



China's Domestic Politics and U.S.-Taiwan-China Relations: An Assessment in the Aftermath of the CCP's 16th National Congress

Szue-Chin Hsu

To cite this article: Szue-Chin Hsu (2003) China's Domestic Politics and U.S.-Taiwan-China Relations: An Assessment in the Aftermath of the CCP's 16th National Congress, American Foreign Policy Interests, 25:1, 43-52, DOI: [10.1080/10803920301108](https://doi.org/10.1080/10803920301108)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10803920301108>



Published online: 30 Nov 2010.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 24



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 1 View citing articles [↗](#)



China's Domestic Politics and U.S.–Taiwan–China Relations: An Assessment in the Aftermath of the CCP's 16th National Congress

Szue-Chin Philip Hsu

The 16th National Congress of the Chinese Communist party (CCP) was held only months ago. Among other things, the issue of the CCP leadership transition had assumed foremost priority on the agenda before the party congress. Accordingly, various forecasts of the outcome of the leadership lineup, which hinged chiefly on Jiang Zemin's retirement, gained currency.¹ Although I will not attempt in this article to ratiocinate or develop scenarios or trace factors bearing on the power succession, I will make two observations that may shed light on the direction in which the dynamics of China's elite politics will evolve in the near future.

First, it is conceivable that concentrating on Jiang's retirement as the pivotal issue of disagreement and bargaining among key actors involved in the transition might have facilitated the handling of other issues on which it would otherwise have been much harder to reach commonly accepted resolutions. Two examples were the composition of the new Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) and the incorporation of Jiang's "three represents" guideline into the party constitution. Focusing on Jiang's staying or leaving is crucial for comprehending what all the give-and-take initiatives and responses of those key actors were really aimed at.² Second, given the intrinsic need for testing and trying all the arrangements that mark the new generation's accession to leadership, the top leadership after the congress will have to confront the uncertainties

involved in adapting the dynamics used by the top leadership to make decisions. Such uncertainties and adaptations, especially with respect to the distribution of the key leaders' influence over policymaking and patterns of political alignment, will exert a greater impact on China's domestic and foreign affairs than the results of the personnel reshuffling effected at the congress. In other words, the unpredictable effects of politics on policymaking are just now beginning to become apparent to the CCP's top elites in the wake of the congress.

Furthermore, the accelerating transformation in China's domestic macropolitical, economic, and social contexts since the 15th Party Congress is producing a new mix of dynamics that will likely shape the regime's interests, goals, and policy tools for both internal and external national policies in the years to come. Against the backdrop of the changing macroenvironment, this article will attempt to assess the possible effects of China's domestic politics on U.S.–Taiwan–China relations in the aftermath of the 16th CCP Congress.

China's Domestic Politics and U.S.–China Relations

In the macrosetting, the most noteworthy evolution is the consolidation of China's economic

reform indicated by its expediting marketization, WTO accession, ballooning foreign investments, the shrinkage of the state-owned sector, and so on. In addition, economic growth, thanks to the marketization reform, has become a crucial means of propping up the party–state’s legitimacy in governing. Thus it would be hard for any new Chinese leader to roll back the economic reform program. To the degree that the personal and factional nature of China’s elite politics remains a factor after the congress, it would make sense to expect some degree of tangible interpersonal and interfactional disparities over those policy issues that have generated problems. Some examples of such issue areas are domestic political reform, worsening socioeconomic inequalities, and China’s strategic and security relations with other major powers.³

Any of the disparities that enter into the policymaking process have to be filtered and refracted through a new power structure at the level of micropolitics. At this level, whether or not the transition proceeds smoothly from the third to the fourth generation, the CCP leadership stands at the center. On the surface, the transition in terms of the leadership lineup seemed to be successful after Hu Jintao became the general secretary. Moreover, it now appears that the days for Jiang to remain chairman of the CCP’s Central Military Commission (CMC) are numbered. Yet such developments will not alter the fundamental reality of the power structure that underlies the new CCP leadership. Jiang’s protégés in the new PBSC—including Zeng Qinghong, Huang Ju, Wu Bangguo, Jia Qinglin, and Li Changchun—would make up the major power bloc in the PBSC. This coalition might even expand by incorporating Luo Gan, who is backed by Li Peng. The other PBSC members—including Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao, and Wu Guanzheng—may or may not forge an alternative coalition that possesses sufficient internal cohesion and external strength. Whereas Jiang may seek to continue to exercise his influence from behind the scenes, leading many observers to draw an analogy based on the paramount authority exercised by Deng

Xiaoping during the reform era, the key feature of such a power structure would differ in a vital way from that which held sway during the period of the 12th through the 14th party congresses. During that period, Deng was able to exercise overriding authority thanks to, among other things, his standing, which went beyond the parochial interests of all competing power coalitions (e.g., between Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, Zhao Ziyang and Li Peng, and Jiang Zemin and Qiao Shi/Li Peng). This degree of relative detachment was unquestionably a decisive element that enabled the paramount leader to play a role both as the ultimate arbiter in succession politics and as the effective balancer in factional politics.

In contrast, this does not seem to be the case for Jiang’s relationship with the new CCP top leadership. Before the party congress, contests had occurred over Jiang’s retirement; Zeng Qinghong’s election to full membership in the Politburo, which had been foiled previously; the replacement of Li Ruihuan with Jiang’s associates; Huang Ju’s and Jia Qinglin’s last-minute promotion to key central positions; and so on. Such controversies reflect as well as deepen the inraelite animosity that lies at the heart of the power politics at the top. Therefore, it would appear much more reasonable to conceive of Jiang as standing behind his associates in a contest with any competing faction rather than using equidistance to demarcate his relationships with all power contestants. If Jiang, who still occupies the key post of CMC chairman, is viewed by the PBSC elites as a player rather than a legitimate referee of the power game and is perceived to lack the personal charisma that enabled Deng to play the role of the paternalistic chief, those perceptions would further undermine the bases justifying his authoritativeness.

What does this mean for U.S.–China relations? To be sure, there seems to be no indication of any major disagreement within the new leadership over key foreign and security policy issues or China’s vital national interests and goals (e.g., safeguarding China’s sovereignty and territorial

integrity). In broad terms, a state-centered form of patriotic nationalism will be the overarching theme for consensus building among both the new elites and the current civilian leadership.⁴ After all, such a collective consensus is a minimal requirement for sustaining the legitimacy of the regime as a whole in the eyes of the Chinese people. More important at the more concrete level of daily routines and crisis management in foreign relations is the set of attributes shared by members of the Politburo, such as personal, educational, and career background, which promote congeniality rather than divergence over specific decisions.

That kind of commonality has been evident among Politburo members since the 15th Party Congress, which was composed of two roughly equal groups of third- and fourth-generation leaders.⁵ But the essential common denominator could not prevent at least three factors created by China's transforming political landscape from influencing its stance toward the United States and the U.S. stance toward China.

First, the top leadership's tendency to personalize China's foreign relations, particularly with the United States, will be much more evident as it is intertwined with the new parameters of elite politics elaborated above. Since 1949, China's key central leaders have developed a pattern in which they manipulated ideological issues with the United States and the Soviet Union and took advantage of personal ties with those foreign leaders for the purposes of enhancing their positions in the domestic power competition.⁶ Jiang is no exception. His decision to allow Zeng Qinghong, Huang Ju, Tang Jiaxuan, Li Zhaoxing, Yang Jiechi, and even Wang Zhongyu—all of whom are seen as his associates in the so-called Shanghai Gang—but not any other key central leader to participate in the informal APEC summit of 2001 in Shanghai was only one of the many obvious examples that reveal the pattern. It seems certain that Jiang's coalition will seek to retain or enhance this advantage. After all, exercising a monopoly over the irreplaceable position that serves as the principal channel for dialogue

as well as substantive dealings with a major power such as the United States will inevitably produce enormous domestic political assets.

Hu Jintao and the other PBSC members are unlikely to avoid the opportunity to jockey for this prerogative. Hu's visit to the United States last year, for instance, earned for him among many observers the image of a relatively open-minded, sensible, and well-informed CCP leader. Many regard him as possessing great potential to be a desirable key leader working to stabilize U.S.–China ties and tackling thorny bilateral issues. Driven by the structural dynamics of the emerging framework of elite politics, Hu would assuredly be encouraged by the strength of his position to pursue a stronger role in participating in key spheres of the bilateral relationship. What may develop, therefore, is competition among the various power blocs in the top echelon of the CCP over the personalized influence exercised by individuals involved in U.S.–China relations.

It might be tempting to dismiss the momentousness of this competition. After all, competition over personalized influence seems nothing new. But the changing context in which this competition is taking place makes a vast difference. The distinctive features of such a competition are the absence at the apex of a single legitimate mediator to set commonly accepted ground rules, to monitor the race, and to ensure that each contestant possesses a fairly solid comparative advantage. Considering these parameters, it would be hard to find a reasonably comparable case in the past. Under them the competition would be much more intense and, in consequence, would give much more significance to the top elites. Their domestic political strength as well as survival would hinge on their access to and then control over the channels that conduct bilateral dialogues and dealings and their ability to resolve bilateral disputes. Accordingly, the United States may find its leverage in facing China greater than ever because U.S. stances toward and responses to various Chinese top elites will undeniably affect their relative performance in this particular

competition. The recognition of this reality by no means suggests that this particular competition would necessarily result in the compromise of China's vital national interests vis-à-vis the United States, given the common denominator of the Chinese elites' firm consensus. On the other hand, at a critical juncture of the transition in China's domestic politics, the U.S. policymaking community might not want to turn a blind eye on the new possibility that has potentially momentous consequences for U.S.–China relations.

To be sure, the new possibility does not necessarily mean the United States can unilaterally shape China's U.S. policy by manipulating its political contacts with various key leaders in China. Taking advantage of the new possibility also would entail extensive briefings about the potential pitfalls of particular tactics. Any mistake that results in the failure of a particular key leader to stay in the competition would create a serious backlash against bilateral relations.

Second (and related to the first factor), various CCP top elites' perceptions of China's domestic political reform will continue to shape the U.S. perception of the nation in general and of individual leaders in particular. As China's economic reform reaches a point of no return, the weight of political reform will increase to such an extent that it will dictate how the United States views China. Jiang and his colleagues of the third generation of CCP leadership more or less coped with the issue by simply postponing the most critical and needed systemwide reform measures and strategically passing on the tough task to the next generation. Hu may not be more capable than Jiang of handling the political risks inherent in any major political reform. But he and his colleagues of the fourth generation, facing cumulative and explosive tensions across and within social strata and geographic areas and between the state and society, will have no more leeway to dodge the issue. Above all, both inside and outside of China, this issue is precisely the one on which Hu can score by seizing initiatives and distinguishing himself from the previous generation and perhaps from his competitors as well. Scholar

Susan Shirk points out that the image of China and of individual Chinese leaders based on the criteria of democracy and human rights more often than not has determined how the United States perceives them and adjusts its fundamental approach to bilateral relations.⁷

A key dimension that has remained largely overlooked is Hu's greater amenability to political reform than Jiang's and Zeng's. Their approaches reflected not so much disparities in their personal political beliefs but discrepancies in their power bases.⁸ Hu hails from the organizational system of the Chinese Communist Youth League (CCYL), whose recruitment policy is inclusionary of various social strata across the board. Accordingly, Hu's followers from the CCYL reflect broad-based diversity in personal and family backgrounds. In contrast, both Jiang and Zeng are the offspring of first-generation CCP revolutionaries. As widely perceived in China, they have remained more closely aligned with those of similar backgrounds (the so-called princelings, or *Taizidang* who hold key posts in the party–state apparatus), than have Hu and his CCYL adherents. The rationale for the *Taizidang*'s political support for and cooperation with Jiang and Zeng is the latter's insistence on preserving the one-party dominant, authoritarian political order that the old revolutionaries strove to maintain and, more important, their role in obtaining and sustaining all the political and socioeconomic privileges of the group. Any major systemwide political reform would set in motion a series of measures that would deepen the trend and thus threaten their monopoly over key political and economic resources. It follows from this analysis that Hu, if he is not to be sidelined in any future power reshuffling, will have to undertake some meaningful political reform based on the pragmatic concerns of power politics and revitalized legitimacy.⁹ Once achieved, a political reform of that kind would win for him a more favorable image as well as special recognition from the United States.

The two effects suggested above do not mean that Hu and Zeng are doomed to engage in a zero-

sum, noncooperative power game. Like most actors in a competitive context, they share a set of parallel interests (such as their support for the CCP's continued domination) and may not reject cooperation wherever it appears likely that both sides will benefit rather than lose from choosing such a strategic approach. Most important, no insurmountable obstacles appear to hinder them from devising mechanisms of power sharing in certain issue areas.

Third, the worldviews and perspectives on international relations of the new CCP top elites are likely to be more diversified, flexible, and adaptive than those of their predecessors. This observation is based on their personal cognitive and evaluative inclinations, which have been revealed on various occasions.¹⁰ Above all, the CCP's Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group (FALSG), which perhaps exercises more influence than any other political institution in China on both daily and long-term foreign policymaking, is likely to give to that type of orientation a credibility reinforced by information, analytic roadmaps, and policy advice proffered to FALSG and the top elites by the epistemic community in China that is engaged in foreign policymaking. It has been predicted that the information flow from that community to China's foreign policy apparatus in the near future will carry growing weight.¹¹ As many of us in frequent contact with the community have come to realize, it has been undergoing a series of swift transformations particularly since the mid-1990s. Realist thinking, for example, is no longer the dominating paradigm in both academic and policy deliberations and debates. Furthermore, China's increasingly deepening involvement in international institutions—whether bilateral, minilateral, or multilateral—not only exposes the members of that community to more cosmopolitan elements but also helps to foster their understanding that an isolationist, noncooperative grand strategy of foreign policy is not a viable option for China.

The key implication here, I would argue, relates not only to the perception that the new CCP leadership appears to be more open to interna-

tional norms and rules; more important is the conclusion that it is unlikely that China will fall prey to the paranoia of perceiving itself to be alienated from and antagonized by the current international system. Accordingly, the conventional U.S. preoccupation with refraining from taking actions that could make China paranoid in this way, although still relevant in general, may require some reformulation or at least fine-tuning. From a bargaining point of view, recognition of the relatively insular, stiff, and unpredictable behavior of China's previous top leadership, which culminated in "tying China's hands," may no longer serve to reinforce rival expectations that China can derive an advantage from continuing to act in this way in the international arena. Consequently, this approach may no longer seem as effective as it did before—but only if the United States identifies and recognizes the possibility of change in the domestic component of Chinese foreign policymaking.

These three factors, to be sure, do not justify a tougher U.S. stance toward China after the 16th CCP Congress. Counterbalancing forces are playing out as well. Chinese nationalism and the People's Liberation Army's domestic political clout, for instance, are two crucial considerations that stem from China's macropolitical structure. About Chinese nationalism, this article proposes two hypotheses. First, its overall impact on China's international behavior will increasingly depend on the interaction between China's aspirations and its demands to receive increasing structural status in the international system and the corresponding response from the major powers and the rest of the world. This issue will ultimately and inexorably be entangled with the fundamental contradiction between China's longstanding pursuit of a multipolar international order and the U.S. belief in a unipolar system that underpins its foreign policy now. Second, China's rising expectations based on its status in international affairs derives from, among other things, the augmentation of its comprehensive national power that has benefited heavily from globalization. China is indubitably the greatest beneficiary

of the much freer flows of capital and technology that have occurred in the past two decades. Given up-to-date statistics on these flows, it seems that China will continue to reap the lion's share. Therefore, the overall pattern suggests that as more progress is achieved in globalization, China will make more demands internationally, which may be frustrated. Should that happen, it would fuel the nationalistic mood in Chinese society. This scenario, together with the prospect of many developments that can be scrutinized only in the future, suggests that, contrary to what many believe, for China a zero-sum, linear relationship does not exist between a growth in nationalism and involvement in globalization as well as in internationalization.

China's Domestic Politics and Taiwan-China Relations

A mix of preexisting dynamics and new factors after the 16th CCP Congress may bring about at least the following four outcomes in China's policy toward Taiwan. First, the PLA's domestic political clout might soar because of the intrinsic structural weakness of the political elite who lack adequate legitimacy and have to count on the military's political backing in succession politics. The lack of legitimacy haunts the top leadership in all Communist party states. Yet the change in China might not be as dramatic as was widely anticipated. One of Jiang's evident bargaining chips before the party congress was the military's relatively unanimous approval of his retention of command. Underscoring the importance of the relationship to both the PLA and the top leadership of the CCP is the fact that Jiang counted on army support for the realignment before the party congress and that the PLA needed Jiang's sponsorship as well. Undeniably, among all top civilian leaders, Jiang adroitly established and has successfully maintained the closest and strongest ties with the PLA. Above all, even after the sweeping reshuffle of the top leadership within the

CMC since the party congress, certain key officers in the PLA still depend on Jiang (or his associates) for the continued development of their careers. In brief, the relationship reflects a two-way, mutual dependence between Jiang's power coalition and the PLA, not one characterized by an imbalance in favor of the PLA, which Jiang's coalition has been forced to maintain.

This analysis suggests that as long as Jiang remains chairman of the CMC, the PLA will have to take into serious consideration his intentions and preferences for key security issues, such as the use of force against Taiwan. In the absence of irreparably provocative actions by Taiwan, the PLA will have to exercise self-restraint to the extent that it shares Jiang's policy preferences. When it has been determined that Jiang will step down from the CMC chairmanship, the logic of power politics among the CCP leadership suggests that he will not be able to hand over the authority of command to Hu. One way or the other, he may keep a firm grip on the PLA or play a role in ushering in the influence of his associates and thereby ensure for the civilian leader who assumes actual control over vital security and military issues the kind of relationship that has existed consistently between the PLA and the leader of the political elite. In fact, this seems a key reason for Jiang's decision to cling to the CMC chairmanship while relinquishing the position of general secretary.

Second, China's rudimentary policy line toward Taiwan of "peaceful unification" under the formula of "one country, two systems" is unlikely to be scrapped or to be refreshed with any practical innovation in the near future. The most obvious reason is the symbiotic tie between Jiang's coalition and the PLA. It continues to reinforce Jiang's Eight-Point Initiative promulgated in January 1995, when the policy line was further consolidated by his proposal of Cross-Strait dialogues for unification and proclaimed as Beijing's policy guideline in the near future. Jiang's characterization of Beijing's Taiwan policy in his political report at the party congress clearly set the tone for this continuity. But, more important, the

inertia reflects the growing collective tendencies of the top CCP leadership. In the absence of the perception on the part of the PBSC elite that any fourth-generation leader possesses the solid status of first among equals, such as Jiang has exemplified since the 15th CCP Congress, and has acquired legitimate paramount authority, the top leadership will be much more collective at its core than it was before last November. Accordingly, it will be more difficult to produce any meaningful policy change on the key issue of Taiwan because in itself the consensus decision rule normally applied to such a key realm would be inimical to policy change.

Furthermore, in the context of power competition, no individual leader would have the incentive to depart from the collectively held policy line over which there has been little division. No one is strong enough to force the other to shift the policy line. That also suggests that no individual leader would be able to strike a binding deal with Taiwan without the knowledge and consent of his colleagues, because both the political risks involved and the preponderance of power needed would be prohibitively high. Finally, because China has defined the Taiwan issue in terms of sovereignty and national pride, the new top leaders will avoid being seen as embracing a soft approach to it in order to minimize their vulnerability in the new power game. All the considerations discussed in this article explain why Qian Qichen, who was then vice premier and deputy leader of the CCP's Taiwan Affairs Leading Small Group (TALSG), indicated on October 16, 2001, that the Cross-Strait three links (especially the air transport link), once established, will be defined strictly as "Cross-Strait" links instead of any special domestic link on which Beijing had insisted in the past. The slim chance that the new leadership would do so may explain precisely why the Jiang leadership made such a major accommodation. Not only does it have more latitude than Taipei's leaders to tinker with the political dimension of the issue of the three links, but the Jiang leadership possessed control of domestic political security required to make that accom-

modation now, in contrast to the new leadership that was unlikely to achieve control soon. The timing of this declaratory policy adjustment could not have been better in the next several years.

Third, among various participants in China's government bureaucracy, there has long been salient interministerial and interdepartmental bureaucratic competition over policymaking toward Taiwan. Bureaucratic competition is particularly evident in the TALSG and its cross-ministerial role of policy coordination.¹² The major problem is that rather than competing to achieve greater effectiveness and innovation in China's Taiwan policy, bureaucratic actors, first and foremost, are engaged in competing for the political trust and backing of top elites. The aggregate outcome of this behavior is homogeneity in the information and analyses proffered by most, if not all, competitors in the bureaucracy, who seem to go out of their way to echo the existing policy line and endorse specific measures toward Taiwan. The best example is the bureaucracy's misunderstanding and judgment of the 2000 Taiwan presidential election. The information was widely circulated in Taiwan's community of China studies that except for a handful of analysts in southern China, the major bureaucratic actors in the PRC came up with the prediction that either Lian Zhan or James Soong, not Chen Shui-bian, would prevail. Considering Beijing's calculus that in many ways Chen would be the least desirable leader of Taiwan from its standpoint, the Chinese bureaucracy's misjudgment was by no means a surprise.

Only since the 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait crisis has the scope of China's bureaucratic participation in the Taiwan policy process gradually increased. The expansion was brought about by the proliferation of new research institutions specializing in the Taiwan issue and the arrival of new bureaucratic actors as well as policy and academic institutions formerly uninvolved in the issue area. In addition, the forthcoming leadership turnover in the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) is likely to introduce more talented people with strong backgrounds in international

and economic affairs. That infusion may facilitate to some degree the reorientation toward concrete tactics in Beijing's Taiwan policy. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether this quantitative change will engender any substantive policy innovation. To the extent that the quintessential demand for loyalty and political correctness persists in the bureaucracy, which may very well be aggravated by the new power game played by the CCP's top leadership, the prospect appears quite bleak.

Finally, the likelihood that there will be more uncertainties and even the chance of greater instability in China's domestic politics after the 16th CCP Congress yields a crucial implication for Cross-Strait relations. In facing China's new leadership, Taipei, like any other rational actor in international relations, will have a limited incentive to reach any binding agreement with Beijing, particularly one governing Taipei's and Beijing's relative political status. This issue goes back to the defining parameters of China's new power game and thus differs from the period of relative rapprochement that characterized relations between Taiwan and China from 1992 to 1995. The credibility of state actors' external behavior is always subject to the interpretation of other international actors and always a function of their internal stability or, as Kenneth Lieberthal said in speaking of the Chinese Communist regime, "the personal, factional nature of elite politics makes instability an ever-present stability."¹³ Unless the structure of such a self-perpetuating stasis can be removed by the new CCP leadership, there appears to be little reason for Taiwan to rush into a deal tainted by Beijing's shaky credibility.

About the Author

Dr. Szue-Chin Philip Hsu is assistant research fellow at the Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan, and a member of the NCAFP's Roundtable on U.S.–China–Taiwan Relations.

Notes

1. See, for instance, the various reasoning and scenarios provided in Gang Lin and Susan Shirk (eds.), *The 16th CCP Congress and Leadership Transition in China* (Asia Program Special Report no. 105, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C., September 2002).

2. This observation of Jiang's strategic intention stands in contrast to the view held by Susan Shirk, H. Lyman Miller, and Lowell Dittmer. Although not completely precluding the possibility of the strategic intention, they propose that clinging to the position of the CCP's general secretary is one of Jiang's real objectives. See Susan Shirk, "The Succession Game"; H. Lyman Miller, "The 16th Party Congress and China's Political Processes"; and Lowell Dittmer, "Chinese Factional Politics Under Jiang," in Lin and Shirk, *The 16th CCP Congress and Leadership Transition in China*, op. cit.

3. Various new members of PBSC, on the sidelines of the party congress, underscored those issues.

4. Michael Swaine, *China: Domestic Change and Foreign Policy* (Santa Monica, Ca., 1995), 7–8.

5. H. Lyman Miller and Liu Xiaohong, "The Foreign Policy Outlook of China's 'Third Generation Elite,'" in David M. Lampton (ed.), *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978–2000* (Stanford, Ca., 2001), 127–145.

6. Carol Lee Hamrin, "Elite Politics and the Development of China's Foreign Relations," in Thomas W. Robinson and David Shambaugh (eds.), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (Oxford, 1994), 83.

7. Hao Yufan and Zhang Yandong, *Wuxing de Shou: Yu Meiguo Zhongguo Wenti Zhuanjia Dianping Zhongmei Guanxi* (An Invisible Hand: Reflections from American China Experts on Sino–American Relations; Beijing, 2000), 249–261, 318–338.

8. Li Cheng also notes the variation in the foundation of Hu's and Zeng's constituencies. But Li focuses on such dimensions as organizational, personal careers, and the specific geographical backgrounds of the constituencies. Li also interprets their different power bases in terms of the structural conflict of interests in the overall Chinese polity, which could be resolved through bargaining. This article maintains that those dimensions will be crosscutting with the dimension of social strata and that the effect of that dimension is reflected in the dispute over domestic political reform, which may be much harder to settle. See Li Cheng, "Emerging Patterns of Power Sharing: Inland Hu vs. Coastal Zeng?" in Lin and Shirk, *op. cit.*

9. In fact, anecdotal evidence in recent years seems to point to a greater chance of bold political reform sponsored by Hu rather than by Zeng personally. One example was an experiment this year, believed to have been initiated by Hu's associates in the city government of Nanjing, of allowing public opinion to exert increased influence on the issue of the turnover of personnel in local government. A city bureau chief who ranked last in the mass evaluation made by ordinary citizens in Nanjing could not continue to hold onto his job. Another example, which occurred in 2000, was the handling of the case of Gao Fang, a retired professor who had publicly called for more direct challenges from China's political parties other than the CCP to the one-party political

dominance of local legislatures. Gao was allowed to attend a seminar hosting a highly selective group of participants that focused on Jiang Zemin's political directive of reassessing Western capitalism. Many believe that the seminar was organized under Hu's supervision.

10. H. Lyman Miller and Liu Xiaohong maintain that the fourth-generation leaders constitute about half of the Politburo members since the 15th Party Congress. Together with the third generation, the fourth generation is likely to be very pragmatic, committed to overall development instead of ideological principles, and thoroughly "internationalist" toward the international community. This foreign policy orientation stems from the common background of the majority of both the third and fourth generation as technocrats and careerists from China's coastal regions. See Miller and Liu, *op. cit.*, 127, 136–139.

11. Fourth-generation leaders, in working with their seniors from the third generation since the 15th Party Congress, have been inclined to rely on staff work by aides, professional bureaucrats, and experts in the decision-making processes on foreign relations and security issues. See Miller and Liu, *op. cit.*, 138.

12. Michael D. Swaine, "Chinese Decision-Making Regarding Taiwan, 1979 to 2000," in Lampton, *op. cit.*, 297–302.

13. Kenneth G. Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform*, 319.

