

The Second Transition of Political Elites in China: A Response to National Crisis

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Abstract

This study aims to characterize the 18th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). It argues that, after the first transition of Chinese political elites from revolutionary cadres to technocrats in the post-reform era, the second transition occurred in the 18th Central Committee of CCP with a shift from technocrats to 'generalist cadres'. The latest leading elite types of generalist cadres in CCP tend to be college graduates in humanities and social sciences with work experience in the Party or government-related organizations. The emergence of this new leading elite type indicates that China has entered a new post-revolution and post-industrialization era. Unlike the 'lions' in the revolutionary era or the 'foxes' in the industrialization era, the new leaders tend to maintain more generalist characteristics than elitist or populist in order to resolve the crises of national disparity and imbalance.

Key words: 18th central committee of the chinese communist party, the second transition of political elites, revolutionary cadre, technocrats, generalist cadre, national crisis

1. Introduction

The 18th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was held in November 2012. Each National Congress reviews the previous five years and determines the policy line for the following five years. It also amends the party regulations, and elects the CCP's major leaders: members and candidate members of the Central Committee. The significance of the most recent National Congress in particular is evident in analyses of how these three elements determine China's trajectory. While

the review and implementation of policy and the amendment of party regulations may be characteristic of fixed structures, the election of the CCP leaders acts as a core operating entity for driving change in China as it interacts with the internal and external variables within structural constraints. Furthermore, the National Congress represents the Chinese political elite in practice. Because of the party-state system, the social impact of the elites is relatively large compared to that in other countries; analysis of changes within the leadership is therefore critical to Chinese political studies (Lee, 1983; Li & White,

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1988; Zang, 1993; Li & White, 1998; Li & White, 2003; Bo, 2008).

This study aims to characterize the 18th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). It argues that after the first transition of Chinese political elites from revolutionary cadres to technocrats in the post-reform era, the second transition has occurred in the 18th Central Committee with a shift from technocrats to 'generalist cadres'. The first transition of leading elite types occurred in the post-reform era from revolutionary cadres to technocrats, and this paper argues that a second transition has occurred. This new type of elite can be defined as a 'generalist cadre,' as opposed to 'lions' (revolutionary cadres) and 'foxes' (technocrats).

Existing research on China's political elites has principally been centred on the transition of elite types through each national congress. These studies share two characteristics. First, their view is based on the perspective that elite type change is both a dependent variable that defines the characteristics of Chinese societies and an independent variable that is influenced by social change in China. Second, it is generally perceived that China's first elite type transition began with the economic reform policies of the eighties. Lastly, most papers characterize officials from before the reform era as 'revolutionary cadres.' Differences have appeared with the newly emerged concept of elite types in the reform era. Some scholars have characterized the newly emerged elite type as 'technocrats,' while others have argued that it is difficult to apply the Western concept of a technocrat to Chinese society and that some adjustment is required (Lee, 1991; Li & White, 1998; Shi, 1998; Bo, 2004). In this sense, this study

discovers and analyses the new leading type of elite that has replaced the technocrats.

In order to conduct a full-scale analysis, this research uses the *Chinese Political Elites Database, 1921–2012*. This database contains data about all 1,973 full and alternate members of the 1st to 18th Central Committees of the CCP. Specific categories include demographic information such as the age, gender, birthplace, ethnicity and year of birth of each member, as well as socio-political information such as education, university major, career background, party standing, primary place of work and elite types. In addition, specific data were collected from peer-reviewed journals in the literature and data from *China Vitae*, A Dictionary of Members of the Central Committees of the Chinese Communist Party, 1921–2003, and *the Chinese Political Elites Database* (Joo, 2013: 280).

II. The Second Transition of Chinese Political Elites: From Technocrats to General Cadres

1. Overall Characteristics of the 18th Central Committee of the CCP

The 18th Central Committee is composed of members with an average age of 56, with 91.2 percent of the members are male, 89.9 percent Han Chinese, and over 46 percent claiming one of the main coastal areas (Shandong, Jiangsu, Hebei, Liaoning and Zhejiang Provinces) as their home region (Joo, 2013b: 49–51).

With regard to age, one thing is important. The average age of 56 in the 18th Central Committee is one year younger than the average age in the 17th Central Committee; however, all Central

Committees since the reform era have had an average age in the late 50s with a high of 59 and a low of 56. The 18th Central Committee continues to be male-dominated with only 33 women, or 8.8%, participating. While gender diversity decreased slightly between the 16th to the 17th Central Committees, a slight bump in the 18th Central Committee shows some weakening in the representation of females. Ethnic minorities represent 10.1 percent of the Central Committee. In fact, 17 out of 55 ethnic minority groups have each generated more than one full or alternate members of the Central Committee. The 17 ethnic minority groups are Hui, Uyghur, Hasake, Dai, Yi, Miao, Man, Zang, Menggu, Tujia, Buyi, Chaoxian, Yao, Bai, Li, She, and Zhuang.

Also, ethnic heterogeneity of 18th Central Committee reaches its highest levels the since the reform era during this period. In terms of birthplace, Shandong is represented more than any other province with over 14% of Central Committee members hailing from there. Unlike ethnic heterogeneity, birthplace heterogeneity has weakened compared to the 17th Central Committee, suggesting perhaps that a degree of bias has been reinforced in some areas (Joo, 2013b: 50).

The education level before starting government work is completion of tertiary studies and the average overall highest educational attainment is university graduate. Education is based on two indicators: the final level of tertiary education completed and whether or not members completed university before starting government work. The overall level of education in both indicators has increased since the reform era. In particular, overall education levels have increased significantly since the 15th Central Committee and the level of education

before starting official Party work has increased one level on average since the 16th Central Committee. University majors are categorized into natural or applied sciences, humanities or social sciences, and military degrees. Among these, humanities, or social sciences, accounted for 46.6 percent of the total, or 173 members. The most highly selected major has changed from the natural or applied sciences to the humanities or social sciences.

In terms of the primary career background, that of members before being selected to the Central Committee, 40.4 percent of the Central Committee, or 152 members, held careers within the Party Organization, including mass organization. However, the representational dominance of Party Organization within career distribution has only recently come about. From the 14th to 16th Central Committees, the distribution of Party Organization as a career increased slightly from 11.4% to 16.6%. Nevertheless, the 17th Central Committee saw it rise over 20 points as 39.4% of the members held careers within the Party. Also, career heterogeneity has decreased slightly in the 18th Central Committee after sustaining slight increases in the previous two Committees (Joo, 2013b: 52–55).

The average Party standing (years of working in the Party) is 34.1. When these categories are compared diachronically, the average age is one year lower than the 17th Central Committee's average of 57, and is equal to that of the 16th Central Committee – the lowest average in the post-reform era. Regarding gender distribution, male representation at 91.2 percent is slightly higher than for the 17th Central Committee, but is relatively low compared to distribution in other sessions in the post-reform era. In terms of ethnic minority ratio, it is similar

to that in the 16th and 17th Central Committees but is lower than those of the 15th and 16th Central Committees. Shandong Province has produced the largest number of political elites in the post-reform era, reaching its highest ratio in the 18th Central Committee. For education levels in the post-reform era, the final education level has steadily risen compared to the education level before starting government work. The trend of majoring in the natural and applied sciences compared to the humanities and social sciences has shown an inverted-U and U-shape in the 18th Central Committee. The two curves intersect, with the humanities and social sciences accounting for more of the university majors.

In terms of career background, the trend of having worked in the Party and in government-related organizations is on the rise in the 18th Central Committee as was also seen in the 17th Central Committee. The number of people who have had a career in engineering continues to increase, with engineering remaining the second most popular career field. The heterogeneity of variables in relation to university majors (such as gender, ethnicity, hometown, university major and career background) seems to be inconsistent with recent trends. Only gender heterogeneity has increased in the 18th Central Committee, which until now had been in decline since the 15th Central Committee. The heterogeneity of rest of the categories has been weakening. Ethnic heterogeneity had been increasing since the 16th Central Committee, career background had been on the rise since with the 15th Central Committee, and hometown origins and university majors had seen increased diversity since the 12th Central Committee, but all took a downward

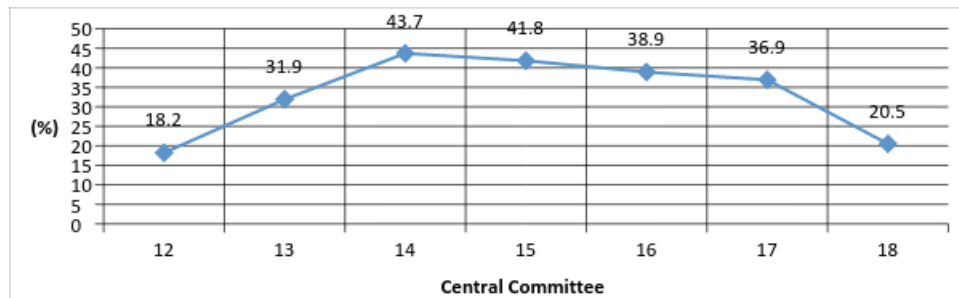
turn in the 18th Central Committee (Joo, 2013b: 62–63).

From this information we can gather that heterogeneity has been relatively weakened in most of the categories, which means that the level of differentiation within the elite group has also weakened (Joo, 2013c: 111–115). In other words, the possibility of conflict caused by disagreements is likely to have diminished. Interestingly, if such changes are connected to the discussion of mode of circulation, the current Chinese political elites have transitioned to the ‘ideocratic’ type that is typical under totalitarian political systems. In addition to differentiation, unity is also taken into consideration to set the elite type. Apart from ideocratic type, there are also elite types of ‘consensual’, ‘fragmented’ and ‘divided’ (Burton & Higley, 2001: 191–199).

2. The Second Transition of Chinese Political Elites

This section examines the transition of Chinese political elite types. As shown in (Figure 1), the peak of the first transition from revolutionary cadres to technocrats was in the 14th Central Committee. Their representation has been in decline since as other elite types have become more powerful. The steep decline in the representation of technocrats from the 17th to 18th Central Committees indicates that another transition has occurred.

The term ‘revolutionary cadre’ has been used to conceptualize the characteristics of Chinese political elites in the pre-reform era. They were mainly poor peasants and workers who were active in the revolution but who held low levels of formal education. They are currently typically seen as



※ Source: The Chinese Political Elites Database, 1921–2012.

Figure 1. The proportion of technocrats in the 12th to 18th central committees

incapable of understanding the professional services needed in an industrial society. Some of the founding members of the CCP were revolutionary cadres. Without an interest in protecting the existing social order, they created new political structures after their gains from the revolution. After 1949, these revolutionary cadres ruled China and the CCP in a radical way (Lee, 1991: 384–385).

After the revolution in 1949, political loyalty (*dezhi*) was highly regarded while professional knowledge was largely ignored. The criteria for selecting members of the CCP were based on “ability and integrity” (*decaijianbei*) (Liu, 2007: 64). This trend was reinforced through land reform, collective farms, the struggle against the political right, the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution and other political movements. In fact, in the pre-reform era the selection criteria for the CCP cadre was ranked first by participation in revolutionary activity such as the Long March or the war against the Japanese, as well as the date of joining the CCP; secondly by one’s ideological commitment to Marxism or Maoism; thirdly, through political loyalty and active behaviour in class struggle; fourthly, by being a member of the proletariat. On the other hand, those who received university education were recognized as one of the

nine classes that were harmful to society and always needed to be re-examined for revolutionary purposes (Lee, 1983: 676–678).

Revolutionary cadres can be broken down according to the political generation in China, as similar ages and shared socio-political experiences are taken into account. For example, the first generation of China’s political elites are those who went through the Long March from 1934 to 1935. The key figures are Mao Zedong (1893–1976), Zhou Enlai (1898–1976), Liu Shaoqi (1898–1969), Lin Biao (1907–1971), and Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997). The second generation experienced the Second Sino-Japanese War from 1937 to 1945. The key figures are Hu Yaobang (1915–1989), Zhao Ziyang (1919–2005), Hua Guofeng (1921–2008) and Qiao Shi (1924–) (Goodman, 1980; Li, 2001: 9). Thus, the main types of the first and second generation of political elites can be said to be revolutionary cadres, leading the 1st to 11th Central Committees of the CCP from 1921 to 1982.

When economic reforms began in the early nineteen eighties, a new type of elite began to emerge – the technocrat. This concept was originally presented in the United States in order for them to explain the emergence of a new type of elite that was distinct from previous revolutionary cadres.

As opposed to the previous generations' emphasis on political activity, loyalty, and ideological beliefs, emphasis shifted in the reform era to those with skills in advanced technology (Bell, 1977). Technocrats are defined as those having received university education in the natural and applied sciences while also possessing necessary professional skills and work experience in relevant fields (Bo, 2007: 98–99). The concept of technocrats was used as a way of analysing the 12th Central Committee of the CCP in order to better understand the makeup of its members (Mills, 1983: 16–35). Meanwhile, this concept was used under the political freedom and democracy but after Stalin's death the Soviet Union also used it to analyse the new elite (Bailes, 1978). The trend of using the term 'technocrat' has continued in China.

While the emergence of the technocrats was initially recognized after the 12th Central Committee, as <Figure 1> shows, the first elite transition from revolutionary cadres to technocrats occurred during the 13th Central Committee in 1987 (Li & White, 1990). The dominance of the technocrats reached a peak in the 14th Central Committee and even after slight declines in representation percentages in the subsequent Central Committees; they continued to maintain their dominance (Li & White, 2003: 559).

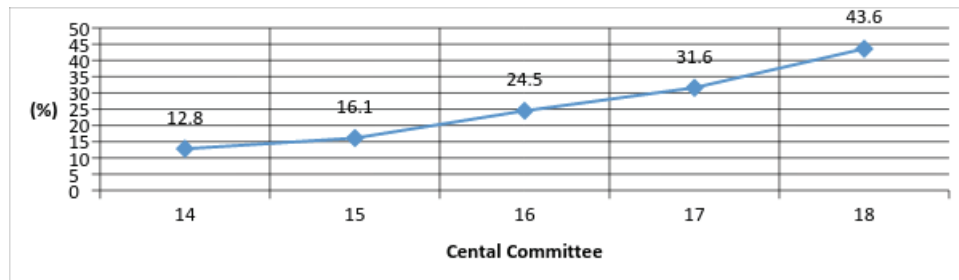
Compared to the existing revolutionary cadres, the technocrats were seen as young, highly educated, and experienced in business and science. The main reason for the first elite transition from revolutionary cadres to technocrats was due to the change in recruitment policy for cadres. In the eighties, Deng Xiaoping began advocating for changes such as the Four Modernizations. The Four

Modernizations was formulated and written into the Party rules during the 12th National Congress of the CCP in 1982. While continuing to stress the importance of 'virtue' among Party members, Deng also began to emphasize education, specialization, talent, and youth – qualities that were seemingly opposite to Mao's preference for "ability and integrity" but attributes that Deng felt were needed for economic reform and growth (Straus, 2003: 831–834).

The political realities of the time indicated that economic reform was needed and in order to minimize resistance, the leadership wanted to expand membership to those that would be more amenable to policy changes (Lee, 1991: 323–346). The effects were immediately visible. With the introduction of this policy, total membership of the Central Committee of the CCP began to rise. As shown in <Figure 1>, from the 12th to 14th Central Committee, total membership increased by 10 percent every session.

Technocrats can be divided into two generations. One is the third generation, who experienced the socialist renovation between 1949 and 1958, and the other is the fourth generation, who went through the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976 (Li, 2001: 9). The key figures of the third generation are Jiang Zemin (1926–), Li Peng (1928–) and Li Ruihuan (1934–) while those of the fourth generation are Hu Jintao (1942–), Wen Jiabao (1942–) and Wu Bangguo (1941–). Most of them are seen as technocrats and became the leading political elites in China in the post-reform era.

As a prime example, Jiang Zemin, born in 1926 in Jiangsu Province, participated in the student movement led by the CCP underground organizations



※ Source: The Chinese Political Elites Database, 1921–2012

Figure 2. The proportion of generalist cadres in the 12th to 18th central committees

in 1943. After joining the CCP in 1946, he graduated from Shanghai Jiaotong University in 1947 with a degree in electrical engineering. After the liberation of Shanghai, he worked as an engineer at the Shanghai Yimin Food Factory. He also received training at the Stalin Automobile Works in Moscow in 1955. Returning home that same year, he worked for Changchun's First Automobile Works, the Shanghai Electrical Science Institute, the Import and Export Committee, and the National Foreign Investment Management Committee. He became a member of the 12th Central Committee in 1982 while serving as Minister of Electronic Industries. In 1985 he began serving as Mayor of Shanghai and as Party Secretary of Shanghai. In 1987 he was selected as a member of the Politburo, and in 1989 became General Secretary of the Central Committee.

Hu Jintao was born in Anhui Province in 1942. He began studying water conservancy engineering at Tsinghua University in 1959 and graduated in 1964 (the same year he joined the Party) while staying on at the university to work as a political instructor. From 1968 to 1969 Hu worked on the construction of the Liujiaxia Hydroelectric Station, moving on to the Sinohydro Engineering Bureau in 1969. From 1974 to 1980 he worked as an engineer and secretary in the Construction Department of

Gansu Province. Afterward, he became the Secretary of the Communist Youth League Gansu Branch from 1980 to 1982 and also served as secretariat and First Secretary of Communist Youth League Central Committee in 1985. He was selected as a candidate member for the 12th Central Committee in 1982 and as a member of the Central Committee in 1985. He served as the provincial Committee Secretary of the CCP in Guizhou between 1985 and 1988 and Party Regional Committee Secretary of the Tibetan Autonomous Region between 1988 and 1992, and became a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee in 1992. After a succession of promotions, he became the General Secretary of the 16th Central Committee in 2002.

After the 14th Central Committee, the proportional representation of technocrats began to drop, and by the 18th Central Committee, their ranks had fallen to just slightly above their numbers from the 12th Central Committee (see <Figure 1>). At the same time, a new elite type began to emerge. This new type, the generalist, has grown steadily through each successive Central Committee, and in the most recent 18th Central Committee, its proportional dominance far exceeds that of the technocrat (see <Figure 2>).

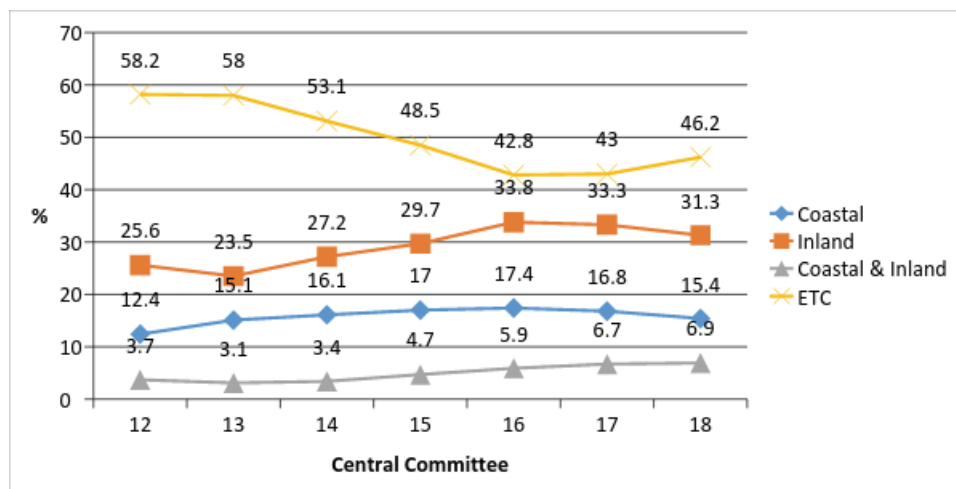
III. The Conception of ‘Generalist Cadre’

This section aims to define this new elite type through comparisons with previous types. The definition of a specific elite type can be also conducted in the manner of designing a certain analytical framework and measure the variables. This method can be having a higher level of universality as it can conduct both of diachronous and synchronic comparisons (Higley & Pakulski, 1995; Burton & Higley, 2001).

The term *generalist* can be found in the research literature of Soviet and Chinese politics. Compared to revolutionary cadres, generalists have higher levels of education and experience participating in the revolution or civil war. Also, rather than majoring primarily in applied or natural sciences as is the case with technocrats, this new elite type has specialized in social sciences and humanities. In terms of career backgrounds, generalists have mostly worked in the Party or in government organizations such as the Communist Youth League or All-China Women’s Federation.

It should be noted that when this paper categorizing these elites specifically, the field of study for post-graduate education is prioritized over undergraduate majors. For example, Party members might have graduated with an undergraduate degree in natural and applied sciences before furthering their education in humanities and social sciences. Also, career background is put before university major, so if one gains work experience in the areas mentioned above, it is categorized in ‘generalist cadre’ type. The typical examples are Xi Jinping and Li Yuanchao (the current member of political bureau of central committee of CCP and vice president of P.R.C). Before formally starting work, Li Yuanchao studied Math in Shanghai Normal University. While working in Communist Youth League Central Committee, he studied economics for his Master’s degree from Peking University and later while working at the central organization of the Party, he received his PhD in law at the Central Party School of the CCP (<<The Chinese Political Elites Database, 1921–2012>>).

These generalist cadres do not seem to carry



* Source: The Chinese Political Elites Database, 1921–2012

* Note: ETC indicates people who have worked in the central government or military.

Figure 3. Changes in work area of the central committee members in the post-reform era

similar patterns in work experience. As shown in <Figure 3>, the proportion of such cadres working in the central government or military is generally low and the proportion of those working in inland and coastal areas are gradually rising. Thus, it is difficult to determine that work experience in any particular area is a prerequisite for categorization as a generalist cadre.

The term *generalist* can be found in the research literature of Soviet Union and Chinese politics. It differs from the revolutionary cadre mentioned above and it is used as the opposite of technocrats, i.e. specialists or experts. The term includes those cadres who have no experience in revolutionary or war-like activities and those who have no special expertise or professional expertise but who have primarily worked in the Party and in government organizations (Blackwell, 1972; Monte 1979). The term ‘cadre,’ which appeared in relation to the Russian revolution, emphasizes political characteristics, whereas the term ‘bureaucrats’ focuses on functionality and practical skills (Brodsgaard, 2012: 71–73). Therefore, overall, generalist cadres are those CCP members who are college graduates with a major in the humanities or social sciences and who gained work experience in the Party and government-related organizations. They are China’s new political elite type.

The increase in this type of political elite may be related to changes in the CCP’s policy on cadres. An example of these changes can be seen in the “List of Selection and Appointment of Leading Party Cadres,” a document which began as a temporary practice in 1995 before becoming formally established in 2002. This document describes six principles applied when selecting and appointing

the Party cadres: 1) the principle of the Party’s management of cadres; 2) the principle of appointing people based on their merit, virtue, ability and integrity; 3) the principle of recognition from mass and performance-oriented activities; 4) the principle of openness, equality, competition and talent; 5) the principle of democratic centralism; and 6) the principle of the rule of law (Zhonggong zhongyang, 2003). Compared to Deng’s Four Modernizations, these principles more specifically regulate the selection and appointment of the leading cadres. In particular, the fourth to sixth principles are associated with the institutionalization of the process of cadre selection and appointment. The first to third principles, and especially the first one, have always been emphasized for the Party selection of cadres. Xi Jinping’s remarks in 2009 are similar to the ideas stated in the second principle, but with more emphasis on virtue (People’s Daily, 2009). The third principle has been very specifically added to the list, seemingly as an expression of ways of addressing new problems such as the growing level of corruption among cadres and dissatisfaction from people and society in the post-reform era (Liu, 2010: 13–18). Meanwhile, it has been officially stated that the element of virtue, stated in the second principle, will be stressed over talent.

Generalist cadres seem to belong to the fifth generation of members, as they tend to share the experience of reform and open policy. The key figures are Xi Jinping (1953–), Li Keqiang (1955–) and Li Yuanchao (1950–). Xi Jinping was born in Fuping, Shaanxi Province. Between 1969 and 1975, he was one of the “sent-down youths” or “rusticated” youths of Mao’s Down to the Countryside Movement. Later Xi studied chemical engineering at Tsinghua

University. From 1998 to 2002, he was a post-graduate student at Tsinghua University and obtained a Doctorate of Law (LLD) degree. In addition, from 1979 to 1982, he served as Secretary of General Office of the State Council and the Central Military Commission. He was Deputy Secretary to the CCP Zhengding County Committee in Hebei Province from 1982 to 1985 and subsequently served as Secretary of the Party Committee in the cities of Xiamen, Ningde, and Fuzhou in Fujian Province from 1985 to 2000. Xi was also Secretary of the Party Committee in Zhejiang Province from 2000 to 2007 and became the Party Chief of Shanghai in 2007, the same year he was appointed as a member of the Politburo Standing Committee at the 17th Party Congress. At the 18th Central Committee in 2012, he was appointed General Secretary and became the supreme leader of China.

IV. Conclusion: More than 'Foxes' and 'Lions'

Generalist cadres have become the leading elite type in the 18th Central Committee. The members of this new elite group are identified by their degrees in the humanities and social sciences and their work experience in the Party and government-related organizations. At the same time, the technocrats, the long-time leading elite group in the post-reform era, have seen their dominance particularly decline in this 18th Central Committee. It remains to be seen how China will be led by the new elite type, generalist cadre. This type of elite is certain to make policy choices based on the variables of domestic and international affairs. Thus, this study can only provide some rudimentary prospects based on the

characteristics of generalist cadres by comparing them with the previous leading elite type. The generalist cadres differ Vilfredo Pareto's 'lions' and 'foxes', the classical division of elites along psychological lines (Putnam, 1976: 167-168). In times of revolution, the revolutionary cadres, like brave lions, were on the rise, and during economic reform the technocrats were like crafty foxes. However, China has entered a new era with a society aimed at scientific development and social harmony, and it seems that the Party is seeking a more comprehensive and balanced sense of direction to maintain social and political stability.

These generalists focus on the interests of the whole rather than specializing in a particular region or sector (Shih, 2008: 4-7). Their work experience in the Party and in other government-related organizations shows that they understand the Party hierarchy and existing modes of cooperation. In analyses of the 18th Central Committee, as in terms of elite circulation and differentiation, the terms 'ideocratic' and 'replacement' have gained prominence compared to in other Committees (Joo, 2013c: 125-126).

Generalist cadres are more likely to be populist rather than elitist (Li, 2008: 107-118). With their growth-oriented mind-set, elitists have rationalized the logic of imbalanced development, emphasized the rationality and efficiency and have been paying attention to new economic fields, regions and interests. On the other hand, distribution-focused populists have embraced the logic of balanced development, and emphasized the compromises and negotiations, putting the focus on the traditional economic field, regions and interests. In this respect, generalist cadres have already been verified

in terms of the ability to compromise, negotiate and solve various conflicts and issues occurring in the organizations. The rising of this elite type means that the second transition of Chinese political elites has occurred. This also means that Chinese communist party has changed into more popular or left direction. Importantly, this signs China has entered into Post-Reform era. The policy orientations of this era are those that are more redistributive, invest more in social insurance and protections, and tend to support some kinds of protectionism in favour of national and labour's interests to resolve the crisis of national imbalance and disparity.

This can be also demonstrated by the newly added sections in the "List of Selection and Appointment of Leading Party Cadres" initiated in 2002. In this context, although internal and external changes will play an important variable, the basic policy direction of generalist cadres compared to the technocrats, seems to be leaning towards the left (Nauthton, 2008: 142-150). This is because the 16th Central Committee composed of 24.5 percent generalist cadres, made policies that had leftist characteristics in comparison to the 13th or 14th Central Committee. Compared to the 16th and 17th Central Committees, the 18th Central Committee has shown the tendency to constantly increase the number of generalist cadres and continually decrease the number of technocrats.

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제2차 중국 정치 엘리트의 전환: 국가 위기에 대한 대응

국문초록 이 연구는 제18기 중국 공산당 중앙위원회의 특성을 분석하는 것을 그 목적으로 한다. 이를 통해 중국에서 1980년대 이루어진 혁명간부에서 기술관료로의 제1차 정치 엘리트 전환 이후, 이번 회기를 기점으로 기술관료에서 일반간부로의 제2차 정치 엘리트 전환이 진행되었다는 것을 주장한다. 제18기 중국 공산당 중앙위원회의 주된 엘리트 유형은 대학에서 인문 혹은 사회과학을 전공하고, 당정기관 혹은 군중 조직에서 주요 경력을 쌓은 이들로써, 혁명 간부 그리고 기술관료와 구분되는 일반간부라고 할 수 있다. 이 새로운 주도 엘리트 유형의 출현과 부상은 중국이 혁명과 산업화의 시대를 넘어섰다는 것을 의미한다. 즉 혁명의 시대에 ‘사자’와 같은 엘리트가 필요하고, 산업화의 시대에 ‘여우’가 필요했다면, 후 산업화 시대에는 일반간부가 필요하다는 것이다. 따라서 이 일반간부는 엘리트주의자라기 보다는 대중주의자이고, 주되게 국가적 차원의 불균형과 격차를 해소하기 위해 최적화된 이들이라고 할 수 있다.

주제어 : 제18기 중국 공산당 중앙위원회, 제2차 중국 정치 엘리트 전환, 혁명간부, 기술관료, 일반간부, 국가 위기

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