

Selected reader comments:

Reader 10:

To the troubling Hong Kong agitator Wenfang Tang, recently leaving and seeming to be unsafely turning against our United States: Your "Understanding Authoritarianism" in the current issue of *American Affairs* is dangerously treacherous, indeed. It perilously pits East against West

Reader 12:

Is it a coincidence that he publishes in the ultraconservative ethnonationalist pro-Trump journal *American Affairs* and praises authoritarianism?

Reader 27:

I've been a big fan of your articles at *American Affairs*. If at some point you'd like to broaden your audience across a more heterodox readership, do let our editor know and we would be happy to host and distribute an upcoming article.

Reader 43:

Thank you for your illuminating paper in the recent issue of *American Affairs*. I admire the clarity of thought that runs through it.

Reader 65:

Like all good review essays, yours is more essay than review. It makes a strong argument on its own and uses the books for supporting evidence.

Understanding Authoritarianism

by Wenfang Tang

REVIEW ESSAY

The Party and the People: Chinese Politics in the 21st Century

by **Bruce J. Dickson**

Princeton University Press, 2021, 328 pages

Evolutionary Governance in China:

State-Society Relations under Authoritarianism

edited by **Szu-chien Hsu, Kellee S. Tsai, and Chun-chih Chang**

Harvard University Press, 2021, 400 pages

Ruling by Other Means: State-Mobilized Movements

edited by **Grzegorz Ekiert, Elizabeth J. Perry, and Yan Xiaojun**

Cambridge University Press, 2020, 362 pages

Authoritarianism has long been viewed as undesirable in the Western world because it represents the “wrong” values and is a political system completely incompatible with Western liberal democracy. For several decades, it was assumed that authoritarian systems would eventually collapse. This liberal democratic, media-driven view of authoritarianism, however, does little to help us understand how authoritarian governments function and why they persist. Nor can it explain how an authoritarian system has presided over the dramatic rise of China.

Today, at least, even mainstream observers see the authoritarian option successfully at work in China—one of the most influential authoritarian regimes in the world, if not the most influential of all.

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Three recent books help us to paint a more useful picture of authoritarianism as an alternative political system, and explain why authoritarianism has been able to persist against all expectations.

HOW AUTHORITARIANISM WORKS

Western observers often look with perplexity at authoritarian states. The ideological foundation of their political power seems stark and off-putting, their methods of leadership selection and succession far from transparent. From the standpoint of liberal democracy in particular, authoritarian states have an alien policymaking process. People in the West also wonder about civil society development, political protests and regime stability, policies toward religion, the relationship of nationalism and regime support, and the prospect of democratization.

In what follows, I draw on three recently published volumes in order to shed some light on these questions. These works also help to paint a clearer picture of why authoritarian regimes succeed and will not be going away any time soon. First, a brief word about each of these books.

In his new book *The Party and the People: Chinese Politics in the 21st Century*, Bruce J. Dickson offers a comprehensive description of how China's authoritarian political system operates. Dickson is a seasoned China observer and an accomplished scholar. His book weaves together important research contributions of the past several decades. Dickson observes how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) manages to stay in power without the necessary elements of Western liberal democracy, such as individual rights, freedom of speech, and multiparty competitive elections.

The two other volumes reviewed here are edited collections that together provide a remarkable answer to some of the typical Western critiques and inquiries. In their volume on *Evolutionary Governance in China*, Szu-chien Hsu, Kellee S. Tsai, and Chun-chih Chang describe the importance of societal actors for effective governance in the Chinese authoritarian context. In her chapter introducing the volume, Kellee Tsai, a political scientist and respected China observer, proposes a new angle on studying authoritarian politics in China. Rather than focusing on examining state power, Tsai develops an innovative idea of "evolutionary governance" by analyzing the interaction between the state and society.

Tsai shows that authoritarian governance is an outcome of constant interaction between the state and society in which each player determines its position based on its own interests and then adjusts its strategy according to the reactions of the other players. For example, in China, local protests were initially tolerated and their material demands were met, but later treated harshly when the state saw the growing threat to its legitimacy as the protests moved toward calls for regime change. The result is a sustainable authoritarian political system in which the state is capable of maintaining its dominance while allowing for limited but meaningful participation by the public in the decision-making process.

Traditionally, social movements are understood as anti-state and anti-establishment, particularly in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian societies. In their penetrating collection *Ruling by Other Means*, Grzegorz Ekiert, Elizabeth J. Perry, and Yan Xiaojun propose a new way of understanding social movements by showing the state's role in organizing, facilitating, and encouraging these movements. The authors show that state-mobilized movements or SMMs are frequently used as weapons in intrastate elite conflict among political factions at the national level, between central and local leaders, in suppressing social opposition with other social groups, and in cross-border conflict such as that waged by Russia in Ukraine, China in Hong Kong, and the United States in the Arab Spring.

Although *Ruling by Other Means* is mostly about authoritarian and semi-authoritarian societies, the authors repeatedly call for further research on SMMs in democracies, such as Indian right-wing nationalism under Modi and the populist unrest under Trump in the United States. The book makes a refreshing and significant contribution to the protest literature in political science and sociology.

In the sections that follow—on authoritarianism's ideological foundation, institutional design, civil society characteristics, management of protests, and the response to the Covid-19 pandemic—I draw on all these volumes to paint a picture of authoritarianism's long-term resilience.

IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION: THE INDIVIDUAL VERSUS THE GROUP

One of the fundamental differences between authoritarianism and liberal democracy¹ is found in their different understandings of the

relationship between the individual and the group (with group understood broadly as family, society, or country). In a liberal democratic society, it is believed that the individual is the core of society and that everything else should be centered around the individual. Contemporary liberal democracy seems to encourage individuals and small groups to assert their interests in the political process.

Take the example of gender and sexual orientation and political rights. Liberal democracy no doubt encouraged women to gain their right to vote in the United States in the 1920s. More recently, other movements continued this legacy in different arenas—at first in the movement toward same-sex marriage, more recently with the expansion of LGBTQ advocacy. Meanwhile, the same process has occurred across various policy areas and among a growing number of identity and interest groups. The result is a highly fragmented society with a diverse range of groups competing for their own interests; everyone is taught to believe that they are endowed at birth with unalienable individual rights. Such beliefs are deeply rooted in the Western liberal tradition—in the natural rights tradition of Locke, as well as the natural freedom emphasis in Rousseau, among others.

The contrast with an authoritarian society could not be more obvious. While there are different forms of authoritarianism, in the Confucian one, group interest takes priority before individual interest. In this tradition, the most important responsibility for each person is social obligation—the obligations of citizens to their country, of parents toward their children, of spouses in a marriage, or of employees in a work organization. The concept of social obligation provides the justification for authoritarian regimes to rule on behalf of the officially defined social interest, even if at the expense of individual interests.²

In addition to the emphasis on the importance of group interest, another defining feature of the Chinese ideological foundation is populism or the Mass Line (in the CCP's terminology), which originated in the 1940s within the Communist movement. According to this tradition, regime legitimacy comes from how well it represents the interests of ordinary people. The Mass Line idea, however, is not the result of institutional design as it is in liberal democracy, where multi-party competition and periodic elections are supposed to determine the popular will. Under the Mass Line, direct interaction between the state and society is necessary to identify public interests and to get

public input in decision-making, as Hsu, Tsai, and Chang document. Once decisions are made, however, there is little room for further disagreement.³

In the Chinese version of authoritarian ideology, the Han Chinese ethnic identity plays another important role in holding people together. China is a multiethnic society whose linguistic diversity could probably rival that of Europe. Thanks to a unified written language, however, China's rulers succeeded in making more than 90 percent of its huge population accept the concept of Han ethnicity. In this "imagined" Han community,⁴ reinforced by Chinese rulers' constant reminders about the external threats posed by Western powers since the mid-nineteenth century, Chinese nationalist sentiment has been among the strongest in public opinion surveys throughout the world.⁵ Less than 10 percent of China's population identify as ethnic minorities.

At the time of this writing, there seems to be a joint effort among Western liberal democratic regimes and their media outlets to criticize China for its ethnic minority policy and the alleged genocide in Xinjiang. Yet ethnic tension in China is low when compared to the racial and ethnic conflicts witnessed in the United States, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and in other parts of the world.⁶ The CCP has been able to rally regime support and justify the harsh treatment of dissidents, along with the promotion of the common group interest, in the name of Chinese nationalism.⁷

INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN

Ever since Donald Trump's 2016 victory in the United States, the term "populist authoritarianism" has become a fashionable way to describe the rise, in liberal democracies, of right-wing political parties that aim to bypass left-wing or liberal elites and the institutions they dominate. Yet from my vantage point, Western populist authoritarianism differs from the Chinese version of populist authoritarianism in that the Western version is limited in both its populism and its authoritarianism.

In the liberal democratic environment, populism is really the ideological vehicle of one political party among many. Its authoritarianism is limited, too; even Donald Trump had to yield to electoral defeat. In other words, the Western version of populist authoritarianism still must operate within the liberal democratic institutional

framework. In the Chinese version of populist authoritarianism, by contrast, both populism and authoritarianism *are* the framework.

Multiparty competition and electoral politics are the key elements of liberal democratic institutional design. Although in theory this competition is supposed to discipline politicians and ensure that they serve the public interest, in practice electoral victory has often become the goal, rather than the means, of political life in such systems. Everything politicians say and do is aimed at winning the next election or positioning themselves to get a cabinet post or similar office. During this all-consuming process, leaders have little time and energy to think about the common interest of the country and to develop long-term national strategies that transcend the electoral cycle. Everything is a partisan fight, including solar power, oil pipelines, climate change, immigration, infrastructure development, Covid-19 policy, and other policies that require national coordination.

In authoritarian China, as described by Dickson, leadership selection in the authoritarian state can still be quite competitive, even in the absence of elections. One's career network, past job performance, and demonstrated competence are all important criteria for gaining leadership positions. But in this process, meritocracy replaces election.⁸ The CCP inherited the Leninist doctrine of single-party domination over the government and the legislature. To achieve such dominance, the party must rely on its tight organizational hierarchy and strictly enforced disciplines, as well as loyalty among its members.

In this environment, there is no organized political opposition. Any opinions different from the government-defined "common interests"—for example, on environmental protection, energy policy, infrastructure, ethnic and religious separatism, or Hong Kong independence—are suppressed or limited in the name of national security. Moreover, when there is no partisan divide and no concerns about winning elections, the government can more easily focus on long-term strategies and national projects. Comedian Bill Maher succinctly described this contrast as the difference "between authoritarian government that tells everyone what to do and representative government that can't do anything."⁹

The repressive nature of authoritarianism does not mean that there are no channels for public input in policymaking, however. As Dickson notes, populism or the Mass Line provides a mechanism for

voicing public opinion and for identifying public interests. This is particularly true for people's everyday livelihood issues, such as food safety, job and pay, housing, environment, Covid-19, and so on. When it comes to national security issues, the room for discussion is much more limited.

In liberal democracies, multiparty elections are designed to allow maximum expression and representation of diverse opinions. In reality, though, such a system cannot guarantee that these different opinions and interests are fully represented; the winners of elections feel little obligation to please their political rivals. Their political instinct is to constantly undermine the position of their opponents so they can win the next election. Bureaucracy then emerges as one of the few institutions capable of maintaining some sense of continuity across administrations regardless of electoral outcomes.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society is another cornerstone of liberal democracy. Social organizations and NGOs flourish in a lively civil society. These self-organized autonomous groups provide opportunities for citizen involvement in political life, promote interpersonal trust and social capital, serve as a buffer zone between society and the state, and articulate public interests in influencing government decision-making. Political scientists have long shown that civil society serves as a lubricant between the public and the government, and that it ensures the smooth functioning of democracy.

When they consider authoritarian societies, the conventional understanding of those living in liberal democracies is that autonomous social organizations must be closely scrutinized, particularly if they are advocating interests that are inconsistent with government policy. People working for NGOs are arrested (it is said) and their organizations are shut down whenever they engage in activities that are deemed subversive to regime legitimacy.

This view is certainly correct when NGOs engage in activities that touch an authoritarian government's redline, such as (for the Chinese government) the situations in Xinjiang, Tibet, Hong Kong, Taiwan, human rights, and so on. Yet as both Dickson and Hsu, Tsai, and Chang observe, a lively array of quasi-civil society activities dot the landscape of authoritarian China. Dickson talks about how, for example, the NGOs focusing on social issues such as environmental

protection, poverty relief, and urban migrants are permitted to operate, although no human rights groups are allowed. As Hsu, Tsai, and Chang's volume shows, mobilization by various women's groups that started in the late 1980s culminated in China's first Anti-Domestic Violence Act in 2016.

Dickson devotes an entire chapter to religion, another touchy topic in China that has received overwhelmingly negative coverage in Western media. Dickson shows that the CCP places tight constraints on some politically motivated religious groups, such as the Christian group *Showwang*, which consists of highly educated and politically dissatisfied members, on religious cults such as *Falungong*, and on religion-based terrorist groups in Xinjiang and Tibet. Few people would want to admit the similarity, but when liberal democracies such as the United States perceive national security threats by religious groups, they deal with these groups equally if not more harshly—as they have done with domestic religious cults like the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, and jihadist groups abroad.

In the meantime, although the CCP is an atheist political party, it is sometimes quite tolerant of traditional religious beliefs and behavior, and of government-accepted churches based on the accepted religions (Buddhism, Catholicism and other Christian denominations, Islam, and Daoism). When it does not see a threat to its legitimacy and to China's national security, the CCP is even tolerant of international religious groups preaching in China. I have personally encountered Mormons preaching their message under the disguise of teaching English in China. I have also personally witnessed a South Korean Christian group openly preaching in the Forbidden City, which is an imperial museum closely watched by the government.

In my own research, I found that traditional religion has regained its popularity in post-Mao China. Religiosity is low if measured by Western standards, such as belief in institutionalized religion, but just as high as in other societies if measured by diffuse religious beliefs and behaviours, such as ancestral worship, geomancy or feng shui, and choosing religious dates for life events such as weddings, childbirth, and funerals. Moreover, Christianity has always had few adherents in other East Asian societies such as Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, where political control is not a problem. In other words, the low level of popularity of Christianity in China may not be due to the CCP's repression, but to China's own strong religious traditions.¹⁰

In Hsu, Tsai, and Chang's edited volume, almost all the chapters are devoted to showing the "soft" side of the Chinese authoritarian regime. The CCP tends toward accommodation on issues related to people's everyday life and repression on redline issues related to national security. Local authorities were tolerant of the homeowners associations, for example, by granting them legal status, by empowering migrant workers in protecting their economic rights against employers, and by allowing the villagers in Guangdong to protest against the local officials who illegally appropriated land. In HIV/AIDS governance, the state initially denied and reacted harshly against societal pressure, but later (when realizing the seriousness of the problem) accepted international cooperation, resulting in the growth of HIV-related NGOs.

The Chinese state is also responsive to the needs of local environmental protection, in protecting labor rights against overseas investors from Taiwan and Japan, against domestic violence and police brutality, even in protecting a local religious Mazu temple and making it a cultural heritage site. With only one exception, all the chapters in Hsu, Tsai, and Chang's volume point to examples of successful negotiation between the public and the state, if not the development of China's "civil society" in an authoritarian political environment. Nevertheless, the authors do note that the space for societal organization has become more constricted since 2012.

PROTEST UNDER AUTHORITARIANISM

Another myth about authoritarianism in the Western world is that protests do not (or not allowed to) occur. Every time there is a protest in authoritarian China, for example, some Western media outlets get excited, thinking that China is one step closer to regime collapse and to liberal democracy. Since those protests are often supported directly or indirectly by Western liberal democratic regimes, this excitement is understandable. And because they are often targeting the Chinese state directly, these protests are often quickly cracked down upon.

As Ekiert, Perry, and Yan show, however, many other protests are encouraged and mobilized by authoritarian regimes themselves. In 1968, the Polish Communist government successfully mobilized massive social protests against student and intellectual movements that were perceived as challenging the regime. In China in 1968, industrial

workers were mobilized to keep the student Red Guards under control. Taiwan's land reform in the 1950s was an attempt by the regime to reduce social tension by "spoiler mobilization" (bribing farmers and local officials), and to increase regime legitimacy. In the American South during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, the federal government relied on local civil rights groups in Mississippi to advance its anti-racist agenda through state-mobilized movements. In the early 2000s, the Ukrainian regime mobilized counterrevolutionary protests during the Orange Revolution, perhaps receiving behind-the-scenes support from Russia. Under Putin, Russia promoted a youth movement called "Nashi" to rally regime support and anti-Western sentiment. Similarly, state-mobilized movements were also found in the post-annexation Crimea, in Bolivarian Venezuela, in the veteran protests in Croatia during the 1990s, in Egypt during the Arab spring in 2011, and in the counter-Occupy Central Movement in the mid-2010s in Hong Kong.

In addition to the examples cited by Ekiert, Perry, and Yan, there are many other instances of regime-mobilized protests, sometimes successful but other times unsuccessful. In 1989 in China, for example, the then prime minister Zhao Ziyang tried unsuccessfully to stay in power by directly appealing to the student protesters in Tiananmen Square. In Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi relied on protesters to fight against the military coup leaders. Donald Trump encouraged the capital rioters to pressure legislators against ratifying the Electoral College results after his election defeat.

Political leaders throughout the world use public protests to consolidate their own power when facing domestic rivals and international threats. In my own research, I have found that the central government in Beijing often tolerates, encourages, or even directly mobilizes local protests to maintain the public support of the central government at the expense of local governments and their officials. Consequently, local residents develop high levels of political activism. For example, in the public opinion surveys I have administered in China, trust in the central government is positively correlated to protesting against local governments and their policies as well as against local officials. In other words, those who trust the central government more are also more likely to challenge the local government,¹¹ suggesting the central government's encouragement of local protests.

In short, protests in an authoritarian society do not always challenge the regime. They are often used to consolidate the rule of authoritarian regimes. In addition, such tactics are also frequently used by democratic regimes to secure the power of political elites.

COVID-19 UNDER DEMOCRACY AND AUTHORITARIANISM

Does the political system of democracy or authoritarianism make a difference in controlling public health crises such as Covid-19? There are reasons to believe that regime type does not matter because outbreaks of the pandemic occurred in both democratic and authoritarian societies.¹² While it may be true that both democracies and autocracies are incapable of preventing the pandemic from spreading, it has been revealing to watch the ways different countries are handling the pandemic. Often different approaches are associated with the character of their domestic political systems and their core values.

There is of course a wide range of outcomes even between countries sharing similar government systems. For example, democratic Germany performed better than the democratic United States, and authoritarian Russia performed worse than authoritarian China. Here I would like to focus on the comparisons between China and the United States. Covid-19 was first found in China, but the United States is the country that seems to be suffering from one of the worst outbreaks of the virus. Some of the differences seem to be rooted in each country's respective institutions. In other words, political-institutional design may be a significant—but not the only—factor that led to the different approaches and outcomes in fighting the pandemic in the two countries.

China was the first country to report confirmed Covid-19 cases in late 2019 and early 2020. The initial government response was a local bureaucratic knee-jerk reaction to suppress information and punish the whistleblower. After an online public opinion outburst criticizing the local government responses, and with the memory of the early 2000s SARS pandemic still fresh (when local attempts to suppress information also backfired), the Beijing government quickly acted by publicizing the pandemic information on a daily basis. Beijing fired the local officials, honored the whistleblower Dr. Li Wenliang, built a thousand-bed hospital in Wuhan in ten days, ordered everyone to wear masks, locked down Wuhan and then the entire country, mobi-

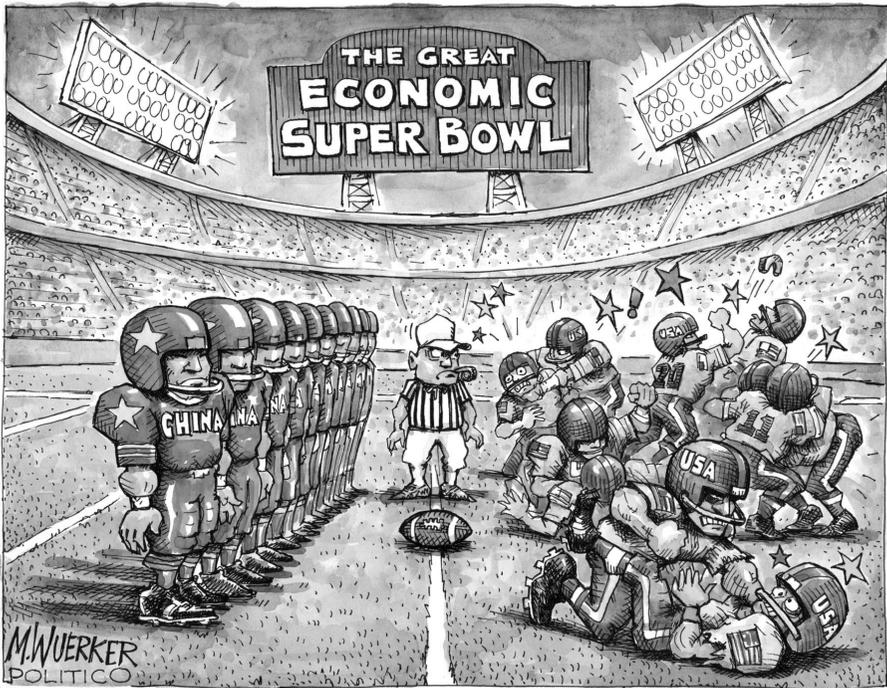
lized medical staff throughout the country to help Wuhan, and coordinated a nationwide effort at developing vaccines.

These measures seemed effective. China quickly prevented the further spread of the virus in the country, kept the death toll low, and was the only country among the world's major economies to record positive GDP growth in 2020. China was successful in its vaccine development projects, and this consequently promoted regime support and public satisfaction. This process of interaction between the public and the state evokes the process of interactive authoritarianism outlined by Hsu, Tsai, and Chang.

State-sponsored social movements have been another tool (aside from repression) used by the CCP to discredit its critics during the pandemic. Consider Fang Fang, a Chinese writer who published her diary in English outside of China criticizing the Chinese government's initial handling of the pandemic. Instead of arresting the writer who made China look bad, the CCP mobilized and encouraged social media campaigns, criticizing the writer as a lapdog of the Western liberal democratic regimes. This case further supports Ekiert, Perry, and Yan's observation of the importance of state-mobilized movements.

In the United States, under Trump, the reaction to Covid-19 was also quick, but the country responded in a highly divided and politicized way. The Trump administration tried to use the opportunity to attack China by labeling Covid-19 the Wuhan virus, by banning travel from China, by telling the American people that everything was China's fault, and by fomenting fear of China among American voters while presenting themselves as protectors. Measures necessary to fight the virus, such as wearing masks, social distancing, distributing medical supplies, reporting confirmed cases, and developing vaccines, were all disputed along party lines.

The concept of individual rights often encouraged opposition to state medical recommendations. American federalism, an institution designed to prevent the concentration of political power and encourage local autonomy, produced a fragmented response according to the interests of political parties. States were divided along party lines in their decisions to wear masks, to enforce social distancing, and to lock down their borders. These nationally uncoordinated policies led to disastrous consequences in fighting the pandemic: the United States has reported the highest levels of confirmed cases and death tolls in



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the world. Public dissatisfaction with the government's chaotic response to the pandemic further harmed the credibility of the democratic system and its response to a national health crisis.

The United States further suffered huge economic damage as businesses were shut down, people were laid off, and consumer spending dropped. Though the United States was among the first countries in the world to develop vaccines, the economy has still not returned to normal. China's economy, on the other hand, recovered even before the development of vaccines. When its own vaccines were produced, China was able to use them to help other countries and thus project its soft power through vaccine diplomacy. In this competition with China, the United States suffered tremendous domestic economic loss, as well as damage to its international influence, particularly among middle- and low-income countries.

It is a common assumption in the Western world that authoritarian regimes are strict in controlling information—as shown above by their blocking news of the virus outbreak and by silencing the whistleblower in the early stages of the pandemic. In a liberal demo-

cracy, the assumption is that information can flow freely and accurately because of the democratic values and principles of government accountability, transparency in decision-making, and the individual right to information.

Yet the pandemic has shown that such assumptions have not been sufficiently fulfilled in the United States. Information is distorted depending on whom you ask. For the Trump camp and its media outlets, there is a strong incentive to downplay the seriousness of the problem, while his opponents were motivated to paint a dire picture in order to make their political enemies look bad, which seemed more important than saving lives. Punishing the whistleblower during the pandemic outbreak was just as much of a problem in the liberal democratic America as in authoritarian China. Brett Crozier, the former commander of the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* aircraft carrier, was fired by the Trump government in the name of national security for leaking the spread of Covid-19 among his sailors.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no doubt that the core values of liberal democracy, its institutional design, and its lively civil society have allowed the United States to develop some of the most advanced technology, the most powerful military, and the wealthiest economy in the world. I am optimistic that the United States will rise again from the pandemic crisis and maintain its status as a world superpower. Yet in the global fight against the pandemic, the core values of authoritarianism, its institutional design, and its interactive relationship between society and the state have shown their own effectiveness.

The world does not have to be a zero-sum game between democracy and authoritarianism, and scholars are ill-served by constantly demonizing authoritarianism as an evil ideology and a repressive political system that is doomed to fail. After all, the core values of democracy include the principle that nations are free to choose their own beliefs, political systems, and institutions. While authoritarian regimes need to learn from democracy to pay more respect to individual freedoms, democracy can also learn a thing or two from authoritarianism about group effort. ^A

NOTES

¹ In this essay, I use the term liberal democracy to refer to the Western democratic tradition. My purpose is not to provide a comprehensive analysis of

different versions of democracy, but to set up a contrast between the Western democratic camp and authoritarianism.

- ² Some people like to illustrate this contrast between group-based and individualistic cultures, or between authoritarianism and democracy, by how mailing addresses are written in English and Chinese. In English, the order is self (first name), family (last name), neighborhood, city, state, and country. In Chinese, the order is reversed: country, province, city, neighborhood, family name, and the last is one's given name. This contrast may play a role in shaping people's thinking in different political cultures.
- ³ Wenfang Tang, *Populist Authoritarianism: Chinese Political Culture and Regime Sustainability* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).
- ⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2016).
- ⁵ Also see Wenfang Tang and Benjamin Darr, "Chinese Nationalism and Its Political and Social Origins," *Journal of Contemporary China* 21, no. 77 (2012): 811–26.
- ⁶ See, for example, Colin Mackerras, "What Is China? Who Is Chinese? Han-Minority Relations, Legitimacy, and the State," in Peter Hays Gries and Stanley Rosen, eds., *State and Society in 21st-Century China: Crisis, Contention and Legitimation* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).
- ⁷ See Wenfang Tang and Gaochao He, *Separate but Loyal: Ethnicity and Nationalism in China* (Honolulu: East-West Center, 2010).
- ⁸ Daniel A. Bell, *The China Model: Political Meritocracy and the Limits of Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).
- ⁹ Rosemary Rossi, "Bill Maher Warns: China Is Dominating US Because 'Nothing Ever Moves in This Impacted Colon of a Country' (Video)," *The Wrap*, March 13, 2021.
- ¹⁰ Wenfang Tang, "The Worshipping Atheist: Institutional and Diffused Religiosities in China," *China: An International Journal* 12, no. 3 (December 2014): 1–26.
- ¹¹ See Tang, *Populist Authoritarianism*.
- ¹² Elizabeth J. Perry, "Epilogue: China's (R)evolutionary Governance and the COVID-19 Crisis," in Hsu, Tsai and Chang, eds., *Evolutionary Governance in China*.