

**DISCOURSES ON POLITICAL REFORM AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN  
EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA IN THE LIGHT OF NEW PROCESSES OF  
REGIONAL COMMUNITY BUILDING**

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**Toward an Incremental Democracy and Governance:  
Chinese Theories and Assessment Criteria**

**by**

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## Preface to the Paper Series

The present discussion paper series of the Institute of East Asian Studies accompanies a research project entitled *Political Discourses on Reform and Democratisation in Light of New Processes of Regional Community-Building*. The project is funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and supervised by Thomas Heberer.

The central topic of interest is, as the title of the project suggests, the influence exerted on the political reform process by political discourse. The papers published in this series address the public political discussion at the national as well as the transnational, regional level. Accordingly, the papers display a variety of discourses that have emerged in different countries and centre round different political issues. Contributions from authors of the region are particularly welcome, because they reflect an authentic view of the political discussion within the local public. By integrating and encouraging the local voices, the project team intends to compile a collection of papers that document some important debates and states of the research process.

The current political discourses in East Asia are primarily analysed in case studies of two authoritarian states (China, Vietnam), a multi-ethnic, formally democratic state with strong authoritarian features (Malaysia), and a democratic state with significant parochial structures and patterns of behaviour (Japan). In addition to these case studies, contributions from and on other countries of the region are included to provide a broad scope of comparable discourses.

While Claudia Derichs and Thomas Heberer are the editors of the paper series, a project team of eight members conducts field work in East Asia and brings forth regular proceedings. Research reports other than discussion papers shall be published in refereed journals and magazines. Detailed proceedings leading to the final results of the research project will be published as a book. The project team is composed of research fellows associated with the Chair for East Asian Politics at the Gerhard Mercator University of Duisburg. The team members are: Karin Adelsberger (area: Japan); Claudia Derichs, Ph.D. (Malaysia, Japan); Lun Du, Ph.D. (China); Prof. Thomas Heberer, Ph.D. (China, Vietnam); Bong-Ki Kim, Ph.D. (South Korea); Patrick Raszelenberg (Vietnam); Nora Sausmikat (China); and Anja Senz (China).

Paper No. 1 of the series provides a detailed idea of the theoretical and methodological setting of the project. Each discussion paper of the present series can be downloaded from the university server, using the following URL: [http://www.uni-duisburg.de/Institute/OAWISSL\\_Publikationen/orangereihe.html](http://www.uni-duisburg.de/Institute/OAWISSL_Publikationen/orangereihe.html). Suggestions and comments on the papers are welcome at any time.

Duisburg, July 2000

Claudia Derichs and Thomas Heberer



**TOWARD AN INCREMENTAL DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:  
Chinese Theories and Assessment Criteria**

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**Abstract**

*The article elaborates the development of Chinese democracy and governance in theory and practice since the market-orientation. It compares the similarities and differences between the traditional view of democracy and the reformist one, and between the official and the academic one. The article generalizes the practice and theories of democracy and governance in China as Incremental Democracy. First this means that the previous centralist system has been collapsed and a pluralization of political life is emerging. However, the political pluralization is conditional: China's politics is in transition from the traditional totalism into a conditional democracy. Second, in comparison to economic liberalization, the extent and degree of political liberalization is much lower. In this paper, the author tries to develop a new theory and assessment criteria to explain and evaluate the recent changes in democracy and governance taking place in a context of economic and social reforms.*

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# **TOWARD AN INCREMENTAL DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE: Chinese Theories and Assessment Criteria**

Yu Keping

## **1 Introduction**

Any political discourse is bound by the respective political era. This is especially true in China where people have witnessed many political movements since 1949. The political terms which prevailed before are replaced by the new ones as the old political era gives way to the new one. Among the most popular political terms from 1949 to 1978 were "revolution", "dictatorship," and "class struggle". But they have disappeared in the list of popular terms since 1978. Instead, new terms like "reform", "rule of law" and "stability" are well known to people since then. However, the term "democracy" is an exception. Most Chinese scholars held that democracy was a foreign word and "there was neither democracy nor science in traditional Chinese culture".<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless "democracy" is always on the list of popular terms in modern Chinese political history, irrespective of the ruler and the regime. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) used democracy as a legitimate basis to overthrow the Guomindang (GMD) Regime before 1949. Mao Zedong, top leader of the CCP, even wrote a pamphlet entitled "New Democracy". It was still one of the most resounding slogans after the CCP came to power in 1949 and even during the "Cultural Revolution", though without democracy. China's politics and economy have undergone fundamental changes since the reform and opening up in 1978, and all old political terms but "democracy" have no longer been popular. There is no doubt that both Chinese understanding and practice of democracy are undergoing great changes although the term is as it was.

## **2 Chinese concepts of Democracy during the Mao Era**

In the era of Mao Zedong, like other political terms democracy was not open to discussion and was used exclusively by the authorities in a specific way. The only official view on democracy in that context was as follows: democracy is the superstructure based upon the economic base; in the final analysis, it is not the ultimate value and goal but a means to achieve economic goals, and it serves economic development; any democracy in human history is class democracy in nature and there is no classless democracy. So far, there have existed only two types of democracies, socialist and capitalist ones; the socialist democracy is the highest form of democracy while the capitalist one is false; democracy and dictatorship are complementary so that democracy for the proletariat and dictatorship for the bourgeoisie are two sides of the same coin. As Mao wrote, "The combination of these two aspects, democracy for the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries, is the People's Democratic Dictatorship".<sup>2</sup> Democracy and centralization are combined in form of "democratic

<sup>1</sup> Li Shenzhi, "Neither Democracy Nor Science in Traditional Chinese Culture", in: SELECTIONS ON LIBERATION (1978-1998), ed. by Qiushi, Beijing, Jingji Ribao Chubanshe, 1998, p.1118.

<sup>2</sup> Mao Zedong, "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship", in: SELECTED WORKS OF MAO ZEDONG, vol. III, Beijing, People's Publishing House, 1991, p.1475.

centralism", that is, centralization based on democracy, and democracy under centralized guidance. Such a "democratic centralism" has been one principle of both the Constitution of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Constitution of the People's Republic of China.<sup>3</sup>

There are many defects in such a view on democracy. First of all, it is an instrumentalist view that regards democracy as a means to attain economic goals, not as one of human ultimate value, so as to devalue democracy simply as an instrument for human beings. As a result, democracy becomes something not essential in practical politics. Furthermore, according to this instrumentalist view, democracy for the people and dictatorship over the enemy are indivisible. But there are no laws to differentiate between the people and the enemy. Under these circumstances, the judgment of who is the people and who is the enemy depends on the will of the leaders without objective criteria. As a result, those who fall under the category of people in the eyes of the leaders would have democratic rights and those who do not belong to the people would not enjoy democratic rights. This was the case during the Mao era. The scope of democracy was reduced while the scope of dictatorship was enlarged due to the "magnification of class struggle". The object of dictatorship, at first, was identical with the "object of revolution" such as the landlords, capitalists, old bureaucrats, warlords, GMD reactionaries and criminals. Then, the Rightist intellectuals, dissidents, ordinary citizens and even the cadres of the Party and government became gradually the object of dictatorship. The instrumentalist theory actually emphasizes centralization instead of democracy. Mao Zedong thought that democracy only functions as a foundation for centralization. Who should have such final centralized power? It was not the people. As Deng Xiaoping criticized, "inappropriate and indiscriminate concentration of all power of the Party committee themselves is often in the hands of a few secretaries, especially the first secretaries, who direct and decide everything".<sup>4</sup> Finally, the instrumentalist view on democracy overlooks citizen's economic democratic rights. This democracy claims a 'command' economy under which workers and peasants did not own their means of production because these belonged to the state or the collective. Ordinary citizens did not have independent power over production. For example, peasants even did not have the right to decide what and how to plant in the fields, and left such a right to the cadres of the People's Communes.

Perhaps ironically, the worst outcome of the instrumentalist democracy was the "ten years chaos" of the "Cultural Revolution". During that "revolution", "democracy" became undisguisedly a tool which some politicians like the "Gang of Four" used to suppress their opponents. Ordinary citizens' rights were not guaranteed under the so-called "grand democracy" of "speaking out freely, airing views fully, holding great debates and writing big-character posters". For example, even the President of the State and the Minister of Defense were arrested and died in prison without any trial. Obviously, Chinese politics could hardly progress without abandoning this instrumentalist democracy that necessarily leads to political disaster in actual life. Therefore, it became an urgent demand for most Chinese people and CCP members to abandon the legitimacy of Mao's democracy after his death.

<sup>3</sup> The General Provisions of THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY stipulate that "we should abide by democratic centralism. It is the combination of centralization on the basis of democracy and democracy under centralized guidance." Article 3 of the General Provisions of the CONSTITUTION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA stipulates that "the state organs of the People's Republic of China should exercise democratic centralism."

<sup>4</sup> Deng Xiaoping, "On the Reform of the System of Party and State Leadership", in: SELECTED WORKS OF DENG XIAOPING, Beijing, People's Publishing House, 1983, p.329.

### 3 Deng Xiaoping's perspective on Democracy

The Third Plenary Session of the XI. Party Central Committee in December 1978 is usually regarded as a milestone of China's reform and opening up. The plenary session decided to put an end to the "Cultural Revolution", to shift the principal work of the Party from class struggle onto economic development and to elect Deng Xiaoping as the top leader of the Party and the state. The basic reason why the Session made so many important decisions within five days, according to some specialists on the history of the CCP, is that before the Session a 36-day working conference was held, at which participants had reached great consensus on important issues after heated argument and intense conflict. The Session did approve the decisions of the working conference and Mr. Deng Xiaoping's keynote speech at the working conference was acknowledged officially as "the main speech of the Third Plenary Session".<sup>5</sup> As Yu Guangyuan, an authoritative theoretician of the CCP who attended both the Session and the working conference, explored, it was one of the main topics of the working conference to promote and discuss democracy. He stated that almost all top leaders of the Party talked about democracy. All participants were deeply impressed by both Deng Xiaoping and Ye Jianying's remarks on democracy, and so were all cadres and the masses who read their remarks.<sup>6</sup>

Now it is clear that Deng intentionally initiated a revision on Mao's view of democracy in his speech to the working conference. He particularly dwelled on democracy in his famous speech entitled "Emancipate the Mind; Seek Truth from Facts, and Unite as One to Look to the Future". Almost all points on democracy in his speech were designed to oppose and ingeniously revise Mao's view on democracy. First, he talked about the relationship between democracy and centralism and thought that the Party leaders laid undue stress on centralism while "at present, we must lay particular stress on democracy because for quite a long time democratic centralism was not genuinely practiced: Centralism was divorced from democracy and there was little democracy".<sup>7</sup> Second, he advocated economic democracy and producers' economic rights in terms of production and management. "We should take realistic measures to guarantee the individual democratic rights of workers and peasants, including democratic elections, democratic management and democratic supervision". Finally, Deng laid emphasis on democratic institutionalization. He pointed out that "democracy is gradually institutionalized and codified so that such institutions and laws will not change with alterations in the leadership or changes in the views or focus of attention of any leader".<sup>8</sup> Afterwards, Deng expounded his view on democracy and made a crucial revision to Mao's theory on democracy, that is, he no longer regarded democracy simply as an instrument, but acknowledged that "democracy is our goal".<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The Editorial Committee for Party Literature under the CC of the CCP, "notes", in: SELECTED WORKS OF DENG XIAOPING, vol.2, Beijing, People's Publishing House, p. 140.

<sup>6</sup> Yu Guangyuan, THE GREAT HISTORICAL SHIFT I EXPERIENCED: THE CONTEXT OF THE THIRD PLENARY SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, Beijing, Central Translation and Compilation Press, 1998, p. 353.

<sup>7</sup> Deng Xiaoping, "Emancipate the Mind; Seek Truth from Facts, and Uniting as One in Looking to the Future", in: SELECTED WORKS OF DENG XIAOPING, Beijing, People's Publishing House, 1983, pp. 144, 145 and 146.

<sup>8</sup> Deng Xiaoping, *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Deng Xiaoping, "Stability Overrides All", *ibid.*, p. 285.

Deng's theory on democracy is particularly noteworthy because it has been written into both the Party Constitution and the Constitution of the People's Republic of China as the guiding ideology which Chinese citizens and CCP members must follow and as principles to guide China's political reform. Generally speaking, Deng's theory on democracy consists of four aspects: 1) Democracy is one of the basic goals for China's political reform. He stated that democracy is a goal of the CCP and there is no socialism without democracy. He summarized his most important policies: "One thing is to develop democracy politically and the other is to carry out reform in the economy and other social fields".<sup>10</sup> 2) China never practices Western democracy. He held that Western democracy featuring the multi-party and representative system, the checks and balances of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary were a democracy of the monopoly capitalist class. Chinese democracy is only the system of People's Congresses. 3) Democracy has to be combined with law. China would get nowhere without extensive democracy and sound laws. 4) Democracy must be practiced under the leadership of the CCP and has to presuppose political stability. China would be in great chaos, according to his logic, if democracy is not put under the leadership of the CCP and there would be no democracy if there is political instability.

In essence, Deng's theory of democracy corresponds with that of Mao. Both of them lay particular stress on the class nature of democracy, reject the Western multi-party system and advocate the sole leadership of the CCP and the system of People's Congresses under the leadership of the CCP. Deng, however, made a crucial revision of Mao's theory on democracy by regarding democracy as a goal of the CCP and stressing institutionalization of democracy, economic democracy and construction of law. Therefore, great changes took place since the reform and opening up in terms of Chinese democracy in theory and practice.

#### **4           Democratization and Chinese Economic Growth**

There is no doubt that the major result of this reform has been rapid economic growth. The speed of China's economic development is so high that many people called it "a miracle". The yearly average growth rate of China's GDP in twenty years from 1978 till 1998 surpassed 9.8%. In 1998 China's GDP reached 7,955,3 billion Yuan while it was merely 358.8 billion Yuan in 1978. The rapid economic growth resulted in an enormous rise in the standard of living of the Chinese people. The average per capita income of peasants increased from 133.6 Yuan in 1978 to 2,160 Yuan in 1998, 4.3 times as much as the 1978 figure. The average per capita income of urban residents in the cities amounted to 5,425 Yuan in 1998, 3.5 times as much as the 1978 figure.<sup>11</sup>

The rapid growth of China's economy is a direct outcome of economic pluralization which, in turn, is one result of the reform of the traditional socialist economic system. First, China reformed the structure of ownership and introduced a diversified economy. The output value of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) occupied a dominant position in GNP till the 1980s, but nowadays the dominant position has been gradually giving way to the non-state ownership. Although the investment proportion of SOEs in terms of total fixed assets remains to be over

<sup>10</sup> Deng Xiaoping, "Develop Political Democracy and Carry Out Economic Reforms ", *ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>11</sup> See CHINA STATISTICAL YEARBOOK (1998), Beijing, China Statistical Publishing House, 1999.

70%, 60% or more of the increase of the GNP in recent years came from the non-state enterprises, because over 70% of the SOEs operate at a loss. Second, China reformed the management and operational system. On the countryside, the People's Commune system was abolished and replaced by a variety of contract or subcontract systems; in urban areas cities, the egalitarian production and distribution systems were replaced by the new job responsibility with different payments. Third, the planned economy was replaced by a market system, and the centralized mandatory economic mechanism yielded to the market price mechanism. Besides, such important economic sectors as finance, insurance, distribution, employment, housing and so forth were significantly reformed and new systems put in place.

As far as China's reforms are concerned, many people acknowledge its above mentioned economic achievements. However, they argue that everything in China has progressed and changed except politics. Some even attribute the success of China's economic reform to the policy of primarily economic reform and afterwards political reform while they identify the failure of the former Soviet economic reform with radical political changes. Indeed, this argument may be right in terms of Western standards of a multi-party system and the separation of powers: the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. However, it is not true in terms of Chinese political standards. For Chinese society, among the three fundamental variables of politics, economy and culture, politics is always the most important and decisive one in the final analysis. Mao Zedong expressed this quite clearly in stating that politics is in command and the soul for all work, "especially in a transitional society".<sup>12</sup> In China, we can say there would be no social reform including an economic one without a political reform. The decisions of the Third Plenary Session of the XI. Party Central Committee could be considered as a political reform to stimulate the above mentioned economic transformation. The process of China's economic pluralization was motivated by the political reform, which in turn accelerates the process of political changes.

In view of China's reform in the last two decades, political reform is both an independent variable and a dependent one. The political reform initiated the process of economic pluralization that, in turn, accelerated the political changes and brought about a process of relative political pluralization. Therefore, what happened in Chinese politics over the last decades could be characterized as a turn from absolute centralism towards incremental democracy. By "incremental democracy", I mean the following: first, the previous centralist system has been weakened and a pluralization of political life is emerging. However, the political pluralization is conditional. In other words, China's politics is in transition from traditional totalism<sup>13</sup> towards a conditional democracy. Second, comparing economic and political liberalization, the extent and degree of the latter is much lower. In this author's view, such a process of relative or conditional pluralization will be found in political changes described below.

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<sup>12</sup> Mao Zedong, QUOTATIONS FROM CHAIRMAN MAO, Beijing, Capital Printing House, 1968, p. 118.

<sup>13</sup> The term "totalism" is different from "totalitarianism". Originally it was put forward by the American China specialist Tang Tsou of Chicago University. It stands for a particular state whose essential feature is identification of the state with the society. On the hand hand it is related to totalitarianism and authoritarianism, on the other it is rather different from that concepts.

#### **4.1 Separating the Party from the State**

It was an outstanding feature of traditional Chinese socialism to identify the Party with the state, a pattern which was acclaimed by Mao Zedong as the political system under the "absolute centralist leadership of the Party". It was a typical centralist political model under which the CCP as the only ruling party had monopolized all legislative, executive and judicial powers, even including all economic and ideological and management power, central as well as local power. The Party was identified with the government, and vice versa. At the very beginning of the reform, the reformists inside the Party put the separation of the Party and the state on the agenda of reform and even considered it to be a major breakthrough in traditional politics. After 20 years, China has made significant progress in the separation of the Party and the state although the ideal of a complete separation of Party and state has not been realized yet. In fact, this will be impossible to be realized under the condition of a one-party system. Two aspects of progress are worth mentioning. First of all, the CCP has for the first time announced that the Party cannot be considered to stand above the law and has to act within the framework of the law, and it has acknowledged that "it is an extremely important principle that the new Party Constitution stipulates that 'all activities of the Party (have to be carried out) within the framework of the law.'" All activities of Party organizations and members from the central right down to the local echelons are not allowed to violate the State Constitution and the laws, moreover, they have to abide by the Constitution and the other laws and never have privileges to pose themselves above the state Constitution and the other laws".<sup>14</sup> Second, the Party cannot replace the government in order to exercise executive and administrative power. There is a special section in the Political Report of the XIII. National Party Congress on the separation of Party and state respectively. It reiterates that this separation of functions is the key to political reform. "It is the Party that has led the people to establish the state organs, mass associations and various economic and cultural organizations; and the Party should guarantee that the state organs exercise their functions in full. It should respect these and not take over the function of the mass organizations". This Political Report emphasized that leadership of the Party could not be identified with administration and execution, but that political leadership means "leadership of the political principles, important decision-making and recommendation of cadres to the state organs".<sup>15</sup>

#### **4.2 Emergence of a Civil Society**

During the Mao era, due to the overlapping of Party, state and society an independent civil society did not exist. It is only since the reform that a relatively independent civil society gradually emerged. The number and diversity of civil organizations has increased significantly while their legitimacy and autonomy have been much greater than before. Before the reform, there existed only few mass and social organizations such as the Trade Unions, the Youth League and the Women's Federation. Strictly speaking, however, they could not be

<sup>14</sup> Central Committee (CC) of the CCP, "Notes of the CC of the CCP in terms of Safeguarding Socialist Law" (July 10, 1986), in: SELECTED DOCUMENTS OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS, ed. by the Research Office of the General Office of the Standing Committee of the NPC, Beijing Democracy and Law Press, 1992, p.166.

<sup>15</sup> Zhao Ziyang, "Marching along the Socialist Road with Chinese Characteristic", Political Report of the Thirteenth National Party Congress, ibid., p.185.

considered as civil society organizations because all of them in fact were part of the hierarchy of the Party and the government system without any independence. Furthermore, they were the auxiliary departments of the Party-State. Rapid growth of civil society organizations (CSOs) has started in the wake of the market-oriented economic reform. From the 1950s to the 1970s, there were only a few civil organizations defined officially as "social associations" under the rigorous control of the Party-State. In the early 1950s, there existed 44 national social associations, and less than 100 had emerged up to 1965; there were 6,000 local social associations during this period. In 1989, national CSOs increased to over 1,600, and local ones to over 200,000. In 1997, CSOs at and above the county level throughout the country increased to 181,318. There are no accurate statistics of CSOs below the county level. According to conservative estimates, there are over 3 million.<sup>16</sup> 739,500 of them are villagers' committees for self-governance and 510,000 are local trade unions.<sup>17</sup> Besides social associations, there are certain new CSOs which emerged in the 1990s. Their official name is "civil non-enterprise units". According to estimations of the departments of civil affairs, there are about 700,000 civil non-enterprise units across the country.<sup>18</sup> All these CSOs are functioning as the foundation of democracy and producing significant impact on democracy and good governance.<sup>19</sup>

#### **4.3        Taking the Rule of Law as a Goal of China's Political Development**

One of the major reasons why the great tragedy of the "Cultural Revolution" occurred is that there existed no "rule of law" but the "rule of men". That is the reason why the new generation of leaders and intellectuals lay considerable emphasis on the "rule of law" as soon as the reform began and preferred a state where the "rule of law" prevails as an overarching goal. The XV. National Party Congress held in September 1997 formally endorsed the ruling of the state by the 'rule of law' and the construct of a state where the 'rule of law' found its way into the Political Report as one of the Party's political goals. Afterwards, the National People's Congress amended the Constitution by adding the phrase "practicing the rule of law in the state" and constructing a socialist state where the "rule of law" exists, so that "ruling the state by the rule of law" becomes a constitutional principle. It is estimated that the National People's Congress (NPC) and its Standing Committee adopted 351 laws and statutes, the State Council formulated 800 regulations and the local People's Congresses more than 6,000 local laws and regulations within the 20 years between 1979 and 1999.<sup>20</sup> From 1994 till 1996, the NPC and its Standing Committee formulated one law or statute every 13 days while the State Council issued a regulation every six days. The authorities intend to establish a more or less comprehensive system of Chinese laws until the year 2010. This system is considered as one of the basic goals in order to establish instead a rule of state by rule of law instead of the "rule of men".<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> CHINA CIVIL AFFAIRS YEARBOOK 1998, Beijing, China Social Press 1999.

<sup>17</sup> CHINA STATISTICAL YEARBOOK 1998, Beijing, China Statistical Publishing House 1998.

<sup>18</sup> CHINA CIVIL AFFAIRS YEARBOOK 1998, ibid.

<sup>19</sup> For Chinese civil society and governance, see Yu Keping, "The Emerging of Civil Society and the Changes of Governance in Reform China", in: SOCIAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY (Hong Kong), Autumn, 1999.

<sup>20</sup> Renmin Ribao, April 14, 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Jiang Zemin, "Holding High the Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory and Push the Cause of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", in: SELECTED DOCUMENTS OF THE FIFTEENTH PARTY CONGRESS, Beijing, People's Publishing House, 1999, p. 33.

#### **4.4 Broadening the Scope of Direct Elections and Local Self-Governance**

Deng Xiaoping and other post-Mao Chinese leaders paid particular attention to local democracy and encouraged grassroots democracy. In accordance with this democratic logic, the *Election Law of the Representatives of the National People's Congress and the Local People's Congresses at All Levels* adopted in July 1979 stipulates that all representatives at and below the county level must be elected directly by voters. Although all leading cadres of the Party and the government are appointed without direct election, in 1998 and 1999 an experiment of direct elections for leaders of towns and townships were conducted in Sichuan Province and Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. This might indicate that this process will be expanded in the near future. In terms of grassroots democracy, the outstanding development is the issue self-governance of villagers. According to the *Organic Law of the Village Administration Committees of the People's Republic of China* adopted in December 1989, villagers' self-governance should proceed gradually across the country, upper government echelons will no longer run villagers' affairs, the administrative body of the villages will not be appointed by the Party Committee or higher government organs, but will be elected directly and freely by villagers. By the end of 1997, about 60% of all villages started with self-governance and over 900,000 villagers' committees had been elected with 90% of voters participating in elections.

There are four elements of villagers' self-governance: 1) Election of villagers. The head of the village and the members of the villagers' committee have to be elected through free, direct and secret vote. 2) Villagers' assembly. All major decisions, including plans and projects related to the development of the village's economy, public goods and other important issues, should be approved and decided on by the villagers' assembly or the representative assembly. 3) Publicity of the village's political and financial affairs. All matters involving the village's public interests must be made known to the villagers. 4) Village's rules and regulations. Village routine affairs are managed according to villagers' rules and regulations. The particular democratic implication of villagers' self-governance is immense, as of China's 1.3 billion people, over 800 million are peasants.

#### **4.5 Separating Government Functions from Enterprise Management**

It is a feature of traditional socialism that the government owns and runs enterprises. Under this system, the state monopolized and managed all important enterprises. The directors of enterprises were appointed by the Party and the government, enterprises had a similar hierarchy as the bureaucracy, and the directors of enterprises had official cadre ranks. For example, a director of a ministerial enterprise enjoys the same privileges as a minister. The integration of enterprises and government is a product of the planned and 'command' economy that does not correspond to a modern enterprise system and market economy. The market economy requires all enterprises to operate as independent corporations. The process of 20 years' economic reform, in a sense, is a process of separating government functions from enterprise management. This has been regarded as one of the main reform tasks by Mao's successors so that the central topic of the Fourth Plenary Session of the XV. Party Central Committee Congress held in Beijing in 1997 was the deepening of the reform of SOEs and the establishment of modern corporate structures. China has made much headway in this

regard although this is a difficult process and China has still a long way to go. So far all enterprises including SOEs have been relatively separated from government and government does not run enterprises directly anymore. SOEs, for the most part, are transforming their ownership and management. Meanwhile, the directors of SOEs no longer serve as officials of Party and government. The absolute centralist politics has been shaken fundamentally as its basis, the unity of government and enterprises, is gradually disappearing.

## 5       Recent Chinese Discourses on Democracy

There is further evidence that the traditional absolute centralist politics is giving way to the incremental democracy from the changes of the relations between the central and the local levels, between the government and the citizens, a more liberal political climate and other political changes. The more liberal climate generates a larger discourse on democracy among Chinese intellectuals. In fact, free discussion of political issues, especially democracy, was never permitted and none dared to do so during the Mao era. Since the enforcement of the reforms, political issues have still remained sensitive and even a little risky, but the climate is liberal so that fewer and fewer intellectuals who participate in the discourse on democracy are subject to persecution. All issues are deliberately divided into two categories: first, the political ones, which could not be discussed freely, and second, the academic ones, which could be freely discussed. This thinking pattern has been attacked fiercely: "It is to deprive vast numbers of citizens of their rights of political participation and to give only a few people access to politics, if free speech is exclusive to academic issues and not permitted in case political issues".<sup>22</sup> It is under this more liberal political climate that Chinese intellectuals now dare to face "sensitive" political issues: "The reform of the socialist political system is a sensitive issue. Why is it sensitive? It is sensitive due to the interference from the 'Left' and the 'Right'. How can we solve the major problems and how can we advance if we do not discuss and study these problems because of their sensitiveness?"<sup>23</sup>

Although there are still various pressures and obstructions, Chinese intellectuals have taken advantage of the relative liberal climate to launch a major discourse on politics, especially on democracy. Democracy has become a hot topic during the last twenty years. One can find a variety of views on democracy from many essays, books and articles about democracy published in the last two decades, which can be categorized into three groups: orthodox Marxism, Liberalism and Incremental Democracy.

### 5.1       Orthodox Marxism

Orthodox Marxism believes that democracy means people are the masters of their own country, which is the superstructure based upon and serving the economic foundation. Democracy has its distinctive class nature and there is no democracy beyond class: "It is the

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<sup>22</sup> Zhang Xianyang and Wang Guixiu, "On Free Speech", in: READING, No.9, 1979.

<sup>23</sup> Liu Ji, "Actively Explore Realistic Ways to Socialist Democracy", in: REPORTS OF PROBLEMS ABOUT CHINA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM" (1978-1998), ed. Liu Zhifeng, Beijing, Chinese Movies Publishing House, 1999, pp.1-2.

nature of democracy and of the state in history that the ruling class enjoys democratic rights while the ruled does not or only enjoys very few incomplete and formal democratic rights".<sup>24</sup> According to this logic, in human history, it is only the socialist democracy that is true and the highest form of democracy serving the majority of the people while the capitalist one is a false democracy serving a minority of people. Orthodox Marxism draws a natural conclusion from this theoretical logic: China can never practice Western democracy in the sense of multi-party system and separation of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. Otherwise, in its advocates' eyes, Chinese history will regress. It is only the people's representative system that is suited to China's reality. It has priority over any capitalist democracy and is the sole realistic way to Chinese democracy which "can guarantee that people rule the state by law and become the masters of the state."<sup>25</sup>

## 5.2 Liberalism

Liberalism emphasizes the universality of Western democracy. According to its theory, China is practicing market economy, which is a liberal economy and requires liberal politics. The elements of liberal democracy are representative democracy, a multi-party system and a separation of the three powers legislative, executive and judiciary. According to this theory, China must permit the existence of opposition parties to the CCP and all other parties must be given rights to be in power by the Constitution. Meanwhile, powers of the legislative, the executive and the judiciary must be separated. Chinese liberals rarely express their straightforward views on democracy because the Constitution stipulates that the CCP is the only ruling party in China as one of "four principles" against which one might suffer political risks. However, they praise bluntly the economic and political value of liberalism: "We are in a transition to the market economy. The market economy must impel economic liberalism that is the basis of all other liberalism. ... We are entering a global age. The market economy has become a global trend and liberty and liberalism are becoming increasingly global values, too. ... After 300 years of comparison and choice in the world and especially after over 100 years of social experiments of the largest scale in China, we have obtained ample evidence that liberalism is the best and most universal value".<sup>26</sup>

The Chinese orthodox Marxist view on democracy is reduced to exercise its impact on the actual political life because it stresses centralism rather than freedom, the Chinese characteristics of democracy rather than its universality, and its substantial importance rather than its procedural importance. Liberal view on democracy plays a role in a small intellectual circle only due to its lack of a necessary legitimate basis and feasible conditions. Comparatively speaking, Incremental Democracy is exerting a great influence on China's political development since it reflects the reality of reform pretty good.

<sup>24</sup> Feng Wenbin, "On Problems of Socialist Democracy", in: PRACTICAL SELECTIONS FOR THE 20 CENTURY CHINA, ed. by Li Bingqing, Beijing, Chinese Peace Publishing House, 1998, p.61.

<sup>25</sup> Du Gan, "An Analysis of Political Pluralization", in: SOCIAL SCIENCES STUDIES, No.2, 1992.

<sup>26</sup> Li Shenzhi, "Carry forward the Liberal Tradition of Peking University", in: TRADITIONS OF PEKING UNIVERSITY AND MODERN CHINA, Beijing, China Personnel Publishing House, 1998, pp. 4-5.

## **5.3 Incremental Democracy**

It is its realistic attitude that distinguishes Incremental Democracy from orthodox Marxism and liberalism. It puts emphasis on the *effects* of democracy rather than on its theoretical system; it is not preoccupied with one theory or doctrine of democracy but embraces all useful elements from various theories and doctrines; it pays full attention to the universality of democracy with a good understanding of the particular Chinese situation and traditional culture; it doesn't concentrate on intellectuals but on people of all ranks and classes; it advocates full use of existing conditions to push Chinese democracy forward incrementally by path-dependence.<sup>27</sup> Such an Incremental Democracy in China may boil down to the following aspects.

### **5.3.1 Highlighting Democratic Procedures and Institutions**

It holds that democracy, above all, is a set of institutions and procedures to guarantee citizen's freedom, equality and other political rights. The essence of democracy is people's political participation and a process of people's participation is a fundamental way to democracy. It is participation that is a manifestation of democratic rights. It is essential that there is a democratic constitution enjoining people's sovereignty. Indeed, all modern states have their own "democratic" constitutions. However, it would mean nothing to democracy if there is only a constitution on paper specifying citizen's rights but lacking the practical measures and institutions to implement these rights. For actual democracy, the practical procedures for implementation of constitutional democratic rights are by no means less important than the articles of the constitution themselves. It is critical for Chinese democracy, in view of Incremental Democracy, that there are feasible procedures to enable citizens to determine final decision-making and participate in planning the political agenda. On the one hand, Chinese laws should be improved and on the other hand, even more importantly, citizens' legal rights provided by the constitution and laws must be guaranteed and realized.<sup>28</sup>

### **5.3.2 Accepting Civil Society as a Precondition for Democracy**

Incremental Democracy believes that civil society is an intermediate associational realm situated between the state on the one side and the basic building blocks of society on the other, inhabited by social and civil organizations named "the third sector", "NGO" and "Civil Society Organizations" (CSOs). CSOs are relatively independent of the state, enjoy some autonomy in relations with the state, and are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect or extend their interests, values or identities. The major reasons why civil society is essential for democracy are as follows : "In the first place, one of the main features of civil society is its autonomy which is one of the ultimate goals of democracy, too. In this sense, a process of developing democracy means a process of expanding civil society and withdrawing the state. In the second, the essential meaning of democracy is people's sovereignty. In all

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<sup>27</sup> The term "path-dependence" is borrowed by social scientists like famous American economist Ronald Coase from biology. It means that the social organism, like the biological one, will cost too much if it changes so fundamentally as to deviate completely from its previous conditions or its traditions.

<sup>28</sup> See Yu Keping, "Substantial Democracy or Procedural Democracy", in: WAY, No.12, 1997.

modern states, people's sovereignty is always indirect while governments exercise power directly. Thus, from the perspective of feasibility and reality, the essential meaning of democracy is people's supervision and control of governments, which will be effective only if civil society is strong and powerful enough. In other words, people's supervision and control of governments do not work without a strong civil society".<sup>29</sup>

### **5.3.3 Esteem of the Rule of Law**

Incremental Democracy believes that it is only by the rule of law, instead of the rule of men, that personal autocracy could be prevented and citizens' rights would be protected. There had been a tradition of the rule of men for thousands of years in China so that it is very difficult to carry out the rule of law. No democracy, no rule of law. The most important task for Chinese democracy is to transform the rule of men into the rule of law and to establish a state where the "rule of law" prevails. Progress in the rule of law even could be regarded as progress in democracy in China nowadays. China has declared to establish a socialist state where there is "rule of law" as a goal and has formulated thousands of laws and statutes at both the central and local levels. A Chinese legal system focusing on the Constitution is formed, which enables Chinese political, economic and social life, for the most part, to have its legal foundation. There is a long distance, however, to the state where there is "rule of law" and even an even longer way to go to the bare necessities of implementing the "rule by law". More officials and civil servants act according to policies rather than laws. "First, officials and civil servants often don't abide by the Constitution and laws, but implement policies. For the sake of their own local or departmental interests, some local or departmental authorities make a number of local or departmental policies in violation of laws and policies of the central government and take illegal actions to seek their private interests". As a jurist says: "Second, many judges, procurators, policemen and lawyers do not abide by legal procedures and even abuse laws at will according to their own individual interests. Third, ordinary people do not have the sense of law but the traditional idea that 'handing legal affairs relies on personal connections'".<sup>30</sup>

### **5.3.4 Affirming the Critical Role of Government in Promoting Democracy**

Incremental Democracy argues that East Asia's political and cultural traditions are different from those of the West, where the state or the government plays a much more important role in social development and civil life. In China, grassroots democracy and local self-government is motivated by government, civil society is led by government, and the market economy is initiated by the government. Furthermore, "the process of the rule of law is led by the government, not by citizens' spontaneous endeavors, which is proved by the campaign of the government in support of popularization of laws".<sup>31</sup> In accordance with this logic, Incremental Democracy neither suits the libertarian claim to minimize the functions of the

<sup>29</sup> Yu Keping, "Socialist Civil Society: A New Subject", in: TIANJIN SOCIAL SCIENCES BIMONTHLY, No. 4, 1993.

<sup>30</sup> Li Shuguang, "The Legal Orientation of Political Reform", in: POLITICAL CHINA, ed. By Dong Yuyu, Beijing, Today's China Press, 1998, p.81.

<sup>31</sup> Li Shuguang, ibid., p. 80.

state nor the claims that strong or weak functions of government should depend on the concrete situation. Instead, it encourages government to play a more active and initiating role in the development process of Chinese democracy. For "government will violate human rights if it did what it should not do as well as if it didn't do what it should do".<sup>32</sup>

### **5.3.5 Advocacy of Cooperative Democracy**

Incremental Democracy tries to build democracy on the basis of cooperation between the government and the citizens and to encourage a constructive collaboration of the government and the citizens in all aspects of political, economic and social life. In the Mao era, there prevailed a philosophy of struggle that urged people to clash and struggle against each other. It was against the democratic spirit that the model of political interaction between the government and the citizens was a zero-sum game, i.e. conflicting and fighting each other and the main means by which to resolve conflicts was institutions of coercion. On the contrary, more and more intellectuals want to develop "a democratic system of cooperation" which means that "the government is subject to the democratic supervision by the people. The people handle their own affairs and the localities deal with their own affairs so that there will be a cooperation between the government and the people and between the central and the local authorities." To be specific, the democratic system of cooperation has three outstanding features: firstly, "the pressure and motive power of local governments at all levels to promote economic development and social progress in their localities comes both from the government at the higher level and from the local people"; secondly, "it is designed to appropriately divide work between the central and the local authorities and between political and economic organizations, define their responsibilities, rights and obligations and then create the conditions needed for their cooperation"; and thirdly, "all the participating parties share the benefits of cooperation".<sup>33</sup>

## **6 Recent Chinese Discourses on Governance**

The concepts of governance and good governance appeared in Chinese academic circles only in recent years last but not least due to the World Bank's Annual Report of 1992 which was entitled "Governance and Development". As the report was translated into Chinese and published in China, a few Chinese economists and political scientists have begun to pay attention to the issues of governance and good governance. Around the mid-1990s, a few Chinese economists began to study corporate governance while some political scientists studied good governance in Chinese political life. Generally speaking, the concepts of "governance" and "good governance" are strange to Chinese scholars so that there has been no uniform Chinese version of these two concepts.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Yu Keping, "What Government Should or Should Not Do", in: POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDIES, No.1, 1998.

<sup>33</sup> Rong Jingben and others, REFORM OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM AT THE COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP LEVELS, Beijing, Central Compilation & Translation Press, 1998, pp.371-384.

<sup>34</sup> So far we can find four special articles on governance and good governance from a political science perspective in China. From 1997 on, six Chinese scholars and I have been engaged in a research project on "Civil Society and Governance in Reform China", which will be finished at the end of this year.

The terms "government" and "governance" have been used alternately in the field of public management related to political affairs. This was, e.g. the case in the English speaking world. Since the 1990s Western theories of governance and good governance have been introduced into China. Some Chinese scholars have thus tried to distinguish governance from government in the way that they limit government to the activities of the central and the local authorities while they refer to governance when it comes to all public management activities, including corporate management. Views of some Western specialists and professional institutions on governance like N.N.Rosenau, R. Rhodes, Bob Jessop and the Commission of Global Governance seem to be particularly influential in China. By Chinese scholars, governance is regarded widely as "governing without government"; a process of interaction between the state and civil society; a new cooperation between the government and the civil, public and private sectors; a management and coordination mechanism with consensus and identity, a social self-organizational net, and so on.

Basically, governance stands for a synthesis of management of public and private affairs and a sustainable process of coordination to maximize public goods. It is beyond dichotomy of the state and civil society, the public and private, the government and non-government, and coercion and voluntariness. Like government, governance requires authority and power necessary for maintaining public order and maximizing common goods. However, governance must be distinguished from government and there are two differences. First, although both governance and government require authority, authority of governance is not necessarily based upon certain government departments while that of government is always based upon a certain state apparatus. Therefore, the scope of governance is much broader than that of government. Governance, rather than government, is necessary for all communities from universities, corporations and interest groups to small clubs, schools and voluntary organizations as long as they work properly. Second, the operation of power is different. Power of government operates always from top-down to bottom-up primarily through orders, statutes, bureaucracy and coercion while power of governance operates mutually, interacting both from top-down to bottom-up and from bottom-up to top-down, primarily through collaboration, coordination, negotiation, social networking, neighborhood, identity or consensus.<sup>35</sup>

The conception of good government has been one element of traditional Chinese political culture, and good government has been perceived as an ideal political model for thousands of years since government came into being in history. From the perspective of traditional Chinese political culture, among assessment criteria of good government are justice, high efficiency, honest officials, good service, and rule by law. These criteria, of course, are still available to evaluate any government and such a good government with these criteria will still be people's political expectation as long as governments exist in the world. The dominant conception of good government in Chinese political culture has been shaken and gradually given way to good governance since China has entered the process of modernization especially in the global age. We are suggesting to develop a set of assessment criteria of good governance on the basis of the traditional good government as below: 1) legitimacy; 2)

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<sup>35</sup> Yu Keping, "Introduction to Governance and Good Governance", in: MARXISM AND REALITY (Bimonthly), No.5, 1999.

transparency; 3) accountability; 4) the rule of law; 5) responsiveness; 6) effectiveness; 7) order; 8) stability (see the appendix for details).<sup>36</sup>

Essentially, good governance is a political model of the global age. It is the return of political power to society from the state and is thus a process of people's participation in political life. Good governance means good cooperation between the state and civil society or between the government and the citizens. Good governance has something to do with the citizens rather than the government in the sense that for certain small communities it is possible to progress without government but impossible to progress without good public management. There could be good government but not good governance without citizens' active and voluntary participation and their identification with the tasks of public authorities. In short, good governance is based upon the citizens or civil society, rather than upon the state or the government; good governance without a strong civil society seems to be impossible.

Furthermore, it is critical for good governance that people have sufficient power and rights to participate in elections, decision-making and supervision of a government. Obviously, only under democratic conditions can people be entitled to such power and rights. Therefore, good governance and democracy coincide here: no good governance without democracy is actionable and vice versa. There might be good government under an authoritarian regime but never good governance without functioning democratic mechanisms. The objective of our political development should be good governance on the basis of democratic governance. Hence we conclude this paper with an attempt to develop a set of analytical criteria and indicators of Chinese democratic governance that would combine a synthesis of universal principles of democracy and good governance and particular Chinese features (see appendix).

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<sup>36</sup> See Yu Keping, "Good Governance: A Political Model in the Global Age", in: WAY, No.1, 1999.

[Appendix]

Principal Assessment Criteria and Indicators  
for Research on Chinese Democracy and Governance

Assessment criteria	Specific Indicators or area of concern
Rule of Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● status of laws and law-making</li> <li>● officials and citizens' understanding of and respect for law</li> <li>● actual role of law in reality</li> <li>● autonomy and authority of legislative and judicial activities</li> <li>● universal application of law across the country and different sections and departments</li> </ul>
Political Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● election laws and regulations</li> <li>● scope of direct elections</li> <li>● methods and measures of elections</li> <li>● access to secret vote</li> <li>● way of choice of candidates</li> <li>● proportion of candidates to the elected</li> <li>● percentage of citizens registered to vote</li> <li>● voting percentage of citizens</li> <li>● extent of participation by socially disadvantaged groups</li> </ul>
Plurality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● extent of participation by women</li> <li>● extent of participation by ethnic groups</li> <li>● Democratic parties' participation</li> <li>● participation by private owners</li> <li>● professional representation of the Party and the government officials</li> <li>● regional representation of the Party and the government</li> <li>● ages of the Party and the government officials</li> </ul>
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● quantity and quality of political channels and media, including media restrictions and publications laws, independence of media, government censorship, acts of violence against journalists</li> <li>● publicity of process of decision-making</li> <li>● publicity of activities of government organs including the public security organs, procuratorial organs and people's courts</li> <li>● provision of information about official procedures</li> <li>● publication of budgets and expenditure plans</li> <li>● citizens' knowledge of political affairs</li> <li>● citizens' rights of access to political information</li> </ul>
Human rights and citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● constitutional provisions and laws concerning civil and political rights</li> <li>● implementation of legal provisions related to civil rights</li> <li>● respect for and protection of rights of minorities and dissidents by law and by the government</li> <li>● citizen's consciousness of human rights</li> <li>● official's consciousness of human rights</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• citizen's capacity to protect their own rights</li> <li>• respect for and protection of rights of the disabled, the weak and the poor</li> </ul>
Supervision of the Party and the government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• legal rights of citizens against injustice and improper behavior of government</li> <li>• check and balance of powers</li> <li>• citizen's check of government's power</li> <li>• supervision of mass media against the Party and government</li> <li>• role of public opinion in checking power of the Party and the government</li> <li>• self-disciplinary regulations and practice of the Party and the government</li> </ul>
Inner-Party democracy and cooperation between the CCP and the Democratic Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• elections inside the Party</li> <li>• procedure and mechanism of selecting the Party leaders at various levels</li> <li>• institutions of decision-making of the Party Committees</li> <li>• relation between the Party and the government</li> <li>• relation between the Party and ordinary people</li> <li>• relation between the CCP and the democratic parties</li> </ul>
Grassroots Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• percentage of villagers' self-governance in the countryside</li> <li>• percentage of inhabitants' self-governance in towns and cities</li> <li>• self-governance of local communities</li> <li>• people's participation in local government proceedings</li> <li>• operation and role of labor representative assemblies</li> <li>• extent of participation by trade unions</li> <li>• extent of participation by women's federations</li> <li>• direct elections of leadership on township level</li> </ul>
Civil Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number and diversity of civil society organizations</li> <li>• involvement of membership in key decision of the government</li> <li>• extent of participation by civil organizations</li> <li>• impact on political, social and economic life</li> <li>• legal, economic, political and cultural environments</li> </ul>
Legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fairness and regularity of government's behavior and policies</li> <li>• citizen's identities to the Party and the government</li> <li>• justice of authoritative allocation of social values</li> <li>• extent of legitimization of the Party's activities</li> <li>• percentage of corrupted officials</li> <li>• access to legal system for wider constituencies</li> </ul>
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• official's honesty</li> <li>• responsibility of officials for their behaviors</li> <li>• punishment of officials due to illegal activities</li> <li>• communication of officials and citizens</li> <li>• respect for citizen's opinions by official</li> <li>• official mechanisms of accepting and dealing with public opinion</li> <li>• frequency of elections and alternations of officials</li> <li>• highlighting incidence of corrupt practices</li> <li>• public knowledge of government procedures and regulations</li> </ul>

Responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consultative mechanisms of the Party and the government</li> <li>• mechanisms for redress against restrictive legislation, regulation, administration, judgements, and other legal actions.</li> <li>• change of government policies as a result of citizen's advocacy</li> <li>• initiatives of the Party and the government due to societal deliberation</li> <li>• innovations of government</li> <li>• use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms</li> <li>• frequency of interaction between the government and the citizens</li> <li>• governmental debates in the process of decision-making attended by the citizens</li> <li>• extent of citizens' involvement in the ruling groups of the Party and the government</li> </ul>
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• costs of government</li> <li>• frequency of government's policies failure</li> <li>• efficiency of policies</li> <li>• length of time of making key decisions</li> <li>• government capacity to deal with eventualities</li> <li>• satisfaction with the government's policies by the citizens</li> <li>• quantity and quality of public goods provided by the government</li> </ul>
Social Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hierarchy of the Party and the government</li> <li>• adaptability and authority of law</li> <li>• authority of the Party and the government</li> <li>• confidence to the government by the citizens</li> <li>• sustainability of existing social norms</li> <li>• political identity of the citizens</li> <li>• challenges to the existing order</li> </ul>
Social stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rate of crimes</li> <li>• ethnic conflicts</li> <li>• regional differentiation</li> <li>• polarization of the poor and the rich</li> <li>• relationship between the centre and the local levels</li> <li>• relationship between cadres and masses</li> <li>• citizens' sensitivity to social crisis</li> <li>• growth of anti-government activities such as petitions, protests, demonstrations, etc.</li> </ul>