

UNENDING CAPITALISM

What forces shaped the twentieth-century world? Capitalism and communism are usually seen as having been engaged in a fight to the death during the Cold War. With the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese Communist Party aimed to end capitalism. Karl Gerth argues that despite the socialist rhetoric of class warfare and egalitarianism, Communist Party policies actually developed a variety of capitalism and expanded consumerism. This negated the goals of the Communist Revolution across the Mao era (1949–76) and down to the present. Through topics related to state attempts to manage what people began to desire – wristwatches and bicycles, films and fashion, leisure travel and Mao badges – Gerth challenges fundamental assumptions about capitalism, communism, and countries conventionally labeled as socialist. In so doing, his provocative history of China suggests how larger forces related to the desire for mass-produced consumer goods reshaped the twentieth-century world and remade people's lives.

KARL GERTH is Professor of History at the University of California, San Diego, where he holds the Hwei-Chih and Julia Hsiu Chair in Chinese Studies. His earlier books are *As China Goes, So Goes the World* and *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation*.

UNENDING CAPITALISM

*How Consumerism Negated China's Communist
Revolution*

KARL GERTH

University of California, San Diego



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Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> vi
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	vii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xi
Introduction: Consumerism and Capitalism	I
1 Self-Expanding and Compulsory Consumerism	10
2 Building State Capitalism Across 1949	41
3 Soviet Influences on State Consumerism	73
4 State Consumerism in Advertising, Posters, and Films	101
5 State Consumerism in the Service Sector	133
6 Consumerism in the Cultural Revolution	169
7 The Mao Badge Phenomenon as Consumer Fad	200
Afterword	229
<i>Notes</i>	233
<i>Bibliography</i>	337
<i>Index</i>	373

Figures

0.1 Industrial consumerism	<i>page</i> 3
0.2 Social consumption	6
0.3 State institutions promoting consumerism	8
1.1 Two faces of progress	17
1.2 A slave to foreign fashions	20
1.3 Conduits of consumerism	25
1.4 Shift in state consumerism	39
2.1 “Industry and Defense”	45
2.2 An army of consumers defends the country	49
2.3 Vilification of capitalists and consumerism	61
3.1 Elder Brother	75
3.2 “What do Soviet women wear?”	78
3.3 Promoting Soviet fashions	85
3.4 Fashioning a model consumer	88
4.1 Heiren toothpaste advertisements	105
4.2 Women sell	106
4.3 Advertising bourgeois lifestyles	108
4.4 Socialistic changes	109
4.5 Communicating status	112
4.6 Class struggle forgotten and remembered	127
4.7 A nurse’s fashion sense	129
5.1 “Shanghai No. 1 Department Store”	140
5.2 Inspecting the Tianqiao Department Store	159
6.1 “Destroy the old world and build a new one”	172
6.2 The road to revolution	173
6.3 Mao-endorsed fashions	196
7.1 Mao badge diversity	205
7.2 A self-expanding badge fad	212
7.3 Trading in revolution	216
7.4 Class photo	218
7.5 Heartwarming inequality	225

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ix

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Abbreviations

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DGB SH	<i>Dagongbao</i> (Shanghai)
JFRB	<i>Jiefang ribao</i> (<i>Liberation Daily</i>)
NBCK	<i>Neibu cankao</i> (Internal reference)
NEP	New Economic Policies
NPM	National Products Movement
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
RMRB	<i>Renmin ribao</i> (<i>People's Daily</i>)
SMA	Shanghai Municipal Archives
SRC	Shanghai Revolutionary Committee
WDGW	Song, Yongyi, ed., 中国文化大革命文库 (Chinese Cultural Revolution database) (Hong Kong: Xianggang Zhongwen daxue, Zhongguo yanjiu fuwu zhongxin, 2002)