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Twentieth-Century China as an Object of Thought: An Introduction, Part 2 The Birth of the Century: China and the Conditions of Spatial Revolution*

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Abstract

This article situates the birth of the twentieth century within the conditions of a spatial revolution. Proceeding from the dimension of horizontal temporality, it analyses anew the problem of "origins" as well as the era's "politics of displacement" and "politics of self-negation." A salient phenomenon of cultural politics in the twentieth century was the horizontal movement of concepts, a formulation of how historical content from different temporal axes was transformed, within a synchronic framework, into that which can be expressed in a single discourse. Yet the political content of such discourse and concepts cannot be defined from its European origins, including ideas such as nation, sovereignty, people, class, citizen, and so on. Whenever these alien concepts are used under historical conditions totally distinct from the conditions that originally produced them, this not only leads to the birth of new consciousness, values, and movements, but it also produces a new political logic. For this reason, it would be difficult to explain the meaning of China's twentieth century if we leave behind the

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*See Dominic Sachsenmaier's comment on Wang Hui's two-part article, available prepublished online and in the upcoming May issue.

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perspectives internal to its revolution. This article therefore takes up the cases of Lu Xun's "literature of resistance to despair" and Mao Zedong's "philosophy of victory," in which one "moves from victory to victory," in order to once again examine twentieth-century China's despairs and hopes, its failures and successes.

Keywords
spatial revolution, horizontal temporality, politics of displacement, political centralization, failure and success

Spatial Revolution, Horizontal Temporality, and the Politics of Displacement

In his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Karl Marx examined relations between political action and historical premises within the framework of "history and repetition," viewing new content within an old form through the lens of "repetition" (Marx, 1926 [1852]). Unlike the prospects that Marx had charted out for Europe's revolutions and counterrevolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, those of the twentieth century occurred within a spatial revolution. In other words, they took place within the synchronized temporal relations of the century's multiple temporalities. As such, their politics of repetition and displacement typically produced topics or subjects of horizontal temporal relations. Just like Europe's nineteenth-century transformations, problems of the old and new, or the ancient and modern, always hovered in the space of twentieth century politics; yet, these contradictions between the old and new were situated within the conflicts that erupted between multiple temporalities. It has therefore become impossible to separate them from their horizontal temporal relations. Given that these horizontal relations are temporal in addition to being spatial, they constitute a process of connecting different axes of temporalities together. Thus, the narration of history is not only the movement from past to present but also one of moving "from there to here," "from here to there," or movements between various spaces. Relations to "origins" are mostly horizontal, even those of exchange and circulation. As a result, although twentieth-century politics often resorted to conditions of opposition or accord between ancient/modern and East/West, such coordinates were in actuality an extremely simplistic articulation of the relations between multiple temporalities, all of which were embodied within a new, shared temporality.

The concept of imperialism centers on an economic analysis; however, unlike analyses of the processes of production and circulation in

nineteenth-century political economy, this concept was by necessity also focused from its very inception on global relations and imperial competition. How, then, did politics unfold within such a discourse? It would be nearly impossible to present the politics of the twentieth century and its historical implications while leaving aside the century's own series of entirely new concepts and categories. But at the same time, if we take these concepts that had already been translated or re-translated from translations of other languages and pose them as the structures or basic categories for our view of history, then extremely clear disjunctures come into focus between the discursive system and actual social conditions. In this epoch, notions such as the individual, citizen, state, nation, class, people, party, sovereignty, culture, society, and so on, became core concepts for a new politics. Production, means of production, social formation, and other associated ideas became the basic categories with which to describe China and other societies. Propositions such as the "weakest link," relations between ourselves and the enemy, "border region," "intermediate zone," "three worlds," United Front, and so on, were all born from assessments and strategic or tactical thinking about both international and national circumstances under conditions of imperialism.

Of the terminology for the major concepts, categories, and propositions mentioned above, with the exception of an extremely small number produced within concrete struggles such as "border region" and "intermediate zone," virtually all come from translations and appropriations of nineteenth-century European ideas and propositions. Wherever twentieth-century revolutionaries and reformers made quick use of these concepts, categories, and propositions for concrete political practice, they have become a source of endless consternation among the recent generation of historians. For example, a number of scholars have heaped ridicule upon the "misuse" of the word "feudal" in modern China. They bend over backward in order to accurately delineate this word's European origins while expounding on China's use of the concept as having misconstrued its "original meaning," consequently leading China's modern politics astray. If the category of the feudal has been thoroughly misused, then what would be the basis on which to characterize China's former and subsequent social formations?[1] In addition, while nineteenth-century European capitalism and colonialism were being established, socialists invented the concept of the "proletariat," which was seen as an accurate representation of the future revolutionary subject. In twentieth-century China, the search for a proletariat to serve as the revolutionary subject was a sustained political process; yet, in this barely industrialized society, the number of workers, their scope, and organizational level were all extremely feeble, such that it has been called into doubt whether the capitalists of China could

even constitute a class. But does this also mean that China's revolution was itself a product of misunderstanding?

Dipesh Chakrabarty, a representative figure of India's "subaltern studies," has found that in India and other parts of the non-Western world, efforts to seek out a revolutionary subject have produced a whole series of replacements for the social category of the proletariat in Western industry, including peasants, masses, subalterns, and so forth (Chakrabarty, 2011: 167, 171–72, 174). But the phenomena of repetition and displacement occur not only within a category like proletariat; they can also occur within all of the categories indicated here. Revolution and counterrevolution also embody this logic of displacement. These categories do not have an explanation which could be offered with simple reference to nineteenth-century logic, nor do they have one which could be presented purely in accordance with their etymology. Numerous categories and subjects of China's twentieth century were all repetitions from nineteenth-century Europe, but with each repetition also came a displacement that was not only the product of a different context but also functioned as a politicizing form of displacement. As such, these concepts restructured historical narratives while also breaking with the previous narrative's hegemony, thereby laying the path for the development of a new politics. This is by no means to suggest that the discursive practices of this era were free from errors in concepts and categories, but rather to say that without an analysis of the process by which these concepts and categories were politically deployed, we absolutely cannot understand their true implications, force, or limitations. Consequently, we would also be unable to make use of them in order to comprehend twentieth-century China's distinctive qualities.

The twentieth century's abundance of horizontal relationships was the product of a spatial revolution. As explained above, the birth of the century signified great changes in multiple temporalities, transforming them into moments of unevenness within a shared temporality and bringing forth an absolute demand to view history from a horizontal axis. The horizontal movement of concepts as well as their uses among different historical temporalities is indeed the most striking feature of the twentieth century. In fact, this transformation of temporal synchronization takes the "spatial revolution" as its condition.[2] Under the premise of the spatial revolution, temporally oriented relationships became increasingly horizontal. The great transformations of modernity as well as the discourses used in describing them cannot be narrated via a diachronically related guiding thread; rather, their account must be derived from their multiple temporalities. When I describe this phenomenon as the horizontal movement of concepts, this formulation's utility lies in articulating how, within a synchronic framework, historical content from different temporal axes was transformed into that which could be expressed in a

single discourse. In other words, what is described above as "displacement" (or the process of producing a new politics) can only be understood within the horizontal temporal relations created by a spatial revolution. Whenever these alien concepts are used under historical conditions totally distinct from the conditions that originally produced them, then new consciousness, values, and movements are born. Japanese scholars, taking European history as their frame of reference, divided the history of China or "the East" (*tōyō* 東洋) into epochs: one focused on the Yellow River and China's interior; one centered on the Grand Canal; and finally, an era of the ocean littoral. Yet they held that it is only with the advent of Japan's Meiji period that this latter maritime epoch truly lived up to its name. This spatialized analysis of the history of China or the "East" in fact echoes three other narratives of spatial revolution: that of rivers as they have been accounted for within European comparative geography (the history of civilization in Mesopotamia); that of the interior and the coast (the ancient epochs of Greece and Rome); and finally that of the ocean littoral (the discovery of America as well as the epoch of colonialism ushered in by global navigation). The concluding portion of the above analysis then takes Tokugawa Japan as an inchoate form of a modern state. Spatio-temporal revolution not only involves profound transformations in concepts of historical geography, it also signifies a thorough restructuring of the entirety of the global order: the maritime epoch emerged in concert with forces of machinery and industry, the power of the nation-state, and so on, bringing along a series of important events: the reconfiguration of relations between city and country; fundamental changes in the state form; transformations in geopolitical relations; restructuring national recognition, and so on. This was an epoch of great changes in the relations between humans and the natural world as well as between peoples. Amid the political actions that advanced or delayed this momentous transformation, new concepts, standards of evaluation, economic formations, political forms, and even sociopolitical actions of varying dimensions were continually conceived and invented. New individuals, new people, and new nations, or the new life of old civilizations, were built upon the ruins of history, all bearing an abrupt and brutal demeanor. Taking stock of its mode of production, Marx anticipated this spatial revolution, saying: "The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country" (Marx and Engels, 1992 [1848]: 6).

Here I will analyze the significance of the spatial revolution that burst forth in relations between multiple temporalities by focusing on transformations in both state form and the connotations of sovereignty. From Marx's perspective, the spatial revolution originates from the "constantly revolutionising [of] the whole relations of society" that capitalist production relies on.

This is a "constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation. [. . .] It has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood," forging new relations between city and country, new national and regional relationships. From this process which "centralised the means of production" there emerged a process of "political centralization." "Independent, or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments, and systems of taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier, and one customs-tariff" (Marx and Engels, 1992 [1848]: 6). Marx did not analyze the diverse compromises in political form and social arrangements that were produced in order to accommodate differences among historical conditions, but even between the most flexible social systems and the processes described above, relations endured that were difficult to discard. With respect to China, was "political centralization" the prolongation of a lengthy historical tradition or was it a new form demanded by relations of production and exchange? The sole correct response to this question would examine this phenomenon by situating it within the horizontal relations of multiple temporalities. For this reason, no matter whether it is a method of "impact-response" or a logic of "internal development," neither of these would hardly be adequate to explain China's revolution and its torturous process, to say nothing of accounting for the spatial conditions (or those of horizontal temporality) necessary for the "continuity" of sovereignty and other domains.

Unlike Marx, who investigated spatial revolution and "political centralization" (a unified state) from the perspective of capitalist reproduction, Carl Schmitt worked within a general outline of European history, tracing the origins of the spatial revolution back to contests over colonizing and developing new territories during the sixteenth century's age of maritime exploration. Maritime hegemony and territorial occupation (*Landnahme*), as well as their political forms, became the key content of these competitions; yet as regards the formation of a fundamental order, these were not only contests between hegemonic states, but were also rivalries between two kinds of order, each with profoundly different religious and cultural backgrounds.[3] In other words, this competition was invested with the significance of a historic turning point because it was far more than a mere dispute over interests; this was also a struggle between two grand camps (namely the Catholics and Protestants), centering on the discovery of new territories and the type of order suited to the establishment of colonies. And given the prerequisite conditions that this struggle focus on territorial occupation and its political forms, it was a type of combat undertaken far from home, in which one could only advance by traveling overseas. Consequently, later generations "launched the first

effective attack on the global hegemony and maritime monopoly" of their forerunners, transforming sectarian civil wars into a new conviction of "a kind of supreme political authority" (Schmitt, 2006b [1942]: 68).

As seen from Schmitt's perspective, the struggle between European countries was therefore motivated not by the distinction between new and old imperialisms as described by Hobson and Lenin, but rather by that of Catholicism and Protestantism, which made way for a new kind of political subject to take the stage. It was precisely this struggle that "neutralized theological-religious conflicts, making life secular and turning even the church into a state institution" (Schmitt, 2006b [1942]: 68). Under these conditions, the concepts of "state" and "sovereign" first attained the authority of juridical form in France. Consequently, the "sovereign state" qua particular form of administration began to enter Europeans' consciousness. For the imaginations of peoples in the centuries to come, the state became the sole standard political unit of expression. As a result, for Europeans, this marked the start of an epoch of nations, spanning the next 400 years of history and demarcating the modern world's whole scope and orientation. In this era, spanning from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, the state governed all conceptions of political order (Schmitt, 2006b [1942]: 68).

However, while the formation of a state as a cogent political body had not yet occurred in sixteenth-century Europe, China's own epoch of the state emerged more than 2,000 years ago, as early as the Qin dynasty (221–206 BCE). In the late nineteenth century, the Qing court was still unfamiliar with the notion of sovereign countries that stemmed from a long process of internal, sectarian wars. China's Confucian thinkers expressed the world order using the formulation "the authority of many states" 列国之势, a transparent appeal to the competitive political model of the Zhou dynasty (ca. 1100–221 BCE), as a means for understanding the contemporaneous world situation, as well as distinguishing it from the principle system of dynastic unity that had been in place since the Qin and Han. From the perspective of forms of production, during the epoch of Europe's rule by force as well as its control of regions in Asia, there existed in these territories different kinds of state formations. For example, China, the Ottoman Empire, the Safavids, the Mughals, and so on, all were empires primarily based on agriculture, while Kilwa, Hurmuz, Calicut, Melaka, and so on, were relatively small coastal states founded on commerce (Subrahmanyam, 2012: 12–14). This manner of distinguishing state typologies has a distant echo in Schmitt's discussion of the land and sea. As for China, the formation of the rational bureaucratic system 郡县 of the Qin dynasty as well as its evolution as a state formation constitutes a major chapter in China's history: in the cultural realm, this system integrated Confucianism and Legalism; political authority was intensely

concentrated; political forms submitted to a high level of bureaucratization; the integration of the system of prefectures and counties into former feudal divisions impacted relations with regional communities; in terms of internal and external relations, the formidable opulence of the dynastic system provided the basic framework for a large, unified state. In order to accommodate changes and crises both foreign and domestic, modern China's revolution and transformations could not but seek aid from all sorts of foreign powers, forms, and value systems. But historian Philip Kuhn countered,

> the character of China's modern state has been shaped decisively by the flow of its internal history. Political activists of the nineteenth century were already dealing with questions of participation, competition, and control in the context of conditions inherited from the eighteenth century and earlier. (Kuhn, 2002: 1)

When people discuss the birth of China's modern, centralized administrative system within a sequence of historical continuity, how do they explain its spatial revolution? This revolution was pushed along by the maritime epoch as well as a system of centralized authority signaling the arrival of modern states in France, England, and Sicily, or what Marx in other terms hailed as the "political centralization" ushered in by the concentration of capitalist production. Beginning with the Opium Wars, Europe's imperial powers sought to impose their conception of order on China and its neighboring regions, where they ruled over all. Furthermore, they wielded the logic of international law as a means of managing and bestowing names upon each distinct political entity.

> Under these conditions, the concrete, historical unit of organization which had formerly been pure, bound to its own epoch and delimited by history, lost its historical position and substantive features. In a bewildering process of abstraction, this form of state was transplanted to various contexts belonging to fundamentally different epochs and peoples; it was hurled into the midst of altogether different outcomes and organizations. (Schmitt, 2006b [1942]: 69)

From within a new synchronic temporality, how do we explain these historical patterns that were both distinct from one another and yet bear resemblances in both form and function, identified today as phenomena of national sovereignty?

First, this specific type of state system was constituted as a consequence of imperialist expansion, so merely pointing out that the state is a form of domination is not adequate—one must also point out this system's various transitional forms. Finance capital and its corresponding international policies

> give rise to a number of transitional forms of state dependence. Not only are the two main groups of countries, those owning colonies, and the colonies themselves, but also the diverse forms of dependent countries which, politically, are formally independent, but in fact, are enmeshed in the net of financial and diplomatic dependence, typical of this epoch. (Lenin, 1965 [1917]: 101)

Among them, China, Turkey, and other semi-colonies were one type, while Argentina, Portugal, and so on, constituted another, characterized by a "form of financial and diplomatic dependence, accompanied by political independence" (Lenin, 1965 [1917]: 101). Second, after having experienced a series of "cultural revolutions," people began using a sort of universal method to designate the various communities found throughout history as ancient, medieval, or modern states, while polities like China and others not included in Western history were pejoratively termed "empires," "dynasties," "tribes," or "tribal states." The "sovereign state" was established by way of omitting difference from the course of history, or by suppressing various forms of historical time. As a result, this not only required what Benedict Anderson has termed "homogenous, empty time" but also a conception of synchronicity in which the relations of multiple temporalities could be contained (Anderson, 2006: 24).

Let us now examine the interconnected relations of "internal historical evolution" and "external historical evolution" amid changing interactions of the land and sea. From the seventeenth century onward, the Qing dynasty came into contact with what Schmitt has termed "two different kinds of hunters" who participated in the vast expansion of space (e.g., Russians pursuing pelts and pirates from northwestern Europe) (Schmitt, 2015 [1942]: 30). In 1636, Hong Taiji established the Mongol Yamen, which temporarily managed the administration of Mongolia. Three years later, it became the *Lifan yuan* 理藩院, a bureau governing Mongolia, Altishahr, Tibet, and the southwestern *tusi* 土司, as well as managing institutions of Russian affairs. The Treaty of Nerchinsk, concluded in 1689 between the Qing and Russian governments, clearly shows an accord reached between sovereign states throughout the entirety of its contents: the scientific delimitation of borders; recognition of administrative jurisdiction in the border region; control over residents crossing the border from either side; accommodations for foreign residents; *wenpiao* 文票 (a kind of passport) and entry admittance for commercial activity; as well as the treaty's composition and translation into different languages, etc. The Kangxi emperor selected two Jesuits, the French missionary Jean-François Gerbillon (1654–1707) and Portuguese missionary Thomas Pereira (1645–1708), to join the party, representing the Qing dynasty in negotiations. Not only did they serve as translators, but they also assumed

the role of advisers (see Zhang Cheng, 1973; Sebes and Pereira, 1973; and Thomaz de Bossière, 2009). They were versed in the theories of Hugo Grotius as well as European international law. This document was thus a sovereign treaty between two sovereign states (Qing History Research Small Group, 1977).[4] By the start of the eighteenth century, the Kangxi emperor had already dispatched Vice Minister He Shou to establish a bureau of affairs in Tibet, but at that time the practice of having an *amban*, or Qing-appointed imperial resident in Tibet, had not yet been implemented. In 1727, following the Qing's suppression of a Tibetan invasion by the Mongolian Dzungar tribe, the Yongzheng emperor established the position of *amban*. In addition to being personally dispatched by the Qing emperor, the *amban*s also shared responsibility for administering Tibetan affairs with the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama. This system was continued until 1912, when the departure of the last *amban* from Tibet announced its conclusion. Subsequently, it was followed by the Tibetan Officer of Affairs and Mongolia-Tibet Bureau of Affairs during the Republic of China as well as the Tibet Autonomous Region in the People's Republic of China (Wang Hui, 2014b).

The evolution of the system in Xinjiang and Altishahr paralleled the formation of that in Tibet. The Qing court implemented the *beg* 伯克 system for the Uyghur, Kyrgyz, and Taji communities in the region. Formerly, the *beg* was an official position of leadership among the Huihe population of northwest China, with records in the histories of even the Tang and Song dynasties. In 1759, after suppressing the revolt of the Altishahr Khojas, the Qing court reformed the *beg* system by integrating it within the Qing bureaucratic structure. With the establishment of Xinjiang province in 1884, the Qing court abolished the various levels of the *beg* system, implementing a bureaucracy consistent with the rest of the Qing state in its place. This tendency toward "political centralization" was an extension of the Qing state's internal crises. As early as Xinjiang's involvement in the Tongzhi Hui Revolt (1864–1877) and the period of Yaqub Beg's invasion, the *beg* system had already fallen into disuse.[5] In comparison to the transformations of the Xinjiang region, the reform and realignment of the *tusi* chieftain system in the southwest was implemented in the fourth year of the Yongzheng emperor (1726). These policies, implemented by Qing court official Ortai long before the establishment of Xinjiang province, had very little relation to any external forces of aggression.

The transformations in state formation described above were distinct from the nineteenth-century global conditions described by Marx. By no means was "political centralization" the consequence of having "centralized the means of production"; rather, the tendency to centralize political power was the result of complications in geopolitical relations between peoples in the

interior and the imperial court. From the seventeenth century onward, in Qing-era studies of its territory, exegeses on classical texts, and writings that address political policy, we can clearly observe the Chinese court's political design for a vast land of multilayered complexity, a territory undivided but nevertheless containing diverse cultures. This was utterly unlike previous historical distinctions, including the neo-Confucian demarcation between the culturally distant 夷 and culturally domestic 夏 as well as the internal and external delimitations of the rational bureaucracy 郡县. And of course, it was also distinct from the internal homogenization presented within the European nation-state's political perspective. From this point of view, "China" could only produce an accord between the state's internal political order and the external world by organizing itself on the basis of a far-reaching set of relations based on ritual. This "China" was the product of gradual historical changes, as well as its own incarnation of a ceaselessly changing history. Thus, what we call a geographical perspective by no means presents simply geographical problems: behind them is the problem of how to define "China" in terms of both space and signification (Wang Hui, 2018).

From the start of the nineteenth century, there was an intimate relationship between this tendency toward the internal centralization of authority and the arrival of that second kind of hunter, the "pirates from northwestern Europe." The course of changes in the Qing dynasty political system clearly attests to this point. There was no concerted effort during the early years of the Qing to attend to institutions managing foreign affairs; instead, responsibility for such matters was delegated to the Bureau of Receptions, one of the four courts within the Ministry of Rites. The Ministry of Rites was established in the Northern Zhou state during the Northern and Southern dynasties, with its six ministries first founded in the Sui dynasty. Subsequent dynasties continued to maintain this organization, until the conclusion of the Second Opium War. In accordance with the first article of the 1858 Treaty of Tianjin demanding an "envoy stationed in Beijing," in 1861 the Qing court finally acted under pressure from Britain, France, and other major European powers to establish the Zongli Yamen, or "Office in Charge of Affairs of All Nations," which assumed responsibilities for the Ministry of Rites as well as the *Lifan yuan*. This institution, ranked above the other six ministries, lasted for 40 years: from 1861 until 1901, when the twelfth clause of the Boxer Protocol of 1901 designated the establishment of a Foreign Office.[6]

In February of the thirteenth year of the Tongzhi emperor (1874), Britain dispatched Colonel Horace Browne to lead an exploration team of 193 British officials, merchants, officers, and soldiers, crossing Myanmar overland to enter Yunnan. British envoy Sir Thomas Francis Wade (1818–1895) obtained permission from the Zongli Yamen to dispatch an official interpreter,

Augustus Raymond Margary (1846–1875), to join Browne in northern Myanmar, in the city of Bhamo. On February 14, 1875, Margary and Browne's party trespassed into Tengyue, Yunnan (now Tengchong), where they opened fire and killed several residents. Subsequent local resistance resulted in the killing of Margary and four companions. In order to put matters to rest, the Qing government executed 23 local residents who were involved in the incident as well as discharging and prosecuting local military and civil authorities. In addition, on July 26 of the second year of the Guangxu emperor (1876), in accordance with the Chefoo Convention (Yantai Treaty) signed by Li Hongzhang and Thomas Wade, aside from adopting all sorts of unequal conditions, China's foreign emissary was required to formally express his "regrets" to Britain. The Margary Affair led to the start of China's practice of dispatching foreign envoys. It also signified a major transformation in China's foreign relations, which had previously taken the principle form of tributary/investiture.[7] This was also the same year that the British Conservative Party war hawk Robert Bulwer-Lytton (1831–1891) took up the post of viceroy of India, initially expressing staunch support for Yaqub Beg's seizure of political authority in Altishahr. After the collapse of Yaqub Beg's authority, Bulwer-Lytton then turned to inciting the Second Anglo-Afghan War. Also in the same year, on March 2 Alexander II signed a decree formally annexing the Khanate of Kokand, renaming it the Ferghana Oblast. General Mikhail Skobelev assumed the role of the new province's chief executive. Within Asia, Anglo-Russian competition entered a new phase (Wang Zhilai, 2007: 339).

Sino-European relations by no means began with Britain and France, Spain and Portugal interfered in affairs of Asia before northwestern European states. Why is it, then, that it was only in the latter half of the nineteenth century that the Qing dynasty was obliged to establish an institution dedicated to foreign relations, as well as reform its management of tributary relations and begin the practice of dispatching foreign envoys? In addition to the contents of the treaties produced by the above incidents, what special significance lies in the differences between northwestern and southern European countries—in other words, differences in sovereign states and their standardized relations as they had been produced by struggles between Protestants and Catholics—for understanding sovereign relations in China and the East Asian region? Britain, the French Huguenots, and the Netherlands, the last of which had arrived in northeastern Asia much earlier, stood at the front line of Protestant resistance to Catholic power; and their struggle with Spain's Catholic domination initiated the epoch of a new world order, with the maritime order its distinguishing feature. At this time, there was a competitive relationship between Britain and the Netherlands, but British theories of

international law and attendant concepts of sovereignty were themselves derived from those of the Netherlands. Their mutual enemy was Spanish Catholicism.

> Here lies a case unique in its essence. Its uniqueness, its incomparability, consists in the fact that England completed an elementary transformation in a wholly other historical moment and in a manner fully different from any other sea power. It really displaced its existence away from the land and into the element of the sea. It thereby won not only sea battles and wars but also something wholly other and infinitely greater, namely, a revolution, and, indeed, a revolution of the greatest kind, a planetary spatial revolution. (Schmitt, 2015 [1942]: 47)

As for the "pirates from northwestern Europe," the era of the sea was the epoch in which the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans were all simultaneously transformed into inland seas. Their institutional arrangements in this period were concerned with consolidating control over the distribution and construction of authority over continents as well as their associated relations of interest (Lattimore, 1942: 8). In 1517, the Portuguese used military force to occupy and establish their authority through the Tamão trade settlement. But after successive, failed attempts at further military invasion, they withdrew in 1553 (32nd year of the Jiajing emperor) to the territory of Macau. Then, in 1572, they paid a land tax of 500 silver pieces (which was in fact a bribe) in order to acquire political and economic rights to Macau. Within the framework of Ming dynasty law and administrative management of maritime security, this constituted a tacit permission for autonomous rule. The Municipal Council of Macau was established in 1583 (eleventh year of the Wanli emperor), and from 1616 (44th year of the Wanli emperor) a governor was appointed. Portugal's lease on Macau was also a sign that the wave of the great maritime epoch had reached China's shore. But it is generally believed that the transformation of Macau from a leased territory into a colony only occurred in the wake of the Opium War. This was signaled by a conflict between the Qing and the Portuguese military incited by the 1849 assassination of Macau's 79th governor, Comandante João Maria Ferreira do Amaral (called the "one-armed general," 1803–1849). Following that incident, Macau formally became a Portuguese colony. In 1887, the Sino-Portuguese Treaty of Peking was concluded, confirming in law Macau's position as a colony. The question of Macau's status, as determined in previous relations between the Ming court and the Portuguese, never touched on the subject of formal sovereignty (even though its substantive content relates to nineteenth-century issues of sovereignty); rather, it was more bound up in the problem of the Catholic Church's

"protectorate of missions." The status of "protectorate of missions" involved the Vatican granting a sovereign state the authority to safeguard Catholic missionaries' right to proselytize in non-Catholic regions.[8] Advised by Christopher Columbus, Pope Alexander VI (1492–1503) signed the Bull of Demarcation in 1493 to divide newly discovered land between Spain and Portugal for the purpose of missionization (Linden, 1916: 20). As the Portuguese Vasco da Gama discovered a route from Lisbon to the Cape of Good Hope and then finally to the Indian Ocean, in 1514 Leo X (r. 1513–1521) bestowed Asia's protectorate of missions, the *Patroado*, upon Portugal. The protectorate of missions stipulated that "all missionaries destined for Asia were required to register with the Portuguese government; they had to voyage to Asia on Portuguese vessels; bishops in Asia had to be recommended to the pope by the Portuguese king; the Portuguese government acted as an agent for all negotiations concerning proselytizing in a given locale; when carrying out religious rites in a given locale, the Portuguese king's representative was the first among all countries' representatives; the Portuguese government assumed responsibility for the financial support of missionaries" (Li, 1998: 280–81). The matter of the protectorate of missions was directly related to commercial problems as well as the issue of jurisdiction within a territory, but principle among the contradictions and conflicts it incited was the struggle it revealed between Eastern and Western forms of protocol. There has already been considerable research on this contest over protocol based in ritual propriety and its evolution (see Boxer, 1948; Li, 1998; and Zhang Guogang, 2001: 144–65).

In contradistinction to the above circumstances, major indicators that an age of maritime authority had arrived were the British East India Company and the Dutch East India Company, founded respectively in 1600 and 1602. These two northwestern European companies bore, at different levels, characteristics of a "state," including the ability to levy taxes, conscript soldiers, erect fortifications, etc. These companies, in their inception, development, transformations, and closure were inextricably bound up with the formation of modern sovereignty.[9] Once the Dutch East India Company had consolidated its commercial network,

> in order to monopolize China's silk export commerce, the Dutch planned to dispatch a naval fleet to force the Portuguese out of Macau and seize their base by force. After this plan was thwarted, the company persisted in its designs to gain a foothold in China's developing liberal commerce, thus deciding to construct defensive fortifications on the Penghu Islands. However, Chinese authorities determined that the Penghu Islands were China's territory, taking the company's action as an infringement upon their sovereignty and consequently taking firm action to cast out the Dutch. (Heyns, 2002: 20)

As early as the late Ming, competition between the Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese in Macau, the Penghu Islands, Taiwan, and elsewhere had already given rise to disputes over sovereignty.

From 1820 to the Second Opium War (1856–1860) was a key period when the trade in opium quickly intensified and incited transformations of the world order. It was also the period when China's Eurasian inner and coastal frontiers suffered simultaneous attacks on both sides from the Great Asian empires. Qing scholar Gong Zicheng realized relatively early on that the four seas were no longer insurmountable natural barriers protecting the continent. It was thus unavoidable that the geopolitical significance of the Qing's western territories would be considered anew from the perspective of the sea. During the time in which Gong composed "Establishing a Province in the Western Territory" (1820) and "On the Plan to Bring Peace to the Border and Pacify Distant Regions" (1829), there was an intense debate within the Qing court, incited by a rebellion in Altishahr led by Jahangir Khoja. It focused on whether to abandon direct control of Altishahr and replace it with a system of investiture. Gong Zicheng's essays recommended establishing a province, stabilizing the border region, searching for a new space to resettle the population, and seeking out an inner-continental route to the Western Sea (the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea) (Wang Hui, 2018).

The advocacy of political centralization was a refutation of a return to the system of investiture. During the 1820s, in a prelude to the coming Opium War, British India had already provided training and firearms for Jahangir's military, strongly supporting the rebellion in Xinjiang. As a result of this crisis in a region situated at the heart of the Asian continent, it became a key site of contention for two major empires, Britain and Russia. As such, this conflict finds its distant echo in the Crimean War of the 1850s. During the Crimean War, Russian foreign diplomat Nikolay Ignatyev received orders dispatching him to both the Khanate of Kokand and the Khanate of Bukhara. In addition, he also was a signatory to the treaty of October 11, 1858, which gained Russia the right to navigation on the Amu Darya. Following Ignatyev's journey in Central Asia, he was then hastened to China in order to "mediate" in the Second Opium War. In this capacity, he successfully hoodwinked the Qing government into signing the Sino-Russian Treaty of Aigun and the Convention of Beijing, making off with over one million li of territory as well as winning Russia the right to commercial trade in Kashgar. Marx mockingly wrote,

> It is by no means a comfortable reflection for John Bull that he himself, by his first opium war, procured Russia a treaty yielding her the navigation of the Amur and free trade on the land frontier, while by his second opium war he has

> helped her to the invaluable tract lying between the Gulf of Tartary and Lake Baikal, a region so much coveted by Russia that from Czar Alexey Michaelovitch down to Nicholas, she has always attempted to get it. (Marx, 2007 [1858]: 41)

Engels's commentary demonstrates even more clearly the significance of the Crimean War for Asia: "the return match which Russia owed to France and England for her military defeats before Sevastopol, has just come off" (Engels, 1980 [1858]: 82). With respect to these issues, the Eastern question, Central Asian question, and Far Eastern question metamorphosed into world-historical questions that could not be separated from one another. It is in this sense that we can integrate the Opium War, what Mao Zedong called the starting point of modern China's history, into the transformation of the global order. This is particularly the case for grasping the process by which the two major Asian empires struggled to gain geopolitical hegemony. By taking the age of the Opium War as our point of departure, we can understand the decades of the 1820s to the 1860s (e.g., before and after the two Opium Wars) as constituting a part of China within a global process. Bound up with the arrival of this era was the beginning of a new imperialist epoch, whose distinguishing characteristic was the rise of the United States, Germany, and Japan.

The advent of maritime authority signified the struggle between two spatial orders. The fundamental aspects of this confrontation inevitably included how to standardize the allocation of land, methods for organizing the state, what kinds of techniques to use in delimiting borders, and the standards by which to define relations between communities. Irrespective of who controlled this space, two kinds of order both manifested a clear tendency toward "political centralization," even before this phenomenon had come to fruition. In terms of the perspectives possible within Europe, from the start of Dutch efforts in the early seventeenth century to attack and occupy both the Penghu Islands (32nd year of the Wanli emperor, or 1604; and the second year of the Tianqi emperor, or 1622) and Taiwan (fifteenth year of the Chengzhen emperor, or 1624), these were in fact not only part of a burgeoning combat between northeastern European powers and Spain, but they were also a prelude to the successive global hegemony of nineteenth-century Britain and twentieth-century America. After demands by the Dutch East India Company in both Macau and the Penghu Islands were refused by Ming dynasty officials, the Dutch could only resolve the stalemate by withdrawing to Taiwan, taking it in exchange for commercial opportunities in China.[10] In 1624, after ratifying an agreement with the Ming court, the Dutch East India Company established a commercial center in Dayuan (Tainan) "as a means of acquiring China's export products and severing the basis for commercial exchange between China and the Philippines" (Heyns, 2002: 20). The British East India

Company had already made multiple attempts to gain extraterritoriality, including in the Taiwan region (in 1670), in the territory controlled by the Vietnamese house of Trịnh (1696), and in Guangzhou (in 1715 and again in 1729); however, according to research by R. Randle Edwards, Qing court officials never agreed to this sort of request.[11]

Zheng Chenggong's (Koxinga) recovery of Taiwan (first year of the Kangxi emperor, 1662) took place in an age of the thriving of maritime forces. He relied on the military resources of the inland coasts to launch the first direct attack against the rising maritime powers. In fact, the struggles between his father, Zheng Zhilong (1601–1661), and Dutch colonialists were already deeply embedded within the sovereign relations of this age.[12] The powers exercised by Zheng and the Dutch East India Company were quite unlike those of the modern state after the 1870s, but this earlier conflict nonetheless was profoundly imbricated with the issue of sovereignty. After the Kangxi emperor put down the southwestern revolt of the Three Feudatories (1673–1681), Zheng's conquest of Taiwan proved to be an altogether different kind of sovereign struggle; namely, a continental power seeking the means to integrate the coast into the scope of an imperial sovereignty. As such, this reassertion of imperial sovereignty drew the conflict into the epoch's broader struggles for maritime sovereignty. The struggle of the Dutch, Zheng Chenggong's forces, and the Qing around Taiwan's territory unfolded in the same epoch as conflicts and displacements in the southern and northern European powers. It was thus related to the era's principle struggle: maritime powers' struggle over sovereignty (Tang, 2002: 118). As such, the consolidation of Qing authority was also a process of the construction of sovereignty. Qing governance of Taiwan manifested characteristics of the landed order's resistance to maritime powers in all aspects, whether this involved the reason for retaking Taiwan (it served as a defensive bulwark for the four provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong; as the Kangxi emperor stated in 1684 "to give up or to take Taiwan is a crucial question. [. . .] To give it up without a fight is the least permissible" [cited in Chen Kongli, 1996: 135]), or the kind of system used to rule Taiwan (it was projected that the government of Taiwan, including Taiwan, Fengshan, and the three counties of Zhuluo, would be within the jurisdiction of the province of Fujian and ruled in accordance with the established regulations used in the Qing's southwest region; this included provisions for the establishment of the administration, military garrisons, construction, and regulation of indigenous peoples) (see Wang Hui, 2014a and 2014c; see also First Historical Archives, 1984; and Chen Kongli, 1996: 135). This early process anticipated post-1870s struggles surrounding imperialist sovereign development. These latter nineteenth-century struggles included discussions and plans for maritime

defense in response to Japan's encroachment on Taiwan as well as diplomatic maneuvers between the Qing and Japanese governments following the Mudan Incident of 1874 (Chen Zaizheng, 1986). The period from 1871 to 1874 marked the start of Meiji Japan's conscious efforts to launch an imperialist political policy. Subsequent to this were both the Mudan Incident, a military attack on southern Taiwanese indigenous people (what the Japanese call the "Taiwan expedition" or "Punitive expedition to Taiwan") and the first instances of modern, diplomatic measures taken between the Qing and Japan. Consequently, these incidents bear the historical connotations of sovereign machinations in the imperialist era.

From the perspective of a spatial revolution, no matter whether it be incidents of general importance like the Opium Wars, the First Sino-Japanese War, China's Xinhai Revolution, the May Fourth movement, the Second Sino-Japanese War, and so on, or Japan's assaults beginning in the 1870s on the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan's territory, or Korea, all of these can be seen as maneuvers between continental forces and new maritime forces. The revolutions in China and Russia, representative incidents of the twentieth century, may also be understood as revolutions on the land opposing capitalism on the sea. These two terrestrial revolutions were wholly derived from the impetus of new maritime powers. Not only were they revolutions to resist foreign invasions or colonialism, but they also transformed the continental order. At a fundamental level, the continuation, profundity, and fortification of these revolutions inevitably depended on the resources and powers of the land, including a huge number of peasants, the vast countryside, and a dense network of geopolitical relations. If the main topic of twentieth-century politics was "countries want independence, nations want liberation, and the people want revolution," then the quest for an independent state and national emancipation within the era of colonialism and imperialism was perforce bound to undergo people's revolution, forging a new political form. For this reason, the most important political achievement of this era was indeed the birth of China as a modern political subject. It would therefore be a mistake to discuss China's sovereignty as well as its internal and external relations from a perspective of generalized continuity; rather, this "continuity" must be examined only once it has been situated within processes of resistance to imperialist invasion and China's revolution.

The striking continuity between late imperial China's and modern China's territory, people, and social-political structures is a subject I have already discussed in my *Rise of Modern Chinese Thought* and other works. If the maritime epoch expanded the system of state sovereignty while shattering both former tributary relations and a diverse system based in ritual propriety, then the only way for the Qing dynasty to avoid total dissolution was to

undertake necessary transformations in its internal political structure. By strengthening its internal unity, the Qing transformed itself from a diverse imperial state "without an exterior" to a "sovereign state" in which interior and exterior were clearly demarcated from one another. In addition, given that the substantive content of the "sovereign state" was "imperialist," it must be considered a "multi-system society," a polity in which diverse temporal relations were integrated. The "political centralization" of China's form was expressed in particular through the process by which historical inheritances of China's heterogeneity (communities, religions, beliefs, languages, populations, etc.) were integrated into a unified political form and social organization, along with attendant cultural norms. In this regard, there was a clear continuity between the Qing Empire and the first Republic. The tendency toward political centralization was advanced, however, by a variety of motive forces, moving along different tracks; and furthermore, this tendency was in line with the evolution of international relations from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, which furthered the integration of the Qing into the category of the "sovereign." Even more importantly, the sovereignty that was molded or formed during the "short twentieth century" and its political agenda were fundamentally different from the sovereignty of imperialist politics. In terms of political form, not only were the late Qing and early Republican periods marked by conflicts over contending proposals for constitutional monarchy from the Society to Protect the Emperor 保皇党人 as opposed to the anti-Manchu revolution promoted by the Revolutionary Party 革命党人, but there were also conflicts within the ranks of loyalists over the type of constitutional monarchy best suited to China and within the ranks of revolutionaries over the form a republic should take. The revolutionaries debated whether a new Chinese state should be a republic of "five nationalities" or whether it should be a confederation where all eighteen provinces were independent. Should a federation or confederation be the basis on which to organize a pluralistic, allied republic; or, on the other hand, should a "republic of five nationalities" serve as the foundation for a unitary state? Within the scope of a national liberation movement that had assumed both the principle of national autonomy and the framework of unitary sovereignty, should the province be the republic's standard form for regional administration, or should the state seek to unify the nationalities by including autonomous administrative zones in addition to provinces? Looking back from the end of the twentieth century, we could also further ask: Why did China's revolution need to build a sole, sovereign republic on the foundation of an empire with many nations? Why did this single and sovereign state need to contain a diversity of systems within it? (See Wang Hui, 2011 and 2012.)

China's revolutionary project engaged with two different orders (colonial rule emanating from the sea and the social relations that had historically taken root in the land), broke them apart, reconstructed then, and adjusted them within a dynamic historical process. From the Self-Strengthening movement to the Hundred Days Reform, the Xinhai Revolution, May Fourth movement, agrarian revolution, and all the way down to the socialist revolution, political powers positioned inland drew aid from those whose power was based in the sea, resulting in an inevitable conflict with the bygone spatial order; yet this history also entailed resistance to the European, American, and Japanese maritime powers. In this epoch, there existed not only a struggle between the forces of coastal revolution and inland, conservative powers but also assaults undertaken by inland, radical forces upon their own traditions, having been catalyzed by the maritime powers. In addition, along with the establishment of colonial regimes arose movements to resist imperialism. In the revolutionary and conservative camps, there were thus conflicts and struggles between two kinds or two visions of order. In this sense, many struggles can be accounted for through the internal relations of spatial revolution explained above, including those between the Narodniks or Pan-Slavics and Westernizers during the Russian Revolution; the contests between the small peasant economists and land reformers of a different stripe during China's land reform; even the contradictions in contemporary China's path to rural reconstruction and urbanization. It is precisely within this sort of fraught process, which makes the peasantry a subject and takes the alliances between workers and peasants as its basis, that a mass movement organized and led by a revolutionary party can remold the political content of the state and sovereignty. It is therefore no accident that, as people's revolutions, there exists between the twentieth century's two great revolutions a kind of family bond (Wang Hui, 2017).

China's revolution was a response to the spatial revolution discussed above. It was also the most extreme form ushered in by the spatial revolution's contradictions and conflicts. From the perspective of language and politics, a primary expression of the aforementioned extreme conflicts was firstly that of words seeking out transhistorical content and secondly that of concepts synthesizing complicated movements of history. Within radical debates and practices, new words and concepts could signal new directions provided by politics, convey new possibilities for those engaged in social transformation, or constitute an ongoing process of political transformation. At the same time, it is often the case that the movements of history can shatter words and disarticulate concepts, displaying their own power and calling forth new words, new concepts, new narratives, and new theories.

Unfortunately, while historians are by and large divided on this period, their interpretations all follow the same logic, which we could tentatively call the "logic of the nineteenth century." They take what actually occurred and then weigh it against nineteenth-century concepts and problematics; or, they use the latter as a standard in order to declare that what happened was not revolutionary. Others dismiss outright the meaning which these concepts bore within their epoch. When I situate the concepts and problematics of China's twentieth century within a framework of "spatial revolution and the displacement of politics," I seek to interrogate several points. For example, the true problematics of the twentieth-century state will not be uncovered by pursuing research on the normative significance of the state qua concept, but rather in examining it as a political process. How did this political process, established within an empire, integrate sovereignty and the meaning of "people" in order to constitute a synthesized, incomplete, and occasionally self-negating form of state? A truly meaningful exploration of political questions involves more than investigating presidents, assemblies, provinces, institutions, or the military at every level in their formation and transformation. Instead, what is needed is an examination of cultural movements: language movements, literary movements, and movements in every kind of artistic form. How did one go about activating youth movements, women's movements, workers' movements, political movements? How, by means of creating a "distance" from politics, was it possible to create a new politics? Why did this category of culture become a catalyst throughout all of twentieth-century politics? Attending to questions of class is essential here not only for investigating the structure of class in Chinese society, but also clarifying why, within a society where both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat were weak, an intensely class-based revolution occurred, as well as how, in the course of being deployed, these class concepts realized their own "displacement."

Given that the twentieth century was an era of war and revolution, understanding China's transformations via war itself first requires examining the special features of China's war during this era. We may mark an important distinction between, on the one hand, the Northern Expedition, agrarian revolution, the Second Sino-Japanese War, and the Civil War, and, on the other hand, all anterior wars (i.e., the Opium War, Sino-French War, First Sino-Japanese War, etc.): the former were wars of mobilization based in revolutionary organization, wars seeking to advance the cause of revolution, in which the construction of a revolutionary state was part of the war itself; they were wars in which the new subject of the people was created via wars, wars that combined national liberation and international resistance to fascism; through the process of a domestic revolution, these were wars that resonated

with both the goal of national liberation and the international socialist movement. And it is precisely for this reason that, following the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the War to Resist America and Aid Korea, or the Korean War, was not only a war of national defense in the general sense, but was as well a war shaped by both twentieth-century revolutionary alliances and the history of anti-fascist alliances. The Korean War unfolded within this context as a war waged by an international alliance (Wang Hui, 2013). All of these conditions must therefore be taken into account when pursuing questions about the historical formation and substantive content of categories like state, nation, sovereignty, party, people, class, and so on; or, when investigating how People's War transformed and created new political organizations (even if they were completely indistinguishable in name) and state formations (the Chinese soviet) distinct from previous political parties; or how organization and mobilization were deployed to transform the peasantry into an organic force or politicized class of the revolution. How do we understand sovereignty and battles over sovereignty within the context of international alliances and internationally allied wars? This is just like the concept of the proletariat, which cannot be directly derived from a study of the historical formation of its members but must be understood as a concept exceeding the historicity of its constitutive members. A political party of the proletariat signifies a historical process; namely, one by which its members are pushed to endlessly overcome their given conditions of existence and adapt to proletarian politics. If a political party is thus situated at the center of a new state form, then how do we ultimately explain the relationship between sovereignty and political party, as well as that between sovereignty and the conflicts between parties? During the period of socialist construction, which is to say a time free of war conditions, what was the relationship between the political tradition of People's War and different types of social movements (like the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution)? Within the categories of party and state, how do we understand connections and differences between cultural revolutions and the May Fourth movement?

Politics of Multiple Temporalities and Self-Negation: The "Twentieth Century" as a Strange Creature

If the spatial revolution was a necessary condition for the displacement of politics, then it was the temporal revolution that operated within new thought and its internal movements to produce a politics of self-negation. The pursuit of the "new" in the twentieth century as well as sublated notions of the "old"

were often embodied in a view of time as evolution and progress. In *The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought*, I summarized this transformation in the view of the cosmos and historical outlook as the collapse of the heavenly principle 天理 and the birth of a universal principle 公理. Within the tremendous amount of materials produced from the late Qing to the May Fourth period, we can draw from several aspects in order to observe the sharp opposition between the heavenly and the universal principles.

First, the worldview of universal principle reverses the historical outlook based on the heavenly principle, taking the future and not the past as the source for ideal political and ethical practices. This reversal shattered the awareness of historical discontinuity and the subsequent will to reinstate Confucian orthodoxy through a revival of the classics in the Confucian outlook. Under the hegemony of this new historical awareness, the goal was not to reconstruct the genealogy of Confucian orthodoxy via individual ethical/political practice, or via methods such as resurrecting classic texts or reviving the practices of antiquity; rather, the new ethics was constructed by an attempt to embody historical will through a kind of throwing oneself into the cause of the future.

Second, the concepts of the "trend of the times" 时势 and the "historical manifestations of the heavenly principle" 理势 were replaced by the universal principle, which entailed a linear, progressive notion of time. In classical thought, the trend of the times was inherent within the transformation of things themselves, embedded in the ways in which rulers relate to the trends of their epoch. The transformation of things is thus not woven into a temporally oriented teleology. Linear, progressive temporality, on the other hand, provided a kind of teleological frame, changing the world of daily life, transforming and developing everything integrated into its temporal teleology.

Third, the universal principle worldview constructs the category of the "fact" through a method of atomization, as well as using this to attack the metaphysical presuppositions of the worldview of the heavenly principle. In doing so, it aims to construct a basis for theory and politics on a logic of facts or natural laws. The universal principle thus takes all of the relations, systems, orders, and standards of "things" contained within the category of the heavenly principle's protocols of "rites and music" and transforms them through the atomizing concept of facts. The scientific outlook thus exercised a near monopoly over the field of "truth" with the following results: first, the notion of progress demarcated a clear divide between the past and present, rendering the humanist methods of Song and Ming neo-Confucianism, which took up classical studies to produce new creations or revive the arts and literature, as no longer conceivable. Second, just as Auguste Comte described human history as developing from a "theological stage" to a "metaphysical

stage" and then finally a "positive stage," the worldview of linear, progressive time replaced the notion of having trends of the times. The division between religion and science, as well that between rule by divine right premised on the former and republican politics epistemologically premised on the latter, could no longer be reconciled. Third, this new concept of "things" inevitably produced a qualitative change, leading to a strict demarcation first within epistemology, second within social divisions, and subsequently within other fields such as art, ethics, politics, religion, and others. No matter whether it was at the level of knowledge or that of systems, universal phenomena of the modern world appeared: the "two kinds of culture" within intellectual fields, the separation of religion and state in politics, the division of public and private in society, and the bifurcation of communal and individual rights in law. Unlike the era of the Renaissance, it was no longer possible to move freely between ancient and contemporary eras, between the arts and sciences, or religion and the natural world.

However, almost as soon as the universal principle worldview came into being, it was subject to critique. Conservative forces, incapable of resistance, were extremely marginal; the true challenge came from within this new worldview. Yan Fu, through his translations, was the first and most important figure to introduce evolutionary thought in China. The work he chose to translate first, however, was precisely a criticism of Social Darwinism. In his translation of Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*, which Yan rendered as *Theory of Evolution* 天演论, Yan Fu maintained that "it is not the strongest of the species that survives, but the one most responsive to change." Yan Fu saw the principles of evolution as a universal "trend of the times" stretching back to antiquity rather than emerging in the age of imperialism. In addition, he criticized Huxley's theory for combining the evolution of good and evil. He could not yet understand what Herbert Spencer's theory presumed in claiming that "those who attain rule are the ones most suited to it" (Yan, 2010 [1894]: 198). Within currents of colonialism, statism, and scientific thought, Zhang Taiyan asserted that the universal principle and sovereignty were intimately connected. For Zhang, control of the individual was accomplished by the emerging universal principle's forms of domination: these being the "civilizing process" produced under colonial conditions as well as modern knowledge and its systems.

Zhang Taiyan sought to lay bare the "scientific universal principle" on the basis of two fundamental principles. First, he distinguished two views of nature, asserting that scientific research examined a nature that was not sufficient unto itself, but rather one dominated by laws of cause and effect and integrated into a designated perspective and category (e.g., a "nature" constructed by science). Taking this as his point of departure, Zhang believed

that science, as an explanatory system, was by no means adequate to give an account of the world in itself. The "universal principle" and "evolution" were not cosmic principles nor were they a priori laws; rather, they were conceptual constructs made by human beings. Instead of saying that the "universal principle" marked the emergence of the (essentially natural) "universal," it would be more apt to call it a warped expression of the "particular." Consequently, he understood the "universal principle" as a synonym for control and domination (Zhang Taiyan, 1985b [1910]: 443–44). Second, Zhang liberated the course of nature from a teleological framework, negating evolution's ethical content and thereby refuting any link between the individual and evolutionary theory's historical teleology. He also thus refused to treat the individual as an instrument for group evolution and resisted the dissolution of the social bonds embedded within customs, habits, and traditions all in the name of science. Zhang Taiyan's opposition to the universal principle eschewed particularism, and instead incisively explored its own universal principle, or a universal principle opposing the universal principle, a world of the "equality in all things": "A body cannot be instrumentalized, and thus it is unparalleled in its uniqueness. The universal cannot be spoken, it is thus an equality suited to all" (Zhang Taiyan, 1985a [1910]: 4). Zhang's own universal principle for an equality of all things exists in a world beyond language, demonstrating that we can only achieve universalism by breaking with the value system espoused by universal values (Wang Hui, 2008c: 1011–1106).

In 1907, when the Xinhai Revolution was still only germinating deep within the churning currents of the Yellow River and the Pacific Ocean, the 26-year-old Lu Xun had just abandoned the study of medicine to take up literature, arriving in Tokyo from Sendai. In an essay in the classical style, he deployed an archaic approach to discuss and examine the newly arrived "century":

> Generally speaking, the development of ideas and culture moves unceasingly toward the profound depths, for the human heart is forever dissatisfied with fixed forms. Twentieth-century civilization should thus be solemn and abstruse, markedly different from that of the nineteenth. With the flourishing of a new life and the withering away of hypocrisy, should spiritual life not also become deeper and more vibrant? Will the brilliant life of the spirit revive and burn brighter? In a moment of awakening, one departs from the world of illusory objectivity, engaging in the conscious practice of the subjective world. Can this lead to my thriving? My inner life grows ever stronger, while the meaning of human life deepens. Individual dignity and the power of judgment become more defined. The new spirit of the twentieth century is like standing strong amid wild winds and raging waves, relying on the power of the will in order to carve out a new path for one's life. (Lu Xun, 2005a [1907]: 56–57)

Lu Xun summed up the "new spirit of the twentieth century" as that which "destroys the material while lauding the spiritual, admitting the individual while expelling the people" (47). This "material" refers to the nineteenth-century material civilization ushered in by England's Industrial Revolution, or the capitalist economy. The "people" refers to the nineteenth-century political civilization pioneered by the French Revolution, or constitutional democracy and its parliamentary-party system. Lu Xun declared that the creative power of the "nineteenth century" had already fallen into decline by the century's end, with freedom and equality having already degenerated into new despotic forms evoking autocratic forms of old. For this reason, China's goal for the newly arrived century should be to overcome Europe's two revolutions and their consequences, establishing a "people's state" in which each person can freely develop (57).

This was China's earliest expression of the "twentieth century." For Chinese people at that time, this concept resembled a strange creature descending from another land, as there had never before existed a "nineteenth century" or an "eighteenth century." The year 1907 was the thirty-third year of the reign of the Guangxu emperor. Lu Xun's depiction of the "nineteenth century," which is opposed to the "twentieth century," does not touch upon Chinese history, but is drawn from the historical epoch opened by the French Revolution and England's Industrial Revolution. This European-derived century became part of China's own historical content in an extremely accelerated, sharp, and profound manner. With the advent of the Self-Strengthening movement, nineteenth-century European material civilization and political systems, which is to say the transformations ushered in by the "dual revolution," were the reform goals of intellectuals who fervently imitated and modeled themselves upon the West, and tried to catch up by "seeking truth from the West." From the 1860s onward, under the shadow of the two defeats in the Opium Wars, China launched the Self-Strengthening movement, which aimed to foster a rich and militarily strong country. Following China's defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894), this movement of "learning from foreign countries to conquer them" transformed directly into symbols of the Hundred Days Reform. The primary goals of this movement were to imitate Europe's constitutional politics, establish a parliament, and transform the imperial court into a "state." The failure of the reform movement overlapped with "the awakening of Asia," signifying the arrival of a revolutionary age. At that time, when a new republic slowly arose amid many bloody struggles, could people not easily grasp that this newly born power was in fact European in its system of democracy, market economy, material civilization, and politics? For this reason, the nineteenth century, in a different form, became an age that determined the fate of the world; namely, a "nineteenth century" of

Western Europe and Russia in which China did not exist. In order to move beyond the threshold of late-Qing reforms and revolutionary goals, China had to take up the strange creature that was the "twentieth century" as its own historic mission. Only then could it reach a turning point: "self-awareness" and "liberation."

The twentieth century was an era of internalizing the other's history, of positioning one's own history within a global scope. This era's special characteristic was the fundamental condition for the emergence of a politics of repetition and replacement. The "twentieth century" was not only a strange creature of "nineteenth-century Europe," it was also alien to "twentieth-century China." This creature was plural, being not one but many. For example, at the same time that Kang Youwei advocated "constitutional monarchy," he also wrote *The Book of Great Unity* 大同书, which not only exceeded the very "constitutional monarchy" which he advocated, but also went beyond the entire substance of the "nineteenth century," demonstrating a synthesis of Confucian thought, Buddhist theory, and a utopian communist world outlook.[13] The radical national revolutionary Zhang Taiyan used the philosophy of "equality of all things" to formulate a profound critique of "nineteenth century" statism, racism, the party-state, constitutional monarchy, formal equality, as well as anything that could accommodate the "universal principle." He also became what was considered a "strange type" within this revolutionary movement (Wang Hui, 2008b: 1011–1106). Sun Yat-sen, leader of the Xinhai Revolution, planned to synthesize the two opposing revolutions which he understood to be the "nineteenth century" national revolution and the "twentieth century" social revolution, with the latter guiding the former. The result was a split between the left and right wings of the revolutionary organization, the Guomindang, as well as the distinct path followed by the Guomindang even though it shared many ideals with the Communist Party (Wang Hui, 2012).

If the foundation for this era of China's social transformations comprised the sovereign state, national recognition, the party-state, civil society, industrial revolution, urbanization, state planning, market economy, and a corresponding system of education and media culture, then the strange creature that was the "twentieth century" lay concealed in its interior. In other words, the substance of twentieth-century China's transformation was by and large an extension or derivation of the "long nineteenth century," but was also its own opposite or harbored within it the object of its negation. This logic of self-opposition or self-negation not only inhabited late-Qing thought and the revolutionary program, but also hovered at the periphery of vision through distinct periods and events across the whole twentieth century, assuming many different forms. In China, the Republican state was founded following

the Xinhai Revolution, whereupon the Republic plunged into crisis. In 1914, the First World War broke out and discussions about a crisis of civilization continued unabated. The cultural movement that began in 1915, whether it was in its "new" or "old" dimensions, took the crises of the Republic and civilization as preconditions for thinking.

In terms of the "new," the leaders of the New Culture movement hoped to actualize a genuine notion of the republic, establishing a sovereign nation-state while at the same time maintaining a fierce critique of the party-state, democracy, and the logic of power. This movement used "New Culture" to wash away the old, anticipating that a new politics would replace elements of accumulated tradition that were the "old politics" of the nineteenth century (politics of education, youth, gender, education, labor, etc.). Just as Lu Xun announced the conclusion of the nineteenth century in 1907, they believed that the World War marked the end of an era, after which all "historical conceptions" would be inadequate to predict or understand subsequent world conditions. Concepts of democracy and science emanated from the nineteenth century, but their deployment contained a critique of the actual historical developments that took place in the nineteenth century under the very auspices of democracy and science.

In terms of the "old," periodicals like *The Eastern Miscellany* 东方杂志 and *Critical Review* 学衡 adamantly declared the end of an era, and thoroughly exposed the failings of Western civilization such that the route formerly offered by the nineteenth century was now a dead end. They harmonized civilization with the revival of traditional thought, anticipating "the advent of a new civilization." Posing the old and new as distinct and even in opposition, they probed the "awareness" of the twentieth century (Wang Hui, 2009). During the Second Sino-Japanese War, discussions on "national form" and the immediate demands for wartime mass mobilization were intimately related, yet the focus of debates was reoriented toward questions of form. Rather than calling this an effort to create a national form of arts and literature that could overcome May Fourth arts and literature, it would be more apt to describe it as purifying May Fourth arts and literature of their substantial nineteenth-century elements, such as Europeanized language, bourgeois content, and so on. The "national form" was therefore not a simple return to folk forms; it was the kind of new form that leading figures in the May Fourth era termed "seldom heard since antiquity" (Chen Duxiu's words), belonging to the twentieth century (Wang Hui, 1996).

The short twentieth century overlapped with the protracted revolution. The historical undertaking carried out by this revolution was a mélange, including problematics of the nineteenth century as well as efforts to criticize, synthesize, and overcome them. China's twentieth-century revolution

presented a world historical problem. From the imperialist epoch onward, the world's distinct regions were all drawn into a global process. The nineteenth-century European socialist movement was powerless to break the internal contradictions of capitalism, such that the completion of China's undertaking demanded passing through a so-called pre-capitalist and agrarian revolution; and yet, the state in which this revolution burst forth also confronted economic, political, and cultural forms of the nineteenth century. As such, China's revolution was invested with a dual task, from Sun Yat-sen's "political and social revolution [which] must be achieved in a single stroke" to Mao Zedong's "New Democracy."

Here, opposition and negation contain a double meaning. First, on the basis of China's distinct historical conditions and unique global position, even if it was a question of fulfilling China's nineteenth-century objectives, this would still have demanded undertaking a process of opposition and negation. For instance, the successful realization of agrarian capitalist accumulation and urban development would require moving through a capitalist economic program; establishing a sovereign nation-state via the state's critique and negation, as well as advocating internationalism (even to the extent of international alliances in war); setting up and restructuring both a political organization and national system by way of attacking and negating the institutions of political parties and bureaucracies.

Second, even if this was a process that fulfilled "nineteenth-century undertakings" such as founding a state or political party, establishing sovereign authority, building up the military, promoting urban industrialization, and so on, it still entailed renewed interrogation, extraordinary attempts, and "permanent revolution" in all respects. This was not limited to cultural and political dimensions but unfolded within all "modernized constructs." To reiterate Lu Xun's words: "The new spirit of the twentieth century is like standing strong amid wild winds and raging waves, relying on the power of the will in order to carve out a new path for one's life" (Lu Xun, 2005a [1907]: 57). "The power of the will" expresses a kind of dynamism, a super-objective condition and capacity to engage in creation; but the creative potential of this condition is not purely subjective, nor is it a utopianism divorced from material social pursuits. It is in fact a form of sustained political strategy and practical activity, devoted to the remolding of the former world and the creation of a new one. The twentieth century was thus the site of a fierce opposition to the old world as well as an intense dissent from one's own century.

I understand this logic of dissent toward oneself or self-negation as the futurity of twentieth-century politics. If the future expresses the emergence of a "not yet" object or world, then we may follow Ernst Bloch's distinction: there exist two conditions of "not yet," of which one is a kind of material

condition of Not-Yet-Become and the other is a subjective condition, one of the consciousness which is Not-Yet-Conscious. "Not yet" is latent under our feet, repressed within our designs, consciousness, and desires (Bloch, 1986 [1954–1959]: 1.119, 129). Twentieth-century politics simultaneously contained both senses of "not yet." While one kind of "not yet" embodied a form of unfinished but clear direction within the overriding process of revolution or transformation, there was also a kind of emphasis on methods oriented toward what remains unknown, the start of a Not-Yet-Conscious. In this latter case, leaders and participants of a movement are all unable to formulate a clear plan for the movement itself, but at the same time acknowledge that the Not-Yet-Conscious is contained within its actual advance. But unlike Bloch's utopianism, within the practice of China's revolution, the dimension of the future not only unfolded within a temporal logic, but also was manifested through the logic of action, of politics, and of military strategy. Concepts of action, politics, strategy, and the like, must develop through the category of a "temporal tendency," always indicating movements of contradiction or relations between ourselves and the enemy within a defined situation. As such, they contain concrete plans to overcome all kinds of difficulties, the intense aspiration to preserve and develop one's own robust power, and the tenacious logic of ultimately seizing victory. This is a futurity that can only be manifested by throwing oneself into the movement of contradictions.

The 1960s gave rise to an expression of the most extreme form of this self-opposing politics. Unlike previous revolutions, the Cultural Revolution contained many more indeterminacies. These indeterminacies did not even possess the quality of experimentation found in the earlier period of China's revolution; instead, the future of the Not-Yet-Conscious was sought out under extreme conditions. In this respect, if a movement is not only seeking to reach goals that were already established but is also seeking out a futurity that cannot be known in advance, then self-contradictions in such a movement are unavoidable. A condition of self-negation or self-reform began anew in the 1970s; however, it was quickly reoriented toward a new era of self-affirmation. The logic of self-negation followed the decline or transformation and suspension of the "short twentieth century." It remains to be seen whether, in the discourse of this new era, this logic will take up a new form to enliven its culture and politics.

Defeat and Victory: Resistance to Despair and the Philosophy of Victory

Emerging from the womb of European capitalist revolutions and colonialism, the twentieth century heralded wars and atrocities on a scope unseen before

in human history and of a cruelty far beyond that of antiquity. Various struggles different in substance and form became entangled with each other. Owing to the development of scientific techniques and the transformation of state conditions, political control and mobilization reached the highest level in history. While the pursuit and excavation of this epoch's tragedies are necessary, such research must be situated within respective conditions of different forces and concrete historical conditions. Such an endeavor must avoid obscuring the different dimensions of these struggles or passing judgment on the entire era by wielding an abstract moralism. With the internal and external crises of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as well as their ultimate defeat, not only have attempts to challenge capitalism from outside the system itself failed, but the classic challenges to capitalism (class, political party, socialist state) have all tended toward disintegration, transformation, or disappearance. This was the historical basis for "the end of history." For these reasons, many works on twentieth-century history take failure as the point of departure for their analyses. The guiding thread and narrative focus of Eric Hobsbawm's *Age of Extremes*, for instance, recounts the century of Eastern revolutions as a series of failures. With regard to communism, the Soviet Union failed by lapsing into bureaucratism, China failed through its descent into permanent revolution, the international communist movement underwent the failure of internationalism, and ultimately communism failed by becoming a kind of faith (Hobsbawm, 1994: 379, 469, 488). As for capitalism, as a result of Soviet Russia having exposed covert diplomacy after the October Revolution, the imperialist system encountered setbacks; but, at the same time, the nation-state and religious identity served to constrain democratic systems and the rights of their citizens, plunging them into a deep crisis (139). Liberalism has not yet, however, gained victory. It continues to be undermined by the fact that, following the Cold War, the most robust economy has been precisely that of China, staked in a communist political and economic system utterly unlike that in the West (412–13). The constitution of an anti-fascist alliance was preconditioned upon fascism's sudden rise and the massacres of 1935–1945, but this only attests to Hobsbawm's principal theme of the "short twentieth century": namely, that the twentieth century was predicated not on a conflict between capitalism and communism, but between supporters and opponents of the Enlightenment. Consequently, the opposition between capitalism and socialism across this century is only a kind of arbitrary, fabricated construction (4).

This series of failures becomes the guiding thread for Hobsbawm's construction of a clear comparison between the "short twentieth century" and the "dual revolution" that was its forerunner: the ever-productive though war and disaster-ridden "long twentieth century." Yet Hobsbawm neglected to take

his questions further. Did the breakup of the Soviet Union represent a complete failure of the October Revolution? Was the Soviet Union, which mounted a strong and enduring opposition to fascism, a failure? Were contributions of the socialist camp to third world anti-imperial and anticolonial struggles a total failure? If China's economic development attests to liberalism's hitherto unfulfilled success and China's push to globalize may potentially lead to the completion of neoliberal globalization, then what finally is the relationship between China's reality, its future, and the continuous revolution of the twentieth century? In 1902 Hobson predicted,

> It is at least conceivable that China might so turn the tables upon the Western industrial nations, and, either by adopting their capital and organisers or, as is more probably, by substituting her own, might flood their markets with her cheaper manufactures, and refusing their imports in exchange might take her payment in liens upon their capital, reversing the earlier process of investment until she gradually obtained financial control over her quondam patrons and civilisers. (Hobson, 1975 [1902]: 309)

Hobson's analysis lacks an explanation of the principal transformation within such a process: to wit, how an extremely impoverished and weak country like China could, through numerous struggles, reverse its fortunes and "turn the tables." What's more, in the range of possible perspectives on twentieth-century politics, it would have been totally beyond the scope to ask whether it would ultimately be a failure or success at turning the tables. But within our contemporary discourse, such assertions were extraordinarily prescient, arising as they did amid that era's imperialist craze to carve up China's territory. Such a penetrating vision far exceeds what is offered up by most historians' heavy sighs.

The imperialist wars and the Cold War had a profound impact on China's formation, but the influence of China's revolution, triggered by war and social crisis, has proven ineradicable not only in China after the revolution, but in the world at large, which has been transformed by that revolution. Not only did China become truly independent and industrialized through the process of revolution and national construction, but unprecedented changes occurred in social relations, ties between people and the natural world, geopolitics, and more. It is nearly impossible to locate a single field in which profound transformations did not take place, from written and spoken language to the state and political system, from social organization to labor and gender, from cultural trends to daily life, from relations between the urban and rural to those of different regions, from religious belief to social theory. Unlike the French and Russian revolutions, China's revolution cannot be

symbolized by one or two incidents, nor can the resistance and opposition to it be delimited by one or two events. The short twentieth century was an extended revolutionary process. Within it, there existed many players who occupied the stage for a long period, such as the two leaders of the Communist and Nationalist parties; but the battles and maneuvers were by no means limited to those generated between a fixed pair. What are called the revolution and counterrevolution were both processes that gave birth to numerous fusions, splits, transformations, and new subjects (revolutionary or counterrevolutionary). This was an era of intensified politicization, an age in which numerous political subjects were born and broken, and in which totality and contradiction were mutually brought into being and transformed, and finally in which the nature of the enemy was clearly demarcated yet continued to undergo major changes. Consequently, whether we examine this as a success or failure, we cannot avoid questions that are not simple and transparent, such as whose failure or whose success and, even, what is failure and success. The "short twentieth century" was thus been covered by this expansive, complex, profound, and intense process. Its density, depth, and breadth were all historically unparalleled. Today, we struggle to imagine a life that has not been transformed by the twentieth century. It is impossible to grasp the significance of this era if we leave behind revolution, creation, and the investigation of failure.

Although historians, philosophers, and trauma investigators have taken failure as the starting point to look back upon the preceding century, should we not also consider the totally new understandings of success and failure that were bound up within the consciousness of the century as such, throughout its birth, development, and transformations? China's revolution developed rich reflections on failure and victory, redefining the revolution itself from within the revolutionary process. It would therefore be difficult to grasp the dialectical relationship of failure and success if one leaves behind the range of perspectives possible within China's revolution. Lu Xun's "literature resisting despair" and Mao Zedong's "philosophy of victory," of his "moving from victory to victory," were both located within literary/philosophical explanations of hope and despair, failure and victory, all of which were bound to China's revolutionary process. In my view, the "philosophy of victory" is historical thinking produced by the total merging of the self into a collective struggle. More precisely, thinking about the revolutionary subject's strategy, sacrifices, and tragedies is oriented toward a program for action leading to victory. Consequently, all feelings of loneliness, ennui, dejection, or futile exhaustion, which had been bequeathed by the May Fourth literary and intellectual fields, were thoroughly eliminated. "The philosophy of victory" was rooted in the cruelty of collective struggle and historical tragedy,

embodying considerations of strategy to turn circumstances of failure toward those of victory. Failure was not the mother of success; rather, it was the starting point for the logic of "the philosophy of success." To start from failure meant to act from a position of adversity, once again distinguishing the "weakest link" and seeking out both strategy and military tactics to conquer the enemy. Furthermore, this was a process of restructuring one's relationship to the enemy through the creation of new circumstances. This was in fact a process of restructuring the self or one's subjectivity.

Texts by Mao Zedong, including "Why Is It That Red Political Power Can Exist in China?" (October 5, 1928), "The Struggle in the Chingkang Mountains" (November 25, 1928), and "A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire" (January 5, 1930), and others, all signaled the birth of the "philosophy of success," providing literary authors who later narrated the revolution's torturous path and difficulties with a kind of overarching optimism, in which the revolution "moves from victory to victory" or in which "the way ahead is bright, but the path itself is long and winding." In August 1949, on the eve of the birth of the People's Republic of China, Mao took up a method that is difficult to dispute in order to discuss history since 1840:

> How different is the logic of the imperialists from that of the people! Make trouble, fail, make trouble again, fail again [. . .] till their doom; that is the logic of the imperialists and all reactionaries the world over in dealing with the people's cause, and they will never go against this logic. [. . .] Fight, fail, fight again, fail again, fight again [. . .] till their victory; that is the logic of the people, and they too will never go against this logic. (Mao, 1969 [1949]: 428)

From the perspective of recreating the subject, this process from struggle and failure to victory was not only a logic of the people but also a means by which to create the people qua revolutionary subject. Mao declared,

> All these wars of aggression, together with political, economic and cultural aggression and oppression, have caused the Chinese to hate imperialism, made them stop and think, "What is all this about?" and compelled them to bring their revolutionary spirit into full play and become united through struggle. They fought, failed, fought again, failed again and fought again and accumulated long years of experience, accumulated the experience of hundreds of struggles, great and small, military and political, economic and cultural, with bloodshed and without bloodshed—and only then won today's basic victory. (Mao, 1969 [1949]: 426)

Clearly, it was not the same group of people who saw through resistance struggles from the Opium Wars onward, nor was there an absence of

important distinctions in the subject of each successive struggle. But the logic of struggle-failure-struggle constructed the "people" as growing increasingly mature and strong, moving from success to success. As long as a logic of struggle exists, failure need not result in ultimate defeat. In other words, the meaning of failure changes within a logic of struggle. As such, a true measure of failure is not the failure itself, but in whether the logic of struggle survives.

Lu Xun characterized Sun Yat-sen as an "eternal revolutionary." "Success" was not a definitive result, but rather a process of carrying on the battle without being crushed by the blows of failure (Lu Xun, 2005b [1926]: 306). It was the link between this entire process and a dialectical understanding of its difficulties, as well as strategic action based on such an understanding, that gave cause for the optimism of "the philosophy of success." Success was not something abstract that would arrive in the future, nor was it something to be found in an abstract utopianism; rather, it was precisely something to be found within both a dialectical analysis of comparisons to enemy powers and concrete practice. "The philosophy of success" was philosophy in action, but not voluntarism. On the contrary, it situated aspirations for victory and an analysis of circumstances, especially comparisons to the enemy, within contradictions of opposition and transformation. It as well was a guide to intense interventions into these various oppositions and transformations.

Lu Xun's "literature resisting despair" rejected an optimistic worldview, but by no means opposed collective struggle. It sought to locate a path to the future in a broad world, rather than placing hope solely in the domain of subjectivity. Though "literature resisting despair" may be clearly differentiated from "optimistic literature," the two share common points with the "philosophy of success." For instance, they both are a philosophy of resistance and action, or a philosophy of struggle. On many occasions, Lu Xun mourned the dissolution of the *New Youth* group in nostalgic tones. But he did more: he labored to establish a new position for collective struggle by means of founding a new periodical or literary society (Lu Xun, 2005c [1933]: 195). Not only did these considerations spring from a strategic analysis of opposing powers, but they also emanated from his acknowledgment of and reflections on failure. From this came his famous coinage of "trench warfare," stemming from a literary and military strategy (Lu Xun, 2005c [1933]: 16). This examination of strategies and tactics was carried out in order to succeed in cultural struggles waged according to military-style strategies and tactics. If we compare this text to *On Protracted Warfare*, a classic work of twentieth-century China's "philosophy of success," could we then discern cultural guerilla warfare tactics? Just as *On Protracted Warfare*'s examination of People's War and its forms is rooted in an analysis of ongoing military difficulties and

failures, so too were reflections on cultural guerilla warfare born from a review of the failures in the New Culture movement's positional warfare. In Lu Xun's "Hometown," the famous phrase "It's like a path across the land—it's not there to begin with, but when lots of people go the same way, it comes into being" takes Bloch's Not-Yet-Consciousness and transforms it into a search for the potentialities contained within a practice or action (Lu Xun, 1990 [1921]: 100). A future dimension was thus presaged from within a dead-end situation. In Lu Xun's *Wild Grass*, the phrase "despair, like hope, is but vanity" is not a negation of hope, but resistance to it, to Not-Yet-Become, and even to the Not-Yet-Conscious (Lu Xun, 2003 [1927]: 36).

The "philosophy of success" in China's revolution, born amid tremendous hardship and bloodshed, arose from an analysis of failed circumstances that rendered revolutionary power totally fruitless. It was the countryside and not the city, the periphery and not the center, which became the necessary place to develop revolutionary strategy; but the delimitation of this new space was founded in circumstances of defeat and a considerable power disparity with the enemy. The logic of success existed in sustained action, searching, and struggle; it was therefore distinct from blind optimism or fanciful hopes. The deterioration of this "philosophy of success," namely through its transformation from a "philosophy of success" into all sorts of "optimistic literature," occurred precisely by abandoning analyses of failed circumstances, thus giving up truly strategic or tactical thinking. If this kind of thinking was not cast off, one would be prone to lose one's orientation, and one could do no more than pin one's hopes to the inevitability of success or an abstract notion of the future. Consequently, the veracity of "hope" was attested to by interring it within "vanity," cutting it off from the dimension of the future contained within the "resistance to despair." This was a logic of blind groping and not one of success and could thus too easily become a logic of "disorientation." As a result, posterity has considered this to be a form of despair, and not a means of resisting it. "Literature of hope" and "optimistic literature" were indeed illusory, but "literature resisting despair" and the "philosophy of success" belonged to the realm of action. Whether it was Lu Xun's "resisting despair" or Mao Zedong's "moving from success to success," both included an acknowledgment of failure as well as an awareness and exploration of the Not-Yet-Become and Not-Yet-Conscious.

When judging the successes and failures in China's revolution, it is therefore necessary to first excavate the range of perspectives that were possible within the revolution as well as the sources of those successes and failures. Only then can one fully understand the significance of its social struggle. This was an age when political initiatives not only redefined the field of politics but did so within the category of political sovereignty; yet, this political

initiative was by no means subordinate to a given logic of power, but always sought an opportunity for revolution and self-negation. This was a process of politicization: a process of turning experiences into a means for advancing the revolution and making strategic compromises; a politicization further expressed through the integration of various problems (related to youth, women, workers and labor, language and literature, city and country, and so on) into the category of "culture," thereby turning politics into a field of creativity; it was the experience of incorporating military struggle, land reform, political construction, mass line, and the united front all into the single corpus of People's War, as well as presenting People's War as a transformation of various political categories handed down from the nineteenth century. Although the experience of mass line politics obscured the boundary between the party and mass movements, it had not yet disappeared. There thus remained a tension between using mass movements to transform the party, as well as using the party to reshape mass movements.

Under the conditions described above, political authority was no longer equivalent to that of a traditional state apparatus, but became a political structure facilitating politics and mass movements rooted in the party. Yet irrespective of whether it was the party's control of the state apparatus or the ongoing attacks and infiltrations into the state and state power carried out by mass movements, none of these signify that the state or its apparatus of authority were abandoned; this was in fact the ongoing politicization of this apparatus. In a polity where over 95 percent of the population comprised peasants, the party advanced a peasant movement in order to transform the rural lower tier of society into the revolutionary movement's political force. Class categories were in actual fact experienced as the political process of becoming a class, but at the same time that this political process was founded in a serious engagement with the objective grounds for class structure, it also transformed class analysis itself into the political impetus for this process of becoming a class. The 1950s and 1960s, in which the international political field was even further monopolized by concepts of sovereignty, the War to Resist America and Aid Korea, the Bandung Conference, and Sino-Soviet intra-party debates all provide cases of politicization within the fields of military affairs and international relations. All aspects of the political processes described above entailed an international dimension. In other words, there was mutual support and interpenetration between the logic of twentieth-century China's international politics and the above-described domestic political logics. They all occurred within a set of horizontal temporal relations.

Any analysis of politicization and depoliticization in twentieth-century China must be accompanied by a search for the reconstruction of opportunities for politicization. This method is constructed by working through a

dialogue with the range of perspectives possible within China's revolution. I intend to proceed from four different fields in order to seek out the Not-Yet-Become and Not-Yet-Conscious politics latent within this historical process: political integration, cultural politics, People's War, and the party and class. These four topics were all born out of an age of revolution and war. While they were all mutually enmeshed, each field had its own particular emphasis, appearing in different historical periods through different guises. Political integration turned the ongoing search for a state form into a process of political competition. Ongoing cultural movements brought about new forms of political understanding, redefined political issues and fields, created a new era of people. People's War was a process of political mobilization that not only fundamentally transformed both the relations between the countryside and the city as well as the nation identities in modern China, but also further reshaped and restructured familiar political categories such as class, party, state, people, and so forth.

Therefore, the questions I want to pursue are as follows: under conditions of the state's failure and the collapse of parliament as well as political parties following the Xinhai Revolution, how do we account for the specificities of "culture" as a category as well as its relations to political initiative? Why was China's revolution able to advance a class movement directed toward socialism within a society in which neither a working class nor a bourgeois class had come to maturity, transforming their ongoing politics and initiatives into the substantive content of class concepts? How did this happen? Twentieth-century China's political process had internal connections to wars of different characters and different forms. Among them, People's War with its many dynamic forms gradually came into being during the agrarian revolution and matured in the period of the Second Sino-Japanese War. People's War helped to form the Chinese Communist Party by promoting land reform, the establishment of political power, and the cyclic communication between party and the masses. As such, the Chinese Communist Party was constituted in a manner utterly distinct from parties of earlier times, including the Bolsheviks. It possessed supra-party elements that exceeded a typical political organization. In addition to all of this, People's War also injected a new dynamism and potential into twentieth-century Chinese culture. How do we explain the politics of People's War? Following the period of People's War, how did this distinct experience serve as a source for efforts to reconstruct politics? At what point were concepts, categories, and problematics such as class, party, nation, state, the masses, and mass line, the people and People's War, etc., politicized? Under what kind of conditions did they exhibit a tendency toward depoliticization?

In the twentieth century, the concept of class gave rise to two distinct modes of political mobilization. The first allowed those who were not strictly speaking members of the proletarian class in terms of identity, property rights, or control of the means of production to become either the servants of said class or its champions, such as when peasants or intellectuals who issued from the ruling class became "proletarian" subjects or even leaders. The second kind of mobilization fixed class origin as a firm and immutable system of signs and a standard by which to define "ourselves" and the enemy. How then did the politicization and depoliticization of class concepts occur? The party and the mass line were intimately connected under the conditions of People's War, as expressed in "from the masses, to the masses." This produced a tremendous amount of political energy and dynamism; but under different conditions, such dynamism was a precondition for partification and statification, or depoliticization. How can we think about the politicization and depoliticization of the party? In sum, what I am examining here are various relations to politicization, including the relation of politicization to political form, to culture, military affairs, and economics. If we abandon the complex process of politicization that was rooted in this era's concrete historical conditions, then we will almost certainly be unable to historically grasp the distinct meanings of these political categories within twentieth-century discourse.

This effort seeks to reconstruct this era's range of perspectives from within it. Historical research is inextricably tied to the researcher's values and methods, but in comparison with earlier periods of textual compilation and research, studies on the twentieth century are nearly fated to include interventions into our reality. The kinds of questions we pose about history involve how we define our own contemporary position. I thus consider my own position part of the duration of the twentieth century. The twentieth century was an era with a high degree of politicization, one in which politics infiltrated every field of social life, as well as demanding people adopt a political position toward every aspect of social life. We can go on conducting research as in earlier periods, describing the flow of twentieth-century Chinese history from the perspective of one field study or another (economics, politics, military history, culture, etc.); but no matter the field in which we conduct our research, we cannot avoid addressing and deliberating on a central question: Why was this tension so intense in the twentieth century, such that it ultimately tended to saturate everything; furthermore, in what came before, and even more so in what followed, why was this tension rare or weak?

The curtain has fallen on the twentieth century, but the dual forms of Not-Yet-Become and Not-Yet-Conscious continue to exist in our world today, a point of departure for those who turn once again to utopianism to seek out the future. Yet I emphasize: the reconstruction of politicization demands values

and ideas, but it is not a utopian plan. It is a practical process of a subject's continuous formation. In the twentieth century, this process was associated with how the powers of revolution, through re-understanding the world, threw themselves into the movement of contradictions in order to pursue a successful strategy and tactics (i.e., the way to act within concrete circumstances).

Making twentieth-century China an object of thought is therefore a search for an internal perspective on China within the twentieth century. It also encompasses, by necessity, an examination of what may lie in the future by means of an inquiry into the present. Here, the future is not fixed within a temporal teleology, but is immanent within our lives, struggles, and actualizations that have yet to present themselves or be discovered. Just as history has no end, a century can only continue along its path via various forms of evolution, continuity and rupture, variation and transformation, failure and success. The birth of the twentieth century was an event: one founded in a concrete assessment of the trend of the times, and infiltrating thought, culture, art, historical reflection, and the spatio-temporal conditions of our daily lives. Henceforth, the century as an event can no longer be measured as merely an abstract, immediately quantifiable temporal unit.[14] In this sense, as categories of different stages, the "long century" and "short century" belong to the event that is the century, describing its inception or conclusion. They thus always imply scrutinizing and further judging the relationship between this event and our contemporary conditions.

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Notes

1. Among the numerous collections with discussions related to the concept of the feudal, Feng Tianyu employs meticulous textual research to discuss the misnomer of "feudal" as a concept (Feng, 2010). This is a meaningful discussion with respect to the problem of different historical stages; yet, when it comes to understanding the twentieth-century concept of the feudal and its relations to intellectual debates and social movements, the view of it being a "misnomer" or "fabrication of a name for a thing" fails to provide a historicized understanding of this concept's modern production.
2. This follows Carl Schmitt's concept of "spatial revolution." His definition of this concept has points of convergence with Marx's description in the *Communist Manifesto* of the advent of the capitalist era. Schmitt says: "The expansion can be so deep and so surprising that not only quantities and measurements, not only the outermost human horizon, but even the structure of the concept of space itself is altered. Then one may speak of a spatial revolution. But a transformation of the sense of space is generally a part of each great historical change. That is the authentic core of the encompassing political, economic, and cultural transformation that then transpires" (Schmitt, 2015 [1942]: 49).
3. "Occupation" (*Landnahme*) does not refer to occupation in the sense of civil law (*occupatio*). In other words, it does not concern an authority taking possession of hitherto unpossessed land; rather, it is the instauration of a spatial order. It requires undertaking the measurement, division, and distribution of territorial space (*topos*), establishing a whole new hierarchical order upon that space, what Schmitt called "orientation." Without an orientation, he explains, one has "no concrete order" (Schmitt, 2006a [1950]: 50).
4. The text of the treaty has also been included in a recent work by historian Dai Yi (Dai, 2018).
5. For more on the *beg* system, see Saguchi Tōru, 1983: 121–22.
6. See Wu Fuhuan, 1995, on the Zongli Yamen system.
7. See Qu and Xie, 2006, 2007, an archival collection of documents. These documents were selected from the Qing Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive holdings in the First Historical Archives of China. See also Wang Shengzu, 1981; Cen, 1978; Fang, 2014; and Ding, 2017.
8. On the Portuguese protectorate of missions, see Zhang Tingmao, 2005.
9. For more on the deployment of British imperial methods of governance by the East India Company within India, see Bayly, 1994.
10. The most meticulous archives on the activities of the Dutch East India Company in the Taiwan region are contained in the *Report on East India Affairs*, in the

holdings of the National Archives of the Netherlands. The section of this report relating to Taiwan has already been translated (Cheng, 2000).

11. See Davis, 1836: 47–48, for the 1670 effort; Morse, 1926–1929: 193–94, for the efforts in 1696 and 1729; Edwards, 1980: 234, for that in 1715. Edwards asserted, "It is clear from the measures taken by the Chinese authorities [. . .] that they did not consider themselves bound by either the 1715 or 1729 agreements made by the Hoppo with the company" (1980: 235–36). Hoppo refers to the administrator of the Canton Customs. See also Chen Li, 2011: 439.
12. Zheng Zhilong rose to prominence in the age of struggles of the Spanish and Portuguese against the Dutch and English (Tang, 2002).
13. Even while Kang Youwei was proposing a utopian project, his thinking could not avoid carrying traces of the nineteenth century. Racism, scientism, and other elements permeated his revolutionary thought, but always on the distinct premise of self-negation current within the epoch's thought. See Wang Hui, 2008a: 737–830.
14. I understand the concept of "duration" in the sense of a classical trend of the times. Henri Bergson criticized Spencer's understanding of temporality, arguing that it was a mechanistic view, excluding duration (*la durée*) from temporality as well as dynamism from movement. As such, he saw Spencer's temporality as incapable of revealing the essence of time. Bergson's theory of duration has much to offer in terms of our own understanding of the relationship between the century and time. Yet Bergson's concept of duration was a description of consciousness, whereas within the trend of the times, duration articulates the occurrence of an event as well as its post-occurrence. See Chapter 2, "The Multiplicity of Conscious States: The Idea of Duration" in Bergson, 1913.

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