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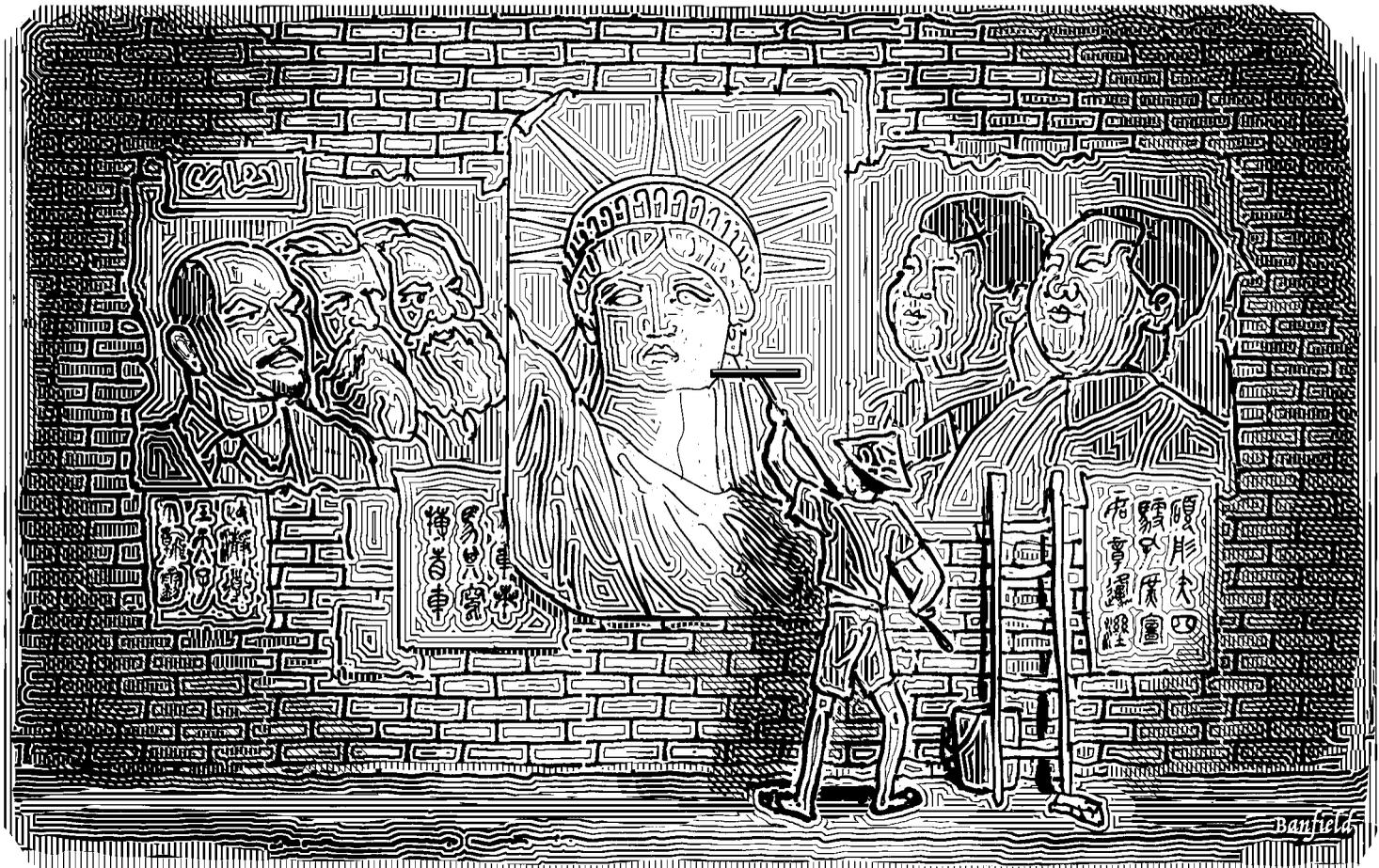
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CHINA'S DEMOCRATIC FUTURE



CHINA IS A COUNTRY WHERE commemorations matter, not only sentimentally but also politically. Two important anniversaries in 2019 have given Beijing's Communist leadership reason to worry. First and foremost was the centennial of the May Fourth Movement. Thousands of Chinese students assembled on May 4, 1919, in Beijing's renowned Tiananmen Square to demonstrate against the Versailles Treaty that had ended World War I that same year. Though the Republic of China had been one of the victorious allies, it did not gain the full restoration of sovereignty which had been its main war aim. The Chinese were especially affronted that Germany's holdings in China were transferred to Japan, not returned to China itself. The resultant protests inaugurated a period of intellectual and political ferment that came to encompass more than foreign relations.

The dominant vocabulary of the movement was Anglo-American. Many of the leaders were American-educated, and many others had been influenced by lectures at Peking

University by the philosophers John Dewey and Bertrand Russell. In less than a generation, by the mid-1940s, Anglo-American influence would become conspicuous in the councils of the Republic of China. The upper reaches of President Chiang Kai-shek's ministries were dominated by Ivy League graduates.

The dissidents in 1919 personified their political demands as "Mr. Democracy" and "Mr. Science." To this day, Mr. Democracy has remained a powerful presence in Chinese political life in the face of extraordinary violence. May 4, 1919, fell in the midst of the "warlord" era (1916-28), when rival strongmen fought for territorial dominance over a divided China. The warlords were racketeers, typically more interested in local infighting than world affairs. But they did sometimes engage in full-scale wars when prompted, and in July 1937 Japan initiated one. The Sino-Japanese engagement was among the most ferocious conflicts of World War II. When it ended, the Chinese Civil War which had been raging between the Republic of China and the Communist Party of China resumed, killing millions more. In

1950, the newly victorious Communist government, the People's Republic of China, sent its forces into Tibet and bloodily suppressed an armed resistance. Turkic peoples in the far northwest met the same fate. The new regime then turned against the Chinese people themselves in a violent top-down effort to hasten industrialization. This "Great Leap Forward" claimed tens of millions of lives throughout the late 1950s. In the 1960s the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," a merciless push to suppress anti-Maoist dissent, spread still more death and destruction.

Despite all those years of bloodshed, new protests in 1989 showed that the democratic spirit in China remained truly deathless. In the "June Fourth Incident," demonstrations erupted again in Tiananmen Square. As *New York Times* correspondent Nicholas Kristof put it at the time,

More than 150,000 demonstrators openly defied official warnings and a concentration of troops today to march for 14 hours through the capital, repeat-



edly and effortlessly puncturing lines of policemen and soldiers sent to stop them, in one of the biggest displays of dissatisfaction in 40 years of Communist rule.... Most worrying for the authorities was the fact that crowds of cheering workers lined the entire route and hailed the core of student marchers almost as a liberating army.

In a separate article, Kristof provided some historical context:

The last two weeks of demonstrations have been an extraordinary humiliation for the Government, and especially for Deng Xiaoping, China's senior leader.... [M]ore fundamentally, they suggest that the Government may be losing its grasp on what the emperors called "the mandate of heaven." Mr. Deng may be too good a Communist to believe in such a mandate, but in his lifetime he has already seen the Qing dynasty crumble in 1911 and the Nationalist Government collapse in 1949 because they lost the moral legitimacy to rule.

We now know that Deng did not take well to this. On June 4, 1989, he ordered the army to clear the square at the cost of thousands of lives. It is clear in retrospect that this atrocity did not make the Communist Party's grip on the mandate of heaven much firmer. In the years after the June Fourth Incident, as the memory of the massacre receded in most places, the party continued to make one triumphalist pronouncement of self-congratulation after another. But in their private deliberations, party leaders were far from sanguine. In fact, they seemed prone to panic.

This decades-long story is the backdrop to the ongoing struggle for democracy and civil rights in Hong Kong. As the events there have captured the attention of the world, there has been a growing realization that the desire for democracy in China is not some delicate or fragile flower but a hardy and persistent perennial.

Trouble in Beijing

THE SURVIVAL OF THE COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP in 1989 was a near-run thing, and the party knew it. To begin with, the economic reforms that Deng had already instituted in 1979—though they would enable China to rise to worldwide prominence—were beset with contradictions. The administration's reforms thereafter, which

Deng himself called "socialism with Chinese characteristics," created a state-directed market economy subservient to objectives established by the political leadership. This bargain looked stable for a time—until the Soviet Union unexpectedly collapsed in 1991. After that, the Communists began to fear that their rule could not survive deeper market reforms and more intimate international involvements.

After Deng transformed the People's Republic into a quasi-capitalist setup, many of the party's elite members became multi-millionaires or even billionaires. But the same political system that made them powerful and rich was also a perpetual threat: there was always the possibility that a loyal party man could find himself on the wrong side of party infighting and lose his fortune. This is precisely what happened to many thousands of loyal party men when Xi Jinping, the new general secretary, took power in 2013 and launched a so-called "anti-corruption" campaign. With due allowance for exaggeration, the accusations involved staggering amounts

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of money—\$6 billion here, \$14 billion there. But this was not a good-government initiative. Xi was going after those who, in his mind, had even the most remote connection to the rivals he had defeated in his rise to power.

Xi was not warring against corruption as such. Mind-boggling corruption was and is the inevitable, because necessary, product of a system in which the Chinese Communist Party reserves to itself the most privileged and influential position in the marketplace. Since 1979, this has been the party's standard operating procedure. Under Xi, corruption remains instrumental—not only in steering the economy in the direction the party wants it to go, but also in ensuring that high-level civilian and military officials have a stake in preserving the system. It is not a matter of one audacious embezzler here or there. Rather, it is the entire Mafia-like system itself, wherein each of the lower-downs kicks up to his boss until the money finally reaches the most powerful body in the system—the

Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China. Its seven members sit atop a network of huge state-owned enterprises, especially banks, which generate and disperse enormous amounts of cash. They also sit atop a massive internal security apparatus, thus bringing together in one place tools for coercion and slush funds for cooptation. For the party's leaders, the daily dialectic is a tension between fear and greed: though they trust their ability to survive intra-party conflict, they also hedge their bets—not least by smuggling billions abroad for safekeeping.

At first blush this may seem a bizarre *modus operandi* for a Communist regime. But Leninism, as an operational code, teaches flexibility above all. Its unchanging objective is the perpetuation of the "dictatorship of the proletariat"—that is, the rule of the vanguard party, which itself is always a self-perpetuating entity. Since its creation in 1921, the Chinese Communist Party has been no different. But acquiring state power and then preserving a monopoly on that power it is no simple matter, especially since sudden radical upheavals have always been modern China's stock-in-trade. Deng's fundamental changes in economic and social policy caught all observers by surprise, but the speed with which they were implemented suggested that they were not the result of some casual decision. Rather, the men in power must have been planning a major shift for some time. What developments at home and abroad convinced them such a shift was required?

The answer lies, at least partly, in the ever-increasing accessibility of Western ideas. The advent of the internet age hastened this change. In the past, China's democratic spirit manifested itself in mass public demonstrations like those of 1919 and 1989 in Tiananmen Square. But in our day, protests are more likely to burst out in cyberspace—a vast, wholly manufactured, yet very real expanse of public space. Eric Fish, an analyst who tracks China's millennials, wrote in the online magazine *ChinaFile* that

By 2011, Sina Weibo [a microblogging website]—which was overwhelmingly used by people born after 1980—was hitting its stride, with Internet vigilantes felling a succession of corrupt officials and exposing government misdeeds and cover-ups.... In early 2013, protestors both on and offline gave what was perhaps the most significant challenge to authorities since 1989 when they decried press censorship en masse after the staff of a liberal newspaper

went on strike over particularly egregious government censorship.

It was at about this time that Xi Jinping became head of the Communist Party and the Central Committee circulated what became known as Document No. 9. This has turned out to be the roadmap for the brutal repression that is the hallmark of Xi's tenure. Document No. 9 was circulated secretly in April 2013, but a copy was leaked about six months later. The directive identified the most ominous "political perils" created by anti-Communist "reactionaries." Among these were:

1. Promoting Western Constitutional Democracy.
2. Promoting "universal values."
3. Promoting civil society.
4. Promoting Neoliberalism.
5. Promoting the West's idea of journalism, challenging China's principle that the media and publishing system should be subject to party discipline.
6. Promoting historical nihilism, trying to undermine the history of the CCP and of New China.

The authors of Document No. 9 were well aware that the fight against these perils would take place largely in the realm of ideas. The writers exhorted good Communists to "pay close attention to work in the ideological sphere" and to "conscientiously strengthen management of the ideological battlefield." "Party members and governments of all levels must become fully aware that struggles in the ideological sphere are perpetual, complex, and excruciating." As Xi Jinping came to power, the party was growing ever more afraid that the digital era would be one of permeable borders, or none at all, between China and the West.

The World is Too Much with Us

THE PARTY KNEW WHEREOF IT SPOKE in Document No. 9, for the outside world has always exerted formidable influence on China's affairs. The Communist Party itself is the product of un-Chinese ideas that originated far away. When the People's Republic took power in 1949, the accompanying parade featured gigantic portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin—four un-Chinese-looking men to say the least. To look at photographs of that event is to grasp the full subversive potential of "Westernization." A hundred years before that, millions of Chinese fought and died for the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, a revolutionary movement inspired by Chris-

tianity. Also in the 19th century, millions of others staged major rebellions inspired by Islam. In 1912, the millennia-old imperial system finally succumbed to republicanism. Today, foreign-bred ideas both secular and religious continue to roil the Chinese polity as it clamors for democracy and flirts with Christianity. Substantial contact with the world is necessary if China's ascent is to continue, of course. But such contact is always dangerous.

Warfare is Communism's preferred political metaphor, and the concept of the "ideological battlefield" has been central to Leninist theory and practice for more than a century. For Lenin himself, "reformism," "liberalism," and similar notions were the mortal enemies of real and total revolution. His 1911 essay, "Reformism in the Russian Social-Democratic Movement," was once required reading for all true Communists. To this day, there is still an argument over whether Stalin actually said something widely attributed to him: "Ideas are far more powerful than guns. We don't allow our enemies to have guns, why should we allow them to have ideas?" But Mao Zedong is unambiguously on the record:

We stand for active ideological struggle.... Every Communist and revolutionary should take up this weapon. But liberalism rejects ideological struggle and stands for unprincipled peace, thus giving rise to a decadent, philistine attitude and bringing about political degeneration.

But perhaps the most subversive of the West's ideological exports is "self-determination," because the People's Republic of China is the last of the world's great multi-national, multi-ethnic empires. Briefly told: in February 1912, the guardians of the five year-old boy, Pu Yi, who was formally the emperor, arranged for his abdication in a way that brought the Qing dynasty to an end by formally ceding power to a new "Republic of China." That dynasty had been the creation, not of the Chinese, but of the inner-Asian Manchus. Through alliances, warfare, and guile, the Manchus had added to China proper the territories of East Turkistan (a tract of about 600,000 square miles which the Chinese call "Xinjiang"), Outer and Inner Mongolia, and Tibet. At their height, the Manchus had constituted only about 2% of their empire's 400 million people. They had overridden a venerable Chinese-dominated bureaucracy and pursued an agenda of their own: in particular, they never attempted to show a Chinese face to their non-Chinese subjects. They projected

themselves as defenders of their own unique cultural and religious traditions. They were not on a "civilizing mission" designed to sinify barbarians.

The new Chinese republic, to which the Manchus ceded power, approached governance in a way wholly different from the previous rulers. The Republic of China, true to its name, resolved to create out of the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic Manchu Empire what today's Beijing regime, like the Republic of China before it, calls "One China." For decades, this has been a recipe for repression and violence. Tibet is now under virtual lockdown because the Tibetan Buddhists who live there do not think of themselves as Chinese. Nor do the Turkic Muslims of East Turkistan; and therefore the Communist regime now holds at least a million of them in concentration camps. Like today's Beijing regime, the Manchu Qing dynasty was brutal and violent in crushing opposition. But in other important ways, it was the polar opposite of today's Communist dictatorship. The dynasty did not enforce cultural conformity. It was cosmopolitan and ecumenical, because that is what it decided it needed to be. In the event, a tiny Manchu elite held on to power for 270 years. The comparably tiny Communist elite is unlikely to equal that record.

Making China Chinese Again

UNTIL THE LATE 1990S OR SO, THE party relied exclusively on its Orwellian inversion of language—"New China Newspeak," as the Australian Sinologist Geremie Barmé has aptly tagged it. Barmé wrote in *Shades of Mao* (1995) that this oppressive jargon was "used by the Party, its propaganda organs, the media and educators to shape (and circumscribe) the way people express[ed] themselves in the public (and eventually private) sphere." The Chinese argument about world politics therefore turned on a definition of terms. The dispute was not about whether "democracy" and human rights were good things. Rather, in keeping with the *dicta* of Lenin and Mao, it was the liberals' implementation of these concepts that needed to be exposed as fundamentally fraudulent. Thus, it fell to Communist authorities to distinguish between bogus democracy—that is, the bourgeois democracy practiced in non-Communist states—and real democracy—that is, the "people's democracies" in power in Communist states. Similar distinctions were drawn between a bogus "rule of law" and genuine "socialist legality."

The critical modifier, as in Stalin's Russia, was the word "socialist"—socialist democracy,



socialist legality, and all the rest. Sometimes, however, the modifier was “Chinese” or “Chinese characteristics,” which, when applied to words like socialism and democracy, really meant no socialism or democracy at all. Confucius himself in the *Analects* advocated “the rectification of names,” that is, the effort to ensure that the meanings of words corresponded to the realities they described. To do otherwise was to invite disorder and, ultimately, chaos. But disorder and chaos of a certain sort have proven useful for the Chinese Communist Party, which has always taken a protean approach to language. It used to be happy with words like “imperialism” and “anti-colonialism.” After all, China itself was once somebody else’s colony: the struggle against the Manchu Empire was, in modern parlance, a war of national liberation. But that trope does not well serve today’s Communist empire, for it almost perfectly describes the relationship between the colonized peoples of Tibet and East Turkistan and the colonialist Han Chinese regime in Beijing—a relationship that the historian Bruce Jacobs has described as “classic colonialism.”

So how could the party justify its rule? Proletarian internationalism was no longer a potent intellectual force either at home or

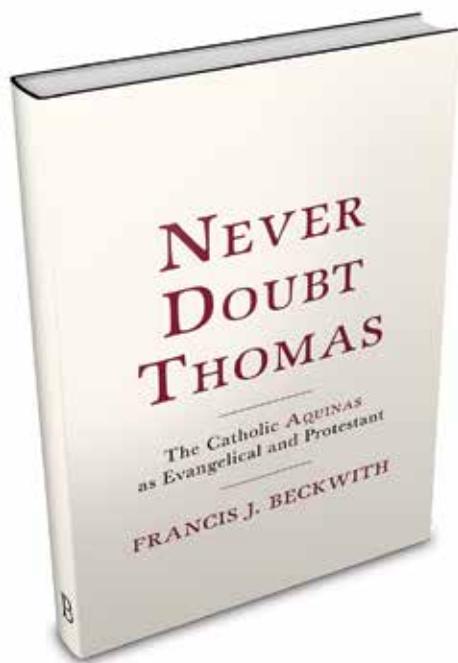
abroad. The party had flirted with concepts like “the Pacific Century” or “the Pacific Rim,” but these were too embracing of an oceans-focused maritime commercial order and its cosmopolitan political ideas. Indeed, these ideas were outright dangerous and were already too well-established in what Beijing regarded as its own bailiwick—the “Sinosphere.” There democracy was thriving in Taiwan and, even in next-door Hong Kong, Beijing’s subversive incursions were being resisted at every turn. Beyond that, democracy prospered, too, in the traditional Confucian strongholds of Japan and South Korea.

All this persuaded leaders that New China Newspeak was in need of refurbishment. In its customarily turgid way, the party signaled its conclusion that Western-derived Marxism was no longer up to the task. A high-ranking minister, Luo Shugang, said in 2014, “It is necessary to learn from the essence of traditional Chinese culture, as it embodies the cultural roots of the Chinese people and is an inexhaustible resource for meeting the demands of ideological and cultural competition in global discourse.” Party propagandists in China were put to work crafting and promoting an alternative vision of the world order which “learns from the essence of traditional

Chinese culture, embodies the cultural roots of the Chinese people and is representative of the Chinese people’s unique spiritual identity.”

And so China embraced a new and defiant provincialism. The political scientist William Callahan, our foremost student of this language, calls it “Sino-speak,” in contrast to the “Rimspeak” it is designed to supersede. In a 2012 essay for the *Journal of Asian Studies*, he wrote: “In the 1980s and 1990s, the discourse of the ‘Pacific century’ and then the ‘Asian century’ talked of the trans-boundary and trans-oceanic economic and social networks that knit together the Pacific rim.” Consequently, “[i]n the 2000s the trend among scholars was to see China’s values converging with Western ones as its society became more and more integrated into the international system.” The trend toward internationalization peaked with the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, and the world financial crisis that occurred shortly thereafter. The new party lingo reverses that movement: “[I]nstead of celebrating cross-border flows, Sino-speak looks to China’s eternal civilization to determine social, cultural and territorial borders.” “This is not simply a scholarly debate because Sino-speak is heavily promoted by government officials, state media, and official intellectuals in China.”

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Because the party has decided to move beyond modernity by looking to “China’s eternal civilization,” it has become necessary—to use some party jargon—to reverse verdicts. Back in Mao’s day, the worst thing that one could say about a political enemy was that he was a “Confucian.” The official verdict, put forward succinctly in a collection of propaganda articles called *Workers, Peasants and Soldiers Criticize Lin Piao and Confucius* (1976), was that

Confucius was a reactionary who doggedly defended slavery and whose doctrines have been used by all reactionaries, whether ancient or contemporary, Chinese or foreign, throughout the more than 2,000 years since his time. The bourgeois careerist, renegade and traitor Lin Piao [once Mao’s Minister of Defense] was a thorough devotee of Confucius.... He used the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius as a reactionary ideological weapon in his plot to usurp Party leadership, seize state power and restore capitalism in China.

But that was then. Shortly after taking power in early 2013, Xi Jinping visited Confucius’ birthplace. As *New York Times* cor-

respondent Chris Buckley noted, Xi gave a speech on that occasion in which he described the Communist Party “as a defender of ancient virtues, epitomized by Confucius and his collected teachings.” He praised Confucius and encouraged study of the *Analects* alongside subsequent commentaries on the classic. A year later, Xi gave the keynote address at an international symposium in Beijing marking the 2,565th anniversary of Confucius’ birth. It was the first time a Communist Party head had attended such an event. “Confucianism, along with other philosophies and cultures taking shape and growing within China, are records of spiritual experiences, rational thinking, and cultural achievements of the nation while it strived to build its identity,” Xi proclaimed. The next step was to link Mao and Confucius, the world’s two best-known Chinese people. Xinhua, China’s official state-run news agency, reported that on the 120th anniversary of Mao Zedong’s birth, “Chinese top leaders including President Xi Jinping visited Mao’s mausoleum, making three bows toward Mao’s seated statue and paying their respects to the remains of Mao.” Xi said Mao was “a great patriot and national hero.”

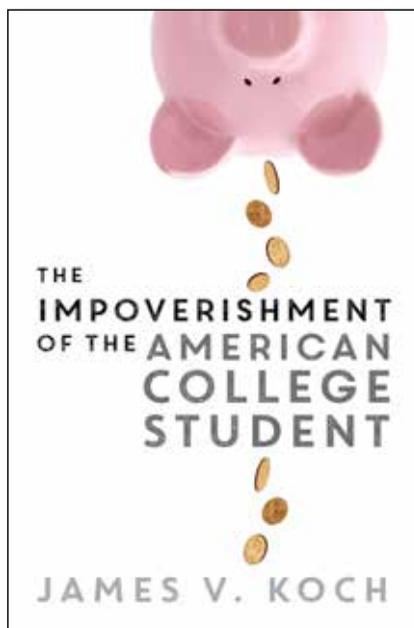
These two highly scripted party displays were meant to help institutionalize an ongo-

ing conflation of Maoism with Confucianism. Many decades ago, Mao’s *Little Red Book* was Beijing’s favorite literary artifact. Today it prefers the seemingly less threatening *Analects* of Confucius. Since 2006, the Beijing regime has spent about \$160 million supporting so-called Confucius Institutes on dozens of American college campuses. It would not have been in the regime’s interests to give these establishments the more accurate name of Mao Zedong Institutes. Yet it is Mao’s purposes, not Confucius’, which such places actually serve. The Confucius Institutes are ostensibly about education, but they are really about keeping tabs on Chinese students in America, spreading propaganda, meddling in American politics generally, and performing espionage. As Barmé has written in *China Heritage*, “the Confucius Institute network...treats Sinologues or students of things Chinese [as] akin to useful idiots of the party-state, mimicking thereby a utilitarian approach to exploiting naïveté and craven ambition that had been devised by V.I. Lenin.”

A Window of Opportunity

LINKING CONFUCIUS AND MAO ZEDONG is an impressive feat of dialectical legerdemain. The term “Confucianism” is

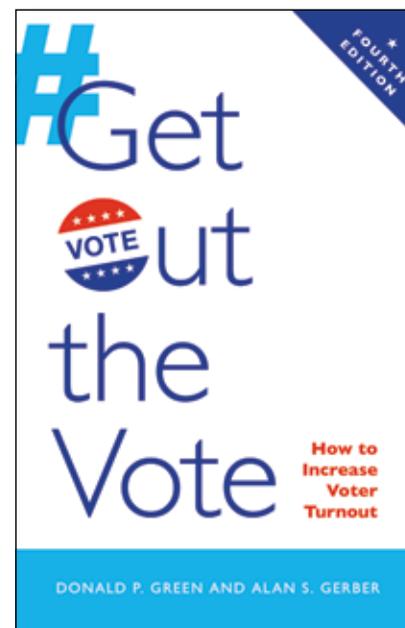
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a way of describing two millennia of thinking about politics and society—not only in China, but in Japan, Korea, and Vietnam also. In years past, Confucianism was blamed for China's inability to cope with the modern world. Then it was used to explain Chinese successes in that same modern world, and not only in China itself but in the Chinese diaspora as well. The prosperity of "Confucian" societies in Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore also prompted discussions about "Asian Values" as a form of pushback against the West's repeated calls for multi-party democracy and human rights. This gave Westerners the impression that Confucianism is an opponent of our deepest beliefs about political and social life.

But the Confucian tradition, properly understood, is not a manual for tyrants. Rather, it is a natural ally of anyone interested in political liberalization. Chinese reformers who seek to argue against the excesses of their government do not have to rely exclusively on Western liberal thought or Western religious-based political ideas like natural law: they have centuries of home-grown political theory to draw on. Confucius himself (551–479 B.C.) left only the sketchiest outlines of his own thought in the form of pronouncements written down by his disciples. Like other great teachers, he passed on a many-faceted legacy. But it is clear that he was not a political authoritarian. He thought that the presence of harsh laws and severe punishments was the mark of a state in bad shape. High taxes, large armies, conscripted labor, and vainglorious aggrandizement were not good signs, either. Indeed, the men in charge were supposed to edify and not intimidate. If they had a claim to rule, it was only because they were better, not more ruthless, than their subjects.

Over the centuries, these ideas influenced both personal and institutional codes of conduct. The proper mandarin was obliged to tell truth to power, often paying with his head. And it was Confucian-minded scholars who composed the long, detailed, multi-volume histories that each new dynasty was obliged to write about its predecessor. Twenty-four such accounts survive, each one a cautionary tale about the need for rectitude and restraint, the threat of profligacy and decadence, and the fate of a state that overreaches itself. These themes reverberated in both high and popular Chinese culture and helped create the *beau idéal* of the official as scholar, moralist, poet, and artist.

Confucians also argued among themselves about issues which have engaged Western political philosophers—the dividing line between public and private, state and civil soci-

ety; the relation between virtue in individuals and good order in the nation, between private economic activity and governmental regulation; and especially the limits on the arbitrary power of the state. Historically, scholar-officials trained in the Chinese classics debated these questions. On one side stood advocates of enlarging the government's role in the economy, setting up the government in competition with private merchants and traders, and, in general, refilling the emperor's coffers by more astute fiscal and administrative interventions. On the other side stood scholars who argued that bureaucracies were prone to bloat, that government interventions sopped up wealth and did not create it, and that, in any event, reliance on government rather than on the cultivation of individuals would prove destructive.

America's greatest Sinologist, William Theodore de Bary (1919–2017), spent decades studying centuries of Confucian doctrine, and he found enough in it to speak of a "liberal tradition in China." Among many other things, this tradition rejected authoritarian pretensions, supported cultural diversity, and favored something akin to Western-style liberal education. Columbia University Law School professor Louis Henkin (1917–2010), who was, during his lifetime, the most highly regarded scholar of international law in the world, argued for the commensurability of Confucianism and universally recognized human rights in his 1998 essay, "Confucianism, Human Rights, and 'Cultural Relativism.'" "There is no inherent tension between Confucianism and human rights," concluded Henkin. "The 'Asian values' of Confucianism need not reject... equality in rights, not equal protection of the laws, not individual autonomy and liberty, not economic and social rights, not the acceptance of the individual and his/her rights as fundamental values.... 'Asian values'—'Confucian values'—are universal values too."

None of this is in keeping with the image of "oriental despotism" developed for us by 17th- and 18th-century European philosophers. But then they knew next to nothing about actual Chinese political thought. Nor does the Confucian tradition track very well with our experience of Chinese totalitarianism post-1949. But for exactly that reason, these ancient Chinese practices and ideas—these "Confucian values"—may end up loosening the party's iron grip from the inside out. Xi's administration turned to ancient Chinese teachings in the hope they could help keep China safe from corruption by "reactionary" liberalism. But there is evidence to suggest that they are doing exactly the opposite. Whatever aspects of Chinese civilization may

be in tension with the free world, Confucianism is decidedly not one of them.

In April 2019, less than a month before the centennial of the May Fourth demonstration, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ian Johnson wrote from Beijing that

something strange is happening in Xi Jinping's China. This is supposed to be the perfect dictatorship, the most sustained period of authoritarianism since the Cultural Revolution ended more than forty years ago.... And yet the past few months have also seen...the most serious critique of the system in more than a decade, led by people inside China who are choosing to speak out now, during the most sensitive season of the most sensitive year in decades.

We in the West can be proud that our ideals of democracy and human rights have inspired the brave souls who are standing up for a civilized and humane polity in their country. But the West does not deserve all of the credit. "[O]ver the past century," Johnson reminds us, "even during the darkest times, the underlying humanism of Chinese culture has never been extinguished and has even, at critical moments, reasserted itself."

The Communist regime in China is betting that the legitimacy of its dictatorship, which it once tried to derive from Western Marxism, can instead be derived from traditional Chinese political thought. Leadership, in other words, has decided that it is time for Confucian Oldspeak to come to the rescue of Communist Newspeak. In so doing, Beijing has wagered that our ignorance of what Confucianism really is will make useful idiots of us all. But there are many Chinese, in China and elsewhere, who object to the Chinese Communist Party's hijacking of China's political tradition. We should help them make those objections. Western leaders and scholars can encourage democratic sentiment in China not only by promoting Western principles, but also by educating themselves and others about the true meaning of Confucian mores. *Those values—real Chinese values—do not justify high-handed authoritarianism nor mass imprisonment, let alone genocide. Just the opposite: if treated properly, Confucianism could form the basis for a new flourishing of political and civil rights in the East. We should do everything we can to encourage that development.*

Charles Horner is a senior fellow of the Hudson Institute and the author of Rising China and Its Postmodern Fate, volume 1 (University of Georgia Press) and 2 (E.J. Brill).

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