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1 Goodbye Radicalism

The Early 1990s

> What is the foundation stone of contemporary Europe which lies so brilliantly before us? It is the gift of revolutions.
>
> Chen Duxiu, "Wenxue geminglun" (On the Literary Revolution)

> In the twenty-first century, we must no longer wage revolution. We must not once again yearn for, eulogize, and worship revolution as if it were sacred.
>
> Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu, *Gaobie geming* (Farewell to Revolution)

Revolution, according to Mao Zedong, cannot be compared to "writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery" because it cannot be "so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous." Revolution is an "act of violence."[1] During the decade after the death of the Great Helmsman, Chinese intellectuals began to question not only the necessity of violent revolution but also the notion of radical change. The belief that there was "no making without breaking" (*bupo buli*) had permeated not only Chinese socialist modernity, they argued, but also China's famous twentieth-century political-cum-cultural movement, the May Fourth Movement (1917–21).[2] In the historical, cultural, and political discourse of the early 1990s, intellectuals said goodbye to the radicalism of twentieth-century China.

Between 1989 and 1993, in a series of debates in leading academic journals, Chinese intellectuals engaged in the unmaking of twentieth-century radicalism, the specter of which loomed large. Why did Chinese intellectuals feel a need to unwrite the recent past at this historical juncture? This book seeks to answer

[1] Mao Tse-tung, "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), 1.44–46.

[2] I follow the periodization of Tse-tsung Chow because this is when the main events of the movement took place. In 1917, new thought and literature gained thrust, whereas after 1921, the movement was more oriented toward political action. See Chow, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 6. On the complex transition from cultural action to political mobilization during May Fourth, see Shakhar Rahav, *The Rise of Political Intellectuals in Modern China: May Fourth Societies and the Roots of Mass-Party Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

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that question. A series of political and socioeconomic developments render the early 1990s a pivotal period in the history of post-Mao China. The end of the Cold War and the implosion of the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991 raised profound questions about the legacy of socialism and the legitimacy of the Chinese Revolution. The repression of the student democracy movement in the spring of 1989 ended the already severed alliance between Chinese intellectuals and the state in the service of modernization. The launch of the second reform period, with Deng Xiaoping's Southern Tour in early 1992 and followed by the Fourteenth Party Congress in October of the same year, created formidable economic, political, social, and cultural changes that existed in tension with the narratives of revolution and socialism.

In her influential work *Translingual Practice*, Lydia Liu asks, "Does theory travel? If so, how? . . . Indeed, who does the traveling?[3] Japan had been a crucial node in the trajectory of Western theory traveling to China during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as were Europe and the United States thereafter, or the Soviet Union in the mid-twentieth century.[4] Throughout, however, Chinese intellectuals abroad served as interpreters of the foreign theories. During the early 1990s, different generations of Chinese émigrés in the United States attracted the attention of mainland Chinese intellectuals. In addition to those who left China before or after 1949 and who were educated in Hong Kong, Taiwan, or the United States, they also included a new generation of Chinese intellectuals who had participated in the reform era. In the case of the former, they had left China decades earlier and were eager to bring Chinese culture back from the "periphery" to the "centre" in the new economic and political climate.[5] Critical of the Maoist attitude toward Chinese tradition, these Chinese intellectuals traced the radical rejection of Chinese tradition back to the decades following the First Opium War (1839–42) and connected this period of radicalism with that of May Fourth and the Cultural Revolution (1966–76).[6]

[3] Lydia H. Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China 1900–1937* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 21.
[4] This is not to say that Europe, the United States, and Japan were the only places from where or through which theory traveled. See, for example, Rebecca Karl's work on the role of colonized nations in China's identity formation and conceptions of nationalism at the turn of the century. Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002). Also, as Liu notes, the traveling of theory was not merely one-directional or merely involving actors outside of China. Examples include China-Japan-China trajectories and trajectories involving Jesuits and Protestants based in China. See Liu, *Translingual Practice*, 32–39.
[5] Tu Wei-ming "'Cultural China': The Periphery as the Center," *Daedalus* 120.2 (1991), 1–32.
[6] This is the official Chinese periodization. Others use 1966–69, corresponding to the Red Guard movement. Guobin Yang, *The Red Guard Generation and Political Activism in China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 6. On the Cultural Revolution, see Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2006); Frank

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After 1989, with China's self-identity and the identity of Chinese intellectuals both in disarray, mainland Chinese intellectuals explored novel narratives of modern Chinese history and reworked some of the ideas of Chinese intellectuals in the United States for a mainland environment. They were hence also intermediaries or "mediators" in their own right.[7] Newly launched journals, lecture tours, international conferences, and visiting professorships beginning in the 1980s, in both China and abroad, allowed for interactions among scholars in mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore, Chinese émigrés in the United States, and scholars in Europe and the United States. In addition to the decline in travel restrictions on mainland China, the reforms in Taiwan allowed visits from mainland travelers after 1987. Publications in Taiwan of works that had first appeared on the mainland led one scholar to refer to 1987 as Taiwan's year of "mainland fever." In addition, the New York–based journal *Zhishi fenzi* (The Intellectual), which was established in 1984 and published in Chinese, functioned as a bridge among scholars based on the mainland, in Taiwan, in Hong Kong, and overseas.[8]

In 1988 Yü Ying-shih, a prominent intellectual historian of China based in the United States, delivered a lecture on radicalism and conservatism in modern Chinese history at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. But it was only after 1989 that reflections on radicalism began to extend to mainland China. Also noteworthy was a 1991 conference held in New York on Chinese intellectuals during China's transitional period that brought together scholars from mainland China and elsewhere. This was followed by the publication of polemical articles by Yü Ying-shih and the mainland Marxist historian Jiang Yihua in *Ershiyi shiji* (Twenty-First Century) in 1992.[9] The latter, a Hong Kong–based scholarly journal, was founded in 1990 and served as a bridge among the various groups of scholars. Thus, a discourse that spread across Chinese-language media and that included a "China" not limited to the geopolitical boundaries of the People's Republic of China but also including Chinese communities globally began to unfold. The participants were part of the "Sinophone world" of intellectuals who made use of "China-originated languages and dialects" in attempts to make sense of the changes that were

Dikötter, *The Cultural Revolution: A People's History, 1962–1976* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016); Joseph W. Esherick, Paul G. Pickowicz, and Andrew G. Walder, eds., *The Chinese Cultural Revolution as History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

7 Peter Burke notes that, next to those who emigrate and bring back new knowledge, "stay-at-home scholars" at universities in major cities are also "mediators" in the sense that they gather and process knowledge. See Peter Burke, *Exiles and Expatriates in the History of Knowledge, 1500–2000* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2017), 21.

8 John Makeham, *Lost Soul: "Confucianism" in Contemporary Chinese Academic Discourse* (Cambridge, MA: Asia Center, Harvard University, 2008), 51.

9 Chen Xiaoming, "Antiradicalism and the Historical Situation of Contemporary Chinese Intellectuals," *Contemporary Chinese Thought* 29.2 (Winter 1997–98), 31.

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taking place in China.[10] Furthermore, Chinese intellectuals in the United States simultaneously published for Anglophone audiences, and Chinese translations of these works also helped shape the Sinophone discourse of the early 1990s.

During this period, radicalism not only was rejected in its cultural and historical manifestations but, following the crisis in the Soviet Union, infiltrated political discourse about the economic reforms in China. In all cases, discussions were structured around a binary of radicalism (*jijin zhuyi* 激进主义) and conservatism (*baoshou zhuyi* 保守主义). In this milieu of such rapid change, however, what did it mean to speak about conservatism? Such discussions highlighted the question of conservatism in China, which had been repressed, together with liberalism, after the victory of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1949. The significance of the debates in the early 1990s is that they raised the issue of alternative paths to Chinese modernity in the face of the "end of history." In debates on radicalism, Chinese intellectuals dealt with questions such as Enlightenment, modernity, morality, legitimacy, and reform, themes that were investigated in relation to modern Chinese history during the 1990s.[11] Such discussions were a continuation of the reflections on socialism that had commenced after the end of the Cultural Revolution but took on a new form after 1989 and 1992.

The Meaning of 1989 and 1992

The early 1990s functioned as a hinge between the New Enlightenment Movement of the mid- to late 1980s and the period after the mid-1990s that witnessed a transformation of the intellectual landscape into two major factions of liberals and the "New Left," even if this distinction omits many of the involved complexities. It stood between the overall optimistic belief in modernization that marked the 1980s, as reflected in the 1983 Chinese translation of Alvin Toffler's *The Third Wave*, and the more dystopian climate of the 1990s, often known as the "second reform decade."[12]

[10] Geremie R. Barmé, "Worrying China and New Sinology," *China Heritage Quarterly* 14 (June 2008), www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/articles.php?searchterm=014_worryingChina.inc&issue=014. The term "Sinophone" has been used in various ways across different disciplines. I am using it here in the broader sense, namely to refer to Chinese-speaking communities inclusive of those in mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. See the reference to a "Sinophone Sphere" in Timothy Cheek, "The Worlds of China's Intellectuals," in Timothy B. Weston and Lionel M. Jensen, eds., *China In and Beyond the Headlines* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), 155, 158–60.

[11] Geremie Barmé, "The Revolution of Resistance," in Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, eds., *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 56.

[12] Chaohua Wang, "Introduction: Minds of the Nineties," in Wang, *One China, Many Paths* (London: Verso, 2003), 11; Jing Wang, *High Culture Fever: Politics, Aesthetics, and Ideology in Deng's China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 41.

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An important marker between the two periods is the June 4, 1989, crackdown on the Tiananmen demonstrations. However, some of the trends that became dominant after 1989 had already been present during the 1980s. Furthermore, the New Enlightenment Movement of the mid- to late 1980s was an outgrowth of the Movement to Liberate Thinking of the late 1970s.[13] At the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Party Congress in December 1978, Deng Xiaoping reiterated the need to "emancipate thinking" and to move away from the ideological rigidity of the Mao era by "seeking truth from facts."[14] The party also declared that "socialist modernization" was part of the official agenda. During the early 1980s, these changes paved the way for a more fundamental criticism of the utopian socialism of the Mao era and a move from class as a category of analysis to an emphasis on the subject. In 1983, at the commemoration of the centenary of Karl Marx's death, Zhou Yang, the literary critic and deputy head of the CCP Propaganda Department, delivered a speech on "socialist humanism," in which he criticized the dogmatism and class determinism of the Cultural Revolution.[15] The controversial claim that alienation could also exist under socialism led to the Campaign Against Spiritual Pollution in late 1983 and early 1984. After the campaign, criticism of utopian socialism continued, but this time it was in the form of a call for "Enlightenment" that included characteristics of Western modernity.

The Democracy Wall Movement and other political campaigns of the late 1970s and early 1980s that were initiated by Chinese youth preceded the cultural movement of the 1980s. Before the Campaign Against Spiritual Pollution of 1983–84, the "antiliberal" campaign of 1981 had already targeted authors of the late 1970s "scar literature" that had repudiated the Cultural Revolution but had also laid bare the tragedies of socialism. During the 1980s, editorial committees such as Towards the Future (Zouxiang weilai) and Culture: China and the World (Wenhua: Zhongguo yu shijie), independent from

[13] Xu Jilin, "The Fate of an Enlightenment: Twenty Years in the Chinese Intellectual Sphere (1978–1998)," tr. Geremie Barmé and Gloria Davies, in Edward Gu and Merle Goldman, eds., *Chinese Intellectuals between State and Market* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 183.

[14] Richard Baum, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 63. Deng referred to emancipating thinking in his December 13, 1978, speech, titled "Emancipate the Mind, Seek Truth from Facts, and Unite as One in Looking to the Future," in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping (1975–1982)* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1984), 151–63, which marked the beginning of the reform period.

[15] Wang Ruoshui, deputy editor of *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily), and Wang Yuanhua drafted the speech. A revised version was published in *Renmin ribao*, March 16, 1983. See Xu, "Fate of an Enlightenment," 186 and 200n4. For an overview of the debate on "humanist Marxism," see Wang, *High Culture Fever,* 9–36; David A. Kelly, "The Emergence of Humanism: Wang Ruoshui and the Critique of Socialist Alienation," in Merle Goldman, Timothy Cheek, and Carol Lee Hamrin, eds., *China's Intellectuals and the State: In Search of a New Relationship* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1987), 159–82.

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publishing houses but affiliated with research units or working with official patrons, were central in this New Enlightenment Movement.[16] The mid-1980s witnessed the zenith of media interest in the spread of a "culture fever" (*wenhua re*), or an obsession with comparative research on the pros and cons of Chinese and Western cultures, in the form of debates, lectures, and editorials.[17] This culture fever culminated in the 1988 documentary *Heshang* (River Elegy). Although the makers of the documentary series upheld liberation from tradition through modernization and Westernization, the documentary also reflected the "apocalyptic anxiety" of a society caught in rapid transformation.[18]

A review of the intellectual landscape of the 1990s reveals a very different picture. Before 1989, different generations had passed down the "talismans" of May Fourth; they had accentuated various elements of the May Fourth legacy, but by the 1990s the legacy itself was being questioned.[19] Because of this retreat from the May Fourth agenda after 1989, both the leading New Leftist Wang Hui (b. 1959) at Tsinghua University and the liberal Xu Jilin (b. 1957) at East China Normal University have compared the 1990s to the period between the late 1920s and the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, when a departure from idealism and a fragmentation of the intellectual landscape substituted for the "explosive energies" of the May Fourth era.[20] The liberal Zhu Xueqin (b. 1952) at Shanghai University has further stated that the 1990s were characterized by a shift toward "neo-authoritarianism," the use of foreign discourses, and the discarding of a "critical spirit" or a "sense of intellectual responsibility," accompanied by a growing impact of market forces.[21]

[16] On the organizational structure of the editorial committees, see Wang Xiaoming, "The Politics of Translation: Modes of Organization in the Chinese Translation Movement of the 1980s," tr. Kenneth Dean, in Naoki Sakai and Yukiko Hanawa, eds., *Specters of the West and the Politics of Translation* (Ithaca, NY: Traces Editorial Office, Cornell University, 2001), 269–300; see also Chen Fong-ching, "The Popular Cultural Movement of the 1980s," in Gloria Davies, ed., *Voicing Concerns: Contemporary Chinese Critical Inquiry* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 71–86.

[17] Especially crucial was the lecture series organized by the Academy of Chinese Culture in Beijing. For a detailed overview of the main events, see Wang, *High Culture Fever*, 48–56.

[18] Wang, *High Culture Fever*, 119.

[19] Rana Mitter, *A Bitter Revolution: China's Struggle with the Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 273–74.

[20] Wang, "Introduction: Minds of the Nineties," 11. On Tiananmen as a watershed event, see Joseph Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen: The Politics of Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Jean-Philippe Béja, "Introduction: 4 June 1989: A Watershed in Chinese Contemporary History," in Béja, ed., *The Impact of China's 1989 Tiananmen Massacre* (London: Routledge, 2011), 1–12.

[21] Zhu Xueqin, "For a Chinese Liberalism," tr. Wu Shengqing, in Wang, ed., *One China, Many Paths,* 98–99.

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The politics of the intellectual discourses during the 1990s were "overdetermined by how they simultaneously came to terms with 1989 and 1992."[22] The intellectuals were responding to the relevant social, political, and economic shifts, but this is not to say that the context determined all the content.[23] The Tiananmen demonstrations in the spring of 1989 emerged from the social effects of the economic reforms, such as inflation, income inequalities, and corruption among the political elite. The government sought to redress some of the imbalances caused by the transition from plan to market through the urban reforms and the 1988 price reforms, but without success.[24] After the violent suppression of the Tiananmen demonstrations during the following year, intellectuals began struggling with the issues of their place in the reforms and their alliance with the state. Reflections on the 1980s naturally led to reflections on socialism, and such reflections were further strengthened by the decline of socialism internationally, the end of the Cold War, and the advance of global capital. The "prolonged postmortem assessment" of what had caused the implosion in the Soviet Union so as to avoid the same fate in China became an important topic of research.[25] Henceforth, the official emphasis was on stability and gradual reforms, as reflected in the formula of "crossing the river by feeling for the stones" (*mozhe shitou guohe*).[26]

Internally, Deng Xiaoping's Southern Tour in January and February 1992 also triggered reflections on revolution and on the socialist identity of a country that had turned to reform. It was during his Southern Tour that Deng called for a more forceful reform and opening up. The tour thus ended the period of uncertainty after the June 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, the string of upheavals in Eastern Europe, and the implosion of the Soviet Union in December 1991. The October 1992 Fourteenth Party Congress political report, which Joseph Fewsmith calls "the most liberal economic document in CCP history," approved the foundation of a "socialist market economy."[27] Following this landmark transformation, foreign direct investment (FDI) from

[22] Zhang Xudong, "The Making of the Post-Tiananmen Intellectual Field: A Critical Overview," in Zhang, ed., *Whither China? Intellectual Politics in Contemporary China* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 9.
[23] Benjamin A. Elman, "The Failures of Contemporary Chinese Intellectual History," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 43.3 (2010), 378.
[24] Timothy Cheek, *Living with Reform: China since 1989* (London: Zed Books, 2003), 68, 82. On the broader causes and the impact of Tiananmen, see David S. G. Goodman and Gerald Segal, eds., *China in the Nineties: Crisis Management and Beyond* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991).
[25] David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 51.
[26] See Kalpana Misra, *From Post-Maoism to Post-Marxism: The Erosion of Official Ideology in Deng's China* (London: Routledge, 1998).
[27] Joseph Fewsmith, "Reaction, Resurgence, and Succession: Chinese Politics since Tiananmen," in Roderick MacFarquhar, ed., *The Politics of China: Sixty Years of the People's Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 505–6.

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Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Chinese in Southeast Asia began to transform China's economy and society. These changes triggered a "consumer revolution" that even led to the commercialization of Chairman Mao's legacy in the form of a "Mao fever."[28]

In spite of this paradigm shift, however, there was no clear-cut break between the two decades. During the 1980s, a number of intellectuals had already been critical of the May Fourth Movement and the Enlightenment project. The philosopher Li Zehou (b. 1930), for example, famously argued that the "salvation" (*jiuwang*) "nationalist" element of May Fourth had repressed its "Enlightenment" (*qimeng*).[29] The "utopian" mood of the 1980s had already suffered vital setbacks prior to the 1990s. At the beginning of 1987, General Secretary Hu Yaobang was forced to resign because, due to his permissive cultural and political policies, he had allowed "bourgeois liberalization" to flourish.[30] Also in 1987, the new party general secretary, Zhao Ziyang, drawing on the ideas of theorist Su Shaozhi and faced with the challenges of inflation and corruption, stated that the country was only at the "primary stage of socialism."[31] In addition, the 1988 documentary *Heshang*, in which the filmmakers press China to embrace Western civilization, became subject to fierce criticism and brought about disputes on the reforms.[32] Amid the reform setbacks, prior to 1989 a sense of crisis had already engulfed the intellectual world. In fact, this sense of crisis had been lurking under the surface ever since the start of the reform era.[33]

Unmaking Radicalism: Realistic Revolution

Even though China's rapid transformation led to many stimulating academic and cultural debates, intellectual discourse during the reform period remains

[28] Ralph Litzinger, "Theorizing Postsocialism: Reflections on the Politics of Marginality in Contemporary China," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101.1 (Winter 2002), 38. On Mao fever, see Ross Terrill (whose own study of Mao played a role in the fever), *The Life of Mao*, www.overdrive.com/search?q=E32A112B-2D31-482A-A8AA-16A00E298663; Geremie R. Barmé, *Shades of Mao: The Posthumous Cult of the Great Leader* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996).

[29] See Li Zehou, "Qimeng yu jiuwang de shuangchong bianzou" (The Double Variation of Enlightenment and Salvation), in Li, *Zhongguo xiandai sixiangshi lun* (On Modern Chinese Intellectual History) (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1987), 7–49.

[30] Geremie Barmé, "History for the Masses," in Jonathan Unger, ed., *Using the Past to Serve the Present: Historiography and Politics in Contemporary China* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), 265.

[31] Wang, *High Culture Fever*, 37. In fact, the term "primary stage of socialism" had been used even earlier by Mao Zedong, but now it was being employed to justify the reform policies. See Henry Yuhuai He, *Dictionary of the Political Thought of the People's Republic of China* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2001), 385–87.

[32] On *Heshang*, see Chapter 4 of this volume.

[33] Bill Brugger and David Kelly, *Chinese Marxism in the Post-Mao Era* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 3.

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relatively understudied. Scholars such as Geremie Barmé and Gloria Davies have made pioneering efforts to bring Chinese voices to international audiences.[34] A number of studies address the broader intellectual and cultural discourse of the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, but few pay attention to interactions among scholars in mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and elsewhere.[35]

Scholarship on the "conservative turn" of the early 1990s, referring to the rise of political neoconservatism and nationalism and a renewed interest in Chinese culture and tradition, can generally be divided into political and cultural discussions. For the political debates, scholars have studied neoconservatism as part of the elite struggles over reform and in relation to questions of political legitimacy and the crisis of Marxist ideology.[36] "Cultural conservatism" refers to arguments about the preservation and continuity of Chinese culture, including debates on New Confucianism, revisionist historiography, and postmodernism and language reform. Some authors have also interpreted these cultural debates as manifestations of cultural nationalism, which refers to an understanding of the nation in cultural rather than political-territorial or civic terms.[37] This distinction between political and cultural developments overlooks the fact that in actuality the two coexisted as products of the changing domestic and international environments. In contrast with the 1980s, when intellectual views were a "weathervane" about the reform policies, during the 1990s a "curious set of parallels" existed between the political and cultural discourses, such as those on radicalism, civil society, and the public sphere.[38]

[34] See, for example, Davies, ed., *Voicing Concerns*; Wang, ed. *One China, Many Paths*. For dissenting voices of the 1980s, see Geremie Barmé and John Minford, eds., *Seeds of Fire: Chinese Voices of Conscience* (New York: Noonday Press, 1989) and Geremie Barmé and Linda Jaivin, eds., *New Ghosts, Old Dreams: Chinese Rebel Voices* (New York: Times Books, 1992). For English translations of more recent writings by Chinese intellectuals, see the Reading the China Dream website and the accompanying project run by David Ownby, Timothy Cheek, and Joshua Fogel. www.readingthechinadream.com.

[35] Representative studies on reform-era intellectual discourse include Xiaomei Chen, *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-discourse in Post-Mao China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Gloria Davies, *Worrying about China: The Language of Chinese Critical Inquiry* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); Min Lin, with Maria Galikowski, *The Search for Modernity: Chinese Intellectuals and Cultural Discourse in the Post-Mao Era* (New York: St. Martin's, 1999); and Wang, *High Culture Fever*. For an example of a study that pays much attention to this interaction, see Makeham, *Lost Soul.*

[36] Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen*; Gunter Schubert, "Was Ist Neokonservativismus? Notizen zum Politischen Denken in der VR China in den 90er Jahren" (What is Neoconservatism? Notes on Political Thought in the PRC during the 1990s), *Asien* (Asia) 65 (October 1997), 57–74; Brugger and Kelly, *Chinese Marxism in the Post-Mao Era*; Misra, *From Post-Maoism to Post-Marxism.*

[37] Yingjie Guo, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China: The Search for National Identity under Reform* (London: Routledge, 2004), 18.

[38] Wang, "Introduction: Minds of the Nineties," 15, 16–19, 36.

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Although some authors have conducted research jointly on cultural and political developments, they have nevertheless suggested that the former merely serve the latter, as in the case of the Confucian revival.[39] Studies that think of the cultural, political, and economic developments of the reform era together do not specifically discuss the early 1990s. Arif Dirlik, for example, has analyzed the rise of New Confucianism and "national studies" (*guoxue*) in relation to global changes, but this critical intervention is mainly about the meaning of 1992—capitalism—for the Chinese intellectual world.[40] Other studies that include both cultural and political developments remain oriented toward the political aspects. Peter Moody's study of conservatism includes "traditionalism," nationalism, populism, and "neo-conservatism," but does not move beyond political thought.[41] Fewsmith's *China since Tiananmen*, a wide-ranging and impressive analysis of political and intellectual changes since 1989, nevertheless mostly centers around the political-reform issue.[42]

This book analyzes the historical, cultural, and political debates of the early 1990s through the lens of the paradigm shift of "anti-radicalism" that connected these debates. In intellectual debates, the term "radicalism" refers not only to China's socialist modernity but also to its liberal past in the form of the May Fourth Movement, often considered modern China's most influential intellectual and political movement. This critique of radicalism was not only a critique of revolution per se but also a critique of a progressivist mode of thought, according to which destruction was a prerequisite for development. The rise of anti-radicalism was directly related to the broader sociopolitical and socio-economic changes heralded by the implosion of the Soviet Union, by June Fourth, and by the acceleration of the economic reforms. Engagement with the Chinese revolutionary past not only was related to economic reconfigurations in East Asia but also was part of the global challenges to the universalism of Enlightenment in the framework of what Dirlik calls "Global Modernity."[43]

After 1989, reflections on radicalism were more than manifestations of self-censorship. There were certainly limits on the objects of inquiry, the methodology, and expression of discussions during the reform era.[44] The blacklisting,

[39] Werner Meissner, "New Intellectual Currents in the People's Republic of China," in David C. B. Teather and Herbert S. Yee, eds., *China in Transition: Issues and Policies* (New York: St. Martin's, 1999), 18–19.
[40] Arif Dirlik, *Culture and History in Postrevolutionary China: The Perspective of Global Modernity* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2011).
[41] Peter Moody, *Conservative Thought in Contemporary China* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 14.
[42] Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen.*
[43] Dirlik, *Culture and History in Postrevolutionary China*, x–xi.
[44] Michael Schoenhals, *Doing Things with Words in Chinese Politics: Five Studies* (Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1992), 106–9.

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