



Tsang, Steve (2014) Contextualizing the China dream: a reinforced consultative Leninist approach to government. In: China's many dreams: comparative perspectives on China's search for national rejuvenation. Nottingham China Policy Institute Series . Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp. 10-35. ISBN 9781137478962

Access from the University of Nottingham repository:

<http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/29639/1/Steve-Contextualizing%20China%20Dream.pdf>

Copyright and reuse:

The Nottingham ePrints service makes this work by researchers of the University of Nottingham available open access under the following conditions.

This article is made available under the University of Nottingham End User licence and may be reused according to the conditions of the licence. For more details see: http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/end_user_agreement.pdf

A note on versions:

The version presented here may differ from the published version or from the version of record. If you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the repository url above for details on accessing the published version and note that access may require a subscription.

For more information, please contact eprints@nottingham.ac.uk

Contextualizing the China Dream: A Reinforced Consultative Leninist Approach to Government

Steve Tsang

Introduction

After he took over as General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and as Chairman of the Central Military Commission in November 2012, Xi Jinping articulated for the first time ‘the China dream’ at ‘the road to revival’ exhibition at the National Museum in Beijing. As he did so he stressed that since the start of the reform period China had finally found the way to restore the greatness of the country and it was called ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’.¹ What Xi has revealed is not a new political system or even a new term to describe it. It is a confidence in the existing political system which, despite all its faults, he now believes is sufficiently strong, effective and robust to deliver the national revival encapsulated in his ‘China dream’. The nature of the system that Xi loosely refers to, in line with the long-standing usage after the end of the Mao Zedong era, as ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’ gets clearer if it is set within the analytical framework of consultative Leninism.

The use of this term in scholarly writings was first made by Richard Baum in a paper released by the French Centre for International Studies and Research or CERI in 2007.² It was developed independently and fully into an analytical framework for understanding the nature of the political system in place in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in an article I published in the *Journal of Contemporary China* in 2009.³ This paper incorporates parts of the previous article, particularly the definition of consultative Leninism. It shows that the approach Xi has adopted fits in with this analytical framework even better than the one he has inherited. The China that Xi has taken over from Hu Jintao is not a superpower that can challenge the United States of America as an

equal – at least not yet. But it stands tall as a rapidly rising power that commands attention globally and attracts admiration particularly from the developing world. In contrast to the early 1990s when the CCP leadership was worried that China might follow in the footsteps of other former Communist states and collapse, Xi exudes immense confidence in China's political system and its prospects.

Xi's China has come a long way from the earlier post-Mao experiments that sought to devise a not clearly defined development model for a political system distinctly different from liberal democracy. The original post-Mao approach of 'crossing the river by feeling for rocks under the surface' has now been replaced by a distinctly identifiable system. The most revealing way to describe this system is the analytical framework of consultative Leninism. This system had taken shape by the time Deng Xiaoping died in 1997 as Jiang Zemin asserted his authority fully as the core of the third generation leaders.

Since then it has stood the tests of two orderly successions, in 2002 and 2012, as well as a major potential crisis as the global financial crisis of 2007–9 threatened to engulf China as well. It is a system that reaffirms the basic Leninist nature of the political system as it greatly strengthens its capacity to respond to public demands and shape public opinions, as it builds up a strong sense of national pride. While this involves introducing considerable changes in the political arena, this system is meant to enable the CCP to reject democracy as a model for China. 'Chinese democracy' as interpreted and implemented under the Party does not tolerate any scope for it to lose power.

This consultative Leninist system blends together the Leninist instrument of control with innovations from other sources. It has five defining characteristics:

1. The Communist Party is obsessively focused on staying in power, for which maintaining stability in the country and pre-emptively eliminating threats to its political supremacy are deemed essential.
2. A focus on governance reform both within the Party and in the state apparatus in order to

- pre-empt public demands for democratization.
3. A commitment to enhance the Party's capacity to elicit, respond to and direct changing public opinion.
 4. A commitment to sustain rapid growth and economic development by whatever means and, where the party leadership deems politically expedient, regardless of its previous ideological commitment to Communism.
 5. The promotion of a brand of nationalism that integrates a sense of national pride in a tightly guided narrative of China's history and its civilization with the greatness of the People's Republic under the leadership of the Party.

This chapter will discuss each of these characteristics in turn.

Perpetuation of Party rule

After the CCP used military power to crackdown and suppress challenges to its authority in 1989, it has become clear that Communism is no longer the ultimate goal for development despite the official rhetoric. Indeed, as Communist states in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union collapsed one after the other in the following few years the relevance of Communism as the state ideology faded in China. Notwithstanding this historic change in terms of global history, the CCP has kept its Leninist structure, ethos and organizational principles and remains totally dedicated to staying in power. It keeps its anti-democratic nature and continues to exercise control over the state institutions. The only basic compromise it has made to the Leninist principles was to put aside, not formally give up, the ultimate objective of reaching Communism.

The Party's formal commitment to and its assertion that it already practises 'democracy' needs to be put in context. Socialist 'democracy' in place in China requires electoral outcomes to be predictable and to deliver general results approved by the Party beforehand. The chief mechanism the Party relies on to secure this is the principle of democratic centralism, which governs 'intra-

party democracy'. In the wider context, this mechanism is reinforced by its Maoist variant known as 'from the masses and to the masses'. In essence this means the Party must go to the masses or 'patriotic citizens' to collect and collate ideas from them, then organize and otherwise add new input to produce a coherent and constructive set of policies and then take them back to the masses, educate and otherwise induce the masses to embrace such ideas as their own.⁴ As far as the Party is concerned its leadership 'is a fundamental guarantee for the Chinese people to be masters in managing the affairs of their own country'.⁵ When the Communist Party refers to 'democracy' this is generally the meaning it has in mind.

Indeed, the leading role and position of the Party continues to be enshrined in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the basic principle that underpins the political system.⁶ This is the only one of the 'four cardinal principles' that Deng Xiaoping put forth at the start of the reform period, and the only provision in the state constitution, that is strictly upheld.⁷ The CCP remains the 'vanguard party' and 'guardian of the people'. As such it not only maintains its long-standing repressive capacities but also devises and implements a development model that seeks to deliver growth, employment, stability, order, prosperity and improved governance for the ordinary people.

Under Jiang Zemin this approach was described in terms of 'the Three Represents', a concept articulated in July 2001. Jiang proclaimed that 'The whole Party must always maintain the spirit of advancing with the times and constantly extend Marxist theory into new realms ... give top priority to development in governing and invigorating the country and constantly break new ground and open up a new prospect in the modernization drive... [and] improve its Party building in a spirit of reform and constantly inject new vitality into itself'.⁸ Jiang did not spell out clearly his formulation except the fundamental importance of upholding the leading role of the Party with a new requirement. It was to broaden the basis of the Party from an alliance of workers and peasants to include the culturally advanced and economically vibrant elements of society. The private space

in which individuals could seek work or personal fulfilment without engaging in activities the Party deemed threatening to its supremacy was enlarged.

After Hu Jintao succeeded Jiang this formulation was replaced by a policy of promoting a socialist harmonious society. In Hu's words 'a harmonious society should feature democracy, the rule of law, equity, justice, sincerity, amity and vitality' in order to produce 'lasting stability and unity'.⁹ What happened in reality was more complex. While the general trend in enlarging the private space for individuals to engage in many different kinds of activities was sustained, the Party also enhanced its capacity to identify those who might pose a challenge to its monopoly of power, and to eliminate such potential threats as soon as they were detected.

As Xi takes the reins of power, Hu's formulation no longer gets wide publicity. But the same basic ideas are incorporated and encapsulated in the 'China dream' that Xi regularly reiterates. Whether it is put in the language of Xi, Hu or Jiang, the fundamental principle has remained essentially the same. It is for the Party to adapt in order to improve its capacity to stay in power. This is to be achieved, when the general conditions in the country are benign, by the Party dominated government machinery delivering improvements in governance, reaching out to the general public, redressing public grievances and improving living conditions. In the leadership change year of 2012, there were strong pent-up public discontents over the scale and reach of corruption which caught the public imagination as the powerful leader of Chongqing Bo Xilai was removed from office.¹⁰ Hence, Xi promptly appointed Wang Qishan, widely seen as the member of the new Politburo Standing Committee least prone to corruption, to spearhead an anti-corruption drive, after he succeeded Hu.¹¹

As a political system consultative Leninism seeks to pre-empt popular demand for liberal democracy or constitutionalism.¹² It dedicates itself to sustaining a benevolent and efficient one-party system that practises democratic centralism. In so doing the Party retains its Leninist character and structure. This implies maintaining the capacity and the political will to use whatever means it

deems necessary to stay in power should this policy fail to achieve its desired result and the Party's political supremacy is challenged. Consultative Leninism prefers to use smart or well-focused repression and, where practicable, inducements adroitly to eliminate or neutralize challenges to the Party as soon as such challenges are detected in order to pre-empt or reduce the need to resort to dramatic large-scale or summary repression.

Enhancing governance

Consultative Leninism promotes 'good governance with Chinese characteristics'. What this means needs to be contextualized carefully. The 'Chineseness' in this formulation should not be confused with traditional Chinese culture or genuine Confucian values. The traditional Chinese concept of 'the ideal government ... is one which is efficient, fair, honest and paternalistic, yet non-intrusive vis-à-vis the life of the ordinary people'.¹³ This contradicts the basic nature of the CCP as a Leninist institution, which is about proactively leading, directing and mobilizing the general population to support all aspects of development as the Party sees fit.

In defining good governance with Chinese characteristics the Party looks back into both its own relatively short history and China's long history for inspiration. It also examines ideas and experience from outside of China as it constructs an alternative model to democratization that is suited to the 'special conditions of China'. As Xi Jinping explained, 'with regard to our cultural tradition and those from outside the country, we must make the old serve the present and those originating in the West useful for China' today.¹⁴ Leninism, a Russian import, is therefore no less Chinese for this purpose than, say, Confucianism.

A particularly important set of lessons the Party has learned are the causes that led to the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.¹⁵ Xi felt that the most important point about the fall of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) was that 'nobody was man enough to stand up and resist' Mikhail Gorbachev.¹⁶ This reinforces the moral the Party took from

the Beijing protests centred on Tiananmen Square in 1989 – that popular protests got out of hand as internal divisions at the top became public knowledge after the Party failed to act quickly and decisively when an unauthorized mass gathering was allowed to take place in the form a vigil commemorating the death of Hu Yaobang.¹⁷ Since he took over Xi has insisted on returning to traditional Leninist discipline to pre-empt the risk of the CCP following the fate of the CPSU.¹⁸ The Party has further examined the experience of the ‘Asian tiger economies’ under authoritarian rule, particularly that of Singapore.¹⁹ The final product is, however, what the Party chooses to put together regardless of origins, which it labels as a distinctly modern Chinese approach.

The chosen instrument to deliver good governance is the Party itself.²⁰ It is an instrument that requires constant reform and updating. The Party seeks to do so by broadening ‘its membership base, promoting a new generation of leaders, reformulating its ideological content, appealing to nationalist impulses in society, strengthening its organizational apparatus throughout the country, and opening the channels of discourse within the party and between the party-state and society’.²¹ Such an approach, which is reinforced by increasing institutionalization and merit-based promotion, has made its brand of authoritarianism resilient.

More specifically the Party has introduced reforms in the political arena aimed at enhancing its own capacity and that of the state to govern effectively. It should be emphasized that such reforms are not meant to be political changes in the direction of democratization but administrative and other changes intended to pre-empt the need for democratization.²² The Party uses ‘a mix of measures to shore up popular support, resolve local protests, and incorporate the beneficiaries of economic reform into the political system’.²³ Reforms, including anti-corruption drives, are deemed necessary to enhance positively its governance capacity and its assertion of legitimacy. At the same time the Party also ‘forcefully represses efforts to challenge its authority and monopoly on political power and organization’.²⁴

Since Hu Jintao succeeded Jiang Zemin the Party has paid more attention to the general

population as a means to enhance the governance capacity of the Party. It does so by selectively putting into practice some Maoist ideas or practices. They include, for example, reviving the principle of democratic centralism,²⁵ as well as making a public commitment to redress the neglect and abuse faced by the rural population, who had been left behind in the rush towards fastest possible growth under Jiang.

This suggests a stronger recognition that the Party must deliver social justice in order to preempt discontent in the countryside from developing into a major source of instability.²⁶ Hu publicly advocates that the government should ‘provide improved public services for the country's citizens’.²⁷ He takes the view that ‘the biggest danger to the Party ... has been losing touch with the masses’ and the Party leadership must therefore ‘focus on the core issue of the inextricable link between the Party and the masses’.²⁸ This basic approach seems to have been followed by Xi. Even though it is doubtful if Xi’s anti-corruption drive will in fact end systemic corruption, it goes a significant way in appeasing the general public. The ostentatious display of ill-gotten gains or lavish entertainment by officials at public expense has dramatically been reduced after Xi rose to the top.²⁹ The approach adopted by Xi and Hu reflects awareness of how effective some of the Maoist mobilization and propaganda methods are, and a preparedness to revive some of them.

Increasing institutionalization and merit-based promotion

Consultative Leninism relies on institutionalization to make Chinese politics less volatile. The most important achievement in this regard is the introduction of an institutionalized way to manage the generational succession. When Jiang’s ‘third generation’ leadership handed over to Hu’s ‘fourth generation’ leaders in 2002–3 it was the first time that an heir-apparent successfully took over as planned. This is a significant landmark as all previously anointed successors, from Liu Shaoqi to Zhao Ziyang, ended their careers in dramatic and in most cases tragic circumstances. Hu’s relatively uneventful succession to Jiang was meant to set a precedent.

This practice was followed and strengthened in November 2012 as Hu handed over to Xi in the 18th Party Congress. On this occasion, Hu passed on both the offices of General Secretary of the Party and Chair of the Central Military Commission to Xi and formally retired. In contrast, his predecessor Jiang hung on to the latter position for two years after relinquishing the Party leadership in 2002. 2012 was also the first time in the history of the PRC when the new Party Chairman and Premier emerged from a compromise reached by the top leadership in the previous Party Congress five years previously, and was not the result of having been anointed by a strong man. Even by the standards of the post-Mao era this is another landmark development, as Deng Xiaoping had in fact anointed three direct and one indirect successor. Among the direct ones, Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang and Jiang Zemin, only the last completed his term of office without being removed by fiat. The indirect successor was Hu Jintao himself.

Despite all the drama and rumours that appeared in the media ahead of the 18th Party Congress (2012) and the intensity of tough bargaining and horse-trading behind the scenes, the politics of succession has become sufficiently institutionalized that it is now nearly predictable, at least for the headship of the Party and of the State Council. The old practice of the paramount leader anointing a successor has now been replaced by a new one, which is still at the early stage of being institutionalized. It involves the existing top leadership collectively choosing their key successors and placing them in apprenticeship for five years before ascending to the top offices, as General Secretary of the Party and Premier of the state. The handing over of power may not be democratic but it is becoming structured, stable and basically predictable – indeed, much more predictable than possible in a genuine democratic system. As a political system consultative Leninism supports collective leadership with an identifiable top leader but limits (though it cannot eliminate) the scope for the rise of a strong man.

Greater institutionalization also means the increasing importance of enforcing the law and containing corruption. In sharp contrast to the Maoist era when the law was reduced to irrelevance,

the Party has resorted to rule by law.³⁰ Whereas the judicial system was a shambles just over three decades ago, China now has roughly 200,000 judges, 160,000 prosecutors and 150,000 registered lawyers at work to improve the quality of justice administered. Although the Party and its top leadership remain above the law and there is no indication that they are individually or collectively willing to subject themselves to the law, it does occasionally allow one of their own to face the force of the law as guided by the Party where it is in the interest of the current top leadership for this to happen, as was the case in the trial of Bo Xilai.

What is being put in place is not the rule of law, essential for democracy to function properly and flourish, but rule by law. It means that in cases with no political implications, the law is increasingly being upheld and the Communist Party seeks to govern through the enforcement of the law rather than in spite of the law.³¹ Under consultative Leninism, the Party retains leadership over the judiciary. The improvements in the criminal justice system have meant substantial reduction in cases of human rights abuse even though political activists and dissidents are treated no less harshly than under Deng, as reflected in the cases of, say, the Nobel peace prize winner Liu Xiaobo and dissident artist Ai Weiwei. Indeed, the Chinese government required all lawyers ‘to swear an oath of loyalty to the “leadership of the Chinese Communist party” and the “holy mission of socialism with Chinese characteristics”’ in 2012.³² But substantial improvements had been made in the criminal justice system particularly during Xiao Yang’s tenure as President of the Supreme People’s Court (1998–2008). Xiao focused on improving training and standards of judicial personnel in order to reduce gross abuses that used to be endemic in the criminal justice system.³³ Although this did not eliminate or even significantly reduce political interference into the judicial system, its resultant improvement in the administration of justice in criminal cases was valuable in enhancing the credibility of the regime and thus the Party’s governance capacity.

As far as corruption is concerned the Party recognizes the importance in tackling it. But the Party cannot stamp out systemic corruption as China lacks the necessary institutional checks and

balances against corruption as well as the rule of law. Unchecked power corrupts. Nevertheless, despite considerable public scepticism, the Party has managed to limit the damage corruption does to its legitimacy.³⁴ It does so by launching periodic high profile attempts to contain the ills of corruption and by requiring the media to report known cases as failings of specific officials and not of the Party or of the central government. The Party's efforts to contain corruption are also needed to limit the erosion of its capacity to exert party discipline as required under Leninism albeit of the consultative variant.

The ascendance of the younger generations of leaders has brought about another major change from the past, when the top positions were held almost exclusively by revolutionary veterans. This generational change meant that technocrats had replaced the revolutionary cadres holding all the top offices by the time Jiang became the genuine core of the third generation leadership in 1997 or when consultative Leninism took shape. The technocrats have a different outlook from the 'old revolutionaries'.³⁵ They recognize that none of them can really take over Deng Xiaoping's mantle as the paramount leader.³⁶ They cannot justify their hold on power by their revolutionary pedigree as founders of the PRC or veterans of 'the revolutionary war' or of the Long March. Instead they must do so by demonstrating their competence and political skills in keeping others in line.

This has led to a greater acceptance of proven ability or record. Since the legitimacy of the Party's rule after 1989 has been based in part on a *de facto* social contract that the people will acquiesce in the continuation of its monopoly of power as long as it delivers continuous improvements in living conditions, improving the governing capacity of the Party is vital. The other element that sustains this *de facto* social contract, namely that the Party's political dominance should not be challenged as it has the will and the means to use force to suppress any such attempt, also requires a strengthening of the administrative capacity of the Party. With the technocrats lacking the standing Deng Xiaoping enjoyed in the armed forces that enabled him to deploy the

army to stage the crackdown in June 1989 despite the initial public articulation of reservation within the military establishment, their rise to power provides a strong incentive to pre-empt a crisis that will necessitate a similar military crackdown. Since the technocrats cannot count on the military to repress popular unrests in the way that Deng could, they have less scope to ignore public opinions.

This means that consultative Leninism sought to enhance governance capacity by recruiting and promoting on merit.³⁷ The Party's objective is to secure a 'high quality contingent of Party leaders that are competent for ruling the country and handling state affairs'.³⁸ This does not spell the end of privileges or relevance of family background. The so called Princelings 'faction' – or, the grouping of senior cadres who are descendants of leaders of the revolution – has flourished and clearly benefited from this new emphasis. How should this apparent contradiction be explained?

It is because merit in the consultative Leninist system requires one to have political astuteness and a capacity to network effectively in the establishment in order to deliver results. Princelings have privileged upbringings, career backgrounds and family connections that enable them to build up the necessary technical competence, personal network and political skills to operate successfully within the Party. This puts them in good positions to gain promotion on the basis of merit or achievement. The elevation at the 17th Party Congress (2007) of Xi Jinping to become the unofficial heir apparent to Hu Jintao illustrates this in action. The promotion of Xi, a 'princeling', despite Hu's personal preference for anointing 'non-princeling' Li Keqiang, has widely been attributed to two factors. These are the economic success of two coastal provinces where Xi served as Party secretary and wide acceptance of him within the Party establishment.³⁹ The latter quality also counts as a 'merit' as the capacity to garner support or at least neutralize opposition within the establishment is an important requirement to function effectively in consultative Leninism. By adopting a system that enables the more able administrators and political operators to rise more quickly, the Party ensures that its upper echelons are filled by individuals who are able to work effectively within the existing political system.

Strengthening consultative capacity

While consultative Leninism is meant to pre-empt democratization, ironically its adoption also involves the introduction of some changes that are commonly seen in democratization. They include not only expanding good governance practices but also allowing for a greater scope for civil liberties and for political participation. In terms of greater political participation the most important general elections in China are not those for the National People's Congress but for the Communist Party's national congress. At the 17th Party Congress, held in October 2007, the party leadership allowed 15 per cent of nominees to fail to get elected.⁴⁰ At the 18th Party Congress of November 2012, 9.3 per cent of those nominated for Central Committee membership were required to accept 'electoral' defeat, whereas the percentage was set at the higher figure of 11.3 per cent for those nominated as alternate members of the Central Committee.⁴¹ The Chinese government has also experimented with township level elections since the turn of the century on the basis of experimentation with village level elections introduced since the 1980s.⁴² Admittedly such developments do not amount to genuine democratic exercises as the Party can and generally does secure its desired electoral outcomes, but they do enlarge the scope for election.⁴³

The Party has also made a point of consulting more external individuals and organizations than before. Important gestures underlining the Party and the government's commitment to do so range from reaffirming the right of existing consultative institutions to criticize specific government policies to the use of the new media as an opinion forum, to allowing greater scope for civil society to operate.⁴⁴ Indeed, the Party revived the Chinese People's Consultative Political Conference (CPPCC) as an institution of consultation. Non-Communist parties that are represented at the CPPCC are now encouraged to articulate their views and 'discuss directly with the central government leaders'.⁴⁵ Non-Communist individuals of considerable personal achievement have also been co-opted to join the central government. Wan Gang was appointed Minister of Science and

Technology in 2007. Chen Zhu also served as Minister of Health from 2007 to 2013. Although such appointments represent primarily the application of a classic United Front idea to ‘show the trust of the CPC Central Committee in people from outside the Party’, it was a significant step in strengthening the non-exclusive element of consultative Leninism.⁴⁶

As to the Internet, which can be an important instrument for undermining authoritarian regimes, the Chinese authorities not only monitor and control it vigorously but also adopt it as an instrument for consultation. Starting in 2007 the State Council has committed itself experimentally to using its official website to collect opinions on draft laws and regulations. Even top leaders like to project the image that they can be accessible via the Internet. When he was Premier, Wen Jiabao maintained a presence on Facebook.⁴⁷ As General Secretary of the Party Hu Jintao held online discussions in the *Renmin Ribao*’s ‘strong country forum’ in 2008.⁴⁸

The swift and effectively choreographed responses to the catastrophic Sichuan earthquake of May 2008 suggest the top leadership had realized the importance of seizing the moment to strengthen the state and the Party’s capacity to reach out to the general population and win over their support. In so doing it demonstrated consultative Leninism working in its most effective way.

By dispatching Premier Wen Jiabao to the disaster scene while Hu retained supreme control in Beijing, the Party projected the image that it cared and the top leadership worked closely together. Wooden in public events, Hu could not have projected the right image for the Party had he gone instead of Wen. Wen’s public performance focused public attention on the efforts being led by the top leadership and directed media coverage to showcase the rescue efforts rather than the suffering of the victims.⁴⁹ It distracted attention, even of the international media, from raising obvious questions about China’s less than perfect rescue operation. The Chinese government’s decision not to permit foreign rescue teams to enter Sichuan immediately after the scale of the earthquake was known meant that irreplaceable time for rescuing victims from collapsed buildings was lost. In the end the first external or foreign rescue teams were allowed to reach the scene of the

earthquake on day four, when experience elsewhere established that by then relatively few survivors trapped under rubble could be pulled out alive. Whatever the government's considerations were for such a decision, the adroit management of the public image of the rescue operations allowed the importance of this specific inhumane decision to go largely unnoticed.

By seizing the moral high ground promptly and turning public reactions to the disaster into a nationalist response the Party made it possible to win wide praise and support from the country generally and to deflect the inevitable criticisms on specific failings in the rescue and relief operation. Where such criticisms could not be silenced, they were directed against the inadequate performance of lower level officials in Sichuan and thus avoided criticism being directed against the overall performance of the Party. This effective use of propaganda to shape public opinion helps to sustain its positive image and moral authority which, in turn, reinforces its governance capacity and legitimacy. In addition, by beaming images of 'Grandpa Wen' at the front of the disaster zone, the Party reached out to the general public nationwide in a paternalistic way. Through its well-oiled propaganda machine it created a heroic image of Premier Wen and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army saving victims of a natural disaster in the front line and under the overall leadership of the Party General Secretary. Thus, even in a situation where public opinions were being formed and changed quickly, the Party leadership seized the moment to control, shape and direct public opinion. This further enabled the Party to claim credit unobtrusively for galvanizing the country to respond proudly as a nation, once the outpouring of sympathy nationwide turned into self-organized non-government organization (NGO) based efforts to help the victims. For a short time NGOs were given space to help to deal with the aftermath of the earthquake but the non-local volunteers or NGOs were squeezed out after six months.⁵⁰ With its moral authority affirmed, the Party was able to require NGOs to co-operate without appearing overly heavy-handed.

This shows an important improvement in governance capacity as the Party allowed a much larger scope than usual for NGOs to take civic action at a time of a major natural disaster. But it

also reveals the existence of a strategy for the Party to play a leadership role in directing the efforts of NGOs. The approach adopted is to treat civil society like a bird in a cage. The Party is prepared to enlarge the cage as it sees fit but a cage is nonetheless maintained. This is to ensure that civil society can have sufficient scope to operate in the non-critical realm while its ambition to extend its scope to the critical realm is contained so that the development of civil society cannot pose a threat to the continuation of Party rule. Indeed, consultative Leninism seeks to make NGOs help the Party efforts to move the country forward under its leadership. Since he came to power, Xi has reaffirmed or, indeed, reinforced this approach.

Economic pragmatism

Since the start of the reform period under Deng Xiaoping in 1978, pragmatism guided the management of China's economy. But it took time for the old command economy to be transformed and for the mentality of policy-makers to adjust. The 'bird cage approach' for managing the economy, as explained by party elder Chen Yun, was clearly applied in the earlier half of the reform period. In this conception the economy was the bird and the scope for it to develop was the cage and the Party was willing to enlarge the cage as long as the performance of the bird justified it, but the Party could and did reduce the cage when required.

By the time Deng died, in 1997, transformation from the old command economy had basically been completed. With the economy substantially modernized, much new infrastructure already built, a generation educated in modern management and other skills required to service a modern economy, the Party leadership increasingly allowed greater scope for the economy to develop, particularly after the potential contagion effect of the Asian Financial Crisis passed. In the last decade major debates among economic and financial policy-makers are no longer about whether the economy should be primarily a socialist or a market one but about what would be the most effective policy to secure sustained and sustainable rapid growth.

Indeed, China's economy is neither a free market nor a command economy. It is a mixed one where private capital now has huge scope to invest in almost whatever it deems the most profitable lines of manufacturing, trade or service provision. It is also one where state or publicly owned enterprises enjoy great privileges and government patronage, and are still subject to government direction. In a nutshell the Party leadership has enlarged the bird cage so much that the bird largely developed without finding itself seriously constrained by the cage most of the time. But pragmatism has its limits so far. The cage has not been removed.

As Xi, Premier Li Keqiang and the rest of the leadership work out a strategy to rebalance the Chinese economy in the coming decade, they will consult China's best economists in think tanks and in academia as well as corporate leaders, and engage in dialogues with major foreign governments and corporate partners, but the Leninist nature of the regime will also assert itself. As far as the Party is concerned, it consults not because of recognition of the intrinsic value of consultation but because it sees consultation as useful in enabling the Leninist system to retain control and come out of an impending crisis stronger. There is no question that the Party retains the final say on what to do.

To rebalance the economy essentially means that it needs to make the Chinese economy less dependent on rapid growth driven by export and heavy investments, particularly in big infrastructural projects, and more dependent on domestic consumption. Indeed, Premier Wen Jiabao acknowledged this in 2007 and what is required today remains essentially the same, namely:

- i. widening the social safety net and raising household incomes and, ultimately, consumption;
- ii. removing the distortions in relative prices – mainly in the exchange rate and input costs – to exploit real comparative advantages and make the model more sustainable;
- iii. reducing the government's interference in the allocation of resources; and
- iv. liberalizing the financial system, which would allow for a more efficient and effective intermediation of savings.⁵¹

Such changes implicitly require the Party to relinquish some of the most powerful levers it holds over the economy and allow the market to function more effectively and empower ordinary citizens as consumers. It amounts to finding an alternative to the ‘bird cage’ approach which has served the Party well since 1978. The requirements are not unknown to the Party leadership but implementing them will still prove difficult, as giving up control on anything that can potentially undermine the Party’s political hegemony is anathema to consultative Leninism. Whether under Xi’s leadership, the consultative Leninist system will be able to do what Hu failed to deliver in this regard in the previous decade remains to be seen.

Nationalism: the new state ideology

The last defining feature of consultative Leninism is the promotion of nationalism as the new ideological force that binds the country together under the leadership of the Party. After Communism in effect ceased being the state ideology, the CCP had to put in place a new ideological framework. This was in part a reaction to the events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as the Chinese establishment feared social and national disintegration following ‘the decline of the traditional ideology’.⁵² It was also because the Party intended to prevent Western values and beliefs from captivating Chinese citizens living in an ideological void.⁵³ In any event, the provision of an ideological binding force was needed to enable the Leninist system function effectively.

The choice of nationalism as the new though informal state ideology is meant to enhance the Party’s capacity to stay in power on two mutually reinforcing ways. It is to provide a new ideological basis for legitimacy on one hand and to serve as a new rallying force to develop a national aspiration around the leadership of the Party on the other. After the cleavages created between the Party and the ordinary people by the Tiananmen Massacre, the top leaders found nationalism ‘the most reliable claim to the Chinese people’s loyalty and the only important value shared by the regime and its critics’.⁵⁴ They thus ‘moved quickly to position themselves as the

defenders of China's national pride' and unity.⁵⁵ Few Chinese citizens in fact know the history of their country well but they have all been indoctrinated in the greatness of China's long civilization and unity, as well as the iniquity of the 'century of humiliation' when China suffered from Western imperialism after 1838.⁵⁶ The historical narrative chosen is outwardly a 'pan-Chinese' one. But in reality it is a Han-centric view of the history of greater China, in which minorities like Tibetans and Uighurs are written into Chinese history as Mongolians and Manchurians have been incorporated. Any ethnic group thus 'honoured' by their inclusion into China's history will be deemed traitorous should they try to assert their own national identity and separate historical narratives. The nationalism thus promoted is essentially xenophobic in nature, which encourages the Chinese people to identify with a rising China under the leadership of the Party in juxtaposition against the West that is portrayed as uncomfortable with China's resurgence and historic unity.⁵⁷

More specifically, the Party has launched an extensive propaganda and educational campaign to indoctrinate the people in patriotism. It is one that requires the citizens of the PRC to participate in affirming 'the rightness and acceptability of the state, its values, policies and agencies'.⁵⁸ The core of this campaign is to emphasize 'how China's unique national conditions make it unsuitable to adopt Western style liberal democracy' and how China's existing political system helps to 'maintain political stability, a prerequisite for rapid economic development'.⁵⁹ By '[r]einforcing China's national confidence and turning past humiliation and current weakness into a driving force for China's modernization' the Party has turned nationalism into 'an effective instrument for enhancing [its] legitimacy'.⁶⁰ The intention is to instil in the mind of the Chinese people a sense of pride in China and its development that is inseparable from the leadership of the Party or a strong feeling of 'my government right or wrong'.

The success of this nationalist indoctrination campaign manifested itself dramatically in 2008, the year the Communist Party had intended to launch the rebranded modern China on the occasion of the Beijing Olympics. The force of nationalism, however, could not be contained until

the Olympics as was originally planned. The nationalists asserted themselves internationally when the Olympic torch relay outside of China generated unfavourable foreign comments and reactions in April that year. The negative foreign reactions were directed immediately at the way the Chinese authorities organized the relay, which was heavily guarded by elite members of the People's Armed Police dressed as torch attendants to protect the Chinese parade against pro-Tibetan demonstrators in Western cities.

Chinese nationalists reacted angrily and strongly against those who demonstrated in foreign cities where the torch passed against specific Chinese government policies, most of which were focused on Tibet.⁶¹ They readily dismissed out of hand the fact that by sending elite police officers, who often told the local police how the torch should be guarded during the overseas relay, Chinese authorities were interfering in the domestic affairs of the host countries concerned. The large number of Chinese citizens who responded so nationalistically showed that they preferred to 'side with the government when foreigners criticize it, believing that, no matter how corrupt [or misguided] the government is, foreigners have no right to make unwarranted remarks about China and its people'⁶² – a classic manifestation of 'my country, right or wrong'.

The Party's adoption of nationalism also dramatically enhanced its governance capacity in the aftermath of the Sichuan earthquake of May 2008. By adopting a nationalist approach to the rescue operation and holding back entry of foreign teams from reaching the scene, the Chinese government ensured that nearly all survivors were saved by Chinese rescue workers. The heroism of the rescue operations by the Chinese nation was used to galvanize a countrywide movement to rally around the Party's leadership in the subsequent relief efforts, even though generous foreign aid and donations were readily accepted. Thus, however well or poorly the Party might have actually performed on the ground, and whether bureaucratic corruption and other policy failures were responsible for the collapse of a disproportionately large number of school buildings, the Party still emerged from it stronger than before. Just as the astute management of propaganda after the

earthquake ensured a positive image of the Party being projected, the long-standing indoctrination of nationalism produced a people 'willing to dissociate their leaders in Beijing from the local officials they blame'.⁶³

The Chinese government might have failed to silence all grieving parents but it could divert their anger from the central government to specific individuals or departments at the local level and reduce the negative impact on its own credibility.⁶⁴ Galvanizing the nation to focus on the 'heroic' rescue operations of the People's Liberation Army apparently personally supervised by Premier Wen was the key to this success.

All indications since Xi assumed leadership point towards even greater emphasis being put on nationalism. Within a month of his elevation, Xi explained to sailors in Guangzhou that the 'China dream' was about national revival, and it was about both the building of a strong country and powerful armed forces that should be totally loyal to the Party.⁶⁵ His invocation of national victimhood in China's 'century of humiliation' provides the basis for foreign observers to see him as unashamedly appealing to emotion.⁶⁶ As elaborated in the Party's theoretical journal, *Qiushi*, the 'China dream' is about 'merging the dreams of the individual with the dream of the country, of the nation, and of the people, and to put the interest of the individual, of the country, of the nation and of the people together as a whole'.⁶⁷ This focus on national revival in Xi's China dream suggests that he is at least as committed as, if not even more so than, his predecessor to use nationalism as the state ideology to galvanize the country in support of consultative Leninism.

Conclusion

As a leader Xi Jinping clearly intends to leave his mark. The launch of the 'China dream' propaganda line is designed to showcase his new approach, compared to that of his predecessor. But it is built solidly on the basis of the consultative Leninist political system already in place.

Consultative Leninism has given China arguably as resilient a political system as it can have

without democracy. The resilience is rooted in the ruthless repressive capacity inherent in what remains an essentially Leninist political machinery. It is strengthened by incorporating various consultative elements and a new ideology that has much wider appeal than Communism. By modernizing the regime's capabilities to monitor and direct public opinion and instil a sense of patriotic duty in its citizens to support the government, the Party has built up a significant capacity to deflect public discontent away from itself. By enhancing its ability to detect challenges as they emerge and remove most of them, either by co-optation or by smart (i.e., relatively well-focused) repression, before they become major threats to the system, consultative Leninism has lowered the need to resort to large-scale summary repression. This implies reduced exposure to risks that can destabilize or break the system in a fundamental way.

Consultative Leninism is not a system that was specifically designed to replace the Maoist or Dengist political edifice. It evolved out of measures the Party took to confront and contain the challenges posed by the Tiananmen movement of 1989 and the subsequent collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The original impetus for change in the political arena was the Party's concern over its own hold on power in China. Once this threat came to pass in the second half of the 1990s and China found itself on track for very fast growth, the Party leadership gained in confidence. This new political setup demonstrated its resilience in the last few years. The Party's self-confidence rose as China rode out the wave of instability and threats unleashed by the global financial crisis of 2008. As Xi took over in 2012, he articulated confidence in the system's ability to sustain itself and form the foundation for China to secure its re-emergence as a great power of the first league. In this process, the Chinese establishment's previous interest in the Singaporean approach as a possible model for China dissipated. This new-found confidence among Chinese leaders has been reinforced by the existence of China fever in the twenty-first century, as a world infatuated with China offers general recognition of and praise for its achievements.

Consultative Leninism is not a static system but one that continues to evolve, as inherent in

its requirements is the need for the Party to adapt to the changing environment in order to stay in power and direct China's development. But its basic structure and governing dynamics have taken shape since 1997. The period since then has seen the incorporation of consultative elements to enhance what remains a basically Leninist institution and allow the CCP to react and respond to new challenges and to monitor and to direct public opinion. Consultative Leninism uses whatever means at its disposal to maintain stability, order and economic growth, and it seeks to minimize the need to use harsh repressive measures on a large scale, but at the same time it keeps such capacity readily available for use. Indeed, a hallmark of consultative Leninism is the Party's readiness to nip in the bud any challenge to the political supremacy of the Party as soon as such a challenge is detected. Confirmation of this took the form of the Party's heavy-handed but effective response to the inter-ethnic riots in Urumqi (2009) or planned peaceful protests following the Jasmine Revolution of the Arab world (2011). To maintain this capacity the Party needs to collect and collate constantly the changing mood and opinions in the country at large. Indeed, doing so is essential for the Party to pre-empt nationalism from asserting itself so much that it may tie the hands of the Party leadership in dealing with a major great power such as the United States of America or Japan in some future and as yet undefined crisis.

In general terms as consultative Leninism consolidates the Party gains in confidence and competence. As it does so it allows greater scope than previously for experimentation in finding ways to enable China to develop without moving towards democracy. Corporatist ideas are taken on board where they appear to work. A larger sphere is allowed for civil society to operate as long as the Party feels confident that it can keep NGOs in line when and where required. Reinvigoration of specific Maoist or highly modified Confucian ideas has also been adopted where the Party believes they can enhance its ability to govern or improve its moral authority. But the bottom line remains unchanged – the dominance of the Party, even if intra-party reforms, such as greater 'inner party democracy', may appear to make the top leader more responsive to others than his predecessors.

Indeed, the increased scope for debate among Party leaders is one of the means through which the Party enhances consultative Leninism and improves on its development model.

Resilient as it is, consultative Leninism suffers from a major inherent problem. It is that the Party needs to get its policies on the economy, politics and society right most of the time – a very tall order in the long term. The built-in safety valve to avoid a major policy or economic failure that may have significant negative impact on people’s living conditions that exists in a democracy – a change of government via the ballot box – does not exist in this model. Instead consultative Leninism relies on two main systemic ‘safety valves’. They are the application of nationalism and the bird cage approach to adjust the degree of control as required. The former raises the prospect that in order to divert public frustration and anger away from itself during a crisis the Party is likely to channel them against foreign powers or capitalists and blame them for turning a benign international environment into a hostile one for China. The latter implies that the Party will assert its Leninist nature at the expense of its consultative elements if the country should face a sustained crisis against which the Party appears helpless. Repression, tightening of control and manipulation of public opinion are the default options for ensuring regime survival when the Party feels it is under threat.

How well consultative Leninism will fare in the very long term remains unknown, as the PRC has not faced any real crisis since 1992 after the aftershocks of the 1989 protests and the subsequent collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Its first big test happened as the global financial crisis unfolded. The Party responded to the economic slowdown by spending massively on infrastructure projects to rekindle short-term growth. But it resisted the much needed rebalancing of the economy to make its growth sustainable on a long-term basis. By transforming the political system into consultative Leninism, the Party has built the most powerful and resilient authoritarian system dedicated to keeping itself in power. As long as the central leadership stays united and determined to nip all challenges in the bud, it should be able to

perpetuate its hold on power.

Consultative Leninism has now been adopted by Xi Jinping as the basis to build the ‘China dream’ as he defines it. While its capacity should not be underestimated, there is a question over how sustainable this will prove over the long term. Export-driven growth in China will slow down as the demographic surplus turns into a demographic deficit, the environmental degradation becomes intolerable, and the scope for using infrastructural investments to generate growth exhausted. To pre-empt such an eventuality, China will need to rebalance its economy and find an alternative model to secure sustainable growth and economic stability. This requires consultative Leninism to change fundamentally and move out of its comfort zone. Whether it can do so or not remains unknown. Should the eventuality outlined above materialize, whether the Party leadership would be able to hang together is an open question. Xi’s ‘China dream’ seeks to pre-empt such eventualities by making consultative Leninism more effective. Consultative Leninism may not last in the very long term, but it only needs to survive a decade for Xi to proclaim how much his ‘China dream’ has done for the country as he retires in a decade.

¹ Xinhua Net, 29 November 2012, ‘Chengqian qihou jiwang kailai jixu chaozhe zhonghuanminzu weida fuxing mubiao fenyong qianjin’ [Building on what was done previously, sustain the past and press on with the future, sustain the great goal of the Chinese people, and courageously move forward], http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2012-11/29/c_113852724.htm (accessed 30 May 2013).

² Richard Baum (2007) ‘The Limits of Authoritarian Resilience’, January 2007, <http://www.stephen-t.com/pdf/the%20limits%20of%20authoritarian%20resilience%20-%20Baum.pdf> (accessed 31 May 2013).

³ Steve Tsang (2009) ‘Consultative Leninism: China's new political framework’, *Journal of Contemporary China*, 18(62), pp. 865–80. Much of the basic analysis in this paper is based on the article cited above.

⁴ Tony Saich (2004) *Governance and Politics of China* (2nd enlarged edition) (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 44. The concept of ‘the masses’ is essentially a Maoist concept. The nearest meaning to such a term is ‘patriotic’ citizens, with the Communist Party holding the right to define what ‘patriotic’ means. The issue of patriotism is examined further towards the end of this paper.

⁵ Kerry Brown (2011) *Ballot Box China: Grassroots Democracy in the Final Major One-party State* (London and New York: Zed Books), p. 40.

⁶ *Constitution of the People’s Republic of China* (4 December 1982), <http://english.people.com.cn/constitution/constitution.html> (last accessed 16 May 2008).

⁷ The four cardinal principles are: ‘1. We must keep to the socialist road. 2. We must uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat. 3. We must uphold the leadership of the Communist Party. 4. We must uphold Marxism–Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.’ They were first formally articulated by Deng on 30 March 1979. Deng Xiaoping (1983) *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan (1975–1982)* [Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping, 1975–1982] (Hong Kong: Sanlian shudian), pp. 150–1.

⁸ ‘Three Represents’, 26 June 2006, <http://english.cpc.people.com.cn/66739/4521344.html> (last

accessed 16 May 2008).

⁹ ‘Building harmonious society crucial for China's progress: Hu’, 27 June 2005, http://english.people.com.cn/200506/27/eng20050627_192495.html (last accessed 16 May 2008).

¹⁰ AFP, ‘Anti-corruption tsar hears calls for transparency’, *South China Morning Post*, 3 December 2012, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1096511/anti-corruption-tsar-hears-calls-transparency> (accessed 31 May 2013).

¹¹ ‘A corruption fighter: Calling Fire Chief Wang’, *The Economist*, 23 March 2013, <http://www.economist.com/news/china/21574022-wang-qishan-has-one-crucial-advantage-fighting-corruption-calling-fire-chief-wang> (accessed 31 May 2013).

¹² Zheng Zhixue (2013) ‘Renqing “xianzheng” de benzhi’ [Understand clearly the true nature of ‘constitutional rule’], 29 May 2013, <http://theory.people.com.cn/n/2013/0529/c83855-21652535.html> (accessed 29 May 2013).

¹³ Steve Tsang (ed.) (1995) *A Documentary History of Hong Kong: Government and Politics* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press), p. 5.

¹⁴ *Renmin Ribao* (People’s Daily) report of 21 August 2013 Xi Jinping, ‘Xionghuai daju bawo dashi zhuoyan dashi nuli ba xuanchuan sixiang gongzuo zuode genghao’ [Bear in mind the context, make the most of the situation, keep an eye on the big issues, work hard to improve work on propaganda and political thought], reporting an important internal speech by Xi Jinping delivered on 19 August 2013, reposted on the CPC’s website, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/0821/c64094-22636876.html>

¹⁵ Joseph Fewsmith (2001) *China Since Tiananmen: The Politics of Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 52–3.

¹⁶ ‘Leaked Speech Shows Xi Jinping’s Opposition to Reform’, 27 January 2013, <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2013/01/leaked-speech-shows-xi-jinpings-opposition-to-reform/> (accessed 3 June 2013).

¹⁷ Andrew Nathan and Perry Link (eds) (2001) *The Tiananmen Papers* (London: Little Brown and

Company), p. xxxvi.

¹⁸ Chris Buckley, 'Vows of Change in China Belie Private Warning', *New York Times*, 14 February 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/15/world/asia/vowing-reform-chinas-leader-xi-jinping-airs-other-message-in-private.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed 31 May 2013).

¹⁹ Chen Feng (1993) 'Xinjiapo Renmin Xindongdang minzhu shehuizhuyi de ruogan lilun' [Certain theories of the national socialism of the People's Action Party of Singapore], *Studies of the History of International Labour Movement*, (1), pp. 5–10.

²⁰ 'Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu goujian shehuizhuyi hexie shehui ruogan zhongda wenti de jueding' [The decisions of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on how to construction a socialist harmonious society], Xinhuanet, 18 October 2006, http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2006-10/18/content_5218639.htm (accessed 23 May 2014).

²¹ David Shambaugh (2008) *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation* (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press), p. 9.

²² Tan Xianmin and Xiao Guangrong (2001) *Zhongguo Gongchandang zhizheng guilu tansuo* [An exploration into the pattern of governance under the Chinese Communist Party] (Changsha: Hunan Remin chubanshe), pp. 215–16.

²³ Bruce Dickson, 'Populist Authoritarianism: China's Domestic Political Scene', conference paper dated 23 May 2005, quoted in Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party*, p. 37.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Wang Yang (2006) *Xin shiqi Dang de ganbu zhidu jianshe* [Building up a new cadre system in the new era] (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe), p. 354.

²⁶ Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party*, pp. 114–15.

²⁷ 'Hu: building a government "by the people, for the people"', Xinhua, 25 February 2008, <http://www.chinaelections.net/newsinfo.asp?newsid=15816> (last accessed 11 February 2009).

²⁸ Quoted in Andrew J. Nathan and Bruce Gilley (eds) (2002) *China's New Rulers: The Secret Files* (London: Granta Books), pp. 193–4.

-
- ²⁹ Clifford Coonan, 'Communist officials sidestep Xi's anti-corruption efforts', *The Irish Times*, 3 May 2013, <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/asia-pacific/communist-officials-sidestep-xi-s-anti-corruption-efforts-1.1380894> (accessed 30 May 2013).
- ³⁰ Chen Yonghong (2006) *Lun Xianzheng yu Zhengzhi Wenming* [Critically discussing constitutional rule and civilized political conduct] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe), pp. 195–6.
- ³¹ Stanley Lubman (2006) 'Looking for Law in China', *Columbian Journal of Asian Law*, 20(1), pp. 6–7.
- ³² Jamil Anderlini, 'Nobel winner's fate casts shadow on China', *Financial Times*, 12 October 2012, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/aea4301e-12a4-11e2-ac28-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2Urkf5ZWP> (accessed 31 May 2013).
- ³³ 'Zuigao Renmin Fayuan Gongzuo Baogao' [Work Report of the Supreme People's Court], 22 March 2008, http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2008-03/22/content_7837838_1.htm (accessed 23 May 2014).
- ³⁴ Yan Sun and Michael Johnston (2009) 'Does Democracy Check Corruption? Insights from China and India', *Comparative Politics*, 42(1), p. 14.
- ³⁵ Zheng Yongnian (2000) *Jiang-Zhu zhixia de Zhongguo* [China under the rule of Jiang and Zhu] (Hong Kong: Taipingyang shiji chubanshe), p. 12.
- ³⁶ Susan Shirk (2007) *China: Fragile Superpower* (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 46.
- ³⁷ Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party*, pp. 142–3.
- ³⁸ Xinhua News Agency, 'Document of CPC on Governance Capability Issued', 27 September 2004, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2004/Sep/108142.htm> (accessed 31 May 2013).
- ³⁹ Melinda Liu and Jonathan Ansfield, 'A Princeling of the People', *Newsweek*, 5 November 2007, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/62256> (accessed 28 May 2008).
- ⁴⁰ John L. Thornton (2008) 'Long Time Coming: Prospect for Democracy in China', *Foreign Affairs*, 87(1), pp. 8–9.
- ⁴¹ Xinhua, 'New China Party leadership elected', 14 November 2012,

http://www.china.org.cn/china/18th_cpc_congress/2012-11/14/content_27108963.htm (accessed 31 May 2013).

⁴² Tianjian Shi (2000) 'Economic Development and Village Elections in Rural China', in Suisheng Zhao (ed.), *China and Democracy: Reconsidering the Prospects for a Democratic China* (New York: Routledge), pp. 244–6.

⁴³ Deliberative and incremental steps in increasing the element of election are part of democratization. In the case of Taiwan, for example, local elections from the 1950s onwards helped the democratization process once the Kuomintang authoritarian regime under Chiang Ching-kuo accepted the need to democratize in the late 1980s, even though such elections in the 1950s were not particularly democratic or meaningful at the time.

⁴⁴ For enlarging the scope for civil society, see discussions below regarding the rescue and relief efforts during the Sichuan earthquake of 2008.

⁴⁵ 'Greater role ahead for non-communist parties', *China Daily*, 7 March 2008, <http://www.chinaelections.net/newsinfo.asp?newsid=16175> (last accessed 11 February 2009).

⁴⁶ 'CCP taps talents outside the Party', *Xinhua*, 29 June 2007, <http://www.chinaelections.net/newsinfo.asp?newsid=4331> (last accessed 11 February 2009).

⁴⁷ Wen's Facebook page is: <http://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/-Wen-Jia-bao/13823116911> (last accessed 12 February 2009).

⁴⁸ 'Online chat with Hu Jintao', *Danwei*, 20 June 2008, http://www.danwei.org/internet/president_hu_jintao_talks_to_n.php (last assessed 11 February 2009).

⁴⁹ Richard Spencer, 'China orders journalists to end negative quake coverage', *The Sunday Telegraph*, 8 June 2008, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/2091084/China-earthquake--journalists-orderered--to-end-negative-quake-coverage.html> (accessed 9 June 2008).

⁵⁰ Fengshi Wu and Kin-man Chan (2012) 'Graduated Control and Beyond: The Evolving Government–NGO Relations', *China Perspectives*, (3), p. 15.

-
- ⁵¹ Ettore Dorrucci, Gabor Pula and Daniel Santabábara (2013) *China's Economic Growth and Rebalancing* (ECB Occasional Paper 142, February 2013), p. 45.
- ⁵² Zheng Yongnian (1999) *Discovering Chinese Nationalism in China: Modernization, Identity, and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 51.
- ⁵³ Chen Shaoming (1996) 'Minzu zhuyi: Fuxing zhi dao' [Nationalism: The way to rejuvenation], *Dong Fang*, (2), p.74.
- ⁵⁴ Zhao Suisheng (2005–6) 'China's Pragmatic Nationalism: Is It Manageable?', *The Washington Quarterly*, 29(1), p. 134.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶ Yuan Weishi (2006) 'Xiandaihua yu lishi jiaokeshu' [Modernization and history text books], 11 January 2006, <http://edu.people.com.cn/GB/1055/4016350.html> (accessed 23 May 2014).
- ⁵⁷ The large public outburst of nationalism when the Olympic torch relay outside of China met with large-scale public protests in April 2008 confirms the xenophobic nature of China's new nationalism. This is addressed later in this essay. For a strong representation of some Chinese nationalists' frustrations, see 'My Friends, What Do You Want From Us?' in *China Digital Times*, 12 April 2008, <http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2008/04/my-friends-what-do-you-want-from-us/> (last accessed 16 May 2008).
- ⁵⁸ David Kelly (2006) 'Citizen Movements and China's Public Intellectuals in the Hu-Wen Era', *Pacific Affairs*, 79(2), p. 201.
- ⁵⁹ Zhao, 'China's Pragmatic Nationalism', p. 135.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ⁶¹ Austin Ramzy, 'China's View of the Olympic Torch War', *Time*, 9 April 2008, <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1729169,00.html> (last accessed 10 April 2008).
- ⁶² Zhao, 'China's Pragmatic Nationalism', p. 136.
- ⁶³ Tom Mitchell and Mure Dickie, "'Just emperor" in Beijing escapes blame', *The Financial Times*, 30 May 2008, p. 5.

⁶⁴ Mark Magnier, 'China tightens media limits loosened after earthquake', *Los Angeles Times*, 5 June 2008, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-rollback5-2008jun05,0,4764776.story> (accessed 6 June 2008).

⁶⁵ Xinhua, 'Xi Jinping kaocha Nanhai jiandui, guanmo junyan yu guanbing gongjin wucan' [Xi Jinping inspecting the South Sea Fleet, overseeing an exercise and sharing lunch with officers and me], undated but the Xinhua dateline is 10 December 2012, http://bbs.tiexue.net/post_6465710_1.html (accessed 31 May 2013).

⁶⁶ 'Xi Jinping and the Chinese dream', *The Economist*, 4 May 2013, <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21577070-vision-chinas-new-president-should-serve-his-people-not-nationalist-state-xi-jinping> (accessed 31 May 2013).

⁶⁷ Zhongguo shehuikexue yuan Zhongguo tese shehuizhuyi lilun tixi yanjiu zhongxin [The centre for the theoretical and systematic study of socialism with Chinese characteristics at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences], 'Ningju Zhongguo liliang shixian weida mengxiang' [Bring together the power of China to implement the great dream], 1 June 2013, http://www.qstheory.cn/zxdk/2013/201311/201305/t20130527_234345.htm (accessed 3 June 2013).