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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE ABSENCE  
OF DEMOCRACY IN CHINA

by

Megan Whipp

A Thesis  
Submitted to the  
Faculty of The Graduate College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts  
Department of Political Science

Western Michigan University  
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Megan Whipp

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE ABSENCE OF DEMOCRACY IN CHINA

Megan Whipp, M.A.

Western Michigan University, 2008

My research will look at the reasons for China's lack of democracy. China has become increasingly developed giving the Chinese people greater wealth, improved education, and better access to healthcare. Based on Seymour Lipset's 1963 study which finds economic development fosters democracy, China should have become democratic. But, China is not a democracy.

The methodology employed in this study is a case study. A case study ensures an in-depth analysis of the relevant factors which could affect China's prospects for democracy. This study advances the understanding of China's continued authoritarian rule finding two factors especially influential. The first factor is the repressive strength of the Chinese Communist Party. Secondly, the lack of opposition to the Chinese government from the intelligentsia, entrepreneurs, and middle class has also hindered democratization. The conclusion of this thesis provides two further ideas for future research which may increase our comprehension of this political phenomenon.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In the last half century, China has seen tremendous economic growth improving living standards, literacy, education, and health for many Chinese citizens. To some theorists, it is believed economic development has an impact of the possibility of democracy (Lipset, 1963; Inglehart, 1997). But the Chinese political system remains authoritarian. While the Chinese constitution includes many rights of a liberal democracy, other articles override them. This lack of democratic freedom and protection from the government has been demonstrated in the repressive measures taken by the Chinese government. The violent crackdown on student protestors in 1989 is one example. In April 2008, the human rights and democracy activist Hu Jia was imprisoned for his alleged subversion of the state. Jia had written several articles and interviews on issues such as human rights and the environment.

This thesis seeks to identify why in the face of economic development democracy has not emerged in China. What has prevented those actors desiring democracy in China from reforming their political system? Is the desire for democracy just weak or are the citizens too fearful of their government to demand reform? The basis for this question comes from an interest not just in China's lack of democracy, but in how democracies emerge and develop throughout the world and what hinders democratization.

China's lack of democracy is an important phenomenon for several reasons. First, a better understanding of the lack of democracy may contribute in democratizing this country. If China democratizes there would be over 1.3 billion citizens who may benefit. Democracy is beneficial because it allows citizens to participate in competitive elections for top government officials. Liberal democracies also permit and value individual rights. These rights often include speech, press, association, assembly, and due process. China's continued authoritarian rule is also important to determine why democratization has failed in other economically developed nations. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and Singapore are examples of increasingly modern countries with limited political rights. It is possible that similar factors inhibiting democratization in China are also working in Saudi Arabia, Singapore and other authoritarian countries. Thus, the lessons learned about China's continued authoritarian rule could provide valuable insight for understanding other non-democratic countries.

In this thesis, I am employing a case study method to find out the reasons for the lack of democracy in China. A case study is advantageous because it allows an in-depth and focused analysis of one specific phenomenon or country. An in-depth study enables the researcher to discover many relevant factors that could affect a subject. Therefore, the best way to analyze China's continued authoritarian rule is to study China deeply.

The first chapter of this thesis presents a literature review on 'modernization theory' and Chinese democratization. The chapter begins with an overview of Lipset's (1959) 'modernization theory' which posits that economic development fosters democracy. According to Lipset, wealth, industrialization, urbanization, and education produce changes in society which foster democracy (1963). But, there have been

numerous instances such as Singapore and Saudi Arabia where economic development has not created democracy. The section then provides recent modifications made to Lipset's (1963) theory showing a breadth of criticism and alternatives. Generally, the expansions discover that Lipset's (1963) 'modernization theory' has a weaker correlation than he believed. But, the authors still find economic development an important variable in democratization.

The literature review then progresses into the hypotheses on Chinese democratization. This section begins with a cultural argument made by Shaohua Hu (2000) who finds the tradition of Confucianism detrimental to China's prospects for democracy. The argument is then discounted by Zhengxu Wang's (1997) research which finds that there is a desire for democracy within the majority of the Chinese. Interestingly, Wang (1997) believes the reason for China's lack of democratic reform is in the Chinese people's fear of instability. Allegedly, the Chinese public believes democracy or a multi-party political system has the possibility of creating tremendous social chaos (Wang, 1997). Because of this, Chinese people are hesitant for change (Wang, 1997). Last, Mary E. Gallagher (2002) finds that economic development in the form of foreign direct investment (FDI) has been at the root of China's continued authoritarian rule. The timing and sequence of this type of investment has managed to increase the power of the Chinese Communist Party while reducing societal resistance to reforms (Gallagher, 2002).

Chapter 2 presents an overview of Chinese political history beginning with the Kuomintang (KMT) rule. This chapter was provided to determine whether China had any history of democracy. Had democracy existed at one time then it is possible the people may yearn for it again. The periods discussed are divided into different regime types

according to Linz and Stepan (1996). The regime first discussed was the Kuomintang which is placed into the authoritarian category. Next, the totalitarian regime describes the Chinese Communist Party rule from 1949 until 1977. The post-totalitarian regime describes the Chinese Communist Party from 1978 to 1989. The last regime type provided is not categorized by Linz and Stepan (1996), but is an intermediate regime between post-totalitarian and authoritarian. The Chinese Communist Party from 1989 to 2007 is put into this category. This chapter will categorize regimes based on mass political participation and limited freedom of speech. It should be noted that although there were times of coerced political participation and limited freedom of speech, China was never a democracy.

The third chapter of this thesis presents a brief summary of Lipset's 'modernization theory'. In this section, Lipset's theory is described paying particular attention to how each factor fosters democracy. Lipset (1963) found wealth was important for the creation of a large and politically moderate middle class. Education produces a more articulate and tolerant public (Lipset, 1963). Lipset (1963) found more democratic and moderate citizens resided in more urban than rural areas. Finally, industrialization produces 'cross-cutting cleavages' which allow citizens to form numerous loyalties and ties between different groups (Lipset, 1959).

The second section of this chapter tests Lipset's (1959) theory against China to determine whether China's economic development has been enough to be qualified as modern. It is important to determine whether China meets Lipset's (1963) modernization criteria. If not, it is possible that it is the lack of economic development which has hindered democratization. In this test, many of the same indices of wealth,

industrialization, urbanization, and education were employed using data from the Chinese Statistical Yearbook. The data indicate that China as a whole has become significantly more developed. The most considerable improvements were made in per capita gross domestic product, literacy, and cellular phones owned.

China maintains a massive territory divided between regions which are unequally developed. While China as a whole appears modern, the eastern region is even more so. Eastern China sustains a large percent of the overall population, is more educated, wealthy, and has more people per square mile. In regards to China's prospects for democracy, the socio-economic changes in the eastern region should be fostering reform in the Chinese political system. In this section, many of the same indicators used from the previous test are used to analyze eastern China. The data show that the eastern region is more modern than China as a whole and is even comparable to some old democracies.

Since China, and especially eastern China, fit many of Lipset's (1963) 'modern' indicators, the question is what obstacles have prevented democracy? This chapter argues that there are two important impediments to democratization in China. The first factor is the repressive strength of the Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese Communist Party has significant control over the legal system and economy and sole control of the political system. Their power is demonstrated in three methods of social control used to prevent a democratic uprising from the public (Lum, 2000). The first method is 'coercive control' which entails the use of physical force (Lum, 2000). This type of control can be seen in the Tiananmen Square incident and the suppression of Tibetan demonstrators. The second method of control is 'normative control' which entails the Chinese government "altering people's attitudes, values, and beliefs" (Lum, 2000, p. 59). The best example of

normative control is the government's censorship over the television media, newspapers, and internet. The last form of control involves imprisonment of groups or individuals believed to be dissenters. Last, a less obvious form of social control used by the Chinese Communist Party is presented. This method is called 'co-optation' (Pei, 2006). Here, the Chinese Communist Party attempts to co-opt possible opposition groups into the party with material benefits and rewards (Pei, 2006). By co-opting certain groups into the party, the chance of these groups becoming political dissenters is lessened. The two main groups 'co-opted' have been the intelligentsia and entrepreneurs (Pei, 2006).

The final section of this chapter argues the lack of democracy in China can also be attributed to a lack of opposition to the Chinese Communist Party. There are three groups in China which would be likely candidates for demanding political reform- entrepreneurs, intelligentsias, and the middle class. Each group has been reluctant to demand political reform for different reasons. Entrepreneurs in China are among the wealthy elite and fear a more inclusive political system may alter the current dynamic giving more power to the poor (Lum, 2000). Similarly, the intelligentsia have little faith in the abilities of the poor finding them uneducated and dishonest (Lum, 2000). Therefore, they perceive that giving political power to the majority would be just as troublesome (Lum, 2000). Finally, the middle class who could be a strong force for democracy in China have been hindered from mobilization with restrictions on freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and association. Without these rights it is unlikely this class will be able to form a vibrant civil society that may seek democratic reforms.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A Review of Modernist Theory of Democratization

Modernization theory was formally developed in the Cold War era (1950's and 1960's) where the rise of third world nations beget interest into the relationship between economic development and democratization (Tipps, 1973). Hypotheses and theories of the era centered on what circumstances a democracy is formed and the constraints of creating a stable democracy (Tipps, 1973). 'Modernization theory' has been put forward as a major explanation. However, it has been conceptualized differently between the fields of sociology and political science. Generally, the term describes the social change engendered from the transformation or development of traditional societies to developed ones. The literature presented in this chapter will discuss the political changes engendered from economic development. In this regard, modernization theorists have found that as a country becomes more developed economically, their political system is inclined to become democratic. The second section of this review will discuss the literature on China's lack of democracy. There have been many studies published on China's continued authoritarian rule, but in this section, the most frequently cited hypothesis will be given.



Seymour Martin Lipset's 1963 study expands upon the previous literature on democratization with the necessary quantitative analysis on the link between economic development and democracy. Lipset's formal theory which has now been altered, expanded upon, and refuted begins with the observation that the more developed societies of the world are also democratic (Lipset, 1963). Lipset (1963) found that the factors of economic development: wealth, industrialization, urbanization, and education foster the social changes needed for democratization. Each of these factors has its own causal validity in creating democratic political institutions (Lipset, 1963).

Lipset tests his theory on several countries of Anglo-Saxon Europe and Latin America. The given countries were each categorized into their political systems: democratic, dictatorship, or stable dictatorship. Lipset then tests each of his indicators on the sample countries. Wealth was tested with such factors as gross domestic product, number of telephones per person, persons per motor vehicle, newspaper copies per 1,000 people, and physicians per 1,000 people. As he would have suspected, the countries that ranked high on the 'wealth' indicator were also categorized as democratic. Lipset (1963) believed that wealth was a significant factor for its ability to change a society's social stratification structure. Prior to economic development it is probably that the socioeconomic structure was divided between a large poor class and a small wealthy elite (Lipset, 1963). After increased economic development in a society Lipset (1963) finds wealth is often more evenly distributed producing a large middle class. The middle class exhibit more sensibility in their political views, temper conflict and reward the moderate and democratic parties (1963). The upper class is also tempered by the growing middle

class and can no longer exclude them out of their belief in their own superiority (Lipset, 1963).

Urbanization is the next factor Lipset (1963) believed important and was tested by the percent of people living in cities at their respective populations (100,000, 500,000 etc.) To Lipset (1963), urbanization produces a scenario where people being closer in proximity than in an agricultural setting are influenced by cross-cutting cleavages. Cross-cutting cleavages occur when different groups of people not only work together, but are part of different professional and voluntary organizations. This in effect moderates their views and allows them to become more tolerant of other people and possibly other political views (Lipset, 1963).

A higher degree of education was found to occur in the more democratic countries which lead Lipset (1963) to believe was an important aspect of democracy. Education was tested by the percent of the population who was literate, person enrolled in primary education, post primary education, and higher education. To Lipset (1963), education serves to broaden a person's outlook which enables them to understand the need for tolerance and keeps them from accepting extremist views. He further notes that while it is important it is again not a sufficient quality to create democracy (Lipset, 1963).

Industrialization is not mentioned specifically as a necessary condition for democracy except for its role in the creation of wealth (Lipset, 1963). The one caveat Lipset (1963) does mention to be important is the rate of industrialization. When industrialization takes place quickly it produces "sharp discontinuities between the pre-industrial and industrial situation" (Lipset, 1963, p. 54). Norway is the example given in the text where industrialization occurred rapidly between 1905 and 1920 (Lipset, 1963).

Here, industrialization from hydroelectric power generated a growth in the industrial working class (Lipset, 1963). Many of the unskilled workers working in the newly established industrial sector were “young migrants from rural areas” (Lipset, 1963, p. 55). The increase of unskilled workers also diminished the power of the “moderate craft union movement” (Lipset, 1963, p. 55). Furthermore, Lipset (1963) believes this influx of a population favorable to ‘extremist’ politics created the left wing Federation of Labor and Labor Party.

Ronald Inglehart’s *Modernization and Postmodernization* (1997) offers an addition to Lipset’s ‘modernization theory’ testing 43 societies covering 70 percent of the world’s population. In this study, Inglehart (1997) challenges Lipset’s (1963) theory on four points. First, he corrects the perception of ethnocentrism in Lipset’s (1963) theory which showed “modernization was equated with ‘westernization’” (Inglehart, 1997, p.11). Inglehart finds that modernization has occurred as a global phenomenon and has been especially affective in East Asia, not just Europe. Second, Inglehart believes that changes occurring from economic development are not always linear meaning they don’t always move in a continuous direction. Thus, change may reach a point of “diminished returns” and begin to “move in a fundamentally new direction” (Inglehart, 1997, p. 10). Third, democracy is not inherent to the modernization process (Inglehart, 1997). There are other outcomes such as fascism and even Communism that have been seen in economically developed societies (Inglehart, 1997). Last, there is an equal relationship between economics, culture, and politics which all play a ‘mutually supportive’ role (Inglehart, 1997, p. 10). Therefore, Inglehart finds “if one knows one component of

society, one can predict what other components will be present with far better than random success” (Inglehart, 1997, p. 10).

Inglehart (1997) believes wealth by itself cannot facilitate democratization. More important are the changes in culture giving “rise to supportive cultural orientations” (Inglehart, 1997, p. 161). There are two changes which result from economic development favorable to democracy. First, economic development “gives rise to social structural changes that ‘mobilize’ mass participation” (Inglehart, 1997, p. 162). Second, economic development produces cultural changes which help stabilize democracy (Inglehart, 1997). On the ‘structural’ side, Inglehart (1997) finds that industrialization is an important factor. Industrialization produces urbanization, mass education, occupation specialization, and greater income equality (Inglehart, 1997). Education is also important in democracy for its ability to produce a more “articulate public” (Inglehart, 1997, p. 163). A rising occupation specialization moves a workforce into both secondary and tertiary industry (Inglehart, 1997). This change engenders a more “autonomous” workforce which increases bargaining power against the elites (Inglehart, 1997, p. 163). According to Inglehart (1997), the ‘cultural changes’ important to the stability of a democracy are a culture of trust and mass legitimacy. A culture of trust occurs in a society’s political system when the rulers and opposition play by the rules of the game (Inglehart, 1997). When one party wins an election they are trusted to not imprison or punish their opposition (Inglehart, 1997). Mass legitimacy is also vital to the stability of a democracy (Inglehart, 1997). Inglehart (1997) claims that whether the government is formed by elites or foreigners the key to their survival is in the mass support of the public. Thus, economic development alone does not facilitate democracy. Had economic

development been the sole cause of democracy both Kuwait and Libya would be viable democracies (Inglehart, 1997).

In Robert Jackman's 1973 study, the author tests Deane E. Neubauer's 1967 finding of the "threshold phenomenon." The 'threshold phenomenon' shows that after a certain level of economic development a country's chance for democracy is "no longer a function of continued socio-economic development" (Jackman, 1973, p. 613). Jackman's (1973) work tests the 'threshold phenomenon' on some 60 non-communist and economically heterogeneous countries. His findings confirm the hypothesis that after continued development, a country may be less likely to become democratic (Jackman, 1973). Thus, there is no linear progression from economic development to democracy. The examples given for this finding are the countries of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates which have had continued authoritarian rule despite dramatic increases in per capita income (Jackman, 1973). Therefore, economic development can affect a country's probability in becoming democratic, but after a certain level the trend may be reversed or have a lessened effect (Jackman, 1973).

In 1995 Edward N. Muller addressed the observation that the greatest gains in democracy came from middle range or intermediately developed societies. But, Muller (1995) also observed that during the 1960's and 70's this pattern changed. Intermediately developed countries like Portugal, Spain, and Thailand began to see a decline in their overall levels of democracy (Muller, 1995). Muller (1995) explains this finding showing that the income inequality experienced in these societies worked to counteract the process of democratization (Muller, 1995). The crux of Muller's (1995) finding is that economic development does not necessarily halt income inequality and at times even creates it.

Thus, Muller (1995) believed it was possible that income inequality had a negative affect on the gains made by economic development. To make this argument Muller (1995) utilizes data from two different studies. The first is a cross-national study of 33 nations which as of 1960 were classified as democratic. Here, Muller (1995) found those countries with “upper quintile income shares greater than 55 percent were unstable” and those which scored lower, were more stable (Muller, 1995, p.980). The second study employed was a cross-national analysis of “macro-level structural and micro-level attitudinal determinants of change in average level of democracy from the 1970’s to the 1980’s” (Muller, 1995, p.980). Here again, Muller found “the strongest influence to democratization was a negative impact of income inequality” (Muller, 1995, p.981). Overall, Muller’s (1995) findings demonstrate that it is equally important to address the level of income inequality when determining why a country has failed to democratize.

In 1996 authors John B. Londregan and Keith T. Poole tested the classic ‘modernization theory’ and found that the correlation between economic development and democracy was weak. Further, the correlation was reduced when testing non-European countries (Londregan and Poole, 1996). Vital to their study these authors identified and corrected for individual and country specific issues. A country’s history, leadership, past regime type, and biographical information about leaders were all taken into account. Having corrected for these features the authors found the ‘modernization theory’ remained valid, but again when excluding European countries the effect declined (Londregan and Poole, 1996). The authors believed that what could explain the non-European exceptionalism was the role of international pressure (Londregan and Poole, 1996). Thus, whether a country becomes a democracy is influenced somewhat by

economic development, but also by international actors (Londregan and Poole, 1996). One example of the affect of international pressure given by the authors was Southern Europe. When the economies in Southern Europe grew, “so to did the impact of the European Community’s insistence that potential member states pass a democratic litmus test” (Londregan and Poole, 1996, p.28). Thus, if there is pressure to reform a countries political system from the international community it seems the country may be more likely to democratize (Londregan and Poole, 1996). This is especially true if there are economic gains to be made from reforming (Londregan and Poole, 1996). Moreover, this study concludes that while economic development may foster democracy, it is alone not the sole determining factor (Londregan and Poole, 1996).

A fifth expansion to the classic ‘modernization theory’ comes from the 1995 study edited by Larry Diamond, Juan L. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset. Here, the authors provide case studies on democratization in ten developing countries from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. The study was developed from a 26 country study published under the title *Democracy in Developing Countries*. The objective of the volume was to draw on past volumes and determine why democracy was lacking taking into account history, politics, and culture. There are three relevant themes in this text. First, the authors discovered that many of the countries analyzed were economically developed, but democracy was yet to emerge (Diamond, Linz, and Lipset, 1995). The cases of India and Mexico are two instances of such an anomaly. In India, democracy has emerged where economic development was relatively low whereas in Mexico modernization had maintained authoritarianism for a relatively long period (Diamond et al., 1995). While these two countries are the outliers, this does not make the theory

useless, but only proves there are other relevant factors to explain the existence or lack of democracy. A second theme is that there exist numerous factors which can create or inhibit democratization (Diamond et al., 1995). Factors such as poor institutions and party governance as well as history and electoral rules were found to be just as important as economic development in the process of democratization (Diamond et al., 1995). The existence of civil society and democratic values in a country are important (Diamond et al., 1995). The third theme of the book is that every country experiences its own 'problems' that may inhibit its path to democracy (Diamond et al., 1995). Thus, we can make generalizations and predictions as to the relevant factors to democratization, but every country's specific characteristics make generalizations difficult (Diamond et al., 1995).

The final expansion upon Lipset's (1963) theory provided in this thesis comes from authors Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi. In their 1997 study, the authors found economic development had a weak if not insignificant affect on democracy (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997). Their findings suggest the most important factor for the possibility of democracy is the role of individual actors (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997). Therefore, democracy may be achieved at any point so long as the political actors or citizens have an influential role in its creation (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997) The authors did not disagree completely with the premise of 'modernization theory.' They found evidence that while economic development does not create a democracy, it does have a role in maintaining it (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997). When a 'wealthy' country is already a democracy, the chances of it maintaining democratic stability are greater than if the country were less developed (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997).



Economic development alone may not be enough to cause the changes necessary to produce a democracy, but all authors have agreed it is still important. Overall, Lipset's 'modernization theory' has received many revisions and whether it has maintained its predictive power is still debatable. There are many differences between the revisions made to Lipset's (1963) theory, but they do agree on the basic theme which does not undermine the theory. All of the authors agree economic development alone is not a sufficient factor in the creation of democratic institutions. There are other factors such as the culture, political elites, and international pressure that play a role. Second, while economic development is not sufficient it is still an applicable and important factor in whether a country becomes a democracy. Whether economic development helps a country's possibility of democracy only to a threshold, or helps a country maintain its democracy, it is still important. Thus, the authors who have made revisions to Lipset's theory still find the work useful, though incomplete.

### Chinese Democratization

The literature on democratization and particularly Chinese democratization is vast and diverse. To better understand the barriers that China faces in regards to democracy it is important to address the main hypotheses in the field.

Some scholars have argued that culture is an important factor hindering democracy in China. Inglehart (1997) has been one of the main proponents of the affect of culture on society. For him, the "relationships between economics, culture, and politics are mutually supportive" (Inglehart, 1997, p.10). Thus, it is not one factor or another, but each individual factor working in unison (Inglehart, 1997). It would be a mistake to

assume culture alone is what has kept any country especially China in an authoritarian state. Both Germany and Japan who were said to be culturally opposed to democracy, but have maintained stable democratic political systems since the Second World War. Much of the recent literature concerning China's lack of democracy has centered on its culture and particularly on the country's Confucianist traditions. The debate is mainly centered on whether Confucianism is suited for western style democracy. Confucius (551-479 B.C.) created what Shaohua Hu (2000) calls a historical legacy. Confucianism has had a tremendous influence on Chinese culture throughout history and this legacy may have created what might be considered constraints as far as Chinese democracy is concerned (Hu, 2000). According to Hu (2000), there are a few major differences between Confucianism and democracy which make them poor complements. First, in Confucianism, it is believed that all human beings are born good (Hu, 2000). While a positive idea, it may be a naive perspective of people and rulers. Similarly, Inglehart (1997) believed culture was important when looking at the relationship between people and rulers. Culture places "limits and obligations on rulers-and by doing so in the long run help legitimate the elites' right to rule" (Inglehart, 1997, p.54). Therefore, if there is a culture of submissiveness in China from the people, it is unlikely the rulers will feel any need to reform (Inglehart, 1997). Second, Confucianism does not take individualism as paramount as most western democracies do (Hu, 2000). In Confucianism, emphasis is on the family and especially the hierarchy within the family (Hu, 2000). Thus, according to Hu (2000), democracy in China has been inhibited because of the emphasis on the filial relationship. This filial relationship negates the possibility of value in individualism and patriotism (Hu, 2000).

Confucianism also accepts a society's 'natural hierarchy' which does not fit well with liberal democracy's understanding of equality (Hu, 2000). Citizens of democracies generally do not feel there is a set order in which they were born. Someone from a rich or poor family may obtain a position in life above or below what their parents or peers have. Further, in a democracy all citizens are believed equal regardless of birth or other superficial differences. Thus, because hierarchy is accepted in Confucianism, citizens may not see each other as equals (Hu, 2000). The fourth distinction between Confucianism and democracy is the 'rule of law' (Hu, 2000). Hu (2000) finds where modern democracies advocate for a 'rule of law' whereby all citizens are subject to the law, Confucianism praises the 'rule of men'. The Confucian doctrine holds that where the ruler is ruling correctly, laws will not be necessary and could even be harmful (Hu, 2000). If Confucianism has been described accurately by Hu then China may not be ready for democracy. But Hu's arguments have received criticism from scholars who reject the alleged anti-democratic values of Confucianism and find Confucianism either a-democratic or to actually maintain democratic qualities.

It has been argued throughout Chinese history that the Chinese are devoid of any democratic political culture. The Chinese are or were supposedly intimidated by politics, did not believe in individual freedoms, and longed for authoritarianism (Wang, 2007). Further, according to Lee Kuan Yew, former Prime Minister of Singapore, liberal democracy would not work for Asia as a whole (Wang, 2007). This claim has been refuted where modern Chinese studies have found that the Chinese accept democratic ideals just as well as many western European countries. The problem according to Zhengxu Wang (2007) has not been the lack of understanding of democratic ideals, but an

unwillingness to reform the current system in favor of democracy. Political transitions are renowned for creating a time of instability which may be at the root of aversion to a new democratic system (Huntington, 1996). In Wang's (2007) article, to better determine the current attitude toward democratic values, he employs three dataset from a representative national sample of Chinese citizens from 1992, 1993, 2001 and 2002. Questions asked of respondents included attitudes towards work, family, religion, happiness, tolerance, democracy, forms of government, and political participation.

The overall image presented of Chinese political culture from this study is one of optimism according to Wang (2007). At the time of the study Wang found that 94% of the Chinese population believed there was a need of democracy in China (Wang, 2007, p. 566). Answering to the statement, "democracy has problems, but is better than any other form of government", 81% of respondents agreed and 9% strongly agreed (Wang, 2007, p. 566). While the apparent desire for democracy and appreciation of democratic values would benefit their prospects of democratization, Wang (2007) also finds some resistance. Interestingly, 45% of respondents believed a switch to a democratic political system would be problematic and may disrupt the current social order (Wang, 2007, p. 568). Similarly, 60% of respondents believed with "too many" political parties chaos could erupt in the Chinese government (Wang, 2007, p. 568). The reluctance for political reform can be explained by the Chinese view that the only way for economic development to continue is for political stability (Wang, 2007). This view is exacerbated by the recent past of the Cultural Revolution "where the collapse of the social order led to human suffering" (Wang, 2007, p.571). Overall, Wang (2007) finds that democratic

values are not absent in Chinese society, but a desire for order and continued economic development overshadows any desire for real democratic reforms.

In 1995, Edward N. Muller published a study where findings showed that economic development has the ability to create economic inequality. Similarly, those countries with higher degrees of economic inequality were also less democratic (Muller, 1995). In a study by Mary E. Gallagher, the author finds that to a degree, economic development has hurt China's chances for democracy (Gallagher, 2002). According to Gallagher, the "timing and sequence" of foreign direct investment (FDI) liberalization has been the main impediment to democracy in China (Gallagher, 2002, p. 339). FDI liberalization in China occurred prior to any other market reforms such as market privatization and the creation of an "indigenous" capitalist class (Gallagher, 2002, p. 354). Because of this particular sequence Gallagher (2002) finds it created three situations averse to democratic reform (Gallagher, 2002). First, the new FDI sector created a "laboratory for reform" which fragmented society especially the urban working class and those who could lose from economic reform (Gallagher, 2002, p. 355). This occurred because the foreign investment sector had always been separated from domestic industry both spatially by often being located in the Special Economic Zones and also legally. Legally, the foreign sector was separate from domestic industry and introduced new reforms in "employment, social welfare, and enterprise management" (Gallagher, 2002, p.355). Further, "many of these new practices were encoded in new laws and practices expressly designed for the foreign sector" (Gallagher, 2002, p.355). Interestingly, these laws and regulations did not negate many of the China's socialist norms and thus did not create a class against their capitalist practices (Gallagher, 2002). Further, many of the

Chinese people found working in the foreign sector beneficial and presented greater opportunities (Gallagher, 2002). Overall, the laboratory for capitalism reduced the possibility of “societal resistance to reforms” (Gallagher, 2002, p. 371).

Second, the competition for foreign investment between regions and firms in China has led to less regional resistance for bringing in foreign investment to their area (Gallagher, 2002). Most see FDI to be beneficial and lucrative where as sticking with the socialist enterprise would be less so (Gallagher, 2002). Third, the ideological debate between public versus private industry, a hallmark of socialist transitions, has changed to one of Chinese national industry versus foreign industry (Gallagher, 2002). The Chinese Communist Party has thus been able to maintain power by emphasizing Chinese industrial survival against foreign competition (Gallagher, 2002). Moreover, Gallagher finds that the new ideology of the Chinese Communist Party has managed to generate a “nationalist perspective” which has prevented significant opposition to its legitimacy (Gallagher, 2002, p. 360).

Overall, the reforms have led to a new relationship between the Chinese state and civil society and created a less oppositional middle and business class (Gallagher, 2002). The CCP have further changed their perceived legitimacy from a government which provides the core socialist principles to one advocating for capitalist reform and competition (Gallagher, 2002). But, much of the rhetoric of the CCP would not have been perceived highly had the public not found the reforms to be beneficial (Gallagher, 2002). Thus, FDI and privatization has managed to increase the authority of the CCP while losing support of possible opposition (Gallagher, 2002). Przeworski and Limongi (1997) found in their revision of Lipset’s modernization theory that more than economic

development, actors are important in the development of democratization. In Gallagher's (2002) study, it would seem that the explanation behind China's lack of reforms has been not only at the behest of FDI investment, but also in the chameleon like ability of the Chinese Communist Party. Similarly, Minxin Pei (2007) finds that the economic development in China has increased the income inequality which is widespread throughout China. Inequality has been detrimental to the prospects of democracy creating an unequal social structure. Here, the wealthy who are connected to the Chinese Communist Party, maintain significantly more political power than the lower classes (Pei, 2007).

The discussion on the lack of democratic reform in China has taken several forms. It is possible that the common thread between these works is the lack of societal pressure on China's current regime. Whether it is the fear that chaos will erupt or economic development will be hindered with democratic reform there appears to be some resistance from the public to challenge the Chinese Communist Party.

## CHAPTER III

### INKLINGS OF DEMOCRACY IN CHINA

While the Chinese Communist Party, the ruling party in China, progresses toward some degree of inner-party democracy, the citizens of China have remained in a Communist state with immense restrictions on political and civil rights. Currently, Chinese citizens can not vote for national public office, have limited access to free media, do not have protected speech, and the judiciary lacks independence. Constitutionally, the People's Republic of China is a 'people's democratic dictatorship'. Mere mention of democracy of course does not make the country democratic. The constitution also stipulates numerous guarantees found in western democratic systems such as freedom of speech, press, assembly, and private property. Citizen's civil, political, and human rights are guaranteed within the constitution, but other articles constrain them. The Chinese Communist Party often speaks of the need for some form of democracy in China to the international press and yet "they assert that a "deliberative" form of politics that allows individual citizens and groups to add their views to the decision making process is more appropriate for China than open, multiparty competition for national power" (Thornton, 2008, para 6). This statement signifies the CCP may be interested in the opinion of its citizens on some issues, but is unwilling to relinquish power in multiparty elections.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss China's political history as it relates to their lack of democracy. Countries with some history of democracy may be more likely



to yearn for it again. China's political history has encountered limited degrees of political participation throughout all periods discussed.

In order to determine whether China exhibited democratic practices in its past, I define democracy based on Linz and Stepan's (1996) study of democratic consolidation. A democracy is a political system which maintains "responsible political pluralism reinforced by extensive areas of pluralist autonomy in economy, society, and internal life of organizations" (Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.44). The ideology of a democracy maintains an "extensive intellectual commitment to citizenship and procedural rules of contestation" (Linz and Stepan, 1996, p. 44). Further, the state has "respect of minorities, state of law, and value of individualism" (Linz and Stepan, 1996, p. 44). Mobilization of the people is achieved through the "autonomously generated organization of civil society and competing parties of political society guaranteed by a system of law" (Linz and Stepan, 1996, p. 45). In this system the state also tolerates opposition to its leadership and regular elections are held freely for the top leadership.

Since a majority of China's history being analyzed here can be categorized as authoritarian, totalitarian, or post-totalitarian I will also define these terms. In a totalitarian regime, the party in power has eliminated all previous political, economic, and social pluralism, maintains an extensive 'utopian' ideology, and has a ruler who rules with undefined limits (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Mobilization in a totalitarian system is obligatory and regime-created (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Conversely, authoritarian regimes are a political system with limited political pluralism and some 'space' for opposition (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Here, mobilization of people is much less extensive than that in a totalitarian regime. Authoritarian regimes do not have the elaborate ideology of the

totalitarian regime and leadership is 'ill-defined' (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Finally, a post-totalitarian regime is characterized by "limited, but responsible social, economic, and institutional pluralism" (Linz and Stepan, 1996, p.44). The party still maintains a monopoly on power but ideology is less extensive.

An additional mechanism provided here to measure China's past and present levels of political and civil rights is Freedom House's annual report. This additional source is important for demonstrating how China's freedom in political and civil rights has changed. Furthermore, the measurements given by Freedom House indicate whether democracy has been attained in China, or if it is severely lacking.

This analysis of Chinese political history will begin with a brief description of the ruling of the Kuomintang who were in power just prior to the formation of the People's Republic of China and the installation of the Chinese Communist Party (Townsend, 1969). But, the main focus will be on the era of the People's Republic of China from 1949 to present. This time period has been chosen to maintain continuity with the rest of the work on modernization in China throughout this thesis. The timeline below has been provided to simplify the many dates and events which will be discussed in this chapter. The time periods are divided into their regime types developed by Linz and Stepan (1996). Also, the most important events relating to democracy in Chinese political history since 1928 are given.

### The Kuomintang: Authoritarian Rule

China has never experienced genuine democracy at the national level. Between 1936 and 1937 during the Kuomintang rule, elections were held and the general

## Timeline of Chinese Political History 1928-2007

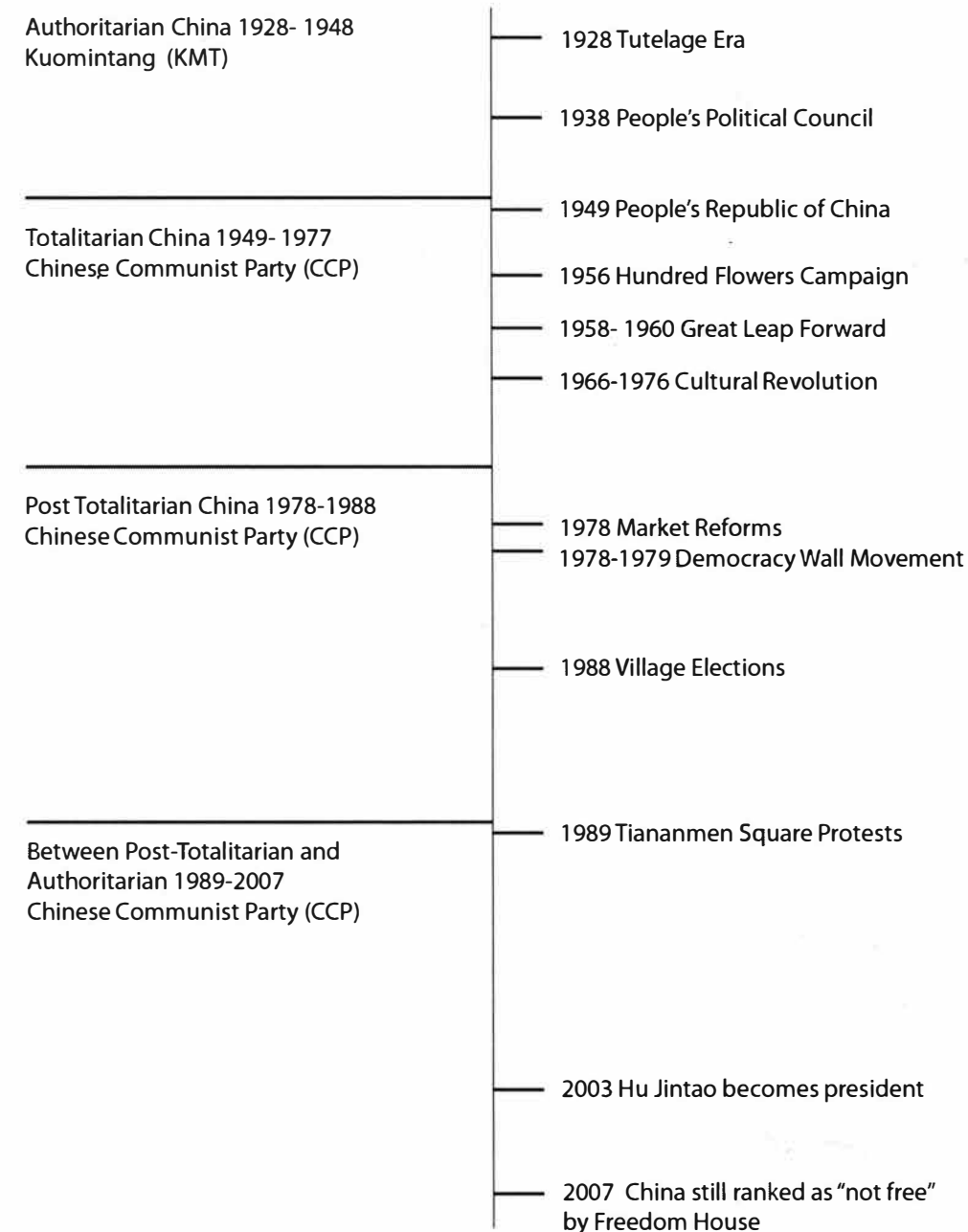


Figure1. Timeline of Chinese Political History 1928-2007.

population had the right to vote selecting delegates for the Republic's National Assembly (Townsend, 1969). Unfortunately, the Second Sino Japanese War became the top priority and elections were never finished (Townsend, 1969). While the Chinese have not exhibited genuine democratic elections, we will see during the time of the KMT they experimented with some forms of political competition and participation. These forms of participation were not democratic given their lack of universal suffrage, but there was an attempt to introduce democratic elections.

The KMT came to power in 1928 through 'direct political action' of the people but they did not continue towards any democratic reforms after obtaining power (Townsend, 1969). During KMT rule, Sun Yat-sen devised the practice of tutelage which was designed to "educate the people in political democracy without allowing them any control of the central government" (Townsend, 1969, p.30). By educating the people on democracy Sun felt this would prepare the Chinese for a constitutional form of government which was one of his 'Three Principles of the People' (Townsend, 1969). This system was intended to develop participation at the local not national level (Townsend, 1969). Moreover, local self-government was implemented and anyone who had suffrage at the time and who had taken a loyalty oath to the Republic of China could attend meetings and participate in local elections (Townsend, 1969). Although local self government was seen as a stepping stone to participation at the national level, it did not transform into the constitutional government Sun had hoped. Moreover, while local elections held during the KMT were thought to have been competitive, the KMT was still overseeing much of who was elected (Townsend, 1969). Further, political participation from the public was always consciously directed by the party to support the dictatorship

(Townsend, 1969). Because the KMT was interested only in 'favorable' political participation, many other parties and youth groups which did not support the ideas of the KMT were repressed (Townsend, 1969). It was Sun's objective to educate the people about democracy, but democracy was never attained during this period (Townsend, 1969).

The Second Sino-Japanese War between China and Japan began in 1937. Unique to this period in Chinese political history was the creation of a representative council at the national level called the People's Political Council (Townsend, 1969). The council came into existence as "an attempt to provide national unity in the face of Japanese aggression" (Townsend, 1969, p.32). Because of the precarious situation the nation was in with Japan, opposition parties were allowed to give their advice on the war (Townsend, 1969). Overall, the People's Political Council was an institution developed in order to advise the government over its handling of the war (Townsend, 1969). But, the KMT never relinquished any power to the PPC or opposition parties and did not require their consent on decisions (Townsend, 1969).

This period of KMT rule was an authoritarian dictatorship. Because there was some space for opposition or differing parties as we have seen in the PPC the political system was not totalitarian (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Further, the regime was not in complete control of the citizens in either political or social life.

### The Rise of the CCP: Totalitarian China

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came to power with the fall of the KMT on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1949 to which Mao- Tse-tung announced that The People's Republic of China

had been founded (Townsend, 1969). The CCP was first established in 1921 and upon taking power was able to establish a recognized government for China with a set of articulated political principles (Townsend, 1969). In 1949, the party was under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung who based Chinese mass political participation around the current political environment and Soviet-Marxist ideology (Townsend, 1969). Beginning with the period of 1945 author James R. Townsend documents six principles of China's mass political participation. For the purposes of this thesis four are relevant and they will be discussed. With these four principles the basic concept of political participation in Communist China will be explained. It should be recognized that political participation is a necessary element of democracy, but not all forms of political participation are democratic. Therefore, political participation is not a synonym for democracy.

When the Communist Party of China assumed power in 1949, the state was defined as a "people's democratic dictatorship" (Townsend, 1969). This concept indicated the state's aim of extinguishing class, parties, and even the state in the country (Townsend, 1969). The 'people's democratic dictatorship' stipulates who and who is not entitled to political liberties (Townsend, 1969). Only those who supported socialism were guaranteed rights, and further they were the only ones who were entitled to be called 'a people' (Townsend, 1969). Those who did not agree with socialist ideology did not constitute a person or a people and were not given political rights. But, under the CCP dictatorship the 'people's' political participation was believed important for the continuation of the political system (Townsend, 1969). So, while disagreement or criticism of socialist ideology was forbidden, it was still important to the state that the people understood socialist ideals.

The second principle was the 'Supremacy of the Collective Interest'. In this period, the CCP believed that the interests of the 'people' and the state together were a collective interest (Townsend, 1969). "Therefore, when the CCP speaks of the collective interest it means not only the total interest of the "people," as defined above, but also the state interest, which represents the people's interest during the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the national interest" (Townsend, 1969, p. 68). Because the interest of the 'people' and the state were synonymous, any separate interest of an individual were believed heretical (Townsend, 1969).

The third principle of the Communist Party of China was 'Party Leadership'. In this period of CCP control, the party claimed their actions were altruistic when ruling China (Townsend, 1969). They further believed that the measures taken would eventually liberate the Chinese people from class and government (Townsend, 1969). The leadership in the party could not be questioned and was the final say in all policy decision-making (Townsend, 1969). Furthermore, the party based its legitimacy in the assertion that they were the only group which had the political experience and leadership qualifications to rule (Townsend, 1969). But, as important as the party leadership was to the CCP, mass public support was equally important (Townsend, 1969).

The fourth principle called 'The Mass Line' suggested that while the leadership could and did make all decisions for the people of China regarding the path the country would take, it recognized the need for mass political participation (Townsend, 1969). To understand this claim, it must be noted that while the CCP wanted the support of the people, it was only to further the CCP's own political power (Townsend, 1969). The CCP made sure that only the party could make the necessary decisions (Townsend, 1969). Yet,

without the masses to carry out these decisions and further the CCP's policy objectives there would be no way to force them on the people (Townsend, 1969). It was in this understanding of the necessity of mass support that the dictatorship found they could not simply dictate policy (Townsend, 1969). For real execution of party policy the CCP found ways to disseminate party line through media and education (Townsend, 1969).

This period of CCP rule was totalitarian whereas it had been authoritarian during the KMT. This distinction is clear from the CCP's utilization of an elaborate ideology, state run mobilization, undefined limits in leadership, and lack of political pluralism (Linz and Stepan, 1996). We can see further that although political participation existed during this period, the participation was not democratic since it was not 'autonomously generated' (Linz and Stepan, 1996). In terms of suffrage, the Chinese were only termed as 'people' when they acknowledged socialist ideology and those who did not accept the ideology were not allowed to vote (Townsend, 1969). Similar to rule during the KMT the ideology of the CCP did not value individualism which should be present in a democracy. Last, there was no competition between political parties and the CCP did not tolerate opposition (Linz and Stepan, 1996). From this description even at its basic level we would find an absolute absence of democracy during this period of CCP rule.

#### Period of Relaxation During Totalitarian Rule

While the period between 1945 and 1949 was characterized by strict adherence to party line, forced mass participation, and a remarkable centralization of power within one party, this was not always the case. These tumultuous times were marked by civil and international wars and thus in order to maintain order and power within the country it



seemed political and social control was necessary (Townsend, 1969). According to Townsend (1969), beginning in 1956 the political mood changed. This period is claimed to have been one of 'liberalization' in which political life for the Chinese person was slightly more relaxed than it had been in the 1940's and 50's (Townsend, 1969). There were improvements in public life for the citizens partly because of the end of the Korean War and internal problems such as counterrevolutionaries had dissipated (Townsend, 1969). Further, the Chinese economy had been restored since the war and "the First Five Year Plan was well under way" (Townsend, 1969, p.92). Moreover, the CCP as well as the people were optimistic about where China was heading (Townsend, 1969). At the Eighth National Congress in 1956, the Chinese Communist Party determined that "the centralization of authority that had been necessary at the time of the founding of the PRC was now leading to bureaucratism and excessive restrictions on local authorities" (Townsend, 1969, p. 92-93). Thus, there was a call from the party for decentralization of power and expansion of democracy for the people (Townsend, 1969). This period of liberalization was also characterized by a moderate political climate allowing criticism of the party so long as it did not criticize socialist ideology (Townsend, 1969). Criticism often came mainly from the intellectuals who felt the CCP was "willing to improve its position" (Townsend, 1969, p. 94).

Beginning in 1956 after the CCP had tested the waters for criticism, the Hundred Flowers Campaign was initiated (Townsend, 1969). The campaign was one of the most significant times for tolerated mass political participation in Chinese history. Author Roderick MacFarquhar (1993) finds during this period that "a further measure was an effort to bolster the status of the small democratic parties that had been drawn into the

united front in 1949” (MacFarquhar, 1993, p.68). The campaign allowed for public discussion and open criticism of the party and state (MacFarquhar, 1993). Interestingly, most criticism was based not on ideology or the party itself, but on the mistakes made by the party and “methods of leadership” (Townsend, 1969, p. 95). This period of acceptable open discussion ended with the party finding the experiment too dangerous and would be unable to tolerate the further criticism (Townsend, 1969).

China’s ‘Great Leap Forward’ followed the ‘Hundred Flowers Campaign’ from 1958 to 1960 (Townsend, 1969). The ‘Great Leap Forward’ was developed to shift the Chinese economy from agriculture to industry in order to compete with the more industrialized British and Americans (Townsend, 1969). To accomplish this, many farms were ploughed over and replaced with factories (B.B.C., 2008). Farmers who had little experience in industrial work were forced to give up their agricultural duties to work in the factories (B.B.C., 2008). The plan resulted in the deaths of approximately 20 million people (B.B.C., 2008). ‘The Great Leap Forward’ was also an important time in Chinese political history because of the tremendous power the CCP wielded over the country (Townsend, 1969). Townsend (1969) finds during this period the party had replaced the state structure and “in its place was a naked assertion of party control throughout the state and society (Townsend, 1969, p. 97). Further, the party’s adherence to codified laws had been diminishing (Townsend, 1969). In terms of coercion, the party made great attempt at indoctrinating ideology into the masses believing “acceptance of Party policies in the past had been, too superficial or lacking in consciousness” (Townsend, 1969, p. 98).

The Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) followed the ‘Great Leap Forward’ as the next politically relevant event. The Cultural Revolution began out of

Mao Zedong's belief that capitalism was taking over Chinese society and must be obliterated (Townsend, 1969). But, the revolution was equally a power struggle within the Communist Party (B.B.C., 2008). During this time, Mao had attempted to regain power and assert the necessity of the class struggle ideology which seemed to have lost some influence (B.B.C., 2008). Aside from the disastrous affect on education and the economy, human rights violations were extreme with many intellectuals sent into forced labor camps and many thousands killed (B.B.C., 2008).

The period of the middle and late 1950's for China was one of experimentation with political participation (Townsend, 1969). The party had succeeded in consolidating control after 1949 and reached a phase where they felt socialism was well established enough to allow some room for criticism (Townsend, 1969). This period is put into the category of totalitarian instead of authoritarian because while there were times of liberalization such as the 'Hundred Flowers Campaign', it was short lived. Further, opposition and criticism of the party was kept on a short leash and no formal power was given up. Thus, the party still maintained control over society as well as their political opposition.

### Post-Totalitarian China: The Democracy Wall and Village Elections

The Democracy Wall Movement (1978-1979) was a politically motivated period of citizen resistance to the Chinese Communist Party and the first assertion for democratic rights after the passing of Mao Zedong in 1976 (Goldman, 2005). For over one year, demonstrators and activists attempted to enlarge their democratic and human rights by displaying posters and giving speeches at the Xidan Wall (Democracy Wall) in

Beijing (Goldman, 2005). Many Democracy Wall activists were Chinese youth who had been forced into the countryside to teach the party ideology during the Cultural Revolution (Goldman, 2005). Termed 'Red Guards' during the revolution, these youth used tools they had learned in the Cultural Revolution such as "printing and distributing pamphlets, delivering speeches, engaging in debates, organizing groups, and putting up wall posters" (Goldman, 2005, p. 30). It was these youths Goldman (2005) argues who had seen the disastrous effects of the Cultural Revolution and sought to acquire individual rights. At this time, Deng Xiaoping approved the Democracy Wall because he had been an adversary of Mao and the protests appeared to help "oust those Maoists still remaining in power" (Goldman, 2005, p. 31). Furthermore, the demonstrations had also helped Deng consolidate his own power. But, when Deng felt his leadership secure, the Democracy Wall Movement was deemed unnecessary and potentially dangerous (Goldman, 2005). While the Democracy Wall itself was a place activists could display posters and poetry critical of 'The Gang of Four' the activists soon began criticizing many CCP institutions and leaders (Goldman, 2005). The Democracy Wall Movement activists and CCP leaders did not disagree on every issue (Goldman, 2005). Activist demands included the rule of law, term limits, and younger party membership within the CCP (Goldman, 2005). Many members of the CCP agreed with the activists opinions (Goldman, 2005). But, it was the requests for human rights, freedom of speech and press, and civil rights which they could not agree (Goldman, 2005). These demands seemed far too drastic for the Marxist-Leninist ideals of the CCP. The Wall was closed down in December of 1979 and the Democracy Wall Movement affectively suppressed (Goldman, 2005).

Beginning in 1979 and formally established in 1988 China's local village elections were introduced. Village elections are defined by Baogang He (2007) as:

a political process whereby village affairs can be managed by villagers and for villagers, and village citizens are capable of participating in village decision making either through direct democratic mechanisms, such as all-villagers assemblies, or through representative institutions, such as elected village committee members and village representative assemblies. (He, 2007, p. 8)

What makes this form of local democracy interesting is that the electoral process was not started because of altruism from the CCP or mass protest. Local elections were initiated following the fall of the commune system and subsequent need for stability and order in localities (He, 2007). In 1998, the Chinese National Congress passed the Provisional Organic Law of Village Elections which formally recognized village elections (He, 2007). According to Thornton (2008) these village elections reach 700,000 villages and 700 million farmers throughout China. But, the existence of village elections does not say anything about the validity of democracy at the village level. The CCP has played a role in the creation and maintenance of Chinese village elections since their formal inception (Thornton, 2008). It was actually the goal of the CCP for competent leaders to be elected in the localities in order to "grow the national economy and implement national policies such as the one-child policy" (Thornton, 2008, para 11). When the village elections began, they were run surprisingly fairly (Thornton, 2008). But, in the 1990's as the CCP got wind of the decrease in the election of CCP members as village chiefs they have maintained more control (Thornton, 2008). Currently, many provinces holding elections have village chiefs that are also CCP members (Thornton, 2008). Similar forms of elections have been occurring in townships and districts of China but are often flawed with nepotism, vote buying, and corrupt leadership (Thornton, 2008).

Further, the elections do not have genuine autonomy from the Chinese government and also do not elect any national government officials (Thornton, 2008). But, how much autonomy do the elected village chiefs have from the CCP? According to Baogang He (2003), before village elections began, the village branch of the CCP was the strongest decision maker in the village. When villagers began voting for village chiefs in the elections, the position of the village chief gained legitimacy (He, 2003). This legitimacy is based on the belief by the chief that h/she have been given a mandate from the people (He, 2003, p.2). Moreover, “the party branch is no longer the most important decision-maker in the village” (He, 2003, p.2). This rosy picture should not let us assume the CCP has lost or willingly given up power to the village chiefs. Tim Luard of the British Broadcasting Channel describes the story of citizens of the village of Taishi China. These citizens have petitioned for the dismissal of the director of the village committee (Luard, 2005). Interestingly, the person being petitioned against is also a Communist Party secretary (Luard, 2005). To gain attention for their cause some Taishi villagers set up a web forum discussing the issue (Luard, 2005). The disgruntled Taishi residents also have also been using a lawyer and other activists to aid their case (Luard, 2005). But, in an apparent effort to keep the director and party member in power, the police have arrested the lawyer and beaten up the activists (Luard, 2005). The police in China are under orders from the CCP and thus the suppression of the dissents was not from a autonomous police force.

In order to understand political reform under Deng, it is equally relevant to recognize how Deng understood democracy (Hu, 2000). First, he was not looking for liberal democracy to be instituted into the Chinese political system (Hu, 2000). Deng

believed the mass participation during the Cultural Revolution led to the chaos which prevented China from becoming more prosperous (Hu, 2000, p. 130). He further claimed that democracy should not put the stability of the country or the economic reforms in jeopardy (Hu, 2000). But in regards to political reform under Deng, village elections were instituted and a degree of competitive elections were introduced into the Communist Party of China (Hu, 2000). Deng also managed to breath fresh air into the police departments, courts, and procuracy which had been badly damaged during the Cultural Revolution (Hu, 2000). The relevance of these invigorated departments has been the implementation of due process, speedy and public trial, and rule of law (Hu, 2000). In 1979, Deng partially liberalized the Chinese market economy showing the pragmatic and less idealistic nature of the changing CCP (Hu, 2005). The path taken by the party was now focused on the economy and notions of a utopian socialist state were put on the back burner. But, after hope had permeated academics and international watchers that the political system would reform shortly after the economy did, the Tiananmen Square incident occurred (Hu, 2005). The Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1989 were initiated by students, entrepreneurs, and peasants who collectively held demonstrations demanding political reform and human rights in China. To quell demonstrations, the Chinese military which was under the control of the CCP, used violent force showing the regime could still take oppressive measures in the time of possible political uncertainty. Thus, while Deng has instituted economic reform which formed into economic pluralism for the country, the state still maintained a monopoly on political power and most other realms of Chinese society.

This period of Chinese political history was post-totalitarian. The distinction between the totalitarian and post-totalitarian regimes is the partial loosening of political participation (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Further, the ideology of the CCP of 1949 and the CCP of 1978 has changed somewhat. In 1978, the party became more pragmatic understanding the discontent of the people could easily turn into political instability (Burton, 1987). Author Charles Burton (1987) finds that the party began understanding the need to 're-establish' their prestige in order to consolidate power again. Further "for many in the Chinese leadership, the post-Mao reform policies were largely motivated by an open realization that, should no change be forthcoming, the CCP could lose its mandate to rule" (Burton, 1987, p.435). It was during this period as well that the CCP while not completely abandoning Marxist ideology took on 'socialism with Chinese characteristics' as a new political objective (Burton, 1987). This term meant that socialism could be maintained, but with a mixture of capitalism as well (Burton, 1987). Overall, while the party was the sole authority in China they allowed limited political pluralism at the village level and altered their ideology from utopian to a pragmatic, especially in the economic realm.

#### Between Post-Totalitarian and Authoritarian: Jiang and Zemin

Jiang Zemin became the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China in 1989, and President of China from 1993 to 2003. Political reform under Jiang was less concerned with the characteristics of liberal democracy such as individual rights and was focused more on preventing corruption and establishing the rule of law (Fewsmith, 2005). Both were a means to prevent disruptions to the economic system that may slow or



prevent further development (Fewsmith, 2005). According to Freedom House, between 1999 and 2000 the Chinese Communist Party made several attempts at improving the rule of law while maintaining control over the judiciary in politically sensitive cases (Freedom House, 2000). Thus, the rule of law during Zemin only extended to those issues that could benefit the economic reforms in place.

China has been under the leadership of Hu Jintao since March 2003. During his leadership, Hu has made several public statements on the necessity of political reform in China. But, reforms as Hu understood would be 'China specific' meaning they would not be typical liberal democratic reforms made in order to free up room for civil society and individual rights (Fewsmith, 2005). Fewsmith (2005) believes there was tremendous hope in the Chinese intellectual community that the Hu administration would be more open to democratic reform. Interestingly, the Hu administration has become less tolerant of opposition than had Zemin and more critical of neoliberalism in the west (Fewsmith, 2005). Moreover, Hu has become increasingly concerned with strengthening the CCP and their ideology (Fewsmith, 2005). In order to maintain security within the nation, the Hu administration enabled a "strengthening of restrictions on the country's media, and the detention of human rights" (Freedom House, 2007, para 1). In 2006, The United States Department of State's Country Report on Human Rights Practices (2007) found the Chinese government had been increasingly strict on issues such as free speech and press. The many NGO's which have been created by the 1978 economic reforms have also seen 'scrutiny and restrictions' (U.S. Department of State, 2008). The U.S. Department of State (2007) also finds political prisoners in China receive sentence reductions less frequently than other prisoners.

According to a Freedom House (2007), China maintains many flaws in their political system relating to democracy even with the economic reforms that have raised living standards. Table 1 describes the political climate in China for 2007. The table provides ratings from 0-7. A score of 0 is the lowest rating meaning the country exhibits very few if any of the given rights. Conversely, a score of 7 indicates a high degree of the given factors. Moreover, from the data provided China exhibits very low scores for elections and electoral laws. This rating also signifies a lack of confidence in the democratic procedures of the village elections. More interesting are the discoveries on the lack of media independence, protection from state terror, and unjustified imprisonment and torture. Equal treatment under the law has the highest ranking of 3, but is still low on a scale of 7.

Table 1

Political, Civil, and Legal Rights in China, 2006

Free and fair electoral laws and elections	0.25
Media independence and freedom of expression	1.00
Protection from state terror, unjustified imprisonment and torture	1.57
Rights of ethnic, religious and other distinct groups	2.5
Freedom of conscience and belief	1.33
Freedom of association and assembly	1.80
Independent Judiciary	1.80
Equal treatment under the law	3.00

Source: Freedom House 2007.

It is obvious that there is no formal respect within the Chinese government for individual rights which is the essence of a democratic political system. Table 2 provides

Table 2  
Freedom in China 1972-2007

Year	Civil Rights	Political Rights	Dual Score	Status
1972	7	7	14	NF
1974	7	7	14	NF
1976	7	7	14	NF
1978	6	6	12	NF
1980	6	6	12	NF
1982	6	6	12	NF
1984	6	6	12	NF
1986	6	6	12	NF
1988	6	6	12	NF
1990	7	7	14	NF
1992	7	7	14	NF
1994	7	7	14	NF
1996	7	7	14	NF
1998	7	6	13	NF
2000	7	6	13	NF
2001	7	6	13	NF
2002	7	6	13	NF
2003	7	6	13	NF
2004	7	6	13	NF
2005	7	6	13	NF

Source: Freedom House 2007.

an overview of China's lack of political freedoms and civil rights from 1972-2005.

Unfortunately, this data was only available beginning in 1972. If there were data on these issues beginning in 1949, they would have been used. The rating system for political rights is based on people's ability to participate freely in the political process, compete for public office, join political parties or organizations, and elect representatives "who have a decisive impact on public policies and are accountable to the electorate" (B.B.C., 2007, para 1). A score of 7 on political liberties indicates the lowest degree of political liberties and a score of 1, the highest. Civil liberties are based on whether citizens are allowed

freedom of expression and belief, “associational and organizational rights, rule of law, and personal autonomy without interference from the state (B.B.C., 2007, para 1). Thus, it should be highlighted that the scale measuring political rights and civil liberties for this data are exactly opposite than the measurements from Table 1. The trend of political freedoms and civic rights in China has been interesting. The period between 1978 and 1988 scored lower/better on both indicators than do the years of 1998-2005. A possible explanation to this trend may be the methodology used by Freedom House. According to Freedom House (2007), if there is a rating change in one year it is because “the raw points from the previous edition are used as a benchmark for the current year under review” (B.B.C., Rating Process, 2007, para 2). Thus, only when a change from the previous year such as media crack down, or a countries first free and fair election will a score change. Another explanation is the liberalization which began in 1978 which created a degree of economic pluralism and provided the guarantee of private property to business owners. One possible reason to revert back to a score of 7 beginning in 1989 was because of the Tiananmen Square crackdown. Following that event from the beginning of the 1990’s was a stricter situation of political rights by the CCP.

What can be seen from the discussion and data is that the lack of democracy in China has gone through phases from allowing controlled freedom of speech and expression to an almost complete absence of all civil liberties and political rights. Recently, China has become more economically developed with growth rates in the double digits yearly which has enhanced economic pluralism and produced higher living standards than the country has ever seen. But, in 2000 Freedom House found that the CCP still “holds absolute power, has imprisoned nearly all active dissidents, uses the

judiciary as a tool of state control, and severely restricts freedom of speech, press, association, and religion” (Freedom House, 2000, p.129). The Chinese state during this period can be characterized as between post-totalitarian and authoritarian. Limited economic pluralism exists during a post-totalitarian state (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Since the 1978 economic reforms which shifted the economy from command to market, there has been an increase in economic pluralism, making the system closer to authoritarian. There is an almost complete absence of political ideology in an authoritarian regime (Linz and Stepan, 1996). Similarly, in this period China has seen a significant diminishing of political ideology becoming less utopian and more pragmatic. China’s political system during this period is beyond post-totalitarian and could be categorized as authoritarian if not for the lack of political pluralism. The Chinese Communist Party still maintains a monopoly of power where the existence of opposition parties is prohibited. Without political pluralism in China, the regime remains between post-totalitarian and authoritarian.

## CHAPTER IV

### TESTING MODERNIZATION THEORY OF DEMOCRACY IN CHINA

The observation that many of today's democracies lie in more economically developed areas has been based on the work of Aristotle and Max Weber (Lipset, 1963). Aristotle found that intelligent political participation by the masses could only occur if the society maintained little to no poverty (Lipset, 1963). Where there was a large poor class and a small wealthy class oligarchy would ultimately result. Although political participation is an essential element of democracy, not all political participation is democratic. Managed or coerced political participation by a regime would certainly not constitute a democracy. Lipset's findings agree with the observation that countries with a higher degree of economic development are often democratic. He finds that the factors of economic development (industrialization, urbanization, wealth, education) together are what make a country more or less susceptible to democracy (Lipset, 1963).

Lipset found that wealth in terms of its distribution was important for whether a country would become democratic. Those countries which maintain large disparities between rich and poor are less conducive to democracy whereas the existence of a large middle class is more conducive. Furthermore, countries which are becoming more economically developed enable a new class struggle. The class struggle is formed because prior to economic development most wealth was held by a small percentage of the upper class. Following economic development, the wealth becomes more evenly distributed in

the population creating a larger middle class. This new class division permits “those in the lower strata to develop longer time perspectives and more complex and gradualist perspectives of politics” (Lipset, 1963, p. 45). Because of increased economic development those in the lower strata experience greater income, security, and presumably more education. The examples in the text are the United States and Canada who because of their wealth and a proportionally minimal poor class have never maintained a strong communist party. Socialist parties have existed in many wealthy western European countries, but a powerful communist party has been rare. Contrarily, many countries falling below Lipset’s \$500 per capita benchmark as of 1949 did have a strong communist party. Overall, Lipset finds low income countries produce enough discontent for the basis for ‘political extremism’. But, to clarify the argument, Lipset does not claim poverty itself is directly related to political extremism. When wealth and poverty co-exists in a society, for stability to prevail the poor must stay unaware of this wealth. Thus, when the poor are exposed to the possibility of an improved life, instability is likely to occur. Lipset finds poor citizens have become increasingly aware of wealth in their society because of advancements made in modern communication. Moreover, it is rare that a country with a large poor population would be oblivious of surrounding wealth (Lipset, 1963).

Therefore, the link between wealth and democracy is in the creation of a middle class (Lipset, 1963). Lipset finds the middle class to be the driving force behind democratic institutions and is the group who “can stand up against the state and provide the resources for independent groups” (Lipset, 1993, p. 2). The causal factor is not simply in the creation of a strong middle class, but the creation of a civic culture (Lipset,

1963). With increased income the public are more receptive to “democratic political tolerance norms” (Lipset, 1963, p. 84). These norms can be seen in the middle class who have become less concerned with which political party wins or loses (Lipset, 1963). Similarly, there is a new relative acceptance of error from the governing party (Lipset, 1963). These two democratic norms stem from a society with enough wealth to be distributed and a governing party which “has little power to affect the crucial life chances of the most powerful groups” (Lipset, 1963 p. 84). Without economic development, Lipset (1963) finds that the poor become hostile. Their life experiences including a poor education and “isolation from heterogeneous environments” engender this hostility especially of the wealthier classes (Lipset, 1963, p. 114). Lipset’s psychological description of the poor indicates their experiences lead them to view politics as “black and white” making them lack patience and long term perspectives (Lipset, 1963, p. 115).

The increase in wealth combined with improved education makes the public more susceptible to democratic leanings by inducing cross-pressures. Prior to wealth and education, a society often maintains a social structure naturally dividing people into groups with similar degrees of education, occupation, and political views (Lipset, 1963). For example, in a poor country, farmers, miners, and bankers generally do not interact with one another since their lives are invested in different sectors of that society. Because of this isolation intolerance and extremist views persist.

Cross-cutting cleavages can develop from sources such as industrialization. The introduction of industry in a formerly non-industrial and poor society brings together many groups of people from all different socioeconomic classes and ethnicities to work in the factories. *In this situation, groups who formerly did not see one another are put in a*



situation where they are regularly in contact. Cross-cutting cleavages are important because they create numerous loyalties, ties, and affiliations between different groups of people (Lipset, 1963). This often reduces “emotion and aggressiveness” to different people and political views (Lipset, 1963, p.76).

Lipset’s second indicator of modernization is urbanization. Urbanization is measured by the percent of people living in metropolitan areas and cities over 20,000 and 100,000. Lipset finds countries with a greater proportion of the population residing in urban areas to have greater democratic political leanings. The example given comes from the work of two American sociologist’s research on Nazi party support between 1928 and 1932. The research indicated that the greatest percentage of Nazi party supporters resided in smaller communities. Conversely, few people voted for the Nazi party who lived in cities over 25,000 people. Therefore, Lipset (1963) may not find a direct correlation between urbanization and democracy, but more so a correlation between a lack of urbanization and leftist politics.

A high degree of overall educational attainment in a country is often said to be an important if not sufficient factor in the formation of a democracy. According to Lipset, education allows people greater tolerance and permits them to make more rational electoral choices. Lipset found this trend in a study done through a public opinion research agency on people’s beliefs in tolerance for opposition. The study looked at degrees of tolerance for racial minorities and multi-party political systems. Their findings suggest that the higher the degree of education the more likely a person will adhere to the democratic values of a multi-party system. The actual degree of education whether it be high school or college is not mentioned. But, the change which occurs from education

serves to transform the citizen's political perspectives. Education will broaden a person's outlook allowing them to understand the necessity of tolerance making them less inclined to adhere to political extremism. Education is clearly important but it alone cannot support or create a democracy (Lipset, 1963). Moreover, Lipset (1963) finds education to be a 'necessary but not sufficient' factor.

Lipset's (1963) most valuable claim in his research on democratization is that there are social changes resulting from modernization that foster democratic institutions. He also finds that a country's history, legitimacy, and effectiveness of a political regime are similarly important to a country's democratic prospects (Lipset, 1963).

### Economic Development in China

China is one of the few remaining Communist countries in the world where the Communist party holds sole power and the formation of other parties is illegal. While there is some inner-party democracy within the Chinese Communist Party, citizens of China do not have the right to vote in national elections. The existence of village elections is used to argue that China is at least somewhat democratic. But, according to Freedom House 2007, China still ranks as "not free" with scores of 7 for civil rights and 6 for political rights. The scores are based on a 1-7 scale where 1 is the highest degree of freedom and 7 the lowest. Some factors which make up Freedom House's ratings are the restriction on free media and detention of human rights activists and other political activists. These low scores make China similar to many undemocratic countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East.

Prior to the 1978 reforms which transformed the country from a command to market based economy, China began to improve economically. But, economic growth has been most profound in the years beginning in 1980. Between 1980 and 2000 the per capita GDP Yuan increased over 16 fold. Table 3 presents evidence of the change which has occurred in China since the early 1950's. Throughout the 1960's, China saw fluctuation in GDP with as many losses as gains in the real annual growth rate. The data in the given tables below have been compiled with information from the Chinese Statistical Yearbook.

Table 3  
China's GDP 1952-2000

Year	GDP (100 million Yuan)	GDP Per Capita (Yuan)
<b>1952</b>	679	119
<b>1953</b>	824	142
<b>1955</b>	910	150
<b>1965</b>	1716.1	240
<b>1970</b>	2252.7	275
<b>1980</b>	4517.8	463
<b>1990</b>	18547.9	1644
<b>2000</b>	88254.1	7858

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook (1996-2007).

To measure the degree of wealth by the number of telephones per person as Lipset did, a slight revision was made. In this study, the number of cellular phones is included as well as handset phones. Both handset telephones and cellular phones can be argued as

an indication of wealth if not a luxury item. Table 4 shows the use of both cellular and handset telephones by the Chinese population have increased substantially. Whereas in 1995 only 3.6 people per 100 owned a handset telephone, in 2002 there were 32.8 per 100 owned. Cellular phones have also become increasingly popular moving from 6.6 phones owned per 100 people in 2000 to 16.1 in 2002.

Table 4  
China's Wealth 1975-2002

Year	GDP (100,000,000 Yuan)	GDP per capita PPP	Cellular Phones per 100 people	Handset telephones per 100 people	Internet users per 100 people	Physicians per 1,000 people	Per capita motor vehicles per 10,000 people
1975	2997.3	230	Na	Na	0.0	Na	Na
1980	4517.8	410	Na	.20	0.0	1.18	Na
1985	8989.1	820	Na	.30	0.0	1.41	28.49
1990	18598.4	1310	Na	.60	0.0	1.55	81.62
1995	57277.3	2510	.30	3.6	0.0	1.91	249.96
2000	88254.0	3870	6.60	17.8	1.70	2.07	625.33
2002	103935.0	4580	16.1	32.8	4.6	1.84	968.98

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook (1996-2007).

An additional indicator employed in this study which was not present in Lipset's because of technological advancements is internet use. Having both the time to be on the internet and the opportunity to use a computer may indicate the citizens of China are spending less time on basic necessities and more on leisure. This is assuming not all computer usage is for business or education purposes.

Table 4 shows that the internet was almost non-existent in China until 2000. But, from 2000 to 2002 internet use had almost tripled. The number of physicians per 1,000 people was the next indicator of wealth used by Lipset. The data from 1975 to 2002

show the number of physicians has increased only slightly. Yet, the lower rates of physicians do not indicate a poor health care system in China. According to Yip and Hsiao (2008), the health care system in China is not poor because of technology or physician quality, but because many Chinese cannot afford the healthcare. While some Chinese may not be pleased with healthcare in their country it does not make this indicator an outlier. The United Nations' Human Development Report finds the average life expectancy in China is 72.5 years ranking 81 out of 177 countries (United Nations, 2006). Similarly, in 1990, China had an infant mortality rating of 37 per 1,000, but in just 16 years the infant mortality dropped to 20 making it similar to other medium developed nations (United Nations, 2006).

The number of personal motor vehicles owned as an indicator of wealth is Lipset's last factor. In China, the number of per capita motor vehicles owned has made a dramatic increase particularly in the short period between 1985 and 2002. In 1985, there were only 28.49 motor vehicles owned per 10,000 people. In 2002, 968.98 motor vehicles were owned per 10,000 people. Overall, the indicators testing modernization in wealth show China may not be fully developed, but there has been a dramatic change since the 1950's.

Lipset believed education was an important variable for the creation of democracy. In his work, he claimed education produced a society of more moderate, tolerant, and rational citizens (Lipset, 1963). He also provided numerous indicators of education which are tested here for China. To measure education, the indicators of illiteracy, school aged children enrolled, institutions of higher education, and post graduate students enrolled are analyzed. Table 5 shows that 33% of the Chinese

population was illiterate in 1964. Illiteracy has dropped substantially throughout the years and in 2000 was 6.72%. In Lipset's (1963) study he found the countries of Western Europe to generally maintain a literacy rate in the upper 90 percentiles.

Though China is not there yet, it is possible that an increase of only 2 to 3 percentage points may not substantially affect China's democratic values. Similarly, there are many democracies particularly in Latin America which hold literacy rates comparable or below that of China.

Table 5 shows the increase in the percent of school aged children enrolled since 1953. Here, the change has been tremendous moving from 49.2% in 1953 to 99.1% in 2000. It is clear the percent of school aged children enrolled could not increase too much more. Lastly, the growth in institutions of higher education and post graduate students has increased significantly since the mid 1960's. The number of post graduate students in 1953 was 2,763 and has increased to 301,239 students in 2000. The advancements in education for China have improved in the measures of literacy, school aged children

Table 5  
Education in China 1953-2000

Year	Illiteracy as % of population	% school aged children enrolled	# institutions of higher education	Post graduate students enrolled (person)
1953	Na	49.2	201	2,763
1964	33.58	84.7	434	4,546
1982	22.81	93.9	675	Na
1990	15.88	97.8	1,075	93,018
2000	6.72	99.1	1,041	301,239

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook 2001.

enrolled, institutions of higher education, and post graduate students. These factors show that China has become better educated and the trend appears to continue.

In Lipset's (1963) study, industrialization was found to correlate with democracy because it created wealth. To measure the degree of industrialization in a country he looked at the percentage of men working in agriculture and per capita energy consumption. For this study, the same indicators were analyzed, but could not be traced back prior than 1991. Still, looking at Table 6, China has shown that the percentage of men working in agriculture has decreased from 60 percent in 1991 to 44.8 percent in 2005. In per capita energy consumption, the second indicator, China also increased even in the period between 1991 and 2005. Therefore, even in such a short time period China has become more industrialized.

Table 6  
China's Industrialization 1991-2005

Year	% males in agriculture	Per capita energy consumption (kwh)
1991	59.7	138.1
1995	52.9	130.8
1998	50.0	115.9
2000	50.0	126.4
2005	44.8	179.4

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook (1996-2007).

Finally, Lipset (1963) tests urbanization by the percent of citizens living in either urban or rural areas. Lipset believed countries with a greater percentage of its citizenry residing in urban areas were more likely to be democratic (Lipset, 1963). The

measurements for urbanization given in Table 7 are based on the number of cities with the given amount of people. Thus, the measurements for urbanization here differ slightly from Lipset's. But, the precise method may not be necessary to be replicated so long as both are valid measurements of urbanization. To compensate, Table 8 has been included to show the percent of urban to rural population in China according to the Chinese Statistical Yearbook of 2006.

Table 7

China's Urbanization 1995-2005

Year	2 Million and over	1-2 Million	Under .2 Million
1995	10	22	373
1997	12	22	382
1999	13	24	365
2000	13	27	352
2005	13	75	NA

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook 2006 (Tables 7 and 8).

Table 8

China's Urban/Rural Population 1952-2005

Year	Rural	Urban
1952	87.54	12.46
1965	82.02	17.98
1990	73.59	26.41
2000	63.78	36.22
2005	57.01	42.99



Overall, China has seen a moderate increase in the number of cities with populations 2 million and over increasing from 10 cities in 1995 to 13 in 2005.

Conversely, in 1995 there were only 22 cities with populations of 1 to 2 million people, but in 2005 there were 75. In cities under .2 million people there has also been a decrease from 373 cities in 1995 to 352 in 2000. The data shows clear evidence that China has become more urbanized with an increase in cities with high populations. Similarly, the percent of people living in urban instead of rural communities has seen an increase since 1952. Table 8 shows that in 1952, 87.53 percent of the Chinese population was rural whereas in 2005 only 57.01 percent of the population was rural.

#### Economic Development in East China

The previous data demonstrated that China met many of Lipset's (1963) factors of modernity. But, that data described China as a whole. Since the evidence of modernity in China was only aggregate data, it did not account for China's regional and provincial variation. With a population of roughly 1.3 billion people China maintains vast and diverse regional territory of approximately 9.5 million square kilometers (C.I.A. World Factbook). Aside from its geographical breath and variety, the country is dissimilar in terms of its regions. Generally, when looking at a map of China it is divided into the 22 provinces including five autonomous regions, Taiwan, and two special districts provinces. But, China can also be divided into the east, central, and western regions.

Attention is given to this regional variation because the eastern region of China maintains a significant percent of the Chinese population and is also more modern than the country as a whole. Thus, because the east region is developed in many ways it

further the mystery of China's continued authoritarian rule. It will be argued that the eastern region of China is an area with a great enough portion of the population and wealth that it is a society in itself. Moreover, a societal transformation occurring in east china could have an impact on the politics of China as a whole. The eastern region of China is made up of 12 provinces: Liaoning, Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Shandong, Jiangsu, Shanghai, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan. In this eastern region, the population was approximately 558.8 million people in 2005 (Golley, 2007, p. 6). Though the country as a whole has many indices of modernity, China's east region shows significant variance. For example, while China maintains a per capita GDP of \$2,460, the east region encompassing many of the wealthiest cities maintains a per capita GDP of over \$7,000 (Golley, 2007, p.6).

Table 9 shows a clear divergence between the three regions in terms of population and landmass. It can be seen that the east region's population is almost twice as large as the west's. Interestingly, this large population resides on a fourth of the land of the west. The east also makes up approximately 28 percent of the country's total population, nine of the twelve provinces *individually* have the population equivalent of France (East,

Table 9  
China's Regional Population and Landmass

Region	Population (millions)	Area (10,000 km <sup>2</sup> )
East	558.8	129.4
Central	454.2	285.2
West	298.5	546.8

Source: Golley, 2007.

2001). The provinces of Shanghai, Jiangsu, Shandong, Zhejiang, Fujian and Guangdong alone account for 26.5 percent of the population of the country (Golley, 2007). These provinces also make up 43 percent of the country's GDP but only 7 percent of the landmass (Golley, 2007).

In comparison to other democracies shown in Table 10, the eastern region is also larger in terms of population than the democracies listed. In terms of population, landmass, and population density, China's eastern region is comparable to the given countries listed in Table 10. Population density in regards to democratization is an important concept. A citizen of a sparsely populated community will have a more difficult time interacting with others in their community because space acts as a barrier. But, in an area of high population density such as east China, people interact more regularly because of their close proximity. It should not be overlooked that the restrictions on speech and other rights may hinder the possibility of this interaction.

Table 10

Eastern China's Population, Area, and Density Comparison

Country	Population (10,000 persons)	Area (10,000 km <sup>2</sup> )	Population density (person sq./km)
China	129,608	960.0	136
East China	55,880	129.4	431
United Kingdom	5,987	24.2	247
Turkey	7,173	77.0	93
Germany	8,252	34.9	236
United States	29,336	915.9	32

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook 2005.

## Testing the Theory

Table 11 presents Lipset's modernization factors (wealth, industrialization, urbanization, and education) divided by year and region. Among every indicator, the eastern region surpasses the west and central regions. The data begin with the number of employed persons and show the eastern region has more people employed, but the region is also more populous. When measuring GDP in 2005, eastern China maintained a GDP of 109,924.60 Yuan. The GDP for China's western region was 33,493.30 Yuan. It is also important to note the increase between years. Between 1996 and 2005, the eastern region was not only wealthier, but the increase in wealth was greater. The number of telephone sets for the eastern region in 1996 was 4,327.9 per 10,000 people. The central and western regions were significantly lower on this factor with only 1,603.0 and 643.6

Table 11

### China's Regional Modernization 1996 and 2005

Region/ year	# of employed (per 10,000 people)	GDP 100 million Yuan)	# telephones (per 10,000 people)	Annual electricity consumption (100 million Kwh)	# institutions of higher education	# health institutions
<b>East-</b> 1996	25,050.20	39,478.00	4327.9	4691.6	157.4	83,948
2005	29,491.90	109,924.60	NA	14,259.11	714.8	123,121
<b>Central-</b> 1996	17,271.30	16,915.60	1603.0	2517.7	98.5	49,964
2005	23,238.40	37,230.30	NA	6341.35	468	93,027
<b>West-</b> 1996	8,979.10	7,221.10	643.6	1289.5	57.2	29,678
2005	13,983.00	33,493.30	NA	3812.3	428	76,469

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook (1996-2007).

telephone sets per 10,000 people. Also, annual electricity consumption for 1996 in eastern China was almost four times higher than the western region. Finally, on the factors of higher education and health institutions the eastern region in China greatly surpasses the west and central region. Compared to the east, the western region has 286.8 fewer institutions of higher education as of 2005. Health institutions are also in greater supply in eastern China with almost three times as many facilities as the west region as of 1996.

Table 12 also shows that China's eastern region is more industrially advanced. Industrialization can be tested in terms of the percent of people in a country in primary, secondary, and tertiary industry. The data demonstrate that the eastern region is again superior to the west and central regions. For example, the percent of people working in primary industry is 47% in the east, 36% in central and 15% in the west.

Table 12  
China's Population by Region and Industrial Sector

Region	% in Primary Industry	% in Secondary Industry	% in Tertiary Industry	# of industrial enterprises
<b>East</b>	32.55	28.10	37.94	780,056
<b>Central</b>	49.07	20.44	30.47	293,114
<b>West</b>	55.30	14.78	29.9	119,122

Source: Chinese Statistical Yearbook (1996-2007).

By employing similar indicators utilized in Lipset's (1963) modernization theory, it appears the eastern region of China is modern. Because the region accounts for such a great percentage of the population and is becoming increasingly wealthy it should be beginning to reform its political system according to Lipset's (1963) theory. But, this is

not the case. The Chinese citizens in all regions of the country remain under the leadership and authority of the Chinese Communist Party.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY AND CHINA'S LACK OF DEMOCRACY

Seymour Martin Lipset's 1963 study found that the factors of wealth, industrialization, urbanization, and education foster democracy. Yet, the theory did not hold in China. In chapter two, we saw that China as a whole qualified as modern on many factors and on others it is quickly moving towards it. For example, from 1978 to 2002 the number of newspaper copies has tripled and books published have increased eleven fold (Pei, 2006). On the measurements of literacy and cellular phones owned China often ranks higher than many democracies today. But, the eastern region of China maintains much greater wealth and industry than China's west and central regions. The eastern region which comprises the cities of Beijing and Shanghai maintains 9 provinces which individually have populations greater than that of France (East, 2001). Further, the eastern region's population is increasing with many rural residents from the west and central regions moving into eastern provinces for employment. It is important to recognize this regional variation between the east, central, and western regions of China. While the country as a whole is modern on many accounts, the eastern region which maintains a tremendous percent of the Chinese population is even more modern. Moreover, since China's eastern region fits Lipset's modernization criteria, it furthers the question of why China is not a democracy.

It has previously been established that the Chinese political system is not a democracy. Currently, Chinese Communist Party members “hold almost all top government, police, and military positions” and citizens do not have the right to change their government (U.S. Department of State, 2007, para 1). This irony of modernity without democracy has led many scholars in search of answers. One explanation has been the lack of a political culture conducive to democracy (Hu, 2000). It has been argued that a society with a prevalence of Confucianism will not value the ‘rule of law’ but instead ‘the rule of men’ (Hu, 2000). But, Confucianism has been widespread throughout South Korea and Japan, two working democracies. Additionally, some authors assert China has not democratized because they lack a political history of democracy. Again, this is an unviable argument since all democracies today were at one time, not.

Three pieces of work have been especially helpful in looking outside Lipset’s modernization thesis to understand the Chinese phenomenon. First, this study employs the research of Larry Diamond, Juan L. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset’s 1995 research. These authors find that country specific characteristics should be recognized instead of utilizing one broad theory to explain a country’s lack of democracy. Thus, because all countries have different histories and political leaders, a single theory may not explain a political phenomenon such as continued authoritarian rule. Second, I employ Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi’s 1997 study which found the lack of democracy in a country can often be explained by addressing the role of political actors. They believe that democracy develops through actors not just the country’s historical past or social and economic conditions (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997). Last, I use the work of Mary E.



Gallagher who finds that economic development has hindered democratization in China by reducing “social resistance to reform” (Gallagher, 2002, p.271).

In this chapter, I will argue that the reason for China’s continued authoritarian rule in the face of economic development is the repressive strength of the Chinese Communist Party. The party often employs various state security agencies to suppress dissent. Through these agencies the CCP has inhibited democratization by employing various methods of social control. These methods range from violent to normative control and have been very effective in suppressing the possibility of democratic opposition. Next, the classes which would be most likely to demand reform (entrepreneurs, intelligentsia, and middle class) are discussed to demonstrate how restrictions on freedoms as well as a lack of desire for democracy have inhibited political movements for reforms. Overall the CCP has halted most possibility of democratization from the public.

### The Party Line on Democratic Reforms

It is important to examine the reasons given by the CCP for China’s continued authoritarian rule since it shows the party is not willing to reform. Because it is the only party allowed in China, their attitude on the prospects of democracy are valuable. The CCP has stated the need for more democracy, but qualified it by saying democracy in China would have Chinese characteristics. In October 2007 in a report to the 17<sup>th</sup> National Congress, President Hu Jintao claims that by 2020 Chinese citizens will have more democratic rights and cited “democracy” over 72 times in his speech (Lam, 2007, para. 1). He spoke of both inner-party democracy as well as allowing increased rights for Chinese citizens (Lam, 2007). But, he also mentioned that China would never imitate the

path the Vietnamese Communist Party took “with much bolder electoral mechanisms to elect its leaders” (Lam, 2007, para 4). While the Vietnamese political system is also communist, it allows for greater participation from its citizens in electing leaders. Hu further sets his boundaries claiming that the leadership of the CCP must be upheld (Lam, 2007). Therefore, it is possible Hu’s mention of democracy is only a way to legitimize the CCP’s rule in China.

### Why Look at the CCP?

Since the formation of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the CCP has been the only party ruling China and has suppressed opposition parties which are important for the possibility of political reform. Minxin Pei, Senior Associate of the China Program at the Carnegie Endowment, believes the lack of democracy in China can be attributed mainly to the CCP (Pei, 2007). Pei finds that many theories attempting to explain the lack of democracy in China have not fully taken into account the strength of the party and their affect on society (Pei, 2007). Further, even if there were a push for democratic reforms it is unlikely that any authoritarian regime let alone the CCP would give up power. Generally, democracy does not develop simply from economic development. Actors such as the ruling elites have played an important role (Pei, 2007).

### The CCP and Methods of Oppressing Dissent

According to author Zhengxu Wang, “public opinion polls show that more than 90% of Chinese citizens believe that having a democracy is good” and 54.8% believe there should be more democracy in China now (Wang, 2007, p.561). While there may be

public support for democracy in China, the Chinese government has worked hard to not allow support for democracy to publicly accumulate (Lum, 2000). Author Thomas Lum (2000) describes three ways in which the CCP maintains political control over society. First, coercive control is defined as control through “force or the threats of force” (Lum, 2000, p.59). This type of social control can be seen best in the CCP’s use of both military and police forces in quelling dissent in Tibet and student democracy protests. The party also controls the six million men in both military and police who can easily be deployed in case of a major uprising (Gilley, 2004). The military has been used to suppress demonstrations in numerous slightly smaller incidents than the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. According to the Washington Post, the courts in the Tibetan region have made it clear they will “hand out tough verdicts and reinforce the government’s campaign against the Dali Lama” (Buckley, 2008, para 7). The use of force by the Chinese government has also been used against the Falun Gong, a spiritual group with millions of Chinese followers (Forney, 2001). According to the Time magazine, the police under the authority of the CCP have “sentenced more than 10,000 followers to labor camps where claims are made that around 200 people have died while in custody” (Forney, 2001, para. 6). Overall, the use of force against Tibetans and Falun Gong members have demonstrated that the CCP is fully capable of dispersing military and police forces in order to suppress dissidents.

The second repression technique employed by the CCP is called ‘normative control’ which entails “altering people’s attitudes, values, and beliefs” (Lum, 2000, p.59). When the government suppresses freedom of speech and press, they are altering people’s beliefs and attitudes by not allowing access to information (Lum, 2000). There are two

examples of China's 'normative control' on society. The first is media control. It is quite possible that the 'information revolution' of the 1990's could have had a destabilizing affect on the CCP's control of Chinese society (Pei, 2006). Internet users would have been able to read western newspapers online giving them different political and cultural perspectives. They may have been able to communicate easier with one another throughout the country through America Online's Instant Messenger. The possibilities of a more open communication system from the internet are endless. But, this did not occur in China and the CCP has been effective in "minimizing the political impact of the internet while using the internet to improve certain aspects of routine administrative functions, such as e-government (Pei, 2006, p.85). In 2000, the Ministry of Security in China set up a Bureau for Supervising the Security of Public Information Networks, or BSSPIN (Pei, 2006, p. 86). The BSSPIN states that their mission is to " monitor and control the net-based activities of hostile organizations and individuals in and outside Chinese borders; timely report various information and trends regarding social and political stability; strengthen Internet patrol; and closely watch developments on the internet" (Pei, 2006, p.86). Currently, Chinese citizens do not have the access to information from the internet that citizens in most democracies do. Suppressing news media and "dangerous" internet websites has been an important tactic used by the CCP to suppress the possibility of a democratic uprising (Pei, 2006). Furthermore, tremendous work has been done in disallowing possibly subversive information entering into the Chinese public's awareness.

The internet is not the only area where the CCP has worked to divert 'dangerous' information from the public. Authors Carin Zissis and Preeti Bhattacharji of the Council

on Foreign Relations (2008) find that the Chinese government has used a number of methods in censoring writing of journalists. The internet is censored mostly by the BSSPIN, but there are two other powerful government agencies in charge of censorship. The first is the General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP) which is in charge of licensing publishers, screen written publications, and “has the power to ban materials and shut down outlets” (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008, para. 5). The second agency is the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008, para. 5). Zissis and Bhattacharji (2008) find that the monitoring body with the most power who works with the GAPP and SARFT is the Communist Party’s Central Propaganda Department (CPD) (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008, para. 5). The CPD is responsible for making sure all media content is consistent with CCP doctrine (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008). There are several methods the Chinese government agencies use to control Chinese media and information (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008). The first is ‘dismissals and demotions’ where editors and journalists may be fired when their writing goes against the party line or criticizes the CCP (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008, para. 5). Second, journalists and editors may be charged with libel if material published offends the party (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008). The next form of suppressing information is through fines (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008). Lastly, the CCP uses imprisonment as one of the final resorts in stifling information seeping out into the public (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008). In 2007, the Chinese government jailed 29 journalists, one was a foreign journalist writing about the Chinese Communist Party (Zissis and Bhattacharji, 2008, para 12).

## The CCP and 'Selective Repression'

An interesting characteristic of many authoritarian regimes is their use of 'selective repression' as a tool of social control (Pei, 2006). Whether it is because of the current legitimacy crisis in the CCP, the party is finding they must be more tactful and sophisticated in their methods of repression (Pei, 2006). According to Pei (2008), the CCP has engaged in many selectively repressive tactics such as the use of security informants on university campuses and research institutions looking for possible dissidents (Pei, 2006). In dealing with social unrest in the countryside throughout the 1990's, Pei (2008) found the Chinese government used their security apparatus in "crowd control by removing leadership, intelligence gathering, propaganda and videotaping, arrest, and interrogation" (Pei, 2006, p.84).

One method utilized by the CCP has been aimed specifically at suppressing the voices of those who would likely be dissidents. This form of selective repression is what Pei (2006) calls 'co-optation'. The term refers to the ability of the communist party to adapt to their increasingly wealthy and modern society to maintain their level of support (Pei, 2006). Co-optation works to "allow the organization to add new skills, experiences, and resources (such as political support) that may enhance its performance and increase its chance of survival" (Dickson, 2000/2001, p. 519). The utility in co-optation by the CCP is that it allows the party to reward specific groups to lessen the chances of them becoming an oppositional force (Pei, 2006). According to Pei (2006), there are two main groups the CCP has worked to build a relationship with, the intelligentsia and entrepreneurs. Throughout Chinese political history, the intelligentsia has been one of the

greatest critics and challengers to the party. Pei (2006) finds that in the 1980's and 1990's the intelligentsia lost strength after the Tiananmen Square protests where many members of the intelligentsia had been involved (Pei, 2006). With the intelligentsia in a weakened state, the CCP launched "a systematic campaign of co-optation to recruit loyalists among the intellectuals and professionals" (Pei, 2006, p.89).

Another form of co-optation used by the CCP has been patronage (Pei, 2006). Patronage allows the party to organize salary increases or other rewards for recruited party members (Pei, 2006). In the university setting, the party employs two other tactics. First, it recruits the best outstanding cadres into college administration which allows the party to have more influence with the universities (Pei, 2006). Second, the party attempts to direct the best undergraduate and graduate students into political positions upon graduation (Pei, 2006). These students are then 'groomed' to become full time party officials and are rewarded with housing and pay (Pei, 2006). But, Dickson (2000/2001) has found that while recruitment within the intelligentsia has been crucial, the party has had some reservations about recruiting those who do not fit the CCP's ideological stance. After the 1978 economic reforms, the party lost some interest in obtaining members who fit the party's ideology and gained interest in the younger and educated technocrats and entrepreneurs (Dickson, 2000/2001). The radical leftist party members were then 'weeded out' fearing they may not support and even disrupt the economic reform initiative. Following the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, the CCP found that many of their own members had been participants. From that experience, the CCP recognized that dissenters within the party could have come from the party members lacking ideological commitment. In an effort to balance the new technocrats and entrepreneurs who had been

brought in at the time of reforms, the CCP sought to incorporate their base into the party. The CCP's base comprises of the Chinese citizens working in farming and industrial production (Dickson, 2000/2001). Therefore, while the CCP recognized the need to include the new intelligentsia into the party, they have also seen that too much could destabilize CCP political control.

The second group co-opted by the CCP is the entrepreneurs. It was believed by many western social scientists that the new entrepreneurial class would generate a vibrant civil society that could transform the country's political system. But, the CCP has made many efforts to ensure the new capitalist class does not become a great oppositional force. Dickson (2000/2001) finds that in the 1980's Chinese entrepreneurs were co-opted into the party in great numbers. The percent of entrepreneurs in the party seemed to increase into the mid 1990's and in 1995, 17.1 percent of entrepreneurs were registered CCP members (Dickson, 2000/2001, p. 525). However, many older more conservative members of the CCP were not pleased with the influence of entrepreneurs in the party (Pei, 2006). So, in September 1995, the party officially banned new recruitment of entrepreneurs into the party (Dickson, 2000/2001). Interestingly, the ban was not effective and many members who had become private entrepreneurs while in the party were allowed to continue their membership (Pei, 2006 p.93).

A last form of co-optation the CCP has employed has been "organizational penetration and individual recruitment" (Pei, 2006, p. 93). For example, the party has managed to reach out to "business groups formed by the entrepreneurs" such as Gongshanglian which comprised 80 percent of private business entrepreneurs (Pei, 2006, p. 93). There have also been attempts made at including private entrepreneurs at lower



levels of government such as the Local People's Congress (Pei, 2006, p.93). But, Pei also finds that only 5.6 percent of private entrepreneurs became CCP members after their business was set up (Pei, 2006). It is likely the entrepreneurs are party supporters because they rely on the party for favors, capital, or protection of property (Pei, 2006).

### The CCP and Lack of Opposition

The efforts made by the Chinese Communist Party in controlling opposition and democracy have been strong at times and weak at others. To better explain the lack of democracy in China it is important to address the role of the traditional opposition and democratic forces in Chinese society. The three classes which assume this role are the entrepreneurial, intelligentsia, and middle class. Moreover, this section will discuss how these groups have been unable to mobilize dissent and facilitate democracy in China.

#### Intellectuals

The Intellectuals are "those with university degrees or some college education-constitute about eleven percent of the urban population and two percent of the total population" (Lum, 2000, p.118). While they are a small group within society and those who are critical of the party even smaller, intellectuals have been a formidable threat to the CCP and authoritarian rule. The intellectuals of China have "played principle roles in all democratic movements of the post-Mao era" (Lum, 2000, p.119). But, there have been both structural and cultural obstacles which have prevented democratic movements from materializing (Lum, 2000). Lum (2000) finds four significant factors which have

weakened the ability of China's intellectual class to present a challenge to the CCP's authoritarian rule.

First, the intellectuals do not have the base of support within the political, social, and economic realms independent of the state (Lum, 2000). Second, the intellectuals have not been able to cultivate ties with other mass groups such as labor (Lum, 2000, p.118). Third, the intellectuals are tied to the state for their socio-political status and "material well-being" (Lum, 2000, p.119). Last, intellectuals have not been able to form an effective strategy to oppose the CCP (Lum, 2000, p. 119).

The first dilemma discussed by Lum (2000) is that the intellectuals do not have an independent support base. The reason for their lack of independence is because like many Chinese citizens the intelligentsia needs the "socio-political status and material well-being" the state provides (Lum, 2000, p. 120). An example of the group's dependence on the state is their inclusion of patron CCP members into study groups discussing China's political and economic problems (Lum, 2000). By including selected party members in discussions, the intellectuals shield themselves from prosecution (Lum, 2000). Certainly these study groups that discussed possible political and economic reform have only existed because of the presence of small political cleavages within the CCP. Without some discussion of democracy in China within the CCP, the groups would have never found any sympathy.

Second, intellectuals also have the difficulty of linking themselves with other social groups which may help build a base of support in challenging the state (Lum, 2000). The intellectual class in China is not a typical class. They are relatively small and do not share the same physical environment, economic status, or culture as most Chinese

citizens (Lum, 2000). The CCP has worked to prevent classes such as peasants and intelligentsia from mingling fearing a strong oppositional force (Lum, 2000). The CCP's fear comes from the establishment of the Consultative Joint Committee of All Groups during the Tiananmen protests (Lum, 2000). Here, an alliance was formed between intellectuals, students, and workers (Lum, 2000). Currently, there does not seem to be a viable link between the intellectuals, the growing entrepreneurial class, factory workers, or peasants (Lum, 2000). While the private entrepreneurs helped fund the 1989 student demonstrations the intellectuals do not hold the group in high regard finding them either uneducated or dishonest (Lum, 2000, p.125). These differences between intellectuals and other classes in Chinese society make it difficult to come together for a common cause.

The opposition strategies of the intellectuals particularly during the post-reform era have mainly been "loosely structured, non-confrontational, and non-binding" (Lum, 2000, p.121). Intellectuals throughout the 1970's and 1980's took several measures at increasing the debate on political reform both within Chinese society and the party (Lum, 2000). First, the intellectuals published news articles on the subject of political reform for Chinese newspapers (Lum, 2000). Articles were often published underground and disseminated in the countryside in order to avoid government censorship (Lum, 2000). Second, establishment intellectuals who had personal contact with members of the CCP attempted to persuade party members of the merits of institutional reform (Lum, 2000). These intellectuals were only critical of Mao and did not challenge the legitimacy of the party (Lum, 2000). Last, the critical intellectuals have only focused on incremental political changes such as that within the leadership (Lum, 2000). For example, Wei Jinsheng, a Chinese intellectual no longer living in China, believes that democratic

reforms should come from within the party and not by overthrowing the Chinese government (Lum, 2000). These are also the sentiments of two other Chinese intellectuals who argue that “the CCP would remain in power and that reformers within the regime provided the best change of carrying democratization forward” (Lum, 2000, p. 123).

From Lum’s description it appears many intellectuals do not believe the CCP should be abolished, but only that there is change needed within it.

### Entrepreneurs

The second class within Chinese society who have in the past been a catalyst for democracy are the entrepreneurs. Private entrepreneurs are an important element of civil society because they do not rely on the state as a means for survival (Chen, 2002). But, the entrepreneurial class is not a single unified group and is becoming increasingly diverse (Tsai, 2008). Entrepreneurs come from varying life circumstances such as the rags to riches entrepreneur who made their business from Deng’s reforms or the real-estate tycoons who have familial links to the CCP (Tsai, 2008). Author Kellee S Tsai (2008) believes for entrepreneurs to become a strong force for democracy they must have a similar class identity which comes from similar values, life experiences, and interests. But this is not the case in China. Author An Chen (2002) finds that the entrepreneurial class or the ‘bourgeoisie’ can be classified into two different yet relevant categories. First, there are the entrepreneurs who are “comprising the owner’s of relatively large capital, namely the wealthiest Chinese private entrepreneurs” (Chen, 2002, p. 409). The second group is the small-time entrepreneurs who are placed into the middle class category (Chen, 2002, p.411). But, within the first group, there are two further classifications; the

'parasite' and the 'self-made' entrepreneur (Chen, 2002, p.409). The parasite entrepreneur is s/he who are "children, spouses, and relatives of incumbent senior officials/cadres as well as former bureaucrats whose private companies thrive on their official networks" (Chen, 2002, p.411). Self-made entrepreneurs are those who have come from any "walk of life" and have on their own become extremely successful business owners (Chen, 2002, p.411).

In their desire for democratic reform there is an important distinction between these two groups. The parasitic entrepreneur "relies on government agencies and clientelistic relationships with local officials and party cadres for such essential resources and services as capital and distribution" (Lum, 2000. p. 33). Because of this relationship with the Chinese government and their monopoly of resources, moving toward a more inclusive capitalist system may be detrimental to their current circumstances (Lum, 2000). This group of entrepreneurs fears what could happen when all classes had equal access to valuable resources (Chen, 2002). Conversely, the self-made entrepreneur often times does not have the same advantages of the parasitic entrepreneur with close family ties in the Chinese government (Chen, 2002). The self-made entrepreneur must compete in an unfair system for the same resources and "pay high prices for politically monopolized resources" (Chen, 2002, p. 412). Thus, they may be a better prospect for a democratizing force. The rule of law and a democratic system which makes government more transparent and less corrupt is high on the list of demands for the self-made entrepreneur (Chen, 2002). But, the rule of law alone is not democracy and what both entrepreneurial sects fear is democracy for the masses (Lum, 2000). Because these groups have experienced increased wealth and prosperity they fear giving power to all

Chinese citizens may act as a catalyst for chaos that could hurt their private property (Chen, 2002). Chen (2002) finds that to these groups, elections where all citizens of China could vote would create a political system in which the government takes all measures to appease the poor who are in the majority. Thus, while the parasitic and self-made entrepreneurs differ greatly in how they obtain their wealth, they do not disagree on what democracy could bring-chaos and the possible loss of wealth (Lum, 2000).

### The Middle Class

Historically, the middle class have been a revolutionary force for democratization. Lipset found that the middle class were not only politically more moderate than other classes, but were also the group “who can stand up against the state and provide the resources for independent groups” (Lipset, 1963, p. 2). After having their material needs met, the middle class desire more say in their political system (Lipset, 1963). Unlike the entrepreneurs and intelligentsia, the middle class do not have as much to lose from challenging the government. Both intelligentsia and entrepreneurs as a class receive benefits in the form of recognition of their profession to material benefits from the Chinese government. The middle class does not have the same connection to the party and thus face different challenges.

The modernization and transition to a market based economy has created a middle class in China. The middle class comprises of doctors, high-school teachers, engineers, government administrators, and small entrepreneurs (Unger, 2006, p.27). Euromonitor International Inc. finds the middle class have grown substantially from 65 million in 2005 to 80 million in 2007 (Hodgson, 2007). The growth of the Chinese middle class can also

be seen in Beijing's 40 new shopping complexes and burgeoning apartment buildings (Unger, 2006). But, China's middle class has not become a strong oppositional force challenging the Chinese Communist Party. The middle class are hindered by the restrictions on civil rights such as speech, press, assembly, and association.

Article 35 of the Chinese constitution grants the people of China the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, association, procession, and demonstration. But, in China, free speech is often not 'respected in practice'. According to the U.S. Department of State, topics permissible for private speech were slightly expanded and political topics were allowed to be discussed in small groups or privately without punishment (U.S. Department of State, 2007). Further, minor criticism of the government are common (U.S. Department of State, 2007). But, public speeches (particularly academic) in forums, academic discussions, or events with media present are met with restrictions (U.S. Department of State, 2007). It is important to address the role of speech as it is one of the most important freedoms allowing citizens the ability to demand political reform. Freedom of speech allows citizens to express themselves openly without fear of government reprisal. The importance of this right in fostering democracy is that it permits citizens to criticize the government, leaders, and policies. This freedom also enables open discussion, debate and most importantly the "discovery and spread of truth on subjects of general concern" (Chafee, 1954, p. 34). Thus, it is only when a topic is openly debated without government interference that unadulterated truth can be established (Chafee, 1954).

Similarly, the freedom of press is a repressed right in China with journalists and political dissenters jailed and punished for publishing materials critical of the CCP.

According to Freedom House, the Chinese government still maintains strict control over 'political content' in what can be published (China, 2000). The media are allowed to report on government corruption, inefficiency, and environmental problems (China, 2000). Thus, media content is not restricted so long as it does not directly criticize the authority or legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (China, 2000). In this situation of media restriction, similar to freedom of speech, citizens are left poorly informed.

Freedom of Assembly is defined as the right to form groups, organize, and assemble together with the aim of addressing issues of common concern (Freedom, 2008). A government which allows citizens to gather freely for common causes is often necessary for democratic movements. While this freedom is permitted in the Chinese constitution, there are many restrictions on it. The freedom of assembly is only permissible so long as it does not challenge state interests or the party's leadership (U.S. Department of State, 2007). Any protests against leaders of the CCP are prohibited and are sometimes enforced through detention (U.S. Department of State, 2007). The Chinese government claims that mass demonstrations have decreased since 2006 but demonstrations occurring often include tens of thousands of Chinese citizens (U.S. Department of State, 2007). Government authorities have even become accustomed to detaining potential demonstrators before anniversary events such as the Tiananmen Square demonstrations (U.S. Department of State, 2007). To guard against possible protests, any event or meeting with over 200 people expecting to attend must obtain the approval of China's public security authorities (U.S. Department of State, 2007). Other preventative measures include the harassment of petitioners by 'plainclothes' police to



prevent them from registering petitions to the Chinese government (U.S. Department of State, 2007).

Freedom of Association gives citizens the right to join or not join an organization of their choosing. For the prospects of democratization, this freedom is important because it enables the formation of autonomous groups with separate ideals and goals from the government. In China, the lack of this freedom deeply curtails the possibility of democratization. Freedom of association is restricted in China to prevent “the formation of truly autonomous political, human rights, religious, spiritual, and other organizations that might challenge government authority (U.S. Department of State, para 109). A form of association which has become more prominent in China recently are non-governmental organizations. Authorities within the Chinese government and in the international community have found NGO’s growing in China. It is possible between authorized and unauthorized NGO’s there are as many as 8 million (U.S. Department of State, 2007). NGO’s could be tremendously beneficial to the prospects of democracy for China. But, since 2005 Chinese authorities have increased supervision over NGO’s which are considered to be politically dangerous (U.S. Department of State, 2007). NGO’s must also register with a government agency that will ‘sponsor’ their organization (U.S. Department of State, 2007). Whether these organizations could become a force for democracy is contested. NGO’s advocating for AIDS patient rights or labor rights are still heavily monitored and at times their organizations are shut down (U.S. Department of State, 2007).

Together, the restrictions on the rights of freedom, press, association, and assembly curtail the possibility of a politically motivated civil society in China.

According to Linz and Stepan (1996), civil society is “the arena of the polity where self-organized groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests”(Linz and Stepan, 1996, p. 7). Civil society may also be able to monitor government activity and produce political alternatives (Linz, and Stepan, 1996). Moreover, because restrictions on freedoms are so severe, Chinese citizens are unlikely able to challenge the authoritarian rule of the CCP.

### Other Forms of Resistance

Restrictions on freedoms for Chinese citizens have not stifled all political dissent. Underground movements have been present in China and have shown their resistance in events such as Tiananmen Square and the Democracy Wall Movement. But, the secretive nature of underground political organizations makes it difficult to analyze for the purposes of this thesis. Information is lacking on this topic since even overseas members of underground movements are unlikely to discuss the existence of their group fearing they may be found out. In 1992 The New York Times’ Seth Faison Jr. wrote on the existence of an underground pro-democracy movement in China called the All-China People’s Autonomous Federation (Faison, 1992). According to the group’s former student leader, Tang Boqiao, the organization had at the time hundreds of members many of whom participated in the 1989 pro-democracy movement (Faison, 1992). Boqiao further claimed the group operated in 22 provinces in China, but would not give further information as the whereabouts of the organizations locations (Faison, 1992). The activity of underground movements may be almost impossible to determine.

But, the entrepreneurs, intelligentsia, and middle class are not the only groups which could challenge authoritarian rule in China. The large lower class in China could also become a strong force for democratic reform. The lower class is a likely candidate to demand reforms because they have not benefited equally from the economic development occurring in China. Since they are poorer and less educated than the entrepreneurs and intelligentsia, they may need another class or group to lead the movement. Once a movement has begun, the lower class which makes up the majority of Chinese society could be a powerful force. Other forms of resistance have appeared in China and dissidents have used the CCP's market reform relaxation to personal space and private property to their benefit (Pei, 2003). After market reforms began in 1978, financial transactions both overseas and within China have been easier (Pei, 2003). This financial freedom in the context of resistance has provided many dissidents with the opportunity to gain external funding for their organization (Pei, 2003). Pei (2003) finds that dissidents "receive support from overseas exiles and domestic private businessmen, allowing them to purchase much needed equipment such as fax machines and personal computers" (Pei, 2003, p. 32). Similarly, while the communication revolution (though censored), has also enabled dissidents to make contact with other dissidents throughout the country and overseas (Pei, 2003). Pei (2003) finds that many dissidents have personal access to telephones, cellular phones, internet and personal computers allowing them to communicate with other supporters (Pei, 2003). Dissidents are not only making contact with individual supporters overseas, but also news organizations attempting to gain media attention to their cause (Pei, 2003).

## Conclusion

The fact that China maintains an authoritarian political system while becoming increasingly developed has generated the subject matter for this thesis. To address this question it was necessary to first examine Seymour Martin Lipset's 1963 study on the role of economic development and democratization. In that study, Lipset (1963) found that the factors of economic development such as wealth, industrialization, urbanization, and education produced the societal changes conducive to democracy.

Following the literature review in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 presents a brief discussion of Chinese political history since 1928. It is possible that a history of democracy could act as a catalyst for democratization from the Chinese people. But, there does not appear to have been any formal democracy established before. Chapter 3 addresses China's modernity using Lipset's indicators from his 1963 study. Here, China appears modern on many factors, and moving in that direction on others. Improvements appear to have been made to GDP, cellular phone use, motor vehicles, educational facilities, literacy rates, and urbanization. China's eastern region is examined for modernity showing the area is substantially wealthier and more educated than China as a whole. These factors indicated that eastern China could be an even greater force for democracy. The modernity experienced in China and more so eastern China furthered the question of China's lack of democracy.

The last chapter of this thesis argued that China's lack of democracy stems from the repressive power of the Chinese Communist Party. The CCP employs numerous tactics of social control and has legal political authority. Forms of social control can

range from overt physical force to imprisonment and co-optation. Secondly, the three groups in China which have historically been the most apt for demanding democracy have not been a strong democratic force. Entrepreneurs have benefited materially from the CCP and do not desire a democracy which may alter their status and wealth (Chen, 2002). The intelligentsia is a small class in society and has been greatly weakened by the 1989 pro-democracy crackdown (Pei, 2006). The intelligentsia also does not share the same physical environment with other classes, have a general distrust of the lower classes and have not been able to form a pact with these other numerically important groups (Lum, 2000). This lacking relationship and trust of other groups in society has prevented the intelligentsia from demanding a democratic political system (Lum, 2000). Last, the democratic prospects of the middle class have been stifled by restrictions of speech, press, association, and assembly. These restrictions have prevented middle class Chinese from accessing critical information of their government as well as engaging in truth-seeking debates. The inability to make associations and assemble has also hindered a forceful and vibrant civil society. Civil society has been found as an almost crucial component for democratization (Linz and Stepan, 1996).

The topic of Chinese democratization could not be captured in one thesis. Further work on this issue should investigate the role of underground democratic movements in China. There is very little information to be acquired from the internet, articles, or books on this subject. But, it is possible the existence of these movements could be a determining factor in whether China democratizes. It is also important to see how Chinese citizens view democracy. Democracy can be a nebulous concept especially for those who have not been indoctrinated with it at a young age. A societies understanding

of what democracy entails and what it could bring may also be hindering the chances of a democratic uprising from the Chinese people.

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