Polanyi, China and the Environmental Impasse: Unconscious Retrogression and Conscious Advance.

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Abstract

This thesis re-examines core concepts of Polanyian thought in order to evaluate the contemporary value of Polanyian theory. Since the 2008 financial crisis there has been an increased focus on Polanyi's double movement and countermovement concepts to help explain the fallout of 2008. However this thesis argues a significant proportion of the contemporary Polanyian literature has mis-interpreted these core concepts leading to interpretations that undercut the explanatory potential of Polanyi's main arguments. Through an interrogation of the countermovement and double movement concepts this thesis puts forward a new vocabulary of consciousness, which I argue can help better understand general Polanyian thought. To demonstrate the potential importance of the new vocabulary, as well as Polanyi's contemporary value, I use this re-examination to interrogate two Chinese case-studies. The first examines what I argue is an *unconscious* countermovement occurring in wet markets in China as people look to the rural as a sphere of food safety from the negative effects of China's rapid market transformation and agroindustrialization. The second case study examines what I term *conscious* Polanyian movements; urban residents 'returning' to the rural to gain refuge from the market. These movements are 'conscious' as they explicitly attack market ideals and call for a new political synthesis in similar ways to Polanyi. The environmental crisis is at the core of these communities' ideology and they connect that crisis to market norms. Both these case studies illuminate the importance of the consciousness vocabulary within Polanyi's work as well as bring out specific issues within Chinese political economy. The final chapter puts forward a contemporary interpretation of the unconsciousness/consciousness dichotomy by examining the current environmental crisis impasse. It argues that only conscious Polanyian movements, which bear responsibility for our part in mutual human relationships, are able to solve our collective climate emergency. Consciousness of this responsibility would necessitate dramatic changes in the social and economic structures of the global north. Polanyian theory will undoubtedly be employed to analyse the fallout of the current Covid-19 crisis due to the likely economic instability and political uncertainty that will result. The interpretation of Polanyi's theory in this thesis is important for scholars to use to demonstrate the explanatory potential of Polanyi's thought in future analysis.

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Introduction

It is going to be called Liberal Utopia: Origins of the Cataclysm.

Karl Polanyi, 1940[1]

The theory behind this DPhil thesis started on the first day I arrived in China in August 2011. Having almost no Mandarin language ability, being jet lagged and hungry, food was one of my primary concerns. I asked the first 'foreign' face I bumped into on the university campus in Beijing where to eat. He told me that the canteen food was cheap and good and safer than street food that used gutter oil. This was my first experience of the importance of food safety in China. Another incident occurred in 2013 when I was working in a Nanjing school teaching English. A number of the teachers invited me for lunch; we drove a few hours to a small countryside restaurant. The teachers continually remarked that this food was safe because the countryside had clean air and water and that the food was produced by the family that was also cooking it. I was told to go to the garden to pick some wild greens to take back to the city to eat because they were healthy as they did not use chemicals. I saw how the countryside was conceptualised as a sphere of (food) safety in contrast to the pollution of the city. Numerous other experiences in China confirmed that the countryside was seen as a sphere of safety and that peasant agriculture was seen as safer than the products of Chinese agribusinesses. For example, visiting a friend's house in Inner Mongolia I was invited to eat the crab apples on the table in front of us. Knowing I was interested in food and rural China they told me these apples were organic ('有机的') and came from a rural village where

[1] Polanyi [1940], in; Polanyi-Levitt, Smith & Pettifor (2017).

some of their relatives lived. Later on we travelled to the village to pick the apples from the tree and collect home-made dumplings.

During my MPhil research at a peri-urban organic farm I witnessed families driving to the outskirts of Beijing and filling their cars with organic produce. I talked to the founder of the farm who told me it was common for urban residents to drive to the peri-urban areas where their relatives might still produce food, taking it back to the city because they did not trust the food they could buy in the urban centre. These experiences contrasted sharply with the dominant and politically constructed idea that 'the rural'[2] is backwards and a location that needs to be fundamentally changed – for many people, the rural is actually conceptualised as a sphere of safety and important for their future.

The rural is not only conceptualised as a sphere of *food* safety, but also as a possible refuge from Chinese mass-produced products, as a further conversation demonstrated. Friends in Shanghai had recently become pregnant and wanted to buy a cot, but they did not trust Chinese made cots. One option was to ask relatives, who still lived in the countryside, to cut down a tree on their land and make a hand-made cot. This was seen as safer as the wood would not have been treated with chemicals. In the end the couple decided on buying a foreign imported cot but, once again, the rural was conceptualised as a possible refuge from Chinese mass-produced products. However the most important discussion that directly influences my first case study was with a pregnant woman in Chengde who told me that at the weekly vegetable market she would only buy from small-scale peasant farmers as she believed this produce was home grown and therefore used fewer chemicals that may be dangerous to her unborn baby. I visited the market and saw the vast array of sellers. Some were selling only a handful of one product that could have been self-grown, while others set up larger stalls with numerous different types of vegetables unlikely to have been grown by the seller themselves. It is this data, gathered from many years of participant observation, and coming long before any theoretical ideas, that grounds my current research.

[2] I follow Schneider (2017) and Chen *et al*. (2017) using the term 'the rural' as a noun to describe the 'dyad' of the rural and the urban in contemporary China (*Ibid*, p.84).

The theoretical framework began to be developed during my MPhil course. Here I drew on European thinkers such as Foucault, Nietzsche and Polanyi to interrogate contemporary Chinese society. Polanyi's scholarship seemed highly relevant to contemporary China as his thesis on the great transformation of Britain in the 19th century from a less to a more marketised society appeared to have parallels with China's current 'great transformation'. Furthermore, since the 2008 financial crisis there has been an increased interest in Polanyi's work because of the possible parallels with the 1930s great depression.[3] I therefore decided to engage more deeply with Polanyian scholarship for the DPhil project hypothesising that Polanyian theory may help explain the phenomenon I had experienced – that people in China look towards the rural for social protection in a rapidly industrialising and marketising China.

Reading Polanyi's *The Great Transformation* (*TGT*), in order to start developing my theory, along with the contemporary Polanyian academic literature, I believed there to be a general mis-reading of Polanyi's core concepts, the countermovement and double movement. Whereas many articles would argue Polanyi's countermovement was an anti-market ideological movement designed to change the political system it was clear to me that Polanyi in fact was describing movements unconsciously countering the negative effects of the market without a pre-disposed ideological motive. This seemed to connect more concretely with my experiences in China, in which people saw the less marketised rural as a place of safety from negative effects of industrialisation and marketisation, but were not necessarily articulating any ideologically coherent position. This posed a question as to why the mis-reading was so prevalent in the contemporary Polanyian literature. My general answer became the disregard of the concept of consciousness within *TGT* and much of Polanyi's other work. The unconscious countermovement/conscious Polanyian movement dichotomy developed in this thesis in Chapter 1 helps to explain Polanyi's theory and is used as the core thread linking each chapter. It is used in this thesis to interrogate contemporary China,

[3] See for example *The Present Age of Transformation* (Polanyi-Levitt, Smith & Pettifor, 2017). See also, Crain (2018), Sandbrook (2018), Hopkin (2017), Smith (2017) and Pabst (2008).

illuminating important developments in Chinese political economy, while simultaneously demonstrating the contemporary value of Polanyi's work.

After the demonstration of the unconscious/conscious dynamic of Polanyi's work in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 demonstrates the current use of Polanyi in Chinese scholarship. It then briefly interrogates contemporary state and society literature and social movements in China through the Polanyian unconscious/conscious framework. Chapter 3 engages with my first case study that I argue exemplifies the spontaneous and unconscious countermovement concept. Chapter 4 interrogates the conscious Polanyian movement aspect of the framework through an analysis of Chinese ecovillages. Finally, Chapter 5 puts forward a general theory arguing that an important aspect of the 21st century double movement is demonstrated in the current global environmental impasse.

This Polanyian re-examination is important. As we face the acute crisis of Covid-19 and the resulting economic and political crisis, Polanyi will, no doubt, again be employed to analyse the fall-out. A clearer understanding of Polanyi's core concepts and therefore a better general understanding of Polanyi's theory is vital in creating a faithful Polanyian understanding and potentially pointing us in the direction to solve this most recent global crisis. Further, the ever-growing general environmental crisis remains the fundamental crisis of our times. A re-examination of Polanyi's core concepts and their applicability to this crisis is especially important.

Chapter 1

Polanyi and the Countermovement: a Theoretical Re-examination.

The congenital weakness of nineteenth-century society was not that it was industrial but that it was a market society. Industrial civilization will continue to exist when the utopian experiment of a self-regulating market will be no more than a memory.

Karl Polanyi, 1944

Introduction

In order to answer the overarching research question on the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory we must first articulate what Polanyian theory is. In this chapter I take a core concept of Polanyian thought, the countermovement, and re-examine its contemporary use. I argue that the countermovement should be understood as an unconscious movement, and that this understanding of the countermovement is almost totally absent within the contemporary literature. From here I develop the dichotomy of the unconscious countermovement and the conscious Polanyian movement, which I argue leads to a better understanding of Polanyi's general thought. This theoretical re-examination of Polanyi's countermovement concept provides the theoretical framework for the rest of this thesis project as I use it to interrogate contemporary society, in turn demonstrating the significance of Polanyian thought.

In this chapter I argue that there has been a misreading of Polanyi's countermovement thesis explained in *The Great Transformation*. I argue that scholars have generally overlooked three significant elements of the countermovement thesis; 1. that countermovement(s) are not ideologically driven, 2. that they are not a collective 'conspiracy' against the market and 3. that they are inherent/spontaneous in the move towards a more self-regulating market. I further argue that a fourth critical element has been almost totally disregarded by scholars; that the countermovement(s) are 'unconscious'. I argue that to understand these characteristics of the countermovement it is important to understand the dialectical nature of the 'double movement' thesis implicit in the 'hard', socialist, reading of Polanyi's *The Great Transformation.* I argue that the 'hard' reading coupled with an understanding of the 'double movement' process as a Hegelian dialectic with a triadic dynamic strongly confirms the argument that Polanyi's countermovement is unconscious and the move to socialism is conscious. This unconscious/conscious dynamic has not been fully appreciated within the literature on Polanyi and is, I suggest, a useful framing for future scholars that would avoid misreading Polanyi's main thesis and lead to a deeper understanding of Polanyian thought. Blyth (2002) is used throughout this chapter to demonstrate some of the common misreadings in the Polanyian literature. Although Blyth may not consider himself a

'Polanyian scholar' Blyth (2002) is chosen due to his scholarly prominence and the likelihood that his work using Polanyi has been highly influential.[4]

This chapter will be structured as follows. In section 1.1 I will demonstrate the three important characteristics of Polanyi's countermovement thesis identified above; that the countermovement(s) are non-ideological, non-conspiratorial, and inherent[5] to the increased movement towards the self-regulating market in society. In section 1.2 I demonstrate that a further feature of the countermovement – 'unconsciousness' – remains unexplored.[6] In section 1.3 I demonstrate how my reading of the countermovement thesis is part of the 'hard' reading of Polanyi and fully contradicts the 'soft' reading that Blyth (2002) exemplifies. In section 1.4 I demonstrate how Polanyi's idea of consciousness diverges from a Marxist view of consciousness arguing that for Polanyi the whole of society is able to gain consciousness. In section 1.5 I develop my argument as to how Polanyi believes the unconscious countermovement becomes ideological and argue, along with Block & Somers (2014), that Polanyi was writing *The Great Transformation* in order to create consciousness. In section 1.6 I argue that this re-examination of the countermovement suggests the Polanyian process towards consciousness is similar to a Hegelian triadic dynamic. I also argue here that Polanyi's overall thesis can be seen as synthesis of Hegelian and Marxist thought. In section 1.7 and 1.8 I demonstrate more examples of the misinterpretations of Polanyi in the general literature and show how my new theoretical deconstruction of the countermovement concept helps

[4] For example, this influence is seen clearly in Patomäki (2014) who references Blyth (2002) as evidence of Polanyi's belief in 'embedded liberalism' (p.738). I argue this is a misreading of Polanyi. I examine Patomäki's (2014) argument with reference to Blyth (2002) in section 1.8.

[5] Understanding these characteristics appears to have been neglected in contemporary Polanyian scholarship although the work of Block & Somers (2014) is a significant exception.

[6] From my reading some scholars have touched on the idea of 'consciousness' in Polanyi's work for example Mendell (2007, p.84) argues that people need to be conscious of their individual function for Polanyi's functional democracy to work and this according to Polanyi requires education. Block & Somers (2014, p.88) write about Polanyi's interest in the consciousness of the working class. However, both these accounts are brief and do not consider consciousness a main theme of *The Great Transformation*. Dale (2016a) also deals with Polanyi's ideas of consciousness although does not directly link them to *The Great Transformation.* Polanyi-Levitt (Ed.) (1990) is a significant exception with a number of articles mentioning consciousness including Brown (1990) who argues consciousness is an important aspect of Polanyi's double movement thesis (p.44) and that 'in effect' the countermovement was 'an unconscious effort' (p.46).

avoid these common misinterpretations. Finally in section 1.9 I briefly suggest what my deconstruction of Polanyi's thesis implies for future Polanyian scholarship.

1.1 The Countermovement – Non-ideological, Non-conspiratorial, and Spontaneous.

Polanyi's general thesis – the 'double movement' – argues that there are '...two organizing principles in society...' (Polanyi 2001 [1944] p.138). One is economic liberalism '...aiming at the establishment of a self-regulating market...', the other is '... the principle of social protection aiming at the conservation of man and nature...' (*Ibid*). Polanyi refers to the second of these movements as a 'countermovement' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.136) or the '...self-protection of society...' (*Ibid*, p.87) which checks the expansion of the first self-regulating market movement.

The countermovement occurs because of the negative effects the self-regulating market has on different groups in society, specifically in terms of the 'fictitious commodities'; land, labour and money. These 'commodities' are fictitious as they are 'essential elements of industry' (*Ibid*, p.75) which in a self-regulating market are organised through markets, yet they were never produced by the market for market exchange:

> 'Labour is only another name for a human activity which goes with life itself, which in its turn is not produced for sale but for entirely different reasons…land is only another name for nature, which is not produced by man; actual money, finally, is merely a token…which, as a rule, is not produced at all, but comes into being through the mechanism of banking or state finance' (*Ibid*, p.75).

Polanyi argues that due to industry's need to have a large amount of readily available resources to feed capital, land and labour hungry machines, markets in these 'commodities' were set up (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.42). As soon as this happened regulations became necessary in order to protect these fictitious commodities from the social destruction caused by commodification (*Ibid*, p.81). Labour protective institutions, such as trade unions, were established and protective legislation, such as factory laws, were enacted. However, these institutions interfered with the self-regulating market '...and ultimately, destroyed the system' (*Ibid*). Once necessary but destructive protections were inserted into parts of the self-regulating market mechanism there was a cascading effect:

> ‘The rising cost of living induced by corn laws invited the manufacturer's demand for protective tariffs... Trade unions naturally insisted on higher wages to compensate for an increased cost of living, and could not well object to such customs tariffs as permitted the employer to meet an inflated wage bill. But once the accountancy of social legislation had been based on a wage level conditioned by tariffs, employers could not in fairness be expected to carry the burden of such legislation unless they were assured of continued protection’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.213).

Once one section of society was protected from the self-regulating market by state regulations, there were justifiable demands for other sections to be protected from the very effects of the initial intervention. For Polanyi these protections were normally state regulations often instituted through institutions legislated by the state such as trade unions. However ‘The origins of the movement were spontaneous and widely dispersed’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.213), thus many social groups spontaneously arose to protect themselves. These diverse countermovements pulled the newly democratic state in the direction of protectionism at the same time as the liberal utopian ideal of the self-regulating market pulled the economy in the opposite direction of expanding the self-regulating market system (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.139) – the double movement of society.

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At this point an adjunct is worthwhile to elucidate some of the misreadings in the literature on Polanyi. I draw on the work of Blyth (2002) and suggest that he fails to understand Polanyi’s double movement thesis. Blyth (2002) argues that due to the advance ‘…of capitalism and the commodification of labor…’ markets were disembedded from society. Blyth goes on to say ‘In reaction to this, labor mobilized and demanded protection from the state against the strictures of the market’ and that this ‘…was Polanyi’s great insight, the double movement: Those dislocated by the market will use of the state to protect themselves…’ (pp.3-4).

Blyth (2002) is correct in his analysis of commodification and disembededness and that labour (and society as a whole) mobilised against these. However Blyth (2002) goes on to state that this mobilisation, against the market, constitutes the double movement. It should be clear from the above quotes from *The Great Transformation* that the double movement consists of *two simultaneous* movements; one aiming at establishing the self-regulating market and one aiming at the self-protection of society. The movement that Blyth (2002) erroneously labels as the double

movement is in fact the countermovement. This mistake could be seen as a simple mistake of confusing terms and nothing to dwell upon. However I suggest that this confusion sets up the rest of Blyth's (2002) argument and leads to conclusions and arguments that either misinterpret Polanyi or take Polanyi's ideas and attribute them to Blyth himself.

One clear representation of this misreading and claiming Polanyi's interpretation as his own is when Blyth (2002) argues there has been 'a reversal' (p.4) of the double movement in society or a '*counter* double movement' (p.5). What he means by this is that there has been '…an attempt once again…' to disembed '…the market from society, to roll back the institutions of social protection and replace them with a more market-conforming institutional order' (p.4). Of course this is not a 'counter' double movement as the disembedding of markets from society phenomenon is fully explained within Polanyi's double movement thesis as one of the '…two organizing principles in society…' the one '…aiming at the establishment of a self-regulating market…' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.138). Polanyi was well aware, and in fact his whole book is based on the fact, that one side of the double movement is *always* faced with the other in an eternal internal battle within capitalism. This misreading of the double movement thesis by Blyth (2002) is compounded by the fact that there is not one mention in over 275 pages of the term 'countermovement'.

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According to Polanyi in *TGT* the institutions that were created due to the countermovement principle within the double movement thesis were internal mechanisms to regulate the excess of the self-regulating market. They were not designed as ideological institutions to undermine the self-regulating market mechanism itself and, as Polanyi explains, were even supported by 'extreme liberals' and 'radical adherents of economic liberalism':

> '…analysis reveals that not even radical adherents of economic liberalism could escape the rule which makes laissez-faire inapplicable to advanced industrial conditions; for in the critical case of trade union law and antitrust regulations extreme liberals themselves had to call for manifold interventions of the state…' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.156).

The fact that these internal institutions *did* undermine[7] the workings of the self-regulating market, does not mean they were created for this purpose. In Polanyi's terms these institutions were created to alleviate the obvious excesses the self-regulating market was causing to society. However the necessary and unintended by-product was that they '…ultimately, destroyed the system' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.81). Just as the creation of other social countermovements '…such as churches, townships, fraternal lodges, clubs…' (Polanyi 200, [1944], p.162) *did* undermine the workings of the self-regulating market, that was not their expressed goal. These organisations were non-ideological[8] and had no expressed aim to tear down the self-regulating market mechanism or to create a new ideological system.

Just as adherents to economic liberalism who supported certain protections, that ultimately destroyed the economic liberal ideological goal, demonstrates that the countermovements were non-ideological, it also demonstrates that the destruction of the self-regulating market mechanism is inherent, spontaneous[9] and internal to the self-regulating market itself. Not even 'extreme liberals' were immune to the countermovement. The countermovement that destroys the self-regulating market is not an outside ideological attack; it is located in all aspects of society – of which government is a part. The countermovement is inherent and internal to a self-regulating market system because diverse sections of society protect themselves from '…the perils inherent in a self-regulating market system…' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.79). The perils of a self-regulating market were inherent to its structure and countering these inherent perils is spontaneous, or 'natural', for society. Describing the market attempt to create the institution of commodified labour Polanyi writes:

> 'The natural aim of all social protection was to destroy such an institution and make its existence impossible' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.185).

The countermovement is able to resist the pressure that the market bears upon it to try and commodify labour through '…social legislation, factory laws, unemployment insurance, and,

[7] Polanyi uses liberal economic logic to argue how intervention in the self-regulating market system undermines the whole market system itself, see Selwyn & Miyamura (2014, p.651)
[8] Neither liberal, socialist or fascist – the ideologies Polanyi engages with in *The Great Transformation*
[9] For an analysis of the use of spontaneity in Polanyi's work see Dale (2018b).

above all, trade unions…' which '…interfered with the mobility of labour and the flexibility of wages…' (*Ibid*). However the countermovement resists the self-regulating market by resisting the *effects* of the self-regulating market on labour, land and money rather than positioning itself against the *ideology* of the self-regulating market:

> '…a deep-seated movement sprang into being to resist the pernicious *effects* of a market-controlled economy' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.79) [Emphasis added].

Polanyi is clear that the countermovement is not a movement against the ideology of the self-regulating market. The movement(s) were '…independent of the specific ideologies present in a number of different countries…' they did not have '…any theoretical or intellectual preconceptions…', and the protections were demanded '…irrespective of…attitudes towards the principles underlying a market economy…' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.156).

Polanyi states that not only are the countermovement(s) non-ideological, inherent and internal to the workings of a self-regulating market but they are also explicitly not an organised anti-liberal 'collectivist' conspiracy:

> 'The great variety of forms in which the "collectivist" countermovement appeared was not due to any preference for socialism or nationalism on the part of concerted interests, but exclusively to the broad range of the vital social interests affected by the expanding market mechanism… Intellectual fashion played no role whatever in this process; there was, accordingly, no room for the prejudice which the liberal regards as the ideological force behind the anti-liberal development' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.151).

The evidence I have presented so far of three of the four aspects of the countermovement is important for Polanyi's thesis as it nullifies the potential liberal rebuttal that the countermovement(s) are ideologically driven, external and collectivist conspiracies. It therefore nullifies the argument that countermovements can be overcome through liberals educating the population regarding the advantages of the self-regulating market system – a person that believes in the self-regulating market can still be part of a countermovement as countermovements are non-ideological. Liberal propaganda, according to Polanyi, will not change the fact that countermovements exist as they spontaneously exist within the self-regulating market mechanism, and it will not change the fact that countermovements ultimately destroy that self-regulating mechanism.

Fred Block sums up this reading of Polanyi's countermovement thesis in the introduction to the 2001 edition of *The Great Transformation*:

> 'He [Polanyi] explicitly attacks market liberals who blamed a "collectivist conspiracy" for erecting protective barriers against the working of global markets. He argues, instead, that this creation of barriers was a spontaneous and unplanned response by all groups in society against the impossible pressures of a self-regulating market system. The protective countermovement *had* to happen to prevent the disaster of a disembedded economy' (Block in; Polanyi 2001, Loc.465) [Emphasis in original].

Even though Fred Block explains that Polanyi argues the countermovement(s) are not a 'collectivist conspiracy' but are spontaneous and internal, it is worth elaborating this further as I have done in this section as this reading of the countermovement thesis has been relatively neglected.

1.2 The Countermovement – Non-ideological, Non-conspiratorial, Inherent and Unconscious.

Block (in; Polanyi 2001) is correct to highlight the fact that the countermovement is not a 'collectivist conspiracy' but spontaneous and internal, however, he neglects the fourth aspect of the countermovement – that it is unconscious. Within the countermovement neither liberalism, socialism nor fascism drives the self-protective actions and there is no external conspiratorial organisation aiming to undermine the self-regulating mechanism. Different groups in society protect themselves from the negative material and social *effects* they see around them without consciously[10] linking these negative effects to the self-regulating market mechanism:

> 'Eighteenth-century society *unconsciously* resisted any attempt at being made into a mere appendage of the market' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.81) [Emphasis added].

Society did not look upon itself and come to a Polanyian understanding that it was being commodified by the market – if it had Polanyi's thesis would not have had any originality and it would have been written 100 years before his birth. What society saw was the *effects* of this commodification and resisted them, in turn unconsciously resisting becoming a commodity or an

[10] Brown (1990) points out that 'in effect' the countermovement is 'an unconscious effort to re-embed economy back into society' (p.46). The countermovement is also unaware that their actions, according to Polanyi, will ultimately undermine the self-regulating market mechanism.

appendage of the market and in a second turn unconsciously resisting the self-regulating market itself, thus destroying the mechanism.

The clearest example of the theme of unconsciousness[11] is when Polanyi deals with the fictitious commodity money which '...showed a very real analogy to that of labor and land' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.204). The '...inclusion into the market system...' of money meant '...grave dangers to society developed...' and '...protective measures had to be taken, with the result that the self-steering mechanism of the market was put out of action' (*Ibid*).

The 'protective measure' or 'countermovement' was central banking which '...reduced the automatism of the gold standard to a mere pretense' (*Ibid*). The central banking countermovement was unconscious:

> 'Liberal nationalism was developing into national liberalism, with its marked leanings towards protectionism and imperialism aboard, monopolistic conservatism at home. Nowhere was the contradiction as sharp and yet *as little conscious* as in the monetary realm. For dogmatic belief in the international gold standard continued to enlist men's stintless loyalties, while at the same time token currencies were established, based on the sovereignty of the various central banking systems. Under the aegis of international principles, impregnable bastions of a new nationalism were being *unconsciously* erected in the shape of the central banks of issue' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.207) [Emphasis added].

This unconscious countermovement becomes very important to Polanyi's whole thesis as he argues it unconsciously erects nationalist protectionist institutions, which played a part in the new '...unsuspected forces of charismatic leadership...' which was to the '...stupefaction of the vast majority...' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.208). Polanyi therefore suggests that fascism was born in the 1930s in part due to the 'unconscious' meddling in the monetary system which lead to institutions and ideas that had the potential to embed nationalistic ideologies and create '...autarchist isolationism...' (*Ibid).* This demonstrates Polanyi's thesis that countermovements, inherent in the self-regulating market and implemented unconsciously by liberals themselves, have the potential to lead to fascism:

[11] An example of unconscious interference in other work is stated in Polanyi (1934c) 'Parliaments, consciously or unconsciously, weaken, discredit and disorganize the economic machinery of Capitalism in trying to prevent its self-regulating mechanism from restarting the cycle of production at the cost of hecatombs of human lives' (p.128).

> ‘The stubbornness with which economic liberals, for a critical decade, had, in the service of deflationary policies, supported authoritarian interventionism, merely resulted in a decisive weakening of the democratic forces which might otherwise have averted the fascist catastrophe’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.242).

The dangers of the *unconscious* countermovement leads to Polanyi's assertion that society must *consciously* transcend the self-regulating market to socialism:

> ‘Socialism is, essentially, the tendency inherent in an industrial civilisation to transcend the self regulating market by *consciously* subordinating it to democratic society’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.242) [Emphasis added].

The conscious subordination of the market to achieve socialism is in stark contrast to the unconscious authoritarian meddling in the economy that can lead to fascism, however they both have their origins in the countermovement. Unconsciousness/consciousness is thus a vitally important aspect to Polanyi's thesis.

The unconscious countermovement is not reserved for the liberal utopians. Polanyi uses similar language to describe class-based countermovements. He argues that generally the ‘...trading classes had no organ to sense the dangers...’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.139) of the self-regulating market therefore it fell to the landed aristocracy and the peasantry to safeguard ‘...men and soil...’, while the labouring people ‘...became representatives of the common human interests that had become homeless’, however, ‘...at one time or another, each social class stood, ***even unconsciously***, for interests wider than its own’ (*Ibid*) [Emphasis added].

What these interests are is not specifically explained here. However, my reading is that countermovements initiated by class conflicts to protect class interests unconsciously protected other classes from the negative *effects* of the self-regulating market. This reading is supported by a later quote:

> ‘Precisely because not the economic but the social interests of different cross sections of the population were threatened by the market, persons belonging to various economic strata *unconsciously* joined forces to meet the danger’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.162) [Emphasis added].

This reading of class based countermovements unconsciously helping each other to fight the effects of the self-regulating market demonstrates the potential for classes to come together to

'transcend' the self-regulating market once they are conscious that the negative effects on their lives are part of a dysfunctional system whole which will destroy all aspects of society. For Polanyi, once the classes are collectively conscious socialism is the result because:

> 'Socialism is, essentially, the tendency *inherent* in an industrial civilisation to *transcend* the self regulating market by *consciously* subordinating it to democratic society' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.242) [Emphasis added].

If the countermovement is unconscious – not linking the negative material and social effects it is experiencing to the self-regulating market mechanism – and a transcendence to socialism is conscious and inherent to industrial society, there must be a process by which Polanyi believes the unconscious countermovements become conscious (linking the negative material and social effects to the self-regulating market mechanism whole). The argument here becomes that *The Great Transformation,* was not only a book to explain the great transformation from a less marketised system to a self-regulating market system and describe the countermovement this provokes, but it was further designed to *create* the consciousness necessary for the second great transformation[12] to socialism. Block & Somers (2014, p.89) argue this point, that Polanyi may have been writing *The Great Transformation* to help facilitate a transcendence in the English political system after WWII. The idea of the creation of consciousness will be returned to in section 1.5.

I have argued in this section that the theme of unconscious countermovements and conscious transcendence to socialism is a key theme for Polanyi.[13] Unconscious countermovements, ones that do not link the negative effect they are countering to the self-regulating market whole, are not a good in themselves as they can lead to fascism. However, once these unconscious

[12] Here I periodise the first great transformation as the transformation from an embedded society to a society disembedded by the self-regulating market during the industrial revolution (this periodisation is directly from Polanyi as evidenced in Polanyi (1947b, p.100) and Polanyi (2001 [1944], p.74)). The second great transformation would embed the market back into democratic society and for Polanyi would be a transcendence to socialism. This process is clearly demonstrated in Polanyi (1937a, Loc.3670-86). This is different to the double movement in which, at different periods of time in industrialised society, the market or society may be more dominant.

[13] This theme of a conscious (through the mind) transcendence of capitalism is repeated by Polanyi, '...with the exercise of power over their fellows assuming the appearance of rule by 'capital' and 'prices': a fateful mirage that under existing social relations can be transcended only through the human mind as 'a theoretical insight of sociology' pending its transcendence in practice – "the task of socialism"' (in, Dale, 2016a, Loc.1144-47, from Polanyi, 'Uber die Freiheit').

countermovements become conscious of the negative effect of the self-regulating market whole they can join together in a society that will transcend the self-regulating market. This tendency according to Polanyi is ‘inherent’ in an industrial civilisation. This interpretation of *The Great Transformation* can be seen as, and lend more evidence for, a 'hard' reading of Polanyi’s seminal work.

1.3 The 'Hard' and 'Soft' Reading of Polanyi.

Interpretations of Polanyi's *The Great Transformation* can generally be divided into two camps, the ‘hard’ reading and the ‘soft’ reading (Dale 2016a, Loc.149). The ‘soft’ reading argues that countermovements are an inherent part of capitalism, one that regulates the excesses of the market to create an equilibrium in which neither the market over-runs society nor civil society takes over the control of the market. Proponents of this reading often argue that Keynesianism and ‘embedded liberalism’ is the result of Polanyian logic and that Polanyi can be seen as a social democrat (Robotham, 2009, p.277).[14] Hart and Hann (2009, p.3) and Dale (2016a, Loc.209-13) argue a large proportion of contemporary Polanyian scholarship places Polanyi in the Keynesian or ‘soft’ camp. Blyth (2002) is one of the scholars that can be argued to be in the ‘soft’ camp. He argues that ‘...enconomic ideas, in their Keynesian...form, served as the ideological basis of the postwar “embedded liberal” order foreseen by Polanyi and others’ (p.5).

The ‘hard’ reading of Polanyi argues that Polanyi's goal was the transcendence of the market system, not a mere regulation of it by civil society countermovements. In this reading Polanyi is a staunch socialist who demands society takes back control of the market system and firmly puts it in its place, controlled by democratic movements in order to protect human dignity and the natural

[14] As Hart and Hann (2009, p.3) and Dale (2016a, Loc.209-13) suggest, the ‘soft’ interpretation is widespread which demonstrates the widespread mis-interpretation of the countermovement in the literature. In fact all the articles in Hart and Hann (2009) I argue are mis-interpretations because Robotham, (2009, p.277) states all of these essays ‘ … take for granted that Polanyi’s aspiration to “embed” the modern capitalist economy was substantially achieved in the postwar social democratic settlement’.

world. This reading is argued by Dale (2016a, Loc.209-13) to have a smaller following[15] but more textual support in *The Great Transformation*. It also gains legitimacy from Polanyi's daughter, Polanyi-Levitt, who argues in Dale (2016a) that:

> 'The double movement...was not intended to be understood as "an in-built repair operation"...that simply moderates the excesses of market capitalism. It contains, instead, profoundly critical implications, theorising as it does the "existential contradiction between the requirements of a capitalist market economy for unlimited expansion and the requirements of people to live in mutually supportive relations in society"' (Loc.149-94).

Polanyi-Levitt continues her argument by stating her father was a socialist '...and refused to believe that capitalism could be viable in the long term, due to its disembedding tendencies' (*Ibid*). This view is evidenced in Polanyi's earlier works, for example in *The Essence of Fascism*, Polanyi argues that:

> '...in a highly developed society of the machine age there is no alternative to Capitalism but Socialism' (Polanyi 1933b, pp.381-2).

My interpretation of Polanyi sits firmly within the 'hard' reading and I argue the unconscious/conscious dichotomy can be seen as further evidence in support of this reading. The double movement, inherent in capitalism, is only transcended to socialism through *conscious* movements. My analysis of the double movement and the countermovement in this thesis can be seen as evidence to reject the large number of 'soft' mis-readings of Polanyi.

The 'hard' reading has similarities with the arguments being debated within Polanyi's political milieux.[16] Rosa Luxemburg, for example, believed the dialectical contradictions of capitalism meant it would either be supplanted by socialism or regress into 'barbarism', and that World War I demonstrated this regress (Luxemburg, 1915). She believed that human action could 'accelerate or retard history' (*Ibid*) and that the consciousness of the proletariat could accelerate the move to

[15] However Sandbrook (2011, p.424) argues that, 'Most Polanyi scholars accept that this 'hard' position is the most accurate reflection of the man's life-long commitments and the logic of his theory'. Other followers of the 'hard' reading include Lacher (2007, 1999), Bernard (1997), Mendell (2007) and Clark (2014).
[16] For example Lukács (1971, [1923], 1975 [1947] (completed in 1938)) and Luxemburg (1900, 1915).

socialism (*Ibid*; Geras (2015); Wojnar-Sujecka, (1973)). Polanyi follows this framing in much of his writing and sees World War II and fascism as this type of regress. However, in *TGT* and Polanyi's later writing it is society as a whole gaining consciousness that pushes history to its next stage. Luxemburg (1900) also foreshadows Polanyi's countermovement concept. In *Social Reform or Revolution,* written as a rebuttal of Eduard Bernstein's parliamentary reform process,[17] Luxemburg writes:

> 'Revisionist theory thus places itself in a dilemma. Either the socialist transformation is, as was admitted up to now, the consequence of the internal contradictions of capitalism, and with the growth of capitalism will develop its inner contradictions, resulting inevitably, at some point, in its collapse, (in that case the "means of adaptation" are ineffective and the theory of collapse is correct); or the "means of adaptation" will really stop the collapse of the capitalist system and thereby enable capitalism to maintain itself by suppressing its own contradictions. In that case socialism ceases to be an historic necessity' (1900, §1).

The 'means of adaptation' can be seen as similar to Polanyi's countermovement. Numerous unconscious acts to ameliorate the negative effects of the self-regulating market without being aware the negative effects come from the market mechanism itself. In the 'hard' reading of Polanyi these means of adaptation are unable to supress the contradictions of the self-regulating market and ultimately destroy the system, meaning socialism is still a necessity. Whereas the 'soft' reading argues these means of adaptation enable capitalism to maintain itself, thereby socialism ceases to be a historic necessity. 'Embedded liberalism' becomes a stable form of capitalism.

Blyth's (2002) 'soft' reading of Polanyi not only, in my view, posits the false argument that Polanyi aimed for an 'embedded liberalism' but argues that Polanyi sees this embedded liberalism as the 'end of history':

> '...Polanyi replicated a fallacy he rightly denounced in the liberal economists of his day: the tendency to see market society as the "end of history." Yet in critiquing such a view, Polanyi paradoxically posited his own historical end: an institutional form of capitalism that authors following him have termed "embedded liberalism"' (p.4).

[17] Reformism or revolution was an important debate within Polanyi's milieux including within Gramsci's writing and political activity (Forgasc 1999). Dale (2016) suggests Polanyi was not 'so dismissive' as some of his close acquaintances of the revolutionary tract of this debate identified with Luxemburg, Lukács and Gramsci (Loc.962-964).

Blyth's (2002) criticism here stems from his failure to understand the double movement thesis. It is not possible for Polanyi to arrive at a conclusion that is 'an institutional form of capitalism' because that form of capitalism (which is capitalism regulated by the countermovement) would still be under the influence of the double movement thesis as it still *necessarily* has the two organising principles of society within it – economic liberalism and the countermovement. If it is still under the double movement thesis it can't possibly be the 'end of history'[18] as the double movement is by definition dynamic and contentious. Further to this misunderstanding, Blyth (2002) uses a footnote here to show the authors he is attributing to the argument that Polanyi posited the idea of 'embedded liberalism'. One of the references, Kirshner (1999), actually rejects[19] the idea that Polanyi himself supported the idea of embedded liberalism:

> '…while Polanyi did call attention to the relationship between state and society, it would be wrong to associate him with embedded liberalism, and an even greater mistake to consider him a founding father of that philosophy. While Polanyi criticized laissez-faire capitalism, he was not a reformer, and in fact was skeptical of the prospects for the types of reforms that would be associated with embedded liberalism' (p.317).

Another reference Blyth (2002) uses to claim scholars attribute 'embedded liberalism' to Polanyi is Ruggie (1982). Yet in this piece there is no direct statement that Polanyi endorsed or posited the idea of embedded liberalism. At best Polanyian ideas, among others, seem to have indirectly influenced Ruggie (1982) to create a theory of embedded liberalism.

In the 'hard' more socialist reading of *The Great Transformation*, which I argue is the more accurate representation, Polanyi interestingly takes inspiration from neo-classical economics when he argues that the countermovement(s) will undermine the market mechanism and eventually destroy the system (Dale 2016a, Loc.235-41). However as Dale (2016a) notes the 'hard' reading also 'contains a radical, even Marxian, tale' (Loc.194-208). However I argue that this tale is

[18] In 'On Freedom' Polanyi (1927) is even explicit that a transcendence to socialism should not be regarded as the end of history, 'The history of humanity will not have reached its final point with socialism; humanity's history will, in its true sense, only begin with it' (Loc.1085, in, Thomasberger & Cangiani (Eds.) 2018).

[19] Again here; 'What makes Keynes' approach a middle way is the importance of the market mechanism. This is embedded liberalism, with an emphasis on the latter, which is sharply distinct from Polanyi's concept of an economy embedded within a social structure' (Kirshner 1999, p.319).

adapted by Polanyi in an important way; the expansion of who constitutes the conscious actors that bring forth the transcendence of the market system.

1.4 Marx's Class Consciousness and Polanyi's Societal Consciousness.

Marx argued that a transition to a post-capitalist society necessitated a class-conscious working class (Baxter 1992, p.19). According to Baxter (1992) Marx argues that consciousness is attained when the proletariat realises that the alleviation of the negative effects of their class position within capitalism can only come about through '...the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist mode of production' (p.26). Harvey (2010) describes the process as a '...trade-union consciousness... morph[ing] into more revolutionary demands' (Loc.2889).[20]

In Hungary during the time of Polanyi's writing, Georg Lukács, a personal acquaintance and family friend of the Polanyis, was a strong proponent of this Marxist view (Leopold 2008, p.112). His seminal work *History and Class Consciousness* 1923, – a book which according to Dale (2016a) Polanyi 'studied in depth' (Loc.976-78) – argues that the emergence of working class consciousness '...must become the *decisive step...*' (Lukács 1971 [1923], p.2) for revolution. However, this consciousness is not '...the sum nor the average of what is thought or felt by the single individuals who make up the class' (Lukács 1971 [1923], p.51) but an 'imputed' consciousness. By this Lukács means the consciousness that would theoretically exist if every person in the class had an overview of society as a whole.[21] The importance of class consciousness was an influence on Polanyi. In *Notes of a Week's Study on The Early Writings of Karl Marx and Summary of Discussions on British Working Class Consciousness* Polanyi argues, 'The consciousness of the proletariat is the consciousness of mankind as a whole' (Polanyi 1938, p.17).

[20] The belief that trade union consciousness is insufficient for a radical change in society is clearly argued by Lenin in *What Is To Be Done?* (Lenin 1902)

[21] There are also links here with Polanyi: 'Consciousness of particular economic functions requires, as its precondition, an overview and collective comprehension of all the elements of the economy' (Polanyi 1922, p.8)

However, in *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi shifts who constitutes the agent of consciousness and therefore moves away from a more orthodox Marxist position.[22] This may be because of his experience with the English working class.[23] Block & Somers (2014) argue that '...Polanyi was deeply puzzled by the lack of political consciousness of the English working class' (p.88) and that 'Polanyi...attribute[d] the inability of British workers to move beyond trade union consciousness to the impact of the Industrial Revolution' (*Ibid*). They argue he 'was shocked by..."the English working class's"...political views and ignorance of their own past struggles' and that Polanyi's '...experience with England's working people became central to his analysis in GT...' (Block & Somers 2014, p.5). However, for Polanyi in *The Great Transformation* society as a whole is the most important agent of analysis:[24]

> 'Society protected itself against the perils inherent in a self-regulating market system – this was the one comprehensive feature in the history of the age' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.79).

Polanyi's emphasis on society as a whole is often repeated in *The Great Transformation* and some of Polanyi's main theoretical insights are based on society rather than class. For example the idea of embeddedness:

> 'Ultimately, that is why the control of the economic system by the market is of overwhelming consequence to the *whole organization of society*: it means no less than the running of society as an adjunct to the market. Instead of economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system...' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.60) [Emphasis added].

There is no mention either of class or of economic relations. Social relations seem to be more important than class based economic relations here. Similarly the countermovement is referred to as the '...self-protection of society...' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.136) rather than the self-protection of a class. The solution to the double movement impasse is also societal and not class based:

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[22] As Brown (in Polanyi-Levitt (Ed.), 1990) argues 'with only the singular movement of the self-regulating market, both Lukacs and Marx would have been correct…However, because the state responded to the diversity of social groups victimized by the disembedding of the economy, it countered the dichotomizing effect of the self-regulating market, reduced the abject level of dependence of workers upon capitalists, and prevented the economic sphere from becoming the sole constitution source of power' (p.49).

[23] Another explanation is that Polanyi wanted *The Great Transformation* to have a larger appeal and therefore moved away from a more orthodox Marxist position.

[24] As Selwyn & Miyamura (2014) put it Polanyi's unit of analysis was society as an organic whole (p.641).

> ‘Socialism is, essentially, the tendency inherent in an industrial civilisation to transcend the self regulating market by consciously subordinating it to democratic society’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p,242).

Society as a whole, or civilization, will transcend the self-regulating market by becoming conscious, not just one class.[25] Society does this by consciously subordinating the market to the whole of society. The emphasis on social, rather than economic, relations is explicit in *The Great Transformation*:

> ‘Precisely because *not the economic but the social interests* of different cross sections of the population were threatened by the market, persons belonging to various economic strata unconsciously joined forces to meet the danger’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.162) [Emphasis added].

This is one of Polanyi's great insights; even if the self-regulating market may be a benefit to the economic relations of a class it can still threaten the social interests of that same class, meaning even that class will start to realise, or become conscious of the fact that, the economic system is a threat to them and thus the whole of society. As Polanyi-Levitt (1990) describes; ‘Where Karl departs from the conventional Marxist analysis is in his insistence on cultural degradation as the ultimate evil of capitalism, as distinct from mere economic exploitation’ (p.123). Polanyi’s argument is in contrast to what Polanyi calls the economic determinism of ‘popular Marxism’. [26]

As Brown (in Polanyi-Levitt (Ed.), 1990) argues:

> ‘There are two major manifestations of economic determinism in orthodox Marxism, and both relate to capitalism’s essence. The first is that…the essence of capitalism is class struggle. It is capitalists’ private property that constitutes the basis for all power. The second is that the capitalist state is an epiphenomenon of the economic base. The essence of capitalism lies in its economic structure where the capital-labour dichotomy not only originates but determines all other super-structural spheres, most importantly the state. Economic power determines political power, in other words’ (p.48).

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[25] This argument is confirmed by a quote by Polanyi in 1963 in *Our Homeland's Duty*: ‘...in the years of the crisis which is endangering all mankind, I have fully turned towards socialism, which is no longer merely the cause of the working class, but a matter of life and death for all humanity...’ from Polanyi (1977, p.xix)

[26] The criticism of the idea of material and economic determinism is explicit in *Our Obsolete Market Mentality*. Polanyi (1947a) argues that in ‘Both utilitarian liberalism and popular Marxism…we were made to accept the heresy…that the incentives on which everyday life is organized spring from the “material” motives’ (p.101). Polanyi further argues that ‘…laissez-faire philosophy…is paralyzing our social imagination by more or less unconsciously fostering the prejudice of "economic determinism"’ (p.116). Block and Somers (2014) further argue ‘Polanyi passionately rejected the second International's belief that predetermined stages of historical development inevitably resulted in social progress. Central to him and others of his generation was the idea that progress could only come through conscious human action based on moral principles’ (p. 46). See also p.228 in *TGT*.

Polanyi in *The Great Transformation* rejects both these by introducing the countermovement concept. The countermovement describes the political power of a large variety of groups in society which may not have had economic power, including the working class. This '…prevented the proletariat from developing as a "class." It never reached the point of having nothing to lose but its chains, primarily because the capitalist state never became an epiphenomenon of the base' (*Ibid*, 48). Only in 'economic society' 'it could truly be said that society was determined by economics' (Polanyi, 1947b, p.100) yet the countermovement limited the possibility of a fully 'economic society' emerging, preventing 'this most artificial of all social settings' (*Ibid*).[27]

Of course Polanyi in *The Great Transformation* does mention the working class and its importance, but only as one group of the many countermovements in society attempting to counter the negative effects of the self-regulating market:

> '...the workers were, up to a point, in the position to transcend the limits of a market society and to borrow solutions from the future' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.162).

Presumably 'solutions from the future' is a reference to socialism, as, for Polanyi, industrial society has an 'inherent' tendency towards socialism. However, Polanyi goes on to comment that we must not rely '...too much on the economic interests of given classes in the explanation of history' (*Ibid*) and puts forward his thesis that societal relations are more important than narrow class interests:

> 'Ultimately, therefore, it is the relation of a class to society as a whole which maps out its part in the drama; and its success is determined by the breadth and variety of the interests, other than its own, which it is able to serve' (*Ibid*).

Polanyi is articulating the argument that classes must serve interests broader than their own in order to eventually, consciously, transcend the self-regulating market as a society. Therefore there is a greater unity in Polanyi's transcendence[28] than that of Marx. However this consciousness must

[27] In Polanyi (1947b) the 'rejection of the very concept of economic determinism' (p.111) stems from the rejection of the separation of the economic sphere from society and the separation of human incentives as 'material' and 'ideal'. Polanyi (1947b) argues these ideas appear in both Marxist (Burnham) interpretations and Liberal (Hayek) interpretations of economics and society.
[28] See also (Barham, 1997, p.241) and (Block, 2014, pp.75-6).

be ‘created’, or perhaps more accurately, ‘teased’ out of each individual through the power of ideas.

1.5 Creating Consciousness Through the Power of Ideas.

I have already observed that Block & Somers (2014, p.89) argue Polanyi may have been writing *The Great Transformation* to help facilitate a transcendence to socialism. As Polanyi-Levitt (2006) argues, Polanyi ‘…*believed in the power of ideas to affect the course of world events*’ (p.154). Unconscious countermovements are dangerous as they may lead to fascism. Therefore it must, in Polanyi’s eyes, be the moral thing to create consciousness of the negative effects of the self-regulating market through powerful ideas that could change the course of world events for the better.

The argument that *The Great Transformation* is a tool to create societal consciousness can be evidenced in Dale’s (2016a) argument on what consciousness meant to Polanyi and how he believed one ought to change society. Dale (2016a) argues that the academic milieux Polanyi was influenced by:

> ‘...had come to believe that Enlightenment conceptions of a rationally ordered external reality were inadequate, that human consciousness was the critical mediator between individuals and society, and that the nature of reality did not appear in a coherent form but had to be approached through the deployment of conventional fictions’ (Loc.462-67).

Stories of society must be created for societal consciousness, and the story Polanyi wanted to concentrate on was a moral story of humanity to ‘...expand the awareness of moral agents of the repercussions of their behaviour upon society as a whole...’ (*Ibid*, Loc.526-36).

Dale (2016a) argues Polanyi had sympathy with the ideas of Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky, Gramsci, Karl Korsch and Georg Lukacs in that ‘ideas participate in the constitution of knowledge’ and that history was ‘...not predetermined by economic development but radically open to conscious human intervention’ (Loc.962-72). This idea of creating consciousness through the force of ideas in order

to change society can be seen in a number of Polanyi's works. In an article written by Polanyi after *The Great Transformation* entitled *Our Obsolete Market Mentality* this idea is explicitly described:

> 'To overcome such doctrines, which constrict our minds and souls and greatly enhance the difficulty of the life-saving adjustment, may require no less than a reform of our consciousness' (Polanyi 1947a, p.101).

Polanyi concludes the article by arguing that only a conscious democratic socialist transcendence of the market mentality can solve the problem inherent in industrial civilization and it is this very conscious action that is an embodiment of freedom:

> 'Others, on the contrary, believe that in a truly democratic society, the problem of industry would resolve itself through the planned intervention of the producers and consumers themselves. Such *conscious* and responsible action is, indeed, one of the embodiments of freedom in a complex society. But, as the contents of this article suggest, such an endeavour cannot be successful unless it is disciplined by a total view of man and society very different from that which we inherited from market-economy' (Polanyi 1947a, p.117) [Emphasis added].

Polanyi's concern with the importance of consciousness for society to be able to control the economy in a socialist manner can also be seen in his earlier writings:

> '...the achievement of a conscious social control over the economy requires our active understanding of the process of social transformation in which we are participants – and our understanding of that process is of the essence' (Polanyi 1922, p.1).

This 'consciousness' needs to be taught in order to obtain the goal of 'functional democracy' – or a socialist transcendence:

> 'The *functional democracy*, defined by Otto Bauer as "the constant cooperation of comrades in the service of the interests of the whole and the effective performance of each individual within his particular occupation and function", is possible only if each individual is conscious of his particular function. Bauer is absolutely correct in his insistence that the educational work to be done is *the* problem of socialist organization. As concerns the problem of raising the consciousness of the function of each and every individual within the working class movement, we repeat: for all the questions of socialism it is true and valid that consciousness without context, without specific circumstance, without – in the case of the collectivity – *Ubersicht*, is an impossibility. Consciousness of particular economic functions requires, as its precondition, an overview and collective comprehension of all the elements of the economy' (Polanyi 1922, p.8) [Emphasis in original].

The clear argument is that education is the process that leads to consciousness and that consciousness entails a collective overview of the economy.[29] As Block and Somers (2014) argue 'Central to him and others of his generation was the idea that progress could only come through conscious human action based on moral principles' (p.46). Due to Polanyi's strongly held belief in the intrinsic morality of the individual (perhaps influenced by his Christianity) he still believed in a form of determinism which will get society to socialism – as the transcendence to socialism is 'the tendency *inherent* in an industrial civilization'. This determinism, I argue, is a 'weaker' moral determinism, rather than a strong economic determinism. As Polanyi (1947b) states, 'It is human ideals, not economics, which are determinative outside of a market society' (p.111). This 'weaker' determinism depends on ideas and collective consciousness gained through moral education,[30] however, if this moral education is lacking society may well fall into unconsciousness.

The process of falling into unconsciousness is, firstly, unconscious, non-ideological, spontaneous countermovements interfering with the self-regulating market, as explained in section 1.2. Second, this interference creates a logic of authoritarian interference in the market to protect society. Third, this logic is used by fascists to co-opt unconscious countermovements by arguing they can use authoritarianism to protect society. Fourth, once they have gained support for their authoritarian interventionist methods they focus the people's anger away from the self-regulating market mechanism (or market-liberalism) and shift it onto the idea of social-liberalism. The attack on social-liberalism, attacks individualism and individual rights and denies '…the idea of the brotherhood of man in all its forms' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.245).[31] A society unconscious of individual rights and which takes the self-regulating market to its logical conclusion,[32] Polanyi

[29] This quote from 1922 argues for the creating of the consciousness of the working class in order to create a socialist future more in line with an orthodox Marxist view that the working class is the most important agent of a socialist transcendence. As I argue above this idea of consciousness shifts to the whole of society in *The Great Transformation* and Polanyi's later writings.

[30] 'Hence springs a realization: nothing can save democracy today except a new mass culture of economic and political education' (Polanyi, 1932, in Cangiani and Thomasberger (Eds.), 2018, Loc. 1774)

[31] See also: 'The Christian discovery of the uniqueness of the individual and the oneness of mankind is negated by fascism' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.267).

[32] Here it should be noted that, for Polanyi, the self-regulating market or (capitalism) is a utopia and can't be achieved in liberal terms alongside democracy (Polanyi 1933b, p.392). Polanyi believes that due to the economic liberal attack on democracy that argues '…Democracy inevitably diminishes the sum total of goods produced' that 'Fascism is condoned as the safeguard of Liberal economics' (*Ibid*). Similarly he

believes, is the essence of fascism (Polanyi 1933b). This process also destroys the countermovement because individual self-protection becomes an anachronism as there is no longer an individual self to protect.[33]

Each unconscious countermovement aims to protect itself (or its defined group) from the negative effects of the self-regulating market system. This may be done through embracing the market and excluding others from the isolated benefits of the market while shifting the harms of the market on to the 'other'. It is not hard to see how these processes, taken to an extreme, may provide fertile ground for fascism. On the other hand when moral education is sufficient these unconscious countermovements can become conscious. They do so first by being shown that the negative effects they are countering stem from a dysfunctional whole (the self-regulating market) – a Polanyian consciousness. They then gain a higher consciousness that each individual must protect the other from the system. The countermovement is destroyed in this process because individual self-protection becomes an anachronism as people are conscious that there is no individual protection unless there is societal protection. According to Polanyi, once this societal consciousness is achieved the transcendence to socialism is the result. These conscious movements are not explored in *The Great Transformation* but, I argue, one of the aims of *The Great Transformation* is to transform – through education – the unconscious countermovements into conscious movements, and therefore lead to a socialist future. This process is shown in Figure 1.[34]

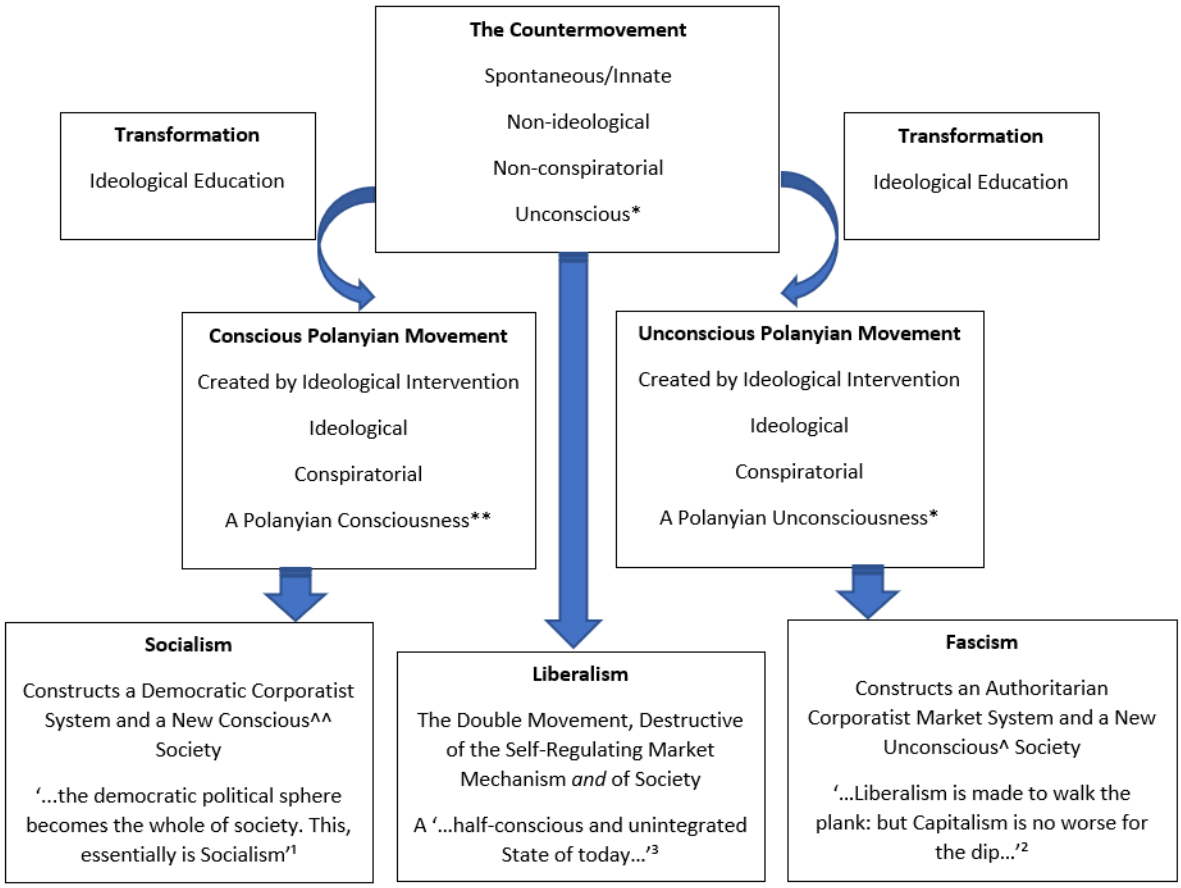
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argues '…the Fascist onslaught on Democracy [is] an attempt to save the present economic system by force' (*Ibid*). This is an argument that suggests the attempt to create a self-regulating market inevitably leads to fascism. In fascism '…Capitalism as organised in the different branches of industry becomes the whole of society' (*Ibid*). The logic of the self-regulating market becomes pervasive in society and because this logic is one in which the 'weak' can be legitimately overcome by the 'strong' authoritarianism is legitimised in the 'Corporative State' (*Ibid*). I argue that Polanyi believes the cut-throat logic of the market penetrates fascist social consciousness to create a social Darwinist system, based on the economic logic of the survival of the fittest. In this process the economic system has moved far from the original laissez-faire of economic liberals however, it potentially maintains (and expands) the essence of laissez-faire economic rationality.

[33] '[Fascism] leaves no foothold for the individual; man is entrapped in his condition of self-estrangement' (Polanyi 1933, p.376).

[34] For clarity I represent socialism, liberalism and fascism as distinct and separate. However it is clear that Polanyi sees liberalism as in continuous movement through the double movement dynamic. Liberalism contains the possibility of something relatively more progressive (when the countermovement dominates) and the possibility of something more regressive (when the self-regulating market dominates). It could be argued that socialism is a continuation of this 'progression' and fascism, a continuation of this 'regression'. This is suggestive of a spectrum rather than a dichotomy, something more like Fraser's (2019) point that 'progressive-neoliberalism' has hampered the ability of truly progressive alternatives. However, there is a

Figure 1. Liberalism, Fascism or Socialism;



distinct rupture in that the double movement is destroyed and the breakdown of this dynamic ushers in something distinctive and new, either socialism or fascism. For Polanyi socialism is 'a radical departure from the immediate past' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.242); similarly, fascism 'fused societies into new forms' (*Ibid* p.209). Therefore, a theory based on the existence of a dichotomy between fascism or socialism is justified.

*Unconscious of the fact that it is the self-regulating market system that has created the negative effects that the countermovement is attempting to counter.

**Conscious of the fact that it is the self-regulating market system that has created the negative effects that the countermovement is attempting to counter.

^Unconscious of the fact that every human is connected and we exist within every other human as a 'Brotherhood of Man' (Polanyi 1933b, p.370), thus protecting every human is protecting our self. Fascism uses the countermovements' anger at the effects of the self-regulating market and diverts this anger towards social liberalism, so social liberalism can go and the self-regulating market can remain. This works as the countermovement was unconscious that it is the self-regulating market system whole that creates the negative effects that the countermovement was attempting to counter. The countermovement is destroyed because individual self-protection becomes an anachronism as there is no longer a self to protect – fascism destroys the individual.

^^A Polanyian consciousness conscious of the fact that every human is connected and we exist within a 'brotherhood of man' thus we must protect every human in order to protect our self. For Polanyi we must do this by protecting every human from the self-regulating market because the self-regulating market destroys society. The countermovement is destroyed because individual self-protection becomes an anachronism as all individuals understand in order to protect the individual one must protect society as a whole – socialism creates this genuine individualism; 'The discovery of the individual *is* the discovery of mankind. The discovery of the individual soul *is* the discovery of community' (Polanyi 1933b, p.370).

[1]Polanyi (1933b, p.392).

[2]Polanyi (1933b, p.367).

[3]Polanyi (1934d, p.74).

As Polanyi (2001 [1944]) remarks:

> 'The discovery of society is thus either the end or the rebirth of freedom. While the fascist resigns himself to relinquishing freedom and glorifies power which is the reality of society, the socialist resigns himself to that reality and upholds the claim to freedom, in spite of it. Man becomes mature and able to exist as a human being in a complex society' (p.268).[35]

The idea of a collective consciousness explored in this section I argue has links to Hegelian[36] ideas of consciousness.

[35] Similarly: 'But what, in fact, depends upon us, and us alone, is whether this transformation will land Society on a higher or a lower level of existence than present. Whether it brings more human Freedom and Equality in a commonwealth the Socialist economics of which are but the frame-work of a Democracy infinitely more full and real than that of our day, or whether it will mean the end of Western and Christian ideals in the human stud farm of a eugenically improved Capitalism in a Fascist Satrapy' (Polanyi 1934d, p.74)

[36] Also the idea of revelations has links to Hegel: 'For Polanyi, Western man is defined by his cast of mind – that forma mentis that gives life its inner meaning, order, and coherence. The evolution of that consciousness is the result of three successive high points, or what Polanyi calls "revelations" – fateful unveilings of the elements of the human condition. These are reminiscent of the Hegelian "moments" where consciousness advances to the higher levels of self-consciousness: "knowledge of death, knowledge of freedom, knowledge of society' p.106 Polanyi-Levitt Ed. (1990)

1.6 Polanyi and Hegel: Cancelation, Preservation and Elevation

Polanyi's rejection of a Marxist class conscious in *The Great Transformation* and the creation of a societal consciousness, I argue, has similarities to Hegel. Houlgate (1990) explains that the idea of consciousness in Hegel '...is the consciousness of humanity as such and not merely the consciousness of a particular culture or state' (p.76). Houlgate (1990) goes on to argue that:

> 'Once we realize that our value and identity lie not merely in our being Greek, Roman, French, or German, but rather in our being human...then our consciousness has developed a proper sense of universal, or world-, identity' (*Ibid*).

It was this universal consciousness that I argue Polanyi believed in and sought to ignite.

Lukács (1975 [1947]) in *The Young Hegel* argues that 'Hegel perceives civil society as a unified whole' (p.366). Similarly, Polanyi's unit of analysis in *The Great Transformation* is society as an 'organic whole' (Selwyn & Miyamura 2014, p.641). Although there are many different groups within society they will still act as a unified whole when they become conscious that it is the self-regulating market that is destroying society.[37]

In *History and Class Consciousness* Lukács (1971, [1923]) argues:

> 'It is at reality itself that Hegel and Marx part company. Hegel was unable to penetrate to the real driving forces of history... In consequence he was forced to regard the peoples and their consciousness as the true bearers of historical evolution. (But he did not discern their real nature because of the heterogeneous composition of that consciousness. So he mythologised it into the 'spirit of the people')' (p.17).

Lukács here is criticising Hegel for not seeing class as the real driving force of history and basing his theories of consciousness on society as a whole and not the many different conflicting groups within society. We can assume, given the arguments I have presented, that Lukács would have had similar criticisms of Polanyi's idea of consciousness in *The Great Transformation*.

[37] This idea of society as a whole vs. marketisation has been criticised by Fraser (2014) for not dealing with the struggles within the countermovement (or society), not against marketisation, but for emancipation from social norms and structures (p.515). A lack of understanding of exploitation in capitalist societies by Polanyi has also been critiqued by Selwyn & Miyamura (2014).

It is not simply the similarity in who comprises the driving force of history through consciousness that links Polanyi and Hegel, there are a number of other links. For example Polanyi, in *The Essence of Fascism,* Polanyi argues socialism:

> '…*is* the heir to Individualism. It *is* the economic system under which the substance of Individualism can alone be preserved in the modern world' (Polanyi 1933b, p.365) [Emphasis in original].

This is in stark contrast to the 'Anti-individualism' of fascism (Polanyi 1933b, p.367). I argue the fact that Polanyi constructs socialism as the heir to individualism[38] shows affinity with Hegel. As Houlgate (1990) argues for Hegel:

> 'As history develops and we become more self-conscious...we become interested in human individuality in and for itself...we become increasingly conscious that we are essentially self-productive beings and that *free*, self-conscious self-production is the ultimate goal of our historical activity. The aim of human history, therefore, is to free us from subordination to natural laws which are indifferent to our individuality, and to generate human laws and communities which respect and promote that individuality' (p.75) [Emphasis in original].

Polanyi's aim is to create a system that protects and respects individualism and the collective.[39] Further to collective consciousness and the emphasis on individualism, Polanyi is linked to Hegel through dialectics.

I argue Polanyi's conscious societal transcendence to socialism is a dialectical[40] process as the double movement contradiction becomes the driving force for potential 'progression'.[41] Further, I argue it can be linked to Hegel in similar terms as Rotstein (1990) describes:

> '…the effective meaning of Polanyi's doctrine of resignation to the reality of society…is both resignation and transcendence – akin to Hegel's *Aufhebung*, annulling and preserving simultaneously' (p.109 In Polanyi-Levitt Ed., 1990).

[38] The idea that socialism is individualism writ large and fascism is anti-individual is often repeated by Polanyi including in Polanyi (1934f) *The State and the Individual in Fascism.*
[39] One that lets the individual '…ascertain the effects of his individual acts upon others…' Polanyi (1924-1927, p.12) which he argues neither state socialism or capitalism are able to achieve (*Ibid*, p.13).
[40] Patomäki (2014) argues 'Polanyi's method is dialectical' (p.735) although does not argue the self-regulating market, counter-movement, socialism, cancelation, preservation and elevation dialectic and seems to accept Blyth's argument that Polanyi's end was 'embedded liberalism' (p.738).
[41] Clearly demonstrating a dialectical method, see Leopold (2008, p.113).

This process is most clearly demonstrated through a Hegelian triadic dynamic, described by Leopold (2008):

> 'A paradigmatic triad might take the following general form. Hegel starts with a particular category which appears fixed and distinct. Conceptual analysis, however, reveals that this first category contains a contrary category and that this contrary category contains *it* [the first category]. Further analysis of the relation between these self-contradictory categories reveals a third category which unites the previous two. More precisely, the third category unites the previous two in a highly distinctive manner. The third category is said to cancel, preserve, and elevate, the previous concepts in a way which renders them no longer contrary' (p.113) [Emphasis added]. [42]

Using the above quote as reference we find that the first category (the self-regulating market) contains a contrary category (the countermovement or self-protection of society) and that category also contains aspects of the first category (society contains aspects of the market). For Polanyi the third category (socialism) still contains aspects of both the first category and the second but elevated in such a way that they are no longer contradictory. The self-regulating market is cancelled, but things such as the price mechanism (or 'markets') are preserved,[43] the countermovement is cancelled (as there is no self-regulating market to counter) but democracy is preserved and elevated to the whole of society: [44]

> '… the democratic political sphere becomes the whole of society. This, essentially is Socialism' (Polanyi 1933, p.392).

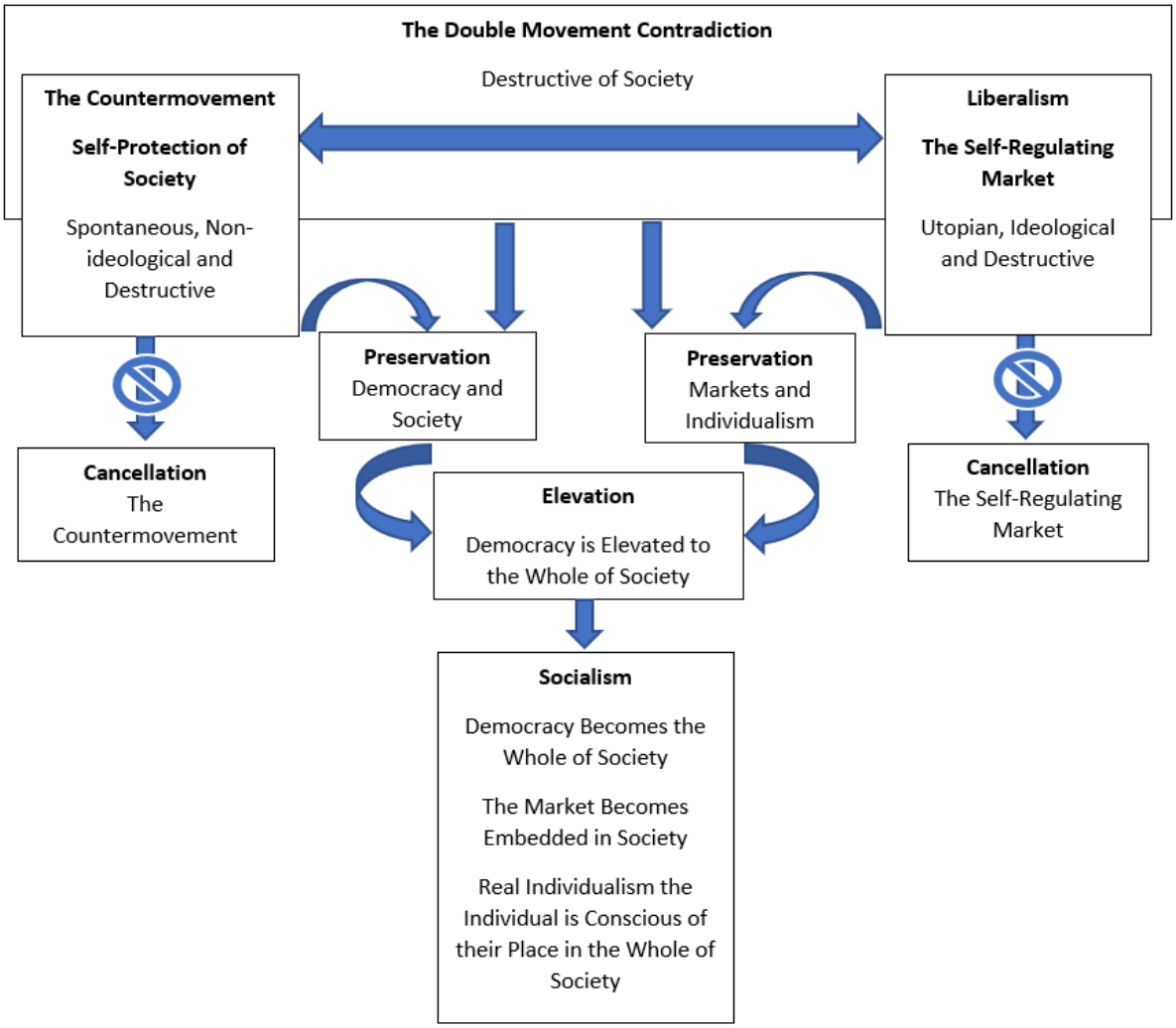
This process is shown in figure 2.

Figure 2. Socialist Transcendence;

[42] Some might call this the thesis, antithesis, synthesis Hegelian dialectic, however the thesis, antithesis, synthesis terminology is contentious, see Mueller (1958). Although this terminology may be over-simplified, Forster (1993 p.131) argues it 'does capture the intended general structure of the method reasonably well'. Leopold's (2008, p.113) quote expands the thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis to something more useful and in-line with Forster's (1993) explanation.

[43] ' … the end of market society means in no way the absence of markets' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.260).

[44] The 'whole' is an important concept for Hegel (Forster 1993, p.137).



However socialism is not the only dialectical solution[45] to the double movement contradiction for Polanyi. There is also the ideological solution to expand unconsciousness.[46] In this dynamic democracy is cancelled, but society (or 'Universalism' (Polanyi 1933, p.363)) is preserved,

[45] The idea of dialectics and fascism in Polanyi is commented on by Cox (1996): 'Hyperliberalism today replicates the first phase of the double movement. Reflecting on Polanyi's dialectical framework, the problems now are (1) to identify the probable sources of response leading to a second phase of movement; and (2) to avoid the kinds of excessive breakdown that would generate malignant responses of the fascist type' (p.32) However the ideas are not fully elaborated.

[46] This is not to say that those aiming for fascism are unconscious of what they are doing, they are in fact consciously aiming for a fascist ideology, an ideology that, in Polanyian terms, is one that creates an unconscious society. This unconscious society, purposefully created by fascists intervention, denies the emergence of the consciousness that it is every individual's duty in society to protect every other individual from harm: 'The Christian discovery of the uniqueness of the individual and the oneness of mankind is negated by fascism' (Polanyi 2001, p.267). The countermovements, having not yet gained the consciousness that the self-regulating market is the cause of their angst, are ripe for fascist intervention – a blank canvas on which fascists can divert blame away from the liberal economic sphere and towards social liberalism. Attacks on multiculturalism, immigration or various Jewish or Muslim conspiracies are used to explain why the countermovement arose in order to further the fascists' cause.

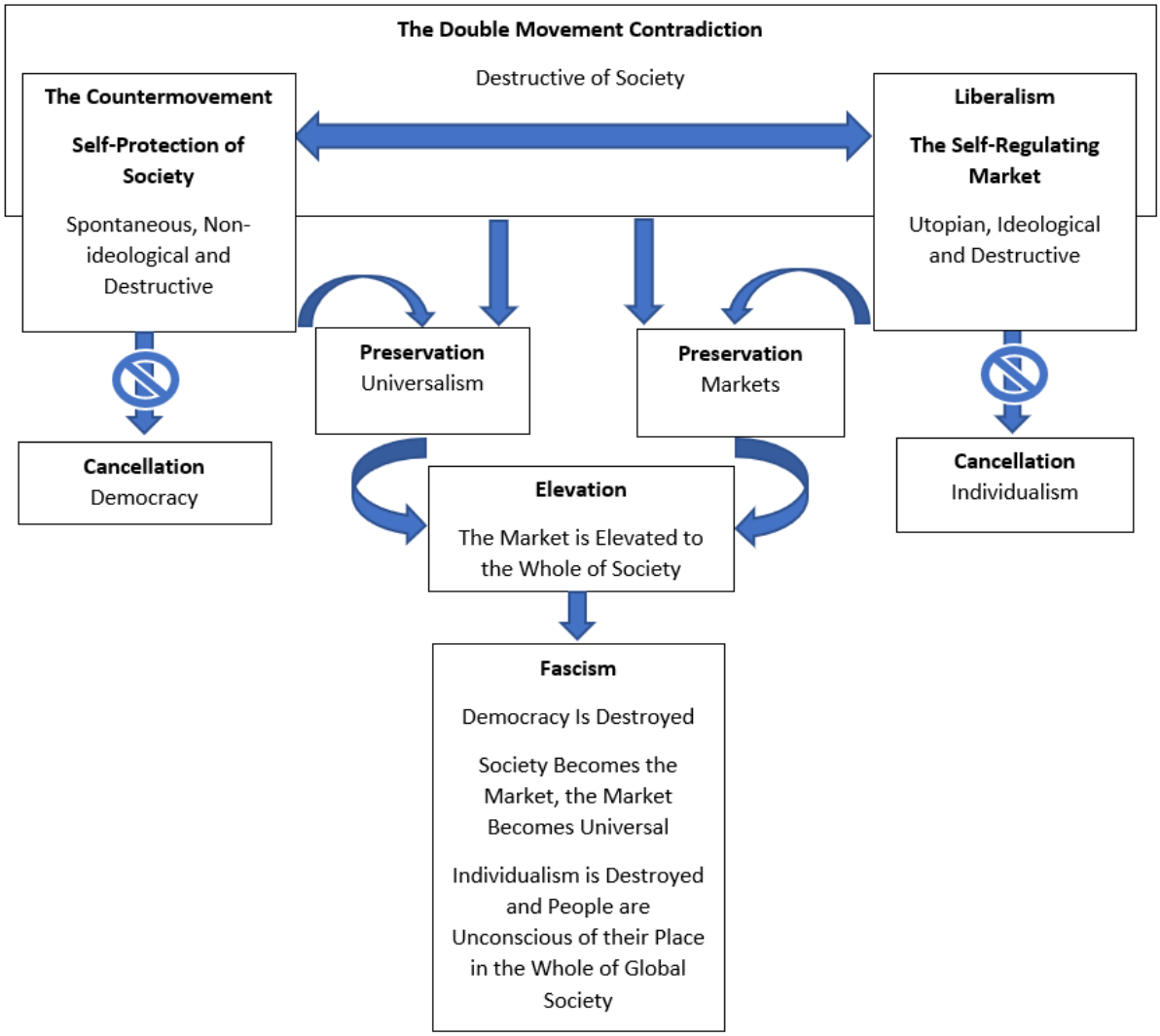
individualism is cancelled but the market is preserved and elevated to fascism – a form of capitalism shorn of individual rights and democracy:

> '...if Socialism is not to be, democracy must go. This is the *raison d'etre* of the Fascist movements in Europe. Anti-individualism is but the realisation of this political outlook' (Polanyi 1933b, p.367).

> 'Either Democracy or Capitalism must go. Fascism is that solution of the deadlock which leaves Capitalism untouched. The other solution is Socialism. Capitalism goes, Democracy remains' (Polanyi 1934a, p.159)

This process is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The Fascist Retrogression;



In *The Essence of Fascism* Polanyi explicitly mentions the importance of Hegel and explains that '...using Hegel's concept of the Mind Objective without his dialectic tends to produce a new kind of metaphysical justification of Capitalism' (Polanyi 1933b, p.374). This justification of capitalism without the dialectics[47] means '...Hegel [is] deprived of revolutionary dynamics' and 'reduced...to a static Totalitarianism' (*Ibid*) or fascism.[48]

This is the unconscious solution as in this fascist path people are unconscious that it is the capitalist system that is the root of the crisis[49] and people start to become unconscious of their individuality:

> 'Thus Fascist philosophy is an effort to produce a vision of the world in which society is not a relationship of persons. A society, in fact, in which there are either no conscious human beings or their consciousness has no reference to the existence and functioning of society' (Polanyi 1933b, p.370).

These two dialectical options, [50] the one that is unconscious and creates fascism and the one that is conscious and creates socialism,[51] can both fit within Hegel's theory of history as progress, as according to Lukács:

> 'Before Hegel...there had been a widespread tendency to think of history in terms of a linear development, gradually moving upward. Thanks to the dialectical unity of objective and absolute spirit (which also contains dialectical separation and opposition) it is possible for Hegel to register irregularities in history, i.e. advances that contain retrograde

[47] In *Notes of a Week's Study on The Early Writings of Karl Marx* (1938) Polanyi also mentions the importance of dialectics echoing Lukács' (1971 [1923]) arguments: 'Working-class consciousness is the starting point of the dialectic of modern history. The working-class in this situation is the object of its own consciousness. The recognition of its position by the working-class is the step which will lead ultimately to the overthrow of capitalism' (Polanyi, 1938, p.17). However as I have argued in *The Great Transformation* it is the whole of society which becomes the object of its own consciousness and then transcends capitalism.
[48] A similar idea is expressed by Lukács' (1975) (originally published in 1947 but completed in 1938) where he argues Hegel was '...interpreted in such a way as to give birth to a 'true German' philosopher, i.e. a mythical, irrationalist figure palatable to Fascism' (xix). Lukács (1971, [1923]) also argues that dialectics is revolutionary (p.27).
[49] 'By denouncing Socialism and Capitalism alike as the common offspring of Individualism, it enables fascism to pose before the masses as the sworn enemy of both. The popular resentment against Liberal Capitalism is thus turned most effectively against Socialism without any reflection on Capitalism in its non-Liberal, i.e. corporative, forms. Though unconsciously performed, the trick is highly ingenious. First Liberalism is identified with Capitalism; then Liberalism is made to walk the plank: but Capitalism is no worse for the dip, and continues its existence unscathed under a new alias' (Polanyi 1933b, p.367)
[50] Patomäki (2014) suggests dialectical 'World history is not a smooth, linear development to any direction, however rational that direction may be. As processes are subject to regression, entropy, and roll-back…' (p.746).
[51] Polanyi (1937b) suggests the process I have outlined commenting that 'To the new consciousness the condition of man under capitalism appears for what it is – a state of self-estrangement. By being estranged from other men, man is estranged from himself. The socialist transformation is recognised as the only means by which self-estrangement can be overcome, and personal life re-claimed in a complex society' (Loc.3944).

> moments, retrograde developments that in certain circumstances can provide the impetus for a new advance' (Lukács 1975 [1947], p.511).

For example we could argue, in Hegelian terms, that the clear retrograde step and horrors of fascism provided the impetus for the advancement of Universal Human Rights – understanding the universalism of individual rights within the whole of global society. Of course it would have been preferable to come to this consciousness of universal rights without the retrograde step of fascism. It may be the case that Polanyi hopes to create this kind of consciousness to transcend to socialism in an attempt to avoid future, potentially catastrophic, unconscious retrograde steps. If we maintain capitalism Polanyi believes consciousness will take a retrograde step:

> '...Capitalist society does not lead onward to a higher personality, but back to the unconscious social organism...' (Polanyi 1933b, p.381).

The unconsciousness of the individual related to society in fascism compared, on the contrary, to the consciousness of the individual of society in socialism has explicit Hegelian links. Firstly 20th century fascism can be seen as an attempt to go backwards in Hegelian historical terms, back into the forests of Germany and away from the 'progress' of Christianity (Avineri 1972b, p.229). For Polanyi capitalism leads back to a pre-Christian epoch as capitalism leads to fascism.[52]

Secondly, for Lukács 'What Hegel is concerned with in *The Phenomenology of Mind*, then, is the acquisition by the individual of the experience of the species' (Lukács, 1975 [1947], p.470). This is exactly what Polanyi[53] is also concerned with:

> 'The discovery of the individual *is* the discovery of mankind. The discovery of the individual soul *is* the discovery of community. The discovery of equality is the discovery of society. Each is implied in the other. The discovery of the person *is* the discovery that society is the relationship of persons. For the idea of Man and the idea of society cannot be

[52] 'This is the Individualism on which Democracy is based, and on the destruction of which Fascism is bent. It is the Individualism of the Gospels' (Polanyi 1933b, p.366), and 'At the present juncture, however, the churches, though predominantly reactionary, are unconsciously bearing witness to that Christian content which they have in common with Socialism. Thus, not in spite of its antagonism to Marxian Socialism, but in consequence of it, is National-Socialism attacking them' (*Ibid*, p.361). Polanyi (1956-1962) also refers to Fascism as a 'pagan upsurge' (p.2) and in Polanyi (1934f) 'a return to Paganism' (p.7).

[53] Polanyi (1924-1927) argues that '..the individual in a market economy…neither knows nor is able to ascertain the effects of his individual acts upon others…' and that this 'is a hindrance to the full realisation of personality' (p.12). He argues 'The moral value of social organisation depends on the degree to which it helps individual responsibility to be realised in the social sphere' (p.13). He argues both a planned economy and a market economy are unable to achieve this (p.13).

> dealt with separately. What Fascism is contending with is the Christian idea of Man and society as a whole'(Polanyi 1933b p.370) [Emphasis in original].

Lukács specifically, and orthodox Marxism in general, reject Hegel's interpretation of society as a whole being the agent of consciousness, those whose self-knowledge constitutes the self-knowledge of the world, and reject Hegel's Christian overtures. However Polanyi embraces both of these[54] but synthesises them with a Marxist transcendence of capitalism to socialism, thus rejecting Hegel's belief that his era in France, England and German sufficiently embodied self-consciousness (Houlgate 1990, p.79).[55]

I argue that Polanyi's general theory can be seen as a synthesis of Hegelian and Marxist theory, rejecting the 'bad' (the economic materialist determinism in Marx, and the 'end of history' in the capitalist epoch of Hegel), and accepting the 'good' (the transcendence of capitalism to socialism in Marx and the ability of the whole of society to gain consciousness in Hegel plus Hegel's emphasis on Christianity) and consciously creating something new that Polanyi would see as a progression of the two theories. This is similar to Block & Somers's (2014) argument that in:

> '…his English years, Polanyi developed his own Hegelianized Marxist position that had distinct commonalities to arguments developed by Lukacs in *History and Class Consciousness* (1971 [1923])' (p.73).

The point on the importance of Christianity and its link to socialism is well evidenced in *The Great Transformation.* After Polanyi mentions socialism is the inherent tendency in industrial civilization to transcend the self-regulating market and consciously subordinate it to democratic society, he then states:

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[54] For example in *The Great Transformation*: 'The traditional unity of a Christian society was giving place to a denial of responsibility on the part of the well-to-do for the condition of their fellows…the stoic determination to renounce human solidarity in the name of the greatest happiness of the greatest number gained the dignity of a secular religion' (p.106). Although earlier works have more emphasis on Christianity, see footnote 26 above, see also Polanyi (1938).

[55] However Avineri (1972b) argues Hegel '…was well aware that the future was still open in terms of the emergence of new cultures…however…whether the future development of Russia and America would signify new 'principles' of world history or just an extension of the principles already achieved' is still an open question in Hegel's writing (p.237)

> ‘From the point of view of the community as a whole, socialism is merely the continuation of that endeavor to make society a distinctly human relationship of persons which in Western Europe was always associated with Christian traditions’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.242).

The Marxist transcendence to socialism, societal consciousness and Christianity, from Hegel, are directly linked here. However Polanyi does not mention Marx or Hegel by name. In the whole of *The Great Transformation* Hegel[56] is only mentioned once in passing and Marx a handful of times, often to criticise specific Marxist points. However, given the time the book was written in, and the purpose of the book (to attempt to influence the post-war consensus), it is not surprising that Hegel, who had been linked to fascist ideology, and Marx, linked to the ideology of the Soviet Union, are not mentioned more often. Therefore, even with the lack of specific attribution, I argue that the Polanyian link to Hegel's dialectical method and societal consciousness, as well as Christian ideas and a Marxist transcendence out of capitalism should be kept in mind when reading *The Great Transformation*. Understanding Polanyi through his range of writings and through a Hegelian dialectic lens avoids interpretations that classify *The Great Transformation* as ‘static’ (Blyth 2002, p.10), avoids erroneous claims that Polanyi's ‘end of history’ was ‘embedded liberalism’ (Blyth 2002, p.4) and avoids the clearly false argument that Polanyi did not understand the power of ideas in the process of change (Blyth 2002, p.10, p.275). Ideas matter[57] to Polanyi because ideas create societal consciousness for a dialectical transcendence to socialism.

This section described how the aspect of unconsciousness is important for Polanyi's thesis on the countermovement. I have also argued that this brings Polanyi's thesis towards a Hegelian-Marxist synthesis. Polanyi accepts the Marxist view that conflicts within society, due to the negative effects of the market system, have the potential to become conscious conflicts to transcend the capitalist super-structure. However he argues that it is not just one class that moves history towards this

[56] See appendix A.1 for a more detailed argument of Polanyi’s affinity with Hegel.
[57] For example education is primary for Polanyi: ‘We thus arrive at the conclusion that only a cultural revolution of economic and political education can save democracy from suicidal demise’ (Polanyi 1932, p.3). See also Polanyi-Levitt (2012).

transcendence but society as a whole – echoing Hegelian ideas of a world-consciousness. In this section I have put forward a range of potential links between Polanyi and Hegel. However a thorough investigation of Hegel's influence on Polanyi is beyond the scope of this thesis. In section A.1 of the appendix I have examined further arguments I argue demonstrate Polanyi's affinity with Hegel. This helps strengthen the argument that the societal consciousness used by Polanyi may have Hegelian links as well as strengthening the position that Polanyi's dialectical process can be linked to Hegel as demonstrated above.

I have further argued that Block & Somers (2014) argument that *The Great Transformation* was written in order to influence the English political system is enhanced by Polanyi's ideas of consciousness described by Dale (2016a) as well as enhanced by a number of other writings written by Polanyi, both before and after the publication of *The Great Transformation*. I argue Polanyi's ideas on consciousness, and the idea that *The Great Transformation* was aimed at creating consciousness is essential in order to understand one of Polanyi's main theses – the countermovement – and the contemporary misreadings of it. For Polanyi the countermovement is spontaneous, inherent and destructive of the self-regulating market system. While the solution – consciousness – is *not* spontaneous or inherent but must be demonstrated and created for a transcendence to occur. This re-examination of Polanyi's core concept – the countermovement will allow me to answer the overarching research question on the contemporary relevance of Polanyian thought in the rest of this thesis. First, however, I will demonstrate how widespread the contemporary misreadings of Polanyi are and therefore the importance of my re-evaluation.

1.7 The Explicit Contemporary Misreading of Polanyi's Countermovement Thesis

The non-ideological, non-conspiratorial, inherent and unconscious nature of Polanyian counter-movements described in *The Great Transformation* is in contrast to much of the writing on Polanyi

today. The countermovement thesis has morphed into an explicit description of anti-globalization and anti-capitalist movements:[58]

> 'In recent years, Karl Polanyi's concept of the "double movement" has been resurrected to describe growing international resistance to neoliberal global capitalism. The double movement originally referred to counter-movements for social protection against the 19th and early 20th century laissez-faire market. Today, it describes the growth of new social movements which often resist neoliberal economic practices and ideologies' (Mostafanezhad 2016, p.114).

Mostafanezhad's (2016) explanation of how Polanyi's thesis of the double movement and countermovement have been resurrected demonstrates some of the explicit contemporary misreadings of Polanyi's thesis. Firstly the term double movement is being incorrectly used, in a similar way as Blyth (2002) misuses the term. Mostafanezhad (2016) rightly points out that scholars have used the term double movement to describe resistance against capitalism, however this is a misreading of the term double movement. As I have argued the double movement of society entails *both* the countermovement and the move towards economic liberalism '...aiming at the establishment of a self-regulating market...' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.138). The double movement is dialectical, simultaneously containing the thesis and its contradiction.

The second misreading in the above quote is that the double movement, (read as countermovement), was a resistance to the laissez-faire market, in fact it was only a resistance to the *effects* of the laissez-faire market and not the system itself. This misreading of the 19th and 20th century countermovements then leads to the misuse of the term to describe contemporary social movements that resist neoliberal ideologies. The contemporary social movements that resist neoliberal ideologies are themselves ideological, they are conspiratorial – in the sense they come

[58] A similar misreading occurs in Levien & Paret (2012): 'Karl Polanyi's theory of the 'double movement' has gained great currency in recent years to explain the global growth of contemporary social movements resisting neoliberalism' (p.724). Their statistical study may actually give evidence of 'consciousness' in Polanyian terms and an increase in conscious Polanyian movements, rather than an increase in Polanyian countermovements. The title 'A second double movement? Polanyi and shifting global opinions on neoliberalism' also seems to be a misinterpretation as the double movement never ended. For another misreading of Polanyi see Carroll (2016) who argues we must add 'Gramsci's concept of the relations of force' to see why the double movement has 'failed' (Abstract) – conflating the double movement and the countermovement and not understanding the countermovement *necessarily* fails according to Polanyi. See also Stuart, Gunderson & Petersen (2019) who argue the degrowth movement which 'challenges the logic of market fundamentalism' (p.95) is a countermovement.

together to attempt to create something new – and are conscious of the systemic problems the capitalist system has on nature and people. Therefore these social movements cannot be called countermovements in the sense Polanyi describes them in *The Great Transformation*.

These contemporary anti-globalisation social movements referred to in the literature as Polanyian countermovements (Stuart, Gunderson & Petersen 2019; Levien & Paret 2012) actually demonstrate how some of the countermovements have become 'conscious' of the Polanyian idea that (neo)liberalism will destroy society. These conscious movements therefore want to transcend this economic system to a post-capitalist world. They have gained a Polanyian consciousness and should be named conscious Polanyian movements.

1.8 The Implicit Contemporary Misreading of Polanyi's Countermovement Thesis.

The conscious Polanyian movements, and the Polanyian countermovement dichotomy is a useful tool to help us understand the implicit misreadings of the countermovement thesis in the literature. In Dale's (2010) chapter entitled 'No dearth of countermovements' he explains the multitude of studies that have used the countermovement thesis to describe a wide range of social organisations. He starts by arguing that 'Few Polanyians would deny that...' the Perez neoliberal 'Great Turn' in Venezuela followed by Chavez's coup '...is an uncomplicated case of the double movement in operation' (Dale 2010, Loc.5707). However I argue that this is not the double movement thesis Polanyi describes in *The Great Transformation*.

If we accept Chavez's rhetorical aim to achieve socialism of the 21st century, then at least rhetorically Chavez's political movement demonstrates the *transcendence* of the self-regulating market and thus the transcendence of the double movement dialectic. The Chavez movement was not a non-ideological, non-conspiratorial and unconscious countermovement within the self-regulating market, but an openly socialist and openly revolutionary movement that aimed to overthrow the existing system rather than simply wanting more regulation of the system that

already existed. Rather than the Perez neoliberal turn followed by the Chavez countermovement, it was a Perez neoliberal turn followed by a Chavez transcendence. Whether the practice accorded with the socialist rhetoric is of course a separate and complex question, but the point is the rhetoric was of a transcendence to socialism rather than a regulation of capitalism.

This difference between an unconscious countermovement and a conscious movement may seem subtle but it is important, as in Polanyian terms, the unconscious countermovement(s) only succeed in destroying the whole of society by unconsciously destroying the self-regulating market and unconscious countermovements have the potential to lead to fascism. Whereas the movements that become conscious are the progressive solution[59] to the double movement contradiction. They create a society that transcends the liberal push for more market and support a society based on socialism.

In my terms what actually represents a countermovement and the double movement thesis is something more like the Thatcher/New Labour double movement. The New Labour 'third way' has been linked to Polanyi in Porter and Craig (2004). After the Thatcherite movement to increase the market mechanism in society, New Labour were elected on a more protectionist platform and enacted protectionist legislation such as minimum wage legislation. New Labour generally accepted the predominance of neoliberalism and argued for protective legislation rather than an overhaul of the system. In Polanyian terms this is the type of protectionism initiated through a countermovement that is necessary yet also necessarily unsuccessful (Lacher 1999, p.314) as it undermines the self-regulating market which leads to social destruction. New Labour did not call for a transcendence of the self-regulating market system to a post-capitalist one. Therefore New Labour can be seen as a Polanyian countermovement but not a conscious Polanyian movement. I argue that the shock victory of Jeremy Corbyn, more outwardly socialist, represents a move from

[59] Wissen (2020) uses the term 'progressive countermovement' (p.170) to describe movements that aim to go 'beyond capitalism' (p.171). I argue this phrase is contradictory to Polanyi's use of the term in *TGT*. The countermovement is argued to ultimately destroy the system without initiating something new, it is therefore not a progressive solution. The term 'progressive' is only used twice in *TGT* and never with reference to Polanyi's main concepts. I argue the term 'conscious Polanyian movement' more accurately captures Polanyi's theory as to how society may transcend capitalism.

the Labour Party being a countermovement to it being a conscious Polanyian movement.[60] Although the policies were still largely protectionist[61] the rhetoric was more anti-neoliberal,[62] arguing that a more radical change of society is necessary. This rhetoric is clear in a publication commenting on the IPCC 2018 report, in which Clive Lewis, then a member of Corbyn's shadow cabinet wrote:

> 'In other words, markets will not solve climate breakdown on their own. Nor will they stop the rapidly deteriorating levels of biodiversity loss and breaching of planetary boundaries. In fact I would go further and argue that the entire paradigm of deregulated markets, the all consuming drive for profit maximisation and the resulting gross inequality, has itself acted as the greatest recent driver of climate change and ecological degradation' (Lewis 2018).

Polanyi would not disagree.

The few dialectical interpretations of Polanyi have also succumbed to many of the misreadings that are found in the general scholarship. Firstly although Patomäki (2014) correctly interprets the double movement thesis earlier in his paper and talks of it in dialectical terms (p.734) it seems to later become interchangeable with the countermovement:

> 'It is thus clear that the new double movement will not come about semi-automatically, but can only be realised through *transformative praxis*' (p.741).

As previously explained there cannot be a new double movement. The double movement in the 21st century is the same process as the one in the 19th and 20th as we have not transcended the self-regulating market system. The move to a more market society and the countermovement may take new forms but the process of the double movement is exactly the same (an eternal internal struggle). Here again I think there has been a confusion between the double movement thesis and the countermovement. However, if we read countermovement, then it is *necessarily* automatic within the double movement thesis or else it would not be the countermovement. What I believe Patomäki (2014) actually wants to say is that 'consciousness' will not be achieved semi-automatically but can only be realised through transformative praxis. This is exactly Polanyi's

[60] Economist (2018) argues Polanyi is a large influence on the current Labour leadership.
[61] Although policies such as large-scale nationalisation and government intervention do seem to go beyond the New Labour consensus.
[62] See: Asthana; Elgot and Mason (2017), Jeremy Corbyn: neoliberalism is broken and we are now the centre ground.

thesis – that we need to transcend the double movement binary through transformative ideas and practice and come to a new synthesis. However here Patomäki (2014) is being critical of Polanyi for not seeing the importance of praxis, when in fact it is Patomäki's (2014) misreading that should be in question. This misreading may come from Patomäki's (2014) acceptance of Blyth's (2002) thesis:

> 'Blyth follows Polanyi in thinking that the ideas behind embedded liberalism were a rational response to a real crisis' (Patomäki 2014, p.738).

If we accept that the double movement is a process of regulating capitalism in embedded liberalism then there seems to be no synthesis available and embedded liberalism becomes the end of history. In this reading there would be no transformative action, just a continuous pendulum force (Dale 2012).

Further, Patomäki (2014) criticises the lumping of '…all forms of social protection even when the protection may serve the purposes of, say, large landowners' specific interests or militarist nationalism (p.741). However, firstly, this is one great insight of Polanyi, that even people that benefit from the market in economic terms will start to become part of the countermovement because the countermovement is inherent and non-ideological and their *social* existence is at threat from the self-regulating market. It is also untrue that Polanyi does not distinguish between militarist nationalism and other countermovements. The countermovements start as unconscious *and* non-ideological movements, never mind if they are workers fighting for more pay or land owners fighting to maintain the value of their land from the effects of global competition. But they become ideological through people creating narratives around why they are having to protect themselves. The nationalistic countermovements are the ones that are ideologically unconscious in Polanyian terms as they do not believe each person must protect each other from the market. This leads to the fascist ideological synthesis – an ideologically unconscious society. While the countermovements that become conscious of the fact that it is the self-regulating market that is the root cause of the problems of society then become conscious on a higher level, which for Polanyi

necessarily leads to a socialist ideological synthesis. Therefore Polanyi is acutely aware of a militarist nationalism movement.

Despite mistaken interpretations, what is most interesting is that Patomäki (2014) comes to almost the exact conclusion as Polanyi – although Patomäki (2014) does not realise it is Polanyi's conclusion. Patomäki (2014) argues for what Camilleri and Falk's (2009) call 'hororeflexivity' which '…involves a comprehension of the mechanisms, structures and processes of the whole' (p.745), or what Hegel may describe as self-consciousness or world consciousness (Houlgate 1990, p.76), or a Polanyian societal consciousness. Patomäki (2014) argues that this 'hororeflexivity' can create a new synthesis. Patomäki (2014) describes the possibility of this new synthesis as democratic global Keynesian. Although Polanyi sees this synthesis as socialism, both rely on a consciousness of the whole. A dialectical understanding of Polanyi – even with flaws – is able to come to what I argue is the correct Polanyian conclusion – a conscious transformation of the whole of society.

What is further striking about both Blyth (2002) and Patomäki (2014) misreadings, is they subconsciously internalise Polanyi's theses and rebrand them as their own. Blyth's (2002) *ideas and narratives matter* thesis, which is integral to Polanyi, and Patomäki's (2014) *global conscious synthesis*, which is ultimately Polanyi's conclusion. Whereas Blyth (2002) subconsciously understood Polanyi's *process* – ideas, narratives and education, Patomäki's (2014) dialectical understanding subconsciously understood Polanyi's *goal* – conscious societal transcendence. Both believe that Polanyi did not come to these conclusions[63] thus missing the overall message of Polanyi's *Great Transformation* – using narratives and ideas to educate the inherent, non-ideological, unconscious countermovements to become conscious in order for a societal conscious transcendence of the self-regulating market.

[63] My reading of Polanyi as dialectical and aiming for a societal conscious transcendence using the power of ideas came before reading either Blyth (2002) or Patomäki (2014).

1.9 Implications for Contemporary Polanyian Research.

My argument that consciousness and unconsciousness are important themes for Polanyi in his thesis on countermovements has a number of implications for contemporary Polanyian study on social movements. First, it means that if we want to research Polanyian countermovements we must look for unconscious movements; movements that aim to mitigate the *effects* of the market rather than movements that are ideologically predisposed to changing the economic system. This is something I return to in a Chinese context in Chapter 3.

Second, we should classify ideological movements that argue that the current economic system is destructive to the environment and society and must be fundamentally changed as conscious Polanyian movements. These movements would have become conscious of the Polanyian thesis that the disembedding of the self-regulating market from society is at the core of society's ills, whether they have encountered Polanyi or not. This is something I return to in a Chinese context in Chapter 4.

Third, the idea of a Marxist proletariat class-consciousness is expanded to other classes in a Polanyian reading of consciousness. This means that the middle classes (or bourgeoisie) and upper classes have the potential to gain consciousness of the inherent destructive nature of the self-regulating market. Researching non-working-class class consciousness/unconsciousness may be an interesting and fruitful avenue for Polanyian scholarship as well as providing a better understanding of what societal consciousness would entail. For this more research on Polanyian and Hegel would be fruitful.

Finally, the emphasis on societal consciousness may help us develop a trajectory to overcome the current triple crisis of land (nature), money and labour. As it becomes more apparent that our economic system is causing massive environmental destruction, that our financial system is prone to large crises and that the economy may not be able to provide sufficient jobs in the future due to artificial intelligence or the slow-down of global growth, it seems that a re-think of our economic and political system is due on a societal level.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that Polanyi's countermovement concept is often misinterpreted within the literature. This is because scholars do not give enough weight to three of the aspects of the countermovement thesis; that it is non-ideological, non-conspiratorial and inherent to a self-regulating market mechanism. Further to this I argue there is a fourth aspect of the countermovement thesis that has been almost totally overlooked: that countermovements are unconscious. I argue that the character of unconsciousness is important as it helps explain how unconscious countermovements can turn fascistic and helps us see how society can break the destructive tangle of the double movement thesis through a conscious transcendence. I further argue that emphasising consciousness links Polanyi's work to Hegel's ideas and that we may be able to interpret Polanyi as a synthesis of Hegel and Marx. I argue that, for Polanyi, a Hegelian consciousness will create a Marxist transcendence.

Finally it must be noted that my interpretation is one of many possible interpretations of Polanyi's work. *The Great Transformation* is full of complexity and is sometimes ambiguous. More research is necessary to conclusively argue that my interpretation of the countermovement is the same as Polanyi's. However, what I argue is that my interpretation is the most credible interpretation of the countermovement currently available in the contemporary literature. The main alternative thesis – that the countermovement is an internal stabilising mechanism for embedded liberalism – is clearly not well evidenced in Polanyi's writing. I argue that a re-reading of Polanyi with an emphasis on the idea of consciousness is important. I believe it will not only help us better understand Polanyian theory but may help us better understand the contemporary political context in which we find ourselves.

My next chapter interrogates the use of Polanyi in contemporary China and argues that the conscious/unconscious dynamic is a useful frame to describe certain phenomena. I argue that to answer my overarching research question on the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory the applicability of the theory to China is important. This is because China has recently undergone a

‘great transformation’ and the legacies of this transformation are likely to still be clearly observable. Further as China becomes more and more influential on the world stage it is important to understand Polanyi’s contemporary significance for China in order to argue Polanyi’s theoretical insights are widely relevant to the 21st century.

Chapter 2

Polanyi Embedded in China?

My work is for Asia, for Africa, for the new peoples...The opposition which my world of thought is called forth at last, is a good sign. I should have loved to last and be in at the fight, but man is a mortal thing.

Karl Polanyi, 1958[64]

[64] From a letter to Be de Waard, 1958, in Polanyi (1977).

Introduction

Since reform and opening up China has been experiencing a 'great transformation' from a planned economy to a more market type. It is therefore unsurprising that Polanyi's seminal work *The Great Transformation* has been applied to a Chinese context. In this chapter I first review the Polanyian literature used in a Chinese context in section 2.1. In section 2.2 & 2.3 I interrogate two Chinese movements that I argue can be described as conscious Polanyian movements; the New Rural Reconstruction Movement (NRRM) and the Institute for Postmodern Development of China (IPDC). I put forward a number of arguments as to how these 'radical' movements are able to survive in the Chinese context. Section 2.4 through 2.6 interrogates three concepts within the literature on China; 'Atomized Collective Action' (Rev 1987 & Zhou 1993), 'Resigned Activism' Lora-Wainwright (2017) & 'Mobilizing Without the Masses' (Fu 2017). I argue these concepts can be defined as unconscious countermovements and that within Fu's (2017) work there is potential to see how unconscious countermovements may become conscious Polanyian movements through ideological education. In this chapter I therefore demonstrate the value of Polanyian thought on contemporary China as well as arguing the applicability of Polanyi's theory, as articulated in Chapter 1, on current concepts used in Chinese scholarship.

2.1 Polanyi in China.

Polanyi's work has been used to interpret China in numerous ways,[65] often being adapted in an attempt to fit the China 'special' case. For example Zhang (2013) adapts Polanyi to Chinese circumstances and turns Polanyi's self-regulating market thesis into a Chinese disembedding self-regulating state thesis. Zhang (2013) turns Polanyi's thesis of the double movement into an intraparty double movement of factional divides one pushing for ever more marketisation while the other attempting to protect society. Using a more standard Polanyian argument Lim (2014)

[65] It could be argued that using Polanyi to interrogate Chinese society is Euro-centric and should be avoided in order to decolonialise scholarship. However a number of Chinese scholars have found Polanyi's theories useful to explain certain phenomena in modern China. I follow these scholars' in developing Polanyian interpretations of China's transformation. I especially take inspiration from Zhou (2013) whose work resonated with my understand of Polanyi and which expands Polanyian theory into the sphere of food-safety.

describes the Chongqing development model[66] as a countermovement of the state protecting society from the market and Zhou (2013) uses Polanyian theory to look at how peasant farmers protect themselves from food safety concerns through individual self-protection from the market.[67] More generally many China scholars have argued that Polanyi's ideas are relevant to a Chinese context (Lin, 2009; Lu, 2011; Dai & Wang, 2014; Wang, 2012, 2008).[68]

The most in-depth analysis of Polanyian theory from a China scholar I have found comes from Wang's (2012) book entitled *Polanyi's Great Transformation and China's Great Transformation* (波兰尼 《大转型》与中国大转型). The book is divided into two lectures the first interpreting and explaining the Great Transformation (《大转型》解读) and the second discussing the market economy transformation (市场经济中的转型) with reference to China. The second section is a translation of the forewords by Joseph Stiglitz and Fred Block from the 2001 edition of *The Great Transformation*.

Wang's (2012) interpretation of Polanyi can be seen as a 'hard' reading of Polanyi as he argues that Polanyi believes a move to socialism is an intrinsic tendency ('内在倾向') in industrialised society and that socialism transcends the self-regulating market by consciously obeying democratic society ('它通过自觉地服从民主社会的方式，超越自我调节的市场') (p.54). Wang (2012) also argues that Polanyi sees social protective methods as spontaneous ('自发') (p.46) and that the countermovement ('反向运动') is not a movement of a specific class but stems from the needs of the whole of society (p.54). Further, Wang (2012) argues Polanyi's socialism and his Christian beliefs in solidarity are inextricably linked ('有千丝万缕的关系').

[66] For more on the Chongqing model see Huang (2012).
[67] See also Zhang & Qi (2019) which uses Polanyian theory of the countermovement to link peasant eco-agriculture 'self-protection' to urban alternative food networks. This piece hints at the process of unconscious countermovements becoming conscious Polanyi movements, although it is not articulate in these terms.
[68] Wang's (2004) paper on the 1989 social movement also includes a significant number of Polanyian tropes.

Wang (2012) strongly links Polanyi's writing on the industrial revolution to the situation in China, arguing that the economic upheaval ('经济剧变') in China has brought social and environmental problems similar to 19th century Britain (p.45). One social problem of economic change he points to in his second lecture is urbanization leading to atomization ('陌生化') and the breakdown of traditional communities (p.93). Wang (2012) also argues that a Polanyian double movement ('双向运动') can be seen in China's recent history. Wang (2012) periodises China's double movement as a period of 'moral economy' ('伦理经济') from 1949 to 1984, in which the market did not play a large role and policies were both economic and social policies ('所有政策既是经济政策也是社会政策'). The second period according to Wang (2012), began in 1985 and lasted until 1998, at which time China only developed economic and not social policies ('中国政府只有经济政策，没有社会政策') – the market was dominant. Finally the period starting in 1999 which has been defined by an increase in social policies (p.95-96). He notes that this periodisation is different from other writers who may argue 1978 was the beginning of a move to a more market based economy, but Wang (2012) argues the actual implementation of reforms began after 1984. The argument that 1949 and the Maoist period can be seen to be a period of the embedding of society stands in stark contrast to Hann (2009), who also uses Polanyi in a Chinese context.

Hann (2009) argues, with specific reference to the Xinjiang region of China, that the *increase* of marketisation in China can actually be seen as a type of Polanyian embedding as:

> '…Marxist– Leninist– Maoist socialism promoted a non-market disembedding of the economy from social relations, with social consequences no less devastating than the market-driven processes analyzed by Polanyi' (p.258).

Hann (2009) suggests '…that "reform socialism," that is, modifications of collectivist central planning which re-introduce the principle of the market, can be consistent with a renewal of moral embeddedness analogous to the embedded liberalism of the Keynesian generation in the West' (*Ibid*). It is certainly likely that authoritarian political systems are disembedding and cause devastating social consequences. However it is not clear that it follows that an authoritarian system with slightly more marketisation is necessarily a renewal of moral embeddedness. Hann (2009)

explains the positives for the people of Xinjiang since the reform era 'opening up' with emphasis on moral embedding. However, recently, these positives have been rapidly undermined by the state. It is not clear how the actions of the state have been tempered by market-driven processes and it is possible that the opposite is the case – that increased moral disembedding today is due to the desire for political stability to develop the Belt and Road economic initiative (Zenz 2018; Abdurihim 2019). It also seems fair to say that Chinese authorities are using similar disembedding tactics of forced labour and re-education that were present in Maoist times (Feng 2018; Zenz 2018). Other tactics, such as citizens being 'sent-down' to Xinjiang villages have similarities to Maoist policies. However in Xinjiang the Han 'civilizers' are sent down to help re-educate, and spy on, 'Uighur and Kazakh "masses"' in a capitalist inversion of the Maoist practice (Byler 2018). It could be argued the tactics being used in Xinjiang currently are a synthesis of Maoist political re-education with capitalist social relations and a technological[69] revolution – potentially even more disembedding than either tactic in isolation. If there was moral embeddedness brought on by market reforms, as Hann (2009) argues, it seems to have quickly dissipated.

Hann's (2009) use of Polanyi also opens up complex questions as to how much Maoism was or was not influenced by capitalist social relations. It is possible to argue Maoism looked very much like a 'state capitalist' system as Liu (2016) argues.[70] Hann's (2009) article is none the less an interesting and thought provoking adaptation of Polanyi to a Chinese context, and demonstrates how reforms may have increased moral embeddedness in Xinjiang for a short time.

The diversity of the various applications of Polanyi's theses could, by a sceptic, be seen as a demonstration of Polanyi's ambiguities and contradictions; however, these could also be seen as testament to the innovative ways in many different contexts to which his theories can be applied. While Zhang (2013) argues that at present there is little scope in China for countermovements because of the authoritarian state, Lim (2014) suggests that it is the very power of the state that can

[69] For example see Human Rights Watch's article on Xinjiang, big data and predictive policing (HRW, 2018), see also Byler (2019).
[70] Similarly Gerth (2020) argues the CCP was always developing a 'variation of industrial capitalism' and that 'Mao-era political economy can be better understood… as *state capitalism*' (p.4).

be used as a countermovement to protect society from the market. However within the literature of Polanyi in China there are similar misreadings as present in the European and American centred scholarship.

For example Dai & Wang (2014) argue Polanyian countermovements have diverse ideologies ('意识形态的多元性') (p.60), however, as previously argued countermovements are non-ideological. For Yang (2013) the countermovement:

> '…originates most forcefully from deep material grievances, it targets the predatory activities of the market, and it is spontaneous. In China's case, there is one additional crucial element: the targets are not limited to the market but also include local government authorities' (p.34).

However as argued above the countermovement never directly targets the predatory activities of market itself but *does* target the state to set-up protections for certain groups from the negative *effects* of the market. Further, Yang (2013) argues that:

> 'In Polanyi's analysis, the state aligned with society in the countermovement against the market. The Chinese state in the reform period is never unambiguously on the side of society. More often, it is an advocate of the market. It is only *after* the rise of the countermovement that the state is alerted to the destructive potentials of the market' (p.34) [Emphasis in original].

However Polanyi is well aware that no state is unambiguously on the side of society and is always, in part, an advocate of the market (the double movement thesis). For Polanyi the state is only protecting society from the market when it is alerted by the countermovement, either from within the state or outside, of the destructive effects of the market.

Zhang's (2013) article also illustrates some of the misreadings present in the Polanyian scholarship on China, when he argues that:

> 'Political liberalization would at least have enabled workers and social groups to organize independent unions and large-scale social movements, creating countervailing power and perhaps opening possible venues for a regime change. But any such civic power for countermovement is considered intolerable and emasculated by the Party-state' (p.1619).

Zhang (2013) argues here that countermovements are ideological and 'conspiratorial' in the sense that they could undermine the Chinese regime to force regime change. However as previously discussed the countermovements are non-conspiratorial countering the *effects* of self-regulating

market and not the market mechanism itself. If we take Zhang's (2013) logic that the Party-state is a self-regulating state similar to the self-regulating market, countermovements would aim to combat the negative *effects* of the CCP and not attack them ideologically and not aim to consciously undermine CCP rule. In fact this is what Zhang (2013) argues is happening:

> 'Although grievances manifested themselves in widespread protests, they have been made localized, isolated, segmented, and thus manageable under the self-regulating Party-state (Bernstein, 2009)...In fact, the upsurge of widespread resentment and resistance on the part of deprived workers and farmers has been directed at the unfair rule of the party-state rather than at capitalists (Dickson, 2008; O'Brien and Li, 2006). Other than contesting neoliberalism, there is obviously a pressing need to contest the self-regulating state, to make the political system more transparent and accountable, and to make the working class politically enfranchised' (p.1619).

If the self-regulating Party-state is analogous to the self-regulating market in Polanyian terms what we would expect to see in terms of the countermovement is many spontaneous, localised and isolated countermovements against the *effects* of the Party-state. This is exactly what Zhang (2013) argues is happening, although he fails to identify them as countermovements. What Zhang (2013) seems to be calling for are conscious Polanyian movements that are conscious of the fact that the state is destructive to society and aim to 'transcend' the ideology of the state, to a more accountable, transparent and democratic system.

This reading of Polanyi with Chinese characteristics – that the Party-state is a self-regulating state similar to the self-regulating market – is an interesting interpretation but by misinterpreting the countermovement concept the argument becomes weaker. I argue that a more authentic reading of Polanyi for a Chinese context would argue that there are multiple countermovements against the effects of the market which aim – exactly as Polanyi describes in *The Great Transformation* – to get protections from the state without attacking the market or state in ideological terms. For example, the perceived necessity of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for China to grow and modernise in capitalist terms leads to middle class protests against pollution (Liu 2013; Hoffman & Sullivan 2015; Kuhn 2017). These protestors are consciously protesting the negative *effects* of marketised industrialisation (the pollution) but are not consciously protesting against the root cause (the market) as Liu (2013) argues:

> '…environmental rights are apolitical: protesting does not challenge the authority of the current system'

The protestors are demanding the state intervene in the market to protect their health, and are not consciously demanding the state rejects the marketization of society. This seems to be almost identical to Polanyian countermovements during the British Industrial Revolution in which there were demands for the state to intervene in the market to help alleviate health issues.

Zhang (2013) also seems to argue that the lack of democracy in China means that there cannot be Polanyian countermovements:

> 'The Polanyian active society would be suppressed or even deactivated under totalitarianism or authoritarianism, until effective democratic mechanisms through which it can exercise influence over the state are established' (p.1612).

Although one of Polanyi's theses is that democracy tends to pull the state in one direction while liberal ideology pulls the state in another, countermovements do not need democracy to operate. Polanyi argues that the countermovement existed in 18th century England (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.81), at which time England could not be described as a functioning democracy in modern terms. Polanyi also describes the Church or religion as a countermovement in certain respects. The Church as a countermovement can put pressure on the state but is not itself a democratic institution. Finally, Polanyi argues that the central bank can be seen as a countermovement initiated by liberals themselves – pressure for a central bank came from bureaucrats and industry rather than a democratic sphere. Although democracy may help countermovements be successful in dealing with the effects of the market, democracy is not *necessary* for countermovements to be successful. As long as there is some leverage a countermovement has some power. In a Chinese context this leverage can come from bargain through protest or illegal strike action (Chen & Selden 2014). Protests are generally protesting the *effects* of the market initiated through state action, demanding protections from the state to control these negative effects, but they are not demanding the ideological overhaul of either the state or the market.

In rural China there is evidence that citizens trust the central state when faced with local grievances, and demand the central state step in to protect them from predatory local officials (Li,

2004).[71] Thus these types of protests can be seen as Polanyian countermovements demanding protection from the state while not questioning the underlying ideological legitimacy of the state – a legitimacy which is intertwined with the market and economic growth (Burns 1999; Guo 2003; Zhu 2011). As Polanyi's double movement thesis suggests, the government can be both protective of society against the market and a force to expand the market. The central state checking the local state's market expansion behaviour fits well with the double movement thesis even if the central state is also aiming to expand marketisation on a macro level.

It is clear, however, that translating Polanyi's theories into a Chinese context has to deal with the fact that China's market expansion has not coincided with a widespread and meaningful democratic expansion. Societal groups that Polanyi talks about as institutions that are countermovements or places that countermovements originate – such as trade unions, churches or working class political parties – are, in China, either, co-opted within the CCP (Pringle 2015), highly regulated by the state (SCMP 2018), or none-existent.[72] This is not to say the institutions that do exist are not countermovements or do not have the potential to be countermovements, but it is likely that their leverage is highly constrained.

2.2 Conscious Polanyian Movements in China? The New Rural Reconstruction Movement.

Although civil society in China is constrained, I argue that there are groups that can be described as conscious Polanyian movements in Chinese society. One such movement I argue is the ecovillage movement which I will explore in more detail in Chapter 4. Two other movements that may be considered conscious Polanyian movements are the well-researched New Rural Reconstruction

[71] Shue (2004) similarly argues '…workers and peasants have been prone to frame their protests in localized and limited ways, taking as their protest targets not the architects of central reform policy but local "bad" officials…' (p.29).
[72] Fu (2017) argues authoritarian states including China '…seek to contain, co-opt, or channel organizations away from facilitating popular contention…' (p.500)

Movement (NRRM)[73] and the less well-known Institute for Postmodern Development of China (IPDC).[74]

I first encountered the NRRM during my MPhil research on a small peri-urban organic farm on the outskirts of Beijing.[75] The founder of the farm, Shi Yan, is a close associate of Wen Tiejun, one of the most prominent NRRM scholars (Yan & Chen 2013). I learnt more about the NRRM during the 6th international CSA Conference and 7th Chinese national CSA conference which I attended in Beijing in November 2015, co-organised by Shi & Wen and with a number of presentations by NRRM scholars. This was the first time I had experienced a large scale open forum in China that had a number of presentations which articulated a 'radical' and progressive critique of China's current development process. It therefore sparked an interest in me to learn more about the NRRM.

The NRRM is considered to have emerged in the 1990s (Day 2008) with the publication of Wen Tiejun's thesis on the 'three dimensional problem of rural China' ('三农问题') (Wen 2001). It is a movement of loosely connected projects and people (Hale 2013b, p.53). Wen's school is regarded as the most influential school within the NRRM (Hale 2013b), and Wen is considered 'the leading intellectual' in the NRRM (Yan & Chen 2013, p.968). However a second influential school within the NRRM is associated with He Xuefeng and the Center for Rural Governance Studies (Day & Hale 2007). The NRRM is generally considered to be led 'by intellectuals and university students' but with 'participation at all levels of society' (China Development Brief). The main theoretical base of the Wen school is the Centre for Rural Reconstruction at Renmin University (Day & Hale 2007). The Centre's aim is 'integrating with grassroots and local culture' to reconstruct the rural and reverse the 'decline resulting from rapid industrialization' (*Ibid*).

The NRRM has already been linked to Polanyi in Day (2008) who argues the NRRM 'is best grasped as a Polanyian social protective movement in reaction to the marketization of society and

[73] The NRRM has been argued to be a Polanyian countermovement by Escher, Schneider & Ye (2018 p.93). However, I argue this is a mis-reading of Polanyi's countermovement thesis; as the NRRM is consciously arguing for structural changes, it should therefore be classified as a conscious Polanyian movement.
[74] http://postmodernchina.org/
[75] See Alcock (2019).

perceived lack of an urban solution' (p.50). Day (2013a) further argues NRRM scholars critique '…global capitalism, particularly in its neo-liberal mode…' and argue '...utopian attempts at the marketization of social life…' are contested by '…diverse social protective movements similar to those described by Karl Polanyi...' (p.185). In my terms these 'diverse social protective movements' can be seen as countermovements while the NRRM, with a Polanyian outlook, can be described as a conscious Polanyian movement. The description of the NRRM as a conscious Polanyian movement is evidenced by its critique of global capitalism. For example, in a *Monthly Review* article by a number of NRRM scholars they put forward a critique of China's recent capitalist modernisation process:

> 'Today's problems require different ways of thinking, and the abandonment of rigid modernization schemes for forms of thought that respect local, indigenous culture. The economic and social problems that China faces today were created, and in a sense recreated, first by the rush to participate in the system of global capital, and then by the use of procedures developed for capital and resource intensive agriculture' (Wen *et al.* 2012).

This echoes Polanyi's arguments of the disembedding nature of the self-regulating market mechanism and puts forward a call for local knowledge to be respected or a re-embedding of the economy within local culture. Of course it is not a coincidence that this call is made in a socialist magazine. The use of Polanyi and Polanyian concepts and their importance is explicit in Pan & Wen (2016).[76] They argue that 'radicalisation' ('激进化') brings about 'social self-protection' ('社会自我保护') and this is the source of the 'wide spread and diverse rural reconstruction practice' ('广泛多样的乡村建设实践') (Pan & Wen 2016, p.135). The footnote after this quote explains this is a direct reference to Polanyi's The *Great Transformation* and the countermovement ('反向运动') concept. 'Radicalisation' is a reference to the effects of marketisation or 'industrialisation, urbanisation and de-agriculturalization' ('工业化、都市化、非农化') which has caused the 'three dimensional rural problem' ('三农问题') (p.131) – Wen's main thesis.[77]

[76] This article also specifically references Polanyi's concept of 'disembeding' ("脱嵌") (p.135, footnote 21).
[77] See Wen (2001).

This explanation of the NRRM by Pan & Wen (2016) demonstrates how the NRRM can be classified as a conscious Polanyian movement and shows how the unconscious/conscious dichotomy may work in a Chinese context. The social self-protection movement, or countermovement, spontaneously arises due to the negative effects of industrialisation on the rural sphere. The movements then have the potential to come together under the umbrella of NRRM – an ideological movement that criticises the self-regulating market and calls for a strengthening of society to protect it from market excess. Each person or organisation at the beginning was likely mainly concerned with self-protection from the negative effects of the market. However, scholars saw these 'unconscious' movements, theorised that their origins were in market dislocation and set up a practical movement to help solve the issues theorised. Of course, each individual that is part of the NRRM may not be fully aware of the ideology behind the NRRM but under the umbrella of NRRM they are likely to learn the ideological ideas. This demonstrates a process of how the unconscious countermovements can become conscious Polanyian movements.

In a political system that seeks '…to contain, co-opt, or channel organizations away from facilitating popular contention…' (Fu 2017, p.500) it may be surprising that a conscious Polanyian movement like the NRRM is able to survive. State tactics to shape the NRRM are evident in China. Firstly the state tactic of co-option and channelling groups away from contention are demonstrated by how, according to He, Zhang & Wen (2014) in 2003 the Central Committee of the CCP and the State Council officially gave Wen's 'three dimensional problem of rural China' thesis high priority in its work report (p.102). Yet despite this, He, Zhang & Wen (2014) argue that the NRRM continues to be ignored by '...the mainstream ideology of China...' (p.101). I argue this is the tactic of co-opting a critique in order to devalue the power of the critique and shape it to fit a state agenda. The state can argue it is already dealing with the 'three dimensional problem of rural China' (the main thesis of the NRRM) even though the state continues its ideological (market) behaviour which the co-opted thesis argues is the core cause of the rural problems in China.

The state tactic of channelling organizations away from contention is also evident within the NRRM. For example Day & Schneider (2017) argue the recent acceleration of agricultural

‘modernization’ ‘forecloses on the basic pro-peasant politics associated with the NRR movement’ (p.11) and the NRRM has shifted towards promoting alternative food networks which ‘focus on niche marketing to the urban middle class, without seeking to transform rural social relations’ (p.19). Day & Schneider (2017) continue by arguing the NRRM has become more capitalist along with the changing political economic context. When I presented this article to Shi Yan on a return trip to her NRRM affiliated Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm, she was highly critical of their conclusions and upset they had not come to see the new farm she had set up after she had left Little Donkey farm referred to in Day & Schneider (2017).

The new focus on CSAs by the NRRM, seen through a Polanyian lens, can be argued to have similarities with how the NRRM engages with the rural and may still be seen as able to transform social relations even as Day & Schneider (2017) argue the opposite. Due to food safety issues, often due to market pressures, the middle class are seeking social self-protection – just like the peasants were seeking social self-protection from the encroaching market in the rural. The NRRM see these unconscious countermovements and set up alternative food networks – just as they saw the rural countermovements and set up rural co-operatives. The NRRM CSAs still articulate an ideology counter to industrialisation and marketisation (Alcock 2019) and hope to educate ‘unconscious’ middle class consumers that the reason their food is unsafe is due to rapid marketisation and the devaluing of the peasant. As Polanyi is concerned with society as a whole, rather than class relations, creating consciousness in middleclass consumers of the negatives of a market society helps create consciousness in society as a whole which means that the whole of society is closer to a transcendence of the system. This Polanyian transcendence will protect the whole of society including the peasants themselves. A two pronged ideological attack – one aiming at bringing a Polanyian consciousness to the rural and one aiming at bringing it to the urban middle class – may be a positive move in terms of NRRM goals even if they have to play the ‘capitalist’ game to achieve it.

Therefore, I argue that the NRRM is still relatively ‘radical’ even if it is argued by Day & Schneider (2017) to have become more capitalist in practice. He, Zhang & Wen (2014)

demonstrate the 'radicalism' of the NNRM by arguing it '...is an alternative public democracy experiment' which differs from '...living under an elite dictatorship' (p.117). Wen is also argued to support 'deeper democracy' (Hook 2007, 13). In an authoritarian political system it may be surprising that the NRRM is able to put forward a call for increased democracy or suggest that the current system acts as an elite dictatorship. However, I argue that the NRRM use a number of tactics in order to survive and maintain a 'radical', although circumscribed, critique.

Firstly NRRM scholars aim to protect existing institutions, such as the household responsibility contracting system, from marketisation (He 2015; Wen 2013, 2009). The support for this institution among peasants remains high due to its social support mechanism (Ho 2014), thus giving legitimacy to NRRM arguments for its protection. Furthermore, an attempt to protect current institutions initiated by the CCP itself avoids the danger of the NRRM being charged with attempting to undermine the CCP. However, as I argue, since the current CCP's governance of China can be seen as a state capitalist project, the protection of non-marketised institutions against the market *is* a veiled attack on CCP ideology. It is an attack on one aspect of CCP ideology – albeit one of the strongest aspects currently – but not necessarily the legitimacy of CCP rule as a principle.[78] This can be seen in the other institutions the NRRM aim to strengthen and expand. For instance, cooperatives and rural democracy are institutions already initiated by the CCP. The NRRM wants to expand rural cooperatives and make them meaningful and democratic in order for peasants to gain power against market encroachment often supported by the state.

As long as the NRRM does not cross the line to call for the removal of the CCP the NRRM has space to operate and critique CCP policy. The NRRM are also likely to have some support within the government from more 'populist' members of the CCP, those that define themselves as protecting the more marginalised sections of Chinese society especially peasants and low skilled workers (Li 2005). NRRM alternatives, such as democratically run rural co-operatives, can fit within a one party state structure. However wide-scale expansion of these would likely have to

[78] Calhoun & Yang (2007) argue that environmental messages that don't challenge state legitimacy and '…operate largely within the parameters of state policies' are able to survive (p.223).

exist within a more 'populist' controlled CCP and according to Zhang (2013) members that aim at challenging marketisation from within the CCP have become progressively less vocal. Nevertheless what I argue is that the NRRM are concentrating on the protection of the rural from the market with the eventual hope of a transformation of society and the CCP from a more state capitalist party to a more democratic[79] and socialist one, which aims to prevent the rural from becoming a 'market society'. A state that uses its power to protect the most marginalised along with strengthening local and economic democracy as a check on predatory state and market power is a system that would likely have appealed to Polanyi.

Secondly, space to criticize China's development by the Wen school of the NRRM may also come from respect for Wen as an individual, who worked within various sections of government including, from 1987, the deputy director of the Office of Rural Reform Experimental Zones (Day 2013a, p.95). Wen left his government role in 1997 due to 'his disagreement with state policy on the marketization of rural finance and banking' (Day 2013a, p.97). In 2004 Wen moved to Renmin University (*Ibid*) where he set up the Rural Reconstruction Centre. University support is important for civil society organisations in China. As Shapiro (2016) argues, it lets groups occupy a middle ground 'between state-run institutions with considerable leeway and truly independent citizens' groups' (Loc. 2869). It is also likely to give the NRRM legitimacy in the minds of members of the public. Wen has also been awarded a number of prizes including the China Central Television (CCTV) annual 'economic person' award for setting up the NRRM,[80] which gives him a public profile that may protect him from certain forms of overt government censorship.

[79] Democratic in terms of 'deeper' democracy such as democratic cooperatives rather than a multiparty liberal democracy.
[80] Renmin University Biography, http://www.ruc.edu.cn/archives/18630 (Accessed 06/12/18)

2.3 Conscious Polanyian Movements in China? Institute for Postmodern Development of China.

I first encountered the IPDC in July 2017 when I first went to a Chinese ecovillage. The main building bore a plaque that read 'Education base of the Postmodern Construction Research Institute of China and the United States'. Inside the room there was a shelf of books, one that caught my eye was called 'Organic Marxism' written by Philip Clayton and Justin Heinzekehr. The founder of the ecovillage told me the next weekend there would be a conference held at the ecovillage that would be based around the ideas of 'Organic Marxism' and I was welcome to attend.

After arriving the next week on Friday, with a number of other visitors, the conference started the next day with two videos. The first was by John Cobb, the founding president of the IPDC and the second by Philip Clayton, the president of the IPDC.[81] Both videos explored the environmental crisis and the need for new ideas to help solve it, and the fact that China was especially important in that process. Philip Clayton also mentioned the Organic Marxism book that he wrote, arguing that it is becoming a school of thought in China. After the videos there were a number of presentations including from Zhihe Wang, the CEO of IPDC and Paul Bube the Co-Director of the IPDC Summer Academy.[82] Paul Bube talked about Alfred North Whitehead and process philosophy. The two main interconnected themes at this conference were Organic Marxism and Whitehead's process philosophy with both Chinese and American scholars mentioning these themes in most of the presentations and how both may be related to ecological civilization. A third theme was ecovillage construction, which was also linked to Organic Marxism, Whitehead and ecological civilization. Another important theme was Chinese traditional culture, especially Buddhism and Daoism. For me, the two day conference implied a 'radical' critique of modernisation, a modernisation in which I argue China is fully engaged. However the critique, unsurprisingly, shied away from explicit criticisms of the CCP and praised the Chinese authorities for adopting ecological civilisation.

[81] http://postmodernchina.org/about-us/our-team/ (Accessed 08/01/19)
[82] *Ibid*

The conference had been held following a recent scathing critique of the IPDC by Yin Haijie of Harbin Institute of Technology entitled 'The theological swindler from Clermont Theological College, world ranking 10548, deceives more than 50 universities in China' ('来自世界排名 10548 的美国克莱蒙神学院的神学骗子骗了中国 50 多所大学').[83] Yin argues that members of the IPDC have 'concealed Christian identity' ('被隐瞒的基督教身份') and they plan to 'curb China's development, subvert China's ideology and conduct religious infiltration into China' ('有计划地进行遏制中国发展，颠覆中国的意识形态和对中国进行宗教渗透的活动') and concludes by arguing the IPDC 'is an extremely dangerous political and cultural invasion!' ('最危险的政治、文化的入侵！'). Within a Chinese context these words are especially provocative and dangerous for the IPDC as if authorities believe them there could be harsh punishments for those involved.

The open response[84] to Yin's critique by John Cobb took a more conciliatory tone, arguing that Yin's concerns were understandable and put forward a number of reasons why Cobb and others in the IPDC were not as Yin represented them. These reasons centred on the fact that the IPDC and many within their organisation were critics of American policy and behaviour. This included the statement that the Vice President[85] of the IPDC, David Griffin, had written numerous books arguing that the United States government was behind the 9/11 terrorist attacks ('针对 9/11 事件，大卫分别写了 10 本书，他立场鲜明地指出美国政府才是 9/11 不幸事件的肇始者。他的研究说服了我，对这个问题我写的著作不太多') and that both Griffin and Cobb do not trust the mainstream news in America, which is controlled by the CIA ('我们两个学者已经不太相信中央情报局操纵下的标准新闻'). The response also praises Xi Jinping and China's adoption of 'ecological civilization' and argues that China as a socialist country has the ability to take a different path to the United States in terms of environmental protection, as the United States is

[83] 尹海洁, Yin Haijie 2017, https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/25065291 (Accessed 11/01/19)
[84] https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Q4q1fYqntqG-UdFKCI7pKQ? (Accessed 11/01/19)
[85] http://postmodernchina.org/about-us/our-team/ (Accessed 11/01/19)

under the influence of big business and capitalism ('企业界阻挠我们的生态行动。从根子上来说，资本主义是以摧毁环境为代价的，美国的情况如今也越来越糟').[86] Finally, the response mentions the importance of Chinese ancient cultural traditions, that Cobb's mission is to promote ecological civilization around the world and save humanity from 'self-destruction' ('我的使命就是将人类从自我毁灭中拯救出来') and that the CIA promote propaganda against China and therefore Yin and Cobb have a 'common enemy' ('共同的敌人').

Putting aside the arguments on 9/11 and the CIA, the IPDC's critique of the current global situation and future path global society should take has a number of resonances with Polanyi's thought. The clearest representation of these are articulated in the previously mentioned book *Organic Marxism: An Alternative to Capitalism and Ecological Catastrophe (Toward Ecological Civilization)* (Clayton & Heinzekehr 2014). Clayton & Heinzekehr (2014) argue that capitalism '…cannot be salvaged by reforms' (Loc.101-12), criticises 'Leninist and Stalinist' forms of Marxism (Loc.113-115) and calls for a new form of Marxism – 'Organic Marxism'. They argue 'The book will have a much easier time gaining a hearing in China than in the United States' (Loc.129-31) due to the United States' general hostility to Marxism. They argue that 'China has opened the door quite wide to…capitalism' but 'still has the opportunity to check this rush into the arms of global capitalism' although 'it will not be easy'. They assert that 'This book could be an important ally in that resistance' (Loc.142-47).

The argument that capitalist society is heading towards a 'calamity' (Loc.168) and a new form of socialism may arise out of a synthesis of Chinese traditional culture and Marxism (Loc.147-49) has clear resonances to my argument that Polanyi sees the transcendence of the self-regulating market as a dialectical synthesis of Marxism and Hegelian consciousness. In fact, the argument is explicit that 'Organic Marxism' is a dialectical synthesis:

[86] Again similar arguments are articulate later: '美国政府为大企业服务，特别是为华尔街的金融寡头服务。中国的国家政府为人民服务' (The US government serves large corporations, especially for Wall Street. The Chinese national government serves the people.)

> 'In particular, the relationship between Marxist thought and cultural values needs to be conceived in a genuinely dialectical fashion. Under the influence of Hegel, Marx conceived dialectic as a "synthesis" of thesis and antithesis, in which differences are "transcended yet preserved" (aufgehoben). Traditional Chinese thought, influenced by Daoist thought, describes the process as (re)establishing the harmony between complementary principles. When Western and Eastern notions of dialectics can be harmonized, a stronger political philosophy results' (Loc.1544-49).[87] [88]

Both Polanyi and the writers of *Organic Marxism* hope to synthesise a future based on a transcendence of capitalism influenced by Marxist philosophy. Both also have Christian influences and want to see a future socialism that includes 'religion' or spiritualism broadly defined, in a manner not dissimilar to the way in which Hegel hoped 'to integrate all the world religions into his own grandiose metaphysical system' (Dumoulin 1981, p.460). Polanyi looks to Hegel to synthesise with Marx while *Organic Marxism* looks to a different metaphysical thinker for the synthesis – Alfred North Whitehead – who they propose '…can be "the philosopher of ecological civilization"' (Clayton & Heinzekehr 2014, Loc.94-95). Whitehead proposes that there is a 'God' but not a supernatural God or a coercive God; 'Rather God is the persuasive ground of freedom… All the possibilities are there, good and bad, but they come to us, Whitehead says, with God's call toward the better' (Mesle 2008, 87).[89] *Organic Marxism* can therefore not only be described as conscious in Polanyian terms as it not only critiques capitalism and calls for a transcendence to something more socialist, but also articulates the same process for that transcendence – a dialectical process. The similarities with Polanyi are clear even though the book does not reference Polanyi or his work.

Although the IPDC is not a registered NGO in China and its board of directors are all American citizens Organic Marxism and Constructive Postmodernism has gained traction in China. Wu & Wallace (2014) state that there were 25 process centres in Chinese Universities including Zhejiang

[87] Note my understanding of Polanyi as dialectical and influenced by Hegel came before reading *Organic Marxism*.
[88] Again here: 'Political theory over the centuries has fought an endless battle between approaches centered on the individual (liberalism, libertarianism) and those centered on the community or society (socialism, communism, communitarianism). In Organic Marxism, which weds Marxist thought and process thought, this battle is circumvented. Following Whitehead, we prefer the middle way, whereby the two perspectives are synthesized' (Loc.2969-72). A similar argument as I put forward that Polanyi aims at synthesising Hegelian and Marxist thought.
[89] Mesle (2008) was given to me at the ecovillage for further reading on Whitehead.

University, Peking Normal University, and Harbin Institute of Technology.[90] As of the beginning of 2019 Wang, Zhihe states this has increased to 36.[91] As I argue the arguments articulated by scholars involved in the IPDC are 'radical', in the sense they critique capitalism and modernisation and call for a new paradigm,[92] it becomes important to ask why these 'radical' views are able to persist in an authoritarian regime, which I further argue very much represents the capitalist modernisation paradigm being criticised. It seems unlikely that the multi-millionaires and billionaires in positions of power in China are just waiting for *Organic Marxism* to take hold of the consciousness of the Chinese people, so that they may finally relieve themselves of the burden of their immense wealth and power.[93] I believe there are two main reasons that the IPDC persist; (1) that they use the vocabulary of the CCP and avoid criticisms of the CCP (or actively praise it), and (2) that the IPDC is useful in certain respects for the CCP.

Firstly, as mentioned above, while the IPDC's general critique of modern society and Chinese society is strong and 'radical'[94] they are unwilling to directly critique the CCP or specific CCP policies that may undermine the environment, and instead praise the leadership and their adoption of 'ecological civilization'.[95] This is clearly a tactic to survive in China that recently has been cracking down on NGO and civil society activity (Yuen 2015) as well as religion (Kuo 2019). In more critical English language writing, which does criticise Maoism and Deng Xiaoping, but which is unlikely to gain large scale traction in China, there is also an acceptance of CCP vocabulary. For example, a general acceptance that China is a 'socialist' country (Wang 2012; Wang, He & Fan 2014), without critical assessment of whether this terminology is still applicable

[90] Yin (2017) lists 32 centres.
[91] Personal correspondence, 11/01/19.
[92] See: Wang, He & Fan (2014), Wang *et al*. (2013) and Wang (2012).
[93] Although this may be the future hope of the IPDC and in a sense what Polanyi also hopes will happen as people look onto a world facing the disastrous effects of the self-regulating market and come to the consciousness that this cannot continue. It is clear, however, that neither Chinese nor global society is yet at this position.
[94] Miller (2017) argues that the idea of 'ecological civilization' '…at a deep level contradicts the culture of modernity that has shaped China over the last one hundred years and the value of rapid economic development that has shaped it over the last thirty years'. Praising 'ecological civilization' as an emancipatory socialist and ecologically sustainable theory, I argue, is therefore a veiled critique of modern China.
[95] This is most clearly represented in Cobb's letter to Yin: https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Q4q1fYqntqG-UdFKCI7pKQ? (Accessed 11/01/19)

in a period when 'China has opened the door quite wide to…capitalism' (Clayton & Heinzekehr 2014) or whether China ever represented the emancipatory ideals of socialism the IPDC believe in. I have also not come across a critical assessment of 'ecological civilization' by the IPDC[96] beyond agreeing with the rhetoric.[97]

Geall & Ely (2018) argue the Central Document No. 12 on ecological civilization has little content dealing with 'redistribution' (p.1187) which would likely be necessary for an ecological Marxist future the IPDC argue for. Similarly there is little in the way of 'the re-agriculturalization of the economy' (*Ibid*) that is argued by Wang Zhihe and others as an important aspect of Constructive Postmodernism (Wang, Fan & Ikerd 2013).[98] While there may be praise in the rhetoric of 'ecological civilization' from an environmental point of view, a critical assessment of what it actually means in practice and how this practice differs from more 'developed' countries that have not adopted 'ecological civilization' would be worthwhile for an NGO which hopes to spread 'ecological civilization'. As Geall & Ely (2018) argue the Central Document No. 12 on ecological civilization concentrates on 'continued agricultural modernization', 'technological innovation' and developing 'green industries' (p.1186-1187), rather than a radically progressive eco-socialist spiritual transformation. From my personal experience travelling, studying and working in China I do not see how 'ecological civilization' practically distinguishes China from other major countries. Europe, America and China all have global financial hubs, high levels of consumer consumption and wasteful practices as well as ecovillages, community farms and movements for 'radical' environmental change.

There are many questions that remain un-asked by the IPDC, for example how to reconcile The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), one of the largest investment projects China has ever envisaged, with 'ecological civilization'. The BRI seems to represent a global push by China on capitalist terms to become the centre of globalised capitalism (Wong *et al*. 2017). It involves investments in

[96] Of course this may exist.
[97] For a more detailed look at the debates on ecological civilization see (Goron 2018)
[98] The re-agriculturalization of the Chinese economy articulated by Wang; Fan & Ikerd (2013) is very similar to NRRM arguments explained above on the future of agriculture in China.

countries that become heavily indebted to China (Kynge 2018) in much the same way poorer countries have been burdened with debt by other 'developed' nations. It also involves large scale coal investments (Economy 2017; Hao 2017). The BRI is argued to be an 'expansion of Chinese state capitalism' according to writers including Wen Tiejun (Wong *et al*. 2017). For me there is a survival strategy here too, the IPDC know that their general critique is 'radical' and need to side step some specific issues in order to be able to continue work within China. The above is not necessarily a critique of how the IPDC interact with China, but a demonstration of tactics that I argue help them survive while maintaining 'radical' Polanyian consciousness. The IPDC may well believe that self-censorship is a price worth paying for the greater good of being able to spread their views in China on global environmental issues, issues that will define global humanity.

Secondly, the IPDC may be useful for the aims of the Chinese authorities. Although the IPDC argues that a synthesis of Western and Eastern culture is necessary for a new ecological paradigm, John Cobb's open letter to Yin demonstrates how easily the IPDC may fall into Chinese nationalist tropes when engaging with Chinese people, especially in order to defend themselves from Chinese nationalist attacks. The ideas expressed in John Cobb's letter,[99] whether true or false, may be useful propaganda tools for the Chinese authorities. As Goron (2018) argues, it has been pointed out that, '…Xi's [ecological civilization] discourse has exacerbated trends towards political and cultural chauvinism. Exalted praise of the ecological wisdom of China's ancient culture, [has been] put against the evil of imported Western industrialism…' (p.29). The IPDC ought to be careful about becoming useful propaganda tools for 'cultural chauvinism' in order to survive as an organisation in China. Wang (2012), himself argues 'it would be easy for ecological Marxists to garner praise from parochial nationalists…by turning ecological Marxism into a weapon that should be only pointed at foreign capitalist countries' but that this tactic would be a mistake.

[99] For example arguments that the CIA control US news, that the US government played a part in 9/11, that Hilary Clinton may have gone to war with China, that the US government serves large corporations, especially the financial oligarchy on Wall Street, that the CIA plays a big role in Tibet and the CIA are the common enemy of himself (John Cobb) and Yin https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Q4q1fYqntqG-UdFKCI7pKQ? (Accessed 11/01/19)

More explicit thinking within the scholarship of the IPDC is that Chinese culture ought to be praised and that China is becoming a larger influence on the world and thus important to engage with positively. This also tallies with Chinese authorities' arguments regarding ecological civilization and the strengthening of Chinese culture, thus also making the IPDC useful for Chinese authorities. The concern is that the IPDC in China, in order to survive, emphasises parts of their philosophy that Chinese authorities are comfortable with, or in fact embrace, and self-censor parts of their philosophy which the Chinese authorities are uncomfortable with; for example, freedom, democracy and human rights engaged with in Chapter 7 of *Organic Marxism* (Clayton & Heinzekehr 2014). The question becomes how much the IPDC is an agent of Polanyian dialectical transcendence towards something more socialist and emancipatory or simply, with regards to its actions within China, an unwitting agent of the Chinese state. This is a question that can be applied to most conscious Polanyian movements in China. The question of self-censorship and 'discursive boundaries controlled by CCP propaganda' (Goron 2018, p.26) that politically constrains '…the transformative reach of [ecological civilization]' (*Ibid*, p.35) may be demonstrated with IPDC rhetoric in China. It also may be included among the reasons the concept of the unconscious Polanyian countermovement is especially applicable in a Chinese context.

2.4 The Unconscious Countermovement in China – Atomized Collective Action.

In the Chinese context political protest and organisation is potentially dangerous for those who participate and the risks of collective action may outweigh the rewards. Openly arguing for an ideological change to the system is illegal, therefore unconscious Polanyian countermovements may be relatively widespread. The idea of unconscious Polanyian countermovements in a Chinese context may have theoretical links to a number of concepts already conceptualised to help explain actions in Chinese or authoritarian social conditions. The three concepts I will briefly compare the unconscious countermovement to are 'Atomized Collective Action' (Rev 1987 & Zhou 1993), 'Resigned Activism' (Lora-Wainwright 2017) and 'Disguised Collective Action' (Fu 2017).

Rev (1987) argues that in an authoritarian system there are advantages for individuals of being atomised. Rev (1987) reflects on Hungarian state socialism and writes that:

> 'One can argue that the liquidation of all parties, associations, unions, organizations, and clubs, which are then replaced by one single centralized, formal, over-ritualized organization – one ruling party, one centralized trade union, one youth organization, one women's association – is the end of politics' (p.341).

He goes on to argue this interpretation is actually incorrect:

> 'Atomization is thus seen as the termination of political discourse and political action, the death of politics. But it has seldom been noticed that when all possibility of meaningful action has been eliminated, when there is no formal framework of political expression left, then *everything* becomes a potential political issue. Instead of having been liquidated, politics becomes dispersed, hidden but present everywhere...' (p.341).

In China today it is not the case that *all* meaningful political action is eliminated. Fu (2017) argues that the Chinese state '…to a certain extent tolerates popular contention…' (p.500). Ho (2007) argues China can be seen as a semi-authoritarian system rather than fully authoritarian as there is space to articulate certain forms of criticism. However it is fair to say certain forms of political action are eliminated and much political action is heavily constrained. In this case, Rev (1987) would likely suggest that politics becomes dispersed, hidden but present everywhere. 'Resigned' actions become politically meaningful, a large number of 'unconscious' '…actions on the micro level…' might '…have very serious consequences on the macro level' (Rev 1987, p.343).

Zhou (1993) argues in a similar vein as Rev (1987) about state socialism in China:

> 'Although individuals are unorganized, their actions in pursuit of their own self-interests tend to convey similar claims, share similar patterns, and point to the state, i.e., they "converge" into collective action' (Zhou 1993, p.54).

This 'unorganized collective action' is often unconscious and spontaneous:

> '...even without a conscious articulation of interests, individuals and social groups tend to exhibit a spontaneous articulation of behavior in response to state policies' (Zhou 1993, p.59).

Zhou (1993) defines China as state socialist and argues that the trend toward unorganised collective action is particularly relevant in a state socialist system. However, I argue that currently

China's economy may be better referred to as state capitalist[100] (Kurlantzick 2016; Huan 2012; Bremmer 2008) or perhaps as Chu & So (2010) argue, a system of 'state neoliberalism'.

Friedman (2020) employs a Marxist analysis to understand China as a state capitalist project. This analysis argues that labour has become commodified in so far as social reproduction is not possible for the vast majority of people unless 'they first make themselves useful to capital'. Importantly Friedman (2020) further argues that the state not only generally works in the interests of capital but that capital 'is fundamentally *inseparable* from state power'. Friedman (2020) also argues the interventionist nature of the Chinese state 'is nothing new for capitalism' thus ought not disqualify it from the state capitalist framing. Polanyi may well have agreed with this state capitalist interpretation of contemporary China, in spite of the claims that China represents a form of socialism.

It is clear that land and labour are becoming more generally commodified, although there are still aspects of land tenure – especially in the rural – that are not yet covered by the self-regulating market. It is also relatively clear that Polanyi's call for the cultivation of rich, deep, and diverse institutions of democracy, that could lead to widespread devolved responsibility on to the individual of political and social life (Polanyi, 1932a, p.5), is not a project the Chinese state is meaningfully engaged with. For Polanyi democracy is 'the highest expression of moral consciousness' (*Ibid*). China, however, seems to more clearly demonstrate the argument that 'popular democracy was a danger to capitalism' (Polanyi (2001 [1944] p.234). I argue that even in a state capitalist system, in which capital could be argued to be inseparable from state power, the countermovement is still present. The state does regulate some of the negative effects of the self-regulating market and the impetus for these regulations can come from social countermovements.[101]

[100] Gerth (2020) argues that Mao era China ought also be classified as state capitalist and that the Deng Xiaoping era reforms 'adjusted institutions to continue to accelerate the expansion of capitalism' (p.9).
[101] See for example 'rightful resistance' (O'Brien 1996).

I argue that the state capitalist description reflects the duel political bounded freedom and atomisation tendency of the (semi-)authoritarian state with the dual economic bounded freedom and atomisation tendency of the market we see in China. As Zhou (1993) argues 'The presence of a market economy also reduces the probability of collective action' (p.56). This is due to the market creating opportunities for individuals to protect themselves from negative social effects, initiated by either an authoritarian political sphere or a hyper marketised economic sphere, by buying themselves out.[102] The market therefore brings a form of individual freedom while at the same time undermining collective political action. Far from the market leading to more political freedom due to increasing prosperity (Rowen 1999),[103] the market may actually do the opposite, helping to stabilise the (semi-)authoritarian political sphere by undermining collective political action. Individual, atomised, self-protection can be gained, at least in the short term, through market transactions. As Tsai (2007) argues only a minority of wealthy Chinese are 'discontent with the current regime type' and 'due to fear of political persecution they are more likely to invest in exit options for their families than to advocate political reform' (p.15). In other words, disaffected wealthy Chinese are more likely to use their economic strength to buy themselves and their families out of the system than to act collectively as a powerful social class to attempt to change it.

This theme can be seen in the literature on Chinese 'individualization'. Tilt (2013) argues that:

> 'Individualization is a circumstance in which the institutions of modern society – the market economy, the wage labour system, land tenure, civil rights, access to complex medical and legal systems – are increasingly set up for the individual rather than for the group' (p.285).

Tilt (2013) argues this form of individualised modernisation has '…particular salience for contemporary China where the past several decades of economic reform have unravelled many of the previously foundational social institutions such as the family, the rural collective and the work

[102] This becomes important in terms of organic food and CSAs as the well-off attempt to buy their way out of food safety issues. It also becomes important for Polanyi's thesis on how the self-regulating market may destroy society if everybody is attempting to simply protect themselves in an atomised way through the countermovement.

[103] Rowen (1999) predicted that in 2015, due to China having a per capita GDP of $7000 – 'the level at which all previous countries have become at least "partly free" in the Freedom House ratings' – China would also rank as 'partly free'. In 2019 China is still ranked as 'not free' by Freedom House (2019).

unit' (p.295). In terms of 'environmental health risks', the subject of my case studies in subsequent chapters, Tilt (2013) argues that people who face environmental risks face them 'as atomized individuals and families' due to their having been 'individualized' (p.299).

'Individualisation', 'unorganized collective action' and 'atomized collective action' seem to have parallels with Polanyi's countermovement concept. Although the actors may have been subject to an ideology of 'individualisation' their actions are spontaneous and not consciously connected to an ideological movement (liberal, fascist or socialist). They are individuals protecting themselves against negative effects of a system by living their lives as best they can.

Further, according to Rev (1987), these individual actions might undermine the system altogether or according to Zhou (1993) lead to open popular uprisings against the state. However, Rev (1987) and Zhou (1993) are mainly concerned with atomised collective action that undermines centralised and authoritarian state socialism whereas Polanyi is interested in the spontaneous countermovement undermining the disembedding effects of the self-regulating market mechanism. Instead of spontaneous action of agents solely due to the existence of an authoritarian state, I argue that modern China, having embraced the market, is experiencing a countermovement against the negative effects of that state-led marketisation. This may be seen as a reversal of the 'bottom up' social movement argued to have been initiated by peasants during the cultural revolution towards marketization (Dikötter 2016).

2.5 The Unconscious Countermovement in China – Resigned Activism.

According to Lora-Wainwright (2017) 'Resigned Activism':

> '…encapsulates a spectrum of perceptions and practices comprising acts that may fit the conventional label of collective environmental contention, such as protesting at the factory gates and filing petitions. But it also includes less confrontational and more individualized or family-oriented strategies aimed at minimizing pollution in one's immediate surroundings…' (Loc.404).

The idea of the more conventional collective environmental contention, explained by Lora-Wainwright (2017), in Polanyian terms can be seen as either an unconscious countermovement or a conscious Polanyian movement, depending on narratives. However the more interesting 'activism', for a Polanyian understanding of how the unconscious countermovement may work in China, is of the 'individualized' strategies. Lora-Wainwright (2017) argues:

> '…the seeming absence of collective action against pollution should not be a reason to ignore subtler, less visible forms of environmental engagement. These practices may not present the characteristics of a full-fledged environmental movement, but their effects are no less significant…activism comprises the small steps individuals and families take in order to minimize the physical, psychological, and social effects of pollution' (Loc 419).

This seems to fit the idea of the unconscious countermovement well. The individuals are spontaneously aiming to protect themselves from negative *effects* of the market without necessarily articulating the idea that the problem comes from the economic system as a whole. They are not acting due to any pre-adopted ideological beliefs and are not aiming at an ideological change to the system. Wanting to drink clean water or breathe clean air is not ideological in Polanyian terms – it does not come from a liberal, socialist or fascist ideological outlook. It is these less visible forms of engagement with material and social problems, which can still be called 'activism', that is the root of the unconscious countermovement. There are clear, if hidden, tensions that the individuals are expressing with their actions. In a Chinese context the countermovement may not easily be theorised or vocalised as a conscious Polanyian movement through fear of sate repression. Polanyi, however, argues the countermovement itself, even without ideology or a conscious understanding of where the negative effects stem from, may unconsciously destroy the whole economic system.

2.6 The Unconscious Countermovement in China – Mobilizing Without the Masses, Creating Consciousness?

The process of the unconscious countermovement starting to achieve a form of Polanyian consciousness in a Chinese context might be seen in Fu's (2017) *Mobilizing Without the Masses*.

Fu (2017) describes how labour organisations help individual citizens make claims on their rights in an authoritarian context that constrains collective action. The organisations do this through 'disguised collective action'. Disguised collective action '...is a form of organized activism in which civil society groups play a vital but under-the-radar role in coaching citizens to advance rights claims' (Fu 2017, p.501). This helps create a '…middle ground between challenging authorities and organizational survival' (*Ibid*, p.500).

The first part of this process can be seen as a Polanyian countermovement because the individual is fighting for rights within the paradigm that the market – or state market nexus – has denied them. They are likely to be fighting for pay that has been denied to them or other compensation owed – a form of 'rightful resistance' (O'Brien 1996). The atomised action, which is helped by the under-the-radar labour organisation, is not ideologically driven or a collective conspiracy against the market for the individual protestor. The individuals are demanding state protection from the negative effects of the market commodifying the worker. The individual taking the action is also highly likely to be unconscious, in Polanyian terms, that it is the self-regulating market at the core of the reason they are not given their rights.

Fu (2017) argues the cumulative result of these actions based on individual self-protection from the market '...can achieve transformative social change' (Fu 2017, p.503), in a similar way Zhou (1993) argues that in a state socialist system a large number of unorganised individual actions can converge '...even without a conscious articulation of interests...' (Zhou 1993, p.59) into something that can '...challenging the state' (Zhou 1993, p.58).

Although Fu (2017) argues that these actions have the potential to achieve transformative social change, Polanyian would argue that all they achieve in the long run is the destruction of the system. For Polanyi truly 'transformative' change would only be realised if these individuals become 'conscious' of the fact that it is the self-regulating market system as a whole that is at the core of the myriad of conflicts. In Fu's (2017) study, the creation of this type of consciousness is

argued to come from the under-the-radar organisations that educate the individuals to perform the atomised actions:

> '...the pedagogical process of disguised collective action fosters collective consciousness...They inspire workers to think about the structural factors that caused them to suffer —collusion between business and the state, lax implementation of laws, and the state policies that contribute to growing inequality of wealth and opportunity' (p.517).

Fu (2017) argues, just as Polanyi does, that creating consciousness is something that must be taught. Educating people on the structural problems of society and especially the collusion between business and the state is potentially the beginning of creating a Polanyian consciousness for a transcendence to a new paradigm away from an authoritarian state-capitalist model. The individuals come to the organisation because they have experienced the negative material effects of the system; they are then taught how to best get recompense for this within the system, this is the unconscious countermovement. However the under-the-radar organisation itself may be a conscious Polanyian movement as it also expresses ideological reasons why these negative effects have occurred. It thus spreads an ideological message. If this process is occurring in many different types of organisations in many parts of the country, a large number of people may gain a Polanyian consciousness and eventually aim to transcend the system.

This interpretation of a process from countermovement to a conscious movement for transcendence is not explicitly articulated by Polanyi in *The Great Transformation*. However, education is an important aspect of how Polanyi believes a better society may come into being.[104] Fu's (2017) study of 'disguised collective action' might be a useful way to understand how society can come to a societal consciousness in China; using under-the-radar education methods to ideologically educate unconscious countermovements. This is a similar process to the manner that I argue Polanyi suggests consciousness is created in a European and American context, although in these settings, the ideological education can be more public.

[104] 'We thus arrive at the conclusion that only a cultural revolution of economic and political education can save democracy from suicidal demise' (Polanyi, 1932a, p.3).

It is these ‘individualised’, ‘atomized’ or ‘resigned’ actions that I engage with in my first case study of wet market consumption habits in a third tier city in China. The unconscious, non-ideological, spontaneous and widespread countermovement concept, I argue, can help us make visible the ‘less visible forms’ (Lora-Wainwright, Loc.419) of political engagement in a Chinese context. Polanyi's double movement thesis works in a Chinese context as sections of the state pull China in the direction of the market while atomised collective action (the countermovement) pushes society in the direction of protection from the market orientated policies of the state. If the state can locate these atomised collective actions before they ‘...converge into collective action challenging the state’ (Zhou 1993, p.58) the state will be able, in a Polanyian countermove, to erect protective barriers mitigating the negative effects of increased marketization and potentially avert social unrest. If not, these atomised collective countermovements may have the potential to morph into something more threatening to the intertwined logic of state and market in China's state capitalist system – conscious Polanyian movements.

Conclusion

Given my interpretation of Polanyi's countermovement thesis in Chapter 1 and the fact that China has been undergoing a great transformation from a less to a more marketised economy, this chapter has interrogated the conscious Polanyian movement and unconscious countermovement thesis in a Chinese context. I have put forward two organisations I argue can be described as conscious Polanyian movements as well as interrogating three concepts, developed in the Chinese literature, which may be defined as unconscious countermovements. The atomised and unconscious Polanyian countermovements are, almost by definition, more difficult to locate as there is no collective agreement or collective ideology. What must be located is action by atomised agents in the face of increased marketisation that is consciously attempting to avoid the negative *effects* of marketisation but not consciously expressing an ideological predisposition against the market system itself. Uncovering Polanyian countermovements in all spheres of Chinese society, especially spheres of land (environment) and labour, necessitates discovering the less visible and

demonstrating that the action aims to counter the negative effects of marketisation. I argue if unconscious atomised collective action exists there may be a potential for these unconscious countermovements to become conscious in Polanyian terms, along the logic explained in reference to Fu (2017). If they exist at a large enough scale, this could have negative consequences for a party that has interwoven its legitimacy with economic growth through marketisation. Therefore, atomised collective action against marketisation is an interesting and potentially important concept to develop within the context of China today.

My Polanyian analysis fits with Becket's (2009) argument that scholarship claiming Polanyi as its inspiration should focus on a number of questions including; '...how are actors responding to the increasing uncertainties they face in consequence of the marketisation of 'fictitious commodities'?' (Becket 2009, p.51). My case-study analysis will look at how atomised individuals are 'collectively' facing the uncertainty of food safety issues under the condition of the marketisation and indistrialization of the Chinese food system that is reliant on the marketising of the fictitious commodity – land. In the next chapter I argue that, in the sphere of food consumption, there is 'atomized collective action' which can be described as a spontaneous and unconscious countermovement and is specific to the conditions of China's political economy.

Chapter 3

The Unconscious Countermovement: a Chifeng City Wet Market Case-study.

As long as domestic industry was supplemented by the facilities and amenities of a garden plot, a scrap of land, or grazing rights, the dependence of the laborer on money earnings was not absolute…family earnings acted as a kind of unemployment insurance. The rationalization of agriculture inevitably uprooted the laborer and undermined his social security.

Karl Polanyi, 1944

Introduction

This chapter brings the theoretical re-examination of the countermovement concept in Chapter 1 to the streets of China. I examine vegetable consumption habits, primarily in Chifeng city (赤峰市), Inner Mongolia (内蒙古), to ascertain whether it is possible to argue vegetable consumption can be seen as an unconscious countermovement. Bringing my Polanyian re-examination to a Chinese wet market[105] helps answer the overarching research question of the contemporary relevance of Polanyian theory as well as answering the secondary question of the relevance of Polanyian theory to China specifically. This case-study examines specific Chinese issues regarding food through a Polanyian lens arguing Polanyian theory has potential to productively contribute to research on Chinese food safety issues.

This chapter will be structured as follows. In section 3.1 I describe the use of the countermovement concept in this case study and argue why Polanyi is an important scholar to engage with in a Chinese wet market context. In section 3.2 I demonstrate the literature gap, how my case study fills these gaps and explain why research on wet markets is important in a Chinese context. In section 3.3 I put forward my research methodology and describe my research location. Sections 3.4 through to 3.8 analyses the findings of different parts of my case-study and section 3.9 discusses these findings in a broader context of Chinese society and Polanyian thought.

3.1 Polanyi & Food Safety In China.

Food safety is an increasingly important contemporary issue in China (Garnett & Wilkes 2014, p.4). There have been a number of high profile food safety episodes in recent years, such as the Sanlu tainted milk powder (Pei *et al*. 2011; Xu & Klein 2010) and the Huangpu River pork meat

[105] 'In China, 'wet market' usually refers to place that sell fresh produce in the open space or in a building. It mainly consists of a number of individual stalls that offer fresh fruit and vegetables, poultry, live fish, and fresh meat' (Maruyama *et al.* 2016, p.34). The term wet market, in the English language, originates in Hong Kong and is now used to describe a large variety of markets in Asia (Lynteris & Fearnley 2020). In mainland China the term 'wet market' is rarely used. Terms such as '菜市场' (vegetable market), '市集' (public market), '早市' (morning market), '农夫市集' (agricultural wholesale market) and '农夫市集' (farmer's market) are more commonly used and help differentiate different types of markets. I use the term 'wet market' in this research as this is the term commonly used in English language scholarship on food markets in China.

scandals, that have come to national attention. Numerous other reports (Anderlini 2014) including pesticide residue[106] or chemical contamination of fruit and vegetables (Zhang *et al.* 2017, p.236) have flared up locally. These issues have had profound effects on Chinese society at large, with most PRC residents questioning food safety regularly and taking steps to avoid unsafe food.[107] Holdaway and Husain (2014) report that 'Surveys have found that the public regards food safety as the second greatest risk in daily life...' (p.53).[108] Viewed through a Polanyian lens, consumers seeking safe food from less marketised spheres[109] represents an unconscious countermovement that I argue is both large-scale and growing in Chinese society today.

To ascertain whether consumers are attempting to search for home grown, peasant produce in everyday consumption I conducted an exploratory survey at a wet market in Inner Mongolia.[110] I argue there is evidence that consumers aim to buy small scale peasant produced food or food that farmers eat themselves and that this constitutes an unconscious Polanyian countermovement rooted in self-protection from the market,[111] similar to those described in *The Great Transformation*. People are consciously attempting to avoid the negative effects of the market without consciously attempting to undermine the market mechanism itself.

Collectively, these countermovements are suggestive of a mechanism that could challenge the modernisation paradigm through 'unorganised collective action' (Zhou 1993, p.54) and 'atomized collective action' (Rev, 1987) and may have the potential to become something similar to Fu's (2017) 'disguised collective action'. In a repressive authoritarian political context in which there is

[106] Numerous Greenpeace investigations have found high levels of pesticides in vegetables, teas and herbal medicines (Wang 2015; Wei & Zuo 2013; Zou 2012).
[107] For example the increase in demand for non-mainland baby milk formula (Jacob 2013).
[108] See also: 'Food safety tops public's concerns' (Wang 2013) and 'Environmental Concerns on the Rise in China' (Pew 2013) also 'Corruption, Pollution, Inequality Are Top Concerns in China' (Pew 2015).
[109] I conceptualise rural China as less marketised than urban China due to the general inability to buy and sell rural land and housing. This is important for Polanyi as land is a fictitious commodity that ought not to be freely exchangeable in a self-regulating market. More specifically I follow Zhou's (2013) study on 'One Family, Two Systems' to differentiate between vegetables grown exclusively for the market and vegetables grown for self-consumption. I describe the latter as less marketised, although excess may become available at informal wet markets.
[110] As well as a smaller study in Fujian see section A.5 in appendix.
[111] Wang (2004) describes the peasant farming system set up at the beginning of the reform era as a '"small peasant socialist" model' (p.12).

little space for countermovements of the sort Polanyi mentions – independent trade unions, free religious practice etc. – spontaneous consumerist countermovements can and do arise. I argue that Chinese consumers are paradoxically using the relative freedom of the market to demanding less market – something that theorists looking at Chinese marketisation have thus far failed to appreciate (Dikötter 2016).

In the context of industrialising 19th century Britain, Polanyi argued that the disembedding effect of the rapid market-led transformation caused negative social effects in much the same way Holdaway and Husain (2014) argue that 'many food safety problems are related to the rapid expansion of industries and markets' and that the '...inability of government to regulate competition and bring order to markets in real time...' (p.48) is at the centre of food safety issues in China. The themes of economic transformation and government regulation come together when Zhang *et al.* (2016) comment 'Urbanisation and the industrialisation of food processing radically change the relationship between food producers and consumers, and stronger governmental control is therefore required' (p.271). Polanyi's key aim was to argue for a strong democratic state to be able to regulate competition in the interests of society as a whole especially in reference to the dangers of large-scale economic transformations.

With regards to wet markets specifically Zhang & Pan (2013) argue that the transformation of wet markets from government control to market control has failed to address the needs of consumers (p.512). As Zhang *et al.* (2016) argue 'Food consumption must be understood as a social practice embedded in specific institutional, cultural and political contexts' (p.278). Polanyi's argument that the economy must be embedded in social relations through political and cultural institutions seems especially relevant to food production, sale, and consumption. The consumption of food is not a purely economic activity, and to aim for a self-regulating market in food may undermine numerous cultural and societal norms.

Polanyian theory has already been used in a Chinese food safety context by Zhou (2013). He argues that food safety issues in China have led to a Polanyian countermovement of self-protection from the market by small-scale fruit and vegetable farmers. Zhou (2013) argues a large number of peasant farmers produce two forms of agricultural produce, one for sale on the market and one for household consumption. Produce for household consumption uses fewer chemical inputs than that destined for market in order to gain safer food for personal and family consumption. Zhou (2013) calls this 'One Family, Two Systems'. This rationale is demonstrated in Schneider (2017) where a small-scale farmer comments that when he 'travels to cities, he is afraid to eat meat because companies use drugs and chemicals in production and processing, and he does not trust that government regulatory oversight can effectively monitor or enforce food safety standards inside agribusiness operations. For him, the only meat that is safe to eat is the meat that he or his neighbors raise...' (p.343). With regard to vegetable consumption Fang & Liu (2018) highlight comments by one farmer who said, if she has to buy vegetables, she prefers to buy from neighbours as she knows how they have used pesticides (p.63). Si *et al*. (2019) also highlight the importance farmers attach to food produced by family or friends in the local community amid the likelihood that this produce is produced in a more 'green' and therefore 'safer' way.[112]

My research on wet markets in China is designed to ascertain whether this food producer countermovement described by Zhou (2013) is translated into a similar Polanyian countermovement for consumers. If consumers know or suspect that peasant farmers are producing a second safer form of food they may well attempt to find and consume this produce. There is a possibility that this 'safer' food finds its way into the market through over-production for peasant farmer family needs, or a separate possibility that rural citizens who only grow food for personal use (i.e. people who do not gain their income from farming, but have a family plot and therefore would only engage in the 'safer' form of production) also sell surplus food in the marketplace. The

[112] My own interviews of peasant farmers conducted for Chapter 4 also suggest similar beliefs, for example one local villager (LMOV01) worried about the chemicals that were used to keep vegetables fresh in shops and therefore tried to make all the food she consumed home grown ('自家种的').

idea that consumers may be avoiding the more formal market to consume produce straight from the countryside also potentially subtly undermines the state's rhetoric that the countryside is backwards (Yeh; O'Brien & Ye 2013, p.917), and could be considered an unconscious critique by consumers of urbanisation, industrialisation and modernisation.

Embeddedness, rapid transformation, expansion of markets and government regulation are all themes that overlap Polanyian theory and food safety in China and thus make Polanyi an important scholar to use to interrogate China's food system. Using Polanyi in this setting is likely to reveal ideas that may have escaped mainstream economic evaluation of food safety and wet markets in China. Polanyi may also be a useful tool to help reconstruct current theories of agricultural modernisation, rural China and peasant agriculture, moving away from an economistic evaluation and towards a more holistic societal approach.

3.2 Literature Gap, Wet Markets and Agriculture 'Modernisation'.

As Holdaway and Husain (2014) have noted, relatively privileged urban consumers have been the subject of most studies (for example Maruyama, Wu & Huang 2016; Zhang *et al*. 2016), and 'little targeted research has been done on rural populations or second- and third-tier cities, or on more "traditional" sales venues such as wet markets' (p.55). By contrast, my research focus is on lower-end consumers and wet markets in a city ranked as third-tier status. Third tier cities are increasingly important for research on consumption habits as according to Garnett and Wilkes (2014) '...it is here that supermarkets are focusing for their next phase of expansion' (p.44). The potential for a longitudinal analysis of consumption habits in the face of the expansion of supermarkets in my chosen city could be the basis of future research.

As Zhang *et al.* (2016) argue more research needs to be done '...based on a detailed understanding of consumer practices in accessing food...' if the aim is to develop '...strategies to promote sustainable food consumption...' (p.278). My research will help develop a more detailed analysis of

consumer practices by not simply relying on surveying the supermarket vs. wet market dichotomy but disaggregating different forms of consumption within wet markets and engaging in a more qualitative approach. Further, Alita; Dries & Oosterveer (2020) argue 'more in-depth research on wet markets is needed' due to their 'surprising' finding of the 'high degree of vegetable safety in wet markets' in China (p.14).

It might be assumed that wet markets are a dying form of retail in China as China modernises and supermarkets increase their market share. However, even in tier one cities, wet markets are a highly significant form of retail. Maruyama, Wu & Huang (2016) report that in '...Beijing, 30.3% of the respondents indicated that they do most of their food shopping at traditional wet markets. Buying fresh food at (large- and small-scale) supermarkets accounted for 59% of purchases. For Shanghai, the figures are respectively 49.4% and 38.4%, and 59.1% and 27.9% for Guangzhou' (p.36). With regards to vegetables specifically Wang *et al.* (2009) argue that in Beijing, '...although it is difficult to verify the share of each day's total vegetable sales that pass through supermarkets, a conservative guess is around 15%' (p.1798), meaning traditional forms of vegetable consumption still account for the majority of sales. A survey of China's five biggest cities reported in Garnett & Wilkes (2014, p.44) recorded a rate of 22% of vegetable consumption from supermarkets. Zhang & Pan (2013) report a number of reasons that wet markets are still an important feature of Chinese consumption even in more economically developed cities, for example, the '...cultural preference for purchasing fresh vegetable daily in small quantities and consuming them without refrigeration...' (p.509) and that '...supermarkets do not have a price advantage...' (p.509) over wet markets with regard to fresh produce. It may be assumed that in lower tier cities wet market use is even higher than in tier one cities due to the lack of large supermarkets. Further reported reasons for the strength of wet markets in China is the cultural preference for bargaining and the perception that wet market produce is fresher than supermarket produce (Maruyama, Wu & Huang 2016, p.33).The strength of wet markets in modernising Chinese cities is highlighted by Goldman, Krider & Ramaswami (1999). In their study on Hong Kong they argue 'Modernization need not follow the Western model, which assumes that all traditional food retail formats are inferior to the

supermarket' (p.138). They conclude that '...food retail modernization researchers... [should] systematically study the fresh food distribution system and the role of wet markets in other Asian countries. The question of why simple retail technologies might continue to be appropriate even in developed countries should be the focus of this research' (p.138).

Another important reason for researching wet markets is to help understand food consumption changes and their possible effects. In China processed food and animal product consumption is increasing and vegetable consumption is decreasing (Garnett & Wilkes 2014, p.73). This may be correlated with increases in supermarkets and decreases in wet markets along with increases in urbanisation and income levels. The decrease of vegetable consumption and replacement with animal products can have negative environmental costs, and health costs. Wet markets may actually have the potential to help increase vegetable consumption and reduce processed food consumption (and possibly animal product consumption) meaning supporting wet markets could have positive external benefits for China's health and environment.

In the general literature on 'modernization' of food retail, supermarket produce is assumed to be safer (Maruyama, Wu & Huang 2016, p.35). However, in Maruyama, Wu & Huang's (2016) statistical analysis of over 1500 residents in tier one Chinese cities, their hypothesis that the higher consumers rate safety, the more likely they are to shop at modern retail formats, was found to be unsupported. This suggests there is something more complicated occurring in the minds of consumers when they think of food safety issues. I hypothesize that in wet markets consumers aim to consume small-scale peasant grown food for safety reasons. This hypothesis comes from anecdotal information from a conversation with a pregnant woman in Chengde. She told me that she consciously searches for small-scale peasant farmers from whom to buy vegetables as she believes small-scale peasant farmers use fewer chemical inputs than industrial farms. Research has shown that consumers believe that '...agricultural systems that use fewer or no chemical inputs, such as those based on 'green' or organic approaches, are seen as safer than those which may rely very heavily on such inputs...' (Garnett &Wilkes 2014, p.95), and that the overuse of chemical inputs in Chinese agriculture is high (Lu *et al.* 2015). The overuse of farm chemicals is so serious

in China that the government is aiming for zero growth in use by 2020 (State Council 2015; Jin & Zhou 2018).

Small scale agricultural producers are likely to use fewer chemicals on food for household consumption, but not necessarily market based produce (Zhou 2013; Zhang *et al*. 2017). If however these producers sell surplus vegetables grown for household consumption at local markets they may be selling food which is 'safer', in the eyes of consumers, than the food produced for the specific purpose of making profits on the market. Therefore with this knowledge consumers may search for home grown surplus produce.

My research is the first survey I am aware of that disaggregates two forms of wet market produce in an attempt to understand consumer reasoning around food safety and decisions to continue to shop at these traditional retail locations. It may be that the produce sold by small stalls is in fact not grown by small-scale farmers, who may or may not use fewer chemical inputs. However my research is not aimed at discovering which type of product is actually safer, but which type of product is *perceived* to be safer. This may have certain implications for government policy as well as important theoretical insights on how safe food is constructed by consumers as well as insights as to how the countermovement works in a Chinese context.

The Chinese government's strategy to combat food safety issues is to minimise the role of smallholders and create more easily regulated large scale industrial agriculture systems (Zhang et al. 2016, p.278; Garnett &Wilkes 2014, p.6; Schneider 2015). This strategy may have potential pitfalls if consumers are actively seeking to consume smallholder produce and are concerned about the safety of industrialised systems because of over-use of chemical inputs, or cutting corners in search of higher profits. Chinese modernisation has included '...a national ideology that valorized the urban and denigrated the rural, positing cities as the primary site of political, cultural and economic worth' (Yeh; O'Brien & Ye 2013, p.917). However I argue that Chinese people are increasingly looking to the rural for solutions to the problems brought about by the rapid transformation and industrialisation of China. This phenomenon may be seen in trends such as the

rise of organic community supported agriculture farms (Shi *et al*. 2011; Cheng & Shi 2014; Shi *et al*. 2018), the *nongjiale*[113] phenomenon (Park 2014), other rural eco-tourism[114] and the eco-village movement (which I explore in Chapter 4).

The rapid increase in industrial agriculture production and supermarket consumption may also have negative impacts in terms of environmental sustainability. As Schneider (2015) puts it:

> '…it is agroindustrialization that is the problem, for which *nongmin* and "traditional" agriculture are part of the solution' (p.344).[115]

Further, Maruyama, Wu & Huang (2016) report that people consuming at wet markets are more likely to travel there on foot or by bike, whereas supermarket consumers are more likely to drive. In Chinese larger cities air pollution and traffic congestion is one of the principal concerns of citizens, incentivising supermarkets may increase this problem while wet markets may be seen as a tool to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion. Similarly large scale industrial agriculture, while in a narrow sense is economically efficient,[116] comes with a number of environmental issues especially in China (Lu *et al.* 2015). The issue of pesticides and other toxic chemicals in the industrialization of agriculture has led some to argue we need to transition away from industrial agriculture:

> '...the most effective, long-term method to reduce exposure to these toxic chemicals is to move away from industrial agriculture' (UN 2017, p.22).

The competitive advantage Chinese supermarkets have in processed foods coupled with the disadvantages they have in fresh vegetable retail compared to wet markets should also be a concern with regards to future health implications for Chinese people. Shifts in consumption patterns and lifestyles in China have led to an increase in obesity (Garnett &Wilkes 2014). This pattern is seen

[113] *Nongjiale* is a Chinese version of eco-tourism which '…involves peasant families hosting urbanite guests in their farm guesthouses, providing them with rustic food and lodging that symbolize something quintessentially rural, familial, authentic, eco-friendly, healthy, and traditional' (Park 2014, p.519).
[114] For example *Laojia* focused on foreign tourists http://www.laojia.co./ (Accessed 04/11/18)
[115] Zhang & Qi (2019) similarly argue that it is the peasant agro-ecological 'bottom-up initiatives for self-protection' that can ensure safe food (p.127).
[116] In a narrow sense because while industrial agriculture increases productivity per unit of labour and to some extent per hectare, it may lower energy efficiency and have large environmental externalities (Martínez-Alier 2012, p.60)

in other developed and developing countries, however that should not mean that it is seen as inevitable. Garnett & Wilkes (2014) suggest that 'Enabling people with low incomes to make sustainable choices about food (and other purchases) would seem to be a priority if policy is to contribute to preventing the widespread adoption of the unsustainable consumption practices that took root in most developed nations during the processes of urbanisation and industrialisation' (p.96). I argue that China mimicking the approach of developed nations to food systems could be counterproductive. Enhancing access to wet markets could help to avoid some of the negative consequences of 'modernisation' seen in industrialised nations.

China's industrialised 'modernisation' of agriculture and food supply chains therefore, may in fact be a negative for health, environment and welfare. Traditional smallholding mixed method farming that relies on agroecology[117] may actually be the future of global farming. Clearly the Chinese government is not convinced; however, the question I am aiming to answer is whether consumers think the future is industrialization or going back to the future of small-scale modern agroecology, at least with respect to food safety. This question has the potential to raise more fundamental issues with regards to what 'modernization' is and how China will look in the future. As China's food system is estimated to produce 4-5% of global GHG emissions (Garnett & Wilkes 2014), the future and modernization of agriculture in China will not just have profound effects on the people of China but also for the rest of the world.

3.3 Research Methodology and Location.

My research was designed to help better understand vegetable consumption habits in China through gaining evidence for a new theory of why wet markets might still be seen as locations for buying safe food. My research approach is a case study approach as I argue there are gaps in knowledge about why people consume at wet markets in China. A case study strategy will allow me to gain new insights and evidence for new theory. The research process was firstly inductive.

[117] Promotion of agroecology is one of the recommendations in the UN report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food (UN 2017, p.22). See also Schneider (2015).

Having spent a relatively large amount of time in China and being interested in food and where it comes from I observed a number of cases where people would aim to obtain food directly from small-scale producers in the countryside. These experiences showed me that people strive to avoid the mass-market Chinese produce and look towards the rural sphere for safety. This is especially interesting, as the rural has been portrayed as 'backwards' (Day 2013a, p.68; Schneider 2015) in official rhetoric.

In light of this I theorise that I was observing evidence of Polanyian countermovements – evidence of society protecting itself from the negatives of the self-regulating market but without an attack on the self-regulating market itself. I wanted to test deductively whether this phenomenon was more widespread than the small number of cases I had witnessed and therefore created a survey for a case study on wet market consumption habits. If the evidence was there it would allow me to firstly challenge and reconstruct some literature arguing that the rural is backwards and industrialised farming and buying systems are the correct way to modernise Chinese agriculture. Secondly it would help me demonstrate my unconscious/conscious thesis and the contemporary value of Polanyian theory, specifically the countermovement, in a Chinese context. This methodology conforms to the extended case study methodological paradigm (Burawoy 1991a, 1991b, 1998).[118]

From the literature it is clear that there are gaps in knowledge about wet market consumption (Holdaway and Husain 2014) and that simple comparisons to western literature on food consumption may not hold in a Chinese context (Goldman, Krider & Ramaswami 1999; Maruyama, Wu & Huang 2016). I was especially interested in Maruyama, Wu & Huang's (2016) failure to find enough support for their hypothesis that the higher consumers rate safety, the more likely they are to shop at modern retail formats. I theorise that people aiming to consume safe food look towards the countryside and small plots of peasant farmed land and not necessarily towards 'modern' retail formats. From conversations the rationale seemed twofold, 1) that the countryside had cleaner air, water and soil and 2) that peasant farmers won't use as much chemical inputs as

[118] More on the extended case study approach can be found in section A.7 in the appendix.

they were also eating the food and wanted to protect their health and their family's health. With reference to Zhou's (2013) study of the 'One Family, Two Systems' Polanyian countermovement (and further research of the one family two systems theory in Zhang *et al.* 2017 & Si *et al*. 2019)[119] I developed the theory that looking for non-marketised 'safer' peasant produced food constitutes a consumer protective Polanyian countermovement from the market – 'One Market, Two Products'.[120]

The 'One Market, Two Products' concept is best illustrated by pictures I took during the pilot study in Beijing that demonstrate the different types of product being sold in the market. Picture 1 is likely to be produce grown on a larger scale whereas pictures 2 and 3 have the potential to be surplus small-scale home grown produce. The seller of picture 2 stated his produce was 'self-grown' and 'organic', using chicken and sheep droppings as fertiliser.

[119] Similar research has also been carried out by Fang & Liu (2018) which demonstrated vegetables peasant farmers grow for self-consumption had reduced pesticide levels.

[120] Note here that 'market' refers to the wet market in which I argue there are two types of products on offer - large scale industrial agriculture products and small scale peasant produce. The word 'market' does not refer to the market system as a whole. There is also likely to be many different supply routes of produce, however I am concentrating on the peasant self-grown, non-peasant self-grown dichotomy.

Picture 1, Sweet Potatoes, Beijing Pilot Study 07/08/17;



Picture 2, Self-Grown Produce, Beijing Pilot Study 07/08/17;



Picture 3, Sweet and Bitter Cucumbers, Beijing Pilot Study 07/08/17;



My main research area was in a third tier city, Chifeng, in Inner Mongolia.[121] I also conducted a complementary survey in Fuzhou, Fujian province with similar results.[122] In Chifeng I surveyed a location which had a less formal morning market (from around 5:30am to 7am) as well as a more formal day market (from around 5:30 am to midday). I also surveyed a Chifeng Walmart to ascertain if consumers at a supermarket location had different consumption preferences in terms of peasant self-grown produce.[123] Chifeng was chosen for two main reasons; 1) researchers have commented that there has not been enough research on food consumption (whether in supermarkets or wet markets) in third tier cities and 2) I had good contacts in this city, this was not only important as it gave me access to local knowledge, but also because it gave me a support network in case of any unforeseen problems. For these reasons the selection of my research city was purposive. In Chifeng city I visited four different wet markets, one was a wholesale wet market, two were smaller indoor wet markets and one was my chosen outdoor wet market.

[121] Information on the pilot surveys can be found in appendix section A.2 and information on panels in section A.3.
[122] See appendix section A.5.
[123] See appendix section A.4.

The wholesale wet market was inappropriate for my research as the main customer base were restaurant and small shop buyers, not the consumers that I was targeting. One of the indoor wet markets I visited I felt was too small for any meaningful research – only 2 vegetable stalls; while the other market was larger it seemed less popular than my chosen location. Again this was a purposive selection process in order to be able to capture the consumers I was interested in. The aim of this research was not to achieve representativeness, because of resource constraints and the complex ideas being investigated, but to explore a concept hitherto not conceptualised and give evidence for my theoretical argument. I could not have used current data as I am unaware of any data exploring consumer preferences in wet markets for small-scale peasant grown produce. My aim is that this exploratory research and connected theory will be of interest to a wide range of people and help spawn future research using this concept.

Access to my main research site was straightforward as it was a public market. However some complications arose due to the structure of the market. I soon realised that this market was in fact at least two connected markets: a morning market (5:30am-7am) and a day market (5:30am-midday). The morning market consisted of sellers that sold produce on the floor on a road just next to the more formal market that had stalls which sellers could rent. At 7am the city management enforcement (城管) would drive by with a loud speaker telling the sellers to move on. This indicated that these sellers have no formal rights to sell here but are tolerated until 7am when the roads become busier (the morning market would often block a bus stop on the main road and a second less busy road). This observation led me to split up my research into two separate surveys, one survey that captured the morning market and the other the day market. Each survey area was also split up into a consumer survey and a seller's survey. Splitting up the research into the morning and day markets would allow me to compare whether there were any differences between why consumers come to the different markets and if the different sellers told me different things about their produce.

My data consisted of a number of surveys. Twenty morning market seller surveys were completed over two days plus fifteen supplementary surveys (this consisted of two new questions, some

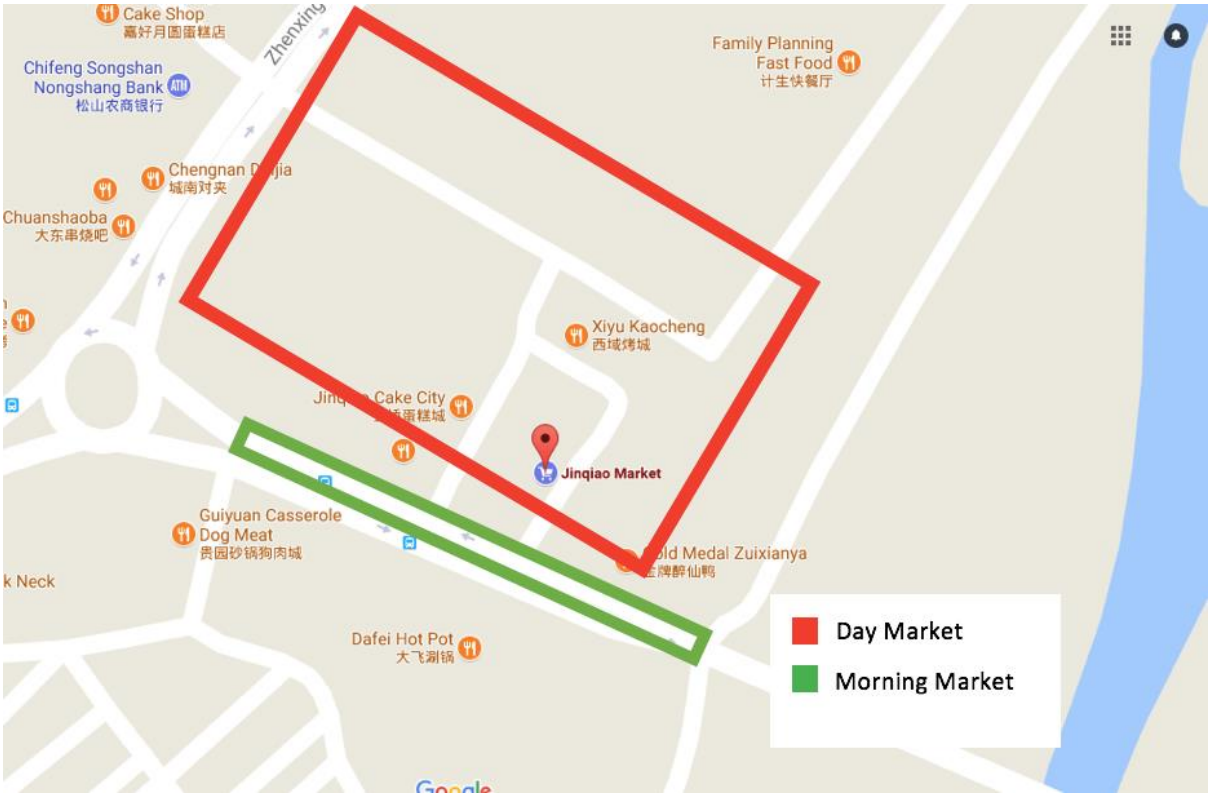
sellers were part of the original twenty some not). This was a high number of surveys for the morning market section as the number of vegetable sellers fluctuated from 16-25. I also collected thirty day market seller's surveys (already containing the new questions). The day market had around 60-80 vegetable sellers on different days.

I collected 67 morning market consumer surveys (after the first 30 two explanation sections were added as it became apparent a more qualitative approach was necessary). A further twenty supplementary morning market consumer surveys were completed to expand the qualitative approach at the end of the project. I also collected 70 day market consumer surveys plus twenty supplementary. All surveys were completed to varying degrees with some participants missing questions out. This means some analysis of certain questions will not have 100% of the surveys available. The wet market location was as follows.

Picture 4. Wet Market Location;



Picture 4. Wet Market Location;



The morning market consumers were given the surveys in the green area from around 6am - 7:15am, while the day market consumers were given surveys in the red area from around 10am - 12pm. The morning sellers were located in the green area and were surveyed from 6am - 7am after which they were told to pack away by the city management enforcement. The day market sellers were surveyed from around 10am - 12:30pm in the red area. At around 12pm stall holders would start to pack away and there was almost no market stalls after around 12:45pm.

3.4 Analysis and Findings of Morning Market Seller's Surveys.

I began the survey research at the Chifeng wet market by surveying the morning market sellers. I was interested in how the sellers describe their produce; whether they describe it as produce they had grown themselves or produce they had bought to sell. With regards to Zhou's (2013) 'One

Family, Two Systems' I was also interested in whether the sellers ate the produce they were selling.

The most important question for my hypothesis, that people come to wet markets in order to buy small scale peasant food because they believe it is safer, was question 2; '您卖的菜是您自己种的还是采购的？' (Are the vegetables you are selling grown by yourself or bought?). If all sellers stated that their produce is bought and not grown, it would be very difficult to argue there was 'One Market, Two Products', and that consumers come to this market to buy small-scale peasant produced produce.

In response to this question, in the morning market, 16 out of 20 sellers responded that their produce was self-grown and one seller responded that some was self-grown and some was bought with three describing their produce as bought. Two of these three sellers told me that they bought their produce directly from peasants ('直接从农民') while one said they bought it from a wholesale market ('从中间商买'). When conducting the 15 supplementary morning surveys there were seven sellers I had not originally surveyed, six of the respondents said their produce was self-grown while one said it was wild produce he had picked himself. Unfortunately I was unable to validate the reliability of this information. However this is not detrimental to my study as it is the fact that produce is being described as homegrown that may demonstrate there is a demand for consumers to eat homegrown produce. If the producers think the consumers want to consume self-grown produce the obvious question becomes why.[124] Of course the producers could be changing their response because of my positionality; for some reason changing their story due to a foreign researcher asking them the question. However I cannot think of a plausible reason they would do this. Chifeng is not a city that attracts may foreign visitors and it is unlikely that sellers have a different answer for foreign people than local. Having talked to a number of people that live in

[124] This is explored in the consumer survey analysis below.

Chifeng they confirmed to me that many sellers at wet markets describe their produce as self-grown.

A second connected question was aimed to fit with Zhou's (2013) study but in the market setting. Question 4 was; '如果是自己种的, 这些也是您自己家里吃的菜吗？' (If your vegetables are self-grown, are these also vegetables that your family eats?). All sellers who described their vegetables as self-grown answered yes to this question. However, I realised this was also an important question to ask sellers who said their produce was bought. Out of the 3 sellers that said their produce was bought I asked one seller '这些也是您自己家里吃的菜吗？' (Are these also vegetables that your family eats?) who confirmed he did eat this produce and the one seller that said some produce was grown and some bought also said that her family eats these vegetables. As this was not enough information to come to any conclusions I designed a supplementary morning market sellers' survey in an attempt to better understand this situation in regard to Zhou's (2013) theory.

I realised the question '这些也是您自己家里吃的菜吗？' (are these also vegetables that your family eats?) would not fully capture the information I needed for ascertaining what type of self-grown vegetables the vegetables being sold were. Therefore for the supplementary questionnaires the questions I asked were; 1. '您的这些菜是（a）自己家里吃一部分，卖一部分（b）只是为了卖' (The vegetables you are selling are they (a) partly eaten by your family and partly sold (b) only for selling) and 2. '您是否单独种植专供自己家里吃的蔬菜（不卖的蔬菜）' (Do you grow your own vegetables that are only eaten by your family (not sold)).

The results were as follows; 11 out of 15 reported that their family eats part and they sell part while the remaining four said they only sell the produce. The four who said they only sell the produce included the only two sellers who reported that not all their produce was self-grown. 13 out of 15 said they did not grow produce solely for their family to consume and not to sell at the market. From this small sample the majority of the sellers seem to be selling food that they also grow for their family. One respondent commented that if they can't finish ('吃不了') the food they grow

then they sell it. This means that, if we assume the sellers are telling the truth, and take Zhou's (2013) (along with Zhang *et al.*, 2017) data as somewhat representative of Chinese farmers in varying regions it is possible that the vegetables being sold at the morning market are being produced with fewer chemical inputs and may be described as 'safer' in the minds of consumers.

Zhou (2013) argues that the vegetables being grown with more chemical inputs are the 'market' destined vegetables and the vegetables grown with fewer chemicals are consumed by the family. However if there is a surplus of the vegetables produced for family consumption it seems reasonable to suggest that these vegetables may find their way into 'the market' at less formal wet market locations being sold by the people who produce them. This is what my sample data suggests. However more research needs to be done. An ethnographic study of small-scale food producers would be able to better trace the supply of the different types of vegetables, and what the differences were, while a larger survey study on wet markets would be able to determine how widespread this phenomenon may be. My exploratory research is an important step in confirming the possibility of a 'One Market, Two Products' system that can be the basis of more research.

Table 1. Summary of Data;

Morning Market (Sellers) Surveys Given 20				
Are the vegetables you are selling grown by yourself or bought? (Respondents 20)	**Self-grown** 80%	**Some grown some bought** 5%	**Bought** 15% (of which 2 out of 3 bought from peasants and 1 bought from wholesale)	
Supplementary Morning (Sellers)				

Surveys Given 15 Respondents 15 (7 not originally surveyed).				
Are the vegetables you are selling grown by yourself or bought?	**Self-grown** 80%	**Some grown some bought** 13.3%	**Bought** 0%	**Wild** 6.7%
The vegetables you are selling are they (a) partly eaten by your family and partly sold (b) only for selling	**(a)** 73.3%	**(b)** 26.7%		
Do you grow your own vegetables that are only eaten by your family (not sold)?	**Yes** (Only for eating not sold) 13.3%	**No** 86.7%		

3.5 Analysis and Findings of Day Market Seller's Surveys.

The same questions were asked of the sellers at the day market. These sellers reported different results. 23 out of 30 said their produce was bought while four reported it as self-grown and three reported that some was bought and some was self-grown.

19 out of 29 (one person did not answer) said they only sell their produce and do not eat it. This represents just over 65.5%. Compared to the same question in the supplementary morning market survey over 73.3% stated the opposite (that they sold a part and their family ate a part). Of the 23 that reported their produce was bought 18 (78.3%) reported they only sold the produce and did not eat it, while of those that reported all their produce was self-grown three out of four (75%) reported that they sold some and ate some.

These results seem to indicate the existence of 'two products' being sold at the day market; 1) a product that is mainly bought to sell at the market, and is less likely to be eaten by the sellers themselves and 2) a product that is more likely to be grown by the sellers and more likely to be eaten by the sellers themselves. If we include the morning market results in which nearly all said their produce was self-grown (with only two stating some is grown and some bought) and over 73.3% stating their family eats the produce we can argue there is evidence for the 'One Market, Two Products' concept. However it may make more sense to split up the day and morning markets and argue there is in fact two markets and two products.[125]

Table 2. Summary of Data;

Day Market (Sellers) Surveys Given 30			
Are the vegetables you are selling grown by yourself or bought? (Respondents 30)	**Self-grown** 13.3%	**Some grown some bought** 10%	**Bought** 76.7%
The vegetables you are selling are they (a) partly eaten by your family and partly sold (b) only for selling (Respondents 29)	**(a)** 34.5%	**(b)** 65.5%	**If answered bought** (23): (a) = 21.7% (b) = 78.3% **If answered self-grown** (4): (a) = 75% (b) = 25%

[125] Using the term 'one market, two products' or 'two markets and two products' depends on the structure of the specific wet market being investigated. For example my Beijing pilot would suggest that the Beijing wet market had self-grown peasant produce intermingled with larger scale produce, meaning a 'one market, two products' concept was more applicable. Whereas my Chifeng market analysis seems to suggest the majority of the peasant self-grown produce is in the less formal morning market, which must pack away at 7am, meaning 'two markets and two products' is a more relevant concept.

These results would suggest that Zhou's (2013) study of the two systems of peasant production is being translated into the wet market setting. The more informal morning market being a place to buy the more informal peasant grown produce, which may have used fewer chemical inputs, and the more formal day market being a place to buy more formal produce grown for the general market, potentially with more chemical inputs. As Zhou (2013) argues that the 'food for life' ('为生活而生产') produce, as opposed to the 'food for money' (为逐利而生产)[126] produce, represents a Polanyian countermovement by producers in an attempt to protect themselves from market produce, I similarly argue that if consumers are attempting to purchase the 'food for life' produce they are also performing a Polanyian countermovement to protect themselves from the mass-market produce. If it is the case my consumer surveys should give evidence that consumers are consciously attempting to buy peasant self-grown produce and linking this to safety. My Likert data aimed to capture the importance of safety for people consuming at this market.

3.6 Analysis and Findings of Consumer Likert Data.

There is a debate in the literature on how best to analyse and interpret Likert data. The debates centre upon whether Likert data should be conceptualised as ordinal or interval data and the lack of a normal probability distribution for Likert-scale data (Nanna & Sawilowsky 1998; UNI 2010).

UNI (2010) argues that even for ordinal Likert data calculating the mean and standard deviation is useful as the mean '...can give us a feel for which direction the average answer is' and the standard deviations tells us the average distance of the answers from the mean. Further to this Zhang *et al.* (2016) use means to describe their Likert-scale data on trust in food provisioning schemes in

[126] Zhou (2013) translates this to English as 'food for money' (p.34) but it could also be translated as food for profit.

Beijing, therefore using means will help me compare my results with the literature on Chinese consumption.

My Likert survey design means participants are likely to conceptualise my data as interval or ratio data.

Picture 5. Likert Scale;

	不重要		---->		非常重要
原因	1	2	3	4	5

This design points to the numbers being a continuous data range from 'Not Important' to 'Very Important'. Survey participants would likely conceptualise the distance between 1 and 2 as the same as between 2 and 3 and so on. This contrasts to other Likert surveys which use words for each section for example 1 = 'Not Important At All', 2 = 'Not Very Important', 3 = 'Neither Important nor Unimportant' etc. This means calculating the mean and standard deviation for my data is potentially more meaningful than other Likert-scale data.

Picture 6. Likert Survey;

	不重要		---->		非常重要
原因	1	2	3	4	5
(a) 在这个市场菜价低廉					
(b) 这个市场的菜新鲜					
(c) 来这个市场方便					
(d) 这个市场的菜品安全					
(e) 我能在这个市场买到本地菜,支持本地经济					
(f) 我能在这个市场买到环保食品					
(g) 我喜欢在这个市场跟卖家讲价					
(h) 我喜欢这个市场的氛围, 喜欢跟卖家聊天					

The mean and standard deviation values for all the consumer surveys at the wet market are as follows.

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation;

	Low Price 1(a)	*Freshness 1(b)*	*Convenience 1(c)*	*Food Safety 1(d)*
Mean	3.95	4.31	4.44	3.46
SD	1.324	1.022	1.045	1.475

	Local 1(e)	*Environment 1(f)*	*To Bargain 1(g)*	*Atmosphere 1(h)*
Mean	3.57	2.84	2.36	2.23
SD	1.572	1.555	1.597	1.461

From this information we can see on average the most important reason for people coming to the Chifeng Wet Market is 'Convenience' followed by 'Freshness', 'Low Price', 'Local food and supporting local economy', 'Food Safety', 'Vegetables that are better for the environment', 'Like to Bargain', and finally 'Like the atmosphere and talking to vendors'.

If we conceptualise convenience, freshness, low price, and food safety as 'economistic' values as they are variables that mainly concern private gain we can argue that 'economistic' values dominate the reasons people go to this wet market. However the clearest 'economistic' value 'price' was not the most important reason to go to this wet market.

The food safety variable mean value of 3.46 demonstrates that on average food safety was not as important as other reasons for people coming to this market although a score of 3.46 could be conceptualised as somewhat important. For my hypothesis that people looking to buy safe food are more likely to buy from peasant producers the result of 'Food Safety' being of middling average importance for going to the Chifeng market seems problematic. However Zhang *et al*. (2016)

found that trust in wet markets and farmer's markets was middling, whereas trust in ‘citizen gardens/farms’ was high. The aim of my study is to argue you can consume ‘citizen garden/farm’ produce (which seems to be a similar concept to small-scale peasant grown produce) in a wet market setting and that people believe this type of food is safer. The addition of more qualitative analysis of this hypothesis I argue is more able to tease out the views of different ways of consuming within the same wet market and may be a better method to understand my hypothesis than closed Likert questions.

When comparing my results to Maruyama, Wu & Huang (2016), my results on the importance of convenience and freshness for consuming at the Chifeng wet market are mirrored in their data and the ambiguousness of price and safety for consuming at wet markets is also mirrored. This ambiguousness in the data means a qualitative approach becomes important. My data is also similar to Zhang *et al*. (2016) who found that the most important reasons for consumers’ mode of food purchase (whether supermarket or wet market or other) were most frequently reported as; 1) convenience, 2) freshness, 3) cheapness, and 4) safety, when given ten options.

One distinct difference is that Maruyama, Wu & Huang (2016) found that bargaining ‘in the traditional retail formats is still an attractive factor for Chinese consumers’ whereas my surveys found that bargaining is relatively unimportant for consumers coming to the Chifeng wet market. More research on the possible changing attitudes of bargaining might be a worthwhile research topic.

Of the 137 total buyer surveys 32 from the morning market and 17 from the day market opted to answer question 1(i) ‘Other reasons’ that are important for coming to this market not included in my Likert table. One clear trend stood out, 14 respondents to the morning market survey said something to do with exercise (锻炼, 溜达, 遛弯 etc.) and three from the day market. This is an interesting finding as from my reading of the literature there is no mention of exercise as a possible reason people will choose certain types of consumption and it possibly shows a positive external social benefit to outdoor markets and especially early morning markets.

Maruyama, Wu & Huang (2016) found that people who use wet markets are more likely to walk or cycle although whether this was a conscious decision to exercise was not explored. They also report that ‘a unit increase in a consumer’s preference to shop by car would raise the probability of a consumer choosing modern retail formats by 25.4%’. This was the strongest effect they found for people shopping at supermarkets.

An important observation for my hypothesis was that three people from the morning market stated that buying something similar to small-scale peasant agriculture was an extra reason for coming to the market. One reported a reason to come to this market was to find ‘个人家的菜’ (Lit. individual family vegetables) – likely to mean vegetables grown by the family themselves. Another used the term ‘个人种的菜’ (Lit. individual grown vegetables) and the third used the phrase ‘自己种的菜’ (Lit. self-grown vegetables). These answers were given before any of the questions about peasant agriculture were read or answered. This gives some evidence for my theory that people are consciously looking for small-scale peasant grown food at wet markets. Even though three seems a small number I argue self-reported reasons should be given extra attention. Furthermore, 12 respondents to the extra reasons question gave an answer that was already captured by the Likert data either to do with low price or convenience. Therefore the reports of self/family grown vegetables are a larger percentage of self-declared reasons that were actually new.

The fact that the three reports of trying to buy self/family grown produce were reported at the morning market is also important. From my surveys of the sellers, the majority of morning market sellers described their produce as self-grown while the majority of day market sellers described it as bought. It seems that there is some evidence that this information is being transmitted to consumers.

3.7 Analysis and Findings of Data on Question of Peasant Agriculture.

My hypothesis is that in wet markets consumers aim to consume small scale peasant grown food for safety reasons. Therefore question 5 directly asked which type of food consumers would most like to buy; '对您个人而言, 下面两种生产方式您更倾向于选择买哪种？' (For you personally, which one of the below mentioned methods of production are you most inclined to choose to buy?) (a) '更倾向于选择买大规模生产的菜' (More inclined to choose to buy large-scale produced vegetables) (b) '更倾向于选择买农民自己种的菜' (More inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables) (c) '不确定' (Not sure). The results were as follows:

In the morning market 60 out of 65 (2 respondents did not give an answer to this question) or over 92.3% reported they were more inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables, with the remaining 5 reporting 'not sure' and no-one reporting they prefer large-scale produced vegetables.

In the day market 60 out of 67 (3 respondents did not give an answer to this question) or just under 89.6% reported they were more inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables, with 5 (7.5%) reporting they were more inclined to choose to buy large-scale produced vegetables and 2 (3%) reporting 'not sure'. This is summarised below.

Table 4. Consumer Consumption Preference;

Morning Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 67	More inclined to choose to buy large-scale produced vegetables	More inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables	Not sure
Which one of the mentioned methods of production are you most inclined	0%	92.3%	7.7%

to choose to buy? (Respondents 65)			
Day Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 70 (Respondents 67)	7.5%	89.6%	3%

Two of the consumers who reported that they were more inclined to buy large-scale produce stated the reason was simply that they were unable to buy peasant self-grown vegetables (‘农民自己种的买不到’). One of these respondents reported in question 6 that she would prefer to eat the same vegetables as peasant farmers grow to feed their family because they have fewer pesticides and chemical fertilizers (‘化肥农药少’). Another respondent, who picked large scale produce, stated the two types of produce were ‘broadly similar’ (‘两者差不多’) while in question 6 also reported she would prefer to eat the same vegetables as peasant farmers feed their families because they are healthy and protect the environment (‘健康,环保’). The remaining two that picked large-scale produce did not answer why. One of the consumers who answered ‘not sure’ gave the reason as (‘自己家有菜园’), meaning their own family has a plot of land to grow vegetables, therefore presumably a large amount of the vegetables they eat are home-grown. When asked if she would prefer to eat the produce peasants eat themselves she answered yes because they use less chemical fertiliser (‘化肥少’). The second person who answered ‘not sure’ did not give a reason why.

The supplementary morning results were 18 out of 20 (90%) more inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables and 2 reporting ‘not sure’. The supplementary day results were 17 out of 20 (85%) more inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables, one person was more inclined to choose to buy large-scale produced vegetables and two reporting ‘not sure’.

Table 5. Consumer Consumption Preference Supplementary;

Supplementary Morning Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 20	More inclined to choose to buy large-scale produced vegetables	More inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables	Not sure
Which one of the mentioned methods of production are you most inclined to choose to buy? (Respondents 20)	0%	90%	10%
Supplementary Day Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 20 Respondents 20	5%	85%	10%

These were clearly overwhelming results to suggest consumers at this market were more inclined to buy peasant self-grown vegetables. These overwhelming results lead me first to ask whether this question could be described as a 'leading question'. It is possible that '大规模生产' can be translated to mass-produced, hinting at large quantities of inferior produce giving a negative tint to the question. However 'mass-production' can have positive connotations such as being able to produce more at a lower selling cost, reducing consumer expenditure. It is possible that the term itself is neutral but because of past experiences, such as the melamine milk scandal, it has become a negative term and therefore a way of producing that people want to avoid. If this is the case the question should not be described as a leading one, people have simply become sceptical of the benefits of mass-production.

After the first 30 morning surveys I realised a more open ended question was necessary to help understand people's reasoning and added a why question (‘为什么?’).

Thirty-seven morning market consumers were given the chance to explain their answer, 27 answered. Of the 27, 13 (48%) directly answered that peasant self-grown vegetables were ‘safe’ (‘安全’) one answered ‘卫生’ which is likely to mean ‘health’, presumably that these types of vegetables are better for health, two answered ‘无公害’ which means ‘pollution free’ and is also likely to be connected with health and safety. Finally four mentioned either using less or using no chemical fertilisers or pesticides. Since pesticide and chemical fertiliser residue is a health and safety concern I also conceptualised this under ‘safety’. Taking these all into account 20 out of 27 (74%) mentioned something to do with the vegetables being ‘safer’. Other notable comments were ‘fresh’ (‘新鲜’) stated by three people exclusively as well as four people in conjunction with other terms. Two people wrote that they are inclined to choose peasant agriculture to protect the environment (‘环保’) while three people wrote that this type of produce was ‘cheap’ (‘便宜’) or affordable (‘实惠’) – one person as the sole reason and two as a reason in conjunction with others.

It is clear that ‘safety’ overwhelmingly dominated the ideas put forward for why morning market consumers were more inclined to buy peasant self-grown vegetables than large scale produce. Day market consumers had similar results. Things to do with 'safety' (in which I include terms such as 安全, 放心, 无化肥, 农药少, 无污染, 健康) accounted for 63% or 41 out of the 65 who chose to answer this question. Other answers might also be seen as hinting that peasant agriculture may be seen as safer, for example one respondent wrote ‘天然’ meaning peasant agriculture is more ‘natural’ while another wrote ‘无添加’ meaning ‘nothing added’, presumably nothing bad added, such as harmful chemicals. Eight respondents chose freshness as a reason to choose peasant grown produce (six exclusively, two in conjunction with other reasons) and seven responded that peasant grow produce was cheap or affordable (two exclusively and four in conjunction with other reasons). Finally three mentioned environmental protection – one exclusively and two in conjunction with other reasons.

Table 6. Reasons for Peasant Self-Grow Preference;

Morning Market New Question (Consumers) Surveys Given 37	Safety	Fresh	Environmental Protection	Affordable
Why? (Respondents 27) (Percentage of answers containing each concept)	74%	25.9%	7.4%	11%
Day Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 70 (Respondents 65)	63% (+3%)	12%	4.6%	10.8%

The clear result of both the morning market and day market was that peasant grown produce is seen as safer than large scale produce by a large majority of people. The results of question 6 '如果您更倾向于选择买农民自己种的菜，您也更倾向于选择买农民种给自己家里吃的菜吗' – if you are more inclined to choose to buy peasant grown vegetables, are you also more inclined to choose to buy peasant grown vegetables grown for family consumption? , (This question was also asked to people that said they were more inclined to buy large scale produced produce, by missing out the first part of the question) were similar to the previous question. 59 out of 63 (93.7%) morning market surveys answered yes, three answered 'not sure' and one answered 'no'. The respondent that answered 'no' to this question previously answered he would be more inclined to buy peasant self-grown vegetables because they were safer in question 5. The reason given that he is not inclined to buy peasant agriculture that was grown for family consumption was because 'there is almost no self-grown' ('几乎没有自己种的') vegetables. Of the four that answered not

sure for question 5, two of them answered yes for question 6, one did not answer and one answered not sure. The reasons were similar to question 5; something to do with 'safety' was cited 22 times out of 30 in the morning market (73%).

In the day market, 57 out of 64 (89%) answered 'yes' to question 6, with five answering 'not sure', and two answering 'no'. The reasons for these choices were broadly similar to question 5, with something to do with 'safety' being the main reason cited 45 times (73.8%) out of the 61 who answered this question. Of those that answered they were inclined to buy large scale produce in question 5, two said they would be inclined to buy peasant grown produce grown for family consumption in question 6, one answered they would not be inclined to while two did not answer. Of those that answered 'not sure' to question 5, one answered they would be inclined to buy peasant grown vegetables produced for family consumption while the other did not answer.

Table 7. Consumer Preference for Vegetables Grown for Family Consumption;

Morning Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 67	**Yes**	**No**	**Not Sure**
Are you more inclined to choose to buy peasant grown vegetables grown for family consumption? (Respondents 63)	93.7%	1.6%	4.8%
Day Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 70 (Respondents 64)	89%	3.1%	7.8%

One respondent pointed out that '自己吃的菜他们上粪，没有肥' meaning the food the peasants eat themselves use animal droppings as fertiliser rather than chemical fertilizer, another responded

that if the peasant farmers eat it, it must be good therefore I eat it (this was not conceptualised as 'safety' above as it is not clear if it is good because it is safe or some other reason). A third stated '因为自己吃，所以不上肥，算绿色食品' because they eat it, it will therefore not have chemical fertiliser, it will be relatively 'green' produce. These answers seem to give some evidence that while peasant grown produce is very popular, if the consumers think it is grown for the farmer's own family to consume it is slightly more popular. This potentially fits with Zhou's (2013) 'One Family, Two System' thesis although more research is necessary.

3.8 Likert results on Safety and Peasant Agriculture.

This overwhelmingly positive attitude of consumers to peasant self-grown produce and the linking of it to 'safety' coupled with the majority of morning market sellers stating that they grow their own produce contrasts to my Likert data in which 'safety' was not an especially important reason to come to this market. It may seem logical that people looking to buy safe food would come to the morning market. However taking the Likert results separately shows the most important reasons to come to the morning market on average were 1) 'Convenience' (mean = 4.6 (1dp)). 2) 'Freshness' (4.4), 3) 'Price' (3.7), 4) 'Buying local food and supporting local economy' (3.6), 5) 'Safety' (3.4), 6) 'Buying vegetables that are better for the environment' (2.7), 7) 'Like to bargain' (2.4) and 8) 'Like the atmosphere and talking to vendors' (2.0). Safety was relatively low and these results were exactly the same ranking as the importance of the reasons to come to the day market, where fewer sellers described their produce as self-grown.

This mismatch between the Likert data on safety and the attitudes of consumers about peasant-grown vegetables lead me to create a supplementary survey that aimed to challenge the wet market part of my hypothesis. My hypothesis is that in wet markets consumers aim to consume small-scale peasant grown food for safety reasons, the data so far, I argue, provides strong evidence that consumers at this wet market see small-scale peasant grown food as safer, but that according to the Likert data 'safety' was not on average one of the most important reasons to come to this wet

market. Therefore, perhaps the consumers want to buy small-scale peasant agriculture but this wet market is not a location where they can do this. My supplementary survey asked again which type of agriculture people would be most inclined to buy and asked two new questions; '您觉得是否方便买到农民自己种的菜？' (Do you think it is convenient or not to buy peasant self-grown vegetables?) and'您通常是如何得到农民自己种的菜呢？ 例如从哪里买到的， 怎么买到的等' (How do you usually get peasant self-grown vegetables? For example where do you buy them, how do you buy them etc?).

Firstly, again as reported above, a large majority stated they were more willing to choose to buy peasant grown vegetables, 18 out of 20 for the morning market with two stating 'not sure' and 17 out of 20 for the day market with two stating 'not sure' and one stating they preferred large scale produced vegetables. The one that stated that he was more inclined to buy large scale produce stated the reason was because most of the produce was large scale produce and he didn't have time to walk around (presumably he did not have time to check whether the vegetables were peasant self-grown or not). One morning market participant commented that all the sellers say their produce is self-grown, but how many are actually self-grown is hard to know.

15 out of the 19 that gave a reason in the morning market stated something I conceptualised as to do with better 'safety' of peasant agriculture (fewer pesticides or chemical fertilisers, feel more at ease eating it or simply 'safe') 13 out of the 20 day market surveys stated something to do with 'safety'. One person commented '不上化肥，身体没生病' ('not applying chemical fertiliser, will not get ill') – strongly linking chemical fertiliser with health concerns.

In the morning market 14 out of 20 stated it is convenient to buy peasant self-grown vegetables and 12 out of 20 in the day market reported it was convenient. Asked to elaborate on whether it was convenient the answers were varied. In the morning market one person stated '早市上都有' meaning the morning market sellers sell peasant self-grown produce and another simply said morning market '早市'. Three other participants partly agreed with this saying although there is

not enough peasant grown produce you can get it early at the morning market (‘不太多，特早有，晚一点就没了’) or the night market (‘夜市’). However one participant stated that the peasant farmers don’t come to the city because they (presumably the city government) don’t let them sell on the street (‘[农民]不来城里，不让摆摊’).

Two morning responses to the convenience question were especially interesting when coupled with answers to the previous question. One answered she would be more inclined to buy peasant grown vegetables and gave the reason as they use fewer pesticides, she then reported peasant self-grown vegetables were not convenient to buy and stated ‘心理上，农民自己种的菜也放农药’, meaning peasant self-grown produce made her feel better but she knows they also use chemical pesticides. A second participant reported something similar, stating he would be more inclined to buy peasant self-grown vegetables because of trust ‘厚道’ and that it is convenient to buy peasant self-grown vegetables but they are not necessarily better because they still use chemical fertiliser and pesticides (‘农民自己种的菜不一定好，也上化肥农药，除虫剂’). These comments seem to show the complexity of food consumption for some people in China. While both respondents are more inclined to buy peasant agriculture and initially explained positive reasons for this, they then went on to explain the negatives of peasant agriculture, almost contradicting the first positives reason. It seems that due to safety concerns and lack of information food consumption can become a complex psychological burden, everybody wanting to protect their health but not knowing exactly how to do it.

In the day market there were many contrasts in the reasons given as to why it was convenient or not to buy peasant vegetables. Seven participants stated that the peasant farmers come to the market to sell their vegetables while five stated that it is too far for them to come or there is none at the market to buy from. One respondent stated that most people are middle-men at this market so it is not clear where their produce comes from and another said the farmers sell their produce to peddlers (‘小贩’) who come to the city to sell.

The final question of the supplementary survey aimed to look deeper at where people obtain peasant self-grown vegetables by directly asking ‘您通常是如何得到农民自己种的菜呢？ 例如从哪里买到的，怎么买到的等’ (How do you usually get peasant self-grown vegetables? For example where do you buy them, how do you buy them etc?). From the morning market 9 out of 20 stated they can get peasant self-grown vegetables at the morning market ‘早市’ and four stated at the market ‘市场’.

This finding has not squared the circle between the mismatch of the Likert ‘safety’ variable being on average relatively low and people thinking peasant grown vegetables are safer. If peasant grown vegetables are safer and you can buy them at this market as a majority of respondents suggest, you would expect the ‘safety’ variable to be relatively high even if convenience or price still dominated. I argue that Likert data is unable to capture the complexities of consumption in this wet market and that more open-ended questions are necessary to understand nuances. As Likert data is the most common kind of data collected when assessing consumer behaviour in China I argue many studies may be missing more subtle ideas on what food safety means in a Chinese context.

A second important response to this question was that three respondents explained that their relatives (‘亲戚’) would get them peasant self-grown vegetables from the countryside. This type of consumption avoids not only industrial markets but also traditional wet markets and relies on non-economic norms of the family – an unambiguous Polanyian countermovement away from the perceived negative effects of the market. This confirms similar behaviour I have witnessed while living in China. A further answer that was interesting was one respondent stating that in rural areas there is peasant grown vegetables and every year she orders them and they are sent to her home (‘农村里还有，每年订菜，送到家里’). This might be classified as ‘alternative food systems’ that have been reported as a growing trend in China, although mainly reported in tier one cities (Cheng & Shi 2014).

In the day market 10 mentioned buying at the market ‘市场’, none mentioned the morning market specifically. The specific mentioning of the market again demonstrates a lack of consistency with

the Likert data. Four respondents mentioned something to do with relatives '亲戚' when asked where they get peasant grown vegetables. For example one respondent stated in Ningcheng they have relatives who live in the countryside and don't use chemical fertiliser ('宁城，乡下亲人，不上肥'). A further three people stated they go to the countryside to buy peasant grown vegetables ('去村里买') without specifically mentioning relatives. With regards to people that come to this market it seems a relatively common theme that they obtain vegetables directly from the countryside. Further, interesting comments were that one person stated they have their own place to grow vegetables and one mentioned a market in the new district of the city where she believes more peasant farmers go to sell produce. These trends I argue again demonstrate that non-market social spheres – the family and less marketised spheres – the rural, are conceptualised as locations of safety from the negatives effects of the market.

Table 8. Supplementary Consumer Preferences;

Supplementary Morning Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 20	More inclined to choose to buy large-scale produced vegetables	More inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables	Not sure
Which one of the mentioned methods of production are you most inclined to choose to buy? (Respondents 20)	0%	90%	10%
Why? (Percentage of answers containing	Safety 78.9%	Fresh 10.5%	Affordable 21%

each concept) Respondents 19			
Is it convenient to buy peasant self-grown vegetables? Respondents 20	Yes 70%	No 30%	
How do you usually get peasant self-grown vegetables? (Percentage of answers containing each concept)	Market 65%	Relatives 15%	Countryside 20%
Supplementary Day Market (Consumers) Surveys Given 20	More inclined to choose to buy large-scale produced vegetables	More inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables	Not sure
Which one of the mentioned methods of production are you most inclined to choose to buy? Respondents 20	5%	85%	10%
Why? (Percentage of answers containing each concept) Respondents 20	Safety 65%	Fresh 5%	Affordable 30%

Is it convenient to buy peasant self-grown vegetables? Respondents 20	Yes 60%	No 40%	
How do you usually get peasant self-grown vegetables? (Percentage of answers containing each concept)	Market 50%	Relatives 20%	Countryside 15%

3.9 Discussion of Findings.

It seems clear to me that the consumers surveyed at the Chifeng wet market look towards the countryside for protection against the market. First they look to peasant self-grown vegetables to avoid unsafe large scale agricultural produce, most specifically to avoid chemicals used in the production of food. I argue this is a clear unconscious Polanyian countermovement aiming to avoid the perceived negative effects of the rapidly industrialising market. Even though the picture is complicated and sometimes contradictory many of my informants stated that this wet market and/or specifically this morning market were places where it is possible to buy peasant self-grown vegetables and therefore 'safer' food in the consumer's own terms. However there are inconsistencies. The Likert data does not show consumers rate 'safety' in this market as an especially important reason for buying produce here.

This disconnect between Likert results and more open questions could be due to the Likert choices being too restrictive and therefore not capturing nuances or, in the wet market setting, consumers disaggregating specific types of sellers at the market with different 'safety' profiles. More research is necessary to better understand wet market consumption. Research that asks Likert style questions along with more open ended questions and perhaps longer interviews could yield richer

data. I argue that given my overwhelming results that people in this market were more inclined to buy peasant produce for safety reasons, research on wet markets in the future should aim to elucidate consumers' perceptions on peasant agriculture.

Further to these findings another countermovement can be seen involving the consumers at the wet market location. Some consumers, if able, will try to by-pass the market altogether and obtain vegetables directly from the countryside through relatives or other means. Both these countermovements, I argue, are the 'unconscious' kind, specifically talked about in *The Great Transformation*. They are countermovements that aim to protect the individual from the negative effects of the market but do not consciously seek to undermine the market system. Polanyi theorises that these countermovements will nevertheless, unconsciously, undermine the market system and cause the system to break apart. With regards to vegetable consumption I argue this might occur through two channels, 1) 'Atomized Collective Action' explored in Rev (1987) with regards to Hungarian state socialism or 2) people becoming 'conscious' that it is a systematic problem preventing them from having recourse to safe food. This would constitute a process of unconscious countermovements becoming 'conscious',[127] something that Polanyi does not directly address in *The Great Transformation*, but a plausible mechanism for the eventual 'transcendence' of the market system that Polanyi argues is the only way to save society. Of course if the government is aware of a large scale spontaneous[128] and unconscious countermovement in vegetable consumption they would be able to protect rural society from marketisation in the classic state-led protective countermovement mechanism Polanyi describes in *The Great Transformation*. This state-led countermovement mechanism would not necessarily be 'spontaneous' as it would be triggered by the spontaneous and unconscious wet market countermovement, however it would

[127] This is a similar idea as articulated in Zhang & Qi (2019) which argues to maintain and expand peasant agro-ecological 'self-protection' consumers 'require greater awareness of food and agricultural production practices' (p.128) but this awareness is undermined by the reproduction of the peasant and rural society as backwards in mainstream narratives. Further, they also see an expansion of the peasant 'self-protection' countermovement as having political consequences which create networks that challenge 'the legitimacy of mainstream governance' (*Ibid*). This process is how I argue countermovements may become conscious Polanyian movements.

[128] For more on Polanyi's idea of spontaneity see Dale (2018b).

still be unconscious in Polanyian terms if it created social protections without attempting to transcend the self-regulating market mechanism. This classic 'unconscious' countermovement described in *TGT*, according to Polanyi, will still eventually destroy the market system if society continues to be organised as a 'market society'.

Here, although I argue this is the classic state-led countermovement mechanism described in *TGT*, I have put forward the point that while the countermovement itself is spontaneous, the state's intervention mechanism to deal with the countermovement's demands is not necessarily spontaneous. The state, 'under modern conditions', according to Polanyi is the 'representation' of 'social protection' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.162). The state can represent the claims of the varied spontaneous countermovements, as the countermovements often demand, and protect society from the negative effects of the self-regulating market, without directly attacking the self-regulating market logic. However, at the same time, Polanyi shows that spontaneous countermovements can emerge from the state itself, as I demonstrate in Chapter 1 on the central banking countermovement. This spontaneous and unconscious countermovement initiated by liberals themselves has the same state-led mechanism to resolve itself – state legislation. Although within a market society this state mechanism, unconscious of the root cause of the countermovements, never fully resolves the problem, as the mechanism is directed at the negative effects of the market rather than directed at the market society whole.

State protection of the rural sphere against the market is something some Chinese scholars argue is necessary.[129] If rural China's land and labour is strongly protected by the state from the market rural China may be able to avoid becoming a 'market society'. Further, to this my exploratory survey research suggests people have a positive association of the countryside and safety. This is important as it somewhat goes against the state rhetoric of the backwardness of rural society (Schneider 2015, p.333) and suggests that society may already frame 'agroindustrialization

[129] For example Wen (2013) '近年来我在很多场合都反复劝告人们，不要轻言农地私有化制度' (For the past few years I have on many occasions repeatedly advised people not to recklessly privatise the agricultural land system) and Wen (2009). Also He (2015) '千万不能搞土地私有化。包括不能搞变相土地私有化' ([We] never should engage in land privatisation, including in disguised forms.)

[as]...the problem, for which *nongmin* and China's tradition of smallholder farming are part of the solution' (Schneider 2015, Abstract). It is possible to argue with reference to Schneider (2015) that there is a double movement in the framing of the peasant. A move by those in favour of market expansion to frame the peasant as backwards and underdeveloped and something that must become 'modernised' through agroindustialisation, and the countermovement of society, inherently, spontaneously and unconsciously framing the peasant as the antithesis of market values – a political unit that stands for safety and refuge, as my study suggests. This may further suggest that the state project of increasing the marketisation of rural China (Day & Schneider 2017) will experience significant social backlash as a sphere of refuge from the perceived less safe market starts to become part of the market system.

If the government were to protect the countryside from agricultural industrialisation and the marketisation of rural society, my research suggests, perhaps paradoxically, that there would be a 'market' for less marketised produce. This kind of 'market' solution can be seen in the comment by one participant that they directly go to the countryside each year to order vegetables. If peasants could come together to make agricultural cooperatives that produced food with fewer pesticides and could directly market this to urban consumers[130] there is a 'market' root to solve the problems perceived by consumers of the highspeed development of industrialised markets.

An obvious critique of this is that my analysis of Polanyian countermovements in China unconsciously protecting themselves from the negative effects of the market yet I have just proposed a 'market' solution to the problem. However this criticism would be erroneous. The Polanyian solution is for the state to protect rural society from becoming a 'market society' as Polanyi describes it. This is beyond the state regulating the market in the style of the countermovement described in *TGT* – as this only destroys the system without creating something new. A Polanyian solution to the negative effects of the self-regulating market in terms of food production and consumption would be to take land and labour out of the market altogether. Food

[130] Something that may be similar to Wen Tiejun's idea of agriculture 4.0 explained in a speech at Southwest University in 2017 (Wen; Liu & Zhang 2018).

however, could still be bought and sold in a market where prices are allowed to fluctuate depending on supply and demand, as food products, unlike land and labour, can be produced for market exchange. Polanyi does not suggest that the price mechanism is always a bad way to arrange consumption[131] and for Polanyi 'the mere presence of marketplaces does not necessarily signal a market (capitalist) economy' (Isaac 2012, p.15).[132] 'Market society' – one in which land, labour and money are commodities and nearly all social and cultural relations are filtered through market norms – is what Polanyi warns us against. Following Polanyi's argument on taking land and labour out of the self-regulating market mechanism the Chinese government could protect Chinese rural land from becoming commodified[133] by strengthening the household responsibility contracting system and not abandon the rural *hukou* system.[134] This would allow basic livelihood to be acquired in non-market spheres[135] and potentially reduce competitive pressure from large industrial farming operators. Peasant farmers may then have space to shift food production from profit driven production to 'food for life' production (Zhou 2013) reducing pesticide and herbicide use.[136]

Maintaining the *hukou* system is relatively controversial in the Chinese studies literature as the rural *hukou* has been shown to negatively affect rural citizens as they are not entitled to the same welfare as urban citizens (Wu 2011). However Andreas and Zhan (2016) argue recent *hukou* reforms, replacing *hukou*-based land rights with market-based rights in the pursuit of urbanization, higher consumption and growth, 'come at the cost of economic insecurity for much of the

[131] Polanyi position is not a 'state-socialist' one 'which…is assumed to be non-exchange, non-market command economy' (Polanyi 1924, p.1).
[132] In Polanyi's own words: ' …the end of market society means in no way the absence of markets' (Polanyi 2001, p.260).
[133] The opposite trend seems to be occurring with the December 23rd amendment to the Land Management Law (China Daily 2018) which is argued to be '…a key step in removing the legal basis of the dual system for urban and rural land' (Caixin 2018).
[134] The *hukou* system is a system of household registration which entitles those with rural *hukou* and those with urban *hukou* different welfare rights in their registration area. Importantly for my study rural *hukou* gives rural citizens the farming use right to a portion of village owned land. This land is not normally able to be sold by the villager on the market.
[135] Potentially creating what Polanyi would see as a more 'communist' system in which the individual is secure due to their 'share in the common resources' (Polanyi, 1947a, p.112) rather than their productive capacity.
[136] Clearly this is not a simple process and would require large-scale social change.

displaced rural population' and may lead to many former peasants 'eking out a marginal existence in crumbling housing projects on the urban periphery' (p.818). This worry is echoed by Wen (2009) and He (2018).[137] Wen (2009) argues that two freedoms ('两个自由') need to be guaranteed to peasants, to be free to work in the city but also free to come back to their land to farm. Wen (2009) argues this is important to maintain social stability. This guarantee of the right to farm rural land would mean that rural land would not be subsumed into the self-regulating market system and therefore not be able to be freely exchanged. Land would therefore not be commodified and the rural could be protected in Polanyian terms. Labour would still be partially commodified as it would compete in the urban market labour force. However the rural would be a safe haven for those unable to compete in market terms. This system is unfortunately being eroded, not strengthened, as Andreas and Zhan (2016) explain CCP leaders are 'using a combination of market mechanisms and administrative measures to aggressively promote the concentration of farmland in the hands of large-scale operators' (p.819). Dong (2015) argues this is because 'political power allies itself with capital to occupy large-scale land in the pretence of public interest' (p.50) – something that Polanyi would see as one part of the double movement in society. Although the market is being expanded into the rural, the rural can be seen as a pre-existing 'fissure…in capitalist domination' (Holloway 2013, Loc.4151-60) – a sphere not fully under the logic of 'market society'. I argue, in the next chapter, that conscious Polanyian movements are able to insert themselves within this fissure in an attempt to expand it.

Conclusion

This chapter argues that the data I have collected demonstrates there is a spontaneous and unconscious consumer countermovement with regards to vegetable consumption at the wet market I analyse. Although the analysis is complicated by inconsistencies in the Likert data the overwhelming finding is that consumers prefer peasant self-grown vegetables and that they link these vegetables to 'safety'. I argue this shows consumers look to the less marketised rural for

[137] Dong (2015) argues something similar. Wang (2012, p.59) also cautions against privatisation of rural land.

protection, demonstrating the countermovement in action. This conclusion is enhanced by a number of respondents looking to their rural relatives to secure safer vegetables, bypassing the market altogether. I then place this micro finding in the macro context of a double movement in society of the construction of peasant farming and the rural. One movement aimed at denigrating the rural and peasant farming in order to marketize it while another, spontaneous and unconscious movement, aims to cling to it as a refuge from the negative effects of the market. This chapter has demonstrated the unconscious countermovement concept in the real world and demonstrates its contemporary value. It also helps to show scholars one potentially productive way the countermovement can be measured and theorised in future research. My next task is to find conscious Polanyian movements in China to illuminate the unconscious/conscious dichotomy and further show the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory.

Chapter 4

The Conscious Polanyian Movement – Chinese Ecovillage Case Study.

If industrialism is not to extinguish the race, it must be subordinated to the requirements of man's nature. The true criticism of market society is not that it was based on economics…but that its economy was based on self-interest. Such an organization of economic life is entirely unnatural, in the strictly empirical sense of exceptional.

Karl Polanyi, 1944

Introduction

In Chapter 2 I put forward the argument that the NRRM and the IPDC could be seen as conscious Polanyian movements demonstrating the existence of a potential radical, although circumscribed, critique to the hegemonic state discourse present in China. In this chapter I put forward a third, less researched, example of a conscious Polanyian movement being set up in various locations in rural China – the ecovillage movement. I analyse the ecovillages through three important normative themes that recur in Polanyi's own writing; the conscious and immediate relationship of persons (Polanyi 1933, p. 393),[138] capitalism and socialism, and freedom in a complex society. I argue that the ecovillages put forward, within these themes, similar normative arguments to Polanyi and therefore can be described as conscious Polanyian movements.[139] This analysis, coupled with the previous analysis in Chapter 3 on wet markets, is designed to clearly demonstrate the differences between the unconscious countermovement and the conscious Polanyian movement. Further, it deepens the conscious Polanyian movement concept by arguing that, even within movements that can be generally described as conscious in Polanyian terms, there are moments of retrogression. This demonstrates an argument that the double movement contradiction 'goes all the way down'; it is not just a macroeconomic and political contradiction but a philosophical or spiritual/religious contradiction played out within each individual.

A corollary to this Polanyian interrogation of the ecovillages are arguments on how these 'radical' movements are able to survive in an authoritarian context. I argue that adopting the hegemonic vernacular of existing political authorities and avoiding direct criticism of the central state and its policies are two clear survival strategies. Finally, the interrogation of the values of the chosen Chinese ecovillages in this chapter demonstrates that progressive and even radical ideas are being expressed in contemporary China similar to those expressed in ecovillages in parts of Europe and North America, and similar to Polanyi's own views, despite the vastly different historical, cultural

[138] This is taken from Polanyi (1933, p.393). This concept often manifests itself as the 'brotherhood of man' in Polanyi (2001 [1944]).

[139] Litfin (2019) emphasises 'the transformation of consciousness' (p.185) as a theme she often encountered at the ecovillages she studied (see especially pp.180-186). The idea of human 'awakening' was an important theme in my case studies.

and socio-political contexts in which these messages are being developed. For those who argue that ecovillages may be places where potential solutions to global environmental issues can be found, this may represent a positive development. Further, it may confirm the universal resonance of Polanyi's message across time and space.

This chapter begins with a general review of the literature on ecovillages and definitions of ecovillages within that literature. Section 4.2 briefly engages with social movement theories to help contextualise the place of ecovillages and the unconscious countermovement/conscious Polanyian movement dynamic. Section 4.3 through 4.5 analyses the three ecovillages I visited through the three themes mentioned above. A fourth sub-section on conflicts within the villages highlights various scholarly arguments for Chinese social movements and ecovillage construction in China. Finally section 4.6 brings together the 'retrogressive' arguments found in the ecovillages and develops the idea that the double movement works 'all the way down'.

Due to limited time and resources I could only spend a short amount of time at each location, therefore any results can only provide a snap-shot of the organisation and people's lives within it. I hope that, in this sense, my research may stimulate future research on phenomenon of Chinese ecovillages. Finally it must be said that the hospitality of all the participants of the ecovillages towards me was beyond anything I expected or deserved. The welcome, the food, the gifts[140] and, more important, the kindness and caring they extended me was profound and seemed genuine. Any critique I present in this chapter of any aspects of the ecovillages is within the context of the overwhelming kindness that I was shown at every turn.

4.1 What is an Ecovillage?

My literature search on ecovillages generally brought up work on either European (East 2018),[141] or North American (Lockyer 2017) ecovillages. Longer work that aimed at a broader look at ecovillages throughout the world did not investigate Chinese ecovillages either (Litfin 2014,

[140] These were mainly handmade soap or natural cleaning products and books. The giving of small gifts was normal practice for people who visited the ecovillages.
[141] Trainer (2000) mentions Europe and South Asia as important locations of ecovillages.

Lockyer *et al.* 2013). This represents a large gap in the literature that I hope to begin to fill. Interestingly, however, Litfin (2014) briefly mentions the New Rural Reconstruction Movement in China as something similar to the ecovillages she investigated in the global south (pp.195-6).[142] With regards to East Asia, Litfin (2014) investigated Konohana Family ecovillage in Japan, this ecovillage was well known by the participants in the ecovillages I analyse and was often praised.[143] A further complication arises due to the term 'ecovillage' being used to describe an eco-tourism village in a Taiwanese context (Jung 2016). This village would probably not fall under the definition of an ecovillage according to the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN),[144] which describes an ecovillage as:

> '…an intentional, traditional or urban community that is consciously designed through locally owned, participatory processes in all 4 dimensions of sustainability (social, culture, ecology, economy into a whole systems design) to regenerate its social and natural environment' (GEN, n.d).

Within the four categories mentioned, the 'radical' nature of ecovillages can most clearly be seen in the economic sustainability dimension and cultural sustainability dimension. In the economic sustainability dimension GEN (n.dA) argues most 'ecovillages actively work to provide sustainable alternatives to the mainstream economy' and 'Reconstruct the concepts of wealth, work and progress'. In the cultural sustainability dimension it is argued that many ecovillages aim to encourage people to feel deeply connected to each other and to the planet and further to 'Connect to a higher purpose in life' (*Ibid*). I argue that these aims may be sensitive in a Chinese context.

Although my reading on ecovillage literature may not be fully comprehensive a brief description of what some scholars regard as the purpose and definition of ecovillages is worthwhile. Dawson (2013) argues there are 'five defining characteristics of ecovillages: "[p]rivate citizens initiatives; in which the communitarian impulse is of central importance; that are seeking to win back some measure of control over community resources; that have a strong shared values base, often referred

[142] Potentially the NRRM looks similar to village reconstruction in parts of the global south while the ecovillages I investigate look more like the ecovillages in the global north.
[143] Other prominent ecovillages mentioned by the participants in the ecovillages I studied were Findhorn, Scotland and Damanhur, Italy.
[144] Three of the ecovillages I visited are members of GEN, and the fourth has begun the process to join.

to as "spirituality"; and that act as centers of research, demonstration and in most cases training"' (p.219). Interestingly, Dawson (2013) argues 'ecovillages can no longer be described as standing outside of and in opposition to the mainstream' as they are 'increasingly working in formal and informal alliance with the more progressive elements in today's society' (p.217). In a Chinese context however, I argue that ecovillages may still be seen as 'relatively isolated countercultural experiments offering a profoundly alternative vision and lifestyle to the cultural mainstream' (*Ibid*),[145] even though they are aiming to build the alliances Dawson (2013) argues more established ecovillages have achieved.

For Trainer (2006, 2002, 2000), ecovillages are part of a 'transition to some kind of "Simpler Way"' (Trainer 2006, p.1) which is necessary because of the unsustainability of 'consumer-capitalist society' (*Ibid*). Trainer (2006) sees eco-villages as something that ought to be expanded in towns and suburbs to help deal with potential environmental and financial crises. For Trainer (2006), ecovillages are counter to consumer capitalism; however they do not attack it directly but 'defeat it…by ignoring it to death' (p.2). If consumer capitalism is considered the 'cultural mainstream', Trainer (2006) sees ecovillages as 'offering a profoundly alternative vision and lifestyle to the cultural mainstream' (Dawson 2013, p.217). Litfin (2014) argues ecovillages '…are the "seed" communities of the not-too-distant future' (p.10). What she means by this is that ecovillages contain the seeds 'of a new worldview' which aims at 'inoculating the collective consciousness with new ideas and concepts' (*Ibid*).

The definitions of ecovillages put forward by Dawson (2013), Trainer (2006, 2002, 2000) and Litfin (2014) are mainly developed in a European and North American context. Therefore, understanding and testing whether these definitions hold in the case of Chinese ecovillages is an important aim of this chapter. Litfin (2014) separates the function of ecovillages in affluent and less affluent countries:

[145] Dawson (2013) argues mainstream society refers 'to that portion of the population subscribing to the dominant cultural narrative revolving around the merits of sophisticated technology, largeness of scale and economic growth— in opposition to which the ecovillage movement has been developing an alternative and contrary vision' (p.233).

> ‘Ecovillages in affluent countries seek to overcome social alienation and reduce material consumption, while those in the less affluent countries aim to make existing villages economically and ecologically sustainable’ (p.16).[146]

In a Chinese context, this separation may not hold as China is both an affluent and less affluent country due to regional inequalities and the rural/urban divide. People who go to the rural to set up ecovillages may be relatively affluent compared to the original villagers. This chapter therefore helps to broaden the ecovillage literature by engaging with, and describing Chinese ecovillages, and the normative values they espouse.

4.2 A Social Movement?

In this chapter I argue that the ecovillages I analyse can be seen as conscious Polanyian movements. This emphasises their ‘radical’[147] outlook and potential to be transcendental in Polanyian terms. The use of the term ‘movement’ inevitably conjures up the term social movement. Tilly & Wood (2009) describe social movements as:

> ‘…a distinctive form of contentious politics – contentious in the sense that social movements involve collective making of claims that, if realized, would conflict with someone else’s interests, politics in the sense that governments of one sort or another figure somehow in the claim making, whether as claimants, objects of claims, allies of the objects, or monitors of the contention…’ (p.3).

The contentious nature of the ecovillages I analyse is contained within their ‘radical’ nature. Their views conflict with interests of others in society. If ‘making claims’ is seen as making normative claims that differ from a hegemonic norm, the ecovillages I visited clearly conform to Tilly & Wood’s definition. However if ‘making claims’ means *campaigning* or ‘a sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities’(p.3) as Tilly & Wood (2009) suggest, the ecovillages I analyse start to look less like social movements. In fact of the three elements Tilly & Wood (2009) put forward to define social movements; ‘*campaign*’, ‘*social movement repertoire*’ and ‘*WUNC displays*’,[148] only WUNC (‘worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment’

[146] The Wen school of the NRRM, on the surface, looks more like what Litfin (2014) argues constitute ecovillages in less affluent countries. However I argue the NRRM do have potentially radical ideas (Alcock 2019).
[147] The idea that the ecovillages are ‘radical’ is supported by my 1000 Lives interviewee who argued their ecovillage was seen as ‘too radical, and the government leaders can’t accept it’.
[148] WUNC is an acronym for ‘worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment’ and is concerned with how the general public perceives the social movement (Tilly & Wood 2009, p.4).

(Tilly & Wood 2009, p.4)) displays seem to be strongly contained within the ecovillages I analyse. This could be because of the Chinese political context in which things like '…public meetings, solemn processions, vigils, rallies, demonstrations…' (p.4) etc., contained in the '*social movement repertoire*' element, are constrained by authorities.

The constraint of the first two elements then leads to an emphasis on the third, especially the public demonstration of 'worthiness' and 'unity'. Here counterhegemonic movements in China may focus on setting forth a moral appeal to the public rather than a material claim on the government.[149] The worthiness they aim to project to the public is due to the worthiness of the issues with which they attempt to grapple – namely, the environmental and cultural crisis of China and the world as a whole. Further, their demonstration of unity is not just shown by a demonstration of ingroup unity, but also their articulation of a unity of all people and living things. However, a fourth element, which is not put forward by Tilly & Wood (2009), but was a strong presence within the ecovillages I analysed, was education. All the ecovillages aimed at some form of education, whether education on global environmental issues, philosophy or how to make enzymes to clean with in order to use fewer artificial chemical cleaners. Two of the ecovillages were explicitly involved in educational activities and would invite hundreds of students to engage in different workshops around the year. Providing educational courses is part of the core mission of many ecovillages around the world (Dawson 2013, p.223), and it has been noted that educational work in a Chinese context is less contentious than other forms of social engagement and is potentially safer (Shapiro 2016, Loc.2476).[150] An emphasis on education, and a de-emphasis on contention with authority and material gains, may therefore appear to move these ecovillages out of the realm of the mainstream of social movement theory and potentially towards something more akin to a conscious Polanyian movement.[151]

[149] This according to Shue (2004) has subversive potential as material claims 'implies the power and the authority of the state to satisfy the need' whereas moral claims implies the state is lacking (p.40).
[150] This is in the context of extra-curricular education on environmental issues. If social movements aim to supplant state education welfare provisions or challenge the state's monopoly on 'truth', education provision may become a challenge to the state (Shue 2004).
[151] Polanyi (1922) argues that a transcendence 'is possible only if each individual is conscious of his particular function' and this is done through 'educational work' (p.8).

However Melucci (1989) locates four features of contemporary social movements: 1) that they '…are not preoccupied with struggles over the production and distribution of material goods and resources… [but] challenge the administrative logic of complex systems primarily on symbolic grounds', 2) '…that the very forms of the movements – their patterns of interpersonal relationships and decision-making mechanisms – operate as a 'sign' or 'message' for the rest of society… Participation within movements is considered a goal in itself because, paradoxically, actors self-consciously practise in the present the future social changes they seek'. 3) That they '…rely on a new relationship between the latent and visible dimensions of their collective action… Movements are only part-time participants in the public domain, precisely because they practise new forms of everyday life' and finally, 4) '…contemporary movements are acutely aware of the planetary dimensions of life in complex societies. Their emphasis upon the interdependence of the world system helps stimulate a new consciousness of ourselves as members of a human species which is situated in a natural environment' (pp.5-6).[152]

These four features speak much more to the ecovillages I analyse than the three elements of Tilly & Wood (2009). The distinction here I believe can also be explained in Polanyian terms. The social movements Tilly & Wood (2009) explore are akin to countermovements that lobby the state in various ways for concessions within the political paradigm. What Melucci (1989) is speaking to is something more like conscious Polanyian movements that emphasise 'a new consciousness of ourselves as members of a human species' (p.6). These movements are much more likely to aim at transcending the current social paradigm and are therefore likely to be more threatening to the Chinese state (Shue 2004).

Tilly & Wood (2009) also put forward the argument that 'Separatist communities – religious, political, or lifestyle – have sometimes emerged from social movements, although most regimes have either repressed or contained such communities energetically' (p.5). This seems to suggest

[152] Melucci (1989) also suggests 'solidarity', 'conflict' and something which 'breaks the limits of compatibility of a system' as characteristics of contemporary social movements (p.29). If conflict is seen as theoretical confrontations or 'symbolic' challenges (p.63), these three characteristics are present within all the ecovillages I analyse.

that these communities are something beyond a social movement. Tilly and Wood's (2009) argument would suggest that organisations like ecovillages have potentially emerged from social movements. I argue that a similar dynamic occurs between the countermovement and the conscious Polanyian movement. Ecovillages in China may have emerged from social movements taking on the government to achieve environmental protections. However, I argue, they can also emerge from atomised collective action such as the wet market countermovement I analyse. People in search of safety don't just try to purchase food *from* the countryside but attempt to become people *of* the countryside in order to gain the safety it has come to represent.[153] However, for Melucci (1989) these types of 'counter-cultures' are included as social movements:

> 'Today's social movements contain marginal counter-cultures' and small sects whose goal is the development of the expressive solidarity of the group, but there is also a deeper commitment to the recognition that personal needs are the path to changing the world and to seeking meaningful alternatives' (p.49).

Nevertheless, I argue, these 'counter-cultures' can emerge from the countermovement whether one would classify counter-cultures as social movements or not.

In my interviews, because of the sensitivity of this issue, I did not directly ask whether the participants considered the ecovillages (or themselves) to be part of a social movement. However in one interview this issue arose spontaneously. In the context of a question on the influence of the ecovillage on the village in which it was located, one interviewee began by suggesting that the ideas the ecovillage promotes would potentially create conflicts or 'collisions' ('带来一些比较有碰撞性的观点'). This demonstrates Melucci's (1989) 'conflict' (p.29) characteristic of the social movement. This interviewee also suggested the ecovillage activities were 'pioneering' ('比较先锋的活动') suggesting Melucci's (1989) 'breaks the limits of compatibility of a system' (p.29) characteristics is also met. Further, this interviewee used the term social movement ('社会运动')

[153] The clearest example of the food safety issue being able to transform someone's ideas is expressed by interview RH01.

to describe the ecovillage and continued by saying you can't use this word in China ('这个词在中国是不能说的').

This interviewee suggested that due to the fact that social movements are 'dangerous' ('危险的') can repel people ('它是让人反感的'), and easily create problems ('它是容易造成很多问题的') the ecovillage uses terms that are more in tune with Xi Jinping's 'axis' ('主轴'). Even to the extent that this interviewee suggested the term ecovillage ('生态村') was an elegant cloak ('一种优美的外衣') for the actual reason behind the ecovillage – ideological enlightenment ('思想启蒙').

For the purposes of this project, I therefore classify ecovillages as social movements, as described in the work of Melucci (1989).[154] In general the ecovillages I analyse do have what I deem to be 'radical' ideas – in terms of ideas that are counter hegemonic – and they hope to influence society and politics. However they generally do this in a non-confrontational way. If they become more confrontational they are highly likely to be banned, as I will show later.

4.3 Little Mountain Ecovillage.

I first visited Little Mountain Ecovillage[155] in July 2017 for five days, and then returned in July 2018 to join one of their summer camps for students to learn about philosophy and the environment. This second stay lasted seven days during which I listened to classes and interviewed different people involved with the ecovillage and the wider village community. During this second visit I was accompanied by a graduate research assistant from a university in Fujian who helped me with interviews and summer camp lectures.[156] In total we conducted 12 interviews (with 15 interviewees) with four distinct groups. Firstly, a 'core' group of 'new villagers' from the ecovillage, totalling 3 interviews; the founder of the ecovillage, the general manager and one of the

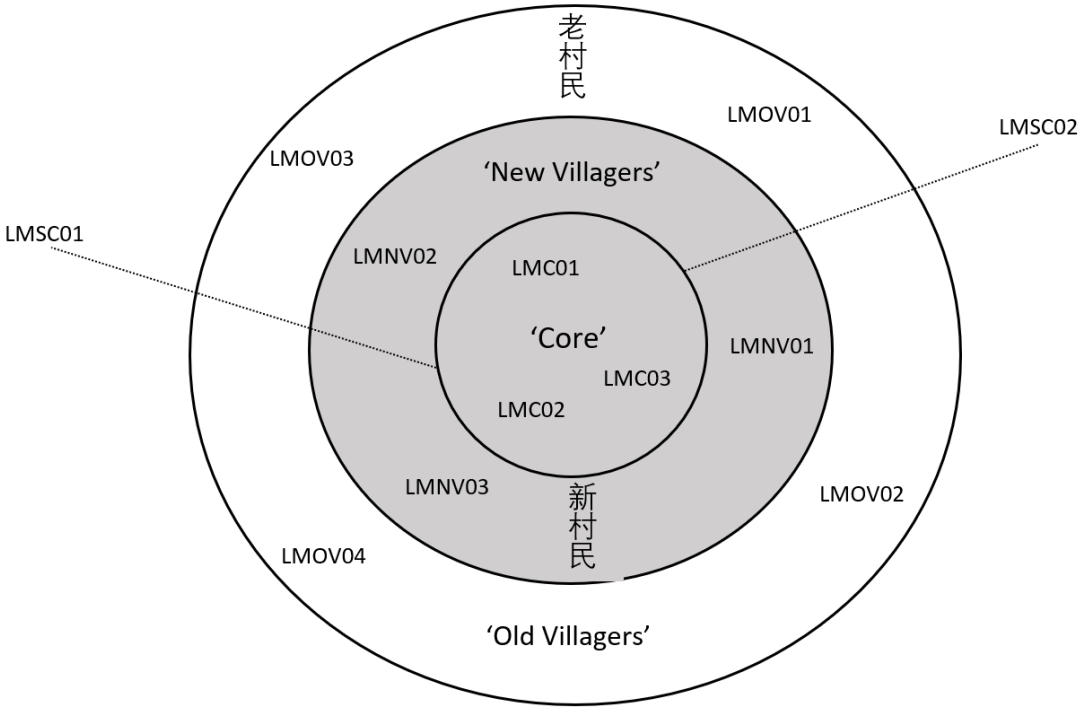
[154] Whereas the unconscious countermovement can be seen as a social movement in Tilly and Wood's (2009) terms.
[155] The names of people and places have been changed in order to maintain anonymity.
[156] Lectures and classes were either in English or Mandarin as there were a number of English speaking teachers present.

family members of the founder. A second group was comprised of 'new villagers' (新村民) who had been attracted by Little Mountain Ecovillage to come and settle in the village. Although they all maintained contact with the ecovillage core team they were not involved in the day to day running of the ecovillage and would participate in ecovillage events as they saw fit. Interviews with new villagers totalled 3, however one of these interviews was a group interview, by request, of four 'new villages' (one who had been previously been interviewed independently and had introduced me to the others). The third group was composed of 'old villagers' (老村民) – those who had lived in the village before Little Mountain Ecovillage was set up. These totalled 4 interviews. Finally, there were two interviews with people who had come to the ecovillage summer camp to teach and learn about ecovillages and philosophy.

Estimates by my interviewees of the number of 'core' and 'new' villagers in the village ranged from 40 (LMC02) to 50 (LMC01, LMC03)[157] and old villagers from 30-40 (LMC01).[158] This way of conceptualising the people within the village came from one of my interviewees (LMC01)[159] who put forward the concept of three concentric circles, as this interviewee was from the 'core' ecovillage management group they placed that group at the centre:

[157] LMC03 estimated the 'core' group on their own numbered around 17 not including children.
[158] In the past it was estimated that this village contained around 600 residents (LMC03).
[159] LMC02 and LMC03 also referred to this concentric circle idea and most interviewees used the terminology of 'new' and 'old' villagers.

Figure 4. Core, New and Old Villagers;



This representation is useful to understand where each interviewee stood in relation to the ecovillage organisation and will be used to reference quotes and ideas from each interview. The interview abbreviations denote whether the interviewee is from the 'core' (i.e. LM*C*01-LM*C*03), 'new villager' (LM*NV*01-LM*NV*03), 'old villager' (LM*OV*01-LM*OV*04) or the 'summer camp' (LM*SC*01-LM*SC*02) group. Interviews ranged from 23 minutes to two and a half hours for the group interview. The total length of the interviews at Little Mountain was over 11 hours. Interviews were transcribed by my research assistant, a second assistant in the UK, and translated by me. They were analysed with the help of NVivo software. The gender composition of the old villager interviewees was three male and two female (one interview involved two interviewees, a male and female), for the core group was two female and one male and the new villager group was two female and a group interview with three females and one male (one of the females had already been interviewed as a sole interviewee). Although ages were not specifically asked the 'old villagers' were predictably older, however the sole female interviewee in this group was of similar age to the interviewees in the other groups.

All interviewees were given an information sheet in which I introduced myself and my project and request for oral consent to interviews, as well as consent to be recorded. Sampling used a snowball method as people would introduce others that may be interested in being interviewed, as well as simply meeting 'old villagers' around the village and asking them if they wanted to be interviewed. As such the interviews may not be fully representative in a statistical sense although as the inhabitants of the village number less than 100, the ten interviews (not including the two summer camp interviews) with villagers (and 13 interviewees) is a relatively good and, I feel, representative sample. The two outside interviewees were used for added context and understanding. The majority of people approached, both 'new' and 'old' villagers, were happy to be interviewed. All interviews were of a semi-structured nature, with a list of relatively open questions used as a guide for the interviews.[160] Of course, other informal conversations and participant-observation inform my general analysis of Little Mountain, as well as the ecovillage's online posts. Analysis was also informed by extensive research notes. Due to the sensitive nature of this material, I have anonymised both the names and locations of the ecovillages, as well as the identities of my informants. [161] Generally anonymity was not an important issue for my interviewees and all interviews seemed relatively open and unafraid to speak their minds.

Little Mountain Ecovillage was founded in 2015. Interviewee LMC02 described the term ecovillage ('生态村') as a relatively accurate description of Little Mountain[162] and the ecovillage has links to the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN). It is registered as a company rather than an NGO. LMC02 stated that registering as a company ('公司') avoided problems and meant the ecovillage was on a more equal ('平等') footing with the other organisations in the village. In setting up the ecovillage, the support of the then village mayor was emphasised (LMC01).[163] The ecovillage was provided with some local government funding to build a small number of structures

[160] See section A.8 of the appendix.
[161] In some cases when interviewees mention sensitive issues regarding the government I will not reference the anonymised interview code either.
[162] LMC03 agreed the organisation should be described as an ecovillage.
[163] The difficulty when the local government team were changed was also mentioned.

to support the ecovillage project and the local community. However the aim of the ecovillage is to use educational camps as a social enterprise (‘社会企业’) to make the ecovillage financially sustainable (LMC02).

The following section will be divided into three parts in order to analyse the ecovillages in terms consistent with those found in Polanyi’s own work; Conscious and Immediate Relationship of Persons, Capitalism and Socialism, and Freedom in a Complex Society. These headings represent important themes in Polanyi’s work that accord with the characteristics that I argue he would ascribe to progressive conscious movements. Retrogressive ideas will also be included as moments of potential ‘unconsciousness’ in Polanyian terms. I will also interrogate some of the conflicts I uncovered within the villages as these hold important kernels of information about the possible contradictions between the values presented and their actualisation. When analysing the ecovillage the ‘core’ and ‘new villager’ opinions will be primary, whereas ‘old villagers’ opinions will be used to bring a wider understanding of the ecovillage within the general village administrative zone.

Conscious and Immediate Relationship of Persons.

As I argue in previous chapters, Polanyi’s hope of a conscious transcendence of the self-regulating market is based on an expansion of social consciousness, akin to a ‘brotherhood of man’, in which all people are respected as if they were uniquely valuable. Although the idea of a brotherhood of man comes from Christian traditions and the idea that every human has a soul, Polanyi’s aim in *The Great Transformation* is to construct a foundation from which society is able to consciously transcend Christian thought. He aims to keep the understanding of the importance of the individual while synthesising it with a broader understanding of society as a whole. For a group to be classified as a type of conscious Polanyian movement embracing the idea of a shared brother- and sister-hood of humanity is an important factor. In my NVivo transcription analysis of the ecovillages this concept was coded as ‘world loyalty’. The term ‘world loyalty’ came from interviewee LMSC01 who was an overseas academic invited to the ecovillage to give talks in the summer camp about philosophy. LMSC01 stated that the people in this ecovillage believed in the

idea of being loyal to something on a world scale and put forward both an idea of 'earth loyalty' and 'world loyalty'.

Interview question three directly asked interviewees[164] what they understood to be the core values of the ecovillage ('生态村的核心价值观'). LMC02 mentioned five key words; love ('大爱'), sustainability ('可持续'), alliance or union ('联盟'), education ('教育'), and grassroots ('草根'). The concept of '大爱' (which can be translated as 'large' or 'deep' love) was explained to be love for all life, including human, animal and plant life. LMC01 also mentioned there were five words that had been agreed upon although could not recall them. The idea of '大爱' seems to represent a similar idea as that of a conscious and immediate relationship of persons – embracing all humans as equal in their uniqueness. However it seems to go further than a humanist Christian socialist idea articulated by Polanyi, to include a deeper respect for animal and plant life. Here, one source of the idea of love for all and therefore a type of 'world loyalty' comes from Daoist traditions.[165]

When asked about ecovillage influences,[166] for example, LMC01 stated that they do not follow any religions but Daoism and Buddhism were 'strong' traditional cultural influences. Buddhism and Daoism was emphasised by LMC03 when asked about spiritual dimensions ('精神的层面'). LMC02 presented a list of ecovillage influences including Heidegger, Nietzsche, Whitehead and Gandhi, as well as Laozi[167] and Confucius. This list of influences, which go beyond Chinese cultural traditions, also points to a form of 'world loyalty' present in the ecovillage. However, in general, Daoism and Buddhism were the most mentioned influences. All 'core' interviews as well as LMSC01 and LMNV03 mentioned both Daoism and Buddhism, LMSC02 mentioned Buddhism as well as the Yi Jing ('易经').[168] Within the interviews Daoism was mentioned most often. It is of

[164] Not all interviewees were asked every question. Depending on previous answers or position in relation to the ecovillage questions varied although generally conformed to the questions in appendix section A.8.
[165] This was most clearly represented by LMC03 in which the importance of Daoism was that it represented 'heaven, earth and all living things' ('天地万物').
[166] If the interviewee asked to clarify what type of influences I asked if there were individuals, philosophers, philosophies or religious ideas which influenced the ecovillage.
[167] Laozi a primary philosopher of Daoism.
[168] One of the main classics for Daoist and Confucian philosophies.

course of little surprise that Chinese ecovillages would be influenced by long standing Chinese traditions. Many ecovillages around the world are also influenced by these traditions. However, Confucianism was conspicuous in its almost complete absence. Only LMC02 mentioned Confucius in a list of influences. I will come back to this point later.

One interviewee put forward a potential argument as to why Daoism may have been mentioned more often than other sources of influence. Firstly this interviewee stated that in general the ecovillage does not 'magnify' ('放大') these aspects because the ecovillage 'has to communicate with government' ('因为要跟政府做交流'). However Daoism is not as much of a problem because it is 'native' ('本土') whereas Buddhism is more 'sensitive' ('敏感').

Capitalism and Socialism.

As presented previously, the Chinese state can be argued to be a state-capitalist project. Part of its legitimacy is entwined with economic growth and modernity within a global capitalist order. Just as 'world loyalty' may clash with a state-led nationalism – both able to be informed by the same cultural traditions – the interplay between capitalism, socialism and cultural traditions has the potential to create contradictions between the ecovillage communities and local officials, and potentially cause further fissures. Therefore the narratives on capitalism and socialism, internal to these ecovillages, are of particular interest in the context of their identification as conscious Polanyian movements.

One question asked directly whether 'non-market ' ('非市场化') or 'non-commercial' ('非商业化') ideas were important to the ecovillage; however, many sections of the interviews touched on these issues. Generally there was not a total rejection of market economics or profits. LMC02 explained that the economy is necessary for their needs ('经济只是我们比较正常的一种生存的生活的一种需要') and that they were adopting the social enterprise model to make money in order to be sustainable ('去采用社会企业的做法去盈利，来让这个团队可持续'). However this was coupled with the argument that the ecovillage was not set up for commercial reasons and that they do not pursue economic interests too much as this would negatively influence their personal

‘*quality*’ (‘质量’).[169] This idea of personal quality was linked with the term *suzhi* (素质) by the interviewee who stated, a few sentences prior to this, that people with good ‘ecological philosophy’(‘生态理念’) have high *suzhi* (‘素质很高’). *Suzhi* is a government discourse (Murphy 2004), that can be literally translated as ‘“essentialized quality”’ (*Ibid*, p.2). It ‘…is an amorphous concept that refers to the innate and nurtured physical, intellectual and ideological characteristics of a person’ (*Ibid*). It is used to reinforce ‘…systems of valuation already embedded within Chinese development discourse’ including the backwardness of the rural and the positive value of modernisation and wealth (*Ibid*, p.3). However in this interview *suzhi* or ‘quality’ was used to criticise those who pursue profits. This may be seen, to an extent, as inverting the *suzhi* discourse to give it new meaning implicitly criticising hegemonic Chinese development discourse. The use of state vocabulary and the attempt to imbue it with new meaning will be returned to later in this chapter.

Interview LMC01 was decisive in the answer that non-market ideas and non-commercial ideas were important to this ecovillage. Both LMC01 and LMC02 gave the example of the village canteen that was set up by the ecovillage. Here LMC01 stated that because the ‘whole community’ can go to the canteen to eat ‘three meals a day’ with ‘no need to pay’ this demonstrated non-market norms in practice. Another example put forward by LMC01 was the decentralisation in work tasks and lack of a work hierarchy.

The group interview of ‘new villagers’ brought out further interesting conceptual arguments regarding commodification. When asked whether mainstream problems (‘主流社会问题’) attracted them to come to the ecovillage one interviewee stated that mainstream society has a problem in that most people can’t escape material desires (‘对物质的欲望里面出不来’). A second interviewee agreed and argued that everything they had done before was based on endless selfish desires (‘觉得以前的所有事情，真的像她说的那种，那种无穷无尽自私的欲望去支持的这些

[169] ‘We will not pursue [economic profit] too much, as it will affect our quality’ (‘我们不会过多地去追求它, 它会影响我们的质量’).

事情'). I enquired as to whether they believed this was a market or capitalist phenomenon. One stated yes, capitalism can be considered to magnify this situation ('是。我觉得资本主义是属于放大这个事情'), serendipitously echoing Polanyi's argument that the problem of 'market society' is that 'its economy was based on self-interest'(Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.257). Another interviewee agreed and placed the problem in the context of humanity separating themselves from nature ('人类脱离了自然'). This could be seen, in Polanyian terms, as the market disembedding society from nature through its commodification. This interviewee further argued that the city and type of work there alienates people from nature and leaving the city and going back to the land means people will start to be in awe of the world again ('我们会更加敬畏天地'). People will cherish food ('珍惜食物') and everyday things ('们日常使用的所有东西我们都会珍惜'). This is in contrast to the city in which things come directly to us without thought ('直接来到我们面前的,我们就会不加以思考') meaning that when this interviewee lived in a tier one city they were adept at buying, buying, buying ('特别能买买买'), however this did not bring them meaningful pleasure ('但是并不能从里面得到乐趣'). This shows a critique of commodification and unconscious consumption, similar to Polanyi's own, as well as a yearning for more connection with the land and nature.

These themes were further emphasised by the third interviewee, who argued that everyone is controlled by consumerism ('大家已经被消费主义控制了') and that consumerism is a part of the development of capitalism ('消费主义是资本主义的一个发展中的某个部位表现出来的东西'). However, they also argued that it may not be a direct relationship ('不是直接的'), and that the main problem is that people no longer have belief ('我们没有信仰了'). In the agricultural period, people believed in heaven, earth and nature ('我们在农耕时代我们是信仰天、地、自然') but then maybe politics emerged, and business started to take control ('后来可能政治出现了, 可能商业开始控制了'). However, the fourth interviewee's opinion differed slightly, arguing that commercialism and 'moneyism' ('金钱主义') has both good and bad aspects. The good aspects are

admirable (‘推崇’) and can be combined with traditions (‘我们结合了我们的传统’). In this way, this interviewee argued that where they grew up, the ‘force’ of capitalism and the money of capitalism can be combined to help restore the environment (‘和资本主义的力量结合，和资本主义的钱来结合，那么他们可以帮助生态恢复’). However the most important aspect is to restore local beliefs (‘我觉得恢复本土信仰是最重要的’).

This section of discussion can be used to argue Polanyi’s theory of the double movement ‘goes all the way down’.[170] The double movement is not merely a macro level social phenomenon played out in politics and economics as in *TGT*, but also an individual phenomenon played out in philosophical or spiritual terms.[171] There exists a battle between personal material gain that can be achieved in a capitalist market, and human need to feel that life is more than individual gain, as well as a desire to feel that we belong to something more than an unconscious market mechanism. Generally these interviewees aim to transcend ‘thoughtless’ consumerism and to link themselves with something more universal, based on millennia-old traditional thought and a reverence of nature. The opinions expressed suggest that society ought to re-embed itself into social traditions. This thought process, in Polanyian terms, then has two possibilities – a regressive, local protectionist outcome or alternatively a Polanyian consciousness, that to protect ‘man and nature’ on a mountain in China, one must protect man and nature in every place on earth. While I argue this ecovillage generally conforms to what I describe as ‘world loyalty’, showing it to be a conscious Polanyian movement, a few aspects of ‘regressive’ thought were also displayed. In most

[170] This idea that two sides of human consciousness can be in an internal struggle within the individual comes from Polanyi’s (1927) argument that the consciousness of the consumer and producer can play out within the individual: ‘For each person is indeed at once consumer and producer. Here there is no longer a market outside of the consciousness of those present, no market factors, no supply, no demand – all of that plays out within each individual. The two sides of his own existence, the consumer and the producer, are confronting each other eye to eye here, within his own consciousness’ (Loc.1044). Further see Appendix 2 (1927) in which Polanyi argues ‘we all stand’ in a ‘double relation’ in which ‘the active part of our consciousness is able to connect to the active part of the consciousness of other people, and our suffering part with the corresponding part of the consciousness of others. The result is the monstrous concept of two humanities…of an egotistically active humanity that limits the other helplessly passive humanity in its freedom and pushes it into misfortune – without the ability of the theoretical knowledge to counteract against this semblance, that what is involved here is just two directions of intent of one and the same humanity’ (Loc.1154-1161).

[171] This idea is expanded upon in section A.1 of the appendix.

contexts, these few examples would be generally dismissible as outliers; however, in a Chinese context, in which one interviewee described that the Chinese government is more receptive of Daoism than Buddhism because it is 'native', and the government is argued to be promoting native religions for 'populist' (Johnson 2019) reasons, a careful look at the potential tropes of a Polanyian 'unconsciousness' are worthwhile. An integration of capitalism and native traditions posited above could be seen as one example, but a clearer example was presented by a different interview.

This interviewee argued that the countryside is the spiritual home of the Chinese people ('乡村也是我们的一个精神家园') ('乡村的空间更容易寄放中国人的一颗心吧'). This is because China has thousands of years of rural history and therefore Chinese culture is contained within the rural ('里面蕴含了我们的文化'). Furthermore, this rural culture therefore becomes part of Chinese people's genetic makeup ('也成了我们的基因') so Chinese people are naturally genetically pre-disposed to the countryside ('所以中国人天然地对大自然，对田园，对耕作有基因的'). This is within a context of Chinese culture being an 'antidote' ('解药') to 'global Americanization' ('全球美国化') which is 'constant consumption' ('就是不断消费'). This theme arises again in the context of the hope for a new civilization ('希望有一次新的文明出现') an 'ecological civilization' ('生态文明') which is different from the industrial civilisation of Europe and the United States. This western culture comes from Greek culture of the city-state ('西方的特别很多从希腊的文化过来的, 他都是城邦') which leads to the western emphasises on contractual 'spirit' ('西方人的契约精神是很强').[172] When China faced this contractual society and urbanisation ('中国面对这种契约社会、面对城市化') it was at a type of cultural disadvantage ('一种文化的劣势') because the 'blood' did not possess such a thing ('血液里都不具备这种东西'). This demonstrates Polanyi's argument of the 'natural' inclination of society to re-embed itself within its cultural context. It also demonstrates the possibility that this embedding can essentialise race and

[172] Polanyi (2001 [1944]) is also critical 'of a market view of society which equated economics with contractual relations with freedom' (p.266).

lead to retrogressive nativist outcomes. Embedding, for Polanyi, does of course also have progressive potential if synthesised with a broader human or world consciousness. This interview demonstrates the argument that the double movement 'goes all the way down' as there is a battle between the ideas of 'world loyalty' and retrogressive nativism. The critiques of capitalist modernisation based on urbanisation, industrialisation and consumerism, can become a critique of 'the west' and an essentialisation of the superiority of Chinese traditional culture and genetic make-up. Despite the potential problematic racialised distinctions, the general narrative of this ecovillage is one of a conscious Polanyian movement and 'world loyalty'.

A further demonstration of the progressive nature of this ecovillage, in Polanyian terms, is of its Marxist and socialist leanings. As Polanyi believes a transcendence of the self-regulating market would lead to socialism, to describe the ecovillage as a conscious Polanyian movement, elements of socialist thought ought to be present. While Marxism and socialism were not the strongest themes that emerged in the interviews (outweighed heavily by Daoist and Buddhist references) this ecovillage engaged with 'Organic Marxism' through a conference I attended on my first visit. LMC02 explained that Organic Marxism is a school of thought that combines Marxism and Organic Philosophy ('有机哲学'), this interviewee hoped that the Chinese government may adopt Organic Marxism as original Marxism was not 'organic' enough ('原来的马克思主义不够有机'). The responses of LMSC02 contained the most Marxist references. This interviewee said that Marxism was a personal influence, especially with respect to ideas like alienation ('异化'). The argument here was that people had lost what it meant to be human ('我已经失去了做人的一个标准') and have become tools ('人已经不是人，只是一个工具了'). This clearly echoes Polanyi's argument that the self-regulating market commodifies labour with negative consequences for society. The interviewee continued arguing the capitalists are also in this bad social system ('actually capitalists 也在 这个不好的社会制度') as the small capitalists are eaten by the large ones and therefore also 'suffer'. This interviewee posited the rhetorical question: why would we continue this system if everyone is suffering ('all people are suffering, why we 我们为啥还要去

continue?').[173] This interviewee further argued that socialism and communism must be 'eco' or they are not truly socialist or communist (必须是 eco 的, 否则它就不是 socialism or communism') arguing Marx was against big cities ('马克思是非常反对城市的大城市').[174] LMSC02 also put forward the importance of Marx's idea on freedom ('自由') and liberation ('解放') in order for an 'eco' future.

Freedom in a Complex Society.

Freedom was an important theme within the interviews at Little Mountain. For Polanyi, freedom in a complex industrial society is particularly important to his work (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.265). The definition he uses in his essay *On Freedom* of 'socialist' freedom is one in which acting 'means acting while conscious of the responsibility we bear for our part in mutual human relationships' (1927, Loc.780).[175]

As previously described, the ecovillage has a strong narrative of 'world loyalty' – potentially, in Polanyian terms, the discovery of society on a world scale. However, the interviews also revealed the specific importance of freedom. For example, one respondent argued that the important thing people need now is 'free will' ('我认为我们现在需要的是什么, 我认为是自由意志') or the attainment of freedom ('我们希望得到我们的自由'), specifically in reference to the freedom to have faith or not ('我有信仰的自由也有不信仰的自由'). Further, to hold whatever belief or otherwise one should be free from interference ('不要有人来干涉我'), which seems to suggest that living in the ecovillage is a hope to expand this form of freedom.

[173] This points to a Polanyian argument that even capitalists will eventually become conscious of the destructive social consequences of the self-regulating market and aim to transcend it. It also has resonances with Polanyi's (1927) argument that 'The capitalist is just as powerless in the face of the laws of competition as the workers are' (Loc.643).
[174] The reasoning behind this seemed to be Foster's (1999) argument on the metabolic rift within Marx's work.
[175] Polanyi (2001 [1944]) argues to attain peace and freedom 'we will have consciously to strive for them… they must become chosen aims of the societies toward which we are moving' (p.263) and 'personal liberty…will exist to the degree in which we will deliberately create new safeguards for its maintenance and, indeed, extension' (*Ibid*). This seems highly relevant to the ecovillages and their aim to expand personal freedoms.

Conflicts.

As this ecovillage was situated within an existing village, I was interested in understanding the old villagers' opinions on Little Mountain Ecovillage. In general the three older male interviewees (LMOV02,[176] 03 & 04) had a generally negative opinion of Little Mountain, whereas the younger female interviewee (LMOV01) had a more balanced view. However, negative points did not just originate from the 'old villagers'; some 'new villagers' also expressed concerns about how the ecovillage was interacting with the old village and some of the consequences of this interaction.

One of the key concerns the old villagers had was the low harvest that the ecovillage was producing through avoiding the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides (LMOV04, LMOV02). One of the interviewees in LMOV02 stated simply that organic agriculture without adding pesticides and fertiliser will mean plants will not grow ('有机农业，又不放农药，又不放肥料。种不起来的呀'). The other interviewee agreed, arguing that organic agriculture can only produce 30, 40 or 50% of the yields, and argued this amount of food is not enough as China had a population of 1.3 or 1.4 billion. LMOV04 stated that he tried to grow without using pesticides but there were too many insects therefore he returned to applying pesticides ('回去打农药'). LMOV03 also criticised the growing practices of the ecovillage, stating that the plants they grew were very small and the weeds were taking over. These criticisms were not confined to the older villagers, the younger 'old villager' (LMOV01) also said the ecovillage did not manage the growing well and that grass was spreading everywhere ('他们种下去就不会去管理，都是那个草里面'). The group interview of 'new villagers' (LMNV03) also raised the point that Little Mountain had very limited success in growing.

LMOV04 did concede that chemical farming inputs were causing illness ('现在呢我们的毛病[病] 很多。主要原因跟农业化肥有关。这个确实是'). However this was weighed up against the fact that the Chinese medical system is more developed now ('但是现在呢我们国家的医学科学

[176] LMOV02 was a joint interview with one male and one female.

发达'), presumably meaning treatment was possible. LMOV02 also admitted agricultural inputs ('化肥农药') were bad for health but argued there was no other way ('但是没有办法的') stating that if there was not enough grain to eat, then what ('谷物如果不够吃怎么办')? LMOV02 further pointed out that many people died during the Cultural Revolution[177] because there was not enough to eat.

This conflict has interesting dimensions. The old villagers presented arguments embedding themselves as farmers within China's historical and current situation, as people feeding the growing population to avoid a return to more difficult times.[178] By contrast, 'core' ecovillage members generally embedded themselves in a larger global context that presents their actions as necessary to protect the local and global environment.

A second conflict demonstrated a lack of trust from the 'old villagers' towards the ecovillage. This was the argument that the ecovillage was part of a pyramid scheme ('传销'). Both interviewees in LMOV02 believed Little Mountain was engaged in this ('这个人实际上就是传销呀') and mentioned the case of Zhang Tianming who was arrested and charged in Hunan province for operating a pyramid scheme there (Teng, 2018). For these two interviewees this case was connected to Little Mountain as Zhang Tianming was also involved in promoting organic vegetable growing. LMOV01 explained that a significant number of 'old villagers' believed these rumours because they did not understand where Little Mountain's money was coming from. However she did not believe it and actively tried to counter these rumours. None of the 'new villagers' mentioned anything to do with a pyramid scheme and presumably they would have been the alleged target for the 'core' members. Beyond demonstrating a lack of trust between the ecovillage and 'old villagers', these rumours may also suggest a wider distrust of urban people

[177] Although this may have actually been referring to The Great Leap Forward.
[178] LMOV04 within the context of not using chemical inputs stated that in the past when they were not used the economic condition of the peasant was poor, suggesting a worry of a return to that situation.

coming to the countryside to allegedly help the local people.[179] It also links to a further conflict that was present in the village I investigated.

Most of the conflicts I came across involved the 'old villagers' complaining about Little Mountain ecovillage;[180] however, there was a separate conflict which demonstrates a potential clash of values between the 'core' and 'new villagers' ideology, and the general hegemonic discourse present in China of capital accumulation. When I first went to Little Mountain in 2017 the ecovillage had only recently been set up. I encountered narratives that criticised globalisation and the rush for profit at the expense of traditional values. On my return in 2018 I was therefore surprised to find that a luxury hotel had been built in the village.

For LMC01 the new hotel was connected with the change in the village government. This interviewee argued that they had a good relationship with the old local government but when it changed, the goals of the local government also changed. LMC01 stated the new officials may have 'old thought' and prefer 'some big money' to invest in 'business development'. This interviewee stated that 'we [the ecovillage] don't think this [the hotel] is a good thing because it is not eco' and argued that the ecovillage had signed a contract with local government that meant they could check any investments coming in, but that this agreement was ignored. The 'new villager' group interview further demonstrated the ideological clash. One of the interviewees stated the price of this hotel was excessive ('我觉得太离谱了') and that the people that build an ecovillage are those who want to live a simple and comfortable ('简单安逸') life without being disturbed so the hotel was not good ('现在这个酒店我觉得都不好'). Small local hotels ('小的民俗'), with reasonable prices ('价格适中') on the other hand are welcome ('这种还是欢迎的'). Another interviewee stated that if these kind of projects increased in the village it would be

[179] This was suggested in Zuo (2019) in which urban returnees were said to be suspected of operating a pyramid scheme by local villagers.
[180] Apart from the ones already mentioned one 'old villager' was angry that Little Mountain had changed the name of the village in the minds of visitors from the original name of the village to the ecovillage name. Further, this villager was not happy that Little Mountain was using the water resources that the old villagers had paid to build many years ago. Other villagers complained that the ecovillage was making a mess of the old footpath below one of the buildings they were using.

insufferable (‘惹不起’) and they would move to another place. LMNV02 agreed it was not good as it could make the village more touristy.

The ‘old villagers’ had varying opinions. One of the interviewees in LMOV02 blamed Little Mountain for inviting the hotel to come to the village although LMC01 & LMC02 stated they had not had any say in the matter. LMOV01 on the other hand wanted Little Mountain to attract a ‘big boss’ (‘大老板’) to invest in the village or at least some ‘new villagers’, so that the village might then become prosperous (‘我们村里能旺起来’). This hotel would mean that the people who work there may be able to stay in the village, with their families and save some money. However LMOV01 stated that in the end there are not many jobs at the hotel (‘工作岗位毕竟也要不了多少人啊’) and if there were many of these hotels, it could destroy the environment. According to this interviewee, this, however, was something for the government to consider, adding that ‘we are small people, what do we know?’ (‘我们是小喽啰，我们懂什么事情啊?’).

Clearly, the latent ideological contrast between the ecovillage and the new local government officials in terms of how to invest in the village and to what ends, portends potential conflicts in the future. It also potentially highlights the differences between the belief of ‘old villagers’ and the ecovillage about who should be in control of those decisions. The ecovillage clearly believes that they should have some say in the future construction of the village as a whole, whereas LMOV01 believes important decisions should be left up to the government. This has the potential to generate discord in the future.[181]

4.4 Rolling Fields Ecovillage.

Rolling Fields Ecovillage[182] was set up in 2014 in an area that was not previously a village. Therefore, in Rolling Fields there was no ‘old villager’ ‘new villager’ dynamic. The ecovillage infrastructure development was supported financially by the local government and the ecovillage is

[181] Interviewees in LMOV02 had already started to question what right the ecovillage had to take charge of certain decisions in the village.
[182] As with Little Mountain, Rolling Fields also used the term ecovillage (生态村) to describe their community.

also supported by an organisation that aims to promote traditional values. The main influence in this village was Dao De Jing (道德经) a classical Chinese text written by Laozi (老子), and a foundational text of Daoism.

The ecovillage was made up of around 30-40 permanent members and connected to a second location nearby, which was a Dao De Jing study centre with around 1000 students. The ecovillage was also connected to other study centres and cultural heritage communities across the country and members sometimes moved to other locations to gain or share experience. The ecovillage had what I will call a 'spiritual leader', a Buddhist master who travelled extensively within and outside of mainland China giving lectures and writing books on Dao De Jing. In the open interview he argued that the reason ecovillages should be 'vigorously' promoted is to solve many kinds of serious human crises ('为什么要大力推广生态村，是要化解人类的种种重大危机啊'). He further argued that increasingly severe crises, especially due to global warming and other human influences on the environment, will mean that the collective consciousness of humanity ('人类的集体意识') will eventually see that current global policies, specifically capitalist policies, are wrong and need to change.

I first visited Rolling Fields in May 2018 for 6 days. For these 6 days I was accompanied by a translator provided by the ecovillage. I then returned in July for 14 days, for the first 5 days I was accompanied by the same research assistant I had employed in the previous ecovillage. We conducted 20 interviews in total, of which 11 have been analysed.[183] I further conducted a one-hour open interview with the spiritual leader in May and attended a small talk by him that were both recorded by the ecovillage and given to me to translate and analyse.[184] The interviewees ranged in ages from people who had recently graduated from university[185] to those at retirement age. The relatively youthful makeup of the ecovillage was proudly pointed out to me by members.

[183] This was due to the 11 interviews already providing a sufficient level of data saturation.
[184] Almost all the talks by the spiritual leader I attended were recorded by the ecovillage team, the recording of my open interview was therefore not a personal special request.
[185] Although not all of the younger interviewees had been to university.

Participants' previous lives were relatively diverse, and the residents included a retired nurse, a teacher who had quit their job, a young farmer who previously immigrated to the city for manual work and recent university graduates. All interviewees were given an information sheet about my research and asked to give oral consent for the interview and the recording. My analysis is also informed by reading a book on Dao De Jing written by the spiritual leader, as well as watching a number of videos of his teachings.[186] Analysis further includes participant observation and informal conversations. The majority of the interviewees will be abbreviated in a similar way as the previous ecovillage (i.e. RH01-RH11), although the open interview will be directly referenced.

Conscious and Immediate Relationship of Persons.

One of the recurring themes of this ecovillage was the concept of the unity of heaven and humanity ("天人合一").[187] This concept argues that humanity is an integral part of nature and that we are all intimately connected with each other and the world as a whole. In the ecovillage this was often connected to the idea of harmony between all people and harmony between people and nature ('使人与人之间是一种和谐，人与大自然很和谐').[188] A similar concept that was prevalent was the idea of a 'community of life' ('生命共同体').[189] In the open interview with the spiritual leader this concept was connected to the idea that all people and all countries were one family ('我们所有的人民，所有的国家，我们都是一家人').[190] This ecovillage, influenced by Laozi and the Dao De Jing, maintained that we are also intimately connected to all life on earth and even to the whole universe.[191]

The idea of a 'brotherhood of man' is also fostered through the multi-faith ideas present within the ecovillage. The spiritual leader of the village believes Dao can unite Buddhist, Christian, Islamic

[186] References on request.
[187] For example RH03, RH04, RH07, RH08.
[188] RH07
[189] This concept was also cited in RH04, RH08, RH10, RH11.
[190] Similarly the idea of a conscious and immediate relationship of persons was conveyed in the open interview through the idea that all the world's resources belong to all humanity collectively ('地球的资源是属于我们全人类所共有').
[191] As RH06 describes after studying Dao De Jing they see themselves from the point of view of the whole of the universe ('我们是从整个宇宙来看自己').

and Confucian concepts and teaching.[192] This was explained to me in an informal conversation with members of the ecovillage as people like Jesus, Confucius and Siddhattha Gotama (Buddha) having gained a high level of understanding of the world and grasped Dao.[193] Others such as Gandhi and Mother Teresa were mentioned as those that had also gained a good understanding of the world, although not to the level of those previously listed. The uniting of major world religions was a theme in all three of the ecovillages I analyse. In Little Mountain this theme was less explicit than in the Rolling Hills and 1000 Lives ecovillages, although elements were still present. I argue this multi-faith idea can be seen as aiming to create a global 'brotherhood of man' similar to Polanyi's aim based on Christian understanding. Potentially, the ecovillages aim to unite religious teachings in order to unite humanity. However there is a second potential for this uniting to take a regressive turn by subsuming world religions and cultures under the native Chinese tradition of Daoism. While ecovillage members are unlikely to be actively aiming for this, a nationalist state with the aim to strengthen its ideological legitimacy could harness these ideas to further its own agenda. An ideology that argues ancient Chinese thinkers were at the forefront of all major philosophical thought could help create an ideology of Chinese exceptionalism that may legitimate cultural domination.

Capitalism and Socialism.

The clearest articulation of the ideological position of capitalism and socialism within the general ideology of Rolling Fields Ecovillage was expressed in a video by the spiritual leader the community watched together one evening.[194] In this video the spiritual leader stated that capitalism ('资本主义') was one of the four phenomena that have seriously devastated the whole world ('这种四大现象把整个地球蹂躏地非常严重').[195] However, what world society was moving towards was high level spiritual socialism ('这个世界这个社会它就会逐渐地实践出高心灵的社会主义'), which would entail a world where everyone would share, thrive together and co-exist ('一种

[192] Reference on request.
[193] Initially Muhammad was not mentioned, this is expanded upon below.
[194] I asked for and was given a copy of this video to analyse. Reference on request.
[195] The other three were industry (工业), economics (经济) and technology (科技).

世界大家共享共荣共存') – a truly harmonious society ('这个社会才会真正的和谐'). Further to this, in the open interview with the spiritual leader he argued that the British Industrial Revolution was the beginning of the major problems society is now experiencing. After the invention of the steam engine ('发明了蒸汽机之后'), which drove a global industrial revolution, capitalism combined with industrial economics ('然后资本主义跟工业经济结合起来') and the world began to pursue economic growth ('然后追求经济成长'). Because of the emphasis on the privatisation of resources ('强调资源私有化'), large corporations developed. These corporations' only concern is making money, and governments[196] supported this as the money being made could help government policies. This meant that government and corporate interests were combined and everybody put economic growth and profits as the most important consideration ('政府跟财团利益结合，然后大家把经济成长、利益成长挂在最重要的位置') with detrimental consequences for the environment and ecology. The solution again was 'real' socialism or a 'so called communist system' ('真正社会主义还有所谓的共产制度') not based on strict planning ('严格规划') but based on spiritual awakening ('心灵的觉醒').

Some of these arguments are similar to Polanyi's position.[197] The critique of capitalism and the transcendence of it in Polanyi's work is also steeped in religious/spiritual[198] undertones – although this is often neglected by contemporary scholarship on his work. However, the question that arises here is whether the ecovillage is co-opting socialism or 'wearing a beautiful cloak' of socialism in order to disguise the spiritual/religious messages that would likely subject them to higher levels of scrutiny, if not direct intervention and repression, from local Party-state officials.

[196] This process was centred on a critique of the 'west' as China was said to be socialist or communist.
[197] As argued in Chapter 1 Polanyi believes the invention of 'the machine' was one factor which led to the privatisation of land, money and labour and the creation of the self-regulating market in order for the machine to be able to be efficiently utilised and profits to be made (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.81). This privatisation then expanded into more and more aspects of society clashing with societal values and undermining the wellbeing of all humans including their relationship with nature.
[198] As Rotstein (1990) argues: 'For Polanyi, man was essentially a religious being, a term that should be understood in a very broad sense. He saw it as central to man's nature to invest the world with meaning and to locate his own person and the import of his life within such a universe' (p.99).

Either way, I argue that the spiritual socialism expressed by the spiritual leader in this ecovillage demonstrates this ecovillage to be a conscious Polanyian movement, and can be seen as a potential challenge to Chinese authorities. Although the spiritual leader separates China from his criticism by arguing it is socialist or communist, the process of pursuing economic growth and the combining of the interests of government and corporations is as clear in China as anywhere in the world – as is the detrimental effect this has had on the global and local environment. Even if one would separate the Chinese system from the general critique laid out and describe it as socialist, it is difficult to see it as a spiritual socialist project.[199] The challenge to the Chinese state is further demonstrated by the three other phenomenon that are devastating the world according to the video by the spiritual leader – industry ('工业'), economics ('经济') and technology ('科技'). These three seem to be core to China's current and future legitimation – economic growth created by high tech industrial output.

My argument here is that because Chinese legitimation strategy is contradictory – both socialist theory and capitalist expansionary growth based on cheap labour and global markets, it creates a fissure in which 'radical' ideas are able to be articulated. 'Radical' movements are able to co-opt parts of the legitimation strategy of the state while aiming to actually change the very meaning of the words the state uses to legitimate itself. This is very similar to how the state has been argued to co-opt civil society (Fu 2017, p.500). However in this iterative process society aims to co-opt parts of state vocabulary and re-define the meaning of that vocabulary. Shue (2004) describes this process as being:

> '…embedded in the very logic of legitimation advanced by a system of domination we can find the grammar that may be used most effectively by citizens and subjects in making statements in opposition and in resistance to that system' (p.28).

It is the capitalist/socialist contradiction contained within China's legitimation process that makes the criticism of the market by ecovillages difficult for authorities to challenge. If it is to be

[199] Although the Chinese authorities seem to be using Daoism to promote the project of ecological civilization (Schönfeld & Chen 2019). Brown & Brzia-erenkova (2018) also argue that Xi's interpretation of 'spiritual civilization' involves 'spreading "excellent Chinese traditional culture"' as well as core socialist values (p.337).

challenged, authorities are implicitly demonstrating that socialism is no longer an important part of the legitimacy of the regime, undermining their own rhetoric. In the case of the ecovillage it is not 'wearing an elegant cloak' to disguise its true agenda, it is aiming to embroider the cloak with new meaning without taking the cloak off the back of the emperor. In this way it is more like 'playing edge ball' ('擦边球')[200] by trying to move the edge further towards something more aligned with their belief system.[201]

The idea that the ecovillage is related to socialism or communism is demonstrated by interview RH06. This interviewee stated that the construction of the ecovillage has a process, a process similar to communism ('现在过程就像共产主义'). RH06 goes on to explain that communism now is at the socialist stage, starting at the primary stage and slowly moving to the middle stage ('现在共产主义, 社会主义那个阶段，开始是个初级阶段慢慢的到中级'). The ecovillage is the same, slowly moving to an ideal ('生态村也是一样，一个慢慢的构建，然后到达一种理想的'). Interview RH05 further demonstrates the link to communism. When asked what the core values of this ecovillage were, as well as talking about Laozi and the natural law of Dao ('道法自然'), this interviewee also mentioned 'one village, one paradise' ("一村一天堂"). This interviewee stated that when they were younger they were told communism would come to the world ('共产主义，来到那个大同世界'), 'one village, one paradise' was similar ('这个我感觉也是差不多') it just uses different words ('只是用词不一样').

Education is seen by Polanyi as necessary for this kind of move towards socialism. Rolling Hills Ecovillage also engages in education and promoting different writings and aims to be a

[200] The idea of 'playing edge ball' was put forward by one of the Little Mountain Ecovillage interviews. In the context of setting up a school in the ecovillage this interviewee described generally the system in China as playing edge ball. This was explained as 'grey zones' ('是灰色空间'), as long as there is no explicit provocation activities that are not strictly legal won't cause big issues ('你只要不去惹他应该也没什么大事').

[201] Evidence for this is that even the banned group argues for a form of communism, and they have no need to lie about being communist to deflect attention therefore no need to 'wear a beautiful cloak'.

demonstration area. They are creating the world they want to see in order to positively 'infect' others ('感染别人')[202] and 'awaken' ('觉醒')[203] them.

Freedom in a Complex Society.

Freedom was another important issue at Rolling Fields. For example, interviewee RH05 described how in mainstream society everything is done in order to show off and to change the way others see you ('都是在炫耀，我怎么怎么样。是在给别人看，那样的人生'). This interviewee went through this kind of life but became tired of it ('我也经历过，但是活的很累'). Now in the ecovillage they feel free ('现在就觉得活的很自由') as they do not feel judged by others ('就是说我不是活在别人视线里'). This idea was also presented by RH09 stating that city life is oppressive ('压抑'). RH09 believed that in many cases society determines what you do rather than you wanting to do it yourself ('很多是社会上给你的答案就决定了你要做什么，而不是你自己想要做什么'). However, in the ecovillage you can develop freely ('你可以自由发展') you are free ('你是自由的') and do not have to follow other people's ideas ('不是说按照别人的想法来做').

This idea of the ecovillage as a place of freedom contrasts with the reaction of various people I talked to outside of the ecovillage who often mentioned that this ecovillage sounded cultish. One such conversation was with someone who had visited the ecovillage who argued the members unthinkingly follow Dao De Jing. An analysis of whether this ecovillage could be described as a 'cult' is complex and beyond the scope of this project. What is potentially more interesting is the ecovillagers' description of their newfound freedoms and their criticism of the almost cultish mainstream where people unthinkingly follow prevailing views. The importance of the ecovillage then becomes a place for people to experience a different style of life and question their own assumptions. This, I argue, can be seen as a potential threat to the mainstream if, as the

[202] RH04

[203] The idea of awakening ('觉醒') was used continually in the open interview with the spiritual leader (mentioned 12 times) as well as in RH03, RH07 and RH08. It can be seen in similar terms as Polanyi's idea of creating consciousness of global interconnectedness to transcend to something akin to socialism.

ecovillagers are aiming for, more and more people engage with the ideas articulated within the ecovillage and take them outside.

Conflicts.

As this ecovillage was not set within an existing village and therefore had no 'old villagers' or existing village power dynamics there were not the same conflicts present here as Little Mountain Ecovillage. The more interesting conflicts and contradictions at Rolling Fields were those that I saw as potential conflicts with state hegemonic discourse.

One of the main narratives of the village was 'one village one paradise'[204] from chapter 80 of Dao De Jing. This narrative came up in a number of interviews (RH04, RH05, RH06, RH09) as well as in videos and talks by the spiritual leader. In the description of this chapter of Dao De Jing in the book by the spiritual leader the idea of one village one paradise is described as including promoting the idea of a 'self sufficient community (small autonomous region)' with land that 'does not have to be large' and 'need not have a large population'. The size of a village or town is 'ideal'. It would be an exaggeration to suggest that this is a direct swipe at the current Chinese political system that, to a significant degree, seeks to implement more or less uniform policies across diverse locales. Although China has 'autonomous' regions, they are on a scale that is much larger than a village or town and how autonomous they are is questionable. The concept of 'one village, one paradise' has the potential to conflict with hegemonic state discourse.

A further contradiction I encountered was when villagers talked about Xi Jinping and the government. Generally Xi and the central government were praised for promoting traditional culture in both general discussion, for example in interview RH11, and the video courses by the spiritual leader. Again in the video courses and general conversation, the government's policy proposals on protecting the environment were praised. In the communal canteen a large picture of Xi and his wife was present on the back wall, both standing in front of modern high-rise buildings and high speed trains. However, at the same time, modern city life was criticised harshly by

[204] This could also be translated as 'one village one heaven' however I am following the translation the spiritual leader uses in his book on Dao De Jing.

interviewees (RH04, RH09), as well as mainstream society with regards to over consumption (RH11, RH10), industrial agriculture (RH01, RH11)[205] and general pollution (RH03, RH04, RH07, RH08, RH11). Therefore, direct criticism of Xi Jinping, the central government, or government policies was avoided although the negative effects of these policies were criticised indirectly. I argue this is a survival strategy as it is clearly safer to avoid direct criticism of government.[206] This becomes even more apparent when I analyse the third ecovillage.

There were other examples I argue demonstrate self-censorship in the ecovillage. One instance of a small group discussion in which the multi-faith idea of the ecovillage was described to me. Jesus, Buddha and Confucius were mentioned as people with a high understanding of Dao. I then asked about Muhammad and found a number of people reluctant to talk about him, although was told he is also part of this group of high-level people. I suspect that this reluctance is due to the political issues in China regarding Muslim minorities especially in the Xinjiang region. Other issues included discussions about the hope of a future without any countries or borders that became an awkward discussion with knowing glances. Further demonstrations of potential self-censorship due to political issues include during a group discussion with the spiritual leader in which foreign guests mentioned the Dalai Lama with a ripple of uncomfortable sounds in the audience. Finally, in my open interview with the spiritual leader I asked if there is anything I could not write about that we had discussed, he mentioned one thing that would be relatively uncontroversial in other political contexts. These moments demonstrate the political constraints in which the ecovillage has to operate and the likelihood that they know they are operating under certain constraints. This suggests they have to play 'edge ball' with authorities and may not be able to fully articulate their beliefs.

[205] In the open interview with the spiritual leader current industrial agriculture and industry practices were criticised as creating pollution and poisoning the earth.
[206] Local government capacity was criticised by RH07.

4.5 1000 Lives Ecovillage.

The final[207] ecovillage I analyse acts as a demonstration case of a banned ecovillage. This is useful as it can be compared to the two ecovillages I visited that continue to survive. Reasons as to why certain ecovillages are tolerated in the Chinese context while others are banned can be extrapolated from data on the banned case. For this ecovillage I spent half a day with a senior member who introduced me to a small number of other members living together in a house in the city. I undertook a one and a half hour recorded interview[208] with this senior member as well as extensively engaging with online videos and the organisation's website,[209] research notes were also used to inform my arguments.

My contact explained that from 2009-2016 the organisation had 8-9 branches in total. Further details on the organisation's website explain that at the beginning there were 3 concurrent branches which were all eventually shut down by authorities by 2014. After these branches were shut down, the organisation decided to set up 3 more branches in two new provinces emphasising ecological farming. These were all shut down by 2015. In 2015 the organisation set up 3 new branches in the original province that they described as ecovillages. At the end of 2016 these had all been closed by authorities. The organisation then began to search for international locations for a new branch and have set up outside of China. At its peak this organisation had 150-180 active members living in the communities.

1000 Lives Ecovillage's founder, or spiritual guide/leader as he was sometimes referred to, was responsible for most of the literature explaining the ecovillage values and ideas. This included a list of 800 values that made up the core ideology of the group. The 800 values seem to stem from different religions and cultural traditions as well as from what some would describe as conspiracy theories. The general belief is that the world is entering a new 1000 year era in which all religions will unite as one and life will be joyous and free. However, the next 30 years will be a time of 'soul

[207] Although I also engaged with a fourth small and relatively new ecovillage, conducting three in depth interviews, for the purposes of brevity I have decided to exclude this ecovillage from my analysis.
[208] This interview was conducted in English.
[209] References on request.

purification and the elimination of outdated consciousnesses'. Consciousness was an important theme within the 800 values being mentioned 65 times, as well as 'consciousnesses' being mentioned 25 times. A key concept here seems to be that 'Reality is the projection of one's own consciousness'. Furthermore, the universe is said to be the product of the consciousness of the 'Greatest Creator' and this consciousness can be referred to as Dao. Generally there is strong criticism of modern life throughout the 800 values that was also reflected in the interview.

Conscious and Immediate Relationship of Persons.

1000 Lives clearly demonstrated ideas similar to the 'conscious and immediate relationship of persons' concept articulated by Polanyi. For example one of the 800 values states 'The Earth belongs to all humanity' another argues 'Every citizen on earth should regard themselves as citizens of the entire earth, not merely of a region or country'. According to the website members regard themselves as 'globalists' who do not belong to any countries, political parties, or religions, but belong to the whole of mankind. They argue when others attain the same understanding states, religions, political parties and families will disappear.

The website also includes a call for ecovillages around the world to unite together, as ecovillages are seen as 'effective measures' to resolve multiple crises that global society is facing namely; financial crises, ecological crises and war. The website also argues that ecovillages can 'transcend' the differences of nations, cultures, and lifestyles, and 'unite as one big family'. An important theme within the 800 values and website as a whole is the uniting of the thought of Jesus, Laozi, and Siddhattha Gotama (Buddha);[210] however, Confucius is not included as someone whose teaching ought to be followed. In one conversation with my contact Confucius was explicitly rejected as an important historical figure to be studied.

Capitalism and Socialism.

1000 Lives Ecovillage is highly critical of capitalism. The website argues that although capitalism has achieved progress for humanity it has three major issues; inequality, over-consumption of natural resources and idealising selfishness and greed. The solution put forward is communism;

[210] Muhammad and Mother Teresa are also sometimes mentioned.

‘only communism can save the world’. The call for communism is especially interesting as this group is highly critical of the Chinese Communist Party. My interviewee explained that ‘in the process of some countries trying to realise communism they used the violent way to run the country, some countries, they used bad ways to control people, including the Chinese government’. In contrast, the communism put forward by 1000 Lives won’t ‘force’ people to do anything. The interviewee argued it is more like a ‘commune’ where they ‘share everything’. People would not ‘possess private property’ as ‘private ownership’ was the ‘source’ of greed and selfishness and leads to the destruction of the environment.

The website continues by arguing that the communism being promoted by 1000 Lives is not the same as that of Marx, Lenin and Mao; it is in fact a ‘noble faith’ and the ‘essence of the thoughts of many saints and sages’. 1000 Lives communism is also argued to be important for the soul and would create ‘spiritual abundance’, and would help people to achieve ‘self-transcendence’. One of the 800 values sums this up by arguing ‘communism without belief in the Greatest Creator does not work’.[211] The idea of transcending the current paradigm and ‘the elimination of outdated consciousnesses’ clearly placed this group at odds with authorities, who determined that the group represented a dangerous movement that needed to be repressed.

Freedom in a Complex Society.

My interviewee argued that one of the two main goals of 1000 Lives was to ‘live in a happy free and blessed life’. This would be achieved through freeing yourself from the pursuit of money and mainstream ideas of success that only bred greed and selfishness. According to the 800 values 1000 Lives also aimed to free themselves from organisations such as the state, political party, religion and the nuclear family.

[211] Polanyi argues a transcendence of the self-regulating market should keep ‘“all that is truly valuable in Christianity”’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.267). This is likely to be the ‘Christian discovery of the uniqueness of the individual and the oneness of mankind (*Ibid* p.267). Further, ‘Karl Polanyi throughout his life admired…revolutionaries of all time including, according to Ilona's memoir, the foremost of them all, Jesus of Nazareth’ (Polanyi-Levitt & Mendell 1987, pp.16-17) demonstrating that Polanyi believes in a similar spiritual socialist synthesis.

Here lies one of the clearest differences between 1000 Lives and the other ecovillages I analyse. 1000 Lives were not afraid to directly criticise the idea of a nation state or political parties or even the CCP and its underlying ideologies. While other ecovillages would frame their criticism of society as either a criticism of capitalism, the west, city life in general or sometimes bad local government management, 1000 Lives directly confronted central government. This is shown above when my interviewee directly criticised the central government's implementation of communism. When I asked why the group were facing difficulties from the government, my interviewee defended the local government officials saying that actually in the different locations they set up in local officials agreed they had helped the environment and were friendly with them. However the ideas were 'too radical' for higher officials and the local officials had 'to do what they are told to do'. My interviewee also suggested that any government officials that might be supportive of 1000 Lives' ideas 'can't dare to say it' because 'they are in the system'.

I asked whether knowing that the ecovillages they set up would all be disbanded by government due to the 'radical' views of the organisation, they could have acted differently to avoid government backlash. My interviewee stated that the process 'can only happen this way' and there were no regrets because the importance of spreading these views was greater than the impact of being disbanded. The organisation did not want 'to keep it in a small scale' as they wanted 'to help the world' it was therefore 'worth it to be patient'. This potentially demonstrates the deeply-held and principled beliefs of some in this organisation; the purpose was not simply individual self-protection from the problems of modern society, but a real hope of radical transformation of global society.

Some of the 'radical' ideas in the ecovillages I analyse were similar; however, only 1000 Lives would directly publish and promote certain ideas. Even during the time the 1000 Lives ecovillages existed my contact said they openly published all their ideas online, whereas other ecovillages seem to be less forthcoming. For example, in a discussion at one of the ecovillages I was told by a member that they often wondered why humans could not be like animals with no borders and be able to travel the world without passports or visas. This member also stated that John Lennon's

song *Imagine* was inspirational but stopped speaking the lyrics in embarrassment before it came to 'imagine there's no countries'. However 1000 Lives openly argue on their website that 'people should be allowed to flow freely throughout the world and not be restricted by political borders'. 1000 Lives also had ideas that I did not come across in the other ecovillages, including those that may also be uncomfortable for authorities, like the idea that 'marriages and families are Satan's cradles' and therefore should be abandoned. My interviewee argued that marriages and family install the idea of private ownership and create selfishness.

Although the idea that an organisation that directly confronts the CCP is more likely to be forcibly disbanded than ones that temper their direct criticism is not a revelatory finding, the ways in which I argue the organisations cloak their criticism, by co-opting government vocabulary, policy goals and ideologies of legitimacy and expand their meanings, is more interesting. I argue that it demonstrates a potential power that civil society organisations have to try and shift government policy in a favourable direction without direct confrontation. Of course, this process is a potential long one for the ecovillage movement and easily undermined if the government decides to crackdown. None the less all the ecovillages I studied were actively aiming to set up new ecovillages around the country or internationally and were all highly connected to similar organisations in China and across the world.[212]

4.6 Retrogression and Natural Justice.

Throughout this chapter I have highlighted a small number of moments I argue demonstrate retrogressive and potentially 'nativist' attitudes. These may have the potential to morph into something more sinister even though these ecovillage movements generally display a conscious worldview more akin to Polanyi's own. 1000 Lives demonstrated these potentially problematic attitudes more clearly than the other ecovillages.[213] For example, my contact argued that humanity will deserve the catastrophes that will befall it because of general ignorance. This idea was

[212] Even though the 1000 Lives contact argued the Chinese government does not like Chinese ecovillages connecting with 'foreign people, overseas villages or international organisations'.
[213] At the same time as generally demonstrating 'radically progressive' narratives. As Holloway (2013) argues we are unlikely to find a 'pure subject' demonstrating radical alternatives. More likely, we will find a 'confused and contradictory presence of rebellion' (Loc. 4198-4200).

exemplified during the COVID-19 crisis. On the website the spiritual leader of 1000 Lives argued that the appearance of COVID-19 represented a form of 'natural justice' that came about because the conditions were set by humanity, and that many people's souls had been corrupted and warnings had been ignored. The coronavirus outbreak would not abate until the human soul was purified and spiritual pollution was eliminated. People who had 'pure minds' would not be infected by the coronavirus.

While the other ecovillages I visited did not express these kinds of 'natural justice' ideas so explicitly somewhat similar themes were present in their messaging. For example the spiritual leader of Rolling Hills argued that many crises will come not because heaven wants to punish us, but because we created it and we inspired such crises to come out ('不是老天爷想要惩罚我们，而是自己去造成，自己去感召来的'). While it may well be true that climate change and the disasters it will cause have been created by humanity[214] a natural justice argument is potentially dangerous and could lead to the 'righteous' justifying actions against the 'corrupted', rather than fostering a collective sense of shared humanity, further increasing the potential risks of conflict between these ecovillages, Party-state officials, and residents of neighbouring areas.

Retrogressive, nativist or natural justice arguments are not the dominant ideas expressed by the people at the ecovillages, which emphasised the ideals of global society and human interconnectedness. However the existence of these ideas reveal that the double movement is not only a macro dynamic between state and society but 'goes all the way down'.[215] The narratives I highlight demonstrate the double movement in action on the micro level, within organisations and within individuals themselves. The double movement oscillates within individuals between blame and ostracising certain groups and the countermovement of a collective human global society that needs to work together to solve collective human crises. The predominant message in the

[214] More accurately a sub-set of humanity has disproportionally led to climate change and the ones that will be most affected are likely to be the ones that were proportionately less 'guilty' – a challenge to the 'natural justice' argument. For inequality in energy footprints between income groups see Oswald, Owen & Steinberger (2020).
[215] This term is used by Fraser (2014) when analysing Polanyi although my use is significantly different.

ecovillages I analysed represented a synthesising of socialism with spirituality.[216] As long as humanity awakens from its ignorance, a future of constant disaster may be avoided in something explicitly described as socialist or communist. However, the possibility remains that looking back to a mythological ancient time of peace and stability, in which economics was embedded in society and natural law was followed through fear of natural justice, can lead to something authoritarian and dystopian. All conscious Polanyian movements therefore must grapple with an internal double movement and be acutely aware of the possibility of unconscious retrogression.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that the Chinese organisations I analyse have a generally 'radical' 'world loyal' outlook and therefore can be described as conscious Polanyian movements. At the same time, they sometimes exhibit moments of retrogression in Polanyian terms which demonstrates the double movement is not just a macro phenomenon, but a process that is played out within movements and individuals. This demonstrates the double movement can be seen to exist at the philosophical or religious levels as well as being played out in politics and economics.

I further put forward a number of arguments describing why these 'radical' movements are able to survive. One strategy I identify is cloaking their criticisms in the language of the state, at the same time as attempting to give new meaning to this language. This is particularly relevant in a Chinese context in which the Chinese government legitimation strategy is highly contradictory and difficult to directly challenge. Civil society is able to adopt the vocabulary of socialism to critique capitalist growth, over consumption and 'modernisation' without directly attacking the 'communist' party – even though the Party and government are subsumed into the very capitalist system being criticised. I argue the contradictions in CCP legitimation creates multiple fissures within Chinese society that can be filled with organisations that are able to promote 'radical' spiritual socialism and communism – defined as a system of self-determination (Holloway 2013). This striving for a socialist self-determining society is in conflict with the authoritarian capitalist political system,

[216] As I argue Polanyi's writings also suggest.

therefore the organisations must navigate this conflict carefully. Being reluctant to use the term religion, or state they are explicitly political projects[217] as well as being unwilling to directly criticise the CCP or their policies are clear examples of this careful 'edge ball' game. However in other ways these organisations are treading a potentially difficult path – especially by aiming to develop national and international networks.[218] Little Mountain hope to help set up 100 ecovillages around the country and Rolling Fields similarly hoped to expand their ecovillage projects.

A further important finding in this chapter demonstrates that similar progressive environmental based arguments are being promoted in Chinese ecovillages as in other ecovillages in Europe and North America, notwithstanding the different historical, geographical and socio-political context of contemporary China. Although some of the arguments in China are cloaked due to political pressures, criticism of consumer capitalism, a lack of spiritual awareness or global consciousness, and the need to radically transform society are as strong as they are in other ecovillages (Litfin 2014). This adds context to Litfin's (2014) study of global ecovillages. It is not that China only has movements to revitalize villages in similar terms as Senegal's Colufifa or Sri Lanka's Sarvodaya – ones that aim to promote village economy through 'small-scale organic farming' or 'by coupling traditional knowledge with new green technologies' (pp.195-6). China also has self-defined ecovillages that look and act more like the ecovillages of the global north – grappling with issues of global human consciousness, global environmental crises and aiming for a spiritual or multi-faith future. This shows that China is dealing with problems associated with the global north and the global south simultaneously.

I further argue that the ecovillages in China I describe as conscious Polanyian movements have links to the unconscious wet market countermovement I analyse in the previous chapter. Both develop due to the fissures in the contradiction between capitalism and socialism experienced in

[217] This was demonstrated in all the ecovillages I analyse even 1000 Lives which states as one of its values 'Politics and Religion are NOT to be practiced'. Other examples include Little Mountain We Chat group stating talking about politics is forbidden and Rolling Fields constantly arguing Daoism is not a religion.
[218] Shue (2004) argues the Chinese state strategy to combat social movements is '…decapitating in embryo as many groups or units as they deemed might develop into the organizational skeletons for larger-scale collective actions' (p.25).

China and both aim at protecting themselves from the state sponsored expansion of capitalism.[219] The unconscious countermovement does this in an individual atomised collective way by looking at the less marketised rural sphere for individual self-protection from mass-market food safety issues. This entails an unconscious rejection of the self-regulating market ideology. The ecovillages do this in a more openly ideological and conscious manner.[220] They again do this by seeking sanctuary in the less marketised rural. What the ecovillages also aim for is a form of self-determination, or 'conscious control of the social flow of doing' (Holloway 2013, Loc.4553), an explicit rejection of the ideology of the self-regulating market and authoritarian political systems. This may put them on a collision course with Chinese authorities especially as they also hope for the expansion of this rejection, and the adoption of conscious control, on a national and global level – similar to Polanyi's aim. The ecovillages represent the, very green,[221] green shoots of a form of spiritual socialism in an otherwise authoritarian capitalist system. The extent to which these green shoots are able to expand in the fissures of state hegemonic discourse and flourish depends on the extent they are able, along with civil society all around China, to redefine the language of the state in a radically new way. It also depends on whether they become a significant challenge to state-led capitalist expansion, and are therefore repressed, before they are able to achieve this redefinition of state vocabulary in the Chinese collective consciousness.

[219] And for the conscious ecovillage movements expanding this protection to the whole of global society.
[220] Including a critique of the mass-market food for health in LMNV03 ('就发现必须吃自然农法的食物，我才会痊愈') – eating naturally farmed food (as opposed to mass market food) helped to recover from illness. Also the explicit idea that self-grown food is healthier (LMNV01, LMOV01) because of the chemical inputs of food bought in supermarkets (LMOV01). And the general promotion of natural farming (自然农法) for environmental and human health in multiple interviews.
[221] In both meanings of the term.

Chapter 5

Polanyi for the 21st Century

Industrial civilisation may yet undo man... the task of adapting life in such a surrounding to the requirements of human existence must be resolved if man is to continue on earth. No one can foretell whether such an adjustment is possible, or whether man must perish in the attempt. Hence the dark undertone of concern.

Karl Polanyi, 1947

Introduction

As the ecovillages in the previous chapter argue the environmental crisis will be one of the defining issues of the 21st century. The crisis is man-made, but humanity also has the potential to un-make it. Significant adjustments to society will be necessary. This final chapter suggests that the Polanyian framework articulated in the first chapter of this thesis is applicable for the 21st century. I argue that the 21st century impasse has similarities to the 19th & 20th century impasse that Polanyi described. I suggest the current impasse is manifest in an environment vs economic growth double movement contradiction. I argue this contradiction must be transcended in order to achieve a stable global environment in which the majority of humanity may flourish. However, as Polanyi warns us, there is the possibility of this contradiction being solved in a retrogressive way. Therefore Polanyi's theory directs us to not only articulate the impasse, but to simultaneously articulate a progressive solution. This chapter therefore further interrogates the overarching research question in this thesis of the contemporary value of Polanyian theory. It does this by putting forward the potential paths – highlighted through Polanyi's work – that society may choose to circumvent the 21st century environmental impasse.

The first section briefly discusses the Anthropocene concept and how it relates to environmental crisis and how it may be connected to Polanyi's idea of the self-regulating market. It then describes some of the current environmental critiques of contemporary economics and argues how Polanyian theory would resolve these. The second section describes eco-modernism as the location of the environment vs economic growth ideological impasse. The third section describes the potential for eco-modernism to morph into eco-fascism using updated diagrams from the original Polanyian analysis in Chapter 1.

5.1 The Environmental Impasse in the Anthropocene.

The man-made global environmental crisis is so pervasive it has been argued that it has created a new geological epoch – the Anthropocene (Bonneuil & Fressoz 2017; Lewis 2009; Crutzen 2002). The Anthropocene theory proposes that human actions, in many areas, outweigh natural processes. Sulphur dioxide emissions, nitrogen fertilizer application, nitric oxide production as well as carbon

dioxide and methane emissions by human action all outweigh natural processes (Crutzen 2002). It also denotes that humans are exploiting more and more of the natural world; fresh water, forests, fisheries etc., which is increasing species extinction (*Ibid*). It has been argued however, that it might be more accurate to call the Anthropocene the 'Capitalocene' (Bonneuil & Fressoz 2017 Loc.4147-54) because the richest nations:

> '…would neither have succeeded in industrializing nor attained the post-war affluent society without the possibility of unequal ecological exchange with the rest of the world, and that unequal ecological exchange is indeed a major explanatory factor for the combined genesis of the asymmetries of wealth characteristic of the historical dynamic of capitalism, and the rise of human impacts that caused the geological derailment of the planet in the Anthropocene' (*Ibid*, Loc.4478-84).

In Polanyian terms, the environmental crisis engendered in the Anthropocene can be linked to the self-regulating market mechanism and industrialisation. For Polanyi the 'commodity fiction' of nature in a market economy 'would result in the demolition of society' as landscapes become defiled, 'rivers polluted' and 'the power to produce food…destroyed' (Polanyi, 2001 [1944], p.35).

The contemporary environmental crisis is unlike previous global crises. World wars, the Cold War, nuclear threat and terrorism all have a definable enemy 'out there'.[222] The climate crisis is distinct; it makes us the enemy of ourselves as we fly on holiday, drive to work and dig into a big juicy steak. However, more importantly, it makes us an enemy of those most vulnerable to the negative consequences of these individual actions who may themselves aspire to achieve similarly destructive consumption. It forces us to confront ourselves as an individual in a global interconnected society – to understand the importance of the particular to the whole. It creates a new epoch that directly challenges the idea of the 'independent individual of liberal capitalism' as Polanyi describes it:

> 'The independent individual of liberal capitalism is independent only because he is unconscious of his dependence; yet he is unconscious of it only for the lack of moral sensibility which allows him to disregard the social effects of his individual actions and omissions. He who wishes to be truly independent must first shoulder the burden of dependence in order to build a society in which it is possible to be really and truly independent. Such independence is not to be achieved by not knowing, or disregarding, our

[222] An enemy that can at least be constructed as an 'other' even if it is not a particularly accurate construction.

> indebtedness to others; it can be achieved only by liberating ourselves from social bondage by paying off debts' (Polanyi 1937a, Loc.3707-3714).

The Anthropocene epoch thrusts the fact of global human interconnectedness into our everyday lived reality, through flooding, fires, drought etc. It forces itself into our individual consciousness. We can no longer ignore the social effects of our individual actions as consumers or producers because the debts we accrue are being paid, in catastrophic ways, all around us.

A world that is able to solve the climate crisis is 'a world in which we would have to consciously bear the human effects of our existence' (Polanyi 1927, Loc.898-901). For Polanyi, this is real freedom and the definition and goal[223] of socialism:

> 'For the socialist, "acting freely" means acting while conscious of the responsibility we bear for our part in mutual human relationships – outside of which there is no social reality – and realizing that we have to bear this responsibility' (Polanyi 1927, Loc.777-82).

This realisation of our responsibility to global society, Polanyi argues, 'must today seem frightening to us weak human beings' (*Ibid*, Loc.898-901). To live as atomised individuals without accepting our individual actions have global consequences is to live an unfree life, yet this unfree life is 'paradisiacal' in its 'innocence' (Polanyi 1927, Loc.796-99). What the climate crisis demands, and what Polanyi argues socialism entails, is for individuals to be torn from 'paradisiacal innocence' and thrust into 'freedom'. This freedom is different from the 'mirage' (Polanyi 1927, Loc.643-47) of freedom in a market society in which people are 'mere players on the economic stage' (*Ibid*). Neither is it like 'state socialism' (*Ibid*, Loc.898-901) which keeps 'the impersonal state, which apparently exists independently of us, as the general scapegoat for all suffering' (*Ibid*). The freedom Polanyi articulates is more like the freedom I argue the ecovillages I analysed in Chapter 4 attempt to grasp. The global environmental crisis therefore creates a space to engage with a deeper, although potentially more uncomfortable, freedom. The environmental crisis necessitates a change in individual and societal behaviour, especially in highly developed resource intensive economies, to protect the global community. However the potential limiting of individual choice to protect the collective whole due to the environmental crisis 'does not mean the

[223] 'There is a succinct formulation of socialism's final goal… it is the leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom' (Polanyi 1927, Loc.625-27).

liquidation of personal freedom: it means a crisis out of which the concept of personality emerges more powerfully than ever before' (*Ibid*, Loc.787-92).[224]

Many of those I interviewed argued they felt more free in the ecovillages they chose to live in, even though it constrained a number of their individual choices. What they were potentially articulating is the idea that they could not be free in a society that ignored the harm of individual choices on collective global society. They gained a deeper freedom by constraining their actions to ones they believed to be less damaging to the social whole.[225] Litfin (2014) describes ecovillages as 'laboratories for conscious participation in the Great Unfoldment' (p.185).[226] They articulate the Polanyian idea that 'the transformation of consciousness' is necessary for 'socio-material transformation' (*Ibid*, p.183) and this socio-material transformation is necessary if humanity is able to stabilise the global environment. They are, I argue, therefore articulating and practising what Polanyi describes as socialism; '"acting freely"…while conscious of the responsibility we bear for our part in mutual human relationships' (Polanyi 1927, Loc.777-82), but synthesised with the current global environmental crisis, an eco-socialism. Polanyi for the 21st century, I argue, would call for an eco-socialist response to our current impasse.

An eco-socialist paradigm would be aware of the responsibility we individually and collectively bear for our part in the environmental crisis; this would necessitate an awareness of ecological boundaries and social inequalities (Raworth, 2017a, 2017b). Raworth (2017b) emphasises these ecological boundaries and argues that a 21st century economics, in a time of environmental crisis, needs to question fundamental tenants of current economics – significantly the idea of 'never-ending Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth' (p.2). Raworth (2017b) argues 21st century

[224] The original quote begins this sentence with socialism: 'Socialism does not mean the liquidation of personal freedom…'
[225] This idea is explained by Polanyi in his notes on Individualism and Socialism (n.dE): 'Man feels that he is living the good life if his consciousness is filled with human motives; he lives a higher life if he is able to know the part he is playing in the life of his fellows by performing his everyday work; and he lives on yet higher planes if he not only knows this, but is also able to act accordingly' (p.1).
[226] The Great Unfoldment is the 'narrative' Litfin (2014) argues has taken root in ecovillage culture to describe the interconnectedness of life, from the beginning of the creation of the universe, it has similarities to the idea of Gaia. The Anthropocene, she argues, means humans are now 'protagonists in the Great Unfoldment' (p.155).

economics must become 'growth-agnostic' (p.6). Others go further, not only should the richest nations be 'growth-agnostic' but we should accept 'a distinct possibility that the growth on which we have relied…might just not be available any more' (Jackson 2017, p.46). Therefore we must search for an economic system which leads to *Prosperity Without Growth* (Jackson 2017). For Jackson (2017) the realisation that continued economic growth is incompatible with ecological limits means 'There is a very strong case for the developed nations to "make room for growth" in poorer countries' (p.60). I argue this would necessitate a situation that Polanyi would describe as socialist, as the richer nations must be responsible for a dramatic shift in their societies in order to bear our responsibility in mutual human relationships. Jackson (2017) does not use the term socialism as he wants to avoid 'turf wars' (p.224). However he argues that the transformation he is calling for is 'totally incompatible with the "casino capitalism" or the "consumer capitalism" that has characterised the richest economies in recent decades' (p.222). Jackson (2017) also references Polanyi's double movement concept within his arguments on growth:

> 'On the one hand, government is bound to the pursuit of economic growth. On the other, it finds itself having to intervene to protect the common good from the incursions of the market…This tension is what the historian Karl Polanyi called the 'double movement' of society… Government itself, in other words, is caught in the dilemma of growth' (p.198).

It is this economic growth vs ecological limits impasse that I argue would define Polanyi for the 21st century. Eco-socialism solves this impasse, a 21st century 'transition to socialism is a transition beyond growth' (Kallis 2019, p.189).

5.2 Eco-Modernism.

The 21st century impasse is created because the current 'solution' to the environmental crisis is a stark utopia. The eco-modernism solution of 'green growth'[227] argues 'techno-economic fixes and improvements in the management of markets will enable the path of endless growth to continue, in harmony with the environment' (Dale, Mathai & Oliveira 2016, Loc.142-145). For green growth to work 'growth in dollars must be 'decoupled' from growth in physical throughputs and environmental impacts' (Jackson 2017, p.21). However according to Jackson (2017) 'There are no

[227] For more critiques of green growth and the growth paradigm see Hickel & Kallis (2019), O'Neill *et al*. (2018), Mathai; Oliveira & Dale (2018), Ward *et. al.* (2016), Anderson & Bows (2012), and Kallis (2011).

prospects for it doing so in the immediate future'(*Ibid*).[228] Further, with reference to carbon emissions, although there may be some evidence of relative decoupling the 'fall in carbon intensity has simply been swamped by rising economic output. Absolute decoupling is nowhere to be seen' (p.89). Economic growth increases carbon dioxide emissions, cancelling out efficiency savings, and the amount of carbon in the atmosphere continues to increase (NASA 2020).[229] It therefore seems impossible to reconcile economic growth with global heating and the crises this will bring.[230]

The technological strand of this paradigm is also highly suspect. Negative-emissions technology is the 'get-out-of-jail-free' card of the green growth paradigm. However as Anderson (2015b) argues these technologies, most prevalently BECCS (Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage), as described in the Paris Agreement, are highly unrealistic as they necessitate 'the equivalent of decades of planting and harvesting of energy crops over an area of one to three times that of India' (p.1).[231] The idea that 'Technology will save us. Capitalism is good at technology. So let's just keep the show on the road and hope for the best' (Jackson 2017, p.211) is a 'delusional strategy' (*Ibid*). Hickel & Kallis (2019) argue 'extant empirical evidence does not support the theory of green growth' (p.15). Further, it is argued that the Paris Agreement[232] actually requires reduced overall consumption and production (Alfredsson *et al*., 2018)[233] not a mere shift to 'green' consumption and green growth. Eco-modernism is a utopia, in much the same way as Polanyi described the self-regulating market. It also suggests 21st century global society has not moved

[228] For a longer summary on this see Jackson (2017) Chapter 5, *The Myth of Decoupling*. See also Ward *et al*. (2016) who argue 'growth in GDP ultimately cannot be decoupled from growth in material and energy use. It is therefore misleading to develop growth-oriented policy around the expectation that decoupling is possible' (p.1).
[229] The estimated 5.5% reduction in Carbon emissions in 2020 due to the COVID-19 global economic slowdown will mean 'atmospheric carbon levels are expected to increase again this year' and to reach the 1.5 degree target annual emissions would have to decrease '7.6% every year this decade' (Evans 2020). Demonstrating the enormous and increasing challenge of the climate crisis.
[230] Some researches put the likelihood that temperatures rise less than 2°C this century at 5% (Raftery *et al.* 2017)
[231] See also Anderson & Peters (2016) and Hickel (2018) on the problems of negative emissions.
[232] See Dennis & Mooney (2018) for a brief description of how nations are failing their current Paris agreement targets.
[233] Similarly Allwood *et al.* (2019) suggest a UK absolute zero target for 2050 would have to include reduced material throughput (p.3), zero consumption of beef and lamb, and banning all flights and freight ships (p.2).

beyond the 19th century '...uncritical reliance on the alleged self-healing virtues of unconscious growth' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.35). Eco-modernism creates an impasse which must be transcended. As described above one of the possibilities is an eco-socialist transcendence. Using Polanyi's dialectical process developed in Chapter 1 the second path is eco-fascism.

5.3 Eco-fascism.

Degrowth scholars make the issue explicit:

> 'If we continue to uphold an unsustainable level of consumption in privileged areas of the globe – and even worse, continue to imagine that this level will grow in the future – we must also acknowledge that this "growth" can only come by means of "closure," of leaving out those for whom "there is not enough"' (D'Alisa; Demaria & Kallis 2015, p.24).

The increase of consumption for the privileged and the closure of growth to those who need it most is a morally troubling result of the 'green growth' paradigm. It suggests a disregard of billions of humans at the altar of economic growth for the richest.[234] When the utopian project of 'green growth' becomes apparent, hundreds of millions of people in the richer nations, who were promised ever expanding consumption, will search for a solution. To maintain the growth utopia for the privileged few in a resource constrained world, an explicit and enforced closure of growth for those that really need it may become the 'solution'. An ideology that justifies this domination of the many for the enrichment of the few, while protecting the global environment, will be essential. This is the eco-fascist solution to the eco-modernist utopia. Eco-fascism is a *real* solution to the contradiction of growth and environmental limits by using the carrying capacity of the earth to continually enrich a minority. To understand eco-fascism we must revert to the eco-modernist utopia which creates the growth vs. environment double movement contradiction – echoing Polanyi's argument that to understand fascism we must revert to Richardian England (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.32) which creates the original double movement contradiction.[235] The seeds of eco-fascism are being sown in the eco-modernist utopia.

[234] Even if the global economic growth could continue at levels we have become accustomed to, Hickel (2019) argues it would take 200 years to end global poverty (disregarding the ecological damage this growth would do). See also Woodward (2015).

[235] Polanyi (2001 [1944]) argues 'the origins of the cataclysm' and German fascism were due to 'the rise and fall of market economy' (p.32). For Polanyi the breakdown of these market institutions in the twenties was due to the utopian nature of market economy and its internal contradictions. He locates the emergence of the

The idea of a modern eco-fascism is more than a theoretical premonition; eco-fascist ideology is already a real threat to global society. Biehl & Staudenmaier (2011) note some of the modern variations of eco-fascism. One prominent eco-fascist proponent 'believes that cultures around the globe will compete for survival over the means of life, in a social Darwinist struggle for existence' (Loc.1347-48) and that death is the 'currency' that must be paid for 'life that has overgrown on this planet, so that the planet can once again come into equilibrium' (Loc.1368-70). This is a call for the 'laws of nature' (*Ibid*) to 'justly' sacrifice hundreds of millions in the most environmentally vulnerable regions. These theories have real world consequences. The 2019 Christchurch mosque attacker identified as an eco-fascist (Wilson 2019) and European far-right parties are 'beginning to incorporate green politics into their ethno-nationalist vision' (Aronoff 2019).

Due to a 'widespread rise of authoritarian leaders and populist politics around the world' (McCarthy 2019, p.301)[236] and continuing environmental crises, there has been a significant amount of literature on authoritarian environmentalism (McCarthy 2019; Wainwright & Mann 2013; Beeson 2010). This literature often concentrates on the Chinese case (Chen & Lees 2018; Beeson 2016, 2010; Wainwright & Mann 2013; Gilley 2012).[237] Although environmental authoritarianism is most often rejected as the wrong solution, it is clear that it may have 'some distinct advantages, particularly in terms of the capacity to coordinate massive political-economic reconfiguration quickly and comprehensively' (Wainwright & Mann 2013). It is an attraction to these advantages that must be assuaged in a new 21st century progressive environmental politics. McCarthy (2019) argues the authoritarian environmentalism debate is situated in a broader contemporary context in which both left and right are rejecting 'neoliberal hegemony' and are articulating 'genuine alternatives' (p.302). This general rejection of 'neoliberal hegemony' brings

market economy in Ricardian England therefore argues that 'In order to comprehend German fascism, we must revert to Ricardian England' (p.32).

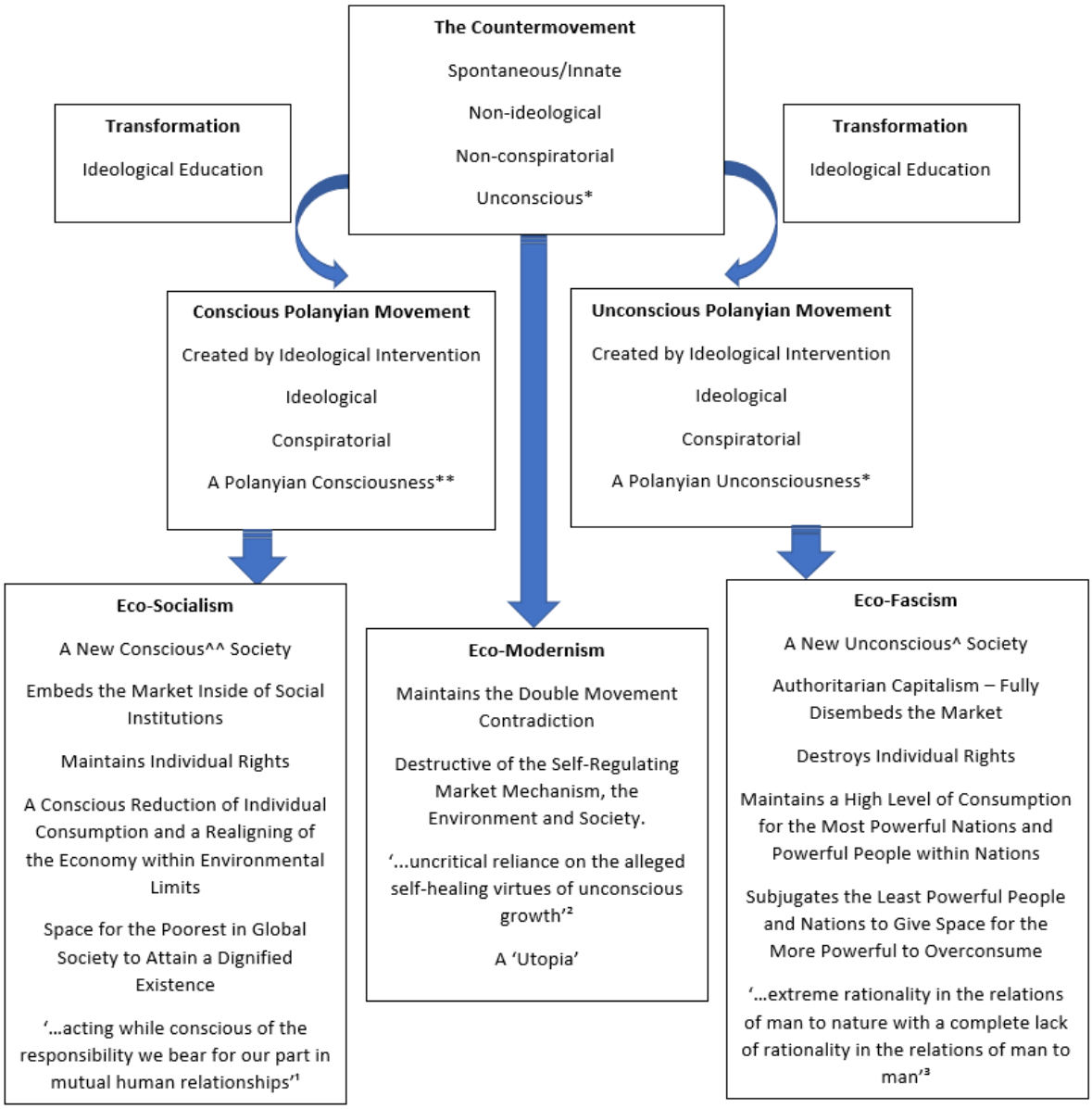
[236] See also Fukuyama & Muggah (2018) and Foa & Mounk (2017) on the rise of the authoritarian right.

[237] Nair (2018) could in some sense also be described as a book on authoritarian environmentalism. Schönfeld & Chen (2019) put forward a sincere defence of authoritarian environmentalism by arguing China has 'a strategic edge over the market-driven and post-truth dissolution that hamstrings Western aspirations to save the
Planet' (p.9). This edge seems to be the ability to 'punish' people for ignoring so-called 'environmental facts'. Schönfeld & Chen (2019) compared the Chinese system favourably to the 'post-truth politics in liberal democracies' (p.9). The dangers in this type of argument are clear.

'hope…if the left is able to articulate positive radical alternatives' (*Ibid*). This can be seen in Polanyian terms as a call to transcend neoliberal hegemony that is now establishing itself in the utopian eco-modernist paradigm. A call to transcend to a global society that allows us to be conscious of the responsibility we bear for our part in mutual human relationships is of critical importance if we want to avoid unconscious retrogression.

The process I have outlined above is demonstrated in figure 4.

Figure 5. Polanyi for the 21st Century: Eco-modernism, Eco-fascism or Eco-socialism;



*Unconscious of the fact that it is the self-regulating market system and its new eco-modernist guise that has created the negative effects that the countermovement is attempting to counter.

**Conscious of the fact that it is the self-regulating market system and its new eco-modernist guise that has created the negative effects that the countermovement is attempting to counter.

^Unconscious of the fact that every human is connected and we exist within every other human as a 'Brotherhood of Man' (Polanyi 1933b, p.370), thus protecting every human is protecting our self. Eco-fascism uses the countermovements' anger at the effects of the self-regulating market, and the betrayal of the myth of continuously increasing economic growth in eco-modernism, and diverts this anger towards social liberalism. Social liberalism can go and the self-regulating market and increased growth and consumption for a privileged minority can remain. The countermovement is destroyed because individual self-protection becomes an anachronism as there is no longer a self to protect – fascism destroys the individual; 'This leaves no foothold for the individual; man is entrapped in his condition of self-estrangement' (Polanyi 1933b, p.376).

^^A Polanyian consciousness; conscious of the fact that every human is connected and we exist within a 'Brotherhood of Man' thus we must protect every human in order to protect our self. For Polanyi we must do this by protecting every human from the self-regulating market because the self-regulating market destroys society. In the 21st century we must protect everybody from the myth of eco-modernism as eco-modernism will destroy society. The countermovement is destroyed because individual self-protection becomes an anachronism as all individuals understand in order to protect the individual one must protect society as a whole – socialism creates this genuine individualism; 'The discovery of the individual *is* the discovery of mankind. The discovery of the individual soul *is* the discovery of community' (Polanyi 1933b, p.370).

[1]Polanyi 1927, Loc.777-82

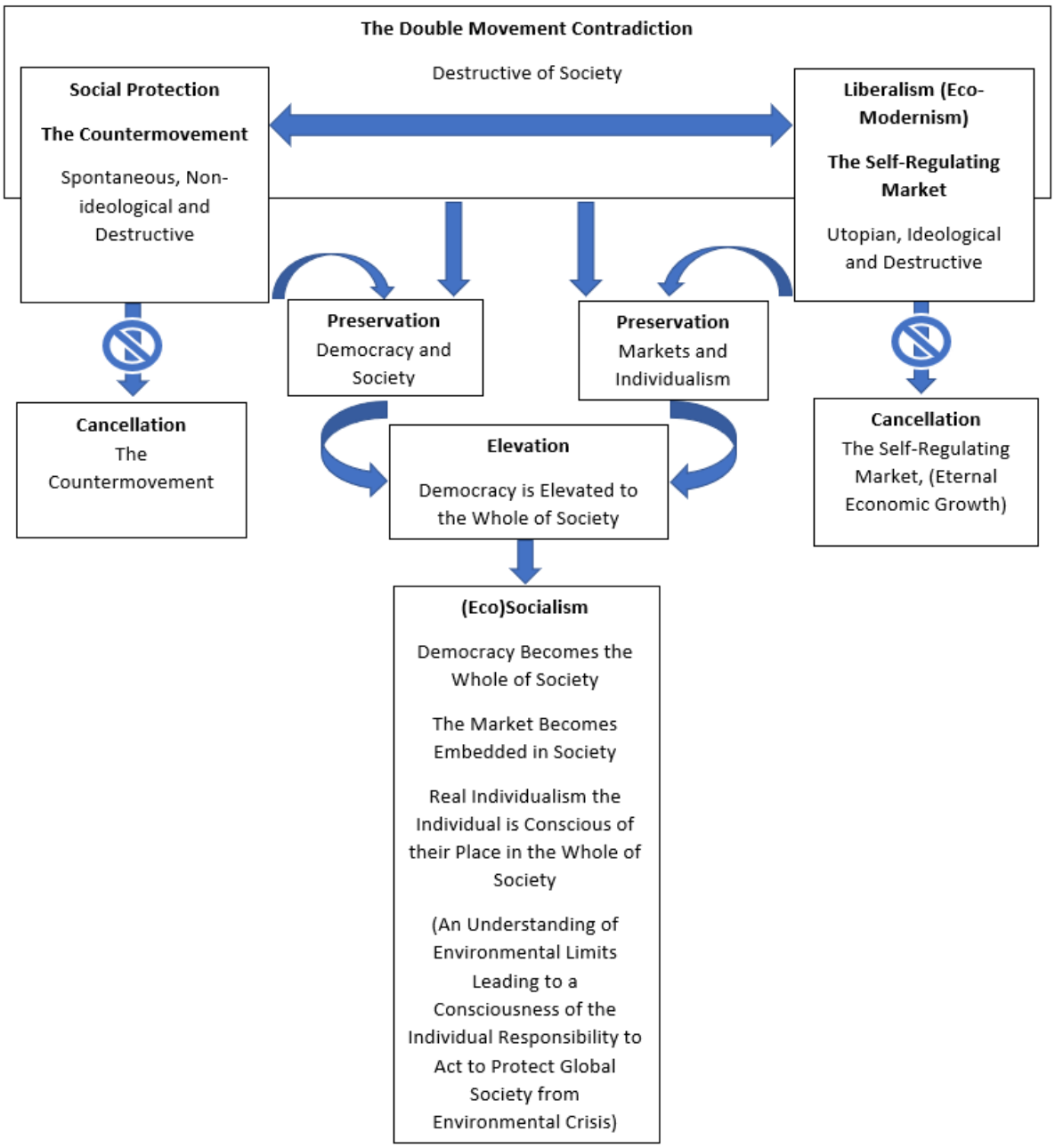
[2]Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.35

[3]Polanyi 1933b, p.384

The 'discovery of [an interconnected global] society' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.268), which the environmental crisis engenders, 'is thus either the end or the rebirth of freedom' (*Ibid*) – the end of freedom in eco-fascism or its re-birth in eco-socialism.

The process by which the countermovement contradiction is transcended in this dynamic is the same as the original process outlined in Chapter 1. However, the myth of eternal economic growth in eco-modernism is cancelled along with the general belief in the self-regulating market. Further, an understanding of environmental limits leads to the individual gaining an eco-socialist consciousness of their place in the whole of global society. Therefore they are conscious that they must act in a way that protects every individual from actions that help cause devastating environmental effect and pursue lives that can enhance environmental stability.

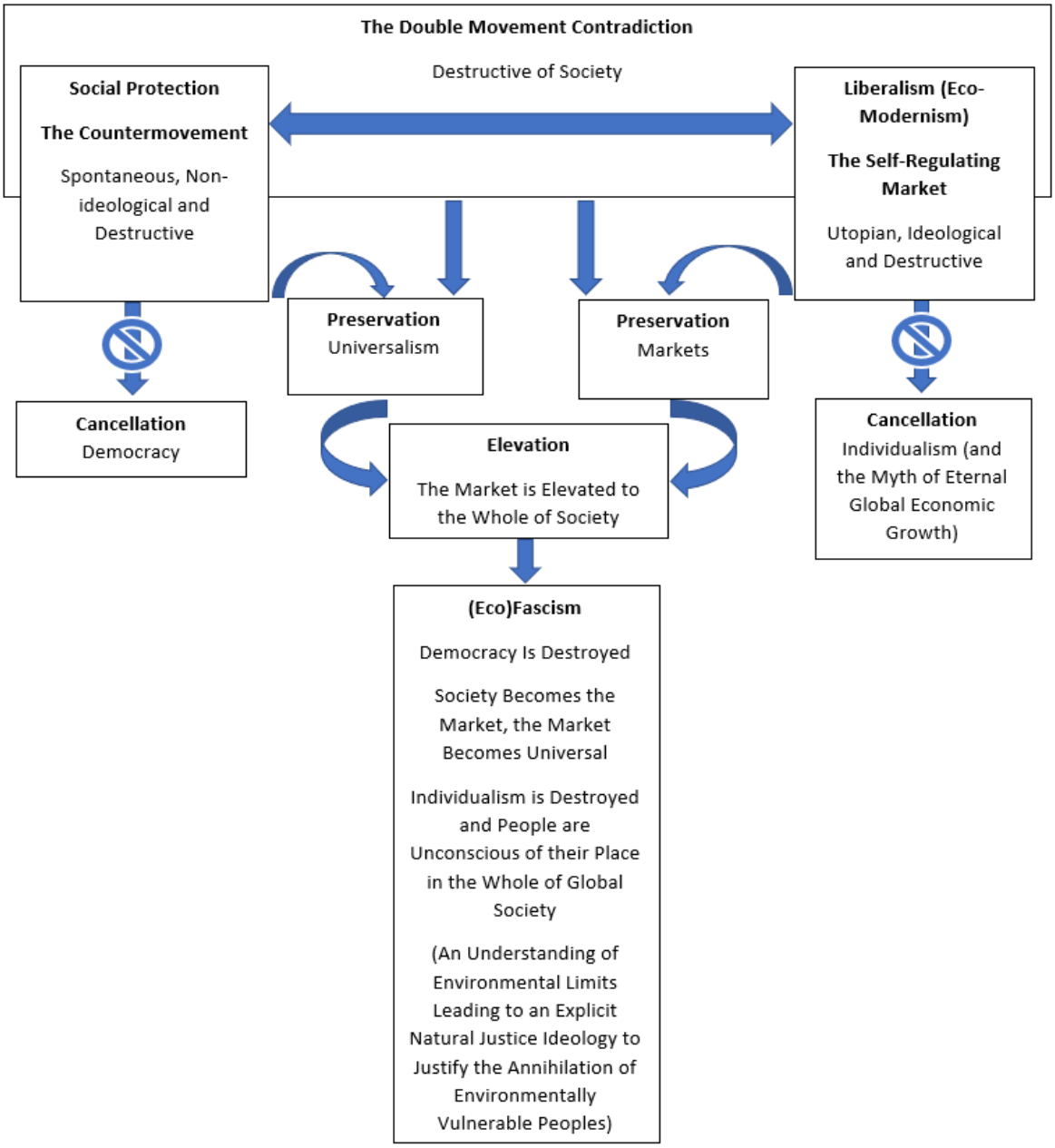
Figure 5. Eco-socialist Transcendence;



The eco-fascist retrogression is also much the same as in Chapter 1. However the myth of eternal global economic growth in eco-modernism is cancelled along with individualism. The idea of environmental limits is used to justify economic and consumption growth only for those that

'deserve' it. The idea that the environmental crisis is natural justice for 'weaker' and 'undeserving' people is added to justify their annihilation. The market is elevated to the whole of society meaning those peoples who are unable to compete perish – allowing the earth's environment to 'self-adjust'.

Figure 6. Eco-fascist Retrogression;



The emphasis that Polanyi puts on individual consciousness is not a call for individual action alone to combat crisis. It is a hope for individual consciousness to create a collective transcendence so that society may collectively and democratically solve shared global crises. This may seem

utopian; however, if the alternative, as Polanyi suggests, is a form of fascism it is clearly sensible for the majority of people to aim to avoid this retrograde step. Individuals have the potential to realise that the only way to protect themselves from multiple, complex and interconnected societal, political, economic and environmental crises is to protect all individuals. To do this they must work together for the collective good of global society as a whole. For Polanyi strengthening the idea of the responsibility of the individual is critical to this. It is important in order to avoid the fascist aim of the destruction of the individual and the resulting creation of an unconscious society.

As Polanyi argued, educational work is required (Polanyi 1932a, p.3).[238] Today an education of environmental limits is essential if we are to solve our collective environmental crisis. However, there is a danger to this education. Much like educating people on the disembedding effect of the self-regulating market mechanism and its danger to society had the potential to create a reactionary backlash in the form of fascism, educating people on environmental limits poses the same danger. If the world has hard environmental limits and our economies need resources to grow to survive in the global capitalist struggle, to stay ahead we must ensure our economy has access to these resources. A reduction in our ability to exploit these resources in order to avoid catastrophic environmental crises means, to stay ahead, we must exclude the rest from gaining these resources. This creates the Darwinian struggle of eco-fascism and may lead to the justification of horrendous crimes against humanity.[239] Therefore education on environmental limits can't stop with the scientific facts, it must be done in tandem with describing a progressive vision for the future of global human flourishing without global economic growth.[240]

This concluding chapter brings the Polanyian theoretical analysis of Chapter 1 into the 21st century. I argue the schema I developed to help explain Polanyi's theory can be used to understand the impasse global society is facing today. According to Polanyi's understanding of socialism, only an eco-socialist future can solve the eco-modernist contradiction in a progressive way. Of course there

[238] Also Polanyi (1925, Loc.1400-1408)
[239] It must be admitted that capitalism, in its eco-modernist form, implicitly accepts the idea of large scale global poverty, however in eco-fascism this not only becomes explicit but celebrated and actively pursued as a way to annihilate 'weaker' humans to give space for mother nature to breath.
[240] This is most prominently being engaged with through the Degrowth movement (https://degrowth.org)

is always a dark undertone of concern, that eco-modernism will morph into eco-fascism to solve the impasse. Without education on environmental limits in tandem with a progressive vision of a future, it seems likely that eco-modernism will slowly regress into something more like eco-fascism. Eco-modernism implicitly accepts the closure of growth for the very people that need it most, and thus implicitly defends vast inequality and human suffering. The progressive future that is necessary for global human flourishing need not explicitly be called eco-socialist or socialist at all. However at its core it does need to mean each individual, and society as a whole 'acting while conscious of the responsibility we bear for our part in mutual human relationships…and realizing that we have to bear this responsibility' (Polanyi 1927, Loc.777-82). To bear this responsibility global society needs to be conscious of the limits to economic growth. Whatever we term this future, creating it, is clearly 'the task of our time' (Polanyi 1937a, p.146).[241]

[241] This quote originally refers to Polanyi's belief that the task of his time was 're-integration' of the 'economic, political, "religious", and other spheres', 'into a whole'. It is distinctly possible that this re-integration is also necessary to deal with the global environmental crisis.

Conclusion

Introduction.

This thesis has sought to answer the overarching research question – what is the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory? – through an evaluation and application of current Polanyian scholarship. It uses Polanyian theory to interrogate lived experiences of environmental constraints in modern China. This is important as the environmental crisis is unabating. Examining ways in which people currently aim to deal with environmental issues could point to potential solutions for mitigating these problems in the future. In this conclusion I summarise my arguments chapter by chapter, and then consider the limits and potential future expansion of this research. I chose to interrogate the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory in the context of China because it, relatively recently, underwent a 'great transformation' which brought market mechanisms to a previously less marketised economic and social sphere. It can also be argued that this transformation has not yet fully transformed rural society, in which an ideological battle is occurring between those that want to protect the rural sphere from the market and those that want to use it to expand profits.

The development of my argument.

My starting point is to demonstrate the theoretical distinctiveness of my argument by revisiting Polanyi's work and the contemporary scholarship surrounding it. The argument I developed in Chapter 1 is that much of the current academic debate on Polanyian theory has significantly departed from an authentic representation of Polanyi's thought. More specifically, Polanyi's countermovement concept is often interpreted as an ideological social movement aiming at progressive political change. In addition the double movement concept has often morphed into an in-built repair mechanism for liberal capitalism, justifying a Keynesian style social contract. I challenged both these representations, arguing that it is clear that in *The Great Transformation* the countermovement concept is described as non-ideological, and its articulation within a self-regulating market society is itself destructive of society. I argue that Polanyi clearly demonstrates that the double movement dynamic is also destructive. The double movement does not create an equilibrium and in fact must be transcended to secure a just future for humanity. I use the

vocabulary of (un)consciousness found in *TGT* and a large number of Polanyi's other works (Polanyi 1922, 1927, 1933b, 1937b, 1947a, 1947b) to shine light on the general misreading of the countermovement concept. I argue that Polanyi is clear that the countermovement is unconscious of the self-regulating market system being the root of the countermovement's angst. If the unconscious countermovement becomes conscious of the dangers of the self-regulating market and conscious that the protection of each individual involves protecting the whole of society, then it attains a Polanyian consciousness.[242] Thus it has the ability to transcend the self-regulating market at the same time transcending itself and transcending the double movement contradiction. This individual[243] and societal transcendence leads to socialism. Alternatively the unconsciousness within the countermovement can be expanded into an ideology in which unconsciousness becomes the basis of the whole of society; 'back to the unconscious social organism' (Polanyi 1933b, p.381). This unconscious society is how Polanyi describes fascism. People are unconscious of our human relationships and fascism 'force[s] our consciousness into a different mould from that which was created by the doctrine of the 'Brotherhood of Man' (*Ibid*, p.382).[244] This interpretation of Polanyi provides the theoretical basis of the rest of the thesis and is used in particular to interrogate Polanyi's contemporary significance.

Chapter 2 discusses the relevance of Polanyian theory to China, arguing that its explanatory power in a Chinese context has been highlighted by a number of Chinese academics. I also engage with a range of Chinese social movements to help exemplify the conscious/unconscious dynamic developed in Chapter 1. I argue that it is possible to theorize the existence of both the unconscious countermovement and conscious Polanyian movement in contemporary China. I also suggest a mechanism as to how unconscious countermovements may become conscious Polanyian movements through a reading of contemporary China scholarship. This chapter demonstrates the applicability of Polanyian theory in China and helps develop the distinctive Polanyian argument I

[242] Which is equal to a socialist consciousness as Polanyi's definition of socialism is a society of individuals that bears their responsibility for all other individuals.
[243] It is not clear if Polanyi believes everybody must gain this individual consciousness for the whole of society to be able to transcend to socialism or whether this transcendence is achievable with a majority gaining consciousness.
[244] This analysis of Polanyian thought is presented in Alcock (2020).

put forward on the importance of consciousness. The unconscious/conscious argument is further developed in the next two chapters in which I analyse two Chinese case studies.

Chapter 3 brings the theoretical debate of Chapter 1 to the streets of China through interrogating wet market vegetable consumption preferences to help understand the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory. I argue that the preference for peasant self-grown vegetables articulated by the vast majority of consumers in the wet markets I analyse can be conceptualised as a countermovement as described by Polanyi in *TGT*. The movement is spontaneous and does not have a defined political aim, it is made up of numerous atomised individuals who converge in their actions to engage in atomised collective action. This atomised collective action is unconsciously targeting the marketisation of food – or the self-regulating market. The individuals' aim is to buy 'safer' food and they link the idea of safety to peasant self-grown produce. This style of produce is less marketised as it is likely either to be surplus homegrown family produce or from non-marketised land holdings. I demonstrate that there is evidence in the literature that peasant self-grown produce, mainly produced for self-consumption, can be described as 'safer' as it often uses fewer pesticides or herbicides than large scale marketised operations. That consumers seek to buy peasant self-grown produce for safety is evident in the fact that they claimed they were even more willing to buy peasant self-grown produce if it was grown for peasant self-consumption. However, it is not clear that consumers are able to successfully buy the type of produce from wet markets that they would most prefer. Therefore, some have resorted to alternative food net-works to buy peasant self-grown produce, linking to a more general trend being seen in large cities in China. After identifying the possibility of an unconscious countermovement in vegetable markets in China Chapter 4 analyses the possibility of new conscious Polanyian movements developing in contemporary rural China.

Chapter 4 draws on interviews and participant observation of environmental communities to help answer my research question on the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory. These communities self-define as eco-villages and have connections with the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN). To my knowledge this is the first academic study on these types of Chinese ecovillages in

English. I conceptualise the eco-villages as conscious Polanyian movements as they articulate ideas of 'world loyalty' and strongly criticise capitalistic ideals. I also argue that it is important for these movements, and all movements articulating radical change, to be aware of unconscious retrogression. Some aspects of the ideology conveyed by the eco-villages could be used to legitimate authoritarian environmentalism. This idea, I argue, demonstrates Polanyi's double movement concept 'goes all the way down'.[245] The double movement is within each individual and must be transcended here, as well as in society as a whole. As in Chapter 3 the Polanyian analysis of this case study simultaneously brings out contemporary Chinese political issues. How 'radical' views are constrained or are able to be maintained within an authoritarian context is a key aspect of inquiry. I also argue that the contemporary issue of food safety links the wet market countermovement and the eco-village movement. There is potential that the eco-village movement is a conscious articulation of the unconscious wet market countermovement. I argue that the unconscious/conscious Polanyian analysis is a powerful tool for developing original ways of conceptualising contemporary issues in China and this framework ought be developed further in Chinese scholarship.

From the micro level case studies of Chinese wet markets and rural eco-communities in Chapter 3 and 4, and the theoretical interrogation of Polanyian theory in Chapter 1, I develop a macro theory for the 21st century in Chapter 5. Here I answer the overarching research question of the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory by locating the 21st century impasse. I argue that the ecovillages discussed in Chapter 4 show us the 21st century impasse is an environmental one. Further, contemporary environmental literature is explicit that the 21st century impasse is an environment vs economic growth contradiction. This contradiction, largely stems from, the self-regulating market mechanism, as it is here that the utopian idea of continual increases in economic growth is contained. Currently this ideology is manifest within an eco-modernist paradigm that I demonstrate exhibits fundamental issues and can be described negatively as a 'utopia'. I argue the progressive way to break this destructive 'utopia' is a consciousness of our individual and

[245] An idea also argued in notes in the appendix on Polanyi's affinity with Hegel.

collective responsibility to the whole of global society. Therefore, much like Polanyi's 20th century solution, the 21st century solution is a transcendence of the self-regulating market ideology. In the richest nations this would mean giving space to the poorest nations so they may use scarce resources to grow to a level that ensures all people a dignified life. For Polanyi, a society that acts in a way that bears responsibility for their actions on the whole of humanity is the definition of socialism. Therefore I argue that to break today's eco-modernism impasse we need something Polanyi may describe as eco-socialism. There is, however, a second path that also breaks our current impasse: the eco-fascist solution. This solution also accepts the limits to global growth but captures the limited growth for the already powerful, leaving, hundreds of millions, if not billions, to live an inhumane and short life. I argue that, due to the fact eco-modernism implicitly accepts a closure of growth for the most vulnerable in global society, that the step towards eco-fascism is not as large as might be hoped. As Polanyi (1934g) notes 'Capitalism needs Fascist politics as its complement' (Loc.3181-83). Hence there is a dark undertone of concern; eco-modernism may need fascist politics for its continuation and thus morph into eco-fascism.

The Limits and Future Expansion of this Research.

Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 demonstrate the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory as described in Chapter 1. Chapters 3 & 4 use small scale case-studies in China to achieve this. While in-depth case studies can uncover rich data they are limited in how far their conclusions can be generalised. To answer my research question on the contemporary significance of Polanyian theory, evidence that unconscious countermovements and conscious Polanyian movements exist is sufficient. However to deal with the limits of generalizability one productive possibility for expansion of this research would be to ascertain how widespread the unconscious Chinese wet market countermovement I conceptualise is. The most practical scale for this research initially would likely be in one city aiming for statistically significant conclusions. These conclusions could help inform debates about wet markets and food provision in China, and may potentially create arguments for the importance of protecting small-scale peasant farming. Further, potential

expansion of this study could include long-term ethnographic research on Chinese ecovillages asking how and why they survive, flourish or potentially fail within the political context.

A second limit of this study stems from political considerations when researching in China. The avoidance of overtly political questions and avoidance of directly sensitive topics means some issues potentially remain hidden. Further, some potentially informative information has been left-out due to potential risks to participants or organisations. These political considerations of doing research in China are unlikely to diminish soon.

As I have argued, the Polanyian dynamic put forward in Chapter 1 is a powerful tool to analyse China. It also has the potential to be employed in different contexts. I have already deployed this theoretical framework in the context of the history of regulation of private renting in England in Carr & Alcock (2020). This achieved a more politically nuanced and historically sensitive analysis of a topic that is key to contemporary social justice and helped articulate and evaluate genuinely progressive political initiatives. This shows the framework developed in this thesis has widespread application and the potential to become an important part of, not only the expansion of understanding of Polanyian theory, but also the expansion of understanding of numerous contemporary and historical state and society debates.

Finally, as we begin to come out of the COVID-19 crisis Polanyian analysis will again be useful in analysing the political and economic fall-out. Already nationalism is shaping the discourse on COVID-19 in China, the USA and Britain (Zhang 2020). Others are aiming for the crisis to be an impetus for a new social contract to deal with our collective environmental crisis as well as the social crises the virus has brought forcefully into the social consciousness (Deben & Brown 2020; Harvey 2020; Monbiot 2020). To constructively use Polanyian theory to explain these issues, and more, it is important to put forward a credible and clear explanation of Polanyi's thought and its contemporary value. This is something I believe this thesis has achieved.

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Appendix

Life is man's missed opportunity.

Karl Polanyi, 1954

A.1 Polanyi's Affinity With Hegel

Brich mit dem Frieden in Dir

Brich mit den Werte der Welt

Besseres nicht, als di-e Zeit

Aber auf's Beste zu sein

Break with the peace within you

Break with the values of the world

You cannot be better than the times

But to be of the best[246]

My general reading of Polanyi's work led me to conclude that although consciousness, dialectics, and Christianity were all important concepts for Polanyi's main thesis they have been left relatively unexplored by recent Polanyian literature. The importance of these themes for Polanyi and their overlap with Hegelian thinking led me to believe that Hegel was an important influence on Polanyi even though references to Hegel in Polanyi's main works were few. Polanyi-Levitt (Ed.) (1990) was especially important in helping me confirm the importance of Hegel to Polanyi. Although a thorough investigation of Hegel's influence on Polanyi is beyond the scope of this thesis, and would be worth a stand-alone DPhil project, I hope in this section to demonstrate Polanyi's affinity with Hegel.

Revelation, Synthesis and Transcendence

In Polanyi-Levitt (Ed.) (1990) there are a small number of explicit references to Polanyi's similarities with Hegel. Firstly, and most importantly for my argument that Polanyi's idea of consciousness is related to Hegel, Rotstein (1990) argues 'what Polanyi calls "revelations" – fateful unveilings of the elements of the human condition…are reminiscent of the Hegelian

[246] The quotation comes from Polanyi-Levitt (1990), although it is from Hegel it is 'not exactly as written by Hegel, but exactly as recollected by Karl Polanyi, and as written in his handwriting'. Polanyi-Levitt (1990) states Polanyi cited this quotation many times (p.253). The translation also comes from Polanyi-Levitt (1990).

"moments" where consciousness advances to the higher levels of self-consciousness…' (p.106). For Polanyi these 'revelations' were 'the three constitutive facts in consciousness of Western man: knowledge of death, knowledge of freedom, knowledge of society' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.267) and they came from three sources:

> 'The first, according to Jewish legend, was revealed in the Old Testament story. The second was revealed through the discovery of the uniqueness of the person in the teachings of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament. The third revelation came to us through living in industrial society…' (*Ibid*).

Polanyi argues, through Robert Owen, that 'the "individualization" of man on the part of Christianity…' and 'the freedom we gained through the teachings of Jesus was inapplicable to a complex society…'. The only way to maintain this freedom and individuality was to transcend current industrial civilisation to a 'cooperative commonwealth'. Polanyi argued that the third revelation – the discovery of society was '…either the end or the rebirth of freedom' (*Ibid*, p.268) the end of freedom in fascism or the re-birth in socialism (*Ibid*). This argument mirrors the Hegelian dialectical process I argue stems from the double movement concept, but brings it from the social/political level to a philosophical/religious level. I suggest this demonstrates Polanyi's affinity with Hegel as it demonstrates shared concerns with freedom at multiple levels. For Hegel:

> 'The goal of history is to achieve consciousness of, and thus to realize, freedom at all levels of human existence - the political, social, economic, religious, aesthetic, and philosophical levels' (Houlgate 1990, p.79).

This dialectic argument of a synthesis of the Old Testament and the New Testament transcends Christianity but preserves '"all that is truly valuable in Christianity"' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.267) and elevates those values to the whole of society as they 'cease to be separated from man' (*Ibid*). This argument is evidenced in Polanyi-Levitt (Ed.) (1990) in a letter from Polanyi to Polanyi-Levitt which states '[*The Great Transformation*] ends up with the formulation of the new concept of freedom, the reform of human consciousness, the transcending of Christianity' (p.7).

Despite the importance of Christian values and the freedom at the heart of the teaching of Jesus the problem for Polanyi was that the 'Gospels did not any more suffice' (Polanyi 2001 [1944] p.267)

for a complex industrial society. This I argue can be seen in terms of Hegel's argument of 'freedom' and 'positivity' in religion (Avineri, 1972). According to Avineri (1972):

> 'By 'positivity' Hegel means a religious system which lays down a set of rules and regulations which the believer has to follow not because each individual act of behaviour represents for him the expression of his own inner conviction and free moral choice, but because it has been so established, set down and 'posited' for him by the institutions of religion' (p.14).

Hegel's '…specific historical problem follows from these criteria…firstly, how did it happen that Christianity, which began as an attempt at emancipation from 'positive' Old Testament Judaism, ended up with an ecclesiastical establishment at least as 'positive' as the old Mosaic Hebrew law…' (*Ibid*). Polanyi (1909a) follows this logic[247] and argues this process repeated itself in modern times where the freedom of Jesus's[248] teaching was lost to the working class as the capitalist class institutionalises religion '…to a state-religion precisely as the Roman empire did with the militant religion of the rebellious slaves in Christianity' (p.2). Christianity is no longer a tool for slaves to break their chains but becomes a tool for the oppressor to re-make them – a 'positivist' religion.[249] To preserve the morals of the teachings of Jesus on human freedom, society must transcend capitalism to socialism.

This argument explains why religion was one on the numerous spheres in society Polanyi argues articulates a countermovement to the self-regulating market process, yet it also suggests something more – that within the religious countermovement there is a further double movement. One side aims to institutionalise religion to make it compatible to the needs of capitalism while the other side emphasises religion's emancipatory potential. This suggests something that Polanyi does not articulate – that the double movement works 'all the way down', by which I mean the double movement exists within each countermovement and within each individual's mind. This seems

[247] In *Christianity and Economic Life* Polanyi argues 'Jewish society was a theocracy' (Polanyi 1937b, Loc.3738-41) and in ancient Jewish society 'the whole of society was justified by its positive reference to the will of God' (Loc.3772-77). Polanyi (1937b) argues that Jesus rejected this as 'For him society consisted essentially of individual human beings and the will of God was concerned with the relation of these individuals to one another' (Loc.3738-41).
[248] 'Karl Polanyi throughout his life admired…revolutionaries of all time including, according to Ilona's memoir, the foremost of them all, Jesus of Nazareth' (Polanyi-Levitt & Mendell 1987, pp.16-17).
[249] As Polanyi (n.dD) states '…with the Jews, the whole of society was justified by its positive reference to the will of God'

feasible as the battle for transcendence is not simply on the level of political institutions but in human consciousness itself. Each individual may be experiencing an internal contradiction of the potential individual benefits they may be able to amass in the self-regulating market with the knowledge that personal and social relations should not be reduced to market transactions. What Polanyi's theory seems to suggest is that the '...two organizing principles in society...' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.138) stem from this human contradiction, most clearly played out in religion.[250] The solution to this contradiction is when each individual understands the contradiction within them and sees that it can be solved with a transcendence to socialism.

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A worthwhile adjunct here is to consider a possible answer to a question/critique put to Polanyi by Peter Drucker quoted in Dale (2016a, Loc.2841). Drucker writes that Polanyi's 'premise that a society must collapse if it functions at less than 100% efficiency cannot be maintained'.[251] It is not clear exactly what words of Polanyi Drucker is referring to nor whether Polanyi explicitly said that a society must collapse if it functions at less than *100%* efficiency. However Dale (2016a, Loc.2841) puts the quotation into context of Polanyi's argument that intervening in the economy tends to destroy the self-regulated market mechanism which then destroys society.

While it is clearly true that if the economy is conceptualised as a machine it is able to work at any level of efficiency and may only destroy society if it becomes so inefficient that it is unable to provide society with basic needs. However if one conceptualises the economy and society as a functioning whole and not as a machine but as a collective consciousness[252] it becomes clearer how even basic protective measures may destroy the rationale of the self-regulating market and destroy the system. This is because protection introduces, not mechanical inefficiency, but a contradiction

[250] But also played out in economics and politics (see ecovillage chapter on the idea of the double movement working 'all the way down').
[251] From, Correspondence: Karl Polanyi, 1945, page 7 of Peter Drucker's letter to Polanyi http://www.concordia.ca/research/polanyi/archive.html (Accessed 10/04/2019)
[252] Similar to the Hegelian idea that 'the body politic lives in every individual's consciousness and in the collective imagination' (Avineri 1972, p.20). Polanyi (1947b) argues that in socialism 'imagination is free again to create and shape' society (p.102). Polanyi (2001) argues 'The form in which the nascent reality came to our consciousness was political economy. Its amazing regularities and stunning contradictions had to be fitted into the scheme of philosophy and theology in order to be assimilated to human meanings' (p.88).

in an ideology. When the state protects society from the self-regulating market it destroys the belief within the collective consciousness that the self-regulating market is the clear moral way to organise society. It is questionable how long each individual can live within this system of contradiction without aiming to reconcile it. One side may argue that greed and selfishness is a moral good for society because it results in a greater collective gain and by following those instincts, you are performing a moral activity for society as a whole, whilst the other argues for the protection of your fellow brothers and sisters from the very thing that some argue creates the greater good. This double movement in each individual consciousness and the collective consciousness of society is clearly played out in Christian ideas as one highly significant, both historically and in terms of power, place in society that articulates a collective brotherhood.[253] Polanyi (n.dA) argues the intervention in the market 'is a reaction of society as a whole' which comes from diverse parts of society including 'from organs of moral life or public opinion such as churches' (p.3).[254] Interventions are therefore not just economic that might reduce economic efficiency, they are much more broadly conceived. The importance of the Church as a countermovement to the self-regulating market is why Polanyi argues fascism attacks the Church:

> '…the churches, though predominantly reactionary, are unconsciously bearing witness to that Christian content which they have in common with Socialism. Thus, not in spite of its antagonism to Marxian Socialism, but in consequence of it, is National-Socialism attacking them' (Polanyi 1933b, p.361).

Polanyi's solution to the double movement contradiction is of course its transcendence to socialism, which also transcends Christianity but keeps '"all that is truly valuable…' (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.267) of Christianity.

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[253] Christianity is also within the double movement contradiction as parts of society aim to make it compatible with the self-regulating market.
[254] Also: 'For religion or government may be as important for the structure and functioning of the economy as monetary institutions or the availability of tools and machines themselves that lighten the toil of labour' (Polanyi 1957a, p.250).

Although Christianity is important to Polanyi, it seems clear that it is not the institutionalised positivist Christianity that is important, but the emancipatory values within Christianity. As Rotstein (1990) argues:

> 'For Polanyi, man was essentially a religious being, a term that should be understood in a very broad sense. He saw it as central to man's nature to invest the world with meaning and to locate his own person and the import of his life within such a universe' (p.99).

This suggests that the transcendence of Christianity could equally be conceived as the transcendence of any positivist religion, keeping the emancipatory values but doing away with the disciplinary and hierarchical institutions. This may also show an affinity towards Hegel's philosophy of religion, in which '…he sought to integrate all the world religions into his own grandiose metaphysical system' (Dumoulin 1981, p.460). In fact Rotstein (1990) argues that Polanyi's idea of '"the reality of society"…is a subtle, metaphysical doctrine…' (p.101).

Ultimately the goal of Polanyi is to achieve freedom in a complex society:

> 'As long as he is true to his task of creating more abundant freedom for all, he need not fear that either power or planning will turn against him and destroy the freedom he is building by their instrumentality. This is the meaning of freedom in a complex society; it gives us all the certainty that we need' (Polanyi 2001 [1944] p.268).

I argue this freedom is created through individual and societal consciousness of its own freedom similar to Hegel's goal of 'selfconsciousness' (Houlgate 1990, p.79). This is done through the 'slave-mentality' of Christianity which for both Polanyi and Hegel '…yielded a sensitivity for the human condition in general and thus…served as a basis for a world culture' (Rauch & Sherman 1999, pp.119-20).[255] For Polanyi, this world culture is only achievable in socialism.[256]

The State, Corporations and Guild Socialism.

In Polanyi-Levitt (Ed.) (1990), Somers (1990) argues that;

[255] For Polanyi the proletariat is a class celebrated 'for its status as the universally oppressed class which, in Christ-like suffering, personifies the promise of redemption' (Dale 2016a, Loc.1159). Polanyi (1933b) argues Hegel was 'emotionally anti-nationalist' (p.383).

[256] This is similar to the beliefs I encountered at the ecovillages that I discuss more in Chapter 4.

> ‘In the post-war climate, Polanyi’s invocation of the state as guarantor of freedom was shocking in that it smacked of the “heavy hand of Hegel”’ (p.157).

Polanyi believed that the state was a necessary part of the future of humanity. Block & Somers (2014) argue that the implicit implication of Polanyi’s theory is that the Marxist idea that the state could ‘wither away’ was ‘…a parallel utopian fantasy to that of the self-regulating market’ (p.26). Polanyi (1947a) is in fact explicit on this point:

> ‘On general grounds, the Communist's expectation of the “withering away of the State” seems to me to combine elements of liberal utopianism with practical indifference to institutional freedoms. As regards the withering State, it is impossible to deny that industrial society is complex society, and no complex society can exist without organized power at the center’ (p.116).

For Hegel the state was equally an important part of the progress of humanity. Avineri (1972) argues that for Hegel ‘…the very existence of the state is part of a divine strategy, not a merely human arbitrary artefact’ (p.177). While Polanyi may or may not have believed that the state is part of a divine strategy, he clearly believes it is necessary and it ought to contain religious values. Furthermore, according to Avineri (1972) Hegel argues ‘Only in the sphere of the state does reason become conscious of itself’ (p.178). This echoes Polanyi’s argument that socialism is consciousness of the individual and the species as a whole. ‘The reform of human consciousness’ (Polanyi-Levitt, (Ed.) 1990, p.7) is found through a development of the consciousness of each individual and the consciousness of society due to the negative effects of the self-regulating market in industrialised society on individuals and society as a whole.

The consciousness individuals must gain is a Hegelian consciousness that ‘…I am fulfilled through my living in communion with other human beings…’ (Avineri, 1972, 179) or, in Polanyi’s words that the desire of men is ‘to live together, by one another and for one another…’[257] (Polanyi-Levitt (Ed.), 1990, p.78). For Polanyi, socialism preserves this consciousness in the state much like Hegel describes:

> ‘…‘the consciousness that my interests, both substantive and particular, are contained and preserved in another’s (i.e. in the state’s) interests and ends, i.e. in the other’s relations to me as an individual’’ (Hegel, Philosophy of Right, § 268, In; Avineri (1972, p.179)).

[257] From a letter to his brother in 1923.

Polanyi, like Hegel, believed each individual's consciousness creates the state:

> '*We* are the state, *we* are capital – but in what way? We shall remain servants until we understand this' (Polanyi-Levitt 1990, p.78))[Emphasis in original].[258]

However the image of the socialist state is a specific one – a 'Christian-spirited guild life'.[259]

Hegel's ideas on corporatism were important for Polanyi here too. As Polanyi states Hegel '…used the generic term 'Korporation' as a synonym for "gild"' (n.dC, p.6).[260] Polanyi's general argument in *Marx on Corporatism* (n.dC) is that Hegel's corporatist system inherited ideas from the medieval guild system that unites society and the economy. However, Polanyi continues, as shown by Marx 'liberal capitalism' aims at the institutional separation of the political and economic sphere. Whereas Hegel's corporatism '…kept the old undemocratic "constitution" in being' (*Ibid*, p.4) 'liberal capitalism' offered 'progress' as '…it made the development of political democracy possible' (p.2). However this social/economic separation could '…only be transitory…' and 'Eventually both socialism and fascism offered opposite and mutually incompatible answers' (p.5) to re-embedding economy in society (or society in economy). For Polanyi there was '…a striking likeness in the political role of the corporations defended by Hegel and those advocated by almost all fascist movements of [the] period' as they were both the 'enemy of popular government…' (p.7). For Polanyi the dialectical solution of 'liberal capitalist' separation of the economy and society is corporatist; either a corporatist fascist solution that denies democracy or a guild socialist solution that enhances it:

> '…what Marx here called the separation of the political and economic sphere in society has been now for some time recognised as the incompatibility of liberal capitalism and popular democracy. By eliminating the one or the other, the unity of society can be restored' (*Ibid*, p.7).

> 'In other words, while under socialism the unity of society is restored through the extension of political democracy at the economic sphere, fascism represented the diametrically opposite effort, to unify society by making an undemocratic industry the master of the State' (*Ibid*, p.8).

[258] *Ibid.*
[259] *Ibid*.
[260] Kinga-Koretta (2010) also argues 'Hegel's corporations look similar to medieval guilds' (p.8).

This becomes one of the conclusion of *The Great Transformation*[261] and demonstrates why Polanyi argues 'In order to comprehend German fascism, we must revert to Richardian England' (Polanyi 2001, p.31) when society and economy were separated. Hegel's importance was his demonstration of a system, that influenced fascists of the twentieth century, that unites society and economy. For Polanyi corporatism was also the answer but it had to be democratic in order to avoid the fascist turn.

Although Polanyi laments the influence of Hegel's corporatism on twentieth century fascism[262] it can be argued that Hegel's purposes in defending a corporatist system are similar to Polanyi's purposes in advocating a form of corporatism[263] in guild socialism. Kinga-Koretta (2010) for example argues:

> '…corporatism is the solution Hegel devises for guarding against the increased atomization of society that came about with the advent of the modern, highly institutionalized state, a social development which would ultimately endanger the very existence of that same state' (p.3).

Polanyi's adherence to guild socialism was to resolve the increased atomization of society that came about with the advent of the self-regulating market. Individuals in a market economy 'are not only isolated from one another, but they are in a manner separated from themselves' (Polanyi 1924-27, p.11). If left to its own devises, Polanyi believed the self-regulating market would ultimately endanger the existence of society itself. In fact Kinga-Koretta (2010) further argues that Hegel was also concerned with the harm the market may have on communities and this was one reason the corporations were important:

[261] It also suggests that for Polanyi fascism is more 'natural' than liberal capitalism as it unites society and economy, whereas liberal capitalism was the first time in human history these spheres were separated.
[262] Polanyi (1933b) argues the fascist interpretation of Hegel is distorted and extreme (p.372) and a mere 'caricature' which is 'deprived of revolutionary dynamics' (p.374). Polanyi (1933b) also suggests that fascist thought aims to undermine the Hegelian idea that 'the State is itself…a person' in order to 'eliminate the concept of freedom' and 'self-realisation' from Hegel's philosophy, which leads to 'the world of man' becoming 'a helpless body devoid of consciousness' (p.376).
[263] 'His daughter Kari Polanyi-Levitt characterises his socialism as "neither that of traditional European social democracy, nor that of centralised communist planning" but more of "the populist, syndicalist, quasi-anarchist, and corporativist" variety' (Dale 2016a, Loc.140-46).

> ‘Hegel re-invents sub-state level welfare communities, which he sees as acting more efficiently in protecting against the injuries inherent in the market than the state could do through the external organ of the police’ (p.9).

Hegel’s corporations were also ‘envisaged as adding a function that relates to morality’ (*Ibid*). Through them ‘“*the ethical returns* to civil society as an immanent principle”’ (Philosophy of Right § p.249, quoted in Kinga-Koretta 2010, p.9). One of Polanyi’s key concerns was bringing morality and ethics back into society. As Polanyi (1924-1927) argues ‘..the individual in a market economy…neither knows nor is able to ascertain the effects of his individual acts upon others…’ and that this ‘is a hindrance to the full realisation of personality’ (p.11). Polanyi (1924-27) states the ‘…moral value of social organisation depends on the degree to which it helps individual responsibility to be realised in the social sphere’ (p.12). This language echoes Hegel’s aim of individual freedom. Both Polanyi and Hegel are aiming for a social system that can guarantee individual freedom during a time in which society was beginning (or had already been through) a great transformation that stripped and atomised the individual from his or her social context. However, for Polanyi, this freedom necessitated representative democracy (Polanyi,1924-1927, p.12)[264] as well as a corporatist guild socialist system (Dale 2016a, Loc.567-72).

Further, links between Hegel and Polanyi include drawing on the ancient polis to synthesise a modern society enmeshed in social relations. According to Dale (2016a), Polanyi adored the Greeks and ‘was well versed…in nineteenth-century German Romantic philosophy, a current that envisioned ancient Greece as a model of a fully realised, integrated society’ (Loc. 4278). Polanyi ‘idealised ancient Greece as a non-alienated culture, one that could serve as an instrument of criticism of the present and a model of integrity and synthesis for the future’ (*Ibid*).[265] This shows

[264] Although there may be a ‘non-democratic’ role for a King in appointing members to the Senate: ‘The Senate – partly nominated by the King, partly elected by the Chambers – is the co-ordinating body; it has a suspensory veto against the decisions of the Chambers in case of a conflict between them’ (Polanyi 1934e, p.503).

[265] In *TGT* Polanyi argues ‘The classical economists themselves were far from unconscious…’ of the need to re-integrate ‘society into the human world’ (Polanyi 2001 [1944], p.131).

clear affinity to Hegel's ''state'…[as] an attempted re-statement of an ancient political ideal in modern circumstances' (Kinga-Koretta 2010, p.12).

In addition, Polanyi (1927) argues 'Socialism…must always be thought of as the solidary life form, as the living family extended to humanity' (In; Cangiani, & Thomasberger, (Eds.) 2018, Loc.1017-18). Polanyi (1927) also suggests 'we will have only attained the highest stage of social freedom when the social relations of human beings to each other become clear and transparent, as they are in fact in a family or in a communist community' (*Ibid,* Loc.841-42). The family structure[266] as a conscious socialist structure resembles Hegel's concept of the family:

> '…in a family, one's frame of mind is to have self-consciousness of one's individuality within this unity as the absolute essence of oneself, with the result that one is in it not as an independent person but as a member' (PR § 158).

In Hegel's schema, family '…transcends a relation of exchange or mutual subordination to the other's needs'(Hutchings 2017, p.101), 'it is a sphere of ethical life in which freedom is experienced through mutual identification with a whole that transcends any particular member' (*Ibid,* pp.103-4). These themes are exactly the themes Polanyi explores in connection with a socialist transcendence. Of course in Hegel's schema family is mediated by civil society and the state while in Polanyi's schema the state, civil society and family seem to be synthesised into a socialist system.[267]

Finally both Hegel and Polanyi accepted the general argument on how the economy works derived from Adam Smith.[268] Although Polanyi, while accepting Smith's account of the economy, critiques its working as he argues it does not guarantee freedom:

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[266] Polanyi (1925) also suggests socialism needs an 'inner overview' similar to 'that of the head of a family regarding the needs of the family members' (In; Cangiani, & Thomasberger (Eds.) 2018, Loc.1349-52)
[267] Hegel's concept of the family views women as potentially inferior (Hutchings 2017), this is something that Polanyi does not argue for.
[268] For Hegel see; Kinga-Koretta (2010, p.6) and Avineri, (1972, p.5). For Polanyi see; Polanyi (1934-1946) and Dale (2010, Loc.1479), although Polanyi while accepting Smith's account of the economy critiques it.

> ‘The market-price is the unconscious result of the relationship of human individuals, who are unable to control this result. If human freedom is the freedom of a community to shape its own fate consciously capitalist society is essentially unfree’ (Polanyi 1938, p.4).

Neither the influence of Smith nor ancient Greece in isolation is particularly surprising as many theorists look towards the ancients for inspiration and read Smith to help understand the economy. However, in combination with other arguments explained in this section, they help to substantiate Polanyi’s affinity with Hegel.

Conclusion

Although many of the arguments I have presented in this section to show Polanyi’s affinity with Hegel may overlap with Marx’s arguments, there are sufficient differences to argue that Polanyi did not gain all his Hegelian ideas through Marx’s interpretation. The importance of the state as a guarantor of freedom is one and the maintenance of religion, broadly conceived, in the transcendence to socialism is a second. A third difference is Polanyi’s argument that dialectic progression is played out in society as a whole rather than mainly between two classes.[269]

This view is clearly argued by Polanyi (1934g) in *Fascism and Marxism Terminology*. Here Polanyi explicitly argues the ‘dialectical’ Hegelian ‘philosophical background’ (Loc.3237-38) of Marx needs to be emphasised in order to show the ‘limitations of the theory of class war in Marx’ (Loc.3301-10). The theoretical limitation is that ‘Class war is not an ultimate *reality*. The ultimate reality is the interest of society as a whole’ (*Ibid*, [Emphasis in original]). Polanyi expands by arguing that ‘Class interest is a motive power in society only in so far as, in an objective situation, it represents the interests of the whole of society’ (*Ibid*). Polanyi further argues, ‘the threat of disruption comes not from these opposing [class] interests. It comes from the deadlock. The distinction is vital’ (Loc.3312-17). Polanyi ends the article on this note:

[269] In the *TGT* and later writings, earlier writings put more emphasis on class based transcendence.

> ‘If a revision of Marxism is necessary…the task should neither be shirked nor delayed’ (Loc.3321-25)

Of course Polanyi was influenced by Marx – the necessity of society to transcend capitalism due to capitalism’s dehumanising tendencies and the importance of democracy, broadly conceived, demonstrates this clearly. However Polanyi also moves away from Marx in his rejection of economic determinism, believing morality plays a larger part in history than materialism suggests.[270] These factors are why I argue Polanyi’s theory should be seen as a synthesis of Marxist and Hegelian thought.[271]

A.2 Wet Market Pilot Studies & Survey Design.

At the beginning of the development of the survey, my aim was to find some robust statistical evidence for my hypothesis that people who regard food safety as more important would more likely buy from small-scale producers within a specific wet market context. However, I soon found that the situation was more complex than I had assumed and that narrow survey questions good for statistical analysis were not able to capture enough information and may not have had enough variation in order to do robust statistical analysis. As my survey developed during the research period, more open questions were added to better understand people’s views and the complexities of food buying, this made my research conform more closely to the extended case study method embracing ‘…not detachment but engagement as the road to knowledge’ (Burawoy 1998, p.5). I took daily research notes in order to track the developments of my survey. As my theory was new there were no surveys or data sets I could use to get the information I desired.

[270] As elaborated in Chapter 1.
[271] This is a similar view to Block & Somers (2014) ‘In his English years, Polanyi developed his own Hegelianized Marxist position that had distinct commonalities to arguments developed by Lukacs in *History and Class Consciousness* (1971 [1923])’ (p.73).

I conducted two small-scale pilot studies before engaging with the main research location in Chifeng city. These studies were designed to ascertain the feasibility of my project as well as help improve my questionnaire. The first pilot was held in Hangzhou in July 2017 at a relatively large indoor wet market (I estimated around 30 vegetable stalls, 40 fruit stalls and a handful of meat, egg and dry goods stalls). On the first day I informally talked to a small number of stall holders about their produce asking if it was self-grown. Four said all their produce was self-grown while the fifth said some was self-grown and some was bought. As two of these stall holders were selling a large variety of produce (perhaps 30 different things) I doubted that it could all be self-grown. However the fact they all claimed at least some produce was self-grown showed me the theory, that there was demand for peasant self-grown food, was credible.

A few days later I conducted a small survey of 13 consumers (picture 7). I attempted to design my survey to reject the hypothesis that consumers interested in buying safe food had no preference as to which sellers they bought from at the market. However from the first pilot study this idea faced problems. Firstly there was almost no variation in consumer's views that food safety was a 5 on the Likert scale (highest mark of importance to come to this wet market), and secondly consumers found it hard to estimate the percentage of produce bought from different types of sellers on that day. Consumers also often only bought a small amount of produce each day so estimations on how much was bought from different sellers may not reflect their general consumption preferences. These issues and the sometimes contradictory responses I was receiving suggested to me that more open questions might be more meaningful, it also suggested that I needed to create a more in-depth sellers survey. However I continued with the estimation of produce bought and re-worded the first Likert scale in the hope that this would increase variation and make the Likert scale capture what I was looking for.

One other main issue I wanted to test was whether the idea of small-scale peasant self-produced vegetables was something people understood in the same way as I did. I asked consumers what percentage of produce they estimated they normally bought from small-scale farmers ('农民自产自销') and middlemen ('中间商'). Although this question was difficult for participants to answer

in terms of percentages, and was therefore eventually scrapped from final analysis, interactions showed me the concepts contained were understandable. One example was a consumer telling me she only bought from one person at the market who grows his own produce. She then proceeded to ask the seller if his produce was self-grown, to which he answered 'yes'. Another consumer stated that all the sellers were middlemen here and there was no self-grown produce. Although this contradicted what the sellers had told me and the previous interaction it demonstrated the concept of self-grown produced was understood.

Some practical issues which this pilot study helped me to understand was firstly to be more specific with my questions. On a few occasions when I asked consumers why they came to this wet market to buy vegetables they stated it was traditional for Chinese people to buy at markets. This answer, I believe, was a specific answer to give to a foreigner and did not help to answer the questions I was looking at. Secondly, I realised more open ended questions may be necessary to gain more detailed information. Other issues included the large number of people who refused to take the survey or who only completed half of the survey, demonstrating to me that I needed to keep the survey as brief as possible. Finally I realised I needed larger font as a number of older participants told me they could not read the survey.

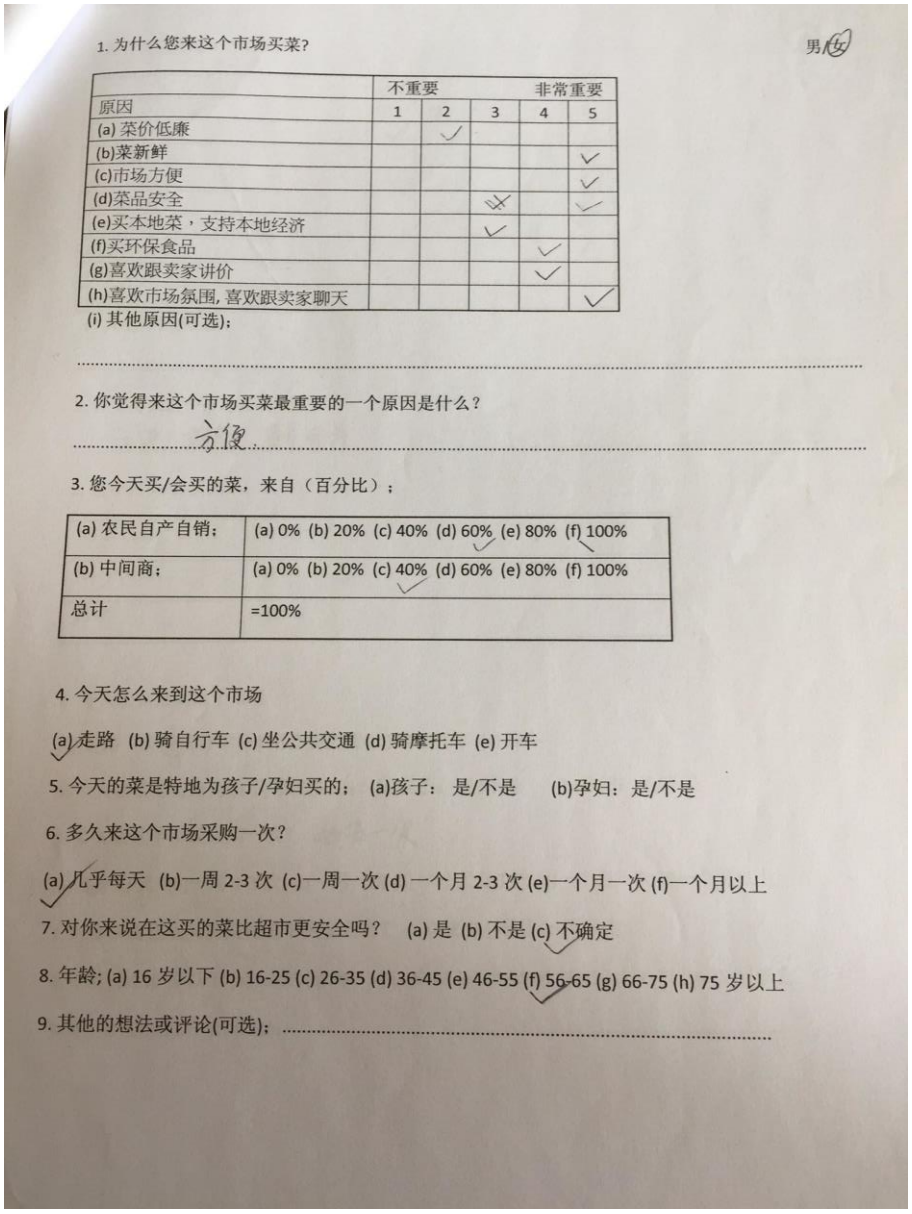
The Beijing pilot in August 2017 was of a large outdoor market on the outskirts of Beijing. I conducted this with help from a research assistant. The market was open every 1st, 6th, 11th, 16th, 21st, 26th and 31st of each month of the Luna calendar. The location of this market was close to small rural villages (15 to 20 minute bus journey) in which most houses had outdoor space which often grew vegetables. I conducted 8 seller surveys and 2 consumer surveys. The low number of surveys was due to the 37 degree heat which meant firstly, few people wanted to stop in the sun to talk, and secondly the heat was extremely draining personally.

Initially I was worried that sellers would not want to waste their time engaging in a survey when they could be selling. However, to my surprise the vast majority were happy to talk to me. My survey was relatively short, simple and informal which I believe fitted the context of the market. It was clear that there were different types of sellers at this market. Some had come with trucks full

of potatoes while others had come to sell a handful of cucumbers. This could be described as the 'one market, two products' approach, in which it is clear there are (at least) two types of sellers. One that might be selling small-scale leftover household produce and one that might be engaging in a more market driven selling process. Engaging one seller in conversation who had a handful of cucumbers and a handful of Chinese chives (things that I often saw being grown in the small gardens of the traditional style houses of the surrounding villages), he told me he grew his produce himself and only used chicken and sheep manure as fertiliser.

For the surveys I picked 3 sellers that looked like they were selling things they grew themselves (small amounts of limited produce), 4 that looked like they were selling things they had bought (three had trucks of potatoes, 1 had a truck of sweet potatoes) and 1 that was not clear (just had beans but a medium amount). The results generally confirmed my initial suspicions as 4 reported they had bought the produce (although the sweet potato seller stated the produce was self-grown ('自己种的')), and 4 stated they were self-grown. All those that stated their produce was bought stated it was bought directly from peasant farmers ('直接从农民') not middlemen('从中间商买的'). This pilot again suggested the concept of peasant self-grown produce was understood but also suggested that vegetables bought from middlemen could also be peasant self-grown produce, meaning I needed to potentially differentiate these two concepts further.

Picture 7. Hangzhou Consumer Survey Pilot Example;



1. 为什么您来这个市场买菜？ 男/女

原因	不重要 1	2	3	4	非常重要 5
(a) 菜价低廉		✓			
(b)菜新鲜					✓
(c)市场方便					✓
(d)菜品安全			✗		✓
(e)买本地菜，支持本地经济			✓		
(f)买环保食品				✓	
(g)喜欢跟卖家讲价				✓	
(h)喜欢市场氛围，喜欢跟卖家聊天					✓

(i) 其他原因(可选)：

.....

2. 你觉得来这个市场买菜最重要的一个原因是什么？

方便

.....

3. 您今天买/会买的菜，来自（百分比）：

(a) 农民自产自销：	(a) 0% (b) 20% (c) 40% (d) 60% (e) 80% (f) 100%
(b) 中间商：	(a) 0% (b) 20% (c) 40% (d) 60% (e) 80% (f) 100%
总计	=100%

4. 今天怎么来到这个市场

(a) 走路 (b) 骑自行车 (c) 坐公共交通 (d) 骑摩托车 (e) 开车

5. 今天的菜是特地为孩子/孕妇买的； (a)孩子： 是/不是 (b)孕妇：是/不是

6. 多久来这个市场采购一次？

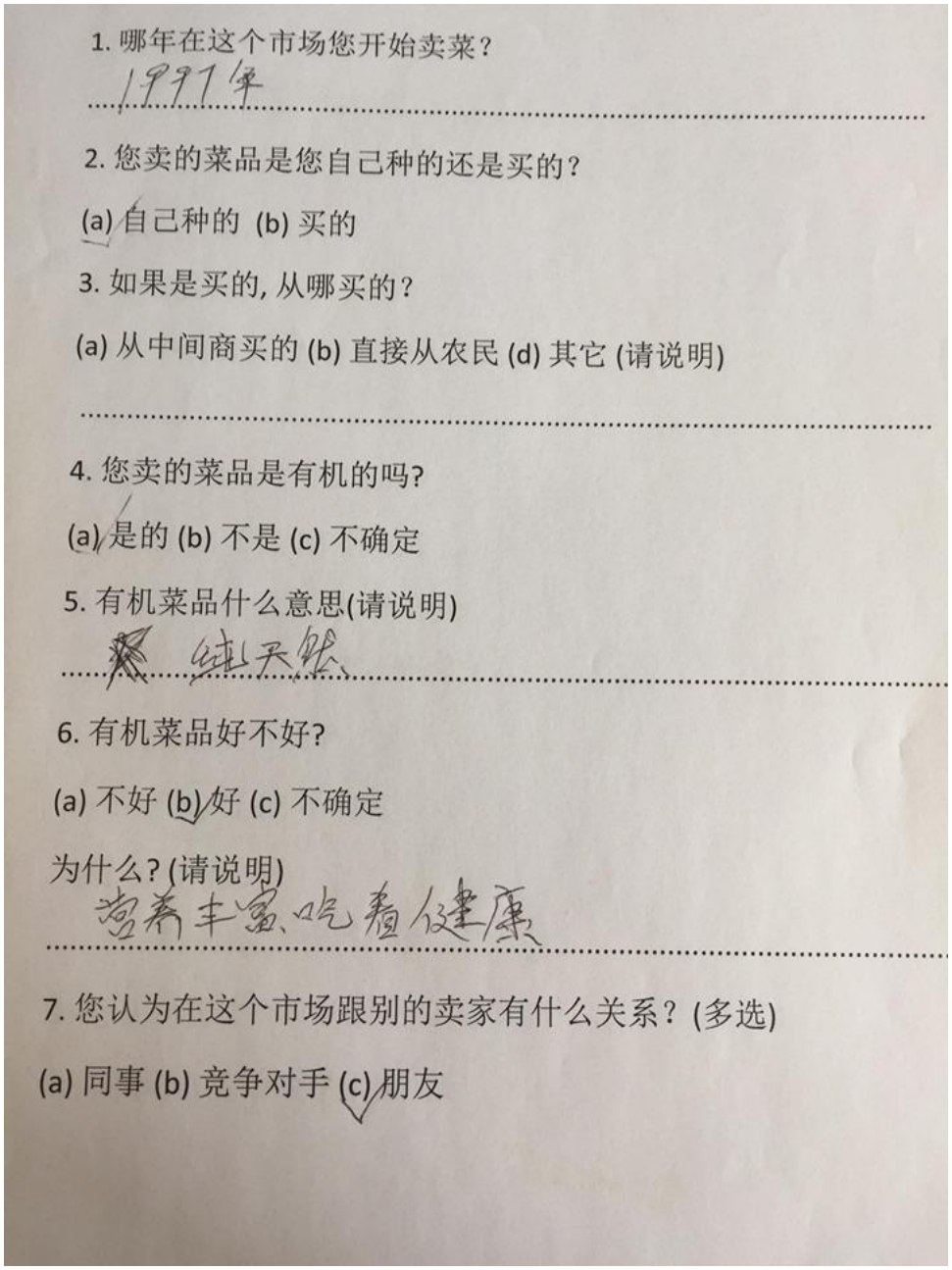
(a) 几乎每天 (b)一周 2-3 次 (c)一周一次 (d) 一个月 2-3 次 (e)一个月一次 (f)一个月以上

7. 对你来说在这买的菜比超市更安全吗？ (a) 是 (b) 不是 (c) 不确定

8. 年龄; (a) 16 岁以下 (b) 16-25 (c) 26-35 (d) 36-45 (e) 46-55 (f) 56-65 (g) 66-75 (h) 75 岁以上

9. 其他的想法或评论(可选)：.....

Picture 8. Beijing Pilot Seller Survey Example;


1. 哪年在这个市场您开始卖菜？
1991年
2. 您卖的菜品是您自己种的还是买的？
(a) 自己种的 (b) 买的
3. 如果是买的，从哪买的？
(a) 从中间商买的 (b) 直接从农民 (d) 其它 (请说明)
4. 您卖的菜品是有机的吗?
(a) 是的 (b) 不是 (c) 不确定
5. 有机菜品什么意思(请说明)
纯天然
6. 有机菜品好不好?
(a) 不好 (b) 好 (c) 不确定
为什么? (请说明)
营养丰富、吃着健康
7. 您认为在这个市场跟别的卖家有什么关系？(多选)
(a) 同事 (b) 竞争对手 (c) 朋友

A.3 Panels.

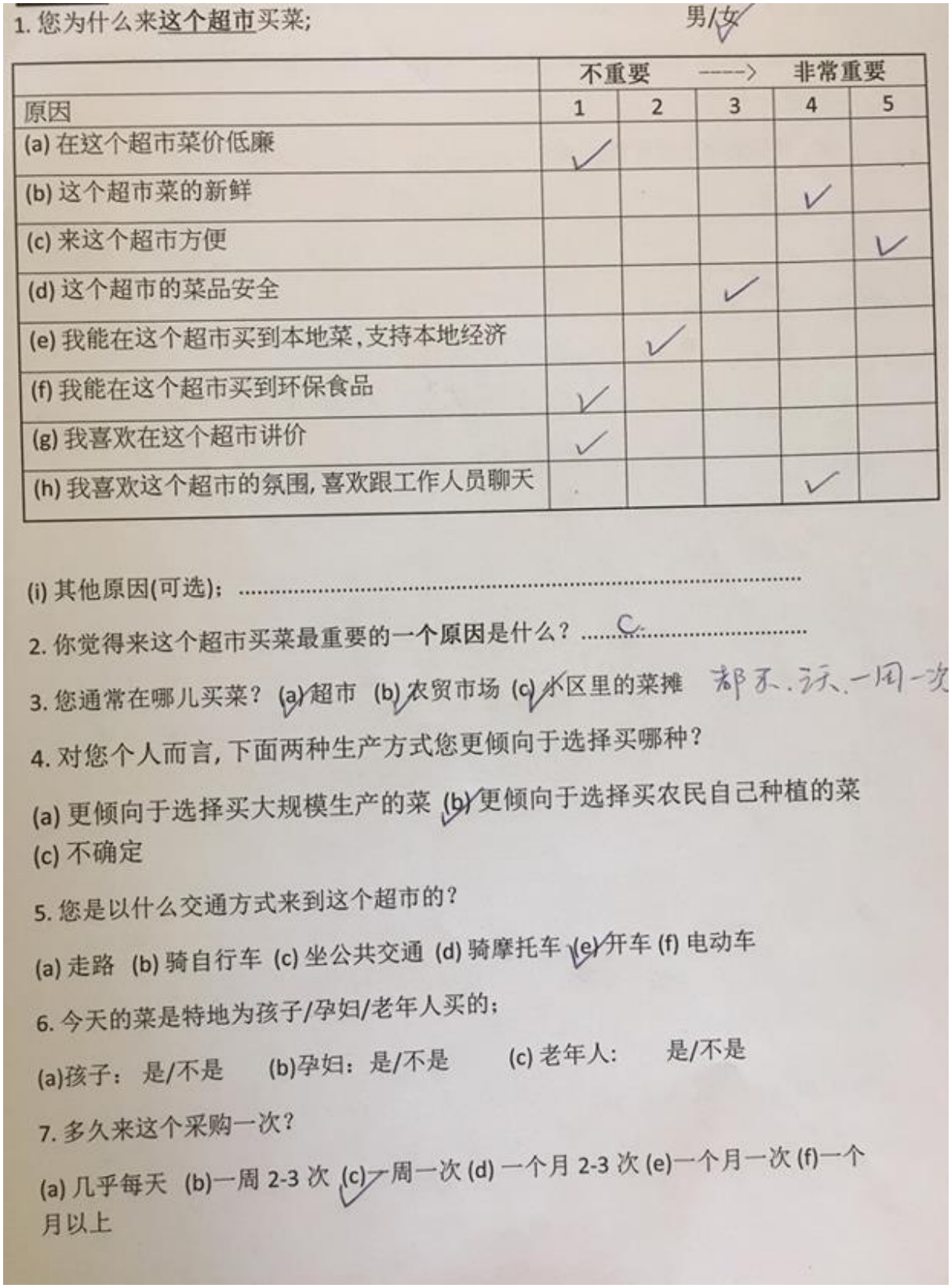
To further help me make sure my final questionnaire was understandable to my participants I conducted two small panels in Chifeng city (in Oxford I had also talked to a researcher, who had done similar research techniques in China, about my questionnaire). I was helped in the organisation of this by my Chifeng contact and the participants were friends and family. The total number of participants was 15. I gave each person a draft questionnaire and asked them to write comments on it concerning, mainly, any translation issues or unclear concepts. General comments,

such as people remarking that all the sellers will say they grow their produce themselves even though it is likely untrue, suggested the most important concepts of the questionnaire were things that were relevant to people in Chifeng city. I realised it may have been better to isolate each person during this process so they were not influenced by other people's comments, however the discussion the participants had with each other was also useful to me.

A.4 Walmart Chifeng.

To begin to ascertain if there are significant differences in consumption preferences between supermarket and wet market consumers I conducted a small survey outside a Chifeng Walmart. I asked 40 participants if they were more inclined to choose to buy large-scale produced vegetables ('更倾向于选择买大规模生产的菜'), more inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables ('更倾向于选择买农民自己种的菜'), or if they were not sure ('不确定'). Answers were similar to the wet market location showing an overwhelming preference for peasant self-grown produce. Out of the 37 that answered this question 33 replied they were more inclined to buy peasant self-grown vegetables or just over 89%, one stated 'not sure' and the remaining 3 replied they were more willing to choose to buy large scale produce.

Picture 9. Chifeng Walmart Survey Example;



1. 您为什么来这个超市买菜; 男/女

	不重要 ----> 非常重要				
原因	1	2	3	4	5
(a) 在这个超市菜价低廉	✓				
(b) 这个超市菜的新鲜				✓	
(c) 来这个超市方便					✓
(d) 这个超市的菜品安全			✓		
(e) 我能在这个超市买到本地菜，支持本地经济		✓			
(f) 我能在这个超市买到环保食品	✓				
(g) 我喜欢在这个超市讲价	✓				
(h) 我喜欢这个超市的氛围，喜欢跟工作人员聊天				✓	

(i) 其他原因(可选)：.....

2. 你觉得来这个超市买菜最重要的一个原因是什么？ C

3. 您通常在哪儿买菜？ (a) 超市 (b) 农贸市场 (c) 小区里的菜摊 都不，或一周一次

4. 对您个人而言，下面两种生产方式您更倾向于选择买哪种？

(a) 更倾向于选择买大规模生产的菜 (b) 更倾向于选择买农民自己种植的菜
(c) 不确定

5. 您是以什么交通方式来到这个超市的？

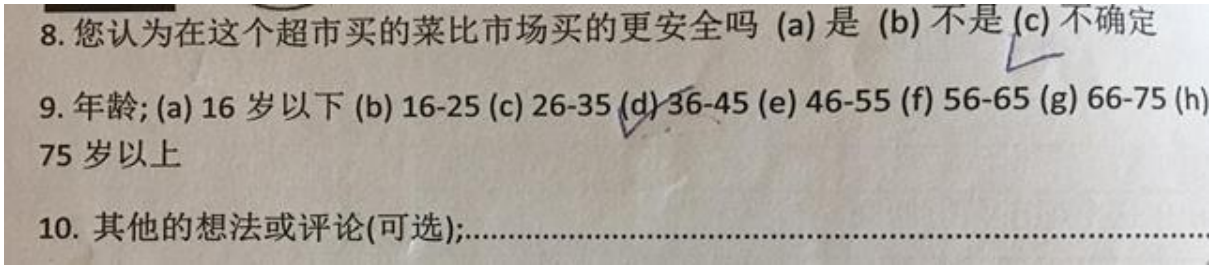
(a) 走路 (b) 骑自行车 (c) 坐公共交通 (d) 骑摩托车 (e) 开车 (f) 电动车

6. 今天的菜是特地为孩子/孕妇/老年人买的；

(a)孩子： 是/不是 (b)孕妇：是/不是 (c) 老年人： 是/不是

7. 多久来这个采购一次？

(a) 几乎每天 (b)一周 2-3 次 (c)一周一次 (d) 一个月 2-3 次 (e)一个月一次 (f)一个月以上


8. 您认为在这个超市买的菜比市场买的更安全吗 (a) 是 (b) 不是 (c) 不确定

9. 年龄; (a) 16 岁以下 (b) 16-25 (c) 26-35 (d) 36-45 (e) 46-55 (f) 56-65 (g) 66-75 (h) 75 岁以上

10. 其他的想法或评论(可选);.....

A.5 Fuzhou Wet Market.

To begin to ascertain if there are significant differences in consumption preferences in wet markets in different tier cities I conducted a small survey of a wet market in Fuzhou in summer 2018. With two Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University student volunteers we conducted 31 surveys. Again a large majority would prefer to choose peasant grown produce (67% 1dp) whereas 1 answered large scale produce (3%), and 10 answered not sure (32%). The not sure category included an 18 year old that said she just buys what her mum tells her when they go to the market together and a young man that says he does not often buy vegetables as he does not often cook.

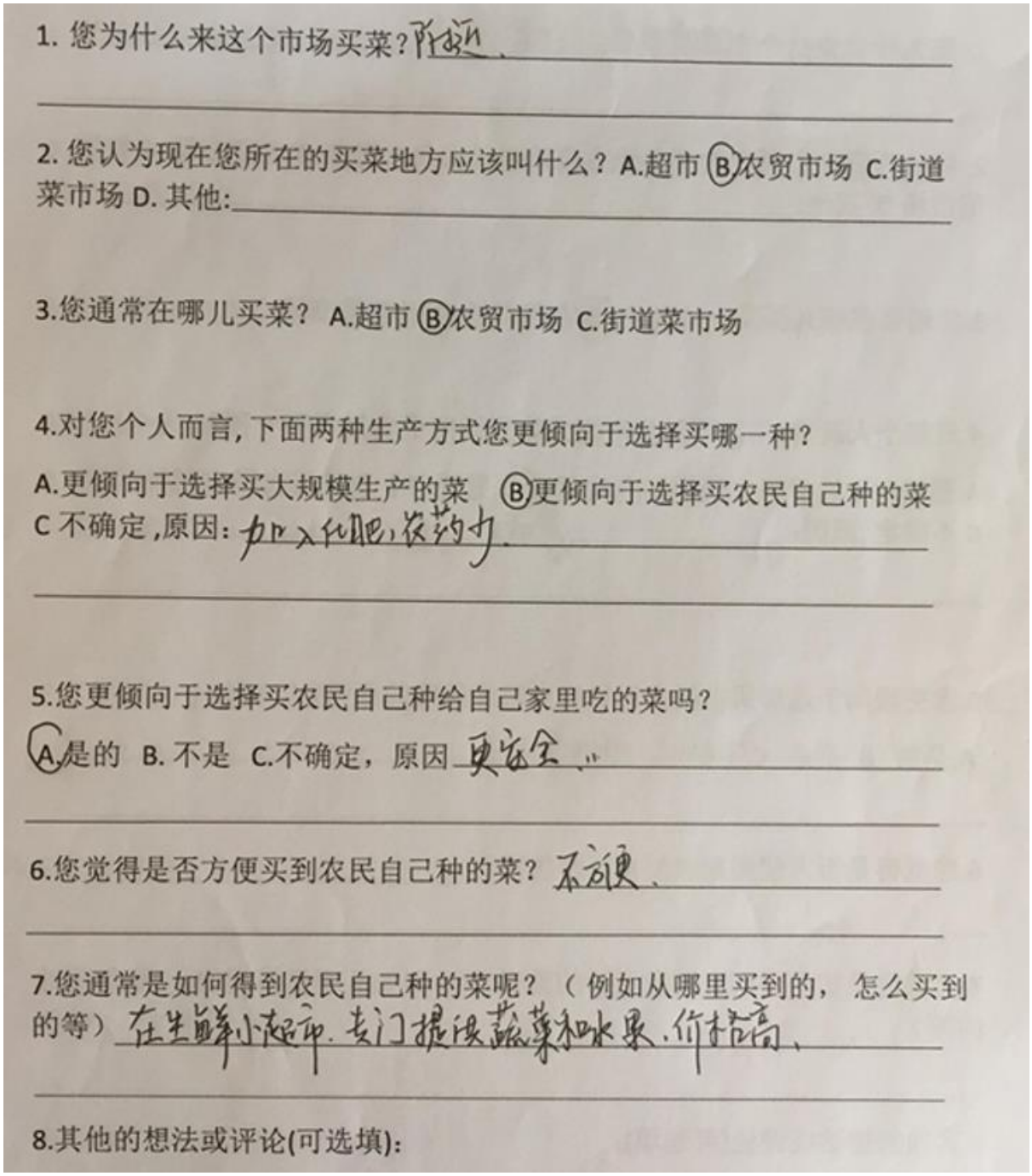
Asked to elaborate on their answers to this section one participant stated; '因为大规模生产的菜大多加入的化学添加物质较多, 农民自己种植的蔬菜农药添加较少', meaning a large amount of the mass-produced vegetables contain more chemical additives whereas peasant self-grown vegetables add fewer additives. Another stated; '没有加入激素，我认为他们卖的是有机蔬菜', meaning they don't add hormones and maybe they sell organic vegetables. A third suggested '农民的蔬菜更加安全，但是我认为就算在这里大多数蔬菜也都是大规模种植的，很多都来自批发市场', meaning peasant vegetables are safer but that most of the vegetables being sold here are from large scale production and are bought at the wholesale market. Further, one person commented peasant grown vegetables are naturally better ('农民种植的蔬菜自然更好') but in the big cities there is not very much, although they hope in the future there will be more. Another mentioned they were 'natural' ('天然的') and one directly commented that peasant self-grown vegetables used fewer agricultural chemicals/pesticides ('因为农药少'). Demonstrating the

connection between peasant self-grown produce and ideas of ‘safety’. Another important reason for choosing peasant self-grown produce was it was perceived to be fresher.

One comment from a participant who put forward ‘not sure’ suggested all the vegetables were from large scale production no matter if you bought them at the market or elsewhere (‘因为无论在蔬菜市场还是其他地方购买的蔬菜都存在大规模生产,自己也没有明确的想法’). However of the 8 seller surveys I conducted at this wet market (which was a relatively small informal market consisting of around 10 vegetable sellers and a handful of fruit stalls, fish stalls and meat stalls as well as a handful of non-food stalls), 4 stated their produce was self-grown. As some of these stalls that stated this were selling a very limited range of vegetables this seemed credible.

Further, when asked if the consumers would be more inclined to choose to buy peasant self-grown vegetables that were grown for peasant self-consumption(‘您更倾向于选择买农民自己种给自己家里吃的菜吗？’) 25 out of 31 answered yes (81% 1dp), 5 answered not sure (16%) and only 1 answered no (3%). This showed an increase in preference for peasant self-grown produce when asked in this way, mirroring the Chifeng study. Reasons for choosing produce that was peasant self-grown and produced for family consumption included that it was ‘safer’ suggested by 3 people, ‘healthier’ suggested by 2 people, that this produced used fewer (4 people) or no pesticides (3 people). Some participants however suggested this type of produce was hard to come by. The small Fuzhou wet market study suggests similar consumer preferences and similar reasons for these preferences are being exhibited in larger more developed cities than Chifeng, however more research is needed.

Picture 10. Fuzhou Wet Market Consumer Survey;



1. 您为什么来这个市场买菜？附近。

2. 您认为现在您所在的买菜地方应该叫什么？A.超市 (B)农贸市场 C.街道菜市场 D. 其他:

3.您通常在哪儿买菜？ A.超市 (B)农贸市场 C.街道菜市场

4.对您个人而言，下面两种生产方式您更倾向于选择买哪一种？

A.更倾向于选择买大规模生产的菜 (B)更倾向于选择买农民自己种的菜

C 不确定，原因：加入化肥，农药少。

5.您更倾向于选择买农民自己种给自己家里吃的菜吗？

(A)是的 B. 不是 C.不确定，原因更安全。

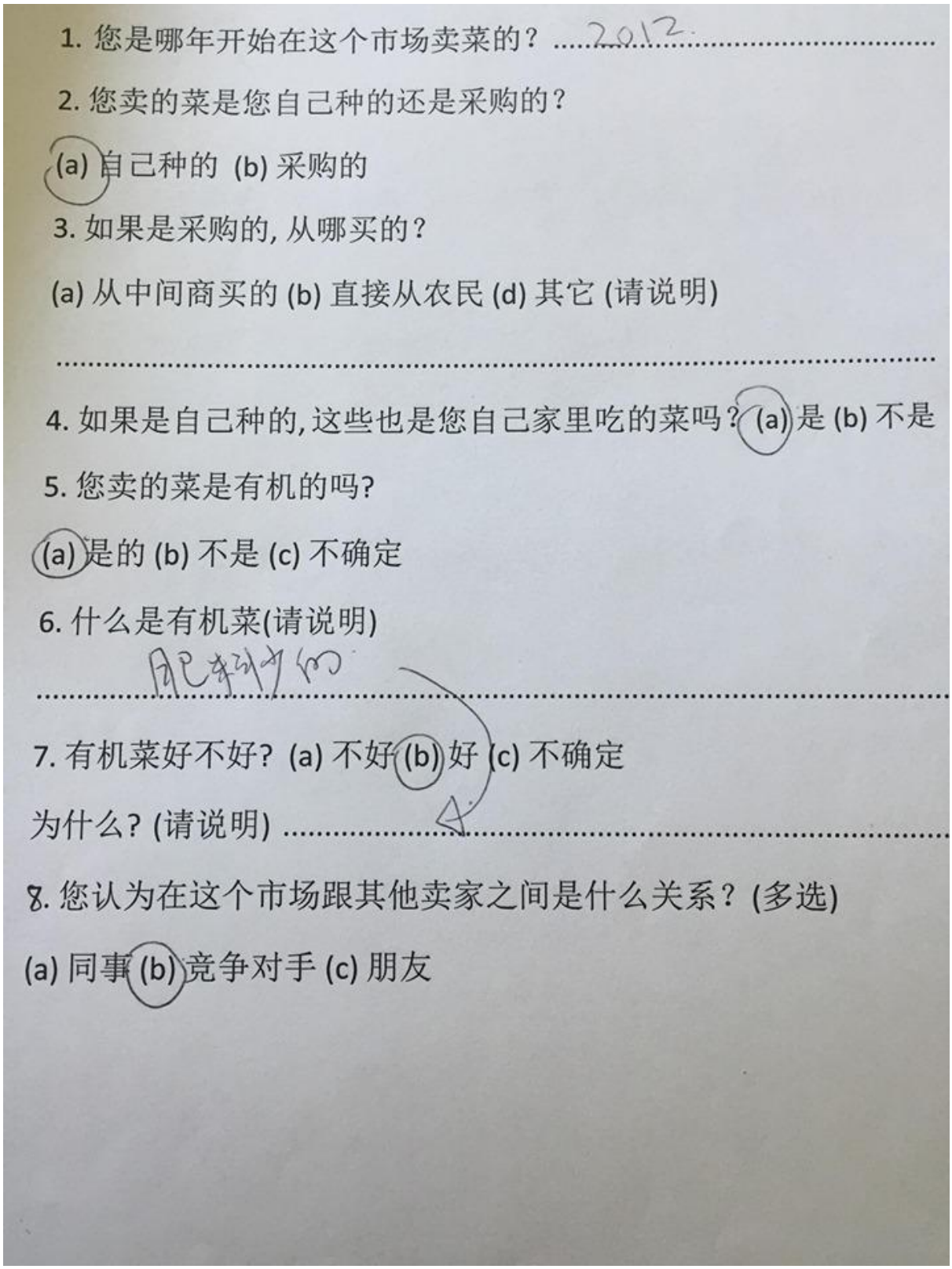
6.您觉得是否方便买到农民自己种的菜？不方便。

7.您通常是如何得到农民自己种的菜呢？（例如从哪里买到的，怎么买到的等）在生鲜小超市。专门提供蔬菜和水果，价格高。

8.其他的想法或评论(可选填)：

A.6 Chifeng Surveys.

Picture 11. Chifeng Seller Survey Example;


1. 您是哪年开始在这个市场卖菜的？ ....2012.....

2. 您卖的菜是您自己种的还是采购的？

(a) 自己种的 (b) 采购的

3. 如果是采购的, 从哪买的？

(a) 从中间商买的 (b) 直接从农民 (d) 其它 (请说明)

.....

4. 如果是自己种的, 这些也是您自己家里吃的菜吗？ (a) 是 (b) 不是

5. 您卖的菜是有机的吗?

(a) 是的 (b) 不是 (c) 不确定

6. 什么是有机菜(请说明)

.....

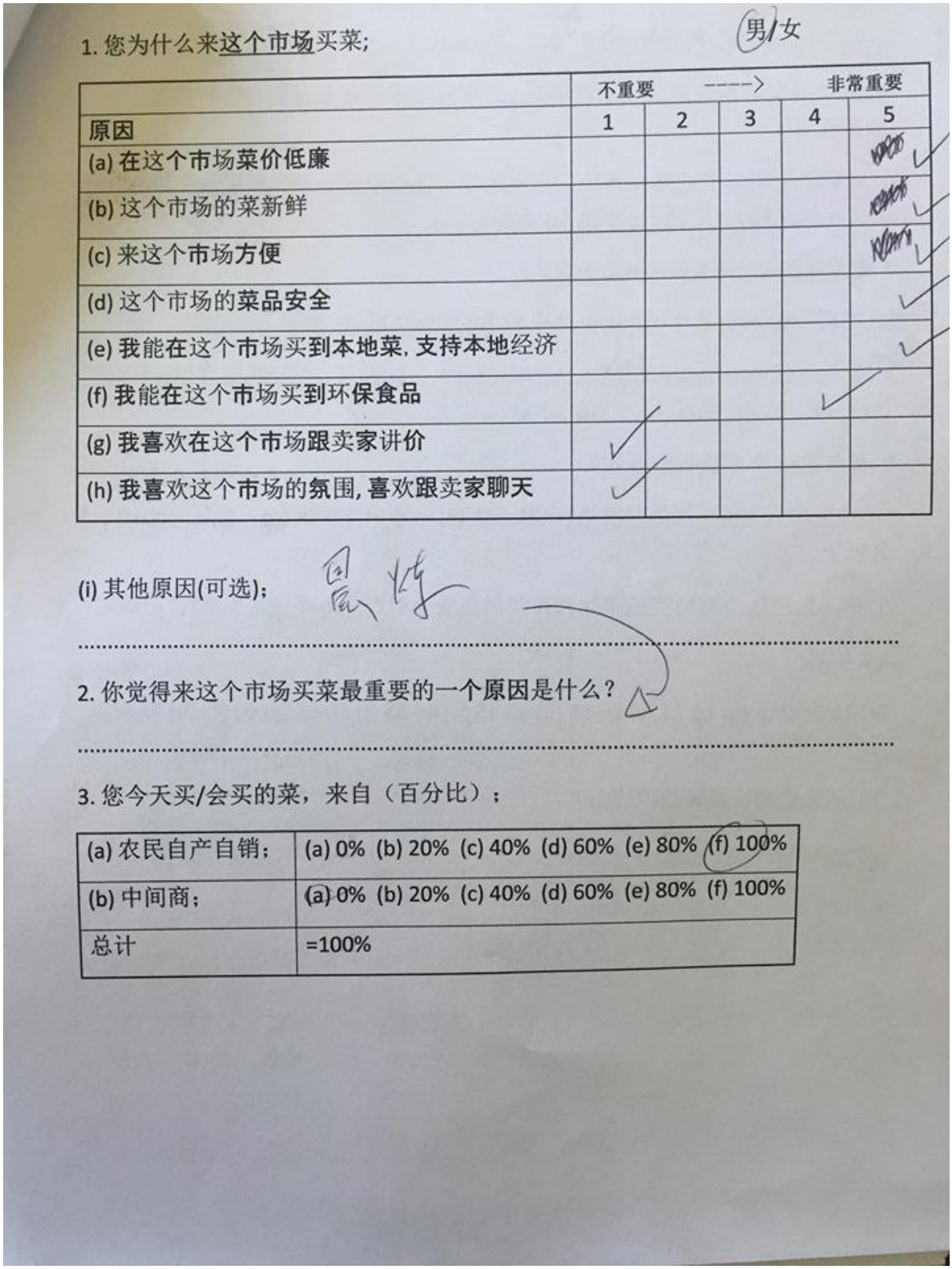
7. 有机菜好不好？ (a) 不好 (b) 好 (c) 不确定

为什么？ (请说明) .....

8. 您认为在这个市场跟其他卖家之间是什么关系？ (多选)

(a) 同事 (b) 竞争对手 (c) 朋友

Picture 12. Chifeng Consumer Survey p.1;



1. 您为什么来这个市场买菜;

男/女

	不重要 ----> 非常重要				
原因	1	2	3	4	5
(a) 在这个市场菜价低廉					✓
(b) 这个市场的菜新鲜					✓
(c) 来这个市场方便					✓
(d) 这个市场的菜品安全					✓
(e) 我能在这个市场买到本地菜, 支持本地经济					✓
(f) 我能在这个市场买到环保食品				✓	
(g) 我喜欢在这个市场跟卖家讲价	✓				
(h) 我喜欢这个市场的氛围, 喜欢跟卖家聊天	✓				

(i) 其他原因(可选): 回头

.....

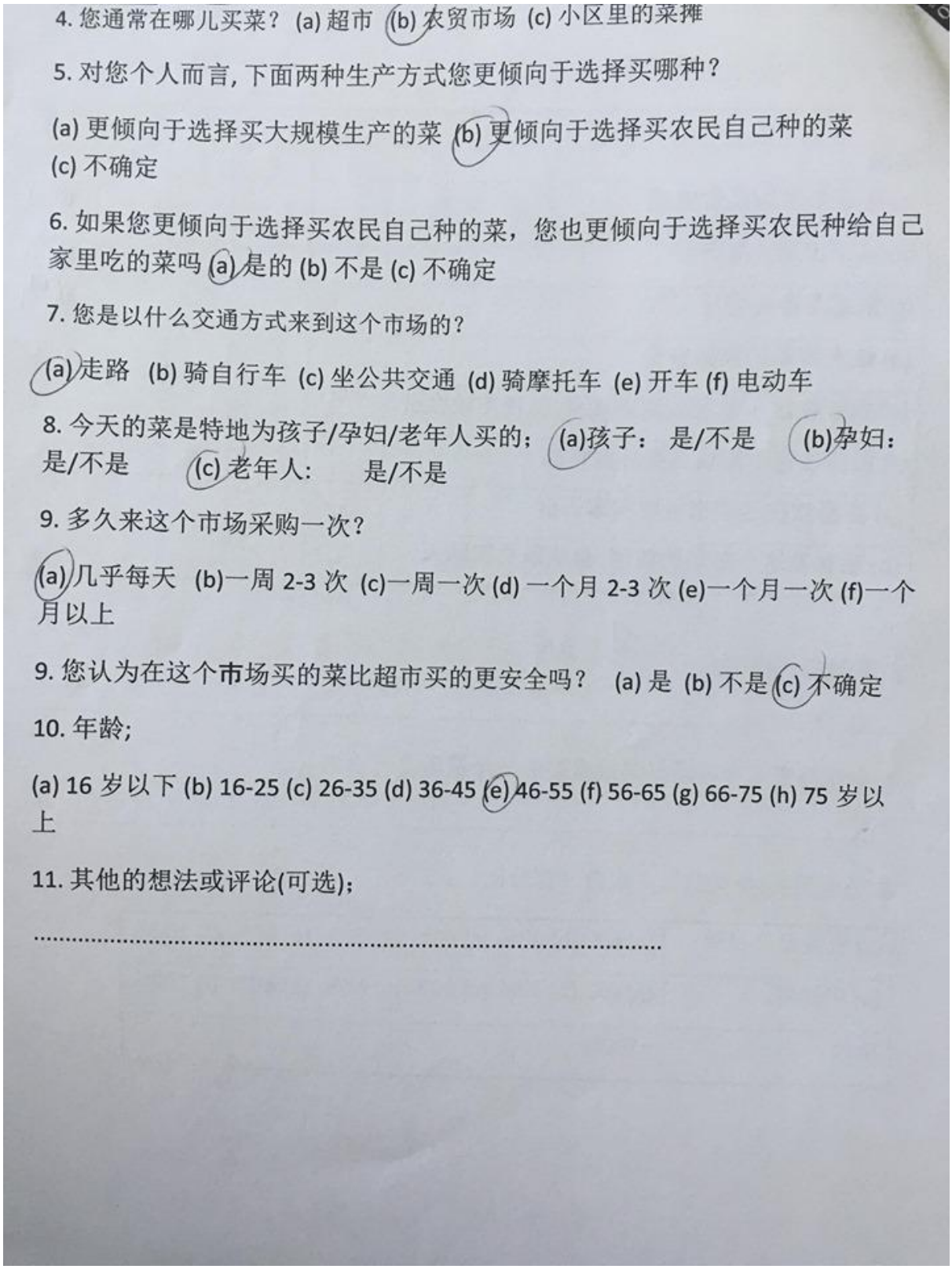
2. 你觉得来这个市场买菜最重要的一个原因是什么?

.....

3. 您今天买/会买的菜，来自（百分比）：

(a) 农民自产自销;	(a) 0% (b) 20% (c) 40% (d) 60% (e) 80% (f) 100%
(b) 中间商;	(a) 0% (b) 20% (c) 40% (d) 60% (e) 80% (f) 100%
总计	=100%

Picture 13. Chifeng Consumer Survey p.2;



4. 您通常在哪儿买菜？ (a) 超市 (b) 农贸市场 (c) 小区里的菜摊

5. 对您个人而言，下面两种生产方式您更倾向于选择买哪种？

(a) 更倾向于选择买大规模生产的菜 (b) 更倾向于选择买农民自己种的菜
(c) 不确定

6. 如果您更倾向于选择买农民自己种的菜，您也更倾向于选择买农民种给自己家里吃的菜吗 (a) 是的 (b) 不是 (c) 不确定

7. 您是以什么交通方式来到这个市场的？

(a) 走路 (b) 骑自行车 (c) 坐公共交通 (d) 骑摩托车 (e) 开车 (f) 电动车

8. 今天的菜是特地为孩子/孕妇/老年人买的；(a)孩子： 是/不是 (b)孕妇：是/不是 (c) 老年人: 是/不是

9. 多久来这个市场采购一次？

(a) 几乎每天 (b)一周 2-3 次 (c)一周一次 (d) 一个月 2-3 次 (e)一个月一次 (f)一个月以上

9. 您认为在这个市场买的菜比超市买的更安全吗？ (a) 是 (b) 不是 (c) 不确定

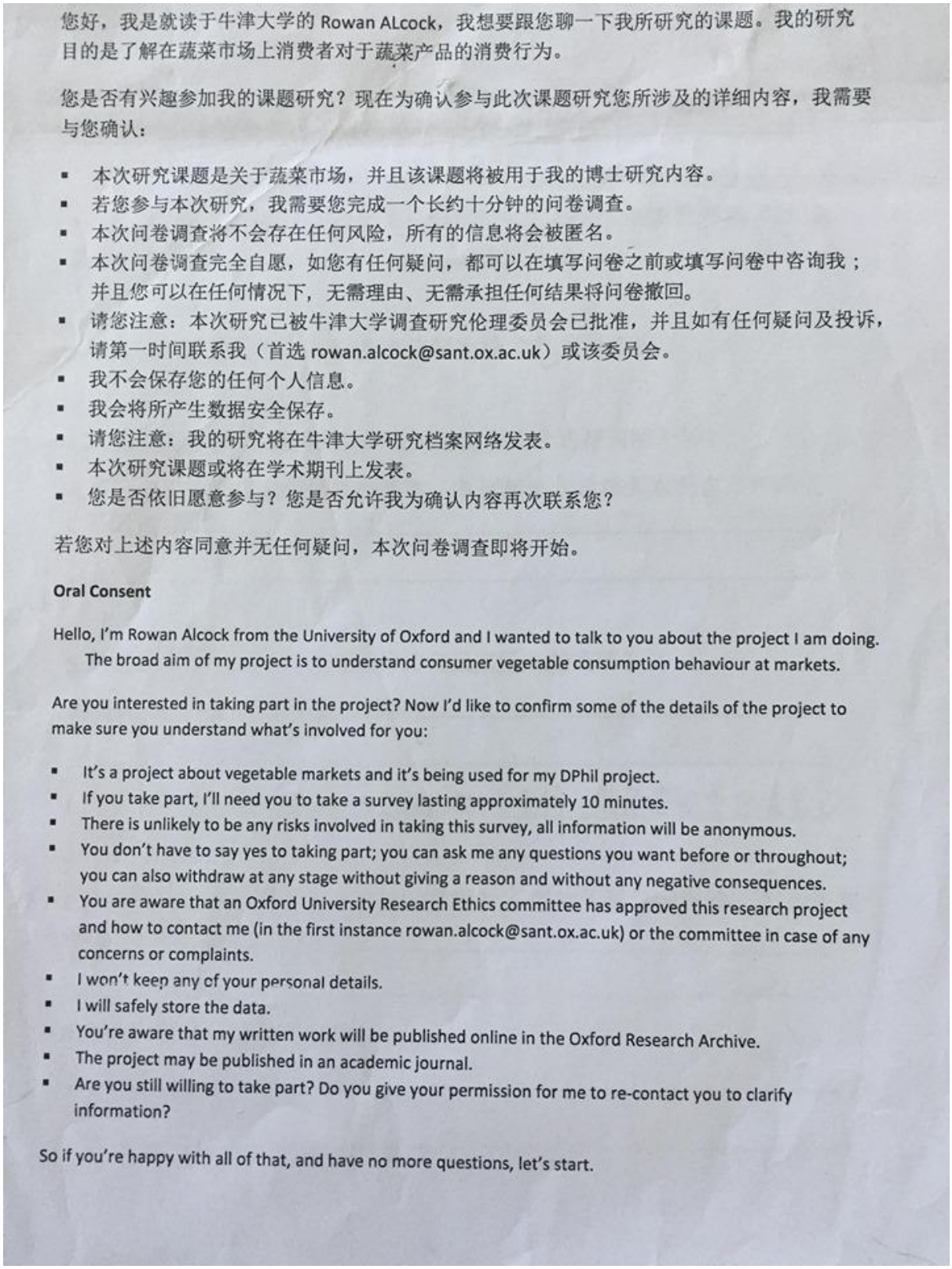
10. 年龄;

(a) 16 岁以下 (b) 16-25 (c) 26-35 (d) 36-45 (e) 46-55 (f) 56-65 (g) 66-75 (h) 75 岁以上

11. 其他的想法或评论(可选)；

.....

Picture 14. Oral Consent Form Wet Market;



您好，我是就读于牛津大学的 Rowan ALcock，我想要跟您聊一下我所研究的课题。我的研究目的是了解在蔬菜市场上消费者对于蔬菜产品的消费行为。

您是否有兴趣参加我的课题研究？现在为确认参与此次课题研究您所涉及的详细内容，我需要与您确认：

- 本次研究课题是关于蔬菜市场，并且该课题将被用于我的博士研究内容。
- 若您参与本次研究，我需要您完成一个长约十分钟的问卷调查。
- 本次问卷调查将不会存在任何风险，所有的信息将会被匿名。
- 本次问卷调查完全自愿，如您有任何疑问，都可以在填写问卷之前或填写问卷中咨询我；并且您可以在任何情况下，无需理由、无需承担任何结果将问卷撤回。
- 请您注意：本次研究已被牛津大学调查研究伦理委员会已批准，并且如有任何疑问及投诉，请第一时间联系我（首选 rowan.alcock@sant.ox.ac.uk）或该委员会。
- 我不会保存您的任何个人信息。
- 我会将所产生数据安全保存。
- 请您注意：我的研究将在牛津大学研究档案网络发表。
- 本次研究课题或将在学术期刊上发表。
- 您是否依旧愿意参与？您是否允许我为确认内容再次联系您？

若您对上述内容同意并无任何疑问，本次问卷调查即将开始。

Oral Consent

Hello, I'm Rowan Alcock from the University of Oxford and I wanted to talk to you about the project I am doing. The broad aim of my project is to understand consumer vegetable consumption behaviour at markets.

Are you interested in taking part in the project? Now I'd like to confirm some of the details of the project to make sure you understand what's involved for you:

- It's a project about vegetable markets and it's being used for my DPhil project.
- If you take part, I'll need you to take a survey lasting approximately 10 minutes.
- There is unlikely to be any risks involved in taking this survey, all information will be anonymous.
- You don't have to say yes to taking part; you can ask me any questions you want before or throughout; you can also withdraw at any stage without giving a reason and without any negative consequences.
- You are aware that an Oxford University Research Ethics committee has approved this research project and how to contact me (in the first instance rowan.alcock@sant.ox.ac.uk) or the committee in case of any concerns or complaints.
- I won't keep any of your personal details.
- I will safely store the data.
- You're aware that my written work will be published online in the Oxford Research Archive.
- The project may be published in an academic journal.
- Are you still willing to take part? Do you give your permission for me to re-contact you to clarify information?

So if you're happy with all of that, and have no more questions, let's start.

Picture 15. Oxford University Ethics Approval Wet Market;

Department of Politics & International Relations

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Email: enquiries@politics.ox.ac.uk
www.politics.ox.ac.uk

Rowan Alcock,
St Antony's,
Oxford

9 May 2017

Dear Rowan,

Research Ethics Approval: Ref No.: SSH_DPIR_C1A_17_016

Title: Survey of consumer vegetable consumption habits in Chifeng, China

The above application has been considered on behalf of the DPIR Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to the DREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly approval has been granted.

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project, which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application, you should submit details to the DREC for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A. Melling

Andrew Melling,
Secretary to the DPIR DREC

cc. Patricia Thornton, Merton

A.7 Ecovillage Methodology.

The methodological approach I used in the ecovillage case-study was similar to that of the wet market – an extended case study approach (Burawoy 1991a, 1991b, 1998). The research method was ethnographic as I was researching '…about the world from the standpoint of participant observation' (Burawoy 1998, p.6). The research techniques included both participant observation and interviews, as the extended case study method suggests (*Ibid*). The extended case study method emphasises the '…*intersubjectivity* between participant and observer' (*Ibid* p.14) that was especially important in my Ecovillage research locations as I was eating, working and relaxing with my participants. The intersubjectivity was clear as some interviewees asked to be interviewed in English and some explanations used by interviewees to clarify explanations would use British examples. Further, in one field location I became the interviewee when asked to be interviewed for the ecovillage.

'Instead of discovering grounded theory… [I was] elaborate[ing] existing theory' (*Ibid* p.16). I did this through demonstrating the potential contemporary value of Polanyian thought but elaborating on new ideas that were contained within the interviews and actions of participants. Ideas such as the contemporary environmental crisis being extricable linked to the problems of capitalism, which was prevalent at all field locations, as well as the idea of the double movement going 'all the way down' which I theorised due to a number of comments that demonstrated an internal psychological contradiction much like that of the double movement. As explained in the introduction, the initial 'data' that grounds my research came from living and working in China and the experiences I had, this was data gathered from participant observation before any plan to take on a DPhil project. This demonstrates that my research method was necessarily reflexive and 'separation between scientist[] and the subjects' (*Ibid* p.1) to achieve 'positive' scientific results would have been almost impossible. 'The goal of [my] research is not directed at establishing a definitive "truth" about an external world but at the continual improvement of existing theory' (*Ibid* p.28).

While the extended case study approach helps elaborate and potentially expand theory, it also has costs in terms of reliability, replicability, and representativeness. For the wet market case study this

can be overcome with future research developing a more positivist approach through large scale statistical surveys of consumer preferences. This would not elaborate or expand the theory that the wet market can be seen as an unconscious countermovement, however it would help demonstrate how widely, or otherwise this theory is. In the case of Ecovillages further research on these types of organisations would likely need reflexive methods. To establish the representativeness of these results, future research '…should maximize variation within the field through constant comparison, searching for extreme cases in what is called "theoretical" sampling' (*Ibid* p.25). This could take the form of researching the varied 'return' to the rural initiatives arising in China, from ecotourism, high-end rural communities, farm co-operatives, community supported agriculture initiates, as well as different types of ecovillages. Do they all exemplify the Polanyian consciousness I argue that the ecovillages I engaged with demonstrate or will researching different initiatives help create more complex theory and lead 'to the discovery of new and surprising facts' (*Ibid* p.28). As ever, more research is necessary in order to gain a better overall picture of both Chinese society and the general applicability of Polanyian thought.

Oral Consent Form for Ecovillage Interviews;

Oral Consent 口头承诺书

Hello, I'm Rowan Alcock from the University of Oxford and I wanted to talk to you about the project I am doing. The broad aim of my project is to understand ecovillage members and their reasons for joining the ecovillage.

你好，我的名字叫仁龙，英文名是 Rowan Alcock。我来自牛津大学，正在攻读博士学位。我目前在做关于中国生态村的一些调查研究，希望了解这里的村民以及他们搬到这里的原因。

Are you interested in taking part in the project? I'd like to confirm some of the details of the project to make sure you understand what's involved for you:

不知您是否有兴趣接受采访？在采访开始之前，我想要和您先说明以下几点，以免造成不必要的误会：

- It's a project about ecovillages in China and it's being used for my DPhil project.
- 该采访主要目的是了解中国生态村，仅用于我的博士研究项目。

- If you take part, I'll need you to take an interview lasting approximately 30 minutes.
- 采访的过程大概持续 30 分钟。
- There is unlikely to be any risks involved in taking this survey, all information can be anonymous at your request.
- 此项调查研究不含任何风险，如果您要求，也可接受匿名采访。
- You don't have to say yes to taking part; you can ask me any questions you want before or throughout; you can also withdraw at any stage without giving a reason and without any negative consequences.
- 此项调查研究纯属自愿；采访之前或采访过程中您可以毫无保留地随时提出任何问题；
- You are aware that an Oxford University Research Ethics committee has approved this research project and how to contact me (in the first instance rowan.alcock@sant.ox.ac.uk) or the committee in case of any concerns or complaints.
- 该项目已通过牛津大学研究伦理委员会审核，如您需要，可联系我个人或该委员会，我的邮箱是：rowan.alcock@sant.ox.ac.uk。
- I won't keep any of your personal details unless you consent to me doing so.
- 您的个人信息不会在未经同意的情况下泄露。
- I will safely store the data.
- 调查数据将会得到妥善保管。
- You're aware that my written work will be published online in the Oxford Research Archive.
- 该研究调查将被撰写成文，并于牛津研究在线档案馆出版。
- The project may be published in an academic journal.
- 该文有可能将在学术期刊上出版。
- The interview may be recorded digitally, but only with your consent.
- 如果您同意，该项研究调查需要录音存档。
- Are you still willing to take part? Do you give your permission for me to re-contact you to clarify information? Do you have any questions or worries?

- 不知您是否愿意参与此项调查？若整理数据中出现问题我是否可以日后再次登门拜访或联系您？ 您是否对此次调查有任何疑虑？

So if you’re happy with all of that, and have no more questions, let’s start.

如果您没有问题并乐于帮助我完成调查的话，那么就开始吧，谢谢!

Picture 16. Oxford University Ethics Approval Ecovillage;



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www.politics.ox.ac.uk

Rowan Alcock,
St Antony's,
Oxford

5 February 2018

Dear Rowan,

Research Ethics Approval: Ref No.: SSH_DPIR_C1A_18_001

Title: Interviews of participants at ecovillages China

The above application has been considered on behalf of the DPIR Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to the DREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly approval has been granted.

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project, which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application, you should submit details to the DREC for consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A. Melling

Andrew Melling,
Secretary to the DPIR DREC

cc. Patricia Thornton, Merton

A.8 General Interview Questions

Personal introduction.

What groups/organizations/individuals support this ecovillage (monetarily or otherwise)?

What do you think the core values of this ecovillage are?

What do you think were the reasons to set up this ecovillage? How was it set up?

Do you think this ecovillage aims to reflect mainstream societal problems?

Are non-market values important to how this ecovillage operates?

Is spirituality, broadly defined, important to the ecovillage?

What are your future and the ecovillage's future plans?

What is the ownership structure of the land?

What other ecovillage sin China do you know?