“Left—Center—Right”

“Except in a desert, wherever there are people, there will be left, center, and right, and it will remain thus even after ten thousand years.”

除了沙漠，凡有人群的地方就有左中右，一万年以后都是如此。

1957.5.15
事情正在起变化

（一九五七年）

左中右的统一和在社会生活中普遍存在的斗争是不能避免的。现在新的统一，社会生活就向前进一步。

左中右的统一和新的统一，社会生活要向前进一步。
“Left—Center—Right”
徐友渔：新左派与自由主义的分与合

作者：徐友渔
来源：博客中国
来源日期：2001-05-21 00:11

李泽厚：四期儒学，后现代主义及新左派

2012-06-14 12:20:48 作者：李泽厚 评论：字体大小

张明澍：左派右派都是想过好日子

2013年05月14日07:15 环球时报

萧三问对话高全喜：左派是诗，右派是散文

2014-02-27 16:51 作者：萧三问 评论：大中小
Deep Historical Roots

➤ 1898 Liang Qichao, Yan Fu
➤ 1919 Marxism, Leninism
➤ 1930 League of Left Wing Writers
➤ 1950-60 Collectivization, Great Leap Forward
➤ 1957-1960 Hundred Flowers Campaign, Anti-Rightists Movement
➤ 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution
➤ 1979 Reform and opening up
➤ 1989 Tiananmen
➤ 1992 Deng’s Southern Tour
➤ 1997 Socialist Market Economy
➤ ....
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>“Left”</strong></th>
<th><strong>“Right”</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Political</strong></td>
<td>National unity</td>
<td>Civil liberty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Party-state</td>
<td>Electoral competition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Socialist state/statism</td>
<td>Constitutional democracy</td>
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<td>National security</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
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<td>Maoism</td>
<td>Legalism</td>
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<td>Chinese characteristics</td>
<td>Universality</td>
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<td></td>
<td>State sovereignty</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
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<td>Patriotism</td>
<td>Internationalism</td>
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<td>Anti-West</td>
<td>Pro-West</td>
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<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td>Welfare state</td>
<td>Free market</td>
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<td></td>
<td>More intervention</td>
<td>Less intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public interest</td>
<td>Individual rights</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Legitimacy of labor gains</td>
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<td><strong>Social/Cultural</strong></td>
<td>Traditional values</td>
<td>Western values</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collectivism</td>
<td>Individualism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confucianism</td>
<td>Individual freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional wisdom</td>
<td>Modern science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thriftiness</td>
<td>Materialism</td>
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</table>
Definition of Ideology

➤ Marxist: ideas proposed by the dominant class of society (Marx and Engels 1846; Gramsci 1995; Mannheim 2013)

➤ Belief system to motive and reinforce social control (Inkeles 1954; Neumann 1957; Friedrich and Brzezinski 1965)

➤ A cultural system based on symbols (Geertz 1964)

➤ Organization of societal preferences (Converse 1964)
Main challenges for research

➤ Perceived as unimportant in authoritarian regimes
  only matters in periods of “crisis or challenge to the existing power structure” (Converse 1964)

➤ Limited data
What We Do

➤ Study the constraints and configuration of preferences of the China public using an online dataset of 460,563 respondents

➤ Develop measures of ideology

➤ Explore their correlations with regional and individual characteristics
Why Does It Matter?

➤ Understanding the emergence of political cleavage in the absence of electoral competition

➤ Gauging future political development in China
  - Support for the regime
  - Prospect of democratization
  - Political landscapes
‘Ideological spectrum’ misreads local reality

Source: Global Times Published: 2015-4-15 0:43:01

Two students from Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology [MIT] have created a "China’s Ideological Spectrum," which covers 29 provinces, cities and autonomous regions in China, labeling them as "liberal" (right), "conservative" (left) and "neutral." They argue that a certain unification of politics, economy, society and culture exists in Chinese values, claiming that coastal areas with higher levels of economic development are mostly liberal regions, while the majority of individuals in the less developed provinces and cities in the central and western areas are conservative.
Preview

➤ Constraints
➤ Configuration
➤ Correlations
(1) Constraint

There is *systematic* organization of public preferences, but the constraint is *weaker* than what has been observed in competitive democracies.
Preview of Main Findings

(2) Configuration

The configuration of preferences falls in three dimensions: (i) political, (ii) economic/social, and (iii) nationalism. The latent traits of these dimensions are highly correlated.
(3) Correlates

Ideology of the Chinese public is related to respondent’s *socioeconomic status* and regional *development indicators*. 
Roadmap

➤ Motivation
➤ Conceptualization
➤ Data and Methods
➤ Findings
➤ Conclusion
Roadmap

➤ Motivation

➤ Conceptualization

➤ Data and Methods

➤ Findings

➤ Conclusion
A Toy Example

2 Dimensional (orthogonal) 1 Dimensional 2 Dimensional
Goals of This Paper

1. Constraints on public preferences
2. Configuration of public preferences
Roadmap

➤ Motivation
➤ Conceptualization
➤ Data and Methods
➤ Findings
➤ Conclusion
China Political Compass Survey（中国政治坐标系）

➤ Source: zuobiao.me

➤ 50 questions
   (randomly ordered)

➤ 4 options for each question

➤ 460,563 respondents (2012—2014)

➤ The sample is NOT representative
Zuobiao Questions

1. Political Institutions
2. Individual Freedom
3. Market Economy
4. Capital and Labor
5. Economic Sovereignty and Globalization
6. Nationalism
7. Traditionalism
(1) Political Institutions

➤ Western multiparty systems are unsuitable for China in its current state.
西方的多党制不适合中国国情。

➤ Indiscriminately imitating western-style freedom of speech will lead to social disorder in China.
在中国照搬西方式的言论自由会导致社会失序。
(2) **Individual Freedom**

- Primary school, secondary school, and college students should all participate in government organized military training.

- Even with population pressures, the state and the society have no right to interfere in the decision to have a child, or how many children to have.
(3) Free Market

➤ If the price of pork is too high, the government should intervene.
如果猪肉价格过高，政府应当干预。

➤ Individuals should be able to own, buy and sell land.
私人应当可以拥有和买卖土地。
(4) *Capital and Labor*

- People who make money through gains from financial investments contribute less to the society than people make money through labor.

- The process of capital accumulation is always accompanied by harm to the working class.
(5) Economic Sovereignty and Globalization

➤ Foreign capital in China should enjoy the same treatment as national capital.
在华外国资本应享受和民族资本同样的待遇。

➤ A high tariff should be imposed on imported goods that are also produced domestically to protect domestic industries.
应当对国外同类产品征收高额关税来保护国内民族工业。
(6) Nationalism

➤ National unity and territorial integrity are the highest interest of society.
国家的统一和领土完整是社会的最高利益。

➤ Force should be used to reunify Taiwan with China if conditions permit.
条件允许的话应该武力统一台湾。
(7) Traditionalism

➢ Traditional Chinese classics should be the basic education material for children.
应当将中国传统文化的经典作品作为儿童基础教育读物。

➢ Two adults should be free to engage in voluntary sexual behavior regardless of their marital status.
两个成年人之间自愿的性行为是其自由，无论其婚姻关系为何。
Zuobiao Questions

1. Political Institutions
2. Individual Freedom
3. Market Economy
4. Capital and Labor
5. Economic Sovereignty and Globalization
6. Nationalism
7. Traditionalism
Non-Representative Sample
Pros and Cons

➤ Pros

- Coverage on a wide range of issues
- Respondents more intrinsically motivated

➤ Cons

- Representativeness
- Coverage on ethnicity, women’s rights, etc.
1. Reweight the sample based on the *Census*, targeting gender, age, and geographic location (province).

2. Random sample **10,000 observations** from the original *zuobiao* sample using the weights

*All subsequent analyses are based on the constructed sample with 10,000 observations.*
Original and New Sample
### Table A2. Regional Compositions of the *Zuobiao* Data: Original vs. Resampled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>20.96</td>
<td>345</td>
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<td>Hebei</td>
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<td>1,441</td>
<td>0.31</td>
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<td>Jiangsu</td>
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<td>6.67</td>
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Methods

➤ We use principal component analysis (PCA) and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to study the level of constraint on public preferences (IRT models can be seen as a type of EFA)

➤ We use confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to study the configuration of public preferences
Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Latent Factor 1
- Item 1
- Item 2
- Item 3

Latent Factor 2
- Item 4
- Item 5
- Item 6
- Item 7
Roadmap

➤ Introduction
➤ Conceptualization
➤ Data and Methods
➤ Findings
➤ Conclusion
Roadmap

➤ Introduction
➤ Conceptualization
➤ Data and Methods
➤ **Findings**
  ➤ Constraints
  ➤ Configuration
  ➤ Correlates
➤ Conclusion
Roadmap

➤ Introduction
➤ Conceptualization
➤ Data and Methods
➤ Findings
  ➤ Constraints
  ➤ Configuration
  ➤ Correlates
➤ Conclusion
Constraints

![Graph showing eigenvalues for principal components and factors]

- **i'th Principal Component or Factor**
- **Eigen Values of Components and Factors**
Constraints

- Percentage Correctly Predicted (Accumulative PCP) %
  - Number of Principal Components

- Independent Predictive Power (Increase in PCP %)
  - i\(^{th}\) Principal Component
Roadmap

➤ Introduction
➤ Conceptualization
➤ Data and Methods
➤ Findings
  ➤ Constraints
  ➤ Configuration
  ➤ Correlates
➤ Conclusion
Configurations

- Political Institutions
- Traditionalism
- Nationalism
- Economic Sovereignty and Globalization
- Capital and Labor
- Free Market
- Individual Freedom
Configuration

➤ Assumption 1. Each question is driven by one latent variable.

➤ Assumption 2. Questions in the same category are driven by the same latent factor.
Maybe… 3D

- Political Institutions
- Individual Freedom
- Nationalism

- Free Market
- Capital and Labor
- Economic Sovereignty and Globalization

- Traditionalism
Maybe… 2D

Political Institutions
Individual Freedom
Nationalism

Free Market
Capital and Labor
Economic Sovereignty and Globalization
Traditionalism
Maybe… 1D

- Political Institutions
- Individual Freedom
- Nationalism
- Free Market
- Economic Sovereignty and Globalization
- Capital and Labor
- Traditionalism
Choosing the Best Model
The Best Model

Political  Economic/Social  Nationalism
The Best Model

Political

Political Institutions
Individual Freedom

Economic/Social

Free Market
Capital & Labor
Economic Sovereignty and Globalization
Traditionalism

Nationalism

Nationalism
Variance-Covariance Matrix

Raw Data

Residuals
Interpretations

➤ Dimension 1: Political

➤ Dimension 2: Economic/Social

➤ Dimension 3: Nationalism
**Political Dimension**

It is acceptable to besmirch the images of national leaders and founding leaders in literary and artistic works.

When events that have major repercussions for the safety and security occur, the government should freely disseminate information even if information disclosure increases the risks of unrest.

Universality of human rights take precedence over sovereignty.

It is preferable to let universities recruit students by themselves than to have a unified national college entrance examination system.

Lawyers should do their utmost to defend clients even if the client has committed a crime.

The fundamental standard to evaluate the value of a work of art is whether it is liked by the masses.

Religious adherents should be allowed to conduct missionary work in nonreligious spaces.

Even with population pressures, the state and the society have no right to interfere in the decision to have a child, or how many children to have.

Media should be allowed to represent the voice of a particular social stratum or interest group.

Even if procedural rules are violated in the process of investigation and evidence gathering, those who have actually committed crimes should be punished.

People should not have universal suffrage if they have not been educated about democracy.

When laws fail to fully constrain criminal behaviors, people have the right to impose their own punishments for these behaviors.

Indiscriminately imitating (systems of) western-style freedom of speech will lead to social disorder in China.

Western multiparty systems are unsuitable for China in its current state.

Wasting food is an individual freedom.

Primary school, secondary school, and college students should all participate in government organized military training.
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Even if procedural rules are violated in the process of investigation and evidence gathering, those who have actually committed crimes should be punished.

Preference for democratic institutions and protecting individual freedom vs. Preference for the status quo and state’s intervening in the private domain

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When events that have major repercussions for the safety and security occur, the government should freely disseminate information even if information disclosure increases the risks of unrest.
Economic/Social Dimension

Individuals should be able to own, buy and sell land.

Foreign capital in China should enjoy the same treatment as national capital.

It is better to sell state-owned enterprises to capitalists than to let them go bankrupt.

Attempting to control real estate prices will undermine economic development.

I will recognize the relationship between my child and a homosexual partner if it is a voluntary choice.

Two adults should be free to engage in voluntary sexual behavior regardless of their marital status.

The government should adopt higher grain purchasing prices to boost the income of peasants.

The modern Chinese society needs Confucianism.

Education should be public to the greatest extent.

If the price of pork is too high, the government should intervene.

Sectors related to national security and important to the national economy and people's livelihoods must be controlled by state-owned enterprises.

People who make money through gains from financial investments contribute less to society than people make money through labor.

The process of capital accumulation is always accompanied by harm to the working class.

It is unnecessary to push forward the simplification of Chinese characters.

The Eight Diagrams (Bagua) in The Book of Changes (Zhouyi) can explain many things well.
Individuals should be able to own, buy and sell land.
Economic/Social Dimension

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Economic/Social Dimension

Preference for pro-market reforms and non-traditional social values vs. Preference for state intervention of the economy and traditional social values
Nationalism Dimension

Chinese citizens should be allowed to hold foreign citizenship.

It is impossible for western countries led by the United States to tolerate the rise of China into a major power.

The state has an obligation to provide foreign aid.

If it has sufficient state capabilities, China has the right to take any action to defend its national interests.

Force should be used to reunify Taiwan with China if conditions permit.

The state should take measures to train and support athletes so they can win glory for the country in various international competitions.

National unity and territorial integrity are the highest interest of society.
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Nationalism Dimension

Anti-Nationalist Views vs. Nationalist Views
3D, but highly Correlated Latent Traits
### 3D, but highly Correlated Latent Traits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensional</th>
<th>“Left” (conservatives)</th>
<th>“Right” (liberals)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>The political status quo, state’s intervening in the private domain</td>
<td>Democratic institutions, individual freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic/Social</td>
<td>State control of the economy, economic sovereignty, traditional values</td>
<td>Pro-market reforms, deregulation, globalization, non-traditional values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalism</td>
<td>Nationalist views</td>
<td>Anti-nationalist views</td>
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</table>
Roadmap

➤ Introduction
➤ Conceptualization
➤ Data and Methods

➤ Findings
  ➤ Constraints
  ➤ Configuration
  ➤ Correlates

➤ Conclusion
Correlates

➤ Individual characteristics

➤ Regional development indicators

➤ Preliminary results on cadres
Gender

![Graph showing gender and political liberalism, pro-market/non-traditional values, and nationalism.](image)
Gender
Gender
Education

- Political Liberalism
- Pro-Market/Non-Traditional Values
- Nationalism * (-1)

zuobiao Data

ABS Data
Education
Income

zuobiao Data

ABS Data
Age

zuobiao Data

ABS Data
Correlates

➤ Individual characteristics

➤ Regional development indicators

➤ Preliminary results on cadres
Development Indicators

![Graph showing the relationship between trade openness and political liberalism with data points for Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong.]
Development Indicators

- Log Income per capita
  - 9.8
  - 10.0
  - 10.2
  - 10.4
  - 10.6

- Political Liberalism
  - 9.8
  - 10.0
  - 10.2
  - 10.4
  - 10.6
Development Indicators
Regional Differences
Regional Differences
Regional Differences

![Density Plot]

- Jiangxi
- Guangdong
- Hong Kong
Why?

➤ Material self-interest
➤ Greater exposure to diverse culture/foreign ideas
➤ Cognitive mobilization or personality traits
➤ (Reverse causality)
Concluding Remarks

1. Society preferences are grouped in **systematic** ways that reflect known debates, though the constraint is weaker than those observed in western democracies.

2. **Three-dimensional** ideological space (**political**; **economic/social**; **nationalism**) and these dimensions are highly correlated.

3. Ideological measures are highly correlated with individual **SES** and regional **development** indicators.
Next Steps

➤ How to measure ideology more effectively?
➤ Causes of ideological formation
➤ Ideology and regime support
➤ Ideology and political participation (Meng and Wu 2016)
➤ Ideology in online spaces and of opinion leaders
➤ Ideology of political elites
➤ More ....
Thank you!

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