PART III
The history of the People’s Republic of China from its founding to today has progressed through three stages: the 17 years from October 1949 to May 1966, the 10 years from June 1966 to the end of 1976, and the 28 years from 1978 until now. Here, for the sake of this analysis of the Cultural Revolution, the stages can be called “the 17 years prior to the Cultural Revolution,” “the 10 years of the Cultural Revolution,” and “the 28 years after the Cultural Revolution,” respectively abbreviated below as “17,” “10,” and “28.” This division is necessary because it pertains to the mutual relationships and interactions of these three stages, and relates to how we understand and grasp each stage. More specifically, it influences the way we evaluate many issues of the Cultural Revolution.

Due to different personal interests, people’s views and attitudes toward these three stages can roughly be divided into the following three angles:

1. Using “17” as the frame of reference from which to analyze “10” and “28.”
2. Using “10” as the frame of reference from which to analyze “17” and “28.”
3. Using “28” as the frame of reference from which to analyze “17” and “10.”

This text does not make judgments of right or wrong, or associated explanations of value regarding these three perspectives. Rather, this text attempts to, through comparison of the three perspectives, reveal the cultural resources that the Cultural Revolution provides to Chinese modernity, even if most of that heritage is negative. In China today, the majority view the Cultural Revolution from the third angle. However, there are also some who approach the Cultural Revolution from