The Discourse of "Chinese Marxism"

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I take up in this discussion a discourse on Marxism in the Chinese Communist movement that was aborted by the Cultural Revolution but has been reborn since the 1980s to claim the mantle of Chinese Marxism 中国(的)马克思主义. Chinese Marxism as a specific discourse needs to be distinguished from "Marxism in China" 马克思主义在中国, which is broader in compass and more diffuse. It refers to an ongoing effort "to make Marxism Chinese" 马克思主义中国化, or "to integrate the universal truths of Marxism with the concrete circumstances of Chinese society."[1] The discourse also equates "Chinese Marxism" with Mao Zedong Thought 毛泽东思想 as its foundational moment.

The discourse assumed recognizable form in the idea of New Democracy 新民主主义 during the Yan'an period (1935–45), which also corresponded roughly to the years of the war of resistance against Japan (1937–45). It guided

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1 I use the quotation marks here to indicate reference to Chinese usage (*Zhongguo Makesi zhuyi*), and the description of a discourse. They are dispensed with below unless I use the term to refer to other works. I also prefer in this discussion "making Marxism Chinese" to the more common terms, sinicization or sinification, not only because it is a more literal translation of "Makesi zhuyi Zhongguohua," but more importantly for interpretive reasons. The terms sinicization or sinification carry the suggestion of cultural assimilation to a "Sinic" space as Latinate equivalents for *Hanhua* 汉化 (becoming Han) or *tonghua* 同化 (assimilation). Problematic in their application to imperial China, these usages are meaningless in the 20th century as Chinese society itself was undergoing radical change, raising the question of what the foreign was being assimilated to. "China" in the new national conception was in the process of being invented out of the dialectics of the past and the "West", which was the source of the very idea of the nation. This dialectic is quite apparent in Communist usage, which sought not just to assimilate Marxism to some preexisting social or cultural entity, but to use Marxism as an instrument of change and an indispensable moment of inventing a new nation. The complexity is evident in the ambivalence toward past legacies of Communist leaders from Mao Zedong 毛泽东 (1893–1976) to Hu Jintao 胡锦涛 (1942–) even as they speak of the glorious cultural legacies of the Chinese nation. It is most eloquently illustrated in the recent appearance and disappearance of the Confucius statue in Tiananmen square.

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the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to victory over the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) in 1949. It was quickly forgotten with the re-radicalization of the new communist regime by the mid-1950s that would culminate in the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s. The repudiation of Cultural Revolution Marxism after 1978 would prepare the grounds for another "great leap" 飞跃 in the unfolding of the discourse.[2] Since then, but especially over the last decade, it has been the subject of intensive theorization in official Marxism, which inevitably colors all discussion of Marxism in the People's Republic of China.[3]

My discussion below is organized around these two periods of "great leap" in the unfolding of this discourse, the one associated with the name of Mao Zedong, the other with those of Deng Xiaoping and his successors. This is the periodization of Chinese Marxism that is sanctioned in official historiography, but with a critical twist. Official historiography is of obvious significance for comprehending the self-image of the Communist Party under the reform leadership, but it needs to be approached critically. A discourse does not just propose a certain way of thinking and writing; it also suppresses or

2 This has become standard usage in recently published works on "Chinese Marxism". For an example, see Guo Dehong, chief editor, *Zhongguo Makesi zhuyi fazhan shi* (Beijing, 2010).

3 A scholar in the People's Republic of China (PRC), Hu Daping, has suggested recently that there has been a rejuvenation of interest in Marxism that he describes as "re-Marxization". According to Hu, "Re-Marxization means that many Chinese Marxist scholars are beginning to reconsider Marx's critique of modern capitalism in a different way under the conditions of market and globalization. In comparison with dominant ideology, it means: (1) there will be an emphasis on socialism with Chinese characteristics; (2) Marxism will be studied more as the critique of capitalism than as a guide to socialism; (3) if the process by which Marxism became the dominant ideology was the Marxization of old China, then re-Marxization demonstrates theoretically a new phase of Chinese modernization. Hu Daping, "Marxism in China," *Socialism and Democracy* 24.3 (15 December 2010), 193–97, p. 193. "Re-Marxization" is visible in efforts to create a Marxist sociology (e.g. Sun Liping, Shen Yuan), in cultural studies deployments of Marxism (Cui Zhiyuan, Wang Hui, Wang Xiaoming), and work that stresses issues of subjectivity in Marxism (e.g. Zhang Yibing and the Center for the Study of Marxist Social Theory in Nanjing University). We might add that important work is produced also by party-affiliated institutions such as the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau and the Marxism Academy of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. While some of the work produced by these scholars and institutions critically engages problems of "socialism with Chinese characteristics", it is also severely limited by the regime's jealous guardianship over interpretations of Marxism. From its origins to the present, the discourse on Chinese Marxism has positioned itself in opposition to "left" tendencies. Yet, we need to remember that while they may have different visions of the trajectory of socialism in the PRC, few intellectuals of a Marxist bent would disagree about "making Marxism Chinese."

marginalizes others. The discourse of Chinese Marxism is built around certain periods and their versions of Marxism, which then dismisses alternatives as false or deviant, thereby reserving for itself the status of truth. This highly ideological operation could in turn be dismissed just as easily as but one more ideological maneuver in party political struggles. It is that, to be sure. But it is also something else, which gives it its discursive plausibility. That element is the vision that guides the discourse, in this case the vision of a socialism superior to its competitors. The ultimate test of superiority here is the results delivered by this vision measured against the record of those competitors. How this success is to be measured against its own claims to socialism is another matter, one that also calls into question what it has to say about the latter.

Despite very significant differences in historical situation and trajectory, the two periods in the unfolding of Chinese Marxism are linked not only by a common agenda but also by a common ideological goal: to discredit "left" dispositions within the party and in party policy. The contemporary leadership can claim the legacy of Mao Zedong to criticize Mao himself for his policies during the Cultural Revolution, as Mao did his "leftist" opponents back in the 1930s and 1940s. This implies also the existence of two Maos, the Mao of New Democracy and the Mao of the Cultural Revolution, the one worthy of emulation, the other, condemnation. The discourse conveniently overlooks that there might be a connection between the two Maos, which in turn would open up the possibility of contradictions within Chinese Marxism that were responsible for the leftist turn in Mao's thinking in the 1950s, and might invite similar turns presently, at another stage in the development of Chinese Marxism.

These contradictions are also visible in interpretations of Mao Zedong Thought, which theoretically provides the common bond between the two periods of Chinese Marxism. Despite the deep-seated impression at home and abroad created by its repudiation of Mao the "cultural revolutionary", the Communist Party since 1978 has not rejected but rather embraced Mao Zedong Thought. Indeed, Mao Zedong Thought as it had emerged during the Yan'an years is practically synonymous with Chinese Marxism. But here, too, a distinction is necessary between Mao's thought and Mao Zedong Thought, the one the thought of one individual leader, the other that of the party as a collective entity that was the collective source and guardian of an ideological disposition that had been enunciated by that leader. Mao the cultural revolutionary, then, had deviated from Mao Zedong Thought, which had been recovered with his repudiation. As the distinction is not one that is readily sustainable in the face of historical evidence and conflicting dispositions within the party, the effort to appropriate Mao Zedong Thought for the reforms has generated its own contradictions.

Chinese Marxism 1: Mao Zedong and New Democracy

It would seem that the first public reference to "making Marxism Chinese" was in an important speech Mao gave in fall 1938 on the new situation in China after the full-scale Japanese invasion in July 1937:

> Another task of study is to study our historical legacy and to evaluate it critically using Marxist methods. A great nation such as ours with several thousand years of history has its own developmental laws, its own national characteristics, its own precious things . . . The China of today is a development out of historical China. We are Marxist historicists; we may not chop up history. We must evaluate it from Confucius to Sun Zhongshan 孙中山, assume this precious legacy, and derive from it a method to guide the present movement . . . Communists are Marxist internationalists, but Marxism must be realized through national forms. There is no such thing as abstract Marxism, there is only concrete Marxism. The so-called concrete Marxism is Marxism that has taken national form; we need to apply Marxism to concrete struggle in the concrete environment of China, we should not employ it in the abstract. Communists who are part of the great Chinese nation, and are to this nation as flesh and blood, are only abstract and empty Marxists if they talk about Marxism apart from China's special characteristics. Hence making Marxism Chinese, imbuing every manifestation of Marxism with China's special characteristics, that is to say applying it in accordance with Chinese characteristics, is something every party member must seek to understand and resolve. We must discard foreign eight-legged essays, we must stop singing abstract and empty tunes, we must give rest to dogmatism, and substitute in their place Chinese airs that the common people love to see and hear. To separate internationalist content and national form only reveals a total lack of understanding of internationalism.[4]

It was after their arrival in Yan'an in late 1936 that Mao and the party intellectuals gathered around him would work out the theoretical implications of making Marxism Chinese, but the orientation that informed Mao's thinking went back at the latest to the early part of the decade. Mao's first reference to

4 Mao Zedong, "Lun xin jieduan" 论新阶段 (On the new stage). Speech to the sixth enlarged plenary session of the sixth Central Committee (12–14 October 1938) in Takeuchi Minoru (ed.), *Mao Zedongji* 毛泽东集 (Collected works of Mao Zedong, hereafter *MZDJ*), 10 vols (Hong Kong, 1976), vol. VI, pp. 163–263, pp. 260–61.

the basic idea of Marxism made Chinese, integrating Marxist theory with the realities of Chinese society, was in an essay written in May 1930, "Oppose book worship" 反对本本主义, subsequently lost and rediscovered in 1961, where he wrote: "The texts of Marxism need to be studied, but it must be integrated with the actual conditions of our country. We need texts (*benben*), but we must correct book worship divorced from reality."[5] This orientation would guide Maoist revolutionary strategy in ensuing years. The experience gained in the course of revolution would in turn endow it with substantial content.

Mao's fullest discussion of the strategic consequences of making Marxism Chinese was offered in his January 1940 talk "On new democracy" 新民主主义论, which was published in the first issue of the new periodical, *Chinese Culture* 中国文化.[6] For reasons to be discussed below, this essay has received considerable attention among contemporary Chinese historians as a foundational text of "Chinese Marxism". The text is indeed of seminal significance in laying out the strategy that would carry the Communist Party to power in 1949. "New democracy" referred to an economic and political formation (a mixed state/private economy to facilitate economic development, and an alliance across classes—under Communist leadership—in the pursuit of national liberation) suitable to China's immediate needs: to complete the national democratic revolution and pursue the country's economic development. More significantly from a theoretical perspective, its insertion of a new stage in historical progress appropriate to all societies in situations similar to that of China has been hailed by the party since then as Mao's seminal contribution to Marxist theorization of historical development. Mao revised the classic Marxist formulation of the stages of historical development moving from feudal to bourgeois to socialist transition into a new schema progressing from semi-feudal/semi-colonial to new democracy to socialism. Its premises were: (1) that the Chinese revolution is part of a global revolution against capitalism; (2) that it is, however, a revolution against capitalism in a "semi-feudal, semi-colonial" society to which national liberation is a crucial task; and (3) that it is also a national revolution, a revolution to create a new nation and a new culture which would be radically different from both the culture inherited from the past and the culture imported from abroad. The latter, significantly, included Marxism:

5 "Fandui benben zhuyi," in Central Party Documents Research Bureau, *Mao Zedong nongcun diaocha wenji* (Beijing, 1982), pp. 1–11, p. 4.

6 Published originally as "Xin minzhu zhuyi de zhengzhi yu xin minzhu zhuyi de wenhua," *Zhongguo wenhua* 1 (January 1940). An English translation is available in *Selected works of Mao Tse-tung* (hereafter SWMTT), 4 vols (Beijing, 1965–67), 2.339–84.

> In applying Marxism to China, Chinese communists must fully and properly integrate the universal truth of Marxism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution or, in other words, the universal truth of Marxism must be combined with specific national characteristics and acquire a definite national form.[7]

According to a recent study by the Chinese scholar Huang Zhigao, the term "new democracy" 新民主主义 had first appeared in an article by the socialist Jiang Kanghu 江亢虎 (1883–1954) published in *The Eastern Miscellany* 东方杂志 in 1922 that offered ways to make up for the ills of the old democracy. There had been earlier distinctions, including by Mao himself, between the old revolution (1911) and the new revolution after the May Fourth Movement of 1919. But Mao's distinction between old and new democracy in 1940 was quite different from these earlier usages in addressing questions of "the nature of the Chinese revolution and its developmental stages." The distinction enabled Mao to mark the May Fourth Movement (and the founding of the Communist Party, we might add) as the beginning of a new stage of the revolution as well as to draw an important distinction between the old and the new Three People's Principles of Sun Yat-sen.[8]

In the immediate historical context of competition with the Kuomintang for political hegemony, "On new democracy" was a barely disguised effort to appropriate for the Communist Party Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary legacy, as Mao already had acknowledged in another important speech in December 1939, "The Chinese revolution and the Chinese Communist Party."[9] The mixed public/private economy Mao proposed had its origins in Sun's "socialist" policies dating back to the first decade of the century. The four-class alliance (of the proletariat-peasantry-petit bourgeoisie-national bourgeoisie) that would be the basis of New Democracy was a reinstatement of the class policy of the first United Front established in 1924, led by the Kuomintang with Soviet guidance. The "new" Three People's Principles that stressed the priority of the masses and alliance with the Soviet Union represented little more than a rephrasing of what the Kuomintang left advocated based on Sun's "Last will and testament" before he died in 1925. The major difference was Mao's reframing of Sun's ideas in a Marxist historical perspective and in Marxist language. It was also significant that it was now the Communist Party ("the proletariat") rather than

7 Ibid., pp. 380–81.

8 Huang Zhigao, *Sanmin zhuyi lunzhan yu Makesi zhuyi Zhongguohua* (Beijing, 2010), pp. 162–63.

9 SWMTT, 2.305–34, pp. 326–29.

the Kuomintang that would carry out the tasks of the national democratic (or "bourgeois") revolution on the way to socialism. The political transition envisaged was vaguely reminiscent of Trotsky's idea of "permanent revolution".

The legacy of the Three People's Principles loomed large in Mao's formulation of new democratic strategies of revolution and development. What is of interest here is the Marxism that went into these formulations, and the consequences of the formulations in the making of Chinese Marxism. While quite significant in both an immediate and a long-term perspective, New Democracy was only one moment in the making of Chinese Marxism that in hindsight was a product of the revolutionary experience of the previous decade. Its contradictions would generate conflicts over Chinese Marxism the effects of which are felt to this day.

Mao did not only emerge as a leader of the rural revolution after 1927, but he was in a significant sense its product. The ideological activity that attended Mao's confirmation as party chairman at the seventh congress of the CCP in 1945 suggested that Mao had led the new democratic revolution since its origins in 1921, which also had marked "the birth" of Mao Zedong Thought.[10] To be sure, Mao had shown a penchant for leadership early on, especially among his circles in Hunan and in Hunanese politics. He was of rural origin, with an interest in the intricacies of rural life. He had been introduced to Marxism through Li Dazhao 李大钊 (1889–1927), who had combined a populist faith in the people with a view of China as a "proletarian nation" suffering from "class" oppression in international relations.[11] In the first United Front he had served for one term as director of the Peasant Movement Training Institute in Guangzhou, and had played a part in rural organization in Hunan during the revolutionary events of 1927. His report on the peasant movement in Hunan provided an eloquent if not chiliastic expression of the revolutionary promise he perceived in the peasantry. An article he wrote on classes in Chinese society in 1926 displayed his penchant for discovering in Marxist sociology elements of an "art of revolution" that would serve him well after 1927.[12]

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10 Liu Shaoqi, "Report of the revision of the party constitution" (hereafter, "Report") (May 1945), in Tony Saich, ed., with a contribution by Benjamin Yang, *The rise to power of the Chinese Communist Party: documents and analysis*, (Armonk, NY, 1996), pp. 1244–63, p. 1245.

11 Maurice Meisner, *Li Ta-chao and the origins of Chinese Marxism* (Cambridge, MA, 1967), especially chapters 4 and 8.

12 Mao Zedong, "Analysis of the classes in Chinese society" and "Report on an investigation of the peasant movement in Hunan," in SWMTT, 1.13–21 and 23–59. For "art of revolution", see Marcia Ristaino, *China's art of revolution: the mobilization of discontent, 1927 and 1928* (Durham, NC, 1987).

But Mao had been a relatively minor figure in the "great revolution" of 1925–27, and by no means had he been alone in stressing the importance of the countryside in the Chinese revolution. Many of his fellow revolutionaries had rural origins or connections. The Chinese working class as it emerged in the 1920s had yet to break with its rural origins. Lenin had stressed the importance of the peasantry in the Russian revolution. Comintern advisors in China were quite cognizant of the "peasant question", and guided the agrarian policy of the United Front, including the establishment of the Peasant Movement Training Institute. The Communist Youth organ, *Chinese Youth* 中国青年, edited by Yun Daiying 恽代英 (1895–1931), repeatedly advised its young readers to engage in rural revolutionary activity during their vacation breaks. And if one name was prominent in rural revolutionary activity during this period, it was that of Peng Pai 彭湃 (1896–1929), the organizer of the Hailufeng 海路风 Soviet in Guangdong province.[13] As Angus McDonald has argued in *The urban origins of rural revolution*, Mao's primary interest had been in urban revolution until the defeat of the "great revolution" drove the communists to the countryside.[14]

The crisis created by the failure of the "great revolution" left Marxists in disarray. In the Comintern, Leon Trotsky (1879–1940) launched sharp criticism of Joseph Stalin (1878–1953) for his mishandling of the Communist alliance with the Kuomintang that had led to the disaster, which would result in his expulsion from the Communist Party, exile, and eventual murder by Stalinist agents a decade later.[15] The splits in the Comintern also divided the Marxists in China. Kuomintang Marxists turned against their erstwhile allies in the Communist Party even as they continued to struggle against the victorious right-wing in their own party, leading to divisions that would never be healed. The Communist Party, following Stalin's lead, blamed the defeat on the "right opportunism" of Chen Duxiu, who was accused of Trotskyist errors for his doubts about the alliance with the Kuomintang but also, somewhat inconsistently, for his failure to lead an armed uprising in 1927 (which Trotsky had advocated against Stalin's insistence on continued alliance with the Kuomintang).[16] The Stalinists were divided among themselves over the proper strategy of revolution to pursue, leading to rapid changes in leadership as one revolutionary uprising after another led to defeat at the hands of the Kuomintang and its allies. These divisions were reflected in the Marxist debates on Chinese society

13 Fernando Galbiati, *P'eng P'ai and the Hai-lu-feng soviet* (Stanford, 1985).

14 Angus McDonald, *The urban origins of rural revolution: elites and the masses in Hunan province, China, 1911–1927* (Berkeley, 1978).

15 Leon Trotsky, *Problems of the Chinese revolution* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1967).

16 Gregor Benton, *China's urban revolutionaries* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1996), pp. 16–20.

and history in the late twenties and early thirties, debates intended to produce assessments of the nature of Chinese society that would guide revolutionary strategy but in fact ended up just providing theoretical and historical excuses for these conflicting strategies.[17]

The most significant division in the Communist Party after 1927 (and the elimination of the Trotskyists) was between a rural and an urban strategy of revolution, both claiming Stalinist legitimacy. The former was represented most prominently by Mao Zedong and the Red Army in the countryside, leading a soviet government established in 1931, and the latter by the official Party Center located in Shanghai under the successive leadership between 1927 and 1935 of Qu Qiubai 瞿秋白 (1899–1935), Li Lisan 李立三 (1899–1967), Wang Ming 王明 (1904–74), and the "28 Bolsheviks". By the requirements of "democratic centralism", the forces in the countryside were subject to the orders of the Party Center which in turn received its directives from Moscow. The Party Center was forced under security pressures to relocate to the countryside in 1933, where it gradually came under the sway of the rural soviet government established in 1931. By 1935, Mao Zedong had emerged as the effective leader of the party. His leadership would be consolidated during the ensuing decade. By 1945, he was anointed as the supreme leader of the Communist Party.

In order to appreciate the particularities of the strategy of revolution that would come to be associated with Mao Zedong, it is useful to contrast this strategy and its underlying assumptions with its competitors. Assessments of the nature of Chinese society (and hence the appropriate revolutionary strategy) by Marxists varied widely, depending on what aspects they emphasized of a complex society being transformed by its incorporation within an expanding capitalist order. On the left were Trotskyists who believed that China had long been a commercial society, was already part of a capitalist order, and showed many signs of having become a capitalist society. In line with Trotsky's idea of "permanent revolution", they advocated a proletarian revolution to complete the task of capitalist development and move on to socialism. At the other end of the political spectrum were Kuomintang Marxists who blamed the failure of the revolutionary movement on the strength of "feudal forces", referring mostly to warlords who continued to wield political power even though their economic basis had been eroded by commercialization. They gave priority to a political revolution against these "feudal forces", and against foreign imperialism, which held back the development of productive forces in China in keeping with its own interests. This was the line of the Kuomintang left who

17 Arif Dirlik, *Revolution and history: the origins of Marxist historiography in China, 1919–1937* (Berkeley, 1978).

adhered to a radical version of Sun's Three People's Principles that called for mass mobilization against the Kuomintang right's reliance on the military. Occupying the middle were the Stalinists who continued to view China as a "semi-feudal/semi-colonial society" in keeping with the line of the United Front of 1924, but now included the landlord class and its representatives in the Kuomintang among the "feudal forces" that needed to be overthrown in order to secure autonomous economic development and establish a basis for socialism. Their advocacy of class struggle, key to this strategy, distinguished them from leftists in the Kuomintang.[18]

What divided rival Stalinists within the Communist Party was less disagreement on this basic assessment than issues of revolutionary strategy and the function of the Communist Party, which would have not just practical but important theoretical consequences. How Maoists distinguished their approach from those of their rivals was spelled out in a 1945 document, "Resolution of the CCP on certain historical questions".[19] This document was designed to establish a Maoist line on the Communist revolution since 1921 on the eve of Mao's anointing as party chairman. It was a propaganda document to be sure, intended to show that Mao alone had pursued a correct line of revolution from the party's origins. The document is significant nevertheless as a guide to understanding the Maoist self-image, and how the party explained the strategy that by 1945 had laid the grounds for its eventual victory in 1949. Indeed, this document, and a similar one composed by Deng Xiaoping 邓小平 (1904–97) in 1981 (and possibly modeled on it), continue to serve as basic frame of reference in party ideological formulations to this day. They are essential preambles to the party's constitution in both senses of that term.

According to the 1945 resolution, following Chen Duxiu's 陈独秀 (1879–1942) "right-opportunism" that had contributed to the disaster of the "great revolution", the party in response had veered to the left. Between 1928 and 1935, in different ways, the Qu Qiubai, Li Lisan, and Bo Gu 博古 (1907–46, pseudonym of Qin Bangxian 秦邦憲)/Wang Ming leaderships represented three leftist deviations that arose from a failure to grasp the realities of Chinese society. In their urban orientation, these leftist leaderships not only had not understood the significance of the Soviet and Red Army revolution in the countryside, but instead had undermined its growth by recklessly criticizing it for its "peasant mentality", and driving the Red Army to attack cities against superior forces or pushing it toward conventional warfare in its tactics. As the Resolution put it:

18 Dirlik, *Revolution and history*, chapter 3, "Revolution and social analysis," pp. 57–96.

19 The resolution is dated 20 April 1945. The version used here is in Saich, ed., *The rise to power of the Chinese Communist Party*, pp. 1164–84.

> The various "left" lines were in error, above all, on the question of the task of the revolution and the question of class relations. Comrade Mao Zedong pointed out that the task of the Chinese revolution is to fight imperialism and feudalism and that the fundamental content of this was the peasant struggle for land. Thus the Chinese bourgeois democratic revolution was in essence a peasant revolution and the Chinese proletariat's basic task was to lead the peasant revolution. His basic ideas of new democracy were not understood and were even opposed by the various "left" lines. The third "left" line put the struggle against the bourgeoisie on a par with the struggle against imperialism and feudalism, denied the existence of an intermediate camp and of third parties and groups, and laid particular stress on the struggle against the rich peasants.[20]

The leftists had also failed to appreciate Mao's (and Stalin's) view that "in the Chinese revolution armed struggle is the main form of struggle and an army composed chiefly of peasants is the main form of organization, because semi-colonial and semi-feudal China is a large non-uniform country which lacks democracy and industry." In the period of the rural revolutionary war,

> Since the cities were all occupied by powerful counterrevolutionary forces, base areas had to be set up, expanded and consolidated mainly by relying on peasant guerilla warfare (not on positional warfare) and first of all in the countryside, where counterrevolutionary rule was weak (and not in the key cities). Comrade Mao Zedong pointed out that in China the historical conditions for the existence of such armed rural revolutionary base areas are the "localized agricultural economy (not a unified capitalist economy) and the imperialist policy of marking off spheres of influence in order to divide and exploit" and the resulting "prolonged splits and wars within the white regime."[21]

The correct line then had been pursued in the countryside by Mao Zedong, with the blessings of Stalin, and aided by urban activities under the guidance of Liu Shaoqi 刘少奇 (1898–1969), who would emerge as Mao's second-in-command in 1945 until his downfall during the Cultural Revolution for being a "revisionist". As the Resolution put it:

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20 Ibid., p. 1169.

21 Ibid., p. 1170.

> As for mass work in the cities during that period [of rural revolution], the principal policies should have been those advocated by Comrade Liu Shaoqi, the exponent of the correct line for work in the white areas, namely, to act chiefly on the defensive (and not on the offensive), to utilize all possible legal opportunities for work (and not to reject the use of legality) so that the party organizations could go deep among the masses, work under cover for a long time, and accumulate strength; and always to be ready to send people to develop armed struggle in the rural areas and thereby to coordinate with the struggle in the countryside and advance the development of the revolutionary situation.[22]

We may note in defense of the "left" lines rejected by the Maoists not only that they had good reasons for claiming Stalin's authority for their policies, but, more importantly from an ideological perspective, that their policies were at least partially driven by a desperate urge to restore some semblance of orthodoxy to the revolutionary movement by bringing it back into the cities and reconnecting it with the urban working class.[23] Conversely, the charge of dogmatism Maoists brought against the "left" lines was not without foundation, as the latter failed to realize (or acknowledge) that a theory formulated out of the realities of another time and place, and with somewhat different goals, rendered the realities of Chinese society opaque so long as it was not adjusted to account for local particularities. This is what the Maoists believed they had accomplished by 1945.

Mao Zedong Thought took shape in the midst of struggles for and over revolution, which also involved struggles for supremacy in the party's leadership. The charges against the "leftists" in the 1945 Resolution also offer clues to what Maoists believed was the correct Marxist line. First, and most obvious, is the primacy given to the peasantry. It was no doubt shocking for the more orthodox Marxists in the party that the bourgeois democratic revolution in China "was in essence a peasant revolution" with only a subsidiary role for the urban working class even as "the proletariat" led the revolution. It was nevertheless consistent with the diagnosis enunciated first in the 1924 United Front that in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society such as China, the bourgeois democratic

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22 Ibid.

23 Stalin's flip-flops on revolutionary strategy are concisely analyzed in Benjamin I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the rise of Mao* (New York, 1967). By far the most comprehensive account of the Communist movement and Mao during the early period of the rural revolution is to be found in John E. Rue, with the assistance of S.R. Rue, *Mao Tse-tung in opposition, 1927–1935* (Stanford, 1966).

revolution took the form of a national democratic revolution against both imperialism and feudal forces.[24] Nor was there anything new about the equation of the proletariat with the Communist Party, which had been a Leninist innovation. The Maoist stress on the priority was not a product of some kind of rural romanticism but of a sober calculation of the alignment of class forces. If Mao himself had faith in the peasantry as a revolutionary force, he consistently qualified it with the necessity of transforming the peasantry. In his own speech to the seventh party congress in April 1945, he observed that:

> For twenty-five years, and especially during the last eight years, the peasants have warmly welcomed our policies. However, the party's guiding ideology should help distinguish us from the peasantry and not confuse us with them. It is hard for comrades of peasant origin to recognize the difference . . . When a person of peasant origin joins the party, he or she becomes a party member and a vanguard of the proletariat. He or she should distinguish him or herself from the peasants and raise the consciousness of the peasants to the level of the proletariat.[25]

In his Report on the constitution the following month Liu Shaoqi would observe that Chairman Mao had transformed Marxism "from its European form into a Chinese form" and "discarded certain specific Marxist principles and conclusions that are outmoded or incompatible with the concrete conditions in China and replaced them with appropriate new ones."[26] We might add that Mao did not have any qualms about filling Marxist concepts with local content, in the process giving them not just a new form but also a new meaning.

The second observation to be drawn from the Maoist critique of leftism is its insistence on the primacy of armed conflict in the revolution, in the specific form of guerilla struggle. This, once again, was the product of a recognition that the communists faced superior military power which they could hope to overcome only through a protracted mobile strategy, in the process patiently

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24 "Why do we call the present stage of the revolution 'a bourgeois democratic revolution'? Because the target of the revolution is not the bourgeoisie in general but imperialist and feudal oppression; the program of the revolution is not to abolish private property, but to protect private property in general; the results of this revolution will clear the way for the development of capitalism." Mao Zedong, "On coalition government" (24 April 1945), in Saich, ed., *The rise to power of the Chinese Communist Party*, pp. 1216–30, p. 1225.

25 Mao Zedong, "Speech to the seventh party congress" (hereafter, "Speech") (24 April 1945), in Saich, ed., *The rise to power*, pp. 1230–43, p. 1235.

26 Ibid., pp. 1252, 1253.

building bases to serve as the nuclei of the society they hoped eventually to create. The strategy would have momentous consequences in the making of Chinese Marxism.

Survival and success in the guerilla struggle depended on popular support, which called for a close integration of the party with the people without, however, compromising its leadership and guiding ideology, as is implied in Mao's statement above on the peasantry. The communists found the answer in the "mass line", which may be understood as the extension to the party's mass constituency of the principle of "democratic centralism" within the party. Whether or not the line was democratic in the sense understood in liberal democracies is beside the point. What it called for was closer communication between the party and the people so as to gauge popular responses to party policies. Maoists were critical both of theoretical "dogmatism" and theory-less empiricism. Likewise, as was spelled out in the Rectification Movement of 1942, cadres were expected neither to "tail" the masses nor adopt a "commandist" attitude. It is apparent from complaints over the years that the mass line rarely worked as it was supposed to. It nevertheless brought a new style into party work.[27]

More importantly, the need to communicate with the people, and to guide them to a higher level of theoretical consciousness, also created pressures toward the vernacularization of theory, of which Mao himself was a masterful practitioner. References to "empty book-learning" or the "eight-legged essay" in Maoist criticisms of the "left" underlined the deep gap between theoretical speculation by party intellectuals and the language of the masses, and called attention to the necessity of translating theory into the language of the masses if the latter were to be genuine participants in the revolution.[28] The problem of translation, Mao's own practice revealed, was not just linguistic in a narrow sense, but broadly cultural. To take an example (and certainly not a rare one to anyone familiar with Mao's works, even after they had been edited) of what Mao had to say of intellectuals in his speech to the seventh congress discussed above:

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27 This problem was documented in William Hinton's classic study, *Fanshen: a documentary of revolution in a Chinese village* (Berkeley, 1997; first published in 1966).

28 Criticizing "the insipid" language of formalism, Mao enjoined party cadres to learn "the people's language", which is "rich in expression . . . lively and vigorous and presents life as it is." Mao, "In opposition to party formalism" (February 1942), in *Mao's China: party reform documents, 1942–1944*, translated with an introduction by Boyd Compton (Seattle, 1966), p. 42.

> Without intellectuals, a class cannot win victory. There are senior intellectuals, ordinary intellectuals, and of course other types of intellectuals. There are intellectuals in all states in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. All those who wear the clothes of the eight trigrams are intellectuals. There are also intellectuals in the stories of *The Water Margin*. Every class has intellectuals who serve its interests . . . Without intellectuals, the proletariat cannot stand up.[29]

This discursus, reminiscent of Antonio Gramsci's idea of "organic intellectuals", is not just an example of Mao's earthiness, but also of the substitution of stories for theoretical exegesis.[30] Mao in his speeches and writings made extensive use of four-character phrases 成語, with the stories imbedded in them, that translated revolutionary issues into familiar stories, making them comprehensible to his followers (and perhaps to himself as well!). Likewise his allusions to historical events and personages transported Marxism into a familiar historical terrain. In the process, Marxist concepts acquired associations that brought them to life for his listeners, but would likely have been quite incomprehensible to outsiders to the Chinese cultural oecumene.[31]

Vernacularization did not consist merely in translating concepts from one national context to another, but also entailed accounting for local language

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29 Mao, "Speech," p. 1241.

30 For further discussion of Gramscian elements in Mao's thought, see, Arif Dirlik, "The predicament of Marxist evolutionary consciousness: Mao Zedong, Antonio Gramsci and the reformulation of Marxist revolutionary theory," *Modern China* 9.2 (April 1983), 182–211.

31 The question of Mao's use of language has received greater attention from Chinese than from foreign scholars. For two interesting examples, see Li Shaobing, *Mao Zedongde yuyan jiqiao* (Beijing, 1993), and Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences Mao Zedong Philosophical Thought Research Bureau, *Mao Zedong bapian zhuzuo chengyu diangu renwu jianzhu jianjie* (Chongqing, 1982). Among non-Chinese scholars, Stuart Schram and Nick Knight stand out for their attentiveness to the issue of language. See Stuart S. Schram, *The political thought of Mao Tse-tung*, revised and enlarged edition (New York, 1971), p. 113. Nick Knight has offered careful analyses of Mao's use of native sources and language even in an abstract essay such as "On contradiction" in his important textual analysis of Mao's philosophical texts, "Mao Zedong's On contradiction and On practice: pre-liberation texts," *China Quarterly* 84 (December 1980), 641–68, pp. 658–59. Knight has published his textual studies (including, in addition to these two essays, the "Lecture notes on dialectical materialism") in Nick Knight, ed., *Mao Zedong on dialectical materialism* (Armonk, NY, 1990). His translations and annotations of Mao's philosophical writings from this period, supplemented with an excellent introduction on the sources of Mao's writings, provide the most up-to-date textual analysis of Mao's philosophical writings in English language scholarship.

and cultural differences. To recall the Resolution, "in China the historical conditions for the existence of . . . armed rural revolutionary base areas [were] the 'localized agricultural economy (not a unified capitalist economy) and the imperialist policy of marking off spheres of influence in order to divide and exploit'." Heterogeneity characterized the cultural make-up of Chinese society as well, and called for precise investigation of each and every locality.[32] Maoists were not the first to recognize this problem. Some of the key ingredients that were to go into making Marxism Chinese had been enunciated earlier in response to problems of communication encountered in the course of revolutionary activity.[33] In December 1927, in the heat of the revolutionary uprising in Guangzhou, the cadets from out of town had to rely on a translator to communicate with the worker Red Guards.[34] The question of localism was a challenge to the communists both as a characteristic of Chinese society to be overcome, and as an ongoing threat to the organizational integrity of the party itself.[35] It also kept the issue of culture in the foreground of revolutionary thinking. As Mao explained in "On new democracy", the creation of a national

32 Local cultural influences in shaping Mao himself are analyzed in Peng Dacheng, *HuXiang wenhua yu Mao Zedong* (Changsha, 1991).

33 Some of the earliest and most important discussions on the need to translate Marxism into the language of the masses were provided not by Mao, or Maoists, but by Qu Qiubai, an earlier secretary of the party and a literary theorist. For a discussion of Qu's ideas, see Paul Pickowicz, *Marxist literary thought in China: the influence of Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai* (Berkeley, 1981). A more direct discussion of Qu's (and the party's) efforts to accomplish this through literary means in the early part of the agrarian revolution is to be found in Ellen Judd, "Revolutionary drama and song in the Jiangxi Soviet," *Modern China* 9.1 (January 1983), 127–60. Mao's early practice is most readily (and comprehensively) apparent in an account of a local investigation he conducted in 1930, which is available in English in Mao Zedong, *Report from Xunwu*, edited with an Introduction by Roger R. Thompson (Stanford, 1990). This essay has justified some Chinese authors' tracing of Mao's "sinification" of Marxism to as early as 1930. See Wei Riping, "Shinian lai Mao Zedong zhexue sixiang yanjiu shuping," *Mao Zedong zhexue sixiang yanjiu* 5 (1989), 4–10.

34 Wen Peilan, "Chen Tiejun lieshi zhuanlue," *Guangdong wenshi ziliao* 34 (1982), 33–65, p. 60.

35 This was (and is) a common complaint of the party leadership. For outstanding examples of the dispersed nature of the rural revolution, and its implications for the formation of the party and its ideology, see Stephen C. Averill, *Revolution in the highlands: China's Jinggangshan base area* (Lanham, MD, 2006); Gregor Benton, *Mountain fires: the Red Army's three-year war in south China, 1934–1938* (Berkeley, 1992); Chen Yung-fa, *Making revolution: the communist movement in eastern and central China, 1937–1945* (Berkeley, 1986); and Odoric Y.K. Wou, *Mobilizing the masses: building revolution in Henan* (Stanford, 1994).

culture was part of the revolutionary project. In the meantime, recognition of local cultural differences was crucial to the success of the guerilla revolution.

The third, and from a theoretical perspective possibly the most important, question to be raised by the 1945 Resolution was the question of classes, when it observed that "the third 'left'" line put the struggle against the bourgeoisie on a par with the struggle against imperialism and feudalism, denied the existence of an intermediate camp and of third parties and groups, and laid particular stress on the struggle against the rich peasants. Maoist flexibility in the exercise of class struggle is well known, and does not require much elaboration here. Not only "rich peasants" but even landlords could be excluded from the targets of revolutionary struggle as political exigencies demanded. This revolutionary opportunism, if you like, was more important for what it revealed about Mao's approach to class as a concept that was deeply political rather than sociological; the aim was to distinguish the enemies of revolution from its friends, as he put it in his 1926 essay, "How to analyze the classes in Chinese society". Class belonging and consciousness were not merely functions of economic structure, but were situational and overdetermined. Beginning with this 1926 essay, and throughout many investigations of classes in agrarian society, Mao's emphasis was less on discovering what might have been anticipated from theory than determining the complex social webs that shaped class orientation as guides to revolutionary practice. This did not mean turning his back on theory, as the concept retained its supremacy as an ultimate referent: Mao was as critical of "empiricism" as he was of "dogmatism".[36] But it did mean that theoretical concepts were meaningful in practice only in their concrete overdetermination.

This was also the thrust of the two philosophical essays Mao composed in 1937, "On contradiction" 矛盾论 and "On practice" 实践论, that represent Mao at his most abstractly theoretical. These essays, too, had a practical goal: to argue that the national struggle against the Japanese invasion had priority over class struggle, and prepare the grounds for a united front while discrediting the "left" line of Mao's opponents who were more orthodox in their commitment to class struggle. Nevertheless, the essays' abstractions need to be taken seriously as keys to Mao's deployment of Marxist categories, which not only was key to his argument, but of theoretical interest from a Marxist perspective.[37]

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36 "Resolution," p. 177. The condemnation of both dogmatism and empiricism was written into the party constitution of 1945. See "Constitution of the CCP" (June 1945), in Saich, *The rise to power*, pp. 1254–67, p. 1254.

37 A more comprehensive discussion of these essays and their implications in both theory and practice is to be found in Arif Dirlik, "Mao Zedong and 'Chinese Marxism'," in Brian

The world of "On contradiction" is one of ceaseless and endless confrontation and conflict, where unity itself may be understood only in terms of the contradictoriness of its moments, where no entity is a constant because it has no existence outside its contradictions or a place of its own other than in its relationship to other contradictions. It may be that all Marxism is a conflict-based conceptualization of the world. But however differently Marxists may have structured conflict or theorized the structure of society, conflict in most interpretations of Marxism is conceived of in terms of a limited number of social categories (production, relations of production, politics, ideology), and there has been an urge to hierarchize these categories in terms of their effectiveness in the social structure. Mao's multitude of contradictions resist such hierarchization and, more significantly, resist reduction to a limited number of categories. Some contradictions are obviously more significant than others in determining social structure or historical direction, but Mao refuses to deny a role in social dynamics to what seem to be the most trivial contradictions (and, therefore, to dissolve them into broader categories) or to hierarchize them except on a temporary basis, for in their interactions they are in a constant state of flux as regards their place in the structure. What he says of the primary categories of Marxist theory is revealing:

> For instance, in the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, the productive forces are the principal aspect; in the contradiction between theory and practice, practice is the principal aspect; in the contradiction between the economic base and the superstructure, the economic base is the principal aspect; and there is no change in their respective positions. This is the mechanical materialist concept, not the dialectical materialist conception. True, the productive forces, practice and the economic base generally play the principal and decisive role; whoever denies this is not a materialist. But it must also be admitted that in certain conditions, such aspects as the relations of production, theory and the superstructure in turn manifest themselves in the principal and decisive role.[38]

Mao's companion essay, "On practice", offers in epistemological form a more direct statement on interpretation as an essential component of revolutionary activity (or, if I may overstate the point, on revolutionary activity as

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Carr and Indira Mahalingam, eds, *Companion encyclopedia of Asian philosopy* (London, 1997), pp. 593–619.

38 Mao, "On contradiction" (August 1937), SWMTT, 1.311–47, pp. 335–36.

interpretative activity).[39] "On practice" may be viewed as a call for the revolutionary hermeneutic which Mao would elaborate a month later in "On contradiction". Composed as parts of a single project, the two discussions illuminate each other in their intertextuality. On the surface, the epistemology which "On practice" offers is an empiricist one. As he presents it, cognition begins with perceptual cognition, which is "the stage of sense perceptions and impressions." As sense perceptions are repeated and accumulate, "a sudden change (leap) takes place in the brain in the process of cognition, and concepts are formed. Concepts are no longer phenomena, the separate aspects and the external relations of things; they grasp the essence, the totality and the internal relations of things"[40] (Mao also describes this as "the stage of rational knowledge"). The knowledge thus acquired is then tested for its validity in actual practice, which leads to further perceptions, conceptual modifications, and back to practice in an ongoing cycle of perception-conception-practice-perception.

While Mao's epistemology is empiricist, however, it is the empiricism of an activist who constructs knowledge in the process of reconstructing the world with revolutionary goals. Mao begins his discussion of cognition at the stage of perception, but this does not imply that the mind is a blank sheet of paper upon which perceptions rewrite themselves into conceptions, because the mind already has a conceptual apparatus for organizing perceptions (implicit in the class character of knowledge), and a theoretical apparatus (dialectical materialism) for articulating them. His epistemology, furthermore, elevates certain activities over others in the acquisition of knowledge (i.e. the struggle for production and class struggle),[41] and knowledge has a clear goal—"making revolution". The goal of "On practice" is not to argue for a vulgar empiricism (such as "seeking truth from facts"), but to assert the priority of practice in cognition against a theoretical dogmatism oblivious to concrete circumstances of revolution. Quoting Stalin, Mao observes: "Theory becomes purposeless if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illumined by revolutionary theory."[42] Theory, in other words, provided a compass without which revolution would drift aimlessly in a sea of contingencies.

"On contradiction" and "On practice" do not just represent one theoretical innovation among others. They provide a master code for reading the

39 Mao, "On practice" (July 1937), in ibid., pp. 295–309.

40 Ibid., p. 298.

41 Ibid., pp. 296, 300.

42 Ibid., p. 305.

revolutionary strategy the Communist Party pursued under Mao's leadership. Contradiction was the key element of the code, and correct reading of contradictions the guide to correct praxis, for practice was aimed at bringing about desired change. While Marxist sociology provided the broad framework in Maoist analysis, "contradiction" introduced an element of contingency to revolutionary praxis, underlining the significance of reading the conjuncture of forces at any one historical moment in the revolution, and adjusting tactics accordingly. It also stressed the importance of interpretation and the interpreter. The code applied to all aspects of the revolution discussed above—from the role of the peasantry and military struggle to the mass line and the cultural status of Marxism vis-à-vis native legacies. It was particularly significant with reference to New Democracy.

If New Democracy represented a return to the first United Front of 1924 in a formal sense, it was a return that had been anticipated throughout the years after 1927, and offered itself as a real possibility after the Soviet call for anti-Fascist "popular fronts" and the emergence in China of the National Salvation Movement in response to the Japanese invasion of China.[43] The Communist Party that returned to it to claim Sun Yat-sen's mantle in the late thirties was an

43 The national problem as a problem in Marxism was also a subject for intensive discussion in Chinese intellectual circles as early as 1936. See the essays in the collection, n.a., *Xian jieduan de Zhongguo sixiang yundong* (Shanghai, 1937).The most in-depth study of the national salvation movement in English is Parks M. Coble, *Facing Japan: Chinese politics and Japanese imperialism, 1931–1937* (Cambridge, MA, 1991). The Communist Party no doubt benefited from the popularity of Marxism in Chinese intellectual life in the thirties, which was possibly the golden age of Marxism in China—an era when Marxism had an important presence in intellectual and cultural life. There is as yet no comprehensive study of Marxism in these years. For studies of Marxism in the social sciences, history, philosophy, literature, and film, see Arif Dirlik, ed., *Sociology and anthropology in twentieth century China: between universalism and indigenism*, with the assistance of Guannan Li and Hsiao-pei Yen (Hong Kong, 2012); Arif Dirlik, *Revolution and history: the origins of Marxist historiography in China, 1919–1937* (Berkeley, 1979); and Arif Dirlik, "The triumph of the modern: Marxism and social history," in Arif Dirlik, *Culture and history in postrevolutionary China: the perspective of global modernity* (Hong Kong, 2011), pp. 63–96; Nick Knight, *Marxist philosophy in China: from Qu Qiubai to Mao Zedong, 1923–1945* (Dordrecht, 2005); Nick Knight, *Li Da and Marxist philosophy in China* (Boulder, CO, 1991); and the essays by Nick Knight and Paul Healy in Arif Dirlik, Nick Knight, and Paul Healy, eds, *Critical perspectives on Mao Zedong's thought* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1997); Paul Pickowicz, *Marxist literary thought in China: the influence of Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai* (Berkeley, 1981); Amitendranath Tagore, *Literary debates in modern China, 1918–1937* (Tokyo, 1967); Yingjin Zhang, ed., *Cinema and urban culture in Shanghai, 1922–1943* (Stanford, 1999).

entirely different party than it had been in 1924. The immediate difference lay in the power the party had built up in the course of the rural revolution, and a new sense of confidence in the ideological and political line that had made it possible. The Communist Party continued to acknowledge the leadership of the Soviet Union politically, and as the source of Marxist orthodoxy, but gone were the days when Comintern advisors had dictated the course of the revolution in China. By the 1930s, Chinese had acquired extensive knowledge of Marxism. The influence of Marxism was felt widely across the cultural spectrum, giving the communist argument a new plausibility among urban constituencies that were products of the May Fourth Movement. With their newfound success and confidence, the communists were prepared to write their own gloss on Marxism to explain what they perceived to be China's national conditions 国情. Ai Siqi 艾思奇 (1910–66), one of Mao's close collaborators in the project of making Marxism Chinese, put it as follows in a short commentary that followed Mao's "On new democracy":

> Marxism is a universal truth 一班的正确性 not only because it is a scientific theory and method, but because it is the compass of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat . . . That is to say, every country or nation that has a proletariat or a proletarian movement has the possibility 可能性 and necessity 必然性 of giving rise to and developing Marxism. Marxism can be made Chinese (*Zhongguohua*) because China has produced a Marxist movement in actuality 实际. Chinese Marxism has a foundation in the internal development of Chinese economy and society, has internal sources; it is not a surface phenomenon . . . The Chinese proletariat has a high level of organization and awareness, has its own strong party, has twenty years of experience in struggle, has model achievements in the national and democratic struggle. Hence there is Chinese Marxism. If Marxism is a foreign import, our answer is that Marxism gives practice 实践 the primary place. If people wonder whether or not China has its own Marxism, we must first ask whether or not the Chinese proletariat and its party have moved the heavens and shaken the earth, and impelled the masses of the Chinese nation to progressive undertakings. The Chinese proletariat has accomplished this. Moreover, it has on this basis of practice developed Marxist theory. Hence it has its own Marxism. These are the real writings of Chinese Marxism, the texts of Chinese Marxism . . . Marxism cannot but assume different forms depending on the different conditions of development of each nation; it cannot assume an international form globally. Presently, "Marxism must be realized through national forms 民族形式. There is no such thing as

> abstract Marxism, there is only concrete Marxism. The so-called concrete Marxism is Marxism that has taken national form."[44]

In the ideological reworking of party history that accompanied Mao's ascension to power, New Democracy was made into part of a package that included the transformations in revolutionary practice discussed above: the militarization of the party in its cultural and organizational entanglement with the military it led, the identification with the peasantry through the "mass line" in the party's relationship to the people, and the construction of Chinese Marxism. During the period when the idea of New Democracy was being formulated, the Communist Party under Mao had managed to establish itself in Yan'an, gaining breathing space due to the Japanese invasion, and began to develop a kind of guerilla socialism. This was characterized by the unity of peasants and the guerillas, mutual aid, populist governance practices informed by the mass line, and economic "self-reliance" through the combination of agriculture and rudimentary industries that were products of necessity but also reminiscent of anarchist proposals going back to the turn of the century. These practices also called for the creation of a new culture out of the interaction of the revolutionaries and the people, united in the struggle against feudalism and imperialism. In his discussion of the culture of New Democracy, Mao Zedong called for the making of a new national culture out of the interaction of national, scientific, and mass cultures. It sounded like a projection into the national future of practices already in formation. Given the temporal coincidence of the Yan'an Way and New Democracy, it was persuasive to gather all these accomplishments and projects in one package that would constitute Mao Zedong Thought—and Chinese Marxism.

It is necessary here to examine a little more closely the place of New Democracy in the initial formulation of Mao Zedong Thought in anticipation of the significance with which it has been endowed in recent discussions as the foundation for Chinese Marxism in its contemporary phase. New Democracy is portrayed in these discussions as the proper essence of Mao Zedong Thought that was the synthesis of the experiences of the rural revolution with the long-term national goals of struggle against feudalism and imperialism. Mao's deviation from this correct path beginning in the mid-1950s would culminate in the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, with disastrous consequences for the people and the country. Is it possible, however, that Mao's turn to the left was not a betrayal of New Democracy (or of the "Thought" associated with his name), but a response to problems built into the project of New Democracy

44 Ai Siqi, "Lun Zhongguo de teshuxing," *Zhongguo wenhua* 1 (January 1940), 26–28.

itself, and its inability to contain the forces and aspirations that the revolutionary movement had set in motion?

Two questions are of particular significance. The first relates to the structure of New Democracy itself, especially the class alliance it proposed. The other question involves Mao's role in the collective leadership of the party.

New Democracy was formulated in the course of Maoist struggles against competitors in the party, and to wrest political hegemony from the Kuomintang by claiming Sun Yat-sen's legacy. But it was also part of the project of national liberation and autonomy which had been a motivating force of Chinese Marxism since its origins and had acquired even greater urgency during the Anti-Japanese War. Liu Shaoqi tacitly displayed a grasp of the Marxist notion of hegemony when he told a party audience in 1945 that

> the CCP can succeed only when it stands for the interests of the whole people, instead of merely for the partial and immediate interests of one class, and only when it organizes and unites the entire nation and people for the struggle, instead of organizing and uniting one class.[45]

Mao himself had implied, in more colorful language, that this accorded with the desires of the common people when he noted in his speech to the seventh party congress the previous month that

> Mr. Shou Jin, a journalist, said that ours is a "moderate democratic centralism". He is a bourgeois liberal, and even he thinks that we are very moderate. This is a good name, and we should not change it. The common people like it very much. People in Jiangxi province call us "Gongsandang" [the "common umbrella party"], which is nice.[46]

Perhaps most importantly, New Democracy was quite in accord with Marxist theoretical premises in the economic policies it proposed to achieve the twin tasks of abolishing "feudalism" and establishing an economic base, tasks that had been accomplished elsewhere by capitalism, which would prepare the ground for socialism.

Unlike other constituents of Mao Zedong Thought derivative of the experiences that had shaped the party in the course of the rural revolution, New Democracy was strategically tentative and theoretically circumscribed. It was theoretically a necessity of the developmental premises of socialism.

45 Liu Shaoqi, "Report," p. 1249.

46 Mao, "Speech," p. 1237.

But it was also a product partly of political exigencies within the party and in the party's relationship to the broader political environment, and partly a response to an immediate national crisis (described by Mao as the "principal contradiction" of the moment). Even theoretically, it was conceived as a transitional form to be superseded as soon as the ground had been laid for the transition to socialism; this suggested the possibility of instability in the alliance of classes it proposed as well as in the party's class constituencies with changing circumstances of revolution and development.[47] While New Democracy was expected to last as long as it took to accomplish the tasks associated with it, there was no clear-cut standard for determining when these tasks had been completed. Mao's references to Sun Yat-sen in his speech to the seventh party congress imparts some sense of the mixture of almost casual political opportunism and revolutionary conviction in the considerations that underlay its formulations:

> We have quoted many of his [Sun Yat-sen's] fine statements and should affirm his strong points throughout our lives. We should ask our sons and daughters to affirm them after we die. But there are also differences. Our New Democracy is much more progressive and comprehensive than Sun Yat-sen's doctrine. There are many members of our party who are not too happy with Sun Yat-sen. I do not know why. This shows they do not have enough awareness and still retain the work-style of the Civil War period. During the Civil War, the Kuomintang used Sun Yat-sen to strike us, and it is, therefore, pardonable to abandon him . . . The current situation is different from that of the Civil War period. Now, as our party is stronger with greater forces, it is to our advantage to have him. The stronger our forces grow in the future, the more beneficial it will be for us to have him. We should be perceptive and make use of the banner of Sun Yat-sen. As our forces grow, it is increasingly to our advantage to make use of him.[48]

Mao's reference here to differences between the Civil War period and the present is especially interesting in his call for a new "awareness and work-style". Similar changes would be anticipated with the progress of New Democracy as the party's own policies generated new contradictions.

This leads us to the second question concerning the part Mao played in interpreting contradictions and deciding on necessary changes of practice.

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47 Mao's discussion of these issues in his "Speech" is illuminating not only for what he has to say on these issues but also how he says it.

48 Mao, "Speech," p. 1236.

There were from the beginning ambiguities in the party's presentation of Mao Zedong Thought—possibly representing an effort to smooth over disagreements on its status—that are important for understanding the dynamics of Chinese Marxism.[49] In his "Report of the revision of the party constitution", presented in May 1945, Liu Shaoqi repeatedly attributed the revision to Mao's "talent" and "creativity";[50] but he also noted that it was "to be found in Comrade Mao Zedong's writings and in many works of our party literature."[51] Previous scholarship has shown that there is good reason to think of Mao's writings as a collective product of his "think-tank", as Raymond Wylie has dubbed it, further subject to editing by the party propaganda organs.[52] Nevertheless, the understanding of Mao Zedong Thought as the thought of Mao the individual has persisted to this day, surviving the repudiation of the adoration it enjoyed during the Cultural Revolution.

Liu's presentation was similarly ambiguous on the related question of the development of Mao Zedong Thought. It suggested, on the one hand, that Mao Zedong Thought had been born with the founding of the Communist Party twenty-four years earlier, and that the party had followed Mao's "road" since the days of the "great revolution", of which he (again stressing Mao's individual contribution) "was one of the organizers."[53] Yet Liu added that Mao's thought came into being and developed not only in the course of the revolutionary struggles against domestic and foreign enemies but also in the course of the principled struggles against various erroneous opportunist ideas within the party."[54] There is an important historical question here concerning the extent to which Mao's rural revolutionary policies might be traced to predispositions he already displayed before 1927. But this has also been subject to ideological contention. During the Cultural Revolution, the history of the Communist Party was written entirely around the figure of Mao Zedong, to the detriment of all who had opposed or disagreed with him, including most importantly Liu Shaoqi. This has been modified but not entirely eliminated from contemporary interpretations of Chinese Marxism and Mao Zedong Thought in party

49 For a discussion of ambiguities in the seventh congress and limitations on Mao's victory, see Frederick C. Teiwes, with the assistance of Warren Sun, *The formation of the Maoist leadership: from the return of Wang Ming to the seventh party congress* (London, 1994).

50 Mao, "Speech", p. 1245.

51 Ibid., p. 1252.

52 Ibid., p. 1253. For Wylie, see, Raymond F. Wylie, *The emergence of Maoism: Mao Tse-tung, Ch'en Po-ta and the search for Chinese theory, 1935–1945* (Stanford, 1980).

53 Ibid., p. 1245.

54 Ibid., p. 1251.

scholarship. Equally important from an ideological perspective is a question that has been thrown up in recent party interpretations that will be discussed below: if Mao Zedong Thought was a product of the historical experience of the party, and evolved in response to shifting challenges, would it ultimately be relegated to the past, or continue to evolve as the party evolved?

Finally, a third ambiguity that is especially significant from a theoretical perspective and with respect to the relationship of Chinese Marxism to Marxism in general concerns the status of Mao Zedong Thought. It has never been clear whether Mao Zedong Thought represents the application of Marxism in China, a practice without theoretical claims (in Mao's terms, taking Chinese society as a "target" for the "arrow" of theory or a "blank sheet" upon which Marxism may write its agenda), or whether it ought to be considered a theoretical departure in its own right that might also be relevant to other societies.[55] In his 1945 Report Liu portrayed Mao Zedong Thought as a particular local manifestation of a universal Marxism, "the theory and practice of communism applied to China."[56] The reference to "theory" left the door open for his insistence further that Mao had transformed Marxism "from its European form into a Chinese form" and "discarded certain specific Marxist principles and conclusions that are outmoded or incompatible with the concrete conditions in China and replaced them with appropriate new ones."[57] Chinese Communists have also claimed that as the product of a "semi-feudal/semi-colonial" historical situation, Mao Zedong Thought represents a Marxism for societies similarly placed. The question is not academic as it concerns the identity of Chinese Marxism within a broader global Marxism, which obviously has been a matter of concern for Chinese Marxists since the days of Mao Zedong himself. Once again, it has acquired renewed urgency in recent years as the party tries to reconcile its Marxist faith with its immersion in global capitalism.

Chinese Marxism II: Socialism with Chinese Characteristics[58]

Recently published histories of Marxism in China represent the policies of "reform and opening" instituted since 1978 as the second "great leap" in making Marxism Chinese that followed the example of the first "great leap" under Mao

55 Compton, *Mao's China*, pp. xlii, 21, 66.

56 Mao, "Speech", p. 1251.

57 Ibid., pp. 1252, 1253.

58 This section is drawn, with some modification, from my essay, "Mao Zedong in contemporary Chinese official discourse and history," *China Perspectives* 2 (June 2012), 17–27.

between the mid-1930s and the mid-1950s. Contrary to the impression left by the radical transformations since 1978, the Communist Party has never officially repudiated Mao. Mao nevertheless presented a problem in party ideology: how could Mao's leading part in the Cultural Revolution be repudiated without denying his role in the national revolution? He is still a problem. Given the ongoing conflict over Mao's legacies and his involvement in the Cultural Revolution, it would be misleading to speak of a consensus on Mao within the party or in society at large. Despite vast differences among party ideologues concerning not just the cultural revolutionary past but the period of New Democracy, recent works, apparently part of the "Marxism project" 马克思主义工程 launched under Hu Jintao's sponsorship, have found in the ideological formulations of Chinese Marxism a link between the present and New Democracy under Mao. Part of the procedure is to de-link Mao Zedong Thought from Mao the political leader, appropriating it for the collective leadership of the party.

Despite the demotion he has suffered over the past three decades within and outside the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong continues to occupy a central place in official and officially-sponsored histories of the Chinese revolution, as regards both its past and its present. Whatever personal feelings they may harbor, Chinese leaders officially propagate the line that the Communist Party continues the work that Mao started to build a strong socialist state informed by a Marxism that has been adjusted to national circumstances in keeping with the demands of the times. As might be expected, they view this work as having begun sometime in the 1930s, then having gone astray for more than two decades from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s with the left-extremism of the Cultural Revolution, and since 1978 having been revitalized by his successors.

This official line has shown remarkable consistency since the post-Mao regime reversed the policies of the Cultural Revolution, although it has undergone elaboration and consolidation. Attitudes toward Mao have undergone shifts as well among the public, at least in part corresponding with what officialdom has deemed appropriate with respect to celebrating Mao. But the basic line, and the justification given for it, has remained much the same.

Continued fealty to Mao's legacy despite the reversal of his radical policies may be attributed at the most obvious level to the legitimacy needs of the Communist Party. But this calls for more in-depth exploration for what it may have to say about the party's ideological self-representation. The party claims the mantle of the revolution. Given the prominent part Mao played in the revolution as its leader and chief theoretician, it would be a rather difficult task to uphold the historical significance of the revolution and its achievements while

repudiating his legacies. The examples of Russia and Eastern Europe provide ample testimony to what happens to legacies of socialist revolutions once their founding leaders have been discredited. The post-Mao leadership in China has avoided this mistake despite, or perhaps because of, the upheaval it had experienced during the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, which made party loyalty an overwhelming consideration. As Deng Xiaoping warned in 1980, "When we write about his mistakes, we should not exaggerate, for otherwise we shall be discrediting Chairman Mao Zedong, and this would mean discrediting our party and state."[59]

Deng himself would lead the effort to reconstruct party history to appropriate Mao for the reforms. Representations of Mao in the PRC and abroad that are dominated by memories of the Cultural Revolution overlook that there is more than one Maoist legacy available to the party in the legitimation of the revolutionary past; there is not only that of Mao the cultural revolutionary, but also that of Mao the leader of the national revolution who gave voice to the theoretical formulations of Marxism in defense of the pursuit of national aims—a Chinese Marxism growing out of the historical experience of the Chinese revolution. The current leadership presents its own undertaking—and the thirty years of "reform and opening" under the successive leaderships of Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin 江泽民 (1926–) (but not Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦 [1915–89] and Zhao Ziyang 赵紫阳 [1919–2005])—as further developing the policies of New Democracy that had brought the Communist Party to power in 1949 under Mao's leadership. In this historical reconstruction, "socialism with Chinese characteristics" 中国特色社会主义, as formulated by Deng Xiaoping and enriched by his successors, represents a second stage in the unfolding of Chinese Marxism, of which New Democracy under Mao was the inaugural phase. The Cultural Revolution, sandwiched in between, serves in the new history of Chinese Marxism as a period when the ideology went astray (and a "negative example" from which to learn what not to do); yet it leaves Mao's "true" legacy intact for his successors to follow once the temporary deviation had been overcome.

The reinterpretation of Mao's "correct" thought was especially important at the beginning of the reform period when there still were Maoists powerful and popular enough to torpedo the abrupt reversal of the policies of the Cultural Revolution and the ideological orientation that had guided them.

59 Deng Xiaoping, "Remarks on successive drafts of the 'Resolution on certain questions in the history of our party since the founding of the People's Republic of China'" (hereafter, "Resolution 1981"), in *Selected works of Deng Xiaoping, 1975–1982* (hereafter, SWDXP) (Beijing, 1984), pp. 276–96, p. 287.

This consideration would gradually fade after the Tiananmen tragedy of 1989. As the reforms gained speed in the 1990s, now stimulated by a new awareness of globalization, Mao was no longer the threat he had been earlier. This was suggested by the regime's mostly tolerant response to the "Mao fever" 毛泽东热 that accompanied the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Mao's birth in 1993. It was also around this time that a serious rewriting of the first three decades of PRC history got underway, which culminated in the publication of the official party history in 2011, just in time for the 90th anniversary of the party's founding.[60] This history, and works on Chinese Marxism that have appeared during the last few years, have brought into focus an interpretive effort that goes back in its origins to the reforms that put an end to Mao's radical policies.

Mao, it may be recalled, was never officially repudiated. Indeed, the overthrow of the "Gang of Four", the termination of the Cultural Revolution, and the turn to "reform and opening" with the historic third plenary session of the eleventh Central Committee in December 1978 was viewed by party leaders as the restoration of "the correct path of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought".[61] "Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought" were enshrined in 1979 as one of the four "cardinal principles" guiding the party (in addition to "the socialist road", "dictatorship of the proletariat", and "leadership of the Communist Party"). The final verdict would be provided in the "Resolution on certain questions in the history of our party since the founding of the People's Republic of China," which was endorsed by the sixth plenary session of the

60 Zhonggong zhongyang dangshi yanjiu shi, *Zhongguo gongchandang lishi*, 2 vols (Beijing, first vol., 2002; second vol., 2011). The first volume, edited by Hu Sheng 胡绳 and Hu Qiaomu 胡乔木, was a revision based on the 1991 volume of the same title. Covering the years before 1949, it was published as a two-part set, part one for 1921–37 and part two for 1937–49. In addition to drawing from previously unstudied historical documents, its main revisions were prompted by post-1991 speeches by Deng Xiaoping and, more significantly, the new leader Jiang Zemin's "important thought of 'three represents'" (see "Afterword," Part 2, pp. 1051–55). The second volume of 2011 was also published as a two-volume set, each roughly 500 pages, covering, respectively, the years 1949–58 and 1958–78. See the interview with a former vice-director of the Central Party History Office, Zhang Qihua 张启华, who oversaw successive revisions of the text, in *Zhongguo xinwen zhoukan* 中国新闻周刊 (China News Weekly), excerpted in "Zhonggong dangshi chengren sannian ziran zaihai 1000 duowan ren siwang," *Cenews.eu* 14 January 2011, http://www.cenews/?p=28441. Hereafter, Zhang Qihua.

61 Deng Xiaoping, "Uphold the four cardinal principles" (30 March 1979), in SWDXP, pp. 166–91, p. 167.

eleventh Central Committee in late June 1981.[62] This document, and the discussions that attended it, were in hindsight among the foundational documents of "socialism with Chinese characteristics".[63] Supplemented by pronouncements from Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, whose policies are viewed as further developments of Chinese Marxism, these basic texts from party leaders of the reform era have served as the templates for writing the history of Marxism in China as well as for determining Mao's role in that history.

The Resolution of 1981 held Mao directly responsible for the leftist errors of the Cultural Revolution, but concluded nevertheless that:

> Comrade Mao Zedong was a great Marxist and a great proletarian revolutionary, strategist, and theorist. It is true that he made gross mistakes during the "cultural revolution", but, if we judge his activities as a whole, his contributions to the Chinese revolution far outweigh his mistakes. His merits are primary and his errors secondary. He rendered indelible meritorious service in founding and building up our party and the Chinese People's Liberation Army, in winning victory for the cause of liberation of the Chinese people, in founding the People's Republic of China and in advancing our socialist cause. He made major contributions to the liberation of the oppressed nations of the world and to the progress of mankind.[64]

Deng Xiaoping's account of the successive drafts of the Resolution leaves little question that this conclusion was reached after considerable disagreement and

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62 "Chinese Communism subject archive," http://www.Marxists.org/subject/china/documents/cpc/history/01.htm.

63 In an essay published in 1986, Brantly Womack suggested that the 1981 Resolution was comparable in significance to a similar document produced in 1945, "Resolution on certain questions in the history of our party." The latter provided an account of the party's history since 1921, foregrounding the role of Mao. The 1981 Resolution, which in its concluding paragraph did indeed refer to the 1945 Resolution as its antecedent, laid the groundwork for the writing of party history for the 1949–78 period. His suggestion is confirmed in recent historical works which consistently refer to this document as their primary guideline. See Brantly Womack, "Where Mao went wrong: epistemology and ideology in Mao's leftist politics," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 16 (1986), 23–40. In his speech on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the founding of the CPC on 1 July 2011, Hu Jintao once again referred to the two resolutions as storehouses of the party's "experiences and lessons". Hu Jintao, "Speech at CPC anniversary gathering," http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-07/01/c_13960505_6.htm, 17, p.6.

64 "Resolution 1981," p. 34.

deliberation within the party leadership.[65] How the Resolution maneuvered its way through the Cultural Revolution, weighed Mao's errors against his achievements, and balanced the mistakes of the Cultural Revolution against past achievements has been discussed by other scholars.[66] What is of interest for our purposes is the document's historical delineation of Mao as the party's leader and its relationship to Mao Zedong Thought and Chinese Marxism. Mao Zedong's achievements as leader from the mid-thirties to the mid-fifties were indisputable. He had led the party to victory in the "New Democratic revolution", opened up a new historical era by "liberating" China, and overseen the transition to socialism completed by 1956. Even after his radical left-turn shortly after the eighth party congress in 1956, he had continued to make important contributions to China's development, which had continued through the Cultural Revolution, when his mistakes had reached their most destructive. Throughout, he had continued to produce theoretical work that significantly contributed to socialist reconstruction. As the quotation above indicates, there was no questioning his role as the leader of the Chinese revolution.

The most interesting part of the Resolution had to do with Mao Zedong Thought. The Resolution reaffirmed the distinction between Mao's thought and Mao Zedong Thought that had been part of party ideology since the origins of that formulation in the early 1940s.[67] What it had to say is worth quoting at some length because of its implications for Mao's placement in the ideological reconstruction of the past and for the part Mao Zedong Thought would play in the unfolding of "socialism with Chinese characteristics":

> The Chinese Communists, with Comrade Mao Zedong as their chief representative, made a theoretical synthesis of China's unique experience in its protracted revolution in accordance with the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. This synthesis constituted a scientific system of guidelines befitting China's conditions, and it is this synthesis which is Mao Zedong Thought, the product of the integration of the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution. Making revolution in a large Eastern semi-colonial,

65 Deng, "Drafts," is an invaluable testament to inner-party negotiation in producing this important document. As I shall note below, the party history published thirty years later went through a similar negotiation, this time extending over fifteen years!

66 Womack, "Where Mao went wrong"; John Bryan Starr, "'Good Mao', 'Bad Mao': Mao studies and the re-evaluation of Mao's political thought," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 16 (1986), 1–6; Nick Knight, "The form of Mao Zedong's 'sinification' of Marxism," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 9 (1983), 17–33.

67 See Raymond F. Wylie, *The emergence of Maoism*.

> semi-feudal country . . . cannot be solved by reciting the general principles of Marxism-Leninism or by copying foreign experience in every detail. The erroneous tendency of making Marxism a dogma and deifying Comintern resolutions and the experience of the Soviet Union prevailed in the international communist movement and in our party mainly in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and this tendency pushed the Chinese revolution to the brink of total failure. It was in the course of combating this wrong tendency and making a profound summary of our historical experience in this respect that Mao Zedong Thought took shape and developed. It was systematized and extended in a variety of fields and reached maturity in the latter part of the Agrarian Revolutionary War and the War of Resistance against Japan, and it was further developed during the War of Liberation and after the founding of the People's Republic of China. Mao Zedong Thought is Marxism-Leninism applied and developed in China; it constitutes a correct theory, a body of correct principles and a summary of the experiences that have been confirmed in the practice of the Chinese revolution, a crystallization of the collective wisdom of the Chinese Communist Party.[68]

The identification of Mao Zedong Thought with the collective wisdom of the party rather than Mao the individual suggested not only that it was possible for Mao, the leader, to transgress against Mao Zedong Thought, but also that Mao Zedong Thought was a work in progress, "still in the process of development" after the passing of Mao, the leader.[69] There was a danger here, too, that the party might be culpable for the wrong turn that the ideology had taken during the two decades of deviation, which was indeed conceded by the document.[70] And yet, Mao Zedong Thought as the expression of the collective leadership of the party has been elevated to a plane where it leads an unblemished existence beyond the errors of individual leaders, having demonstrated repeatedly its ability to correct its mistakes. Making mistakes was inevitable for living people, as Mao himself had stated in his 1945 seventh party congress speech, adding that only the unborn and the dead don't make mistakes. He had admitted to the many mistakes he and others (including Marx and Engels) had made

68 "Resolution 1981," pp. 34–35.

69 Deng, "Drafts," p. 282. The Resolution stated that the "erroneous 'left' theses, upon which Comrade Mao Zedong based himself in initiating the 'cultural revolution', were obviously inconsistent with the system of Mao Zedong Thought, which is the integration of the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution," p. 19.

70 See also Deng, "Resolution 1981," p. 281.

in the course of revolutionary activity. But when Mao Zedong Thought was enshrined at the congress, those mistakes went unmentioned. Likewise in the present, the mistakes Mao made in his later years must be excluded from Mao Zedong Thought to preserve the latter's status as the infallible guide to socialist reconstruction.[71]

To recall a distinction Franz Schurmann has drawn in his study of ideology in the PRC, Mao Zedong Thought is given an abstract existence and a longevity in these discussions that raises it almost to the status of an "ideology" of universal significance, rather than a "thought" that represents the concrete practice of the ideology.[72] As the 1981 Resolution framed it:

> Mao Zedong Thought is the valuable spiritual asset of our party. It will be our guide to action for a long time to come . . . While many of Comrade Mao Zedong's important works were written during the periods of new-democratic revolution and of socialist transformation, we must still constantly study them. This is not only because one cannot cut the past off from the present and failure to understand the past will hamper our understanding of present-day problems, but also because many of the basic theories, principles and scientific approaches set forth in these works are of universal significance and provide us with invaluable guidance now and will continue to do so in the future . . . Mao Zedong Thought has added much that is new to the treasure-house of Marxist-Leninist theory. We must combine our study of the scientific works of Comrade Mao Zedong with that of the scientific writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.[73]

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71 Zhonggong gongyang dangshi yanjiu shi yishi, ed., "'*Zhongguo gongchandang lishi* (*shang juan*)' ruogan wenti shuoming" (Beijing, 1991), pp. 211–13. This interesting volume, published as a companion volume to the party history published in 1991, was devoted to the clarification of unresolved problems in party history. The clarifications were used also to comment on contemporary issues. In addition to this explication of the relationship between Mao and Mao Zedong Thought, the volume also drew attention to the Communist Party's struggles with bourgeois thinking in the 1920s, and its parallels with the struggles against advocates of bourgeois economics and politics since the beginning of reform and opening" (pp. 20–21). See also Mei Rongzheng, chief editor, *Makesi zhuyi Zhongguohua shi* (Beijing, 2010), p. 633, where the author cites Deng Xiaoping to the effect that "Mao Zedong's mistakes late in life do not belong in Mao Zedong Thought."

72 Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and organization in Communist China*, new enlarged edition (Berkeley, 1968), esp. pp. 24–58.

73 "Resolution 1981," p. 45.

The greatest achievement of Mao Zedong Thought was its integration of universal Marxist theory and concrete Chinese practice. In 1980, Deng Xiaoping insisted that "it is precisely Mao Zedong Thought that the present Central Committee upholds, only we have given it concrete content."[74] The statement elevates Mao Zedong to an ideological plane comparable to that of Marxism-Leninism, but at the same time evacuates it of any substantial content, which also increasingly has come to characterize the relationship of Chinese Marxism to Marxism. The development of the Chinese Communist Party beginning with Mao's leadership in the 1930s has become at one and the same time the historical unfolding of Chinese Marxism, with ever fewer references to the theoretical sources it claims as its ancestral origins. In other words, its Marxism has become increasingly self-referential.[75]

In addition to the example it provided in the appropriate handling of Marxism in the national revolution, the reaffirmation of Mao Zedong Thought under Deng Xiaoping had a second, more concrete, significance. Mao Zedong Thought was formulated and reached its fullness in the course of the New Democratic revolution, of which it was the ideological expression. Hence its evocation also invoked the question of the relevance of its policies following the elimination of the leftist zeal of the Cultural Revolution. I have suggested elsewhere that there was much in common initially between reform policies after 1978 and the policies of New Democracy that had brought the Communist Party to power: a coalition government under the leadership of the Communist Party and the "dictatorship of the proletariat"; a mixed economy blending private national capital and state management and direction (bureaucratic capitalism); a cultural policy that sought to integrate a new Communist culture

74 Deng, "Drafts," p. 283.

75 For a cogent summary of the ideological process from the origins of Mao Zedong Thought to Hu Jintao, see Zhiyue Bo, "Hu Jintao and CCP's ideology: a historical perspective," *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 9.2 (2004), 27–45. Bo suggests that with Hu Jintao, ideology has become "an asset" of the party with the Party Secretary as its institutional interpreter. So far, the process has been cumulative, with each Secretary referring to and building on the previous interpretation—in other words, filling in new content as circumstances dictate, with only symbolic gestures toward theory. For a discussion of successive leaders' contribution to theory, see Xiao Dongbo and Nie Yueyan et al., *Zhongguo gongchandang lilun jianshe de lishi jingyan yanjiu* (Beijing, 2005), Introduction, pp. 1–12. This work, written at the beginning of the Hu Jintao leadership, is mostly an elaboration of Jiang Zemin's contributions. It also suggests that the systematization 系统化 and institutionalization 制度化 of theory production got under way in earnest with the Jiang leadership.

with native legacies, especially popular culture.[76] Theoretically speaking, reforms after 1978 picked up where the eighth party congress in 1956 had left off, when the transition to socialism had been completed. As the Resolution of 1981 stated, however, while New Democracy belonged to an earlier phase of the revolution, it was the foundation of Mao Zedong Thought, and its documents would retain their significance for the foreseeable future. It is clear in hindsight that the reforms initiated in the 1980s would ultimately go back past 1956 to the mixed policies of New Democracy, especially in economic policy. Cultural policy has abandoned Mao's stress on popular culture as the source of a new culture except in its more theatrical forms, and there has been a revival of elite traditions reminiscent of Kuomintang policies in the 1930s. It is only in the consolidation of Communist Party rule and "the dictatorship of the proletariat" (albeit independently of the latter) that reform policies would go beyond the provisions of the 1956 conference. In an essay published in 1999, the distinguished historian (and head of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences between 1985 and 1998), Hu Sheng, pointed out that New Democracy was very important for understanding "socialism with Chinese characteristics".[77] Hu at the time (until his death in 2000) was also in charge of the group working on the official history of the Communist Party of China since 1949 published in 2012.[78]

The re-evaluation of Mao Zedong Thought in 1980–81 set the stage for the part Mao was to play in official historiography since then. It is worth stressing here two dimensions of this re-evaluation. On the one hand, Mao Zedong Thought was associated intimately with the policies of New Democracy that had prevailed for two decades between the mid-1930s and the mid-1950s, and therefore belonged to the past of the party. On the other hand, as the foundation for a Chinese Marxism that would continue to develop for the foreseeable

76 Arif Dirlik, "Mao Zedong and 'Chinese Marxism'," and Arif Dirlik, "Back to the future: contemporary China in the perspective of its past, circa 1980," *Boundary 2*, 38.1 (2011), 7–52. The inspiration of New Democracy also links the reforms to Sun Yat-sen's ideas on Chinese economic development, as New Democracy was very much entangled in ideological competition with the Kuomintang to appropriate Sun Yat-sen for the Communist Party. For a recent discussion, see Huang Zhigao, *Sanmin zhuyi lunzhan yu Makesi zhuyi Zhongguohua* (Beijing, 2010). For parallels between Deng's and Sun Yat-sen's ideas on development, see Arif Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese revolution* (Lanham, MD, 2005), chap. 2, "Socialism and capitalism in Chinese socialist thinking: the origins," pp. 17–44.

77 Hu Sheng, "Mao Zedong de xin minzhu zhuyi lun zai pingjia," *Zhongguo shehui kexue* 3 (1999), 4–19.

78 *Zhongguo gongchandang lishi*, vol. 2, "Afterword," pp. 1070–74.

future, Mao Zedong Thought transcended its times, and lived on in party ideology as guide to the future of socialism.

In his 90th anniversary speech in 2011, Hu Jintao reiterated this double temporality of Mao Zedong Thought when he stated that:

> The party has consistently integrated the basic tenets of Marxism with the specific conditions of China, and it has made two great theoretical achievements in the historical process of adapting Marxism to China's conditions. One is Mao Zedong Thought, which represents the application and development of Marxism-Leninism in China. Mao Zedong Thought has resolved in a systematic way the issue of how to accomplish the new-democratic revolution and socialist revolution in China, a big semi-colonial and semi-feudal country in the East, and made painstaking effort to explore the issue of what kind of socialism China should build and how to build it, thereby making new and creative contributions to enriching Marxism. The other theoretical achievement is the system of theories of socialism with Chinese characteristics. This is a scientific theoretical system consisting of Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of three represents, the Scientific Outlook on Development and other major strategic thoughts . . . The system of theories of socialism with Chinese characteristics represents the continuation and development of Mao Zedong Thought.[79]

Mao Zedong Thought represented the integration of Marxist theory with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution. It was not merely the application of Marxism to the Chinese revolution, it added "new content" 新内容 to Marxism and enriched it theoretically.[80] Reference to Marxism has remained as a basic tenet of the party's practice, but Mao Zedong Thought itself has come to represent "a new stage of Marxism" for the party to refer back to as a theoretical basis for practice in the new circumstances that it faced. It is also worth noting that however strenuously the party sought to distinguish Mao and Mao Zedong Thought, it could not (or would not) take Mao the person out of the thought so long as it insisted on that particular. According to the current interpretation, there have been two important periods in the making of Chinese Marxism, the New Democracy period and "socialism with Chinese characteristics", which represented another "revolutionary great leap" in making Marxism Chinese. The Mao Zedong Thought the party restored in 1978 returned it to

79 Hu Jintao, "Speech at anniversary gathering," p. 4.

80 Guo Dehong, chief editor, *Zhongguo Makesi zhuyi fazhan shi*, preface, p. ii.

its "true" spirit, that of New Democracy, premised upon class alliance (united front) and development of the forces of production as its primary goals. This was the Mao legacy Deng Xiaoping drew upon to formulate "socialism with Chinese characteristics". One work phrases it even more strongly: "Deng Xiaoping theory was nourished within the womb of Mao Zedong Thought" 孕育于毛泽东思想中.[81]

To appropriate Mao for the reforms was a much more astute move than repudiating Mao Zedong Thought. According to Maurice Meisner, the eighth party congress in 1956 presided over by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping deleted "the phrase 'guided by the thought of Mao Tse-tung'" from the new party constitution in order "to reinforce the new principle of collective leadership."[82] This deletion had been viewed by cultural revolutionaries subsequently as one more piece of evidence of Deng Xiaoping's underhanded opposition to Mao. This time around, Deng recruited Mao for the reforms, while alleviating the anxieties of those within and those outside the party who continued to be loyal to the revolution Mao had represented. More to the point here, by claiming Mao for his innovations, Deng incorporated Mao into his theory, which has then been passed down to "the important thought of 'three represents'" and "the scientific outlook on development".

In other words, New Democracy was one phase in the formulation of Chinese Marxism, but this first phase has been both a foundation and a paradigm for its subsequent development.[83] These are the two temporalities of Mao Zedong Thought: one that relegates it to the past, as an expression of New Democracy that now has been superseded; the other is a long-term reference for Chinese Marxism. In this perspective, there is hardly anything ideologically radical about the recent call by the prominent party intellectual (and "princeling") Zhang Musheng 张木生 (b. 1948) to return to the social and political policies of New Democracy to resolve contemporary problems of development. At the

81 Song Shichang and Yi Fang, *Makesi zhuyi Zhongguohua tonglun*, 2 vols (Jinan, 2010), 1.19. It is difficult to say if there is an analogy here to what Marx had to say about the dialectics of one mode of production growing out of another. If there is, it would suggest that Deng Xiaoping theory was a product but also a negation of Mao Zedong Thought, which would make more sense in terms of a non-dialectical reading of the discourse as product of Mao Zedong Thought but negation of the Mao elements in it!

82 Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China: A history of the People's Republic* (New York, 1977), p. 182. This was in the midst of the criticism of Joseph Stalin and hero worship in the Soviet Union, and conflicts within the Chinese Communist Party over agrarian reform policies. It is also indicative of the intimate link between Mao Zedong Thought and Mao's thought, which defies efforts to de-personalize the former.

83 Mei Rongzheng, *Makesi zhuyi Zhongguohua shi*, pp. 4–5.

same time, if there is an affinity between New Democracy and "socialism with Chinese characteristics", as the leadership has claimed, it is unlikely that New Democracy would resolve problems presented by a developmental trajectory of its inspiration. Indeed, as I observed above, ignoring the part contradictions created by New Democracy may have contributed to the radical turn of the mid-1950s is a significant shortcoming of party histories anxious to represent the Cultural Revolution as an irresponsible deviation.[84]

84 The reference here is to Zhang Musheng, *Gaizao women de wenhua lishi guan* (Beijing, 2011). For the stir created by the book's call to New Democracy, see David Bandurski, "Turning back to 'New Democracy'?", *China Media Project*, posted 19 May 2011, http://cmp.hku.hk/2011/05/19/12486/, and Chris Buckley, "Exclusive: party insider maps bold path for China's next leaders," *Reuters*, 18 August 2011, http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/08/18/us-china-politics-idUSTRE77H11R20110818. See also the interview with Zhang, "Zhang Musheng: zai ju xin minzhu zhuyi daqi", *Southern News Network*, 31 October 2011, http://nf.nfdaily.cn/nfrwzk/content/2011-10/31/content_32350892.htm, 9 pp. Zhang is firmly committed to Communist Party leadership, advocates intra-party democracy, and greater democratization of politics with an emphasis on home-grown democracy, which he argues is to be found in New Democracy. It seems to me that the controversy over Zhang's ideas may be due not to his advocacy of New Democracy as such, but a version of the latter that stresses the revolutionary spirit of "the Yan'an Way" against the reigning party "orthodoxy" preoccupied with the development of the forces of production, its call for the party to reground itself in the worker and peasant classes, its criticism of inequality, its condemnation of the party for having turned away from these principles of New Democracy beginning in the 1990s (corresponding to the Jiang Zemin leadership which brought capitalists into the party), and its advocacy of contentious politics. These issues are also entangled in conflicts among party "princelings" (the descendants of prominent revolutionaries) as well as between the "princelings" and those who have worked their way up from the bottom. Indeed, the Chongqing experiment and Zhang's call for a return to New Democracy may be viewed as variant responses to the same problems, the one advocating a greater role for the public in politics, the other re-politicization under party leadership with closer attention to socially equitable development. Despite its "cultural revolutionary" appearance, the Chongqing experiment would seem to have been a highly controlled affair intent on avoiding any of the dreaded 1960s style chaos. Zhang Musheng, who expresses a preference for "Chongqing exploration" 重庆探索 or "Chongqing road" 重庆之路 over "Chongqing model", notes its affinity to cultural practices in Yan'an ("Interview," p. 8). It also has affinities to New Democracy, and through it, to developmental ideas going back to Sun Yat-sen in its emphases on using capitalism for socialist ends, the priority it gives to people's livelihood, and public ownership of land as a developmental resource. See Philip C.C. Huang, "Chongqing: equitable development driven by a 'third hand'," *Modern China* 37.6 (2011), 569–622. This experiment came to an end with the fall of Bo Xilai in 2011. For the revival of the Yan'an Way, see Geremie R. Barme, "The children of Yan'an: new words of warning to a prosperous age," *China Heritage Quarterly*

Similarly in discussions of Chinese Marxism Party leaders continue to reference Mao for their theoretical and policy innovations. A vague but potentially significant development in recent discussions of Chinese Marxism is their self-referentiality. Recently published studies of Chinese Marxism read mostly as histories of policy innovations by successive generations of Communist leaders that are now endowed with theoretical status in the formulation of a Chinese Marxism. There is little visible concern in these texts for theoretical discussions that critically engage issues of Marxist theory with reference to Deng Xiaoping's theory, "the important thought of 'three represents'", or "the scientific outlook on development". Rather, each references predecessors in its ancestral lineage, building on them to further develop Chinese Marxism and Mao Zedong Thought. Mao's theoretical corpus from New Democracy days and even some produced after his left deviation are simply part of the ever-expanding theoretical corpus of the party.

Theory itself endlessly changes in response to the times and national needs. In the words of Hu Jintao in his speech on the CPC's 90th anniversary:

> The development of practice, cognition of the truth, and innovation of theories know no boundary. The practice of the party and the people keeps progressing, so should the theories guiding it. The path of socialism with Chinese characteristics will definitely be expanded through the innovative practice of the party and the people, and the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics will surely continue to improve as we deepen reform and open up wider. This process will certainly open up broad prospects for theoretical innovation. In upholding Marxism under the new historical conditions, it is important to promptly address new issues emerging in practice and thus provide scientific guidance for practice. We should have a correct understanding of the global development trend and China's basic condition of being in the primary stage of socialism, find out more about the features of China's development at the current stage, review the new experience gained in a timely manner by the people led by the party, and create new theories with the focus on major issues concerning economic and social development, so as to ensure the vitality of scientific theories.[85]

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26 (June 2011), http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/features.php?searchterm=026_yanan.inc&issue =026.

85 Hu, "Speech at CPC anniversary gathering," p. 6.

This endless development of theory in response to changing needs of practice suggests that theory no longer serves as a check on, or even guide to, future developments, which are to be determined solely by their efficacy in securing the developmental goals of the regime. It is not that there is no longer any concern for Marxism. On the contrary, the party repeatedly stresses its loyalty to the essence of Marxism as the thread that runs through the development of Chinese Marxism. Official publications express considerable concern over ignorance of Marxism, indifference to it for no longer being relevant, or feigning interest while undermining it, clearly referring above all to party cadres.[86] Hu Jintao was responsible for initiating in 2004 a "Marxism project" intended to produce an interpretation of Marxist classics appropriate to contemporary circumstances. One of the basic goals of the project was to provide theoretical, historical, and educational material that would give coherence to party policies, and revitalize the study of Marxism, especially Chinese Marxism.[87]

The project is important for understanding the regime's attitude toward Marxism and Mao's place in it. The primary purpose of the project was to establish an unfolding Chinese Marxism on firmer theoretical ground by uncovering in the Marxist classics evidence that Marx and Engels, at least in theory, had anticipated developments in Chinese socialism; this was a project of articulating texts to policies that had guided the course of the Chinese revolution as well the policies of the leadership of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" from Deng through Jiang to Hu. As the authors of *Zhongguo Makesi zhuyi fazhan shi* write, "The only Chinese Marxism is Marxism that has been integrated with Chinese realities. Only by answering to the needs of the Chinese revolution and reconstruction can Chinese Marxism take shape and advance."[88]

This is a theme that in a basic way runs through the corpus of Mao Zedong Thought from Mao during New Democracy to the leadership under Hu Jintao as—at the time of writing—the most recent representative of "socialism with Chinese characteristics". What is new about it is ruling out or downgrading certain fundamental features of Marxist theory—notably class analysis—from any consideration in the formation of Chinese Marxism. The issue of class is

86 Guo Dehong, *Zhongguo Makesi zhuyi fazhan shi*, p. 382.

87 Xiao Dongbo and Nie Yueyan, *Zhongguo gongchandang lilun jianshe de lishi jingyan yanjiu*, pp. 228–31. See also "Makesi zhuyi gongcheng jiaocai meiben zhishao touru liangbaiwan yuan," *Liaowang dongfang zhoukan* (26 October 2004), no pagination; author's personal collection. I am grateful to the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau 中央编译局, especially the vice-director, Dr. Yu Keping, for making materials on the project available to me while I was a visiting scholar there in 2006.

88 Guo Dehong, *Zhongguo Makesi zhuyi fazhan shi*, p. 381.

dismissed as having been exaggerated in the days of New Democracy, abused during the Cultural Revolution, and irrelevant under the socialist regime. While vigilance is called for against both the "right" and the "left", it is the left that represents the more important threat to the party's policies and the country's security and welfare.[89] The problem is that leaving out those aspects of Marxist theory that contradict the regime's policies obviates the need to engage Marxist theory in its wholeness, and suffers from the same tendentiousness in the reading of theory as its Cultural Revolution predecessors. Sweeping aside the issue of class also glosses over the contradictions of New Democracy that produced the conflicts of the 1950s, and the contradictions that mark Chinese society today. Marxism is obviously too important for the regime's legitimacy to be simply cast aside. It is however instrumentalized in the service of policies that accommodate capitalism, which is in the process of transforming Chinese society—and not in any direction recognizable as socialism. What the future may bring is another matter, of course, but then judging by what the regime says, Marxism in the future may serve any and all policies that suit the needs of China as the regime perceives them. The gap between promise and reality may be an important reason that many in and out of China remain skeptical of the regime's Marxism or socialist commitments.

Nevertheless, the claims to Marxism need to be taken seriously for what they suggest. Chinese Marxism is a Marxism that is rooted in the Marxist tradition going back to Marx and Engels—"ancestors" 老祖宗, as Deng Xiaoping described them.[90] But it is also a Marxism that has been integrated with Chinese circumstances, in keeping with the history of Marxism, which has taken national form everywhere. And as the circumstances change, so does the synthesis of theory and practice. What is implied here is that Marxism is a work in progress and needs to be re-invented on an ongoing basis if it is not to degenerate into a dogma.[91] It is not a matter of following texts, but of creating new Marxisms out of them. Hence, there is the insistence in the new texts on Chinese Marxism that both New Democracy and "socialism with Chinese characteristics" opened new eras in the unfolding of Marxism. They are most relevant to China, but they have implications for other societies as well at a time when socialism is in retreat.

Two considerations guide this project. First, however fundamental the principles and methods of Marxism, Marx and Engels could not have foretold

89 Ibid., pp. 384–85.

90 Ibid., p. 383.

91 The preferred term is "innovate" 创新, which has become a very popular term in the party lexicon, especially since Jiang Zemin.

the course socialism would take once it had been established. Second, theoretical development to answer to contemporary needs can no longer rely on the mediation of Soviet interpretations, as in the past, but requires independent investigation of the texts.[92] The investigation of texts has been international in scope, as Chinese researchers comb libraries for Marxist texts, often assuming leadership in such research. There is a suggestion in some discussions that the project of making Marxism Chinese has taken on an even broader scope than before. One text points to four dimensions to making Marxism Chinese: "concretization" 具体化 of theory, "nationalization" 民族化 of its form, "modernization" 现代化 of the classics, and "practicalization" 实践化 of its theoretical form.[93] Especially significant is the modernization of the classics.

Whether or not these new departures point to aspirations to leadership in global Marxism commensurate with the regime's newfound power in the world as the foremost success story of socialism, or, better still, a socialist version of capitalism, there is not much question about the immediate goals for refurbishing Chinese Marxism theoretically and giving it canonical status. What is less obvious but more significant is that it is the Chinese present—the standpoint of an unfolding Chinese Marxism—that provides the guide to reading the Marxist classics and, in effect, re-theorizing the theory. What will remain of Marxism by the time they are finished remains to be seen. Mao's successors have arguably gone beyond anything he claimed in making theory their own, subservient to the practices of national development within a context of global capitalism. Ironically, the more they change Marxism to respond to contemporary circumstances, the less connected they seem to be to an environment in which Marxism carries little weight among the population at large. But they may legitimately claim, as they do, that they are following the example of the Chairman—both in making Marxism Chinese and in silencing critics from the left who would suggest that the more the theory becomes "Chinese" the less there is left of it that may be viewed as Marxist in any serious sense of that term.[94]

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92 Interview with Yang Jinhai 杨金海, Deputy Secretary of the Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, August 2006. Yang has been one of the foremost interpreters of the philosophical basis of Hu Jintao's "Scientific outlook on development." See also Yang Jinhai, "Makesi zhuyi jingdian zhuzuo yanjiude xianzhuang he weilai," unpublished discussion paper. I am grateful to Yang Jinhai for providing me with these materials.

93 Song Shichang and Yi Fang, *Makesi zhuyi Zhongguohua tonglun*, 1.2–3.

94 This applies even to party elders critical of the turn Marxism has taken under the regime: "In July 2007, even the 'Maoflag' website was temporarily shut down when it posted an open letter by seventeen former high-level CCP officials and Marxist academics accusing CCP policies of making a mockery of Marxism and taking the country 'down an evil road'."

Chinese Marxism: From Revolution to Development

Over the last three decades, the Communist Party has reworked Mao Zedong Thought from a revolutionary discourse on development to a development discourse that legitimizes incorporation in global capitalism. Chinese Marxism is identified in this discourse with the policies of New Democracy which provided the context in the late 1930s and the 1940s for the enunciation of Mao Zedong Thought. The priority is given in this discourse to economic development in preparation for the eventual transition to socialism, class alliance over class conflict, and the creation of a new culture appropriate to a Marxism made Chinese.

This discourse derives its essential premises from Maoism as it was formulated to justify New Democracy. Economic development as a prerequisite for socialism is consistent both with the needs of Chinese society and a theoretical necessity of Marxism. Deng Xiaoping's emphasis on "seeking truth from facts" and encouraging economic privatization to release the forces of production, Jiang Zemin's invitation to capitalists to join the party as advanced representatives of the proletariat, and Hu Jintao's "scientific concept of development" and cultural policies all have precedents in the ideological formulations that accompanied the original adoption of New Democracy. The critique of leftist dogmatism in the repudiation of the Cultural Revolution echoed a similar critique Mao and his advisors directed at the more orthodox Bolsheviks in the party. There are also good grounds for the claim that Mao Zedong Thought, as opposed to the product of Mao the individual, was a collective ideological formulation of the party. In all these senses, the contemporary leadership has good reasons to claim that it is continuing a process of making Marxism Chinese that Mao initiated half a century earlier.

These premises also provide the justification for the criticism of Mao Zedong for his left turn from the mid-1950s that would culminate in the

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Zhao Yuezhi, "Sustaining and contesting revolutionary legacies in media and ideology," in Sebastian Heilman and Elizabeth J. Perry, eds, *Mao's invisible hand: the political foundations of adaptive governance in China* (Cambridge, MA, 2011), p. 228. Party elders, who seem to wait until retirement to go public with their criticisms, are routinely censored regardless of the nature of their criticism. This includes Premier Wen Jiabao, who did not wait until retirement to go public. For a more recent general shut-down of "leftist" sites, see Keith B. Richburg, "China shuts leftist web sites as political strife continues," *Washington Post*, 6 April 2012. For an interesting theoretical discussion of continuities with Maoist language that presently have different consequences for communication with the people than they did earlier, see Maurizio Marinelli, "The historicity beyond the appearance of words: the treachery of images in Chinese political language," conference paper.

Cultural Revolution. In the perspective established by the 1981 Resolution, the problem was not Mao Zedong but Mao's misreading of the contradictions in Chinese society, which led him to betray the very thought that bore his name.

This interpretation is, however, quite problematic. If contemporary policies have precedents in the initial formulation of Chinese Marxism, the same may be argued with equal validity of the Cultural Revolution interpretation of Mao Zedong Thought, which turned its back on New Democracy but not other indispensable elements of Mao Zedong Thought. From the Cultural Revolution perspective, the push to collectivization from the mid-fifties was an extension of the cooperative movement that went back to the revolutionary period; the militarization of the party under the Mao-Lin Biao 林彪 (1907–71) collaboration had a precedent going back to the rural revolution of the 1930s, as did the "mass line" that justified Cultural Revolution attacks on the party itself; Yan'an "guerrilla socialism" with its emphasis on self-reliance provided a paradigm for Cultural Revolution aspirations; and the Cultural Revolution's revolutionary culture, following on the Yan'an model, was thoroughly nativist in orientation. The celebration of "the people" in Cultural Revolution Maoism was likewise a legacy of this earlier period. This celebration, its populist excesses notwithstanding, was accompanied by a qualification that the people must be transformed even as they were made the masters of politics. Even the deification of Mao derived from the earlier period. In his 1945 Report, Liu Shaoqi had referred to the collective production of Mao Zedong Thought, but his emphasis by far was on the virtues of Mao the individual, his talent and his genius. It is possible even to view the Cultural Revolution as an effort by Mao and his followers to rescue Mao Zedong Thought from the party. The Cultural Revolution carried these policies to their extremes, against the status quo established by the Communist Party, but it had good claims to the legacies of the revolution in doing so.

Issues of development and class are equally complicated. If Mao is to be criticized for his development policies, it is not because he underestimated the significance of development but rather because of the irrational speed-up of development he encouraged in the late 1950s. It is possible that it was only over issues of class and class struggle that the Cultural Revolution went beyond its revolutionary antecedents.[95] The reification of class during the Cultural Revolution, while theoretically justifiable, broke with the flexibility Mao had displayed in his class analyses during the revolutionary days. The biologically informed "blood-line theory" that emerged out of the factional

95 The most comprehensive, illuminating discussion of "class" in the Cultural Revolution is to be found in Richard C. Kraus, *Class conflict in Chinese socialism* (New York, 1981).

struggles of the Cultural Revolution had no antecedent either in earlier days of the revolution or in Marxist theory. This fact, however, should not detract from the importance of the problem of class in socialist society, first raised by Eastern European socialists, that the Cultural Revolution dramatically put on the political agenda.[96]

The point here is not whether the Cultural Revolution was desirable or the correct approach to resolving the contradictions of New Democracy, but rather its status in the unfolding of Chinese Marxism. There is no convincing theoretical or empirical reason for excluding the Cultural Revolution from Chinese Marxism. Indeed, it may be recalled that it was the Cultural Revolution that raised the question of a "Chinese-style socialism" to be distinguished in its development policies not only from capitalist societies, but also from existing socialisms in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.[97] Contemporary interpretations, while critical of the "leftism" of the Cultural Revolution not only concede the party's complicity in Mao's policies but also recognize that all the way into the early 1960s, Mao produced analyses deserving of inclusion among the canonical works of Chinese Marxism.[98]

Most importantly, exclusion of the Cultural Revolution from Chinese Marxism conceals contradictions within New Democracy to which it was arguably a radical response. Including the Cultural Revolution within Chinese Marxism, however, also draws attention to the contradictions generated by the simultaneous practices of capitalism and socialism that continue to characterize the policies of the post-socialist regime. The difference between the present and its cultural revolutionary past lies not in the correctness of one and the errors of the other, but in the responses to these contradictions. Faced with the contradictions of New Democracy, Mao opted to speed up the development of socialism. The response to similar contradictions presently is to deepen the drift to capitalism. While the Chinese Communist Party continues to profess socialist commitments, it has pushed the transition to socialism so far into the future that for all practical purposes it is irrelevant to the formulation of policies. Recognition of this reality would force the regime to acknowledge that

96 I am referring here in particular to the classic analysis by Milovan Djilas, *The new class: an analysis of the communist system* (New York, 1957). A more down-to-earth account is to be found in Miklos Haraszti, *A worker in a worker's state* (New York, 1978).

97 E.I. Wheelwright and Bruce McFarlane, *The Chinese road to socialism: economics of the Cultural Revolution* (New York, 1970).

98 Thus the canonical works of Chinese Marxism include post-1949 essays such as "On the ten great relationships" (1956) and "On the correct handling of contradictions among the people" (1957).

its socialist legacies are no longer relevant in a world that is radically different from the world that gave rise to New Democracy and Mao Zedong Thought.

There is evidence of such recognition in the recent Chongqing experiment as well as the renewed calls for rejuvenation of new democratic policies. The failure and discrediting of the Chongqing experiment provides further evidence of the drift to capitalism. The calls for new democratic policies are even more problematic, as such policies have been responsible for the crisis of socialism presently, as they were in the past. In the meantime, these alternatives offered to resolve the crisis of socialism have gone a long way toward exposing the corruption and inequality in Chinese socialism. Socialism has become an excuse in these policies for exploitation of the classes that supposedly constitute the foundation of the regime, in particular the peasantry; and, it has become a justification for the accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of the Communist Party.[99] This was the eventuality, ironically, that the Cultural Revolution was launched to prevent.

The regime's efforts to redefine the relationship of Chinese Marxism to Marxism by assimilating Marxism to its practices similarly disguises the theoretical problems thrown up by such assimilation. A nationalized Marxism may serve and appeal to nationalist sentiments. It also conceals the ways in which Marxism has been corrupted by nationalism in its long history. This, too, is a legacy of Mao's leadership. Still, some sense of a dialectical relationship (opposition in addition to unity) marked the discussions of the 1940s in the recognition of contradictions, if only temporary, between Marxist and nationalist goals. Mao was as fervently nationalist as any of his successors, and bent Marxism to serve national purposes. But he was also willing to acknowledge the reality of "temporary" deviations necessitated by national considerations.[100] The temporary deviations have by now become permanent. As Marxism disappears into a nationalism that is fueled by success in global capitalism, it not

99 For studies of labor under "reform and opening", see Anita Chan, *China's workers under assault: the exploitation of labor in a globalizing economy* (Armonk, NY, 2001), and Ching Kwan Lee, *Against the law: labor protests in China's rustbelt and sunbelt* (Berkeley, 2007). While there is a clear distinction between the urban and the rural in the PRC's development, the heavy use of agrarian labor (peasant-worker, or *nongmingong* 农民工) in urban factories and construction increasingly calls into question earlier categories of peasant and worker. "Peasant" uprisings are a daily occurrence, the most dramatic recent example being the Wukan uprising in Guangdong in the area of the 1920s Hailufeng Soviet. The expropriation of village land and the exploitation and oppression of labor is quite a different matter from the institution of colonial regimes in "minority" areas such as Tibet and Xinjiang.

100 Mao, "Speech," pp. 1232–33.

only ceases to serve critical purposes, it becomes part of a nationalist ideology that makes Marxism mean whatever the party leadership would like it to mean. The argument that nationalism must have priority in order to combat imperialism does not ring true when the PRC engages in its own versions of colonialism internally and imperialist competition in global politics, as in the case of its activities in Southeast Asian waters. At this time of its global self-assertion, Chinese Marxism heralds not a bright future for Marxism, but its relegation to a past beyond recovery.

Appendix: A Note on Religion and "Chinese Marxism"

Chinese Marxism in "Religious Fields"

In his study of Marxism in China published coincidentally with the launching of the reforms that in hindsight would initiate the second phase of "Chinese Marxism", Nigel Harris, the British economist and one time editor of the Trotskyist journal, *International Socialism*, wrote,

> The Party has, in Marx's terms, an "esoteric wisdom," sustained independently of the perception of workers . . . The Party is united by doctrine, not by its relationship to a class . . . The Party thus conforms to Marx's criterion of a sect: "The sect sees the justification for its existence and its 'point of honour' not in what it has in common with the class movement but in the particular shibboleth which distinguishes it from it." The Party grows by inducing people to accept its ideology, and this accounts for the stress laid on "education" and psychological transformation. Theory does not explain the perceptions *workers* derive from their own experience. Rather, faith provides a spiritual consolation and direction independent of those perceptions. The faith has sometimes echoes of non-conformist Christianity, for it embodies a moral attitude rather than a scientific theory that relates the experience of a class to society as a whole. Part of the faith may be an abstract emphasis on science.[101] (emphasis in the original)

Lest Harris' conclusion be attributed to Trotskyist animus against Maoism, the CCP, and the Maoist groups outside of China which inspired his diagnosis, similar judgments to his have acquired currency in recent work by scholars of religion in China. A distinguished expert on the history of Chinese religion states in no uncertain terms that,

101 Nigel Harris, *The mandate of Heaven: Marx and Mao in modern China* (London, 1978), p. 241. The reference is to Marx's "Letter to Schweitzer," 13 October 1868.

> The ongoing reverence, for Sun Yatsen in Taiwan and for Mao Zedong in China, while it may look to a Westerner not unlike American reverence for George Washington, must also be understood in terms of the millennia-old worship of dynastic founders, as what can only be characterized as the divinization of Mao can be made sense of only if the divine status of the Son of Heaven is factored in—divine status which moved . . . from mere association of ancestors and Heaven or the Dao to the self-definition of the Song emperor Huizong as a Daoist god. The divinization of the ruler of a religious state is not an occasional aberration but an intrinsic part of its foundational logic. In contemporary China, which has moved decisively away from the disastrous personality cult of Mao—as did Song China from that of Huizong, what remains unchanged is that ideological orthodoxy and orthopraxy—things associated by Westerners with religions—continue to be determined by the state. If in the past it was the emperor, today it is the Party that functions like a church.[102]

In a somewhat different vein, a sophisticated and theoretically informed study of religion in China since the early 20th century by Goossaert and Palmer finds in the Communist Party significant signs of "political religiosity" ("the sacralisation of the state and the moralization of governance") that the authors argue has characterized much of Chinese politics in the 20th century.[103] Their stress is on the 20th-century creation of a "religious field" in the encounter with Euromodernity that not only introduced the concept of religion into the Chinese intellectual and political scene, but also forced the reorganization of native religious traditions after the model of Christianity in modern secular states. Under state enforcement and/or guidance, religions were subjected to and reorganized in accordance with "scientific" criteria in the pursuit of cultural modernization, with the dismissal and suppression as "superstition" of popular religious practices that ran afoul of the "civilizing mission" of the state, or did not lend themselves to organization amenable to state supervision. "Modernist secularism," the authors write, "created 'religion' as a foil and autonomous category."[104]

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102 John Lagerwey, "Letter to Johann Arnason" (n.d.), cited with the author's permission.

103 Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago, 2011), p. 168. See also the important study of religion focusing on the Kuomintang, Rebecca Nedostup, *Superstitious regimes: religion and the politics of Chinese modernity* (Cambridge, MA, 2009).

104 Goossaert and Palmer, *The religious question in modern China*, p. 3. With ups and downs, five religions have been officially recognized since the founding of the Republic in 1912: Catholicism, Protestant Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Daoism (ibid., p. 58).

The transformation of the "religious field" was also generative. Religion was never eliminated with the new "scientific" secularism, but it was endowed with new meanings and significance. Most important in a cultural and political sense was the appearance of a variety of "redemptive societies", organized around alternative native "traditions" eclectically, including "superstitions". Under the twin impacts of Euromodern universalism and nationalist messianism, the ideologies of these societies sought revitalization of native values, national renaissance, and the global diffusion of revitalized native values. They were very "modern", but theirs was the modernity of revitalization that sought roots in native soil against the mimicry of Euromodernity in different political and cultural guises—even though it was very much a product of the latter.[105]

"Political religiosity" infused the very state that would secularize religion, including the Communist state established in 1949. Four manifestations of political religiosity that blended contemporary inspiration with past imperial practices have found organizational and ideological expression of varying intensity over the years of Communist Party rule: "creation of the civic rituals characteristic of any nation-state"; "active promotion, through organized campaigns, propaganda, and education, of new forms of civil morality, designed to forge Chinese into a unified and advanced people"; "revolutionary asceticism, which aimed to create a new race of humans who would sacrifice themselves for the cause of the Communist Party"; and "the cult of Mao, which intensified revolutionary asceticism and violence, but led to the break-down of utopian solidarity and the dislocation of the crypto-religious synthesis of the Maoist state—state ritual, the Mao cult, self-cultivation, and state-sponsored moral education all following autonomous trajectories in the post-Mao era."[106]

Recent work has amply demonstrated the relevance and importance of bringing the prism of religion to the study of modern China, drawing attention not only to the cultural and political significance of previously ignored and marginalized social movements, but also to its benefits in enabling more critical reading of the anti-religious secularist ideologies responsible for their trivialization.[107] This goes for the Communist Party and Chinese Marxism as much as it does for the Kuomintang. The discovery of "religion" in Chinese Marxism (and Marxism in general) is not quite novel, especially among its detractors. But it has gained greater credibility with the waning of revolution. As the Communist Party once derided the "feudal" tendencies that would bring

105 Ibid., chapter 4.

106 Ibid., p. 169.

107 In addition to the works cited above, see, Thomas D. DuBois, *Religion and the making of modern East Asia* (New York, 2011), and Adam Yuet Chau, *Religion in contemporary China: revitalization and innovation* (New York, 2011).

down the Kuomintang, the same tendencies become visible in its own history with the removal of the dazzle of revolution.

I will discuss at some length below problems in the rhetorical deployment of religion (and secularism) in these works. Suffice it to say here that some notion of "religiosity" is indeed useful in drawing attention to aspects of Communist practice that otherwise remain elusive: the cult of the leader, devotional fanaticism, moral and ideological fundamentalism, ideological and organizational sectarianism and perhaps even some of the language that characterized the politics of the Cultural Revolution that undermined its theoretically more reasoned goals—and made socialism into something to flee from among many who at first had welcomed the party's rule.[108] The supine concupiscence of bodies shimmering in the radiance of Mao Zedong's blazing gaze from his portrait, featured prominently in a propaganda film such as "The East is red", enhances, in its eroticism, the mysteries of the homage paid by devotees to an icon that exudes charisma in its heated solar rays. The "religion of Mao", if we can call it that, did not follow him into political oblivion. Only a decade or so after the official repudiation of his policies, the hundredth anniversary of Mao's birthday in 1993 provided occasion for his enshrinement in temples by peasants in different parts of China, much to the chagrin of the party leadership.

Resemblances to religion do not stop with Mao Zedong. Indeed, as with Mao-worship during the Cultural Revolution, some resemblances appear to be not just functional but also substantial in a significant sense. Party leaders have done their best to create an imperial aura by association in their choice of residence on the grounds of the former imperial palaces and keeping the population as well as lower party members at a deferential distance. The party's hierarchical organization that has a counterpart in the ideological realm in the power to interpret theory in its doctrinal version, its claims to exclusive truth as defined by the leadership, its assumption of infallibility (despite repeated demonstration of fallibility), the endless reading of officially prescribed texts accompanied by criticism—in fact self-criticism until the "correct" truth (!) has been internalized—and the chiliastic utopianism of its message of national salvation and revival are all good reasons to uphold the ecclesiastic analogy despite the CCP's atheistic commitments. Harris was certainly correct to point to the stress on education and psychological transformation in the making of party membership, as is evinced by the quotation from Mao above, that promised the transformation of

108 The language of the Cultural Revolution freely drew upon the language, if only rhetorically, of the very "superstitions" it set out to obliterate. See Xing Lu, *Rhetoric of the Chinese Cultural Revolution: the impact on Chinese thought, culture and communication* (Charleston, SC, 2004), pp. 59–61.

peasants (and, we might add, intellectuals) into proletarians through the inculcation of party truths.

Discussions of "political religiosity" in the Communist revolution refer not to Marxism in general but to the political practices that have issued from the ideological construct that is the subject of this essay: "Chinese Marxism", or "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought", and the additions that have accrued to it since 1978—"Deng Xiaoping theory", "the important thought of 'three represents'", "the scientific development outlook"—that mark the unfolding of Chinese Marxism through the Hu Jintao leadership, and now the "grand renaissance" (*da fuxing* 大复兴) under Xi Jinping 习近平 (1953–) leadership. While ideally there might be an expectation that the charisma of the leader would reflect on the party and vice versa, there was from the beginning a tension between the leader and the collective party organization in conflicting claims to authorship and possession of the correct ideological line. Mao's claims to authorship, which reached a crescendo during the Cultural Revolution, were justifiable by the attachment of his name to the theoretical lineage that defined orthodoxy even as the party with equal justification insisted on it as a collective formulation. The fact that "Mao Zedong Thought" was taken out of the party constitution in 1956,[109] reclaimed for Mao by the Cultural Revolution, and restored in its collective guise in 1978, underlines its doctrinal significance against its ups and downs in practice. Rumours on the eve of the 18th party congress that brought Xi Jinping to power that it might once again be eliminated have been put to rest by Xi's slogan of "the two non-negatables" 两个不能否定: "We cannot use the historical period after the reform and opening to negate the historical period before the economic reform and opening; we cannot use the historical period before the reform and opening to negate the historical period after the economic reform and opening."[110]

While Mao's Cultural Revolution policies have been rejected, among other reasons for the "feudal" worship of the leader at the expense of the party, the reaffirmation (and seemingly-meticulous pursuit) of collective leadership by overcoming factional divisions has not done away with the significance of the leader in defining the course of ideology, as should be evident from the additions since 1978, each of which is attached to the particular leader in charge, though without personal naming after Deng Xiaoping. More to the point is the insistence on "orthodoxy" even as "Chinese Marxism" has moved farther and farther away from its foundational premises. If orthodoxy is a sign of the religious, as Lagerwey suggests, it is arguable that the party

109 Alexander V. Pantsov, with Steven I. Levine, *Mao: the real story* (New York, 2012), p. 433.

110 Guangming Special Report: "'Liangge buneng fouding' de zhongda zhengzhi yiyi," *Guangming ribao*, guangming.net, 7 May 2013, http://politics.gmw.cn/2013-05/07/content_7538912.htm (consulted 16 May 2013).

has become not less but more religious as it has abandoned its socialist goals except in name.

"Fetishism of Concepts": Rhetoric of Secularism/Religion and Ideology[111]

The deployment of religion as a metaphor to underscore certain aspects of Communist Party ideology and practice is not intended to render the party into a religious organization and its ideology into ecclesiastical dogma, as Goossaert and Palmer recognize in their use of qualifiers such as "crypto" and "quasi" in their references to the party's "political religiosity". Yet, placing the party (or its secular predecessors in the 20th century) in a "religious" field opens up the possibility of slippage from metaphorical analogy to equivalence, especially in a so-called "post-secularist" intellectual environment where the search for religion in politics has become a political and cultural imperative. Recent work provides evidence of the importance for understanding Chinese politics and society of "return[ing] religion to the center of modern Chinese history."[112] The same move, however, also decenters secularism in a reversal of the secular-religious relationship. Its resonance with the contemporary turn to "post-secularism" raises questions about the ideology in scholarship that calls for closer scrutiny.[113]

Under the global hegemony of Euromodernity, the universalization of the nation-form and the epistemological primacy given to science in nation-building guaranteed the ascendancy of secularism, also redefining and limiting the realm of the religious intellectually, culturally, and politically. In crucial ways, religion was itself secularized, and still is in its continued service to politics, as well as in its subjection to the demands of scientific ways of knowing.[114] Nevertheless, the reassertion presently of cultural identities suppressed or marginalized under the regime of Euromodernity has

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111 In his comments on this essay, Thomas DuBois suggested that the discussion I offer below could be described as a critique of "the fetishization of concepts", which eloquently captures the underlying thrust of my analysis: that concepts which we utilize to make theoretical (or poetic) sense of social practice and experience are rendered into characteristics of the objects of practice or experience, and endowed with a life of their own. Hence my insistence on the metaphorical rather than the descriptive deployment of the concepts. I am grateful for his perceptive insight.

112 Goossaert and Palmer, *The religious question in modern China*, p. 5.

113 For a discussion by a distinguished sociologist and fierce defender of modernity, see Jurgen Habermas, "Notes on post-secular society," in "Secularism's crisis of faith," special issue of *New Perspectives Quarterly* (Fall 2008), 17–29. See also the analysis of the historical relationship between the religious and the secular, in the unfolding of Euromodernity, itself exemplary of "post-secularism", in Charles Taylor, *A secular age* (Cambridge, MA, 2007).

114 See Charles Taylor, *A secular age*, Introduction.

once again raised the issue of religion as an essential moment of cultural and political identity. This resurgence has inspired claims to the arrival of a "post-secular" society. If the secular is not shunted aside as a remnant of a declining hegemony, its substance is shown to be riddled with "religious" assumptions and practices of its own. Like postmodernism of which it is one more offshoot, post-secularism at its best raises questions about the validity of a binary opposition between the secular and the religious that has on occasion led to the political and cultural suppression of rights to religious practice; yet it has also opened the gates to an interpenetration of the two—an intellectual counterpart to the actualities globally of the social and political challenge of religion to secular political regimes. While this is celebrated as an expansion of the realm of freedom, it also raises disturbing questions about culture and politics. It is nearly impossible for analysis to avoid entanglement with the politics of culture, in essence, religion. What is of immediate interest here is an issue of conceptual significance it raises: the implications of the expansion of the realm of religion to invade the space of the secular.

The privileging of religion is most egregious in the reversal in critical discourses of a relationship as old as the history of Euromodernity between ideology and religion. Since the late 18th century, Euromodern critical discourses have subsumed religion under the concept of "ideology" as one ideological formation among others, but one that commanded particular significance as an ur-ideology in its claims to ultimate truth. As Karl Marx would put it, "the criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism."[115] Ideology as concept was itself entangled in the criticism of religion in its emergence. It has assumed in the long run the hopes and burdens associated with the latter as it came to refer both to visions of earthly salvation *and* to obstacles to their realization in beliefs and practices that alienated humans from their "species-being". Further, it kept hidden from them the real conditions of their existence. As it was historicized, religion appeared as one more ideology produced out of the social formations of the past, receding before the social and cultural forces of modernity, to be replaced by ideologies generated by the social and intellectual forces of the contemporary world.[116]

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115 Karl Marx, "Contribution to the critique of Hegel's philosophy of right. Introduction," in *Marx and Engels on religion*, introduction by Reinhold Niebuhr (New York, 1964), pp. 41–58, p. 41.

116 For interesting discussions of the emergence of ideology and its relationship to religion, see Jorge Larrain, *The concept of ideology* (London, 1979), and Donald R. Kelly, *The beginning of ideology: consciousness and society in the French Reformation* (New York, 1983). For a discussion of ideology in the analysis of religion in the Indian context, with special attention to Marxism, see Krishna Mohan Shrimali, "Religion, ideology and society," *Social Scientist* 16.2 (1988), 14–60.

A search would seem to be under way presently to rescue religion from its status as ideology, as well as to uncover the religious in ideologies that earlier sought to repress the religious for their alleged inconsistency with modernity. Conversely, religious traditions, superstitions and all, claim the authentic essence of cultural traditions. Thus Goossaert and Palmer write that "many historians of modern China have tended to follow Communist and/or nationalist historiography in considering the secularist narrative of China's modernization as a fact, whereas it now appears to be an ideological project."[117] There is good reason for pointing to modernization as an ideological project, and its main agent, the state, deserves close critical scrutiny for its assumption of the "civilizing mission" that has accompanied modernization. Nonetheless, it does not follow from the discovery of the ideological in modernity that the religious represented some kind of reality outside of the ideological, or that the modern critique of religion as ideology is therefore simply ideological and, by implication, false or misguided. It does not do the argument much credit to suggest misleadingly that "historians of modern China" have themselves been in the thrall of ideology because they have followed the Chinese states in pursuing a secularist narrative. It is also possible, to recall Mikhail Bakunin, to be against both God and the State without having to choose between one or the other. It might be intellectually more circumspect and plausible to concede that a currently emergent post-secularist ideology finds in a narrative of religion what modern-minded narratives found (and continue to find) in the progress of secularism.

Leaving aside for the moment the work by Harris, which belongs to another age and a different kind of discourse, recent efforts to "mainstream" religion in China have no doubt benefited, among other things, from the renewed visibility of religion in contemporary political and cultural life globally: the reassertion of native cultural traditions against Euromodernity as resources for alternative modernities and a multiculturalist populism anxious to rescue everyday beliefs and practices from the erasure they have suffered under the twin hegemonies of science and modernizing states.

The political and cultural implications of this turn are enormous, but so are its intellectual consequences in the privileging of "religion" as a category. The works cited above that focus most prominently on the state and religion over the issue of secularism suggest a functional equivalence between imperial Chinese religious legacies and religious institutions in general, and its secular successors under the Kuomintang and the CCP. Lagerwey refers to the party "functioning" like a church, while Goossaert and Palmer, who otherwise insist on the necessity of recognizing the secular production of religion, write nevertheless that "new forms of culture such as political utopianism, fill the functional space previously occupied by cosmologies rejected as religion or

117 Goossaert and Palmer, *The religious question in modern China*, p. 5.

superstition while consciously or unconsciously drawing on their symbolic resources."[118] Differences in substance receive no more than a passing glance in analogies between imperial rulers claiming cosmological legitimacy and the "sacralized" state resting similar claims on the people, or on utopian political promises. Religion is similarly privileged in the rhetorical analogy of party to church when the same analogy in reverse would carry very different implications. It is similarly so with the branding as "redemptive societies" of a variety of movements with mixes of political, cultural, and religious aspirations, effectively bringing religion to the foreground in their identification.

Studies of religion going back to William James and Emile Durkheim have recognized that religion and religious experience in their variety do not lend themselves to easy definition. Goossaert and Palmer wisely refrain from defining a historically complex phenomenon subject to ideological definition and appropriation. Yet, given the interdependency and even the porosity they recognize between the secular and the religious, it is difficult not to wonder what they have in mind when they state that "Chinese societies, in all their diversity, have never been totally secularized."[119] What would a "totally secularized" society look like, especially if the secular is so irresistibly infused with the religious? Are there any such "totally secular" societies? Do Goossaert and Palmer have in mind some limitation to the applicability of "religion" in their references to "quasi-religious" or "crypto-religious" in describing Communist Party practices?

The totalizing impulse for religion here reverses an earlier totalizing impulse that drove secularism. The difficulties it presents are many. How do we distinguish the religiosity of regimes claiming atheism from that of regimes that openly promote a religious politics? How do we distinguish the Communist Party from its competitors in the "redemptive societies" it views as superstitious and subject to suppression? Indeed, how do we distinguish the elements and episodes of religiosity in the history of the Communist Party itself when they assumed different levels of intensity at different times? Does the religious become meaningless in its extension over the whole ideological spectrum?

It seems to me that at a general level, virtually limitless numbers of analogies are possible, although not all may be apt or acceptable. It may be just as plausible to compare the Communist Party to a business corporation as to a church, to take one pertinent example among these possibilities. Analogies, moreover, cut both ways, or in the more elegant phrasing of Clifford Geertz, "the trouble with analogies—it is also

118 Ibid., p. 11. See also p. 167. A simpler version of this argument, communism as a response to the crisis of faith brought about by the discrediting of past beliefs, is to be found in C.K. Yang's seminal *Religion in Chinese society* (Berkeley, 1961), chap. XIV, "Communism as a new faith."

119 Ibid., p. 393.

their glory—is that they connect what they compare in both directions."[120] If we were to compare the Communist Party to a church, the likely effect would be to underline the secularism of the church (among other things) rather than the religiosity of the Communist Party. The same is the case with so-called "redemptive societies", where the use of "redemptive" foregrounds their religiosity rather than their commitment to nationalism, traditionalism, or whatever else. The particular representation chosen depends on what we wish to extract from the analogy. This takes us back to the ideology of the reader/interpreter.

While definitions may indeed be obstacles to historical analysis, it is important for these reasons to consider what it is about "religion" that distinguishes it as activity and subject of scholarship from other human realms of activity and study. In a discussion of the validity of analogies, Martin Seliger wrote that,

> In more than a strictly formal sense, it is a contradiction to talk about certain ideologies as "secular religions" . . . Religion is based upon the belief in God or gods, while the ideologies which have come to be called "secular religions" are atheist either in principle or in actual fact.[121]

Seliger believed that this did "not obliterate substantive and functional analogies between religions and secular belief systems,"[122] as analogy was at any rate based on recognition of difference. But it is equally important in the process of analogy not to "obliterate substantive and functional" differences lest analogy slip into identity. In the end, what would remain of religion without some sense not just of God or gods, as Seliger puts it, but more generally of some sense of the divine, holy, sacred, numinous, transcendental, immanent, other-worldly, supernatural, superhuman, or even of values imbedded deep within the individual psyche or a cultural system that are not readily visible except in its symbols and rituals? Unrestrained reading of religion into diverse social phenomena leads to something like what has been called the "Mannheim paradox", after Karl Mannheim, a seminal analyst of ideology: if everything is ideological, including "the sociology of knowledge", how can we ever know what is ideological—or, perhaps more pertinently, non-ideological![123]

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120 Clifford Geertz, "Blurred genres: the refiguration of social thought," in Geertz, *Local knowledge: further essays in interpretive anthropology* (New York, 1983), pp. 19–35, p. 27.

121 Martin Seliger, *The Marxist conception of ideology: a critical essay* (Cambridge, UK, 1977), p. 194.

122 Ibid.

123 Mannheim stressed the "situatedness", of knowledge, including "objectivity", with the result that "in the course of the progress of social knowledge, this element is ineradicable, and that, therefore, even one's own point of view may always be expected to be peculiar

Analogy as rhetorical strategy, like comparison in general, may suggest possible answers to a question, but it is most important for raising questions that demand new lines of inquiry. A classic example of metaphor such as "my love, a rose," does not foreclose questions about the lover's feelings any more than it means that the loved one is literally a rose. It begs the question, if poetry is uncouthly subjected to unpoetic analysis, of why rose is the preferred comparison, why the loved one should resemble a rose, and why the lover should think so. It would probably seem inappropriate or incongruous to refer to cultural revolutionaries in China, or even the Chairman himself, as a "rose", even though pink was the preferred color for their precociously photo-shopped depictions in contemporary representations. The choice of metaphor is contextual not only in its application but also in the reception of the message it is intended to convey. This is equally the case in the deployment of analogy as explanation.

The uses of analogy in the works cited above provide further illustrations of the problem. Maoism reminds Harris of dissident Christians, whereas Lagerwey is inspired to compare Mao's deification to that of a Song dynasty monarch a thousand years earlier; and while the one refers to dissident sects, for the other the comparison is with the established church, presumably the Catholic. The Weberian identification of religion with the cultural system raises the question of cultural essentialism.[124] Goossaert and Palmer argue (correctly, I think) that the "social ecology" of 20th century China transformed the meaning of received traditions, including the naming of some as "religion", whereas Lagerwey in his analogy leaves the impression, not uncommon among sinologists, that the past is not just one more consideration in understanding the present but provides a model for its comprehension. Each analogy imparts a different sense of the religious in 20th century secular politics. It is reminiscent of the story about the blind monks who each touched a different part of an elephant and, not surprisingly, came up with a different guess as to what it was.

As I noted above, within the limits of reasonableness, we extract from analogy what we wish to achieve by it in the first place: the analogy opens up new avenues of inquiry, but it also faces the predicament of circularity, of finding what one wishes to find. The problem begins with the idea of religion itself. Having convincingly demonstrated that "religion" was a Euromodern idea that in the 20th century invented a "religious field" in China, is there something problematic about turning around and further deploying the term in analysis as if it were an ontological reality of the given historical situation rather than one possible conceptualization of it among other, equally plausible, alternatives—unless in fact China has been so thoroughly transformed and shaped by this

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to one's own position." Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and utopia*: *an introduction to the sociology of knowledge*, tr. from the German by Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York, 1936), p. 300.

124 See also John Lagerwey, *China: a religious state* (Hong Kong, 2010).

field that no alternative (including past ones) is imaginable?[125] If so, what do we make of the continued presence of the past and the present, and how different constituencies in China have named themselves across such a temporal divide? What would be the implications of such differences for judging the place, status, and meaning of "religion" in a broader field in which such alternative naming is possible? It may be observed in defense of the authors that their usage is justified by the Chinese internalization of the concept of religion. In that case, rather than dismiss modernity as ideological, it is necessary to recognize that even in its repudiation, modernity—Euromodernity—provides the context for the discussion of religion as of other phenomena associated with "tradition".[126]

One plausible possibility, at least to this author, is to recall a guiding principle dear to anthropologists and historians but in a somewhat different sense than is usually attributed to it: not to override with our own interpretations (and analogies) the way the subjects of analysis see "their experiences within the framework of their own idea"[127] of what they might be up to, but to recognize in their ideas the limitations and reconfigurations of our own. If they see ideology (or, for that matter, superstition) where we see religion, the solution is not to dismiss their deployment of "ideology" as ideological, but rather (if we take their ideas as anything other than "false consciousness") to recognize the possibly ideological in our own deployment of religion.[128] This is not to

125 See Vincent Goossaert, "The concept of religion in China and the West," *Diogenes* 52 (2005), 13–20.

126 While she does not discuss this problem of the native assimilation of the European category of religion, Tomoko Masuzawa offers a cogent argument for the inescapable persistence of a Euromodern universalism as the grounds for discourses of religion in their very recognition of pluralistic particularity. See Masuzawa, *The invention of world religions: or, How European universalism was preserved in the language of pluralism* (Chicago, 2005), Introduction. In the case of China, this was the fundamental argument offered by Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and its modern fate: a trilogy* (Berkeley, 1968). This is also the approach taken by a recent work on Confucianism as religion. See Anna Sun, *Confucianism as a world religion: contested histories and contemporary realities* (Princeton, 2013).

127 Geertz, "'From the native's point of view': on the nature of anthropological understanding," in Geertz, *Local knowledge*, pp. 55–70, p. 59.

128 "Superstition" further illustrates the problem of the relationship of a concept to the reality it seeks to comprehend. Contemporary studies of religion eschew a distinction between "religion" and "superstition" because of the derogatory implications of the latter, but also, more fundamentally, because from a neutral "scientific" (or secular) perspective, the distinction does not make much sense. It is not that practices thus depicted have changed, but just that our intellectual and cultural attitudes toward them have. Indeed, what earlier generations depicted as "superstitions" are presently viewed by many as resources in confronting current social and ecological problems. Indigenous religious practices are a

share with them their illusions about themselves, to recall Marx, but to uncover what in our own "ways of seeing"[129] may lead us to see illusions in what they take to be their reality—or, indeed, what may be illusory about our own. If post-secularism is not to be an excuse for the invasion of the secular by religion (or vice versa), it seems necessary to view the relationship between the two not just in their inter-penetration but in their dialectical contradiction. The contradiction, I might add, is not abstractly intellectual but is quite visible in contemporary politics globally.

Revolution to Revitalization

As the various authors cited above readily acknowledge, the "religious turn" in the contemporary analysis of modern China needs to be placed in a broader global "religious field". Such a move reveals a more problematic relationship between the analyst and his/her discursive context as well as between the analyst and the Chinese subject than they concede—at least explicitly. But that is only one side of "the situational determination". The other side is equally if not more important. What is it about the contemporary Chinese situation—more specifically, the rule of the Communist Party, that makes the "religious turn" in its analysis not just possible but plausible?

One answer that seems to me to be of crucial interest is the post-revolutionary turn of the party that may well be described as a counterrevolution in terms of the party's relationship to its own and the broader Chinese past. Legacies dismissed until just two decades ago as ideological remnants of a "feudal" past, and still contested, have been revalorized as living products of a glorious national tradition, all the more appealing for its failure to specify the substantial content of such a tradition, which in reality was fraught with differences and contradictions and remains so.[130] It is arguable, as I have suggested above, that the relationship to the past was ambiguous from the initial formulation of "Chinese Marxism", and what the "counterrevolution" has done is to resolve the ambiguity by elevating those aspects of the past over others favored by its revolutionary predecessors. What it also has done is to reveal more cogently than ever before the ideological contradictions in "Chinese Marxism" that also find expression in the contradictory relationship of the party to its own ideology. Most relevant here are the three issues of the party's proletarian self-image, the relationship

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case in point. We nevertheless cannot ignore the perceptions of the Chinese state which are consequential not only intellectually but also politically. See Masuzawa, *The invention of world religions*, pp. 3–4. See, also, Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a cultural system," in Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays* (New York, 1973), pp. 193–233, pp. 199, 200. And the essays in James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds, *Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography* (Berkeley, 1986).

129 John Berger, *Ways of seeing* (London, 1973).

130 Goossaert and Palmer, *The religious question in modern China*, pp. 194–98.

of national to socialist goals, and the relationship to past legacies in the making of a new culture.

The issue of the proletarian self-image is one that the Communist Party has faced along with all other Bolshevik parties (which Harris conveniently ignores in his criticism of Maoism). It goes back to Lenin's diagnosis that revolutionaries knew better than workers how to make revolution, which was probably the case, but also signalled the alienation of the party from its own professed constituency. As is generally acknowledged in scholarship, in the case of the Chinese Communist Party, this alienation was deepened within the context of a rural revolution from the late 1920s in which the party had the most tenuous connection to the proletariat, and ended up with the substitution of party for class. This was more or less codified in "Chinese Marxism". Agrarian origins continued to overshadow the brief reunification with workers in the 1950s, which at any rate did little to change the party assumption of the prerogative of deciding what being a true worker meant, and the classification of workers according to those criteria. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which offered marginalized workers the political space for self-assertion, was nevertheless primarily a movement of youth mobilized to pursue goals set by Mao. The final break came in the 1990s when Jiang Zemin's "important thought of three represents" allowed admission into the party of newly-minted entrepreneurs, as the party was remade into the representative not of the proletariat and the peasantry, but of the "most advanced groups" in society, along with most advanced forces of production and culture. Over the past decade, the Communist Party has become the party of a new economic elite composed of party members and a new business class. The term class has in the meantime disappeared from political discourse when, as in other contemporary societies with their deepening social divisions, it is most needed. Yet, "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought-socialism with Chinese characteristics" remains the party banner, with no obvious relationship to the party's practice or its relationship to society at large. More than ever, it appears as a disciplinary ideology to secure the fragile unity of the party, but also, in its many transformations, to provide a sense of coherence in a situation of social and cultural incoherence—not just in society at large but within the party itself. It may be incongruous to describe the party in state power as a "cult", but the resemblance is not entirely fortuitous. The party's present, moreover, invites inevitable questions about cultic elements in its past as well that long were hidden from view by political success, and about its hegemonic prestige secured by the successful articulation of its ideology to the people at large—prestige presently on the wane.

The second issue is the nearly total identification of the party with the achievement of national wealth and power. This, indeed, is the most important tie binding the party to the people, and more significant than ever before in sustaining its legitimacy and hegemony. Nationalism all along was a fundamental motive force of revolution and the master code of "Chinese Marxism". Since the beginning of "reform and opening" in

1978, it has progressively been relieved of the socialist ideological encumbrances that had given the Communist Party its unique identity among competing nationalisms. This extended to the point where "socialism with Chinese characteristics" is nearly synonymous with an authoritarian bureaucratic capitalism, a more dramatically successful version of the once-maligned bureaucratic capitalism of the Kuomintang. During the same period, the PRC has gone from one of the most egalitarian to one of the most unequal (and elitist) societies in the world. Even so, while the Cultural Revolution has been repudiated, the militant nationalism it fostered is still very much alive. Interestingly, even as the PRC struts on the world stage as a rising power, it still maintains a siege mentality.

The nativization of ideology has proceeded apace. The "Marxism project" Hu Jintao sponsored, and which may yet be abandoned by his successor, went beyond simply finding a particular expression in China of a universal Marxism under Mao or even the initial formulation of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" under Deng Xiaoping to remake Marxism in the Chinese image, suggesting claims of "Chinese Marxism" to universality in a global age. It hinted at an almost literal rendering of "making Marxism Chinese."

More interesting has been the redressing of "Chinese Marxism" as an ideology of national salvation and regeneration, which became apparent under the Hu-Wen leadership. It has so far been an underlying theme of Xi Jinping's speeches, beginning with his inaugural addresses in November 2012.[131] Newfound economic and political power has not diminished but, on the contrary, intensified the sacralization of the nation. Over the last decade, but especially the last five years, the term *fuxing* 复兴 has acquired an increasingly prominent place in political and public discourse along with talk about a "China model", Chinese civilizational superiority, a new world order built around China, and so forth. *Fuxing* is a term with a long lineage in 20th century cultural and political discourse. It may be translated as renaissance, revival, rejuvenation, regeneration, revitalization, and other kindred terms. It was introduced into political discourse a hundred years ago, most prominently by the so-called "national essence" group, with the explicit sense of "renaissance" inspired by the European Renaissance. As the latter had drawn upon the past to give birth to modern Europe, China would draw upon "the West" to revive its ancient culture and secure a place in the modern world.[132]

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131 "Full text: China's new party chief Xi Jinping's speech," BBC News (15 November 2012), http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-20338586, consulted 9 April 2013. Checked against the Chinese original.

132 Arif Dirlik, "Guoxue/National Learning in the age of global modernity," *China Perspectives* 1 (2011), 4–13. See also Tze-ki Hon, "National Essence, National Learning, and culture: historical writing in *Guocui xuebao*, *Xueheng and guoxue jikan*," *Historiography East and West* 1.2 (2003), 244–86.

Finally, the relocation of revolution within the stream of Chinese history reverses the earlier location of China within universal history by a revolution that sought liberation not just from foreign hegemony, but also from its own past. The move has had significant cultural consequences. There was a cultural ambiguity in "Chinese Marxism" from the beginning. The Cultural Revolution, for all its contradictions, sought to resolve the ambiguity by an attack on all "feudal" remnants. Its own condemnation as "feudal" by Mao's successors opened the way to the restoration of the past which would gain in speed and intensity from the 1990s. As Goossaert and Palmer write,

> The ideological synthesis of Chinese socialism and traditional culture began with dispersed and hesitant efforts in the 1990s . . . By early 2000, however, it became an increasingly sophisticated and integrated effort. Hu Jintao's promotion of a "harmonious society," as well as the decision to enhance China's "soft power" as part of its geopolitical strategy, provided an even wider conceptual space and political opening for deeper connections between the official ideology and traditional culture, including its more religious aspects.[133]

Here, too, there was collusion between national and party interest. Religious practices were common among Chinese societies outside of the PRC. The Confucian resurgence had got underway in Singapore in the late 1970s, with a stress on its beneficent effects on economic development. Anxious to mobilize overseas "compatriots" in the cause of development, there were some clear material advantages in the party's support for the revival of traditional beliefs. It was also motivated in part by a perceived need for a substitute for the popular loss of faith in socialism and to restore the legitimacy severely compromised by the Tiananmen tragedy in 1989. The turn to tradition coincided in the 1990s with the decision to speed up the development of consumption values that would, hopefully, substitute the pursuit of economic ends for political concerns.[134]

The traditionalist turn has had benign consequences in freedoms given to the population to practise their convictions. But it continues to be marked by ambivalence on the part of the party, most evidently in the case of Confucianism, which is treated with

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133 Goossaert and Palmer, *The religious question in modern China*, pp. 197–98. For a more thorough discussion of efforts to articulate Marxism to "Confucianism", see John Makeham, *Lost soul: 'Confucianism' in contemporary Chinese academic discourse* (Cambridge, MA, 2008), chap. 11.

134 Arif Dirlik, "Confucius in the borderlands: globalization, the developmental state, and the reinvention of Confucianism," in Dirlik, *Culture and history in post-revolutionary China: the perspective of global modernity* (Hong Kong, 2011), pp. 97–155. For a recent discussion of the issue of religion as it relates to Confucianism, see Anna Sun, *Confucianism as a world religion*, note 126.

some suspicion at home even as it is paraded in Confucius Institutes abroad as the foundation of Chinese culture. Clichéd references to "5000 year old glorious tradition", while luring to unwary tourists, gloss over the difference between history in "China" and Chinese history—not to speak of relevance to a rapidly developing consumer society. Claims to "harmonious unity between humans and nature" 天人合一 as the essence of Chinese culture remain wishful thinking against the backdrop of an environmentally destructive development better described by the slogan inscribed at the Henan end of the Red Canal built under Mao during the Great Leap Forward of the late 1950s: "Conquer nature" 克复自然. It is no more convincing than Hu Jintao's slogan of a "harmonious society", which ignored the repression that went into the securing of harmony.

It would be a mistake, however, to dismiss these claims as mere masks for self-interest on the part of the party. Ideology does not serve only as a mask, but also points to a deeply-held world outlook. The reorientation is expressive of the ongoing effort to relocate the revolution within a narrative of national revolution. What is most interesting is the increasing resemblance of the party's ideological orientation (sacralization of the nation and the utopianization of the national narrative) to the "redemptive societies" of an earlier period that were dismissed in the past for their traditionalism or superstitious beliefs.[135]

The analogy may suggest that the party has finally found religion. It is intended here to foreground the political in "redemptive societies" that is obscured by the religious connotations of redemption. The bundling of religious, political, and cultural revival, motivated by quite secular if millennial ends, is more reminiscent of what Anthony Wallace half a century ago described as "revitalization movements". As he put it in the introductory paragraph to his seminal essay,

> Behavioral scientists have described many instances of attempted and sometimes successful innovation of whole cultural systems, or at least substantial portions of such systems. Various rubrics are employed, the rubric depending on the discipline and the theoretical orientation of the researcher, and on salient local characteristics of the cases he has chosen for study. "Nativistic movement", "reform movement", "cargo cult", "religious revival", "messianic movement", "utopian community", "sect formation", "mass movement", "social movement", "revolution", "charismatic movement" are some of the commonly used

135 For discussions of "redemptive societies", see Goossaert and Palmer, *The religious question in modern China*, chap. 4, and David A. Palmer, "Chinese redemptive societies and salvationist religion: historical phenomenon or sociological category?" *Minsu quyi* 172 (June 2011), 1–52. See also David Ownby's chapter in volume 2.

> labels . . . All these phenomena of major cultural-system innovation are characterized by a uniform process, for which I propose the term "revitalization."[136]

Wallace's argument was based on movements among Amerindians. Revitalization as a concept has enjoyed a revival in recent years, and is applied across a broad spectrum of movements in response to the resurgence of religion in global politics.[137] It would be misleading to describe these developments as a return to pre-secular politics (and religion) that did not clearly distinguish the religious and the political, as they contain much else besides, including nationalism and mass movement politics.[138] But post-secular politics is informed by, and bears much resemblance to its pre-Euromodern precedents.

In the Chinese case, the prominent use of the term *fuxing* suggests that what is at issue is not a return to the past but its revitalization and renovation in a new global situation. The means to this end are primarily economic, and the party has to prove its worth by a seemingly frantic pursuit of development. Developmentalism, or the fetishization of development, with all its religious overtones, is nevertheless a secular ideology imbedded within the history of capitalism. "Chinese Marxism" in its denouement has yoked itself to the service of achieving national wealth and power, restoring the greatness enjoyed during its imperial past, but also bringing in its wake all the ideological baggage of a past that did not recognize insurmountable divisions between culture, politics, religion, or society. Revitalization seeks to capture this complex holism that may be ideological wishful thinking, but is not therefore irrelevant to understanding the goals of the party or, for that matter, society at large. One important advantage it offers as concept is to bring the analytical discourse on religion into closer dialogue with the ideological self-image of the Communist Party and the utopian goals of "Chinese Marxism".

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136 Anthony F.C. Wallace, "Revitalization movements," *American Anthropologist*, New Series 58.2 (April 1956), 264–81, p. 264.

137 Richard Vokes, "Rethinking the anthropology of religious change: new perspectives on revitalization and conversion movements," *Reviews in Anthropology* 36 (2007), 311–33.

138 See Talal Asad, "Anthropological conceptions of religion: reflections on Geertz," *Man*, New Series 18.2 (June 1983), 237–59.