

I could not maintain the top position in the class after one year. Ximen Jiye 西门纪业 came to join my class. His class was disbanded after the first year. Its students were scattered over the other classes. Ximen was sent to our class. He was a brilliant student with remarkable memory, and worked very hard. He was good all around except in physical education. He was going to be the top student wherever he went. I would be with him in the same class again in my third year in junior middle school in Nanking. We were also in the same senior middle school for the first three semesters, but not in the same class. He went to the Shanghai Middle School for the last three semesters in the senior high school, again the top of the class. He entered Tsinghua University in 1950.

His father Ximen Zong Hua 西门宗华 was the president of the Sino-Soviet Cultural Association 中苏文化协会. He was a progressive scholar, naturally a sympathizer of the Communists. He was a professor in Fudan University after liberation and became a Rightist during the Anti-Rightist Movement.

Because of his family background, Ximen Jiye was also very progressive. In the senior middle school Zhong Da Fu Zhong 中大附中, he participated to publish a weekly wall paper The Fellow Traveler 同路人. One of its correspondent from Shanghai was YAO Wen Yuan 姚文元, who was our classmate in Nankai. Later YAO introduced Ximan to be a Communist Party member.

Ximen graduated from Beida physics department in 1953, and went on for graduate study in Beida and graduated in 1956. He stayed in Beida teaching to the end of his life. I suspect that if not for his not-red-enough family background, with his brilliance, he should have been sent to Soviet Union for advanced study in theoretical physics. He eventually became an authority on electron optics in China.

He was very argumentative with his brilliance and knowledge in high school days. When I saw him again in 1979 in Beijing, he was quite subdued. He never mentioned his sufferings during the cultural revolution and other times, not like many of my other friends.

I was visiting Beijing in 2000. He was already in hospital for treatment of cancer. One day in September, I paid him a visit in the hospital. He walked me to the elevator from his room when I left. Three weeks later he passed away.

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一年之后在班上我就当不成第一名了。西门纪业加到了我们班。他上了一年之后原来的班被解散，学生分给其它各班，西门到了我们班。他是个非常杰出的学生，记性好而且很勤奋。除了体育以外他门门都很强，不管到哪里都是第一名。我后来在南京上初三的时候又跟他同班。我们高中前三个学期同校但不同班。高中后三个学期他去了上海中学，还是班上第一名。1950年他进清华大学读书。

他父亲西门宗华是中苏文化协会的会长，是一位进步学者，自然地亲共。解放后，他在复旦大学做教授，在反右运动中划了右派。

由于家庭背景，西门纪业是个很进步的学生。在中大附中念高中的时候，他参与出版每周一期的《同路人》壁报。这个壁报的一位通讯记者是上海的姚文元，我们南开中学的同学。后来，姚文元介绍西门入了党。

西门 1953 年从北大物理系毕业，接着在北大读研究生，1956 年毕业。他一辈子都在北大教书。我估计要不是因为家庭出身不够红，凭他的杰出劲儿，应该会被送到苏联学理论物理。他后来成了中国电子光学的权威。

高中时代，凭着睿智和知识，他十分能言善辩。等我 1979 年在北京再见到他，他变得很低沉。不像我的其他朋友们，他从来没提过自己在文化大革命和其它运动中的遭遇。

我 2000 年访问北京，那时他已因癌症住院治疗。九月的一天，我去医院看他，临别时他从病房陪我走到电梯，三周后他就过世了。