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Lecture

Is there a 'Chinese way' to democracy?

Tuesday 15th April 2014
at 6:00 pm

Simone Weil amphitheatre
5, allée Jacques Berque,
Nantes

By

Anne Cheng

Professor at Collège de France,
Chair of "Intellectual History of China"

Anne Cheng is Professor at Collège de France, Chair of "Intellectual History of China". For almost thirty years she has been involved in teaching and research on the intellectual history of China and Confucianism in particular, initially at the CNRS (French National Center for Scientific Research), then at the National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations (Inalco, Paris). She was appointed to the Institut universitaire de France and elected at the Collège de France in 2008.

She has written a French translation of the Analects of Confucius (*Entretiens de Confucius*, 1981), a history of Confucianism in the early Imperial Era and a history of Chinese thought (*Histoire de la pensée chinoise*, 1997, reprinted in 2002), which has already been translated into several languages. She has also edited several joint publications, including *La pensée en Chine aujourd'hui* (2007).

Theme

“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 Communist China after 1949) to delve into the resources offered by the Chinese intellectual tradition with a view to dig out indigenous antecedents of 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 aggressive turn, with the search for a specifically ‘Chinese way’ which remains to be examined from a critical and historical viewpoint.”

Anne Cheng