



COLLÈGE
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From Confucian Orthodoxy to Chinese Modernity

by

Anne Cheng

*Professor at the Collège de France
Chair in Intellectual History of China*

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Abstract:

For the past hundred years or so, ever since the early 20th century, the issue of the possibility for China to develop a democratic political system has been hotly debated, both by Chinese and Western theoreticians. Among the numerous propositions that have emerged, one of the most prominent is the attempt made by some “new Confucians” (most of them chose to leave the Continent after 1949 and took refuge in Hong Kong and Taiwan) to delve into the resources offered by the Chinese intellectual tradition with a view to dig out indigenous antecedents to democracy. Ever since the 1980s, when mainland China jumped in its turn on the “new Confucian bandwagon”, such mobilization of traditional culture has taken a rather more assertive turn, with the search for a specifically “Chinese way”. Central to this revival of a Chinese political way of thinking is the canonical text of the Great Learning (Daxue). By establishing a continuity between ethics and politics, it raises, however, a number of problems and contradictions which shall be discussed in the course of this lecture.



Date: 16 October 2013 (Wednesday)
Time: 4:30 pm
Venue: Connie Fan Multi-media
Conference Room
4/F, Cheng Yick-chi Building
City University of Hong Kong
Enquiries: Ms Anne Yeung
Tel: 3442 9268
Fax: 3442 0322
Email: anne.yeung@cityu.edu.hk

All are Welcome