

**NARRATIVE, LOGIC,
CONTRADICTION
XI JINPING'S STORY OF CHINA'S
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE**

**中国故事：
习近平叙述中国的
过去、现在和未来**

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代心语

June 2020

Submitted for the degree of
Bachelor of Asian Studies (Honours)
The College of Asia and the Pacific
The Australian National University

Except where otherwise acknowledged, this thesis is my original work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Janet Davey'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'D'.

Janet Davey
7 June 2020

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Acknowledgements

Writing a thesis is often thought to be a fairly solitary project, but I've found the opposite to be true. The support I've received from my mentors, peers, family and friends over the past eighteen months is what has made this project possible.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my brilliant Honours supervisor, Associate Professor Fengyuan Ji, for her wisdom, for helping me see things in a new light, and for sparking my interest in the politics of the Chinese language.

I thank the Honours academic staff, Associate Professor Chris Ballard, Professor Francesca Merlan and Professor Alan Rumsey, and both the 2019 and 2020 CAP Honours cohorts, for guiding me through the process and offering valuable feedback on the many—ridiculously long—draft chapters I produced.

I am incredibly grateful to all of my Chinese teachers for their encouragement and enthusiasm, and for sharing such a wonderful language with me. I would particularly like to thank Mrs Danyang McAuliffe, Dr Yanyin Zhang, Dr Shengyu Fan and Dr Zhengdao Ye.

Many thanks to Dr Mary Kilcline-Cody for being not only an inspirational mentor but a great friend.

To my family and friends, I could not have done it without you. Thank you to Georgia, for showing me the way. Thanks to Imogen for our walks. And thank you to my parents, Cathy and Chris, and my brother Phillip for always lending a hand and seeing me through. I promise from now on I'll stop talking about what Xi Jinping talks about.

Finally, to Dr Guanxin Ren, for believing in me.

Abstract

China's current leader Xi Jinping is telling, and selling, a story to China and the world. Xi's grand narrative, the 'China Story', recounts a modernising China's journey to national rejuvenation. Naturally, this 'Chinese Dream' can only be realised under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with its unique development model of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'. The backdrop to this positive story is a bleaker reality: a downturn in China's economy, tighter political controls over modern Chinese life, ongoing protests in Hong Kong and deteriorating relations with the United States. In 2020, China has looked to turn crisis into opportunity, using the global COVID-19 pandemic to promote a political narrative about the superiority of its CCP-led governance system. However, the underlying argument of China's COVID-19 narrative is not new; it is simply another echo of Xi's existing China Story. This suggests that a broader study of Xi's grand narrative is warranted. Analysing his overarching message will inform an understanding of how the contemporary CCP uses narrative and its governance performance to support the legitimacy of its rule.

This study examines the narrative, argument and potential flaws in Xi's China Story. Drawing from literatures on Chinese language and politics, discourse analysis and political narratives, it critically analyses a selection of Xi's official speeches along with three texts published in response. This analysis informs an argument that by weaving the CCP, socialism with Chinese characteristics and national rejuvenation into a narrative of China's past, present and future, Xi turns his China Story into a 'mythologic'. Xi's mythologic, a narrative framework of reality, seeks to justify perpetual CCP rule by presenting the CCP-led system of socialism with Chinese characteristics as the only pathway to rejuvenation. However, analysing critical readings of Xi's discourse reveals contradictions in not only the China Story but also China's broader 'discourse-political system'. These contradictions prevent the China Story from generating a sustainable justification for CCP rule. Nonetheless, Xi's mythologic provides valuable support for CCP legitimacy. But its reliance on a perception of continuous progress to legitimise CCP rule means it must continually realign narrative and reality to demonstrate such progress, explain new developments and accommodate new interpretations.

INTRODUCTION: THE NAMES

子路曰：衛君待子而為政，
子將奚先？

Zi Lu said: "The monarch of the state of Wei wants you to govern the country, what is the first thing you plan on doing?"

子曰：必也正名乎。

Confucius said: "First it is necessary to rectify the names."

—*Analects* 论语 13:3

Human beings like stories. To sift through the randomness and noise of life, we seek out explanations that can make sense of the world. But the words we choose to account for our experiences are not value-free. Names and labels reveal how we see things and how we would like others to see them. If you can convince others to see the world on your terms, you can define reality as you wish. Perhaps politics then is not so much a contest of ideas as a contest of definitions. And power, accordingly, becomes a measure of one's ability to decide what will be true (Foucault 1980, 131). In this world, it is those whose definitions, moral standards and worldview come to be shared who stand to obtain legitimacy and become a source of authority (Joseph 2006, 4).

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has become the main source of contention in domestic and international politics. The world's two major powers, the People's Republic of China (PRC; China) and the United States of America (US), have advanced different accounts of the unfolding crisis to both domestic and global audiences. Disagreements between the two countries over the efficacy of China's response, the severity of the outbreak in the US, the origin of COVID-19 and even the name of the virus have been read as an indication that a new 'narrative battle' is unfolding (Munro 2020).

By China's account, its rapid mobilisation of resources and large-scale lockdown of tens of millions of its citizens—a response enabled by its strong leadership and effective governance system—saved countless lives, arrested the spread of the virus in China and gave the world more time to prepare. Now China is playing a major role in the global containment and recovery effort, donating medical supplies and sending aid far and wide (Xinhua 2020b).

When the US Trump administration tells the story, China is entirely to blame for the global outbreak. China's city of Wuhan was the source of the virus. Its overriding concern with suppressing information, underreporting cases and downplaying the crisis—a response inevitable in a repressive authoritarian system—impeded the timely containment of the virus and endangered the whole world (Wintour 2020).

Of course, there is some truth to both accounts. But while China and the US' coronavirus narrative battle may seem like predictable political squabbling, it has had a profound impact on a digitally connected yet physically isolated COVID-19 world. Their competing narratives, misinformation campaigns and conspiracy theories have come to shape global assessments of and responses to the virus (Munro 2020). Limited to a quarantined perspective amidst an 'infodemic', looking beyond framed messages and seeking the bigger picture now seems more important than ever (Seccombe 2020).

Taking a broad critical perspective is particularly important for understanding political messages in China, as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has long dominated public discourse and controlled information flows (C. Cao 1992, 46). The Party uses official narratives to guide public opinion and promote its own legitimacy. Moreover, it continually refreshes these stories to suit current realities (Mahoney 2014, 23–24).

China's coronavirus narrative is a prime example of the way the CCP tries to support its legitimacy through discourse. Domestically, the narrative attempts to boost popular support for the CCP, as China's rapid containment of COVID-19 is portrayed as evidence of its superior political system. This is contrasted to the disorderly efforts in Western countries, particularly the US. The narrative thus also serves a strategic purpose: emphasising China's global leadership while depicting the US as a hindrance to global cooperation (Shoebridge 2020).

The overarching story, however, is not new. The 'superior China/chaotic West' juxtaposition of governance systems, the emphasis on solidarity between the Party and Chinese people, the militaristic description of a 'people's war' against a crisis, the ambivalent portrayal of the public as both empowered and contained, and the equivocation on current leader Xi Jinping's degree of authority—all of these are recurring themes in contemporary

Chinese official narratives (Xinhua 2020a). Nor is it unprecedented that the coronavirus narrative has been informed by historical events (in this case the 2002–2003 SARS crisis) and aimed at both domestic and international audiences (also a feature of China's official account of the 2019–2020 'riots' in Hong Kong [Dotson 2019b]). On the contrary, China's official COVID-19 narrative is simply the latest expression of a grander story that seeks to legitimise the CCP-ruled political system.

This contemporary grand narrative brings together many of Xi Jinping's concepts and campaigns, including his anticorruption crackdown, 'core socialist values' 社会主义核心价值观, celebration of traditional culture, and effort to recentralise the Party in modern China (Brown and Bērziņa-Čerenkova 2018). But the heart of the narrative is Xi's signature concept: the 'Chinese Dream' 中国梦 to realise the 'great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation' 中华民族的伟大复兴. Echoing calls for China's revival that have reverberated across modern history into the present, Xi's Chinese Dream envisages China's destiny as a prosperous, strong, cultured and respected modern civilisation (Z. Wang 2014, 1–2).¹

Following Lams (2018) and Barmé, I call this grand narrative the 'China Story' 中国故事: Xi's tale of a modernising China's journey to rejuvenation under CCP leadership.² Xi himself stresses the importance of 'telling the China story well' 讲好中国故事. His call to enhance China's 'discourse power' 话语权 highlights that Chinese official narratives are increasingly directed towards both domestic and international audiences (Lams 2018, 393–394). The China Story is no exception and its current expression in the coronavirus narrative illustrates this more concerted effort to shape local and global understandings of China through an account that is continuously refreshed to reflect new developments and audiences' shifting interpretations. The value of examining Xi's China Story then is that it offers a way to look beyond individual narratives and their ongoing modifications to reveal recurring patterns in a grander narrative that seeks to justify a CCP-led future.

Study

This study analyses Xi Jinping's grand narrative of the China Story, an account of China's journey to rejuvenation under the leadership of the CCP and its unique system of 'socialism

¹ Modern history' here refers to historical events from 1839 until the present. The period from the First Opium War in 1839 to the PRC's founding in 1949 is also known as the 'century of humiliation' (Callahan 2006, 180).

² Emeritus Professor Geremie R. Barmé, the founding director of the Australian Centre on China in the World (CIW) at the Australian National University (ANU), highlighted the coalescence of multiple official narratives into a grand narrative often termed 'the China Story' as part of an introduction to the 'China Story Lexicon', a compilation of keywords in Chinese official discourse, on the website of the China Story Project run by CIW. The China Story Project website has since been reconfigured and the relevant page no longer exists. See <https://www.thechinastory.org/china-story-keywords/>.

with Chinese characteristics'.³ I argue that by interweaving the CCP, socialism with Chinese characteristics, and national rejuvenation into a story of China's progressive journey through past, present and future, Xi transforms the China Story into a 'mythologic', a legitimising narrative framework of reality (Apter and Saich 1994). However, an analysis of critical readings exposes contradictions in the China Story, which also extend to the broader 'discourse-political system'.⁴ These contradictions undermine the logical basis of a narrative that depends on audiences' perception of China's continuous, cumulative progress. This prevents the China Story from providing a sustainable justification for perpetual CCP rule as an ideal mythologic. Instead, Xi's China Story is a mythologic which, while valuable to the CCP's legitimacy, is vulnerable to changing developments and interpretations.

Definitions

Before delving into the analysis, the first thing to do, as Confucius says, is rectify the names. I begin from a Foucauldian perspective that views *discourse* as a set of social practices that is realised in text (Chilton, Tian, and Wodak 2012). Following Fairclough (1989) and Wodak (1989), I contend that discourse interacts in complex ways through political and socio-cultural contexts to construct social reality, and is intertwined with power, knowledge and ideology.

Drawing on Van Dijk (2013), I view *ideology* as a form of social cognition that is acquired, expressed and circulated in discourse. As a set of shared beliefs, ideology is communicated through *frames*, evaluative perspectives that label, simplify and organise the world (Goffman 1974, 10). Cognitively, ideological perspectives can be ordered within a *mental model*, a grander schematic of reality.

In politics, ideology is often conveyed through a *political narrative*, which recounts the development of a sociopolitical issue, elaborates on its consequences and proposes actions in response (Geall and Ely 2018, 1181). These issue-based narratives can then be threaded into a single *grand narrative* that interprets the past and present, and prescribes a vision of its future. When these narratives are meaningful, we may internalise the attitudes and beliefs put forward and update our mental models accordingly (McLaughlin and Velez 2017, 23).

The connection between a grand narrative and mental model is reflected in Apter and Saich's (1994) concept of a *mythologic*. The mythologic, an argument enveloped in a story,

³ 'Socialism with Chinese characteristics' 中国特色社会主义 is an official term for China's development model and political system of Chinese Communist Party rule. It is sometimes translated as 'Chinese socialism'. Following a convention in the China literature and official translations of Chinese official discourse, I will henceforth refer to this term without quotation marks.

⁴ At times I will refer to China's 'discourse-political system' (henceforth without quotation marks), as this term better captures the close relationship between Chinese official discourse and the CCP's political legitimacy than does 'political system'.

orders the past, explains the present and projects the future. By constructing a compelling framework of reality, the mythologic legitimises a political order and promotes a desired future. A mythologic that provides a sustainable justification for political rule—one that is robust and can be maintained—is an ideal type to which particular grand narratives may approximate to varying degrees.

Guided by D. Zhao's (2009, 416–418) discussion of political legitimacy in China, I view *legitimacy* as the state's ability to generate and sustain a consensus belief that existing political institutions are the most suitable for that society. I follow the China literature in distinguishing between the CCP's *moral-historical legitimacy* (or ideological legitimacy), based on its revolutionary victory and founding of the PRC under leader Mao Zedong, and its *performance legitimacy*, based on the Party continuing to raise living standards and develop China into a prosperous, strong, clean and green modern country. Recognising these links between discourse, ideology, politics and reality informs an understanding of the ways in which Xi's narrative draws on shared beliefs, discourses and histories to construct CCP legitimacy; and furthermore, how interpretations of the China Story are shaped by audiences' knowledge and experiences.

Sources

To construct a comprehensive account of Xi's narrative, I draw from scholarly literature on Chinese politics, history, language, culture and society, and studies of political narratives. These secondary sources provide contextual background and inform my theoretical and methodological approach.

My primary material is a corpus of speeches given by Xi Jinping, along with three critical responses to Xi's remarks. The speech corpus consists of twenty-three official speeches composed by Xi's official speechwriters and delivered by Xi between November 2012 and October 2019. These speeches were selected from approximately seventy official Xi speeches. My selection criteria were Xi speeches that marked significant political occasions; represented each year of Xi's leadership (except 2020); and repeated common themes and ideas.⁵ Similar criteria guided the selection of the critique texts (see Chapter Three).

I obtained full-text Chinese-language speech transcripts from the state-run Xinhua News Agency or the two-volume collection of Xi's speeches 《习近平谈治国理政》,

⁵ The list of Xi speeches in Appendix 1 shows that many of the chosen speeches were given in the first few years of his leadership. This is because the start of Xi's era was the crucial period for him to assert his authority. His early speeches played an important role in laying out his signature vision and establishing a grand narrative. These early speeches will further provide a reference point for subsequent elaboration and changes to the story.

published in English as *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*. Existing English translations of the speeches were obtained where available; otherwise I translated them myself. All the speeches are listed in Appendix 1. The Chinese-language equivalents of speech quotations cited in the text are given in Appendix 2. My translations of the four previously untranslated speeches are in Appendix 3. Chinese and English versions of the critique texts are reproduced in Appendix 4.

Scope

The historical roots, cultural ties, thematic breadth, nativist appeal and legitimising functions of the China Story make it a representative grand narrative. Of necessity, this project considers only the authoritative version of the China Story as conveyed by Xi Jinping to a domestic mainland Chinese audience.⁶ Future work could comparatively examine how the narrative is communicated via Chinese state and commercial media, or to Chinese- and English-speaking international audiences. Detailing Xi's narrative will also facilitate a subsequent comparison with the narratives of his predecessors.

Methodology

Framing the world through story shapes not only our representation of reality but reality itself, as assumptions embedded in discourse can influence our beliefs and behaviour (Charteris-Black 2004, 22–24). It is imperative to have a means of analysing these assumptions. Within the field of discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis (CDA) examines the nexus of power, language and ideology in discourse (Fairclough and Wodak 1997). CDA's focus on the use of language to represent social reality and to reproduce social and political relations of power has proved insightful—in modified form—in a Chinese context (e.g., J. Wang 2017; Q. Cao 2014; Chilton, Tian and Wodak 2012; Gu 2018; L. Liu 2009). Yet it has also been criticised for its politically activist agenda (e.g., L'Hôte 2014, 16–19; Joseph 2006, 130–134).

Bearing this in mind, my methodological approach emulates CDA's attention to context and agency in reading, interpreting and explaining texts but seeks a more detached perspective. In this respect, I am guided by the theoretical frameworks of Charteris-Black (2018) and L'Hôte (2014), both of whom combine CDA with other aspects of discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, framing and conceptual metaphor theory in order to study

⁶ In particular, I am not considering reception of the narrative in Taiwan, the special administrative regions Hong Kong and Macao, or in mainland autonomous regions, such as Tibet and Xinjiang. All of these places have distinctive cultural, political, historical and social environments.

conceptual metaphors and narratives in political discourse from a critical yet impartial standpoint (see Charteris-Black 2018, chap. 9; L'Hôte 2014, chap. 2).

This approach was applied to analyse the Chinese-language speech transcripts and critique texts. Analysing the texts in Chinese was essential to the interpretation process. Removing translation variability helps reveal the connotations and consistency of phrases across texts, the use of metaphors and allusions, and allows possible motivations and meanings in the texts to be inferred more directly. To interpret the speeches and critiques, I identified and analysed significant and recurring phrases, conceptual metaphors and themes; the depiction of Chinese history; and the expression of social agency in active/passive constructions and transitive/intransitive verbs.

Literature Review

The use of language for political purposes in China has been widely studied throughout the history of the PRC. This section introduces the key literature that has informed my research approach, especially studies of political narratives and analyses of political language in China.

Mao Zedong understood the power of words. His moral story explaining people's experience of China's recent past was recounted in an amalgamated language of Marxist terms, Chinese idioms, standardised formulae, simple slogans and traditional metre (Lu 2017a, 15–23; Brown 2018b, 45). Mao's new language also introduced a new way to understand the world into China, through the lens of class struggle and contradictions (Y. Liu 2010, 333)—and sparked a new wave of research. Ji (2004) provides a definitive account of Mao's language; Apter and Saich (1994) do likewise for Mao's Yan'an narrative.

Ji (2004, 2) examines Mao's 'linguistic engineering': a systematic control of language that attempted to "remake people's minds" by forcing people to use linguistic formulae to express politically correct thoughts.⁷ Ji focuses on Maoist discourse's linguistic features and control tactics in equal measure, and links both to its interpretations and political impact. My project seeks to employ a similarly broad yet analytical perspective.

Apter and Saich's (1994, 33–36) seminal work demonstrates that the power of Mao's Yan'an narrative lay in its ability to explain the present through a logical ordering of the past,

⁷ In the text, double quotation marks are used for direct quotations from primary or secondary sources. Single words or short phrases from one of the analysed Xi speeches (listed in Appendix 1) are denoted by single quotation marks when the reference has been omitted for readability. These references may be found in Appendix 2.

one which simultaneously inferred a utopian future. They argue that this enabled Mao to generate a compelling narrative framework of reality: a mythologic. As a strong but not quite ideal mythologic, Mao's Yan'an story provides a reference point for assessing the degree to which Xi's China Story generates a convincing and robust justification of CCP rule that can be feasibly maintained.

Of course, Xi's story must also be compared with more recent official narratives. The story of a humiliated China's push for national rejuvenation has become the leading narrative of the post-Mao era (Gries 2007, 123). Renwick and Cao (1999) demonstrate how China's victimisation narrative monopolises understandings of history in order to communicate a continuous national story that consolidates existing power structures. Renwick and Cao's attention to the constructed nature of history, identity and power, and the ways these interact in discourse, has guided my approach. Furthermore, their study highlights the continuity of the rejuvenation narrative in Chinese political discourse—reaffirmed in more recent work (e.g., Weigelin-Schwiedrzik 2006; Hwang and Schneider 2011; Z. Wang 2012; Brown 2018b)—and so helps contextualise Xi's representation of national rejuvenation.

Lin (2017) and Anagnost (1997) complement research on the rejuvenation narrative by analysing the *suzhi* 素质 'population quality' narrative of the reform era. Lin highlights the historical, cultural and nationalist ties between *suzhi* discourse and China's rejuvenation, and shows how both narratives are used to support the CCP's legitimacy. Meanwhile, Anagnost interrogates the pedagogical overtones in the *suzhi* narrative of China's frustrated modernisation. She further examines the *suzhi* narrative's contrasting portrayals of an objectified Chinese populace and a paternal CCP authority.

To date, many studies of Xi-era official narratives have focused on a particular issue, such as anticorruption or the environment (e.g., Brown 2018a; Geall and Ely 2018), or a particular region (e.g., Zhang, Brown, and O'Brien 2018; Brady 2015). However, Brown (2018b) and Lams (2018) are two that broadly survey Xi-era narratives. Both adopt a historically comparative perspective to analyse how Xi's narratives seek to justify Party rule. Updating earlier work by Z. Wang (2014) and Mahoney (2014) on Xi's Chinese Dream discourse, Brown and Lams reaffirm the historicity of the rejuvenation narrative. Furthermore, by tying each of Xi's narratives into a broader 'China story', Lams highlights the fact that meaningful interpretations of Xi's discourse must factor in the multiple audiences (domestic/international, Party/people, online/offline, urban/rural); subjects of legitimacy (socialism with Chinese

characteristics, Xi in the CCP, the CCP in China, China in the world); and Party identities (revolutionary, theoretical, cultural, organisational, pragmatic) represented in his story.

While following a similarly considered, comparative approach, I aim to expand on these accounts. To do this, my study analyses the thematic content of Xi's discourse; details how a journey-based framework links these strands into an overarching argument; and devotes greater attention to the role of socialism with Chinese characteristics in legitimising CCP rule.

A compelling grand narrative speaks to the past, present and future, and leads audiences to particular conclusions (King 2017, 26). My assessment of Xi's China Story in this regard draws on Marinelli's (2009) name-reality framework. The Confucian doctrine of *zhengming* 正名 'rectification of names' considers 'correct' language to be a source of political authority. Marinelli concentrates on the notion that language is only correct when there is harmony between the *ming* 名 'correct name' and *shi* 实 'claimed reality' via *yan* 言 'linguistic expressions'. He argues that interactions between politics and this *ming-yan-shi* triad trace the shifting relations between language, power and claimed reality (Marinelli 2009, 24–26). Modifying Marinelli's framework to consider the interplay of *narrative* and reality then offers a way to assess the explanatory power of the China Story (with reference to the mythologic outlined above), and conceptualise how interpretations shift over time.

Understanding a political narrative, however, means understanding the language in which it is told. To interpret Xi's China Story, I will draw on several critical analyses of Chinese political language that have contributed novel, evidence-based conclusions on ideology and legitimacy in discourse.

Hodge and Louie's (1998) work on political and cultural ideologies in the Chinese language combines a macroscopic perspective with microscopic details. Its analysis of ideology scales up from individual character components to grammatical constructions and ultimately entire texts. Their concept of 'P-ideology' and 'S-ideology'—the former asserting the hegemony of authority to delineate a power hierarchy, the latter expressing solidarity to promote a sense of common identity—also offers a framework for interpreting ideological assumptions in representations of social agency (49). I will apply this framework to Xi's assignment of agency in Chapter Two.

Link (2013) provides a similarly comprehensive examination of the politics of the Chinese language, highlighting ideological assumptions and lingering classical and Maoist influences in the political formulae, metaphors and even rhythm of contemporary political

discourse. More recent work on Xi-era discourse has shown that metaphor remains a primary means of communicating official ideology (e.g., Magagnin 2016; Šebok 2017; Jing-Schmidt and Peng 2017), and that literary allusions and Maoist echoes are still invoked to demonstrate the CCP's cultural authority and continuous identity (Lu 2017a; Trevaskes 2016). Pei (2019) further demonstrates how to apply this historically-contextualised perspective to study official speeches, by analysing a Xi speech against corresponding speeches given by his predecessors.

Together these studies motivate, first, an examination of how metaphor patterns in a larger corpus of Xi speeches contribute to conveying the ideological assumptions of Xi's narrative; and second, how these assumptions are reinforced by echoing older discourses. To unravel the ideological assumptions of the China Story, I will draw on J. Wang's (2017) Chinese CDA analysis of ideological representations in Xi's discourse, and the similar approach adopted in Q. Cao (2014) and Chilton, Tian and Wodak (2012). These studies help to tailor my discourse analysis framework (outlined above) to a Chinese context.

Contributions

This project makes three main contributions to address research gaps in the English-language literature on Chinese official narratives: it shifts focus from message control to narrative content; it concentrates on the domestic rather than global reception of a contemporary official narrative; and it studies the official portrayal of not only the goal of rejuvenation but also China's means of achieving it.

Propaganda, censorship and other aspects of political communication in China are already extensively studied in the English-language scholarship. This study seeks to redress this imbalance by conducting the first analysis of the narrative content of a large number of Xi Jinping's speeches given over the course of his leadership. It also contributes four new translations to the corpus of Xi speeches available in English. By analysing both Xi's authoritative grand narrative and published critical responses to his remarks, this study seeks a better understanding of the ways in which the arguments presented in Chinese official narratives are shaped by unfolding developments and audiences' interpretations.

In addition, contemporary Chinese official narratives have hitherto mostly been studied in terms of their influence on global perceptions of China. This study supplements this understanding by considering the domestic context of Xi's narrative. Its focus on the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics further allows for China's domestic- and internationally-directed official narratives to be related to one another, as the concept of China's effective governance system is also a signature claim of its global story.

Finally, although the goal of national rejuvenation lies at the heart of Chinese official narratives, an extensive focus on its significance in recent research has distracted somewhat from considerations of how official narratives envisage rejuvenation will be achieved. To address this gap, this study concentrates on the system that supports the CCP's claim to be essential to rejuvenation—socialism with Chinese characteristics. Linking the political system with the official story, and Party performance with people's perceptions, will offer new insight into the dynamic interactions between official narratives, political legitimacy and contemporary realities in China.

Chapter Outline

Chapter One analyses how Xi Jinping's account of China past and present in his speeches constructs the grand narrative of the 'China Story'. The first section provides an overview of the language, narratives and communication of Chinese political discourse from the past into the present. I then explore how Xi frames the past in five historical eras and the present in his 'New Era'. I argue that the five historical eras together generate a teleological narrative that leads directly into the redemptive present of the New Era. In the final section, I examine how the portrayal of the New Era as the latest advance in China's journey towards rejuvenation attempts to foster confidence in Xi's leadership, his anticorruption campaign and the established political system. To conclude, I identify historical echoes and modern achievements which are interwoven into the China Story's five strands, and argue that these strands together generate a legitimising narrative that links past and present to project a confident future.

Chapter Two examines the logic of the China Story. I analyse three themes threaded through Xi's narrative: History's endorsement of socialism with Chinese characteristics as a development model that successfully balances continuity and innovation; a nested journey metaphor; and the different roles of the Party and 'the people'. To follow, I show how these themes come together to generate a theory based on three logical inferences: the enduring relevance of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the exclusive suitability of this system, and the Party as its exceptional architect. In conclusion, I argue that successfully uniting narrative and theory enables Xi to generate a mythologic, a plausible framework of China past, present and future that justifies CCP rule.

Finally, Chapter Three explores alternative interpretations of Xi's narrative by analysing three critical readings of the China Story. Examining ways in which these critiques reappropriate the terminology, themes and structure of Xi's narrative, I demonstrate that each text contests the narrative's five strands and three logical inferences. I contend that this enables the critiques to expose two contradictions in the China Story: in the role of 'the people', and in the split between continuity and change in a journey to rejuvenation. Moreover, these two contradictions reflect a structural feature and potential fault of China's discourse-political system—a contradiction between inclusion and exclusion. To conclude, I argue that these contradictions demonstrate that the China Story cannot provide a sustainable justification for perpetual CCP rule. Ultimately, Xi's mythologic offers considerable support for the Party's legitimacy but remains vulnerable to changes in context and audience interpretations.

CHAPTER ONE: THE NARRATIVE

White teacups and long wooden benches. Great red sails billowing above a sea of suits. Perfect silence. Perfect symmetry. A perfect picture of power.

As CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping rose to address the delegates gathered in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing for the CCP's Nineteenth National Congress on October 18, 2017, everything was in its perfect place.

Over the past 96 years, to accomplish the historic mission of national rejuvenation, whether in times of weakness or strength, whether in times of adversity or smooth sailing, our Party has never forgotten its founding mission, nor wavered in its pursuit. It has united the people and led them in conquering countless challenges, making enormous sacrifices, meeting setbacks squarely, and courageously righting wrongs. Thus we have, time and again, overcome the seemingly insurmountable and created miracle upon miracle. [2017.1]

The thousands of delegates and media representatives in the hall listened attentively as Xi spoke. The images were beamed and streamed to millions more. Few ordinary people would sit through Xi's three-and-a-half-hour political report, but that was no matter. Thanks to China's irrepressible, digitally revolutionised propaganda system, the speech would reach all corners. Snippets looped through news reports. Slogans plastered on billboards. Pop-ups flashed over social media. Excerpts bundled up and distilled down as collected wisdom. Technologies old and new harnessed and harmonised. But despite today's use of the 'Study Xi's Strong Nation' 学习强国 app to test officials' knowledge of Party ideology, has much really changed from the days of the Little Red Book?

From Mao's Little Red Book to Xi's ideological study app, this chapter analyses how Xi draws on China's past and present in his speeches to construct his grand narrative of the China Story. It first surveys Chinese political discourse across PRC history. The second section examines the historical and contemporary eras represented in Xi's speeches. I outline Xi's five historical eras—China's glorious civilisation; the 'century of humiliation' (1840–1949); the (coincident) modern political awakening (1919–1921); the Mao era: independence and

socialist construction (1949–1976); and the post-Mao era: Deng's modernisation (1978–2008). Arguing that Xi's historical framing develops the China Story as a tale of continuous progress leads me to consider his contemporary era. I show how Xi's 'New Era' (2013–) depicts the present as an advance in China's journey towards rejuvenation. The final section argues that Xi's depiction of the New Era seeks to justify his leadership, his anticorruption campaign, and the CCP-led system of socialism with Chinese characteristics for the future. I then show how the China Story's five strands—the dream, hero, solution, appeal and validation—interweave the past, present and future to generate a legitimising narrative that projects confidence in the current political system as China's pathway to a rejuvenated future.

1.1 Political Discourse

When you speak only of 'fruit', people have no way of knowing whether you are affirming apples or denying bananas.

—Cao Changqing (1992, 49)

Political power flows from discursive power. Control over language is control over reality. These beliefs have been held by China's ancient Confucian philosophers and modern communist rulers alike (Blum 2007, 106). Mao Zedong mastered the art of generating political legitimacy through the power of words, but to do so he drew on thinking from the past and showed his successors the future—where discourse rules (Marinelli 2003, 145–148).

But how does political discourse generate legitimacy? This section surveys the language, communication and narratives of PRC political discourse over the Mao (1949–1976), post-Mao (1976–2013), and Xi eras (2013–) to show how the discourse supports CCP legitimacy by asserting authority, projecting consensus and constructing identity.

1.1.1 Language and Communication

Stylistically, Chinese political discourse has not changed much from Mao to now (Link 2013, 237). It remains a formulaic language of slogans, metaphors, theoretical concepts, classical allusions and fixed terms. Its terminology must be referenced in consistent sequences to demonstrate continuity, but is periodically updated to reflect changing developments (Lu 2017a, 15–23). Its subjectless predicates conceal the enforcer of commands while intimating directions ought to be followed. Sentences are littered with superfluous adverbs (e.g., 充分 'fully', 彻底 'thoroughly', 深刻 'deeply'/'profoundly') and empty verbs (e.g., 进行 'carry out', 采取 'adopt'/'take'). Such terms direct attention to the outcome while avoiding the need to define how it will be achieved (Link 2013, 3, 17–18). This 'gaseous language' 气体语言 as C. Cao (1992, 49) calls it, has two seemingly contradicting aims—to be as vague as possible while leaving no room for ambiguity.

The functional value of political language has long been recognised in traditional Chinese statecraft (Chilton, Tian and Wodak 2012, 11). The Confucian concept of *zhengming* 正名 'rectification of names', holds that political legitimacy is generated by rulers enacting their proper role and guiding the people with correct language and behaviour. The use of appropriate terminology—representations of canonical texts and a body of orthodoxy—demonstrates the ruler's moral authority, and leads to good governance and social stability (Lu 2002, 99).⁸

The communication of official discourse in modern China reflects this instrumental view of political language (Lams 2018, 394). Correct language cascades down and reverberates outward through a hierarchical discourse-political system of linguistic performance and text production. This system encompasses the CCP and state administrations, media, academia, publishing industry, educational and cultural sectors, and now the internet (Brady 2016, 130–131). The topics, theories and terminology of the discourse are continuously updated to reflect new developments in an effort to ensure it speaks to its time (Q. Cao 2014, 10). At the top, Chinese leaders make reference to standardised linguistic formulae, known as *tifa* 提法, and theoretical concepts—both their predecessors and their

⁸ In a recently published article on *zhengming*, F. Cao (2016) argues that interpretations of *zhengming*—which generally relate the Confucian concept to China's social and political hierarchy, and a duality between names and actuality—cannot be derived solely from Confucius' use of the term (the phrase *zhengming* only occurs once in the *Analects*, in the passage which is cited at the start of the Introduction). Instead, understandings of *zhengming* predominately arise from commentaries on the text by later generations. However, for my purposes, this is largely immaterial because the original 'real' meaning of *zhengming* is unknowable. It can only be understood based on others' interpretations and our own ideas. The prevailing understanding of *zhengming* as a correspondence between name and reality in which correct language becomes the foundation of good governance is in a sense now more 'real' than the original meaning. Furthermore, this understanding has had a far greater influence on people's understandings of the relationship between language and politics.

own. Leaders use these authoritative formulations and concepts to demonstrate the CCP's continuity and authenticate their own ideological authority (Schoenhals 1992, 3; Mahoney 2014, 24).⁹ The terminology then moves through the political hierarchy in a "great downward copying process," which is facilitated by study sessions, rectification campaigns and other techniques honed in the Mao era (Ji 2012, 91–98). Fluency in this language gives CCP officials a standard means of demonstrating their loyalty and policy knowledge to superiors—something essential for a political entity with ninety million members (Brown and Bērziņa-Čerenkova 2018, 326). It furthermore presents local measures as contributions to national goals to impart a sense of collective involvement in China's development. The circulation of a shared, standardised discourse is therefore instrumental to Chinese politics: it asserts leaders' authority, manifests political loyalty, projects Party unity and fosters a sense of national purpose (Renwick and Cao 1999, 121).

In the Mao era, the Party-state implemented a pervasive programme of 'linguistic engineering' to manufacture emotion, transform consciousness, control society and monopolise power (Ji 2004; Perry 2002). The circulation of Mao's homogenised discourse in closed texts—which excluded not only heterodox content but also alternative linguistic forms—impoverished language in an effort to restrict thought itself (Schoenhals 1992, 51–52; Lu 1999, 504).

In the post-Mao era, communication strategies of official discourse are still driven by an instrumental view of language as a mechanism to shape perceptions, attitudes and ultimately actions (Brown and Bērziņa-Čerenkova 2018, 325). But while the discourse remains crucial within the Party-state hierarchy, its reach into wider society has been significantly curtailed (Ji 2011, 193). After Mao's death, the dismantling of institutional structures, retreat from an immersive political discourse and commercialisation of the media allowed new and diverse voices to make themselves heard. With the Party unable to dominate public discourse as it did in the Mao era, winning hearts and minds has become far more difficult (Yang and Tang 2018, 6). Marinelli (2009, 25) regards this as evidence of a "progressive devolution" in official discourse across the post-Mao era, arguing that the standard formulae of the discourse (*ming* 'names') have become increasingly dissociated from their referents (*shi* 'reality'). The diversity and connectivity of contemporary Chinese society has only further complicated the task of promoting a relevant yet standardised discourse (Mahoney 2014, 20).

⁹ In the Xi era, the correct sequence of theoretical concepts would cite 'Mao Zedong Thought', 'Deng Xiaoping Theory', Jiang Zemin's 'Three Represents', and Hu Jintao's 'Scientific Outlook on Development', before the latest contribution to the CCP's guiding ideology: 'Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era' 习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想.

Nevertheless, since coming to office, Xi has certainly tried to make official discourse speak to society again. (Brown 2018b, 130–131). Xi's tighter restrictions on speech and expression have been covered extensively (e.g., Miller 2019; Roberts 2018; J. Wang 2017; S. Zhao 2016; Brady 2016; Lorentzen 2014) and so will not be revisited here. More notably, the marginalisation of other voices under Xi has been matched by active promotion of 'positive propaganda' 正面宣传 (Li 2015, 22). Innovative forms of propaganda, including the use of social media, apps such as 'Study Xi's Strong Nation' 学习强国, and sponsored posts from the 'Fifty-cent Party' 五毛党, have sought to help the Party win the 'public opinion struggle' 舆论斗争 (Yang 2017; Bandurski 2013). And, as Xi seeks to proactively 'guide' people through effective and affective communication, narratives have developed renewed significance (Lams 2018, 392).

1.1.2 Narratives

The past, real and imagined, hung as heavy on them as it does on us all; it bent them towards certain futures and rendered others unthinkable.

—Sulmaan Wasif Khan (2018, 245)

Controlling history is fundamental to official discourse and, hence, the CCP-ruled political system (Z. Wang 2012, 6). Drawing on a teleological framework of history, official narratives aim to craft a progressive tale that conflates the Party's story with the national story to demonstrate the CCP's irreplaceable role in China's development (Brown 2018b, 21–22).

For such a narrative to be convincing, however, it needs to align with audiences' own experiences and understanding of the world (King 2017, 25). Perhaps the most compelling political narrative seen to date in China was the grand narrative of revolutionary struggle crafted by Mao in Yan'an in the 1940s (Lu 2017b, 148). During this time Mao honed storytelling and study techniques that would later be deployed to instruct an entire nation to converse in the Party's new language (Ji 2004, 51–52). By actively getting people to recount their own experiences in terms of class struggle, Mao's narrative effectively reframed the way people discussed and understood the world around them (W. Guo 2014, 266–267). As detailed in Apter and Saich (1994, 119), Mao's Yan'an narrative resonated because it explained how powerful forces of imperialism, feudalism and class conflict contributed to

both national and personal experiences—China's traumatic encounters with modernity and its people's hardship during the 'century of humiliation' 百年国耻. As a moral narrative, Mao's vision of securing independence and leading a socialist revolution reaches a just conclusion: China's communist utopia (Ji 2004, 285). Through retelling their own experiences through this narrative framework, many communists in Yan'an became immersed in Mao's mythologic (Apter and Saich 1994, 70–88).

Yet the degree to which a grand narrative is seen as credible will fluctuate over time, and be influenced by the communication context, audience characteristics and new developments (Charteris-Black 2018, 203). Initially, Mao's mythologic played a significant part in securing his own political supremacy and the CCP's dominance in China (Perry 2002, 112). By the late Mao era, however, Mao's discourse and China's reality seemed increasingly disconnected. Class conflict and multiple mobilisation campaigns, policy reversals and abject failures—such as the Great Leap Forward (1958–1961) and the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976)—exhausted the population without bringing China closer to Mao's utopia. The divergence between promised future and experienced present led to widespread disillusionment (Ji 2004, 292–299). The prescriptive Yan'an mythologic had devolved into a clouded vision. But which of these Mao stories—compelling mythologic or confused tale—does Xi Jinping's China Story resemble in its explanatory power and appeal? This question will be answered in Chapter Three.

Following Mao's death in 1976, it was left to the post-Mao leadership headed by a rehabilitated Deng Xiaoping¹⁰ to explain the devastation wrought by the Cultural Revolution while safeguarding Mao's position as founding leader of the PRC (Meisner 1999, 439). Deng also had to dismantle Mao's policies and reinvent the Party's identity while claiming that a shift from socialist revolution to economic development was consistent with Mao Zedong Thought and the CCP's founding mission (Brown 2018b, 28–29). To do this, Deng drew on Mao's theoretical standing, redefined the essence of Mao Zedong Thought and appropriated Mao's words (Unger 1993, 170). He also integrated the Mao era into a longer history so that it could be understood not as an ill-fated attempt to achieve socialism within a generation, but as a foundational stage in the Party's mission to develop China into a modern socialist country (Vogel 2011, 400). In Deng's updated version of Mao's narrative, China's most pressing task in the 'primary stage of socialism' was not class struggle but economic development. By using Mao's words and theories to demonstrate the Party's continuity, and rebadging China's system as one of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics', Deng justified his reforms as not a

¹⁰ The brief Hua Guofeng era (1976–1981) is generally regarded as a transition phase between the Mao and post-Mao periods. Hua was effectively a figurehead after 1978 once Deng gained political supremacy (Meisner 1999, 432).

repudiation of everything the Party had worked towards under Mao, but an advance in the Party's implementation of socialism (Ji 2011, 188).¹¹

The limitation of Deng's 'stages' narrative is that it only accounts for practicalities. The unbalanced economic boom driven by Deng's reforms and resulting social discontent—which culminated in the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests—revealed that pragmatic development was not enough (Vogel 2011, 497–502). To uphold its claim to be a progressive, exceptional force, the Party needed to show it was more than a wealth creator, that its system was superior to Western models, and that it represented the beliefs of the people and Chinese tradition (Brown 2018b, 61). Enter nationalism.

Jiang Zemin's time as leader in the 1990s proved crucial for the CCP to regenerate its identity. Historical narratives under Jiang rehabilitated China's imperial history and Confucian heritage (denounced as 'feudal' by Mao), and reemphasised China's victimisation during the 'century of humiliation' (Meisner 1999, 525–526). This nationalistic narrative, which has been maintained ever since, celebrates the Party's role in wiping out humiliation and securing China's independence. It portrays the CCP as a great patriot devoted to China's revival to convert national pride into Party support (Y. Guo 2004, 31). The CCP's transition from a revolutionary to ruling party was completed via Jiang's theoretical contribution to Party doctrine. Jiang's 'Three Represents' 三个代表 stipulated that the CCP represents not only peasants, soldiers and workers but the broad masses of all Chinese people, including the growing ranks—and influence—of entrepreneurs (J. Wang 2017, 416).¹² Crucially, Jiang's regenerated narrative transcends a pragmatic economic argument to appeal to people's affinity with traditional culture and yearning to restore the glory of Chinese civilisation (Kerr 2015, 25).

China's rejuvenation has been the leitmotif of official narratives ever since (Z. Wang 2014, 5–6). Like Mao's Yan'an narrative and Deng's development stages, the modern story of China's rejuvenation draws on the same teleological understanding of history as progress that has dominated official historiography since the introduction of Marxism to China in the twentieth century (Brown 2018b, 22–23; Unger 1993, 2). The utility of this linear, progressive perspective is that it simultaneously supports the Party's moral-historical and its performance legitimacy. Once socialism is projected into an elusive future and made synonymous with

¹¹ In proposing a system of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' as an appropriate development model for a modernising China under CCP rule, Deng was drawing on an idea established by Mao that China must follow a 'Chinese road' to socialism. Similarly, Deng's assertion that China was in 'the primary (or initial) stage of socialism' echoed earlier ideas from the Mao era (Vogel 2011, 567).

¹² The 'Three Represents' stipulate that the CCP must represent the development trend of the advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people (Fewsmith 2003, 9).

'modernity', post-Mao official narratives can cite tangible achievements as milestones that demonstrate that the CCP is making progress towards achieving not only the more immediate and appealing goal of a *xiaokang shehui* 小康社会 'moderately prosperous society' but also its founding mission to realise socialism (Q. Cao 2014, 8; Smith 2019, 65–66).¹³

This raises the question of whether Chinese official narratives show a 'progressive devolution' since the Mao era, similar to that diagnosed by Marinelli (2009) for official discourse. A pragmatic focus on realising a 'moderately prosperous society' and ultimately China's rejuvenation would conversely suggest that official narratives have increased in appeal and plausibility since the late Mao period, when class struggle seemed to be China's only means of advancing towards an endlessly deferred utopia (Kerr 2015, 25–28; Ji 2011, 194). But how does Xi's narrative compare? Chapter Three will assess whether the China Story appears to support or contest the notion of a divergence between names and reality in contemporary Chinese official narratives.

Although each post-Mao leadership generation has conveyed a similar account of China's progress in development, the addition of the 'New Era' 新时代 differentiates Xi's narrative (Brown 2018b, 61).¹⁴ Extending the linear progression of history, the New Era closes off the post-Mao period and distinguishes Xi's own time (Tiffert 2019, 46). This promotes appreciation of China's latest achievements (secured by the Party), and positions Xi, the 'core' 核心 of the CCP and nation, as the equal of paramount leaders Mao and Deng. The New Era is also associated with another Xi slogan. The 'Two Cannot Negates' 两个不能否定 (see [2013.1]) contends that PRC history should be viewed as a continuous advance: the successes of the second thirty years (post-Mao/reform era) do not negate the contributions of the first thirty years (Mao period) or vice versa (Economy 2018, 43).

The New Era and Two Cannot Negates highlight the importance of balancing the Mao and post-Mao legacies in official narratives. The former supports the CCP's moral-historical legitimacy, the latter its performance legitimacy: the twin pillars of Party rule (Brown 2018b, 42–43). But if Xi is to legitimise the Party's place in China's past, present and future, he needs a compelling grand narrative that speaks to the diversity of modern society (Kleinman et al. 2011, 48–49). His China Story thus conscripts not just the legacies of Mao and Deng but all

¹³ The concept of a *xiaokang shehui* 小康社会 'moderately prosperous society' as a goal of China's modernisation was first outlined by Deng Xiaoping and has been reaffirmed by every Chinese leader since. Xi Jinping has defined his 'First Centenary Goal' as the creation of a 'moderately prosperous society in all respects' before the CCP's centennial anniversary in 2021. *Xiaokang* 小康 itself is a Confucian term that has been successively adapted by Chinese intellectuals across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to suit Marxist, Maoist and modern political visions. See Smith (2019).

¹⁴ Most Chinese leaders have highlighted the distinctiveness of their own era upon taking office. The term 'New China' is closely associated with Mao, and post-Mao leaders Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao have all emphasised China's 'new historical period', 'new historical conditions' and 'new circumstances' during their respective leadership periods. Xi's 'New Era' concept, however, has been more sustained as a discourse and more closely linked with the politics of his era than other post-Mao 'new period' slogans.

of Chinese history to weave a tale of progress that stretches from the ancient past through the redemptive present and on to a rejuvenated future. First, Xi makes the past serve the present.

1.2 Xi Jinping's Eras

1.2.1 The Past: Five Historical Eras

1.2.1.1 Glorious Civilisation

The story always begins with China, the glorious civilisation. Standing "tall and proud in the East" as a global beacon, China "boasts a long history and splendid culture of over 5,000 years" [2019.2; 2014.4]. Its edifying philosophies, advanced science and technology, unified script and meritocratic governance system are the envy of the world (Z. Wang 2012, 47). Culture, traditions, ethics—these are always 'fine' 优良, 'profound' 深刻 or 'splendid/brilliant' 灿烂/辉煌. In the official portrayal, dynasties and rulers, invasions and rebellions, floods and famines—the myriad transformations of Chinese civilisation over thousands of years—are all smoothed into a homogenous idealised past.

Xi's recollection of a golden age sees China's ancient civilisation as the 'positive pole' or 'chosen glory' of the national story (Apter and Saich 1994, 9; Z. Wang 2012, 42). Invoking the nostalgic past appears to be fundamental to imagining the nation. It helps tie living generations to a common history and continuous identity (Anderson 2006, 11–12, 26). For China, this is the great *Zhonghua minzu* 中华民族 'Chinese nation'. Enveloping China's different cultures and peoples, the *Zhonghua minzu* evokes a shared national belonging and shared mission to restore China's glory (Kerr 2015, 3). Yet to create a common identity for the present and collective mission for the future, the glorious past must first be lost.

1.2.1.2 Century of Humiliation (1840–1949)

Following the Opium War of 1840, the Western powers savagely blasted open China's doors with their warships and cannons, miring the Chinese nation in the tragic circumstances of domestic turmoil and foreign aggression. [2018.1]

China's modern history officially commences with the First Opium War (1839–42) fought between China and Britain. This marks the beginning of China's 'century of humiliation', a traumatic period of "grave suffering" 深重苦难 [2018.1] that saw a proud ancient civilisation confronted with malicious modern powers (ZZDY 2002, 19).

These events shaped the making of modern China, yet when sequenced within the 'century of humiliation' narrative they do so by unmaking China (Renwick and Cao 1999, 113). Recounting China's degeneration into spheres of foreign influence constructs the 'negative pole' or 'chosen trauma' of the nation's collective memory (Apter and Saich 1994, 88; Z. Wang 2012, 47).¹⁵ The linear, progressive development of China's humiliation is important to Xi's narrative as it illuminates the path out of this history. As the obverse of a golden past, China's chosen trauma stirs the nation towards recapturing glory in a redeemed future (Brown 2018b, 167).

Echoing his predecessors' moralistic narratives, Xi presents China's humiliation as a collective victimisation, as he highlights how Chinese people were "bullied by foreigners," "ravaged by war" 经历了战乱频仍, and endured "sufferings and sacrifices" [2014.3; 2017.1; 2012.3] (Renwick and Cao 1999, 113). The sense that China's entire populace suffered a great injustice then implies national redemption is their shared responsibility as well. Hence, China's 'century of humiliation' as shared trauma interlaces with the shared glory of glorious civilisation to construct a common identity for present generations and bestow a collective mission of future redemption (Z. Wang 2008, 804).

1.2.1.3 Modern Political Awakening (1919–1921)

Xi's next era continues the theme of a mission to redress injustice and rejuvenate China, a nationalist goal that cuts across political lines and evokes Xi's Chinese Dream (Schell and Delury 2013, 387). This makes the shared mission of rejuvenation—apolitical and timeless—an essential part of portraying the CCP as the eternal and solely legitimate representative of the Chinese people (Schneider and Hwang 2014, 165).

Echoing existing historical accounts, Xi's narrative draws on the milestone of China's modern political awakening, the May Fourth Movement of 1919 (see [2019.1]), to portray the CCP as the patriotic representative of the Chinese people (ZZDY 2002, 54).¹⁶ Since the CCP

¹⁵ For a discussion of how the 'century of humiliation' discourse has shaped historical memory, politics and identity in China, see Z. Wang (2012, 47–69), Gries (2007), and Callahan (2004).

¹⁶ The May Fourth Movement originated in protests over China's 'humiliation' at the hands of Western powers as the post-WWI Treaty of Versailles transferred jurisdiction of German concessions in Shandong province to Japan. The May Fourth Movement then broadened into an intellectual and cultural movement led mostly by young Chinese determined to transform

did not exist in 1919, Xi depicts participants in the May Fourth Movement as an anonymous mass of patriotic Chinese—there can be no hero until the Party arrives. Xi then collapses history from 1919 to 1921 so that the CCP's founding appears to be the direct result of the "great awakening" 伟大觉醒 [2019.1] of the May Fourth Movement:

On this great tide of history, a Marxist political party which would heroically undertake the task of national rejuvenation and surely lead the Chinese people in creating a miracle for humankind came into being—the Communist Party of China. [2018.1]

The CCP becomes the custodian of the progressive, patriotic 'May Fourth Spirit' 五四精神 and thus the nation's greatest patriot, worthy of representing all Chinese and shouldering "the historic mission of national rejuvenation" 中华民族伟大复兴的历史使命 [2017.1].

The CCP's role as national saviour is then upgraded to an exclusive prerogative by presenting "the scientific truths of Marxism" 马克思主义科学真理 as China's panacea [2016.1]. Xi does this by contrasting the CCP's success in unifying China with previous failed attempts:

Over the past 95 years, the reason why the CPC has managed to complete an arduous mission that no other political force in modern China was able to complete is that it has always taken Marxism as its guide to action.¹⁷ [2016.2]

Xi's retelling of this historical period is consistent with his predecessors' accounts (Apter and Saich 1994, 93). It also shows glimpses of a logical scaffolding: the people's mission is national rejuvenation, the CCP represents the people, so the CCP's mission is to achieve national rejuvenation for the people (Dotson 2019a). Scientific Marxism is vital for China's success, only the CCP practices Marxism correctly, so only the CCP can realise national rejuvenation.

Chinese culture and society with new ideas such as Western science and democracy and thereby realise an independent, unified and modern Chinese nation (Meisner 1999, 17).

¹⁷ China's ruling party 中国共产党 is usually called the 'Chinese Communist Party' in English, or 'CCP'. In China, it is called (in English) the 'Communist Party of China', or 'CPC'. The quotations from speeches by Xi Jinping therefore make reference to the 'CPC'.

1.2.1.4 Mao Era: Independence and Socialist Construction (1949–1976)

The Mao era, surely the most contested period of modern Chinese history, presents a unique challenge for Party narratives (Weigelin-Schwiedrzik 2006, 1076). Following previous accounts, Xi attempts to boost nationalist pride in the PRC's establishment under Mao—a foundational source of Party legitimacy—while downplaying all the social conflicts, CCP clashes and stark contradictions that followed (Meisner 1999, 439–440).

To balance these two objectives, Xi ties the Party to Mao while simultaneously abridging Mao-era history. First, Xi emulates Deng Xiaoping in trying to minimise Mao's influence while maximising the utility of his legacy (Meisner 1999, 446). Stressing that the Party's "collective leadership" 中央领导集体 "led the Chinese people in winning victory in the New Democratic Revolution" presents a unified, independent China as the CCP's collective achievement [2012.2; 2012.4]. Moreover, it was not just Mao but all "Chinese Communists [who] developed Mao Zedong Thought" [2018.2]. This theoretical wisdom "guided the Chinese people out of the darkness of that long night and established a New China" [2013.1]. Rebadging Mao Zedong Thought as the Party's intellectual property reinforces the connection between the modern CCP and Mao's foundational legacy (Unger 1993, 170).

This also makes China's independence *the* achievement of the Mao era, a unifying moment of national redemption that "marked the first time that the people became the masters of their own destiny" [2018.1]:

This monumental event completely transformed the miserable fate of a poverty-stricken and weak China, a nation subjected to bullying and humiliation for over 100 years since the advent of modern times. [2019.2]

Following a convention of post-Mao narratives, Xi's focus on the emotional symbolism of the PRC's founding intentionally glosses over the omission of other Mao-era events, namely, the controversies and failures of collectivisation, the Great Leap Forward and its resulting famine, and the Cultural Revolution (Hwang and Schneider 2011, 38). With the Mao era now sanitised, Xi can stretch its collapsed history into a 'stage' in China's progression towards socialism. As Chapter Two reveals, Xi draws heavily on journey and building metaphors to construct this progressive account. Echoing Deng's 'development stages', he presents the Mao period as the first step on the path of socialist modernisation by emphasising that Mao-era 'socialist construction' "provided [us with] invaluable experience" 宝贵经验 and "the

fundamental political prerequisites and institutional basis for all subsequent development and progress in contemporary China" [2012.2; 2018.2].¹⁸ The Mao/modern connection of Xi's narrative works to increase the appeal of both: the contemporary CCP by drawing on Mao's legacy and the Mao era by drawing on contemporary success.

1.2.1.5 Post-Mao Era: Deng's Modernisation (1978–2008)

Narrating the post-Mao or reform era presents an altogether different problem for Xi and the Party. Celebrating its achievements is easy: Deng's pioneering 'reform and opening up' 改革开放 initiative kick-started China's modernisation and lifted millions out of poverty (Schell and Delury 2013, 402). The challenge lies in connecting China's economic, cultural and social transformations to a political order largely unchanged (Meisner 1999, 450).

To account for the Mao/post-Mao rupture, Xi again follows Deng by presenting reform as a progression in China's development only made possible by the Mao era and invoking Party theory to smooth over the incongruity of a communist party progressing to a market-based economic system on a foundation of 'socialist construction' (Pei 2019). He tries to shore up the socialist credentials of Deng's reforms by celebrating socialism with Chinese characteristics as having "[revealed] the essence of socialism," as it "provided the first systematic explanation of how to build, consolidate and develop socialism in a socially and economically underdeveloped country like China" [2018.2; 2014.5].

Xi further stresses that Deng's ideological breakthrough arose from the Party's existing doctrine as Deng made "another historic step in adapting Marxism to China's conditions after Mao Zedong Thought" [2014.5]. By reappropriating Mao's theory for Deng's reforms and the success of Deng's reforms for Mao's theory, Xi tightens the links between the two eras. The connection then supports the Party's claim to have consistently upheld its mission to realise socialism in China, while applying its "guiding thought" 指导思想 in novel ways to suit China's current stage of development [2015.1]. Furthermore, the amorphous processes of socialist 'construction' 建设, 'development' 发展 and 'reform' 改革 allow Xi to equivocate on when or how 'socialism' will be achieved.

The rhetorical force of Xi's historical narrative arises from linking the Party's consistent programme of socialist construction to the emotional pull of national redemption. This

¹⁸ There is more truth to this assessment of the Mao period than is often acknowledged, as the early Mao years initiated China's rapid industrialisation and economic modernisation. See Meisner (1999, 414).

supports both the CCP's performance legitimacy and moral-historical legitimacy. Moreover, there is a concerted effort to attach the CCP to national rejuvenation at every opportunity, so that all progress on China's journey to rejuvenation appears to be attributable to the enlightened, patriotic Party.

The shared dream of restoring China's glorious ancient civilisation is threaded through the story. The Party, enlightened by the scientific truth of Marxism, emerges from an anonymous mass of patriotic Chinese determined to save the nation. This hero leads the people to overcome their shared trauma and then drives progress towards the revival of shared glory.

The nationalist appeal is obvious, but what is seldom remarked upon is the importance of progressive development in the narrative's construction of CCP legitimacy (Renwick and Cao 1999, 114). When the passage of time is progress itself, Xi's eras generate a logical momentum for maintaining the current political order, as each successive era marks one step closer to China's rejuvenation. And in the redemptive present of the New Era, China is now "closer, more confident, and more capable than ever before of making the goal of national rejuvenation a reality" [2017.1].

1.2.2 The Present: Xi's New Era (2013–)

1.2.2.1 The Turning Point

Xi's Two Cannot Negates slogan, which holds that neither the Mao nor the post-Mao period can be repudiated, captures the symbiotic legacies of these two eras. It is often regarded as a rehabilitation of Mao (e.g., S. Zhao 2016), but the break from the post-Mao era is equally significant. The 'second thirty years' since the launch of Deng's reforms in 1978 is well and truly over.

Thirty years later, 2008 marked a turning point in the way the world talked about China and China talked about itself (Economy 2018, 189). As the US and other Western economies foundered in the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), China sailed through relatively unscathed. It then announced its arrival on the world stage at the 2008 Beijing Olympics (McGregor 2019, 62). The dazzling Olympic celebrations stirred a popular Chinese pride that built on the solidarity expressed in the wake of the devastating Wenchuan earthquake earlier that year (McGregor 2010, 192). Two years later, China overtook its historical rival Japan to

become the world's second-largest economy (Schell and Delury 2013, 366). China was turning from caution to confidence.

Xi Jinping was not in charge during any of this. But that has not stopped him using these achievements for his own ends. His predecessor Hu Jintao's failure to resolve problems of unbalanced development, environmental degradation and rampant corruption prevented him from fully capitalising on the 'Chinese miracle'. Conversely, Xi's stronger commitment to tackling the deleterious consequences of modernisation has better allowed him to draw on China's success to establish his own era (Economy 2018, 9–18).

1.2.2.2 The Historic Break

The great victory of the Chinese people, achieved under the leadership of the CPC put the Chinese nation, the curator of a 5,000 year-old civilization, well on the way to modernization, infusing new vigor into Chinese civilization . . . [and] allowing scientific socialism to display renewed vigor in the 21st century. Moreover, this great victory enabled the People's Republic of China, founded more than 60 years ago, to captivate the world with its achievements in development. In little more than 30 years, China, the world's largest developing country, has shaken off poverty and risen to become the world's second largest economy. Guaranteeing its own survival, it has performed an earthshaking miracle in the history of human development. [2016.2]

Xi's celebration of China's achievements draws heavily on historical contrast to convey the transformative impact of development on the nation's fate. Marking the passage of time, as in the quotation above, emphasises that "today's China forms a sharp contrast to China in the 19th century," and its "high-speed rise" has occurred in "only a few decades" 几十年时间 [2014.3; 2018.1; 2018.2]. The quotation above further highlights Xi's tendency to cite tangible improvements in modern Chinese life, such as poverty alleviation and higher living standards, as these are major performance benchmarks for the modern CCP (D. Zhao 2009, 428). China's "remarkable achievements" 巨大成就 are further presented as "historic victories" 历史性胜利 that mark "major milestones on our journey in modern times to realise the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" [2013.5; 2014.5; 2018.2]. In such a way, Xi strives to demonstrate that the CCP has always worked towards fulfilling its historic mission:

The Chinese nation, which since modern times began had endured so much for so long, has achieved a tremendous transformation: it has stood up, grown rich,

and is becoming strong; it has come to embrace the brilliant prospects of rejuvenation. [2017.1]

Imagining rejuvenation as three milestones of national redemption neatly places Xi alongside Mao and Deng: China stands up with Mao, grows rich with Deng and is now becoming strong with Xi (站起来, 富起来, 强起来). Furthermore, because Xi's five historical eras construct a linear, progressive history, the present becomes not just a break from the past but an advance in China's journey. This is Xi's New Era of progress.

1.3 The China Story: Past, Present and Future

1.3.1 The Justifications of the New Era

The claim that China has progressed to an unprecedented stage of development along its journey to rejuvenated modernity is critical to Xi's justification of the established political system as the best (i.e., only) option for the future. Yet there are actually three nested justifications to the New Era: Xi's leadership, his anticorruption campaign, and the CCP-led system of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

For Xi, the New Era positions his period of leadership as an advance over his predecessors. Placing today's redeemed China in a future period of history helps distance Xi from lingering issues of rising inequality and environmental degradation. But it also presents Xi as possessing the authority of a paramount leader, an equal of Mao and Deng. By lumping his predecessors Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao into Deng's reform era while distinguishing his own age, Xi conjures his legacy of steering the nation through a new phase of its journey to rejuvenation . . . before it has even come to pass (Economy 2018, 22–23). This shows that Xi's Two Cannot Negates, which seals the reform era in the past, is not so much about the legacy of Mao or Deng as Xi himself.

While it is often construed as a thirst for power on Xi's part (e.g., Wood 2017), the New Era discourse holds greater significance for Xi's anticorruption campaign. As Brown (2018a, 10) contends, the anticorruption campaign can, among other readings, be regarded as

Xi's genuine attempt to restore the CCP's moral centre and moral centrality in Chinese life. By stamping his authority and flagging that times have changed, Xi's unforgiving crackdown sends a clear message that money worship and reprehensible behaviour, which shredded the CCP's image in the reform period, will not be tolerated in the New Era. Xi recognises that rehabilitating the CCP's moral standing is vital for maintaining its ruling mandate, as the Party's unique values and scientific theories support its claim to be irreplaceable—'chosen by history' to fulfil the nation's dream of rejuvenation (Brown 2018b, 61–62). The final New Era justification discusses how Xi presents the CCP's values and scientific theories as the inspiration behind socialism with Chinese characteristics in order to project confidence in this CCP-led system for the future.

1.3.2 Confidence in Socialism with Chinese Characteristics

Without the people . . . carrying forward a tradition of extremely hard and bitter struggle, there would be no New Era of socialism with Chinese characteristics today, nor will there be the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation tomorrow.

[2019.1]

Somewhat counterintuitively, Xi's confidence in the current political system springs from the challenges of the New Era. Although it is a historic progression in China's development journey, the New Era does not promise endless good times. It soberly reflects China's prospects, dented in recent years by a slowing economy, international tensions, the China–US trade war, Hong Kong protests, discontent with Xi's leadership and the current COVID-19 pandemic. Stressing that "our task is more arduous, our challenges more severe, and our work greater than ever" [2018.2], Xi strives to moderate expectations of further economic gains and political reforms, while warning the Party against complacency (McGregor 2019, 20, 112–114).

Then what gives Xi confidence in the face of 'obstacles'? It is the knowledge that under CCP leadership, China has "time and again, overcome the seemingly insurmountable and created miracle upon miracle," with an inspired system that provides "a fundamental guarantee for our future" [2017.1; 2016.2]. Following Deng Xiaoping's lead, Xi celebrates socialism with Chinese characteristics as "the fundamental accomplishment made by the Party

and the people during the arduous struggle over the past 90 years" [2012.2] to backdate a system only launched in 1978 (Meisner 1999, 442). Vesting socialism with Chinese characteristics with historical significance, Xi ties it to the hard-fought project of overcoming a traumatic past and realising success in the present. As discussed in Chapter Two, this makes it a system validated by 'History' as "the only choice for the development of modern China" [2016.1]. The connection between past and present thus

Provides solid proof that it is only by upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics that we can realize the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. [2018.1]

In other words, past hardship and present success generate confidence in socialism with Chinese characteristics for the future, as it becomes the only pathway to national rejuvenation.

But something is missing. For the New Era discourse to justify the entire political system, confidence in socialism with Chinese characteristics must entail confidence in the CCP. Xi therefore strives wherever possible to describe socialism with Chinese characteristics as the "fundamental achievement of our Party" [2017.1]. Everyone should understand that

The leadership of the CPC is the most essential feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and its greatest advantage. [2018.2]

In order to make the CCP essential, Xi looks to demonstrate that "the guiding thought of the Party" 我们党的指导思想 [2015.1] is a prerequisite of socialism with Chinese characteristics, such that this efficacious system cannot be implemented by anyone else (Ji 2012, 100). It is the Party's ideals, values and theories of "scientific socialism" 科学社会主义, he stresses, that allow it to secure "new victories for Chinese socialism" 中国特色社会主义新胜利 [2018.1; 2012.2].

Unfortunately, this line of argument hits a minor snag: the Party's founding ideology of Marxism-Leninism adapted to Chinese realities does not exactly inspire modern generations (Osburg 2015, 49). Culture, on the other hand, has far greater popular appeal (Kerr 2015, 250). Xi's appreciation of the importance of culture led him to add it to his slogan of the 'Three Confidences' to make 'Four Confidences' 四个自信: confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics (Lams 2018, 402). If "cultural confidence is a more fundamental, broader, and deeper form of self-confidence"

[2016.2], then associating Chinese culture with both the CCP and socialism with Chinese characteristics may help Xi's calls for confidence in China's political system permeate 'Deep China' (Kleinman et al. 2011). He creates this association between the CCP, socialism with Chinese characteristics, traditional culture and "advanced socialist culture" 社会主义先进文化 through the umbrella term, "socialist culture with Chinese characteristics" 中国特色社会主义文化 [2017.1]:

Socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is derived from China's fine traditional culture, which was born of the Chinese civilization and nurtured over more than 5,000 years; it has grown out of the revolutionary and advanced socialist culture that developed over the course of the Chinese people's revolution, construction, and reform under the Party's leadership; and it is rooted in the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

[2017.1]

Interweaving Chinese cultures past and present with the system and its architect highlights the socialist CCP's Chinese roots to try to enhance its nativist appeal. The connections also suggest that traditional beliefs and socialist ideals together inspired socialism with Chinese characteristics, and continue to guide its implementation today. This depicts the system as a distinctly Chinese creation, and shows CCP leadership to be essential for its operation. That the Party and socialism with Chinese characteristics have both "matured in Chinese soil" then supports Xi's calls for confidence in a political system that "suits China's national conditions and reality" [2014.6; 2014.5]. Furthermore, contrasting a suitable Chinese system to foreign political systems, which do "not suit our conditions" 会水土不服 works to delegitimise alternatives. Xi thereby attempts to foster confidence in a "Chinese solution" 中国方案 that is pioneered by a Chinese Party and guarantees the realisation of national rejuvenation [2014.6; 2016.2].

Xi's cultural revival has an additional benefit. His 'socialist culture with Chinese characteristics' is often expressed through another signature concept: the 'core socialist values' (Tiffert 2019, 47).¹⁹ The core socialist values "represent the inheritance and upgrading of outstanding traditional Chinese culture" [2014.3]. There is nothing particularly socialist about them, but that is the point. Xi's concept appropriates both Confucian and (redefined) Western values (e.g., 文明 'civility' and 和谐 'harmony'; 自由 'freedom' and 民主 'democracy') to try to show that the Party has appealing values that suit modern China. Furthermore, emphasising

¹⁹ The twelve core socialist values are: prosperity (and strength) 富强, democracy 民主, civility 文明, harmony 和谐, freedom 自由, equality 平等, justice 公正, rule of law 法治, patriotism 爱国, dedication 敬业, integrity 诚信 and friendship 友善. See Gow (2017).

the CCP's modern values supports Xi's effort to rehabilitate Party morality through his anticorruption campaign, and reinforces the idea that CCP ideology is essential for correctly implementing socialism with Chinese characteristics (Brown 2018b, 137).

By signalling that times have changed and stamping his authority through the New Era discourse, Xi looks to justify his own leadership and anticorruption crackdown. Stressing the challenges of the New Era reinforces the need for a strong leader, one who is confident in the tried-and-tested system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The anticorruption campaign attempts to restore the CCP's moral standing, and thereby bolster Xi's assertion that only the CCP can correctly implement this system. Since both system and architect are distinctly Chinese, people should have confidence that CCP-led socialism with Chinese characteristics is China's best option; it has empowered China to overcome the past, achieve success in the present, and now propels it towards a rejuvenated future.

1.3.3 Confidence in the Future

The confident New Era makes Xi's China Story unique. His confidence, however, is derived from a linear, progressive narrative largely not of his own making, but one steadily elaborated on over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Schell and Delury 2013, 387). Echoes of ideas from the past reverberate through Xi's five historical eras before being conscripted into the New Era. These historical echoes also appear in the China Story's five strands—the dream, hero, solution, appeal and validation—to lend a sense of familiarity to Xi's understanding of the present and underpin his call for confidence in the future.

The heart of the China Story is the *dream* of China's rejuvenation, a shared vision that reaches back to "the long-cherished wishes of Dr Sun Yat-sen" [2014.1] and his call to 'rejuvenate China' 振兴中华 in 1894 (Z. Wang 2012, 137). Entrusted with a historic mission to fulfil this dream is the *hero*, the Chinese Communist Party. Evoking Mao's moral story from Yan'an, the exceptional CCP brings forth China's redemption, leading the people to overcome historical traumas and stand tall (Brown 2018b, 53). Xi's hero then reveals a profound truth: the *solution* to achieving rejuvenated modernity is socialism with Chinese characteristics, a great system masterminded by the CCP under Deng Xiaoping. Three decades' worth of cultural and patriotic propaganda since Jiang Zemin's time gives this system considerable *appeal*, as Xi highlights the ties between socialism with Chinese characteristics,

Chinese culture and modern values—and the CCP's links to all three (Schneider and Hwang 2014, 146). Since this solution reflects Chinese culture and modern values, it suits Chinese conditions and keeps abreast of the times—a *validation* borne out by China's achievements under Hu Jintao and in Xi's New Era. People should have confidence that, whatever challenges may lie ahead, socialism with Chinese characteristics under CCP leadership is the pathway to achieving China's future rejuvenation.

Appropriating historical narratives, heralding the start of a New Era, drawing on yesterday and today to generate confidence in tomorrow, Xi's China Story interweaves past, present and future in a tale of China's continuous progress towards rejuvenation. Confidence in the unique CCP-led system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, however, is based on China's success. So when the abstract challenges of the New Era suddenly become very real, as in China's recent economic downturn and the COVID-19 pandemic, it potentially undermines the rationale for confidence.

But an exploration of the ways in which the China Story may be questioned requires first delineating the narrative logic. The next chapter will consider how Xi's narrative generates a theory to justify CCP rule.

CHAPTER TWO: THE LOGIC

The collapse of an ideal or belief is the most dangerous form of collapse. The decline of a political party often begins with the loss or absence of ideals and beliefs. [2016.2]

Many of Xi Jinping's concepts, including the Two Cannot Negates, the Chinese Dream and the socialist core values, are preoccupied with belief. Belief as a theme is most apparent in the Four Confidences, a slogan that reveals Xi's concern about the sustainability of China's current system of CCP-led socialism with Chinese characteristics (Lam 2017). In Chapter One, a logical scaffolding built on confidence and belief began to emerge from the analysis of the China Story: a grand narrative that rationalises the past, celebrates the present and predicts a rejuvenated future.

But how does Xi's story become a theory justifying the established political order? How might story and theory be merged to generate a self-fulfilling framework of reality in the form of a mythologic? To understand how Xi's narrative builds an argument through countless speeches over many years, this chapter analyses recurring themes in the China Story and their underlying ideological assumptions.²⁰

Repeated exposure to consistent messages, as in advertising, helps make certain representations of the world seem familiar. Over time these mental representations are processed less consciously, and may eventually be absorbed into heuristics that enable the processing of novel or complex situations. Metaphors are often used to create this connection, as they use existing knowledge to frame the unfamiliar in familiar terms (Charteris-Black 2018, 202, 250).

According to conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), a conceptual metaphor encapsulates a number of related metaphorical expressions, while a higher-level conceptual key links a set of related conceptual metaphors (Charteris-Black 2004, 16). Conceptual metaphors are expressed in capital letters in the form 'TARGET IS SOURCE'

²⁰ This broad approach is not to discount the importance of identifying minor changes in official discourse. Indeed, this can often prove insightful, as subtle rhetorical changes may signal shifts in official thinking. However, changes in terminology are already comprehensively studied elsewhere, e.g., see *China Media Project*.

(L'Hôte 2014, 11). The 'source domain' is more concrete or experiential and offers a way to understand the more abstract or complex 'target domain', as in the conceptual metaphor HOPE IS LIGHT, for example (Ahrens and Chung 2019, para. 1).

By linking concrete and abstract, simple and complex, familiar and unfamiliar, metaphors exert a powerful influence on our conceptualisation of the world (Charteris-Black 2004, 28). Analysing the use of metaphor provides a way to identify ideological claims embedded in a political narrative in order to interpret its underlying argument and persuasive aims (L'Hôte 2014, 21). Assessing how the China Story's conceptual metaphors convey certain representations of reality and idealisations of future China therefore helps explicate the logic of Xi's narrative, and uncover what, exactly, people are supposed to have confidence in.

This chapter analyses three themes that recur throughout Xi's China Story. These are: History's objective endorsement of socialism with Chinese characteristics as a development model successfully balancing continuity and innovation; a nested 'journey' conceptual metaphor; and the differentiated roles assigned to the Party and 'the people'. I show how Xi's three themes echo existing discourses and together yield three logical inferences. These inferences underlie a theory that China's rejuvenation can only be realised by maintaining a CCP-led political system. I conclude by arguing that Xi's interweaving of narrative and theory turns the China Story into a mythologic that he uses to justify Party rule.

2.1 The Scientifically-Proven System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics

A notable aspect of Xi Jinping's depiction of socialism with Chinese characteristics is that he never fails to attribute its efficacy to its strong historical, cultural and theoretical pedigree. But he also acknowledges that this development model must continue to be improved to remain viable. This idea of combining continuity and innovation to create a suitable model of development evokes a century-old distinction between *ti* 体 'essence' and *yong* 用 'use' in Chinese discourse (Schell and Delury 2013, 260). More pertinently, it follows a Deng Xiaoping convention of reemphasising the socialist and Chinese credentials of socialism with Chinese characteristics in an effort to resolve the disparities in the Party's history and

identity—from revolution and socialism to patriotism and pragmatism—across the Mao/post-Mao divide, and demonstrate that this system has always accorded with China's 'national conditions' despite four decades of adjustments (Deng 1994, 72).

2.1.1 Continuity

In order to substantiate its historical, cultural and theoretical continuity, socialism with Chinese characteristics needs to be backdated in PRC history, tied into Chinese culture and linked to a consistent ideology.

To show historical continuity, Xi portrays socialism with Chinese characteristics as encapsulating "the aspirations of countless patriots and revolutionary martyrs" [2012.2] of generations past. Following Deng Xiaoping and befitting his Two Cannot Negates slogan—which contends that neither the Mao nor post-Mao period can be repudiated—Xi also provides socialism with Chinese characteristics with a Mao-era antecedent (Meisner 1999, 442):

Socialism with Chinese characteristics was first initiated in the period of reform and opening up. However, it was during the New China [Mao] era that the basic socialist system was built. [2013.1] ²¹

This quotation further draws our attention to the conceptual metaphor SOCIALISM IS A BUILDING—a perennial favourite of CCP discourse (Magagnin 2016, 362). Conceptualising socialism with Chinese characteristics in this way reinforces the sense that it is a historically consistent model, as it "could only have been initiated on this twenty-year [Mao era] foundation of socialist construction" [2013.1].

Xi then strengthens the historical ties of socialism with Chinese characteristics by highlighting the system's roots in Chinese culture, a point noted in the Chapter One discussion of Xi's cultural confidence. The idea of 'roots' here is an important one, as it is largely through plant-based metaphors that Xi grounds socialism with Chinese characteristics in Chinese culture and embeds it deeper into history:

The system of socialism with Chinese characteristics has grown in the soil of Chinese society through the past and into the present. [2014.6]

²¹ The term 'New China' 新中国 generally refers to the period since the founding of the PRC in 1949, and contrasts with the pre-1949 'Old China' 旧中国. But in the speech [2013.1], Xi's contrast between the era of New China and the (post-Mao) period of reform and opening up shows 'New China' to be a more limited reference to the Mao era here.

This sense of intrinsic connection between a continuous China and socialism with Chinese characteristics—and the natural development of the latter from the former—can then be used to support Xi's claim for the system's ongoing suitability for distinctive 'Chinese conditions'.

The theoretical continuity of socialism with Chinese characteristics, as noted in the Chapter One discussion of Deng's era of modernisation, relies on establishing its socialist credentials and turning it into the Party's collective intellectual property. On the first point, Xi is unequivocal: "socialism with Chinese characteristics is socialism, not any other 'ism' " [2013.1]. But the sense that it is supported by a consistent ideology really stems from invoking the standard sequence of theoretical contributions to Party doctrine—the science of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory and so on—and incorporating all of them into 'Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era', as "the latest achievement in adapting Marxism to the Chinese context" [2017.1] (Brown 2018b, 112). This also presents socialism with Chinese characteristics as the CCP's collective achievement rather than Deng's esoteric creation. That it is a coherent theory collectively and progressively enriched by each generation is further supported by Xi's emphasis on its "scientific theories" 科学理论 and "theoretical framework" 理论体系 [2018.1; 2016.2].

These claims about the historical, cultural and theoretical roots of socialism with Chinese characteristics highlight the system's continuous development, rich heritage and shared theory. Common to all three is the notion of inheritance. This becomes clear from examining the verbs that frequently collocate with 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' in Xi's speeches, including 'uphold' 坚持, 'inherit' 继承, 'inherit and pass on' 传承, and 'carry forward' 弘扬. This sense of inheritance is what broadens Xi's stress on continuity from an effort to foster confidence in China's development model to the entire political order. Inheriting the shared creation of socialism with Chinese characteristics implies that Chinese people are obliged to maintain it—and everything that sustains it, including the CCP. Moreover, the unbroken lineage of a system continuously enriched across generations through Party wisdom lends socialism with Chinese characteristics a historical momentum, which contemporary and future generations would be foolhardy to disrupt.

2.1.2 Change

An impressive aspect of socialism with Chinese characteristics is that official discourse never elaborates on what it means in a practical sense. Its policy content can be infinitely redefined as circumstances require. Yet because the system is afforded an evolving, rich and shared heritage, it can be portrayed as an enduring part of China's political system, suitable for Chinese conditions and theoretically consistent—even as it changes.

But in Party discourse, 'change' can never be so neutral. Change must be reform, development or innovation! Thus, while Xi acknowledges the imperfections of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the ubiquity of verbs such as 推进 'advance; carry forward', 促进 'promote; advance', 增强 'strengthen', 改善 'improve', 完善 'refine; perfect', and 创新 'innovate' suggests any adjustments to the system are both positive and necessary. Moving the system forward and/or upward, these verbs draw on the conceptual metaphor PROGRESS IS FORWARD and the conceptual key GOOD IS UP to present socialism with Chinese characteristics as a driving force of China's development (Charteris-Black 2004, 74, 97).

However, to resolve the illogicality of carrying forward tradition while changing it, socialism with Chinese characteristics needs not just the power of positivity but of science. Xi looks to introduce an apparent scientific rigour to the change process through analytical terminology, such as "thorough scientific review" 经过科学的扬弃 and "developing this scientific theory in practice" [2013.4; 2016.2]. This also reinforces the idea that socialism with Chinese characteristics embodies Marxism's "scientific and truthful nature" 科学性和真理性 [2018.1]:

Socialism with Chinese characteristics is the dialectical unity of the theoretical logic of scientific socialism and the historical logic of China's social development. [2013.1]

Together these threads of continuity and change, positivity and objectivity, depict an unceasing process of scientific refinement that builds on the historical, cultural and theoretical foundation of socialism with Chinese characteristics. This ensures that China's development model is constantly progressing while staying true to its essence.

The underlying idea echoes a distinction between the enduring *ti* 体 'essence; core' and adaptable *yong* 用 'techniques; use' of China's development model. A feature of reform debates for over a century, the *ti-yong* concept is derived from the late nineteenth-century Self-Strengthening Movement 自强运动 motto: '中学为体, 西学为用' 'Chinese learning as

the core, Western learning for practical use' (Schell and Delury 2013, 76, 260).²² The emphasis on adapting things to suit 'Chinese conditions' 国情 became more pronounced in the post-Mao era, as Deng Xiaoping sought to legitimise his pragmatic system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and has remained a theme of official discourse ever since (Deng 1994, 14):

[Socialism with Chinese characteristics] is a scientific socialism rooted in China's soil, one that reflects the aspirations of the Chinese people, and one that is adapted to the conditions of progress in our times. [2013.1]

Implicit in Xi's remarks here is an assumption that regardless of any adaptations made to 'keep abreast of the times' 与时俱进, there is always an underlying set of unique 'Chinese conditions' that remains even as it changes. As a result, the unceasing innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics advances China's development without ever diminishing an essentialised 'Chineseness' (Smith 2019, 65–66). Furthermore, Xi's effort to harmonise continuity and change in socialism with Chinese characteristics also supports his claim that it is a development model objectively validated by 'History'.

2.1.3 History's Validation

A striking feature of Xi's narrative is the way that history itself is a protagonist. As mentioned in Chapter One, the teleological narrative structure of the China Story is consistent with modern official historiography (Lams 2018, 398). It draws on an orthodox Marxist perspective that sees historical development as linearly progressing through stages according to objective laws that only the CCP correctly understands (Renwick and Cao 1999, 122–123).²³ This narrative framework underwrites Xi's first theme in three ways. It facilitates Xi's use of the conceptual metaphor HISTORY IS A PERSON to portray 'History' as driving the China Story plot. It also depicts socialism with Chinese characteristics as developing progressively through history via its balance of continuity and innovation. Finally, it allows

²² The Self-Strengthening Movement 自强运动 or 洋务运动 (1861–1895) implemented a series of reforms which made use of Western methods and technology in an effort to modernise China's military, industry, economy, diplomacy and education system (Schell and Delury 2013, chap. 3).

²³ As in most things, however, Mao took a different view of history. Mao's voluntarist belief that human consciousness was the decisive factor determining the course of history freed China from a predestined Marxist developmental pathway. According to Mao, China would be able to 'leap over' development stages through sheer revolutionary will (Meisner 1999, 42). The disastrous Great Leap Forward and estimated thirty million deaths from the resulting famine soon discredited such a radical idea. In saying that, a Mao-era framing of Chinese history as driven by the popular masses of Chinese people (of course, whether the Chinese people were afforded any meaningful role in shaping history in the Mao era is another matter) persists in official and popular historiography to this day (Unger 1993, 3). This point will be explored later on in this chapter.

Xi to incorporate these first two portrayals into a claim that his agential History endorses the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

However, Xi's History is not just any agent but a transcendent force that develops according to immutable 'laws':

Yet as shown by humanity's progress, history always moves forward according to its own laws despite twists and turns, and no force can hold back its rolling wheels. [2013.3]

Xi often sets History in motion with 'tide' metaphors, or by mentioning 'wheels' as in the above quotation. References to History being 'irresistible' then give its (linear) development a deterministic momentum that cannot be stopped. The third theme of this chapter considers how the notion of a preordained history influences Xi's portrayal of Chinese people's agency.

The impression given by History's irrefutable laws and unalterable developmental trajectory is of a divine entity impartial to the worldly concerns of politics. By implication, History's assessment of a particular political or development model is objective and dispassionate. According to Xi, History's evaluation criteria are whether the system "conforms to China's national conditions" 符合中国国情 and "[keeps] pace with the times" 与时代同步伐 [2014.6; 2019.1]. To demonstrate that socialism with Chinese characteristics fulfils these criteria, Xi uses 'prove' 证明 and 'profoundly show' 深刻表明 to highlight the 'objective' nature of History's judgement. Its rigour is further supported by the scientific airbrushes Xi applies to the theoretical foundation and innovations of socialism with Chinese characteristics noted earlier. Moreover, receiving History's validation is an idea vested with historical and cultural significance in China; it evokes the traditional concept of the 'Mandate of Heaven' 天命: that a higher force determines the legitimacy of political rule, bestowing or revoking a governing mandate accordingly (Tiffert 2019, 44). Xi's depiction of History as progressing according to its own laws and delivering impartial judgements therefore draws from both established Marxist and traditional understandings of history. The historical echoes lend weight to his assertion that socialism with Chinese characteristics has received History's objective endorsement:

Rooted in Chinese culture, socialism with Chinese characteristics represents the Chinese people's aspirations, suits the times and facilitates the development of the country, and is based on a long history and solid reality. [2013.4]

The value of invoking an objective History as ultimate adjudicator is that it depoliticises the assessment of socialism with Chinese characteristics as the only suitable development model for China. The need to 'stay abreast of the times' disguises the fact that the system's 'innovations' are primarily designed to strengthen the CCP's ruling position. Furthermore, the globalised projection of socialism with Chinese characteristics (in modified form) as the 'China Model' 中国方案 also assists in depoliticising judgements of China's current political system (see Fukuyama and Zhang 2014).²⁴ While the 'China Model' discourse is mostly aimed at international audiences, it also serves a domestic legitimising function—and so re-emphasises the increasing overlap between official China's domestic and global narratives (Lams 2018, 393):

In recent years, with the rise of China's comprehensive national strength and international status, there has been much international discussion and study of the "Beijing Consensus," "China Model," and the "China Road." Among these studies there is no shortage of praise. Some foreign academics believe that the rapid pace of China's development has called Western theories into question. A new form of Marxist theory is overturning the traditional theories of the West!
[2013.1]

Merely presenting China's system as a worthy subject of global discussion and template of development adds another layer of validation to socialism with Chinese characteristics. Emphasising that it is regarded as an imitable model also reflects a (disavowed) habit of the Party-state to substantiate its legitimacy by citing global approval of China (Lams 2018, 395).

The greatest strength of this argument about the impartial endorsement of socialism with Chinese characteristics, however, is that because it uses a linearly progressive narrative structure and an agential History as assessor, the conclusion it draws about the suitability of this system in the present can easily be extended to the future. In such a way, it reinforces Xi's projection of confidence in a proven system:

We firmly believe that as socialism with Chinese characteristics develops further, our system will inevitably mature; it is likewise inevitable that the superiority of our socialist system will be increasingly apparent. Inevitably, our road will become wider; inevitably, our country's road of development will

²⁴ I do not wish to overstate the importance of the 'China Model' as a topic of China's official discourse. It is more prominent in academic debates than official circles, and generally regarded as a way to boost global (rather than local) perceptions of China's political system. Nor should it be seen as exactly equivalent to socialism with Chinese characteristics. The global China Model discourse focuses on the model's ability to respond proactively and effectively to changing situations, as this allows official propaganda to draw a contrast between China's model and the endless negotiations and political stalemates characteristic of many Western democratic systems (Schell and Delury 2013, 397). China's official coronavirus narrative offers a current example of this line of argument about China's effective system. Even when these arguments are towards a global audience, however, they still have domestic influences—hence the reason for discussing it here.

have increasingly greater influence on the world. We need just this sort of confidence—confidence in our theories, confidence in our system, and confidence in our road. [2013.1]

This quotation shows how the threads in Xi's theme of History's objective validation of continuity and innovation in socialism with Chinese characteristics come together: a stress on belief and improvement, an assumption of inevitable progress, a celebration of global endorsement and greater influence, and a call for confidence in the future.

Yet even as this quotation wraps up the first theme of Xi's China Story, it introduces the second. It is time to follow the road.

2.2 The Journey

The road of life is progressive, ever ascending the infinite hypotenuse of a spiritual triangle, and nothing can obstruct it.

—Lu Xun (1980, 54)

The shared human experience of physical movement through space supports a common concept of a journey as a purposeful activity (Charteris-Black 2004, 74). Metaphors about journeys are highly productive in political speech, as they use purposeful, goal-oriented motion to simplify the complexity of planning, executing and coordinating actions in pursuit of long-term goals (Ahrens and Chung 2019, para. 28).

In China, socialism with Chinese characteristics has always been represented as a *daolu* 道路 'path' (or 'road') (Deng 1994, 14). More generally, a path/road metaphor has featured in Chinese political discourse throughout PRC history (e.g., Mao's 解放之路 'road to liberation') (Mao 1965b, 157). Linking a vision of the future to the collective activity required to achieve it, the metaphor represents the means to an end as the path to a destination. Its equivocated end-goal—rejuvenation or socialism?—attempts to demonstrate the CCP's commitment to its founding mission while harnessing the emotive power of rejuvenation. Xi Jinping draws on this conflation of goals and journey metaphor in the China Story to support

his claim that China can only realise its rejuvenation by following the CCP along the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics:

To realise the Chinese Dream, we must take our own path, which is the path of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. It is not an easy path. We are able to embark on this path thanks to the great endeavours of reform and opening up made in the past 30 years and more, the continuous quest made in the 60-plus years of the PRC, a thorough review of the evolution of the Chinese nation in its 170-plus years of modern history, and carrying forward the 5,000-plus years of Chinese civilisation. [2013.2]

As shown in Šebok (2017) and Magagnin (2016), Xi's journey is a nested conceptual metaphor. Modifying Šebok and Magagnin's categorisation, I identify three aspects to Xi's journey metaphor: a journey has obstacles, a guide leads a journey along the correct route, and the conceptual metaphor HISTORY IS A PATH.

2.2.1 A Journey has Obstacles

In the future we are certain to face all sorts of risks and challenges, and even be met with stormy seas such that we cannot yet imagine. [2018.2]

Xi's notable emphasis on the (abstract) challenges ahead implies that a strong hand is needed in troubled times. As argued in Chapter One, this helps legitimise both his own and the CCP's leadership. To convey this sentiment, Xi accentuates the "long-term, complex, and onerous nature" 长期性、复杂性、艰巨性 [2017.1] of the 'obstacles' China faces before highlighting what enabled China to overcome obstacles in the past:

On our journey to realise the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we need to maintain our spirit of hard struggle, as we are sure to meet with arduous tasks, difficulties and obstacles, and rough seas. [2019.1]

Since China's development will not be "smooth sailing" 一帆风顺 and progress will be slow along a path "overgrown with brambles and full of bumps" [2019.1], Xi cautions his audience about the need for patience and tempered expectations. But why then should people remain confident in the face of challenges?

It is because we have always upheld the centralised, unified leadership of the Party that we have been able to successfully . . . conquer countless difficulties and obstacles. [2018.2]

It was through these "great difficulties" that China found "the right path . . . [of] socialism with Chinese characteristics" [2012.3]. Thus, although progress may be slow, Xi reassures his audience that the system and its architect will guide China over the "peaks to climb and rivers to cross" 跋山涉水 [2018.2]. Such encouragement highlights the second aspect of his journey metaphor: the guide and its correct route.

2.2.2 A Guide Leads a Journey along the Correct Route

Xi's metaphor takes advantage of the conceptual association between a journey's guide and its correct route to portray the CCP and socialism with Chinese characteristics as inextricable. Only the Party knows the way to rejuvenation, and socialism with Chinese characteristics is the only way.

Referring to the CCP as a guide or leader is ubiquitous in Party discourse (e.g., Mao 1977, 447). The two most common terms, 指导 'guide'/'guidance' and 领导 'lead'/'leadership', imply a direction 导 (of people and in space) and a notion of instruction given by a source of knowledge (through 指 'to point at/to' or 领 'to lead'). Yet both 'guide' and 'leader' simultaneously conjure their opposites—the guided, the led. Xi's division of roles then implicitly positions the 'People' as an object in need of Party direction:²⁵

Our Party will rally and lead the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in marching along the path of Chinese socialism. [2012.2]

The role differentiation between the CCP as guide and the People as followers is reinforced by the high incidence of other directional travel phrases (e.g., 方向 'direction; orientation', 前进 'advance; go forward', 迈进 'stride forward; forge ahead'). Paradoxically, the pervasiveness of the journey metaphor renders it almost indiscernible. Its distinction between the Party and

²⁵ Similar to my use of 'History' to designate history as an agent, I will capitalise 'the People' to signify its reference to an abstract agent that embodies the collective of politically representable Chinese people 人民. For a discussion of the importance of 'the people' 人民 as a political concept in China, see Schoenhals (2007).

People becomes so familiar as to seem unquestionable. This helps conceal the political significance of Xi's assignment of agency, as will be discussed in the third theme.

Xi then tries to make following the CCP along the route of socialism with Chinese characteristics appear essential if China is to reach its rejuvenation.

First, he frequently uses modal verbs alongside socialism with Chinese characteristics. Modals such as 必须 'must; have to', 需要 'need to', 要 'must; should; it is necessary/imperative/essential (to)' invoke an obligation to 'adhere to' 坚持 the "correct path" 正确道路 of socialism with Chinese characteristics [2014.6].

Xi then contrasts the "road one must follow" 必由之路 to the "old path" 老路 or "erroneous path [of] abandoning socialism" 改旗易帜的邪路 to delegitimise alternatives to socialism with Chinese characteristics [2018.2]. Moreover, Xi's warning that "we must be sure not to change our direction, [nor] deviate from our path" 坚持方向不变、道路不偏 [2018.2] portrays any alternative as a detour that jeopardises the hard-fought progress China has made towards rejuvenation.

Finally, as Šebok (2017, 21) notes, Xi tries to strengthen the sense of obligation to follow the 'correct path' by equating arrival at the destination of rejuvenation with the CCP's fulfilment of its historic mission. Moreover, because this mission is 'bestowed' 赋予 on the CCP by History, the Party's role as the guide becomes irreplaceable and its connection to the route unbreakable.

2.2.3 'HISTORY IS A PATH'

The logic of Xi's guide-route-destination connection is based on the final strand of his nested journey metaphor: an understanding of history as progressive development. This view of history is often expressed through the conceptual metaphor HISTORY IS A PATH.

As revealed in Chapter One, the China Story presents Chinese history as a linear advance through successive eras to convey a sense of China's continuous progress. There are several conceptual metaphors underlying this depiction: TIME IS SPACE maps history onto a linear path; TIME IS MOTION and PROGRESS IS FORWARD equate forward movement in space with advancement in space and time (Link 2013, 141).²⁶ Finally, THE NATION IS A

²⁶ The TIME IS SPACE conceptual metaphor may map time onto a horizontal axis, vertical axis, or switch between horizontal and vertical axes depending on the situation. It is not my intention to imply that time is always conceptualised horizontally in Chinese official discourse, as the above might suggest. However, I would postulate that a horizontal conceptualisation

PERSON is the conceptual key that allows 'China' to travel along history's path. China's development thus seems deterministic; progress is guaranteed and its destination assured . . . but only if it follows the Party's chosen path. Again, there is an implied obligation to continue, one which Xi reinforces—and relates to his notion of inheritance—through a favourite metaphor, DEVELOPMENT IS A RELAY RACE:

Establishing a strong, modern socialist country and realising the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is a relay race. We must run each leg of the race one after another, with each generation posting a good time for the next. [2018.2]

The metaphor HISTORY IS A PATH thus establishes a notion of continuous, cumulative progress on China's journey towards rejuvenation. Projecting (obligatory) confidence in the guide and route, it underwrites not only Xi's journey metaphor, but also—as revealed in the final chapter—the logic of the China Story itself.

2.3 Roles of the Party and the People

2.3.1 The Party

The CPC is the central force for leading and bringing together people of all ethnic groups in advancing the great cause of building Chinese socialism. It shoulders a historical mission and faces the tests of our times. [2013.2]

The exceptional CCP is the hero of the China Story, a constructive influence endorsed by both History and the People. This section analyses the portrayed roles of the Party and the People as the third theme of Xi's narrative.

predominates in Xi's China Story as it matches up with ideas of a 'road/path' and journey of progress. In general, cross-cultural research on the ways native Chinese and English speakers conceptualise time has yielded mixed results. At issue is in which linguistic contexts are Chinese speakers more likely to represent time on a vertical axis rather than a horizontal axis (with the future as the 'down' direction, e.g., as implied by 上月 'last month' and 下月 'next month', literally 'up month' and 'down month'). For a review, see Ahrens and Chung (2019) or Link (2013, chap. 2).

2.3.1.1 The Party Builds Progress

The Party almost exclusively assumes an active subject position in Xi's narrative. It is the initiator of actions and creator of success. In particular, CCP activity tends to be expressed through active, positive verbs such as 创造 'create', 发挥 'give full play to', 推动 'promote', 领导 'lead', and 引导 'guide; lead'. These verbs showcase the Party's positive influence on China—uniting the people, winning "historic victories" 历史性胜利 and securing "great achievements" 伟大成就 [2014.5; 2018.2]—yet conveniently avoid specifying what the Party has achieved or how (Link 2013, 246–248).

Building metaphors then strengthen the impression that the CCP's influence is *constructive*. It is the Party that 'builds' or 'constructs' 建设 socialism with Chinese characteristics and socialism itself, bestowing it with the agency as the nation's change-maker. As noted in Chapter One, the idea of a 'foundation' also supports Xi's rationalisation of the Mao era as a requisite stage of modernisation. More generally, it ties into his narrative framework of China's continuous, cumulative progress towards rejuvenation—a process which, by implication, should not be undermined. Recurrent references to the Party's "leading and core role" 领导核心作用 to "[exercise] overall leadership and coordinate the efforts of all" 党总揽全局、协调各方 then elevate the CCP into a powerful force directing China's development [2012.2; 2018.2].

2.3.1.2 Endorsements of the CCP

We must live up to the trust the people have placed in us and prove ourselves
worthy of history's choice. [2017.1]

However, even when the CCP is not the active subject of a sentence, it still seems to hold the preponderance of agency. This is because Xi typically uses a passive construction to demonstrate an endorsement of CCP rule by either History or the People.

The CCP's leadership is first vested with Historical weight. Xi's depiction of History as a transcendent authority and invocation of the CCP's 'historic mission' 使命 portrays the Party as the guide 'chosen' to lead the nation's journey. It also insinuates that the guide is irreplaceable so long as rejuvenation remains unrealised.²⁷ The religious overtone of the 'mission' also accords with the Party's claim to be exclusively enlightened to 'scientific truths'

²⁷ The fact that the character 命 *ming* appears in both 'historic mission' 使命 *shiming* and 'heavenly mandate' 天命 *tianming* may help reinforce a connection between claims that the CCP has a historic mission and that it is a 'chosen' leader.

that guide its correct practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics (Ji 2012, 100). With the chosen guide and route now both seen to be inspired by proven theories and endorsed by History, Xi strengthens the three-way tie between the CCP, socialism with Chinese characteristics and the historic mission of rejuvenation.

Xi looks to reinforce the legitimacy of the CCP's dominance by showing the Party to be (implicitly) endorsed by the People. Party and People are portrayed as intimately connected. But the correct hierarchy—'the Party and the people', never 'the people and the Party'—is always maintained to distinguish the CCP's authority. To demonstrate that this supreme "Party always stands with and maintains its bond with the people," Xi often links them with body- or plant-related metaphors, describing the CCP as "the backbone of the Chinese people" 全国人民的主心骨 or as having "rooted itself deep among the people" 植根于人民 [2018.2; 2016.2; 2017.1]. The plant metaphors also tie into Xi's emphasis on the CCP's cultural roots discussed earlier. The image of a 'home-grown' CCP is further supported by Xi's penchant for quoting Confucius to present rule by popular mandate as a Chinese 'tradition':

There is an old saying: "The water that keeps a ship afloat can also upset it." This is something we must never ever forget. The people are the skies above us, and the earth below us. If we forget the people, and become distanced from them, we will lose our support, like a river with no headwater or a tree with no roots. [2016.1]

The symbiosis of the Party and People in Xi's portrayal thus makes the People's endorsement of the CCP a foregone conclusion, a mandate implicitly guaranteed by their "common aspirations" 共同心愿 and "common dream" 共同梦想, and requiring no further verification [2014.5; 2013.2].

2.3.2 The People

The 'flesh-and-blood ties' between the Party and the People make them seem inseparable—but they are not equal. At first glance, the People appear to hold the most power:

The people are the creators of history. They are the real heroes and the source of our strength. [2012.1]

Xi's depiction here echoes Mao's belief that the 'masses' are the 'motive force' of history and a fount of wisdom and creativity (Mao 1965b, 257). However, while the People may be the 'masters of the country' 当家作主 (as Xi remarks twenty-seven times in one speech: [2014.6]), their power is entirely abstract and their qualities are intangible.

Closer examination of Xi's portrayal therefore reveals that the People are largely powerless. The People rarely initiate actions. They are mostly presented as objects that the Party comes to "cultivate and educate" 以文化人、以文育人 or "guide and encourage" 积极引导 [2014.2]. Often this representation is expressed by pairing 'the people' with passive 'markers' such as 受, 给, 对 or 接受.²⁸ Even when they are theoretically in charge, it is the Party that 'gives full play to' 发挥 the People's role as 'masters of the country', and so they still come to be acted upon. This shows that the People are, in Anagnost's (1997, 11) terms, the Party's "pedagogical project." The Party appears to wield a Foucauldian 'pastoral power' as it guides the People and harnesses their energy for supposedly collective ends (Zhang, Brown and O'Brien 2018).²⁹ Some of the potential problems with this division of roles will be considered in Chapter Three.

2.3.3 Echoes of Existing Portrayals

Xi's representation of the Party and the People draws on established ideas to support his distinction between a legitimate ruler and an objectified populace in need of guidance. A belief that it is a ruler's duty to better the people is a tenet of Confucian statecraft (Lin 2017, 33). It is also reminiscent (although considerably less radical) of twentieth century totalitarian efforts to make 'new' human beings, and in particular, Mao's interventionist project to transform people's consciousness through linguistic engineering and emotional mobilisation (Ji 2004; Y. Liu 2010). Xi's portrayal further showcases the Party-state's modern preoccupation with enhancing people's 'quality' *suzhi* 素质 and 'unleashing the productive forces' to advance China's modernisation (Murphy 2004, 2). The reform-era *suzhi* discourse presents the state as solely interested in bettering the people, but clearly its overriding concern is with cultivating productive, disciplined citizens (Lin 2017, 52). In this respect, it reveals the

²⁸ I have not translated 受, 给, 对 and 接受 here because when used to mark passive the characters have little semantic meaning beyond 'by', 'on', 'of', or 'receive/accept'.

²⁹ Foucault's concept of 'pastoral power' describes the exercise of power by an institution (state, church, school etc.) that portrays itself as responsible for the welfare of its subjects. It creates ambivalent power relations between authority and subject, as the authority is both caring and controlling (Foucault 2007). Zhang, Brown, and O'Brien (2018) demonstrate how 'pastoral power' can be applied to contemporary Chinese political discourse in a study of how Party-state legitimacy is constructed through official narratives in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

influence of global discourses of developmentalism and modernisation on contemporary China (Dai 2018, 13). It also echoes an earlier belief that people's 'backwardness' would need to be rectified before China could become a unified, modern nation-state, and certainly before its people would be ready for self-determination (Lin 2017, 113).³⁰

Xi's portrayal of the CCP and the People's roles contains traces of all these ideas—a legitimate moral authority, social engineering and the objectification of Chinese people (Magagnin 2017, 237). The Party is an enlightened ruler endowed with a mission and a mandate by History. Exercising its benevolent authority, it betters the People and thereby advances China's development. The People are rendered as the object of Party pedagogy and the raw energy of modernisation. Representing the Party's leadership as a necessary supplement for everything the People lack, Xi's discourse implies that the People cannot hope to achieve rejuvenation without the CCP's guidance.

However, there is one notable difference in Xi's idea of the Party compared to other reform-era portrayals. Xi's push to restore the CCP's moral legitimacy in modern China has led him to extend the project of cultivating disciplined subjects into the Party itself. His anticorruption crackdown and rectification campaigns elevate a dominant Party centre above subordinate (and expendable) ranks, with wayward officials depicted as yet more objects to be moulded (Sorace 2019, 148).

When interpreted in terms of Hodge and Louie's (1998) concept of 'P-ideology' and 'S-ideology', Xi's portrayal of the Party and the People's agency combines ideological expressions of power (P) and solidarity (S). P-ideology representations of the Party's authority are reflected in its active subjectivity and its monopoly on narrative action. The Party builds progress, shoulders History's mission, acts as a moral guide and leads the People on a journey to better themselves and the nation. The People—and lowly Party officials—tag along behind, subordinated to this Party-driven enterprise and abstracted into a nominal motive force of history. To help conceal the unequal division of agency, Xi stresses the CCP's benevolent paternalism—that its power is wielded only for the People's benefit. He also accentuates S-ideology representations of the solidarity between Party and People. But their 'flesh-and-blood ties' are realised only in metaphor. The final chapter will examine how the critique texts use this apparent ambivalence about the People's role as 'masters of the country' to try to contest the China Story.

³⁰ As Meisner (1999, 42) notes, Mao was a notable exception. He upended conventional thinking on China's social hierarchy by viewing 'the masses' as inherently progressive, a force of infinite wisdom and creativity that would propel China's advance. See e.g., Mao (1965b, 257).

So far, this chapter has detailed three major themes of Xi's China Story: History's objective validation of socialism with Chinese characteristics as a system of continuity and change; a nested journey metaphor; and a distinction between the roles played by the Party and the People in China's progress. It will conclude with a consideration of how Xi's themes facilitate his creation of a mythologic.

2.4 The China Story Mythologic

Embarking on a journey along the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the guiding light of the CCP illuminates the path to national rejuvenation. The People follow the CCP's great strides with confidence, as milestones periodically affirm they are being led along the right track. Occasionally they come to a crossroads. But to turn off would be to stray—from their mission and their destiny. So they carry on, bracing for the obstacles ahead and allowing alternative futures to fall by the wayside.

2.4.1 Three Logical Inferences

There are three logical inferences woven into the narrative of Xi's speeches: the *enduring relevance* of socialism with Chinese characteristics; the *exclusive suitability* of socialism with Chinese characteristics as China's development model; and the *exceptional architect* of this model, the CCP. Underlying all three is a linear, progressive narrative structure that turns Xi's story about yesterday and today into a theory about tomorrow.

First, History objectively verifies that socialism with Chinese characteristics fits Chinese conditions and the needs of the times, because this system continuously innovates itself while remaining grounded in history, culture and scientific theories. The system's harmonious match of continuity and change—past and present—drives China's progress. Mapping time onto space, this representation envisages the temporal development of socialism with Chinese characteristics as a spatial journey to rejuvenation. Locating past, present and future as points along a linear path of progress then constructs the *enduring*

relevance of socialism with Chinese characteristics. This projects confidence in socialism with Chinese characteristics as the pathway to a rejuvenated future.

Moreover, the linearity of progress makes this the only path to rejuvenation. China's advance gathers momentum as History regularly reconfirms that socialism with Chinese characteristics suits Chinese conditions and the times. The established linearity then implies that changing the system would interrupt, or even ruin, China's otherwise inexorable progress towards rejuvenation. The longer the journey continues, the greater its inertia and the more disruptive change would seem. Alternatives turn into aberrations. Eventually, socialism with Chinese characteristics becomes the *exclusively suitable* path.

But where is the hero? The story's logic coheres upon recognition that the CCP unites the system, the journey and history. The Party dominates Xi's narrative: its constructive contributions are foregrounded at every opportunity, its wisdom is applied in socialism with Chinese characteristics and its rule is legitimised by History and the People. Achievements are attributed to socialism with Chinese characteristics, a system proven by History to generate progress towards rejuvenation by balancing continuity and change. But this would not be possible without the system's *exceptional architect*, because it is the Party's historical ties, cultural roots and scientific theories that ground socialism with Chinese characteristics in Chinese soil, and its innovative practice that updates this system to current realities. The corollary of History's validation of socialism with Chinese characteristics is then endorsement of its architect. And now it is the Party, not the system, guiding the national journey to rejuvenation—an irreplaceable force of progress chosen by History for this historic mission. Without its moral guidance and enlightened leadership, the People have no means of attaining their destiny.

2.4.2 Narrative and Theory: Creating the Mythologic

Collective stories have political consequences when as myths they purport to be history, as history they are reinterpreted as theories, and as theories they make up stories about events. Theories that become stories create fictive truths.

—David Apter and Tony Saich (1994, 70)

The linear, progressive structure of the China Story links a familiar tale of the past with the success of the present, and both past and present with an evocative dream of the future. A narrative thread of continuous progress weaves the hero and the system into a journey to rejuvenation, such that desire for the happy ending presupposes confidence in the path and endorsement of the guide. This thread of progress stitches together the China Story's three themes and three logical inferences to yield a coherent theory about China's development under CCP leadership. Overlaying this theory back onto the narrativised past and present then leads to a single conclusion: that China must maintain a CCP-led development model of socialism with Chinese characteristics in order to realise its rejuvenation.

This is Xi's mythologic: a narrative framework of reality that legitimises CCP rule. When an appealing narrative and convincing theory are united as mythologic, Xi's China Story can come to shape people's understandings of history, reality and the future. If this happens, if the truths it derives become self-fulfilling, then the China Story may even become an ideal mythologic—a convincing, robust and sustainable justification for perpetual CCP rule.

The China Story appears to be a good candidate for an ideal mythologic. The narrative's claims are not contingent on charismatic leaders, aggrieved nationalism, belief in socialism, or repudiating either the Mao or post-Mao era. By stressing the importance of stability in challenging times, it is a legitimising narrative that strengthens the hand of a dominant leader and a dominant Party. The story can also be tailored to a domestic or international audience by using either socialism with Chinese characteristics or the China Model respectively as an innocuous front for CCP rule. If successful, an ideal mythologic would help alleviate the Party leadership's chronic sense of insecurity about CCP legitimacy (McGregor 2019, 15). But while the China Story may appear to be a compelling mythologic, can it realise the ultimate objective—a sustainable justification for perpetual Party rule?

CHAPTER THREE: THE CONTRADICTIONS

In this country, history too is moving in reverse.
—Xu Zhiyong (2020a)

As the novel coronavirus COVID-19 gripped the city of Wuhan in late January 2020, Xi Jinping was nowhere to be found. Online, people wondered, 'Where is that person?' 那个人在哪里? Soon enough that disappeared too—scrubbed from the internet. People's bemusement illustrated how deeply Xi had ensconced himself into the fabric of official China. In his absence, it felt like governance itself had ground to a halt. Recognising the mistake, Xi was suddenly back, reaffirmed as the core around which all else revolves (Xinhua 2020b). But it was too late; Xi's assertion that he was 'personally commanding' this, that and the other was simply met with derision (Kuo 2020). About a week later, the death of Wuhan doctor Li Wenliang from COVID-19 sparked an outpouring of grief and rage from Chinese netizens. Li had been censured by authorities for warning colleagues ('spreading rumours') about the virus in late December 2019. His death led to appeals for citizens' constitutional right to freedom of expression to be fully enforced (Rudolf 2020).

Under Xi's leadership, the Party-state's censorship and propaganda system has intensified its efforts to drown out dissent with a raucous 'main melody' (Yang and Tang 2018, 22). However, popular reactions to authorities' handling of the coronavirus outbreak have shown that unauthorised views can still make themselves heard (Bandurski 2020). Making Party discourse inescapable and Xi's narrative definitive does not guarantee the future it envisages will be universally accepted. People have continued to challenge the official story, reappropriating terminology and reinterpreting 'truth' to expose the gulf between rhetoric and reality, and imagine an alternative future.³¹

This chapter explores three critical interpretations of Xi's narrative. The first section analyses three texts selected as critical readings of the China Story. By identifying ways in which the texts reappropriate the terminology, themes and structure of Xi's tale, I show how they contest

³¹ Yang and Tang (2018) discuss an interesting and rare case of the 'reverse appropriation' of official discourse, in which the popular online phrase 'positive energy' 正能量 was deliberately appropriated by official discourse in 2012. Xi Jinping has used the phrase 'positive energy' numerous times since. It also features in the official messages regarding China's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic (Bandurski 2020).

the narrative's five strands and three logical inferences. I argue that by uncovering these flaws, the critiques expose contradictions in the China Story. The final section first discusses two contradictions in the narrative: in the role of the People, and in the split between continuity and change along the journey to rejuvenation. I then contend that these two contradictions reflect a deeper contradiction between inclusion and exclusion that is both an inherent feature and structural fault in China's discourse-political system. Moreover, the inclusion/exclusion contradiction is reproduced in both the China Story and critiques. To conclude, I argue that the China Story is neither an ideal mythologic that generates a convincing, robust and sustainable justification for perpetual CCP rule, nor a failed story that would support an assessment of a 'progressive devolution' in Chinese official narratives. Instead, Xi's China Story is a mythologic that usefully supports the CCP's legitimacy but remains vulnerable to changes in context and audience interpretations.

3.1 The Three Critiques

3.1.1 Context of the Critiques

In 2020, calls to strengthen implementation of China's constitution following the death of Dr Li Wenliang must have sounded as tiresome to Xi as his calls for confidence do to many others. Xi had already weathered a debate about constitutionalism in his first year as leader. Controversy arose at the start of 2013 when it emerged that the 'New Year's Greeting' editorial published in influential Guangdong newspaper *Nanfang Zhoumo* 南方周末 *Southern Weekly* (also called *Southern Weekend*) had been rewritten at the behest of provincial propaganda authorities. Playing on Xi's newly-minted concept of the 'Chinese Dream', the uncensored version, 'China's Dream, the Dream of Constitutionalism' 中国梦, 宪政梦, was posted online, promoting widespread discussion of constitutionalism in China (Creemers 2015). See Appendix 4.1 [A4.1] for both the original and censored editorial.

The May Fourth Movement of 1919 is a major milestone of Xi's narrative, celebrated as China's political awakening and the spark for the CCP's founding in 1921. The 2019 centennial anniversary of the May Fourth Movement presented a golden opportunity for the Party to strengthen its claim to represent the 'progressive, patriotic May Fourth Spirit' 五四精

神. Yet it also offered an occasion for outside voices to contest the sanctioned legacy of May Fourth to expose CCP duplicity and push for political reform. As Xi prepared his speech for the official commemoration (see [2019.1]), a group of young Marxist and/or Maoist sympathisers calling themselves the 'Young Pioneers' 青年先锋 posted a 'May Fourth Manifesto' 青年先锋的五四宣言 online (see Appendix 4.2 [A4.2]). Inspired by the original manifesto, the 2019 May Fourth Manifesto is similarly concerned with power's corrupting effects on ideology and morality. But in the 2019 context of violent clampdowns on labour protests and young Marxists, the perpetrator of injustice is now the CCP itself. Unsurprisingly, the offending May Fourth Manifesto soon suffered the same fate as the disappeared Marxists (Dotson 2019a).

In the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the muffled expressions of dissatisfaction with Xi's China appear to have found new voice (Wade 2020). Despite being punished for outspokenness in recent years, the liberal-minded intellectual Xu Zhangrun 许章润 published an online essay criticising Xi Jinping's handling of the coronavirus outbreak on February 4, 2020. Within days, Xu had been placed under house arrest (Yu and Graham-Harrison 2020). His letter, 'When Fury Overcomes Fear' 愤怒的人民已不再恐惧 (see Appendix 4.3 [A4.3]), clearly struck a nerve.³²

The 2013 editorial, 2019 manifesto and 2020 essay have much in common. Each text was circulated online before being swiftly censored. Each addressed two audiences—Xi Jinping's CCP and the Chinese public. Mutually concerned about China's direction under Xi's leadership, each text pinpoints the moral impoverishment of modern China and proposes a future in which people lead fulfilling lives, enjoy equal rights and share the benefits of collective effort. Each appeals to morality by petitioning China's rulers directly, recreating a practice seen in imperial China, the 1919 May Fourth Movement and the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests (Schell and Delury 2013, 307). Most importantly, each text uses history and appropriates elements of Xi's discourse to promote new meanings and new means of achieving a rejuvenated Chinese civilisation.

Despite these similarities, the editorial, manifesto and essay are still sufficiently distinct to allow more general conclusions to be drawn about which aspects of the China Story are potentially problematic. Spanning Xi's leadership period thus far, the critiques are each tied to a different political event and speech. Xi's speech celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of China's constitution [2012.4] sparked the 2013 constitutionalism debate; Xi

³² On the same day that Xu Zhangrun's letter was published, the legal scholar and activist Xu Zhiyong 许志勇 posted a similar open letter on his blog, also criticising Xi's leadership during China's coronavirus crisis. Having been in and out of jail since publishing his first open letter critical of Xi in 2013, Xu went into hiding in late 2019. He was eventually detained on February 15, 2020 for this latest indiscretion. See Xu Zhiyong (2020a, 2020b).

gave a major speech for the centennial anniversary of the May Fourth Movement [2019.1]; and in 2020, Xi's 'personal command' 亲自指挥 of China's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was disparaged online (Creemers 2015; Kuo 2020).

However, the three critiques do not necessarily represent a broader audience's understandings of Xi's narrative. Each text is authored by a privileged voice in Chinese society—urban, educated, relatively young and internet-savvy—which may diminish the force of their criticism. Furthermore, all three texts were published publicly, whereas much of contemporary political discussion in China stays within trusted circles to evade censors (Stockmann and Luo 2017). Yet this also means that it is immensely difficult to get an accurate, representative measure of 'public opinion'. Thus, while the selected critiques offer a limited perspective only, other forms of audience responses to official rhetoric would face similar drawbacks.

3.1.2 Discussion of the Critiques

3.1.2.1 The 2013 *Southern Weekly* Editorial

Contesting the meaning of Xi's Chinese Dream is the point of the 2013 Southern Weekly editorial, 'China's Dream, the Dream of Constitutionalism'. But the editorial's greatest affront to Xi's narrative is not its alternative Chinese Dream, but what its call for constitutionalism implies about the CCP's (in)ability to represent the Chinese people. By reappropriating Xi's journey framework, reimagining rejuvenation, and reversing the agency assigned to the Party and the people, its new dream becomes Xi's nightmare—a China rejuvenated without the CCP.

First, the editorial employs the narrative framework of a journey towards rejuvenation to present constitutional governance as the pathway to a strong, prosperous and respected modern China. Like the China Story, the editorial conceptualises China's progress through history to rejuvenation as a progressive 'journey' led by a hero bestowed with a historic mission and carried forward across generations:

The ancestors endured great hardships in their work, were trampled upon and died for their cause. Today, their descendants continue this ideal, and light the lamp to advance. [A4.1]

Yet this quotation also reveals how the editorial's depiction of China's march of progress differs from Xi's narrative. Here, it is the Chinese people, and not the Party, who are driven to "complete that which heaven bestowed on you." The historic mission is passed down as an inherited dream—"the dream of the ancients, the dream of the ancestors, and . . . the dream of many people today,"—but is redefined as the realisation of a "free, democratic and strong Constitutional China." This makes the ultimate goal of rejuvenation conditional on fulfilling the inherited dream of constitutionalism. The editorial also restructures the historical timeline to present Chinese people's inherited dream as an obligation to their ancestors. Disrupting the cumulative progress of a CCP-driven advance through history as expressed in the China Story, the editorial depicts the full "170 years" of modern history as a continuous "long march [towards] constitutional governance." In this chronology, PRC history, particularly the Mao era, has digressed from the "heavenly path." This conveys a sense that Chinese people have a responsibility to return the nation to the "great path" and fulfil countless generations' frustrated hopes for constitutionalism. Furthermore, because rejuvenation is provisional on realising the inherited dream, the restructured historical timeline implies that the CCP-ruled political system is not only impeding progress towards constitutionalism but also China's final destination in rejuvenation.

Second, the editorial draws on the emotive appeal of national rejuvenation in the same manner as Xi's China Story, but presents a different vision of a rejuvenated future. Its ideal of China is a China of ideals, a place where prosperity is more about "spiritual plenty" than "material wealth". Yearning for freedom and justice, democracy and equality, the editorial promotes the universal values that Xi's narrative denounces as inappropriate for 'Chinese conditions' (see [2015.1]). To circumvent this charge, the editorial removes the presumption of inalienable Chinese superiority conveyed by official invocations of the Chinese essence/Western learning *ti-yong* paradigm. Instead, it emphasises balancing the two to "create a new sort of civilization that combines the Chinese and the Western," foregrounding the "common values of humankind" to show that universal values are suitable for China.

Finally, the editorial's emphasis on personal values draws our attention to its portrayal of the people and the Party's agency. Accentuating Chinese people's autonomy and individuality, the editorial mostly describes them as 'citizens' 公民 or simply 'people' 人/人们, rather than the political 'People' 人民 of Xi's narrative—a term closely associated with the CCP. The editorial also presents the Chinese people as active subjects who "build a free and strong country." Once the Chinese people supplant the Party as chief nation builder, the CCP is consigned to irrelevance, absented from China's journey to rejuvenation. The CCP is never named explicitly, and the editorial's few oblique references to the Party subordinate it to

Chinese "citizens [who] voice their criticisms of power loudly and confidently." This quotation also implies that inversion of the existing power hierarchy reflects the true division of moral authority. Contrasting the people's ethical idealism to a depraved power, the editorial notes that "there are still people thirsting for conscience to sprout new buds, and to revive the essence of the Mandate of Heaven." By portraying the CCP as bereft of moral authority and a Historical mandate, the editorial implies that the Party cannot legitimately represent a principled populace and must forfeit its right to rule. The people then take it upon themselves to lead the nation along the path of constitutional governance towards a rejuvenated China.

3.1.2.2 The 2019 'May Fourth Manifesto'

In 2019, the 'Young Pioneers' looked to turn the centenary of the May Fourth Movement into a cutting critique of contemporary Communists. Upending the authorised narrative of China's recent past, condemning the CCP's ideological and moral corruption and redefining the hero and villain of China's journey, their 'May Fourth Manifesto' not only refutes the claimed continuity of progress that justifies a CCP-ruled future, but invalidates the legitimacy of contemporary Party rule.

The 'May Fourth Manifesto' upsets the China Story's teleology of cumulative progress by presenting an alternative history that shows how the Party lost its way. Following the founding of the PRC in 1949, the manifesto's historical account diverges from Xi's narrative, overturning authorised verdicts on more recent events. Reminiscent of earlier Leftist critiques of the reform era, it revives Maoist terminology to lambast "a group of power-holding capitalist-roaders inside the Party" (i.e., Deng Xiaoping) for initiating economic reforms and socialism with Chinese characteristics (Thornton 2004, 92). In this alternative portrayal, the advent of reform becomes the start of China's regression, rather than an advance on the Mao-era foundation as in Xi's narrative. The manifesto negates reform's 'achievements' by showing China's "wealth and power" to have been monopolised by a "privileged class," while the "workers who created the economic miracle with their own hands" are left with only "the coiled fuse of countless social problems." By destroying any evidence of a successful present, the manifesto disrupts the sense of continuous progress that validates socialism with Chinese characteristics in the China Story, and also brings the Party's performance legitimacy into question. China's lost past and bleak present then leaves the future uncertain.

Moreover, the manifesto's heretical account of China's recent past and present becomes the basis of its broader critique of the CCP's ideological and moral corruption. As

the moment the Party "betrayed socialism," the launch of economic reforms marks the CCP's repudiation of its founding ideology. The consequences of this betrayal become clear in China's depraved present. The manifesto juxtaposes the glorification of youth activism by "red beings" at the centennial celebration of the May Fourth Movement with violent descriptions of "progressive students" being "dragged into police cars, kicked and beaten." As the students' only 'crime' was to uphold the CCP's own principles, the manifesto reverses the onus of guilt to incriminate the Party as shamelessly duplicitous. The violent crackdown on young Marxists and the degeneracy of contemporary China further demonstrates that the CCP's ideological betrayal results only in moral decay. Under the Party's exploitative capitalism, working people have "changed from 'masters of the country' into 'slaves of sweat and blood'." The supposed champion of the working class thus fails to represent the people and possesses neither ideological nor moral authority. This renders its rule illegitimate. The manifesto captures this sentiment in a simple question: "Whose 'rejuvenation' is this?"

Finally, the 'May Fourth Manifesto' reassigns the roles of China's hero and villain to inspire people—particularly Chinese youth—to fight for its alternative vision. Imitating official discourse, the manifesto draws on journey and Maoist military metaphors to distinguish the forces of good and evil. But this time, "the greatest enemy of the Chinese working class" and the "greatest obstacle to social progress" is the CCP itself. Describing the corrupted CCP as the " 'masters of the people'," it exposes Xi's claim that the people are 'the masters of the country' as a fallacy, and strikes another blow to CCP legitimacy. The Party's "[subjugation of] every aspect of society to the service of capital," however, simply impels Chinese youth to "dare to fight against authoritarian power." The manifesto's incorruptible and noble hero is motivated to search for a 'mass politics' that restores the people's rightful position as "masters of their own lives." The people and Party thereby become opposed forces of good and evil on China's journey, the former a heroic force with an inspired vision, the latter a "road-block" to be demolished. This inversion of the Party and people's roles in driving progress then works in concert with the manifesto's heterodox history, negation of present success and its disruption of historical continuity to further undermine the CCP's claims on the future and inspire a call for change.

3.1.2.3 Xu Zhangrun's 2020 Essay

Xu Zhangrun's 2020 essay, 'When Fury Overcomes Fear,' is best known for its incisive criticism of Xi Jinping. But its rhetorical force really comes from its unsparing scrutiny.

Lambasting not only a morally corrupt CCP but also a submissive populace, his critique becomes an indictment on the paralysed, inhumane system that both rulers and ruled accept. Upsetting the China Story's teleology and undermining its claim to the efficacy of China's current system, Xu narrates the suspension and reversal of progress under Xi, urging his audience to stop merely imagining an alternative future and start acting to achieve it.

To begin, Xu highlights the power and morality imbalance between the Party and the people to expose contemporary CCP rule as illegitimate. The Party dominates Xu's essay as a depraved villain that silences critics with "big data totalitarianism" to "maintain ruthlessly its hold on power," while holding no concern for "the welfare and lives of normal people." Yet the people remain morally incorruptible as a frustrated force of goodness burning with "popular fury" at the injustices of Party rule. As in the 'May Fourth Manifesto', the juxtaposition between unscrupulous might and scrupulous meek shows that the Party has violated its ruling mandate; the moral authority and popular support on which its legitimacy depends is found wanting. Unlike the manifesto, however, Xu calls out the Chinese people's "long-practiced slavish acquiescence," portraying them as complicit in perpetuating illegitimate Party rule. To reinforce a feeling of collective responsibility, Xu makes clear the "price everyone has to pay" for failing to correct injustice:

Otherwise, you will all be no better than fields of garlic chives, giving yourselves up to being harvested by the blade of power, time and time again.
[A4.3]

Hence, while all three critiques call on people to mobilise as a united force of righteousness, Xu presents his call for action as a moral obligation that demands commitment.

To heighten the sense of obligation, Xu broadens the target for change from the CCP to a cruel, ineffectual political system. For Xu, what is ultimately to blame for the COVID-19 pandemic and the degeneracy of modern China is "a system that turns every natural disaster into an even greater man-made catastrophe," because its sole concern is "to preserve at all costs the privileged position of the Communist Party" while abandoning "the people over which it holds sway to suffer the vicissitudes of a cruel fate." Xu then refutes any claim of the system's efficacy, by stressing how its "near paralysis" turns a problem "into a national calamity." This undermines official narratives' standard justification for a centralised, authoritarian governance system—a key claim of the China Story and current coronavirus narrative (Lams 2018, 393). However, exposing the system as inhumane and paralysed changes nothing. And so Xu returns to the "price paid by the whole nation" for acquiescence:

Whenever there is the slightest disturbance—let alone a major disaster—everyone is endangered, and they are certainly powerless to help each other.
[A4.3]

By conveying a sense of people's personal responsibility for the peril and powerlessness collectively suffered under the current political order, Xu asserts the imperative of moving beyond criticism and committing to change.

Finally, Xu presents an alternative historical narrative that highlights China's paralysis and regression under Xi to impel the search for an alternative future. Employing ocean and journey metaphors reminiscent of Xi's narrative, Xu represents modern history as a "long-breaking wave of modernity" that progresses through sequential waves of reform. However, "the Third Great Wave of reform and opening . . . has petered out." Having halted China's advance, Xu then reverses it by describing the "stampede into the past" that has occurred under Xi's leadership. Once the present demonstrates China's regression rather than its success, progress no longer accumulates continuously. This overturns History's endorsement of the CCP-ruled system and undermines the foundation of Xi's mythologic. Swept backwards "against the tides of history," the nation is powerless to prevent the rejuvenation horizon receding from view. To conclude the essay, Xu contrasts this regressive future with his vision of a "true people's republic" in which Chinese people are restored as 'masters of the country'. But tired of weary tolerance and wishful thinking, Xu stresses that "We, the People" must turn outrage into action in order to turn vision into reality.

3.2 The Critiques and the China Story

A selective appropriation of terminology, themes and the structure of the China Story allows the critiques to disrupt logical links in Xi's narrative. This section outlines how the texts reimagine the five strands of the China Story—the dream, hero, solution, appeal and validation—to contest the narrative's three logical inferences of the enduring relevance, exclusive suitability and exceptional architect of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

3.2.1 Five Strands

3.2.1.1 Dream

The revival of Chinese civilisation is a dream woven into China's national fabric (Gries 2007, 123). Unsurprisingly then, all three critiques portray rejuvenation as a worthwhile goal. However, they all diverge from the official understanding of rejuvenation as a measure of 'wealth and power'. The 'May Fourth Manifesto' and Xu Zhangrun's essay further condemn a statist, materialistic rejuvenation as morally and intellectually hollow, a claim intended to expose how far China is from maturing into a modern civilisation. Having displaced the state as the object of rejuvenation, the critiques instead imagine a revival of morality and the people's agency in a free and equal society. By hedging their idealistic visions of rejuvenation with qualifications (e.g., enforcement of the Constitution, workers' rights), the texts attempt to promote their proposed solution (constitutionalism or socialist mass politics) as a viable pathway to rejuvenation.

3.2.1.2 Hero

In Xi's China Story, the Party is the hero and the People merely a supporting cast. The three critiques look to reverse these roles by inverting the balance of agency and morality between the Party and People. The texts first contest the CCP's claim to be a positive force driving national progress. The editorial simply omits the Party and restores the People as the heroes leading the nation's journey to constitutionalism. Conversely, the manifesto and essay foreground the modern Party's presence as an immoral hegemon in order to negate Xi's claims that the CCP is a constructive influence, moral guide and representative of the People. The critiques then contrast the Party's domineering depravity to the People's principled powerlessness to reveal a power/morality imbalance. This reinforces the illegitimacy of CCP rule and motivates the search for a future in which the People are the heroes.

3.2.1.3 Solution

Socialism with Chinese characteristics and its architect are the source of China's modern success in Xi's narrative. The three critiques try to demystify this supposedly proven system and promote alternative solutions. The texts first minimise the significance of the achievements secured through economic reforms—a tacit acknowledgement that China's

modernisation provides considerable support to the CCP's legitimacy. The editorial and essay present China's modern success as simply a series of material gains, while the manifesto rejects the notion that post-Mao reforms have benefited the people. Focusing instead on the deleterious consequences of China's 'economic miracle', the texts imply that China can progress no further towards rejuvenation under a development model that offers no cultural or moral enrichment. The three texts then draw upon a journey framework to propose new pathways to a rejuvenated future. Decrying the injustices of capitalism or a lack of spiritual fulfilment in modern China, the critiques present either an egalitarian mass politics or constitutionalism as a moral solution that will allow China to become a great modern civilisation.

3.2.1.4 Appeal

The appeal of Xi's China Story primarily rests on substantiating its ties to national rejuvenation as a shared goal, Chinese culture as a shared heritage and Chinese values as shared guidance. The critiques adopt a similar approach in an effort to demonstrate that their alternative visions, solutions and morals are better suited to Chinese conditions. All of the texts draw on the nativist allure of China's rejuvenation to portray their Western liberal or Marxist/Maoist visions as culturally appropriate. Each critique then tries to enhance its appeal by presenting its solution as a way to transcend the morally corrupted state of modern China under CCP rule. By contending that alternative value systems will be required to restore social ethics, the texts further imply that Xi's 'core socialist values' are simply empty rhetoric.

3.2.1.5 Validation

The China Story justifies a confident future by drawing on past achievements and present success. The three critiques reproduce this narrative framework but restructure its historical timeline to promote a view that the solution to attaining rejuvenation lies elsewhere. Once China's success is shown to be merely material (and therefore, immaterial) or else secured through exploitation, the present no longer appears to be an improvement on the past. As the nation stalls or regresses in its development, the momentum of continuous progress that sustains the China Story is lost. By breaking the teleology of past, present and future and the association between progress and the system that drives it, the critiques portray socialism with Chinese characteristics as a failed solution. The perception that the current model needs to be

changed to reopen the path to rejuvenation then creates the rationale for the critiques' alternative proposals. By righting the reversals of history, restarting the journey of progress and restoring the desired narrative teleology, the texts' chosen solutions become viable pathways to a rejuvenated future.

3.2.2 Three Logical Inferences

Analysing how the critiques selectively reinterpret the China Story's terminology, themes and structure across its five strands has helped pinpoint places where Xi's narrative logic seems to become problematic.

Contrasting the contemporary CCP's lofty rhetoric with its bankrupt morality and shallow vision weakens the narrative's perceived *appeal*. Framing this depraved present as a regression disrupts the teleology of continuous progress, undermining the story's *validation* and unravelling its entangled *dream*, *hero* and *solution*. Lacking moral authority, the *hero* must forfeit its role as journey guide. Socialism with Chinese characteristics is seen to be incapable of driving the nation's progress through history and thus fails as a *solution*. Finally, the official *dream* appears to forsake the spiritual fulfilment of the people and must surrender its annexation of the imaginable future.

The weaknesses the critiques expose in the China Story's five strands make the narrative's three logical inferences—the *enduring relevance*, *exclusive suitability* and *exceptional architect* of socialism with Chinese characteristics—seem implausible. Depriving the hero of moral authority and devaluing the story's appeal contests the *exceptional architect* claim, as it questions the legitimacy of the Party's role as the sole correct practitioner of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Restructuring the historical narrative to interrupt the continuity of cumulative progress overturns History's validation of the *enduring relevance* of socialism with Chinese characteristics. This also closes off the pathway to rejuvenation and thus challenges the *exclusive suitability* of socialism with Chinese characteristics as a solution, opening up the potential for alternative proposals to pave the way to a reimagined dream.

These three inferences, each founded upon an assumption of China's continuous progress, form the logical basis of the China Story. By contesting them, the critiques can disrupt the process by which the narrative logic coalesces into a coherent theory that explains China's actual past and present—and prescribes its future under CCP leadership. Without such

a theory and its self-fulfilling truths, the mythologic falters. The China Story is reduced to just that—a story.

3.3 Contradictions

3.3.1 People Power/less: Role of the People

The people would have to be created to serve as the people.

—Prasenjit Duara (1995, 32)

Potential problems with the portrayal of the Party and the People in Xi's narrative began to emerge in Chapter Two. Analysing the critiques has brought these issues to the surface. All three texts mine the power/morality imbalance between the Party and People. They restore the People as the force of progress while marginalising the Party in order to critique CCP rule and inspire visions of an alternative future. Yet the power of this portrayal lies not so much in its inversion of roles, but in the fact that the inversion *restores* the correspondence between the officially stated and implied roles of the Party and People. The critiques thereby expose a contradiction between what is said and what is understood about who is in charge of China's destiny.

This is the problem of the People. Are the People a subject or an object of Xi's narrative? Do they advance the plot or obstruct progress? Xi lauds the creators of history and 'masters of the country' as an inexhaustible source of strength and wisdom. But it is the People's *lack* that summons their leader, their need for guidance that moralises CCP dominance, and the insufficiency of their infinite strength and wisdom that rationalises a Party project of population enhancement.

This ambiguous depiction of the People's role may diminish the appeal of the China Story. Handmaidens to an imposed vision of the hero's journey, the official narrative affords people no meaningful input into shaping China's future. If it seems that Xi's story has no confidence in the People, so too may people start to lose confidence in Xi's story.

Moreover, there is another character in the China Story potentially disillusioned by its ambivalent agency—the Party itself. As discussed in Chapter Two, Xi's disciplinary anticorruption discourse diminishes the agency of individual officials in order to foster obedience to the Party centre. Yet its depiction of wayward officials as expendable objects may estrange CCP personnel from a domineering Party, and from Xi at its 'core'. Since officials are not the People, there appears to be no place for them in Xi's vision. Yet even as officials are marginalised, the anticorruption discourse cannot help but acknowledge the power that they hold over the Party; otherwise there would be no need for such a publicised crackdown (Sorace 2019, 158).

Hence, the tensions the critiques expose in the China Story between what is expressed and what is implied about the Party and People's degree of agency highlights a contradiction—in the role of the People and the membership of the Party. This may reduce the narrative's relevance and appeal, as audiences struggle to pinpoint where they fit into the story.

3.3.2 Continuity and Change in the Journey to Rejuvenation

Only a nonteleological future can free history and time from the custody of power and violence.

—Dai Jinhua (2018, 21)

As the China Story portrays the People and lowly CCP officials as incapable of influencing China's development in any meaningful capacity, it falls to the narrative hero to generate the momentum of progress. This leads to the story's second contradiction: that the nation advances towards rejuvenation through the CCP's balance of continuity and change.

The first theme of Chapter Two explored how demonstrating the continuity and innovation of socialism with Chinese characteristics supports Xi's claim that both this system and its architect are essential for realising rejuvenation. However, there are two justifications here, each expressed through a different understanding of time. When combined, the two justifications send a conflicting message that undermines the logic it attempts to establish. The first justification relies on continuity. By representing time as an unbroken line, continuity embeds the CCP in the past, present and future, supporting the argument for

preserving the established order. Conversely, the second justification depends on change, on citing new achievements to prove that the present system is advancing China towards the future. But here time is understood as a series of infinitesimal presents, each moment a positive change over the last that substantiates the correctness of the path in an unceasing legitimisation process.

The China Story therefore exhibits what Duara (1995, 29) calls "aporias in the experience of linear time" between "time as eternal" (continuity) and "time as flux" (change). Moreover, Xi's representation of national rejuvenation reproduces this temporal split in the narrative. In time as flux, the impending approach of rejuvenation is endlessly reconfirmed with evidence of further progress, as demonstrated by Xi's celebration of the successive restorations of China's independence, wealth and power. Drawing on Bourdieu (2000, 213), this affirms the correspondence between the nation's 'subjective expectations' and 'objective chances' of attaining rejuvenation. Yet the dream of rejuvenation must simultaneously be woven into eternal time—projected into the future as a destination to march towards. Because it is only when an end is unreachable that its means can forever be justified.

This aporia in narrative time in the China Story reveals that both continuity and progress must be witnessed—and harmonised—through the actions of the narrative hero and its great solution. As a result, when China's development seems to deviate from the teleological trajectory underpinning the China Story, it creates a perception that real and rhetorical progress have decoupled. This may reduce people's confidence in the system and its architect.

The three critiques sought to highlight this perceived gulf between rhetorical and real progress by using the narrative's temporal split between continuity and change. Overturning History's endorsement of the current system, the texts portray a stagnant China, its development arrested by an authority that permits no change that might destabilise the status quo. By reusing the China Story's journey framework in alternative portrayals that show only continuity and no change, the texts contest the logic of inexorable momentum on the path through history to rejuvenation. The critiques' representation halts China's progress and presents rejuvenation as unattainable, and thereby undermines the logic that the China Story relies on to legitimise the CCP's leadership.

The People have no role in progress, the dream is unrealisable—the critiques' reinterpretation of the China Story may lead audiences to heterodox conclusions that preclude the possibility of Xi's mythologic generating a sustainable justification for perpetual Party rule. Instead, when the Party crowds out the People's place in a national narrative, and when the Party's historic mission arrests the national journey towards a rejuvenated China—when

the two contradictions in the China Story are exposed—the critiques reveal an underlying structural fault in China's discourse-political system, a contradiction between inclusion and exclusion.

3.3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion

3.3.3.1 Inclusion and Exclusion in the Discourse-Political System

The real ambition to control the future . . . varies with the real power to control that future, which means first of all having a grasp on the present itself.
—Pierre Bourdieu (2000, 221)

The Party serves 'the People'. But who are the People? As the CCP has moved from championing the cause of workers and peasants to representing "the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people," the scope of the People has broadened over the post-Mao era (J. Wang 2017, 416). This sends a good message about representative politics, but that creates its own problem (Brown 2018b, 129). How can the Party always be seen to satisfy the competing demands, conflicting interests and considerable diversity of all of these people?

Official discourse is the CCP's main means of demonstrating that it represents the Chinese people. To keep up with an increasingly pluralised China, the Party's legitimising narrative emphasises the solidarity between the Party and People with S-ideology. It also continually produces new evidence of the CCP working for the People's interests and benefiting society (Lams 2018, 399). These constant updates to the narrative generate a momentum of accumulating progress that drives the nation towards the future.

However, the CCP's representation of the People is not the only objective of official discourse. The other major pillar of the CCP's legitimacy—preservation of its control and privilege—creates an additional demand (Kleinman et al. 2011, 64). The CCP's ability to impose a hegemonic and homogenised discourse—fusing local and central, Party and nation, politics and patriotism—is a powerful demonstration of its organisational authority. This P-ideology

discourse also helps portray the CCP as China's sole source of truth and therefore its only legitimate political agent (Lams 2018, 392, 400).

In other words, the effort to preserve unchallengeable rule for an exceptional authority through *exclusion*—from authoritative discourse, organised politics or meaningful participation—while simultaneously representing China's modern diversity in an *inclusive* narrative shows that a contradiction between inclusion and exclusion is an operational feature of China's discourse-political system. But as the scope of the People has broadened over time, the challenge of meeting both objectives has become increasingly acute. This is the challenge confronting the China Story in the Xi era.

3.3.3.2 Inclusion and Exclusion in the China Story and the Critiques

Unless the China Story is contested by alternative interpretations that more plausibly align with an individual's own experiences, it seems a compelling mythologic. It speaks to the past, celebrates the present and predicts an appealing future. It communicates an inclusive tale of a nation united on a journey to realise a shared dream of rejuvenation. It matches many people's experiences of improved living standards and continually procures new evidence that demonstrates that the CCP secures achievements for the People. This progress reaffirms a correspondence between the nation's subjective expectations and objective chances of achieving its storied rejuvenation, and hence inspires confidence in the established political order as a representative system that offers the means to reach China's predestined future.

However, a problem arises when real and rhetorical progress appear to decouple, and people's lived experience no longer seems to match the continuous progress promised in the narrative. As shown by the critiques, disrupting the narrative's logical foundation of continuous progress portrays the nation as suspended or regressing in its development. This divorces subjective expectations of the rejuvenated future from the objective chances of its possibility, extinguishing the sense of inexorable advance through history and leaving the future uncertain.

Without this logical foundation and with its contradictions exposed, the China Story cannot operate as an ideal mythologic that legitimises the CCP in perpetuity by representing its rule as China's only means of realising rejuvenation. Instead, the China Story devolves to a diminished vision of a stagnant China that precludes rejuvenation and excludes the People from shaping the future. In other words, the critiques' presentation of Xi's narrative shows it to

be an inclusive story told from an exclusionary perspective. Aiming to project a representative legitimacy with S-ideology while preserving an unchallengeable authority through P-ideology, the China Story then cannot help but reproduce the same inclusion/exclusion contradiction that it tries to conceal in the broader discourse-political system.

Notably, the critiques themselves fail to move beyond the contradiction between inclusion and exclusion. By disrupting the teleological structure of Xi's narrative, the critiques are able to propose new futures and recover lost histories that had previously been sublated into a rationale for future confidence (Ballard 2018, 281). But the critiques' alternative chronologies replicate the developmentalist logic of Xi's narrative. Each rationalises history as the departure point of a modernised future and offers only one viable solution for China: either Western constitutionalism or a Marxist/Maoist revival (H. Wang 2009, 66). Furthermore, the texts—all authored by urban, educated individuals writing in a "Confucian language of moral exemplarity"—reproduce the same "historical presumption to speak on behalf of the Chinese people" that they condemn as illegitimate (Davies 2010, 61). Calling for solidarity as they promote an elitist representation of what the People should want, the authors' sense of their authority to speak "as the unified voice of the 'people as one' " belies their call for a democratic mass politics (Anagnost 1997, 12). Ultimately, the intellectual critiques' own investment in the circulation of power through closed texts produced by elite voices constrains them to operate within a discourse-political system that excludes undervalued perspectives while claiming to represent them (Q. Cao 2014, 11).

3.4 The China Story and the Mao Stories

The unity of opposites is conditional, temporary and relative, while the struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute.

—Mao Zedong (1965a, 342)

At the Communists' base in Yan'an in the 1940s, Mao Zedong crafted a strong but not ideal mythologic. Addressing a small, like-minded audience, Mao was able to link story to theory and tale to perceived truth to weave a compelling account of China's past, present and future—and justify the CCP's centrality to realising that future. But overwhelming acceptance of Mao's mythologic did not last; its heights never recaptured beyond that time or place (Apter and Saich 1994, 133–136).

There was also a later Mao story. A confused story in which experiences of hardship and social conflict appeared certain to continue indefinitely, while Mao's communist utopia receded from view. The dissociation of present reality and future vision, of the objective chances and subjective expectations of realising a promised destiny, led to widespread disenchantment among Chinese people in the late Mao era (Meisner 1999, 424).

How does Xi's China Story compare to these two Mao stories? The contradictions in Xi's narrative expose its reliance on China's perceived progress and inclusiveness to generate legitimacy. But although this means the China Story is not an ideal mythologic that provides a sustainable justification for perpetual CCP rule, it is still a significant achievement for Xi to have sustained a modern mythologic in a complex and connected China. The China Story draws on established discourses and a shared dream of national rejuvenation to craft a vision with broad appeal. Its historical account is largely consistent with existing narratives. It celebrates recent achievements as evidence of China's superior system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and then extrapolates this into confidence in the current political order. It rationalises Xi Jinping's centralisation of power and anticorruption campaign as necessary if China is to surmount the obstacles ahead (Tiffert 2019, 40). It standardises the official explanation and justification of policies and ties them to the higher mission of national rejuvenation to give CCP officials a consistent, positive story to tell, and promote an image of the Party's united purpose (Lams 2018, 399). It partially supports Party representation with an inclusive story; it partially supports Party preservation with an exclusive discourse. Therefore,

counter to Marinelli's (2009) diagnosis of Chinese official discourse, Xi's narrative does not support a verdict of a 'progressive devolution' in Chinese official narratives, in which names and reality have become increasingly dissociated from one another. In the China Story, narrative and reality do not always fully correspond, but nor do they progressively diverge. Instead, the correspondence between narrative and reality is forever in flux.

Thus, in the final analysis, Xi's China Story resembles neither the totally compelling nor the utterly confused Mao story, neither an ideal mythologic nor a clouded vision. To retain its current explanatory power, it must remain in constant dialogue with a changing world to prove that China is still making progress towards a predestined future. Meanwhile, people's interpretations of the story shift over time based on their changing experiences. This means the China Story is always a tale unfinished. Its definition of reality is never absolute, its conclusions never definitive. And hence, while it provides valuable support for the CCP's legitimacy, it never guarantees it.

Conclusion

China's current leader Xi Jinping is telling, and selling, a story. But the audience always has the final word.

Xi's 'China Story' recounts China's journey to rejuvenation through the unique CCP-led system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. This grand narrative speaks of pride in tradition and desire for modernity, socialist ideals and patriotic appeals, performance benchmarks and moral credentials, exceptional China and global China, the traumatic past and successful present, future vigilance and future confidence. By now, audiences know the story. But whether the China Story is accepted as a comprehensive logic, disputed as a contradictory fiction or partly used and partly refused, will depend on how well it accords with an individual's own understandings of China past, present and future. Hence, it is not Xi who generates a mythologic but those audiences who find the China Story makes sense of their world. Equally, it is not critical responses to Xi's narrative that make it a diminished vision but those audiences who find that an alternative interpretation better accommodates their experience of reality and expectations of the future.

Audiences' interpretations of Xi's narrative are shaped by perceptions of the CCP's performance and China's progress. This comes back to a political contest of definitions. What is rejuvenation? What is progress? What is success? The analysed critiques redefined these core components of the China Story to promote alternative assessments of the performance of the Party and progress of modern China. Lifting seven hundred million people out of poverty is hard to argue against and the critiques do not bother trying. Instead, they shift focus to more problematic areas for the CCP, such as human rights.

The China Story's reliance on perceived performance and perceived progress to legitimise CCP rule is thus both its great strength and its structural weakness. Invoking the undeniable success of China's modernisation and evocative dream of national rejuvenation gives Xi's mythologic persuasive power and appeal. It promotes audiences' appreciation of how the successful CCP-led system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is propelling China towards rejuvenation. However, fostering confidence in Party leadership in such a way relies on sustaining a perception that China's progress is continuous and cumulative. As a result, generating political legitimacy through the China Story becomes an endless project of realigning narrative and reality to demonstrate such progress, of updating myth and verifying logic to reaffirm an unchanging political order against a changing reality. No matter how compelling the narrative may seem, it can stabilise neither the dynamics between discourse

and reality, nor the dialogues between authors and audiences. It projects confidence but yields only a momentary justification. And because Xi's mythologic is structured as a progressive journey to rejuvenated modernity, and because its appeal rests on representing a pluralised populace, a loss of confidence in the future may trigger a crisis of legitimacy in the present.

For Xi Jinping and the CCP in 2020, confronted with an economic downturn, tensions in China-US relations and the COVID-19 pandemic, a legitimacy crisis is not beyond the realms of possibility (Pei 2020). The unfolding pandemic has already shown how quickly people's perceptions change and how rapidly China's official narrative must realign in response. Its account of the virus outbreak has shifted from being suppressive to aggressive and now defensive, striving to keep up with new developments and new interpretations in China and around the world (Wade 2020).

How effective will this narrative realignment process be in the future? How might the upcoming First Centenary Goal to achieve a 'moderately prosperous society' by 2021 shape the subsequent development of Xi's mythologic? All this remains to be seen. But if China's outlook continues to deteriorate, generating legitimacy through a grand narrative that relies on continuous progress will become increasingly difficult. Perhaps a new story will be needed.

Following the China Story across the Xi era, this thesis addresses an imbalance in Western scholarship on Chinese political discourse by shifting research focus from message control to narrative content, from an international to a domestic audience, and from the ends of national rejuvenation to China's means of realising it. Fleshing out the other side to the story in such a way offers a more informed understanding of the ongoing interplay between China's official story and political system. In particular, by concentrating on the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, this study demonstrates the interdependence between the CCP's legitimising narrative and perceptions of the Party's performance and China's progress. Furthermore, this project shows how interpreting an official narrative in terms of Apter and Saich's (1994) concept of a 'mythologic' promotes attention to the role of audience perceptions in generating and sustaining political legitimacy through a narrative. Finally, this study contributes to the English-language literature on China by conducting the first analysis of the narrative content of a large corpus of Xi Jinping's speeches. Perhaps more importantly, it captures Xi's grand narrative at what may prove to be a moment of inflection. In a post-COVID-19 world, China's trajectory and consequently its official narrative may be very different. Given that the global 'infodemic' associated with COVID-19 is already influencing

levels of trust in government messages, the pandemic's impact on subsequent official narratives in China and elsewhere will be interesting to follow.

Future research on contemporary Chinese official narratives could address some of the limitations of this project. In particular, a corpus-based comparative analysis of Xi's political speeches could improve upon the restricted analytical scope of this study (e.g., see L'Hôte 2014; Charteris-Black 2018). Applying such a methodology would, for example, assist in determining the significance of particular terms, metaphors and themes in Xi's speeches. A corpus-based approach also lends itself to a comparison of texts. A future study could potentially compare 'early Xi' to 'late Xi' speeches to explore how his narrative has changed over time; compare pre- and post-COVID-19 versions of Xi's narrative; compare different Chinese leaders' speeches to trace the evolution of the CCP's legitimising narrative; or compare Xi's authoritative narrative with its reproduction in the media and online commentary to analyse the ways in which secondary texts influence the reception of Xi's messages.

The challenge and the joy of this project has been to follow an unfolding story. When I started in 2019, the Hong Kong protests had not yet begun and the COVID-19 pandemic was unimaginable. The eighteen months to mid-2020 have been a turbulent period for China, and there is little indication things will stabilise in the near future. Nevertheless, the significance of Xi Jinping's grand narrative will become clearer in time. I cannot wait to find out what happens next.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix 3: Xi Jinping Speech Translations **123**

- A3.1 [2014.7] 'Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Establishment of the National People's Congress'
- A3.2 [2018.2] 'Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of Reform and Opening Up'
- A3.3 [2019.1] 'Address at the Ceremony to Commemorate the Centenary of the May Fourth Movement'
- A3.4 [2019.2] 'Address at the Grand Rally to Celebrate the Seventieth Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China'

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- A4.1 'China's Dream, the Dream of Constitutionalism' 2013
- A4.2 'May Fourth Manifesto' 2019
- A4.3 'When Fury Overcomes Fear' 2020

Appendix 1. List of Xi Jinping Speeches

	Title	Date	Source	Speech Text
[2012.1]	'The People's Wish For a Good Life is Our Goal'	November 15, 2012	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	http://www.bannedthought.net/China/Individuals/XiJinping/XiJinping-TheGovernanceOfChina.pdf
	人民对美好生活的向往，就是我们的奋斗目标		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/05/15/ARTI1431671479154923.shtml
[2012.2]	'Study, Disseminate and Implement the Guiding Principles of the 18th CPC National Congress'	November 17, 2012	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	
	紧紧围绕坚持和发展中国特色社会主义学习宣传贯彻党的十八大精神		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/05/15/ARTI1431672893775413.shtml
[2012.3]	'Achieving Rejuvenation is the Dream of the Chinese People'	November 29, 2012	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	
	实现中华民族伟大复兴是中华民族近代以来最伟大的梦想		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/05/18/ARTI1431937047285524.shtml

[2012.4]	'Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the Promulgation and Implementation of the Current Constitution'	December 4, 2012	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	在首都各界纪念现行宪法公布施行 30 周年大会上的讲话	习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/06/10/ARTI1433922909054881.shtml
[2013.1]	'Uphold and Develop Socialism with Chinese Characteristics'	January 5, 2013	Palladium Magazine May 31, 2019	毫不动摇坚持和发展中国特色社会主义	《求实》2019/07	https://palladiummag.com/2019/05/31/xi-jinping-in-translation-chinas-guiding-ideology/ ¹
[2013.2]	'Address to the First Session of the 12th National People's Congress'	March 17, 2013	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	在第十二届全国人民代表大会第一次会议上的讲话	习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/05/18/ARTI1431941748897100.shtml
[2013.3]	'Follow the Trend of the Times and Promote Global Peace and Development'	March 23, 2013	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)			

¹ An abridged version appears in the first volume of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*.

	顺应时代前进潮流，促进世界和平发展		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/06/30/ARTI1435633471623282.shtml
[2013.4]	'Enhance Publicity and Theoretical Work'	August 19, 2013	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	
	把宣传思想工作做得更好		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/06/14/ARTI1434265704214912.shtml
[2013.5]	'Align Our Thinking with the Guidelines of the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee'	November 12, 2013	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	
	切实把思想统一到党的十八届三中全会精神上来		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/05/25/ARTI1432538937919186.shtml
[2014.1]	'Together Fulfill the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation'	February 18, 2014	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	
	共圆中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/05/20/ARTI1432101130145760.shtml
[2014.2]	'Cultivate and Disseminate the Core Socialist Values'	February 24, 2014	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	

	培养和弘扬社会主义核心价值观		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/06/14/ARTI1434265745440915.shtml
[2014.3]	'Young People Should Practice the Core Socialist Values'	May 4, 2014	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	
	青年要自觉践行社会主义核心价值观		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/06/15/ARTI1434355638326518.shtml
[2014.4]	'Foster and Practice Core Socialist Values from Childhood'	May 30, 2014	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 1)	
	从小积极培育和践行社会主义核心价值观		习近平谈治国理政 (第一卷)	http://syss.12371.cn/2015/06/15/ARTI1434355641667519.shtml
[2014.5]	'Address at the Ceremony to Commemorate the 110th Anniversary of the Birth of Deng Xiaoping'	August 20, 2014	<i>Chinese Law and Government</i> 48, no. 6 (2016)	https://doi.org/10.1080/00094609.2016.1241102 ²
	在纪念邓小平同志诞辰 110 周年座谈会上的讲话		新华网	http://www.xinhuanet.com//politics/2014-08/20/c_1112160001.htm
[2014.6]	'Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Establishment of the National People's Congress'	September 5, 2014	n/a	Appendix 3.1

² An abridged version titled 'A Bright Future for Socialism with Chinese Characteristics' appears in the second volume of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*.

	在庆祝全国人民代表大会成立六十周年大会上的讲话		新华网	http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/leaders/2019-09/15/c_1124998129.htm
[2015.1]	'Uphold and Consolidate the Party's Ideological Leadership'	December 11, 2015	<i>Xi Jinping: The Governance of China</i> (Vol. 2)	
	在全国党校工作会议上的讲话		《求实》2016/09	http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2016-04/30/c_1118772415.htm ³
[2016.1]	'Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Ninety-Fifth Anniversary of the Founding of the Communist Party of China'	July 1, 2016	<i>Qiushi Journal</i> 8, no. 4 (2016)	http://english.qstheory.cn/2016-12/20/c_1120042032.htm ⁴
	在庆祝中国共产党成立 95 周年大会上的讲话		新华网	http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2016-07/01/c_1119150660.htm
[2016.2]	'Address at the Ceremony to Commemorate the Eightieth Anniversary of the Victory of the Long March'	October 21, 2016	<i>Qiushi Journal</i> 9, no. 1 (2017)	http://english.qstheory.cn/2017-02/27/c_1120457140.htm
	在纪念红军长征胜利 80 周年大会上的讲话		新华网	http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2016-10/21/c_1119765804.htm

³ 'Uphold and Consolidate the Party's Ideological Leadership' is an abridged version of Xi Jinping's speech, 'Address at the CPC Central Party School National Work Conference'. The abridged version appears in the second volume of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*. A link to the full Chinese text, published in *Qiushi*, is provided here for the sake of completeness.

⁴ An abridged version titled 'Stay True to Our Original Aspiration and Continue Marching Forward' appears in the second volume of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*.

[2017.1]	'Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era'	October 18, 2017	Xinhua News Agency	http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/special/2017-11/03/c_136725942.htm
	决胜全面建成小康社会夺取新时代中国特色社会主义伟大胜利		新华网	http://www.xinhuanet.com/2017-10/27/c_1121867529.htm
[2018.1]	'Address at the Ceremony to Commemorate the Bicentenary of the Birth of Karl Marx'	May 4, 2018	<i>Qiushi Journal</i> 10, no. 3 (2018)	http://english.qstheory.cn/2018-09/07/c_1123371913.htm
	在纪念马克思诞辰 200 周年大会上的讲话		新华网	http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/leaders/2018-05/04/c_1122783997.htm
[2018.2]	'Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of Reform and Opening Up'	December 18, 2018	n/a	Appendix 3.2
	在庆祝改革开放 40 周年大会上的讲话		新华网	http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/leaders/2018-12/18/c_1123872025.htm
[2019.1]	'Address at the Ceremony to Commemorate the Centenary of the May Fourth Movement'	April 30, 2019	n/a	Appendix 3.3
	在纪念五四运动 100 周年大会上的讲话		新华网	http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/leaders/2019-04/30/c_1124440193.htm
[2019.2]	'Address at the Grand Rally to Celebrate the Seventieth Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China'	October 1, 2019	n/a	Appendix 3.4

在庆祝中华人民共和国成立 70 周年大
会上的讲话

新华网

http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/70zn/2019-10/01/c_1210298654.htm

Appendix 2.

Xi Jinping Speech Quotations Cited in the Text

Chapter One: The Narrative

[2017.1] Over the past 96 years, to accomplish the historic mission of national rejuvenation, whether in times of weakness or strength, whether in times of adversity or smooth sailing, our Party has never forgotten its founding mission, nor wavered in its pursuit. It has united the people and led them in conquering countless challenges, making enormous sacrifices, meeting setbacks squarely, and courageously righting wrongs. Thus we have, time and again, overcome the seemingly insurmountable and created miracle upon miracle.

九十六年来，为了实现中华民族伟大复兴的历史使命，无论是弱小还是强大，无论是顺境还是逆境，我们党都初心不改、矢志不渝，团结带领人民历经千难万险，付出巨大牺牲，敢于面对曲折，勇于修正错误，攻克了一个又一个看似不可攻克的难关，创造了一个又一个彪炳史册的人间奇迹。

1.2 Xi Jinping's Eras

1.2.1 The Past: Five Historical Eras

1.2.1.1 Glorious Civilisation

[2019.2] Tall and proud in the East

Today, socialist China stands tall and proud in the East.

今天，社会主义中国巍然屹立在世界东方。

[2014.4] Boasts a long history and splendid culture of over 5,000 years

The Chinese nation boasts a long history and splendid culture of over 5,000 years, and our civilization has developed in an unbroken line from ancient to modern times.

中华民族有着5000多年的悠久历史和灿烂文化，而且中华文明从远古一直延续发展到今天。

1.2.1.2 Century of Humiliation (1840–1949)

[2018.1] Following the Opium War of 1840, the Western powers savagely blasted open China's doors with their warships and cannons, miring the Chinese nation in the tragic circumstances of domestic turmoil and foreign aggression.

1840年鸦片战争以后，西方列强凭着坚船利炮野蛮轰开了中国的大门，中华民族陷入内忧外患的悲惨境地。

[2014.3] Bullied by foreigners

Today's China forms a sharp contrast to China in the 19th century when the country was humiliated, its sovereignty was infringed upon, and its people were bullied by foreigners.

想想近代以来中国丧权辱国、外国人在中国横行霸道的悲惨历史，真是形成了鲜明对照！

[2012.3] Sufferings and sacrifices

Its sufferings and sacrifices in modern times were rarely seen in the history of the world.

近代以后，中华民族遭受的苦难之重、付出的牺牲之大，在世界历史上都是罕见的。

1.2.1.3 Modern Political Awakening (1919–1921)

[2018.1] On this great tide of history, a Marxist political Party which would heroically undertake the task of national rejuvenation and surely lead the Chinese people in creating a miracle for humankind came into being—the Communist Party of China.

在这个历史大潮中，一个以马克思主义为指导、一个勇担民族复兴历史大任、一个必将带领中国人民创造人间奇迹的马克思主义政党——中国共产党应运而生。

[2016.2] Over the past 95 years, the reason why the CPC has managed to complete an arduous mission that no other political force in modern China was able to complete is that it has always taken Marxism as its guide to action.

95年来，中国共产党之所以能够完成近代以来各种政治力量不可能完成的艰巨任务，就在于始终把马克思主义这一科学理论作为自己的行动指南。

1.2.1.4 **Mao Era: Independence and Socialist Construction (1949–1976)**

[2012.4] Led the Chinese people in winning victory in the New Democratic Revolution

These documents affirmed the heroic struggle of the Chinese people against domestic and foreign enemies and their striving for national independence and people's freedom and happiness over the previous 100 years of modern China, and affirmed the history in which the CPC led the Chinese people in winning victory in the New Democratic Revolution and in acquiring state power.

这些文献都以国家根本法的形式，确认了近代100多年来中国人民为反对内外敌人、争取民族独立和人民自由幸福进行的英勇斗争，确认了中国共产党领导中国人民夺取新民主主义革命胜利、中国人民掌握国家权力的历史变革。

[2018.2] Chinese Communists [who] developed Mao Zedong Thought

With Comrade Mao Zedong as their chief representative, Chinese Communists developed Mao Zedong Thought by combining the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism with the actual practice of the Chinese revolution.

以毛泽东同志为主要代表的中国共产党人，把马克思列宁主义基本原理同中国革命具体实践结合起来，创立了毛泽东思想。

[2013.1] Guided the Chinese people out of the darkness of that long night and established a new China

It is Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought that guided the Chinese people out of the darkness of that long night and established a New China.

是马克思列宁主义、毛泽东思想引导中国人民走出了漫漫长夜、建立了新中国，是中国特色社会主义使中国快速发展起来了。

[2018.1] Marked the first time that the people became the masters of their own destiny.

Under the influence of Marxism, Marxist political parties were established and developed, springing up like mushrooms across the world. This marked the first time that the people became the masters of their own destiny, that they became the fundamental political force for realizing their own emancipation and indeed that of all of humankind.

在马克思主义影响下，马克思主义政党在世界范围内如雨后春笋般建立和发展起来，人民第一次成为自己命运的主人，成为实现自身解放和全人类解放的根本政治力量。

[2019.2] This monumental event completely transformed the miserable fate of a poverty-stricken and weak China, a nation subjected to bullying and humiliation for over 100 years since the advent of modern times.

这一伟大事件，彻底改变了近代以后100多年中国积贫积弱、受人欺凌的悲惨命运。

[2018.2] The fundamental political prerequisites and institutional basis for all subsequent development and progress in contemporary China.

In doing so, they successfully achieved the greatest and most profound social transformation in Chinese history—one which provided the fundamental political prerequisites and institutional basis for all subsequent development and progress in contemporary China.

成功实现了中国历史上最深刻最伟大的社会变革，为当代中国一切发展进步奠定了根本政治前提和制度基础。

1.2.1.5 **Post-Mao Era: Deng's Modernisation (1978–2008)**

[2018.2] [Revealed] the essence of socialism

This decision helped reveal the essence of socialism and established the Party's basic line that China remains in the primary stage of socialism.

实行改革开放的历史性决策，深刻揭示社会主义本质，确立社会主义初级阶段基本路线。

[2014.5] Provided the first systematic explanation of how to build, consolidate and develop socialism in a socially and economically underdeveloped country like China.

[2014.5] Another historic step in adapting Marxism to China's conditions after Mao Zedong Thought.

His theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics provided the first systematic explanation of how to build, consolidate and develop socialism in a socially and economically underdeveloped country like China as it was back then, revealed the essence of socialism and marked another historic step in adapting Marxism to China's conditions after Mao Zedong Thought.

邓小平同志第一次比较系统地初步回答了在中国这样经济文化比较落后的国家如何建设社会主义、如何巩固和发展社会主义的一系列基本问题，深刻揭示了社会主义的本质，实现了马克思主义同中国实际相结合的又一次历史性飞跃。

[2017.1] Today, we are closer, more confident, and more capable than ever before of making the goal of national rejuvenation a reality.

今天，我们比历史上任何时期都更接近、更有信心和能力实现中华民族伟大复兴的目标。

1.2.2 The Present: Xi's New Era (2013–)

1.2.2.2 The Historic Break

[2016.2] The great victory of the Chinese people, achieved under the leadership of the CPC put the Chinese nation, the curator of a 5,000 year-old civilization, well on the way to modernization, infusing new vigor into Chinese civilization . . . [and] allowing scientific socialism to display renewed vigor in the 21st century. Moreover, this great victory enabled the people's republic of China, founded more than 60 years ago, to captivate the world with its achievements in development. In little more than 30 years, China, the world's largest developing country, has shaken off poverty and risen to become the world's second largest economy. Guaranteeing its own survival, it has performed an earthshaking miracle in the history of human development.

中国共产党领导中国人民取得的伟大胜利，使具有5000多年文明历史的中华民族全面迈向现代化，让中华文明在现代化进程中焕发出新的蓬勃生机；使具有500年历史的社会主义主张在世界上人口最多的国家成功开辟出具有高度现实性和可行性的正确道路，让科学社会主义在21世纪焕发出新的蓬勃生机；使具有60多年历史的新中国建设取得举世瞩目的成就，中国这个世界上最大的发展中国家在短短30多年里摆脱贫困并跃升为世界第二大经济体，彻底摆脱被开除球籍的危险，创造了人类社会发展史上惊天动地的发展奇迹，使中华民族焕发出新的蓬勃生机。

[2014.3] Today's China forms a sharp contrast to China in the 19th century.

Today's China forms a sharp contrast to China in the 19th century when the country was humiliated, its sovereignty was infringed upon, and its people were bullied by foreigners.

想想近代以来中国丧权辱国、外国人在中国横行霸道的悲惨历史，真是形成了鲜明对照！

[2018.1] High-speed rise

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, and especially since reform and opening up, within 70 years our Party has led the people in resolute efforts at unleashing and developing national forces of production and completed a process of development that took the West several centuries to complete, thus propelling our country's high-speed rise to become the world's second largest economy.

新中国成立以来特别是改革开放以来，在不到 70 年的时间内，我们党带领人民坚定不移解放和发展社会生产力，走完了西方几百年的发展历程，推动我国快速成为世界第二大经济体。

[2018.2] Major milestones on our journey in modern times to realise the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation

The establishment of the CPC (1921); the founding of the PRC (1949); and the promotion of, firstly, reform and opening up and, secondly, socialism with Chinese characteristics, are the three major historic events that have occurred in China since the May Fourth Movement (1919), and represent three major milestones on our journey in modern times to realise the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

建立中国共产党、成立中华人民共和国、推进改革开放和中国特色社会主义事业，是五四运动以来我国发生的三大历史性事件，是近代以来实现中华民族伟大复兴的三大里程碑。

[2017.1] The Chinese nation, which since modern times began had endured so much for so long, has achieved a tremendous transformation: it has stood up, grown rich, and is becoming strong; it has come to embrace the brilliant prospects of rejuvenation.

中国特色社会主义进入新时代，意味着近代以来久经磨难的中华民族迎来了从站起来、富起来到强起来的伟大飞跃，迎来了实现中华民族伟大复兴的光明前景。

1.3 The China Story: Past, Present and Future

1.3.2 Confidence in Socialism with Chinese Characteristics

[2019.1] Without the people . . . carrying forward a tradition of extremely hard and bitter struggle, there would be no New Era of socialism with Chinese characteristics today, nor will there be the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation tomorrow.

Without the people—and especially the generations of young people—carrying forward a tradition of extremely hard and bitter struggle, there would be no New Era of socialism with Chinese characteristics today, nor will there be the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation tomorrow.

没有广大人民群众特别是一代代青年前赴后继、艰苦卓绝的接续奋斗，就没有中国特色社会主义新时代的今天，更不会有实现中华民族伟大复兴的明天。

[2018.2] Our task is more arduous, our challenges more severe, and our work greater than ever.

Thus, the mission before us—the whole Party and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups—is more glorious still. Our task is more arduous, our challenges more severe, and our work greater than ever.

摆在全党全国各族人民面前的使命更光荣、任务更艰巨、挑战更严峻、工作更伟大。

[2017.1] Time and again, overcome the seemingly insurmountable and created miracle upon miracle.

攻克了一个又一个看似不可攻克的难关，创造了一个又一个彪炳史册的人间奇迹。

[2016.2] A fundamental guarantee for our future

Chinese socialism is not only a great cause that we must continually advance; it is a fundamental guarantee for our future.

中国特色社会主义，既是我们必须不断推进的伟大事业，又是我们开辟未来的根本保证。

[2012.2] The fundamental accomplishment made by the Party and the people during the arduous struggle over the past 90 years

It was emphasized at the 18th National Congress that we should uphold socialism with Chinese characteristics, that the socialist system with Chinese characteristics is the fundamental accomplishment made by the Party and the people during the arduous struggle over the past 90 years.

党的十八大强调要高举中国特色社会主义伟大旗帜，强调中国特色社会主义是党和人民90多年奋斗、创造、积累的根本成就。

[2016.1] The only choice for the development of modern China

Socialism with Chinese characteristics, as the only choice for the development of modern China, embodies the ideals and explorations of several generations of Chinese Communists, the wishes and hopes of countless progressives, and also the struggles and sacrifices of millions upon millions of Chinese people.

中国特色社会主义，承载着几代中国共产党人的理想和探索，寄托着无数仁人志士的夙愿和期盼，凝聚着亿万人民的奋斗和牺牲，是近代以来中国社会发展的必然选择。

[2018.1] Provides solid proof that it is only by upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics that we can realize the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

这一伟大飞跃以铁一般的事实证明，只有坚持和发展中国特色社会主义才能实现中华民族伟大复兴！

[2017.1] Fundamental achievement of our Party

Socialism with Chinese characteristics has been the focus of all of the Party's theories and practice since reform and opening up began. It is the fundamental achievement of our Party and our people made through countless hardships at enormous cost.

中国特色社会主义是改革开放以来党的全部理论和实践的主题，是党和人民历尽千辛万苦、付出巨大代价取得的根本成就。

[2018.2] The leadership of the CPC is the most essential feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and its greatest advantage.

中国共产党领导是中国特色社会主义最本质的特征，是中国特色社会主义制度的最大优势。

[2016.2] Cultural confidence is a more fundamental, broader, and deeper form of self-confidence.

文化自信，是更基础、更广泛、更深厚的自信。

[2017.1] Socialist culture with Chinese characteristics is derived from China's fine traditional culture, which was born of the Chinese civilization and nurtured over more than 5,000 years; it has grown out of the revolutionary and advanced socialist culture that developed over the course of the Chinese people's revolution, construction, and reform under the Party's leadership; and it is rooted in the great practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

中国特色社会主义文化，源自于中华民族五千多年文明历史所孕育的中华优秀传统文化，熔铸于党领导人民在革命、建设、改革中创造的革命文化和社会主义先进文化，植根于中国特色社会主义伟大实践。

[2014.6] Matured in Chinese soil

The reason why the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics works and has such great vitality and efficacy is because it has matured in Chinese soil over a long period of time.

中国特色社会主义政治制度之所以行得通、有生命力、有效率，就是因为它是从中国的社会土壤中生长起来的。

[2014.5] Suits China's national conditions and reality

Chinese socialism is a path that suits China's national conditions and reality and the requirements of the times in both theory and practice. Therefore, it has yielded and will continue to yield practical results.

中国特色社会主义是适合中国国情、符合中国特点、顺应时代发展要求的理论和实践，所以才能取得成功，并将继续取得成功。

[2014.3] Represent the inheritance and upgrading of outstanding traditional Chinese culture

The core socialist values we advocate today represent the inheritance and upgrading of outstanding traditional Chinese culture.

我们提倡的社会主义核心价值观，就充分体现了对中华优秀传统文化的传承和升华。

1.3.3 Confidence in the Future

[2014.1] The long-cherished wishes of Dr Sun Yat-sen

These were the long-cherished wishes of Dr Sun Yat-sen: to achieve the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, to realize the greatness and prosperity of China, and to ensure the happiness of the Chinese people.

实现中华民族伟大复兴，实现国家富强、民族振兴、人民幸福，是孙中山先生的夙愿。

Chapter Two: The Logic

[2016.2] The collapse of an ideal or belief is the most dangerous form of collapse. The decline of a political party often begins with the loss or absence of ideals and beliefs.

理想信念滑坡是最危险的滑坡。一个政党的衰落，往往从理想信念的丧失或缺失开始。

2.1 The Scientifically-Proven System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics

2.1.1 Continuity

[2012.2] The aspirations of countless patriots and revolutionary martyrs

It goes without saying that socialism with Chinese characteristics encapsulates the ideals and explorations of generations of Chinese Communists, embodies the aspirations of countless patriots and revolutionary martyrs, and crystallizes the struggles and sacrifices of the myriads of the Chinese people.

可以看出，中国特色社会主义，承载着几代中国共产党人的理想和探索，寄托着无数仁人志士的夙愿和期盼，凝聚着亿万人民的奋斗和牺牲。

[2013.1] Socialism with Chinese characteristics was first initiated in the period of reform and opening up. However, it was during the New China [Mao] era that the basic socialist system was built.

[2013.1] Could only have been initiated on this twenty-year [Mao era] foundation of socialist construction

中国特色社会主义是在改革开放历史新时期开创的，但也是在新中国已经建立起社会主义基本制度并进行了20多年建设的基础上开创的。

[2014.6] The system of socialism with Chinese characteristics has grown in the soil of Chinese society through the past and into the present.

中国特色社会主义政治制度过去和现在一直生长在中国的社会土壤之中。

[2013.1] Socialism with Chinese characteristics is socialism, not any other 'ism'.

中国特色社会主义是社会主义，不是别的什么主义。

[2017.1] The latest achievement in adapting Marxism to the Chinese context

[Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era] represents the latest achievement in adapting Marxism to the Chinese context and encapsulates the practical experience and collective wisdom of our Party and the people.

[新时代中国特色社会主义思想] . . . 是马克思主义中国化最新成果，是党和人民实践经验和集体智慧的结晶。

2.1.2 Change

[2016.2] Developing this scientific theory in practice

Over the past 95 years, the reason why the CPC has managed to complete an arduous mission that no other political force in modern China was able to complete is that it has always taken Marxism as its guide to action, and remained committed to enriching and developing this scientific theory in practice.

95 年来，中国共产党之所以能够完成近代以来各种政治力量不可能完成的艰巨任务，就在于始终把马克思主义这一科学理论作为自己的行动指南，并坚持在实践中不断丰富和发展马克思主义。

[2013.1] Socialism with Chinese characteristics is the dialectical unity of the theoretical logic of scientific socialism and the historical logic of China's social development.

[2013.1] [Socialism with Chinese characteristics] is a scientific socialism rooted in China's soil, one that reflects the aspirations of the Chinese people, and one that is adapted to the conditions of progress in our times.

中国特色社会主义，是科学社会主义理论逻辑和中国社会发展历史逻辑的辩证统一，是根植于中国大地、反映中国人民意愿、适应中国和时代发展进步要求的科学社会主义。

2.1.3 History's Validation

[2013.3] Yet as shown by humanity's progress, history always moves forward according to its own laws despite twists and turns, and no force can hold back its rolling wheels.

人类社会发展的历史证明，无论会遇到什么样的曲折，历史都总是按照自己的规律向前发展，没有任何力量能够阻挡历史前进的车轮。

[2013.4] Rooted in Chinese culture, socialism with Chinese characteristics represents the Chinese people's aspirations, suits the times and facilitates the development of the country, and is based on a long history and solid reality.

中国特色社会主义植根于中华文化沃土、反映中国人民意愿、适应中国和时代发展进步要求，有着深厚历史渊源和广泛现实基础。

[2013.1] In recent years, with the rise of China's comprehensive national strength and international status, there has been much international discussion and study of the "Beijing Consensus," "China Model," and the "China Road." Among these studies there is no shortage of praise. Some foreign academics believe that the rapid pace of China's development has called Western theories into question. A new form of Marxist theory is overturning the traditional theories of the West!

近年来，随着我国综合国力和国际地位上升，国际上关于“北京共识”、“中国模式”、“中国道路”等议论和研究也多了起来，其中不乏赞扬者。一些外国学者认为，中国的快速发展，导致一些西方理论正在被质疑，一种新版的马克思主义理论正在颠覆西方的传统理论。

[2013.1] We firmly believe that as socialism with Chinese characteristics develops further, our system will inevitably mature; it is likewise inevitable that the superiority of our socialist system will be increasingly apparent. Inevitably, our road will become wider; inevitably, our country's road of development will have increasingly greater influence on the world. We need just this sort of confidence—confidence in our theories, confidence in our system, and confidence in our road.

我们坚信，随着中国特色社会主义不断发展，我们的制度必将越来越成熟，我国社会主义制度的优越性必将进一步显现，我

们的道路必将越走越宽广，我国发展道路对世界的影响必将越来越大。我们就是要有这样的道路自信、理论自信、制度自信。

2.2 The Journey

[2013.2] To realise the Chinese Dream, we must take our own path, which is the path of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. It is not an easy path. We are able to embark on this path thanks to the great endeavours of reform and opening up made in the past 30 years and more, the continuous quest made in the 60-plus years of the PRC, a thorough review of the evolution of the Chinese nation in its 170-plus years of modern history, and carrying forward the 5,000-plus years of Chinese civilisation.

实现中国梦必须走中国道路。这就是中国特色社会主义道路。这条道路来之不易，它是在改革开放30多年的伟大实践中走出来的，是在中华人民共和国成立60多年的持续探索中走出来的，是在对近代以来170多年中华民族发展历程的深刻总结中走出来的，是在对中华民族5000多年悠久文明的传承中走出来的，具有深厚的历史渊源和广泛的现实基础。

2.2.1 A Journey has Obstacles

[2018.2] In the future we are certain to face all sorts of risks and challenges, and even be met with stormy seas such that we cannot yet imagine.

未来必定会面临这样那样的风险挑战，甚至会遇到难以想象的惊涛骇浪。

[2019.1] On our journey to realise the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we need to maintain our spirit of hard struggle, as we are sure to meet with arduous tasks, difficulties and obstacles, and rough seas.

在实现中华民族伟大复兴的新征程上，必然会有艰巨繁重的任务，必然会有艰难险阻甚至惊涛骇浪，特别需要我们发扬艰苦奋斗精神。

[2019.1] Overgrown with brambles and full of bumps

The road of struggle will not be a smooth one; our path will often be overgrown with brambles and full of bumps.

奋斗的道路不会一帆风顺，往往荆棘丛生、充满坎坷。

[2018.2] It is because we have always upheld the centralised, unified leadership of the Party that we have been able to successfully . . . conquer countless difficulties and obstacles.

It is because we have always upheld the centralised, unified leadership of the Party that we have been able to successfully combat a series of major risks and challenges and conquer countless difficulties and obstacles.

正是因为始终坚持党的集中统一领导，我们才能实现伟大历史转折、开启改革开放新时期和中华民族伟大复兴新征程，才能成功应对一系列重大风险挑战、克服无数艰难险阻。

[2012.3] Great difficulties

Looking at the present, all Party members must bear in mind that the path we take determines our destiny and that we must resolutely keep to the right path that we have found through great difficulties.

展望未来，全党同志必须牢记，要把蓝图变为现实，还有很长的路要走，需要我们付出长期艰苦的努力。

[2012.3] The right path . . . [of] socialism with Chinese characteristics

Having reviewed our historical experience and made painstaking efforts to probe our way forward in the past 30 years and more since the reform and opening-up process was started, we have finally embarked on the right path to achieve the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and made impressive achievements in this pursuit. This path is one for building socialism with Chinese characteristics.

改革开放以来，我们总结历史经验，不断艰辛探索，终于找到了实现中华民族伟大复兴的正确道路，取得了举世瞩目的成果。这条道路就是中国特色社会主义。

2.2.2 A Guide Leads a Journey along the Correct Route

[2012.2] Our Party will rally and lead the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in marching along the path of Chinese socialism.

我们党团结带领全国各族人民沿着中国特色社会主义道路继续前进。

2.2.3 HISTORY IS A PATH

[2018.2] Establishing a strong, modern socialist country and realising the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is a relay race. We must run each leg of the race one after another, with each generation posting a good time for the next.

建成社会主义现代化强国，实现中华民族伟大复兴，是一场接力跑，我们要一棒接着一棒跑下去，每一代人都要为下一代人跑出一个好成绩。

2.3 Roles of the Party and the People

2.3.1 The Party

[2013.2] The CPC is the central force for leading and bringing together people of all ethnic groups in advancing the great cause of building Chinese socialism. It shoulders a historical mission and faces the tests of our times.

中国共产党是领导和团结全国各族人民建设中国特色社会主义伟大事业的核心力量，肩负着历史重任，经受着时代考验。

2.3.1.2 Endorsements of the CCP

[2017.1] We must live up to the trust the people have placed in us and prove ourselves worthy of history's choice.

我们要不负人民重托、无愧历史选择。

[2016.2] Party always stands with and maintains its bond with the people.

Through a routine, meticulous, and sustained effort, we must improve the conduct of the CPC in all respects and ensure that the Party always stands with and maintains its bond with the people.

坚持抓常、抓细、抓长，使党的作风全面好起来，确保党始终同人民同呼吸、共命运、心连心。

[2016.1] There is an old saying: "The water that keeps a ship afloat can also upset it." This is something we must never ever forget. The people are the skies above us, and the earth below us. If we forget the people, and become distanced from them, we will lose our support, like a river with no headwater or a tree with no roots.

“水能载舟，亦能覆舟。”这个道理我们必须牢记，任何时候都不能忘却。老百姓是天，老百姓是地。忘记了人民，脱离了人民，我们就会成为无源之水、无本之木，就会一事无成。

2.3.2 The People

[2012.1] The people are the creators of history. They are the real heroes and the source of our strength.

人民是历史的创造者，群众是真正的英雄。人民群众是我们力量的源泉。

Appendix 3. Xi Jinping Speech Translations

A total of twenty-three speeches given by Xi Jinping were analysed in this project. Four of these speeches did not have an English translation available at the time of writing. These four speeches I translated myself.

The full texts of the speeches cited in the thesis as [2014.6], [2018.2], [2019.1], and [2019.2] are produced below.

The translation is my own unless otherwise acknowledged.

Special thanks to Janos Batten, Tony Edwards and Dr Shengyu Fan for assistance.

A3.1 [2014.6] 123

'Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Establishment of the National People's Congress'

在庆祝全国人民代表大会成立六十周年大会上的讲话

September 5, 2014

A3.2 [2018.2] 150

'Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of Reform and Opening Up'

在庆祝改革开放 40 周年大会上的讲话

December 18, 2018

A3.3 [2019.1] 193

'Address at the Ceremony to Commemorate the Centenary of the May Fourth Movement'

在纪念五四运动 100 周年大会上的讲话

April 30, 2019

A3.4 [2019.2] 216

'Address at the Grand Rally to Celebrate the Seventieth Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China'

在庆祝中华人民共和国成立 70 周年大会上的讲话

October 1, 2019

A3.1 [2014.6]

Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Establishment of the National People's Congress

Translated December 2019

在庆祝全国人民代表大会成立六十周年

大会上的讲话

2014年9月5日

习近平

Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Establishment of the National People's Congress

September 5, 2014

Xi Jinping

同志们，朋友们：

60年前，我们人民共和国的缔造者们，同经过普选产生的1200多名全国人大代表一道，召开了第一届全国人民代表大会第一次会议，通过了《中华人民共和国宪法》，从此建立起中华人民共和国的根本政治制度——人民代表大会制度。中国这样一个有5000多年文明史、几亿人口的国家建立起人民当家作主的新型政治制度，在中国政治发展史乃至世界政治发展史上都是具有划时代意义的。

Comrades and friends,

Sixty years ago, the founders of our People's Republic—over 1,200 national deputies selected through general elections—convened the first session of the First National People's Congress (NPC). The deputies passed the 'Constitution of the People's Republic of China' and so established the NPC as the basic political system of the People's Republic of China (PRC). China, a country with a history of over 5,000 years of civilisation and a population of several

hundred million people at that time, established a new kind of political system in which the people are the masters of their own country. This was a moment of epoch-making significance in China and the world's political history.

今天，我们在这里隆重集会，庆祝全国人民代表大会成立60周年，就是要回顾人民代表大会制度建立和发展的历程，坚定中国特色社会主义道路自信、理论自信、制度自信，在新的历史起点上坚持和完善人民代表大会制度，更好组织和动员全国各族人民为实现“两个一百年”奋斗目标、实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦而奋斗。

Today, we are solemnly gathered here to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NPC. We will look back over the journey of the establishment and development of the NPC and reaffirm our confidence in the path, the theory and the system of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'. Today, poised at a new historic starting point, we will continue to uphold and improve the NPC model, and better mobilise the Chinese people of all ethnic groups to achieve the 'Two Centenary Goals' and the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

同志们、朋友们！

在中国建立什么样的政治制度，是近代以后中国人民面临的一个历史性课题。为解决这一历史性课题，中国人民进行了艰辛探索。

Comrades and friends,

What kind of political system should China establish? This was the historic question that the Chinese people faced in modern times. The question the Chinese people have gone through arduous explorations in order to answer.

1840年鸦片战争后，中国逐步成为半殖民地半封建社会。那个时代，为了挽救民族危亡、实现民族振兴，中国人民和无数仁人志士孜孜不倦寻找着适合国情的政治制度模式。辛亥革命之前，太平天国运动、洋务运动、戊戌变法、义和团运动、清末新政等都未能取得成功。辛亥革命之后，

¹ The 'Two Centenary Goals' for building socialism with Chinese characteristics were proposed by the CPC at its Eighteenth National Congress in 2012. The two goals are: to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the centenary of the CPC (founded in 1921), and to build China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, and harmonious by the centenary of the PRC (founded in 1949). (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 76)

中国尝试过君主立宪制、帝制复辟、议会制、多党制、总统制等各种形式，各种政治势力及其代表人物纷纷登场，都没能找到正确答案，中国依然是山河破碎、积贫积弱，列强依然在中国横行霸道、攫取利益，中国人民依然生活在苦难和屈辱之中。

After the First Opium War in 1840, China gradually degenerated into a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. At that time, Chinese people and countless individuals with lofty ideals were assiduously searching for a political model that would suit China's national conditions. Prior to the Xinhai Revolution (1911), not one of the Taiping Rebellion (1851–1864), Self-Strengthening Movement (1861–1894), Hundred Days Reform (1898), Boxer Rebellion (1900) or new policy measures at the turn of the 20th century was able to achieve success. After the Xinhai Revolution, China experimented with various political models, including a constitutional monarchy, revived imperial regime, parliamentary system, multiparty system and presidential system. Various political forces and political representatives rose to prominence one after another, yet none could find the right answer. China was still poor and weak, a country broken up and torn apart; the imperialist powers were still tyrannising China, plundering the country for profit; and the Chinese people were still living abject, humiliating lives.

事实证明，不触动旧的社会根基的自强运动，各种名目的改良主义，旧式农民战争，资产阶级革命派领导的民主主义革命，照搬西方政治制度模式的各种方案，都不能完成中华民族救亡图存和反帝反封建的历史任务，都不能让中国的政局和社会稳定下来，也都谈不上为中国实现国家富强、人民幸福提供制度保障。

Facts have proven that not one of the Self-Strengthening Movement, various manifestations of reformism, old-style peasant warfare or the democratic revolution led by the revolutionary capitalist class was able to uproot the foundations of the old society. All were based on Western political models, and so could not save the nation from disaster and ensure its survival, nor could they complete China's historical mission to oppose imperialism and feudalism. None was able to stabilise China's political and social turbulence, and none could fulfil promises to establish a system that would allow China to become a prosperous and strong nation and its people to live in happiness and contentment.

在中国人民顽强前行的伟大斗争中，中国共产党诞生了。自成立之日起，中国共产党就以实现中国人民当家作主和中华民族伟大复兴为己任，为“索我理想之中华”矢志不渝，“唤起工农千百万”，进行艰苦卓绝的革命

斗争，终于彻底推翻了帝国主义、封建主义、官僚资本主义三座大山，建立了人民当家作主的新中国，亿万中国人民从此成为国家和社会的主人。这一伟大历史事件，从根本上改变了近代以后中国内忧外患、任人宰割的悲惨命运。

The Communist Party of China (CPC) was forged in the Chinese people's great, tenacious struggle for progress. Since the day of its founding, the CPC has undergone the most arduous struggle in order to fulfil its mission to make the Chinese people the masters of their own destiny and realise the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. The CPC has pledged its devotion to the task of securing our ideal China and inspired millions of workers and peasants to finally overcome the three great mountains of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism and establish a 'New China'—a China ruled by the people. Since then, the hundreds of millions of Chinese people have become the masters of the country and society. This momentous historical event completely transformed the miserable fate of foreign exploitation and domestic turmoil that China had endured through the modern era.

中国共产党领导中国人民取得革命胜利后，国家政权应该怎样组织？国家应该怎样治理？这是一个关系国家前途、人民命运的根本性问题。经过实践探索和理论思考，中国共产党人找到了答案。早在1940年，毛泽东同志就说到：“没有适当形式的政权机关，就不能代表国家。中国现在可以采取全国人民代表大会、省人民代表大会、县人民代表大会、区人民代表大会直到乡人民代表大会的系统，并由各级代表大会选举政府。”

After the CPC led the Chinese people to victory in the revolution, the question was then how should state power be organised in China? How should the country be governed? This was a fundamental issue pertaining to the future of the nation and the fate of the people. Through practical explorations and theoretical deliberations, CPC members found the answer. As early as 1940, Comrade Mao Zedong said, "There is no state which does not have an appropriate apparatus of political power to represent it. China may now adopt a system of people's congresses, from the national people's congress down to the provincial, county, district and township people's congresses, with all levels electing their respective governmental bodies."²

新中国的诞生，为中国人民把这一构想付诸实践奠定了前提、创造了条件。1949年9月，具有临时宪法地位的《中国人民政治协商会议共同纲

² Mao Zedong, "On New Democracy," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. 2 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965).

领》庄严宣告，新中国实行人民代表大会制度。1954年9月，一届全国人大一次会议通过的《中华人民共和国宪法》明确规定：“中华人民共和国的一切权力属于人民。人民行使权力的机关是全国人民代表大会和地方各级人民代表大会。”

The birth of New China established the prerequisites and conditions for the Chinese people to put this idea into practice. In September 1949, a provisional constitution entitled 'The Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference' (CPPCC) was adopted. It solemnly proclaimed that New China would establish a system of people's congresses. In September 1954, 'The Constitution of the People's Republic of China' was adopted at the first session of the First NPC. It stipulated that: "All power in the People's Republic of China belongs to the people. The National People's Congress and the local people's congresses at various levels are the organs through which the people exercise state power."

在中国实行人民代表大会制度，是中国人民在人类政治制度史上的伟大创造，是深刻总结近代以后中国政治生活惨痛教训得出的基本结论，是中国社会100多年激越变革、激荡发展的历史结果，是中国人民翻身作主、掌握自己命运的必然选择。

In the political history of mankind, the implementation of the system of people's congresses in China is a great creation of the Chinese people. It is the basic conclusion drawn from the bitter lessons of China's political experiences in modern times. It is the historical result of over a hundred years of great changes and developments in Chinese society, and the inevitable choice of the Chinese people to stand up and become masters of their own fate.

60年来特别是改革开放30多年来，人民代表大会制度不断得到巩固和发展，展现出蓬勃生机活力。60年的实践充分证明，人民代表大会制度是符合中国国情和实际、体现社会主义国家性质、保证人民当家作主、保障实现中华民族伟大复兴的好制度。邓小平同志曾经说过：“我们实行的就是全国人民代表大会一院制，这最符合中国实际。如果政策正确，方向正确，这种体制益处很大，很有助于国家的兴旺发达，避免很多牵扯。”江泽民同志强调：人民代表大会制度“是我们党长期进行人民政权建设的经验总结，也是我们党对国家事务实施领导的一大特色和优势”。胡锦涛同

志也指出：“人民代表大会制度是中国人民当家作主的重要途径和最高实现形式，是中国社会主义政治文明的重要制度载体。”

In the past 60 years, particularly since the launch of 'reform and opening up' more than 30 years ago, the system of people's congresses has been continuously strengthened and developed, showcasing its immense vitality. Sixty years of practice have fully proved that the system of people's congresses is a good system that conforms to the national conditions and realities of China, reflects the nature of a socialist country, ensures the people are the masters of the country, and guarantees the realisation of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Comrade Deng Xiaoping once said, "We have a unicameral legislature, the National People's Congress, which best conforms to China's realities. As long as it keeps to the right policies and direction, such a legislative body helps greatly to make the country prosper and to avoid much wrangling."³ Comrade Jiang Zemin stressed that the system of people's congresses "is the crystallisation of our Party's long experience in developing the state power of the people, as well as a unique feature and advantage of the way the Party directs state affairs."⁴ Comrade Hu Jintao has also pointed out that, "the system of people's congresses forms the key means and most practical realisation of making the Chinese people the masters of the country. It is also a major institutional carrier of China's socialist political civilisation."⁵

在新的奋斗征程上，必须充分发挥人民代表大会制度的根本政治制度作用，继续通过人民代表大会制度牢牢把国家和民族前途命运掌握在人民手中。这是时代赋予我们的光荣任务。

On our new journey of struggle, we must give full play to the role of people's congresses as China's fundamental political system. We must also continue to put the future of our country and fate of our nation in the hands of the people through the people's congresses. This is a glorious task bestowed on us by the times.

同志们、朋友们！

在中国，发展社会主义民主政治，保证人民当家作主，保证国家政治生活既充满活力又安定有序，关键是要坚持党的领导、人民当家作主、依

³ Deng Xiaoping, "Speech at a Meeting with the Members of the Committee for Drafting the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region," *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping*, vol. 1 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1995).

⁴ Jiang Zemin, "Adhere To and Improve the System of People's Congresses," *Selected Works of Jiang Zemin*, vol. 1 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2010).

⁵ Hu Jintao 胡锦涛, "Zai shoudu gejie jinian Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui chengli 50 zhounian dahui shang de jianghua" 在首都各界纪念全国人民代表大会成立 50 周年大会上的讲话 [Speech to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the National People's Congress], September 15, 2004. Translation is my own.

法治国有机的统一。人民代表大会制度是坚持党的领导、人民当家作主、依法治国有机统一的根本制度安排。

Comrades and friends,

The key to developing socialist democracy in China, safeguarding the position of the people as masters of the country, and ensuring our country's political life is stable and vibrant, is to uphold the unity of the leadership of the Party, the position of the people as masters of the country and the rule of law. The basic institutional structure by which this is achieved is the system of people's congresses.

——坚持和完善人民代表大会制度，必须毫不动摇坚持中国共产党的领导。中国共产党的领导是中国特色社会主义最本质的特征。没有共产党，就没有新中国，就没有新中国的繁荣富强。坚持中国共产党这一坚强领导核心，是中华民族的命运所系。中国共产党的领导，就是支持和保证人民实现当家作主。我们必须坚持党总揽全局、协调各方的领导核心作用，通过人民代表大会制度，保证党的路线方针政策和决策部署在国家工作中得到全面贯彻和有效执行。要支持和保证国家政权机关依照宪法法律积极主动、独立负责、协调一致开展工作。要不断加强和改善党的领导，善于使党的主张通过法定程序成为国家意志，善于使党组织推荐的人选通过法定程序成为国家政权机关的领导人员，善于通过国家政权机关实施党对国家和社会的领导，善于运用民主集中制原则维护党和国家权威、维护全党全国团结统一。

To uphold and improve the system of people's congresses, we must unwaveringly uphold the leadership of the CPC. The leadership of the CPC is the most essential feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Without the Communist Party, there would be no New China, and certainly no prosperous and strong New China. Upholding the strong leadership core of the CPC is the destiny of the Chinese nation. CPC leadership supports and guarantees the people's position as the masters of the country. We must adhere to the Party's core leadership role of exercising leadership of the overall situation and coordinating the efforts of all. We must ensure that the Party line, policies and decisions are fully and effectively implemented in the work of the state through the system of people's congresses. We should support the organs of state power and ensure they carry out their work in a proactive, independent and coordinated manner in accordance with the Constitution and the law. We should continue to strengthen and improve Party leadership. We should be adept at using

legal procedures to turn the Party's propositions into the will of the state and to train candidates recommended by Party organisations to become leaders of state organs. We should be adept at providing Party leadership over the country and society through state organs, and make good use of the principle of democratic centralism to safeguard both Party and state authority, and the unity of the entire Party and country.

——坚持和完善人民代表大会制度，必须保证和发展人民当家作主。

人民当家作主是社会主义民主政治的本质和核心。人民民主是社会主义的生命。没有民主就没有社会主义，就没有社会主义的现代化，就没有中华民族伟大复兴。我们必须坚持国家一切权力属于人民，坚持人民主体地位，支持和保证人民通过人民代表大会行使国家权力。要扩大人民民主，健全民主制度，丰富民主形式，拓宽民主渠道，从各层次各领域扩大公民有序政治参与，发展更加广泛、更加充分、更加健全的人民民主。国家各项工作都要贯彻党的群众路线，密切同人民群众的联系，倾听人民呼声，回应人民期待，不断解决好人民最关心最直接最现实的利益问题，凝聚起最广大人民智慧和力量。

To uphold and improve the system of people's congresses, we must guarantee and advance the people as the masters of the country. That the people are the masters of the country is the essence and core of socialist democracy. People's democracy is the life of socialism. Without democracy, there will be no socialism, there will be no socialist modernisation, and there will be no rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. We must ensure that all state power belongs to the people, uphold the position of the people as masters of the country, and support and safeguard the people's exercise of state power through the people's congresses. We should expand and improve the system of people's democracy, diversify its forms and open up its channels, and expand citizens' orderly political participation at all levels and in all fields in order to make people's democracy more extensive, fuller in scope and sounder in practice. All state work must implement the Party's mass lines; maintain close ties with the people; heed their voices; meet their expectations; continue to resolve the issues of greatest concern, immediacy, and relevance to their interests; and finally gather the wisdom and strength of the great majority of people.

——坚持和完善人民代表大会制度，必须全面推进依法治国。发展人民民主必须坚持依法治国、维护宪法法律权威，使民主制度化、法律化，使这种制度和法律不因领导人的改变而改变，不因领导人的看法和注意力

的改变而改变。宪法是国家的根本法，坚持依法治国首先要坚持依宪治国，坚持依法执政首先要坚持依宪执政。我们必须坚持把依法治国作为党领导人民治理国家的基本方略、把法治作为治国理政的基本方式，不断把法治中国建设推向前进。要通过人民代表大会制度，弘扬社会主义法治精神，依照人民代表大会及其常委会制定的法律法规来展开和推进国家各项事业和各项工作，保证人民平等参与、平等发展权利，维护社会公平正义，尊重和保障人权，实现国家各项工作法治化。

To uphold and improve the system of people's congresses, we must comprehensively advance law-based governance. Developing people's democracy necessitates that we govern the country according to the law and safeguard the legal authority of the Constitution so as to strengthen the institutional and legal basis of democracy and prevent such systems and laws from changing due to either leadership changes or differences in leaders' views and priorities. The Constitution is the fundamental law of the state. In essence, governing the country by law is governing by the Constitution, and exercising state power in accordance with the law is exercising state power in accordance with the Constitution. We must uphold governing the country according to the law as the fundamental principle by which the Party leads the people in running the country and our basic means of running the country. We must continue to press ahead with the construction of rule of law in China. We should promote the spirit of the socialist rule of law through the system of people's congresses, implement and promote national initiatives and tasks in accordance with laws and regulations formulated by people's congresses and their standing committees, ensure the people's equal rights to participate in governance and develop themselves, maintain social equity and social justice, respect and safeguard human rights, and enact the rule of law in all state initiatives.

——坚持和完善人民代表大会制度，必须坚持民主集中制。民主集中制是中国国家组织形式和活动方式的基本原则。人民代表大会统一行使国家权力，全国人民代表大会是最高国家权力机关，地方各级人民代表大会是地方国家权力机关。我们必须坚持人民通过人民代表大会行使国家权力；各级人民代表大会都由民主选举产生，对人民负责、受人民监督；各级国家行政机关、审判机关、检察机关都由人民代表大会产生，对人大负责、受人大监督；国家机关实行决策权、执行权、监督权既有合理分工又有

相互协调；在中央统一领导下，充分发挥地方主动性和积极性，保证国家统一高效组织推进各项事业。

To uphold and improve the system of people's congresses, we must adhere to democratic centralism. Democratic centralism is the fundamental principle of state organisation and activity in China. The people's congresses exercise state power, with the NPC the highest organ of state power and local people's congresses at all levels the local organs of state power. We must ensure that the people exercise state power through the people's congresses and that people's congresses at all levels are democratically elected, supervised by and accountable to the people. We must ensure that state administrative organs, judicial organs and procuratorial organs at all levels are elected by, supervised by and accountable to the people's congresses and that the decision-making, executive and oversight powers of state organs have a reasonable division of responsibilities and coordinate well with one another. We must also give free rein to local initiative and enthusiasm under the unified leadership of the central government to ensure that government agencies organise all undertakings concertedly and efficiently.

同志们、朋友们！

人民代表大会制度是中国特色社会主义制度的重要组成部分，也是支撑中国国家治理体系和治理能力的根本政治制度。新形势下，我们要毫不动摇坚持人民代表大会制度，也要与时俱进完善人民代表大会制度。当前和今后一个时期，要着重抓好以下几个重要环节的工作。

Comrades and friends,

The system of people's congresses is an important part of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the fundamental political system that supports China's national governance system and governance capacity. In the new circumstances, we must unwaveringly adhere to the system of people's congresses and continue to make improvements so as to keep abreast of the times. At present and in the future, we must focus on the following important aspects of our work:

第一，加强和改进立法工作。“国无常强，无常弱。奉法者强则国强，奉法者弱则国弱。”经过长期努力，中国特色社会主义法律体系已经形成，我们国家和社会生活各方面总体上实现了有法可依，这是我们取得的重大成就，也是我们继续前进的新起点。形势在发展，时代在前进，法律体系必须随着时代和实践发展而不断发展。

First, we must strengthen and improve legislative work. As an ancient Chinese proverb says, "No country is permanently strong. Nor is any country permanently weak. If conformers to law are strong, the country is strong; if conformers to law are weak, the country is weak."⁶ Through long-term efforts, a socialist legal system with Chinese characteristics has been formed, so we have laws to abide by in all aspects of state and social life. This is a great achievement and a new starting point from which to forge ahead. As the situation unfolds and the times advance, it is imperative that the legal system continues to develop along with the times and practice.

我们要加强重要领域立法，确保国家发展、重大改革于法有据，把发展改革决策同立法决策更好结合起来。要坚持问题导向，提高立法的针对性、及时性、系统性、可操作性，发挥立法引领和推动作用。要抓住提高立法质量这个关键，深入推进科学立法、民主立法，完善立法体制和程序，努力使每一项立法都符合宪法精神、反映人民意愿、得到人民拥护。

We should strengthen legislation in key areas, ensure all national development and major reforms have a legal basis, and better integrate decisions on legislative policy with those on development and reform. We should take a problem-oriented approach, make legislation more targeted, timely, systematic and workable, and allow it to play a guiding and driving role. We should seize the opportunity to make legislation more scientific and democratic. This is the key to raising the quality of legislation. We should improve the legislative system and procedures and strive to ensure all legislation is in the spirit of the Constitution, reflects the people's aspirations and wins their support.

第二，加强和改进法律实施工作。法律的生命力在于实施，法律的权威也在于实施。“法令行则国治，法令弛则国乱。”各级国家行政机关、审判机关、检察机关是法律实施的重要主体，必须担负法律实施的法定职责，坚决纠正有法不依、执法不严、违法不究现象，坚决整治以权谋私、以权压法、徇私枉法问题，严禁侵犯群众合法权益。

Second, we must strengthen and improve implementation of the law. The life of the law is in its implementation, as is its authority. As an old Chinese proverb goes, "When laws and decrees are enforced, the state is in order; when laws and decrees are relaxed, the state is in

⁶ Han Fei, "Having Regulations: A Memorial," in *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzu: A Classic of Chinese Political Science*, book 2, trans. W. K. Liao (London: Arthur Probsthain, 1959).

disorder."⁷ State administrative, judicial and procuratorial bodies at all levels are important for implementing the law, and so must bear statutory responsibility for implementing laws, rectifying any failures to abide by or enforce laws, and ensuring lawbreakers are brought to justice. They must resolutely rectify any abuses of power for personal gain or to defy the law, correct instances of bending the law to favour one's relatives and friends, and strictly prohibit any infringement on the legitimate rights and interests of the masses.

我们要全面落实依法治国基本方略，坚持法律面前人人平等，加快建设社会主义法治国家，不断推进科学立法、严格执法、公正司法、全民守法进程。要深入推进依法行政，加快建设法治政府。各级行政机关必须依法履行职责，坚持法定职责必须为、法无授权不可为，决不允许任何组织或者个人有超越法律的特权。要深入推进公正司法，深化司法体制改革，加快建设公正高效权威的司法制度，完善人权司法保障制度，严肃惩治司法腐败，让人民群众在每一个司法案件中都感受到公平正义。

We should fully implement the basic strategy of governing the country according to the law. We should ensure that all citizens are equal before the law and accelerate the construction of a socialist country built on the rule of law. We should continue to make laws in a scientific manner, enforce them strictly, administer justice impartially and ensure all people abide by the law. We should further promote law-based administration and accelerate the building of law-based government. Administrative organs at all levels must perform their duties in accordance with the law, adhere to statutory obligations, act only with the authority of the law, and certainly never allow any organisation or individual to have extralegal privileges. We should promote impartial administration of justice, deepen reforms of the judicial structure, accelerate the establishment of a judicial system that is fair, efficient and authoritative, strengthen judicial safeguards on human rights, severely punish judicial corruption, and ensure people feel that justice is served in every legal case.

第三，加强和改进监督工作。人民的眼睛是雪亮的，人民是无所不在的监督力量。只有让人民来监督政府，政府才不会懈怠；只有人人起来负责，才不会人亡政息。人民代表大会制度的重要原则和制度设计的基本要求，就是任何国家机关及其工作人员的权力都要受到制约和监督。

⁷ Wang Fu 王符, "Shu she" 述赦 [Amnesties], in *Qianfu lun* 潜夫论 [*Comments of a recluse*], *Sibu congkan chubian* ed. 四部丛刊初编本 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, Minguo 25, 1936). Thanks to Tony Edwards for assistance with the translation.

Third, we must strengthen and improve oversight. The people's eyes are sharp. Their gaze is omnipresent. Only by accepting the people's supervision will the government not slacken in its duties. Only by letting the people take responsibility can the good work of the government carry on through changes in leadership. A major principle of the system of people's congresses and a basic requirement of the system's design is that the power of any administrative organ and its personnel are subject to institutional checks and supervision.

各级人大及其常委会要担负起宪法法律赋予的监督职责，维护国家法制统一、尊严、权威，加强对“一府两院”执法、司法工作的监督，确保法律法规得到有效实施，确保行政权、审判权、检察权得到正确行使。地方人大及其常委会要依法保证宪法法律、行政法规和上级人大及其常委会决议在本行政区域内得到遵守和执行。要加强党纪监督、行政监察、审计监督、司法监督和国家机关内部各种形式的纪律监督。要拓宽人民监督权力的渠道，公民对于任何国家机关和国家工作人员有提出批评和建议的权利，对于任何国家机关和国家工作人员的违法失职行为有向有关国家机关提出申诉、控告或者检举的权利。要健全申诉控告检举机制，加强检察监督，切实做到有权必有责、用权受监督、侵权要赔偿、违法必追究。

People's congresses and their standing committees at all levels should fulfill the supervisory responsibilities entrusted to them by the Constitution and the law; uphold the unity, sanctity and authority of the country's legal institutions; strengthen oversight of law enforcement and the judicial work of 'One Government, Two Courts'⁸; ensure laws and regulations are effectively implemented; and safeguard the proper exercise of executive, judicial and procuratorial authority. Local people's congresses and their standing committees should make sure that the Constitution, laws, administrative regulations, and higher level people's congresses' and their standing committees' resolutions are observed and enforced in their respective administrative areas. We should strengthen supervision over Party discipline, administrative work, audits, the judiciary, and various disciplinary measures within state organs. We should broaden the people's channels of oversight and ensure that citizens have the right to raise criticisms, make suggestions, appeal against, lodge complaints about or report any relevant state organ or its staff for transgressions of the law or dereliction of duty. We should improve mechanisms to make appeals, complaints and reports, strengthen procuratorial oversight, make sure that the exercise of power is responsible and subject to oversight, and further ensure that any infringements are compensated and violations of the law are investigated.

⁸ 'One Government, Two Courts' refers to the People's Government, the People's Court and the People's Procuratorate.

一个政党，一个政权，其前途命运取决于人心向背。人民群众反对什么、痛恨什么，我们就要坚决防范和打击。人民群众最痛恨腐败现象，我们就必须坚定不移反对腐败。要坚持用制度管权管事管人，抓紧形成不想腐、不能腐、不敢腐的有效机制，让人民监督权力，让权力在阳光下运行，把权力关进制度的笼子里。要坚持“老虎”、“苍蝇”一起打，坚持有腐必反、有贪必肃，下最大气力解决腐败问题，努力营造风清气正的党风政风和社会风气，不断以反腐倡廉的新成效取信于民。

The future and fate of a political party and a political regime hinges on winning or losing popular support. We must resolutely prevent and crack down on whatever the people are against and whatever they detest. What the masses abhor most is corruption. We must stand firm in opposing corruption. We should use the system to manage power, affairs and people; and work hard to form an effective mechanism so that people neither want, are able to, nor dare to be corrupt. We must let the people supervise authority, ensure the light of the sun shines on the workings of power, and make sure power is caged by the system. We should persist in fighting both 'tigers' and 'flies' by fighting every instance of corruption and punishing every corrupt official. Then we should devote ourselves to resolving the problem of corruption by striving to make Party conduct, government conduct and social conduct clean and upright. By continuing to achieve new results in fighting corruption and promoting integrity, we will earn the people's trust.

第四，加强同人大代表和人民群众的联系。人民代表大会制度之所以具有强大生命力和显著优越性，关键在于它深深植根于人民之中。我们国家的名称，我们各级国家机关的名称，都冠以“人民”的称号，这是我们对中国社会主义政权的基本定位。中国260多万各级人大代表，都要忠实代表人民利益和意志，依法参加行使国家权力。各级国家机关及其工作人员，不论做何种工作，说到底都是为人民服务。这一基本定位，什么时候都不能含糊、不能淡化。

Fourth, we must strengthen ties between deputies to the people's congress and the masses. The reason why the system of people's congresses enjoys such tremendous vitality and remarkable superiority is because it is deeply rooted among the people. The name of our nation and the names of our state organs at all levels bear the title, 'the people'. This is our basic position on the Chinese socialist state. The deputies to people's congresses at all levels, over 2.6 million of them, should faithfully represent the interests and will of the people and

exercise state power in accordance with the law. In the final analysis, no matter what kind of work they do, state organs and their personnel at all levels exist to serve the people. This basic position must not be vague or diluted at any time.

各级国家机关加强同人大代表的联系、加强同人民群众的联系，是实行人民代表大会制度的内在要求，是人民对自己选举和委派代表的基本要求。各级国家机关及其工作人员一定要为人民用权、为人民履职、为人民服务，把加强同人大代表和人民群众的联系作为对人民负责、受人民监督的重要内容，虚心听取人大代表、人民群众意见和建议，积极回应社会关切，自觉接受人民监督，认真改正工作中的缺点和错误。

Organs of state power at all levels must strengthen their ties with people's congresses and with the masses—this is a requirement which is inherent to implementing the system of people's congresses and fundamental for the people to elect and appoint their own representatives. State organs at all levels and their personnel must serve the people, exercise power on behalf of the people and perform their duties for the people. Strengthening ties between deputies to the people's congresses and the masses is a key means of ensuring deputies are accountable to and supervised by the people. State organs must sincerely solicit opinions and suggestions from the masses and deputies to people's congresses, proactively respond to social concerns, actively accept the people's oversight and earnestly correct any shortcomings and errors in their work.

第五，加强和改进人大工作。新的形势和任务对各级人大及其常委会工作提出了更高要求。要按照总结、继承、完善、提高的原则，推进人民代表大会制度理论和实践创新，推动人大工作提高水平。

Fifth, we must strengthen and improve the work of people's congresses. The new situation and tasks before us impose higher demands on the work of people's congresses and their standing committees at all levels. We should promote theoretical and practical innovation of people's congresses with a focus on reviewing, continuing, refining and enhancing the system, and raise the standard of work done by people's congresses.

各级人大及其常委会要坚持正确政治方向，增强代表人民行使管理国家权力的政治责任感，履行宪法法律赋予的职责。要健全人大常委会组成人员联系本级人大代表机制，畅通社情民意反映和表达渠道，支持和保证人大代表依法履职，优化人大常委会、专门委员会组成人员结构，完善人

大组织制度、工作制度、议事程序。各级党委要加强和改善党对人大工作的领导，支持和保证人大及其常委会依法行使职权、开展工作。

People's congresses and their standing committees at all levels must keep to the correct political direction, strengthen their sense of political responsibility in managing the exercise of state power on behalf of the people, and fulfil the duties conferred on them by the Constitution and laws. We should improve the mechanism for standing committees to liaise with deputies to the people's congress at the same level, ensure there are unobstructed channels for reporting social conditions and expressing public opinions, support and ensure delegates perform their duties pursuant to the law, diversify the makeup of standing committees and special committees, and also improve the organisational, operational and procedural systems for people's congresses. Party committees at all levels should strengthen and improve Party leadership over the work of the people's congresses. They should also support people's congresses and their standing committees and ensure they exercise state power and function in accordance with the law.

同志们、朋友们！

人民民主是中国共产党始终高举的旗帜。在前进道路上，我们要坚定不移走中国特色社会主义政治发展道路，继续推进社会主义民主政治建设、发展社会主义政治文明。

Comrades and friends,

People's democracy is a brilliant banner that has always been held high by our Party. On our way forward, we should unwaveringly keep to the path of making socialist political advances with Chinese characteristics. We should continue to advance the building of socialist democracy and promote socialist political progress.

以什么样的思路来谋划和推进中国社会主义民主政治建设，在国家政治生活中具有管根本、管全局、管长远的作用。古今中外，由于政治发展道路选择错误而导致社会动荡、国家分裂、人亡政息的例子比比皆是。中国是一个发展中大国，坚持正确的政治发展道路更是关系根本、关系全局的重大问题。

The kind of thinking used to plan and promote the construction of China's socialist democracy plays a role in managing the fundamentals, long-term prospects and overall state of the country's political life. Whether in ancient times or modern, whether in China or abroad, we have seen countless examples of social unrest, national division and the fall of

governments being caused by erroneous choices in the path of political development. China is a large developing country. Adhering to the correct path of political development is a major issue of overall and fundamental concern.

设计和发展国家政治制度，必须注重历史和现实、理论和实践、形式和内容有机统一。要坚持从国情出发、从实际出发，既要把握长期形成的历史传承，又要把握走过的发展道路、积累的政治经验、形成的政治原则，还要把握现实要求、着眼解决现实问题，不能割断历史，不能想象突然就搬来一座政治制度上的“飞来峰”。政治制度是用来调节政治关系、建立政治秩序、推动国家发展、维护国家稳定的，不可能脱离特定社会政治条件来抽象评判，不可能千篇一律、归于一尊。在政治制度上，看到别的国家有而我们没有就简单认为有欠缺，要搬过来；或者，看到我们有而别的国家没有就简单认为是多余的，要去除掉。这两种观点都是简单化的、片面的，因而都是不正确的。

In designing and developing the national political system, we must focus on integrating history with reality, theory with practice, and form with substance. We should insist on proceeding from our national conditions and from reality. We should not only hold onto the long-standing heritage of our history but also keep to the development path we have traversed. We should hold onto the political experience we have accumulated and the political principles we have formulated. We should be realistic in both the requirements we maintain and the problems we focus on. We cannot cut ourselves off from history. We cannot suddenly shift a fully-fledged political system overnight like the legendary 'Feilai Peak'. A political system is used to regulate political relations, establish a political order, promote development and maintain the stability of a country. It is not possible to make abstract judgments of political systems without considering their specific social and political conditions, nor is it possible to impose a one-size-fits-all model. When we see that other countries have something that we don't, we naively think that our political system is missing something and we should adopt it. Or, when we see that we have something that other countries lack, we naively think that it must be unnecessary and we should do away with it. Both these views are simplistic and one-sided, and hence are both incorrect.

“橘生淮南则为橘，生于淮北则为枳”。我们需要借鉴国外政治文明有益成果，但绝不能放弃中国政治制度的根本。中国有960多万平方公里土

⁹ Located near the Lingyin Temple in Hangzhou, the Feilai Peak is a craggy limestone formation that stands out from the sandstone mountains around it. According to Buddhist legend, the peak was flown to Hangzhou from India, hence its name, the 'Peak Flown From Afar'.

地、56个民族，我们能照谁的模式办？谁又能指手画脚告诉我们该怎么办？对丰富多彩的世界，我们应该秉持兼容并蓄的态度，虚心学习他人的好东西，在独立自主的立场上把他人的好东西加以消化吸收，化成我们自己的好东西，但决不能囫圇吞枣、决不能邯郸学步。照抄照搬他国的政治制度行不通，会水土不服，会画虎不成反类犬，甚至会把国家前途命运葬送掉。只有扎根本国土壤、汲取充沛养分的制度，才最可靠、也最管用。

As a Chinese proverb goes, "When an orange tree is planted south of the Huai River it produces oranges as fruit, but if you transplant it north of the Huai River, it produces bitter oranges."¹⁰ That is to say, the nature of something will be changed by its environment. We should draw on the political achievements of other countries, but never abandon the fundamentals of China's political system. China has a territory of over 9.6 million square kilometres and a population made up of 56 ethnic groups. Which country would we model ourselves on? Who would be qualified to wag their finger at us and tell us what we should do? We should maintain an inclusive attitude towards diversity in the world. We should study the good things of others with an open mind, absorb them from an independent standpoint, and then make them our own. In saying that, we should neither swallow things wholesale without thinking, nor slavishly copy others and risk losing what we've got. Indiscriminately copying the political systems of other countries will not work. It would not suit our conditions, it would be an overambitious attempt resulting in failure, and would even put the fate and future of our nation in jeopardy. Only a political system that is rooted and fully nurtured in a country's own soil can be reliable and effective.

世界上不存在完全相同的政治制度，也不存在适用于一切国家的政治制度模式。“物之不齐，物之情也。”各国国情不同，每个国家的政治制度都是独特的，都是由这个国家的人民决定的，都是在这个国家历史传承、文化传统、经济社会发展的基础上长期发展、渐进改进、内生性演化的结果。中国特色社会主义政治制度之所以行得通、有生命力、有效率，就是因为它是从中国的社会土壤中生长起来的。中国特色社会主义政治制度过去和现在一直生长在中国的社会土壤之中，未来要继续茁壮成长，也必须深深扎根于中国的社会土壤。

There is no such thing in the world as two political systems that are completely identical, nor can there be a workable political model that applies to all countries. As the ancient sage

¹⁰ Yan Zi, "The Inner Chapters: Miscellaneous Tales, Part Two: 2.6.10," in *The Spring and Autumn Annals of Master Yan*, trans. Olivia Milburn (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

Mencius said, "It is the nature of things to be of unequal quality."¹¹ Each country has different national conditions and so each has a unique political system. The political system of each country is determined by its people and by being developed and gradually improved over a long period of time on the basis on its historical heritage, cultural traditions, and level of economic and social development. The reason why the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics works and has such great vitality and efficacy is because it has matured in Chinese soil over a long period of time. The system of socialism with Chinese characteristics has grown in the soil of Chinese society through the past and into the present. To continue to thrive in the future, it must stay deeply rooted in Chinese society.

同志们、朋友们！

评价一个国家政治制度是不是民主的、有效的，主要看国家领导层能否依法有序更替，全体人民能否依法管理国家事务和社会事务、管理经济和文化事业，人民群众能否畅通表达利益要求，社会各方面能否有效参与国家政治生活，国家决策能否实现科学化、民主化，各方面人才能否通过公平竞争进入国家领导和管理体系，执政党能否依照宪法法律规定实现对国家事务的领导，权力运用能否得到有效制约和监督。

Comrades and friends,

Appraising whether or not a country's political system is democratic and effective mainly depends on the following considerations: whether the nation's leadership has an orderly and law-based succession process; whether the populace can manage state and social affairs, as well as economic and cultural undertakings; whether the interests and demands of the masses can be freely expressed; whether all social sectors can effectively participate in the country's political life; whether national decision-making is scientific and democratic; whether talents from all walks of life can enter the system of national leadership and administration through fair competition; whether the ruling party can carry out leadership over state affairs in accordance with the Constitution and laws; and finally, whether the exercise of power is subject to effective checks and oversight.

经过长期努力，我们在解决这些重点问题上都取得了决定性进展。我们废除了实际上存在的领导干部职务终身制，普遍实行领导干部任期制度，实现了国家机关和领导层的有序更替。我们不断扩大人民有序政治参与，人民实现了内容广泛、层次丰富的当家作主。我们坚持发展最广泛的爱国统一战线，发展独具特色的社会主义协商民主，有效凝聚了各党派、各

¹¹ James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, *The Works of Mencius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895).

团体、各民族、各阶层、各界人士的智慧和力量。我们努力建设了解民情、反映民意、集中民智、珍惜民力的决策机制，增强决策透明度和公众参与度，保证了决策符合人民利益和愿望。我们积极发展广纳群贤、充满活力的选人用人机制，广泛把各方面优秀人才集聚到党和国家各项事业中来。我们坚持依法治国、依法执政、依法行政共同推进，坚持法治国家、法治政府、法治社会一体建设，全社会法治水平不断提高。我们建立健全多层次监督体系，完善各类公开办事制度，保证党和国家领导机关和人员按照法定权限和程序行使权力。

Thanks to prolonged efforts, we have made decisive progress towards resolving these key issues. We have replaced lifelong terms for leading cadres with a tenure system and implemented an orderly succession process for leaders of state organs nationwide. We are continuing to expand people's orderly participation in political affairs so that the people's mastery of the country is achieved in broader and more diverse ways. We are developing the broadest possible patriotic united front and a unique socialist consultative democracy that effectively consolidates the wisdom and strength of all political parties, organisations, ethnic groups, social strata, and people of all circles in China. We are working hard to build a mechanism of decision-making that understands popular sentiments, reflects popular opinion, pools the people's wisdom and values people power in order to increase the transparency of decision-making and the public's level of participation in political affairs, and further ensure that decisions align with the interests and aspirations of the people. We are actively developing a dynamic mechanism of personnel appointment that selects from the breadth of talent available and gathers outstanding talented people from all walks of life into the service of the Party and the country. We will persist with jointly promoting the governance, exercise of power, and administration of the country in accordance with the law. We will also work to integrate the construction of a law-based country, government and society, which will raise the standard of law-based governance across the whole society. Establishing and strengthening a multi-layered system of supervision, and improving the transparency of administration, will ensure that Party and state leadership organs and their personnel exercise power in accordance with statutory mandates and procedures.

中国实行工人阶级领导的、以工农联盟为基础的人民民主专政的国体，实行人民代表大会制度的政体，实行中国共产党领导的多党合作和政治协商制度，实行民族区域自治制度，实行基层群众自治制度，具有鲜明的中国特色。这样一套制度安排，能够有效保证人民享有更加广泛、更加充实的权利和自由，保证人民广泛参加国家治理和社会治理；能够有效调节

国家政治关系，发展充满活力的政党关系、民族关系、宗教关系、阶层关系、海内外同胞关系，增强民族凝聚力，形成安定团结的政治局面；能够集中力量办大事，有效促进社会生产力解放和发展，促进现代化建设各项事业，促进人民生活质量和水平不断提高；能够有效维护国家独立自主，有力维护国家主权、安全、发展利益，维护中国人民和中华民族的福祉。

The systems that China implements—the state system of a socialist state under the people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based on the worker-peasant alliance, the system of government of the people's congresses, the system of multiparty cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC, the system of regional ethnic autonomy, and the system of community-level self-governance—all possess clear Chinese characteristics. This institutional structure effectively ensures that the people enjoy broader access to more substantial rights and privileges, and wider participation in management of state and social affairs. It effectively regulates political relations in the country and develops vibrant relationships amongst the Party, ethnic groups, religions, social strata and compatriots at home and abroad. It also strengthens national cohesion; creates a stable and unified political environment; concentrates our strength on major issues; and effectively promotes the liberation and development of the productive forces, the cause of modernisation, and the continual improvement in people's living standards and quality of life. Furthermore, this institutional structure effectively safeguards the country's sovereignty, security and development interests, and finally the wellbeing of the Chinese people and Chinese nation.

改革开放30多年来，中国经济实力、综合国力、人民生活水平不断跨上新台阶，我们不断战胜前进道路上各种世所罕见的艰难险阻，中国各民族长期共同团结奋斗、共同繁荣发展，中国社会长期保持和谐稳定。这些事实充分证明，中国社会主义民主政治具有强大生命力，中国特色社会主义政治发展道路是符合中国国情、保证人民当家作主的正确道路。

Since reform and opening up was launched over thirty years ago, China's economic strength, overall national strength and the people's living standards have all continued to reach new heights. On our way forward, we have overcome various difficulties and obstacles, the likes of which the world has rarely seen. The Chinese people of all ethnic groups have been working together for lasting common prosperity and development, and a stable and harmonious Chinese society. These facts have fully proved that China's socialist democracy has tremendous vitality and that the development path of socialism with Chinese characteristics is a correct path that conforms to China's national conditions and guarantees that the people are the masters of the country.

同志们、朋友们！

一个国家的政治制度决定于这个国家的经济社会基础，同时又反作用于这个国家的经济社会基础，乃至起到决定性作用。在一个国家的各种制度中，政治制度处于关键环节。所以，坚定中国特色社会主义制度自信，首先要坚定对中国特色社会主义政治制度的自信，增强走中国特色社会主义政治发展道路的信心和决心。

Comrades and friends,

A country's political system is both determined by and helps to determine its economic base and social foundation, even coming to play a decisive role in these matters. A country's political system is the key link between its various systems and structures. Thus, in order to maintain firm confidence in socialism with Chinese characteristics as a whole, we must first reinforce confidence in the political system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and also strengthen our confidence and determination to stick to the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics for our political development.

中国特色社会主义民主是个新事物，也是个好事物。当然，这并不是说，中国政治制度就完美无缺了，就不需要完善和发展了。制度自信不是自视清高、自我满足，更不是裹足不前、固步自封，而是要把坚定制度自信和不断改革创新统一起来，在坚持根本政治制度、基本政治制度的基础上，不断推进制度体系完善和发展。我们一直认为，我们的民主法治建设同扩大人民民主和经济社会发展的要求还不完全适应，社会主义民主政治的体制、机制、程序、规范以及具体运行上还存在不完善的地方，在保障人民民主权利、发挥人民创造精神方面也还存在一些不足，必须继续加以完善。在全面深化改革进程中，我们要积极稳妥推进政治体制改革，以保证人民当家作主为根本，以增强党和国家活力、调动人民积极性为目标，不断建设社会主义政治文明。

Socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics is something entirely new and good. Obviously, this is not to say that China's political system is already perfect, lacks shortcomings, and needs no further improvements or development. Having confidence in the

system does not mean thinking highly of oneself and being complacent, nor does it mean being stagnant and content with the status quo. It is, rather, about bringing together firm confidence in the system with continuous reform and innovation, and this is achieved by continuing to promote development and improvement while maintaining the basic political system as the foundation. We have always maintained that we have not yet fully met the requirements for building a democratic rule of law, for the expansion of people's democracy and for economic and social development. There are still imperfections in the system, mechanisms, procedures, norms and specific applications of socialist democracy. There are also still deficiencies in safeguarding the people's democratic rights and giving full play to the people's creative spirit—issues which we must continue to work to improve. In the process of comprehensively deepening reform, we should actively and steadily advance reform of the political system with our goals being to ensure the people are the masters of the country, increase the vitality of the Party and the country, and mobilise the people's enthusiasm so as to continue to make socialist political progress.

发展社会主义民主政治，是推进国家治理体系和治理能力现代化的题中应有之义。党的十八届三中全会提出的全面深化改革总目标，是两句话组成的一个整体，即完善和发展中国特色社会主义制度、推进国家治理体系和治理能力现代化。前一句规定了根本方向，我们的方向就是中国特色社会主义道路，而不是其他什么道路。后一句规定了在根本方向指引下完善和发展中国特色社会主义制度的鲜明指向。两句话都讲，才是完整的。

The development of socialist democracy is an integral part of modernising our national governance system and capacity. The general goal of comprehensively deepening reform that was proposed by the Third Plenary Session of the Eighteenth CPC Central Committee can be summed up in two sentences. The goal is, firstly, to develop and improve the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Secondly, it is to further modernise the national governance system and governance capabilities. The first sentence stipulates our basic direction as being the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics and not any other road. The second sentence lays out a clear path of how to develop and improve the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics under the guidance of the basic political direction. The general goal cannot be reduced to either one of these; it is complete only with both stipulations.

发展社会主义民主政治，关键是要增加和扩大我们的优势和特点，而不是要削弱和缩小我们的优势和特点。我们要坚持发挥党总揽全局、协调各方的领导核心作用，提高党科学执政、民主执政、依法执政水平，保证党领导人民有效治理国家，切实防止出现群龙无首、一盘散沙的现象。我

们要坚持国家一切权力属于人民，既保证人民依法实行民主选举，也保证人民依法实行民主决策、民主管理、民主监督，切实防止出现选举时漫天许诺、选举后无人过问的现象。我们要坚持和完善中国共产党领导的多党合作和政治协商制度，加强社会各种力量的合作协调，切实防止出现党争纷沓、相互倾轧的现象。我们要坚持和完善民族区域自治制度，巩固平等团结互助和谐的社会主义民族关系，促进各民族和睦相处、和衷共济、和谐发展，切实防止出现民族隔阂、民族冲突的现象。我们要坚持和完善基层群众自治制度，发展基层民主，保障人民依法直接行使民主权利，切实防止出现人民形式上有权、实际上无权的现象。我们要坚持和完善民主集中制的制度和原则，促使各类国家机关提高能力和效率、增进协调和配合，形成治国理政的强大合力，切实防止出现相互掣肘、内耗严重的现象。

The key to developing socialist democracy is to increase our superiority and broaden our advantages, and not to weaken our superiority and limit our advantages. We should ensure that the Party plays its core leadership role in exercising overall leadership and coordinating the efforts of all, and promote scientific and democratic governance that is in accordance with the law. This will ensure the Party leads the people in governing effectively, preventing the country from becoming 'a host of dragons without a head', its people disunited and unable to cooperate like 'a sheet of loose sand'.¹² We must ensure that all state power belongs to the people by enabling the people to carry out democratic elections, democratic decision-making, democratic administration and democratic supervision in accordance with the law, effectively preventing election candidates from promising the world and then failing to deliver. We should uphold and improve the system of multiparty cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC by strengthening cooperation and coordination across society, thereby preventing inter-party disputes and conflicts. We should uphold and develop the system of regional ethnic autonomy by consolidating socialist ethnic relations of equality, solidarity, mutual assistance and harmony, which will promote accord amongst all ethnic groups so they live and develop in harmony and prevent the emergence of ethnic divisions and ethnic conflict. We should uphold and improve the system of community-level self-governance by developing grassroots democracy and guaranteeing the people's direct exercise of democratic rights in accordance with the law, which will prevent the people from being powerful in theory but powerless in reality. We should adhere to the principles and improve the system of democratic centralism and urge all organs of state power to improve their capabilities, increase their efficiency, enhance their coordination and cooperation, and form a

¹² Describing the Chinese people as being like 'a sheet of loose sand' is a well-known saying of Dr Sun Yat-sen.

strong synergy in governing the country. Finally, we should prevent state organs from imposing constraints on and sowing discord among one another.

总之，我们要不断推进社会主义民主政治制度化、规范化、程序化，更好发挥中国特色社会主义政治制度的优越性，为党和国家兴旺发达、长治久安提供更加完善的制度保障。

In short, we should continue to institutionalise and standardise socialist democracy and make it more procedure-based. We should give more leverage to the advantages of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, providing a stronger institutional guarantee for the prosperity and long-term stability of the Party and the country.

同志们、朋友们！

60年一甲子。此时此刻，让我们一起来重温毛泽东同志60年前在第一届全国人民代表大会第一次会议上讲的一段话，他说：“我们有充分的信心，克服一切艰难困苦，将我国建设成为一个伟大的社会主义共和国。我们正在前进。我们正在做我们的前人从来没有做过的极其光荣伟大的事业。我们的目的一定要达到。我们的目的一定能够达到。”

Comrades and friends,

Sixty years have passed us by. Now, let us revisit a speech given by Comrade Mao Zedong 60 years ago at the first session of the first NPC. He said, "We are fully confident that we can overcome all difficulties and hardships and make our country a great socialist republic. We are advancing. We are now engaged in a great and most glorious cause, never undertaken by our forefathers. Our goal must be attained. Our goal can unquestionably be attained."¹³

当代中国共产党人和中国人民一定要把这个崇高使命担当起来，不断发展具有强大生命力的社会主义民主政治，在实现中国梦的伟大奋斗中，共同创造中国人民和中华民族更加幸福美好的未来，大家一起努力吧！

CPC members and Chinese people today must take on this lofty mission and continue developing a socialist democracy with great vitality. Together we will create a happier and

¹³ Mao Zedong, "Strive to Build a Great Socialist Country," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. 5 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1977).

better future for the Chinese people and the Chinese nation in our great struggle to achieve the Chinese Dream. Let us all work together!

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The referencing style employed here was selected to match the style in the official translated volumes of Xi Jinping's speeches, *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*.

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Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of Reform and Opening Up

Translated February 2020

在庆祝改革开放40周年大会上的讲话

2018年12月18日

习近平

Address at the Ceremony to Celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of Reform and Opening Up

December 18, 2018

Xi Jinping

同志们，朋友们：

1978年12月18日，在中华民族历史上，在中国共产党历史上，在中华人民共和国历史上，都必将是载入史册的重要日子。这一天，我们党召开十一届三中全会，实现新中国成立以来党的历史上具有深远意义的伟大转折，开启了改革开放和社会主义现代化的伟大征程。

Comrades and friends,

December 18th, 1978 is bound to go down as a momentous day in Chinese history, in the history of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and in the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC). On this day, our Party convened the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CPC.¹ This occasion marked a great turning point of far-reaching significance in all of our history since the founding of 'New China', as we embarked on a great journey of socialist modernisation and 'reform and opening up'.

¹ The Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CPC was convened in Beijing from December 18 to 22, 1978. At this plenary session, Marxism was reestablished as the guideline for the Party's ideological, political and organizational work. This plenary session also made the historic decision to shift the focus of the Party and state to economic development and to introduce the 'reform and opening up' initiative.

(Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 110).

今天，我们在这里隆重集会，回顾改革开放40年的光辉历程，总结改革开放的伟大成就和宝贵经验，动员全党全国各族人民在新时代继续把改革开放推向前进，为实现“两个一百年”奋斗目标、实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦不懈奋斗。

Now, we are solemnly gathered here today to look back on a glorious history of reform and opening up that spans four decades; to sum up the great achievements and valuable experiences we have gained in carrying out reform and opening up; and to mobilise the entire Party and Chinese people of all ethnic groups to continue to promote reform and opening up in the New Era, and make unremitting efforts to realise the 'Two Centenary Goals' and the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

同志们、朋友们！

党的十一届三中全会是在党和国家面临何去何从的重大历史关头召开的。当时，世界经济快速发展，科技进步日新月异，而“文化大革命”十年内乱导致我国经济濒临崩溃的边缘，人民温饱都成问题，国家建设百业待兴。党内外强烈要求纠正“文化大革命”的错误，使党和国家从危难中重新奋起。邓小平同志指出：“如果现在再不实行改革，我们的现代化事业和社会主义事业就会被葬送。”

Comrades and friends,

The Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CPC was held at a critical historical juncture for the Party and the country. At that time, economic development and scientific and technological advances were proceeding at a rapid pace around the globe. But, meanwhile, in China, the Cultural Revolution decade of civil strife (1966–1976) took China's economy to the brink of collapse, to the extent that feeding and clothing our people became a problem and all aspects of nation-building needed to be restored. It was strongly urged both within the Party and externally that the errors of the Cultural Revolution must be rectified so that the Party and the country could rise up out of their difficulties. Comrade Deng Xiaoping pointed out, "If we do not undertake reform, then our causes of modernisation and socialism will both be ruined."

在邓小平同志领导下和老一辈革命家支持下，党的十一届三中全会冲破长期“左”的错误的严重束缚，批评“两个凡是”的错误方针，充分肯定必

须完整、准确地掌握毛泽东思想的科学体系，高度评价关于真理标准问题的讨论，果断结束“以阶级斗争为纲”，重新确立马克思主义的思想路线、政治路线、组织路线。从此，我国改革开放拉开了大幕。

The Third Plenary Session—under the leadership of Comrade Deng Xiaoping and with the support of the elder generation of revolutionaries—broke free of the shackles that had chained them to 'Leftist' errors for a long time and criticised the erroneous policy of the 'Two Whatevers'.² At the same time, it fully confirmed the need to attain a complete and accurate mastery of the scientific system of Mao Zedong Thought. This decision came about through a high-level discussion on the criterion of truth that put a decisive end to 'taking class struggle as the key link' and re-established a Marxist ideological line, political line and organisational line. It was thus that the curtain rose on China's reform and opening up.

我们党作出实行改革开放的历史性决策，是基于对党和国家前途命运的深刻把握，是基于对社会主义革命和建设实践的深刻总结，是基于对时代潮流的深刻洞察，是基于对人民群众期盼和需要的深刻体悟。邓小平同志指出：“贫穷不是社会主义”，“我们要赶上时代，这是改革要达到的目的”。

The historic decision of our Party to implement reform and opening up is based on, firstly, a profound grasp of the future and fate of the Party and the country; secondly, a profound summation of our practice in carrying out socialist revolution and socialist construction; thirdly, a deep insight into the trend of the times; and finally, a deep awareness of the expectations and needs of the people. As Comrade Deng Xiaoping pointed out, "Poverty is not socialism," and, "We want to catch up with the times; this is the goal the reform is to achieve."

历史发展有其规律，但人在其中不是完全消极被动的。只要把握住历史发展大势，抓住历史变革时机，奋发有为，锐意进取，人类社会就能更好前进。

Historical development follows its own laws, but they are not ones in which the people are rendered entirely passive. As long as we grasp the trend of historical development and

² The 'Two Whatevers' 两个凡是 is a reference to the political direction of Hua Guofeng, successor to Mao Zedong as Chairman of the CPC from 1976 until 1981. Hua pledged in a 1977 editorial jointly published by the *People's Daily*, *PLA Daily* and the journal *Red Flag* that the CPC would "resolutely uphold whatever policy decisions Chairman Mao made, and unswervingly follow whatever instructions Chairman Mao gave."

seize the opportunities of historical change, working hard to make achievements and striving for progress, then this will better allow human society to move forward.

改革开放是我们党的一次伟大觉醒，正是这个伟大觉醒孕育了我们党从理论到实践的伟大创造。改革开放是中国人民和中华民族发展史上一次伟大革命，正是这个伟大革命推动了中国特色社会主义事业的伟大飞跃！

Reform and opening up was our Party's great awakening. It was this great awakening that gave birth to the great innovation of our Party to shift focus from theory to practice. Reform and opening up was a great revolution in the history of the Chinese people and Chinese nation's development. It was this great revolution that propelled the great leap of 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'.

同志们、朋友们！

建立中国共产党、成立中华人民共和国、推进改革开放和中国特色社会主义事业，是五四运动以来我国发生的三大历史性事件，是近代以来实现中华民族伟大复兴的三大里程碑。

Comrades and friends,

The establishment of the CPC (1921); the founding of the PRC (1949); and the promotion of, firstly, reform and opening up and, secondly, socialism with Chinese characteristics, are the three major historic events that have occurred in China since the May Fourth Movement (1919),³ and represent three major milestones on our journey in modern times to realise the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

以毛泽东同志为主要代表的中国共产党人，把马克思列宁主义基本原理同中国革命具体实践结合起来，创立了毛泽东思想，团结带领全党全国各族人民，经过长期浴血奋斗，完成了新民主主义革命，建立了中华人民

³ The May Fourth Movement, so named because it started on May 4, 1919 in Beijing, was a patriotic movement of the Chinese people against imperialism and feudalism. Soon after the end of World War I, victorious nations including Britain, the United States, France, Japan and Italy convened the Paris Peace Conference. The conference decided to transfer German concessions in China's Shandong Province to Japan. Even though China was one of the victorious nations in the war, the Chinese delegation was prepared to sign the Treaty of Versailles that would see the German concessions handed over. On the afternoon of May 4, 1919, over 3,000 students of Peking University, and other schools and universities, protested against the treaty and the Chinese government's intention to sign it. This provoked a response throughout the country. By June 3, the protests became a patriotic movement against imperialism and feudalism, with members of the working class, urban petite-bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie all taking part. The May Fourth Movement ultimately pressured the Chinese government into refusing to sign the Treaty of Versailles. Furthermore, the May Fourth Movement reinvigorated the ongoing New Culture Movement (1915–1921) against feudal Chinese culture, and marked the start of the New Democratic Revolution in China, thereby opening a brand-new chapter of revolution in Chinese history. (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 209).

共和国，确立了社会主义基本制度，成功实现了中国历史上最深刻最伟大的社会变革，为当代中国一切发展进步奠定了根本政治前提和制度基础。在探索过程中，虽然经历了严重曲折，但党在社会主义革命和建设取得的独创性理论成果和巨大成就，为在新的历史时期开创中国特色社会主义提供了宝贵经验、理论准备、物质基础。

With Comrade Mao Zedong as their chief representative, Chinese Communists developed Mao Zedong Thought by combining the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism with the actual practice of the Chinese revolution. They united and led the entire Party and Chinese people of all ethnic groups in a long and bloody struggle, ultimately completing the New Democratic Revolution,⁴ founding the PRC, and establishing the basic socialist system in China. In doing so, they successfully achieved the greatest and most profound social transformation in Chinese history—one which provided the fundamental political prerequisites and institutional basis for all subsequent development and progress in contemporary China. Although the Party experienced many twists and turns in its explorations, it developed distinctively creative theories and made momentous achievements in socialist revolution and socialist construction. This has provided us with invaluable experience, as well as the theoretical preparation and material basis we need to usher socialism with Chinese characteristics into a new historical period.

党的十一届三中全会以后，以邓小平同志为主要代表的中国共产党人，团结带领全党全国各族人民，深刻总结我国社会主义建设正反两方面经验，借鉴世界社会主义历史经验，创立了邓小平理论，作出把党和国家工作中心转移到经济建设上来、实行改革开放的历史性决策，深刻揭示社会主义本质，确立社会主义初级阶段基本路线，明确提出走自己的路、建设中国特色社会主义，科学回答了建设中国特色社会主义的一系列基本问题，制定了到21世纪中叶分三步走、基本实现社会主义现代化的发展战略，成功开创了中国特色社会主义。

After the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CPC, Chinese Communists, with Comrade Deng Xiaoping as their chief representative, united and led the entire Party and Chinese people of all ethnic groups in summing up the positive and negative experiences of China's socialist construction and learning from the historical experiences of

⁴ The 'New Democratic Revolution' refers to the Communist-led Chinese revolution. Officially it spans three decades from 1919 until 1949.

world socialism, to formulate Deng Xiaoping Theory. They made the historic decision to shift the focus of the Party and country's work to economic development and to pursue the policy of reform and opening up. This decision helped reveal the essence of socialism and established the Party's basic line that China remains in the primary stage of socialism. It clearly specified that we should take our own road in building socialism with Chinese characteristics, and provided scientific answers to a series of fundamental questions on building socialism with Chinese characteristics. Furthermore, they formulated a three-step development strategy in which socialist modernisation would be fundamentally realised by the mid-21st century, and successfully launched socialism with Chinese characteristics.

党的十三届四中全会以后，以江泽民同志为主要代表的中国共产党人，团结带领全党全国各族人民，坚持党的基本理论、基本路线，加深了对什么是社会主义、怎样建设社会主义和建设什么样的党、怎样建设党的认识，积累了治党治国新的宝贵经验，形成了“三个代表”重要思想。在国内国际形势十分复杂、世界社会主义出现严重曲折的严峻考验面前，捍卫了中国特色社会主义，确立了社会主义市场经济体制的改革目标和基本框架，确立了社会主义初级阶段的基本经济制度和分配制度，开创全面改革开放新局面，推进党的建设新的伟大工程，成功把中国特色社会主义推向21世纪。

After the Fourth Plenary Session of the Thirteenth Central Committee of the CPC, Chinese Communists, with Comrade Jiang Zemin as their chief representative, united and led the entire Party and Chinese people of all ethnic groups in adhering to the Party's basic theory and basic line, while deepening our understanding of a series of questions, namely, what socialism is and how to build it, and what kind of party to build and how to build it. They gained valuable new experiences in governing the Party and the country and thus formulated the important thought of the 'Three Represents'.⁵ Faced with severe tests brought on by the complex domestic and international environment and the sharp twists and turns in the trajectory of world socialism, they defended socialism with Chinese characteristics, established the reform goals and basic framework of the system of the socialist market economy, instituted the basic economic and distribution systems for the primary stage of socialism, and made a breakthrough in comprehensive reform and opening up, giving impetus to the great new project of Party building and successfully steering socialism with Chinese characteristics into the 21st century.

⁵ The important thought of the 'Three Represents' is a major component of the system of theories of Chinese socialism, and the guiding thought of the CPC. This theory emphasises that the CPC must always represent the development trend of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people. The principal proponent was Jiang Zemin. (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 43).

党的十六大以后，以胡锦涛同志为主要代表的中国共产党人，团结带领全党全国各族人民，坚持以邓小平理论和“三个代表”重要思想为指导，根据新的发展要求，深刻认识和回答了新形势下实现什么样的发展、怎样发展等重大问题，形成了科学发展观，抓住重要战略机遇期，在全面建设小康社会进程中推进实践创新、理论创新、制度创新，强调坚持以人为本、全面协调可持续发展，形成中国特色社会主义事业总体布局，着力保障和改善民生，促进社会公平正义，推动建设和谐世界，推进党的执政能力建设和先进性建设，成功在新的历史起点上坚持和发展了中国特色社会主义。

Following the Sixteenth National Congress of the CPC, Chinese Communists, with Comrade Hu Jintao as their chief representative, continued to take Deng Xiaoping Theory and the important thought of the Three Represents as their guide as they united and led the entire Party and Chinese people of all ethnic groups. Based on new demands of development, they forged a deep understanding of the new circumstances and answered a number of major questions, including what kind of development to pursue and how to pursue it in light of these new circumstances, thereby formulating the 'Scientific Outlook on Development'.⁶ They seized the moment of major strategic opportunity to promote practical innovation, theoretical innovation and institutional innovation in the process of comprehensively building a moderately prosperous society; emphasised the need to adhere to people-oriented, comprehensive and coordinated sustainable development; and formulated the overall layout of socialism with Chinese characteristics. In doing so, they were able to safeguard and improve the people's livelihoods, promote social equity and social justice, further the cause of building of a 'harmonious world', push on with developing the Party's governing capacity and its advanced nature, and successfully uphold and develop socialism with Chinese characteristics from a new historic starting point.

党的十八大以来，党中央团结带领全党全国各族人民，全面审视国际国内新的形势，通过总结实践、展望未来，深刻回答了新时代坚持和发展什么样的中国特色社会主义、怎样坚持和发展中国特色社会主义这个重大

⁶ The 'Scientific Outlook on Development' is an important component of the system of theories of Chinese socialism, and the guiding thought of the CPC. It gives top priority to development, puts people first, and seeks all-around, balanced and sustainable development with a holistic approach. The principal proponent was Hu Jintao. (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 43).

时代课题，形成了新时代中国特色社会主义思想，坚持统筹推进“五位一体”总体布局、协调推进“四个全面”战略布局，坚持稳中求进工作总基调，对党和国家各方面工作提出一系列新理念新思想新战略，推动党和国家事业发生历史性变革、取得历史性成就，中国特色社会主义进入了新时代。我们以巨大的政治勇气和智慧，提出全面深化改革总目标是完善和发展中国特色社会主义制度、推进国家治理体系和治理能力现代化，着力增强改革系统性、整体性、协同性，着力抓好重大制度创新，着力提升人民群众获得感、幸福感、安全感，推出1600多项改革方案，啃下了不少硬骨头，闯过了不少急流险滩，改革呈现全面发力、多点突破、蹄疾步稳、纵深推进的局面。

Since the Party's Eighteenth National Congress, the Central Committee of the CPC, uniting and leading the entire Party and people of all ethnic groups, has examined contemporary domestic and international developments and, through integrating theory with practice and looking to the future, has systematically addressed the major question of our times—that is, what kind of socialism with Chinese characteristics is required in the New Era and how should it be maintained and developed. In the process, we have formulated the 'Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era'. We continue to adhere to promoting the overall 'Five-Point Strategy'⁷ in a holistic manner, as well as the 'Four Comprehensives'⁸ strategy in a coordinated manner. We are upholding the key principle of making progress in our work while ensuring stability by proposing a series of new concepts, new ideas and new strategies in all aspects of Party and government work which allow us to push forward historic changes for the Party and government, obtain historic achievements, and usher socialism with Chinese characteristics into a New Era. Drawing on our immense political courage and wisdom, we have put forward overall goals for comprehensively deepening reform. Our goals are: to develop and improve the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics; promote the modernisation of the governance system and governance capacity; focus on making reform more systematic, holistic and coordinated; promote innovation in major institutions, and make great efforts to enhance the people's sense of achievement, wellbeing and security. Having put forward over 1,600 reform initiatives, we have chewed through a lot of tough bones and traversed numerous treacherous rapids. Thus,

⁷ The 'Five-Point Strategy' is China's overall development plan to pursue economic, political, cultural, social and environmental progress. The strategy was first introduced in the political report to the Eighteenth National Congress of the CPC in 2012.

⁸ The 'Four Comprehensives' (sometimes called the 'Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategy') is a strategy to comprehensively complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, comprehensively deepen reform, comprehensively implement law-based governance and comprehensively strengthen Party discipline. The strategy was first introduced in the political report to the Nineteenth National Congress of the CPC in 2017. (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 2, p. 22).

overall our reform effort has great momentum; keeping up a steady canter as we make multiple breakthroughs and further our progress.

艰难困苦，玉汝于成。40年来，我们解放思想、实事求是，大胆地试、勇敢地改，干出了一片新天地。从实行家庭联产承包、乡镇企业异军突起、取消农业税牧业税和特产税到农村承包地“三权”分置、打赢脱贫攻坚战、实施乡村振兴战略，从兴办深圳等经济特区、沿海沿边沿江沿线和内陆中心城市对外开放到加入世界贸易组织、共建“一带一路”、设立自由贸易试验区、谋划中国特色自由贸易港、成功举办首届中国国际进口博览会，从“引进来”到“走出去”，从搞好国营大中小企业、发展个体私营经济到深化国资国企改革、发展混合所有制经济，从单一公有制到公有制为主体、多种所有制经济共同发展和坚持“两个毫不动摇”，从传统的计划经济体制到前无古人的社会主义市场经济体制再到使市场在资源配置中起决定性作用和更好发挥政府作用，从以经济体制改革为主到全面深化经济、政治、文化、社会、生态文明体制和党的建设制度改革，党和国家机构改革、行政管理体制改革、依法治国体制改革、司法体制改革、外事体制改革、社会治理体制改革、生态环境督察体制改革、国家安全体制改革、国防和军队改革、党的领导和党的建设制度改革、纪检监察制度改革等一系列重大改革扎实推进，各项便民、惠民、利民举措持续实施，使改革开放成为当代中国最显著的特征、最壮丽的气象。

Success only comes through hard work.⁹ For the past 40 years, we have liberated our minds, sought truth from facts, been bold in trying things, had the courage to make changes, and brought forth a new world. We have progressed from the introduction of the household responsibility system (HRS), swift emergence of township and village enterprises (TVEs), and abolition of the agricultural tax, livestock tax and speciality product tax, to the tripartite division of rural land rights, victory in the battle of poverty alleviation, and implementation of the strategy of rejuvenating the countryside. From setting up special economic zones (SEZs) in Shenzhen and elsewhere, and opening up central inland cities and regions near the coast, our borders, major rivers, highways and railway lines to the outside world, to joining the

⁹ An allusion to a saying of Zheng Zai (1020–1077), a neo-Confucian philosopher of the Northern Song dynasty. The quotation comes from his main work *Zhengmeng* [*Correcting ignorance*].

World Trade Organisation (WTO), jointly constructing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), setting up trial free trade areas, developing a plan of free trade with Chinese characteristics at our ports, and successfully holding the first China International Import Expo (CIIE). From the strategy of 'bringing in' to that of 'going out'. From the skilful management of small, medium and large enterprises and development of the small-business and private sector economy, to the deepening of reform of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and development of a mixed-ownership economy. From sole public ownership to collective ownership as the backbone in a jointly developed diversified system of ownership while upholding the 'Two Unswervinglys'.¹⁰ From the traditional planned economic system to an unprecedented socialist market economic system and then to a system that lets the market play the decisive role in the distribution of resources and better utilises the role of the government. From economic reform taking precedence we have progressed to comprehensively deepening reform in each of our economic, political, cultural, social and environmental sectors, as well as in Party building, and this has allowed us to make solid progress on a series of major reform initiatives. These reform initiatives include: reform of Party and government agencies, the administrative structure, law-based governance, the judiciary, foreign affairs, the social governance system, environmental inspection system, institutions of national security, national defence and the armed forces, the system of Party leadership and Party building and the disciplinary inspection and supervision system. All of these measures have been implemented to benefit the people, thus making reform and opening up the most distinctive feature of contemporary China, and giving today's China a magnificent vibe.

同志们、朋友们！

改革开放40年来，从开启新时期到跨入新世纪，从站上新起点到进入新时代，40年风雨同舟，40年披荆斩棘，40年砥砺前行，我们党引领人民绘就了一幅波澜壮阔、气势恢宏的历史画卷，谱写了一曲感天动地、气壮山河的奋斗赞歌。

Comrades and friends,

The forty years of reform and opening up have seen us go from beginning a new period to striding into a new century, from standing at a new starting point to entering a New Era. For the past 40 years we have stuck together through storms and stress, hacked through brambles and thorns, and advanced with great endeavour. For 40 years, our Party has led the people in inscribing a magnificent, stirring epic on the scroll of history, and composing a deeply moving song of our heroic struggle, full of power and grandeur.

¹⁰ The 'Two Unswervinglys' is the CPC's commitment to, firstly, unswervingly consolidating and developing the public sector of the economy; and, secondly, unswervingly encouraging, supporting and guiding the development of the nonpublic sector of the economy.
(Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 110).

——40年来，我们始终坚持解放思想、实事求是、与时俱进、求真务实，坚持马克思主义指导地位不动摇，坚持科学社会主义基本原则不动摇，勇敢推进理论创新、实践创新、制度创新、文化创新以及各方面创新，不断赋予中国特色社会主义以鲜明的实践特色、理论特色、民族特色、时代特色，形成了中国特色社会主义道路、理论、制度、文化，以不可辩驳的事实彰显了科学社会主义的鲜活生命力，社会主义的伟大旗帜始终在中国大地上高高飘扬！

Over the past 40 years, we have insisted on emancipating our minds, seeking truth from facts, advancing with the times and looking for truth and being practical. We have unswervingly upheld the guiding position of Marxism and the basic principles of scientific socialism. We have had the courage to promote theoretical innovation, practical innovation, institutional innovation, cultural innovation and innovation in all spheres, continuing to invest socialism with Chinese characteristics with distinct practical characteristics, theoretical characteristics, national characteristics and the characteristics of the times. We have formulated a path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics, highlighted the irrefutable fact that scientific socialism has immense vitality, and all along we have ensured the great banner of socialism flies high in China!

——40年来，我们始终坚持以经济建设为中心，不断解放和发展社会生产力，我国国内生产总值由3679亿元增长到2017年的82.7万亿元，年均实际增长9.5%，远高于同期世界经济2.9%左右的年均增速。我国国内生产总值占世界生产总值的比重由改革开放之初的1.8%上升到15.2%，多年来对世界经济增长贡献率超过30%。我国货物进出口总额从206亿美元增长到超过4万亿美元，累计使用外商直接投资超过2万亿美元，对外投资总额达到1.9万亿美元。我国主要农产品产量跃居世界前列，建立了全世界最完整的现代工业体系，科技创新和重大工程捷报频传。我国基础设施建设成就显著，信息畅通，公路成网，铁路密布，高坝矗立，西气东输，南水北调，高铁飞驰，巨轮远航，飞机翱翔，天堑变通途。现在，我国是世界第二大经济体、制造业第一大国、货物贸易第一大国、商品消费第二大国、外

资流入第二大国，我国外汇储备连续多年位居世界第一，中国人民在富起来、强起来的征程上迈出了决定性的步伐！

Over the past 40 years, we have insisted on taking economic construction as the central task and continued to liberate and develop the productive forces. Across this period, China's GDP has increased from 367.9 billion RMB to 82.7 trillion RMB in 2017, with an average annual real growth rate of 9.5%. This is far higher than the global average growth rate of approximately 2.9% across the same period. China's GDP as a proportion of gross world product rose from 1.8% at the start of reform and opening up to 15.2% now. For many years, China has contributed over 30% of the world's economic growth. China's total volume of foreign trade increased from US\$20.6 billion to more than US\$4 trillion while foreign direct investment (FDI) amounted to over US\$2 trillion and total outbound investment reached US\$1.9 trillion. China's major agricultural production has leapt into a world-leading position, it has established the most complete modern industrial system in the world, and its scientific and technological innovation and major projects have been an unending stream of success stories. China has made significant achievements in the development of infrastructure by building information networks, highway networks and railway networks. China has built great dams, the West-to-East Natural Gas Transportation Project, the South-North Water Diversion Project, high-speed railways, large ships, and soaring airplanes, and thereby "turned a deep chasm into a thoroughfare."¹¹ Now, China is the world's second largest economy, and a superpower of manufacturing and trade. China is the world's second largest country for consumer goods and has the second largest foreign capital inflow. China's foreign exchange reserves have been the largest in the world for consecutive years. This shows that the Chinese people have taken a mighty and decisive step on their journey to become rich and strong!

——40年来，我们始终坚持中国特色社会主义政治发展道路，不断深化政治体制改革，发展社会主义民主政治，党和国家领导体制日益完善，全面依法治国深入推进，中国特色社会主义法律体系日益健全，人民当家作主的制度保障和法治保障更加有力，人权事业全面发展，爱国统一战线更加巩固，人民依法享有和行使民主权利的内容更加丰富、渠道更加便捷、形式更加多样，掌握着自己命运的中国人民焕发出前所未有的积极性、主动性、创造性，在改革开放和社会主义现代化建设中展现出气吞山河的强大力量！

Over the past 40 years, we have adhered to a political development path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, continued to deepen political restructuring and developed socialist democracy. We have steadily enhanced the system of Party and government

¹¹ 'Turning a deep chasm into a thoroughfare' 天堑变通途 is a line from Mao Zedong's famous 1956 poem 'Swimming'.

leadership, further promoted comprehensive law-based governance and progressively improved the socialist legal system with Chinese characteristics. These actions have strengthened the legal safeguards and institutional guarantee that the people are the masters of the country, furthered the cause of human rights and consolidated the 'patriotic united front'.¹² They have also enriched the people's enjoyment of democratic rights and their exercise of democratic rights in accordance with the law, and further opened up channels for the people to exercise a diversified set of democratic rights. Taking mastery of their own destiny, the Chinese people are brimming with enthusiasm, initiative and creativity—they are the valiant powerhouse driving reform and opening up and socialist modernisation!

——40年来，我们始终坚持发展社会主义先进文化，加强社会主义精神文明建设，培育和践行社会主义核心价值观，传承和弘扬中华优秀传统文化，坚持以科学理论引路指向，以正确舆论凝心聚力，以先进文化塑造灵魂，以优秀作品鼓舞斗志，爱国主义、集体主义、社会主义精神广为弘扬，时代楷模、英雄模范不断涌现，文化艺术日益繁荣，网信事业快速发展，全民族理想信念和文化自信不断增强，国家文化软实力和中华文化影响力大幅提升。改革开放铸就的伟大改革开放精神，极大丰富了民族精神内涵，成为当代中国人民最鲜明的精神标识！

Over the past 40 years, we have upheld and developed an advanced socialist culture, strengthened the construction of a socialist spiritual civilisation, cultivated and practiced the core socialist values,¹³ inherited and carried forward fine traditional Chinese culture and adhered to the direction of scientific theories. By uniting the people and pooling their strength with correct public opinion, by shaping souls with advanced culture, and by inspiring a fighting spirit with outstanding cultural works, a spirit of patriotism, collectivism and socialism has spread far and wide. Role models of our age and heroes come forward one after another; literature, the arts and culture are flourishing, and the online sphere is developing at a rapid pace. Chinese people across the country have stronger aspirations and beliefs and more cultural confidence than ever. And the country's cultural soft power and the influence of Chinese culture are on a sharp upswing. The great reformist spirit cast by reform and opening up has greatly enriched our national spirit, becoming the most distinctive spiritual symbol of contemporary Chinese people!

¹² The 'united front' refers to the political union formed by various social and political forces, including social classes and strata, political parties and groups, and even ethnic groups and nations, based on their common interests, to achieve a common goal under certain historical conditions. The 'united front' under the leadership of the CPC is the broadest revolutionary, socialist and patriotic united front formed by all ethnic groups, all political parties, all social strata and people of all circles in China during periods of the New Democratic Revolution (1919–1949), socialist construction and reform, in order to achieve national independence, democracy, prosperity and the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 111).

¹³ The core socialist values are: prosperity, democracy, civility, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, the rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity and friendship.

——40年来，我们始终坚持在发展中保障和改善民生，全面推进幼有所育、学有所教、劳有所得、病有所医、老有所养、住有所居、弱有所扶，不断改善人民生活、增进人民福祉。全国居民人均可支配收入由171元增加到2.6万元，中等收入群体持续扩大。我国贫困人口累计减少7.4亿人，贫困发生率下降94.4个百分点，谱写了人类反贫困史上的辉煌篇章。教育事业全面发展，九年义务教育巩固率达93.8%。我国建成了包括养老、医疗、低保、住房在内的世界最大的社会保障体系，基本养老保险覆盖超过9亿人，医疗保险覆盖超过13亿人。常住人口城镇化率达到58.52%，上升40.6个百分点。居民预期寿命由1981年的67.8岁提高到2017年的76.7岁。我国社会大局保持长期稳定，成为世界上最有安全感的国家之一。粮票、布票、肉票、鱼票、油票、豆腐票、副食本、工业券等百姓生活曾经离不开的票证已经进入了历史博物馆，忍饥挨饿、缺吃少穿、生活困顿这些几千年来困扰我国人民的问题总体上一去不复返了！

Over the past 40 years, we have insisted on ensuring and improving people's living standards through development, fully promoting access to childcare, schooling, employment, medical care, elderly care, housing, and social assistance to improve the lives of the people and enhance their wellbeing. Over the four-decade period of reform and opening up, per capita household disposable income increased from 171 RMB to 26,000 RMB nationwide and the ranks of the middle class have continued to expand. The number of Chinese people living in poverty has fallen by 740 million, a drop of 94.4 percentage points in the poverty rate. This adds a glorious chapter to the world's history of poverty alleviation. The comprehensive development of education has seen the mandatory nine years of schooling achieve a national participation rate of 93.8%. China has built the world's largest social security system, one that encompasses elderly care, medical services, a subsistence allowance and housing. Our basic retirement insurance covers over 900 million people, while medical insurance covers over 1.3 billion. Our resident urbanisation rate has reached 58.53%, an increase of 40.6 percentage points. Average life expectancy has risen from 67.8 years in 1981 to 76.7 years in 2017. Overall social stability has been maintained for a long period of time, making China one of the safest countries in the world. The grain coupons, clothing coupons, meat coupons, fish coupons, oil coupons, tofu coupons, non-staple food coupons, industrial product coupons and all the other coupons which were once indispensable in people's lives, have been consigned to the history museum. Starvation, lack of food and clothing, and lives of poverty—these problems plagued Chinese people for thousands of years, but now they are gone forever!

——40年来，我们始终坚持保护环境和节约资源，坚持推进生态文明建设，生态文明制度体系加快形成，主体功能区制度逐步健全，节能减排取得重大进展，重大生态保护和修复工程进展顺利，生态环境治理明显加强，积极参与和引导应对气候变化国际合作，中国人民生于斯、长于斯的家园更加美丽宜人！

Over the past 40 years, we have insisted on protecting the environment and conserving natural resources. We have upheld and promoted the construction of an ecological civilisation and accelerated the creation of an institutional system of ecological civilisation, gradually improving the main functional areas of the system. We have made significant progress in energy conservation and major environmental protection and restoration projects have progressed smoothly. Environmental management has been significantly strengthened and we are actively participating in and leading international cooperation to address climate change. The home where the Chinese people have been born and brought up is now more beautiful than ever!

——40年来，我们始终坚持党对军队的绝对领导，不断推进国防和军队现代化，推进人民军队实现革命性重塑，武器装备取得历史性突破，治军方式发生根本性转变，革命化现代化正规化水平显著提高，人民军队维护国家主权、安全、发展利益的能力显著增强，成为保卫人民幸福生活、保卫祖国和世界和平牢不可破的强大力量！

Over the past 40 years, we have upheld the Party's absolute leadership over the military. We have continued to advance the modernisation of national defence and the armed forces, promote the revolutionary remodelling of the people's armed forces, achieved historical breakthroughs in weaponry and military equipment, and radically transformed military governance. The extent to which the armed forces have been revolutionised, modernised and standardised has improved markedly. As such, the ability of the people's armed forces to safeguard national sovereignty, national security and China's development interests has been greatly enhanced, and this makes our military a powerful, indestructible force working to defend the happiness of the people, the motherland and world peace.

——40年来，我们始终坚持推进祖国和平统一大业，实施“一国两制”基本方针，相继恢复对香港、澳门行使主权，洗雪了中华民族百年屈辱。

我们坚持一个中国原则和“九二共识”，加强两岸经济文化交流合作，推动两岸关系和平发展，坚决反对和遏制“台独”分裂势力，牢牢掌握两岸关系发展主导权和主动权。海内外全体中华儿女的民族认同感、文化认同感大大增强，同心共筑中国梦的意志更加坚强！

Over the past 40 years, we have upheld the great cause of peaceful reunification of the motherland, implemented the fundamental policy of 'One Country, Two Systems',¹⁴ and resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong and Macao, erasing a century of the Chinese nation's humiliation. Over this period we have adhered to the 'One China' principle¹⁵ and the '1992 Consensus'¹⁶ while strengthening economic cooperation and cultural exchanges across both sides of the Taiwan Strait, promoting peaceful development of cross-Strait relations, resolutely opposing and containing 'Taiwan independence' separatist forces, and firmly taking on the leadership of and grasping the initiative to develop cross-Strait relations. By strengthening the sense of national and cultural identity shared by all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation at home and abroad, our determination to together realise the Chinese Dream is stronger than ever!

——40年来，我们始终坚持独立自主的和平外交政策，始终不渝走和平发展道路、奉行互利共赢的开放战略，坚定维护国际关系基本准则，维护国际公平正义。我们实现由封闭半封闭到全方位开放的历史转变，积极参与经济全球化进程，为推动人类共同发展作出了应有贡献。我们积极推动建设开放型世界经济、构建人类命运共同体，促进全球治理体系变革，旗帜鲜明反对霸权主义和强权政治，为世界和平与发展不断贡献中国智慧、中国方案、中国力量。我国日益走近世界舞台中央，成为国际社会公认的世界和平的建设者、全球发展的贡献者、国际秩序的维护者！

¹⁴ 'One Country, Two Systems' is a concept put forward by the CPC and the Chinese government for realising China's reunification and solving the Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao issues. The framework of the concept is: under the premise of national reunification, the mainland keeps practicing socialism, while Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao retain their original capitalist system and ways of life for a long time, while enjoying a high degree of autonomy. China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong and Macao in 1997 and 1999, respectively, in accordance with this concept. (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 256).

¹⁵ The 'One China' principle refers to the PRC government's position on the issue of Taiwan, namely that there is only 'one China' and that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China. The 'One China' principle should not be confused with the 'One China' policy. The 'One China' policy is a policy adopted by foreign governments who acknowledge there is only one sovereign state with the name 'China' and do not formally recognise the Republic of China (ROC), i.e. Taiwan, as this sovereign state.

¹⁶ The '1992 Consensus' refers to an oral agreement reached at a November 1992 meeting between the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS), based in mainland China, and the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF), based in Taiwan. The meeting discussed how to express the 'One China' principle in negotiations on general affairs, and agreed that both sides would follow the 'One China' principle, each with its respective interpretation. (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 267).

Over the past 40 years, we have maintained an independent foreign policy of peace, firmly pursued peaceful development and followed a mutually beneficial strategy of opening up. All along we have resolutely defended the basic norms governing international relations and defended international equity and justice. We have realised a historic transition from seclusion and semi-seclusion to fully opening up to the outside world, coming to actively participate in economic globalisation and making due contributions to the common development of humanity. We have actively promoted the construction of an open global economy, the joint building of a global community with a shared future for mankind, and advanced the transformation of the system of global governance. We have maintained clear-cut opposition to hegemonism and power politics, and continued to contribute Chinese wisdom, Chinese solutions and Chinese strengths towards realising world peace and global development. China is approaching the centre of the global stage. We have been recognised by the international community as a builder of world peace, contributor to global development, and defender of the international order!

——40年来，我们始终坚持加强和改善党的领导，积极应对在长期执政和改革开放条件下党面临的各种风险考验，持续推进党的建设新的伟大工程，保持党的先进性和纯洁性，保持党同人民群众的血肉联系。我们积极探索共产党执政规律、社会主义建设规律、人类社会发展规律，不断开辟马克思主义中国化新境界。我们坚持党要管党、从严治党，净化党内政治生态，持之以恒正风肃纪，大力整治形式主义、官僚主义、享乐主义和奢靡之风，以零容忍态度严厉惩治腐败，反腐败斗争取得压倒性胜利。我们党在革命性锻造中坚定走在时代前列，始终是中国人民和中华民族的主心骨！

Over the past 40 years, we have insisted on strengthening and improving the Party's leadership, responding proactively to the various risks and tests the Party has faced through governing and leading reform and opening up for a long period of time. We have made sustained progress in our new great project of Party building, maintaining the purity and advanced nature of the Party as well as its flesh-and-blood ties with the masses. We are actively investigating the laws governing the CPC, the laws governing socialist construction, and the laws governing the development of human society, so as to continue to open up new realms for the Sinification of Marxism. We will continue to insist that the Party supervises its own conduct and enforces strict discipline, work to purify the Party's internal political environment, persevere with Party rectification and Party discipline, and vigorously rectify

instances of formalism, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance,¹⁷ adopting a zero-tolerance attitude as we strictly combat and severely punish corruption, enabling us to secure an overwhelming victory in the fight against corruption. Our Party, forged with a revolutionary spirit, stands firmly at the forefront of the times, and has always been the backbone of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation!

40年春风化雨、春华秋实，改革开放极大改变了中国的面貌、中华民族的面貌、中国人民的面貌、中国共产党的面貌。中华民族迎来了从站起来、富起来到强起来的伟大飞跃！中国特色社会主义迎来了从创立、发展到完善的伟大飞跃！中国人民迎来了从温饱不足到小康富裕的伟大飞跃！中华民族正以崭新姿态屹立于世界的东方！

Forty years of learning and experience, forty years of talent and moral integrity, have seen reform and opening up completely transform the face of China, the face of the nation, the face of the Chinese people and the face of the CPC. The Chinese nation has made a great leap, from standing up, to getting rich, and now becoming strong! Socialism with Chinese characteristics has made a great leap, first created, then developed, and now being perfected! The Chinese people have made a great leap, from a life without adequate food and clothing to one of initial prosperity! The Chinese nation now stands tall in the East with a grand new bearing!

40年来取得的成就不是天上掉下来的，更不是别人恩赐施舍的，而是全党全国各族人民用勤劳、智慧、勇气干出来的！我们用几十年时间走完了发达国家几百年走过的工业化历程。在中国人民手中，不可能成为了可能。我们为创造了人间奇迹的中国人民感到无比自豪、无比骄傲！

Our achievements over the past 40 years did not just fall from the sky, nor were they gifted to us by others. They were created through the hard work, wisdom and courage of the entire Party and Chinese people of all ethnic groups! It has taken us only a few decades to go through the industrialisation process that developed countries took hundreds of years to complete. In the hands of the Chinese people, the impossible becomes possible. We are extremely proud of the Chinese people, as they have created a miracle on earth!

¹⁷ Formalism, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance are collectively known as the 'Four Forms of Decadence' 四风.

在这里，我代表党中央，向各条战线为改革开放和社会主义现代化建设贡献了智慧和力量的广大工人、农民、知识分子、干部、解放军指战员、武警部队官兵、公安干警，向各民主党派和无党派人士、各人民团体和各界爱国人士，致以崇高的敬意！向为祖国改革开放和现代化建设作出积极努力的香港特别行政区同胞、澳门特别行政区同胞、台湾同胞和海外侨胞，致以诚挚的问候！向一切关心和支持中国改革开放和现代化建设的外国朋友和世界各国人民，表示衷心的感谢！

Today, on behalf of the Party Central Committee, I'd like to pay my respects to all the workers, peasants, intellectuals, cadres, People's Liberation Army (PLA) and People's Armed Police Force officers and troops, and Public Security Police for contributing your wisdom and strength on every battlefield of reform and opening up and socialist modernisation. Furthermore, I'd like to pay my respects to all democratic parties and public figures unaffiliated with the CPC, as well as people's organisations and patriots from all walks of life! I'd also like to extend sincere regards to all our compatriots in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), Macao SAR and Taiwan who have actively worked for reform and opening up and the modernisation of the motherland! Finally, I'd like to express heartfelt thanks towards all our foreign friends and people of all countries who care about and support China's reform and opening up and modernisation.

同志们、朋友们！

40年的实践充分证明，党的十一届三中全会以来我们党团结带领全国各族人民开辟的中国特色社会主义道路、理论、制度、文化是完全正确的，形成的党的基本理论、基本路线、基本方略是完全正确的。

Comrades and friends,

Forty years of practice have fully proved that our Party's work since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CPC to unite and lead the Chinese people of all ethnic groups to open up the road, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics is completely correct, and that the basic theories, basic line, and basic strategies formulated by the Party are completely correct.

40年的实践充分证明，中国发展为广大发展中国家走向现代化提供了成功经验、展现了光明前景，是促进世界和平与发展的强大力量，是中华民族对人类文明进步作出的重大贡献。

Forty years of practice have fully proved that China's development has given a great many developing countries currently undergoing modernisation an example of successful modernisation, and showcased its bright prospects. China's development is thus a mighty force for promoting world peace and development and the Chinese nation's great contribution to the progress of human civilisation.

40年的实践充分证明，改革开放是党和人民大踏步赶上时代的重要法宝，是坚持和发展中国特色社会主义的必由之路，是决定当代中国命运的关键一招，也是决定实现“两个一百年”奋斗目标、实现中华民族伟大复兴的关键一招。

Forty years of practice have fully proved that reform and opening up is the magic weapon that enables the Party and the people to make great strides and keep up with the times. Reform and opening up is the road we must follow to uphold and develop socialism with Chinese characteristics. It plays the decisive role in determining the destiny of contemporary China, and it is the key to realising the 'Two Centenary Goals' and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

只有顺应历史潮流，积极应变，主动求变，才能与时代同行。“行之力则知愈进，知之深则行愈达。”改革开放40年积累的宝贵经验是党和人民弥足珍贵的精神财富，对新时代坚持和发展中国特色社会主义有着极为重要的指导意义，必须倍加珍惜、长期坚持，在实践中不断丰富和发展。

It is only by following historical trends, actively adapting to change and proactively seeking out change that we can advance with the times. As an ancient Chinese saying tells us, "Practice enriches knowledge. More knowledge leads to better practice."¹⁸ The valuable experience we have accumulated through four decades of reform and opening up is the precious spiritual wealth of the Party and the people, experience that has extremely important significance for steering our approach to upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics in the New Era. We must treasure our experience highly and maintain it in the long-term, while continuing to enrich and develop it in practice.

¹⁸ Zhang Shi 张栻, *Gui si Lunyu jie* 癸巳论语解 [Thirty-year commentary on the Analects] (Shanghai: Han fen lou, 1922).

第一，必须坚持党对一切工作的领导，不断加强和改善党的领导。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：中国共产党领导是中国特色社会主义最本质的特征，是中国特色社会主义制度的最大优势。党政军民学，东西南北中，党是领导一切的。正是因为始终坚持党的集中统一领导，我们才能实现伟大历史转折、开启改革开放新时期和中华民族伟大复兴新征程，才能成功应对一系列重大风险挑战、克服无数艰难险阻，才能有力应变局、平风波、战洪水、防非典、抗地震、化危机，才能既不走封闭僵化的老路也不走改旗易帜的邪路，而是坚定不移走中国特色社会主义道路。坚持党的领导，必须不断改善党的领导，让党的领导更加适应实践、时代、人民的要求。在坚持党的领导这个决定党和国家前途命运的重大原则问题上，全党全国必须保持高度的思想自觉、政治自觉、行动自觉，丝毫不能动摇。

First, we must uphold the Party's leadership over everything and continue to strengthen and improve Party leadership. Forty years of practice in reform and opening up has revealed that the leadership of the CPC is the most essential feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and its greatest advantage. Party, government, military, and civil society; north, south, east and west—the Party takes leadership of all. It is precisely because we have always upheld the centralised, unified leadership of the Party that we have been able to realise a great historic transition, beginning a new period of reform and opening up and a new journey of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. It is because we have always upheld the centralised, unified leadership of the Party that we have been able to successfully combat a series of major risks and challenges and conquer countless difficulties and obstacles. It is because of this that we have been able to effectively cope with change, calm wild winds and waves, fight floods, guard against SARS, resist earthquakes and turn crises into opportunities. It is because of this that we have been able to walk unswervingly down the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and not take the old path of a rigid, closed-door policy, nor an erroneous path by abandoning socialism. To uphold Party leadership we must continue to improve Party leadership by ensuring it adapts to the requirements of the times, the people and practice. On the matter of upholding Party leadership, the major principle determining the future of the Party and destiny of the country, it is imperative that the whole Party and the entire country maintains a high level of ideological awareness, political awareness, and behavioural awareness, and not allow these to waver at any time.

前进道路上，我们必须增强“四个意识”、坚定“四个自信”，坚决维护党中央权威和集中统一领导，把党的领导贯彻和体现到改革发展稳定、内政外交国防、治党治国治军等各个领域。改革开放每一步都不是轻而易举的，未来必定会面临这样那样的风险挑战，甚至会遇到难以想象的惊涛骇浪。我们党要总揽全局、协调各方，坚持科学执政、民主执政、依法执政，完善党的领导方式和执政方式，提高党的执政能力和领导水平，不断提高党把方向、谋大局、定政策、促改革的能力和定力，确保改革开放这艘航船沿着正确航向破浪前行。

On our way forward, we must strengthen the 'Four Consciousnesses'¹⁹ and the 'Four Confidences',²⁰ and resolutely uphold the authority of the CPC Central Committee and its centralised, unified leadership, implementing Party leadership and ensuring it is reflected in all spheres, including reform, development and stability; domestic affairs, foreign affairs and national defence; and governance of the Party, country and military. None of the steps of reform and opening up have been easy, so in the future we are certain to face all sorts of risks and challenges, and even be met with stormy seas such that we cannot yet imagine. Hence, our Party must exercise leadership of the overall situation and coordinate the efforts of all, upholding scientific and democratic governance that is in accordance with the law. We must improve the Party's leadership and governing style and increase the Party's governance capacity and its leadership level. We must continue to improve the Party's capacity and resolve to set a direction, plan the general state of affairs, decide on policy and advance reform. This will ensure that our great ship of reform and opening up will chart the correct course through breaking waves.

第二，必须坚持以人民为中心，不断实现人民对美好生活的向往。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：为中国人民谋幸福，为中华民族谋复兴，是中国共产党人的初心和使命，也是改革开放的初心和使命。我们党来自人民、扎根人民、造福人民，全心全意为人民服务是党的根本宗旨，必须以最广大人民根本利益为我们一切工作的根本出发点和落脚点，坚持把人民拥护不拥护、赞成不赞成、高兴不高兴作为制定政策的依据，顺应民心、

¹⁹ The 'Four Consciousnesses' are to maintain political integrity (political consciousness); think in terms of the big picture (consciousness of the overall situation); follow the leadership core (consciousness of the core); and keep in alignment with the central Party leadership (compliance consciousness).

²⁰ The 'Four Confidences' are confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

尊重民意、关注民情、致力民生，既通过提出并贯彻正确的理论和路线方针政策带领人民前进，又从人民实践创造和发展要求中获得前进动力，让人民共享改革开放成果，激励人民更加自觉地投身改革开放和社会主义现代化建设事业。

Second, we must be people-centred and continue to fulfill the people's aspirations for a better life. Forty years of practice in reform and opening up have revealed that seeking happiness for the people and rejuvenation for the nation is not only the original aspiration and founding mission of Chinese Communists, but also the aim of reform and opening up. Our Party comes from the people, has taken root among the people and benefits the people. Serving the people wholeheartedly is the Party's fundamental purpose, and so we must regard the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people as the essential starting point and end goal of all our work. In policy-making, we must base our decisions on whether or not the policy is endorsed by the people, approved by the people and pleases the people, ensuring that it agrees with public opinion, respects the people's wishes, attends to popular sentiments and works for the people's livelihood. This will, firstly, lead the people to make progress by proposing and implementing general and specific policies that are based on correct theories and a correct line. Secondly, it will provide impetus to further enable the people to share the fruits of reform and opening up, as they devise, put forward and advance their demands. In turn, this will inspire the people to devote themselves even more conscientiously to the causes of reform and opening up and socialist modernisation.

前进道路上，我们必须始终把人民对美好生活的向往作为我们的奋斗目标，践行党的根本宗旨，贯彻党的群众路线，尊重人民主体地位，尊重人民群众在实践活动中所表达的意愿、所创造的经验、所拥有的权利、所发挥的作用，充分激发蕴藏在人民群众中的创造伟力。我们要健全民主制度、拓宽民主渠道、丰富民主形式、完善法治保障，确保人民依法享有广泛充分、真实具体、有效管用的民主权利。我们要着力解决人民群众所需所急所盼，让人民共享经济、政治、文化、社会、生态等各方面发展成果，有更多、更直接、更实在的获得感、幸福感、安全感，不断促进人的全面发展、全体人民共同富裕。

On our way forward, we must always regard the people's aspirations for a better life as our goal, carry out the Party's fundamental purpose, and implement the Party's mass line. We must always respect the leading position of the people and respect all the wishes expressed by,

experiences created by, rights possessed by, and roles played by the masses in practice, and so fully stimulate the people's latent creative power. We must strengthen the system of democracy by expanding channels for democracy, diversifying its forms and improving legal safeguards, so as to ensure the people enjoy a wide range of full, true, specific and effective democratic rights in accordance with the law. We must focus on realising the needs, concerns and expectations of the masses, so they may all share the results in development we have achieved across economic, political, cultural, social and environmental sectors and ensure they gain a richer, truer and more immediate sense of achievement, sense of security and happiness by constantly promoting the all-round development and common prosperity of the people.

第三，必须坚持马克思主义指导地位，不断推进实践基础上的理论创新。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：创新是改革开放的生命。实践发展永无止境，解放思想永无止境。恩格斯说：“一切社会变迁和政治变革的终极原因，不应当到人们的头脑中，到人们对永恒的真理和正义的日益增进的认识中去寻找，而应当到生产方式和交换方式的变更中去寻找”。我们坚持理论联系实际，及时回答时代之问、人民之问，廓清困扰和束缚实践发展的思想迷雾，不断推进马克思主义中国化时代化大众化，不断开辟马克思主义发展新境界。

Third, we must uphold the guiding position of Marxism while continuing to promote theoretical innovation based on practice. Forty years of practice in reform and opening up has revealed that innovation is the lifeblood of reform and opening up. There is no end to practical development, nor does emancipating the mind ever cease. As Engels once said, "The final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in men's better insights into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange."²¹ We will persist with linking theory and practice, provide timely answers to the questions of the times and the people, and clear up the ideological fog which troubles and constrains the development of practice, thereby continuously promoting the Sinification and popularisation of Marxism, updating it for our era, and opening up new realms for its development.

前进道路上，我们必须坚持以马克思列宁主义、毛泽东思想、邓小平理论、“三个代表”重要思想、科学发展观、新时代中国特色社会主义思想

²¹ Frederick Engels, "Historical Materialism," part 3 of *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, The Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 3 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970).

为指导，坚持解放思想和实事求是有机统一。发展21世纪马克思主义、当代中国马克思主义，是当代中国共产党人责无旁贷的历史责任。我们要强化问题意识、时代意识、战略意识，用深邃的历史眼光、宽广的国际视野把握事物发展的本质和内在联系，紧密跟踪亿万人民的创造性实践，借鉴吸收人类一切优秀文明成果，不断回答时代和实践给我们提出的新的重大课题，让当代中国马克思主义放射出更加灿烂的真理光芒。

On our way forward, we must adhere to the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of the Three Represents, the Scientific Outlook on Development and the Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, and uphold the organic unity between liberating our minds and seeking truth from facts. The development of 21st-century Marxism and contemporary Chinese Marxism is the unshirkable historical responsibility of the modern CPC. We must heighten our attentiveness to problems, consciousness of the times and strategic awareness; draw on profound historical insights and a broad international perspective to grasp the nature and internal relations of development; follow closely the creative practice of the people in their hundreds of millions; and learn from and absorb all the outstanding achievements of human civilisation. Continuing to respond to the new and important issues put to us by the times and practice will thus enable contemporary Chinese Marxism to shine even more brightly with the light of truth.

第四，必须坚持走中国特色社会主义道路，不断坚持和发展中国特色社会主义。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：方向决定前途，道路决定命运。我们要把命运掌握在自己手中，就要有志不改、道不变的坚定。改革开放40年来，我们党全部理论和实践的主题是坚持和发展中国特色社会主义。在中国这样一个有着5000多年文明史、13亿多人口的大国推进改革发展，没有可以奉为金科玉律的教科书，也没有可以对中国人民颐指气使的教师爷。鲁迅先生说过：“什么是路？就是从没路的地方践踏出来的，从只有荆棘的地方开辟出来的。”中国特色社会主义道路是当代中国大踏步赶上时代、引领时代发展的康庄大道，必须毫不动摇走下去。

Fourth, we must adhere to the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics by continuing to uphold and develop it. Forty years of practice in reform and opening up have

revealed that the direction we take determines our future and the path we take determines our destiny. To take hold of our own destiny, we must have the will to stick fast and the resolve not to alter our path. Over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, the central theme of all of our Party's theories and practice has been upholding and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics. Advancing reform and development in China, a country with a history of over 5,000 years of civilisation and a population of more than 1.3 billion people, there is no textbook with a golden rule for the Chinese people to follow, nor is there a 'wise' teacher to arrogantly boss us around. As the great Chinese writer Lu Xun once said, "What is a road? It comes of trampling places where no road was before, of opening up wasteland where only brambles grew."²² The path of socialism with Chinese characteristics is the broad open road that China is striding along as it catches up with the times and leads the development of our age. We must walk unswervingly along this road.

前进道路上，我们必须坚持以新时代中国特色社会主义思想 and 党的十九大精神为指导，增强“四个自信”，牢牢把握改革开放的前进方向。改什么、怎么改必须以是否符合完善和发展中国特色社会主义制度、推进国家治理体系和治理能力现代化的总目标为根本尺度，该改的、能改的我们坚决改，不该改的、不能改的坚决不改。我们要坚持党的基本路线，把以经济建设为中心同坚持四项基本原则、坚持改革开放这两个基本点统一于新时代中国特色社会主义伟大实践，长期坚持，决不动摇。

On our way forward, we must adhere to the guidance of Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and the spirit of the Nineteenth National Congress of the CPC, strengthen the 'Four Confidences' and stick to progress-oriented reform and opening up. As for what to reform and how to go about it, we must base our decisions on the essential measure of whether or not it accords with our overall goals of, firstly, improving and developing the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and, secondly, promoting modernisation of the national governance system and capacity. We will reform the things that should or need to be changed, and we will leave those that should not or need not be altered. We must adhere to the Party's basic line by bringing together economic development as the central task, observance of the 'Four Cardinal Principles',²³ and compliance with the 'Two Basic Points'²⁴ of reform and opening up. Furthermore, we must integrate these into the great

²² Lu Xun, "Random Thoughts (66) – The Road of Life," *Selected Works of Lu Xun*, vol. 2, p. 54 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980). Lu Xun (1881–1936) was a leading figure of modern Chinese literature. He is often regarded as China's greatest modern writer.

²³ The 'Four Cardinal Principles' are the principles of adhering to: the socialist path; the people's democratic dictatorship; the leadership of the CPC; and Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. The Four Cardinal Principles were put forward by Deng Xiaoping in 1979.

(Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 44).

²⁴ The 'Two Basic Points' are: the Four Cardinal Principles, and the policy of reform and opening up.

(Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 44).

practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the New Era, which we must maintain unwaveringly for a long time to come.

第五，必须坚持完善和发展中国特色社会主义制度，不断发挥和增强我国制度优势。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：制度是关系党和国家事业发展的根本性、全局性、稳定性、长期性问题。我们扭住完善和发展中国特色社会主义制度这个关键，为解放和发展社会生产力、解放和增强社会活力、永葆党和国家生机活力提供了有力保证，为保持社会大局稳定、保证人民安居乐业、保障国家安全提供了有力保证，为放手让一切劳动、知识、技术、管理、资本等要素的活力竞相迸发，让一切创造社会财富的源泉充分涌流不断建立了充满活力的体制机制。

Fifth, we must persist with developing and improving socialism with Chinese characteristics, so as to continue to enhance and give free rein to the superiority of China's system. Forty years of practice in reform and opening up have revealed that this system is a matter related to the fundamental, general and stable development of the Party and government in the long term. By turning the key to unlock the development and improvement of socialism with Chinese characteristics, we have provided strong guarantees for the liberation and development of the productive forces, for releasing and boosting social dynamism, and for releasing and enhancing the everlasting vitality of the Party and the country. Furthermore, we have provided a strong guarantee for maintaining overall social stability, thereby ensuring the people live and work in peace and contentment and safeguarding national security. This has enabled us to establish an immensely dynamic institutional mechanism that unleashes the vitality of labour, knowledge, technology, management, capital and other factors to open up an abundance of social wealth.

前进道路上，我们必须毫不动摇巩固和发展公有制经济，毫不动摇鼓励、支持、引导非公有制经济发展，充分发挥市场在资源配置中的决定性作用，更好发挥政府作用，激发各类市场主体活力。我们要坚持党的领导、人民当家作主、依法治国有机统一，坚持和完善人民代表大会制度、中国共产党领导的多党合作和政治协商制度、民族区域自治制度、基层群众自治制度，全面推进依法治国，巩固和发展最广泛的爱国统一战线，发展社会主义协商民主，用制度体系保证人民当家作主。我们要加强文化领域

制度建设，举旗帜、聚民心、育新人、兴文化、展形象，积极培育和践行社会主义核心价值观，推动中华优秀传统文化创造性转化、创新性发展，传承革命文化、发展先进文化，努力创造光耀时代、光耀世界的中华文化。我们要加强社会治理制度建设，不断促进社会公平正义，保持社会安定有序。我们要加强生态文明制度建设，实行最严格的生态环境保护制度。我们要坚决破除一切妨碍发展的体制机制障碍和利益固化藩篱，加快形成系统完备、科学规范、运行有效的制度体系，推动中国特色社会主义制度更加成熟更加定型。

On our way forward, we must unswervingly consolidate and develop the public economy while unwaveringly encouraging, supporting and guiding development of the non-public sector so that the market can play a decisive role in allocating resources while the government can play its own role more effectively, thereby stimulating all market entities. We must uphold the unity between the leadership of the Party, the position of the people as masters of the country and the rule of law, maintaining and improving the system of people's congresses, the system of multiparty cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC, the system of regional ethnic autonomy, and the system of community-level self-governance. We must advance law-based governance in a comprehensive manner, consolidate and develop the broadest possible 'patriotic united front', develop socialist consultative democracy and use its systems and mechanisms to ensure that the people are the masters of the country. We should strengthen institution building in the cultural field, raise our banner, win the people's support, nurture new citizens, revive our culture, showcase our image, and actively cultivate and practice the core socialist values, while also creatively transforming and developing fine traditional Chinese culture, passing on our revolutionary culture and developing an advanced culture, thereby working hard to create a Chinese culture that dazzles our era and our world. We should strengthen construction of the social governance system, promoting social equity and social justice and maintaining social order and stability. We should strengthen the building of an ecological civilisation by implementing the strictest possible system of environmental protection. We must remove all institutional barriers that hinder development and the fences erected by interest groups in order to hasten the formation of a comprehensive, effective structure of support systems based on scientific standards that can make socialism with Chinese characteristics a more mature and well-defined system.

第六，必须坚持以发展为第一要务，不断增强我国综合国力。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：解放和发展社会生产力，增强社会主义国家的综合国力，是社会主义的本质要求和根本任务。只有牢牢扭住经济建设这个中心，毫不动摇坚持发展是硬道理、发展应该是科学发展和高质量发展的

战略思想，推动经济社会持续健康发展，才能全面增强我国经济实力、科技实力、国防实力、综合国力，才能为坚持和发展中国特色社会主义、实现中华民族伟大复兴奠定雄厚物质基础。

Sixth, we must persist with development as our top priority and continually strengthen China's comprehensive national strength. Forty years of practice in reform and opening up have revealed that liberating and developing the productive forces while increasing the comprehensive national strength of a socialist country is the essential requirement and basic task of socialism. Only by grasping economic construction as our central task; only by maintaining the strategic thinking that only development makes a difference and that it should be scientific and high in quality; only by promoting the sound, sustainable development of the economy and society; only by doing these things can we comprehensively increase China's economic power, strength in science and technology, strength of military defence, and comprehensive national strength. Only by doing these things can we lay a solid material foundation that enables us to uphold and develop socialism with Chinese characteristics and realise the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

前进道路上，我们必须围绕解决好人民日益增长的美好生活需要和不平衡不充分的发展之间的矛盾这个社会主要矛盾，坚决贯彻创新、协调、绿色、开放、共享的发展理念，统筹推进“五位一体”总体布局、协调推进“四个全面”战略布局，推动高质量发展，推动新型工业化、信息化、城镇化、农业现代化同步发展，加快建设现代化经济体系，努力实现更高质量、更有效率、更加公平、更可持续的发展。我们要坚持以供给侧结构性改革为主线，积极转变发展方式、优化经济结构、转换增长动力，积极扩大内需，实施区域协调发展战略，实施乡村振兴战略，坚决打好防范化解重大风险、精准脱贫、污染防治的攻坚战。我们要坚持创新是第一动力、人才是第一资源的理念，实施创新驱动发展战略，完善国家创新体系，加快关键核心技术自主创新，为经济社会发展打造新引擎。我们要加强生态文明建设，牢固树立绿水青山就是金山银山的理念，形成绿色发展方式和生活方式，把我们伟大祖国建设得更加美丽，让人民生活在天更蓝、山更绿、水更清的优美环境之中。

On our way forward, we must focus on resolving the principal contradiction facing Chinese society, which is the contradiction between unbalanced and inadequate development and the people's ever-growing needs for a better life. We must implement principles of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development and promote the Five-Point Strategy in a holistic manner and the Four Comprehensives strategy in a coordinated manner. We must promote high-quality development. We must simultaneously develop new applications of information technology, and new forms of industrialisation, urbanisation and agricultural modernisation. By doing these things, we can speed up construction of a modernised economic system and ensure development is fairer, better targeted, more sustainable and of a higher quality. We must maintain supply-side structural reform as our central task by proactively transforming modes of development, optimising the economic structure, changing drivers of growth and actively increasing domestic demand. At the same time, we must implement a coordinated regional development strategy and a strategy of revitalising the countryside while also fighting the battle to prevent and resolve major risks, the battle for poverty alleviation, and the battle to prevent and clean up pollution. We must adhere to principles of innovation as the primary driver of development and human resources as the primary source of development by implementing a development strategy driven by innovation, improving the national innovation framework, accelerating China's independent innovation of key core technologies, thus building a new engine of growth for economic and social development. We must strengthen the building of an ecological civilisation by firmly establishing the idea that 'green lands and blue waters are as precious as silver and gold', formulating a green mode of development and green lifestyle, and beautifying the development of our great motherland, so that our people live in a beautiful environment in which the sky is bluer, the hills are greener and the waters are clearer.

第七，必须坚持扩大开放，不断推动共建人类命运共同体。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：开放带来进步，封闭必然落后。中国的发展离不开世界，世界的繁荣也需要中国。我们统筹国内国际两个大局，坚持对外开放的基本国策，实行积极主动的开放政策，形成全方位、多层次、宽领域的全面开放新格局，为我国创造了良好国际环境、开拓了广阔发展空间。

Seventh, we must continue opening up to the outside world and work for the creation of a global community with a shared future for mankind. Forty years of reform and opening up have revealed that opening up brings progress, whilst seclusion is bound to make us lag behind. China's development is inseparable from global development, just as global prosperity needs China. We should better balance China's overall domestic and international interests, adhere to the basic national policy of opening to the outside world, carry out a policy of proactive opening, and create a new setup of all-round opening up that is comprehensive, multilayered and wide-ranging. In this way, we can create a favourable international environment for China and gain scope to develop further.

前进道路上，我们必须高举和平、发展、合作、共赢的旗帜，恪守维护世界和平、促进共同发展的外交政策宗旨，推动建设相互尊重、公平正义、合作共赢的新型国际关系。我们要尊重各国人民自主选择发展道路的权利，维护国际公平正义，倡导国际关系民主化，反对把自己的意志强加于人，反对干涉别国内政，反对以强凌弱。我们要发挥负责任大国作用，支持广大发展中国家发展，积极参与全球治理体系改革和建设，共同为建设持久和平、普遍安全、共同繁荣、开放包容、清洁美丽的世界而奋斗。我们要支持开放、透明、包容、非歧视性的多边贸易体制，促进贸易投资自由化便利化，推动经济全球化朝着更加开放、包容、普惠、平衡、共赢的方向发展。我们要以共建“一带一路”为重点，同各方一道打造国际合作新平台，为世界共同发展增添新动力。中国决不会以牺牲别国利益为代价来发展自己，也决不放弃自己的正当权益。中国奉行防御性的国防政策，中国发展不对任何国家构成威胁。中国无论发展到什么程度都永远不称霸。

On our way forward, we must hold high the banner of peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit for all. We must strictly abide by a foreign policy whose purpose is to maintain world peace and promote common development, and promote a new type of international relations built on mutual respect, fairness, justice, cooperation and mutual benefit. We should respect the right of the people of all countries to choose their own development path, safeguard global fairness and justice, and advocate for democracy in international relations. At the same time, we should oppose acts that impose one's will on others or interfere in other countries' internal affairs, and oppose the strong bullying the weak. We must play our due role as a responsible major-country, support the development of all developing countries, play an active part in building and reforming the global governance system, and work together to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity. We should support an open, transparent, tolerant and non-discriminatory multilateral trade system, promote liberalisation and facilitation of trade and investment, and ensure economic globalisation moves towards greater openness, tolerance, universal gain, balance and mutual benefit. We should focus on jointly building the BRI and work with all parties to create a new platform for international cooperation, in order to give new impetus to the world's common development. China will never pursue development at the expense of others' interests, but nor will China ever abandon its legitimate rights and interests. China pursues a national defence policy that is defensive in

nature. China's development poses no threat to any other country. China will never seek hegemony no matter how far its development progresses.

第八，必须坚持全面从严治党，不断提高党的创造力、凝聚力、战斗力。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：打铁必须自身硬。办好中国的事情，关键在党，关键在坚持党要管党、全面从严治党。我们党只有在领导改革开放和社会主义现代化建设伟大社会革命的同时，坚定不移推进党的伟大自我革命，敢于清除一切侵蚀党的健康肌体的病毒，使党不断自我净化、自我完善、自我革新、自我提高，不断增强党的政治领导力、思想引领力、群众组织力、社会号召力，才能确保党始终保持同人民群众的血肉联系。

Eighth, we must ensure the Party is governed with strict discipline while enhancing its ability to innovate, power to unite and energy to fight. Forty years of practice in reform and opening up have revealed that 'you must be tough if you want to work with iron', that is, we must be sound of mind and professionally competent to do arduous work. China's success hinges on the Party. It hinges on ensuring that the Party supervises its own conduct and runs itself with strict discipline. The only way to ensure that the Party always maintains its flesh-and-blood-ties with the people is if, while leading the great social revolution of reform and opening up and socialist modernisation, our Party concurrently advances its own great self-revolution. We must have the courage to eliminate the viruses eroding the Party's health and continue to purify, improve, innovate and upgrade the Party to enhance its political leadership, ideological leadership, social appeal, and strength as a mass organisation.

前进道路上，我们必须按照新时代党的建设总要求，以政治建设为统领，不断推进党的建设新的伟大工程，不断增强全党团结统一和创造活力，不断增强全党执政本领，把党建设得更加坚强、更加有力。我们要坚持用时代发展要求审视自己，以强烈忧患意识警醒自己，以改革创新精神加强和完善自己，在应对风险挑战中锻炼提高，在解决党内存在的突出矛盾和问题中净化纯洁，不断提高管党治党水平。我们要坚持德才兼备、以德为先、任人唯贤，着力培养忠诚干净担当的高素质干部队伍和宏大的人才队伍。我们要以反腐败永远在路上的坚韧和执着，深化标本兼治，坚决清

除一切腐败分子，保证干部清正、政府清廉、政治清明，为继续推进改革开放营造海晏河清的政治生态。

On our way forward, the requirements of Party building in the New Era stipulate that we must take political construction as our overarching principle while pressing ahead with the new great project of Party building. By continuing to strengthen Party unity and creativity, and by enhancing the Party's governing capability, we will become stronger and stauncher. We should insist on scrutinising ourselves according to the requirements of the times; stay alert to potential dangers; strengthen and improve ourselves with a spirit of reform and innovation; enhance our ability to respond to risks and challenges; and cleanse and purify contradictions and issues within the Party. This will improve the Party's ability to manage and govern itself with strict discipline. We should select those who are both talented and morally cultivated for Party work by prioritising morality and appointing people on merit, and focus our efforts on populating our ranks with loyal, clean, high-quality cadres and building a great team of talent. We must have the tenacity and resolve to stick to the long road of combatting corruption, ensuring that we tackle both the root cause and symptoms of this disease, and resolutely eliminate all instances of corruption. This will guarantee that our officials remain honest and upright, our government remains clean, and political integrity is upheld, and so create a clear and clean political environment for further progress in reform and opening up.

第九，必须坚持辩证唯物主义和历史唯物主义世界观和方法论，正确处理改革发展稳定关系。改革开放40年的实践启示我们：我国是一个大国，决不能在根本性问题上出现颠覆性错误。我们坚持加强党的领导和尊重人民首创精神相结合，坚持“摸着石头过河”和顶层设计相结合，坚持问题导向和目标导向相统一，坚持试点先行和全面推进相促进，既鼓励大胆试、大胆闯，又坚持实事求是、善作善成，确保了改革开放行稳致远。

Ninth, we must adhere to the worldview and methodologies of 'dialectical materialism' and 'historical materialism',²⁵ and correctly handle the relationship between reform, development and stability. Forty years of practice in reform and opening up have revealed that China is a big country and so we cannot afford to make subversive mistakes on fundamental issues. We will adhere to combining the strengthening of Party leadership with respect for the people's pioneering spirit, combining the principle of 'crossing the river by

²⁵ 'Dialectical materialism' and 'historical materialism' are two related philosophical concepts derived from Marxism. The two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, but in general, 'dialectical materialism' refers to a Marxist understanding of nature, one which sees events in the material world arising through dialectical development as conflicts between oppositional elements emerge and are resolved continuously. 'Historical materialism' applies dialectical materialism to social life, regarding the continuous process of conflict between social forces and their resolution as the driver of progress in history and human society. For a discussion of 'dialectical materialism' and 'historical materialism' as concepts of CPC doctrine, see Laikwan Pang, "Dialectical Materialism," in *Afterlives of Chinese Communism*, Sorace, Franceschini, and Loubere, eds., pp. 67–71 (Canberra: ANU Press, 2019).

feeling for the stones'²⁶ with that of top-level design, the integration of a problem-oriented approach with a goal-oriented approach, and concurrently promote pilot schemes and full-scale implementation. This not only encourages bold trials and daring breakthroughs, but also upholds the principles of 'seeking truth from facts' and 'working wholeheartedly to produce the best possible results' to ensure reform and opening up proceeds steadily to its destination.

前进道路上，我们要增强战略思维、辩证思维、创新思维、法治思维、底线思维，加强宏观思考和顶层设计，坚持问题导向，聚焦我国发展面临的突出矛盾和问题，深入调查研究，鼓励基层大胆探索，坚持改革决策和立法决策相衔接，不断提高改革决策的科学性。我们要拿出抓铁有痕、踏石留印的韧劲，以钉钉子精神抓好落实，确保各项重大改革举措落到实处。我们既要敢为天下先、敢闯敢试，又要积极稳妥、蹄疾步稳，把改革发展稳定统一起来，坚持方向不变、道路不偏、力度不减，推动新时代改革开放走得更稳、走得更远。

On our way forward, we must enhance our strategic thinking, dialectical thinking, innovative thinking, law-based governance thinking and bottom-line thinking while strengthening macroscopic thinking and top-level design. We must follow a problem-oriented approach that focuses on the prominent contradictions and issues that China faces in development and conduct in-depth investigations and research. We must encourage bold exploration at the grassroots level, maintain the link between reform decisions and legislative decisions, and continue to enhance the scientific nature of reform decisions. Just as the force of a hammer drives a nail, we must have the tenacity to be branded by hot iron and tread on hot coals in order to ensure that all major reform measures are implemented effectively. We must not only have the courage to take the lead, make breakthroughs and try new things, but also actively take rapid yet steady steps to unify reform, development and stability. We must be sure not to change our direction, deviate from our path or diminish our efforts so that reform and opening up in the New Era makes greater and steadier progress.

同志们、朋友们！

坚持富国和强军相统一，建设同我国国际地位相称、同国家安全和发
展利益相适应的巩固国防和强大军队，是我国社会主义现代化建设的战略
任务。我们要全面贯彻新时代党的强军思想，坚持党对军队的绝对领导，

²⁶ 'Cross the river by feeling for the stones' 摸着石头过河 is a saying generally attributed to Deng Xiaoping. It refers to Deng's approach to reform and opening in China.

把握世界新军事革命发展大势，坚持走中国特色强军之路，全面深化国防和军队改革，推进政治建军、改革强军、科技兴军、依法治军，建设一支听党指挥、能打胜仗、作风优良的人民军队，努力建设世界一流军队，为维护国家主权、安全、发展利益，为维护世界和平稳定，为实现中华民族伟大复兴提供坚强后盾。

Comrades and friends,

The strategic tasks of China's socialist modernisation are to, firstly, uphold the integration of our goals of making the country rich and the armed forces strong, and, secondly, build a strong system of national defence and strong military, such that both are commensurate with China's international status and compatible with our national security and development interests. We must fully implement the Party's thinking on strengthening the military for the New Era and uphold the Party's absolute leadership over the military. We must seize the new global trend to revolutionalise military development while staying committed to the path of building strong armed forces with Chinese characteristics by comprehensively deepening national defence and military reforms and promoting political work, reform, science and technology and law-based governance in the military. This will enable us to build people's armed forces that follow the Party's commands, are able to win battles and have fine conduct and work towards creating a world-class military which protects our national sovereignty, security and development interests, helps maintain world peace and stability, and provides a powerful support for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

“一国两制”伟大构想具有强大生命力。我们要全面准确贯彻“一国两制”、“港人治港”、“澳人治澳”、高度自治的方针，严格按照宪法和基本法办事，完善与基本法实施相关的制度和机制，保持香港、澳门长期繁荣稳定，支持和推动香港、澳门更好融入国家发展大局，让香港、澳门同胞同祖国人民共担民族复兴的历史责任、共享祖国繁荣富强的伟大荣光。

The great concept of 'One Country, Two Systems' has a strong vitality. We must fully and faithfully implement the principle of 'One Country, Two Systems', under which the people of Hong Kong govern Hong Kong and the people of Macao govern Macao, and both regions enjoy a high degree of autonomy. We must act in strict accordance with the Constitution and the Basic Law of each SAR and improve the work mechanisms for their enforcement. We must maintain the long-term prosperity and stability of the two regions and further support and promote their integration with the development of the mainland, so that our Hong Kong and Macao compatriots can share with the people of our motherland the historical responsibility for national rejuvenation and the great honour of a prosperous and strong motherland.

实现祖国完全统一，是全体中华儿女共同心愿，是中华民族根本利益所在。我们要坚持一个中国原则和“九二共识”，巩固和发展两岸关系和平发展的基础，深化两岸经济文化交流合作，造福两岸同胞。我们有坚定的政治决心和强大能力维护国家主权和领土完整，祖国的神圣领土一寸都不能分裂出去！

To realise the reunification of the motherland is the common aspiration of all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation and is in the fundamental interests of the nation. We must adhere to the 'One China' principle and the '1992 Consensus', consolidate and develop the basis for peaceful development of relations across the Taiwan Strait, and deepen cross-Strait economic cooperation and cultural exchanges to benefit our compatriots on both sides of the Strait. We have the firm political determination and strong capabilities needed to protect our national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Not even an inch of our motherland's sacred territory can be taken from us!

同志们、朋友们！

中国人民具有伟大梦想精神，中华民族充满变革和开放精神。几千年前，中华民族的先民们就秉持“周虽旧邦，其命维新”的精神，开启了缔造中华文明的伟大实践。自古以来，中国大地上发生了无数变法变革图强运动，留下了“治世不一道，便国不法古”等豪迈宣言。自古以来，中华民族就以“天下大同”、“协和万邦”的宽广胸怀，自信而又大度地开展同域外民族交往和文化交流，曾经谱写了万里驼铃万里波的浩浩丝路长歌，也曾经创造了万国衣冠会长安的盛唐气象。正是这种“天行健，君子以自强不息”、“地势坤，君子以厚德载物”的变革和开放精神，使中华文明成为人类历史上唯一一个绵延5000多年至今未曾中断的灿烂文明。以数千年大历史观之，变革和开放总体上是中国的历史常态。中华民族以改革开放的姿态继续走向未来，有着深远的历史渊源、深厚的文化根基。

Comrades and friends,

The Chinese people have the courage to dream big. The Chinese nation has the enthusiasm for change and opening. Thousands of years ago, the ancestors of the Chinese

people began the great project of creating Chinese civilisation, drawing on a spirit which can be encapsulated in a line from the Confucian classic the *Book of Songs*: "Even an established nation like Zhou still regards self-renewal as its mission."²⁷ Since ancient times, countless reform movements on Chinese soil have sought to make the country strong. These movements have left us with many heroic declarations, such as this one recorded by the great Han dynasty official Sima Qian in his epic history of China, the *Shiji*: "There is more than one way of governance, and the ancient way is not the only way to develop a nation."²⁸ Since ancient times, the Chinese nation has believed that "all people under the heaven are of one family," and, "all nations should live in harmony."²⁹ Drawing on this broad-minded spirit, the Chinese nation confidently and magnanimously made contact with ethnic groups outside the country. These vibrant cultural exchanges helped compose the great lay of the mighty Silk Road, where camel bells ring and sand dunes undulate for over ten thousand *li*. It was cultural exchange, too, that fostered the splendour of the high Tang period, as showcased in its capital Chang'an, a global city of its time in which the national costumes of countless states mingled in a vivid display of colour.³⁰ It is just this enthusiasm for change, which is exemplified by the saying, "Just as heaven maintains vigour through movement, so should a gentleman constantly strive for self-perfection,"³¹ that has made China the only civilisation in human history with over 5,000 years of continuous civilisation. Seen in the perspective of these thousands of years of history, change and opening is the historical norm of China. Even now, the Chinese nation continues to move towards the future through reform and opening up, while preserving its profound historical origin and deep cultural foundation.

我们这么大一个国家，就应该有雄心壮志。毛泽东同志说：“夺取全国胜利，这只是万里长征走完了第一步。如果这一步也值得骄傲，那是比较渺小的，更值得骄傲的还在后头。在过了几十年之后来看中国人民民主革命的胜利，就会使人们感觉那好像只是一出长剧的一个短小的序幕。剧是必须从序幕开始的，但序幕还不是高潮。”“我们不但善于破坏一个旧世界，我们还将善于建设一个新世界。”

We should have a grandness of ambition befitting of such a large country. As comrade Mao Zedong once said, "To win countrywide victory is only the first step in a long march of ten thousand *li*. Even if this step is worthy of pride, it is comparatively tiny; what will be

²⁷ Section III. 1. (235), in the *Book of Songs* [*Shijing*].

²⁸ "Shangjun" 商君 [Biography of Lord Shang], 68, *Liezhuan* 列传 [*Ranked biographies*], *Shiji* [*Records of the Grand Historian*] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959).

²⁹ The two sayings come from works in the Five Confucian Classics [*Wujing*]. The first quotation is from the *Book of Rites* [*Liji*], the second from the *Book of History* [*Shangshu*].

³⁰ The phrase 万国衣冠, translated here as 'the national costumes of countless states', is an allusion to a line of poetry by famous Tang poet Wang Wei 王维 (699–759): 九天阊阖开宫殿，万国衣冠拜冕旒 "The most exalted central gate opens on to the palace; And officers from countless states bow down to the tasselled crown."

Wang Wei, "Matching the Poem 'Dawn Audience in the Palace of Great Brightness' by Imperial Scribe Jia Zhi," in *Three Hundred Tang Poems*, Harris trans., 231 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009).

³¹ This saying comes from the *Book of Changes* [*Yijing*], one of the Five Confucian Classics.

more worthy of pride is yet to come. After several decades, the victory of the Chinese people's democratic revolution, viewed in retrospect, will seem like only a brief prologue to a long drama. A drama begins with a prologue, but the prologue is not the climax." He stressed that, "We are not only good at destroying the old world, we are also good at building the new."³²

改革开放之初，虽然我们国家大、人口多、底子薄，面对着重重困难和挑战，但我们对未来充满信心，设计了用70多年、分三步走基本实现社会主义现代化的宏伟蓝图，没有非凡的胆略、坚定的自信是作不出这样宏远的构想和决策的。

In this early stage of reform and opening up, although our country is huge, our population large and our foundations weak, although we still face many difficulties and challenges, we are full of confidence for the future. We have designed a grand blueprint for basically realising socialist modernisation in just over 70 years spread across three stages. Ambitious ideas and decisions such as this could not have been made if we did not possess firm confidence and extraordinary courage and resourcefulness.

40年来，我们咬定青山不放松，风雨无阻朝着这个伟大目标前进。党的十九大对我国发展提出了更高的奋斗目标，形成了从全面建成小康社会到基本实现现代化、再到全面建成社会主义现代化强国的战略安排，发出了实现中华民族伟大复兴中国梦的最强音。

Over the past 40 years, we have forged ahead towards this great goal with utter determination and an indomitable spirit.³³ The Nineteenth National Congress of the CPC has set a higher goal for China's development by formulating a strategic plan that will take us from a fully formed moderately prosperous society to essentially realising modernisation, and then progress from there to complete the construction of a strong modern socialist country. This has sounded the most resonant note yet for realising the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

古人说：“事者，生于虑，成于务，失于傲。”伟大梦想不是等得来、喊得来的，而是拼出来、干出来的。我们现在所处的，是一个船到中流浪

³² Mao Zedong, "Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, vol. 4 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1961).

³³ Here the Chinese text alludes to a famous line in the poem 'Bamboo in the Rock' 竹石 by Qing dynasty painter and calligrapher Zheng Xie 郑燮 (1693–1765). 咬定青山不放松 can be translated as 'Upright stands the bamboo amid green mountains steep'.

更急、人到半山路更陡的时候，是一个愈进愈难、愈进愈险而又不进则退、非进不可的时候。改革开放已走过千山万水，但仍需跋山涉水，摆在全党全国各族人民面前的使命更光荣、任务更艰巨、挑战更严峻、工作更伟大。在这个千帆竞发、百舸争流的时代，我们绝不能有半点骄傲自满、固步自封，也绝不能有丝毫犹豫不决、徘徊彷徨，必须统揽伟大斗争、伟大工程、伟大事业、伟大梦想，勇立潮头、奋勇搏击。

The ancient Legalist philosopher Guan Zhong once said, "Careful planning and concrete actions lead to success, while complacency results in failure."³⁴ Great dreams come about not through words or waiting, but through toil and effort. We are now at the point where the waves rise higher against our boat, the point halfway up the mountain where the path steepens, the point where further progress entails greater danger and difficulty, but you must go on or you will fall behind. Reform and opening up has navigated across thousands of mountains and rivers, but still there are more peaks to climb and rivers to cross. Thus, the mission before us—the whole Party and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups—is more glorious still. Our task is more arduous, our challenges more severe, and our work greater than ever. In this era where a thousand sails are flown and a hundred barges race one another, we must not feel the slightest inkling of arrogance or complacency, nor harbour the slightest hesitation or indecision. We must take charge of great struggles, great projects, great undertakings, and great dreams, having the courage to stand with the times and forge ahead against tremendous odds.

信仰、信念、信心，任何时候都至关重要。小到一个人、一个集体，大到一个政党、一个民族、一个国家，只要有信仰、信念、信心，就会愈挫愈奋、愈战愈勇，否则就会不战自败、不打自垮。无论过去、现在还是将来，对马克思主义的信仰，对中国特色社会主义的信念，对实现中华民族伟大复兴中国梦的信心，都是指引和支撑中国人民站起来、富起来、强起来的强大精神力量。

Belief, faith and confidence—these are vital at all times. Whether it is a single person or group, or a whole political party, nationality or country, big or small, if they have belief, faith and confidence, then setbacks will only spur them on, and challenges will only make them more courageous still. However, lacking belief, faith and confidence, then they will be defeated before the battle has even begun; beaten without coming to blows. Whether in the

³⁴ Guan Zhong 管仲, "Cheng ma" 乘马 [On military taxes], in *Guanzi* 管子 [*Master Guan*], *Sibu congkan chubian* ed. 四部丛刊初篇本 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, Minguo 25, 1936).

past, present or future, belief in Marxism, faith in socialism with Chinese characteristics and confidence in the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation has always been the mighty spiritual force guiding and supporting the Chinese people to stand up, get rich and become strong.

同志们、朋友们！

四十载惊涛拍岸，九万里风鹏正举。江河之所以能冲开绝壁夺隘而出，是因其积聚了千里奔涌、万壑归流的洪荒伟力。在近代以来漫长的历史进程中，中国人民经历了太多太多的磨难，付出了太多太多的牺牲，进行了太多太多的拼搏。现在，中国人民和中华民族在历史进程中积累的强大能量已经充分爆发出来了，为实现中华民族伟大复兴提供了势不可挡的磅礴力量。

Comrades and friends,

For forty years, fierce winds and raging waves have beaten against the shore, but still the "mighty Roc is winging to the Empyrean; on a flight of ninety-thousand *li*."³⁵ The reason why rivers can carve through cliffs is because they accrue the great power of floods that have flowed for thousands of miles. In the long course of history since the advent of modern times, the Chinese people have experienced far too many hardships, made far too many sacrifices, and gone through far too much hard struggle. But now, the powerful energy that the Chinese people and the Chinese nation have amassed through the course of this history has burst forth, creating an unstoppable force of momentum for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

建成社会主义现代化强国，实现中华民族伟大复兴，是一场接力跑，我们要一棒接着一棒跑下去，每一代人都要为下一代人跑出一个好成绩。

Establishing a strong modern socialist country and realising the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is a relay race. We must run each leg of the race one after another, with each generation posting a good time for the next.

全党全国各族人民要更加紧密地团结在党中央周围，高举中国特色社会主义伟大旗帜，不忘初心，牢记使命，将改革开放进行到底，不断实现

³⁵ Li Qingzhao, "Tune: Fisherman's Pride: A Dream by Li Qingzhao (1084–1151)," in Ward, *Li Qingzhao: An Homage To*, p. 137 (London: Lulu, 2008). The Roc is an enormous legendary bird, first described in the *Zhuangzi* 庄子, an ancient Chinese text from the late Warring States period (476–221 BC).

人民对美好生活的向往，在新时代创造中华民族新的更大奇迹！创造让世界刮目相看的新的更大奇迹！

The whole Party and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups should rally even more closely around the Party Central Committee and hold high the banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics. We must stay true to our original aspiration and continue marching forward, carry reform and opening up through to the end and continue working to realise the people's aspirations for a better life. We will create new and greater miracles for the Chinese nation in the New Era and new and greater miracles that will amaze the world!

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A3.3 [2019.1]

Address at the Ceremony to Commemorate the Centenary of the May Fourth Movement

Translated January 2020

在纪念五四运动100周年大会上的讲话

2019年4月30日

习近平

Address at the Ceremony to Commemorate the Centenary of the May Fourth Movement

April 30, 2019

Xi Jinping

共青团员们，青年朋友们，同志们：

100年前，中国大地爆发了震惊中外的五四运动，这是中国近现代史上具有划时代意义的一个重大事件。

Communist Youth League (CYL) members, young friends and comrades,

A hundred years ago, the May Fourth Movement erupted in mainland China. This was a momentous event of epoch-making significance in China's modern history, and one that shook the whole world.

今年是五四运动100周年，也是中华人民共和国成立70周年。在这个具有特殊意义的历史时刻，我们在这里隆重集会，缅怀五四先驱崇高的爱国情怀和革命精神，总结党和人民探索实现民族复兴道路的宝贵经验，这对发扬五四精神，激励全党全国各族人民特别是新时代中国青年为全面建

成小康社会、加快建设社会主义现代化国家、实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦而奋斗，具有十分重大的意义。

This year marks the hundredth anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, and the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Today, at this pivotal moment in history, we come together to cherish the lofty patriotism and revolutionary spirit of the May Fourth pioneers, and to reflect on the valuable experiences that the Party and people have shared on their search for national rejuvenation. Our commemoration today has great significance, firstly for carrying forward the 'May Fourth Spirit', and secondly, for inspiring the entire Party, Chinese people of all ethnic groups, and especially Chinese youth in the 'New Era', to strive to build a modern socialist country and realise the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

青年朋友们、同志们！

五四运动，爆发于民族危难之际，是一场以先进青年知识分子为先锋、广大人民群众参加的彻底反帝反封建的伟大爱国革命运动，是一场中国人民为拯救民族危亡、捍卫民族尊严、凝聚民族力量而掀起的伟大社会革命运动，是一场传播新思想新文化新知识的伟大思想启蒙运动和新文化运动，以磅礴之力鼓动了中国人民和中华民族实现民族复兴的志向和信心。

Young friends and comrades,

The May Fourth Movement, which broke out at a time of national crisis, was a great revolutionary patriotic movement opposing imperialism and feudalism. It was led by progressive young intellectuals and enjoyed widespread participation from the broad masses of the Chinese people. It was a great revolutionary social movement which was sparked when the Chinese people pooled their strength in a bid to salvage the nation's fate and defend the dignity of its people. It was a great enlightenment movement and 'new culture' movement, spreading new ideas, new culture, and new knowledge with great momentum to inspire the Chinese people and the Chinese nation to achieve national rejuvenation.

五四运动，以彻底反帝反封建的革命性、追求救国强国真理的进步性、各族各界群众积极参与的广泛性，推动了中国社会进步，促进了马克思主义在中国的传播，促进了马克思主义同中国工人运动的结合，为中国共产党成立做了思想上干部上的准备，为新的革命力量、革命文化、革命斗争登上历史舞台创造了条件，是中国旧民主主义革命走向新民主主义革命

的转折点，在近代以来中华民族追求民族独立和发展进步的历史进程中具有里程碑意义。

The May Fourth Movement drove social progress, promoted the spread of Marxism in China and helped integrate Marxism into the Chinese Labour Movement through, firstly, a revolutionary spirit that opposed imperialism and feudalism; secondly, its progressive character, which sought the way to save and strengthen the nation; and lastly, its populist nature, which saw the active participation of Chinese people of all ethnic groups and from all walks of life. In so doing, the May Fourth Movement laid the ideological and operational groundwork for the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and established the conditions for a new revolutionary force, revolutionary culture, and revolutionary struggle to each take their place on the historical stage. Marking the end of the 'Old Democratic Revolution'¹ and the start of the 'New Democratic Revolution'² in China, the May Fourth Movement was a milestone in the history of the Chinese nation's quest for independence and development in modern times.

——五四运动以全民族的力量高举起爱国主义的伟大旗帜。五四运动，孕育了以爱国、进步、民主、科学为主要内容的伟大五四精神，其核心是爱国主义精神。爱国主义是我们民族精神的核心，是中华民族团结奋斗、自强不息的精神纽带。五四运动时，面对国家和民族生死存亡，一批爱国青年挺身而出，全国民众奋起抗争，誓言“国土不可断送、人民不可低头”，奏响了浩气长存的爱国主义壮歌。

The May Fourth Movement hoisted up the great banner of Chinese patriotism through the strength of the entire nation. The movement gave birth to the May Fourth Spirit of patriotism, progress, democracy and science. At its heart, the May Fourth Spirit is a spirit of patriotism. Patriotism is at the core of our national spirit and is the spiritual glue that binds the Chinese people in their united struggle and drive for self-reliance. During the May Fourth Movement, a group of patriotic youth stepped forward to face up to the life-or-death struggle for the survival of the nation and its people. Across the country, the people rose in protest. They vowed that, "China's territory will not be given away and its people will not surrender"³—a patriotic call that reverberates with an inextinguishable noble spirit.

¹ The 'Old Democratic Revolution' refers to previous non-communist democratic revolutionary efforts including the Xinhai Revolution of 1911. More generally it refers to "traditional" Western representative democracy.

² The 'New Democratic Revolution' refers to the Communist-led Chinese revolution. Officially it spans three decades from 1919 until 1949.

³ This is a shortened version of a line from 'The Manifesto of All the Students of Beijing,' released during the May Fourth Movement. The full line reads: '中国的土地可以征服而不可以断送！中国的人民可以杀戮而不可以低头！' "First, China's territory may be conquered, but it cannot be given away. Second, the Chinese people may be massacred but they will not surrender."

Luo Jialun 罗家伦, "The Manifesto of All the Students of Beijing" [Beijing xuejie quanti xuanyan 北京学界全体宣言] (May 1919).

历史深刻表明，爱国主义自古以来就流淌在中华民族血脉之中，去不掉，打不破，灭不了，是中国人民和中华民族维护民族独立和民族尊严的强大精神动力，只要高举爱国主义的伟大旗帜，中国人民和中华民族就能在改造中国、改造世界的拼搏中迸发出排山倒海的历史伟力！

History has profoundly shown that patriotism has coursed deep through the veins of Chinese people since ancient times. Immovable, unbreakable and inextinguishable, patriotism is a mighty spiritual force of the Chinese people and Chinese nation, one that safeguards national independence and dignity. Only by holding high the great banner of patriotism will the people and the nation be able to unleash an irresistible historical momentum that will shape their transformation of China and the world!

——五四运动以全民族的行动激发了追求真理、追求进步的伟大觉醒。五四运动前后，我国一批先进知识分子和革命青年，在追求真理中传播新思想新文化，勇于打破封建思想的桎梏，猛烈冲击了几千年来的封建旧礼教、旧道德、旧思想、旧文化。五四运动改变了以往只有觉悟的革命者而缺少觉醒的人民大众的斗争状况，实现了中国人民和中华民族自鸦片战争以来第一次全面觉醒。经过五四运动洗礼，越来越多中国先进分子集合在马克思主义旗帜下，1921年中国共产党宣告正式成立，中国历史掀开了崭新一页。

Through the work of the whole nation, the May Fourth Movement inspired China's great awakening to the pursuit of truth and progress. Both before and after the May Fourth Movement, a group of progressive intellectuals and revolutionary youth in China spread new ideas and new culture in their pursuit of truth. They had the courage to break the shackles of feudal ideology, launching a fierce attack on feudal relics that had stood for millennia—old rites, old morals, old ideas and old culture. The May Fourth Movement took what had been a struggle of enlightened revolutionaries and those few ordinary people who had come to realise the truth, and transformed it into the first great awakening of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation since the Opium War in 1840. Baptised through the May Fourth Movement, increasing numbers of progressive intellectuals in China rallied around the banner of Marxism. The official founding of the CPC was then announced in 1921, thereby opening a new chapter in Chinese history.

历史深刻表明，有了马克思主义，有了中国共产党领导，有了中国人民和中华民族的伟大觉醒，中国人民和中华民族追求真理、追求进步的潮流从此就是任何人都阻挡不了的！

History has profoundly shown that the Chinese people and nation's pursuit of truth and progress becomes an unstoppable tide when they have Marxism, CPC leadership, and the great awakening of the Chinese people and Chinese nation by their side!

——五四运动以全民族的搏击培育了永久奋斗的伟大传统。早在80年前，毛泽东同志就指出：“中国的青年运动有很好的革命传统，这个传统就是‘永久奋斗’。”通过五四运动，中国青年发现了自己的力量，中国人民和中华民族发现了自己的力量。中国人民和中华民族从斗争实践中懂得，中国社会发展，中华民族振兴，中国人民幸福，必须依靠自己的英勇奋斗来实现，没有人会恩赐给我们一个光明的中国。

The May Fourth Movement helped cultivate a great tradition of perpetual struggle as the whole nation took up the fight. Eighty years ago, Comrade Mao Zedong said, "The Chinese Youth Movement has a fine revolutionary tradition, the tradition of 'perpetual struggle'." Through the May Fourth Movement, not only did Chinese youth realise their own strength, but so did all of the Chinese people and the nation as a whole. The Chinese people and nation came to understand through struggle and practice that the development of Chinese society, revitalisation of the Chinese nation, and happiness of Chinese people will only be achieved through heroic struggle; not bestowed on us as a favour.

历史深刻表明，只要中国人民和中华民族勇于为改变自己的命运而奋斗牺牲，我们的国家就一定能够走向富强，我们的民族就一定能够实现伟大复兴！

History has profoundly shown that as long as the Chinese people and Chinese nation have the courage to endure struggle and sacrifice in order to change their destiny, then our country will surely become prosperous and strong, and our nation will surely achieve its rejuvenation.

五四运动以来的100年，是中国青年一代又一代接续奋斗、凯歌前行的100年，是中国青年用青春之我创造青春之中国、青春之民族的100年。

The century since the May Fourth Movement has been a century of young people in China fighting and marching forward generation after generation; a century of young people in China drawing on their youth to create a youthful China and a youthful nation.

100年来，中国青年满怀对祖国和人民的赤子之心，积极投身党领导的革命、建设、改革伟大事业，为人民战斗、为祖国献身、为幸福生活奋斗，把最美好的青春献给祖国和人民，谱写了一曲又一曲壮丽的青春之歌。

Over the past hundred years, China's youth have harboured a heartfelt devotion for the motherland and the people. They have enthusiastically participated in the great causes of Party-led revolution, socialist construction and reform. They have fought for the people, sacrificed for the nation, and struggled for a life of happiness, dedicating their glorious youth to serving the motherland and the people, and composing song after song on the magnificence of youth.

实践充分证明，中国青年是有远大理想抱负的青年！中国青年是有深厚家国情怀的青年！中国青年是有伟大创造力的青年！无论过去、现在还是未来，中国青年始终是实现中华民族伟大复兴的先锋力量！

Practice has fully proven that Chinese youth are young people with lofty ideals and ambitions! Chinese youth are young people with deep feelings for the nation! Chinese youth are young people with great creativity! Whether in the past, present or future, China's young people have always been and will always be in the vanguard striving for the achievement of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation!

青年朋友们、同志们！

今天，在中国共产党领导下，我们开辟了中国特色社会主义道路，形成了中国特色社会主义理论体系，建立了中国特色社会主义制度，发展了中国特色社会主义文化，推动中国特色社会主义进入了新时代。中国人民

拥有了前所未有的道路自信、理论自信、制度自信、文化自信，中华民族伟大复兴展现出前所未有的光明前景！

Young friends and comrades,

Today, under the leadership of the CPC, we have pioneered the path, formulated the theoretical framework, established the system, and developed a culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and so ushered socialism with Chinese characteristics into a New Era. Chinese people have unprecedented confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The new prospects for achieving the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation are bright indeed!

新时代中国青年运动的主题，新时代中国青年运动的方向，新时代中国青年的使命，就是坚持中国共产党领导，同人民一道，为实现“两个一百年”奋斗目标、实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦而奋斗。

The theme, direction and mission of the Chinese youth movement in the New Era is to uphold the leadership of the CPC and unite with the people in their struggle for the achievement of the 'Two Centenary Goals'⁴ and the Chinese Dream of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

青年是整个社会力量中最积极、最有生气的力量，国家的希望在青年，民族的未来在青年。今天，新时代中国青年处在中华民族发展的最好时期，既面临着难得的建功立业的人生际遇，也面临着“天将降大任于斯人”的时代使命。新时代中国青年要继续发扬五四精神，以实现中华民族伟大复兴为己任，不辜负党的期望、人民期待、民族重托，不辜负我们这个伟大时代。

Young people are the most active and lively force in society. The hopes of the country and future of the nation lies with its youth. Today, Chinese youth in the New Era live in the best period of development in the history of the Chinese nation. They are faced with not only rare opportunities to accomplish their goals, but also the mission of the times to be "bestowed

⁴ The 'Two Centenary Goals' for building socialism with Chinese characteristics were proposed by the CPC at its Eighteenth National Congress in 2012. The two goals are: to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the centenary of the CPC (founded in 1921), and to build China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, and harmonious by the centenary of the PRC (founded in 1949). (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 76)

with great responsibility."⁵ Chinese youth in the New Era should continue to uphold the May Fourth Spirit, make the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation their duty, and live up to the Party's aspirations, the people's expectations, the nation's trust and our great age.

第一，新时代中国青年要树立远大理想。青年的理想信念关乎国家未来。青年理想远大、信念坚定，是一个国家、一个民族无坚不摧的前进动力。青年志存高远，就能激发奋进潜力，青春岁月就不会像无舵之舟漂泊不定。正所谓“立志而圣则圣矣，立志而贤则贤矣”。青年的人生目标会有不同，职业选择也有差异，但只有把自己的小我融入祖国的大我、人民的大我之中，与时代同步伐、与人民共命运，才能更好实现人生价值、升华人生境界。离开了祖国需要、人民利益，任何孤芳自赏都会陷入越走越窄的狭小天地。

First, Chinese youth in the New Era should foster lofty ideals. The ideals and convictions of youth relate to the future of the country. The great aspirations and firm convictions of young people are an almighty force of progress for a country and its people. Lofty youthful aspirations tap a potential for endeavour, and so prevent young people from drifting aimlessly like a boat without a rudder. As they say, "If you establish the resolve to become a Sage, then you have become a Sage. If you establish the resolve to become a Worthy, then you have become a Worthy."⁶ Young people will have different life goals and career choices, but only if they merge their lesser selves into the greater collective of the motherland and the collective of the people, keeping pace with the times and sharing the people's fate, will they be able to discover the true value and essence of life. Divorcing yourself from the country's needs and the people's interests will only ensure that narcissism comes to confine you in your own little world.

新时代中国青年要树立对马克思主义的信仰、对中国特色社会主义的信念、对中华民族伟大复兴中国梦的信心，到人民群众中去，到新时代新天地中去，让理想信念在创业奋斗中升华，让青春在创新创造中闪光！

⁵ '天将降大任于斯人' originally comes from the *Mencius* 孟子. James Legge's translation is: 'When Heaven is about to confer a great office on any man.' See James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2, *The Works of Mencius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895).

⁶ Wang Yangming 王阳明, "Jiaotiao shi Longchang zhusheng" 教条示龙场诸生 [Tenets to instruct the students of Longchang], in *Yangming xiansheng jiyao* 阳明先生集要 [The essential works of Master Wang Yangming], *Sibu congkan chubian* ed. 四部丛刊初编本 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, Minguo 25, 1936). In the previous sentence, 无舵之舟 'a boat without a rudder' comes from the same passage in Wang Yangming's work. Thanks to Tony Edwards for assistance with the translation.

In the New Era, Chinese youth must maintain belief in Marxism, faith in socialism with Chinese characteristics and confidence in the Chinese Dream of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. They should go amongst the masses and enter the new world of our New Era, refining their ideals and convictions as they make their way in the world, and letting their youth shine through their innovation and creativity!

第二，新时代中国青年要热爱伟大祖国。孙中山先生说，做人最大的事情，“就是要知道怎么样爱国”。一个人不爱国，甚至欺骗祖国、背叛祖国，那在自己的国家、在世界上都是很丢脸的，也是没有立足之地的。对每一个中国人来说，爱国是本分，也是职责，是心之所系、情之所归。对新时代中国青年来说，热爱祖国是立身之本、成才之基。当代中国，爱国主义的本质就是坚持爱国和爱党、爱社会主义高度统一。

Second, Chinese youth in the New Era must love our great motherland. Dr Sun Yat-sen once said that the most important thing in life "is to know how to love one's country." A person who is not patriotic, or who deceives or betrays the motherland, is shameless and has no place in either their own country or the world. For every Chinese person, patriotism is their duty and responsibility. It is where their heart belongs and where their sentiments lie. For Chinese youth in the New Era, the way for them to get on in life and make something of themselves is to love the motherland. The essence of patriotism in today's China is to maintain a high degree of unity in loving the country, the Party and socialism.

新时代中国青年要听党话、跟党走，胸怀忧国忧民之心、爱国爱民之情，不断奉献祖国、奉献人民，以一生的真情投入、一辈子的顽强奋斗来体现爱国主义情怀，让爱国主义的伟大旗帜始终在心中高高飘扬！

In the New Era, Chinese youth must listen to the Party and follow the Party. They must love, care for and be devoted to the country and the people. These patriotic feelings should be reflected through a lifetime of emotional dedication and staunch struggle, ensuring the great banner of patriotism is always flying high in their hearts!

第三，新时代中国青年要担当时代责任。时代呼唤担当，民族振兴是青年的责任。鲁迅先生说，青年“所多的是生力，遇见深林，可以辟成平地的，遇见旷野，可以栽种树木的，遇见沙漠，可以开掘井泉的”。在实现中华民族伟大复兴的新征程上，应对重大挑战、抵御重大风险、克服重

大阻力、解决重大矛盾，迫切需要迎难而上、挺身而出的担当精神。只要青年都勇挑重担、勇克难关、勇斗风险，中国特色社会主义就能充满活力、充满后劲、充满希望。青年要保持初生牛犊不怕虎、越是艰险越向前的刚健勇毅，勇立时代潮头，争做时代先锋。一切视探索尝试为畏途、一切把负重前行当吃亏、一切“躲进小楼成一统”逃避责任的思想 and 行为，都是要不得的，都是成不了事的，也是难以真正获得人生快乐的。

Third, Chinese youth in the New Era must shoulder the responsibility of the age. The times call for young people to take responsibility for national revival. As the great writer Lu Xun once said, young people "have strength and to spare, if you come to a dense forest, you can cut it down; if you come to a wilderness, you can plant trees; if you come to a desert, you can sink wells." On our new journey to realise the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we urgently need to adopt a conscientious approach to deal with challenges, withstand risks, overcome obstacles and resolve contradictions. As long as young people have the courage to shoulder heavy burdens, surmount difficulties and grapple with risks, then socialism with Chinese characteristics can be full of vitality, staying power and hope. Young people should maintain the fearlessness of youth. Faced with mounting hardships and perils, they should forge ahead with even more daring, have the courage to stand with the trend of the times and strive to be the pioneers of our age. Any thoughts or behaviour that sees trials and explorations as perilous, regards shouldering heavy tasks as a burden, or tries to shirk responsibilities is intolerable. It will neither amount to anything nor bring true happiness to people's lives.

新时代中国青年要珍惜这个时代、担负时代使命，在担当中历练，在尽责中成长，让青春在新时代改革开放的广阔天地中绽放，让人生在实现中国梦的奋进追逐中展现出勇敢奔跑的英姿，努力成为德智体美劳全面发展的社会主义建设者和接班人！

In the New Era, China's youth should cherish the age and shoulder the mission of the times. Gaining experience as they take responsibility and maturing as they fulfil their duties, the young will blossom in the vast world of 'reform and opening up' in the New Era. This will also allow them to showcase their dashing courage as they race ahead in pursuit of the Chinese Dream, striving to become builders and successors of socialism who have benefited from a good and all-round moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic education.

⁷ Lu Xun, "Teachers," In *Selected Works of Lu Xun*, vol. 2, p. 165 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1980). Lu Xun (1881–1936) was a leading figure of modern Chinese literature. He is often regarded as China's greatest modern writer.

第四，新时代中国青年要勇于砥砺奋斗。奋斗是青春最亮丽的底色。“自信人生二百年，会当水击三千里。”民族复兴的使命要靠奋斗来实现，人生理想的风帆要靠奋斗来扬起。没有广大人民特别是一代代青年前赴后继、艰苦卓绝的接续奋斗，就没有中国特色社会主义新时代的今天，更不会有实现中华民族伟大复兴的明天。千百年来，中华民族历经苦难，但没有任何一次苦难能够打垮我们，最后都推动了我们民族精神、意志、力量的一次次升华。今天，我们的生活条件好了，但奋斗精神一点都不能少，中国青年永久奋斗的好传统一点都不能丢。在实现中华民族伟大复兴的新征程上，必然会有艰巨繁重的任务，必然会有艰难险阻甚至惊涛骇浪，特别需要我们发扬艰苦奋斗精神。奋斗不只是响亮的口号，而是要在做好每一件小事、完成每一项任务、履行每一项职责中见精神。奋斗的道路不会一帆风顺，往往荆棘丛生、充满坎坷。强者，总是从挫折中不断奋起、永不气馁。

Fourth, the New Era of Chinese youth must have the courage to take up arduous struggle. Struggle is the bright backdrop of youth. In one of his early poems, Mao Zedong wrote that in his youth, "I believed my life would last two hundred years and I could swim three thousand *li*."⁸ We must rely on struggle to achieve our mission of national rejuvenation and hoist high the sails of our ideals. Without the people—and especially the generations of young people—carrying forward a tradition of extremely hard and bitter struggle, there would be no New Era of socialism with Chinese characteristics today, nor will there be the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation tomorrow. The Chinese nation has endured hardships for thousands of years but none of them could defeat us. Instead, each one honed our national spirit, our will and our strength. Today, our living conditions have improved but our spirit of struggle has in no way diminished, and the fine tradition of perpetual struggle carried forward by young Chinese has not been lost. On our journey to realise the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, we need to maintain our spirit of hard struggle, as we are sure to meet with arduous tasks, difficulties and obstacles, and rough seas. Struggle is more than a resounding slogan; it is the manifestation of our spirit in every little thing we do, every task we accomplish, and every duty we fulfil. The road of struggle will not be a smooth one; our path will often be overgrown with brambles and full of bumps. But the strong always rise from setbacks and never lose heart.

⁸ Mao Zedong 毛泽东, "Qigu (canju)" 七古·残句 [Pre-Tang style septasyllabic poetry (verse incomplete)], in *Mao Zedong shici shijiu shou* 毛泽东诗词十九首 [*Mao Zedong: Nineteen poems*] (Beijing: Wen wu chubanshe, 1958). The phrase 水击三千里 'swim three thousand *li* [a thousand miles]' is originally from the *Zhuangzi* 庄子, a classical text of the late Warring States period (476–221 BC). Thanks to Tony Edwards for assistance with the translation.

新时代中国青年要勇做走在时代前列的奋进者、开拓者、奉献者，毫不畏惧面对一切艰难险阻，在劈波斩浪中开拓前进，在披荆斩棘中开辟天地，在攻坚克难中创造业绩，用青春和汗水创造出让世界刮目相看的新奇迹！

In the New Era, China's youth must have the courage to be the trailblazers, the pioneers and the dedicated, standing at the forefront of the times. They are fearless in the face of all difficulties and obstacles; cleaving a path through the waves, hacking through brambles to reveal new worlds, breaking through barriers to accomplish outstanding feats and using their sweat and their youth to produce new miracles that amaze the world!

第五，新时代中国青年要练就过硬本领。青年是苦练本领、增长才干的黄金时期。“青春虚度无所成，白首衔悲亦何及。”当今时代，知识更新不断加快，社会分工日益细化，新技术新模式新业态层出不穷。这既为青年施展才华、竞展风采提供了广阔舞台，也对青年能力素质提出了新的更高要求。不论是成就自己的人生理想，还是担当时代的神圣使命，青年都要珍惜韶华、不负青春，努力学习掌握科学知识，提高内在素质，锤炼过硬本领，使自己的思维视野、思想观念、认识水平跟上越来越快的时代发展。

Fifth, Chinese youth in the New Era must have professional competence. Youth is the ideal time to develop one's competence and abilities. As a classic Tang poem goes, "Youth frittered away, but with nothing to show; save a head of white hair, and a heart full of sorrow. Could it be that time has run out?"⁹ In our present age, knowledge must be updated with ever-greater frequency, the social division of labour is becoming more and more differentiated, and there is an endless stream of new technologies, new models and new ways of doing business. This not only gives young people a vast stage on which to showcase their talent and fine qualities, but also sets a new, higher benchmark for the quality and ability of our youth. Whether it is to achieve their own aspirations in life or fulfil the sacred mission of the times, young people should cherish their youth and live up to their youthful potential. They should work hard to master scientific knowledge, enhance their inner qualities, hone their skills, and ensure their perspectives, ideas, and level of knowledge keep pace with the increasingly rapid development of the times.

⁹ Quan Deyu 权德舆, "Fang ge xing" 放歌行 [A singing stroll], in *Quan Tangshi* 全唐诗 [Complete Tang poems], 328.10 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1960). Thanks to Tony Edwards for assistance with the translation.

新时代中国青年要增强学习紧迫感，如饥似渴、孜孜不倦学习，努力学习马克思主义立场观点方法，努力掌握科学文化知识和专业技能，努力提高人文素养，在学习中增长知识、锤炼品格，在工作中增长才干、练就本领，以真才实学服务人民，以创新创造贡献国家！

In the New Era, Chinese youth should have a sense of urgency in study and learn diligently as if hungering after something. They should work hard to learn Marxist standpoints and methods, strive to master scientific and cultural knowledge and professional skills, and enhance their level of cultural attainment. In study, they should grow their knowledge base and temper their moral character. In the workplace, they should enhance their abilities and perfect their skills, using their true talents to serve the people and contribute to the country through creativity and innovation!

第六，新时代中国青年要锤炼品德修为。人无德不立，品德是为人之本。止于至善，是中华民族始终不变的人格追求。我们要建设的社会主义现代化强国，不仅要在物质上强，更要在精神上强。精神上强，才是更持久、更深沉、更有力量的。青年要把正确的道德认知、自觉的道德养成、积极的道德实践紧密结合起来，不断修身立德，打牢道德根基，在人生道路上走得更正、走得更远。面对复杂的世界大变局，要明辨是非、恪守正道，不人云亦云、盲目跟风。面对外部诱惑，要保持定力、严守规矩，用勤劳的双手和诚实的劳动创造美好生活，拒绝投机取巧、远离自作聪明。面对美好岁月，要有饮水思源、懂得回报的感恩之心，感恩党和国家，感恩社会和人民。要在奋斗中摸爬滚打，体察世间冷暖、民众忧乐、现实矛盾，从中找到人生真谛、生命价值、事业方向。

Sixth, Chinese youth in the New Era must cultivate high morals. A person cannot succeed without virtues. Morality is the essence of upright conduct. To reach supreme goodness has been an unchanging moral pursuit of the Chinese nation. The strong, modern socialist country that we want to build must not just be materially strong but also spiritually strong. Strength of spirit is more durable, profound and powerful than material strength. Young people should bring together their correct understanding, conscious development and active practice of morality so as to continuously cultivate their moral character and lay a solid

foundation of morality, which will allow them to walk straighter and further down the path of life. Faced with a world of great complexity and change, they must know right from wrong and stick to the correct path rather than blindly following the crowd. Faced with temptations from the outside world, they must maintain willpower and self-discipline. They should use their own two hands to create a better life for themselves through honest work, and not be opportunistic, resort to trickery, or think themselves too clever. Faced with the splendour of youth, they should have a sense of gratitude, seek to repay kindness, and show thanks to the Party, country, society and the people. They should become accustomed to struggle and experience life's ups and downs, the joys and sorrows of the people and real contradictions in the world, so they may discover the true meaning of life as well as their values and career path.

新时代中国青年要自觉树立和践行社会主义核心价值观，善于从中华民族传统美德中汲取道德滋养，从英雄人物和时代楷模的身上感受道德风范，从自身内省中提升道德修为，明大德、守公德、严私德，自觉抵制拜金主义、享乐主义、极端个人主义、历史虚无主义等错误思想，追求更有高度、更有境界、更有品位的人生，让清风正气、蓬勃朝气遍布全社会！

In the New Era, China's youth must foster and follow the core socialist values. They should draw moral nourishment from the Chinese nation's traditional virtues and gain a deep appreciation of the exemplary moral demeanour of heroes and role models of our age. They should enhance their moral cultivation through introspection, allowing them to understand great virtue, observe social morality and be disciplined in their personal morals. They should consciously resist erroneous ideas including money worship, hedonism, extreme individualism and historical nihilism, and instead take the higher road and the moral high ground in life, allowing a spirited, vigorous fresh breeze and healthy atmosphere to sweep across society!

青年朋友们、同志们！

中国共产党自成立之日起，就始终把青年工作作为党的一项极为重要的工作。一代又一代中国共产党人，大多数都是在青年时代就满怀信仰和豪情加入了党组织，并为党和人民奋斗终身。党的队伍中始终活跃着怀抱崇高理想、充满奋斗精神的青年人，这是我们党历经百年风雨而始终充满生机活力的一个重要原因。中国共产党立志于中华民族千秋伟业，必须始

终代表广大青年、赢得广大青年、依靠广大青年，用极大力量做好青年工作，确保党的事业薪火相传，确保中华民族永续发展。

Young friends and comrades,

Youth work has always been an extremely important task of the Party since the founding of the CPC. For generation after generation, most Chinese Communists have joined the Party organisation full of the faith and pride of their youth and have fought for the Party and the people all their lives. Young people harbouring lofty ideals and full of the spirit of struggle have always been active in the Party's ranks. This is a major reason why our Party has always been full of vitality throughout a hundred years of hardships. Throughout the ages, the CPC has always aspired to bring about the great cause of the Chinese nation and so it must always represent, win over and rely on the majority of youth, and furthermore, take great pains to do a good job in youth work. This will guarantee that the Party's cause is passed on generation to generation and the Chinese nation develops in perpetuity.

把青年一代培养造就成德智体美劳全面发展的社会主义建设者和接班人，是事关党和国家前途命运的重大战略任务，是全党的共同政治责任。各级党委和政府、各级领导干部以及全社会都要充分信任青年、热情关心青年、严格要求青年，关注青年愿望、帮助青年发展、支持青年创业，做青年朋友的知心人、青年工作的热心人、青年群众的引路人。

Cultivating the younger generation into builders and successors of socialism who have enjoyed a good, all-round education is a major strategic task that concerns the future and fate of the Party and the country. It is the shared political responsibility of the entire Party. Party committees, government agencies and leading cadres at all levels, in concert with the whole society, must have complete faith in young people, show care and concern for them, set strict standards for them, pay attention to their aspirations, help them in their development, support them in their endeavours, be enthusiastic about youth work, and finally become the close friends and leaders of young people.

我们要主动走近青年、倾听青年，做青年朋友的知心人。当代青年思想活跃、思维敏捷，观念新颖、兴趣广泛，探索未知劲头足，接受新生事物快，主体意识、参与意识强，对实现人生发展有着强烈渴望。这种青春天性赋予青年活力、激情、想象力和创造力，应该充分肯定。同时，青年人阅历不广，容易从自身角度、从理想状态的角度来认识和理解世界，难

免给他们带来局限性。这是青年成长的规律，我们要尊重这个规律。信任是理解的前提。要尊重青年天性，照顾青年特点，经常到青年中去，同青年零距离接触、面对面交流，了解他们的思想动态、价值取向、行为方式、生活方式，倾听他们对社会问题和现象的看法，对党和政府工作的意见和建议。即便听到了尖锐的甚至是偏颇的批评，也要有则改之、无则加勉，成为青年愿意讲真话、交真心、诉真情的知心朋友。青年要向年长者学习，年长者也要向青年学习，相互取长补短，相互信任帮助。

We must take the initiative to approach young people, listen to them, and become their close friends. Today's young people are full of ideas and originality. They are agile thinkers and have broad interests. Young people seek the unknown and accept new things quickly. They have a strong self-awareness, sense of participation and desire for self-growth. They are, by nature, blessed with youthful vitality, passion, imagination and creativity, all of which we should encourage. At the same time, however, young people lack breadth of experience, tend to see things from their own point of view, and assess the world through an idealistic perspective, all of which are sure to limit them down the track. This is a law of youth maturation, a law we should respect. Trust is a prerequisite for understanding. We must respect the nature of youth and nurture their traits. We should go to our young people frequently, keep in close contact with them and communicate face-to-face so we can understand their trends of thinking, value orientations, lifestyles and patterns of behaviour. We should listen to their views on social issues and social developments, and also take note of their opinions and suggestions for Party and government work. Even if we hear sharp or even biased criticism, we must still correct any mistakes we have made or guard against them if we have not. Then we can become the close friends of young people, people to whom they are willing to speak sincerely and tell the truth. The young should learn from the old, and the old from the young. In this way, we can each make up for our own weaknesses by learning from the other's strong points, trusting and helping one another.

我们要真情关心青年、关爱青年，做青年工作的热心人。青年处于人生道路的起步阶段，在学习、工作、生活方面往往会遇到各种困难和苦恼，需要社会及时伸出援手。当代青年遇到了很多我们过去从未遇到过的困难。压力是青年成长的动力，而在青年成长的关键处、要紧时拉一把、帮一下，则可能是青年顶过压力、发展成才的重要支点。我们要关注青年所思、所忧、所盼，帮助青年解决好他们在毕业求职、创新创业、社会融入

、婚恋交友、老人赡养、子女教育等方面的操心事、烦心事，努力为青年创造良好发展条件，让他们感受到关爱就在身边、关怀就在眼前。

We must truly care for young people and carry out youth work with enthusiasm. Young people are in the starting phase of their lives. They will frequently encounter difficulties and frustrations in their studies, work and life, and so need society to lend a helping hand. Today's youth come across many difficulties that we have never encountered before. Pressure is a driving force for their growth, but in key areas of their development, lending a hand and helping them out when necessary can provide a pillar of support that helps them cope with stress and develop their talent. We should pay close attention to what young people think, what they worry about, and what they look forward to. We should help them resolve their troubles and frustrations in finding graduate employment, innovation and entrepreneurship, social integration, relationship matters, supporting their parents and educating their children. We must work hard to create a favourable environment for young people to develop and ensure they feel that care is at close hand.

我们要悉心教育青年、引导青年，做青年群众的引路人。青年要顺利成长成才，就像幼苗需要精心培育，该培土时就要培土，该浇水时就要浇水，该施肥时就要施肥，该打药时就要打药，该整枝时就要整枝。要坚持关心厚爱和严格要求相统一、尊重规律和积极引领相统一，教育引导青年正确认识世界，全面了解国情，把握时代大势。既要理解青年所思所想，为他们驰骋思想打开浩瀚天空，也要积极教育引导青年，推动他们脚踏实地走上大有作为的广阔舞台。当青年思想认识陷入困惑彷徨、人生抉择处于十字路口时要鼓励他们振奋精神、勇往直前，当青年在工作上取得进步时要给予他们热情鼓励，当青年在事业上遇到困难时要帮助他们重拾信心，当青年犯了错误、做了错事时要及时指出并帮助他们纠正，对一些青年思想上的一时冲动或偏激要多教育引导，能包容要包容，多给他们一点提高自我认识的时间和空间，不要过于苛责。要积极鼓励青年到艰苦的一线吃苦磨练、增长才干，放手让青年在重要领域和重要岗位上攻坚克难、施展才华，积极为青年创造人人努力成才、人人皆可成才、人人尽展其才的发展条件。

We must take the utmost care in educating and providing guidance to young people, so we can be their guides in life. The smooth and successful development of young people is just like the careful cultivation of seedlings. Turning over the soil, watering, fertilising, spraying of pesticides and pruning should all be done when they need to be. We should persist with matching our care and kindness with strict requirements for young people, and matching our respect for the laws of youth development with proactive leadership. In this way, we can educate and guide young people to correctly understand the world, fully comprehend our national conditions and grasp the trend of the times. It is imperative that we not only understand the thoughts and ideas of youth, and open up a vast sky where their minds can run free, but also actively educate and guide young people, leading them to step onto a broad stage full of opportunities and possibilities. When young people become confused and indecisive or when they reach a crossroads in their lives, we should exhort them to lift their spirits and forge ahead. When they make progress in work, we should give enthusiastic encouragement. When they encounter difficulties in their careers, we should help them regain their confidence. When they make mistakes and do the wrong thing, we should point out their mistakes promptly and help young people in correcting them. Further education and guidance may be needed for some young people with impulsive ideas or extreme thoughts. But we should be tolerant when we can and give them more space and time to increase their self-awareness rather than criticising them too harshly. We should actively encourage young people to work hard, endure hardships and develop their skills in trying circumstances, and let them go forth to surmount obstacles and showcase their talents in important fields and professions. Finally, we should actively foster favourable conditions in which all our young people can strive to achieve, become successful and display their talents.

青年朋友们、同志们！

自古英雄出少年。在漫漫历史长河中，人类社会青年英雄辈出，中华民族青年英雄辈出。《共产党宣言》发表时马克思是30岁，恩格斯是28岁。列宁最初参加革命活动时只有17岁。牛顿和莱布尼茨发现微积分时分别是22岁和28岁，达尔文开始环球航行时是22岁，爱因斯坦提出狭义相对论时是26岁。贾谊写出“西汉一代最好的政论”时不到30岁，王勃写下千古名篇《滕王阁序》时才20多岁。在我们党领导人民进行革命、建设、改革的伟大历史进程中更是青年英雄辈出。中共一大召开时毛泽东是28岁，周恩来参加中国共产党时是23岁，邓小平参加旅欧中国少年共产党时是18岁。杨靖宇牺牲时是35岁，赵一曼牺牲时是31岁，江姐牺牲时是29岁，红三十四师师长陈树湘牺牲时是29岁，邱少云牺牲时是26岁，雷锋牺牲时是22岁，黄继光牺牲时是21岁，刘胡兰牺牲时只有15岁。守岛32年的王继才第一

次登上开山岛时是26岁，航天报国的嫦娥团队、神舟团队平均年龄是33岁，北斗团队平均年龄是35岁。这样的青年英杰数不胜数！我们要用欣赏和赞许的眼光看待青年的创新创造，积极支持他们在人生中出彩，为青年取得的成就和成绩点赞、喝彩，让青春成为中华民族生气勃发、高歌猛进的持久风景，让青年英雄成为驱动中华民族加速迈向伟大复兴的蓬勃力量！

Young friends and comrades,

Since ancient times our heroes have come from the young. Right through the long course of history, young heroes in human society and young heroes of the Chinese nation have come forth in great numbers. At the time the Communist Manifesto was published, Marx was 30 years old and Engels was 28. Lenin was only 17 when he first participated in revolutionary activities. Newton and Leibniz were 22 and 28 respectively when they simultaneously discovered the calculus. Darwin was 22 when he set off navigating the world. Einstein was 26 when he proposed the special theory of relativity. Jia Yi¹⁰ was not yet 30 when he wrote "the best political commentary of the Western Han dynasty." Wang Bo¹¹ was only in his 20s when he wrote the still-famous piece, 'Preface to the Pavilion of Prince Teng'. In the great history of our Party leading the people in revolution, socialist construction and reform, even more young heroes have come to the fore. Mao Zedong was 28 years old when the CPC was first convened, Zhou Enlai was 23 when he joined the CPC, and Deng Xiaoping was only 18 when he joined the Chinese Youth Communist Party in Europe. Yang Jingyu¹² sacrificed himself when he was 35 years old. Likewise, Zhao Yiman¹³ sacrificed herself at 31, and both Sister Jiang¹⁴ and Chen Shuxiang¹⁵—head of the 34th Division of the Red Army—sacrificed themselves at 29 years old. Qiu Shaoyun¹⁶ was 26 years old when he sacrificed himself, Lei Feng¹⁷ was 22, Huang Jiguang¹⁸ was 21, and Liu Hulan¹⁹ only 15 years old. Wang Jicai²⁰ who protected Kaishan Island for 32 years, was only 26 years old when he was first stationed there. The average age of the Chang'e and Shenzhou teams of astronauts, dedicated to serving our country in space, is 33 years, while for the Beidou team it is 35. There are countless numbers of these youthful heroes! We should view the innovations and creations of young people with appreciation and admiration, actively support them to achieve in life, and

¹⁰ Jia Yi (200–168 BCE), Chinese poet and statesman of the Western Han Dynasty.

¹¹ Wang Bo (650–676 CE), one of the Four Great Poets of the early Tang dynasty.

¹² Yang Jingyu (1905–1940), commander-in-chief of the First Route Army of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army.

¹³ Zhao Yiman (1905–1936), resistance fighter against the Imperial Japanese Army in Northeast China when it was under Japanese occupation.

¹⁴ Jiang Zhuyun (1920–1949), Communist resistance fighter and revolutionary martyr. Jiang Xueqin, or 'Sister Jiang', a character in the semi-fictional novel *Red Crag*, was inspired by Jiang Zhuyun.

¹⁵ Chen Shuxiang (1905–1934).

¹⁶ Qiu Shaoyun (1926–1952), PLA soldier who died as a martyr in the Korean War.

¹⁷ Lei Feng (1940–1962), famous PLA soldier and legendary communist exemplar. After his death in the early 1960s, he became the subject of a nationwide propaganda campaign.

¹⁸ Huang Jiguang (1931–1952), decorated PLA soldier who fought in the Korean War.

¹⁹ Liu Hulan (1932–1947), Chinese Communist spy who gathered intelligence during the civil war between the Communist Party and the Nationalist Party.

²⁰ Wang Jicai (1960–2019), militia sentry director of Kaishan Island, an island in the Yellow Sea off the coast of Jiangsu Province.

commend and applaud their accomplishments. This will ensure young people are always on the scene of the Chinese nation's vigorous development and triumphant progress and will enable our young heroes to become a force of vitality that drives the Chinese nation towards its great rejuvenation.

青年朋友们、同志们！

共青团是党的助手和后备军，是党的青年工作的重要力量。在中国青年运动的光辉历程中，共青团发扬“党有号召、团有行动”的优良传统，为党争取青年人心、汇聚青年力量，在革命、建设、改革各个历史时期作出了积极贡献、发挥了重要作用。党旗所指就是团旗所向。共青团要毫不动摇坚持党的领导，增强“四个意识”、坚定“四个自信”、做到“两个维护”，坚定不移走中国特色社会主义群团发展道路，不断保持和增强政治性、先进性、群众性，坚持把培养社会主义建设者和接班人作为根本任务，把巩固和扩大党执政的青年群众基础作为政治责任，把围绕中心、服务大局作为工作主线，认真履行引领凝聚青年、组织动员青年、联系服务青年的职责，不断创新工作思路，增强对青年的凝聚力、组织力、号召力，团结带领新时代中国青年在实现中华民族伟大复兴中国梦的进程中不断开拓创新、奋发有为。

Young friends and comrades,

The CYL is the Party's assistant and reserve army. It is an important force for the Party's youth work. In the glorious course of the Chinese Youth Movement, the CYL has developed a fine tradition of "heeding the Party's calls with action", winning the hearts of young people and pooling their strength on the Party's behalf. The CYL has made enthusiastic contributions and played an important role in each historical period, spanning revolution, socialist construction and reform. The Party banner flies the way of the CYL banner. The CYL must unswervingly uphold Party leadership, strengthen the 'Four Consciousnesses',²¹ reinforce the 'Four Confidences'²² and realise the 'Two Upholds'²³. The CYL must unswervingly follow our common development path of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It must also preserve

²¹ The 'Four Consciousnesses' are to maintain political integrity (political consciousness); think in terms of the big picture (consciousness of the overall situation); follow the leadership core (consciousness of the core); and keep in alignment with the central Party leadership (compliance consciousness).

²² The 'Four Confidences' are confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

²³ The 'Two Upholds' are to resolutely uphold General Secretary Xi Jinping's position as the core of the CPC Central Committee and the whole party; and resolutely uphold the authority of the CPC Central Committee and its centralised, unified leadership.

and constantly strengthen its political nature and its character of being an advanced organisation of the people. The CYL must adhere to the fundamental task of cultivating builders and successors of socialism and make it its political responsibility to consolidate and extend the foundation of the Party's rule among young people. The CYL must make it its main line of work to keep to the centre and serve the interests of the whole. It should earnestly perform its duties to guide, unite, organise and mobilise the youth, and ensure it communicates with and serves young people. The CYL should continuously innovate its work style, increase its cohesion and organisation of young people, and strengthen its ability to rally the youth so as to unite and lead Chinese youth of the New Era to blaze new trails and prove their worth in the process of realising the Chinese Dream of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

关心和支持青年是全社会的共同责任。一切党政机关、企业事业单位，人民解放军和武警部队，各人民团体和社会团体，广大城乡基层自治组织，各新经济组织和新社会组织，都要关心青年成长、支持青年发展，给予青年更多机会，更好发挥青年作用。

Caring for and supporting young people is the shared responsibility of our whole society. All Party and government agencies, enterprises and institutions, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and People's Armed Police Force, public institutions, community organisations, the great majority of urban and rural grassroots autonomous organisations, new economic organisations and new social organisations must care about the growth of young people and support their development. They should also give young people more opportunities and make the most of the role of youth in our society.

青年朋友们、同志们！

青年是国家的未来，也是世界的未来。中国梦与世界梦息息相通，中华民族应该对人类社会作出更大贡献。新时代中国青年，要有家国情怀，也要有人类关怀，发扬中华文化崇尚的四海一家、天下为公精神，为实现中华民族伟大复兴而奋斗，为推动共建“一带一路”、推动构建人类命运共同体而努力。

Young friends and comrades,

Young people are the future of the country and the world. The Chinese Dream and the world's dream are closely intertwined, so the Chinese nation ought to make a greater contribution to global society. In the New Era, Chinese youth should have national sentiments and show solicitude for humanity. They should carry forward the essence of Chinese culture to revere the nation as one family and the world as one community, struggle for the realisation of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and work hard to promote the joint construction of

the 'Belt and Road Initiative' (BRI) and to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

青年朋友们！一代人有一代人的长征，一代人有一代人的担当。建成社会主义现代化强国，实现中华民族伟大复兴，是一场接力跑。我们有决心为青年跑出一个好成绩，也期待现在的青年一代将来跑出更好的成绩。衷心希望新时代中国青年积极拥抱新时代、奋进新时代，让青春在为祖国、为人民、为民族、为人类的奉献中焕发出更加绚丽的光彩！

Young friends,

Each generation has its own 'Long March',²⁴ just as each generation has its own responsibilities. The construction of a strong, modern socialist country and realisation of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is a relay race. We are determined to achieve a good result for our youth, and we expect the current generation of young people to achieve an even better result. We sincerely hope that Chinese youth in the New Era will enthusiastically embrace the New Era and forge ahead in the New Era, allowing their youth to shine with even greater splendour as they dedicate themselves to the motherland, the people, the nation and humanity!

再过几天，就是五四青年节了。在这里，我代表党中央，向全国各族青年致以节日的热烈祝贺！

In a few days it will be Youth Day.²⁵ On behalf of the Party Central Committee, I would like to extend our warm Youth Day wishes to young people of all ethnic groups right around the country!

²⁴ The Long March (1934–1936) was an historic 10,000-kilometre trek from southwest to northeast China undertaken by the Chinese Communists in order to escape the military advance of Nationalist forces on the Communists' main revolutionary base in Jiangxi Province.

²⁵ China's Youth Day is a national annual holiday held on May 4 to recognise the anniversary of the May Fourth Movement.

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A3.4 [2019.2]

Address at the Grand Rally to Celebrate the Seventieth Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China

Translated October 2019

在庆祝中华人民共和国成立 70 周年大会上的讲话

2019 年 10 月 1 日

习近平

Address at the Grand Rally to Celebrate the Seventieth Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China

October 1, 2019

Xi Jinping

全国同胞们，

同志们，朋友们：

今天，我们隆重集会，庆祝中华人民共和国成立 70 周年。此时此刻，全国各族人民、海内外中华儿女，都怀着无比喜悦的心情，都为我们伟大的祖国感到自豪，都为我们伟大的祖国衷心祝福。

Compatriots,

Comrades and friends,

We are gathered here today for a grand rally to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Right at this moment, the Chinese people of all ethnic groups and all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation at home and abroad are bursting with pride and joy as we send our best wishes to our great motherland.

在这里，我代表党中央、全国人大、国务院、全国政协和中央军委，向一切为民族独立和人民解放、国家富强和人民幸福建立了不朽功勋的革命先辈和烈士们，表示深切的怀念！向全国各族人民和海内外爱国同胞，致以热烈的祝贺！向关心和支持中国发展的各国朋友，表示衷心的感谢！

Standing before you here today, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the National People's Congress, the State Council, the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and the Central Military Commission, I would like us to remember our revolutionary forefathers and martyrs for their remarkable feats as they strove for national independence, China's strength and prosperity, and the people's liberation and happiness. I would also like to extend our National Day best wishes to the Chinese people of all ethnic groups and compatriots both at home and abroad, and further express heartfelt thanks to all our friends around the world who support China's development.

70 年前的今天，毛泽东同志在这里向世界庄严宣告了中华人民共和国的成立，中国人民从此站起来了。这一伟大事件，彻底改变了近代以后 100 多年中国积贫积弱、受人欺凌的悲惨命运，中华民族走上了实现伟大复兴的壮阔道路。

Seventy years ago today, in this very spot, Comrade Mao Zedong solemnly declared the founding of the People's Republic of China to the world. He declared that the Chinese people had stood up. This monumental event completely transformed the miserable fate of a poverty-stricken and weak China, a nation subjected to bullying and humiliation for over 100 years since the advent of modern times. This monumental event marked the moment the Chinese nation set off on the path to realise its national rejuvenation.

70 年来，全国各族人民同心同德、艰苦奋斗，取得了令世界刮目相看的伟大成就。今天，社会主义中国巍然屹立在世界东方，没有任何力量能够撼动我们伟大祖国的地位，没有任何力量能够阻挡中国人民和中华民族的前进步伐。

For seventy years, the Chinese people of all ethnic groups have arduously struggled with one heart and mind to secure great achievements that have amazed the world. Today, socialist China stands tall and proud in the East. There is no force capable of shaking the place of our

great motherland. There is no force capable of stopping the progress of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation.

同志们、朋友们！

前进征程上，我们要坚持中国共产党领导，坚持人民主体地位，坚持中国特色社会主义道路，全面贯彻执行党的基本理论、基本路线、基本方略，不断满足人民对美好生活的向往，不断创造新的历史伟业。

Comrades and friends,

On our journey forward, we must uphold the leadership of the CPC, uphold the primary position of the people, adhere to the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and fully implement the Party's basic theories, line and policies. We must always meet the people's aspirations for a better life and continue to make new historic achievements.

前进征程上，我们要坚持“和平统一、一国两制”的方针，保持香港、澳门长期繁荣稳定，推动海峡两岸关系和平发展，团结全体中华儿女，继续为实现祖国完全统一而奋斗。

On our journey forward, we must uphold the principles of both 'peaceful reunification' and 'One Country, Two Systems'.¹ We must maintain long-term prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao, promote the peaceful development of cross-strait relations, unite all sons and daughters of the Chinese nation, and strive for the complete reunification of our motherland.

前进征程上，我们要坚持和平发展道路，奉行互利共赢的开放战略，继续同世界各国人民一道推动共建人类命运共同体。

On our journey forward, we must adhere to the path of peaceful development and pursue a mutually beneficial strategy of opening up to the world. We will continue to work with the people of all countries to promote a jointly established world community with a shared future for humanity.

¹'One Country, Two Systems' is a concept put forward by the CPC and the Chinese government for realising China's reunification and solving the Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao issues. The framework of the concept is: under the premise of national reunification, the mainland keeps practicing socialism, while Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao retain their original capitalist system and ways of life for a long time, while enjoying a high degree of autonomy. China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong and Macao in 1997 and 1999, respectively, in accordance with this concept. (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 256).

中国人民解放军和人民武装警察部队要永葆人民军队性质、宗旨、本色，坚决维护国家主权、安全、发展利益，坚决维护世界和平。

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the People's Armed Police Force must maintain their nature, purpose and distinction as the forces of the people, resolutely safeguard China's sovereignty, security and development interests, and firmly uphold world peace.

同志们、朋友们！

中国的昨天已经写在人类的史册上，中国的今天正在亿万人民手中创造，中国的明天必将更加美好。全党全军全国各族人民要更加紧密地团结起来，不忘初心，牢记使命，继续把我们的人民共和国巩固好、发展好，继续为实现“两个一百年”奋斗目标、实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦而努力奋斗！

Comrades and friends,

China's yesterdays have been inscribed into the annals of history. China's today is right now being shaped by hundreds of millions of hands. And China's tomorrow promises a future even brighter still. All Party members, all members of the armed forces, and the Chinese people of all ethnic groups should unite ever more closely together. We should remain true to our original aspirations and keep our mission firmly in mind, build on our existing achievements, and continue our development as we strive to accomplish the 'Two Centenary Goals'² and the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

伟大的中华人民共和国万岁！

伟大的中国共产党万岁！

伟大的中国人民万岁！

Long live the great People's Republic of China!

Long live the great Communist Party of China!

Long live the great Chinese people!

² The 'Two Centenary Goals' for building socialism with Chinese characteristics were proposed by the CPC at its Eighteenth National Congress in 2012. The two goals are: to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the centenary of the CPC (founded in 1921), and to build China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious by the centenary of the PRC (founded in 1949). (Note adapted from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 1, p. 76)

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Appendix 4. Critiques Cited in the Text

The three primary texts analysed in Chapter Three are reproduced below.

The full texts are given in Chinese and then English, except for the 'May Fourth Manifesto' for which the Chinese text is unavailable.

The translations are not my own and have been acknowledged.

A4.1 'China's Dream, the Dream of Constitutionalism' 222

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A4.2 'May Fourth Manifesto' 231

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A4.3 'When Fury Overcomes Fear' 235

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A4.1 'China's Dream, the Dream of Constitutionalism' 2013

《中国梦，宪政梦》

《南方周末》原来的新年献辞由该报评论部编辑戴志勇撰写

The original text by Dai Zhiyong

天地之间，时间绽放。

这是我们在 2013 年的第一次相见，愿你被梦想点亮。

2012 年，你守护自己的生活，他们守护自己的工作。守护这份工作，就是在守护他们对生活的梦想。

2012 年，庙堂之上发出的宪政强音喻然回响：□宪法的生命在于实施，宪法的权威也在于实施。□我们期待宪法长出牙齿，宪政早日落地。惟如此，才能成就这个沧桑古国的艰难转型；惟如此，国家与人民，才能重新站立于坚实的大地之上。

今天，已是能够梦想的中国，今天，已是兑现梦想的时代。经历过宪政缺失的□文革梦魇，我们花费三十多年的时间来逐渐回归常理与常情。从土地联产承包责任制到个体户、乡镇企业到□民企□，稍稍归还国人自主安排生活的权利，我们便创造了繁华城市，收获了满仓粮食。

我们重新体认什么是真，什么是假，是其是，非其非；我们重燃对公义的热爱，对自由的向往。面对暴虐强力，我们双手相握，一起走过艰难时刻，迎接生活转机。

今天，我们终于可以从厚厚的历史尘埃中挺起胸，从琐碎的日常生活中抬起头，重走先辈的宪政长征，重温先辈的伟大梦想。

一百七十多年前，我们开始从天朝上国的迷梦中醒来。先败于英，后败于日。百姓愈加民不聊生，耻感深深刺痛中国士人。保国！保种！由洋务而君宪，由立宪而革命。从器物到制度再至文化，激愤者不惜彻底打倒□孔家店□，决绝地将自己的文明连根拔起。

辛亥革命后，清帝退位，先辈们终于建立了亚洲第一个共和国。但是，一个自由、民主、富强的宪政中国并没有随之而来。

国家内外，战争连连；人群内外，残酷不断。

一度，人们远离仁，远离义，远离天道，远离对自由的坚守。

一度，人们认错为对，指鹿为马，万千生灵生机断绝。

美梦与山河，齐齐破碎。自由与宪政，双双消隐。

度尽人世劫波，深味人性幽暗，我们依然是能做梦的人，有颗能做梦的心。

今天，我们断断不只梦想物质丰盛，更希望性灵充盈；我们断断不只梦想国力能强盛，更希望国民有自尊。新民和新国，救亡与启蒙，谁也离不开谁，谁也不能压倒谁。而宪政便是这一切美梦的根基。

兑现宪政，坚守权利，人人才能心如日月流光溢彩；鳏寡孤独才能感受冬日暖意而非瑟瑟发抖；城管与小贩才能谈笑风生；房屋才能成为自己与家人的城堡；

兑现宪政，限权分权，公民们才能大声说出对公权力的批评；每个人才能依内心信仰自由生活；我们才能建成一个自由的强大国家。

兑现宪政大梦，每个人才能做好个人的美梦。而这需要我们就从手边做起，就从守护此时此刻的生活做起，而不要将重任留给子孙。

很多人一直深深懂得这一点，很多人早就努力践行这一点。

不是杰出者才做梦，是善于做梦者才杰出。

你的天赋权利就是可以梦想，并且兑现梦想！

为你的梦想鼓掌，为这个国家的梦想加油，这就是很多新闻人的梦想，是他们不大不小的野心。他们忠于新闻，更忠于内心。愿你也有个玫瑰色的美梦；自由成就自己，完成天之所赋。

总会梦想人人可以做一个有尊严的人，不论身居高位，还是街头卖艺；

总会梦想人人内心有爱，即使罪犯也未必穷凶极恶，总有恻隐之心自由闪动；

总会梦想阶层只是引人自由流动的动力，而不再是相互猜忌和仇视的天堑；总会梦想这五千年文明生生不息，为改善人类的现代处境，捧出一掬甘冽清泉……

兑现这一千一万个梦想，才能抚平这一百多年的刻骨痛楚。

兜兜转转一百七十年，美梦成真何其难！一百七十年后，依然有人渴望良知萌新芽，重温天命之谓性；依然有人坚持要求权利一一落地，政治复归于正，公义自在流淌。

依然有人相信，不管多难，梦想终会落实为宪政良制，风行为敦敦美俗。

先辈们筚路蓝缕，践义成仁。如今，后人承继其志，燃灯前行。

兑现梦想，自然要借鉴前贤智慧，与古人的信仰、习俗和情感和解。儒释道法墨，百家皆是源泉；周汉唐宋明，代代皆有可取。

但这决不是要复古，古人不能给予今天所需的一切。只是不再轻易贬损先辈，平心静气地吸收转进，以让中华文明开新花，结新果。

兑现梦想，自然要吸取世界经验。所以要认真审视希腊民主，罗马法治，借鉴英美宪政，追赶现代科技文明。

但这也不是仅仅作一个西方文明的优等生，西人有西人演进的轨迹，同样未必能直接给予我们今天所需的一切。

我们要站在自己的大地上，与各国人民一起，生活出一种古今相融的新生活，文明出一种中西合璧的新文明。在古今中西的激荡中，要遵循人类共通的价值，也要不惮于做自己的新梦。

称美古人，赞扬邻居，不是因为他们足够完美，而是因为我们熟悉他们眼中洋溢的快乐，心底流淌的自由。

中国人本应就是自由人。中国梦本应就是宪政梦。

宪政之下，才能国家持续强盛，宪政之下，才有人民真正强大。兑现宪政梦想，才能更好地外争国权，维护国家的自由；才能更好地内争民权，维护人民的自由。而国家的自由最终必得落脚于人民的自由，必得落脚于人人可以我口说我心，人人可以用心做美梦。

生而为人，谁能不热爱自由？这自由，不仅是权利针对权力而言，也是宽恕针对报复而言，是般若针对无明而言，是仁爱针对暴虐而言，是有道针对无道而言。

大道之行，天下为公；万物自在，各正性命。这就是古人的梦想，先辈的梦想，也是今天很多人的梦想。

中国梦，自由梦，宪政梦。

万物速朽，但梦想永在。万物诞生，因梦想不灭。梦想就是生生之几，就是当你失败了一百次，那第一百零一次充实你内心的不死之希望。

依然有人倾听你的梦想，期待你敢于做梦。你从苦难中爬起，他们为你加油；你尝尽人世冷暖，他们为你加油；你收获美好生活，他们为你加油……他们别无所资，惟有对梦想的执着；他们别无所长，惟有对真相的追求。

一句真话能比整个世界还重，一个梦想能让生命迸射光芒！

China's Dream, the Dream of Constitutionalism

Translated by Rogier Creemers

Between heaven and earth, time blossoms.

This is our first meeting in 2013, we hope you have been lit up by dreams.

In 2012, you guarded your own life, they defended their own work. Defending their work meant that they defended the dreams in their lives.

In 2012, the buzz about constitutional governance reverberated around the Imperial Halls: “The life of the Constitution lies in its implementation, the authority of the Constitution lies also in its implementation.” We expect that the Constitution will grow teeth, and that constitutional governance will be born soon. Only in this way will it be possible to accomplish this difficult transition of an ancient country to which time has brought great change. Today, the time has come to fulfil dreams. Having undergone the nightmare of the “Cultural Revolution”, where constitutional governance was lost, we have spent thirty years of time to progressively return to logical thinking and common sense. From the remunerative contract responsibility system to individual small business, from township and village enterprises to “people’s enterprises”, the right of compatriots to autonomously arrange their lives has been slightly returned, we have created flourishing cities, and harvested food to fill warehouses.

We again perceive what is true and what is false, we know what is good and bad; we are burning with ardent love for public justice, and yearn for liberty. In the face of brute force, we join hands, and march through difficult times together, welcoming that life turns for the better.

Today, we finally may raise our hearts from the thick dust of history, and lift our heads from the trivialities of daily life, again march the long march of constitutional governance of our ancestors, and renew the magnificent dreams of our ancestors.

More than 170 years ago, we began to awake from the pipe dream of the Celestial Empire. We were first defeated by England, and then by Japan. The common people increasingly had no livelihood, and a sense of humiliation deeply stung the scholars of China. Protect the country! Protect the race! From foreign affairs to a constitutional monarchy, from constitutional drafting to revolution, from instruments to institutions and to culture, these indignants did not stint to thoroughly overthrow “the Confucius shop”, and uproot their own civilization.

After the Xinhai revolution, the Qing Emperor abdicated, and the ancestors finally established the first republic in Asia. But a free, democratic and strong Constitutional china did not come in the wake of this.

At home and abroad, there war one war after another; among the masses, brutality did not cease.

For a while, the people were far from benevolence, far from justice, far from the heavenly path, and far from a persistence in liberty.

For a while, the people saw the wrong as right, things were deliberately misrepresented, and the vitality of tens of thousands of people was severed.

Beautiful dreams, mountains and rivers were smashed to pieces. Liberty and constitutional governance were both hidden.

After going through an aeon in the human world, in which human nature was dimmed, we still are a people that can dream, and have hearts that can dream.

Today, we absolutely do not only dream about material wealth, we also hope for spiritual plenty; we absolutely not only dream that the country can become strong and wealthy, we hope even more that its citizens can find self-respect. A new people and a new country is saving the nation from extinction and enlightening it. No one can do without others, no one can overpower others. Constitutional governance is the basis for all beautiful dream.

Only by honouring the commitment of constitutional governance and sticking to rights, will it be possible for everyone to lead a tranquil life brimming with colour with a heart like the sun and the moon; will it be possible for widowers, widows, orphans and the childless to feel the warmth of the winter sun and not quiver like a string; will it be possible for “urban management” and peddlers to talk and laugh with each other; and will it be possible for housing to become a castle for oneself and family members;

Only by honouring the commitment of constitutional governance, limiting and dividing power, will citizens be able to loudly proclaim their criticism of public power; will it be possible for everyone to live freely according to their inner beliefs; and will we be able to build a free and strong country.

Only by honouring the commitment of the great dream of constitutional governance, will everyone be able to dream individual dreams. And this requires that we start with the matters at hand, start from guarding lives at this very moment, and must not leave these important tasks to our children and grandchildren.

Many people have always deeply understood this point, many people already have striven to realize this point.

It is not just the outstanding who dream, it is those who are good to dreamers who are outstanding.

Your inborn right is to be permitted to dream, and to fulfil this dream!

Applauding your dreams and making extra efforts for the dream of this country, is the dream of many news people, and is their just ambition. They are devoted to news and even more devoted to their inner feelings. They wish that you also have a rosy-coloured dream; freedom to achieve yourself, and complete that which heaven bestowed on you.

There is always the dream that all people can become dignified people, both when they are in high position, and when they perform in the street; there is always the dream that everyone will have love in their hearts, even criminals may not necessarily be extremely evil, there are always compassionate hearts moving freely; there is always the dream that class is only a driver to lead people to freely circulate, and no longer a moat of suspicion, jealousy and hatred; there is always the dream that this five thousand year old civilization will endure without end, and will bring a new, crystal clear fountain to improve the modern condition of humankind...

Only by fulfilling hundreds and thousands of dreams will it be possible to comfort the deep-rooted anguish of this century.

After hanging around for 170 years, how difficult it is for dreams to come true! After 170 years, there are still people thirsting for conscience to sprout new buds, and to revive the essence of the Mandate of Heaven; there still are people who persistently demand that rights are born one by one, that politics returns to the right, and that public justice will flow freely. There still are people who are convinced that, regardless of how many difficulties there are, in the end, dreams will lead to a good system of constitutional governance, where sincerity and excellent customs will be in fashion.

The ancestors endured great hardships in their work, were trampled upon and died for their cause. Today, they descendants continue this ideal, and light the lamp to advance.

Fulfilling dreams, naturally requires learning from the wisdom of earlier worthies, to become reconciled with the beliefs, habits and feelings of the ancients. Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Legalism and Mohism, these various schools of thinking are all sources; Zhou, Han, Tang, Song and Ming, every dynasty has something worth having.

But this does not mean to revive antiquity, the ancients cannot give us everything we need in the present. It is just the cast that we must no longer lightly criticize the ancestors, and but calmly absorb matters and proceed, in order to let China's civilization flourish with new flowers and grow new fruits.

Fulfilling dreams naturally requires the assimilation of foreign experiences. Therefore, we must earnestly examine Greek democracy and Roman rule of law, learn from Anglo-American constitutional governance, and pursue modern science, technology and civilization.

But this also does not only mean that we must be the top student of a Western civilization, Westerners have Westerners' evolutionary path, similarly, they may not necessarily be able to directly give us all we need today.

We must stand on our own land, and together with the people of all nations, live a sort of new life that merges the past and the present, and create a new sort of civilization that combines

the Chinese and the Western. In this surge of the old , the new, the Chines and the Western, we must respect the common values of humankind, and must also not be afraid to dream our own new dreams.

We praise the ancients, and commend neighbours, not because they are so perfect, but because we know that their eyes are brimming with happiness, and that liberty flows in their hearts.

The Chinese people ought to have been free people. The Chinese dream ought to have been constitutional governance.

Only under constitutional governance will it be possible for the country to continue to become strong and wealthy, only under constitutional governance will it be possible for the people to become truly formidable. Only by fulfilling the dream of constitutional governance will it be possible to strive for national sovereignty abroad even better, and safeguard the freedom of the nation; will it be possible to even better strive for civil rights at home, and safeguard the people's freedom. And the freedom of the country must, in the end, rest on the freedom of the people, it must rest on the fact that everyone may speak their hearts, and everyone may have dreams in their hearts.

Born as human beings, who could not ardently love liberty? This liberty is not only to speak of rights aimed at power, it also refers to forgiveness aimed at retaliation, it means wisdom aimed at ignorance, it means humanity aimed at tyranny, it means virtue aimed at injustice.

When the great path prevails, all under heaven belongs to everyone; the myriad beings will be at ease, and all have a just life. This is the dream of the ancients, the dream of the ancestors, and it is the dream of many people today.

The Chinese Dream, the dream of liberty, the dream of constitutional governance.

The myriad beings decay fast, but the dream lives forever. The myriad beings, are born, and do not perish because of dreams. Dreams are produced endlessly, because even when you are defeated a hundred times, the one hundred and first time, your heart may be filled with the hope not to die. Still, there are people who listen to your dream, who expect you to dare to dream. You crawl up from suffering, they root for you; you gain a beautiful life, they root for you... They have no other capital, they only persist in dreams; they have no other advantage, they only pursue truth.

A true word can be heavier than the entire world, a dream can let lives burst forth with radiance!

《我们比任何时候都更接近梦想》

We Are Now Closer To Our Dream Than Ever Before

最终出现在《南方周末》上的有度震代笔的献辞
*The version that appeared in Southern Weekly, edited
by Guangdong provincial propaganda chief Tuo Zhen*

梦想是我们对自己的期许，梦想是我们对应然之事的承诺。

这是我们第一千零五十七次和你相见，也是 2013 年的第一次。过去、现在以及将来，你守护你的生活，我们守护这张报纸。让我们彼此祝福，愿你我都能够在新的一年离梦想更近一步。

梦想是我们对自己的期许，而这期许常新。我们曾创造灿烂古国延续千年，但 1840 年的炮火惊醒天朝旧梦，我们始觉昨日之弊。开眼看世界，鼓民力、开民智、新民德肇始于此；变法维新肇始于此；革命共和肇始于此；五四呐喊肇始于此；而南湖游船上的畅想、天安门土的宣告、改革开放的号角，亦肇始于此。

我们对自己的期许从来不能脱离时代的进程；□苟日新，日日新□，唯有融入文明进步的潮流，期许才不会退化为桎梏。

梦想是我们对应然之事的承诺，而我们必须对自己一诺千金。农民从种子里收获一个好年景是应然之事，孩子从学校平安归来也是应然之事；先贤所谓□老有所终，壮有所用，鳏寡孤独皆有所养□是应然之事。

在 2012 年年末，梦想的火焰又一次被点燃。新任中共中央总书记习近平说：□实现中华民族的伟大复兴，就是中华民族近代以来最伟大的梦想。□这个梦想，凝聚着近代以来无数仁人志士的探索奋斗，蕴藏着中华民族固有的□家国天下□情怀，更包含着中国走向未来的道路自信、理论自信和制度自信，体现了中华民族和中国人民的整体利益，是每一个中华儿女的共同期盼。

站在新年的起点，我们比任何时候都更接近这个梦想。

我们比任何时候都更接近这个梦想，是因为□宪法的生命在于实施，宪法的权威也在于实施□这样的时代强音，因为宪法正是国家对万千生民的梦想所签署的契约。

我们比任何时候都更接近这个梦想，是因为□每个人的前途命运都与国家和民族的前途命运紧密相连□这样的民生承诺。□国家好，民族好，大家才会好□。民族复兴之梦必须将广大人民个人小梦串联汇聚，把国家与人民真正连为一体的承诺正是汇聚的闸门。

我们比任何时候都更接近这个梦想，是因为今天的我们已处于能够兑现梦想的时代。我们梦想权利一一落地，公义自在流淌；我们梦想国家的强大成为人民福祉的保障，让每一个人都从国家的发展中收获自己应得的成果。

兑现这一千一万个梦想，才能祭奠那无数舍身成仁的亡灵；兑现这一万一亿个梦想，才能抚平这一百多年的刻骨痛楚。令人欣慰的是，从新中国□站起来□，到改革开放富起来□，再到新世纪□强起来□，我们的梦想正在一步步变为现实。

万物速朽，但梦想永在。我们倾听你的梦想，我们期待你敢于做梦：不是杰出者才做梦，而是善做梦者才杰出。我们别无所倚，惟有对期许的追求；我们别无所长，惟有对承诺的执著。

A4.2 'May Fourth Manifesto' 2019

YOUNG PIONEERS

MAY FOURTH MANIFESTO

New Left Review

Red banners, red flags, red carpets. The people in the Great Hall appear to be red beings themselves. If you lift your head, you can see the meeting is commemorating the centenary of the May Fourth Movement of 1919. The characters written aloft are so grand yet so false that they invite derision.

For at this very moment, on so-called 'red' youth day, six progressive students of Peking University are in detention for no reason.

In the commemoration conference, they are singing, 'The mission of national rejuvenation will be accomplished in struggle.' On the banners overhead, the slogans read: 'Strive to write the magnificent contribution of youth to the realization of the China dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.' The young people sitting in their seats are listening intently, noting down in frenzied fashion every word of the General Secretary.

Yet just two days ago, students on Peking University campus were pushed down to the ground, hands held behind their back, dragged into police cars, kicked and beaten.

Just yesterday, the sun of eight or nine in the morning witnessed the disappearance of six students.¹ The last sound from them was their voices telephoning their parents, crying: 'Bad news, I've been arrested.'

They are not law-breaking criminals. All they did was remain loyal to Marxism, seeking to commit their youth to the cause of workers, as the centenary of May Fourth and the international labour day of May First approached.

It is bright and spacious inside the Great Hall, and people there are dressed very respectably, entranced by the repeated words, 'Youth, time, commitment'. Outside, however, no 'movement' is allowed. On pain of otherwise incurring the incriminating pretext of 'disturbing public order', all that is permitted is watching sports.

¹ 'The sun of eight or nine in the morning': ironic allusion to Mao's words to Chinese students and trainees in Moscow in 1957: 'You young people, full of vigour and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed on you. The world belongs to you. China's future belongs to you.'

This is a festive day that has been profaned. This is a spirit that has been profaned. The real banner of May Fourth, if we do not fight for it, will soon be stained and vanish into darkness.

2

A hundred years ago, inspired by calls to fight for national sovereignty and do away with national traitors, on the Fourth of May students boycotted classes, workers held strikes, merchants boycotted markets, and people everywhere threw themselves into a tidal wave of protest by boycotting Japanese goods, in an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal movement that spread like wildfire across the country. This was a great mass explosion. It saw the Chinese working class stepping onto the stage of history for the first time as an independent force. It began the glorious tradition of solidarity between progressive intellectuals and the working class.

This movement swept away old corruption and brought in things that were new. Culturally, it demolished the authoritarian, corrupt, oppressive, hierarchical structures of the traditional feudal order, spreading the new ideas of democracy, science, liberty and equality. Politically, it enlarged the camp of fighters against imperialism and feudalism: of workers, students and broad masses exploring the socialist path of demands for social equality and national liberation, and so furthering the dissemination of Marxism in China and the preconditions for founding the ccp.

Looking back today, those battle-cries belong to history, and that great movement lies a hundred years in the past.

A century later, the wheels of history have rolled forward, and changes shaking the heavens have occurred in China. Thirty years after the May Fourth movement, revolution triumphed, and the construction of socialism began in a New China, where the dreams of these forebears came to pass.

Yet sixty years after the May Fourth movement, a group of power-holding capitalist-roads inside the Party betrayed socialism. Singing the high-pitched tune of ‘whoever can catch the mouse is a good cat’, they took the capitalist road of ‘letting some people get rich first’.

In the forty years since the Open Door policy, China has fast-forwarded along the road of a developmental market economy, simultaneously creating a ‘China Miracle’ that has stunned the world, and leaving behind a coiled fuse of countless social problems.

The market economy has presided over the marriage of power and money. Bureaucrats have been transformed from ‘servants of the people’ into ‘masters of the people’. Polarizations between rich and poor have become ever more extreme in the ‘spring breeze’ of the Reform Era. Today a mere 0.4 per cent of the population owns 70 per cent of total social wealth. The three richest persons in China are worth 800 billion rmb.

Labourers have changed from ‘masters of the country’ into ‘slaves of sweat and blood’, living in basements, eating pickles and steamed buns, wearing so-called safety helmets that

crack at the first hit, working hard all their lives, earning at the end of them only illnesses in every part of their bodies.

Knowledge can be measured by money. Life can be measured by money. Personality can also be measured by money . . . ideas are controlled, speech is censored, while feudal notions and slavish beliefs like ‘men are the heaven and women are the Earth’, or the Confucian hierarchy of monarch-minister/ father-son, all see a revival today.

While red flags can be seen everywhere, today it is like living in the areas under kmt control before 1949. Obviously, it was workers who created the economic miracle with their own hands. But it is a privileged class that utterly monopolizes wealth and power. Whose ‘rejuvenation’ is this? Whose ‘rise’ is this?

It is not the rejuvenation of the Chinese people. It is the rejuvenation of the bourgeois class. It is not the rise of a socialist China. It is the rise of a new empire.

3

Today the greatest obstacle to the radical May Fourth spirit of progress, democracy and science taking root in China is the bureaucratic bourgeois class.

The greatest obstacle to social progress in China is the bureaucratic bourgeois class.

The greatest enemy of the Chinese working class is the bureaucratic bourgeois class.

In addition to exploiting the workers’ direct labour to extract surplus-value from them, this class exploits them a second time over by the continuous marketization of housing, healthcare and education. At the same time, it controls social opinion and the reproduction of ideology, ceaselessly promoting Confucian ‘family tradition’, ‘women’s virtue’ and other conservative feudal ideas, harshly suppressing any voices that might challenge them, subjugating every aspect of society to the service of capital.

Where there is oppression, there will be resistance.

In the spring and summer of 30 years ago, progressive college students marched to Tiananmen Square, fighting against bureaucratization, corruption, inflation, official profiteering and control of free speech, all deteriorating during the first ten years of reform. They demanded democracy, liberty, science and the rule of law, hoping to accomplish a modernization of China. That movement was initiated by students in Beijing, eventually mobilizing over a hundred thousand students throughout the country, and hundreds of thousands of Beijing citizens. There is no question of its progressive significance and historical achievements.

However, the greatest road-blocks to democracy and freedom are the exploitative relations of capitalism. So long as you are not walking on the road to socialism, which lies beyond capitalism, there is no way of answering the questions of democracy and freedom.

So what is the social responsibility of youth today?

It does not lie in the empty talk of ‘great rejuvenation’ and ‘national self-strengthening’. It lies instead in our social consciousness, in throwing our lives into a mass movement of opposition to the mighty and to capital—in taking once again the path of democracy, science and equality. In that process, young people will gradually discover that ‘only Marxism can save China’.

This ‘movement’ shall not be subdued or silenced, nor reduced to mere life within the Great Hall. Those students who went out to protest in Tianmen county in Hubei, those who are fighting the hired thugs in Nanjing, and those countless others in conflict with their college bureaucracy form the youth of our time who dare to charge forward. In them, the spirit of May Fourth is burning with a bright flame.

Today’s youth should not fight just for a democracy on campus for themselves. More importantly, they should also fan out to the zones of industry, to the countryside, to the widest fields of social life.

Today’s youth should not only dare to fight against authoritarian power. More importantly, they should also dare to unite with the broadest masses of workers and peasants, to fight on the front of their struggles.

Remember at every moment—the new society we are fighting for is one led by the working class, one that truly makes people the masters of their own lives, that firmly rejects exploitation or oppression of one class by another, that seeks equality and the free, all-round development of every human being. The road may not be smooth for us; it will be hard and long. But let us go forward in struggle together, arm in arm, and it’s not impossible we’ll see the day when the clouds have cleared and all mists are gone.

A4.3 'When Fury Overcomes Fear' 2020

《愤怒的人民已不再恐惧》

二月。墨水足够用来痛哭，
大放悲声抒写二月，
一直到轰响的泥泞，
燃起黑色的春天。

——帕斯捷尔纳克

豕鼠交替之际，九衢首疫，举国大疫，一时间神州肃杀，人心惶惶。公权进退失据，致使小民遭殃，疫疠散布全球，中国渐成世界孤岛。此前三十多年“改革开放”辛苦积攒的开放性状态，至此几乎毁于一旦，一巴掌把中国尤其是它的国家治理打回前现代状态。而断路封门，夹杂着不断发生的野蛮人道灾难，迹近中世纪。原因则在于当轴上下，起则钳口而瞒骗，继则诿责却邀功，眼睁睁错过防治窗口。垄断一切、定于一尊的“组织性失序”和只对上负责的“制度性无能”，特别是孜孜于“保江山”的一己之私而置亿万国民于水火的政体“道德性败坏”，致使人祸大于天灾，在将政体的德性羸败暴露无遗之际，抖露了前所未有的体制性虚弱。至此，人祸之灾，于当今中国伦理、政治、社会与经济，甚于一场全面战争。再说一遍，甚于一场全面战争。此可谓外寇未逞其志，而家贼先祸其国。老美或有打击中国经济之思，不料当轴急先锋也。尤其是疫疠猖獗当口，所谓“亲自”云云，心口不一，无耻之尤，更令国人愤慨，民心丧尽。

是的，国民的愤怒已如火山喷发，而愤怒的人民将不再恐惧。至此，放眼世界体系，揆诸全球政治周期，综理戊戌以来的国情进展，概略下述九项，兹此敬呈国人。

首先，政治败坏，政体德性罄尽。保家业、坐江山，构成了这一政体及其层峰思维的核心，开口闭口的“人民群众”不过是搜刮的税收单位，数目字管理下的维稳对象和“必要代价”，供养着继续这个极权政体的大小无数蝗虫。公权上下隐瞒疫情，一再延宕，

只为了那个围绕着“核心”的灯红酒绿、歌舞升平，说明心中根本就无生民无辜、而人命关天之理念，亦无全球体系中休戚相关之概念。待到事发，既丢人现眼，更天良丧尽，遭殃的是小民百姓。权力核心仍在，而低效与乱象共生，尤其是网警效命恶政，动如鹰犬，加班加点封锁信息，而信息不胫而走，说明特务政治临朝，国安委变成最具强力部门，虽无以覆加，却已然前现代，有用覆无用矣。其实，老祖宗早已明言，防民之口甚于防川，哪怕网信办再有能耐，也对付不了十四万万张嘴，古人岂余欺哉！盖因一切围绕江山打转，自以为权力无所不能，沉迷于所谓“领袖”之自欺，而终究欺瞒不住。大疫当前，却又毫无领袖德识，捉襟见肘，累死前方将士，祸殃亿万民众，却还在那里空喊政治口号，这个那个，煞有介事，令国人齿冷，让万方见笑。此亦非他，乃政体之“道德性败坏”也。若说七十年里连绵灾难早已晓喻万众极权之恶，则此番大疫，更将此昭显无遗。惟盼吾族亿万同胞，老少爷们，长记性，少奴性，在一切公共事务上运用自己的理性，不要再为极权殉葬。否则，韭菜们，永难得救。

其次，僭主政治下，政制溃败，三十多年的技术官僚体系终结。曾几何时，在道德动机和利益动机双重驱动下，一大批技术官僚型干才上阵，而终究形成了一种虽不理想、弊端重重、但却于特定时段顶事儿的技术官僚体系。其间一大原因，就在于挂钩于职位升迁的政绩追求，激发了贫寒子弟入第后的献身冲动。至于乘势而上的红二们，从来尸位素餐，酒囊饭袋，成事不足败事有余，在此不论。可惜，随着最近几年的不断整肃，红色江山老调重弹，只用听话的，自家的，其结果，技术官僚体系的德性与干才，其基于政绩升迁的那点儿冲动，不知不觉，乃消失殆尽。尤其是所谓“红色基因”的自家人判准及其圈定，让天下寒心而灰心，进而，离德离心。于是，这便出现了官场上普遍平庸而萎顿委琐之态。鄂省乱象，群魔乱舞，不过一隅，其实省省如此，举朝如此矣。其间原因，就在于这个后领袖时代，领袖制本身就在摧毁治理结构，口言现代治理却使整个国家治理陷入无结构性之窘境。此间症状，正为“组织性失序”和“制度性无能”。君不见，惟一人马首是瞻，而一人瞑朦，治国无道，为政无方，却弄权有术，遂举国遭罪。百官无所适从，善者只堪支应，想做事而不敢做事，恶者混水摸鱼，不做事却还搅事，甚而火中取栗，遂劣胜优汰，一团乱象矣。

再次，内政治理全面隳颓。由此急转直下，遂表现为下述两方面。一方面，经济下滑已成定势，今年势必雪上加霜，为“风波”以来所未有，将“组织性失序”和“制度性无能

”推展至极。至于举国信心下跌、产权恐惧、政学愤懑、社会萎缩、文化出版萧条，惟剩狗屁红歌红剧，以及无耻文痞歌功颂德之肉麻兮兮，早成事实。而最为扼腕之处，则为对于港台形势之误判，尤其是拒不兑现基本法的普选承诺，着着臭棋，致使政治公信力跌至谷底，导致中国最为富庶文明之地的民众之离心离德，令世界看清这一政体的无赖嘴脸。那边厢，中美关系失序，而基于超级大国没有纯粹内政的定律，这是关乎国运之荦荦大端。恰恰在此，当轴颞颥，再加上碰到个大洋国的特没谱，遂一塌糊涂。网议“帝国主义亡我之心不死”，想做而没做成的事，却让他做成了，岂只调侃，而实锥心疼痛也哉。另一方面，几年来公权加紧限制与摧毁社会发育，钳口日甚，导致社会预警机制疲弱乃至丧失，遇有大疫，便从封口而封城，死心覆死人矣。因而，不难理解的是，与此相伴而来的，便是政治市侩主义与庸俗实用主义蔓延政治，无以覆加，表明作为特殊时段的特殊现象登场的“知青政治”，早已德识俱亡。可以说，上上下下，他们是四十年来最为不堪的一届领导。因而，此时此刻，兑现《宪法》第 35 条，解除报禁，解除对于网络的特务式管控，实现公民言论自由和良心自由，坐实公民游行示威和包括结社在内的各项自组织权利，尊重全体国民的普遍人权，特别是政治普选的权利，而且，对于病毒的来源、隐瞒疫情的责任人及其体制性根源，启动独立追责机制，才是“战后重建”之大道，也是当务之急也。

复次，内廷政治登场。几年来的集权行动，党政一体之加剧，特别是以党代政，如前所述，几乎将官僚体制瘫痪。动机既靡，尾大不掉，遂以纪检监察为鞭，抽打这个机体卖命，继续其等因奉此，逶迤着拖下去。而因言论自由和现代文官体制阙如，更无所谓“国王忠诚的反对者”在场，鞭子本身亦且不受督约，覆以国安委一统辖制下更为严厉之铁腕统领，最后层层归属，上统于一人。而一人肉身凡胎，不敷其用，党国体制下又无分权制衡体制来分责合力，遂聚亲信合议。于是，内廷生焉。说句大白话，就是“集体领导”分解为“九龙治水”式寡头政制失效、相权衰落之际，领袖之小圈子成为“国中之国”，一个类似于老美感喟的隐形结构。揆诸既往，“1949 政体”常态之下，官僚体系负责行政，纵便毛时代亦且容忍周相一亩三分地。“革委会”与“人保组”之出现，打散这一结构，终至不可维持。晚近四十年里，多数时候“君相”大致平衡，党政一体而借行政落实党旨。只是到了这几年，方始出现这一最为封闭无能、阴鸷森森之内廷政治，而彻底堵塞了重建常态政治之可能性也。一旦进路闭锁，彼此皆无退路，

则形势紧绷，大家都做不了事，只能眼睁睁看着情形恶化，终至不可收拾之境。置此情形下，经济社会早已遭受重创，风雨飘摇于世俗化进程中的伦理社会不堪托付，市民社会羸弱兮兮，公民社会根本就不存在，至于最高境界的政治社会连个影子都没有，则一旦风吹草动，大灾来临，自救无力，他救受阻，必致祸殃。此番江夏之乱，现象在下，而根子在上，在于这个孜孜于“保江山，坐江山”，而非立足于人民主权、“以文明立国，以自由立国”的体制本身。结果，其情其形，恰如网议之“集中力量办大事”，顿时变成了“集中力量惹大事”。江夏大疫，再次佐证而已矣。

第五，以“大数据极权主义”及其“微信恐怖主义”治国驭民。过往三十多年，在底色不变的前提下，官方意识形态口径经历了从“振兴中华”的民族主义和“四化”的富强追求，到“三个代表”和“新三民主义”，再至“新时代”云云的第次转折。就其品质而言，总体趋势是先升后降，到达“三个代表”抛物线顶端后一路下走，直至走到此刻一意赤裸裸“保江山”的“大数据极权主义”。相应的，看似自毛式极权向威权过渡的趋势，在“奥运”后亦且止住，而反转向毛氏极权回归，尤以晚近六年之加速为什。因其动用奠立于无度财政汲取的科技手段，这便形成了“1984”式“大数据极权主义”。缘此而来，其“微信恐怖主义”直接针对亿万国民，用纳税人的血汗豢养着海量网警，监控国民的一言一行，堪为这个体制直接对付国民的毒瘤。而动辄停号封号，大面积封群，甚至动用治安武力，导致人人自危，在被迫自我审查之际，为可能降临的莫名处罚担忧。由此窒息了一切公共讨论的思想生机，也扼杀了原本应当存在的社会传播与预警机制。由此，“基于法西斯主义的军功僭主政治”渐次成型，却又日益表现出“组织性失序”和“制度性无能”，其非结构性与解结构性。职是之故，不难理解，面对大疫，无所不能的极权统治在赳赳君临一切的同时，恰恰于国家治理方面居然捉襟见肘，制造大国一时间口罩难求。那江夏城内，鄂省全境，至今尚有无数未曾收治、求医无门、辗转哀嚎的患者，还不知有多少因此而命丧黄泉者，将此无所不能与一无所能，暴露得淋漓尽致。盖因排除社会与民间，斩断一切信息来源，只允许党媒宣传，这个国家永远是跛脚巨人，如果确为巨人的话。

第六，底牌亮出，锁闭一切改良的可能性。换言之，所谓的“改革开放”死翘翘了。从2018年底之“该改的”、“不该改的”与“坚决不改”云云，至去秋十九届四中全会公报之诸般宣示，可得断言者，中国近代史上的第三波“改革开放”，终于寿终正寝。其实，

这一死亡过程至少起自六年前，只不过至此算是明示无误而已。回头一望，二十世纪全球史上，但凡右翼极权政治，迫于压力，皆有自我转型的可能性，而无需诉诸大规模流血。纵便是“苏东波”，尤其是东欧共产诸国等红色极权政体，居然亦且和平过渡，令人诧异而欣慰。但吾国刻下，当局既将路径锁闭，则和平过渡是否可能，顿成疑问。若果如此，则“兴，百姓苦；亡，百姓苦”，夫覆何言！但愿此番大疫过后，全民反省，举国自觉，看看尚能重启“第四波改革开放”否！？

第七，由此顺流直下，中国再度孤立于世界体系，已成定局。百多年里，对于这个起自近代地中海文明、盛极于大西洋文明的现代世界体系，中国上演了多场“抗拒”与“顺从”的拉锯战，反反覆覆，跌跌撞撞。晚近三十多年里，痛定思痛，“低头致意”以及“迎头赶上”，乃至“别开生面”，蔚成主流。惜乎近年再度犯二，犯横，表明“改开”走到头了，左翼极权“退无可退”，无法于和平过渡中完成自我转型，因而，也就怪异于现代世界体系。虽则如此，总体而言，几番拉锯下来，中国以其浩瀚体量与开放性态度，终于再度跻身现代世界体系，成为这个体系的重要博弈者，重新诠释着所谓“中心—边缘”的地缘叙事，也是事实。但是，与国力和时势不相匹配、太过张扬的外向型国策，尤其是内政回头，日益“法日斯化”，引发这个体系中的其他博弈者对于红色帝国崛起的戒慎戒惧，导致在高喊“人类命运共同体”之际却为共同体所实际拒斥的悲剧，而日呈孤立之势，更是眼面前的事实。事情很覆杂而道理却很简单，一个不能善待自己国民的政权，怎能善待世界；一个不肯融入现代政治文明体系中的国族，你让人怎么跟你共同体嘛！故尔，经济层面的交通互存还将继续存在，而文明共同体意义上的孤立却已成事实。此非文化战争，亦非通常所谓“文明冲突”一词所能打发，更非迄今一时间数十个国家对中国实施旅行禁限，以及世界范围的厌华、拒华与贬华氛围之悄悄潮涨这么简单。——在此可得提示者，隐蔽的“黄祸”意识势必顺势冒头，而买单承受歧视与隔离之痛的只会是我华族同胞，而非权贵——毋宁，关乎对于历经磨难方始凝练而成的现代世界普世价值的顺逆从违，而牵扯到置身列国体系的条约秩序之中，吾国吾族如何生存的生命意志及其国族哲学，其取舍，其从违。在此，顺昌逆亡，则所谓孤立者，全球现代政治文明版图上之形单影只、孤家寡人也。扭转这一局面，重建负责任大国形象，担负起应担之责，而首先自良善内政起始，必然且只能皈依人类普世文明大道，特别是要坐实“主权在民”这一立国之本。在此，内政，还是内政，一

种“立宪民主，人民共和”的良善政体及其有效治理，才是摆脱孤立、自立于世界体系的大经大法，而为国族生存与昌盛之康庄大道也。那时节，顺时应势，中国加入 G7 而成 G8，亦且并非不可想象者也。

第八，人民已不再恐惧。而说一千道一万，就在于生计多艰、历经忧患的亿万民众，多少年里被折腾得一佛升天二佛出世的“我们人民”，早已不再相信权力的神话，更不会将好不容易获得的那一丝丝市民自由与三餐温饱的底线生计，俯首帖耳地交还给僭主政制，任凭他们生杀予夺。毋宁，尤其是经此大疫，人民怒了，不干了。他们目睹了欺瞒疫情不顾生民安危的刻薄寡恩，他们身受着为了歌舞升平而视民众为刍狗的深重代价，他们更亲历了无数生命在分分钟倒下，却还在封号钳口、开发感动、歌功颂德的无耻荒唐。一句话，“我不相信”，老子不干了。若说人心看不见摸不着，最最无用，似乎经验世界早已对此佐证再三，也不无道理。这不，万民皆曰可杀，他却坐享天年，如那人人唾骂之李大鸟者，令人感慨天不长眼，天道不公，可实际上，天是苦难本身，与我们一同受罪。但是，假如说人之为人，就在于人人胸腔里跳动着一颗人心，而非狼心狗肺，其因生老病死而悲欣交集，其因祸福义利而恨爱交加，其因落花而落泪、流水而伤怀，则人心所向，披荆斩棘，摧枯拉朽矣！人心丧尽之际，便是末日到来之时！至于脑残与岁月静好婊们，一群乌合之众，历史从来不是他们抒写的，更不因他们而改变奔流的航道，同样证之于史，不予欺也。

第九，败象已现，倒计时开始，立宪时刻将至。戊戌修宪，开启邪恶之门，集权登顶之际，恰恰是情势反转之时。自此一路狂奔倒退，终至败象连连。撇开人心已丧不论，则前文叙及之港台应对失策与中美关系失序，以及经济下滑之不可遏止、全球孤立，表明治理失败，违忤现代政治常识的强人政治事与愿违。大家面对闷局而恐惧其已成僵局，苦思焦虑其开局与再布局，期期于内部生变式与自下而上式之破局犹如水中捞月之时，港台形势发展实已自边缘捅破铁桶，而开辟出一线生机。此种自边缘破局、而渐进于中心的和平过渡之道，或许，将成为中国式大转型的收束进路。此时，吾友所说之“难城”，或为华夏旧邦新命之耶路撒冷。换言之，边缘突破意味着现代中国的立宪时刻再度即将降临。当此关口，天欲晓，将明未明，强权抱残守缺，不肯服膺民意，则崇高之门既已打开，可得预言者，必有大量身影倒毙于黎明前矣。

以上九点，呈诸国民，均为常识。而一再申说，就在于国家治理未入常态政治轨道，国族政治文明有待现代转型，而于积善前行中，期期以“立宪民主，人民共和”收束这波已然延续一个半世纪的文明大转型。正是在此，我们，“我们人民”，岂能“猪一般的苟且，狗一样的奴媚，蛆虫似的卑污”？！

行文至此，回瞰身后，戊戌以来，在下因言获罪，降级停职，留校察看，行止困限。此番作文，预感必有新罚降身，抑或竟为笔者此生最后一文，亦未可知。但大疫当前，前有沟壑，则言责在身，不可推诿，无所逃遁。否则，不如杀猪卖肉。是的，义愤，如西哲所言，正是义愤，惟义与愤所在，惟吾土先贤揭橥之仁与义这一“人心人路”之激荡，令书斋学者成为知识分子，直至把性命搭进去。毕竟，自由，一种超验存在和行动指归，一种最具神性的世界现象，是人之为人的禀赋，华夏儿女不能例外。而世界精神，那个地上的神，不是别的，就是自由理念的绚烂展开。如此，朋友，我的亿万同胞，纵然火湖在前，何所惧哉！

脚下的这片大地啊，你深情而寡恩，少福却多难。你一点点耗尽我们的耐心，你一寸寸斫丧我们的尊严。我不知道该诅咒你，还是必须礼赞你，但我知道，我分明痛切地知道，一提起你，我就止不住泪溢双眼，心揪得痛。是啊，是啊，如诗人所咏，“我不要温和地走进那个良夜，老年应当在日暮时燃烧咆哮；怒斥，怒斥那光明的消逝。”因而，书生无用，一声长叹，只能执笔为剑，讨公道，求正义。置此大疫，睹此乱象，愿我同胞，十四万万兄弟姐妹，我们这些永远无法逃离这片大地的亿万生民，人人向不义咆哮，个个为正义将生命怒燃，刺破夜瘴迎接黎明，齐齐用力、用心、用命，拥抱那终将降临这片大地的自由的太阳！

庚子正月初四初稿，初九定稿，窗外突降大雪

Viral Alarm: When Fury Overcomes Fear

Translated and annotated by Geremie R. Barmé

*February. Get out the ink and weep!
Sob in February, sob and sing
While the wet snow rumbles in the street
And burns with the black spring.*

—Boris Pasternak

Translated by Sasha Dugdale

As the Year of the Pig [2019] gave way to the Year of the Rat [February 2020], a virus originating in Wuhan, capital of Hubei province and a city famed as the nation’s major transportation and communication hub, was spreading throughout China. Overnight, the country found itself in the grip of a devastating crisis and fear stalked the land. The authorities proved themselves to be at a loss as to how to respond effectively, and the high cost of their impotence was soon visited upon the common people. Before long, the coronavirus was reaching around the globe and the People’s Republic found itself rapidly isolated from the rest of the world. It was as though the China famed for its “Reform and Opening-Up” policies for more than three decades was being undone in front of our very eyes. In one fell swoop, it seemed as though the People’s Republic, and in particular its vaunted system of governance, had been cast back to pre-modern times. As word spread about blockades being thrown up by towns and cities in an attempt to seal themselves against contagion, as doors were slammed shut everywhere, it actually felt as though we were being overwhelmed by the kind of primitive panic more readily associated with the Middle Ages.

The cause of all of this lies, ultimately, with The Axle [that is, Xi Jinping] and the cabal that surrounds him. It began with the imposition of stern bans on the reporting of accurate information about the virus, which served to embolden deception at every level of government, although it only struck its true stride when bureaucrats throughout the system consciously shrugged off responsibility for the unfolding crisis while continuing to seek the approbation of their superiors. They stood by blithely as the crucial window of opportunity that was available to deal with the outbreak snapped shut in their faces.

Ours is a system in which The Ultimate Arbiter¹ monopolizes all effective power. This led to what I would call “organizational discombobulation” that, in turn, has served to enable a dangerous “systemic impotence” at every level. Thereby, a political culture has been nurtured that, in terms of the actual public good, is ethically bankrupt, for it is one that strains to vouchsafe its privatized Party-state, or what they call their “Mountains and Rivers,” while abandoning the people over which it holds sway to suffer the vicissitudes of a cruel fate. It is

¹定於一尊, an imperial-era term used by state media to describe Xi Jinping.

a system that turns every natural disaster into an even greater man-made catastrophe. The coronavirus epidemic has revealed the rotten core of Chinese governance; the fragile and vacuous heart of the jittering edifice of the state has thereby been shown up as never before.

This viral outbreak, which has been exacerbated by the behavior of the power-holders and turned into a national calamity, is more perilous perhaps than total war itself. Everything is caught up in the struggle—the nation’s ethical fabric, its politics, our society, as well as the economy. Let me say that again: The situation is even more perilous than total war, for it is leaving the nation open to a kind of devastation that even foreign invaders failed to visit upon us in the past. The ancients put it well: “Only thieves nurtured at home can truly despoil a homeland.” Although the Americans may well be trying to undermine our economy, The Axle is beating them to it here at home! Please note: Just as the epidemic was reaching a critical moment, He big-noted himself as being “Personally This” and “Personally That.”² They were vacuous claims that merely served to highlight His hypocrisy. Such claims excited nationwide outrage and sowed desolation in the hearts of the people.

It is true that the present level of popular fury due to the handling of the epidemic is volcanic; a people thus enraged may, in the end, also cast aside their fear. Herein I offer my analysis of these developments in a broader context. Mindful of the cyclical nature of the political zeitgeist, and with an unswerving eye fixed on what has been unfolding here in China since 2018 [when Xi Jinping was granted limitless tenure and the author published his famous broadside against the Party-state], I have formulated my thoughts under nine headings. Compatriots: I respectfully offer them here for your consideration.

1. Politics in a New Era of Moral Depletion

First and foremost, I would posit that the political life of the nation is in a state of collapse and that the ethical core of the system has been rendered hollow. The ultimate concern of China’s polity today and that of its highest leader is to preserve at all costs the privileged position of the Communist Party and to maintain ruthlessly its hold on power. What they dub “The Broad Masses of People” are nothing more than a taxable unit, a value-bearing cipher in a metrics-based system of social management that is geared towards stability maintenance.³ “The People” is a rubric that describes the price everyone has to pay to prop up the existing system. We are funding the countless locusts—large and small—whose survival is supported by a totalitarian system. The storied bureaucratic apparatus that is responsible for the unfettered outbreak of the coronavirus in Wuhan repeatedly hid or misrepresented the facts about the dire nature of the crisis. The dilatory actions of bureaucrats at every level exacerbated the urgency of the situation. Their behavior has reflected their complete lack of interest in the welfare and the lives of normal people. What is of consequence for them is

² When meeting Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the WHO, on January 28, Xi made a point of saying that he was “personally commanding” the response to the outbreak, a statement that was widely derided online.

³ “Stability maintenance” (维稳), short for “protecting the national status quo and the overall stability of society” (维护国家局势和社会的整体稳定), is a term that includes the deployment of paramilitary forces, police, local security officials, neighborhood committees, informal community spies, Internet police and censors, secret service agents and watchdogs, as well as everyday bureaucratic monitors who hold a brief to be ever vigilant and to maintain order and control over every aspect of society. This is part of China’s “forever war” against its own citizens.

their tireless support for the self-indulgent celebratory behavior of the “Core Leader,” whose favor is constantly sought through their adulation for the peerless achievements of the system. Within such a self-regarding bureaucracy, there is even less interest in the role that this country and its people can and should play in a globally interconnected community.

Those shameless bureaucrats allowed the situation to deteriorate to such an extent that they were directly harming average people. Meanwhile, “The Core” was steadfast as inefficiencies and chaos proliferated. Instead, they focused particular attention on policing the Internet: They unleashed the dogs and have been paying their minions overtime to blockade the news of what is actually happening. Information has been getting out regardless, proof that even though the government is employing the tactics of a police state, and while the National Security Commission⁴ amasses ever greater powers, it can never truly achieve its vaunted aims.

The ancients observed that “it’s easier to dam a river than it is to silence the voice of the people.” Regardless of how good they are at controlling the Internet, they can’t keep all 1.4 billion mouths in China shut. Yet again, our ancestors will be proved right. Nonetheless, since all of their calculations are solely made on the basis of maintaining control, they have convinced themselves that such crude exercises of power will suffice. They have been fooled by the self-deception of “The Leader,” but theirs is a confidence that deceives no one. Faced with this virus, the Leader has flailed about seeking answers with ever greater urgency, exhausting those who are working on the front line, spreading the threat to people throughout the land. Ever more vacuous slogans are chanted—Do this! Do that!—overweening and with prideful purpose. He garners nothing but derision and widespread mockery in the process. This is a stark demonstration of the kind of political depletion that I am addressing here. The last seven decades [of the People’s Republic] have taught the people repeated lessons about the hazards of totalitarian government. This time around, the coronavirus is proving the point once more, and in a most undeniable fashion.

One can only hope that our fellow Chinese, both young and old, will finally take these lessons to heart and abandon their long-practiced slavish acquiescence. It is high time that people relied on their own rational judgment and refused to sacrifice themselves again on the altar of the power holders. Otherwise, you will all be no better than fields of garlic chives; you will give yourselves up to being harvested by the blade of power, now as in the past.⁵

2. Tyranny in a New Era of Political License

Secondly, tyranny ultimately corrupts the structure of governance as a whole, and it is undermining a technocratic system that has taken decades to build. There has been a system-wide collapse of professional ethics and commitment.

There was a time, not too long ago, when individual moral imperatives found fellowship with systemic self-interest in a way that led to a vast corps of competent technocrats taking the

⁴ The supreme policing agency created by Xi Jinping in November 2013.

⁵ The term “garlic chives,” (韭菜) or *Allium tuberosum*, is used as a metaphor to describe the common people who are regarded by the power-holders as an endlessly renewable resource.

stage. Over time, they formed a highly capable coterie of specialists and administrators even though, as anyone would readily admit, the process also resulted in managerial arrangements that were far from ideal. After all, China's new technocracy was riven by its limitations and beset by serious problems of every kind. Nonetheless, one of the reasons that the technocratic class evolved and managed to function at all was that by instituting administrative competence within a system that allowed for personal advancement on the basis of an individual's practical achievements in government, countless young men and women from impoverished backgrounds were lured to pursue self-improvement through education. They did this in order to devote themselves both to meaningful and rewarding state service. Of course, at the same time, the progeny of the Communist Party's own nomenklatura—the so-called “Red Second Generation” of bureaucrats—proved themselves to be all but useless as administrators; they occupied official positions and enjoyed the perks of power without making any meaningful contribution. In fact, more often than not, they simply got in the way of people who actually wanted to get things done. But enough of that.

Unfortunately, as a result of the endless political purges of recent years [carried out by Xi Jinping and his deputy Wang Qishan in the name of an “anti-corruption campaign”] and along with the revival of “Red Culture,” the people in the system who have now been promoted are in-house Party hacks who slavishly obey orders. Consequently, both the kind of professional commitment and expertise previously valued within the nation's technocracy, along with the ambition people previously nurtured to seek promotion on the basis of their actual achievements, have been gradually undermined and, with no particular hue and cry, they have now all but disappeared. The One Who Must Be Obeyed who talks about the importance of transmitting “red genes” through a reliable Party body politic, the man with the ultimate decision-making power and sign-off authority, has created an environment in which the system as a whole has fallen into desuetude. What's left is a widespread sense of hopelessness.

The bureaucratic and governance system of China that is now fully on display is one that values the mediocre, the dilatory, and the timid. The mess they have made in Hubei Province, and the grotesque posturing of the incompetents involved [in dealing with the coronavirus] have highlighted a universal problem. A similar political malaise infects every province and the rot goes right up to Beijing. In what should be a “post-leader era,” China has instead a “Core Leader system” and it is one that is undermining the very mechanisms of state. Despite all the talk one hears about “modern governance,” the reality is that the administrative apparatus is increasingly mired in what can only be termed inoperability. It is an affliction whose symptoms I encapsulate in the expressions “organizational discombobulation” and “systemic impotence.”

Don't you see that although everyone looks to The One for the nod of approval, The One himself is clueless and has no substantive understanding of rulership and governance, despite his undeniable talent for playing power politics. The price for his overarching egotism is now being paid by the nation as a whole. Meanwhile, the bureaucracy drifts directionless, although the best among them try to get by as best they can. They would like to take positive action, but they are hesitant and fearful. For their part, meanwhile, bureaucratic schemers avail themselves of the muddle and, although they have no motivation to be proactive, they are quite good at making trouble. The situation works to their advantage; they shove the competent bureaucrats aside and create in their place an environment of overall chaos.

3. A New Era of Attenuated Governance

Furthermore, the day-to-day governance of China is in a state of terminal decay. This manifests itself in two ways:

In the first place, the economic slowdown is now an undeniable reality, and all indications are that things will only get worse over the current year. This presents the nation with a situation unrivaled since the economic downturn that followed the 1989 “disturbances” [that is, the June 4 Beijing Massacre]. Such a situation will only serve to exacerbate further the aforementioned “organizational discombobulation” and “systemic impotence.” Equally undeniable is the state of things more broadly, including:

- A collapse in consumer confidence;
- Widespread panic about the long-term security of private property;
- Administrative and academic frustration and pent-up anger;
- A general shutting down of society as a whole; and,
- A depressed cultural and publishing industry.

What is thriving, however, is all that ridiculous “Red Culture” and the nauseating adulation that the system heaps on itself via shameless pro-Party hacks who chirrup hosannahs at every turn.

Of particular and profound concern are the massive political miscalculations that have been made: first, regarding the uprising in Hong Kong; and, then, in forecasts about the elections in Taiwan. The political problems [in Hong Kong] are the product of a blatant refusal to abide by the undertaking stipulated in the Hong Kong Basic Law regarding general elections [for the Chief Executive of the territory]. Repeated missteps in the Special Administrative Zone have been followed by clumsy and haphazard moves that have led to the complete collapse of public confidence in the territory’s political leadership. The upshot is a fundamental disaffection towards Beijing among the masses of a place that is, if truth be told, the most prosperous and civilized part of China’s territory. The whole world has witnessed the ugly reality of the polity that lurks behind this situation.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the Pacific Ocean, as the Sino-American relationship continues into uncharted territory, the fact that for the Superpower politics are not merely about grand claims that no one has a right to comment on the internal affairs of such nations, all of these happenings [in Hong Kong and Taiwan, which Beijing emphasizes are solely China’s “internal affairs”] have a direct impact on the unfolding fate of our own nation. It is at this very juncture that The Axle, befuddled as usual, is for his pains also having to deal with an America led by a man who repeatedly “trumps” him by virtue of his own unpredictability.⁶ What you end up with is an unholy mess. There is a proliferation of online comments claiming that through His actions He is actually aiding and abetting the Yankees’ pursuit of their “imperialist steadfast desire to see us destroyed.” In other words, [canny

⁶ Here the author alters the Chinese transliteration of Trump’s name to read “extremely befuddling,” that is someone who “stumps” everyone.

commentators are suggesting that] He is helping the U.S. achieve the very things it could never have dreamed of accomplishing itself. This is not just a way of ridiculing Him, it is a profoundly painful reality for all of us.

Secondly, the power holders have in recent years accelerated their efforts to stamp out anything that resembles or contributes to the existence of civil society in China. Censorship increases by the day, and the effect of this is to weaken or obliterate those very things that can and should play a positive role in alerting society to critical issues [of public concern]. In response to the coronavirus, for instance, at first the authorities shut down all hints of public disquiet and outspoken commentary via censorship; they then simply shut down entire cities. First people's hearts die and then Death stalks the living. It takes no particular leap of the imagination to appreciate that along with such acts of crude expediency a soulless pragmatism can make even greater political inroads. Given the fact that the country is, in effect, run by people nurtured on the "politics of the sent-down youth"⁷ this is hardly remarkable. After all, we are living in a time when what once passed for a measure of public decency and social concern has long quit the stage.

One could go so far as to say that from the highest echelon to the very bottom of the system, this lot [of leaders in power today] represent the worst political team to have run China since 1978. That is why I believe that it is imperative that the nation act on and truly put into practice Article 35 of the Constitution. That is to say [we ourselves should advance Five Key Demands]:

1. Lift the ban on independent media and publishing;
2. Put an end to the secret police surveillance of the Internet and allow people their right to freedom of speech so they can express themselves with a clear conscience;
3. Allow citizens to enjoy their right to demonstrate as well as the freedom of assembly and association;
4. Respect the basic universal rights of our citizens, in particular their right to vote in open elections.

[And, fifthly,] It should also be a matter of pressing urgency that an independent body be established to investigate the origins of the coronavirus epidemic, to trace the resulting cover-up, identify the responsible parties, and analyze the systemic origins of the crisis. Then and only then [after the coronavirus epidemic has passed] can we truly engage in what should be a meaningful "Post [Anti-Virus] War Reconstruction."

4. A New Era of Revived Court Politics

Then there is the re-emergence of court politics or palace intrigue. The lurch towards the totalitarian in recent years along with a concomitant ratcheting up of policies aimed at insinuating the Communist Party into every aspect of civil government has, as we have noted in the above, resulted in the near paralysis of normal bureaucratic operations. The system

⁷ That is, of the Cultural Revolution era—today's leaders came of age during the late 1960s and early 1970s, a period of unparalleled political cynicism.

lacks any real sources of positive motivation, and the concentration of authority along with the concomitant impotence of actual power means that the Tail [or underlings] can all too readily Wag the Dog—ergo the existence of a Security Commission that imposes harsh punishments as part of the overall mechanisms that have to be used to keep the show on the road and the bureaucratic game ticking over. Due to the lack of freedom of speech and the absence of a modern bureaucratic system, let alone the absence of anything even approaching a “His Majesty’s Loyal Opposition,” the whip itself knows no restraint and the National Security Commission [established by Xi] rules with an iron fist, each layer of bureaucracy answering upwards until it reaches the pinnacle, The Sole Responsible Person. And that individual is but a man of flesh and blood who cannot possibly “be across” all aspects of governance.

A Party-state system that has no checks or balances, one that actually resists the rational allocation of duties and responsibilities, invariably gives rise to the rule of a clique of trusted lieutenants. Hence we have seen the equivalent of a court emerge and the political behavior endemic to a court. To put it more clearly, the “collective leadership” with its “Nine Dragons Ruling the Waters”⁸ and its concomitant claue of rulers acting in an equilibrium is no longer operable. With the over-concentration of power and a relative decline in efficacy, the One Leader’s inner circle becomes a de facto “state within a state,” something that the Yankees have taken to calling the “deep state.”

Following the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949, a non-Party bureaucracy was established which was empowered to carry out basic administrative tasks. Even Mao was able to tolerate someone like Premier Zhou Enlai running his part of the government. With the appearance of the Revolutionary Committees and Security Organs⁹ that system was overthrown. In the four decades [after Cultural Revolution policies were formally rejected from 1978], for the most part a modicum of balance existed between the roles of Party leader and state leader.¹⁰ Even though the Party and state were still melded, the state bureaucracy was given the task of implementing Party directives. It is only in the last few years that a new kind of hermetically sealed governance has come to the fore and, because of the nature of hidden court politics, it is one that has further enabled the sole power-holder while granting license to the darkest kinds of plotting and scheming. Such a rulership structure stifles systemic innovation and forecloses the kinds of changes that might enhance regularized forms of governance. With the way ahead reduced to something akin to a “political locked-in syndrome,” and since a meaningful retreat is all but impossible, the system is put under constant strain. It is virtually impossible for anyone to act in any meaningful fashion. Instead, all are forced to look on in impotent frustration as things deteriorate. This may well continue until the situation is simply beyond salvaging.

Faced with all of this, the social economy itself is left in tatters; the basic ethical skein of society as a whole is rent by the changing winds of political fashion, so much so that people’s already fragile sense of citizenship is further depleted. In the absence of anything that can meaningfully be called civil society, there is no hope that a mature form of politics can

⁸ Prior to the Xi Jinping era, there were nine members of the ruling Politburo Standing Committee. Xi’s leadership saw this number reduced to seven.

⁹ Which replaced the police and the judicial system as a whole during the Cultural Revolution, from 1966 until the 1970s.

¹⁰ That is, between the General Secretary of the Communist Party and the Premier who, as head of the State Council, was in charge of the formal structures of government.

possibly evolve. The brittleness of the situation is such that, whenever there is the slightest disturbance—let alone a major disaster—everyone and everything is endangered; we are all powerless to help each other. In such circumstances, what may start out as a molehill can all too readily burgeon into a mountain.

The present chaos in Wuhan has thrown Hubei into confusion, but as we noted earlier, the root cause of the expanding problem lies in Beijing: The One who devotes himself energetically to “Protecting the Mountains and Rivers and Maintaining Rulership over the Mountains and Rivers” [of China].¹¹ His self-interest is not grounded in the sovereignty of the people, nor in a system of governance that is about “building a nation on the basis of civilization, or freedom.” The end result of His style of rulership is, as commentators on the Internet have widely remarked of late, that although “major tasks can be accomplished by concentrating power” in times of crisis, the reality is that “major mishaps are also generated by overly concentrated power.” The coronavirus epidemic is a clear demonstration of this.

5. A New Era of Big Data Totalitarianism and WeChat Terror

They now pursue their rule over the people via what I would call “big data totalitarianism” and “WeChat terror.” Although the Communist Party has formulated its ideology in various guises over the decades, it has not fundamentally changed. That is how the nationalism that underpins their enterprise is presently cast in terms of “the revitalization of the great Chinese nation,” while the broad-based aspiration for national wealth and power was formulated [in the 1970s] under the slogan of “[achieving] the Four Modernizations” [of agriculture, industry, defense, and science and technology]. Twists and turns have followed one upon another, including such ideological formulations as the Three Represents and the The New Three People’s Principles¹² right up to the “New Era” announced under Xi Jinping [and written into the Communist Party Constitution in late 2017].

The Three Represents and the ideas [and policy latitude of the time] expressed the relative apogee of possibility under the Communists; since then, there has been an evident downward curve which, in recent years, is evidence that the Party is increasingly obsessed with maximum control over their “Rivers and Mountains.” To that end, they are now evolving a form of big data totalitarianism. Of course, the relative move away from the totalitarian controls of the Maoist era [during the 1980s and 1990s] seemed at the time to presage some hope that the system as a whole might actually be able to transition into something else. Following the 2008 Beijing Olympics, however, that trend petered out as Maoist-style forms of social control were gradually re-instituted. That trend has been more evident over the past six years [under Xi Jinping].

Unlimited government budgets have funded technological developments that are turning China into a mega data totalitarian state; we are already subjected to a 1984 style of total

¹¹ “Rivers and Mountains” is a poetic expression for China as a unified entity under authoritarian control.

¹² The Three Represents: of the Jiang Zemin era that stated that the Party “represents the means for advancing China’s productive forces; represents China’s culture; and represents the fundamental interests of the majority of the Chinese people. The New Three People’s Principles: reformulated in the early 2000s on the basis of ideas first articulated in the Republican period, 1912-1949.

surveillance and control. This state of affairs has enabled what could be called “WeChat terrorism” which directly targets the country’s vast online population. Through the taxes the masses are, in fact, funding a vast Internet police force dedicated to overseeing, supervising, and tracking everyone and all of the statements and actions they author. The Chinese body politic is riven by a new canker, but it is an infection germane to the system itself. As a result, people live in a state of constant anxiety; they are keenly aware that the Internet terrorism is by no means merely limited to personal WeChat accounts being suspended or shut down entirely, nor to the larger enterprise of banning entire WeChat groups [which are a vital way for individuals to debate issues of interest]. Everyone knows that the online terror may readily escape the virtual realm to become overtly physical: That is when the authorities use what they have learned online to send in the police in real-time. Widespread anxiety leads to relentless self-censorship; people are beset by nagging fears about what inexplicable punishment may suddenly befall them.

As a result, the potential for meaningful public discussion [of issues of the day, including the coronavirus] is stifled. By the same token, the very channels of communication that should in normal circumstances exist for the dissemination of public information are choked off, and a meaningful, civic early-warning system that could play a crucial role at times of local or national emergency is thereby outlawed. In its place we have an evolving form of military tyranny that is underpinned by an ideology that I call “Legalistic-Fascist-Stalinism” [*Fa-Ri-Si*, 法日斯], one that is cobbled together from strains of traditional harsh Chinese Legalist thought [*Fa* (法); that is, 中式法家思想] wedded to an admix of the Leninist-Stalinist interpretation of Marxism [*Si* (斯); 斯大林主义] along with the “Germano-Aryan” form of fascism [*Ri* (日); 日耳曼法西斯主义]. There is increasing evidence that the Party, for all of its weighty presence, is in fact a self-deconstructing structure that constantly undermines normal governance while tending towards systemic atrophy. Therefore, when a political arrangement like the one I have been describing here is confronted by a major public health emergency, as is now the case, the so-called “All Powerful Totalizing System” under the Chairman of Everything produces real-world effects that expose the profound inadequacies of the system as a whole. Among other things, it has left the country without even enough face masks to go around.

As I write these words, in the city of Wuhan, and within the province of Hubei, there are still countless numbers of people unable to get adequate medical attention, people who have been abandoned as they wail in hopeless isolation. Will we ever know how many people have as a result been condemned to a premature death? This is the reality of the so-called “all-powerful state”; its “good-for-nothing” nature is now on display for all to see. China’s Party-state system has systematically outlawed society itself, as well as the civic realm,¹³ cut off all sources of information apart from its own, and solely given license to its own propaganda apparatus. A nation like this may well attempt to strut, but the reality is that it is little more than a crippled giant, if it can even be called a giant.

6. A New Era That Has Shut Down Reform

¹³ This is a translation of the capacious term *minjian*, for more on this, see Sebastian Veg, *Minjian: Rise of China’s Grassroots Intellectuals*

The last cards in the deck have been played and the possibilities for further meaningful reforms have been locked out. Or, to put it more directly, the Reform and Opening-Up policies are dead in a ditch. From when [Xi Jinping declared], in late 2018 that “we must resolutely reform what should and can be changed, we must resolutely not reform what shouldn’t and can’t be changed” right up to the publication of the Communiqué of the Fourth Plenary Session [of the 19th Party Congress] last autumn, we can definitely say that the Third Great Wave of reform and opening in modern Chinese history¹⁴ has now petered out. In reality, the process of shutting down reform started six years ago [following the rise of Xi Jinping in late 2012].

Observing the trends in global history throughout the 20th century, it is fairly evident that right-wing governments have proven, when forced by pressure or circumstance, that they may be able to evolve and overcome their internal systemic dilemmas without always having to resort to mass blood-letting. Even in the case of the “Eastward Wave of Soviet Change”¹⁵—in particular in the case of the socialist governments of the Eastern Bloc under Soviet control—even they managed a peaceful transition, something that, at the time, was both surprising and a relief. However, in China today, the authorities have blocked off all possible roads that may imaginably lead to positive change. We must seriously doubt whether any form of peaceful transition might now even be conceivable. If that is the case, one cannot help but think of the old poetic line [from the Yuan dynasty] that, “The people suffer whether the state prospers or fails.” We can only hope that in the wake of the coronavirus, the people of China will reconsider their situation and that this ancient land will awaken to its predicament. Might it, perhaps, be possible to initiate a Fourth Wave of Reform?!

7. A New Era of Isolation

Given the logical unfolding of things discussed in the foregoing, China looks like it will, once more, be isolated from the global system. The modern global system is one that took shape in the Mediterranean [with the rise of the European trading powers] and reached an apogee on either side of the Atlantic Ocean [with the imperial dominance of the United Kingdom and the United States]. Over the centuries, China has engaged in endless tugs of war with that system, rejecting or embracing it at various times. Back and forth it has gone as the nation has lurched one way and careened another over the years. For over three decades [from 1978 to 2008], a hard-won and painful realization led this country to “bow in humble acknowledgement” [as the author titled an essay in late 2018] as well as “actively pursue change,” right up to giving birth to its own new form of engagement with the world system that would, over time, become itself something of a new mainstream.

It is a sad reality, however, that in recent years China has increasingly acted imprudently and against its own best interests. Furthermore, the “Open Door” has evidently opened just about

¹⁴ The first wave dates from the self-strengthening movement of the 1860s.

¹⁵ Su Dong Bo, literally “the (politically transformative) wave that broke over the Eastern Bloc controlled by the Soviet Union.” This clever shorthand is based on the name “Su Dongpo,” a famous Song-dynasty poet.

as far as it is going to; the totalitarian impulses of the Extreme Leftists have led them to take a stand; they will not tolerate any kind of systemic evolution that could possibly lead to a peaceful transition and enable China finally to evolve [away from authoritarianism and the one-party state]. That's why this place has repeatedly found itself at loggerheads with the modern global system. Despite this, and after all the to-ing and fro-ing, by virtue of its sheer scale and as a result of a generally more open mindset, China was fitfully finding its place in the modern world system and even becoming an important player in it. Its mere global presence also forced people to engage with new interpretations of staid geopolitical narratives about the meaning of "the center" and "the periphery."¹⁶

In recent years, however, the country's increasingly aggressive international posture has been out of kilter both with realistic assessments of China's actual national strength as well as the trends in global affairs as a whole. Added to all of that has been the changing internal dynamics of China itself, dynamics that have seen a steady drumbeat egg on the regime of "Legalistic-Fascist-Stalinism." All of this taken as a whole has elicited alarm and trepidation among other players in the new great game of global politics; they are now alert to the potential rise of a Chinese "Red Empire."¹⁷ Just as China has been trumpeting the concept of a global Community of Shared Destiny [since late 2013], the international community rejects it. What a tragic irony! Instead of embracing a real community, China is increasingly isolating itself from it.

No matter how complex, nuanced, and sophisticated one's analysis, the reality is stark. A polity that is blatantly incapable of treating its own people properly can hardly be expected to treat the rest of the world well. How can a nation that doggedly refuses to become a modern political civilization really expect to be part of a meaningful community? That's why although mutually beneficial economic exchanges will continue unabated, China's civilizational isolation will remain an undeniable reality. This has nothing to do with a culture war, even less can it be encapsulated in—and dismissed by—such glib concepts as a "clash of civilizations." Nor is this situation simply a matter of a new wave of anti-Chinese sentiment, or Sinophobia, or a desire to put China down. I say that despite the fact that, for the moment, dozens of countries have imposed travel restrictions on people from the People's Republic.

Nonetheless, I would remind readers that as the present China scare increases talk about the threat of a "Yellow Peril," that long occluded and sclerotic ideological construct, must invariably intensify. Internationally, the due appreciation for universal values and human rights was hard won, and it only achieved widespread acceptance following a tortuous period of contestation. These concepts have long been a standard element in the treaties and agreements that underpin the international community. China's own international engagement and its worthiness of enjoying a substantive place in the international community depend too on how these philosophical issues are understood and treated.¹⁸ Over time, who will prosper and who will move against the tides of history—that is, who will end up being isolated—these are questions that can only be answered in the process of some places being

¹⁶ China and other economies like it having been traditionally regarded as peripheral actors in the world system, in recent decades the "center" of geopolitical concerns has shifted.

¹⁷ For more on this, see Xu, "China's Red Empire—To Be or Not To Be."

¹⁸ That is, if the People's Republic can evolve and accept internationally recognized rights and universal values, which at present are rejected as a threat to Party domination in China.

isolated by others or as a result of those states that decide to self-isolate and end up alone. Those nations [and here the author is thinking of China] may end up appreciating their assumed pulchritude as reflected back at them in the mirror of their imperial self-regard.

The way to turn things around, to re-establish the image of China as a responsible major power that can shoulder its global responsibilities, requires that the internal affairs of this country must be set in order, but that can only happen if we as a people join together on the Great Way of Universal Human Values. Of particular importance is that this nation has to ground itself substantively in the political concept that Sovereignty Resides in the People. It all comes down to how this country chooses to manage its own affairs. I believe that the only way for China to end its global and historical isolation and become a meaningful participant in the global system, as well as flourish on the path of national survival and prosperity, is to pursue a politics that both embraces constitutional democracy and fosters a true people's republic. When that time comes, and in accord with the flow of events, it is not unimaginable that China might even be worthy of joining the G7, which would as a result become the Group of Eight or G8.

8. A New Era in Which to Seek Freedom from Fear

The People are no longer fearful. These are the common people—men and women who struggle to make a living, a populace that has put up with so much trepidation, a vast population that has only with the most extraordinary difficulty freed itself from the various myths about Power—they are a people who will not forever be willing to hand over submissively the scant freedoms they enjoy to a tyrannical system, or their right to work for a better life. Why indeed should they submit to an arrogant system that arrogates unto itself the sole right to apportion life and death, and survival itself?

Because of this Great Virus, the People are enraged; they've had enough. They have witnessed how the facts about the viral outbreak were hidden from them and how the health and safety of the common people was ignored by an unfeeling bureaucracy. Long before now, they have repeatedly paid a heavy price — the constant levies imposed on them to support the grandiose celebrations and bloated self-congratulation which the party-state uses to advertise prosperity and peace. All the while the people are treated as straw dogs [that is, sacrificial victims to be dispensed with at will]. They witness the ever-increasing death toll [caused by the virus], yet they are being shut down on WeChat and forced into silence while the power-holders extol their own heroism and shamelessly heap plaudits on themselves. Mass sentiment can be summed up in that line [made famous in Bei Dao's 1976 poem]: I—DO—NOT—BELIEVE! And they won't put up with it any more.

Well may they say that the human heart is ineffable and inexplicable; it has no practical use. Experience would seem to have proven this fact repeatedly and we cannot ignore the grim truth.. After all, what about Big Cock Li,¹⁹ the man [who was directly responsible for the Beijing Massacre of 1989 and the nationwide repression that followed in its wake]? Millions bayed for his blood, but he peacefully lived out his allotted time [dying at the age of ninety-

¹⁹ Li Peng, whose personal name, Peng, is also a term for a mythical huge bird.

one in July 2019] even though the masses strained to spit on him in disgusted outrage. Do we not lament the fact that Heaven repeatedly fails to deliver justice? Even though, if truth be told, Heaven too must suffer along with all of us. If we are to believe that it is the heart—our sense of human decency—is what makes us what we are, rather than the bestial organs of wolves and dogs, then it is the heart too that responds most meaningfully to the vicissitudes of life—be they joys or sorrows, disaster or good fortune, fairness as well as to profit, loves and hates. It is but human to be conflicted by wants and needs, to be prone to suffer the agonies of separation and harbor the hope for happiness. It is by means of that heart that a way forward may be forged, through thickets of pain as well as despite the rotten realities of our world.

When humanity itself is tested even up to the very point of extinction, know that this may presage the true “End of His Days.” As for those addle-brained morons and all of those smarmy gadabouts who think nothing bad can ever happen to them, they are an undifferentiated mob: they play no positive role in history, nor indeed does the course of unfolding events change because of their existence, or anything they do.

9. A New Era in Which the Clock Is Ticking

The deplorable reality is evident and the countdown has started—the time to establish a meaningful constitutional order is upon us. It should be recognized that the March 2018 revision of China’s Constitution²⁰ opened the door to all manner of evil. It has legislated that a totalitarian specter may once more cast a long shadow over us. However, at that very moment, things were taking an unexpected turn; just as that stampede into the past began, systemic decay became increasingly evident. Putting aside the issue of disgruntled popular sentiment, in the above we have already noted the bungled policies related both to Hong Kong and to Taiwan, as well as the disorderly fashion in which the Sino-American relationship has been unfolding. Added to all of that is an overall economic decline that eludes simple resolution as well as the real-time international isolation that China has been experiencing [due to its increasingly aggressive foreign posture]. All of these things are symptomatic of policy failure, yet further proof that “Strong Man Politics”—a phenomenon that cuts against the very nature of modern political life—produces results that are at glaring variance with the avowed aim of their author [that is, Xi Jinping].

Given this suffocating situation, there is a widespread anxiety that we are caught in a stalemate. People are bedeviled by it and strain to think of ways to break through the logjam and excite new possibilities. Of course, there is a fervent hope among many that certain internal dynamics [within the Communist Party] may lead to a way forward; perhaps, they think, something welling up from below that may influence those above positively. Just as such a pipe dream seemed to be capturing people’s imaginations, developments in Hong Kong and Taiwan showed instead how the periphery can suddenly throw the centre off kilter. Events in those two places have been so dramatic that, in fact, they may even offer a ray of hope. For it is perhaps, only perhaps, that with such a path forward—one in which the

²⁰ The revision allowed for Xi Jinping to stay in power beyond the limited term in office previously stipulated by law.

periphery gradually influences the centre and makes imaginable some kind of peaceful transition, that a particular Chinese Way out of our present political conundrum may be found. Perhaps too the “besieged city” [of Wuhan], beset as it is by crisis, may also prove to be a Jerusalem—a place of hope and peace; an old city proffering new hope.

To put it another way, a breakthrough originating from the periphery may augur once more [as it did in the 1890s, the 1910s, the 1940s and again in the 1980s] a moment that favors a push towards meaningful constitutional and legal rule in China. We may well be at just such a juncture; even as the faint light of a new dawn is discerned on the horizon, we nonetheless remain in the gloaming—we may no longer be lost in the pitch dark of night, yet the roseate promise of a new day still eludes us. Throughout, that bastion of power holds itself together tightly, its crumbling edifice reluctant as ever to acquiesce to the popular will. But, look there, the draw bridge that leads a way out [that is, the promise offered by events in Hong Kong and Taiwan] has been lowered, just so far. Is this not a time spoken of by prophets—even though many will fail and fall before the dawn light ushers in a new day?

* * *

I present these Nine Points for the consideration of my fellow countrymen and women.

Everything I say is obvious and no more than common sense. Nonetheless, allow me to reiterate my key point: when our nation has yet to enter a normal state of rule; when our people and our civilization are yet to transition into a truly modern era, we must continue forward with fortitude and hope; we must strive to bring about constitutional democracy and realize a real People’s Republic. We have been part of this long-breaking wave of modernity for over one and a half centuries [since the fledgling reform movement of the 1860s in the Qing dynasty]. It is herein that we play a role. That’s right, we, We the People, for [as I have previously said] how can we let ourselves continue to “survive no better than swine; fawn upon the power-holders like curs; and live in vile filth like maggots”?!

As I write these words I am forced to reflect on my own situation, one which also dramatically changed in 2018.²¹ Having raised my voice then I was punished for “speech crimes.” Thereafter, [in March 2019] I was suspended from my job as a university lecturer and cashiered as a professor, reduced to a minor academic rank. I was also placed under investigation by my employer, Tsinghua University and my freedoms have been curtailed ever since. Writing as I do herein, I can all too easily predict that I will be subjected to new punishments; indeed, this may well even be the last thing I write. But that is not up to me.

Confronted by this Great Virus, as we all are, to me it seems as though a vast chasm has opened up in front of us and I feel compelled to speak out yet again. There is no refuge from this viral reality and I cannot remain silent. To act in any other way would be to betray my nature. In Western philosophy, they call it “righteous indignation;” it is a kind of fury that results from repeated abrasion. Our own thinkers speak of it as “humanity combined with a sense of justice.” It is [what Mencius] called “the true way of the human heart” and, thus

²¹ When the author published his famous anti-Xi Jeremiad.

agitated, I—a bookish scholar who dares to think of himself as an “intellectual”—am prepared to pay for it with my life.²²

Ultimately, it is about Freedom—that Transcendent Quality; well-spring and fulcrum of conscious action; that secular value that is the most divine aspiration of humankind; that innate sensibility that truly makes us human; that ineffable “suchness” that we Chinese share with all others. The spirit of the world, that spirit incarnate on earth, makes possible a glorious unfolding of Freedom itself. This is why, friends—my countless compatriots—though a sea of flames confronts us, can we let ourselves be held back by fear?

Oh, Vast Land beneath our feet, it is You that I now address:

You inspire the most profound feelings, yet you can be cruel in your dispensation.
Despite the bounty of your promise all too often you assail us with ceaseless troubles.
Bit by bit you gnaw away at our patience, inch by inch you chip away at our dignity.
Do you deserve all of the praise we direct at you or are you worthy only of our curses?
There is one thing that I do know, and it is a hard-won truth: at the mere mention of
you my eyes fill with tears and my heart gasps. So it is that I say unto You, in the
words of the poet [Dylan Thomas]:

I will not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Yet people like me—feeble scholars—are useless; we can do nothing more than in our lamentation take up our pens and by writing issue calls for decency and advance pleas for Justice. Faced with the crisis of the coronavirus, confronting this disordered world, I join my compatriots—the 1.4 billion men and women, brothers and sisters of China, the countless multitudes who have no way of fleeing this land—and I call on them: rage against this injustice; let your lives burn with a flame of decency; break through the stultifying darkness and welcome the dawn.

Let us now strive together with our hearts and minds, also with our very lives. Let us embrace the warmth of a sun that proffers yet freedom for this vast land of ours!

*Drafted on the Fourth Day of the First Lunar Month
Of the Gengzi Year of the Rat [January 28, 2020]
Revised on the Ninth Day of the First Month [February 2]
As a snow storm suddenly assailed Beijing*

²² Here the author is referring to the famous Confucian text Mencius where it says: “Benevolence is the heart of man, and rightness his road. Sad it is indeed when a man gives up the right road instead of following it and allows his heart to stray without enough sense to go after it.” — trans. D.C. Lau, *Mencius*, Book VI, Part A: 11.