

## THE BURDEN OF MEMORY: The Cultural Revolution and the Holocaust

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"The building of a Cultural Revolution Museum is not the responsibility of one person. Everyone owes it to their children and the future to leave a monument to the harrowing lessons of the past. 'Don't let history repeat itself' should not be an empty statement. Everyone should be able to see clearly, remember fully".<sup>1</sup>

Here, a Chinese intellectual uses words almost identical to Jewish survivors of the Holocaust who also cry "*Le'olam lo od*": "never again". Ba Jin wants a monument that would teach children the "harrowing lessons of the past".

But monuments, as the Jewish historian James Young reminds us, only represent the past.<sup>2</sup> They began to stand more and more for past realities and slowly erased part of what history has to teach. Monuments promote remembering and forgetfulness at once. China has no Cultural Revolution Museum today. Jews, on the other hand, have erected many museums to commemorate the Holocaust. These structures command the landscape from Washington to Los Angeles, from New York to Jerusalem. Yet neither museums nor official commemorations answer Ba Jin's question: how to prevent history from becoming an empty statement? Perhaps, there is no answer. Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that complex events cannot be reduced to one single moral message.

### The Cultural Revolution Was No Holocaust

Ba Jin, veteran of the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and fellow traveler of the Communist revolution since the 1920s, wanted to build a Cultural Revolution

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<sup>1</sup> Ba Jin, "A Cultrev (Cultural Revolution) Museum", in: G. Barné and John Minford (Eds.), *Seeds of Fire: Chinese Voices of Conscience*. London: Hill and Wang 1988, p. 381.

<sup>2</sup> James E. Young, "Jewish Memory in Poland", in: Geoffrey Hartman (Ed.), *Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory*. London: Basil Blackwell 1994, pp. 215-231.

Museum so that history will not repeat itself. He asked his contemporaries to heed George Santayana's often quoted warning: "Those who do not learn from history are condemned to repeat it". Ba Jin's was not a lonely voice in the past-Mao era. Many other writers, poets, and memorialists, used Santayana's motto to think about what went wrong in their own country during the Red Terror of the 1960s.<sup>3</sup> Nien Cheng, the author of *Life and Death in Shanghai*, for example, opens her memoir of the Cultural Revolution with her own impassioned reaffirmation of Santayana: "The past is forever with me and I remember it all".<sup>4</sup> A few pages later, she recalls how the Red Guards stormed into her house to loot, to search out "anti-revolutionary" materials. At this very moment, Nien Cheng finds solace in the *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. The echoes with the *Kristallnacht* (the 1939 beginning of Nazi terror for German Jews) is no accident here. In this memoir, Nien Cheng's house is poised for destruction — each painting, each vase, each curtain about to be torn or broken.

The Chinese word for "Holocaust" — *huojie*, literally "plunder by fire" — has been gaining currency amongst victims of the Cultural Revolution. Used initially to recall Japanese atrocities in China during World War II, it has developed into a subtler, darker question about the "fire" of Maoist policies that "plundered" the lives of millions during the 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>5</sup> But the *huojie* of the Cultural Revolution was no Holocaust. Though the loss of life during prolonged beatings and hard labor was real enough (and the "plunder" of the best years of several generations of young people still aches China today), the Maoist nightmare never reached the depths of despair that engulfed Jews in Europe.

This is partly because what happened in China from 1966 to 1976 was an internal struggle. It was a war of Chinese against Chinese. Some people armed with quotations from Chairman Mao took it upon themselves to struggle against, to persecute, to beat and even to kill those deemed to be enemies of the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution". Yet everyone in China was, in principle, capable of total obedience to the Red Sun. Everyone was forced to memorize quotations from Chair-

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<sup>3</sup> For the repeated use of this motto about the power of the past to instruct the present, see Zhou Ming (Ed.), *Lishi zai zheli chensi* (History has brought us to this meditation), Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe 1986. This is a three-volume collection of Cultural Revolution memoirs detailing the daily experiences of students as well as older intellectuals — both of those who were Red Guards as well as those who were their victims.

<sup>4</sup> Nien Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 10

<sup>5</sup> Wu Tianwei, "Zhongguo de 'huojie'?" ("Is there a Chinese 'Holocaust'?"), in: *Jiujiu xuekan*, Vol. 1, No. 4, Summer 1987, pp. 107-110.

man Mao, everyone was required to perform "loyalty dances" — even "class enemies".<sup>6</sup> Mao's absolute authority in political and spiritual matters depended on very old, very traditional mechanisms of dictatorship which one young critic, Sun Longji, terms as "sodality":

"Within Chinese sodality there is a guaranteed interdependence [...]. And, in typically, infantile fashion, when a man's somatized needs are satisfied by another person, then he must surrender his Heart-and-Mind. Thus the individual comes to obey authority. In this way the Chinese adult never totally outgrows childhood. Throughout Chinese history, the Chinese common man has been the little child of a paternal, but dictatorial ruler".<sup>7</sup>

Hitler was no Mao Zedong. He was not a paternal father to the Jews. He was bent upon their total destruction, no matter if they spoke good German, had memorized his words, or were willing to betray their parents. The Holocaust was no internal struggle but a strategy to dehumanize as well as exterminate the Jews. The concentration camps and gas chambers assaulted the human spirit, not just the body. In the words of the philosopher Jean Amery, what died in Auschwitz was reason itself, the hope of any understanding:

"In the camp, the intellect in its totality declared itself to be incompetent. As a tool for solving the tasks put to us, it admitted defeat. Beauty: that was an illusion. Knowledge: that turned out to be a game with ideas ... The reality of the camp triumphed effortlessly over the entire complex of difficult questions."<sup>8</sup>

The essay from which this thought-defying conclusion is drawn is titled "The Intellectual in Auschwitz". It describes, among other terrifying moments, the ridiculous effort to talk about German poetry on a march to forced labor. It details the total

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<sup>6</sup> For a fuller description of the "loyalty dances" and the spiritual humiliation these dances brought upon intellectuals castigated as "enemies of the people", see Yue Daiyun, *To the Storm*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1985.

<sup>7</sup> Sun Longji, "The Deep Structure of Chinese Culture", in: G. Barné, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

<sup>8</sup> Jean Amery, *At the Mind's Limit*. New York: Schocken Books 1986, pp. 15 and 19.

devastation of the spirit in a world in which there were no books, no ideas. Just hunger, humiliation, and death. Read by a Chinese survivor of the Cultural Revolution, this work might seem to echo the singling out of intellectuals for persecution in the 1960s. This was the time when old professors and learned persons from all walks of life were labeled *qiu lao jiu*, or "stinking ninth" — the worst of the class enemies (after "revisionists" and "capitalists", "traitors", etc.) to be struggled with by the Red Guards.

But no matter how much stench was presumed to emanate from the educated in China, they were never degraded to the subhuman level described by Art Spiegelman in *Maus* — a book of terrifying cartoons which opens with Hitler's words: "Jews are undoubtedly a race, but they are not human".<sup>9</sup> Demonology certainly thrived during the Cultural Revolution. "Ox-devils" and snake-spirits" (*niu hui sheshen*) was a common appellation for "class-enemies", along with "rotten dog's head", "evil wind", "pests and vermin".<sup>10</sup> *Niuping*, "ox-pens", were set up to interrogate and to beat prominent victims of Red Terror — all in the name of "re-education".

In the intense fervor of "class-struggle" the oldest, most violent folk beliefs surfaced, including the notion that it was morally beneficial to eat the heart and liver of one's enemies. We now know, from the scrupulous, unofficial researches of Zheng Yi (a writer who escaped from China after 1989) that cannibalism did take place in certain parts of China during the Cultural Revolution. Zheng's book, *Red Memorial*, details fifty six cases of the eating of human flesh in one county in Jiangxi province. Zheng Yi even goes as far as to trace down the "poor peasant" responsible for the most public disembowelment. He finds the man accused of wielding the vegetable cleaver to be quite unrepentant and still quoting Chairman Mao:

"Didn't Chairman Mao teach us: If we can't kill them, they'll kill us? It's life and death. It's class struggle! [...] The government should have killed him, should not have left it to us. I just did the handiwork. The first knife didn't work so I threw it away. I got

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<sup>9</sup> Art Spiegelman, *Maus*. New York: Pantheon 1985.

<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth J. Perry and Li Xin, "Revolutionary Rudeness: The Language of Red Guards and Rebel Workers in China's Cultural Revolution", in *Indiana East Asian Working Papers*, No. 2, July 1993, p. 7.

him opened with the second knife. But I was not the one to pull out the heart and liver".<sup>11</sup>

Zheng Yi's book comes close to answering Ba Jin's plea for a memorial of the Cultural Revolution. Though it is not a physical museum, *Red Memorial* is a testament to the potential intelligibility of atrocity. Recollection of the disembowelment of Jews on their way to the gas chambers in Treblinka, by contrast, defies any "reason". Some were disemboweled, many kicked, most gassed. No such words as "class-struggle" apply here. This is what Jean Amery tried to suggest when he said that Reason was murdered in Auschwitz. This is what sets him apart from a Chinese intellectual such as Zheng Yi who presumes that it is possible to make sense of history — even when fact finding is still thwarted by the powers at be.

Despite the demonology, cannibalism and violence that was China's daily fare for a decade, the Cultural Revolution never aimed to defeat sense-making the way that Hitler tried to in the death camps. Li Zehou, a Chinese philosopher who survived the dark decade of 1966-1976, might well sympathize with Jean Amery's radical deprivation in Auschwitz. But he never experienced them. When he was sent down to the countryside in 1972 (for what he then assumed would be a life long exile), Li managed to hide Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* among his belongings, along with the required Red Book of quotations from Chairman Mao. Less than a decade later, in 1979, Li was back in Beijing, publishing a critique of Kant's critique and calling for a revival of the philosophy of esthetics.<sup>12</sup> Li Zehou, with one hidden book, managed to salvage what of Jean Amery with no books and a head full of useless quotations from German poetry lost in Auschwitz: the hope of cultural generation through reason.

Because of this hope, China could return to a quest for normalcy after the death of Mao, The spiritual terrain, though greatly ravaged, could be reseeded. This is the traditional goal of "harmony" described by Ma Sheng-mei in an essay comparing the survival literatures of the Cultural Revolution and that of the Holocaust. Exploring the various strategies used by Chinese and Jewish poets to describe the historical trauma of their contemporaries, Ma points out the difference between the "obscurity" of poems that evoke the unspeakable facts of Holocaust in Europe and

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<sup>11</sup> This excerpt from Zheng Yi's *Red Memorial* is translated and discussed in Liu Binyan, "An Unnatural Disaster", in: *The New York Review of Books*, 8 April 1993, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Li Zehou, "Houji" ("Postface"), *Pipan zhexue de pipan (The Critique of Critical Philosophy)*. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe 1979.

works that recall the Cultural Revolution in China. Jewish poets like Paul Celan war with language in the name of ineffable history, while writers like Bei Dao preserve their faith in the healing power of literature.<sup>13</sup> Beauty and harmony are words that retain some meaning for Chinese poets after the death of Mao. They are empty in the world of Jean Amery.

Yet the corrosive power of history has its limits even in the darkest corner of Jewish nightmares. Poems continue to be written after the Holocaust by survivors as well as by their children. These Jews cannot leave alone the stench of history. Naming history, even when words are inadequate, is the starting point for the recovery of memory. David Koenig, an American-Jewish poet whose parents fled Vienna in 1939, puts this willful recovery in simple words:

After the Holocaust,  
 No poetry--  
 That is what they say--  
 But I write poems about it...  
 Forgive me.  
 I am not unstrung.  
 The poems keep me sane.  
 I guard them  
 Like torn and injured pages  
 From buried books of prayer.<sup>14</sup>

Refusing to become unstrung is one way to talk back to reason-defying events such as the Holocaust.

Some Holocaust survivors have argued for the dignity of silence while others have focused their energies on building public memorials. Elie Wiesel is one of those who try to do both. He has written volumes and volumes of stories, novels, poems and essays about the unspeakable events that took the life of his family and community in Transylvania. He also headed the Presidential Commission that began planning for the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. If Ba Jin could have

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<sup>13</sup> Ma Sheng-mei, "Contrasting Survival Literatures: On the Jewish Holocaust and the Chinese Cultural Revolution", in *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 1987, pp. 47-92.

<sup>14</sup> David Koenig, "After the Holocaust, No Poetry", in Charles Fisherman (Ed.), *Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust*. Lubbock, Texas: Texas Tech University Press 1991.

consulted one expert in the art of memorializing shameful events, it would have been Elie Wiesel. Yet, in the very midst of his tireless efforts to create linguistic and stone structures aimed at preventing history from repeating itself, Wiesel warned about the risks embodied in a massive project such as the Holocaust Museum: "Either this place will be a sanctuary or an abomination".<sup>15</sup>

Stark as this contrast is, it does capture one prominent survivor's worry about the monumentalized Holocaust. Chinese survivors of the Cultural Revolution do not have this concern, yet. There is no Cultural Revolution Museum in China. There is no public place for memorial pilgrimages yet. But a question looms nonetheless: How much of history's nightmare can be housed in a Museum? The edification of the past rarely leaves room for shame, rage, betrayal — which is why Yang Zai-dao and other survivors of persecution still whisper on the outskirts of public commemoration. Their rebuttals cannot be made in the glaring light of public ceremonies. There, history needs to appear complete, didactic, reasonable. Personal memory, by contrast, is fractured, a crumpled note in the wall of the monumentalized past.

### The Historian as Physician of Memory?

The "lessons of history" are more mutable at the periphery of the Chinese cultural world than at its center. A dance performance about remembering in New York can challenge, but not dislodge the forgetting being institutionalized in Beijing. The Chinese government's strategy of political re-education following the shooting of June 4th was meant to enforce amnesia about the true purpose of the student movement for reform. "Memory is a fragile thing", reported Elizabeth F. Loftus, a professor of psychology who researched Chinese methods of promoting amnesia after 1989. According to this American scholar, the memory of the Chinese people forced to repeat a lie became more and more vulnerable over time: "All the right psychological ingredients are in place for the lie to become truth ... reason for us to view the future of memories of Tiananmen Square with pessimism".<sup>16</sup>

Yet the psychologist's pessimism was premature. It is too soon for us to know the true fate of memory in the People's Republic of China. Professor Loftus, reporting to the American Psychological Association two months after the crackdown

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<sup>15</sup> Judith Miller, *One by One by One: Facing the Holocaust*. New York: Simon and Schuster 1990, p. 262.

<sup>16</sup> Report by Elizabeth Loftus to the American Psychological Association, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 15 September 1989, p. 4.

in Beijing, focused on the harsh measures which were being imposed on the population, especially in Beijing. But with a historian's perspective, one can see that strategies for enforcing amnesia have not been thoroughly effective. Each year when June 4th nears, the Chinese government shudders with anxiety and "protective" measures are enacted to make sure no commemorations of the student movement takes place in Tiananmen Square. Away from the large chunk of pavement it controls, the government's policy is less effective. Poems, memoirs and collections of documents about the events of 1989 have been pouring out of China. Mostly published abroad, these materials invariably find their way back "home" and from there, they continue to disturb the "peace" of forgetting that Loftus worried about in August 1989.

The future of memory is far from bleak on the Chinese mainland. Yet how are we to evaluate its future? Who will design its parameters? How will the lessons of hope be extracted from the rubble of remembrance? Charles S. Maier, a historian of German strategies for amnesia after the war, writes quite worried about what he calls a "surfeit of memory".<sup>17</sup> Maier believes that modern society is in danger of an addiction to memory at the cost of political action:

Let me summarize the political argument: the surfeit of memory is a sign not of political confidence but of retreat from transformative politics. It testifies to a loss of a future orientation, of progress toward civic enfranchisement and growing equality. It reflects a new focus on narrow ethnicity ... I believe that when we turn to memory it should be to retrieve the object of memory, not just to enjoy the sweetness of melancholy.<sup>18</sup>

But, is memory a retrievable "object"? Or does it disintegrate in our hands whenever we want to squeeze it for political messages about "civic enfranchisement"? To be sure, some of the ways in which Chinese and Jewish memory is being regathered in our time does reinforce some kind of "ethnicity", but it hardly seems that of a narrow stripe. Nor is the content of this quest motivated by the "sweetness of melancholy".

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<sup>17</sup> Charles S. Maier, "A Surfeit of Memory? Reflections on History, Melancholy, and Denial", *History of Memory*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Fall/Winter 1993), pp. 136-151.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.



Yu Guangzhong writes about mother and graves and barbed wire with an edge of nostalgia. But only because he knows that "homecoming" is forever denied.

Even if there were a surfeit of memory, how are we to access it? How are we to confront its shredded fabric in our time? Rosenstock-Husey is one historian who takes such questions to heart. Though he is not writing about the recent happenings in China or about the proliferation of Holocaust memorials in the Jewish world, his work outlines the distinctive responsibility that historians have in times prone to amnesia. His recommendation is nothing short of a total redefinition of the historian's task. Far from being a collector of "facts", she (though Rosenstock-Husey always refers to "him") must now become a "physician of memory":

It is his honor to heal the wounds, genuine wounds. As a physician must act, regardless of medical theories, because his patient is ill. So a historian must act under a moral pressure to restore a nation's memory, and that of mankind. Buried instincts, repressed fears, painful scars come for treatment to the historian. The historian regenerates the great moments of history and disentangles them from the mist of particularity.<sup>19</sup>

The only similarity between Charles Maier and Rosenstock-Husey is their concern with narrow "particularity". They both want a vaster vista for the historian — the former in the realm of political action, the latter in the sphere of memorial-recovery. Rosenstock-Husey's call to conscience places great responsibility on the historian. To be sure, "the patient is ill", not only in China where strategies for forgetting are applied rather nakedly, but also in most of the Western world.

We must ask a further question. Is the historian truly capable of "healing" the wound of forgetting? According to Arthur Schlesinger: "Too often it is those who can remember the past who are condemned to repeat it".<sup>20</sup> In other words, the historian is as ill as the society whose memory he seeks to "cure". Whatever mission he or she might have, the historian is ill served by outworn notions of medical healing. Even Freud, the first doctor to try to actually become a physician of memory was more modest than Rosenstock-Husey about his ability to "restore the memory

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<sup>19</sup> Eugene Rosenstock-Huessy, *Out of Revolution: Autobiography of Western Man*. New York: Four Wells Press 1964, p. 696.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in W. Andrew Achenbach, "Public History's Past, Present and Prospects", *American Historical Review*, 92:5 (December 1987), p. 170.

of mankind". Precisely because he spent most of his life researching buried instincts, repressed fears and painful scars — both in the individual patients he analyzed and in the social matrix that dominated his later years (spent in the shadow of rising Nazism), Freud was cautious about the nature of "healing" through memory.

His essay "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through" addresses this problem directly. It, too, is concerned with recovering forgotten events. The goal of psychoanalysis, according to Freud, is to "fill in gaps of memory".<sup>21</sup> The transformation thus effected will, in Freud's view, enable the patient to move beyond painful, forgetful repetition: "The patient does not *remember* anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, but *acts* it out. He reproduces it not as a memory but as an action; he *repeats* it, without, of course, knowing that he repeats it".<sup>22</sup>

Freud, the doctor, like Rosenstock-Husey, the historian, is concerned with freedom from repetition. For both theoreticians, remembering is the key to emancipation from the endless acting out of the nightmares of history. Psychoanalysis tries to effect such liberation on the individual level, and sometimes succeeds. Historians' works rarely penetrate the layers of the collective unconscious to the point of arresting the process of repetition. We must, therefore, define more limited goals for the morally urgent challenge of recovering memory. One place to look for guidance is the work of psychologists who have treated patients traumatized by history. In a recent essay on "How Bodies Remember", Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman suggest that Chinese survivors of the Cultural Revolution cannot but bear society's enforced forgetting upon their own skin. Dizziness, exhaustion and pain are here seen as expressions of a broad societal distress: "To be dizzy (or vertiginous, Chinese patients do not make a distinction between the two) is to be unbalanced, to experience malaise, to be diseased ... To experience dizziness is to live and relive the memory of trauma".<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> For a fuller discussion of Freud's essay and its significance for contemporary memory studies, see Edward Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press 1987, p. 205.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Arthur Kleinman, *The Illness Narrative*. New York: Basic Books 1988. In a recent paper, "Suffering and its Professional Transformation" (presented at the first conference of the Society for Psychological Anthropology, October 1989), Kleinman elaborates further his critique of the uses of "post-traumatic stress syndrome": "The very idea of post-traumatic stress as a disorder invalidates the moral and political meaning of suffering. After all in both traditional Chinese and Western culture, the idea of suffering turned on the idea of having to endure or bear great hardship. The idea of suffering carried the moral significance of endurance. These connotations

The Kleinmans' work takes seriously both the testimony of Chinese victims of the Cultural Revolution and the cultural tradition that frames their experience. They do not fear the "mists of particularity" and feel free to draw upon traditional Chinese medicine and philosophy to explain how Chinese patients somatize memories of historical trauma: "Fatigue and weakness in traditional Chinese medical theory express loss or blockage in the flow of *qi* (vital energy). Devitalization is understood to affect the body-self and the network of connections (*guanxi wang*), the microscopic local world and the macroscopic society".<sup>24</sup> The body, in this context, does not represent suffering but conveys it in living form.

This connection between the body and the remembered past is also manifested in the life of Sima Qian, the Grand Historian of the Han Dynasty. A scholar-official who chose the shame of castration in order to gain time to finish his comprehensive work on history, Sima Qian paid an exorbitantly high physical price for the sake of cultural memory. The Grand Historian found courage for his choice in his belief that the fate of the future depends on the density of our connection to the past. The historian, according to Sima Qian, has two goals: "to console the dead for their sorrows" and to "instruct the living and the unborn".<sup>25</sup> Sima Qian was no physician of memory. He contented himself with recording carefully the variety of human characters and actions embodied in actual events. To "console the dead", after all, is a modest aim — one which was at the heart of the entire practice of ancestor worship.

This essay ends with a painting by Chen Yifei, "Modern Young People Thinking about History".<sup>26</sup> Chen Yifei is part of the "generation after". Born after the birth of Communist China, even after the worst excesses of the Cultural Revolution, Chen can almost afford the leisure of an armchair contemplation of history. But the chair stands empty, almost menacing in the foreground of the picture. The young

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are lost when suffering is configured as stress with which we cope (either adaptively or ineffectively) or a disease that can be cured" (p. 30).

<sup>24</sup> Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman, "How Bodies Remember: Social Memory and Bodily Experience of Criticism, Resistance and Delegitimation Following China's Cultural Revolution". Seminar paper for the conference on "Remembering and Forgetting", University of Virginia, 27 January 1993.

<sup>25</sup> Burton Watson, *Ssu-ma Ch'ien: Grand Historian of China*. New York: Columbia University Press 1958, p. 126.

<sup>26</sup> For a fuller discussion of this painting, see Joan Lebold Cohen, *The New Chinese Painting 1949-1986*. New York: Harry N. Abrams 1987, pp. 99-101.

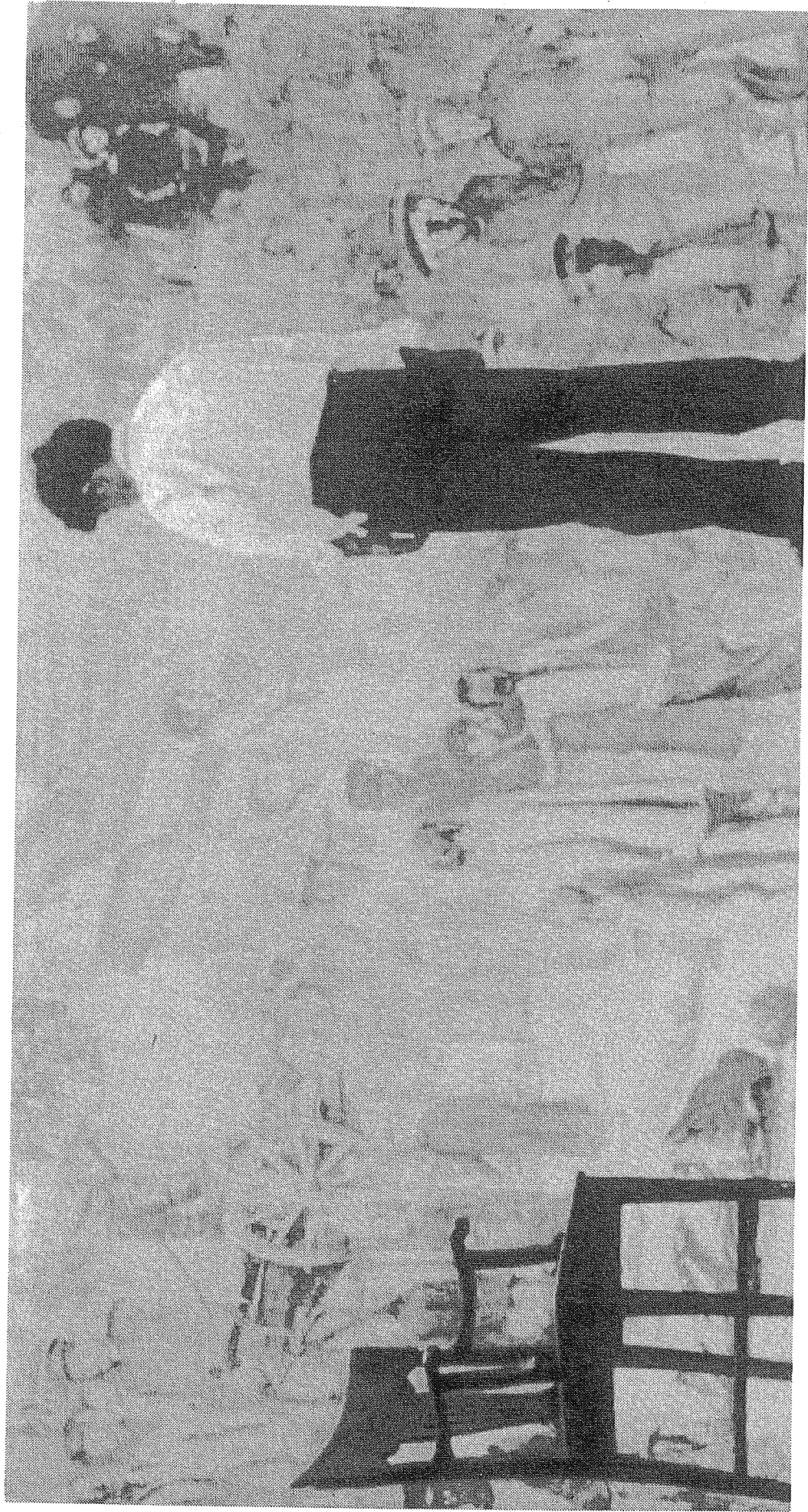
man can ill afford to sit and contemplate. Instead he turns to face the past. He allows memory's disconnected, often violent images to flood him: the naked children, the long queues of former times that are only too present. To be "modern" might simply mean that one has the use of a clean white shirt while historical personages are being led off to destruction.

Nothing may be salvaged by this gazing, but the young man has his sleeves rolled up. He is willing to try to do something. Even if just to paint this work, to take upon himself the questioning look. This is what Daniel Tornopolsky did when he brought a court case in Argentina. Daniel's parents "disappeared" in the early hours of 15 July 1976. For many years it was forbidden to ask about their whereabouts. After the fall of the junta, it became inconvenient. Yet Daniel looked questioningly upon history. He asked. He brought his case against two former chiefs of staff who had been connected to the murder of the "disappeared". This gesture ran against the grain according to Argentina novelist, Marcos Aquinis: "Remember, this is a country where even non-Jews know they have no rights. Ask anybody on the street and he will tell you, there is one law for us, and one law for them. Nobody expects justice here, and it is easier to forget".

Daniel Tornopolsky did not forget. He couldn't. And he won a three million dollar settlement. This is not simply a story with a happy ending. This is no victory for the Wal-Mart warriors. It is, according to Daniel's cousin Noga Tornopolsky, a small victory against the large scale "murder of memory in Argentina". The murder goes on whenever Argentines agree that it is easier to forget. Like Chen Yifei's young man, Tornopolsky got off his armchair, turned around, and demanded an accounting. "Memory", in Noga Tornopolsky's words, "is the only barrier against the recurrence of barbarism".<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Noga Tornopolsky, "Murdering Memory in Argentina", *The New York Times*, 15 December 1994, p. 26.



Chen Yifei, "Modern Young People Thinking about History".