

# The Inner Logic of the Centennial Organizational System of the Communist Party of China

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**Abstract:** *As an advanced Marxist party and the world's largest ruling party, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has formed invaluable experience in organizational building during its century-long stormy journey of leading the Chinese revolution, construction and reform, of which a distinct logical thread is the continuous casting of a tight organization system. Its fundamental logic can be summarized as always manifesting the value orientation of organizing the party, always focusing on building a scientific and strict organizational system, always insisting on the correct application of the organizational principle of democratic centralism, relying more firmly on the organization to accumulate strength, and effectively transforming the organizational advantages into a powerful synergy to advance the cause.*

**Keywords:** *Communist party of china, Century-long, Organizational system, Strength advantage*

## 1. Introduction

Throughout the world, the deepest power of human society originates from the organization, and only by organizing can we form the great power to transform the world, which is not only an eternal law for people to seek survival, but also a basic law in organization science. The essence of a political party is a political organization, and the organizational system is the basic symbol to measure the power of a political party, and also an important guarantee for the ruling party to achieve its ruling goals, reach effective leadership and accomplish its historical mission. It can be said that whether a ruling party can forge a tight organizational system is not only about the amount of its organizational resources, but also profoundly affects the political life and the power of collective action of the ruling party. As an advanced Marxist party and the world's largest ruling party, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has developed invaluable experience in organizational construction during its century-long journey of leading China's revolution, construction and reform, of which a distinctive logical thread is the continuous forging of a tight organizational system.

Looked back at the grand and glorious history of the CPC's centennial construction, since the Party's Second National Congress initially proposed the concept of "Party's organizational system" to "Party's organizational system" clearly defined by the National Organizational Work Conference in July 2018, century-long history forged the party's glory, but also repeatedly showed that the history of the party is a history of the importance of organizational system construction, and giving full play to the power of the organization.

## 2. Always Show the Value of the Organization of the Party

French Duverger, Maurice once said, "The reason why some political parties are strong and efficient, and others are weak and ineffective, can often be explained in the structure of political parties." [1] This not only points out the influence of organizational systems on the action ability and effectiveness of political parties, but also clarifies that the difference between different political parties lies not only in the presence or absence of organizational systems, but also in what kind of organizational system it is. This is because the full play of the strength of political parties depends on the tightness, coordination, and effectiveness of their organizational system in actual operation, which determines the ability of political parties themselves to act in unity. Even Robert Michels, who identified the organization of political parties as having a tendency to oligarchy, had to admit the necessity and importance of organization in the operation of political parties, arguing that "organization appears to be the only way to realize the collective will." [2] For Marxist parties, the establishment of

extensive grass-roots party organizations in the form of party branches and the formation of a tight organizational system from top to bottom is a remarkable mark that distinguishes them from Western bourgeois parties, popular parties and elite parties.

Practice tests the truth and comparison draws conclusions. In the case of Asian political parties in recent years, “the disorderly evolution of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) multi-party organizational structure has led to the emergence of a vicious situation of withdrawal from the LDP, which ultimately threatened the LDP’s governing position.” [3] If we look at the historical roots of the Kuomintang of China (KMT)’s failure during the New Democratic Revolution, it is not difficult to find that the disorganization of the organizational system was an inherent problem of the KMT, and the power game with the bourgeoisie’s vested interests intensified the process of its “governing” towards failure.

Throughout the development of the CPC, “tight organization is both a glorious tradition and an indelible distinctive trait. Compared with other political parties, it is superior in both the degree of refinement in organizational construction and the level of synergy in organizational operation.” [4] Since its establishment, the Party has always adhered to the value of organizational development, and in practice has formed a tight organizational system including the Party’s central organization, local organizations and grassroots organizations, shaping an organizational form that is coherent, integrated, with high beliefs and advanced purposes. This strict organizational system and the leadership of the Party it brings ensure that party members can always be organized, talents can be gathered and the masses can be mobilized in different historical stages, creating a miracle in the history of scientific socialism.

### **3. Always Focus on Creating a Scientific and Strict Organizational System**

People cannot step twice into the same river, and there are no two political parties in the world that look exactly the same. Different political parties often have different organizational systems depending on the historical conditions of their founding, their nature and purpose, their missions and internal environment. As a mature and powerful Marxist ruling party, the CPC has a clear organizational connotation and system structure, and this organizational system, has increasingly presented stable and regular morphological characteristics and exuded unique organizational characteristics after the revolutionary forging, historical baptism and practical evolution.

#### ***3.1. Focus on the Wholeness of the Organizational System***

When Marx and Engels founded the Communist League, the world’s first Communist Party organization, they advocated the establishment of a bottom-up and hierarchical organizational system, emphasizing the two-way linkage between the central and local levels, and between the higher and lower levels, so as to connect the Party as a unified whole. Guided by Marxism, the CPC has inherited this fine tradition and organizational gene, and demonstrated a distinct holistic nature from the “infancy” of communism. Liu Shaoqi pointed out in the report of the 7th National Congress of CPC on the revision of the Party Constitution that “our Party is not a simple sum of a number of members, but a unified organism organized by all Party members according to certain laws, a combination of the leaders and the led of the Party, a combination of the head of the Party (the Central Committee), the Party organizations at all levels, Party members and the masses according to certain laws. The unity of the party” [5]. This clear definition of its nature essentially clarifies that the Party’s organizational system is not fragmented, but highly coherent and integral.

#### ***3.2. Focus on the Systematization of the Organizational System***

On the one hand, the Party’s organizational system is composed of many individual organizations of different levels, scales and duties and tasks, especially the system coverage of the central organization, local organizations and grassroots organizations, which makes the elements and levels within the organizational system closely coherent, and the Party organization exists in a systematic structural way, thus forming a coordinated organizational system. On the other hand, each party member, regardless of his or her position, must be organized into a branch, group or other specific organization of the party, which determines that the activity carrier of the party organization and party members is based on the party branch, and all party members must belong to a specific party branch, which then builds a deep network of grassroots organizations. The huge organizational volume and

networked organizational existence are like the roots of a big tree deeply integrating the tentacles of Chinese society, building an organizational system with high organization and mobilization capacity, and showing a strong systematization.

### ***3.3. Focus on the Tightness of the Organizational System***

The reason why the Communist Party of China has been able to unite and lead the people to achieve from the “groundbreaking” of the Party building, to the “transformational change” of the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, and to the world-renowned “China miracle” created by reform and opening up, especially in the new era. Is that tight and powerful organization is an important guarantee. At the beginning of its establishment, the CPC made clear the strictness of its organization. This tightness not only lies in the strict organizational discipline and serious organizational life, but also in the completeness of organizational differentiation and systematization of organizational system, thus laying the cornerstone for the creation of a great ruling party. As early as the Resolution on the Constitution of the Communist Party adopted at the 2nd National Congress of CPC, it clearly pointed out that the Party was not a “Marxist society organized by intellectuals”, nor was it a “revolutionary group of a few communists who have left the masses in an idealistic manner”. “The basic organization of the central organs and even of small groups must have a strict system in order to avoid a state of rabble-rousing” [6]. The degree of tight organization is evident, which is precisely because of its glorious tradition of a tightly organizational system and its firm grasp of the lifeblood of a Marxist party that is “organizational tightness”, so that the CPC has been able to win one great victory after another.

## **4. Always Adhere to the Application of the Organizational Principle of Democratic Centralism**

The CPC was formed according to the Marxist principles of party building, and the party organization has achieved great development in the historical process of revolution, construction and reform. The key lies in the fact that since its establishment, it has attached great importance to the construction of organizational system, set up the standards and norms of party behavior with a good organizational system, and established a unified organizational will and ideological consensus with strict institutional implementation, thus developing and expanding the organization, obtaining organizational resources and consolidating its ruling position. In the final analysis, thanks to the formation of the organizational system guided by Marxist principles of party building and the principle of democratic centralism as the core, the party organization has always been a strong and unified whole.

### ***4.1. Always Take Democratic Centralism as the Fundamental Organizational Principle***

Looked back, when Marx and Engels founded the Communist League and the First International, they tried to carry out organizational leadership in accordance with the combination of democracy and centralism, and initially showed the ideas of democracy and centralism. In the process of founding the Russian Communist Party, Lenin further developed the ideas of Marx and Engels on the principles of organizational leadership of the Party and put forward the concept of “democratic centralism” for the first time. The initial establishment of democratic centralism greatly strengthened the fighting power of the Bolsheviks and accelerated the process of victory of the Russian October Revolution. “When democratic centralism was imported into China, it became intertwined with Chinese problems, Chinese experience and Chinese context.” [7] The CPC’s adherence to and application of democratic centralism has not only always continued the fine tradition of the Marxist principle of organizational leadership, but has also been continuously enriched and deepened in the process of leading the Chinese revolution and socialist modernization, and has made creative exploration and innovative development of democratic centralism, which is concentrated in the amendments or revisions to the Party Constitution made by successive party congresses, and centrally reflected in the authoritative expressions and provisions of democratic centralism in the Constitution of the Communist Party of China.

### ***4.2. Give Full Play to the Institutional Advantages of Democratic Centralism***

Democratic centralism is the fundamental organizational system and leadership system of the CPC, which is the distinctive mark of the CPC as a Marxist political party that distinguishes it from other political parties. The institutional advantages of democratic centralism stem from its institutional

rationality and scientific functions. Over the past century, the CPC has scientifically used democratic centralism to regulate inner-party relations, standardize the behavior of organizations and party members, strengthen its own leadership ability and realize the restriction and supervision of power operation, giving full play to the institutional advantages of democratic centralism.

#### ***4.2.1. Applied to Regulate Inner-Party Relations***

Guided by the spirit of democratic centralism, on the one hand, it emphasizes the full development of inner-party democracy and the development of the enthusiasm and creativity of party organizations at all levels and the majority of party members. On the other hand, it emphasizes the implementation of correct concentration to ensure the unity and consistency of action of the whole Party. The combination of the enthusiasm and creativity of the Party members and the centralization and unification in the organization operation effectively prevents the indifference of feudal autocracy to people's democracy and collective wisdom, dialectically handled the relationship between the promotion of democracy and correct centralization, and realized the concretization, institutionalization and scientification of the regulation of inner-party relations.

#### ***4.2.2. Used to Standardize Party Organizations and Party Members' Behaviors***

On the one hand, it is used to play the guiding and restraining role of democratic centralism at the levels of party organization establishment, function play, self construction and system improvement, and thus guide the actions of party organizations in a scientific, rational and correct direction. On the other hand, it is applied to regulate the thoughts and behaviors of the members of the party organization to ensure that the purpose, process and results of the organizational behavior produced by the members of the organization are in line with the expected requirements of the party, thus playing its important guiding role in strengthening and regulating political life.

#### ***4.2.3. Applied to Strengthen Leadership***

Firstly, the scientific leadership method connoted by democratic centralism is applied to better collect ideas, exchange opinions and unify thoughts, and form correct resolutions and strategies on this basis, so that the party organizations at all levels can better play the role of a leading core while unifying thoughts and understanding. Secondly, the application of the decision-making procedure of democratic centralism connotation, especially the basic way of the Party's leadership, has clearly stipulated, expanding the scope of the Party's leadership in the work practice, is conducive to the implementation and execution of the collective decision-making, thus forming the collective leadership force. Again, applying democratic centralism establishes a unified leadership of the Party organization and coordinates all parties in the leadership system. In the actual work of organizing multiple forces and deploying power resources, the party organization's cohesion and combat power can be better formed when major emergencies and complex situations are managed.

#### ***4.2.4. Applied to Power Constraints and Supervision***

Political practices in ancient and modern times and in China and abroad have repeatedly confirmed that in order to ensure that those who exercise power always use it correctly, it is necessary to exercise the necessary constraints and supervision on power, otherwise it will easily breed corruption. The CPC has applied democratic centralism to scientifically regulate the configuration of power of party organizations at all levels, the scope of authority and responsibility among members of party organizations, the relationship of practices and efficient communication within the party, and has given full play to its role of constraining and supervising the operation of power within the party.

On the whole, democratic centralism, as the organizational and leadership principles of Marxist political party, is theoretically scientific and practically correct, manifesting strong political, organizational and institutional advantages, and has become a key to drive the CPC to success and an important window to understand and observe the internal operation mechanism of the CPC.

### ***4.3. Further Enrich the Practical Connotation of Democratic Centralism***

The scientific organizational principle lies in inheritance and implementation, and the remarkable institutional advantage lies in perfection and implementation. Fundamentally speaking, the establishment of various specific systems within the Party is essentially the concretization of the principle of democratic centralism, the concrete embodiment and application of the basic content of the principle of democratic centralism in all aspects of Party construction and Party life.

Since the 18th National Congress of CPC, in order to meet the needs of the great struggle with

many new historical characteristics, the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core has continuously deepened the Party's great self-revolution, comprehensively deepened the reform of the Party's construction system, insisted on the unification of running the CPC with system and with rules, placed the construction of the Party's internal laws and regulations in the overall situation of the Party and the State's cause, and placed it in the context of consolidating the Party's long-term rule and overall leadership for planning, and actively endows democratic centralism with new connotation of the Times, forming a series of new viewpoints, new judgments and new requirements. The Party has made the distinctive assertion that democratic centralism is the greatest institutional advantage of the CPC, emphasizes that democratic centralism is the basic principle for the Party to manage the Party and govern the Party in a comprehensive and strict manner, further highlights the important role of the "key minority" in the implementation of democratic centralism, and calls on the Party to learn and use the working method of the Party Committee to effectively improve the ability and level of implementing democratic centralism.

At the same time, the introduction of a series of party regulations has not only laid a solid foundation for the establishment of a party regulatory system that is scientific in content, strict in procedure, complete in support and effective in operation, but also enriched the spirit of the times and practice of democratic centralism. This also shows that, on the one hand, the CPC, based on its profound understanding of the internal logic of the fundamental, scientific and effective nature of democratic centralism, has effectively integrated and mutually promoted the adherence to institutional principles and the improvement of specific institutional patterns. On the other hand, combined with the development and progress of the times and changes in the situation and tasks, the party continues to respond to new situations and problems, and uses the spirit of reform and innovation to strengthen weak links in building organizational system and maintain the vitality of institutional systems.

## 5. Conclusions

The world today is facing the unprecedented changes in a century, and the only way for political parties to survive and relieve their worries is to adapt to the general trend and change with the times. However, political party changes involve a wide range of elements, and the party should "plan a domain" to promote the overall situation. This "domain" is, above all, the organizational system as the "life bone" of the political party. Especially in the face of the impact of the global Internet and the social media era, the question of how political parties should behave themselves and better address the issue of organizational sustainability is a real challenge that political parties around the world must pay attention to today. For the CPC, strengthening and optimizing the organizational system is always an inevitable choice to ensure the party's ruling leadership and improve its own construction. The Party's focus on strengthening the organizational system varies from one historical period to another. After completing a series of historical tasks of developing Party members, growing the organization and ensuring the maturity and stability of the Party's organizational system, the scientific proposition that the Party's strength comes from the organization has become more prominent. Standing at a new historical starting point, the CPC must build great projects, unswervingly adhere to and improve the Party's overall leadership, more firmly rely on the organization to accumulate strength, and effectively transform organizational advantages into advantages for advancing the great cause to new victories if it is to unite and lead the people to carry out great struggles, advance great causes and realize great dreams.

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