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Democratization within the CPC and the Future of Democracy in China

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Introduction

The Communist Party of China (CPC) is the ruling political party in China. Its policy and practice on democracy will have direct impact upon democratic progress in China. The official policy of the CPC is to develop and promote the people's democracy through realization of democracy within the CPC. Hence the future of democracy in China hinges upon the success of democratization within the CPC. This chapter focuses on the discussion of democracy within the CPC. It will start with an overview of the historical development of democracy within the CPC, showing that democracy within the CPC has only been taken seriously in the twenty-first century, and that there are deep historical and cultural reasons for this lack of democracy. Despite the lack of a democratic tradition, various policy statements of the CPC have mentioned the necessity of developing internal democracy and the Seventeenth Central Committee in 2007 made it clear that the CPC should develop internal democracy in order to achieve people's democracy in China. That has been regarded as essential to maintaining the governing position of the CPC in China. Part II of the chapter will discuss the justifications for the change of policy to embrace democracy within the CPC. There are various reasons for this, of which the democratic movement in the former Eastern European communist countries is an important external factor. In order to develop democracy within the CPC, the consensus is that a set of democratic mechanisms has to be established, which includes the means for competitive elections, the protection of the

rights of CPC members, ensuring transparency, leadership within the CPC, the working of the CPC, supervision and so on. After an overview of the mechanisms to democratize the CPC, Part III of the chapter will focus on competitive election as a basis to discuss the actual development of democracy within the CPC. Discussion of different experiments in electoral reform within the CPC at different levels in the two recent rounds indicates that the element of competition has gradually been brought into elections within the CPC. It is also encouraging to see that the necessity for democratic election within the CPC has been appreciated by senior Party leaders. However, the development of competitive elections within the CPC is still at its preliminary stage and at the lower level of CPC organizations. There are also considerable obstacles in the lower-level CPC organizations for the expansion of competitive elections. Since the election reform within the CPC has broken through some existing rules within the Constitution of the CPC, it will be more desirable for the relevant provisions in the Constitution of the CPC to be amended before further electoral reforms are carried out. Part IV of the chapter will discuss the future of democracy within the CPC and the future of democracy in China. Given that the CPC has a clear policy on developing internal democracy, the establishment of various mechanisms and their reforms has proved to be moving in the right direction, and that those mechanisms seem to work in coordination with each other, the author remains cautiously optimistic about the future development of democracy within the CPC. However, the progress of the development of internal democracy has been very slow and it has even been argued that the development of internal democracy has encountered a bottleneck due to resistance to the reform from lower-level CPC organizations. Since the CPC is so powerful that it has no competitors at all at the moment, it is in the best interest of China and the Chinese people for the CPC to democratize itself first, which will lead naturally to popular democracy in the country. Without internal reform and external pressure coming from outside the CPC, the progress of internal democracy will lack momentum. Hence the chapter concludes by arguing that the increase of both internal and external pressure will force the CPC to take internal democratization seriously and assist the Central Committee of the CPC to remove resistance against internal democratization from local party organizations. That means China

should develop democracy both within the CPC and nationally, so that the people's democracy will facilitate the development of democracy within the CPC. Once democracy is achieved within the CPC, there will be people's democracy in China.

Historical Development of Internal Democracy

A Change of Policy: From Centralism to Democracy

From the time the CPC was founded in 1921 to the time it came to power in 1949, the Party was at war, centralism was believed to be more important than democracy, and the conditions were not right for the CPC to develop internal democracy.¹ After the CPC came to power as a governing political party in 1949, it realized the necessity of developing democracy within the Party itself.² This interest in democracy within the CPC reached its first height in 1956 when the Eighth Central Committee of the CPC was held. The Eighth Central Committee decided that the CPC should insist on democratic centralism, collective leadership, the development of internal democracy and also people's democracy.³ According to Professor Xu Yaotong,⁴ the Eighth Central Committee made eight important decisions with regard to the development of internal democracy. First, the CPC must without exception implement the principle of collective leadership and expand internal democracy. Second, the principle of democratic centralism was defined as democracy under the guidance (rather than under the leadership) of centralism and the essence of the principle of democratic centralism is democracy rather than centralism.⁵ Third, all the business of the Eighth Central Committee was made public. Fourth, there should be no idolatry. Fifth, the CPC should have regular deputies to Party congresses. Sixth, a strict and effective supervision mechanism should be established within the CPC. Seventh, the CPC should explore fixed terms of appointment (rather than life-long terms) for leadership positions. Eighth, the CPC should protect and expand the democratic rights of the CPC members – the Constitution of the CPC adopted by the Eighth Central Committee included seven specific rights.⁶

Unfortunately, the decisions made by the Eighth Central Committee were not fully implemented and their implementation was

interrupted by a series of political movements starting from 1958, which culminated in the Cultural Revolution during which centralism became the norm within the CPC.⁷ After the Cultural Revolution, especially from the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee, the CPC started to reflect on its painful experience. More critical reflection was made by Deng Xiaoping in 1980 in an article entitled “The Reform of the Leadership System of the CPC and the State”, which is generally regarded as the very first serious discussion of its kind. Deng noted in his article that the CPC had in its history emphasized the necessity of unified leadership of the CPC which had seen the concentration of power in the hands of a few persons. One specific problem was the excessive concentration of power in the hands of party committees which was in turn concentrated in the hands of several party secretaries, especially the first secretaries. Most matters were decided by the first secretaries.⁸ One year later, in 1981, “the Resolution on Several Historical Issues of the CPC after the Founding of the PRC”, adopted by the Sixth Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee, endorsed Deng’s views as the official approach of the CPC.⁹

This approach was formally stated in the Report adopted by the Thirteenth Central Committee of the CPC in 1987. Furthermore, the Report announced that democracy should be developed within the CPC in order to promote people’s democracy.¹⁰ The development of democracy within the CPC was believed to be a feasible and effective means to develop a socialist democratic polity in China.¹¹ In 1994, the Fourth Plenum of the Fourteenth Central Committee of the CPC announced that an important route to developing a socialist democratic polity was by developing democracy within the CPC so as to promote people’s democracy in China.¹² Ever since then, the issue of development of democracy within the CPC has frequently appeared in various documents of the CPC and its Central Committee. The Report adopted at the Sixteenth Central Committee has put democracy within the CPC into a more prominent position and stated that internal democracy is the life of the CPC and will be an important model and driving effect on people’s democracy.¹³ In September 2004, the Decision of the Central Committee of the CPC on the Enhancement of the Party’s Governance Capability was adopted at the Fourth Plenum of the Sixteenth Central Committee. That document makes democratic rule one of the three basic pillars of the CPC¹⁴ while

democratic rule includes promotion of people's democracy by enhancing democracy within the CPC.¹⁵ The White Paper entitled "Building Political Democracy in China" issued by the State Council in October 2005 confirms that the CPC will stick to the principle of promoting people's democracy by enhancing democracy within the CPC and states that the promotion of democracy within the CPC is an important component of the CPC's democratic rule.¹⁶

The policy of promoting people's democracy through the development of democracy within the CPC has become widely known among the general public in China since 2006, when the journal *Qiushi* (*Seeking Truth*) published an article written by Professor Zheng Xiaoying from the Central Party School, entitled "Promoting People's Democracy through Internal Democracy within the CPC".¹⁷ That article attracted much attention and caused a great deal of discussion. Professor Zheng argues in the article that without having the people's democracy there will be no future for the CPC, and the development and implementation of democracy within the CPC is the proper route to develop people's democracy.¹⁸ Shortly thereafter, Professor Li Junru, a Vice President of the Central Party School, echoed this view in an interview with Xinhua News Agency. Further, Professor Li argues that this is a new approach for the reform of China's political system.¹⁹

Professor Li is an expert on the development theory of the CPC. It is the common perception that the views expressed by scholars from the Central Party School represent the views of the Central Committee of the CPC. *Qiushi* is an official journal of the CPC and Xinhua News Agency is the official news agency of Chinese government. Furthermore, the Seventeenth Central Committee affirmed the policy made at the Sixteenth Central Committee.²⁰ It is now crystal clear that the CPC's roadmap for China to develop its democracy is to develop democracy within the CPC first. Once there is democracy within the CPC, it is expected that such internal democracy will promote and eventually lead to the development and realization of people's democracy in China.

Reasons for Lack of Internal Democracy

The above discussion shows that as early as 1956 the CPC decided to develop internal democracy and actually made some specific decisions

to implement it, but there was no development of internal democracy in the two decades thereafter. Now the CPC has once again adopted a policy of developing internal democracy. In order to examine whether the current policy will lead to the same dead end, it is necessary to examine the reasons why there was so little democracy within the CPC for decades after it came to power.

Chinese scholars and politicians have identified several reasons which can be summarized as follows. First, the lack of democracy within the CPC is related to the social and historical circumstances in which the CPC was situated. China had traditionally been a country in which a patriarchal system played the dominant role. There were deep historical and cultural undemocratic elements in traditional China. These factors influenced the CPC from its formation.²¹ Deng Xiaoping described it as the influence of the feudal autocratic system in ancient Chinese history.²² Second, lack of democracy within the CPC may also be due to the influence of the tradition of various other communist countries, whose leaders often had an excessive concentration of power in the age of the League of Communism.²³ For example, in the early days of the former Soviet Union, there was not much democracy within the Soviet Communist Party. Third, the CPC historically never emphasized the necessity of avoiding an excessive concentration of power in the hands of a few persons.²⁴ Instead, it greatly emphasized centralism. Lack of internal democracy may also be due to other defects in the exercise of leadership power such as bureaucracy, and life-long tenure, and various phenomena of prerogatives.²⁵ Fourth, whether there was internal democracy was also related to whether the CPC had adopted a proper political policy at a particular time in its history. It has been observed that if the political policy is correct, implementation of the principle of democratic centralism is much better. This is because a proper political policy would have the support of the masses and all CPC members, could be implemented in practice, and officials would have more confidence and not be afraid of criticism from the masses and CPC members. But if the policies were not good, not in the interests of the general public and CPC members, then they would not get the support of the masses and CPC members. If certain officials still wanted to insist on the implementation of those policies, they would have no choice but to emphasize centralism improperly and to oppress democracy in order to control criticism from within the CPC.²⁶ Fifth, the working style of

some senior officials in key positions also contributed to the lack of democracy within the CPC. The power of party organizations and officials comes from the CPC members, which is a point often not appreciated by some senior CPC officials. Hence, once they were in control of positions of power, they thought they were patriarchs and enjoyed prerogatives, and became very bureaucratic. Very often they would put themselves above CPC organizations and treat such organizations as instruments to implement their will.²⁷

Out of the five reasons, the first is related to Chinese tradition which is something inherent in the system and may be more fundamental and difficult to remove. The second is a historical reason which no longer exists. The last three reasons are all related to the leadership style and decision-making mechanisms within the CPC. It is fair to say that those three reasons have not yet disappeared. On the one hand, that has made it more difficult to develop democracy within the CPC. On the other, it proves the necessity to develop democracy within the CPC because those are the issues that need to be resolved.

The Necessity to Democratize the CPC

Development of democracy within the CPC has become the official policy of the CPC and is also the common understanding among scholars.²⁸ But why does the CPC want to develop internal democracy at this moment of history? Scholars have identified several justifications. The first is the uniqueness of China's own historical development of democracy. One Chinese scholar has observed that in Western countries it has often been the case that there was a democratic state first before political parties were formed. Under the circumstances that people enjoyed widespread social democracy, it was difficult for political parties not to adopt a democratic system within their own organizations. In the case of China, when the CPC was founded it was a secret political party with the mission to overthrow the existing political power in China and eventually it came to power itself.²⁹ Due to the restriction of circumstances, there was often a lack of internal democracy. After it came into power, given the lack of a democratic tradition within the CPC and in society at large, a feasible choice was to develop democracy within the CPC first. In so doing, it could avoid certain risks and mistakes by having directly

people's democracy in society. It could also avoid possible loss of control and a chaotic situation from occurring in China³⁰.

The second major reason is that both the CPC and scholars believe that democracy within the CPC is a proper means to develop and promote people's democracy in China. The CPC has carried out political reforms several times in its history without success. This time, the CPC has chosen the development of internal democracy to be the breakthrough point for political reform. Professor Wang Guixiu of the Central Party School has argued that development of democracy within the CPC is the best breakthrough point for political reform in China. The CPC has tried various means to reform China's political system, such as reform of administrative organs, separation of the CPC from the administration, transparency of politics, development of democracy at grassroots level, and reform of the personnel system. None of them has proven to be successful. In his view, the breakthrough point should focus on the fundamental issue a political reform needs to resolve and the fundamental aims the reform intends to achieve. The development of democracy within the CPC is the fundamental issue and therefore should be chosen as the breakthrough point.³¹ Thus the development of democracy within the CPC has been regarded as a means to start political reform in China. One related advantage is that there is comparatively low risk of causing social disorder even if the reform fails.

The third reason is that development of internal democracy will contribute to maintaining the status of the CPC as a ruling political party in China. Jiang Zemin observed that since the 1990s some political parties in other countries which had been in power for decades have been removed from the ruling position, and some have already withered away. The fundamental reason is internal problems that occurred within those political parties.³² That reveals the real purpose of carrying out internal reform of the CPC, i.e., to remove any internal problems so that the CPC can maintain its position as the ruling political party in China. This has been confirmed by various decisions and documents issued by the CPC. For example, the Report of the Sixteenth Central Committee has stated that internal democracy is the life of the CPC.³³ This shows, in my view, the determination of the CPC to carry out internal reform within the CPC.

The fourth reason is that development of internal democracy is necessary for the healthy development of the CPC under the current

circumstances because China is opening itself to the outside world and developing a socialist market economy.³⁴ The fifth reason is that it is the internal requirement of the CPC's recently stated objective to establish a harmonious socialist society in China.³⁵

Out of the five reasons mentioned above, the most important reason should be the third one. Changes in many former communist/socialist countries, especially the so-called "colour" revolutions, have made the CPC realize that it must change in order to maintain its ruling position in China. Democratization is the required change. The development of internal democracy will help to make the CPC more appealing to the public and therefore a stronger ruling political party in China.

Democratization of the CPC – from Policy to Practice

How to Democratize the CPC?

After adoption of the policy to democratize the CPC, the next issue is how to do it. As early as 1980, Deng Xiaoping mentioned that many problems occurred partly due to the mistakes of certain leaders but more importantly due to the lack of various mechanisms. The existence of some good mechanisms could, in his view, prevent leaders from exercising their powers arbitrarily.³⁶ According to Deng, Mao actually realized that problem and also the importance of establishing certain mechanisms, but he did not make a serious effort to establish them.³⁷

Many scholars have also expressed the view that in order to develop democracy within the CPC it is necessary to establish various democratic mechanisms. One commentator has observed that lack of effective mechanisms in operation is one of the reasons for insufficient democracy within the CPC.³⁸ Another scholar has noted that in order to develop democracy within the CPC, the very first thing to do is to establish democratic mechanisms.³⁹ Professor Zheng Xiaoying has argued that the establishment of democratic mechanisms is one of the four means needed for development of democracy within the CPC.⁴⁰ The establishment of various democratic mechanisms is believed to be fundamental to the development of democracy within the CPC since mechanisms are stable and of long-term effect.⁴¹

Consensus therefore exists among scholars that the establishment of various democratic mechanisms is a necessity to develop democracy within the CPC. Different views, however, exist on what the democratic mechanisms should include. Professor Zheng Xiaoying, for example, mentions democratic mechanisms together with a democratic supervision mechanism, leadership mechanism and working mechanism within the CPC.⁴² It seems that democratic mechanisms in her view do not include a supervision mechanism, leadership and working mechanism within the CPC. Some other scholars are of the view that a leadership mechanism, working mechanism and supervision mechanism are important democratic mechanisms.⁴³ This is a difference of classification rather than of substance because they all agree that the establishment of proper leadership, working and supervision mechanisms is essential for the development of democracy within the CPC.

Many Chinese scholars have mentioned the following mechanisms in their articles: competitive election mechanism, mechanism for the protection of rights of the CPC members, mechanism to ensure transparency, leadership mechanism within the CPC, working mechanism within the CPC, especially the relationship between different CPC organs and committees, supervision mechanism, and so on. Since it is impossible to discuss all the mechanisms mentioned above within the scope of this chapter, this part will focus on the competitive election mechanism as an example to discuss in detail.

Competitive Election and the Constitution of the CPC

According to the Constitution of the CPC as amended in 2007, all party organizations can be classified into three levels; national party organizations, local party organizations including those organs at provincial, municipal, district/county levels, and grassroots-level party organizations. The electoral system of the CPC can be summarized as follows. The highest organ of power within the CPC is the National Party Congress and the Central Committee elected by it. The CPC's organs of power at local levels are its local party congresses and party committees elected by such local party congresses. A party committee will be accountable to and report to the party congress at the corresponding level.⁴⁴ The CPC's organs of power at all levels should

be formed through election.⁴⁵ Hence, the electoral system within the CPC includes the election of deputies to party congresses and the election of members to the Central Committee and various local party committees, as well as election of the first and deputy secretaries to party committees at all levels.

Since reform with regard to competitive election has been carried out only among grassroots and local party organizations, I will set out here just the two articles relevant to the election of delegates to party congresses and members of grassroots and local party committees, as well as the first and deputy secretaries thereof.

Paragraph 1 of Article 11 of the Constitution of the CPC provides:

The election of delegates to Party congresses and of members of Party committees at all levels should reflect the will of the voters. Elections shall be held by secret ballot. The lists of candidates shall be submitted to the Party organizations and voters for full deliberation and discussion. The election procedure in which the number of candidates nominated is greater than the number of persons to be elected may be used directly in a formal election or this procedure may be used first in a preliminary election in order to draw up a list of candidates for the formal election. The voters have the right to inquire about the candidates, demand a change or reject one in favour of another. No organization or individual shall in any way compel voters to elect or not to elect any candidate.

Paragraph 1 of Article 27 of the Constitution provides:

The local Party committees at all levels elect, at their plenary sessions, their standing committees, secretaries and deputy secretaries and report the results to the higher Party committees for approval. The standing committees of the local Party committees at all levels exercise the functions and powers of local Party committees when the latter are not in session. They continue to handle the day-to-day work when the next Party congresses at their levels are in session, until the new standing committees are elected.

From these two articles, we know that all elections must be carried out through secret ballot. The relevant CPC organs will have an important role to play in the election because the list of candidates will be formed through consultation between them and CPC members. Elections can either be direct or indirect in that preliminary elections can be organized to decide a formal list of candidates. Furthermore, the local Party committees will elect the first and deputy secretaries.⁴⁶ Discussion in later sections will focus on competitive election at grassroots and local levels and will show that the last requirement has not been achieved in the various experiments in electoral reform.

Election Experiments by Grassroots Party Organizations

Rules and Regulations

The Interim Regulations on Election Work of Grassroots Organizations of the CPC (“Interim Regulations”) were adopted in 1990 with the intention of improving democracy within the Party.⁴⁷ The Interim Regulations apply to party committees, general branch committees, and sub-branch committees of grassroots organizations of the CPC, including factories, shops, educational institutes, institutions, residential groups in urban areas, cooperative societies, farms and townships, and also to the disciplinary committees established with the approval of grassroots party committees.⁴⁸ Article 4 of the Interim Regulations provides that committees of grassroots organizations of the CPC shall be elected by the general meeting of all CPC members. If the number of CPC members is more than 500 or the party organization is spread over a wide geographical jurisdiction, committee members can also be elected by deputies of CPC members after obtaining the approval of the party organization at the next level above. Article 5 provides that formal party members have the right to vote and to stand for election. Article 6 provides that the democratic rights of the CPC members should be respected and protected in elections, and that democracy should be fully enhanced in elections so that elections represent the will of the voters. No organization or individual should impose pressure on any voters to vote for or against a specific candidate. In summary, the committees of grassroots party organizations will be elected either by all CPC members or by their

deputies.⁴⁹ All CPC members enjoy democratic rights in elections which should not be improperly interfered with.

As far as the election of deputies to grassroots party congresses is concerned, the relevant election unit, i.e., one specific grassroots party organization, shall organize all its CPC members to conduct consultations with regard to the nomination of candidates, and candidates will be determined according to the views of the majority of CPC members.⁵⁰ The number of candidates should be 20 per cent more than the number of deputies to be elected.⁵¹ The exact number of deputies to a grassroots party congress shall be determined by that particular grassroots party organization, subject to the approval of the party organization at the next level above⁵².

As for the election of members to a grassroots party committee, candidates will be determined by the incumbent party committee according to the opinion of the majority of party members.⁵³ The number of candidates should be 20 per cent more than the number of committee members to be elected.⁵⁴

As for the election of the first and deputy secretaries of a committee of a grassroots party organization, its candidates shall be proposed by the incumbent party committee and submitted to the party organization at the next level above for approval before election by all members of the party committee.⁵⁵ For a general branch which does not establish a party committee, candidates for the first and deputy secretaries shall be proposed through adequate consultation among all CPC members and submitted to the party organization at the next level above for its examination and approval before election by all party members.⁵⁶ The number of candidates will be equal to the number of secretaries to be elected.

For a grassroots party organization which establishes a standing committee of its party committee, candidates shall be determined by the incumbent party committee according to the rule that the number of candidates should be one or two more than the number of standing committee members to be elected. An election will be held by all members of the party committee after the candidates are examined and approved by the party organization at the next level above.⁵⁷

The elected members of a party committee shall be submitted to the party organization at the next level above for record. The elected members of the standing committee of a party committee and the first and deputy secretaries should be submitted to the party organization

at the next level above for approval. Similarly, the first and deputy secretaries of the party disciplinary committee shall, once approved by the party committee, be submitted to the party organization at the next level above for approval.⁵⁸

It is not difficult to see that the election of deputies to a party congress and members to a party committee is more democratic in that the number of candidates can be more than the number of persons to be elected. But for election of members to the standing committee of a party committee, and the first and deputy secretaries of a party committee, the party organization at the next level above has the right to veto not only the candidates but also the elected persons under the existing rules.

Electoral Reform Practices

According to one source, at the end of 2009, there were in total 3,792,000 grassroots party organizations, of which 183,000 were party committees, 235,000 general branches, and 3,374,000 sub-branches.⁵⁹ Various electoral reforms have been carried in the last decade for the purpose of enhancing democracy within the CPC. At village level, as early as 1997, one county in Shenyang City (Liaoning Province) had, with the approval of the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CPC, experimented with direct election of the first secretary of a sub-branch of the CPC in a village by all CPC members in that village.⁶⁰ Since then, electoral reform of CPC organs in villages has been tested in different localities in China. In 2000, the Central Committee of the CPC actively promoted reform of the selection and appointment system of members of sub-branches in villages.⁶¹ Reform has picked up pace since then and four different models have appeared. The first is called “two recommendations and one election”, meaning recommendation by both the public and CPC members in a village and then election by all CPC members.⁶² The second is called the “two votes system”, meaning that it will be up to the public to cast a vote of confidence, and then all CPC members will formally cast their votes. The purpose of the “two votes system” is to win the support of villagers for the village CPC sub-branch.⁶³ The third is called “direct election after public recommendation”, meaning that the CPC members and the masses will openly pre-elect candidates for the secretary of a village CPC sub-branch and then an election will

be held.⁶⁴ The fourth is direct election by all CPC members in a village through one-person one-vote. It is a variation of the other three models and the candidates have been through four prior recommendations.⁶⁵ The essence of all the four models is that the election of a village CPC sub-branch is no longer regarded as an internal matter within the CPC. Instead, members of a village CPC sub-branch need to get the support of not only the CPC members of that village but also the majority of villagers (who are non-CPC members). Though the election will ultimately be held among CPC members, villagers who are not CPC members, and who constitute the majority of residents in the village, will almost determine the election results.⁶⁶

The reform of elections in township party organizations also started in the last decade. Reform of township party committee elections has mainly been in the direct election of secretaries of a township party committee. In 2001, Pingchang County in Sichuan Province started an experiment in the direct election of members of township party committees on the basis of public nomination.⁶⁷ During the election in 2001-2, for all 175 townships under Ya An City in Sichuan Province, the first and deputy secretaries of party committees at township level were elected through public nomination and public voting. But that competitive election, according to one commentator, had its limitations. Firstly, only those within the system, i.e., cadres, could be qualified to stand for election. Secondly, election campaigning was prohibited although the candidates were allowed to make a speech before voters and answer voters' questions. Thirdly, there is often an age limit, which is set very low. The same commentator has observed that by 2002 some competitive elections occurred within CPC organizations⁶⁸ but they were very small in numbers. He has noted that quite a number of experiments have taken place in Sichuan Province, but even there, in big cities such as Chendu reform was not popular.

As to the reasons for the introduction of competitive elections within the CPC, the same commentator has identified several. Firstly, competitive election at township level was very often enthusiastically promoted by county and/or municipal party committees. Secondly, there was a crisis of confidence about the cadres of township party committees. Party organization at the next level, especially the first secretaries, wanted to resolve the problem by introducing a

competitive election mechanism so that people could elect party cadres in whom they have confidence. Thirdly, party leaders at the next level above wanted to bring in persons who could contribute to local economic development. In Ya An City, for example, that was the fundamental reason. In the past, local leaders only listened to leaders above them, and lacked enthusiasm in their work. The participation of the public was limited and passive. The work carried out by township government did not have active support from ordinary people. Through competitive elections, the enthusiasm of cadres at lower level has been activated so that additional resources outside the system can be mobilized and used for local economic development. In Ya An, competitive election was not the result of a crisis of confidence, instead it is a means adopted by the municipal party committee to mobilize additional resources in order to achieve higher objectives.⁶⁹

In 2006, Ya An City completed another round of election. From February to April 2006, Ya An City carried out a reform experiment with the election of CPC as well as governmental officials in four selected townships under its jurisdiction. As far as candidates for the first and deputy secretaries of party committees are concerned, there were two steps in the election process. First, all candidates must be publicly voted for by all voters in the specific jurisdiction (township). The party organization could only nominate candidates from those who ranked in the top ten in the public voting process. Secondly, the candidates will be put before all CPC members for election to determine the results. Again, as in the 2001–2 election, the conditions set for candidates were very high; only those within the system were qualified and they were required to have a certain number of years of experience as cadres. For example, in Renyi Township, only 26 persons were qualified to be candidates. After mobilization, 18 persons eventually participated in the election of CPC and governmental leaders. Voting was arranged for all qualified voters (including non-CPC members) to elect 10 out of 18 preliminary candidates. After this public election, the county party committee decided the formal candidates through voting. For Renyi Township, the original first party secretary, Gao Geli, who ranked no. 1 in the public vote, and another candidate Zhang Min, who ranked no. 2 in public vote, were nominated by the county party committee as candidates for the first secretary. Gao was elected as first secretary. Then, Zhang Min together with two other candidates who ranked no.

3 and no. 4 respectively in the public vote were nominated as candidates for deputy party secretaries. Again, and surprisingly, Zhang Min lost the election.⁷⁰

In addition to Ya An, experiments in competitive elections at lower levels of party organizations have also been carried out in some other places in recent years. For example, in Luotian County in Hubei Province, public nomination and public voting in township party committees, and direct election of deputies to county party congress by CPC members, have been implemented.⁷¹ Mu Lan Town in Xin Du District of Chengdu City (Sichuan Province) had the secretary of its township party committee directly elected through “direct election after public recommendation” on 7 December 2003.⁷² In 2004, 45 party secretaries of township party committees in Sichuan Province were produced through direct election on the basis of public nomination.⁷³ In Chendu City, as many as 46 township party committees have been elected through public nomination and public voting method. Similar reforms have also been carried in other provinces.⁷⁴ In Luxi County of the autonomous prefecture of Honghe hani ethnic minority and li ethnic minority, Yunan Province, all members of the party committees at township level have been elected through direct nomination and direct election by CPC members.⁷⁵ Up to October 2005, the method of direct election on the basis of public nomination has been experimented with in more than 210 townships in Sichuan Province. This has proved to be the trend in the election of members as well as the first secretary of a party committee at lower levels.⁷⁶

A new round of elections is being held from 2011 to 2012 at four local levels.⁷⁷ The policy of the Organization Department of the Central Committee is to continue the experiment of “public recommendation in combination with direct election” in order to gain experience for further expansion of direct elections within the CPC.⁷⁸ Some new mechanisms have been experimented with under the guidance of the Organization Department. One is the election recently completed at township level in Fengxin County, which was the first of its kind, with the Organization Department in charge of the whole process. The Guidance Group sent by the Organization Department to Fengxin designed a set of rules to standardize the whole election process. The purpose was to change the phenomenon of the minority electing from among the minority by giving the majority the right to

elect from among the majority of party members. The specific mechanism introduced by the Guidance Group is called “four publicity, three recommendations and two votes”. The positions and their requirements, the selection process, nominations and recommendations, as well as relevant information about the candidates, will be made public. “Three recommendations” means that on the basis of self-nomination or nomination by relevant party organizations, the county organization department will first make its recommendation, then all leaders at county level will through secret ballot select candidates according to the ratio of two candidates for one position. Finally the senior leaders will select candidates according to the ratio of one and a half candidates for one position. Two votes means the final candidates will be decided through voting by both the county party committee and its standing committee.

In Chongqing, the initial target was to use the method in 60 per cent of township party committee elections. Surprisingly, due to strong popular demand, the method has been used in more than 80 per cent of township party committee elections.⁷⁹ One fundamental change which has been observed is that the attitude of elected members, especially first and deputy secretaries, of party committees at township level has changed. They feel that they are now accountable not only to the party organization at the next level above, but also to the voters who have elected them.⁸⁰

These experiments have set good examples for other grassroots party organizations to follow. Xu Yaotong has noted that if all party organizations at grassroots level implemented internal democracy in elections, then the democratic progress of the CPC as a whole would become a completely new picture of healthy and orderly development.⁸¹ He is of the view that democracy should be developed progressively by starting from grassroots party organizations and then gradually move upwards and eventually to the central party organization.⁸²

At the moment, experiments with various means of direct election have been tried and achieved good effects. It has been suggested that on that basis direct election should be further expanded progressively to ensure that cadres of party organizations at grassroots level are more representative.⁸³ It is also encouraging to note that in the current round of election for the change of term, for the first time we are seeing that the method of “public recommendation and direct

election” has been used to elect the secretaries of three municipalities directly under the provincial government of Jiangsu Province.⁸⁴ This means that direct election has been expanded upwards to municipal level.

Election Reform of Local Party Organizations

Rules and Regulations

The Regulations on Election Work of Local Organizations of the CPC were enacted in 1993 (the 1993 Regulations) for the purpose of improving democratic centralism within the CPC and the election system within the CPC, and strengthening local organizations of the CPC.⁸⁵ The 1993 Regulations apply to the election of members of party congresses, party committees and disciplinary committees of provinces, municipalities directly under the State Council, municipalities which are divided into districts, autonomous prefectures, counties, municipalities not divided into districts, and districts under municipalities.⁸⁶ Several general principles are laid down in the 1993 Regulations. The first is that the election of deputies to party congresses at all local levels, members of party committees, standing committees and disciplinary committees, must be held according to the principle that the number of candidates should be greater than the seats available.⁸⁷ The second is that election must be democratic and the democratic rights of voters must be respected and guaranteed.⁸⁸ The third is that voting must be by secret ballot.⁸⁹ There are also detailed rules on the election of deputies in the 1993 Regulations. Whether the election of deputies under these Regulations is democratic seems questionable, however. At local levels, all members of a party committee shall elect its first and deputy secretaries as well as members of the standing committee. The election results must be approved by the party committee at the next level above.⁹⁰

Reform Practice

One fundamental reform at local level is to allow all CPC members to elect their deputies directly. The direct election of deputies to a CPC

Congress at county level in Ya An City in December 2002 is believed to have been the first of its kind in China.⁹¹ In Ya An City, one county and one district were selected to experiment with public direct election of deputies to the party congress at county/district level by CPC members.⁹² Related procedural reforms also included the procedure for a CPC member to nominate him/herself to compete in an election and the procedure for delivering campaign speeches.⁹³ Other experiments relating to the election of deputies include: (1) reduction of quota for deputies, which usually amounts to a decrease of more than 20 per cent in the number of deputies; (2) making election units smaller so that CPC members within an election unit will have a better understanding of and supervision over the candidates; (3) the number of candidates has been increased to 40 per cent more than the number of deputies to be elected.⁹⁴ Comments on these experiments have not been uniform. Some are of the view that the reform will make it possible for a CPC congress to play its role and contribute to democracy within the CPC. Others are of the view that the cost for such reform is too high and it may well affect the efficiency of decision-making within the CPC.⁹⁵ For instance, some cadres, including party secretaries of township party committees and governmental officials, lost their positions in the election.

Bai Gang, a professor with the Public Policy Research Centre of the China Academy of Social Sciences, observed that it had never happened in the past that democratic election was adopted for the election of deputies to a party congress. The experiment in Ya An City could be seen as a starting point of the development of internal democracy within the CPC. Such an experiment should have positive effect upon promoting change of governance style as well as democratization of decision-making processes within the CPC.⁹⁶

From March to October 2003, direct election of deputies to county party congresses was also held in Yidu County and Luotian County (Hubei Province). As far as Luotian was concerned, all preliminary candidates were put before party members so that they could elect formal candidates in a preliminary election by secret ballot. Those formal candidates would then be voted on by CPC members to elect the deputies. Only those obtaining more than 50 per cent of the votes could become deputies. One election unit, for example, had a quota of ten deputies, but only eight candidates got more than 50 per cent of the votes. Therefore, only eight deputies were elected from that

election unit.⁹⁷ Similarly, from November 2004 to March 2005, direct election of deputies to the party congress was also held in Luqiao District of Taizhou City (Zhejiang Province).

Several breakthroughs have been identified by a group of researchers from Beijing from the reforms carried out so far. Firstly, the nomination method has been changed and is different from that stated in the Constitution of the CPC. The new method allows nomination by a candidate him- or herself, the party organization or other party members jointly, while the primary method is voluntary nomination by party members themselves. Secondly, the difference between the number of formal candidates and number of deputies to be elected has been expanded from 20 per cent to more than 20 per cent, in some places up to 50 per cent. Thirdly, competition speeches were given by formal candidates. The formal candidates would be subject to direct election by party members and the votes would be counted on the spot. Fourthly, the whole process of election is public. It is also required that the names of the preliminary candidates and the formal candidates and the election results are publicly announced.

In the new round of elections held for the change of term of party organizations from the end of 2010 to 2011, direct election upon public recommendation has been experimented with at different levels. In Shenzhen, for example, four electoral units were chosen to try this method to elect 14 deputies to Shenzhen Municipal Party Congress in 2011. In these four units, out of 116 candidates, 78 were chosen as preliminary candidates and then 26 were chosen as final candidates.

Analysis

The above discussion shows that the relevant rules and regulations governing election within the CPC are not fully democratic and reveal the clear intention that the party organization at the higher level should have control of the election of senior officials of party organizations at the next lower level, including the first and deputy secretaries as well as members of the standing committees of party committees. That is the nomenclature system China learned from the former Soviet Union.

Electoral reform practices carried out in the last decade until 2011 indicates that electoral reform has been experimented with in elections

within the CPC up to municipal level in different provinces. In some places it is upon the initiative of party organizations at the next higher level while in others the reform was carried out with the approval of the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CPC. These reforms have shown a trend of expansion, which is important because elections were being carried out among four levels of CPC organizations from township party organizations to provincial party organizations from 2010 to 2011. From reports on the election results which were already known at the time of writing, such as for Shenzhen, it is encouraging to see that new and more democratic reform has been experimented with at higher levels.

In order to develop democracy within the CPC, it is necessary to have a competitive mechanism within the CPC, and elections in which the number of candidates is greater than the number of persons to be elected is one kind of competition. Such a view has been expressed by Professor Zheng Xiaoying in an interview with the *Journal of Finance (Caijin)*.⁹⁸ Specifically speaking, competition is reflected through election. Hence, it has been suggested that there is a necessity to improve election mechanisms further within the CPC, and to expand democracy in the election of candidates and also the use of persons by the number one person either in the CPC or people's government.⁹⁹

In internal elections, it has been proposed for the nomination of candidates that the party organization should decide the proportion and the structure of different kinds of candidates, and then specific candidates should be proposed from the bottom up by party members to ensure that recommendation is made on the basis of members' discussion and agreement. Party organizations should respect the will of their members, and not arbitrarily change the list of candidates. Before election, candidates should be allowed to meet with the CPC members or their deputies. Websites with information on candidates can be established and candidates be allowed to deliver campaign speeches. The introduction of candidates must be detailed and accurate so as to ensure that CPC members' right to information concerning the candidates and their rights as voters are properly protected.¹⁰⁰

It is encouraging to see that the 2006 election in Ya An City met most of the criteria proposed above. In particular, the party committee at the next level above no longer dictates the candidates for secretaries of party committees at the next level down. Instead, it only selects

formal candidates from those already approved by the CPC members. At grassroots level, the reform has been more dramatic in that decision-making power in the election of party secretaries and members of standing committees of party committees has more or less been given to voters, including CPC members and non-CPC members.

While it is undeniable that such reform has made election within the CPC at grassroots and local level (mainly county/district level) more democratic, it is a fact that such reforms are not consistent with the existing rules and regulations governing elections within the CPC. It is common phenomenon in China that reforms are conducted in violation of existing rules and regulations. But now China and the CPC as well has vowed to follow the rule of law principle and to do things according to law. It would be much more desirable for the rules and regulations to be amended before the relevant reforms are carried out.

However positive those electoral reforms are, one must remember that electoral reform within the CPC is still at its preliminary stage and is still limited to those levels at and/or below county level as in 2006. There are also different views with regard to whether competitive election is necessary, and the criteria to assess whether or not there is internal democracy within the CPC.¹⁰¹ In the author's field study, concern has also been expressed by some party members. In one province, it was observed by a couple of CPC members that they work very hard and often need to travel to other parts in China for business. As a result they don't have much opportunity to socialize with their colleagues. That will affect negatively their competitiveness in elections and hence their opportunities for promotion within the party. Such concern needs to be addressed but it does not challenge the merits of democratic election within the CPC.

The Future of Democracy within the CPC and the Future of Democracy in China

The Future of Democracy within the CPC

The above discussion of competitive election experiments proves that various elections within the CPC, such as the election of deputies to party congresses, members of party committees, members of standing

committees of party committees, and the first and deputy secretaries, have become more competitive in those places where reform has been implemented. The White Paper entitled “Building of Political Democracy in China”, issued by the State Council in October 2005, has made positive comments on election reform within the CPC, and states that the difference between the number of candidates for election of deputies to CPC congresses and the number of deputies should be increased appropriately, and that the scope for direct election of officials of grassroots CPC organs should gradually be expanded.¹⁰² Although CPC organization at the next level above still enjoys and exercises the power to determine certain formal candidates, such as candidates for the first and deputy secretaries of party committees at the next level below, the practice in Luotian shows that the exercise of that power has been based on the voting results of CPC members and proves that it is possible to converge the views of CPC members with the views of the CPC organ at the next level above. That is a good example of the implementation of the democratic centralism principle. What is also important to note is that electoral reform in Luotian and some other local party organizations has the endorsement of the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CPC. It demonstrates that top-level officials within the CPC take the position that it is necessary to have electoral reform within the CPC.

CPC members and Chinese scholars have expressed mixed views about the future of democracy within the CPC. For example, in the author’s interviews with some CPC officials and scholars during his field study trip to Guangzhou, Hunan and Zhejiang, several CPC officials who are in power expressed their confidence about the future development of democracy within the CPC. One official expressed the view that the CPC’s primary objective is to maintain stability and develop the economy in China. Internal democracy will develop under those conditions and serve those purposes. In his view, the CPC is now more democratic than at any time before in its history, although in some aspects it is still not that democratic. He has even predicted that in 50 years China might be more democratic than the United States. Some ordinary CPC members are, however, less optimistic than those in power. Another official opined that there is no democracy at all and everything is decided by the first secretary within the CPC. One scholar specializing in research on the development of the CPC has

expressed positive views about its future development, while some law professors are of the view that the policy on developing internal democracy within the CPC is only for window-dressing purposes, and the CPC has no real intention to develop democracy within the CPC and in China.

What the official in power has said about stability and economic development represents the common understanding in China, i.e., stability and economic development are top priorities of the CPC. Comparatively speaking, the development of internal democracy has a low priority. It is understandable that opinions differ between those in power and those not in power as they have different perspectives, but it is a bit surprising that the contrast is so great. Whether or not the policy on developing internal democracy is for window-dressing is a subjective judgment. It is, nevertheless, a fact that such policy has been promulgated and repeated in various normative documents issued by the highest organ of power within the CPC. There must be some factors which have prompted the CPC to adopt the policy. The “colour revolutions” in other former Communist countries must be one of them. The promulgation of such a policy is already a step forward. Once the policy is coupled with actual experimental practice, those who have benefited from such practice will add momentum to the implementation of the policy and promote internal democracy within the CPC, just as happened with various economic policies adopted by the CPC after 1978.

While the author remains optimistic about the future development of democratic election within the CPC, it should also be noted at the same time that the future is not yet that clear, and the goal of democracy may not be reachable in the new future. To take Luotian as an example, it was planned to complete in five years the experiment which started in March 2003 and hence was due to end in February 2008.¹⁰³ Thereafter, the Organization Department of the Central Committee would review the experience obtained in Luotian and decide whether or not to adopt the experimental practice as formal policy to be applied to elections in other local party organizations. During the current round of elections, Luotian has not yet completed its elections at the time of writing and hence we do not know whether Luotian will continue to move ahead.

It should also be noted that democracy within the CPC is not developing smoothly without any obstacles. Concerns have been

raised as to: (1) whether democracy within the CPC will cause endless debate within the CPC and therefore harm the unity of the CPC, and with it social and political stability in China; (2) whether the development of democracy within the CPC would affect adversely the authority of party organizations and individual leaders. The answers by some scholars to the above two questions are negative. On the contrary, they are of the view that internal democracy will facilitate the decision-making and provide a means to resolve conflicts within the CPC. The exercise of democracy within the CPC by the members could provide a good basis/foundation for party organizations to practise centralization correctly. The existence of different opinions within the CPC is a common and healthy phenomenon. As to the second question, the authority and reputation of party organizations and individual leaders can only be truly established on the basis of genuine support from party members and the masses. Internal democracy could contribute to the establishment of genuine support. Oppression of democracy within the CPC would only lead to blind obedience. Authority established on such a basis would be superficial, weak and unsustainable. Furthermore, within party committees, the status of the party secretary and committee members is equal, rather than the relationship between a leader and those led by him. The Constitution of the CPC also clearly prohibits individual worship within the CPC and emphasizes that CPC officials must be under the supervision of the CPC and the people. In order to achieve this, it is important to develop democracy within the CPC.

In conclusion, despite the existence of many problems as discussed above in different aspects of the development of democracy within the CPC, the CPC has shown through a series of its official documents, including Decisions, Resolutions, and White Papers, clearly and consistently its policy to develop democracy within the CPC. Since it has established various mechanisms to facilitate the development of democracy within the CPC, the author remains cautiously optimistic about the future development of democracy within the CPC. One should never forget the fundamental objective for the CPC to develop democracy within the CPC, however. As noted by Deng in 1980, the objective is to strengthen the leadership of the CPC rather than to weaken it.¹⁰⁴ Hence, there exists a possibility that the Central Committee of the CPC would call off the development of internal democracy if it threatened the governing position of the CPC.

The Future of Democracy in China

Can democratization within the CPC eventually lead to people's democracy in China? While the majority of Chinese scholars are positive about the answer, there does exist a different view. One Japanese scholar has argued that the development of democracy within the CPC has encountered a paradox. On the one hand, the Central Committee of the CPC wants to push forward internal democracy. On the other hand, local party organizations are not enthusiastic about it, because it would mean members of party committees being elected by party members, and that the decisions within the party committee will be made by voting. That means the first and deputy secretaries will no longer be able to make whatever decisions they want. He argues that the only means to resolve this paradox is to resort to people's democracy. The proper method to develop democracy in China is to develop democracy in the society, i.e., people's democracy, then democracy within the CPC.¹⁰⁵

What he has suggested is the development route and the practice in many Western countries where democracy developed before political parties were established. As a result any political parties will have no choice but to follow the rule of democracy within their parties. But as discussed above, in China the CPC came into being at a time when there was no democracy in China. China needs to determine how to develop democracy. What is needed to realize people's democracy in China is to empower the people. That means the CPC needs to let the Chinese people choose the ruling political party. That is clearly impossible at this stage because the Constitution states very clearly that the CPC is the ruling political party in China and the CPC has shown no intention to do so.

Recently people in some North African and Middle Eastern countries have taken to the streets to demand democracy. Such popular revolutions are successful in some countries but not in the others. Meanwhile, China has tightened its control of some dissidents who advocate democracy, human rights and rule of law in China.¹⁰⁶ One possible interpretation is that the CPC is concerned that its governing status might face similar challenge from the masses. Under such circumstances, it is even more difficult for the CPC to empower Chinese people by giving them the right to determine the future of China.

This means there are only two alternatives left for China. One is a radical change through mass movements, following the example of many countries in the former Socialist bloc. Informal interviews with Chinese people at different levels leads the author to the view that this is not a choice favoured by the majority of Chinese people. Furthermore, the CPC has now more than 8 million members, occupying all the important positions in all governmental organs at all levels. The total membership of all the other eight political parties together is 710,000, which is less than one per cent of the total number of the CPC members¹⁰⁷. So if there were a radical change, no other political party could come out to replace the CPC. As a result, China might enter into a period of chaos.

The rational choice is for the CPC to democratize itself. That will lead to people's democracy. The issue is how to ensure that the progress of democratization within the CPC will move forward. On this point, I am of the view that both internal and external pressure for democracy will have an important role to play. The increase of both internal and external pressure will force the CPC to take internal democratization seriously and assist the Central Committee of the CPC to remove resistance against internal democratization from local party organizations.

In conclusion, China should develop both democracy within the CPC and people's democracy so that the people's democracy will facilitate the development of democracy within the CPC. Once democracy is achieved within the CPC, there will be people's democracy in China.

Note

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Notes and References

1. See Lin Shangli, *Dangnei Minzhu – Zhongguo Gongchandang de Lilun yu Shijian (Internal Democracy – Theory and Practice of the CPC)* (Shanghai Academy of Social Science Press, Shanghai, 2002), pp.1–40; see also Xu Dongmei, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Dangnei Minzhu Yanjiu (Study of Internal Democracy within the CPC)* (Dangjian Duwu Press, Beijing, 2004), pp. 2–3.

2. See Lin Shangli, *Dangnei Minzhu – Zhongguo Gongchandang de Lilun yu Shijian (Internal Democracy – Theory and Practice of the CPC)*, pp. 40–50.
3. See Guanyu Jianguo, “Yilai dangde ruogan lishi wenti de jueyi (The resolution on several historical issues of the CPC after the founding of the PRC), para. 15, adopted by the 6th Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the CPC on 27 June 1981, in *Resolution on CPC History (1949–1981)* (Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1981), pp. 23–24.
4. See Xu Yaotong, “Dang de ba da he dangne minzhu” (The 8th Central Committee and internal democracy within the CPC), <http://guanचा.gmw.cn/show.aspx?id=9901>.
5. Before that, the principle of democratic centralism was defined as centralism on the basis of democracy and democracy under the leadership of centralism.
6. See Xu Yaotong, “Dang de ba da he dangne minzhu” (The 8th Central Committee and internal democracy within the CPC).
7. For detailed discussion after the 8th Central Committee, see Lin Shangli, *Dangnei Minzhu – Zhongguo Gongchandang de Lilun yu Shijian (Internal Democracy – Theory and Practice of the CPC)*, pp. 50–57.
8. See Deng Xiaoping, “Dang he guojia lingdao zhidu de gaige” (“The reform of the leadership system of the CPC and the state”), Part III: <http://www.ccyl.org.cn/theory/dspws/page2/danghe.htm> (accessed 26 November 2006).
9. See Guanyu Jianguo, “Yilai dangde ruogan lishi wenti de jueyi (The resolution on several historical issues of the CPC after the founding of the PRC) pp. 23–24.
10. See Zhao Ziyang, “Yanzhe you Zhongguo tese de shehui zhuyi daolu qianjin” (“March along the socialist road with Chinese characteristics”), Report delivered at the 13th Central Committee of the CPC on 25 October 1987, Part Six: <http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/archive/131711.htm>.
11. See Wang Yongbing, “Dangnei minzhu: zhidu kongjian yu fazhan lujin” (“Internal democracy within the CPC: room within existing system and route for development”), <http://chinainnovations.org/read.asp?type01=1&type02=3&type03=5&articleid=3465>.
12. See “Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu jiaqiang dangde jianshe jige zhongda wenti de jue ding” (“Decision of the Central Committee of the CPC on several important issues concerning strengthening the establishment of the CPC”), adopted on 28 September 1994 by the 4th Plenum of the 14th Central Committee of the CPC, <http://www.china.com.cn/chinese/archive/131752.htm>.
13. See Jiang Zemin, “Zai dangde di shiliu ci quanguo daibiao dahui shang de baogao” (“The report delivered by Jiang Zemin at the 16th Central Committee of the CPC”), part 10, <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2002-11-17/2258809867.html>; see also Wang Yongbing, “Dangnei minzhu: zhidu kongjian yu fazhan lujin” (“Internal democracy within the CPC: room within existing system and route for development”).
14. See “Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu jiaqiang dang de zhizheng nengli jianshe

- de jue ding” (“The decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on strengthening the governing capacity of the Chinese Communist Party”) (“the Decision”), <http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/2004/Sep/668376.htm> (accessed 26 November 2006).
15. See the White Paper entitled “Building of political democracy in China”, Part Eight, Para. 2, <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/index.htm> (accessed 26 November 2006).
 16. *Ibid.*
 17. Zheng Xiaoying, “Yi dangnei minzhu tuijin renmin minzhu” (“Promoting people’s democracy through democracy within the CPC”), http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2003-06/18/content_925227.htm (accessed 26 November 2006).
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. See Liu Chang and Min Jie, “Wo dang yi dangnei minzhu daidong renmin minzhu zhanxian zhenggai zin silu” (“The CPC promotes people’s democracy through internal democracy within the CPC: manifestation of new thoughts”), <http://politics.people.com.cn/GB/1026/4539217.html> (accessed 26 November 2005).
 20. See Hu Jintao, “Report delivered at the 17th National Congress of the CPC”, Part XII: http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2007-10/24/content_6938568.htm (accessed 10 April 2011).
 21. See Xu Dongmei, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Dangnei Minzhu Yanjiu (Study of Internal Democracy within the CPC)*, pp. 160–173.
 22. See Deng Xiaoping, “Dang he guojia lingdao zhidu de gaige” (“The reform of the leadership system of the CPC and the state”).
 23. See Xu Dongmei, *Zhongguo Gongchandang Dangnei Minzhu Yanjiu (Study of Internal Democracy within the CPC)*, pp. 147–160.
 24. See Deng Xiaoping, “Dang he guojia lingdao zhidu de gaige” (“The reform of the leadership system of the CPC and the state”).
 25. *Ibid.*
 26. See Lin Shangli, *Dangnei Minzhu – Zhongguo Gongchandang de Lilun yu Shijian (Internal Democracy – Theory and Practice of the CPC)*, pp. 50–57.
 27. *Ibid.*
 28. The journal *Dang Jian Yanjiu* has published a series of articles, from volume 4 to volume 12 in 2005, discussing various aspects of the development of internal democracy of the CPC. For a summary, see “Fazhan dangnei minzhu zhuanti yantao guandian zongshu” (“Summary of views expressed around the theme of development of internal democracy within the CPC”): <http://theory.people.com.cn/GB/49150/49151/4071358.html> (accessed 26 November 2006).
 29. See Xu Yaotong, “Yi dangnei minzhu daidong renmin minzhu” (“To Promote people’s democracy through internal democracy within the CPC”), <http://www.studytimes.com.cn/chinese/zhuanti/xxsb/1017450.htm> (accessed 26 November 2006).

30. *Ibid.*
31. See Wang Guixiu, “Zhengzhi tizhi gaige de zuijia tuopokou: fazhan dangnei minzhu” (“The best breakthrough point for political system reform: development of internal democracy within the CPC”), in *Gaige Neichan (Internal Reference Material for Reform)*, vol. 21, 2003, <http://www.zysy.org.cn/06/0605/Images/200559-111331-2003%E5%B9%B4%E7%AC%AC6%E6%9C%9F.doc#>, 政治体制改革的最佳突破口：发展党内民主 (accessed 27 November 2006).
32. See Jiang Zemin, *Lun Dangde Jianshe (Study of the Development of the CPC)* (Zhongyang Wenxian Press, 2001), p. 442.
33. See Jiang Zemin, “Zai dangde di shiliu ci quanguo daibiao dahui shang de baogao” (“The report delivered by Jiang Zemin at the 16th Central Committee of the CPC”).
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. See Deng Xiaoping, “Dang he guojia lingdao zhidu de gaige” (“The reform of the leadership system of the CPC and the state”).
37. When Mao talked about the serious damage caused by Stalin to the former Soviet Union’s socialist legal system, Mao said that it is impossible for such problems to occur in the UK and the USA.
38. See Ji Fang, available at <http://www.bjpopss.gov.cn/bjpopss/xzit/xzit/20050427b.htm.zh>.
39. See Wang Yongbing, “Dangnei minzhu: zhidu kongjian yu fazhan lujin” (“Internal democracy within the CPC: room within existing system and route for development”).
40. See Zheng Xiaoying, “Yi dangnei minzhu tuijin renmin minzhu” (“Promoting people’s democracy through democracy within the CPC”).
41. See Xu Yaotong, “Yi dangnei minzhu daidong renmin minzhu” (“To Promote people’s democracy through internal democracy within the CPC”).
42. The four requirements mentioned by Professor Zheng Xiaoying are to implement the principle of ruling the country according to law and to insist on administration according to law. For details, see Zheng Xiaoying, “Yi dangnei minzhu tuijin renmin minzhu” (“Promoting people’s democracy through democracy within the CPC”).
43. See, for example, Ding Xiaoqiang, “Fazhan dangnei minzhu yao zhongshi zhidu jianshe” (“In order to develop internal democracy within the CPC attention needs to be paid to the establishment of mechanisms”), <http://www.zgdjyj.com/default.aspx?tabid=99&ArticleId=143>.
44. See para. 3 of Art. 10 of the Constitution of the CPC.
45. See para. 2 of Art. 10 of the Constitution of the CPC.
46. See para. 1 of Art. 11 of the Constitution of the CPC.
47. See Art. 1 of the Interim Regulations.

48. See Art. 2 of the Interim Regulations.
49. See para. 2 of Art. 29 of the Constitution of the CPC.
50. See Art. 9 of the Interim Regulations.
51. See Art. 8 of the Interim Regulations.
52. See Art. 7 of the Interim Regulations.
53. See Art. 13 of the Interim Regulations.
54. See Art. 12 of the Interim Regulations.
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58. See Art. 18 of the Interim Regulations.
59. See the statistics issued by the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CPC in 2010, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64093/95111/11994237.html> (accessed 10 April 2011).
60. See Yang Hai-feng etc, “Shencheng xiangzhen dangwei gaixuan huanjie, shixing dang daibiao zhijie xuanju fangshi” (“Election for the change of term of the CPC committees at township level in Shenyang City, the experiment of direct election by deputies to the CPC Congress at township level”), in *Huashang Chengbao (Huanshang Morning Post)*: <http://www.nen.com.cn/77970767572107264/20050830/1749500.shtml>.
61. *Ibid.*
62. See “Shangdong shixing cun dangzhibu zhijie xuanju qude shixiao” (“The trial of direct election of village CPC organ in Shangdong Province has achieved good results”), in *Dongfang Wang (Dongfang Net)*, <http://www.siica.org.cn/eastday/node4796/node12163/node12166/node12183/userobject1ai731890.html>.
63. See Xu Yong, “Chongjian zhengzhi xinren de youye tansuo – du ‘xiangcun xuanju zhong de liangpiao zhi’” (“Good experiment in re-establishing political confidence: reading ‘two votes system’ in village election”), <http://www.weiquan.org.cn/data/detail.php?id=3463>.
64. See “Jihuo dangnei gaige shidian, Sichuan cheng zhongguo zhengzhi gaige shiyantian” (“To activate reform within the CPC, Sichuan has become the experimental field for China’s political reform”), 9 June 2005, 11:05, from *Fenghuangwang (Phoenix Net)*, <http://news.memail.net/050609/120,2,1525872,00.shtml>; see also “Gongtui zhixuan de xianshi yiyi – Fenghua shi nongcun dangzuzhi xuanju zhidu gaige de sikao” (“The practical meaning of direct election after public recommendation – reflection on the reform of the election system of Village CPC organs in Fenghua City”), <http://www.zjol.com.cn>.
65. See “Zhixuan dangzhibu shuji, chuangxin xuanju moshi” (“Direct election of the secretaries of CPC branches and creation of new election model”): <http://dj.sun0769.com/newsc.asp?id=2618>; also “Dalingya Chun huanjie

- shunli chanshen xinyijie zhibu shuji” (“The change of term election at Dalingya Village has smoothly produced the new team of branch committee”), at <http://www.523170.com/article-446-1.html> (accessed 10 April 2011).
66. See “Shangdong: wuqian duoge cun shixing zhixuan zhishu” (“Shangdong: direct election of the heads of village CPC organs in more than 5,000 villages”): http://news.xinhuanet.com/mrdx/2005-09/26/content_3544135.htm.
 67. See Wang Yongbin, “Dangnei minzhu: zhidu kongjian yu fazhan lujin” (“Internal democracy within the CPC: room within existing system and route for development”).
 68. See Lai Hairong, “The development of competitive election at township level in Sichuan Province”, p. 5, originally published in *Zhanganue Yu Guanli (Strategy and Management)*, vol. 2, 2003. The author downloaded the article from: http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk_wzdetails.asp?id=2242.
 69. *Ibid.*, pp. 5–7.
 70. See: <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64093/64387/4640945.html>
 71. See Xu Yaotong, “Yi dangnei minzhu daidong renmin minzhu” (“To Promote people’s democracy through internal democracy within the CPC”).
 72. See “Chengdu kai quanguo xianhe, 639 ming dangyuan zhixuan chu zhen dangwei shuji” (“Chengdu leads the nation: 639 CPC members directly elected the head of the CPC Committee in a town”), <http://www.chinaelections.org/readnews.asp?newsid={C8F5F99A-D7E1-4A18-B496-52920FBFBAE7}>.
 73. See Wang Yongbing, “Dangnei minzhu: zhidu kongjian yu fazhan lujin” (“Internal democracy within the CPC: room within existing system and route for development”).
 74. See “Jihuo dangnei gaige shidian, Sichuan cheng zhongguo zhengzhi gaige shiyantian” (“To activate reform within the CPC, Sichuan has become the experimental field for China’s political reform”); see also “Sihong shiyan: 1.4 wan dangyuan zhixuan xiangzhen dangwei” (“Sihong experiment: 14,000 cpc members directly elect the CPC committees at township level”), <http://www.chinaelections.org/readnews.asp?newsid={01BE8DED-934C-42AD-945E-9EA66B43E042}>.
 75. See Xu Yaotong, “Yi dangnei minzhu daidong renmin minzhu” (“To Promote people’s democracy through internal democracy within the CPC”).
 76. See Wang Yongbing, “Dangnei minzhu: zhidu kongjian yu fazhan lujin” (“Internal democracy within the CPC: room within existing system and route for development”).
 77. They include township, county/district, municipal, and provincial levels.
 78. See “Xiangzhen dangwei zhixuan guancha” (“Observation of direct election of the CPC committee at township level”) in *Liaowang*: http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2011-04/17/c_121313565_8.htm (accessed 10 April 2011).
 79. *Ibid.*

80. *Ibid.*
81. See Xu Yaotong, “Yi dangnei minzhu daidong renmin minzhu” (“To Promote people’s democracy through internal democracy within the CPC”).
82. *Ibid.*
83. See Ding Xiaoqiang, “Fazhan dangnei minzhu yao zhongshi zhidu jianshe” (“In order to develop internal democracy within the CPC attention needs to be paid to the establishment of mechanisms”).
84. See “Neidi xuanju ji, xukuo gongtui zhixuan” (“The season of election in Mainland China, continuous promotion of ‘public recommendation and direct election’”) in *Ming Pao*, 21 April 2011: <http://news.sina.com>.
85. See Art. 1 of the Regulations.
86. See Art. 2 of the Regulations.
87. See Arts. 4 and 7 of the Regulations.
88. See Art. 5 of the Regulations.
89. See Art. 6 of the Regulations.
90. See Art. 27 of the Constitution of the CPC. According to the same Article, the standing committee of a CPC local committee will exercise the authority of that local committee while the latter is not in session; the standing committee will continue to be in charge of routine work when the next local CPC congress is in session until a new standing committee is elected.
91. See “Jihuo dangnei gaige shidian”, “Jihuo dangnei gaige shidian, Sichuan cheng zhongguo zhengzhi gaige shiyantian” (“To activate reform within the CPC, Sichuan has become the experimental field for China’s political reform”).
92. See “Dangdaibiao dahui changrenzhi: Ya An shishui chengxiao lingren guanzhu” (Permanent deputies to party congress, experiment in Ya An and its effect catches attention), originally published in *Ban Yue Tan*. The author downloaded from http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2003-09/05/content_1064336.htm.
93. See “Jihuo dangnei gaige shidian”, “Jihuo dangnei gaige shidian, Sichuan cheng zhongguo zhengzhi gaige shiyantian” (“To activate reform within the CPC, Sichuan has become the experimental field for China’s political reform”).
94. See Li Zhi-hong, “Guanyu dang daibiao dahui changrenzhi shidian gongzuo de diaocha” (“Investigation of the experiments with the standing system of deputies to the CPC Congresses”), in *Dangjian Yanjiu Neichan (Study of the CPC Development for Internal Reference)*, vol. 2, 2003, <http://www.djjj.com.cn/share/viewdjjjnc.asp?id=477>.
95. *Ibid.*
96. See “Dangdaibiao dahui changrenzhi: Ya An shishui chengxiao lingren guanzhu” (Permanent deputies to party congress, experiment in Ya An and its effect catches attention).

97. See “Zhongzubu shidian dangnei minzhu gaige: Hubei Luotian xianwei sushe changwei” (“The Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CPC experiments with reform of internal democracy within the CPC: there will be no standing committee of county party committee in Luotian, Hubei Province”), <http://politics.people.com.cn/GB/1027/3438031.html>.
98. See engine.cqvip.com/content/l/81160x/2003/000/010/jy23_l4_9095942.pdf.
99. See note 28 above.
100. See Ji Fang, available at <http://www.bjpopss.gov.cn/bjpopss/xzit/xzit/20050427b.htm.zh>.
101. See Wang Yicheng, “Dui fazhan dangnei minzhu wenti de ruogan sikao” (“Several thoughts on the issue of developing internal democracy within the CPC”), originally published in *Zhengzhixue Yanjiu (Research of Politics)*, vol. 2, 2005. The author downloaded from <http://chinaps.cass.cn/readcontent.asp?id=4834>
102. See the White Paper entitled “Building political democracy in China”, Chapter 8, at <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/index.htm>. It actually means that the CPC wants to develop democracy within the CPC first and hope that democracy within the CPC will naturally promote democracy in the society nationwide. That has been regarded as the policy for achieving democratic governance by the CPC.
103. See Wu Licai, “Luotian zhenggai: cong dangnei minzhu qidong de xianzheng gaige” (“Political reform in Luotian: a political reform starting from democracy within the CPC”), http://ganzhi.china.com.cn/xxsb/txt/2006-01/24/content_6104089.htm
104. See Deng Xiaoping, “Dang he guojia lingdao zhidu de gaige” (“The reform of the leadership system of the CPC and the state”)
105. See Jiantian Xianzhi, “Zhongguo gongchandang dangnei minzhu jianshe de xianshi lilu ji lishi jingshi” (“The current practice of establishing democracy within the CPC and its historical lessons”), http://www.rmlt.com.cn/News/201101/201101251435282365_3.html
106. For example, Ai Weiwei has recently been detained by the Public Security Authority.
107. Statistics from the United Front department of the Central Committee of the CPC, <http://www.zytzb.org.cn/zytzbwz/ztlm/mzdpjh/zphl/80200712200209.html> (accessed 10 April 2011).