justice and executions" and "Forced abortions, minorities, women, and religious persecution." The most important criticism of this book concerns the sources. They have mainly an occidental origin: Chinese sources (from the mainland or Hong Kong) are hardly used and there is no trace of first-hand studies by the authors. In conclusion, this is a good but limited synthesis of the evolution of human rights in China.

In *Tiananmen Square Spring 1989. A Chronology of the Chinese Democracy Movement*, Theodore Han and John Li "offer a comprehensive study of the Tiananmen event by relating the events chronologically and in entry form." There is no real analysis in this volume, but a crude presentation of the facts. The information comes from a wide range of sources: newspapers, television broadcasts, eyewitness accounts, from mainland China and abroad. Sources from Hong Kong-based newspapers are largely and usefully quoted. An essential instrument for researchers, except for the fact that the authors do not provide an index.

Of these four books, the most complete and the most profound study of the Tiananmen movement is without contest *China's Search for Democracy. The Student and the Mass Movement of 1989*. In contrast to numerous analyses, the editors note that "China's 'Beijing Spring' of 1989 was complex, convoluted and often contradictory" and deserves a wider perspective than the struggle of the "good" population against the "bad" regime. In particular, the different contributions show the great variety of behaviour and objectives between participants in terms of generation (between the lost generation and the children of the open-door policy) and social status (between workers and self-made men for example). The most interesting aspect of the book is that faced with the contradictions of the movement, the point of view of the contributors is mainly dialectical. Sources and data are integrated into the analysis: "we have chosen to present the picture of the movement by combining our own analyses of the events with the diverse and contradictory voices of the democracy movement." The documents are considered as historical documents and not as accurate records of events. They are interpreted in the light of a broader approach to the evolution of Chinese society.

The different contributors, while agreeing with this general methodology, keep their own way of analysis and their own opinions about the movement and the reasons for its dramatic end. The first part is about the "Ferment before the 'turmoil'," where Kathleen Hartford presents a good synthesis of the state of Chinese society on the eve of the 1989 events. The five other parts are based mainly on the chronology of the movement and provide interesting analyses of its evolution. A complete index and bibliography contribute to the book's definitiveness.

JEAN-LOUIS ROCCA

After the Event: Human Rights and Their Future in China. Edited by SUSAN WHITFIELD. [London: Wellsweep Press, 1993. 128 pp. £7.95. ISBN 0 948454 18 0.]

Democracy Wall Prisoners: Xu Wenli, Wei Jingsheng, and Other Jailed Pioneers of the Chinese Pro-Democracy Movement. [New York: *Asia Watch*, Vol. 5, No. 6, March 1993.]

Recent Political Trials in China. [New York: *Asia Watch*, Vol. 4, No. 10, March 1992.]

Political Prisoners in Tibet. By ASIA WATCH and TIBET INFORMATION NETWORK. [New York & Washington, D.C.: Human Rights Watch, 1992. 71 pp. ISBN 1 56432 055 3.]

China: Political Prisoners Abused in Liaoning Province as Official Whitewash of Labour Reform System Continues. [New York: *Asia Watch*, Vol. 4, No. 23, September 1992.]

Freedom of Religion in China. By ASIA WATCH. [New York & Washington, D.C.: Human Rights Watch, 1992. 79 pp. ISBN 1 5643 050 2.]

Religious Repression in China Persists. [New York: *Asia Watch*, Vol. 4, No. 11, April 1992.]

The enormity of the Chinese Communist Party's abuse of human rights is notorious and the suffering is well known. *After the Event* is a collection of papers from a symposium on the subject, organized by the 4 June Support Group at SOAS in June 1991, and skilfully edited by Susan Whitfield. It considers three fundamental subjects: whether there is such a thing as universal human rights, contrary to what Beijing claims; censorship, imposed and self-imposed; and a comparison of the dissident movement in China with countries once under Soviet control.

In his comprehensive introduction, Andrew Nathan considers a striking Chinese anomaly: a crisis in which relative economic prosperity does not bring the regime forgiveness for past enormities. He quotes an elderly peasant: "We protected the Communists from the Nationalists and the Japanese, but we won't protect them next time." But Nathan thinks there is little hope of substantive political change and that in post-Deng China the new leaders will emerge from the traditional ruling group. Equally pessimistically, in his essay Liu Binyan, China's best investigative journalist, now in exile at Princeton, says, "The Chinese people sacrifice their freedom in return for subsistence .... But within a few years they started to realize that not only were they without freedom but even their basic existence is threatened."

Liu's conclusion is more than pessimistic – it is despairing. Chinese either accept their misery, he says, and this included the 1959–61 famine whose dead he puts at 30 to 40 million, or passively resist it. He points out that in 1989, when a group of Nobel prize winners wrote a letter to China's leaders protesting against the Tiananmen killings, all four Chinese physics laureates refused to participate. Bonnie McDougall makes much the same point when she approvingly quotes Liu's observation that Chinese intellectuals are more compliant than their colleagues in the Soviet sphere.

This pessimism is open to question after the vast confrontations of the Tiananmen period – there were uprisings in nearly 100 cities, as the valuable publications of Asia Watch demonstrate – which received much popular support. Indeed, the essays of Nathan, Liu and McDougall show that China's intellectuals opposed dictatorship as early as the Yan'an period, and have suffered during interminable anti-intellectual campaigns (700,000 "rightists" were named in the late 1950s alone), yet have exhibited dogged – if often discreet – resolution.

What has been missing in China – until Tiananmen at any rate – is organized resistance on a wide scale. The Asia Watch publications make an exception here for Roman Catholics who as a group have probably resisted and suffered more, proportionally, than anyone except Tibetan

Buddhists. In the *After the Event* symposium, Jay Bernstein, noting that human rights as an abstract notion are hard to identify, suggests that they must be attained through "political and legal struggle" for rights to which everyone in a community is entitled by virtue of being a member. If this means sufficient food and clothing, as Beijing insists, then freedom of speech and assembly are also rights. This notion of community rights, Bernstein emphasizes, would be difficult for Beijing to refute on ideological grounds because it is found in Marx.

Since 1985 Asia Watch, like Amnesty International, has produced a stream of meticulously documented and soberly written exposés of human rights violations in China (and elsewhere). Although some of the prisoners whose careers and persecutions Asia Watch details have been released, invariably because of Western pressure – often mobilized by Asia Watch – and invariably very near the end of their sentences, the number of political prisoners remains large (and is being constantly topped up), the gulag extensive, and the lack of due process and other legal safeguards disgraceful.

The reports at hand provide evidence of continuing persecution and harassment of Catholics, Tibetans and regional dissidents (another Asia Watch report, not included here, shows the extent of the post-Tiananmen crackdown in Hunan and especially in Changsha, even though the authorities and dissidents there had earlier reached a *modus vivendi*). What is especially useful about the Asia Watch materials is their copious quotation from *neibu* (confidential) documents and from dissident materials smuggled out of China. *Democracy Wall Prisoners*, for instance, includes up-to-date information on Wei Jingsheng, who was recently released "early" – after nearly 15 years for abusing Deng Xiaoping in print at Democracy Wall – as a sign of good will. It also surveys comprehensively the case of Xu Wenli, another Democracy Wall activist released in the early summer of 1993.

The Xu archive is deeply poignant, including as it does poems and pen sketches for his wife and daughter. Asia Watch provides much information concerning Xu's long and often sadistic 12-year ordeal. His crime was the public organization of the writers of two samizdat journals – some of the contributors to *After The Event* bewail the absence of samizdat in China – to call for democracy within a socialist context. Indeed, in the economic sphere some of Xu's key demands are indistinguishable from the reforms for which Deng Xiaoping is given credit. Another of his wrongdoings was a message of solidarity to Lech Walesa in September 1980.

Xu is almost unbelievably brave. In prison, because of his unco-operative attitude he was enclosed in the "closed box" in Peking's supposedly model Number One prison. Windowless, crawling with insects, with only a toilet bucket, and one light bulb always on, this was Xu's home for three and a half years. His food was corn meal buns, salt and water. He received no family visits and was forbidden exercise. China's own regulations for such "strict regimes" stipulate conditions far better than these and that the maximum term be ten days.

In his smuggled-out diary Xu belittles himself, compared to "great heroes ... household names" like Zhang Zhixin who was shot during the Cultural Revolution after having her throat slit to prevent her from

shouting defiance. He is, he claims, "merely a minor 'counter-revolutionary element,' uniformed and of little learning or scholarship."

JONATHAN MIRSKY

Quelling the People: The Military Suppression of the Beijing Democracy Movement. By TIMOTHY BROOK. [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992. 265 pp. $27.50. ISBN 0 19 507457 2.]

This study grew out of a project undertaken by Toronto China specialists on the military aspects of the suppression of the Tiananmen demonstrations of 1989. Participants identified and interviewed people, both Chinese and foreigners, who had been in China during the period and audiotaped them on a confidential basis. Those who could not be interviewed in person were encouraged to send their written recollections to project members. Although the original intent was to produce a short report, the volume of material quickly suggested book-length format. Inquiries focused on three questions: what were the intentions of the Chinese government in mobilizing the army against civilians; why did the troops act as they did, and what does this say about how the People's Liberation Army (PLA) might act the next time around; and how does the military suppression of the democracy movement help us to understand China's predicament toward the close of the 20th century?

Brook finds some evidence that the government did not anticipate the destruction of the night of 4 June: the next day's news had clearly not been "managed," and hospitals were totally unprepared for the casualties that were brought to them. On the other hand, extensive military preparations had been made, including marshalling enormous numbers of troops armed with assault weapons, on a scale far beyond what would be needed for crowd control. As for the behaviour of the military, the use of the PLA against the people cost it dearly in terms of both internal demoralization and popular disillusionment about the PLA being a "people's army." While attitudes about the wisdom of enforcing martial law may have divided senior and junior officers, it is unrealistic to expect the army to fight on the side of democratic change in the future. Brook can imagine a more professional PLA a decade from now shooting people in the streets again – not to stall the transition from the old Communist order, but to ensure the successful implementation of market-oriented reforms. Finally, the author reasons, the military had to be brought in if the Chinese Communist Party were to continue its monopoly of power. Concepts such as democracy, human rights and the independence of the press that were espoused by the students erode the absolute authority of party-as-state and replace it with people-as-state. Therefore, Deng had no choice but to order in the military. Brook concludes that, although it is possible to fault Marxism-Leninism for furnishing an excuse for totalitarianism, ideology is not the real problem. Small oligarchies rule nations all over the Third World under all manner of ideological pretensions: China is not different. The real problem is Western imperialism, and he finds it impossible to make sense of 4 June 1989 without it.

This reviewer finds it difficult to accept Brook's conclusion, advanced in the final pages of the book and without prior conceptualization. This startling last-minute resort to external imperialism-as-bogeyman should