Daoism and Anarchism

Critiques of State Autonomy in Ancient and Modern China

John A. Rapp

2012

Contents

Acknowledgments **6**

Prelude **8**
Main Thesis of this Book . . . 8
Definition and Typology of Anarchism . . . 9
Major Objections to Main Thesis of this Book . . . 12
Objections from scholars and proponents of Daoism . . . 12
Objections from scholars and proponents of anarchism . . . 13
Preliminary Answer to Both Types of Objections . . . 14
An Anarchist Critique of the Critics . . . 16

Part One: Daoism and Anarchism **19**

1. Daoism and anarchism reconsidered **20**
Introduction . . . 20
Doubts about Classical Daoism as Anarchism . . . 21
The *DDJ* and *Zhuangzi* as advocating laissez-faire or limited government and not full-fledged anarchism . . . 21
"Anarchism" of the *DDJ* and *Zhuangzi* as corrupt idea of later Daoists . . . 24
Warring States Daoism as "Reactionary" and not "Revolutionary" . . . 26
Warring States Daoism as individualist and not socialist . . . 28
Daoism as a negative or passive, backward-looking Nihilist doctrine and not a positive, scientific vision for the future . . . 29
Synopsis of the thought of Wei-Jin Daoist anarchists . . . 32
Ruan Ji (210–263 CE) . . . 34
Bao Jingyan (ca. 300 CE) . . . 36
Liezi and the Yang Zhu chapter . . . 39
Tao Qian's "Peach Blossom Spring" . . . 40
Conclusion . . . 44

2. Utopian, anti-utopian, and dystopian ideas in philosophical Daoism **45**
Introduction . . . 45
Daoist Utopias from the *DDJ* to Tao Qian . . . 47
Anti-Utopianism in Philosophical Daoism . . . 53
Dystopian Ideas in Daoist Thought . . . 56

3. Daoism as utopian or accommodationist: The Guodian challenge to Daoist anarchism **59**
Introduction . . . 59
The Guodian challenge examined . . . 60
The absence of the most anti-statist and utopian sections of the *DDJ* . . . 60
Chapter 19 and the Guodian accommodation to Confucianism . . . 61
The lack of a "law of return" in the Guodian texts . . . 62
Review: The case for radical Daoism . . . 63
The Guodian Texts Reexamined: The questions of dating and authorship . . . 65
The changes in Chapter 19 . . . 67
The "Law of Return" . . . 68
The surviving radical utopian vision of the *DDJ* in the Guodian texts . . . 69
Conclusion: The Guodian Texts and the State of Chu . . . 70

4. Daoism as anarchism or nihilism: The Buddhist- influenced thought of Wu Nengzi **72**
Introduction: The Main Problems Raised by the *Wunengzi* . . . 72
Daoist Anarchism before Wu Nengzi . . . 73
The Political Thought of Wu Nengzi . . . 73
More Narrow Problem: Is All Daoism Nihilism? . . . 79
Larger Problem: Is Postmodern Anarchism Nihilism? . . . 82

Interlude **85**

5. The twentieth-century Chinese anarchist movement **86**
Looking Back: Daoism and the Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Anarchist Movement 87
Looking Ahead: The Debates Between Anarchists and Marxists in the 1920s . . . 91

Part Two: Maoism and Anarchism **97**

6. Maoism and anarchism: An analysis of Mao Zedong's response to the anarchist critique of Marxism **98**
Introduction . . . 98
Purported Anti-Statist Elements in the Maoist Critique: Influence of rural origins . . . 99
Mao's supposed opposition to harsh punishment . . . 99
Mao on "Continuing the Revolution" against corrupt officials . . . 100
Possible positive influence of anarchism on Mao's "Anti-Statism" . . . 102
Mao and the "New Class" . . . 104
Autocratic Elements in Mao's Theory and Practice . . . 109
Mao's "Anarchism" reexamined . . . 109
Mao's collectivization and self-reliance policies reexamined . . . 111
Mao's purges of civilian officials . . . 113
Mao's attitude toward punishment of intellectuals . . . 114
Mao's purges of military officials . . . 116

Mass participation reexamined . . . 117
Maoist "Egalitarianism" in education policies . . . 121

7. Denunciations of anarchism in the PRC **123**
Introduction . . . 123
Denunciations of Anarchism from 1957 to 1976 . . . 124
Denunciations of Anarchism during the Hua Guofeng-Early Deng Xiaoping Years . . . 128
PRC Denunciations of Anarchism, 1992–present . . . 132
Conclusion . . . 133

8. Extra-Party neo-anarchist critiques of the state in the PRC **135**
Introduction . . . 135
Shengwulian, Yang Xiguang, and Dissident Maoism . . . 137
Competing Dissident Visions of the New Class: Wang Xizhe and Chen Erjin . . . 141

9. Inner Party neo-anarchist critiques of the Leninist Party-state **148**
Introduction . . . 148
Wang Ruoshui and Alienation of the Socialist State . . . 149
The Chinese Asiatic Mode of Production Debate in the Early 1980s . . . 152
Conclusion: Neo-Anarchist Thought in the PRC . . . 161

Postlude: The Continuing Relevance of Daoist Anarchism **163**

Appendices: Works of Daoist Anarchism **167**

1. *Zhuangzi,* Chapter 9, "Horses' Hoofs" **168**

2. Ruan Ji, "The Biography of Master Great Man" (excerpt) **170**

3. Bao Jingyan **174**

4. Tao Qian, "Peach Blossom Spring" **177**

5. *Wunengzi* **179**
Preface . . . 179
Part 1 . . . 179
Chapter 1 : The mistakes of the sages . . . 179
Chapter 2 : Illuminating the origin . . . 182
Chapter 3 : Analyzing misconceptions/The clarification of errors . . . 183
Chapter 4 : Having no worries . . . 183
Chapter 5 : Criticizing foolishness (in two sections) . . . 183
Chapter 6 (missing from surviving Chinese text) . . . 185
Chapter 7 : Cultivating your original nature (in four sections) . . . 185

Part 2 186
Chapter 1: King Wen speaks, Part 1 186
Chapter 2: Sayings of the masters of Shou Yang 187
Chapter 3: Sayings of the old ruler 188
Chapter 4: Sayings of Confucius (in two sections) 189
Chapter 5 (missing from original text) 190
Chapter 6: Sayings of Fan Li 190
Chapter 7: Sayings of Song Yue 191
Chapter 8: Sayings of Shang Yin 192
Chapter 9: Sayings of Yan Ling 193
Chapter 10: Sayings of Sun Deng 195
Part 3 196
Chapter 1: Answering Tong 196
Chapter 2: Responding to Hua Yangzi 196
Chapter 3: Answering Yu Zhongzi 197
Chapter 4: On fish 198
Chapter 5: The [Zhi bird] speaks 198
Chapter 6: Answering Lu (Note: No one knows who he is except that he is Wu Nengzi's cousin) (in two parts) 199
Chapter 7 (missing) Chapter 8: A record of things seen (in three parts) . 200
Chapter 9 and 10 (missing) 202
Chapter 11: Holding firmly to the root (in four parts) 202

Bibliography **204**

Acknowledgments

Since this book is the product of many years of research and writing, I have many people to thank for their help and encouragement. To the usual disclaimer that the author alone is responsible for any mistakes and shortcomings, I must add a special emphasis that due to the controversial nature of much of this book, none of the people thanked below necessarily agrees with any of the opinions or analysis expressed herein.

Thanks and appreciation go first to this author's many teachers in subjects directly related to this book, including, at Indiana University, Judith Berling for her seminar on Daoism and for serving as advisor on my MA thesis, and the late Jerome Mintz and Alan Ritter for their seminar on anarchism. At the University of Wisconsin, I am very grateful to my two main mentors, Crawford Young as whose teaching assistant I was introduced to the literature on state autonomy, and especially Ed Friedman, who continues to impart to me much wisdom about Chinese politics and give generous and patient advice and criticism. I also owe a debt of gratitude to John Clark of Loyola University for his encouragement and support over the years.

A second round of thanks go to the students, faculty, staff, and alumni of Beloit College, first for their tolerance and inspiration in allowing me to teach classes on China, Daoism, and anarchism over the years and for sabbatical grants in 1999–2000 and 2006 and other research support, including a Sanger summer research grant in 2008 that allowed for the translation by Catrina Siu of the entire *Wunengzi,* work-study monies that allowed for translation assistance from Lauren Jones, and a grant from the Dean's office to help defray costs of rights fees and other translation assistance. My faculty colleague Daniel Youd played an essential role in many of the translation projects related to this book. I owe a great debt also to Cindy Cooley and the entire staff of the Beloit College library who worked many hours locating materials for me through interlibrary loans.

I am also grateful to the Pacific Cultural Foundation of Taiwan for a research grant in 2000 that allowed me to carry out the research that led to the essays used as the basis for Chapter 2 and 6.

Another large group of people to thank includes all the professional colleagues over the years who allowed me to participate in their panels and publish essays in their edited books and journal volumes, including Joseph Cheng for permission to use material from my article in the special issue of the *Journal of Comparative Asian Development* on Utopianism in Chinese Political Culture that was the basis for Chapter 2, Shiping Hua, the guest editor of that issue who gave me the opportunity to contribute to that volume and also fine editorial advice, and the past and current editors of *Anarchist Studies*, Sharif Gemie and Ruth Kinna, who also gave fine editorial suggestions and permission along with that of Lawrence & Wishart publishers to adapt material for the prelude and Chapters 1 and 6 of this book from articles published first in that journal. Ruth, along with Laurence Davis, very kindly included me in a panel on Utopianism and Anarchism at a conference of the Utopian Studies Society of Europe in Tarragona, Spain, in 2006, where I presented a paper that became the basis of material from my chapter in their book, *An-*

archism and Utopianism, which they and the publishers at Manchester University Press kindly gave me permission to adapt for use in Chapter 3. Besides their generous editorial suggestions, Ruth and Laurence gave much help and encouragement over the years and included me in other conferences related to the Anarchist Studies Network, whose members have given me excellent feedback and criticism as well. I am grateful to Alexandre Christoyannopoulos for taking the lead in planning a panel on anarchism and religion at the first conference of the Anarchist Studies Network of the British Political Studies Association in Loughborough, England, in 2008 and for including my essay on the *Wunengzi* and giving fine editorial assistance in the book he edited, *Religious Anarchism: New Perspectives*, whose publisher Cambridge Scholars Publishing kindly granted permission to adapt that essay as the basis for Chapter 4 of this book.

I am also grateful to Susan McEachern and colleagues at Rowman & Littlefield for permission to adapt for use in Chapter 6 material from the book *Autocracy and China's Rebel Founding Emperors* that I cowrote with Anita Andrew. Chapter 9 includes material reprinted and adapted from John Rapp, "Editor's Introduction," *Chinese Law and Government*, 22(2) (Spring 1989), used by permission of M.E. Sharpe, Inc. Thanks go to Van Young for his translation assistance on Chinese articles on the Asiatic Mode of production debate, many of which are referred to in Chapter 9. I am indebted to Bruce Gilley and Joseph Wong, the organizers of "Backward Toward Revolution: A Festschrift to Celebrate the scholarship of Professor Edward Friedman" at the University of Toronto, Munk Centre for International Studies in 2009 for including me in the conference and allowing me to present a paper that became the basis for Chapter 7. Alex Prichard and Ruth Kinna very generously allowed me to participate in the Anarchism stream of Manchester Workshops in Political Theory in 2010 where I presented a paper that became the basis for Chapter 8 and 9. Thanks also to Alex, Laurence Davis, and the other members of the advisory and editorial boards of the Contemporary Anarchist Studies series of Continuum Press and to reviewers of the original proposal and manuscript of this book as well as the editors at Continuum, especially Marie-Claire Antoine, for their generous criticism and advice. I am very grateful for Uri Gordon's patient help and consultation on the cover art and especially to my student, (Cleo) Zhang Kun for her original calligraphy that appears on the cover of this book. I would also like to express my profound thanks to Marjorie Schafer for her help in producing the index to this book and for copy editing suggestions.

Above all I am grateful to my wife, the China historian Anita Andrew, for her constant advice, criticism, and encouragement to write this book, and to our daughters Amy Chunyi and Laura Mingyi Rapp for their patience, understanding, and inspiration.

Prelude

Main Thesis of this Book

This book examines the key moments in Chinese history when different people used a basic anarchist theory to criticize the inevitable tendency of all states to rule for themselves, from radical Daoists[1] in pre-imperial and imperial China to members of the twentieth-century Chinese anarchist movement influenced by the West, to what we will label "neo-anarchist" dissidents in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Despite China's long history of authoritarian rule and state autonomy from society, as well as a long line of political thinkers who in one way or another justify centralized state power, China also has a long history of anti-statist thought. This book does not attempt the impossible task of examining all Chinese dissident thought but only those people in ancient and modern times who utilized an underlying anarchist theory of the state.

Since this book is primarily aimed at helping non-China specialists to see anarchism as not just a Euro-American concept, and in order to avoid the potential problem of this author appealing from authority as a sinologist, this book will cite Chinese sources in translation wherever possible and even provide original translations in the appendices of key texts that have never before been fully translated into English. Nevertheless, this work will pay attention to scholarly debates among ancient and modern China specialists and will not hesitate to join these debates whenever it proves necessary to the book's main thesis.

The thesis is that what most distinguishes anarchism from other political ideologies is the idea that the state rules for itself whenever it can, not for individuals, interest groups, socioeconomic classes, or society as a whole.

Furthermore, for anarchists, the very nature of the state, its hegemony on the legitimate use of coercion, to slightly modify Max Weber's definition, not to mention its monopoly on the ability to define threats to itself as threats to society, only reinforces its inherent advantages in being able to gain autonomy from its subjects.[2] The basic anarchist thesis, this book argues, is not limited in time or by region. Anarchist thought can and has occurred many times and in many places in history and not just among those thinkers and activists in Europe from the early to mid-nineteenth century who consciously took on the anarchist label and who started a movement that then spread throughout the world, including to China, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

While the adherents of that movement were for the most part explicitly socialist or communist in orientation and favored revolutionary methods to implement their ideals, such ideas

[1] As romanized in the modern *hanyu pinyin* system used throughout in this work except for the names of some Chinese scholars and the Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek; "Taoist" is perhaps the more familiar version from the older Wade- Giles system, a romanization system that is used by some authors of works translated in the appendix.

[2] See Murray Edelman, *Politics as Symbolic Action*, Chapter 9, "Escalation: International Relations," 142–71, for a neo-anarchist critique of the state's ability to manipulate its monopoly on the identification of foreign threats in order to maintain its internal authority.

and commitments, however important and necessary they may have been, do not in themselves distinguish anarchists from other socialist revolutionaries. Instead, this book argues, it is their critique of states, whether capitalist or socialist, as, in the end, ruling for themselves that gave the anarchist movement its greatest power and coherence.

In China anarchist thought arose among what has been traditionally labeled the Daoist school of philosophy (though we will examine later in this chapter those who question the existence of such a coherent school) which, as we will see in Part 1 of this book, began during the pre-imperial era nearly 2,500 years ago and revived in the third century CE. Modern anarchist thought arose most consciously among Chinese thinkers and activists in the early twentieth century, first among Chinese students studying in Tokyo and Paris but after the 1911 revolution among many trade union activists and intellectuals in China itself.

Though in the interlude chapter we will briefly examine the thought of some members of that self-conscious Chinese anarchist movement, we will look at that movement primarily for the rare times when it consciously harked back to radical Daoist political theory and also for the key moment when it most consciously used the basic anarchist theory of the state ruling for itself, namely, during the anarchists' debates with early Chinese Marxist–Leninist thinkers. In Part 2 of this book we will examine the question of the influence of anarchism on the thought of Mao Zedong as well as denunications of anarchism in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and then examine what we will label neo-anarchist critiques of Marxism–Leninism in the PRC from the Mao to Deng and contemporary eras in order to see that the deadly contest over the question of state autonomy is still very much alive in modern and contemporary China.

Definition and Typology of Anarchism

Before proceeding with the case for the anarchism of premodern and contemporary Chinese thinkers, we first need to distinguish between the various types of anarchism and to develop a working model of the term as well as to suggest the main points of the argument in later chapters.

Anarchism as a term of course comes from the Greek *an-archos*, meaning "without a ruler," and should refer to any doctrine that contends that any type of rule is unnecessary, harmful, and/or even counterproductive or evil. As such, this author would contend that anarchism is a generic label for all doctrines opposed to rule and should not be limited to the Western anarchist movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Wei-Jin Daoist term *wujun* literally means "without a prince" (see Chapter 1), the Chinese characters for which appear on the cover of this book, and is nearly identical in meaning to the Greek *an-archos* and thus clearly fits within this broad definition of anarchism. In short, anarchism can and has appeared in many periods and places throughout history and thus this author would disagree with those who would limit the concept to a modern context. Indeed, the first part of this book argues that the Daoist anarchists' focus on the state ruling for itself, while they noted at the same time that other political ideologies only disguise this fact, may have much to teach Western anarchists about internal consistency and may aid in a revival of anarchist themes in the contemporary world.

Within this all-inclusive generic definition there are of course many different types and strands of anarchism, all of which can be divided among three intersecting poles. First, following the historian of Western anarchism George Woodcock, anarchism may be divided into the "idea"

and the "movement,"[3] that is between philosophical anarchism on the one hand and on the other the concept of anarchism as a "developed, articulate, and clearly identifiable trend …," which Woodcock argues appeared only in "the modern [Western] era of conscious social and political revolutions."[4] In this distinction, all "social or political" anarchists would also be philosophical anarchists, though of course analysts never fail to point out contradictions of particular anarchists on this score as, for example, between Bakunin's expressed anti-statism and the perhaps inherent authoritarianism of his professed revolutionary methods. On the other hand, we could also say that not all philosophical anarchists could be labeled political or social anarchists, that is, to the extent that such philosophical anarchists declined to join much less lead movements aimed at overthrowing particular states even if they expressed doubts about the basis for all political authority. It is this distinction, this author believes, that is at the root of many doubts over the supposed anarchist nature of Daoism and probable criticism of the label of "neo-anarchist" for contemporary Chinese critics of Leninism. This distinction may have started to make less sense in the late twentieth and early twenty-first-century era of "people power" than in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when many activists and intellectuals saw violence as the only way to affect true revolution. Certainly, just because Daoists may not have led overtly political movements to overthrow existing states does not mean that Daoism amounts to a "diluted" form of anarchism as Alex Feldt and others contend;[5] instead, as will be argued throughout Part 1 of this book, to the extent that they refused to join movements that themselves might found oppressive states, Daoists may be more consistent anarchists. This point leads us to the second, intersecting distinction among anarchists.

Many students of anarchism draw a distinction on the one hand between those anarchists willing to use and even embrace violent methods, the archetype again being Bakunin, and on the other those such as Tolstoy who insist on a unity of means and ends, and thus who would stress methods of noncooperation and passive resistance (what Tolstoy, following the Christian gospel(s), called "non-resistance") to all coercive authority.[6] Some pacifist anarchists went beyond pure philosophical anarchism to the extent that they founded movements of their own that later analysts label as social or political.

In this case, Daoists of the Warring States and Wei-Jin periods should definitely be labeled pacifists, but whether or not they led conscious social or political movements we will examine later in this chapter and in the following chapter.

In the third main distinction, many scholars commonly differentiate between "individualist" anarchists including Stirner and the modern anarcho-capitalists such as Murray Rothbard who reject all political authority but accept and assume the prior existence of private property (whether or not they are willing to use violence and/or hire private armies), and "collectivist" anarchists including everyone from socialist to communist anarchists who deny the existence or right of private property prior to the state. The collectivist view is summed up in the famous phrase of

[3] George Woodcock, *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements*, Prologue, 11–31, Epilogue, 404–23.

[4] Ibid., 39.

[5] Feldt, "Governing Through the Dao: A Non-Anarchistic Interpretation of the *Laozi*," 326, 336.

[6] Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God is Within You: Christianity Not as a Mystic Religion but as a New Theory of Life*, 213ff. The most recent analysis of Tolstoy's thought as the culmination of Christian anarchism can be found in Alexandre J. M. E. Christoyannopoulos, *Tolstoy's Political Thought* and throughout his *Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel*.

Proudhon that "property is theft."[7] This distinction, problematic enough when applied to Western thinkers such as William Godwin and even Proudhon (who accepted the need for private "possessions" such as tools, if not landed property) becomes even more difficult when dealing with the ancient and medieval Daoists, as we will see in the next chapter. Nevertheless, one can distinguish, as we will see, between the more individualist or "selfish" strands of thought as in the "Yang Zhu" chapter of the *Liezi* (a book probably written ca. 300 CE during the Daoist revival,[8] though this chapter may have been based on the surviving ideas of the legendary proto-Daoist hermit of the earlier, classical Daoist period) and the possibly more communitarian strands of other Wei-Jin anarchists who claimed to base their thought more directly on the received versions of the classic texts known as the *Daodejing* and the *Zhuangzi*. There is certainly no justification for Feldt's assumption that all anarchists must have a view of society as made up of a collection of atomized individuals and that the only job of anarchists is to protect the autonomy of the individual from the force of the state.[9] Instead, this author would argue, the main similarity in all anarchists is the rejection of the conflation of state and society, even if various kinds of anarchists have different views of the nature of society.

As will be argued in Chapter 1, the Daoism of certain figures of the Wei-Jin period was indeed thoroughly anarchist, at a minimum on a philosophical level and at a maximum as an intended program to delegitimize the centralized bureaucratic rule of the late Han and the less effective but no less brutal rule of the Wei and Jin dynasties. While never advocating or propagating violent opposition to authority, so far as we know, the Wei-Jin Daoists did oppose all authority in general and did attempt to oppose the ideological hegemony of Confucianism, a form of which had become the official ideology of the imperial Han dynasty (206 BCE to 220 CE) and almost all successive imperial dynasties, if combined in practice with heavy doses of the Chinese Machiavellian doctrine of Legalism. Thus this book will argue that Wei-Jin anarchism *was* a doctrine of resistance to the state, albeit almost certainly pacifist and remaining at the intellectual level if no less important as a means to undermine authority. Furthermore, this work will argue that the full-fledged anarchism of the Wei-Jin thinkers was firmly based on classical Daoist texts, which the later Wei-Jin Daoists only highlighted and did not distort. In sum, Part 1 of this book contends that the Wei-Jin figures were only the most open advocates of Daoist anarchism, a movement that lasted at least from the early Han or late Warring State periods, if not before, and extended well into the Tang dynasty (617–907 CE). Daoist anarchism, we will conclude, was a movement that perhaps can still be drawn upon in any contemporary or future challenges to Chinese political authority.

Although there are many different types of anarchists, what they all share in common and what distinguishes them from other dissident thinkers and radical activists is their basic tenet that the state rules for itself whenever and wherever it can. Even those who use the basic anarchist theory of the state, both those who consciously label themselves as anarchists and those who do not, can depart from anarchism in other aspects of their thought as we will see throughout the book; thus different types of anarchists can themselves be criticized for acquiescing in one kind of state power or another. The focus of this book is on the key periods in Chinese history when the basic anarchist theory of the state was expressed most clearly within a Chinese context.

[7] Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *What Is Property*, 13.

[8] A. C. Graham, *The Book of Lieh Tzu*, 1.

[9] As argued in Feldt, 326, for example.

Major Objections to Main Thesis of this Book

While the basic thesis of the book may seem obvious to many readers, in fact this author has found it to be very controversial and has encountered two seemingly quite different types of objections. On the one hand, some scholars and practitioners of Daoism would argue that no clear school of Daoist thought exists and that to focus on those relatively few thinkers who brought out the anarchist themes in the classical Daoist texts risks distorting the essence of Daoism by radicalizing it. On the other hand, scholars of and/or sympathizers with anarchism worry that universalizing anarchism may ironically *de-* radicalize it, emptying it of meaning. As we will argue in this chapter, both types of objections are based on shared similar unwillingness or inability of such observers to face up fully to the truly radical aspect of the anarchist theory of the state.

Objections from scholars and proponents of Daoism

The first main objection to this book will come from scholars and proponents of Daoism who would deny that Daoism has any clear coherence as a distinct school of thought. First, some such people, especially those studying Daoism as a religious practice, would argue that the traditional Chinese separation of Daoism into *daojia* (Daoist school, that is, philosophical Daoism) and *daojiao* (Daoist teaching, for example, alchemical and religious traditions) is itself only a later concept of the historian Sima Qian (165–110 BCE) of the former Han dynasty who imposed a coherence upon many disparate types of much earlier thinkers and practitioners, a coherence that did not in fact exist or that those individuals were unaware of. Even among the classic philosophers of the Eastern Zhou era (ca. 770–221 BCE), scholars of Daoism would argue, there was often no clear distinction between Daoist and Confucian schools, which again was only a later idea applied to the thought of this era. Many modern scholars argue that both so-called Daoist and Confucian thinkers called for limited governance and for rule by sages virtuous in one way or another, and the idea of opposing schools of Daoists and Confucians (the name even for the latter school given by Westerners with the Chinese term the *ru* only meaning the school of the scholars) is an exaggeration of later historians. Furthermore, what are often regarded as the classic Daoist texts, the *Daodejing*, traditionally ascribed to the probably nonexistent personage Lao Zi (old master) and the *Zhuangzi* were not clearly single author texts, and even the author of the seven inner chapters of the latter text, the historical individual Zhuang Zhou, was perhaps unaware of any coherent text known as the *Daodejing* that may have been compiled into a single text contemporaneously or slightly after Zhuang Zhou lived. Many scholars of Daoism argue that there are in fact differences between the two texts and it was not until the last years of the later Han (25–220 CE) and the Wei-Jin era (265–420 CE) that scholars who created the "Lao-Zhuang" tradition related the two texts. Many scholars of Daoism would claim further that the "Lao-Zhuang" side of Daoism is itself at best only one tendency within a tradition that developed for over 2,000 years after the classical period and which included many other traditions and aspects including spiritual and physical practices that were far from anarchist. Overall, some scholars of Daoism worry that "radicalizing" Daoism by comparing it to Western anarchism risks losing the overall

picture of the real place in Chinese tradition of the holistic concept of life contained within the disparate strands of what is labeled Daoism.[10]

We will deal more fully below with this basic objection to the main thesis of this book. Before turning to the other main objection from scholars and proponents of anarchism it should just be noted here that the position of this book is that to ignore the clearly expressed anarchist point of view in key Daoist texts or to minimize or excise from the Daoist tradition those thinkers who express an anarchist point of view itself distorts a key part of Daoist thought. Perhaps a useful heuristic if not identical analogy would be to the idea of a Christian anarchism. Although it is true that the anarchist interpretation of Jesus is very much a minority tradition compared to the over 2,000 years of other interpretations, from purely spiritual to avowedly statist from the apostle Paul to Augustine and beyond, scholars of and sympathizers with Christian anarchism nevertheless claim a firm basis for their interpretation in the words and practices of Jesus and his early followers.[11] Likewise those later Daoist thinkers and students of Daoism, including this author, who make an anarchist interpretation of classical Daoist texts even if they are not in the mainstream of Daoist scholarship would claim clear links to some of the oldest texts in the Daoist tradition, as we will see throughout Part 1 of this book.

Objections from scholars and proponents of anarchism

Seemingly opposite to the objections of Daoist scholars, those who study and/or sympathize with anarchism fear that "traditionalizing anarchism" risks *de-* radicalizing it and that assuming the universality of anarchism runs the risk of making the concept meaningless. For example, if one limits anarchism to its critique of the state, then, some might charge, one would have to include as anarchist even American libertarians and Tea Party activists who claim to hate government, which on the face of it again would seem to empty the term anarchism of all meaning as a truly radical critique given such people's support for and by corporate and other elite interests.[12] To such students of anarchism and to anarchist sympathizers, anarchism as a concept must involve socialism, revolution, and critiques of all kinds of oppression, including that caused by, among other types of power, family, religion, property, and culture.

Many students of anarchism and Communism in China would argue more specifically that ignoring important differences between ancient Daoist writings and modern Chinese anarchism risks denigrating the modern anarchist movement in China.

[10] This paragraph includes ideas now commonly held by a number of students of Daoism. For a convenient summary of such ideas, if perhaps within the most strident attempt to "radically reconstruct" Daoism in a way that would privilege the believers and practitioners and belittle classic texts such as the *Zhuangzi* as being at the heart of Daoism, see Russell Kirkland, *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*, *passim*. Kirkland argues that the classical texts such as the *Daodejing* and the *Zhuangzi*, at best "played a marginal role in the lives and thoughts of most later Daoists" (68) and in general accuses Chinese and Western scholars of "lying" about the true nature of Daoism. This author would conclude that Kirkland's version of a post-colonial critique of Western and Chinese scholarship on Daoism can itself serve to promote the flip side of cultural imperialism, privileging those who turned to Daoism for spiritual or physical guidance in effect to colonize Daoism for the academic field of religious studies. Modern students of Daoism as a philosophy, such as Chad Hansen, may similarly find as key to Daoism the aspects that privilege their field, though perhaps more ready to preserve room for disparate types of Daoist thinking as well as practice. See Hansen, *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought: A Philosophical Interpretation.*

[11] For the most recent and comprehensive review of the Christian anarchist tradition, see Christoyannopoulos, *Christian Anarchism.*

[12] As one reviewer of the original proposal for this book charged.

Preliminary Answer to Both Types of Objections

Both objections ignore the clear times in Chinese history when, whatever one labels them, Chinese thinkers did express a clear anarchist theory of the state, that is, when they did not just call for limited government but criticized states as ruling for themselves and not for the benefit of the people, and when they rejected the possibility of any type of reformed or benevolent government. So the Daoist anarchists, as we will see in the four chapters of Part 1, did not just call for a limited government to rule in a benevolent way but attacked the whole idea of humane rule, both in the chaotic Eastern Zhou and later Wei-Jin periods of competing states. That is, whether or not they called themselves Daoist or whether or not one labels them anarchist, these Chinese thinkers rejected the whole idea of government. While this book by no means argues that all Daoists are anarchists, we will see that there was in China a long tradition of people who did base themselves on ideas in the *Daodejing* and *Zhuangzi*, texts that, whatever their other different emphases, did try in key chapters that were written as far back as the Warring States period of the Eastern Zhou, if not by the original authors, to undermine the whole idea of rule, as we will see in the next chapter. These Daoist anarchists, as we will call them, also attacked the application of Legalist ideas of rule by power and force and Confucian ideas of benevolent rule as different types of ideological disguises to justify the wealth and power of a few. Furthermore, the Daoist anarchists did indeed include critiques of other kinds of power besides that of the state, including especially patriarchal authority and manipulation of language, but with the basic anarchist point that it is the link to and backing by the state that makes social, family, and linguistic authority oppressive.[13] As noted above, to the degree that scholars of Daoism, including Chinese scholars from the Han to the PRC eras and Western scholars from the eighteenth century to the present, ignore this basic critique it is they in fact who serve to tame and deradicalize Daoism. In short, it is they who distort Daoism to the extent that they ignore or minimize this important anarchist part of the Daoist tradition.

Against some scholars of Daoism who might agree that the radical anarchist tradition exists but was a revision of later thinkers, in the first chapter we will trace this radical anarchist streak back to the classic texts of the Warring States era, the *Daodejing* and the *Zhuangzi.* Indeed, in Chapter 3 we will trace this radical tendency even further back to even the oldest surviving version of the former text, the so-called Guodian manuscripts, refuting those scholars who think that earliest known version of the text does not contain anti-Confucian language and is more accommodating to state power. As we will see, beyond its critique of the state this Daoist anarchism did have communal aspects and was similar in many other ways to the thought of different Western anarchists, if without a commitment to violent revolution. Despite their similarity with Western anarchists on many other grounds, we will nevertheless see throughout Part 1 of this book that the radical Daoist argument was most powerful when it kept to the main anarchist theory of the state and weakest and most contradictory when Daoist thinkers were willing to acquiesce in state power, as we will see was especially the case with some people who revived Daoism in the late Han and Wei-Jin eras and after, including especially Wu Nengzi of the Tang dynasty whose thought we will analyze in Chapter 4.

[13] See Hansen, 225–30, who though mostly looking at Daoism as pure philosophy and not political philosophy, nevertheless finds the goal of at least some of the early Daoist thinkers to be "radical anarchy" (229).

Against the criticism from scholars and proponents of anarchism that focusing on anarchism's theory of the state risks losing sight of its larger vision, we will see in Chapter 2 that the Daoist anarchists did not just have a negative view of the state but also a positive vision of the possibility of life without government, though still containing a dystopian vision of the state run amok under other political ideologies. Scholars of anarchism and anarchist sympathizers would likely on the same ground also strongly disagree with the last two chapters in Part 2 of this book that view as neo-anarchist those dissident thinkers within and outside the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the PRC who criticized the Leninist state, since such thinkers took pains to deny they favored anarchist solutions even if some of them also denied that official Maoist thought had a genuine anti-statist side. Nevertheless, we will see that those thinkers did indeed criticize the Leninist state as ruling for itself and were often well aware that anarchists were the first to make such a charge.

Their separation of the anarchist critique from proposed anarchist solutions is why we will label such thinkers "neo-anarchist." Although this book will not hesitate to criticize and show the limits of modern Chinese thinkers as well as ancient ones when they depart from the basic anarchist critique, including especially Mao Zedong himself as we will see in Chapter 6, one important secondary theme of this book is that we must not forget about the terrible limits faced by genuine anti-statist Chinese thinkers from ancient to modern times when states started to centralize and militarize their power, as at the end of Zhou dynasty and the beginning of the imperial era in the third century BCE and in the Nationalist and Communist eras of modern China. In all such periods of consolidating authoritarian states, intellectuals trying to oppose state autonomy had to express themselves carefully and to claim to be arguing within tradition in order to protect themselves, get their works published, and even survive physically. Though often having to disguise or camouflage their thought, this does not mean Chinese anarchist thinkers were in any way less radical, as long as they kept to the basic anarchist critique of the state.

This book argues that to insist on including as radical anarchists only those people who expressly advocate achieving socialism through violent revolution is not only to take a completely Euro-centric approach (since the faith in the universality and inevitability of both socialism and revolution began in Europe in the nineteenth century) that in effect serves as the flip side of Western cultural imperialism, but also serves to miss the radical heart of anarchism.

Far too often, as we will see in Chapter 6 for example, those China scholars who want to defend the socialist nature of the Chinese revolution and more particularly the ideas of Mao Zedong as radical and liberatory in intent have to downplay the atrocities of Mao and his successors alike that are clearly linked to their presiding over a state ruling in its own interests, whatever be those leaders' stated intentions. Likewise, far too often such socialist sympathizers among China scholars in order to defend the socialist nature of the Chinese revolution are led to downplay or even ignore the thought of the "neo-anarchist" critics of the Chinese Leninist regime that we will examine in Chapter 8 and 9.

Arguing that anarchism does not have to include the call for socialist revolution by no means is to say that Western-style collectivist anarchists, including in China itself as we will see in the interlude Chapter 5, failed to be true anarchists; instead this book argues that collectivist anarchists were most true to the basic anarchist idea when they criticized nonanarchist collectivist fellow revolutionaries for ignoring the dangers of accepting socialist state autonomy and least true to anarchism when for one reason or another they themselves acquiesced to state power, as we will see was the case with Liu Shipei and other members of the twentieth-century Chinese

anarchist movement. In that chapter we will both refer back to Part 1 to see why Liu was such an exception among twentieth-century Chinese anarchists in looking to the Daoist tradition as well as forward to Part 2 to see the genesis of the Marxist critique of anarchism in the PRC after 1949 in the anarchist–Marxist debates of the 1920s, where the modern Chinese anarchist critique of Leninist state autonomy also began.

In the end, for a true anarchist everything else, no matter how necessary or genuine, should be secondary to the political critique at the heart of anarchism, namely, the idea that all states ultimately try to rule for themselves, the idea that most distinguishes anarchists from other schools of thought. This basic anarchist premise is also the hardest idea for dissident thinkers to express since it is the biggest taboo that state leaders try to enforce and thus the first type of thought they start to repress when they (rightly) realize it strikes directly at their interests. Thus anarchists often have to partially disguise or camouflage their basic premise within the language of other schools of thought, even then only in rare times of openings in official ideology. This is why Daoist thinkers often had to sound similar to Confucians in eras when the state's reach was expanding, and so too why modern Chinese thinkers took advantage of the Maoist openings during the Cultural Revolution and the reform opening in the 1980s before the post-Tiananmen clampdown to use the varying language of official Marxist–Leninist ideology to criticize the Leninist state as ruling for itself and not the proletariat. Though the neo-anarchists in the PRC had to use seemingly Marxist language in order to get published and to survive, similar to the ancient Daoists if without citing them, these modern Chinese thinkers as we will see in the second part of this book clearly used the anarchist theory of the state (though unlike the Daoists, divorced from any clearcut anarchist solutions) to break the biggest taboo in Marxist–Leninism.

The modern Chinese neo-anarchists certainly claimed to be anti-capitalist and made clear their support for idea of socialist revolution, but their main argument was how the socialist goal of equality would be compromised and contradicted by an unchecked socialist state ruling for itself. Even if not calling for a fully stateless society, nevertheless, like the ancient Daoists these modern Chinese neo-anarchists still had a positive vision of a cooperative society that would flower best when not limited by the state's interests. If their positive vision was not expressed as overtly as an anarchist vision as that of the radical Daoists, again this was perhaps because the neo-anarchists had to use Marxist language to mount their critique given the very real threat of prison or execution and because they knew very well that they would be denounced as anarchists by official state ideologists. Such Leninist state apologists would always be quick to use the old Marxist anti-anarchist memes first employed against Chinese anarchists in the 1920s that we will examine in Chapter 5, revived by Mao to put down genuine anti-statist radicals in the Cultural Revolution, as we will see in Chapter 6, and used against dissident thinkers in the PRC from the 1950s to the early twenty-first century, as we will see in Chapter 7. In the end, this book will find that these anti-anarchist memes only served to prove the main anarchist critique of Marxism: by acquiescing to centralized state power, Marxist and other socialists become servants of the state and help to quash hope for genuine liberation.

An Anarchist Critique of the Critics

Within this thesis of their critique of the state as the key minimal characteristic of all anarchists, this book argues that even self-labeled anarchists can depart from anarchist theory of

state and acquiesce to state power, as was the case for some Daoists—as we will see throughout Part 1 of this book—for members of self-styled Chinese anarchist movement of early twentieth century—as we will see in Chapter 5—and for Mao and some official Maoists who claimed to be using anti-bureaucratic class ideas that others argue were influenced by anarchism—as we will see in Chapter 6. In the end, employing the basic anarchist premise, one could argue that such people at times limited the real anarchist content of their critiques in order to justify, promote, or augment their own power within the state.

So too one could argue that self-styled libertarian Tea Party activists in America and elsewhere may sometimes sound like they are using the anarchist theory of state but in reality only want their opponents to unilaterally disarm (e.g. ending regulation of oligopolistic corporations) while keeping the parts of state apparatus that they find beneficial (e.g. those related to the "military– industrial complex" or policing people's sexual behavior). Some intellectuals within that tradition claim to find a laissez-faire management approach or even an anarcho-capitalist vision in the *Daodejing*, which would seem to give further ammunition to socialist critics of Daoism as anarchism, but both types of thinkers have to ignore many other inconvenient aspects of radical Daoism including the idea of communal village life and living in harmony with nature.[14]

More consistent and explicit anarcho-capitalists such as Murray Rothbard (in that he at least rhetorically favors privatizing the police and military) are perhaps more useful in showing the limits of anarchism in some collectivist anarchist critiques to the extent that the latter would allow social coercion and "social consensus" as defined by small groups to lead to new oppressive authority.[15] This possibility of the germ of future political oppression can be seen most famously in Bakunin's conspiratorial cells to direct the violent revolution, contradicting his own most brilliant version of the anarchist theory of state in his view that the Marxist "workers' state" would all too quickly become the state of ex-workers and how it would never "wither away" as Marx predicted. At the same time, however, collectivist anarchists help to deny the anarchism in practice among such "libertarian" thinkers by showing the real link of Tea Party "anti-government" ideology to the power of wealthy individuals and corporate interests and especially to the military–industrial complex, which distorts the "free market" to the benefit of state-supported industries. Both sides of the individualist–collectivist divide can depart from the anarchist critique by asserting something else as primary above the anarchist theory of the state, whether "free" markets or socialist revolution, and both are most useful when criticizing each other for shortcomings in this regard. It is the Daoist anarchists, this book argues, who are most true to this genuinely radical critique.

Despite their seemingly opposite criticism—for either overly radicalizing Daoism or deradicalizing anarchism—in the end both types of objections to this book's main thesis are very similar. Scholars and proponents of Daoism would argue that just looking at the political critique of Daoism is to miss the larger picture and how much more Daoists say, including about living in touch with the whole and not dividing things into separate or opposed categories.

---

[14] See Clark (pseudonym Max Cafard), "The Dao of Capitalism or 'Going with the (Cash-) Flow'," in Cafard, *The Surre(Gion)alist Manifesto,* 25–39.

[15] The important, if very controversial idea to anarchist sympathizers, of the insidious dangers of social coercion under any future anarchist society becoming worse than state coercion to the extent they are denied was an important theme of Ursula Le Guin's novel *The Dispossessed*, as well as R. Booth Fowler's scholarly essay "The Anarchist Tradition of Political Thought."

Scholars of and sympathizers with anarchism say that anarchism involves much more than a critique of the state but also includes critiques of oppression in the economy, family structure, sexual relations, and the environment, among other areas, and contains a positive vision for a cooperative, communal future. This book certainly does not deny the power of Daoists and other kinds of anarchists to say much more about life beyond politics, but it will highlight and focus on the minimal yet crucial aspect of all anarchists: their critique of the state ruling for itself and their warnings of the danger of radical thinkers who depart from this main point as themselves distorting the main message of anarchism. While paying attention to both types of critics of Daoist anarchism, we should not ignore their own possible interests in avoiding or minimizing the radical heart of the anarchist critique, as intellectuals in all countries throughout history have divided interests between promoting intellectual autonomy and yet retaining their elite status within existing or future states or systems of authority. So, above all, this book tries to stay on point and will challenge even Daoist and other anarchists when they depart from the basic anarchist critique of the state, while of course welcoming challenges from all types of people wherever they think this book too strays from the basic anarchist premise.

Part One: Daoism and Anarchism

1. Daoism and anarchism reconsidered

Introduction

Philosophical Daoism is a term used to refer to the ideas of some people who arose at the end of China's Zhou dynasty (1027–256 BCE), a period when China disintegrated into a long period of civil war and chaos that finally ended only in 221 BCE with the end of feudalism and the founding of the centralized, bureaucratic Qin empire (221–206 BCE). In the latter part of the Zhou period (722–481 BCE), specifically in the Spring and Autumn, and Warring States Periods (403–221 BCE), philosophers and teachers arose who tried to gain the ear of the feudal warlords to adopt their particular systems in order to reunify China. Most such thinkers offered specific advice on how to attain order, such as the idea of rule by moral virtue of the Confucians or the idea of rule by power and force of the so-called Legalist school. Those thinkers later labeled the Daoists often traced their ideas back to Lao Zi ("Old Master"), a semi-mythical figure who may have lived, if he lived at all, in the sixth century BCE and who is traditionally treated as the author or compiler of the *Daodejing* (Wade-Giles: *Tao Te Ching*, or the "Classic of the Way and Its Power," referred to hereafter in this book as *DDJ*). This text dates in its received form at least from the third century BCE (in Chapter 3 we will examine a recently unearthed version of the text that dates back to as much as a century earlier).

Modern scholars argue that the *DDJ* may have been compiled over a long period of time from the sayings of village elders, and perhaps first coalesced as a text during the Warring States period partially in response to other schools of thought.

The other great classical Daoist philosopher was Zhuang Zi (Master Zhuang), a historical individual with the given name of Zhuang Zhou who lived in the fourth century BCE and who wrote at least the seven core or "inner" chapters of the book known as the *Zhuangzi*, the other, "outer" chapters being added at later periods by unknown authors. Thus the core chapters of *Zhuangzi* are nearly as old as the received *DDJ* and should not be denigrated as any less important a "… foundational text of socio-political relevance" for Daoism, as Alex Feldt contends, so that the *DDJ* should not have to "clearly enjoy primacy in developing a classical Daoist political theory."[1] Whatever their differences, both texts were unique in their advice for rulers to rule by inaction or doing nothing (*wuwei*) and in their opposition to law, morality, punishment, warfare, and nearly all other techniques and forms of rule. As such, many scholars have long referred to Daoism's "anarchistic" tendencies and aspects.[2]

[1] Feldt, "Governing Through the Dao: A Non-Anarchist Interpretation of the *Laozi*," *Dao* 9 (2010): 324, 325, n. 3.

[2] We will cite below many English language sources that give an anarchist interpretation of Daoism. For German-speaking readers, perhaps the best summary is in Gotelind Müller, *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus*: 110–18.

Feldt's different interpretation of *wuwei* is the main basis for his non-anarchistic view of the *DDJ*. See Feldt, 323–37. Even though this author argues in this chapter and throughout this work that *wuwei* can and does allow for non-violent passive resistance, nevertheless the concept of *wuwei* is only one important clue about the *DDJ* and, *contra* Feldt, is far from the only basis for an anarchistic interpretation. Furthermore, Feldt's non-anarchistic interpretation

Given these many references to its anarchist tendencies, it may seem strange to question whether or not philosophical Daoism is really a doctrine of full-fledged anarchism similar to Western anarchism. In fact, however, as noted in general in the prelude there have been various objections raised to equating Daoist philosophy with anarchism, mostly focusing on the classical Daoists of the late Zhou dynasty. We will examine these objections more in detail in the first part of this chapter. In the second part of the chapter we will examine key thinkers of the Daoist revival in the Wei-Jin period (ca. 220–420 CE) and note their similarities to specific Western anarchists on key points central to the doctrine of anarchism.

Doubts about Classical Daoism as Anarchism

Doubts about the fully anarchist nature of Daoism have mostly centered on the Daoism of the late Zhou texts, the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, associated with the mythical or real figures of Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi respectively. Although only some of these doubts apply to the Wei-Jin Daoists, as we will see, those who question the fully anarchist nature of the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* nevertheless usually see Wei-Jin Daoist anarchism as an extension or even corruption of classical Daoism rather than a loyal exegesis of it. These doubts about classical Daoism as an anarchist doctrine then must be dealt with before examining the more obvious anarchism of the Wei-Jin thinkers. Below the questions about Warring States Daoist anarchism are broken down into five categories. Here it should be noted that many of these doubts may have to do with the distinctions among different types of anarchists that we noted in the prelude. Those sympathetic to socialism and skeptical about philosophical and individualist anarchists as genuine anarchists and those sympathetic to the nineteenth-century collectivist anarchist movement (not to say that Daoist anarchism can easily be pigeonholed as philosophical and individualist, as we will see below in the section on Warring States Daoism as individualist or socialist), are perhaps the most skeptical about Daoism as true anarchism.

The *DDJ* and *Zhuangzi* as advocating laissez-faire or limited government and not full-fledged anarchism

The main limit many scholars find in Daoist anarchism of the Warring States Period is that the *DDJ* and for some even the *Zhuangzi*, if to a lesser extent, seemed to be giving advice to sage–rulers on how to govern, even if their advice was to rule by *wuwei* (often translated as nonaction or doing nothing).

As Hsiao Kung-chuan put it about the *DDJ*, … non-action in government need not destroy and cast aside the ruler-servitor institution, and return to the total lack of restraints that exists

---

of the *DDJ* rests on what this author will argue are three very dubious assertions, including, besides his claim that the *DDJ* must be given primacy over the *Zhuangzi*, second, his belief that all anarchism must be based on a defense of "the traditional Western, atomistic individualism" against state interference (326, 330), and third, that the *DDJ* does not depart from "ancient Chinese political texts [that] unvaryingly assume an autocratic framework" (328), and thus that the "political structure presented in [the *DDJ*] would necessarily be autocratic with a centralized government ruled by the Daoist sage and administered by numerous ministers" (335). We will question both of these latter assumptions later in this chapter.

among birds and beasts … in theoretical terms, what Lao Tzu attacked was not government in and of itself, but any kind of governing which did not conform to "Taoistic" standards.[3]

Likewise, Frederic Bender and Roger Ames in a 1983 roundtable discussion of Daoism and politics, while finding great lessons for anarchism in "political Daoism," conclude that the (received) *DDJ* is not a full-fledged anarchist text, since, as Ames notes it seems to accept the state as a natural institution,[4] and as Bender argues, "retains, albeit in improved form, ruler, rule, and the means of rule (the state)."[5] This is the main basis upon which Feldt argues that classical Daoism represented at best a "diluted" form of anarchism[6] and at most a justification for the most efficacious type of limited rule within an autocratic and bureaucratic state, a type of rule akin to the "minimal, 'night watchman' state of Nozikean liberalism,"[7] a contention that, besides the obvious self-contradiction between autocratic and limited rule, we will dispute on page 28 of this chapter below.

On a less literal level other scholars find similar limits to anarchism in the received *DDJ* and even in the *Zhuangzi*, the author(s) of which many scholars otherwise recognize as much more explicitly anti-statist than the *DDJ*. Arthur Waley, for example, while finding great similarities between the classical Daoism of the *DDJ* and *Zhuangzi* and Western anarchism, nevertheless concludes that there were important differences, since "one of the main tenets of modern anarchism is that no appeal must be made to the authority of 'metaphysical entities'" and that "… [*dao*] is undoubtedly a 'metaphysical entity'."[8] Similarly, Benjamin Schwartz claims that the language of the *DDJ* suggests "… not a spontaneously emerging 'anarchist' state of affairs but a state of affairs brought about by a sage-ruler."[9] Likewise, A. C. Graham claims that however similar Western anarchism is to the thought of later "Daoist primitivists" who probably were the real authors of some of the "outer" or later added chapters of the *Zhuangzi*, by contrast the more limited anti-government doctrine in the (received) *DDJ* and perhaps the "inner" or original chapters of the *Zhuangzi* if not amounting to "hierarchic anarchism" at least "amounts to a paternalistic anarchism" in its hope that the ruler will follow the practice of the "ancient Emperors, [who] it may be presumed, had no task but to keep the people ignorant of the arts and luxuries which were eventually to corrupt them …"[10] For Graham, as for Hsiao, the classical Daoists "[found]

it difficult to imagine a society without any ruler or sages at all … The concept of the pure community explicitly described as without ruler and subject belongs rather to the revival of philosophical Taoism in the 3rd century A. D."[11]

This point of view that finds limits to Daoist anarchism and instead deems it a doctrine of laissez-faire or limited government,[12] would perhaps have as its best evidence the use of ideas in

[3] Hsiao Kung-chuan, *A History of Chinese Political Thought*, 1: 298–9.

[4] Roger Ames, "Is Political Taoism Anarchism?" 35.

[5] Frederic Bender, "Taoism and Western Anarchism," 12.

[6] Feldt, 326, 336.

[7] Ibid., 334, 336.

[8] Arthur Waley, *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*, 74.

[9] Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China*, 213.

[10] Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*, 310.

[11] Ibid., 311.

[12] Again, a view most clearly expressed in Feldt, 336, though he claims that the type of state allowed in the *DDJ* under his expanded concept of *wuwei* could "far exceed the scope of the legitimate functions of Nozick's state," leading him to what this author views as the highly self-contradictory assertion that the supposed laissez-faire state of classical Daoism could support a highly centralized, autocratic form of rule (as will be noted later in this chapter).

the *DDJ* and *Zhuangzi* ideas by officials in the court of the emperor Wu Di in the first century of the former Han dynasty (202 BCE–8 CE). At that time, after the official Legalist ideology of the hated Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE) was discredited (the Qin being the first, if the shortest, centralized imperial dynasty in Chinese history due to its rule by naked force with little legitimizing ideological veneer) and before official Confucianism took full form as a replacement ideology justifying the Han empire as rule by the morally virtuous for the benefit of all, some court scholars briefly adapted Daoist ideas to legitimize the Han's supposedly more "light" rule compared to that of the Qin. This laissez-faire version of Daoism can especially be found in parts of the *Huainanzi*, a text of the early Han.

Likewise, during the revival of philosophical Daoism at the end of the later Han dynasty (25–220 CE) and the beginning of the long Period of Disunity (ca.

220–581 CE) before the centralized empire was finally revived in the sixth century CE, Daoism was first used as a formula to justify the rule of the upstart military dictator and posthumous founder of the failed Wei dynasty Cao Cao against the Confucian ideology of his opponents—the great families or large landlords from the end of the Han—as represented especially by the Sima clan who founded the Jin dynasty after Cao's death, another failed attempt at revival of empire (thus this first part of the Period of Disunity is usually referred to as the Wei-Jin period by China historians). Again, it seems to have been no problem for the Wei ideologists of the first generation of neo-Daoists to use the thought of the *DDJ* and *Zhuangzi* to justify a supposedly limited government, or at least one free from the Confucian conventions of "benevolent" rule by the morally superior.[13]

Against this idea of the limits to anarchism in classical Daoism, many scholars have posited an opposite case of a more full-fledged anarchism. In general, their argument would be that the received *DDJ* while referring to ideal rulers takes virtually the entire content of rule away from them in its condemnation of law, morality, education, taxes, and punishment. In effect the received text takes away all meaning of rulership by removing all elements of coercion from "rulers."[14] As first and best pointed out by Joseph Needham (if within what many, including this observer, view as an unnecessarily unilinear and old-fashioned form of Marxist analysis), the *DDJ* was trying to change "feudal" rulers back into leaders of primitive communal tribes, that is, into tribal elders or wise men with no monopoly on the legitimate use of coercion, to employ again Weber's minimalist definition of the state. As such, the authors of the classical Daoist texts could be identified as "men of the South," that is, of the areas at the far southern end of the Yellow River valley sedentary agricultural society who may have been in touch or dimly aware of surviving pre-sedentary practices and ideas.[15] Without accepting Needham's thesis, Burton Watson, the great translator of the *Zhuangzi*, does accept that the author of its inner chapters was a man of the South,[16] who was thus not just anti-imperial but may have been in touch with pre-Zhou and thus prefeudal customs and ideas.

Even the best evidence for the laissez-faire interpretation of classical Daoism, the *Huainanzi* (a text of the early Han dynasty in which Daoism was combined with other philosophies in an eclectic fashion in an attempt to find a legitimating formula for Han rule), has been brought into

[13] Etienne Balazs, *Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy: Variations on a Theme*, 234–5; Richard Mather, "The Controversy over Conformity and Naturalness during the Six Dynasties," 161–4.

[14] John P. Clark, "On Taoism and Politics," 84–5.

[15] Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, II: 100–32.

[16] Burton Watson (trans.). *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 1–2.

question by Roger Ames. In a vein of analysis very similar to that in this chapter, Ames views the text as only justifying government on a literal level, but with a deliberate subtextual purpose of undermining political authority since "… as an anarchistic political theory, the [Daoist] concept of [*wuwei*] cannot be supported by any elaborate apparatus for practical implementation."[17] In effect, Ames sees large portions of the *Huainanzi* (which he translates as "The Art of Rulership") as a continuing attempt to use Daoist ideas, if in a more practical and concrete way, to undermine Confucian and Legalist justifications of authority, and indeed all coercive rule:

> If we understand the primary objection of the anarchist to be coercive authority—that is, one person or group obliging another to act in a certain way—and the primary objective of the anarchist to be the eradication of this kind of authority from all areas of political life, then inasmuch as *The Art of Rulership* advocates full use of the spontaneous contribution of each participant in an organization committed to the nonmediated action of personal initiative, there is much here that points to a [Daoist] anarchism.[18]

For Ames, the "political Daoism" of the *DDJ*, *Zhuangzi* and the *Huainanzi* has four necessary conditions for a "comprehensive anarchism," namely a theory emphasizing a natural "free" condition of human nature, a rejection of all coercive authority, a notion of some kind of "non-coercive, nonauthoritarian society" that could replace coercive authority, and "some practical method" of moving from "authoritarian reality" to the "non-authoritarian ideal."[19] Even if one questions whether this "willingness to work within the framework of existing institutions to approximate the [anti-authoritarian] ideal"[20] in the *Huainanzi* could too easily lead to accommodation and acquiescence to authority rather than a challenge to it, this weakness does not have to apply to the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* nor to other, later Daoists. Even granting the inconsistency of the *Huainanzi* on the issue of political power, Ames' view of political Daoism as a thoroughgoing, anti-statist critique even in the classical era thus goes a long way toward refuting the theory of early Daoism as only a doctrine of laissez-faire rule and not of anarchism.

"Anarchism" of the *DDJ* and *Zhuangzi* as corrupt idea of later Daoists

Related to the above point, many scholars, led again by A. C. Graham, see the later, more explicit Daoist anarchism from the time of the authorship of the outer chapters of the *Zhuangzi* to the Wei-Jin neo-Daoists as an extrapolation and even distortion of the political ideas expressed in the *DDJ* and the inner chapters of the *Zhuangzi*. For Graham, the explicitly anarchist sections of the *Zhuangzi* (Chapters 8–10, and parts of Chapter 11) reflect the writings of the "primitivists,"

---

[17] Ames, *The Art of Rulership: A Study in Ancient Chinese Political Thought*, 46.

For a full translation of the *Huainanzi*, see Liu An, King of Huainan, *The Huainanzi: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Government in Early Han China*. For other partial translations, see deBary and Bloom, 268–73, and Mark Csikszentmihalyi (ed. and trans.), *Readings in Han Chinese Thought*, 63–4, 72– 5.

[18] Ibid., 148.

[19] Ames, "Is Political Taoism Anarchism?" 113; *The Art of Rulership*, 30–1 and *passim*).

[20] Ames, *The Art of Rulership,* 44 .

who wrote with a very different, if still "idiosyncratic" style than the author of the inner chapters[21] (see Appendix 1 for the most brilliant anarchist chapter of the *Zhuangzi*). Likewise, Burton Watson finds the same chapters to be written in a tone with a much more "shrill, almost pathological fury that is unlike anything found in the 'inner chapters'."[22] although, interestingly enough, he finds these chapters much more closely parallel to the *DDJ* than the inner *Zhuangzi* chapters.[23] As an important corollary, such scholars would see Wei-Jin Daoist anarchism as a further extension or even corruption of the less harsh and explicit anti-statism in the *DDJ* and the inner chapters of the *Zhuangzi*.

A. C. Graham, however, sees the "primitivist" additions to the *Zhuangzi* not as much later corruptions but as based on an earlier tradition that goes back to the hermit Yang Zhu, a legendary figure who predated even the classical Daoist texts. This primitivist tradition was also based on the "Shen Nung" ("Divine Farmer") tradition of a stateless agricultural community that also goes back at least to the Warring States period and fourth century BCE, if not earlier.[24]

Graham also notes the tradition of Xiu Xing, another of the great "madmen of the South" who disputed the Confucian thinker Mencius around 315 BCE based on the Shen Nung ideal.[25] Thus, even for Graham, who believes that the "primitivist" chapters were authored between 209–202 BCE, that is, during the interregnum between the fall of the Qin and rise of the former Han dynasty,[26]

there is nevertheless a long tradition of Daoist or proto-Daoist anti-statism that goes far back into the Warring States Period.

Liu Xiaogan disputes Graham's dating, finding instead that the "anarchist" chapters of the *Zhuangzi*, which for him include the "Yangist" chapters as well (i.e. those influenced by the tradition of the hermit Yang Zhu, including Chapters 28, 29, and 31), date to the late Warring States period, that is, not as far removed from the historical Zhuang Zhou. Although Liu thinks these chapters did go far beyond the political vision of the *Zhuangzi* in their radicalism, he nevertheless concludes that the authors of the "anarchist" chapters were still followers of Zhuang Zi.[27] If true, this would help make the case even more that the anarchist tradition of Wei-Jin Daoism has long and deep historical roots that go back nearly to the time of the historical Zhuang Zhou, if not before.

On a philosophical level, of course, many authors have found an anarchist spirit in both the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*. The case for an anarchist vision in the classical Daoist texts, to be explicated further in this chapter and throughout this first part of the book, would focus first on the thoroughgoing critique of all aspects of government and the positive view of the stateless society expressed in the *DDJ*.[28] Second, an anarchist view of classical Daoism would focus on the cybernetic vision of life in the paragraph of the great second (inner) chapter of the *Zhuangzi*, where the original author himself suggests that since there is no one body part that rules the

[21] Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 306–11; *idem.* , *Chuang Tzu: Textual Notes to a Partial Translation*, 202–13.

[22] Watson, 14–15.

[23] Ibid., 14.

[24] Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 64–74.

[25] Ibid., 70–2.

[26] Ibid., 306.

[27] Liu Xiaogan, *Classifying the Zhuangzi Chapters*, *passim.* Also see Livia Kohn, "Review of Liu Xiaogan, *Classifying the Zhuangzi Chapters*," 420–4.

[28] As argued in Clark, *passim*, and by this author originally in Rapp, "Taoism and Anarchy: An Analysis of the Political Critique in Philosophical Taoism and Its Comparison with the Western Philosophy of Anarchism, 18–23.

others, there is thus a natural or spontaneous order in the universe that exists without human intervention.[29] As the author of this inner chapter put it, The hundred joints, the nine openings, the six organs, all come together and exist here [as my body]. But which part should I feel closest to? I should delight in all parts, you say? But there must be one I ought to favor more. If not, are they all of them mere servants? But if they are all servants, then how can they keep order among themselves? Or do they take turns being lord and servant? It would seem as though there must be some True Lord among them.

But whether I succeed in discovering his identity or not, neither adds to nor detracts from his truth.[30]

This is essentially the same point that Peter Kropotkin made using the language of nineteenth-century science in his famous pamphlet, "Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal," where he claimed that the discoveries of modern astronomy and other natural sciences have led to a new realization that there is no purposive center or natural hierarchy in nature. As Kropotkin put it about the universe, "thus the center, the origin of force, formerly transferred from the earth to the sun, now turns out to be scattered and disseminated. It is everywhere and nowhere."[31]

It is not just for the view of the absence of purposive order but for the positive vision of a world free from all "restraints or controls" that Hsiao Kung-chuan changed his earlier skeptical view and concluded that the "thought of" the *Zhuangzi*, even in the inner chapters, amounted to "the most radical of all anarchisms."[32]

Warring States Daoism as "Reactionary" and not "Revolutionary"

Nevertheless, even if one grants the philosophical anarchism of the *DDJ* and/or the *Zhuangzi*, many observers find that philosophical Daoism, from the Warring States to the Wei-Jin periods, is still limited by its lack of outright support for revolution, that is, for lack of any attempts to overthrow the existing state by force. For example, Liu Xiaogan, who finds that the "*wujun*" (again, literally, "without a prince" or, in other words, anarchist) chapters of the *Zhuangzi* went beyond the inner chapters to attack the (political) reality of the day rather than merely try to transcend or escape it,[33] nevertheless claims that the "theories of the Wu-Jun school never directly became a herald for any revolution."[34] As Frederick Mote puts it, even if one accepts the *Zhuangzi* as a thoroughgoing anarchist text and not just as advocating laissez-faire, the doctrine in this text was only the "anarchy of the non-conforming individual" and thus if the author(s) of this text were anarchists they "certainly did not believe in organization or social movements." Therefore

[29] See Ames, "Is Political Taoism Anarchism?," 36–7.

[30] Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 38.

[31] Kropotkin, "Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal," in Kropotkin, *Kropotkin's Revolutionary* Pamphlets, Roger Baldwin (ed.), 117. This author was reminded of Kropotkin's cybernetic argument by Arif Dirlik, who noted the evident adaptation of this argument by the twentieth-century Chinese anarchist Wang Siweng as part of his criticism of the Marxist emphasis on centralized organization. See Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 246, citing Wang Siweng, "Hewei er xinyang wuzhengfu gongchan zhuyi" (What Are Anarcho-Communist Beliefs), 5–19.

[32] Hsiao, 318, a change from his earlier view of Daoism as a philosophy of despair, as we will see below.

[33] Liu Xiaogan, "The Wu Jun School," Chapter Three of *Zhuang Zi houxue san paizhi yanbian* (The Evolution of Three Schools of Latter-Day Zhuang Zi Philosophy), translated in *Chinese Studies in Philosophy* 23:2: 50.

[34] Ibid., 85.

in the end, the anarchism of the *Zhuangzi* "could not become a political threat, except that it gave a point of view to less disinterested critics of the state."[35]

Again, some observers relate this critique of the nonrevolutionary nature of Daoism to the emphasis put on appeals to the ruler in the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*. Both texts appeal not to the masses to revolt, but only to rulers to govern through the *dao* rather than through coercive means.[36] Above all, such critics would argue, the *DDJ* and especially the *Zhuangzi* call for transformation of the individual and not for genuine social revolution, and thus remain limited and ineffectual. Peter Zarrow, a student of twentieth-century Chinese anarchism who takes seriously the "anarchist provisions" supplied to Chinese political culture by Daoism[37] nevertheless similarly finds Daoism lacking in this regard:

> ... traditional anarchistic tendencies, in China as in the West, were not associated with a full-fledged theory of social reconstruction. An alternative vision is not the same as a sense of how real people can create and respond to a new social structure. This traditional anarchism, then, lacked revolutionary self-awareness. Philosophical Daoists issued no calls for organizing the people or fostering resistance to the rulers they so condemned, for such calls themselves would be unnatural and interfering.[38]

Against this idea of inherent political limits to Daoist anarchism, other scholars stress that perhaps Daoism is superior and on a higher level more revolutionary than the "social and political" Western anarchists. First, on a philosophical level Frederic Bender thinks Daoism has much to teach Western anarchism about applying a consistent metaphysical grounding for its claim of an essential "egolessness" of human nature (e.g. what Alan Ritter would call Western anarchism's search for "communal individuality"[39]), a lack of grounding that has helped to weaken anarchism as "a practical movement for social transformation."[40] In addition, Daoism can better explain, and thus attract followers for an anarchist movement, the psychological and not just material needs that are unmet by any type of state.[41]

Most importantly, classic Daoism, similar to the ideas of Tolstoy and other Western pacifist anarchists, is much more consistent in its opposition to coercion[42] and less susceptible to the contradictions of the Western anarchists, from Bakunin on, willing to embrace violent methods. This willingness to use violence or, as in Kropotkin, the failure to clearly denounce it was a large factor in leading to the demise of anarchism in the West, forever poisoning the name of anarchism in many people's minds.[43] We will examine this argument at more length later in this chapter. Here we should note that just because Daoist anarchism rejects violence should not mean that it lacks revolutionary qualities.

Perhaps a reexamination of the concept of *wuwei* can help us to resolve this question. Given the numerous "people power" movements that began in the late 1980s and have spread most

[35] Frederick W. Mote, *Intellectual Foundations of China*, 76.

[36] For example, see Bender, 12–15.

[37] Peter Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture*, 6–12.

[38] Ibid., 11.

[39] Alan Ritter, *Anarchism: A Theoretical Analysis*, Chapter Two, "The Goal of Anarchism: Communal Individuality," 25–39.

[40] Bender, 15–20.

[41] Ibid., 20–1.

[42] Ibid., 24–5.

[43] As argued, for example in Woodcock, 16–17.

recently to North Africa and the Middle East, one must no longer identify violent action as the most revolutionary kind of movement. Indeed, the attempts of some online Chinese bloggers to spark a "Jasmine Revolution" in China, according to one author, may reveal the possibilities of *wuwei*. As Will Clem argued in the Hong Kong newspaper *The South China Morning Post*, those Chinese citizens who showed up in the crowded shopping districts of Beijing and Shanghai to "take a stroll" in response to the bloggers' call played a very clever cat and mouse game:

> There was a certain aesthetic to the action, like a farcical ballet. No sooner had uniformed and plain-clothes officers broken up one possible gathering than the crowds simply re-formed somewhere else.
>
> It was almost the embodiment of the ancient Taoist philosophical concept of *wuwei*, best translated as "active non-action."[44]

Thus it is not only state rulers who can operate by *wuwei* but perhaps those who would oppose oppressive rule. As in the events in the middle east perhaps show, the greater the efforts of states to repress their citizens, perhaps the greater reactions of their subjects, which can be prevented from becoming violent movements that in the end would recreate state violence only by taking on a radical but pacifist Daoist attitude toward revolution.

Warring States Daoism as individualist and not socialist

As we have just seen above, many observers who find an essential nonrevolutionary nature in Daoism often see Daoist anarchism as a doctrine of transformation of the individual self rather than as a call for collective action.

For such observers, even if the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* did advance beyond the reported pure hedonism of the proto-Daoist Yang Zhu and even if on some level classical Daoism could be labeled as an anarchist doctrine it nevertheless remained at the level of individualist anarchism and contained no elements similar to modern socialism. Such critics in effect agree with scholars such as Feldt about the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* but take the opposite position from him in seeing only collectivist anarchism as true anarchism.

Thus, even if the Wei-Jin Daoists were firmly within the tradition of the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* in their explicit anarchism, they nevertheless were far from the collectivist anarchism of Proudhon, Bakunin, and especially Kropotkin. As Hsiao Kung-chuan puts it, … [the authors of the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*] thought that the individual should abandon knowledge and make few his desires, seek self-contained contentment and not seek individual advancement, sharing accord with ruler and superiors about the way [of simplifying life] through diminishing. Hence the political method of letting alone did not demand "popular knowledge" and did not demand social equality … in consequence the individual becomes the only value, and freedom is not a means for guaranteeing the growth of knowledge and human capacities, but becomes in itself the ultimate goal.[45]

Against this view, one could posit again Needham's idea of the early Daoists as harking back to the real or supposed primitive communism of pre-Zhou society.[46] Thus, far from justifying a

[44] Will Clem, "The Flowering of an Unconventional Revolution," *South China Morning Post*, March 3, 2011.
[45] Hsiao, 317–18.
[46] Needham, II; also see Clark, 82.

"ministerial bureaucracy" of an autocratic and centralized state, as Feldt somewhat anachronistically argues[47] (since the imperial state had not formed yet), the classical Daoists may in fact have been opposing such tendencies as may have been growing but were far from universal during the Warring States period.

Even if one is not inclined to fully accept Needham's rather literal view of "Daoist communism," others would still stress the vision in the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* of an organic community that links individual and collective.

Though Daoist anarchists perhaps based their hopes for change on individual awareness and transformation, this would *not* lead to a society of egoists as in the ideals of Max Stirner or Murray Rothbard, but instead, as Bender argues, to the transformation of the "egoistic self into a realized, nonegoistic self which, if successful, will be the necessary and sufficient condition for corresponding transformations of [the] subject's selves and thereby the restoration of harmonious social order."[48] In other words, the classical Daoists may have surpassed Western anarchists in their vision of a society of "individual-communal beings," the vision again that Ritter sees as the essential project of Western anarchism.[49]

Daoism as a negative or passive, backward-looking Nihilist doctrine and not a positive, scientific vision for the future

Even if one grants that at some level the classic Daoist vision was communal in nature, other critics would suggest that this was always an anti-technological ideal that posited a lost utopia far in the past. Furthermore, this was inherently a negative vision of loss that offered little or no hope for grafting the benefits of economic and technological progress onto an anarcho-communist future society. As Hsiao Kung-chuan put it in an early, influential article on anarchism in Chinese political thought (but a position from which he changed greatly in his magnum opus on Chinese political thought as we saw above), "Western anarchism is … a doctrine of hope, whereas Chinese anarchism seems to be a doctrine of despair."[50] Finally, the vision of freedom, if there was one in Daoism, was only of a negative freedom that could easily turn into a passive nihilist acceptance of authority, as in the early Han Daoists and the first and third generation of neo-Daoists of the Wei-Jin periods (as we will see in chapter 4).

A much more deadly version of this argument was played out in Mao's China where two strong supporters of Mao's Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution argued that the authors of the classical Daoist texts represented the interests of the "patriarchal slave owning class" who were gradually losing out to the rise of the feudal, land-owning class. The author of the *DDJ*, these Maoists argued, took the stand of the slave masters by advocating "abolishing struggle and adopting a cyclical theory" that denied progressive development and wanted to "restore the idyllic system of the Zhou."[51] Under this view, the author of the *Zhuangzi* represented the "pessimistic and hopeless remnants of slave-masters" in the later Warring States period, when the

[47] Feldt, 334.

[48] Bender, 9.

[49] Ritter, *passim*.

[50] Hsiao, "Anarchism in Chinese Political Thought," 260.

[51] Guan Feng and Lin Lüshi, "Characteristics of Social Change and Philosophical Thought during The Ch'un-Ch'iu Period," 90–104.

principal contradiction (using Mao's formula for determining progressive and reactionary forces) was between the "aristocratic landlords" (who were primarily old slave masters transformed) and the newly emerging "feudal landlords" (who represented new and progressive social privilege).[52] Those who would dare to oppose this official Maoist line on Daoism would suffer greatly for 20 years. Liu Xiaogan, for example, argued in 1957 that the theories of the "Wu Jun" school "were theories with which the laboring people criticized reality, not the theories of a reactionary faction wanting to turn things back." For Liu, "it is utterly unreasonable to say that the [anarchist] chapters [of the *Zhuangzi*] represented the ideas and feelings of the declining class of slave owners."[53]

Situated as we are safely apart in time and space from these far from purely academic quarrels, where any people opposing the Maoist line on Daoism could be (and were) arrested or killed, it should be clear that these Maoist authors tried to fit Chinese history into the Stalinist unilinear straitjacket where every precapitalist society had to undergo the same transformation from primitive communes to slavery to feudalism.[54] As Hsu Cho-yun states, and as most Chinese and Western historians recognize, "there is no evidence that the economy of ancient China was based on slavery like the economy of ancient Greece."[55] Still, even within their orthodox Marxist faith that every idea has a particular economic class standpoint at its base, the Maoists failed to account for the opposition to Confucian beliefs in the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* and to the fact that the classical Daoists looked to mythical *pre*-Zhou rulers for their ideal. Furthermore, when they recognized that because of indigenous climatic and agricultural conditions and needs in China much of the "patriarchal communal" system survived in the late Zhou period,[56] the Maoist critics missed the chance to argue that the Daoists may have represented the interests of remnants of primitive communism, much as Joseph Needham argued, as we have seen. While still making the Daoists "reactionary" in the Marxist sense, this line of argument would go a long way toward taking the Wu Jun school's ideas seriously as a "radical attack on monarchical power."[57] Without being hampered by any version of Marxist dogma, in any analysis of the radical side of Daoism one should still try to determine whether the Daoists were really reactionary and anti-progressive.

First, on the question of looking to the past, some scholars would argue that the nature of classical Chinese makes it ambiguous, at least in Chapter 80 of the received *DDJ*, whether the Daoist ideal is located in the past, present, or future.[58] Even if the ideal did exist in the past, this was a tradition of most schools of thought in the late Zhou with the exception of the Legalists;[59] but certainly the Daoists believed that the ideal society could be attained again, at the present moment or whenever the *dao* was followed again. Furthermore, extrapolating from philosophical discussions of Daoism as related to the lack of a "beginning" or "creation myth" in Chinese thought, we could say that the Daoist stateless ideal is definitely not limited to the past but can

[52] Ibid., 168–70.

[53] Liu, "The Wu Jun School," 6.

[54] In chapter nine below we examine modern Chinese thinkers who disputed this unilinear Marxist view.

[55] Hsu Cho-yun, *Ancient China in Transition*, 13.

[56] Guan and Lin, 49–50.

[57] Liu, "The Wu Jun School," 4–5 and *passim.*

[58] Arthur Waley, *The Way and Its Power: A Study of the Tao Te Ching and Its Place in Chinese Thought*, 242, n. 1. We will examine this part of the *DDJ* in the next chapter for its utopian vision.

[59] The author would like to thank one reviewer of an early version of this chapter for reminding me of this point.

be created of itself and by itself unconditionally. This "unconditioned norm," as David Hall says, is "also the norm of any radical form of anarchism."[60]

Additionally, this norm is far from being only a negative version of freedom that stresses removal of restraints, though this aspect is important, nor is it true that Daoist anarchism must be based only on the concept of *wuwei*, as Feldt suggests. It is true that many Daoist metaphors are expressed in terms of *wu* or negative forms, as David Hall has pointed out.[61] These forms include not only *wuwei* (variously translated as "doing nothing," "inaction," or, as Hall says, "non-assertive action") but also *wuzhi* ("without knowledge" or, as Hall says "without unprincipled knowing"; or as Needham suggests, without the objective and harmful technological knowing of the coming centralized state), and *wuyu* ("no desire" or, as Hall says, "objectless desire"). We could add, of course, *wujun* ("without a prince" or ruler) of the neo-Daoists. But as both Hall and Chang Chung-yuan[62] suggest, these terms relate to an unleashing of creativity when one is freed from restraints.

Indeed, one cannot claim an essential negativity of classic Daoism without ignoring the whole artistic tradition spawned in large part by the literary influence of the *Zhuangzi* on the Southern schools of Chinese art, poetry, and calligraphy that were based on the concept of *ziran*, which this author would contend is nearly as important if not more so than *wuwei* to an understanding of Daoist anarchism. The term *ziran* (literally "of itself so," often translated as "natural" or "spontaneous") taken from the classical Daoist texts, was central to the revived anarchist vision of the second generation of neo-Daoists and should dispel any notion of a lack of a positive vision of freedom in ancient China. Based on an understanding of *ziran*, one can see that the Daoists did indeed contain a positive vision of the limitless possibilities of human nature unbridled and did contain a positive embrace of the world, as David Hall suggests.

As we will see in Chapter 4 this is not to argue that all Daoists avoided the problem of slipping from anarchism into nihilism, but only that the nihilist side of Daoism comes out when shifting away from *dao* to *wu* (nothing, nothingness) as the key term, or to *wuming* (the nameless), as did some generations of Wei-Jin Daoists.[63] In other words, only when the Daoists shifted away from saying "everything exists as an interdependent whole of which we are a part" (as emphasized by those focusing on *dao* and *ziran* together) to saying that "nothing exists" or that "power came out of nowhere" did they shift from anarchism to nihilism. Based on this view of the centrality of *ziran* to a consistent vision of Daoist anarchism, one could also follow Needham and Hall and see the Daoist stress on *hundun* ("[positive] chaos," "primeval unity," or "social homogeneity") as a positive vision of individuals living and working together in [stateless] society.[64]

As for the question of science and technological progress, here again we can turn to Needham, who sees the Daoists as representatives of a "anti-feudal" forces and who criticized the use of technology to build up new forms of oppressive rule while at the same time maintaining within their thought a "proto-scientific" element of opposition to all authority and a desire to observe the universe without preconditions, as we saw above in the satirical version of a cybernetic view of the human body in the second, inner chapter of the *Zhuangzi*.[65] Generally speaking, Daoist

[60] David Hall, "The Metaphysics of Anarchism," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 10 (1983), 56–57.
[61] Ibid., 59–60.
[62] Chang Chung-yuan, *Creativity and Taoism*, *passim*.
[63] Balazs, 247; Mather, "The Controversy over Conformity and Naturalness," 169– 70.
[64] Hall, 58; Needham, II: 107–15.
[65] Needham, II: 86–99; 121–7; 131–2.

anarchists did not oppose all knowledge, but only knowledge used to divide and conquer the world. Indeed, those claiming a Daoist philosophical base were at the heart of Chinese scientific discoveries.

To sum up, then, this chapter starts from the position that the later Wei-Jin Daoist anarchists were firmly within the vision of the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, that is, a positive vision of the freedom and human creativity that could be unleashed once the terrible authority of the state was removed. This vision could be achieved by a program of combining individual transformation with the need to realize our essential communal nature. Far from being a corrupt, less artistic vision, the explicitly anarchist side of Daoism in the hands of talented writers and poets such as Ruan Ji and Tao Qian (see sections on these poets in this chapter below) could demonstrate the powers of *ziran* in action. Finally, as will be argued later in this chapter, the efforts of Daoist anarchists did amount to a consistent, very long-lasting movement that by the standards and lessons of the late twentieth century we can now see can be much more progressive and effective than old-fashioned "revolutionary violence." Extrapolating from Bender's argument,[66] we could suggest as others do concerning Tolstoy's pacifist anarchism that Daoist anarchism may solve the dilemma of Western anarchists who tried to use violent coercion to bring down the state and end all coercion, but who in the process only succeeded in poisoning the name of anarchism and in leading to some degree of popular revulsion against revolutionaries. Using the language of postmodernism (though in Chapter 4 we will examine a potential lesson also for postmodern anarchism from some Chinese thinkers who used neo-Daoist language to shift away from anarchism to nihilism), we could posit the Daoist anarchist method as an attempt to deconstruct and undermine the specific structures of ideological hegemony, structures that are far more important to ruling elites than raw coercion as a method to maintain state power, and to build in their place a new language of resistance that will not itself easily degenerate into a new system of authority (as critics have often explicitly or implicitly charged against devotees of Derrida and deconstructionism).

Synopsis of the thought of Wei-Jin Daoist anarchists

This author argues that Wei-Jin Daoist anarchism, which most scholars recognize as very close in spirit at least to philosophical anarchism in the West, is not a distortion but a fuller explication of the anarchism at least implicit in the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*. In order to make this case before proceeding to outline the ideas of the key figures of later Daoist anarchism, we should outline the historical background to their thought.

The revival of philosophical Daoism (*daojia* as opposed to *daojiao*, or religious Daoism as we saw in the introduction—a distinction that postdated the classical Daoist philosophers but that predated the Wei-Jin), began at the end of the later Han dynasty (25–220 CE). The warlord Cao Cao (150–220 CE), a general of the Han who had helped put down the Yellow Turban and Five Pecks of Rice rebellions, later went on to found his own state, which contended with two other states to reunify China. In this effort, he grouped around himself various scholars of different persuasions who developed philosophies designed to give him legitimacy as a ruler, perhaps including eventual justification for assuming the title of emperor itself if he could have succeeded in conquering the rival kingdoms. Included in this group of scholars were men who used Daoist

[66] Bender, 24–5.

and Legalist concepts to justify his rule. After the death of Cao Cao, the regent in the succeeding *Zhengshi* reign period filled all of the important posts of the government with a group of these neo-Daoists. For 10 years, from 240 to 249 CE, this neo-Daoism became part of the official orthodoxy for the central Wei kingdom against the other states controlled by the great aristocratic family interests dominant in the centrifugal forces that had weakened and finally brought down the Han dynasty and which continued to oppose recentralization of imperial state power.[67]

Under this first version of neo-Daoism, the emphasis was changed from *dao* to a new focus on *wu* ("nothingness" or "non-being"). According to this philosophy, all things come not from an underlying unity in the world, but from nothing. Activities should be carried out according to *ziran* (again, "naturalness" or "spontaneity"). Thus Cao Cao's rise from nowhere to the top of the social hierarchy could be justified by this combined Daoist–Legalist philosophy as opposed to the prevailing *mingjiao* ("teaching of names") school of Confucianism. Richard Mather describes the political nature of the Wei faction's philosophy as follows, In the [Zhengshi] era the debris of Confucian ritualism had to be cleared away and room made for new values of 'Naturalness' [*ziran*] and 'Non-actuality' [*wu*] to buttress the new order of government ... [Originally] the new men like [Cao Cao] had risen to power by virtue of their ability alone, and the Confucian shibboleths of the old aristocracy concerning 'goodness and morality' [*ren-i*], 'loyalty and filial submission' [*zhongxiao*] were meaningless to them if a man could not conduct a campaign successfully or manage an administrative post efficiently. [Cao]'s slogan, 'Only the talented will be promoted to office' ... agreed with his policy of disregarding whether or not a man "carried a sullied or disgraceful reputation, acted with ridiculous behavior, or was neither 'good' nor 'filial'" [quoting the *Wei shu* (Book of Wei), O29lb]. And the men he gathered about him quickly furnished this pragmatic policy with an ideological base.[68]

At the same time, however, these neo-Daoists did not totally reject Confucianism. For example, they saw Confucius as the greatest sage since, unlike Lao Zi, he supposedly practiced the (Daoist) way of nonaction without ever talking about it.[69]

Eventually the centralizing Wei faction was thrown out of power by the Sima clan who, after a brief period of using the Wei emperors as puppets, seized power in their own right under the name of the Jin dynasty. For a short time, the Jin reunited all of China into one empire organized along the interests of the great families. The surviving neo-Daoists then readapted their philosophy, now emphasizing *ziran* to refer to a way of behavior opposed to official life and customs. This new use of the term also helped to justify refusing to serve in the new government as a higher form of behavior rather than as an act of disloyalty. A group of these neo-Daoists known as the "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove" became famous for their nonconformist behavior, which besides refusal to join the government included *qingtan* (literally "pure conversation") a style of behavior consisting of witty remarks and put-downs, nudism, and wine drinking.[70] All of their actions were supposedly based on precepts in the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, and indeed, in this time those classical Daoist texts were recollected and studied anew.[71]

---

[67] For one movingly written and still useful description of this period, see Balazs, Chapters 13–14, 187–254.

[68] Mather, 161, 163.

[69] Fung Yulan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, 218.

[70] See Richard Mather (trans. with introduction). *Shih-shuo Hsin-yu: A New Account of Tales of the World*, for an English translation of the most famous collection of *qingtan*.

[71] See Holmes Welch, *Taoism: The Parting of the Way*, revised edition, 123–6.

The Jin dynasty fell almost immediately after it was founded because of infighting among the royal princes as well as due to the incursions of the northern "barbarians." Moving its capital eastward, the Jin became little more than another kingdom among several regional and "barbarian"-controlled states. This era of the Period of Disunity, known as the Six Dynasties, became increasingly chaotic, as even family estates themselves soon became unstable.

In such a situation of chaos, from the fall of the Wei to the disintegration of the Jin, the anarchistic side of Daoism began to reemerge. Even in making the case for the extreme anarchism of the second generation of neo-Daoists, it is important to note that this Daoism originated as a justification for the centralization of power and only became anarchistic as the centralizing faction was defeated and its descendants forced to fight for survival against the rule of the great families. Nevertheless, the greatest of the Western anarchists, including Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Tolstoy, also came from privileged backgrounds, as Marxists never fail to point out, including from aristocratic classes that were being swept aside in the push toward industrialization and centralization of state power in the West. Thus the Daoist anarchists cannot be denigrated on these grounds as any less sincerely anarchist than their Western counterparts. Below we examine the background and key elements of anarchism of four writers of this second generation of neo-Daoists, making specific comparisons to Western anarchists along the way.

Ruan Ji (210–263 CE)

One of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, Ruan Ji, was the first person in the post-Han era to reemphasize the anarchistic side of Daoism. His father, Ruan Yu, was intimately involved with the military government of Cao Cao.

Indeed, the Ruan family's wealth and power does not seem to precede Ruan Dun, the grandfather of Ruan Ji, who was a local magistrate in the district where Cao Cao first raised his troops.[72] In spite of these strong Wei connections, Ruan Ji survived the executions of the Wei intellectuals at the end of the Zhengshi period by carefully walking the line between Confucianism and Daoism in his poetry, and by his nonconformist, "harmless" behavior in which he could avoid serving in the Jin government without being accused of disloyalty. He died a supposedly natural death in 263, yet that was the same year in which the last of the Seven Sages were executed by the Sima faction.

Though Ruan Ji himself never openly challenged the authority of the Jin, late in his life, in one great poetic essay, the *Daren Xiansheng Zhuan* ("Biography of Master Great Man"), Ruan Ji raised the first banner of Daoist anarchism since the Warring States period. In the first third of this work (reprinted in Appendix 2), a fictional, nameless person supposed to have lived since Creation replies to a letter from a typical Confucian gentleman that attacked the Great Man for his unconventional ways. In his reply the Great man gives, in the words of Hsiao Kung-chuan, a "merciless attack upon conventionality, and, at the same time, an enthusiastic encomium of anarchist freedom."[73] The Great Man begins his reply by describing the original utopian community of the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* when all lived in harmony, innocence, and physical equality (see

[72] Donald Holzman, *Poetry and Politics: The Life and Times of Juan Chi (AD 210–263)*, 2–5.
[73] Hsiao, "Anarchism in Chinese Political Thought," 253.

the next chapter), concluding that, … for then there was no ruler, and all beings were peaceful; no officials, and all affairs were well ordered.[74]

The Great Man then continues to say that, by unspecified means, artificiality was introduced into this community, including class differences between rich and poor, strong and weak. Then government came about and resulted in the greatest misfortunes. Different factions fought among themselves for power and caused great chaos. According to Jung Chao-tsu, it was from his vantage point in the struggles between the factions of Wei and Jin that Ruan Ji came to conclude that the origin of social chaos was in the power struggles between competing empires, and thus explains why in the end he came to oppose all government and advocate anarchy.[75]

Following the *Zhuangzi*, Ruan Ji in this essay describes the nature of sages as essentially the same as that of thieves, and the nature of government as oppression:

> When rulers are set up, tyranny arises; when officials are established, thieves are born. You idly ordain rites and laws only to bind the lowly common people.[76]

By pursuing wealth and power, these rulers hold up a bad example to the people; thus crime and rebellion ensue only after government is established and drain away all of the public wealth. Confucian ideas ensuring order through benevolence and ritual, and Legalist ideas of standardized law "are indeed nothing more than the methods of harmful robbers, of trouble-makers, of death and destruction…"[77]

Though there is more ambiguity in this poem concerning the origin of government than in the ideas of Bao Jingyan (as well will see in the next section), Ruan nevertheless does bring out of the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* a clearer picture of how an unnatural and harmful government could originate out of the *dao*, just as Western anarchists have to explain how government could have originated out of a species with a supposedly naturally communitarian and peaceful human nature. For Ruan, based firmly on passages in the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, it is clearer that government is not just philosophically indefensible but actually harmful and counterproductive. Furthermore, government is not a natural occurrence, but an artificial creation of those trying to justify their wealth and power. Ruan equates rulers and sages in power with thieves, although the Great Man does seem to believe that the sages are merely mistaken, not insincere, in setting government up in the first place. In addition, the Great Man sees crime not just as a response to oppression, as do the Western anarchists from Proudhon to Kropotkin, but as corruption of the people by wealth and power. Thus, even with his more blatant anarchist tendencies, Ruan Ji remains within the limits of the *DDJ* in seeing both rulers and subjects alike as well-meaning if corruptible or, as Benjamin Schwartz puts it, "latently vulnerable" to this "propensity to fall."[78] Finally, though justifying rebellion as inevitable once government is established, Ruan Ji still paints a picture of this as an unfortunate occurrence—in other words, he is not openly advocating violent revolution as would, say, Bakunin. Nevertheless, within the thesis of this book, Ruan's poem clearly contains an anarchist theory of the state.

It should be noted that the Daoist anarchist critique occurs only in the first third of Ruan's poem; in the latter two-thirds of the essay, the Great Man soars through the universe to attain

[74] Holzman, 195; also see Balazs, 238 and Bauer, 135–7.
[75] Jung Chao-tsu, *Wei-Jinde ziran zhuyi* (The Wei-Chin Doctrine of Naturalness), 42–3.
[76] Holzman, 195.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Schwartz, 210.

harmony with the *dao*. Nevertheless, one should not mistake the fictitious and fantastic nature of this essay as an indication of anything less than a serious work. As Donald Holzman says, "far from marking this as a work of satirical exaggeration, a playful slap at the bigoted Confucian of his day, the extremeness of his condemnation shows how heart-felt it was, how absolutely serious he is."[79]

Soon after the death of Ruan Ji, the neo-Daoist or *qingtan* movement began to decline from "liberty to libertinage" as it was taken up by the idle sons of the aristocracy.[80] At the same time, serious neo-Daoist philosophers began again to justify government service as being in line with *ziran* once they saw the inevitable and irreversible triumph of the Sima reaction.[81]

Bao Jingyan (ca. 300 CE)

Before the neo-Daoist movement totally degenerated, however, the last and probably greatest direct statement of Daoist anarchism was made. It survives only as a short treatise in one chapter of the alchemical text of Ge Hong (253– 333 CE), who reproduced it with a lengthy refutation of his own[82] (see Bao's full tract in Appendix 3). This anarchist was clearly influenced by Ruan Ji and, according to Ge Hong, "enjoyed the works of Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi and studied the discipline of dialectics and sophistry."[83] The anarchist's name is Bao Jingyan, who had the same surname as one Bao Jing, the father-in-law of Ge Hong, thus probably placing Bao Jingyan in the same family and aristocratic class.[84]

While firmly basing his critique of the State on the ideas in the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, Bao Jingyan unambiguously shifts the emphasis regarding the origin of the State from that of misguided altruists trying to order the world, to that of, according to Lin Mousheng, "an institution created and maintained by the dominant classes in society and imposed upon the weak and ignorant."[85] Bao starts out by explicitly condemning the Confucian theory of the origin of the State as a mere pretext for rule of the strong over the weak, arguing that "… servitude and mastery result from the struggle between the cunning and innocent, and Blue Heaven has nothing whatsoever to do with it."[86]

Bao goes on to use the argument in Chapter 9 of the *Zhuangzi* to refute the idea of the naturalness of having ruler and ruled, concluding that, in reality, government works by force in order to enrich those in office:

---

[79] Holzman, 189.

[80] Balazs, 247.

[81] Mather, 1969–70, 169–70.

[82] See the translation of Bao's tract in Balazs, 243–6, reprinted in Appendix 3 below and in Robert Graham, *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas, Volume One: From Anarchy to Anarchism (300 CE to 1939)*, 1–3; also see Bauer, 138–40; Liu, "The Wu Jun School," 80–8, and Lin Mousheng, *Men and Ideas: An Informal History of Chinese Political Thought*, 150–8.

[83] Ge Hong, *Baopuzi nei wai pian* (Master Embracing Simplicity, Inner and Outer Chapters), *wai pian* 48, "Jie Bao" (The Refutation of Bao), translated in Lin, 152–3.

[84] Needham, V: 76; also see Bauer, 138, 438, n. 16; Ofuchi Ninji, "Ho seiden ko" (On the Identity of Bao Jing), *Tohogaku* (Eastern Studies) 18 (June 1959): 18, and Robert Ford Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's* Traditions of Divine Transcendents, 16.

[85] Lin, 152–3.

[86] Bao, translated in Balazs, 243.

> … And so the people are compelled to labor so that those in office may be nourished; and while their superiors enjoy fat salaries, they are reduced to the direst poverty.[87]

Next Bao denigrates by implication those Daoist alchemists who sought immortality, as well as the Confucians who claimed to believe in resigning from office under an immoral government. He denounces the Confucian virtues as a response to rebellion and discord rather than as natural occurrences, concluding that "loyalty and righteousness only appear when rebellion breaks out in the empire, filial obedience and parental love are only displayed when there is discord among kindred.[88] Again, the last sentence is firmly based on the received Chapter 18 version of the *DDJ* and on the *Zhuangzi*.

The next section of Bao's treatise repeats the description of the Golden Age found in Chapter 80 of the received *DDJ* and in the *Zhuangzi*, when small, independent, and self-sufficient agricultural communities supposedly lived in harmony both with each other and with animals. In this ideal state, Bao claims, there was no accumulation of private property or wealth, nor were there any plagues, pestilence, rebellions, nor, of course, any government.[89] In an unspecified way, knowledge and cunning entered this world, and immediately it lost the Way and fell into decadence. A hierarchy was established, along with regulations for promotion and demotion and profit and loss, class distinctions, and technological development. With the search for and acquisition of wealth, people began to strive for reputation; next thievery developed, after which came armed aggression and war.

Bao then denounces evil tyrants, not just as immoral rulers but as capable of doing evil only because of the existence of the principle of rule and the distinction between lord and subject. In such a situation, people are inevitably corrupted both by the oppression of rulers and by covetousness for the wealth and power that rulers possess. Finally the people are led to rebel and are then unstoppable by government to the point that "… to try to stop them by means of rules and regulations, or control them by means of penalties and punishments, is like trying to dam a river in full flood with a handful of earth, or keeping the torrents of water back with one finger."[90] Here Bao goes a step beyond Ruan Ji to explicitly suggest the social causes of crime, a point that marks him greatly similar to Western anarchists. His final metaphor is strikingly similar to the idea of Michael Bakunin that, … all the revolutionaries, the oppressed, the sufferers, victims of the existing social organization, whose hearts are naturally filled with hatred and a desire for vengeance, should bear in mind that the kings, the oppressors, exploiters of all kinds, are as guilty as the criminals who have emerged from the masses … it will not be surprising if the rebellious people kill a great many of them at first. This will be a misfortune, as unavoidable as the ravages caused by a sudden tempest, and as quickly over.
…[91]

Both Bao and Bakunin find that crime is caused by government, especially by one emphasizing harsh laws and punishments whether they be late absolutist monarchies of Bakunin's day or the Legalist side of the Chinese imperial state, which in its last stages is more easily exposed as a government imposed by force with no pretensions of morality. Bao, following the *DDJ* and Ruan

[87] Ibid., 244.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid., 245.
[90] Ibid., 246.
[91] Bakunin, quoted in Sam Dolgoff (ed.), *Bakunin on Anarchy*, 150.

Ji, sees this Legalist government as the final phase of rule after Confucianism had earlier stirred up the people's desires. Both Bakunin and Bao Jingyan, then, refuse to condemn rebels and also seem to be trying to scare members of the ruling elite with the possibility of violent revenge to be exacted by the masses.

Nevertheless, neither tyrants nor criminals should be looked upon as incurably evil or deserving of punishment for both Bao and Bakunin; it is their corruption by the State that accounts for their evil ways.

In sum, Bao Jingyan explicitly detailed all of the anarchistic tendencies in the political critique of Daoism and made more explicit two important elements: first, the nature and origin of government as the oppression of the strong and rich over the weak and poor, rather than as well-intentioned attempts of sages to order the world; and second, the explanation of crime and popular revolt as the inevitable reaction of the people to the tyranny of government. Influenced heavily by the "anarchist" chapters of the *Zhuangzi* and perhaps by Ruan Ji in these opinions, he denied completely that the attempts of sages were simply mistaken—clearly he denounced sages as trying to protect stolen property by imposing an unnatural ideal of morality.

In Bao Jingyan we see an explicit rejection, not only of the naked, Legalist style of harsh rule but also of the Confucian Mandate of Heaven theory of the origin of government. In this rejection Bao also closely parallels Western anarchists, especially Proudhon, who see the nature and origin of government as the protection of the seizure of private property by theft. As Western anarchists rejected other contemporary theories of government, such as Social Contract and Divine Right, so Bao rejected all justifications for rule in his day.

Again, following Ruan Ji, Bao also clearly went beyond pure philosophical anarchism by viewing government as harmful and criminal, not merely as unjustifiable.

Nevertheless, while resolving this contradiction, Bao still fails to explain how wealth itself was introduced into the ideal community, or how "knowledge and cunning came into use."[92] But of course one could argue that Western anarchists, given their positive view of human nature, also failed to give this explanation. Perhaps one could augment both anarchisms by taking the idea from modern anthropology that it was an increase in the social surplus created by accidental discoveries and improvements in agriculture that gave rise to a fight for control over this surplus, with government as the final justification and protection of the wealth of the winners.

Even without such an argument, and while clearly not endorsing violent revolution, as opposed to Bakunin and his followers among Western anarchists, Bao Jingyan still has no sympathy with rulers and clearly presents an anarchist ideal in the place of state rule. In his ideal society, as in that of most Western anarchists, no crime occurs and no law and punishments are even dreamed of. Since the social environment of excess wealth and the coercion and oppression of government are the main causes of crime, at the same time, in the anarchist ideal of both Bao and Bakunin, crime will largely disappear.

Punishment by the government is useless and hypocritical and only exacerbates the problem, according to both Bao and Western anarchists such as Bakunin, since it is the principle of rule that allows rulers to do harm and leads to the people's violent reaction. Belief in the environmental factor as the cause of crime as well as the rejection of law and punishment are thus key ingredients in both Daoist and Western anarchism.

[92] Balazs, 245.

Liezi and the Yang Zhu chapter

As stated earlier, the anarchistic trend in Daoism began to die out when, as Balazs says, the qingtan movement fell into the hands of the gilded youth—"the brothers and sons of the idle" [*guiyu zidi*], in the stock phrase of the Chinese historians—and became fashionable, whereupon the attempt made by the politicians of the first generation and by the artists of the Bamboo Grove to break free from social conventions degenerated into moral breakdown.[93]

It is either the beginning of the first qingtan generation (249–265 CE) or the end of the second (265–317 CE) that Aloysius Chang thinks is most likely to have produced the fatalistic work *Liezi* and its hedonistic chapter "Yang Zhu."[94] According to A. C. Graham, the *Liezi*, except for the Yang Zhu chapter, may have been written by a single author as late as 300 CE.[95] In any event, the philosophy of Yang Zhu as expressed in this chapter could be summed up very simply:

If the men of old could benefit the entire world by pulling out one hair, they would not do it. If they were offered the entire world for life, they would not take it. When no man hurts one hair and no man benefits, the world will be at peace.[96]

According to the author of this chapter, if everyone minded their own business the idea of rule itself would disappear:

> Take my way of private life; if it could be extended to the whole world, the principle governing the ruler-subject relationship would naturally die out.[97]

Chang finds that while the Yang Zhu chapter contains passages from the original philosophy of the historical Yang Zhu of the late Zhou era, passages which contain his anarchistic statements, most of the rest of the chapter, as well as the *Liezi* as a whole, is not fundamentally opposed to the idea of government as long as it does not interfere or try to regulate people's enjoyment of life.[98]

A. C. Graham, on the other hand, concludes that the *Liezi* gives many examples of the ideal Daoist anarchy:

> The [*Liezi*] itself reflects this [anarchistic] tendency [of Ruan Ji and Bao Jingyan], although very cautiously. The hedonist [Yang Zhu] chapter explicitly recommends a society in which each pursues his own pleasure without interfering with others, and "the Way of ruler and subject is brought to an end." The [other] chapters retain the old assumption that the power emanating from a true sage maintains the harmony of society without the need of government, but imply that he is not an Emperor; such sages have only existed either before or outside the Chinese empire.[99]

Nevertheless, the *Liezi* as a whole advocates a fatalistic acceptance of life, while the Yang Zhu chapter deemphasizes the element of restraint present in the original Yang Zhu's philosophy

[93] Ibid., 246–7.

[94] Aloysius Chang, "A Comparative Study of Yang Chu and the Chapter on Yang Chu," *Chinese Culture* 14 (1972): 77–8.

[95] A. C. Graham, *The Book of Lieh Tzu*, 3.

[96] "Yang Zhu," translated in Lin Mousheng, 81.

[97] Ibid., 81.

[98] Chang, 77–8.

[99] Graham, *The Book of Lieh Tzu*, 8.

and substituted for it the belief in an unrestrained enjoyment of the full sensual pleasures of life. Therefore, we could put forward the hypothesis that the *Liezi* and its Yang Zhu chapter represent a transition stage in the decline of the *qingtan* movement and its shift from pacifist anarchism into passive nihilism.

As many students of Chinese philosophy in this century have noted,[100] the extreme individualism of the Yang Zhu chapter bears a striking similarity to the work *The Ego and Its Own* by the early nineteenth-century German philosopher known as Max Stirner. Though ideas of the Yang Zhu chapter also helped play into the passive nihilism of the third generation of *qingtan* Daoists, and the ideas of Stirner were later influential perhaps on the development of Nietsche's nihilism and perhaps even of later fascism,[101] in the beginning both the Yang Zhu chapter and *The Ego and its Own* were sincere statements of rebellion by men who wished to place the individual above the demands of the central authority. Despite this great similarity, others find that Yang Zhu may represent a less radical form of individualism as the author of that chapter "concedes the existence of other egos" and condemns the use of force against others, which Stirner would justify as "might makes right."[102]

Still, both the Yang Zhu author and Max Stirner show a basic and striking similarity in their placing of the individual above the state. In both cases this was a much more radical individualism than that represented by other figures in their respective movements, but nevertheless foreshadowed other anarchists' denunciations of the State and its limitations to the full potential of humans in both ancient China and the West.

Although the *qingtan* movement did degenerate and eventually die out, the Daoist anarchist tradition lived on in art and literature and in the lives of scholars and government officials after hours and in retirement. Especially in times of disorder, or when the government sponsored or promoted the study of an official Daoism, the anarchistic side of Daoism would resurface, for example, in the Buddhist-inspired anarchism of Wu Nengzi during the breakdown of the Tang dynasty in the tenth century (see Chapter 4) or by Liu Shipei during the Western-inspired anarchist movement in China in the early twentieth century (as we will see in Chapter 5).[103]

Tao Qian's "Peach Blossom Spring"

The best example of the anarchist tradition of Daoism surviving through art is the poem "Peach Blossom Spring" by Tao Qian (326–397 CE) (see Appendix 4). Tao Qian was a scholar–official of the surviving remnant of the Jin dynasty, who retired from government service during the later years of his life in a Confucian protest against the "immoral" regime. Refusing all offers of government posts, he retired to his estate to till his own soil and write poetry.[104] Possibly inspired by a contemporary account of a lost, independent community of people,[105] and obviously influenced by classical Daoist texts, especially the *Zhuangzi*, he wrote twin prose and poetic accounts describing a fisherman who sailed down a stream through a cave to discover a hidden land to which people had fled long ago to escape the harsh Qin dynasty and where they founded

[100] See for example Lin Mousheng, 152–3.
[101] As argued for example by John Carroll, *Max Stirner: The Ego and His Own*, Introduction, 15–16.
[102] Lin, 86–7.
[103] Zarrow, 10.
[104] James R. Hightower (trans.), *The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien*, 1–3.
[105] Ibid., 256.

a society without government. This poem epitomizes the Daoist ideal of anarchy and as such demands a detailed commentary of its political philosophy.[106]

As with most Chinese poetry, this poem can be read on several levels. It might just be the poetic expansion of the contemporary report of such a place, but on the other hand the fisherman's physical discovery might be a metaphor for a psychological discovery of an internal, forgotten tendency. The fisherman found the spring only after he "had lost track of how far he had gone," which could be taken to mean temporarily forgetting conscious attempts to alter the world. By not striving or desiring to affect artificial changes, he was able to "return to the root" in the phrase from the *DDJ*, in other words, perhaps, to discover this anarchical state of being as an innate part of his nature. When he followed this impulse and returned to this state of "original simplicity" (*pu*—a very important Daoist term), his path "suddenly opened out and he could see clearly." Therefore the amazing community he found might on one level be the *dao* itself. In other words, while the *dao* may not be an empirically verifiable entity, it is nevertheless a real state of being that is far from simply metaphysical. An artistic, suggestive description, which in a way constitutes all of Daoism, is not inherently more metaphysical than a supposedly objective explanation.

On this level the *dao* is really a metaphor for freedom, a word that scholars used to stress as not existing in ancient Chinese and *had* to be expressed metaphorically in order not to confused with the idea of libertinage or license (as Balazs argues,[107] though A. C. Graham disparages the idea that in traditional China there was no way to get across the idea of liberty[108]). As with modern Western anarchism, in Daoist anarchism the idea of freedom means more than the absence of restrictions. In both anarchisms, freedom is inseparable from equality and community. This is expressed in Daoism by the term *pu* ("original simplicity," which Needham thinks refers to the "solidarity, homogeneity, and simplicity of primitive collectivism"[109]), a term which this author would contend, is yet another metaphor for freedom in the positive, active sense. In other words, the legacy of Daoist anarchism for Tao Qian was far from purely individualistic, but contained strong communal elements.

The village that the fisherman found was totally peaceful; all were "carefree and happy." There were no institutions and rites to teach the people goodness and morality, yet there was no evident selfishness. All invited him into their homes and shared their harvest with him. As in the ideal in the *Zhuangzi*, all relished simple food and clothing and were content to farm and live at home.

When Tao Qian says the chickens and dogs could be heard from farm to farm, he is further suggesting the passages from Chapter 80 of the received *DDJ* and Chapter 10 of the *Zhuangzi* where the members of the ideal community also live so close to each other that the fowls of neighboring villages could be heard, "but the people would grow old and die without ever having been there."[110] It is important that the poem notes that the inhabitants of the spring fled there in order to escape the Qin dynasty, both to show that this state of harmony is only to be achieved in

[106] This author's following commentary on this poem is based on the translation in Watson, *The Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry: From Early Times to the Thirteenth Century*, 142–3, reprinted in Appendix 4 below. For other translations, see Cyril Birch (ed.), *Anthology of Chinese Literature* Volume 1: *From Early Times to the 14th Century*; Hightower, 254–5; and Tan Shilin (trans. and ed.), *The Complete Works of Tao Yuanming*, 96–9.

[107] Balazs, 247.

[108] Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 202.

[109] Needham, II: 114.

[110] *Zhuangzi*, translated by Waley, *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*, 39, 69.

the absence of government, and to show that the official views of the history and civilization of humanity, far from improving our moral nature, must also be abandoned along with government in order to attain the ideal state. In other words, merely by stating that the people fled the Qin dynasty and had no desire to return even after hearing of the glorious succeeding dynasties, Tao Qian alluded to the Daoist belief that the Confucian attempt to inculcate morality and order only comes about after morality and order have been lost. Far from the Confucian ideal of people in their primitive state desperately needing good government, it is clear in this poem that it is the State which causes the suffering of the people.

However, the fisherman was not a true Daoist sage and in time remembered himself and desired to return to society. Later, deliberately retracing his steps, this time failing to forget conscious effort, he was unable to find the community again. True to its own dependence on domination and its desire to attach its institutions upon the people, the government also tried to find the community upon hearing of it from the fisherman. Along with the Confucian gentleman Liu Ziji, however, the government was unsuccessful in its search. Clearly, the idea of government as well as the basic idea of Confucianism is the antithesis of the ideal Daoist community. More importantly, Tao Qian is expressing a nearly identical idea to that of Kropotkin, that government depends on people's voluntary cooperation—mutual aid in Kropotkin's language—in order to have a society to rule over, but government is at the same time parasitic on this cooperation and in basic contradiction against it. In other words underlying Tao Qian's poem is a clear anarchist theory of the state.

In time men stopped seeking the spring, just as in time men forgot their original state and were corrupted by laws and morals and knowledge, until, as in Chapter 10 of the *Zhuangzi* "nothing was left in its original state. It must be hacked and sawed until the whole world was in utter chaos and confusion. All this came from tampering with the heart of man."[111]

The tale suggests the survival of the *dao* even in the corrupt times of Tao Qian. Indeed, the fisherman could be a metaphor for the former Confucian bureaucrat Tao Qian himself, who in one moment of inspired despair drew upon the reservoir of the Daoist anarchist tradition. That the statist and anti-statist traditions could survive side-by-side in one man is perhaps not easily understandable to Western observers, but it is the chief means by which the anarchistic side of Daoism survived in Chinese minds up to the twentieth century.

In any event, in "Peach Blossom Spring" we can see that the Daoist anarchist ideal is far from that of individualism. The Daoist ideal community, it could be argued, conforms closely to Kropotkin's idealization of mutual aid, that is, his view that primitive anarchist communism was an important factor in the past evolution of humanity, as well as in his ideal communist society of the future. As cooperative tendencies survive from "savage tribes" to "barbarian villages" to medieval towns and even to the present in Kropotkin's analysis,[112]

so too perhaps did elements of this primitive communism survive the development of Zhou feudalism and even the onslaught of the centralized, bureaucratic state in China. In the ideal of both Kropotkin and Tao Qian, humans are easily able to survive without government by utilizing mutual cooperation and communal living and work.

Tao Qian can also stand, perhaps, for another great similarity of the Daoist anarchists and one strand of Western anarchism. This strand, of course, is pacifism. Leo Tolstoy, the greatest

[111] Ibid., 72.

[112] Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution, passim.*

Western exponent of the pacifist anarchist ideal, perhaps comes closest to the Daoist vision as reenunciated by Tao Qian.

For Tolstoy, God was synonymous with nature, and humanity was a part of God, as for the Daoist anarchists humans are all a part of the *dao* from which all things arise. If we only fulfill "the infinite law from Whom he has come" for Tolstoy,[113] or if we only "return to the root" and act in accordance with *dao*, then the ideal anarchy would be achieved by itself, and the State, with all of its instruments, would eventually disappear. Of course, both pacifisms seem to reject material progress, at least as an end in itself, and both hold up a life of simplicity as the ideal. Both recognize the absurdity and impossibility of governing by force and violence, and both reject the use of violence to do away with government. Both see the moral enlightenment of each individual, enlightened that is, to see the natural connection between all individuals as the only means to achieve the ideal society. Most importantly, rather than placing humans above and isolated from the natural and spiritual, against what they see as the orthodoxies of their day, both Tolstoy and the Daoist anarchists such as Tao Qian in this poem, construct a nonauthoritarian ideal which defines human freedom and the pure anarchist society as attainable only by recognizing the link with the natural and spiritual. For both Tolstoy and Tao Qian, this link had never really been severed, but only forgotten and perhaps disguised by the State. God and the *dao* are synonymous with freedom in these systems of thought; the state of living totally by the power of love or the *de* of the *dao* is thus synonymous with the state of anarchy. Therefore this author would strongly disagree with Frederic Bender who believes that Tolstoy was less than a fully consistent anarchist because his thought "relies ultimately upon the authority of God."[114] Instead, Tolstoy's vision was clearly one in which each individual came to see the link to the rest of humanity and to the universe by him or herself, by accepting God as Love into one's heart, not by a process of "rational knowing" or certainly not by accepting an official, imposed idea of God from any Church institution. In this hope that we can by our own efforts find the link between the individual and collective mind, the Daoists and Tolstoy were remarkably similar and more consistent than other anarchists, this author would argue.

Tao Qian is also strikingly similar to Western anarchists such as Godwin and Tolstoy who fostered the idea of anarchism through their art. Although Daoist anarchism died out as a movement long ago, perhaps, its influence carried on in the artistic tradition that the *ziran* ideal inspired. Ruan Ji and Tao Qian, two of China's greatest poets, carried on the Daoist anarchist ideal in two great poems of fantasy that inspired whole genres as well as individual poets throughout Chinese history. In both China and the West, then, perhaps the anarchist traditions survive in an inactive, yet purer form. For the artistic metaphor of an undifferentiated freedom and equality, stripped of all artificial blueprints of how to attain that condition in the future, perhaps suggests more powerfully than calls to violent revolution the universal idea that can never be destroyed or extinguished, the idea of the unimaginable heights that could be achieved by humanity unrestrained—the idea of freedom in the active sense that is the pure ideal of anarchy.

[113] Tolstoy, quoted in Marshall S. Shatz (ed.), *The Essential Works of Anarchism*, 249–50.
[114] Bender, 19.

Conclusion

By examining the thought and art of key Wei-Jin Daoists, we have seen how Daoist anarchism can be considered a long-term, clearly identifiable movement in Chinese history. Daoist anarchism does go beyond pure philosophical anarchism and can be considered a movement for real political change, albeit a pacifist one. Daoist anarchism is also not limited to individualist anarchism, except perhaps in the ideas of the "Yang Zhu" chapter of the *Liezi*, but in fact does contain a clear communitarian ideal.

It is true that Wei-Jin Daoist anarchists, for all their opposition to authority, so far as we know, never led peasant rebellions against the state (though the life and career of Bao Jingyan remains a mystery). Critics of the case for Wei-Jin Daoist anarchism might maintain that since at least some of the Wei-Jin Daoists were representatives of families and groups whose ancestors had supported Cao Cao's attempts to reinstitute an empire built on central bureaucratic lines as opposed to the Sima family rule of the great landowners, perhaps they were not sincere anarchists but only, in effect, sore losers. Even if they were sincere, the neo-Daoist anarchists could easily have been identified in the minds of the peasants with the process of centralization of state power, with all of the connotations of taxation, military conscription, and public works corveés that centralization implies. Nevertheless, since in the end the peasant rebellions in Chinese imperial history were themselves quite hierarchically organized, coercive movements that failed to break down the imperial system of autocracy, perhaps the Daoist anarchists were aiming at opposing the state by attempting to subvert its myth of legitimacy and by undermining the confidence of the scholar–gentry elite in the morality and/or efficacy of rule.

Thus, even if there were limits to Daoist anarchism because of the class background of its main adherents in the Wei-Jin period, on the other hand, Daoist anarchism never suffered the terrible contradictions of Western anarchists such as Bakunin. Many scholars still view such Western anarchists today as the precursors of the Leninist vanguard, and as people who helped to justify violent acts that seemed to have poisoned the name of anarchism.[115]

Furthermore, as some students of revolution have long suggested, the rare instances in history of genuine social revolution only occur after the ruling elite itself split or became demoralized. This attempt to sabotage the confidence of the ruling elite is the main project of Daoist anarchists, one could argue, from the Warring States through to the Wei-Jin Daoists and beyond, an intellectual pacifist guerrilla project that is often repressed but is also easily revived in succeeding centuries. In this sense, then, the similarities outlined above between Daoist and Western anarchists relate to a common project that is ultimately more important, and more consistent with the anarchist ideal of ending coercive rule. That project is to sow a seed of doubt and undermine the faith in the authority of elites and through them the masses. By helping to break the hegemony of dominant statist ideologies promoted by the intellectual agents of the State, if only for brief moments, Daoist and Western anarchists may achieve their greatest significance.

[115] For Bakunin as a precursor of Lenin, see the publisher's preface in G. P. Maximoff (ed.), *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin: Scientific Anarchism*, 15 and the critical discussion of this view in Dolgoff, xxiii, 9–12, 181–2.

2. Utopian, anti-utopian, and dystopian ideas in philosophical Daoism

Introduction

Although the previous chapter concluded that Daoist anarchists may have intended to sow seeds of doubt among the elite in order to undermine the whole concept of rule, we saw that some scholars have charged this attitude at best amounts only to a negative type of anarchy that lacks a positive vision of a possible stateless society. We refuted that charge by showing how, with the concepts of with the *ziran* and *hundun,* the Daoists did suggest the possibilities of living in a harmonious, stateless society; nevertheless, such a positive view of freedom does not mean that Daoist anarchists were completely utopian in their outlook. This chapter will demonstrate that Daoist anarchists' suspicion of all forms of rule included suspicions about other forms of utopian thought, while at the same time they retained their own positive vision about the possibilities of stateless society. This chapter, then, attempts to link certain aspects of Daoist thought of the late Zhou (ca. fourth–third centuries BCE) and Wei-Jin (ca. third–fourth century CE) periods to both positive and negative connotations of utopianism.

On the one hand, both students of anarchism and many anarchists themselves note the "utopian" aspects of anarchism, if by "utopia" one means the depiction of an ideal society.[1] In this sense, anarchists in their writings and political activities try to get people to reach beyond the flawed and imperfect society in which they live and start to construct a new society along the ideal lines the anarchists suggest. Likewise, philosophical Daoists from the late Zhou period to the Wei-Jin era also maintained a consistent utopian ideal that they used to challenge both existing social mores and what they saw as dangerous trends in the society and government of their day, as we will see below. Thus this author would disagree with the contention of those (including even some twentieth-century Chinese anarchists as we will see in Chapter 5) who argue that Daoism is necessarily an escapist utopia.[2] Within the context of Daoists' opposition to any kind of ideal society imposed from above on people, this author contends that the Daoist utopian vision is meant to serve as an inspiration to reconstruct society from below in an anti-coercive fashion.

Likewise, though this author would agree with William Callahan's contention that the Daoist vision is one of a decentered "heterotopia" opposed to any kind of artificially imposed uniformity; otherwise Callahan may have missed the main point in his analysis of the (outer) "Robber Zhi" Chapter 29 of the *Zhuangzi*[3] where the famous robber argues with Confucius that his own way

[1] See Ronald Creagh, *Laboratoires de L'utopie* for an account of American anarchist utopian experiments.

[2] See for example Baogang Guo, "Utopias of Reconstruction: Chinese Modern Utopianism: from Hong Xiuquan to Mao Zedong," *Journal of Comparative Asian Development*, 2(2) (2003): 197.

[3] See Callahan, "Confucian Harmonizing: Utopia, Dystopia and Heterotopia in Chinese Thought," *The Journal of Comparative Asian Development*, 2(2) (2003): 236–7.

has its own virtue. Unlike postmodernist thinkers who would say even the robber Zhi's vision is as valid a utopia or heterotopia as any other, to this author the *Zhuangzi* is clearly saying that the amoral world of the robber Zhi is not something to admire or uphold, but is only the inevitable horrible flip side of the Confucian attempt to impose a supposed moral order on a world perfectly capable of ordering itself. In other words, the relativism of the *Zhuangzi* is not that of modern moral or cultural relativists who might deny the existence of eternal absolutes, but that of skeptics who nevertheless accept the principle of an unknowable *dao* underlying the unity of the universe, even as they believe that the attempt of "wise men" to put this unity into practice through objective (coercive) action is doomed to violent failure.

Despite the clear utopian content of Daoist and other anarchism in the sense of their shared optimism about humans being able to live without government, on the other hand, as at least one historian of anarchism has noted, most anarchists also have a negative attitude toward the whole concept of utopia, if that term is meant, as it was by Plato and More, to describe an ideal government. As George Woodcock puts it, In fact the very idea of Utopia repels most anarchists, because it is a rigid mental construction which, successfully imposed, would prove as stultifying as any existing state to the free development of those subject to it.[4]

The Daoists certainly shared this deeply skeptical attitude toward utopia, especially related to the Confucian idea of benevolent government as we will see in the second section of this chapter, and perhaps took this skepticism to the fullest extent of all anarchists, East and West.

Yet this should not disqualify Daoists completely as utopian thinkers. As Sharif Gemie suggests, most utopian thinkers, in their search for an ideal society … are often prepared to sacrifice any of the potential benefits of the existing world. It is out of this conjunction of an *absolute* rejection of the present, and an *absolute* affirmation of an ideal world, that a distinctively utopian vision is born, and it is also from this conjunction that the often-noted authoritarian qualities of utopian thinking develop. Thus while the utopian form can potentially be the vehicle for any political ideology, in practice, once the utopian form has been adopted, the vision which evolves has an inherent tendency to develop authoritarian features.[5]

Nevertheless, Gemie finds that some utopian thinkers in the West, most notably William Morris and Charles Fourier, managed to successfully resist this authoritarian tendency.[6] This author would argue that the Daoists were also examples of this comparatively rare libertarian trend in the history of utopian thought, even as they gave a harsh critique of the authoritarian tendencies of the utopias of their rivals, most notably the Confucians, as we will see below.

Beyond their critiques of nonanarchist utopias, at their best, anarchists also present pictures of dystopia, or a negative, hellish vision of a future society based on projections from present governments or statist political philosophies. In the case of the nineteenth-century Western anarchists, these projections included critiques of dominant political ideologies, whether conservative or liberal, as well as competing radical critiques from Rousseau to Marx. Anarchists criticized all these ideologies for their dictatorial tendencies that in the end would limit human freedom and creativity. In the case of the Daoists, both in the late Zhou and Wei-Jin periods, these dystopian elements included negative projections of what society dominated by other philosophies would

[4] Woodcock, *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements*, 23–4.

[5] Gemie, *Fourier and the Politics of Utopia*, 3.

[6] Ibid., 2–3.

actually look like in practice, most especially the ideas of the so-called Legalist school as we will see in the third section of this chapter.

Before examining the strong anti-utopian and dystopian elements in the Daoist critique of rival philosophies, we first examine their own undeniably utopian ideas.

Daoist Utopias from the *DDJ* to Tao Qian

The Daoist utopian society is most famously found in Chapter 80 of the received *DDJ* as follows:

> Let there be a little country without many people.
>
> Let them have tools that do the work of ten or a hundred, and never use them.
>
> Let them be mindful of death and disinclined to long journeys.
>
> They'd have ships and carriages, but no place to go.
>
> They'd have armor and weapons, but no parades.
>
> Instead of writing, they might go back to using knotted cords.
>
> They'd enjoy eating, take pleasure in clothes, be happy with their houses, devoted to their customs.
>
> The next little country might be so close the people could hear cocks crowing and dogs barking there, but they'd get old and die without ever having been there.[7]

Ursula Le Guin rightly points out in her notes to her translation of this chapter that those who "dismiss this Utopia as simply regressivist or anti- technological" miss the point that the people *do* have "labor-saving machinery, ships and land vehicles, weapons of offense and defense" but that they do not use them. She further interprets this passage in the *DDJ* to mean that the people "aren't used by [the tools]," that is, "don't surrender their power to their creations."[8] Thus, rather than link the author of the *DDJ* with "Luddites" and others in the West opposed to technological progress, Le Guin's analysis can correspond to Joseph Needham's claim that the Daoists did not

[7] Ursula Le Guin, with the collaboration of J. P. Seaton, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching: A Book about the Way and the Power of the Way*, 100–1. Though owing much to the influence of Arthur Waley's classic 1935 translation (see Waley, *The Way and Its Power*), Ursula Le Guin's more recent translation of the *DDJ* has the advantage of taking away purposeful action of the sage or prince in attaining this ideal, and puts the utopia in simpler, more poetic English. Her translation is used sparingly in this work, however, first because she does not know Chinese herself and bases her version on other translations, and second, since she is clearly sympathetic to a view of Daoism that highlights its anarchist and utopian tendencies, which might lead some critics to say that this author is pre-selecting the translation to fit the case. Exceptions where this book does use her translation of certain chapters of the *DDJ* occur where she cannot be accused of highlighting this "anarchist" interpretation more than non-anarchist translators do and where her concise, poetic language drives the point home especially well without deviating in meaning from other translations. Likewise, this work uses Burton Watson's translation of the *Zhuangzi* since he is especially apolitical and finds the outer chapters clearly more anarchist and less true in spirit to the inner chapters than this author does (see Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 14, 16) and yet his translations often help demonstrate this author's point.

[8] Ibid., 125.

oppose labor-saving technology for its own sake, but only to the extent that this same technology was used by the budding centralizing military states of the late Zhou to crush the people.[9] Nevertheless, this ideal society would not have the advantages of the economy of scale of larger countries and would also seem to do away with writing systems and thus "written literature, history, and mathematics" among other advances in culture and civilization, as Le Guin herself recognized. She notes, however, that this antipathy toward writing "might be read as saying it's best not to externalize all our thinking and remembering … but to keep it embodied" in our bodies and brains.[10]

Similarly, Waley notes that knotted ropes aid our own memory "whereas one writes contracts down in order to make other people fulfill them."[11] So once again, the Daoist objection may not be to writing and learning per se, but to dependence on other people who could become oppressive overlords, whatever such "sages" claim about benevolence and righteousness or law and order.

In Chapter 10 of the *Zhuangzi* this utopia is repeated almost verbatim, but with links to Shen Nung and other pre-Zhou mythical rulers:

> Long ago in the time of Yung Ch'eng, Ta T'ing, Po Huang, Chung Yang, Li Lu, Li Hsu, Hsien Yan, Ho Hsu, Tsun Lu, Chu Jung, Fu Hi, and Shen Nung, the people knotted cords and used them. They relished their food, admired their clothing, enjoyed their customs, and were content with their houses.
>
> Though neighboring states were within sight of each other, and could hear the cries of each other's dogs and chickens, the people grew old and died without ever traveling beyond their own borders. At a time such as this, there was nothing but the most perfect order.[12]

What the *Zhuangzi* adds to the utopia in the *DDJ* is the idea of people living to a longer age, as well as the express statement of this ideal as a "perfect order." What is also added after this picture of utopia is a description of how humans fell from this state, a dystopian picture we will examine in the third section of this chapter.

Though the above depictions are the most famous and clear utopias in the received *DDJ* and in the *Zhuangzi*, in both works there are other depictions of life lived by the *dao* that would reappear in later Daoist utopian accounts. For example, in Chapter 50 of the *DDJ* there is a description of the Daoist sage: It is said that he who has a true hold on life, when he walks on land does not meet tigers or wild buffaloes; in battle he is not touched by weapons of war.[13]

Le Guin rightly points out in her commentary on this chapter that the *DDJ* is not making claims about immortality or bodily invincibility as later Daoist alchemists and *qigong* practitioners from the Han dynasty to the present would argue, but instead is only advising us to "take life as it comes" and is concerned with "how to live rightly, how to 'live till you die'."[14] In Chapter 7 the *DDJ* clearly suggests that people will live longer by following the *dao*, but only if they do not try to "foster their own lives" or "strive for any personal end."[15] This is certainly consistent

[9] Needham, II: 121–7, 131–2.
[10] Le Guin, 125.
[11] Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, 241, n. 5.
[12] Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 112.
[13] Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, 203.
[14] Le Guin, 120.
[15] Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, 150.

with the *Zhuangzi*, which in many places, notably in Chapter 3, advises people to live out their lives without conscious effort and by "go[ing] along with the natural makeup."[16]

There are many other utopian aspects in the *Zhuangzi*, most of which fall in the so-called outer chapters that most scholars believe were written by authors in a period after the historical person of Zhuang Zhou, who lived in the fourth century BCE. As we saw in the previous chapter about the *Zhuangzi*'s more explicit anarchist passages, A. C. Graham believes that most of the utopian aspects in the *Zhuangzi* were written by a "primitivist" author probably in the years between the fall of the Qin state and the rise of the former Han dynasty, that is, between 209–202 BCE, as China once again broke down into civil war and rebellion,[17] while Liu Xiaogan finds instead that these passages were written by one individual probably at the end of the Warring States period, that is, not that far removed from the historical Zhuang Zhou.[18]

In any case, both Graham and Liu would trace the utopian aspects of many outer chapters of the *Zhuangzi* to an old, preexisting Chinese tradition of a stateless agrarian community, closely related to the school of Shen Nung (or Divine Farmer).[19] This element in both the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* can also be linked to the tradition of Xiu Xing, one of the legendary "madmen of the South" who disputed the thinker Mencius around 315 BCE based on the Shen Nung ideal, an ideal that according to Graham influenced classical Daoism and is "ancestral to all Chinese utopianism." This utopianism was revived at the end of the Qin, Graham asserts, by Daoists who "were weary of a state ordered solely by laws and punishments."[20] These Daoists opposed the idea of the Yellow emperor and succeeding pre-Zhou kings as in any way ideal or wise rulers, as the Confucians and other schools claimed. In fact, only later in the Han dynasty would Daoists come to identify their ideal with the Yellow Emperor and Lao Zi combined into one person or concept (the so-called Huang-Lao school of Daoism).

It is in the famous Chapter 29 of the *Zhuangzi*, "The Robber Zhi," where this agrarian utopia is most readily apparent. Graham links this chapter to the "Yangist" ideal of individualist heremitism, while Liu Xiaogan links the chapter to the more or less consistent "anarchist" ideal of earlier chapters (i.e. 9, 10, and parts of 11). In any case in this chapter one can see the picture of an ideal society that would be picked up by later Daoists of the Wei-Jin period. In the key paragraph of the chapter, the robber Zhi cites the Shen Nung idea in answering Confucius's advice that he set up a great walled state where he could serve as a benevolent ruler:

> Moreover, I have heard that in ancient times the birds and beasts were many and the people few. Therefore the people all nested in the trees in order to escape danger, during the day gathering acorns and chestnuts, at sundown climbing back up to sleep in their trees … In ancient times the people knew nothing about wearing clothes. In summer they heaped up great piles of firewood, in winter they burned them to keep warm … In the age of Shen Nung, the people lay down peaceful and easy, woke up wide-eyed and blank. They knew their mothers but not their fathers, and lived side by side with the elk and the deer. They plowed for their food, wove for their clothing,

[16] Watson, 51.
[17] Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 306–11; *Chuang Tzu: Textual Notes to a Partial Translation*, 197–9.
[18] See Chapter 1, 52, n. 26.
[19] Graham, *Chuang Tzu: Textual Notes to a Partial Translation*, 72–4.
[20] Ibid., 70–2.

> and had no thought in their hearts of harming one another. This was Perfect Virtue at its height![21]

This utopia began to be lost by the end of the Yellow Emperor's rule, robber Zhi continues, a task completed by the early Zhou rulers such as Yao and Shun who were idealized by Confucius.

In the great anarchist Chapter 9 of the *Zhuangzi*, "Horses Hooves" (reprinted in Appendix 1 of this book) there is another description of this pre- Yellow Emperor utopia, in this case a utopia where even agricultural pursuits are perhaps absent.[22]

Even if written by a (slightly) later author, this vision of the lost utopia seems very consistent with the ideal in the inner chapters of the *Zhuangzi* as well as with the received *DDJ*, especially concerning the terms *si* (raw silk) and *pu* (uncut wood) that were key concepts in text related to the idea of "returning to the root" and having nothing to do with the refinements of the modern age.

As we saw in the previous chapter, the "Horses' Hooves" Chapter 9 of the *Zhuangzi* also provides the best evidence to back up the contention of those who find that the ancient Daoists may have been harking back to dim memories or even actual survivals or remnants in the wild Chinese "south" of a primitive egalitarian society that was either a transitional stage between hunter–gatherers and sedentary agriculturists, or a full-fledged hunter–gatherer society. In any case, according to this argument the classical Daoists from the *DDJ* and Zhuang Zhou to the authors of some of the outer *Zhuangzi* chapters opposed not only the rise of more centralized, bureaucratic states that culminated in the Qin empire but also, as we saw in the previous chapter, the Shang-Zhou feudal system idealized by the Confucians, among others.

Beyond the importance of this stateless utopia for the late Zhou and early Qin eras, this ideal also served to inspire thinkers in the early Wei-Jin period (ca. 220–419 CE). As also noted in the previous chapter, these thinkers were part of a larger school of thought that revived philosophical Daoism in order to oppose those who used the prevailing Confucian teachings of the day to justify the dominance of the aristocratic "great families" against the upstart warlords such as Cao Cao. The idea that humans were naturally meant to live in a stateless utopia, one in which humans and animals live peacefully together, would have a profound influence on those neo-Daoists who revived the radical anti-statist side of the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*.

This revived stateless utopia is most famously found in the *Liezi*, the text whose "Yang Zhu" chapter we analyzed in the previous chapter, and which most scholars believe to have been compiled around 300 CE. In a different chapter of this text there is a clear depiction of a lost utopia that the Yellow Emperor finds during a daytime dream:

> … It is a place which you cannot reach by boat or carriage or on foot, only by a journey of the spirit. In this country there are no teachers and leaders; all things follow their natural course [*ziran*]. The people have no cravings and lusts; all men follow their natural course. They are incapable of delighting in life or hating death, and therefore none of them dies before his time. They do not know how to prefer themselves to others, and so they neither love nor hate. They do not know how to turn their faces to things or turn their backs, go with the stream or push against it, so nothing benefits or harms them. There is nothing at all which they grudge or

[21] Watson, 327.
[22] Ibid, 105.

> regret, nothing which they dread or envy. They go into water without drowning, into fire without burning; hack them, flog them, there is no wound or pain; poke them, scratch them, there is no ache or itch. They ride space as though walking the solid earth, sleep on the void as though on their beds; clouds and mist do not hinder their sight, thunder does not confuse their hearing, beauty and ugliness do not disturb their hearts, mountains and valleys do not trip their feet—for they make only journeys of the spirit.[23]

In the *Liezi* version of the Daoist utopia, it is clear that this ideal society is not just a long ago place of a lost age (or "no place" as many students of Western utopianism point out is the literal translation of utopia[24]), but a real place that can be found again whenever one forgets conscious effort and striving for fame and profit, that is, when people stop striving to dominate each other. Although the text can be read as justifying supernatural qualities such as invulnerability to sword or flame, as well as "flying on the clouds," the last statement makes it clear that these are metaphorical, spiritual abilities that allow one to survive in a chaotic age.

In Chapter 5 of the same text there is another description of the lost utopia, in this case a "Divine Spring" coming out of the "Cave of Plenty" in a mountain on the northern shore of the North sea. The legendary (Confucian) ruler Yu "blundered and lost his way" and came on this country by mistake. In this place, … the climate is mild, and there are no epidemics. The people are gentle and compliant by nature, do not quarrel or contend, have soft hearts and weak bones, are never proud or envious. Old and young live as equals, and no one is ruler or subject; men and women mingle freely, without go- betweens and betrothal presents. Living close to the waters, they have no need to plough and sow, nor to weave and clothe themselves, since the climate is so warm. They live out their span of a hundred years, without sickness and early deaths; and the people proliferate in countless numbers, knowing pleasure and happiness, ignorant of decay, old age, sorrow, and anguish. By custom they are lovers or music; they hold hands and take turns to sing ballads, and never stop singing all day…[25]

Though the supernatural elements are more pronounced in this version of the stateless utopia, including the suggestion that drinking the waters of the "Divine Spring" is what gives the people their special qualities, including long life, these abilities might still relate to the idea that it is the increased population density and urbanization of modern states that led to increased disease and violent death, as we will see in Section 3 of this chapter. Of course, this belief would contradict the idea of people "proliferating in countless numbers," but to this observer, that claim seems more related to the picture of sexual freedom and equality that exists in this utopia than to any density of population. In this version of the Daoist utopia there is clearly more emphasis on the pleasures of life, from sex to singing, pleasures that would be enhanced once political authority is removed.

In this society, as in the ideal of the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, people do not strive for reputation or profit, or to dominate each other. Even more clearly than in the classical Daoist texts, there is no government and no gender inequality in this utopia. Also, more clearly even than in Chapter 9 of the *Zhuangzi*, there is no agriculture, which is perhaps again related to the possibility of influences from surviving remnants or memories of hunter– gatherer society, yet people live

[23] Graham, *The Lieh Tzu*, 34.

[24] For example, see Shiping, *Utopianism in Chinese Thought*, 191.

[25] Graham, *The Lieh Tzu*, 102–3.

long lives free of sickness. While described as a magic place, it is clear that the *Liezi* text is telling us to forget conscious effort and to reject Confucian, Legalist, or other advice to inculcate morality and order in each other. If we do let go of these attempts, the text clearly implies we will be able to find this place again.

Perhaps the greatest statement of this utopian ideal in the Wei-Jin era came in the third century CE poem, the "Biography of Master Great Man" by Ruan Ji that we analyzed in the previous chapter for its anarchist sentiments (also see Appendix 2). Confronted by Confucian gentlemen who criticized him for his unconventional behavior, the Great Man responds by describing the utopia of the ancient past that he seems able to conjure up by letting go of conventional morality. It is this passage of the poem that concludes with the anarchist statement, For then there was no ruler [*wujun*], and beings were peaceful; no officials, and all affairs were well ordered.[26]

This utopia is firmly based on the similar accounts in the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, but now, as we saw in the previous chapter, with an even more explicit anarchist element as well as an increased emphasis on economic equality, perhaps influenced by the religious Daoism of sects such as the Yellow Turbans and Five Pecks of Rice—rebellion movements that helped to bring down the Han dynasty, even as they themselves were repressed by the military commanders who became the rulers of the rival kingdoms in the early part of the Period of Disunity.[27] Clearly, however, unlike the hierarchical religious structures of those movements, there is no room for even a benevolent government in Ruan Ji's utopia, not to mention one that strives to restore law and order. People can order themselves and would not be at each others's throats if left alone to manage their own lives.

In less poetic language, and in more blunt and forceful terms, the Wei-Jin thinker Bao Jingyan repeats this anarchist picture of utopia found in the *Liezi* and in Ruan Ji's poem[28] (see Appendix 3 below). In this version of the Daoist utopia, rejection of the use of roads and labor-saving technology is even more clearly tied to opposition to conquest and political domination of some over others. People in this utopia live not only in harmony with each other, but more explicitly with the animals, following the *Liezi* text and "Biography of Master Great Man." This pastoral ideal is most obviously similar to Henry David Thoreau's ideal of communion with nature and the idea of loss of this communion as one of the main defects of existing society. Disease and pestilence are linked in these Wei-Jin utopias neither to defects in nature that civilization needs to overcome nor to human nature, but to defects in the artificial attempts of sages and rulers to order the world.

Of course this idea of the natural equality and pacific nature of humans begs the key question for all Daoists of how people ever lost this ideal in the first place. This question will lead us into the discussion of the anti-utopian and dystopian sides of Daoism, which we will examine in Parts 2 and 3 of this chapter. First, however, we should return to the last and, perhaps, greatest statement of Daoist utopianism in the Wei-Jin era, Tao Qian's poem "Peach Blossom Spring" (see Chapter 1 and Appendix 4). In this account, we should recall that a fisherman sailed down a stream through a cave to discover a hidden land to which people had fled long ago to escape the harsh Qin dynasty and who knew nothing of succeeding dynasties. In this place they had founded an egalitarian society without government, one in which, as in Chapter 80 of the received *DDJ*,

[26] Holzman, 195.

[27] For one colorful account of this movement, see Balazs, 175–6, 192–3.

[28] Bauer, 139; also see Balazs, 244–5 and Hsiao Kung-chuan, 623–30.

people were content to live in their own villages and men and women dressed alike and worked together in the fields.

The fisherman, after being feted by the inhabitants, left for home swearing never to reveal the location of this society. Later, breaking his promise and consciously trying to retrace his steps with the help of the district military commander and his troops, he tried to find the community again, but to no avail. Clearly, Tao Qian is saying that neither conscious attempts to impose morality by Confucian sages nor Legalist attempts to build uniform codes and regulations can get us back to this utopia. But as noted above, this is not a place to be found only in the distant past. This place can exist at any time by anyone who "returns to the root," or the state of original simplicity, by forgetting or letting go of conscious effort.

Tao Qian's last great statement of Daoist utopianism[29] neatly sums up the qualities of the Daoist ideal society. As also noted in the previous chapter, clearly the Daoist society is egalitarian and communitarian—people are not individualist hermits, but cooperate and live in simple equality and peace with each other. Most importantly, there is no government or any kind of political authority in this utopia. Going back to the Shen Nung ideal, Tao Qian's utopia seems to allow for agriculture and husbandry rather than just hunting and gathering, if still on a simple level. People still have few desires, and by noting the noise of the fowls and dogs of the next farm that could be heard, Tao Qian is clearly suggesting the original statement of the Daoist utopia in the received *DDJ* where people would be able to hear and know about neighboring villages, but would never desire to go there.

How then, if people were so content and had such lack of desire, did humanity lose contact with the ideal society? The attempts of Daoist philosophers to answer this question lead us to the anti-utopian strands in Daoist thought.

Anti-Utopianism in Philosophical Daoism

The main answer of Daoists to the question raised above concerning how humans lost their connection to utopian society ironically also demonstrates the anti-utopian aspects of Daoist thought. The received *DDJ*, for example, does not argue that the ideal society once found will never be lost, but only that those who try to consciously build a perfect order will only bring about a reaction of nature that will destroy their creation. As Chapter 55 of the received *DDJ* puts it, Whatever has a time of vigor also has a time of decay.

Such things are against Tao And whatever is against Tao will soon be destroyed.[30]

The Daoists aim their criticism against those attempting to construct ideal governments at many of their rival schools, but their sharpest criticism seems to be aimed against the Confucians. As Chapter 4 of the *Zhuangzi* says about one who preaches "sermons on benevolence and righteousness" (*ren* and *yi*— two of the most important concepts of Confucianism), he "will be called a plaguer of others. He who plagues others will be plagued in turn."[31]

[29] See Chapter 4 and Appendix 5 for a similar utopian account by the pseudonymous thinker Wu Nengzi (Master of no abilities) during the reign of the Xizong emperor of the Tang dynasty (874–888 CE). As we will see, however, since Wu Nengzi was heavily influenced by an interpretation of Buddhism emphasizing *wu* or nothingness instead of the *dao*, in the end he came to a nihilistic rejection of even the Daoist stateless utopia as something to idealize.

[30] Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, 209.

[31] Watson, 55.

Clearly for philosophical Daoists of the Warring States and Wei-Jin periods, the principal cause of disorder and chaos is the attempt to order the world by well-meaning sages. Even before attempting to impose a perfect political order, even the attempt to draw up ideal standards only creates the opposite.

As in Chapter 2 of the received *DDJ*, It is because everyone under Heaven recognizes beauty as beauty, that the idea of ugliness exists.

And equally, if every one recognized virtue as virtue, this would merely create fresh conceptions of wickedness ...[32]

The next chapter of the received *DDJ* suggests the link between sages and thieves in the attempt to find an ideal ruler:

> If we stop looking for 'persons of superior morality' [*xian*] to put in power, there will be no more jealousies among the people. If we cease to set store by products that are hard to get, there will be no more thieves.[33]

This relativistic criticism of sages' attempts to build a perfect order as the cause of the rise of the great thieves is most pronounced in the anarchist Chapter 10 of the *Zhuangzi*:

> Cudgel and cane the sages and let the thieves and bandits go their way; then the world will be at last well ordered! If the stream dries up, the valley will be empty; if the hills wash away, the deep pools will be filled up. And if the sage is dead and gone, then no more great thieves will arise. The world will then be peaceful and free of fuss.

But until the sage is dead, great thieves will never cease to appear, and if you pile on more sages in hopes of bringing the world to order, you will only be piling up more profit for Robber Chih...[34]

What both the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* seem to be implying is that the attempt to impose one standard or ideal will inevitably lead to strife and thus to evermore authoritarian structures of power to enforce the ideal, just as Gemie suggested about Western critics of statist utopias.[35] Thus Confucian ideas of imposing benevolent rule are only the first stage in a decline that ends in the "brawling" or contending, as the received *DDJ* clearly states in Chapter 38:

> ... After the 'power' [*de*] was lost, then came human kindness [*ren*].
>
> After human kindness was lost, then came morality [*yi*], After morality was lost, then came ritual [*li*].
>
> Now ritual is the mere husk of loyalty and promise-keeping And is indeed the first step towards brawling.[36]

[32] Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, 143.
[33] Ibid., 145.
[34] Watson, 109–10.
[35] Gemie, 3.
[36] Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, 189–90.

Of course this Daoist anti-utopianism begs the question of how the Daoist utopia is to be instituted, and if Daoists' own optimism about humans' ability to reattain the ideal society contradicts their skepticism about setting up ideals in the first place. The attempted answer of the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi* is that the sage is to attain the ideal by *wuwei*, a term usually translated as "inaction" or "doing nothing" as we saw above. As Chapter 37 of the received *DDJ* puts it, Tao never does; Yet through it all things are done.

If the barons and kings would but possess themselves of it, The ten thousand creatures would at once be transformed, And if having been transformed they should desire to act, We must restrain them by the blankness of the unnamed [*wuming zhi pu*].

The blankness of the Unnamed Brings dispassion; To be dispassionate is to be still And so, of itself, the whole empire will be at rest.[37]

As the later Daoist philosophers put it more directly, especially Bao Jingyan, the loss of utopia was caused by the attempts of the strong to dominate the weak, and the statist utopian ideals of the Confucians and others were nothing but the attempts to disguise and justify this inequality of wealth and power.[38]

As we suggested in the previous chapter, one could augment this more direct Daoist critique with the modern view that in the Neolithic revolution an increase in the social surplus caused by accidental discoveries and improvements in agriculture and animal husbandry gave rise to inequality of wealth and power. This inequality in turn led to violent contention over control of the surplus, which led both to government of, by, and for the winners, with utopian ideas of benevolent rule as the final justification and idealization of the status of the wealthy and powerful. The goal of the Daoists, and all libertarian utopian thinkers, is to debunk and deconstruct the statist utopias by contrasting them with a stateless ideal. Thus the Daoists may have rejected focus on objective knowledge and labor-saving conveniences, as was noted in the first part of this chapter, not out of a "Luddite" opposition to progress for its own sake, but as a way to link this knowledge and technological advance with the loss of utopia.

In the more gentle language of the inner chapters of the *Zhuangzi*, it is the hubris of humans in thinking they can construct an ideal society that leads to their downfall and their modesty and return to the *dao* that allows them to survive. As the author of Chapter 7 says:

> Hold on to all that you have received from Heaven but do not think you have gotten anything. Be empty, that is all. The Perfect Man uses his mind like a mirror—going after nothing, welcoming nothing, responding but not storing.
>
> Therefore he can win out over things and not hurt himself.
>
> The author continues in this chapter in a gently satirical vein to illustrate the basic Daoist skepticism about benevolent attempts to order the universe in a famous anecdote about boring holes. This anecdote will also serve to begin our discussion of dystopian elements in philosophical Daoism in its final intimation of the cosmic disaster unleashed when we try to institute artificial schemes of utopian order.
>
> The emperor of the South Sea was called Shu [Brief], the emperor of the North Sea was called Hu [Sudden], and the emperor of the central region was call Hun-tun [Chaos]. Shu and Hu from time to time came together for a meeting in the territory

[37] Ibid., 188.
[38] Balazs, 243.

> of Hun-tun, and Hun-tun treated them very generously. Shu and Hu discussed how they could repay his kindness. 'All men,' they said, 'have seven openings so they can see, hear, eat, and breathe.
>
> But Hun-tun alone doesn't have any. Let's try boring him some' Every day they bored another hole, and on the seventh day Hun-tun died.[39]

Dystopian Ideas in Daoist Thought

As we have seen, Daoist philosophers are not merely anti-utopian in the sense that they oppose ideas of benevolent government as impossible or impractical, but also as they view such ideas as harmful and leading in the end to harsh, authoritarian systems of rule. In the received *DDJ*, this view is again related to the idea of the inevitable reaction of nature against those who hope to conquer the world, as in Chapter 30:

> He who by Tao purposes to help a ruler of men Will oppose all conquest by force of arms; For such things are wont to rebound.
>
> Where armies are, thorns and brambles grow.
>
> The raising of a great host is followed by a year of dearth …[40]

In Chapter 53, the *DDJ* continues to paint a picture of the famine and poverty caused by those who would order the world:

> … So long as the Court is in order They are content to let their fields run to weed and their granaries stand empty.
>
> They wear patterns and embroideries, Carry sharp swords, glut themselves with drink and food, have more possessions than they can use.
>
> These are the riotous ways of brigandage; they are not the Highway.[41]

Opposing the Legalists who would order the world through applying a strict and uniform code of rewards and punishments, the *DDJ* suggests the harshest punishment—the death penalty—will not work, probably because of the worse death and destruction caused by the state itself. As Chapter 74 of the received *DDJ* puts it, the people are not frightened of death. What then is the use of trying to intimidate them with the death penalty? …[42]

The next chapter of the *DDJ* describes the real cause of starvation, rebellion, and disorder:

> People are starving.
>
> The rich gobble taxes, that's why the people are starving.
>
> People rebel.
>
> The rich oppress them, that's why the people rebel.

[39] Watson, 97.
[40] Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, 180.
[41] Ibid., 207.
[42] Ibid., 234.

People hold life cheap.

The rich make it costly, that's why the people hold it cheap …[43]

Similarly, in Chapter 4 of the *Zhuangzi*, there is a description of the results of sages attempting to build utopian governments, which only led to tyrants destroying them out of jealousy and then causing misery for the people:

> In ancient times Chieh put Kuan Lung-feng to death and Chou put Prince Pi Kan to death. Both Kuan Lung-feng and Prince Pi Kan were scrupulous in their conduct, bent down to comfort and aid the common people, and used their positions as ministers to oppose their superiors. Therefore their rulers, Chieh and Chou, utilized their scrupulous conduct as a means to trap them, for they were too fond of good fame. In ancient times Yao attacked Ts'ung- chih and Hsu-ao, and Yu attacked Yu-hu, and these states were left empty and unpeopled, their rulers cut down. It was because they employed their armies constantly and never ceased their search for gain …[44]

The picture of the destruction of great sages by tyrants and thieves because of the unleashing of the desire for fame and reputation is continued in harsher terms in the outer Chapter 10, which has Zhuang Zhou say, … what the ordinary world calls a man of perfect wisdom is in fact someone who piles things up for the benefit of a great thief; what the ordinary world calls a perfect sage is in fact someone who stands guard for the benefit of a great thief… In times past, Kuan Lung-feng was cut down, Pi Kan was disemboweled, Ch'ang Hung was torn apart, and Wu Tzu-hsu was left to rot. All four were worthy men, and yet they could not escape destruction.[45]

In Chapter 11 of the *Zhuangzi*, one of the "anarchist" outer chapters, there is a vivid dystopian description of the results of Legalist rule:

> In the world today, the victims of the death penalty lie heaped together, the bearers of cangues tread on each other's heels, the sufferers of punishment are never out of each other's sight. And now come the Confucianists and Mo-ists, waving their arms, striding into the very midst of the fettered and manacled men. Ah, that they should go this far, that they should be so brazen, so lacking in any sense of shame! Who can convince me that sagely wisdom is not in fact the wedge that fastens the cangue, that benevolence and righteousness are not in fact the loop and lock of these fetters and manacles? …[46]

Once again, the progression is clear: Confucian doctrines of humane rule lead only to Legalist forms of rule where sages are punished and executed and the people as a whole are eventually violently oppressed.

The neo-Daoist poet Ruan Ji takes over this critique with a viciously satirical metaphor comparing the gentlemen (*junzi*) supposedly concerned with morality and propriety with lice who think they are safe living in a pair of trousers, "… but when the trousers are ironed, the flames

[43] Le Guin, 95.
[44] Watson, 55–6.
[45] Ibid., 108.
[46] Ibid., 118.

invade the hills, the fire spreads, the villages are set on fire and the towns burned down; then the lice that inhabit the trousers cannot escape."[47] While meant to satirize those who would criticize the Great Man (or any neo-Daoist nonconformist such as Ruan Ji) for his unconventional ways, no one who had lived through the fall of the Han and the continuing civil wars of the early Wei-Jin period could fail to take the metaphor more literally as applying to everyday reality. As we saw above, Bao Jingyan takes over this picture of Confucian morality where sages striving for reputation and material wealth in the end only unleashed robbers and thieves who, "however cruel by nature they may have been … could [never] have done such things if they had to remain among the ranks of the common people?"[48]

Clearly, it is the creation of hierarchical structures of authority, if originally intended to be a utopian form of humane rule, which allowed this dystopia to form. Although certainly the dystopian picture would include the harsh life that would result for the common people, as was argued in the previous chapter, Bao and other Daoists mostly seem to be trying to scare the ruling elite with the revenge that the common people will exact on them, and thus help to break the Confucian–Legalist ideological hegemony among the elite.[49] This is nowhere clearer than in Bao's depiction of how the Confucian–Legalist attempts to impose order will end, which, as we saw in the previous chapter, concluded with the flood metaphor:

> … to try to stop them revolting by means of rules and regulations, or control them by means of penalties and punishments, is like trying to dam a river in full flood with a handful of earth, or keeping the torrents of water back with one finger.[50]

Though harsher and more direct than the dystopian picture in the *DDJ* and the inner chapters of the *Zhuangzi*, the neo-Daoist picture of dystopia is firmly based on the ideas of the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, even as the Daoist utopian ideal of the stateless community of small villages is retained and heightened. This Daoist utopianism can perhaps serve today as a warning and counterweight both to neotraditional forms of authoritarian rule in East Asia[51] and to those who would revive elements of the Confucian political culture as a guide to democratization. Daoists who utilize the basic anarchist theory of the state would warn us that these efforts, no matter how well-intentioned, might only lead to new forms of elite rule that in the end might only serve to weaken and destroy, not extend, genuine democracy.

---

[47] Balazs, 238.

[48] Ibid., 246.

[49] See Chapter 1 above, 22.

[50] Balazs, 246.

[51] For the application of a neo-traditional critique to a twentieth century Chinese ruler, see Anita M. Andrew and John A. Rapp, *Autocracy and China's Rebel Founding Emperors: Comparing Chairman Mao and Ming Taizu*, who would contest any assertion that Mao's "utopian" experiments ever really had as their purpose the ending of alienation or the building of mass democracy. Instead, as argued throughout the Andrew and Rapp book, as in Chapter 5 of this book, Mao's aim from the outset was to build a heightened personal autocracy and a militarized society in which the checks of the central bureaucracy on his own authority would be curtailed and even removed. Thus if one considers there to have been utopian aspects to Mao's thought, this would only be in the sense of an ideal (autocratic) government, and not in the sense of a truly egalitarian, democratic society.

3. Daoism as utopian or accommodationist: The Guodian challenge to Daoist anarchism

Introduction

Although the previous chapters demonstrated that philosophical Daoism[1]

undoubtedly contains utopian anarchist strains, whether these tendencies can be traced back to the text known as the *DDJ* is more open to debate.[2] Those who find a radical utopian[3] argument in Daoism stress especially the *DDJ*'s critique of the Confucian ideal of humane rule. Below we trace this critique to previously received versions of the *DDJ* that date to approximately 250–200 BCE. Nevertheless, some scholars would claim that bamboo strips unearthed in 1993 from a tomb in China's Hubei province present a major challenge to the claim that the basic anarchist idea of the state ruling for itself goes back to the earliest roots of Daoist philosophy.

Perhaps the most important find in this tomb were portions of what later became the *DDJ*, thus marking the text as much as a century older than any previously known version.[4] As the news about the strips spread, some scholars began to claim that the Guodian manuscripts proved that Daoism was more accommodationist toward government than was previously thought to be the case.[5]

This chapter will first present the provisional case for that "accommodationist" view of Daoism. Next we will review the utopian anarchist strands of Daoism that can be traced back to at least a century after the Guodian manuscripts were transcribed, which will then lead us to question whether the Guodian texts really present such a major challenge to radical Daoism. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of what the identity of the owner of the Guodian strips may tell us about the ultimate meaning of the Guodian texts.

[1] As noted in the introduction to this book, many China scholars argue that the idea of philosophical versus religious Daoism, not to mention the very idea of clearly delineated schools of "Daoist," "Confucian," and "Legalist" thought, was a much later idea in Chinese history that later scholars projected back to earlier periods. Nevertheless, this author would contend that the *DDJ*, including the Guodian partial version, contains similar political ideas to those in texts such as the *Zhuangzi* and later works, ideas which can be grouped together and contrasted with ideas in texts that later became part of imperial ruling ideology. Thus for the purposes of this chapter the terms Daoist, Confucian, and Legalist are used to denote those contrasting ideas.

[2] See Chapter 1 and [2] of this volume.

[3] To review the previous chapter, the terms "radical utopian" or "utopian anarchist" in this chapter refer to the suspicion shared by Daoist and Western anarchists of other, statist utopias, even while Daoist and other anarchists present their own vision of an ideal (stateless) society.

[4] See Robert Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching: A Translation of the Startling New Documents Found at Guodian*, 22. For the original transcription of the strips, see Hubeisheng Jingmenshi bowuguan (Hubei Province Jingmen City Museum) (ed.), *Guodian Chu mu zhu jian* (The Guodian strips in the Chu tomb).

[5] See Tu Wei-ming, quoted in A. Shen, "Ancient Script Rewrites History," *Harvard College Gazette* (February 22, 2001): 8.

The Guodian challenge examined

The Guodian manuscripts present three main challenges to the view of the anarchist essence of philosophical Daoism. The first is the absence from the Guodian bamboo strips of many *DDJ* chapters that explicitly oppose direct attempts to rule, including, most dramatically, the absence of the entire last third of the received *DDJ*. The second challenge is the lack in the bamboo strips of clear anti-Confucian language in what became Chapter 19 of the received *DDJ*. The third challenge is the relative absence of a "law of return" in the Guodian version of the *DDJ* that would explain how humans could ever have fallen away from the stateless utopia. All three potential challenges are based on the fact that the Guodian text is the oldest known edition of what became the *DDJ* and thus that the clearly anti-statist and utopian statements in the received text may be later additions by other authors.

The absence of the most anti-statist and utopian sections of the *DDJ*

Absent from the Guodian strips are some of the most direct criticisms of other political philosophies and the most anti-statist statements of the received *DDJ*.

Most importantly, the Guodian text does not contain the explicit, influential utopian Chapter 80 of the *DDJ* that we analyzed in the previous chapter. Others have argued that this chapter contains the heart of the Daoist critique opposed to technological innovation that would aid the oppressive centralization and militarization of state power, a critique that can be found clearly in Daoist texts of the Warring States period (403–221 BCE)—an era that culminated in the foundation of a centralized imperial state.[6] Absent as well from the Guodian text are some of the most dramatic examples of Daoist advice to rule by noninterference in the affairs of the world (*wushi*), including the end of Chapter 48 of the received *DDJ*:

> In wanting to rule the world
>
> Be always non-interfering in going about its business;
>
> For in being interfering
>
> You make yourself unworthy of ruling the world.[7]

The Guodian strips also leave out the severe critique of Legalism, a political philosophy that would later be highly influential on the imperial state. This anti-legalist stance can be seen in chapters in the received *DDJ* missing from the Guodian strips that contain criticism of rule by harsh punishments (Chapter 74) and the idea of suffering and rebellion as caused by over-taxation and the oppression of the rich over the poor (Chapter 75).[8] Finally, the Guodian text leaves out much of the attack on the Confucian ideal of rule by the morally virtuous, as in Chapter 3 of the received text which is missing from the Guodian strips:

[6] As we noted in the previous chapter; also see Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China,* II: 86–9, 121–32.

[7] Roger Ames and David Hall, *Dao De Jing*: *Making This Life Significant: A Philosophical Translation*, 151.

[8] See Chapter 2.

> If we stop looking for "persons of superior morality" (*xian*) to put in power, there will be no more jealousies among the people.
>
> If we cease to set store by products that are hard to get, there will be no more thieves.[9]

Also absent from the Guodian strips is the explicit critique of the negative political evolution that occurs if Daoist principles are lost, as in Chapter 38 of the received *DDJ*:

> After the "power" [*de*] was lost, then came human kindness [*ren*].
>
> After morality was lost, then came ritual [*li*].
>
> Now ritual is the mere husk of loyalty and promise-keeping And is indeed the first step towards brawling.[10]

Chapter 19 and the Guodian accommodation to Confucianism

By far the most highly publicized example of the seeming accommodation toward government in the Guodian strips lies in what became Chapter 19 of the received *DDJ*. The received versions contain language that directly mocks the Confucian values of sageliness (*sheng*), benevolence or humanity (*ren*), and righteousness (*yi*), values at the heart of the ideal of paternalistic rule. As the received *DDJ* puts it, Eliminate sageliness, get rid of knowledge, And the people will benefit a hundredfold.

Eliminate humanity, get rid of righteousness, And the people will return to filial piety and compassion.

Eliminate craftiness, get rid of profit, And there will be no robbers and thieves ...[11]

As opposed to this direct critique, the Guodian text uses the following language:

> Eliminate knowledge, get rid of distinctions, And the people will benefit one hundredfold.
>
> Eliminate artistry, get rid of profit, And there will be no robbers and thieves Eliminate transformation, get rid of deliberation, And the people will return to filial piety and compassion ...[12]

To critics, this chapter shows clearly that Confucian and Daoist thought were not so opposed at the time when the Guodian texts were transcribed and that both philosophies argued for a humane rule based on paternalistic values of filial piety and benevolence,[13] not a stateless utopia as some later Daoists from the Warring States to the Wei-Jin period explicitly favored. Thus the Guodian text prefigures scholar–officials who later used Daoist principles to defend the supposedly limited and light rule of the former Han dynasty. Perhaps the best evidence for such an accommodationist position can be found in Chapter 54 of the received *DDJ*, which is also in the Guodian strips with only minor differences and gaps due to broken or missing slips (for which Henricks puts extrapolations in italics):

[9] Waley, *The Way and Its Power,* 145.

[10] Ibid., 189–90.

[11] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 12.

[12] Ibid., 13, 29.

[13] See, for example, Pang Pu, "Gu mu xin zhi" (New Information from an Old Tomb), 7–12, translated in Defoort and Xing, "Guodian, Part I," 46–9.

> If you cultivate it in your self, your virtue will be pure; If you cultivate it in your family, your virtue will be overflowing; If you cultivate it in your village, your virtue will be longlasting; If you cultivate it in your state, your virtue will be rich and full; If you cultivate it throughout the world, *your virtue will be widespread. Look at the* family *from the point of view of the family;*
>
> Look at the state from the point of view of the state; Look at the world from the point of view of the world ...[14]

As many commentators have long pointed out, this chapter is remarkably similar to the later Confucian text the *Da Xue*, or "Great Learning," which says that great sages of antiquity who wished to order their own states, first regulated their own families, for which they first corrected their own hearts, for which they first regulated their own intentions, for which they first perfected their own knowledge.[15]

The *Da Xue* later became one of the four classic texts that all would-be officials had to master in order to pass the imperial examinations, thus showing how Confucianism became a legitimating formula under which the role of the ruler was similar to that of head of a family. Thus critics of Daoism as anarchism point to this chapter of the *DDJ* to say that early Daoism was not opposed in principle to the idea of rule as long as it was limited and humane.

The lack of a "law of return" in the Guodian texts

Finally, the Guodian strips severely lack what could be termed the Daoist "law of return" that exists in the received *DDJ*.[16] This law is important in that it helps Daoists both to explain how a "fall" from a stateless utopia could ever have occurred, and to predict the oppressive forms of rule other political philosophies of the time would bring if ever put into practice. This law is most explicit in Chapter 55 of the received text, which is absent from the Guodian strips:

> Whatever has a time of vigor also has a time of decay.
>
> Such things are against Tao And whatever is against Tao will soon be destroyed.[17]

In other words, those who try to impose political order either by indoctrinating people with ideas of goodness (Confucianism) or through harsh laws and punishments (Legalism) will only bring about a reaction of nature that will destroy their ideal states.[18] Also, under this principle, Daoists can explain the "fall" from the natural, stateless society not as something unnatural, which would be self-contradictory to a naturalistic philosophy, but instead only as a temporary change that is doomed to fail. Without this law of return, the Daoist critique of other political philosophies is arguably much weaker.

In the Guodian version of what became Chapter 30 of the received *DDJ*, which opposes war and militarized rule, the lines containing the most famous example of the law of return are absent (marked in italics below):

[14] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 108.
[15] Translated in A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao,* 132; also see Ames and Hall, *Dao De Jing*, 160–2.
[16] For the idea of "return" in the *DDJ*, see for example Ames and Hall, *Dao De Jing*, 27–9.
[17] Waley, *The Way and Its Power,* 209.
[18] See Chapter 2.

> One who uses the Way to assist the ruler of men, Does not desire to use weapons to force his way through the land.
>
> *Such deeds easily rebound. In places where armies are stationed, thorns and brambles will grow. Great wars are always followed by great famines.*
>
> One who is good at such things achieves his result and that's all.
>
> He does not use the occasion to make himself stronger still.[19]

Thus the Guodian version seems to call for modest, humane rule that avoids war if possible but refrains from opposing *any* attempt to use force of arms, which would undermine the idea of Daoism as anarchistic.

For many scholars, other minor linguistic differences between the Guodian and the received *DDJ* demonstrate that the Guodian text is the oldest version of what became the *DDJ* and that much of the received *DDJ* was not present at the time of Confucius (b. 579 BCE), but instead was added during or after the third century BCE.[20] Thus, according to the "accommodationist" view, the elements of the *DDJ* that contain the anti-Confucian critique must have also been added during the late Warring States era, while the utopian anarchist aspects must have been nonintrinsic additions of later writers.

Review: The case for radical Daoism

To make the case for radical Daoism as genuine and intrinsic, one should start with unambiguous anarchist Daoism of the Warring States and Wei-Jin periods and work backward to the time of the Guodian texts.

First, as we saw in the previous chapters, later radical thinkers definitely used Daoist language to describe a stateless utopia.[21] These utopian depictions included explicit opposition to Confucian moral virtue and Legalist rewards and punishments, ideas that provided legitimated succeeding Chinese imperial dynasties. Radical Daoism developed to its fullest extent in the early Wei-Jin period (ca. 220–316 CE).[22] As we noted in the previous two chapters, the poet Ruan Ji took Daoist anarchism to its height in his poem "The Biography of Master Great Man," which describes a stateless utopia in terms based on the received *DDJ*. Ruan Ji has the Great Man denounce serving in government, based on the *Zhuangzi*. Based also on received versions of the *DDJ*, Ruan Ji in his poem criticizes Confucian and Legalist ideas of rule as "nothing more than the methods of harmful robbers, or trouble-makers, of death and destruction…"[23] As we also saw in previous chapters, Ruan's harsh, anti-Confucian tone is continued in the tract of the obscure Daoist philosopher Bao Jingyan (ca. 300 CE) who also presents the Daoist stateless utopia found in other Wei-Jin writers, but in very direct and forceful language. These Wei-Jin Daoist anarchists took their language directly from the "outer" chapters of the *Zhuangzi*, especially Chapter 10, which as we saw was itself highly resonant of Chapter 80 of the received *DDJ* and is dated by scholars to at least 250–200 BCE. As in Chapter 18 and 19 of the received *DDJ*, we saw above how

[19] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 15, 36–7. The emphasis is Henricks' for the lines missing from the Guodian.
[20] See, for example, Boltz, *"The Fourth-Century B.C. Guodian Manuscripts,"* 594.
[21] As argued in the previous chapter.
[22] As argued in Chapter 1.
[23] Holzman, *Poetry and Politics*, 195.

Chapter 10 of the *Zhuangzi* also blames Confucian and Legalist "sages" for bringing oppression into the world, if in much harsher language that calls us to "cudgel and cane the sages and let the thieves and bandits go their way" and concludes that "the world will then be peaceful and free of fuss…" if we "..

. cut off sageliness, cast away wisdom" and "… destroy and wipe out the laws that the sage has made for the world…"[24]

As we saw in the second chapter of this book, Chapter 9 of the *Zhuangzi* also depicts a Daoist utopia where the world is free of sages trying to order the world,[25] a utopian picture that relates to language of the inner chapters of the *Zhuangzi* and the received *DDJ* concerning the need to "return to the root" and reject technological refinements that came with the increasing centralization of power in the Warring States era.[26] Even if these accounts from the outer *Zhuangzi* chapters and the received *DDJ* were later extrapolations, as we saw in Chapter 2, there is no doubt that their utopian ideal harkens back to a preexisting tradition of a stateless agrarian community that was supposedly begun by the mythical founder of agriculture, Shen Nung. A. C. Graham's argument that the Shen Nung ideal "appears to be an anarchistic order based on mutual trust in small communities …" that is "… ancestral to all Chinese utopianism"[27] would backdate the utopian Daoist ideal to a time at least roughly contemporaneous with the historical Zhuang Zhou himself, if not earlier, even if this ideal was later sharpened during the harsh Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE). Graham's argument supports the view that even the inner *Zhuangzi* chapters suggest the spontaneous order that exists in the universe without human intervention and thus the lack of any need to impose political order. We should recall that in the inner chapters of the *Zhuangzi* the greatest sages often refuse to serve in government, while the great second chapter, "Discussion on Making All Things Equal," satirizes the idea that hierarchical rule is natural in the famous section we noted in Chapter 1 that contains a cybernetic view of the human body.[28]

Further, as we saw in Chapter 2 of this work, another (inner) chapter of the *Zhuangzi* puts forth the metaphorical anecdote about the disaster that will follow from artificial attempts to impose order when, after trying to repay Hun-tun for his generosity, the emperors of the north and south seas tried to bore the seven human orifices in him so that he could see, hear, eat, and breathe, "every day they bored another hole, and on the seventh day Hun-tun died."[29]

Clearly the inner *Zhuangzi* chapters oppose the idea of rule as morally virtuous, if in more gentle language than used by later Daoists.

Likewise, the received *DDJ* often depicts the idea of morally virtuous rule as at best a step down from the ideal, as in Chapter 17:

> With the most excellent rulers, their subjects only [barely] know that they are there, The next best are the rulers they love and praise, Next are the rulers they hold in awe, And the worst are the rulers they disparage.[30]

[24] Ibid., 110.

[25] Ibid., 105.

[26] See previous chapter.

[27] Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 64–74.

[28] Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 38.

[29] Ibid., 97.

[30] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 112. Henricks finds the last phrase largely intact in the Guodian version, if combined with the next chapter.

Given the Daoist admonition to (would-be) sages to rule by *wuwei* throughout the received *DDJ*, in addition to its denigration of laws and punishments, taxes, warfare, education, and virtually any other element of rule, we argued in the first chapter that even the received *DDJ* is trying to subvert government by advising the ruler to emulate leaders of hunter–gatherer bands and thus remove the ruler's monopoly on the legitimate use of coercion—advice that would do away with the state as it is minimally defined by Max Weber. Following Joseph Needham, we have argued above that even the authors of the inner chapters of the *Zhuangzi* and the received *DDJ* may have lived early enough to have at least dim memories of surviving remnants of wild hunter–gatherer or semi-sedentary ways of life in the south of ancient China and thus opposed the increasing centralization of power from the late Spring and Autumn to the Warring States periods.[31] We know that Daoist thinkers often came from more recently settled or partially settled regions of China, such as the "madman" Xiu Xing from the State of Chu who argued with Mencius, the great fourth-century Confucian exponent of the doctrine of humane rule.[32] Here the earlier date of the Guodian text may help heighten the argument, since the Guodian tomb is located within the historical boundaries of the state of Chu, which perhaps would place its ideas within this "southern" tradition of Chinese political thought opposed to harsher types of rule. Before we return to that question below, we must first reexamine the Guodian text to see whether it really lacks anti-Confucian and anti-statist utopian language.

The Guodian Texts Reexamined: The questions of dating and authorship

In refuting the claims that the Guodian texts point to an "accommodationist" Daoism, one must first examine the issue of dating. Though it is currently the oldest known version of the text, whether or not all later editions of the *DDJ* were additions to the Guodian texts or whether there was a preexisting oral and/or written tradition to all received or discovered versions of the *DDJ* is a matter of dispute. Even if one accepts the view of scholars who point to linguistic evidence to suggest that sections of the Guodian texts were more succinct and thus that later *DDJ* versions contained many emendations,[33] this does not mean that later authors of texts that entered into the received *DDJ* were starting wholly new traditions. Instead their texts could have been based on preexisting utopian traditions, as we noted above, such as that of Shen Nung, which might have had a history predating the Guodian manuscripts.

Robert Henricks points out that the Guodian strips were discovered in the tomb in at least three bundles, which were copied separately in at least two different hands probably from at least three other written sources.[34] The complete text of the *DDJ* may have existed by 300 BCE in more than one version, and the common ancestor of all versions may have been written earlier in the fourth century.[35] The Guodian strips thus may be copies of copies and transcribed from versions of the text that date to as early as 350 BCE.

---

[31] Needham, *Science and Civilisation,* 100–32.

[32] Graham, *Disputers of the Tao*, 70–2.

[33] See Li Cunshan, "Cong Guodian Chu jian kan zaoqi Dao Ru guanxi" (Early Daoist and Confucian Relations as Seen from the *Guodian Chu* Slips), 199, translated in Defoort and Xing, "Guodian, Part II," 82.

[34] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 21–2.

[35] Ibid., 22.

Whether or not the idea of one man named Lao Zi as the author of the *DDJ* was a later invention—as Chinese intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s believed and most contemporary Western and Japanese scholars contend—or whether the *DDJ* really dates back to someone such as the sixth century BCE legendary figure Lao Tan or Li Erh, certainly at a minimum the main principles of the received *DDJ* date to the Warring States period.[36]

Perhaps based on the traditional Chinese view of Lao Zi as the author of the *DDJ*, most contemporary Chinese scholars contend that the Guodian texts prove there was an already existing version of the *DDJ* much earlier than previously believed. Most Western scholars, on the other hand, believe that the lack of many *DDJ* chapters in the Guodian texts and other linguistic evidence shows that the complete *DDJ* was not yet in existence in 300 BCE.[37] While many Western observers find the Chinese belief in an early *DDJ* as authored by Lao Zi to be based more on a conjectural "act of faith" rather than hard evidence,[38] other Western scholars are starting to come around to the Chinese position, including Edward Shaughnessy, who finds that Western views might also be faith-based and prematurely based on the evidence at hand, and Robert Henricks,[39] who as we saw above is willing to consider that a complete version(s) of the *DDJ* may have existed as early as 300 BCE. Liu Xiaogan sees a possible third, compromise position: that much of the *DDJ* may have been composed after Confucius (sixth century BCE) but before the historical Zhuang Zhou (i.e. before the mid-fourth century).[40] If so, that would put much of the *DDJ* much farther back than 200 BCE, showing that much of the radical side of Daoism can be traced before the rise of China's early imperial dynasties and thus further in Chinese history than many observers previously believed.

Even if much of the *DDJ* dates far back into the Warring States period, critics of Daoism as originally anarchist would still raise the questions noted above, which we will now consider successively, that is, the "missing" (radical) chapters from the Guodian strips, the changes in what became Chapter 19 of the *DDJ*, and the question of the "law of return." **The "Missing" chapters from the Guodian texts**

Despite the fact that some chapters and sections of the received *DDJ* are missing from the earlier Guodian texts, upon closer examination one can find even in the Guodian strips precursors of much of the later radical utopian argument. To take a crucial example, the concept of *wuwei*, nonaction or doing nothing, still can be found in the Guodian texts despite the lack of several *DDJ* chapters that focus on the concept. For example, in the Guodian version of what became Chapter 57, the author has the perfect sage say the following:

> I am unconcerned with affairs, and the people on their own enjoy good fortune; I do nothing, and the people transform on their own …[41]

Besides *wuwei,* other *wu* forms such as *wuzhi,* literally "not knowing," and *wuyu*, literally "not desiring" (or "unprincipled knowing" and "objectless desire" respectively, as David Hall more

[36] For a summary of the 'doubting of antiquity' debate in the *DDJ*, see Edward Shaughnessy, "The Guodian Manuscripts and Their Place in Twentieth-Century Historiography on the 'Laozi'," 417–28; 433–44.

[37] Shaughnessy, "The Guodian Manuscripts," 445; also see Sarah Allan and Crispin Williams (eds), *The Guodian Laozi, Proceedings Of the International Conference, Dartmouth College, May 1998*, 142–6.

[38] William Boltz, "The Fourth-Century B.C. Guodian Manuscripts," 594.

[39] Shaughnessy, "The Guodian Manuscripts," 447–8; Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 21–2.

[40] Liu Xiaogan, "From Bamboo Slips to Received Versions: Common Features in The Transformation of the Laozi," 340.

[41] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching,* 68.

clearly translates those terms[42]) exist in one form or another in the Guodian texts.[43] These terms were crucial in developing the Daoist ideal of rule by noninterference with the natural order, which Hall regards as central to the philosophical anarchist vision of Daoism.

Likewise, despite the fact that the Guodian slips contain only about one-third to two-fifths of the received *DDJ*, in addition to the *wu* forms, the Guodian texts include other key concepts such as *pu* (uncarved wood) and *si* (raw silk),[44] terms that related to advice to return to an "original" simple and unrefined nature and thus pointing to a critique of overly refined methods of rule.

Especially if one accepts the argument of Liu Xiaogan that later versions of the *DDJ* mostly amount to, first, a "linguistic assimilation" that may have amplified and intensified but not directly changed the meaning of the text and, second, a "conceptual focusing" that "highlights key concepts but also strengthens consistency in language,"[45] then one can argue that the core message of the later *DDJ* is contained in the Guodian strips. For example, Liu contends that concepts such as *wuwei* may be used less often and in less intense fashion in the Guodian texts, but they can still be found, just as the anti-Confucian questioning of rule by benevolence or morally virtuous leaders is still present if one looks more closely, which leads us back to the question of Chapter 19.

The changes in Chapter 19

Even if some terms and concepts of the received *DDJ* can be found in the Guodian texts, there is still the celebrated change in lack of explicitly anti-Confucian language in what became Chapter 19 of the received *DDJ*. Even here, however, Liu Xiaogan's point applies about the received text of the *DDJ* only amplifying and not distorting the fundamental message in the Guodian text.

As Liu says, "… in chapter nineteen in [later versions of the *DDJ*] neither the amendment of sentences nor criticism of Confucianism are sudden or incomprehensible. They do not distort the original thought of the bamboo versions." For Liu the changes in Chapter 19 are "special case[s] of conceptual focusing" that mostly "amplify criticisms in the bamboo versions" and intensify the criticism without changing the essential meaning of the text.[46]

This is especially true if one looks at the eighteenth chapter in the received *DDJ*, which was found intact in a separate bundle of Guodian strips. In the latter part of this chapter the anti-Confucian language survives, as follows:

> Therefore, when the Great Way is rejected, it is then that "humanity" and "righteousness" show up on the scene; When the six relations are not in harmony, it is then that we hear of "filial piety" and "compassion"; And when the state is in chaos and disarray, it is then that there is praise for the "upright officials."[47]

For Henricks, combining the sentiments in this paragraph with the advice in what became Chapter 19 to eliminate attempts to use knowledge and distinctions to morally transform the

[42] David Hall, "The Metaphysics of Anarchism," 59.

[43] See Ames and Hall, *Dao De Jing*, 48–53; Liu, "From Bamboo Slips to Received Versions," 363–8, and Hall and Ames, *Thinking from the Han Self, Truth, and Transcendence in Chinese and Western Culture*, 45–58.

[44] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 17.

[45] Liu, "From Bamboo Slips to Received Versions," 339.

[46] Ibid., 373.

[47] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 112.

people makes it clear that even if this Guodian chapter is "not yet 'anti-Mencian'," that is, not explicitly opposed to that fourth-century philosopher's focus on humane rule, "it is still very 'anti-Confucian'," that is, against the idea of sages trying to inculcate morality and compassion in the people.[48]

The "Law of Return"

Though differences between the Guodian text and what became Chapter 30 of the received *DDJ* are not as famous as the changes in what became Chapter 19, to this author the lack of a clear "law of return" in the Guodian texts may be the biggest difference between the Guodian strips and the received *DDJ*. Again, this absence is important, since anyone who wants to argue that a stateless utopia is the natural human condition has to explain how people could ever have fallen so far as to live under Confucian or Legalist-influenced governments.

In making the case for the continuity of the Daoist anarchist tradition, one should first note that a law of return is implicit in the Guodian texts since they still emphasize that ruling through inaction or nonconcern with affairs is the best way for the sage to endure. Most scholars who have examined the Guodian version of what became Chapter 30 emphasize that it is very likely that a punctuation error in the text should be corrected so that the final line reads, "such deeds [i.e., those achieved by being modest and not desiring to use weapons] are good and endure"[49] or "its affair tends to be prolonged" [*qi shi hao chang*].[50] In other words, one who rules by doing nothing will survive, clearly implying the opposite for those who fail to heed this warning. Thus again, the later, clearer versions of the *DDJ* that talk about those "not being on the Way [coming] to an early end"[51] are merely examples, to borrow Liu Xiaogan's terminology, of "intensifying" or "focusing" concepts that can be found in the Guodian texts.[52]

Likewise, the anti-militarism of the received *DDJ* is present in the Guodian text with or without an explicit law of return, as in the likely suggestion of what became Chapter 31 that "weapons are instruments of ill omen."[53]

Henricks finds that the key characters found in later texts contained what the missing characters in the strips must have said, which in any case is consistent with the Guodian version of what became the opening lines of Chapter 30:

> One who uses the Way to assist the ruler of men
>
> Does not desire to use weapons to force his way through the land.[54]

Indeed, Shaughnessy speculates that the separation of the two chapters in the Guodian text may have been due to a misplaced bamboo strip, which would not be hard to imagine given the chaotic state in which the strips were first found in the tomb. This strip may have in fact contained the more direct language "where troops are based brambles will grow," a clear example

[48] Ibid., 15.
[49] Ibid., 36.
[50] Shaughnessy, "The Guodian Manuscripts," 453–4.
[51] Ibid., 453.
[52] Liu, "From Bamboo Slips to Received Versions," 339.
[53] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 117–18.
[54] Ibid., 36.

of the law of return that might have later been moved to a different place in the received version of the *DDJ*.[55]

The surviving radical utopian vision of the *DDJ* in the Guodian texts

To relate this technical debate among specialists on ancient China to the point of trying to find the genesis of the radical anarchist utopia in the Guodian texts, we should conclude this section by examining the main point in the *DDJ* shared by all philosophical anarchists who present a utopian vision of what society would look like without government, namely, that humans can find morality on their own, that is, they can find the link between individual freedom and community without the need of outside intervention. In Western anarchism that point is made most clearly and consistently in the works of Peter Kropotkin, who asserts that "mutual aid" is the natural and voluntary method humans have always used in order to survive, as opposed to the more hierarchical concept of "charity" projected by those trying to justify rule of some over others.[56]

Similarly Leo Tolstoy argues that the spirit of love as expressed by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount points to a voluntary process where individuals see the link to each other inside their own hearts, as opposed to orthodox Christian doctrines that preach the need for sinful humans to be saved from without.[57] If such ideas are indeed at the core of all philosophical anarchism, then the Guodian strips contain the same message. That message is for the (would-be) sage to let go, not to direct the people, and let things take care of themselves.

The Guodian version of what became the latter part of Chapter 64 of the received *DDJ* contains this message most clearly, while also containing the germ of the law of return:

> The rule to follow in approaching all matters, is—
>
> If you're as careful at the end as you were at the beginning
>
> You will have no disasters.
>
> The Sage desires not to desire and places no value on goods that are hard to obtain.
>
> He teaches without teaching, and backs away from matters in which the masses go to excess.
>
> As a result, the Sage is able to help the ten thousand things to be what they are in themselves, and yet he cannot do it.[58]

This Guodian chapter especially contains both the idea of opposing "charity" and a version of the law of return. If the sage does nothing, the people will eventually find their true nature. They may stray from the Way, in which case the sage would back away from them and remove

[55] Shaughnessy, "The Guodian Manuscripts," 455–56.

[56] Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Human Evolution.*

[57] For a summary of Tolstoy's and other Christian anarchists' interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, see Christoyannopoulos, *Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel*, Chapter 1, "The Sermon on the Mount: A Manifesto for Christian Anarchism," 43–82. The original dissertation on which that work is based, "Theorising Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel," includes an appendix (274–8) containing a reprinted translation of Tolstoy's "harmonized" version of the Sermon.

[58] Henricks, *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*, 42.

his approval, like a tribal elder but not a ruler possessing the power of coercion, but on their own they would return to the Way, that is, to the natural morality that is contained in all of us. That trust in people to rule themselves is the heart of the utopian vision of anarchism, and at root, one could argue, that belief is still contained in the Guodian strips.

Conclusion: The Guodian Texts and the State of Chu

Why then, if the core utopian message remains in the Guodian texts was the man who owned the texts, and perhaps those who first wrote and transcribed them, so seemingly willing to embrace the idea of humane rule? To answer this question, it may be useful to look at who was buried in the tomb where the strips were found. The owner of the Guodian strips may have been a relatively high-ranking, Confucian-influenced teacher of the heir apparent to the ruler of the state of Chu.[59]

The state of Chu was an important southern state during the Warring States period, famous among other things for some of the most legendary "madmen," the hermits and poets who perhaps based their anti-statist ideas on earlier, pre- sedentary traditions.[60] The idea of Daoism as part of China's "southern" tradition more apart from and skeptical of official life has a long history.[61] In other words, it may be that even the Confucian tradition in Chu was affected by Daoism. Li Cunshan, for example, points out that some of the other texts unearthed at the Guodian tomb were examples of a southern form of Confucianism very much influenced by Daoism.[62]

Thus it may not be so much that Confucianism tamed Daoism in this time and place but that Daoist ideas affected Confucian thinkers, for example, in leading some of them to oppose "artificial" filiality and to favor ruling more by *wuwei*, inaction, or doing nothing. Others have similarly argued that the Guodian texts demonstrate that early Confucianism was more than a dispassionate elitism and was instead influenced by Daoist ideas to put more stress on human feelings (*xing*).[63]

Thus one could easily speculate that in choosing which parts of what became the *DDJ* to recopy for the use of tutoring his pupil, the owner of the Guodian strips may have selected sayings that backed up his own views and would best aid his goal of influencing his student to rule less harshly once he succeeded to the throne.[64] The teacher could not be openly anti-statist but only gently suggestive of less harsh doctrines of rule, a goal perhaps of southern Chinese intellectuals who saw such doctrines as based on dangerous "northern" traditions that were starting to take over the Chinese world.

---

[59] Ibid., 4–5; also see Liu Zuxin, "An Overview of Tomb Number One at Jingmen Guodian," in Allan and Williams, *The Guodian Laozi*, 32, and Jiang Guanghui, "Guodian Chu jian yu zaoqi ruxue" (The Guodian Chu Slips and Early Confucianism), 81–92, translated in Defoort and Xing, "Guodian, Part II," 6–38.

[60] Needham, *Science and Civilisation II*, 100–32.

[61] See Watson's introduction to *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* for the application of this idea to the *Zhuangzi*. For the application of China's north– south divide to the contemporary era, see Edward Friedman, "China's North-South Split and the Forces of Disintegration," in Friedman, *National Identity and Democratic Prospects in Socialist China*, 77–86.

[62] Li Cunshan, "Cong Guodian Chu jian kan zaoqi Dao Ru guanxi," 87–90.

[63] For example, see Tu Wei-ming cited in Andrea Shen, "Ancient Script Rewrites History," 8; also see Pang Pu, "Kong Men zhi jian," 22–35, translated in Defoort and Xing, "Guodian, Part II," 39–54.

[64] This argument leaves aside the question of whether the robbers who first broke open the tomb and scattered its contents made off with any of the strips.

The view that Confucian intellectuals in the period of the Guodian texts and later were trying to convince their pupils to accept less interventionist forms of rule while preserving their own role as advisors perhaps resonates with Roger Ames' view of the later Daoist text, the *Huainanzi*. Later Daoists in times of more centralized order in the early imperial era of the Qin and Han dynasties (ca. third to second centuries) may have interpreted Daoism as supporting the principle of rule at the same time that they were trying to subvert rule in practice.[65] Whether they succeeded in this double game or in the end helped more to legitimize the new imperial forms of rule would of course depend on one's own underlying political perspective.

That Confucian scholars even before the time of Mencius were trying to promote a "humane rule" doctrine that would mitigate authoritarian rule, and thus that Confucianism is at root not dictatorial or "feudal" is an important part of more contemporary Chinese intellectual discourse. The idea that Confucianism can be reconciled with constitutional monarchy and even democracy was a crucial part of the later Chinese "Hundred Days" reforms of 1898. The idea of Confucianism as a pro-democratic doctrine can be found in the works of "liberal" Chinese intellectuals from the 1920s and 1930s up to contemporary philosophers such as Tu Wei-ming, who has explicitly focused on the Guodian manuscripts as showing that there is a long history in China of limits to autocratic rule.[66]

A radical Daoist, on the other hand, might point out the remaining danger that any doctrine of humane or democratic rule could subvert true equality and freedom. The Daoist anarchist might point to the potential for intellectuals to use such humane rule doctrines to satisfy themselves that they are not responsible for harsher forms of rule even as their acquiescence in the rule of supposedly more benign leaders not only preserves their elite status but helps to legitimate the state in general.

In any event, in times of disorder in China, when fighting between rival states intensified and state power in general became increasingly centralized and oppressive, some intellectuals started to make more directly radical statements based on the utopian anarchist side of Daoism. This chapter argues that these more direct statements are not distortions of the original message represented by the Guodian texts but instead a more explicit statement of Daoist anti-statist impulses that always exist for many people. In times when the state's rule becomes more oppressive and more obviously for the benefit of rulers rather than the ruled, for example, during times when states swallow each other up in war and become increasingly centralized, earlier, more gentle critiques of rule can often evolve into more blatant anti-statist doctrines. In times of disorder, with constant warfare, pestilence, disease, and famine, perhaps at least some intellectuals who feel they have nothing to lose in a situation when their lives are under constant threat anyway are more likely to return to Daoism and bring out its utopian anarchistic tendencies, as was the case for Liu Shipei in the early twentieth century, as we will see in Chapter 6, and for the individual in the mid-ninth century CE writing under the pseudonym of Wu Nengzi, as we will see in the next chapter, even if their own interests in serving in government or merely surviving led them to compromise their original Daoist anarchist visions.

[65] Ames, *The Art of Rulership*.

[66] Tu, quoted in Shen, "Ancient Script Rewrites History," 8.

4. Daoism as anarchism or nihilism: The Buddhist- influenced thought of Wu Nengzi

Introduction: The Main Problems Raised by the *Wunengzi*

The ninth century CE Chinese text known by the name of its pseudonymous author, Wu Nengzi (literally, "Master of No Abilities"), was the first (surviving) piece of writing in 500 years to revive the anarchist side of philosophical Daoism. Though starting out in the same radical anti-statist and utopian fashion of earlier Daoist anarchist texts of the third to fourth centuries CE, in the end the author of the ninth century text seems to acquiesce in the idea of rule, as we will see below. Thus, this text creates problems for anyone who would seek to use the radical side of philosophical Daoism to build a modern anti-statist critique. The first problem, more narrowly linked to Daoist anarchism, is whether the *Wunengzi* demonstrates more openly a flaw that may be present in all radical Daoist texts or whether the author of this text makes a fundamental shift of his own based on influence from his interpretation of Buddhist doctrines. The larger problem for all anarchists is whether or not the *Wunengzi* demonstrates flaws present in postmodern and/or "lifestyle" anarchist thought. Can an "ironic stance" toward political authority combined with ways of living supposedly apart from the state and claims to reject any overarching principle or "meta-narrative," in the end lead too easily to a cynical acceptance of the state and/or a refusal to oppose it directly? Even if one rejects such an "ironic stance" alone as adequate and wants to go beyond it, are there any grounds to do so from a perspective that denies humans' ability to learn and know any absolute truths objectively? To answer these questions we need first to reexamine the nature of Daoist anarchism before Wu Nengzi and then see how Wu Nengzi himself applies and possibly changes the lessons of Daoist anarchism. After examining nature of the text itself and analyzing its main tenets, we can return to the questions raised above.

Although the *Wunengzi* has been referred to by several students of Chinese thought, including Germaine Hoston, Peter Zarrow, and Gotelind Müller,[1] it has previously only been partially translated into English by Hsiao Kung-chuan.[2] There is also the partial German translation by Alfred Forke and a full German translation in an unpublished PhD dissertation by Gert Naundorf.[3] This relative neglect is unfortunate, since the text can teach us much about both Daoist and Western anarchism. Thus this book contains the first full translation of the surviving text (see Appendix 5), which is analyzed in this chapter.

[1] See Germaine Hoston, *The State, Identity, and the National Question in China and Japan*, 158–9; Peter Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture*, 10– 11; and Gotelind Müller, *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus*, 116–18.

[2] Hsiao Kung-chuan, "Anarchism in Chinese Political Thought," 251–63.

[3] See Alfred Forke, *Geschichte der Mittelalterlichen Mittelalterlichen Chinesichen Philosophie*, 330–2; and Gert Naundorf, *Aspekte Des Anarchischen Gedankens in China: Darstellung der Lehre und Ubersetzung des Texts Wu Neng Tzu.*

The surviving text of the *Wunengzi* (as the text is referred to in this work, with its author referred to as Wu Nengzi) contains 3 books with a total of 23 chapters and a preface by an unnamed friend who reports that Wu Nengzi wrote the text during the Huangchao rebellion (875–884 CE), when he fled his home and travelled about, having no regular abode, finally living with a peasant family.[4] The author of the preface claims to have created the text from scattered scraps of paper that Wu Nengzi left in a bag. From chapters in the text it would seem that Wu Nengzi had disciples and was consulted by many people for sagely advice.

Daoist Anarchism before Wu Nengzi

We can perhaps most profitably compare the thought in the *Wunengzi* to that of Bao Jingyan. As we saw in the previous chapters, Bao was heavily influenced by the famous classical text the *Zhuangzi* (ca. 300 BCE), as were most of the thinkers in the revival of philosophical Daoism at the end of the later Han Dynasty (10–220 CE) and the Three Kingdoms era at the beginning of the Period of Disunity (220–589 CE). Bao completely rejects the Confucian idea of rule by the morally virtuous based on any "Mandate of Heaven" from an impersonal deity and in place of this utopian view of benevolent rulership (based on a Mencian interpretation of Confucianism), posits the existence of an ideal utopia of original undifferentiated simplicity where there were no rulers and everyone lived in harmony. In Bao's utopia, which we will compare and contrast with that of Wu Nengzi, there were no "princes and ministers" and no means of transportation over wide areas so that "wars of conquest between states did not occur." Since there was no "greed for power and profit," there was no "unhappiness and confusion" and people lived in "mystical equality" (*xuantong*) "without famine, pestilence or disease." Given their simple lives, it was impossible to implement crushing taxes on them or trap them with harsh punishments.[5]

While there is no evidence that Bao joined or fomented any political uprisings, we saw in previous chapters that he clearly viewed all government as immoral, unnecessary, and dangerous to human survival, and there was thus no way that he could ever accept the need for a state of any kind. Rather than follow the Confucian advice to resign office in an immoral government, as we also saw previously, Bao argues that it would be better if there were no offices in the first place. Bao bases his political stance on the concept of *ziran*, literally "of itself so," often translated as natural or spontaneous, a term that other scholars argue is the closest term in classical Chinese thought to the concept of freedom.[6] Likewise, Wu Nengzi starts with this same concept in a similarly radical sounding fashion, and at first seems to also reject serving in government, but by the end of his tract, as we will see below, he comes to a very different political conclusion from Bao and the Wei-Jin Daoist anarchists.

The Political Thought of Wu Nengzi

In his first chapter, Wu Nengzi picks up the description of the Daoist utopia in terms very similar to those of Bao Jingyan, where all creatures "lived together indiscriminately" without gender or other hierarchical distinctions. As a result, there were no crimes of theft or murder

[4] For a modern reprint of the classical text, see Wang Ming, compiler, *Wunengzi jiao shu*.

[5] Bauer, *China and the Search for Happiness*, 139.

[6] See, for example, Holzman, *Poetry and Politics*, 190.

and no elaborate rituals. "They followed what was natural; there was no ruling or shepherding, [and everything was] in its original simplicity; according to these principles they could live long lives."[7]

Again, as with Bao Jingyan, those who would "help" others by instituting government entered the picture and started to draw distinctions between humans and other animals in order to dominate the animals, which introduced the principle of hierarchy, first between men and women and finally between leaders and the led in general. Once introduced, the principles of hierarchical rule and economic inequality became more and more developed, and human oppression increased as a result:

> … After we imposed the construction of hierarchy; there came about rulers and ministers … We imposed assessments on people, so now they started to realise the distinction between honourable and disgraced. Now, the pure and natural has been weakened, and passions and predilections are embraced by vying hearts. If there is competition, there is stealing, if there is stealing, there is chaos [*luan*], [so] what is to happen in the future?"

Given the worry of the ruling class about ordinary people's increasing restiveness, "sages" then developed the Confucian principle of benevolence and propriety and regulation of people through ritual and music. Under this scheme of supposedly benevolent rule, "when a ruler oppressed his subjects he was to be called cruel, and the ministers would say that the government was illegitimate. When the ministers usurped [the ruler's authority], the ruler would call them rebels…"

Thus, far from reflecting Heaven's will and an unchanging human nature, as for Bao, so too for Wu the Confucian ideas of cultivation of "virtue" only served to legitimate and protect domination of some humans over others.

Based on chapters from the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, and again following the tradition of the Wei-Jin Daoist anarchists such as Bao Jingyan, Wu Nengzi goes on to argue that the introduction of Confucian hierarchy only inflamed the people's passions and awakened their desire to compete with each other for dominance. Thus eventually the "sages" "had no other option but to establish laws and punishments and organise armies to keep the people under control" including eventually instituting the harsh punishments of the Legalists, which only led to armies being sent over the land and violence spreading over the whole country, so that in the end, far from improving their lives, "the common people came to dire poverty and died." In the end, similar to the arguments of Western anarchists such as Michael Bakunin, Wu Nengzi turns on its head the typical question about how anarchists would handle the problems of crime and warfare in the absence of government.

Instead, Wu Nengzi argues, it is the principle of rule and the imposition of hierarchy that leads to chaos and the destruction of human life:

> Alas! It was natural to treat [the people] as beasts; it was not natural to treat them as humans. Imposing the establishment of palaces and mansions, [formal] meals and

[7] Unless otherwise noted, all translations from the *Wunengzi* in this chapter come from the first complete English version by the author's student colleague, Catrina Siu, with editorial assistance from his faculty colleague, Daniel Youd of the Department of Modern Languages at Beloit College, which is published in its entirety in Appendix 1 of this book.

> [prepared] food stirred up desires; imposing distinctions between the exalted and debased and the honourable and disgraced excited competition; imposing benevolence, virtue, ritual and music perverted what was natural. Imposing punishments and laws and [using] military [force] immiserated [people's] lives … this disturbed their passions and attacked their lives, and together in great numbers they died.

Thus far, Wu Nengzi's critique sounds as radical as that of his Daoist predecessors, including even Bao Jingyan, based on Daoist principles of original simplicity (*si*), primeval unity without hierarchy (*hundun*), and especially *ziran* (the natural or spontaneous), which as we noted in previous chapters could serve as metaphors for human freedom in nature. But in later sections in Part 1 of his text, though still based on the Daoist idea of nature as an undifferentiated whole, Wu Nengzi starts to introduce themes concerning the identity of life and death, almost certainly influenced by the spread of Buddhist ideas in China during the Tang dynasty. In his Chapter 3, Wu Nengzi examines human nature and how humans look at the human body, concluding that, That which is born from Nature, although it exists separately and can be broken off, is eternally alive. That which naturally dies, although it moves around, it will always die.

Beginning with the Daoist principles that nothing exists separately and that the idea of life and death is like *yin* and *yang*, or two sides of an undifferentiated whole, Wu Nengzi denigrates those who would seek the elixir of long life instead of worrying about the quality of their lives. This "idiotic" desire for long life in the end only gets people further from life. Though based on Daoist principles, Wu Nengzi seems to be introducing a Buddhist-influenced idea of the unreality of both life and death, as in his Chapter 4 of Book 1: As for death, it is the most despised by the people. But there is no death to be despised, besides the shape and skeletal structure; is there anything really to disturb feelings of utmost harmony and satisfaction? Throughout the next chapter, Wu Nengzi continues to denigrate people's fear of death and their desire for material things and a fine reputation as ideas inculcated and fanned by the so-called sages. While still serving the purpose of undermining Confucian and Legalist concepts of rule, we will see below how this Buddhist-influenced denial of material needs based on the denial of the distinction between life and death ultimately served to undermine his anarchism.

Nevertheless, in the second part of this same chapter, Wu Nengzi continues his radical egalitarian vision. Far from naturally favoring our relatives and close friends, as Confucian thinkers would have it, he argues that we should not differentiate among people and treat all equally. Far from teaching people to treat each other with benevolence, Confucian ideas of benevolent hierarchy lead only to strife and contention.

It is in the second of his three books that Wu Nengzi's political ideology starts to show the effects of his Buddhist-influenced stance of detachment from material things. In retelling a famous incident from the period toward the end of the Shang or Yin dynasty and the beginning of the Zhou (ca. eleventh century BCE), Wu Nengzi takes up the eternal question for intellectuals first raised in the *Zhuangzi*, whether or not to serve in government—a question many chapters in that text and the later neo-Daoists answer in the negative.

Answering a Confucian-influenced gentleman named Xi Bo who would try to rescue the Shang dynasty from chaos, at first Wu Nengzi's reclusive sage Lü Wang seems to follow the radical Daoist advice to not get sullied by serving the state, though in terms that seem to deny the reality of the people's suffering:

> … the Shang Dynastical government became chaotic by itself, and the people are in great pain out of their own doing. What is the connection to you? Why do you want to sully me?' … If something killed off all humans, birds, beasts, and insects, the ether would still be the ether. How can we do anything about the Shang government's loutishness? How can we say anything of people's hardship?

Though sounding very indifferent to ordinary people's suffering, this passage could be based on Chapter 5 of the received *DDJ*, which advises the sage to be ruthless and treat the people as straw dogs—advice which Arthur Waley claims is a bait for the Legalists.[8]

That is, since "nature is perpetually bounteous" and thus perhaps takes care of people on its own, there is no need for rulers to paternalistically "take care" of the people. Nevertheless, in a very important shift, Wu Nengzi allows his reclusive official to serve the state after all in the end:

> [D]espite all of this, the castle walls, houses, and cottages are already built and so need not be destroyed, just as the people are already formed and need not be killed, so I will save them!

In answering another of his officials as to why he decided to aid the suffering people of the Shang dynasty despite his talk of the virtue of the Daoist principle of *wuwei* (inaction, or doing nothing), Xi Bo replied with what one could argue is a very Buddhist take on *wuwei,* an interpretation that Wu Nengzi has Lü Wang endorse:

> Xi Bo said, "Heaven and Earth are inactive, yet the sun, moon, stars, and constellations move in the day and the night. There are rain, dew, frost, and freezing rain in the autumn and winter. The great rivers flow without pause, and the grass and trees grow without stopping. Therefore, inaction can be flexible. If there is a fixed point in action, then it cannot be inaction." Lü Wang heard this and knew that Xi Bo really did have compassion for the people and didn't want any profit from the Shang Dynasty's world.

Thereupon, Lü Wang and Xi Bo finally made the State of Zhou prosperous and powerful.

This conclusion of the chapter goes to the heart of the difficulty of Wu Nengzi's thought. If life and death are the same and material suffering is just an illusion, then being attached to opposing all government is also an illusion. In the end, for Wu Nengzi, one *can* try to help people by trying to govern them, but only as long as one has no desire to dominate them and no illusions about the ultimate worth of government. One then could wonder whether Wu Nengzi's prior condemnation of all government and his ridicule of the idea of benevolent rule for the benefit of people completely fall apart. If nothing matters, so too does opposition to the state not matter. Perhaps we could use contemporary language to say that Wu Nengzi would not oppose intellectuals taking part in government as long as they have a stance of ironic detachment while they are governing.

In the rest of Part 2, Wu Nengzi turns the tables on both famous officials and famous recluses in Chinese history, making both look ridiculous for seeking virtue and fame either by holding office and great wealth or by becoming hermits. Both are deluded, he seems to be saying, if

[8] See Waley, *The Way and Its Power*, 147.

they think they have found the truth. It is being attached to any desires that leads people astray, whether the desire is to hold high office or to hold a reputation as an honest recluse.

Standing by itself, this message would not depart very much from the ideas of earlier Daoist anarchists, especially those of the poet Ruan Ji. As we saw in Chapter 2, in his great poem "The Biography of Master Great Man," Ruan Ji's hero answered the Confucian gentlemen who came to him to criticize his "immoral" behavior of not dressing properly or seeking high office by comparing these men ambitious to serve nobly in high office to lice who inhabit a pair of trousers. Ruan Ji goes on to make the argument, echoed by Bao Jingyan, that it would be better if there were no offices and honors to seek than to resign office from an immoral government. Wu Nengzi likewise criticizes the idea of serving in government for noble reasons, more cynically than Ruan Ji or Bao Jingyan, and goes on to argue that serving in office is nevertheless not to be condemned if one has no illusions about the morality of serving. In Chapter 6 of Part 2, he has two officials discuss retiring from high office after achieving success for their king. The first official cannot imagine retiring at the point of their highest achievement, while the other warns that the king will now only be jealous of their success if they stick around:

> … because he hated the state of Wu, [the king] employed you and me in order to use our schemes. You and I benefitted from the pay and therefore we schemed against Wu [for the king], and we [can] take as a sign of our success, the destruction of the people, and as payback, he gives us our emoluments. The duplicity of people is such that they say that they are like Heaven and Earth's births and killings [and] that they are agents of Heaven and Earth—what sages call getting rid of harm and bringing things to completion, isn't this just a big scam?[9]

In other words, Wu does not really criticize the idea of serving in office nor even the destruction of a whole people for the benefit of a king, but only the idea that the rewards earned by serving the king will last forever or that the government service has some higher purpose.

In Chapter 8 of Part 2, Wu Nengzi tells the story of four famous recluses whom a king tried to entice to join his government, probably in order to demonstrate that the most virtuous officials were willing to serve him. Though they agreed that the emperor was more kind and virtuous than his rivals for power, the four recluses made a cynical conclusion to serve the evil Queen Mother and her henchman the Marquis of Liu, who were scheming to replace the emperor with her son, the Crown Prince.

… As for Empress Lu, that woman's nature is cruel and mean, [and] her son Ying is not yet firmly established as the crown prince, so she has necessarily been pushed to a crisis. In crisis, she has come seeking us; the peaceful resolution of the crisis depends on us. If she seeks us but does not get us, she will necessarily bring disaster upon us, therefore we must answer yes to her.

Thus the four former recluses agreed to do the dirty work of the Empress and the Marquis, to the point where her son ascended the throne and her enemies were eliminated. At that point the four men refused her offer of further honors and returned to their reclusion. We should note again that this chapter does not criticize the idea of serving in government, even serving obviously power- hungry nobles and officials at the expense of more high-minded rulers. The only thing being criticized is the belief that either serving or not serving in office can ever demonstrate moral virtue.

[9] Translated in Holzman, 192–5.

This cynical attitude is perhaps why Hsiao Kung-chuan claims that in the end Wu Nengzi's thought is nothing more than "a pure negation without any suggestion as to what is to be done or what shall take the place of the state" and thus demonstrates that Chinese Daoist anarchism is merely a "doctrine of despair" rather than one of hope as in Western anarchism.[10] As we saw in the first chapter, Peter Zarrow thinks that Hsiao unfairly characterizes Daoist anarchists as a whole, some of whom did possess an "alternative social vision" if not a theory of revolution; nevertheless, Zarrow does accept that Wu Nengzi is an exception to other radical Daoists and is closer to a "total cynic than a constructive social thinker."[11] Similarly, Germaine Hoston thinks his cynical attitude marks Wu Nengzi's thought as nihilistic.[12]

In Part 3 of the *Wunengzi*, the author speaks more in his own name and says things more directly. His main point is still that people should have no intentionality, and Wu Nengzi continues to interpret the Daoist principle of *wuwei* as taking no *intentional* action out of a desire for personal or social benefit, except perhaps for the benefit of continuing to live, which would seem to be an obvious contradiction to having no desire. Nevertheless, in other chapters Wu Nengzi disparages even the desire for health and long life.

Perhaps he is arguing that having no intention and having no desire is not always the same thing. In Chapter 2 of the third book Wu Nengzi answers a friend who came to him asking about whether to accept another friend's offer to serve in office by saying that taking office is not against the principle of *wuwei* as long has one as no intentionality (*youxin*) or desire to get ahead.

… when the situation is favourable then it is permissible to provide aid to the world. Therefore the emperors Yao and Shun didn't decline the office of emperor. In both cases [the hermits and the emperors] were united in having no intentionality.

Thus Wu Nengzi concludes this chapter on a very Confucian note, even to the point of accepting the official Confucian model heroes Yao and Shun and the Duke of Zhou. Taking away all intentionality and all illusions about trying to rule for the benefit of the people, he seems to be saying, might sometimes allow not just for serving in government but, in the end, even for ruling in ways that would benefit oneself and others, although only if one does not have the desire or intention to benefit people at the outset.

If this conclusion is valid, then one might obviously ask if anything at all is left of Wu Nengzi's anarchism. After all, the minimal definition of anarchism offered at the outset of this book is that the state is unnecessary, harmful, and dangerous. Though some Western anarchists, most famously Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, at some points accepted service in the state, perhaps for tactical or limited reasons, as also, for example, some of the anarchists who cooperated with the Republican side in the Spanish civil war, most modern anarchists would point out the obvious contradictions even for tactical or temporary compromises with the state, since the main anarchist principle is that the state's very nature as a monopolistic operation will eventually lead it to dominate other interests, including those of class, interest group, gender, or ethnicity. If there is something in even the radical side of philosophical Daoism that would excuse state service, then it would seem the possibilities for Daoist anarchism are severely compromised, to say the least.

[10] Hsiao, *History of Chinese Political Thought I*, 260.

[11] Zarrow, 10, 262, n. 23.

[12] Hoston, 159.

More Narrow Problem: Is All Daoism Nihilism?

As we saw in earlier chapters, at other times in preimperial and early imperial China, individuals justified or excused service in the state using Daoist principles. If we can find some common shift in language or rhetoric among those who used Daoist terms to justify rule, perhaps we can determine whether those thinkers who remained ostensibly loyal to the anarchistic side of Daoist thought shared a common flaw or whether those who accommodated themselves to rule introduced changes in Daoist thought not shared by radical Daoist thinkers, and perhaps not shared in the original Daoist texts such as the *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*. To review what we found in earlier chapters, the three most important times earlier in Chinese history when thinkers used Daoism to justify or acquiesce in rule included the early years of the former Han dynasty (ca. 202 BCE–9 CE), the first generation of the revival of philosophical Daoism at the end of the later Han dynasty (ca. 220 CE), and the third generation of neo-Daoists at the beginning of the Wei-Jin period (ca. 220– 300's CE).

In the early Han dynasty, intellectuals were casting around for a suitable legitimating ideology of rule for the Han leaders, given that the previously prevailing ideology of Legalism had been discredited by the harsh rule of the Qin dynasty that the Han had recently overthrown. For a relatively short time, Daoism seemed to gain ascendancy at the Han court. The basic argument of these court Daoists was that the Han regime ruled lightly, with less harsh taxes and less need for military repression compared to the Qin and so could be said to be like the ideal ruler in the received *DDJ* who is unseen and unfelt by the people. This use of concepts in the *DDJ* to justify rule perhaps came from what is known as the "Huang-Lao" tradition, which combined the mythical Yellow emperor with a deified Lao Zi (the legendary author of the *DDJ*). Most famously, in one of the silk manuscripts unearthed near the village of Mawangdui in Hunan province in 1973 from a tomb that had been sealed in 168 BCE,[13] the author argues that a ruler in touch with the *dao*, or the Way, should be able to know what is needed and how to get others to accept his rule:

> Therefore only Sages are able to discern [the *dao*] in the Formless,
> And hear it in the Soundless.
>
> And knowing the reality of its emptiness,
> They can become totally empty,
> And then be absorbed in the purses essence of
> Heaven-and-Earth.
>
> Absorbed and merged without any gaps,
> Pervasive and united without filling it up.
>
> Fully to acquiesce to this Way:
>
> This is called 'being able to be purified.'
> The lucid are inherently able to discern the ultimate.
>
> They know what others are unable to know,
> And acquiesce to what others are unable to attain.

[13] For an account of the discovery of this manuscript, see Wm. Theodore deBary and Irene Bloom (trans. and compilers), *Sources of Chinese Tradition, vol. 1: From Earliest Times to 1600,* 241–2.

This is called 'discerning the normative and knowing the ultimate.'
If sage kings make use of this, All-under-Heaven will acquiesce.

...

One who is truly able to be without desires
Can give commands to the people.

If the one above truly acts without striving
Then all living things will be completely at peace.[14]

The first change one can discern in early Han Daoism from ideas in the received *DDJ* and the *Zhuangzi*, texts that were used by later Wei-Jin Daoist anarchists to deny the need for all rule, is the Han thinkers' confidence that the *dao* can be known and interpreted by the sages or even one sage–ruler and applied to others. The second, related shift concerns the blowing up of the concepts of nothingness (*wu*) and the emptiness or void at the heart of the universe.

The most famous version of this Daoist justification of rule in the early Han, we saw in Chapter 1, was the text known as the *Huainanzi*, which was presented to the future Han emperor Wu (r.141–187 CE) in 139 BCE as a preferred method of rule that would help justify his regime. The authors of this text continue to use the principle of non-action or doing nothing (*wuwei*) found in the *DDJ* but now interpret it not as calling for anarchy, but as favoring a ruler in touch with the *dao* who rules by emptying his mind and limiting his and his subjects' desires.[15] Roger Ames argues, however, that in practice the authors of this text were trying to subvert rule and get the king to rule in a less overbearing manner and thus continue to be influenced by the anarchist side of Daoism.[16] We asked above whether an anarchist-influenced observer would instead conclude that these intellectuals' attempt to soften Han rule was in practice overwhelmed by their participation in aiding the state's legitimation.

In any case, it is the shift toward the belief in one or a few sages knowing how to interpret the *dao* for others based on a *dao* that is equated with nothingness that allows for the justification of rule.

In the end, of course, the state eventually abandoned most claims to follow Daoist principles when the Han dynasty gradually had to rule more directly and forcefully as more officials and their families became tax exempt, public works needed to be repaired, and armies replenished to fight nomadic invaders and internal rebels. As a result, the Han eventually turned to a new synthesis of Confucian doctrines as its main legitimating ideology.

The second major period when philosophical Daoism was put in the service of rule was in the early Wei-Jin period (ca. 220 BCE–62 CE). As we saw in the first chapter, at this time, after the fall of the later Han dynasty and the beginning of a long period of political disunity in imperial China, some of the intellectual figures around the legendary general Cao Cao (155–220), who was seeking ways to legitimate his rule as the leader of a would-be new imperial Wei dynasty, returned to the received *DDJ* to try to find ways to justify his rule.

The Daoist-influenced intellectuals serving him also returned to the idea of *wu* or nothingness as the main principle of Daoism. According to this version, all things in the universe come

[14] Translated in deBary and Bloom, 254–5.

[15] In their introduction to Liu An, King of Huainan, *The Huainanzi*, 27–32, the translators discuss the differing views of scholars (including the translators themselves) as to whether the text should be considered Daoist or some kind of eclectic mix. In either case, the text certainly contains and adapts Daoist themes related to governance.

[16] Ames, *The Art of Rulership*, 46, 148.

not from an underlying unity in the world but from nothing. All actions should be carried out according to a principle of spontaneity (*ziran*), but for these Daoist advisors there was nothing wrong in principle with the idea of rule. Thus Cao Cao's rise from a person of low birth to that of possible emperor was the rise of a ruler coming "out of nowhere." Cao Cao's apologists used this version of philosophical Daoism against the rival Sima clan, who came from the higher class of land-owning gentry and whose preferred ideology of rule lay in the Confucian doctrine of the time known as *mingjiao*, or "teaching of names."[17] Against this doctrine, the apologists for Cao Cao used Daoism to provide an ideological justification for a new type of government based on people "arising out of nowhere" based on their ability, especially in military campaigns, instead of the *mingjiao* praise for rulers with family connections within the old aristocracy. Thus, Richard Mather argues, these Wei official intellectuals emphasized Daoist concepts of "'naturalness' [*ziran*] and 'non-actuality' [*wu*]" against "the [Confucian] shibboleths of the old aristocracy concerning 'goodness and morality,' [*ren-yi*] 'loyalty and filial submission' [*zhong-xiao*] …" not in order to call for anarchism, but instead to justify Cao Cao's rule.[18]

As we noted in the first chapter, Daoism was only one of many philosophical strands picked up by Cao Cao's coterie, who also borrowed concepts from Legalism and even Confucianism to justify his rule. In this synthesis, some intellectuals claimed that Confucius was a better sage than Lao Zi as in the following exchange from the biography of the noted Wei philosopher Wang Bi (226–249):

> [As Pei Hui asked Wang] "Nothing (*wu*) is, in truth what the myriad things depend on for existence, yet the sage (Confucius) was unwilling to talk about it, while Master Lao expounded upon it endlessly. Why is that?" Wang Bi replied, "the sage embodied nothing (*wu*), so he also knew that it could not be explained in words. Thus he did not talk about it. Master Lao, by contrast, operated on a level of being (*you*). That is why he constantly discussed nothingness; he had to, for what he said about it always fell short."[19]

This elevation of Confucius above Lao Zi by the neo-Daoist intellectuals around Cao Cao mirrors their elevation of sages who rule over those who refuse to participate in rule, reversing the praise of the latter type of sages found most famously in the *Zhuangzi* that the full-fledged Daoist anarchists Ruan Ji and Bao Jingyan had copied.

We saw in Chapter 1 that only after the Wei rulers were overthrown by the Sima clan, who founded the Jin dynasty, did some of the descendants of the Wei intellectuals turn philosophical Daoism into a doctrine opposing all rule, as reflected in the ideas of the poet Ruan Ji and the thinker Bao Jingyan. But as the Jin dynasty itself broke down into infighting among royal princes and as northern nomadic groups moved into northern China and the political situation became even more chaotic at the end of the Wei-Jin era of the Six Dynasties period (220–589), Daoist-influenced intellectuals and members of the upper classes turned neo-Daoism once again into a nihilistic doctrine. As Balazs puts it, What had been, with men [of the second generation of anti-statist neo- Daoists] a high state of tension that was part of a serious effort to transcend

[17] See Balazs, 234–5.

[18] Mather, "The Controversy over Conformity and Naturalness," 161, 163.

[19] In the *Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms*, translated in de Bary and Bloom, 385.

human limitations, relapsed into mere abandonment of the ordinary decencies of life. The frenzied attempt at emancipation had turned into wanton frivolity, the cry of cynical revolt to cynical acceptance, liberty to libertinage.[20]

Men of this third generation of neo-Daoists once again began to justify government service as being in line with *ziran* or spontaneity, based again on the idea of *wu* or nothingness as the basis of the *dao*.

What all three prior instances of Daoist anarchism turning into nihilism share then, is the emphasis on the universe as based on nothing and the idea of the superior ability of properly detached sages to realize this and to interpret principles for others without getting sullied or corrupted by rule. Of course Wu Nengzi shares at least the former belief, and implicitly the latter in his claim that the truly enlightened sage knows when serving in government is folly and when it is permissible. The shift in emphasis in all these instances was literally from everything to nothing, that is, from the belief in an overarching unity of the universe that cannot be objectively known and applied by some to rule over others to the idea that everything that seemingly exists comes from nothing and thus that there were no a priori principles that would make all rule illegitimate. The shift in all instances was also from the idea of rejecting all participation in government as inherently corrupting to the idea that the wisest people with the coolest attitude of detachment could have the superior knowledge and ability to allow them to acquiesce in rule, or even to rule over others themselves, without being corrupted.

The flaw then, is not in the Daoist principle of *wuwei* itself but in the denial of any preexisting overarching principle underlying the unity of existence and equality of all things. What is also missing from those Daoists who justified rule and service in government is any true belief in human equality and freedom for all, not just for superior sages, despite the talk of favoring all equally in *Wunengzi* Book 1, Chapter 5 that we examined above.

Larger Problem: Is Postmodern Anarchism Nihilism?

The larger problem presented by the breakdown of Daoist anarchism in the thought of Wu Nengzi into passive nihilism is the lesson for postmodernist thought, especially those postmodernists who call themselves anarchists.

Anarchists up to the postmodernist period would reject the classic conservative critique that by denying the existence of preexisting standards of morality, all anarchism is nihilism in the end. This conservative stance is perhaps most cogently summarized by Fyodor Dostoevsky's claim that "once God is abolished, anything is possible" and in his denunciation of early Russian revolutionaries as immoral nihilists too easily duped by power hungry would-be supermen, such as Sergei Nechaev, the associate of Michael Bakunin and the basis for the character of Pyotr Verkhovesky in Dostoevsky's novel *The Devils*.[21] Classic anarchists, most notably Peter Kropotkin, are more easily able to reject this critique in their claim that there is a natural un-

[20] Balazs, 247.

[21] The title of this novel has also been translated as *The Possessed* and more recently, by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky as *Demons*, who note in their foreword, vii–viii, that Dostoevsky based the character of Verkhovensky on Nechaev and his actions in the actual murder of the fellow revolutionary Sergei Ivanov.

derlying morality of humans based on human evolution, a morality that existed prior to the establishment of organized religion and the state.[22]

Many postmodernist thinkers, on the other hand, would seem more open to the organic conservative critique to the extent that they accept the premise that all "meta-narratives" meant to explain the world and give people a guide to action are inherently just constructions of new forms of domination that stand in the way of liberatory goals. While they claim to deny any overarching "meta-narrative" as valid for all other people, one must ask whether postmodernist anarchists reserve for themselves the right to be critical of all other narratives while preserving their own ideas as something other than a true narrative. Even if they claim their own approach is not a meta-narrative but only a stance of "ironic detachment," then one could argue that this stance too easily smacks of intellectual superiority.

While they clearly remain within the tradition of classical anarchists who viewed all religious and political doctrines as attempts to enslave people with metaphysical or real authority, one must ask whether postmodernist anarchists go further to deny the existence of all truth, even truth that cannot be known objectively or imposed on others. If so, as asked by many critics about postmodernism, how is one to criticize any political doctrine or state as evil, even fascist states? This charge was most famously and, perhaps for postmodernists, most infuriatingly raised by Richard Wolin who examines the collaborationist and even fascist background of some of the seminal postmodernist thinkers in order to expose flaws in postmodernist thought as a whole.[23] While those who want to find a genuine liberatory critique in postmodernism may decry his attack as relying almost completely on guilt by association, perhaps it is too easy for postmodernist anarchists to make this charge and ignore the need for serious self-examination. It seems obvious to this author that the move among Daoist thinkers such as Wu Nengzi from pacifist anarchism to passive nihilism was based on a similar shift in emphasis from the nonexistence of hierarchical distinctions to the nonexistence of everything.

This charge of nihilism against postmodernist and/or "lifestyle" anarchists who think their intellectual stance alone will serve to achieve anarchism may be the opposite side of the coin of those who find Daoist anarchism a mystical doctrine that relies on a supernatural authority and is thus inherently un-anarchist, a view of Daoism with which this author obviously strongly disagrees.[24] Even if Daoists believe in the existence of an overarching, undifferentiated whole, they would deny that one can objectively reconstruct that whole for others. More dangerous, a Daoist anarchist would argue, is any doctrine based on the idea that some may know objective truths better than other people and thus also when to apply those truths on behalf of others, which may too easily lead to would-be anarchists acquiescing and even participating in establishing authority over fellow humans. Only by embracing the whole, not denying its existence, a Daoist

[22] Kropotkin expressed this idea of a naturally existing human morality most famously in his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* and also in his unfinished but posthumously published work, *Ethics: Origin and Development.*

[23] See Wolin, *The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism from Nietsche to Postmodernism.*

[24] A charge made against Daoism by Janet Biehl, an associate of Murray Bookchin and the Social Ecology school, in exchanges with this author on the Research on Anarchism (RA-L) listserv. Biehl's charge against Daoism as a "supernatural" or "mystical" authority was in her "Re: Comment on Bookchin," Part 2, September 30, 1998, and "Reply to Rapp," Parts 1 and 2, October 22, 1998, which no longer seem to be in the RA-L archives; this author's original post on October 2, 1998 and his rejoinder to Biehl's critique on October 28, 1998 can be found at www.zpub.com/notes/JohnRapp.html and www.zpub.com/notes/JohnRapp.html respectively. Though both posts contain a rather unrefined view of the split between religious and philosophical Daoism, the main point that one does not have to take a "mystical" interpretation of the classical Daoist texts as appealing to "supernatural authority" still applies.

anarchist would argue—that is, by accepting the underlying unity and thus equality of all things, even if by its very nature that whole cannot be hierarchically organized—can one stay loyal to a fully anarchist vision.

Nevertheless, perhaps given the difficulty radical Daoists faced in order to survive and publish their works, not to mention the degradation of radical Daoist ideas in works such as the *Wunengzi*, the idea of Daoist anarchists as passive escapists survived in Chinese culture to the point that, as we will see in the next chapter, most participants in the twentieth-century Chinese anarchist movement declined to accept Daoist anarchism as a worthy predecessor.

Interlude

5. The twentieth-century Chinese anarchist movement

It might seem odd for a book on Chinese anarchism to devote only one chapter to the early twentieth-century anarchist movement in China, which began separately at the turn of the last century among Chinese student groups in Tokyo and Paris, respectively, and continued in China itself after the 1911 revolution until it was gradually eclipsed by Marxist–Leninism in the 1920s. First, given the rather extensive scholarship on this movement both in and outside of China,[1] and second, the limited relationship of that movement to either premodern Daoist anarchism or to the dissident Marxists whose critique will be labeled "neo-anarchist" in later chapters, that early twentieth-century movement lies largely outside the scope of this book, with two different but notable exceptions that are the focus of this chapter.

For the most part the early twentieth-century Chinese anarchists adopted the themes of their European and American counterparts, especially concerning the need for a social revolution to overthrow the capitalist state and to establish social and economic equality within an industrial, modern, but communal society, also to be accomplished through establishing experiments such as work–study movements where people would combine intellectual work with manual labor. The modern Chinese anarchists also, of course, proclaimed what this book terms as the minimal essence of the anarchist critique—the idea that the state is harmful and unnecessary and rules for itself when it can. As with their Western counterparts, however, the Chinese anarchists were often contradictory on this point when they called for coercive, violent revolution and when many of them ended up acquiescing one way or the other to state authority in their later careers. For Chinese anarchists as for anarchists in other countries, this work argues, it is their departure from the minimal essence of the anarchist critique that made it easier for people who continued to identify as anarchists to cooperate eventually with various types of state authority. The two different issues within the modern Chinese anarchist movement that we need to examine also highlight this departure from the basic anarchist critique.

First we need to examine why there was such a limited influence from traditional Chinese anti-statist ideas, including especially Daoism, on the modern Chinese anarchist movement. Did the negative attitude of most members of that movement toward Daoism really reveal limits or weaknesses in Daoist anarchism—especially whether it was truly opposed to all state authority—or instead did their attitude reflect biases related to modern faith in "scientific" socialism that

[1] For a large, if necessarily still limited selection of the voluminous PRC studies of the Chinese anarchist movement, see Rapp, "Chinese Works on Anarchism in the People's Republic of China, 1949–2010," in Ruth Kinna (ed.), *The Continuum Companion to Anarchism*. The leading English language monographs on the twentieth century Chinese anarchist movement consulted in this brief overview include Robert A. Scalapino and George T. Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement*; Peter Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture*; Arif Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*; Edward Krebs, *Shifu: Soul of Chinese Anarchism*; and Yang Fang-yen, "Nation, People, Anarchy: Liu Shih-p'ei and the Crisis of Order in Modern China." Another comprehensive Western language source (German) is Gotelind Müller, *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus.*

itself may reveal too much faith in authority even among self-styled anarchists? Second, we need to examine the debates between anarchists and Marxist–Leninists that broke out in China in the 1920s, both in order to understand the possible negative lessons Mao Zedong drew from those debates, which we will examine further in the next chapter, and to understand why Marxist dissidents in the PRC, even when they utilized what we will label in the last two chapters as "neo-anarchist" critiques of the state, had to take pains to disassociate themselves from anarchism (even if at points, as we will see in the last two chapters, they did acknowledge a similarity or even debt to anarchism).

Looking Back: Daoism and the Early Twentieth-Century Chinese Anarchist Movement

Most of the early twentieth-century Chinese anarchists, even if they acknowledged the "anarchist impulse" in the DDJ and the *Zhuangzi*, nevertheless viewed Daoism, with its emphasis on *wuwei* (which they took to mean inaction) as a prescientific, escapist philosophy of individual transcendence that provided little to no guide for revolutionary action. As Li Shizeng, a leader of the Chinese anarchists studying in Paris in the first decade of the twentieth century, put it, Anarchism advocates radical activism. It is the diametrical opposition of quietist nonaction. Anarchism does not only advocate that imperial power does not reach the self, it also seeks to make sure that it does not reach anyone else.[2]

Furthermore, though Li did accept that Daoism had some commonalities with anarchism, nevertheless, given that the ancient Daoists did not have the benefit of modern scientific advances, he believed that, … naturally what [Lao Zi and other ancient sages] had to say is not fully relevant to events that are occurring several thousand years later …[3]

Likewise, for Wu Zhihui, another leader of the Paris group, all traditional thought and religion, though perhaps valuable in their day, have been made worthless as a result of modern evolution. Against those who would find transcendental ideas of selflessness and fraternity in traditional Christian and Buddhist values that could be used to reform society, Wu responded, Selflessness and fraternity are the natural virtues of humankind and the seeds of world evolution … [Now that the world is] relatively civilized, most people believe in good morality and so agree on selflessness and fraternity.

The beliefs of ancient people have nothing in common with those of today.

The anarchists have no need to yield one iota.[4]

Similarly, Shifu—the influential leader of the anarchist movement in China itself from the time of the 1911 revolution until his death in 1915—despite his own influence from Buddhist practices "vigorously denied" any connection of Daoism and Buddhism to anarchism.[5]

The chief exception to this negative view of Daoism among the early twentieth-century anarchists was Liu Shipei, the leader of the Chinese anarchists in Tokyo from 1907 until 1910. Given his later career, however, by his negative example he may serve as the exception who proves

[2] Zhen (pseudonym for Li Shizeng), "Da Chee shi" (Response to Mr. Chee), 2, cited in Dirlik, 111–12.

[3] Ibid., 10, cited in Zarrow, 181.

[4] Wu Zhihui, "Tuigang renshu yi yi shijie guan" (Extending the Way of Humanity to Cure the World), 148, cited in Zarrow, 164.

[5] Krebs, 255, n. 27.

the rule about the lack of influence of Daoism on twentieth-century Chinese anarchists, or even perhaps as the person who by his negative example led other anarchists to reject Daoism as true anarchism. Liu began his career as a rather typical Confucian scholar and would-be bureaucrat who continued to admire Confucian and Daoist thinkers for their supposed ideals of laissez-faire government even after he became an anti-Manchu nationalist revolutionary after 1903 and an anarchist after 1907. In the poems he wrote between 1902 and 1906 just before moving to Tokyo, Liu took up Buddhist and Daoist themes of the transience and emptiness of the material world and the need to transcend the self and attain oneness with the cosmos.[6] During his anarchist period, Liu expressed his view that Lao Zi was the father of Chinese anarchism and that ancient Chinese society was inherently anarchistic, since it was supposedly mostly free of central state control due to the influence of the "noninterference" policy of both Daoism and Confucianism. In addition, he also pointed to the ancient Chinese advocates of an egalitarian agrarian utopia such as Xiu Xing to say that China had its own libertarian socialist tradition.[7]

During his anarchist period Liu rediscovered the Daoist anarchist tract of Bao Jingyan, whom Liu viewed as an anti-militarist who called for the destruction of the whole principle of rulership and who attacked the distinction between rich and poor, thus for Liu showing that Daoism had anarcho-communist and not just philosophical anarchist roots.[8]

While seemingly providing more evidence for the point of the first part of this book concerning the anarchist nature of Daoism, the lesson that many scholars of anarchism and anarchist sympathizers may draw from the direction Liu took in his later career is that of the weaknesses and contradictions of any modern anarchism based on Daoist and other premodern philosophies. In 1908, Liu returned to China, where he turned very conservative, supporting the late, decaying Qing dynasty regime that he had previously so opposed, even serving under the Qing official Duan Feng as he moved from one post to the other, including in Sichuan province where Duan suppressed republican revolutionaries in late 1911. After the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, Liu served under the warlord Yan Xishan and through him came to support and join the government of Yuan Shikai, the former Qing dynasty general who extracted the reward of being named president of the republic as the price for going over to the republican side but who nevertheless started to move toward declaring himself the emperor of a new dynasty in his last years in office. After Yuan's death in 1915 Liu returned to the purely academic realm where he was mostly apolitical, though he did take part in a journal that opposed the prevailing New Culture era radicalism up till his death in 1919.[9]

Even before his return to his conservative roots, Liu was more in sympathy with the anti-materialist, anti-urban egalitarian ideals of Tolstoy than with the pro-science (if not scientistic) attitudes of the Paris anarchists,[10] though he was never a total primitivist and did think the future anarchist society could achieve a high economic–technological level.[11] Nevertheless, beginning in his anarchist period, Liu's anti-capitalist and egalitarian beliefs led to an "ambivalent attitude" that laid the seeds of a conservative utopianism opposed to Western modernity based on

[6] Chang Hao, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis*, 167–70, cited in Yang, 270.

[7] Liu Shipei (under pseud. Shenshu), "Renlei junli shuo" (On the Equal Ability of Human Beings), 375–83, cited in Yang, 291, and Dirlik, 101–2.

[8] Liu, "Baosheng xueshu fawei" (The Subtleties of Master Bao's Scholarship), cited in Zarrow, 166–7.

[9] Yang, 296–300.

[10] Zarrow, 95–6; Dirlik, 102–3.

[11] Yang, 287.

economic–industrial technological development if that modernity meant the growth of socioeconomic inequality and modern bureaucratic government. Once he lost hope for the possibility for immediate revolution, he believed that China's past agrarian ideal, even if it was very backward economically, was preferable to Western "material civilization."[12] As the historian Yang Fang-yen cogently summarizes, In Liu's pleas for anarchist utopia, his agrarian nostalgia was wrapped up in the apologetic rhetoric of the "advantage of backwardness" and transposed into a defense of China's pioneering role in the world anarchist revolution.

In his advocacy of "preserving the old," by contrast, this nostalgia reasserted itself as a reactionary but no less utopian attempt to return to the past.[13]

Once he lost faith in the immanence of social revolution in China, a critic of Daoism as anarchism could argue, Liu's Daoist–Buddhist beliefs helped him to justify a shift from anarchism to a nihilistic acceptance of the state and even to a willingness to accept political office, similar to the path Wu Nengzi took nearly a 1,000 years previously. In sum, Liu's path from anarchism to reactionary monarchism would seem to seriously discredit Daoist anarchism, or at the very least, to undermine the anarchist cause in providing fodder for its critics and enemies.

Indeed, the seminal Chinese Marxist and early CCP leader Chen Duxiu in his debates with the anarchists in the early 1920s did not hesitate to attack anarchism "as a reflection of intellectual and behavioral habits rooted in Daoism." As Edward Krebs summarizes Chen's argument, anarchism fostered a lazy and undisciplined sort of free thinking … which had as its chief cause the "nihilist thought and laissez attitude" of Daoism.

As a result, the anarchism so popular among [Chinese] youth "is certainly not a thoroughly western anarchism," but rather "a revival of the principles of Laozi and Zhuang Zi, a Chinese-style anarchism."[14]

For Chen, the passive Daoist "irresponsible individualism" of these self-labeled "Chinese-style anarchists" led to lazy, dissipated, unlawful, libertine behavior that would only result in people "taking vows, going mad, and committing suicide."[15] Chen charged that those "Chinese-style anarchists" who opposed centralized state authority as not fitting China's national character were only too similar to Yuan Shikai and other strongmen who called for a new type of government fitting the Chinese national character, and thus anarchists would only help China achieve such reactionary authoritarian rule.

---

[12] Ibid., 311–12, 320–1. Overall, Yang carries out the most penetrating analysis of Liu's "conservative turn" and how it was prefigured in his anarchism. See Yang, 294–341.

[13] Ibid., 312–13. Jing Meijiu, the "sole personal link" between Liu Shipei's Tokyo group of Chinese anarchists and later anarchists in China proper during the early Republican period, and who would become a prominent anarchist writer and editor in the 1920s, in a 1912 lecture, perhaps influenced by Liu Shipei, expressed sympathy for "utopian counter traditions" in China's past that pointed to an egalitarian agrarian ideal, and at one point even contemplated writing a short book (a project evidently never realized) that would "synthesize anarchism and the theories of Lao Zi." For Jing's link to Liu Shipei's group, see Gotelind Müller and Gregor Benton, "Esperanto," 107; for Jing's unrealized project on Lao Zi, see his "Zuian" (Account of Crimes) in *Xinhai geming ziliao leipian* (Collection of Materials on the 1911 Revolution), 74, cited in Dirlik, 119–20. In the supplement *Xuehui* (Sea of Learning) to the newspaper *Guofengribao* (National Customs Daily) that Jing edited in the 1920s, the pseudonymous author Wuxu wrote one other article that referred to ancient precursors of anarchism, titled "Zhongguo gudai wuzhengfu zhuyi chao zhi yipie" (A Brief Look at Anarchist Currents in Ancient China), an article this author has been unable to locate but which is cited in Muller and Benton, "Esperanto," and in Muller, 491, n. 3.

[14] Chen, "Zhongguo shide wuzhengfu zhuyi" (Chinese-Style Anarchism), *Xin Qingnian* (New Youth) 9(1) (May 1921): 5–6, as summarized in Krebs, *Shifu,* 177; also see Zarrow, 226.

[15] Ibid., 177–8; also as summarized in Zarrow, 226.

The "nihilists" among the Chinese anarchists, Chen contended, were only "low grade anarchists" with no principles at all, who included "parliamentarians, bureaucrats, opium addicts, jailers, thieves, and charlatans."[16] Since, in response, Western-influenced Chinese anarchists were quick to deny that they were passive nihilists and escapists and that anarchism was quite capable of organizing and leading a mass movement to build a modern society, they felt the need to distance themselves from Daoism.[17]

As we have seen throughout the previous chapters, by no means does all Daoist anarchism have to lead to individualist nihilism or escapism. Only when such Daoist-influenced thinkers came to reject the existence of a unified whole, we concluded, did they fall prey to nihilism and acquiescence with state power, as in the second and third generations of *qingtan* intellectuals at the end of the Han dynasty and Wu Nengzi during the chaos of the mid-ninth century CE. Certainly in the current "post-modernist" age where faith in the ability of science and technology to solve all of the world's problems has reached a low ebb, one does not have to automatically denigrate premodern political thought as obsolescent or irrelevant. Within the argument presented in the first part of this book, one could attribute Liu's conservative turn not to his Daoist anarchism per se but to his own lack of confidence in Daoist principles of a spontaneous order underlying the whole.

Furthermore, all kinds of anarchists could and did take the path of collaborating with various authoritarian governments, including even modern Chinese anarchists who rejected Daoism and claimed to embrace materialism and modern science, such as Wu Zhihui, who ended up joining the Guomindang (Nationalist Party) government. It would be all too easy to join other Chinese anarchists and denounce such actions as opportunist and hypocritical, but in fact some anarchists often may take such actions out of a failure to recognize that the key point of anarchism is its view of state autonomy. Wu Zhihui seemed to have greatly valued his own experience in France on a work-study program and agreed to work with the Guomindang to the extent that it would back his schemes for expanding such programs in the future.[18] In other words, he may have valued modern anarchism's stress on socioeconomic equality over its critique of the state, thereby gradually opening himself up to the path of acquiescence to state power. Despite any such sincere and/or principled reasons for compromise with authority, Chinese anarchists who acquiesced to various types of authoritarian rule, including especially anyone who claimed inspiration from Daoism such as Liu Shipei, helped Chen's argument and ultimately served to discredit anarchism in China, even if there was accommodationist behavior on all sides, including among some Chinese Marxists who, like many political actors, were certainly not immune to self-serving authoritarian actions. Of course the anarchists were quick to respond to criticism from Chen and other Marxists, which led to rather vigorous debates between the two types of revolutionaries in the early 1920s, debates we now examine.

[16] Chen, "Xiapin de wuzhengfudang" (Inferior-grade Anarchists), 119–21, as summarized in Zarrow, 227; also cited in Krebs, *Shifu*, 177–8.

[17] For example, see [Li] Feigan, "Wuzhengfu zhuyi yu shiji wenti" (Anarchism and Practical Problems), reprinted in Ge Maochun et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliaoxuan* (Selection of Materials on Anarchist Thought), 830–8.

[18] For the move of some Chinese anarchists to the Guomindang and to the right in general, see Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, Chapter 7, "Revolution that Never Was: Anarchism in the Guomindang," 248–85; Zarrow, 196–208, and Ming K. Chan and Arif Dirlik, *Schools into Fields and Factories: Anarchists, the Guomindang, and the Labor University in Shanghai, 1927–1932.*

Looking Ahead: The Debates Between Anarchists and Marxists in the 1920s

It is important to examine these debates, not only in order to understand Mao's possible negative influence from anarchism that we will examine in Chapter 6, but also in order to see why anarchism became such a pejorative label in the PRC, which will help provide the background for the denunciations of anarchism in the PRC examined in Chapter 7 and to see why Chinese Marxist thinkers using what this book will term "neo-anarchist" critiques of the state had to take pains to try to protect themselves from being denounced as anarchists, as we will see in Chapter 8 and 9. This debate also relates directly to this book's prime contention of the minimal essence of anarchism. After all, the Chinese anarchist response to Marxist–Leninism, when that rival doctrine entered China in the years following the Bolshevik revolution, followed the anarchist critique of Marxism elsewhere, which since the days of Bakunin has focused primarily on the main anarchist critique of the state.

The first Chinese anarchist to criticize Marxism in print seems to have been Huang Lingshuang, who wrote an article criticizing Marxism in 1919, before its Leninist variant entered China.[19] Though praising Marx for some of his economic theories, he criticized him heavily on other grounds, most especially for the limits of his theory of the state. For Huang, not just the capitalist state, but any state "is organized solely for the protection of the privileges and property of the few," while the tyranny of the Marxist state in particular, following Kropotkin, if "endow[ed] with even more power such as control of the land, mines, railways, banks, insurance" will be even harsher and will provide no guarantee of a new Napoleon on Yuan Shikai arising.[20]

The main debate between the rival anarchist and Marxist camps began in late 1920 and early 1921, around the time of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and for the most part remained civil in tone since there were still many anarchist or anarchist-influenced activists in the CCP ranks and both sides still had some hope of cooperation in organizing workers in the cities. First in secret criticism of anarchists in the new CCP journal the *Communist* (*Gongchandang*), writers argued that Communism was superior both in carrying out class struggle through centralized organization and in economic production through a centralist (*jizhong*) approach. Without the use of state power, another writer argued, through a dictatorship of laborers it would be impossible to create socialism in a backward society such as China as well as to defend socialism against its enemies.[21]

The open part of the debate began with a lecture that the CCP cofounder Chen Duxiu gave during his visit to the southern city of Guangzhou in January 1921, reprinted in the joint anarchist–Marxist journal *The Guangzhou Masses* (*Guangzhou Qunbao*) that then printed replies from Chen's former student, the anarchist Ou Shengbai. *Voice of the People* (*Minsheng*)—Shifu's anarchist newspaper that was revived by his followers after his death—reprinted Ou's part of the debate, and the whole exchange was reprinted in the national magazine *New Youth* (*Xin Qing-*

[19] Huang, "Makesi xueshuo de piping" (A Critique of Marxist Theory), reprinted in Gao Jun et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfui zhuyi zai Zhongguo* (Anarchism in China), 295– 300. A partial translation of this essay can be found in Graham, *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas I*: 355–7.

[20] Translated in Graham, 356; also see Krebs, "The Chinese Anarchist Critique of Bolshevism during the 1920s," in Roger B. Jeans (ed.), *Roads Not Taken: The Struggle of Opposition Parties in Twentieth Century China*, 207.

[21] For the internal communist criticism of anarchism, see Dirlik, 207–14.

nian) in August of the same year. Ou tried to revive the debate in 1922 when he sent an essay from abroad to an anarchist publication in China.[22]

While rather restrained in tone as each side was still trying to convince the other to come to its side, the heart of this first part of the Marxist–anarchist debate in China was over the issue of individual freedom versus group life and whether or not coercion was a necessary part of social existence. Chen argued that given its stress on individual freedom and voluntary compliance, anarchism fundamentally lacked the capacity both to wage revolution successfully and to maintain power after the revolution. "Except for the individual who escapes from society, there is no absolute freedom [*jiedui ziyou*] and no capacity to put anarchism into practice."[23] Based on the success of the Bolshevik revolution, Chen argued that organized, centralized power was needed to overthrow imperialism, while anarchist reliance upon separate, atomized units of undisciplined men could not advance the revolution. Even if somehow anarchists could set up Kropotkin-style free federations of communes instead of Lenin's dictatorship of the proletariat, the capitalists would soon mount a comeback, thus, to Chen, explaining why anarchists were considered the good friends of capitalism.[24] Anarchists were too optimistic about human nature and too pessimistic about all things political, and since some men were evil and reactionary and even good people could not be reached by education in the capitalist era, rule by virtue and education alone were unrealistic.[25] Trying to rely on the public will as found in town hall-style meetings and voluntary associations would not work given the emotionalism of ignorant masses in the current corrupt, backward conditions of the Chinese people.[26] Anarchism would also not be capable of building a modern economy but was based on romanticized notions of individualism and anti-industrial society that would return humans to primitivism and tribalism instead of building large-scale industry, for which centralized organization and control were necessary.[27]

Ou's response was that anarchism was not based on rampant individualism but instead on voluntary association (*lianhe*) through free contracts in which there would be an organic relationship between individual and society, where a more flexible "public will" (*gongyi*) would help the group function, as opposed to coercive and unchanging public laws. Anarcho-communists in fact were not opposed to group life; instead they only opposed the despotism of the group over the individual.[28] As Ou put it, showing great influence from Kropotkin, We depend on society for our survival and the individual is a member of society; thus in order to pursue individual liberty, we should first pursue society's liberty …

---

[22] The original exchanges between Chen and Ou were republished in "Taolun wuzhengfu zhuyi," *Xin Qingnian*, 9(4) (August 1921) and reprinted again in Editorial Department, Xinqingnianshe (New Youth Society), *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji* (Collection of Discussions on Socialism), 97–154. Ou's last rejoinder, "Da Chen Duxiu junde yiwen" (Responding to Chen Duxiu's Doubts) was published in *Xuehui* (Sea of Learning) (Feb. 1923) and reprinted in Ge Maochun, Jiang Jun, and Li Xingzhi (eds), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliao xuan* (Selection of Materials on Anarchist Thought), 2: 658. English language summaries of the Chen-Ou debate can be found in Krebs, *Shifu*, 175–8; "The Chinese Anarchist Critique of Bolshevism," 209–13, Zarrow, 228–9; Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 213–19; *The Origins of Chinese Communism*, 234–45; and Scalapino and Yu, 55–9.

[23] Chen, "Taolun wuzhengfu zhuyi," 5, translated in Zarrow, 229.

[24] Chen, "Speaking on Politics," in *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji*, 1–16, as summarized in Scalapino and Yu, 55–6.

[25] Chen, "Criticism of Socialism," in *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji*, 74–96, and "Another Answer by Chen Duxiu to Ou Shengbai," in *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji*, 119.

[26] Ibid., 125, and "Chen Duxiu's Third Reply to Ou Shengbai," in *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji*., 137–8.

[27] Ibid., 140–1, also cited in Zarrow, 229.

[28] Ou, in *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji*, 97–101, cited in Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 215.

The individual liberty that ignores the common good is not liberty but rather the enemy of liberty.[29]

Anarchists were not against violence in order to achieve revolution, Ou argued, but were only against institutionalized power and law that would inevitably result in new types of oppression. As opposed to free contract between individuals, rule by law only aided the interests of the ruling class and failed to prevent officials from robbing the people.[30] Though there was much ignorance in modern society due to capitalism, with scientific progress the dominance of emotionalism would fade and people would become more rational in time.[31] Ou did accept that certain "reactionary individuals" who did not respond to sincere argument could be controlled with ostracism or banishment from the community, the "same way we treat capitalists,"[32] a response that allowed Chen to reply that "public will" could be more akin to the despotism of the tribe over the individual in primitive society and to argue that contracts were in effect just another type of law that would be ineffective and meaningless without the backing of more clearly defined "abstract laws." Ou's allowing for some form of social coercion of the individual opened him up to Chen's rebuttal and perhaps shows the problem that critics of anarchism see in the social coercion that would remain in anarchist society. Despite this weakness, Ou did employ the main anarchist theory of the state to criticize Marxist socialism as "state collectivism." In this system, "with the state as the owner of the means of production and the workers as its laborers," "… the bureaucrats are the masters, the workers their slaves. Even though they advocate a state of the dictatorship of the workers, the rulers are bureaucrats who do not labor, while workers are the sole producers."[33]

Other anarchists in *Minsheng* also responded to Chen's critique within the basic anarchist theory of the state by arguing that when Marxists justified advocating a "people's dictatorship" in place of voluntary association supposedly because "human nature is not developed to its fullest" they demonstrate a "great contradiction,"[34] which presumably refers to the classic problem of how to control the controllers if all people cannot be trusted. These *Minsheng* writers were in effect raising the question of what would stop the growth of a new state elite ruling for itself once one accepts the need for "temporary" dictatorship. The *Minsheng* writers also took issue with the stress on class alone as the basis for revolution, noting that state authorities often used the power of religion in past eras and nationalism in the contemporary era as ways to get the masses to fight each other.[35] Another *Minsheng* writer argued that the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat was so vague that it lost all meaning. It would make as much sense as to call for all women of the world to unite to overthrow the rule of men and replace it with a dictatorship of women. "If you say this is a ridiculous approach, the Marxist method is the same except that what it proposes is even more remote … what we must remember is that if we wish to save society from

[29] Ou, in "Taolun wuzhengfu zhuyi," 7, quoted in Zarrow, 229.

[30] "Ou Shengbai's Answer to Chen Duxiu," in *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji*, 118, and "Another Reply to Chen Duxiu," in *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji*, 127–8.

[31] Ibid., 119.

[32] Ou, "Taolun wuzhengfu zhuyi," 18, quoted in Zarrow, 229.

[33] Ou, "Da Chen Duxiu junde yiwen" (Answering Mr. Chen Duxiu's Doubts), *Xuehui* (Feb. 1923), reprinted in Ge Maochun et al. (eds), 658, translated in Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 224.

[34] "Gao feinan wuzhengfu zhuyizhe" (Response to the Critics of Anarchism), and "Wuzhengfu gongchan pai yu jichan pai zhi qidian" (The Differences between Anarchist Communism and the Collectivists), *Minsheng* (Voice of the People), 30 (March 1921), cited in Krebs, *Shifu*, 178–9.

[35] Ibid.

perishing, we cannot use methods that are doomed!"[36] Again, this "doomed" method presumably refers to the basic anarchist idea of the state as a parasite on society that will destroy its host and thus itself in the long run.

As Arif Dirlik notes, the main differences in the Chen–Ou debate were that Chen "believed that individual rights must be sacrificed to the interests of the group" and that the revolution had to be achieved through coercion, while Ou believed that the revolution could be achieved through education and that to use coercion would "nip in its bud the promise of a good society." In what in retrospect was obviously a very ill omen for the future, Chen argued that while laborers should have the right to strike under capitalism, since all production was for the equal benefit of all members of society in communist society there would be no need to strike as that would be the equivalent of workers striking against themselves.[37] This belief goes to the heart of the Marxist failure to see the difference between state and society after the revolution, where the state indeed could act against the interests of the proletariat. This failure in turn reveals why the twentieth-century Chinese anarchists, like their anarchist compatriots elsewhere, distrusted the Marxist–Leninist emphasis on economic class alone as the basis for revolution.

The debate became more heated after 1922 when, influenced by Emma Goldman, many Chinese anarchists—some of whom had met her and/or corresponded with her personally and most of whom were aware of her writings criticizing Bolshevism after her departure from the Soviet Union— stepped up their criticism of their Marxist rivals. Chinese anarchists were also influenced by criticisms of the Bolshevik revolution by Peter Kropotkin's widow and by the Georgian anarchist and associate of Kropotkin Varlaam Cherkezov, from whom they learned of the suppression of the anarchists in the Soviet Union and especially of the brutal suppression of the Kronstadt uprising, knowledge which sharpened their polemics and focused their criticism more on the Marxist–Leninist concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat.[38] In addition, the alliance of the young CCP with the Nationalists, which began in 1923 and was formalized in the "First United Front," gave anarchists ammunition to attack "Bolshevism" in China.

Some Chinese anarchists, following Ou Shengbai's earlier argument, attacked Bolsehvik socialism as "state collectivism" that would not achieve true communism but only replace individual capitalist ownership with state ownership. Others, following Cherkezov, attacked the "Jacobinist" tradition within Marxist socialism that similarly failed to break with the methods of bourgeois politics that Lenin revived.[39]

The Chinese anarchists' biggest complaint about Soviet-style socialism was over the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Huang Lingshuang, in a letter from the United States published in 1923, noted that Kropotkin's widow had told him of Kropotkin's view before his death

[36] Krebs, 179, citing "'Jieji zhangzheng' he 'pingmin zhuangzheng' guo shiyong yu shehui geming ma?" (Are "Class Warfare" and "People's Dictatorship" Appropriate in Social Revolution?), *Minsheng*, 33 (July 1921): 5; reprinted in Ge Maochun, et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang*, 2: 587–90; also cited in Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese* Revolution, 228.

[37] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 217, and *The Origins of Chinese Communism*, 241, citing Chen in *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji*, 149–51.

[38] For the later part of the anarchist-Marxist debates in China, see Zarrow, 225–6, Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution,* 220–36, Krebs, *Shifu*, 185–8; "The Chinese Anarchist Critique," 214–17. Dirlik (220, 224–30) notes at length the influence of Cherkezov on the Chinese anarchists in the early to mid-1920s. One article published at the end of the decade showing such influence was by the novelist Ba Jin under his given name [Li] Feigan, "Makesi zhuyi pipan Chaierkaisuofu zuo" (Criticism of Marxism in the Works of Cherkezov).

[39] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 225–6.

that Bolshevism was not true socialism since true socialism could not be built upon centralized state power, reinforcing Huang's conclusion that the "'dictatorship of the proletariat' was only a mask for a dictatorship of intellectuals in the Communist party."[40]

Similarly, another Chinese anarchist writer debating the leader of the Chinese communist students in Paris and future PRC Premier, Zhou Enlai, argued that the dictatorship of the proletariat, given the centralized method of organization of Marxist–Leninism, was in reality nothing but "a dictatorship of leaders of the Communist party."[41] As the Sichuan anarchist Lu Jianbo summarized the argument, "facts tell us: the inner lining of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the dictatorship of a single party—the Leninist party. The Soviets have already been captured by bureaucratic socialists."[42]

Another young Sichuan anarchist, writing under his given name [Li] Feigan, who was to translate several classic works of Western anarchism into Chinese and who would become a world famous novelist under his pen name Ba Jin (formed from parts of the transliterated names of Bakunin and Kropotkin), continued Jianbo's critique of the Marxist concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat in one of several articles he himself wrote and which were critical of Bolshevism. Ba Jin took up the core anarchist argument that one group can never rule in the name of another. As he wrote, the bourgeoisie toppled the feudal regime and seized political power, after which this nearly created an autocratic system [*ducaizhi*] controlled by a minority of the bourgeoisie. If it were truly the case that a dictatorship [*zhuanzheng*] of a minority of the bourgeoisie could represent the interests of the collective bourgeoisie, how come within the bourgeoisie there still occur incidents of struggle for political power? For this reason Marx's [dictatorship of the] proletariat is no different from what he calls the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. That is to say, it's a minority dictatorship. A true dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible to create. Truly, what the Russians have done [quoting Jianbo] is to hang out "the sign of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the substance is still a dictatorship by a minority of Communists. The real workers still live in the state of slavery. The interests of the proletariat cannot be represented by the Communist Party …" … Therefore [Jianbo] says that the Communists really are nothing more than a so-called bourgeoisie and that which the Communists call a proletariat are nothing more than a slight mutation on the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

As Ba summarized his own argument, if we recognize that one class oppressing another class is not correct and that this is sufficient to harm the happiness of humanity and impede humanity's progress, then we ought to oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie used their political authority to oppress the proletariat and that was wrong, but should the proletariat rise up and oppress the bourgeoisie and commit the same offense? "If a majority of people direct a minority of people then they themselves become perpetrators of violence; they themselves become oppressors [and] they negate other people's rights." These are the words of A[lbert] Parsons, who was from the Chicago workers' movement, which he said in court [in his trial for the Haymarket bombings].

---

[40] Dirlik, 222–3, citing Huang, "Lingshuang zhi mojun han" (A Letter from Lingshuang), in *Chunlei yuekan* (Spring Thunder Monthly), 110, 113.

[41] Sanbo (pseudonym), "Iguo gongchan zhuyi shibaizhi yuanyin jiqi buqiude fangfa" (The Failure of Communism in Russia and the Way to Salvage It), reprinted in Ge Maochun et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfuzhui sixiang*, 2: 598, cited in Dirlik, 223.

[42] [Lu] Jianbo, "Lun wuchan jieji zhuanzheng" (On the Dictatorship of the Proletariat), 1, cited in Dirlik, 223.

… The social revolution of the proletariat is a revolution liberating the proletariat. It's a revolution that topples control of people by others. Now if in the first step you seize political power, then you become one who controls other people and you put yourself in the position of one who ought to be overthrown. Would one then have the gall to come forward and work for revolution?[43]

In other words, following Bakunin's criticism of Marx, Ba here implies that the workers in the post-revolutionary State would quickly become ex-workers who would betray the revolution.[44] As we will see in Chapter 7, Ba Jin, who remained in China after the communist revolution, would later suffer several rounds of denunciation up to 1949 for his loyalty to the cause of anarchism.

The early twentieth-century Chinese anarchist movement, like the anarchist movement internationally, started to lose out to the communists in the later 1920s and 1930s not only due to its famous problems in organization, which the Chinese anarchists increasingly bemoaned themselves, but also due to its failure to make peace with nationalism and the desire of most Chinese revolutionaries to build up a strong modern economy, which many at the time identified with centralized, hierarchical organization. Nevertheless, given its earlier dominance over Marxism among radical intellectuals and trade union activists up to the 1920s, the Chinese anarchist movement would have profound effect on the Chinese communist movement, many of whose members were originally anarchists, including Mao Zedong himself, as we will see in the next chapter. Most importantly, the anarchist critique of the state, especially in its Leninist form, would continue to haunt and taunt the Chinese communists after 1949. In what could serve both as a companion to Bao Jingyan's denunciation of the tyrannical crimes of rulers divorced from the common people and as a prediction of the bloody course of communism in the PRC after 1949, one Chinese anarchist writing in 1923 argued that the Bolshevik emphasis on seizing political power led, … those who consider themselves extraordinary in a period of brutality to arouse the ignorant masses to do battle for them; and when the struggle is over, they use the educated to devise a set of laws to bind the people, and train police and soldiers to massacre them. Ah! Power, power! People who have died cruel deaths throughout history, and the poor with their existence as beasts of burden, all have received your labor![45]

Thus, even at the moment it started to lose out to the communists, the Chinese anarchist movement expressed most clearly the most powerful part of the anarchist idea, the fear that the state, even in a revolutionary movement whose original goal was to liberate the people, would inevitably start to rule for itself and thereby to oppress the people.

[43] Li Feigan (Ba Jin), "Zailun wuchan jieji zhuanzheng" (Further Discussion of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat), 1–2, translated for this chapter by Daniel Youd; also cited in Dirlik, 222–3. See also, John Rapp and Daniel Youd (guest eds), "Ba Jin and the Anarchist-Marxist Debates in China" (forthcoming), which will include four of Ba Jin's articles written in the 1920s critical of Marxism and two articles from the PRC criticizing his anarchism.

[44] Bakunin, *Statism and Anarchy* (1873), reprinted in Dolgoff, *Bakunin on Anarchy*, 330–1.

[45] A An (pseudonym for Anarchist A?), "Wo suo xinyang de geming" (The Revolution I Believe In), *Wuyi yuekan*, reprinted in Gao Jun et al., *Wuzhengfu zhuyi zai Zhongguo*, translated in Krebs, "The Chinese Anarchist Critique," 215.

Part Two: Maoism and Anarchism

6. Maoism and anarchism: An analysis of Mao Zedong's response to the anarchist critique of Marxism

Introduction

This chapter examines the possible influence of the basic anarchist critique of the state on the political thought and ruling practice of Mao Zedong. First, we will try to construct the best case possible for the populist, anti-statist Mao, including the argument that his early flirtation with anarchism left a lasting influence on his supposed attempt in his late years to prevent the emergence of a "new class" of power holders in the socialist state. Next, after delineating the inadequacies of this new class argument, we will try to construct an opposite case, which attempts to show the roots of Mao's autocratic practice in the statist, authoritarian side of his ideology that led to his ultimate failure to answer the anarchist critique of Marxism.

With the extensive revelations of the horrors of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, few people today would any longer seriously consider Mao Zedong to be any kind of quasi-anarchist. Nevertheless, more than 35 years after Mao's death, views on the nature of the thought and rule of Mao Zedong are still diametrically opposed, both in China and the West. The difficulty in evaluating Mao's rule lies in the now seemingly blatant contradiction between Mao's words and deeds from 1949 until 1976. Thus, many Western observers in the late 1960s and 1970s, and even including some into the 1990s, viewed Mao as a genuine social revolutionary or perhaps a kind of semi-populist democrat. Such observers insist that whatever the failures of the Cultural Revolution in practice, given the ineglaitarian trend of the Deng Xiaoping years, the scholarly community should take seriously Mao's rhetoric about supporting mass rule, opposing the rise of a "new class" in the state, and favoring poor rural sectors over urban areas.[1]

The defenders of Mao ask why, if Mao were the autocrat that his modern critics claim, he spent so much time fighting the bureaucrats and other officials of his own regime and why he used such populist and even, at times, anti-statist rhetoric. Mao's critics answer that the actual policies Mao tried to implement in fact led to widening gaps between elites and masses and to a highly repressive and murderous form of rule. In fact, one of the trends in China scholarship in the last 20 years is to view Mao—indeed, the whole Chinese Leninist regime itself—within the paradigm of neo-traditional or neo-feudal rule. Under such a view the PRC is often seen as little more than the continuation or restoration of imperial autocracy, and thus Mao himself as more like emperors of old than a true social revolutionary.[2] Mao's defenders might reply that the case

[1] For example, see Kalpana Misra, *From Post-Maoism to Post-Marxism: The Erosion of Official Ideology in Deng's China*, *passim*.

[2] For the most prominent and recent versions of this view, see Harrison E. Salisbury, *The New Emperors: China in the Era of Mao and Deng*, and most spectacularly, Mao's personal physician, Li Zhisui, in his *The Private Life of*

for Mao as autocrat ignores many aspects of Mao's thought and ruling practice that point in the direction of Mao as being a radical revolutionary. Below then, we first summarize these points in the case for the anti-statist Mao before refuting them and constructing the Mao as autocrat case, in both instances focusing on the relationship between Mao and anarchism. In the end, we will find that Mao could not accept the basic anarchist premise that the state rules for itself and thus that it cannot be checked from within.

Purported Anti-Statist Elements in the Maoist Critique: Influence of rural origins

The anti-statist case would begin with Mao's origins from a rich Hunan peasant family, origins that aided him in analyzing rural life in China and perhaps influenced his "heretical" ideas of the possibilities for peasant-based revolution from the late 1920s on, ideas that he argued against more Soviet-educated and urban-oriented Party cadres. Mao claimed the peasants were less corrupted by capitalism and were more susceptible to being reeducated with revolutionary ideas. He felt that an alliance of poor and middle peasants was capable of pushing for a genuine social revolution that would overthrow the "four systems of authority" in the countryside, which besides "state, clan, and theocratic" authority, included the patriarchal authority of husbands over wives.[3]

Though it is true that after taking power Mao did rely on Soviet advice and "White area" and urban-oriented cadres in the early 1950s to support a Stalinist crash course of heavy industrialization through the establishment of a central planning apparatus, from the mid 1950s on, those seeing Mao as a genuine egalitarian socialist would claim that he returned to his roots in favoring rapid collectivization of agriculture and in rhetoric opposing a rural– urban gap. As early as the rural cooperativization movement of 1953, the rapid collectivization drive of 1955, and especially the People's Communes of the late 1950s, the anti-elitist case would point out that Mao tried to carry out a true social revolution in the countryside supposedly quite different from Stalin's violent, forced collectivization of the 1930s.

Mao's supposed opposition to harsh punishment

Though he revised his utopian faith in the peasants in the ensuing decades, the "mass line" policies of the Yanan era of the 1930s and 1940s still emphasized uniting with the majority against the minority. As part of this policy, the case for the egalitarian side of Mao might emphasize his constant injunction to minimize harsh punishment, if of course within his oft-noted injunction that revolution is not a dinner party but "an act of violence whereby one class overthrows another." Carrying over this officially lenient policy into the 1950s, especially during the "Hundred Flowers" movement of 1956, when it came to counterrevolution outside the Party, Mao argued,

---

Chairman Mao. Another scholar who combines a view of Mao as similar to imperial rulers with the view of him as a genuine social revolutionary is Stuart Schram, who uses the metaphor of "modernizing despot." See Schram, "Mao Zedong a Hundred Years on: The Legacy of a Ruler," 125–43. Finally, see Andrew and Rapp, *Autocracy and China's Rebel Founding Emperors*, *passim*, which compares Mao with Zhu Yuanzhang, the founder of the Ming dynasty.

[3] Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works of Chairman Mao* I: 21–59, especially 45–9.

… we must make fewer arrests and carry out fewer executions … But we should not declare that we shall never execute anyone. We cannot abolish the death penalty.

Nevertheless, when it came to "suppressing counter-revolutionaries" within the Party-state, Mao emphasized, We must keep up the policy which we started in Yenan: "no executions and few arrests." There are some whom we do not execute, not because they have done nothing to deserve death, but because killing them would bring no advantage, whereas sparing their lives would. What harm is there in not executing people? Those amenable to labor reform should go and do labor reform, so that rubbish can be transformed into something useful. Besides, people's heads are not like leeks. When you cut them off, they will not grow again. If you cut off a head wrongly, there is no way of rectifying the mistake even if you wanted to.[4]

Mao on "Continuing the Revolution" against corrupt officials

Perhaps the largest influence of his early anarchist roots on his later career, the anti-elitist case for Mao would emphasize, was his view of the need for a "continuing revolution" even after the establishment of socialism. In the late 1950s, Mao began to argue that class contradictions existed even after the socialist revolution and that class struggle would have to be emphasized for some time to come in the transition to communism. Mao's ideas went through a transition from belief in the essential dying out of class struggle, to a view of remaining basically non-antagonistic contradictions, and finally, to severe and clearly antagonistic contradictions surviving under socialism—the latter first clearly appearing in 1962.[5]

This location of class struggle as the "key link" or primary contradiction led to Mao's insistence that the "bourgeoisie" still existed as a major force after the socialist revolution, and furthermore, that it would try to find support and refuge in the Party-state apparatus itself. Eventually Mao termed this group the "forces inside the party pursuing the capitalist road." Mao claimed that these people derived their base of support from bourgeois remnants of the old society as well as "new bourgeois" elements that had sprung up within socialist society based on remaining inequalities, the inevitable side-effects of an epoch when distribution according to work was still practiced.[6]

As part of this critique, Mao had very harsh words to say about high officials, as in the following statement during the Cultural Revolution:

> They are conceited, complacent, and they aimlessly discuss politics. They do not grasp their work; they are subjective and one-sided; they are careless; they do not listen to people; they are truculent and arbitrary; they force others, they do not care about reality; they maintain blind control. This is authoritarian bureaucracy.

[4] Mao, "On the Ten Great Relationships" (April 25, 1956), Translated in Stuart Schram, *Chairman Mao Talks to the People: Talks and Letters: 1956–1971*, 61– 83.

[5] Mao, "Comment at the Working Conference of the Central Committee at Beidaihe" (August 6, 1962), 28, and "Speech at the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the CCP" (September 24, 1962), in Mao, *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui!* (Long Live the Thought of Chairman Mao!), (1969): 430–6, translated in *Chinese Law and Government*, 1(4) (Winter 1968–9): 85– 93.

[6] Mao, "Some Problems Currently Arising in the Course of the Rural Socialist Education Movement" ("The Twenty-three Articles"), translated in Richard Baum and Frederick Teiwes, *Ssu-ch'ing: The Socialist Education Movement 1962–66*, 118–26.

> Their bureaucratic attitude is immense; they cannot have any direction; they are egotistic; they beat their gongs to blaze the way; they cause people to become afraid just by looking at them; they repeatedly hurl all kinds of abuse at people; their work style is crude; they do not treat people equally.
>
> This is the bureaucracy of the overlords…
>
> They seek pleasure and fear hardships; they engage in back door deals; one person becomes an official and the entire family benefits; one person reaches nirvana and all his close associates rise up to heaven; there are parties and gifts and presents … This is the bureaucracy for the exceptional.[7]

In the mid-1960s, Mao called for continuing struggle against corrupt bureaucrats even after the triumph of the socialist revolution. The "continuing revolution" against this surviving class contradiction (which, again, Mao defined more often as an antagonistic one during the 1960s) became the cornerstone of Mao's mature thought and the basis for launching the Cultural Revolution. Those who see this doctrine as inherently anti-elitist would link Mao's view of corrupt and bureaucratic "new bourgeois" urban elements not just to his early anarchism but to his roots in the rural-based revolution of the 1930s when Mao's line of surrounding the cities from the countryside and the "mass line" of learning from the peasants was first formulated.

Mao's proposed remedies for the dangerous situation created by these "bourgeois elements" who had come to power in the early 1960s included calls for workers and peasants to engage in mass criticism against people in authority,[8] self-criticism of the offenders,[9] sending down all Party and state cadres to the countryside to engage in manual labor and learn from the masses,[10] and worker and peasant "participation" in running the economy.[11] Of course, actual peasant and worker involvement in workplace management and policy making was never stressed heavily by Mao.[12]

Above all, Mao and his followers called for an ideological reeducation of masses through inculcation of revolutionary ideas, most especially through intensive study of his own writings. These writings, along with his own unofficial remarks from the Great Leap Forward (1958–60) to the Cultural Revolution, seemed to stress the need for organs of mass action to fight the growth of inequality in the socialist revolution. Again, in these writings Mao seemed to hark back to the "mass line" of the Yanan days and to call for decentralization of authority away from the Party-state in Beijing and the provinces toward more direct control by workers and peasants. Though ultimately disappointed in the generation of "revolutionary successors" for the violent havoc

[7] Mao, "Chairman Mao Discusses Twenty Manifestations of Bureaucracy," 40–3, cited in Richard Kraus, *Classes and Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism*, 74; also translated in Andrew and Rapp, 231–4.

[8] Mao, "Draft Resolution of the Central Committee of the CCP on Some Problems in the Current Rural Work" ("The First Ten Points") (May 20, 1963), in Mao, *Mao Zedong zhuzo uandu* (Selected Readings from the Writings of Mao Zedong), translated in Baum and Teiwes, *Ssu-ch'ing*, 65.

[9] Mao, "Comment on Criticism and Self-criticism," *People's Daily* (December 22, 1967), cited in Jerome Ch'en, *Mao Papers*, 150.

[10] Mao, "Draft Resolution of the Central Committee of the CCP," translated in Baum and Teiwes, *Ssu-ch'ing*, 65.

[11] Mao, "Constitution of the Anshan Iron and Steel Company" (January 22, 1960), reprinted in *Beijing Review*, 13(16) (April 17, 1960): 3.

[12] As noted, for example, by John Bryan Starr, *Continuing the Revolution: The Political Thought of Mao*, 161–2; and Andrew Nathan, *Chinese Democracy*, xii.

they wreaked in the Cultural Revolution, he still expressed hopes for a continuing revolution every 10 years or so that would prevent the growth of bureacratism.[13]

Possible positive influence of anarchism on Mao's "Anti-Statism"

Such an anti-elitist picture of Mao might stress his early influence from the anti-statist ideas of anarchism—until 1919 the leading socialist movement among the working class and avant garde intellectuals.[14] Arif Dirlik suggests that anarchism had a much wider influence on the May 4th Movement than scholars had previously accepted, citing PRC scholarship to support his case.[15] Peter Zarrow has drawn the most explicit comparison between Maoism and anarchism, especially related to Mao's thought in the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution.[16] Other sources point out that anarchism retained much influence in study groups, cooperative ventures, and trade unions well after 1920, as was certainly the case in Hunan, among circles with which the young Mao was associated.[17] Clearly, Mao's knowledge of both Marxism and anarchism was not very sophisticated in his early years; nevertheless, he did stress the anarchist idea of the importance of founding small unions of mixed classes of ordinary people at the grass roots level and building larger confederations from the bottom up,[18] an idea directly opposite to the Marxist (not to mention Mao's later Leninist) notion of conquest of central political power. Whether or not Kropotkin's idea of "mutual aid" (*huzhu*) as the cornerstone of a true social revolution was the direct linguistic source for the "mutual aid teams" of Yanan and the early 1950s,[19] one could posit a continuing influence on Mao and other former anarchists among the Chinese Communists

[13] For example, see Mao, "Letter to Jiang Qing," partially translated in *China News Analysis* (Hong Kong): 907 (1966): 7.

[14] In his famous Yanan interview of 1935, Mao admitted to Edgar Snow that he had read many anarchist pamphlets in late 1918 and "favored many of its [anarchism's] proposals." See Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China*, 152. Other sources claim that Mao was in fact an anarchist or worked in anarchist organizations in late 1919 and early 1920 when he even considered founding an anarchist society and called himself an anarchist to his friends. See Robert Payne, *Mao Tse-tung, Ruler of Red China*, 55 and Maurice Meisner, *Mao Zedong: A Political and Intellectual Portrait*, 14–16. Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, 53, states that at this time Mao read books by Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Tolstoy, while by Angus McDonald's count nearly half the books in Mao's Changsha bookstore were anarchist tracts. See McDonald, *The Urban Origins of the Rural Revolution: Elites and Masses in Hunan Province, China, 1911–1927*, 129.

[15] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 30–2, 148–96, 294–304. In his discussion of the relation of anarchism and Maoism in this work, perhaps influenced by anarchism, Dirlik emphasizes more the authoritarian reality of Maoism as opposed to its anti-statist rhetoric (e.g. 299–300) than he does in his other works on Chinese Marxism, which to this author tend to overrate Mao's supposed egalitarianism and underplay the despotic aspects of his rule. Also see n. 66. Likewise, Maurice Meisner in his later works, including *Mao Zedong*, though still praising Mao for laying the groundwork for later socioeconomic progress, does conclude that beginning with the Great Leap Forward, Mao's later years amounted to political tyranny. See Meisner, *Mao Zedong*, Epilogue, 193–7.

For this author's critiques of Dirlik and Meisner for downplaying Mao's tyranny in their earlier studies, including Dirlik and Maurice Meisner (eds), *Marxism and the Chinese Experience*, see Rapp, Review of four books on Chinese Marxism, *Theory and Society*, 21(4) (August 1992): 599–609 and Rapp, Review of Cheng (ed.), *Marxism and Capitalism in the People's Republic of China*, 821–2.

[16] Zarrow, 232–7.

[17] McDonald, 134–5.

[18] Mao, "The Great Union of the Popular Masses" (1919) in Mao, *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings 1912–1949* I: *The Pre-Marxist Period, 1912– 1920*, 378–89.

[19] Schram, in his *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 20–1, notes that the original edition of Li Rui's biography of Mao, *Mao Zedong tongzhi di chu qi geming huodong* (Comrade Mao Zedong's Early Revolutionary Activities), edited out the striking paragraph of Mao's 1919 article cited in the previous note, which praised Kropotkin's ideal of mutual aid

of anarchism's extreme populist doctrines of linking industry and agriculture, especially in the People's Communes of the Great Leap Forward.[20]

Germaine Hoston sums up best the case for an anarchist influence on Mao and the CCP, as follows:

> … the CCP sought to establish a state power that would engineer revolutionary change in Chinese society and to develop methods of leadership that would prevent that power from being institutionalized as the same sort of bureaucratic, intellectual, elite leadership remote from China's millions of common people that had characterized previous Chinese states.
>
> … In practice, Mao's solution to the national question issued … in the triumph of statism, but it must be recognized that in both its theoretical formulation and in aspects of its actual practice it was highly anarchistic.[21]

Thus perhaps the case for an anarchist-influenced Mao would emphasize that it was precisely in his doctrine of the "continuing revolution" that Mao attempted to integrate criticism of a new elite in the socialist state into Marxist theory.

The possibility of "vested interest groups" arising in the transition period, at least partially based on a "new bureaucratic class" in socialist society, would follow more from his anarchist intellectual roots than from his Marxism.[22] The continuing of class struggle after the socialist revolution, possibly even into unknown future communist stages of development, and the need for periodic shake-ups of power holders by the masses would then represent Mao's answer to the anarchist question first posed by Bakunin to Marx of how to prevent the rise of a new and worse ruling class in the "workers' state."[23]

Even though this latter point seems to make the case most directly for Mao as anti-elitist based on his influence from anarchist doctrines, we will return later in this chapter to the anarchist critique of Marxism to find an opposite meaning from this anti-statist interpretation of Mao's thought. But to sum up the case for the anti-statist Mao, what Hoston, Dirlik, and others are suggesting is that given Mao's direct knowledge and influence from anarchism, perhaps he also could have inherited at this time the anarchist critique of the Marxist theory of the state. This could have occurred even as Mao began to turn away from anarchism in the early 1920s, since in that time he could not fail to hear the disputes between anarchists and communists that we examined in the previous chapter. While these debates probably firmed up Mao's increasingly negative view of anarchism, at the same time they could have forced him to deal with the serious anarchist criticisms of the inherent despotism embedded in Marxist–Leninist theory.

(*huzhu*) as more progressive than Marx's doctrines of violent revolution. Also see Brantly Womack, *The Foundations of Mao Zedong's Political Thought 1917–1935*, 17–21, and McDonald, 104–5.

[20] Dirlik, *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 296.

[21] Hoston, *The State, Identity, and the National Question in China and Japan*, 363, 364. As we will see below, Hoston recognizes not just the supposedly anti-statist side of Mao but also the flaws in his anarchist tendencies. As she puts it, "… Mao's solution to the problem of limiting party and state power was at once anarchistic and potentially authoritarian" (395). Even this recognition overstates Mao's anarchism, as we will argue below, and underestimates the degree to which Mao's authoritarian side was dominant.

[22] Zarrow, 234–7; Womack, 27, 211, n. 81.

[23] Bakunin, quoted in Dolgoff, 325–38.

Before we turn to the opposite case for Mao as autocrat, we must examine one last point in favor of an anarchist-influenced Mao. Ironically, this point would utilize the criticism aimed at the radical Maoist leaders of the Cultural Revolution that occurred very shortly after Mao's death, criticism based on the 1920s anarchist-Marxist debates. As we will see in the next chapter, late in 1976 and into 1977, the Chinese Communist regime under Hua Guofeng criticized the coterie of Mao's personal followers, including Mao's wife Jiang Qing, who wanted to maintain the doctrine of the Continuing Revolution as the heart of Mao's late thought. In a double irony, this criticism of Mao's followers was carried out in a Maoist-style mass campaign orchestrated by the party-controlled media. Using a supposed quote of Mao, the Cultural Revolution leaders were criticized as the "Gang of Four," who, among other evil deeds, supposedly pushed anarchist ideas in order to subvert the socialist revolution.

In one example of this part of the campaign, Engels' famous anti-anarchist tract, "On Authority" was cited to equate the Gang of Four with Bakunin as people who waved the anti-authority banner in reality only to seize power for themselves:

> Like Bakunin, the "Gang of Four," while desperately trumpeting anarchism, also went all out to establish their own counter-revolutionary "authority." Bakunin resorted to all intrigues and conspiracies to oppose Marxism and split the first International, but in the end he went down in disgraceful defeat. The "Gang of Four" picked up Bakunin's rotten stuff, stirred up anarchism over a long time, opposed the revolutionary authority of the proletariat, and split our Party.[24]

Obviously, to those who want to see a genuine anti-authoritarian spirit in the Maoism of the Cultural Revolution, this criticism of radical Maoists as anarchists by a regime that at the same time was bringing back bureaucrats purged in the Cultural Revolution and that gradually moved away from Mao's Cultural Revolution policies of attacking the "new bourgeoisie in the Party" would only seem to prove the point that Mao had a genuine anti-statist or quasi-anarchist side. This is nowhere more true for such defenders of Mao than in his supposed argument criticizing a "new class" in authority in the socialist state, one which had to be struggled against in a "continuing revolution" against authority. Thus, before turning to the case for Mao as autocrat, we must first examine and refute the argument that Mao adopted the anarchist critique in order to oppose a "new class" based on state power alone.

Mao and the "New Class"

Even if his policies failed to improve the lives of his subjects, and even if his proposed solution in the end failed to stem state despotism, some defenders of Mao would still contend that his theory of the socialist state, perhaps influenced by anarchism, was *intended* as a counterweight to the elitist tendencies in Marxism. Such analysts would point to his criticism of the increasing

[24] Hsu K'o-ch'eng (Xu Kocheng), " 'On Authority'—A Classical Document Criticizing Anarchism," *Tianjin Shiyuan Xuebao* (Tianjin Normal College Journal) 2, translated in American Consulate General, Hong Kong, *Selections from People's Republic of China Magazines*, 77(926) (May 23, 1977): 6. As we will see in the next chapter, the best study of PRC denunciations of anarchism up to the late 1970s is that of William Joseph, *The Critique of Ultra-Leftism in China*. See especially pages 128–44, 159–61, and 189–90 for his summary of attacks on anarchism in China during the later phases of the Cultural Revolution, especially in 1971–2 and 1976.

bureaucratism of state cadres, whom Mao's defenders claim he referred to as a "new class" and thus demonstrate his populist leanings in theory.[25]

In fact, however, Mao himself stopped well short of a genuine "new class" argument, terming the corrupt "new bourgeoisie" a "privileged stratum" or a "vested interest group."[26] Thus, he always saw the enemy to be struggled against as either composed of the remnants of old bourgeois classes or as "new elements" based on the necessary evil of remaining income and other inequalities, not as a new elite based on unchecked state power. His attitude was similar not to anarcho-communist critiques of Marxism, but to the way the traditional Chinese autocrats such as the Ming founder Zhu Yuanzhang opposed corrupt bureaucrats not for building up an all-powerful state apparatus, but because their activities tended to restrict the emperor's personal control.[27]

In sum, despite what some scholars claim, Mao never truly posited the existence of a "new class" in terms similar to Djilas, that is, a class based on political control, not private ownership, as other scholars have more recently concluded.[28] Indeed, the defenders of Mao, aside from citing each other to back up their comparison of Mao to Djilas, rely on very thin evidence from Mao himself. They often use parts of quotations of Mao on the "new class" in socialist society while downplaying or glossing over other phrases in the same work (or even the same sentence) that clearly call this a "new bourgeoisie."[29]

One of the main works these scholars rely on for their comparison of Mao to Djilas is the September 13, 1963 *People's Daily* and *Red Flag* joint editorial "Is Yugoslavia a Socialist Country?"[30] This editorial, apart from the question of Mao's authorship, clearly criticizes the managers of factories in Tito's Yugoslavia as part of the "new bureaucrat comprador *bourgeoisie*" (emphasis added). The label of "bourgeoisie" could of course have a changed meaning; however, far from referring to a political class monopolizing privileges and power that would demand democratic controls on the state in response, the editorial links this new class to "capitalist" reforms that "abandoned unified economic planning by the state" and departed from Leninist orthodoxy man-

[25] For the clearest statement of Mao's supposed "new class" argument, see Maurice Meisner, "Marx, Mao, and Deng on the Division of Labor in History," in Dirlik and Meisner (eds), *Marxism and the Chinese* Experience, 79–116, especially 101–2. In his later work, *Mao Zedong*, Meisner does moderate his earlier argument, recognizing that Mao "conflated the terms 'bureaucratic class' and 'bourgeoisie'" (173), and, "as the Cultural Revolution approached … realizing the political implications of the notion, drew back from publicly characterizing China's bureaucrats as a new class" (174).

[26] Mao, "Reading Notes on the Soviet Text, *Political Economy*," original text 1961–2, reprinted in Mao, *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui!* , translated in Moss Roberts (trans.), *A Critique of Soviet Economics*, 63, 71.

[27] See Andrew and Rapp, Part I, *passim*.

[28] For examples of other scholars who make this crucial point, see Andrew Nathan, *Chinese Democracy*, 73–4; Jonathan Unger, "Whither China?: Yang Xiguang, Red Capitalists, and the Social Turmoil of the Cultural Revolution," *Modern China*, 17(1) (January 1991): 25; Andrew Walder, "Cultural Revolution Radicalism: Variations on a Stalinist Theme," Chapter 3 of William A. Joseph, Christine Wong, and David Zweig (eds), *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution*, 52, 54; Svetozar Stojanovic, "Marxism and Democracy: The Ruling Class or the Dominant Class?" *Praxis International*, 1(2) (July 1981), 160–70; and Schram, *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 182–4.

[29] See Stephen Andors, "Mao and Marx: A Comment," in "Symposium on Mao and Marxism," *Modern China*, 3(4) (1977): 432–3; Joseph Esherick, "On the 'Restoration of Capitalism': Mao and Marxist Theory," in "Symposium on Mao and Marxism," 64–5; and Young "Mao Zedong and the Class Struggle in Socialist Society," 56–61; 77, n. 120 and 121.

[30] *People's Daily* (26 September, 1963), reprinted in *Peking Review*, 6(39) (September 26, 1963): 14–27; also translated in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*, and in Mao (uncertain authorship), *The Great Debate*, 110–44).

dating the "socialist planned economy."[31] Tito's policies were criticized not for increasing the autonomy of the state but for "abolishing" the "monopoly of foreign trade by the state," specifically insisted upon by Stalin himself.[32] By looking back to the Stalinist era in Yugoslavia before 1948 as the period of true socialism and rule by the dictatorship of the proletariat and by clearly labeling Yugoslavia a "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie" based on the "restoration of capitalism,"[33] the editorial clearly stops short of a critique of a "new class" based on new bureaucratic power alone. In other words, Mao (or leading Maoists in the propaganda apparatus) criticized Yugoslavia in 1963 for being insufficiently centralized on the Stalinist model, not for insufficient democratic checks on state authority or for an uncontrolled bureaucracy.

Another important text cited by scholars attempting to equate Mao and Djilas on the new class is the 1964 polemical article "On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World" also published under the names of the Editorial Departments of *People's Daily* and *Red Flag*, and especially the section "The Soviet Privileged Stratum and the Revisionist Khrushchev Clique."[34] Nearly identically with the article on Yugoslavia, however, this editorial's condemnation of the "privileged stratum" also clearly links "bureaucrats alienated from the masses"[35] with "bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologies and force of habit" surviving from pre-revolutionary times and from outside capitalist circles. It also links this new class to "sabotage" of the "socialist planned economy"[36] represented by Khrushchev's (limited to nonexistent, we now know) market reforms. Again, this polemic does not amount to a Djilas-like critique of the rise of a new class due to lack of popular control over a bureaucratically managed economy.

Perhaps the most extensive analysis of Mao's supposed Djilas-like new class argument is that of Richard Kraus, who claims that "Mao refashioned the concept of class into a tool with which to contest the accretion of privilege by a new class of dominant bureaucrats."[37] Nevertheless, Kraus' analysis is the exception that proves the rule. At one point he claims to cite a quotation where Mao "toyed fleetingly" with the idea that "bureaucrats themselves form a class, with interests 'sharply antagonistic' to those of workers and peasants,"[38] yet in the very next footnote, where Kraus cites Mao's statement more fully, it is clear Mao refers to "bourgeois elements" who are "taking the capitalist road," and that Mao is not making a general anti-statist critique nor calling for democratization but instead is only asking for a greater reliance "on those cadres who are not hostile to the workers and are imbued with revolutionary spirit" [i.e. who do what Mao and his followers want].[39]

Elsewhere in his work, besides citing his colleagues such as Joseph Esherick and the same sources they cite from Mao's writings and speeches from 1958 to 1975, Kraus bases his argument for the radical nature of the Maoist critique mostly on the 1975–6 writings of the radical Maoist leaders in the Party, Yao Wenyuan and Zhang Chunqiao, sources which in the end severely undermine his case. For example, Kraus does recognize that Mao and these high Party followers "had never so explicitly identified high-level bureaucrats as an antagonistic class [compared to extra-

[31] Ibid., 124–5.
[32] Ibid., 128–9.
[33] Ibid., 135–8.
[34] July 14, 1964, translated in Mao (uncertain authorship), *The Great Debate*, 323– 74.
[35] Ibid., 339.
[36] Ibid., 341.
[37] Kraus, 17.
[38] Ibid., 76.
[39] Ibid., 76, 208, nn. 40, 41, citing Mao as quoted by Hung, "Inner-Party Struggle and Party Development," 11.

Party Maoists such as the group Shengwulian],"[40] but he claims, charitably, that this was due to "Mao's political needs," that is, his fear of arousing the resistance of an entrenched bureaucracy. Thus, given such tactical considerations, Kraus admits that Mao limited his class critique to one based on "individual political behavior rather than as a system of collective political structural relationships ..."[41] Furthermore, while still trying to maintain his belief in the "radical" nature of Maoism and the "deradicalization" of the post-Mao period, Kraus at various points does recognize other limits of Mao and his personal followers, including stopping short of a full critique of inequality, aiding repression of genuine radical Maoists outside the Party, failing to construct a genuine program of political restructuring, and tendencies "to protect local cadres, directing class struggle [instead] against the higher salaried officials," all of which led Maoists "often [to behave] in ways similar to the conservative power-holders they replaced."[42] This author would concur then, with Stuart Schram's assessment that Kraus, ultimately "errs ... as does Esherick, in arguing that in his later years Mao defined class primarily in terms of the privileges, and the control of the means of production, derived by cadres from their relationship to the state."[43]

Maurice Meisner, for his best proof of Mao's "new class argument," cites the late extra-Party Maoist group at Beijing University who wrote under the collective pseudonym "Ma Yanwen."[44] This group did indeed go much further toward arguing for a bureaucratic class than Mao himself, but not clearly with his approval and, more importantly, still firmly within the bounds of a critique of the restoration of capitalism.[45] Furthermore, following Edward Friedman's more extended analysis of Ma Yanwen's arguments, one can only conclude that this group is yet another exception that proves the rule that Maoism lacks a true new-class argument. Opposing the nascent political reformers of the Deng coalition who were to call for more democracy in the name of opposing feudalism, the Mao group made clear the limits to their own anti-bureaucratic critique:

> ... the class enemies [i.e., pro-market forces] absurdly claim that bureaucrats and bureaucratism are products of the proletarian state system itself. This is a slander of red political power, reckless, reactionary logic ... Bureaucracy's poisonous roots are [actually in the old, capitalist soil of an earlier] exploitative system.[46]

Indeed, the Maoist critique of capitalist restoration really has very little in common with Djilas' critique of a new class based on Party monopoly of control over the state-managed economy. Instead it is the anti-feudal critique of later Party democrats in China opposed to Mao's autocratic policies of the Cultural Revolution that really recalls Djilas, as Edward Friedman also pointed out, quoting the following analogy by Djilas:

> [In Yugoslavia] top leaders of the oligarchy distribute state functions, and sometimes economic functions among party officials, just like the fiefs which the kings and

[40] Kraus, 149.
[41] Ibid., 150.
[42] Ibid., 147–9, 153–6, 160.
[43] Schram, *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 183, n. 245.
[44] Meisner, "The Ritualization of Utopia: Chinese Marxism in the Post-Mao Era," in Dirlik and Meisner (eds), 231.
[45] Ma Yanwen (pseudonym), "The Bureaucratic Class and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," 259–74.
[46] Ma Yanwen, cited in Friedman, "The Societal Obstacle to China's Socialist Transition," in Victor Nee and David Mozingo (eds), *State and Society in Contemporary China*, 159; see also Andrew and Rapp, 2000, 259–74.

> barons used to grant to their faithful and deserving vassals … In the same way that the royal prerogative, the privileges of the feudal lords, and the feudal estates, became a stumbling block to free trade and industry, which were developing under feudalism, so the despotism of the oligarchy, and the party bureaucracy's privilege in the government and the economy, together with the static, absolutized property patterns provided a basis for all this, have put the brakes on modern transport, modern management, and modern technology, and even on the socially owned property that has developed under Communism.[47]

In sum, by equating state ownership managed by the vanguard party with socialism and Party control over the state with proletarian democracy, Mao and his "radical" followers remained loyal to Stalinist concepts of Party management of industry and agriculture and failed to oppose the growth of state autonomy and despotism.[48] We will examine this argument in more detail in later chapters, especially in Chapter 8 as part of our analysis of the debates between Democracy Wall extra-Party dissidents who revived a more genuine neo-anarchist critique, but in this chapter we need to examine further whether Chairman Mao himself really launched such a critique.

His defenders might argue that Mao, whatever his limitations, desired that this "new class," whether or not a "new bureaucratic class," be controlled and eliminated not only with the rectification processes described above, but by the restriction of "bourgeois right," that is, through narrowing of wage differentials and other material incentives. In practice, one could answer, Mao seldom attacked the system of *non-wage* privileges of Party officials such as greater access to information, luxury goods, and publicly owned wealth in the form of automobiles, villas, etc, privileges which some of his self-professed radical followers enjoyed the fullest. Of Mao's self-professed anti-elitist followers, we know the most about the excesses of his wife Jiang Qing.[49]

Even in Maoist theory, the vanguard, though needing periodic rectification, would be better able to absorb such privileges without corruption and would even require some such privileges in order to advance its leadership capability. It was not elite privilege itself that Mao and his followers sought to overcome, nor the principle of elite rule, but only their own lack of complete control over the levers of state power.[50] Mao's theory of the "Continuing Revolution" then,

[47] Ibid., 169, citing Milovan Djilas, *The Unperfect Society: Beyond the New Class*, 191–2.

[48] Indeed, in light of the hardline reaction to the Tiananmen democracy movement from 1989 to the early 1990s, and perhaps revived in 1999 after the US bombing of the Chinese embassy in Serbia, the Maoist opposition to Khrushchev's idea of a "peaceful transition" to socialism expressed in "Is Yugoslavia a Socialist Country" and other 1960s editorials can now be seen to justify increased state repression, not anti-elitism. That is true to the extent that opposition to a "peaceful transition" was the inspiration for opposition to "peaceful evolution" to capitalism, a code phrase revived by hardliners in China from 1989 to the early 1990s, perhaps revived recently, in an attempt both to discredit the young democracy activists as tools of Western imperialism and to return China to its Stalinist "golden age" of the early 1960s. For the earlier invective against the "peaceful transition," see *People's Daily*, 1964, translated in Mao (authorship uncertain), 1986, 282–322. Also see Editorial Departments of *People's Daily* and *Red Flag*, 1964, 323 and *passim*.

[49] Ross Terrill, *The White-Boned Demon: A Biography of Madame Mao Zedong*, especially 213–329 for her contradictory actions during the Cultural Revolution.

[50] A point that even Kraus recognized when he concluded that "not only were Maoists concerned with mobilizing maximum support for dislodging their conservative opponents from power, but they were also eager to wield their own power effectively. The castigation of all high-level bureaucrats as an enemy class would embrace Maoists as well, a possibility which the Chairman found unacceptable …," which led him to make the statement cited above opposing "extreme anarchism." See Kraus, 150. Of course Kraus still believed that Maoists wanted to dislodge their opponents for the noble reason of saving socialism. Why Kraus and others should be so charitable to that faction of state leaders

including his attack on the "bourgeoisie in the party" and the measures to be taken against it, would not contradict his essentially autocratic and despotic rule under this view since an autocrat such as Mao Zedong or the Ming founder Zhu Yuanzhang could feel that his arbitrary power is threatened as much from other central elites as well as from mass action from below.

Thus, this chapter argues, Mao departed from the key component of the anarchist critique by failing to see that state autonomy is not just based on surviving or renewed "bourgeois" ideas and remaining economic inequality and thus by failing to really challenge the real basis for autocracy, the interests of state power holders in gaining autonomy from their subjects.

Autocratic Elements in Mao's Theory and Practice

Given the limits of Mao's "new class" argument as outlined above, it is clear that Mao was no mass democrat, much less a quasi-anarchist. This should lead us to examine the arguments of those who view his rule from 1949 to 1976 as similar to that of Chinese imperial autocrats. The very man many in the West considered to be an anti-bureaucratic revolutionary seeking a third way to socialism many now view as nothing more than a corrupt emperor. Again, by using the lens of anarchism, perhaps we can see the limits to anti-statism in Mao's thought and ruling practice, and the authoritarian and even autocratic tendencies that lie deeper in his thought.

Mao's "Anarchism" reexamined

Ironically, it is with a reexamination of Mao's relation to anarchism that the case for Mao as despot should begin. Unlike many young anarchists, Mao found in the doctrine neither an ultimate basis for human community nor a lifelong personal creed. Perhaps similar to the utility traditional Chinese rebels turned emperors found in (religious) Daoist, Manichaean, or Buddhist millenarian doctrines, for Mao anarchism, or indeed any other set of theories explaining China's predicament, was only useful as it also helped arouse people against oppressors and, perhaps more importantly, in so far as it called for heroic new leaders capable of enlisting and organizing popular support.

Before Mao was exposed to anarchist, liberal, or Marxist ideas, he was largely self-educated in the tradition of the Chinese peasant rebels in novels such as the *Shuihu zhuan* (The Water Margin).[51] Though briefly exposed to the repression of a military government against unarmed civilians, Mao's anti-militarism fell far short of that of Kropotkin or Tolstoy, who from personal experience came to view the highly regimented and authoritarian military and prison life as the hidden basis of the state and of all political organization. In contrast, Mao often imagined himself a general or dreamed of a career as a military adventurer in his early adulthood. Friends

---

while conceding so little to factions who would increase individual economic (and for a purged minority within the reform faction) even political autonomy, blaming the latter for "deradicalizing" the revolution, is a question perhaps resolved only by facing up to ideological bias of the analysts in question, even if it is a more noble and less selfish bias than that of their ideological opponents. This is especially a question for analysts such as Kalpana Misra who argued for the "deradicalizing" thesis long after the horrors of the Cultural Revolution were well-known in her *From Post-Maoism to Post-Marxism: The Erosion of Official Ideology in Deng's China*, *passim.*

[51] Schram, *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 54; Bauer, 408–10; Hoston, 387.

stressed his qualities of military leadership, especially in his defense of the students at the Hunan Teachers' Training School against an attack by the forces of the provincial warlord government.[52]

Under this thesis of Mao as romantic rebel, in seeing the heroic nature of military life he would seem ill-suited to embrace anarchistic doctrines for more than a temporary opposition to one form of state oppression, and then only in a brief and inadequate flirtation that failed to satisfy his romantic nature and desire to be a military/rebel hero.[53]

Ultimately, of course, just as traditional Chinese rebels turned away from early anti-Confucian millenarian doctrines the closer they got to power, Mao eventually rejected anarchism on tactical grounds. Following the early Chinese Marxist intellectual and CCP cofounder Chen Duxiu, Mao ultimately saw anarchism as incapable of waging revolution and holding power against a well-organized opposition. Anarchism, Chen asserted, was simply too optimistic for the contemporary epoch in China, an epoch which demanded instead a much more centralized and tightly organized party capable of leading the downtrodden masses out of their backward condition.[54] As indicated in letters to Cai Hosen in late 1920 and early 1921, Mao had embraced Marxism in rudimentary form and had rejected anarchism as impractical, and as incapable of forming strong organization to oppose the united landlord– bourgeoisie government.[55] In these letters Mao viewed anarchism as more akin to liberalism, as in its supposedly optimistic view of the possibility of a peaceful transformation of society given the monopoly of the state over the organs of education, communication, and money, a monopoly indispensable to social transformation.[56]

Here perhaps the "natural Leninism" in Mao's thought and personality first appeared, as noted by many scholars.[57] This "natural Leninism" came well before Mao's mature Marxist–Leninist outlook led him to denounce anarchism in more orthodox terms as "petty-bourgeoisie ultra-leftist opportunism."[58]

Even when the supposedly democratic "mass line" of the Yanan period of the 1930s and 1940s was most dominant in practice in a time when the crisis of the Japanese occupation led to a more easily recognizable convergence of interests between rural peasants and their Communist Party leaders, there were still great limits to Yanan democracy and a growing internal reach of the state, as revealed in purges of critical intellectuals and the growth of the secret police apparatus under Kang Sheng.[59]

In the Cultural Revolution, this lack of genuine anti-statist elements in his personality and thought led Mao to reject any proposals of his would-be followers that might result in real in-

---

[52] Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, 43; Li Rui, 52; Xiao San, *Mao Zedong tongzhi de qing shao nian shidai* (Comrade Mao's Boyhood and Youth), 79–80; and Schram, *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 16.

[53] Womack, 6, 10–13; Schram, 16.

[54] Chen, "Xuwu de gerenzhuyi ji ren ziranzhuyi" (Nihilistic Individualism and Nature-worship," 107–9, cited in Zarrow, 226–7; also see Hoston, 201–2.

[55] Schram, "From the Great Union of the Popular Masses to the 'Great Alliance'," *China Quarterly*, 49 (January 1972): 95–6.

[56] Mao, *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings 1912–1949* II: 7–11; 35–6; also see Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, 296–8.

[57] For example, see Schram, *The Political Thought of* Mao, 104; "From the Great Union of the Popular Masses to the 'Great Alliance'," 95–6; Meisner, *Marxism, Maoism, & Utopianism: Eight Essays*, 76–117; and Zarrow, 235–6.

[58] The same terms often used by Soviet authors to denounce Mao and the "military–bureaucratic dictatorship" of the Cultural Revolution. See for example, Vladimirov and Ryazantsev, *Mao Tse-tung: A Political Portrait*, 22–40 and *passim*.

[59] See for example, John Byron and Robert Pack, *The Claws of the Dragon: Kang Sheng, the Evil Genius Behind Mao—and His Legacy of Terror in People's China.*

stitutions of direct democracy. Though at first praising the spontaneous rebellion of some urban elements who followed his initial praise for Paris Commune-type models of direct democracy, Mao quickly reversed himself when he saw such movements as threatening:

> … in reality there always have to be chiefs … Anarchy is detrimental to the interests of the people and against their wishes.[60]

He called for absorbing such Commune-style movements into the "Revolutionary Committees" which supposedly combined the Red Guard leaders, military officers, and returned bureaucrats into joint leadership bodies. These committees, however, were viewed by some of his Red Guard followers at the time, and recognized by most scholars soon afterwards, as the beginning of the reinstitution of Party and state authority. Far from endorsing calls for "extensive democracy" on the model of the Paris Commune, Mao opposed the idea that elections could replace the Party or more importantly himself as the arbiter of proletarian interests.[61] Even for those who find the requirement of elections as far from guaranteeing genuine rule by the people, Maoism in the end fell far short. As Andrew Walder puts it, To emphasize the ubiquity of class forces, and to demand thereby *more intense* loyalty to a "correct" doctrine, effectively precluded any serious attempt to undermine the privilege or arbitrary power of bureaucrats. To implement "mass democracy" under these conditions generated heightened ritual and deference and provided surviving bureaucrats with even more arbitrary power over the people under them.[62]

In the final analysis, Mao reined in or destroyed any groups such as Shengwulian[63] or the theorists around his former secretary and Cultural Revolution leader Chen Boda who refused to accept his limits to mass criticism or who continued to call for egalitarian democratic institutions based on the Paris Commune model and criticized a new "red bourgeoisie" in the Party. As Walder notes, these "dissident radicals" "bore the brunt of military repression, imprisonment, and execution and were choice targets in the military-directed campaigns in the years 1968 to 1970,"[64] that is, the years when Mao and the "orthodox radicals" beholden to him were dominant in the Party leadership.

Mao's collectivization and self-reliance policies reexamined

Quite apart from the authoritarianism shown in his subjective opinion of anarchism in his mature years, Mao's actions from 1955 onward demonstrated an increasingly autocratic nature.

[60] As quoted in Ch'en, *Mao Papers*, 152; also see Hoston, 395; Frederic Wakeman, Jr., *History and Will: Philosophical Perspectives of Mao Tse-tung's Thought*, 313–4; Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao*, 173; Zarrow, 236.

[61] Even analysts such as Graham Young who would like to see democratic possibilities in Mao's thought recognize Mao's opposition to elections and thus his ultimate failure to "provide a viable substitute for the organizational role formerly provided by the Party." Young also recognizes that Mao ultimately rejected his radical followers who called for "extensive democracy," and in the end allowed his allies in the Party to call instead for relying on Mao Thought as the "sole locus of authority." See Young, "Mao Zedong and the Class Struggle in Socialist Society," 68. Nevertheless, Young, 60, does find that a critique of a new bureaucratic class within the Party was at least partially contained in Mao's thought, a contention this author will continue to dispute below.

[62] Walder, "Cultural Revolution Radicalism: Variations on a Stalinist Theme," 61.

[63] See Unger, "Whither China?: Yang Xiguang, Red Capitalists, and the Social Turmoil of The Cultural Revolution," for an updated study of the most famous dissident Cultural Revolution group who took Mao's anti-elitist rhetoric seriously and developed a more consistent new class line than Mao. We will examine official PRC denunciations of this group in Chapter 7 and the thought of this group itself in Chapter 8.

[64] Walder, 59.

These actions included Mao's support for speed-ups in agricultural collectivization whose economic lunacy met increasingly with peasant resistance.[65] Thus collectivization, including the People's Communes of the Great Leap Forward, could have had more to do with heightened state penetration of society that would increase Mao's personal power than with benefits to peasant life,[66] perhaps similar to the *lijia* system introduced by Zhu Yuanzhang—another peasant rebel who became supreme ruler of China as the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty in the 1380s. Reigning as Ming Taizu, Zhu used his work *The Placard of People's Instructions* to directly intervene in the village affairs in the 1390s.[67]

Franz Schurmann was perhaps the first Western scholar to note the similarity of the Maoist rural collectivization policies with the *tuntian*, or military farms policy, as well as with the Ming dynasty *lijia* and the Song and Qing dynasty *baojia* rural mutual surveillance networks. Though Schurmann saw the Maoist policies as an extension of the social revolution begun with land reform, in comparing them with traditional imperial forms he emphasized the collectives and communes as an attempt to extend state penetration and control down to the village level and as attempt to militarize the peasantry. Indeed, as Schurmann noted, the Great Leap Forward began with public works projects that had a similar, if more permanent, effect toward militarization of the peasantry than that accomplished by corvée labor projects in imperial Chinese history.[68]

Mao's collectivization policies reached a zenith of course in the People's Communes of the Great Leap Forward, in which local administration and local Party control would be fused in the *xiang* or township level units. In the Great Leap Forward, agricultural and industrial pursuits were to be combined, with the expectation that as they were educated by cadres and by themselves in the works of Mao the naturally progressive poor peasants and other "good class

[65] Selden, "Cooperation and Conflict: Cooperative and Collective Formation in China's Countryside," *passim.*

[66] Dirlik, in *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*, 299 also seems to have come to the conclusion that the agricultural and other communes in Mao's China were not part of a quasi-anarchist, mass democratic experiment. Instead they served as "a means to social control, faster economic development, and the efficient exploitation of labor." Dirlik includes in this assessment not just the People's Communes of the Great Leap Forward but the early Paris Commune models of the Cultural Revolution as well. The latter especially, "under the guise of popular revolutionary control, perpetuated and enhanced the political penetration of society." Nevertheless, Dirlik still seems to be enamored of Mao's supposed egalitarian intent, as in his recent praise of Nick Knight's book *Rethinking Mao* for its overall highly positive assessment of "the historical and theoretical significance of Mao's thought" versus "anti-socialist" critics and for giving "a reevaluation of Mao's policies" that might provide "inspiration in confronting the problems created by three decades of reform that turned its back on his revolutionary legacy," thus returning to the downplaying of Mao's despotic legacy and forgetting the key anarchist denial that one has to choose between revolution, freedom, and equality. See Knight, *Rethinking Mao*, back cover. For a much harsher assessment of Knight as downplaying or minimizing Mao's autocratic and brutal rule, see Rapp, review of Nick Knight, 392–6.

[67] The "Placard of People's Instructions" is found in Zhang Lu (compiler), *Huang Ming zhishu* (Regulations on the imperial Ming) (1579), 1579, 1607–2205, 1896–7. For a more extensive comparison of Zhu Yuanzhang and Mao that elaborates on this point and others noted below and which includes translations of PRC articles on the Ming founder in the 1980s and 1990s that can be viewed as allegorical criticisms of the Chairman, see Andrew and Rapp, *Autocracy and China's Rebel Founding Emperors.*

[68] Schurmann, 404–500. For the public works origins of the Great Leap Forward, see especially Schurmann, Chapter VII, "Villages," 479–80; for comparisons to the *lijia*, *baojia*, and *tuntian* see especially 409–12 and 494–5, and the Supplement, Chapter II: "Organization", 532–75, 559. The great student of the Great Leap Forward, Roderick MacFarquhar, has also compared aspects of the movement to corvee labor projects in imperial China. See MacFarquhar, "The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao," 15. Franz Schurmann concluded that the phases of rural cooperativization, collectivization, and communization beyond the original "land to the tiller" land reform amounted ultimately to a failed social revolution, a judgment with which this author disagrees; instead with many contemporary scholars, this author considers the social revolution to have ended with land reform.

elements" would create a revolutionary enthusiasm that would result in increased productivity in the fields and voluntary contributions to public works and other projects. There were similar types of expectations in the Ming dynasty about what a "good citizen" would be, revealed both in Zhu Yuanzhang's pronouncements in the *Great Warnings* and in the *Placard*, where he identified the "good people" (*liangmin*) as the commoners of the village community and expected them to have a knowledge of his works and to take the lead in spreading his ideas.[69]

In the Great Leap Forward (and also later in the Cultural Revolution, if with a less rural focus) Mao called for policies of "self-reliance," policies that to some Western observers seemed to demonstrate Mao's sincere desire to avoid the pitfalls of development tied to Soviet or Western domination. These policies, however, were in fact also more similar to Zhu Yuanzhang's isolationist trade policies of the early Ming, including extreme restrictions on foreign investment and trade. Similar to Zhu Yuanzhang's failed trade policies, it has now been revealed that the model communes of the Maoist era often had to be propped up with heavy state subsidies in order to keep their status as successful experiments.[70] Furthermore, recent studies since 1979 have revealed that such policies of self-reliance and decentralization of authority to communes, whatever local empowerment and criticism of officials may have resulted, actually increased the arbitrary power of rural cadres.[71]

Mao's purges of civilian officials

In a remarkable similarity to the violent reaction of Zhu Yuanzhang against his subordinates late in his career, so too as both Mao's policies of the mid 1950s and the growth of a new state elite led to dissatisfaction and as the Great Leap Forward policies led to mass famine and serious economic difficulty did Mao look for scapegoats.

Directly contradicting his "Hundred Flowers" policies of lenient punishment for counter-revolutionaries, Mao launched an "anti-rightist" purge in 1957 against those intellectuals who had dared to challenge the Party's authority, a campaign that led to imprisonment and death for hundreds of thousands. In 1959 Mao extended this harsh treatment to intellectual and party elites who had dared to criticize his policies. This included Marshall Peng Dehuai, who had politely suggested retrenchment of the Great Leap Forward in inner party councils. Mao accused Peng of expressing personal opposition to him and adamantly refused to rehabilitate him even in the retrenchment years that did follow.[72]

Regarding the discrepancy between Mao's conciliatory words and harsh deeds, one must especially note the growth of secret police terror and the increased authority of Mao's personal clique of followers in the whole period from 1955 to 1976 when such forces built up their arbitrary power at the expense of inner Party collective leadership, not to mention at the expense

[69] Andrew and Rapp, 65–8.

[70] See Friedman et al. (eds), *Chinese Village, Socialist State*, *passim*.

[71] Thomas P. Bernstein, "The Limits of Rural Political Reform," in Victor Falkenheim (ed.), *Chinese Politics from Mao to Deng*, 303.

[72] For the most famous account of the Great Leap and its purges, see Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution: The Great Leap Forward 1958–1960*.

of mass democracy.[73] After the reversals of the Great Leap Forward policies forced Mao into the "second rank" and led to policies of limited market incentives under Chairman of State Liu Shaoqi and Party General Secretary Deng Xiaoping in the early 1960s, Mao launched the counterattack of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s. Mass campaigns of young Red Guards were launched to "bombard the headquarters" and "drag out" those in power "taking the capitalist road." Eventually, Liu and Deng and many of their followers in the Party-state apparatus were removed, with deaths and executions of many of those like Peng Dehuai who had first been purged in 1957 and 1959. The post of Chairman of State was abolished and many bureaucrats were sent down to the countryside to "learn from the masses." When this purge was accomplished, Mao called in the army to rein in the Red Guards and restore order, eventually proclaiming Lin Biao, the Defense Minister he had installed after the purge of Peng, his chosen successor.[74]

Mao's attitude toward punishment of intellectuals

Though at first Mao seemed to be using intellectuals to help carry out his policies in the Yanan and land reform periods to the Hundred Flowers, from the Anti-Rightist Campaign on, if not earlier, Mao turned on intellectuals. Even if part of a sincere desire to mold a more egalitarian society (a premise we examine below in the context of his education polices), some speculate that his actions against intellectuals were also due perhaps to repressed feelings of jealousy from his humble birth and/or feelings of being slighted by intellectuals from his days as a lowly clerk at Beijing University library. In any event, Mao from 1957 on revived his "strongly held feelings carried over from the past that intellectuals were not to be trusted and could under some circumstances prove to be enormously dangerous."[75]

Perhaps due more immediately to fears of a Hungarian-style uprising, Mao in the Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957 turned on intellectuals with a vengeance, similar to traditional emperors' purges of scholar/officials, especially the violent purges of the founding Ming emperor late in his career.

Mao went beyond his personal purge of the intellectual critic Hu Feng in 1955 to a more open and widespread movement in 1957 against anyone who had dared to challenge his authority.[76] This attitude culminated in the Cultural Revolution, when intellectuals became known as the "stinking Ninth category" of elements opposed to the revolution and when Mao purged his more intellectual rivals in the Party.

It is hard to find honest accounts in Mao's speeches and written works of this change toward harsh treatment of intellectuals. Nevertheless, following Benjamin Schwartz, one can detect in Mao's statements of 1957 a more negative appraisal about intellectuals' inherent "bourgeois" na-

[73] Friedman, "Maoism, Titoism, Stalinism: Some Origins and Consequences of the Maoist Theory of the Socialist Transition," in Selden and Lippitt (eds), *The Transition to Socialism in China*, 159–214; Schram, "Foundations and Significance of Mao Zedong's Personal Power," in Schram (ed.), *Foundations and Limits of State Power in China*, 211–24.

[74] Of the many books on the Cultural Revolution, two stand out for their details on the "politics of the court" and purges of high officials. See Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*, and Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, *The End of the Maoist Era: Chinese Politics during the Twilight of the Cultural Revolution, 1972–1976.*

[75] Benjamin I. Schwartz, "Thoughts on the Late Mao—Between Total Redemption and Utter Frustration," in MacFarquhar et al. (eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 27.

[76] See MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution: The Great Leap Forward 1958–1960.*

ture and lack of sincere commitment to socialism.[77] Although the original text of his speech "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" (February 27, 1957) primarily emphasizes the conciliatory and relatively tolerant line of the Hundred Flowers, which drew upon the traditional Yanan emphasis on the desire for unity, tolerance of "non-antagonistic contradictions among the people," and "curing the illness to save the patient," Mao in this speech also noted the beginning of "antagonistic contradictions among the people." These contradictions included the "poisonous weeds" that had cropped up among the Hundred Flowers intellectual critics of 1956.

Perhaps foreshadowing the violent purges that would soon begin, and reflecting earlier harsh treatment from the Yanan rectification movement to the purge of Hu Feng in 1955, in this speech Mao did also suggest a danger from intellectuals:

> … the intellectuals and student youth, as well, have made great progress, but [they] also have incorrect thought, evil winds, too; [there] have been some disturbances … Among our youth, among the intellectuals, self-remoulding needs to be furthered.[78]

In spite of conciliatory language toward intellectuals, he made clear that he sympathized with party cadres being criticized by intellectuals and noted:

> Sometimes in comparison with those of a low educational level, the intellectuals make the more severe mistakes.[79]

Even while calling for expression of all points of view, as Merle Goldman has pointed out, in this speech Mao also clearly "would not tolerate the articulation of basic disagreement with the policy itself … All views were possible, except those who disagreed with Mao's."[80] Moreover, while opposing "crude methods" of coercion against "bourgeois ideology" and while noting that even people like Hu Feng who was arrested for supposedly running a secret organization would be released some day, Mao sounded an ominous warning: "… Hu Feng's ideas have not perished yet; they still exist in many people's minds."[81] Furthermore, as Goldman notes, in trying to reassure intellectuals that the Hundred Flowers would follow the "moderate" methods of the Yanan Rectification of the 1940s, which supposedly allowed intellectual criticism of bureaucratism, Mao in fact only managed to scare knowledgeable intellectuals who were aware of what really happened at Yanan. That is, they would remember those of their colleagues who were in fact arrested and even executed for their criticisms in 1944.[82]

Indeed, though continuing some of the official conciliatory rhetoric into the Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957, including the idea of not depriving bourgeois rightists of their civil rights "unless they act as secret agents or carry on sabotage," in a speech at the height of the movement Mao announced that, … the contradiction between the people and the bourgeois Rightists, who

---

[77] Ibid., 28–9.

[78] Mao, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People (Speaking Notes)" (27 February 1957), in MacFarquhar et al. (eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 156.

[79] Ibid., 177.

[80] Goldman, "Mao's Obsession with The Political Role of Literature and the Intellectuals," in MacFarquhar et al. (eds), 53.

[81] Mao, "Talk at a Conference of Party Member Cadres in Tianjin Municipality" (17 March 1957), in MacFarquhar et al. (eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, 289.

[82] Goldman, 53–4.

oppose the Communist Party, the people, and socialism, is one between ourselves and the enemy, that is, an antagonistic, irreconcilable, life-and-death contradiction.[83]

By retaining for himself in the name of the Party the power to define who the enemies were and what actions constituted "launching wild attacks" and forming "secret organizations," the following statement of Mao on punishment takes on fearful overtones despite statements elsewhere in the same speech on the need to maintain unity and limit punishment:

> Counter-revolutionaries must be eliminated wherever found. Kill few, but on no account repeal the death penalty or grant any special pardon. Arrest and punish those persons who commit fresh crimes after having served prison terms. Punish the gangsters, hooligans, thieves, murderers, rapists, embezzlers, and other felons in our society who undermine public order and grossly violate the law; also punish those whom the public identifies as bad elements. At present, certain functionaries in the judicial and public security departments are neglecting their duties and allowing persons who should be arrested and punished to remain at large; this is wrong. Just as over-punishment is wrong, so is under-punishment, and these days the danger lies in the latter.[84]

In sum, based on his purges of intellectual and civilian officials in 1957 and 1959 as well as in the Cultural Revolution, Mao did not show leniency in practice and in fact demonstrated a strong bias toward anti-intellectualism and harsh punishments.

Mao's purges of military officials

Beginning in 1970, under circumstances that are still unclear, the defense minister Lin Biao himself was either murdered in Beijing or died in a fiery plane crash in Outer Mongolia supposedly after attempting to escape from a foiled coup against Mao. After Lin's fall, the army commanders were reshuffled and purged, more of the party and state cadres were brought back, and Mao started to rely more heavily around new party members related to the clique of personal supporters around his wife Jiang Qing.[85]

This clique of people personally dependent on Mao for legitimacy desperately tried to build up its authority in the 1970s, including attempting to augment its strength within the "People's Militia" in the years leading up to Mao's death. In the violent purges related to the fall of Lin Biao, the secret police apparatus led by Kang Sheng until his death in 1975, along with leaders of Mao's personal bodyguard, also gained authority. Mao was firmly in charge of a decimated central Party-state bureaucracy, but was forced to rely on a small network of personal followers to maintain his direct rule.[86]

Such a picture of Mao's autocratic rule does not in itself demonstrate the limits in theory to his supposed anti-bureaucratic if not anti-statist strains of thought. After all, populism and despotism need not be considered polar opposites, just as others have noted the claim of certain leaders in the imperial period to "rule for the people." Nevertheless, to the extent that sympathetic observers

[83] Mao, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People" (Speaking Notes), 473.
[84] Mao, "The Situation in the Summer of 1957" (July 1957), in Mao, *Selected Works*, V, 476.
[85] See MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, 324–36.
[86] See Teiwes and Sun, 25–109.

in and outside of China, based on Mao's own words, considered his "populism" to contain at least partially anti-elitist or quasi-democratic elements, we can now see how mistaken this impression was. First in the methods of "rectification" to be used and, second, in the limits even in theory to the autonomy of the state controlled by the "new class," we can complete the picture of the autocratic nature of Mao's political thought, a picture contrary to the views of some of Mao's self-professed followers inside China during the Cultural Revolution.

Mass participation reexamined

First, one must examine the meaning of mass participation in Mao's understanding. Too often in the recent past, and still today, some scholars have admired Mao's "mass line" policies for supposedly attempting to overcome the over-centralization and bureaucratic tendencies of orthodox Marxist- Leninist thought and practice without also fully examining how in that "mass line" approach the wishes of the masses were to be determined and how their participation was to be implemented.[87]

One of the few articles of Western scholarship in the 1970s to deal specifically with this question, even while partially justifying Mao's actions, was that of Phyllis Frakt.[88] She found that Mao's "mass line," as in Lenin's vanguard theory, assumes that leaders have identical interests with the masses in the long run of history, and thus could carry out "virtual" representation if they developed the proper attitudes in dealing with the people.[89] Those among "the People" (the particular progressive forces under any one epoch's primary antagonistic contradiction) who had incorrect beliefs and attitudes should be educated through criticism and self-criticism, but if they fell outside that category outright coercion was permissible.[90] Mao did recognize and accept the necessity of contradictions between leaders and the led before full communism was achieved, but believed such differences could remain non- antagonistic as long as the quality of leadership was preserved.[91] Similarly, Donald Munro made another rare recognition in the 1970s that the "weaknesses" of Maoism even in theory might pose a danger to its otherwise egalitarian "strengths." The Maoist distinction between moral persuasion and (Stalinist) compulsion could break down due to fallacious Maoist assumptions of the identity of long-term private and public interests, the malleability and short-term inferiority of individual interests to those of society and the state, and, most importantly, due to the Maoist belief in the ability of a few leaders to decide "not only what the people's true interests are but also what values they should adopt."[92] The last weakness in Maoist theory, Munro notes, could especially undermine the egalitarian ideal:

> The ability to formulate the constituents of a value consensus and then to serve as supreme teachers gives to those leaders a special social position.

[87] Starr, 206–13, 220–2, 304–5, recognizes that "limitations" and "narrowness" in Mao's view of mass participation exist, but otherwise idealizes Mao's real desire to fight "misguided authority" and to implement the mass line, much as other scholars did in the pre-Deng era.

[88] Frakt, "Mao's Concept of Representation," *American Journal of Political Science*, 23 (November 1979), 684–704.

[89] Ibid., 690–3.

[90] Ibid., 693–4.

[91] Ibid., 697–8.

[92] Donald Munro, *The Concept of Man in Contemporary China*, 181–4.

> And this special position is inconsistent with the spirit of the very status egalitarianism that the leaders chose to foster.[93]

Frakt claims that Mao's idea of mass participation followed an essentially Burkean pattern (to Frakt, minus the "natural" governing elite in Burke, though with greater hindsight one could deny even this difference). As with Burke, Mao would allow popular representation only in the perception stage— discovering the needs and grievances of the people—not in the later stages of policy formation, and only partially in the implementation or execution stage.

In other words, differing with the liberal conception of public opinion as an essential aid in determining the national interest, Mao shared the "conservative" (following Munro, one could add, Confucian) view of an objective national interest immediately knowable only by properly educated leaders, and knowable by the masses only at a future stage of history.[94]

It is in the preservation of the prerogatives of leaders to know what masses want that Frakt considers the real nature of Mao's "mass line" (though she recognizes the possibility that a "ritualization" of the rectification process might eventually occur).[95] First, in rectification campaigns and movements, erring leaders would have their attitudes corrected by mass criticism, self-criticism, and being sent down to participate in rural and urban labor. Second, though quality of leadership is determined mostly by purifying attitudes, not change in government form, nevertheless, through the Revolutionary Committees at the workplace level, individual workers could aid in the purification process (though Frakt recognizes that in practice party members often dominated the proceedings).[96]

Similarly to Frakt's comparison of Mao and Burke on leadership by "virtual representation," Germaine Hoston, writing after a fuller knowledge of the horrors of the Cultural Revolution could be attained, compares Mao's concept of mass democracy to that of Rousseau:

> … Like Rousseau's *Social Contract* [the mass line] has both democratic and nondemocratic elements. On the one hand, the mass line conception prescribed a revolutionary process relying on a certain faith in the simple wisdom of the common person engaged in the concrete practice of production and revolution, in opposition to the abstract theory of intellectual knowledge … At the same time, Mao's concept of leadership was highly elitist in its own way. The ideas of the masses were inherently "scattered" and "unsystematic," just as the citizens in Rousseau's polity could discern only partial interests and articulate "particular wills." Ordinary women and men required the leadership of a party of persons with true revolutionary consciousness that could discern the true interests of all Chinese, or at least, of Chinese with a proper class perspective.
>
> Hoston further notes that since Maoists believed even the Party itself could become corrupted, … the ultimate implication … was that the party required a visionary leader specially gifted to discern the Way. In arguing thus, Mao … was not prepared to relinquish for himself the traditional mantle of leadership worn by China's emper-

[93] Ibid., 183–4.
[94] Frakt, 698–9.
[95] Ibid., 693, 699.
[96] Ibid., 693–4.

> ors even while he himself was suspicious of and threatened by his Soviet-educated rivals as he sought to consolidate his leadership of the party.[97]

Thus, despite her belief in the "anarchist" side of Mao, through her insightful comparison of Mao's thought to that of Rousseau, Hoston leads herself to a contradictory conclusion:

> … given the corruptive nature of political power and the need for the "particular wills" (to use Rousseau's term) of the people to be "reinterpreted" so that they accorded with what was best for all China, who was to determine when a new rectification campaign was necessary? Mao's solution seemed to require a sort of equivalent to Rousseau's [Great] legislator, yet more powerful, someone who was superhuman, whose wisdom transcended the normal bounds of class-based perspectives …[98]

That Mao acted like a traditional emperor and allowed himself to be set up as a "superman" would lead some leaders of the Democracy Wall Movement in China to deny that Mao had any mass democratic tendencies at all, and indeed that in the end he was not a quasi-anarchist but a "feudal-fascist" dictator.[99]

Even without the advantage either of the hindsight of later Western scholars or of having actually lived through the Cultural Revolution, which would have helped them realize more fully the real tendencies in practice toward "ritualization" and Party dominance of mass participation, Frakt's and Munro's earlier analyses show clearly the theoretical limits to Mao's mass line and what others would see as his anti-democratic tendencies. Participants were not to be involved in determining the national interest itself, for example, through genuine elections with real popular nomination procedures; rather, the vanguard essentially coopted peasant, worker, and student figures and anointed them as leaders of officially recognized groups.[100] The definition of "the People" still lay within the control of the vanguard—those with sufficient proletarian consciousness—and thus the whole range of popular attitudes that would be allowed expression in individual and mass form lay within the discretion of the Party (i.e. in the Cultural Revolution, Mao and his cronies).[101]

Certainly no body of law or other set of institutional checks was to be set up over the vanguard. In other words, to use Edward Friedman's phrase in a slightly different context, Mao's theory could be likened to favoring an "internal policing" of leaders instead of a "civilian review

---

[97] Hoston, 392.

[98] Ibid., 394.

[99] For example, see Wang Xizhe, *"Mao Zedong yu wenhua dageming," passim*, abridged selections in Andrew and Rapp, 275–95.

[100] Brantly Womack, "Where Mao Went Wrong: Epistemology and Ideology in Mao's Leftist Politics," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, 16 (July 1986), 30, notes the "lack of any institutional guarantees of mass voice or citizen rights" in Mao's "mass line" going back to the Yanan base area period, and also notes that Mao's late view of the masses as "malleable" tended to "denigrate mass creativity."

[101] That the Party ultimately maintained control of the definition of the People is an obvious but important point made by many scholars. For example, see MacFarquhar, "The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao," 7. The Party's elitist definition of the people was also partially recognized by Starr, 220. Also see Andrew Nathan, *Chinese Democracy*, xii. As Maurice Meisner suggests, there is furthermore an ambiguity in Maoist thought as to where the vanguard resides, at least in the Cultural Revolution when the Party was under attack. See Meisner, "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Chinese Marxist Thought," in Nee and Mozingo (eds), *State and Society in Contemporary China*, 123–31.

process using outsiders."[102] Likewise, as Hoston notes, "in the absence of such institutions, authority is most easily exercised by none or by the arbitrary will of one, acting in the name of the state." As she elaborates further, … In Mao as in Rousseau the priority of substantive virtue over institutional and procedural arrangements attached little importance to particular interests and the right of individuals to express and act on them politically. Unless a democratic culture could be created that would prize rights as much as obligations, the tension between the option for chaos versus the perils of institutionalized power, on the one hand, and the need for a strong and visionary leader, on the other, could well resolve itself (and would) in a larger measure of stateness and statism than China enjoyed in the prerevolutionary era.[103]

In other words, Mao's entire party rectification process depended for its continuation on calls for mass participation from the Maoist vanguard itself (or from one person above the vanguard). Or, as Stuart Schram puts it, "although the people were consulted, the ultimate aim was to make them believe they wanted what the leader and the Party has decided was best for them."[104] Thus, given these limits, in the end Mao's mass line meant greater and not lesser autocracy, and more despotism and not more democracy.[105]

It is easy to see how these limits in theory could be directly related to the horrors in practice of the Cultural Revolution, with or without the subjective desire of Mao himself. Criticism and self-criticism within the bounds of correct theory was ultimately controlled by ideological authorities themselves, leading exactly to the "ritualization," if to an even greater extent, that Frakt feared. Learning correct ideas became rote memorization and shouting of slogans in mass unison. Individuals could be categorized virtually at will as "class enemies" outside the safe category of "non-antagonistic differences among the people," according to who was in power among the vanguard.

Making more explicit Hoston's recognition of the "statism" of the late Mao era, most genuine mass participation was quickly silenced by verbal and physical acts of denunciation on the part of secret police and loyal Maoists in authority.

More properly speaking, permissible mass participation was often limited to participation in terror, while real participants who tried to expose the despotism of the times were subject to repression and death. As Walder notes, the "radical" Maoism of the Cultural Revolution was not just violent and murderous in practice, but in its essence:

> … If we place this radicalism in its proper perspective, we see it as a form of reactive extremism whose defining premises were descended directly from the rationale for Stalin's mass murders … what actually happened in China during the Cultural Revolution—the inquisitions, witch hunts, cruel and vindictive persecution of indi-

[102] Friedman, "The Societal Obstacle to China's Socialist Transition," 166.

[103] Frakt, 401.

[104] Schram, "Mao Zedong a Hundred Years On," 129.

[105] Schram, *The Thought of Mao*, *passim*, especially 97–109, essentially makes the same argument, that is, that Mao's "mass line" and calls for decentralization and democracy were in the end limited by other aspects of his thought, including the "primacy of centralism over democracy," the stress on dictatorship and slighting of direct elections, the emphasis on control and channeling of participation in proper directions by the Party, and above all by Mao's "attachment to the ideal of a 'strong socialist state'" which included a high degree of autocracy. In his later essay, Schram extends this argument, stating that "Mao's ideal was *yiyuanhua*, or monolithic unity," which though ostensibly based on the mass line, "did not mean, and was never intended to mean, simply doing what the masses wanted." See Schram, "Mao Zedong a Hundred Years On," 129.

viduals, unprincipled and often incoherent factionalism—were inherent in the doctrine and mentality that inspired it.[106]

Maoist "Egalitarianism" in education policies

But even if the political theory and methods of Maoism were in the end highly undemocratic, were not its goals at least highly egalitarian and populist? For example, what of Maoist attempts from the 1950s on to expand worker and peasant education? This would include most famously the part-work, part- study schools and the recommendation system added to the supposedly elitist examination system in order to insure that "good class elements" could gain entrance into universities.[107] One would first have to point out more recent studies that demonstrate that China by the end of the Maoist era in fact did far worse on reducing the gap in literacy between urban and rural areas (and between men and women) than did other less developed countries.[108] Second, regarding the expansion of the education system to include more individuals from worker and peasant backgrounds, one would have to point out the severe low quality of the education received during the Maoist era and, more importantly, the tendency to give good class labels not based on economic background but by a combination of birth and political attitude, defined at the height of Maoist periods as loyalty to Mao's thought as assessed by Maoist leaders. Furthermore, as in ancient China in periods when the recommendation system flourished over the examination system as a method of recruitment into the imperial bureaucracy, this often permitted the *restriction* of social mobility rather than its expansion since the top state leaders who controlled the definition of moral criteria could also use the system to keep out potential rivals.

At the height of the Cultural Revolution of course, not just quality, but even educational quantity was affected as schools were closed down to allow youth to "bombard the headquarters" and "share revolutionary experiences." One could make the harsh assessment that faced with the choice of an educated peasantry and proletariat who might drift away from his policies or uneducated masses who would blindly follow the supreme leader, Mao, in the end, contradicted his claim to reverse the imperial policy and instead followed exactly what he had condemned:

> It is to the advantage of despots to keep people ignorant; it is to our advantage to make them intelligent.[109]

Although rural areas are still unable to fully join the rush toward economic development, one has to conclude that, as their material standards have also improved dramatically from the Mao era, despite Mao's pro-peasant rhetoric, so too rural peasants and urban workers have fared much better in terms of access to education in the reform era despite the growing inequalities and other severe problems. Ignorance in China, by both statistical measures and personal accounts of survivors of the Cultural Revolution, is much reduced from Mao's time, if still a great aid to a continuation of despotic rule.

---

[106] Walder, "Cultural Revolution Radicalism," 61.

[107] See Munro, "Egalitarian Ideal and Educational Fact in Communist China," in John M. H. Lindbeck (ed.), *China: Management of a Revolutionary Society*, 279–83, 293–4; and Munro, *The Concept of Man in Contemporary China*, 107–34.

[108] See for example the section on literacy rates in China in Nick Eberstadt, *The Poverty of Communism*, 155–65.

[109] Mao, *Hong Qi* (Red Flag), 2 (1966), 18, quoted in Ch'en, *Mao Papers*, 103; cited in Munro, *The Concept of Man in Contemporary China*, 104.

While many who had previously admired the "anarchist" aspects to Mao's thought and/or the "democratic" component of the mass line have come to agree with much of the case for Mao as autocrat, other observers want to maintain a belief in the anti-elitist side of Mao. Such people would say one simple question remains: why would Mao attack his enemies in the party–state apparatus in a simple drive for power when he could have had all the power and influence he wanted simply by going along with the policies of his rivals?[110] Given other ruling elites' need to rely on him for legitimacy, they would have been more than willing to preserve his prestige, as evidenced by the willingness in the early 1960s of most of the party elite to keep Mao's personal critics in jail or in internal exile when they otherwise forced him to retreat on the Great Leap Forward policies. Even given Mao's lack of expertise in fields such as economics that would have been given more emphasis in a regime following a development-oriented policy line, he still could have retained much influence and power. This can be demonstrated by the brief 1956 consensus in which Mao kept personal power while going along with the Chen Yun-Deng Xiaoping limited market reforms, and also by Deng Xiaoping's continued powerful influence within the Party even as he admitted his lack of economic expertise during the era of economic reform. Clearly one has to give Mao credit for following his subjective ideological desires to an extreme limit in practice, since he could have kept his position of authority in the party by a total shift toward a reform coalition. Once this new coalition had allowed enough improved economic well-being in society at large, Mao would also have added to his popular base of legitimacy. But such a stance would have forced him to rely more on intervening bureaucratic elites and lessened direct social control of the population at large, weakening his actual authority that would open up room for future challenges and limits. Certainly if he had accepted a more indirect leadership role mediated by the bureaucracy, Mao Zedong felt that he would then not be able to play the role of activist leader or "moral entrepreneur," a role forged in his early career as a rebel leader.

Whatever his intentions, one has to admit the extremely irrational and destructive ends to which Mao's actions directly led from 1955 to 1976, ends that were far from anarchistic but instead only served to build up China's modern autocratic system.

[110] This question has been asked in different ways, for example, by "Comrade Jin Jun" to his fellow Democracy Wall activist Wang Xizhe, which as we will see in Chapter 8, prompted Wang to write his long essay "Mao Zedong yu wenhua dageming" (Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution) (February 1981), translated in Anita Chan et al. (eds), *On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System: The Li Yizhe Debates*, 177–260, 285–97; reprinted in abridged form in Andrew and Rapp, *Autocracy and China's Rebel Founding Emperors*, 275–95.

This question was also posed by Maurice Meisner in a lecture on the Chinese Revolution at McAlester College, St. Paul, Minnesota, March 1985, and in his subsequent writings.

7. Denunciations of anarchism in the PRC

Introduction

This chapter continues to examine the limits to genuine critiques of state autonomy in the PRC by analyzing denunciations of anarchism published in the official Chinese press from the early years of the regime to the contemporary era, utilizing a three line model of Leninist regimes, especially as presented by Edward Friedman. It should be noted at the outset that the PRC denunciations of anarchism are not in themselves very interesting and mostly blindly follow the critique of Marx and Engels of Proudhon and Stirner as representing the interests of the petite bourgeoisie, or small producers, mixed in with Lenin's denunciations of anarchism as an "infantile disorder" of "ultraleftism," as typified by Mikhail Bakunin, whom Lenin claimed was an opportunist perhaps only posing as a revolutionary.[1] Such denunciations almost always ignored, as did most Soviet critics, the claims of people like Bakunin to be socialist anarchists, and the claims of most anarchists after that date, most notably Peter Kropotkin, to be anarcho-communists equally interested as Marxist–Leninists, if not more so, in ending private property. It should also be noted that almost none of the people being denounced were really anarchists and that in numerous cases people condemning others as anarchists were themselves later denounced for the same reason.

However unoriginal and inaccurate these denunciations of anarchism were in practice, they are nevertheless worth examining for the confirmation they provide, both about the lack of any true quasi-democratic elements in Maoist thought or practice and the essential truth behind the charge of Party democrats that despite the major policy shifts and huge changes in society over time from the Mao to Deng and post-Deng eras, there is an essential continuity in the nature of China's Leninist Party-state. This chapter will attempt to make the latter point without falling into the trap of viewing China's Leninist regime as an unchanging, "totalitarian" monolith by adapting Friedman's labels of "Stalinists" who emphasize socialism as the buildup of heavy industry through central planning and a command economy, "Maoists" who supposedly favor the use of ideological incentives to move toward communism without creating a huge bureaucratic state or reviving economic inequality, and "Titoists" who view socialism as the buildup of abundance

[1] For a very convenient summary of these orthodox Marxist denunciations of anarchism, see the Soviet text published in an attempt to counteract revivals of anarchism in the student movements in America and Europe in the late 1960s to early 1970s, *Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism: Selected Writings by Marx, Engels, Lenin*. Chinese official denunciations mostly ignored other possible Marxist lines of attack on anarchists, for example Nicolai Bukharin's claim that they represented déclassé and "lumpenproletariat" rough elements (see Nicolai Bukharin, "Anarchy and Scientific Communism" (1922), translated in *The Poverty of Statism: Anarchism vs. Marxism: A Debate Bukharin, Fabbri, Rocker*, 1–10), or V. I. Lenin's charge that the Christian anarchist Leo Tolstoy represented elements of the dying aristocracy that turned against all states out of twin reactionary idealization of a supposed egalitarian rural ideal and a pessimistic realization that the old landed order was doomed to destruction. See Lenin, *On Literature and Art*, 64–8.

of the proletariat and thus who would allow market reforms that tolerate limited inequality.[2] In fusing this model with labels borrowed from analyses of internal politics of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan under the old "1955" single party hegemonic system, one could posit that coalitions of mainstream and anti-mainstream elements of different lines often form, such as a Maoist–Stalinist coalition during the Cultural Revolution and a Titoist–Stalinist coalition in the early to mid-Deng years.[3] After that point through the early years of the twenty-first century, the differences within the Party-state could be said to focus on degrees of market reform, and thus between moderate and radical Titoists, though as we will see in the postlude, Maoist and Stalinist elements in the Chinese Leninist state may be mounting a comeback.

Denunciations of Anarchism from 1957 to 1976

Denunciations of anarchism in the PRC can be traced back at least to the Anti- Rightist Campaign of 1957–8. Deng Xiaoping made note of the problem of anarchism in 1957 in his report at the end of the Anti-Rightist Campaign, where he concluded that among the "serious erroneous points of view" of a few "bourgeois intellectuals" (i.e. those who had dared to speak up during the Hundred Flowers Movement), were "… individualism, liberalism anarchy, egalitarianism and nationalism."[4]

In 1958, the Maoist Yao Wenyuan helped begin his career by taking part in denunciations of the novelist Ba Jin (virtually the only real Chinese anarchist ever criticized in the PRC, and even then a former anarchist), who though no longer claiming to be the anarchist he was before 1949, as we saw in Chapter 5, did express mildly loyal criticism of the status quo during the Hundred Flowers period.[5] In his article, Yao targeted anarchist themes in Ba Jin's early novel, *Miewang* (Destruction).[6] As Ba Jin was still protected at this point by others in the Party hierarchy, Yao mostly couched his criticism in comradely terms, saying Ba had insufficiently repudiated his former anarchism in articles he had published since 1949, since the novelist had only called his early thought "limited," tried to defend anarchism of the Kropotkin variety as another version of communism that did not amount to bourgeois individualism, and claimed that his novel *Destruction* was in favor of revolution and was not nihilistic. In response, Yao dissected the novel to argue that its anarchist hero did indeed express an "anarchist hopelessness" that amounted to a philosophy of "extreme individualism" opposed to leadership of the Party. Yao summed up the main lesson of his analysis of Ba Jin's novel as the "especially harmful nature" of anarchist thought, which, whatever its claim of being revolutionary, in fact "uses individualism to resist

[2] See especially Friedman, "Three Leninist Paths within a Socialist Conundrum," in Dorothy Solinger (ed.), *Three Visions of Chinese Socialism*, 11–46. Also see Friedman, "Maoism, Titoism, Stalinism: Some Origins and Consequences of the Maoist Theory of the Socialist Transition," in Mark Selden and Victor Lippit (eds), *The Transition to Socialism in China*, 159–214.

[3] Following the argument of John A. Rapp, "Despotism and Leninist State Autonomy: The Chinese Asiatic Mode of Production Debates in Comparative Perspective," 1–59.

[4] Deng, "Report on the Rectification Campaign," September 23, 1957, translated in Robert R. Bowie and John King Fairbank (eds), *Communist China 1955–1959: Policy Documents with Analysis*, Document 19, 348.

[5] For a concise summary of Ba Jin's actions during the Hundred Flowers, see Olga Lang, *Ba Jin and His Writings*, Introduction.

[6] Yao Wenyuan, "Lun Ba Jin xiaoshuo 'Miewang' zhongde wuzhengfuzhuyi sixiang" (Discussing the Anarchist Thought in Ba Jin's Novel, *Destruction*), 17– 20. The first English translation of this article will appear in Rapp and Youd, "Ba Jin and the Anarchist-Marxist Debates in China," forthcoming.

collectivism" and "advocates extreme democratic transformation, opposes discipline, shows contempt for organizations, and fails to see the productive nature of physical laborers," leading to a potential "destructive effect" on contemporary society if it were not thoroughly opposed. Though tame in comparison to later denunciations of Ba Jin in the Cultural Revolution, Yao's critique can be seen as a shot against the bow of those who had challenged the Party in the Hundred Flowers period by calling for more openness and individual freedom. After expressing mild self-criticism in 1958 against this attack, including of his past anarchism, Ba Jin survived this assault and returned to prominence after the Great Leap Forward where he could again raise mild criticisms of the excesses of the regime and especially of the "literary bureaucrats" who had criticized him and other writers in the late 1950s, criticisms which only helped intensify the later assault on him during the Cultural Revolution.[7]

Before the Great Leap ended, however, and probably as part of the "Campaign against Right Opportunism" launched after the purge of Peng Dehuai in 1959, another brief round of denunciations of anarchism occurred.

Most prominently, Lin Biao, who had replaced Peng as Minister of Defense, criticized "anarchism and egalitarianism" as part of the "temporary, partial interests of the small producers" in his denunciations of major deviations within the army.[8]

By far the most intensive criticisms of anarchism in the history of the PRC, however, occurred during the Cultural Revolution. Anarchism, as William Joseph points out in his exhaustive study, *The Critique of Ultra-Leftism in China*, represented only one, if perhaps the leading example, of "ultra-leftism" that was periodically if incompletely criticized during this period.[9] Given the sheer volume and number of denunciations of anarchism in the Cultural Revolution era, only a small sample can be summarized in this chapter. Suffice it to say that both Stalinists and Maoists launched criticisms of anarchism in the early years of the Cultural Revolution, if for different reasons.

The Stalinists, and perhaps any closet Titoists who might have quietly survived, denounced the "chaos" of "great [or ultra or extensive] democracy" (*daminzhu*) at the outset of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 and revived these charges periodically from 1967 to 1969 to in effect charge that the Party Maoists had encouraged extra-Party "ultra-leftists" to push Mao's critique of a "new bourgeoisie in the Party" to a point that threatened continued state control of society. In February 1967, for example, when the Stalinists had gained a temporary ascendancy (in what was later termed by the Maoists, the "February Adverse Current"), an article in *Hongqi* revived the critique of anarchism in Engels's *"On Authority,"* a work issued during Marx's lifetime. Just as Engels criticized Bakunin's followers for failing to see the essential authoritarian nature of socialist revolution and thus the need to maintain "the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie," so too "some persons" in the Cultural Revolution used Mao's call to seize power from the bourgeoisie in the Party to supposedly oppose all authority, a stance that, following

[7] For Ba's criticism during the early 1960s and his suffering during the Cultural Revolution, see Olga Lang's introduction to the English translation of Ba Jin, *Family*.

[8] See Lin, "March Ahead under the Red Flag of the General Line and Mao Tse-tung's Military Thinking," translated in Bowie and Fairbank, Doc. 46, 580, 584– 5. For a summary of the criticism of anarchism in this revival of the Anti-Rightist Movement, see *Zhongguo renmin daxue makesi liening zhuyi jichuxi* (The Marxist-Leninist Studies Department of Chinese People's University), *Wuzhengfuzhuyi pipan* (Criticizing Anarchism).

[9] Joseph, 220–31. See pages 23–61 for Joseph's summary of the classical Marxist-Leninist lines of attack on anarchism. See pages 128–44, 159–61, and 189–90 for his summary of attacks on anarchism in China, especially in 1971–2 and 1976.

the standard Marxist critique of anarchism, the *Hongqi* author found to be "an expression of the inherent bad characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie, an expression of anarchism."[10] This stance was perhaps reflected in the *Renminribao* editorial of April 26, 1967, "Anarchism is the Punishment of Opportunist Deviationists," that found that "anarchism is looming up, dissolving the targets of our struggle and deflecting it from its normal direction."[11]

On the other hand, also during the Cultural Revolution, Maoists who favored continuing class struggle against "new bourgeois elements" in the Party could use anarchism as a whipping boy to prove their own truly leftist credentials and to protect themselves against Stalinist attacks. For example, when extra- Party Red Guard Maoists went too far for Mao and began to attack "bourgeois elements" in the People's Liberation Army and to call for "suspecting all" as the "fighting slogan of great democracy,"[12] Yao Wenyuan, who by this time became perhaps the leading Maoist polemicist, known as "the Stick," responded with a denunciation of one, perhaps mythical, extra-Party Maoist group, the "May 16 Corps," as a "scheming counter-revolutionary gang" that spouts such slogans as "doubt everyone" and "oppose anybody" that appears only in the guise of ultra-Left anarchism but is in essence extremely Rightist.[13]

Yao tried to combine this anti-anarchist critique of extra-Party Maoists with denunciation of the fallen Party leader Tao Zhu for the same tendencies, even though Yao and the other inner Party Maoists otherwise criticized Tao for being too conservative, that is, as we might argue using the three line model, too much within the Stalinist camp.[14] Likewise, Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, when called upon by Party elders to help rein in the Red Guards attacking the army and seizing weapons, denounced such groups for "factionalism," which she charged was "a characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie and is mountain-topism, departmentalism and anarchism—very serious anarchism."[15]

Mao himself, following Friedman, may not have been the best Maoist during this time as he shifted back and forth along policy lines as he saw fit and in order to keep his perceived Party rivals off balance. Thus, the Chairman first allowed the Maoist group that he created to push (rhetorically) for Paris Commune style mass democracy in 1966 while, as we saw in Chapter 6, he himself later denounced the Shanghai Commune in 1967 as "extreme anarchy, which is most reactionary" and "… detrimental to the interests of the people and against their wishes."[16] It was by using this statement of Mao that Stalinists in the Cultural Revolution could denounce

[10] *Hongqi* Commentator, "On Revolutionary Discipline and Revolutionary Authority of the Proletariat," *Hongqi*, 3 (February 1967), translated in *Survey of China Mainland Magazines* (hereafter SCMM), 564 (February 20, 1967), 3, citing Frederick Engels , " On Authority," first published in Italy, 1873, translated in *Anarchism and Anarcho-Syndicalism*, 100–4.

[11] Cited in Jacques Guillermaz, *The Chinese Communist Party in Power, 1949– 1976*, 428.

[12] "Long Live Chairman Mao's 'Great Democracy,'" in *Dongfanghong* (East Is Red), November 16, 1966: 4, translated in *Joint Publications Research Service* (hereafter JPRS): *Translations on Communist China* 49387 (March 24, 1967), 18.

[13] Yao, "Comments on Tao Chu's Two Books," *Renminribao*, September 8, 1967, 1–3, published in English by New China News Agency, September 7, 1967, reprinted in James T. Myers, Jürgen Domes, and Erik von Groeling (eds), *Chinese Politics: Documents and Analysis*, *Volume I: Cultural Revolution to 1969*, 351–2.

[14] See Peter R. Moody, Jr., "Policy and Power: The Career of T'ao Chu 1956–66," CQ 54 (April–June 1973), 268, 288.

[15] Jiang Qing, Speech of September 5, 1967, translated in *BBC: Summary of World Broadcasts: Far East* (hereafter FE): 2570, reprinted in CQ 32 (October– December 1967), Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation, 212–17.

[16] "Chairman Mao's Speech at His Third Meeting with Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan" (Feb. 6, 1967), translated in JPRS China Report, 90, 44.

Red Guard organizations as anarchist and imply that their Maoist supporters in the Party were anarchists as well, which in turn forced the inner Party Maoists to find extra-Party groups to denounce as anarchists, as with Yao and Jiang Qing. Thus inner Party Maoists could very easily both denounce anarchism and be denounced in turn as anarchists themselves. As the first such example, the leading Party Maoist Chen Boda could denounce anarchists as causing "splittism" and leading to the failure of unity if the revolutionary Left in 1967,[17] while he himself became the major target of a campaign denouncing anarchism after his fall in late 1969 to early 1970. Evidently with the permission of Mao himself, in September of 1969 the top ideological organs of the Party-state launched a major national campaign against "bourgeois factionalism" and anarchism as part of preparing the country for a possible war with the Soviet Union,[18] a campaign that continued into 1970–1 with Chen as the main, if unnamed, target of a campaign against "swindlers like Liu Shaoqi."[19] As Joseph notes, this campaign continued into 1972 when it merged into the first campaign against Lin Biao for his "leftist" errors.

This latter campaign featured articles in *Renminribao* in October 1972 criticizing the "swindlers" as opportunists who only posed as anarchists, "…not because they want to do away with all forms of government, but because they want to do away with the government of the dictatorship of the proletariat and replace it with a government of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie which they represent."[20] This aborted campaign was perhaps the high point of criticism of anarchism in the Mao era and a precursor to the 1977 attacks on the Gang of Four as anarchists.

From the inner Party Marxist democrat Wang Ruoshui, whose thought we will examine in Chapter 9, we now know the inside story of the 1972 campaign, which he himself promoted.[21] Even though, as Wang noted, remaining Maoists such as Yao Wenyuan themselves had earlier compared the "swindlers" to Bakunin's "sabotage activities" against the First International,[22]

the leading Maoists at the top of the Party in 1972 feared that the main thrust of the initial campaign to criticize Lin Biao as an ultra-leftist was aimed at them (with good reason, one would think, considering the very recent campaign against Chen Boda as an anarchist and the not much later 1977 campaign against the Gang of Four as anarchists that we will examine below), and thus they tried to quash the campaign, publishing articles in the Shanghai journal *Wen Hui*

[17] See Chen's speech in *Huochetou* (Locomotive), February 1967, translated in *Survey of China Mainland Press* (hereafter SCMP), 3898, 5–6, cited in Philip Bridgham, "Mao's Cultural Revolution in 1967: The Struggle to Seize Power," CQ 34 (April–June 1968), 11.

[18] See Bridgham, 22 and articles such as Kao Zhiren, "Anarchism Is Reaction against the Continuation of Socialist Revolution," in *Hongqi*, 9 (August 27, 1969), in SCMM 665 (September 22, 1969), 29–31.

[19] See Joseph, 124–6, citing for example *Renminribao* August 15 and 29, 1971, in SCMP 4966, 22 and 4973, 19.

[20] See Lung Yen, "Anarchism is the Counter-Revolutionary Tool of the False Marxist Swindlers," *Renminribao*, October 14, 1972, in SCMP 5241 (October 25, 1972), 58.

[21] See Wang Ruoshui, "A Turn Around from Criticism of 'Leftism' to Opposition to Rightism—One Individual's Experiences and Reflections on Chinese Communist High Level Infighting," *Ming Bao Yuegan* (Hong Kong), 27(9) (March 9, 1989), 312, in JPRS 89: 055 (May 30, 1989), 6–18. Also see Wang, *Zhihui de tongku* (The Pain of Wisdom), 331.

[22] Wang, "A Turn Around from Criticism," 9. Wang cites the *Hongqi* editorial, "Strengthen the Party's Centralized Leadership," *Hongqi*, 11 (November 1, 1972), translated in SCMM 741–2 (November 27–December 4, 1972), 2–8, which criticized "… the crimes of Liu Shaoqi and other swindlers" [code for Lin Biao] for advocating "slavery and anarchism" in an attempt to "corrupt the proletarian Party character and undermine the Party's centralized leadership." For another example of such earlier criticism of Lin Biao for anarchism in the Maoist- controlled journal *Hongqi*, see Xiao Pin, "Be Open and Aboveboard, and Don't Intrigue and Conspire," *Hongqi*, 3 (March 1, 1972), in SCMP 725–6 (April 3–10, 1972), 35.

Bao that took *Renminribao* to task for the pernicious influence on the provincial press of its articles criticizing anarchism.[23] This criticism of his paper led Wang, on his own initiative, but also at the suggestion of his editor Hu Jiwei to write to Mao himself to ask whether or not the anti-anarchist articles Wang had published were proper. Mao ruled against Wang, and probably under the Chairman's orders, on December 19 Premier Zhou Enlai called in Wang to a meeting at the Great Hall of the People along with members of what would become the Gang of Four to get Wang to end the campaign. By the end of this nearly 6-hour meeting, which lasted well into the early hours of the next day, Wang realized that he had inadvertently put Zhou in a very difficult position since Zhou himself had earlier declared that he was "inclined to agree" to thoroughly denounce "… the ultra-leftist trend of thought and anarchism stirred up by the Lin Biao anti-party clique"[24] without then knowing that it was Mao himself in October in a private conversation with Yao Wenyuan and others who decided that criticism of anarchism was inappropriate. Wang reported that at the December meeting, Zhou, though admitting that he himself had earlier criticized people for anarchism, claimed that he only meant to refer to those who interfered in foreign policy as anarchists and "not to the entire line of Lin Biao," speaking in what Wang viewed as an uncharacteristically haphazard and at times incoherent manner that suggested to Wang that "the premier was saying things that ran counter to his convictions," including saying things critical of Wang, as evidently ordered by Mao, while trying to protect him.[25] Thus, as Wang belatedly realized, the dispute over whether or not to label Lin Biao as an anarchist became inextricably wound up in palace intrigue involving the struggles of the Maoists around Jiang Qing to replace Zhou Enlai and other top leaders of the Party, struggles that were to increase a few years later.[26]

Denunciations of Anarchism during the Hua Guofeng-Early Deng Xiaoping Years

The use of denunciations of anarchism to reinforce their Maoist credentials while limiting Maoist policies in practice is especially true of those Party elites in the Hua Guofeng era (1977–9), which could represent the ultimately failed rule of a Stalinist–Maoist coalition. As such, Hua's coalition had an interest in denouncing full Maoism as illegitimate anarchism, which they wanted to discard while retaining the supposed essence of the Mao line of the Cultural Revolution. During the spring and summer of 1977 especially, articles appeared in the official Chinese press criticizing the Gang of Four in much the same terms as Lin and company were criticized in 1972, that is, as opportunists who only fanned up the wind of anarchism in order to usurp Party and state power.[27] After that point the main tone of criticism of the Gang shifted to other directions,

[23] Wang, 9–10.

[24] Wang Nianyi, *Da dongluande niandai* (A Decade of Great Upheaval), 450, citing a classified document from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This account is summarized in MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, 355.

[25] Wang Ruoshui, "A Turn Around from Criticism," in JPRS, 12–15.

[26] Ibid., 17. Other accounts concur that this incident involving Wang Ruoshui and the quashing of the criticism of Lin Biao as anarchist was a precursor of the Maoist attacks on Zhou Enlai in 1975. See Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, *The End of the Maoist Era: Chinese Politics during the Twilight of the Cultural Revolution, 1972–1976*, 63–5, and Yan Jiaqi and Gao Gao, *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural* Revolution, 415–16.

[27] See especially "The Aim of the 'Gang of Four' in Fanning Up Anarchism is to Usurp Party and State Power," in *Guangmingribao* March 10, 1977, in Survey of the PRC Press 6308 (March 28, 1977), and Zhang Wenhuan, "The 'Gang

even to the contradictory charges that the Gang tried to establish a "fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie," but the earlier charges culminated in speeches by Party Chairman and Premier Hua Guofeng and the top general and later Chairman of State Ye Jianying that mentioned the problem that "secret factions" in the Party were spreading, among other things, the "harm of anarchism," and a plank in the "General Program" of the CCP Constitution adopted in August 1977, which noted the need for the whole Party to "oppose all splittist and factional activities, oppose the independence from the Party, and oppose anarchism."[28]

The denunciations of anarchism did not end with the fall of the Gang of Four.

The criticism of anarchism that survived in the late 1970s perhaps helps demonstrate the early Deng era as representing the ascendancy of a Titoist– Stalinist coalition, with Deng uneasily maintaining a balance between representatives of both lines and with the Stalinists implicitly threatening to return to a neo-Maoist coalition. In this regard, Ye Jianying's continuing denunciation of anarchism in 1978 especially represents the continuity of the Hua and early Deng eras. Ye criticized the Gang of Four in 1978 for "…

incit[ing] anarchism and slander[ing] the socialist legal system and every kind of rational rules and regulations as revisionist and capitalist in their vain attempt to throw our proletarian country into chaos and seize power in this chaos," an attempt that he would oppose by strengthening the "socialist legal system."[29] As criticism of the Gang for "ultra-leftist" excesses continued in the official press, now even in the former Maoist bastion of the Party magazine *Hongqi*, the tone of the articles reflected Ye's line about the need to restore economic order and a socialist legal system, a point on which the unity of the rising Titoist–Stalinist coalition of Deng would hinge.

Especially at the beginning of market-based economic reform in 1979–80, the attack on ultra-leftism as a whole was initially intensified, as Joseph notes.[30] Though Joseph does not himself mention examples, after 1979 those who denounced anarchism most often were people in the Party-state elite who had opposed Maoist policies for their undermining of state control and Stalinist-style central planning. Such people denouncing anarchism in this period did so to undermine intellectual critics inside and outside the Party who tried to take advantage of Titoist economic reforms to push for political liberalization. For example, in late 1978 and early 1979 denunciations appeared in the official press that tried to link Democracy Wall activists to the activities of the Gang of Four, both supposedly representing "anarchists who, masquerading under the banner of democracy, caused worsening economic conditions and social instability."[31] The PRC Minster of Education directly tied the "small number of students [who] practice anarchism in defiance of organization and discipline" presumably in the Democracy Wall movement to the

---

of Four' and the Bakunin Bandit Gang," in *Renminribao*, April 14, 1977, in SPRCP 6332, May 4, 1977, 110–16. Also see "*Si ren bang" fandui "guan ka ya" jiushi shandong wuzhengfuzhuyi* (The Gang of Four in Opposing "Guan, Ka, and Ya," Were Merely Instigating Anarchism).

[28] See Hua, "Speech at the 2nd National Conference on Learning from Dazhai in Agriculture," *Peking Review*, 1 (January 1 1977), reprinted in CQ 69 (March 1977): 247, Ye, "Speech at the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of the PLA," in CQ 72 (December 1977), 860, and "Constitution of the Communist Party of China," in *Peking Review*, 36 (September 2, 1977), 17.

[29] Ye, "Report to the 5th National People's Congress," March 1, 1978, in CQ 74 (June 1978), 462.

[30] Joseph, 231–44.

[31] As noted in CQ 126 (June 1991), 228. Such national articles were also reflected in the provincial press. See FBIS: China Report (hereafter FBIS) February 28, 1979, J1 and March 13 1979, H1.

"corruption and poisoning of [their] minds by Lin Biao and the Gang of Four,"[32] a theme that continued in national and provincial press articles throughout 1979 and into 1980. Once again, the culmination of this campaign was a speech by Ye Jianying to mark the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the CCP where he spoke of the need to eliminate "factionalism, anarchism, and ultra-individualism." A report on his speech noted further the need to guard against the ideology of "ultra-democracy," a habit of the "small producers" that once again was caused by the "spoiling of the social atmosphere" by Lin Biao and the Gang of Four, which spread the "ideology of anarchism and extreme individualism … among some people,"[33] a line that was repeated widely in other press outlets from November 1979 to early 1980.[34] The criticism of the "anarchism" of Democracy Wall activists as a form of bourgeois individualism counterposed with the need to achieve "stability, unity, and socialist democracy" would of course presage the many campaigns against bourgeois liberalization in the 1980s.

After the repression of the Democracy Wall extra-Party critics in 1979–80 with Deng's institution of the "Four Cardinal Principles," the debate shifted to inside the Party, where intellectuals within the Titoist side of the coalition tried to call for political reforms, while their Stalinist opponents, led by Hu Qiaomu, continued to push against bourgeois liberalization in the name of preserving "socialist spiritual civilization." As reflected in denunciations of anarchism, this struggle included a debate between Ma Jia of the Titoist camp who argued in 1980 for the need to "scientifically" criticize anarchism while clearly distinguishing it from real democracy,[35] versus Gu Zhaoji of the Stalinist camp who wrote an article at the same time that wasn't published until 1982 which argued that anarchists were indeed exponents of "extreme democracy" and that trying to "scientifically" distinguish what constitutes anarchism would lead people to "not find any traces of anarchism at all," leading people to oppose bureaucratism without opposing anarchism.[36]

This brief debate reflected the Stalinist push against bourgeois liberalization in 1981–2 that had begun with official criticism of Bai Hua's screenplay "Bitter Love." Included in this criticism were denunciations of the script for, as one author put it, "the erroneous trend of thought of anarchism, ultra-individualism and the bourgeois liberalism to the extent of negating the four basic principles."[37] Such denunciations were repeated in the provincial press until early 1982 and were revived in 1983–4 after the Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign. This campaign was again led by Stalinists such as Hu Qiaomu against what Friedman labels the democrats inside the Party, as typified by Wang Ruoshui,[38] whose thought we will examine in Chapter 9. Hu denounced Wang's use of the Marxist concepts of humanism and alienation in a long article in *Hongqi* that was reprinted in *Renminribao*, where he explicitly charged that those "well-intentioned" comrades

[32] Xinhua, March 30, 1979, in FBIS, April 2, 1979, L20.

[33] Ye, *Beijing* Review 40 (1979), reprinted in CQ 81 (March 1980), 158; Hou Jun, "Manifestations of Ultra-democracy Must Be Stamped Out," *Gongrenribao*, October 16, 1979, in JPRS 74992 (January 24, 1980).

[34] For example, see Hua Song, "Remove the Disturbances of Anarchism," *Hongqi*, 2 (January 1980): 23–6.

[35] For example, see Ma Jie, "Criticism of Anarchism Must be Scientific," *Renminribao*, January 31, 1980, 5, in JPRS 75189 (February 20, 1980), 22 and Zhang Wenhuan, "Commenting on Stirner, Patriarch of Anarchism," Renminribao February 7, 1980, 5, in FBIS, February 21, 1980, L 16–19.

[36] Gu Zhaoji, "How to Understand the Scientific Nature of Criticism of Anarchism," *Renminribao*, May 3, 1982, 3, in FBIS, May 7, 1982, K 22–3.

[37] Commentator, "The Four Basic Principles Brook No Violation: Commenting on the Film Script 'Bitter Love,'" *Jiefangjunbao*, April 20, 1981, in FBIS, May 21, 1981, K 13.

[38] See Friedman, "The Societal Obstacle to China's Socialist Transition," 164–71.

who pushed the concept of alienation in effect gave cover to those who called explicitly for "the abolition of all social and political power, all social and economic organization, all ideological authority, all centralism and discipline, and have openly propagated anarchism, absolute freedom, and extreme individualism."[39]

Such denunciations were echoed in numerous articles in 1984 which stressed the need to completely negate "extensive democracy" and tried to link anyone calling for democracy to the "anarchism" fanned up in the Cultural Revolution. As one article in *Hongq* i put it, "while practicing anarchism, some anarchists and their apologists will talk at length as if they are 'fighting for democracy.'"[40] While academic articles in this period could discuss the early twentieth-century Chinese anarchist movement more dispassionately and even find in it some progressive elements, Stalinist critics around Hu Qiaomu continued to try to link those in the 1980s who called for democracy with the evil of anarchism, including in the aftermath of student protests in 1986, when an article in *Renminribao* again linked the protestors to those who pushed the concept of extensive democracy during the Cultural Revolution, which the article claimed would in fact only lead to anarchism and the violation of the rights of the majority.[41]

This attempt to link the student-led democracy movement to the turmoil (*dongluan*) of the Cultural Revolution was also used after the Tiananmen student protests of 1989. The problem for the regime, however, in applying the label of anarchism to the student movement was that the student leaders, even after the severe provocations of May and June launched by the government, at most called for electoral democracy and human rights and not the Paris Commune style mass democracy advocated in the Cultural Revolution. This fact of course did not stop the government from trying to draw a link between the Tiananmen protests and the Cultural Revolution. As one commentator argued in an article published jointly in *Jiefangjunbao* and *Renminribao* in the same month as the crackdown on the student protesters, The university students today are all young people around 20 years old.

They have not personally experienced the disaster and pains suffered by the state and the people, including the young students, caused by social disturbances during the Cultural Revolution. At that time, many Red Guards who were so young had gone to the streets to advocate speaking out freely, airing views fully, holding great debates, and writing big character posters, established ties and took part in criticism and struggles. As a result, our country was led to a nationwide great turmoil of civil war and our national economy was on the verge of collapse …

… Young students [of the Tiananmen movement in 1989] originally intended to solve problems through demonstrations and petitions, but the result was the spread of anarchy.[42]

This line continued into August, as in one article in *Jiefangjunbao* that applied Lenin's old label of "leftist infantile disorder" in order to argue once again that the student movement would

[39] Hu Qiaomu, "On the Problem of Humanism and Alienation," *Hongqi*, 2 (1984), 26; also in *Reniminribao*, January 27, 1984, cited in Schram, "Economics in Command?: Ideology and Policy since the Third Plenum, 1978–84," CQ 99 (September 1984), 446.

[40] Zhai Sishi, "Anarchism is Diametrically Opposed to Socialist Democracy," *Hongqi*, 20 (October 21, 1984), 37, in JPRS 84–023 (December 10, 1984), 64.

[41] *Renminribao*, December 25, 1986, in BBC, *Summary of World Broadcasts, Far East* 8452, cited in Robert Ash, "Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation," CQ 109 (March 1987), 156.

[42] Zheng Yanshi, "A Post-Rebellion Reflection—Ant Attempt to Analyze the Question 'Why Did the Development of the Situation Go Against the Students' Good Intentions?" *Jiefangjun Bao* and *Renminribao*, June 21, 1989, in FBIS 89–119 (June 22, 1989), 13.

result in "anarchy" if the country moved too hastily towards implementing democracy.[43] Similarly, another official commentator argued that if people pushed for democracy beyond China's "national conditions" during the "initial period of socialism" when China is still in a time of low levels of education, literacy, and development and "…

when many people are still preoccupied by the daily toil for basic survival" then "it [would be] impossible to expect from them a high degree of democratic participation. Even if a so-called democracy is forcibly implemented, interference from various factors will give rise to individualism, factionalism and anarchy, and lead to de facto non-democracy and even chaos."[44] In contrast to trampling on human rights and the promotion of "anarchist thinking" by Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four" during the Cultural Revolution, it was the Deng-era regime, yet another commentator argued while denouncing the program of exiled Tiananmen student leaders and reform intellectuals, that had reversed the verdicts on tens of thousands of people persecuted during the Mao era and restored the rule of law, thus demonstrating the "iron-clad fact of [the state] respecting people and caring for people…

."[45] In criticizing the calls of intellectual allies of the students within the Party such as Yan Jiaqi for deepening market reforms as the same as "putting the economic system on a capitalist basis as an appendage to international capital," this article perhaps demonstrates a point when Titoist reform in the Deng Xiaoping era was stalled and some Maoist, anti-imperialist rhetoric reappeared, threatening a shift to a Stalinist–neo-Maoist coalition. This harsh line as applied to denunciations of student protests culminated in a speech by CCP General Secretary Jiang Zemin in October 1989, reinforced in an interview with the PRC Minister of Justice in November, that stressed the need to take as the main task opposing those who advocated "ultra-democracy and anarchism."[46]

PRC Denunciations of Anarchism, 1992–present

Even after Titoist economic reforms returned to the forefront after 1992 with Deng Xiaoping's trip south to visit the special economic zones, and as the threat of a shift to a Stalinist–Maoist coalition receded, denunciations of anarchism nevertheless continued. To pick just a few examples, first in 1995, probably in response to academic calls for political reform, *Renminribao* published an article reviving Deng Xiaoping's 1979 warning that talking of "abstract democracy" would "inevitably lead to serious spreading of extreme democratization and anarchism, total sabotage of the political situation of stability and unity, and complete failure of the four modernizations."[47] In 1999 and 2000 the PRC press denounced the founder of the Falungong spiritual/healing movement, Li Hongzhi, as someone who "hated, negated, and undermined our socialist

[43] Xinhua, August 19, 1989, citing an article by Xiao Yi *in Jiefangjunbao*, in FBIS 89–160 (August 21, 1989), 30.

[44] Wang Guofa, "Democracy Should Not Go Beyond Social Development," *Liaowang*, 32 (August 7, 1989), in FBIS 89–160 (August 21, 1989), 32–3.

[45] Zhen Yu, "A Program Vainly Attempting to Practice Capitalism in China— Commenting on the Program of the 'Democratic China Front,'" *Liaowang* (Overseas Edition), 43 (October 23, 1989), in FBIS 89–212 (November 3, 1989), 18.

[46] Wang Pei, "Resist the Ideological Trend of Ultra-Democracy and Anarchism: An Interview with Cai Cheng, Minister of Justice," *Jingjiribao*, November 1, 1989, 1, in FBIS, November 17, 1989, 21–2.

[47] Zhou Xirong, "On Socialist Democracy: Making a Clear Distinction between Socialist Democracy and Parliamentary Democracy," *Renminribao*, April 16, 1995, 9, in FBIS, June 14, 1996, 114, citing Deng Xiaoping, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles" (March 30, 1979), in Deng, *Selected Works*, 184.

state power" and to Falungong as a troublemaking group which is "anti-science, anti-humanity, anti-society, and anarchistic"[48]

and as an "evil cult" that carried out activities that similar to "anarchist trends and factions of all kinds [which] have occurred in history."[49] In 2000, in response to very moderate demands of the democracy movement in Hong Kong, the CCP-controlled press there complained that "pure populism and anarchism can only throw Hong Kong into chaos…"[50] In 2003, countering Taiwan President Chen Shui-bien's call for an eventual referendum on a new Taiwan constitution, the Hong Kong Communist press denounced the "so- called 'popular will' [of] the Taiwan authorities … as none other than 'populism' or 'anarchism.'"[51] In 2004, against international and some domestic demands for increased respect for human rights, a PRC functionary claimed that "respect and safeguards for human rights in an isolated and abstract sense .

.. could lead to anarchism and extreme individualism in practice and bring disaster to the state, society, and the people."[52] In July of 2008, even after the defeat of Chen Shui-bien and the election of the KMT's Ma Ying-jeou as president in Taiwan, the same Beijing-controlled press in Hong Kong denounced the continuing efforts of the Taiwanese opposition to carry out "Taiwan-style democracy" that would dare to "directly criticize any official, even top leaders" and "directly expose the corrupt officials and lawbreakers via the media" as "classic anarchy and personal liberalism!"[53] Finally, also in 2008, in response to calls for "returning power to the people" at an academic conference marking the thirtieth anniversary of the beginning of the Deng-era reforms, the Communist press in Hong Kong denounced this call as possibly leading "to the evil path of anarchism." As one article concluded, "unrestrained talk about 'returning power to the people' will not only mislead the people with the impression that they do not need the government but will mislead them into thinking that the government had been abusing its power and now needs to rectify its ways."[54]

Conclusion

In effect, the leaders of China's Leninist Party-state in both the Cultural Revolution and the reform era turned the label of anarchism into a cultural meme that could be wielded against anyone who dared decry the growth of a new Communist Party elite ruling for itself, or to call for any real degree of democracy and individual freedom. In the end, therefore, the criticism of anarchism in the PRC ironically helps prove the essential point of the anarchist critique of Marxism. That is, regardless of important differences among themselves, the very agreement of

[48] Xinhua, July 21, 2000, in FBIS, July 24, 2000.

[49] Special Commentator, "Absurd Heresy and Evil Motives: On the Anti-Scientific, Anti-Mankind, Anti-Social, and Anti-Government Essence of Falungong," *Renminribao* August 18, 1999, 1, in FBIS, August 19, 1999, 0818.

[50] "Hong Kong Is Our Home; Stability Must Be Cherished," *Wen Wei Po*, July 17, 2000, in FBIS, July 25, 2000, 0717.

[51] Li Jiaquan, "'Holding Referendum' Means Nothing But 'Taiwan Independence,'" *Ta Kung Pao*, November 8, 2003, in FBIS, November 13, 2003, 1108.

[52] Dong Yunhu, "Quanmian zhunquede linhui bawo he guanche shishi guojia zunzhong he baozhang renquande xianfa yuanze" (Completely and Accurately Understand, Grasp, and Implement the Constitutional Principle of the State Respecting and Safeguarding Human Rights), *Renminribao*, May 11, 2004, 10, in FBIS, June 3, 2004, 0511.

[53] Li Jiaquan, "On Taiwan's Political Situation after the General Elections on 20 May," *Wen Wei Po* online, July 20, 2008, in World News Connection 985, accession number 265700670.

[54] Liu Tzu-lu, "'Returning Power to the People' Not a Good Slogan," *Wen Wei Po*, October 23, 2008, in *World News Connection* (FBIS) 985, accession number 270451202.

top leaders of all Leninist factions to condemn as anarchists any democrats within their coalition as well as any critics outside of the Party who argued that the state may act at times in its own interests and not just for the economic class it supposedly represents, itself helps to remove a check on increasing state autonomy and aids the continuing survival of Leninist state despotism.

8. Extra-Party neo-anarchist critiques of the state in the PRC

Introduction

This chapter and the succeeding one examine various "neo-anarchist" critiques of the Leninist state in the PRC, from the early years of the Cultural Revolution to the beginning of the Tiananmen protests. The label of neo-anarchist in this book refers not to self-proclaimed "post-modern" anarchist critiques but to anyone in China who criticizes the Leninist state using the simple, basic, but powerful view shared by all kinds of anarchists (contradictory as they might be on their own positive agendas), namely, that the state rules for itself when it can, not for classes, interest groups, a mass of individuals, or the whole community. The term "neo-anarchist" is adapted from analysts who apply the label "neo-Marxism" to those thinkers who find the Marxist class paradigm useful without necessarily being Communists. The references to neo- anarchism, then, in these chapters refer to a kind of negative elite theory similar to the "iron law of oligarchy" of Roberto Michels, whose classic book *Political Parties* is perhaps still the greatest work employing a neo-anarchist paradigm.[1]

In that work, Michels gave full credit to anarchist thinkers as "the first to insist upon the hierarchical and oligarchical consequences of party organization,"[2] while at the same time at key points in his book pointing out that anarchists themselves often departed from this basic critique, as when some anarchists supported hierarchy in economic and in revolutionary organization.[3] Michels himself, though a member of the German Social Democratic Party, was heavily involved in a syndicalist group within that party and was also deeply influenced by earlier anarchist and anarcho-syndicalist thinkers.[4] In his positive program he supported the necessity of forms of representative democracy, while maintaining his belief in the need for direct democratic institutions and new mass democratic "waves" as would-be checks on the tendency of democracies to constantly develop new "aristocratic forms." Michels' critique of bureaucratic organizations starting to work for their own interests instead of those of their constituents is mostly focused on political party organization, especially that of democratic socialist parties, rather than the state as a whole. Nevertheless, what makes Michels' argument such an outstanding example of the neo-anarchist critique is that he focuses not on their economic and "bourgeois" class privileges as the main factors in causing party leaders to develop interests divorced from their followers, but on their interests in maintaining their own power and in perpetuating their organizations. As we will see below, the focus on institutional as opposed to economic interests as leading to a "new class" of

[1] Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy.*

[2] Ibid., 325.

[3] Ibid., 326–7.

[4] Wolfgang Mommsen, "Roberto Michels and Max Weber: Moral Conviction Versus the Politics of Responsibility," Chapter 6 of Mommsen, *The Political and Social Theory of Max Weber*, 87.

elites helped to differentiate genuine neo-anarchist critiques in China from official Maoist discourse. In any case, if organizations without full monopoly on the legitimate use of violence can become autonomous from their constituents and lose sight of their original mission (the most prominent example in recent years being the Roman Catholic Church's failure to protect its followers from predatory sexual abuse from priests), how much more likely and virulent is it for states to become autonomous from their subjects and develop into oligarchies? Michels himself in his later career became suspicious of even direct democracy as a sufficient check on oligarchic tendencies and thus came to value individual heroic leaders as the best way to prevent oligarchy. That ironically Michels later in life became an apologist for Italian fascism should not denigrate his basic critique in *Political Parties*, but only help to demonstrate that even great neo-anarchist thinkers may have their own flaws and limitations based on their own particular situations in time and space that may contradict their basic anarchist critique of the state. In examining these dissident Chinese thinkers in these last two chapters, we will also note the flaws in their ideas about how to overcome oligarchy that contradict a full anarchist critique.

The main limitation of Chinese neo-anarchist thinkers was that they had to protect themselves from the revenge of the Leninist Party-state, thus their critiques were necessarily based on secondary Marxist concepts of the state.

As opposed to Marx's primary class paradigm of the state, these Marxist concepts all contained what Bob Jessop calls a "parasitic" view of the state, or what Robert Alford terms the "pathological" version of elite theory.[5] These ideas were often very similar to those of East European Marxist dissidents who presented explicit "new class" arguments about the Leninist state, most famously Milovan Djilas, Georgy Konrad, and Ivan Szelenyi, and members of the Yugoslav "Praxis" group such as Svetozar Stojanovic.[6]

While having the advantage of being able to claim Marxist credentials, using these secondary Marxist concepts that they themselves would never label "neo-anarchist" still leaves such intellectuals open to the standard Marxist attack on them as being influenced by the "ultra-leftist" and "petite-bourgeois" ideas, including those of anarchism, charges which such Marxist democrats must take pains to deny. Again, this chapter and the one that follows do not claim that Chinese thinkers who criticize the Leninist state are indeed full anarchists themselves or even much influenced by various positive anarchist visions for future society, but that they come on their own to a neo-anarchist critique based on the oppressive weight of the existing Leninist state that they see and feel every day.

This chapter first examines the dissident Red Guard group Shengwulian, which during the Cultural Revolution took advantage of Mao's seeming new class argument and early praise of

[5] Jessop specifically states that the anarchists had a "parasitic view of the state" while Alford fits nineteenth-century anarchist thought within the "utopian" version of what he calls the "class" paradigm of the state. See Bob Jessop, "Recent Theories of the Capitalist State," 353–73; Robert Alford, "Paradigms of Relations between State and Society," reprinted in Hall, 67. In this and the following chapter we revise Alford's analysis by separating anarchism's critique of the state from some anarchists' revolutionary program, and thus instead locate the critique within Alford's "pathological" version of the "elitist" paradigm.

[6] Milovan Djilas, *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System;* Gyorgy Konrad and Ivan Szelenyi, *Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*; Svetozar Stojanovic, "Marxism and Democracy: The Ruling Class or the Dominant Class?" For summaries of new class arguments of Eastern European dissidents as well as West European and American intellectuals, see Gil Eyal, "The Idea of the New Class," Chapter 1 of Eyal, *The Origins of Post-Communist Elites: From Prague Spring to the Breakup of Czechoslovakia*, 1–34; and Bill Martin and Ivan Szelenyi, "The Three Waves of New Class Theory."

the Paris Commune to condemn the rule of the "Red Capitalist class." Next we examine the debate between Chen Erjin and Wang Xizhe, who at the end of the Cultural Revolution and beginning of the reform era in different ways came to see the Party-state as becoming a new bureaucratic class. In the next chapter, we will examine Wang Ruoshui and other Communist Party intellectuals during the early reform years of the 1980s who, based on the inhumanity of the Cultural Revolution, resurrected the early Marxist ideas of alienation and humanism to argue that the proletariat could become alienated from the socialist state. The final type of neo-anarchist thought examined in the final chapter is that contained in the Chinese Asiatic mode of production debate of the early to mid-1980s, a time when some Chinese historians argued implicitly that the Leninist state was becoming a despotic entity ruling for itself rather than for the proletariat.

While presenting the neo-anarchist aspects of these Chinese thinkers, these two chapters try not to lose sight of their actual life situations, in which they struggled to find openings for dissent while keeping their jobs and ability to publish, and how they strained to keep the emoluments and minor privileges offered to cooperative intellectuals by the Leninist Party-state from blunting their neo-anarchist critiques.

Shengwulian, Yang Xiguang, and Dissident Maoism

The first major neo-anarchist critique of the state in the PRC occurred during the Cultural Revolution, which the current PRC regime officially says lasted from 1966 to 1976. Taking advantage of openings within official ideology that Party Chairman Mao Zedong himself at first seemed to initiate, as we saw in Chapter 6, groups of young Red Guards, junior high to college age youth whom Mao had called upon in 1966 to "bombard the headquarters" of the Party and State to oppose the "new bourgeoisie in the Party," began to take his call a step further to raise a genuine neo-anarchist critique of the state as a ruling class in and for itself.

As we noted in Chapter 6, during the early days of the Cultural Revolution, Mao himself had seemed to support Paris Commune style mass democracy as a way to oppose a growing "new class" within the Party-state elite. As we also saw in that chapter, many observers have long noted that in fact Mao stopped well short of a genuine new class critique similar to that of Milovan Djilas but instead only criticized a "small handful" of people within the Party who were taking China back on the capitalist road. Mao almost always argued that they did so not because of their special privileges or interests as state power holders, but because of remaining economic inequalities in society. In other words, he only opposed those arguing for modest market reforms and stopped short of calling for a struggle against a new power elite. But even before the Cultural Revolution, Mao had made clear to other Party leaders the limits of his anti-bureaucratic critique:

> … The Communist Party is a prestigious one. Don't bring up any idea of a stratum … this will frighten and offend too many people … It's enough to call them just [isolated] elements or cliques …[7]

In 1968, after factionalism between competing Red Guard organizations broke out across the country, we saw in Chapter 6 that Mao quickly reemphasized this anti-new class view, denouncing Paris Commune style forms as "extreme anarchy" and calling upon Red Guard units to accept

[7] Mao, *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui!* (1969), 582–3, n. 22, translated in Anita Chan, "Images of China's Social Structure: The Changing Perspectives of Canton Students," 316, n. 25.

in their place the so-called three-in-one revolutionary committees made up of members of mass organizations, returned bureaucrats who had been "remolded," and members of the army, who were to take up leadership within the committees. In response, some members of Red Guard groups felt betrayed and tried to maintain the Paris Commune model.

The leading example of such a "dissident radical" group, to use Andrew Walder's term,[8] was the organization known as "Shengwulian," an abbreviation of the Chinese title for "Hunan Provincial Proletarian Revolutionaries Great Alliance Committee."[9] This group of "more than twenty loosely affiliated Red Guard organizations"[10] managed to publish at least three documents before they were attacked and suppressed by the regime. Under the pretense that it was not "Comrade Mao" (by not referring to him as Chairman Mao, perhaps demonstrating their ultra-egalitarian, anti-bureaucratic ideology) but other reactionary forces in the Party who had tried to abolish the Paris Commune-style models and replace them with the Revolutionary Committees, the group ignored the real limits to Mao's new class argument that we examined in Chapter 6. The group argued in its program that Mao's real goal in the Cultural Revolution was for "proletarian revolutionaries to overthrow the newborn and yet decadent privileged stratum of the bourgeoisie … and smash the old state machinery which serves the [new] privileged class of the bourgeoisie."[11] In its program, Shengwulian followed the official regime line that only a "very few" cadres took the capitalist road. Nevertheless, the group severely condemned the idea that the Cultural Revolution was only about criticizing the crimes of individual leaders and dismissing them from their offices instead of "overthrowing the privileged stratum and smashing the old state machinery." The group bitterly criticized as well the failure of the Cultural Revolution to even barely touch "the class root which gave birth to the reactionary line, and to the bureaucratic structure which served the revolutionary line."[12] Shengwulian's program pointed to the forming of Revolutionary Committees as merely a "reprint of the old political power" that was a reactionary departure from Mao's revolutionary theory. In effect, the group realized that the formation of Revolutionary Committees was the beginning of the end of the Cultural Revolution and the start of the reformation of the state machinery.

It was in its manifesto, "Whither China?," originally written in January 1968, that Shengwulian, under the leadership of a young Red Guard member who called himself Yang Xiguang, made its most radical and influential argument. Yang first detailed the history of the Cultural Revolution and what he saw as the betrayal of the "January Storm" 1967 upsurge of Red Guards by the representatives of China's "new bureaucratic bourgeoisie" in the "February Adverse Current" in

[8] Walder, "Cultural Revolution Radicalism," 58–61.

[9] For studies of the Shengwulian group and its suppression, see Klaus Mehnert, Peking *and the New Left: At Home and Abroad*; Peter Moody, Jr., *Opposition and Dissent in Contemporary China*, 202–9; and Jonathan Unger, "Whither China?: Yang Xiguang, Red Capitalists, and the Social Turmoil of the Cultural Revolution." The writings of Shengwulian are translated in these volumes, often based on the original translation of their writings by US government intelligence agencies. See especially the group's main manifesto, "Whither China?" *Guangyin Hongqi*, 5 (March 1968), translated in SCMP 4190 (June 4, 1968), 1–18, reprinted in revised form in Mehnert, 82–100. We will cite other writings of this group as well in this chapter.

[10] Unger, 22.

[11] Shengwulian, "Whither China?" translated in Mehnert; also see Shengwulian, "Shengwulian's Resolutions on Several Problems in the Current Hunan Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," *Dongfeng Chanbao* (East Wind Combat News) (Guangdong), 19 (February 29, 1968), based on resolutions passed by the preparatory group for Shengwulian on December 21, 1967, translated in Mehnert, 80.

[12] Shengwulian, "Our Program," *Guangyin Hongqi* (Guangdong Printing System Red Flag), 5 (March 1968), 3, translated in SCMP 4174 (May 9, 1968), 10–13; also translated in Mehnert, 75–6.

that same year. Yang on the surface tried to stay loyal to Mao by focusing on Premier Zhou Enlai, who, as the "chief representative of China's 'Red' capitalist class," was the person responsible for setting up the revolutionary committees, which to Yang amounted to the reinstatement of the bureaucrats and a usurpation of power.[13] Rather than the "small handful" of people in power taking the capitalist road, Yang argued that "90 per cent of the senior cadres had already formed a privileged class."[14] The masses of the January Storm represented the truly revolutionary class of the Cultural Revolution, and by their own revolutionary experiences came to see that, … this class of "Red" capitalists had entirely become a decaying class that hindered the progress of history. The relations between them and the people in general had changed from relations between the leaders and the led, to those between rulers and the ruled, and between exploiters and the exploited. From the relations between revolutionaries of equal standing, it had become a relationship between oppressors and he oppressed. The special privileges and high salaries of "Red" capitalists were built upon the foundation of oppression and exploitation of the broad masses of the people.[15]

Though Yang recognized that "Comrade Mao" had decided to delay the dream of establishing people's communes, thus at least tacitly acknowledging that Mao had acquiesced in the formation of revolutionary committees, Yang claimed that Mao's intent in his injunction to the People's Liberation Army to "support the left" was to carry out cultural revolution in the armed forces.

Thus, in perhaps his most radical statement, and the one that would ultimately get his group in trouble, Yang claimed that the "Red capitalist class" included not just civilian bureaucrats, but also members of the army:

> It is now seen that the present army is different from the people's army of before Liberation [i.e., before 1949]. Before Liberation, the army and the people fought together to overthrow imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism, and feudalism. The relationship between the army and the people was like that of fish and water [following Mao's famous phrase]. After liberation … some of the armed forces in the revolution have not only changed their blood-and-flesh relationship with the people that existed before Liberation but have even become tools for suppressing the revolution.[16]

Yang came to the conclusion that "any revolution must naturally involve the army," members of whom inevitably became part of the "Red capitalist class,"[17] and thus that "it was necessary to carry through to the end the Cultural Revolution in the field armies" as well as in the civilian bureaucracy.[18]

Going beyond a neo-anarchist critique of the existing state, Yang in 1968 called for a violent smashing of the new bureaucratic class in the Party, a revolution that would set up Paris Commune-style or early Russian soviet-type organizations of direct, mass democracy in the place of the corrupt bureaucratic state. People would have to be taught that the true purpose of the Cultural Revolution was not just the dismissal of officials and the "purging of individual capitalist roaders" but that the capitalist roaders were a class implacably opposed to the cultural revolution

[13] Shengwulian, "Whither China," translated in Mehnert, 87–8.
[14] Ibid., 85.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid., 89.
[17] Ibid., 86.
[18] Ibid., 91.

and thus that a violent social revolution would be necessary. In order to carry out such a violent revolution, the masses would have to reject the official militia organizations as well as the army and to seize arms themselves.[19]

Perhaps in the foreknowledge that anyone calling for such radical action in a Leninist Party-state would be denounced as favoring anarchism, Yang in "Whither China?" tried to distance himself from what he termed the "infantile leftist" doctrine of "one revolution" and from those who wanted to establish a full communist society immediately. He claimed that though a regime of the Paris Commune type was their goal, his group did not favor elimination of all class differences right away, but instead continued to see the need for stages in the revolution.[20]

Despite their weak attempts to distance themselves from "infantile leftists," the calls of Shengwulian and other dissident radicals for direct revolution and for extending class struggle into the army frightened the rest of the state elite, if not Mao himself, and led Mao to allow Zhou Enlai and other Party-state leaders to launch a campaign against "ultra-leftism" and anarchism, as we saw in the previous chapter. In this campaign, Mao and other Party leaders put pressure on the "establishment Maoists" to denounce the "extreme anarchism" of "ultra-leftists" in the country, as exemplified by Shengwulian, who claimed to be followers of the official Maoists. The establishment Maoists included Mao's wife Jiang Qing, Chen Boda, Mao's former secretary and first leader of the Cultural Revolution Group in the Party, and Kang Sheng, the secret police chief, all of whom would later fall after Mao's death in 1976 in the campaign against the "Gang of Four." In the earlier 1968 campaign against "ultra- leftism," Shengwulian's documents were published and widely distributed in order to have everyone denounce and repudiate them.[21] In effect, we saw that the establishment Maoists tried to use the campaign against "ultra-leftists" to legitimate their position and protect themselves from attack, but in retrospect one can see that this was a futile attempt since the campaign ultimately led to a wider purge of even official Maoists such as Chen Boda in 1970, just as Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng, and other establishment Maoists were later purged and themselves denounced as anarchists in 1976. The 1968 campaign then, as we saw in the previous chapter, was but one of many in the history of the PRC led by people who denounced as anarchist anyone who questioned whether the Party really ruled for the people, yet who themselves were later denounced as anarchists.

Though Yang Xiguang and other Shengwulian members were arrested and imprisoned, they had a profound influence on those members of the betrayed Red Guard generation who would later lead the Democracy Wall movement.

Wang Xizhe, a leader of that latter movement whom we will examine below, claimed that Shengwulian was the forerunner of what he called the "thinking generation" that began to question the official line that the Party represented the masses, even as Wang made clear that he disagreed with the group's critique of Zhou Enlai and by extension other reformist leaders such as Zhao Ziyang. In effect, Wang was arguing that whatever their great foresight and courage, groups like Shengwulian were too entrapped in Cultural Revolution language of violent class struggle and failed to see the need for rule of law and institutional checks and balances, reforms

[19] Ibid., 91–2.

[20] Ibid., 86, 98.

[21] For accounts of this campaign, see Unger, 29–32; Mehnert, 20–5; MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, 221–38; and Barry Burton, "The Cultural Revolution's Ultraleft Conspiracy: The 'May 16' Group."

that Wang and others in the Democracy Movement called for in the 1980s.[22] Without such a realization of the need for tolerance and treating people with humanity, Wang and others argued in the 1980s, and by calling for further class struggle and "smashing" of people in power, China's Red Guard generation was trapped in an endless cycle of denunciation and violence that at best would only continually recreate and reinforce a despotic ruling body standing over the people.

Yang Xiguang himself later came to agree with this point of view based on his observations of ordinary people during his 10 years in prison,[23] and under his original name "Yang Xiaokai" in fact became an advocate of market-based economic modernization and political reform, first after his release from prison in China and then as a noted classical economist teaching in Australia up till his death in 2004.[24] Even as he changed his political beliefs about how best to go about challenging state autonomy, in effect Yang never gave up his neo-anarchist critique of China's Leninist Party-state. Whether as a violent Red Guard faction leader or as a neo-classical economist, one could argue that he departed in different ways from a full positive anarchist vision; nevertheless, in both periods Yang viewed institutions as strongly tending to rule for themselves, not the people they were originally designed to serve, and the Communist Party of China was no exception.

Competing Dissident Visions of the New Class: Wang Xizhe and Chen Erjin

As noted above, many members of the self-proclaimed "thinking generation," which arose among educated and ex-Red Guards in the late stages of the Cultural Revolution and which reached its height in the Democracy Wall Movement of 1978–81, openly paid homage to Shengwulian and the dissident radicals of the early Cultural Revolution. Nowhere was this link clearer than in their ideas of the PRC as being dominated by a "bureaucratic class." The first salvo of this generation came in November 1974, during the later stages of the Cultural Revolution, when a group of young former Red Guards writing under the collective pseudonym of "Li Yizhe" (based on a combination of the names of three of its four members) put up a small character wall poster manifesto in downtown Guangzhou denouncing the "feudal fascist" nature of the "Lin Biao system" and the lack of true "socialist democracy" in China.[25]

Taking advantage of the state-sanctioned campaign then raging that denounced as counter-revolutionaries both the ancient philosopher Confucius and Lin Biao, the Vice-Chair of the Party, Vice-Premier, and Mao's designated successor, who had been killed in 1971 in a plane crash after supposedly leading a failed coup against Mao, Li Yizhe presented a more radical critique of the whole "Lin Biao system." Their critique was really aimed at the abuses of other establishment Maoists in the regime, later to be denounced as the "Gang of Four." In their wall poster essay,

[22] Wang, "Mao Zedong yu wenhua dageming" (Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution), in *Qishi niandai* (The Seventies), 133 (February 1981), translated in Anita Chan, Stanley Rosen, and Jonathan Unger (eds), *On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System: The Li Yizhe Debates*, 252 and cited in Unger, 4, 36, n. 20.

[23] See Yang Xiaokai and Susan McFadden, *Captive Spirits: Prisoners of the Cultural Revolution.*

[24] See Carol Lee Hamrin, "Yang Xiaokai," *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Christianity*, online at www.bdcconline.net/en/stories/y/yang-xiaokai.php/.

[25] Li Yizhe, "Guanyu shehuizhuyide minzhu yu fazhi" (On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System), in Qi Hao (ed.), *Guanyu shehuizhuyide minzhu yu fazhi* (On Socialist Democracy and Development), translated in Chan, Rosen, and Unger, *On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System:* 31–86.

"On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System," the group extended Mao's critique of the "new bourgeoisie in the Party" to argue that the "privileged stratum" of the Party led by Lin Biao attempted to "implement a feudalistic socialist-fascist despotism."[26] While starting from the argument that it was vestiges of economic inequality and special privileges that created this new class, Li Yizhe argued that this force of new gentry (*wenren*)[27] had vested *political* as well as economic interests and privileges[28] and existed objectively based on the "traditions formed by several thousands of years of feudal despotism" that "stubbornly maintain their stronghold over thought, culture, education, law, and virtually every other sphere of the superstructure."[29] In other words, while claiming to support the ideals of the Cultural Revolution in fighting counterrevolutionaries within the Party, Li Yizhe began a line that was to become official during the early reform era, that vestiges of feudalism, not a return to capitalism, were the main threat to China's socialist revolution.

In a preface to a later edition of their manifesto, the group claimed that members of this new "bourgeois class" maintained and expanded its power by "turning public into private [property]" and turning their power into "special economic and political privileges" that they "extended without limitation to their family, friends, and relatives." Furthermore, … they buttress and sustain a clique of "new nobility," a force which stands separate from the people and whose interests come into opposition with the people's.[30]

For Li Yizhe, the "preconditions for the Lin Biao system" were rooted in the "vicious practices of the dictatorial arbitrariness of the feudal era" that were "fixed firmly in the minds of the people as well as in those of the average members of the Communist Party."[31] The members of Li Yizhe at first took pains to claim loyalty to Chairman Mao and followed the line that Mao had long known and suspected Lin Biao's treacherous nature. Despite their claim to be upholding Maoist traditions of the Cultural Revolution, the group called for political reform and the rule of law, not mass violent upheaval, as the way to overcome feudal fascism.

Though initially supported by members of the Guangdong provincial leadership such as Zhao Ziyang, the later reformist national leader of the PRC who in the earlier era hoped to resist and overcome the establishment Maoists, the members of Li Yizhe were eventually arrested, tried, and imprisoned as the Maoists temporarily regained the upper hand. After the second return of Deng Xiaoping to the Party leadership in 1977–8, members of the Li Yizhe group were eventually released from prison and rehabilitated. Most of the group's members tried to affect the new regime from within, but one of its members, Wang Xizhe, almost immediately joined the new Democracy Wall movement that formed around the young workers and members of the Red Guard generation in Beijing and other major cities.[32]

---

[26] Ibid., 61.

[27] Ibid., 68.

[28] Ibid., 78.

[29] Ibid., 75.

[30] Ibid., 36.

[31] Ibid., 42.

[32] Besides the Chan et al. and Rosen works cited above, major studies of the Democracy Wall Movement that often contain translations of key texts include Kjeld Erik Brodsgaard, "The Democracy Movement in China, 1978–1979: Opposition Movements, Wall Poster Campaigns, and Underground Journals"; Chen Ruoxi, *Democracy Wall and the Unofficial Journals*; Gregor Benton, *Wild Lily, Prairie Fire: China's Movement for Democracy,Yan'an to Tian'anmen, 1942–1989*, 157–263; Stanley Rosen, "Guangzhou's Democracy Movement in Cultural Revolution Perspective"; James

In interviews around this time Wang Xizhe claimed to be the primary author of Li Yizhe's main essays,[33] a claim Li Zhengtian, another member of the group, partially contested.[34] In 1979, as Deng gained ascendancy within the post-Mao coalition at the top of the CCP and as remaining Maoists within the Party were about to be purged, Wang penned another essay under his name alone, which he termed the sequel to the group's original wall poster.

In this essay "Strive for the Class Dictatorship of the Proletariat"[35] Wang attempts to place the "feudal vestiges" argument about the bureaucratic class within a Marxist, class-based explanation. Wang claims that the rise of "the dictatorship of the advanced stratum of the proletariat"[36] is inevitable in a socialist nation striving to survive within a world capitalist economy. In such a nation, where, given the low level of development of the productive forces and thus the low "cultural level and capacity for management of the entire proletariat," Wang argues that "… it becomes necessary for the advanced stratum of the proletariat (the Communist Party) to carry out exclusively the management for their class." The danger in this division of labor, Wang claims, citing Lenin, is that "it depreciates the political power of the soviet and causes the revival of bureaucratism"[37] (here conveniently ignoring that Lenin only decried "bureacratism" and never claimed that the Soviet political elite constituted a new class). Though claiming to support the idea of rule by the dictatorship of the proletariat, Wang wants to ensure the rule of law and democratic accountability in order to gradually transform the "dictatorship of the Party … into the realization of the dictatorship of the proletariat by an organization of the entire proletarian class," by which he means workers' democratic control over management along the lines of what he claimed occurred in Yugoslavia. Without such practices, Wang warns, … this dictatorship of the Communist Party step by step sets itself free from the control of society and becomes a force above the society; the original advanced stratum of the proletariat (especially its leadership group) metamorphoses into the antithesis of the proletariat, and the original dictatorship of the advanced stratum of the proletariat becomes the dictatorship of "the Communist bureaucrats' holding up the sign post of the Communist Party."[38]

While publishing his manifesto in unofficial journals outside the control of the Communist Party, Wang remained firmly within what Kjeld Erik Brodsgaard termed the "socialist democratic" wing of the Democracy Wall Movement that, … favored democratic reform and progress within the framework of the present political and economic framework of China … [and thus] never really questioned the "socialist" foundation of China, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the leadership of the Party based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought.[39]

Though based outside the Party, from 1978 to 1980 Wang in effect hoped to form a pressure group that would help the reformers inside the Party overcome their bureaucratic opponents, and thus Wang took pains to demonstrate his Marxist credentials. Nevertheless, the critique of the "new bureaucratic ruling class" that Wang continued from the first Li Yizhe manifesto, which

---

Seymour, *The Fifth Modernization: China's Human Rights Movement, 1978–1979*, and James Tong (ed.), "Underground Journals in China, Parts I and II."

[33] Stanley Rosen (guest ed.), "The Rehabilitation and Dissolution of 'Li Yizhe'."

[34] Ibid., 111–13.

[35] Wang Xizhe, "Wei wuchanjieji zhuanzheng er nuli" (Strive for the Class Dictatorship of the Proletariat), translated in Chan, Rosen, and Unger, *On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System*.

[36] Ibid., 141.

[37] Ibid., 140.

[38] Ibid., 141–2.

[39] Brodsgaard, 768.

was in turn influenced by Shengwulian, became an accepted part of the discourse of all wings of the Democracy Wall movement. This would include what Brosgaard terms the "abolitionists," the wing of the movement (exemplified most famously by Wei Jingsheng) which rejected Marxist-Leninism and concluded that, far from trying to prove their loyalty to the Communist revolution, "the revolution should be reversed in order to destroy the systemic foundation of a new class, ruling in the name of socialism."[40]

In a long essay he wrote during the later years of the Cultural Revolution and published in one of the Democracy Wall journals in 1979, originally entitled "On Proletarian Democratic Revolution," another member of the "socialist democrat" wing of the Democracy Wall activists writing under the name of Chen Erjin tried consciously to continue the new class argument from the Cultural Revolution period.[41]

Unlike Wang, Chen did not reject Maoism and the Cultural Revolution but claimed to take over what he saw as its democratic spirit and goals while overcoming its inherent limitations. In the midst of his unique and idiosyncratic blend of Paris Commune-style mass democracy and Western influenced institutional checks and balances, in which Chen seemed to favor some kind of violent "second revolution" leading to the founding of a second communist party to compete with the original CCP, Chen launched his own critique of the "bureaucrat-monopoly privileged class."[42] In Chen's view, although the transformation to public ownership of the means of production was a crucial step forward in the socialist revolution, the change to public ownership also began a new, irreconcilable contradiction that would eventually necessitate a new revolution. This contradiction was between "the highly organized and politico-economically unicorporate social production under public ownership" (*gaodu zuzhide zheng-jing yitihua gongyouzhi shenghui shengchan*) and the coercive monopolization of power by the minority,[43] which Chen's translator explains as "a form of socialized production which proceeds under a form of public ownership, and is characterized by a fusion, into a single and highly-organized whole, of the formerly distinct spheres of the political and the economic."[44] In other words, similar here to Wang's argument, the "new bureaucratic class" arises as a side effect of socialism in a backward country, though Chen thinks this is a necessary step while Wang came to believe it was a tragic development, as we will see below.

While claiming to support the socialist revolution, Chen recognizes the irony that in the "workers state" the workers lost the right to change jobs or move where they want, and thus under this system "are no longer free but only 'workers within organization'" who thus "forfeit their free and independent nature."[45] Instead of a transition to a classless society, there has been a "coercive monopolization of power by a minority" that has but "established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old."[46] Although he incorporates the Cultural Revolution critique of a necessary, even violent struggle against this new class, Chen changes the terms from "capitalist roaders" within the Party to a struggle against privilege and

[40] Ibid., 769.

[41] Chen Erjin, *Lun wuchanjieji minzhu geming* (On Proletarian Democratic Revolution), *Siwu luntan* (April fifth Forum), 10 (June 1979), translated in Chen, *China: Crossroads Socialism: An Unofficial Manifesto for Proletarian Democracy, passim.*

[42] Ibid., especially Chapter 6, 110–19.

[43] Ibid., 87.

[44] Ibid., 87, translator's note.

[45] Ibid., 115.

[46] Ibid., 119.

revisionism within the Party and also changes the nature of the system that would replace Party dictatorship.

In a strange and idiosyncratic twist, Chen contrasts his idea of a necessary revolution against the new class with the ideas of those "reformists" within the Party who accepted public ownership and control by the "unicorporate elite" but would fight revisionism through such measures as mass campaigns to restrict "bourgeois right." As Munro makes clear in his introduction to Chen's manifesto, this means that in effect Chen identifies the establishment Maoists of the Cultural Revolution as the reformists, not their rivals favoring modest market reforms who were purged during that movement and later returned under Deng Xiaoping.[47] The "reformists," Chen argues—here prefiguring later denunciations of the Gang of Four—had a "petite bourgeois mentality" and may possess "revolutionary fanaticism" but "also may turn to the right ideologically." As members of the political elite, they "either remain subject to the restriction by the interests of the bureaucrat class, or else drool at the prospect of acquiring those vested interests themselves." As a result, … they are placed in extremely perilous situation, being not only divorced from the mass of the people but at the same time hated by the bureaucrat class as a whole. At the decisive juncture, the bureaucrat class will surely drown them in their own blood.[48]

By praising the workers' sense of mastery but not pushing for a thoroughgoing revolution against the new bureaucratic class, the "reformists" on the one hand serve in effect to negate "the rule of privilege; but on the other to reinforce 'unified leadership' by the bureaucrat class—thereby in effect reinforcing workers' slavelike position of unconditional subordination."[49]

In effect, one could argue, Chen was still taking the standpoint of the dissident Maoists who felt betrayed and sold out by Mao and his coterie for turning against the Paris Commune model of mass democracy late in the Cultural Revolution and for sending the dissident radicals to the countryside or to jail. On the other hand, Chen and the dissident Maoists remained suspicious of the rising coalition of Stalinist bureaucrats and market reformers of the Deng era. Chen's loyalty to a thorough neo-anarchist theory of the state perhaps helps explain his idiosyncratic positive program that combined calls for violent revolution against all wings of the bureaucratic class with a proposed new system of two communist parties alternating in power within a system of rule by law and checks and balances of three or more branches of government.

Whatever one thinks of the lack of anarchism in his positive program, Chen clearly recognized, it seems to this observer, that even a (to him necessary) violent revolution against the bureaucratic class would only eventually result in the formation of a new oligarchy as bad or worse than the old, and thus some kind of institutional checks on that potential oligarchy were needed.

Wang Xizhe reacted strongly against Chen's view that the class struggle and anti-bureaucratic language of the Cultural Revolution should be maintained. In his long essay written in 1980, "Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution," against "Comrade Jin Jun" (whom Robin Munro and others identify as Chen Erjin[50]), Wang argued that Mao and his establishment Maoist followers were neither reformists nor genuine socialist revolutionaries but only "agrarian socialists" intent on "placing the national economy under militaristic command" that would call for "a supreme

[47] Ibid., 26–7.
[48] Ibid., 123.
[49] Ibid., 124.
[50] Ibid., 48, n. 32.

militaristic authority."[51] From his attacks on Marshall Peng Dehuai, who had dared to criticize the disastrous and harmful failures of Mao' Great Leap Forward, to the brutal and violent purges of anyone who dared to criticize his policies in the Cultural Revolution, Mao was in effect a super-Stalinist autocrat:

> Mao Zedong's reactionary trait was precisely that he was not satisfied with the degree of autocracy and of centralization of power that had already been attained by the Stalinist-modeled Party and state. He demanded more autocracy and more centralization, but the democratic reform faction within the Party blocked his attempts. This obstruction developed to a degree so serious that it even threatened his continued ride on the neck of this Party as Chairman. Thereupon he decided to attack this Party, smash this Party, and establish a Mao Zedong Fascist Party.[52]

In other words, Wang argued that opponents of Mao within the Party who favored more rule of law and market reforms were indeed the genuine reformers, whatever their limits and however much resistance they faced from remaining Stalinist bureaucrats who favored ending the violent upheaval in society but not opening up the Leninist state. Mao, despite his few words against bureaucratism, in fact only used Paris Commune rhetoric to get rid of the reformers in the state who would check his power. The Cultural Revolution was not about mass democracy in the end, but about "worship of Mao Zedong as an individual"[53] and "revering Mao Zedong as an emperor."[54] Though at first tolerating Paris Commune style rhetoric, in the end Mao turned against Paris Commune models, ridiculed the idea of masses electing officials, and only desired to build up his own autocratic power against officialdom, akin to the efforts of Zhu Yuanzhang the late fourteenth-century peasant rebel who founded the Ming dynasty, or Hong Xiuquan the leader of the Taiping peasant rebellion of the nineteenth century,[55] both of whom became autocratic tyrants and launched violent purges of their officials.

Though perhaps his argument was not completely fair to Chen himself, since as we saw above Chen also criticized Maoists within the Party, Wang was trying to tell members of his own "thinking generation" that they had to make a complete break with the Manichean ideas of the Cultural Revolution of a violent struggle between good and bad class forces, and instead had to stress the rule of law, the art of compromise, and the gradual evolution of peaceful, democratic checks on authority. In effect, one could argue, despite his own lack of an anarchist positive program, Wang was calling for the neo-anarchist critique to be extended to Mao himself and the whole Maoist system of putting faith in top authority figures. Wang's weakness, from a full anarchist perspective, was his faith in a reformed single Party system, in which pressure from extra-Party movements such as the Democracy Wall would support reformist leaders in the Party against "opportunist bureaucrats." At one point in "Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution" Wang even seemed to downplay Deng's arrest of Wei Jingsheng, though Wang argued that Deng would come to regret turning against the "thinking generation."[56] Ironically, as the crackdown on Democracy Wall in-

[51] Wang, "Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution," in Chan et al., 195.

[52] Ibid., 206.

[53] Ibid., 226.

[54] Ibid., 218.

[55] Ibid., 236. Andrew and Rapp, *passim* make the same argument, acknowledging their debt to Wang Xizhe on page 9.

[56] Wang, 248.

tensified and Wang himself came under pressure (ultimately he too was arrested and imprisoned for many years before being exiled to the West), in a late 1980 interview Wang seemed to accept the need for some kind of multiparty checks on the Communist Party.[57] Even during a gradual transitional stage to fuller democracy, Wang argued, "there may arise a privileged stratum or clique which benefits from seeking to prolong this stage.

Such a stratum or clique will never trust the popular masses to stand on their own two feet and to exert their democratic rights on their own behalf,"[58] and thus he continued to see a need for pressure for democracy from the popular masses, perhaps similar to Michels' hope for continued democratic "waves" to check the tendency toward oligarchy.

In 1981 the crackdown on Democracy Wall activists extended beyond the "abolitionists" and started to include the socialist democrats, such as Wang and Chen, who were both eventually arrested and imprisoned. Perhaps recognizing that the end was near, in the late interview noted above, Wang now expressed agreement with Wei Jingsheng that "the fifth modernization," democracy, was needed in order to overcome "a new form of 'alienation'" under Stalinism, where "the people work more and more but have fewer and fewer democratic rights."[59] While reflecting his even bolder attitude and expressions of support for the rights of the abolitionists such as Wei, this statement also reflects Wang's links with Marxist intellectuals within the reform camp of the CCP who had also been returning to earlier concepts of Marx in order to call for political as well as economic reform. As in this interview, in his late article "The Direction of Democracy," Wang Xizhe also called for a "renaissance" of Marxism similar to that in Hungary and Yugoslavia by resurrecting long- ignored Marxist concepts such as alienation to build a "proletarian humanism" that would overcome the "obsolete" practices of Stalinism,[60] which included an unchecked Party-state. As the Democracy Wall activists were rounded up, it fell to the inner Party democrats to take up this neo-anarchist critique.

[57] See Wang, "An Interview with Wang Xizhe on the Democratic Movement," translated in abridged form as "Democracy and Chinese Communism," 65.

[58] Ibid., 66.

[59] Ibid., 38.

[60] Wang, "Minzhude fanxiang" (The Direction of Democracy), translated in *The Undercurrent*, 11.

9. Inner Party neo-anarchist critiques of the Leninist Party-state

Introduction

With the crackdown on Democracy Wall, Deng Xiaoping had the "four bigs" removed from the state constitution (the "right to speak out freely, air views fully, hold debates, and write big character posters") and in their place announced a new line of the four cardinal principles that all subjects were required to uphold, including Marxism–Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, socialism, the people's democratic dictatorship, and leadership of the CCP.[1]

For the rest of the 1980s, it fell to inner Party reform intellectuals (whom we will refer to as "Marxist democrats," to adapt the term of Edward Friedman[2]) to find ways to pursue the cause of political reform within these harsh limits.

Deng Xiaoping and his allies tolerated such intellectuals to the extent that they needed their help against Maoist and Stalinist-influenced colleagues in the ruling state elite resistant to market reforms, something hard to justify within orthodox Marxism. After all, if there is no clear blueprint in the writings of Marx and Engels for Stalinist-style central planning and the command economy, there is nevertheless also a strong antipathy to markets and the "commodification" of the economy. As a result, such reform-minded intellectuals were allowed and encouraged to study market socialist reforms in places such as Hungary and Yugoslavia. While carrying out this role for the Leninist regime, such intellectuals also pushed for their own interests in increased intellectual freedom by borrowing political reform ideas of Marxist democrats in those same regimes.

As with the Democracy Wall activists, at first such inner Party Marxist democrats were also aided by the Deng era call to "seek truth from facts," sometimes put as to place "practice as the sole criterion of truth," and the main enemy to be fought as feudal vestiges from the past, not capitalist elements in society.

While there were many different, creative ways that Marxist democrats tried to keep alive calls for political reform and democratization within Marxism, at least two different Marxist routes made possible the continuation of neo- anarchist critiques of the socialist state ruling for itself and not the proletariat: the writings of the early Marx on humanism and alienation and his concept of the Asiatic Mode of Production (AMP) from his middle period. Each route had advantages and disadvantages for the Chinese Marxist democrats, though, in the end both routes were shut off by the end of the decade as Deng reached a deal with his Stalinist colleagues in the state elite to repress attempts at meaningful political liberalization.

[1] Deng Xiaoping, "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles," a speech at the Forum on the Principles for the Party's Theoretical Work, March 30, 1979, in Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works (1975–1982)*: 166–91.

[2] As we have seen in the previous two chapters, Friedman uses the terms "extra-party" and "[inner] party democrats." See Friedman, "The Societal Obstacle to China's Socialist Transition," 159–71.

Wang Ruoshui and Alienation of the Socialist State

The first route, returning to the writings of the early Marx on humanism and alienation, had many adherents, termed by some the "Party of Humanism" or the "alienation school" (*yihualun pai*).[3] We will focus in this section on by far the leading exponent of that school, the prominent philosopher and deputy editor of the CCP flagship newspaper *Renminribao* (People's Daily), Wang Ruoshui.[4]

In seminal articles Wang published in the early 1980s,[5] including many in the popular press, Wang argued, borrowing from the East European debates, that Karl Marx did not eliminate in his later works his sentiments in favor of humanism as a socialist project that he put forward in what is known as his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, not published in the Communist world until 1932. Instead Wang argued that Marx subsumed them in later, more economic materialist language. For Wang, the goal of socialism should still be that of Marx in his early work: not just state ownership of the means of production in the name of the workers but control of workers over their own work. Most especially in this early work, Marx took over the concept of alienation from Hegel and Feuerbach, turning it from Hegel's alienation from a pure idea and from Feuerbach's alienation from man's essential nature or essence into economic alienation of classes from their own labor. Wang did point out that Feuerbach's idea of humans as creating God in their own image and then becoming a slave to Him had clear echoes in the Cultural Revolution when people were called upon to "think of Chairman Mao in everything, do everything for Chairman Mao, serve Chairman Mao in everything, follow Chairman Mao in everything." "Do everything for Chairman Mao": who would Chairman Mao do everything for? Chairman Mao should have been doing things for the people, everything should have been for the people, this is a basic principle. It turned out in fact that the people did things for the leader, everything was for the leader… Could "follow Chairman Mao in everything" mean anything but an autarchy (*yiyan tang*)? What was it but an inversion of the relations between party, leader and people?[6]

For Wang, this type of alienation was "… closely connected with the influence of Chinese feudal mentality."[7]

Beyond intellectual or spiritual alienation, Wang argued, there was the problem of political alienation. Trying to protect himself from the inevitable attack on him as an anarchist that was bound to be leveled by his orthodox Marxist opponents in the regime, Wang admitted that while the issue of political alienation was first raised by the anarchists and "hence to overcome alienation, one should take anarchism into account,"[8] Marx and Engels also maintained the concept

[3] See Ding Wang, *Ming Bao Yuekan*, 217 (January 1984), translated and adapted in David A. Kelly (guest ed.), "Wang Ruoshui: Writings on Humanism, Alienation, and Philosophy," 113–14; and cited by Kelly, "The Emergence of Humanism: Wang Ruoshui and the Critique of Socialist Alienation," 162, 339, n. 12.

[4] For studies of Wang Ruoshui and the "alienation school" in general see Kelly, "Wang Ruoshui: Writings on Humanism, Alienation, and Philosophy," and "The Emergence of Humanism"; Bill Brugger and David Kelly, *Chinese Marxism in the Post-Mao Era*, 139–69; Merle Goldman *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era,* 116–32; and Hua Shiping, "Marxist Humanism: Wang Ruoshui," Chapter 6 of Hua, *Scientism and Humanism,* 95–107.

[5] These would include especially Wang, "Tantan yihua wenti" (Discussing the Problem of Alienation), 8–11, translated in Kelly, "Wang Ruoshui: Writings on Humanism, Alienation, and Philosophy," 25–38 and "Wei rendaozhuyi bianhu" (A Defense of Humanism), translated in Kelly, 71–88.

[6] Wang, "Tantan yihua wenti," translated in Kelly, 29–30.

[7] Ibid., 30.

[8] Ibid., 27–8.

of political alienation under the old society, when the organs of state, in Engels words, "in pursuance of their own special interests, transformed themselves from the servants of society into the masters of society."[9] In his most radical statement, which was at the heart of the reason why the Party-state made him the leading target of the "Campaign against Spiritual Pollution" in 1983, Wang argued that political alienation could still exist after the revolution:

> … Is there still alienation under socialism? Socialism is supposed to abolish alienation, but has it done so in fact, or does alienation still exist? I think we should admit that practice has proven that alienation still exists.
>
> Not only is there intellectual alienation, there is also political and even economic alienation.
>
> … when the government turns into an overlord, refusing to accept the people's control and turning into an alien force, this is alienation, alienation in politics.[10]

For Wang, this problem of alienation could only be solved as Engels suggested, by adapting the model of the Paris Commune (though not by violent revolution as for Shengwulian), that is, by having the socialist state institute universal suffrage that would elect officials and have them subject to instant recall and by reducing "special treatment and privilege" of state officials, if not the low salaries that Engels called for.[11] Thus Wang stayed within the framework of the one Party-state, even if a reformed one subject to popular checks, and could plausibly claim not to have departed from Deng's Four Cardinal Principles.

Such a claim did not protect him in the end, as he became the leading target of the Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign and was purged from his post at *Renminribao*.[12] At the end of the campaign, Party propaganda chief Hu Qiaomu made a speech to the Central Party School, which was reprinted in the popular press under his byline. This speech contained extensive criticism of the humanism and alienation school in general and a direct attack on Wang Ruoshui's views in particular.[13] Demonstrating the main point of the previous and current chapters, that claiming the socialist state can come to rule for itself is the main taboo that must not be crossed under Leninist rule, Hu warned toward the end of his speech that those who advocate the theory of alienation, especially those who concluded "that alienation existed everywhere in the political, economic, and ideological spheres of socialism and that its fundamental cause was not in another area, but precisely in the socialist system itself" could (perhaps inadvertently) lead people to favor "abolishing all social political powers, social economic organizations, ideological authority, and centralism and discipline" thus to "openly publiciz[e] anarchism, absolute liberalism, and ultra-egoism."[14]

Significantly, Wang refused to make a self-criticism during the Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign and never recanted his belief in socialist alienation. As the intensifying campaign threat-

[9] Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* 1, 438.

[10] Wang, "Tantan yihua wenti," translated in Kelly, 29, 33.

[11] Ibid., 33.

[12] See Thomas B. Gold, "Just in Time!: China Battles Spiritual Pollution on the Eve of 1984," 958; Goldman, 121–32; and Stuart R. Schram, *Ideology and Policy in China since the Third Plenum, 1978–1984.*

[13] Hu's speech is analyzed in Goldman, 127–8.

[14] Hu Qiaomu, "Guanyu rendaozhuyi he yihua wenti" (On Problems Concerning Humanism and Alienation), *Renminribao* (People's Daily) (January 27, 1984), reprinted in *Hongqi* (Red Flag), 2 (January 26, 1984), translated in FBIS (February 7, 1984), 31.

ened to undermine domestic and international confidence in market reforms, Deng first limited what counted as spiritual pollution and then wound down the whole campaign. Thus, Wang managed to survive the 1983 campaign against him, and as reform temporarily returned to the agenda, from 1985 to 1986 republished his main works on humanism and alienation in books of his essays.[15] Supposedly without his approval, his rebuttal to Hu Qiaomu appeared in a Hong Kong periodical where he defended his position that humanism can be found in the later works of Marx and that ideological alienation at least still exists in socialist society.[16]

In 1987, after a round of student demonstrations that Party elders blamed on the liberal policies of CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang, who had been the main protector of Wang Ruoshui and other Marxist democrats, a new campaign against "bourgeois liberalization" was launched, at the end of which Hu was removed from his post and Wang was expelled from the Party.[17] In the late 1980s, as the reformers within the Party were losing out to advocates of increased Party control over intellectuals, Wang published new essays that at first did not repeat his radical critiques but only called for respect of civil rights and the constitution, basing himself firmly within remaining official Party policies that denounced the personality cult of Mao during the Cultural Revolution and that claimed to establish a socialist legal system.[18] However, in another article published in Hong Kong again supposedly without his permission, Wang again answered Hu Qiaomu's 1984 attack on humanism and alienation and raised anew the question of socialist alienation. Wang claimed that his views were firmly in line with former Premier and now General Secretary Zhao Ziyang's report to the Thirteenth National Party Congress where he criticized the outdated nature of the PRC political system based on "large-scale mass movements" and intensified "mandatory [central] planning." While Zhao included this criticism of past practices only as part of his call for more market reforms and for only modest political structural reform, Wang took the opportunity to link the issue of personality cults and mass campaigns to alienation under socialism:

> Such a political structure cannot prevent personality cult[s]; moreover it can easily engender bureacratism, autocratic work style, privileges, infringements on the rights of rank and file party members and ordinary people, and other negative phenomena. (I regard all such things as demonstrations of alienation) …[19]

Thus, despite being expelled from the Party, in articles of the late 1980s Wang became more insistent on his ideas, and even started departing from belief in Leninism,[20] though he still called himself a Marxist up until his death from lung cancer in 2002.[21]

---

[15] For example, see Wang, *Wei rendaozhuyi bianhu* (A Defense of Humanism).

[16] Wang, "My Views on Humanism," translated in FBIS (August 10, 1984), W5– W17, cited in Brugger and Kelly, 160.

[17] See Goldman, 204–37.

[18] For example, see Wang, "Shuangbai fangzhen he gongmin quanli" (The Double Hundred Policy and Civil Rights), reprinted in *Chengming*, 60–1, translated in FBIS (September 12, 1986): K6–K12, cited in Brugger and Kelly, 1990, 166.

[19] Wang, "The Personality Cult and Ideological Alienation—Replies and Criticism," *Ching Pao*, Part I, 24–7 and Part II, 40–4, translated in FBIS 88–91 (May 11, 1988), 27.

[20] Personal conversation of this author with Wang Ruoshui, Madison, WI, April 1989.

[21] Joseph Chaney and Sophia Woodman, "In Memoriam: Wang Ruoshui: Journalist,Philosopher, Humanist," *China Rights Forum* 1 (2002), online at www.hrichina.org/public/contents/article?revision_id=2044&item_id=2043.

David Kelly concludes that although Wang Ruoshui's perception of the evils left over from the Mao period was similar to that of Li Yizhe and the Democracy Wall extra-Party critics, his own diagnosis and remedy for the problem differed, since he referred only to "bureaucratic privilege and the difficulties of implementing democracy" and not a "new bourgeoisie" (or bureaucratic class) and tried to stay within Deng's four cardinal principles, at least up to 1988.[22] While it may be true that Wang's solutions to the problem of socialist alienation were largely unspecified or moderate at best, this author would argue that his critical views still lay firmly within a neo-anarchist paradigm of the state, one that sees the tendency of organizations, especially coercive ones with a monopoly of power, to rule for themselves. As such, however moderate in practice were his proposed solutions compared to the Democracy Wall extra-Party activists, Wang broke the taboo of all taboos in a Leninist system with his critique of the socialist state and thus could not be allowed to propagate his views much further after 1987.

The Chinese Asiatic Mode of Production Debate in the Early 1980s

Although less well-known perhaps than alienation and humanism, there is another Marxist concept that contains the seeds of a neo-anarchist paradigm of the state and can be used to call implicitly for democratization, namely the Asiatic Mode of Production (hereafter AMP).[23] The advantage of the AMP over alienation is, first, that the term is initially confined mostly to the historical profession and is not one that obviously lends itself to articles in the popular press and, second, that if challenged one can always claim to be talking about past states and not the current Leninist regime. The disadvantages of the AMP concept are, first, that it may be so esoteric that it may be hard to spread awareness of the concept beyond a small academic circle and, second, that the concept carries political baggage, both because of its association with the idea of a stagnant or unchanging Asia versus a more dynamic West and because of its use in the 1950s by the Marxist turned fierce anti-Communist Karl Wittfogel, who linked a version of the concept he termed "oriental despotism" specifically to contemporary "totalitarian" dictatorships in Russia and China, as we will see below. Nevertheless, for Marxist democrats willing to try to overcome these disadvantages, the AMP presents a clear challenge to the primary, class paradigm of the state while still keeping within a professed Marxist outlook, which thus makes it possible for intellectuals to bring into doubt whether the socialist state always represents the interests of the proletariat without being accused (right away at least) of having "bourgeois liberal" tendencies.

Tons of ink have been spilled among Marxist and non-Marxists alike all over the world concerning the AMP, somewhat reduced by the fall of Communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe.[24] Suffice it to say here that the concept can be found most extensively, though not exclusively, in Marx's work, the *Grundrisse der Politischen Okonomie* (Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy), a manuscript he completed in 1857–8 in preparation for writing *Das Kap-*

[22] Kelly, "The Emergence of Humanism," 181.

[23] Bob Jessop specifically cites the AMP as a case where Marx sometimes treated the state as a "parasitic body standing over society." See Jessop, "Recent Theories of the Capitalist State," in Hall, 83.

[24] For a review of the AMP concept in the USSR, West and East Europe, and China, see Rapp, "Despotism and Leninist State Autonomy," 110–200, which includes an extensive bibliography of the main sources on the AMP debates in different countries.

ital. The *Grundrisse* was not published until 1939–41 in the USSR.[25] The AMP appears on one chapter of that work entitled "Precapitalist Economic Formations."[26] To sum up his views on the AMP in that chapter, though a matter of heated debate, in general Marx may have argued that some pre-capitalist societies may not be examples of either primitive communist, slave, or feudal modes of production, but instead examples of a distinct Asiatic mode where first, the centralized despotic state claims to own all land based on combining rent and taxes, second, where it stands over isolated, self- sufficient rural village communities in which production is based on the land mixed with handicraft production, and third, there is cyclical, stagnant development. Marx also seemed to indicate that the state carries out large-scale irrigation and other hydraulic projects and public works projects (whether necessary and real or only taking credit for the work of lower communities) and rules from essentially administrative, rentier cities.[27] The political significance of the concept is that if a state can rule for itself rather than private economic classes at one or more times and places in human history, then it could also rule for itself at later points and places, such as in Leninist regimes, especially those that had a past history of "Asiatic" state forms.

Once Soviet intellectuals became aware of Marx's AMP concept (as well as similar ideas in Engels, Lenin, and other Marxist thinkers), a great debate began in the USSR over whether or not the AMP was a genuine Marxist concept. Stalin settled the issue by fiat in 1931, denying that Marx ever held to the concept and that all societies must universally pass through the same stages in history, from primitive communist, to slave, feudal, capitalist, socialist, and communist modes of production, thus announcing as Communist dogma what later scholars term the universal unilinear schema of history.[28] Nevertheless, the AMP concept was revived in Western and Eastern Europe during the Cold War by Marxist thinkers trying to open up room for limited critical thinking about the Leninist state.[29] Just as with the Marxist concepts of humanism and alienation, therefore, the AMP concept became ripe fodder for Chinese thinkers in the early years of the reform era when they were allowed to study diverse strands of European Marxist thought.[30]

The first main problem such Chinese thinkers had to overcome was the use of the AMP concept by Karl Wittfogel to denounce "totalitarian" systems in the USSR and China. In his magnum opus *Oriental Despotism*, Wittfogel claimed that Communist systems often took root in societies with a "despotic" past based on the need for centralized bureaucracies to organize massive "hydraulic" projects in arid regions.[31] Even more problematic for Marxist democrats wanting to use the AMP, Wittfogel claimed that Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin all "sinned against science" by first utilizing and then dropping the AMP concept in later works because it seemed too reminiscent of the critique of their anarchist competitors that a Marxist "managerial state" would

[25] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Politischen Okonomie* (Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy) (Moscow, 1939–41), translated by Martin Nicholas as *The Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*.

[26] This chapter of the *Grundrisse* has been published as a separate work in English. See Marx, *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*.

[27] This summary definition of the AMP is partially based on that of Perry Anderson, "[Research Note on] the 'Asiatic Mode of Production'," in Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolute State,* 483.

[28] Rapp, "Despotism and Leninist State Autonomy," Chapter 4, 76–100.

[29] Ibid., Chapter 3, 110–200.

[30] For a mostly apolitical account of the Chinese AMP debates, see Timothy Brook, *The Asiatic Mode of Production in China*; for a more political analysis, see Rapp, "Despotism and Leninist State Autonomy," 301–97; (guest ed.), "China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production," *Chinese Law and Government*, XXII(2) (Spring 1989), "Editor's Introduction," 3–26, from which this section of the chapter is derived.

[31] Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism*.

lead to bureaucratic despotism.[32] Ernst Gellner finds that this charge amounts to finding Marx and Engels guilty of being "Stalinists by anticipation" and thus stretches credulity,[33] but Alvin Gouldner agrees with Wittfogel to the extent that the AMP, however limited and incompletely spelled out in the *Grundrisse*, was nevertheless a crucial concept that Marx and Engels may have glossed over due to its nature as (what this author would term) a neo-anarchist anomaly in their primary class paradigm of the state. In the AMP, "far from being dependent on class controlling the dominant means of production, the state itself controls these and other cases are dependent on it."[34] In any event, because of the political sensitivity of the concept, Marxist democrats in all Leninist countries who wanted to revive the concept had to take pains to criticize Wittfogel and show how their use of the concept was different from his.

The second main problem intellectuals faced, in China at least, who wanted to utilize the AMP concept was to show that they did not incorporate earlier views of a "stagnant" or unchanging Asia. As Gellner put it, the AMP impairs, perhaps destroys, the unity of human history by postulating a sideline of historical development that perhaps leads nowhere and ends in stagnation.[35]

In trying to refute the basic stagnant nature of the AMP, especially those Chinese thinkers who wanted to utilize the AMP to call for political reform were heavily influenced by Umberto Melotti's1974 work *Marx and the Third World*, which was translated into Chinese in the late 1970s.[36] For Melotti, the AMP was a unique path of historical development in Marx's essentially multilinear way of thinking, and China was the best example of the AMP, but not a case of "Asiatic stagnation." Melotti did see parallels, however, between China and Russia as "bureaucratic collectivist" societies that existed at a crossroads between revolution and reaction,"[37] so the Chinese Aziatchicki (to use the Russian term for those using the AMP concept) had to watch their step and deny that they accepted Melotti's conclusion even while they used his ideas to open up room for criticism of the bureaucratic state.

In China in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as we have seen, the official line of the Leninist regime led by Deng Xiaoping was that survivals of feudalism (*fengjian*) were the main obstacle to further development, not capitalist remnants or bourgeois elements in the Party, as the Maoist line had it. In fact the leading Chinese political scientist and member of the democratic camp within the Party, Yan Jiaqi, argued that while "heavy feudal autocratic vestiges" remain in China, "autocracy was not a political phenomenon that belonged solely to feudalism" in world history.[38] Some countries, for example, in medieval Western Europe, had a feudal system without centralized dictatorship, while other countries such as "the slave-owning Roman empire and fascist Germany" had centralized dictatorships without being feudal.

According to Yan, "no matter the social system" autocracy could exist anywhere and at any time where there was "indivisibility and nontransferability of the supreme state power."[39] Thus,

[32] Ibid., 369–412; see also Wittfogel, "The Ruling Bureaucracy of Oriental Despotism: A Phenomenon that Paralyzed Marx."

[33] Gellner, "Soviets against Wittfogel; Or, The Anthropological Preconditions of Mature Marxism."

[34] Gouldner, *The Two Marxisms: Contradictions and Anomalies in the Development of Theory*, 327–8.

[35] Ibid., 347–8.

[36] English edition, Melotti, *Marx and the Third World*, the edition which Wu Dakun reports heavily influenced him in beginning his studies of the AMP. See Wu, "On Several Questions in the Study of the AMP," 18, n. 2.

[37] Melotti, 105–13, 141–51.

[38] Yan, " 'Imperial Power' and 'Imperial Position': Two Characteristics of Autocracy," reprinted in Yan, *Quanli yu zhenli* (Power and Truth), 91–6, translated in *Yan Jiaqi and China's Struggle for Democracy,* 15.

[39] Ibid., 10–11.

Yan made clear that while often a vestige of the past, autocracy could occur even under modern political systems.

It was in this atmosphere of criticism of feudal autocracy that the Chinese AMP debate began in the early 1980s. Chinese thinkers raising the AMP stood on all sides of the issue, from those Stalinist-inspired thinkers who denied the AMP as anything more than one version of primitive communal or slave society, to those on the middle ground who accepted the AMP as a legitimate term for some unique societies that must nevertheless pass through a universal phase of development through capitalism and socialism, to those Marxist democrats who used the term to refer to a special case of Chinese *fengjian* society, one which could not be equated with Western feudalism. For the purpose of this chapter, we will mostly focus on the last group of thinkers, since they are the ones who suggested contemporary relevance for the AMP, even as they denied being anti-socialist.

The leader of what one could term this minority or "opposition" school of thought on the AMP was Wu Dakun, professor of political economy at Chinese People's University in Beijing, who was linked to the Marxist-Leninist Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), led by the Marxist democrat Su Shaozhi. In a seminal article, Wu in a somewhat cautious fashion attempted to retain a link of the AMP to a unilinear if not universal schema of development by dividing the AMP into two stages, ancient oriental society (thus linked to slavery) and the Asiatic feudal (*fengjian*) system.[40]

Using these divisions, Wu claimed legitimacy for his version of the AMP in the thought of Mao Zedong. Though Mao often referred to China's *fengjian* past, Wu noted, he always emphasized the patriarchal clan authority that led to a Chinese pattern of familial exploitation on top of class exploitation under feudalism.[41]

By dividing the AMP into two stages, Wu was also able to deny the characteristic of "stagnation" often ascribed to AMP societies, thus demonstrating his loyalty to the notion of a progressive Chinese revolution and avoiding the danger of the AMP justifying imperialism as a progressive force in Asia. At the same time, Wu pointed out differences between Chinese *fengjian* society and Western European society along lines that incorporated some of the classic characteristics of the AMP. First, in the imperial epoch before the Western impact, China combined private and state land ownership through tax and corvée obligations of the peasant to the state. Second, the state controlled not only land and water resources through hydraulic and other public works projects, but also the most important economic enterprises, such as its monopolies on salt and iron. Such a view leads directly to a picture of a Chinese *fengjian* society containing a much more centralized and authoritarian state than the decentralized political authorities of European feudalism. Third, Wu claimed that land could be bought and sold in the *fengjian* system, thus showing the beginnings of historical development toward capitalism. Fourth, the remnants of primitive communism and slavery survived in *fengjian* society through the patriarchal clan system. Fifth, Chinese cities lacked a bourgeoisie and were dominated by landlords and bureaucrats. Sixth, Chinese *fengjian* society existed in a small peasant economy linking agriculture and

[40] Wu, "The AMP in History as Viewed by Political Economy in Its Broad Sense," 18–29, translated in Su Shaozhi et al. (eds), *Marxism in China,* 53–77, and in Rapp, "China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production," 27–46.

[41] Ibid., citing Mao, "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan Province," in Mao, *Selected Works* I, 44, 146.

handicrafts, with commodity production limited to luxury production for the consumption of bureaucrats and landlords.[42]

By positing these basic characteristics of Chinese *fengjian* society, Wu was able to use the AMP without implying the stagnation or inherent nonrevolutionary quality of Asian society, an implication for which Stalinist-oriented Party intellectuals severely criticized Melotti and, implicitly, the Chinese reformers.[43] Wu could explain that although China had failed to develop capitalism and developed slowly in comparison to the West, Chinese society nevertheless contained the seeds of capitalism before the Western impact. By the same token, Wu denied that China was without grounds for future development and change, including socialist revolution.

Most importantly, Wu used his redefinition of China's *fengjian* society to incorporate the AMP as a way to explain the tension in Chinese history between the central government and the landlords, a situation difficult if not impossible to understand by applying to China in a unilinear way the category of the feudal mode of production. Throughout imperial Chinese history, small peasants were periodically squeezed to the point of rebellion as taxes increased on both their land and the land of non-official gentry, while the bureaucratic officials' lands became increasingly tax exempt. Yet as Chinese history unfolded, private land ownership increased at the expense of state ownership, a change Wu claimed was in the direction of capitalism. This change in land ownership combined with peasant rebellions and changes in the state tax system demonstrate that Chinese society was far from static or unchanging, directly refuting Wittfogel's analysis.

Wu asked for further study of China's remaining vestiges of the AMP in order to aid in China's modernization. He left mostly unstated, however, what the remaining vestiges of the AMP were, but in light of his application of the AMP to the history of imperial China, Wu clearly had despotic state vestiges in mind. Though he would not spell out the nature of that continuing despotism under socialism, Wu did suggest that the AMP had relevance to "the study of contemporary world economy," but he claimed that that study would be more appropriate to "another subject" which he "would not talk about here."[44] As the leading exponent of the multilinear view of the AMP, Wu Dakun was perhaps more restrained than other reformers in utilizing the AMP concept to warn of the continuing despotic features of the socialist state.

The boldest example of the "opposition" view of the AMP up to 1985 was an essay in the national journal *Zhongguoshi yanjiu* (Chinese Studies in History) by Hu Zhongda of the University of Inner Mongolia.[45] Perhaps not coincidentally, this region was hard hit by the extreme state oppression of the Cultural Revolution. Hu specifically criticized the unilinear schema of five modes of production, arguing for the AMP as a separate "social existence." He argued that not only did the AMP diverge from Western European-style feudalism, but that slavery and feudalism themselves were not chronological stages but separate paths out of primitive society. Thus there was no single, universal path of development, but rather many unique paths, though all followed the formula of pre-class to class to classless society.

[42] Wu, in Su Shaozhi et al., 68–9.

[43] See for example, Lin Ganquan, "The AMP and Ancient Chinese Society: A Criticism of Umberto Melotti's Distortion of Chinese history in His 'Marx and the Third World'," translated in Rapp, "China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production," 47–70.

[44] Wu, 69–76.

[45] Hu, "Shilun Yaxiya shengchan fangshi jianpi wuzhong shengchan fanchangshuo" (On the Asiatic Mode of Production with a Criticism of the Theory of Five Modes of Production), translated in Brook, 164–83.

All pre-capitalist class societies shared the characteristics of simple mechanical development (i.e. iron age hand labor), agriculture as the chief production form combined with family handicraft industry, and land taxation as the major form of oppression. Ancient, feudal, and Asiatic modes were all different forms of "slavery" defined in a larger sense, that is, as methods of direct expropriation of surplus labor by the oppressing class. Although Hu recognized the fact that Engels may have dropped the AMP in later writings and that Lenin at times defined Russia and China as falling under an enlarged definition of "feudalism," he argued that Marxists in the contemporary era did not have to deny the unique qualities of an Asiatic path to development. Hu recognized that Chinese society in the Western and Eastern Zhou Periods (ca.

1100–221 BCE) contained qualities resembling Western European feudalism and had aspects of a slave system in parts of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). Nevertheless, beginning with the Qin and Han dynasties, Hu claimed that China had a different and, for the most part, far more developed system than Western European feudalism. In stressing the unique nature of the Chinese state throughout the imperial era from 221 BCE to 1911 CE, he not only gave a much-needed counterweight to long-standing Marxist orthodoxy on ancient Chinese history, but surpassed many Western Marxist sinologists who often failed to distinguish properly between pre- and post-Qin history.

For Hu the differences between the Chinese imperial period and Western feudalism centered on the existence in China of a large, centralized state standing as the "higher unity" above a system of peasant ownership of land.

Landlords did exist at the local level, but the centralized collective ruling power took the place of serfdom per se, presumably through state taxes and corvée labor. China's self-sufficient agricultural system retained features of the primitive communes through such unique entities as China's single-surname clan villages. Thus, like Wu Dakun, Hu tried to finesse the point that the conservatives used against the Marxist democrats and that Western sinologists raised against Wittfogel—the private ownership of land in imperial China and the existence of a landlord class—by implying the identity of landlords and patriarchal clan leaders. Hu claimed that in China state interests dominated private class interests. He suggested that clan leaders acted as agents of the state on the local level rather than as independent exploiters. While downplaying the significance of private property more explicitly than Wu, Hu Zhongda was better able to highlight the direct exploitation by a centralized despotic state in imperial China.

In sum, Hu made an extremely creative attempt to examine the destructive autonomy of the socialist state using a neo-anarchist paradigm of the state contained within the Marxist concept of the AMP. In essence, as he explained at a Chinese academic conference on the AMP, Hu argued for the existence of direct state exploitation in imperial China by pointing out that China's monarchical system allowed for the monopoly of the surplus products and surplus labor by an "autocratic collective ruling class" (*zhuanzhi junzhu weishoude tongzhi jituan he boxue jieji*—literally "ruling clique and exploiting class headed by an autocratic monarch").[46] Rather than follow the orthodox Marxist–Leninist theory of the state, that is, the state as protecting and disguising exploitation by a dominant economic class, Hu posited that the Chinese imperial state itself had a dominant position in a collective ruling class of landlords, administrators, and the monarchy. Thus the state did not just protect and disguise exploitation, but rather, exploited its subjects directly.

[46] See Pang Zhuoheng et al., "Summary of the Symposium on the AMP."

Despite some vacillations on retaining the label of feudalism, in 1981 Hu accepted the AMP as a useful concept in explaining the real differences between China's centralized absolutist monarchy and the decentralized politics of Western feudalism. Hu also vacillated on whether to call this unique oriental variant a "separate social existence" or a separate mode of production; nevertheless in his essay he clearly rejected the unilinear five modes of production schema and expressed the hope for continuing free academic debate on the AMP issue.[47]

By 1982–3, such hopes were repressed by high Party leaders. Unlike the contemporaneous debate over humanism and alienation, the AMP disputes never surfaced in the popular press. The AMP debate was quietly ended by higher echelon leaders such as Hu Qiaomu shortly after an issue of *Zhongguoshi yanjiu* (Studies in Chinese History) was published based on a conference of historians on the AMP.[48] In the first Stalinist backlash, lasting until late 1984, the Marxist democrat AMP advocates were largely silenced.

At the same time, the moderate AMP advocates retreated to a view positing that China had a distinctive variation of feudalism rather than a separate AMP.

By 1982–3 the small advantages the mainstream ruling elite obtained by allowing the AMP debate were outweighed by threats to state autonomy other parts of the elite perceived from continuing intellectual debates, and the AMP debate was forcibly ended.

When China's Marxist democrats found themselves in a position publicly to reassert themselves from 1985 to 1986,[49] just as the advocates of humanism and alienation under socialism made a brief comeback, the AMP debate likewise briefly resurrected. This brief thaw began in the Chinese historical profession in mid-1985, including new academic articles that analyzed the nature of the centralized bureaucracy of imperial China.[50]

The AMP concept itself reappeared in the first 1986 issue of *Lishi yanjiu*, ending that journal's Stalinist ideological monopoly. The individual responsible for this breakthrough was none other than Hu Zhongda, the most daring of the AMP advocates from the debates of the early 1980s, who returned with an article criticizing the orthodox five mode view.[51] In this article, Hu did not emphasize the AMP as a distinct mode, but instead, echoing the late 1970s view of certain Soviet Aziatchiki, was able to recognize the non-universality of the full slave mode of production by advocating the existence of a single pre-capitalist stage in all societies with different variants, a view that preserved universality of development while allowing multilinear paths to capitalism and socialism. Though thus still legitimizing the Chinese path to socialism, the Soviet-inspired formula that Hu adopted allowed the AMP to resurface as a despotic remnant of feudalism or as a temporary non-universal variation that could continue to influence succeeding stages, just as elements of slavery and feudalism coexisted in different degrees in precapitalist societies and into capitalism. Cautiously, Hu claimed that he based his current opinions on his work of the early 1980s, which would include his Tianjin article.[52]

[47] Hu, in Brook, 173–4.

[48] See Pang et al.

[49] See Goldman, 166–203.

[50] For example, see Wu Shouzhi, "The Essence and Important Function of Centralized State Power in the Feudal Autocratic System of China."

[51] Hu, "Further Criticism of the Five Modes of Production Theory," translated in Rapp, "China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production," 71–97.

[52] Ibid., 94.

By far the most extraordinary reappearance of the AMP was presented by Wang Yizhou in the third 1985 issue of *Makesizhuyi yanjiu* (Marxist Studies) published by the Party democrat-controlled Institute of Marxism-Leninism- Mao Zedong Thought.[53] Wang viewed the AMP both as a fundamental tenet that Marx never abandoned and as a real historical entity. Though he viewed the AMP as a survival of primitive communal forms into class society, Wang emphasized development and change within this mode. He explicitly denied the stagnation or backwardness of former AMP societies that underwent socialist revolution. Most importantly, he claimed the "most outstanding features" of the AMP to include:

> … the absolute economic control by the state over all members of the society through the ultimate, hereditary state ownership of the basic means of production … the right of the state to appropriate, transform, and redistribute a large amount of surplus product at will, and the absolute, almost religious, control by the state over thought, as well as the absolute, almost blind loyalty to the state from the masses.[54]

Wang specifically used the term "oriental despotism" to refer to the state under the AMP, though he denied that the AMP was geographically limited to Asia either in actuality or in the thought of Marx. Although he denied the backwardness of former AMP societies now under socialist rule, Wang stressed the impossibility of skipping or leaping stages in the revolutionary process. He also denied that the AMP and Oriental Despotism could be equated with state socialism either in Marx's eyes or in reality. Yet, in the boldest Chinese statement on the AMP, Wang clearly suggested the continuing legacy of the AMP for countries that passed through such a stage on the route to socialism:

> … we are confident that Marx never made his studies of the AMP as a part of his theory of socialism … [but] we cannot deny the guidance of Marx's analysis of the AMP toward our understanding of some important phenomena in contemporary socialist society. Quite the contrary, the concept of the AMP is extremely important to our understanding of present reality … it would not be surprising if the characteristics of the AMP discussed by Marx are present in various degrees in all socialist countries due to the fact that most socialist revolutions occurred in countries with the legacy of oriental despotism.[55]

After this temporary return of the Marxist democrats' critique of the Leninist Party-state, from December 1986 to 1987, all talk of political reform came to a crashing halt following the student demonstrations at major Chinese universities, as noted above. Once Hu Yaobang, the ultimate protector and patron of the Marxist democrats within the Party, was forced to resign from his post, the arch Stalinist hardliners Deng Liqun and Hu Qiaomu returned to influence in the ideological sphere and in their new campaign against "bourgeois liberalization" the AMP debate was once again aborted. In 1987–8, however, when the reformer Zhao Ziyang was "kicked upstairs" to replace Hu Yaobang as General Secretary, a new thaw briefly began,[56] until the 1989

[53] Wang Yizhou, "An Inquiry into Marx's Concept of the AMP—Critical Comments from a Theoretical Standpoint," translated in Rapp, "China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production," 98–108.

[54] Ibid., 104.

[55] Ibid., 107.

[56] Goldman, 238–55.

Tiananmen student demonstrations once more led to a crackdown and Zhao was removed from his post.

In 1988, during this last brief thaw, the television series *Heshang* (River Elegy) was allowed to be broadcast on state TV and praised by Zhao. This series made direct reference to China's "despotic" past based on a centralized bureaucratic state's control of irrigation and other hydraulic projects. The series made clear that a "despotic centralized power" became "a kind of unchallengeable overlord" that continued to affect Chinese political culture.[57]

In the backlash that followed, the series was heartily condemned by Stalinist leaders and their intellectual followers,[58] and after the 1989 Tiananmen protests, the series' creators were ultimately forced into exile.

In April 1989, however, just before Hu Yaobang's death by heart attack during a Politburo meeting and thus just before the Tiananmen protests began, Hu's network of critical intellectuals managed to get in some last criticisms of Leninist state autonomy. None other than Wang Yizhou, the leading Marxist democrat on the AMP, at one symposium on the topic of the state ownership system, declared that the root cause of corruption in contemporary society was not market reform, as the Stalinists would have it, but "the state ownership system, and its monopolization of all resources."[59] As Wang argued, … the privileged treatment for those vested beneficiaries does not come from party membership dues, but from the monopoly of the state ownership system.[60]

After Hu's purge in 1987, intellectuals associated with new General Secretary Zhao Ziyang pushed the idea of "neo-authoritarianism" as the way to ensure the continuation of economic reform, that is, the rule of a strong, enlightened leader and his followers who would use their authority to overcome "old authoritarian" forces within the elite who would obstruct market reforms. Only later, once those old forces were removed, could society gradually move in a democratic direction. In response, members of Hu Yaobang's old network of intellectuals defended the need for political reform and democratization, in the process noting the tendency of the state to turn despotic if it were not subject to popular checks on its authority.[61] As the playwright Wang Ruowang put it, the would-be reformist Soviet leader Khrushchev (whom Goldman sees as perhaps Wang's allusion to Gorbachev or even Zhao Ziyang) was an example of "an enlightened authoritarian leader who had not turned into a despot, but had been overthrown by the entrenched party bureaucracy because his reforms threatened their interests."[62] In other words, the Marxist democrats feared that any justification for "enlightened despotism" would in the end only allow the state to gain autonomy and follow its own interests to the point where the old despotism would return. As Gao Gao (the wife of the Party democrat Yan Jiaqi) put it about the supposedly enlightened rule of Mao, which after all led to the depredations of the Anti-Rightist Campaign and Cultural Revolution, "the practice of enlightened rule can be such that it can be enlightened today and tomorrow, but on the day when power and interests are touched enlight-

[57] See Su Xiaokang,Wang Luxiang, Richard W. Bodman, and Pin P. Wan, *Deathsong of the River: A Reader's Guide to the Chinese TV Series Heshang*, 275.

[58] See Goldman, 257–60.

[59] Cited in Ibid., 272–3.

[60] Quoted in Zhang Weiguo, "Whither the State Ownership System?" translated in FBIS (April 25, 1989), 37, cited in Goldman, 273.

[61] Goldman, 275–82.

[62] Ibid., 279, citing Wang, interview with *Jiushi niandai*, translated in JPRS 89033 (April 12, 1989), 4.

enment will all but be squeezed out by autocracy."[63] In light of the crackdown that followed the Tiananmen demonstrations, in which many of the Marxist democrats were silenced for many years or forced into exile, Gao's words were very prescient, though of course totally unsurprising to anyone holding a true neo-anarchist critique.

Conclusion: Neo-Anarchist Thought in the PRC

These last two chapters have examined the thought of Chinese intellectuals, both within and outside the CCP, who utilized versions of the neo-anarchist paradigm of the state from the Cultural Revolution to the Tiananmen student movement. The main advantage of such approaches is that they resonate very well with the experience of Chinese subjects who face the overwhelming might of despotic state power in nearly every aspect of their daily lives. Whatever the Leninist state might say about the primacy of representing the interests of the proletariat (or "the people" since the CCP rewords the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat to that of the "people's democratic dictatorship" so as to supposedly include other "progressive" classes), Chinese subjects know all too well that when push comes to shove the state takes care of its own interests first, interests which often come into sharp conflict with those of ordinary people. Even though political thought in the last two decades has been relatively muted on the issue of a new ruling class compared to the relatively liberal period of 1978–89, not to mention the radical moment of 1967–8, and avenues of using neo-anarchist critiques based on anomalies in Marx's thought have been largely cut off, a few brave dissidents still manage to talk about Chinese autocracy. As the contemporary dissident thinker Liu Xianbin recently argued, … whether the country is ruled by the family clans or by the party, the rule is, in essence, an autocratic rule, which is antagonistic to the people. It runs counter to the concept of democracy and contravenes the will of the people.

Over the past several thousand years, the Chinese people have never become the master of this country …

… If the rulers are still reluctant to give up the various advantages of the autocratic system, then the people who are the masters of the country should stand up on their own initiative to accomplish this social transformation.[64]

For writing such thoughts, and as part of the recent ongoing broad crackdown on all forms of dissent, Liu was convicted in March 2011 of "inciting subversion of state power," or as his lawyer says, "slander[ing] the ruling Communist Party and [trying] to end its monopoly on power," and is currently serving a 10 year prison sentence.[65]

Even if those Chinese thinkers who talked about autocracy under Leninism linked autocracy to China's imperial past and/or to the pressures of the international economic or political system, their main point, from the Cultural Revolution through the early reform era to contemporary dissidents such as Liu Xianbin, is that once the state gains autonomy, it will not give up power without strong pressure from citizens at the grassroots who are highly aware of an autocratic state ruling for itself. Thus, thinkers who talk about the Chinese state within a neo-anarchist paradigm—whatever their various proposed solutions to the problem and despite their own lack

[63] Gao Gao, "Improve the Social Control System Taking the Rule of Law as the Main Body," translated in JPRS 89088 (August 21, 1989), 10–11, cited in Goldman, 281.

[64] Liu Xianbin, "Cong 'renmin dajiazuozhu' shuoqi" (Commenting on 'The Position of the People as the Masters of the Country'), translated by United States Open Source Center, 2010.

[65] See Jacob Andrew, "Chinese Democracy Activist Is Given 10-Year Sentence."

of ability to fully challenge the Leninist state in an open way—nevertheless play a crucial role in opening up room for increased pressure on the state in the future.

Most Chinese subjects, as with people living under all dictatorships, are not in a position to challenge the state directly; nevertheless, they continue to feel the weight of state oppression, even as the state tries to whip up support based on nationalist sentiments. Whether it is the state-enforced poverty and mass violence in the Maoist periods of the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution, which led to the death and suffering of untold millions of people, or the bureaucratic corruption, environmental degradation, growing inequality, and remaining high levels of police state repression of the reform era, it should be obvious even to socialists that the so-called epiphenomena of the Leninist political superstructure easily overwhelms the economic base and the supposed goal of social and economic equality. Whatever one thinks of as the best way to control this behemoth, it should be clear to most people today, including socialist-inclined intellectuals, that the history of the twentieth century was the history of political domination and oppression in different forms and with different ideological justifications, from liberal to Marxist, a history that is likely to continue to expand in this century. Radical intellectuals and activists around the world who desire genuine human liberation could do well to challenge this expansion of state autonomy by copying the Chinese Marxist democrats of the 1960s to 1980s and adopting more explicit anarchist theories of the state.

Postlude: The Continuing Relevance of Daoist Anarchism

As noted in the prelude to this book, at least two types of critics would object to the whole concept of Daoist anarchism, including some students and/or practitioners of Daoist spiritual beliefs and physical practices and some scholars of and/or sympathizers with anarchism. The former type of critic might point to the lack of survival of Daoist anarchism within China itself, while the latter type would object to universalizing anarchism beyond the "official" anarchist movement of the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, perhaps revived in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The latter might especially object to the this work's application of the "neo-anarchist" label to Chinese dissidents in the previous two chapters since they take pains to deny they are anarchist and for the most part are far from advocating anarchist solutions. A third type of critic would object to the possible "reification" of the state contained in this book, denying that there is any real unified body at all that could be defined as having its own interests, that in fact states are made of up many different levels and types of institutions that often work at cross purposes. This brief conclusion tries to answer all such objections by pointing out how the recent, highly ironic simultaneous revival of Maoism and Confucianism in the PRC might open up space for an anarchist critique, perhaps harking back to radical Daoist themes and language.

What the nearly simultaneous revival of Maoist and Confucian themes in the PRC may show is that for all their different and, at times, conflicting interests and perspectives, different state elites have a common interest against their own subjects in limiting checks on their authority. The ancient Daoist anarchists criticized both the Confucians who called for humane rule through leaders' supposedly moral example and education in traditional rituals, and the Legalists who called for implementing harsh system of rewards and punishments, knowing full well the differences between the two schools but finding them to be two sides of the same coin. Likewise, in Chapter 7 we saw how modern Chinese Leninist state elites could be usefully analyzed as being divided along three basic lines of different social control mechanisms yet have a common interest in maintaining state hegemony over their subjects. Certainly there may be more divisions and differences among ruling elites in non- Leninist states and more ability of sections of such elites to go outside the state elite to seek a popular base, but this potential ability does not negate the common interest of all state elites in at least attempting to maintain and expand their autonomy from their subjects.

This book argues that anarchists are at their strongest when they focus on state autonomy as the heart of the anarchist critique and weakest when they make compromises with states in order to pursue other, seemingly more central goals, such as reducing economic inequality or increasing chances for individual intellectual critics to survive and prosper within certain political regimes. To pick just three examples of such acquiescence in state power that we have seen in earlier chapters, some ancient Daoists reinterpreted Daoist principles to allow them to accept taking office, some early twentieth-century Chinese anarchists defended participating in the Nationalist regime because it would allow them to continue work-study experiments whose goal was to end the division between mental and physical labor, and some official PRC leaders during the Cultural Revolution, including Mao himself, limited their new class critique in order to preserve space for seemingly radical officials within the state elite to pursue policies allegedly aimed at keeping revolutionary egalitarian policies alive. In all these cases the state interests of such compromising elites in the end overwhelmed their radical critiques, and the differences they had with other state elites in the end paled in comparison with the gaps between them and their subjects. To the extent that they maintained aspects of their radical critique, they were easily

overwhelmed by their state elite rivals and perished anyway despite their compromises with state power.

There are other individuals in China, on the other hand, who kept to what this book argues is the heart of the anarchist critique, the focus on the constant danger of the state ruling for itself and gaining autonomy from its subjects—the idea that most distinguishes anarchism from other political ideologies. Far from having an unchallenged authoritarian political culture, we have seen that individuals raising the basic anarchist critique have popped up time and time again in Chinese history.

The current political moment in China would seem to be the least hospitable for anyone attempting an anarchist critique of the state to emerge. After all, not only are political dissidents being harassed, jailed, and tortured, even their lawyers and family members are being punished to the point that they are afraid to speak out. Almost all talk of meaningful political reform and democratization has been forbidden in the buildup to the 2012 Communist Party Congress, and any revival of the neo-anarchist themes of the extra and inner Party democrats of the 1980s seems highly unlikely any time in the near future. Nevertheless, these harsh actions against dissent would also indicate that the regime is running scared, to say the least.

In a great irony, given their past antipathy toward each other, the regime has allowed two supposedly heterodox and seemingly opposite types of themes to be raised. On the one hand, some figures, notably the Chongqing Party boss Bo Xilai, have revived neo-Maoist egalitarian rhetoric in propaganda initiatives, while on the other hand the regime has revived Confucian language of benevolent and harmonious rule at the same time as it retreats from market-based reform and insists on protecting state-owned industry and local government investments at the expense of its subjects' economic well-being.

The Confucian revival includes not just setting up "Confucius institutes" around the world to promote the study of Chinese language and culture nor the temporary setting up of a statue of Confucius in front of the National history Museum alongside Tiananmen square, but the official stress on building a "harmonious society" as a key goal of the regime, a goal which includes some stress at least on the supposed positive values to be found in Confucian thought.[66] At the same time, officials such as Bo Xilai are pushing for a revival of Mao-era songs and slogans and a stress on supposed revolutionary purity as a way to ensure social control.[67] The two trends are often at odds, of course.

For example, some Maoists who abhor the stress on Confucianism (perhaps reflecting the Cultural Revolution campaign to denounce Confucius that we referred to in Chapter 9) succeeded in getting the Confucius statue removed, while would-be neo-Confucians would note the violent and far from harmonious class conflict and struggle at the heart of real Maoism. In fact the regime seems to have accepted more than a little bit of each side's rhetoric in claiming to favor more balanced growth of interior and coastal regions of China as the key way of building a harmonious society. In the end, of course, talk of harmony cannot even thinly disguise the real institutionalized violence still going on in China, as not just political dissidents but even those protesting poor earthquake relief and public school building standards or those who try to get redress for

[66] For an overview of the revival of Confucius and Confucian themes in the PRC, see John Dotson, "The Confucian Revival in the Propaganda Narratives of the Chinese Government."

[67] For the recent revival of Maoist themes by Bo Xilai (who has most recently suffered a spectacular fall from power) and other PRC leaders at the same time as the revival of Confucianism, see Francis Fukuyama, with response by Jonathan Fenby, "China Is Looking to Its Dynastic Past to Shape Its Future."

purely economic grievances such as failure to pay promised back wages of laid off workers at state-owned enterprises or promised reimbursements for local governments' seizure of land, are very often all jailed, sent to mental treatment centers, or otherwise forcibly "disappeared." Just as in nearly all other periods of Chinese history, revived official stress on Confucian themes coincides with increased state repression, while emphasis on Maoist egalitarian and revolutionary rhetoric coincides with increased inequality between Party elites and the masses, recalling the radical Daoist sentiment that talk of morality and harmony only occur when such principles are absent. All these nervous and even paranoid attempts of state elites to adjust official ideology only serve to demonstrate the main point of Daoist anarchism: attempts to justify rule on the grounds of increasing benevolent treatment of people or achieving peaceful order only serve in reality to justify the power and wealth of state elites. Likewise the return to claims of Maoist revolutionary fervor and equality only come when in fact the fervor has long waned and when most citizens know instinctively and through direct experience that state leaders are only out to preserve their own power. The time is perfect in China for the revival not of the relatively weak heterodox Marxist themes of alienation and the AMP, but, since no one really believes in Marxism any more, for things like Daoist study societies that might fit in with the call to learn from Chinese tradition, and even for radical Maoist ideas of true mass democratic checks on authority—this time without the stress on class violence and reliance on top leaders to define when direct democracy may be allowed. Undoubtedly any such attempts would eventually be repressed as well, but only at an ever growing cost for a regime that may be increasingly facing contradictions between its avowed goals of wealth for all and the reality of protecting vested state interests.

The basic anarchist idea has broken through the surface at widely spaced geographic places and many different points in time throughout history, almost always to suffer severe repression, but the fact that anarchists of all kinds have been a small minority of all thinkers or that anarchist interpretations of traditions as different as Christianity, Marxism, or Daoism are all almost equally put down as heretical or blasphemous can never extinguish the anarchist impulse as long as states inevitably seek to augment their own power and autonomy at the expense of their subjects. What Daoist anarchism would teach anyone trying to revive a radical critique of state autonomy is that people must constantly be on guard for making compromises with the state out of their own interests as intellectuals and political activists. Radical Daoist thinkers at their best (as in Bao Jingyan) and at their most contradictory (as in Wu Nengzi) may teach other anarchists the crucial difference between everything and nothing: without an underlying positive vision of society as always able to thrive on its own without a state, though certainly without trying to turn that vision into detailed blueprints to be imposed on anyone else, any anarchist or neo-anarchist critique can too easily degenerate into nihilism and/or compromises with state authority. If necessarily based on such an underlying positive vision, however, it is the constant and consistent critique of state autonomy that must come first and foremost for any true anarchist.

Appendices: Works of Daoist Anarchism

1. *Zhuangzi,* Chapter 9, "Horses' Hoofs"

Translated by Burton Watson, in Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu,* 98–106, with abridged translator's notes, © 1970, Columbia University Press, reprinted with permission of the publisher.

Horses' hoofs are made for treading frost and snow, their coats for keeping out wind and cold. To munch grass, drink from the stream, lift up their feet and gallop—this is the true nature of horses. Though they might possess great terraces and fine halls, they would have no use for them.

Then along comes Po Lo.[1] "I'm good at handling horses!" he announces, and proceeds to singe them, shave them, pare them, brand them, bind them with martingale and crupper, tie them up in stable and stall. By this time two or three out of ten horses have died. He goes on to starve them, make them go thirsty, race them, prance them, pull them into line, force them to run side-by-side, in front of them the worthy of bit and rein, behind them the terror of whip and crop. By this time over half the horses have died.

The potter says, "I'm good at handling clay! To round it, I apply the compass; to square it, I apply the T square." The carpenter says, "I'm good at handling wood! To arc it, I apply the curve; to make it straight, I apply the plumb line." But as far as inborn nature is concerned, the clay and the wood surely have no wish to be subjected to compass and square, curve and plumb line. Yet generation after generation sings out in praise, saying, "Po Lo is good at handling horses! The potter and the carpenter are good at handling clay and wood!" And the same fault is committed by the men who handle the affairs of the world! In my opinion, someone who was really good at handling the affairs of the world would not go about it like this. The people have their constant inborn nature. To weave for their clothing, to till for their food—this is the Virtue they share. They are one in it and not partisan, and it is called the Emancipation of Heaven. Therefore in an age of Perfect Virtue the gait of men is slow and ambling; their gaze is steady and mild. In such an age mountains have no paths or trails, lakes no boats or bridges. The ten thousand things live species by species, one group settled close to another. Birds and beasts form their flocks and herds, grass and trees grow to fullest height. So it happens that you can tie a cord to the birds and beasts and lead them about, or bend down the limb and peer into the nest of the crow and the magpie. In this age of Perfect Virtue men live the same as birds and beasts, group themselves side-by-side with the ten thousand things. Who then knows anything about "gentleman" or "petty man"? Dull and unwitting,[2] men have no wisdom; thus their Virtue does not depart from them. Dull and unwitting, they have no desire; this is called uncarved simplicity. In uncarved simplicity the people attain their true nature.[3]

[1] Frequently mentioned in early texts as an expert judge of horses.

[2] Reading *t'ung* with the man radical; see Chapter 10, n. 12.

[3] The terms *su* and *p'u* (uncarved simplicity) appear frequently in the *Tao-te-cbing,* for example, Chapter XIX. Waley translates them as "Simplicity" and "the Uncarved Block" respectively.

Then along comes the sage, huffing and puffing after benevolence, reaching on tiptoe for righteousness, and the world for the first time has doubts; mooning and mouthing over his music, snipping and stitching away at his rites, and the world for the first time is divided. Thus, if the plain unwrought substance had not been blighted, how would there be any sacrificial goblets? If the white jade had not been shattered, how would there be any scepters and batons? If the Way and Its Virtue had not been cast aside, how would there be any call for benevolence and righteousness? If the true form of the inborn nature had not been abandoned, how would there be any use for rites and music? If the five colors had not confused men, who would fashion patterns and hues? If the five notes had not confused them, who would try to tune things by the six tones? That the unwrought substance was blighted in order to fashion implements— this was the crime of the artisan. That the Way and its Virtue were destroyed in order to create benevolence and righteousness—this was the fault of the sage.

When horses live on the plain they eat grass and drink from the streams.

Pleased, they twine their necks together and rub; angry, they turn back-to-back and kick. This is all horses know how to do. But if you pile poles and yokes on them and line them up in crossbars and shafts, then they will learn to snap the crossbars, break the yoke, rip the carriage top, champ the bit, and chew the reins.[4] Thus horses learn how to commit the worst kinds of mischief.[5] This is the crime of Po Lo.

In the days of Ho Hsü,[6] people stayed home but didn't know what they were doing, walked around but didn't know where they were going. Their mouths crammed with food, they were merry; drumming on their bellies, they passed the time. This was as much as they were able to do. Then the sage came along with the crouchings and bendings of rites and music, which were intended to reform the bodies of the world; with the reaching-for-a-dangled-prize of benevolence and righteousness, which was intended to comfort the hearts of the world. Then for the first time people learned to stand on tiptoe and covet knowledge, to fight to the death over profit, and there was no stopping them.

This in the end was the fault of the sage.

[4] There are many different interpretations of the terms in this sentence. I follow the emendations and interpretations of Ma Hsü-lun.

[5] Following texts that read *neng* rather than *t'ai*.

[6] Legendary ruler of high antiquity.

2. Ruan Ji, "The Biography of Master Great Man" (excerpt)

Translated by Donald Holzman, from Holzman, *Poetry and Politics: The Life and Times of Juan Chi, A.D. 210–263*, 193–6, © Cambridge University Press 1976, reprinted with the permission of the publisher.

I suppose Master Great Man is old. I know neither his family name nor his polite appellation [*tzu*]. But his description of the beginning of the universe and his remarks on the affairs of Shen-nung and the Yellow Emperor are brilliant. No one knows how long he has lived. Since he once resided on Mount Su-men, some people call him by that name. From time to time he nourishes his nature and prolongs his longevity, glowing with a radiance equal to that of Nature's own. He sees the acts of Yao and Shun as if they were in the palm of his hand! Ten thousand leagues are to him no more than a pace, and a thousand years, one morning; his movements take him nowhere, and his sojourns are in no place. All he seeks is the great *tao:* He has no temporary residences. The Master, by responding to the vicissitudes of the world, remains in harmony with them: The universe is his home. Should the conditions of fortune and the world be unfavorable, he stays apart, leading a solitary existence, feeling that it is enough to be able to evolve with the whole of creation. And so he silently seeks out the *tao* and its virtue and has no dealings with the world of men. The self-satisfied criticize him; the ignorant think him strange: Neither recognize the spirit-like subtleties of his transformations. But the Master does not change his calling because of worldly criticism or wonder.

The Master believes that the central area [in which China is located] occupies a position in the universe not even equivalent to the space occupied by a fly or a mosquito stuck in a curtain. And so he pays no attention to it and lets his thoughts stretch out endlessly to foreign places and strange regions, roams about enjoying the sights, unseen by the world, going back and forth, ending nowhere. He left his book on Mount Su-men before he went away—no one in the world knows where.

Someone gave a letter to Master Great Man which reads, "Among the things honored in the world, nothing is more honored than a gentleman. In his dress a gentleman wears prescribed colors; his facial expressions follow prescribed forms; his words obey prescribed rules; his conduct is according to prescribed models. When standing [in the presence of a superior] he bends in two like the musical stone, his hands folded before him as if he were holding a drum. His periods of activity and repose are measured; his pace in walking conforms to a musical beat. When he advances or when he retreats, in all his relations with others, everything is done according to rule. His heart seems filled with ice, so tremulous he is, so nervous. He restrains himself, cultivates his conduct and is each day more prudent than the preceding. He would choose the very ground he walked on, and only be afraid of committing some error. He recites the instructions left to us by the Duke of Chou and Confucius and sighs over the *tao* and the virtue of Yao and Shun. He cultivates only the [Confucian] law; disciplines himself only with ritual. His hands hold the

symbols of his rank and his feet toe the line of orthodoxy. In his conduct he wants to be a model to the present world; in his speech he wants to set up eternal standards. In his youth he is praised in his native place and when he grows up his fame spreads throughout the entire nation. At best he desires to become one of the three highest officers in the central government, or, at least, to become the governor of a province. Thus he clasps his gold and jade, dangles his patterned silk bands, enjoys honored position and is granted fiefs. He spreads his fame down to later generations and pits his merits against the past. He humbly serves his sovereign and governs the flock of the common people. When he retires he manages his own family and instructs his wife and children. He performs divination to build a propitious residence and plans to procure myriad celestial favors for it, to keep catastrophes far away and good fortune near, to keep his family and descendants eternally secure. This is truly the highest achievement of a gentleman, the kind of praiseworthy conduct that has not changed from ancient times until our own. But now, Master, you let your hair down and live in the middle of the great ocean, far from these gentlemen. I fear the world will sigh over you and criticize you. Your conduct is laughed at by the world and you have no way of achieving success: This indeed can be called shame and disgrace! You dwell in difficult conditions and your conduct is laughed at by the men of the world; I cannot believe that the Master can accept such a fate!" Thereupon Master Great Man sighed in a relaxed way and sent him the following answer, using the clouds [to carry his message]: "What can all that you have said mean? Now, a Great Man is of the same essence as Creation and was born with the universe itself. He freely floated in the world, reaching perfection with the *tao.* In accord with the successive transformations that take place he disperses himself or gathers himself together: He does not keep a constant form. The divisions of the universe are all within him so that his free and easy understanding penetrates all without. The [true idea of] the eternity and stability of the universe is not something that the men of the world can approach. I am going to explain it to you. In the past, at one time the heavens were below and the earth was above; they turned over time and again, and had not yet reached a stable condition. How [if you had been living then] could you not have lost your 'rules' and 'models'? How then could you have counted them as 'prescribed'? When the heavens moved with the earth, the mountains crashed down and the rivers rose up, the clouds dispersed and the lightning broke apart; the six directions lost their order; how then could you have been able to 'choose the very ground you walk on' or 'make your pace in walking conform to a musical beat'? Formerly the living fought for existence; the creatures died of worry; men's limbs were not obedient; their bodies turned to dust. [They were like trees] whose roots were pulled out and branches cut off; all lost their place. How then could you 'restrain yourself and cultivate your conduct,' 'bent in two like a musical stone' 'as if holding a drum'? Li Mu lost his life in spite of his merit;[1] Po Tsung was loyal, and his family was killed off[2]; if entry into official life to seek for profit [thus] leads to loss of life, and working for titles and awards leads to the extermination of one's family, how then are you able to 'clasp your gold and jades' in myriads and myriads and respectfully 'serve your sovereign' and still able to keep your wife and children alive? Can it be that you have never seen a louse in a pair of drawers? When he runs away into a deep seam or hides in some broken wadding, he thinks he has found a 'propitious residence.' In his movements he dares not leave the seam's edge nor part from the

[1] Li Mu was a famous general in Chao during the Warring States period. In spite of his brilliant service against the Hsiung-nu and the Ch'in, he was executed by the sovereign of Chao who believed a calumny against him.

[2] Po Tsung was an outspoken courtier of the state of Ch'in during the Ch'un-ch'iu [Spring and Autumn] period who was killed, along with his family, because his frankness irritated less scrupulous courtiers than himself.

crotch of the drawers, and thinks he is 'toeing the orthodox line' that way. When he is hungry he bites his man and thinks he can eat forever. But when, [in the event of a great fire] there are hills of flame and streams of fire, when towns are charred and cities destroyed, then the lice, trapped where they are, die in their pair of drawers.

What difference is there in your gentleman's living in his small area and a louse in a pair of drawers? How sad it is that he thinks he can 'keep catastrophes far away and good fortune near' and '[his family and descendants]

eternally secure'![3]

Look, too, at the Sun Crow[4] who roams beyond the dust of the world, and at the wrens who play among the weeds and grasses: There can certainly be no contact between the small [wrens] and the great [Sun Crow]; how could you ever imagine that your gentleman had heard of me? And again, in recent times the Hsia were defeated by the Shang;[5] the Chou were banished by the Liu [Han];[6] Keng[7] and Po[8] became ruins; Feng-hao[9] became a mound. In the length of time it would take a Perfect Man to come and look, one dynasty had succeeded another; before their residence was established, others had taken their place. From whom, then, would you 'receive' an eternal 'fief'? That is why the Lordly Man lives without taking up a dwelling, is orderly without 'cultivating' himself. The sun and the moon are his rule; the *yin* and the *yang* his measure. How could he have feelings of regret for the world or be bound to any single period in time? He comes on a cloud from the east and rides the wind that blows from the west. With the *yin* he keeps his femininity, and with the *yang* his masculinity. His ambitions are satisfied, his wishes fulfilled so that he is never exhausted by exterior things. Why, then, should he not be able to succeed by himself? Why should 'he fear the laughter of the world'? In the past, when heaven and earth divided and the ten thousand things were all born together, the great among them kept their natures tranquil, and the small kept their forms calm. The *yin* stored up their vital breath, and the *yang* gave forth their vital essence. There was no fleeing from harm, no fighting for profit.

What was put aside was not lost; what was stored up did not become surfeit.

Those who died did not die young; those who lived did not become old. Good fortune procured nothing; bad fortune brought no calamity. Each followed his fate and preserved himself with measure. The bright did not win because of their knowledge; the ignorant were not overcome because of their stupidity.

---

[3] The analogy of lice in a pair of drawers, the most famous part of the 'Biography,' was probably inspired by a passage in *Chuang-tzu*, 24 [see Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 276] in which a class of men are compared to lice living on a pig. The 'great fire' is probably also inspired by that passage and should be read with the fall of dynasties in mind.

[4] Literally 'yang crow.' This seems to be the earliest usage of this term as an heroic bird (like the phoenix or roc), a usage often found in later poetry. The comparison between heroic and small birds is based on the first chapter of *Chuang-tzu*. Like so many of the creatures referred to by Juan Chi, the Sun Crow was probably a well know mythological animal, perhaps the black crow often shown against the sun in early (Former Han) paintings… Archeological discoveries of this type continue to show us that so many of the strange birds and beasts Juan Chi delights in mentioning were an important and perhaps even a commonplace of contemporary daily life.

[5] Traditionally in 1766 [BCE].

[6] The Chou were actually defeated by the Ch'in in 255 [BCE] and the latter by the Han in 206 [BCE], but Master Great Man can hardly be expected to take a mere half century into account!

[7] Said to be the capital of the Shang king Tsui-I (reigned 1525–1505 [BCE]).

[8] Po [refers] in all probability [to] the three capitals of the Shang dynasty, T'ang, variously located near Lo-yang …

[9] The capital of the early kings of the Chou dynasty, in the northwest of Ch'ang-an.

The weak were not cowed by oppression, nor did the strong prevail by their force. For then there was no ruler, and all beings were peaceful; no officials, and all affairs were well ordered. Men preserved their persons and cultivated their natures, not deviating from their norm. Only because it was so were they able to live to great ages. But now when you make music you get sounds in disorder; when you indulge in sexual activity you weaken the body. You change your exterior appearance to hide your passions within you. Filled with desires, you seek excess; you practice counterfeits to make yourself famous. When rulers are set up, tyranny arises; when officials are established, thieves are born. You idly ordain rites and laws to bind the lowly common people. You cheat the stupid and fool the unskillful, and hide your knowledge to make yourselves appear to be like spirits. The strong look fierce and are oppressive; the weak shiver with anguish and are servile. You pretend to be honest to attain your avaricious ends; you harbor dangerous thoughts within you but appear benevolent to the outside world. When you commit some crime you do not repent of it, but when you encounter some good fortune you take it as a matter for personal pride. Because you pursue these things to the exclusion of all else [?], you become stagnant and do not develop.

Now, if there were no honors, those in low position would bear no grudges; if there were no riches, the poor would not struggle [to obtain them]. Each would be satisfied within himself and would have nothing else to seek. If liberalities and favors did not bind one to [a sovereign], there would be no reason [to expose oneself to] death and defeat against [his] enemies. If rare music were not performed, the ear's hearing would not be altered; if lascivious views were not shown, the eye's sight would not be changed. If the ear and the eye were not altered and changed, there would be no way to disrupt the spirit.

This was the perfection arrived at in former times. But now you honor merit to make one another exalted; you compete with your abilities to set one above the other; you struggle for power to make one rule over another; and you esteem honors so that you can offer them to one another. You encourage the whole world to pursue these aims, and the result is that the upper and lower classes harm one another. You exhaust all the creatures of the universe to their very limits in order to purvey to the endless desires of your senses. This is no way to nourish the common people! And then you fear the people will understand what is going on, so you add rewards to please them and strengthen punishments to keep them in awe. But when there is no more wealth, rewards can no longer be given; when there are no more punishments, sentences cannot be carried out. Then begin the calamities of ruined states, assassinated rulers and armies defeated and dispersed. Are these things not caused by you gentlemen? Your rites and laws are indeed nothing more than the methods of harmful robbers, of trouble-makers, of death and destruction. And you, you think they form an inalterable way of excellent conduct: How erroneous you are! …"

3. Bao Jingyan

From Etienne Balazs, *Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy: Variations on a Theme*, 243–6, © Yale University Press, 1964, reprinted with permission of Yale University Press.

The Confucian literati say: "Heaven gave birth to the people and then set rulers over them." But how can High Heaven have said this in so many words? Is it not rather that interested parties make this their pretext? The fact is that the strong oppressed the weak and the weak submitted to them; the cunning tricked the innocent and the innocent served them. It was because there was submission that the relation of lord and subject arose, and because there was servitude that the people, being powerless, could be kept under control. Thus servitude and mastery result from the struggle between the strong and the weak and the contrast between the cunning and the innocent, and Blue Heaven has nothing whatsoever to do with it.

When the world was in its original undifferentiated state, the Nameless (*wu- ming,* that is, the Tao) was what was valued, and all creatures found happiness in self-fulfillment. Now when the cinnamon-tree has its bark stripped or the varnish-tree is cut, it is not done at the wish of the tree; when the pheasant's feathers are plucked or the kingfisher's torn out, it is not done by desire of the bird. To be bitted and bridled is not in accordance with the nature of the horse; to be put under the yoke and bear burdens does not give pleasure to the ox.

Cunning has its origin in the use of force that goes against the true nature of things, and the real reason for harming creatures is to provide useless adornments. Thus catching the birds of the air in order to supply frivolous adornments, making holes in noses where no holes should be, tying beasts by the leg when nature meant them to be free, is not in accord with the destiny of the myriad creatures, all born to live out their lives unharmed. And so the people are compelled to labor so that those in office may be nourished; and while their superiors enjoy fat salaries, they are reduced to the direst poverty.

It is all very well to enjoy the infinite bliss of life after death, but it is preferable not to have died in the first place; and rather than acquire an empty reputation for integrity by resigning office and foregoing one's salary, it is better that there should be no office to resign. Loyalty and righteousness only appear when rebellion breaks out in the empire, filial obedience and parental love are only displayed when there is discord among kindred.

In the earliest times, there was neither lord nor subject.[1] Wells were dug for drinking-water, the fields were plowed for food, work began at sunrise and ceased at sunset; everyone was free and at ease, neither competing with each other nor scheming against each other, and no one was either glorified or humiliated. The waste lands had no paths or roads and the waterways no boats or bridges, and because there were no means of communication by land or water, people did not appropriate each other's property; no armies could be formed, and so people did not attack one another. Indeed since no one climbed up to seek out nests nor dived down to sift the waters of

[1] The description of "paradise" in *Lieh-tzu*, 5, where *pu chiin pu ch' en* occurs (A.C. Graham, *The Book of Lieh-tzu,* 102, translates "no one is ruler or subject"), and of Utopia, *Lieh-tzu*, 2 (translated by Graham, 34: "In this country there are no teachers and leaders; all things follow their natural course").

the deep, the phoenix nested under the eaves of the house and dragons disported in the garden pool.

The ravening tiger could be trodden on, the poisonous snake handled. Men could wade through swamps without raising the waterfowl, and enter the woodlands without startling the fox or the hare. Since no one even began to think of gaining power or seeking profit, no dire events or rebellions occurred; and as spears and shields were not in use, moats and ramparts did not have to be built. All creatures lived together in mystic unity, all of them merged in the Way (*Tao*) . Since they were not visited by plague or pestilence, they could live out their lives and die a natural death. Their hearts being pure, they were devoid of cunning. Enjoying plentiful supplies of food, they strolled about with full bellies.[2] Their speech was not flowery, their behavior not ostentatious.

How, then, could there have been accumulation of property such as to rob the people of their wealth, or severe punishments to trap and ensnare them? When this age entered on decadence, knowledge and cunning came into use.

The Way and its Virtue (*Tao te*) having fallen into decay, a hierarchy was established. Customary regulations for promotion and degradation and for profit and loss proliferated, ceremonial garments such as the [gentry's] sash and sacrificial cap and the imperial blue and yellow [robes for worshiping Heaven and Earth] were elaborated. Buildings of earth and wood were raised high into the sky, with the beams and rafters painted red and green. The heights were overturned in quest of gems, the depths dived into in search of pearls; but however vast a collection of precious stones people might have assembled, it still would not have sufficed to satisfy their whims, and a whole mountain of gold would not have been enough to meet their expenditure: so sunk were they in depravity and vice, having transgressed against the fundamental principles of the Great Beginning. Daily they became further removed from the ways of their ancestors, and turned their back more and more upon man's original simplicity. Because they promoted the "worthy" to office, ordinary people strove for reputation, and because they prized material wealth, thieves and robbers appeared. The sight of desirable objects tempted true and honest hearts, and the display of arbitrary power and love of gain opened the road to robbery. So they made weapons with points and with sharp edges, and after that there was no end to usurpations and acts of aggression, and they were only afraid lest crossbows should not be strong enough, shields stout enough, lances sharp enough, and defenses solid enough. Yet all this could have been dispensed with if there had been no oppression and violence from the start.

Therefore it has been said: "Who could make scepters without spoiling the unblemished jade? And how could altruism and righteousness (*jen* and *i*) be extolled unless the Way and its Virtue had perished?" Although tyrants such as Chieh and Chou were able to burn men to death, massacre their advisers, make mincemeat of the feudal lords, cut the barons into strips, tear out men's hearts and break their bones, and go to the furthest extremes of tyrannical crime down to the use of torture by roasting and grilling, however cruel they may by nature have been, how could they have done such things if they had had to remain among the ranks of the common people? If they gave way to their cruelty and lust and butchered the whole empire, it was because, as rulers, they could do as they pleased. As soon as the relationship between lord and subject is established, hearts become daily more filled with evil designs, until the manacled criminals sullenly doing forced labor in the mud and the dust are full of mutinous thoughts, the Sovereign trembles

[2] *Chuang-tzu,* IX [see Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, 104–6].

with anxious fear in his ancestral temple, and the people simmer with revolt in the midst of their poverty and distress; and to try to stop them revolting by means of rules and regulations, or control them by means of penalties and punishments, is like trying to dam a river in full flood with a handful of earth, or keeping the torrents of water back with one finger.

4. Tao Qian, “Peach Blossom Spring”

Translated by Burton Watson, in Watson (trans. and ed.), *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu,* 142–3, © 1984, Columbia University Press, reprinted with permission of the publisher.

During the Tai-yuan era (376–397 CE) of the Chin dynasty, there was a man of Wu-ling who caught fish for a living. Once he was making his way up a valley stream and had lost track of how far he had gone when he suddenly came upon a forest of peach trees in bloom. For several hundred paces on either bank of the stream there were no other trees to be seen, but fragrant grasses, fresh and beautiful, and falling petals whirling all around.

The fisherman, astonished at such a sight, pushed ahead, hoping to see what lay beyond the forest. Where the forest ended there was a spring that fed the stream, and beyond that a hill. The hill had a small opening in it, from which there seemed to come a gleam of light. Abandoning his boat, the fisherman went through the opening. At first it was very narrow, with barely room for a person to pass, but after he had gone twenty or thirty paces, it suddenly opened out and he could see clearly.

A plain stretched before him, broad and flat, with houses and sheds dotting it, and rich fields, pretty ponds, and mulberry and bamboo around them. Paths ran north and south, east and west across the fields, and chickens and dogs could be heard from farm to farm. The men and women who passed back and forth in the midst, sowing and tilling the fields, were all dressed just like any other people, and from white-haired elders to youngsters with their hair unbound, everyone seemed carefree and happy.

The people, seeing the fisherman, were greatly startled and asked where he had come from. When he had answered all their questions, they invited him to return with them to their home, where they set out wine and killed a chicken to prepare a meal.

As soon as the others in the village heard of his arrival, they all came to greet him. They told him that some generations in the past their people had fled from the troubled times of the Ch’in dynasty (221–207 BCE) and had come with their wives and children and fellow villagers to this faraway place. They had never ventured out into the world again, and hence in time had come to be completely cut off from other people. They asked him what dynasty was ruling at present—they had not even heard of the Han dynasty, to say nothing of the Wei and Chin dynasties that succeeded it. The fisherman replied to each of their questions to the best of his knowledge, and everyone sighed with wonder.

The other villagers invited the fisherman to visit their homes as well, each setting out wine and food for him. Thus he remained for several days before taking his leave. One of the villagers said to him, “I trust you won’t tell the people on the outside about this.” After the fisherman had made his way out of the place, he found his boat and followed the route he had taken earlier, taking care to note the places that he passed. When he reached the prefectural town, he went to call on the governor and reported what had happened. The governor immediately dispatched men to go with him to look for the place, but though he tried to locate the spots that he had taken note of earlier, in the end he became confused and could not find the way again.

Liu Tzu-chi of Nan-yang, a gentleman-recluse of lofty ideals, heard the story and began delightedly making plans to go there, but before he could carry them out, he fell sick and died. Since then there have been no more "seekers of the ford."[1]

[1] An allusion to *Analects*, XVIII, 6, in which Confucius sends one of his disciples to inquire about a fording place across a river. Here, of course, the phrase refers to seekers of the utopian land of the Peach Blossom Spring.

5. *Wunengzi*

Translated by Catrina Siu; edited by John Rapp, with (limited) notes based on various editions of the complete (surviving) Chinese text.

Preface

Wu Nengzi was my friend who's now passed away. As a young man he was widely learned and of few desires. As he grew he investigated principle to the fullest extent and the nature of things and got to the very nature of fate. During the Huangchao rebellion [874–884 CE] he fled and traveled around with no regular abode. He was cold and famished. In the third year of the Guangqi reign period [887] when the Son of Heaven was in Bao, all around there were armies. Wu Nengzi was staying in the home of the peasant Mr Jing who was from the town of Zuofu and the peasant dwelling was most lowly and there was stuff all about. In the daytime Wu Nengzi liked to stay in bed and not get up. As he lay in bed he would take a pen in hand and write one or two pieces of paper and then he would put them in the breast of his garment and not show anyone.

From [such a such a date] to [such an such a date] he had written several tens of pieces of paper and put them in a bag and it would seem as if he had produced a book and I stole a look at them and tried to note down as much as I could see so that I could talk about these words with my brothers and friends.

The main import of what he wrote concerns elucidating natural principle and getting to the origin of nature. Behave naturally and don't labor. Make sure that you follow nature without desire, and thereby he treated lightly the teachings of ritual and externalized the affairs of the world. People who are in the know won't need to be told about these things to believe them. Will people who aren't in the know be able not to condemn them? I divided his writing up into chapters, thirty-four in all, and made a book of three parts, first, second, and third volumes, with the purpose of sharing it with those in the know. Now because the doings of Wu Nengzi's life are hidden away I will not record his name or any of his particulars here.

Part 1

Chapter 1 : The mistakes of the sages

Before Heaven and Earth split, there was a mass [*hundun*] of unitary ether [*qi*]. This mass of *qi* became full and overflowed, and split into two principles. At this point they were clear and muddy, light and heavy. The light and clear rose upwards, and became the element Yang of Heaven; the heavy and turbid dropped to the bottom, and became the element Yin of the Earth! The then robust and solid Heaven moved the then malleable and docile Earth [and things were?] peaceful; this is the natural way of *qi*. Heaven and Earth were already in their positions, the Yin

and Yang *qi* interacted, thereupon the naked creatures: The scaly creatures, hairy/furry creatures, feathery creatures, and shelly creatures were born. [Thus] Humans, [or the] naked creatures, the scaly, hairy/furry, feathery, and shelly creatures were [all] born from Heaven and Earth; they [all come from] the interaction of the *qi*, there is no difference [between the two].

Someone says there [is a principle] that already exists that differentiates [between things], [but] is it not that people themselves maintain this difference between the scaly, feathery, hairy/furry, and the shelly creatures? But don't [people have] intelligence and wisdom [and] language? Oh well, birds and beasts, up to and including insects and worms, all favor life and avoid death, construct their nests and caves, plan their food, give birth to and raise their type and protect them; compared to people who [also] favor life and avoid death, construct their palaces and mansions, plan their clothing and meals, give birth to and raise their sons and daughters, and treat them with private love, there is no difference [between the two]. How can one maintain that there is no intelligence and wisdom [in these creatures]? Well, birds and beasts, up to and including insects and worms, they call, chirp and screech, each has their own sound; how [can we] know that among their kind, there is no language? Humans, by means of not knowing [animals'] sounds, maintain their inability to speak. Moreover, how [can we] know that the birds and beasts are not making an analogy of people's speech, also maintaining that people are incapable of language? Therefore, the sound of their cries, calls, chirps, and screeches must be speech. Moreover, how can one maintain that [animals] are incapable of language? As for intelligence, wisdom, and language, people and creatures are one and the same; that which is different is shape and form. So, [since] among the scaly, hairy/furry, feathery, and scaly [creatures], there are also differences in shape and form, how can it be that [they are] especially different from humans? Among humans, shapes and forms also have similarities and differences, differences and similarities; how can it be that [humans' forms are] especially different from the shapes and forms of the four creatures? Alas! As for Heaven and Earth, the elements yin and yang are big things. The naked, scaly, hairy/furry, feathery, and shelled, these five vital classes, they followed the *qi* that harmonized the big things (Heaven and Earth); moreover they form a body within the big things. Also it's like river streams and oceans providing lodging for fishes and other water creatures, [like] mountains and hills encompassing grasslands and woods.

In the most ancient times, the naked creatures and the scaly, hairy/furry, feathery, and shelled lived together indiscriminately, female and male, male and female. They [lived] together naturally, with no distinction between men and women, husband and wife [and no hierarchical order among] father and son, older brother and younger brother. In the summer they created nests and in the winter they created caves; there was no construction of palaces and mansions. They ate raw meat and drank blood, without eating the food of the one hundred grains.[1] The living moved around, the dead keeled over, [there was] no [desire for] stealing and murder, [and there were] no funeral [rites].

They followed what was natural; there was no ruling or shepherding, [and everything was] in its original simplicity; according to these principles they could live long lives.

Not long after, among the naked creatures arose a bunch of "wise" and "intelligent" animals who called themselves "people" who established rules under which they could [dominate] the scaly, hairy/furry, feathery, and shelled creatures. Moreover, they taught [each other] sowing and planting in order to eat the food of a hundred grains, and thereafter [learned] to use the plow. They

[1] "Food from the one hundred grains" means food that needed to be processed through machinery or technology.

hewed wood and made mud bricks to construct mansions and palaces, and thereupon started to use the blade and the axe. They instituted marriages, which started the distinction between men and women, and thereafter began the distinction between husband and wife and the hierarchical distinction among fathers and sons and older brothers and younger brothers. They made coffins and shrouds to bury their dead, and thereupon there [developed] funeral rites.

They tied knots together to make nets in order to catch the scaly, hairy/furry, feathery, and shelled creatures; thereupon emerged the taste for prepared food.

Original simplicity was thereby broken up, thereby giving rise to selfish passions and intentions. People were strong and weak by their natural abilities; there was still no way to regulate this. Among the crowd that called themselves the "wise" and "intelligent," they chose one who would unite the rest of them; this one was called the ruler, and the multitude were called his servants [officials]. The one could control the multitude, but the multitude could not gain supremacy over the one. From this came the distinction between the ruler and the ministers, and the exalted and lowly. The honored were set on high and the multitude placed on the same low level [beneath him].

In later times hierarchy and emoluments were established among the "wise and intelligent." Thereupon, material things distinguished the ranks between the wealthy and the poor, people satisfied their desires in accordance with their ranks and emoluments. Then they called the wise and intelligent ones "sages." But soon the debased and disgraced started to become jealous of the honored, the poor became jealous of the wealthy, and from this was born the spirit of competition. Those who called themselves sages worried about this and together they said, "in the time of original purity, who was it who called themselves people? We artificially imposed the name 'people' and therefore people were separated from the animals. At that time, there were no exalted and debased, [so] who was it who called themselves rulers and ministers? But after we imposed the construction of hierarchy; there came about rulers and ministers. At that time, there was no grasping and no desires, [so] what were ranks and emoluments to them? We imposed assessments on people, so now they started to realize the distinction between honorable and disgraced. Now, the pure and natural has been weakened, and passions and predilections are embraced by vying hearts. If there is competition, there is stealing, if there is stealing, there is chaos [*luan*], [so] what is to happen in the future?" From among the group of the "wise and intelligent," one who was most "wise and intelligent" spoke and said: "I have a scheme!"; from this he taught the principles of benevolence, virtue, loyalty, and trustworthiness and to regulate them by means of ritual and music. When a ruler oppressed his subjects he was to be called cruel, and the ministers would say that the government was illegitimate. When the ministers usurped [the ruler's authority], the ruler would call them rebels. A father who did not love his son, would be called un-nurturing, and a son who did not obey his father would be called unfilial. When older brother and younger brother were not in accordance, they would be called disrespectful and unfraternal; when a husband and wife were not united as one, they would be called unchaste and inharmonious. People who acted in these ways were called the wrong and people who did not were called the right. The right were honored and the wrong were disgraced, thus was cultivated the feeling of pleasure in being right and the shame of being in the wrong, and feelings of competition were suppressed.

As even more generations passed, predilections and desires became more inflamed; thereupon [people] turned their backs on benevolence, virtue, loyalty, and trustworthiness, and they transgressed from ritual and music and [started to] compete [with each other]. Those who called

themselves sages regretted this. They had no other option but to establish laws and punishments and organized armies to keep the people under control. When there were small offenses, [people] were punished. When offenses were big, an army was set onto them. Therefore punishments such as imprisonment, using the *kang*, and being whipped were spread out over the country. Spears, pikes, bows and arrows were spread out over the world, families were destroyed and kingdoms wiped out. There were too many to count. The common people came to dire poverty and died; this spread without end.

Alas! It was natural to treat [the people] as beasts; it was not natural to treat them as humans. Imposing the establishment of palaces and mansions, [formal]

meals and [prepared] food stirred up desires; imposing distinctions between the exalted and debased and the honorable and disgraced excited competition; imposing benevolence, virtue, ritual, and music perverted what was natural.

Imposing punishments and laws and [using] military [force] immiserated [people's] lives; this caused people to seek after the branches [the extraneous]

and forget about the root [the essential]; this disturbed their passions and attacked their lives, and together in great numbers they died. They could not revive the past. This was the fault of those who called themselves sages.

Chapter 2 : Illuminating the origin

That which people call the origin is the being at the heart of nonbeing; the shape of the body and the skeletal structure relies upon it in order to stand up straight; it is long-lasting and never dies. Just like fire that can be used to burn things, one cannot take away its heat. Just like how water can be used to moisten things, one cannot take away from its wetness. If you try to take it, then you will not have it. If you try to hide it, then it does not cease to exist. If it moves then you'll be able examine even if it is as small as an autumn hair[2]

and investigate it even if it is as silent as the buzzing of a mosquito; if it remains still, then if it's as big as Mount Qiu, then you won't be able to see it; even if it's as loud as thunder, you won't be able to hear it. When it's big it's capable of encompassing the entire universe; when it's small it can enter into the pupil of an eye. It appears suddenly, neither coming nor going. Suddenly, and without being aware, it is neither overflowing nor diminishing. The recluses Chao Fu and Xu You, the escape of Dong Yuan Gong and Qi Liji, they had a single-minded purpose at the root to only do what was right. Emperor Yao passed the empire to Shun, Emperor Shun passed the empire to Yu, Emperor Yu passed the empire to Jie, Tang kicked out Emperor Jie, and King Wu who attacked the state of Zhou took hold of the opportunity to benefit everyone simultaneously. One who understands this root, if he must hide, he will then hide, if he must act, then he will act, he responds to things and establishes affairs/gets things done, he is vast and without partiality/feelings.

One who is blind to this, his predilections and desires are his motivation; every day, he mindlessly uses his environment, he isn't conscious and doesn't understand. The skilled is able to illuminate by means of an unfixed light, it shifts around according to the harmony of nature, then the great nameless origin will be seen in the midst of the unseen!

[2] An autumn hair is traditionally considered the finest of hairs, those that are used for calligraphy brushes.

Chapter 3 : Analyzing misconceptions/The clarification of errors

As for human nature, it is spirit, as for fate, it is ether [*qi*]. Human nature and fate—these two must mutually come together in the vast void; they give birth to each other in nature. They are similar to Yuan and Fu's mutual responding to each other/harmony, the mutual harmonizing of Yin and Yang. That which we term the skeletal part that is the body, it is the apparatus of human nature and fate. Is it not that fire is on top of the firewood, if there is no firewood then the fire does not burn, if there is no fire, the firewood does not glow (from heat). If there is not skeletal structure and body, human nature and fate has no means of standing up, if human nature and fate attach themselves to the body, then it causes them to be lively, therefore human nature and fate bubbles forth from nature and is born; the natural skeletal structure and the body stagnate and die.

That which is born from Nature, although it exists separately and can be broken off, is eternally alive. That which naturally dies, although it moves around, it will always die.

Nowadays, everyone likes life and despises death; [people] do not understand the principle of the natural cycle of life and death, they look to the thing that is not moving and is rigid/stiff and they worry about it. They cast aside that which is naturally born, devoting themselves to preserving that which is naturally dead, the more diligently they preserve it, the more distant is life. This is desire that sinks feathers and floats rocks—how great is this stupidity!

Chapter 4 : Having no worries

As for people, they most despise death, which is to say that they despise the shape and skeletal body being rigid and not moving. As for the shape and skeletal body, blood, flesh, ear, and eyes, they cannot be empty and yet vital, therefore we know that they are not the implements of life. Therefore the reason you should not wait to call death the point at which there is no movement and stiffness; rather, death is at its root already there when we run about and move around! Therefore that which runs about and moves around relies on nothing more than that which is not dead. And, secondly, it is not that which is able to move and hasten about by itself. The body and skeletal shape are originally dead; therefore it is not dying today, therefore it is not dead today, and therefore it is not going to die! As for death, it is the most despised by the people. But there is no death to be despised, besides the shape and skeletal structure; is there anything really to disturb feelings of utmost harmony and satisfaction?

Chapter 5 : Criticizing foolishness (in two sections)

Part 1

The things that which everyone in the world commonly hastens after without knowing where to stop are wealth, nobility, and a good name. As for those we call wealthy and noble, they are satisfied by material things. At the high points of wealth are emperors and princes; at the low points of wealth are the dukes and marquises. Is it not by the crown they wear, the fancy palace they live in, and their security guards and attendants that we call them emperors and princes? Is it not because they wear a bureaucrat's hat [when they go outside], have noisy carts and horses, flags and big axes that we call them dukes and marquises? If we do not decorate them with an emperor's clothing, palaces, large umbrellas decorated with bird feathers, boards that

prohibit people from passing, bureaucrat hats, carts, horses, axes, and flags, then what can make them emperors, princes, dukes, and marquises? As for the emperor's clothes, large umbrellas decorated with bird feathers, axes, flags, carts, and horses, these are all material things. When there is a sufficiency of material objects, then we have the condition of nobility. When one is wealthy and ennobled, then there are emperors, princes, dukes, and marquises. That is the reason why I say that the wealthy and noble are merely sufficient in material objects. As for material nothings, they are things that people are capable of making. There are those who make these things by themselves and on the contrary, there are those that do not create [there things], who enjoy them. Well then, just as we designate those with sufficient material things as wealthy and ennobled, we [also designate] those without material things to be poor and lowly; because of this, we take pleasure in wealth and honor and are ashamed to be poor and lowly; of those who do not achieve happiness, there is no conduct too extreme for them [to get what they want]. From ancient times until the present, [we]

have been awake but not enlightened. How powerful is the strength of material things! As for those who are said to have a fine name, are they not the type to live at home and be filial, the type to serve their superiors with loyalty, the type to make friends and be trustworthy, the type when confronted with objects of value are honest; are they the ones who are filled with talent, are they the ones who are sufficient in skills? These are the ones whom the so-called sages value, in order to control the stupid common people. As for what can be considered a fine name, it is a person's external bodily form and inner character. Without an external bodily form, then, one is equivalent to empty space, thus unwanted praise cannot be added to it. As for the external bodily form, it is [merely] a bag to hold the blood and all the internal organs; in the morning, it is whole and in the evening, it spoils—how can it be said that it has a good name? Among people today, why are there none who do not cast off their natural and correct human nature and [instead] hasten after wealth, nobility, and a fine reputation, which then leads to activities of cheating and falsifying? It is because the so-called sages have misled them.

Part 2

People of ancient times until now, those determined to be their relatives were their blood-kin, thereupon their affections had a point to specialize on. When gathered together, they cheer for each other, when separated, they become sick looking for each other, when sick, they worry for each other, when there was death, they cried for each other. Now, everyone under Heaven is a kin to me, we are all one body: we are like hands, feet, stomach, back, ears, eyes, mouth, nose, head, neck, eyebrows, and hair. How can you separate and differentiate this one from me? Therefore, the distinction between the self and the other resides only in the name. The reason why people feel distant from other people under Heaven is because we are not mutually familiar with each other; the reason why we are close to our relatives is because we are mutually familiar to them.

Alas! If among the people, you divide up their bodies into hands, feet, stomachs, backs, ears, eyes, mouths, noses, heads, necks, eyebrows, and hair and attempt to call them bodies, you will have no success, who could you say are your relatives? Who could you say have people? You'll have to achieve this act of distinction by imposing names. If you use the name that you use to name your relatives to name the people under Heaven, then all people under Heaven will be your relatives! If you use the way you familiarize yourself with relatives to familiarize yourself with people of the world, then all the people under Heaven will all be your relatives! What need

is there to speak of an exclusive object of our affections? If there are none to be familial to or paternally benevolent to, then we can be familial and paternally benevolent to all under Heaven; but if there are those that we must be familial and paternally benevolent to, then we will only be familial and paternally benevolent to the people in one single household, and moreover, filial piety and paternal benevolence will become a burden! But if you get rid of them then there is insincerity; and if there is insincerity, then fathers, sons, older brothers, and younger brothers will have dislike and resentment! Zhuang Zi said, "when a group of fishes are placed on land, they pass water to each other mouth to mouth [to keep each other alive], this is not as good as forgetting each other in the rivers and lakes." How true are these words! As like fish that should take no notice of each other in rivers and lakes, people should also take no notice of each other in Nature, this is what is suitable! Therefore finding an exclusive location toward which to direct your feelings is what an intelligent person will not do.

Chapter 6 (missing from surviving Chinese text)

Chapter 7 : Cultivating your original nature (in four sections)

Part 1

As for the scale and mirror, they are material things; they are things that are made by people. People themselves make these things, and in return, they seek to know the lightness or heaviness from the scale and they seek to know the beauty or ugliness from the mirror, how is this so? The scale has no intentionality and is balanced; the mirror has no intentionality and is perfectly-reflective. As for material things without hearts, they are balanced and bright; with the people with intentionality, you must polish them with nothingness, clean them with emptiness, and cultivate in them a sense of formlessness and quietness, then they will not know who they are. I see them accompany Heaven and Earth in their boundlessness, reducing and rolled up in the *qi*, but become inexhaustible, and under heaven, there is none who are/nothing that is able to compete with them/it.

Part 2

As for the nature of water, when it is dammed up, it forms clear pools, when it is channeled, it flows, when it rises up and evaporates, it becomes clouds and it will rain, when it lands on earth, it will moisten it, it forms rivers and oceans but feels no need to boast of its vastness, it may be in ravines and caves but it is not embarrassed/shamed by its smallness, it may divide into one-hundred rivers but it will not be exhausted, it will benefit the ten-thousand things and not run out of energy/quit, it is the most pliant of things. Laozi said, "therefore, the pliant and weak will be victorious over the rigid and strong." Then it contains the mysterious form of spirit [*shen*], the one where the special *qi* arrives and goes to, it is the thing that has obtained the most original essence of nature.

Part 3

When water flows, it is wet, when fire burns, it is dry and sultry, dragons originate from clouds, tigers originate from the wind; these are the natural principles of stimulus and response. Therefore that which is the mysterious form of spirit brings about *qi*, the *qi* brings about that

which is mysterious, that is the way things are. If you want to know how things of nature respond to each other, then you should concentrate on returning to the root of the Mysterious Mother[3] [*Xuan Mu*], then you will have almost no problems in your understanding.

Part 4

Well now, that birds fly in the sky and fish swim in water is not by intentional design; rather, they naturally do so. Therefore they have no self-consciousness of their own ability to fly or swim. If they had consciousness of it and made up their mind in order to do these things, then they will necessarily fall out of the sky and drown! Also, just as how people walk with their feet, grab with their hands, listen with their ears, see with their eyes, they need not be taught to have the ability to do it. At that moment at which they are walking, grabbing, listening, and seeing, then the reflex takes over; moreover there is no need for them to think about things before they do it. If they first had to think about these things and afterwards do them, then they will become exhausted! If they followed along with nature, they will last a long time; those who attain its rhythms will be saved. As for the great, empty void, this is the natural state of the mind. Today, people's hands, feet, ears, and eyes follow along with their nature and walk, grab, listen, and see. As for their minds, they do not follow along with their nature and they are obstructed and hindered; [thus] if we desire the greatest harmony and enlightenment, that will be difficult.

Part 2

Chapter 1: King Wen speaks, Part 1

Lü Wang[4] was fishing on the bank of the Wei River.[5] Before Xi Bo[6] went out to hunt, he divined using stalks of plants. The result of the fortune telling said, "There will indeed be no bears of any kind, and heaven will bestow upon you a teacher." Getting to the hunt, he found Wang, and thereupon Xi Bo again entreated him, yet Wang kept fishing without interruption. Only after Xi Bo repeatedly beseeched him, Wang sat down with his legs crossed like a basket and laughed, saying "Why did you come here?!" Xi Bo said, "The Shang government is in chaos! The people are in great pain! I, a foolish peon, desire to save them, yet I think I should get a worthy gentleman to help me." Lü Wang said, "The Shang dynastical government became chaotic by itself, and the people are in great pain out of their own doing. What is the connection to you? Why do you want to sully me?" Xi Bo said, "Well, sages should not hide their usefulness or keep their benevolence to themselves. They must exhaust their wisdom by helping all things universally. Isn't this so?" Lü Wang said, "Well now, Human beings are floating between heaven and earth, together with the birds, beasts, and many insects, in the middle of unitary *qi,* and nothing more, exactly the same as castle walls, houses, and cottages all really are based on hollow air. If something completely destroyed the castle walls, houses, and cottages, then the air would still be the air. If something killed off all humans, birds, beasts, and insects, the *qi* would still be the *qi.* How can we do anything about the Shang government's tyranny? How can we say anything

[3] Implying the womb.

[4] Lü served under Kings Wen and Wu of the Zhou Dynasty.

[5] A large tributary of the Yellow River in today's Shaanxi Province.

[6] Xi Bo later became King Wen, the first King of the Zhou Dynasty.

of people's hardship? Despite all of this, the castle walls, houses, and cottages are already built and so need not be destroyed, just as the people are already formed and need not be killed, so I will save them!" Then, he agreed with Xi Bo and rode back home with him in the same carriage.

Tai Dian Hong Yao[7] personally went to Xi Bo and said, "The accumulated virtue and amassed achievement of Gong Liu[8] and Hou Ji,[9] and through the current reign, the King's virtue extends above and beyond his ancestors! Now the earth is divided into three parts, and the King possesses two of them; this can be called 'fantastic'! You, Lü Wang, are a fisherman, so what would you ever want to say beneath the extreme greatness of the King?" Xi Bo said, "Well, the virtue of inaction envelopes and pervades heaven and earth, while the virtue of action gets things started and accomplishes things. Xüan Yüan[10]

and Tao Tang's[11] actions made them Sons of Heaven, and it was with the virtue of action that they obtained an audience with Master Guang Cheng[12] at Mount Kong Tong and asked for Xü You[13] at Sieve Mountain, although they didn't catch his attention. Besides, my virtue is not yet accomplished like that of Xüan Yüan and Yao, and isn't my inferiority the result of the virtue of inaction?" Tai Dian Hong Yao said, "If what the King says is true, then Wang is really the epitome of the virtue of inaction, so why is he following the King's actions?" Xi Bo said, "Heaven and Earth are inactive, yet the sun, moon, stars, and constellations move in the day and the night. There are rain, dew, frost, and freezing rain in the autumn and winter. The great rivers flow without pause, and the grass and trees grow without stopping. Therefore, inaction can be flexible. If there is a fixed point in action, then it cannot be inaction." Lü Wang heard this and knew that Xi Bo really did have compassion for the people and didn't want any profit from the Shang Dynasty's world. Thereupon, Lü Wang and Xi Bo finally made the State of Zhou prosperous and powerful.

Chapter 2: Sayings of the masters of Shou Yang

When King Wen[14] died, King Wu attacked King Zhou[15] and destroyed him. Bo Yi[16] and Shu Qi[17] grabbed hold of Ma Chen's horse and said, "your father died and is not yet buried, and you have already taken up this large enterprise, and you have stirred up all the people, this is not filial. Being a minister, you have killed your ruler, this is not loyal." King Wu's retainers wanted to attack Bo Yi and Shu Qi, but King Wu performed a righteous act and let them go. Bo Yi and Shu Qi then left and hid in Mount Shou Yang and became known as the Masters of Mount Shou Yang. (Below: A possible friend's remonstrance to Bo Yi and Shu Qi) "If you go in accordance with Earth's natural rhythm, there is no distinction between rulers and ministers. Someone created rulers and ministers in order to differentiate between the noble and based, those

[7] A high minister under King Wen.

[8] Ancestor of the Zhou clan; he passed his job on to Hou Ji's great grandson.

[9] Another ancestor of the Zhou clan who was supposedly an agricultural official that ruled the fief of Tai under Emperor Shun, the legendary founder of the Xia Dynasty.

[10] Another name for the Mythical Yellow Emperor.

[11] Another name for the legendary Emperor Yao, who abdicated his throne to Shun.

[12] A legendary virtuous man.

[13] A hermit from the time of Emperor Yao who supposedly refused all offers of honors and offices by becoming a hermit and living in a deep mountain cave.

[14] The first king of the Zhou dynasty.

[15] The last king of the Shang dynasty.

[16] Bo = the oldest of the sons.

[17] Shu = the middle of the sons.

who called themselves sages, they, by means of their wisdom, deceived the stupid. By means of wisdom, they deceived the stupid, how absurd. With you, I've said this quite often! It was illegitimate to make a distinction between rulers and ministers; it was illegitimate to proclaim the Shang dynasty. Within the illegitimate Shang dynasty, there was one who was illegitimately known as Xin.[18] As the illegitimate last king of the Shang dynasty, he was illegitimately cruel and illegitimately violent in order to fulfill his illegitimate desires. Ji Fa's rebellion was also predicated on desire. [The rebels'] desires were also illegitimate, therefore we can say that this is a case of the illegitimate replacing the illegitimate. As for taking no action [*wuwei*], it is pure and upright and is in accordance with Heaven's principles; father, sons, rulers, ministers, do they exist in this natural state? Taking action [y *ouwei*] is based on predilections and desires, and it wreaks havoc on human nature; filial piety is not really filial piety, loyalty is not really loyalty, what difference does one have from another? Now, you are considering what we have always been saying to be illegitimate, by illegitimating what we have to say, you can cover up your illegitimate actions in order to invite a righteous reputation. You are relying on your bones, which will necessarily rot away, in order to move toward an empty reputation; this is like trying to put out a fire with the wind. Ji Fa did not attack you, how lucky. If his retainers had attacked you, then you would have obtained a good name, [but then] what good would your rotting body be to you? As for dragons that shed their scales, phoenixes who shed their wings, they will be looked down upon by fishermen and hunters. How sad! You are probably not friends of mine." Bo Yi and Shu Qi thereupon escaped into Mount Shou Yang, we did not know how they died, and people thereafter thought they starved to death.

Chapter 3: Sayings of the old ruler

Confucius established the correct form of rituals and music and illustrated the ancient statutes. He edited *The Book of Poetry*, *The Book of Documents*, and *The Spring and Autumn Annals*, so he thought he could, by means of all of this, put into correct order human relationships, and stop the hearts of the chaotic ministers, thieves, and rebels, and then he went to tell Laozi about it. Laozi said, "as for governing a large country, it is like frying a small fish, if you use these kinds of knives, it will be mashed! In the past, the sages invented material things and managed affairs, they seduced and moved people's passions, and people's passions lost what was natural, and people's human nature and fate came to an early end in many ways! Nowadays, you added new complications to the sages' system and tied up human feelings even more, and [so] you have complicated people's passions. People's passions are multiple, which makes them idle, idleness causes swindling and cheating, and cheating causes even more chaos. This is a case of attacking Heaven's nature and having success, [meaning that] disaster is imminent." Confucius was scared, but he would not bring himself to stop.

Thereafter, he was kicked out of the country of Wei, and then he was disgraced in the state of Song, then he almost starved in Chen and Cai, and then he was surrounded by people who did not like him in Kuang. He spent his whole life anxiously, and several times he was almost killed. Confucius turned around and looked at his disciple Yan Hui and said: "You don't suppose what Laozi said was right, do you?"

[18] Xin = King Zhou of the Shang.

Chapter 4: Sayings of Confucius (in two sections)

Part 1

Confucius was surrounded by people who did not like him in Kuang, for 7 days, he strummed a string instrument and sang without stopping. Zi Lu[19]

said: "I have heard that the gentleman can protect his body from any kind of harm, and never has trouble for even a single day. Well now, you who are a sage has nevertheless starved in the state of Chen, and been surrounded by people who did not like you in Kuang; why is this so? And now, you, Master, are strumming on a stringed instrument and singing without stopping, and you do not have a melancholy expression, do you have a secret method?" Confucius said: "You, come over here, I want to tell you something: well now, people themselves have it in their power to do the correct, incorrect, the evil, and the upright, incorrect, the evil, and the upright derive from people themselves, whether you get a lot or a little [luck] depends on Fate, having success or failing depends on the time. The light of the sun and the moon, even these things cannot avoid the disaster of an eclipse. These sages, who are wise men, their intelligence and wisdom are not able to change the human allotment of how much or little success or failure [one receives]. The gentleman is able to be benevolent to people, but not able to cause people to be benevolent to himself; he is able to be righteous to people, but not able to make people behave righteously towards him. [If] the people of Kuang are surrounding me, it is not due to any fault of my own; I am powerless to keep them from surrounding me! Moreover, the thing that can be surrounded, it is only my body.

I am merely floating without form in an empty space above, I am floating without passion in another space, and I know of nothing of which to be anxious about, so I am, by chance, harmonizing my instrument with my song and nothing more." Before he was finished speaking, the people of Kuang had dispersed.

Part 2

When Confucius's disciple Yuan Xian lived in a lowly lane, his other disciple Zi Gong was simultaneously serving ministers in the states of Lu and Wei. [Zi Gong] saddled up his horses and assembled his retinue to call on Mr Xian! Xian was wearing his tattered clothing. Zi Gong said: "As for you, are you sick?" Xian said: "I have heard that if you do not cultivate virtue and justice—that is what is called sickness, being without wealth—that is called poverty. I am poor, but not sick." Zi Gong was embarrassed by what Xian said, and for the rest of his life, he did not dare to go to see Xian again.

Confucius heard this and said: "What Zi Gong was in the wrong. Well, now, he is concerned merely with external appearances and not emptiness, one who keeps these things inside his heart is not pure because he is not empty, so then his thinking is not clear, because it causes his heart to not be chaste. Zi Gong5 is close to being arrogant and desirous; Xian is close to steadfastness and purity, we can compare them to the clear and muddy, they are mutually distant by quite a large degree!"

[19] One of Confucius's disciples.

Chapter 5 (missing from original text)

Chapter 6: Sayings of Fan Li

Fan Li helped King Gou Jian of Yue destroy Wu and killed Fu Cha,[20] and in discussions with Minister Zhong said, "I have heard that for one who secretly schemes against other people, disasters will necessarily rebound on him. As for the destruction of the Kingdom of Wu and the death of King Wu, this has followed from the secret schemes you and I have made. Moreover, as for the way the king treats people, he likes to share his worries, but he doesn't share his happiness. This is not to mention, numerous achievements, a well-known reputation, and going into retirement—this is the way of Heaven." Minister Zhong said, "as for the whole world and the ten-thousand things, they are born in the spring and killed in the winter, as for the ten-thousand things, how can they, by being killed in the winter, cause disaster for Heaven and Earth? I hear that sages are not valued for their solitary goodness; rather, they are valued for getting rid of harm and helping things grow/getting things done. If you have helped something grow, you could be said to have gotten rid of disaster. This is what the Yellow Emperor did when he killed Chi You.[21]

The legendary emperor Xun eliminated the four evil ones, I have gotten rid of chaos in the state of Wu and have brought [things] to a successful state of completion, [with] hegemony in the state of Wu under Yue; this is nothing more than getting things done and getting rid of harm, [so] what disaster/retribution will come back to strike me? Just now, the King was able to destroy Wu because he had you and me; we must serve in office from start to finish, don't hasten towards retirement!" Fan Li said: "No, you're wrong. Not to mention, as for the universe, it has no intentionality, it does not control itself. Moreover, how can it control the other things? Heaven and Earth are by themselves Heaven and Earth, the ten-thousand things are by themselves the ten-thousand things, spring, by means of warmth gives birth to itself, winter, by means of the cold, kills itself, it is not Heaven and Earth that causes this to be so. Sages, although they have intentionality, what they can perform is part of Heaven and Earth. Heaven and Earth, although without intentionality, when stimulated, they will respond, when affairs push them, they will obey, when things pass by them, they will resist and go against them, getting rid of harm and causing things to come to completion, it has nothing to do with hate or love. Therefore [even when] we have gotten rid of harm and avoided disasters and brought material things to a completion, we will have no good fortune. Recently, because he hated the state of Wu, [the king] employed you and me in order to get our schemes. You and I benefitted from this pay and therefore we schemed against Wu, and [can] take as a sign of our success, the destruction of the people, and as payback, he gives us our emoluments. The duplicity of people is such that they say that they are like Heaven and Earth's births and killings [and] that they are agents of Heaven and Earth; what sages call getting rid of harm and bringing things to completion, isn't this just a big scam?" Minister Zhong was not happy, and he was greatly suspicious of it all and would not do it [retire from office?].

Fan Li in the end took his leave from Gou Jian and sailed on a boat to [Lake Tai]; not long thereafter, King Yue killed Minister Zhong.

[20] King of Wu.

[21] A person who attacked the emperor.

Chapter 7: Sayings of Song Yue

Qu Yuan was a minister at Chu who held the title of "San Lu Dai Fu" of three closely allied clans. King Chu was not virtuous, clever Minister Jing Shang had the King's good graces, and so the state of Chu was not [well] governed.

Qu Yuan was worried about this, so he remonstrated with King Xiang, and asked him to get rid of Jing Shang. The king did not listen, so Qu Yuan remonstrated with the King to the utmost point.

His disciple Song Yu stopped him and said, "as for the intentions of a gentleman, he cultivates himself and does not find fault with others, he hides his usefulness and does not show it off to the public, when the time comes, then he responds, when material things come, then he follows through; he responds in time, but does not make plans for himself in advance; he follows through with these things but is not devoted to his own achievements, and for this reason the ruler's benevolent intentions will not accrue to him, and resentment has no place to gather. Recently, the king was misled by one with a clever tongue. He was confused, causing the government to become chaotic, the people in the state of Chu were all envious of Jing Shang's noble status and made a lot of commotion to try to appease him. Qu Yuan, at this point, was all alone; he held onto his loyalty and trustworthiness, called out in his midst, and no one listened to him, and the country was still not [well] governed, and all he accomplished to display to others was they were wrong and he was right, all he was doing was buying enmity and fishing for disaster." Yuan said, "I heard that as a gentleman, when residing at home, one must be filial and fraternal, when one acts as an official, one must be loyal and trustworthy. If he reaches his aspirations, although dead, he is like the living; if he does not reach his aspirations, although he is alive, he is like the dead." He kept remonstrating without stopping. Jing Shang resented this, so he calumniated to the king [about Qu Yuan].

Song Yu remonstrated to him, saying, "previously, you were all alone, holding onto your loyalty and trustworthiness, and you kept on saying the same thing! But you did not listen, so now what do you have to be sad about? It could not be rank and emoluments that you're thinking about, is it that you are thinking about the country you are exiled from?" Yuan said, "neither. Well, I am depressed about the non-usage of my loyalty and trustworthiness, and that the state of Chu is not well governed." Yu said, "previously, you thought that you should die for filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty, and trustworthiness, so why are you sad? Moreover, your facial expression, form and body, they are not yours. The beautiful cannot be made ugly, the ugly cannot be made beautiful, the long cannot be made short, the short cannot be made long; the overflowing and strong are not able to be weakened, the weakened are not able to be made to overflow and strong; you cannot drive out sickness, when dead you cannot take things with you. My form and my body seem to belong to me, but I am not able to be in control of it. If your own body is like this, moreover, how would you desire to cause the people of the state of Chu to be ordered out of chaos by your own power. Your error is so deep! Well, the gentleman who lives in this world in the temporary lodgings of his body should have an empty heart when he responds to material things; there is neither wickedness nor righteousness, no right and no wrong, no good and no evil, no merit and no blame. If you have an empty heart, even if you

are judging the Kings Jie,[22] Zhou,[23] and Jiao Ji,[24] they are not to be blamed. If you preserve this emptiness of heart, even if you are judging the Kings Yan, Xun, Kui, and Xie,[25] they are not worthy of merit. Then, as for your loyalty and trustworthiness and Jian Shang's evil cleverness, who is to differentiate between the right and the wrong? There is no way to differentiate between them, so then loyalty, trustworthiness, evilness, and cleverness are one. [Even] if there is a way to differentiate between them, to make these distinctions is illegitimate. Well then, you have left your nature far behind by relying upon these illegitimate distinctions, and you are relying on yourself to cast dispersions on others—you should not have waited for the king to exile you, you should have exiled yourself! Now, you have sought after being loyal and trustworthy and have achieved being loyal and trustworthy, and you are depressed about it and are unable to stop yourself; you are one who is known to have lost your incorrect way of thinking. I have heard that the people of the highest intelligence understand the rules, the ones of middle intelligence obey the rules, and the ones of power intelligence break the rules. As for the person who has an empty heart and is far away from taking action [y *ouwei*], they understand and transcend the rules; as for the ones who control their hearts and differentiate between right and wrong, they are obeying the rules; as for the ones who get the distinction yet get distressed and let it pass, they will be victims of the rules." Yuan did not understand, in the end, he threw himself into the Mi Luo River and died.

Chapter 8: Sayings of Shang Yin

When Emperor Gao of the Han was infatuated with Qi Ji,[26] he wished to replace the crown prince, Ru Yi[27] of Zhao, with the prince of Ying.[28] The great ministers were unable to resist this. Lu Hou[29] was really worried about this; she schemed with the Marquis of Liu, Zhang Liang. Liang said, "only when there are extraordinary people, can extraordinary things get done. I heard that there were four recluses living on Mount Shang Luo; they are called: Minister Xia Huang, Minister Lu Li, Minister Dong Yuan and Qi Li Ji. The emperor often summoned them but they have never come. Now, the crown prince was truly able to humble himself and seek for them to come, so then, the four people, for the time being, came. If they came, they will be guests of the prince, and this will be a great help to him." [After] Emperor Lu followed Liang's plan, she sent Lu Ze[30] to invite them.

The four people, in the beginning, refused him, but they got together and discussed [the matter], saying, "Liu Ji was high and mighty, moreover, he knows the means by which he is higher (exalted) than us, he sought after us but we will not go, he has embarrassed himself and nothing more! As for Empress Lu, that woman, her nature us cruel and mean, her son Ying was not yet firmly established as the crown prince, so she was necessarily pushed to crisis. In crisis, she has come seeking us; the peaceful resolution of the crisis depends on us. If she seeks us but does not

[22] The last king of the Xia dynasty.
[23] The last king of Shang.
[24] An immoral robber.
[25] Four legendary rulers.
[26] A royal concubine.
[27] Son of the emperor's first wife.
[28] Son of [the emperor's] favorite concubine.
[29] The legitimate empress.
[30] Empress Lu's eldest brother.

get us, she will necessarily bring disaster upon us, therefore we must answer yes to her." One day the four of them accompanied the crown prince into the palace. The Emperor saw them and asked them, and all four of them introduced themselves.

The king was surprised, and then said: "I often sought for you but you would not come for me, so why do you follow the crown prince?" The four recluses responded, "your majesty has treated us poorly, we do not, in principle, allow ourselves to be humiliated. The crown prince honors people, so we have come as his honored guests." The emperor departed from them. He pointed to the four recluses and addressed Qi Li, saying, "the crown prince now has his own feathers and wings,[31] now he cannot be harmed!" Empress Lu treated them virtuously, she wanted to honor and give them rank and ennoblements. The four recluses discussed this and said, "the reason we came here was to avoid disaster, it was not from the desire of our hearts. Yin is now secure and Ru Yi has been undermined. The Empress Lu has now gotten her wish and Qi Ji was killed. Now we are afraid of disaster, we have caused Yin to succeed and Ru Yi to be undermined, we caused Empress Lu to be happy and Qi Ji to despair; this is called destroying others to keep yourself whole, so this is probably not a case of killing to achieve virtue. Moreover, are we going to deal with the humiliation of being ennobled by a woman and by this means, get a position at court—what difference is this from being a thief and going into a person's home and taking their gold and becoming a rich person?" So they left and again hid themselves in Mount Shang, and Empress Lu was unable to keep them.

Zhang Liang also became enlightened, thereupon he controlled his breathing and stopped eating and he left the palace and went into reclusion.

Chapter 9: Sayings of Yan Ling

When Guang Wu[32] was in his early years, he made friends with Yan Ling when he was in poverty. When he ascended the throne, Ling was still a fisherman on Fu Chun Lake. [When] Guang Wu thought about their past, he admired and yearned for Yin Ling's virtue; he himself went to invite him to be part of his court, but Ying did not follow.

Guang Wu said, "you and I are friends; recently, I have been given the status of emperor, and you are still a fisherman; on your behalf, I am ashamed for you. I have official and noble titles by which I can ennoble you, gold and jade that can make you rich and cause you to be above millions. Taking action can move mountain summits, a single command [from you] can cause rain and clouds to rise up—this will bring honor to you and fame to your clan, you will have a succession of lines and marquises, you will have courtyards and palaces and mansions, multitudes of different carts and horses, beautiful clothes, delicate foods, people will play the bell and drum wherever you go, and there will be joint song and dance wherever you go; you yourself will be happy for your entire life, your name will pass on for ten-thousand generations.

How would your life of dropping bait in this pool and having no fame compare with the life of the high and mighty, those who rise up and fall down? Why don't you follow me?" Ying smiled and said: "In the beginning when I made friends with you, and you cultivated your virtuous intentions, and were satisfied with being poor and lowly, it seemed like you were one who I could select. Nowadays, you brag and are misled, you are a fool. As for the world, since antiquity,

[31] That is, has now grown up and can make his own decisions.

[32] Later Han emperor Guang of Wu, ninth generation descendant of Emperor Gao of Han, who rebelled during the Wang Mang dynasty and reestablished the Han Dynasty.

people have thought that it is the biggest thing. Among its ten parts, mountain summits, streams and oceans comprise half of it, the Man, Yi, Rong, and Di[33] possess three parts, and the Middle Kingdom has only one or two of those parts. Within this Middle Kingdom, war has never ceased. As for the noble emperor of the Middle Kingdom, he is merely one who has proclaimed himself to be noble in this one or two tenths of the world that is constantly at war; you were the one with self-respect. As for the one who is ennobled and calls himself the greatest, he is nothing more than one who according to his likes and dislikes controls death within these one or two parts, in these one or two parts of the world, one who cuts bricks and wood to make palaces and mansions, one who assembles silks and other treasures to decorate his carts and clothes, one who kills oxen and sheep and plants of the one hundred grains in order to make delectable foods, lines up beautiful people and has them bang on gold and rock instruments, all in order to delight his eyes and ears. The emperor's desires are never satisfied; when old age arrives, then he will die, then his muscles will be cast aside and be food for the ants and maggots, and his rotting bones are reduced to mud and soil; he is no different than any common man or any common woman—where is the nobility of an emperor? Those offices and ennoblements by which you honor me, I see through them all! Since antiquity, the noble title of minister, marquis, prime minister, great minister, these have been given by dukes and kings, they are all names that have been fabricated by the sages, who used rank to differentiate between the honored and lowly in order to seduce and guide the stupid people. Nowadays, you have the body of the emperor, but that's the same body you had when you were wearing cloth clothing; although people today call you emperor, still you ought to look at yourself—what differences are there in you now from the former times? Most likely, you want to seduce me with these made up names, to cause yourself to be happy and boast. Nowadays, you want to seduce me by means of these titles of minister, marquis, prime minister, and great minister— is this not treating me as if I am stupid? As for fake names, everyone is capable of making them. If I like doing this thing, then I could make up names and call myself minister, marquis, prime minister, or great minister! Why would I need you to make them up for me? Probably you will necessarily reply that the one with office and an ennobled title can by means of this become rich. Office and an ennobled title are in truth fake names; only I can truly enrich and ennoble myself; without thus sense of self, who has office and nobility? As for what is meant by title and nobility, it is nothing more than a tall hat, tinkling jade pendants, people walking in front of your horse carts, and people following behind your carriage, sitting in a large mansion, wearing new clothing, ears wearied from so much music of stringed instruments and bamboo instruments, your mouth entertained with chilies and orchids; this I say, is all with which you mean to seduce me and nothing more. As for carts and horses, they replace labor; whether it is a thoroughbred horses or an old man, it is one and the same; a house is there to protect from the wind and rain, whether it is a palace or a shack, they are one and the same; clothing is used to hide the body, whether it is fine silk fabrics or skins and cloth, they are one and the same; eating is to eliminate hunger, whether it is chilies and orchids or simple foods, they are one and the same. Moreover, I fish in the great emptiness, and I eat from the extreme harmony, I neither move nor am still, I am united in a single wave with the elements Yin and Yang. Just now, I forgot my own surname, I make no plans for when I go or when I stop, holding onto a fishing line and hurling fishing net, everywhere is my lodging place. Moreover, what time do I have to shackle my own body and deplete my energy; how lowly is craving for

[33] Four non-Chinese minority tribes.

fake names and fulfilling illegitimate desires! Whether King Meng[34] or Geng Zhi[35] possesses the world, what is the difference between that and you having all under Heaven? Aren't all of you are merely seeking to be the most honored in the Middle Kingdom? It is not that you are really concerned about the world. Now, you wage war and kill, not knowing when to stop, and you exterminate people's lives and fate, to obtain one's own desires; one who is benevolent cannot bear to speak of this.

Moreover, you are not ashamed; rather, you are ashamed that I am a fisherman!" Guang Wu was embarrassed and thereupon he did not dare to call upon Ling to be a minister.

Chapter 10: Sayings of Sun Deng

Minister Sun Deng hid in Mount Su Men [as a recluse]. Ji King admired this and went to see him, and said, "I have heard that bugs are not able to know a tortoise's age, a swallow and sparrow are not able to compare with the Hong bird. My heart is not sufficient to receive true teachings, nevertheless the light of the sun and the moon makes no distinctions when it shines on the main village of the little town; the rain doesn't choose whether it will water the fragrant orchids or the little weeds. Now [since] you have mastered your pursuit of self-cultivation, you must have extra which you can pass on to me, which can cause me to transcend from the finite into the infinite." It was a while before Deng responded, "just now when I was in deep meditation, it seemed like I had a thought. If I did not have a thought, I was all bound up with the universe as if I had a spirit, but I did not have a spirit.

Thoughts and spirits are true; if you want to leave them, you cannot, if you want to stay with them, you cannot. What can be called extending one's life? What can be called cultivating self? What can be said to have a limit? What can be said to have no boundaries? Yet within emptiness and nothingness, everything is flowing and continuous, both entry and exit leave no trace; they are the root of Heaven and Earth. The one who knows this is enlightened; the one who obtains this is respected. That which you just said is not even getting a look at the gateway. I heard multiple times that Laozi said, 'the good merchant hides his goods as if they were nothing, and a gentleman who is prosperous in virtue can appear to look stupid.' Moreover, just because the oyster has a pearl, it is cut open; the elephant, because of his tusks, is killed, orchids are rendered into precious oils, birds are plucked to make human beings pretty, this is what common people know. You are a well-known talent; you have forgotten the secret mystery of the dark universe. It is as if you are holding a bright candle, bright and illuminating your own skills, and Heaven hates you. I once read your book, *Letters Objecting to the Recommendation of Mr. Shan Ju Yuan*, which is about the two great reasons and seven minor reasons why you should be an official and would be [great] by the times. As for one who is empty at his center, neither the court nor the marketplace will disrupt him; the one who has desires at his heart, the high cliffs and dark valleys will provide for him no rest. Office should not be able to shake you from your resolve; going into reclusion will not aid you in seeking peace. If you became an official then you have a lot to do, if you are not an official, then you will not have anything to do; also you brought up the fact that you want to cut off interactions with people, and that you are a useless creature, but that is the same as getting into a vulgar argument that you want to disentangle yourself from; and now you say you want to seek after eternal life, this can be called disliking one's own shadow and

[34] A famous usurper.

[35] Emperor Guang Wu's brother.

running away from it in the sun. How are you good enough to listen to my instruction?" Kuang was confused and seemed as if he was drunk, and later on in life, he was executed.

Part 3

Chapter 1: Answering Tong

When Wu Nengzi was impoverished, his elder brother and his younger brothers' sons were cold and starving and they all sighed and followed each other. On day his elder brother's son Tong addressed Wu Nengzi and said, "alas, I'm cold and hungry and I've been so for many years. Last night I dreamt of being an official with a big salary and I had a lot of carriages, horses, gold, and silk. When I was dreaming I was happy; when I awoke then I was sad.

How can I manage to flip dream and reality?" Wu Nengzi said, "your unhappiness during the day and your unhappiness at night are all the same.

There's no need to change them." So his elder' bother's son then said, "oh, so you mean to say that happiness at night is just a dream and nothing more?" Wu Nengzi replied, "at night when you dream of residing in a mansion and riding a carriage with horses and wearing fancy clothes and eating and drinking and having love for your wife and children and despising your enemies, are those feelings of sadness, happiness, delight, and anger any different from the desire and actions you take when you are awake?" His elder bother's son responded, "there's no difference." Wu Nengzi said, "since there is no difference, how do you know that what you do when you are asleep and what you do when you are awake are both no dreams? Now the human lifespan is about 100 years. It's divided about equally between day and night, so half the time you're happy and half the time you're sad. What's there to be resentful about with that situation? Now, as for those people who can maintain themselves in the cultivation of the void [*xu*], even if they were to become kings and marquises that would not be sufficient to ennoble them, and even if they were to become slaves, that would not debase them. Even if they had jade and silk and sons and daughters, that would not be enough to enrich them and if they had meager porridge and tattered clothes that would not be enough to impoverish them. For them, there's no space for sadness and happiness. The emotions being moved and then taking form in the body are nothing more than being stimulated by things, and that which we mean by things are nothing more than wealth and honor. Bodies and things are the root of decay. When your feelings are moved by them and you feel sadness or happiness, this is impermanence [*wuchang*]. With impermanent feelings getting tied up with the root of decay, is this not like saying that the waking state is like a dream and that the 100-year lifespan is nothing more than one nighttime? If you are able to maintain yourself in the cultivation of the void then you won't know the meaning of starvation, cold, wealth, and ennoblement.

If your emotions are moved and they take form in your body, then night and day, sleeping and awake, will be all a dream. Think about that."

Chapter 2: Responding to Hua Yangzi

Wu Nengzi had an acquaintance whose name was Hua Yangzi, who was being pressured by another acquaintance to take office. Hua Yangzi couldn't decide what to do and so he consulted Wu Nengzi. "I have been practicing to be without intention for a long time. If I go and become

an official, then I will be going against my desires, but if I don't go and become and official, then I will anger that friend. What should I do?" Wu Nengzi said, "Having no intentionality [*wuxin*] is not something that you can learn. Having no intentionality has nothing to do with serving in office or not serving in office. If you confused and your thinking is too deep, it's like you have seen a blind person on the verge of a pit and you instruct him to walk forward. As for a person who takes no action [*wuwei*] that means there's no action that he cannot take, and as for a person who takes action, there are certain actions that he can't take. Only those people who are closest to their original nature [*zhishi*] will be able to understand this great principle. That which is closest to the highest public spiritedness [*zhigong*] is what we mean by no action and it takes its root in having no desires and having no selfishness.

So if you have desire then even if you're a fisherman, a woodcutter, a farmer, or a shepherd, you'll have intentionality [*youxin*]. But if you have no desire, and you're the emperor riding in his carriage or you're a marquis wearing his robes, then you'll have no intentionality. Therefore, sages abide where it is appropriate and take action [*xing*] where it is appropriate. Principle is located at the point where one cultivates the self. Xuyou and Shan Zhuan [hermits from the time of Shun] were not embarrassed to be commoners, but when the situation is favorable then it is permissible to provide aid to the world.

Therefore the emperors Yao and Shun didn't decline the office of emperor. In both cases [i.e., the hermits and the emperors] they were united in having no intentionality. When Yao and Shun were on the throne they had no concern for the nobility that the office of Son of Heaven gave them. They merely let their robes hang down and the world was governed. So when it was evident that Dan Zhu [the son of Yao] and Shang Zhun [who was the son of Shun] were of small ability, then Yao passed the throne to Shun and Shun passed the throne to Yu; therefore they cast aside their own sons as if they were scabs and they set aside the world as if it were spittle. For this reason there were generations when the world was at peace. In the time of the Duke of Zhou, King Wen's son and King Wu's younger brother, [King Cheng] everyone knew that the Duke of Zhou was virtuous but because King Cheng was alive it was not a favorable time for the Duke of Zhou and therefore he didn't become the Son of Heaven.

Because King Cheng was young it was correct for the Duke of Zhou to remain as regent and this he didn't decline. He did all this in order to make sure that the House of Zhou would last for generations and that the people of the state of Zhou would have good lives and he was greatly successful and the fame of his deeds has never declined. This is all because he had no desires himself and there was nothing that he would not do. If you can understand this, although you might be cock fighting or racing dogs in the butcher's market or grasping an enemy's battle flag on the battlefield, it doesn't matter, you can do both of them, so why are you worried about serving in office?"

Chapter 3: Answering Yu Zhongzi

Wu Nengzi's intimate friend, Yu Zhongzi had pain in his heart, so he asked Wu Nengzi for some medicine.

Wu Nengzi said, "what's the symptom?' His friend said, "it hurts." Wu Nengzi said, "where does it hurt? His friend said, "in my heart." Wu Nengzi said, "where is your heart?' And Yu Zhongzi said, "my sickness is better now." Wu Nengzi said, "You can really say that this fellow understands the nature of heaven and is one who is truly enlightened."

Chapter 4: On fish

On the Yellow River there's a place called Dragon Gate [a tight spot in the Yellow River where in ancient times people said that if fish could jump over the pass they would become dragons and if they couldn't they would remain fish] that is close to Li that is in the ancient state of Jin. The pass in the river was carved out by Emperor Yu [when he was controlling the floods]. The water there falls down some tens of *ren* [Chinese yards]. The water that comes over it has a gushing sound like thunder that can be heard for ten miles around.

In the springtime the great fish of the river assemble below it and use their strength to try to surmount it, and those who pass over the gate then become dragons who are then capable of creating clouds and causing the rain to fall.

The little fish look at each other and say, "we're also fish and we could transform in this matter as well. Why are we just paddling around here hiding ourselves in little rock caves?" One from among them said, 'how wrong you are. Within the universe the forms that things take numbers more than ten million. The magnitude of things' form ranges from the big to the small. According to a thing's form, it fulfills its destiny, each of which is appropriate to itself. As for the ones that become dragons, when the river is turbulent then it knocks them around; when it's placid, then it leaves them at peace. And at that time whether they are deep in the water or floating in the surface, they're happy and safe, but when it comes time to change into dragons, they assemble at the bottom of the waterfall and the force of the waterfall is angry and they struggle, then it becomes cloudy and starts to rain. Now the clouds and the rain are only the product of the moisture of the river. This has absolutely nothing to do with the fish themselves. If the fish who were becoming dragons were to have the intention of making clouds and rain, some of the time the clouds would form and the rain would fall, but this is actually just a product not of their intention and it's not an achievement of theirs. The horns on their head and the claws of their feet are the same as the whiskers that we have on our face. We swim around with our whiskers in the water and they fly around with horns and feet. Both of us are doing what is natural. Why would we want to change our struggle-free life swimming around here in the river and our carefree life here hidden in the caves and our happiness which results from people not knowing where we are not harming us for the laboriousness of their horn-footed life in the clouds and the rain?"

Chapter 5: The [Zhi bird] speaks

The Bird meets a snake and the bird goes forward and bites the snake and the snake says, "everyone in the world says that you are poisonous. To be poisonous is to have a bad reputation. The reason that you have a bad reputation is because you're trying to eat me. If you don't eat me, then you won't be poisonous. If you are not poisonous then your bad reputation will go away." The bird laughed and said, "aren't you also poisonous to people? And yet you point to me and say that I'm poisonous and by this means you're trying to cheat me, and the reason that you're poisonous to the people of the world is that you're trying to eat them and I'm angry at you for trying to eat the people.

Therefore by eating you, I'm punishing you. The people of the world know that I can punish you and therefore will blame me for protecting you. They also know that when I eat you your poison become infused in my feather and my body and therefore I can kill people. My poison is

actually your poison. I hate my bad reputation and yet I live with it, but what kills people are really people themselves. For example, when people use weapons to kill other people, is the weapon at fault or is the human at fault? Therefore it is clear that it's not my poison that kills people.[36] Now the people of the world blame me and don't blame me—that's clear. Unintentionally I poison people—it's merely because I hate bad things that I have gotten this reputation. I'm used by people but my actions are not selfish. I'm not selfish and I'm happy to have a bad reputation, and that's in fact not having a bad reputation. You on the other hand have the intention to poison people and you skulk in the grass and bushes and enjoy waiting for people to come by. Now your meeting with me today is fate, and yet you want to use rhetoric to argue your way out of it." The snake was unable to respond, so the bird ate him.

Now creatures cannot have intentionality, what about people?

Chapter 6: Answering Lu (Note: No one knows who he is except that he is Wu Nengzi's cousin) (in two parts)

Part 1

Wu Nengzi's cousin went to study with Wu Nengzi and Wu Nengzi said, "What do you want to study," and the cousin said, "I would like to study morality and refined behavior [*wen*]." Wu Nengzi replied, "I don't know what you mean by morality and I don't know what you mean by literature, but among those who in the past were called sages, I occasionally have seen what you're talking about.

They have said that 'morality is putting things into action, that is to say, putting into action the goodness [*shan*] in your heart. And by refined behavior is meant embellishing the goodness of your actions.' So the funeral rite is based in sorrow and the wearing of the mourning clothes and the implements used in sacrifice are all the embellishment. Ritual is based in respect; respect is an action, but the rising up, the going down, the bowing, and the yielding are all embellishment. Music is based in harmony; harmony is an action; the pottery, the gourds, the silk, and the bamboo of the instruments, are all embellishment.

Embellishment derives from the action; the action derives from the heart; and the heart derives from what is natural. If it's not natural, then we have the birth of intentionality. With intentionality we have a brittleness of action, and with brittle action, then we have the corruption of embellishment. When embellishment is corrupt then it's false; when it's false, then it's disordered.

When things are disordered, even sages will be of no help. Now you have to take hold of the root [*gen*] and not the branch. Trace things back to their source and don't worry about the offshoots. If you can verify that you have no intention, then you can return to what is natural and you won't need to have the example of the sages before you or the example of mysterious heaven above you. Action and embellishment are both like in not studying."

Part 2

On another day Lu consulted Wu Nengzi again, saying, "I have often been troubled by not being able to reach the goal of my studies; I seek after it, but it disappears and I'm melancholy.

[36] People would use this bird's poison to assassinate people by putting it in their wine.

After I have gotten drunk I am happy and ignorant of my distress, so I can't give up drinking." Then Wu Nengzi said, "your worries and your melancholy do they come from your body? Or do they come from your heart?" Lu responded, "from my heart" Wu Nengzi said, "can you see your heart?' And the disciple said, "I can't see it." "That which you can't see is giving rise to your troubles and your melancholy. If you seek after what gives rise to your troubles and melancholy and you can't see it, where then do your troubles and melancholy lie? Since there is no location, for your troubles and melancholy, then when you seek after something and can't get it, and go after something and it's already gone, where do those things lie? Now you are sad and melancholy about not finding them. This is like trying to tie up the wind and catch shadows.

Your worries and your melancholy have no real location and moreover you have a taste for the oblivion [*taoran*] of alcohol and you are not satisfied, so you drown your sorrows in wine. Are you nothing more than a wine barrel?"

Chapter 7 (missing) Chapter 8: A record of things seen (in three parts)

Part 1

In a market town in the former state of Qin, there was a conjurer who could put his hands and feet into a boiling vat of oil and yet remain with a smile on his face. Wu Nengzi sought him out and asked him some questions about the magic and the conjurer said, "I studied this trick from my master; the kind of magic that I practice can eliminate the heat of fire; moreover there's a little magic formula that I say which goes, 'when I see the pot of boiling oil, I first have to forget all about myself.' Not only do I have to look on my own hands and feet as if they were the sticks of an old tree, but I have to also forget about these hands and feet which are like the sticks of an old tree and only then will my trick work. But even if for one moment I start to fear, then the trick will fail.

This is the secret to my success." Wu Nengzi turned around and said to his disciples, "Young ones, take note of this. With a body without intention, the conjurer can cause even a boiling pot of oil to seem cold. Shouldn't people of superior virtue be able to do more?"

Part 2

One time when Wu Nengzi was staying with a peasant family named Jing in a village in the ancient state of Qin, at night an owl came by and landed on a branch and called out, and Mr. Jing's expression changed to one of sadness and he wanted to shoot it. Wu Nengzi stopped him and Mr. Jing said, "but the owl is an inauspicious bird. When something inauspicious is going to happen in a family(s) household then the bird comes and calls. If I kill it then maybe this inauspiciousness won't exist." Wu Nengzi said, "if your family were really to have something bad happen to it because this bird came and called nearby, then that would really be the fault of the bird, and if the owl could really cause people to have bad things happen to them, then even if you killed the bird, it wouldn't be enough to get rid of the bad thing. If on the other hand something bad was going to happen at a family's home and only then did the bird come and cry, couldn't you say that owl is actually quite loyal to people and gives them a forewarning of bad things to come? And since the bad thing doesn't come from the owl itself then killing the owl is like killing a loyal and sincere bird. Moreover, we who call ourselves people and animals like this bird are both born from the impartial *qi* of the universe. People have horizontal eyes and square

feet and birds fly up into the air; these are our differences. But these are just incidental to the clearness, the turbidity, the lightness or heaviness of *qi* and by this way they come into being. They don't come into being by any judgment of love or hate.

Who commanded the birds to be in charge of ill omens? Who was the one who deemed this so? Did heaven and earth say this was going to be so? Did the owl himself say this was going to be so? But if heaven and earth didn't say this and the owl didn't say this, why must it be so? We don't know who originated this idea; moreover the beautiful colored bird we call the phoenix may not be auspicious and in the same way the owl may not be inauspicious." So Mr Jing didn't kill the owl and no harm came to his family.

Part 3

In the Pan clan there was a handsome man who was about thirty years old. On some days he would let down his hair and run all about. Other days he would just sit quietly for the whole day and not say anything. When he would speak he would say the horse is a goat and that a mountain is water. Whenever he pointed to any particular object he would use the wrong word to name it.

Everyone in his family and everyone in the village thought he was crazy and no one paid any attention to him. Wu Nengzi also thought that he was crazy.

One day Wu Nengzi met this crazy one in a forest and he sighed and said, "you are a sturdy looking fellow with good looking features. What a shame it is that you're so sick." The crazy one slowly said, "I am not sick." Wu Nengzi was startled and said, "you don't wear your hat and your belt correctly. You get up and you sit down with no regularity. You misname everything. You don't observe the proper rituals of your family and the other villagers. This is insanity. How can you say that you're not sick?" The crazy one said, "do you really mean to say that wearing the belt and the hat in the proper way and having regularity in rising and sitting and showing respect or love towards my family members and respect toward my fellow villagers comes from my own nature? In the past there were people who fabricated things and they embellished things and called them the rites and they have caused people to practice these rites down to the present day. But weak wine and strong wine are still wine. One who knows this and nevertheless goes against this and then pretends not to know this is therefore called by everyone an insane person.

Moreover, as for the names of the ten thousand things, do they also come from nature? The clear stuff that's gone up is called heaven; the yellow stuff that's gone down is called earth. The bright shiny thing in the day we call the sun and the bright shiny thing at night we call the moon, and as for the flowing, are they not all fabricated and forced names of things? For example, the wind, the clouds, the rain, the dew, the smoke, the fog, the frost, and the snow, mountains, peaks, rivers seas, grass, trees, birds, beasts, Chinese, barbarians, emperors, kings, dukes, marquises, officials, farmers, artisans, merchants, slaves, of all kinds, and even truth, falsehood, goodness, good and evil, the correct, the incorrect, the honored and the debased, they are all this way. People are used to these names so they don't see that they were in the beginning forced, so they continue the practice of using them and don't dare to change, but what would have happened if in the past the original fabricator had said that the light stuff that goes up is called earth and the yellow stuff that goes down is called heaven and the shiny thing in the sky is called the moon and the shiny thing at night is called the sun and we had used that practice till today? So these forced names derive from people. I'm also a person; on what authority did someone create these

forced names and why can't I do the same? As for wearing my hat and my belt, getting up and sitting down, I'll do any of those as I please and I will name any of the ten thousand shapes and things as I please. Is this insane? I don't know, but is it right for others who don't know to say that I'm insane?"

Chapter 9 and 10 (missing)

Chapter 11: Holding firmly to the root (in four parts)

Part 1

All the five types of weaponry have as a purpose the killing of people. Various kinds of nets have as a purpose capturing birds, beasts, other kinds of animals and fish. The sages made them and afterwards people could kill each other.

People could also catch the birds, the beasts, the fish, and other animals. First they caused them to know how to kill people and know how to catch things, then they set up penalties to stop people from killing each other and they set up prohibitions for entering the mountains and the marshes in order to stop people from catching animals. And now in this era of decayed morality, people can't protect their own fathers, their own children, and their own brothers and now the animals have ability to give birth to their young like little deer and little fish. The laws have become clearer and yet they can't prohibit [people from doing what they want]. This is because people have learned about weapons and nets. If the people who invented these things were to come back to life today, would they be able to control themselves [and not make these stupid inventions]?

Part 2

A coffin is of great help to the dead, but the people who make the coffins don't intend to help the dead; rather, they just intend to make money for themselves.

Hoping to sell something every day, they hope that more and more people die.

It's not that they hate other people, it's just that they hope to get profit. Doctors take pleasure in sickness, but they also hope that they can cure sickness. It's not that they take pleasure in saving people and helping them, it's that they like profit. Coffins and medicine all are an aid to people. Taking pleasure in life and pleasure in death don't come from love or hate, they just come from the coffin maker or the doctor's desire. For this reason treating the universe benevolently through inaction is not like the profit seeking of the coffin maker and the doctor. It is rather, the real desire to help the dead and cure the sick.

Part 3

Animals with horns spear their enemy; animals with hooves kick their enemy; snakes bite, insects sting; they all use what is their own particular strength. If you investigate what they use then you can guard against what they use. For this reason, things that use something are not as good as those that don't use anything. There's an insect known as the silkworm that eats mulberries and produces silk in its stomach. It weaves its own little cocoon and is transformed inside. When it comes out it has wings and is a moth. It is relying on it nature to be so. This is just like the fetuses of animals and the eggs of birds; these are not things that they themselves

have decided upon. Wise people know that you can turn silk into thread and thread into cloth. So therefore they boil the silk and then they weave it into cloth, turn it into material and wear it. Now the silkworm enters into its cocoon to become a moth, not for the purpose of allowing people to enjoy clothing. The reason why they're boiled is because they're burdened by the very silk that they produce. The people who boil them are not mad at the silkworms themselves; they just want to get profit from it.

Now the animal's placenta, the bird's egg, and the silkworm's cocoon are all what is natural to them. That the silkworm alone produces silk and silk must be boiled is unlucky and that seems to be just dependent on fate. Now one who does nothing has neither luck nor no luck; there's no fate involved.

Part 4

Those who take action and perform good deeds will not necessarily become prosperous, and those who perform bad deeds will not necessarily meet with disaster; this is all determined by fate. For this reason the sages particularly held as valuable the idea of inaction [*wuwei*]. If you are to tell the little insect that lives in a wall and the frog that lives in a well about tigers and leopards that live in mountains and whales that live in the sea, they would have their doubts because of the limits of their own experience. Similarly, if you tell people who are addicted to the affairs of the world about the principle of *wuwei*, they will necessarily have doubts because they are enmeshed in their own practices. Fathers cannot pass on [the idea of *wuwei*] to their sons. Older brothers can't pass it on to their younger brothers. Some people will remain lost in their desire until the moment they die. Of people who return to the source [*yuan*] and don't give rise to anything, in today's world there's not a single one. Alas! Inaction depends on me. Desire also depends on me. If I follow inaction then I will be at peace; if I follow desire, then I will toil. If I'm at peace then I will be happy; if I toil then I will be troubled. Ordinary people are deluded and there's nothing you can do to cause them to understand. What they study causes them to be this way. Bright people will turn their backs on these customs.

Bibliography

A An (pseudonym for Anarchist A?). "Wo suo xinyang de geming" (The Revolution I Believe In). *Wuyi yuekan* (May first Monthly) (1923). Reprinted in Gao Jun et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi zai Zhongguo*: 475–8.

Alan, Sarah and Crispin Williams (eds). *The Guodian Laozi: Proceedings Of the International Conference, Dartmouth College, May 1998.* Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 2000.

Alford, Robert. "Paradigms of Relations between State and Society." In Chapter 6 of Robert Lindberg, C. Alford, C. Crouch, and C. Offe (eds), *Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism.* Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1975: 145–60. Reprinted in Hall, *The State: Critical Concepts*: 63–76.

Ames, Roger. *The Art of Rulership: A Study in Ancient Chinese Political Thought.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983.

—. "Is Political Taoism Anarchism?" *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 10 (1983): 27– 47.

Ames, Roger and David Hall (trans. and commentary). *Dao De Jing: Making This Life Significant: A Philosophical Translation.* New York: Ballantine Books, 2003.

Anderson, Perry. "[Research Note on] the 'Asiatic Mode of Production'." In Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolute State.* London: New Left Books, 1974: 462– 550.

Andors, Stephen. "Mao and Marx: A Comment." In "Symposium on Mao and Marxism." *Modern China*, 3(4) (1977): 427–33.

Andrew, Anita M. and John A. Rapp. *Autocracy and China's Rebel Founding Emperors: Comparing Chairman Mao and Ming Taizu.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.

Ba Jin. *Family.* Introduction by Olga Lang. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1972.

Balazs, Etienne. *Chinese Civilisation and Bureacuracy: Variations on a Theme.* Trans. M. H. Wright. Ed. Arthur F. Wright. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964.

Bauer, Wolfgang. *China and the Search for Happiness.* Trans. Michael Shaw. New York: Seabury Press, 1976.

Baum, Richard and Frederick Teiwes. *Ssu–ch'ing: The Socialist Education Movement 1962–66.* Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1966.

Bender, Frederic. "Taoism and Western Anarchism." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 10 (1983): 5–26.

Benton, Gregor (ed.). *Wild Lily, Prairie Fire: China's Movement for Democracy, Yan'an to Tian'anmen, 1942–1989.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

Bernstein, Thomas P. "The Limits of Rural Political Reform." In Victor Falkenheim (ed.), *Chinese Politics from Mao to Deng.* New York: Paragon House, 1989: 299– 336.

Birch, Cyril (ed.). *Anthology of Chinese Literature. Volume 1: From Early Times to the 4th Century.* New York: Grove Press, 1965.

Boltz, William G. "The Fourth-Century B.C. Guodian Manuscripts from Chuu and the Composition of the *Laotzyy.* " *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 119(4) (1999): 590–608.
Bowie, Robert R., and John King Fairbank (eds). *Communist China 1955–1959: Policy Documents with Analysis.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962.
Bridgham, Philip. "Mao's Cultural Revolution in 1967: The Struggle to Seize Power." *China Quarterly*, 34 (April–June 1968): 6–37.
Brodsgaard, Kjeld Erik. "The Democracy Movement in China, 1978–1979: Opposition Movements, Wall Poster Campaigns, and Underground Journals." *Asian Survey*, 21(7) (July 1981): 747–74.
Brook, Timothy. *The Asiatic Mode of Production in China.* New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1988.
Brugger, Bill and David Kelly. *Chinese Marxism in the Post-Mao Era.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990.
Bukharin, Nikolai Ivanovich, Luigi Fabbri, and Rudolf Rocker. *The Poverty of Statism: Anarchism vs. Marxism: A Debate Bukharin, Fabbri, Rocker.* Minneapolis, MN: Soil of Liberty, 1981.
Burton, Barry. "The Cultural Revolution's Ultraleft Conspiracy: The 'May 16' Group." *Asian Survey*, 11(11) (November 1971): 1029–53.
Byron, John and Robert Pack. *The Claws of the Dragon: Kang Sheng, the Evil Genius Behind Mao—and His Legacy of Terror in People's China.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.
Callahan, William. "Confucian Harmonizing: Utopia, Dystopia and Heterotopia in Chinese Thought." *The Journal of Comparative Asian Development*, 2(2) (2003): 236–7.
Campany, Robert Ford. *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Divine Transcendents.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
Carroll, John (ed.). *Max Stirner: The Ego and His Own* (Abridged edition). New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1971.
Chan, Anita. "Images of China's Social Structure: The Changing Perspectives of Canton Students." *World Politics*, 34(3) (April 1982): 295–323.
Chan, Anita, Stanley Rosen, and Jonathan Unger (eds), *On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System: The Li Yizhe Debates.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1985.
Chan, Ming K. and Arif Dirlik. *Schools into Fields and Factories: Anarchists, the Guomindang, and the Labor University in Shanghai, 1927–1932.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991.
Chaney, Joseph and Sophia Woodman. "In Memoriam: Wang Ruoshui: Journalist, Philosopher, Humanist." In *China Rights Forum* 1 (2002). Online at www.hrichina.org/public/contents/article?revision_id=2044&item_id=2043
Chang, Aloysius. "A Comparative Study of Yang Chu and the Chapter on Yang Chu." *Chinese Culture*, 13 (1971): 49–71; 14 (1972): 44–81.
Chang Chung-yuan. *Creativity and Taoism.* New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1963.
Chang Hao. *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
Chen Duxiu. "Xiapin de wuzhengfudang" (Inferior-grade Anarchists). *Xin qingnian* (New Youth), 9(2) (1 June 1921): 119–21. Reprinted in *Duxiu wencun*, 2: 119–21.
—. "Xuwu de gerenzhuyi ji ren ziranzhuyi" (Nihilistic Individualism and Nature- worship." In *Duxiu wencun* (The Collected Writings of Chen Duxiu) (Hong Kong: Yuandong tushu gonsi, 1965), 2: 107–9.
—. "Zhongguo shide wuzhengfu zhuyi" (Chinese-Style Anarchism). *Xin Qingnian*, 9(1) (May 1921): 5–6.
Chen Erjin. *Lun wuchanjieji minzhu geming* (On Proletarian Democratic Revolution. *Siwu luntan* (April 5th Forum), 10 (June 1979)). In Chen, *China: Crossroads Socialism: An Unofficial*

Manifesto for Proletarian Democracy, trans. and introduced by Robin Munro. London: Verso Editions and New Left Books, 1984.Ch'en, Jerome. *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*. London: Oxford University Press, 1965.
—. *Mao Papers*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.
Chen Ruoxi. *Democracy Wall and the Unofficial Journals*. Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1982.
Chih Hung (Zhi Hong). "Inner-Party Struggle and Party Development." *Peking Review* 19: 34 (August 20, 1976): 11–14.
Christoyannopoulos, Alexandre J. M. E. *Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel*. Exeter, England: Imprint Academic, 2010.
—. "Responding to the State: Christian Anarchists on Romans 13, Rendering to Caesar, and Civil Disobedience." In Christoyannopoulos (ed.), *Religious Anarchism: New Perspectives*: 106–44.
—. "Theorising Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel." PhD Dissertation, Rutherford College, University of Kent, 2008.
—. *Tolstoy's Political Thought*. London: Routledge, 2011.
Christoyannopoulos, Alexandre J. M. E. (ed.). *Religious Anarchism: New Perspectives*. Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
Clark, John P. "On Taoism and Politics." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 10 (1983): 65–88.
— (pseudonym Max Cafard). "The Dao of Capitalism or 'Going with the (Cash-) Flow." In Cafard, *The Surre(Gion)alist Manifesto and other Writings*: Chapter 3: 32–9. Baton Rouge: Exquisite Corpse, 2003. Online at http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/anarchist_archives/cafard.html#ch3
Creagh, Ronald. *Laboratoires de L'utopie*. Paris: Payot, 1983.
Csikszentmihalyi, Mark (ed. and trans.) *Readings in Han Chinese Thought*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co Inc, 2006.
De Bary, Wm. Theodore and Irene Bloom (trans. and comp.) *Sources of Chinese Tradition*. Vol. 1 *From Earliest Times: to 1600* (Second edition). New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
Defoort, Carine and Xing Wen (eds and trans.). "Guodian, Parts I and II." *Contemporary Chinese Thought*, 32(1) (2000) and 32(2) (2001).
Deng Xiaoping. "Uphold the Four Cardinal Principles." A speech at the Forum on the Priniciples for the Party's Theoretical Work, March 30, 1979. In Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Works (1975–1982)*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1984: 166–91.
Dirlik, Arif. *Anarchism in the Chinese Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.
—. *The Origins of Chinese Communism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
Dirlik, Arif and Maurice Meisner (eds). *Marxism and the Chinese Experience*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1989.
Djilas, Milovan. *The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System*. New York: Praeger, 1957.
—. *The Unperfect Society: Beyond the New Class*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1969.
Dolgoff, Sam (ed.). *Bakunin on Anarchy*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1971.
Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Demons: A Novel in Three Parts*. Trans. and annotated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.
Dotson, John. "The Confucian Revival in the Propaganda Narratives of the Chinese Government." U.S.–China Economic and Security Review Commission Staff Research Report, July 20, 2011. Online at www.uscc.gov/researchpapers/2011/Confucian_Revival_Paper.pdf
Eberstadt, Nick. *The Poverty of Communism*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1988.

Edelman, Murray. *Politics as Symbolic Action: Mass Arousal and Quiescence*. New York: Academic Press, 1971.

Editorial Departments of *People's Daily* and *Red Flag*. "On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World" (July 14, 1964). Reprinted in Mao (uncertain authorship), *The Great Debate*: 323–74.

Editorial Department, Xinqingnian she (New Youth Society). *Shehui zhuyi taolun ji* (Collection of Discussions on Socialism). 2 vols. Shanghai: Xin qingnian chubanshe (New Youth Publishing Company), 1922.

Esherick, Joseph. "On the 'Restoration of Capitalism': Mao and Marxist Theory." In "Symposium on Mao and Marxism." *Modern China*, 5(1) (1979): 64–5.

Eyal, Gil. *The Origins of Post-Communist Elites: From Prague Spring to the Breakup of Czechoslovakia*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993, Chapter 1, "The Idea of the New Class," 1–34.

Feldt, Alex. "Governing Through the Dao: A Non-Anarchistic Interpretation of the *Laozi*." *Dao*, 9 (2010): 323–37.

Forke, Alfred. *Geschichte der Mittelalterlichen Chinesichen Philosophie* (History of Medieval Chinese Philosophy). Hamburg: Cram, De Gruyter and Co, 1964.

Fowler, R. Booth. "The Anarchist Tradition of Political Thought." *The Western Political Quarterly*, 25(4) (1972): 738–52.

Frakt, Phyllis. "Mao's Concept of Representation." *American Journal of Political Science*, 23 (November 1979): 684–704.

Friedman, Edward. "China's North-South Split and the Forces of Disintegration." In Friedman, *National Identity and Democratic Prospects in Socialist China*.

Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999: 77–86.

—. "Maoism, Titoism, Stalinism: Some Origins and Consequences of the Maoist Theory of the Socialist Transition." In Selden and Lippitt (eds), *The Transition to Socialism in China*: 159–214.

—. "The Societal Obstacle to China's Socialist Transition." In Nee and Mozingo (eds), *State and Society in Contemporary China*: 148–71.

—. "Three Leninist Paths within a Socialist Conundrum." In Dorothy Solinger (ed.), *Three Visions of Chinese Socialism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984: 11–46.

Friedman, Edward, Paul G. Pickowicz, Mark Selden, and Kay Ann Johnson. *Chinese Village, Socialist State*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.

Fukuyama, Francis, with response by Jonathan Fenby. "China Is Looking to Its Dynastic Past to Shape Its Future." *Financial Times*, July 12, 2011.

Fung Yu-lan. *A History of Chinese Philosophy*. Trans. Derk Bodde. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1952.

—. *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*. Ed. Derk Bodde. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1948.

Gao Gao. "Improve the Social Control System Taking the Rule of Law as the Main Body." *Jingjixue Zhoubao*, March 12: 4. Translated in United States, National Technical Information Service, Joint Publications Research Service: *China Report* (hereafter JPRS) 89088 (August 21, 1989): 10–11.

Gao Jun, Wang Guilin and Yang Shubiao (eds). *Wuzhengfu zhuyi zai Zhongguo* (Anarchism in China). Changsha, China: Hunan renmin chubanshe (Hunan People's Publishing Co), 1984.

Ge Hong. *Baopuzi nei wai pian* (Master Embracing Simplicity, Inner and Outer chapters). Taipei: Yi Wen yin shuguan (Yee Wen Publishing Co.), 1967.
Ge Maochun, Jiang Jun, and Li Xingzhi (eds). *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliaoxuan* (Selection of Materials on Anarchist Thought). 2 vols. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, (Beijing University Publishing Co), 1984.
Gellner, Ernest. "Soviets against Wittfogel; Or, The Anthropological Preconditions of Mature Marxism." *Theory and Society*, 14(3) (May 1985): 341–70.
Gemie, Sharif. "Fourier and the Politics of Utopia." *University of Glamorgan Occasional Papers in Humanities & Social Sciences*. Prifysgol Morgannwg, Wales: University of Glamorgan, 1995.
—. *French Revolutions, 1815–1914: An Introduction*. Edinborough: University of Edinborough Press, 1999.
Gold, Thomas B. "'Just in Time!': China Battles Spiritual Pollution on the Eve of 1984." *Asian Survey*, 24(9) (September 1984): 947–74.
Goldman, Merle. "Mao's Obsession with The Political Role of Literature and the Intellectuals." In MacFarquhar et al. (eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao:* 39–58.
—. *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.
Goodman, David S. *Beijing Street Voices: The Poetry and Politics of China's Democracy Movement*. Lawrence, MA: Marion Boyars, 1981.
Gouldner, Alvin. *The Two Marxisms: Contradictions and Anomalies in the Development of Theory*. New York: Salisbury, 1980.
Graham, A. C. *Chuang Tzu: Textual Notes to a Partial Translation*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1982.
—. *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China*. La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 1989.
—. *The Book of Lieh Tzu*. London: John Murray, 1960.
Graham, Robert. *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas, Volume One: From Anarchy to Anarchism (300 CE to 1939)*. Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2005.
Guan Feng, and Lin Lüshi. "Characteristics Of Social Change And Philosophical Thought During The Ch'un-Ch'iu Period." Trans. of a portion of the authors' *Essays in Ch'un-Chiu Philosophy*, Peking, 1963 in *Chinese Studies in Philosophy*, 2: 1–2 (Fall–Winter–Spring 1970–1).
Guillermaz, Jacques. *The Chinese Communist Party in Power, 1949–1976*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1976.
Guo Baogang. "Utopias of Reconstruction: Chinese Modern Utopianism: from Hong Xiuquan to Mao Zedong." *Journal of Comparative Asian Development*, 2(2) (2003): 197.
Hall, David. "The Metaphysics of Anarchism." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 10 (1983): 49–63.
Hall, David and Roger Ames. *Thinking from the Han: Self, Truth, and Transcendence in Chinese and Western Culture*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.
Hall, John A. (ed.). *The State: Critical Concepts*. London: Routledge, 1994.
Hamrin, Carol Lee. *"Yang Xiaokai." Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Christianity*. Online at www.bdcconline.net/en/stories/y/yang-xiaokai.php/
Hansen, Chad. *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
Henricks, Robert. *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching: A Translation of the Startling New Documents Found at Guodian*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

—. *Lao-Tzu Te-Tao Ching: A New Translation Based on The Recently Discovered Ma-wang-tui Texts*. New York: Ballantyne Books, 1989.
Hightower, James R. (trans.). *The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.
Holzman, Donald. *Poetry and Politics: The Life and Times of Juan Chi (AD 210– 263)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
Hoston, Germaine. *The State, Identity, and the National Question in China and Japan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
Hsiao Kung-chuan. "Anarchism in Chinese Political Thought." *Tien Hsia Monthly*, 3 (October 1936): 249–63.
—. *A History of Chinese Political Thought. Volume 1: From the Beginnings to the Sixth Century A.D*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979.
—. *Zhongguo chengzhi sixiang shi* (History of Chinese Political Thought). Taipei: Zhonghua wenhua chubanshe yewei yuanhui, 1954.
Hsu Cho-yun. *Ancient China in Transition*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965.
Hsu K'o-ch'eng (Xu Kocheng). "'On Authority'—A Classical Document Criticizing Anarchism." *Tianjin Shiyuan Xuebao* (Tianjin Normal College Journal), 2. Trans.
"American Consulate General, Hong Kong." *Selections from People's Republic of China Magazines*, 77: 926 (May 23, 1977): 1–7.
Hu Qiaomu. "Guanyu rendaozhuyi he yihua wenti" (On Problems Concerning Humanism and Alienation). *Renminribao* (People's Daily) (January 27, 1984): 1–5.
Reprinted in *Hongqi* (Red Flag), 2 (January 26, 1984): 2–28. Translated in United States, Foreign Broadcast Information Service: *China Report* (hereafter FBIS) (Feb. 7, 1984): K1–K33 and in JPRS: *China Report/Red Flag* (March 19): 1–42.
Hu Zhongda. "Further Criticism of the Five Modes of Production Theory." *Lishi yanjiu* (Historical Research), 1(1986): 33–51. Translated in Rapp, *China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production*, 71–97.
—. "Shilun Yaxiya shengchan fangshi jianpi wuzhong shengchan fanchangshuo" (On the Asiatic Mode of Production with a Criticism of the Theory of Five Modes of Production). *Zhongguo shi yanjiu* (Studies in Chinese History), 3 (September 1981): 30–43. Translated in Brook, *The Asiatic Mode of Production in China*: 164–75.
Hua Shiping. "Marxist Humanism: Wang Ruoshui," Chapter 6 of Hua, *Scientism and Humanism*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995: 95–107.
—. "Utopianism in Chinese Thought: An Introduction to the Special Collection." *Journal of Comparative Asian Development*, 2(2) (Fall 2003): 191–5.
Huang Lingshuang. "Lingshuang zhi mojun han" (A Letter from Lingshuang). *Chunlei yuekan* (Spring Thunder Monthly), 1 (October 10, 1923).
Hubeisheng Jingmenshi bowuguan (Hubei Province Jingmen City Museum) (ed.). *Guodian Chu mu zhu jian* (The Guodian Chu tomb strips). Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1998.
Jacobs, Andrew. "Chinese Democracy Activist Is Given 10-Year Sentence." *New York Times,* March 25, 2011. Online at www.nytimes.com/2011/03/26/world/asia/26china.html?_r=2&ref=world
Jessop, Bob. "Recent Theories of the Capitalist State." *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 1 (1977): 353–73, reprinted in John A. Hall (ed.) *The State: Critical Concepts*: 81–103.
Jiang Guanghui. "Guodian Chu jian yu zaoqi ruxue" (The Guodian Chu Slips and Early Confucianism). *Zhongguo zhexue* (Chinese Philosophy), 20 (1999): 81–92. Translated in Defoort and Xing, "Guodian, Part II," 6–38.

— "'Jieji zhangzheng' he 'pingmin zhuangzheng' guo shiyong yu shehui geming ma?" (Are "Class Warfare" and "People's Dictatorship" Appropriate in Social Revolution?). *Minsheng*, 33 (July 1921). Reprinted in Ge Maochun, et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang*, 2 (1984): 587–90.

Jing Meijiu. "Zuian" (Account of Crimes). In *Xinhai geming ziliao leipian* (Collection of Materials on the 1911 Revolution). Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe: Xinhua shudian Beijing faxing suo faxing, 1981: 54–160.

Jung Chao-tsu. *Wei-Jinde ziran zhuyi* (The Wei-Chin Doctrine of Naturalness). Taipei: Commercial Press, 1966.

Kelly, David A. "The Emergence of Humanism: Wang Ruoshui and the Critique of Socialist Alienation." In Chapter 6 of Merle Goldman, Timothy Cheek, and Carol Hamrin (eds), *China's Intellectuals and the State: In Search of a New Relationship*. Cambridge: Harvard University Council on East Asian Studies, 1987: 159–82.

— (Guest ed.). "Wang Ruoshui: Writings on Humanism, Alienation, and Philosophy." *Chinese Law and Government*, 16(3) (Spring 1985).

Kirkland, Russell. *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Kohn, Livia. "Review of Liu Xiaogan, *Classifying the Zhuangzi Chapters*." *Philosophy East and West*, 46(4) (1996): 420–4.

Konrad, Gyorgy and Ivan Szelenyi. *Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1979.

Kraus, Richard. *Classes and Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism*. New York: The East Asia Institute of Columbia University, 1981.

Krebs, Edward S. "The Chinese Anarchist Critique of Bolshevism during the 1920s." In Roger B. Jeans (ed.), *Roads Not Taken: The Struggle of Opposition Parties in Twentieth Century China*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992: 203–24.

—. *Shifu: Soul of Chinese Anarchism*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.

Kropotkin, Peter. "Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Ideal." In Kropotkin, *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets*, Roger Baldwin (ed.). New York: Dover Publications, Inc, 1970 (Original edition, 1927): 114–44.

—. *Ethics: Origin and Development*. New York: Dial Press, 1925.

—. *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*. London: W. Heineman, 1902 (Reprint edition), Edited with an introduction by Paul Avrich. New York: University Press, 1972.

Lang, Olga. *Ba Jin and His Writings: Chinese Youth between Two Revolutions*.

Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.

Le Guin, Ursula. (with the collaboration of J. P. Seaton). *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching: A Book about the Way and the Power of the Way*. Boston and London: Shambala Publications, Inc, 1997.

—. *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia*. New York: Harper, 1974.

Lenin, V. I. *On Literature and Art*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970.

Li Cunshan. "Cong Guodian Chu jian kan zaoqi Dao Ru guanxi" (Early Daoist and Confucian Relations as Seen from the *Guodian Chu* Slips). *Zhongguo zhexue* (Chinese Philosophy), 20 (1999): 187–203. Translated in Defoort and Xing, "Guodian, Part II," 68–90.

[Li] Feigan [Ba Jin]. "Makesi de wuchanjieji de zhuanzheng" (The Marxist Dictatorship of the Proletariat). In *Makesizhuyi de pochan* (The Bankruptcy of Marxism): 105–25.

—. "Makesi zhuyi pipan Chaierkaisuofu zuo" (Criticism of Marxism in the Works of Cherkezov). *Ziyou yuegan* (Freedom Monthly), 1(1) (January 30, 1929).

—. "Wuzhengfu zhuyi yu shiji wenti" (Anarchism and Practical Problems), reprinted in Ge Maochun et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliaoxuan*: 830–8.
—. "Zailun wuchanjieji zhuanzheng" (Further Discussion of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat), *Shishi xinbao* (Current Trends), Supplement, *Xuedeng* (Light of Learning), 7(12), Number 17 (December 17, 1925).
Li Rui. *Mao Zedong tongzhi di chu qi geming huodong* (Comrade Mao Zedong's Early Revolutionary Activities). Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1957.
Li Shizeng (under pseudonym Zhen). "Da Chee shi" (Response to Mr. Chee). *Xin shiji* (New Century), 3 (July 6, 1907): 2–11.
Li Yizhe. "Guanyu shehuizhuyide minzhu yu fazhi" (On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System). In Qi Hao (ed.), *Guanyu shehuizhuyide minzhu yu fazhi* (On Socialist Democracy and Development) (Hong Kong: Heshang dashan chubanshe, 1976): 45–98. Translated in Chan, Rosen, and Unger, *On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System*: 31–86.
Li Zhisui. *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*. New York: Random House, 1994.
Lin Ganquan. "The AMP and Ancient Chinese Society: A Criticism of Umberto Melotti's Distortion of Chinese History in His *Marx and the Third World*." *Shijie lishi* (World History) (Beijing), 3 (1981): 133–46. Translated in Rapp, *China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production*, 47–70.
Lin Mousheng. *Antistatism: Essay in Its Psychiatric and Cultural Effects*.
Washington, DC: The William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation, 1940.
—. *Men and Ideas: An Informal History of Chinese Political Thought*. New York: The John Day Company, 1942.
Liu An, King of Huainan. *The Huainanzi: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Government in Early Han China*. Trans. and ed. John S. Major, Sarah A. Queen, Andrew Seth Meyer, and Harold D. Roth. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
Liu Shipei. "Baosheng xueshu fawei" (The Subtleties of Master Bao's Scholarship). *Tianyibao* (Heavenly Justice), 8–10 (30 October 1907): 233–8.
—. (under pseudonym Shenshu). "Renlei junli shuo" (On the Equal Ability of Human Beings). *Tianyibao*, 3 (July 10, 1907): 375–83.
Liu Xianbin. "Cong 'renmin dajiazuozhu' shuoqi" (Commenting on "The Position of the People as the Masters of the Country") Independent Chinese Pen Center, January 22, 2010. Trans. United States, Open Source Center, 2010. Online at www.chinesepen.org/Article/sxsy/201001/Article_20100122051631.shtml
Liu Xiaogan. *Classifying the Zhuangzi Chapters*. Trans. William E. Savage. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Center for Chinese Studies, 1994.
—. "From Bamboo Slips to Received Versions: Common Features in the Transformation of the Laozi." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 43(2) (2003): 337–82.
—. "The Wu Jun School." In Chapter Three of *Zhuang Zi houxue san paizhi yanbian* (The Evolution of Three Schools of Latter-Day Zhuang Zi Philosophy).
Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe (Chinese Social Sciences Press), 1957.
Translated in *Chinese Studies in Philosophy*, 23(2) (Winter 1991–2).
Liu Zuxin. "An Overview of Tomb Number One at Jingmen Guodian." In Allan and Williams, *The Guodian Laozi*: 23–32.
Lu Jianbo. "Lun wuchan jieji zhuanzheng" (On the Dictatorship of the Proletariat), *Shishi xinbao*, Supplement, *Xuedeng*, 20 (1924).

Ma Yanwen (pseudonym). "The Bureaucratic Class and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." *Beijing Daxue xuebao* (Beijing University Journal), 2 (1976): 22–9; 3: 15–29; and 4: 3–12. Part Three translated in *Selections from People's Republic of China Magazines*, 895 (October 28, 1976): 18–30, reprinted in Andrew and Rapp (2000), 259–74.

McDonald, Angus. *The Urban Origins of the Rural Revolution: Elites and Masses in Hunan Province, China, 1911–1927*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

MacFarquhar, Roderick. *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution: The Great Leap Forward 1958–1960*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.

—. "The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao." In Chapter One of MacFarquhar et al.

(eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*: 3–18.

MacFarquhar, Roderick and Michael Schoenhals. *Mao's Last Revolution.* Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2006.

MacFarquhar, Roderick, Timothy Cheek, and Eugene Wu (eds). *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao: from the Hundred Flowers to the Great Leap Forward*. Cambridge: Harvard University, Council on East Asian Studies, 1989. *Makesi zhuyi de pochan* (The Bankruptcy of Marxism). Vol. 5 of *Ziyou congshu* (Compendium on Freedom). Shanghai: Ziyou shudian (Freedom Bookstore), 1927; republished San Francisco: Pingshe (Equality Society), 1928.

Mao Zedong. "Chairman Mao Discusses Twenty Manifestations of Bureaucracy." In Mao (uncertain authorship), *Mao Zhuxi wenxuan,* translated in Mao, *Selections from Chairman Mao*, 40–3.

—. "Comment at the Working Conference of the Central Committee at Beidaihe" (August 6, 1962). In *Peking Review*, 10(26) (23 June 1967): 28.

—. "Comment on Comrade Chen Zhenren's Stay in a Primary Unit (January 29, 1965). In Mao (uncertain authorship), *Mao Zhuxi wenxuan*. Translated in JPRS 49826 (February 12, 1970), *Selections from Chairman Mao*, 23.

—. "Comment on Criticism and Self–criticism." *People's Daily* (December 22, 1967).

Partially translated in Ch'en, *Mao Papers*, 150.

—. "Constitution of the Anshan Iron and Steel Company" (January 22, 1960).

Reprinted in *Beijing Review*, 13(16) (17 April 1960): 3.

—. "Draft Resolution of the Central Committee of the CCP on Some Problems in the Current Rural Work" ("The First Ten Points") (20 May 1963). In Mao, *Mao Zedong Zhuzo xuandu*: 249–51. Translated in Baum and Teiwes, *Ssu–ch'ing:* 58– 71.

—. (uncertain authorship). "Is Yugoslavia a Socialist Country?" *People's Daily* (26 September, 1963). Reprinted in *Peking Review*, 6(39) (26 September 1963): 14–27.

Also translated in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965 and in Mao (uncertain authorship), *The Great Debate:* 110–44.

—. "Letter to Jiang Qing." Partially translated in *China News Analysis* (Hong Kong), 907 (1966): 7.

—. *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings 1912–1949*. Ed. Stuart Schram. *Volume I: The Pre-Marxist Period, 1912–1920*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1992.

—. *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings 1912–1949*. Ed. Stuart Schram. *Volume II: National Revolution and Social Revolution, December 1920–June 1927*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994.

—. *Mao Zedong zhuzo xuandu* (Selected Readings from the Writings of Mao Zedong). Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1966.

—. *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui!* (Long Live the Thought of Chairman Mao!). Red Guard collections of unpublished essays and correspondence, 1967 and 1969 editions.
— (uncertain authorship). *Mao Zhuxi wenxuan* (Selected Writings of Chairman Mao).
No date, no publisher. Translated in Mao, *Selections from Chairman Mao.*
—. "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People" (February 27, 1957). Speech at the Eleventh Session (Enlarged) of the Supreme State Conference.
First version in *People's Daily* (June 19, 1957). Official edited version in Mao, *SelectedWorks*, V (1977): 384–421.
—. "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People (Speaking Notes)" (27 February 1957). In Macfarquhar et al. (eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*: 131–89.
—. "On the Ten Great Relationships" (25 April 1956). Translated in Schram, *Chairman Mao Talks to the People:* 61–83.
—. "Reading Notes on the Soviet Text, *Political Economy*." Original text 1961–2.
Reprinted in Mao, *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui!* Translated in Roberts (1977): 33– 127.
—. "Selections from Chairman Mao. Translation of Mao, *Mao Zhuxi wenxuan.* " In *Joint Publications Research Service* 49826 (February 12, 1970): "Translations on Communist China." —. *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*. 4 vols. London: Lawrence & Wishart Ltd, 1954.
Based on the first Chinese edition, Peking: 1951.
—. *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,* Vol. V. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1977.
—. *Some Problems Currently Arising in the Course of the Rural Socialist Education Movement* (The Twenty–three Articles). 1966. Translated in Baum and Teiwes, *Ssu–ch'ing,* 118–26.
—. "Speech at the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the CCP" (24 September 1962). In Mao, *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui!* (1969 version): 430–36. Translated in *Chinese Law and Government*, 1(4) (Winter 1968–9): 85–93.
—. "Talk at a Conference of Party Member Cadres in Tianjin Municipality" (17 March 1957). In MacFarquhar et al. (eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao:* 275–96.
—. (uncertain authorship). *The Great Debate*. Varanasi, UP: Sarvahara Prakashan, 1986.
—. "The Situation in the Summer of 1957" (July 1957). In Mao *Selected Works*, 5: 473–82.
Martin, Bill and Ivan Szelenyi (1988). "The Three Waves of New Class Theory." *Theory and Society*, 17: 645–67.
Marx, Karl. *Grundrisse der Politischen Okonomie* (Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy). Moscow (1939–41). Trans. Martin Nicholas as *The Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*. New York: Random House, 1973.
—. *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*. Trans. Jack Cohen. Edited with an introduction by E. J. Hobsbawm. New York: International Publishers, 1964.
Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *Selected Works*. 2 vols. Moscow: Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, 1948.
Marx, Karl, Frederich Engels, and Vladimir I. Lenin. *Anarchism and Anarcho- Syndicalism: Selected Writings by Marx, Engels, Lenin*. New York: International Publishers, 1972.
Mather, Richard. "The Controversy over Conformity and Naturalness during the Six Dynasties." *History of Religions*, 9(2–3) (November 1969 and February 1970): 160–79.
—. (trans. with introduction). *Shih-shuo Hsin-yu: A New Account of Tales of the World*. By Liu I-ch'ing with commentary by Liu Chun. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1976.
Maximoff, G. P. (ed.). *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin: Scientific Anarchism.*

London: Collier-MacMillan Ltd, 1953.
Mehnert, Klaus. *Peking and the New Left: At Home and Abroad*. Berkeley, CA: University of California, Center for Chinese Studies, 1969.
Meisner, Maurice. *Mao Zedong: A Political and Intellectual Portrait*. Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 2007.
—. "Marx, Mao, and Deng on the Division of Labor in History." In Dirlik and Meisner (eds), *Marxism and the Chinese Experience*: 79–116.
—. *Marxism, Maoism, & Utopianism: Eight Essays*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982.
—. "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Chinese Marxist Thought." In Nee and Mozingo (eds): 109–31.
—. "The Ritualization of Utopia: Chinese Marxism in the Post-Mao Era." In Dirlik and Meisner (eds): 212–39.
Melotti, Umberto. *Marx and the Third World*. Edited with a forward by Malcolm Caldwell. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Highlands Press, 1972.
Michels, Roberto. *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*. Trans. Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: Collier Books, 1962.
Misra, Kalpana. *From Post-Maoism to Post-Marxism: The Erosion of Official Ideology In Deng's China*. New York and London: Routledge, 1998.
Mommsen, Wolfgang. "Roberto Michels and Max Weber: Moral Conviction versus the Politics of Responsibility," Chapter 6 of Mommsen, *The Political and Social Theory of Max Weber*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989: 87–105.
Moody, Peter R., Jr. *Opposition and Dissent in Contemporary China*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1977.
—. "Policy and Power: The Career of T'ao Chu 1956–66." *China Quarterly*, 54 (April–June 1973): 267–93.
Mote, Frederick W. *Intellectual Foundations of China* (Second edition). New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989.
Müller, Gotelind. *China, Kropotkin und der Anarchismus: eine Kulturbewegung im China des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts unter dem Einfluss des Westens und japanischer Vorbilder* (China, Kropotkin, and Anarchism: A Cultural Movement in Early Twentieth Century China under the Influence of the West and Japanese Models). Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2001.
Müller, Gotelind and Gregor Benton. "Esperanto," Chapter 8 of Benton, *Chinese Migrants and Internationalism: Forgotten Histories, 1917–1945*. New York: Routledge, 2007: 92–114.
Munro, Donald. "Egalitarian Ideal and Educational Fact in Communist China." In John M. H. Lindbeck (ed.), *China: Management of a Revolutionary Society*.
Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1971: 256–301.
—. *The Concept of Man in Contemporary China*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1977.
Myers, Jaames T., Jürgen Domes, and Erik von Groeling (eds). *Chinese Politics: Documents and Analysis, Volume I: Cultural Revolution to 1969*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1986.
Nathan, Andrew. *Chinese Democracy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
Naundorf, Gert. "Aspekte Des Anarchischen Gedankens in China: Darstellung der Lehre und Übersetzung des Texts Wu Neng Tzu." Inaugural Dissertation, Julius- Maximilians-Universität zu Wurzberg, 1972.

Nee, Victor and David Mozingo (eds). *State and Society in Contemporary China.*
Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983.
Needham, Joseph. *Science and Civilization in China.* 5 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954–76.
Ofuchi Ninji. "Ho seiden ko" (On the Identity of Bao Jing). *Tohogaku* (Eastern Studies), 18 (June 1959): 13–18.
Ou Shengbai. "Da Chen Duxiu junde yiwen" (Responding to Chen Duxiu's Doubts). *Xuehui* (Sea of Learning) (February 1923). Reprinted in Ge Maochun et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliao xuan* (Selection of Materials on Anarchist Thought), 2: 658.
Pang Pu. "Gu mu xin zhi—mandu Guodian Chu mu" (New Information from an Old Tomb: Reading the Guodian Bamboo Strips). *Zhongguo zhexue* (Chinese Philosophy), 20 (1999): 7–12. Translated in Defoort and Xing, "Guodian Part I," 43–9.
—. "Kong Men zhi jian—Guodian Chu jian zhong de rujia xinxingshuo" (From Confucius to Mencius: The Confucian Theory of Mind and Nature in the Guodian Chu Slips). *Zhongguo zhexue* (Chinese Philosophy), 20 (1999): 22–35. Translated in Defoort and Xing, "Guodian Part II," 39–54.
Pang Zhuoheng. "Summary of the Symposium on the AMP." *Zhongguo shi yanjiu*, 3 (1981): 3–17.
Payne, Robert. *Mao Tse–tung, Ruler of Red China.* London: Secker and Warburg, 1951. "The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchev's Revisionism" (March 31, 1964). Reprinted in *Peking Review*, 7(14) (April 3, 1964): 5–22. Translated also in Mao (uncertain authorship), *The Great Debate*: 280–322.
Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph. *What Is Property?* Ed. and trans. Donald R. Kelley and Bonnie G. Smith. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
Qi Hao (ed.). *Guanyu shehuizhuyide minzhu yu fazhi* (On Socialist Democracy and Development). Hong Kong: Heshang dashan chubanshe, 1976.
Rapp, John. (Guest ed.). "China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production." *Chinese Law and Government*, 22(2) (Spring 1989).
—. "China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production." *Theory and Society*, 16 (1987): 709–40.
—. "Chinese Works on Anarchism in the People's Republic of China, 1949–2010." In Ruth Kinna (ed.), *The Continuum Companion to Anarchism.* New York and London: Continuum Press, forthcoming.
—. "Daoism and Anarchism Reconsidered." *Anarchist Studies*, 6(2) (1998): 123–51.
—. "Daoism as Utopian or Accommodationist: Radical Daoism Reexamined in Light of the Guodian Manuscripts." In *Anarchism and Utopianism*, Laurence Davis and Ruth Davis (eds). Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2009: 33–52.
—. "Despotism and Leninist State Autonomy: The Chinese Asiatic Mode of Production Debates in Comparative Perspective." PhD Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1987.
—. "Maoism and Anarchism: Mao Zedong's Response to the Anarchist Critique of Marxism." *Anarchist Studies*, 9 (2001): 3–28 —. *Marxism and Capitalism in the People's Republic of China* (Review of Peter P.
Cheng (ed.)). Lanham, MD.: University Press of America, 1989. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 48(4) (November 1989): 821–2.
—. "Rethinking Mao: Explorations in Mao Zedong's Thought" (Review of Nick Knight). *China Review International*, 15(3) (2008): 392–6.
—. "Review of four books on Chinese Marxism." *Theory and Society*, 21(4) (August 1992): 599–609.

—. "Taoism and Anarchy: An Analysis of the Political Critique in Philosophical Taoism And Its Comparison with the Western Philosophy of Anarchism." Masters Thesis, Indiana University, 1978.
—. "Utopian, Anti-Utopian and Dystopian Ideas in Philosophical Daoism." *Journal of Comparative Asian Development*, 2(2) (Fall 2003): 211–31.
Rapp, John A. (Guest ed.) and Daniel Youd (Guest ed. and trans.). "Ba Jin and the Anarchist-Marxist Debates in China." Special issue of *Contemporary Chinese Thought*, forthcoming.
Resolutions of the Eleventh Plenum of the Central Committee of the CCP—the Sixteen Articles." *People's Daily* (August 9, 1966). Translated in *Peking Review*, 33 (August 12, 1966). Also translated in Ch'en, *Mao Papers*, 117–27.
Ritter, Alan. *Anarchism: A Theoretical Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
Roberts, Moss (trans.). *A Critique of Soviet Economics*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977.
—. (trans. and commentary). *Lao Zi Dao De Jing: The Book of The Way*. Berkeley: California University Press, 2001.
Rosen, Stanley (Guest ed.). "Guangzhou's Democracy Movement in Cultural Revolution Perspective." *China Quarterly*, 101 (March 1985): 1–31 —. "The Rehabilitation and Dissolution of 'Li Yizhe.'" *Chinese Law and Government*, 15(2) (Summer 1981).
Salisbury, Harrison E. *The New Emperors: China in the Era of Mao and Deng*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1992.
Sanbo (pseudonym). "Iguo gongchan zhuyi shibaizhi yuanyin jiqi buqiude fangfa" (The Failure of Communism in Russia and the Way to Salvage It). *Gongyu* (After Work), September 1922. Reprinted in Ge Maochun et al. (eds), *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliaoxuan*), 2: 598.
Scalapino, Robert A. and George T. Yu. *The Chinese Anarchist Movement.* Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1961.
Schram, Stuart R. *Chairman Mao Talks to the People: Talks and Letters: 1956–1971*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1974.
—. "Foundations and Significance of Mao Zedong's Personal Power." In Schram (ed.), *Foundations and Limits of State Power in China*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1987: 203–56.
—. "From the Great Union of the Popular Masses to the 'Great Alliance.'" *China Quarterly*, 49 (January 1972): 88–105.
—. *Ideology and Policy in China since the Third Plenum, 1978–1984*. London: Contemporary China Institute, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1984.
—. "Mao Zedong a Hundred Years on: The Legacy of a Ruler." *China Quarterly*, 137 (March 1994): 125–43.
—. *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (Revised and Enlarged edition). New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970.
—. *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
Schurmann, Franz. *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Second enlarged edition). Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.
Schwartz, Benjamin I. *The World of Thought in Ancient China.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985.
—. "Thoughts on the Late Mao—Between Total Redemption and Utter Frustration." Chapter Two of MacFarquhar et al. (eds), *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao:* 19–38.

Selden, Mark. "Cooperation and Conflict: Cooperative and Collective Formation in China's Countryside." In Mark Selden and Victor Lippitt (eds), *The Transition to Socialism in China:* 3–31.
Selden, Mark and Victor Lippitt (eds). *The Transition to Socialism in China*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1982.
Seymour, James. *The Fifth Modernization: China's Human Rights Movement, 1978– 1979*. Stanfordville, NY: Human Rights Publishing Group, 1980.
Shatz, Marshall S. (ed.). *The Essential Works of Anarchism*. New York: Bantam Books, 1971.
Shaughnessy, Edward L. "The Guodian Manuscripts and Their Place in Twentieth- Century Historiography on the 'Laozi.'" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 65(2) (2005): 417–57.
Shen, Andrea. "Ancient Script Rewrites History." *Harvard College Gazette*, (February 22, 2001): 8.
Shengwulian (Hunan Provincial Proletarian Revolutionaries Great Alliance Committee). "Our Program." *Guangyin Hongqi* (Guangdong Printing System Red Flag), 5 (March 1968): 3. Translated in United States, Hong Kong, American Consulate General, *Survey of China Mainland Press* (hereafter SCMP) 4174 (May 9, 1968): 10–13. Reprinted in revised form in Mehnert: 74–7.
—. "Shengwulian's Resolutions on Several Problems in the Current Hunan Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." *Dongfeng Chanbao* (East Wind Combat News) (Guangdong), 19 (February 29, 1968), based on resolutions passed by the preparatory group for Shengwulian on December 21, 1967. Translated in part in Mehnert, *Peking and the New Left: At Home and Abroad*: 78–81.
—. "Whither China?" *Guangyin Hongqi*, 5 (March 1968). Translated in SCMP 4190 (June 4, 1968): 1–18. Reprinted in revised form in Mehnert: 82–100.
"*Si ren bang*" *fandui* "*guan ka ya*" *jiushi shandong wuzhengfuzhuyi* (The Gang of Four in Opposing "Guan, Ka, and Ya," Were Merely Instigating Anarchism). Gansu, China: Gansu renmin chubanshe (Gansu People's Publishing House), 1977.
Snow, Edgar. *Red Star over China*. New York: Random House, 1938.
Song Yongyi. "The End of Innocence: Heterodox Thought on Human Rights & Political Reform during the Cultural Revolution." Website of Human Rights in China (HRIC). Online at www.hrichina.org
Starr, John Bryan. *Continuing the Revolution: The Political Thought of Mao.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976.
Stojanovic, Svetozar. "Marxism and Democracy: The Ruling Class or the Dominant Class?" *Praxis International*, 1(2) (July 1981): 160–70.
Su Shaozhi, Wu Dakun, Ru Xin, Cheng Renqian, and Ken Coates (eds). *Marxism in China*. Nottingham, UK: Spokesman, 1983.
Su Xiaokang, Wang Luxiang, Richard W. Bodman, and Pin P. Wan. *Deathsong of the River: A Reader's Guide to the Chinese TV Series Heshang*. Ithaca, NY: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 1991.
Tan Shilin (trans. and ed.). *The Complete Works of Tao Yuanming*. Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co, Ltd, 1992.
Teiwes, Frederick and Warren Sun. *The End of the Maoist Era: Chinese Politics during the Twilight of the Cultural Revolution, 1972–1976*. Armonk, NY: M.E.
Sharpe, 2007.
Terrill, Ross. *The White–Boned Demon: A Biography of Madame Mao Zedong* (Revised and expanded edition). Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992.

Tolstoy, Leo. *The Kingdom of God is Within You: Christianity Not as a Mystic Religion but as a New Theory of Life*, trans. C. Garnett. New York: Cassell, 1894 (Reprint edition). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.
—. *Tolstoy's Writings on Civil Disobedience and Non-Violence*. New York: The New American Library, 1968.
Tong, James (ed.). "Underground Journals in China, Parts I and II." *Chinese Law and Government*, 13(3–4) (Fall–Winter 1980–1), and 14(3) (Fall 1981).
Unger, Jonathan (ed.). *Chinese Law and Government*, XVIII: 2 (Summer 1985).
—. "Whither China?: Yang Xiguang, Red Capitalists, and the Social Turmoil of the Cultural Revolution." *Modern China*, 17(1) (January 1991): 3–37.
Vladimirov, O., and V. Ryazantsev. *Mao Tse–tung: A Political Portrait*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976.
Wakeman, Frederic. *History and Will: Philosophical Perspectives of Mao Tse-tung's Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973.
Walder, Andrew. "Cultural Revolution Radicalism: Variations on a Stalinist Theme." Chapter 3 of William A. Joseph, Christine Wong, and David Zweig (eds), *New Perspectives on the Cultural Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Council on East Asian Studies, 1991: 41–61.
Waley, Arthur. *The Way and Its Power: A Study of the Tao Te Ching and Its Place in Chinese Thought*. New York: Grove Press, 1935.
—. *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1939.
Wang Ming (compiler). *Wunengzi jiao shu*. Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju: Xinhua shudian Beijing faxing suo faxing, 1981.
Wang Nianyi. *Da dongluande niandai* (A Decade of Great Upheaval). Zhengshou: Renmin chubanshe, 1988.
Wang Ruoshui. "A Turn Around from Criticism of 'Leftism' to Opposition to Rightism —One Individual's Experiences and Reflections on Chinese Communist High Level Infighting." *Ming Bao Yuegan* (Hong Kong), 27(9) (March 9, 1989). Translated in *JPRS*, 89(055) (May 30, 1989): 6–18.
—. "Shuangbai fangzhen he gongmin quanli" (The Double Hundred Policy and Civil Rights), *Huashengbao* (August 8, 1986), reprinted in *Chengming* (Hong Kong) 107 (September 1, 1986): 60–1, translated in FBIS (September 12, 1986): K6–K12.
—. "Tantan yihua wenti" (Discussing the Problem of Alienation). *Xinwen zhanxian* (Journalism Frontline), 8 (1980): 8–11. Translated in David A. Kelly, *Wang Ruoshui: Writings on Humanism, Alienation, and Philosophy*, 25–38.
—. "The Personality Cult and Ideological Alienation—Replies and Discussion, Parts I and II." *Ching Pao* (Hong Kong), 4(10) (April 10, 1988): 24–7 and 5(10) (May 10, 1988): 40–4. Translated in FBIS (May 11, 1988): 18–21, 24–7.
—. "Wei rendaozhuyi bianhu" (A Defense of Humanism). *Wen hui bao* (Daily Bulletin) January 17: 3 (1983). Translated in Kelly, 71–88.
—. *Zai zhexue zhanxian shang* (On the Philosophical Front). Beijing: Renmin chubanshe (People's Publishing House), 1980.
—. *Zhihui de tongku* (The Pain of Wisdom). Hong Kong: Sanlian shudian, 1989.
Wang Ruowang. Interview with *Jiushi niandai*, December 1, 1988, 65–75. Translated in JPRS 89033 (April 12, 1989): 4.

Wang Siweng. “Hewei er xinyang wuzhengfu gongchan zhuyi” (What Are Anarcho- Communist Beliefs). *Chunlei* (Spring Thunder), 1 (October 10, 1923): 5–19.
Watson, Burton (trans.). *Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1964.— (trans.). “Preface to the Poem on the Peach Blossom Spring.” In Watson (trans. and ed.), *The Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry: From Early Times to the Thirteenth Century*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984: 142–3.
—. (trans.). *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1970.
Wang Xizhe. “An Interview with Wang Xizhe on the Democratic Movement.” *Qishi niandai* (The Seventies), 150 (July 1982): 34–8. Translated JPRS 81700 (September 3, 1982): 86–97, and in abridged form as “Democracy and Chinese Communism.” In *New Left Review*, 131 (January–February 1983): 62–70.
—. “Guangzhou *Renmin zhi sheng* fangwen Wang Xizhe” (An Interview with Wang Xizhe by the Guangzhou *People’s Voice*), reprinted in *Guanchajia* (The Observer), 23 (September 1979): 7–9. Translated in Unger (ed.), *Chinese Law and Government*: 77–83.
—. “Mao Zedong yu wenhua dageming” (Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution).
In *Qishi niandai* (The Seventies), 133 (February 1981). Translated in Chan, Rosen, and Unger, *On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System*, 177–260, 285– 97. Reprinted in abridged form in Andrew and Rapp, *Autocracy and China’s Rebel Founding Emperors*, 275–95.
—. “Minzhude fanxiang” (The Direction of Democracy). In *Qishi niandai*, 124 (May 1980): 55–60 and in Wang, *Wang Xizhe lunwenji*. Translated in *The Undercurrent* (Hong Kong), 1980: 1–11.
—. *Wang Xizhe lunwenji* (A Collection of Wang Xizhe’s Essays). Hong Kong: Qishiniandai zazhishe (The Seventies Magazine Society), 1981.
—. “Wei wuchanjieji zhuanzheng er nuli” (Strive for the Class Dictatorship of the Proletariat). Reprinted in *Qishi niandai* (The Seventies), 116 (September 1979): 25–30, and in Wang, *Wang Xizhe lunwenji*. Translated in Chan, Rosen, and Unger, *On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System*: 133–56.
Wang Yizhou. “An Inquiry into Marx’s Concept of the AMP—Critical Comments from a Theoretical Standpoint.” *Makesizhuyi yanjiu* (Marxist Studies), 3 (1985): 75–86. Translated in Rapp, “China’s Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production,” 98–108.
Welch, Holmes. *Taoism: The Parting of the Way* (Revised edition). Boston: Beacon Press, 1965.
Wittfogel, Karl. “The Ruling Bureaucracy of Oriental Despotism: A Phenomenon that Paralyzed Marx.” *Review of Politics*, 15(3) (1953): 350–9.
—. *Oriental Despotism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957.
Wolin, Richard. *The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism From Nietsche to Postmodernism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.
Womack, Brantly. *The Foundations of Mao Zedong’s Political Thought 1917–1935*.
Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1982.
—. “Where Mao Went Wrong: Epistemology and Ideology in Mao’s Leftist Politics.” *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, 16 (July 1986): 23–40.
Woodcock, G., *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements* (Reprint edition). Peterborough, Ontario, Canada: Broadview Press, 2004. Original edition, New York: The New American Library, 1962. Second edition, London: Penguin, 1986.
Wu Dakun. “Criticizing Karl Wittfogel’s Oriental Despotism.” *Lishi yanjiu* (Historical Studies), 4 (1982): 27–36. Translated in Su Shaozhi et al. (eds), 213–25.

—. "Guanyu dongfang shehui de qiben tedian wenti" (On Several Questions in the Study of the AMP). *Xueshu yanjiu* (Academic Research), 1 (1980): 11–18.
—. "The AMP in History as Viewed by Political Economy in Its Broad Sense." *Zhongguoshi yanjiu* (Studies in Chinese History), 3 (1981): 18–29. Translated in Su Shaozhi, et al. (eds), *Marxism in China* (Nottingham, UK: Spokesman, 1983), 53– 77, and in Rapp, *China's Debate on the Asiatic Mode of Production*, 27–46.
Wu Shouzhi. "The Essence and Important Function of Centralized State Power in the Feudal Autocratic System of China." *Shehui zhanxian* (Social Science Front), 8(2) (1985): 117–25.
Wuxu (pseudonym). "Zhongguo gudai wuzhengfu zhuyi chao zhi yipie" (A Brief Look at Anarchist Currents in Ancient China). *Guofeng ribao* (National Customs Daily), supplement, *Xuehui* (Sea of Learning) 138–9 (March 14–15, 1923).
Wu Zhihui. "Tuigang renshu yi yi shijie guan" (Extending the Way of Humanity to Cure the World). *Xinshiji*, 37 (March 7, 1908): 148.
Xiao San. *Mao Zedong tongzhi de qing shao nian shidai* (Comrade Mao's Boyhood and Youth). Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1949.
Yan Jiaqi. "'Imperial Power' and 'Imperial Position': Two Characteristics of Autocracy." *Xin shiqi* (New Era), 6 (1980). Reprinted in Yan, *Quanli yu zhenli* (Power and Truth). Beijing: Guanming ribao chubanshe, 1987: 91–6. Translated in *Yan Jiaqi and China's Struggle for Democracy*, David Bachman and Dali L. Yang, (trans. and ed.). Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc, 1991: 9–15.
Yan Jiaqi, and Gao Gao. *Turbulent Decade: A History of the Cultural Revolution.* Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1996.
Yang Fang-yen. "Nation, People, Anarchy: Liu Shih-p'ei and the Crisis of Order in Modern China." PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1999.
Yang Xiaokai, and Susan McFadden. *Captive Spirits: Prisoners of the Cultural Revolution.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
Yao Wenyuan. "Lun Ba Jin xiaoshuo 'Miewang' zhongde wuzhengfuzhuyi sixiang" (Discussing the Anarchist Thought in Ba Jin's Novel, *Destruction.*). *Zhongguo qingnian* (Chinese Youth), 19 (October 1958): 17–20.
Young, Graham. "Mao Zedong and the Class Struggle in Socialist Society." *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, 16 (July 1986): 41–80.
Zarrow, Peter. *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.
Zhang Lu (compiler). *Huang Ming zhishu* (Regulations on the imperial Ming) (1579). 20 *juan.* 2 vols. Tokyo: Koten kenkyūkai, 1966–7. Also 6 vols. Taibei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1969.
Zhang Weiguo. "Whither the State Ownership System?" *Shijie jingji* (World Economy), April 3, 1989. Translated in FBIS (April 25, 1989): 37.
Zhongguo renmin daxue makesi liening zhuyi jichuxi (The Marxist-Leninist Studies Department of Chinese People's University). *Wuzhengfuzhuyi pipan* (Criticizing Anarchism). Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 1959.

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



John A. Rapp
Daoism and Anarchism
Critiques of State Autonomy in Ancient and Modern China
2012

Retrieved on 13th April 2021 from astudygroup.files.wordpress.com

theanarchistlibrary.org