

CHAPTER 4

FORCASTING

A. Does China a Democracy State?

For the Westerners, especially Americans can acknowledge the word as “Democracy” as is a fantasy and cherished word. Mostly westerners feel familiar to Democracy in terms of Freedom, Capitalism, Democratic institutions or Political participation. However, democracy does not mean the same thing to all people everywhere; it changes each time it translates into a different language and cultural context as in China.

As all languages are reflections of the emotion, spiritual, and intellectual character of people who created them and using them. China is also a quintessential country in which “Cultural code words” play a vital role in the lives of its people. The democracy in China also has a word for it, “Minzhu (meen-juu), or people-as-masters”.¹ It is not a concept inherent in Chinese culture or political philosophy. In fact, it is in complete opposition to Confucian ideology, which stresses harmony and obedience. But neither is democracy a concept that has just recently taken hold in the minds of Chinese youth who have seen the wonders of democracy in Western-styles.

¹ *Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia*, s.v. “History of the Republic of China,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Republic_of_China (accessed November 22, 2009).

The Chinese democratic tradition was begun nearly one hundred years, it has been the cause of rebellions, arrests, purges, and endless debate on the best way to understand and implement such a complex form of social organization. An exiled Chinese writer, named as Liang Qichao was the important person who introduced Democracy to China. In 1895, he was involved in protests in Beijing calling for increased participation in government by the Chinese people. It was the first protest of its kind in modern Chinese history. After the government crackdown on anti-Qing protesters, he moved to Japan and during that time, he translated and commented on the works of Hobbes, Rousseau, Locke, Hume, Bentham and many more western political philosophers. He also published his essays in a series of journals that easily found an audience among Chinese intelligentsia hungering for an explanation of why China, once a formidable empire of its own, was now on the verge of being dismembered by foreign powers. In interpreting Western democracy through the prism of his strongly Confucian background, Liang shaped the ideas of democracy that would be used throughout the next century.

According to Liang Qichao's idea, there was no difference between the individual interests and public interests; individual citizens were granted rights in order to better strengthen the state. There was no need for individual rights in the Western sense, whose purpose was to protect the individual from the government.² In his attempt to understand and implement democracy, then, Liang himself

² *Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia*, s.v. "History of the Republic of China".

inadvertently set down justifications for the authoritarianism that would characterize China's "democratic" era.³

From the long history, the four constitutions of the PRC affirmed popular sovereignty, contained provisions for citizens to vote and run for office, and guaranteed the rights of free speech, assembly, petition and demonstration. During Mao Zedong's era, there was a democratic movement due to the clash of concepts understanding on Democracy. Mao resolved the contradiction between rhetoric and reality with the concept of "democratic dictatorship," which held that the system was democratic because the totalitarian vanguard party was serving the highest interests of the people - whether they liked it or not as Mao's view on democracy as understanding from Marxist theory. Many blamed the problems that they encountered in their own lives on individual cadres rather than on the system and the assumption were widespread that Mao did not intend the abuses that were carried out in his name. Paradoxically, the practice of writing letters of remonstrance and appeal to Mao was common in the darkest days of his regime, perhaps more common than in his relatively lenient periods. This made it possible for Deng's regime, which never contemplated full De-Maoization, to reverse the verdict on the incident only two years after Mao's death.

³ Helene Cooper, "Obama's Star Turn at Summit Gets Mixed Results," *International Herald Tribune*, April 2, 2009.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/03/world/europe/03assess.html?ref=global-home> (accessed December 2, 2009).

A democratic transition in China is most likely to occur through the growth of popular democratic forces. Thoughts, from Mao Zedong Thoughts to Deng Xiaoping Theory, it is seen as a power transition that the next taking over party was having more strength. The open-door policy and process of economic reform initiated by Deng after the death of Mao have brought enormous benefits to the majority of people in China. Over the last twenty years, China has maintained the highest economic growth rate in the world, averaging more than 9 per cent per annum, and China's GNP has doubled every eight years since 1978. As a vision of political transform in China, it shows that transition from the party leadership of Jiang Zemin to Hu Jintao in 2002-2003 was the smoothest transition in Chinese Communist history. All of these political reforms, however, were sanctioned by the Chinese Communist Party in order to maintain stability and to regain the party's legitimacy after the chaos of Mao's Cultural Revolution (1966-76).

As the period of President Hu Jintao, the Chinese has published a white paper, concerning the government's effort towards democracy in 2005, saying that democracy is alive and well in China. The content of the report mentioned that democracy already exists in the country, and, amongst other things, it can be read that the democracy of China is the democracy of the people and subordinated the Communist Party. The Chinese Communist Party has held the power since 1949.⁴ The party does not acknowledge opposition parties, free media or an open discussion in the society. The Chinese president and leader of the Communist Party, Hu Jintao has at several occasions talked about strengthening of the democracy. These thoughts are

⁴ Cooper, "Obama's Star Turn at Summit Gets Mixed Results".

directed to the democracy within the Communist Party, and are not concerned in any thoughts about splitting up the communistic dictatorship.

Besides, the white paper also explains on the Communist Party as a Fundamental guarantee for the Chinese people to be masters in managing the affairs of their own country.⁵ It is seen that China increased economic power and at the same time China also try to merge the political issues with political reform and make the country to be more openness. As the white paper insisted that the economic development needed social stability because without it, the economic development will not go smoothly as it's expected. In addition to the white paper, it also said that each country should be permitted to pick its own path to democracy.

"Because situations differ from one country to another, the paths the people of different countries take to win and develop democracy are different," the white paper (2005)

Supporting from Parliament chief Wu Bangguo, the second rank of President Hu Jintao in the Communist Party, saying *"We will never simply copy the system of Western countries or introduce a system of multiple parties holding office in rotation,"* Mr. Wu strongly made the comments in a speech to the National People's Congress, China's annual parliament session.

⁵ Cooper, "Obama's Star Turn at Summit Gets Mixed Results".

To support, it seems that China is following the idea of thinking of great British economist, Keynes, John Maynard as his theories, called “*Keynesian Economic Theory*” concerning on the role of aggregate demand in the determination of aggregate output. It argues that the decisions of private economic agents some times lead to inefficient macroeconomic outcomes such as lower employment and output. During such business cycles, the government can stabilise output and employment through expansionary fiscal policy in combination with appropriate monetary policy actions.

Also, the theory, named “The General Theory”, had little parallel in China, as Yang Shu-ching (1942)⁶ clearly cited in his article that it Keynesian notions of demand management could usefully be applied to China's inflation. However, the inflation, arising out of traditional wartime "currency finance" certainly did not require Keynesian tools. However, the traditional categories of the equation of exchange were also used. It can be explained that an effective blending of Keynesian and traditional monetary analysis which was well adapted to the Chinese context.

As its concept, Keynesian Economic Theory, emphasizes on “the involvement of the state”, the recent National Peoples' Congress announced plans for a substantially larger budget deficit aimed at stimulating domestic spending to avert an economic slowdown.

⁶ Richard Hooker, “Sun Yat – sen,” *Modern China*, June 6, 1999, <http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/MODCHINA/SUN.HTM> (accessed January 21, 2010).

Indeed, there is another issue concerning on the United States pushing China to be Democracy state, in a term of West thinking. According to A. F. K. Organski (1958), an expert on Power transition theory, describes "International politics" as a "Hierarchy", with 4 degrees of power between states. This leads to the view that when the balance of power is unstable (For example, one or two nations have taken a dominant role in geopolitics), the likelihood of war is less. According to Organski:

“An even distribution of political, economic, and military capabilities between contending groups of states is likely to increase the probability of war; peace is preserved best when there is an imbalance of national capabilities between disadvantaged and advantaged nations; the aggressor will come from a small group of dissatisfied strong countries; and it is the weaker, rather than the stronger; power that is most likely to be the aggressor.”(Organski 1980, 19)

The Chinese approach to democracy is illustrated in an all-round manner through the design of State bodies and their interaction with society. For example, it included statistical data portraying progress in self-governance in rural and urban neighborhoods.⁷

The government has demonstrated a firm determination to pursue a course of its own, distinct from the Western pattern. China has never ruled out the possibility of borrowing from successful foreign models. In fact, many of the recent moves made by the government, such as allowing greater transparency and endorsing closer public scrutiny, are based on time-honored prescriptions from overseas. In order to live up to

⁷ Hooker, “Sun Yat – sen”.

its vow to deliver good governance, the authorities have a lot more to learn from other nations.

China's nowadays growth has called attention to the power-transition theory, as the rising period, many West countries, especially the United States concerning as a threat to China. As currently, China and America are locked into so many trade agreements and so much economic interdependence that any direct conflict between the two would cripple both. China owns a great deal of our debt and therefore has control over our currency.

Besides, the United States is having policies to promote democracy to the whole world, comply with international law, limit nuclear proliferation, or respect human rights. Many developing countries are watching the economic success of China and are arguably finding the "Beijing Consensus" of authoritarian government and market economy increasingly more appealing. A steadfast adherence to a policy of democracy promotion in China is unlikely to win the United States international support as China already has its own terms for defining its Democracy. Although, West countries influence China on Democracy, Chinese people's search for democracy, including building a system of checks and balances, the rule of law, and efficient and transparent governance. But when handled inappropriately, such influences may turn counterproductive. China is still running on its line.

As, the Chinese people have a strong national emotion in favor of independence against external pressures, the Western influences may be treated as a

new form of colonialism and ignite anti-foreign nationalism in China. Truly, the complex democratization model suggests an elite-oriented, transitional path to China's democratization. Although the model includes economic development, political culture, and the middle class as either antecedent or intervening variables, the key to China's future democratization depends on political elites who can promote democratic reform in China.