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Discussion with Professor Wang

January 16, 1991

RM: Well, here we are on January 16, 1991.

TY: Yes, we are all in a nervous state. It is the deadline for the U.N. Resolution on Iraq.

RM: Let's start with your graduation from Qing Hua.

TY: After graduation, I was admitted to the Graduate School at the same university.

RM: That was in 1933?

TY: Yes. I was admitted to graduate school for a master's degree, specializing in International Law. I worked under a professor whose name was also Wang - Professor Wang Hua-Cheng.

RM: A good professor? well-known?

TY: No. In China, he was not very well-known. He was a Ph.D. from Chicago, a student of Quincy Wright. During these years, many things were happening in North China. The Japanese aggression was going on, which had

an impact on life there. The first day I was in Beijing, Manchuria was occupied by the Japanese. That was in 1931. In 1933 Japanese forces threatened to occupy Beijing, and ^{on} the last day I was in Beijing, the 7th of July, 1937, the Sino-Japanese war broke out. I studied three years in Qing Hua at graduate school and wrote a thesis on the ~~occupied~~ ^{leased} territories ^{in China}. I received my master's degree in 1936 and, at the same time, I passed the national examination for going abroad. I passed it for the topic of International Law. I chose to go to London to study under the supervision of Lauterpacht.

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RM: That was in 1936?

TY: 1937. It was 1937 to 1939. I spent two years in London. According to regulations of the Ministry of Education, a person who was nominated to go abroad had to stay in China for one year to study under a Chinese professor's supervision. So I stayed in Beijing from 1936 to 1937, after which I went to England.

RM: What were you doing? ~~During~~ that year 1936 to 1937?

TY: I was doing research work under the supervision of Professor Zhou.

RM: In Peking, still at Qing Hua?

TY: Yes, I stayed in Qing Hua, but my supervisor was not a Qing Hua professor, he was a professor at Wuhan University.

RM: Was there much International Law in Chinese universities at that time?

TY: Not many had International Law programmes, but the well-known Political Science Departments had programmes. In China at that time, International Law was a ~~division of~~ ^{course in the} Political Science ^{department}, as in U.S. universities, ~~not part~~ ^{it was} of ~~Law~~. For instance, in Qing Hua, there was no Law School until 1936. I studied International Law in the Political Science Department and the professor who supervised me was also a professor of Political Science. It was the same case in Wuhan University. Zhou Gengsheng, who was the supervisor of my studies, ~~in Beijing~~, was also a professor in the Political Science Department. So the method of study was rather like the method of a Political Science Department here: We didn't do case studies. We used Hershey's textbooks. Sometimes we used Fenwick's book as a reference. We also read Oppenheim's but, of course, it's rather big! The library was good at that time, but there were not as many published books available as there are now - over the last 50 years. At Qing Hua University the library was excellent. I think it was the best in China at the time.

RM: Better than Peking University?

TY: Oh, much better than Peking University! Qing Hua had a grant that came from the Boxer Rebellion Indemnity Fund. We could get any book we wanted, we just had to ask the library to buy the books from abroad. It was ~~even~~ ^{so much} easier then than it is today in Peking University. There were articles published in the academic journals in both Qing Hua and Wuhan Universities which were very substantial. I think they were rather good articles,

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which could be used as a reference even today.

RM: So would we say that Qing Hua was the leading university at the time?

TY: Yes, especially in certain fields: social science, literature, and also natural sciences.

RM: Also in Law?

TY: No. Remember, there was no Law Department until 1936!

RM: Political Science, then?

TY: Yes. In ^{the} Political Science ^{Department,} there were law courses; for instance, Introduction to the Study of Law, Civil Law - no Criminal Law - International Law, and Private International Law.

RM: Well, now we have you in London, at LSE. We talked about that briefly the last time. Is there anything else that we should include about that phase of your life?

TY: You know, the Anti-Japanese war broke out, so there was some involvement in movements against the Japanese. I attended several meetings, which were held by professors, scholars, and experts to explain the situation in the Far East. I remember an excellent lecture by ^{Professor} C.K. Webster, the historian. His topic was Sino-Japanese Relations. Of course, the lecture

Professor
by Harold Laski was also very good.

RM: Laski, of course, was outstanding.

TY: Yes. Also, I think I wrote one or two letters to the Times. Very short ones, arguing on behalf of China.

RM: Did you! Were they published?

TY: They published two.

RM: In 1939?

TY: No. It was 1937 or 1938.

RM: Did you keep copies of those letters?

TY: No. I never did. During those two years, I went across to Europe twice. Once to Paris and, afterwards, to Grenoble to study French. ~~That~~ ¹⁹ was in the summer in 1939. ~~I~~ ^{that} I went to Germany, to Berlin, then to Leipsig, because one of my friends was there. However, at that time it was felt that war was imminent and I had to go back to Paris to find out what I should do. I decided to go home, so I took a train to Marseilles, then the boat, which went to Saigon then to Yunnan and afterwards to Chungqing, as I said last time.

RM: That was a difficult trip home, wasn't it? Once you got to Saigon -

TY: It was a very difficult trip home. The conditions on the train were the worst. There were no beds, sometimes you couldn't find a seat, so you stood there for hours.

RM: In what year did you arrive back in Beijing?

TY: It was 1946.

RM: Didn't you leave Marseilles in 1939 by boat?

TY: Yes. But before I arrived back to Beijing, I went to Chungqing, which was the capital during the war. Beijing was occupied by the Japanese at that time.

RM: Yes, of course! So what date did you arrive in Chungqing?

TY: It was 1939, around November.

RM: What was the situation in Chungqing when you were there?

TY: It was very bad. Politically, there was much strife between the Kuomintang and the Communists. Militarily, the city was being bombed repeatedly. Economically, prices rose very high, very quickly. So professors had a very poor life.

RM: Did you find a teaching position right away?

TY: No. I had to wait for a recommendation from my former supervisor, Zhou Gengsheng. Before that, I stayed in Chungking for six months without any job. I stayed in my friend's house without paying any rent, which was lucky for me. Then I got a job as an editor of the journal "World Politics", which paid me some money. I didn't like that job, though, it was too political. I preferred academic work. At last, my supervisor did get back to me with a recommendation for Wuhan University. It was not Wuhan as it is today, but in Sichuan, a very small town. They withdrew from Wuhan to Sichuan in 1937 when the war broke out. So I stayed there for two years, giving courses and writing short articles.

RM: And Cai was with you?

TY: We met in Chengdu in 1940! We were introduced by one of my friends, so I went to Chengdu to meet her. After one year, we were married. From 1940 to 1942, I taught at Wuhan University and at the same time, I wrote some articles which were published in academic and political journals on topics that were current at that time. After that, I moved to Central University in Chungking. After 1949, Central University became Nanking University. It was called Central because it was established as the first ^{governmental} one in the country (ranked no. 1 in the country ~~X~~) by the Kuomintang ~~Minister~~ ^{Ministry} of Education. In Chungking, there was not only Central University, but there was also a second university, Chungking University. At the end of the war, Central ~~moved~~ ^{University} to Nanking and retained its name. The name Central ~~was~~ ^{University}

changed to Nanking ^{University} after 1949, after the Liberation. At Central University, there was much ~~more~~ of a political atmosphere. The change of the university President was dominated by political forces. Personally, I didn't get involved in politics. I didn't like that university very much, but I stayed there to teach. The only thing I did in that period other than teaching courses, was to write articles on the new ^{Sino-foreign} treaties, as well as articles on the effect of war on treaties. The articles on the effect of war on treaties were published in the Central University Journal of Social Sciences. At the same time, I wrote articles on the new treaties of 1943. The 1943 treaties were treaties which abolished extra-territorial jurisdiction in China. That meant that the main extra-territorial system was abolished as a result. The articles I wrote were collected into two ^{monographs} ~~pamphlets~~. I lost my copies of the ^{monographs} ~~pamphlets~~ before ^{the} liberation, but afterwards, some students sent me them ~~again~~. One was called "War and Treaties"; the other was called "Studies on New Treaties". During war time, I published these two as well as another one, which was a paper on the status of aliens, written in English. I remember that I mentioned this to you last time.

RM: Yes. So that was two years, then, teaching there?

TY: Four years in Central University. The war ended in 1945, but I wasn't able to get an airplane to go to Nanking or Beijing, so I had to wait in Chungking for another year. It wasn't until October 1946 that I was finally able to go to Beijing and I've been there ever since.

RM: With Cai and your family.

TY: Yes. At that time, we had only one child.

RM: Then, you went directly to Peking University.

TY: Yes. I was recommended by Qian Duansheng who was a Ph.D. from Harvard University and a good friend of John Fairbank. He taught in Harvard Law School for one year. I was his student when I was in ^{Qing Hua} college, so he recommended me to be a professor ^{in Peking University} there. After one year he left China for the U.S. and began teaching at Harvard Law School. Then I was requested to be the Head of the Department, in 1948.

of Political Science

RM: This was the Political Science Department?

TY: Yes. There was a Law Department, but ^I ~~we~~ belonged to the Political Science Department. Students and Faculty Members always thought that the Political Science Department was a much better department than the Law Department. Generally in China, Law Departments were often dominated by Japanese-trained lawyers. There were two schools of law then; one was Suzhou which was teaching common law, but it wasn't very popular in China. People like Dr. Yuanli ^{Liang} belonged to the Suzhou University Law School. Then you had another school in Beijing, which was Japanese-dominated. Most of the professors were educated in Japan. The professors in Peking University, ^{Law School} by comparison, were somewhat of the old tradition, so they were not so good. We were lucky to be in the Political Science

Department!

RM: Also, the university was downtown at that time.

TY: Yes. The buildings were in the place where Mao Tse Tung worked. The lecture rooms were in a separate building, the offices were in another building, and we lived outside of this, in the university dormitories. We had, for instance, 12 families in a large group of houses. Our life was not so happy then, because the economic situation in Beijing was not good. The pay for the professors was always low, so we could not sustain our lives simply by our monthly salaries. We wrote articles in order to earn royalties. Cai had to manage the money very carefully, otherwise we would not make both ends meet at the end of the month.

RM: Was Cai working at that time?

TY: No. She was at home with our two children, who were ~~very young~~ ^{little}. I should mention that I knew an American scholar called Dr. Dorothy Borg who was a member of the American Branch of the Institute of Pacific Relations. She was introduced to me by Qian Duansheng, the former Chairman of the Department. I arranged for her to come to my Department to give a series of lectures on Modern European History. We also organised groups for discussing international problems, especially problems of China's relations with foreign countries. We organised the groups in different professors' houses, with someone to take notes. The person who was the note-taker was Harriet Mills; she afterwards became professor of Chinese

Literature at Michigan University. I mention this because after seven years, in 1957, I was accused of having special relations with foreign spies. You know, Harriet Mills was jailed by the Security Department for three or four years in Beijing. She wrote an article describing how she was jailed by the Security Department and then, how she finally got permission to leave.

RM: Is she still living?

TY: I think yes, she is still in Ann Arbor, but quite old.

RM: You must have been aware of the fighting that was going on between the Kuomintang and Mao Tse Tung, so it must have been a very uneasy time.

TY: We were enthusiastic about the victory of the Communist Army. There was a well-known weekly journal called "The Observer", where we found articles describing the movement of the Communist Party and the war between the two parties. The journal was enthusiastic about the downfall of the Chiang Kaishek Regime, because it was so corrupt. In the last year of that regime the economic situation was so bad that people couldn't even carry money with them, because the value decreased so rapidly it would have had no value.

practically

RM: Were classes going on?

TY: Classes were going on, but the students were very active in political

movements. There were so many societies and groups in the universities that no one knew which were Communist, Progressive, or Reactionary. Sometimes you would find very reactionary students were really communists. It was a sort of underground work. I was in contact with some of those students working underground, but what I did was to give speeches to the students. For instance, I gave a speech on ^{occasion celebrating} the May 4 Event of 1919 - the Paris Conference. Just before the Liberation of Beijing, the situation became very tense for ^{the} ~~my~~ students. ^{At last} ~~For one thing~~, ^{time} most of the progressive students went to the liberated area. One of these students came to my house and didn't tell me anything, but hinted about it. If I wanted to go to the liberated area, ^{he} ~~she~~ would arrange it. My personal feeling at the time was that I would have liked to go, but I couldn't. I had my family - my wife and two children. It would have been very dangerous. So I stayed in Beijing until the Liberation, to see what would happen after that.

RM: What happened on Liberation Day? Where were you?

TY: We were very excited. In the morning, I stayed at home. I was informed by one of my students that it would be that day, I think it was February 2nd...

TY: Cai has just said that after listening to my talk of our past history, she remembers many things about our past forty years together.

RM: We will have to get Cai to give some memoirs soon.

TY: She has had a very simple life, taking care of the children most of the time.

RM: But a very important life.

TY: She did work in Peking University Library from 1952 until 1972.

RM: Twenty years. I didn't realize! We'll have to come back to that. So, you were telling us about the day of liberation.

TY: This was February 2, 1949. I was informed by one of my students that the city would be liberated and that the Communist Army would march into the city that morning. I got out of bed and ran out of my house to one of the city gates. We stood at the side of the road there to wait and to watch when the Liberation Army would come. It was not very long after - about half an hour - that the Liberation Army came with tanks -

RM: Was this early in the morning?

TY: Not very early. It was about ten o'clock, and they came with tanks, infantry, in all, it was a huge Army! It was very serious. We threw flowers and we even climbed on the tanks in our excitement, but they didn't care, they just continued on their way into the city. I think everyone in the streets was very happy with the Army.

RM: Was it a massive demonstration? That was the day that the People's

Republic was proclaimed, wasn't it?

TY: No, it was not that same day. That proclamation was made only ^{on} ~~after~~ the 1st of October, 1949. After the Liberation in February, 1949, the first thing the Communist Party did was to organise the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. It was a national conference, not a ~~formal~~ ^{constituent} one, but an advisory conference. It passed a Common Programme on September 29, 1949. Afterwards, ^{on} October 1, 1949, there was a mass meeting in Tian An Meng. All the leaders were there, including Mao Tse Tung. He made a short speech and we students and teachers were in a long row, standing and watching everything that happened.

RM: On the day that the Army came in, were there no speeches, nothing?

TY: No. Nothing.

RM: During that period, from February, 1949 on, was the university working, were you going in to teach classes, etc. or was everything suspended?

TY: Things were not normal, but classes went on.

RM: The students were there?

TY: Yes. They were there, but they were busy because they had to attend classes and there were many social activities for the new regime.

RM: The economic situation must still have been very bad, though.

TY: It was not so bad. They introduced a new ^{the token of} system of distribution. You didn't get paid money, your salary was given in rice. It was kind of an equity system. Everybody had basically the same salary. It was what was called "war-time communism".

RM: There must have been a great deal of excitement in the city.

TY: Personally, I was very busy ^{Party leader (second to Mao)} because I had many meetings to attend. One important meeting was where Liu Shaoqi made a speech after visiting Tianjin. In that speech, he said that capitalism had to be preserved; he tried to accomodate the capitalists. It was one of the most important speeches he made during the first days of Liberation. I also attended some conferences. One conference was to mobilize students and professors to go to the South, because the South had not yet been liberated. Some people in Beijing organised the students and professors to go with the Army to South to become cadres of the Army, as well as the officials for the local government. It was my intention to go, but I was advised by friends not to go because in Beijing there were more important tasks to be done.

Something happened to me which was very interesting. The first international conference convened in Beijing in 1950, which was called the "Beijing Peace Conference". Also in 1950, I was sent out with a delegation headed by Liu Ningyi, the leader of the labour union, to go to

China

visit Britain.

RM: Can you tell me something about that first international conference?

TY: It was a peace conference. There were a lot of speeches made by well-known pacificists who came to Beijing to attend the conference, such as a scientist in Britain at the time who was known for his nuclear research.

RM: We can find his name later. So this was a big conference, two or three days or longer?

TY: It was a big conference and I remember it went on for a week. I was there to accompany some guests - the Pakistan delegation - to visit places of interest. That was my job: to attend the conference and accompany the delegation on their visits.

RM: Next point then, your trip to Britain. What date was that?

TY: It was 1950 in August and October. The plan of the delegation was to celebrate the ^{Chinese} national day in London, which is October 1. We were not very happy, though, because war broke out between Korea and the United States. So we were not very happy in Britain, which was the reason why the next year we tried to go again, but our applications for visas were not approved by the British government.

RM: Was there anything, at that point, happening in the legal field in

Beijing?

TY: Yes. There was the abolition movement. I was not in Beijing at the time it began, because I was in Britain. It was a movement against the Six Codes, which were codes containing six laws. It was very serious. Most of the lawyers of the old generation had to criticize themselves. It meant that the codes had to be abolished and their ideas abolished too. So there was a political aspect to it. I didn't attend that movement because I was in Britain at the time.

old Chinese

RM: Was there anything going on in the field of International Law at that stage?

TY: Yes. I was invited to join a delegation to the United Nations in 1950.

RM: As early as that?

TY: Yes, a delegation was established under the direction of one of the important leaders of the Communist Party, Zhang Wentian. The delegation was composed of more than fifty people. We intended to go to the United Nations in the Summer of 1950. We made all the preparations for the trip, the government had even given us money to prepare and to buy Western clothes - we didn't have any. The leader of the delegation even asked my wife to go with me, but she declined because we had two children then and according to regulations, children could not go abroad with parents.

RM: So Cai had to stay home.

TY: Unfortunately, it had not been possible for me to go. However, the whole delegation was refused by the United Nations.

RM: Of course! There was the problem of representation. The Credentials Committee, probably.

TY: Yes. Also, the Korean War was going on. I mentioned that I was sent to Britian; I was asked to stop in Moscow on the way home.

RM: What year was this?

TY: It was in November, 1950. I didn't know why I was asked to go to Moscow, but people later told me that I was originally intended to join the delegation of General Wu Ziuzhuan, who had been on the United Nations' Security Council, arguing on behalf of China. Premier Zhou Enlai originally planned to have more than twenty people in the delegation, which would have included me. However, that number was reduced.

RM: So now you are travelling from London to Moscow?

TY: Yes. I stayed in Moscow for a few days and I didn't know why. They told me I could go back to Beijing, because my name had been deleted from the list of people who were going to New York. Premier Zhou thought that it was not necessary to have so many people going to New York. They ended up

sending only five people. Two of them were General Wu and Chao Guanhua, who later became the Foreign Minister of China. I went back home.

RM: You went by rail from Moscow to *Beijing*.

TY: Yes. From Moscow, and it took seven days.

RM: The Trans-Siberian Railroad.

TY: Yes. It was very cold! The train stopped at Yerkutsk and we stayed at a very poor hotel. I stayed in a room with a Russian. I was very surprised by him. He went outside and rubbed snow all over his body. It looked terrible! At that time, the Russians were very sympathetic to China. They took care of me and anything I wanted to do. At that time, the relations between Russia and China were excellent.

RM: So, this meant you arrived home at the end of 1950.

TY: The next year, I went to Britain again, but we were stopped at Prague. Our delegation was refused visas for Britain. Afterwards, I was told that I was not the person they refused but that it was the head of our delegation they did not like. It was because he was a typical communist; although he was an economist he still was a typical communist.

RM: So this was 1951.

TY: Yes. And when I came back I discovered that I had lost my position.

RM: How did that happen?

TY: It was because of the reorganisation of the educational system in 1951. All of the universities were reorganised. In one instance, four universities were merged together. Part of Peking University was merged with ^STeinghua to become a purely Natural Science and Technology university - Qing Hua University. Also, Peking and Yenching Universities were merged to become a comprehensive university. What *did* concern me was that the Political Science Department was abolished. The Law Department was abolished too. The only Law Department which continued to exist was at People's University, under the influence of Soviet scholars. As a result of this reorganization, Peking University was left with no Political Science Department, no Law Department, so what could I do? Fortunately, one of the very well-known historians at that time invited me to go to his department. After some negotiations, I became a professor of history. He told me - maybe he was trying to please me - that my area of specialization, International Relations, especially the History of International Relations, was the most important of the branches of history. They established a seminar section on the History of International Relations, of which I was made the Head, with about five or six teachers in the section.

RM: Well, that was something of a lifesaver! How long were you there?

TY: Five years, from 1952 to 1957.

RM: Did you enjoy it?

TY: Not much. I enjoyed teaching the History of International Relations, but I was not happy that my knowledge of International Law was ignored.

RM: So there was no teaching of International Law anywhere in China.

TY: No. Well, except for People's University where the courses were taught by Russians.

RM: Were they teaching in Russian?

TY: It was translated. There was a lot of Soviet influence during those five years. As a result, Chinese International lawyers at that time copied Soviet textbooks. Even the definition of International Law used was the definition put forward by Vyshinsky. This influence, however, only lasted a few years.

I concentrated my energy and time on teaching the History of International Relations. My interest focused on the early period of modern International Relations; that is, the period from 1870 to 1919. That period held my interest. For the time following that early period, I didn't think there was much good research material available. Of course, my course still had to cover the time following 1919.

RM: So the picture is that the university was in session; you were busy with your classes and lectures; Cai and the family were there. Were you active in the city?

TY: There were not many activities at that time. There were several movements in which I had to participate: the movement against the Hu Shi, a movement criticizing ~~Ho~~^{Hu} Shi. He was one of the greatest scholars in the early days of the Chinese Republic. I didn't really have much interest in the movements, so I taught my courses and collected material for the students. Before 1957, I published three monographs on the materials related to European Diplomatic History. I also began publication of my collection of treaties, which eventually came out in three big volumes. That was the kind of work I did during those years.

RM: You must have been busy. The work you were doing must have been very demanding and detailed.

TY: Yes. However, I didn't write many articles at that time.

RM: Well, you were too busy!

TY: You know, I was not a specialist in the History of International Relations. I would rather have been studying International Law and writing articles on that, but of course, I had no chance.

RM: Of course, you were very busy, as we've said.

TY: Then in 1957, there was a big event: the anti-Rightist Movement.

RM: Can you tell me something about that event?

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TY: In appearance you could say it was a movement against the Right-wing of the Communist Party, as well as the people who represented it, *→ dating from May 1957.* It is not easy to explain, but it was a very big movement and it damaged many members of the intellectual class, especially international lawyers such as T.C. Chen and myself. We were condemned as Rightists. What it meant to be condemned as a Rightist was that you had to leave whatever administrative position you held at that time; you were not permitted to give any courses; you were throughly refused. It meant hardship for us. The worst thing to endure was that we were regarded as "the enemy". No one wanted to be associated with us. In a practical sense, we became even poorer. My salary was reduced to a Grade two level.

RM: That, of course, affected your family, as well.

TY: Yes. Fortunately, this happened at a time when Cai was working in the Library and had her own salary.

RM: How long did that last?

TY: It began in May 1957 and lasted for five years.

RM: That's a long time!

TY: Yes and even after five years, I was not entirely released from that condemnation. It did not end until 1978.

RM: You suffered a lot in that period. You were not able to do any lecturing; you were repudiated and isolated; were you able to do any sort of work?

TY: No lecturing. I was not permitted to write articles. My salary was reduced drastically. People would not associate with me, and there was no possibility of attending or joining any social activities.

RM: That is terrible. You were isolated.

TY: I did not write any articles during that period. It was even difficult to study International Law in my own home. I didn't own many of my own books. The only thing I did, as I told you, was to translate Kelsen's Principles of International Law.

RM: Did you work at home, then? What was your day like?

TY: I had to go into the office and was supervised by someone from early in the morning until 5:00 p.m.

RM: What would the supervision be?

TY: You had to work. Sometimes I had to write my personal history for them to examine.

RM: That would go on every day?

TY: Later, they asked me to go to the Law Library to ~~collect~~^{arrange} material, you know, routine work. Sometimes I was sent to the International Law Section to collect material for other professors. I collected material for Sao Jing and Wei Ming. I even wrote for them.