JMSC Working Papers

WATCHWORDS
Reading China through its Political Vocabulary

By Qian Gang*

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Introduction
WATCHWORDS: THE LIFE OF THE PARTY

To outsiders, the political catchphrases deployed by China's top leaders seem like the stiffest sort of nonsense. What do they mean when they drone on about the "Four Basic Principles," or "socialism with Chinese characteristics"? Most Chinese are outsiders too, unable to say exactly, for example, the meaning of a "scientific view of development."

But understanding what the Chinese Communist Party is saying — the vocabularies it uses and why — is fundamental for anyone who hopes to makes sense of the topsy-turvy world of Chinese politics. As a Leninist party, the Chinese Communist Party has always placed a strong emphasis on propaganda. It is infatuated with sloganeering, and it often turns to mass mobilization to achieve its political objectives. The phrases used by the Party are known as *tifa* (提法) — what, for the purpose of this series, I am calling "watchwords." Matters of considerable nuance, *tifa* are always used deliberately, never profligately. They can be seen as political signals or signposts.

Every five years, the prevailing watchwords of the Chinese Communist Party march out in the political report to the National Congress. Each political report can be regarded as the Party's "general lexicon." Certain statements are to be formulated after extensive deliberations and internal debates. And phrases ebb and flow; certain words may appear with great frequency in one report then drop out of sight in the succeeding one. Watchwords are born, and watchwords die.

Watchwords may seem like fussy word games, but they are significant in that they reflect the outcomes of power plays within the Party. Even the subtlest of changes to the lexicon can communicate changes within China's prevailing politics.

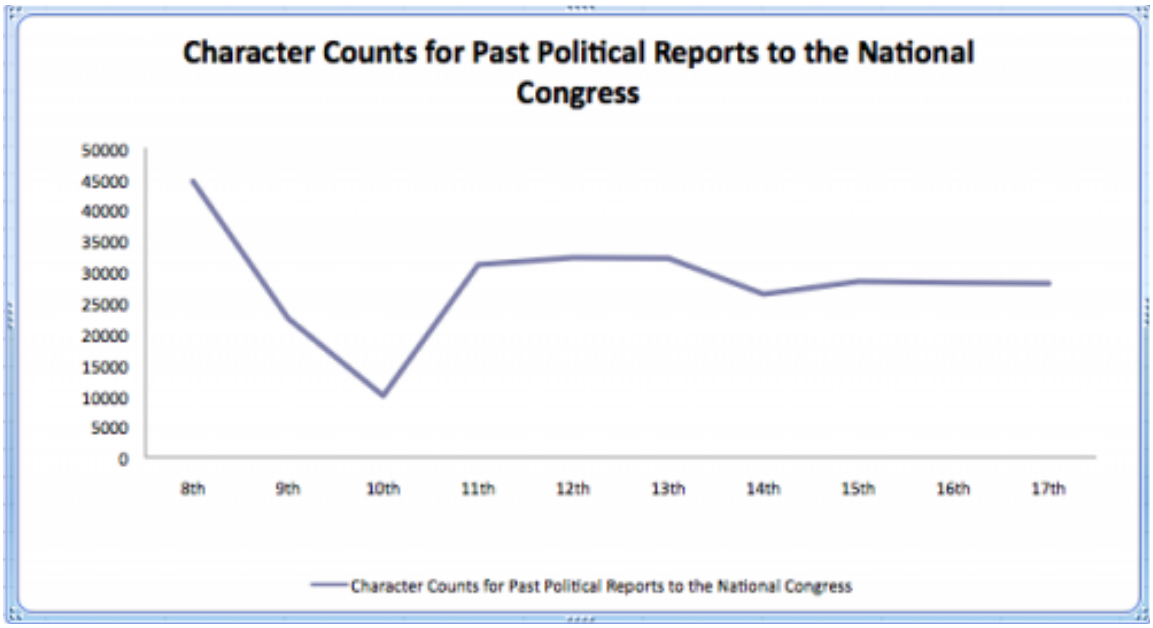
[ABOVE: Chairman Mao addresses the 8th National Congress in 1956.]

Six national congresses were held in the first eight years after the founding of the Party. It was decided at the 6th National Congress, in Moscow in 1928 (the only congress held outside China), that the Party's national congresses would be convened annually, but it was 17 years until the next congress was held, in 1945, just months before Japan's surrender at the end of the Second World War.

The 1945 meeting, held in Yan'an, decided to convene national congresses every three years, but it was another 11 years until the 8th National Congress in 1956. The 8th National Congress decided on the format that prevails today, of holding the congresses every five years. But political turmoil prevailed once again, the tragedies of the Great Leap Forward and the Great Chinese Famine (1958-1961), pushing the next national congress back 13 years to 1969.

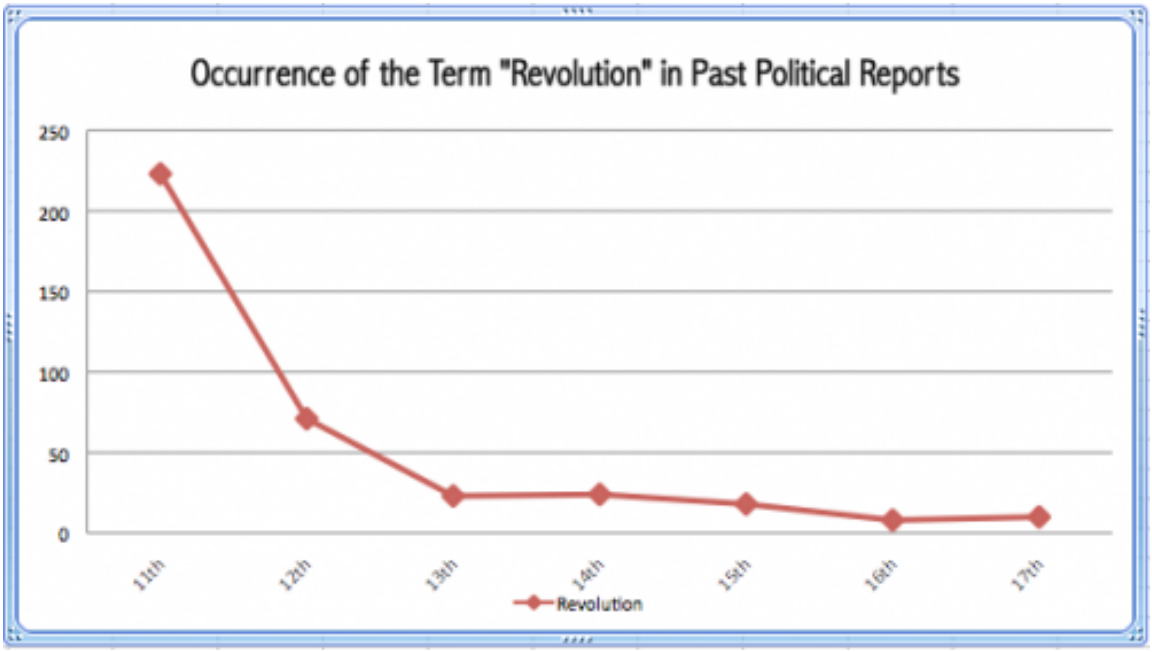
The 10th National Congress, originally to be held in 1974, was moved up to 1973 following the sudden, and suspicious, death of Lin Biao, who had been designated as Mao Zedong's successor at the 9th National Congress. The 11th National Congress was also eventually pushed ahead to 1977 owing to the downfall of the Gang of Four and the end of the Cultural Revolution.

The political reports to the 8th, 9th and 10th national congresses varied greatly in terms of length. The report to the 8th National Congress was 45,000 characters long. The report to the 9th National Congress was less than half that, at 20,000 characters. The report to the 10th National Congress, drafted by a very ill Zhou Enlai, was just 10,000 characters.



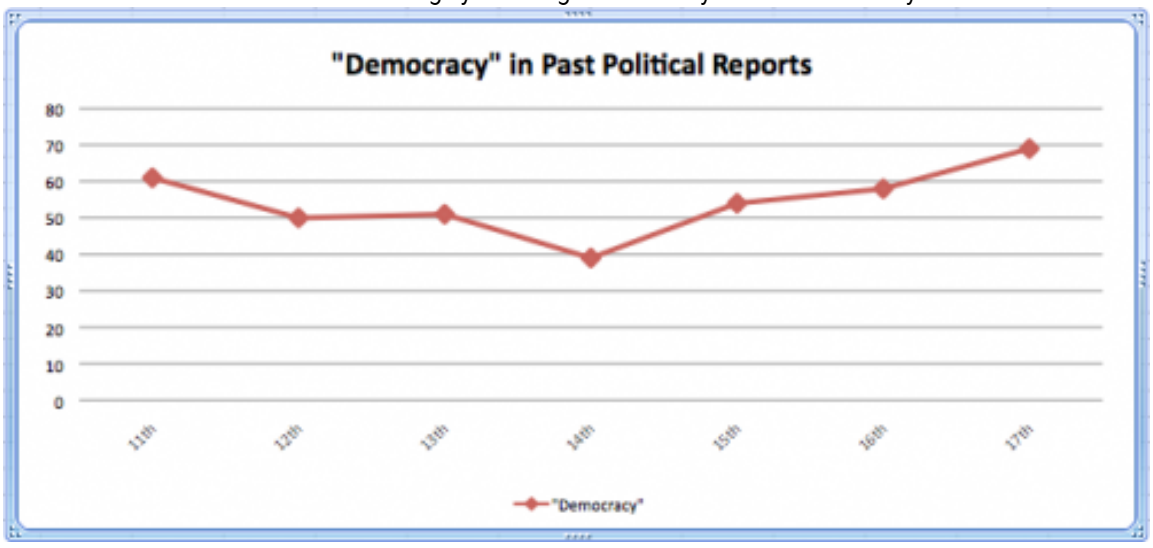
Since the end of the Cultural Revolution, national congresses have settled into a pattern, held every five years since the 11th National Congress in 1977. The political reports emerging from these congresses have consistently been around 30,000 characters. Since these congresses have all been held in the same historical era — the post-Mao era — we can compare the frequencies of various Party watchwords in respective political reports. The shifts in frequency of various terms in the Party lexicon map nicely with contemporary political history.

Note how watchwords that once reigned supreme over time exit the stage, for example the watchword "revolution"[i]:

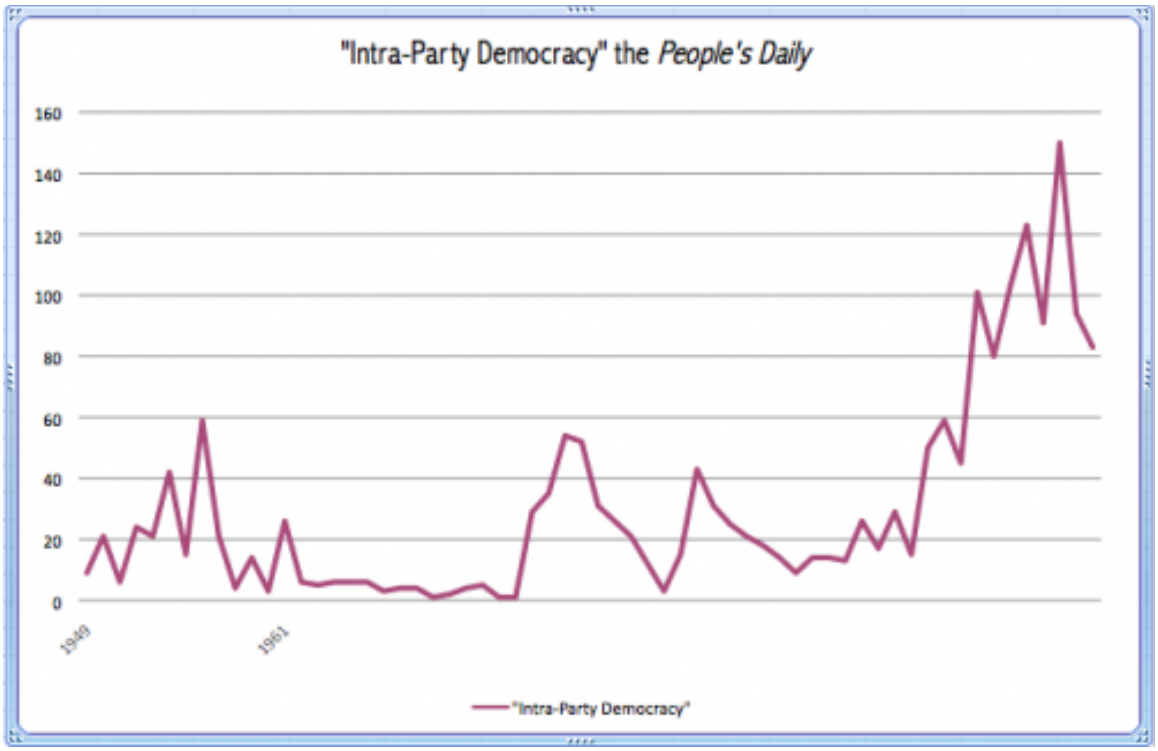


Some terms have experienced clear ups and downs over the past 30 years, hot in one political report and cold the next. Here, for example, is "Mao Zedong" as it has appeared in political reports over the years:

One term that has remained largely unchanged over the years is "democracy":

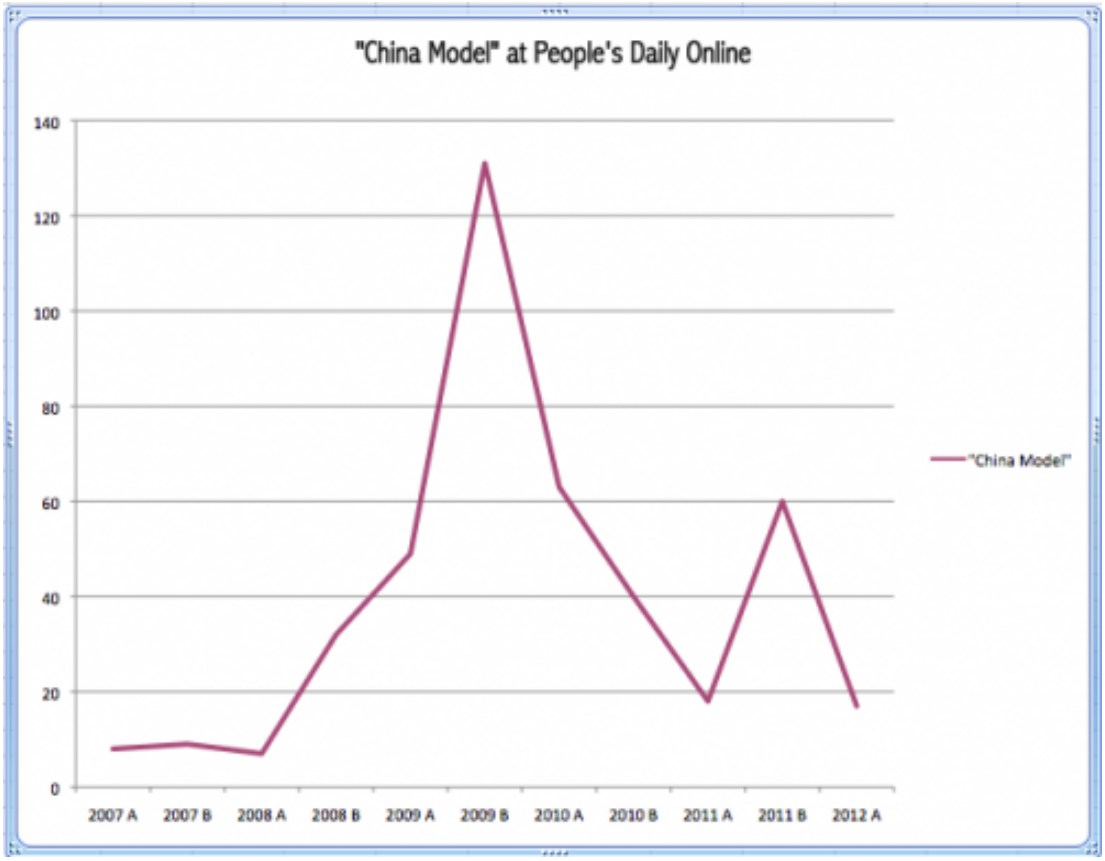


The watchwords of the Party's senior leadership leave clear impressions in China's official media, like the *People's Daily*. Internet databases and search tools have simplified the process of analyzing these watchwords. For example, we can look at the frequencies with which the phrase "intra-party democracy" has appeared in the *People's Daily* going all the way back to 1949[ii].



There are a number of peaks for "intra-party democracy" in the above graph. The 1956 peak reflects criticism of Stalin's personality cult in Nikita Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in February 1956, and discussion of expanding "democracy" during China's 8th National Congress later that year. The 1987 peak corresponds to the 13th National Congress, which defined political reform as a central agenda in the political report by Zhao Ziyang. The term "intra-party democracy" has also warmed up somewhat during Hu Jintao's tenure, and this has prompted some to ask whether he might be testing the waters for political reform.

Online search engines are a valuable source for watchword analysis. The following graph plots changes in frequency for the term "China Model" between 2007 and 2012 on People's Daily Online. The two peaks shown below in fact correspond to two shifts toward the left in China's internal politics:



Keyword analysis can also be applied to all Chinese media, either for full-text occurrences of a given watchword or for headline occurrences, thereby drawing comparisons of how political vocabularies are communicated (in terms of context, frequency, etc.) in various media. For example, clear differences appear in how Party-run media (like the *People's Daily*) and market-driven media (like Guangzhou's *Southern Metropolis Daily*) use political vocabularies in the Party lexicon[iii].

The bewildering world of the Party lexicon can be a source of frustration. But you must never dismiss these vocabularies as empty, for there are secrets hidden in their deployment.

Through its history the Chinese Communist Party has invented many "red" slogans to manipulate the Chinese public, but the Party is also in a sense held hostage by these vocabularies.

In order to help people understand the basic disposition of political terminologies in China today, I separate them into four color-coded segments along a red-blue scale.

There are four colors in the figure above: *deep red*, *light red*, *light blue*, *deep blue*. Deep-red political terms include "class struggle," "dictatorship of the proletariat," and "Mao Zedong Thought." These are legacies of the totalitarian era, but they have not altogether disappeared in the present day, and their influence lingers. The officially sanctioned vocabularies of the Party today are light red, and they hold lexical supremacy in today's politics.

Light-blue terms are those in popular use in China, permitted in China's media but rarely, if ever, used officially (particularly at the level of the standing committee of the Central Politburo). Between the light blue and dark blue sections, we can imagine a line of prohibition. Deep-blue terms, ones explicitly prohibited from use, include politically sensitive terms like "separation of powers," "multiparty system," "nationalization of the armed forces," "lifting the ban on political parties" (*jiechu dang jin*) and "lifting media restrictions" (*jiechu bao jin*).[iv]

As we observe this year's 18th National Congress, 10 terms in the Party lexicon deserve particular attention. These are:

1. The Four Basic Principles (四项基本原则), which include "Mao Zedong Thought" (毛泽东思想).
2. Stability preservation (维稳).
3. Political reform (政治体制改革).
4. Cultural Revolution (文革).
5. Power is given by the people (权为民所赋).
6. The rights of decision-making, implementation and supervision (决策权, 执行权, 监督权)
7. Intra-party democracy (党内民主)
8. Social construction (社会建设)
9. The scientific view of development (科学发展观)
10. Socialism with Chinese characteristics (中国特色社会主义)

As dry and obnoxious as they may seem, political watchwords become the life of the Party in China. The above watchwords are 10 keys to unlocking the significance of the political report to the 18th National Congress. In this series I tackle each of these watchwords in turn, explaining their meanings and origins, and their political journeys within the Party lexicon.

Chapter One
READING DEEP RED

Keywords: The Four Basic Principles and Mao Zedong Thought (四项基本原则/毛泽东思想)

What political trends can we expect to unfold during the 18th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, a once-in-a-decade leadership transition that will set the tone for China's domestic political environment for years to come? Will political reform cower in the wings, barely visible? Or will it stride out to center stage?

Certainly, China's political battles are complicated affairs, waged largely behind the scenes, backstage, between flesh-and-blood Party leaders with their own, competing agendas and ideological proclivities. But the language of China's Party politics, the script that emerges as "consensus" from this backstage melee, can offer us important clues to emerging trends, as well as to the strength of regressive political impulses. China's political script is rewritten every five years, taking shape in the "political report" delivered at each National Congress.

On the question of political reform, there is one important terminology in particular we should remain alert to if we hope to read, between the lines as it were, the larger political climate of the 18th National Congress: the "Four Basic Principles," or *sixiang jiben yuanze*.

If this term continues to appear in the political report to the 18th National Congress, it is possible to say with some certainty that, barring shifts of a more dramatic nature, there is little hope or expectation for substantive political reform. By the same token, a strong showing in the political report for this buzzword would signal an unfortunate turnabout, a backsliding, on the issue of political reform. But the vanishing of the term altogether would be the most important signpost for political reform.

So where does this term, the "Four Basic Principles," come from? And what does it mean?

On March 30, 1979, Deng Xiaoping marked out the boundaries for a process of reform that had just begun. He said:

> First, we must adhere to the socialist path; second, we must adhere to a dictatorship of the proletariat; third, we must adhere to the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party; fourth, we must adhere to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.[v]

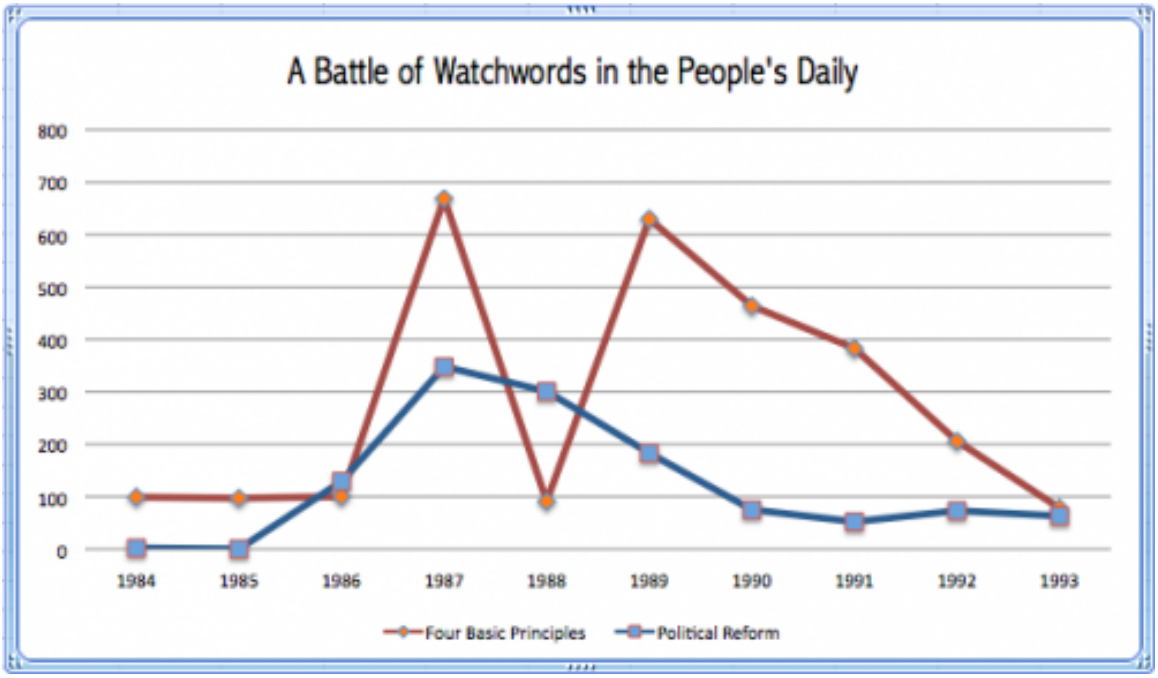
In the 1980s, Deng Xiaoping's "Four Basic Principles" formed the very heart of China's political orthodoxy. However, they later became the most effective tool by which those on China's extreme political left opposed Deng's policy of reform and opening. Deng Xiaoping's political line in the 1980s was referred to also as the "third plenary political line" (established, that is, during the third plenary session of the 11th National Congress, held in 1978).

In the ideological struggles that marked the first half of the 1980s, General Secretary Hu Yaobang, a strong advocate of economic and political reform, was sharply criticized by the chief proponents of the left for contravening the Four Basic Principles. Hu was eventually forced to resign his position as General Secretary, opponents claiming his light-handed approach had contributed to public demonstrations in 1987 calling for greater economic and political liberalization. Two years later, it was again the truncheon of the Four Basic Principles that leftists wielded to force the resignation of Hu Yaobang's successor, Zhao Ziyang,

in the aftermath of the June 4, 1989, Tiananmen Incident. As a result, Deng Xiaoping lost a capable ally.

Hu and Zhao were both conscientious actors for political reform. But as the veteran Xinhua News Agency reporter Yang Jisheng wrote in his chronicle of that time, *Political Struggle in the Era of Reform*: "The first issue to be resolved in terms of political reform is checks and balances on power.[vi] Checks and balances on power would mean upsetting the current leadership system. In both cases, the removal of these general secretaries was prompted by [the struggle over] political reform. In the conflict between the Four Basic Principles and political reform, there was no room at all for either of them to maneuver."

These two terms, the "Four Basic Principles" and "political system reforms" – the more drawn out term in Chinese for political reform – were locked in fierce opposition throughout the 1980s. In the Party's official mouthpiece, the People's Daily, we can still glimpse the fossil evidence of this tension.[vii]



In 1988, when the political reform movement was reaching its zenith, the Four Basic Principles were in rapid retreat, as can be seen from the graph above, which plots occurrences of each term in the People's Daily over time. In 1989 the situation was reversed. But we can also see that by the 1990s both terms were in decline, political reform bottoming out by 1990, and the Four Basic Principles joining it at the bottom in 1993, by which time the country was preoccupied with an unprecedented economic acceleration.
In China's media today the Four Basic Principles occur with very low frequency. In the 10 years since President Hu Jintao came to power, the term has appeared in headlines in the People's Daily on just three occasions – in 2004, 2007 and 2008.

The last instance came as the Party commemorated the 30th anniversary of China's policy of economic reform and opening. The second instance came as the newspaper unpacked President Hu Jintao's political report to the 17th National Congress of the CCP in 2007, in which he mentioned the Four Basic Principles.

But the most important case by far was the first one, in 2004. This was the handiwork of one of the most prominent members of China's Maoist faction, Chen Kuiyuan (陈奎元), the head of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Commemorating the centennial of Deng Xiaoping's birth that year, on August 22, Chen Kuiyuan remarked: "The adherence to the Four Basic Principles is one of Deng Xiaoping's greatest contributions to the socialist cause." In a clever stroke of leftist spin, Chen was suggesting that the greatest legacy of the man who has been called the architect of China's economic rise, was not reform, but in fact the political orthodoxy of the Four Basic Principles.[viii]

2004年8月27日 星期五 第六版 人民日报 要闻

在邓小平生平和思想研讨会开幕式上的发言

（2004年8月21日）

中共中央书记处书记、中央军委委员、总政治部主任 徐才厚

坚持四项基本原则，是邓小平对中国社会主义事业的伟大贡献

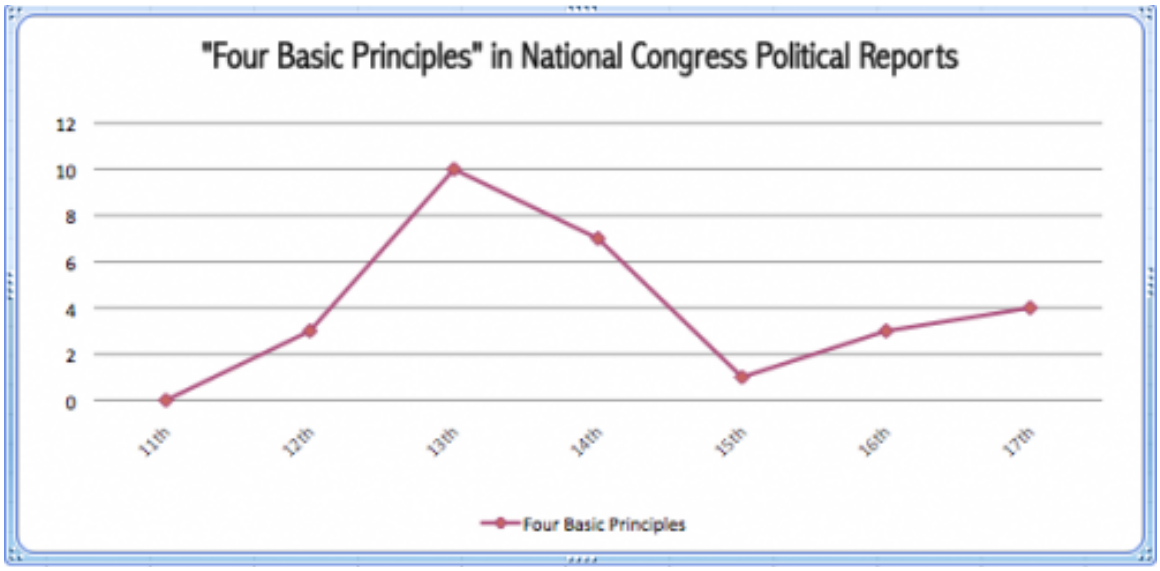
——在邓小平生平和思想研讨会开幕式上的发言

（二〇〇四年八月二十一日）

全国政协副主席、中国社会科学院院长 陈奎元

[ABOVE: The People's Daily runs an article by Chen Kuiyuan in which he says the Four Basic Principles were Deng Xiaoping's greatest contribution to the socialist cause.]

Here is how the term Four Basic Principles has played out in successive political reports from the 11th National Congress in 1977 to the 17th National Congress in 2007:



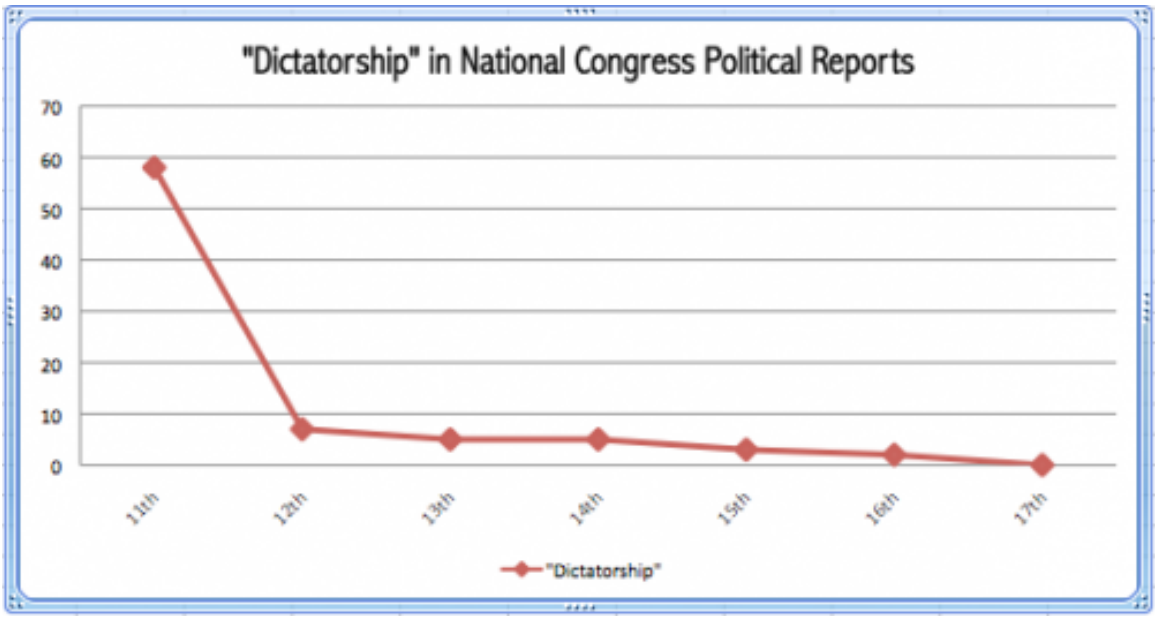
The 13th National Congress in 1987 was the meeting at which political reform became a part of the agenda. But Hu Yaobang's resignation had come at the beginning of that year, and his successor, Zhao Ziyang, had to waver his way across a political tightrope. He did not dare shortchange the Four Basic Principles and risk drawing fire from his political opponents. So the term peaked just as political reform was in its inception as an issue.

The term came up just once in President Jiang Zemin's report to the 15th National Congress in 1997, as a nod of acknowledgement, but without particular emphasis. One question remains: why, in President Hu Jintao's report to the 17th National Congress in 2007, did usage of the Four Basic Principles surpass both of the previous political reports, those in 1997 and 2002?

In fact, the Chinese Communist Party long ago scrapped the first two of the Four Basic Principles. China would "adhere to the socialist path," said Deng Xiaoping. But in no respect is "socialism" in China today similar to socialism as Party leaders would have understood it when Deng uttered these principles in 1979. Before the opening and reform policy was initiated, China's economic system was a system of Soviet-style planning combined with Mao Zedong-style command economics. By the standards of the day, today's China would no doubt be regarded as having taken the capitalist road.

In the second of his Four Basic Principles, Deng Xiaoping said China would "adhere to the dictatorship of the proletariat." But this idea has, not unlike the original notion of socialism, become something of an anachronism with the Party. It has virtually disappeared from use, except in rare instances where it is raised as a matter of historical fact. The last use of the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" as a matter of current relevance in the official *People's Daily* newspaper, in fact, was the August 2004 article by Chen Kuiyuan, the same one I alluded to above.

The current term of favor, replacing "dictatorship of the proletariat," is "people's democratic dictatorship," or renmin minzhu zhuanzheng. And even this term is something of a rarity these days. Here I have graphed the frequency of the use of the term "dictatorship" in successive political reports.



As readers can readily see, use of the term "dictatorship" fell dramatically after the 11th National Congress, held in August 1977, and has declined ever since.

Of the remaining two of Deng Xiaoping's Four Basic Principles, the "leadership of the Chinese Communist Party" remains unshaken and unchanged. The last, "Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought," is a matter for further study and scrutiny. In particular, "Mao Zedong Thought," this deep-red expression, is like a terminological zombie, dead in one sense but in another refusing to die, vested with so much political baggage that it still haunts China's politics. Clearly, for many Party chieftains this term continues to have utility.

The term Mao Zedong Thought originated with the Party's 7th National Congress in 1945. In 1956, as the Communist International criticized the cult of personality in which the former Soviet leader Joseph Stalin had enveloped himself, it seemed untimely to harp on the political philosophy of China's own personal dictator; Mao Zedong Thought was dropped at the 8th National Congress in September 1956. But after the Lushan Conference in 1959, the term resurfaced in the People's Daily. This marked a direct and concerted campaign to preserve Mao's moral and political authority following the calamities of the Great Leap Forward and the Great Chinese Famine.

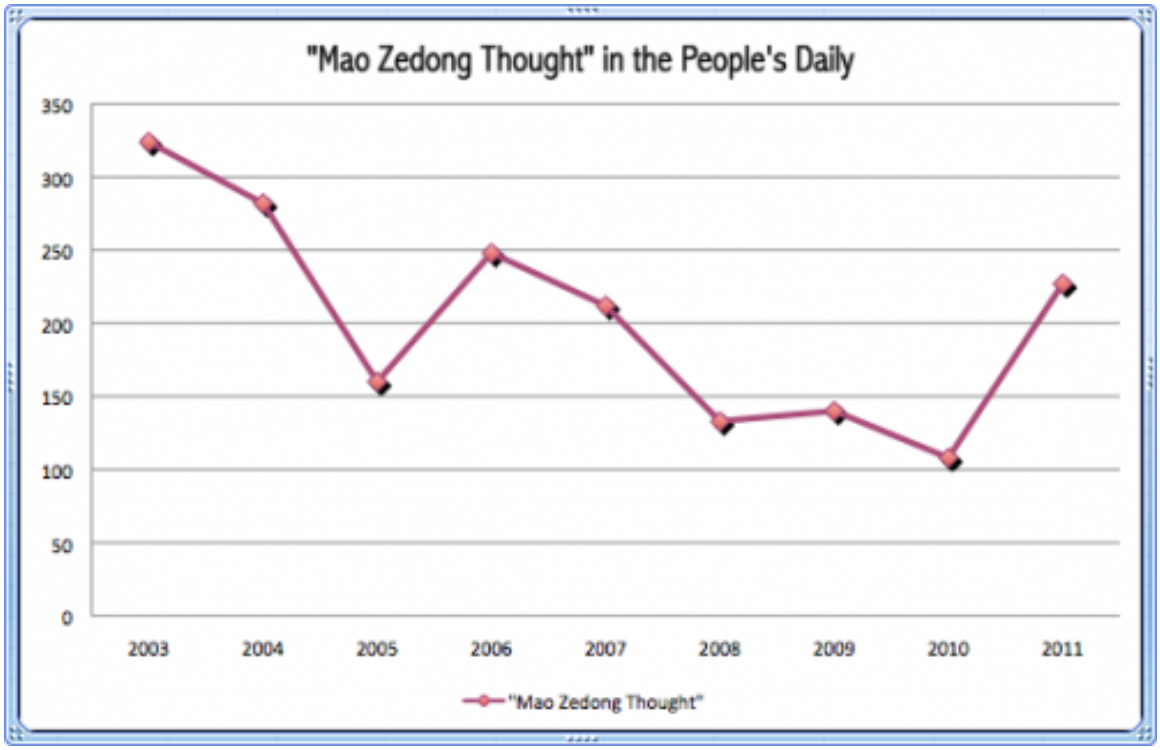
Under the direction of Marshal Lin Biao, the People's Liberation Army took the vanguard in "holding high the great red banner of Mao Zedong Thought." Before the onset of the Cultural Revolution, the term was already running hot in the Party newspapers. During the Cultural Revolution, the term blazed hotter than the sun in the sky, and more than a few lives were scorched by this ideological weapon, jailed and even killed for "opposing Mao Zedong Thought."

After the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese Communist Party cautiously questioned and redressed the errors of Mao Zedong. Many of the most integral aspects of Mao Zedong Thought — the people's communes, class struggle, continuing revolution — were scrapped. But the hardened shell of Mao Zedong Thought stubbornly remained, venerated by some. Here is how the term has fared from the 11th National Congress in 1977 to the 17th National Congress in 2007:

During the 11th and 12th National Congresses in 1977 and 1982 respectively, Mao Zedong Thought continued to make a strong showing. But as the political reform agenda was kick-started at the 13th National Congress in 1987, the term sank to an historic low. For Maoists within the Party, the chaos that followed the bloody crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing on June 4, 1989, was an opportunity to restore their leftist agenda; the term Mao Zedong Thought made a comeback in the 1990s, rising steadily through to the 15th National Congress in 1997. In 2002, as he handed the presidency over to Hu Jintao, Jiang Zemin tried to shift China's politics to the right, and Mao Zedong Thought was played down somewhat in that year's political report. Five years later, in Hu Jintao's report to the 17th National Congress, the term trended upward yet again.

The uptick of Mao Zedong Thought in the 2007 political report might have been dismissed as incidental. But there were other signs too. In 2009, a mass military procession, full of pomp and pageantry, was planned to commemorate the Party's 60th anniversary. Initially, there were to be three major parade groups eulogizing the Party leaders of the reform era — Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. Three days before the celebrations, however, a fourth "Mao Zedong Thought parade column" was added to the mix.[ix] For those awaiting a renewed political reform agenda, the sudden appearance of this parade column was like a thunder roll, signaling stormy days ahead.

President Hu Jintao seems to have been even more tolerant of China's Maoist left than his predecessor, Jiang Zemin, and has made no apparent attempts to stay the leftists' advance. The following is a graph of occurrences of "Mao Zedong Thought" in the People's Daily during Hu Jintao's term in office:



The 2011 peak holds not just for the Party's official newspaper, the People's Daily, but also for its robust online portal, People's Daily Online, where occurrences of Mao Zedong Thought in 2011 were higher than in the previous three years. This is a reflection of the din of so-called red propaganda, which

was driven to a national climax in 2011 by the "red song" campaign of prominent Party "princeling" Bo Xilai, then a top Party leader in the city of Chongqing.

Since the dramatic fall of Bo Xilai in 2012, the term Mao Zedong Thought has cooled somewhat in China's official Party media. In the first half of 2012, the term appeared 67 times in the People's Daily (against 227 times for all of 2011). But there are no signs that the term is going away.

On July 12, 2012, China's Central Party School held a commencement ceremony at which Xi Jinping, Hu Jintao's presumed successor, delivered the address. According to the official news report from the People's Daily, the graduates had, thanks to their activities at the school, "deepened their study and understanding of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and particularly the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics." Not long after, on July 23, President Hu Jintao addressed a seminar of provincial-level Party cadres and spoke of the "guidance" of Marxism and Mao Zedong Thought.

Usage of the term Four Basic Principles by senior Party officials today is roughly the same as the term Mao Zedong Thought. Both are used sparingly, but are still in use. A search of the People's Daily from the 17th National Congress in 2007 up to August 2012 shows that Hu Jintao, Wu Bangguo, He Guoqiang and Xi Jinping have all used the term Four Basic Principles. Premier Wen Jiabao has made many public speeches during this time, but not once since 2008 has he used Four Basic Principles or Mao Zedong Thought.

The Four Basic Principles (including Mao Zedong Thought) is an important measuring stick by which we can observe the political trends of the 18th National Congress. Before the 17th National Congress in 2007, many Chinese had hoped for the possibility of political reform. I wrote in an essay for Hong Kong's *Yazhou Zhoukan* at the time: "Hu Jintao and his succession team have already come to the great door of political reform. The question of whether they can step over the threshold of history will be answered when we know whether their feet are still shackled by the Four Basic Principles."[x]

As it turned out, the Four Basic Principles and Mao Zedong Thought were both present in Hu Jintao's political report, and in fact were used more frequently than in the political report five years earlier. On this basis, I concluded that "we cannot harbor romantic thoughts about the possibility of political reform in the next five years."[xi] My conclusion has been borne out by political realities over the past few years. Now, once again, we can apply this measuring stick to see what possibilities the next five years might hold.

Chapter Two
PRESERVING STABILITY

Keyword: stability preservation (维护稳定/维稳)

On July 21, 2012, torrential rains devastated China's capital, Beijing. The ensuing floods claimed at least 77 lives, according to official numbers. The tragedy, which state media were quick to characterize as a "natural disaster," in fact exposed the extreme deficiencies of Beijing's municipal administration. In a panic, leaders leapt onto the defensive, and the phrase "stability preservation" came leaping into the headlines:

北京日报

BEIJING DAILY

2012年7月23日 星期一

抗击强降雨 最美北京人

郭金龙在市委市政府领导干部紧急会议上强调

当前要把工作重心转到救灾善后维稳上来

杜德印王安顺吉林出席

[ABOVE: The front page of the July 23, 2012, edition of the official *Beijing Daily*. The top headline reads: "The Focus of Work Has Now Shifted To Stability Preservation in the Wake of Disaster Relief."]

"The Focus of Work Has Now Shifted To Stability Preservation in the Wake of Disaster Relief."]

The two-character Chinese phrase weiwen is an abbreviated form of the full phrase, *weihu wending*, meaning to preserve or safeguard stability. The Chinese Communist Party has many such shortened

phrases, compact verbalisms that pack a political punch, invoking whole histories of policy and practice. For those versed in China's political vocabulary, these are important shibboleths.

In the phrase "stability preservation," stability is a coded reference to social disorder — which is to say, social disorder must be avoided at all cost.

In the chaos that followed the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong talked about the need for "tranquility and unity." In the 1980s, as social tensions became more acute, Deng Xiaoping first used the word "tranquility," or "anding," and later opted instead for "stability," or "wending."

Meeting with U.S. President George H.W. Bush on February 26, 1989, Deng Xiaoping said: "Before everything else, China's problems require stability."[xii] In the aftermath of the Tiananmen crackdown just over three months later, Deng again stressed this point in what quickly became a hardened phrase: "Stability is of overriding importance."[xiii]

The phrase "wending yadao yiqie" could also be translated as "stability above everything else." This term's coming of age, you might say, was heralded when it became a headline in the People's Daily on the one-year anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown in 1990.


人民日报
RENMIN RIBAO
国务院又批准16个电力项目
总投资93亿元装机容量590万千瓦
社论
稳 定 压 倒 一 切

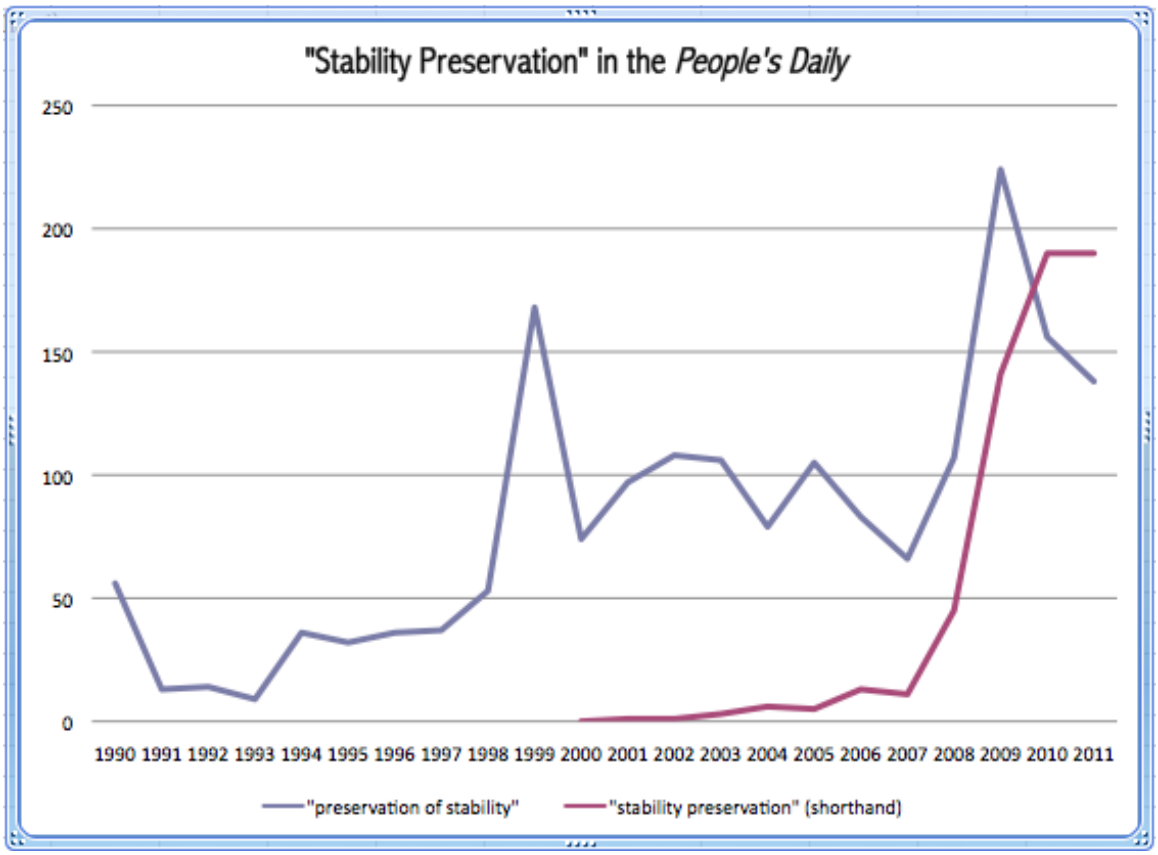
[ABOVE: In June 1990 the Party's official People's Daily includes the phrase "stability above everything else" in a headline.]

"Stability above everything else" is a slogan much beloved by Party leaders associated with the conservative faction, or baoshoupai, who oppose reforms in China. When Deng Xiaoping used this phrase, however, he used it in conjunction with his advocacy of reform and development.

When Jiang Zemin passed the baton on to Hu Jintao in 2002, a careful balance of these three ideas — stability, reform and development — was maintained. The full phrase, "Stability above everything else," this hard-edged watchword, did not appear at all in either of Jiang Zemin's political reports to the 14th and 15th national congresses in 1992 and 1997. The phrase did sneak into the political report to the 16th National Congress in 2002, the year when Hu Jintao took the presidency, but it was dropped again in the political report five years later.

Unrest in Urumqi, the capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in China's remote northwest, in the summer of 2009 brought a momentary change in this watchword's fortunes. For some time after Urumqi, "Stability above everything else" made a strong showing in China's media.

Over time, the phrase "stability preservation" has been used with greater regularity in the Chinese media. From June 1989 to July 2012, there were three peaks in the use of the phrase. The first was in 1990, the year after the Tiananmen crackdown. The second came in 1999, as the Party launched a concerted campaign against the Falun Gong religious sect. Finally, there was peak in use in 2009, which marked the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.



Terms like "stability preservation" and "incident handling", or *chutu*, short for "handling sudden-breaking incidents" (such as mass riots), are now used as a matter of routine by armed police divisions in China. The shortened form of "stability preservation," *weiwen*, was used for the first time in the official People's Daily in 2002, in the explanation accompanying a photograph of armed police. The term reached new heights of popularity in 2008 and 2009, and has maintained a high rate of use in China's media ever since.[xiv]

In this way, a term that had been used routinely only inside China's police system became one of the Party's key political watchwords. There are now many related buzzwords, phrases like "stability preservation work," "stability preservation outlays," the "stability preservation office," and "stability preservation teleconference."

In China's Hunan province, one county has even come up with a "stability preservation security deposit." Party leaders throughout the county now have 150 yuan withheld from their monthly wages, and if there are no so-called "mass incidents," or cases of unrest, on their watch, this money is paid to the officials at year's end.

As the phrase "stability preservation" has risen in prominence, so has the influence of officials associated with the Central Politics and Law Commission, the Party organization that takes charge of political and legal affairs in the country.

The *People's Daily* has even applied the term "stability preservation" to international affairs, as in this article dealing with the recent Libyan civil war, which bears the headline: "Libya Faces 'Stability Preservation' Challenge."

外国势力介入内政　部族武装各成一派

利比亚面临"维稳"挑战

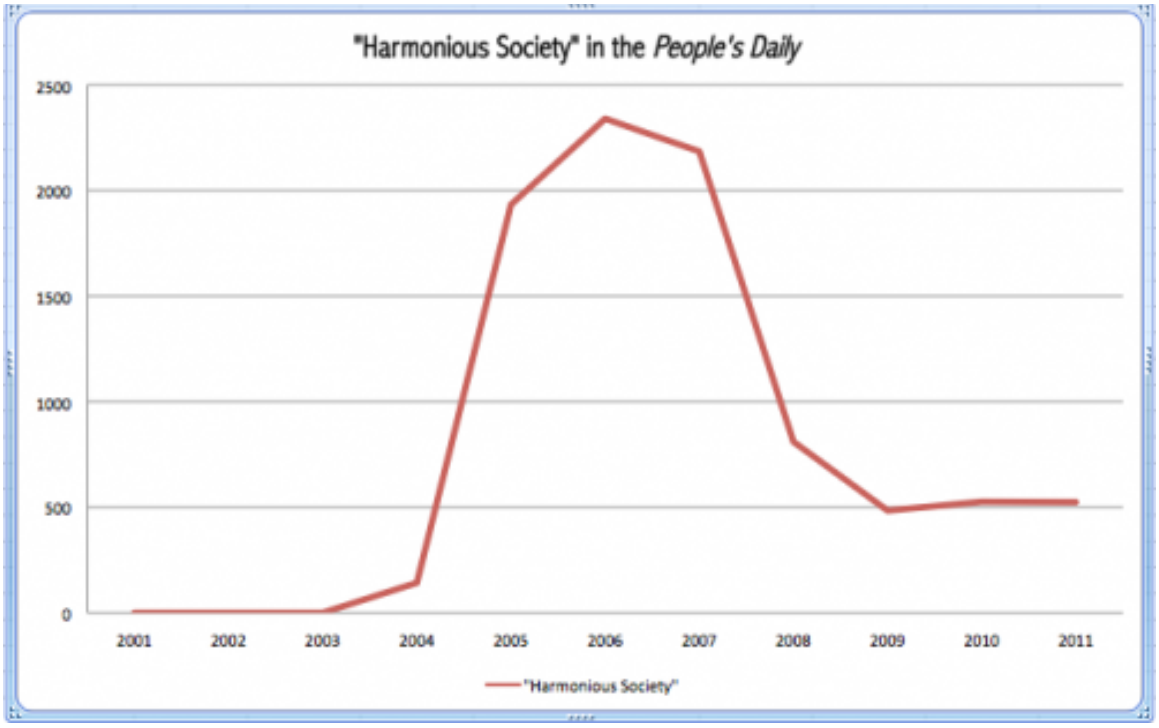
本报驻埃及记者　张　翔

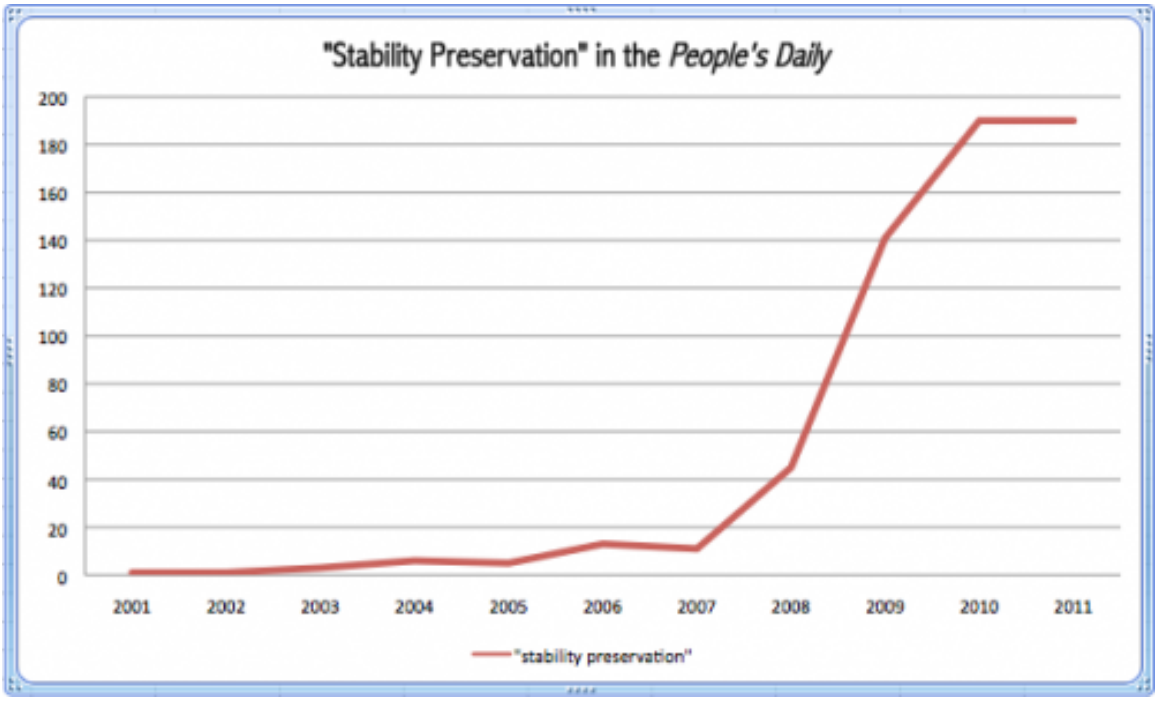
[ABOVE: A headline in the official *People's Daily* uses the Party notion of "stability preservation" to frame unrest in Libya.[xv]]

Some within China have referred to the 10 years of President Hu Jintao's leadership as the "stability preservation decade." During these years, political reform has stalled as an agenda item, and powerful interest groups have hijacked politics and the economy.

As China's national strength has advanced, China's population at large has paid a heavy toll. Social inequality in China has worsened substantially. Facing a growing tide of rights-defense movements by disenfranchised Chinese, the response by Party authorities has been to apply pressure on top of pressure. This has sometimes been called "maintaining a high-pressure environment." Its net result has been a constant outbreak of violent incidents. When thousands of residents in the Sichuanese city of Shifang took to the streets in July 2012 to protest the building of a copper alloy plant close to residential areas, the local government responded by mobilizing armed police, who sought to clear the streets in tightly advancing formations, even firing stun grenades at protesters.

When Hu Jintao came to power in 2002, China was already experiencing a worsening social crisis. In 2004, President Hu offered a rhetorical response to growing internal instability, trumpeting what he called a "harmonious society." For some time, this new watchword burgeoned, becoming visible everywhere in the Party's propaganda. But by 2007 it was already on the decline, as "stability preservation" made its rapid ascent. Here you can see both terms as they appeared in the *People's Daily* from 2003.





Together, these contrasting pictures of the "harmonious society" and "stability preservation" form a portrait of the real predicament facing President Hu Jintao. A "harmonious society" may be a pleasing idea, but it's the iron will behind "stability preservation" that packs the real punch. This fact was brought home for many Chinese internet users by the following photograph in which men in fatigues march bearing a red sign that reads: "Building a Harmonious Society." The appended caption, as the photo was shared online, became: "Who Would Dare Be Unharmonious?"

[ABOVE: A photograph circulated widely on Sina Weibo, a leading social media

platform in China, depicting riot police marching with a red sign that reads, "Building a Harmonious Society."]

In the midst of the 2012 Bo Xilai Incident, as the actions of police in the city of Chongqing — hitherto treated as principled, resolute and efficient heroes — were scrutinized and tainted with allegations of corruption, China's entire police bureaucracy was subjected to criticism. This leaves open the question of how influential the forces of "stability preservation" will remain within the mix of China's Party politics. We will have to wait and see how the 18th National Congress deals with the issue of "stability preservation." In terms of Party watchwords, this leaves us with two important questions:

1. Will the phrase "stability is of overriding importance" appear in the political report?
2. Will the phrase "stability preservation" appear in the political report?

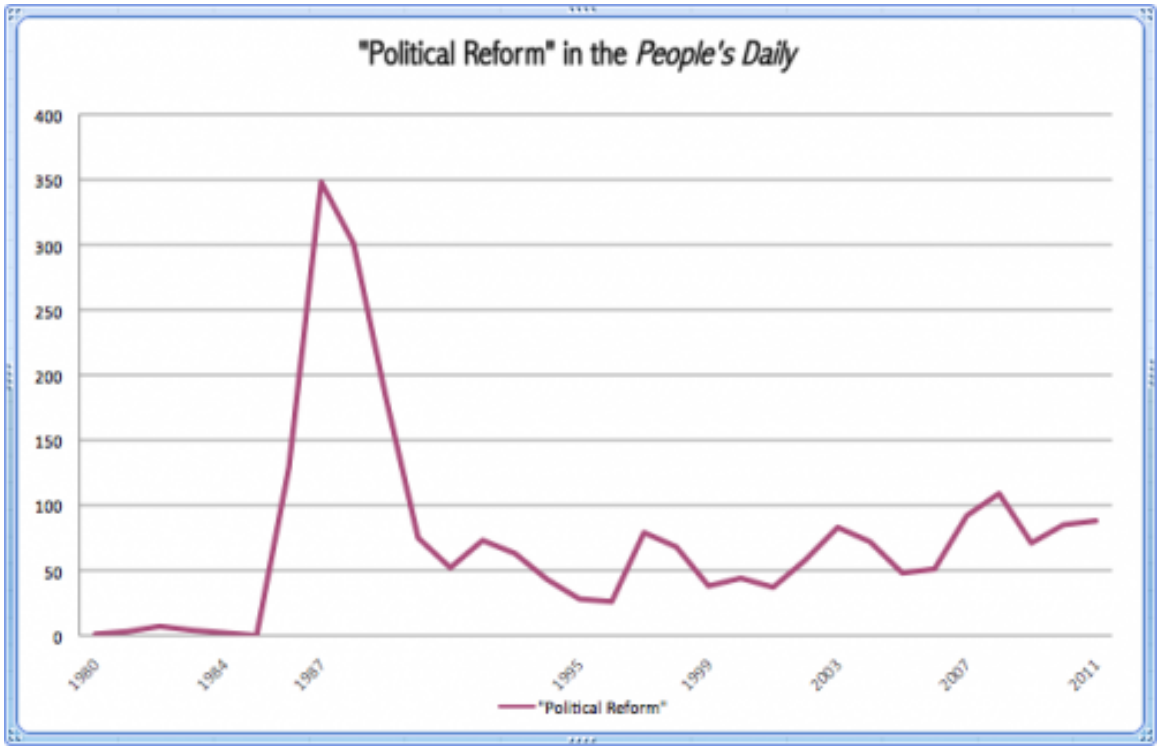
If these terms do appear, this will signal that the Party intends to perpetuate the political line of "stability preservation," and maintain an atmosphere of high pressure on all perceived forms of unrest, regardless of how legitimate the claims of those carrying out rights defense may be. If these terms do not appear in the political report, the question will be how the report deals with the agenda of social stability, and whether there are watchwords of change to read between the lines.

Chapter Three
POLITICAL REFORM

Keyword: political system reform (政治体制改革)

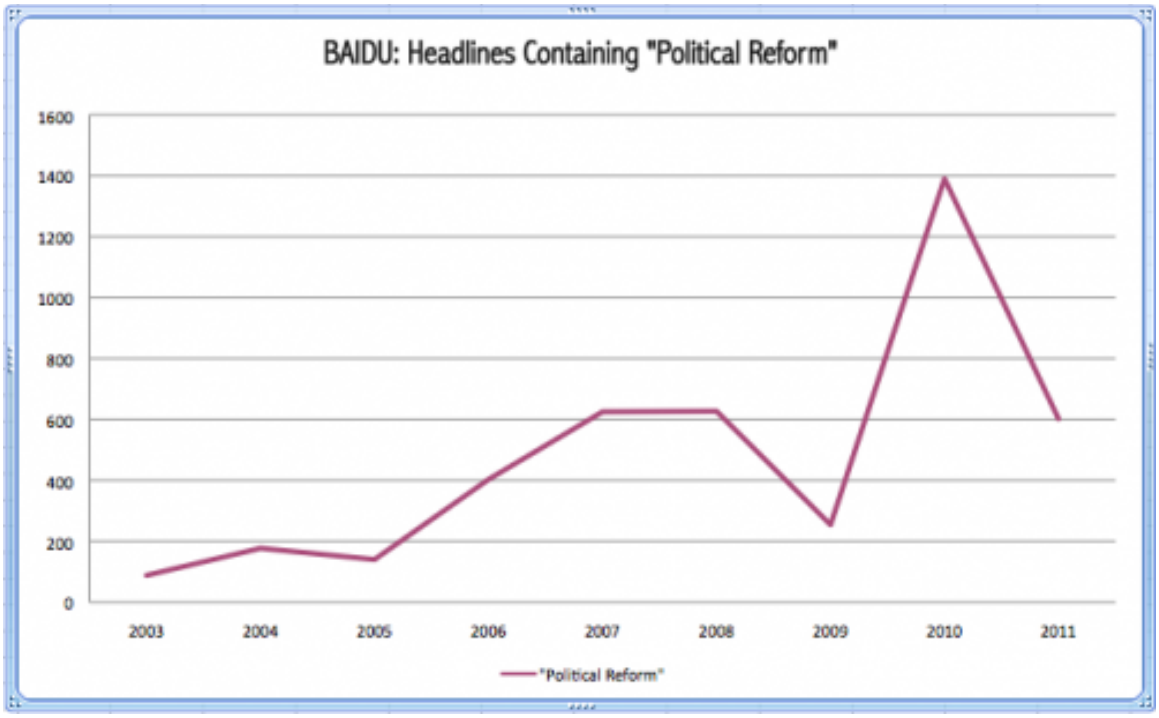
Ever since the 17th National Congress in 2007, the Chinese Communist Party has shilly-shallied on political reform. For advocates of political reform who see it as essential to China's continued development the signals emerging from the leadership have brought constant disappointment.

Searching the phrase "political system reform" — which can more simply be translated as "political reform" — in the official *People's Daily* since the beginning of the 1980s, one derives a surge and sag pattern that mirrors quite closely the history of the Party's engagement with this issue. Usage of the phrase surged before and after the 13th National Congress in 1987, during which time political reform was integral to the agenda. But the phrase fell precipitously in the wake of the June Fourth crackdown on protests in 1989, and has never recovered.



This is the historical pattern drawn by Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, whose efforts to promote political reform in the 1980s ultimately failed, and by Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, who in the years that followed were unable to move out of the shadow of June Fourth and take steps in the direction of political reform.

But China's premier, Wen Jiabao, has called repeatedly in recent years for political reform, and popular voices clamoring for political reform have by some measures grown more insistent. The pattern emerging from a search, using China's domestic Baidu search engine, of uses of "political reform" in news headlines since 2003 is quite different from the *People's Daily* pattern above.



The graph shows that before and after the 17th National Congress in 2007, the term "political reform" rose generally in China's media. These results are for all media, including Party-run newspapers, market-driven metro newspapers and magazines, and websites. The pattern may reflect broader expectations of political reform at the time. In 2009, however, China's leaders introduced a concerted campaign to propagate the so-called "China Model," and this clamor was accompanied by new attempts to stifle discussion of political reform. As China proclaimed that it had arrived at a glorious new model of development, it would certainly have been untimely to suggest there was an urgent need to reform.

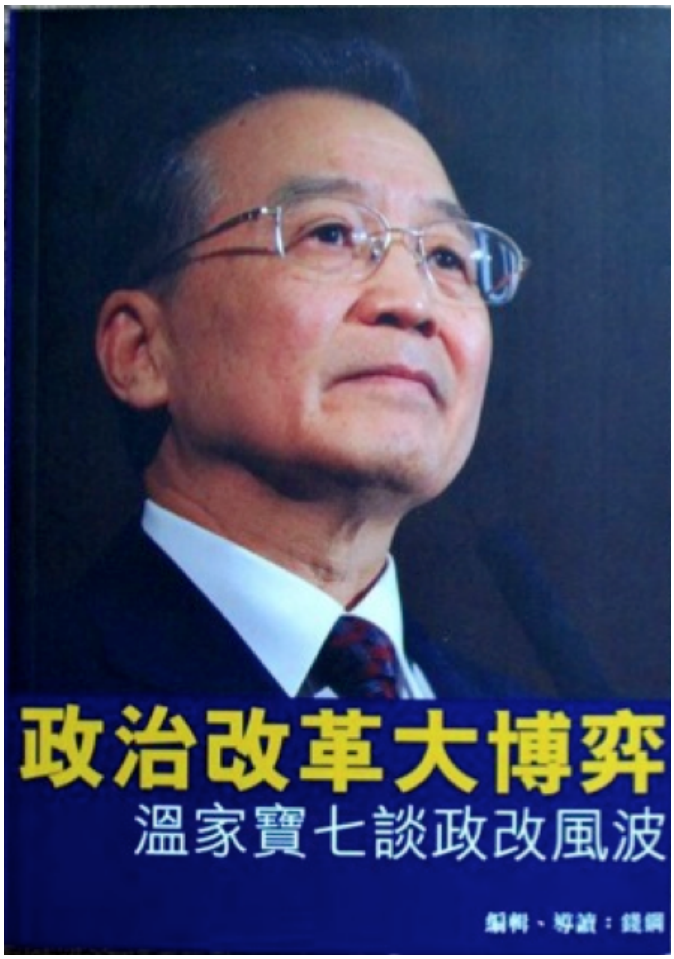
In 2010, Premier Wen Jiabao made seven important references to political reform in within a period of weeks. He remarked in a CNN interview that "the people's wishes for, and needs for, democracy and freedom are irresistible." But another bump in the "political reform" curve followed, and once again, the discussion was quickly muffled.

During the first half of 2012, there were just 31 articles in the *People's Daily* making use of the phrase "political reform," a sign that Party media remained cold on the issue. But online articles using the term during the same period totaled 781, suggesting that the issue of political reform was enjoying a new high, surpassing even the bump in 2010.

Over the years of the Hu-Wen administration, Wen Jiabao has consistently been the leader within the Standing Committee of the Chinese Communist Party who has spoken out most insistently on the issue of political reform. Premier Wen has made eight government work reports to the National People's Congress since taking office, and in every single one he has spoken of political reform. He has held eight press conferences for each of these NPC sessions, and at all but two of them (2005 and 2006) he has spoken directly about political reform. In 2007, in particular, he was insistent on the issue, exploiting each question raised by reporters as an opportunity to discuss his political reform views.

Fielding a question from a report in 2007, Wen Jiaobao said: "Things like democracy, rule of law, freedom, human rights, equality, universal love, these are not unique to capitalism. These are fruits of civilization that have emerged in common across the world through a long historical process, and they are values humanity pursues in common."[xvi] These remarks occasioned a series of fierce exchanges that year between liberal intellectuals and hardliners in China.

In October 2008, Wen Jiabao was interviewed by CNN's Fareed Zakaria while on a visit to the United States. When Zakaria asked Wen what lessons he had taken from the Tiananmen Square crackdown on protests in 1989, the premier responded: "I believe that while moving ahead with economic reforms, we also need to advance political reforms; as our development is comprehensive in nature, our reform should also be comprehensive." He added that in addition to greater rule of law, and more oversight exercised by the Chinese people, "We need to gradually improve the democratic election system so that state power will truly belong to the people and state power will be used to serve the people."[xvii]



[ABOVE: The China Media Project's book on Premier Wen Jiabao and the political reform discourse in China in 2010.]

Wen again raised the political reform issue in 2010. In his government work report to the National People's Congress in March that year, he said: "Without political reform, our economic reforms and modernization drive cannot possibly succeed; fairness and justice are brighter than the sun in the sky."[xviii]

Five months later, he used the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone and other events of moment, such as his presence at the United Nations General Assembly, to further press the issue of political reform.[xix] His remarks seemed to become heftier with each utterance. He said on one occasion: "If we run counter to the will of the people, then the road ahead is a blind alley."

In these instances, what have since become known in China as Wen Jiabao's "seven mentions of political reform," the thrust was that without political reform China's economic reforms, and the gains they have brought, will ultimately fail. Further, he said, the problem of over-concentration of power and insufficient checks and balances had to be dealt with. The ruling party had to abide by the nation's law and govern according to the Constitution. Finally, he emphasized that fairness and personal freedom were the ultimate measure of democracy and rule of law in a country.

Wen Jiabao's political reform remarks were supported by many Chinese, but they were resisted by the Party's upper ranks. The Central Propaganda Department responded by issuing stiff restrictions on coverage and discussion of political reform. On China's Twitter-like Sina Weibo, then just over a year old but already a crucial platform through which millions of Chinese gathered with a thirst for information, both of the long and shortened forms of the term "political reform" were blocked.

Premier Wen was undeterred. On September 14, 2011, attending the World Economic Forum's Summer Davos held in the Chinese city of Dalian, Wen delivered a speech in which he said, "We must continue to promote economic reform and political reform."[xx] He added that China must "adhere to national governance by rule of law, reforming on an institutional level the over-concentration of power and [the problem of] insufficient checks and balances, protecting the democratic rights of the people and their legal rights and benefits, preserving fairness and justice in society."

[ABOVE: Wen Jiabao addresses the Davos forum in 2009. Image from Flickr.com,

shared by the World Economic Forum under Creative Commons license.]

Again, on June 15, 2012, Wen said as he addressed the Counselors' Office of the State Council: "The goal we are pursuing is not just the development of the economy, but freedom and equality for the people, and comprehensive development." He spoke again about democracy, both so-called intra-party democracy – essentially, more shared decision-making within the Party – and the "institutionalization and legalization of democracy in the political and social life of the country."[xxi]

Wen Jiabao's most recent appearance was a speech delivered at Tsinghua University on September 14, 2012. Addressing the issue of universal values, Wen said that "democracy and rule of law, fairness and justice, freedom and equality, are ideals and goals for which all of humankind were striving." He again called on China to be "unswerving in carrying out political reform, developing socialist democracy and rule of law, promoting social fairness and justice, and realizing freedom and equality for all."[xxii]

The scores of speeches in which Wen Jiabao has addressed political reform during his 10 years in office have come to form a kind of peculiar garden within the terrain of contemporary politics. Within the upper echelons of the Chinese Communist Party, he has gone the farthest in voicing his hopes and expectations for political reform. Based on his remarks, his political ideals can be distilled by two simple ideas: protecting civil rights and checking government power. While Wen's ideas have met resistance at every turn, the Chinese media have done their utmost, against the odds, to utilize and pass along these "Wen-style utterances":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ORIENTAL MORNING POST
3月15日 星期四
东方早报
今日5叠 84版
改革须有人民觉醒和支持
温家宝自评担任总理9年工作有不足 最后1年一定要做好5件难事
温家宝在发布会最后说，新中国成立以来，在党和政府的领导下，我国的现代化建设事业取得了巨大的成就，但是我们也走过弯路，有过教训。党的十一届三中全会，特别是中央作出关于建国以来党的若干历史问题的决议以来，确立了解放思想、实事求是的思想路线和党的基本路线，并且做出了改革开放这一决定中国命运和前途的重大抉择。历史告诉我们，一切符合人民利益的实践，都要认真吸取历史的经验教训，并且经受住历史和实践的考验。这个道理全国人民都懂得。因此，我们对未来特充信心。

[ABOVE: A headline on the front page of the March 15, 2012, edition of Shanghai's *Oriental Morning Post* reads: "Reform Requires the Awakening and Support of the

People."[xxiii]

On May 14, 2012, the *People's Daily* devoted an entire page to a special series of articles under the main headline, "Advancing Steadily on Political Reform." The series purported to catalogue China's progress on political reform since the 16th National Congress in 2002, the year Hu Jintao stepped into the presidency. There was nothing at all momentous about the content. Most interesting, however, was the page's design, in which a pair of phrases was emphasized boldly with a traditional block-style print. "Protecting rights," read the first. "Checking power," read the second. Whatever the back-story on this *People's Daily* page, this pairing of phrases was distinctly Wen.[xxiv]

[ABOVE: The May 14, 2012, edition of the *People's Daily*. The birth of a new pair of watchwords?]

One important, recurring idea in Wen Jiabao's remarks on political reform has been that the Party must act within the scope of China's Constitution and its laws. This idea, acting within the law, first appeared in Zhao Ziyang's political report to the 13th National Congress in 1987. It has since traveled an uneven road, disappearing in the report to the 14th National Congress in 1992, reappearing with newfound emphasis at the 15th National Congress in 1998, disappearing yet again five years later, and finally re-emerging in 2007 in Hu Jintao's report to the 17th National Congress.

At the Summer Davos in 2011, Wen Jiabao said: "The most important task of a ruling party is to handle matters according to the constitution and laws, operating strictly within the scope of laws and the constitution. This means we must change the Party's proxy control of government affairs, and the state of absolutization and over-concentration of power."[xxv]

One thing to watch at the 18th National Congress will be the leadership's position on governance and law. Will the political report emphasize the idea that the Party must operate within the law, or will this phrase once again do a disappearing act?

Another political catchphrase that has become a familiar "Wen-style utterance" is "judicial independence," or *sifa duli*. In fact, judicial independence is not a particularly sensitive phrase in China's

media. Every political report since 1987 has incorporated the concept of judicial independence, though the specific phrasing has differed in every case, and *sifa duli* has not expressly been used. On April 14, 2011, in a speech to newly-appointed members of the Counselors' Office of the State Council, Wen Jiabao said: "We must uphold the rule of law, building a socialist nation of rule of law, in particular ensuring judicial independence and fairness."[xxvi]

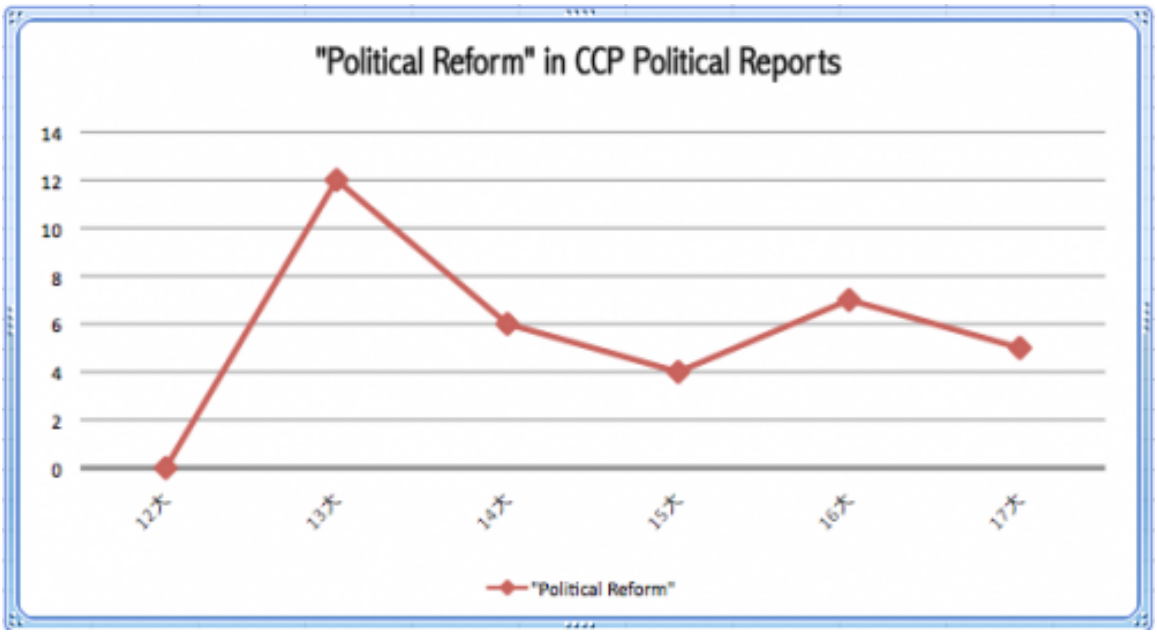
This is another watchword to watch closely at the 18th National Congress. Is it possible that "judicial independence," or *sifa duli*, could sneak into the political report?

President Hu Jintao is far more ambiguous than Premier Wen Jiabao on the issue of political reform. While Hu Jintao has mentioned political reform, it is important to note that in the 13 plenary sessions of the Central Committee he has convened since coming into office, he has not once put political reform on the agenda for a "topic discussion", or *zhuanti taolun*. In all his most important documents and speeches — from his "decision" on building a harmonious society in 2006, to his July 23, 2012, speech during a topic discussion with provincial-level leaders — Hu Jintao's remarks on political reform have occasioned disappointment.

Hu Jintao has avoided singling out the issue of political reform. He has tended to lump political, economic, social and cultural reform together, so that no single priority is emphasized, and political reform fades into the larger pattern. Most importantly, Hu has said again and again that political reforms "must be unified with adherence to the leadership of the Party, the people as the masters of the country and governing the country by rule of law." This phrase, a legacy of the Jiang Zemin era, is in fact meant to restrain political reform.

In my analysis of Hu Jintao's political report at the 17th National Congress in 2007 I found that Hu had actually backpedaled on political reform. The principal sign of this was that the phrase "political reform" was not included in a section heading in the report, the first time this had happened since the 13th National Congress in 1987. Secondly, Hu Jintao made more frequent use of the "Four Basic Principles" in his own report than Jiang Zemin had in his report to the 16th National Congress in 2002.

The following graph can serve as a benchmark against which to measure "political reform" as it appears in the political report to the 18th National Congress.



Is there hope for political reform in China? This is of course a complex question. But the watchwords used in the political report to the 18th National Congress may give us some clue to related trends within the Party leadership. Will the phrase "political reform" appear more frequently, or more prominently, than it did in 2007? And will "Wen-style utterances" like "judicial independence" make their way into the Party agenda?

Chapter Four
TOTAL DENIAL AND THE WILL TO FORGET

Keywords: Cultural Revolution (文革 or 文化大革命)

Anyone who regularly observes the topsy-turvy world of Chinese politics understands that the past, even the remote past, can exert a powerful influence on the present and future. Major historical anniversaries — like that of the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre or the founding of the Chinese Communist Party — can send either perennial chills or doctrinal fevers through China's political culture and media. In China, the past is always present, even if, as in the case of Tiananmen, it cannot be readily talked about. As we train our eyes on the 18th National Congress with a mind to reading China's future, therefore, one of the most important signs to watch will be how China's leaders deal with the country's past. Specifically, how will the political report to the 18th National Congress deal with the Cultural Revolution, that period of political and social upheaval from 1966 to 1976 in which millions of Chinese were persecuted?

[ABOVE: Does the Cultural Revolution still loom behind contemporary Chinese politics? Wen Jiabao's remarks at a press conference in March 2012 suggested tragedies like the Cultural Revolution could happen again in China if political reforms are not pursued.]

Several variants of the term "Cultural Revolution" are used in Chinese. The longest form, seldom used, is the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," or wuchan jieji wenhua dageming. More frequently used is the phrase "Cultural Revolution," or *wenhua dageming*, and its shortened form, *wenge*. Originally, this term appeared quite regularly in the media, but in recent years it has become sensitive, and therefore rare.

In early 2012, as China edged closer to the 18th National Congress and leadership struggles came to a head in the ouster of Bo Xilai, an influential "princeling," Politburo member and top leader of the municipality of Chongqing, more attention was paid to the Cultural Revolution in China's media, and in society generally. Bo Xilai's populist campaign of "red songs", which some saw as a key part of his bid for a spot in China's powerful Politburo Standing Committee, had seemed to invoke the Cultural Revolution — its aesthetic exterior if not its core principles. With Bo apparently swept from contention, the question was now open: how would Hu Jintao and his successors deal with the history of the Cultural Revolution and Mao's leftist political line?

On March 14, 2012, before Bo Xilai's fall was assured, and as the curtain closed on the National People's Congress in Beijing, Premier Wen Jiabao held a press conference to answer reporters' questions. This was Wen's last press conference as premier, and he came prepared with some of his heaviest remarks yet on political reform.

A reporter from Singapore's *Straits Times* asked, "In recent years you have raised the issue of political reform numerous times in various forums, and this has drawn a lot of attention. I'd like to ask why it is you continue to raise the issue of political reform. And where does the difficulty lie for China in carrying out political reforms?" Wen Jiabao responded as follows:

> Yes, many times in recent years I've talked about political reform — already quite comprehensively and specifically, it should be said. As to why I've given so much attention to this, it is a matter of responsibility. After the breaking up of the 'Gang of Four,' our Party issued its [1981] Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the Republic and instituted economic reform and opening.
>
> But we have not yet fully rooted out the evil legacy of the errors of the Cultural Revolution and the influence of feudalism. Along with economic development, we have also had such problems as unfair distribution of income, a lack of credibility and corruption. I know only too well that resolving these issues means not just carrying out economic reforms, but also means carrying out political reforms, especially reforms to the system of Party and state leadership.[xxvii]

Right now our reforms have come to a key stage. Without successful political reforms, we cannot possibly carry out full economic reforms, the gains we have made so far in our reform and construction could possibly be lost, new problems emerging in society cannot be fundamentally resolved, and tragedies like the Cultural Revolution could potentially happen again. Every responsible Party member and leading cadre must have a sense of urgency about this.

We should, through reforms, gradually institutionalize and legalize socialist democracy in our country. This provides the basic guarantee that we can avoid a replay of the Cultural Revolution and realize long term peace and stability in our country."

Responding to a separate question about the so-called "Wang Lijun Incident" of that February, in which the former top police official in the city of Chongqing — who had been spearheading Bo Xilai's campaign against organized crime in the city — entered the U.S. Consulate in Chengdu apparently seeking protection, Wen Jiabao said sternly that the Party and government leadership of Chongqing "must engage

in reflection."

For Wen to talk about the Cultural Revolution, political reform and other sensitive issues at such a sensitive time drew great interest from media outside China. *Ta Kung Pao*, the Chinese Communist Party-aligned newspaper in Hong Kong, splashed a large, red headline across the top of its page-four special coverage of the NPC: "Failure of Political Reform Could Mean Repeat of Cultural Revolution."[xxviii]

[ABOVE: Hong Kong's Ta Kung Pao splashes Premier Wen Jiabao's remarks about reform and the Cultural Revolution across page four.]

Even some mainland media dared prominent headlines. An article at QQ.com, one of China's most popular internet news portals, read: "If Political Reforms Do Not Succeed, Cultural Revolution Tragedy Could Be Repeated."

腾讯新闻 新闻 > 国内新闻 > 2012年全国两会 > 正文

温家宝：政改不成功“文革”悲剧可能重现

2012年03月15日02:45 北京晨报[微博] 姜葳 我要评论(1) 字号： T | T

昨日，国务院总理温家宝在北京人民大会堂与中外记者见面，并回答记者提问。新华社发

And the *New Express*, a leading commercial newspaper in the southern city of Guangzhou, ran a large picture of a waving Wen Jiabao on its front page. The headline to Wen's left read: "Without Successful Political Reform the Historical Tragedy of the Cultural Revolution Could Be Replayed." The phrase "Cultural Revolution" was bolded for emphasis in the headline.

[ABOVE: Wen Jiabao's comments on the Cultural Revolution and reform make the front page of Guangzhou's *New Express*.[xxix]]

After 1976 in China, assessments of the Cultural Revolution were closely tied to political struggles within the Chinese Communist Party, struggles that of course determined what direction the country took. The 11th National Congress in 1977 was the first major political meeting to be held following the death of Mao Zedong, the collapse of the Gang of Four, the end of the Cultural Revolution and the political comeback of Deng Xiaoping. Not only did this National Congress fail to deny the Cultural Revolution, it defined the fall of the Gang of Four as one of the great victories of the Cultural Revolution, and it continued to criticize former chairman Liu Shaoqi, who had been persecuted by Mao Zedong.

In fact, it took reformists in China, led by Deng Xiaoping, three full years to issue a full-fledged condemnation of the Cultural Revolution and its excesses. First, in the wake of the ouster of the Gang of Four, came the so-called "debates over the criteria for testing the truth," a kind of mass movement of introspection arising from vehement objections to the words of then-Chairman Hua Guofeng, who remained supportive of Mao Zedong's policies in spite of the havoc they had wrought, saying: "We will firmly uphold whatever policy decisions Chairman Mao made, following Chairman Mao's instructions without hesitation." There was the rehabilitation of those involved in the 1976 Tiananmen Incident, in which thousands had mourned the death of former Communist Party leader Zhou Enlai in April 1976 (Zhou had passed away in January that year) against the wishes of top leaders like Jiang Qing and other members of the Gang of Four. There was the sentencing of the members of the Gang of Four, and of the clique of Marshal Lin Biao. Finally, there was a protracted discussion within the Party of the breathlessly named Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party since the Founding of the Republic, which grappled with important questions lingering from the Cultural Revolution.

It was not until the end of 1981 that the Party issued a full condemnation of the Cultural Revolution. At the 12th National Congress in 1982, Hu Yaobang's political report criticized the Cultural Revolution. Five years later, Zhao Ziyang's political report to the 13th National Congress connected the issue of political reform to the prevention of further tragedies in China like the Cultural Revolution:

> . . . [We must] through reforms ensure that socialist democracy gradually moves toward systemization and legalization. This is the most basic guarantee that we can prevent a replay of the Cultural Revolution and achieve long-term peace and stability.[xxx]

In the 1980s it was essentially not sensitive to talk about the Cultural Revolution, although a small number of creative works and theoretical writings were suppressed because they directly criticized China's political system. In fact, discussion of the Cultural Revolution was beneficial to Deng Xiaoping as he sought to consolidate his power and push ahead with his reform agenda.

After the June Fourth Incident in 1989, there were far fewer references to the Cultural Revolution in the speeches of Party leaders. In his political reports to the 14th and 15th National Congresses, when President Jiang Zemin praised Deng Xiaoping's legacy and placed it in its historical context, he made passing mention of the Cultural Revolution. In his report to the 16th National Congress in 2002, Jiang Zemin made no mention at all of the Cultural Revolution.

Since coming to office, President Hu Jintao has mentioned the errors of the Cultural Revolution on

at least five occasions. One was the commemoration in 2003 of the 110-year anniversary of Mao Zedong's birth. Next came the 50-year anniversary in 2004 of the founding of the National People's Congress. That was followed by a speech to a special topic discussion among provincial leaders in 2005, a speech celebrating the 110-year anniversary in 2008 of the birth of Liu Shaoqi, and, finally, his speech to commemorate the 30th anniversary of economic reforms in 2008. In his report to the 17th National Congress in 2007, Hu Jintao mentioned the Cultural Revolution in explaining — as Jiang Zemin had — the historical context of Deng Xiaoping's achievements. But in none of his speeches has Hu Jintao summarized and reviewed the lessons of the Cultural Revolution.

The sense in China's media over the past few years has been that the space for discussion of the Cultural Revolution is actually diminishing further. When the 40th anniversary of the onset of the Cultural Revolution rolled around in 2006, many Chinese media had planned to do retrospective reports, but these were stopped across the board by a ban issued from the Party's Central Propaganda Department. There is a close match between the determination to forget the Cultural Revolution and the present stagnation of political reform in China. The Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao eras have spanned the 70th, 80th and 90th anniversaries of the founding of Chinese Communist Party, crucial milestones for the Party leadership.

In his speech to commemorate the 70th anniversary in 1991, Jiang Zemin did mention that "for a period of time, under the influence of the left, a number of mistakes were made, particularly such serious setbacks as the Cultural Revolution."[xxxi] Ten years later, commemorating the Party's 80th anniversary, Jiang Zemin made no mention at all of the Cultural Revolution. President Hu Jintao similarly absented the Cultural Revolution in his 2011 speech to commemorate the 90th anniversary.

Since 2009, in fact, Hu Jintao has made no mention of the Cultural Revolution in any of his publicly available speeches. It was in that year that Chongqing's charismatic top leader, Bo Xilai, launched his nationally popular campaign against organized crime in the city, along with his mass mobilization movement of "red" culture promotion and its Cultural Revolution-style nostalgia. Events in Chongqing emboldened China's Maoist left, which has been more active and influential since 2009.

Progress on the issue of political reform in China has already become inseparable from reckoning with the Cultural Revolution. That decade touches directly on what is now most central to China's development: creating checks and balances as restraints on political power. At its most basic, the question is this: does China move forward to establish a system of constitutional governance, or does it slide backward into a new era of Mao-style political movements, fanning populism, breaking and remolding society, wiping away competing ideas?

It was against this backdrop that Wen Jiabao's remarks about political reform and the Cultural Revolution created such a stir in China in 2012. In a sense, Wen was breaking through a taboo about discussion of this historical tragedy that has prevailed in recent years. He was using the opportunity presented by dramatic events in Chongqing to raise again the point Zhao Ziyang made in his political report to the 13th National Congress in 1987, that political reform was necessary to prevent a replay of the Cultural Revolution.

One issue to watch at the 18th National Congress is whether and how China's past will be dealt with in the political report. Will the phrase "Cultural Revolution" make a more prominent showing? How will it be talked about?

Chapter Five
WILL A NEW WATCHWORD BE BORN?

Keyword: power is given by the people

President Hu Jintao had scarcely settled into office in 2002 when he introduced his own signature watchword to the Party vocabulary. On December 5, 2002, just three weeks after the close of the 16th National Congress, Hu Jintao declared during a visit to Xibaipo, a village with symbolic importance as a Chinese Communist Party base in the late 1940s:

> Leading cadres at all levels must continue to work at the grassroots level, going among the masses, listening to the call of the masses, tending to the hardships of the masses, exercising power for the people, empathizing with the feelings of the people, and working for the well-being of the people.[xxxii]

This utterance was quickly seized upon by Hong Kong media, which summed it up as the "new three principles of the people," or *xin san min zhuyi*, a reference to the political philosophy of Sun Yat-sen, dating to the late 19th century.

In June 2003, the full-length Hu Jintao phrase was written into a policy document calling for renewed study of the political theories of Hu's predecessor, Jiang Zemin.[xxxiii] Four years later, the new three principles — the longhand form, that is, and not the "new three principles" catchphrase originated in Hong Kong — were included in Hu Jintao's political report to the 17th National Congress.[xxxiv]

On September 1, 2010, Xi Jinping, assumed to be Hu Jintao's successor ever since he was promoted to the Politburo Standing Committee at the 17th National Congress, called on Party members in a speech at the Central Party School to have a "correct view of the world, of power and of their work." He said:

> . . . The Marxist view of power can be summed up in two phrases: power is given by the people, and power is used for the people.[xxxv]

[ABOVE: The headline on this Xinhua News Agency piece posted to QQ.com reads: "Xi Jinping Describes His View of Power at the Central Party School: Power is Given By the People."]

We should note the timing of Xi Jinping's remarks, which come right in the midst of Premier Wen Jiabao's burst of statements in 2010 about political reform. Prior to Xi Jinping's speech, Wen had already made two important speeches on political reform, and he would subsequently discuss political reform on five other occasions through October 2010.

Xi Jinping's use of the phrase "power is given by the people," or *quan wei min suo fu*, is a conspicuous reference to Hu Jintao's so-called "new three principles of the people." What's more, Xi's statement builds on Hu's formula by dealing with the question of the origin of power. Guangdong's *Southern Weekly*, one of China's more outspoken newspapers, seized on this Xi Jinping moment as one of the current affairs bright spots of 2010 in China.[xxxvi]

[ABOVE: An online article at *Southern Weekly* defines Xi Jinping's remarks on the origin and meaning of power at a "bright spot" of 2010.]

Across the border in Hong Kong, commentators were more openly sanguine, certain that this comment from Xi Jinping signaled that the Party's fifth generation of leaders would jump-start political reform.

[ABOVE: A blog in Hong Kong argues in September 2010 that Xi Jinping's remarks on

the origin of power signal that the "fifth generation" of Party leaders will jumpstart political reforms.]

Xi Jinping's speech was reported by both the *People's Daily* and People's Daily Online:

[ABOVE: The Party's official *People's Daily* runs a front-page report on Xi Jinping's speech at the Central Party School.]

But the phrase "power is given by the people" is not yet a mature watchword in the Party media. The phrase has never appeared in a headline at the *People's Daily* — a coming of age ritual for any Party phrase — and it has appeared in just 11 articles in the *People's Daily* in the past two years (to July 2012). President Hu Jintao's exact attitude toward this phrase is a matter of speculation. In June 2003, Zhu Houze, a known reform advocate who once served as head of the Party's Central Propaganda Department, openly elaborated on the "new three principles of the people" at a Party meeting, saying:

> Party leaders have demanded that cadres at various levels 'exercise power for the people, empathize with the feelings of the people, and work for the well-being of the people' . . . What are we supposed to rely on to make this happen? Is it a matter of

> consciousness, or of conscience? I think the crux still lies in 'endowment of power by the people'. This, still, is the system's most fundamental security.

The phrase used by Zhu Houze, *quan wei min suo shou*, is identical in meaning to quan wei min suo fu, the phrase Xi Jinping used in 2010. It is rumored, however, that Hu Jintao was displeased with Zhu Houze's outburst, which went beyond the Party's responsibilities, to the very root of its legitimacy.
Neither Hu Jintao nor Jiang Zemin have ever uttered language of this kind — raising so directly, in the roundabout world of the watchword, the issue of legitimacy of power. For Xi Jinping to make such a remark about power being "given" by the people was something remarkable.

What had Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao said? In his report to the 15th National Congress, Jiang Zemin said: "Our power is vested in us by the people, every cadre is a public servant of the people, and they must be monitored by the people and by the law."[xxxvii] The difference, which might seem trifling rendered into English, is in fact politically significant.

Jiang repeated the language in his report to the 16th Party Congress five years later, saying: "[We must] ensure that the power vested by the people is used to seek the interests of the people."[xxxviii] And Hu Jintao's phrasing in his report to the 17th National Congress, parroted Jiang Zemin: "[We must] ensure that the power vested by the people is used, from start to finish, to seek the interests of the people."[xxxix]

These three instances are in fact far weaker than the idea of power being given by the people as a supplement to the so-called "new three principles of the people," which spell out the spirit in which power must be exercised and sidestep the legitimacy issue.

While President Hu has not invoked the phrase "power is given by the people," he has on a number of occasions addressed the issue of the Party's "ruling status," or *zhizheng diwei*. Released by the central Party leadership in 2004, the breathlessly named "Decision on the Strengthening of the Chinese Communist Party's Ruling Ability" said that "the Party's ruling status is not a birthright, nor is it permanent."[xl]

In 2008, a lead editorial in the *People's Daily* quoted Hu Jintao as saying: "The Party's core ruling status is not permanent, possession in the past does not equate to possession in the present, and possession in the present does not equate to possession in the future."[xli] In his speech to commemorate the Party's 90th birthday in 2011, he again emphasized: "Leading cadres at various levels must bear in mind that the power in our hands was vested by the people."[xlii]

The appearance of "power is given by the people" in the political report to the 18th National Congress is virtually assured. But will this phrase be repeated and emphasized? This question, which will ultimately be decided by internal power plays, is a matter of wordplay that directly concerns China's political future.

Chapter Six
THE POWER OF SEPARATION

Keywords: *power of decision-making, power of administration and power of monitoring*

If I suggested to my audience that "separation of powers," the tripartite model of state governance common to many of the world's democracies, exists in the Chinese Communist Party too, they would probably revile me. "You must be dreaming!" they would scoff, sliding off their shoes to use as projectiles. I'll leave that thought hanging in mid-air for a moment as I indulge in a bit of background.

In March 2011, at China's annual National People's Congress (NPC), Wu Bangguo, the NPC's chairman and a member of the powerful Politburo Standing Committee, made a statement that later became shortened and popularized as the "Five Will Nots," or *wu bu gao*:

> China will not do rotational multiparty rule; will not do diversity of guiding ideologies; will not do "separation of powers" and a bicameral system; will not do privatization [of property].[xliii]

In fact, this idea comes from Deng Xiaoping. In 1987, when Deng had a mind to promote political reform, he stressed that China would not follow a multiparty system and separation of powers, or *san quan fen li*.[xliv] When Deng opposed "separation of powers" — in Chinese, literally "separation of three powers" — he was referring broadly to the Western sense of the idea, Montesquieu's division of political power into the executive, legislative and judiciary.

[ABOVE: Wu Bangguo addresses the NPC in 2011 and rules out Western-style separation of powers.]

It may or may not surprise readers to know that the Chinese Communist Party has its own version of "separation of powers." This is the idea of a tripartite functioning of power within the Party itself, the

three powers being: power of decision-making; power of administration; power of monitoring.

In theory, the highest decision-making organ of the Chinese Communist Party is the National Congress of the CCP. This power is exercised, or administered, by the Central Committee, Politburo and Politburo Standing Committee on which the congress decides. The Central Commission carries out monitoring for Discipline Inspection.

Back in the 1950s, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union sought to cleanse itself of the tyranny of Joseph Stalin. At the Chinese Communist Party's 8th National Congress, held two and a half years after Stalin's death, it was decided that a permanent body would be constituted to exercise decision-making power while the congress was not in session. At the same time, a secretariat would be formed to execute these decisions. Finally, oversight committees would be set up at various levels to monitor the Party's work. It was just a year later, however, that Mao Zedong fomented his Anti-Rightist Movement, re-centralizing and monopolizing these three powers. The tragedies of the Great Chinese Famine and the Cultural Revolution followed over the next two decades. When Deng Xiaoping rose to power after the end of the Cultural Revolution he singled out over-concentration of power as the root sickness of the old political system under Mao. In the Deng Xiaoping era, through the efforts of Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, there was some progress in building mechanisms to check power, but that progress was slow.

In today's Chinese Communist Party the root of decision-making power is somewhat obscure. National congresses are held only once every five years, but these are carefully scripted events, everyone clapping at the right moments, raising their hands to approve matters that have already been decided. After this staged event, the responsibilities of the Party "delegates" are at an end.

[ABOVE: Wen Jiabao addresses the National People's Congress in 2010, photo by Remko Tanis, available at Flickr.com under Creative Commons license. While the NPC is supposed to have substantial lawmaking powers, the real power lies with the Central Committee's Politburo.]

The Party's administrative power is massive. Both decision-making power and administrative

power are in fact concentrated in the hands of the Central Committee — more precisely, in the hands of the Politburo Standing Committee.

The monitoring of power is a difficult proposition: the Central Committee for Discipline Inspection is controlled by the Central Committee, which means essentially that the sick patient is also the doctor.

The idea of "three powers" within the Chinese Communist Party dates to the era of state-owned enterprise reform in the 1990s. On November 27, 1995, the *People's Daily* reported the remarks of the boss of one state-owned enterprise, who said there was a need to create "scientific management systems in which the powers of decision-making, administration and monitoring and their related mechanisms were mutually independent."[xlv]

If applied to political power, this idea of "mutually independent mechanisms" is quite significant. Later, however, when the Party introduced the idea of "three powers" into the political sphere, the word "independent" was left out.

Corruption has steadily worsened in China under the leadership of Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. In the five years between the 15th National Congress (1997) and the 16th National Congress (2002), the Party investigated at least 98 provincial and ministerial level officials. The first high-level official to be pulled from his perch during Hu Jintao's term in office was Cheng Weigao, the top leader of Hubei province.

In 2003, as there was increased discussion about "corruption among principles" — meaning officials with chief responsibility for particular offices — the phrase "three powers within the Party" began appearing in the media. But if anyone at the time had tried to elevate the debate by using the phrase "separation of powers within the Party," or *dang nei san quan fen li*, they would have been stepping into a forbidden zone.

On November 3, 2004, a brand new weekly publication in Hubei province called the *New Weekly Report*, or *Xin Zhou Bao*, ran a gutsy report called, "New Trends in Official Corruption."[xlvi] The report argued that without the proper monitoring mechanisms, the institutions of power inevitably become hotbeds of corruption. It suggested further that there be "separation of power" within the Party, that the powers of decision-making, administration and monitoring be entrusted to different branches.

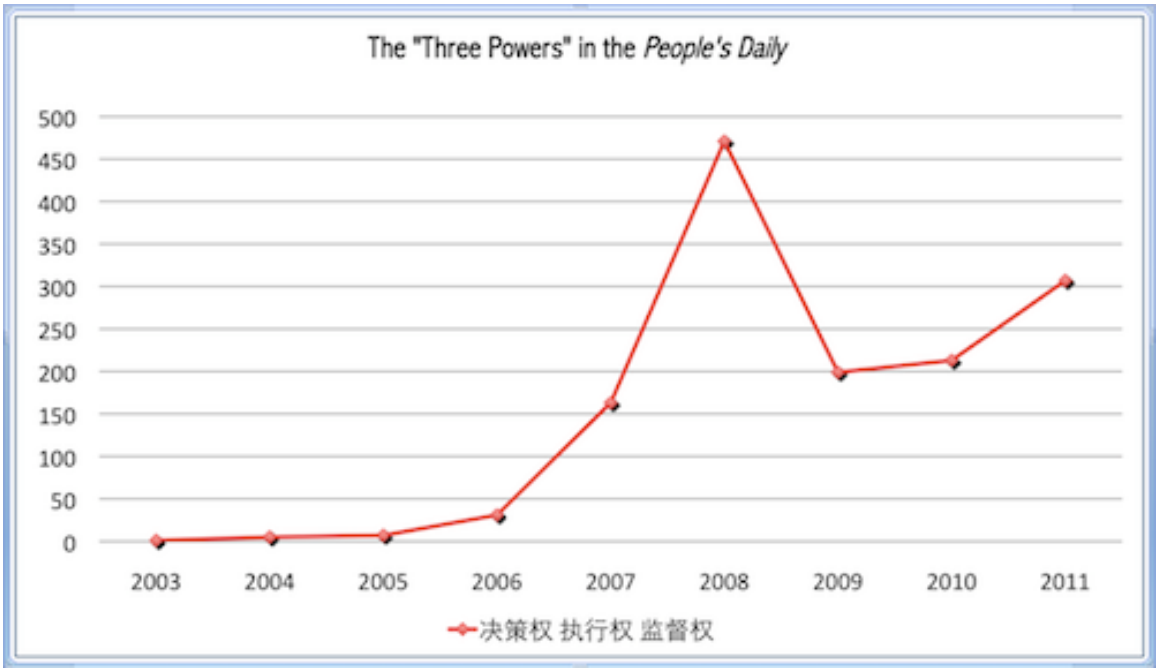
官场腐败新动向：

组织部长、秘书长、反贪局长成为“高危人群”

[ABOVE: Hubei's *New Weekly Report* runs a daring article on separation of power and gets shut down in 2004.]

When this report was re-published by other media, some editors decided to include “separation of powers within the Party” in the headline. The report quickly drew fire from officials in the Central Propaganda Department. Under pressure, provincial officials in Hubei moved immediately to shut down the New Weekly Report, which had published only seven issues. All at once, the phrase “separation of powers within the Party” became taboo.

The phrase “power of decision-making, power of administration and power of monitoring,” however, became more and more popular. The following is a graph of articles on People’s Daily Online using the term “three powers,” or *san quan*, in recent years:



A meeting of the Central Committee for Discipline Inspection in early 2006 marked an intensification of the official campaign against corruption. Conveying the "spirit" of the meeting, an article in the *People's Daily* listed out for the first time the "three powers":

> . . . [The Party] must build and improve power structures for mutual conditioning and mutual coordination of the powers of decision-making, administration and monitoring, improving oversight mechanisms . . .[xlvii]

人民日报 理论与实践

学习党章 遵守党章 贯彻党章 维护党章

——学习胡锦涛同志在中央纪委第六次全会上的重要讲话

深刻认识新的历史条件下强调学习贯彻党章的重大意义

准确把握学习贯彻党章和加强党风廉政建设的着力点

全面履行党章赋予纪委的职责，做党的忠诚卫士，当群众的贴心人

[ABOVE: A 2006 article in the *People's Daily* lists out the "three powers" for the first time in central state media.]

Notice that the report refers to "conditioning" — or restriction — and to "coordination," but not to "independence." This phrase was destined to become a formal phrase, a new watchword, making it into the political report to the 17th National Congress in 2007.[xlviii]

建立健全决策权、执行权、监督权既相互制约又相互协调的权力结构和运行机制

党的十七大报告提出建立健全决策权、执行权、监督权既相互制约又相互协调的权力结构和运行机制，是对改革开放以来我们党在探索权力制约和监督机制方面的重要经验和实践成果的总结，是对权力结构和运行机制认识的进一步深化，对于规范权力运行，从源头上防治腐败，对于深化我国的政治体制改革，意义十分重大。

第一，建立健全决策权、执行权、监督权既相互制约又相互协调的权力结构和运行机制，是当前完善权力结构，规范权力运行，防止权力滥用的客观需要。应当说，我们国家的权力结构和运行机制是符合自己国情的，能够集中力量办大事，最大限度地发挥社会主义制度的优越性。但是，在具体实践中，一些地方和部门也确实存在权力过分集中的问题，从而导致权力滥用现象的发生。

这些年来，我们在强化权力监督方面，进行了积极的探索，做了大量有益的工作，已经取得明显成效。在加强权力制约方面，虽然也采取了一些措施，但成效还不大。一些地方和部门主要领导的权力仍然得不到有效制约，有的部门既当“导演”，又当“演员”，还当“评委”，自己制定规矩自己执行等现象普遍存在。要通过适当分解决策权、执行权、监督权，使决策职能、执行职能、监督职能由不同部门相对独立行使，努力形成不同性质的权力既相互制约、相互把关，又分工负责、相互协调的权力结构。做到决策更加科学，执行更加高效，监督更加有力，从而保证权力依法运行，最大限度地防止权力滥用现象的发生。

第二，建立健全决策权、执行权、监督权既相互制约又相互协调的权力结构和运行机制，已经在实践中取得一些进展。党的十五届六中全会明确提出，市（地）、县（市）党委、政府领导班子正职的拟任人选和推荐人选，还步骤到由上一级党委常委会提名。党的委员会全体会议审议，进行无记名投票表决；在全会闭会期间，可由党委常委会作出决定，在决定前要征求全委会成员的意见。这为扩大全委会的决策权开了先河。党的十六大报告在总结经验的基础上明确提出，要建立结构合理、配置科学、程序严密、制约有效的权力运行机制，从决策和执行等环节加强对权力的监督，按简化、统一、效能的原则和决策、执行、监督相协调的要求，继续推进政府机构改革。

党的十六大之后，在探索权力制约方面取得了一些进展。在权力科学配置方面，胡锦涛同志多次强调要按照权力制约的特点和决策、执行、监督相协调的要求，把对权力的科学配置与对干部的有效监督结合起来，建立健全决策进行授权力的制约机制；强调要科学合理地配置权力，建立健全决策权、执行权、监督权既相互制约又相互协调的权力结构，形成结构合理、配置科学、程序严密、制约有效的权力运行机制，最大限度地减少权力产“寻租”的机会。在党内决策权力方面，通过完善党的代表大会制度和党的委员会制度，选择一些县（市区）试行党代表大会常任制，积极探索党的代表大会闭会期间发挥代表作用的途径和形式，进一步发挥党的委员会全体会议的作用，减少地方党委副书记职数等，以更有效地发挥党代会和全委会对重大问题的决策作用。在党内监督权力方面，通过制定并颁布党内监督条例，建立健全巡视制度，对纪检监察派驻机构实行统一管理并执行个人有关事项报告、述职述廉、诫勉谈话和函询制度，进一步强化了党的纪律检查委员会的监督权。政府科学民主决策、坚持依法行政、加强行政监督作为政府三项基本准则，并以此来部署和开展行政工作。因此，党大报告明确提出建立健全决策权、执行权、监督权既相互制约又相互协调的权力结构和运行机制，是有一定的理论和基础的，是经过努力可以付得诸、办得到的。

第三，建立健全决策权、执行权、监督权既相互制约又相互协调的权力结构和运行机制，要有切实可行的措施落实。当前，要按照党的十七大报告的要求，着重抓好三个方面，一是在巩固以往改革成果的基础上，继续在党政执政，扩大党代会和全委会的决策权，强化纪律检查监督权，在发挥人大对政府和司法机关的制约监督作用和公开行政权力，形成权责一致、分工合理、决策科学顺畅、监督有力的行政管理体制等方面，进行积极探索。二是要健全各部门各系统内部权力的合理配置，严不同权力的使用边界，加强对权力使用的制约和限制，门内部的权力制约与协调机制。三是要健全组织法制规则，把不同权力的行使通过法律和规章确定下来，纳化、程序化轨道，保证分工明确、各司其职、各负其责，定权限和程序行使权力、履行职责，目是要建立健全党和政务公开、厂务公开、财务公开以及各类公开办事制度政府工作透明度和公信力。五是要重点加强对领导班子主要领导干部、人财物管理使用、关键岗位的监督人民赋予的权力始终用来为人民谋利益。

（新华社北京 12 月 26 日

党的十七大报告解读

[ABOVE: The *People's Daily* mentions the "three powers" in an article about the 17th National Congress in 2007.]

The term “three powers” appeared more frequently in the wake of the 17th National Congress. There were two peaks of use, the first in 2008, when the State Council pushed a program of institutional restructuring (and the term “separation of powers” actually appeared in the official *Xi’an Daily*).[xlix] The second peak came in 2011, when the fourth full meeting of the Central Committee again appealed for a tough stance on corruption.[l] Clearly, the phrase “three powers” is directly associated with administrative restructuring and anti-corruption.


西安日报 2008 全国两会 3版
国务院机构改革纵深
新变革 向服务型政府转变
决策权、执行权、监督权"三权分立"
中编办负责人就机构改革答记者问
前五次政府机构改革回顾
五次改革的重要意义

[ABOVE: The official *Xi'an Daily* uses the term "separation of powers" in a headline dealing with the "three powers."]

As the 18th National Congress approaches, some language in the official press has linked the "three powers" of the Chinese Communist Party with political reform. *People's Forum*, a magazine supplement of the *People's Daily*, ran an article in its July 2012 edition by Xu Yaotong, a professor at the China National School of Administration. Professor Xu wrote: "In its top-level design, political reforms must take reasonable steps to separate the power structure into separate institutional structures [exercising] the 'power of decision-making, power of administration and power of monitoring,' so that these 'three powers' can operate on their own and mutually check [one another].'" This idea of three powers that are "separate" and "operating on their own" was a step closer to the idea of independently operating powers or branches.

There have also been increasingly bold calls for reform of the Party power structure from Party insiders. Unpublishable in China's mainstream media, these have been passed along privately, through e-mail and social media. One of the most notable examples has come from Cao Siyuan, a well-known constitutional scholar in China. In a piece called, "Three Suggestions for the 18th National Congress," Cao argued that the most serious issue for the Party was the concentration of the powers of decision-making and monitoring in the hands of those also charged with implementing policies. He offered a proposal for the separation and mutual balancing of powers within the Party.[li]

According to Cao's proposal, the number of delegates to the National Congress, which exercises decision-making power, should be trimmed down. This smaller, more streamlined body would then serve a permanent role for the five-year duration of each congress. Delegates to national congresses, now numbering more than 2,000, would be reduced to around 500 permanently serving members who would be salaried and meet on an annual basis. This body would have the power to elect or remove officials in administrative and monitoring organs, but they would not have the power to interfere in these activities.

The delegates in Cao's proposal would elect from among themselves seven to nine committee members to form an Executive Commission (like the present Standing Committee) to serve an executive function. The Executive Commission would report on and be responsible for the work of the National Congress, offering opposing opinions and prompting reconsideration of policy decisions.

The National Congress would also, under Cao's plan, select five to seven members to form a Discipline Inspection Commission to exercise a monitoring role. The primary responsibility of this commission would be to monitor the conduct of Party officials of approximate rank (including delegates to the National Congress and members of the Executive Commission). They could not, however, interfere in the daily business of the congress or other officials.

Importantly, officials serving as delegates to the National Congress, or as members of the Executive Commission Discipline Inspection Commission, would not be permitted to hold other positions concurrently.

Cao believes that his plan could ensure that decision-making power in its present form could be made substantial instead of empty, and at the same time elevate the power of monitoring to an independent status, so that the three institutions provide separate checks — and so that the executive institution, the most easily abused, can be effectively monitored.

This is one form of intra-Party reform as proposed by a moderate within the Party. Nevertheless, for many within the Party, this proposal is revolutionary if not outright subversive.

If separation of powers occurred within the Party, this would effectively mean victory over the existing, entrenched system of concentration of power within the executive. That is something that won't happen at the upcoming 18th National Congress. Nevertheless, the watchword "three powers" is one to watch carefully at the 18th National Congress. Will the phrase that was included in the political report five years ago make it into the upcoming political report? If it does, will the phrasing change in any way, and how? Will the idea of three powers edge closer to the idea – and perhaps even the likelihood – of their independent exercise? Is there any possibility for the implementation of a permanent body of delegates

such as that envisioned by Professor Cao? And if this does not become an agenda for the moment, will there be any mention of a timetable for such reform?

Chapter Seven
DEMOCRACY WITH THE DOOR SHUT

Keyword: *intraparty democracy* (党内民主)

On May 14, 2012, an editorial appeared in China's official *People's Daily* newspaper arguing that the country had made "immense progress" on political reform. At the same time, the editorial resolutely shut the door on the idea of a multiparty political system in China. Even as China "actively and steadily promotes" political reform, it said, the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party must be upheld. Moreover:

> . . . [We] resolutely will not imitate Western political forms. Only by respecting [our country's] national circumstances, and by proceeding step-by-step in an orderly way, will we be able to create new Chinese miracles, constantly reaping new self-confidence for our people.[lii]

If the idea of competing political parties is left out in the cold, is there any sense in talking about "democracy" at all? Yes, say many Party leaders. And what they advocate are more mechanisms for shared decision-making within the ruling Party itself, what is known as "intraparty democracy," or *dangnei minzhu*. The phrase "intraparty democracy" was in fact a hot watchword in the political report to the 17th National Congress in 2007. But like many Party watchwords, "intraparty democracy" has run hot and cold through history.

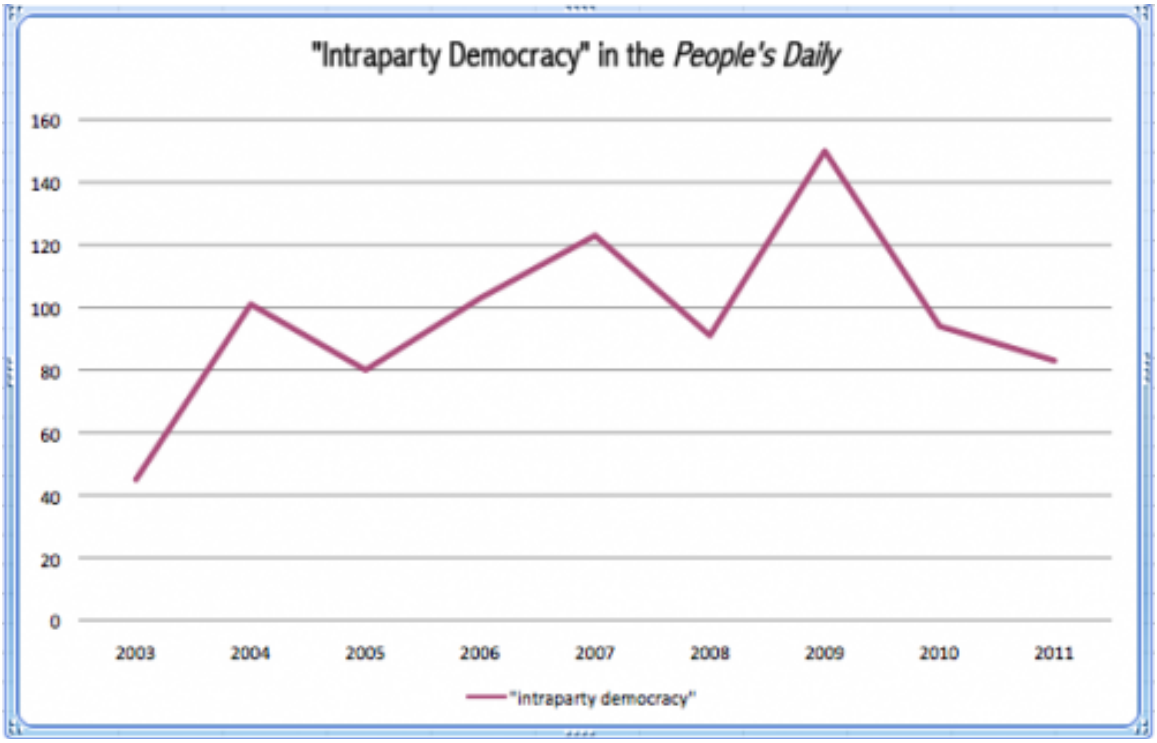
At the 9th and 10th national congresses, held during the Cultural Revolution (and the height of power concentration in the hands of Mao Zedong), the phrase disappeared altogether. The phrase appeared three times in the political report to the 11th National Congress in 1977, following the end of the Cultural Revolution, a return to levels actually seen two decades earlier at the 8th National Congress. From the 12th National Congress in 1982 to the 16th National Congress in 2002, the term did appear, but was used only rarely. In these five political reports it emerged 1, 2, 2, 1, and 2 times respectively.

Against this background, the phrase's showing in the 2007 political report was remarkable. The term popped up five times in a single breathless utterance, as President Hu Jintao said:

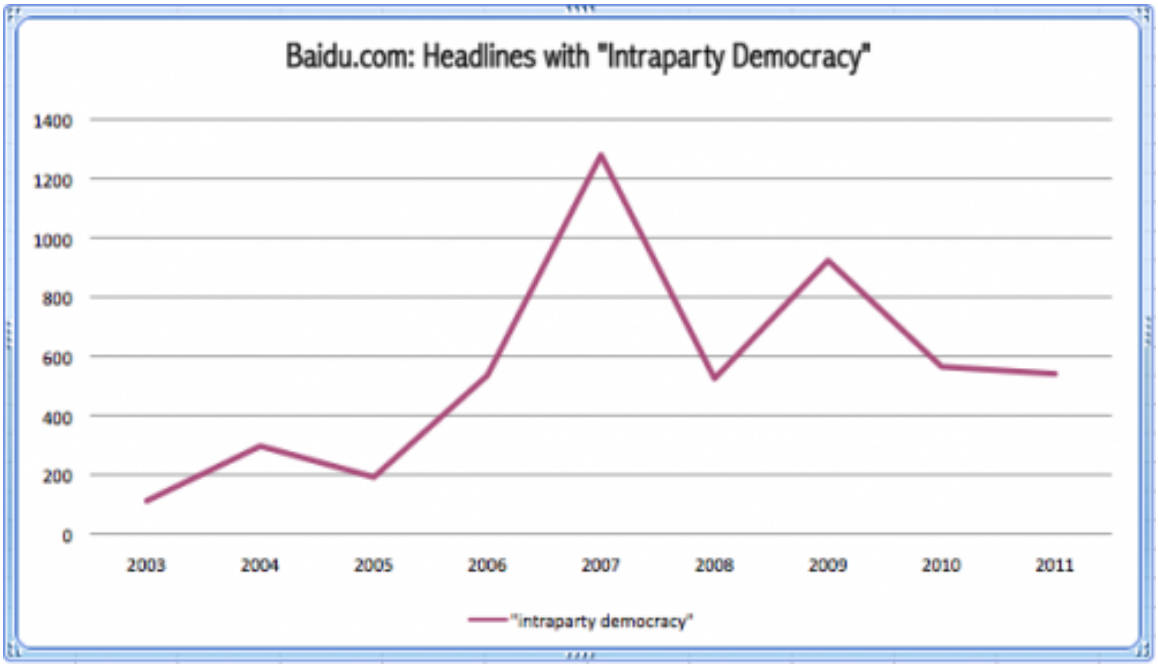
> . . . [We must] actively advance the building of intraparty democracy, working hard for unity and solidarity within the Party. Intraparty democracy is an important guarantee in strengthening the vitality of the Party, and firming up the Party's unity and solidarity. [We must] expand intraparty democracy in order to set people's democracy in motion, furthering harmony within the Party in order to advance harmony in society. [We must] respect the principal status of Party members, ensure the democratic rights of Party members, promote openness of Party affairs, and create the conditions for democratic discussion within the Party. [We must] improve the Party's national congress system, instituting a system of fixed tenure for delegates to the Party's national congress, and selecting delegates on a trial basis from a number of counties (cities, districts) for a permanent Party congress system.

Throughout the Party's history there have been voices calling for an expansion of "democracy"

under a single-party system, regarding this as a safe and reliable way of reform. In offering this long grocery list of Party reforms in his political report in 2007, **Hu Jintao** endeavored to use intraparty democracy as a wedge to promote further reform. But even this is not an easy road.



The above graph plots usage of the term "intraparty democracy" in the *People's Daily* since 2003, reflecting fluctuations of the term within central-level Party media.



The second graph above shows the frequency with which the term "intraparty democracy" was used in Chinese news media more generally. The original data were obtained from the Baidu.com news search engine. The two data sets do not entirely match up, but we can see that the peaks and lows do correspond, with rising usage in 2004, 2007 and 2009, and falling usage in 2005, 2008 and 2011.

The rise in 2007 is the most robust, reflecting the more prominent role the term played at the 17th National Congress that year and a general expectation across media that intraparty democracy might make advances. The situation in 2009 is quite different, with a strong showing for the term in the *People's Daily* but much weaker use of the term across the media as a whole.

Intraparty democracy basically means shutting the door and promoting democracy inside — it does not entail reforms directly impacting Chinese society at large. But the space within the room, so to speak, is in fact extensive. There are more than 80 million Chinese Communist Party members in China, a Party population roughly equal to the population of Germany. If serious steps were taken to promote "democratic" decision-making within this subpopulation of Chinese, this would greatly advantage China as a whole.

The problem is that so far the Chinese Communist Party's talk on intraparty democracy is just that, talk — at least where the fundamental issues are concerned. Are the conditions there for more "democratic discussion" within the Party? It certainly does not seem so when even China's premier, Wen Jiabao, is censored by the Central Propaganda Department when he talks about political reform. Are the Party's affairs handled openly? Ahead of this year's 18th National Congress, speculation has run rife over possible personnel changes within the Party, and Party members are as much in the dark as anyone else. Nothing at all has been done to experiment with a permanent tenure system for congress delegates, an idea that has come up again and again in talk about intraparty democracy.

The only apparent action is happening at the grassroots level, where there is purportedly experimentation in certain areas with direct election of Party officials. After he took office, Hu Jintao encouraged a number of places in China to organize experiments in the direct election of grassroots Party officials. One of these places was in Jiangsu province, where the provincial Party secretary, Li Yuanchao, first experimented with "open nomination and direct election," or *gongtui zhixuan* (公推直选), between 2002 and 2007.

Gongtui zhixuan is one method of reforming the mechanisms by which leaders are chosen for official posts, a limited decentralization (or letting go) of the Party's power to exercise control over its own cadres. The word *gongtui*, which means roughly "mutual nomination," refers to the method by which candidates emerge.

Formerly (and of course this is mostly still the case), candidates were simply appointed by their Party superiors. Now, in addition to candidates recommended by superiors, Party members can jointly or individually recommend candidates, and city residents or villagers can send representatives to take part in the nomination process. *Zhixuan*, which means "direct selection," refers to a process by which a general meeting of Party members or a congress of Party delegates directly elects a candidate for a post from among the nominees.

At the 17th National Congress in 2007, Li Yuanchao, the **Jiangsu** leader who had experimented

with "open nomination and direct election" at the grassroots level, was himself promoted to the Politburo and made head of the Organization Department of the Chinese Communist Party, the body within the Secretariat that handles personnel decisions. From this position he more actively promoted "open nomination and direct election" as a means of making strides in the development of intraparty democracy. The Fourth Plenary Session of the 17th Central Committee in 2009 said the Party should "promote a method combining open nomination by Party members and the masses and nomination by Party organizations in order to gradually expand the scope of direct election of the leadership groups of grassroots Party organizations." In 2009 and 2010, China's media reported actively on these proposed reforms.

By the summer of 2010, "open nomination and direct election" was reportedly being practiced "across the board" in the city of Nanjing, where Li Yuanchao had previously served as Party secretary. This meant, in theory, that all leaders of Party branches in urban neighborhoods and rural villages in this jurisdiction had emerged through this process of open nomination and election. Chinese media called this a "new advance in democracy."

[ABOVE: A cover of *China Newsweek* in June 2010 carries the bold headline: "A New Advance in Democracy."[liii]]

"Open nomination and direct election" quickly spread to other regions. In Shenzhen, a deputy provincial level city just across the border from Hong Kong, this method was used even in the selection of delegates to the local Party congress as well as members of the consultative conference, a nominal advisory body made up of representatives from various parties and mass organizations. In a development

much touted by the media, Ma Hong, a 42-year-old accountant who had nominated himself as a candidate, was successfully elected as a Party delegate in Shenzhen, becoming the first such case in the country. Ma was dubbed the "black horse," a play on his surname ("ma" means horse).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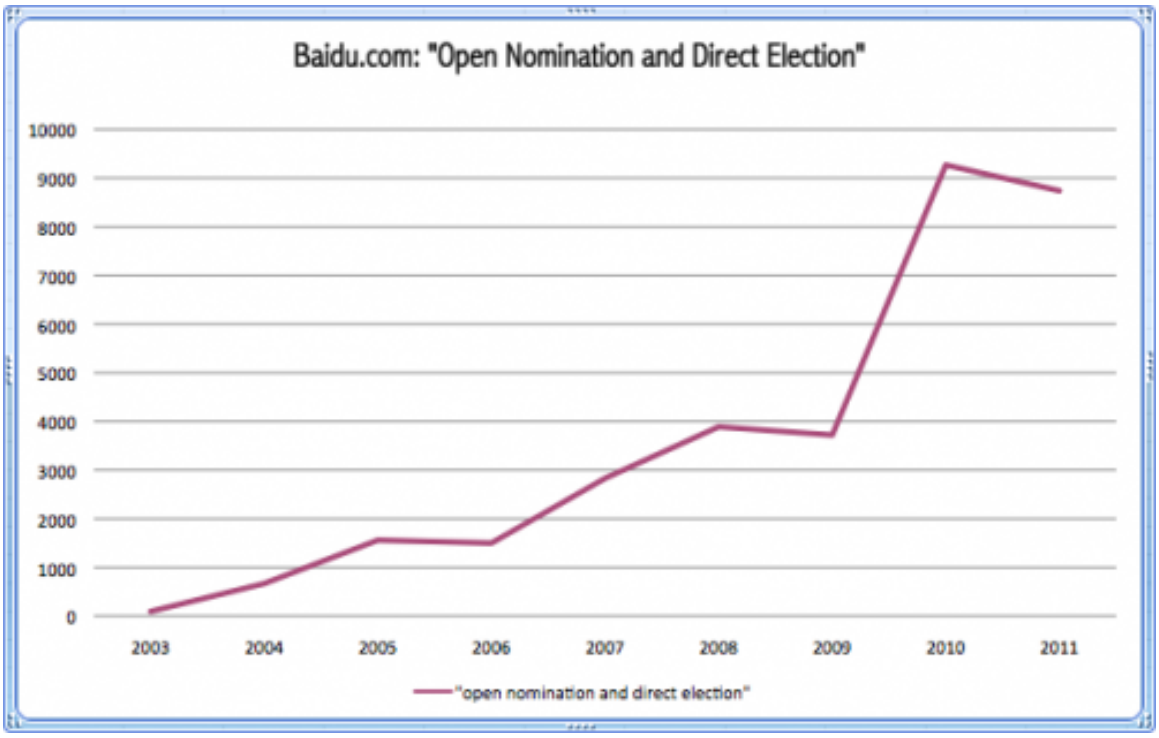
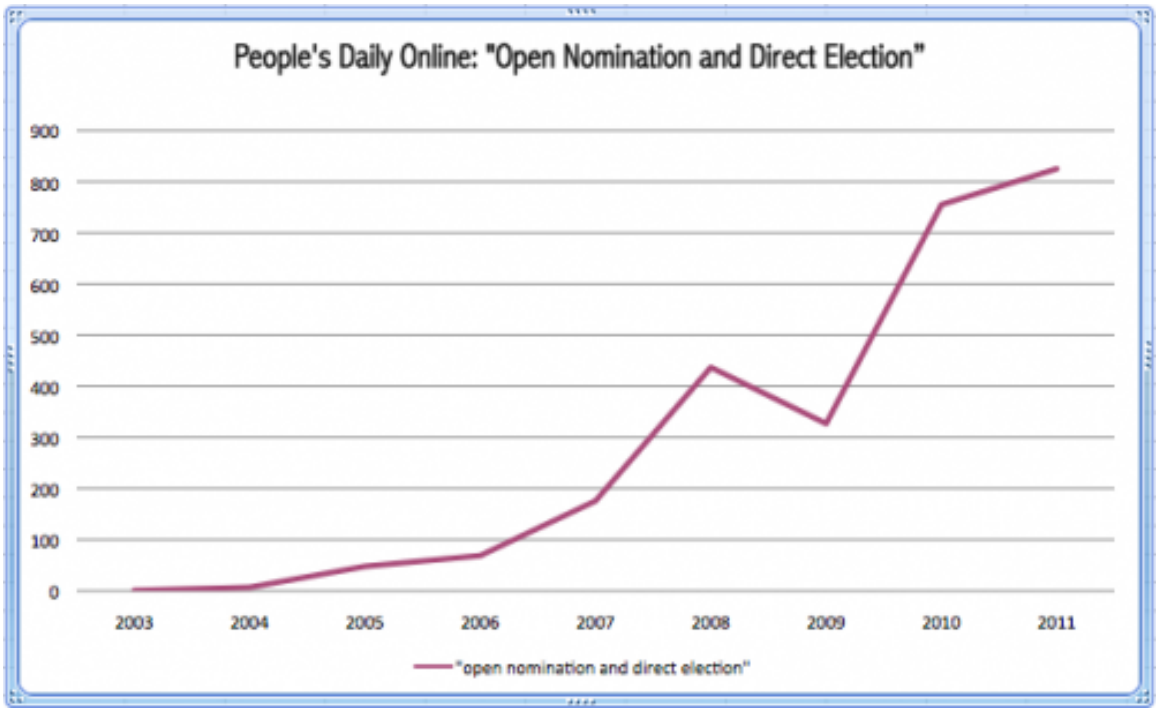
[ABOVE: Guangzhou's *Southern Metropolis Daily* reports on the election of Ma Hong, the "black horse," as a delegate to the local Party congress in Shenzhen in 2010.[liv]]

"Open nomination and direct election" has not yet been formally promoted nationwide in China as the method of handling Party personnel arrangements, one important reason being that it requires amendment of the Party Constitution. But it's clear from news reports since 2009 that the method has already spread to many places in China.





I wrote in the *Hong Kong Economic Times* back in 2010: "The 18th National Congress in 2012 is just two years away, and it's difficult to say whether open nomination and direct election will, in the next two years, be promoted at the level of county Party secretary appointments. However, it is not inconceivable that open nomination and direct election could be practiced to some extent in the selection of provincial Party congress delegates, and even perhaps for national congress delegates."[lv]

The facts over the past two years have shown that I vastly over-estimated the potential for progress on intraparty democracy. So-called intraparty democracy remains confined to the grassroots, to the lowest levels of the Party's vast bureaucracy, and any progress beyond this has been difficult.
A number of issues related to intraparty democracy are in fact of greater urgency and importance. These include:

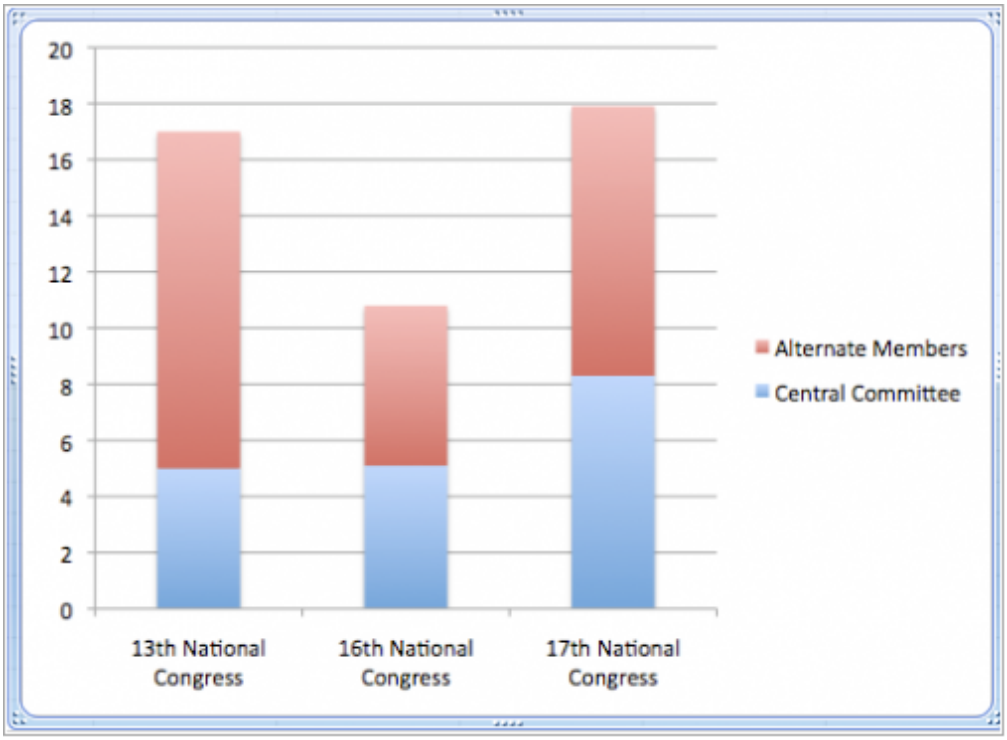
1. Checks-and-balances on the powers of decision-making, administration and monitoring (an issue I addressed here).
2. "Fixed tenure" for the national congress.
3. "Differential election" within the Party's national congress.

The Party notion of "differential election" or *cha'e xuanju* (差额选举), is a strange concept to grasp, and for readers from democratic countries it may even verge on the ludicrous. But in China, the so-called "differential ratio," the ratio of open seats to candidates, is taken seriously as a democratic measure. Essentially, it refers to the ratio of candidates for official posts to the number of posts actually available. In most democratic countries, ideally you would have a ratio of at least 100 percent before you could talk about democracy at all — which is to say, you have at least two candidates for any given position, 100 percent more candidates than positions available.

From the 14th National Congress in 1997 to the 16th National Congress in 2002, the ratio was 10 percent. That means 110 candidates were nominated for every 100 positions. Delegate spots were subject to competition between multiple candidates in at most 10 cases, with delegates to be chosen by Party electors (there could also have been more than 2 candidates for a spot).

At the 17th National Congress in 2007, much was made in official media about the new ratio of 15 percent (115 candidates for every 100 spots). And at this year's congress the rate is supposed to surpass 15 percent. The highest rate in the Party's history was set back at the 13th National Congress in 1987, where one out of five delegate positions were contested.[lvi]

We can also talk about the "differential rate" in selection of candidates for the Party's Central Committee, the group of around 350 members selected by the national congress, as well as alternative committee members. Here is a chart showing rates for three congresses since the 1980s.



[ABOVE: "Differential rates" for Central Committee members and alternates for three national congresses.]

What will these differential rates look like for the 18th National Congress? More importantly, will differential election be applied at all to the Politburo, that more elite group of 20-odd Party officials who wield the most political power in China? Never in the Party's history have these elite positions been left to an intra-party elective process.

There is little doubt that we will continue to see the watchword "intraparty democracy" at the 18th National Congress, but the above three issues are critical ones that the 18th National Congress would have to grapple with if any meaningful progress is to be made. We will have to wait and see how the Party deals with them, if at all. At the same time, we should pay attention to whether the 18th National Congress significantly extends the scope of experiments in the reform of grassroots appointments for Party organizations. For example, will "open nomination and direct election" be more formalized as a model and promoted?

Chapter Eight
SOCIETY LOST

Keyword: social construction (社会建设) Related Term: *civil society* (公民社会)

So far in this series, I have dealt with political reform issues and watchwords that are predominately about the reform (or not) of China's political institutions. How do China's leaders propose to deal with the problem of over-concentration of power? How will the incoming generation of leaders conceptualize power and its relationship to the Party and to Chinese society? Yet another oft-overlooked issue integral to political reform is the role of society in China.

In recent years, the relationship of the government to society has become a topic regularly discussed in China. Academics, journalists and others routinely describe China as a place where "government is strong and society is weak," or *qiang zhengfu ruo shehui* (强政府、弱社会).
In one recent example, Chinese historian Xiao Gongqin wrote in the magazine *China Entrepreneur*:

> Under the 'strong government weak society' system, the collusion of power and money drives inequality in society and it's hard for [this nexus of power and money] to be subjected to effective oversight by autonomous social forces . . .[lvii]

So where does Chinese society and its development fit into the overall picture of political change in China?

[ABOVE: Volunteers donate blood in Guangxi province following the May 2008 earthquake in Sichuan province. Photo from Bxzzk.cn.]

Ever since the 17th National Congress in 2007, the terms "social construction" (*shehui jianshe*), "social management" (*shehui guanli*) and "social system reforms" (*shehui tizhi gaige*) have been heating up as political watchwords.

Before the 17th National Congress, I wrote an essay called "Keep Your Eyes on Hu Jintao's 'Social System Reforms,'" in which I shared the views of Chen Ziming, a leading Chinese economist and political thinker who was jailed through the 1990s for his role in the 1989 Tiananmen protests.[lviii] Chen said that reform in China was an opera in three acts, moving the country from economic reform to social reform and eventually to political reform. He argued that the chief task of the present generation of leaders, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, was to move the country toward an "opening of society." The task of pushing political reform, or "opening up politics," would fall to their successors.

This prompted me to pose the question:

> . . . In observing President Hu Jintao, then, is it possible that our focus should be on how far social system reforms can progress, and not on how substantial his steps on political reform are?

Hu Jintao raised the issue of "social construction" not long after he took office. In his 2004 "Decision" on strengthening the leadership capacity of the Chinese Communist Party — I'll spare readers the full title of that policy document — he said the Party needed to "strengthen social construction and management."[lix] According to the document, this included "bringing into play the capacity of autonomous grassroots social organizations to coordinate interests, resolve conflicts and mitigate hardship." Grassroots social organizations could be used, it said, to provide services and relay the demands of various social groups, "joining the forces of social management and social service."

In China, social system reform is often regarded as a kind of subset of political reform. Its goal is the building of a civil society. But along the color spectrum of Chinese politics, "civil society" is in fact what I call a light blue term, used by market-driven media and academics (even some within the Party establishment) but never by senior leaders.

On the eve of the 17th National Congress in 2007, Yu Keping, a theorist some observers believe is closely aligned with Hu Jintao, wrote in the official *Beijing Daily*: "Since the 16th National Congress the Party and the government have paid more attention to the role of various kinds of social organizations, including civic organizations, industry associations and community organizations. They have begun to emphasize [the need for] reform and improvement of the social management system. This means the Party and government have in fact already begun to see the existence and role of civil society as an important basis for decision making."[lx]

[ABOVE: The cover of *Making Democracy Benefit China*, a book of discussions with political theorist Yu Keping.]

The political report to the 17th National Congress did not use the term "civil society." Ahead of the congress, I believed it might actually appear in the report, but the five years since have indicated there is little hope of that.

After the 17th National Congress, there were a number of developments on the "social construction" front in China's southern Guangdong province. In the fall of 2010, Shenzhen was Premier Wen Jiabao's first stop in what would later be known as his "seven mentions of political reform" seven separate speeches in which he urged political reform as an imperative. Not long after Wen's run of political reform speeches, Shenzhen held a series of events to commemorate its 30th anniversary as a Special Economic Zone, and President Hu Jintao traveled to the city to attend.

Responding to a general interest in Shenzhen as a beacon of reforms — economic reforms were jump-started there in the 1980s — the city's top leader, Wang Rong, suggested openly that new reforms were in the offing. "Shenzhen is an immigrant city of economic vitality," he began, referring to the sea of migrant labor the city had attracted from the countryside and from other cities. "We hope that in this new kind of society that we can be the earliest in building a civil society," he said, adding that "if no new efforts were made, the special zone would not exist."

Wang's implication was that even though Shenzhen was no longer special in the sense that the economic reforms piloted there in the 1980s were now happening all over China, it should remain special by staying at the forefront of the reform effort. In what seemed an even more significant piece of information, Wang Rong said that "the greatest advantage rendered by the central Party leadership is permission to experiment," a remark seeming to suggest that the city had received the blessing of senior Party leaders in its plans to push civil society development.[lxi]

[ABOVE: A headline at QQ.com on September 1, 2010, reads: "Shenzhen Party Secretary Wang Rong: We Hope to Build a Civil Society Even Earlier."]

At the time there were reports in both in the *China Youth Daily*[lxii] and Hong Kong's *Ta Kung Pao*[lxiii]:

[ABOVE: Headlines in *China Youth Daily* and Hong Kong's Communist Party-backed *Ta Kung Pao* in September 2010 report on Shenzhen's supposed advances on civil society construction. The *China Youth Daily* headline reads: In Civil Society Construction, Shenzhen Moves to the Forefront."]

Nevertheless, at the very same time that Premier Wen Jiabao's discussion of political reform was meeting resistance within the Party and political reform became a taboo issue in the media, Shenzhen's experiments in "civil society" came to an abrupt halt.

At the end of 2010, the top Party leadership in Shenzhen submitted a report to leaders at the provincial level in which they introduced the work they had done in Shenzhen to build civil society. They assumed that their breakthrough work on this front would be welcomed by Wang Yang, the top Party leader in the province, who is one of the chief contenders now for entry into the powerful Politburo Standing Committee. They were reportedly sorely disappointed, however, as the report brought fierce criticism from Wang Yang.

The following is a report from Hong Kong's *Apple Daily* on Wang Yang's response to efforts in Shenzhen.[lxiv]

[ABOVE: Hong Kong's *Apple Daily* reports in late 2010 that Guangdong leader Wang Yang has criticized leaders in Shenzhen for playing politics.]

The second line on the *Apple Daily* headline reads, "Wang Yang Staunchly Criticizes Shenzhen: 'Don't Talk Politics.'" Wang Yang's "politics" reference here points to a deep division within the higher levels of the Party over so-called social construction. Hardliners within the Party have an animosity toward the idea of civil society.

For example, in a May 2011 article published in the Party's *Seeking Truth* journal, Zhou Benshun, secretary of the Party's Central Politics and Law Commission, viciously attacked the idea of social organizations working independent of the government. Zhou said China had to avoid the "pitfall of 'civil society' designed for us by certain Western nations."[lxv]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中国/政治 - 发表日期 2011年 5月 16日 - 更新日期 2011年 5月 16日

中共政法委秘书长：“公民社会”是西方陷阱

作者 上海特约记者 曹国星

中共高级政法官员、中共中央政法委秘书长、中央综治委副主任周本顺5月16日在中共机关刊物《求是》发表的文章《走中国特色社会管理创新之路》，指责西方为中国“设计”了所谓“公民社会”的陷阱。

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[ABOVE: A Chinese-language report from France's RFI on May 16, 2012, quotes Zhou Benshun's remarks that civil society is a Western "pitfall."]

Lately, some people have had two misunderstandings about social management overseas. The first is the idea of ‘small government large society,’ that the bulk of social management should be taken on by society. In fact, not all developed nations follow this ‘small government large society’ model, and quite a number of large nations have large governments with the government taking on the principle tasks of social management. Second is the idea that social organizations are a ‘third sector,’ independent of the government and of the social management system. In fact, the vast majority of nongovernmental organizations overseas have government backgrounds, and all are under the effective management of the government. In our country, we must properly regulate conduct in fostering and developing social organizations, first putting ‘safety valves’ in place, thereby preventing the propagation of social organizations with ulterior motives.

In Chinese political lingo, “ulterior motives” are often ascribed to groups or individuals that the Party sees as undermining its leadership, including foreign organizations. Wang’s remarks are in fact quite typical of the xenophobic conservatism generally shown by senior leaders on China’s Politics and Law Commission.

In 2011, the term “civil society” became highly sensitive in China and a number of related bans

were issued by the Party's Central Propaganda Department to the media. In response, more professionally inclined commercial media wanting to explore this general topic used instead the phrase "folk society," or *minjian shehui*. Even during this sensitive period, a number of Party officials wrote their own articles dealing with related issues under the umbrella of "social construction." And even as Wang Yang warned Shenzhen officials against talking about "civil society," he promoted a number of "social construction" initiatives in Guangdong.

In November 2011, Guangdong announced that it would relax registration rules for so-called mass organizations, generally including associations, federations and charities closely aligned with the government. According to the new rules, taking effect on July 1, 2012, social organizations can now register directly with the Ministry of Civil Affairs — that is, without their application having the sponsorship of a government institution. The rules also paved the way for greater competition by allowing the registration of multiple organizations serving a particular interest or group. Wang Yang said that any activities social organizations could "handle and manage well" would be entrusted to them.

From September to December 2011, the residents of a small village in northeastern Guangdong called Wukan staged a mass rights defense action. Angry over the sale of their land, for which they received no compensation, the villagers ran their local officials out of town and dug in for a long standoff, as they demanded that the government address their concerns. The conflict, now known widely as the "Wukan incident," resulted in the death of one village-appointed representative, and was only resolved after the intervention of a special "work group" appointed by provincial leaders to negotiate with the villagers.

One of the most important signs of compromise on the part of the government during the incident was its recognition of the legitimacy of the provisional committee formed by the villagers to represent their interests. The government had for a time designated the committee as an illegal organization. This was the first instance in China of a popularly elected village organization receiving official recognition. And the handling of the Wukan incident offered a glimpse of Wang Yang's thinking on the issue of "social construction."

On November 14, 2011, Wen Jiabao made a speech about proposed further reform of China's administrative license system. This system, set up in China in the 1950s, basically awards certain organizations power over prescribed activities — such as the operation, for example, of gas stations, or providing telecommunications services. A legacy of the planned economy, the system has slowly been dismantled to allow for greater private participation in certain areas of the economy.

But Wen Jiabao's speech on the administrative license system also brought in the related issue of social construction:

> . . . [We must] further clean up, decrease and adjust the areas subject to administrative license, promoting a transformation of the government's role. [We must] adhere to the primacy of the market to the principle of social autonomy. In those areas where the market has the ability to make effective adjustments, citizens, legal persons and other organizations can make decisions autonomously, industry associations can [serve as mechanisms for] self-regulation, and the government should not set up administrative licenses . . . There are three priority areas. The first is investment. [We must] continue to deepen investment system reforms, establishing the principal status of enterprises and

> individuals citizens in investment. The second area is [in the provision of] social programs. [We must] . . . break through monopolies, expand openness, allow fair access and encourage competition. Third is the area of nonadministrative licenses. [We must] clean up cases where agencies and local governments use red tape to restrict [the activities] of citizens, enterprises and other organizations.[lxvi]

[ABOVE: In late November 2011, Guangdong's *Southern Metropolis Daily* reports on plans to relax restrictions on the registration of social organizations in the province.]

The Chinese Communist Party has howled the cry of socialism ever since it came to power in 1949. But as Xiong Peiyun, a well-known Chinese writer and academic, has quipped, for many years now China has "had the -ism but not the social." To put it another way, the Party's practice of socialism has been radically antisocial, crippling society through decades of political movements in order to serve a powerful state.

The rebuilding of society in China, the nurturing of its social roots, will be an essential part of the long process of political reform in the country.

At we watch the 18th National Congress from the sidelines, "social construction" will be another important watchword to bear in mind. In particular, we can ask the following three sets of questions:

1. How will the political report to the 18th National Congress characterize "social construction," "social management" and "social system reform"? Will it resort to hard-line views like those of

Zhou Benshun, who called civil society a Western "pitfall"? Will it borrow from Wang Yang's "social construction" playbook (à la Wukan), what is now being called the "Guangdong model"? Will there be traces of Wen Jiabao and his emphasis on autonomous organizations and individuals?

2. Will there be mention of "social self-governance," or *shehui zizhi*, which is core to the concept of social construction? The term "self-governing grassroots organizations" appeared 10 years ago in the political report to the 16th National Congress and senior officials have raised a number of related concepts since. In 2004, the *People's Daily* ran an article from an academic that advised the leadership to "actively foster nongovernmental organizations and self-governing social organizations."[lxvii] In a 2005 speech, President Hu Jintao said "the administrative function of the government and the function of self-governing social organizations should be complementary."[lxviii] The 2007 political report talked about "expanding the self-governing scope of masses at the grassroots." Will the political report to the 18th National Congress mention "social self-governance"? And if so, how?

3. The chances are perhaps miniscule, but we must ask: Will we be completely surprised by the appearance in the political report of the term "civil society"?

Chapter Nine
PRIDE AND POSITIONING

Keyword: *Scientific View of Development*

On July 11, 2012, the *South China Morning Post* ran a report about how training materials for police in Hong Kong were found to contain Communist Party political slogans.[lxix] One of the watchwords apparently included in the materials was the "Three Represents," or *sange daibiao*, the political concept associated with China's former president, Jiang Zemin. News of the training materials spread rapidly on the Internet, and many Hong Kong locals were dismayed to learn that police in the territory were being subjected to "brainwashing."

Lately, nerves in Hong Kong have been especially sensitive to perceived encroachments from Beijing. And concern about the Party's political slogans seeping over the border may be understandable. But the fact is that officials in China today would scratch their heads if you asked them to list out the "Three Represents." Assuming the police training materials in Hong Kong were really intended to "brainwash," I don't envy the author's daunting task of explaining what the "Three Represents" are all about.

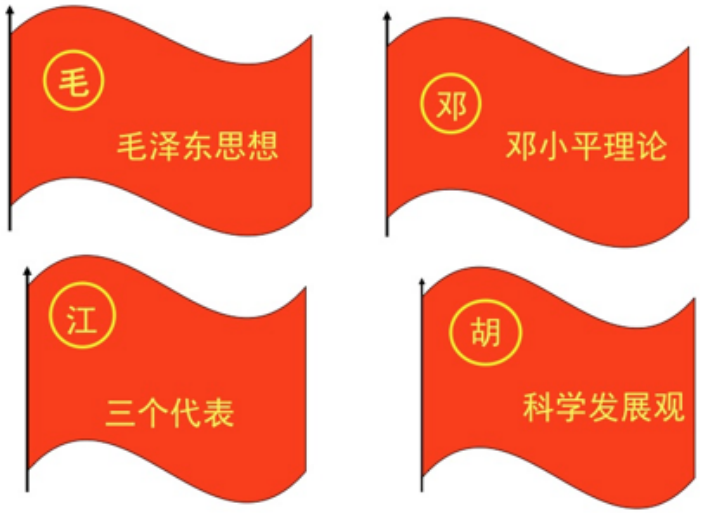
This phrase, in fact, leads us into the mysterious core of what I have called the Party's "general lexicon," the idea of the ideological banner, or *qihao* (pronounced "CHEE-how").

All four generations of Chinese Communist Party leaders have had their own ideological banners. These symbolize a leader's contributions, which could be called their political philosophies, except that *qihao* are often far less material or definable than that suggests. *Qihao* are political brands, and like commercial brands they have an insubstantial quality that transcends their material (or practical) value.

Mao Zedong's ideological banner is "Mao Zedong Thought" (*Mao Zedong Sixiang*). Deng Xiaoping's is "Deng Xiaoping Theory" (*Deng Xiaoping Lilun*). Jiang Zemin's, once again, is the "Three Represents." And Hu Jintao's banner, his brand legacy, is the "Scientific View of Development" (*Kexue Fazhan Guan*). Below are China's four generations of top leaders and their respective *qihao*.

毛邓江胡
四个旗号



These ideological banners may seem inconsequential, flapping about in China's political winds. But Party leaders regard them with great seriousness, and their symbolic importance is reiterated in every major document or speech:

> . . . raising high the glorious banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics, guided by the important ideologies of Deng Xiaoping Theory and the 'Three Represents', [the Party] thoroughly implements the Scientific View of Development . . .

The above phrase is perhaps the most standard expression of political correctness in contemporary China. It brings in (as it must) all three of the prevailing ideological banners of the Chinese Communist Party.

To a large extent, understanding the 18th National Congress begins with an understanding of these *qihao*. What do they mean? How do they emerge?

Mao Zedong Thought is a *qihao* that the Maoist left of China's political spectrum regards as its quintessence. At the end of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese Communist Party engaged in a limited criticism of the errors committed under Mao. Mao Zedong's ideas themselves were not repudiated, however. In fact, the Marxism-Leninism so central to Mao Zedong Thought remained ideologically intact and symbolically important.

In the 1980s, no new *qihao* were created within the Chinese Communist Party. It was only in the 1990s that Deng Xiaoping Theory strutted onto the stage. This new banner term reached its apogee in the political report to the 15th National Congress in 1997, following Deng Xiaoping's death earlier that year. Deng Xiaoping Theory was essentially a revision of Mao Zedong Thought, upholding the intense concentration of power that marked Mao's rule while at the same time promoting a capitalist economy. Most ordinary Chinese today see the policy of "reform and opening up," or *gaige kaifang*, as emblematic of Deng and his ideas.

[ABOVE: One of many books available in China attempting to explain "Deng Xiaoping Theory" and its significance.]

At the 16th National Congress, five years after Deng Xiaoping's death, it was Jiang Zemin's turn to shine. Even as he transferred power to Hu Jintao, Jiang's own *qihao*, the Three Represents, climbed to its zenith.

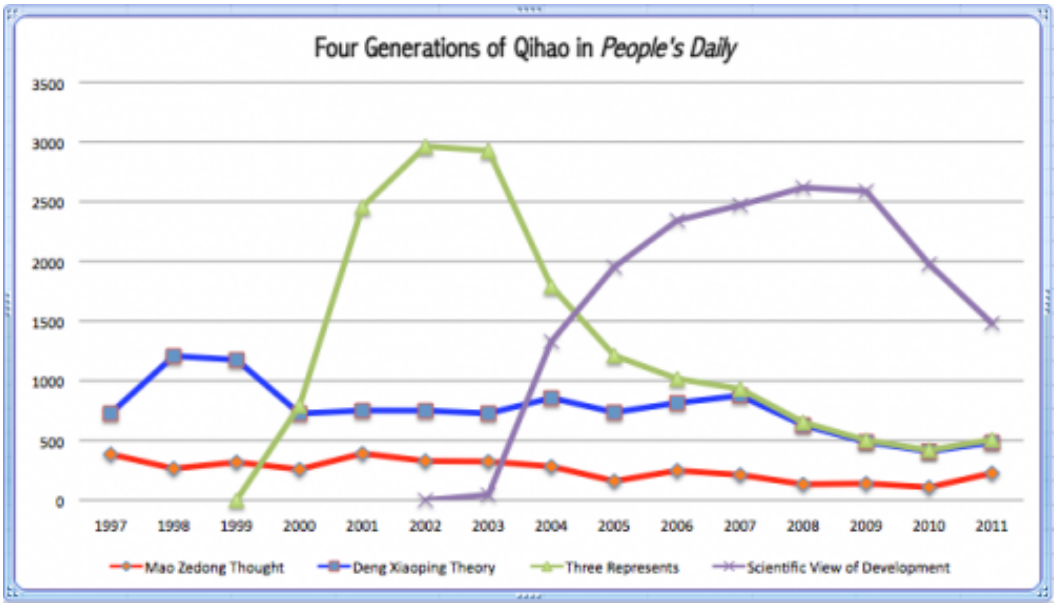
The Three Represents demanded that the Chinese Communist Party "represent the developmental needs of China's advanced production capacity, represent the forward direction of China's advanced culture, and represent the fundamental interests of the majority of the people." That is a mouthful. So it's no surprise that many people seized on the much simpler idea — Jiang's basic intent in all this sloganeering — of "letting capitalists join the Party." A few commentators tried using the term "Jiang Zemin Doctrine" to describe his ideological legacy, but this never caught on. Jiang's doctrine would not bear his name, a reflection of the fading notion in China of the paramount leader.

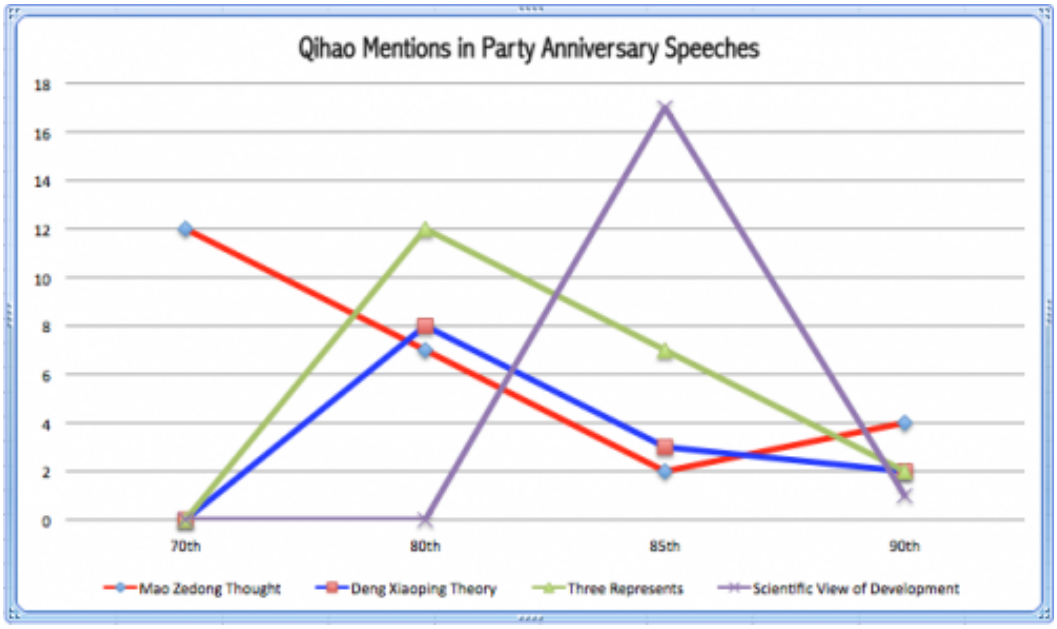
Once Hu Jintao had fully secured the reins as China's national leader, becoming chairman of the Central Military Commission in 2004, he set about creating his own political brand.[lxx] Known as the Scientific View of Development, Hu's *qihao* rose to the top in the political report to the 17th National Congress in 2007. The Scientific View of Development was about sustainable, balanced and people-based development in China. This was understood essentially as a recognition that China's growth through the 1990s had to a great extent been uneven, worsening tensions and divisions in Chinese society.

Like Jiang's third-generation term, Hu's fourth-generation *qihao* did not bear his name. But Hu's authority as a Party commander was in fact a notch below that of his predecessor. In the Jiang era, major

policy announcements typically began with the phrase, "The Central Committee united around the core of comrade Jiang Zemin . . . " Hu Jintao has had to settle for a rather less potent preamble: "The Central Committee with Comrade Hu Jintao as General Secretary . . . "

To sum up, when Jiang Zemin came to office in 1989, he solidified his power and standing first by raising up Deng Xiaoping's banner, Deng Xiaoping Theory. Only after some time did he introduce his own banner term, which was passed on to his successor, Hu Jintao. More than a year after he came to power, Hu Jintao fashioned his own banner, the Scientific View of Development. But the following graphs illuminate one important difference in the life cycle of Hu's term.





The first graph shows the four *qihao* as they have appeared in the *People's Daily* since the late

1990s. The second graph shows the relative strength of these terms in the five official speeches given at the 60th, 70th, 80th, 85th and 90th anniversaries of the Chinese Communist Party. What we can see clearly here is that Hu Jintao's term has gone into decline even while he is in office.

Uses of the Scientific View of Development in the *People's Daily* fell steadily through 2010 and 2011. And when we compare the official speech given at the Party's 85th anniversary in 2006 to the 2011 speech to commemorate the 90th anniversary, we again see use of Hu Jintao's term slipping. Deng Xiaoping Theory and the Three Represents also fell during this period, but Mao Zedong Thought rose slightly. Reading Hu Jintao's speech for the 90th anniversary, I speculated in the *Hong Kong Economic Journal* at the time that the weakness of Hu's Scientific View of Development probably meant there was little hope that his *qihao* would figure prominently in the political report to the 18th National Congress in 2012. During the first half of 2012, there were 571 articles in the *People's Daily* that used the Scientific View of Development, down substantially from the same period in 2011. But as the 18th National Congress drew closer this year, Hu seemed more intent on raising the pitch of his legacy term.

On July 23, 2012, Hu Jintao delivered a speech at a special forum attended by provincial-level leaders. In this speech, the relative frequencies of the four Party-banner terms were different from what we saw in his 90th anniversary speech. Mao Zedong Thought was mentioned just once, while Deng Xiaoping Theory and the Three Represents were each given three mentions. The surprise was Hu's Scientific View of Development, which came in with six mentions (plus three additional mentions of the shortened term "scientific development").

In his speech, Hu Jintao resoundingly affirmed China's accomplishments in the decade since the 16th National Congress, saying it had made "historical achievements and progress" chiefly because of the "formation and implementation of the Scientific View of Development" under the guiding ideas of Mao, Deng and Jiang.

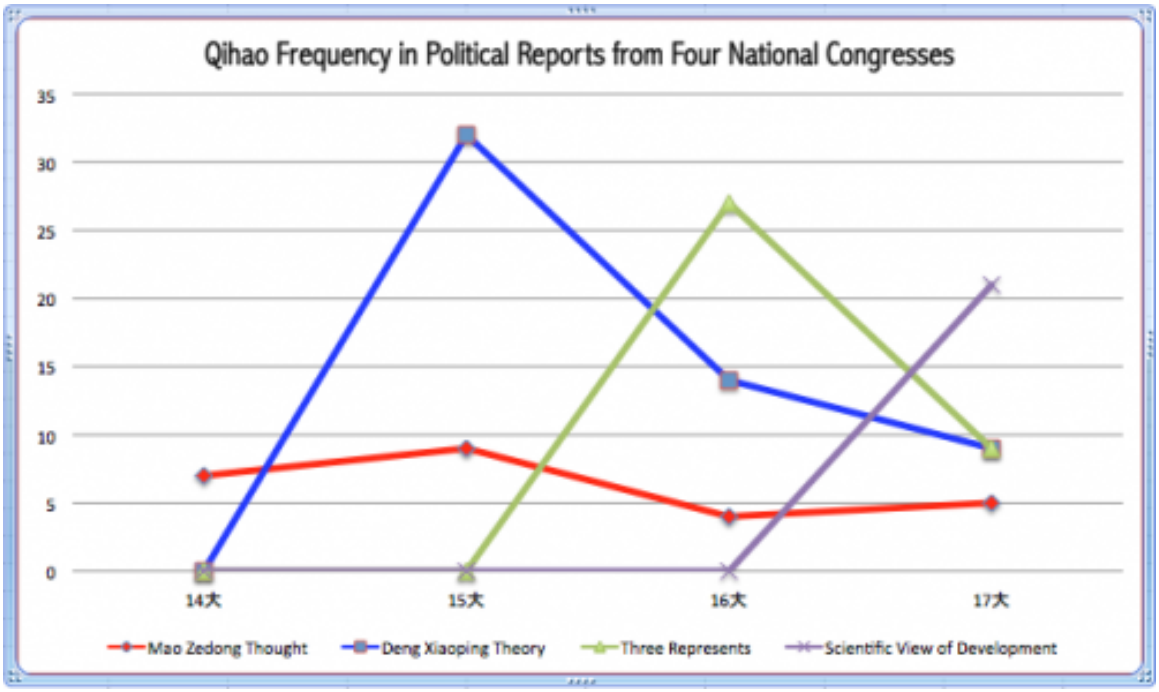
Hu Jintao's exact words were:

> The full and serious fulfillment of the Scientific View of Development remains a long-term, difficult task, and it faces a range of tensions and hardships that will be very challenging. We must, with greater resolve, more effective measures and an improved system, fully implement the Scientific View of Development. [We must] truly transform the Scientific View of Development into a powerful force driving the better and more rapid development of our economy and society.[lxxi]

In the wake of Hu's speech, the *People's Daily* ran a series of articles explicating it — explaining its "spirit," as this is called in Party jargon. On July 31, 2012, an article called "Deeply Grasping the Major Importance of the Scientific View of Development" offered a detailed review of Hu Jintao's *qihao*.[lxxii] One week later, on August 6, People's Daily Online ran an article by Liu Yunshan, the Party's propaganda chief. The article said China must "more conscientiously take the road of the Scientific View of Development."[lxxiii] This wave of pro-Hu propaganda suggested that the Scientific View of Development was not just a "guiding principle," or zhidao sixiang, but in fact was a fundamental policy to be put into full effect for the foreseeable future, even in the face of "hardship." The context — and let's not forget how sensitive the Party is to context — implied that the Scientific View of Development is a policy that will define how China handles its business for the next 10 years.

The Scientific View of Development symbolizes Hu Jintao's political power. Affirming this term means affirming Hu's 10 years of leadership; strongly emphasizing it signals his lingering influence. For this reason, we can look at how the Scientific View of Development appears at the 18th National Congress as an important indicator.

The Chinese Communist Party has held four national congresses since the June 4, 1989, crackdown on democracy demonstrations in Beijing. When we plot the number of times the four *qihao* are used in the political reports to those congresses, this is what we come up with:



We can look at the fate of Jiang Zemin's banner term for clues to what is in store for Hu Jintao's Scientific View of Development. Jiang presented the Three Represents late in his term as president, and he passed the term on to Hu Jintao. During Hu's first two years in office, the Three Represents remained influential. In 2004, Jiang's *qihao* was written into the Party Constitution (think of it as the Party's watchword hall of fame), just as Deng Xiaoping Theory had been written into the Party Constitution in 1999. On September 19, 2004, just as Jiang Zemin was handing his chairmanship of the powerful Central Military Commission over to Hu Jintao, a meeting of the Central Committee issued a "Decision" on strengthening the Party's "governing capacity." That decision formally introduced the Scientific View of Development. From that time on, Jiang Zemin's *qihao* faded while Hu Jintao's burgeoned.

There is an old saying in China: "When people leave, the tea grows cold." This really is the case for the ideological banner terms that symbolize the legacies of China's Party leaders. Deng Xiaoping Theory, the Three Represents and the Scientific View of Development — these are all cups of tea sitting on the conference table of Chinese politics.

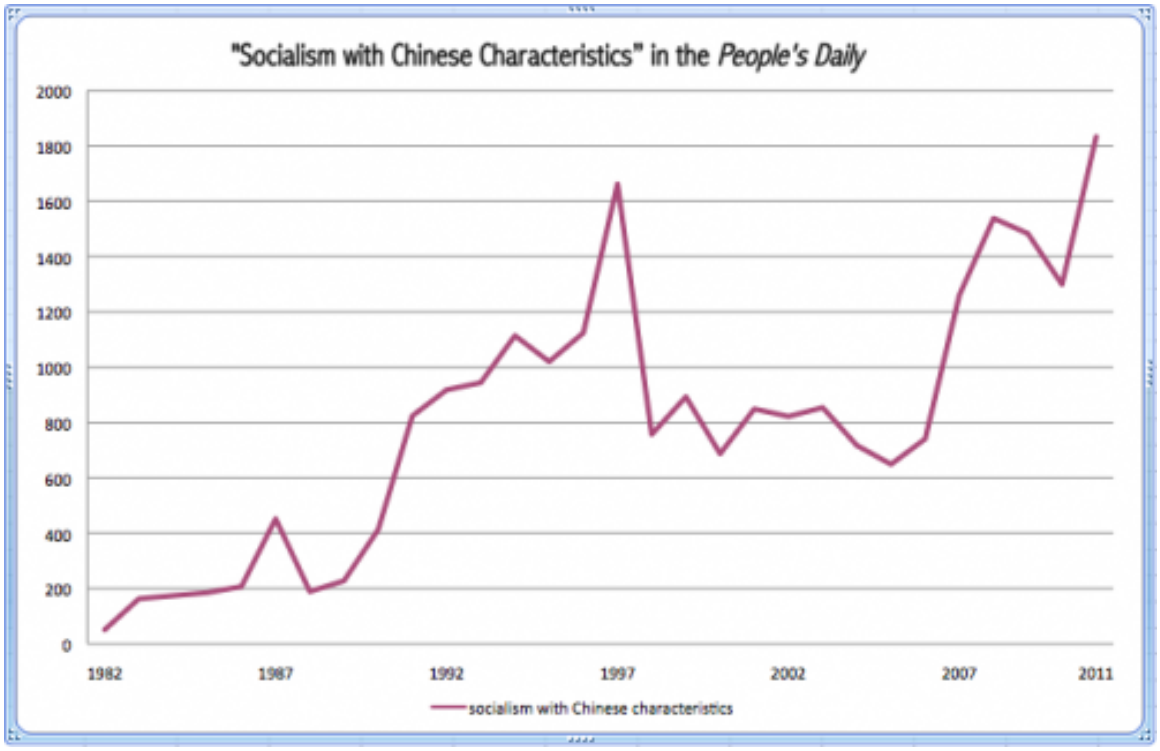
When the curtain opens on the 18th National Congress, where will these banner terms stand? Will Hu Jintao be able to do as Jiang Zemin did, passing his qihao on to the next generation of leaders? If so, how far will his successors carry the banner before it falls? When will his successor, whoever it may be, introduce their own political brand (their own cup of tea) to the world? And what kind of *qihao* will that be?

Chapter Ten
THE MIXED BAG OF SOCIALISM

Keyword: *socialism with Chinese characteristics* (中国特色社会主)

In China, there is a popular phrase people use when referring to the seemingly whimsical world of the political slogan: "It's an open basket," they'll say of this or that watchword, "Anything can be thrown in there." This could be said of just about all the specialized vocabularies I have covered in this series. And it is certainly true of one of the most central phrases now in use by the Chinese Communist Party — "socialism with Chinese characteristics," or *zhongguo tese shehui zhuyi*.

As we prepare for the 18th National Congress, this term in fact is celebrating its 30th birthday, and it is running as strong as ever. There is little doubt this watchword will appear, probably prominently, in the next political report. The real question is exactly what Chinese leaders will use to fill this basket.



The patent rights, so to speak, on socialism with Chinese characteristics go back to Deng Xiaoping. Deng first used the term in his opening remarks to the 12th National Congress in 1982, which were printed in the *People's Daily*. For Deng, this was a reform slogan, and the obvious target of his reform was the Mao-style socialism that had been practiced to great detriment in China for 30 years.

By the time the congress rolled around in 1982, the Party had already dissolved the people's commune system in China's countryside, and market reforms had begun. In fact, Deng's true intention was to practice not socialism with Chinese characteristics, but capitalism with Chinese characteristics. But the changes he initiated were already drawing opposition from conservatives in the Party ranks. Deng had to proceed cautiously. He could not force a break with the political orthodoxy without losing important allies

needed to push reforms.

Deng's introduction of the term "socialism with Chinese characteristics" was a stratagem, what my Western readers might call a Trojan horse. Better yet, to return to the popular Chinese phrase, it was a basket. On the outside, it seemed ideologically acceptable to conservatives, but inside it could accommodate Deng's vision of change. The crux of the term is not "socialism" but "Chinese characteristics." The modifier "Chinese characteristics" enabled Deng to qualify and adapt socialism, easing it in a new direction. This was Deng's great magic trick, you might say — making people believe socialism was still there even though it had disappeared right before their eyes.

In 1982, socialism with Chinese characteristics was a newborn watchword. It had not yet appeared in General Secretary Hu Yaobang's political report to the 12th National Congress, held in September that year. The term rose to prominence only after Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang laid out their blueprint for further reform.

The following are the full titles of the political reports delivered to national congresses in China, from the 12th in 1982 to the 17th in 2007.[lxxiv] For anyone unaccustomed to the Party's windbag ways, these will no doubt seem a marvel of expansiveness:

> **12th:** "Fully Creating a New Phase in the Socialist Construction of Modernization" (Hu Yaobang) **13th:** "Moving Forward Along the Path of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" (Zhao Ziyang)
> **14th:** "Accelerating the Pace of Reform and Opening and the Construction of Modernization, Striving for Greater Victories in the Enterprise of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" (Jiang Zemin)
> **15th:** "Holding High the Glorious Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory, Pushing the Building of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics into the 21st Century" (Jiang Zemin)
> **16th:** "Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all Respects, Opening a New Phase of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" (Jiang Zemin)
> **17th:** "Holding High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, Struggling for New Victories in the All-Round Building of a Moderately Prosperous Society" (Hu Jintao)


人民日报
RENMIN RIBAO
中央领导人同一些老同志
会见党的十三大全体代表
沿着有中国特色的社会主义道路前进
——在中国共产党第十三次全国代表大会上的报告
（一九八七年十月二十五日）
赵紫阳
一、历史性成就和这次大会的任务
二、社会主义初级阶段和党的基本路线

[ABOVE: In 1987, the front page of the *People's Daily* reads: "Moving Forward Along the Path of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics."[lxxv]]

My point here is that every single political report since the 13th National Congress in 1987 has included socialism with Chinese characteristics in the title. This, indeed, is the 400-pound gorilla of Party watchwords. Both the reports to the 13th and 14th congresses referred to socialism with Chinese characteristics as a "banner." The report to the 15th National Congress, held in 1997, the year of Deng Xiaoping's death, mentions the "Glorious Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory," which essentially has the same meaning as the previous two references to socialism with Chinese characteristics. From the 15th National Congress to the 17th National Congress, the reference to the "Glorious Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory" was prevalent and socialism with Chinese characteristics faded somewhat. In Hu Jintao's report to the 17th National Congress in 2007, however, the reference to socialism with Chinese characteristics as a "banner" returned, marking a general resurgence of the term.

So, what exactly is socialism with Chinese characteristics? Can anyone really say?

Every political report since the 13th National Congress in 1987 has been accompanied by an elaborate treatment. These explanatory notes serve as a kind of political bible for ordinary Chinese — a tuning fork that gets everyone on the same note. If we look carefully at these treatments, we can spot how watchwords shift in meaning.

The 13th National Congress was marked by a fierce struggle between the reform faction and the leftist conservatives. At that time the explanation of socialism with Chinese characteristics, which was called the "basic line," was explained like this: "[The term means] leading and uniting people of all ethnic groups,

with economic construction as the core, adhering to the Four Basic Principles, adhering to reform and opening, with self-reliance, [with a] tough and pioneering [spirit], struggling to transform our country into a strong and prosperous, democratic and civilized modern socialist nation." Within this explanation, "reform and opening" and the Four Basic Principles are afforded equal position. In the context of the 1980s this actually gave reform and opening the upper hand.

The 14th National Congress was held three years after the June Fourth Incident at Tiananmen Square that marked the violent end to pro-democracy protests in 1989. Even as he faced off with a resurgent left — which was making political hay of the unrest in 1989 — Deng was adamant that not a single word of the 1987 political report be altered. In the spring of 1992, before the congress was held, Deng broke the stalemate by making his "southern tour," a whistle-stop tour of economically important cities in the south during which he promoted an acceleration of reforms.

In his political report later that year, Jiang Zemin stressed that while the Party's leaders had to be mindful of a rightward shift they had to remain especially vigilant against threats from the left. Deng's southern tour had succeeded in tipping the scales in favor of reform.

By the 15th National Congress in 1997 the market economy was already well established and China was preparing for entry into the World Trade Organization. Once again, Jiang Zemin warned the Party to stay the course and not shift to the left. He said the country and the Party needed to be "even clearer about what is meant by the primary stage of socialism, [and by] a socialist economy, politics and culture with Chinese characteristics."

Jiang was once again transforming socialism with Chinese characteristics, filling the basket with several changes to ownership systems in China. Now the term also implied the creation of a basic economic system in which various new forms of ownership could operate. In practice, this was already a far cry from the call to stick to the "socialist path," an integral part of the Four Basic Principles.

Five years later, Jiang Zemin no longer cautioned leaders to be alert to a leftward shift. In his political report to the 16th National Congress, he summarized the Party's achievements in the "construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics," breaking them down into 10 points. These included Mao Zedong Thought and the Four Basic Principles (both much beloved by those on the left). Most crucial, however, was Jiang's closing statement. Wrapping up his 10 points, he said the Party must "represent the developmental needs of China's advanced production capacity, represent the forward direction of China's advanced culture, and represent the fundamental interests of the majority of the people."

This, of course, was the so-called Three Represents, Jiang's banner term, or *qihao* — an issue I dealt with in my last piece. Jiang Zemin was now stuffing the basket of socialism with Chinese characteristics with his own political term, a symbol of his legacy.

Not surprisingly, Hu Jintao's political report to the 17th National Congress in 2007 made further revisions to socialism with Chinese characteristics. Hu's words were (and I'll have to plead with readers to bear with me):

> . . . The road of socialism with Chinese characteristics is about building a socialist market economy, socialist politics, a socialist advanced civilization and a socialist harmonious

> society, building a modern socialist nation that is prosperous, democratic and civilized, [all] under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, rooted in the basic circumstances of the country, with economic construction as the core, adhering to the Four Basic Principles, adhering to reform and opening, liberating and developing the productive forces of society, consolidating and improving the socialist system. . . The theoretical system of socialism with Chinese characteristics is a scientific theoretical system that includes Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important ideologies of the Three Represents and the Scientific View of Development and other important strategic ideas.

And there you have it, not a lucid definition of socialism with Chinese characteristics, but a perplexing mixed bag of Party watchwords. The phrase "other important strategic ideas" reminds us that this is a collection of evolving ideologies. You could see it as the accumulating sum of China's political baggage.

Hu Jintao essentially repeated this definition, such as it is, in his speech to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party in 2011. In a speech on July 23, 2012, Hu added that "socialism with Chinese characteristics is a banner for China's present-day development and progress, and a banner of unity and struggle for the whole Party and all the peoples of the nation."[lxxvi] This was tantamount to saying that the term will also, in the future, remain a banner standing for all three of the latest leadership generations — Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao.

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2012年7月
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胡锦涛强调，高举中国特色社会主义伟大旗帜，以邓小平理论、"三个代表"重要思想为指导，深入贯彻落实科学发展观，解放思想，改革开放，凝聚力量，攻坚克难，坚定不移沿着中国特色社会主义道路前进，为全面建成小康社会而奋斗

胡锦涛在省部级主要领导干部专题研讨班开班式上发表重要讲话强调

全党全国各族人民更加紧密地团结起来
沿着中国特色社会主义伟大道路奋勇前进

吴邦国温家宝贾庆林李长春李克强贺国强周永康出席 习近平主持

[ABOVE: The July 24, 2012, edition of the *People's Daily* touts socialism with Chinese characteristics as a basket of banner terms.]

The front page of the July 24, 2012, edition of the *People's Daily*, shown above, offers a hint about the upcoming 18th National Congress. In the upper right-hand corner of the page, the three banner terms of Deng, Jiang and Hu are listed out. The main headline, meanwhile, emphasizes socialism with Chinese characteristics. From this we could hypothesize that no entirely new watchwords will be unveiled at the congress. Rather, socialism with Chinese characteristics will be contested among various political interests and factions, emerging once again as the greatest common denominator.

What we will need to watch is how socialism with Chinese characteristics is explained. How will it be different? Will it continue to bear the ideas of Jiang Zemin, or the Four Basic Principles, or Mao Zedong Thought? Inside the evolving basket of socialism with Chinese characteristics, will Hu Jintao's Scientific View of Development have a new and special place? Will the Scientific View of Development become, like the banner terms of Deng and Jiang, an idea merely offering "guidance," or will it be once again defined (as it has been more recently) as a fundamental policy to be loudly proclaimed, and followed reverentially, by China's next leader?

Conclusion
HOW CAN WE SCORE THE 18th NATIONAL CONGRESS?

As I hope I've illustrated through this series, China's political watchwords can reward us with a wealth of information. These specialized vocabularies, and their shifts over time, provide a glimpse into China's secretive political culture.

Analyzing China's political watchwords would have been a painstaking process before the advent of computers and the Internet. Just imagine the time and immense effort it would require to sort through six decades of the *People's Daily* for a phrase like "intraparty democracy."

Fortunately, a new generation of digital search tools makes searching political watchwords in Chinese far easier. We now have, at our fingertips, the means to search through individual articles, through entire archives of a single newspaper, or even through hundreds of newspapers and websites over specified time periods.

With the help of these new search tools, watchwords become keys, allowing us to unlock China's political past and present, and to make educated guesses about its future. Our basic measure is a given term's frequency of use, which gives us a reading of that term's temperature over time. Or, if you prefer, it shows us a term's changing stock price. Is a watchword (and related ideas, policies or people) on the rise or in decline?

In this series, I've looked at the history, origin and context of various political watchwords used by the Chinese Communist Party. I've also looked at changes in the frequency of use and meaning of these terms over time.

[ABOVE: What kind of score will we be able to give the political report to the 18th National Congress on the basis of our core watchwords? Flag image (checkmarks

added) by Renato Ganoza posted to Flickr.com under Creative Commons license.]

Political change in China over the past 60 years has been attended by change in the meaning and frequency of political watchwords. Some terms, like "class struggle," have faded into the past. Others, like "political reform," have run hot and cold.

The following is a bulleted list of basic points that I hope will help readers make sense of the upcoming 18th National Congress. If you like, you can think of these 10 key points as a basis on which we can come up with a report card telling us which direction the leadership seems likely to go on a number of important issues.

1. *The Four Basic Principles* (including *Mao Zedong Thought*). These watchwords have strong significance as indicators of where Chinese politics is heading. If both of these terms are abandoned, this will signify the leadership's intention to pursue political reform. If the phrase Four Basic Principles is used to the extent that we saw five years earlier, or its frequency is reduced only slightly, this will signal a perpetuation of the status quo, with no substantive progress on political reform. Any increase in the frequency of use of either term will suggest a political turnabout.

2. *Stability Preservation*. If this hard-line term appears in the political report to the 18th National Congress (marking its coming of age as a Party watchword), this will be a serious sign of political backsliding. (Note that an increase for Term 1, the Four Basic Principles, accompanied by Term 2, "stability preservation," would be a serious sign of political backsliding. If this happens, no situation with respect to the other watchwords below would override this more pessimistic reading.)

3. *Cultural Revolution*. A return appearance of this term in 2012 could have special meaning. If the political report to the 18th National Congress attempts any sort of soul-searching about the Cultural Revolution, this could be read as positive sign pointing to possible political reform. If, however, the term is used only in the context of praise for China's progress, its appearance will have little significance.

4. *Political Reform*. Possible positive developments for this watchword at the 18th National Congress would be inclusion in a section header of the political report (which didn't happen in 2007), or an overall increase in use of the term (which was mentioned five times in 2007). Any decrease in use would be a negative sign. We should also note whether the report includes Wen Jiabao-style language. For example, the appearance of the phrase "protecting rights, checking power" would be a positive sign. The appearance, on the other hand, of hard-line language such as "opposing Westernization" or the "Five Will Nots" would be a negative sign.

5. *Power of Decision-Making, Power of Administration and Power of Monitoring*. For this phrase, which did appear in the political report to the 17th National Congress, the critical thing to look for is whether it reappears this year. The full 2007 phrase to look for is: "[The Party] must build and improve power structures for mutual conditioning and mutual coordination of the powers of decision-making, administration and monitoring, improving oversight mechanisms" (要建立健全决策权、执行权、监督权既相互制约又相互协调的权力结构，完善监督机

制). If we do not see this phrase repeated in this year's political report, that will be a negative sign. If the phrase is altered to include the idea of these powers operating independently of one another, that will be a positive sign.

6. *Power Is Given by the People*. As I explained in my fifth article in this series, this phrase was introduced by Xi Jinping after the 17th National Congress. Any appearance of this term at all in this year's political report will be a positive sign.

7. *Social Construction*. The critical thing to watch here is whether the phrase "expanding the scope for self-governance at the grassroots," which appeared in 2007, reappears in this year's political report. If it disappears (and is not replaced by "social self-governance") that will be a negative sign.

8. *Intraparty Democracy*. This term appeared five times in the political report to the 17th National Congress, a relatively high frequency. In this year's political report we will need to look both at how often the watchword appears, and at whether or not it is accompanied by language about more concrete measures, such as "open nomination and direct election," "differential election" and "fixed tenure."

9. *Scientific View of Development*. The term, President Hu Jintao's "banner term," or *qihao*, appeared 21 times in the 2007 political report. If the term appears the same number of times or marginally less often in this year's report, that will be normal. If, however, the term appears with greater frequency, this will signal that Hu intends to extend the influence of his banner term beyond the 18th National Congress. Also worth scrutiny is whether the meaning of the Scientific View of Development is changed in any way. For example, if there is an emphasis on "people-based" governance, or if there is mention of civil and political rights along the lines of what we saw in China's National Human Rights Action Plan (2012-2015), then this will be a positive sign.

10. *Socialism with Chinese Characteristics*. This watchword appeared a whopping 51 times in the political report to the 17th National Congress. Judging from Hu Jintao's speech on July 23, 2012, this watchword, actually a changing medley of political terms, will become a term representing the banner terms for the last three generations of Chinese leaders — Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. If that's true, we can expect the term to be used with even greater frequency. That would be the product of political balancing and would not necessarily signify positive or negative political developments.

Observers should carefully monitor how Socialism with Chinese Characteristics is defined in the political report. Specifically, we should look at whether that definition includes the Four Basic Principles or "one core, two basics" (which includes the Four Basic Principles). If either of these terms is bundled into the definition of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, that will occasion pessimism about the path ahead. It remains to be seen which particular watchwords will be most useful in reading China's political situation and prospects at the 18th National Congress. But I hope I've made the case that China's political watchwords are more than just words — they are concrete outcomes of China's internal politics. Of course, the study of the ups and downs of China's specialized political vocabulary should always be combined with a keen eye for other political variables. After all, as this year's Bo Xilai scandal has shown, China is always ready to surprise.

Endnotes

[i] For the text of past political reports, readers can refer to the archive at People's Daily Online: http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64168/index.html

[ii] Data in this series concerning usage of various terminologies in the *People's Daily* are derived from the People's Daily full-text database located at: http://www.oriprobe.com/peoplesdaily_cn.html

[iii] These data are obtained from the WiseNews database, Wisers Information Limited.

[iv] The author made these observations ahead of the 17th National Congress in 2007. See "Political Reform at the 17th Congress: Drawing Clues from the Media," *Yazhou Zhoukan*, Issue 40, 2007, online article published October 14, 2007: http://www.yzzk.com/cfm/Content_Archive.cfm?Channel=ae&Path=223847801/40ae3.cfm

[v] Deng Xiaoping, "Adhering to the Four Basic Principles," March 30, 1979, archived at People's Daily Online: http://www.people.com.cn/GB/channel1/10/20000529/80791.html

[vi] Yang Jisheng, *Political Struggle in the Era of Reform*, (Hong Kong: Excellent Culture Press), 2004, pp. 479-481.

[vii] *People's Daily* data are obtained from the *People's Daily* full-text database.

[viii] *People's Daily*, August 27, 2004, p. 6.

[ix] *Beijing Youth Daily*, September 28, 2009, p. A5, available online at: http://bjyouth.ynet.com/3.1/0909/28/3871882.html

[x] See "Political Reform at the 17th Congress: Drawing Clues from the Media," *Yazhou Zhoukan*, Issue 40, 2007, online article published November 4, 2007: http://www.yzzk.com/cfm/Content_Archive.cfm?Channel=ae&Path=223847801/40ae3.cfm

[xi] "Where is Political Reform?" *Yazhou Zhoukan*, Issue 43, 2007, online article published October 14, 2007: http://www.yzzk.com/cfm/Content_Archive.cfm?Channel=ae&Path=2217583212/43ae3.cfm

[xii] "Thoughts on Deng Xiaoping's [Saying] 'China Does Not Permit Chaos!'", Xinhua News Agency, April 12, 2008, available at Xinhua Online: http://news.xinhuanet.com/theory/2008-04/12/content_7820513.htm

[xiii] *People's Daily*, June 4, 1990, p. 1.

[xiv] After this article was published on the Chinese online edition of the New York Times on September 20, 2012, a web user observed correctly that the first use of the term "stability preservation" in the *People's Daily* in fact was on July 20, 2001, in a page 6 article about the police. See: "Chongqing: Organizing Police Links with 110", People's Daily, July 20, 2001, p. 6.

[xv] *People's Daily*, November 18, 2011, p. 21.

[xvi] *People's Daily*, March 17, 2007, p. 1.

[xvii] Video of the interview available online at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUpcQSJ0tTE

[xviii] *People's Daily*, March 15, 2012, p. 1.

[xix] See: *The Great Game of Political Reform: Wen Jiabao's Seven Mentions of Political Reform*, (Hong Kong: Cosmos Books, 2010).

[xx] *People's Daily*, September 15, 2011, p. 1.

[xxi] *People's Daily*, June 16, 2012, p. 1.

[xxii] *People's Daily*, September 15, 2012, p. 1.

[xxiii] *Oriental Morning Post* (Shanghai), March 15, 2012, p. 1.

[xxiv] *People's Daily*, May 14, 2012, p. 5.

[xxv] *People's Daily*, September 15, 2011, p. 1.

[xxvi] *People's Daily*, April 15, 2011, p. 1.

[xxvii] *People's Daily*, March 15, 2012, p. 1.

[xxviii] *Ta Kung Pao* (Hong Kong), March 15, 2012, p. A4.

[xxix] *New Express* (Guangzhou), March 15, 2012, p. 1.

[xxx] *People's Daily*, November 4, 1987, p. 1.

[xxxi] *People's Daily*, July 2, 1991, p. 1.

[xxxii] *People's Daily*, December 8, 2002, p. 1.

[xxxiii] *People's Daily*, June 23, 2003, p. 1.

[xxxiv] *People's Daily*, October 25, 2007, p. 1.

[xxxv] *People's Daily*, September 2, 2010, p. 1.

[xxxvi] *Southern Weekly*, December 23, 2010: http://www.infzm.com/content/53826

[xxxvii] *People's Daily*, September 22, 1997, p. 1.

[xxxviii] *People's Daily*, November 18, 2002, p. 1.

[xxxix] *People's Daily*, October 25, 2007, p. 1.

[xl] *People's Daily*, September 27, 2004, p. 1.

[xli] *People's Daily*, October 13, 2008, p. 6.

[xlii] *People's Daily*, July 2, 2011, p. 2.
[xliii] *People's Daily*, March 19, 2011, p. 1.
[xliv] "Deng Xiaoping: Political Reform Cannot Use Western Separation of Powers," Xinhua News Agency, posted to Netease on February 26, 2009: http://news.163.com/09/0226/04/5324TCAB000136KA.html
[xlv] *People's Daily*, November 27, 1995, p. 1.
[xlvi] "New Trends in Official Corruption," *New Weekly Report* (Hubei), November 3, 2004, p. 11.
[xlvii] *People's Daily*, January 24, 2006, p. 8.
[xlviii] *People's Daily*, December 27, 2007, p. 2.
[xlix] *Xi'an Daily*, March 12, 2008, p. 3.
[l] Xu Yaotong, "Top-level Design and Deepening Reform," posted to 21ccom.net, July 5, 2012: http://www.21ccom.net/articles/zgyj/ggcx/article_2012070563191.html
[li] Cao Siyuan's ideas for reform were laid out to the author in a document sent directly to the authors e-mail account and kept on file.
[lii] *People's Daily*, October 25, 2007, p. 1.
[liii] *China Newsweekly*, Issue 21, 2010.
[liv] *Southern Metropolis Daily*, April 19, 2010, p. A2.
[lv] *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, June 18, 2010.
[lvi] Wu Hong: "Making Headway on Political Reform in China," People's Daily Online, November 11, 2003: http://www.people.com.cn/GB/14576/14841/2181669.html
[lvii] Su Gongqin, "Strong Government and Weak Society," *China Entrepreneur*, September 2012, available online at: http://www.iceo.com.cn/shangye/62/2012/0919/257656.shtml
[lviii] "China Needs 'Opening in Three Acts'", *Yazhou Zhoukan*, Issue 27, 2007: http://www.yzzk.com/cfm/Content_Archive.cfm?Channel=af&Path=235215691/27af1.cfm
[lix] *People's Daily*, September 27, 2004, p. 1.
[lx] "Yu Keping: What Major Results Has Our Country Made on Democratic Politics?", *Beijing Daily*, September 17, 2007, available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/theory/2007-09/17/content_6737139.htm
[lxi] Lu Li, Liu Chunlin, "Shenzhen Secretary Wang Rong: We Hope to be Earlier in Building a Civil Society", *Southern Metropolis Daily*, September 1, 2010, available at: http://news.qq.com/a/20100901/001065.htm
[lxii] *China Youth Daily*, August 5, 2010, p. 1
[lxiii] *Ta Kung Pao* (Hong Kong), December 2, 2010, p. A5.
[lxiv] "'Civil Society' Rattles the Nerves of the the Chinese Communist Party," *Apple Daily* (Hong Kong), December 12, 2010: http://hk.apple.nextmedia.com/international/art/20101212/14757608
[lxv] "Taking the Innovative Road of Social Management with Chinese Characteristics," *Seeking Truth*, 2011, Issue 10: http://www.qstheory.cn/zxdk/2011/2011010/201105/t20110513_80501.htm
[lxvi] *People's Daily*, November 15, 2011, p. 2.
[lxvii] *People's Daily*, June 29, 2004, p. 9.
[lxviii] *People's Daily*, June 27, 2005, p. 1.
[lxix] *South China Morning Post*, July 11, 2012, City3.
[lxx] *People's Daily*, September 27, 2004, p. 1.
[lxxi] *People's Daily*, July 24, 2012, p. 1.
[lxxii] *People's Daily*, July 31, 2012, p. 1.
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[lxxiv] *Political Reports of the National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party*, see People's Daily Online "Database of Past CCP National Congresses", available at: http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64162/64168/index.html
[lxxv] *People's Daily*, November 4, 1987, p. 1.
[lxxvi] *People's Daily*, July 24, 2012, p. 1.