

The recasting of Chinese socialism: The Chinese New Left since 2000

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Abstract

In post-Mao China, a group of Chinese intellectuals who formed what became the New Left (新左派) sought to renew socialism in China in a context of globalization and the rise of social inequalities they associated with neo-liberalism. As they saw it, China's market reform and opening to the world had not brought greater equality and prosperity for all Chinese citizens. As part of *China Information's* research dialogue on the intellectual public sphere in China, this article provides a historical survey of the development of the contemporary Chinese New Left, exploring the range of ideas that characterized this intellectual movement. It takes as its focus four of the most prominent New Left figures and their positions in the ongoing debate about China's future: Wang Shaoguang, Cui Zhiyuan, Wang Hui, and Gan Yang.

Keywords

contemporary China, market reform, end of history, New Left, Chinese socialism, Maoism, democracy, statism

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By the Cold War's end, people suddenly discovered 'the end of history', and there appeared to be no alternative to the liberal economic order of or as envisaged by Francis Fukuyama. A vast wave of capitalist globalization paired with increased marketization in China to produce a strong reaction from Chinese intellectuals grounded in resistance to the end of history and for a commitment to reinvigorating Chinese socialism. This response led to the rise of China's 'New Left'.¹ Today, China has emerged as a world power, and the legitimacy of the New Left as an independent group of intellectuals has been established. The scars of the previous century's battles with the New Left's principal opponent, Chinese liberals, have given way to a diversity of approaches to addressing the challenges that face a rising China. Indeed, the New Left continues to debate liberals and engage liberalism, but with the New Left's emergence as an established school of thought its proponents have, since the 1990s, evolved their thought and taken on different characteristics. In the past few years, New Left intellectuals have 'taken up the role of establishment intellectuals, serving or supporting the party', whereas the liberals have sought to 'carve out a role as public intellectuals' in vying for decentralized government, the protection of individual liberties, and increased marketization.²

This article's main task is to examine four public intellectuals who represent the different strands of the New Left, thereby showing that its representatives do not speak monolithically, but rather coalesce around rejuvenating Chinese socialism while differing in terms of approach. We examine the following thinkers: Wang Shaoguang (b. 1963); Cui Zhiyuan (b. 1963); Wang Hui (b. 1959); and Gan Yang (b. 1952). Our approach is chronological, examining the emergence of the New Left, its rise to prominence, and more recent developments.

Emergence of the New Left: Re-establishing the state and socialism

The unhappy political, economic, and social consequences that accompanied rapid market transformation in the 1990s produced the context in which the New Left rose to the forefront of contemporary debates on China's direction. The cause for the ideological confrontation between liberals and New Leftists was China's changing position within a globalized economy. We see the rise of the New Left in the context of three interrelated historical processes: (1) the 4 June 1989 Tiananmen demonstrations and subsequent crackdown; (2) the December 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union; and (3) accelerated marketization in China since 1992. Both Tiananmen and the Soviet Union's dissolution threatened the legitimacy of Chinese socialism in different ways, opening the door for market reforms that produced great prosperity, but widening the gap between rich and poor and demanding China's integration into the global market. The result was an intensification of the political legitimacy crisis due to marketization's 'betrayal' of the values and developmental model of socialism. The crisis was twofold: one of the socialist system and ideology; and the accompanying socio-economic crisis. Intellectuals who comprise the liberal and New Left camps offered competing responses to these very crises. As the crises converged, and amid increasing integration into the global market, anxious Chinese intellectuals now face the task of rethinking the relationship between China, socialism, and the world.

In this context, the New Left has entered the stage of China's intellectual world. But first, something must be said of the New Left's position as a school of thought. The New Left label was attached to intellectuals by liberals who relied on the negative identification of the left with late Maoism and implied that this must be a throw-back to the Cultural Revolution. By the late 1990s, New Left replaced 'conservative' as the go-to term in the lexicon of pro-reform intellectuals who wished to attack anyone who criticized the rush to marketization. Chinese New Left thinkers have maintained an ambivalent relationship with the New Left label.

In response to the rapid push toward market liberalization, liberal and New Left camps voiced their concerns over China's direction. Liberal voices were loudest at the outset, denouncing radicalism in hopes to 'bid farewell to revolution'.³ They rethought their previous allegiance to the French and Russian revolutions and advocated instead the liberal model of the British and American revolutions, with some negating the historical legitimacy of Chinese socialism.⁴ Widespread privatization and reform discourse of 'big market, small government' linked up with the process of China's internal transformations.⁵ Conflicting reform agendas, the direction of which had never been clear, were rapidly marginalized and pushed further away from traditional socialism. For many liberals, world trends were moving in the direction of Fukuyama's end of history:⁶ socialism was no longer viable whereas capitalism provided a 'free and democratic' system of government and 'free competition' of a market economy. Where was China going? The answer seemed obvious. Yet the New Left perceived liberal solutions of more market reform, constitutionalism, inter alia, as a blank-slate, zero-sum approach that advocated the abandonment of socialism and wholesale embrace of a liberal politico-economic model. Reductionist or not, their proposals set the stage for a nearly two decades-long debate between both camps. New Leftists argue that Chinese liberals such as Yu Yingshi, Li Zehou, and Zhu Xueqin were, in rethinking socialism, bidding farewell to revolution. Yet liberals were in fact perpetuating the regime's legitimacy crises in advocating for the Anglo-American revolutionary liberal model, which required breaking with the revolutionary heritage of socialist China.

New Leftists, by contrast, stressed the importance of Chinese socialist tradition and state power. Wang Shaoguang and Cui Zhiyuan are two early examples. In 1991, Wang wrote a series of articles that went against the neo-liberal tide. One article from that year focused on the state, distinguishing between state capacity and political form, and arguing that while the form should be democratic, the capacity should be strong.⁷ By state capacity, Wang meant both cultural hegemony and the capacity to control society. Most important was the state's capacity in terms of financial extraction. In Wang's words, 'Regime change toward democracy (the construction of a mechanism allowing local and social groups' interests to be fully represented in the policy process of the central government) is a necessary condition for the state to concentrate financial power. But only if the central government is able to concentrate financial power can we establish a strong democratic regime.'⁸ The article's main point was later developed more substantially in the book, *A Report on China's State Capacity* (中国国家能力报告), co-authored with Hu Angang,⁹ which triggered an important debate about China's state capacity in the Hong Kong-based magazine *Twenty-First Century* (二十一世紀). Wang continued on this theme in a 1995 article in which he argued for limiting the decentralization of power

from central to local governments.¹⁰ He emphasized the state's leading role in the transition to a market economy¹¹ and concluded that state intervention in 'civil society' was a necessity.¹²

After the Soviet Union collapsed, Fukuyama's end-of-history thesis caused an uproar in which scholars denounced the autocratic nature of Soviet political power as one of the principal causes for its dissolution.¹³ Such denunciations worked hand in glove with neo-liberal claims that all forms of socialist planned economies, even the welfare state in state-run economies, were 'inefficient'. Wang Shaoguang's response was to insist on the absolute necessity of state capacity while upholding the importance of democracy. Whereas neo-liberals stressed market economy efficiency, Wang highlighted the state's key role in the process of market transition,¹⁴ a position that became an important aspect of New Left theory. A nationalist faction of New Leftists eventually discarded this distinction, leading to the use of 'state capacity' as an excuse to build an undemocratic regime in China (the 'statist' turn). Importantly, Marxism-Leninism places primacy on the state, which, in the period of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', is indispensable to class rule guiding the process of material production, after which it will disappear. Wang never envisioned the 'disappearance of the state'. He also holds that the important task is not to establish binaries between state and localities, or market and civil society, but rather to rethink the relationship between them and redefine the state's role and limits of authority in the process of marketization. In so doing, Wang sought to reconstruct the balance in terms of power and institutions, and not to 'disembled' the state from the political structure, market, and society. This flexibility and constant search for new and innovative practices is characteristic of the New Left.

While Wang revived the state in his proposals, Cui Zhiyuan, a Chinese doctoral student at an American university and, later, a professor, reimagined socialism. Cui published an article entitled 'Institutional renovation and the second thought liberation' in *Twenty-First Century*, in which he examined the relationship between capitalism and socialism in a globalized post-Cold War era.¹⁵ His 'global' thinking is an important step in the development of the New Left since it supplements Wang's theory of the state, which omitted consideration of state transformation under globalization. Despite the failure of the socialist movement, its legitimacy could take root again under new historical conditions. For instance, township and village enterprises, a failed experiment in the Mao era, succeeded during the early reform era as an economic engine in rural China. As a new era demands new perspectives, Cui urged us to free ourselves from the facile capitalism-socialism divide:

The old conceptual categories of the Cold War era can no longer satisfy China's or the world's needs ... We need a second movement to liberate our thought: its focal point shall no longer be to simply negate the conservatives, but to expand the imaginative space of institutional innovation. This Second Liberation of Thought shall no longer wallow in obsolete dichotomies, but will rather embrace economic and political democracy as its guiding thought so as to seek out every opportunity to explore different institutional innovations.¹⁶

Evidently, Cui drew from analytical Marxism as represented by scholars such as Adam Przeworski (b. 1940), who equated socialism with the values of 'economic democracy and political democracy'.¹⁷ Cui noted, 'From a macro level, the theory of "economic

democracy” should penetrate the economies of modern democratic countries through the theoretical principle of “popular sovereignty” [人民主权],¹⁸ which guarantees that the organization of all economic institutions will be constructed and regulated to pursue the interests of the greatest number of people. From a micro perspective, the theory of economic democracy accelerates the adoption of post-Fordist democratic management principles within enterprises, relying on worker creativity to attain or raise economic efficiency.¹⁹ This formulation, Cui noted, succeeds in separating socialism from two of its core institutional arrangements – planned economy and public ownership – but does not deny the efficacy of the planned economy and public ownership. Instead, concrete historical circumstances prove the multiple possibilities of plan and market, public and private ownership, as we develop economic and political democracy.

In addition, Cui encouraged us to rethink capitalism altogether. Cui agrees with Przeworki that ‘democratic capitalism’ must be a compromise between capitalism and democracy.²⁰ He criticized China’s ‘institutional fetishization’ of capitalism in which its concrete institutional arrangements are held as part of the abstract concept of liberal democracy.²¹ To move from blind worship of capitalism, Cui called for disassociating the concept of liberal democracy from Euro-American political and economic structures (two-party system and private corporations) in the same way that scholars distinguish socialism from public ownership in a planned economy.²² Cui is confident that humanity’s creative capacity regarding institutional arrangements is unlimited, though he cautions that a perfect system is unobtainable. He concludes that we ought to build relatively stable and open institutional arrangements while exploring economic and political democracy.²³

A renewed understanding of socialism must deal with the legacy of the Maoist period, for if the era’s radical practices had not exhausted the Chinese people’s faith in socialism, its status in contemporary China might be different. Cui thus sought to chart a new theoretical path for interpreting the Mao era that avoided blanket praise or condemnation by reflecting on Mao’s institutional legacy. For instance, Cui’s reading of the ‘Angang Constitution’, which, he noted, made the most of team cooperation and workers’ creative initiative, aligned Maoist practices with contemporary post-Fordist demands for production flexibility and economic democracy.²⁴ Cui defended Maoism from a theoretical perspective, arguing that Marxism is a symptom of the basic contradictions of mainstream Euro-American modernity rather than its cure. This basic contradiction is an internal one between the ‘laws’ grounded in belief in reason and the ‘liberation’ that people seek through freedom. Cui concluded that Mao’s Cultural Revolution sought to break through the contradiction of modernity from the angle of human ‘liberation’, a significant Marxism-Leninist innovation and a Chinese contribution to the reconstruction of Euro-American modernity.

The efforts of Wang Shaoguang and Cui Zhiyuan represent responses to new historical changes that Arif Dirlik’s concept of post-socialism captures well.²⁵ For Dirlik, contemporary Chinese socialism has not degenerated into an empty ideology. Chinese socialism has undergone real transformations with China moving toward post-socialism, which requires some integration with capitalism. As Dirlik explains, ‘Post-socialism manifests itself in such a way as to both use capitalist experience and overcome the flaws in capitalist development.’²⁶ To a certain extent, New Left theoretical explorations are

post-socialist. But more broadly, contemporary Chinese New Left thought reorients Chinese socialist tradition to achieve a breakthrough. Chinese socialism thus means practices drawn from China's socialist revolution, nation-building, reform, and Mao's Sinification of Marxism-Leninism, which included two major theoretical forms: Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping's theory. Deng conceived the latter as a solution to Mao-era contradictions, but as reforms deepened, socialism's legitimacy crisis re-emerged once again and continues to this day. As part of the tradition of reflexion on Chinese socialism, New Leftists moved to address this urgency. We therefore ought to place the New Left in a *longue durée* of Chinese socialist tradition to grasp its historical connotation.

By the mid-1990s, Wang Shaoguang's and Cui Zhiyuan's thinking had spurred considerable debate, but marketization, privatization, and globalization had not yet caused cataclysmic problems of inequality. By the end of the 20th century, however, the real crisis of inequality deepened, which stimulated a heated debate between intellectuals in which Wang Shaoguang, Cui Zhiyuan, and Wang Hui banded together to form the New Left.

The rise of the New Left: The 'anti-modernity' 'liberal left'

Here, we provide an explanation of how and why the New Left emerged, and explore some of the similarities and differences in their ideas and approaches. This section has three goals: (1) to emphasize that crises of reform have deepened since the late 1990s; (2) to highlight that the debate about approaches to such crises has formed the basis of the New Left, a debate in which Wang Hui has been particularly noteworthy; and (3) to examine Wang Hui's concrete and theoretical viewpoints, which we compare to those of fellow New Leftists Wang Shaoguang and Cui Zhiyuan.

Since 1992, China's market transition and the globalization process have triggered widespread inequality. If 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' means socialist equality, and the material abundance of a market economy produces what Deng described as 'shared wealth', then the reform process has proceeded in an opposite direction. The result is more akin to 'bureaucratic capitalism', and thus we cannot help but ask whether socialism with Chinese characteristics has meaning. Inevitably, at the end of the 1990s liberals and New Leftists debated over the legitimacy of the reforms, opposing diagnoses of China's problems, and different paths to reconstructing China's intellectual critical traditions.

Central to this rethinking was prominent New Leftist Wang Hui, whose writings played a key role in the Chinese Liberal–New Left debate of the late 1990s. Whereas Wang Hui, Wang Shaoguang, and Cui Zhiyuan were vocal critics of capitalism (especially in its contemporary form) and neo-liberalism, and committed themselves to defending Chinese socialism, the latter two did not question capitalist modernity as a whole. Wang Hui, by contrast, questioned capitalist modernity from the perspective of *modernity*, situating his critique in the context of globalization. His 1997 'Contemporary Chinese thought and the question of modernity' (当代中国的思想状况与现代性问题; hereafter 'Question of modernity') represents the fuse that lit the debate between left and right in which he made Marxism relevant once again to the post-Mao

Chinese intellectual realm. He argued that following global capitalism's arrival in China, contemporary thought had lost its critical capacity to describe Chinese reality. This was because the three contemporary forms of Chinese Marxism – Maoism, Deng-era pragmatic Marxism, and Marxist Humanism – and New Enlightenment thought viewed as mainstream since the 1980s were all grounded in the ideological base of modernization and by the 1990s were transformed into market ideology. As such, contemporary thought could not offer a cogent analysis of global market acceleration and the relationship of these forces to politics because modernization was now less an objective than a problem. As Wang Hui proclaimed:

Traditional forms of socialism have been unable to solve the intrinsic crisis of modernity, while the various contemporary modernization ideologies lack the strength to provide the appropriate response to developments in our contemporary world. For Chinese intellectuals to re-examine China's questions in a historical perspective of globalization and the historical conditions of China's pursuit of modernity, a very urgent historical task, they must transcend long-standing China–West, tradition–modernity dichotomies.²⁷

Wang Hui's problematique and methodology echo other New Leftists from the early period, including a shared reaction to Fukushima's 'end of history'. In 'Question of modernity', Wang stated, 'The last decade of the 20th century was a historical turning point. Some say that the century-long socialist experiment is ending. Two worlds have become one, a globalized capitalist world.'²⁸ Like Cui Zhiyuan, Wang Hui noted that with the end of history, past binaries of socialism–capitalism, China–West, and tradition–modernity have all ceased to function, ushering in a 'historical opportunity for Chinese intellectuals to carry out theoretical and institutional innovation'.²⁹ Here, Wang Hui and Cui Zhiyuan have focused on the three dualisms above, with China situated in modern times and the West related closely because of the encounter. Yet these three dualisms constitute the universal and lasting cognitive frameworks in China during its modern transformation that Western civilization has challenged. Such cognitive frameworks hold that 'we' or 'our' are essentially Chinese, traditional and socialist, and that 'they' or 'theirs' are Western, modern, and capitalist. In the era of post-Cold War globalization, however, traditional socialism has been in crisis and China accepted capitalism, on the one hand, yet on the other globalization's rapid advance made it so that the West became intrinsic to China. Thus, in the 'we' or 'our' and 'they' or 'theirs', the boundaries have become blurred, prompting Wang Hui and Cui Zhiyuan to rethink existing dualisms and establish new understandings of the world.

Undoubtedly, the Cold War's polarized structure framed the Chinese socialist experience during the Mao and Deng eras. Mao never lacked a global vision; his 'three worlds theory' is evidence.³⁰ But neither Mao nor Deng imagined a future in which three worlds, or even the two worlds led by the Soviet Union and the United States, would merge into the 'same' capitalist world. They envisioned a great communist 'harmony'. The Chinese socialist tradition's epistemological framework thus remains fixed on a dichotomy. The age of global capitalism ultimately constitutes a grim challenge to the Chinese socialist experience, theory, and development.

How can one imagine a 'different' future for Chinese socialism in this 'same' world? Wang Hui identified a conceptual shift from modernization as a goal to 'modernity as a

system', in which Chinese socialism must be re-examined from the standpoint of modernity. He defined Mao Zedong Thought as an 'anti-modern modernity', since Mao's socialism is both an ideology of modernization because it pursues modernization while incorporating 'a kind of teleological view of history and the world'³¹ and a 'critique of Euro-American capitalist modernity'. 'So it is less a critique of modernity itself, but a critique of the modern capitalist form or stage of development grounded in revolutionary ideology and nationalism.'³² In line with his understanding of anti-modern modernity, Wang Hui argued that Deng's 'pragmatic Marxism' degenerated into a pure ideology of modernization without anti-modern tendencies. Yet both Mao's and Deng's socialisms and their corresponding crises are intrinsic elements of modernity and its crises; they were once, with capitalism, part of the same world structure, but are now part of the same globalization process. To rethink Chinese socialism, therefore, cannot be accomplished within the tradition-modernity dichotomy because such a reflexion cannot offer a critique of the reform process and Euro-American modernity. Only by rethinking modernity can the crisis of Chinese socialism be understood as part of the crisis of modernity, and only then can we grasp the modern ideology that is intrinsic to Chinese socialism. On this basis, Wang urged, we may begin to seek out the future of Chinese socialism.³³

Wang Hui introduced anti-modern modernity in 'Question of modernity', noting that 'Mao Zedong's socialism was [at once] a modern ideology, [and] a criticism of European and American modernity', 'a modern theory that opposed capitalist modernity'.³⁴ Anti-modern modernity was thus the main characteristic of Chinese thought since the late Qing period, as the search for modernity contained within it doubts and criticisms of modernity. Wang's multivolume *The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought* (现代中国思想的兴起)³⁵ explored the histories of the intellectual and institutional traditions behind the modernity process in China, uncovering modern China's historical construction, which exhibited a characteristic of anti-modern modernity. For him, the basic criticism of modernity in modern Chinese thought is 'principle' (理), and the element within Chinese thought that seeks modernity is 'tendency' (势). The intellectual resources to oppose modernity therefore originate within modernity itself and the postmodern knowledge that emerges from modernity, and for that reason, anti-modernity still seeks a solution to the crisis of modernity from within modernity. Yet intellectual resources opposing modernity originate in China's classical tradition (such as Confucian thought and the late-Qing imperial experience). Through an 'internal perspective' grounded in historical China, Wang Hui seeks a position outside of modernity. Anti-modern modernity is thus structured as a puzzle, and between modernity and anti-modernity exists a complex shuttling back and forth. Yet anti-modern modernity reveals the dialectical relationship between inner and outer, Chinese and Euro-American, ancient and modern. Due to the ambiguity of anti-modern modernity, it remains a temporal concept that cannot provide a profound theoretical analysis of the complex relationships between existing dichotomies and does not give a clear constructive theory. Anti-modern modernity does reveal, however, an irreconcilable contradiction and conflict within modern Chinese thought. Instead of identifying a new type of modernity theory, it is a perception of Chinese modernity that is in the midst of violent fluctuation in history and, thus, cannot take a clearly defined form.

While Wang Hui reviewed China's socialism and its reform from the perspective of modernity, Gan Yang expressed similar ideas in the early 1990s. As a response to Cui

Zhiyuan, Gan Yang, also based in the United States at the time, proclaimed in 1992 that ‘it is possible to think of a more feasible road of social development only if we understand socialism’s infeasibility and capitalism’s illegitimacy in the Cold War context’.³⁶ He argued that the reform of China’s town and village enterprises represented a unique search for a non-privatized developmental path, which signalled the rise of Chinese modernity. But amid sharp social crises that accompanied market reform, Gan Yang no longer insisted on a perspective of modernity from an overall standpoint. By the mid-1990s, Gan, Cui Zhiyuan, and Wang Shaoguang thus stood as ‘liberal left’ (自由左派).

Gan Yang approached the problems to Chinese socialism that accompanied market reform through a radical interpretation of liberalism. Widening divisions in Chinese society led Gan to argue for mass democracy and for ameliorating the people’s livelihood to uncover a political process in which multiple yet divided social interests may converge into a ‘political will’ and a political centripetal force of the people as a whole. This process marks the passage from an ‘economic people’ to a ‘political people’³⁷: extensive political participation to generate the national political identity is the modern ‘political nation’. Gan, who interpreted liberalism as equality for all as opposed to ‘special rights’ enjoyed by few, drew from de Toqueville in dividing liberalism into two camps: (1) aristocratic liberalism; and (2) populist liberalism.³⁸ Such a distinction is similar to the conceptual difference in contemporary Euro-American thought between a liberalism that defends ‘libertarianism’ and ‘liberal egalitarianism’. Gan’s favourable view of egalitarian liberalism led him to regard China’s New Left, including himself, as part of a ‘liberal left’. The New Left’s critique of laissez-faire liberalism and its advocacy that the state and social forces must govern and regulate market forces is, for him, ultimately a central tenet of contemporary Euro-American liberal theory as represented by American moral and political philosopher John Rawls (1921–2002), his main theoretical reference.³⁹ Gan Yang’s understanding of the meaning of contemporary Euro-American liberalism, meanwhile, is both a response to criticism of the New Left by contemporary Chinese liberalism and an attempt to position himself within a strain of Euro-American liberalism via a connection between China’s New Left, Rawls, and American philosopher Ronald Dworkin (1931–2013).

In a similar vein, Wang Shaoguang acknowledges his liberal left position, which he outlines in the following passage:

China’s ‘Liberals’ belong, in fact, to the right. Thus to call them liberal rightists is even more appropriate. If they really do not like the rightist label, they can call themselves libertarians which is what they are. Standing opposed to the right liberals are the left liberals (often labelled the New Left by the Liberals). Left liberals seek freedom; not solely freedoms that only economic, social, and intellectual elites can enjoy, but equal freedom (公平的自由), the true freedom that all citizens can enjoy. Left liberals acknowledge that the state can and often does violate citizens’ freedoms, but the solution is not to demolish the state, but to use democratic means to transform the state itself ... [through] the establishment of a powerful democratic state.⁴⁰

Wang Shaoguang’s effort mirrors Gan Yang’s, which contends that one way to remake Chinese socialism is to link it to liberal egalitarian traditions. For instance, Wang Shaoguang’s insistence on the importance of state capacity is not because he had

a traditional socialist attachment to the state, but because he understood freedom as a collection of rights that requires the strong guarantee of state capacity. His theory of the state is thus that it alone has the capacity to realize equal liberty.

Another link between the New Left and liberal egalitarianism is Cui Zhiyuan's espousal of analytical Marxism. Analytical Marxist scholar John Roemer (b. 1945) remarked, 'The boundary between contemporary analytical Marxism and contemporary leftist liberal political philosophy is blurry. This means they share a common core, even if the core has not been made explicit.'⁴¹ Cui's position thus falls into the left liberal camp, which is the very direction that he pursued in developing a liberal socialist theoretical framework. For instance, Cui regarded the concepts of 'bourgeois socialism', 'petty-bourgeois socialism', and 'liberal socialism' as interchangeable. Liberal socialism's economic goals are to 'establish a socialist market economy through reforms and the transformation of the existing financial system'.⁴² Its political goals, meanwhile, are 'to establish economic democracy and political democracy'.⁴³ Cui held that the historical foundation of this project is 'the Chinese Revolution and [national] reconstruction, particularly the policies enacted with the reforms of the economic system, which actually included the practice and renewal of "petty-bourgeois socialism"'.⁴⁴ Here, he used liberal socialism to identify continuities between the Mao and Deng eras. Despite Maoism's later radicalization, it nonetheless contained liberal socialism's intrinsic orientation, whereas the Deng era's 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' had more potential to lead to a 'liberal socialist' future.⁴⁵ Cui thus considered liberal socialism as a current hidden within the Chinese socialist tradition that had yet to be theorized. This stream includes a series of institutional innovations to realize political and economic democracy, many of which cannot be classified solely as capitalist or socialist; rather, they are a synthesis, with labour and capital components structured similarly.

However, at this stage, New Leftists differed in terms of theory. Wang Hui focused on capitalist modernity from the perspective of modernity and the future of Chinese socialism, arguing that we ought to pay attention to anti-modernity within the Chinese socialist tradition. Gan Yang, Cui Zhiyuan, and Wang Shaoguang, by contrast, discussed the rupture from China's socialist reform within modernity. New Left ideology therefore presents two kinds of orientation: (1) on the theoretical level, as represented by Wang Hui, which criticizes capitalist modernity and the specific way to explore China's socialist reform; and (2) the positions of Gan Yang, Wang Shaoguang, and Cui Zhiyuan, which explore internal resources of modernity. This difference will no doubt change in the future; Gan Yang, for instance, has revised his liberal left position and leaned toward the perspective of civilization to frame his overall criticism of modernity. In any case, aside from Cui's liberal socialism and from the liberal left position of Wang Shaoguang and Gan Yang, all give primacy to freedom, equality, and the synthesis of socialism with capitalism. Wang Hui, as we have seen, has identified the historical prerequisites for such a synthesis in the rethinking of modernity. Still, in the age of market economy and globalization, how can we reaffirm the necessity and originality of such a synthesis?

If Maoism ultimately did not create this synthesis, and instead carried out a 'desperate resistance' to the crisis of Chinese socialism via the Cultural Revolution, then how would the New Left conceptualize, at a theoretical level, a genuine and effective synthesis? Some answers to this difficult question include: (1) a critique of Chinese socialism's

ideology of modernization; (2) the adoption of a globalist view of China's situation that moves beyond the socialism–capitalism binary; (3) a comprehensive redefinition of socialism that reconstructs the relationship between state, locality, market, and society; and (4) absorption of the egalitarian liberal tradition. China's New Left has advanced in this direction, starting with a critical reconstruction of Mao-era socialist practices and rethinking the relationship between socialist and traditional China. It is to this rethinking that we now turn.

The indigenization of the New Left: 'Integration of the three traditions' within Chinese socialism

After the turn-of-the-century's 'left–right debate', the New Left developed its legitimacy as a body of thought in two directions: (1) indigenization; and (2) constructing a continuity between socialist and traditional China. The indigenization effort was driven by a desire to discover theoretical resources within the history of socialism to resolve the crisis of Chinese socialism. The search for historical continuity, however, sought to anchor Chinese socialism within China's classical traditions. Accompanying such trends were China's rise as an economic power, and the discussion of the 'China model' that came with the country's reflexion on the United States and Europe following the 2008 financial crisis.⁴⁶ Europeans and Americans had once trumpeted the end of history; now China proclaimed 'one world, one dream'. If there really was only *one* history and *one* world, then comparing China to the United States and Europe truly gave one pause. China's economic boom following the 2008 crisis prompted Chinese intellectuals to re-examine the West, the relationship of the West with China, and to grasp China's uniqueness.

From the outset, the New Left emphasized China's uniqueness and urged grounding critical reflexions in Chinese historical experience. Theories of state capacity (Wang Shaoguang), institutional innovation (Cui Zhiyuan), and town and village enterprises (Gan Yang) are all clear examples. Yet to this point, China's experience still needed Euro-American theoretical validation to legitimate its own arguments. More recently, however, the New Left has sought to examine China's revolutionary history and to attach itself to that tradition to arrive at a contemporary internal critical perspective, with Wang Hui and Wang Shaoguang leading the way.

Wang Hui first addressed the issue of indigenization in 'Question of modernity', asking, in reference to China's modernity: 'Is it a modern society that diverged from bourgeois history, or instead a process of modernization that has its own critical reflexion on modernization?' His answer, formulated in *The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought*, drew from Neo-Confucian thought and the Qing imperial experience to provide a new understanding of modern China. He also sought to excavate the legacy of the 'short 20th century'⁴⁷ to understand contemporary problems, which he hoped would revitalize Chinese socialism. For Wang, the most pivotal 20th-century event was China's revolution, which began in 1911 and continued through 1964–6 (outbreak of the Cultural Revolution) to 1976, making it the duration of China's greater socialist revolution that defined its 20th century. It is 'short', Wang notes, because 1911 to 1976 is less than a century, hence his terminology.

Wang Hui's analysis of the Cultural Revolution is an equally representative effort. He developed the new concept of 'depoliticized politics' to describe political crisis in the contemporary world. By depoliticized, Wang meant the replacement of politics by economics and the insistence that politics are neutral and technical, while political values are hollowed and the significance of political values is internalized within political action and structure. Against the conventional view, he noted that the tragedy of the Cultural Revolution was precisely *not* the result of politicization as symbolized by political struggles inside and outside the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and government over political debates, theoretical explorations, and unprecedented discussions on political organization. Rather, it was because of 'depoliticization', which caused factional struggles that reduced the possibility of social self-government – a political model that transformed political debates into power struggles – and essentialist class viewpoints that transformed political concepts of class into pure status arguments. In Wang's view, for the ruling state that dispensed power through its structure, political parties were the vehicles of political values and the agents of political process. As for classes that could coalesce around economic issues, political parties were engines that could mould and motivate them. The history of the short 20th century thus illustrates that in a socialist revolution carried out in rural China, political parties were clearly an indispensable basic condition. In contemporary China, however, the Chinese communists monopolized state power, slipping further into the swamp of depoliticization. Hence Wang's conclusion that the CCP is depoliticized, with the 'staticization of the party' and the combination of party and state structures (political values of the ruling structure now hollowed out) as glaring symptoms. This is the most concentrated and profound illustration of the crisis of contemporary Chinese politics.

If one manifestation of CCP depoliticization is staticization, then another is its 'crisis of representativity', which manifests in the party's inability to represent the demands and interests of the class and society to which it belongs. Indeed, the party is divorced from class and society to the point that a 'rupture of representativity' has occurred; staticization has made the party unable to spur class or social movements. The consequences include widening socio-economic inequality and the crisis of political legitimacy. At the beginning of the revolutionary process, the party was able to represent and combine class interests, thereby allowing the state to play a 'neutral' role that transcended special interest groups and represented majority interest. But the dual crises of staticization and rupture of representativity, which describe the two aspects of the party's depoliticization, corroded state neutrality and risk capture by interest groups. For this reason, Chinese socialism has suffered from an increasingly serious legitimacy crisis.

The solution to the problem of depoliticization, Wang Hui concluded, is renewed politicization, meaning the return of theoretical debates within the CCP. For him, 'It was precisely such theoretical debates and political struggles within the party establishment that allowed party politics to maintain vitality... The same debates and struggles also assured that the party could, through struggle, correct its own errors via the twin experiences of theory and practice. This is a mechanism by which a party corrects errors and renews itself.'⁴⁸ A solution to the rupture of representativity is the 'mass line', which Wang believes is 'not merely the path followed by the party to maintain its political vitality, but [also] a great increase in political participation'.⁴⁹ Theoretical debates and the mass line

are therefore means to reanimate the CCP's political will and ideals, and allow China to reconstruct the representative relationships between party, classes, and society. If for Wang Hui re-politicization means recovering the anti-modernity orientation, the period from the Mao era to the revolution of the short 20th century includes the spirit of anti-modernity. The final stage of the short 20th century therefore means a political form of depoliticization, and the end of anti-modernity. From this angle, these two concepts possess internal continuity and help to express the uniqueness of Chinese socialism.

Wang Shaoguang also examined the indigenization of research in political thought, and more recently, sought out extant democratic and citizen social theory from within the history of Chinese socialism. He argues that Euro-American 'representative democracy' is merely a 'gilded bird cage democracy', while 'the representational democracy practised by China has great latent power, and means that another form of democracy is possible'. The basic superiority of China's 'representational democracy' lies in its effective response to social needs, which allows it to obtain the recognition of the Chinese people as something closer to a genuine democracy. This representational democracy comprises four components: (1) the chief representative of the 'people' is the 'great mass of labourers engaged in material production'; (2) political representation includes 'anyone with administrative power, including formally elected representatives as well as other officials who exercise real power'; (3) representation of the people as a whole, especially the objective needs of society's lower classes; and (4) the mass line, 'which is not only the theoretical basis of the Chinese style of representational democracy, but is also the main path for the realization of Chinese style representational democracy'. Wang noted further that the notion of civil society is merely 'a crude myth invented by neo-liberalism'. 'What the Chinese people should really pursue is a political community constructed by the labouring masses, a people's society'. Indeed, the 'people' of this people's society comprise different classes, yet the leaders are the masses. 'The goal of the people's society is equality', and a people's society insists that the labouring masses serve as leaders. The government and popular organizations work together and complement one another, paying attention to the internal efficiency of popular organizations (training in individual cooperation and public spirit) and their role in realizing democracy. Wang Shaoguang, however, admits that a people's society is an ideal, a measure by which we judge our future accomplishments.⁵⁰

Wang Hui's criticism of a rupture of representativity or Wang Shaoguang's critiques of representative democracy and civil society arose amid the crises of contemporary Western society. Yet Wang Hui and company do not think that these crises are external to China; rather, they have long been aware that China and the West are inextricable from each other. To think of a theoretical way to overcome such crises, Wang Hui and Wang Shaoguang look to China's socialist history instead of trying to find a solution in Western theoretical resources.

In the context of China's rise, another attempt at indigenization in the New Left is Confucianization, which merged Confucian and socialist traditions to reinvent a continuity between traditional and socialist China. 'Confucian Leftists', notably Gan Yang, represent a more radical and imaginative theoretical exploration of the 'integration of the three traditions' within Chinese socialist legitimacy.⁵¹ In a 2005 talk at Tsinghua University, Gan Yang addressed the question of the integration of the three traditions,

which borrows from the *gongyang* (公羊) tradition in Chinese classical thought and approaches the ideal of the 'great unity of spring and autumn' that began with Confucius.⁵² Three traditions here refer to the synthesis of Confucian, Maoist, and Dengist traditions; the goal is to construct a continuous historical and cultural community. 'Integrating the three traditions', Gan noted, aims to 'see late-Qing disintegration, the Chinese revolution, and the entire Chinese revolutionary process as a continuous whole seeking to establish a modern China.' One must therefore break with previous understandings of Chinese history, which focus on ruptures, and to 'understand China anew', rebuilding the continuity of Chinese history.

In his talk, Gan Yang emphasized the decentralization of the Maoist period, which discarded high-level administrative centralization of the Soviet central planning experience, thereby laying the groundwork for the Deng-era reforms. Gan insists that modern and traditional China are continuous because 'Chinese traditional civilization itself was a basic element in the success of China's economic revolution'. But we cannot omit the greatest demand of the integration of the three traditions, which is that 'the age of globalization has robbed Chinese civilization of its agency'. This also means that we must 'renew our knowledge of China' from the standpoint of civilization. The integration of the three traditions is ultimately at the service of China's cultural consciousness and civilizational confidence, the 'Chinese Road', and 21st-century China as a 'civilization-state'. Evidently, Gan applies traditional Confucian concepts in the formulation of his problematique, using the resources of the Confucian tradition to transcend New Left, liberal, and New Confucian perspectives to understand China's contemporary thought situation from a civilizational perspective. Whereas Wang Hui had transformed the question of contemporary Chinese thought from that of modernization to modernity, Gan Yang developed the field of civilization by rethinking 'debates between ancient and modern, Chinese and Western', and, ultimately, between anti-modern modernity and the integration of the three traditions. Indeed, Gan Yang combined the three together with the idea of reconstructing civilizational agency in seeking out the Chinese Road, which echoes the Chinese model directly. Gan was clear that the rise of China and the 2008 economic crisis ushered in what Cui Zhiyuan referred to as a 'Second Thought Liberation'. For Gan, it was time to move beyond past suspicions of the Western and American models.

The approaches are the same and yet different, and merit reflection. As a complement to the question of integrating the three traditions, Gan Yang probed the question of 'Confucian socialism', arguing that in terms of the value sequence of the three traditions, socialism is superior to cultural conservatism, thus we ought to defend the legitimacy of Chinese socialism. On this basis, we can and must reinterpret the 'People's Republic of China': 'China' refers to Chinese civilization with Confucian tradition as its core element; 'People's Republic' does not mean a capitalist, bourgeois republic, but a republic with worker and peasant labourers as subjects. Thus the true meaning of the People's Republic of China is a Confucian socialist republic. 'The deepest meaning of China's reforms', Gan contended, 'is their effort to deeply excavate the core meaning of "Confucian socialism".' Yet this slogan seems even more in need of demonstration than merely integrating the three traditions.

The vision of Confucian socialism inevitably leads one to think of the theory of 'Confucian capitalism' in the context of the 'Four Asian dragons' of the late 1990s. It is

precisely because the rise of Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and South Korea provides a realistic basis for Confucian capitalism that the rise of China provides a realistic basis for Confucian socialism. But Confucian capitalism still seeks to carry out a ‘creative transformation of Chinese tradition’, a project of modernity, while Confucian socialism is based on a civilizational perspective and seeks to reconstruct the foundation for Chinese socialist legitimacy. Confucian socialism means that Chinese socialist legitimacy should be founded on a liberal market economy, realize the political orthodoxy of socialist countries and their demands in terms of values, and ground itself in traditional Chinese civilization. As opposed to Cui Zhiyuan’s ‘liberal socialism’ – a re-imagined form of political economy – Gan Yang’s Confucian socialism is a cultural and ideological construction. Importantly, Confucian socialism does not offer a clear political system in its content, and the exact meaning of ‘Confucian’ in Gan’s argument remains ever elusive. As we gather from Gan’s use of the term Confucian, it represents Chinese culture and its subjectivity, which he asserts ‘can be used to sum up the essence of this tradition’.⁵³ But how does Confucianism as a classical tradition relate to modernity? Gan presents us with no clear path to its possible integration in a socialist or capitalist system, and indeed, Confucianism has within it several obvious internal contradictions that make such an integration most difficult. Inside the Chinese socialist tradition are objectives that affirm and absorb Chinese tradition, which we see in the anti-Japanese War protests and the historical changes of the 1980s and 1990s. Yet radical critiques of Chinese tradition reverberate across the years, with the ‘criticize Legalism-criticize Confucius’ campaign of the 1970s as one of the peaks. If the Confucian tradition and socialism can combine to form a new thought tradition, this cannot be accomplished merely by forgetting the antagonisms and conflicts between the two; rather, they must rely on a mutual construction of the socialist and Confucian traditions.

Conclusion: An uncertain future?

As is clear even from our short discussion of four representative figures, the thought of the Chinese New Left is complex, dispersed, unclear, and even contradictory. This is partly because of different intellectual genealogies, ways of thinking, and problematics. As a contemporary school of thought, too, the Chinese New Left is constantly changing in ways that respond to political, social, economic, and cultural changes in China and the world. Still, these thinkers have addressed the real problems facing reform China. From the Chinese New Left’s origins in the end-of-history discourse in the 1990s, its core preoccupation has been how to rebuild Chinese socialism’s effectiveness and legitimacy. From the perspective of an anti-modern modernity, Wang Hui re-examined the short 20th century; Cui Zhiyuan imagined the distant future of liberal socialism, calling for a second thought liberation and institutional innovation; Wang Shaoguang focused on the relationship between the socialist state, society, and the market, searching for theories of representational democracy and people’s society; and Gan Yang promoted the integration of the three traditions on the basis of his faith in the possibility of Confucian socialism. All are responses to the question of how to restore the effectiveness and legitimacy of Chinese socialism. In fact, we see the New Left’s exploration of Chinese socialism within the ongoing evolution and continuous revolution of Chinese socialism. This

tradition is represented by Mao Zedong Thought and the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and contains any exploration carried out under the banner of socialism to find a Chinese Road that transcends capitalist modernity.

However, the future of Chinese socialism remains uncertain. Indeed, we can say that for Wang Hui, socialism means that a political, economic, and cultural relationship is integrated in a substantive democratic relationship and that socialism maintains a political structure in a revolutionary way, namely resistance to capitalism. For Cui Zhiyuan, meanwhile, socialism means 'political and economic democracy' with infinite institutional possibilities. Wang Shaoguang, however, regards socialism as a true representation and protection of majority interests, whereas Gan Yang holds that socialism is an inclusive system of government that establishes the subjectivity of Chinese culture and a political and economic system that favours the masses. All share in a commitment to criticizing capitalism in its latest forms and defending the positive legacy of Chinese socialism, especially Maoism. But we do not know whether the New Left has put forward a concrete and pursuable system of socialist practice to frame China's socialist system politically, economically, and culturally. Thus in this regard, New Left thinking is still largely at the critical and theoretical levels.

Today, the statist turn of New Leftists is well known. Some critics argue that China's rise will coincide with part of the New Left defending the current political order, echoing the country's pragmatic demands within the international order. However, this criticism ignores that such a defence is embedded in higher standards of value. Such statism is indeed a change in a part of the New Left that is worthy of concern, but in terms of theory, it has not occurred in the thought of the core New Left representatives whom we have discussed in this article. Nonetheless, we cannot say that there is no relationship between statism and the New Left, and the thought and positions of the New Left can be extended to statism all too easily. This runs the risk of serious error. Nonetheless, the New Left's defence of and reflection on socialist China is grounded in value perspectives that transcend the state and in utopian visions, and has roots in the historical tradition of Chinese socialism. The New Left's view of Chinese socialism thus regards the present from both past and future perspectives, an observation that contains defending, analyses, and criticisms. For precisely this reason, there will always be a tension between how the New Left imagines the future of Chinese socialism and Chinese socialism as a genuine historical process, and between the New Left's exploration of Chinese socialism and its existence as a set of political-economic-social institutions. This is how the New Left has maintained dynamism of thought and a genuinely critical voice. Once these tensions disappear, New Left thought may be absorbed into the current institutions of Chinese socialism, thereby losing its critical nature and becoming statist.

Unfortunately, in contemporary China's public sphere, statist are becoming increasingly diverse, with their identity varying depending on whether they work in the government, academia, or civil society. They are in a straightforward position with the help of nationalist sentiment, and have gained more attention and civil recognition than the New Left because of the support of state power. The network is full of shouting statist, and the New Left's voice is confined increasingly to universities. As the political situation became harsher in recent years, the New Left has been forced to diversify its approach. For instance, Cui Zhiyuan participated actively in the Chongqing municipal government of the party leader Bo Xilai, and hoped to help Chongqing become an experimental field

of Chinese socialism to explore new possibilities. But while some of New Left proponents such as Cui took on official titles and worked in government, the New Left as a whole has thus far been unable to put its theories into practice for real change. All this has marginalized the New Left, confining it to the so-called leftist camp, which is undoubtedly another unfortunate turn for contemporary Chinese socialism.

Notes

1. The earliest use of the term Chinese New Left (中国的新左派) was in a 21 July 1994 issue of *Beijing Youth* (北京青年报). Yang Ping, a journalist, noted that China had produced a 'New Left wing' (新左翼). In 1996, Hong-Kong-based magazine *Twenty-First Century* (二十一世纪) used the front-page headline 'A critique of the "Chinese New Left" and "Postmodernism"' to describe a Chinese-style New Left focusing on Cui Zhiyuan.
2. Timothy Cheek, *The Intellectual in Modern Chinese History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 292.
3. See Lu Hua and Matthew Galway, Freedom and its limitations: The contemporary mainland Chinese debate over liberalism, *China Information* 32(2), 2018: forthcoming; and Tang Xiaobing and Mark McConaghy, Liberalism in contemporary China: Questions, strategies, and directions, *China Information* 32(1), 2018: 121–38. See also Li Zehou 李泽厚 and Liu Zaifu 刘再复, 告别革命: 回望二十世纪中国 (Farewell to revolution: Looking back at 20th-century China), Hong Kong: 天地圖書有限公司 (Cosmos books), 1995.
4. See Zhu Xueqin 朱学勤, 道德理想国的覆灭: 从卢梭到罗伯斯庇尔 (The destruction of moral utopia: From Rousseau to Robespierre), Shanghai: 上海三联书店 (Shanghai joint publishing), 1994.
5. Perry Anderson 佩里·安德森, 新自由主义的历史和教训 (History and lessons of neo-liberalism), trans. Fei Xinlu 费新录, 天涯 (Frontiers), no. 3, 2002: 162–70.
6. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Free Press, 1992.
7. See Wang Shaoguang's chapter, 建立一个强有力的民主国家: 兼论'政权形式'与'国家能力'的区别 (Establishing a strong democracy: On the difference between 'political form' and 'national competence'), in Wang Shaoguang 王绍光, 安邦之道: 国家转型的目标与途径 (Ampang Road: The goal and approach of national transformation), Beijing: 生活·读书·新知三联书店 (SDX joint publishing), 2007, 3–32.
8. All translations provided in this article are the authors'; Wang Shaoguang 王绍光, 祛魅與超越: 反思民主, 自由, 平等, 公民社会 (Disenchantment and transcendence: Reflexion on democracy, freedom, equality and civil society), Hong Kong: 三联书店 (Joint publishing), 2010, 31–2.
9. Wang Shaoguang 王绍光 and Hu Angang 胡鞍钢, 中国国家能力报告 (A report on China's state capacity), Shenyang: 辽宁人民出版社 (Liaoning people's publishing house), 1993.
10. Wang Shaoguang 王绍光, 分权的底线 (The bottom line of authority's decentralization), 战略与管理 (Strategy and management), no. 2, 1995: 42.
11. Wang Shaoguang 王绍光, 国家在市场经济转型中的作用 (The role of the state in market transformation), 战略与管理 (Strategy and management), no. 2, 1994: 90–6.
12. Wang Shaoguang 王绍光, 关于'市民社会'的几点思考 (A few points of reflections on 'civil society'), 二十一世纪 (Twenty-first century), no. 8, 1991: 102–14.
13. Wang Shaoguang, 分权的底线, 42.
14. Wang Shaoguang 王绍光, 左脑的思考 (Left-brain thinking), Tianjin: 天津人民出版社 (Tianjin people's publishing house), 2002, 1.
15. Cui Zhiyuan 崔之元, 第二次思想解放与制度创新 (The second thought liberation and institutional innovation), Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1997, 1.
16. *Ibid.*, 5, 10.

17. Ibid., 9.
18. Adam Przeworski and Michael Wallerstein, Popular sovereignty, state autonomy, and private property, *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie/Europäisches Archiv für Soziologie* 27(2), 1986: 215–59.
19. Cui, 第二次思想解放与制度创新, 365.
20. Ibid.
21. Cui Zhiyuan 崔之元, 制度创新与第二次思想解放 (Institutional innovation and the second thought liberation), 二十一世纪 (Twenty-first century), no. 24, 1994: 12.
22. Ibid.
23. Cui Zhiyuan 崔之元, 再论‘第二次思想解放’与制度创新 – 兼答各位评论者 (Rethinking ‘the second thought liberation’ and institutional innovation – Responding to all comments), 二十一世纪 (Twenty-first century), no. 27, 1995: 134–45.
24. On Angang Constitution, see He Li, *Political Thought and China’s Transformation: Ideas Shaping Reform in Post-Mao China*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 52; and Cui Zhiyuan 崔之元, 鞍钢宪法与后福特主义 (Angang constitution and post-Fordism), 读书 (Readings), no. 3, 1996: 11–21.
25. Arif Dirlik 阿里夫·德里克, 后社会主义? – 反思‘有中国特色的社会主义’ (Post-socialism? – Reflection on ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’), trans. Er Dong 尔东, in Yuan Jie 苑洁 (ed.) 后社会主义 (Post-socialism), Beijing: 中央编译出版社 (Central compilation and translation press), 2007, 25–44.
26. Ibid.
27. Wang Hui 汪晖, 当代中国的思想状况与现代性问题 (Contemporary Chinese thought and the questions of modernity), 天涯 (Frontiers), no. 5, 1997: 133–50, quote from pp. 147–8; and Wang Hui, *China’s New Order: Society, Politics, and Economy in Transition*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003, 141–87.
28. Ibid., 133.
29. Ibid., 150.
30. Mao Zedong, On the question of the differentiation of the three worlds, 22 February 1974, in *Mao Zedong on Diplomacy*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1998, 454.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., 136.
33. Wang Hui 汪晖, 去政治化的政治: 短20世纪的终结与90年代 (Depoliticized politics: The end of the 20th century and 1990s), Beijing: 生活·读书·新知三联书店 (SDX joint publishing), 2008, 157–8.
34. Wang Hui, 当代中国的思想状况与现代性问题, 133–50.
35. Wang Hui 汪晖, 现代中国思想的兴起 (The rise of modern Chinese thought), 4 vols, Beijing: 生活·读书·新知三联书店 (SDX joint publishing), 2004–2008.
36. See Gan Yang’s chapter, 文化中国与乡土中国: 后冷战时代的中国前景及其文化 (Cultural China and native China: Post-Cold War China’s prospects and its culture), in Gan Yang 甘阳 (ed.) 文明, 国家, 大学 (Civilization, state, university), Beijing: 生活·读书·新知三联书店 (SDX joint publishing), 2012, 37.
37. Gan Yang 甘阳, 从经济民族走向政治民族: 中国政治改革的中心问题 (From economic nation to political nation: The central problem of China’s political reform), in Gan Yang 甘阳 and Cui Zhiyuan 崔之元 (eds) 中国改革的政治经济学 (Political economy of China’s reform), Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1997, 3–8.
38. Gan Yang 甘阳, 自由主义: 贵族的还是平民的? (Liberalism: For the noble or for the common people?), 读书 (Readings), no. 1, 1999: 85–94.
39. See the chapter by Gan Yang 甘阳, 中国自由左派的由来 (The origin of China’s liberal left), in Gong Yang 公羊 (ed.) 思潮: 中国新左派及其影响 (Trends: China’s New Left and its influence), Beijing: 中国社会科学出版社 (China social sciences press), 2003, 110–20.

40. Wang Shaoguang 王绍光, 权力的代价与改革的路径依赖 (The cost of power and the path to reform), *战略与管理* (Strategy and management), no. 5, 2000: 114.
41. John Roemer, 'Rational choice' Marxism: Some issues of method and substance, in John Roemer (ed.) *Analytical Marxism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, 199–200.
42. 崔之元: 小康社会社会主义与中国未来: 小资产阶级宣言 (Cui Zhiyuan: Well-off socialism and the future of China: Declaration of the petty bourgeoisie), 12 November 2004, <http://www.aixiang.com/data/4610.html>, accessed 21 May 2015.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Daniel A. Bell, *The China Model: Political Meritocracy and the Limits of Democracy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015; and Pan Wei 潘维, 中国模式: 解读人民共和国的60年 (Chinese model: Interpreting 60 years of the People's Republic), Beijing: 中央编译出版社 (Central compilation and translation press), 2009.
47. Wang Hui, *China's Twentieth Century: Revolution, Retreat, and the Road to Equality*, ed. Saul Thomas, London: Verso, 2016, chapter 1. Wang develops Eric Hobsbawm's 'short twentieth century', which spanned 1914 to 1991.
48. Wang Hui, 去政治化的政治, 17.
49. Wang Hui 汪晖, 代表性断裂与后政党政治 (Representative fracture and post-party politics), *开放时代* (Open times), no. 2, 2014: 72.
50. Wang Shaoguang 王绍光, 代表型民主与代议型民主 (Representative democracy versus representational democracy), *开放时代* (Open times), no. 2, 2014: 152–74.
51. Confucian voices have not been limited to Confucian Leftists. For an exploration of Confucian voices, see Deng Jun and Craig A. Smith, The rise of New Confucianism and the return of spirituality to politics in mainland China, *China Information* 32(2), 2018: forthcoming.
52. Li Zonggui, *Between Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the Modernization of Chinese Culture*, Oxford: Chartridge Books Oxford, 2014, 288.
53. Gan, 文明, 国家, 大学, 27.

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