

Reforming disability in China:

a study in disability and development.

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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The thesis sits between three academic fields: disability studies, development studies and East Asian studies. It is an unusual but important study of disability in a non-western culture. The thesis is unusual because it explores macro-level (rather than grassroots) constructions of disability, focusing on institutions and ideologies. It is important because no-one has (to my knowledge) undertaken this kind of macro-level analysis on a developing country; and also (again, to my knowledge) because the story of the macro-level construction of disability in China has not been told before.

In this thesis, evidence and arguments are put forward with reference to the historical construction of disability in imperial China (Chapter Three), in late Qing and early Republican China (Chapter Four) and in state socialist China under Mao Zedong (Chapter Five). These chapters explore the place of impairment in Confucian cosmologies; the imperial construction of an administrative category of disability; the influence of western ideas and institutions on internal Chinese debates about the body and nation; and the place of disability and disabled people in state socialist China. A hypothesis of a discourse of body, nation and development is developed, and continues through the next four chapters which focus on disability in post-Mao China. Chapter Six examines the unexpected appearance of disability on the national government's agenda in the 1980s. Chapter Seven explores disability-related policies and their underpinning values. Also in Chapter Seven, three studies are provided which incorporate field-based data to inject some balance (from the "grassroots") into what is otherwise an intentionally imbalanced thesis. Chapter Eight analyses the content and implications of disability propaganda; Chapter Nine tackles the difficult subject of disability legislation, in which equal rights and eugenics appear to go hand in hand.

The result is a study of disability and development - and of *discourses* of disability and development - which will inform current thinking and will provide important information on disability policies, provision and propaganda in post-Mao China.

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List of Abbreviations

The abbreviations listed below appear in the main text - not (only) in textual references.

Where an abbreviation is used in a textual reference to indicate an organization (e.g. DAA, Disability Awareness in Action) which is the author of a publication referred to, or a newspaper (e.g. *BYD, Beijing Youth Daily*) in which a news story appears, then both the abbreviation and the full title are included in the Bibliography and are not generally cited below.

| | |
|----------|--|
| CBR | Community Based Rehabilitation |
| CDPF | China Disabled Persons Federation |
| DPF | Disabled Persons Federation |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| S.A.R. | Special Autonomous Region (Hong Kong) |
| SCF (UK) | Save the Children Fund (UK) |
| MCA | Ministry of Civil Affairs |
| UN | United Nations |
| Unicef | United Nations (International) Childrens (Emergency) Fund |
| Unesco | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

Notes on Language and Romanization

Definitions of impairment and disability are discussed at length in Chapter One.

Quotation marks are deployed in place of *sic*, where a word is used which would be considered derogatory in modern English, yet which provides the most accurate rendition of a (contemporary or historical) Chinese term, for example "mental retardation" where the Chinese term is *ruozhi*, or "cripple" where the Chinese term is *bozi* or *quezi*.

Quotation marks may also be used to indicate that an everyday term is being singled out for particular scrutiny, or is inherently problematic; for example, "race" and "normalcy". In these circumstances, quotation marks are used on the first occasion that the word appears in a chapter, but generally not thereafter. The only exception to this is the term "developing countries" which, were it not disruptive to the narrative, I would have set in quotation marks throughout. My personal and political preference lies with the terms Majority World (for developing countries) and Minority World (for the west). However, these are not widely-recognised terms and I have therefore avoided using them in this thesis.

Throughout the main text of the thesis, the Pin Yin style of romanization is used for Chinese characters (with the exception of Tao and other terms which have found their way into the English language). I have decided against providing the Chinese language version of all quotations or phrases used. Where translation is provided, this is because the language would be of particular interest to someone acquainted with Chinese.

Finally, names of field sites (except Beijing, Wuhan and Tianjin) and names of most research participants have been changed to protect anonymity.

Chronological List of Dynasties

The dynasties mentioned most frequently in the manuscript are boldfaced.

| | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Zhou | 1027-256 BC |
| Qin | 221-206 BC |
| Han | 206 BC - 220 AD |
| Three Kingdoms | 221-280 |
| Western Jin | 265-316 |
| Eastern Jin | 317-420 |
| Six Dynasties | 420-589 |
| Sui | 589-618 |
| Tang | 618-907 |
| Five Dynasties | 907-960 |
| Song | 960-1279 |
| Yuan | 1279-1368 |
| Ming | 1368-1644 |
| Qing | 1644-1912 |

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I am indebted to my family (although I am not quite sure what my father will make of this ... he will probably be pleasantly surprised by the history but a little dismayed by the “discourse”!); and to all my other friends in and around Leeds, London and Hong Kong, who have been stalwart supporters throughout. Helen (and her family) and Jo D. deserve a very special thank-you for their help in the final run-up to submission.

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This thesis is dedicated to James, and also to the memory of my grandmother, Eva Maycock, who would have been proud of me.

Introduction

This thesis has taken me quite by surprise. It is not the thesis I proposed to write when I applied for funding. In fact, I am not quite sure what the Economic and Social Research Council would make of it. It is not even the thesis that I expected to write six months ago, when everyone was asking me, "What sort of thesis is it?" (which is departmental code for "Who should be your examiners?"). But, looking back over the past six years to the time when I first became interested in disability in China, I understand how this particular thesis has come about. It is a direct result of getting caught between interests and identities, and of straddling (or attempting to straddle) divides. It is also the thesis I have secretly wanted to write from the moment I picked up Mike Oliver's *The Politics of Disablement*. Allow me to explain.

* * *

In the course of nine months in China, I strove (as Robert Chambers has encouraged us to strive) to straddle the divide that separates academics and practitioners. I wanted to engage in rigorous social research and also in development work. I was fortunate to get the chance to do both (with Unicef-China and Save the Children Fund). Or so I thought before I returned to Britain and to the task of analysing and writing up.

In the first quarter of 1997, I produced two internal reports for SCF and Unicef which were very much practice and policy-oriented documents (Stone 1997b, 1997c). The reports included findings on local perceptions of disability, on local government provision and on the part that an outside agency might play to improve the lives of disabled people in the locality. Case studies based on interviews with disabled adults, parents of disabled children, government cadres and local teachers and doctors were used at length. Implications for development work were discussed and recommendations (from myself and from research participants) were made.

Then I turned my attention to the thesis and to the volume of other data that I had generated over three years and that lay, awaiting discovery, in the Brotherton Library. With hindsight, I could have ignored that data and produced a thesis on the basis of the reports I had already written. But I didn't. Instead, I immersed myself in library-based

research and, in the process, happened across a handful of texts which were written by East Asian scholars and which gave me the courage to produce something quite different (Brownell 1995, Bakken 1995, Dikötter 1992, Fan Hong 1997).

My intention was to combine analysis of macro-level processes with micro-level realities. Then, six months ago, it occurred to me that straddling the academic-practitioner divide was one thing, but straddling the macro-micro divide was quite another. My grand idea of writing a thesis that would be as useful to high-brow academics as to frontline practitioners, and that would weave together grassroots voices and government discourses was, I admit, a bit too grand ... especially given the academic constraints imposed on doctoral students. So, having already found an outlet for grassroots data in the form of the two policy and practice reports, I determined to set field interviews and observations to one side to make space for the rest of the data I had gathered in the field and in libraries. The results of that decision are set out before you.

This thesis, then, is not about the lived experience of disability in China - although insights into the parameters of that existence are offered. Rather, this is a thesis about institutions and ideologies, about macro-level processes and discourses. Which brings me to the second point raised above, namely that this thesis has been waiting to be written since my first encounter with Mike Oliver's *The Politics of Disablement* and the social model of disability.

I will not go into detail about the social model definition of disability here, nor Mike Oliver's contribution, since both are discussed in Chapter One; suffice to say that the social model definition offers a radically new way of looking at impairment and disability. *Impairment* (visual, hearing, physical, intellectual, behavioural and so on) is located within the individual; *disability* is located outside the individual. In western parlance, disability is the denial of human rights to people with impairments. In cross-cultural parlance, disability is the diminishment of personhood on the basis of an individual's bodily or mental difference.

The story of *disability* can be told from several different perspectives and at several different levels (see Priestley 1998 for an excellent discussion of this). Thus, within research which adopts a social model perspective, there are stories which are grounded

in personal experiences of disability as social restriction or diminished personhood (Campling 1981, Morris 1996, Ingstad & Whyte 1995); and, at the opposite end of the spectrum, there are stories which engage with macro-level structures and processes, and which seek to understand *how* and *why* people with impairments are routinely discriminated against or denied full personhood. Mike Oliver's book fits into the latter category. So too does work by Abberley (1987, 1996), Barnes (1991, 1992, 1996), Davis (1995, 1997b), Garland Thomson (1996, 1997a), Gleeson (1997), Stiker (1992) and Stone (1984).

Is the reader of this thesis starting to feel concerned yet? If so, then I am not surprised. A review (presented in Chapter One) of the three fields in which this thesis sits - western disability studies, development studies and East Asian studies - underscores the simple fact that few (and none to my knowledge) have attempted such a study on any country or culture outside the west. And here lies another vast divide which I have been caught in. There is a strong tradition in western disability studies of mapping out the historical and contemporary construction of disability. There is no such tradition within disability and development studies. I argue in Chapter One that this is understandable and justifiable up to a point, but that it risks consolidating certain myths which have long existed but which should be challenged and dispelled. What are those myths?

First, that disability does not exist outside the structures and culture of the west; that disability is a uniquely western and inherently capitalist construct. Secondly, and following on from the first myth, that macro-level (state, social) institutions play no part in constructing disability in non-western cultures; and that the only legitimate subjects of inquiry are lived experiences and cultural beliefs. Thirdly, if it is believed that disability is not constructed in developing countries, then it follows that disability cannot be *reconstructed* or *re-formed* as a result of macro-level processes and discourses.

Thankfully, the third myth is slowly being dispelled by a growing band of researchers and practitioners who have noted the impact of socio-economic change on local concepts of disability (for example, Bruun 1995, Kisanji 1995a, Nicolaisen 1995). With few exceptions, however, their analysis is focused on change in the here and

now, and not on the dynamics of change in historical perspective. As Miles (1992, 1995) has so persuasively argued, developing countries have histories too. They demand investigation.

In this thesis, I want to dispel the myths. My argument is not that disability (as defined by the social model) exists and is constructed *everywhere*, but that there is no reason to assume that it does not exist beyond the west (this point is clarified in Chapter One). My conviction here is strengthened by the fact that the subject of my research is China. No-one, surely, would claim that there is no need to investigate macro-level structures, processes, ideologies and institutions when studying Chinese society, culture, economics or politics? Nor is there any justification for ignoring historical legacies, given that China's indigenous historical record spans millennia. We are talking about a vast country and culture, with a phenomenal history, that is currently in the throes of rapid change. We are talking about a country which, in the space of a century, has experienced imperial, warlord, Republican and Communist rule and which has now embraced market economics and western consumption. It would be singularly unwise to ignore government policies and discourses, past and present.

Perhaps, then, it is because I have not ignored macro-level ideologies and institutions that I find myself writing *this particular* thesis. Analysis of macro-level structures sits well with a social model definition of disability. That said, I wish to emphasise that whilst I have adopted a social model definition and have been informed by western theories, I have still endeavoured not to seek sanctuary in the social model nor to use western theory and praxis as my "primary referent" throughout (Humphries 1994, p. 201).

The above should give some indication of what to expect from this thesis. Following convention, the first chapter constitutes the literature review and the second chapter details the sources and methods used. My aim is to be transparent about my approach and the evidence on which my arguments are based. Chapters Three, Four and Five explore the macro-level construction of disability in historical perspective (looking at imperial, late Qing/early Republican, and Maoist China respectively). Chapter Six is the first of four chapters on disability in post-Mao China. Chapter Six sets the scene and puts forward the hypothesis that the 1980s and 1990s have witnessed a dramatic

increase in state interest and involvement in disability in China. Chapter Seven examines government policies and provision for disabled people. Chapter Eight looks behind key aspects of recent disability-related propaganda. Chapter Nine is an inquiry into recent disability-related legislation. Although the focus of this thesis is decidedly on macro-level processes, I have occasionally included reference to and citations from fieldnotes, case studies and interviews, where appropriate. Several themes run through the nine chapters, but those will be revealed as the thesis unfolds, beginning with the first chapter.

* * *

To conclude, situating this thesis within and between three academic fields has been stimulating and challenging. The lack of critical and scholarly material on disability in China (which was a driving force behind the decision to undertake the research) has required a high degree of straddling academic boundaries. I have drawn on western disability theories to inform a study of disability beyond the west. I have also, with similar intentions, drawn on China-centred theories of race, gender, sports, nationalism and modernity, even though those who produced these theories express no interest in disability. These decisions, as with the decision to adopt a social model definition of disability, have not been taken lightly and are not unproblematic. The only assurance I can offer is that I have wrestled with and revisited these decisions on numerous occasions, and that I have consciously striven to ground my ideas in data on China, looking to existing East Asian scholarship for support and affirmation. That said, there is no doubt in my mind that this thesis would not have been written were it not for the prior existence of a social model definition of disability, western theories of the construction of disability, anthropological studies of disability beyond the west, and the scholarship of China specialists on race, gender, the body and national identity. Exposure to these diverse sets of literature has encouraged me to read across between apparently disconnected spheres of scholarship. It has given me the inspiration and the courage to approach this study in a way which I could not have anticipated four years ago.

Chapter One

Theorising Disability and Development

In this chapter, the academic scene is set for an admittedly unusual but important study on disability and development in a non-western context which straddles the three fields of disability studies, development studies and East Asian studies. In the process, the theories and concepts which have informed the arguments presented in this thesis are made transparent, especially where those theories and concepts have evolved in and on the west. The dangers of theoretical and conceptual transfers are acknowledged; so too are the potential rewards.

From the Solomon Islands to Sweden, disabled people have been organising, networking and campaigning to secure their human rights and to confront social prejudices (Campbell and Oliver 1996, Driedger 1989, Davis 1993, De Jong 1981, Hasler 1993, Lang 1998, Pagel 1988, NI 1992 and contributions to *Disability Awareness in Action Newsletter* and *CBR News*). In parallel, a new literature of disability and disabled people has emerged, born of a radical redefinition of "disability" (Hunt 1966a, 1996b, UPIAS 1976, Barnes 1991, Oliver 1996b, 1996c). It is a redefinition which underpins my own understanding of disability and the very existence of this project. It is also central to much of the literature reviewed here, and so provides a fitting start to the chapter and an opportunity to set out, from the start, the dangers and rewards of taking approaches evolved in the west and applying them beyond western borders.

Definitions of Disability

The definition of disability which underpins this thesis is the "social model" of disability. It is a definition which originated in the west in the 1970s, but has subsequently been adopted by organisations of disabled people worldwide, including

Disabled People's International (Driedger 1989). In Britain, the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) put forward a social model of disability in the mid-1970s, in which disability was defined as: "a particular form of oppression" and "the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities" (UPIAS 1976, p.14). Since then, the definition has been extended in order to accommodate people with all impairments (not only physical), and it has become the bedrock of disabled people's movements in Britain and beyond (Campbell & Oliver 1996, Lang 1998).

The nature of the critical divide which constitutes a social model definition (between impairment and disability) and which separates the social model of disability from an individual (medical) model has been simply and eloquently described by a group of young disabled people in the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People:

For many years doctors, social workers and other people have told disabled people that they are disabled because of 'what is wrong with them' - their legs don't work, they can't see or hear or they have difficulty learning things, just to give a few examples. This is known as the medical [individual] model of disability. It says that it is the person's 'individual problem' that they are a disabled person.

What we say is that yes, we do have bits of us that don't work very well, this we call our impairment: for example a person who cannot hear very well has a hearing impairment. What we say is that it is not this impairment which makes us a disabled person, it is society which makes us disabled. Society does not let us join in properly - information is not in accessible formats, there are steps into buildings, people's attitudes towards us are negative. So society puts barriers before us which stop us from taking part in society properly - it disables us. This is known as the social model of disability.

(Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People, Young Disabled People's Group (1996), Resource Sheet 1, cited in Morris 1998, p. 13).

The social model of disability represents a radically different and politicised way of thinking about disability. Rather than locating the "problem" within the individual, the social model locates the problem within a society (economy, culture) which fails to meet the needs of people with impairments and discriminates against them on the basis of bodily or mental difference. Disability is therefore about the exclusion of people

with impairments from the labour force and from society in ways which parallel exclusions premised on "race" and gender (Barnes 1991, Hahn 1988, Hunt 1996b, Morris 1991, Garland Thomson 1997a). It is about social and educational segregation (Barnes 1991, Barton 1989). It is about inaccessible environments, transport systems and communication media (see Brechin *et al* 1981, Swain *et al* 1993). It is about the negative imagery of people with impairments in television, fiction, language and film (Barnes 1992, Cumberbatch & Negrine 1992, Gartner & Joe 1987, Hevey 1992, 1993, Longmore 1987b). It is about institutionalised discrimination (Barnes 1991) and disabling laws (Gooding 1994). It is about disabling attitudes which view impairment as a personal tragedy and which lock the individual into an economic, social, political and cultural underclass (Barton 1993, Finkelstein 1980, Sutherland 1981, Swain *et al* 1993). Disability, as with race and gender, is socially created and constructed. Disability is neither natural nor inevitable.

The social model has already demonstrated its power as a force for change in the west and as a concept around which disabled people can mobilise for change (Campbell & Oliver 1996, Finkelstein 1993). However, it should be noted that several individuals and organisations have questioned the extent to which a social model of disability is relevant to the experiences of people with particular impairments (see Barnes & Mercer 1996), including mental health survivors (Barnes & Shardlow 1996, Beresford & Wallcraft 1997, McNamara 1996); Deaf people who view themselves as a linguistic minority culture rather than as disabled people (Davis 1995, Finkelstein 1993, Lane 1995), and people whose experience of disability is inextricable from the specific nature of an impairment (Crow 1996, French 1993a). The mere existence of these debates on the relevance of a social model definition in Britain makes it impossible to ignore the questions raised by an application of social model definitions to non-western cultures.

As stated in the Introduction, this is a thesis about and grounded in China. This is also a thesis about and grounded in a social model of disability. Are these two positions inherently contradictory? Does the social model distinction between "impairment" (as individual condition or difference) and "disability" (as social restriction and oppression premised on having an impairment) hold outside the west, for all cultures, for all

epochs? The question is a difficult one and is compounded by often well-founded criticisms of white, western and privileged academics and activists who write on and campaign against oppression in other cultures and contexts:

Even accounts that at the time were aimed at championing the values and rights of oppressed people are now seen as fundamentally racist in their assumptions (Wilson 1992, p.181).

To date, criticisms of imperialist research into non-western forms of oppression have been most evident in studies of the non-western subordination of women (Amos & Parmar 1984, Humphries 1994, Humphries & Truman 1994, Mohanty *et al* 1991). More recently, a few voices have begun to level similar accusations to those who write and campaign on disability from a western perspective but in relation to non-western cultures (Lang 1998, Miles, M. 1996).

Ray Lang, a disabled academic currently undertaking Ph.D. research on disability in India, sets out a four-fold critique of the transfer of western disability politics to developing countries (Lang 1998). He considers: the limited value of anti-discrimination legislation; the danger of rejecting the role of (non-disabled) professionals; a misplaced emphasis on discrimination rather than popular fear and ignorance; and the dangers of applying western-based notions of empowerment, which are individualistic and centred on the (western?) concept of human rights, to cultures and communities with a long legacy of collective, communal or family-based decision-making. What is implicit in Lang's critique is made explicit in Mike Miles's paper (Miles 1996). Miles condemns the transfer of western disability theory and praxis into developing countries and "the largely monocultural western or westernised disability evangelists" who have "exported community slogans, muddled with the rhetoric of individual disability rights, to third world countries" (Miles 1996, p. 488); and he reminds potential sociological imperialists like myself that the "inutility to developing countries of much western social science has been documented angrily by people who have tried it" (Miles 1996, p. 496).

Western academics and activists who impose western models on non-western cultures are in danger of engaging in acts of the utmost irrelevance and even of cultural imperialism. What, then, is my justification for applying a western definition of

impairment and disability to a study of China? In a reflexive account of doing disability research in China, I made my concerns and justifications transparent (Stone 1997a). I admitted to trying to steer a difficult course between the Scylla of research commensurate with the social model of disability (which would leave me open to charges of irrelevance and imperialism) and the Charybdis of jettisoning the social model (which would leave me open to charges of oppressive research). The pragmatic and principled decision I made then, I maintain now: first, "that it is insupportable to seek sanctuary in the social model of disability when engaging in cross-cultural research" and secondly, "that the responsibility for balancing fidelity to respondent analysis [and data] with my own insights and perceptions as an outsider lies on my shoulders as the researcher" (Stone 1997a, p. 221).

Since then, as mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis, I have also decided that the social model definition, in its most fundamental form, can work outside the west and does work in China *in so far as it is a useful conceptual tool to analyse processes and dimensions of disability*.

I am clear that what can work is an approach which distinguishes between "impairment" (bodily/mental difference) and the construction of "disability" as a particular category premised on impairment and resulting in diminished social status. I am equally clear that what does not work (for China or anywhere else) is the wholesale and unquestioned imposition of theories developed with reference to one context onto another context. That principle applies to theoretical transfers within different countries of the west, as well as beyond western borders. Thus, there is a distinction to be made between the fundamental principles of the social model, and theories based on the social model but which have evolved with specific reference to, for example, the construction of disability in Britain. I have adopted the former, been informed by the latter, but have determined (so far as possible) to avoid imposing the latter onto the data generated in or on China. Thus, in the name of transparency, I set out the main theories which have informed my thinking, but I have tended to avoid discussion of western theory in the main body of this thesis (with a few exceptions).

Discussion of the implications of this for research methodology opens the next chapter. What is needed first is the customary, if cursory, overview of the fields within which

this thesis is situated: western disability studies, development studies (with reference to disability), and East Asian studies.

Western Disability Studies: an overview

In the broad scheme of things sociological, let alone in the even broader scheme of things academic, disability studies is the new kid on the block. Early seeds were sown in the 1960s with the publication of Hunt's *Stigma* (1966a), a collection of twelve essays written by disabled men and women. Hunt's own contribution, "A Critical Condition" (Hunt 1966b), drew parallels with sexism, racism, anti-Semitism and homophobia and put forward the concept of disability as a common oppression shared by people with different impairments. The concept lies at the core of a critical and liberating sociology of disability (Oliver 1996a).

Thirty years on, disability studies has taken root throughout the west. There has been a proliferation of international journals devoted to disability (*Disability & Society*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, *Australian Disability Review* and the *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*). There has also been a recent flurry of edited collections and readers (Barton 1996a, Davis 1997a and Swain *et al* 1993). Len Barton's collection is especially helpful: in it, two of the most prominent protagonists in the development of a British sociology of disability take stock of the development of disability theory in the west. The reviews offered by Oliver (1996a) and Barnes (1996) are worth summarising since they convey the dynamic of disability studies, where it came from, where it has gone and where it is going.

In their papers, Oliver and Barnes highlight the distinction between the development of disability theory in the United States and in Britain. In America, disability studies has built on foundations laid by functionalist and interactionist approaches to sociology. Central to this process have been the Parsonian notion of the "sick role" (Parsons 1951) and the interactionist emphasis on labelling, stigmatisation and deviancy most associated with Goffman (1963), Lemert (1962) and Becker (1963). In time, and in the course of civil rights campaigns and the Independent Living Movement, new approaches emerged exemplified by the writings of De Jong (1981), Hahn (1987,

1988), Safilios-Rothschild (1970) and Scott (1969) which conceived disability as a minority group and shifted away from analysis of individuals and towards environments and professionals. More recently, important work has been undertaken by Albrecht (1992), Bickenbach (1993), Higgins (1992) and Stone (1984) with regard to disability as an instrument of social, political and economic control but, as Barnes and Oliver stress, insufficient attention has been paid to the role played by structural and ideological features of capitalist America in constructing disability as discrimination or deviance.

In Britain, the development of disability theory has taken a different route and one which, until recently, has sat happily within a predominantly materialist framework. Taking the lead from disabled writers such as Hunt (1966), a more critical approach to disability has been formulated, grounded in the social model of disability. Finkelstein (1980, 1991), Abberley (1987, 1996), Oliver (1990, 1996c) and Barnes (1991) have been the main exponents of materialist accounts of disability which emphasise the role of capitalism, industrialisation and the commodification of labour in the construction of disability. Morris (1991, 1996) and Shakespeare (1993, 1994) have shown preference for feminist and post-modernist approaches which call for culture, identity, race, gender, age, sexuality and impairment to be woven more explicitly into the fabric of the social model. For Oliver, this "intersection between materialist, feminist and post-modernist theorising" is a sign that "the sociological imagination has arrived" (Oliver 1996a, p. 49). Time will tell whether this heralds an increased relevance of disability studies for disabled people, or whether it signifies the separation of theory from praxis. In the meantime, and to ensure that theory accords with realities, several researchers have aimed to redress the under-representation and misrepresentation in disability studies literature of disabled women (Campling 1981, Fine & Asch 1988, Keith 1994, Morris 1991, 1996), disabled people from Black and minority ethnic groups (Begum *et al* 1994, Priestley 1995, Stuart 1992, Vernon 1996) and gay and lesbian disabled people (Shakespeare *et al* 1996).

Quite apart from the array of theoretical strands, the above review illustrates the range of windows through which the construction and experience of disability have been explored. Some lean towards cultural analysis. Others lean towards structural and

ideological analysis. Some incorporate a historical perspective. Others are fixed firmly in the here and now of western society. Some are grounded in lived experiences. Others engage with grand narratives. Yet for all this activity and scholarship, disability studies remains relegated to the margins of mainstream academia (Barton 1996b).

Development Studies and Disability

Disability (as distinct from impairment) has also been marginalised in the academic field of development studies and in the practice and policy work of international development agencies and non-governmental organisations. True, there is a relatively long history of articles and books which have an international focus and which deal with disabled people in developing countries; a quick glance through back issues of the *International Journal of Rehabilitation* and *International Journal of Special Education* would reveal that much. However, most articles in the field are written by and for professionals who work in developing countries, mostly as short-term consultants and either western or western-trained; and are concerned with impairment interventions (medical rehabilitation, prevention) rather than disability as defined in the social model. This is perhaps inevitable, certainly understandable and probably justifiable in so far as it meets the ethical requirement of conducting research that makes a difference in developing countries. Less justifiable is the marginalization of disability issues in mainstream development studies.

The failure of academics who work within development studies to take proper account of the realities of disability is perplexing given the fact that development studies has fostered radical work on global and grassroots structural inequalities (Allen & Thomas 1992, Bernstein *et al* 1992, Doyal 1979, Harrison 1988, Kay 1989, Navarro 1974, Sanders 1985, Schuurman 1993); and that it is generally believed that people with impairments rank among those most likely to be excluded from society and the economy (Bowe 1990, Boylan 1991, DAA 1995, ILO 1989, Shirley 1983, Tiroler 1995). Where impairment is mentioned, as in Robert Chambers's theory of rural poverty ratchets (Chambers 1983), analysis seldom goes beyond brief mention of the economic impact of impairment on household strategies (loss of labour power, number of dependants, costs of medical treatment sought). Unfortunately, this

compounds the simplistic (western) message that disabled people make no contribution - economic or otherwise - to the household or community.

Thankfully, things are starting to change, partly due to recent initiatives taken by the United Nations and related agencies like Unicef, Unesco, WHO and the ILO. The decision to name 1981 the International Year of Disabled Persons and to make the following decade (1982-1992) the United Nations Decade of Disabled People succeeded in putting disability onto international, national and regional agendas. It released much needed funding for increased disability-related development work in developing countries. It forced existing organisations to reflect on the extent to which disabled people were included in or excluded from programmes, with the result that several organisations have begun to work in this area. It also prompted the formulation of new strategies and solutions to address issues around impairment and, increasingly, disability (Ainscow *et al* 1995, Chaudhury *et al* 1995, DAA 1995, Das 1993, McConkey 1995, SCF 1994a, 1994b). The most obvious example is the concept of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) which was coined or claimed by WHO in the late 1970s and which hit the world of development work in a big way in the 1980s (Helander 1992, Mendis 1992, Miles, S. 1996, Momm & König 1989, O'Toole 1987).

As a result of increased activity and funds, and the race to develop new strategies for dealing with impairment and disability (CBR is at the top of a long and growing list), there has also been considerable growth in the number of books, articles, conferences and newsletters on disability. Recent examples (in addition to those cited above) include Peter Coleridge's (1992) book which considers disability experiences and interventions in six developing countries, Rachel Hastie's (1997) study of Oxfam's work in Bosnia, and edited collections by Finkenflügel (1993), O'Toole & McConkey (1995), Thorburn & Marfo (1990) and Zinkin & McConachie (1995). For the most part, these too are practitioner-led and policy and practice-oriented. The focus is on the development of appropriate interventions. At best (and the above list includes many of the best), they offer critical evaluations of programme processes and outcomes, with reference to the wider programme context. But since the focus is on the here and now, on programmes and projects, little space is set aside to explore wider and arguably more important issues - more important because fundamental to the success or failure

and the reliable evaluation of any project.

Fortunately, wider issues of attitudes, life-chances, local strategies, beliefs and social expectations are now being incorporated to a growing degree in practice-based studies. For example, in Zinkin & McConachie's collection, the sum of contributions offers insights into both practitioner and local worlds. Papers by Kisanji ("Growing up Disabled", which includes vignettes of disabled children and young people in Tanzania, 1995) and by Williams ("Rights not Charity", written from the perspective of a disabled people's organisation in the Solomon Islands, 1995) provide a helpful counter-balance to practitioner debates on the practicalities and ethics of screening, surgery and assessments. Papers by Ainscow *et al* (1995) on integrated education and Chaudhury *et al* (1995) on CBR projects weave local perspectives and initiatives, project evaluation and practitioner debates into one. The result is a collection that blends perspectives and moves between impairment and disability interventions (see Stone 1996c).

Hastie's casebook is a good example of a text which takes its starting point from the perspective of practitioners (it is an account of Oxfam's work in Tuzla) but which also makes considerable use of the perspectives of those involved: disabled children, parents, members of the wider community, local professionals, project workers and government officials (Hastie 1997). Hastie shows how development workers enter apparent vacuums where poverty and conflict have eroded previous systems, creating a space for foreign funding and models. As the Tuzla story unfolds, it is evident to the reader that this is no "blank sheet" on which development agencies can write at will (Stone 1998d). In Tuzla, the ghosts of state provision and professionalized practice remained, alongside local perceptions of disability, childcare and education. Only through recognising these legacies could progress be made. Thus, Hastie's casebook implicitly supports the argument that wider issues of disability should be central to research and practice on disability in developing countries.

Forthcoming papers by Turmusani (1998), Lang (1998), Susie Miles (1998) and Callaway (1998) *inter alia* should prove useful additions to the growing stock of material on disability and development work (see Stone 1998a, forthcoming). Also worth mention are a growing number of studies on disabled people's organisations in

developing countries (see Devlieger 1995a, Jayasooria & Ooi 1994, articles in *NI* 1992, Werner 1993, and forthcoming papers by Frost 1998 and Hurst 1998).

Moving further away from the practitioner end of the spectrum and towards the academic, a handful of studies exist which adopt an anthropological or historical approach to disability in developing countries. Early examples include the widely-cited 1948 paper by Hanks & Hanks (a review of ethnographic research on people with physical impairments in non-western cultures), work by Aal-Jillek (1965) on epilepsy, Edgerton (1970) on "mental retardation" in cross-cultural perspective, by Gwaltney (1970) on blind people in Mexico and Haj (1970) on disability in ancient non-western cultures. More recent additions to this list include papers by Miles on cultural and historical aspects of disability in south Asian cultures (1992, 1995, 1998 forthcoming); by Burck (1989) on impairment in a Shona community; papers in Mallory *et al* (1993) and by Kisanji (1995b) and Jackson & Mupedziswa (1988) on changing attitudes to disability in developing (mostly African) countries; a forthcoming paper by Saul & Phillips (1998) on Nepalese perceptions of impairment; and excellent contributions written by medical and social anthropologists for Ingstad & Whyte's (1995) collection *Disability and Culture* (especially Bruun 1995, Devlieger 1995b, Helander 1995, Ingstad 1995a, 1995b, Nicolaisen 1995, Sentumbwe 1995, Talle 1995, Whyte 1995a). Also instructive are Connors & Donnellan (1993), Groce & Zola (1993), Groce (1989) and Scheer & Groce (1988) for advice on how to approach disability in non-western cultures or in western sub-cultures.

A few of these papers are revisited subsequently, in recognition of their influence on my approach to disability in China. In the meantime, it need only be stated that they are a valuable addition to the knowledge base on disability beyond the west. The strength of these contributions lies in the extent to which full account is taken of cosmological and cultural perceptions and of grassroots strategies and responses to disability and/or impairment. What is lacking, however, is research which studies the implications of macro-level development processes on macro-level constructions of disability, where such processes can be said to be underway.

But I am in danger of jumping ahead here. Before making the case for macro-level research on disability and development, it is time to turn to the third field in which this

thesis sits.

East Asian Studies and Disability

It will come as no surprise, given the preceding sections, that few have considered disability in China a subject worthy of serious research, until relatively recently. I am one of a still small number of "emerging" academics pursuing an interest in disability issues in mainland China. Others (who are in the process of writing or have recently completed a postgraduate thesis) include Matthew Kohrman (Harvard), Alison Callaway (Bristol, see Callaway 1986 and 1998 forthcoming) and several Masters of Social Work students at Hong Kong University (some of whom have published case studies through the Department of Social Work and Administration, see Pearson & Leung 1995, Pierini 1997). Further signs of growing interest can be found in *China Now* (Callaway 1986, Cohen 1994, Pascoe 1981, Sydenham 1992), and by the promotion (leafleted through *Community Care* magazine) of a tourist-cum-practitioner tour to China titled "Community Care in China" and taking in special schools and rehabilitation centres alongside Peking Duck and the Great Wall.

More western practitioners and academics are now invited to or seek invitations to China on consultancies and study visits. Their views and experiences have been a relatively helpful source of support in relation to current Chinese practice and provision (Ashman 1995, Bray & Chamings 1983, Condon 1990, Potts 1995, Schulze 1989, Smits & Smits 1982, Stevens *et al* 1990; also Parker 1986 for a bibliography on blindness in China, mostly written by outsider practitioners). Also useful are summaries in Mindes (1991) and *China Development Briefing* (1997a) of the various outsider agencies involved in disability-related programmes in China. There has also been a rise in the number of Chinese-authored texts in international journals which provide information on Chinese initiatives in rehabilitation and education (Chen *et al* 1992, Guo 1993, Shen 1993, Shih Chung 1979, Tao 1988, Tse 1995, Zhuo 1982, 1988 *inter alia*). These are mostly impairment and intervention oriented, and have therefore been of limited use in developing this thesis - save as testimony to the hypothesis put forth in Chapter Six that the 1980s and 1990s have witnessed a dramatic increase in Chinese interest in disability.

Most interest in disability in China has come from those working on disability in other

parts of the world. But what of those who work and write within the mainstream of East Asian Studies? There are few China specialists who have incorporated disability research into their work, and even fewer who have gone into detailed analysis. For example, Elisabeth Croll (1994) refers to impairment and illness in much the same way (and with the same basic message) as Robert Chambers, namely that impairment brings high costs through loss of labour power, demands on bread-winners to become "carers" and costs of medical treatment. Irving Epstein (1988) and Suzanne Pepper (1990) provide some useful discussion of China's special education provision in their respective analyses of the Chinese education system. The Kleinmans and colleagues, who have spent years working on healing systems in Chinese cultures and persistently managed to avoid explicit discussion of disability, have recently produced a short but useful study of epilepsy as "chronic illness" which takes account of local perceptions and strategies (Kleinman *et al* 1995). Some, but often passing, reference is made in general discussions of public health care in China (Kleinman *et al* 1975, Sidel & Sidel 1982, Pearson 1995, Wegman *et al* 1973) and of Chinese social security and welfare systems (Chan 1993, Leung & Nann 1995, Wong & MacPherson 1995). The detailed research by John Dixon on China's social welfare system in the late 1970s with reference to disabled people deserves particular mention here (Dixon 1981a, 1981b). More attention has been devoted to issues of mental health in Chinese societies (see contributions to Lin & Eisenberg 1985, and to Tseng & Wu 1985, Phillips *et al* 1994, also Fong 1992); papers explore the meaning and assessment of mental health in Chinese societies, the specific forms that Chinese mental health disorders take, individual and household strategies for restoring mental health and the development of new interventions in the field. There are also a few papers which explore issues of mental health in historical perspective (Chiu 1980, Bunger 1950). These have been most helpful in opening up the possibility for parallel investigations into the construction of disability in China's past and present. However, it should be noted that mental health issues are not a specific focus in this thesis, although reference is made where considered relevant to broader processes.

Finally, a number of texts by China-specialists have proved invaluable in formulating the ideas and arguments presented in this thesis. The fact that their authors declare no obvious interest in disabled people does not negate the fact that there is strong scope to

"read across" to a study of disability. I think here of Susan Brownell (1995) and Fan Hong (1997), who have published scholarly studies of sports and the body in China; Gail Hershatter (1996), who has written on gendered bodies in historical and contemporary perspective; Frank Dikötter's studies of sexuality and historical discourses of "race" in China (Dikötter 1992, 1995); and the work of several eminent scholars of Chinese medicine - including Arthur Kleinman (1975, 1980), Paul Unschuld (1980, 1985) and Charolotte Furth (1987) - who have written on constructions of illness and gender in Chinese history. All of these works offer insights relevant to the construction of disability in historical and contemporary China. Further insights from China specialists which are particularly (if unintentionally) relevant to disability in post-Mao China, are offered in studies of social, economic and cultural change in the 1980s and 1990s where the subject is the experience of socially and economically excluded groups (Honig 1989); the implications of socio-economic change on micro-level realities (Chan *et al* 1992, Croll 1994, Potter & Potter 1990 *inter alia*) and on macro-level structures (Delman *et al* 1990, Dwyer 1994a, Riskin 1987 *inter alia*); the development, implementation and impact of Chinese population policies (Croll *et al* 1985, Kane 1987); and the development of Chinese discourses of nation, modernity and development (Dittmer & Kim 1993, especially Kim & Dittmer 1993, Van Ness 1993). These have proved critical referents and a much needed counter-balance to theories developed on and for the west.

* * *

Having reviewed, if briefly, the three fields within which this thesis is situated, it is time to provide more detail on the theories and concepts which have most influenced my approach and the development of this thesis: first, theories of disability and development; and secondly, concepts of body and personhood.

Disability and Development: theories, concepts and myths

The link between disability and development lies at the core of a critical mass of disability theorising which has emerged in the west since the 1980s. The central question asked is: "How and why has disability been created and constructed in the

west?".

Disability and Development: western theories

In Britain, the development of theories on the creation and construction of disability has been advanced by Mike Oliver's (1990) widely-cited monograph, *The Politics of Disablement*, in which Oliver provides a persuasive explanation of how it is that an individual (medical) model of disability has emerged as the hegemonic model of disability in the west.

Oliver builds on a three-stage historical model set out by Vic Finkelstein (1980). With recourse to the grand theories of Marx, Comte and Weber, Oliver argues that the rise of industrial capitalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a critical period in the history of disability in Britain. Put crudely, the rise of industrial capitalism wrought far-reaching changes in the socio-economic organisation of the population, including the exclusion of disabled people from the factory and, in some cases, from the home. The mass incarceration of people with impairments in institutions or asylums and the exclusion of disabled people from the industrial work force was, Oliver contests, a direct result of western capitalist industrial development:

disabled people are excluded from the workforce not because of their personal or functional limitations ... nor simply because of discriminatory attitudes and practices among employers and labour markets ... but because of the way in which work is organised within the capitalist economy itself (Oliver 1996a, p. 34).

Oliver details the processes (structural and ideological) by which people with impairments have been set apart as a distinct category of the population. Aside from the demands of a capitalist mode of production, Oliver also argues that the rise of the medical profession articulated with capitalist modes of production to construct disability as individual pathology in a way which legitimated the interests of both capitalism and the profession itself. Oliver also discusses the role of capitalist ideologies of individualism and the emergence of able-bodied and able-minded "norms" (again, linked to the demands of the capitalist mode of economic production and the rise of a medical profession). Oliver concludes from available evidence that "the medicalised and tragic view of disability was unique to capitalist societies" (Oliver 1996a, p. 28).

Oliver's gaze is fixed on industrial and late industrial Britain. In contrast, Gleeson (1997) and Stone (1984) have looked to earlier historical periods for explanation, although capitalism, albeit in nascent form, is still centre-stage.

Gleeson (1997) suggests that the gradual development of commodity relations in England from the fifteenth century onwards, the emergence of market relations, the commodification of labour, the introduction of the law of social value (whereby work is socially evaluated according to average productivity standards and is remunerated accordingly), and the emergence of new sociospatial settings which brought about a separation of home and work (namely, the factory and the industrial city) marked a significant departure from the "confined realm of physical interaction" and the "relatively weak presence of commodity production" which Gleeson believes were normative prior to the fifteenth century and which allowed for greater socio-economic inclusion of people with impairments (Gleeson 1997, p. 194). Thus, Gleeson too argues that the construction of disability is a product of the "social history of capitalism" and the way capitalism and related socio-spatial changes have "progressively disabled" the labour power of people with impairments (Gleeson 1997, p. 195).

Deborah Stone's (1984) starting point, in her compelling analysis of "disability" as a construction of the welfare state, is the supposed crisis in modern disability pension programmes and the welfare state in North America and across Europe. Unsatisfied with explanations based on demographic or attitudinal change, Stone turns her attention to social policy and the legislative expansion of disability programmes in the context of rising unemployment and unrest in late-industrial economies. Stone models disability as an administrative and juridical construct, and is concerned to show how and why people with different impairments came to be gathered together into one unified category called disability: "a single phenomenon, with enough shared cultural meaning to serve as a defining characteristic for public welfare programs" (Stone 1984, p. 26). In search of answers, Stone delves into the historical development of social policy in England from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century, in Germany towards the close of the nineteenth century, and in America during the latter half of the twentieth century. Stone argues persuasively that:

what seems to us so obvious now - that there is a state of being called "disabled" which is clearly different from the normal state of being and which requires special treatment - is a fairly modern perception (Stone 1984, p. 26).

The nub of Stone's analysis is the "distributive dilemma" which operates between distributive systems based on work and on need. Whilst the work and need systems are but two of a wide range of distributive systems available to any given society, Stone sees them as the dominant systems in market economies. The dilemma lies in regulating the two systems so as to ensure social order, promote economic growth and preserve the onus on individuals to work and compete, while permitting the selective distribution of social aid for those unable to do so and considered the "deserving poor". The dilemma is resolved (more and less successfully) in the "categorical resolution": the creation of disability as a category, the membership of which permits access to social aid, exemption from the social expectation to work, and escape from stringent sanctions imposed on those who idle and scrounge without "just cause".

For the categorical resolution to function, a validating device is needed which must maintain the primacy of the work-based distributive system and must also be culturally acceptable. In modern welfare states, validation is provided by medical certification which ties "inability to work" to "impairment". Here, the rise of medical professionals as validators of the deserving and undeserving is conceived as central to the maintenance of an apparently "neutral" system.

The role of medical and welfare professionals in constructing and perpetuating the hegemony of an individualised, medicalised view of disabled people has been an organising theme in disabled people's movements and disability studies (see various contributions to Swain *et al* 1993, Barton 1989 and to Morris 1996; also Abberley 1995, Finkelstein 1991, French 1993b, Morris 1991). Perhaps the most radical example of this thesis is Wolf Wolfensburger's (1989) discussion of the contemporary "human service supersystem", which includes all professionals, agencies and fields in the service sector.

Wolfensburger argues that the *manifest* functions of human service agencies may be "beneficent, charitable, benign, curative, habilitative", but there are also *latent* functions which are "dependency-making and dependency keeping, health-debilitating,

and outright death-accelerating" (1989, p. 26). Socially devalued groups, including disabled people, are the fodder of the human service agencies and serve to "support a post-agricultural and post-industrial, and therefore 'post-primary production', economy" (Wolfensberger 1989, p. 30) through engaging large numbers of the population in unproductive employment (including service industries) and keeping many more out of the workforce by labelling them as "in need" of services or "incapable of work".

Less radical but moving in a similar direction is Gary Albrecht's (1992) study of rehabilitation as a lucrative and profit-oriented industry in which people with impairments are the raw material to which economic or humanitarian value may be added via the purchase of rehabilitation commodities (goods and services). The process by which people with impairments came to be the raw material hinges on "larger social processes by which selected sets of social relationships are judged undesirable, dysfunctional, or deviant and are targeted for intervention" (Albrecht 1992, p. 28). Although Albrecht fails to locate his thesis more solidly within the socio-cultural and economic structures which characterise capitalist America, his theory of disability as business still has much to offer, not least in relation to the emergence of an international disability and rehabilitation business (Stone 1998b).

To summarise so far, the emergence of disability as a particular form of oppression in western societies has been variously explained with reference to the rise of capitalism, industrialisation and related socio-spatial and ideological changes, the rise of the medical and other human service professions, the ongoing requirements of post-industrial economies and established professions, and the development of state bureaucratic mechanisms for separating the deserving from the undeserving poor. The underlying message of all these is that disability in the west is the product of western, capitalist, industrial and socio-political change. Disability is a result of western development.

That message is radical. Some would say it is far-fetched. And that possibly explains why so many western disability theorists have drawn on "disability stories" in other countries and cultures to support their arguments and to illustrate the simple claim that disability is constructed differently in different countries. Some have grounded their research in cross-national comparison. Wolfensberger (1989) and Stone (1984) are

good examples of this. Other examples (which have a policy and practice rather than historical orientation) include McCagg & Siegelbaum's (1989) edited collection of essays on disability in the Soviet Union; Ursic's (1996) paper on trends in Slovenian disability policy since the end of the Cold War; Susan Peters's (1993) collection of papers on special education in cross-cultural perspective, including Japan, Pakistan, Hungary and Iran; and cross-national research on disability policy by Aarts *et al* (1996) and rehabilitation policies by Albrecht (1981). These contributions confirm the major role that national politics and history play in constructing disability differently, although most retain a heavy bias on the west, with the occasional inclusion of eastern Europe. There are also, however, "disability stories" from beyond the west which, when they have come to the attention of western disability theorists, have been snatched up with relish.

Western Theories and Non-western Stories

Anthropological accounts of disability in non-western cultures have become a favourite pool into which western social model theorists have dipped to substantiate both their claims (that disability in the west is the product of western, capitalist development) and also the very nature of their project. For instance, Mike Oliver supports his decision to write *The Politics of Disablement* with a series of ethnographic vignettes to illustrate the different treatment of people with impairments across societies and cultures. Sometimes they are venerated. Sometimes they are rejected. Sometimes they are integrated. Sometimes they are excluded. It follows that there is nothing "natural" about the oppression of people with impairments in Britain ... *ergo* disability must be a social creation or construct (Oliver 1990).

Oliver's review of impairment in historical and non-western societies is but one example of several forays into cross-cultural forests made by western disability theorists (Albrecht 1992, Barnes 1996, Stone 1984). Perhaps the most important, because widely-cited, sources have been the Hanks & Hanks paper (1948) and the Scheer & Groce (1988) paper. The various ethnographic and historical vignettes summarised in these have become a valuable resource for western theorists who share the view that disability is socially created or constructed. To that end, the vignettes

have served an important purpose. But they have done so at a cost.

The tendency to present a ragbag of ethnographic snapshots produces, albeit unwittingly, an asocial and ahistorical understanding of disability in non-western societies (Stone 1998b). Non-western societies are incorporated into western theorising in such a way as to rid them of complexity and meaning. That process is further manifested in the seemingly acceptable association of "non-western" with "primitive" or "traditional" - an association that reveals an ignorance and an ethnocentrism that is quite astounding. Gary Albrecht is a case in point. In his discussion of the differential production of impairment, he refers to five types of society which "generally characterize human communities both historically and in the present" (Albrecht 1992, p. 39): hunting and gathering; pastoral; horticultural; agrarian; and industrial. Quite where the vast majority of developing countries fit into this schema is anyone's guess. Likewise, Gleeson (who is so forthright in his criticism of poor historiography) displays a remarkably poor sense of global development (Gleeson 1997). Must one assume that developing countries are to be accommodated somewhere between "feudal" and "primitive"? Deborah Stone (1984) is no less guilty of over-simplification in her references to "peasant" as opposed to "modern" societies. Thus are myths and the orientalist imagination perpetuated (Dawson 1964, Said 1978).

A more appropriate picture of developing countries is of rapid and skewed development processes which serve to keep poor people poor. Industrialization, urbanization, agricultural commodification, urban migration, landlessness, increasing poverty and local disparities, diversification of income-generating opportunities, infrastructural improvements, changing and complex social relationships, cut-backs on local services, shifting organisation of production from the family unit to waged labour ... these are the development processes that characterise much of the developing world. And these are the processes that may dramatically affect, for better and for worse, the opportunities available to disabled and non-disabled people in a given setting. In so doing, they may also radically re-form local and family perceptions of impairment and disability (Momm & König 1989, Ingstad & Whyte 1995, Stone 1998b). Development (or underdevelopment) is a complex process, whether it takes place in Manchester or Manila.

Aside from ethnographic vignettes, the only other obvious example of incorporating data from developing countries into western disability theory has occurred with regard to theories of impairment. Paul Abberley (1987, 1996) argues that a theory of disability as oppression must be based on a theory of impairment as social oppression and socially produced. To this end, Abberley has highlighted the indisputable links between poverty, underdevelopment, conflict and impairment which are more immediately apparent in developing countries. His argument is easy to support (Coleridge 1993, DAA 1995, NI 1992, Phillips & Verhasselt 1994, Tiroler 1995, Richman 1995, Zinkin 1991), but has seldom been pursued within western disability studies since it prompts uncomfortable questions about the place of impairment prevention in a social model of disability (see Stone 1996, 1998b for further discussion of the place of impairment in a sociology of disability and development).

To my mind, the incorporation of non-western societies in western disability studies has been an expediency. It supports the western social model by underlining global difference. It supports attempts to theorise a social production of impairment - again, to serve the interest of western disability theory. Through occasional references to politicisation beyond western borders, it also supports the sense of a global struggle against oppression. But evidence of a more serious and careful engagement with disability and development in developing countries is scarce. This failure to engage properly with disability in the developing world has allowed western disability theory to evolve in a hermetically sealed environment. From an academic standpoint, this is regrettable since engagement with these issues would contribute greatly to the development of disability studies in the west. As long as imperialist imaginations can be kept at bay, there are several very good reasons why the study of disability and development in developing countries should be taken on board - quite apart from the fact that 90% of the world's disabled people do not live in Europe or North America.

First, if we are to convince that capitalism, industrialization and urbanization play critical roles in the construction of disability as oppression, then we must seriously explore the extension of that hypothesis to developing countries which are currently in the throes of economic development and urbanization. Also, the fact that several developing countries, China included, have experienced periods of state socialism

provides an additional motive for inquiry, and opens the door to a re-evaluation of the western emphasis on disability as a product of capitalism, not socialism.

Secondly, there is little point in continuing to ignore the realities of a shared present in a global society. Globalization is, after all, the buzzword of the 1990s (Featherstone *et al* 1995, *NI* 1997, Ritzer 1995, Seabrook 1996). McDonalds, Coca-Cola and Marlboro. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Glaxo, Microsoft and Shell. Processes of development, now more than ever, must be understood in global terms. The same is no less true in the field of disability. On the back of the United Nations Decade of Disabled People (1982-1992) and International Year of Disabled Persons (1981), what can only be described as a "globalisation" of disability and rehabilitation has taken place (Stone 1998b). Witness the *World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons* (UN 1983) - a "how to" book for national governments on disability; the promotion of an annual International Day of Disabled People; the genesis and growth of international networks of professionals, parents and disabled people; the appearance of disability as an issue for international development work; the proliferation of newsletters and journals on disability in developing countries. Add to this list the expansion of a global disability and rehabilitation industry, dominated by western models, serviced by western or western-trained experts, and exported to non-western contexts (Kisanji 1995a, Ingstad 1995a, Lang 1998, Miles, M. 1996). In this era of neo-colonialism, the "disability business" has gone global; westerners need to recognise that.

There is also a shared past, as papers on the the introduction or imposition of western segregated services in non-western colonies during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries confirm (contributions to Peters 1993; also Kalyanpur 1996, Jayasooria & Ooi 1994, Devlieger 1995a, Burck 1989, Mallory 1993, Miles n.d.). Arguably, research on disability in many developing countries is incomplete without reference to colonial administrations and missionary activities. Research on disability and development in the west is likewise incomplete without consideration of western imperialist discourses and impositions.

For all these reasons, it is high time for western disability studies to move beyond simplistic and expedient vignettes towards a deeper and theorised understanding of

disability and development. The only foreseeable obstacle is that a willingness to do so might be frustrated by the dearth of critical and theorised studies of disability in developing countries. Thankfully, and as indicated above, there are a number of studies which point the willing westerner in the right direction.

Disability and development in developing countries

Several within the disability/development field have campaigned for a more critical approach to disability in developing countries which would incorporate political, social, historical and economic factors. Marfo (1993) points out that the socio-cultural and economic transition evident in many African communities renders a sole focus on "traditional" attitudes irrelevant if not counter-productive. Momm & König (1989) contest that data on local and regional complexities is vital if interventions and services are to be appropriate and sustainable. They advise that baseline data be collected on:

- geographical, organisational, economic, political, social, linguistic, tribal and other community characteristics;
- socio-economic modes of organisation and production with an understanding of the impact of socio-economic change;
- relations between the community and the outside world, from a neighbouring village to national government; and
- nature and impact of outsider interventions whether through trade, aid, services, tourism.

Few have met Momm & König's expectations. Nonetheless, the message seems to be seeping through that disability is dynamic in developing countries, and that macro and micro-level changes are likely to impact on perceptions of and responses to impairment. Take Nicolaisen's (1995) anthropological study of disability among the Punan Bah of Borneo.

Although relegated to the closing paragraphs of her account, Nicolaisen does draw attention to the impact of extensive logging on the Punan Bah economy and society.

The large extended households which formerly facilitated the integration of individuals with impairments are now breaking up into smaller, more autonomous units with decreased capacity to provide care as required. The increased reliance on waged labour has undermined the role of many people with impairments in economic production. Meanwhile, socio-cultural expectations and attitudes to beliefs and rituals are changing, to be:

more in tune with the capitalist Western values that imperceptibly permeate [the] Punan Bah view of themselves and the world. This may save the life of children impaired like the "spirit" boy, but it may well make the lives of many others considerably less fulfilling and more difficult (Nicolaisen 1995, p. 54).

The point is important. Change is not only complex but may also be contradictory. Where some members of a household or community may benefit from a diversification of opportunity, others find previous social roles removed or redundant, or are set apart for special intervention where once they were integrated. Benefits may accrue such as literacy, mobility aids or the organisation of community groups, but they accrue at the risk of undermining previous forms of social accommodation (Kisanji 1995b), weakening the role of the extended family as the main source of social security (Ingstad 1995a, Marfo 1993), threatening local strategies and healing systems (Burck 1989), and creating a class of "disabled" people that did not exist prior to outsider involvement in rehabilitation, surveys or research (Ingstad 1995a, Whyte & Ingstad 1995).

A final example and a somewhat unusual study within the field of disability in developing countries, is offered by Frank Bruun (1995) on Nicaragua. Bruun investigates the political use of "old values" such as machismo, martyrdom or Christian charity, and "new foreign ideas" such as the concept of equal rights, in redefining social and self perceptions of disabled people in the wake of the Sandinistan victory of 1979. He uses the story of a disabled ex-soldier alongside media analysis to chart the redefinition process and reveal the way in which disabled people were used as political symbols to support or criticise the government: as heroes and martyrs, or as the victims of Sandinistan policy.

These studies show that the impact of development and change cannot be set aside as

peripheral to the experience of disability in developing countries. And yet most who work and write on disability in developing countries fail to explore these issues to any, let alone sufficient, degree. In fact, there appears to be a deep-seated unease with the prospect of engaging in a more critical, structural or socio-political analysis of disability in developing countries. This is perplexing, given the existence of structural and socio-political analyses of social security, health, medicine, women and people with HIV/AIDS in developing countries (Allen & Thomas 1992, Bernstein *et al* 1992, Doyal 1979, Elson 1991, Mohanty *et al* 1991, Navarro 1974, Sanders 1985). Surely it is feasible that such approaches might be entertained with respect to disability and impairment? Miles, Ingstad and Whyte suggest not.

Benedicte Ingstad and Susan Reynolds Whyte have done more than most to advance the study of disability in developing countries, to rail against the simplistic division of simple and complex societies (made by Scheer & Groce 1988), and to challenge western attempts to research non-western attitudes and transfer western models of rehabilitation to non-western settings. Yet they insist that, with reference to a social model definition of disability, there is no need to inquire into the construction of "disability" in developing countries because it does not exist or exists only as a western cultural and linguistic imposition:

disability in Europe and North America exists within - and is created by - a framework of state, legal, economic, and biomedical institutions. Concepts of personhood, identity, and value, while not reducible to institutions, are nevertheless shaped by them. Notions of citizenship, compensation, and value lost through impairment and added through rehabilitation are institutionally reinforced constituents of disability as a cultural construct. So is the idea that disability is a medical condition for which technical expertise ... is the answer. In countries of the South, where this kind of institutional infrastructure exists only to a very limited degree, disability as a concept and an identity is not an explicit cultural construct. The meaning of impairment must be understood in terms of cosmology and values and purposes of social life (Whyte & Ingstad 1995, p. 10).

Implicit in the above is the belief that disability (as distinct from impairment and as defined by a social model definition) is a singularly western creation, inseparable from western culture and structures, inextricable from western institutions and ideologies. So it makes sense to talk of *disability* in the west, but only of *impairment* in the rest of

the world.

Mike Miles has made a similar, and more vitriolic, argument on the *irrelevance* of social model definitions to the study of people with impairments in developing countries:

Mental retardation, as constructed in Pakistan, cannot have been brought into being by an industrial revolution ... nor by the demands of education conformity and achievement ...there is not at present a class of professionals profiteering from the control and supply of mental retardation services ... Nor are there any disused 'lazar houses', creating a vacuum that might be relieved by a 'grand renferement' of fools and madmen ... The Government of Pakistan has no fiscal motive to "expand the concept of idiocy" ... No doubt the Government seeks to control the population in various ways, but it has hardly 'created' mental retardation as part of its apparatus ... Society on the macro-scale seems to have done little to construct mental retardation in Pakistan (Miles 1992, pp. 248-249).

And thus Miles rejects not only western theories but the core hypothesis posited by a social model definition of disability. But is he right to do so? And are Ingstad and Whyte correct in their claim that *disability* is relevant to the west but not beyond the west?

In their arguments, Miles, Ingstad and Whyte go beyond the statement (with which I agree) that there are considerable dangers when reading across from theories evolved in the west to settings and systems beyond the west. However, they proceed to advocate a stance which is potentially as imperialistic and dangerous - a stance which rejects out of hand the possibility that the concept of *disability*, as defined by a social model, might be of relevance in researching non-western cultures, and that macro-level development might have a role to play in constructing and re-forming dominant perceptions of impairment. Thus, not only are Miles, Ingstad & Whyte in danger of justifying an approach which downplays processes of social, economic, cultural and political change; but they are also in danger of compounding western myths of remote villages, "traditional" peoples, and structure-less cultures.

Governments, politicians, television channels, newspapers, professionals, ideologies, institutions, structures, factories and capitalist modes of production do not exist in the west alone. Furthermore, many developing countries, China included, have

institutional and ideological (often religious) legacies that stretch back over centuries if not millennia. So, whilst great caution must undoubtedly be exercised to avoid the temptation to squeeze non-western realities into western models, the claim that "disability" simply cannot exist outside the west must be debunked. It may be that disability does not exist in a given context and at a given time. It may equally be that disability (as social construct and discrimination, as a product of institutions and ideologies) does exist - as I argue to be the case in China.

* * *

I have taken time to set out theories relevant to a study of disability and development. I have also taken time to discuss the relevance of social model definitions and related theories to non-western contexts. I recognise the dangers of imposing western models beyond the west, but would argue that there are also dangers in rejecting out of hand the possibility that a social model definition might deepen our understanding of disability and development in developing countries, as it has with respect to disability in the west. Above all, I argue that it is time to look beyond micro-level realities in developing countries and to view disability in the context of broader, macro-level processes of development. It is also time for western disability theorists to engage seriously with the realities of disability and development lest theories continue to evolve in way that takes little account of development on a global scale.

In the final part of this chapter, attention turns towards an area of disability theorising which has proved fruitful in research on *both* western and non-western settings; and thereby upholds the case for "reading across" between North and South, East and West. I refer here to research into the role of culture in framing, constructing and re-forming disability.

Culture, Structure and Disability

The analysis of cultural representations of disability has been a persistent theme in western disability studies. Barnes (1992), Cumberbatch & Negrine (1992), Gartner & Joe (1987), Hevey (1992) and Morris (1991) have explored disability and disabling images in film, television, the media and charity advertising. Bragg (1997) and

Davidson *et al* (1994) have gone back in time to Medieval Celtic and Old Norse literature and nineteenth century English children's books respectively. These studies reveal how disabled people are portrayed in specific roles as villains, super-heroes, victims or innocents. Disabled people are endowed with evil or virtue, with supernatural or unnatural powers, with animal-like or child-like natures, and as the objects of pity, fear, hostility or mercy. Similar findings have been produced by Miles (1992, 1995) and Haj (1970) who analyse literary and sacred texts in their studies of the place of people with impairments in non-western and historical cultures.

Cultural representations invariably fall short of explaining the existence of disability (Barnes 1996, Priestley 1998, Oliver 1990, Shakespeare 1994). They do, however, point to the incontrovertible fact that, when it comes to researching disability, culture matters.

Who is human and who is less than human; who is a valued member of the community, who is undervalued and who is not valued at all; who is disabled and who is not disabled. All of these are culturally variable and culturally defined. I believe that, as academics, we know this to be true from accounts which document cross-cultural variation in the treatment of people with impairments. As activists, we need this to be true because it allows room for social change. As human beings, we feel instinctively that it must be true because cultures *are* different in ways which are glaringly obvious even when they remain unfathomable. So how is it that a westerner can travel to a country like China, which exudes cultural diversity, and see little in the treatment of disabled people that appears to differ from the west? In contexts where there is no immediately apparent dissimilarity in the treatment of disabled people, yet where the cultural, historical and socioeconomic context could not be more singular, how can the researcher - on the basis of a belief in the cultural variability of disability - set about identifying the role of culture in producing disability differently?

To answer that question, it is necessary to step back and consider what "culture" is. Clifford Geertz defines culture as a "historically created system of meaning in terms of which we give form, order, point, and direction to our lives" (Geertz 1973, p. 52). Culture is "not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can

be intelligibly ... described" (Geertz 1973, p. 14).

It is culture - as context, system, cosmology, symbolic universe - that frames the construction and experience of social and human being. And it is culture that frames the construction and experience of disability. The challenge is how to pin down the role of "culture" in producing disability differently. Research on disability in the west and in developing countries has generated various concepts with which to pin culture down. For the purposes of this thesis (and bearing in mind that this thesis operates at the macro-level), the most helpful conceptual hooks have been "personhood" and "body".

Personhood

Personhood corresponds to social properties and characteristics on the basis of which an individual is deemed to be "not simply human but human in a way that is valued and meaningful" (Whyte & Ingstad 1995, p. 11). In any given cultural setting, there are likely to be several different degrees and stages of personhood depending on an individual's gender, age, social background and so on. Thus, the social properties and characteristics expected of a girl child may differ from those expected of a boy child, just as the social expectations of "manhood" might differ from those of "womanhood".

The precise parameters of personhood necessarily reflect dominant values and beliefs, and correspond to a culture's cosmology (symbolic universe) and, often, to the dominant mode of economic production and social organisation. Thus, to return to Nicolaisen's (1995) study of the Punan Bah in Borneo, it seems likely that changes in the economy (wrought by the influx of large-scale logging companies) impacted not only on socio-economic organisation but also (and thereby) on local concepts of personhood. An example is the commodification of labour and increased emphasis on wage-earning as an attribute of full personhood. Or, to return to Bruun's (1995) media analysis on disability in Nicaragua, the redefinition of disabled identities promoted by the pro-Sandinistan newspapers is organised around the inclusion of disabled men in dominant perceptions of manhood hitherto denied them - notably the importance of machismo as a defining social property of Nicaraguan manhood.

The argument that dominant cultural definitions of personhood frame local perceptions of and responses to impairment has been made with respect to disability in developing countries (Burck 1989, Helander 1995, Nicolaisen 1995, Talle 1995, Whyte & Ingstad 1995) and in the west (Hunt 1966, Garland Thomson 1997a, Shakespeare 1994 *inter alia*). It has also been argued that an understanding of personhood in a given time and place is inextricable from the study of dominant concepts of the body.

Body

We need to go beyond the classical approach to this field, in which personhood is defined and described in terms of social properties, and analyze the cultural perception of the biological constitution of the human being itself, in order fully to grasp the meaning of disability in a given culture and its social significance (Nicolaisen 1995, p. 39).

In many historical and contemporary non-western cultures, the body holds a cosmological significance that is markedly different to contemporary western concepts of the body (see Burck 1989 and Nicolaisen 1995 on non-western concepts; see Barnes 1996, Garland Thomson 1996, 1997a, Davis 1997b, Murphy 1987, Shakespeare 1994 and S.D. Stone 1995 on disability and western concepts of the body). This is not, of course, to say that non-western conceptualisations of the body are any less oppressive for being non-western. It is, however, to say that the way in which the "body" is perceived, talked about and used as a basis for judgements of personhood and humanity must form a central component of any attempt to fathom disability in both western and non-western cultures.

Understanding the "body" is an important part of understanding perceptions of and responses to impairment and illness. In this regard, the following questions have occupied those working on disability in non-western cultures: How is a particular impairment or illness (the boundaries are often blurred) explained? What causes are ascribed? What actions, if any, are required by the individual, by family members or by the wider community? What is the cultural or cosmological significance of bodily difference? These are important questions - above all where the researcher's concern lies with perceptions and strategies at the micro-levels of households and communities. But, and it is an important but, they are not the only questions which can and should be

asked.

The "body" does not exist at the micro-level only. It is "a cultural text which is interpreted, inscribed with meaning, indeed *made*" (Garland Thompson 1997b, p. 280). And it can be interpreted, inscribed and made at the macro-level of institutions and ideologies as well as the micro-level of grassroots perceptions and socio-familial responses. Enter structural and ideological explanations of cultural representation and the body.

The body has become a hot topic among social scientists in the west (Featherstone *et al* 1991, Mellor & Shilling 1997, Sontag 1977, Turner 1996). The same is no less true of disability studies.

Harlan Hahn (1987) looks to the messages conveyed in mass advertising (linked to the emergence of a consumer economy) which, he believes, oppress disadvantaged groups by promoting an often unattainable way of life and idealized standards of physical appearance. These messages help to regulate the industrial reserve army (by determining a hierarchy of entitlement to work) and they uphold dominant ideologies of personhood and body which, in American society, means wage-earning, male, white, fit and non-impaired (see also Murphy 1987 and Hevey 1992, 1993). Following a different route but reaching a comparable conclusion, Shakespeare (1994) draws on models of Otherness, liminality and anomaly, with reference to the work of Simone de Beauvoir, Victor Turner and Mary Douglas, and argues that disabled people pose a threat to a dominant "ethic of invincibility or perfectibility" which is linked to western concepts of masculinity, and which Shakespeare contends are a project of the Enlightenment. Colin Barnes takes us even further back in time. In his paper on the origins of oppression of disabled people in western society, Colin Barnes argues that the origin of a "myth of bodily perfection" in ancient Greece (with reference to Olympic fitness, the infanticide of disabled newborns, the banishment of Hephaestes - a physically impaired God, and the sorry tale of Oedipus), can be explained by the hierarchical, patriarchal and slave-based socio-economic structures of an aggressively expansionist state which was well-served by an ideology of physical fitness and strength (Barnes 1996). His argument, and the link between ancient myths of perfection and contemporary notions of "normal" bodies and minds, is supported by

Robert Garland's (1995) study of disability in ancient Greek and Roman civilization:

Whatever does not conform to the norms of the dominant group tends to be treated either with suspicion, terror and contempt, or alternatively with an unhealthy blend of amusement, fascination and embarrassment ... Any departure from [the] ideal type, however trivial, was therefore interpreted as a mark of the despised barbarian, whose attributed physiological defects were regarded as an expression of the latter's cultural limitations. In short, ethnic deformity exemplified the critical difference between the Graeco-Roman Self and the Other (Garland 1995, p. 178).

The existence, perpetration and construction of dominant norms and notions of the Other have been discussed in detail with regard to western society and disability by Rosemary Garland Thomson (1996, 1997a, 1997b) and Lennard Davis (1995, 1997a, 1997b) among many others. Before concluding this chapter, it is worth recapitulating the basic hypotheses that Garland Thomson and Davis have put forward.

Garland Thomson has undertaken a careful and instructive study of discourses of the body in American culture, society and literature. Her interest lies in the processes by which meanings are attached to bodies and by which "all forms of corporeal diversity [including race, gender and impairment] acquire the cultural meanings undergirding a hierarchy of bodily traits that determines the distribution of privilege, status and power" (1997b, p. 6). Further:

the meanings attributed to extraordinary bodies reside not in inherent physical flaws, but in social relationships in which one group is legitimated by possessing valued physical characteristics and maintains its ascendancy and its self-identity by systematically imposing the role of cultural or corporeal inferiority on others (Garland Thomson 1997b, p. 7).

Garland Thomson's argument is not especially novel but it is helpful in that it makes a clear case for a theoretical focus on cultural configurations and ideological discourses of the body, and also for exploring overlapping discourses of disabled, racialised and gendered bodies.

Likewise, Lennard Davis is far from the only voice in theorising western concepts and constructs of "normalcy". The construction of dominant norms has been on the agenda in disability studies since the 1960s (Hunt 1966). What Davis does offer, however (and I am not sure that he himself is fully aware of this), is an opening for an approach to

the body, normalcy, disability and development that has not been seriously explored in either western disability studies or in the literature on disability in developing countries. It is a line of theorising which I have endeavoured to pursue in this thesis. Before giving further indication of what that approach might be, it is worth summarising Davis's argument.

[T]he very term that permeates our contemporary life - the normal - is a configuration that arises in a particular historical moment. It is part of a notion of progress, of industrialization, and of [the] ideological construction of the power of the bourgeoisie. The implications of the hegemony of normalcy are profound (Davis 1997b, p. 26).

Davis argues that a concept of normalcy emerged in Europe during the nineteenth century, as a consequence of industrialization, social change and, crucially for Davis, the emergence of statistics as a mathematical science. Davis links the nineteenth century concept of normalcy to Alphonse Quetelet (a French statistician) and his notion of *l'homme moyen physique* and *l'homme moyen morale*. This notion of a "norm", "average" or "standard" was subsequently taken up by a wide range of social reformers and theorists, from Karl Marx to Francis Galton (the latter used statistical measures of normalcy to advocate eugenic ideas).

Davis's findings strengthen the argument (accepted by many in the field) that "[t]o understand the disabled body, one must return to the concept of the norm", and that "the idea of a norm is less a condition of human nature than it is a feature of a certain kind of society" (Davis 1997b, p. 9).

I disagree with Davis's disregard of Graeco-Roman notions of bodily perfection and would contend that these too contained normative imperatives (see Garland 1995, Barnes 1996, Garland Thomson 1997b). I therefore believe that what took place in the nineteenth century was more a *re-forming* of normalcy which exhibited continuities with the past yet simultaneously marked a new direction and heightened significance of normalcy and the normative body. The concept of *re-forming* norms and bodily configurations is something that will feature strongly in this thesis. So too will a dimension of Davis's work with which Davis flirts but does not engage seriously, namely: that reconfigurations of the body and thereby of disability also were "part of a notion of progress, of industrialization, and [of] the ideological construction of the

power of the bourgeoisie" (Davis 1997b, p. 26). In other words, reconfigurations of the body and disability were part of a discourse of "development".

"Development" is a highly problematic and value-laden term, as are commonly used synonyms such as "progress", "westernization" and "modernization" (see also Stone 1998b). All I wish to add to that discussion at this stage in the thesis is that "development" does not only describe socio-economic changes; development is also an ideological and socio-political discourse. Similarly, disability is not simply a product of development because it results from particular forms of socio-economic change. Disability is also a product of development because it results from a particular socio-political construction of development and the place of disability and the body within development. Enough said ... for the time being.

Conclusion

I have made no attempt to disguise the fact that my thinking has been informed by western writing on the social creation and construction of disability in the west. This is inevitable, partly because a doctoral thesis requires research to be located within recognised fields; partly because relatively little (and less which is critical and theoretically developed) has been written on disability in China; and partly because *this particular thesis* would not exist were it not for the theoretical developments within the field of disability studies and the social model definition of disability. Nor have I made any attempt to dodge the difficult issue of transferring theories, concepts and definitions across cultures. If I have not dealt with the issue in sufficient depth or with sufficient conviction, then it is because there are no easy solutions. Whether we like it or not:

[I]t must be recognised that what we choose to observe, what we consider to be data, what we write about and how will always be affected by our personal and institutional values and the underlying assumptions absorbed through our training (Wilson 1992, p. 181).

Perhaps the most that can realistically be expected is a conscious determination to revisit theories, concepts and definitions, and to be transparent about decisions made.

That same imperative opens the next chapter on researching disability and development in China.

Chapter Two

Disability and Development Research in China

In this chapter, the principal methods and data sources used in the thesis are discussed with reference to fieldwork, the use of documentary sources collected in the field (including government policy and propaganda) and historical research. In the process, the ideals, realities and rewards of doing disability research on and in China are presented to make transparent the research process and the strengths and weaknesses of the data generated.

Reflection on research methodologies has proved a constant and major preoccupation of my postgraduate life. Personal reflections in the pre-fieldwork months have been given public airing in a joint paper written in anticipation of doing disability research, tellingly titled "Parasites, pawns and partners: disability research and the role of non-disabled researchers" (Stone & Priestley 1996). Post-fieldwork realities are the substance of a subsequent paper on the experience of doing disability research in China - with the even more telling title, "From the Research Notes of a Foreign Devil: disability research in China" (Stone 1997a). The two papers attest to current interest in disability research methodology and to my own predisposition for research transparency and researcher accountability. They also speak volumes to the methodological difficulties encountered in preparing for and undertaking this research, and a nagging unease about my own ability to fulfil the high ideals of participatory or emancipatory research as a lowly postgraduate trying to research in what is arguably one of the most demanding countries to work and research in.

My aim is to be transparent about the sources, methods and methodologies that I have used in generating data for this thesis. I state from the outset that the decision to work in China, to encompass historical as well as contemporary perspectives, and to explore macro-level and micro-level aspects of disability has generated a good stock of

methodological challenges. Nonetheless, I am confident that the claims and findings presented in this thesis are based on firm foundations and strong evidence, and that the data have been used in ways commensurate with rigorous and ethical research practice.

This chapter sets out the methods and sources which are directly relevant to the data on which the thesis is based. At this point, it is worth reiterating that this thesis concentrates on *macro-level*, historical and contemporary constructions of disability and development in China; and therefore a sizeable portion of data generated through field interviews and observations has not been included. As a result, this chapter (unlike the published papers mentioned above) does not concentrate on fieldwork, but explores dimensions of fieldwork alongside discussion of other methods and sources used, including official and semi-official documents, historical sources, language and media analysis. Fieldwork remains on the list since grassroots realities have, occasionally, been woven into the thesis in order to remind that this is only part of the bigger story, and that the divide between micro-level and macro-level realms is, in many ways, an arbitrary and academic construct. Even so, the discussion presented in this chapter on the principles and practice of disability-related fieldwork in China is only a fraction of the discussion offered in earlier papers (Stone & Priestley 1996, Stone 1997a), and an even tinier fraction of what could have been written. Unfortunately (or fortunately perhaps) constraints of time and space do not allow for methodological indulgence.

Principles of fieldwork are dealt with first, since these apply beyond fieldwork. Documentary research, language-based and historical research are then discussed in turn.

First Principles

Two mutually compatible sets of methodological principles have informed my approach to doing disability research in China. The first hails from development studies and is often abbreviated as PRA: Participatory Rural Appraisal. The second hails from disability studies and is a research paradigm commensurate with a social model definition of disability: emancipatory research. The principles for both are

summarised below.

PRA and its variants have evolved on the back of criticisms levied at the so-called development professionals, researchers included, whose actions and inactions maintain rather than challenge rural poverty and outsider ignorance. The principles of PRA are laid out by Robert Chambers in his uncompromising and inspiring text, *Rural Development: Putting the Last First* (Chambers 1983), in which Chambers condemns those who engage in "rural development tourism" for repeatedly failing poorer rural people in developing countries.

The rural development tourists are outsiders, western or western-trained, city dwellers and specialists, who enter the field with the intent of gathering as much data as possible under severe time constraints, in accordance with a preset agenda and often armed with a highly structured questionnaire which offers little space for local people to define the issues and communicate their realities. The result is an experience which does little to deepen the outsider's understanding (although it may deepen prejudices) and even less to improve the lives of local people, particularly the most marginalized sectors of the community. If research is to be of benefit, argues Chambers, then several things must happen. First, outsiders must "step down off their pedestals, and sit down, listen and learn" (Chambers 1983, p. 101). Secondly, outsiders must ask themselves: "how will rural people benefit from my research?" Thirdly, outsiders must acknowledge and, where possible, rectify biases which impede genuine learning, namely:

- spatial bias (selection of urban and peri-urban, not remote and rural, areas);
- project bias (selection of sites which have established, even model, projects);
- person bias (unrepresentative sampling: local élite; service users; active, working and comparatively wealthy individuals; mostly men);
- dry season bias (avoidance of rainy seasons distorts the picture of seasonal rural poverty);
- diplomatic bias (failure to meet the poorest people, often out of politeness to hosts);
- professional bias (limitations imposed by reluctance to cross disciplinary

boundaries).

These biases are compounded by local power relations, language problems, preconceptions of outsiders and insiders, constraints of time and finance as well as inappropriate research questions and methods, especially "survey slavery".

Fourthly, the research process itself must play a role in community development, facilitating community analysis and the self-empowerment of those on society's periphery. In this way, the practice of participatory research becomes an overtly political activity by which existing power relations are questioned, and in which full participation is an end as well as a means.

PRA has been taken up by many working on disability-related projects in developing countries, although to judge from recent papers on the state of disability research, much more could be done. In programme evaluation (the dominant form of disability/development research), in-depth and qualitative studies are relatively few, whilst statistical data on quantifiable project outcomes and household surveys on the incidence of impairment abound. Scant attention is paid to the socio-cultural and economic realities of having an impairment, or the process and impact of a CBR programme on local attitudes. Brar (1992), Dalal (1993), Krefting (1992a, 1992b), Murthy (1991), Myezwa (1995), Pandey (1993), Prabhu (1993), Miles & Saunders (1990), Menon *et al* (1993), Thorburn (1993) and Tjandrakusuma (1995, *et al* 1995) express dismay at the current state of CBR evaluation and related research. The recurrent themes in their papers pertain to the irrelevance of research to local disabled people, development workers and the community; the dubious ethics behind conducting research which will raise local expectations; the lack of detailed information on disability (perceptions, attitudes, responses); the dangers of transferring western biomedical measures of impairment; and the inadequacy of existing indicators of programme process and impact. Many of these criticisms read across to research in western disability studies.

Debates on good and bad research practice in western disability studies echo the critiques and challenges laid down by Robert Chambers. In Britain, debates have been especially keen since they have been dominated by activists in disabled people's movements.

As disabled people have increasingly analysed their segregation, inequality and poverty in terms of discrimination and oppression, research has been seen as part of the problem rather than as part of the solution...Disabled people have come to see research as a violation of their experience, as irrelevant to their needs and as failing to improve their material circumstances and quality of life (Oliver 1992, p. 105).

Consequently, researchers who ignore the social model, whose research questions focus on individual pathology not disabling barriers, and who fail to do research which challenges injustice and changes lives have been labelled "parasite people" (Hunt 1981). Such research has at best marginalized and at worst exacerbated the oppression of disabled people, and has historically been used to justify segregationist policies, eugenics and euthanasia (Rioux & Bach 1994). From this perspective, the development of a research paradigm commensurate with disabled people's movements is long overdue (see contributions to Barnes & Mercer 1997; also Abberley 1992, Morris 1992, Stuart 1992, Ward & Flynn 1994, Zarb 1992 *inter alia*).

The emancipatory research paradigm was first articulated in the 1992 special edition of *Disability, Handicap and Society* following a conference which brought together disabled people and their allies, some with experience as researchers, others with experience as research subjects. The key principles of the paradigm might be summarised as follows (based on Stone and Priestley 1996):

- the adoption of a social model of disablement as the epistemological basis for research;
- the surrender of claims to objectivity through political commitment to the struggles of disabled people for self-emancipation;
- the willingness only to undertake research where it will be of practical benefit to the self-empowerment of disabled people and/or the removal of disabling barriers;
- the devolution of control over research production to ensure full accountability to disabled people and their organisations;
- giving voice to the personal, whilst also highlighting commonalities of experience; and
- the willingness to adopt a plurality of methods for data collection and analysis.

The implications of these principles are far-reaching. The emancipatory paradigm pushes the concept of participation to its farthest reaches in its call for a reversal of the social relations of research production, whereby the researcher places her or his skills "at the disposal of disabled people" (Barnes 1992b, p. 122), "for them to use in whatever ways they choose" (Oliver 1992, p. 111). These demands, and other research constraints which currently operate in Britain, have led some to question the practicability of emancipatory research (Barnes 1996, Bury 1996, Oliver 1997, Shakespeare 1996, Zarb 1992). Nevertheless, emancipatory research appealed to me. Until fieldwork loomed large.

Doubts regarding the practicability and even the desirability of the paradigm crept in and were first expressed in "Parasites, pawns and partners" (Stone & Priestley 1996). At the fore were worries relating to the effect on researcher integrity of surrendering control over research production, and concerns as to how to manage conflicting analyses where the social model was not shared by research participants. We raised more questions than we answered before concluding that our priorities must be:

the adoption of a social model of disablement ... political commitment to the development of the disabled people's movement ... use of non-exploitative research methods and a commitment to research which is widely disseminated for use against oppression (Stone & Priestley 1996, p. 715).

This was sufficient to get me from the library to the field.

The Field

After numerous and radical amendments to a research plan, I ended up spending nine months in China over a fifteen month period. Six months were used for field research and three months were spent working as an adviser, networker and negotiator for Save the Children Fund (UK)'s China Programme. In the course of nine months, the nature of my thesis and the research questions I was asking took on a very different form to those which had been written in my research proposal. In part, this was due to practical difficulties and the knock-on effect of *The Dying Rooms* - a British documentary on Chinese orphanages which placed officials on edge. In part, it was the result of a

changing awareness of the kind of research that would most benefit individuals engaged in disability-related work in China and elsewhere.

My time in the field was divided between Beijing, Heping County in the Tianjin municipality and Shanlin County in Anhui Province. I also attended a working party on social work held in Hefei and hosted by SCF and Anhui Provincial Civil Affairs and a conference held in Wuhan, hosted by the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation, to evaluate a ten year training programme of Chinese rehabilitation workers. The nature of field research differed greatly between Beijing, Heping and Shanlin.

In Beijing, I operated through informal contacts and friends of friends. I was a freelance researcher with no ties to any institutions, Chinese or western. I was exceptionally lucky in the acquaintances I made, and was able to conduct focus groups and informal interviews with a wide range of disabled people - some of whom were national role models, while others were illegal city residents or low-paid factory workers. In the early stages of fieldwork, I sought permission to tape interviews but, once my Chinese improved, I opted to take occasional notes during an interview and write up full notes immediately afterwards.

In Heping County, I was an external researcher associated with Unicef-China. My remit was to evaluate disability services in the county, including local government services. Heping County is in many respects a model county and exemplifies the project bias described by Robert Chambers. I spent only one week in Heping and yet it was one of the most fruitful weeks of fieldwork. My hosts were eager to facilitate in any way they could, and even granted access to county statistics on poverty households.

In Shanlin County, official sensitivities ran higher and constraints on data generation were more severe when my status shifted from "programme worker" to "social researcher". That said, I was in a stronger position to incorporate principles of participatory and action research than had been possible in Heping County. Research was very much a local team affair - with all the rewards and frustrations that brings (see Stone 1997a). Research was conducted in two sites (a county town and neighbouring village) under severe time constraints, but we were able to cover considerable ground.

Doing Disability Field Research in China

Already, alarm bells will be ringing with those who have not worked in China, and feelings of having-been-there-too will have been aroused in those who have. Experienced China researchers who make their methodologies explicit confirm the difficulties of conducting social science research in China (Croll 1994, Dwyer 1994b, Gold 1989, Manion 1994, Wolf 1985). Yet the fruits of their fieldwork demonstrate that despite the constraints and the "distinctly non-standard conditions" (Manion 1994) much can be learnt if common sense, a healthy skepticism and ingenuity feature in the researcher's bag of skills.

The conditions under which social science research is conducted in China have eased over the past two decades both for mainland Chinese social scientists and for outsiders (Dwyer 1994b, Gold 1989). For the mainland Chinese social scientist, the turbulent history of "bourgeois" social sciences under Mao Zedong seems to have come to an end, as the recent proliferation of social surveys and censuses suggests (Rosen 1989). For the outsider itching to understand China, it is now easier to get visas, to undertake independent travel, to meet people and spend time in their homes, to engage in casual but informative conversation on streets as well as in taxicabs. China's reforms have been a boon for all social scientists (Gold 1989) ... comparatively speaking, of course.

Six months in the field furnished me with an unexpectedly rich and varied store of data (unexpected since pre-fieldwork exposure to the research notes of more experienced China analysts had made me doubt the likelihood of generating any useful data at all). The data comprised field data and documentary data. Field data included semi-structured interviews and focus groups with disabled people and families; semi-structured interviews with non-disabled people involved in disability work; and field notes made from casual conversations and observation. Documentary data included government policy, legislation, statistics; newspaper and magazine articles; official and semi-official periodicals; books and articles written by and/or for disabled people; and promotional pamphlets. The use of documentary sources is discussed shortly.

Field data from China are notoriously problematic, even when the researcher has done her utmost in trying to limit methodological weaknesses (Croll 1994, Manion 1994, Rosen 1989, Wolf 1985). My own damage limitation strategies took the form of

method and data triangulation: I used a variety of different sources, and same-respondent and cross-respondent validation (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983). Key informants and friends proved invaluable. These tactics enhance the reliability of judgments made in this thesis, but problems and biases remain.

Of the six biases described by Robert Chambers, two are particularly evident in my own research and in much research that has been done in China: project bias and person bias. To these, one should also add "political bias" to describe the pervasive influence of local and national politics and propaganda in shaping informant responses.

Project bias denotes the limitations of research which is based on a model project or showpiece. It is a common bias in research conducted anywhere in developing countries (Chambers 1983, Devereux & Hoddinott 1992a) and many would argue that it is almost unavoidable in China (Wolf 1985, Croll 1994). Outsiders, with few exceptions, have had little option but to research model cases, some of which may even claim international renown (Wolf 1985). In my case, both Heping and Shanlin counties are immediately set apart from much of rural China since they have received funding and expertise from international organisations. Funding in Shanlin County had been limited to improving child care and facilities in the local orphanage; the focus of my own inquiries had not yet been subject to foreign intervention. Heping County is a more classic example of the model project due to its large number of welfare factories and disabled people (the county was hit by the Tangshan earthquake in 1976); yet it is definitely not devoid of information and insight.

The main problem with doing research in a model area is the limited scope for generalization. Yet, as other China specialists have pointed out, the extent of atypicality depends on the subject of inquiry (Wolf 1985), while pursuit of generalizability is a misplaced ambition given the extent of social, economic, geographical, cultural and linguistic diversity exhibited across China (Croll 1994). In addition, my own experience suggests that cadres in model areas may be more open (and open to criticism) than their counterparts in areas with a less impressive record. Thus, the visit to a model case need not mean a wasted visit although great care has to be taken in drawing wider lessons.

Biases in site selection are compounded by biases in sampling. In China, the random or

probability sample is out of the question for most researchers. In fact, the act of sampling and selection is seldom considered the role of the researcher at all, beyond specifying selection criteria (generation cohort, gender, socio-economic status and so on). Even then the researcher has to sit tight in the hope that local hosts will select accordingly (Wolf 1985). Respondent selection is very much a political manoeuvre - by which I do not mean (as would have been the case previously) the process of screening respondents on the basis of their conformity to the Chinese Communist Party line. In the 1990s, the politics of respondent selection reflect the everyday politics of social relations in China.

The concept of *guanxi* or "personal connections" is all-important and pervades every sector and strata of Chinese society. More often than not, sampling is conducted through those *guanxi*. In Margery Wolf's field study on Chinese women in the mid-1980s, the majority of women interviewed either sat on or were related to those who sat on the local Residents' Committee (Wolf 1985). In my own research in Beijing, sampling was solely on the basis of *guanxi* - those of my friends and key informants and the network of personal connections which I spun for myself over the nine months. This corresponds to "snowball sampling" whereby one contact leads to another leads to another and so on, but the term "*guanxi* sampling" seems far more appropriate in the case of China, since it incorporates the realities of gaining access and of post-interview expectations.

In Shanlin and Heping counties, my role was restricted to specifying criteria and numbers. In Shanlin, person bias was most evident in the selection of respondents to be interviewed by myself as opposed to by the other two research teams - to whom individuals with more severe impairments and difficult family circumstances were assigned. In Heping, my hosts endeavoured (as negotiated prior to my arrival) to present a realistic picture and selected a range of welfare factories from nationally commended to insignificant. Home visits brought me to the local *nouveau riche* as well as indebted households, although I was still kept away from the most marginalized households (evident from county statistics on poor households).

Finally, political bias. Chinese political culture conspires against truthfulness among respondents and researchers (Rosen 1989). Anonymity is an empty word if one recalls

the political history of post-Liberation China. Truth (for all it ever means) may be even more elusive given extensive government propaganda. Even in the 1980s and 1990s, there remain correct answers and correct conclusions, especially where the subject of inquiry has been the subject of political or media attention. Emily Honig believes that the lack of official recognition of Subei people as a marginalised social group in Shanghai greatly facilitated the process of studying attitudes and prejudice towards them (Honig 1989). In this way, Honig avoided the common difficulty in China of conducting interviews which provide little information that goes deeper than standard propaganda.

The repetition of slogans and buzzwords reflects a tendency shared by many (not just officials) to respond with what *ought to be* rather than what *actually is* (Croll 1994). It may also be the case that respondents repeat propaganda because they are unable, not unwilling, to say anything else, under the extraordinary circumstances of being interviewed by a foreigner (Wolf 1985). In addition, a more "truthful" response might make local officials or family members lose face (the significance of which is easily underestimated by outsiders to Chinese society), while the individual's need to maintain *guanxi* are prioritised over helping an outsider. Some of these were evident in my own research. Disability slogans cropped up regularly, sometimes scattered between more critical, personal opinions and sometimes not. There were occasions when respondents corrected their own use of "incorrect" (derogatory) terminology. And I quickly learned that work-based focus groups were not the place to ask disabled workers for comments on work conditions. The commonplace nature of these problems is captured in a cartoon by a well-known Chinese satirist. The cartoon depicts a government inspection in the factory canteen. The obviously incognito inspector asks a young worker, "What do you think of the lunches here?". The worker replies, "The lunch today or the lunch the rest of the time?" (Ding Cong 1993).

Project, person and political bias are inevitable in China to a greater or lesser degree, or so the research notes of other China analysts suggest. But there are additional features of my own research which add to the complexity of fieldwork and relate to the principles summarised at the outset of this chapter. These have been discussed in detail in Stone (1997) and only the main points (on the social relations of research

production) are set out below.

Social Relations and Dangerous Liaisons

The result of actively seeking opportunities to research *and* to make my research worthwhile for others, led to an association with Save the Children Fund (UK) in Shanlin County and Unicef-China in Heping County. In the process of making those connections, I sacrificed the relative freedom afforded a PhD. candidate and made impossible the devolution of control to research subjects and the exercise of full control myself. Disabled people, parents of disabled children, grassroots project workers, local government cadres and two international organisations were added to the standard triangle of fundholders, academic peers and researcher in the task of research production. I also elected to formalise local-level partnerships with government officials in using a team approach to conduct research. Thereby, I entered a situation in which I did not know whether the inevitable compromises would be validated. I took the risk and placed others at risk in the process.

Having multiple partnerships is a messy business but it is a recurrent theme in social science research in developing countries (Chambers 1983, Lockwood 1992, Devereux & Hoddinott 1992a, 1992b, Harriss 1992, Wilson 1992). This is heightened in China where local officials and entourages are concerned (Wolf 1985, Gold 1989). However, my decisions to multiply the number of social relations are a departure from the research practices of several well-known China specialists who strive for independence. Gold's deployment of "guerilla interviewing" tactics are a case in point (Gold 1989), while Croll's preferred way of working is a prepared and highly structured questionnaire targeted at households, conducted by herself in the presence of as few others as possible (Croll 1994). For myself, delegating research duties in Heping and Shanlin was the only option if the research process was to be more participatory and an act in local capacity-building.

The main liaisons were with international organisations, local cadres, members of the research team in Heping and Shanlin, disabled adults and parents of disabled children. Each entailed certain concessions. The key concessions have been set out in my paper

on "Research Notes from a Foreign Devil" (Stone 1997a); they include compromises on time-scales, site and sample selection, interview location, methods of data generation and recording, and the presence of a (sometimes sizeable) entourage when interviewing factory workers and families. In spite of these difficulties, I would not change my decision to make multiple partnerships. I have good reasons. The reasons (listed in full in Stone 1997a) are:

- local officials were the principal gatekeepers and I could not have involved disabled people and families without them;
- there would have been no possibility of research leading to *action* without linking with officials and international organisations in China;
- conducting collaborative research was an excellent way to learn about local government responses to disability - on which there is a dearth of information thereby encouraging the dangerous view that nothing goes on;
- involving disabled individuals and their families at all was a significant departure from standard approaches to planning and evaluation in China;
- working with international organisations made it possible to channel information directly to them on local concepts, socio-familial responses and existing services; and
- capacity-building and community-development were facilitated by a team approach.

Research is not like the miracle of feeding five thousand with three loaves and two fishes. There is only a fixed amount of control to go round and, inevitably, the more powerful one partner, the less scope there is for meaningful participation by less powerful partners, as a result of which ideologically significant partnerships may be invisible outside of the interview bubble, research report or researcher's head. This makes research more demanding and less emancipatory, but not less valid. As the reasons laid out above illustrate, the undeniable difficulties which arise from multiple partnerships do not confirm the universal necessity and desirability of seeking a single research relationship with disabled research subjects to whom all control is devolved. I do not doubt that I made dangerous liaisons but in the final analysis I believe that the risks proved worth taking.

To conclude this section, the use of multiple partnerships, good fortune in finding friends who proved to be valuable key informants, along with my attitude, ancestry and ability to read and speak Chinese (see Stone 1997) helped to bridge some of the gaps between pre-fieldwork ideals and the realities of field research in China.

Dealing with Documents

Document research has formed a larger part of this thesis than any, myself included, might have anticipated four years ago. In fact, documentary research forms the bulk of evidence provided and analysed in Chapters Six to Nine (on disability in post-Mao China). Hence, this section deals with some of the methodological issues which arise when using official and semi-official written sources, especially when those sources have been produced in a country which is definitely not known for transparent government, reliable statistics or critical press.

The main areas of official (and semi-official) data used in this thesis are: government policies and provision-related plans, legislation, state statistics and media reports. Needless to say, all of these present weighty methodological challenges. Chinese government policies are notorious for setting out what *should be* in an ideal China rather than what is actually intended, let alone what actually *is*. Likewise (and the point is discussed in Chapter Nine), Chinese legislation exists on paper but there are substantial question-marks over how far it is enforced - even enforceable - and therefore how far it counts as legitimate evidence. The spurious quality of state statistics is a regular topic of discussion among China analysts (Manion 1994, Dwyer 1994b). For the most part, anxieties are pragmatically soothed by making full use of statistics with a compulsory caveat that, "state statistics are not known for reliability, but they still afford insights ... and are certainly more reliable now than was the case in the Cultural Revolution". A similar caveat is deployed when media reports are used. After all, how much can be learnt from the propaganda of a country recently judged to have one of the worst records of freedom of press in the world? According to a report carried in *The Economist* (10 May 1997), China is over 80% "not free" in its print and broadcast media. This places media reports firmly within the realm of official and semi-official data, alongside policies, plans, legislation and statistics; but it must be

noted that press reports often form a major component of research on post-Mao China (see contributions to Dwyer 1994, for example).

Yet these methodological weaknesses *need not* diminish the value of Chinese official documentary data as a source of insight into macro-level constructions of disability. Quite the opposite, in fact. Take Chinese propaganda as an example.

The analysis presented in Chapters Six to Nine, and especially in Chapter Eight, is based on a variety of propaganda, including over 120 cuttings from the *China Daily* (collected during fieldwork or from agency files, and covering the period from 1988 to 1996); over 50 cuttings from Chinese language newspapers collected during fieldwork; several disability-related reports and human interest stories taken from semi-official and popular magazines; and the results of a Sinofile (cuttings service) search which produced 170 references to news stories on disability in the Chinese language press between January 1993 and October 1996, excluding references to areas on which I already had large amounts of data, such as disability legislation (see Appendix). What can this data offer, apart from further justification that there is a very strong case for a macro-level analysis of disability in China?

First, news reports can provide secondary and supporting evidence in relation to policies and provision (including the lack of and plans for provision). Secondly, insights into social attitudes to disabled people can be gained through state-sanctioned moral messages. Moralising is a long-standing facet of Chinese literature and broadcasting. It comes into its own as a source of information where certain attitudes and behaviour are decried (in which case, such attitudes are probably commonplace) or applauded (in which case they are probably less than prevalent). This form of "reading" was suggested to me by Chinese friends and key informants. Finally, and crucially, propaganda - as with policies, plans and laws - are invaluable *objects* of inquiry and, in that capacity, have much to offer the curious and critical social researcher. Indeed, it was a recognition of quite how much such data can offer which prompted me to write a thesis about discourse.

In the previous chapter, the word "discourse" appeared towards the end of the chapter, in relation to concepts of the "body" and the notion of a "discourse of development". I wish to make it explicit at this point that I use the term narrowly, in an old-fashioned

rather than a new-fangled post-Modernist sense. For my purposes, "discourse" is a convenient shorthand for dealing with the results of a critical inquiry into government policies, laws and propaganda. My interest lies less in the "facts" of what is being provided (how much and for whom), than the underpinning ideologies and the overarching rhetoric of policy and propaganda. I use "discourse" to refer to the combination of macro-level ideologies and rhetoric. To use "ideologies" where I use discourse would be to impose too rigid and systematic a meaning on the messages conveyed by the state (I use "ideologies" to refer to widely-recognised ideologies, such as Confucianist ideologies). To use "rhetoric" where I use discourse would be equally problematic, since "rhetoric" implies disregard for the messages conveyed as irrelevant. But the evidence suggests otherwise. Therefore, rather than dismiss policies, laws and propaganda as irrelevant, I have elected to interrogate them as objects of investigation and as components of macro-level discourse (as well as being useful sources on state-social institutions and provision).

So much for Chapters Six to Nine. In the remainder of this chapter, I set out the main sources on which Chapters Three to Five are based.

Handling History

The difficulties encountered in the systematic and accurate documentation of disability in historical societies are formidable. Data sources are more limited in availability, authorship and thereby authority. Yet, as set out in the Introduction to this thesis and in Abberley (1987, 1996), Barton (1996) and Miles (1995) among others, the value of historical research cannot be underestimated, even where only first steps and sweeping statements are possible.

Chapters Three to Five are based on a wide range of sources - all of which have their share of pitfalls. So, while folklore and proverbs are rich in colour, it is difficult to ascertain how accurately they reflect historical realities. Eye-witness accounts and travellers tales must also be handled carefully since, as with most historiographies and biographies, they are written with a particular audience and a particular purpose in mind (all the more where authors are missionaries, eager to inform their supporters of

good works). Moreover, these sources, along with legal codes, administrative regulations, philosophical, religious and medical texts, may bear scant correspondence to the lived realities of ordinary individuals. Historical sources largely reflect the perspectives of social and ruling strata; hence, to paraphrase Martha Edwards, we learn about disability history through the filter of a literary élite (Edwards 1997). Added to this are problems encountered when approaching historical sources with pre-set terms of reference (corresponding to the contemporary framing of disability in China); and when working with secondary sources and translations of primary texts (although I have cross-checked terms and references in the original Chinese where possible). And then there is the issue of distance:

experience-distant analyses delegitimize and dehumanize their subjects. If there is a danger that disabled people are presented as Others, not like us, then there is a double danger in the study of people with impairments in other cultures. They are both foreign and disabled, and it is a difficult job to render them as subjects we can understand and identify with (Kleinman & Kleinman 1991 quoted in Whyte 1995b, p. 277).

How much more so when the distances of culture, language and experience are compounded by distances of time? A partial remedy here is to adopt Lois Bragg's objective:

it is our task, as unintended readers of archaic texts, to suspend our own cultural notions and to determine, in so far as possible, the view of the culture at hand (Bragg 1997, p. 166).

Suspending one's own cultural notions is no easy task; but endeavouring to do so is a precondition of historical and cross-cultural research.

In my research, I have followed: Bragg (1997), Davidson, Woodill and Bredberg (1994), Garland (1995), Miles (1992) and Haj (1970) in using literature and mythologies to explore historical dimensions of disability; Miles (1995), Barnes (1996), S. Stone (1995) and Haj (1970) in using sacred and religious texts; Unschuld (1995), Furth (1987) and Hershatter (1996) in exploring illness and the body in historical perspective; Garland (1995), Pullan (1994), Stiker (1962), Stone (1984) and Winzer (1997) in the use of historical legal codes and administrative statutes; Kisanji (1995b) with reference to proverbs and metaphors; and Kalyanpur (1996), Devlieger

(1995a) and Miles (n.d.) in researching missionary involvement in disability. I have also taken the Chinese language as an object of inquiry - and that requires more specific explanation as background for findings presented in Chapter Three.

Learning from Language

Language is important. It has been a prominent site of struggle for politicised disabled people and their allies in the west. Words like "cripple", "dwarf" or "spastic" have been rejected and "disability" has been reclaimed and redefined. The process of creating new words or imparting new meanings to old words has spread beyond western borders (Helander 1995, Ingstad 1995a, Talle 1995, Whyte & Ingstad 1995). That process and its implications for China are detailed elsewhere in this thesis and are mentioned here only in so far as they highlight the need to look at language which predates "new" and "international" terminology.

The need to look at language is strengthened by the privileged position that the written word has held, and continues to hold, in Chinese history, politics, culture and society. A unified writing system has been in place since the first unification of the Chinese empire at the end of the third century BC and has served as "one of the most effective instruments of political unification" (Gernet 1988, p. 32). In a vast empire marked by diversity of dialect, the unified script enabled a remarkable degree of cultural conformity, centralised administration and imperial control. Furthermore, Chinese characters or ideograms have long been invested with symbolic, even mystical, significance. In short, the rich symbolism inherent in this ancient and enduring script offers fertile ground for language and culture analysis - more so than many writing systems.

Chinese characters can be extremely complicated, containing many components. At least one of the components is a "Radical" which assists the grouping of characters in a dictionary and often imparts meaning (McNaughton 1989). Many Chinese characters are symbols or stylised pictures and they can therefore provide important clues to socio-cultural perceptions and élite attitudes. For example: the character for "woman" comprises the symbol for a pregnant woman, thereby conveying the role of woman as

child-bearer and the place of woman as home; in telling contrast, "man" comprises the symbol for physical strength and a stylised picture of a field. Anyone with some knowledge of gender issues in China will immediately make the relevant connections. Guisso (1981) has taken the project even further in his study of perceptions of women in early Chinese script. In the earliest Chinese lexicon (containing 9,353 characters), Guisso identified 245 characters with the Woman Radical of which thirty-six were descriptive. Of those, twenty-eight pertained to temperament and over three-quarters were negative (e.g. lazy, jealous, garrulous), whilst the small number which might be described as positive still conformed to a Confucian worldview which set women in a subordinate position to men.

The Guisso example is a convincing one. Nevertheless, deep-reading any written language is replete with pitfalls, particularly when the reader is an outsider and the script is ancient. It would be dangerously easy to read too much into pictures and symbols, to disregard the dynamics of linguistic evolution and dismiss the tremendous scope for interpretive distortion. Languages, like societies and cultures, constantly expand and change, and yet it would be churlish to ignore the insights offered by Chinese characters.

Conclusion

I have set out the main sources, methods and methodological issues relevant to the findings presented in this thesis. The data sets used are highly diverse and range from Chinese characters to government legislation, from newspaper stories to missionary accounts. Therein lie strengths as well as weaknesses. The sheer volume of data generated (and most of it has not been used in this thesis) has enabled a high degree of cross-validation. It also makes (I hope) for a more interesting and varied read. There is something satisfying about interspersing grassroots voices into a thesis focused on government policies, citing newspaper headlines in one chapter and missionary tales in another. But the richness does not, of course, compensate for methodological weaknesses and the inescapable fact that the data have been generated by a western academic, with a smattering of Chinese ancestry, limited experience of development programmes, a working knowledge of the Chinese language, and a particular agenda

and perspective.

At the end of the day, "Reforming Disability in China" can only claim to be a first and therefore a necessarily speculative step towards unearthing macro-level processes of disability in China's past and present. There is much material, particularly field-based material, that I have been unable to include, and there is certainly much more to be discovered. I only hope that the evidence and findings presented here will stimulate debate and encourage others to expand the limits of inquiry into the construction of disability, in China and beyond.

Chapter Three

Imperial Cosmologies and Ideologies

In this chapter, we embark on a "grand historical adventure". First, the place of the body and impairment in imperial Chinese cosmologies is briefly explored with reference to shared beliefs about causation, implications for personhood and socio-familial response. Secondly, these findings are situated within wider state projects of empire, social control and ruling ideology, as analysis shifts from the private realm of family to the public realm of the state. Finally, and spanning culture and structure, I put forward the hypothesis that "disability" was created in imperial China, that it was the product of Confucianist ideologies and the development of an imperial bureaucratic state, and that it functioned to uphold a dominant construct of the "norm".

Several writers within western disability studies (Abberley 1987, Barton 1996b, Barnes 1996, Gleeson 1997, Oliver 1990, Stone 1984) and a few within disability/development studies (Mallory 1993, Miles 1992, 1995, Devlieger 1995a, Kalyanpur 1996) have highlighted the importance of engaging with the past if we are to understand the present. This argument applies equally to non-western and western settings.

In China, the argument for a strong historical sensibility is particularly strong. It has been suggested that in China, the hold of history over the present and the future is a deference taken to the extremes of tyranny (Jenner 1992). While that may be too bleak an evaluation of China's prospects, it remains incontestable that engaging with the past is a key to understanding China's present. Even a fleeting glance at recent disability legislation is evidence enough that present initiatives cannot be understood without an awareness of historical antecedents (Stone 1996a). And so, the stage is set for an inquiry into the historical and cultural construction of disability in China - an inquiry which is important in its own right, and as background to the analysis of disability in the 1980s and 1990s.

In this chapter, the first of three chapters exploring the historical construction of disability, imperial China provides the time and the place for a grand historical adventure. In the first part of the chapter, perceptions and socio-familial responses to *impairment* are sketched. The findings are then subjected to a more critical reading to see how far perceptions and responses formed part of wider state-social projects. Finally, evidence is presented which points to the macro-level construction of *disability* in the imperial Chinese bureaucratic state, and in opposition to a dominant construct of *normalcy*.

Cosmological Frameworks

It is a flawed but widely-accepted and well-used strategy in historical scholarship to read and write "imperial" where a more accurate word would be "Confucian". That strategy is deployed here too. Only passing reference is made in this chapter to Taoism, Buddhism and the myriad folk beliefs and local cults which are too numerous and unmapped to incorporate properly, and yet which form an important part of the rich symbolic universe (or cosmology) that is imperial China - a universe which contains not one but several symbol complexes which co-exist, compete, overlap and merge.

The reason behind so gross a simplification comes down to lack of space, the complexity of Chinese culture, and the importance of Confucianist thought in the Chinese past and present (Chan 1963, Dawson 1981, Lau 1970, 1979, Legge 1962). Even so, a thorough inquiry into Confucian constructs of body and personhood (of the sort that would take full account of the nuances of Confucianism and neo-Confucianism) is beyond the reach of this thesis. The hope is that this first attempt to understand the place of impairment in Confucian cosmology will yield insightful, if speculative, results.

In Chapter One, body and personhood were selected as conceptual tools with which to pin down the role of "culture" in producing impairment differently. In the case of imperial China, both body and personhood are best approached with foreknowledge of core cosmological principles: Tao (or Way), Order (or Harmony) and Balance (or Complementarity). These three principles framed the imperial concept of body.

The Tao defies translation. Sometimes rendered as the Way or the Truth, the concept of

Tao was all these and more (see Chan 1963, Dawson 1981, Wilhelm 1978 *inter alia* on Tao in Confucian and Taoist cosmologies). In Confucian cosmologies, Tao was both a means and an end. It was a way of behaviour that, if followed, led to an ideal state of social order and being, a state which had existed in the golden age of Antiquity and served as the model for government and society. Tao operated on and through all levels of existence. It was a way of seeing life, world and cosmos that had a place for Heaven (*tian*) but kept Heaven in its place. It also gave substance to what has long been recognised as the core value in the Chinese symbolic universe: Order (Creel 1970, Gernet 1988, Unschuld 1985).

Order epitomised the ideal state. In conjunction with (and created by adherence to) the Tao, Order was sought at all levels of the cosmos - from family to state. It was constructed in direct opposition to Disorder or Chaos [*luan*]. Both Confucianist and Taoist doctrines were essentially manuals on how to lead humanity out of a state of Chaos and into a state of Order. Order was conceived as synonymous with Harmony. Hence, a harmonious society was one in which everyone, from the emperor to the common people, was ordered, orderly and behaved in keeping with their socio-familial status. The Confucianist doctrine of the Rectification of Names [*zheng ming*] was the most concrete expression of the principle (Dawson 1981, Kracke 1964, Loewe 1962). It conceived society as a vast, rigid and hierarchical role-system into which everyone was slotted. The task of imperial government was to ensure that everyone stayed in their place.

Balance is another important principle and one which (along with more metaphysical variations of the Tao) has appealed to westerners disillusioned with Cartesian dualisms and fixed opposites (Lin 1980, Unschuld 1985, Veith 1966). With the notable exception of Order and Disorder, Chinese cosmologies shy away from binary and polar opposites, favouring complementarity and flux instead (Gernet 1988). The best known example is yang-yin dualism, which is likened to male and female, sun and moon, light and dark, heat and cold. Thus, the concept of an ideal state is one in which yang and yin are balanced, complementary, reciprocal and harmonious (Lin 1980, Unschuld 1985, Veith 1966).

Perceptions of Impairment

How did the principles of Tao, Order and Balance feed into constructs of the body in imperial cosmologies? The answer lies in the principle of systematic correspondence, whereby all realms of existence were seen as interlinked and interdependent (Unschuld 1985, Veith 1966). Thus, changes in one realm brought about changes in another, although (as Emily Ahern has noted, 1975) this was not always clearcut. Broadly speaking, however, the body was conceived as a *microcosm* of the various macrocosms of family, society, state, nature and, ultimately, the cosmos (Lin 1980, Unschuld 1985). This was evident in the cosmobiological constitution of the body.

In correspondence with state/social realms, veins and arteries corresponded to canals or channels of transportation, while internal organs corresponded to granaries or centers of government. In correspondence with nature and cosmos, the body comprised yin and yang (heat and cold); the Five Elements of Fire, Wood, Water, Earth and Metal (which relate to geomancy, weather and internal organs *inter alia*); and the essential life-breath or life-force of *qi* which formed an intimate connection between body and nature (Lin 1980, Morse 1934, Unschuld 1985, Veith 1966).

The body, cast in cosmo-biological terms as a microcosm of society, state and nature, was therefore also a site of potential order and disorder. Indeed, several leading scholars of Confucian cosmology and medicine have argued that it makes more sense to speak of "disorder" rather than "illness" or "impairment" (Kleinman *et al* 1975, Kleinman 1980, Furth 1987), especially given the blurred distinctions between them in the imperial Chinese context (see Table 1 below). Therein lies the key to understanding impairment in imperial cosmologies: impairment and illness were constructed as symbols of Disorder and loss or lack of the Tao. Impairment was undoubtedly undesirable.

In the rest of this section, the hypothesis that impairment in imperial China was undesirable is explored further. My intention is to follow the recommendation of Susan Reynolds Whyte that impairment should be investigated as a "cultural and social issue, rather than a medical or technical one" (Whyte 1995b, p. 285). To this end, it is helpful to consider the language of impairment and to interrogate the Chinese script itself for clues (a ploy which is used several times in this chapter and was discussed in the previous chapter on methods and sources).

Impairment Inscribed

In a forthcoming paper entitled "Modern Slogan, Ancient Script: impairment and disability in the Chinese language" (Stone 1998c), I set out the results of a careful trawl through the Karlgren (1972) and Mathews (1943) dictionaries, which produced over 150 individual *impairment*-specific characters used in classical Chinese texts. In addition, a list of impairment-specific aphorisms and proverbs has been compiled, based on Huang (1964), Williams (1920), Lip (1984) and Yong (1996).

The majority of characters denoted physical impairments (especially lameness, short stature and hunched backs), skin and hair impairments (especially baldness), visual, speech and hearing impairments, and a plethora of terms which would nowadays indicate mental health or learning difficulties but are translated here as "insanity" and "idiocy" to distinguish them from more recent, outsider-influenced terminology. A large proportion of the characters are descriptive and depict physical appearance, behaviour or gait. Radicals for Eye, Ear, Mouth, Foot, Walk, Lameness and Mind occur frequently in these descriptive characters, sometimes with added meaning contributed by secondary components. Thus, the combination of "Eye" and "Damage" denotes blindness (as opposed to low vision or myopia); the combination of "Person" and "Hillock" denotes a hunched back (see Table 1).

Table 1: characters which describe impairment or indicate causation.

| <u>Character</u> | <u>Radical</u> | <u>Component</u> | <u>Translation</u> |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>mang</i> | <i>Eye</i> | <i>die/destroy</i> | <i>blind</i> |
| <i>xia</i> | <i>Eye</i> | <i>damage</i> | <i>blind</i> |
| <i>miao</i> | <i>Eye</i> | <i>small</i> | <i>one-eyed, low vision</i> |
| <i>lou</i> | <i>Person</i> | <i>crooked</i> | <i>hunched-back</i> |
| <i>yu</i> | <i>Person</i> | <i>hillock</i> | <i>hunched-back</i> |
| <i>er</i> | <i>Ear</i> | <i>knife</i> | <i>cut-off ear</i> |
| <i>chi</i> | <i>Sickness</i> | <i>knowledge</i> | <i>idiot, stupid</i> |
| <i>dian</i> | <i>Sickness</i> | <i>true, real</i> | <i>insane</i> |
| <i>xian</i> | <i>Sickness</i> | <i>idleness</i> | <i>fits, epilepsy</i> |
| <i>que</i> | <i>Sickness</i> | <i>add + flesh</i> | <i>lame, crippled</i> |
| <i>long</i> | <i>Sickness</i> | <i>abundant</i> | <i>decrepit, deformed</i> |
| <i>yin</i> | <i>Sickness</i> | <i>sound</i> | <i>mute</i> |
| <i>gu</i> | <i>Worms</i> | <i>vessel</i> | <i>insane</i> |

Source: dictionary search in Mathews (1943) and Karlgren (1972).

Table 1 also includes a few examples (and there are many more) of characters which would denote a permanent impairment in western terms but are framed by the Sickness

Radical in Chinese, thereby underlining the overlap between illness and impairment (as well as the methodological dangers of constructing a list of impairments). The use of the Sickness Radical also points to the place of medicine and healers in socio-familial responses to impairment, and to the definition of impairment (or illness) in opposition to a desired state - both these points are revisited shortly.

The cause of impairment is also identifiable in several of the characters listed in Table 1 and suggests that causation played a role - perhaps a decisive role - in shaping perceptions of impairment and socio-familial responses (Kleinman *et al* 1975, Kleinman 1980, T'ien 1985, Unschuld 1980, 1985). One example is the character *gu* ("insane") which features the meaning components for "Insects" and "Vessel": drinking poisonous worms was said to induce insanity (T'ien 1985). Another example is *er* ("cut-off ear") which is one of several characters including "cut-off foot" and "cut-off nose" which feature the Knife Radical. And here it seems appropriate to begin to talk about cultural associations: between impairment and retribution; impairment and evil influences, and impairment and imbalance.

Impairment and Retribution

The link between impairment and punishment or retribution appears strong in imperial cosmologies, although the individual was not always held personally responsible. The individual's impairment might be fixed to the wrongdoing of any member of the living or ancestral family (Kleinman *et al* 1975, Unschuld 1985).

Penal mutilation (prevalent in the Qin dynasty although it subsided after that) must also have built on and strengthened these associations (Creel 1970, Hulsewé 1985). Penal mutilation included tattooing or branding, cutting off the ear, the nose, one or both feet and death by slicing. Other comparable forms of punishment included shaving the head and branding the forehead. All of these, particularly death by slicing, referred back to the principal that allowing one's body to be injured was to be unfilial (Creel 1970). It may also have corresponded to forms of social exclusion from public affairs premised on having certain impairments. An example here would be the link between shaving the head (as a form of punishment, Hulsewé 1985) and baldness (as a basis for specific

forms of social exclusion, Lu & Needham 1987).

The link between impairment and punishment was bolstered by the arrival of Buddhism and notions of karmic retribution (see Gernet 1956 on Buddhism and China). According to the Buddhist-inspired morality books of Ming and Qing China, those who spit blood formerly ate meat while reciting classical texts; deaf people had formerly failed to listen to classical texts; people with a hunched back formerly laughed at idols; and blind people formerly misdirected when asked for directions (Crofoot 1911, also see Brokaw 1991 on ledgers of merit).

Impairment and Evil Influences

The link between disability and the supernatural or divine can be found in many cultures (Bragg 1997, Burck 1989, Miles 1995, Nicolaisen 1995, Whyte 1995a *inter alia*). China is no exception, as indicated by the appearances of the "ghost" or "devil" radical in several impairment characters and by the saying *que jing xia guai* [crippled spirits, blind ghosts], a general term for people with visible impairments.

Associations between evil and disorder appear to have been prevalent, even in Confucianist medical treatises as the following Ming dynasty scholarly medical text illustrates:

Illnesses have many causes, yet they are all related to evil; evil is the ultimate cause....everything that is not a part of the normal order in the human body...is evil (Xu Chunfu, ca. 1556, cited in Unschuld 1985, p. 324).

Evil influences, including demon attacks, spirit possession, encounters with hungry ghosts, fox fairies and malevolent winds, are cited in numerous Confucian and demonological medical treatises and tales (see Unschuld 1980, 1985) and are particularly evident in cases which would now be associated with mental health problems (T'ien 1985, Lin 1980, Veith 1963). It is worth noting here that, in line with concepts of the body and principles of systematic correspondence, the same root cause (for example, an encounter with a fox fairy) could be used to explain a physical impairment, mental health disorder, death in the family, insanity, economic or political misfortune (Veith 1963).

Also classed as an evil external influence would be the concept of fetal pollution - a concept used to explain impairment (or illness) in an infant or newborn (see Furth 1987 for a detailed explication). Fetal poison, passed from a mother or wet-nurse to an infant, was believed to be toxic and was blamed for a variety of disorders from neonatal death, to impairment, to tetanus and poxes. The concept is an interesting one, and is returned to subsequently.

Impairment and Imbalance

Explanations premised on retribution, wrongdoing and external evils often operated alongside explanations based on perceived imbalances (Kleinman *et al* 1975, Lin 1980, Unschuld 1985, Veith 1966). Again, the principles of systematic correspondence meant that imbalances might operate within the body, the immediate family, the lineage or even state, society and cosmos. Perhaps the two most common realms of explanation were the internal balances of the body (between heat and cold, yin and yang, the Five Elements and so on), and imbalanced relations in the lineage. These explanations had direct implications for response and intervention since, by definition, an imbalance could be redressed and attempts should be made to do so. This might involve offerings to displeased ancestors or adherence to a medical regime to bring harmony (in western terms, health) back to the body (Unschuld 1985, Furth 1987, Veith 1966).

Finally, it is important to recognise that (in accordance with Kleinman's thesis of the distinction between shared beliefs of causation and idiosyncratic explanatory models, Kleinman 1980), a range of ascribed causes might be drawn upon at any one time or over time (Ahern 1975). Thus, evil influences, punishment for wrongdoing, and bodily or lineage disharmonies might all be used in constructing explanations for the same impairment and for the same individual or lineage.

Explanations were important in imperial cosmologies, and they still form a very strong part of Chinese perceptions of impairment in the 1990s (Kleinman *et al* 1995). Their importance lies largely in the decisive influence of an ascribed causation in shaping socio-familial responses to impairment (as suggested by Burck 1989, Groce & Zola 1993, Whyte & Ingstad 1995, Kleinman 1980).

Responses to Impairment: socio-familial responses

Before setting out what appear to be dominant responses to impairment, it is important to underline that responses would have varied widely, depending on socioeconomic background, gender, age, education and the point in the life-cycle when an individual acquired an impairment (Kleinman 1980, Whyte & Ingstad 1995). The stock of imperial Chinese historical figures said to have had an impairment is a reminder of this. Examples include the revered Emperor Shun and his father, who both had congenital visual impairments, and the Duke of Zhou, a Confucian hero, who had a deformed spine (Luau 1979, Said 1965). Somewhat lower down the social scale, the biographies written by Sima Qian (a Han dynasty historian) make for interesting reading (Dolby and Scott 1974). Perhaps because Sima Qian was castrated, he had a particular empathy with those marginalised on the basis of bodily difference. Sima Qian's biographies include the triumphs and strategic skills of Sun the Cripple and the court jester-cum-diplomats Baldy Chunyu and Jester Twisty-Pole, and a shamelessly didactic tale of Lord Flat Plain, a "cripple" and a concubine - in which a cripple demands the head of a concubine who has ridiculed him because of his impairment. Lord Flat Plain agrees but neglects to keep his word ... until the departure of his followers makes him realize his mistake. Lord Flat Plain beheads his concubine and apologises to the cripple (see Dolby & Scott 1974 for translations of Sima Qian's biographies).

These stories are a helpful reminder that what follows is a sweeping account which does not do justice to the complex range of responses that would have operated in imperial China. The responses summarised below relate to: intervention, rejection, exclusion, ridicule, pity, and the ascription of special attributes to people with impairments. These are preceded by a short note on the general implications of impairment on imperial Chinese concepts of personhood.

Impairment and Personhood

In Confucian social theory, the individual is never conceived of as an isolated, separate entity ... in the Confucian paradigm of man [sic], man is socially situated, defined, and shaped in a relational context. In brief, man is a relational being. (King & Bond 1985, p. 31)

It is no coincidence that the Chinese ideogram for person comprises two people.

The main context in which the individual was situated and personhood was attained or diminished was in the family (King & Bond 1985, Wu & Tseng 1985). This was not a nuclear family in the western sense (although such were not uncommon in living arrangements) but a family which extended beyond the grave and into the future - a "lineage" to be more precise (Baker 1979). Only in the context of lineage, which included dead ancestors and unborn descendants, did an individual exist as a person. Little (including impairment) was more heterodox than being without a family (Baker 1979, Schak 1988).

The role of the living family was to guarantee the happiness of ancestors in the afterlife, through ritual worship and appropriate conduct, and to ensure the continuation of the family line through provision of male descendants (Baker 1979, Creel 1970). The core obligations, on which basis personhood was conferred, were marriage and male children, correct performance of ancestral rituals and provision for one's elders. To fulfil these obligations was to demonstrate filial piety (Baker 1979, Creel 1970, Lau 1979). To fail in these obligations was to be unfilial, to threaten the entire lineage, and to lose (or experience diminished) personhood. The link between impairment, body and personhood therefore corresponded to the way in which impairment was perceived as threatening to the fulfilment of family obligations.

In imperial Chinese society, impairments were sufficient basis for exclusion from or marginalisation within the marital pool (Baker 1979, Kleinman 1975, Kleinman *et al* 1980, Mo 1988). This was compounded by the fact that impairments were frequently regarded as a basis for exclusion from ancestral worship and ritual performance (Baker 1979, Lu & Needham 1987). Hence, the inclusion of impairment as a "just cause" for a husband to divorce his wife is premised on the fact that the wife would not be in a position to perform ancestral rituals - the hub of family and lineage life in imperial China (Baker 1979). Finally, impairments and illnesses had real or perceived implications for an individual's capacity to provide for the family, where the family was the core economic unit.

Therefore, an impairment was potentially perceived as unfilial and as a threat to the lineage (in terms of descendants and ritual performance), to the family economy and the

fulfillment of filial obligations (including a duty to provide for one's parents). So, and in contrast to the west, impairment in imperial China was a *family* affair and a *lineage* tragedy rather than an individual tragedy. This is not to say that *all* people with impairments were denied opportunities to fulfil family obligations and attain personhood. It is, however, to make clear that imperial Chinese perceptions of cosmology, body and personhood combined to structure impairment as wholly undesirable and as grounds for diminished personhood. It also helps explain why the dominant socio-familial response, as it appears in the historical record and as is still the case in the 1990s, was medical intervention with a view to restoring balance, expelling evil, and ensuring personhood in the interests of family and lineage.

Intervention

Whether explained as retribution, disharmony, internal imbalance, Fate or a random act of malevolence by a fox-fairy in the business of causing chaos, bodily disorders (impairments and illness) were almost always open to intervention and attempts to restore Order (Kleinman *et al* 1975, Lin 1980, T'ien 1985, Unschuld 1985).

The complex and pluralistic system now known as Chinese medicine not only provided explanations of cause, but also structured appropriate interventions. Chinese medicine has long been a focus of scholarly activity and, whilst scholars appear uninterested in disability as a social phenomenon, it is clear from their work that medicine would have been a substantial component of the experience of impairment (Kleinman *et al* 1975, Furth 1987, Lin 1980, T'ien 1985, Unschuld 1985). Indeed, Arthur Kleinman, a medical anthropologist with a long record of research in Chinese societies, has written of "the sheer enormity of medically-related things in Chinese communities, their unique pattern or style, and the intensity of social and individual concern with them" in China, past and present (Kleinman 1975, p. 608). Kleinman suggests that western pre-occupations with the body and health have only recently begun to match Chinese levels. The somatization of society is a long-standing feature of Chinese historical and contemporary culture (Kleinman 1980, Brownell 1995).

In imperial China, there are two broad traditions of Chinese medicine, although even to

talk of two traditions is an imposed construct rather than a grounded reality (comparable to the twentieth century construction of "Chinese medicine" as distinct from "Western medicine", see Croizier 1968, 1975). The scholarly tradition or great tradition corresponds to the medicine of the Confucian literati. The folk tradition or little tradition refers to a plethora of demonological and quasi-Taoist healing systems (see Ahern 1975, Furth 1987, Kleinman *et al* 1975, 1995, Kleinman 1980, Martin 1975, Unschuld 1985 and Veith 1963, 1966 on the scholarly and folk traditions).

In most folk traditions, illness and impairment were explained with recourse to external and evil influences such as spirits, fox-fairies, demons and hungry ghosts. Folk healing (demonological medicine) was directed at pacification or exorcism, through performance of specific rituals, use of spirit mediums or shamanistic healing (Unschuld 1985, Veith 1966).

In the scholarly tradition, disorder was viewed in accordance with the wider cosmological principles already outlined, whereby impairment was attributed to imbalances between Yang, Yin and other cosmobiological factors. Intervention centred around restoring balance and Order. In this tradition alone, there were innumerable prescribed cures and aids for visual, hearing, physical and skin impairments, mental and behavioural disorders, and debilitating and infectious diseases. Acupuncture, herbal treatments, massage, hydrotherapy, moxibustion, minor surgery (for birth defects), eye-glasses, prosthetics, all have a long history in Chinese medicine (see Ch'eng and Chang 1962, Needham 1954, 1956, 1962, 1970, Said 1965, Koster 1956, Morse 1934, Unschuld 1980, 1985, Tao 1987, Wong & Wu 1936 and Veith 1966 for examples of therapies and treatments relevant to impairment). Seals which pre-date the Han dynasty indicate the existence of specialists in speech defects and others in mental disorders (Lu & Needham 1987). Ophthalmology and paediatrics were established specialist domains of medicine, along with gynaecology, treatment of skin conditions and leprosy (Lu & Needham 1987, Said 1965, Furth 1987). All of which supports Kleinman's (1975) thesis, and suggests that the hegemony of a medical model of disability (albeit a cosmo-medical and lineage-based model rather than a biomedical and individualised model) is far from unique to the industrialised west, and is potentially no less oppressive.

Rejection

It is impossible to ascertain the degree to which children with impairments were rejected through neglect, infanticide or abandonment in imperial China. The travel accounts of Father Ripa, a Jesuit priest living in China in 1711, suggest that abandonment was commonplace (Ripa 1846).

There is nothing unusual in seeing children thus abandoned; it occurs daily throughout this vast empire. When mothers are poor, and have large families, or observe any defect upon the body of an infant, or any indication of an illness likely to become troublesome and expensive, they cast away the little creature without remorse ... The poor infants are secretly thrown into a river, or left near the public road, in the hope that some passenger may take pity on them ... This sometimes happens, but generally the unfortunate beings are devoured by wild beasts (Fr. Ripa 1846, p. 64).

The high infant mortality rates that would certainly have existed at the time Father Ripa was writing might have led onlookers to conclude erroneously that all infant bodies were proof of infanticide (Lee 1981). Nevertheless, most would agree that infanticide was practiced in China, although there appear to be no laws comparable to those in ancient Greece or Sparta (Garland 1995, Barnes 1996). For a sense of perspective, the reader might note here that infanticide was not uncommon in nineteenth century England:

Infanticide is practised as extensively and legally in England as it is on the banks of the Ganges; a circumstance which apparently has not yet engaged the attention of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (Benjamin Disraeli, cited in Rose 1986, p. 36).

Rejection has many forms and it was not uncommon for children to be sold out of the family into servitude or apprenticeship (Ching 1980). To sell one's children into prostitution, slavery, begging or concubinage was not encouraged by the state, nor was it inevitable that a disabled child would be sold (it might even be considered a family disgrace to sell any child, disabled or not); nor was it even the case that only disabled children were sold. Significantly, children with particular impairments were sometimes sold into specific occupations: blind boys to musicians, mediums or fortune-tellers; blind girls to brothels as song-girls/prostitutes known as *mangmei* [blind slave-girls] (Ching 1980, Shi 1991).

Exclusion

The degree of exclusion and inclusion, accommodation and rejection, within each family would have varied considerably. The extent to which the threat of impairment to personhood and lineage was realized would depend on the living family's response to the particular individual and disorder. A family might or might not choose to exclude an individual from ritual performance, and it might or might not succeed in securing a marriage partner and descendants. An interesting example is taken from Confucius's own family. According to the *Analects* and commentaries, Confucius was the second son. His elder brother was a "cripple" (Lau 1979). We learn that this did not lessen Confucius's respect as a younger brother to an elder brother; we learn also that the elder brother was married and had at least one child, a daughter. However, it is clear that the elder brother was not expected to carry out ritual and family roles as would normally have been the case: the arrangements for his daughter's marriage were made by his younger brother (Lau 1979).

Ridicule

Chinese folk and humourous literature is replete with examples of ridiculing people with impairments, especially people with visible impairments (Zhang *et al* 1983, Yong 1996). There is the story of the three short-sighted brothers who made fools of themselves endeavouring to prove who had the least impaired sight. There is the story of the hunchback who was killed by a quack doctor (admittedly to the dismay of onlookers) who crushed his back in a bid to cure him of his impairment. There is the story of the six blind men and the elephant (which has become a Chinese proverb, *mang ren mo xiang*) in which six blind men are asked to describe an elephant by touch, and come up with various conclusions (based on different parts of the elephant's body) that an elephant is like a turnip, a fan, a mortar for pounding rice and so on. None of this is unique to Chinese society, of course. Indeed, the first time I came across the story of the six blind men and the elephant, when I was a child, it was described as a "traditional" tale from India. Nor, again, is ridiculing disabled people a thing of the past in China or elsewhere (Fieldnotes 1995-96, Huang & Tian 1990, Zhang 1983).

Pity

The so-called privilege of being allowed to beg and be regarded as a deserving object of compassion certainly existed in China. Missionaries wrote home of willful acts of mutilation and self-mutilation to create impairment and thereby acquire a greater right to beg (Hillier & Jewell 1983). One missionary, a certain Lockhart, noted an escalation of mutilation during the North China famine of 1877-8 (Hillier & Jewell 1983). Lime-mortar or needles were used to blind infants and to self-blind adults. Others bound their legs with thin twine until the exposed bone could be sawn in two:

The operation causes great suffering and many die in the process, but those who survive ... are congratulated by their friends as having gained the loss of their limbs and an increase of fortune, from the contributions of the benevolent (Lockhart 1861, cited in Hillier & Jewell 1983, p. 16).

An even less pleasant by-product of the privilege of pity is summed up in the proverb: "Heaven has not sent down rain for a long time; I expose a rickety, weak person [*wang*] in the sun" - in order to move Heaven to weep tears of pity. As with ridicule, rejection, exclusion and intervention, the perception of people with impairments as pitiable - even the most pitiful - persists in post-Mao China (Schak 1988, Fieldnotes1995-96).

Special Roles and Attributes

The project of diminishing personhood need not be limited to negative labels and appellations (see Barnes 1992, Garland 1995, Shakespeare 1994, Garland Thomson 1996, 1997a). Projections of emotions and ascription of attributes, both good and bad, can all feed the self-same process of designating impairment as a basis for different personhood.

In the Chinese script, virtues of endurance and filial piety appear in many popular aphorisms, such as "a lame tortoise walks a thousand miles" and "a simpleton but loyal and filial". These tallied with seemingly prevalent perceptions that to lack or lose one sense was compensated by another, superhuman ability. The link between blindness and musicality is evident in the ancient ideogram for "blind" which contains the radicals for Eye and Drum, and blind musicians are mentioned several times in relation to court performances in the Chinese classics (Creel 1970, Said 1965, also Doolittle 1868, Legge

1962, Shi 1991). Recognition of compensatory super-senses also explains the suggestion that pregnant women should invite blind storytellers to recount tales of virtue and prosperity so that their child will be born with "extraordinary talents" (Lin Xiang cited in Said 1965, p.85). Other skills associated with blind people were fortune telling and spirit mediation: the cane was perceived to be a powerful tool to conjure ancestral spirits (Ching 1980, Lamson 1935). The extent to which special roles, premised on blindness, operated in imperial society is evident in the existence of Guilds for blind singers, story tellers and musicians (Burgess 1966, Schak 1988). The following is an extract from a 1919 eye-witness account (Schak 1988 confirms that these Guilds existed in the Qing dynasty and probably long before).

The Gild [sic] of the Blind, who makes a business of singing, story-telling and entertaining, holds its meetings on the 2nd of the 3rd month and the 8th of the 9th month ... As the gild has no gild hall, it borrows the Ching Chung Miao, a temple in the South City ... and there, all day long, a constant stream of blind men was coming and going. They were greeting their friends, discussing politics and the conditions of business, and enjoying the tea and cakes ... it was a strange sight to see so many blind people together, each with his long bamboo cane, tapping, tapping, tapping ... In the evening the executive council of forty-eight met to conduct the business of the gild. They gathered around a row of tables arranged in the shape of a tortoiseshell ... all had different titles and duties (Gamble's account, set out in Burgess 1966, p. 103).

People with short stature, referred to in Chinese literature as "dwarfs" [*zhuru*] were also ascribed special roles and skills. Wit, intellect and diplomacy were their compensatory talents, thereby making up in mental agility what they were perceived to lack in physical strength. In fact, the character for Confucian literati is the same character that is used to describe a dwarf: *ru*, whilst the character *jiao* is similarly used for both "dwarf" and "clever" or "canny". Jesters, diplomats and entertainers were the stock professions recorded in literary and historical texts. Think here of Sima Qian's Jester Twisty-Pole ("a dwarf and a first-class funster, but behind his every joke was a grasp of universal principles", Dolby & Scott 1974, p. 166), or the proverbs "short stature - capable and alert" and "a dwarf has many canny schemes" (Huang 1964).

But proverbs and metaphors were not always positive. Examples which ascribed negative attributes or drew negative correlations include terms used for physical impairment which described broken and worthless goods; the saying "to suffer in silence

like a mute man"; and phrases which used visual and speech impairments as metaphors for ignorance, bewilderment, futility, danger and falsity (see Huang 1964, Williams 1920).

* * *

It may have already struck the reader that imperial Chinese socio-familial responses sit relatively well in Mary Douglas's schemata of "primitive" responses to anomaly (Douglas 1966, see Garland Thomson 1997a, Shakespeare 1994). Impairment in imperial China was at times eliminated, avoided, assigned to a particular role or ritual, and labelled as dangerous (to the lineage and the wider cosmos). On the basis of these findings, we might safely conclude that bodily variations were a basis for diminished personhood in imperial China, because (to borrow from Douglas) impairment was regarded as an anomaly. However, as Oliver has argued (drawing on Paul Abberley), Douglas's schemata leads one towards the unsatisfactory and reductionist conclusion that the social position of people with impairments can be reduced to a human instinct to create symbolic order (Oliver 1990).

To my mind, and in the case of imperial China, there is no doubt that the diminished personhood of people with impairments was related to a drive to create symbolic order ... but I do not suggest that this is a natural human impulse. Rather, the construct of Order and Disorder, and the methods by which Order is to be attained and Disorder is to be eliminated, are the product of imperial institutions and ideology. The search for Order is an inherent part of the imperial project, of imperial ideologies.

Empire, Order and Disorder

Ideas - religious, moral, practical, aesthetic - must, as Max Weber, among others, never tired of insisting, be carried by powerful social groups to have powerful social effects; someone must revere them, celebrate them, defend them, impose them. They have to be institutionalized in order to find not just an intellectual existence in society, but, so to speak, a material one as well (Geertz 1973, p.314).

In the rest of this chapter, a socio-political analysis is offered which explores imperial Chinese institutions and ideologies in a bid to move discussion forwards from

impairment to the historical construction of disability. Before that, salient characteristics of imperial Chinese civilization are set out in a thumbnail sketch which is woefully inadequate given the richness and immensity of Chinese imperial history, but gives the reader who is unacquainted with that history a feel for empire, ideology and bureaucracy. (The material set out below draws on a range of general historical scholarship, including Gernet 1988, Fairbank & Reischauer 1989, Hsu 1990, Hudson 1964, Kracke 1964, Loewe 1962 and Spence 1990).

The first unification of the Chinese Empire took place in 221BC under Qin Shi Huangdi, First Emperor of China. Repeatedly castigated throughout Chinese history as the epitome of bad rule, he nevertheless set a course from which Chinese rulers (including Mao and Deng) have seldom, and never willingly, strayed: rule over a unified Chinese empire. The goal of any Emperor was to unify when the empire was fragmented, and to maintain or expand the empire when unified.

The Emperor was regarded as the Son of Heaven, absolute in authority and ruler of the Middle Kingdom ... on condition that the Emperor could retain the Mandate of Heaven. The Mandate of Heaven epitomised the notion of benevolent or compassionate government which was the bedrock of Confucianist ideologies. In today's parlance, it was a Charter for Good Governance, formulated by the educated élite ostensibly to protect the common people. In theory, failure to ensure the well-being and livelihood of the people would result in withdrawal of popular support and thereby loss of legitimacy to rule. In practice, dynasty after dynasty fell through internal social unrest and the occasional large-scale peasant rebellion which played the Mandate of Heaven card.

Benevolent rule was an ever-present theme in Confucianist treatises which, in the second century BC and under the Han Emperor Wu, were declared official state orthodoxy. Remarkably, and despite the rise of Buddhism and Taoism during certain historical periods, Confucianism endured as the basis for political morality and imperial governance for as long as the empire lasted and, some might argue, beyond. Even when conquered by non-Chinese powers (notably the Mongolian Yuan dynasty and the Manchu Qing dynasty), the conquering rulers adopted Confucian ideologies to demonstrate their credentials for rule, to win the support of literati and officials (without whom rule would be impossible), and to promote an atmosphere of orthodoxy over

dissent.

Confucianism is best described as a secular, sociopolitical ideology which aimed to instruct rulers and élites on how to restore order to society. The cosmological ideal of Order was the overarching objective. The ideal and ordered society was perceived as a well-functioning and complex role-system. Social order, for which read social control, was therefore the ultimate aim and constant preoccupation of imperial government, all the more so given the vastness of the Chinese empire and the exacting task of preserving unified rule over a country the size of Europe with as many climatic and linguistic variations. The imperial task was staggering. So too was the overall success in accomplishing that task.

Comparison between medieval Europe and the Sui or Tang dynasties, let alone the Han dynasty (which ended in 221AD) leaves little room for anything but incredulity. Chinese achievements in the arts and literary pursuits, philosophy, technology, the Chinese writing system and agricultural development are manifold and well-documented in the west (Gernet 1988, Spence 1990, Dawson 1964, Hudson 1964). But most noteworthy of all were achievements in the political and bureaucratic sphere - achievements which certainly commanded awe in eighteenth century Europe among leading *philosophes* of the French Enlightenment (Hudson 1964). More recently, but no less awestruck, the eminent French historian, Jacques Gernet, has written:

It is in fact astonishing and remarkable that it should have been possible to extend a unified administrative system so early to a world as vast as Europe and containing human beings of comparable diversity ... The development of the political sphere in the Chinese world and its pre-eminence over all the other (military, religious, economic) is one of its most characteristic marks (Gernet 1988, p.27).

The Han dynasty set the tone for imperial government: a single absolute ruler and a centralized administration staffed by educated élites who had passed imperial examinations. By the Tang and Song dynasties (covering the seventh to thirteenth centuries), government was mature and effective. The centralised bureaucratic state extended its influence into every sphere of public life and to the furthest reaches of the Chinese empire. More importantly (from the standpoint of maintaining Confucian orthodoxy and bureaucratic stability), bureaucratic service was the single profession to

which educated and ambitious men aspired. Military occupations, entry into the Buddhist or Taoist clergy and commercial trade were nothing compared to a post in the imperial bureaucracy, for which a thorough knowledge of Confucian classics was a prerequisite.

Scholars and bureaucrats occupied the highest social strata outside the imperial family. The military sphere was subordinated to the civilian. Commerce was subordinated to agricultural production. The common people were distinguished from the underclasses [*jianmin*] which included slaves, bondservants and merchants. It is clear from this that social standing (as with personhood) was neither based on nor necessarily reflected in economic wealth.

A picture of empire, ideology and bureaucracy has been painted in admittedly bold colours to flag up the pre-eminence of the political sphere in imperial Chinese history, and the importance and endurance of Confucianist ideologies. In the analysis that follows, it is worth keeping a tight hold of the notions of benevolent rule, the primacy of maintaining a unified empire, the function of a huge imperial centralized bureaucracy, the perception of society as a vast and ordered role-system, and the overarching objective of imperial government: Order. Why these concepts? Because they have all conspired to frame impairment as undesirable and as grounds for different treatment.

Family, Medicine and Welfare

The importance of the family has already been noted with reference to personhood. What remains to be explored is the centrality of the family in the Confucianist political scheme. The family (close and extended) was the linchpin of Confucianist visions of an ordered society and a successfully administered empire. Thus, according to Confucian doctrine:

When the family is regulated, the state will be in order; and when the state is in order, there will be peace throughout the world (from The Great Learning, cited in Chan 1963, p. 86)

The regulation of the family operated on similar principles to the Rectification of Names (Baker 1979, Ebrey & Watson 1986). The family was organised around a rigid hierarchy

in which youth was subordinate to age, women were subordinate to men, and all relationships were subordinate to those within the family (Baker 1979, Guisso 1981). The Five Relations (*wu lun*), set out in descending order of importance, were: father and son, ruler and minister, elder and younger brother, husband and wife, friend and friend (see Baker 1979 *inter alia*).

To a sizeable degree, social control depended on the non-official authority manifested in the family hierarchy (Loewe 1962, Ebrey & Watson 1986). Therefore the state undertook every means possible to bolster the family as a tool for maintaining public order without need for direct government intervention. Beginning with the Qin dynasty, families were collectively responsible for the crimes and misdemeanours of a family member (Creel 1970, Hulsewé 1985). During the Qin, a criminal's family was even sold into state slavery as a collective punishment (Hulsewé 1985). Whilst that practice subsided in subsequent dynasties, there remained a considerable onus on the family to contain anti-social elements and prevent disruption. The family was the microcosmic manifestation of imperial discipline and control. The asylum and institution were unnecessary in imperial China - until, that is, the arrival of western missionaries and medical reformers in the nineteenth century (Chiu 1980, T'ien 1985, Wong 1950; see Chapter Four). Attempts to organize the entire population into manageable units (for administration, taxation and registration) took the family as the basic administrative and fiscal unit (Ho 1959). Social authority was thereby premised on familial authority. Families were also the principal providers of welfare, with state welfare reserved for those who had no family to support them (Ebrey 1984). And, of course, the family was the core economic unit (Baker 1979, Ebrey & Watson 1986).

It is at this juncture that the disruptive potential (real and perceived) of a family member with an impairment is discernible. Aside from difficulties in finding a marriage partner, impairment in the family threatened the very basis of familial, social and economic order. For example, a son who acquired a serious impairment in childhood and was perceived incapable of acting out his proper role in the family, not only weakened family economic sustainability but also inverted the family hierarchy. Since any disruption to family order was a potential threat to society and state, impairment was as undesirable from the standpoint of the ruling élite as it was from that of the family.

For those who lived outside the family unit (beggars, migrant traders or craftsmen), guilds functioned along familial or clan lines (Burgess 1966, Schak 1988). There was therefore little need for workhouses or for laws which criminalised vagrants, since the threat to social and economic stability was largely contained by the disciplining and controlling guilds (Burgess 1966, Schak 1988). Those who had no guild to belong to and were destitute could, in theory, expect to receive support from the imperial state (Hulsewé 1987, Xu 1972, Will & Wong 1991). Here we move from family to state welfare.

The primacy of maintaining order and preserving imperial rule articulated with Confucianist principles of benevolent government and the Mandate of Heaven:

As to the people, if they have not a certain livelihood, it follows that they will not have a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart, there is nothing which they will not do in the way of self-abandonment, of moral deflection, of depravity, and of wild licence (from the Mencius, cited in Will & Wong 1991).

Securing the livelihood of the people was inextricable from the Confucian view of good governance. Even allowing for substantial gaps between rhetoric and reality, research on welfare in imperial China reveals a long history of state intervention which cannot be disregarded (Chow 1987, Chow 1990, Leung 1987, Meng & Wang 1986, Will & Wong 1991, Xu 1972). The most prominent aspect of state relief was the granary system, excellently documented by Will and Wong (1991), who make a convincing case for the extensive and enduring nature of state grain relief in imperial China. As regards persistent poverty, there are ordinances dating to the Han which list individuals deemed worthy of state support: orphans, family-less individuals, widows and widowers (the four categories regarded as most pitiful in Confucian doctrine) as well as blind people, little people, people with hunched backs and anyone with a serious impairment or illness experiencing abject poverty (Hulsewé 1987). The same categories arise in records on Song dynasty welfare, indicating that disabled people *in poverty* had long been perceived deserving of relief (Xu 1972). Wong & Wu (1936, p. 43) also draw on historical records, which possibly date back to 700 BC and refer to "institutions where the deaf, the blind, the dumb, the lame, the paralytic, the deformed, and the insane are received" (note that K.C. Wong & L.T. Wu wrote their *History of Chinese Medicine* in

Shanghai at a time when eugenic notions were popular among educated strata, see Chapter Four).

But what exactly might the emperor and ruling élites hope to get out of the provision of welfare? That question can only be answered from a standpoint located *within* the Confucian paradigm. Briefly stated, the emperor had to be seen to rule in accord with Confucian principles. The emperor was the Son of Heaven but he was also the father of the people and was expected to act as a father in return for obedience and loyalty (Creel 1970, Dawson 1981, Kracke 1964). Relief (quite apart from reducing potential for peasant rebellion) was testimony of imperial, paternalistic benevolence (Dawson 1981, Lau 1970, 1979).

Finally in this section, we return to the issue of medicine as a dominant organising realm for perceptions of and responses to impairment. In contrast to the west, medical hegemony in imperial China cannot be put down to the professionalisation of medicine or Enlightenment projects of reason and science (see Oliver 1990, Foucault 1973, Davis 1997b *inter alia*). In China, minimal attempts were made to institutionalize medical knowledge and practice. In fact, in late imperial China, improved technology radically increased access to medical texts (what might be termed a demystification of the scholarly tradition) although, rather than undermining cosmomedical hegemony, this "democratization of medical knowledge" probably strengthened it (Leung 1987, p. 154), since most medicine and healing was conducted in the family (a sign of filial piety) or in the locality (Furth 1987, Unschuld 1985). The little that was done by the state was confined to the imperial court and can only have constituted a fraction of medical practice conducted in the empire.

The state was involved in medical welfare to varying degrees in different periods, mostly establishing hospices and free prescription services (Xu 1972, Needham 1970). But what is significant for the purposes of this inquiry is less the *form* of state medical provision than the *function* of medicine itself.

In imperial China, the scholarly tradition of medicine was based on the same cosmological principles as Confucianist ideology. Unschuld (1985) explains that this was no coincidence.

A similar relationship appears to exist between medical concepts concerning the causation, character, prevention, and management of illness, and sociopolitical ideologies that explain the causation, character, prevention, and management of social crisis (Unschuld 1985, p. 12).

Chinese medicine construed disorder as undesirable but curable and, above all, preventable. The hegemony of medicine in imperial Chinese life was directly related to the hegemony of normalcy and the onus on maintaining a normative body and mind (Furth 1987). Precisely because dominant explanations of disorder were located in imbalance, familial disharmony, excessive emotion and anything which constituted a departure from Confucian orthodoxy and moderation, medicine was ideally placed to function as an additional mechanism for individual, familial and social control (Furth 1987, Unschuld 1985).

Those who disobey the laws of the universe will give rise to calamities and visitations, while those who follow the laws of the universe remain free from dangerous illness, for they are the ones who have obtained the Tao (from The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine, translated by Veith 1966).

The maintenance of normalcy required "constant vigilance in harmonizing every aspect of regimen and conduct, encompassing the control of one's environment and the management of one's emotions" (Furth 1987, p. 13). The evidence is strong that medicine in imperial China was perhaps the major mechanism for social control (Kleinman 1975b, 1980). It was a major part of family life and it structured conduct and emotions around Confucian norms of body and behaviour.

Medicine functioned alongside the family hierarchy as a mechanism for individual, family and social control. Whether practiced in private or public spheres, it was welded to Confucian ideologies. The very notion of cure was bound up in notions of government: *zhi*, loosely translated as "to cure" also meant "to regulate", "to govern", "to order" (Furth 1987, Kleinman 1975b, Unschuld 1985). When combined with welfare in the guise of medical philanthropy, medical ideologies upheld state ideals of social control and Order by an even greater degree. As Leung (1987, p. 156) has noted in her analysis of medical philanthropy in the Ming and Qing dynasties, illness (and impairment) were "well suited to articulate a moralistic discourse for the enhancement of social order" (Leung 1987, p. 156).

The combination of welfare and medicine in medical philanthropy was also a site of struggle between competing paradigms and powerful groups. The most obvious example from imperial Chinese history (aside from medicine as a battleground for western imperialist and missionary influence) relates to Buddhism. Buddhist traditions of welfare and medical relief so strengthened the spread of Buddhism that a massive and decisive persecution of the Buddhist faith in the ninth century was enacted to stem Buddhist influence (Gernet 1956). All Buddhist hospices were taken over by the imperial state (Gernet 1956). Another example is the use of medical philanthropy (in the context of social change and the monetarization of the economy during the Ming and Qing, see Bastid-Bruguière 1980) as an opportunity for emerging commercial classes to win acceptance from the scholar élite (Brokaw 1991, Handlin-Smith 1987, Leung 1987). Inspired by Buddhism and Confucianism, private philanthropists framed their actions in highly moralistic and religious tones. Thus, at the same time as enhancing their own status, climbing into the guarded echelons of imperial society and accumulating merit points for the afterlife, dominant discourses were consolidated, and links between bodily disorder and immorality were reinforced (Brokaw 1991, Leung 1987).

Medicine, philanthropy and family together reinforced and reflected the hegemony of Confucian norms of body, behaviour and personhood. The result? A complex web of interlocking ideologies and practices which consolidated belief in the undesirable and heterodox nature of impairment.

If this argument is beginning to sound far-fetched, then it is perhaps wise to step back a little and explore other dimensions of imperial Chinese ideology and discourse. In the next section, I start to weave the emerging discourse of disability with research which has hailed from established scholars in East Asian studies on imperial Chinese state constructions of gender and "race". The purpose of this is two-fold: first, to draw support from the broader field of historical scholarship on China; secondly, to make clear that I do not regard the construction of disability as any more or less significant than constructions of gender or race. Rather, I regard them as overlapping discourses of the same imperial and Confucianist project.

Imperial Projects: gender, race and disability

Freaks always appeared not just as monsters, but as gendered and racialized monsters (Garland Thompson 1997b, p. 279).

Patriarchy, racism and colonialism are not infrequently used as analogies for the experience and construction of disability in the west (Borthwick 1996, Davis 1995, Hunt 1966, Lane 1995, Shakespeare 1994). Often, those analogies are left hanging in the air like sentences half-said. Sometimes, they are used more advisedly and elaborated as detailed metaphors for the colonization of disabled people in ways comparable to the colonization of Black people and developing countries. Very occasionally, analogies are interrogated more rigorously and a serious attempt is made to unravel the cloth that has been woven from multiple discourses. Garland Thomson offers one such study on disability and gender in American society and literary representation (Garland Thomson 1997a). Donaldson, who offers another on gender and race, advocates a reading of discourses which seeks the "interweaving of oppressions rather than their hierarchical privileging" (Donaldson 1993, p. 8). Yet all too often, patriarchy is analysed without reference to disability, race is analysed without disability or gender, and disability is not analysed at all. This is certainly the case among China specialists and yet the rewards reaped by even a speculative analysis along these lines reveals that in imperial China (and, I would argue, in the west as well) disability must be situated with gender and race because all three may be products of the same ideology and worldview.

The mutual reinforcement of disability and patriarchy is a good starting-point. In imperial China, there is ample evidence which points to the dovetailing of disability and patriarchy. Infanticide was almost certainly more common where the infant was both female and had a visible impairment (Drucker 1981, Lee 1981). Disability or incurable disease was one of seven legal reasons which allowed a husband to divorce his wife (Baker 1979, Ebrey & Watson 1986). But perhaps the best known example is footbinding, which entailed considerable pain in childhood and lifelong mobility difficulties (Drucker 1981, Fan Hong 1997, Lee 1981, Levy 1966). In late imperial China, footbinding was practiced in almost all social classes. The desirable female adult foot was between three and five inches long and was the ultimate in aesthetics and erotica. The smaller the foot and the more immobile the woman, the greater her social

status. In effect, footbinding increased the subordination of women and confined them to private and domestic spheres of activity. Above all, footbinding consolidated perceived parallels between femaleness, weakness and impairment by physically impairing girls and women.

Parallels between femaleness, weakness and impairment were also reflected in the Yang-Yin dualism (Gilmartin *et al* 1994, Guisso 1981, Guisso & Johanssen 1981). Yin represented femaleness, the moon, darkness, coldness and also weakness. Although Yang-Yin dualism held both elements as complementary, it was certainly not the case that the complementarity was equal. The critical point here is that harmony and hierarchy were not mutually exclusive concepts (Guisso 1981). Yang was superior, Yin was inferior: "The ruler is *yang*, the subject *yin*; the father is *yang*, the son *yin*; the husband is *yang*, the wife *yin*" (Guisso 1981, p. 49). It was not uncommon for individuals, male and female, with impairments to be represented as weak and inferior. After all, real or perceived weakness was the basis on which pity and privileges were granted by the benevolent ruler, philanthropic socialites and extended lineage members (Ebrey 1984, Handlin-Smith 1987, Hulsewé 1987, Will & Wong 1991).

The cosmo-medical concept of fetal poison [*tai du*] constitutes a further dovetailing of disability and patriarchy (Furth 1987). Preventing disorder in the foetus and infant was a mother's responsibility: if the mother had bad thoughts, touched bad things, saw bad sights or behaved in any way which deviated from Confucian norms of wifedom and motherhood, disorder ensued and was manifest in impairment and illness in the child. In this way, fetal poison controlled the actions and thoughts of women in the household, thereby strengthening patriarchy (Furth 1987), whilst simultaneously accentuating the undesirability of impairment, thereby strengthening disablism. The overlapping discourses of bodily variation or weakness, disruption and disorder contrived to shape the construction and perception of disability and also the construction and perception of gender:

On the one hand, women were the sickly sex, physical weaklings benignly dependent in a paternalistic social order; on the other they were sources of the destructive emotions and pollutions that kill babies, emblematic of their capacity to disrupt the family (Furth 1987, p. 9).

Viewed as both dependent on the family for personhood and as disruptive to the lineage,

able-bodied women and disabled women and men threatened the patriarchy and hierarchy in which Confucian ideals were grounded. Thus, discourses of patriarchy and disability merged to uphold dominant values of Harmony, conceived as contingent on the strict preservation of hierarchy and family-centred roles (Furth 1987).

Race discourses were rooted in a Chinese (predominantly but not exclusively Confucian) worldview which placed China at the centre of the cosmos and at the apex of civilization and culture (Dikötter 1992). Only those in the Chinese empire were fully human. Outgroups from border tribes to European traders, from foreign slaves to foreign slavemasters, were all conceived as possessing dubious humanity. In literary and linguistic representation, the outsider was dehumanized. As Frank Dikötter rightly insists, naming outsiders as "devils" and "barbarians" was a means by which they might be "conceptually eliminated" and thereby the Confucian worldview might be kept intact. Dikötter maintains that use of animal radicals in names given to outgroups is not merely derogatory but "part of a mentality that integrated the concept of civilization with the idea of humanity, picturing the alien groups ...as distant savages hovering on the edge of bestiality" (Dikötter 1992, p. 4).

The overlap between race and disability is evident in the very language of impairment. Outsiders were "just another variety of physically defective creatures" (Dikötter 1992, p. 14). Thus, since the Han, Japanese people had been denigrated as "dwarf-slaves" [*wonu*]. In ways comparable to ancient Greece, tales of mythical and monstrous races, marked out by exceptional bodies, were kept alive by interlinked discourses of disability and race (Dikötter 1992, Garland 1995, Garland Thomson 1996, 1997a).

The animalization, demonization and dehumanization of disabled people was exemplified in phrases such as "crippled spirits, blind ghosts" and characters, mostly referring to "idiots", "simpletons" or "madmen", which were framed by animal Radicals or contained components denoting devils or inanimate objects (see Table 2). Some of these, it may be argued, conveyed appearance (terms for hunched-back), behaviour (the link between madness and rabies, see Wong & Wu 1936), or causation (madness-inducing worms or demonic influences). Yet, the frequency with which impairment words are used as abusive terms in everyday discourse in the 1990s, combined with Dikötter's findings on imperial Chinese discourses of race and Emily Honig's work on

native place identity (Honig 1989), suggests that animal, devil and object associations carry a deeper and more disturbing significance.

The low place of animals in the Confucian worldview, and the liminal and threatening position occupied by spirits and ghosts, suggest that such characters communicated the diminished personhood of people and social groups with visible bodymind variations, whether those variations related to physical or mental attributes, skin pigmentation, hair colour or speech patterns (Dikötter 1992). The end result is the same: to dehumanize.

Table 2: Characters which indicate diminished humanity or personhood

| <u>Character</u> | <u>Key Component</u> | <u>Translation</u> |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>yu</i> | <i>Monkey</i> | <i>stupid, idiot</i> |
| <i>lu</i> | <i>Fish</i> | <i>stupid, idiot</i> |
| <i>ai</i> | <i>Horse</i> | <i>stupid, idiot</i> |
| <i>tao</i> | <i>Wood</i> | <i>stupid, blockhead</i> |
| <i>dai</i> | <i>Wood</i> | <i>stupid</i> |
| <i>chun</i> | <i>Worm</i> | <i>stupid</i> |
| <i>kuang</i> | <i>Dog</i> | <i>insane</i> |
| <i>ji</i> | <i>Dog</i> | <i>insane</i> |
| <i>tuo-bei</i> | <i>Camel</i> | <i>hunched-back</i> |
| <i>tai-bei</i> | <i>Old Horse</i> | <i>hunched-back</i> |
| <i>jian</i> | <i>Horse</i> | <i>deformed, defect</i> |
| <i>hui</i> | <i>Devil or Ghost</i> | <i>deformed</i> |
| <i>chou</i> | <i>Devil or Ghost</i> | <i>physical/moral deformity</i> |

Source: based on Mathews (1943) and Karlgren (1972).

But why? What purpose did it serve the ruling élite and ruling ideologies?

Variations in body shape, mental ability or skin colour allowed the conceptual elimination of perceived threats to Chinese imperial supremacy (Dikötter 1992). Any outgroup which might have had a different cosmology was a direct threat to the maintenance of Confucian ideologies, élites and empire. The identification of outgroups as Other usefully reinforced the cohesiveness of the Chinese empire as a cultural, social, political and historical entity (Dikötter 1992). Sociocultural cohesiveness was the vital aspect of the imperial project: the maintenance of a unified Chinese empire depended on the maintenance of an imperial worldview and a strict and hierarchical role-system. Variation was thus a useful tool in defining a cultural self in opposition to a cultural

Other, both within and outside the Chinese empire (Dikötter 1992).

Non-Chinese outsiders, then, were the threat from without; disabled people and women were the threat within. All were embodiments of the cultural Other: not Chinese, not able-bodied, not male. They were inscribed with the cosmological discourse of disorder and inferiority and, on that basis, disabled people, women and outsiders were dehumanized and subordinated. Construed as heterodox or potentially disruptive, they were confined to the margins of the household, of society or of the empire. In so doing, the Confucianist hegemony of the normative body could deepen its roots; prevailing orthodoxies of personhood could endure; ruling ideologies and values could be upheld; and the rigid role-system on which empire, elite and Order depended could be ideologically and practically sustained.

* * *

Aud Talle has argued with respect to the Kenyan Maasai that to "name the difference and mark it ... indicates acceptance" (1995, p. 71). I suggest that the same does not hold true with the Chinese language of impairment. Characters that convey appearance, manner or notions of causation might be evaluated as neutral. However, the use of dehumanizing and Otherness-creating symbols to denote individuals with impairment must surely be taken as evidence of a cultural intolerance of impairment. This claim is well supported by evidence of dominant socio-familial responses to impairment, analysis of the ideals and functions of the imperial state (including the role of family, welfare and medicine) and, scholarship on the subordination of women and dehumanization of non-Chinese races and groups in imperial China, as I have argued so far. But perhaps I have yet to convince that there is a case for talking about disability rather than impairment? Hopefully, the final part of this chapter will provide sufficiently conclusive evidence to that end.

State Constructions: disability and normalcy

Already in this chapter, reference has been made to "normalcy" and cosmological notions of a normative body and mind. The notion of normalcy is central to constructions of disability in the west (see Chapter One). I believe that the concept is

also central in imperial Chinese constructions of the body and of disability.

Earlier in this chapter, a brief analysis of the language of impairment revealed a Chinese conceptualisation of bodily variation as undesirable, signifying departure from Tao and embodying Disorder. To resume that analysis: many of the characters in Table 1 were framed by the Sickness Radical and derived meaning from the combination of the Sickness Radical and a component signifying the "desired" state. For example: "idiot" comprises the Sickness Radical plus the component for "knowledge"; "epilepsy" comprises the Sickness Radical plus the component for "leisure"; "lame" comprises the Sickness Radical plus components for "add" and "flesh". Here, a polarity, not a complementarity, of normative and non-normative is apparent. The use of the Sickness Radical supports the perception of impairment as undesirable because non-normative and dis-ordering.

To illustrate this point further, it is useful to consider three conceptual characters: *quan*, *zheng* and *ding*. Each reveals what Nicolaisen (1995, p. 39) has termed the "cultural perception of the biological constitution of the human being itself" which, in China, is a fixed and narrow notion of a normative body and mind.

Quan translates as entire, whole, perfect and complete. To be complete was to be perfect, and one was either complete or incomplete. For example, when the *quan* character was framed by the Ox Radical, it described: "a bullock of all one colour, perfect in all its parts and fit for sacrifice"; when framed by the Sickness Radical, it meant to cure or restore to wholeness (Mathews 1943). But the clearest example of *quan* in framing disability is its use in legal codes dating back to the Qin Dynasty:

Unauthorizedly to kill a child [is punished by] tattoing and being made a grain-pounder [hard labour]. When the child is newly born and has strange things on its body, as well when it is deformed, to kill it is not to be considered a crime (from Qin Dynasty legal codes, translated by Hulsewé 1985, p. 92).

The Chinese term translated above as "deformed" is literally "not complete" [*bu quan*]. The same notion is conveyed in the Han dynasty aphorism *can que bu quan* [deficient and incomplete]; whilst its antonym *wanzheng wuque* [whole and without defect] carries us into the next conceptual character (Huang 1964).

Zheng denoted the orderly, proper, regular and orthodox. It encapsulated the essence of Confucianism as a philosophy which prized orthodoxy and the middle way: there was no room for excess, extremes or deviation. As regards the body, any variation or difference was undesirable *because* it was viewed as unorthodox. For example, the still common phrase *wu guan bu zheng* [the five parts not in their proper place] would have denoted physical, sensorial, behavioural impairments, facial disfigurement and diseases like scabies or leprosy (Schak 1988). The phrase underscores the perception that to have an impairment was to be "not orderly" as well as "not complete". In short, difference was heterodox.

Where *quan* and *zheng* might be situated within cosmologies, the third character, *ding*, spans the cosmological and public spheres. *Ding* is one of the "Heavenly Stems". It is also an administrative category which, throughout much of imperial Chinese history, denoted the taxable individual: able-bodied, able-minded, male and aged between sixteen and sixty (Twitchett 1970, Ho 1959).

The classification of *ding* enshrined the normative bodymind, taking normalcy out of the cosmological and embedding it in public life and bureaucracy. The *ding* was the focus of population registration and liable to military and labour conscription, grain and monetary taxation. The character itself exudes the hegemony of dominant, able-bodied, male normalcy which marked public life in imperial China and the legacy of which is still very much apparent in the 1990s: *ding* is a picture of a nail - solid, strong, straight and useful.

These findings reveal that bodily and mental or behavioural variations were significant in ancient and imperial Chinese culture. Variation was cast in cosmological discourse as counter to the normative body. The fact that this occurred within a context which set the individual as a relational, family-centred being, and was otherwise known for a worldview premised on complementarity, flux and balance, does little to soften the exacting notions of normalcy. These notions are nowhere more marked than in the three conceptual characters, *quan*, *zheng* and *ding*. *Ding* in particular spanned cosmological and public realms as an administrative norm: those considered not *ding* were set apart and categorised according to what may be the oldest disability labels in recorded history.

Codes, Categories and Exemptions

Mention has been made of the pre-eminence of the political sphere in imperial Chinese history. As already stated, China's achievements in institutionalising and implementing administrative control over so vast an empire are considerable (Gernet 1988). Therein lie the clues for the next subject of inquiry. In a similar vein to Deborah Stone's (1984) analysis of disability as an administrative construct (specifically, a categorical resolution of the need to separate the deserving from the undeserving poor), the following analysis presents the case for disability in imperial China as an administrative and legal construct, the by-product of imperial centralized administration and the state's need to maintain a unified empire.

Western knowledge of imperial Chinese administration owes much to the scholarship of Ho P'ing-ti (1959) and Dennis Twitchett (1970). Ho P'ing-ti offers a detailed study of Ming dynasty population registration, with special attention to the first Ming emperor (1368-1398) whose attempts to register the *entire* Chinese population (some sixty-five million people) were both vigorous and innovative. Population registration had been conducted in preceding dynasties, but seldom had it been done so thoroughly or with such effect. The Registers of the Ming were "warp and weft of a complex fiscal structure which, with certain modification in the course of time, lasted til the end of the Ch'ing period" (Ho 1959, p. 4). The method of registration was to organize all households into groups of 110 households called a *li*. In each *li*, the ten household heads due to pay the largest amount of tax (based on the number of taxable individuals and other assets) were selected to be the *li* headmen and the remaining 100 households were subdivided into ten *jia*. Those who were perceived unable to do labour or military service were classed together as "odds and ends" (*qiling*), namely: widowers, widows, orphans, family-less adults, older people, children under ten years old, immigrants and, unsurprisingly, disabled people (Ho 1959).

As might be expected in the context of a centralized bureaucratic state, there were clear guidelines as to who would be regarded as disabled, guidelines which were in use during the Tang dynasty (618-907) and which were probably not new then. In fact, the ancient classic of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* list four impairments or diseases which signalled exclusion from social affairs: *tu* (a scalp disease, possibly alopecia), *miao* (a

visual impairment, possibly trachoma), *bo* (lameness) and *lu* (deformed spine or body) (Lu & Needham 1987). All four were described as *fei ji* - a term which corresponds to the second of the three disability grades specified in the Tang dynasty classification. More precise than general reference to the "infirm" or "unfit", and disconcertingly close to popular western conceptualisations, the imperial Chinese categorisation comprised three grades of impairment, divided according to the level of severity: *can ji* (grade one: minor impairments); *fei ji* (grade two: moderate impairments) and *du ji* (grade three: severe impairments):

All such persons as are blind in one eye, deaf in both ears, lacking two fingers on one hand or three toes from one foot, who have lost either their big toe or thumb, who are bald-headed and without hair, have a chronic discharge, dropsy or any large tumours, shall be considered partially disabled (can ji).

Such persons as are idiots or dumb, dwarfed, with deformed spines, or lacking one limb, shall be considered seriously disabled (fei ji).

Such persons as are completely insane, lacking two limbs, or blind in both eyes, shall be considered totally disabled (du ji).

(from the Hu Ling or Household Statutes, cited in Twitchett 1970, p. 212f).

The classifications were deployed in all facets of administration. In financial administration, membership of a disability category qualified an individual for exemption from military and labour conscription and reduced taxation (Twitchett 1970). In land allocation (for which the Tang dynasty was noted), disabled people were allocated less land than non-disabled people. Able-bodied adult males were granted 100 *mou* (13.3 acres), of which 20 *mou* was land held in perpetuity and could therefore be handed on to descendants. In contrast, those belonging to a disability category were allocated a mere 40 *mou*, of which none was held in perpetuity (Twitchett 1970). Furthermore, in imperial China's extensive legal codes from the Tang to the Qing dynasty, and probably dating back to the Han, special allowance was made for disabled offenders in the second and third grades [*fei ji* and *du ji*] (see Bünger 1950, Chiu 1980, Ch'u 1961, Hulsewé 1985 on Qin dynasty codes, Johnson 1979 for a translation of Tang dynasty codes, Staunton 1966 and Alabaster 1968 for a translation of Qing dynasty codes). Those in the second grade were treated on the same basis as offenders aged over seventy or under fifteen years of age. Those in the third grade were granted even more

leniency alongside offenders aged over eighty or under ten years of age.

So, it would appear that in the name of benevolence, the imperial state sought to provide, nurture and safeguard the wellbeing of the people. In the name of empire (and empires are costly to run), the state exacted heavy demands of taxation, military and labour conscription. To do this efficiently, a centralized bureaucracy was established which extended into the village and across the empire. The development of the state led to and was made possible by rigorous population control, which utilised all available tools, including: familial authority, medicine, moralistic discourse, rigid social hierarchies and meticulous codification and categorisation. By design or default, each of these worked to widen the real and perceived gap between the normative and the Other, between the *ding* and the non-*ding*, between disabled and non-disabled people.

Impairment was grounds for special privileges, a sign of imperial paternalism, but it became an administrative, legislative and financial category - a category of disability - which cemented the position of people with impairments as different and as diminished persons, in direct opposition to cosmological norms of *quan* and *zheng* and the juridical/administrative norm of *ding*. What may have begun as a compassionate and helpful attempt to acknowledge economic hardship premised on impairment became a construct which institutionalised the Otherness of people with impairments as diminished persons, whilst conveying and reinforcing the normative standard of the *ding*.

Conclusion

The chapter began with an exploration of impairment (along lines similar to those used in ethnographies of contemporary cultures); and has ended at a point where it becomes more appropriate to talk of *disability* and *disabled people*. The evidence and analysis presented have spanned the structural and the cultural, incorporating socio-political institutions and ideologies, alongside cosmological perceptions. The breadth of analysis has inevitably weakened the degree to which important dimensions have been fully described, whilst several aspects have been left out entirely - not least the impact of economic change on historical constructions of disability and any sense of re-

constructions of disability in different dynasties and regions. The decision to set economics aside can be attributed to my own lack of skills (I would never claim to understand macro-economics), but also reflects the undeniable pre-eminence of the socio-political sphere in imperial Chinese history. If there are realms of imperial life which operate above and beyond economic change, they are surely the ideological, cosmological and administrative realms of the imperial bureaucracy and the family. So, whilst the picture presented here is partial, it at least highlights the most important dimensions of disability in imperial China.

Chapter Four

Chinese Debates, Western Influences

In this chapter - the second of three chapters on the historical construction of disability in China - the influence of western institutions and ideologies on Chinese macro-level constructions of body, disability and development forms the first area of inquiry. Disability-related missionary activities are explored first, along with the introduction of western constructs of body form and body fitness. The second area of inquiry corresponds to internal Chinese debates on constructions of the body, and on the relationship between body, nation and development. It is argued that the intense, often iconoclastic, nationalistic debates which marked the late 19th and early 20th centuries in China had serious implications for the state/social perception of disabled people - implications which become more evident as the thesis unfolds.

In Chapter One, reference was made to a shared past as well as a shared present in the global history of disability and development. This chapter is about that shared past, with regard to disability in China. It is about the arrival and influence of western missionaries in creating new forms or reworking old forms of institutional provision. It is also about the broader and deeper ways in which western institutions and ideologies have influenced constructions of the body and disability - a subject which has yet to be explored either in relation to China or western imperialism and disability more generally. But above all, it is about Chinese debates that took place during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; debates which have proved decisive in shaping the institutions and ideologies of twentieth century China, post-Mao China included.

The chapter falls into two halves (following some historical scene setting) which analyse western influences and Chinese debates respectively. In the course of the

chapter, two arguments are put forward. First, that missionary involvement in disability and related activities charted a new course in state disability provision in China, a course which involved a greater emphasis on segregated provision, residential care and sheltered employment than had hitherto been the case. Secondly, that the context and content of Chinese debates and western influences in late Qing and early Republican China provided conditions ripe for a radical new discourse of body, nation and development - a discourse which was premised on a crumbling imperial worldview and a search for a national identity.

Setting the Scene

The picture of late nineteenth-century Qing dynasty China is one of social unrest and economic disintegration (Bastid-Bruguiere 1980, Mann Jones 1978, Fairbank & Twitchett 1978, 1980, Spence 1990). The century was peppered with large-scale popular rebellions, such as the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864, Kuhn 1978). Social unrest was symptomatic of economic dislocation within the Qing empire, coupled with a succession of famines, floods, droughts and natural disasters (de Crespigny 1992, Feuerwerker 1980). The Manchu emperor, it seemed, was unable to hold onto the Mandate of Heaven (see Chapter Three).

Internal chaos was supplemented by external disasters. The inefficacy and impotence of the Manchu court and China herself was thrown into sharp relief by repeated humiliations at the hands of foreign powers (Hsu 1980, Fairbank 1986, Spence 1990). If the first half of the nineteenth century had been a catalogue of diplomatic rebuffs by the Qing Court against "barbarian" envoys such as Lords Macartney, Amherst and Napier, then the second half of the century was a catalogue of Qing military defeats and unequal treaties, beginning with the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842, in the wake of the first Opium War (Hsu 1980, Fairbank 1986, Spence 1990). The treaties which followed were variations on a theme of huge indemnities; cession of territory, creation of treaty ports and recognition of foreign spheres of influence; fiscal, legal and residential privileges to foreign merchants, missionaries and diplomats in Chinese ports and, following the 1858 Treaty of Tianjin, throughout China; and the infamous most-favoured-nation clause, whereby any privileges gained by one foreign power

were extended to others (Fairbank 1978 *inter alia*). By the turn of the century, the British, French, Americans, Germans, Italians and Russians were all benefiting from ports and privileges. So, too, was Japan - and it was surely the crushing defeat inflicted on the Chinese in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95, and the subsequent Treaty of Shimonoseki, that finally sealed the fate of the Qing dynasty and triggered ever more radical Chinese agendas for change (de Crespigny 1992, Fairbank 1978, Spence 1981, 1990).

The last decades of the Qing dynasty and the first decades of the twentieth century were marked by internal attempts to explain a shattered Chinese worldview and disintegrating Chinese empire (Chang 1980, Furth 1983, Dittmer & Kim 1993, Schwartz 1964, 1983, Spence 1981). China had proven technologically, militarily and economically inferior to the west and to Japan. This inferiority did not diminish with the advent of China's "Self-Strengthening Movement" (which sought to reform China by borrowing ideas from the west whilst maintaining core principles of Chinese culture and structure, see Kuo 1978, Schwartz 1964 *inter alia*); nor did it evaporate with the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 and the momentous shift from Empire to Republic which that entailed (Spence 1990). Barely four years after China was declared a Republic, Japan succeeded in forcing its Twenty-One Demands on China to widespread Chinese disbelief. International failure to revoke Japan's claims following the end of the first World War fanned the flames of social unrest and intellectual fervour, variously referred to as the New Culture Movement (ca.1915-1924) and the May Fourth movement (Bianco 1971, Furth 1983, Goldman 1977, Lee 1983, Schwartz 1983). This was an era of intense Chinese intellectual creativity and often ruthless cultural iconoclasm; an era characterised by the quest for a new cultural and national identity for China, and by conflict and contact with the west (Kim & Dittmer 1993, Hershatter *et al* 1996, Hunt 1993).

The one-hundred year period of Sino-western contact following the 1839-1942 Opium War and preceding the formation of the People's Republic of China makes for fascinating reading. The period also assumes particular significance in a thesis on disability and development. Throughout this period, disability-related ideas, ideologies and institutions from the west entered China, sometimes through missionary activity,

sometimes through translated texts. For the purposes of disability history, the most visible western influences were those linked to missionary activity in medical, educational and social reform. These influences are outlined first, before exploring less visible but arguably more important influences which have shaped macro-level constructions of the body and disability.

Western Influences

The period between the Opium Wars and the Communist Liberation of China witnessed the introduction of western medical, educational and social institutions and ideas to the Chinese landscape. Many of these approaches and institutions would be emulated by Chinese reformers, philanthropists and politicians, and ultimately taken over and expanded by the post-1949 Communist state (see Chapter Five). In recognition of this, it is appropriate to review the key areas of disability-related missionary activity in late imperial and Republican China.

Orphanages, Hospitals and Schools

The story of western missionary movements in China is one that has caught the imagination of several China-watchers on both sides of the Atlantic and along all points of the ecumenical spectrum (Barnett & Fairbank 1985, Cohen 1963, 1978, Hyett 1976, Latourette 1966, Wiest 1988, Whyte 1988). Setting aside the sixteenth-century sojourns of Jesuit priests and scientists at the imperial Chinese court (see Spence 1980), the missionary story begins at the outset of the nineteenth-century with the arrival of Robert Morrison, an Englishman who entered China on the back of the East India Company in 1807 (Latourette 1966). His steps were followed by other Europeans and, from the 1830s, by American missionaries (Wiest 1988, Kessler 1996, Mungello 1994). Their missions were confined to the treaty ports and immediate hinterland until the 1860s when, in the wake of the Treaty of Tianjin, mission stations spread throughout the empire and foreigners took up residence inland under the full protection of extraterritoriality rights (Bowers 1973). The stage was set for a full-blown Mission China.

Conversions were few, given the size of the Chinese population and the unrelenting efforts of ever larger cohorts of foreign missionaries (Fairbank 1986, Kessler 1996, Spence 1990). Even where converts were won, there was often a question-mark over the nature of conversion; were converts genuine believers or were they "rice-Christians" whose conversion reflected economic need rather than genuine Christian conviction? The distinction mattered little outside the fold; the life of a rice-Christian was as precarious as that of any missionary when anti-foreign sentiments ran high (Fairbank 1986). At most, there may have been some 100,000 Chinese converts in China at the time of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 (Fairbank 1986). Hardly a force to reckon with, then; which is why a more accurate assessment of the missionary impact must centre on institutions rather than individuals.

A focus on institutions sits well with the general tenor of mission movements in China and elsewhere during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Mallory *et al* 1993, Kalyanpur 1996, Vaughan 1991). The evangelical imperative and drive for souls was gradually superseded by a more social gospel (Watson 1930, Whyte 1988). This was only in part a calculated move to use medicine, welfare and education to win souls (the nature of the mission calling was complex, and it is not always constructive to dismiss missionaries as mere agents of imperialism); rather, many missionaries were driven to a nobler calling, eager to save souls but also eager to save lives and improve livelihoods (de Crespigny 1992, Kessler 1996, Whyte 1988, Wiest 1988). For the missionaries and their sponsors, that meant orphanages, medical and educational provision, social reform and famine relief.

Orphanages were an obvious area for missionary involvement, especially since infant protection and "childhood" were on the social agenda in Victorian England and elsewhere in Europe and America (Davidson *et al* 1994, Humphries & Gordon 1992, Rose 1986, Stevens 1995). Since the days of the Jesuit priest, Father Ripa (whose gruesome accounts of infanticide in imperial China have already been mentioned), the souls of abandoned babies had been targeted as ripe for easy salvation. Gathering abandoned babies, baptising them to secure entry to Heaven, bringing them up as God's own if they managed to survive beyond infancy - these formed a significant part of early mission activity, especially in Catholic missions (Latourette 1966, Wiest 1988).

The survival rate was tragically low at 3-6% (Wiest 1988). Within the mission community, high mortality rates were attributed to the near-death situation of most of the infants abandoned or deposited at the orphanage. A different story was occasionally circulated in the Chinese locality, fuelled by anti-foreign sentiment and suspicion of these western men and women who paid a few cents to those who brought a dying infant to their gates. Rumours about missionaries who used the eyes, brains and hearts of their charges to make western medicine, who stockpiled the bodies of dead infants under the floor, possibly for future meals, were not infrequent (Wiest 1988, Spence 1990). In fact, the same rumours had been spread against Jesuit missionaries in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and would be used again, alongside charges of espionage and counter-revolutionary activity, in attempts to discredit western missionaries and force their expulsion from the newly Liberated and staunchly anti-American People's Republic of China (Wiest 1988).

Orphanages were set up as part of many (especially Catholic) mission stations and often evolved into general welfare homes for older women, homeless children and disabled children. Wiest's account of the Maryknollers, an American Catholic mission movement active in China from 1918 to 1955, refers to an orphanage in Yeungkong with an attached home which housed thirty blind and lame girls and ten homeless boys in 1923. A similar institution in Loting housed 55 orphans and blind girls in 1924 and twice that number by 1938 (Wiest 1988).

How far these endeavours were viewed as new and uniquely western is difficult to gauge, since the idea of providing refuge for abandoned children, orphans and "the indigent" tallied with long-standing Confucian principles of imperial welfare provision and social relief (see Chapter Three). Yet it is likely that missionary orphanages and institutions popularised these forms of residential welfare, set them up in new regions away from the capital and treaty ports, and introduced an element of *long-term* residential welfare in contrast to the short-term, emergency-related welfare homes which appear more characteristic of imperial state welfare. It is also safe to suppose that imperial benevolence to China's "indigent", through poverty relief, refuge or medicine, diminished over the nineteenth century as socio-economic dislocation squeezed local communities and imperial coffers alike (Spence 1990)

The distrust that sometimes engulfed missionary-run orphanages was less evident in the sphere of medical practice. Western medicine, dispensaries and hospitals were often viewed as the most successful facet of the mission movement and the most likely to win the support of local people (Bowers 1973, Croizier 1968, 1975, Spence 1990). The first trained medical missionary was Dr. Peter Parker, who was immediately active in setting up the Canton Ophthalmic Hospital in 1835 (Bowers 1973). Parker's lead was followed by hundreds of medical missionaries over the next decades, whose work centred on curative medicine and individual illness. Public health was not a missionary concern until, interestingly enough, fear of plague in colonial enclaves put public health on western agendas (Benedict 1996). The growth of medical mission was impressive. According to Latourette, a major chronicler of western mission in China, there were 166 mission hospitals, 241 dispensaries and 301 trained doctors (of whom almost one-third were women) among 3,445 missionaries in China in 1905. Ten years later, in 1915, 142 nurses had swelled the ranks of trained doctors, the number of mission hospitals had doubled and the number of in-patients had trebled (Latourette 1966).

Hospitals, as with orphanages, were not new to China: charity hospitals and dispensaries for those in dire poverty or who lacked family support were a recognised part of the imperial mandate, on paper at least (see Chapter Three). Yet Croizier (1968, p. 43) believes that the hospital can be regarded as the "most conspicuous institution brought by the medical missionaries". Again, the task of disentangling western innovation and Chinese tradition is a tricky one. I suspect that, as with orphanages, missionary innovations in medical provision relate more to the size, location and long-term nature of western-style hospitals, and to the establishment of non-seasonal institutions which lasted beyond and in spite of emergency situations and which were set up outside the capital and treaty ports.

One form of missionary institution which stands out as wholly new and western is the "mental asylum". Some have argued the existence of ancient Chinese predecessors (Hillier & Jewell 1983) but the general view is that the dubious honour of establishing China's first mental asylum should be afforded to the medical missionary, Dr. John Kerr, and dated 1897 (Wong 1950, Hillier & Jewell 1983, Sidel & Sidel 1982; see also

Ernst 1987 on European asylums in colonial India). Kerr and company set the seeds for a rapid expansion of asylums in post-1949 China, although the vagaries of war and economic disintegration, combined with belief in the supernatural causation of mental health difficulties, traditions of keeping all within the family, and a disregard for the apparently family-less who roamed the streets and begged, resulted in the haphazard development of asylums prior to 1949. Even Kerr's asylum closed in the 1930s (Sidel & Sidel 1982).

Seeds were also sown by the active promulgation of western biomedicine to Chinese people through organisations such as the China Medical Missionary Association, which first met in 1890, and the genesis and expansion of western medical training colleges, most notably the Rockefeller Foundation-funded Peking Union Medical College (Bowers 1973, Chen 1989, Croizier 1975). Medical education was part and parcel of medical missionary work (Croizier 1975, Kleinman 1973, Latourette 1966). After all, the missionary calling was to train local people, ideally converting them in the process, to take up the mission agenda. Wherever possible, medical education was encouraged within China or overseas. In the first half of the twentieth century, thousands of Chinese students would travel to Japan, Europe and America to study western medicine and return to China to practice and to train others, including several of modern China's most prominent reformers, revolutionaries and intellectuals (Croizier 1975, Furth 1983, Lu Xun 1981, Schwartz 1983, Spence 1981).

At this point, it is worth reminding oneself that the story of western medicine in China is no simple tale of wholesale, wholehearted acceptance on the part of Chinese people. Suspicion of the missionary did not evaporate in the promulgation of biomedical science, although several have commented that medical missionaries were more likely to be well received, especially where consultations at their clinics were free of charge (Wiest 1998, Croizier 1968, 1965). Testimonies by successfully treated Chinese people of the efficacy of western medicine paved the way for greater tolerance (Wiest 1988). Forms of mission medicine in which western expertise was demonstrably greater, such as the surgical removal of tumors and cataracts, proved effective in winning praise if not converts. Medical missionaries capitalised on their expertise. Parker's Canton Ophthalmic Hospital was the first of many missionary-run institutions which

concentrated on eye conditions (Miles n.d.).

Missionary involvement in the lives of Chinese disabled people may have been more widespread than the extant record suggests. There is evidence of a gradual growth of medical, educational and welfare provision introduced and run by missionaries, and targeted at certain groups of disabled people (Latourette 1966). It was in the missionary heyday that China's first schools for blind children and deaf children were founded (Hyatt 1976, Miles n.d.). By the turn of the century, schools for blind children had been established in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Hankou, Shanghai and Beijing (Latourette 1966). By 1949, in the wake of international and civil war, 40 schools for blind or deaf children with a total enrolment of 2,322 were counted (Ministry of Education statistics 1983).

What do we know of the development of special education in missionary China? From field reports, correspondence and missionary journals like *The Chinese Repository* (see *TCR 1832 a,b*), analysed by Latourette (1966), Miles (n.d.), Hyatt (1976) and others, we know that several missionaries (including William Moon, William Hill Murray and William Campbell) set their hand to modifying scripts to enable blind children to read, while others developed teaching and learning materials for use with deaf children. We know also that curricula in such schools generally comprised vocational training plus literacy, and that most (if not all) schools were segregated and either began as or evolved into residential workshops, in which residents earned a living through the practice of trades and crafts acquired at the school, such as book-binding, music, basket-making and carpentry (Latourette 1966, Miles n.d., Wiest 1988). Interestingly, some missionaries took the trouble of finding out what vocations were commonly followed by Chinese blind and deaf people before providing relevant training (Miles n.d.). Others endeavoured to find work for school graduates in the wider community (Hyatt 1976). Even so, vocational, separate, residential education was established as the most appropriate form of education for blind and deaf children, designed to provide them with the tools to be "self-supporting" and "useful" (Miles n.d.).

An unpublished paper by Mike Miles on nineteenth century pioneer teachers of blind people in China and India has been particularly helpful in painting a picture of missionary involvement in disability in China (Miles n.d.). In his paper, Miles tells the

story of Agnes Gutzlaff and Mrs. Mary Gutzlaff. Agnes was one of several Chinese girls who had been found by or deposited with Mrs. Mary Gutzlaff and her husband Carl Gutzlaff (a prominent early missionary who died in China in 1851, see Barnett & Fairbank 1985). The task of educating the "rescued" blind girls was taken up by Mrs. Mary Gutzlaff, who opened a small and integrated boarding school in Macau. Mary Gutzlaff then sent four blind girls, including Agnes, to Britain and three girls to America for instruction in Braille and teaching methods, with the noble intention that the girls would return and prove excellent teachers of other blind children. After thirteen years of education at the school of the London Society for Teaching the Blind to Read, Agnes returned to China - the only one of the seven girls to make the return journey (the others died very or relatively young, or remained overseas). Miles makes the point that Agnes was probably the first blind person of any nationality to be despatched to another country as a missionary worker.

Agnes's situation on her return to China was financially unstable, according also to J. Hudson Taylor, future founder of the China Inland Mission, who berated the Gutzlaffs and the China Evangelization Society for their irresponsibility in taking a "poor blind beggar girl", giving her a taste of the good life and then returning her to China with limited funds (Hudson Taylor 1856, cited in Miles n.d.). She arrived in Ningbo in 1856 to begin the work for which she had been trained. It appears that local suspicions of the missionary to whom Agnes was attached, Miss Aldersey - the "Witch of Ningpo", hindered Agnes's work initially but, by 1858, Agnes was teaching three blind girls and was involved in a "School of Industry for the Blind" which Miss Aldersey had founded in Ningbo city. The nature of the industrial school? The eleven residents made mats, straw shoes, stockings and string. Agnes also worked in rural areas, evangelizing as she went. A few years after the departure of Miss Aldersey, Agnes moved to Shanghai to continue her mission and, Miles notes, news of her activities becomes scarcer (Miles n.d.).

Educational and vocational provision for deaf children does not seem to have captured the missionary imagination in quite the same way, although some steps were taken along similar lines. Mrs Annette Thompson Mills is generally credited with the establishment of China's first school for deaf children (see Hyatt 1976 on Mills).

Annette Mills' interests had begun in America, with a half-brother who was deaf, a training as a teacher of deaf children, and headship of the Rochester School in Boston. Her marriage to China missionary, Charles Mills - who shared a personal interest in deafness since his son by a first marriage was deaf - brought Annette Mills to China and culminated in the "Chefoo School for the Deaf" in 1895. Deaf girls were admitted in 1907. Mrs Thompson Mills was as eager as any missionary to secure employment for her graduates (such as typesetting, tutoring, carpentry) and was funded in her endeavours by various associations for deaf people in the USA and UK, as well as Theodore Roosevelt and Yang Shixiang, Governor of Shandong Province (Hyatt 1976).

The establishment of segregated schools and industrial schools would prove enduring, and has lasted into the 1990s. Another area of mission work which won the admiration of some (but doubtless aroused the suspicion of others) was involvement with and creation of leper colonies. Wiest (1988) provides the most detailed account with regard to the Maryknoll movement's establishment of leper colonies, whilst Latourette's (1966) opus indicates the relatively extensive missionary interest in leprosy, partly explained by the prominence given to working with and healing people with leprosy in the New Testament Gospels.

Western missionaries, then, were directly involved in the lives of some (who knows how many) Chinese disabled people - those who were "rescued" from the streets and brought into schools for deaf or blind children, who were enlisted in industrial schools and trained to be "useful", whose cataracts were removed or whose leper villages were improved. The repercussions of this involvement go beyond individual lives. Institutional foundations were laid (which often tallied in some way with age-old, if under-implemented, Chinese notions of welfare) upon which Nationalist and Communist governments would build during the twentieth century (Wiest 1988). There would soon be more segregated schools for blind and deaf children; more industrial schools and workshops; more western medicine hospitals; more attention to leprosy and more welfare homes which provided long-term residential care for an amalgam of poor and disabled individuals, from orphans to elderly widows (see Chapters Five and Seven).

The relationship of mission, disability and development extends beyond the introduction of western-style disability-specific provision. Two other aspects of mission work also had a bearing on disability in China, because they prompted a reconfiguration of Chinese concepts of body and normalcy. They are the anti-footbinding movement and the introduction of western-style physical education and Olympic sports.

Anti-Footbinding, Pro-Fitness

Far more than for its special schools, the missionary movement in China is known for its early involvement in the movement against footbinding. Footbinding, discussed briefly in the previous chapter, was a Han Chinese custom which underlined women's subordinate position in the male-dominated Confucian hierarchy through defining women's aesthetic form and function. In form, women were to be fragile, delicate, tottering, unsteady and almost immobile. In function, they were confined to the private, domestic sphere, their roles defined by childbirth, chastity outside of marriage and chaste widowhood (Fan Hong 1997, Lee 1981, Levy 1966).

Many western women, some of them missionaries, some of them wives of missionaries, merchants and diplomats, witnessed the painful gait of their Chinese counterparts, learnt of the excruciating footbinding process to which young girls were submitted with life-long effect, and were moved to act and speak out against it. Footbinding was put on the mission list of Chinese social evils, alongside infanticide and opium addiction (Drucker 1981, Fan Hong 1997).

Westerners were not, it must be noted, the first to speak out against footbinding in China. The custom had never been tolerated among Manchu and Hakka peoples. Its abolition was advocated by the Taiping leaders. A handful of Confucian literati had, intermittently, written of the pain inflicted on women in the name of beauty and social bearing - in Li Ruzhen's great satirical novel, *Flowers in the Mirror*, gender roles were reversed and the senseless cruelty of footbinding was laid bare (Fan Hong 1997). Westerners were, however, unrelenting in their efforts to abolish footbinding. Various "natural-foot" and "anti-footbinding" societies were formed; tracts, posters, letters and

leaflets were distributed; and the Empress Dowager, Ci Xi, was petitioned (Fan Hong 1997). In 1902, an Anti-footbinding Edict was issued from the imperial court although it was decades before the practice fully died out, especially in rural areas where resilience to abolition was strongest.

In her monograph, *Footbinding, Feminism and Freedom*, Fan Hong is more generous than most in viewing missionaries as agents of positive change in pre-Liberation society. The picture painted by Fan Hong with regard to women's education in the nineteenth century is slightly misleading for, as Dikötter reminds in his study of sexuality in early Republican China, a highly literate women's culture was already emerging in the mid-Qing dynasty, accompanied by a growing press of popular self-education texts and women's literature (Dikötter 1995). Nevertheless, the missionary contribution to the anti-footbinding campaign, girls' education and the development of school and university curricula more generally cannot be overlooked, above all when *physical* education is the subject of analysis.

The introduction of physical education and competitive Olympic sports, via the missionary movement and the proliferation of international sports and athletics meets in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, has not aroused the scholarly interest it deserves. Fan Hong (1997) offers the most extensive study to date on sports and physical culture in late Qing and Republican China, although mention is also made in Susan Brownell's study of sports and body culture in post-Mao China (Brownell 1995).

Fan Hong's interest is the role of sports (Olympic, western, competitive) and physical education (or physical culture) in cultural, political and social change, and with reference to women's bodies. Central to Fan Hong's thesis is the way in which Chinese women's bodies were sites of cultural, political and social contestation and change between 1840 and 1949. The demise of footbinding was only one aspect of women's physical liberation. The participation of women in physical culture and competitive sports was another.

The tail-end of the nineteenth century saw widespread incorporation of Western military physical exercise and drill into Chinese military regimens in military academies and schools (Brownell 1995, Spence 1990). Long-standing indigenous forms of Chinese physical exercise were marginalised as western gymnastics took

centre-stage (Fan Hong 1997, Brownell 1995). Meanwhile, missionaries, the YMCA and YWCA, introduced track and field events and ball games to missionary schools and colleges. Local and regional athletics and team-game events featured more regularly in missionary schools and colleges in China's major cities. The First National Games was held in October 1910 in Nanjing, staged by the YMCA but with considerable Chinese interest (Brownell 1995, Fan Hong 1997). By this time, the Qing court - in its final desperate bid to introduce reforms and salvage a crumbling dynasty - had abolished the imperial civil service examinations (with its history of 1,300 years and its close association with Confucian ideologies) and replaced them with a national system of "modern" schools, with a "modern" curriculum - which included, incidentally, several hours per week for physical culture and sports, western-style (Fang Hong 1997).

This was a marked change in Chinese society, culture and education - and a change that, in due course, would take on wider political significance as the state increased its interest in the place of sports in nation-building. Already, sporting individuals were cutting off their queues, taking off their long scholarly gowns, and unbinding their feet to enable western-style participation in western sports (Brownell 1995, Fan Hong 1997). But this was only the beginning. Both footbinding and physical culture would serve as platforms for a re-forming of male and female Chinese bodies, in ways which would in turn re-form the relationship between the microcosm of the body and the macrocosm of the state, and engender a new and national/ist discourse of body, nation and development.

Linking Western Influences and Chinese Debates

For many westerners drawn to non-western contexts, the available and linguistically accessible historical record begins with the arrival of western colonialists and missionaries. The unfortunate consequence of this is the reduction of non-western disability history to a history of western imperialist intervention in disability (Mallory *et al* 1993, Kalyanpur 1996). In the Chinese case too, several of the most accessible historical sources on disability are the product of missionary and diplomatic labours. Burgess (1966), Legge (1962), Crofoot (1911), Doolittle (1868) and the compilers of

The Chinese Repository were not the first "foreign correspondents" writing from and on China for a western audience (Spence 1980), but they were among the first to communicate Chinese society to a sizeable western population. Fortunately, the extensive indigenous historical record ensures that western versions of Chinese disability history need not be confined to missionary travails and travellers tales, and therefore the impact of western influences on the course of Chinese disability history can, in theory, be contextualised more fully than has been the case elsewhere.

There are no easy answers to the question of *how* best to deal with western influences on Chinese culture, society and politics (Dikötter 1992, Spence 1980, 1981). The prevailing and, I believe, common-sense approach which frames much western thinking on late Qing and Republican China hangs on a fine but critical thread: the importance of Sino-western contact deserves recognition, but the temptation to reduce post-Opium War history to a simple Eurocentric tale of western impact and Chinese response must be resisted (Benedict 1996, Dittmer and Kim 1993, Dikötter 1992, Fairbank 1986, Hunt 1993, Spence 1981, 1990).

There is no doubt that western military, missionary and mercantile influences acted as outside stimuli to Chinese cultural, political and social change. The extent to which such stimuli are viewed as positive or negative depends entirely on the standpoint of the commentator. Thus, missionaries are variously cast as imperialist lackeys, brave and committed individuals, agents of positive change or disruptive elements. A fair appraisal of missionary influence (if there can be such a thing) would cite the low level of converts won, whilst also pointing to the unquantifiable impact of missionaries who educated and influenced individual men and women who would later rise to political and social prominence. It would also cite the equally unquantifiable influence of the introduction of western cultural, social and educational institutions to the Chinese landscape, at a time when Chinese reformers and revolutionaries were on the lookout for new institutions to replace out-moded and crumbling ones. But the central pillar of *any* appraisal of western influences must be that China's modern history is no less China-made than her imperial past. Western influences were meaningful only in so far as they were taken up, reworked and re-formed to suit Chinese internal debates of the nineteenth and twentieth century.

In China, the strength of the Sinocentric worldview and Confucian cosmologies discussed in the previous chapter meant that western impact was both more and less significant than has been the case elsewhere in the world (Dikötter 1992, Goldman 1977, Hunt 1993, Kim & Dittmer 1993, Lu Xun 1981, Schwartz 1964, 1983, Spence 1981). More significant because successive defeats by the West and Japan were keenly felt as cultural and national humiliations on an unprecedented scale. Less significant because the core process of cultural and national re-formation was without question an internal Chinese process. To conclude, if western seeds took root, they did so because Chinese agents chose to propagate and tend them. With this in mind, it is possible to continue the chapter and consider Chinese debates.

Chinese Debates

Living in Britain in the 1990s, it is impossible to grasp the magnitude of the debates which gripped urban and intellectual society in early twentieth century China. Certainly, there had always been dissenters, iconoclasts and revolutionary thinkers in Chinese history, but the early twentieth century was different all the same. Debates were fierce and felt. They were born of angst and anger, of humiliation. There was an urgency to the debates - a sense that something had to give, something had to be created, something had to change (Furth 1983, Goldman 1977, Lu Xun 1981).

Nation and Nationalism

China. All Under Heaven. The Middle Kingdom. The apex of human civilization and epitome of culture. No need for a foreign office, only a throne-room in which to accept tributes from vassal states. Then, the clash with the west and Japan. An entire ideological and belief system - even, one might say, an entire civilization - became unstitched.

Some sought to pick up the threads, to look back to a golden age and mend the system with rejuvenated Confucian conviction (Lee 1983, Spence 1990). Others went in search of synergy, hoping to harness the best of the west (mostly military, economic and medical technologies) for a modern system which would yet be fully, uniquely and

powerfully Chinese (Chang 1980, Hao 1980, Schwartz 1964). Variations on a theme of *tiyong* (Chinese learning for the socio-cultural "essence", western learning for "practical application" in the economy) and *guocui* ("national essence") were their banners (Chang 1980, Kuo 1978, Spence 1990). Others, whose voices were loud and became louder through the making and writing of history, wanted to tear the system down and start all over again, modelling China on the west (or Chinese constructs of the west) to create a new culture, a new society, a new *nation* (Lu Xun 1981, Schwartz 1983, Spence 1990).

It has been suggested that only in the twentieth-century can one begin to talk of "nationalism" in China (Kim & Dittmer 1993). Before then, China did not conceive herself a nation among other nations located in a "world order" premised on military, economic and political power. In the wake of western onslaught, the primary task, and subject of debate, for conservatives, syncretists and iconoclasts alike was *nation-building*.

The intense debates around nation-building and the growing expression of nationalist sentiment in Chinese urban culture (particularly from 1915 onwards) - both of which will now be enveloped in the convenient concept of nationalist discourse - have featured as the text of innumerable studies of twentieth century China. The histories of ideas, literature, politics, social change, discourses of race, sexuality, prostitution, sports and medicine - all can and have been explored with reference to Chinese discourses of nation (Brownell 1995, Croizier 1968, 1975, Dikötter 1992, 1995, Goldman 1977, Fan Hong 1997, Lee 1983, 1986, Hershatter 1996, Hunt 1993, Spence 1981 *inter alia*). The history of disability is no different.

Chinese discourses of the body and its relationship to the nation (accessible in secondary literature through studies of race, gender, sport, footbinding and medicine, and in primary literature through the writers, thinkers and journalists of the time) are vital to an understanding of the forming and re-forming of disability in China. It was at this time, through these internal and introspective debates, that the links between *nation*, *development* and *body* were first formed - links which have framed macro-level approaches to disabled people under Mao and under Deng and which will be a recurrent theme in this thesis.

The concepts of "nation" and "development" are so much a part of twentieth-century furniture in China and the west, that it is virtually impossible to conceive of them as ever being "new" or undergoing such dramatic reconstruction that only "new" conveys the breadth and depth of change. The newness of nation has already been explained with reference to the forced jolt into a hostile and western-dominated world order of nation states (Hunt 1993, Kim & Dittmer 1993). Concepts of development, of evolutionary progress [*jinhua*] and modernization [*shidaihua*] were also new (Dikötter 1992). Here it must be noted that the dominant imperial Chinese conceptualisation of history had been *cyclical* rather than *unilinear* (Fairbank & Reischauer 1989). Dynasties would rise and fall, to be replaced by other dynasties which would also rise and fall, just as individual lineages and clans saw fortunes swell only to subside again over generations. Furthermore, political stability, internal social order, a contented people, a benevolent ruler, and the ascendancy of the cultural over the martial functioned as the principal measures of civilization and right rule (see Chapter Three). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, these measures were variously supplemented, eclipsed or usurped by new ways of understanding the past, present and future, and by new ways of measuring success on an international scale (Dikötter 1992, Hershatter 1996, Hunt 1993). Economic (industrial) and technological development, military strength and international power soared in importance, framed by a unilinear, forward-marching concept of history and evolutionary progress. "Modernity" (which often meant westernization) was the named target for the new nation state (Dikötter 1992, 1995, Hershatter 1996, Kim & Dittmer 1993 *inter alia*).

Body and Nation

What of the link between body, nation and development?

Recall that in Confucian and Daoist cosmologies, the body was structured as a microcosm of the state and society. The functions and names of internal conduits and organs mirrored imperial China's state centralized bureaucracy and administrative map, with the body comprising canals and granaries and bodily order comprising smooth flows along canals, sufficiency in grains and nutrients, and balance in all things (Unschuld 1985; see Chapter Three). In the early twentieth century, this perception was

fundamentally altered - partly because revolutions in western biomedical and anatomical expertise made such views untenable (Croizier 1975), and partly because Chinese thinkers no longer saw the body as a microcosm of the state. Instead, the state became reconstructed as a "body" and, beyond metaphor, as the sum of the individual bodies therein (Brownell 1995).

The link formulated between body, nation and development (modernity, progress, evolution) operated at and beyond the level of metaphor. It rapidly became a focal point of debate on a breathtaking range of issues and state/social interests.

Consider medicine (Croizier 1968, 1975). There was the humiliating metaphor of China as the "Sick Man of Asia" - a metaphor which was taken up as a stick to beat China into reform by leading scholars and writers. There was also the apparent superiority of recent western scientific and medical advances. The omnipresent manifestations of poverty and ill-health in China's growing cities channelled the energies of thousands of men and women into the study of western medicine, overseas (including Japan) and in China. To cure illness in individuals, through western means assumed to be more effective, was quickly conceived as a way to strengthen the nation and rid China of its ignominious nickname.

Consider sports (Brownell 1995, Fan Hong 1997). The strengthening, through physical exercise, of individual bodies was put forward as a critical method of increasing the strength of the nation, especially its military capacity. If China was to become a modern nation state, then it would have to cultivate the attributes of such a state, including physical fitness and military might. National fitness became a national issue and was discussed in the highest intellectual and political circles. Legislation was introduced to make physical education in all schools and colleges compulsory in Republican China. Sports meets were organised. In the process, a fitness-oriented body culture began to develop within China, fostered by but quickly independent of western missionaries (Brownell 1995).

Consider women (Dikötter 1992, Fan Hong 1997, Hershatter *et al* 1996, Gilmartin *et al* 1994). Among other attributes, the importance of participation in physical exercise for women became a platform on which equal social status for women and nationalism were twinned - less in the name of women's liberation than the physical fitness and

survival of the Chinese people. Progeny, it was proclaimed, must be physically fit if a nation is to survive and strengthen. Thus the construction of women's bodies changed in ways which symbolised the concept of evolutionary progress [*jinhua*], and which aimed to create a powerful and modern nation state:

All countries that wish to have strong soldiers insure that all their women engage in calisthenics, for they believe that only thus will the sons they bear be full in body and strong of muscle (attributed to Liang Qichao, cited in Brownell 1995, p. 46).

It was with this end in mind that the anti-footbinding movement found success and support among China's higher Han echelons (Fan Hong 1997). The bound-foot was drastically reconfigured. Where once the epitome of female beauty and erotica, the bound-foot was recast as an ugly product, even a direct cause, of Chinese backwardness and weakness (Fan Hong 1997, Drucker 1981). This was more than a change of fashion. It signified a departure in the conceptualisation of the female body (from desirable fragility to desirable strength) and it consolidated the correlation between physical impairment, individual bodily weakness (for which read inferiority) and national weakness. Paradoxically, then, the abolition of a 1,000 year old custom of deliberately impairing girls and women was premised to no small degree on flagging up the undesirability of an impaired body part. The imagery invoked by anti-footbinding campaigners was an imagery which capitalised on associations between individual impairment and national weakness.

Whether in medicine, sports or women's bodies, the central message is grounded in the notion that a strong body, strong nation and strong race are the roads to progress and development. That message will no doubt sound familiar to anyone familiar with social Darwinism.

Social Darwinism and Eugenic Utopias

In her study of sports and body culture in modern China, Susan Brownell (1995, p. 44) boldly states: "It was not until social Darwinism was introduced into China that the relationship between body and nation was conceived of in a new way". I am inclined to agree, whilst heeding Dikötter's assertion that "social Darwinism" has been bandied

about with little regard to intellectual developments in both China and the west:

The racial discourse that developed in China after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 has generally been reduced to a symbiosis of 'traditional ethnocentrism' with 'modern social Darwinism' ... In the context of modern Chinese intellectual history, 'social Darwinism' is a myth. The predominant evolutionary theories in China from the end of the nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century were non-Darwinian (Dikötter 1992, p.98, 100-101).

That is the view of one whose knowledge of the history of ideas and racial-cum-nationalist discourse is far more nuanced and precise than most have space to be, Brownell and myself included. Dikötter is right: the concept of unilinear evolution which informs the body of theories loosely labelled "social Darwinism" is essentially Lamarckian and not Darwinian. However, the point (and it deserves reiteration) is that where western ideas - be they scientific, political or philosophical - have been taken into the Chinese intellectual arena, the process of "borrowing" is an active and creative process on the part of the "borrowers". Might not a Chinese translation of a western text be more accurately regarded as a Chinese text? So perhaps it matters less whether we refer to "the synthetic philosophy of Spenser and the linear model of Lamarck" (Dikötter 1992, p. 101) or the lay concept of "social Darwinism", than that we hold onto the Chinese formulation of theories which happen to have western links?

The late Qing reformer, Yan Fu, gave his translations of Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* and Spencer's *The Study of Sociology* a very nationalistic emphasis which suited the sensibilities of his audience, including Mao Zedong. His translations built on earlier Chinese concepts of race (Schwartz 1964, Spence 1990). The result was a form of evolutionary cosmology which made sense in an era characterised by a nationalist cult of progress and an angst-ridden concern with physical and moral decay and degeneration (Dikötter 1992, Dittmer & Kim 1993). An evolutionary cosmology offered an explanation for China's demise and place in the world (racial) order, and a prescription for her transformation and rise (Dikötter 1992, Spence 1990). It also put a "social Darwinist" stamp on formulations of body and nation, which took on a hue reminiscent of rapid nation-building in fascist Germany and strident social reform in Britain and America; reminiscent also of eugenic thought in the west (see Burleigh 1994, Gallagher 1990, Jones 1986, Pfeiffer 1994, Proctor 1988 on eugenics in Europe

and America).

Few, other than Frank Dikötter, have taken the time to explore the history of eugenics and genetics in China. In his study of racial discourse between 1915-1949, Dikötter (1992) notes the use of colour, hair, odour, brain (size, weight) and rank as attributes by which racial groups were graded on an evolutionary scale in Chinese intellectual and scientific circles. The physical, mental and social attributes of "barbarians" or "inferior" beings bore close correlation to physical and mental impairments. That correlation, which was far from new to China (see Chapter Three), became ever more significant as the pseudo-science of eugenics, which was enjoying its heyday among the élite of Europe and America, was taken up by prominent intellectuals and scientists in China, at all points along the political spectrum.

One of the earliest proponents of eugenic-style ideas was Kang Youwei, whose Utopian vision was set out in the *One World Philosophy* [*Da Tong*], which was written in 1898 and read by a wide and influential audience (Kang 1898). Kang Youwei was one of the most important late Qing reformers and a proponent of learning from the west whilst also maintaining a sense of Chinese uniqueness. His *One World Philosophy* is an interesting read because it intertwines eugenic ideas, a commitment to social reform, nation-building and the pursuit of equality (Spence 1990). Kang Youwei appears to have been a scholarly man with a strong social conscience (he was apparently horrified by the poverty of street beggars in Beijing and racial discrimination in America) and a strong belief in science as the means to realising a better world (Spence 1990). Regrettably, his vision of an equal and harmonious world is premised on an unfortunate concept of how to eliminate discrimination. In his scheme, racial intermarriage will water down racial distinctions to create one race, while physical and mental impairment will be prevented through segregation and sterilisation.

Those with physical handicaps will all enter this institution for treatment, and there will be no distinctions made in the way they are treated and the way ordinary patients are treated [i.e. they will be given just as good treatment]. The permanently handicapped will be placed in special institutions, and given education through college, with special training in some art. If they are able to go out and support themselves after the age of twenty, well and good; if they cannot, they will be

supported by this institution, with half of whatever they can earn from their work being given to them. However at this time there should not be many such people.

The insane will be placed on special islands. They will not be allowed to procreate their kind. They will be taught agriculture and other work, and half of whatever they can earn will be given to them. However, there will not be such people in this age, since they will not be allowed to have children.

*Persons with malformed bodies, harelips, etc., will not be permitted to marry and propagate their kind. They may receive official permission to have sexual intercourse [presumably with contraceptive control] if they have such desire; however, at this time, there will be 'mechanical persons' to substitute for real persons for sexual relief (Kang Youwei, *One World Philosophy 1898*, translated by Laurence Thompson, 1958, p. 201-2).*

In the short excerpt cited above, Confucian and western medical cosmologies combine. The whole excerpt is drawn from a chapter called "Hospitals", in which the greatest national importance is ascribed to medical professionals, and medical authority is posited as the highest authority in the Utopian state. The first port of call for disabled people is the hospital, where distinction is made between those who can and those who cannot be cured. In the case of "incurables", welfare is to be provided in ways reminiscent of missionary work: residential institutions providing education and vocational training in skills deemed suitable. A distinction is also made between those adults who can and cannot work to support themselves. The latter remain in institutions which double as sheltered workshops. The treatment of people labelled as "insane" is qualitatively different and significantly worse, involving exile to special islands. Reproduction is not allowed and the ultimate goal is that, as there will be one ideal race, so there will be one ideal body-form and mind-form. To return to Confucian cosmologies (for Kang was a Confucian literati), all in Utopia will be equally *ding* (able-bodied), equally *quan* (complete) and equally *zheng* (orderly).

Both Yan Fu and Kang Youwei were on the reading list of leading intellectuals, iconoclasts, writers and reporters in the heady years of the New Culture Movement (Spence 1990). Interest in eugenics flourished and it was promulgated as a means to the end of racial and national survival (Dikötter 1992). Eugenics was translated as "the science of superior birth" [*youshengxue*], linguistically and conceptually linked to "the superior win, the inferior lose" [*yousheng liebai*] - a Chinese rendition of the survival

of the fittest (Dikötter 1992, p. 170). Questions of population quality, heredity and the links between eugenics and evolution or progress came to the fore and ideas of biological determinism were taken up with vigour in texts and treatises underpinned by supposedly scientific claims along Mendelian lines (Dikötter 1992). Prominent intellectuals on the New Culture scene argued that "unfit" elements were a national burden and social danger, and that they should be segregated or sterilized to prevent procreation. These ideas were taken further by others who wrote (sometimes incorporating an element of class analysis) of the imperative of subordinating individual liberties to the interests of the group (Dikötter 1992).

Individual liberty and happiness have to recede into the background or be sacrificed entirely in the struggle for survival of the race (Pan Guangdan 1924, cited in Dikötter 1992, p. 175)

Concepts like "racial hygiene" and "race improvement" were casually bandied about in the 1930s and 1940s, spreading to lower levels of the social hierarchy as well (Dikötter 1992). Alongside intellectual papers were marriage handbooks and parenting guides which advocated the marriage of mentally and physically superior men and women, who would produce superior progeny. News of institutionalised eugenics in America and in Nazi Germany found support in many (although not all) scholarly and élite circles, and plans were proposed by intellectuals for eugenic legislation in China - plans which were never realised in the turmoil of war with Japan and ensuing civil war between Communist and Nationalist factions (Dikötter 1992). Nevertheless, it is worth reviewing quickly some of the plans which were on the agenda of leading figures in the first half of the twentieth century (cited, alongside further examples, in Dikötter's analysis of racial discourse, 1992).

Zhang Junjun, scholar, composed a "Race Reform" plan for Shenxi province in 1935. It included rewards for "superior marriages" and the prevention of "unhealthy" marriages, mostly by segregation, exile or castration. The unhealthy were a broad and ill-defined group comprising the "feeble-minded, mentally disordered, afflicted with a communicable disease, physically weak, tubercular or 'criminally inclined'" (Dikötter 1992, p. 183). Classifications rarely got more specific than that. Wei Juxian, scholar, suggested that mothers be monitored until parturition, upon which "weak" offspring could be eliminated, "strong" offspring would be labelled as "model persons"

[*mofanren*], and any who slipped through the net unsupervised would be labelled "elimination persons" [*taotairen*]. Less draconian but no different in effect were Hao Qiming's prescriptions, whereby marriage would be denied to (in the parlance of the time) idiots, demented people, malformed people, people with loathsome diseases, epileptics and those with hereditary defects. Hao Qiming expected that people with "minor infirmities" like deafness, blindness or baldness would not require coercion since they could be educated into voluntary sterilization. Segregation and sterilization were also the techniques advocated by Hu Buchan, who felt that infanticide was going too far but that legislation was necessary to secure racial and national survival (see Dikötter 1992).

Eugenics was, in many respects, a natural product of the age. Western eugenic ideas and practices, technological and scientific progress, an urgency to improve the strength of the nation, and a shattered worldview which created space for new ideals and Utopian visions came together and locked into older, indigenous notions of hierarchy, race and disability. Unlike in America and Germany, however, circumstances conspired against the institutionalisation of eugenic concepts in national policy. The concepts would lie dormant for decades ... but that is a story which belongs in a later chapter of this thesis.

Conclusion

The findings presented in this chapter highlight the importance of researching shared pasts, and the need to expand the parameters of what such research might entail. Evidence points to the need to look beyond disability-specific interventions, to broader constructs of the body.

The impact of western ideologies and institutions on the construction of disability in China relates not only to forms of provision (segregated schools, vocational training and residential institutions) but also to the export of western concepts of body form and body fitness. The culture and cultivation of the body *per se* was nothing new to late Qing and early Republican China (the importance of bodily regimen and balance was mentioned in the previous chapter). But the concept of body form and fitness

underwent a dramatic change in early twentieth century China as a new relationship was constructed between the body and the nation. Moreover, the body-nation relationship was inextricable from new and western-influenced ways of conceiving past, present, future, population and government. Where Confucianist ideologies had heralded Order as the ultimate state-social aim, early twentieth century reformers looked to modernization as the means and the end of national government. Thus, a new and nationalist discourse of development emerged, premised on a notion of evolutionary progress measured by national military and "racial" might, and by individual fitness, intellect, and strength. Disabled people were, by definition, lower down the developmental hierarchy. The associations formed in imperial cosmologies between weakness, impairment and inferiority (as set out in Chapter Three) were carried to new levels of import in the minds of Republican reformers and radicals ... only to be carried further still under Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party in a Liberated China.

Chapter Five

Disability and Development under Chairman Mao

In this chapter, the construction of disability under Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party is explored, with reference to institutions and ideologies. The analysis of socio-political discourses of body, nation and development is continued, and precedes a discussion of state social welfare ideologies in general and disability-related provision in particular. That discussion is important because Maoist social policy and disability provision have shaped, even constrained, the development of social policy and disability provision under Deng Xiaoping in the post-Mao era. The analysis and findings presented here hold special significance in the context of western theories of disability as the product of a capitalist society. It is argued that the core ideologies, institutions and discourses of Chinese (and Soviet-style) state socialism are no less disabling than those of western capitalism.

Western disability studies, as with all self-respecting disciplines, has produced certain "truths" - concepts which have been repeated so often, so effortlessly, and by so many eminent and articulate individuals that they assume an almost sacred significance. Among these truths is the widely-accepted theory that disability in the west is a product of western capitalist development and ideology (see Chapter One).

It is not my intention here to challenge western theorists on the western construction of disability. Rather, it is my intention to highlight the need for a re-evaluation of the roles of capitalism and socialism respectively in the construction of disability. I argue this corner for the simple reason that Chinese socialist development and ideology have proved every bit as instrumental in constructing disability in China as capitalism has been instrumental in constructing disability in the west.

There is no reason (save for the sake of political or academic pedantry) to regard the two statements as mutually exclusive - although the implicit message among western academics who offer materialist accounts of disability under capitalism is that things would be different and better under socialism. Presumably, the socialist party faithful can always fall back on the expedient argument that Chinese and Soviet-style socialism do not represent *true* socialism in action. As stated above, however, my intention is not to debate the relative merits of socialist and capitalist disability constructions; instead, it is to inform discussion of the relationships between disability, development, ideologies and institutions with reference to Chinese state socialism. Clearly, my contribution would be stronger if I were better-versed in economic analysis. Even so, I am confident that the findings presented here will serve their purpose and move theoretical debates forward.

This chapter falls into four parts. The first part continues the theme of discourses of the body and documents the formation of socialist bodies under Mao Zedong. The second part identifies core ideologies, using the notion of personhood, and explores these in relation to general social welfare policies. The third part of the chapter considers disability-specific provision, policy and propaganda. Finally, and in light of findings presented, the issue of state socialist constructions of disability is briefly revisited before closing the chapter (the last of three historical chapters) with a review of the main arguments advanced so far on the historical construction of disability in China.

Setting the Scene

1949 was a year of extraordinary historical and global significance. It marked the end of a civil war, which had followed hard on the heels of World War II, and the apparent end of decades of internal economic, social and political dislocation. It marked the beginning of three decades of socialist rule under Mao Zedong, leader of the Chinese Communist Party, political theorist and ideologue (Ch'en 1965, 1983, 1986, Schram 1966, 1986).

It is, of course, a gross oversimplification to refer to the period 1949-1976 as "Maoist". Mao was but one individual in a vast political bureaucracy, with a leadership

composed of astute theorists and statesmen (and they were mostly men). Nevertheless, Mao Zedong was the paramount political leader, the key theorist of Chinese communism and the self-styled Great Helmsman. It was Mao's ideology that created and shaped the most significant, if contested, periods of China's socialist history: the Sino-Soviet split in the late 1950s, whereby China broke political and economic ties with the world's other great socialist state, thereby making both "superpowers" a Chinese enemy (de Crespigny 1992, Gittings 1968); the Great Leap Forward, which marked Mao's determination to follow a uniquely Chinese socialist road to economic development and rapid industrialisation, and was badly-timed, badly-planned and ended in man-made starvation on a massive scale (MacFarquhar 1984, Spence 1990); and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution ("ten bad years" of mass mobilisation, political and social upheaval on a scale which was unprecedented, see Chan 1985, Leys 1979, MacFarquhar 1974, 1984).

The socialist decades under Mao were also decades in which (bar the Great Leap catastrophe) China's urban workers and rural peasants experienced a noticeable rise in material well-being in comparison to the decades that had preceded Liberation. Major advances were made in popular literacy, public health, infrastructure, industrial and agricultural development (Hinton 1983, Myrdal 1963, Parish & Whyte 1978, Sidel & Sidel 1982, Wegman *et al* 1973). For years, the Chinese road to socio-economic development was lauded as a model for developing countries to follow - and not just by the Chinese leadership (Hinton 1983, Imfeld 1976). Infant mortality rates declined; literacy levels, nutrition levels and average life expectancy increased. So did political surveillance and the reach of the state into individual lives (Bernstein 1977, Chan 1985). And so too did the role of the state in controlling the Chinese population and constructing the socialist body and socialist personhood.

Socialist Bodies

Under Mao, development meant the rapid economic development of agriculture and, primarily, industry. The national task was to rebuild the Chinese economy and drive it forwards to surpass levels of economic development achieved by the Soviet Union and

the west, and to ensure national economic self-reliance. Social development was pursued as a worthy objective, although subsidiary to economic and political development. To a large degree, social development was undertaken to enable the transition to industrialisation, which in turn was envisioned to provide the conditions for a successful political transition to communism. Politics and political education played a significant part in all development planning, both economic (exemplified in the Great Leap Forward, rural collectivisation, and the establishment of communes in the Cultural Revolution, see Hinton 1983, MacFarquhar 1974, 1984, Myrdal 1963) and social (witness the politicisation of patriotic health and other mass mobilisation campaigns, see Bernstein 1977, Chan 1985, Sidel & Sidel 1982, Wegman *et al* 1973, Worth 1975). Hence, national development was measured in grain production and steel output, in dams built and products manufactured, and in the health, wealth and military strength of the Chinese nation and her population.

The road to development and ultimately to communism was conceived in terms of historical, economic phases, each characterised by a certain social structure and level of political consciousness (Ch'en 1965, Schram 1966). The development vision was therefore economic and evolutionary, inextricable from political and social change, and wholly reliant on the labour and political consciousness of the masses. The Maoist vision of nation and development was welded to (because dependent on) a narrowly-conceived and materialist construct of the individual mind and the individual body.

Only recently (in the wake of a general surge in western scholarship on the sociology of the body) has the Maoist body been considered a worthy subject of analysis. Gail Hershatter (1996) and Frank Dikötter (1992, 1995) consider the Maoist body *en passant*; Susan Brownell (1995) devotes a few more pages to the subject; Fan Hong (1995) provides a more detailed analysis of the Maoist/socialist body in the pre-Liberation period (in the Jiangxi Soviet and Yan'an Liberated Area) and comments on post-1949 constructions. Their scholarship informs the following discussion of body form and body function under Mao.

The country is in crisis. The military is weak. People's bodies are degenerating. Certain reformers wished to solve these problems by learning to use Western technology. They do not understand that what is fundamental is to promote physical exercise. Only when their bodies

are strong can people defend their country ... Physical education should occupy the first place in one's life ... A weak body can become a healthy one and vice versa. The key is exercise ... (from "On Physical Education and Exercise", Mao Zedong, 1917, cited in Fan Hong 1997, p.313-317).

Mao was only twenty-four years old when he wrote "On Physical Education and Exercise" for the leading magazine of the New Culture Movement, *Xin Qingnian* [New Youth], but the ideas which informed it and the strength of his conviction in the primacy of physical education, even over moral and intellectual education, were to stay with him over the next sixty years. In 1966, when Mao was seventy-three and eager to revitalise China's revolution and claw back his political clout, Mao used his physical fitness as a symbol for his fitness to rule in his now-legendary swim across the Yangtze river. This was completely in accord with an emphasis on the strong, physical and functioning body which reached its zenith in the Cultural Revolution, when physical fitness and political correctness were indivisible, but which had been in evidence since the early years of the Jiangxi Soviet (Fan Hong 1997).

The Red Sports Movement was officially formed in 1932 under several slogans, including "to cultivate worker-peasant class team spirit and to make strong bodies to suit the needs of the class struggle" (Fan Hong 1997, p. 156). Zhu De, the Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, pronounced: "To win the war, we need to recruit 1,000,000 iron Red Army soldiers. Therefore, we need to develop a sports movement among the masses which will provide soldiers who are strong - with iron muscle and steel bone" (Zhu De, 1933, cited in Fan Hong 1997, p. 171). But it was not only soldiers who were required to develop iron and steel bodies. The Red Sports Movement quickly spread into factories, schools, villages and associations, including the Children's Corps and the Young Pioneers:

Young Pioneers come to develop their bodies. They are doing gymnastics, playing games. They are strong, active and good at military skills. Young Pioneers come to develop their bodies. They are playing war games ... They are young, but strong. They are the great heroes and heroines (from "Gymnastic Song of the Young Pioneers" in Fan Hong 1997, p. 166).

The drive for physical education continued in the Liberated Areas and the Red Sports Movement was reworked into the New Sports Movement - a mass, not military,

movement:

Our sport is a new sport. We don't need professional athletes. We advocate a mass sport movement. We don't want the weakling stereotype cherished by some Chinese scholars. We want the healthy body - healthy mind ethos to be completely triumphant (Dongyuan Society 1938, in Fan Hong 1997, p. 203).

"Everybody is to do exercise!" was the slogan. Several hours per week of compulsory physical education was decreed for schools and colleges throughout the Liberated Areas; villages were to create sports grounds; trade unions and associations of any kind were to create space for mass physical exercise (Brownell 1995, Fan Hong 1997). Competitive sports were still enjoyed but they were eclipsed by the political emphasis on mass physical culture and, in time, supplemented by attention to health education and "hygiene" (Wong 1950). For information, the story was little different in the Nationalist-controlled areas of pre-Liberation China. Chiang Kaishek, Generalissimo of the Guomindang, was equally convinced of the beneficial link between individual health, physical strength, national might and modernity: "In order to become a healthy modern citizen, it is necessary first to have strong and robust bodies" (Chiang Kaishek, ca. 1934, cited in Fan Hong 1997, p. 242).

It would be wrong to underestimate the political, let alone military, usefulness of sports and physical culture to any modern nation-state (Brownell 1995). Sport is not only about strengthening individual bodies, it is about strengthening unity of will, discipline, conformity and collective (national/ist) identity. In the context of Maoist ideology and vision, exercise was invaluable. In his 1917 essay, Mao had argued that to participate in exercise was to participate in revolution. It was also to participate in modernization, in national development and in self-development. When Mao assumed power in 1949, exercise programmes were built into national development plans (Fan Hong 1997). The introduction in 1951 of mass physical jerks in public spaces to loudspeaker broadcasts across China was not unexpected (Brownell 1995). Nor was the coining in 1952 of the famous Maoist slogan: *fazhan tiyu yundong, zengqiang renmin tizhi* (develop physical culture and sports, strengthen the bodies of the people). Nor again is it mere coincidence that in Maoist vocabulary, the 2-character word *yundong* can denote both physical sports and political campaigns (Brownell 1995).

The Maoist body was a fit body. It was androgynous, classless, simply and frugally clad. The Maoist body was to be cultivated, along with political consciousness, and it was to be regulated. These were not decades of bodily or sexual self-expression, any more than they were decades of free speech and free association (Hershatter 1996). Bodies were national and collective property, rather than individual property. The socialist body was the re/productive body of a worker, a peasant, a soldier and a mother. Never before had body and personhood been so closely intertwined. With each other and with nation and development.

Socialist Personhoods and Welfare Ideologies

Under Mao Zedong, the relationship between the body and personhood became more critical than ever before - even when compared with imperial cosmologies. In Mao's socialist China, the strong body was indivisible from the political and ideological supremacy of the worker-peasant and revolutionary soldier. It was only through *function*, through manual labour or national service, that an individual in socialist China could attain full personhood. Work was the hallmark of personhood; a strong and cultivated physique was its bodily manifestation.

The ideal and achievable standard of the socialist man and woman was enshrined in the mass promulgation (through political campaigns, broadcast, print, literature and art) of the *mofanren* or models (Bakken 1995, Brownell 1995, Chan 1985). Model mothers, model soldiers, model workers, model peasants, model cadres. All glowed with appropriate revolutionary fervour and ideological correctness. All were physical paradigms of socialist imagined reality, ready to sacrifice themselves for China's vision and to toil for China's development. They were entitled to full personhood because they were functional, because they were producers.

The political and ideological pre-eminence of work and production was shared and shaped by the Soviet Union (see Dunham 1989, Madison 1968, 1989, George & Manning 1980), whose lead the newly-created People's Republic dutifully followed in the first decade of Chinese socialism. The "right to work" was more an obligation than a right, and it operated as the key to full personhood, as the 1954 Constitution of the

People's Republic of China illustrates:

Work is a matter of honor for every citizen of the People's Republic of China who is able to work. The state encourages citizens to take an active and creative part in work (from 1954 Constitution, cited in Dixon 1981a, p. 12).

Martin King Whyte and William Parish (1984), in their seminal study of life in Chinese cities, comment on the quasi-mystical value of work and material productivity in Maoist theory, and the considerable energy which was channelled into maximising employment and reducing the numbers of non-employed people in Chinese cities. Population control mechanisms such as restrictions on migration to cities, forced migrations to the countryside, low wage levels and schemes to put women to work were all deployed to that end (Bernstein 1977, MacFarquhar 1984). Work was romanticised. The power of work to reform and even to heal was encapsulated in the reformatories to which beggars, prostitutes, opium addicts and offenders were sent as part of the post-war clean-up operation, the labour camps for criminals and class enemies (*laogai*), and the work therapy stations (*gongliao*) to which people with mental health difficulties were assigned in the cities (Dixon 1981a, Sidel & Sidel 1982, Leung & Nann 1995). The labour camps and work therapy stations probably had their roots in Soviet soil (see Madison 1968 and 1989 on work and welfare in the USSR).

In a society and political economy in which productive output was the measure of human worth, what place was there for those who did not work and those who were unable to work? Those who, in a modern nation-state, would be classed as recipients of welfare?

The ideological place of welfare in a system ruled by an all-encompassing work ethic was carefully and clearly delineated by Mao Zedong in the year preceding Liberation:

A sharp distinction should ... be made between the correct policy of developing production, promoting economic prosperity, giving consideration to both public and private interests and benefiting both labour and capital, and the one-sided and narrow policy of 'relief', which purports to uphold workers' welfare but in fact damages industry and commerce and impairs the cause of the people's revolution (from Mao Zedong, "On the Policy Concerning Industry and Commerce", 1948, cited in Dixon 1981a, p.6; Wong 1995, p. 50).

Whether analysts of the welfare system under Mao postulate that the system is best described as non-redistributive and incrementalist (Dixon 1981a), hybrid socialist or pragmatic socialist (Chan & Chow 1992), reluctant-collectivist or markedly residual (Wong 1995), is neither here nor there compared to the unanimous agreement that the primacy of a proletarian or Marxist work ethic renders the concept of welfare and the place of welfare recipients problematic. In such situations, the challenge for political leaders and theorists is to devise mechanisms whereby the sanctity of work is kept intact, if not actually strengthened by the welfare system. Dependency on state welfare is wholly at odds with the socialist work ethic and Marxist-Leninist-Maoist revolutionary vision: welfare dependency is held to corrupt the revolutionary zeal for hard work on which the socialist vision rests (Dixon 1981a).

Whether or not one agrees with the logic that underpins the Maoist welfare system, it is nonetheless evident that in Mao's China the social welfare system (influenced, as already stated, by Soviet Union practice as well as Marxist-Leninist political theory) managed to do precisely what it set out to do: provide welfare in a way which upheld the work ethic and the ideological position of the worker, a way which ensured that personhood remained locked into narrowly defined measures of productivity.

First, urban welfare [*fuli*] was primarily targeted at workers - men and women who had built up a record of socialist work-based contribution and who, in Maoist terms, had attained full personhood. In illness, injury and impairment, in family hardship and in old age, they were entitled to welfare in cash and in kind (Dixon 1981a, Chow 1990, Whyte and Parish 1984). The work-unit [*danwei*] to and through which they had made their contributions was assigned the task of welfare delivery and funding. As a result, the very existence of a worker-oriented welfare system served to strengthen the practical bond between worker, the worker's family and the work-unit (Dixon 1981a, Whyte & Parish 1984). As Dixon has noted, welfare thus served as an additional and material work incentive. In fact, welfare in this context was a reward for ideological compliance to the socialist vision. City dwellers who were not part of a work-unit and were deemed able to work were not entitled to welfare. Thus, provision upheld ideology and the diminished personhood of the non-worker was consolidated by diminished entitlement to welfare and support (Dixon 1981a).

Secondly, wherever possible it was ensured that individuals with any level of work ability were given the opportunity and obligation to work (Chan & Chow 1992, Dixon 1981a, Leung & Nann 1995). Potential welfare recipients with work ability were assigned to work-units, even if wage levels were so low that welfare subsidies were still needed. Welfare recipients were thus required to earn the welfare they received. Old people were given "neighbourhood watch" duties; nurseries were set up so that mothers could re/enter the workforce more speedily; and individuals with (real or perceived) limited work ability were assigned to specially created work-welfare projects, such as the welfare factory or workshop [*fuli gongchang*], the work therapy station [*gongliao zhan*], or to work in their neighbourhood or Street Office. All of these forms of employment were generally low-paid and low-status, largely through their association with welfare. The "real" workers retained their position in the ideological hierarchy, satisfied that welfare recipients were made to pay for their welfare financially, socially and ideologically. The fundamental Maoist/socialist principle that *to work* was to have honour, to belong and to exist thereby remained intact.

Thirdly, where welfare recipients were outside the work-unit and lacked a work history, eligibility criteria came into their own as mechanisms for upholding socialist ethics (Dixon 1981a). Welfare recipients were divided into two broad groups, usefully distinguished as *zui kelian* and *zui ke'ai*, that is, "the most worthy of pity" and "the most worthy of love" (Wong 1995). Those worthy of the nation's love were retired or injured veterans of national service, their survivors and dependants - whose entitlements were won via self-sacrifice for the nation. Those deemed worthy of the nation's pity were people who were destitute, who had no family, no home, and no work ability (the Three Nos: no family, no one to support them, no means of livelihood, see Dixon 1981a, Parish & Whyte 1978, Whyte & Parish 1984). Most disabled people were slotted into this category - the majority by virtue of their real or perceived lack of earning power, and a minority because they had been rejected by their family. Irrespective of winning the nation's pity, the obligation to work for welfare where possible remained. Also, the label of *zui kelian* ("most worthy of pity") was no less stigmatizing in Mao's China than it would be in Blair's Britain, and in that respect, it too served a thoroughly useful purpose for a hierarchy steeped in a narrowly-

defined notion of work and contribution. Welfare recipients received a fraction of the provision, wages and benefits accrued by workers (Whyte & Parish 1984). Only veterans and those in old age without family support were generally entitled to anything approaching a regular cash benefit (Dixon 1981a, Whyte and Parish 1984). Welfare, in both urban and rural China, was characterised by its irregularity and its austerity. It was no way to live if you had any option; and it was certainly no way to attain personhood.

To summarise, the Maoist welfare system was not, by any stretch of the imagination, a rights-based or egalitarian system (Chow 1987, Chow 1990). Entitlements, such as they were, had to be earned through work and productive contribution or, in the case of "the most worthy of love", through sacrifice for the country in national service. Welfare was a reward and incentive system which propped up the socialist work ethic and maintain^{ed} the strict divisions between worker and non-worker, person and non-person on which the system thrived.

Finally, it is worth considering the place of family members in the Maoist welfare system, in the light of evidence set out in Chapter Three on the importance of lineage in defining personhood in imperial Chinese cosmologies.

In a socialist state, the strength of family loyalties and hierarchies went against the ideological grain of the ideal socialist system, in which loyalties were to the collective and the state, not the lineage (Dixon 1981a). There is plenty of evidence which points to the Maoist state's attempts to undermine family ties where they threatened the bond between individual and collective, individual and the Party, individual and nation. Think here of the *Xia Fang* mass mobilisation campaign which took sons and daughters away from their families and sent them to the countryside to learn from China's peasants (Bernstein 1977). Or the mass migrations engineered by the state to populate resource-full or politically-sensitive areas (Banister 1987, Tien 1973, Wang & Hull 1991). Or the promotion of collective childcare and collective dining during the Great Leap Forward (Min 1993, Wolf 1985). Or the insidious ways in which intra-family surveillance and political denunciations were wooed from children, siblings and parents during the Cultural Revolution (Chan 1985, Leys 1979). And yet, when it came to welfare, there was little choice but to retain the family as the bulwark of welfare

provision and social support (Dixon 1981a, Chow 1990, Chan & Chow 1992, Chan 1993, Parish & Whyte 1978).

The appeal of drawing on Confucian and imperial legacies in retaining the role of the family as the basic unit of support and control made sense given the potential costs of welfare to an impoverished and war-worn state. At the earliest opportunity, in the Marriage Law of 1950, filial duties became socialist obligations, and the family was legally bound to take on the lion's share of welfare provision. Thereafter, social welfare was only provided if every possible means of family support had been exhausted (Dixon 1981a, Chan & Chow 1992, Chow 1987). Ideological inconsistencies were ironed out in expositions of Maoist political theory and in the forged (or forced) alliances between the family and the collective.

Under socialism ... the family still exists. The family, which emerged in the last period of primitive communism, will in future be abolished... Under the present system of distribution of "to each according to his work," the family is still of use. When we reach the stage of communist relationships of distribution of "to each according to his need," many of our concepts will change. After maybe a few thousand years, or at very least several hundred years, the family will disappear (from Mao Zedong, 1958, "Against Blind Faith in Learning", cited in Dixon 1981a, p. 8).

Political theory was thereby harmonized to suit pragmatic measures. Meanwhile, alliances were created and strengthened between the family and the larger non-kin collective (Parish & Whyte 1978, Whyte & Parish 1984).

The Maoist welfare system was a remarkable mixture of pragmatism and ideology, of age-old and all-new institutions. The place of the collective in determining, funding and delivering welfare, the retention of family obligations, and the ideological supremacy of *work* are the defining characteristics of a system which framed the lived realities of Chinese people for three decades, including Chinese disabled people.

Disability Provision under Mao

In the first few years of the People's Republic, the welfare homes, schools and hospitals which had been set up by missionaries and foreign organisations and had

survived the Sino-Japanese war and civil war were quickly taken over by the newly-established Chinese government (Meng & Wang 1986, Wiest 1988). The foreigners who ran them were made to leave the country on a wave of anti-western (especially anti-American) sentiment that saw the old tales of missionary abuse against orphans resurface (Wiest 1988). According to Meng & Wang (1986), the new Government took over 163 welfare homes and centres previously run by the Nationalists, 451 welfare outlets (of varying sizes) which had been run by international welfare and missionary organisations, and over 600 kinship-based or Buddhist charitable organisations (see also Chan & Chow 1992). The important point is that the schools, centres and institutions were not closed down but taken over, expanded and replicated - and thereby western missionary influences on the development of Chinese disability provision were deepened.

In addition, policies and practice from the Soviet Union were heavily utilised in the crucial first decade of the People's Republic of China - crucial because of the intensity of institution building which was carried out in the 1950s (Chiu 1985, de Crespigny 1992, Gittings 1968, Spence 1990). In the wake of the Sino-Soviet split, several Soviet-inspired institutions and structures endured.

To approach disability provision under Mao with intent to separate out the influences of Catholic or Protestant missionaries, Soviet socialists and communists, or the legacies of imperial or Republican China and Confucian ideologies, is beyond the scope of this chapter. Maoist policies and provision were the product of an evolving interplay of insider and outsider influences, of conversations between competing paradigms, embedded in the material realities of a vast, agricultural and war-worn nation. Practicalities as much as philosophies dictated that the institutional detritus of the old, oppressive society was recycled rather than tossed on the scrap heap.

Institutions and Asylums

Long-term care in residential institutions had been new to the imperial landscape (see Chapter Four). Indigenous forerunners tended to provide temporary refuge in periods of human and natural disaster (see Chapter Three). Missionaries introduced "homes" -

mostly for orphans but increasingly for disabled children also. By the time that some mission-run orphanages were taken over in the early 1950s, most of the remaining residents (who had not been found family placements) were disabled children and young adults (Wiest 1988). Over subsequent years, as levels of health, education and socio-economic security increased, it appears that welfare institutions developed along the lines of general institutions for disabled children, adults and no doubt a handful of family-less older people too (Dixon 1981a, Sidel & Sidel 1982). There was an increase also in the number of psychiatric hospitals or small-scale institutions for adults labelled "mentally ill" (Sidel & Sidel 1982). However, and the point needs to be underlined, even with this government-sponsored expansion of welfare homes, residential care in institutions was far from the norm for disabled children, disabled adults and older people in socialist China (Whyte & Parish 1984, Dixon 1981a, 1981b). There was simply not the money. Nor was there the inclination - either from the family or the state - since institutional care (which obviated family obligation) went against both the Confucianist and the Maoist grain.

Whyte & Parish (1984) provide comparative figures for the mid-late 1970s on the number of "mental hospitals" in China and in the USA: in China, there were a mere 254 institutions (less than 5,000 beds) compared to 7,000 in the USA (with 1.5 million beds). Statistics on Maoist China are unreliable, and Dixon (1981b, p. 11) produces a very different figure of sixty such institutes, each with a capacity of around 1,000 beds. Even so, the message is the same: institutional care was minimal. It was funded by the state and only available where there was no or insufficient family support, or where the individual (in the case of adults with severe mental health difficulties) was regarded as a social danger (Chow 1987, 1990, Dixon 1981a).

Welfare-Work

As one would expect given the welfare and work philosophies already outlined, work ability played a decisive role in shaping the lived reality of a disabled person in Maoist China. So too did the crucial factors of severity, type, onset and cause of impairment. The worker or peasant who became disabled through work-related injury was provided

for by the work-unit or the collective (Dixon 1981a, 1981b). They had earned their entitlement. At the opposite end of the spectrum, individuals who were born with impairments (especially more severe impairments) or acquired them during childhood and before they had a chance to make an economic contribution were in an unenviable social and economic position.

Ideology dictated that all who could work should work. And that included disabled people, along with the rest of China's potential welfare recipients (Dixon 1981a, 1981b, Chan & Chow 1992, Leung & Nann 1995). But the structuring of the work place, the narrow definitions of work, and the pervasiveness of age-old Confucianist attitudes which viewed disabled people as antithetical to the able-bodied, tax-paying *ding* meant that many (perhaps most) disabled people were set apart from non-disabled workers. The segregated "schools of industry" set up by missionaries probably strengthened those attitudes and no doubt the Soviet Union's policy of establishing sheltered workshops for its disabled citizens played a part as well (Madison 1968, 1989). But regardless of the interplay of influences, the end result was the creation of welfare factories under the auspices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (to become the Ministry of Civil Affairs) and the promotion at neighbourhood level of small-scale welfare workshops or work stations, to which disabled people were assigned, often according to impairment type (Chan 1993, Chan & Chow 1992, Dixon 1981a, 1981b, Leung & Nann 1995).

Details and data about the operation of welfare factories are patchy and, again, unreliable. Dixon (1981b) provides helpful insight into the professed rationale of welfare factories as vocational rehabilitation or therapy, taken from *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) in 1958:

Thus if we organize mental cases, lepers and chronic disease sufferers into appropriate cultural and productive activities, we will certainly add to the social wealth and more importantly help them recover (January 1958, Renmin Ribao, cited in Dixon 1981b, p. 9).

According to Dixon (1981b), the establishment and administration of welfare factories was conducted by municipal disability-related welfare associations until the Cultural Revolution, after which time they came under the auspices of the Ministry of Civil Affairs. The largest municipal welfare factories (as opposed to neighbourhood-level

welfare workshops) functioned like any other work-unit, providing housing, workers' benefits, collective amenities and so forth. It is unclear quite how many fell into this category. Dixon (1981b) cites Tianjin municipality data for the mid-1970s, which claim that 4,000 disabled people were employed in fifteen welfare factories in the city, and data from a 1978 article in the *South China Morning Post* which reports the establishment since Liberation of 8,000 factories which manufactured prosthetics and other aids (principally for disabled ex-servicemen and women), and which also provided work for 60,000 disabled workers. Chan & Chow (1992), citing Meng & Wang (1986), offer different statistics for different years: data for 1958 specify 280,000 welfare units (which surely include neighbourhood-level workshops and placements), employing one million disabled people; data for 1963 specify 1,371 welfare factories (including prosthetics factories) under Civil Affairs management, of which only 776 still existed by the end of the Cultural Revolution. The welfare factories included in the data are largely, but not exclusively, factories employing disabled people.

According to Chan and Chow (1992), the Maoist government operated on a four-fold typology of welfare factories in the early 1960s. First, "protection type" [*baozhang xing*] which provided productive employment for disabled people; secondly, "service type" [*fuwu xing*] which manufactured specialist equipment and prostheses; thirdly, "reform type" [*gaizao xing*] which gave vocational training to non-disabled but unemployed people or minor offenders; and finally, "self-salvation type" [*zijiyou xing*] which provided employment to non-disabled welfare recipients. Of these, only the protection and service factories provided employment to disabled people. The reform type dwindled or were sucked into the labour-camp system over time. The self-salvation type was basically a catch-all term for work/welfare projects operating within urban localities (Chan & Chow 1992).

Welfare factories remain a core part of disability policy and provision under Deng Xiaoping, and therefore they are discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters. For the time being, it need only be pointed out that welfare factories were a conscious effort to increase disabled people's personhood by enlisting them in the great socialist economic endeavour. They also institutionalised a segregated approach to disabled

people's employment, compounded social stereotypes, restricted social interaction (especially in larger work-units which housed and fed workers), and kept disabled people in their ideological and subordinate place within the state socialist hierarchy.

Segregated Schools for Industry

As disabled workers were set apart from non-disabled workers, so too disabled children were set apart from non-disabled children in a system that undoubtedly had its institutional origins in the well-meant missions of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Arguably more harmful were the "defectology" educational theories which were transferred from the USSR in the 1950s (see McCagg 1989 and Madison 1968 on Soviet bloc defectology). Already in 1951, the Chinese Prime Minister, Zhou Enlai, signed a document which called for more schools for "deaf-mutes, the blind, and other handicapped people and to provide education for children, juveniles as well as adults with physical defects" (Shen 1993, p. 253).

Data on the Maoist period is limited but it appears that most (possibly all) special schools were located in the cities. Also, they were primarily schools for blind children and/or schools for deaf children (Shen 1993). The development of any form of education for children with moderate-severe learning difficulties appears practically non-existent in Maoist China (Robinson 1978, Shih 1979, Epstein 1988, Pepper 1990, Potts 1995). According to Dixon (1981b), there were 467 such schools in 1951 with space for 250-400 pupils, aged eight to twenty years old; these were administered by the disability-related welfare associations prior to the Cultural Revolution, after which (as with municipal welfare factories) Civil Affairs departments assumed responsibility.

In curriculum, work was all-important and vocational training (in massage, music, crafts, low-level manufacturing and so forth) was the overriding focus of special school education, far more than in ordinary primary and middle schools (Epstein 1988). Special schools were designed to feed into the welfare factory system, to produce productive disabled people who would contribute to economic development. Accordingly, they too witnessed a parallel, if fluctuating, rise, as the following data show. It should be noted that there appears (from the data in Table 3) to have been a

dramatic upsurge in the number of schools for blind and deaf children around the time of the Great Leap Forward. It is hard to know how to view that upsurge, if it ever existed - the Great Leap Forward was carried along on a wave of grand but groundless claims of achievement in all spheres of life (Dwyer 1994b). Hyped statistics of hyper-achievement were a regular occurrence (Dwyer 1994b). In contrast, there are no official indicators for the years between 1965 and 1973 - a reminder of the chaos of the Cultural Revolution, during which factories, schools, colleges and hospitals were often brought to a halt (Leys 1979). Another interesting feature which emerges from the data is the upsurge in schools for both deaf and blind children (although one is tempted to regard the 1974 figure as an administrative error) and generally in the number of schools for deaf children. Partial explanation for this can be found in the apparent emphasis given to education for deaf children in the 1950s as oralist teaching methods were developed (Li & Shen 1981). Might it not also be the case that deaf children were seen as stronger candidates for "normalisation" and entrance into a productive economic role?

Table 3: segregated schooling provision in China between 1946 and 1976

| YEAR | Schools Total No. | for blind children | for deaf children | blind & deaf children | Children Total No. |
|-------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1946 | 4 | ... | ... | ... | 2,322 |
| 1953 | 64 | 13 | 42 | 9 | 5,260 |
| 1954 | 57 | 7 | 40 | 10 | 5,021 |
| 1955 | 57 | 6 | 40 | 11 | 5,312 |
| 1956 | 62 | 6 | 43 | 13 | 6,703 |
| 1957 | 66 | 7 | 47 | 12 | 7,538 |
| 1958 | 91 | 11 | 66 | 14 | 10,101 |
| 1959 | 297 | ... | ... | ... | 17,764 |
| 1960 | 476 | ... | ... | ... | 26,701 |
| 1961 | 341 | ... | ... | ... | 20,282 |
| 1962 | 261 | ... | ... | ... | 17,500 |
| 1963 | 253 | 19 | 163 | 71 | 18,029 |
| 1964 | 254 | 18 | 161 | 75 | 19,961 |
| 1965 | 266 | 25 | 176 | 65 | 22,850 |
| 1973 | 221 | 9 | 156 | 56 | 24,940 |
| 1974 | 234 | 8 | 41 (sic) | 185 (sic) | 26,019 |
| 1975 | 246 | 10 | 182 | 54 | 26,782 |
| 1976 | 269 | 9 | 214 | 46 | 28,519 |

Source: State Education Commission, Achievement of Education in China: Statistics (1949 - 1983), also cited in part in Shen 1993.

Finally, higher education was no option for disabled young people in Mao's China.

There were no specialist colleges under Mao, and disabled students were denied entry to colleges and universities, irrespective of academic ability (Shen 1993). Why? Because in an era which prized the physical body above all else, entrance to a college or university was conditional upon a satisfactory assessment of physical health and strength ... and disabled people did not fit the bill.

Disability Associations Soviet-Style

The creation in the 1950s of the Welfare Association for the Blind and the Welfare Association for the Deaf-Mute is a little known fact in the international history of disabled people's organisations. Set up in 1956, the two Associations had certain responsibilities over welfare/work programmes, special schools and socio-political activities for disabled people. The Associations amalgamated in 1960 and their local branches followed suit over the next couple of years. According to Dixon (1981b), there were 368 local and municipal branches by 1962.

The concept and scope of the Associations, at least in the early years of their existence, bear remarkable resemblance to VOS and VOG, the Union of the Blind and the Union of the Deaf which were officially established in the Soviet Union in 1921 (Madison 1989). Both VOS and VOG were urban-based and work-oriented. Their main role was to set up and oversee welfare factories for blind and deaf people. But VOS and VOG also published magazines, organised local and mid-level association branches, and had a majority membership of disabled people. There was a low and fixed quota for hearing or sighted people, and that quota included individuals who had been registered as partially hearing or partially sighted (Madison 1989).

The Chinese Associations followed suit. Congresses were held to discuss issues of interest, and to plan welfare provision and policy (including welfare-work) for blind and deaf people. The first National Congress of Blind and Deaf-Mute People was held in May 1960. It sparked off the formation of social clubs and art circles in various parts of the country (Dixon 1981b). They were not numerous, but the fact that they existed is important all the same. John Dixon also mentions a proliferation of interest in sports competitions in the early 1960s, organised by and with deaf people (Dixon 1981b). So,

from the perspective of disability arts, sports and organisation, Maoist China would appear to be remarkably progressive - at least (and this is important) for those disabled people who approximated most closely to the norms and ideals of the Maoist body.

The activities of the Welfare Association for the Blind and Deaf-mute were suspended during the Cultural Revolution, along with many of the schools and factories that came under their direction (Dixon 1981b). All of which prompts questions about what happened to disability policy and disabled people in the "ten bad years" between 1966 and 1976 and, related to that point, what the broader social position of disabled people was in Mao's vision of a new and revolutionary society. How, if at all, were disabled people incorporated in the mainstream of China's socialist revolution and struggle for development?

What Place Disabled People in Mao's Revolution?

To judge from most accounts, including reminiscences collected in the field, many activities simply ceased during the Cultural Revolution. Regular working hours and lives were hugely disrupted as Mao and the notorious Gang of Four (blamed for the worst of the Cultural Revolution) exhorted the masses to engage in mass political and economic campaigns (Chan 1985, Leys 1979, MacFarquhar 1984, Spence 1990). To a large degree, disabled people were exempt from such campaigns as they were from standard military and productive service (Min 1993, Fieldnotes 1995-96). Disabled people were also absent from the posters and press reports which bombarded the Chinese masses with model workers, model peasants and model mothers. Disabled people who were only deemed suitable for welfare/work projects were not model workers, that much was clear. Nor were all of them encouraged to be model mothers and fathers. The Marriage Law of 1950 stipulated that individuals with infectious diseases (including venereal diseases and leprosy), who were mentally ill, who had congenital impairments or who were in any way deemed "by medical science" to be unfit for marriage, were not allowed to marry or, if they married, to reproduce. So, in political campaigns, propaganda and legislation, as well as education and employment, large numbers of disabled people were set apart. There were, however, a limited

number of ways in which disabled people were brought into the political and revolutionary arena of Maoist China.

Those who acquired impairment through military service or through a feat of socialist self-sacrifice were hailed as exemplars, for they epitomised socialist selflessness, the primacy of the collective over the individual, and revolutionary fervour (Bakken 1995). According to Sidel & Sidel (1982), those people who had acquired an impairment but kept contributing and serving others "against all odds" were used as socialist and collective therapy - to instill revolutionary optimism in a worn-out and disillusioned population, with the message that if *even* these people can find the capacity to serve, then how much more should you be doing?

Perhaps the most telling method of incorporating disabled people in Mao's revolutionary society was through political propaganda. As mentioned already, disabled people (especially those whose impairment was not acquired as a worker or soldier), were seldom used as model subjects, but they were sometimes used as model objects (Said 1965, Agren 1975). In the high-tide of revolutionary and political fever which marked the Great Leap and the Cultural Revolution, there were reports of disabled people who had been "healed" of their impairment by the power of Maoist thought and the seemingly miraculous capabilities of Chinese medicine and medical workers. Reference is made to this phenomenon in Said (1965) and in Agren (1975), who cites medical papers written in 1957 on the successful acupuncture treatment of hearing and speech impairment in Guangdong and Hebei provinces, and reports written in 1958 which mention 162 cases of infantile paralysis sequelae which were also, apparently, cured by acupuncture. Over a decade later, at the height of the Cultural Revolution, similar stories were being disseminated beyond as well as within China's borders. A pictorial album published by the Foreign Languages Press in 1971 is one such example. The following extract is from the commentary which accompanies photographs of once-paralysed children and adults dancing, once-deaf people listening to Mao's speech on the radio, once-mute people denouncing Mao's arch-opponent Liu Shaoqi, and once-blind people reading Mao's thoughts:

Armed with Mao Tsetung thought, medical workers have performed many miracles in the medical worlds, writing a new chapter in the

history of China's medical and health work ... With small silver needles these new health workers restored the hearing and speaking of the deaf-mutes, who now shout: "Long live Chairman Mao!" With the same needles they made it possible for the blind to see the red sun, and for paralytics to stand up. By simple new methods of treatment they conquered the chronic Keshan Disease. They rejoined a worker's arm severed in three places in an accident. They saved the life of a heroine who received severe burns covering 98 per cent of her body surface while fighting a fire, and that of a worker whose heart had stopped beating for 39 minutes ... these new things and unprecedented amazing achievements which have emerged on China's medical and health front, are splendid victories for Chairman Mao's proletarian line on health work and for the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (Foreign Languages Press 1971, pp. 2 & 5, in English).

Not all these cases would have been complete fabrications. Doctors of the People's Liberation Army had acquired the skills of cataract surgery, and the big push (alluded to above) on oralist education for "deaf-mute" children could easily be presented as evidence of "cure". But whether the incidents were real or imaginary is less important than the extent of intervention, the nature of the claims and the fact that they were made at all. Success stories were variously attributed to the healing power of Mao's thought (for Mao was well on the way to quasi-religious cult status by the mid-1960s), the scientifically-proven superiority of traditional Chinese medicine over western medicine, or the super-skills of the nation's heroes - the barefoot doctors and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army.

The stories will immediately strike a chord with the reader brought up on Christ's healing acts, whereby the power of Jesus to forgive and save in God's name is made manifest in making blind people see, deaf people hear, mute people speak and lame people walk, once they repent of their sins. There are similar stories in Chinese Daoist mythology which Mao would most certainly have been aware of, given his personal and political interest in Chinese history and the history of popular uprisings. The Daoist-inspired Yellow Turban Rebellion of 184 (during the Han dynasty) was led by men who were, among other things, healers. Sick people confessed their wrongs and, if their beliefs in the movement were sufficiently strong, they were cured (see Dull in Kleinman *et al* 1975). The revolutionary healing of the 1960s had a clear link with the past and an even clearer link with politics.

To summarise, the use of disabled people as objects of revolutionary zeal rather than as subjects of the revolution, and as political platforms to demonstrate Maoist and Chinese supremacy, reinforced the ideological, social, economic and political supremacy of non-disabled people and the non-disabled body in Maoist China. Disabled people had their ideological uses, but as potential non-workers, non-soldiers and non-mothers, they also posed a threat to Maoist socialist ideologies and the primacy of productive work. Damage limitation meant separate schools, separate work-units, separate sports meets, separate study groups, separate associations. On the other hand, at least there were some schools, factories, study groups and sports meets.

Socialist Constructions of Disability

Historically-grounded research is thus needed both to identify those specific dynamics of capitalism which oppress disabled people and also to demonstrate the ways in which impairment was experienced in alternative social formations. The latter research aim is critical given that capitalism has not been the exclusive source of disablement in human history ... For this reason, it is politically important that materialists turn a critical gaze towards the historical experience of disabled people in 'socialist' societies (Gleeson 1997, p. 196).

Since Chapter Three, I have shied away from discussing western disability theories, primarily to avoid the temptation to squeeze China findings into western frameworks. It is one thing to be informed by western theory and to adopt, in basic form, a social model definition, but it is quite another to continually refer back to western theory when the story being told is not western. However, it feels sensible to depart, temporarily, from that approach in order to make explicit the implications of the Chinese story on the development of disability theory beyond China.

Gleeson, cited above, points out a core weakness of western disability studies: the failure to investigate disability in socialist societies. Such research is politically and academically important for disabled people's movements and for the advancement of disability studies. To date, a small but woefully under-used body of research exists on disability in the Soviet Union (McCagg 1989, Dunn & Dunn 1989, Dunham 1989, Madison 1989 in McCagg & Siegelbaum 1989, also Madison 1968) and in former countries of the Soviet bloc (Ursic 1996 on Slovenia, Hastie 1997 on Bosnia). These

studies offer some fascinating insights but fail to explore theories of the constructions of disability under state socialism. To my knowledge, the only academic who has made a more serious attempt to tackle disability and socialist ideologies is Paul Abberley (1996). Lennard Davis furnishes some juicy titbits relevant to the subject, but fails to use that information as anything more than an interesting aside (Davis 1997b).

Abberley, in a paper on work, Utopia and impairment, makes the common-sense observation that - as far as the exclusion of disabled people is concerned - the core disabling ideology in capitalism is basically the same as the core disabling ideology in socialism and Marxist thought: the primacy of work. Examples abound of texts which explore the role of work and the workplace in constructing disability in capitalist industrial societies (Oliver 1989, 1990, 1996c, Barton 1993, Bickenbach 1993, Davis 1997b, Finkelstein 1980, 1991, Gleeson 1997, Hahn 1987, Stone 1984), but seldom is mention made of the socialist work ethic or the "romanticism of productivity" which is central to Marxist thought (Abberley 1996, drawing on Jean Baudrillard). In a Marxist Utopia, Abberley explains, the ability to labour in a manner recognised by the collective and state as productive, is the key criteria on which full social membership (that is, personhood) is granted. The personhood of children corresponds to their status as future workers. The personhood of older people corresponds to their status as former workers. Given the restrictive but hegemonic definitions of work and productivity in modern socialist societies (which are even now seldom expanded to non-paid work save in child-bearing, child-raising or building capacity for work), it would seem that there is little scope for large numbers of disabled people to achieve full personhood. As long as work in its common-sense definition is the key to personhood, then disability as discrimination will inevitably result. Of course, the rub is that in Maoist/socialist China, as in most Soviet-bloc states, measurements of work have historically been highly restrictive, based on quantifiable production outputs in agriculture and industry. Abberley concludes:

For Marxism, then, there is an identification of who you are with the work you do which transcends capitalism and socialism and enters the concrete Utopia of the future to constitute a key element of humanity, and a key need of human beings in all areas. Whilst other needs can be met for impaired people ... the one need that cannot be met [for all impaired people] is the need to work (Abberley 1996, p. 69).

And thus, Marxism must be added to the list of projects which adhere to aspirations of bodily, mental and functional "perfection", and which identify non-workers (excluding former and future workers) as non-persons.

Abberley's thesis is supported by Davis's recent article on "Constructing Normalcy" (1997b, discussed in Chapter One). A central part of his thesis is the influence of population statistics and the work of Alphonse Quetelet. Quetelet advanced the concept of an average man and foresaw what Davis describes as "a kind of Utopia of the norm associated with progress" (Davis 1997, p. 12), which envisioned civilization as a gradual movement towards the compression of bodily and mental diversities (or, as Quetelet variously framed them, deviations, defects and monstrosities). The notion of an average man became the crux of the Marxist concept of labour value or average wages.

In this sense, Marx is very much in step with the movement of normalizing the body and the individual ... Marxist thought encourages us toward an enforcing of normalcy in the sense that the deviations in society [in terms of wealth and production] ... must be minimized (Davis 1997, p. 13).

The absolute determination to minimize deviations in Chinese socialist society - deviations of wealth, thought, even individual identity and expression - is everywhere apparent in Mao's China. Recall again the form and function of the Maoist socialist body: strong, fit, healthy, active, productive, androgynous, uniformly clad. Recall the state-imposed participation of bodies in mass callisthenics in the workplace, at school, and at public/political events. Recall also the ideological primacy of the worker, upheld by hierarchies of entitlement to welfare; the diminished personhood of the non-worker; and institutions such as the welfare-work factory and the labour camp. And, of course, recall the drive to restore function and thereby personhood through the scientific miracles of Mao's medical army during the cultural revolution.

I suggest, following Abberley and Davis, and based on the findings presented so far, that the historical exclusion of disabled people from work in modern socialist societies is a by-product of the organization of those societies around (a narrow definition of) productive work as the basis for personhood. The body is defined in terms of productive capacity, that definition is cast as "average" or "normal", and is then used as

the basis on which personhood is conferred. I would add that the factor which has most compounded the construction of that normalizing and disabling bond between the functional body and full personhood is an overarching socio-political discourse of body, nation and development; a discourse which ties the individual body to the perceived necessity to the nation of maximum industrial and agricultural outputs and a strong (fit, healthy, non-impaired) stock of human capital, to serve as soldiers, mothers, scientists or workers as the nation-state deems necessary.

The link between notions of nation, national fitness and individual fitness is starkest in eugenic discourses, as many have noted (Davis 1997, Barnes 1996, Abberley 1996, Borthwick 1996, Burleigh 1994 and Morris 1991). But the point to emphasise here is that the body-nation-development discourse is not restricted to the pseudo-science of eugenics. In fact, the focus on eugenics is somewhat misplaced and has detracted from what I believe to be the crucial and ongoing discourse of national development. Only this can explain the fact that the discourse of body, nation and development under Mao carried concepts of the normal and non-impaired body to a higher and more disabling level than had been the case under previous ideological systems; and the fact that this happened at a time when eugenic discourse and practices were actively suppressed as a fallacious bourgeois tool to justify the oppression of the proletariat and peasantry (see Chapter Nine).

To Summarise So Far

We have reached the end of the three historical chapters and, the reader may be encouraged to learn, are half-way through the thesis. In the next four chapters, attention turns to the re-forming of disability (institutions and ideologies) under Deng Xiaoping during the 1980s and 1990s. First, however, some swift stock-taking of the main arguments put forward so far is in order.

For men, but more especially for women, the body became an icon of modernity, reconstruction and rehabilitation. The role of the physical in the redefinition of the moral capacity of Chinese culture, society and politics deserves more than a footnote in contemporary Chinese history (Fan Hong 1997, p. 36)

I have argued, following Fan Hong, that the imperial perception of the body as a microcosm of society and state was re-formed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in line with the emergence of a new discourse of nation and development. The contours of that discourse are inextricable from the broader context of Sino-western contact and conflict, internal debate and the search for a new national identity. The salient features of the emergent discourse might be summarised as follows.

First, the discourse of development was new, nationalist and grounded in a conceptualisation of development as evolutionary, unilinear, and as a ladder to civilization and Utopia. Climbing that ladder of development (Borthwick 1996) was the new goal of the Chinese government in the early twentieth century. The imperial and Confucian aim of creating stability and Order was not lost, but it became secondary to the task of national strengthening and nation-building.

Secondly, the new discourse of development was premised on a reconstructed relationship between the body and the nation. In contrast to imperial cosmologies, the emergent discourse within and beyond China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries conceived the state as a sick body (the "Sick Man of Asia") and as the sum of all the bodies therein. This engendered a range of activities and institution-building, influenced by western missionaries, social reformers and social theorists. Whilst most research has concentrated on the imperialist export of disability-specific institutions in this epoch (such as segregated schools), it is also important to recognise the export of physical culture and competitive sports. Certainly, the place of the body and of body cultivation had long been significant in Chinese society, as the attention paid to medicine and healing therapies in imperial China reveals. But the crucial difference lies in the addition of a national/ist dimension to body cultivation.

The national/ist dimension was consolidated in Mao's socialist state, through the institutionalisation of mass callisthenics and sports, through the primacy of work as a key to personhood, and the definition of work as economic (industrial or agricultural) productivity. The peasant and factory worker assumed the mantle formerly worn by Confucian literati and provided new ideals of perfection. Manual labour was the one thing that China had vast quantities of, and Mao determined to capitalise on this and cast it as the solution to China's problems. Further, the drive for rapid agricultural and

industrial development necessitated propaganda that proclaimed the honour of manual toil; whilst the fear of dissent mixed with a vision of communism necessitated propaganda and policies that denounced individualism, stifled diversity (or deviation), promoted conformity and the construction of a mass, uniform and normative body (Brownell 1995).

It appears, then, that in imperial and Confucian cosmologies, the body was conceived as lineage capital, whereby personhood was premised on reproduction, ritual performance and filial support. In contrast, in late nineteenth and early twentieth century thought, the body was regarded as racial and national capital, while personhood became increasingly linked to individual health and strength in the context of the nation's health and strength. Under Mao Zedong, the link between body, nation and development was taken further yet and the body was viewed in functionalist terms as capital for national economic development; personhood was based on individual productivity, and fitness and health became means to maintaining and improving function (as well as strengthening a sense of the collective) rather than ends in themselves.

How far these concepts of body, personhood, disability and development were reformed in the institutions and ideologies of the post-Mao era is the subject of the next four chapters.

Chapter Six

Disability on the Agenda

This is the first of four chapters on disability in post-Mao China. Accordingly, the chapter has two objectives: first, to convey something of the feel of China in the 1980s and 1990s; and secondly, to advance the hypothesis that state interest and intervention in disability rose to unprecedented levels during the 1980s and 1990s. Evidence is presented in support of that hypothesis and explanations are offered as to why state interest in disability soared in the post-Mao era. The evidence and explanations set out in this chapter, along with the preliminary scene-setting, are vital background to the next three chapters which delve deeper into state interventions, institutions and ideologies relevant to the macro-level construction of disability in post-Mao China.

At the outset of this thesis, mention was made of a small but growing body of literature on disability in China: some produced by academics and practitioners whose interests and careers have carried them to China (including Condon 1990, Potts 1995); some produced by a new generation of academics and postgraduates yet to establish themselves on the publications circuit (see Chapter One); and some produced by specialists on China whose interests in education, society and social security have prompted them to consider disability (Epstein 1988, Pearson 1995, Pepper 1990 *inter alia*). The interests of this motley crew have, with very few exceptions, coincided with the post-Mao era. In part, this can be ascribed to the hypothesis put forward in this chapter; but it is also an illustration of the interest that China now excites in the west ... as travel destination, as subject of television documentaries, as fodder for the great western academic enterprise, and as potentially the largest consumer market in the world. In the 1990s, China is an exciting place to engage with. The pace of change has

taken many who know China by surprise, while most people in the west have little inkling of quite how quickly China is changing. So, to convey something of the sense of change (which is by no means all positive from a left-leaning development studies perspective), the following section outlines the main features of Deng Xiaoping's reforms.

Setting the Scene

Since 1978 and the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, the Chinese government has propelled China down a new road to development. In contrast to Maoist slogans of "Red over Expert", the late Deng Xiaoping declared that "to get rich first is glorious". Deng's approach to China's economic development is nowhere better encapsulated than in the oft-repeated statement: "What matter if the cat is black or white, so long as it catches mice".

The post-Mao era has been an era of reform. China's new road, euphemistically called "socialism with Chinese characteristics", is a road which embraces market economics and the competitive labour market, alongside integration into the international economic order. The pace of change has been astounding, and has proved a worthy subject for numerous macro and micro-level studies, several of which are recommended reading and have informed the sketch of post-Mao change set out below. In terms of macro-level economic reforms, the most helpful sources have been Riskin (1987), White (1988, 1991), and contributors to Dassu & Saich (1992) and Dwyer (1994). Of particular note with regard to the impact of socio-economic change on the Chinese rural economy are Leeming (1993), Saith (1987), Parish (1985), Delman *et al* (1990) and Hinton (1991). Croll (1994), Chan *et al* (1992), Davis (1993), Potter & Potter (1990) and Wiens (1985) offer insightful case studies of the impact of change at household and community level. Contributors to Davis & Vogel (1990) and Link *et al* (1989) convey a sense of broader socio-cultural change, whilst Croll *et al* (1985), Kane (1987) and Wang & Hull (1991) are among the many who have explored demographic change and population policy. The following summary draws on these texts.

In urban areas, the work unit and state owned enterprises have been undergoing a slow

but sure demise (Leung 1992, 1994, Riskin 1987, White 1988, 1991), while levels of urbanization have soared as a result of rural-urban migration (Kirkby 1994). In the late 1990s, the number of work units has dramatically diminished, job security is a thing of the past, urban unemployment levels are on the rise, along with petty crime rates, and more individuals and families are being forced to buy outright the homes that were once subsidised by work units. The pendulum of urban life has swung from low-level security to high-level risk.

In the rural areas, reform has been equally rapid and far-reaching. Specialisation, diversification, commoditisation, commercialisation, rural industry and household responsibility are the reform buzzwords (Aubert 1990, Gray 1988, Parish 1985, Delman *et al* 1990, Hinton 1991). Under Deng Xiaoping, rural collectives were rapidly dismantled and collective land was divided into "noodle-strips" (Hinton 1991). Land ownership and commodification of labour are proceeding apace (Hinton 1991), alongside private and local government-owned "town and village enterprises" (TVEs), described by Frank Leeming (1994, p. 87) as "capitalism, so to speak, with a Communist Party face" (see also Hodder 1994, Delman *et al* 1990). The boundary between socialism with Chinese characteristics and capitalist market economics gets ever more blurred.

In rural and urban China alike, there are clear signs of social stratification and economic disparity between rich and poor (Ghose 1987, Chan *et al* 1992, Mok 1995, Potter & Potter 1990, Shue 1990, Whyte 1985, 1986, Wiens 1985 *inter alia*). Already élitism and exploitation are becoming entrenched in the new social structure of China, to the extent that some analysts have identified a form of caste system operating in rural, peri-urban and urban areas (Chan *et al* 1992, Potter & Potter 1990, Honig 1989). According to Hinton (1991), among others, the trend is towards the creation of a poor peasantry alongside a well-off commercial farming class. Economic and social polarisation are evident in urban China also, which is characterised by a growing underclass of unemployed people, migrant labourers and the nouveau riche (Chan *et al* 1992, Davis & Vogel 1990, Feuchtwang 1987, Honig 1989, Zhu Q.F. 1997).

The cost of embracing market economics and dismantling collectives and urban work units has been dear. There have been many winners. Millions have taken advantage of

the new opportunities to get rich quick. Living standards, measured in consumer goods like televisions and fridges, in meat and alcohol consumption, in spendable income and savings accounts, have risen for a large sector of the population (see Link *et al* 1989). For most, however, there is an economic ceiling to personal ambitions for wealth and security which seems to be getting lower. There have also been outright losers - an inevitable outcome in a socialist or quasi-capitalist market economy. They are the people who have lost their job or have no job to go to, whose land is poor and insufficient even for subsistence purposes, who are faced with school fees and medical costs which they cannot meet (Chan *et al* 1992, Dassu & Saich 1992, Hillier & Xiang 1994, Whyte 1986, Wiens 1985).

In rural and urban areas, the onus for financing and meeting the household's basic needs has fallen back on the household, rendering the task of providing support for non-working family members more difficult (Feuchtwang 1987, Saith 1987, Croll 1994). Access to support depends on wealth or personal connections. Public health and education campaigns have stagnated in the changing political environment (Cheung 1995, Hillier & Xiang 1994). Increased mobility has weakened kinship ties (Davis 1990). The demise of work units and of formal neighbourhood structures has weakened local support networks (Chan 1993, Fieldnotes 1995-96). In rural areas, gender inequalities are resurfacing within households in son-preference (Davin 1990, Croll 1994), in decreasing rates of school attendance among girl children (Davin 1990), and female infanticide (Alibhai-Brown 1996, Croll *et al* 1985). Finally, in a country once known for filial piety and respect for older people, it is sobering to learn of the growth (and anticipated further growth) of residential care for people in old age (Chan 1993, Qi, S.Z. 1997).

The vagaries of socio-economic transition, the introduction of a competitive labour market and the smashed "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed employment, basic health care and schooling have not been welcome reforms for those on the social and economic margins.

A scene has been set which, in the light of western accounts of the ideologies and impact of market economics, competition and capitalism, is hardly a setting conducive to taking a positive interest in disabled people. And yet, that is precisely what appears

to have happened.

Disability on the Agenda?

The hypothesis put forward in this chapter is that the 1980s and 1990s have witnessed a dramatic intensification of state interest in disability. I would go so far as to argue that the level of state interest in the lives of disabled people is without historical precedent in China - and that is a grand claim in a nation which boasts a long and illustrious history, and which (as preceding chapters illustrate) is no stranger to disability as a socio-political issue.

To argue that there has been a dramatic intensification of state interest is not necessarily to say that the everyday lives of disabled people have undergone changes over and above the changes experienced by most Chinese people under Deng Xiaoping. It is, however, to say that never before in China have there been so many macro-level policies, projects and proclamations targeted specifically at disabled people; never before have the rights and lives of disabled people been such a focus of public attention; and never before has disability in China made the news in the way it has in the 1980s and 1990s.

This claim is supported by analysts and academics inside and outside China. Outsiders have pointed out that, setting aside the obvious caveats of limited resources and a low base-level of provision, "enormous improvements have been made in the extraordinarily short period of ten years" (Pearson 1995, p. 107; see also Condon 1990, CD 1990p, DPB 1991a, ESCAP 1993, Guesquière-Peitz 1989/90, Mindes 1991, Pascoe 1981, Sydenham 1992 *inter alia*). Insiders, especially those who speak with official or semi-official authority, are less reserved with their praise:

- people no longer regard those with disability as "the disabled and useless", recognizing that they are equal creators of material and spiritual wealth

- the society is giving more and more understanding, respect, concern and assistance to people with disability, fostering an environment of love and harmony [...]

- disabled people's organizations pursue a vigorous programme in both rural and urban areas, representing and safeguarding the rights and

interests of people with various disabilities [...]

- the State promulgated legislation to protect the human rights of people with disability; formulated, concentrating on effective measures, and carried out consecutively five-year work programmes and achieved remarkable improvement of the situation of people with disability (CDPF 1995b).

Or, in a nutshell, that the post-Mao decades have been "one of [the] best periods for disabled people in China" (Ren *et al* 1989, p. 3-4). I could add countless non-official comments from interviews and casual conversations in Beijing, Heping and Shanlin which run along similar lines: life is still hard but is mostly getting better; there is less physical and verbal abuse; and there is more public awareness compared to ten or fifteen years ago (Fieldnotes 1995-96).

These claims, irrespective of whether or not they are backed by positive outsider evaluations, obviously require hard evidence - because that is what is expected of good research, and because it is the only way to persuade that a developing country such as China, in the throes of socio-economic transition, with a lousy track record on human rights and ruled by a one-party Communist dictatorship might suddenly find the political will to make space for disability issues on the national government agenda. The context could not be more unlikely and, given that context, the realities could not be more remarkable.

By way of preparing the ground for more detailed investigation in the chapters that follow, I propose to set out some of the evidence and explanations for the heady claims made above. The place of this chapter, as the first of four chapters on reforming disability in the post-Mao era, is to present an overview of government activity and change, before getting down to the all-important task of unpacking the activity and deciphering the change.

What follows is a summary of evidence (and space only permits a summary) concerning new or expanded activities and disability-related change in post-Mao China. Evidence is grouped around five themes: data, language, initiatives, professions and organizations.

New Data

What clearer sign can there be of new government interest in an old social subject than the decision to gather data, conduct surveys and compile statistical reports?

On 1st April 1987, after lengthy preparation, the National Disability Sample Survey was launched (Li 1988, see also Lee 1991, Guo 1993). According to the official publication of the National Disability Sample Survey Office (Li 1988), the survey had been undertaken with several objectives in mind. The most pressing need was for detailed information on the numbers, locations and situations of disabled people across China. How many disabled people were there? What types and levels of impairment did they have? How had their impairments been caused? What was the social and economic situation of disabled people and their households? Were there some regions which had higher concentrations of disabled people than others? All of this information was sought to guide policy-making at national, provincial and municipal levels, and provide a "reliable foundation" on which to formulate regulations and guiding policy principles to "solve all the problems of disabled people" (Li 1988, p. 2). Further, the survey was designed to "reflect the concern of the Party and the Government towards disabled people", "reflect the superiority of socialist systems" and "draw the attention of the world to China's disability situation ... to make the people of the world notice the special characteristics of China's disability initiative" and, no doubt, the urgent need for financial donations (Li 1988, p. 3).

The survey comprised three parts: a brief "household survey" [*zhuhu diaocha*] to identify the general characteristics of the household and the number of disabled people, if any, in each household; a detailed "disability screening survey" [*canjiren shaicha*] with forty-one questions on self- or family-identified disabled people and their households; and a medical "disability survey" [*canjiren diaocha*] which included questions on type, level, onset and cause of impairment and which was conducted by local doctors to confirm and classify those identified in the "disability screening survey" (Li 1988). The overall sample comprised 369,816 households (totalling 1,579,314 persons) or approximately 1.5% of the Chinese population in 1987. The response rate was an impressive 97.5% (Li 1988).

The findings of the 1987 survey left an indelible mark on the state and public

conception of disability in China. The medically-certified "disability survey" labelled 77,343 individuals from 66,888 households as disabled according to five basic categories of impairment and a residual category of dual or multiple impairment. The breakdown of figures reads as follows:

Table 4: National Disability Sample Survey (1987) impairment data.

| <i>IMPAIRMENT</i> | <i>Number Identified</i> | <i>Prevalence per 1,000</i> | <i>Projections in millions</i> |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Speech/Hearing</i> | 25,615 | 16.79 | 17.70 |
| <i>Intellectual</i> | 15,233 | 9.65 | 10.17 |
| <i>Visual</i> | 11,303 | 7.16 | 7.55 |
| <i>Physical</i> | 11,304 | 7.16 | 7.55 |
| <i>Mental Health</i> | 2,907 | 1.84 | 1.94 |
| <i>Multiple</i> | 10,080 | 6.38 | 6.73 |

Source: Di, Y. (1988), "The Over Fifty Million Handicapped Population in Our Country", Chinese Civil Affairs, June 1990, pp. 32-33, cited in Pearson 1995, p.102.

In percentage terms, that meant that 4.9% of sampled individuals were labelled "disabled" and 18.1% of sampled households had at least one disabled family member. These figures were then projected to fit the entire Chinese population in 1987 and resulted in a grand total of 51.64 million disabled people of all ages in the People's Republic of China (Lee 1991, Li 1988, Guo 1993).

Guo Ming (1993, p. 214) intimates that a higher figure would have resulted had certain categories of disabled people (such as people with leprosy) not been excluded from final survey findings. Guo Ming suggests an overall figure closer to 91 million people or 8.63% of the Chinese population. An even higher figure is reached when the discrepancy between the total number of disabled people identified by medics in the "disability survey" (77,343 persons) and the total number of disabled people identified by self or family in the "disability screening survey" (176,888 persons) is taken into account. Had the latter figure been used as the basis for projections, the result would have topped the 100 million mark at 11.2% of the Chinese population (based on data cited in Li 1988).

Government guesstimates prior to 1987 had hovered around the 20 million mark (Tan & Yang 1984). Therefore the figure of 51.64 million disabled people was more than

enough to grab and hold the government's attention. Veronica Pearson (1995) suggests that the survey findings probably shook Chinese officialdom and state planners. In effect, China's disabled population had more than doubled overnight, leaving the government with no option but to apply themselves more rigorously to what had become an official "disability problem" [*canjiren wenti*] (Li 1988, Liu & Liu 1993, Ma 1993).

Evidence from the 1987 and subsequent surveys confirmed that disabled people were considerably more likely to be unemployed, in poverty, unmarried, divorced and illiterate compared to their non-disabled peers (*CD* 1988j, 1988p, 1988q, 1988r, 1989d, 1992d, Chen 1995, *LD* 1993, Li 1988, TCAI 1996, Xi 1993). Social discrimination [*qishi*] is acknowledged, more and less openly, to be alive and kicking in China (*CD* 1991c, 1992c,o,p,s, Chen 1995, *PD* 1994, Shi 1991, Xi 1993, Zhang 1991). More worrying yet to the government is the fact that 50% of Chinese disabled adults classed as "with labour ability" [*you laodong nengli*] were *officially* unemployed in 1987 (Li 1988, Zhu 1993). Approximately 50% of disabled people in urban areas and 40% of disabled people in rural areas were classed as unemployed but employable, compared to an official urban unemployment rate of 3% among non-disabled people (Li 1988, Xi *et al* 1993). Moreover, only one-third of disabled people claimed to be self-supporting and economically independent from state, collective or family (Li 1988). This suggests that many disabled people engaged in some form of productive labour may still not earn enough for a basic standard of living (Pearson 1995). That conclusion is backed up by comparative data on the types of employment in which disabled people and non-disabled people engage. For example, 3.4% of employed disabled people work in "brain" [*naoli laodong*] as opposed to "brawn" [*tili laodong*] occupations, compared to a national average of 8.3%. Again compared to the national average, more disabled people are employed in low-level, low-paid, low-skilled jobs (Zhu 1993, *CD* 1993c,d,f).

The 1987 survey also provided strong evidence that illiteracy and semi-literacy rates among the population over 12 years old were more than three times higher (68%) than among non-disabled peers (20.6%) (Zhu 1993; see also *CD* 1988s,t,x, 1990e,j,q, 1995c, CDDC 1992, Li & Shen 1981, Potts 1995, Stevens *et al* 1990, Xu *et al* 1992).

A mere 6% of children (aged between 6 and 14 years old) with sensory impairments and 3% of children with "low intellect" went to school, compared to levels as high as 90% school attendance among non-disabled children in urban areas (Li 1988). Zhu Qingfang offers a different statistic but one that points to a similar conclusion on education for disabled children: only 1% of the 47% of disabled children *deemed suitable* for special education attended a special school in 1987 (Zhu 1993). As regards university education, non-disabled people were over eighteen times more likely to attend university than disabled peers (Zhu 1993, *CD* 1988u). According to Li (1988), only 25.2% of disabled adults had received basic primary education and a paltry 0.3% had entered higher education. I suspect that the reality is worse than even these figures suggest (Fieldnotes 1995-96).

As a result of barriers to education and employment, and also the limited availability and high cost of rehabilitation in China, impairment and serious illness present themselves as the major pathways to individual and family poverty (*CD* 1990s, *BYD* 1994c, Croll 1994). A survey of 21 provinces, cited in Zhu Qingfang's analysis, showed that disabled people made up over 50% of the official Chinese "poverty population" [*pinkun renkou*] in poorer regions. Another survey, conducted in 1989 by the National General Workers' Federation on 130,000 registered "worker households in poverty" [*pinkun zhigong jiating*], showed that in over 80% of cases, impairment or serious illness in a member of the household was the direct cause of poverty (Zhu 1993). The 1991 Work Programme (see below) stated that half of all those living below the poverty line in China were disabled people - and that proportion was expected to rise as absolute numbers of people in poverty declined. The 1996 Work Programme put a figure of 18 million on the number of disabled people living below the official Chinese poverty line, of whom 15 million had "work ability" but were unemployed. A report in the *China Daily* tabled 20 million disabled people as "short of food and clothing" (*CD* 1992j). These statistics are born out by poverty household data for Heping County (Fieldnotes 1995-96).

The Heping poverty household data show that the vast majority of poverty households in the county have at least one family member with an impairment. The only poverty households which do not conform to this model appear to be female-headed

households with two or more school-age children. The ledgers also provide a guide to comparative hardship between poverty households: families with more than one disabled family member, with a very low ratio of individuals of working age and with work ability to dependants, characterise the poorest of the poor - those expected by County Civil Affairs to experience "eternal" [*yongjiu*] or "long-lasting" poverty of over 15 years. 29 out of the 160 households listed in the ledgers come into that category. One of these is a female-headed household. The remainder are either households comprising an older couple (often with an impairment or serious illness) and their unmarried adult disabled son, or they comprise two or three generations in which most, if not all, family members are ill or have an impairment, and in which the only "healthy" [*jiankang*] family members (if any) are too young to labour .

Statistics, reports and informant opinions indicate that rising urban and rural unemployment combined with a competitive labour market and the demise of state allocated jobs in the cities have made it harder for many disabled people to compete and secure employment in the 1980s and 1990s (*CD* 1988c,g, 1990o, 1993f, *BYD* 1994d, Xi 1993). Difficulties of competing with non-disabled peers have been compounded by lack of educational opportunities and, in some cases, lack of basic aids or rehabilitation which could facilitate employment (1996 Work Programme). It is also clear that significant numbers of disabled people and their families are at the bottom end of the socio-economic scale with fewer prospects for extricating themselves from hardship than non-disabled counterparts (see *Les Handicapés en Chine* 1988, Li 1988, Pearson 1995, Xi *et al* 1993 and Di 1988 for further statistical analysis). Particularly vulnerable are older disabled people, adults with multiple impairments, households in which disabled people live alone or in which more than one household member has an impairment, and disabled children (Di 1988 cited in Pearson 1995).

In China, the "disability problem" has become a focus of research in government departments at all levels, hospital research units and university faculties. All have been swift to join in the disability data generation game, concentrating research on disabled children, adults able to work but unemployed, mental health or learning difficulties, and the rural dimension to disability and impairment (*CD* 1988j,p,q,r, 1989d, 1992d, Chen 1997, Chen & Simeonsson 1993, Parker 1992, TCAI 1996, Wang 1996, Wu

1996, Yan 1996, Yang 1987). The boom in disability data - questionable in terms of research and development ethics (Chambers 1983, Miles & Saunders 1990) - has probably been critical in keeping disability on the government agenda and it has certainly proved decisive in shaping the government's response at national and regional levels and/or in providing the ammunition to justify the government's chosen course of action (see Stone 1996a and Chapter Nine). It has also ushered in various changes in the definition and language of disability and impairment.

New Language

The power of language in framing experiences of disability and impairment, and in reforming individual and collective conceptualisations, cannot be overlooked. Throughout the world, disabled people's movements have used language as a platform for change and a focus for resistance.

State systems necessarily operate on the basis of definitions and codes which determine who is eligible for what service, what education and what entitlements. Theories have been advanced which establish a critical link between the development of state and/or professional definitions and the wider project of creating and constructing disability in the west (Abberley 1995, Finkelstein 1991, Stone 1984 *inter alia*). The same holds for China. Indeed, given the important place of the Chinese script in Chinese culture and socio-politics, there is probably an even stronger case to be made for seeing the Chinese language as a major site of change, contestation and disability construction (Stone 1998c, forthcoming).

Administrative and legal disability categories have a long history in China. To recap from Chapter Three: during and perhaps prior to the Tang dynasty, there were three juridical and administrative grades of disability which cut across impairment and were constructed on the basis of impairment severity. The three grades were *canji*, *feiji* and *duji* (*duji* being the most severe), all of which were set against the concept of *ding* - the able-bodied, adult male. During the 1980s, the lowest of the disability categories, *canji*, has been radically reformed whilst *feiji* and *duji* appear to be obsolete. The concept of *ding* also seems to have slipped from the statutes but it lives on in everyday parlance in "*nan zi han*" - a phrase which defies translation, save to say that it sums up

the superior physical, moral and ethnic status of the adult Han Chinese male.

The re-formed meaning of *canji* allows the term to function as a Chinese translation for Anglo-American words like "disabled", "disability" or "impairment" (note that no distinction operates between impairment and disability in Chinese translation) and as a non-derogatory umbrella category for people with certain impairments. Impairments are divided into five major categories with a sixth residual category where an individual has two or more impairments [*zonghe canji*]. The five categories are: hearing and/or speech impairment [*tingli yuyan canji*], visual impairment [*shili canji*], physical impairment [*zhiti canji*], intellectual impairment [*zhili canji*] and mental health disorder [*jingshenbing canji*]. These were in place for the 1987 survey and have guided Chinese disability policies and programmes since. Within each category, more detailed specifications grade impairments by type, severity and implications of the impairment for individual function. These specifications are set out in many post-Mao Chinese texts on disability (see, for example, CDPF *et al* 1992, Li 1988, Teng 1992, Xi 1993, Zhang *et al* 1991).

It may be argued that there seems to be little substantive difference between post-Mao classifications and imperial predecessors (particularly given inevitable interim changes influenced by missionary, Soviet Union and Maoist epochs). Then, as now, people with different impairments and different degrees of impairment were classified and categorised. Then, as now, membership of an impairment-based category was a key to "privileges" granted by the state. Then, as now, officials and doctors were the gatekeepers to privilege and controlled the definitional process. But that is where the similarities end. The differences, and they are substantive, lie in the creation of a single, unifying, catch-all category, and the extent to which definitions are grounded in western biomedicine and tally with dominant "international" classifications and, above all, the increased power that lies behind the label in the 1980s and 1990s (Stone 1998c). In the 1990s, the label "*canji*" defines the existence of Chinese disabled people and frames the activity of the state in disabled people's lives. People with impairments are required to register as disabled people [*canjiren*] if they wish the state to recognise their impairment (Fieldnotes 1995-96).

But *canji* also has a second function which steps beyond administration into the realms

of awareness raising and socio-cultural change. Since *canji* operates as a bureaucratic, medical appellation, it is promoted (perhaps spuriously) as a neutral and non-derogatory term which is ideally placed to combat negative and abusive disability terminology such as *xiazi* for blind people, *yaba* for deaf people, *bozi* for lame people, *daisha* or *chidai* for people with learning difficulties to name just a few of the most common. In line with this second function, a new slogan has been coined to establish a less stigmatizing linguistic framework for impairment and disability (Mindes 1991, Stone 1998c, Zhang *et al* 1990).

The slogan "disabled but not useless" [*canji erbu canfei*] is intended to challenge negative perceptions of impairment and disabled people. It is a direct attack on the more established aphorism "disabled person, good for nothing" [*canfei wuyong*] which sums up the all too prevalent hostility to and disregard for disabled people in China (Zhang *et al* 1990). As argued in a forthcoming paper which links the modern slogan with its ancient script (Stone 1998c), the slogan "disabled but not useless" cannot be dismissed as a meaningless piece of top-down rhetoric. In nine months of fieldwork, I encountered the slogan frequently in formal interviews and casual conversation, in the press and on television, in rural and urban areas (Fieldnotes 1995-96). One key informant in Beijing explained:

There are so many differences with the past. Before the 1980s, all the newspapers and broadcasts would call us "canfei" people. The word itself tells you so much! Under appeal from many disabled people, newspapers and the rest of the media changed and started using "canji" people. Since then, step by step, the rest of society has started to change.

(Source: Semi-structured taped interview with Mr. Liu, Beijing Field Research (freelance), Data Code: BJ-96-SCY-1, March 1996).

"Disabled but not useless" is the most well-known of a series of phrases which challenge dominant perceptions of what disabled people can or cannot do (in ways similar to western axioms which call for a focus on abilities not *disabilities*). Other examples include: "the body is disabled, the will is strong" [*shen can zhi jian*]; "yearn for understanding, aspire to contribute" [*keqiu lijie, zhizai fengxian*] (CDPF 1991a, Sun 1990, Zhang *et al* 1990), and the "four-selves" - self respect, self-confidence, self-strengthening and self-reliance (CDPF 1991a, Fieldnotes 1995-96, see Chapter Eight

also).

What has yet to be asked is why there has been such a drive to redefine disability in post-Mao China. Part of the answer lies with the demand for shared terms of reference among professionals and cadres (Li 1988, Zhang *et al* 1990). Part of the answer lies with the post-Mao upsurge in disability initiatives (to which we turn next) and the resulting demand for more rigorous gatekeeping. And part of the answer lies in the globalization of disability (to which we return towards the close of this chapter).

New Initiatives

The months and years following the National Disability Sample Survey in 1987 were marked by an explosion in disability-related laws, policies, projects and broadcasts - all tied to post-Mao China's "disability initiative" [*canjiren shiye*]. Barely one year after the national survey, the government launched its first comprehensive action plan on disability. *China's Five-Year Work Programme for Disabled People (1988-1992)* was adopted by the State Council in July 1988 for implementation the following September. Within a few years, the 1988 Work Programme (as it is called hereafter) was supplemented by a second programme, *China's Work Programme for Disabled People during the 8th Five-Year National Plan (1991-1995)* (1991 Work Programme). The change was an important one because it signalled the integration of China's disability initiative into the bigger picture of national development. The principle of integration was followed in the third programme, *China's Work Programme for Disabled Persons during the 9th Five-Year National Plan (1996-2000)* (1996 Work Programme). All three programmes are broadly commensurate with the substance as well as the title of the United Nations' *World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons* (UN 1983) - which is not surprising since China was represented on the working party which produced the *World Programme of Action* in 1983.

The key areas covered by the work programmes are: rehabilitation, education, employment, poverty alleviation, welfare, prevention, awareness raising, recreational and cultural life, social and physical environment, aids and equipment and legislation to equalize opportunities (see 1988, 1991 and 1996 Work Programmes). The results, by most accounts, have been impressive and there is scope for optimism (see

BDPF/RD 1995, *CD* 1988d,e, CDPF/DD 1992, Mindes 1991, *PD* 1990, 1991, 1992, Pearson 1995, Zhang 1991). The integration of disability issues into mainstream programmes is promising and is evident in, for example, the inclusion of a disability focus in the national plan to alleviate poverty by the year 2000 (see Croll 1994 on help-the-poor programmes and *CD* 1993o, 1994e, 1996a). Special loan schemes are viewed as a major route out of poverty for the 15 million or so disabled people with work ability but currently unemployed and in poverty. The pilot loan scheme (jointly administered by the China Disabled Persons' Federation, the Poverty Alleviation Department of the State Council and the Agricultural Development Bank of China) supposedly helped two million disabled people to extricate themselves from poverty between 1991 and 1995 (1996 WP). Other aspects of the work programmes are explored in the next three chapters: education, rehabilitation and employment in Chapter Seven; awareness raising and improvements in the social (attitudinal) environment in Chapter Eight; and legislation for equality and prevention of impairment in Chapter Nine.

The work programmes have been supported by a plethora of new laws, rules and regulations which have been adopted at national, provincial and municipal level (see Teng 1992, CDPF *et al* 1992, *CD* 1992j, 1996f, Wen 1997). The most important of these from the perspective of strengthening disabled people's rights and entitlements is the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Disabled People* [*canjiren baozhang fa*], adopted in 1990, effective from 1991, and promulgated as China's first law to promote and safeguard the rights of disabled people (see Chapter Nine). The Law on Protection is the first of its kind in China but it does not stand alone: it has been preceded and supplemented by a host of regulations and stipulations which add detail to what might best be described as a legal charter for Chinese disabled people (CDPF *et al* 1992, Teng 1992).

Finally in this section, mention must be made of the boom in disability-related news stories and television programmes throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s. Since the inception of the disability initiative, the propaganda machine has been put to work for Chinese disabled people (through increasing disabled people's access to and inclusion in news reports, film and television programmes) and for the Chinese government

(through promoting the disability initiative). A quick glance at the Bibliography and Appendix is proof enough of that. So too is the existence of sign language news and feature programmes on Chinese television (Chen 1995, *CD* 1990c) and a general increase in programmes on disability issues and disabled people - according to one source, the China Central TV Station showed 152 items on disability in 1990 alone (Chen 1995). The state has actively promoted media expansion through establishing national awards for best coverage of disability issues in journalism, and setting targets for increased media coverage (1996 WP, Chen 1995). There has also been a rise in films which deal with disability and are intended to raise public awareness. The most famous example in the west is the film *Mama* - famous because it was internationally acclaimed and initially banned in the People's Republic (Rayns 1992). *Mama* was the first of a batch of independent films made in mainland China by graduates from the Beijing Film Academy in the politically hostile post-Tiananmen climate. Directed by Zhang Yuan, the film (screened in London in 1992) told the story of a woman librarian in Beijing and her struggle to raise a son with learning difficulties without support from family, society or state. At one point, the mother tries to abandon her son. At another, she considers committing suicide. The story is told in black and white, interspersed with colour documentary clips which feature real-life women in similar circumstances. According to Rayns, the ban was lifted in China in 1992.

Venus is another example of progressive and realistic disability film-making in China (*CD* 1992m). The film-maker Xie Jin has two sons with learning difficulties (he also heads a sub-organisation of the China Disabled Persons Federation, CDPF 1988). The film stars several children with learning difficulties and focuses on the relationship between a father and son, and between the son and friends at a special school. The aim of the film is to portray children with learning difficulties as "lively and equal" and capable of forming strong interpersonal relationships. As the write-up states, the film was made in the spirit of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (*CD* 1992m). The film does not deny the social prejudice that faces children and adults with learning difficulties in China. Indeed, the film draws directly on prejudice encountered by Xie Jin and his family, including an episode during the Cultural Revolution when one of Xie Jin's sons was dumped in a wooden rubbish box by Red Guards (*CD* 1992m). Other films come closer to the standard "against-all-odds", "disabled innocent" or

"disabled disturbed" films shown in the west. *Who is the Winner?* was screened in 1996 and portrays (according to the *China Daily* write-up): "an iron-willed disabled sportsman, Chang Ping, who wins honour for the country in an international context but falls puzzled in an emotional entanglement with a charming woman" (CD 1996n).

Films, radio broadcasts, television programmes and extensive newspaper coverage are all testimony to the emergence of disability as a public issue. The inevitable result of raising the profile of disability as a "problem" and as an arena for "initiative" is that opportunities arise for those who would intervene and make a living from intervention. The new and expanding disability initiative has precipitated the development of new interest groups, technologies and knowledge. China now has a growing disability industry, staffed by a growing army of disability-related professionals and fuelled by growing disability literature.

New Professions and Publications

Rehabilitation medicine did not become a systematic medical speciality until 1981 with the commencement of activities for the 'International Year of the Disabled'. Since that time rehabilitation has flourished and prospered in our country (Fu Dawei 1986, p. 2).

Rehabilitation medicine is still a new phrase for most Chinese (Tan and Yang 1984, p. 58).

Chinese medicine has long included therapies and treatments that would come under the banner of "rehabilitation techniques" (see Chapter Three, also Luan 1989, Smits & Smits 1982, Zhang 1992). And yet, and interestingly, the message put out by cadres and medics alike is that rehabilitation medicine is a new concept in China, an area of expertise which is western, scientific and in which China lacks skills, knowledge and resources (Fu 1986, Deng 1989, Li 1996, Min 1996). The process of catching-up is well underway (Purves 1996, Lee 1996).

Recent years have seen the formation of the Chinese Association of Rehabilitation Medicine under the aegis of the Ministry of Public Health; the foundation of the high-tech, high-profile China Rehabilitation Resource Centre (a national flagship centre and darling of the China Disabled Persons Federation, see CRRC 1988); and the central

government directive that a rehabilitation department [*kangfu ke*] is a prerequisite for hospitals at or aspiring to reach a certain grade (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Numerous medical and academic journals on rehabilitation medicine (such as *Chinese Rehabilitation Medicine*, *Community Based Rehabilitation* and *Foreign Medicine - Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Medicine*) have appeared since the 1980s, along with textbooks and manuals on rehabilitation therapies, including "how to" books for parents and specialists on Community Based Rehabilitation (Zhang et al 1991), rehabilitation of children with cerebral palsy (Chao 1992), physiotherapy (Xu, Sun & Chen 1991) and hearing and speech training for deaf children (Zhao 1987). The result? The creation of a new and fast-growing rehabilitation industry which promotes high-tech, highly professionalised, medicalised and urbanised services whilst also applauding low-cost, community-based models of service delivery (see Chapter Seven).

In special education too, the way forward is expansion and professionalisation, prompted by the very real need to raise the status, improve the training and attract larger numbers of quality personnel to specialise in teaching disabled children (CDDC 1992, Tian & Li 1997, Chen *et al* 1991, Yang 1992, Pu 1995, Mao 1993). There has been a concomitant rise in provincial, national and international conferences on special education attended by Chinese delegates or hosted by the Chinese government; special education has been listed as a core activity of China's five-year disability work programmes; and there has been remarkable growth in the number of special classes, schools and teachers working in the field (1991 and 1996 Work Programmes, Ashman 1995, CDDC 1992, Chan 1992, Potts 1995, Stevens *et al* 1990). There have been articles in specialist journals such as *Exceptional Children and Teacher Training*, *Educational Research* and the broadsheet *Educational News* (see Chen 1991, Zhao 1991, Zhao & Li 1991). There are also a growing number of books for professionals and parents on educating children with learning difficulties (Chou, Wang & Liang 1991, Mao 1993), on theories and practice of special education (Chen 1989, Chen *et al* 1991, Pu 1995) and inclusive education (Yang 1992). Information on inclusive and/or integrated education (the definitions are blurred) is a particularly welcome addition, although the legacies of the past and perceptions of the present combine to work against its implementation at the grassroots (Fieldnotes 1995-96, see Chapter Seven).

A third area of professionalisation is social work. By the mid-1990s, there were still only a handful of higher-level institutions running social work courses in mainland China. But that number is set to rise, fostered by government interest and by strengthened links with social work professionals in Hong Kong and beyond (see Mo & Hu 1997, Wen 1997, Lin *et al* 1997, Wang S. 1997, Wang, Q. 1997, Zhu 1996). Already, there is a research and practice-based journal, *Social Work*, whilst *China Civil Affairs*, the journal of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, carries social work articles in each issue. Social work studies on young people, older people and family issues have also appeared in the past few years (An & Chen 1991, Yang 1991; Lu 1996, Chen & Lu 1996). There is every likelihood that such texts will increasingly incorporate disability issues. In fact, there are already signs that a new cluster of academic social research is emerging around the study of disability and the lives of disabled people in China. Four recent texts spring to mind. Ma Honglu (1993), who is well known in the disability, rehabilitation and social work field in China, has written on social attitudes towards disabled people and disabled people's attitudes towards society. Disability from a social perspective is the central theme of Xi, Lin & Chen's (1993) study: *Sociology of Disabled People [canjiren shehuixue]* which talks explicitly of a "new disability concept" and, interestingly, cites the translation of Mike Oliver's *Social Work with Disabled People* in its bibliography. Chen Rongfu (1995) and Teng Wensheng (1992) have included large sections on disability in their respective analyses of socialist humanitarianism and human rights.

The common bond between these last four texts and several of the books and manuals mentioned earlier is not simply that they deal with disability, but that they share the same publisher: the Hua Xia press (see *BD* 1995c,e,g). One visit to Hua Xia press in Beijing is enough to furnish the reader with several dozen books on disability: manuals and textbooks for professionals and parents (as cited above); autobiographies and biographies of disabled children and adults (Chen 1995, Guo 1986, Yao 1993); prose and poetry written by disabled people (Fu 1992, Shi 1991, Shi 1993, Sun 1990, Tu 1994, Zhang 1991, Zhang *et al* 1990); national magazines written for and often by disabled people (*Disability in China*, *March Winds* and *Close Friends*).

The proliferation of books, magazines and manuals written on, by and for disabled

people speaks volumes to the emergence of disability as a public issue and professional industry in the post-Mao era. It has also fostered the notion (among those with access to these texts and magazines) that disabled people are a specific social group [*teshu qunti*] with common concerns. Certainly that view has been actively encouraged by central government throughout the 1980s and 1990s, partly through the rejuvenation and expansion of disability associations.

New Organizations

Following Deng Xiaoping's rise in 1978, activities resumed in many areas of social, political and economic life which had ground to a halt in the upheaval of the Cultural Revolution, among them the China Association for Blind and Deaf-Mute People, which restarted and held its Third National Congress in Beijing, 1980 (CABD 1980). The Congress, which was the first for over a decade, was attended by various high-level politicians from Party Central Committee and relevant ministries, along with a large number of blind and deaf delegates.

In 1984, the Association was joined by a new organisation, the China Welfare Fund for the Handicapped (as it is generally referred to in English). It was the first time in China that people with non-sensory impairments were represented by a national association. It was also the first time that *canji* as an umbrella term found organizational expression. Four years later, the China Welfare Fund and other associations were again reorganised and brought under the aegis of the new China Disabled Persons Federation or CDPF [*zhongguo canjiren lianhehui*]: a national semi-governmental organization which has been at the forefront of the Chinese disability initiative for the past ten years (see CDPF 1988a for the CDPF Constitution, also an institutional profile in *CDB* 1997b).

The CDPF is the key player in China's disability initiative. It has been responsible for drafting, promulgating and implementing the laws and work programmes referred to above. It delivers services, funds services, co-ordinates government ministries and departments to do their bit, raises awareness, raises funds and acts (as far as any organization can in China) as an advocate for disabled people. The CDPF has its finger in all disability-related pies from education to employment, research to rehabilitation,

cultural activities to impairment prevention (CDPF 1988a,b). It incorporates at least fifteen other national associations, including activity-based associations (for disabled athletes, artists, massotherapists and rehabilitation professionals) and impairment-based associations (for blind people, deaf people, people with physical impairments, and the "kith and kin of people with mental impairments", CDPF 1988b). According to its inaugural constitution, the CDPF "represents the common interests and safeguards the legal rights of and provides services for the disabled; undertakes tasks assigned by the Government; and mobilizes social forces to promote the undertakings of the disabled" (CDPF 1988a, Article 2). It is a "semi-government, semi-popular" [*banguan banmin*] organisation, which theoretically means that it acts as a bridge between government, society and disabled people (Mindes 1991). In practice, it leans more towards government than grassroots (CDB 1997b).

The CDPF is not a "mass organisation" or an organization *of* disabled people (see Driedger 1989, Oliver 1990 for the difference between organizations *of* and *for* disabled people). Over half of all delegates and executive officers must be disabled people according to the constitution of the CDPF (thereby entry criteria for Disabled People's International are satisfied); yet, there is no membership structure. The grassroots branches of the CDPF (and there are several thousand of them) include some small-scale groups of disabled people, often linked to a welfare factory or sports club, but for the most part they are local cadres who have taken on the title of "CDPF officer" as one of the many titles on their name-card (Fieldnotes 1995-96). The CDPF is therefore situated somewhere between a non-governmental organisation and a government ministry (CDB 1997b, Mindes 1991).

Jude Howell (1995) lists the CDPF alongside the Private Entrepreneurs Association and the Women Mayors Association as examples of "new forms of intermediary organisations" which have taken shape in the post-Mao era and which:

operate in the space between the Party/State and society, articulating the interests of newly emerging socio-economic groups, and reflecting the increasing diversity and complexity of society. They represent the seeds of a potentially flourishing NGO sector in post-Mao China (Howell 1995, p. 5).

In contrast, those who work in the CDPF perceive it as "more or less the same level as

[the Ministry] of Civil Affairs, but we do not call it a ministry" (Shen, in *CDB* 1997). Others who work with the CDPF concur and describe it as having "a strong dragon's head but a weak dragon's body" (Fieldnotes 1995-96). The CDPF is at its best working with government and on the international circuit. It is not a "movement" although it has worked hard to foster a sense of collective identity. Whatever its inadequacies, the CDPF has played an invaluable role in promoting disability issues at the highest levels and from the top-down. Only time will tell whether it has the capacity to develop as Jude Howell suggests it might, or the courage to support developments from the bottom-up (for there is a very real sense in which a monolithic, albeit useful and well-meant, institution can stifle grassroots initiatives). For the time being, the CDPF has made it - it has become a fixture on the national landscape. But why? And why now?

Why is it that disability has come onto the agenda in the post-Mao era? Why the new data and new definitions? Why the growth in interest groups and initiatives? Why the sudden outpouring of disabled people's literature and literature on disability? These questions demand explanations that are rooted in the political and social system of post-Mao China.

Guanxi: the art of connecting

*20 years have elapsed since I became a handicapped. Life has taught me to understand the profound significance of rehabilitation [...] In 1980, I went to Canada for medical treatment with Dr. Armstrong. After the surgical operation, the doctor asked me to stay in Ottawa to undergo some rehabilitation training. Of course, his advice was absolutely right, but when thinking of thousands upon thousands of handicapped people in my country who were desperately crying for appropriate rehabilitation services, I decided to go back home immediately to help establish our own rehabilitation centres. Once back in China, I first talked over my plan to Mr. Wang Lu-guang, and found out that our wishes were so identical. We therefore started to draw up the blueprint for the rehabilitation centre. Since then, I began my career as a worker for the handicapped (Deng Pufang, cited in *CRRC* 1988).*

The above is an extract from an open letter written (and translated into English) for the opening ceremony on 28th October 1988 of China's flagship rehabilitation centre. The letter was penned by a man who is widely regarded as the figurehead of China's

disability initiative, who established and fronts the China Disabled Persons Federation, who was the catalyst behind China's Law on Protection of Disabled Persons and disability work programmes, and who has ensured that disability and disabled people have not only got onto the national agenda, but that they have stayed there. That man is Deng Pufang.

Deng Pufang fell out of a window during the Cultural Revolution. Some say he jumped; some say he was pushed; in any event, it was the result of physical and political persecution at the hands of Red Guards. That was in 1968 and since then Deng Pufang has used a wheelchair. Ten years later, following the death of Mao, the demise of the Gang of Four and the end of the Cultural Revolution, Deng Pufang was politically rehabilitated along with the rest of his family - among them, his father: Deng Xiaoping.

As the eldest son of China's Paramount Leader, Deng Xiaoping (1978-1997), Deng Pufang had the ear of the most important and influential man in a nation of one billion people. And that is why disability made it onto the government and public agenda. Note, this is not to say that Deng Pufang should be credited with all the achievements - China's disability initiative has snowballed in a way which he probably never anticipated - but it would not have stood a chance without him. Time and again in the press, on the television, in field interviews with key informants and in casual encounters with shopkeepers, waitresses and taxi cab drivers, the immediate response to learning of my interest in disability in China was to mention Deng Pufang (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Even where people had not heard of laws and programmes, everyone had heard of Deng Pufang and credited him with making disability a public issue. His speeches, travels and life story are widely known. His calligraphy and catchphrases also (CDPF 1998b, 1991, 1992, CBP 1996). And even though putting such an emphasis on one individual goes against the western grain, few who have seriously tackled the issue of disability in China (and there are only a few of us) have said otherwise:

Much of the change can be traced to Deng Pufang ... Deng Pufang and the CDPF have been directly or indirectly responsible for much of the bilateral and international support for China's programs for people with disabilities, as well as for a sea-change in attitudes towards

Chinese people with disabilities (Mindes 1991, p. 7).

In most areas regarding health policy and the provision of services, the government is in retreat. Yet in the area of disability it seems to be, within the scope of its limited resources, resurgent. Why? The answer almost certainly has to be Deng Pufang and the China Federation for Disabled People (Pearson 1995, p. 107).

A similar story has occurred worldwide: the public figure (actor, author, politician) who is or whose child is disabled has often been the catalyst for increased public awareness. The story is not uncommon, but it has seldom proved as successful as has been the case in China.

To understand how a father-son relationship could be the core catalyst behind all of this is to understand something of the nature of China's social and political system. It is to see how the enduring Confucianist notions of fatherhood and sonhood frame public as well as personal worlds. Above all, it is to grasp the pervasive and powerful operation of *guanxi*: interpersonal connections. In China, *guanxi* are the basis on which life happens, on which business deals are struck, laws are passed, funds secured, promotions and dismissals engineered, power won and power lost. *Guanxi* are not élitist because it is not only the élite who operate them; they are not restricted to the educated, urban or monied classes; peasants and politicians alike seek and use *guanxi*. And what better *guanxi* could anyone have than to be connected to the man whose connections are the most sought after in the nation.

Deng Pufang and, through him, the China Disabled Persons Federation probably wielded more political power over a larger constituency than any other disabled individual and disability organisation in the world during the 1980s and early 1990s. The death of Deng Xiaoping in 1997 was a certain blow to the organisation and its endeavours, but Deng Pufang and colleagues have done as much as possible to limit the damage Deng Xiaoping's death would cause. And here, happy coincidences play their part too.

Open Doors and Globalization

The coincidence of Deng Xiaoping's rise to power, his active policy of opening China's doors and markets to the western world and the globalization of disability (see Chapter One, Stone 1998b) has served Deng Pufang and the CDPF well. The international angle has been instrumental in enabling and shaping the Chinese disability initiative. Deng Pufang clearly shares his late father's pragmatism: both were quick to see the potential of securing outsider support to fuel internal development. Deng Pufang and the CDPF actively courted foreign currency. Their courtship required a visible international presence and, perhaps to the initial surprise of many around the United Nations table, China's representation on the international disability circuit has been strong (DPB 1983, 1991a, 1991b, 1992, ESCAP 1993):

It is worth mentioning that China, Finland and Sweden have been particularly supportive of the Decade and the United Nations Disability Programme. They have played a vital role in hosting United Nations meetings and developing disability policies [...] In China, progressive social welfare policies produced a number of spin-offs for the international community such as the hosting in 1990 of the International Meeting on the Roles and Functions of National Coordinating Committees on Disability in Developing Countries. In addition, its active participation in the Ad hoc Open-Ended Working Group to Elaborate Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Disabled persons has provided evidence of China's success in its disability programme (DPB 1992, p.9).

Deng Pufang has been rewarded with a UN Peace Envoy Award. His Federation has been rewarded with overseas donations. The China Rehabilitation Research Centre was paid for with substantial donations from the governments of Japan, Germany and Canada. Former British Prime Minister, Sir Edward Heath, raised £1 million for another CDPF baby: the China Rehabilitation Research Centre for Deaf Children (CDB 1997a). Sir James Saville donated a mobile cataract clinic, while the Sino-British Group on Rehabilitation masterminded the transfer of old-fashioned hearing aids from Britain's National Health Service (personal correspondence with the Sino-British Group). Former US President Jimmy Carter has funded the manufacture of prosthetics through the organisation Global 2000 (Mindes 1991). The Hong Kong Rehabilitation Centre and World Health Organisation have funded a large-scale professional training course for rehabilitation doctors in China (Lee 1996, Purves

1996). And these are just the icing on the hard currency cake which has sustained the CDPF for the past decade. Mindes (1991) and *China Development Briefing* (1997a) list dozens of other bilateral and international projects on disability which operate through or alongside the CDPF.

But opening doors to the globalization of disability brings more than hard currency. It is no coincidence that the creation of new slogans and the restructuring of official disability definitions, mentioned earlier in this chapter, have followed hard on the heels of China's re-entry into the international arena at a time when disability, more than ever before, has been on the international agenda. A globalization of disability and rehabilitation requires a global language (see Bury 1987, Wood 1981), to which China appears to have signed up.

From China to Zaire, the language of impairment and disability is changing. Increased global disability awareness has resulted in a wealth of definitions and redefinitions - medical, social and political. Old words carry new meanings which may have little to do with indigenous concepts. This process is illustrated in anthropological studies on Zaire, Borneo, Somalia, Kenya and Botswana which flag up the difficulties of translating the western term "disabled" into local languages (Devlieger 1995, Nicolaisen 1995, Helander 1995, Talle 1995, Ingstad 1995, Miles 1996, Whyte 1995). All too often, words which originally denoted individuals with physical impairments are used as a unifying category for all impairments, thereby imposing outsider concepts. China has been equally susceptible to globalising demands. In a bid to capture compliments, raise funds and become a stakeholder in the global disability industry, the Chinese government has stepped in line conceptually and linguistically. Hence the re-formed usage of *canji* as "disabled" (see above) and the use of western biomedical measures of impairment and function (see Stone 1998c, forthcoming).

Exposure to western models has been another enduring feature of the post-Mao disability initiative (CDB 1997a, Mindes 1991). Translations of western texts (including Mike Oliver's *Social Work with Disabled People* and John Wilson's *Disability Prevention*), international exchanges and overseas study visits (which, coincidentally, are statutory obligations of the CDPF) and the transfer of rehabilitation discourses (see Chen *et al* 1992, Lee 1996, Li 1992, Lin 1986, Fu 1986, Purves 1996,

Williams 1990) are here to stay, irrespective of question-marks over the desirability of global transfers.

Whatever the long-term drawbacks of locking China into an international disability circuit, and subscribing to an international disability code of practice and definition, the short-term dividends for Deng Pufang and the CDPF have been high. The international kudos and UN promotion of disability as an issue of global concern have strengthened the CDPF's case and cause several times over, while the much-needed flow of foreign funds and expertise has boosted CDPF capacity to intervene.

So, the answer to the question posed earlier, "Why has disability soared and why now?" comes down to the interplay of an all-important father-son *guanxi* between Deng Pufang and Deng Xiaoping; and the useful and well-utilised coincidence of Open Doors and the globalization of disability.

Conclusion

The evidence presented points conclusively to the increased interest and involvement of the post-Mao state in disability issues and disabled people's lives. Surveys, statistics, professionalisation, changes in language, laws and provision, and the promising beginnings of a new literature of disability in China - including a literature of disabled people - all support that hypothesis. Disability was put on Deng Xiaoping's agenda and it was put there by his eldest son.

Getting disability on the agenda and keeping it there are two entirely different tasks. In a bid to keep disability on the agenda, Deng Pufang, the CDPF and colleagues have actively exploited the international angle and high-level *guanxi*; they have also made full use of the Chinese mass media and a flurry of statistical surveys to flag up the poverty and discrimination faced by disabled people in China, and to ram home the message that China has a "disability problem" and that society and state have a responsibility to act.

As the narrative unfolds in the next chapters, it will become clear that the act of keeping disability on the agenda and bringing the "disability problem" to public attention has reaped untold rewards, but at a cost. Therefore, as the less positive

outcomes of that process emerge, it is as well to hold onto some of the more positive outcomes mentioned in this chapter ... not least the fact that the hardship and prejudice faced by millions of Chinese disabled people has finally and firmly been put on the government agenda.

Chapter Seven

A "Disability Initiative" with Chinese Characteristics

In this chapter, discussion of the government's disability initiative begins with an investigation of government capacities to solve the "disability problem" identified in Chapter Six. Then, analysis moves on to the nature of state intervention in disability and the values that underpin that intervention in the post-Mao era. Finally, three studies are presented which tease out some of the ways in which the legacies of the past have been re-formed to fit state-social realities and the development ethos of post-Mao China. This chapter stands apart from the rest of the thesis in that some evidence from the grassroots is woven into discussion of macro-level policies and provision. This is partly done to inject balance into an intentionally imbalanced thesis; and partly in recognition of the role of grassroots demand in stimulating service provision, especially in rehabilitation.

State statistics set out in the previous chapter give a good idea of the size of the government's "disability problem", not least because the post-Mao Chinese government has tended to see all its "problems" in terms of statistics and projections (Stone 1994, also Croll *et al* 1994, Wang & Hull 1991). From the government's perspective, the "disability problem" is ascribed to three inter-related factors (see Li 1988, Ma 1993, Xi 1993, Zhu 1993; also 1988, 1991 and 1996 Work Programmes). First, individual inability to compete in the labour market and secure employment - this is attributed to individual impairment, low educational status and social attitudes. Secondly, the harsh realities to be expected from the "first phase of socialism", the introduction of market economics and a competitive labour market. Thirdly, prevailing social prejudice especially among potential educators and employers. The question is, what can the government do to turn the situation around?

In this chapter, the government's *capacity* to solve its "disability problem" [*canjiren wenti*] is explored first, in order to set the strategies adopted by the Chinese government within an appropriate context. This is vital to set the record straight. China is still a "developing country" and "transitional economy". There are very real limitations on what the Chinese government - any government - could do given the number of disabled people in the population, the restricted options and resources available, and the plethora of other social and economic concerns which compete with disability for government attention and funding.

With these constraints in mind, attention turns to the key aspects of the Chinese "disability initiative" [*canjiren shiye*] and, finally, to three studies which exemplify the implications of Deng Xiaoping's reforms on the supply and demand of disability-related provision.

National Government Capacities and Constraints

Chinese social welfare and social policy have become hot topics among China-watchers, social scientists and policy analysts (Chan & Chow 1992, Feuchtwang 1987, Leung 1992, 1994, Leung & Nann 1995, Pearson & Leung 1992, Wong 1995, Wong & MacPherson 1995). It is easy to see why.

In a country in the throes of socio-economic transition, with a largely rural population of over 1.3 billion people and an average per capita GNP that lags far behind that of America, Europe or Japan, the challenge of designing and resourcing a national social security system is not one that many would relish. The enormity of the task has soared as the Chinese leadership has embraced market economics and dismantled a vast socio-administrative structure that once provided a modicum of social security for urbanites and basic subsistence for most in the countryside (Chan & Chow 1992, Feuchtwang 1987, Hinton 1991, Leung 1991, 1992, 1994, Wong & MacPherson 1995).

The situation is compounded by a long list of social concerns: a growing and ageing population with fewer children to shoulder responsibilities of care in old age (Davis-Friedmann 1991, George 1989, Harper 1994, Wang & Hull 1991); rising urban

unemployment (Davis & Vogel 1990); social tensions caused by mass rural-urban migration (Chan *et al* 1992, Christiansen 1990, Davis & Vogel 1990); the social costs of environmental disasters (Edmonds 1994, Smil 1984, 1993); and declining self-sufficiency in grain (Aubert 1990, Hinton 1991, Leeming 1993). Disability is not on the list. In China, as in America, Europe and Japan, disability competes with more pressing and potentially explosive issues on the government agenda. True, China's 51.64 million disabled children and adults have been put on the agenda and they have even become an official "disability problem" [*canjiren wenti*] and a "special hardship group" [*tekun qunti*] (Chen 1995, Li 1988, Ma 1993, Liu & Liu 1993). But disabled people are not yet, and probably never will be, a top national priority.

The prospects of increased government spending on social security and general provision for disabled people are slim. Since Liberation, only a tiny percentage of the social security budget (less than 1%) has been spent on disability-related provision, including welfare homes, welfare factories, rehabilitation and subsidies for disabled veterans (Zhu 1993, Leung & Nann 1995, Wong & MacPherson 1995). That is equivalent to only 0.06% of China's GNP and constitutes only a fraction of government disability-related spending in America or Britain (Zhu 1993).

The miniscule amount of financial resources available combined with the scale of current and projected social problems in China give some idea of the logistics of designing and resourcing a disability initiative for 51.64 million disabled people. Even more sobering is the fact that government capacities to deal with social problems have weakened as a direct result of the implementation of Deng's reforms.

Although social welfare provision was minimal under Mao (welfare benefits went against the ideological grain of a collective-based, work centred socialist system), the Party/state nevertheless benefited from a range of mechanisms and safety-nets. Among these were the capacity to allocate employment in urban areas and guarantee basic subsistence in rural areas (Parish & Whyte 1978, Whyte & Parish 1984); to mobilise large numbers of people to provide "free" labour for state projects (Banister 1987, MacFarquhar 1984); to restrict or control population mobility thereby minimising the social tensions and employment pressures generated by rural-urban migration (Banister 1987, Christiansen 1990); and the capacity to keep providers of social support or health care

at the grassroots (Banister 1987, Cheung 1995, Hillier & Xiang 1994). The post-Mao government no longer has those capacities and systems at its disposal.

There is also the argument that government capacity and available resources matter little if the political will is lacking. Zhu Qingfang (1993) notes that local government provision for disabled people, with regard to the creation of employment opportunities, does not correlate positively with regional levels of economic development. The poorest regions and also the richest regions provide the least opportunities for disabled people to gain work in welfare factories. Thus, the national average of 30% disabled people who are financially independent (see Chapter Six) climbs to 43-52% in the municipalities of Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin, but plummets to a paltry 20-27% in Guangdong, Jilin, Fujian and Heilongjiang - some of China's most prosperous economic regions, as well as China's poorest provinces of Guangxi, Yunnan and Ningxia (Zhu 1993; see Appendix: XM 93/06/28, GR 94/06/19, LD 94/07/22, JK 94/08/21, YC 94/09/24). This finding parallels evidence on the impact of the competitive labour market in industrial Europe and America (Abberley 1996, Barnes 1991, Hahn 1987, Oliver 1990). It also adds weight to the opinion that economic prosperity does not automatically (if ever) trickle down to those on the bottom rungs of the ladder (Allen & Thomas 1992, Bernstein *et al* 1992, Harrison 1988, Seabrook 1996).

Reduced national government capacity and limited resources have framed the post-Mao government's approach to disability provision, which has played less to an ideological tune than the relentless march of Deng Xiaoping's pragmatism. Even so, provision has been increased where, in comparison, cuts in other public budgets have been dramatic (Hillier & Xiang 1994, Pearson 1995). The level of disability-specific policy-making that has marked the 1980s and 1990s is remarkably high given the realities described above (see CDPF *et al* 1992, CDPF/DD 1992, 1994, NPC *et al* 1992, NSP 1992; also Appendix: BJ 94/08/23, 94/08/27). With these constraints and weakened capacities in mind, it is possible to review the government's response to the "disability problem".

The "Disability Initiative"

In the 1980s and 1990s, China's "disability initiative" has been dominated by three national disability work programmes which have shaped policy and provision at all levels of state and society (1988, 1991 and 1996 Work Programmes, hereafter WP). The programmes have impacted directly on the lives of hundreds of thousands of disabled children and adults (1991 and 1996 WP, CDPF/DD 1992, 1994, see also Appendix: ZQ 93/10/07, CW 93/10/08, RM 94/01/28, JC 94/0205, BW 94/08/23 and numerous news cuttings in the *China Daily* and also *BD* 1994, *BR* 1991, 1992, 1994, *PD* 1990 1991, 1992 *inter alia*). Elsewhere in the world, especially the "developing" world, intervention on such a scale would be regarded as eminently praiseworthy; but in China praise tends to get swallowed up by the vastness of the population. Even if (and it is conceivable) four million disabled people have benefited from the initiative over the past decade, that still counts for less than 8% of China's official disabled population. Another stumbling block to praising or even analysing the Chinese disability initiative is the inevitable disparity between government rhetoric and grassroots reality. The disparity must be noted, all the more since micro-level realities are not a focus of this thesis. Having noted disparity, space must be created to investigate *how* the Chinese government has sought to solve the "disability problem" and *what values* lie behind its response (see Chapter Two on the use of Chinese official policies and programmes as objects of critical inquiry).

The government's three disability work programmes are more than state-imposed plans of action. They are the guiding principles of state-social involvement in disabled people's lives. They are rooted in and reflect dominant post-Mao constructions of disability and personhood. They carry within them traces of the Chinese past, the hallmarks of the Chinese present and evidence of the influence of international discourses of disability. In recognition of all this, it is worth taking time to consider the key components of the work programmes, namely: policies on education, rehabilitation and employment. These three policy areas have consistently been at the fore of the government's disability initiative. The statistical and policy data presented below are drawn directly from the three work programmes (1988 WP, 1991 WP, 1996 WP). In addition, supporting evidence can be found in several dozen news cuttings (see Appendix and Bibliography) and in the following books, articles and papers: Amity

1989/90a-e, 1990c, Ashman 1995, BASS 1996, CDDC (1992), Callaway 1986, Chan, K.C. (1992), Chen Y.Y 1991, Chen Y.Y. *et al* 1991, Liljestrom *et al* 1985, Li & Shen 1981, Shih 1979, Epstein 1988, Pepper 1990, Potts 1995, Raab 1992, Stevens *et al* 1990 with regard to disability-related education; BMH 1992, Liu & Xiong 1990, MCA 1989, Pascoe 1981, Pierini 1997, Watt 1992, Wong 1992, Thornton 1998, Zhang 1992 with regard to disability-related employment; BSLF 1992, Chen *et al* 1992, Deng 1989, Ding 1996, Lee 1996, Li 1992, Lin 1986, Fu 1986, Hui-Chan 1996, Pearson & Leung 1992, Phillips *et al* 1994, Purves 1996, Tseng & Wu 1985, Zhang, J. 1991, Zhang *et al* 1990, Zhang, Y. 1996, Zhuo 1982, 1988 with regard to rehabilitation provision. The list, which is by no means exhaustive, gives an indication of the importance of education, employment and rehabilitation in Chinese disability policy and provision.

In education, the main priorities have been: to raise levels of school attendance among disabled children in both segregated and mainstream schools, in line with the national principle of nine years compulsory education; to increase the number and skills of specialist teachers; to remove restrictions in further and higher education; and to set up more vocational training centres for disabled adults. The results are impressive: an increase from 577 special schools (primary and secondary) in 1988 to 1,379 in 1995; an increase from 599 special classes affiliated to ordinary schools in 1988 to 6,418 in 1995; an increase in the enrolment rate of school-age children (who have been *judged suitable* for education by local authorities) with sensory impairments or learning difficulties from 20% in 1991 to nearly 60% in 1995; an increase in the admission rate of disabled students *who apply* to further and higher education from 52% to 92%; and the establishment since 1988 and by 1995 of 45 vocational training centres used by over one million disabled adults during the second five-year work programme. Some of these statistics (as with others that follow) do not quite convince, and suspicions of a certain amount of statistical manipulation are not unreasonable. Reliable statistics for the number of disabled children educated in a mainstream school have proved elusive. However, such statistics would be flawed in any case since disabled children who are enrolled in mainstream schools are seldom registered as disabled by their parents, for fear that the label might take them out of the mainstream (Fieldnotes 1995-96).

In rehabilitation, targets have been set in relation to three key areas in the 1988 Work Programme, with the addition of a further three in the 1991 and 1996 Work Programmes. The first three areas are: cataract surgery, surgery in cases of post-polio impairment, and speech training for children with hearing impairments. The three additions concern the rehabilitation of people with mental health disorders, increased pre-school and primary school education for children with learning difficulties, and increased production of specialist aids and prosthetics. The evaluation of work carried out under the 1988 and 1991 Work Programmes claims that 2.08 million children and adults have received rehabilitation or medical treatment in line with the initiative, among them 1.07 million people with cataracts; 39,000 people with low vision; 60,000 deaf children; 360,000 people received post-polio surgery; 100,000 children with learning difficulties; 450,000 people with mental health disorders; and over 700,000 items of specialist equipment or aids have been distributed. In addition, 42.9 million newly-married or pregnant women, babies or young children have received iodine supplements to tackle iodine deficiency in certain regions. The list is impressive, although it should be noted that only some of the above (impossible to know how many) will have been funded by the state.

In employment, the inherited system of welfare factories has continued and tax incentives have been consolidated for factories with a high proportion of disabled people in the shopfloor work force. According to the 1991 Work Programme, there were 41,000 welfare enterprises [*fuli qiye*] employing some 65,000 disabled people in 1991. This figure represents a huge increase on statistics for 1979 (776 Civil Affairs welfare factories, Meng & Wang 1986). The number of disabled people employed in state and collective welfare enterprises had risen to 930,000 by 1995; while the number of registered self-employed disabled people [*getihu*], who also enjoy preferential tax and licensing policies, had risen to the one million mark. In rural areas, the percentage of disabled people with work ability in work ("engaged in economic activity") rose from 60% in 1991 to 70% in 1995. All three programmes also mention the introduction of a quota system or proportional employment [*anbili jiuye*], whereby a percentage of the workforce in companies above a certain size should be disabled people (see also Thornton 1998, pp. 43-44). In theory, companies which do not meet the quota are fined, and the fine is ploughed into the "disability initiative" via Civil

Affairs bureaus or DPFs. Proportional employment seems to have been difficult to implement (Fieldnotes 1995-96, see Appendix: XM 93/06/28, BQ 94/06/02, GR 94/06/19, WH 94/07/25, BQ 94/09/12). Key informants, including cadres and employers, believe that most companies prefer the fine to hiring a disabled person. There is a certain amount of compliance in this on the part of those whose job it is to raise Civil Affairs or CDPF funds (Fieldnotes 1995-96).

The picture of prioritisation which emerges from the above overview exemplifies the economic pragmatism associated with the Deng Xiaoping decades. The three work programmes intentionally and explicitly prioritise areas which might be expected to reap maximum gains for minimum state expense. The 1988 Work Programme established the pragmatic principle that state and society must focus on:

those problems that affect a wide section of the disabled population and call for urgent solutions as well as those whose solution may bring good and quick results to many people (1988 Work Programme, paragraph 12).

Hence the drive to restore sight, mobility or speech. Damage limitation, maximum rewards, prevention first - these are some of the principles which structure provision and steer government strategies. And there are others.

Underpinning Values: work and wealth

From the first, the dominant values underpinning the post-Mao disability initiative have been work and wealth.

Deng Pufang has been a particularly ardent advocate of work as the guiding principle of China's disability initiative. In a speech in 1991, following the implementation of China's first Law on the Protection of Disabled People (see Chapter Nine), Deng Pufang proclaimed:

The most important aspect of the law to me is that it guarantees the disabled equal opportunities to work. The right to work and to contribute is the first fundamental right of an individual. Now, this is guaranteed to us by law (Deng Pufang, 1991).

Creating employment opportunities for disabled people is the primary objective from the government's and the CDPF's standpoint. All and any disability activities are

ultimately implemented to suit that same goal. Thus, measures on education and rehabilitation are construed as a means of maximising individual employment and earning potential.

Education strategies, for example, are tailored to enhance the individual disabled person's capacity to compete in the labour market, which is why the core curriculum in segregated schools comprises basic literacy and vocational training. The nature of vocational training tends to be narrow: often, children and young adults are trained for a specific job in a specified local welfare factory to which they move as special school graduates (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Thus, if the local factory manufactures fluorescent lighting, then the older children in the school will be trained to make fluorescent lights (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Even at the highest levels of the academic ladder open to disabled people, there is an inordinate emphasis on "appropriate" vocations. Changchun University is the first "specialist" university for disabled people and, along with a handful of specialist departments in other universities and vocational training centres, Changchun provides adult and higher education in professions for which disabled adults are deemed suitable: computers, music, massage, painting and calligraphy (Fieldnotes 1995-96, also see Appendix CD 95/10/06.). Incidentally, foreign experts have contributed to the consolidation of stereotype-based vocations. A recent feature in the *China Daily* (CD 1996l) tells of Mr. Li, who has become the first to complete a course taught by a western professional whose aim is to make piano-tuning a viable career for Chinese blind people. The re-emergence of blind musicians and other disabled people begging on the streets of Beijing (a practice stopped under Mao and discouraged by the post-Mao government and CDPF, Fieldnotes 1995-96) and of short people being used as novelty attractions in restaurants are reminders that age-old perceptions die hard (see Chapter Three on imperial perceptions of ability; see Fieldnotes 1995-96 and also Appendix: XM 93/06/15, XM 94/05/11, BQ 94/08/29, GM 95/02/24, HS 95/06/20 on current manifestations).

Rehabilitation, too, is imbued with the functionalist approach to personhood and impairment. The first three target areas in the rehabilitation programme (cataract surgery, speech training for deaf children and post-polio surgery) are oriented towards reducing the loss of a function, maximising function, or creating the appearance of

"normal" function respectively (1988 WP, 1991 WP). The commencement of activity in services for people with mental health disorders, educating children with learning difficulties, and increasing available prosthetics and visual aids all share the same emphasis on restoring or maximising employment potential (1996 WP, see also Fong 1992, Watt 1992).

The centrality of work and maximum function is further underlined in the nature of disability administration and classifications of impairment. In the previous chapter it was suggested that disability categories have never been so important in determining individual life chances as they are in post-Mao China. In part, this is because disability registration has become the major method of separating those who have work ability from those who have not. The ascription of potential work ability [*laodong nengli*] can play a decisive role in individual lives and has led to the stratification of China's disabled population (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Opportunities for disabled people to get vocational training, rehabilitation, special loans for poverty alleviation, *getihu* licenses or a place in a welfare factory hinge on the ascription by medical assessment and official rubber-stamping of individual "work ability" (Fieldnotes 1995-96). The result is a hierarchy based on functional ability, real or perceived.

The above review attests to clear continuities with the Mao decades. Under Mao, work and workers were glorified. Disability categories stratified the wider disabled population into deserving and less deserving candidates for support, based on former and potential economic contribution. Economic productivity was the basis of personhood. However, the functionalist model that marks the post-Mao era also differs from its Maoist predecessor in significant if subtle ways.

The post-Mao ethos of "get rich quick" and the primacy of individual wealth (compounded by the demise of community-based and subsidised health, educational and social services) have ensured that wealth-creation and profit-maximization carry the importance of work - to the individual, the household and the employer - to an even higher level than was apparent under Maoist state socialism. Under Mao, state ownership of factories and farms and the ideological primacy of work created greater opportunities for disabled people to be included in the workforce, albeit often in segregated fashion (see Chapter Five). Under Deng, however, the drive for profit and

the delinking of state from factory and farm have conspired to exclude ever greater numbers of disabled people on the basis of real or perceived low-productivity. These changes are underwritten by a generally negative state perception of the individual, compared to that which operated under Mao (see Stone 1994 for an earlier discussion of this hypothesis). The Maoist construction of personhood was functionalist but it was also populist: Mao glorified the person as producer first, consumer second. In contrast, the post-Mao perception of the population castigates the individual as consumer first and producer second. Accordingly, in the post-Mao functionalist model, it is less a case of *promoting* the potential of every man, woman and child to get rich quick and contribute to the economy, than of *fearing* the potential of every man, woman and child to become dependant, to consume more than to produce, and to drag development down.

The implications of this approach are far-reaching, as will become apparent in the final chapter. In the meantime, suffice it to say that the onus on employment which marks the post-Mao disability initiative stems from a state perception that all individuals are either economic assets or economic liabilities. Constraints on state, society and economy mean that the national government lacks the capacity to support those who are liabilities. The best that can be done is to enable anyone who can make wealth to do so. The policies and provision set out in the three work programmes are deemed the surest way to enable disabled people to make the critical transition - the transition from being a national liability to becoming a national asset:

Conditions should be created to increase job opportunities for the disabled so as to give play to their initiative and enable them to embark on the road of welfare through work, i.e. to derive relatively stable income from their own labour. Thereby the disabled will become an asset to the society instead of a liability (1988 Work Programme, paragraph 13, my emphasis).

The strong functionalist theme in the Chinese disability initiative has been noted by several and successive visitors to China (Bray & Chamings 1983, Pascoe 1981 *inter alia*). Less has been said on the modes and mechanisms deployed to that end. Here, the discontinuities from the Maoist past are more blatant. So too are the continuities with pre-Liberation provision.

Many Channels, Many Levels, Many Forms

The new post-Mao social welfare anthem translates: "many channels, many levels, many forms" [*duo qudao, duo cengci, duo xingshi*]. It is an anthem that features most clearly in disability-specific provision, but has also been deployed to full effect in other areas of social welfare and policy. It is important in this thesis because it illustrates some of the ways in which socio-economic reforms have led to a re-forming of state/social disability interventions under Deng Xiaoping.

The following discussion draws on several sources which have been written by Chinese policy-makers and practitioners. With regard to policy statements and debates, see: Jilin Civil Affairs (1997), Li & Wang (1997), Liu *et al* (1997), Liu, R. (1997), Liu & Liu (1993), Qi (1997), Wang R. (1997), Wang Y. (1997), Wu (1997), Yan Mingfu (1996), Wu (1997) *inter alia*. With regard to practice, findings presented below have been drawn from: BDPF/RD (1995), CA (1997), CDPF/DD (1992), Han (1995), Huang K. (1997), Li Z. (1997), Tian & Li (1997), Yuan (1997), Zhen (1997) *inter alia*. Vignettes on provision and user perspectives provided in Pearson & Leung (1992) have also been helpful.

"Many forms" [*duo xingshi*] is shorthand for the policy that there are few (if any) holds barred on forms of social welfare. Anything goes ... especially if it leads to work and wealth.

The approach is promising in so far as it has opened the door to more integrated forms of provision, sold to the state on the basis that they are lower-cost and higher-impact. Thus, proportional employment is seen as the best and cheapest way to get disabled people into the mainstream workforce and the only way to solve the massive problem of unemployment among disabled people (see also Thornton 1998). There has been a parallel shift in national education policy for disabled children - a move away from segregated schools towards segregated classes attached to mainstream schools or inclusion in mainstream classes (Chen Y.Y. *et al* 1991, Chen Y.Y. 1991, Yang, Z. 1992). Unfortunately, the legacies of the past (special schools only, welfare factories only) and prevailing social attitudes conspire against implementation of national directives at the grassroots (Fieldnotes 1995-96, also Cheung 1995, Chan 1993). For instance, Heping County, in its eagerness to tackle the disability problem, has planned

a segregated school to which all disabled children, including those who would otherwise be educated in mainstream schools, will be sent (Fieldnotes 1995-96). The legacy of segregated schooling and segregated welfare-work continues at the front-line, but there is more scope for new and inclusive directions in the future.

"Many levels" [*duo cengci*] corresponds to hierarchies of service provision. The slogan uncovers the tension between high-tech and high-cost or low-tech and low-cost services. In China, the tension is manifest in the twinned promotion of cutting-edge technologies and scientific rehabilitation medicine at one end of the spectrum (witness the China Rehabilitation Research Centre with its expensive equipment and state-of-the-art facilities, see CRRC 1988) and community-based services at the other (Jilin Civil Affairs 1997, Liu *et al* 1997, Wu 1997, Zhao 1991, 1994, Zhang *et al* 1991). The tension is exacerbated by the national government promotion of legacies from the past, advocated as "special Chinese characteristics" (Zhang *et al* 1991), and the local (government and popular) rejection of Maoist modes of service provision and delivery (Fieldnotes 1995-96, Chan 1993). For instance, the Cultural Revolution and the decades preceding it were known for barefoot doctors, primary health care and deprofessionalisation (Wegman *et al* 1973, Sidel & Sidel 1982). The national government remains very keen to foster those ideals, however the stronger social current flows in the other direction: people want to be, and want to be served by, experts and professionals (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Moreover, the socio-political structures and ideology which spawned barefoot doctors and the political incentives and constraints which kept capable people at the grassroots are no longer a feature of the social and political landscape (Chan 1993). Professional associations, higher salaries and qualifications are.

The boom in the publications industry and emergent professions is testimony to this transition and tension. The Chinese publication *Social Work in China* [*Zhongguo Shehui Gongzuo*] and social work texts (Chen & Lu 1996, Lu 1996, Ma 1993, Xi *et al* 1993) attest to a growing interest in the creation of a social work profession (see also articles by Ma Lin 1997a,b, Wang S. 1996, 1997, Zhu L. 1997, Zhu Y. 1997). So too does the extent to which practitioners and policy-makers opt to turn to the west, Hong Kong and Japan for models, service systems and training (Hui-Chan 1996, Li 1992,

Mo & Hu 1997, Wang Q. 1997, Wen Z. 1997, Zhu C. 1996). It is a difficult situation: Hong Kong shares the same cultural background but could not be more different from rural China in so many other respects. The Hong Kong model is urban, costly, professionalised and charity-centred. The likely outcome of extensive borrowing from Hong Kong would be a network (probably uncoordinated) of disability services which are urban and elitist; professionalised and potentially disempowering; specialist and potentially segregating. These are not problems which are unique to China. In fact, the Chinese government has done more than most national governments to push for low-level, rural-biased services. The unanticipated difficulty is that grassroots demand and government wisdom are not synchronised (this point is revisited shortly).

"Many channels" [*duo qudao*] relates to the big issue of funding. Who pays? Where do the resources come from? Central government has made limited funds available to support the initiative, although these have primarily been channelled into subsidising rehabilitation and education for those with no-one else to foot the bill (such as rehabilitation for children in state-run welfare institutions, Fieldnotes 1995-96). But some is not enough. Again, anything goes - as long as it raises revenue.

The disability initiative has featured a high degree of political and ideological flexibility on the issue of who provides and who pays. Practices which would have been anathema under Mao Zedong are now embraced. A green light has been given to virtually any form of fundraising, whether or not it conflicts with Chinese Communist Party, Maoist or socialist ethics. This includes a green light to local governments to team up with service providers, private entrepreneurs, even foreign agencies and organizations in order to raise funds for local welfare. Local branches of Civil Affairs, welfare factories and welfare homes are urged, even compelled, to engage in "economic activities" so that profits can fund the wider disability initiative.

In the desperate bid to raise funds, charity [*cishan*], has been reinstated as a noble, even patriotic, virtue where it was once derided as a bourgeois affectation (Chen 1995). Lessons in charity are being learned from the Hong Kong S.A.R. (where charity boomed due to a non-existent commitment to local people's welfare from the colonial government and a strong concentration of Chinese and expatriate religious and humanitarian groups), and also from Europe and America (Mo & Hu 1997, Wang Q.

1997, Zhu, C. 1996). On the mainland, recent years have seen growing numbers of private initiatives and the emergence of larger non-governmental or semi-governmental organisations which fundraise within and outside China, including Project Hope and the Amity Foundation. There are charity pop concerts, collections of second-hand clothing to clothe the rural poor, and even national and local charity lotteries. In fact, the CDPF was the first organization permitted to establish a national welfare fund lottery in China (Fieldnotes 1995-96). There have also been campaigns to encourage volunteers to provide free social services to people in their locality - campaigns which sound curiously out-of-synch with the new China (see Chapter Eight also).

None of the above - the calls for philanthropists and charitable services, the promotion of money-making enterprises by collective or state welfare services - has happened without concerned debate within policy-making and practitioner circles in China. That much is clear from recent and numerous articles in the magazine of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, in which the ethics, suitability, implications and concrete methods of fundraising and using "charity" have been considered (Feng 1997, Gao 1997, Li, H. 1997, Lin, Y. 1997, Pan 1997, Yan G. 1996, Zhang, J. 1997a, Zheng, G. 1997 and Zhu C. 1996). But the shift is definitely towards charity. Economic necessity and pragmatism demand it. As a result, the question is no longer whether or not to promote charity, rather how best to promote charity in a way which is distinctively Chinese, if not *traditionally* Chinese (Feng 1997, Lin Y. 1997, Zhang J. 1997a, also CCP 1995, 1996). To this end, historical precedents have been recalled to support the use of charity in welfare provision (Zhang Jian 1997a, 1997b reports on a conference about "The issue of carrying on China's traditions of charity").

For all of this activity, the family remains the core provider of care and welfare for the disabled individual, as has been the case in China since time immemorial and even under Mao Zedong. The only difference under Deng Xiaoping is that the illegality of failing to do so, of neglecting, maltreating or abandoning a disabled family member, has been more heavily underlined in legislation, in the work programmes and propaganda. More is made of the role of the family and the legal obligations between parents and offspring, kith and kin, to provide welfare (see Chapter Nine also). Those who fail to do so are berated by state and society as "irresponsible people" [*bu fuze*

ren] (Fieldnotes 1995-96, see also CDPF/DD 1994, Pu J. 1997, Zhu X. 1996, also Appendix: KJ 93/12/03, WH 93/12/09, YC 93/12/18, LS 94/04/19).

The nature of post-Mao society precludes mass mobilization and collective responsibility. There has been little option but to follow a more pragmatic, less socialist path. And that is probably why the 1980s and 1990s have witnessed the return of foreign involvement in Chinese social welfare.

New Missionaries

In marked contrast to the Maoist ideology of national self-reliance in the 1960s and 1970s, the post-Mao government has actively courted foreign aid, foreign experts, technologies, medical science, equipment, service models and training programmes. Foreign agencies and aid workers are among the "many channels"; their models are among the "many forms".

During the 1980s and 1990s, China has witnessed a steady influx of overseas donations, outsider agencies and foreign experts eager to put their skills and resources to good use in China. The list of new missionaries includes Save the Children Fund (UK), Oxfam (HK), Christoffel Blindenmission, ORBIS, Caritas International and several UN agencies including Unicef-China, Unesco, WHO and the ILO (Mindes 1991, CDB 1997a). The projects they have been involved with range from the manufacture of prosthetics to the training of rehabilitation professionals, from community-based rehabilitation to integrated and inclusive education at pre-school and primary school levels (see also Amity 1989/90a-c, 1990a-e, 1991/92, Raab 1992, Mindes 1991, CDB 1997a *inter alia*). Multinational corporations and western businesses with outlets and interests in China have also played their part (Fieldnote 1995-96, also Appendix: CB 94/05/03, PD 94/05/26, GR 94/06/19, YC 94/07/24, WH 94/07/25, KJ 94/10/23, CW 94/11/11, JJ 94/11/14, BW 95/01/31, JW 95/03/17, PD 95/03/25).

Critics of cross-cultural transfers of rehabilitation and other service models argue that services and concepts are cultural products, and cannot be grafted onto other cultural and social contexts without considerable care (Burck 1989, Ingstad 1995a, Kisanji 1995a, Miles 1998 forthcoming). Chinese policy-makers would agree. In China, policy

makers and planners have become adept at managing outsider influences with a view to assimilating new ideas, owning new models of service provision, and rooting them (sometimes spuriously) in Chinese history and culture. No less would be expected given past legacies of incorporating or rejecting western influences (discussed in Chapter Four). The principle of maintaining Chinese authority and control in dealing with and borrowing from outsiders is exemplified by the slogan: "make it suitable to local conditions" [*an di zhi yi*]. The slogan is common in Party/state documentation, including plans for the disability initiative (1988, 1991, 1996 Work Programmes, also BDPF/RD 1995, CDPF/DD 1992, Chen Y.Y. *et al* 1991, Zhang *et al* 1991, Zhuo 1982, 1988). A good example is provided in the policies, practices and internal debates which have accompanied the introduction of Community Based Rehabilitation [*shequ kangfu*] to China.

CBR (promoted by the World Health Organisation in the late 1970s) has been promoted as the answer to disability service provision in developing countries, if not the world over. Space is too limited to go into detail about the concept here (see Helander 1992, Momm & König 1989, Ingstad 1995a, Finkenflügel 1993, Miles, S. 1996, Thorburn & Marfo 1990, Zinkin & McConachie 1995 *inter alia*), suffice to say that it operates along similar lines to primary health care but for disabled people, and that it has become known as a sure-fire short-cut to accessing foreign funds for disability-related work in developing countries (Wolffers & Finkenflügel 1993). Some CBR projects tackle employment and income generation; some tackle empowerment and awareness; most are concerned with some form of medical or vocational rehabilitation based within the family home (Helander 1992, Wolffers & Finkenflügel 1993). The concept has been swallowed whole by the Chinese leadership and the CDPF, largely because it holds the promise of a low-cost, low-tech solution to providing rehabilitation services for a large number of people, and also because it allows policy-makers to build on recent (Maoist) legacies.

The argument goes: CBR is perfectly suited to the Chinese socio-cultural and socio-economic context. First, because China is "still a developing country with a big population". Secondly, because CBR is designed to suit rural areas. Thirdly, because CBR builds perfectly on the long Chinese record in primary health care (see Wegman

et al 1973, Sidel & Sidel 1982, Hillier & Xiang 1994). What better foundation could there be for a CBR strategy? Or so the story goes in leading CBR journals and manuals (see Hu 1996, Changchun DPF 1991, Jia 1996, Ren 1996, Sun Q. 1996, Sun, S. 1991, Tan 1991, Yang, J. 1996, Zhang, J. 1991, Zhao, T. 1991, 1994 and Zhuo 1982, 1988).

Unfortunately, the actual implementation of CBR in China has fallen far short of the vision. Although the logic is there on paper, the realities have moved on. Post-Mao trends, as already stated, have been to move away from low-level and low-status service workers and towards urban, expensive, professionalised operations. Few, to judge from field interviews, wish to work at the grassroots in "barefoot" style. Also, the rigid and hierarchical structure and top-down nature of government in China works against the development of truly community-based programmes (Chan 1993, Saich 1992). In China, community-based generally refers to the bottom rung of the hierarchy rather than a philosophy of bottom-up development based on shared interests and concerns expressed by people at the grassroots. Informal conversations (rather than public presentations) at the "Symposium of Evaluation Conference on Training Rehabilitation Personnel" hosted in Wuhan by WHO Co-operating Centre for Rehabilitation, Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation and Tongji Medical University (Wuhan Fieldnotes 1996, also Purves 1996, Lee 1996 *inter alia*) point to a litany of disasters in implementing "real" CBR. Several of those trained for CBR had been seconded from hospital work units which, once training had been completed, required the course graduates to return to their work unit and practice on site, not conduct outreach work in surrounding rural areas (Wuhan Fieldnotes 1996). Outsider agencies who pilot projects in CBR or similar bottom-up initiatives have become frustrated at limited opportunities for replication elsewhere and the lack of local funds to sustain and develop initiatives further (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Local cadres wooed by the promise of low-cost are suddenly faced with the prospect of new costs where few or no costs formerly existed. In such a situation, the presumed appeal of a "low cost" programme of service provision is empty.

The admirable principle of "make it suit local conditions" has been harder to practice than would have been the case under Mao Zedong. The post-Mao plan comes unstuck where principles and realities do not tally; where hierarchies and structures do not

accommodate; where the aim of providing a basic service competes with a local (government and popular) demand for high quality, modern services; and where top-down mechanisms no longer function as they once did, yet attempts to work from the bottom-up are constrained.

These problems and constraints are evident worldwide. Community-based services are often seen as second best. Indeed, one legacy of colonial intervention is the government and popular perception that institutions are the only respectable model for service provision (Burck 1989, Kalyanpur 1996). For all those who would see an institution dismantled, there are many more who would welcome high-technology, western-style, medical-oriented and institutional provision. Kalyanpur draws on Albert Memmi's analysis of "the colonized" to explain the often uncritical embrace of western as modern and as desirable by India's middle and upper classes, western-trained professionals and policy-makers (Kalyanpur 1996, Memmi 1965). Deliane Burck attributes the reluctance of rural villagers to value or utilise community rehabilitation services in Zimbabwe to the long-term effects of racially segregated and two-tiered provision under colonial rule (Burck 1989). The irony is that the keenest advocates of community-based services (aside from national governments) are the descendants of former colonizers ... the "new missionaries".

* * *

The pragmatics of "many channels, many levels, many forms" and the underpinning values of work and wealth are exemplified in post-Mao attempts to re-form past provision to bring it in line with constraints, grassroots demands, and the development ethos of the post-Mao times. In the remainder of this chapter, some of the threads spun so far are pulled together in three case studies. The studies explore existing forms of provision which have been re-formed in the post-Mao era. The welfare institution [*fuliyuan*] and the welfare factory [*fuli gongchang* or *fuli qiye*] are the first two studies, selected because they encapsulate the process of transition from Mao to Deng and manifest the implications of socio-economic reforms on local government capacities. The third study corresponds to what has been heralded by some in China as a "new" area of intervention: rehabilitation medicine (Fu 1986, Zhang, Zhao & Yan 1991). Its "newness" is more a sign of government discourses which promote scientific and

technological but low-cost and high impact solutions, than an accurate evaluation of the state of rehabilitation therapies in China (given the evidence set out in previous chapters, also Luan 1989, Zhuo 1982, Zhang, N. 1992, Koster 1956, Said 1965, Smits & Smits 1982).

Reforming the Past: Three Case Studies

While the focus of these studies (in line with the thesis as a whole) is on macro-level institutions and ideologies, insights from the grassroots (generated through fieldwork in Beijing, Heping and Shanlin) are also incorporated and much of the data presented is drawn from Fieldnotes (1995-96). This injects some balance into what is otherwise an intentionally imbalanced thesis. It also reflects the demand-side of disability-related provision. The demand-side is likely to become ever more important as the flexibilities of "many channels, many levels, many forms" are fully utilised by private, profit-driven providers of social care, and as the pressures of life and socio-demographic change take their toll on individuals and households.

The three case studies are the welfare institution, the welfare factory, and medical rehabilitation services. All of these have their roots in the past. All have been reformed under Deng Xiaoping.

The Welfare Institution

The legacies of the welfare institution [*fuliyuan*] run deep in Chinese culture (see Chapters Three, Four and Five on historical information on orphanages, the roots of the contemporary Chinese welfare institution). Infants and children who wind up in a welfare home carry the strong social stigma of being without and unwanted by family. The child who has been abandoned on the basis of impairment, gender, extreme poverty, illegitimacy or a lethal combination of these, falls to the bottom rung of the social ladder. There is worrying evidence that abandonment may have increased under Deng Xiaoping (Becker 1990, *The Observer* 1966a, 1996b, *STD* 1993, also Appendix: KJ 93/12/03, WH 93/12/09, WZ 94/08/28).

Welfare institutions provide, in theory, basic board, care and lodging. Management (as in most Civil Affairs outlets) often comprises retired army personnel. Front-line staff tend to be young women, probably from poor families, with little education, little personal experience of childcare, no professional training and no long-term commitment to work in a welfare institution. The pay is low. The status is low. And, given the low standing of abandoned children, the level of care is low. Basic needs are met in the better institutions; less than subsistence is provided in the worse (Hanshaw 1994, Johnson 1996, *The Observer* 1996a, 1996b).

The welfare institution recently took a dramatic leap into the international sphere with the screening of two Channel Four documentaries and the publication of a Human Rights Watch report on state-run orphanages (see Hanshaw 1994, Johnson 1996, *The Observer* 1996a, 1996b). The accusations ran from widespread neglect to state-sanctioned murder. The government's response was predictable: denials followed by the closure of welfare institutions to outsiders, unless part of a pre-arranged, government-backed visit. The documentaries caused as many problems as they raised funds for outsider agencies working in the field; but they also quickened the pace of reform.

A handful of outsider agencies have been involved in the process of re-forming the welfare institution. Unicef-China has worked with the Ministry of Civil Affairs to turn welfare institutions into CBR resource centres. Save the Children Fund (UK) has piloted a scheme of deinstitutionalisation by setting up family-style groups within the institution as a precursor to moving children and young people into small group homes in the community. The first stage of the model has been replicated beyond the pilot project. This is welcome news, except that it is impossible to ensure that the philosophies and training on which the pilot project was based have accompanied its replication. Both Unicef-China and SCF (UK) are concerned with the quality of children's life within welfare institutions, deinstitutionalisation, and building the capacities of front-line staff and management (see Tolfree 1993 for general approaches to deinstitutionalisation with reference to developing countries). Other, less child-focused priorities have framed the process of reform within the state social welfare system.

In the 1980s and 1990s, and in line with a continued decentralization of responsibility for social welfare across the board, welfare institutions have been granted (or burdened by) financial autonomy and encouraged to make full use of the "many channels" approach to fund-raising. A popular money-spinner in larger welfare institutions has been the out-adoption of abandoned babies to foreigners for considerable sums of money in Chinese public sector terms. The sale of abandoned children (and it is invariably only the "healthy" children who are sold) raises complex issues (Johnson 1996), but as far as Chinese local authorities are concerned, it is a superb way to make much needed cash with a clear conscience. After all, the material life-chances for a child in the west are immeasurably better than those of an abandoned child who grows up in a Chinese welfare institution. Who would deny that?

Another phenomenon which is on the rise and bears the marks of post-Mao social change is the opening up of institutions as private residential care facilities for disabled children whose families are in a position to pay. In the No.1 Beijing Children's Welfare Institute, even in Shanlin county's welfare institute, a number of the children who live there have families who pay the institution or Civil Affairs a monthly fee. The long-term implications of this are mixed. Parental interest and investment may improve the care provided in the institution, but only at the cost of taking more children out of their families and communities. However, several factors conspire against raising disabled children (especially those with more severe impairments) in the family home. The weakening (through social and demographic change, especially in cities) of family and local support systems; the dearth of schools for disabled children, especially those with severe impairments and/or learning difficulties; the pressures on both parents to earn; the lack of alternatives for respite care; and, paradoxically, the re-formed facilities of welfare institutions make residential care a desirable option for some who can afford it, and an aspiration for many who cannot (Stone 1997b). The Jin household falls into the latter category.

Case Study One: Xiao Jin

Xiao Jin is 25 years old and is described as having cerebral palsy since he was a child, following a severe illness and high fever. The Jin household includes Xiao Jin, his father Mr. Jin (who earns a low salary

as a factory worker), and his paternal grandparents (the grandfather gets a retirement pension of 200yuan per month). Xiao Jin's mother is dead and his elder sister has already married and left home. When Xiao Jin was a child, his father would try and help him learn to walk, supporting him and walking with him. But as he has grown older and heavier, that has proved impossible to continue. The Jins, who live in the county town, went to Shanlin County Hospital and then to Shanghai's No.1 Hospital to seek specialist diagnosis, but with no positive result.

Xiao Jin has not attended school and caring for him has become a major difficulty. His father has long wanted to place Xiao Jin in the Shanlin welfare home to be looked after, but the family cannot afford the 80 to 100yuan per month that would be required. So, Xiao Jin watches television most of the time. He communicates at a basic level but is easily upset and frustrated. Xiao Jin's father hopes that the government might be able to help out with a place in the welfare home when his son gets older and Mr. Jin is no longer able to care for both a disabled son and ageing parents.

The local government and Disabled People's Federation have helped the Jin household through informing a Taiwanese organisation of the situation. The organisation donated funds for a wheelchair. Xiao Jin's father says: "At home, every day, he needs someone to help with everything from going to the toilet to eating food ... How can I go and do anything else? My wife died and I cannot manage alone. Everyone knows this and so they don't blame me. There's just nothing that can be done".

(Source: Researcher Notes from a semi-structured interview with the Jin household, Shanlin County Research Project (SCF-linked), Data Code GH-CD-4, November 1996).

It seems likely that grassroots - and largely unmet - demand for respite or residential care will conspire with local government demand for revenue, with the result that fee-

paying residential institutions for disabled children and adults will become a more permanent feature of the Chinese social landscape.

Equally unsatisfactory are financial links between local welfare institutions and welfare factories. Funds generated by welfare factories feed into local Civil Affairs coffers and, indirectly, finance welfare institutions. Welfare institutions also support welfare factories. It is not uncommon for young people who live in welfare institutions to be allocated or offered work in the local welfare factory. The money they earn then flows back into the welfare institution in the form of individual contributions to board and lodging (Fieldnotes 1995-96). In Shanlin county's welfare institution, costs for board and lodging were certainly being passed on to young adults (or older children). The financial buck is thereby pushed from central government to local government to society's marginalised. For the children and young people involved, especially young men who have fewer options for marrying out of residential care, the result is a welfare trap: the transition to adulthood is a transition from welfare institution to welfare factory. Personhood remains diminished.

The Welfare Factory

The welfare factory epitomises the impact of China's capitalist reforms on state socialist welfare structures. It has a direct bearing on the lives of over 930,000 Chinese disabled people and their families (1996 Work Programme). For better and for worse, it has helped shape the social construction of disability and disabled people more than any other form of disability provision in post-Mao China.

The welfare factory of the 1950s was set up to provide work opportunities for disabled adults in the cities (see Chapter Five). Many were small scale, based in the locality, maybe with five to ten disabled workers. A few, larger-scale factories came under the aegis of the Ministry of Civil Affairs. Regardless of size, the welfare factory workforce was made up almost entirely of disabled people. In the 1950s and 1960s, the welfare factory was an initiative which placed *welfare* before *factory*. It was designed to give disabled adults an outlet to contribute to the economy, but was never taken seriously as an economic contributor. With only a few exceptions, welfare factories ranked as the lowest performers in China's planned economy. Most shut down during the Cultural

Revolution, not because they were counter-revolutionary but because they were economically peripheral.

In the early 1980s, it would have been easy for Deng Xiaoping's administration to leave the welfare factory to its inevitable fate in a reform-oriented, market-driven China. Welfare factories with their low-grade products, low-grade conditions, poor management and resources were hardly contenders in the survival of the fittest approach to economic enterprise which marked Deng's idea of economic reform. And yet, as is clear from the disability work programmes, the story of the welfare factory did not end with the embrace of market economics.

Throughout the 1980s, the number of welfare factories in China soared. Civil Affairs statistics claim that in 1981, there were only 1,466 welfare enterprises in operation. Compare that to 27,793 by 1987; 41,000 enterprises with 650,000 disabled employees by 1991; 800,000 disabled employees by 1993; and 930,000 by 1995 (1988, 1991, 1996 Work Programmes, MCA 1989). These are quite staggering statistics and beg the question why. Why was there such a dramatic rise in the number of welfare enterprises in the 1980s and 1990s at a time when Mao's principles of socialist egalitarianism had been silenced by slogans such as "to get rich is glorious" or "more labour, more rewards; less labour, less rewards; no labour, no rewards"?

Put simply, the welfare factory, a hangover from Mao's socialist high tide, remained an important "channel" of provision (and, in the early 1980s, the only macro-level channel) for tackling the high unemployment levels among disabled people. In the wake of the Cultural Revolution, the welfare factory was resuscitated. Given the increasingly competitive domestic market, the Chinese government also deemed it necessary to cushion welfare factories from the harsher realities of economic reform. Accordingly, preferential taxation policies have been successively strengthened and have also acquired greater significance as a result of the profit-driven, incentive-based reforms of the 1980s and 1990s.

Tax reductions and preferential access to raw materials were consolidated in national policy. For those factories which met the quota of 35% disabled workforce, there were exemptions from income tax. For those factories which comprised a 50% disabled workforce, there were additional exemptions from industrial and commercial tax (see

1988, 1991, 1996 Work Programmes, also Dixon 1981a, 1981b, Chan & Chow 1992, Wong 1992 *inter alia*). Quotas did not apply to management. In this way, Deng Xiaoping's government hoped to promote the welfare factory as a business that could be viable (for which read profitable) in market-oriented China. Hence the new-style welfare enterprises generally have a smaller proportion of disabled people working in them, are apparently provided with stronger financial incentives, and, in an important departure from their Maoist antecedent, have the emphasis on *factory* first.

The promise held by tax breaks for new entrepreneurs is one reason behind the welfare factory boom. Tax and profit - magic words in a market economy - meant that it was not long before the government was flooded by factory managers eager to take advantage of the offer. But not all who took advantage were playing the game as the government intended. Here another reason behind the boom begins to emerge, which throws bigger question-marks over already questionable (and, in Chapter Two, questioned) state statistics.

In the course of fieldwork in Beijing and Heping County, various key informants including local government officials, welfare factory bosses and disabled adults, helped to put the welfare factory boom into a more credible perspective. It seems that in the rapid change and economic growth that marked the 1980s, implementation went largely unregulated. Thus in some areas, the boom was effectively a phantom phenomenon - a result of political and economic corruption. Government cadres and would-be business executives have been on the make, as the following story (relayed to me by a young blind man in Beijing) illustrates:

A friend who was also blind had work arranged for him at a welfare enterprise. On his first day, he was taken on a very detailed tour of the factory. He was introduced to all the different aspects of work and machinery. At the end of the tour, he was instructed to make sure that he never forgot what he had been told ... in case anyone did an inspection. If there was an inspection, then the inspectors would discover that the blind man was not at work - they would be told that the blind man had taken the day off. Should the inspectors decide to

visit him at home, they would be reassured by his detailed knowledge of the enterprise. He was paid a monthly subsidy and told to stay at home.

(Source: Researcher Notes following an informal interview with Mr. Ming, Beijing Field Research (freelance), Data Code: BJ-96-CBP, October 1996).

To judge from interviews with other disabled people, this was no isolated incident. Other respondents knew of disabled people who had been on the employee register of several welfare enterprises at once. Each enterprise paid the disabled person a small monthly fee to stay at home. The disabled person then received the equivalent of a basic living subsidy (less than a wage but better than nothing) in return for staying out of the factory. For some, the arrangement worked well since time out of work was used to earn income from home. Others were angry and wanted the work, not the subsidies; it is work that gives individuals social status and personhood.

Field-based accounts question the extent to which the so-called welfare enterprises of the 1980s and early 1990s were welfare enterprises in anything more than name. It is impossible to know how many participated in this kind of scam. In 1994, the state clamped down on the establishment and regulation of welfare enterprises: authorities were set up to look out for fake enterprises and to limit tax evasion (*BYD* 1994d, Appendix: CB 94/07/11). Certainly the issue of "fake enterprises" has made the news, hit the Civil Affairs agenda and even the 1996 Work Programme (1996 Work Programme, *BYD* 1994d, Appendix: CB 94/07/11)

Fakes aside, the need to allocate work and get potential welfare recipients into productivity and the need to generate local revenue to meet a host of welfare needs have framed the re-forming of the welfare factory as part of a broader social welfare strategy in some areas. Heping County, situated in the Tianjin municipality, is an ideal example. Admittedly, it is a "model" county (see Chapter Two); nonetheless it presents a case which illuminates the re-forming of the welfare factory in the context of reforms and the crisis in welfare provision.

Heping County is a county on the move. Most of the inhabitants have done very well out of Deng Xiaoping's reforms as the televisions, new houses and new fashions testify. That includes certain sectors of Heping's disabled population. In that extent, it

is not unlike thousands of counties China-wide. Where Heping County is more unique is in its higher than average percentage of disabled people. The county is located in the disaster belt affected by the Tangshan earthquake of 1976. 17,000 of the 240,000 people who died were from Heping. Also and as a result of the disaster, Heping County Civil Affairs is somewhat exemplary in its provision for disabled people and has taken up the challenge of establishing new-style welfare enterprises with zeal and with care.

What is noteworthy about the Heping case for the purposes of this chapter is the integration of welfare factories into the local economy and local government budgets. In Heping, the local government has used welfare factories (there are fifty-two of them) to supply income-generating opportunities for disabled people and others in poverty at the same time as generating income for itself. The welfare factories are owned by village and township governments. A portion of the profits is channelled into the County Civil Affairs budget and another portion is siphoned off for use at village and township level. The money provides subsidies for poverty households, for disabled people who do not have access to factory employment, for the financial support of the county's rehabilitation hospital, even for the building of a new village school. Heping's welfare factories are welfare-based enterprises which, if sufficiently enterprising, finance the above-average social and welfare services.

The case highlights the way in which the welfare factory has been an experiment in weaving market economics into statist welfare structures in an attempt to refashion at least part of the iron rice bowl in the community (see also *CD* 1990b, *BYD* 1994d, Ji 1997, Jin 1997, Wang B. 1997). In the context of ever diminishing slices of cake for welfare expenditure and ever increasing welfare demands, the welfare factory promises to kill two birds with one stone: providing revenue for the daily functions of government social security, and providing employment for those perceived least able to compete. Thus, in Heping and potentially elsewhere in China, the welfare factory has not died out under Deng Xiaoping. Instead, it has been resurrected, reworked and reformed to bring it in line with the ideologies and demands of the 1980s and 1990s. But what of the implications of the reformed welfare factory on the construction of disability in China?

Even in Heping, the new-style welfare factory is no nearer to challenging the perception that to be disabled is to be worthless or good-for-nothing [*canfei*]. That perception underpinned the segregation of disabled workers into disabled factories in the 1950s. That perception also underpins the move towards integrating disabled and non-disabled people in the welfare factories of the 1980s and 1990s. The fact that the post-Mao government set a quota of 35-50% disabled workforce consolidates the centrality of human economic productivity in the construction of disability and the macro-level perception that disabled people are an economic liability - more likely to bring a factory down than build it up. No enterprise, or so the argument goes, can be expected to make a profit if everyone on board has an impairment. The odds are better if you enlist equal numbers of non-disabled workers plus get a head-start through tax reductions and preferential policies. So, whilst *factory* has become more important than *welfare* in the minds of those who manage the new welfare factories, most disabled people in China remain firmly locked within the welfare category: disabled people do not really work - they just get welfare.

The continuing equation of disabled people's work with welfare renders the welfare factory a substandard means of making a living. This is compounded by the generally poor performance of many welfare factories throughout China, especially those under Civil Affairs. The statistics which show a rise in the number of welfare factories mask the economic difficulties that many have experienced in the late 1980s and over the last few years (Huang 1996, 1997). Articles on welfare enterprises in Shanghai in 1995 refer to the dismissal of some 2,000 disabled employees from different factories (Appendix: WZ 93/12/05). The story seems even worse in Beijing where some 60% of factories managed by Civil Affairs are said to be making heavy losses (Appendix: BQ 94/05/14). In this way, many reformed welfare factories have not made it out of the associations with low grade products, low funding, low technology and poor management that characterised their antecedents under Mao (Huang 1996, 1997). Again, such associations do little but compound the link between low or no productivity and people with impairments (see also Liu & Xiong 1990).

The post-Mao push to be productive and to be profitable underpins attempts to re-form the Maoist welfare factory in a bid to bring it in line with the development ethos of

Deng Xiaoping's China. The results have been, as they can only ever be in a country the size of China, mixed. The future of the welfare factory is in question (Pierini 1997). It seems unlikely that the future will be characterised by success stories like that of Heping County.

Reforming Rehabilitation

In the conclusion to Chapter Five, it was suggested that the body in imperial China was perceived as "lineage capital" and that personhood was premised on reproduction, ritual performance and filial support. Under Mao Zedong, and in the context of the collective, the body was viewed in functionalist terms as capital for national economic development; while the bond between individual body and household economic capacity was weakened, although by no means severed. In the post-Mao era, and in the wake of decollectivization, the economic tie between the body and the household has been re-strengthened in ways reminiscent of pre-Mao constructions. This has impacted on household economic and coping strategies, including strategies relating to impairment.

In post-Mao China, the potential impact of impairment on the household is greater than it was under Mao. Competition in the labour market is severe; unemployment constitutes a very real threat; the costs to the household of medical care and education have sky-rocketed; and neighbourhood support systems have been eroded. All of this makes for a more insecure environment. In addition, and somewhat paradoxically, the fact that disability has been put on the government and public agenda has conspired with social change and insecurities to heighten household concerns when a family member is born with or acquires an impairment.

Impairment threatens the household's capacity for economic survival and longer-term security. As the Chinese saying goes, "if you meet with disability, poverty is bound to follow" [*feng can bi qiong*]. In particular, impairment may incur:

- loss of household labour if the individual is not or is not perceived as "productive";
- loss of household labour if a "productive" family member becomes a full time "carer";

- restricted potential for marriage and descendants (possibly affecting siblings also);
- restricted potential for supporting parents in their old age; and
- sometimes exorbitant costs of medical care and cure seeking.

It is the last of these that is most relevant to a discussion of rehabilitation demand and supply.

In all three field sites, the issue of rehabilitation arose most frequently in relation to disabled children, although the concerns expressed by parents about the limited prospects for a disabled child corresponded directly to perceptions of the lives and life-chances of disabled adults.

In post-Mao China, negative social attitudes and the bleak prospects associated with impairment combine with what is best described as a "cult of the perfect child", which has swept through China on the back of a one-child policy and which articulates with the age-old importance of progeny (Chapter Three; note also that the phrase "one-child policy" is now inaccurate but is used here for convenience, see Davin 1990). The 1980s and 1990s have been a boom-time for the child. Single children have become the object of a massive consumer market. They have acquired the collective nickname of "Little Emperors". Moreover, given that most couples are expected to abide by a one-child policy, the onus on having a perfect (healthy, intelligent, attractive, non-impaired) child is becoming even more intense. This may well be a contributory factor to the purported increase in the incidence of abandonment (Becker 1990, *The Observer* 1966a, 1996b, Appendix: KJ 93/12/03, WH 93/12/09, WZ 94/08/28).

Fieldwork generated case upon case of families exhibiting a high degree of care, commitment and concern, irrespective of social or economic status. Concerns relate to the child's opportunities to attain an education and, beyond that, to find work and get married (to fulfil personhood); and also to the future capacity of the household to provide. Who would look after a disabled son or daughter when the parents died? Who would provide for the parents in their old age? In order to forestall hardship, parents are prepared to invest heavily in trying to educate, rehabilitate and, ideally, cure their child. The bottom line is that the best guarantee of a good future is a cure.

"Our child cannot walk so everyday someone has to be around to look after him - we would be prepared to do anything for our child to be cured" .

(Source: Research Notes from a semi-structured interview with the Li household, Shanlin County Research Project (SCF-linked), Data Code GH-CD-3, November 1996).

The search for a cure is often expensive and protracted. Families may begin with a visit to a local doctor but seldom does help-seeking cease there. Even the poorest families in Shanlin county journeyed to hospitals outside the county. More wealthy families travelled further afield to Shanghai or Beijing. Even within the locality, a family will pay for an examination at the local county hospital on top of visiting several different doctors and clinics.

The following two case studies, the first from a relatively wealthy household based in a county town, and the second from a poor household based in a rural village, illustrate the phenomenal pressures on parents (especially mothers) to seek a cure for a child's impairment.

Case Study Two: Xiao Lin

Xiao Lin is 10 years old, male, lives in Taozhou with his mother, father and elder sister and has low vision. The discovery was made when Xiao Lin was at nursery school and it was confirmed by examination at Shanlin County Hospital. The doctors said there was no cure, but the parents heard of other doctors and went to Wuhu and to Shanghai for further opinions. The family travels to Shanghai every year to see if anything more can be done. To date, they estimate that they have spent 10,000 yuan on medical and associated costs and that those expenses are significantly less than they would have been if the Lin family had not got relatives in Shanghai who could do all the telephoning and liaison and put them up. Xiao Lin's parents have heard that it is possible to have an eye transplant but that such treatment is very expensive - probably 100,000yuan. But it is not something that they have

completely discarded as a possibility: "we will put all we have into helping him".

Xiao Lin currently attends a normal primary school in Taozhou. His academic results are good but his mother is anxious that the next school might reject him because of his impairment.

The family has a respectable apartment, good social connections with the local government (Xiao Lin's grandfather was a senior member of the County Government) and a good standard of living compared to others in the town. Still the search for medical help has necessitated further economic activity. Xiao Lin's mother has had to set up a business making and selling breakfast dumplings before going to her regular job. All of her wages and her husband's (a departmental head in a charcoal company) have been saved to pay for their son's medical treatment.

(Source: Researcher Notes from a semi-structured interview with the Lin household, Shanlin County Research Project (SCF-linked), Data Code TZ-CD-6, November 1996).

Case Study Three: Xiao Zhen

Xiao Zhen is a 6 year old girl with a hearing impairment. She lives with her mother, father and younger sister in a small hamlet. Her parents are poor and only have a basic education; the main livelihood is the household land. Additional income is made through tricycle-based deliveries. Xiao Zhen is not school-age but she finds it upsetting to see her sister attending school with other children: the family's home is situated only yards from the hamlet school. Xiao Zhen's mother does not know whether Xiao Zhen will be able to go to school or whether the family's financial circumstances will permit any form of special education. It is hard enough finding the money for books for the elder daughter.

Almost all the farmwork is done by Xiao Zhen's mother. Xiao Zhen's father is seldom at home ... Xiao Zhen's mother adds that "he has never bothered with his daughters". Xiao Zhen's mother blames herself for her daughter's deafness [which resulted from misused antibiotics to cure a fever]. The family took Xiao Zhen to Shanlin County Hospital, and were informed that the condition was incurable. They got the same response from a hospital in Nanjing. Shortly after, Xiao Zhen's father contracted tuberculosis, so the family had no more money.

Recently, Xiao Zhen's mother saw a programme on television about a hospital in Hefei which claimed good results; so she plans to sell their grain and use the money to take her daughter to Hefei to see doctors there. "Whatever hospital I've taken her to, the results haven't been good - I am always making inquiries and wanting to find out about somewhere good to take her for an examination ... all that I want is to cure my daughter's disease".

(Source: Researcher Notes from a semi-structured interview with the Zhen household, Shanlin County Research Project (SCF-linked), Data Code TZ-CD-5, November 1996).

The hope for a cure or complete recovery (over and above western notions of rehabilitation) and the widely-documented nature of medical help-seeking in Chinese cultures (Ahern 1975, Martin 1975, Kleinman 1975, Kleinman 1980) protract the search for a cure, even when informed that a condition is incurable. The situation is made worse by the multiplicity of health and therapeutic systems which form the Chinese medical landscape; and by the social expectations that doctor-swapping may be necessary, and that a family should not give up the search (see Kleinman *et al* 1975). A high degree of perseverance is expected which may work against the child's and the household's long-term interests. Opportunities for schooling may be lost through the demands of medical treatment. Household resources may be depleted in vain by medical costs.

Households are liable to incur heavy debts for no guaranteed improvement. The costs of medical care (fees, treatment, travel and accommodation expenses, time out of

everyday income generation) can be prohibitive and are born almost exclusively by the families. Occasionally, a poor family might receive assistance from the government, or doctors and hospitals might agree to reduce fees. All the families interviewed in Heping and Shanlin had spent beyond their means, sometimes well beyond their means, on the search for a cure. Moreover, initial household poverty does not automatically reduce the drive to find a cure, since a cure is seen as the only guarantee of avoiding perennial poverty for the whole household. Indebtedness in such circumstances is not uncommon.

Case Study Four: Xiao Guo

Xiao Guo got a fever in infancy. After he recovered, his family discovered that his legs were weak and he could not walk or stand up. Xiao Guo's parents sought help from the local doctor, and the doctor discovered that he probably had polio. The doctor advised that they go to the county hospital, where the diagnosis was confirmed. Then they went to a hospital for infectious diseases in Tianjin. The expenses - both medical and residential - were huge. So, they sold their own house - a four-roomed house - to cover what they owed in medical expenses. They had built their house for 1500 yuan but could only sell it for 1600 yuan, so they went to the county bank and took out a loan; the government provided some assistance. They still owe 3000yuan. The father is self-employed in fish rearing; the mother stays at home to look after their child and farms the land. The family now live in a one-room house.

(Source: Based on a transcribed interview and visit to the Guo family home, Heping County Research Project (Unicef-linked), Transcript Code NH-13, April 1996).

Add to this scenario the boom in the rehabilitation business and health care generally that has been apparent in the 1980s and 1990s. There are innumerable television and radio programmes, popular magazines and tabloids which focus on healthcare, beauty, fitness, and the identification and cure of "diseases". The popular magazine *Health [Jiankang]* is one such example. It regularly features advertisements by doctors of western and Chinese medicine: Diabetes cure! Epilepsy cure! Mental illness cure!

Deafness cure! Paralysis cure! And so on. Books targeted at families, especially parents, on common diseases are widely available and relatively cheap. However, a lack of standard monitoring means that many recommendations prove unhelpful, and advertisements for cure may even be fraudulent.

To conclude this case study: in post-Mao China, the rehabilitation industry may still be small but it is expanding rapidly, and its expansion is in no small measure attributable to growing grassroots demand. Among the factors which have contributed to this are: a preoccupation with health, body and healing, and a multiplicity of therapeutic options; the socio-economic delinking of individual households from the collective; relative freedom to travel; increased public awareness and media coverage of disability; and an emergent cult of the perfect child in a one-child policy context. The result: increased opportunities for medical help-seeking and intensified pressures on families (especially mothers) to invest enormous energy and resources into searching for "recovery" [*kangfu*]. In all likelihood, demand is set to increase, driven by and simultaneously driving the further growth of a Chinese rehabilitation industry - an industry which the government will no doubt encourage if it is financially autonomous, deploys scientific and technological developments, and contributes to maximising the work and wealth-creation abilities of current and future generations of Chinese disabled people.

Conclusion

The chapter began with an attempt to see disability from the perspective of the national government, in the context of weakened capacities, resource constraints, and pressures to advance economic development. The chapter closed with three studies which illuminate local (rather than national) government and grassroots perspectives, constraints and pressures. In the process, clear continuities and discontinuities have surfaced. The continued (albeit re-formed) existence of welfare factories and welfare institutions, and the emphasis on the functional and productive body, are testimony to the enduring place of Maoist legacies in framing the post-Mao present. But there is a sense (which possibly comes more from the outsider's need to understand change than the realities of change itself) that state institutions and local level strategies are more akin to pre-socialist institutions and strategies. The arrival of "new missionaries", the

resurgence of private philanthropy and the promotion of professionalised rehabilitation and social work services ... all of these would have been singularly out of place in Mao's China.

There are signs also of a post-Mao re-forming of the body and its relationship to nation and development. Brief mention has been made of an apparent transition from the populist faith in the productive masses (associated with Maoist thought) to a more negative construction of the Chinese masses as potential economic liabilities rather than potential economic assets. The import of that transition will be considered in Chapter Nine. Before that, the theme of continuity and change is explored further in Chapter Eight, with respect to a singularly Chinese component of the national government's disability initiative: propaganda.

Chapter Eight

Modelling Reform and Reforming Models

In this chapter, the theme of disability re-formed is continued. The focus of analysis is the use of mass media and state propaganda to re-form social attitudes and public perceptions of disabled people, via the promotion of exemplary models. The hypothesis that China constitutes an "exemplary society" rather than a "disciplinary society" is also explored as background to the analysis presented.

Getting disabled people on the government agenda has been the single greatest achievement of Deng Pufang and the CDPF. Making sure that disabled people remain on the agenda has been their single greatest challenge. Surveys and statistics, professional interests, political connections, international commendations and currency - all have played a role in meeting that challenge (see Chapter Six), but the masterstroke has been the way in which disability has been knitted into a dominant discourse of modernization and reform, with more and less predictable results. In the first part of this chapter, some of the contours of a disability-centred discourse of social development are mapped out, with reference to the concepts of "civilization" and "socialist humanitarianism". These are important as context to the one aspect of China's disability initiative that indisputably qualifies as a "special Chinese characteristic" [*zhongguo tese*]: the way in which the mass media has been used to put disability on the public agenda and to change disabling perceptions.

The desirability and difficulties of raising public disability awareness are widely accepted (Helander 1992). In China, however, the potential for public awareness raising is enhanced by the existence of one of the world's largest propaganda machines. State propaganda, public campaigns and political slogans make western-style spin-doctored soundbites seem pale in comparison. All have been used to re-form the public and self image of disabled people in China.

The use of exemplary models in state propaganda offers a unique perspective on disability in post-Mao China. However, exemplary models - like humour - do not translate well across cultures. Consequently, they are neither a common nor an easy subject of study. Borge Bakken's work (1995) stands out in this respect. Few others have taken Chinese propaganda as seriously or written as sensibly on the subject. Apart from Bakken's contribution, this chapter draws on cuttings from the Chinese language press and from Fieldnotes 1995-96, including interviews with five people who have featured in the Chinese media as model disabled people. Obviously, questions of validity and reliability arise whenever Chinese propaganda is used in academic research (see Chapter Two). The difference is that in this chapter, the propaganda itself is the principal object of critical inquiry.

The first part of this chapter explores Bakken's hypothesis that China is an "exemplary society". Bakken's hypothesis is highly pertinent to a study of disability and development in China, even though disability is not the subject of his investigation. Nonetheless, a summary of Bakken's discussion on the exemplary society is useful as a conceptual backdrop. After this, attention turns to the use of non-disabled people as exemplary models to promote the "socialization" [*shehuihua*] of China's disability initiative. The bulk of the chapter concentrates on the use of disabled people as exemplary models. What are the dominant images of disabled people in the post-Mao propaganda of exemplary persons? What messages lie behind those images? What are the wider implications?

Civilizing Society

In this chapter, the existence of a "civilizing" discourse of disability and development is explored first, followed by discussion of the drive to "socialize" the disability initiative. These, it is suggested, form part of a macro-level strategy to replace the grand narratives of Maoist-Marxist-Leninist thought and to restore a sense of collective responsibility for social security - all of which have been eroded through economic reform and social change.

Disability: a civilizing discourse

For most China watchers, the importance of the post-Mao reforms has been perceived as lying within economic or socio-economic arenas (see Dwyer 1994, Dassu & Saich 1992, Delman *et al* 1990, Saith 1987, White 1991). But there is another side to the reforms that has been somewhat neglected, perhaps because it is filed away under "rhetoric" and therefore tarnished with Maoist legacies and memories of swallowing Maoist propaganda. Or perhaps because engaging with the rhetoric means trawling through tedious and often unenlightening documents. Fortunately, Borge Bakken (1995) has taken up the gauntlet and unpacked Party/state discourse in search of a deeper understanding of development and reform.

Among other things, Bakken explores the post-Mao concept of "two civilizations" [*liangge wenming*]: the "material civilization" [*wuzhi wenming*] and the "spiritual civilization" [*jingshen wenming*]. It is a concept which has received little serious coverage outside China, even though there are countless exhortations on posters, in the press, in shop windows and in everyday conversation to live in a *civilized* manner. Drive in a *civilized* manner. Sell in a *civilized* manner. Use the underground in a *civilized* manner. Be *civilized*.

In simplified terms, material civilization denotes the economic growth aspect and spiritual civilization denotes the social development aspect of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Both are central to the Chinese leadership's vision of rapid but controlled modernization - and control is the key, as Bakken explains. Modernization is conceived as a monster. On the one hand, the leadership wants to unleash modernizing forces in a bid for high-speed economic development - hence reforms which have all the appearance and much of the substance of capitalism. On the other hand, the leadership wants to control the monster, being all too aware of the destabilizing potential of uneven economic growth. High expectations and frustrated ambition breed discontent; discontent breeds unrest; and in China, unrest is *luan* - chaos, the downfall of dynasties, the nightmare scenario which the Deng regime determined to crush when it dispatched the tanks on June 4th 1989 (Bakken 1995).

The Chinese government has not been so caught up in the economy as to lose sight of its own interests, which is why China's new road has been pursued with close attention

to social and political control. The theory of spiritual civilization and related concepts of "socialist humanitarianism" [*shehuizhuyi rendaozhuyi*], "human modernization" [*ren de xiandaihua*] and "socialization" [*shehuihua*] are among the more palatable mechanisms deployed to control the monster. The vision, then, is of a China which is not only economically advanced but socially exemplary (see also Li D. 1997, Li G. 1997, Shi 1997, Sun T. 1997, Yang D. 1997 and Kong 1992 who all discuss the concept of "two civilizations" with reference to social security and/or disability issues).

The social progress angle has provided considerable scope for those involved in the disability initiative to knit disability and development together. In the 1980s and 1990s, disability has become a civilizing discourse. To see how, we turn briefly to two texts which constitute attempts to construct disability as a national development issue: Chen Rongfu's *New Theory of Socialist Humanitarianism* (1995) and Xi, Lin and Chen's *Sociology of Disability* (1993). Both texts, published by Hua Xia press, can be assumed to have the blessing of the CDPF.

In Xi, Lin & Chen's (1993) text on the sociology of disability, the links between disability initiatives, the progress of humanity, Chinese civilization, culture and social development are constant themes and run along the following lines:

The establishment of harmonious relations between healthy [non-disabled] people and disabled people are an important aspect of raising the level of morality in society and also an important component part of constructing a socialist spiritual civilization (Xi, Lin & Chen 1993, p. 118).

A person's "disability" is not an individual's problem, but it is a problem which is intimately connected to social civilization. Disabled people's social status and their general life situation are an important marker of whether or not a nation has a civilized society (Xi, Lin & Chen 1993, p. 291).

The superiority of the socialist system is embedded in the interlocking of disability and Chinese development. The authors argue that capitalist countries have more disability-related services, but these are premised on "principles of pity, sympathy and almsgiving" (Xi *et al* 1993, p. 143). In contrast, China deploys a superior brand of humanitarianism which, it is stressed, differs markedly from the capitalist version.

The political tensions surrounding "humanitarianism" provide the starting point for Chen Rongfu's (1995) study which works disability into a passionate promotion of socialist humanitarianism. Humanitarianism was forbidden territory under Mao - discredited, along with those who supported it, as an ideology of the capitalist classes (Chen 1995). The tension has been resolved to some extent with the invention of socialist humanitarianism, but old taboos die hard.

In Chen Rongfu's study, disability is a strong theme, largely because disability has served socialist humanitarianism well. Deng Pufang has been one of its strongest advocates (personal correspondence with Darrell Dorrington, 1995).

This is a time of economic development and rising standards of living. Now more than ever must we face up to the crumbling of human relations and traditional culture that the system of competition brings. The more competition there is, the more we must emphasise truth, goodness and beauty. If we do not pay attention to promoting a humanitarian spirit, if we do not call for close and friendly ties between people, the consequences will be terrible. We must create a form of new Eastern civilization (Chen Rongfu 1993, p. 2, paraphrasing a speech by Deng Pufang).

As socialist humanitarianism has gained credibility, so the disability initiative has benefited from locating itself within a concept that has broader social appeal and stronger state support. Disability discrimination, physical and verbal abuse, abandonment and neglect have been listed among the "unhealthy social practices" and "social evils" perceived to "still exist" or to have arisen on the back of capitalist-style economic competition (CDPF/DD 1994, Chen 1995, Ma 1993, Zhu 1993). In other words, social attitudes and responses to disabled people have been advanced as an indicator of social and socialist development:

Awareness of and attitudes towards disabled people have already become an important indicator with which to judge a society's level of civilization and progress (Xi, Lin & Chen 1993, p. 147).

Thus, the central message is that disabling attitudes and actions are a mark of "backwardness". This, as will be seen shortly, is nowhere more clear than in the parading of good non-disabled citizens who exude accommodating attitudes to disabled people and are the new exemplars of an "exemplary society".

The Exemplary Society

The Maoist decades are strongly associated with the parading of role-models for mass emulation (Chan 1985, Leys 1979, Min 1993). Think here of murals featuring model workers, granite sculptures of model peasants, or the "rust-free screw" Lei Feng. However, although the Mao years provide the most memorable manifestations of the role-model phenomena, this should not obscure the fact that model emulation is deeply rooted in China's past, in her culture and philosophy, in language and enduring assumptions about the individual and society (Bakken 1995, Gittings 1998). Any attempt to discount role-models as a purely Communist product would miss the point. Communism put a certain spin on Chinese role-models, but no more than that (Bakken 1995). In China, the ideal of social order has long been linked with morality, moral education and model emulation. Borge Bakken suggests that China is an "exemplary society" rather than, in Foucault's terms, a "disciplinary society". Bakken's hypothesis can be summed up as follows.

There is an enduring philosophical and cultural assumption in China (going back to the Western Zhou) that the human being is open to transformation and improvement. There is also an assumption that the human being is drawn to morality [*de*] and that, when faced with a virtuous model, will aspire to follow suit. Hence, the attainment of social order merely requires all human beings to follow paragons of virtue. Morality and regulation by moral example are therefore the preferred means of social control. In comparison, law comes a poor second, useful in the last resort only. Models, it is argued, can achieve what discipline and punishment seldom can: harmony and social cohesion. The messages conveyed by role-models change over time: from a chaste widowhood to battlefield bravery to ideological correctness. But their function has remained remarkably constant: to stabilize (control) society, guide individual behaviour, establish social standards of morality and action, and thereby avert social disorder or Chaos (see Chapter Three).

In the 1980s and 1990s, Maoist grand narratives - which had both brought order and ordered chaos - have been eroded in the wake of widespread socio-economic change. So too have social control mechanisms (such as the collective system, the work unit, and the resident pass or *hu-kou*, see Leung 1994, Hinton 1991, Christiansen 1990). As

a result, the post-Mao leadership has found itself in dire need of a new way to order change, control society and stem the chaos that so many in the leadership have feared. Part of the solution was found in the past - in the legacy of exemplary models (Bakken 1995).

Bakken maintains, and convinces, that the use of models in the reform era bears all the hallmarks of China's cultural traditions, yet remains thoroughly modern. Post-Mao models are not anachronistic but an integral part of a post-Mao system of social control. They are inextricable from the concept of material and spiritual civilization. Thus, in the 1990s, there are "civilized peasant households", "civilized cities", "civilized work units" and "civilized families", as well as exemplary individuals who exhibit all the virtues of an economically and morally advanced society. School children and young people are favourite models. So too are those who manifest the now-rehabilitated Confucianist morals of good family relations: model sons and daughters, model parents and in-laws (Bakken 1995, also *WD* 1996, Pu 1997, Zhang X. 1997). There are also good, red entrepreneurs who make money and are generous with it. Above all, there are models who, like Lei Feng, manifest a desire to "serve the people" [*wei renmin fuwu*] and to "do good deeds" [*zuo haoshi*]. And at this point, we move from the general to the disability-specific characteristics of the post-Mao exemplary society.

Socializing Disability

Humanitarianism and charity. Both of these concepts were discredited under Mao by association with capitalism and the west. Both of these concepts fit remarkably well with the ethos of post-Mao China. They allow the privileged and wealthy élite to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the Chinese Communist Party and, given the lack of state funding, such charitable and humanitarian acts are warmly solicited (*CA* 1997, see also Bai *et al* 1997, Can 1997, Liu *et al* 1997, Wu C. 1997). Deng Pufang, for example, regularly calls on China's new rich to dig deep and donate to the CDPF (*SCMP* 1994). But the socialization of the disability initiative goes beyond pumping the new rich for their cash.

Socializing the disability initiative is about broadening the responsibility for the disability initiative. It is summed up in the slogan "support disabled [people], help disabled [people]" [*fucan zhucan*] and is played out in the good deeds of non-disabled people towards disabled people in their household or community (CA 1997, Jilin Civil Affairs 1997, Liu *et al* 1997, Wu 1997).

Fostering and publicizing non-disabled models of charity is a major part of the propaganda drive (Feng 1997, Gao 1997, Li H. 1997, Lin Y. 1997, Pan 1997, Yan Ge 1996, Zheng G. 1997). Models include family members, school children, students, volunteer organizations, even entire enterprises and work units. All are urged to qualify as "advanced units for helping disabled people" [*zhucan xianjin jiti*] or "advanced individuals who help disabled people" [*zhucan xianjin geren*]. Those who manifest the required attributes, and who come to the attention of local cadres or journalists, find themselves in the spotlight as exemplary citizens. The book *Brilliant Stars of the Masses* [*Qunxing Canlan*] provides an excellent idea of what socializing the disability initiative is all about (CDPF 1991a). The book contains summaries of 83 "advanced units", over 100 non-disabled "advanced individuals" and 75 "families to disabled people". It is the book of an award ceremony held in 1991, four years after the nationwide campaign to "support disabled, help disabled" started (CD 1991e). Its purpose is two-fold: to reward those who have set a good example in the disability initiative; and to encourage (*jili*) others to go and do likewise. As the first of three forewords states:

We appeal: the entire society must study and spread the news of their advanced and exemplary deeds; understand, respect, care for and help disabled people; support the disability initiative; all to protect the citizenship rights of disabled people and to contribute to national progress and social civilization (CDPF 1991a, foreword).

The signatories to the appeal (there are eight of them) include the Chinese Communist Party Propaganda Bureau, Communist Youth League, All China Women's Federation, the Ministry of Civil Affairs and CDPF.

So what exactly do "brilliant stars of the masses" do? Examples more concrete than "serving disabled people with love" or "energetically working for the disability initiative" include:

- gifts of basic necessities at Chinese festivals;
- financial donations to support local disability initiatives (e.g. to build a special school);
- organizing disability-related volunteer activities;
- providing old age insurance for disabled people in the local welfare factory;
- providing emergency relief for disabled people in poverty;
- creating jobs for disabled people;
- setting up rehabilitation units and/or providing low-cost treatment; and
- organising local surveys to ascertain numbers and circumstances.

Most of these are done by local government departments, DPF branches, associated welfare factories, hospitals or schools ... which gives some indication of the low extent to which any of the above are "genuine" bottom-up initiatives.

Advanced individuals are mostly professionals or employers who, for example, have set up a welfare factory or manage one, who teach in a special school or provide rehabilitation (CDPF 1991a). Among them is Chen Yunying, a capable and pioneering woman who heads the State Education Commission's special education research unit (CEN 1996, Chen Y.Y. *et al* 1991, Chen Y.Y. 1991). Hidden among the professionals are a handful of non-professionals who have taken it upon themselves to inform local disabled people of their rights and help them to register as disabled people, or have taken disabled people into their homes - an abandoned girl, an older man who has lost his sight (CDPF 1991a). Often, and it underlines the state's eagerness to promote "socialization" as a way of spreading social welfare costs, a comment is added to the effect that the model individual never once asked the authorities for a penny of subsidy.

Stories similar to those in *Brilliant Stars* are everywhere in the press and on television, both locally and nationally (CWD 1996, Jin 1997, Ji 1997, Zhang & Mi 1992, SSWI 1997 and Appendix: YC 93/12/18, JW 94/11/26, CW 95/01/23). Aside from the frequent coverage allocated to local government and organised initiatives, there are "everyday exemplary" stories about wives, parents, husbands and children who care for

a disabled family member (*WD* 1996, Pu 1997, Zhang X. 1997). Generally, the stories present disabled people as a burden, but a worthwhile burden; a burden which the individual either does not reject despite family or social pressures, or which the individual considers rejecting but is awakened to a sense of familial and social duty, and determines to do the responsible thing. In this vein, there is the story (written up for *Civil Affairs* magazine) under the title, "Why I can't bear to leave my mute husband" (Zhang X. 1997). The story, written by and from the perspective of the non-disabled wife, provides an "exemplary model" and extols the worthwhile hardships of such a marriage and husband. Or there is the story (written up in *China Daily*) headlined "Kind strangers help a sick girl", which tells of a student's determination to find a cure for a girl with epilepsy whose household was too impoverished to pay for medical or school fees (*CD* 1996e). The cause, publicised through the student and national press, solicited letters of support and sufficient funds to pay for treatment. Local authorities then, finally, did their bit and offered free education for the girl and her sister.

It is difficult to know how to read these stories, as an outsider. They seem to go so far down the road of encouraging charity and good deeds within and outside the kinship circle as to render the disabled individual an object of pity or an onerous obligation. It is difficult to see how charity in China, as in the west, can avoid disempowering the recipient. The solution (as far as it can be called a solution) which is presented in Chinese propaganda is to ensure that disabled people too have models to emulate; that disabled people are portrayed as subjects and agents as well as objects and recipients.

New Models of the Reform Era

In the Maoist decades, revolutionary heroes were young, strong, selfless, energetic, determined, ideologically correct, fearless ... and flawless. Disabled people did not get a look in, save as objects of revolutionary zeal and revolutionary healing (Chapter Five). Most disabled people were exempt from participating in mass campaigns or political study groups, just as they were exempt from becoming models worthy of emulation, unless their impairments bore the insignia of the battlefield (Min 1993, Fieldnotes 1995-96).

The picture could not have been more different under Deng Xiaoping. Admittedly, the return of charity has ensured the continuing objectification of disabled people, but this has been balanced by a top-down decision to promote disabled people as exemplary models. In the post-Mao era, disabled people have been advanced as actors and agents of reform.

Although they are disabled in body, yet they have ceaselessly sought to strengthen themselves ... they have forced themselves to forge ahead; they have overcome frequent and unimaginable difficulties, they have contributed their own sweat and blood and wisdom, and they have made an outstanding contribution to the glory of the motherland and the flourishing of the race (CDPF 1991a, first preface).

And there is more. Disabled models are "ceaselessly self-strengthening" [*zhiqiang buxi*], have a "disabled body but resolute will" [*shen can zhi jian*], "amazing will power" [*jingren de yili*], "fighting spirit" [*fendou jingshen*] and are "obstinate and strong, risking all and battling on" [*wan qiang pin bo*], and so forth (CDPF 1991a). The language is sentimental and heroic, but the message is a new one. It signals the inclusion of disabled people in the star-studded firmament of China's exemplary society.

The new and inclusive propaganda project seeks and finds support in historical examples such as Sima Qian (whose historical biographies were cited in Chapter Three) and international examples such as Helen Keller, set out in compilations of famous disabled people (JDPF 1992). The historical angle is a post-Mao must: it is in line with the political rehabilitation of Confucian virtues. The international angle is another post-Mao must: it shows that disability is a global concern and that China's more recent record has been less than brilliant when compared to the west (see also Appendix: RM 94/05/30, KJ 94/10/23, GR 94/06/19, GR 96/08/03). The recent arrival of real-life "against all odds" stories of western disabled people is linked to this (Fu 1992, Guo 1986, CD 1993b, GMD 1996c, 1996d, WHN 1994), and is also aimed at enhancing the inter/national credibility of China's new disabled role-models.

Disabled models are presented as living proof that disabled people can be "creators of material and spiritual civilization". The barriers faced - conceived as environmental barriers, social prejudice, economic hardship and individual impairment - are highlighted in the bid to maximise the message of humanity's triumph over nature and

the unremitting march of progress. Disabled people too are "brilliant stars". Hence *Brilliant Stars of the Masses* also features biographical sketches of 194 disabled people awarded the honorific of "models of self-strengthening" [*zhiqiang mofan*] in 1991. There is also the customary exhortation, signed by the Ministries of Civil Affairs, Human Affairs and the CDPF, which translates:

We appeal: disabled people from all around, study the ceaseless self-strengthening and spirit of selfless contribution [of the 194 models]; take them as your models; show self-respect, self-confidence, self-strengthening and self-reliance; build up achievements and exploits for the construction of China's socialist modernization (CDPF 1991a, foreword).

What exactly is to be studied and emulated? Analysis of disabled models in recent Chinese propaganda suggests that there are four main thematic areas: disabled people who exhibit the "four-selves"; who serve others in the community; who contribute to the Chinese cultural base; and those who have won glory for the Chinese nation. These themes are evaluated in turn.

Si Zi: modelling the four-selves

The four-selves [*si zi*] are: self respect [*zizun*]; self confidence [*zixin*]; self-strengthening [*zhiqiang*] and self-reliance [*zili*]. They appear everywhere in relation to disability in China. They are a favourite text for calligraphy inscriptions in brochures and on banners. They are the attributes that mark the "new" disabled man, woman and child in China.

The *si zi* are part of a bigger process of restructuring the ties between state, society and individual. In post-Mao China, reciprocity is widely lauded, cast as a "traditional" Chinese virtue which is alive and kicking (Chan 1993). At the same time, however, individualism is no longer the evil it was under Mao. The collective self has become an individualistic self. The change does not surprise given the nature of Deng Xiaoping's reform. The loss of free medical care, schooling, subsidised housing and secure employment has been sweetened by opportunities for personal aggrandisement, ownership and investment in one's own. Those sweeteners have opened the door for a new legitimization of self.

The "four-selves" slogan illustrates the extent to which disability in the 1980s and 1990s has been re-formed by dominant ideologies. The state has recognized the barriers faced by disabled people; it has contributed funds and promoted a disability initiative; but there is little reason to hope for a bigger, better resourced social security network. Therefore, in the spirit of prevention first and self-help, the Chinese government and CDPF have told disabled people to cut out the need for state/social support. The state expects disabled people to go out into society and do what everyone else does: make a living. Economic independence from state and society underpins the notion of self-reliance or self-support [*zili*].

Self-reliance should not be compared to the Euro-American concept of independent living, for - even in the context of western-style market economics - Chinese individualism still remains a very different animal from its western counterpart. From the Chinese government's perspective, "self-reliance" is solely about getting people (even forcing people) to help themselves and make the vital transition from liability to asset (see Chapter Six). There are no promises of state or social support to facilitate that transition - quite the reverse, in fact, as the very existence of the "four-selves" suggests. The marked absence of reliable state/social support necessitates the prior existence of three other "selves": self-strengthening, self-confidence and self-respect. These qualities are conceived as prerequisites for making it in a hostile society and harsh economic market. Those who succeed are "models of self-strengthening". The most famous of these is Zhang Haidi.

Zhang Haidi is credited with speaking four foreign languages (self-taught), writing a 340,000 character autobiographical novel (*Dreams from a Wheelchair*, published in 1991 and since made into a film), and building a highly successful business enterprise which employs disabled and non-disabled people. Zhang Haidi is also a "Model Worker of Shandong Province", an "Excellent Communist Youth Member" and a "National Bearer of the 3-8 Red Flag" (CDPF 1991a, Zhang 1991). She is one of the 194 disabled people featured in *Brilliant Stars*. Other models of self-strengthening share similar characteristics: self-study is a recurrent theme (it also underscores the barriers to education for disabled people) and so too are self-employment and entrepreneurialism (CDPF 1991a, BYD 1996c, CD 1993b, 1996l, LD 9/07/22).

People like Zhang Haidi are ideal exemplars for China's new entrepreneurs. They approach money-making opportunities, education and the ongoing challenge of self-improvement in a way that pleases the post-Mao leadership. Therefore, Zhang is upheld as a national model for all: in the 1980s, the Chinese Communist Party announced that the "whole nation and especially young people should study Zhang Haidi" (CPDF 1991a). The message to non-disabled and disabled people alike is that if Zhang Haidi - young, female and a wheelchair user - can make a success of her life, become an entrepreneur and make money, what is stopping you? The sub-text is that if you do not make a success of your life, no-one will be there to help you. Don't expect the state or society to provide support; do it *yourself*.

Fu Wu: serving others, sacrificing self

In the post-Mao exemplary society, charity and humanitarianism are not just the playing fields of non-disabled citizens. Disabled people too are urged to contribute to the community. The point is important because it goes some way towards redressing the power imbalances that too often result from charity and voluntary service. To date, disabled people have been portrayed as recipients of state welfare and social philanthropy in a way that underlines their image as China's "most pitiful" [*zui kelian*]. That image has been compounded by the push for community volunteers in the 1980s and 1990s (Jilin Civil Affairs 1997, SSWI 1997, Wu C. 1997). It is a saving grace that disabled people are also among the care-givers, philanthropists and humanitarians who have contributed as agents of a humanitarian and civilizing impulse.

Several examples spring to mind of well-known disabled role models whose fame stems from enterprising initiatives within the spheres of community and voluntary service, notably Xu Bailun, Sun Shujun and Ding Tiejun (for other examples, see: Appendix: LW 94/12/26, YC 95/03/24, CW 95/04/22, GR 95/05/29, QE 95/07/01, TQ 96/05/14).

Xu Bailun is one of the better known Chinese disabled philanthropists. He is the first Chinese citizen to receive the Unesco Comenius Medal. Xu Bailun, architect, became blind in his early forties. During the 1980s, Xu climbed aboard the disability initiative and championed educational and recreational activities for blind children. His work

includes a Braille literary magazine for children, annual summer camps bringing blind and sighted children together, and the Golden Key project which aims to increase integrated and segregated educational opportunities for children with visual impairments in China's poorer rural counties. The project enjoys support from the Amity Foundation and Christoffel Blindenmission among others. His work has been publicized in *China Daily*, *Beijing Review* and Chinese language newspapers (Xu *et al* 1992, *CD* 1991j, 1995c,f, 1996b, and Appendix: GR 95/08/19).

Sun Shujun and Ding Tiejun are also regularly featured in the Chinese popular and disability press for their work with disabled children (*BYD* 1993, 1995c, *CDY* 1995, *PD* 1993, and Appendix: ZQ 95/02/07, LD 96/04/05).

Sun Shujun's work culminated in the founding of Shenyang Enlightenment Kindergarten in 1992 in Liaoning Province (see SEK 1994). The inspiration for the kindergarten emerged when Sun Shujun, born with a physical impairment, was discriminated against when she sought a post to teach in a neighbourhood kindergarten. Although she had the qualifications, she was humiliated and forced to leave. Sun's attempt to set up her own integrated nursery for disabled and non-disabled children was sufficiently successful and innovative to attract official support and external funds (including a substantial amount from the Hong Kong Caritas Association) as well as funds from the region. A new, bigger kindergarten was built offering educational services for disabled and non-disabled children as well as specialist rehabilitation services and classes on good parenting. In a country where pre-school services for disabled children are few and far between, Sun Shujun's initiative has been significant and Sun has been commended as an "Outstanding Disabled Person", for "Ardent Love to Children" and "Advanced Learning from Lei Feng" (SEK 1994).

Ding Tiejun is another model and a popular "against-all-odds" story. Ding Tiejun has moderate cerebral palsy, is self-taught (no school would admit him) and is in his late twenties (Ding 1993, 1996). He has set up a community-based and information-based rehabilitation service targeting children and young people. The "Ai Kang" (Love Rehabilitation) centre is a not-for-profit, small-scale, bottom-up outfit. Ding Tiejun runs the project, with the aid of his family, from their home in downtown Beijing. Ding

Tiejun's decision to set up a CBR project was sparked by a sojourn of forty days in the new CDPF rehabilitation centre and subsequent exposure to texts on social and medical rehabilitation. It became evident to Ding that early intervention was critical in maximizing life-chances; that hospital-based rehabilitation was beyond the reach of most Chinese families; and that the lack of educational access he had encountered in childhood was a form of social discrimination.

Ding Tiejun is well connected in the media world: both parents and his older sister are journalists. His story has been told several times by himself and others in the press and on television. Invariably commentators pick up on the severity of Deng Tiejun's impairment, the fact that he is self-taught and that he combines "traditional Chinese" therapies with "modern scientific" rehabilitation. Thus he is lauded as one who "pursues science, grasps modern technologies ... whose voluntary activities have a unique quality which is fresh and modern" (BYD 1995c). He is the ideal youth model: determined, self-taught, eager to serve others and to use science and technology in the process.

Wen Hua: creators of culture and spiritual wealth

Independent, confident, entrepreneurial, innovative, self-sacrificing and self-reliant, borrowing ideas from the west, promoting traditional Chinese values and engaging with the modern scientific world. Now add literary, artistic talent, musicality, creativity - for these too are in demand in the exemplary and civilized society. What is civilization without culture? What is *wenming* without *wenhua*?

There is a growing official cohort of disabled artists - official in the sense that they have represented China and Chinese disabled people in arts exhibitions and festivals nationally and internationally. Mr. Sun is a calligrapher and sits on the board of Beijing Disabled People's Calligraphy and Painting Association. His calligraphy has won international recognition and has been reproduced in national papers and magazines. Mr. Liu and Ms. Cui move in the same artistic circles. Mr. Liu is a mouth artist and paints traditional watercolours and calligraphy. He studied art following an industrial accident, continued his studies at Changchun University and now chairs the Beijing Disabled People's Calligraphy and Painting Association and is employed by the China

Calligraphy Association. Ms. Cui creates and paints silk figures and is the only one of the three to depend on her creativity for a living - in fact, it has been her sole means of livelihood for over twenty years (she is now in her late thirties). The artistic products of all three are included in *Blossoms Bloom in Struggle* [*zhiqiang kaihua*: literally, self-strengthening blossoms] (Anon. 1994) which is a pictorial album featuring the art of 62 disabled artists with physical, hearing and/or speech impairments.

Shi Tiesheng is a cultural creator of a different kind. He is one of several disabled writers - some of whom are professional writers by default rather than by design. Shi Tiesheng attributes his decision to write for a living to a combination of despair and pragmatism. In his autobiographical short story, "Fate", he writes:

A woman reporter once asked me how I happened "to take the road of creativity?" I thought for some time before replying, "Having reached an utter dead end, I sank to this level". The woman smiled so charmingly. "You're really modest". She really said so. Practical reality has nothing to do with modesty (Shi Tiesheng 1991).

The field of fiction and poetry produced by disabled people, and largely for disabled people, has grown rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s, fuelled by the creation of the Hua Xia press. The Hua Xia press specialises in disability-related textbooks and literature written on or by disabled people (see Chapter Six). In a series of articles on the publishing house, it is described as "sowing humanitarian seeds" and a "national centrepiece for disabled people's cultural activities" (BD 1995a-i). Hua Xia press encourages disabled writers to submit work and is active in disseminating publications countrywide, which leaves it open to the criticism (strongly rebuffed by Shi Tiesheng) that anything written by disabled people will get published, irrespective of quality (BD 1995i). The truth is rather that in-house editors, part and parcel of the CDPF, are eager to raise the profile of disabled people as creators of "cultural wealth".

Performance artists have also been promoted (CDPF 1992, CD 1989a). Nationwide competitions have been held to select the county's best for a national CDPF performing arts troupe. Performers, artists, artisans and authors are all sponsored by the CDPF as part of a cultural mission within the disability initiative. It is a cultural mission which fits in well with the *World Programme of Action* (UN 1983) and recent Chinese discourse on cultural productivity as a fifth area of modernization and development

(Bakken 1995). The enrichment of disabled people's cultural life, access to public cultural events and facilities, to arts classes, public libraries and literature, all feature in the 1996 Work Programme. The anticipated rewards are two-fold: to facilitate disabled people's self-development, and to exhibit disabled people's talents and cultural levels to the wider community. This challenges disablist assumptions (that disabled people are *canfei* or "worthless") while simultaneously reinforcing age-old perceptions that superhuman skills and talents are compensation for impairment (see Chapter Three). More challenging - and with no apparent roots in cultural history - is the promotion of disabled people as models of physical fitness and national sporting achievement.

Ti Yu: the disabled body re-formed

In 1984, the Chinese government opened a new chapter in the development of sports and physical culture in Chinese history. The era of disability sports had dawned. Ten years and several national sports meets later, Beijing hosted the FESPIC Games (a regional version of the Para-olympic Games for the countries of the Far East and South Pacific). The 1994 FESPIC Games were a huge success, not least for Chinese disabled athletes, many of whom were medallists. The Games were the biggest disability event ever hosted in China, and attracted commensurate coverage on television and in the press. Disabled athletes were in the news, meeting high-level state officials, and receiving widespread praise as national heroes (see CDPF 1995a, Wang Jie 1990, Appendix: BJ 94/08/08, BQ 94/08/11, BK 94/08/11, CB 94/09/03, YC 94/09/07, ZJ 96/08/19, ZQ 96/09/19).

The relationship between body, nation and physical culture has surfaced several times in this thesis. To recap: western Olympic sports and athletics were introduced to Chinese schools and youth organizations in the early *twentieth* century, largely through missionaries and the YMCA. Over the ensuing decades, Nationalist and Communist leaders alike pressed the importance of physical exercise and competitive sports onto soldiers, students and school children. The task of raising national levels of physical fitness and health was conceived as critical to national economic development, military superiority and even the survival of the Chinese race (Chapter Four). Under Mao, the link between body, nation and physical culture was

institutionalised to an unprecedented degree. The Maoist body was conceived as a mass body which engaged in mass campaigns and mass callisthenics. A strong and uniform physique was not only desirable but necessary for socio-political advancement. Entry to higher education, for example, required certification of physical fitness in the narrowest sense of the word, while participation in school meant participation in compulsory physical education classes (Chapter Five).

In the 1980s and 1990s, competitive sport has strengthened its hold. The post-Mao body is different from the Maoist body in many ways: it is more individualistic, more gendered, more consumption-oriented, and more competitive (see Brownell 1995). Meanwhile, the arena of sports and athletics has broadened with China's re-entry onto the world stage. International sports meets have proved an ideal space for China to seek reparation for the historical but still humiliating title "sick man of Asia". Accordingly, sports and international competitions have been swathed in a wave of popular patriotism. Now more than ever, Chinese athletes have the potential to become national heroes.

The use of physical fitness as a barrier to higher education has been challenged (see Chapter Nine), but in most other respects the CDPF and leaders of China's disability initiative have bought into the dominant body culture rather than acted against it. In the 1980s and 1990s, the disabled body is construed as capable of physical, as well as moral and economic, self-strengthening. Disabled athletes are presented as strong, fit, healthy and equally able to "win glory for the motherland" [*wei zuguo jingguang*] (CDPF 1995a). In fact, two blind women are credited as the first Chinese athletes to "break through the zero" and win a gold medal for China in an Olympic event (CDPF 1995a). That was in 1984 and the rest is history. The Chinese presence at the 1988, 1992 and 1996 Para-olympics was even stronger and Chinese authorities are pushing disabled athletes ever harder to win more medals and break more world records next time round (see the section on sports in the 1996 Work Programme).

International sporting success is a driving force behind the development of disability sports. Anything that can enhance China's image as an international competitor and winner is prized. Li Peng is said to have "nodded contentedly" when learning that China had by far the largest contingent of athletes of the 42 countries participating in

the FESPIC Games (CDPF 1995a, p. 37). Similarly, Jiang Zemin's speech in the run-up to the Games highlighted the fact that China's disabled athletes would be "winning glory for the motherland, manifesting a fierce patriotic spirit and a fighting human spirit" (CPDF 1995a, p. 34). Other senior-level statesmen welcomed the fact that the FESPIC Games would "manifest the ceaseless self-strengthening of the Chinese people ... show that Chinese people also understand the Olympic spirit, and possess the capabilities to mount a large-scale international sporting event" - no doubt the Beijing bid for the Olympic Games in 2000 was not far from their minds at the time (CDPF 1995a, p. 18).

Another objective (in line with those of the exemplary models studied so far) is to challenge social assumptions about disabled people, particularly the age-old assumption that disability necessarily means weakness [*ruo*] and that, as a consequence of weakness, disabled people cannot and do not know how to compete [*jingzheng*]. In an era of market competition, strength and the ability to compete and win are prized traits. Hence the suggestion in the 1996 Work Programme that: "Popular athletic activities should be organized widely to raise the competitiveness of disabled persons" (1996 WP, my emphasis).

The popularity of disability sports at an individual level is fuelled by the promise of winning national glory in a country which values patriots as much as it values winners. There have been reports (portrayed positively by patriotic journalists, but others would offer a more critical reading) of the intensive training undergone by disabled athletes: hours each day, in poor conditions and sweltering heat, such that some athletes did not only sweat but bled (Appendix: BQ 94/08/11). Yet the rewards for those who compete and win glory are significant as one athlete from Beijing (who has won medals for wheelchair basketball) describes:

"Whenever there's a teacher-parent conference, I insist on going", Gao said. "I make frequent appearances at the school to let the students there know that my son has a father who is a national champion" (CD 1993b).

Most of China's disabled athletes are amateurs - some work (many in welfare factories through which they have access to organized competitions and team selection); others do not (CDPF 1995a). National players are professionally managed but they are not

professionals. News reports suggest that large numbers of the disabled athletes who took part in the FESPIC Games in 1994 had never engaged in sports on a serious, or any, level before being selected for competition. An article in a Beijing newspaper describes the intensive training of a women's basketball team, in which it is clear that the majority had never even held a basketball prior to training (listed in Appendix BQ 94/08/11). These insights, if true, help to put apparent international achievements in a more realistic national perspective.

What, then, is the verdict on disability and sports under Deng? It has proved an excellent publicity opportunity: sport is more important and popular than ever before, so it makes sense to piggy-back on the popularity and raise disability awareness in the process. Furthermore, the phenomenal international success enjoyed by Chinese disabled athletes has mounted a strong challenge to social prejudices and perceptions of the disabled body. Several press reports issued around the time of the FESPIC Games cited non-disabled people exclaiming, "I never expected that disabled people could also win glory for the motherland" or "In the past, the disabled people I saw were beggars but now I see the incredible achievements of disabled athletes and swimmers, and it is amazing" (CDPF 1995a, p.19).

For the first time, disabled people are national heroes as disabled people, rather than as non-disabled people whose acquisition of impairment earns them their heroic status. For the first time also, disabled people are portrayed as strong, as winners, as competitors at an international level, as patriots. All of this is important. So too is the policy (if it can be realized) to make public sports clubs accessible to disabled people and to promote the inclusion of disabled people in community sports events. It has also been gained at a price.

The dominant language of strong over weak, of body and nation, of physical fitness and national glory remains intact - even compounded. Inclusion in the dominant post-Mao body culture is restricted to the few, the strong, the competitors and the winners.

Evaluating the Exemplary Society

The intention behind the use of disabled people as exemplary models is three-fold. First, to include disabled people in China's virtual reality of an "exemplary society". Secondly, to challenge dominant social attitudes which regard disabled people as worthless. Thirdly, to set standards of behaviour for disabled people to follow in the face of acknowledged disabling barriers. Both the second and third points relate to the state's formulation and attempted imposition of social and individual improvement. The question is: has it worked?

The view from the punters, so to speak (and as far as my limited fieldwork allows me to speak), is that government propaganda and slogans are welcome but have little real impact on deep-rooted social attitudes or on the lived realities of most disabled people (Fieldnotes 1995-96). A discussion with blind factory workers in Beijing confirmed other reports that the degree of public verbal abuse has subsided as a result of propaganda and slowly if superficially changing attitudes: local children no longer taunted them on their way to work, calling them "blindman, blindman". Yet there were also strong concerns that reductions in verbal mockery were neither here nor there if the material realities of discrimination continued. They expected more than an absence of verbal abuse. More critical voices stated that acts of public kindness were "superficial", propaganda was "empty words", and that the more positive propaganda there was, the more you were inclined to believe that the opposite was true (Fieldnotes 1995-96).

Bakken (1995) and Gittings (1998) consider exemplary political literature to be impotent, if not counter-productive, in the 1990s - although the medium is still used to boost popular morale and faith in the party and army. Older people may still find exemplars credible (Gittings 1998), but they do not appeal to younger generations, especially where individuals - Zhang Haidi included - are repeatedly brought to public attention (Bakken 1995). There have even been incidences of hero abuse, where local people who attain role model status have been ridiculed and even physically harmed (Bakken 1995). There are also reports of role models who acquired impairment in an act of bravery, were propelled to exemplary fame, and subsequently left without state or local government support once media interest had passed (Appendix: YC 94/05/28,

WH 94/07/05, JK 94/12/24). None of this bodes well for a positive evaluation of China's exemplary society or civilizing discourse.

If a more positive argument was to be put forth, it would cite the importance of raising public awareness and perceptions of what disabled people can do. In that respect, the inclusion of disabled models in state propaganda has challenged common and disabling assumptions, which one might therefore assume to be prevalent in Chinese society (see Chapter Two on "reading" Chinese propaganda). Some of the old stereotypes of uselessness, worthlessness, weakness, no self-respect and no agency have been confronted and partially uprooted. But only partially.

The concept of the "four selfs", for example, challenges negative social perceptions of disabled people, but only up to a point. One might even say that it manages to challenge and to consolidate social prejudice in one fell swoop. Implicit social assumptions of weakness, dependency and low esteem - all of which are conceived as pitiable traits - are directly challenged, but only where individual disabled people have cultivated themselves. Social preconceptions are portrayed as wrong only in so far as they imply that *all* disabled people are *necessarily* weak, dependant and lacking in self-esteem. The onus is on disabled people to undertake a socio-psychological transition from their assumed state of weakness and low esteem to the desirable state of fortitude. Implicitly, the majority of disabled people have so far failed to do this, because of social barriers, but also because of a belief that impairments damage an individual's psychological state [*xinli xingtai*]. My suspicion, although further research would be needed to prove it, is that an individualizing, pathologizing "disabled psyche" is slowly emerging, fostered by what appears to be a broader interest in human and social psychology in post-Mao urban society. If this is correct, the future does not look as bright as Chinese propaganda might have us believe.

Another cause for concern is the partial uprooting of old myths only to replace them with new and more onerous myths. In an interview at the time of the FESPIC Games, a young disabled woman watching the games stated, "I am not as good as them" (*PD* 1994). Also, only people with (usually minor) physical and sensory impairments appear to meet the standard of "models of self-strengthening". Of the 194 disabled people in *Brilliant Stars* (CDPF 1991), three-quarters have physical impairments,

mostly acquired through military service, industrial injury or accident; the remainder have a visual or hearing impairment. People with mental health disorders or intellectual impairments fail to pass muster.

The underlying message is that only *certain* disabled people can work, make money and bring glory to the nation. Thus, bodily difference as a fundamental measure of "normalcy" remains intact in the 1990s. The borders have simply been tampered with to include a few more who would previously have been excluded (see Abberley 1996).

Conclusion

State propaganda neither challenges normalcy, nor the place of work, wealth and national contribution as the keys to post-Mao personhood. The door to personhood has been opened to let a select few in – only those whose inclusion keeps dominant constructs of body and personhood intact. Thus, the process of reforming disability to fit China's development agenda has consolidated as well as challenged disability discrimination. It is as oppressive as it is potentially liberating.

I have argued that well-intentioned attempts to interweave disability and development, to use disability discrimination as a sign of national backwardness and to piggy-back on wider campaigns for "spiritual civilization" can only work up to a point. If "spiritual civilization" is primarily a Party/state project of social control and if "socialist humanitarianism" is primarily a Party/state project of shifting welfare responsibilities onto society, then there is a limit as to how far these attempts can succeed from the perspective of disabled people's rights. Moreover and more worrying still, are the less predictable and less positive outcomes which such piggy-backing can and has produced, as the next and final chapter reveals.

Chapter Nine

Disability, Development and Legislation

Laws are time-capsules which hold vital clues to the macro-level construction of disability. Even in China, laws can furnish rich insights into state interests, ideologies and dominant social perceptions. In this chapter, two laws related to disability are subject to critical inquiry. The first approximates to anti-discrimination legislation. The second has been compared to a programme of Nazi-style eugenics. Reference is made to wider socio-political discourses of the post-Mao era, notably discourses of the body, development and population. Finally, the apparent contradiction of a law to protect and a law to prevent is studied from (as far as possible) a Chinese perspective.

The first part of this chapter looks at recent Chinese laws formulated to protect the interests, rights and lives of disabled people in China (see Stone 1996a for a previous airing of some of the arguments put forward in this chapter). In part, this is done in response to the prominent place assigned to these laws by ordinary Chinese people, professionals and officials when talking about disability in the 1980s and 1990s. This is evident in stock chapters on legislation which appear in official and academic Chinese texts on disability (Liu & Liu 1993, Xi *et al* 1993, Ma 1993, Teng 1992 *inter alia*), as well as from nine months of fieldwork and interviews. It is also done because these laws are generally absent from the picture of Chinese disability-related legislation presented in the west. But that is not surprising.

Mention laws, rights and China in the same breath, and the images conjured are of repression and human rights abuses. When it comes to laws designed to control Chinese people, it is assumed that such laws are enforced with a rigour that only exists in a country like China. In contrast, when talk turns to Chinese laws designed to uphold the rights of individuals and improve social justice, it is assumed that such laws

could never be enforced, and that they are confined to the world of paper dreams rather than concrete realities. Lamentably, there is considerable truth to this. The Chinese government remains far stronger on enforcing laws from the top down than on creating the mechanisms for individuals to secure justice. Even more lamentable is the fact that well-intentioned and comprehensive declarations of individual legal rights are prone to hamper the social change envisioned. How long have calls for gender equality been silenced in a country which was quick to legislate for women's liberation? For how long might calls for disability equality be dulled by the nominal existence of disability rights?

The extent to which Chinese laws can or cannot be enforced (especially at the grassroots but also by the state) raises an important question for the researcher. What can be learnt from legislative documents which half the population have probably never heard of, and had they heard of them, might prove worthless anyway?

The definition and measurement of a law's "worth" is not clear-cut. Even if we take as read the limited effectiveness of Chinese laws for the ordinary individual, might it not still be the case that the law retains a worth, a symbolic value which might occasionally cross into the realms of lived reality and in time reside there permanently? Moreover, even Chinese laws may be viewed as legitimate objects of inquiry when treated as a socio-political product, independent of issues around enforcement (see Chapter Two). Laws and policies are like time-capsules. Open them and you find traces of the past and the present in which they were made - the language, values, ideologies and underlying motives are there for the unpacking. In this sense, Chinese disability laws in the post-Mao era are no different from those of medieval, Victorian or post-war Europe. All take us one step nearer to understanding the historical and contemporary construction of disability and the role of the state in that process.

A Law to Protect...

Citizens of the People's Republic of China have the right to material assistance from the state and society when they are old, ill or disabled. The state develops the social insurance, social relief and medical and health services that are required to enable citizens to enjoy this right

(Article 45 of the 1982 Constitution of the People's Republic of China, see Chow 1990).

Article 45 of the new post-Mao PRC Constitution sets the scene for a plethora of laws and regulations which were the product of the Deng Xiaoping decades or, more precisely, of the father-son relationship between Deng Xiaoping and Deng Pufang, and the steady expansion of a global discourse of disability and impairment.

In the sphere of education alone, these factors ensured that the 1986 Law of the PRC on Compulsory Education made specific mention of the rights of disabled children to a minimum nine years' education (which is not quite the same as a right to school-based education, let alone non-segregated schooling, but is certainly a move in the right direction). Article 9 of the Law states that it is the local government's responsibility to establish special education classes or schools for children who are blind, deaf or have learning difficulties. The momentum has been maintained in the 1990s by the State Council's "Regulations on Education for the Disabled", effective from 23rd August 1994.

The "Regulations on Education for the Disabled" emphasise the importance of education for all disabled people not just school-aged children, with particular attention paid to widening opportunities for pre-school education, secondary and further education (Article 3). The principle of compulsory education for disabled children and young people is reiterated in Article 13. Of special note is the legal requirement expressed in Article 29, that ordinary secondary schools, colleges and adult education institutions are obliged to accept any students who meet the "state-set enrollment requirement and shall not reject them on account of their disability" (Article 29, Regulations on Education for the Disabled 1994). The state-set requirements no longer expect applicants to conform to the stringent and disabling standards of bodily "normalcy" and "fitness" which have proved a barrier to so many for so long. For the first time, then, disabled young people in the People's Republic of China have received an *official* green light to pursue their studies at a higher level and they have gained a theoretical legal basis on which to dispute discrimination-based rejections.

Some interesting insights into the implications of this are offered by the admittedly unusual story of Yang Hongwei - a story known in China and beyond (it was picked up and bandied around Internet communities, as well as by foreign broadcasting services). The story, as told in a long article in the *Beijing Youth Daily* (BYD 1995a) headlined "Can an ugly student go to university?", is about a young man who moved successfully through the mainstream school system, gained high grades in final exams (in excess of the standard requirements of Chinese university entrance), applied to several universities but was rejected by each of them on the basis of an "ugly" appearance.

Yang had encountered a certain amount of prejudice prior to that point, but had also been strongly supported by family members and local teachers, who urged him to apply for higher education. By all accounts, Yang was an exemplary pupil (a "three-good student" in fact). But even that appellation didn't dent the resolve of universities to reject him for the following reasons: "The student's bodily impairment will cause difficulties for his study and therefore we will not accept him" (Lanzhou University); or "We have many activities and contacts with those outside the college, and we are afraid that admitting this kind of student would have a negative influence on these and on other students' studies" (Zhengzhou University). Faced with these rejections, Yang Hongwei complained to the local, provincial and national Education Commission and finally took the story to the press with the questions: "Are universities in the business of education or aesthetics?" and "Should you select on the basis of academic grades or external appearance?".

How far the story is a "disability" story is a moot point. On the one hand, "ugliness" does not slot easily into the restrictive, functionalist and five-fold definition of impairment which has been standardised by the CDPF and, as a result, the local Disabled Persons Federation felt that Yang was not, strictly speaking, a disabled person. However, the barriers faced by Yang Hongwei were patently comparable to those faced by would-be students with state-defined impairments - and on that basis the local and provincial DPF agreed to take up his cause, wrote letters on Yang's behalf, and used the case to highlight difficulties faced by disabled people in exercising the right, only recently bestowed, to attend university if they met the academic grades.

As a result of Yang's media campaign, Yang was finally given offers by various universities around China, received a considerable number of letters of support and financial donations (including from a wealthy American), and was offered the chance for free plastic surgery in a Beijing hospital and in America. Yang redistributed the donations to students in hardship, put university on hold for a while, and took up the offer of plastic surgery in Beijing. His mother explained in a follow-up article in the *Beijing Youth Daily* (BYD 1996d) that the chance for a more acceptable appearance could not be passed by since "after college, he will have to make his way in the world, get a job, make a life". On the broader scene, the story opened debates on disabling barriers to students with impairments and prompted at least one provincial Education Commission to second a member of the provincial DPF with a specific remit to act in cases where disabled students were rejected by universities on the basis of impairment.

The demand for equal opportunities evident in Yang's stories, and the theoretical recognition that equal opportunities be extended to disabled people is nowhere more visible than in the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Disabled Persons (hereafter Law on Protection of Disabled Persons). The law was adopted at the 17th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Seventh National People's Congress in December 1990 and came into effect in May 1991. It is the most significant expression of the Chinese government's involvement in disability. It is also a rare example of the involvement of a disabled people's organisation in national policy-making, since the CDPF was entrusted with drafting the legislation.

Several influential disabled people and current or former CDPF staff inform that the preparation and passage of the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons was no smooth ride (Fieldnotes 1995-96). It seems that the draft was revised several times before it was deemed ready to be submitted to the National People's Congress. Whatever the reasons, all informants concur that the passage of the Law would have been impossible without the political clout of Deng Pufang, and that even the eldest son of the Paramount Leader had to work overtime with his *guanxi* to get the desired result.

The Law contains fifty-four articles, divided into nine chapters: General Provisions, Rehabilitation, Education, Employment, Cultural Life, Welfare, Environment, Legal Liability and Supplementary Provisions. It manages to be simultaneously

comprehensive and vague (a standard style in Chinese legislation). The scope of the law bears a striking resemblance to United Nations declarations and the *World Programme of Action* (UN 1983). It reads rather like a curious mixture of national action plan mixed with anti-discrimination legislation.

The *World Programme of Action* (UN 1983) makes four specific recommendations to Member States on disability legislation. First, equal opportunities with other citizens must be granted to disabled people. Secondly, discriminatory practices based on disability must be eliminated. Thirdly, conditions which may adversely affect disabled people's ability to exercise common rights and freedoms must be addressed. Finally, specific rights to education, work, social security and protection from abuse should be secured for disabled people. For the most part (as far as is possible in a non-democratic state and with important exceptions to which we turn subsequently), these points are met in the Law on Protection.

The purpose of the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons reads as follows:

This Law is formulated in accordance with the Constitution for the purpose of protecting the lawful rights and interests of, and develop undertakings for, disabled persons, and ensuring their equal and full participation in social life and their share of the material and cultural wealth of society (Article 1, LPD 1990).

The rights of disabled people and the message that discrimination on grounds of disability is no longer to be tolerated are stated clearly and boldly in Article 3:

Disabled persons shall enjoy equal rights with other citizens in political, economic, cultural and social fields, in family life and other aspects ... Discrimination against, insult of and infringement upon disabled persons shall be prohibited (Article 3, LPD 1990).

The point is strengthened by a reminder (under "Supplementary Provisions") of pre-existing legislation which prohibit acts of public insult, defamation of character, violence and abuse, including neglect and maltreatment by family members; and by Articles 49-52 which award disabled people the right to appeal, lodge complaints against abuse and file lawsuits, and which pave the way for more severe sentencing than customary where a crime is committed against a disabled person (LPD 1990, Articles 49-52).

Rights, equality and participation in socio-economic and cultural life are constant themes (LPD 1990). The right of disabled people to education and the right to work are established in Articles 18 and 27 respectively. Elsewhere, the law refers to the responsibilities of state and society to provide rehabilitation, to enrich the spiritual and cultural lives of disabled people, to provide welfare and emergency relief and to create a barrier-free and supportive environment (Articles 13, 36, 40, 45, 47). Responsibility for these tasks is assigned to all government departments at all levels, the whole society, the CDPF and its branch organizations, families and friends. These and the statutory obligations levied on disabled people themselves are the legal expression of slogans, socialization and civilizing discourses explored in previous chapters. Thus, Article 10 declares:

Disabled persons must abide by laws, carry out their due obligations, observe public order and respect social morality.

Disabled persons should display an optimistic, and enterprising spirit, have a sense of self-respect, self-confidence, self-strength and self-reliance, and make contributions to the socialist construction.

Article 10, Law on Protection of Disabled Persons 1990.

The obligation expressed in Article 10 to "make contributions to the socialist construction" bears witness to the new and symbolic (perhaps largely symbolic) integration of Chinese disabled people into national planning and economic development. Similarly, the *now statutory* obligation to practice the "four selfs" (examined in the previous chapter) is another act of apparent integration in a society where personal wealth and personal ambition have been paraded as more than legitimate. Disabled people, along with the rest of the populace, are required to instate themselves into a new entrepreneur-oriented, self-centred, profit-driven post-Mao society.

The Law on Protection of Disabled Persons is a good foundation for change. It has been heralded as the jewel in the crown of China's "disability initiative" and is an obligatory component in articles and monographs which address issues relating to disability in China (Pearson & Leung 1992, Pierini 1997, Thornton 1998, Sydenham 1992, Stone 1996a, 1997a). The Law itself is the sole subject of at least two Chinese language publications: *Legal Reports Volume 1 on the Law of the PRC on Protection*

of *Disabled Persons* (CDPF *et al* 1992); and *A Series of Lectures on the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons* (CDPF 1994), which explores every aspect of the law, including the sticky subject of enforcement.

No-one, Deng Pufang included, contends that enforcement is a simple affair (CDPF 1994). That much is revealed in a second news story which hit the Chinese press in February 1994. It too is worth reviewing in relation to the issue of enforcement, but also as a further example of grassroots change and agency. For, whilst grassroots realities are beyond the scope of this thesis (and neither the following story nor that of Yang Hongwei could be held representative of grassroots realities in any case), it is still appropriate and important to remind oneself that macro-level legislation can and does affect micro-level concepts and actions ... even in China.

The *Legal Daily* carried the story: "Who will safeguard the legal rights of disabled people?" in February 1994 (*LD* 1994b). In all probability, this article would not have appeared prior to the implementation of the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons. It begins: "We are 77 disabled people from the city of Rui'an in Zhejiang Province".

The article is an open letter in which general and specific grievances are set out with uncompromising clarity. The first few sentences describe the increased hardship and poverty faced by disabled people who, as a result of impairment, are disadvantaged by the post-Mao reforms, economic competition and labour markets, particularly in less accessible areas of the countryside. Having set the scene, the letter details a series of specific incidences involving several disabled people in Rui'an and senior personnel of the Rui'an Municipal Traffic Police. The incidents began following official decrees in June 1993 that registered disabled people could purchase a "welfare-vehicle" [*fuliche*] (a three-wheeled motorbike with space for a backwards-facing passenger or goods) to use for mobility purposes. Several disabled people took advantage of the opportunity, but were refused the appropriate road licence by the senior official at the municipal traffic police. A number of disabled people, whose livelihoods and mobility relied on the vehicles, resorted to driving them without a licence. They were intercepted, detained in custody, and their vehicles smashed. On top of a fine, some of them were beaten. According to the letter, this type of incident

happened over 70 times between July and the end of October 1993. The letter continues:

On 29th September, the aforesaid officer-in-charge mobilised the traffic police, intercepted and detained over 100 welfare-vehicles. On 4th October, he notified disabled people that they should go to collect their vehicles. He forced the disabled people to "carry a signboard" [gua paizi, a humiliating act associated with the Cultural Revolution], to sit on their vehicles and be photographed. Then, in front of a crowd, he insulted [wuru] the disabled people. When they implored him to stop, the officer-in-charge of the traffic police cursed them in front of everyone, saying: 'You go home and ask your mothers why you were born a cripple?' (LD 1994b).

Following this incident, the disabled people involved and other disabled colleagues tried to find someone who would take an interest in the case, but could find no-one. In the meantime, the officer-in-charge supplied licences to non-disabled people who used their vehicles to make money. In the end, disabled people were given two options: to rent their licences for the hefty sum of 200-300 yuan per month, or not use their vehicles at all.

We make a desperate cry to society: think hard about the appeal we are making as disabled people. Safeguard disabled people's legal rights, in accordance with the law, and quickly put a stop to the illegal behaviour of the officer-in-charge from Rui'an City Traffic Police.(LD 1994b)

Stories such as this and the tale of Yang Hongwei illustrate the extent to which the law has had an impact and provided ideal opportunities for press coverage and awareness raising. Three million copies of the law were distributed via the CDPF, and its general gist was communicated in newspaper articles, television reports and magazines. English language publications such as *Beijing Review* and the *China Daily* were also utilised to get the message out to the world, ensuring that China would be counted among those states with a positive attitude to disabled people (BR 1992, CD 1990k,l,n,u, 1991b,c, 1992j,p *inter alia*). But something went wrong and instead the Chinese government rapidly became counted among governments, mostly past and mostly fascist, with anything but a positive attitude.

In the light of the above review, it is hard to believe that the same government which produced the Law on Protection has gone on to produce the most overt eugenics policy in the world for three decades.

A Law to Prevent...

In 1993, barely three years after the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons had been adopted, the Chinese government announced that the long-awaited draft of a national law on "eugenic health protection" [*yousheng baojian*] was ready for scrutiny. Within days and over the ensuing months, members of the international community, from journalists to disability activists, from politicians to scientists, voiced their concern. Where the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons did not even receive a mention, the draft eugenics legislation was taken up with relish by the western press (for example, Poole 1994, Dickson 1994, *Nature* 1994, Schmetzer 1995, Jakobsen 1995 and Dikötter 1996). Many individuals and organisations have been outspoken in their condemnation and swift to draw parallels with Hitler's eugenic practices against those labelled "unfit to live" - practices which included forced sterilizations, brutal experiments, and, for thousands of people with impairments, death in concentration camps (see Burleigh 1994, Gallagher 1990, Morris 1991 on Nazi eugenics). In the rest of Europe and America, Nazi Germany's atrocities had served to discredit the eugenics movement, speed the demise of eugenic laws and render "eugenics" a dirty word. The same linguistic and conceptual taboo was not evident in China (Stone 1996a).

The Chinese term for "eugenics" [*yousheng*] which featured in the title of the draft law might also be translated "superior birth". During the 1920s and 1930s, when western texts on eugenics and race improvement found their way to China, *yousheng* was the favoured translation (Dikötter 1992). In the 1990s, in the wake of the international storm (not entirely unexpected in China's higher echelons according to Kristof 1991), English language versions of Chinese policies have adopted more internationally acceptable translations of *yousheng*, such as "better birth" or "healthier birth". Thus, what might once have been translated as the 1996 Eugenics Symposium becomes the 1996 Better-Birth Meet (*CD* 1996k). Similarly, what had been draft legislation on Eugenics and Health Protection was revised and renamed the Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care.

The Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care has generally been condemned without reference to the larger body of disability-related initiatives and legislation in the People's Republic, and without sufficient exploration of the why that lies behind its

construction. The answer to the question why has been assumed: isn't this just another example of Nazi-style policies, such as one might only expect from a non-democratic, totalitarian state? But to assume is to acquiesce in old explanations. What is needed is an analysis which moves beyond the compelling but unidimensional analogies to Nazi Germany (Stone 1996a).

Few have offered such an analysis. The apparent lack of interest paid to the topic by the large number of demographic and social science specialists on China is perplexing, especially since considerable attention has been paid to other areas of population policy, most notably the one-child policy and the problems of an ageing and increasingly mobile population (Banister 1987, Croll *et al* 1985, Harper 1994, Wang 1991, Wang & Hull 1991). A Japanese academic, whose work has recently been translated into Chinese, provides a helpful if uncritical summary of the re-emergence of eugenics in the 1980s (Ruo 1994). Passing reference is made to eugenics in Borge Bakken's (1995) study of post-Mao discourses of the exemplary society. Most promising, however, is an eagerly awaited study by Frank Dikötter (*Imperfect Conceptions*) in which the history of Chinese eugenics and regulation of reproduction is traced from the late Ming dynasty to the 1990s. Unfortunately, Dikötter's work comes too late to be included in this thesis; it is not due to be published until the end of September 1998. However, a piece in the *Times Literary Supplement* (Dikötter 1996) sets out some of Dikötter's thinking on Chinese eugenics in the 1990s.

In the analysis that follows, the first task is to set out the key points of the Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care, noting revisions from the draft legislation where appropriate. Then, the recent history of eugenics in China is explored (having already outlined its less recent history in Chapter Four). Thirdly, the rise of eugenics in post-Mao China is examined with reference to post-Mao discourses of the body, development and population.

The Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care

The Law of the People's Republic of China on Maternal and Infant Health Care (hereafter Maternal and Infant Health Care Law or MIHCL), was adopted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in October 1994 and came into

effect as of 6 June 1995. It was a revised version of the Chinese government's first attempt to draft a national Eugenics and Health Protection Law. Prior to its formulation, provincial and municipal eugenic regulations had already been passed or incorporated into birth planning legislation in (among others) Gansu, Sichuan, Fujian, Guangdong, Liaoning and, albeit in milder form, Shanghai (Sichuan Provincial Birth Planning Regulations 1987; Chen 1995, Teng 1992, *SCMP* 1990, Kristof 1991). By 1989, Gansu provincial officials were already boasting of the speedy sterilisation of 5,500 of Gansu's estimated 260,000 adults with "mental disorders" (claims which were soon raised to the full 260,000) in the first eighteen months following the adoption of eugenic regulations (Kristof 1991, Dikötter 1996, *SCMP* 1990). The national draft Eugenics and Health Protection Law and subsequent Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care built directly on provincial foundations.

The primary purpose of the revised Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care is to "guarantee the health of mothers and infants and to improve the quality of births" (Article 1, MICHL 1994). This is mainly to be achieved through a series of legal requirements on would-be partners and potential parents. Couples are required to have a pre-marital medical check-up [*hunqian jiancha*], genetic counselling [*yichuan zixun*] and pre-natal tests [*chunqian zhenduan*], as well as general counselling on nutrition, health care and hygiene during and after pregnancy - all of which is to be provided through medical and public health systems.

Article 8 of the Law stipulates that the premarital medical check-up should look for "serious hereditary diseases", "legal contagious diseases" and "relevant mental disorders". The terms are dangerously open to interpretation by doctors and officials. What, as others have also asked (Dickson 1994, Dikötter 1995), constitutes a "mental disorder" or a "serious hereditary disease"? The Law provides little assistance to those looking for more specific definitions. According to Article 38, "legal contagious diseases" include leprosy, sexually transmitted diseases and other diseases stipulated in the "Law of the PRC on Prevention of Contagious Diseases"; "mental disorders" include "schizophrenia, manic-depressive psychosis and other major psychoses"; while "serious hereditary diseases" include all:

congenital diseases caused by hereditary factors, which are medically deemed as not suitable for child bearing because such diseases make patients lose total or partial ability to live independently and have a high potential to be passed to the next generation (Article 38, MIHCL 1994).

Following the check-up, a medical certificate is produced which can then be shown to the appropriate officials when the couple registers for marriage. The anticipated outcome is that most couples will pass the check-up, get the certificate and proceed to Round Two. Some couples may be advised to postpone marriage until one or both individuals have emerged from an "infectious" or "pathogenic" stage, upon which they too can proceed. The scenario is less optimistic when, as stated in Article 10 of the Law, "either one of the couple is diagnosed to have a serious hereditary disease, which is medically deemed unsuitable for reproduction". In such cases, the doctor is required to offer medical advice to the effect that if the couple are determined to marry (and they would be advised not to), permission to marry is conditional on taking long-lasting contraception or ("voluntary") sterilization.

All pregnancies are to be regulated and monitored closely to prevent the birth of a disabled baby. Pre-pregnancy examinations of husband and wife are required where the wife has already "given birth to seriously defective infants" and wishes to try for a second child. In cases where pregnant women have "contracted serious diseases" or taken "deformity-causing substances" (Article 15), where a doctor "discovers or suspects childbearing couples of contracting serious hereditary diseases" (Article 16), or where a doctor "discovers or suspects pregnant women of foetal abnormality during prenatal examinations" (Article 17), then medical guidance should be given and diagnostic tests conducted. In the event of a pre-natal test (increasingly commonplace in China, as in the west), should the foetus be found to have a serious hereditary disease or deformity, the doctor is required to explain the situation and "give a medical opinion on terminating the pregnancy" (Article 18). Furthermore:

When termination of a pregnancy or ligation is performed on pregnant women, it is necessary to obtain their signature of consent, or the signature of consent from guardians in the case that pregnant women are legally incompetent. Termination of a pregnancy or ligation performed according to the provisions of this law is free of charge (Article 19, LMIHC 1994).

Even in its revised form (which states that decisions to abort should be voluntary) the Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care gives cause for serious concern. It is probably fair to assume that many women labelled "mentally retarded" or "mentally ill" would also be labelled "legally incompetent". How far can a decision be truly voluntary if (on the basis of doctor's opinion), the only available choice is celibacy or sterilization? The state's final say in the matter is underlined in Article 10, already cited in part, which makes clear that even that choice (to marry following sterilization or long-lasting contraceptions) does not automatically apply to couples whose marriage is prohibited by the Marriage Law. As Article 6 of the Marriage Law (1980) states:

Marriage is not permitted in any of the following circumstances:

a) Where the man and woman are lineal relatives by blood or collateral relatives by blood (up to the third degree of relationship).

b) Where one party is suffering from leprosy, a cure not having been effected, or from any other disease which is regarded by medical science as rendering a person unfit for marriage.

For these individuals, and the terms could not be more vague and open to social, official and medical manipulation, marriage is quite simply forbidden. And therefore child-bearing also.

Several aspects of the Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care should be welcomed: sex identification of a foetus is strictly forbidden to limit sex-selected abortions (Article 32) and any medics or health workers who do not abide by this are to be punished (Article 37). The commitment to improving maternal and infant health services, reducing the infant mortality rate and raising awareness about pre-natal and post-natal care is also to be applauded. But these cannot detract from the still overwhelmingly eugenic thrust of this legislation.

To understand the re-emergence of eugenics in post-Mao China, it is necessary to resume the story which was started in Chapter Four.

The Irresistible Rise of Eugenics in China: a recent history

The rise of eugenic theories at the turn of the nineteenth century and during the first decades of the twentieth century did not (in contrast to America, Germany and Japan)

find its way into the statute books (see Chapter Four). Nor did it fare much better under Mao. According to Dikötter (1992), the discourse of racial improvement and eugenics was replaced by "class" as the dominant unit of analysis in socialist China. However, notions of heredity were still implicit in Maoist class analysis since revolutionary and counter-revolutionary traits were deemed inheritable: life chances in Red China were much improved if "born Red", of good revolutionary stock (Dikötter 1992). More importantly, although few China-watchers appear to have recognized the fact, eugenic notions did make some headway into post-Liberation legislation even though the language of eugenics was not used.

The Marriage Law of 1950 prohibited marriage and childbearing in the case of consanguineous relationships and where a person was deemed unsuitable for marriage and reproduction "according to medical science". Since few national laws or socio-cultural systems encourage the marriage of close blood relatives, it is a moot point whether this constitutes legislation based on eugenic principles. Likewise, the prohibition of marriage in cases of leprosy, venereal disease and mental illness were legal expressions of long-standing customs and served to prevent the not uncommon tale of an arranged marriage in which a future spouse's contagious disease is not declared (a story which still retains its poignancy as, for example, in Mo Yan's novel, *The Garlic Ballads*, 1995). And yet, the mere existence of the marriage prohibitions in the 1950 Marriage Law ensured that subsequent, more explicitly eugenic legislation would have a foundation on which to build; and that the concept of eugenic marriages would live on even when the academic discourse of eugenics was being actively repressed.

Repression was very much in evidence. Eugenics and those who would study, popularize and practice it, were subjected to political criticism and persecution under Mao Zedong. The leading eugenicist of the New Culture Movement, Pan Guangdan, and author of *Eugenic Principles* [*yousheng yuanli*], was criticised in August 1957, labelled a Rightist in 1959 and politically persecuted in the Cultural Revolution (Ruo 1994). Ma Yinchu, a leading Chinese demographer and the man credited with making noises, silenced by Mao, about the dangers of uncontrolled population growth, was charged with "concocting a theory of population quality to serve the capitalist class" in

his *New Population Theory* [*xin renkou lun*] and was also subject to persecution (Ruo 1994). So it was that, in 1977, an American visitor to China noted that her repeated inquiries about special service provision for children with learning difficulties were consistently answered with the statement that so few were affected that it was not an issue in China (Robinson 1978). The American, initially suspicious, was soon convinced that "mild mental retardation" might not exist in a rural, collective, cohesive society. Robinson's conclusion is less significant than the fact that "mental retardation" appears to have been so far off the agenda in 1977 as to be effectively non-existent. In a remarkably short period of time, this situation would change dramatically.

Based on research by Ruo (1994) and supplementary information gleaned from Dikötter (1996), it is possible to sketch the steady and apparently unchallenged re-emergence of a eugenics discourse in Deng Xiaoping's China.

The years immediately following the fall of the "Gang of Four" and the end of the Cultural Revolution were years of political rehabilitation. Deng Xiaoping was rehabilitated and rose to ascendancy along with several others formerly criticised for advocating a capitalist road. Academic and intellectual pursuits were rehabilitated, including the "scientific" study of heredity, humanity and eugenics.

In 1978, in Nanjing, the founding meeting of the Science of Heredity Association was convened with eugenics on the agenda, as it was in Qingdao in the summer of the following year. Barely a few months later, Changsha was the venue for a major conference of academics in anthropology, medical science and heredity science. Participants stated:

We praise the one child policy, but we must also pay attention to guaranteeing the healthy bodies and minds of new-borns and reducing the occurrence of hereditary disease. This directly concerns the Four Modernizations and the future prospects of the entire Chinese people [zhonghua minzu]. It also concerns the happiness of each family (cited in Ruo 1994, p. 41).

Also put forward was a statement addressing the taboos which had surrounded eugenics:

For historical reasons, people mixed eugenics up with racial distinctions and racial extinction into being one and the same. This was completely erroneous. In itself, eugenics does not have racial or class

connotations ... For a long time now, people's biological attributes [shengwu shuxing], class attributes and social attributes have all been mixed up together, while academic issues have become blurred with political issues, thereby making it [eugenics] forbidden territory for many people. Research in the areas of anthropology and the medical science of heredity [yixue yichuanxue] has been prevented from making progress for a long time (cited in Ruo 1994, p. 41).

Eugenics was back on the scientific and intellectual agenda, but this time it was also on the agenda of individuals operating at the highest echelons of the Chinese state, and set for an irresistible rise towards national level institutionalisation.

By 1980, the slogan which has become so prevalent in the post-Mao decades, "superior birth, superior development" [*yousheng youyu*] was in currency. 1980 also saw the adoption of China's revised Marriage Law, in which the maltreatment of "mentally retarded and other disabled infants" [*ruozhi he qita can*] was forbidden; and earlier prohibitions were consolidated (see above). By the end of 1981, the political rehabilitation of eugenics appeared complete: the publishing ban on Pan Guangdan's *Eugenic Principles* was lifted.

More research institutes convened meetings on eugenics, population quality and genetic science (Ruo 1994). There was a flurry of research activity by medical institutes, hospitals and universities to survey rural and urban populations and measure their "quality" (see Chapter Six). Surveys investigated the incidence and causes of impairment (especially among new-borns and children), and sought information on the proportion of congenital or pre-natal [*xiantian*] impairment compared to post-natal [*houtian*] impairment. The conclusions drawn were variations on a theme of "the Maoist suppression of eugenics has resulted in higher rates of impairment than should be the case". Where "mental retardation" had, in 1977, been so scarce as to not be a problem, it suddenly constituted a serious national problem. The 1987 National Disability Sample Survey fuelled the flames. "One in 100 children retarded" (*China Daily* 12 November 1988); "Eight million children here are retarded" (*China Daily* 24 October 1989); "Retarded children object of survey" (*China Daily* 18 March 1992) are just a few examples from China's leading English language newspaper.

The "discovery" engendered first steps in specialist educational provision for children with learning difficulties (Shih 1979, Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia

and the Pacific 1986). But as provision increased, so too did the appeal of eugenics, pushed on by social prejudice, statistics and scientism (Bakken 1995, Dikötter 1996).

In 1984, the State Family Planning Commission and the Ministry of Public Health convened a National Eugenics Science Discussion in Chongqing, at which global and scientific advances in genetics and pre-natal technologies (artificial insemination and amniocentesis) were discussed (Ruo 1994). In March 1986, the Ministry of Civil Affairs promulgated State Council approved "Regulations on Marriage Registration" which again stressed the prohibitions of the 1980 Marriage Law. Two years later, the Ministry of Public Health organised a working party to draft a national Eugenic Health Protection Law - a process which took over six years (Ruo 1994). In the meantime, provincial and municipal governments formulated regulations which would make the national draft seem mild in comparison (Kristof 1991, Dikötter 1996, also).

The most quoted example hails from Gansu Province - the first to pass a law prohibiting the marriage of unsterilized "mentally retarded" couples. Couples already married would be sterilized and pregnancies terminated (Dikötter 1996, UPI 1988, SCMP 1990). A report in the *People's Daily* claimed that 5,500 sterilization operations had been performed in the first eighteen months and that officials hoped to sterilize all of the province's estimated 260,000 "mentally retarded" people by the end of 1991 (Associated Press 1990). The report cited one Gansu county with over 700 "mentally retarded" adults, 516 of whom had been sterilized by medical teams. These claims contradict an earlier report in the *People's Daily* (UPI 1988) in which the legal director of Gansu's Standing Committee stated that the law would only apply to those considered "severely retarded" - an estimated 10% of the population of 260,000. Perhaps the warm reception which followed Gansu's laws and the sure knowledge that a national law was in preparation encouraged the Gansu authorities to be more active in their eugenic campaign.

Gansu Province's eugenic regulations certainly could not have received higher support. China's Premier Li Peng is known to be actively pro-eugenic - witness his public statement that "idiots breed idiots" (Kristof 1991, Dikötter 1996). Others at the apex of China's political pyramid and known to be pro-eugenic are Peng Peiyun (head of the State Family Planning Commission) and Chen Minzhang (Minister of Public Health)

(Dikötter 1996). With enemies like that, the reproductive rights of those labelled mentally retarded in post-Mao China stand little chance of legal protection.

The recent history of eugenics in post-Mao China shows that the thinly-disguised eugenic Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care was not a bolt from the blue. Nor can it be claimed that the law and its provincial predecessors stand at odds with the rest of Deng Xiaoping's population policies. On the contrary, under Deng Xiaoping, population *quality* has always gone hand-in-hand with population *quantity*.

Development and Population: a new post-Mao discourse

In the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping's agenda was dominated by the need to devise a new road to development, a road which would bring China's economy in line with the economies of the capitalist west, but which could yet be called socialist and Chinese. A road which would exorcise Maoist ghosts, help China to jostle for a higher place on the world table and secure the mandate of the people for Deng Xiaoping and his political circle. In the process of devising such a road, Deng Xiaoping re-formed the relationship between "population" and "development", and in so doing compounded the links between body and nation that had been evolving since the turn of the century (see Chapters Four and Five).

Under Deng Xiaoping, as under Chairman Mao, the people of China were the principal pawn on the policy-making board (Croll *et al* 1985). Controlling and dictating patterns of population distribution, organisation, mobilisation and control have been features of both Maoist and Dengist policy, although the manipulation of the "people variable" prior to 1978 was fundamentally different from that conducted by Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s and 1990s (Banister 1987, Wang 1991, Stone 1994). Under Mao, the Chinese people had been regarded as the key to successful development: producers first, consumers second. Under Deng, the Chinese people were consumers first and producers second, a liability rather than an asset, as the introduction of the one-child policy illustrates (Croll *et al* 1985, also Chapter Seven).

The one-child policy was presented as a bitter pill to cure a Mao-induced sickness - namely, China's failure to catch up with the west (Stone 1994). A root cause of that

failure was, so the new leadership decreed, unstemmed population growth. The quantity of the population became a national crisis and a national cause, justifying (in much the same way as a war demands sacrifices of families and individuals) the restriction of individual reproductive rights in the present to guarantee the quality of life of future generations (Croll *et al* 1985, Wang and Hull 1991, Kane 1987). The initial rationale lay in the cost of reproduction to the state. Statisticians calculated that 1000 billion yuan (30% of China's national income) had been spent in raising the 600 million children born between 1949 and 1979 (Croll *et al* 1985). Moreover, nightmarish demographic and economic projections forecast that an ever increasing percentage of China's resources would be absorbed by satisfying the basic needs of a growing population rather than being channelled into raising living standards (Harper 1994, Wang 1991, Wang & Hull 1991). Since the policy's inception, that rationale has been bolstered by the threat of famine and environmental degradation (Edmonds 1994, Smil 1984, 1993). China has 22% of the world's population and only 7% of the world's arable land. The annual population increment is currently around 16 million. The absolute and per capita availability of land is fast declining and in many areas environmental degradation is already threatening long-term sustainability (Edmonds 1994, Smil 1993).

The Chinese government was and is, perhaps rightly, convinced that there are limits to growth and that population control is a necessary evil if the Chinese people are to experience rising rather than falling living standards (Wang & Hull 1991, Wu 1994). The same government is also convinced that population *quality* is every bit as decisive in the struggle for development as population *quantity*. Controlling population quantity [*renkou shuliang*] and improving population quality [*renkou zhiliang* or *renkou suzhi*] have been advanced as twin goals (Dikötter 1996, Stone 1996a).

The re-formed discourse of population and development, and the way in which it highlights the place of the individual body and mind in forwarding or holding back the socio-economic development of the Chinese nation, is manifest in all post-Mao population policies and family planning regulations, including the Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care. It is as evident in serious demographic papers as it is in pithy press reports. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, journals such as *Renkou Yanjiu*

[Population Research], *Renkouxue* [Demography] and *Zhongguo Shehui Kexue* [Social Science in China] have regularly carried papers on heredity, genetics and eugenics. In 1997 alone, *Social Science in China* published Du Ruofu & Xiao Chunjie on "The origin and development of the Chinese nation from a genetic perspective", Liu Fusen on "The theoretical dilemma of the biological ethics of natural centrism", and Tian Qing on the achievements and prospects of China's population, including the inter-relationship of population growth, productivity and quality. The issue has also been tackled in Chinese monographs which deal with wider issues of humanitarianism (Chen 1995) and human rights (Teng 1992), as well as in propaganda which has sought to arouse public concern over the low quality of the Chinese population in recent years (see *SCMP* 1990, *ICM* 1990a,b,c and Kristof 1991). But what exactly is meant by "population quality", and how has it been linked to development and disability? In the analysis that follows, sources from the academic and the tabloid are used to highlight the key features of the post-Mao framing of population, development, the body and disability.

To talk about the quality of the population [*renkou suzhi*] is potentially to talk about a host of attributes, many of which would fit comfortably inside international indices of physical quality of life (PQLI). Demographer Li Chengrui defines the quality of life as "health, culture and morality" and takes average life expectancy, infant mortality rates, literacy and illiteracy rates to be indices of this, alongside comparative body measurements and the number of children with "serious health problems" (Li C. 1992, see Chen and Simeonsson 1993, Parker 1992). He concludes that healthcare and education must be improved and that "fewer, healthier [superior] births" must be promoted (Li 1992, p.116). Teng Wensheng divides population quality into physical quality [*shenti suzhi*] and scientific-cultural quality [*kexue wenhua suzhi*] (Teng 1992). Measures of the former include average life expectancy and infant mortality rates, healthy development, intellectual ability, physical strength and physical stamina. Similar definitions operate for Chen Rongfu (1995) who measures physical quality [*shenti suzhi*] by average life expectancy, infant mortality rate and, Chen states explicitly, the ratio of disabled people in the population [*canji renkou bili*]. In other words, a high national ratio of disabled people is the mark of a nation with low population quality.

The link between development, population quality and human quality [*ren de suzhi*] is seductively simple in dominant Chinese discourse. Human quality is based on physical, mental and moral attributes (Bakken 1995). The personality and thinking must be moral, socialist and patriotic. The body must be whole, strong and productive. The mind must be educated or at least educable. The unproductive body and the uneducable mind confine the individual in question to the national scrap heap. Why? Because of the belief that a high ratio of disabled people, especially among new-borns and children, is a sign of low economic development; and because individuals perceived unable to contribute to the national economy are necessarily a drain on social and state resources.

The mentally retarded lack productive capability and live on relief funds and grain. They are a great burden to society (attributed to Li Peng, Kristof 1991).

Though the afflicted consume food and are able to produce children, they are unable to do any productive labour (Yuan Ruoyun 1983, p. 757).

If human quality is low, this will hinder economic development. Raising the quality of the population will advance economic development ... impairment prevention cannot passively wait for economic development, nor for the diminishment of rural-urban disparities, nor for a rise in social civilization levels (Chen 1995, p. 187, 193).

Statistics which suggest that the state supports an estimated 10 million disabled individuals who might not have existed had a eugenics law been in place and that 380,000 "defective children" are born every year in China (see Schmetzer 1994, Poole 1994, Jakobsen 1995, Kristof 1991, ICM 1990a,b,c, SCMP 1990) have been widely used to justify and promote "better-birth" campaigns. Disabled people, especially those labelled "mentally retarded", are constructed as a burden to the state and to society, swallowing up limited resources to which they have contributed nothing.

The post-Mao discourse of eugenics has also been strengthened by its close association with a growing discourse of urban élitism and rural inferiority, which is grounded in state-social prejudice and the creation of development hierarchies within China. Using indices of physical, scientific-cultural and ideological human quality, Chen Rongfu (1995) builds a hierarchy of population quality by geographical region which features

the three municipalities (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin) at the top of the hierarchy, the prosperous provinces of Liaoning, Heilongjiang, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Jilin in second place and Tibet on the bottom rungs in sixth place (Chen 1995). Chen uses the geographical distribution of impairment to strengthen his thesis: there are more disabled people in the countryside, and fewer in the cities.

The subject of "too many people" has increasingly been supplemented and even surpassed by statements on "too many people *in the countryside*" and "too many people *of low quality*". In so doing, eugenic concepts and laws capitalise on two dominant strands of social prejudice: prejudice against people with mental illnesses and learning difficulties in particular, and prejudice against the *nongmin* [peasants], and the inhabitants of China's poorer and poorest rural regions. Discussion of rural inferiority in general, intellectual and moral terms appears to be prevalent in urban China (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Signs of a caste-like system have been noted by analysts working on micro-level as well as macro-level studies of post-Mao society (Chan *et al* 1992, Potter & Potter 1990). Emily Honig's work on people from the Subei area living in Shanghai is a prime example: not only are Subei people afforded the lowest and dirtiest jobs, and housed together in ghetto-type areas of the city, but they are also ridiculed and dealt verbal and dehumanising abuse, such as "Subei swine" (Honig 1989). The overlapping discourse of rural origin and bodily impairment is also apparent in the term used in media reports as well as everyday conversation to refer to China's growing mass of rural-urban migrants: "blind migrants" (Fieldnotes 1995-96). Where rural peasants have impairments or, worse still from the eugenic perspective, have given birth to babies with impairments, the vitriol is even worse, as the following excerpt indicates:

In most areas of the mainland Chinese countryside, there is a desert-like lack of superior education and superior students. Pre-marital tests and prepartum care are regarded as unnecessary trouble. In some places, a woman, having given birth to a mentally-retarded, will go on to bear a second and even a third child. In Mang County in Gansu Province, there is a mentally-deficient couple which has given birth to eight children, not one of whom is free from mental retardation genes (Fortnightly Chat, 10 May 1990, see Inside China Mainland 1990a).

Anecdotes, news reports and surveys of "idiot villages" [*shazi cun*] and "mute villages" [*yaba cun*] have become commonplace and even made into films. A 1989 *People's*

Daily report carried the story of an "idiot village" in Shaanxi, describing "drooling idiots sitting in the sun", broken down houses, dirt and poverty (Ma 1993). Ma Honglu, an eminent mover in social work and rehabilitation circles in China, is one of many who put forth the view that a cycle of increasing poverty, family size and impairment characterises the Chinese countryside, explained in part by a lack of pre-natal screening and the "extremely low cultural level" of young couples (Ma 1993, p. 8). The situation is, so Ma and others believe, nowhere near as bad in the cities, where women are said to be careful and informed. For Ma, the only way to stop the growth of "idiot villages" (and he furnishes plentiful anecdotes on the topic) is the strict implementation of eugenics. Without this:

and just as they always have, disabled foetuses will develop in their mother's bodies and prepare to heap misfortune on the parents that produce them and the society that sustains them (Ma 1993, p. 7).

Having created a crisis of low population quality - a national crisis because it is deemed to be a primary obstacle to national economic development - eugenics has also been paraded as scientific, humanitarian and justifiable on the grounds of the national good.

The scientific justification has been noted by Bakken (1995) and Dikötter (1996) who note that science and technology are lauded as two of the most important weapons in China's development arsenal. Certainly, eugenics is still regarded as a science in China, even though its scientific foundation has long since been discredited in the west (Dikötter 1996). Pseudo-scientific claims are bolstered by international advances in genetic science and engineering, by reports of the endeavours and successes of Chinese genetic scientists (CD 1994a) and by pronouncements to the effect that, "Nowadays we know that there are over 3,000 hereditary diseases which seriously threaten the health of humankind" (Teng 1993, p. 229). No mention that very few of these can be reliably detected nor that factors such as iodine deficiency are a far more likely cause of impairment in some areas than inter-marriage (Dikötter 1996).

A humanitarian justification has also been pushed. "This is the most humanitarian way of increasing the intelligence of the population and relieving the burden the mentally ill place on society" claimed the legal director of Gansu Province Standing Committee (Kristof 1991); "This is the most humane way to maintain a healthy human race in an

overcrowded world" stated Chen Mingxia of the Social Science Academy of China's Legal Research Institute (*Dagongbao* 1 May 1990, in *ICM* 1990b). Their arguments operate on the basis that the birth of a disabled child brings pain and hardship to the family, and to the individual child. Thus, to proceed with a pregnancy where the foetus is suspected of being "defective" would be cruel, as well as irresponsible, anti-social and unpatriotic. Similarly, the denial of reproductive rights to those deemed "unfit for marriage" is ostensibly advocated for the best interests of the individual as well as the good of the nation.

The national good, in every respect, in the present and for the future, is the most prominent justification of eugenic laws. Chen Muhua, Vice-President of the Standing Committee of the NPC, President of the Women's Federation, is quoted as saying: "Eugenics not only affects the success of the state and the prosperity of the race, but also the well-being of the people and social stability" (in Dikötter 1995, p. 185). Yuan Ruoyun goes even further:

The reason we regard eugenics as a proper subject of study is that we desire to improve the genetic quality of our population. Our aim ... is to guarantee that our descendants are able to decrease the occurrence of hereditary illness. The realization of this goal would benefit not only every family in the PRC but would also serve the entire Chinese race (Yuan Ruoyun 1983, p. 757).

There is every reason to question whether China's eugenics legislation will have its desired effect. In which case, there is also every reason to suspect that the passage of such legislation is designed to serve a more political motive. Dikötter (1996) is convinced of that. Dikötter has suggested (and no doubt expands on this hypothesis in his forthcoming book) that reproduction in China is and has long been regarded as a potentially dangerous phenomenon which requires regulation for the good of the nation's eugenic future. In the post-Mao era and with advances in human genetic science, this view has gained considerable credence and has served a useful political purpose: socially undesirable traits, including low intelligence, physical defects, anti-social behaviour and criminality, are attributed to bad genes. In seeking to restrict "inferior births" and "bad genes", the state develops a useful mechanism to regulate reproduction and sexuality, and to control the population. The emergent nationalist and racial discourse of the 1980s and 1990s is also well served by eugenic concepts of

nation or race improvement. I would add that eugenics legislation has also allowed Deng Xiaoping, Li Peng and others to strengthen their rule via scapegoating both disabled people (especially "mentally retarded" or "mentally ill" people) and China's poorest, least educated peasants - blaming them for holding back China's road to development in much the same way that the size of China's population (rather than the policies of her current government or the workings of a free market economy) have been blamed for a failure to achieve national development targets (Stone 1994):

Raise the quality of the population: reinvigorate the roots of mainland China has become the call of the age. This sacred concern for the quality of our nation's population has deeply touched the hearts of every mainland Chinese [...] Just as mainland China was about to whip the horse of the Four Modernizations into a gallop, we were reined in by something within ourselves: low population quality. It lays [sic] before us like a hidden reef, preventing us from making the leap forward (Fortnightly Chat, 10 May 1990, see Inside China Mainland 1990a).

With a eugenic discourse on the government and public agenda and with the strong structural foundation laid by the one-child policy (including the widespread use of sterilization and abortion), it would have been more surprising if the government had not introduced the Maternal and Infant Health Care Law ... were it not, perhaps, for the prior existence of legislation to protect the rights of disabled people. To an outsider, the Law on Protection and the Law on Maternal and Infant Health Care seem wholly at odds - yet they have stemmed from the same government, the same society and the same epoch. Such incongruity demands consideration, not least with regard to the role played by the China Disabled Persons Federation.

Where Equality and Eugenics Combine

How far was the CDPF involved in promoting the law on eugenics? An article in the *China Daily* on 28 March 1988 (CD 1988b), suggests that officials of the CDPF were strong backers of the law during its early stages. According to the article, CDPF sent letters to the Standing Committee of the NPC and the State Council "urging them to speed up the making of such laws" and asking for stronger implementation of the marriage law and more activity on the part of local governments to prevent inbreeding

and improve maternal and infant health care (CD 1988b). Liu Xiaocheng, Deputy Director of CDPF, drawing on statistics, stated: "Such a high percentage has made us think seriously about the important problem of population quality and its relationship to the nation's prosperity". To reduce impairment and raise the economy, Liu argues for prevention, including the prevention of births of children with "congenital defects" as both effective and humanitarian (CD 1988b).

This stance is further laid bare in *Series of Lectures on the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons* [*Canjiren Baozhangfa Xilie Jiangzuo*], compiled by the CDPF Development Department (CDPF/DD 1994). The book, one of the more interesting and open Chinese texts available on disability, includes two lectures which touch on how eugenics fits with disability equality: "How to Understand and Carry Out the Obligations of Disabled People" and "How to Develop the Work of Disability Prevention Using Legislative Measures" (CDPF/DD 1994).

"How to Understand and Carry Out the Obligations of Disabled People" begins with a reiteration of Article 10 of the Law on Protection which sets out the responsibilities of disabled people, on which rights are contingent. The question is posed: what are those responsibilities and are they any different to those placed on non-disabled people? The answer is that the duties of being a good citizen are the same for all people, irrespective of disability, with a few exceptions. Disabled people are not subject to the same conscription duties that befall non-disabled Chinese citizens, there is no obligation to do national service since these activities are not deemed suitable (*heshi*) given disabled people's impairment. But the price for such "privilege" is high.

In the course of carrying out the other duties of citizenship, disabled people ought to display a spirit which is more optimistic and more enterprising than that of able-bodied people and display even more of a spirit of self-respect, self-confidence, self-strengthening and self-reliance (CDPF/DD 1994, p.40).

And that is not all. Disabled people are warned to abide by state laws and regulations since to flaunt these laws on the basis of disability will not be tolerated. Here, specific mention is made of those who "beg and sell their arts in busy public places" (CDPF/DD 1994). These and similar activities, once legitimate social practices in imperial and Republican law, "do not only not qualify for legal protection, but on the

contrary they are acts that the law has decreed to be forbidden" (CDPF/DD 1994).

There is more.

As far as disabled people are concerned, now we must pay special attention to the fundamental national policies on family planning ... Some disabled people carry hereditary [yichuan] or lineage [jiazhu] factors. According to the Marriage Law and the Eugenics Regulations formulated by local legislatures, the law generally prohibits this part of the disabled population - especially those with intellectual and mental health impairments - from getting married, or from getting married without first having undergone sterilization. In order to raise the quality of our country's population, this part of the disabled population and their guardians are responsible for carrying out their respective duties in this regard (CDPF/DD 1994, p.40-41).

The CDPF recommends that disabled people should abide by these laws in the spirit of people who have rights and responsibilities.

In the second of the two lectures, marriage and childbearing prohibitions are described as the first development in China's initiative to use legal measures for disability prevention (CDPF/DD 1994). Thus, considerable praise is afforded to provinces and localities which have banned the marriage of local people defined as having a congenital impairment. Gansu Province's "Rule to Forbid Intellectually Disabled People from Having Children" [*guanyu jinzhi zhili canjiren shengyu de guiding*], Heilongjiang Province's "Regulations on Eugenic Health Protection" [*yousheng baojian tiaoli*], Liaoning Province's "Regulations to Prevent Inferior Births" [*fangzhi liesheng tiaoli*] are mentioned as "regulations which have had very good results in implementation".

There is more than a suggestion here that the CDPF has played a major role in supporting eugenic legislation and remains determined to "get rid of out-dated, traditional notions and break through every resistance, until we can achieve the goal of preventing disability and bringing benefit to future generations (CDPF/DD 1994, p. 42).

The reconciliation of eugenics legislation and disability equality legislation is not just apparent in the CDPF's official line. Chen Rongfu (1995) and Teng Wensheng (1992), both already cited with regard to their support for eugenics legislation, are also firm and outspoken in their support for the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons.

Likewise, Ma Honglu (1993) argues for improved social attitudes to disabled people, improved opportunities for disabled people's participation and equality, and improved attempts to implement eugenic legislation.

The fact that eugenics and equality go hand-in-hand in these texts and the official statements of the CDPF is less surprising when seen against an international context which places prevention of impairments, rehabilitation of impairments, and equalization of opportunities for disabled people at the top of its agenda (UN 1983). If the Chinese government's legislation presents a paradox, it is a paradox that echoes international practice and that has been justified on the basis of international practice and international declarations.

Wilson's 1983 monograph for the Leeds Castle Foundation, *Disability Prevention: the Global Challenge*, has been translated into Chinese (Wilson 1992). So too has the United Nations *World Programme of Action* (UN 1983). Both refer to the increasing role of science, medicine and technology in preventing impairments. Both allude to the important place of "genetic counselling" in impairment prevention. It is impossible to determine whether or not the international agenda helped to get eugenics on the Chinese agenda, but what is clear is that it has helped to keep it there rather than displace it, and has given good lessons in how to frame eugenic practices with more internationally acceptable terminology of "maternal and infant health care", "medical advice" and "genetic counselling". In this regard, it is interesting to note that a euthanasia law has been on the Chinese agenda since the 1980s, with pressure mounting as fears rise about China's ageing population (CND 1998) but, until recently, decisions have been postponed whilst China waits to take the lead from the wider international community (Radford 1993, CND 1998).

Conclusion

It seems that the very process of taking disability seriously, of conducting surveys to assess the extent of disability, and of legislating for provision, may have paradoxically paved the way for a return of eugenics. The context, as it had been in the 1920s and 1930s, was conducive to such a return: rapid economic development was a national priority, and disabled people, as with the rest of China's 1.25 billion people, were both

liability and asset (Stone 1996a). A dominant discourse of population and development, body and nation, made the re-emergence of eugenics in post-Mao China all but inevitable.

The Chinese government has seen fit to promote the integration of disabled people and to legislate for equal opportunities. The same government has simultaneously made clear its stance on impairment as undesirable, and non-normal. Wherever preventable, impairment should be prevented. As Article 11 of the Law on Protection of Disabled Persons states:

The state shall undertake, in a planned way, the work of disability prevention, strengthen leadership in this regard, publicize and popularize knowledge of good pre-natal and post-natal care as well as disability prevention, formulate laws and regulations dealing with disability-causing factors such as heredity, diseases, medical poisoning, accidents, calamity and environmental pollution and adopt measures to prevent the occurrence and aggravation of disabilities by organizing and mobilizing social forces (Article 11, Law on Protection of Disabled Persons 1990).

The call for eugenic births is not the only form of prevention in the People's Republic of China but, in a country which has a strong record of using population control in the drive to modernize and develop (Banister 1987, Croll *et al* 1985, Wang & Hull 1991), it is inevitably viewed as an important policy. It is a policy which denies reproductive rights to thousands of disabled people in China, makes it highly improbable that a disabled foetus will be carried to term, and surely on these grounds it is a policy which compounds social prejudices against disabled people (Morris 1991, Crawshaw 1994, Pfeiffer 1994). But the issue is not so clear-cut at the level of national policy-making and practice. At what point does prevention of impairment (through, for example, selective abortion) cross the boundary into eugenic practice?

Whether in Britain or in China, a government's decision on where to draw the line between the prevention of impairments and the equal rights of disabled people reflects and impacts upon the whole society and social value structure (Abberley 1987, Morris 1991, Ralph 1995). As Paul Abberley has stated in his attempt to explore that boundary:

The key distinction that must be made is between the prevention of impairment ... and attitudes to and treatment of people who are already impaired (Abberley, 1987, p. 9).

But that is a difficult distinction to draw (Bailey 1996, Begum 1995, Hubbard 1997, Shakespeare 1995). Yet, when a national government decides to take disability and impairment seriously, and to put disability on its agenda, it is a line which has to be drawn somewhere.

* * *

In China - a vast country with pressing economic, environmental and social concerns; with a population of over 1.25 billion, and over fifty million disabled people; and a population policy that most in the western world would not dare condemn too vociferously for too long - to fail to draw that line would be a political impossibility.

In China, where a national/ist discourse of body, nation and development has assumed a position of ideological hegemony, and where the population is considered a liability, not an asset, in the battle for national development - to fail to draw that line would be ideologically unthinkable.

In China, where the lack of adequate disability-related services has been brought into sharp relief by a serious and well-intentioned attempt to put and keep disability on the government agenda - to fail to draw that line would be economically inconceivable. Prevention is, from the Chinese government perspective, much better than cure.

This is not to excuse the implementation of eugenic legislation in post-Mao China. My personal conviction is that eugenic policies and practices are inexcusable. It is, however, to offer a more nuanced explanation - to gain some insight into how it is that disability equality and eugenic laws can go hand in hand.

Conclusion

The Book of Odes says: "When you see a high mountain, you can raise your eyes towards it. When you see an open road, you can make out your direction along it".

Yes, even if you know you cannot ever quite get there, your heart knows it is the right direction to aim for.

Sima Qian (147-90 BC)

We have reached that point where, with only a few pages of text left, it is time to take stock, to measure the outcome against the objectives, and to consider the implications of this thesis for future research. First, then, to recap on the story that has been told.

The story started in imperial China with the cosmological concepts of *quan* (wholeness) and *zheng* (orderliness), with the administrative construct of *ding* (able-bodied, adult, male) and the fiscal and juridical construct of a three-grade cross-impairment disability category. These and other evidence presented in Chapter Three left little room for doubt that one could speak of *disability* in imperial China. That case was strengthened by locking disability into other imperial constructions of "race" and gender. The implications of the overlap between the discourses of race, gender and impairment came to the fore in late imperial and early Republican China, and in the context of Sino-western conflict and intense, often iconoclastic, national/ist debates. In the search for a new, national identity and escape from the ignominious label of "Sick Man of Asia", Chinese intellectuals, reformers and politicians turned to a host of institutions and ideologies, some of which were imported from or imposed by the west. The result was a radical reconfiguration of the body and the construction of a new relationship between body, nation and development. The discourse of body, nation and development was upheld by the institutionalisation of physical culture and education - creating the fit and healthy body as the norm and as a precondition of national progress. It was also evident, although not yet institutionalised, in an emergent discourse of eugenics.

Under Mao, eugenics discourses were ostensibly suppressed, but the bond between

body, nation and development took on even greater significance. The institutionalisation of mass callisthenics was one part of this. The ideological promotion of the fit and functional body - the worker, the peasant, the soldier, the mother - was another. Those who could not contribute to national development according to the dominant and narrow definition of contribution were denied access to full personhood.

The ideological primacy of the fit and functional body continued in post-Mao China, as did the discourse of body, nation and development, but with a new and damaging spin. Mao had located the fit and functional body within a populist and collectivist framework, wherein bodies were the collective, mass bodies of producers. Under Deng Xiaoping, the population was no longer conceived as the nation's main resource, but as the nation's main economic liability. Populist faith in the masses was replaced by a strident programme to reduce the quantity and also raise the quality of the population. "Low quality" bodies and minds were labelled inferior, to be subject either to elimination (via prevention) or through interventions to maximise function. In that latter respect, the institutionalisation of a eugenic discourse in the Law of Maternal and Infant Health Care overlapped with the otherwise unexpected and ostensibly contradictory appearance of disability rights and services on the post-Mao government agenda.

As much as the post-Mao era has become known in the west for selective abortions and forced sterilizations, it should also be known for a systematic attempt to put disability on the government and public agenda, to change disabling attitudes, and to provide educational, rehabilitation, employment, cultural and sporting opportunities where few had previously existed. The achievements of Deng Pufang and the China Disabled Persons Federation have been quite remarkable. Decades of institution-building and policy-making in the west have apparently been telescoped into fifteen years in China. For all it is worth (and I have argued that it is worth more than westerners might presume), China has what amounts to an anti-discrimination law for disabled people. It has a semi-governmental pseudo-ministerial organization for disabled people, with disabled people in its most senior positions. It has a press which reports regularly (if sometimes counter-productively) on the achievements of disabled

people in a bid to debunk negative stereotypes. It has in paper, if not yet in practice, a commitment to expanding more integrated opportunities in schools, colleges and the work place. All of this deserves recognition too; not least because it explodes the notion that eugenics policies and practices exist only in contexts where all rights to disabled people are denied. In China (and arguably elsewhere), equality and eugenics go hand in hand.

In amongst, and often hidden beneath, the talk of macro-level discourses of disability and development, a story has also been told of disabled people and benevolent governments. From the first, I argued a case for seeing the construction of disability as a product of socio-political discourses but also as a product of perceptions of good government. In imperial China and continuing into the Republic and the People's Republic, the task of government has gone beyond establishing Order, strengthening the nation and forging ahead with economic development. Confucian principles of good governance stipulated that the ruler should ensure the well-being and livelihood of the people, on which the Mandate of Heaven rested. In the process of following those principles, privileges were created which exempted the individual from meeting state expectations of the people and personhood (abiding by law, paying tax, heeding the imperial demands for military and labour conscription). It is all too easy to conceive how, in the course of time and as a result of socio-economic change, privileges transmuted into grounds for (or justification of) exclusion, exemption and diminished personhood. That thesis, formulated by Deborah Stone (1984) *inter alia* on the construction of disability in Europe and America, holds good under Maoist state socialism and Deng Xiaoping's market economy as well. The welfare factories and segregated schools which function as institutions which reinforce and reflect the separation of normal and non-normal, may have been envisioned as the marks of good governance. Thus welfare factories, as with media stories, government policies and legislation, conspire with socio-political discourses of body, nation and development to construct and re-form disability in China.

* * *

I have told a story - and, all things being equal and data sources and methodologies being what they are - I believe it to be a good one. But has it been good enough to

dispel the myths I set out to dispel? And has the social model worked in that regard?

I would argue that, within the academic confines of a doctoral thesis and given that the focus of this thesis is on institutions and ideologies rather than lived experiences, the social model definition has worked. I would (and have been) more wary of using a social model definition when analysing grassroots data. There is therefore a tension between the policy and practice reports that I produced for SCF and Unicef, and the interpretation set out in this thesis. I have yet to decide whether that is proof of professional expediency or of sound judgement.

In support of using a social model, I would add that the social model definition has provided me with the academic tools necessary to focus on constructions of disability in a way which would not otherwise have happened (given the lack of critical scholarship on disability in China and in developing countries generally). The social model definition has enabled me to dispel myths and demonstrate that disability is not a uniquely western or inherently capitalist construct; that disability in developing countries is not necessarily (if ever) static, simple and unaffected by state institutions and ideologies; and that, contrary to seemingly prevalent perceptions, disability is dynamic and complex, historical and structural in developing countries too.

* * *

Finally, then, to the implications of the thesis for future research.

First and foremost, the evidence and arguments presented in this thesis attest to the importance of taking disability in developing countries seriously as a subject of critical scholarship. It should now be more difficult for the likes of Albrecht (1992), Stone (1984) and Gleeson (1997) to brush the complex realities of disability outside the west under the carpet. I hope also that those who have dipped into ethnographic pools to prove their point might take heed of the messages conveyed in this thesis and seek a more serious engagement with disabling processes beyond western borders. There is much more to disability in non-western cultures than expedient tales of integration and acceptance. To those who already take disability in developing countries seriously, I suggest there is cause to consider institutions, ideologies and historical legacies alongside cosmological beliefs and local perceptions of body and personhood. To those

who work within East Asian studies, I advise that the study of disability will add much to ongoing research on race, gender, the body and nationalism.

Secondly, I believe there is considerable scope to develop our thinking (in China, in the west and elsewhere) on the articulation of disability and development. In the process of writing up, I have come to realize that the story of disability and normalcy in China is in part a story of dominant *discourses of development*. Thus, disability is a product of development not only because it results from particular modes of economic production, social organization or administration but also because it results from a particular socio-political construction of development and the place of disability and the body within that construction. The hypothesis of a discourse of body, nation and development has implications for theories of disability beyond China and beyond eugenics. It is important to look to the development of physical culture and education, to reconfigurations of body form, fitness and function. And it is important to set changing discourses of the body alongside changing discourses of nation and development, gender and race. It is these macro discourses and the values which underpin them (such as work, wealth and productivity) that make space for a better understanding of disability in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and that accommodate the construction of disability under state socialism in China, and possibly elsewhere.

Finally, an implication that is levelled at myself and others currently working or considering work on disability in China: the difficult task of meshing the macro-level and the micro-level together needs to begin. It is all very well to produce case study-based reports to suit the practitioner and macro-level grand theorising to suit the academic, but ultimately a point will be reached when the two must be brought together. We need to know *how far* and *how* the ideologies and institutions described in this thesis impact on the lived experiences of disabled people and their households at the grassroots. We need to understand the ways in which macro-level discourses reflect as well as shape micro-level demands, strategies and perceptions.

In the Introduction, I made it clear that such a project far exceeded the bounds of this thesis. I also intimated that the project of weaving government and grassroots together would make for even more difficult decisions over the adoption, or not, of social

model definitions and interpretations. Those difficulties will still have to be solved, but my hope is that there may be more flexibility for coming up with a creative solution in a book than in a doctoral thesis. That, at any rate, is what I'm telling myself at the moment ... that is my next project. In Sima Qian's words, it is the next high mountain that faces me, the next open road that I plan to travel along.

Appendix: Sinofile Search Results

The following table is the result of a news cuttings search by Sinofile, Beijing.

Search results are listed chronologically and as Sinofile produced them.

| | | |
|----|----------|--|
| ZS | 93.03.16 | crime, party official severs Achilles tendon of handicapped worker's good leg in Baoji, Shaanxi |
| CI | 93.03.19 | automobile, Nanchang handicapped vehicle increases from 50 to 2,500 in 1 year, city forbids use as taxi |
| ZS | 93.03.26 | handicapped, lack of love & care from government policies, society, & families |
| BK | 93.04.08 | handicapped blind girl Zhu Qiong goes to study in US |
| BW | 93.04.22 | handicapped, American handicapped people donate wheelchairs to Tianjin handicapped people |
| BQ | 93.05.08 | lifestyle, handicapped Zhang Haidi's pursuits |
| WH | 93.06.01 | education, 1st private handicapped children kindergarten in Shanghai, 11 years take care of 80 kids with IQ < 30 |
| CB | 93.06.02 | automobile, Fushun several hundred 3-wheel handicapped vehicles turn into taxis, most drivers are disabled |
| XM | 93.06.15 | society, Shanghai professional beggars hire small handicapped children around 4-years old as bait |
| XM | 93.06.28 | handicapped professionals cannot find jobs in Shanghai |
| ZS | 93.09.03 | society, Jiangsu investigation shows handicapped people's living standards improving, north/south varies |
| ZQ | 93.09.19 | kidnapping & sale of mentally handicapped women, stories |
| ZQ | 93.10.07 | society, handicapped association 2nd national conference held in Peking, Deng Pufang reports on progress |
| CW | 93.10.08 | handicapped, achievements in the past 5 years in helping the handicapped |
| FZ | 93.11.12 | crime, Anhui Shouxian Qinglian township governor & cadres torture handicapped farmer to death, 1991 |
| CW | 93.11.24 | family, Hangzhou asks residents to "adopt" over 190 orphans (mostly handicapped) in city orphanage |
| BQ | 93.12.02 | handicapped, 4 roads converted for the convenience of handicapped in 1986 back to old state, people unaware |
| KJ | 93.12.03 | family, abandoning newborn babies, mostly girls or handicapped children, no legal punishment for parents |
| WZ | 93.12.05 | handicapped, Shanghai Pudong enterprises lay off over 2,000 handicapped workers, monthly stipend only 70 Yuan |
| WH | 93.12.06 | handicapped center in Zhejiang owes construction company 300,000 Yuan, has to rent out space to companies |
| ZQ | 93.12.09 | handicapped, Changzhou village strangles 42-year-old schizophrenic farmer of the village |
| WH | 93.12.09 | society, survey of vagrant children: nearly 200,000 in China, smallest are 4-year-olds, many handicapped |

- YC 93.12.18 society, story with happy ending of baby of migrant labor girl & Shanghai handicapped worker
- BQ 93.12.26 medicine, Peking hospitals offer to treat 34 handicapped or severely sick orphans free
- ZQ 94.01.13 medicine, Peking hospitals offer free operations to abandoned kids with handicaps or hereditary diseases
- BQ 94.01.25 society, 30 handicapped abandoned children from Peking orphanage receive special love in hospitals
- RM 94.01.28 society, "Regulations concerning rural support for handicapped, orphans and elderly without support"
- JK 94.01.30 health, Jan. 28 is China's Leprosy Day, China has 200,000 handicapped caused by leprosy
- FZ 94.02.04 handicapped, 77 from Rui'an complain about police refusing to give them vehicle licenses & beatings
- JC 94.02.05 handicapped, survey of recovery, education, & employment of 51.64 million handicapped in China
- BQ 94.02.20 handicapped, special education lacking, Heilongjiang Huanan puts blind kids in ordinary schools, works
- HS 94.02.26 population, quality gets lower in recent 20 years, illiteracy increases, more mentally handicapped
- ZQ 94.03.24 handicapped, blind persons Li Chengjiu & Ping Yali open company in Hebei, healthy persons appropriate it
- LS 94.04.19 crime, Anshan mother Zhang Yurong burns 8-year-old handicapped daughter to death, arrested
- CB 94.05.03 handicapped, Peking Zhanlanlu McDonald hires 5 handicapped persons at same pay as others
- XM 94.05.11 handicapped, Nanjing "Dwarf Restaurant" uses dwarfs to attract customers, insult to the handicapped?
- BQ 94.05.14 handicapped, Peking welfare enterprises not well, VAT makes 60% of them unable to carry on, countermeasures
- PD 94.05.26 computer, Hong Kong Packard Bell donates 86 computers to National Handicapped Association
- YC 94.05.28 handicapped, difficult life of heroine Dai Birong who saved 3 children when she was 10 & lost arm & leg
- RM 94.05.30 Deng Pufang visits Sweden, heads Handicapped Association delegation
- BQ 94.06.02 handicapped in Peking now have right to employment, Peking issues regulation to allot jobs by proportion
- ZQ 94.06.07 hero, Urumqi private mini-bus driver Qiu Jiayun offers free ride to elderly, soldiers, sick, handicapped
- BQ 94.06.08 children, Tibetan handicapped & orphaned girl Maxi comes to Peking for treatment with official help
- CW 94.06.13 handicapped, Anhui Huaibei handicapped worker Wang Laiyun's wife abducted by his bigoted mother-in-law
- GR 94.06.19 handicapped, official admits foreign enterprises do better than Chinese in hiring handicapped people

- WH 94.07.05 hero, story of farmer Gao Xinda who saved his town from explosion
handicapped and lives in poverty
- CB 94.07.11 handicapped, authority to check & clean up fake welfare enterprises that
evade taxes to profit individuals
- FZ 94.07.17 Deng Pufang inspects military police's performance for Handicapped
Games
- LD 94.07.22 handicapped Shanghai Zhu Mingming knows 4 foreign languages,
denied work opportunity 12 years by officials
- YC 94.07.24 children, Guangzhou Pizza Hut offers annual scholarships to orphans &
handicapped children
- WH 94.07.25 handicapped, Shanghai foreign employers more willing to employ
handicapped people than Chinese
- BJ 94.08.08 handicapped, Peking students, prisoners, policemen, & others moved by
handicapped athletes' lectures
- BQ 94.08.11 handicapped, cruel training of 423 handicapped athletes in sweltering
heat: "winning glory for motherland"
- BK 94.08.11 handicapped, famous handicapped woman Zhang Haidi practices 1
month air pistol to take part in coming Games
- JK 94.08.21 handicapped, China has 51 mill. handicapped people, over 40% who can
work are unemployed
- BW 94.08.23 handicapped, rapid development of education for handicapped children,
60% go to school
- BJ 94.08.23 law, "Regulations of proportional employment for Peking handicapped",
in effect from July 1, 1994
- RM 94.08.27 handicapped, "Regulations concerning education of handicapped people"
- WZ 94.08.28 children, more abandoned babies found at Shanghai orphanage this year,
mostly handicapped
- WH 94.08.29 children, 90% handicapped children are born healthy, many problems
caused by parents' ignorance
- BQ 94.08.29 handicapped, handicapped beggars from all over China arrive in Peking
before handicapped athletes
- CW 94.09.02 handicapped, Deng Pufang on significance of FESPIC: let more people
know & care about the handicapped
- CB 94.09.03 Deng Xiaoping, handicapped son Deng Pufang loves sports, especially
football
- BJ 94.09.03 law, "Peking regulations concerning implementation of PRC law for the
protection of handicapped people"
- YG 94.09.03 handicapped, Guangdong offers professional massage training to the
blind, all graduates get jobs
- BQ 94.09.04 handicapped, reports on autistic children in Peking & efforts made for
their improvement
- YC 94.09.07 handicapped, Deng Pufang says sports isn't priority but means for
Chinese handicapped to get what they need
- RM 94.09.09 handicapped, interview w/ non-athletic handicapped girl at FESPIC:
wish people treat us this well always

- BQ 94.09.12 handicapped, survey of deficiencies in education, employment, & public care for the handicapped in China
- ZQ 94.09.22 handicapped, situation with obstacle-free facilities in cities: handicapped people are seldom seen in public
- YC 94.09.24 labor, unemployment up, > 200 mill. farmers surplus, 50-60 mill. moving, jobs for women & handicapped scarce
- BQ 94.10.19 handicapped, Peking Fengtai police seize gang of 11 dumb hooligans robbing & gang-raping 2 dumb girls
- KJ 94.10.23 handicapped, Xingxingyu center for autistic children develops w/ foreign aid, what has government done?
- FZ 94.10.31 handicapped, Shenyang HK manager Xu Zandong kicks handicapped retired worker Wang Shifeng to death
- FZ 94.11.04 slavery, Henan Suiping collective brick kiln enslaves migrant farmers & handicaps some trying to escape
- CW 94.11.11 handicapped, Canadian embassy donates 163,000Y to Peking Xingxingyu center for autistic children
- JJ 94.11.14 handicapped, British welfare fund helps establish handicapped center in Wuhan for job training & treatment
- JW 94.11.26 society, Hubei Shashi retired worker Xu Changhai & his adopted handicapped son & adopted granddaughter
- BK 94.11.28 sports, health in exchange for glory, 59.6% of Chinese athletes have injuries, many handicapped for life
- FZ 94.12.07 crime, Hubei Zaoyang arrest gang leader for kidnapping, raping, & selling 20 handicapped women
- XM 94.12.14 PR, joint-venture Tianjin Huabei Oxygen Factory takes care of 8 handicapped veteran soldiers
- JK 94.12.24 handicapped, hero Jie Shuichen burnt badly in extermination of fire now suffers social discrimination
- LW 94.12.26 handicapped, Wang Wei who treats stuttering, & Chinese society's discrimination against stutterers
- BQ 95.01.06 handicapped, divorced man w/ child & w/out house cheats deaf & dumb woman into marrying him for her house
- CB 95.01.07 handicapped, Peking Xingxingyu center for autistic children about to lose its premises
- XM 95.01.12 handicapped, Shanghai leaders visit handicapped unemployed families living in poverty & give 200 Y to each
- CW 95.01.23 children, group of volunteers in Nanjing establish long-term relationship w/ handicapped orphans
- BW 95.01.31 PR, Peking McDonald's entertains handicapped orphans on Spring Festival Eve
- ZQ 95.02.07 handicapped, crippled girl Sun Shujun establishes private kindergarten in Shenyang despite difficulties
- SB 95.02.14 handicapped, Sichuan has 6 million handicapped people, province calls for donation for handicapped

- XM 95.02.19 transport, handicap vehicles driven by non-handicapped people disturb traffic order in Shanghai
- GM 95.02.24 handicapped, blind musicians appear in Peking Xidan, make lots of money, more acceptable than beggars
- BQ 95.03.05 handicapped, Peking handicapped Ding Tiejun helps others w/ consultancy on recovery points
- ZQ 95.03.16 handicapped, management of motorcycles for disabled chaotic, > 30 able-bodied handicapped by them in Peking
- JW 95.03.17 handicapped, 6-year-old boy whose face is burnt by acid receives help from American to get plastic surgery in US
- MZ 95.03.21 handicapped, Feilong Co. promises to donate to school for deaf & dumb in Urumqi but fails to keep promise
- YC 95.03.24 hero, Guangzhou handicapped man Li Wei'an volunteers to look for lost bikes for 9 years, finds over 20,000
- PD 95.03.25 handicapped, Peking Dongfangyuan Training Center offers special education to autistic children
- HS 95.03.27 handicapped, 1 handicapped in every 5 families, Deng Pufang encourages them to overcome difficulties
- CY 95.04.01 people, story of handicapped and disfigured painter Yao Zhongze: facing society w/ ugly face, painting world handless
- JK 95.04.04 health, much need be done to prevent & cure handicapped babies in rural China, rural rate of abnormal kids higher
- ZQ 95.04.06 handicapped, SEC says China has 500,000 autistic children, special education for them should be provided
- JK 95.04.06 health, 150,000 handicapped people in Henan recover
- WH 95.04.19 transport, Shanghai notice concerning changing handicapped vehicle license plates
- CW 95.04.22 health, handicapped girl spends money & opens hotline service to comfort people; 140,000 suicides in China
- NM 95.05.07 people, adopted 7-year-old takes care of 3 handicapped elderly in Shandong Gaomi photos
- BQ 95.05.14 handicapped, family income of handicapped people only half of national average, 40% handicapped unemployed
- BW 95.05.14 handicapped, Peking gov't to do 10 good deeds for handicapped population this year
- YG 95.05.14 handicapped, Guangzhou plans to develop professional skills of handicapped, Guangzhou has 214,000 disabled
- JF 95.05.18 handicapped, Deng Pufang says: Chinese Foundation for the Handicapped receives record-high contributions in 1994
- CB 95.05.19 handicapped, low-IQ children can increase IQ by use of Shandong Medical Univ's medicine
- BQ 95.05.21 handicapped, Chinese Handicapped Association publicizes amount of funds received for handicapped
- TQ 95.05.21 handicapped, introduction to China's organizations for handicapped; China has 51.64 mill. handicapped people

- RM 95.05.22 handicapped, 92% of handicapped people in Suzhou have jobs
- WH 95.05.23 handicapped, 96% of handicapped children attend school in Wuxi, handicapped people average income >2000 Y/yr
- YC 95.05.23 handicapped, Guangzhou Meng Weinuo's 10-year efforts in establishing & managing 2 schools for the handicapped
- CB 95.06.03 handicapped, Peking Shangrila Hotel celebrates Children's Day w/ handicapped children
- YD 95.06.03 handicapped, Peking telephone bureau hires 7 handicapped girls as temporary workers
- CB 95.06.14 handicapped, sharply increased mopeds for "severely disabled" people causes much trouble in Shanghai's traffic
- HS 95.06.20 handicapped, China has millions of dwarfs, many talented, should they be hired in restaurants?
- CD 95.06.28 handicapped, Ningxia Yinchuan sets up associations to help handicapped people, 3,000 receive medical treatment
- GR 95.05.29 handicapped, handicapped railway worker Ma Hengyi taught himself Japanese & English, learned to repair radios
- QE 95.07.01 handicapped, Ma Cuirui, handicapped since 1-year old, learned Chinese & English by herself & published many novels
- CO 95.08.01 handicapped, Wuhan blind Zheng Juxuan earns over 20 mill. Y by sincerity & honesty in petty commodities business
- GR 95.08.05 children, 1330 rural Datong women have adopted 6500 handicapped orphans since 1964 at behest of the Party
- GR 95.08.19 handicapped, Peking architect Xu Bailun becomes blind & devotes love to blind children's education
- YG 95.08.19 society, desperate girl & handicapped father live on Guangzhou streets for days; helped by car-owning CEO & others
- GR 95.09.02 children, how Datong orphans get along w/ their foster families as 2 of them leave for Peking to treat handicaps
- YG 95.09.09 people, how Harbin CEO Lu Qingyi & his firm takes good care of just-hired employees handicapped by accident at work
- ZQ 95.09.27 handicapped, how young couple in Jilin Huichun spend 100,000Y to set up free school for the handicapped
- WH 95.09.29 education, Henan Xinxiang Yang Hongwei barred from colleges for being ugly, schools say: we have right to choose
- BJ 95.10.03 handicapped, Peking gives subsidy to poverty stricken handicapped families w/o ability to work
- BQ 95.10.04 education, how is Yang Hongwei denied univ. education because he is really ugly? photo
- CD 95.10.06 handicapped, special university for disabled people established in Yantai
- BQ 95.10.12 handicapped, Shandong Linyi's amputate girl Yang Xiaoxia to return home after equipped w/ artificial hands
- WH 95.10.12 education, student Yang Hongwei receives help from all circles of society, problem of college entry to be resolved

- CB 95.10.13 education, "ugly student" Yang Hongwei finally accepted by Lanzhou Univ. after press exposure of his rejection
- YC 95.11.01 handicapped, 60% of the handicapped in Guangdong are employed
- CW 95.11.02 handicapped, education for disabled women in Hebei is poor, Association of the Handicapped calls for measures
- YC 95.11.11 handicapped, blind children learn about world in school for the blind in Guangzhou, where to go after graduation?
- XM 95.11.13 handicapped, "accessible" facilities in Shanghai are far from accessible for the disabled
- JK 95.11.21 handicapped, Shandong helps over 100,000 handicapped people recover health to certain degrees
- XM 95.11.21 people, physically ugly Yang Hongwei, once denied univ. admission, re-donates all donations to poor students
- CW 95.12.25 handicapped, Peking can't even meet lowest standard in constructing roads accessible for handicapped people
- CB 95.12.01 handicapped, China has 1/10 of world's handicapped population, funds for the recovery of handicapped people
- BQ 95.12.23 handicapped, over 5,000 used calendars donated to blind children Dec. 15 to 18 to be used for Braille paper
- CD 96.01.03 handicapped, Zhejiang helps find jobs for disabled residents; >330,000 jobless disabled find jobs in past 5 months
- CW 96.01.04 handicapped, family of Nanjing mentally-ill man; wife suffers from sequelae of meningitis, children have low IQ
- CW 96.01.21 people, "living Lei Feng", Yang Xiaoning is troubled by ungrateful handicapped man whom she helped
- BJ 96.01.23 charity, Shanghai Charity Education Center offers vocational training to handicapped & impoverished people
- XM 96.02.07 handicapped, more mentally retarded handicapped patients hurt people in trains
- GR 96.02.14 women, 19-yr-old Tang Renxiu of Sichuan sold several times in 1995; tortured & now mentally handicapped
- JK 96.03.02 handicapped, handicapped males have more trouble finding wives; social discrimination exists
- LD 96.04.05 Sun Shujun, a handicapped young woman, devotes her life to education for mentally retarded children after she was fired by two enterprises
- BQ 96.04.18 handicapped girl in Peking, candidate for 10 outstanding youths, Qi Kaili, can't find job after college graduation
- BQ 96.04.20 report on handicapped girl Qi Kaili's problem of finding a job brings her employment opportunities, HP & 30 other units want to hire Qi
- RM 96.05.03 9th 5-year plan program for China's handicapped people (1996-2000); review of previous plan, general goals & guiding principles, task indices & general standard
- TQ 96.05.14 Mr. Li Gaoling, self-employed taxi driver in Qingdao, strives to provide complimentary services for soldiers, orphans, patients, elderly & handicapped people, & refuses to take tips from foreigners

- CD 96.05.18 Trane Co. of the US, leading manufacturer of air-conditioners, donates books & equipment to Chinese handicapped on May 19, National Help-the-Disabled Day
- BQ 96.05.24 interview w/ Peking physically impaired 6-year-old girl Zhou Shinan who can't find school to attend, local school emphasizes its inability to accommodate her & ensure her safety; related discussion about education for China's handicapped children
- UH 96.07.25 handicapped, Deng Pufang, son of senior Chinese leader addresses activists for China's disabled on 75th anniversary celebration of CPC, calls for practice of Marxism, Mao Zedong Thought, and Deng's theory of socialism w/ Chinese characteristics; Deng also calls for support for party principles & policies; Deng encourages disabled to be active in vitalizing national culture and strengthening party construction; he also hails achievements of National Federation of Disabled as bringing recovery to some 2 million, causing increase of education rate and employment rate from 50% to 70% and 20% to 60% respectively
- BR 96.07.29 education, College for Handicapped, jointly established by Shanghai Association for Handicapped & Shanghai TV Univ. in 1995, becomes primary classroom where China's physically handicapped students receive higher education & vocational technical training, college currently enrolls more than 100 handicapped students where they have chance to study finance, accounting, computer applications, English & secretarial skills
- GR 96.08.03 handicapped, group of Chinese architectural engineers were surprised to see so many wheelchairs at White House, Capitol Building & Disneyland; actually welfare is sign of civilization; Beijing & other major cities in China begin "non-obstacle" city construction involving sidewalks for blind people & convenient slopes for handicapped
- BQ 96.08.11 society, overview of China's 10-yr-old social welfare lottery giving direct aid to some 6 mill. orphans & handicapped people & indirect aid to tens of millions of others; however, China's social welfare cause is badly in need of funds, 32 bill. Yuan is needed during 9th 5-yr Plan period, or at least 6 bill. Yuan annually, given 10 bill. Yuan quota for lottery prizes, only 3 bill. Yuan can be raised annually, in China where people's sense of lottery is still rather weak & legal framework is still incomplete, China's social welfare cause needs more support & participation
- BK 96.08.15 health, jobless handicapped youth offers to give psychological counselling to public on hot-line, experts say not everybody is qualified to give psychological counselling; China has non-medicine oriented Psychiatric Association & medicine oriented Society for Psychiatric Health, the 2 disagree on who is qualified to give psychological counselling
- YG 96.08.17 handicapped, stories of disabled people's struggle for normal life in Guangdong Shaoguan
- ZJ 96.08.19 handicapped, Deng Pufang & 6 other leaders of the Olympics for the disabled awarded "Halisi" medal for their dedication to the disabled
- ZQ 96.09.19 handicapped, Deng Pufang and 6 other international disabled Olympic Games leaders awarded "Halisi" medal
- CB 96.09.20 society, Jilin hotel manager Liu Min gives up profitable job to establish welfare company for handicapped, unemployed, beggars, & vagrants through services like shoe-shining, car washing, laundry & garbage recycling; initial effort unsuccessful, employees sell of company-issued tools & disappear
- GR 96.10.12 handicapped, 70% of disabled individuals employed in China by end of 8th 5-Year Plan, is 80% in Shanghai, Beijing, Zhejiang & Guangdong; many problems remain regarding disabled individual employment; "Employment Solutions" policy, formally taking effect in June, demands every unit must employ handicapped people at ratio of 1.5% to 1.7% of total amount of staff

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For ease of reference, the Bibliography is divided into four sections:

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- Law of the People's Republic of China on Maternal and Infant Health Care Law* (Adopted by the 10th Meeting of the Eighth National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China on 27th October 1994 to go into effect on 1st June 1995; in English).
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- MCA (Ministry of Civil Affairs) (1989), "Answers from Ministry of Civil Affairs" (official response to an International Labour Organization survey on welfare factories in China, internal document; in English).
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Newspaper Cuttings from China and Hong Kong

See Appendix for the results of a Sinofile news cuttings search. Note: the following are English language newspapers: *China Daily*, *China News Digest* (electronic newspaper), *Hong Kong Standard*, *South China Morning Post*. Not all the news stories listed below have been cited in the main text; but they have all informed the arguments presented in Chapters Six to Nine.

BD (1994), "Our city provides all round care for disabled people", *Beijing Daily*, 29 June 1994.

BD (1995a), "CDPF Chairman Deng Pufang writes a few words of encouragement to a disabled writer", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1995b), "Creating an environment for disabled people to study, by physically disabled researcher Ye Yanfang", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1995c), "Gentlemen who ceaselessly strive for self-strengthening - disabled people and literature", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1995d), "Half of the moon, half of the sun", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1995e), "Let us have even more warmth, by the Vice-Chair of China Publishers Association", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1995f), "Love Beijing, Care for Beijing", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1995g), "Sowing a seed of humanitarianism - an interview with the director of the Hua Xia Press", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1995h), "The spiritual garden of disabled people, by blind Shi Guangzhu", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1995i), "Writing and disability are natural partners, by physically disabled writer Shi Tiesheng", *Beijing Daily*, 26 September 1995.

BD (1996), "Setting up community-based services in Beijing", *Beijing Daily*, 8 August 1996.

BN (1995), "Saving China's blind children", *Beijing News*, 19 August 1995.

BR (1991), "Protection for the Disabled", *Beijing Review*, December 23-29.

BR (1992), "For the Well-Being of the Handicapped", *Beijing Review*, May 25-31 1992: 22-25 (Bei Chen; in English).

BR (1994), "How China Handles Population and Family Planning", *Beijing Review*, August 1-8, pp. 8-12 (Wu; in English).

- BYD (1993), "Its also a road of youthful charisma" (1993), *Beijing Youth Daily*, 6 January 1993 (on Ding Tiejun; in Chinese).
- BYD (1994a), "Challenging life's potential", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 11 August 1994.
- BYD (1994b), "Police check, mute woman saved", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 19 January 1994.
- BYD (1994c), "The phenomenon of disabled beggars in Beijing is on the rise", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 29 August 1994.
- BYD (1994d), "What is the future of Beijing's welfare enterprises?", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 14 March 1994.
- BYD (1995a), "Can an ugly student not go to university?", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 4 October 1995.
- BYD (1995b), "China's wet-nurse mums", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 27 September 1995.
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- BYD (1996a), "Its Spring Festival - how are you?", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 21 February 1996.
- BYD (1996b), "Luo Shi Sisters are happy at school", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 21 February 1996.
- BYD (1996c), "The record of the birth of a wheelchair genius", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 18 October 1995.
- BYD (1996d), "Yang Hongwei wants to be a professor", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 21 February 1996.
- BYD (1996e), "Yang Liu after the fire; the young wind sounds even clearer", *Beijing Youth Daily*, 13 November 1996.
- CCB (1995), "Ugly student also has a right", Chinese Community Bulletin No. 951005, 5 October 1995 (e-mail bulletin).
- CD (1988a), "Beijing set to improve mental care", *China Daily*, 18 March 1988 (Zhu Baoxia).
- CD (1988b), "Disability group urges birth laws", *China Daily*, 28 March 1988 (Ma Zhiping).
- CD (1988c), "Disabled young get skills, jobs", *China Daily*, 14 April 1988.
- CD (1988d), "Handicapped celebrate", *China Daily*, 18 April 1988.
- CD (1988e), "Welfare scheme helps disabled", *China Daily*, 3 June 1988 (Chen Qing).
- CD (1988f), "Mind's eye wins them honour", *China Daily*, 13 August 1988 (Li Xing).
- CD (1988g), "Handicapped have jobs", *China Daily*, 29 August 1988.
- CD (1988h), "Kindness for disabled on welfare street", *China Daily*, 30 August 1988 (Zou Weining & Chen Yuhong).
- CD (1988i), "Five-year plan to aid blind, deaf", *China Daily*, 30 August 1988 (Duan Bayi).
- CD (1988j), "Lack of stimulation in infancy held to blame for retardation", *China Daily*, 7 September 1988.
- CD (1988k), "WHO helps with course", *China Daily*, 16 September 1988.
- CD (1988l), "New centre for disabled established", *China Daily*, 19 September 1988.
- CD (1988m), "Disabled children in need of care", *China Daily*, 14 October 1988 (Liang Chao).
- CD (1988n), "Centre for disabled", *China Daily*, 24 October 1988.
- CD (1988o), "Shen loses parents' love but gains society's care", *China Daily*, 4 November 1988.
- CD (1988p), "One in 100 children retarded", *China Daily*, 12 November 1988 (Zhu Baoxia).

- CD (1988q), "51 million Chinese suffer disabilities", *China Daily*, 17 November 1988 (Guo Zhongshi).
- CD (1988r), "Medicine misuse gets thousands of kids deaf", *China Daily*, 18 November 1988 (Ma Zhiping).
- CD (1988s), "Schools for disabled lagging", *China Daily*, 22 November 1988.
- CD (1988t), "Special kids need school too", *China Daily*, 24 November 1988 (Zhang Lin).
- CD (1988u), "Disabled go to college in greater numbers", *China Daily*, 28 November 1988 (Zhang Lin).
- CD (1988v), "Major programme to aid the disabled", *China Daily*, 1 December 1988 (Zhang Lin).
- CD (1988w), "Computerized arms", *China Daily*, 15 December 1988.
- CD (1988x), "Teaching kids to speak", *China Daily*, 29 December 1988 (Wang Xin & Li Xing).
- CD (1989a), "Disabled thespians perform", *China Daily*, 8 March 1989 (Ma Zhiping).
- CD (1989b), "Welfare for the disabled" (1989), *China Daily*, 10 March 1989.
- CD (1989c), "Handicapped fund to part companies", *China Daily*, 14 March 1989 (Ma Zhiping).
- CD (1989d), "Eight million children here are disabled", *China Daily*, 24 October 1989 (Cao Yong).
- CD (1989e), "Shanghai offers aid to disabled" (1989), *China Daily*, 21 November 1989.
- CD (1989f), "Help for retarded children", *China Daily*, 21 November 1989 (He Yijun).
- CD (1990a), "Handicapped contribute in Sichuan" (1990), *China Daily*, 7 February 1990.
- CD (1990b), "Handicapped people find success in local social welfare enterprises", *China Daily*, 12 February 1990 (Wang Dingchen).
- CD (1990c), "Television for the deaf" (1990), *China Daily*, 22 February 1990.
- CD (1990d), "Success of handicapped project is praised", *China Daily*, 22 February 1990 (Ma Zhiping).
- CD (1990e), "Schools needed for 4 million disabled", *China Daily*, 23 February 1990 (Ma Zhiping).
- CD (1990f), "Xiamen sets up centres for disabled", *China Daily*, 27 February 1990.
- CD (1990g), "Refine the rules to protect mental patients" (1990), *China Daily*, 4 April 1990.
- CD (1990h), "City plans centre for the disabled", *China Daily*, 16 July 1990 (Yao Zong & Xiao Chen).
- CD (1990i), "New programmes teach deaf-mutes to speak", *China Daily*, 24 July 1990 (Xu Pci).
- CD (1990j), "1m yuan to aid schools for disabled" (1990), *China Daily*, 30 July 1990.
- CD (1990k), "Law for handicapped ready for discussion" (1990), *China Daily*, 4 September 1990.
- CD (1990l), "NPC set to discuss law for disabled", *China Daily*, 23 October 1990 (Chang Hong).
- CD (1990m), "Jobs for disabled graduates", *China Daily*, 25 October 1990 (Zhang Lin).
- CD (1990n), "Disabled get legal protection", *China Daily*, 26 October 1990 (Chang Hong).
- CD (1990o), "Occupation for disabled emphasized" (1990), *China Daily*, 30 October 1990.
- CD (1990p), "Work for disabled in China wins praise" (1990), *China Daily*, 30 October 1990.
- CD (1990q), "Teachers find new ways to help retarded children", *China Daily*, 1 November 1990 (Li Xing).
- CD (1990r), "Mental centre proposal made", *China Daily*, 3 November 1990 (Chen Pingjun).

- CD (1990s), "Action urged to better conditions for disabled", *China Daily*, 13 November 1990 (Liang Chao).
- CD (1990t), "Help the disabled to find work" (1990), *China Daily*, 11 December 1990.
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