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The Specter of Failed Transition: Tocqueville and the Reception of Liberalism in Reform China

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Introduction: Towards “Chinese Perspectives on Tocqueville”

Discussing the political thinker and historian Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) and China together might appear paradoxical at first. After all, Tocqueville was highly critical of the strong state and centralized administration and he was a staunch defender of liberty. The People’s Republic of China, on the other hand, remains an authoritarian party-state averse to political liberalization. In addition, historically, dynastic China was mostly (*i.e.* during periods of unity) a centralized state marked by hierarchy and bureaucracy rooted in Confucian notions of the ideal moral and political orders. Nevertheless, both Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* (1835-40) and *The Old Regime and the Revolution* (1856) include references to China. In these works, China featured as a type of negative embodiment of the centralized state, a “symbol” (*emblème*) of its fullest realization.¹ One approach in scholarship on Tocqueville and China has hence been to analyze how Tocqueville referred to dynastic China. For example, also in this journal, Hiroshi Watanabe discusses Tocqueville’s mention of China in *Democracy in America* as a case of democratic despotism based on the latter’s notion of democracy as “equality of conditions.” This equality, Watanabe argues, existed in China in the form of, among others, the examination system and equality of partition in inheritance law.²

A second and rather different approach to Tocqueville and China has been to identify themes that make Tocqueville’s works relevant for the study of contemporary China, an approach we can refer to as “Tocquevillian perspectives on China.” Often, this falls under the broader category of studying Tocqueville “(...) to address contemporary problems of democratization across the globe.”³ An article worth mentioning in this respect is Ming Chong’s “Democracy in China: Tocquevillian Reflections,” which analyses prospects for democracy in China from the angle of Tocqueville’s writings.⁴ Following Tocqueville, democracy is understood as “a social state characterized by equality,” and in this sense, Chong argues, China is democratic.⁵ The author further argues that the reform era in China has been marked by the diffusion of equality and a swift individualization process. However, Tocqueville’s prerequisites for democracy as self-government and political liberty are absent in today’s China: grassroots democracy has its limits, there are no political associations, and the religious milieu is restrictive.

Another article that relies on this second approach and that is relevant for our purposes is James W. Ceaser's "Why Tocqueville on China?" In the article, Ceaser reads Tocqueville as "one of the first thinkers to treat two of the great themes that have preoccupied modern scholars of China: modernization and transition."⁶ He notes that Tocqueville foreshadowed comparative politics research on "democratic transitions" after the end of the Cold War. Ceaser further outlines the "basic factors of political analysis" in Tocqueville, namely the social state—broadly resembling what is referred to as "stage of development"—and the political regime. The democratic social state, which was a given for Tocqueville, not only contained economic aspects, but it was also the outcome of "the idea of equality." The political regime, on the other hand, was not fixed but, influenced by human action, could take the form of either freedom or authoritarianism. Applying this to China, we could then argue that China has entered the democratic social state under authoritarian rule. Following this line of analysis, scholarship has been preoccupied with the question of whether or not a transition to liberal democracy would occur in China.⁷

This article seeks to bring in a third approach, which can be summarized as "Chinese perspectives on Tocqueville." How has Tocqueville been read in contemporary China and why? The starting point of this inquiry is how Chinese intellectuals in China have interpreted Tocqueville during the period of reform and opening up (*gaige kaifang*), and more specifically after the end of the Cold War and the implosion of the Soviet Union, and then again following several decades of reform. To understand the concerns of Chinese intellectuals, it is worthwhile to refer to a relevant observation in Ceaser's article and how this applies in a Chinese context. Firstly, Ceaser reads Tocqueville's works as a "study of transition." Here, he distinguishes between "historical causality" or "knowledge of what will happen" and "logical causality" or "knowledge of what would be more likely to produce a certain result in any situation in which people act."⁸ Especially the last, Ceaser notes, was something dear to Tocqueville, who sought to uncover the factors that would benefit successful transition or failure. As "cases" from which a "general lesson" could be drawn, America represented the former, whereas France represented the latter.⁹

Firstly, this article posits that in the reception of Tocqueville in 1990s China, the word "transition" is vital. However, unlike in the above research where transition is limited to the political transition to liberal democracy, "transition" here stands for the risk of economic, social, and political "chaos" and the "failure" of reform after Tiananmen and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The reference to Tocqueville and other thinkers—liberals and conservatives alike—hence served to avoid the Soviet specter of a failed transition and domestic instability after Tiananmen. Some paradoxically invoked Tocqueville to argue against political liberalization in a broader discourse against the "peaceful evolution" agenda of the United States that threatened Communist regimes. Secondly, this article argues that Ceaser's "logical causality" aspect was significant in discussions in China because Chinese scholars debated "cases" such as the French "model" from which general lessons could be drawn for China. Here, the emphasis was also on those factors that could lead to political turmoil and hence threaten social stability. The exercise was not about accuracy, but about

demonstrating that China needed a strong state or gradualism to avoid a Soviet scenario. Hence, ironically, Tocqueville's criticism of the French "model" was often read to justify a strong state and to avoid political chaos. Here, two factors Tocqueville outlined in *The Old Regime and the Revolution* received attention in the discussion. The first was the paradox that reform could also lead to destabilization and popular uprising because the populace would have increasing expectations as reform unfolded. The second was the role of radical ideas in the creation of political chaos. In brief, in both cases, Tocqueville served as a reminder of the dangers involved in the reform process and this would continue in later references.

Thirdly, it is not an exaggeration to say that numerous intellectuals who brought up Tocqueville in 1990s China were all but experts on Tocqueville. *The Old Regime and the Revolution* and *Democracy in America* were part of a cluster of works that intellectuals interpreted selectively in relation to what they designated as French and English "models" of transition. In this context, Friedrich Hayek and Isaiah Berlin also featured as theorists of "types" or "models" of liberty. The French "model" operated as a negative counter-model that had led to the disaster of 1989, but also to the excesses of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The English "model," on the other hand, with which Tocqueville became associated (in spite of being French), was affirmed to promote gradualism, social stability, and a strong state. In the context of the early 1990s, liberty, so it went, had to be accompanied by order first. After discussing the reception of Tocqueville in 1990s China, the article analyzes the return of Tocqueville in official discourse in the 2010s. It argues that this latest revival equally needs to be interpreted in accordance with the perceived danger of "failed transition." However, the peril was now primarily considered to be not the premature expansion of political participation, but the rise of social inequality. In a final section, the article places the reception of Tocqueville in China against the broader background of the history of the reception of liberalism in China.

The Dangers of "Transition" and the Tocquevillian Paradox of Reform

With the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP in December 1978, China's move from class struggle to economic development was instated. This was justified ideologically with the formula of "practice as sole criterion of truth." Marxism was officially reinterpreted to substantiate reform practices, and early calls for political reform among intellectuals still occurred within a Marxist framework. During the 1980s, after the end of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese intellectuals reintroduced liberal ideas to China in the form of translations of Euro-American scholarship in the humanities and social sciences. The "New Enlightenment Movement" of the mid-to-late 1980s reworked certain themes of the early-twentieth century May Fourth Movement (1917-1921) in its emphasis on individualism and democracy, and in debates on "Eastern" and "Western" cultures, referred to as the so-called "culture fever."¹⁰ The 1980s was a period of modernization frenzy, and debates on democracy also occurred within the broader framework of how to modernize. In light of the preoccupation with "transition" and the Tocquevillian paradox of reform—or how reform could lead to

instability as its progress triggered demands for more reform—noteworthy are a series of debates on economic and political transition that commenced during the late 1980s.

These debates took place between advocates of immediate political reform and those, influenced by developments in East Asia (the rise of the so-called Mini Dragons, namely Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan), who advocated “neo-authoritarianism” (*xin quanwei zhuyi*). For advocates of neo-authoritarianism, before socioeconomic conditions were ripe, economic reform needed to be introduced under strong centralized rule.¹¹ To make this case, as Michael Sullivan has argued, Chinese intellectuals referred to Edmund Burke, Karl Popper, Alexis de Tocqueville, and Samuel Huntington. Burke was appealing because he advocated gradual change; Popper was invoked to criticize the utopianism of the Mao era; Tocqueville served to advocate against immediate political reform; and, finally, Huntington was brought in to promote strong rule and stability. According to the latter, modernization and reform could also lead to chaos and were in this respect no different from revolution.¹²

Although Huntington—and especially his *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968)—was prominent in debates on neo-authoritarianism, Tocqueville’s *The Old Regime and the Revolution* also made an appearance in discussions regarding economic and political transition. In an interview with Huntington on neo-authoritarianism in China, Pei Minxin, a critic of the theory and then a PhD student at Harvard University, asked Huntington:

The French thinker Alexis de Tocqueville once said that “the most dangerous moment in a bad government is when that government is attempting to improve itself.” Are there any dangers or unhealthy tendencies that you can see in the process of transition from a totalitarian system to a post-totalitarian system? More precisely, do you think it is possible [sic] for a society to revert to a totalitarian state? If so, what forces could motivate this reversion?¹³

Huntington’s response to this question was that the circumstances of each country mattered, but that the risk of reversion was probably higher in China because the Soviet Union had already advanced further on the path of political reform. Whereas critics of neo-authoritarianism such as Pei Minxin feared a regression to totalitarianism, advocates of the theory used Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* to advance the argument that China very much needed a “transitional” stage of neo-authoritarianism. For example, Wu Jiaxiang, an economist who called neo-authoritarianism “an express train to democracy,” invoked Tocqueville to highlight that China was different from countries that had progressed straight to parliamentary democracy:

As Alexis de Tocqueville put it, Americans were born equal and therefore did not have to worry about establishing equality. They can enjoy the fruits of the democratic revolution without bearing the burden of its anguish. Such a difference in historical development has made Americans oblivious to the problems that other countries have in establishing, in the course of modernization, an effective authority.¹⁴

Wu continued his discussion by arguing that the Federalists of the United States had, in fact, been “the new authoritarians” because they had been in favour of strengthening the federal government and of establishing a federal constitution. In fact, historically, neo-authoritarianism had grown out of several types of a “short-term democratic movement” which then eventually transformed into a political system.¹⁵ This argument for the postponement of political reform

was also present in the works of one of the main advocates of neo-authoritarianism, the Shanghai-based historian Xiao Gongqin (b. 1946). Xiao emphasized that a transitional stage of neo-authoritarianism was necessary to deal with the economic and social problems of reform. He also acknowledged that the crux of the matter was whether neo-authoritarianism would lead to democracy or to regression. To avoid the latter, Xiao placed emphasis on values and reiterated that the transition to democracy should not come too early. Structurally, contractual relations between people, social differentiation, pluralization, and the formation of a middle class were crucial elements in the transitional stage.¹⁶

The debate between advocates of democracy and advocates of neo-authoritarianism ended with the 1989 Tiananmen massacre, after which most of the discussants were forced to leave China. After this, the Tocquevillian paradox of reform loomed even larger. The Tiananmen crisis itself had been an outgrowth of the crises of economic reform, which included inflation, corruption, and the perception that the benefits of reform had not been shared by the majority of the population. When, in August 1991, hardliners in the Soviet Union plotted against Gorbachev's reforms in a failed coup, this caused wide reverberations in China. A document published by a group of conservatives in policy circles, entitled *Realistic Responses and Strategic Options for China after the Soviet Coup* discussed the negative effects of the economic "shock therapies" in the Soviet Union, which it deemed based on abstract grand designs disconnected from reality, and it argued for centralized and gradual reform instead.¹⁷ In this document, the attention to "transition" is further manifest in a reference to Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies*. The authors argued that popular movements should be avoided because, as Huntington had noted, reforms could be the precursor of revolution.¹⁸ For Huntington, political instability could occur amidst social change if political participation expanded too rapidly and before political institutions were in place.¹⁹ This document, together with the writings of Xiao Gongqin, advocated strong rule, stability, and the reliance on Chinese cultural elements in the transition process in the form of what became known as neoconservatism (*xin baoshou zhuyi*).²⁰ Overall, in this context, Tocqueville and others served to highlight the dangers involved in transition and the paradox of reform.

Radical Ideas and Lessons from the French and Anglo-American "Models"

With the implosion of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and renewed reform in China with Deng Xiaoping's Southern Tour in 1992, followed by the Fourteenth Party Congress in the same year, fears regarding failed transition and the Tocquevillian reform paradox took on new forms in official and intellectual discourse. The strong state argument lost ground under the influence of marketization after 1992. Akin to Tocqueville's distinction between the French and American "cases," Chinese intellectuals instead turned to a binary construction of French and English or Anglo-American "models" to call for gradual economic and political reform. The main broader concern in these discussions, however, remained with China's modernization trajectory.

Since introductions to and translations of Tocqueville's works had only made a renewed appearance in China during the late 1980s, references to Tocqueville became more widespread during the 1990s and after. In a 1991 article, the historian and liberal intellectual Xu Jilin (b. 1957) refers to a Chinese translation of *On Democracy in America* dating from 1988.²¹ In the article, Xu Jilin read Tocqueville from the angle of the overarching question of how to preserve "ultimate concerns" (*zhongji guanhuai*) during the modernization process. Modernization, Xu explained, was a process of secularization, which led people to place their ultimate hopes in secular values such as liberty, reason, progress, or wealth and power (*fuqiang*). In China, however, modernization had produced a crisis of meaning and "ultimate values" had perished during the twentieth century. Tocqueville, on the contrary, had praised Protestantism because it had not only preserved the unity of early modern American society, but it had also provided a value resource for modernization.²²

In a 1993 article, Tian Dwen argued that three points in particular merited attention in Tocqueville's *The Old System and the Revolution*. Firstly, Tocqueville objectively evaluated the meaning of revolution and paid attention to both its inevitability and accidental factors. Secondly, for Tocqueville, equality was more often harmful than beneficial in societies. Finally, Tocqueville highly praised liberty. Tian further argued that even though Tocqueville was often called "conservative" and grouped together with thinkers such as Burke, this was not the most suitable categorization. In fact, Hayek had avoided the term "conservative" altogether. In his *Individualism and Economic Order*, Hayek had argued that Smith, Burke, Tocqueville and others were "true liberals," whereas René Descartes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau were "false liberals." Tian argued that the main difference between these two groups of liberals was that the former were "realists" who believed in the limits of reason whereas the latter were "romanticists" who were convinced that progress could be obtained through the design of blueprints.²³

Tian's article is representative of a broader trend that developed in Chinese intellectual circles after 1989, namely the distinction between a "bad" French "model" and a "good" English "model" of liberalism. The former became associated with the trajectory of socialism in twentieth-century China, whereas the latter became identified with the proper path of reform. If we apply Tocqueville's "logical causality" concern and the quest for factors that were identified as helping the success or failure of "transition" in a broader sense, the first point that we can identify is the critique of radical thought during this period. More specifically, intellectuals denounced the tradition of "radicalism" (*jijin zhuyi*), the belief that progress could only be achieved through wholesale change, whether through revolution or utopian reform schemes. During the early 1990s, both conservative and liberal criticisms of a century of revolutionary and reformist radicalism spread throughout academia. This denouncement of revolution culminated in the publication of Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu's *Gaobie Geming* (Farewell to Revolution) in 1995.²⁴ In a series of debates on the radicalism of the twentieth century, liberals and conservatives alike denounced the radical moments in modern Chinese history, the foremost among which were the Revolution of 1911, the May Fourth Movement, the

Communist Revolution, the Cultural Revolution, and the so-called “New Enlightenment Movement” of the 1980s mentioned above.²⁵

This evaluation of radicalism was conducted by way of the juxtaposition of two “models.” As in Tocqueville’s own analysis, these models served to draw “general” lessons about transition. Chinese intellectuals availed themselves of Hayek’s distinction between the “French” tradition of liberty, which was based on Cartesian rationalism and a belief in freedom as the goals of a grand collective purpose, and the “British” tradition, which was based on empiricism, cumulative growth, and a belief in freedom in the absence of coercion. Furthermore, according to Hayek, whereas change was enforced in the French tradition, it was realized through trial-and-error in the British tradition.²⁶

Besides, Chinese intellectuals debated these models in relation to Isaiah Berlin’s notion of “negative” and “positive” liberty. In “Two Concepts of Liberty,” Berlin had distinguished between “positive” and “negative” freedom, or, put simply, freedom to act and freedom from interference. For Chinese intellectuals, “negative freedom” came to stand for the “British” tradition and gained influence after Tiananmen, the implosion of the Soviet Union, and, consequently, reflections on the legacy of socialism. In addition, the legacy of the Cultural Revolution served to reject popular sovereignty. The emphasis on negative liberty was hence the product of a fear of chaos in relation to the fall of the Soviet Union, the events in Eastern Europe, Tiananmen, and relations with Taiwan. Positive liberty and “popular sovereignty”, on the other hand, were connected with the tradition of Rousseau, the Russian Revolution and the French Revolution and condemned by many liberals. The Rousseau strain came under attack in the 1990s with the denouncement of revolution and utopianism and the ideal of the perfectibility of man in Rousseau. A well-known example of this critique of Rousseau during the reform era can be found in the writings of the liberal Zhu Xueqin (b. 1952), who drew parallels between the French Revolution and the Cultural Revolution.²⁷

This Chinese reading of “British” liberalism was however a reductionist and ideal type interpretation based on the primacy of orderly transition. Some Chinese scholars also referred to this as “conservative liberalism” (*baoshou ziyou zhuyi*), which shows that it was a liberalism *sui generis*.²⁸ In this reductionist scheme, the French Revolution became equated with the socialist tradition, whereas the English “model,” informed by the Glorious Revolution (1688-89) and drawing on Chinese readings of Burke, Hayek, Tocqueville, and Popper, underscored gradual reform and negated direct democracy. Criticism of “rationalism” as idealism had initially been paired with advocacy of a strong state against the background of Tiananmen and the collapse of the Soviet Union. After renewed reform in 1992, the threat was perceived to be French “rationalism” and the path from Rousseau to socialism. Saying goodbye to Rousseau was hence also an accusation of socialist state power and a resort to the market as the initiator of both new individual freedom and order. The reading of Tocqueville in this framework was hence that he had argued that the French Revolution had failed to establish liberty, as revealed in both his *Democracy in America* and *The Old Regime and the Revolution*. Even for Hayek, Tocqueville was closer to the British tradition than to the French tradition.²⁹

The discussion was very vast in scope and cannot be rendered in detail here, so we will zoom in on a few examples. Firstly, for the emphasis on “negative liberty” and the English or Anglo-American “model,” we need to bring up Gan Yang (b. 1952), a key figure in the 1980s New Enlightenment Movement. In a 1991 article in *Ershiyi shiji* (Twenty-first Century), Gan Yang found fault with the May Fourth Movement and its backing of “democracy and science.” May Fourth represented the French revolutionary model, which had led to disastrous effects. Instead, Gan defended what he referred to as “liberty and order.”³⁰ Bringing up Hayek and Berlin, and also reminiscent of Tocqueville, Gan Yang argued that the French revolutionary model did not know liberty, as opposed to the Anglo-American constitutional model of “liberty and order.” Gan also referred to Isaiah Berlin’s famous essay “Two Concepts of Liberty” to repudiate the “positive” freedom of the French revolutionaries and Rousseau, which he connected to the Communist Revolution.³¹

Similarly, in a 1992 article, the philosopher Li Zehou wrote about John Locke, Karl Popper, Edmund Burke, Alexis de Tocqueville, and Friedrich von Hayek together as sources of inspiration. He noted, however, that he had made the distinction between a French and English “model” as early as 1978. According to Li, the early reformer and translator Yan Fu (1854-1921) had reinterpreted British liberalism, which valued individual liberty and competition. The French liberal tradition that emphasized equality, on the other hand, had inspired Chinese revolutionaries. Condemning violent revolution and praising the “rationality” of the English “model,” Li argued that liberty was the product of the accumulation of experience and that the rule of law was a gradual process. Li did, however, also note that many discussions on democracy at the time were too abstract in nature and that more thorough research on the writings of thinkers such as Tocqueville was needed.³² As noted above, even though the prominence of statism declined in the years after renewed reform in 1992, liberalism nevertheless remained connected with procedural change—from economic reform to the creation of a middle class, the rise of civil society, and finally, political reform—and the primacy of economic reform in debates that took place in the aftermath of Deng’s renewed reform.

In another example from the second half of the 1990s, Tao Dongfeng, a professor of literary studies in the Chinese Department of Capital Normal University in Beijing, made mention of Tocqueville in relation to “conservative liberalism.”³³ Tao argued that thinkers such as Burke, Tocqueville, and Hayek had supported a conservative liberalism. In China, however, conservatism had often joined hands with cultural nationalism, whereas liberalism had merged with radicalism and anti-traditionalism. This had been the case, he argued, because Chinese intellectuals had wrongly been affected by the tradition of radical individualism and the direct democracy of French liberalism. Tao had a more positive evaluation of conservative liberalism, which stood for continuity and gradual reform, which recognized the limits of reason, and which envisioned a union of order and liberty.³⁴

Whereas Gan Yang had earlier embraced the English “model” at the expense of the French “model,” he later revised his position and instead became more preoccupied with social inequality. At the same time, he also became increasingly influenced by the works of Leo

Strauss and the tradition of statism. Drawing on Tocqueville, Gan now understood liberalism as equality and mass political participation and made a distinction between “aristocratic” and “populist” liberalism. He came to advocate a Euro-American liberalism that linked to the New Left and, among others, John Rawls.³⁵ In a 1999 article in which he drew heavily on Tocqueville, Gan criticized the conservatism and liberalism of 1990s China because of its fixation on economic liberty, whilst ignoring democracy and equality.³⁶ Like Tocqueville, he also denounced the Glorious Revolution of 1688 because the latter represented a premodern and “aristocratic” liberalism that only had local significance. Gan referred to the problem of the transition of aristocratic liberalism to democratic liberalism as the “Tocqueville problem.”³⁷ Gan also argued for a critique of the French Revolution that did not reject it wholeheartedly, as Burke had done, but that evaluated it from the side of the revolution, just like Tocqueville had stood on the side of democracy to evaluate democracy.

Gan further explained that, according to Tocqueville, many people in Europe believed that democracy had to be accompanied by chaos because it required the eradication of the aristocracy. By focusing his observations on America, on the contrary, he could demonstrate that chaos only occurred during a transitional stage and was not part and parcel of democracy. However, this did not imply that Tocqueville presented democracy as being perfect; he argued that the arrival of the “modern” democratic era was unavoidable and he also elaborated on the complexities surrounding its arrival. For Tocqueville, modern democracy was about “equality of conditions,” and in this we discern the influence of Rousseau.³⁸ Finally, returning to Berlin’s “positive” and “negative” liberty, and drawing on Benjamin Constant’s notions of “ancient liberty” (freedom of political participation) and “modern liberty” (freedom of private life), Gan argued that instead of the emphasis on “negative liberty” in 1990s China, Constant had advocated a balance between the two. For Constant, both “overpoliticization” and “overprivatization” constituted dangers of modern freedom.³⁹ As we can see, under conditions of growing inequality, Gan’s reading of liberalism and Tocqueville evolved to a critique of *laissez-faire* economic reform and of liberalism as the protection of the rights of the privileged.

The Re-Emergence of Tocqueville in the 2010s

Some of Gan’s uneasiness with mounting social inequality resurfaced in later readings of Tocqueville. Two decades after discussions of radicalism through the French and English “models,” Tocqueville made another comeback in China when his *The Old Regime and the Revolution* became recommended reading amongst officials. This revival was yet again connected to fears of “failed transition,” but the main danger was now perceived to be the rise in social inequality after several decades of reform. In addition, the statism that had been advocated during the early 1990s by neoconservatives had now become part of the New Leftist agenda, with several liberals opposing its return. In addition, whereas the liberals’ advocacy of the Anglo-American model had in fact further eroded legitimacy, the New Left emphasized the socialist legacy and state power.⁴⁰ In the wake of the Eighteenth Party Congress in November 2012, Tocqueville’s work stirred interest when economist Hua Sheng tweeted about a meeting

with his “old leader” who recommended reading Tocqueville because China would not “modernize all that smoothly.”⁴¹ This “old leader” was Wang Qishan, the Vice-Premier under Wen Jiabao, Politburo Standing Committee member and a key figure in Xi Jinping’s anti-corruption campaign. In November 2013, when Wang became secretary of the CCP’s Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the book became required reading for officials.⁴²

In an article in *Renmin ribao* (People’s Daily) that appeared in early 2013, entitled “Why does Wang Qishan recommend *The Old Regime and the Revolution?*,” the author explained that the epoch of the French Revolution was very similar to that of China during the reform era in terms of social complexities and the intensification of social contradictions.⁴³ Whereas, during the early 1990s, the French Revolution had been considered an example of rationalist radicalism, now it was described as pursuing *social equality*, liberty, and order:

The democratic political practice of the French Revolution, in pursuing social equality, whilst not sacrificing liberty and order, tells us that when facing the disparity between the ideal order and the real order, people should preserve reason; reform requires boldness and cautiousness.⁴⁴

To convey the primacy of social justice, the author referred to the Communiqué of the 18th National Congress of the CCP, held in November 2012, and to the significance of “scientific development.” Hence, whereas Huntington had warned that revolution could occur under modernization because of an “explosion of participation,” now, the risk factor was considered to be social inequality.

Here, it is useful to bring in Cheryl B. Welch’s observations on this phenomenon in this journal. She rightly argues that we should move beyond understandings that Chinese officials “misunderstood” Tocqueville because the central aspect of liberty is neglected in their reading of *Old Regime*. Instead, she argues, Tocqueville’s work is also about “three fateful challenges” that kings and ministers ignored, by which they neglected to make the old regime stable and hence “(...) hastened their own demise.”⁴⁵ The three “fateful challenges” that Welch outlines are: the legitimacy crisis and the crisis of values; the seeming disinterest in those at the bottom of society who were left out from the new social order; and, finally, the government’s lack of adequate response to those who did benefit from the new social order, but who felt like they did not receive what they deserved.⁴⁶

These three issues were crucial to reform in China. Firstly, the legitimacy crisis had been a challenge since the beginning of the reform era, strengthened by the Tiananmen massacre and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. In addition, since legitimacy was based on economic performance, slower economic growth was a direct threat to legitimacy. Also, as can be seen from Xu Jilin’s article on Tocqueville, the crisis of values under modernization had already preoccupied Chinese intellectuals decades earlier. Secondly, Chinese leaders had become aware of social inequality and had started to attend to rural problems, as reflected in policy priorities. Thirdly, one of the causes of Tiananmen had precisely been the discernment that the middle class had not benefited from the reforms. Corruption and privilege had limited faith in the economic reforms. It is no coincidence that these three issues later also received more consideration under Xi Jinping in the form of the revival of Marxism, populist rhetoric, and a

series of drastic anti-corruption campaigns. In brief, Tocqueville's insights on the relation between social transition and revolution remained highly relevant for China in the 2010s.

Some Historical Perspectives on Liberalism in China

Coming back to Welch's call to move beyond arguments about Chinese "misunderstandings" of Tocqueville, how should we interpret Chinese readings of Tocqueville? To answer this question, this section discusses the reception of liberalism in China and similar debates about Chinese "misinterpretations" of liberalism. In his book on Chinese modernity in Republican China, Edmund Fung argues that there is no single strand of liberalism and that we similarly find different strands of it in China. Fung argues for a "historicist approach" to liberalism in Republican China and analyzes it in relation to foreign encroachment, the end of the monarchy, the breakdown of the Republic, Enlightenment ideas, nationalism, and state building. In addition, he argues that we should factor in "Confucian heritage" in the reception of liberalism in China.⁴⁷

The interpretation of liberalism in China also differed from the European experience because both "clericalism" and the Industrial Revolution were absent. In addition, liberalism joined forces with nationalism and received the influence of social Darwinism and evolution theory. Instead of drawing on natural rights or ancient rights, the Chinese claim to liberalism "(...) was grounded in ideas of individual emancipation from the fetters of the Confucian tradition, especially of the family; in national survival; in cultural regeneration; and in political and social change".⁴⁸ Relying on Chinese scholarship, Fung further argues that Chinese liberals skipped the "laissez-faire phase" of classical liberalism because it was deemed to be conflicting with the Chinese emphasis on community. Instead, they turned to the "modern or state liberalism of nineteenth-century Europe," followed by "the New Liberalism of early-twentieth century England," and then "the social democratic ideology of Western Europe."⁴⁹

Fung distinguishes between three "generations" of liberals in the Republican period, with the first generation being situated in the late Qing dynasty, the May Fourth generation being the second generation, and the third generation, often influenced by Harold Laski, emerging during the early 1930s.⁵⁰ The Chinese liberal and historian Xu Jilin has further argued that this liberalism concerned with social justice was not only influenced by Harold Laski, but also by John Dewey, the teacher of the May Fourth liberal Hu Shi (1891-1962), who also spent two years in China.⁵¹ Zheng Dahua further notes that the "first" generation of liberals, including Yan Fu and Liang Qichao (1873-1929), drew on the classical liberalism of John Locke, Adam Smith, and John Stuart Mill. The "second" generation, on the other hand, consisting of, among others, Hu Shi, and Zhang Junmai (1887-1969), was attracted by the theories of John Dewey and Harold Laski.⁵²

If we turn to this "first" generation, noteworthy was Yan Fu, the first Chinese translator of a range of liberal works, including Mill's *On Liberty* (1859). Among other works, Yan Fu was also the translator of Thomas H. Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* (1893), and of Herbert Spencer's *The Study of Sociology* (1873). As Fung rightly indicates, the context in which

liberalism was received was that of the influx of Western knowledge against the background of foreign intrusion after the first Opium War (1839-1842). Amidst crisis and fears that China was to be carved up by foreign powers, efforts at military, technological, institutional, and educational “self-strengthening” followed. Liberalism became interpreted against the background of the concern with the survival of the nation. Consequently, scholars have debated the question of the relation between the individual and the group or collective—society, the nation, or the state—in the reception of liberalism in China.

For example, in his well-known study of Yan Fu’s introduction to liberalism in China, Benjamin Schwartz has argued that Yan Fu’s interpretation of liberalism served the goal of national wealth and power (*fuqiang*).⁵³ According to Charlotte Furth, Yan Fu read “individualism” as the driving force behind Western civilization in a process of the struggle for survival between societies. Overall, Yan Fu understood European liberalism “(...) in ways which pointed to a natural complementarity between self-assertive individual action and the needs of the social organism.”⁵⁴ Similarly, Furth argues that the reformer Liang Qichao, also a member of the “first” generation for Fung, who studied English liberalism through Japanese scholars, argued for the moral cultivation of a “new people” (*xinmin*). His reading of liberty was also a trait of Darwinian fitness, and for him, “people’s rights” (*minquan*) were more akin to “effective capabilities” or “power” (*quanli*). Hence, like Yan, Liang equally “(...) pointed the liberated individual in this same collectivist direction.”⁵⁵

Debates on the relation between the individual and the group in the reception of liberalism in China have also gravitated around the role of Chinese tradition and intercultural exchange. Well-known in this regard is Max Ko-wu Huang’s book on Yan Fu’s interpretation of Mill, which challenged Benjamin Schwartz’s interpretation of Yan Fu as merely seeking to adjust liberalism to Chinese nationalist needs of wealth and power.⁵⁶ Instead, Huang argues, the process was one of “(...) partly grasping Mill’s ideas, partly misunderstanding and projecting onto them indigenous Chinese values, and partly criticizing or rejecting them.”⁵⁷ Huang argues that Yan Fu did acknowledge the individual, but he failed to grasp what Huang refers to as the “epistemological pessimism” in Mill, or pessimism regarding the human ability to obtain truth, and his focus on “negative freedom” (the protection of rights and liberties).⁵⁸

Instead, Yan Fu read liberalism as “positive freedom”—participation and the free pursuit of individual interests. His liberalism combined a view of morality embedded in Confucian values with Western institutions. Huang also argues that the “epistemological optimism” in Chinese thought led Chinese thinkers to embrace Rousseau instead of Mill. Elsewhere, Huang also states that Chinese liberalism was idealistic and utopian; that it was marked by elitism or the belief that enlightened intellectuals could transform society; and that it rejected individualism and instead emphasized the balancing of group and individual. Huang attributes the latter to Confucianism and debates on public (*gong*) and private (*si*). An interesting point that Huang further makes is that thinkers such as Rousseau and Karl Marx became popular in China because they were “Western” thinkers critical of the West. Especially after World War One, these thinkers were invoked to reject the Western path to modernity.⁵⁹

What does this mean for the reception of Tocqueville in reform China? Concurring with Feng, we could say that Chinese intellectuals reinterpreted liberalism according to the changing needs of the time. After Tiananmen and the end of the Cold War, this meant an overriding concern with stability and statism. Participants in the debates about the French and Anglo-American “models” of the 1990s mostly blamed the May Fourth generation for wrongly taking the “radical” path of the French “model.” Instead, they advocated a partial return to the “statist” tradition of the first generation after May Fourth, but this was combined with references to classical liberal thinkers. After 1991, this advocacy for statism evolved into calls for gradual reform grounded in “realism” rather than the “idealism” and utopianism that had marked China’s twentieth-century trajectory. Following the adoration of collectivism à la Rousseau, now, classical liberalism made a return, but it still became partly reinterpreted in line with the national priorities of modernization and social stability. After the mid-1990s, however, as exemplified by Gan Yan’s writings, interpretations of liberalism show a renewed attention to social justice.

In spite of the adjustment of “liberal” themes to the changing Chinese context, this does not mean that liberals in China did not care about issues “inherent to the liberal political tradition,” such as individual rights, the rule of law, or democracy.⁶⁰ Already during the late nineteenth century, Chinese scholars who had been exposed to liberalism went through great lengths to find equivalents of Western liberalism in Chinese tradition to show that China had already known concern with these issues in ancient times.⁶¹ Part of the argument against Rousseau and the “French” tradition also served to protect the individual from state interference. Hence, although Tocqueville and other liberals were certainly subjected to a statist reading, later interpretations also contained a critique of collectivism and “overpoliticization.”

Overall, Tocqueville attracted attention in 1990s China as part of a renewed interest in classical liberalism. According to the liberal Liu Junning (b. 1961), historically, Chinese liberals had taken inspiration from “collectivists” rather than “individualists.” Hence, those invoked during the first half of the twentieth century had been thinkers such as Rousseau or contemporaries such as Dewey or Laski rather than “classical liberals” such as Tocqueville. In addition, like other intellectuals, Liu argues that they linked themselves intellectually to the French rather than the American and Glorious Revolutions.⁶² In 1990s China, on the contrary, after the end of the Cold War and the “end of history,” Liu argues that liberals sought to differentiate themselves from the liberalism of the 1930s and 1940s and instead turned to classical liberalism. Consequently, translations of the works of, among others, Tocqueville, Popper, Hayek, Berlin spread during this period.⁶³

Although Liu is right in noting the renewed interest in classical liberalism and individualism in 1990s China, we should probably add that especially the “first” generation of Chinese liberals had also been drawn to “classical” liberals such as Locke, Smith, and Mill. However, as discussed above, in the process of interpretation and amidst the concern with national survival, the attention had shifted to the state and the relation between the individual and the collective. The reception of Tocqueville in reform China was nevertheless a response

to the history of liberalism in China and a return to what some perceived as the “neglected” Anglo-American tradition. Although this distinction between the two liberal traditions was reductionist and did not suit the complex reality of the reception of liberalism in China—Fung rightly notes the relevance of developments in Russia, the differences between British and American influence, or the impact of German thought on some Chinese intellectuals—intellectuals employed this bifurcated scheme to argue for gradual “realistic” reform after the end of the Cold War and decades of drastic change rooted in utopianism and collectivism.⁶⁴

Concluding Remarks: Continuities and Calls for “Realism”

Whereas existing approaches to Tocqueville and China primarily address the question of democratization in China, this article has instead proposed the approach of “Chinese perspectives on Tocqueville.” Drawing on Ceaser, this denotes references to Tocqueville in post-1989 China in the face of the specter of “failed transition” and as part of an advocacy of an Anglo-American transition “model.” The article has highlighted two relevant aspects here, namely firstly, the Tocquevillian reform paradox and the fear of instability and, secondly, the rejection of radical ideas and the identification of “models” for a successful transition. The first led Chinese intellectuals to pair Tocqueville with thinkers such as Huntington to argue for a strong state in discussions on neo-authoritarianism and later neoconservatism. As reform unfolded, Tocqueville became part of an argument for the primacy of economic reform. Although statism was now exchanged with the belief in the market, for many, the key question remained that of the nation’s modernization. Secondly, the rejection of radical ideas occurred in the form of a dichotomy between French and English “models” and the advocacy of a conservative liberalism that combined liberty with order. For this, Chinese intellectuals drew on Hayek’s distinction between two traditions of liberty, as well as on Berlin’s distinction between positive and negative freedom. From the mid-1990s onwards, however, intellectuals such as Gan Yang invoked Tocqueville to advocate for a more democratic order with growing inequality under reform. When Tocqueville’s popularity rose once more in the face of the fear of instability in the 2010s, the context was one of increasing social inequality.

As the brief detour of the history of the reception of liberalism in China reveals, intellectuals interpreted it based on the changing needs of the times, but this does not mean that they did not value “general” liberal themes, as Fung has argued for the Republican period. Given that we cannot only distinguish between, but also within “generations,” we should note that the readings of Tocqueville described here are but one changing manifestation of *liberalisms* in China. After 1989, the renewed interest in “classical” liberalism once more became connected with the preoccupation with a strong state. However, with the end of the Cold War, this made room for more varied readings of thinkers such as Tocqueville, including a critique of “statist” and “collective” liberalism à la Rousseau. Nevertheless, even advocates of a return to “classical” liberalism such as Liu Junning still connected it to a belief in order. Finally, as we have seen, Tocqueville could also be invoked to argue for more social justice or to link social stability to social equality. Hence, in spite of the renewed popularity of “classical”

liberalism, traces of the various “generations” of liberalism in its contemporary interpretations remain, be it in the form of state liberalism, New liberalism, or social democracy. The one trait of liberalism that appeared to have diminished since the 1990s is that of idealism. Indeed, in the words of Tian Dewen, “true liberals” were “realists.”

Notes

1] James W. Ceaser, “Why Tocqueville on China: An Introductory Essay,” American Enterprise Institute, 2010. <https://www.aei.org/publication/why-tocqueville-on-china/>

2] Hiroshi Watanabe, “The French, Meiji and Chinese Revolutions in the Conceptual Framework of Tocqueville,” *The Tocqueville Review/La Revue Tocqueville*, vol. 38, no 1, 2017: 63-79.

3] Cheryl B. Welch, “Comments on Ming Chong, ‘Democracy in China: Tocquevillian Reflections,’” *The Tocqueville Review/La Revue Tocqueville*, vol. 38, no 1, 2017: 113-119.

4] Ming Chong, “Democracy in China: Tocquevillian Reflections,” *The Tocqueville Review/La Revue Tocqueville*, vol. 38, no 1, 2017: 81-111.

5] *Ibid.*, 82.

6] James W. Ceaser, “Why Tocqueville on China: An Introductory Essay,” *op. cit.*

7] *Ibid.* On this discussion, see for example Andrew J. Nathan, “Authoritarian Resilience,” *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 14, no 1, 2003: 6-17. For a recent addition to this discussion, see Joseph Fewsmith and Andrew J. Nathan, “Authoritarian Resilience Revisited: Joseph Fewsmith with Response from Andrew J. Nathan,” *Journal of Contemporary China* vol. 28, no 116, 2019: 167-179.

8] *Ibid.*

9] *Ibid.*

10] On this, see Jing Wang, *High Culture Fever: Politics, Aesthetics, and Ideology in Deng’s China*, Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996.

11] The main texts of this debate are collected in Liu Jun and Li Lin, eds. *Xin quanwei zhuyi: Dui gaige lilun gangling de lunzheng* (Neo-authoritarianism: Debates on the Theoretical Reform Program). (Beijing: Beijing jingji xueyuan chubanshe, 1989).

12] Michael J. Sullivan, “The Impact of Western Political Thought in Chinese Political Discourse on Transitions from Leninism, 1986-1992,” *World Affairs*, vol. 157, no 2, October 1994: 86-87.

13] Pei Minxin, “A Discussion on Authoritarianism with Samuel Huntington, the Pioneer of the Theory of Authoritarianism,” *Chinese Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 23, no 4, Summer 1991, 71-72. Originally published in *Shijie Jingji Daobao* (*World Economic Herald*), 27 March 1989.

14] Wu Jiaxiang, “The New Authoritarianism: An Express Train Toward Democracy by Building Markets,” *The Chinese Debate on the New Authoritarianism*, eds. Stanley Rosen and Gary Zou, *Chinese Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 23, no 2, Winter 1990-1991: 42.

15] *Ibid.*

16] Xiao Gongqin, “Quanwei yu minzhu: Hou fazhan guojia xiandaihua de liangnan xuanze” (Authority and Democracy: A Dilemma for the Modernization of Late Developing Countries), *Xiao Gongqin ji* (Collected Works of Xiao Gongqin) (Ha’erbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 1995), 42-52.

17] *Zhongguo qingnianbao* sixiang lilunbu (China Youth Daily Ideology and Theory Department). “Sulian zhengbian hou Zhongguo de xianshi yingdui yu zhanlue xuanze (Realistic Responses and Strategic Options for China after the Soviet Coup). *Zhongguo zhi chun* (China Spring), no 1, January 1992: 35-39.

18] Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

19] *Ibid.*, 6.

20] On Xiao Gongqin’s understanding of “neoconservatism,” see for example his “Dangdai Zhongguo xin baoshou zhuyi de sixiang yuanyuan” (“The Intellectual Origin of Contemporary Chinese Neoconservatism”). *Ershiyi shiji* (Twenty-first Century), no 40, April 1997: 126-135.

21] Tuokewei’er, *Lun Meiguo de minzhu* (Democracy in America), 2 vols. trans. Dong Guoliang (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1988).

22] Xu Jilin, “Zhongji guanhuai yu xiandaihua: Du Tuokewei’er zhuzuo shugan” (Ultimate Concerns and Modernization: Impressions upon Reading de Tocqueville’s Work), *Dushu* (Reading) 1991.1: 15-23.

23] Tian Dewen, “Tuokewei’er de qishi: You ‘Jiu zhidu yu da geming’ tanqi” [de Tocqueville’s Enlightenment: Speaking from The Old System and the Revolution], *Ouzhou* (Europe) 1993, no 5: 53-55.

24] Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu. *Gaobie geming: Huiwang ershi shiji Zhongguo* (Farewell to Revolution: Looking Back at Twentieth-century China) (Hong Kong: Tiandi tushu youxian gongsi, 1995).

25] For the main articles in this debate, see Jiang Yihua, “Jijin yu baoshou: Yu Yü Ying-shih xiansheng shangque” (Radicalism and Conservatism: A Discussion with Yü Ying-shih), *Ershiyi Shiji* 10 (April 1992), 134-142; Yü Ying-shih, “Zailun Zhongguo xiandai sixiang zhong de jijin yu baoshou: Da Jiang Yihua xiansheng” (Again on Radical and Conservative in Modern Chinese Thought: A Response to Jiang Yihua), *Ershiyi Shiji*, no 10, April 1992: 143-149.

26] See Friedrich A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (London: Routledge, 2006), 49-62.

27] On Zhu Xueqin and Rousseau, see Els van Dongen and Yuan Chang, “Introduction.” In Els van Dongen and Yuan Chang, eds. *After Revolution: Reading Rousseau in 1990s China. Contemporary Chinese Thought*, vol. 48, no. 1, 2017: 1-13.

28] See Els van Dongen, *Realistic Revolution: Contesting Chinese History, Culture, and Politics after 1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

29] Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty*, 49-62.

30] Gan Yang, “Yangqi ‘minzhu yu kexue,’ dianding ‘ziyou yu zhixu’” (Discard “Democracy and Science,” Establish “Liberty and Order”), *Ershiyi shiji*, no. 3, February 1991: 7-10.

31] *Ibid.*; Gan Yang, “Ziyou de diren: Zhen shanmei tongyi shuo” (The Enemy of Freedom: The Unification of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty), *Dushu* no. 6 (1989): 121-28; Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty,” in Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 118-72.

32] Li Zehou, “Heping jinhua, fuxing Zhonghua: Tan ‘yao gailiang bu yao geming’” (Peaceful Evolution, Reviving China: On “We Need Reform, Not Revolution”), *Zhongguo shibao zhoukan* (*China Times Weekly*) May 3-9, 1992: 42-45 (Part 1); Li and Liu, *Farewell to Revolution*, 66.

33] Tao Dongfeng, “Baoshou ziyou zhuyi: Zhongguo wenhua jiangou de disanzhong xuanze” (Conservative Liberalism: The Choice of a Third Road for Chinese Cultural Construction), in Li Shitao, ed. *Zhishi fenzi lichang: Jijin yu baoshou zhijian de dongdang* (Intellectual Positions: The Turbulence between Radicalism and Conservatism) (Changchun: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 1999), 475-85.

34] *Ibid.*

35] Anshu Shi, Francois Lachapelle, and Matthew Galway, “The Recasting of Chinese Socialism: The Chinese New Left since 2000,” *China Information*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2018: 147.

36] Gan Yang, “Ziyou zhuyi: Guizu de haishi pingmin de?” (Liberalism: Aristocratic or Populist?), *Dushu* 1999, no. 1: 85-94.

37] *Ibid.*, 87.

38] *Ibid.*, 92-93.

39] *Ibid.*, 93-94.

40] Xiaobing Tang and Mark McConaghy, “Liberalism in Contemporary China: Questions, Strategies, Directions,” *China Information*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2018: 129-130; Anshu Shi, Francois Lachapelle, and Matthew Galway, “The Recasting of Chinese Socialism: The Chinese New Left since 2000,” *China Information*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2018: 141.

41] Joseph Fewsmith, “De Tocqueville in Beijing,” *China Leadership Monitor*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2012. Available at: <http://media.hoover.org/sites/default/files/documents/CLM39JE.pdf> (accessed 29 May 2016).

42] Cary Huang, “Tocqueville’s Advice on French Revolution Captures Chinese Leaders’ Attention,” *South China Morning Post*, 22 January 2013. <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1133212/tocquevilles-advice-french-revolution-captures-chinese-leaders-attention>. Accessed 8 March 2016.

43] Zhang Guangzhao, “Wang Qishan weihe tuijian Jiu zhidu yu da geming?” (Why does Wang Qishan recommend *The Old Regime and the Revolution*?) *Renmin ribao haiwaiban*, 18 January 2013, p. 11.

44] *Ibid.*

45] Welch, “Comments on Ming Chong, “Democracy in China: Tocquevillian Reflections,” 116.

46] *Ibid.*, 115-117.

47] Edmund S. K. Fung, *The Intellectual Foundations of Chinese Modernity: Cultural and Political Thought in the Republican Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 129-130.

48] Fung, *The Intellectual Foundations of Chinese Modernity*, 133.

49] *Ibid.*, 134.

50] *Ibid.*, 136-137.

51] Xu Jilin, “Zhongguo zhishi fenzi de ziyou zhuyi chuantong” (The Tradition of Liberalism of Chinese Intellectuals), in *Xu Jilin zixuanji* (Self-Selected Works of Xu Jilin) (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 1999), 98-109.

52] *Ibid.*, 5.

53] Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (Cambridge, MA; London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1964).

54] Charlotte Furth, “Intellectual Change: From the Reform Movement to the May Fourth Movement, 1895-1920,” In Merle Goldman and Leo Ou-Fan Lee, eds. *An Intellectual History of Modern China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13-96. Reference from 26.

55] *Ibid.*, 29.

56] See Max Ko-wu Huang, *The Meaning of Freedom: Yan Fu and the Origins of Chinese Liberalism* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2008).

57] *Ibid.*, xxiii.

58] Huang takes the terms “epistemological optimism” and “epistemological pessimism” from his teacher, Thomas Metzger.

59] Huang Kewu, “Jindai Zhongguo de ziyou zhuyi: Yuanqi yu yanbian” (Modern Chinese Liberalism: Origin and Development). In Zheng Dahua, Zou Xiaozhan, eds. *Zhongguo jindaishi shangde ziyou zhuyi*, 33-36, 40.

60] Tang and McConaghy, “Liberalism in Contemporary China,” 121-138. Reference from 121.

61] Geng Yunzhi, deng. “Lishi wei shenme mei you xuanze ziyou zhuyi: Guanyu ‘Zhongguo jindai ziyou zhuyi’ de duihua” (Why Has History Not Chosen Liberalism? A Dialogue on ‘Modern Chinese Liberalism’). In Zheng Dahua, Zou Xiaozhan, eds. *Zhongguo jindaishi shangde ziyou zhuyi* (Liberalism in Modern Chinese History) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2008), 2.

62] Liu Junning, “Classical Liberalism Catches on in China,” *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 11, no. 3, July 2000: 53.

63] *Ibid.*, 54.

64] Fung, *The Intellectual Foundations of Chinese Modernity*, 137.

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