The Political Possibilities of China's "Party-State System"*

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> *"Les grands hommes, en apprenant aux faibles à réfléchir, les ont mis sur la route de l' erreur."*[1]
> —Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics*

In other works, the author has analyzed the developmental process and actual state of the political rule of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since the start of the 2000s, focusing on the CCP's political approach toward the new social stratum, with the CCP's political adaptability in mind. In concluding this book the author would like to diagram the political relationships between China's ruling regime and Chinese society as they exist today.

At the same time, while referencing several related researches, the author will overview the discussions on this subject to date and add some of his own observations on the political possibilities for China's "party-state" system. The specific topics of concern will be (1) the control structure for the newly emerging socioeconomic elites, (2) the party-state system's governance capacity and its legitimacy to rule, (3) the current state of political power relationships, (4) the directionality and "room for choice" of Party-led political reform, and (5) further points to consider regarding the dynamism of Chinese political reform.[2]

I. The Control Structure for the Newly Emerging Socioeconomic Elites

In a paper published in 1999, Roderick Macfarquhar et al. point out of China's private entrepreneurs group that "at the end of the twentieth century they have not yet developed into an independent capitalist or middle class able to assert itself in its own right."[3] However, in their concluding remarks they also make the following observation. In brief, while we cannot hope for the political maturation of the Chinese middle class to the point where it will be able to exert pressure regarding important political issues in the near future, over the mid- to long-term, "a growing and diverse middle class may organize itself politically as an alternative to the party-state."[4]

Regarding the above passage, in response to the question of Chinese democratization led by the newly emerging elite and middle class (middle stratum), I have to agree with this view which has been generally accepted in the Western academic community in recent years, based on the findings of my research presented here and elsewhere (*see the original book). In short, the members of the new social stratum are continuing to be proactively integrated into the party-state system through party member

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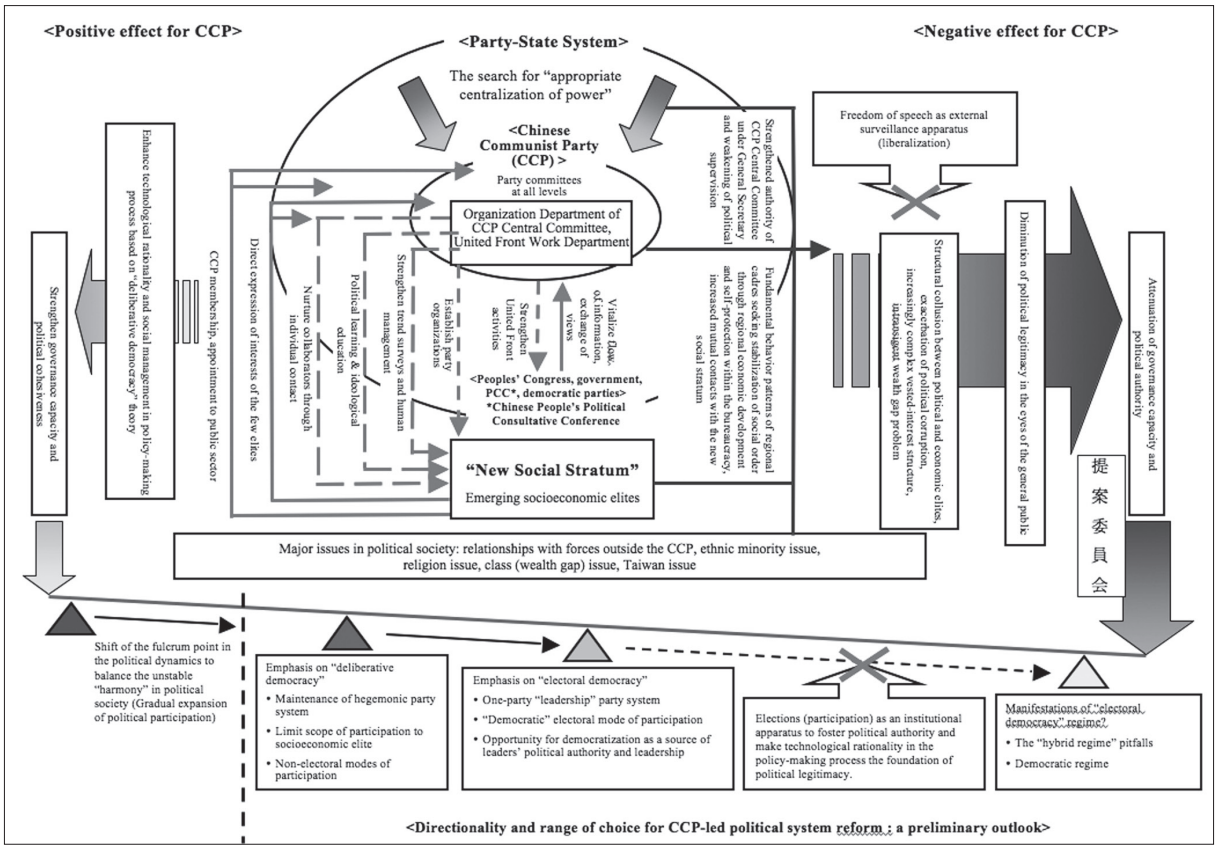
recruitment, the United Front, and other diverse channels. At the same time, a power elite alliance is steadily being formed between on the one hand party and political leaders seeking personal advancement through the growth of regional economies and, on the other, the new social elites who are feverishly seeking to secure their own economic interests. For this reason, it is unlikely that any systemic transformation away from authoritarianism will be led by the newly emerging elite class, that is to say, we cannot expect them to display, at least in the short term, the kind of political initiative as the "vanguard of democratization" that I shall discuss later.

Indeed, even today, more than a decade after MacFarquhar's observations, no collective political behavior among these people has not yet been confirmed. At least up to the present time, the CCP's political control over the newly emerging socioeconomic elites—which can be encapsulated in the two keywords, "control" and "cooptation"—has been functioning effectively for the maintenance of the party-state system. Moreover, regarding as well the securing of the party's political hegemony into the future, the CCP continues—through its various political systems—to achieve a degree of success in institutionalizing the consciousness and behavior of the new social stratum. This fact powerfully suggests the possibility of the long-term continuity of the newly emerging elite classes' conciliatory attitude toward the regime.

Figure 6-1 is a conceptual diagram, based on the essence of this monograph, of the political relationships between China's current ruling structure and Chinese society with a focus on the CCP's political approach toward the new social stratum. Using this diagram, we can generalize the Chinese Communist Party's political control of the newly emerging socioeconomic elites into the following four elements (1) ideological penetration, (2) organizational control, (3) physical coerciveness, and (4) allocation of benefits.

Figure 6-1. Diagram of Political Relationships between the Party-State System and Society with a Focus on Political Approaches to the New Social Stratum



First, regarding the ideological penetration, the CCP has been implementing political and ideological education directed at the new social stratum systematically and extensively. However, the efficacy of these activities in achieving ideological alignment remains ambiguous overall. In reality, what one detects widely in place of declining socialist principles is the conservative disposition of the newly emerging elite groups toward preserving the status quo.

Second, party-building in the "new economic organizations" and "new social organizations"—collectively referred to as the "two new organizations"—*encompassing new business and social organization models outside of traditional Party reach* to which many members of the new social stratum belong has been stagnant both qualitatively and quantitatively except for a few occupational groups. As a result, social surveillance capacity via Party organizations is definitely declining. In order to reinforce this weakening of control at the organization level, the CCP has been compelled to promote individual cooptation initiatives vis-à-vis the socioeconomic elites, including 'corporatism(ist)' (*fatuan zhuyi*) group approaches.

Regarding the third element of physical coerciveness, the strengthening of political control by the CCP's Organization Department and the United Front Work Department has already made a considerable progress through, for example, party-building for designated professions like lawyers and accountants and strengthening management of peoples, especially representative individuals in the new social stratum, using human resources databases and other tools. At the same time, the regime's capacity for selective suppression also appears to be sufficiently guaranteed for now through the installation of these kinds of "power infrastructure."

Fourth, the fruits of sustained economic growth have not only brought numerous material benefits to the new social stratum, but also fostered an attitude of acceptance toward the regime. However, on the other side of the coin, this method of procuring support, in combination with the overall weakening of socialist ideology, will likely work to exacerbate the opportunistic behavior patterns of the newly emerging elite class that depends largely upon favors provided by the ruling regime. This situation harbors a dual meaning of both strength and weakness for the CCP's control of the elites.

II. Governance Capacity of the Party-State System and the Legitimacy of Rule

Figure 6-1 also indicates the two effects that the CCP's political approach to newly emerging elite groups will likely have on the ruling regime's capacity to govern. One is a positive effect for the CCP and the pragmatic goals of this approach, in other words, the enhancement of the party-state system's governance capacity and political cohesiveness through strengthened social management and improved technological rationality in the policy process based on "deliberative democracy" theory. The other is that this mode of response by the CCP will further exacerbate systemic collusion between the government and the economic elites, and will make it more difficult to prevent government corruption, correct the wealth gap, and overcome the political alienation of China's socioeconomically disadvantaged. Therefore, as a negative effect, the possibility cannot be denied that this approach could erode the perception of the government's legitimacy in the eyes of system participants other than the new social stratum and invite an overall decline in governance capacity and political authority.

The problem today is that the negative aspects of this balance of plusses and minuses already appear to be coming to the fore, and the balance of stability in political society seems to be diminishing. For example, according to an Asian Barometer social survey implemented in China in 2002 as part of an international comparative research project, among all survey subjects (3,183 subjects), those replying that "the economy has become less equal" and "government's effort to control corruption has become less adequate" stood at 74.7percent and 83.2percent, respectively, with approximately 40% of respondents

replying that *the majority of* or *almost all* [italics from the original text] local officials had dirtied their hands with corruption.[5] Regardless of what the real state of affairs may be, the spread of such an execrable social image of local governance already far transcends the usual meaning of the word "serious." Again, as regards the wealth gap problem, Edward Friedman has observed that, as an important shared element in the experience of democratization among East Asian countries, "The East Asian experience does not support the conventional wisdom about socioeconomic development delivering an easy transition from wealth to democracy. Equality is decisive." He goes on to emphasize the fostering of a social consensus through economic equity and "the role of the state in building social equity."[6]

Regarding the above, Richard Lowenthal has in the past raised the three points on the issues that one-party or hegemonic party systems would face as follows. They are, in brief (1) securing the economic efficiency and technological rationality needed for achieving the sophistication of economic development and industrial structure, (2) diversifying societal interests and their political aggregation and the maintenance of effective arbitration capacity in that process, and (3) acquiring a new type of legitimacy *reconciled with ideological traditions*.[7] Conforming to this argument, we can say that the CCP has, by preferentially addressing the first issue of economic efficiency through its "Reform and Openness" policy and the shift toward market economy, achieved rapid economic growth for the past 30 years and more. Today, however, it must navigate the remaining two bottlenecks.

First, regarding Lowenthal's second point, under limited interest aggregation by the cadres and the newly emerging elite class, the absence of any "effective counterweights" representing other social interests makes an innovative breakthrough against "inertial resistance to major economic reform" in pursuit of rectifying social inequalities difficult to achieve.[8]

Next, regarding Lowenthal's third point on the legitimacy of rule, short-term support can "only rest on successful performance, such as economic progress or the increase of national power." However, "as no political system can ever guarantee continuously successful performance, long-run legitimacy can be based only on confidence that the institutional procedures by which rulers are selected and decisions are reached offer a reasonable chance of such performance," and, in consequence, authoritarian regimes are prone to suffer from "a long-term decline in legitimacy."[9] The Russia researcher Harley Balzer has likewise emphasized, from a comparative perspective regarding socialist regime, the necessity for the CCP to shift the source of its legitimacy to rule from an overdependence on "performance" derived from solving specific concrete problems to the creation of an environment in which they can be solved in ways that people consider just.[10] Observations like the above are general and by no means novel. Yet they do aptly capture China's political development since the "Reform and Openness" era and the issues accompanying it. These authors are, in essence, arguing the theoretical inevitability of political reform in response to socioeconomic development.

III. The Current State of Political Power Relationships

However, the realization of that demand for political modernization is—in the sense that it is ultimately the outcome of *realpolitik* over power—depends on political power relationships in the end. Then, what kind of social groups can be identified as the driving force for regime reform in the Chinese polity today?

As already noted, when responding to this question it is difficult to posit an active role for the new social stratum. Or, to be more precise, it is difficult to posit that, in the event of political reform that included democratization within its orbit, the newly emerging socioeconomic elites both within and without the party-state system would take the role of the agent demanding a radical change, in short, the role of the "vanguard" for democratization, within the structure of political dynamics.[11]

Quite the contrary, the candidates that come naturally to mind to as possible vanguard groups at such a time are society's "disadvantaged"—[China's] politically marginalized workers, farmers, migrant workers, and others. Regarding this issue, the Korea specialist Tadashi Kimiya—encouraging a reexamination of the conventional image of South Korea's supposedly middle class–led democratization—provides us with valuable suggestions on how to view Chinese politics. In Kimiya's view, when one focuses on the political and social costs accompanying capitalistic development and of economic liberalization in particular, the cases are by no means rare where "the workers and other lower classes who bear the burden of the costs incurred by economic liberalization implemented under authoritarian regimes seek a redistribution of that cost burden, and it is those demands, linked with movements for political democratization, that become the driving force for a democratization movement."[12] Kimiya maintains that the Korean democratization movement in the mid-1980s, in fact, "rather than being supported by the autonomous civil society created by [Korea's] economic liberalization policies and the middle class that were the standard bearers of that civil society, instead powerfully reflected the ideals and principles of the laborers, farmers, and other members of the so-called lower classes who had been the victims of the long years of the development regime and the economic liberalization policies that followed it and were now seeking socioeconomic equality and justice."[13]

However, this [Korean] scenario of democratization driven by the middle and lower classes does not necessarily match with the current state of Chinese politics and predictable extrapolations based upon it. Much of the research on the various societal conflicts and protest activities observed in China today emphasizes, as regards particularly the intermittent rioting across the country by primarily workers and farmers, that they (1) set the low-level regional authorities as the direct target of their protests, so that no class-transcendent or trans-regional mobilization can be observed, (2) the goals of these movements have been to secure adequate access to the policy-making process and, through this, to change specific policies, and thus do not represent a call for systemic transformation, and (3) simply put, the frequent occurrence of social conflict does not by itself equal the destabilization of governance.[14] For this reason, as Elizabeth Perry has observed, these social movements based on "rising rights consciousness" in China should be regarded as "an indication of routine politics" under conditions where institutionalization of political participation has been inadequate, rather than "a harbinger of some tectonic shift" in state-society relations, leading to the conclusion that, so long as the central government "responds sympathetically yet shrewdly to the grievances expressed in widespread protest, … it emerges strengthened rather than weakened."[15] Indeed, the results of many social surveys—regardless of whether or not the implementing body was connected to the Chinese authorities, or even if the surveys were designed to take into account the mental state of political resignation and cynicism among the non-elite classes—indicate that many respondents even today continue to have strong trust in the problem-solving capabilities of the central government.[16]

Given this political reality, Dorothy J. Solinger, taking her cue from the wealth gap problem and the CCP's response to it, lays out a vision of China's political society for the next ten-plus years in a framework of the expansion and immobilization of the socioeconomically disadvantaged, and vigorous growth in the influence of the rich. As the main causes [for these trends], she points to, again, the former's narrow interests and political apathy and the difficulty of organizing to apply collective pressure. In contrast, the CCP, having resolved upon a "new alliance with the upper strata of the population" will likely "use a growing portion of the state's coffers to quiet those at the base—to keep them minimally satisfied but still politically excluded."[17] This, then, is the political reality of a "Harmonious Society." Regarding the future of Chinese politics, Solinger concludes with the following extremely pessimistic prediction.

Namely, "the Chinese polity appears to be moving not toward democratization, in which numbers count, but toward elitism. This, then, is a politics of complacency and scorn among those in the social strata who matter (to the CCP) [parenthesis added], and a politics of the forlorn for those who do not."[18]

IV. Directionality and Range of Choice for Political Reform Led by the Chinese Communist Party

Inadequate political acumen and a *kasse für sich* consciousness on the part of society's politically alienated "vulnerable." Such observations deserve to be heard as one grim aspect of Chinese politics. However, the author does not unreservedly agree with the opinions of Perry, Solinger, and others presented above. Rather, we must pay closer attention to how Solinger, as in her additional observation that, "These factors suggest that change, when it comes, is more apt to be initiated by the top political decision-makers than by the popular strata within society," ultimately looks to the Central Committee of the Communist Party to provide the initiative for reform.[19] Yet, just as there is no further explanation of this point by Solinger here, many other authors as well, while focusing on the influence that various social groups have on the ruling regime, do not appear to have adequately examined neither the multifarious discussions taking place today within the CCP regarding directionality and options for political system reform—including democratization within its scope—nor the political possibilities these debates connote.

Regarding this state of affairs, a critique similar to the framing of the issue by Bruce Dickson and others in the prologue to this book (*see the original) could be made here as well. That is, it is necessary to return the focus of the problem to the Chinese Communist Party itself.[20] The author's own preliminary thoughts on this issue at this point are as follows. Faced with the current situation, in which signs of the destabilization of political society is beginning to surface, the Central Committee of the CCP, the nucleus maintaining the equilibrium of power politics, is now seeking—by partially opening membership in political participation to multiple social groups beginning with the new social stratum (or, as seen in the explanation at the bottom of Figure 6.1, by shifting the fulcrum of the balance in political dynamics further to the right from its former position)—to restore the stability and equilibrium of political society. However, it is important to note that the fundamental departure point for this conception of reform is not one that envisages a direct transition to a democratic regime over a short span of time, but rather one that seeks the reinforcement and continuation of the current party-state system. In other words, it has been devised as a "survival strategy" for the ruling regime.[21]

1. "Deliberative Democracy" as Conservative Reform

In such a political context, we can today ascertain at least two opinions among the CCP's regime ideologues.[22] Position one emphasizes the theory of "deliberative democracy" analyzed in Chapter IV of this volume (*see the original) and associated political concepts. The substance of this argument calls for—while continuing to adhere to the current "hegemonic party system" (in the terminology of Giovanni Sartori) and restricting participating actors to the socioeconomic elites alone—some ways to improve governance capacity through, primarily, the methodologies of deliberative democracy.[23]

The nebulous political image of the future party-state system envisioned by those supporting this approach is a system that seeks—while securing the alliance between the regime's power and socioeconomic elites as a solid foundation and continuing to develop China's traditional "guidance from above"—to establish [new] political methodologies and policy implementation supported by concepts of social engineering and technocracy. There, it would strongly reflect a general inclination that seeks—under the slogan of "good governance"—to trivialize and reduce the business of politics in its true sense to a mere

administrative problem and to process it in that way.

This conception of political reform with deliberative democracy as its theoretical core can be clearly discerned, for example, in the papers on "consultative rule of law" published by Beijing University's Pan Wei, known today as one of the leading theorists on the "New Conservatism" in China's academic forum, from the late 1990s through the mid-2000s.[24] In these papers Pan asserted that—as a reform measure that could be implemented even under China's authoritarian hegemonic regime—China should construct "rule of law supplemented by democracy" that emphasizes establishing the authority of the law. (In contrast, Pan describes conventional democratic systems as "democracy supplemented by rule of law").[25]

According to Pan's explanation, the systemic core of "consultative rule of law" as modeled on Hong Kong and Singapore is (1) administrative organs whose political neutrality is guaranteed, (2) a judicial system capable of making autonomous decisions, (3) advisory and consultative systems that reach broadly throughout society, (4) an independent government body in charge of controlling corruption, (5) modern accounting and auditing systems, and (6) the establishment of "freedom of expression" including freedom of assembly, association, and speech.

Regarding the third of these six elements, namely, "advisory and consultative systems," the following two proposals have been made. First, at both the national and the provincial level, reformation of the People's Congress system to enhance social deliberations, including both inquiry systems and public hearing systems targeting administrative activities. Second, the establishment of "social consultation committees" from the national level down to the lowest levels composed of retired public servants, peoples' representatives, entrepreneurs, experts, and others.[26] In this way, Pan's views are presented as a direct prescription for treating the deepening problem of corruption in China based on an instrumentalist understanding of the rule of law. Again, as an aside, it should be pointed out in terms of the historical expression of democracy and dictatorship in modern China, that the logical construction of Pan's argument shares remarkably much in common with the political theories of the American political scientist Frank Johnson Goodnow who, some 100 years earlier, provided a theoretical defense of Yuan Shikai imperial rule during China's Republican era.[27]

In similar fashion, David Shambaugh—referencing Richard Baum's theory of "deliberative Leninism" examined in Chapter IV (*see the original book)—has also pointed to "the further development of greater consultation [with nonparty groups]" including the People's Congresses and the Political Consultative Conferences as one possible future vision for Chinese-style democracy.[28] He goes on to state that "creating limited political competition and increasing checks and balances on the CCP could conceivably be done" through a range of methods, including (1) increasing the political autonomy of the People's Congresses vis-à-vis the CCP, (2) politically strengthening the eight small "democratic parties" to the point that they "could contest elections nationally," and (3) merging the Political Consultative Conferences with the People's Congresses. Also, he makes it clear that these kinds of reforms are already being debated unofficially among people connected to the CCP.[29]

Shambaugh further offers the following evaluation of such of political projects. He states of the current CCP regime that "[Hu and Wen are] not opening the system to *competition*, but they are definitely attempting to increase *consultation* [italics from the original text]. Still, it is all *tizhinei* (intra-system) reform, with no real *tizhiwai* (extra-system) checks and balances. Thus, the CCP *is* attempting to improve communication and consultation inside and outside its apparatus, but within very prescribed and proscribed boundaries. This may help to improve the party's popular legitimacy in the near term, but over the longer term more competitive dynamics need to be introduced into the system." [30]

2. Electoral Democracy and Related Issues

The institutional axis of competitive political system that Shambaugh has suggested, is none other than "electoral democracy," which could be the other basis of China's democracy.

On this point—in contrast to the above-stated emphasis on "deliberative democracy"—one of the current positions of CCP ideologues is to advocate (while continuing to affirm the significance of electoral democracy as a minimalist definition of democracy and envisioning a more open form of political participation) converting such an institutional expansion into a new font of political authority and leadership for CCP leaders.[31] If I may again borrow Lowenthal's words, their intent lies in giving birth to, "not merely competent economic or administrative experts but a true *political* elite of leaders able to act as guardians of the national interest and arbiters between group interests [italics from the original text]".[32]

Further, it would seem that, by extension, this assertion implies, as one powerful *theoretical possibility,* an opportunity for a gradual transition to—according to Sartori's classification again—a "predominant party system" in which, on the surface at least, a single-party "led" political party system model can be maintained.

Of course, proposals for reforms that would fall under this category have existed in China's political sphere without interruption since the 1980s, not even fading away after the second Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, and the peoples' hopes for the selection of national leaders via elections remains high today.[33] At the same time, the fact that the CCP has itself been energetically publicizing the promotion of "intra-party democracy" strongly suggests a rising mid- and long-term political orientation toward and the existence of a basic consensus for "electoral democracy" even within the ruling elite from the perspective of clarifying the norms, equitableness, and transparency of the "rules of the game" regulating elite politics.[34] However, when considering the future of electoral democracy in China and the political pitfalls therein, research into the following two issues will remain essential now and in the future.

First is the question of the linkages between the electoral system and the party system. As in the phrase "theoretical possibility" that I used above, as a general theory there is a strong possibility that making elections fairer and more universal will result in collateral changes in the party system as well. However, on this point the Asia Barometer survey cited earlier shows some interesting results. While 84 percent of the survey sample (3,183 individuals) supported holding elections for political leaders at the national level, the establishment of a competitive political party system garnered only 17.3 percent agreement.[35] Similar results were obtained in an interview survey of private entrepreneurs conducted by Jie Chen between 2006 and 2007. In short, concluded Chen, "while private entrepreneurs like to check the individual leaders through competitive elections under the current one-party system, they do not support fundamental political change towards a democratic system characterized by multi-party competition and individual liberty."[36]

In explanation, Chen [and Dickson] offer the interpretation that, while the competitive elections would be regarded as an extension of the current Chinese system including "competitive elections," *cha'e xuanju*, the term "competitive multiparty system" evoked an image of a completely different political system. Such a mindset could be both "support and hindrance" for China's transition from a hegemonic party system to a predominant party system. Again, considering the origins of this scattered political consciousness, we will need a more contemporary sociopolitical analysis than simply referring back to the historical background of chaotic party politics during China's Republican era.

The second issue that we must also bear in mind is that—as is clear from such terms as "elections without democracy" and "pseudo-democracy" which have emerged as major themes in comparative political science in recent years—the expansion of electoral democracy does not necessarily lead directly

to a democratic regime. On this point, Larry Diamond has pointed to—as a new phenomena that has emerged since the so-called third wave of democratic expansion—the spread of "hybrid regimes" combining democratic and authoritarian elements or "electoral authoritarianism."[37]

These are regimes that may adopt electoral democracy as a regime principle through regular competitive elections among multiple political parties, therefore in that sense at least, all those democratic systems represented by elections, parliaments [and other institutions] are recognized as important tools for political authority and the exercise of power (an important point of divergence from the "politically closed" authoritarian regime model that I will examine next). Nonetheless, in these systems the fairness, inclusiveness, and degree of freedom that guarantee the functional effectiveness of elections remain at a very low level. Russia and Singapore are among the representative examples of such systems.

In contrast, China, Vietnam, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the other socialist nations of East Asia are categorized as "politically closed" regimes in which none of the systems for political competition and pluralism are in place.[38] As Diamond himself acknowledges, the concept of electoral authoritarianism as a political system classification is still theoretically immature. However, it does indicate the internal diversity of authoritarian systems and suggests one possible direction—although certainly not a desirable one—for the conceivable future development of Chinese politics. Again, as regards this point, future changes in Chinese politics and the examination thereof should make a significant contribution to the comparative study of authoritarian systems.

To summarize the discussion so far, the debates about and the actual implementation of "consultative democracy" and "electoral democracy" [in China] will doubtless provide indications of the fundamental directionality of Chinese political reform in the future, and the "range of options" for regime reform based on CCP initiatives.[39]

V. Points for Consideration regarding the Dynamism of Political Reform: Toward Further Examination

Needless to say, the roadmap for mid- and long-term Chinese political development laid out in Figure 6-1 under "Directionality and range of choice for CCP-led political system reform" will not unfold spontaneously in the form of self-reform by the ruling regime. Rather we can expect many twists and turns and difficulties in the future. The following two points will be particularly important in understanding the dynamism of this kind of political development.

The first point is the awareness of CCP leaders and the political adaptability of the Chinese Communist Party itself. In this regard, if we take a cursory look at the political reform development process and the correspondence between key actors at every level, we find that the significance of social disputes as the "cradle of democracy" at the start and initial stages of reform cannot be underestimated.[40] Of course, progress in reform is impossible without sustained social pressure. It is the exacerbation of wide-ranging social tensions and political instability that is the soil for political reform that would contain democratization within its orbit. In this sense, the "vanguard" of democratization will, as expected, be groups of the politically alienated and socioeconomically disadvantaged.

On the other side, we can expect the newly emerging elite classes, as a "moderate wing" positioned both within and outside the ruling regime, to play an active role as the "rear guard" seeking to guide a reform process that will at times be accompanied by violence and confusion to a political soft-landing. Regarding this point, as has been suggested by much of the existing research on democratization, it is this very role of the socioeconomic elite as a stabilizing factor in the transition process that bears the grave responsibility in determining the success or failure of regime transition and the establishment of the new

regime.

However, the author believes it is pertinent to emphasize that, even in that case, the most critical key to the future of China's democratization will be the awareness of its political leaders, and further, that a significant change can already be recognized there in recent years. In other words, as Michel Oksenberg has stated in the past, on the one hand there is a political environment in which the element of "democracy" (*minzhu*) can no longer be ignored in any discourse and decision-making, on the other we can discern in the thought and behavior patterns of even the governing elite themselves signs of change in acknowledgement of democratic governance through contacts with international society. In this way, a transformation in the shared "political culture" of the ruling group signifies a shift in the cost-benefit equation of leaders seeking political stability and their own self-preservation. This change will inevitably exert an influence advantageous to the establishment of institutional democracy.[41]

Indeed, the leaders of the CCP—even if not in a proactive sense of asking "what should we do" to achieve a democratic regime—have by now accumulated enough learning and experience to know what, for the continuity of CCP rule, an authoritarian regime "should not do, and must not do."

Again, as we saw in the prologue to this volume (*see the original), in recent years the Western academic community in particular has frequently cited the high "political adaptability" of the Chinese Communist Party as the secret to the continuity of its rule, or rephrased, as the "strength" of CCP rule.[42] This study shares that analytical perspective. However, it can also be thought that the outstanding learning ability and adaptability of this form of authoritarianism could, paradoxically, also signify that—dependent on the conditions and the regime's own experience—the chances of achieving democratization led by the ruling regime itself is relatively higher than it is in more politically rigid nondemocratic regimes that lack these strengths. It would also suggest that the political elite classes in China likely possess the political wisdom necessary to avoid the political quagmires and the proliferation of violence surrounding regime transition seen in some of the nations and regions of the Middle East, Africa, and elsewhere today.

Next, as second point for further discussion in this regard, we can cite the changes of timeframes for reform and temporal perceptions on politics. Returning again to Figure 6-1, it must be emphasized that—as indicated under "Directionality and range of choice for CCP-led political system reform—a preliminary outlook"—from the "Reform and Openness" era of the 1980s through the "Socialist Market Economy" era of the 1990s, both the ideological coordinate axis and the implementation vector have been shifting surely, though albeit sluggishly, from the left to the right side of the diagram.

As already explained in Chapter 4 (*see the original book), this is apparent from, among other things, the way that (1) the "deliberative democracy" concept represents the developmental evolution of the "social deliberative discussion system" (*shehui xieshang duihua zhidu*), that was one of the policies included the political reform plans at the 13th National Congress of the CCP in 1987, (2) this package of reforms, known as the most daring reform plan presented by the CCP since the founding of the state, was unceremoniously abandoned by leaders considered to be "conservatives" in the wake of the Tiananmen Square incident, however, (3) today not only "neoconservative" theorists like Pan but even some among the party ideologues who self-identify as political conservatives are actively advocating deliberative democracy with the intent of forestalling what they perceive to be even more radical electoral system and other democratic reforms.

At the same time, if we accept that this movement along the ideological coordinate axis has been underway for the last 20 years and more, then—while the expected relocation further to the right along that vector may manifest more rapidly than the past—in light of current Chinese political and social

conditions it is hard to imagine that it will take longer.

And lastly, as another important phenomenon that both statesmen and analysts alike must bear in mind, not only in China but in all the nations and regions of Northeast Asia including Japan and Korea the peoples' temporal perception regarding the business of politics—not limited to democratization alone—is becoming steadily more compressed. Put more simply, we are witnessing today the emergence of vast numbers of people "who cannot wait" (primarily due—needless to say—to the dramatic advances in informatization).

In closing, the author at the present time has yet to arrive at clear answers to a range of important issues regarding the various proposals for reform that likely exist between the "democratizations" discussed above as two extremes, the current state of their implementation, and beyond that, the nature of the epistemological basis for their planning. For this reason, having here examined the political rule of the Chinese Communist Party, the theme for the author's further research is the "democratization" of the Chinese Communist Party itself.[43]

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1. Michael Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays,* 1962. Translated by Itaru Shimazu et al., as *Seiji ni okeru gōrishugi* (Keisō Shobō, 1988), 18.
2. Regarding the argument below, the author has, in addition to the titles cited in the footnotes, received many suggestions from the following research: David Shambaugh, "Remaining Relevant: The Challenges for the Party in Late-Leninist China" in David M. Finkelstein, Maryanne Kivlehan eds., *China's Leadership in the 21st Century: The Rise of the Fourth Generation* (M. E. Sharpe, 2003), 278–283; Robert A. Scalapino, "Current Trends and Future Prospects," *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 9, no. 1 (January 1998); Robert A. Scalapino, "Communism in Asia: Toward a Comparative Analysis" [Ajia no kyōsanshugi—Hikaku bunseki e no shikō] in Robert A. Scalapino, ed., *The Communist Revolution in Asia: Tactics, Goals, and Achievements,* 1965. Translated by Mitsuto Kamata as *Ajia no kyōsanshugi: Genjō to senryaku* (Kajima Kenkyūjo Shuppankai, 1966), and others.
3. Merle Goldman, Roderick Macfarquhar, "Dynamic Economy, Declining Party-State" in Merle Goldman, Roderick Macfarquhar, eds., *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms* (Harvard University Press, 1999), 18.
4. Ibid., 28.
5. Tianjin Shi, "China: Democratic Values Supporting an Authoritarian System" in Yun-han Chu, Larry Diamond, Andrew J. Nathan, Doh Chull Shin, eds., *How East Asians View Democracy* (Columbia University Press, 2008), 222–27.
6. Edward Friedman, "Democratization: Generalizing the East Asian Experience" in Edward Friedman, ed., *The Politics of Democratization: Generalizing East Asian Experiences* (Westview Press, 1994), 30, 49.
7. Richard Lowenthal, "On 'Established' Communist Party Regimes" in Erik P. Hoffmann and Robbin F. Laird, eds., *The Soviet Polity in the Modern Era* (Aidine Publishing Company, 1984), 786–88.
8. Ibid., 796.
9. Ibid., 801, 806.
10. Harley Balzer, "State and Society in Transitions from Communism: China in Comparative Perspective" in Peter Hays Gries, Stanley Rosen, eds., *State and Society in 21st-Century China: Crisis, Contention, and Legitimation* (Routledge, 2004), 250.
11. Regarding the political dynamics of regime transition including, for example the "four-person game model," see Yasuhiro Takeda, *Minshuka no hikaku seiji—Higashi-Ajia shokoku no taisei hendō katei* [Comparative Politics of Democratization: The Process of Regime Change in East Asian Nations] (Minerva Shobō, 2001); S. P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century,* 1991. Translated by Minoru Tsubogō, Hisakazu Nakamichi, and Yūzō Yabuno as *Daisan no nami—Nijū-seiki kōhan no minshuka* (Sanrei Shobō, 1995); Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, *Political Life after Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Transitions,* 1986. Translated by Hideko Magara and Masanobu Ido as *Minshuka no hikaku seijigaku ken'ishugi-shihai igo no seiji sekai* (Miraisha, 1986), and others.
12. Tadashi Kimiya, "Keizaiteki jiyūka to seijiteki minshuka" [Economic Liberalization and Political Democratization] in Kiichi Fujiwara et al., eds., *Kokusai seiji kōza 3: Keizai no gurōbaru-ka to kokusai seiji* [International Politics Course 3: Economic

Globalization and International Politics] (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2004), 258.

13. Ibid., 266. In addition, Tadashi Kimiya, "Hattentojōkoku no kaihatsu to minshuka—Kankoku no jirei o chūshin ni" [Development and Democratization in Developing Countries—Examining the Korean Example] in Junzo Kawada et al., eds., *Iwanami kōza: Kaihatsu to rekishi 6: Kaihatsu to seiji* [Iwanami Courses: Development and History 6: Development and Politics] (Iwanami Shoten, 1998); Tadashi Kimiya, *Kankoku—Minshuka to keizai hatten no dainamizumu* [Korea—The Dynamism of Democratization and Economic Development] (Chikuma Shobō, 2003).
14. Jessica C. Teets, Stanley Rosen, Peter Hays Gries, "Introduction: Political Change, Contestation, and Pluralization in China Today" in Peter Hays Gries, Stanley Rosen, eds., *Chinese Politics: State, Society and the Market* (Routledge, 2010); Ching Kwan Lee, Eli Friedman, "The Labor Movement," *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 20, no. 3 (July 2009); Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, "Middle-Class Mobilization," in ibid.; Lianjiang Li, Kevin J. O'Brien, "Protest Leadership in Rural China," *The China Quarterly,* no. 193 (March 2008), Yu Jianrong (Shehui kexueyuan nongcun fazhan yanjiusuo [Rural Development Institute Chinese Academy of Social Sciences]),"Shakai-teki 'xiefen' jiken to gabanansu no kukyo" [Social "xiefen (venting anger)" incidents and the predicament of governance]; Masaharu Hishida, *Chūgoku: Kisōu kara no gabanansu* [China: Bottom-up Governance] (Hosei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 2010), and others.
15. Elizabeth J. Perry, "A New Rights Consciousness?" *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 20, no. 3 (July 2009), 20. See also Elizabeth J. Perry, "Studying Chinese Politics: Farewell to Revolution?" *The China Journal,* no. 57 (January 2007).
16. Masaharu Hishida, "Fuantei-ka no antei—Chūgoku kyōsantō 90-shūnen no genkyō" [Stability under Instability—Current State on the 90th Anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party], in *Toa* [Far East], (January 2012), 29; Joseph Fewsmith, "Staying in Power: What Does the Chinese Communist Party Have to Do?" in Cheng Li, ed., *China's Changing Political Landscape: Prospects for Democracy* (Brookings Institution Press, 2008), 214–15. For writing in a similar vein, see Marc J. Blecher, "Hegemony and Workers' Politics in China" in Lowell Dittmer and Guoli Liu, eds., *China's Deep Reform: Domestic Politics in Transition* (Rowan & Littlefield, 2006).
17. Dorothy J. Solinger, "Inequality's Specter Haunts China," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, vol. 171, no. 5 (June 2008), 20–22.
18. Dorothy J. Solinger, "The Political Implications of China's Social Future: Complacency, Scorn, and the Forlorn," in Li, *China's Changing Political Landscape*, 261.
19. Ibid.
20. Among the relatively few contributions based on this perception of the issue in recent years, see, for example, Andrew J. Nathan, "China's Political Trajectory: What Are the Chinese Saying?" in Li, ibid.; and Andrew J. Nathan, "Authoritarian Impermanence," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 20, no. 3 (July 2009). However, as far as the author can ascertain, there remains ample room for examination of the various aspects and content of the debate on ruling regime's side regarding political reform.
21. Masaharu Hishida, *Chūgoku kyōsantō no sabaibaru senryaku* [The Survival Strategy of the Chinese Communist Party] (Sanwa Co., Ltd., 2012).
22. The following is based on the author's unpublished research paper, "Chūgoku kyōsantō no shihai to 'minshu'—'Shin-shakaikaisō' e no seijiteki apurōchi o chūshin toshite" [Chinese Communist Party Rule and "Democratization"—The CCP's Political Approach to the 'New Social Stratum'], presented at the 2008 annual national convention of the Japan Association for Asian Studies (at Kobe Gakuin University), October 11, 2008. For the presentation the author did a discourse analysis regarding regime reform related to the political integration of the new social stratum, on two Chinese theorists, Fang Ning, Director General of Institute of Political Science, CASS, and Wang Changjiang, The Chief of Teaching and Researching Department of Party Building, Party School of the Central Committee of CCP.
23. The concepts from political party system theory used in the following passage are taken from Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis,* 1976. Tanslated by Norio Okazawa and Hideyuki Kawano as *Gendai seitō-gaku—Seitō shisutemu-ron no bunseki wakugumi* (shinsōban) (Waseda Digaku Suppanbu, 1992)
24. Pan Wei, "Fazhi yu weilai Zhongguo zhengti" [Rule of Law and the Future of China's Political System], *Zhanlüe yu guanli* [Strategy and Management], ser. 5 (1999), 32. Pan, "Toward Consultative Rule of Law Regime in China," in Suisheng Zhao ed., *Debating Political Reform in China: Rule of Law vs. Democratization* (M. E. Sharpe, 2006), 4. The main arguments of the above two is the same, but the content of the English paper is more comprehensive regarding policy visions and theoretical explanations.
25. Ibid., 20.
26. Ibid., 33–34. *Op. cit.*, Pan Wei, "Fazhi yu weilai Zhongguo zhengti," 33.
27. Tatsuo Yamada, "En Seigai teisei-ron saikō—Furanku J Guddonau to Yo Taku" [Yuan Shikai's Emperor System Theory

Reconsidered—Frank J. Goodnow and Yang Du] in Tatsuo Yamada, ed., *Rekishi no naka no gendai Chūgoku* [Modern China in History] (Keiso Shobō, 1996). Tatsuo Yamada, "En Seigai no seiji to Teisei-ron" [Yuan Shikai's Politics and Theory of Imperial Rule] in Shigeaki Uno and Satoshi Amako, eds., *Nijū-seiki no Chūgoku—Seiji hendō to kokusai keiki* [China in the 20th Century—Political Change and International Opportunities] (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1994). Pan himself earned a degree in political science from the University of California, Berkeley, in the 1990s. In this respect Pan like Goodnow who served as the first president of the American Political Science Association, is a scholar of American political science.

28. David Shambaugh, *China's Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation* (University of California Press and Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2008), 175.
29. Ibid., 179–180.
30. Ibid., 180.
31. For example, see Wang Changjiang (Central Party School of CCP), "Shissei Nōryoku no kyōka to tōnai minshu" [Strengthening of Administrative Capacity and Party Internal Democratization] in op. cit., Hishida, ed., *Chūgoku: Kisō kara no gabanansu* [China: Bottom-up Governance]; Lin Xueqi (Party School of the Shandong Provincial Committee of CCP), "Dangnei xuanju 90 nian: moshi yanjin, cunzai wenti, lujing xuanze" [Party Election 90 Years: Evolution of Patterns, Existence of Problems, and Selection of Path] in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi keyan guanlibu ed., *Zhongguo Gongchandang 90nian yanjiu wenji (Shang)* [A Collection of Papers on the 90th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Chinese Communist Party, vol.1], (Central Literature Publishing House, 2011), and others.
32. Lowenthal, "On 'Established' Communist Party Regimes," 801.
33. Andrew J. Nathan, "China's Constitutionalist Option," *Journal of Democracy* (October 1996).
34. Joseph Fewsmith, "Now for the Hard Part: Into the Next Decade," Global Asia, vol. 5, no. 2 (Summer 2010), 19–21. Alice Miller, "Dilemmas of Globalization and Governance," in Roderick MacFarquhar ed., *The Politics of China: Sixty Years of the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge University Press, 2011, 3rd ed.), 598.
35. Shi, "China," 216–17. In the original text it states 16.3percent, but this appears to be an erroneous entry.
36. Jie Chen, Bruce J. Dickson, "Allies of the State: Democratic Support and Regime Support among China's Private Entrepreneurs," *The China Quarterly*, no. 196 (December 2008), 795; Chen, Dickson, *Allies of the State: China's Private Entrepreneurs and Democratic Change* (Harvard University Press, 2010), 73–74, 103.
37. Larry Diamond, "Thinking about Hybrid Regimes," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 13, no. 2 (April 2002), 21.
38. Ibid., 30–31. In recent years the following representative research has been published regarding "competitive authoritarianism." In these works, as with the passages from Diamond included in the text, China is placed under the category of "closed regimes" as a subdivision of "full-scale authoritarianism." Steven Levitsky, Lucian A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 7. In addition, see Stephan Ortmann, "Singapore: Authoritarian but Newly Competitive," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 22, no. 4 (October 2011).
39. Following a different line of reasoning from the author, Shigeo Nishimura and Ryosei Kokubun argue the necessity of understanding "Consultative Authoritarianism" and "Pluralistic Authoritarianism" as political corollaries of the party-state system as an initial focal point for an overview of the entirety of Chinese politics in the 21st century. Shigeo Nishimura, Ryosei Kokubun, *Sōsho Chūgoku-teki mondai-gun I: Tō to kokka—Seiji taisei no kiseki* [Chinese Issues Ser. I The Party and the State—The Trajectory of Political Regime] (Iwanami Shoten, 2009), 215.
40. Keiichi Tsunekawa, "Kaihatsu keizaigaku kara kaihatsu seijigaku e" [From Developmental Economics to Developmental Political Science] in Junzo Kawada et al., eds., *Iwanami kōza: Kaihatsu to rekishi 6: Kaihatsu to seiji* [Iwanami Courses: Development and History 6: Development and Politics] (Iwanami Shoten, 1998), 19.
41. Michael Oksenberg, "Confronting a Classic Dilemma," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 9, no. 1 (January 1998), 30–32.
42. Yūji Miyamoto, who served as Japanese ambassador to China from 2006 to 2010, shares in his writings his impression that, "the gut feeling I have gotten from observing China since the beginning of the 1980s" is that "overall, the adaptability of the Chinese Communist Party is high." (Yūji Miyamoto, *Kore kara, Chūgoku to dō tsukiau ka* [How Do We Get Along with China from Now On] (Nihon Keizai Shimbunsha, 2011), 40.
43. It is the author's intention to address electoral democracy in China in a future paper.