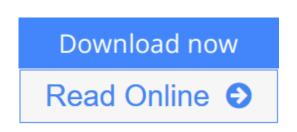


Chinese Politics in the Xi Jinping Era: Reassessing Collective Leadership

By Cheng Li



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Chinese politics are at a crossroads as President Xi Jinping amasses personal power and tests the constraints of collective leadership.

In the years since he became general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party in 2012, Xi Jinping has surprised many people in China and around the world with his bold anti-corruption campaign and his aggressive consolidation of power.

Given these new developments, we must rethink how we analyze Chinese politics—an urgent task as China now has more influence on the global economy and regional security than at any other time in modern history.

Chinese Politics in the Xi Jinping Era examines how the structure and dynamics of party leadership have evolved since the late 1990s and argues that "inner-party democracy"—the concept of collective leadership that emphasizes deal making based on accepted rules and norms—may pave the way for greater transformation within China's political system. Xi's legacy will largely depend on whether he encourages or obstructs this trend of political institutionalization in the governance of the world's most populous and increasingly pluralistic country.

Cheng Li also addresses the recruitment and composition of the political elite, a central concern in Chinese politics. China analysts will benefit from the meticulously detailed biographical information of the 376 members of the 18th Central Committee, including tables and charts detailing their family background, education, occupation, career patterns, and mentor-patron ties.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

A richly detailed account of China's party leadership by one of the world's foremost authorities on Chinese politics.

At the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party in the fall of 2017, China will likely experience its largest leadership turnover since the height of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s. Noted sinologist Cheng Li provides a comprehensive analysis of the vicissitudes of China's party system and predicts what is likely to happen as President Xi Jinping amasses personal power and tests the constraints of collective leadership.

Xi Jinping is one of the most intriguing and complex world leaders of our time, and China's political trajectory is crucial to the peace and prosperity of the world. Since becoming general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party in 2012, Xi has surprised many in China and around the world with his bold anticorruption campaign and his aggressive consolidation of power. Xi's legacy, as Li argues, will largely depend on whether he encourages or obstructs the trend of political institutionalization in governing the world's most populous country as it becomes increasingly pluralistic.

Cheng Li provides a nuanced account of how the structure and dynamics of party leadership have evolved since the late 1990s, challenging Western conventional wisdom about the Middle Kingdom. His insights into what many China analysts call the "black box" of leadership decisionmaking draw on the meticulous biographical information he includes in this volume on the members of the party's Central Committee, with tables and charts detailing their family origins, education backgrounds, occupations, career patterns, and mentor-patron ties.

About the Author

Cheng Li is director and senior fellow at the John L. Thornton China Center at Brookings Institution. His previous books include *China's Political Development: Chinese and American Perspectives* (coedited), *The Road to Zhongnanhai: High-Level Leadership Groups on the Eve of the 18th Party Congress*, and *China's Leaders: The New Generation*.

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