

Xi Jinping and his "Clan": origins and reasons of formation

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Си Цзиньпин и его «Клан»: истоки и причины формирования

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Аннотация: В статье, на основе биографии Си Цзиньпина, прослеживается формирование политической фракции внутри Коммунистической партии Китая, которой в рамках как научной, так и публицистической литературы дали название «Клан Си». В статье прослеживается, как, начиная с детства, заканчивая зрелыми годами, в течение долгих десятилетий Си Цзиньпин формировал свой ближний круг, который, впоследствии, займет свое нынешнее место в современной партийно-государственной иерархии КНР. Кроме того, в статье дается краткий обзор расстановки сил в Политбюро ЦК КПК по результатам прошедшего в прошлом году 20-ого съезда Коммунистической партии Китая. Делается вывод о сохранении позиций «Шанхайской клики» скончавшегося недавно Цзяна Цзэминя, вступившей в союз с «Кланом Си» и полном отстранении фракции «Туаньлай (комсомольцы)» от верховной власти в стране. Так же приводится предположение о том, что причина текущей консолидации ведущих внутривластных игроков КНР вокруг «Клана Си», является углубляющееся внешнеполитическое противостояние с Соединенными Штатам Америки и многочисленные долгосрочные экономические проекты, которые осуществляются китайским истеблишментом в данный момент. Речь идет как об «Одном-поясе, одном-пути», так и о других проектах в Евразии и в Африке.

Ключевые слова: политика, Китай, внешний, клан, политический, государство, президент, правление, КПК, КНР

Մի Ցզինպինը և նրա «Կլանը»: ծագումն ու ձևավորման պատճառները

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Ամփոփում. Հոդվածում, հիմնվելով Մի Ցզինպինի կենսագրության վրա, հետազոտվում է Չինաստանի Կոմունիստական կուսակցության ներսում գոյություն ունեցող «Միի կլան» քաղաքական դմբակցության ձևավորման պատմությունը և պատճառները: Հետազոտվում են նախագահ Միի մանկության, պատանեկության և հասունության տարիների ընթացքում ձևավորված կապերը այն մարդկանց հետ, ովքեր այսօր կարևոր տեղ են զբաղեցրել ոչ միայն ՉԺՀ-ի ղեկավարությունում, այլ նաև Մի Ցզինպինի մերձակա շրջապատում: Բացի այդ, հոդվածում ներկայացված է ՉԿԿ Կենտկոմի քաղքուրդյուն քաղաքական ուժերի դասավորվածության համառոտ բնութագիրը՝ 2022 թվականին կայացած Չինաստանի Կոմունիստական կուսակցության 20-րդ համագումարի արդյունքների համաձայն: Եզրակացություն է արվում վերջերս մահացած Ցզյան Չեմինի «Շանհայան դմբակցության» դիրքերի պահպանման մասին, «Միի կլանի» հետ դաշինք կնքելու շնորհիվ: Բացի այդ մատնանշվում է «Թուսանպայ(Կոմսոմոլ)» խմբակցությանը անդամներին գերագույն իշխանական մարմինների կազմից ամբողջությամբ հեռացնելու փաստը: Առաջ է քաշվում հիփոթեզ այն մասին, որ «Միի կլանի» շուրջ ՉԺՀ-ի առաջատար ներքաղաքական ուժերի ներկայիս համախմբման պատճառներն են հանդիսանում ԱՄՆ-ի հետ քաղաքական պայքարի խորացումը և չինական ընտրախավերի կողմից այս պահին իրականացվող բազմաթիվ երկարաժամկետ տնտեսական նախագծերն ու ծրագրերը: Խոսքը գնում է ինչպես «Մեկ գոտի, մեկ ճանապարհի», այնպես էլ Եվրասիայում և Աֆրիկայում իրականացվող այլ նախագծերի ու ծրագրերի մասին:

Հանգուցաբառերը՝ քաղաքականություն, Չինաստան, արտաքին, կլան, քաղաքական, պետություն, նախագահ, կառավարում, ՉԿԿ, ՉԺՀ

The study of the inner-party fractions of the Communist Party of China is one of the few areas of

Sinological research that has proved to be especially in demand due to the turbulence in modern world

politics. This is especially true for those intra-party groups that are somehow connected with the current top leadership of China in general and with Chinese President Xi Jinping in particular.

In the scientific and periodical press, President Xi's supporters have been codenamed "Xi Clan". This political "clan" includes those CPC functionaries and officers of the People's Liberation Army of China who, one way or another, crossed paths with President Xi on his life path.

Before parsing the Xi Clan, it is necessary to clarify one circumstance. Xi Jinping like some of his colleagues and opponents belongs to the stratum of hereditary CPC functionaries. In scientific literature, CPC functionaries in the second, third, and so on generations were called "crown princes", "princes", or "Red heirs". Hereditary communists are not united in a separate faction. They are a specific phenomenon of the Communist Party and can be found both among representatives of the "Xi Clan" and other intra-party groups such as the "Shanghai gang", "Tunapai" or other factions in the CPC [8, pp. 169-170, 172].

Speaking about the supporters of President Xi, first of all, it is worth talking about the ties that were formed in the childhood and youth of the future leader of the PRC. A special place here have his classmates from the Beijing Baiyi School (八一学校) where children of the officers from the People Liberation Army command staff families were mainly educated. Among the most prominent alumni of the Baiyi School associated with Xi Jinping is Zhang Yuxia. In 2023, he holds the position of Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China and heads the People Liberation Army of China. He is one of the few PRC officers with real combat experience gained during the war with Vietnam. Another of Xi Jinping's school friends is General Liu Yuan, PRC Chairman Liu Shaoqi's son, who served as the Political Commissar of the General Logistics Department of the People's Liberation Army of China until 2016 [1, p. 6].

Another "childhood friend" of President Xi is Liu He. He studied at School 101, which was located near the Baiyi School. With an excellent education including Seton Hall (MPA) and Harvard (MBA), as well as being a gifted researcher in economics, Liu He has long been President Xi's chief economic adviser [3].

A special place in the biography of President Xi is occupied by the period of the Cultural Revolution, when he, like many members of the families of the CPC members, was exiled to the village for "labour re-education" during "Sent-down youth" campaign. During this period, he met Wang Qishan, who was also exiled to the village, where a

long-term friendship began between them. Subsequently, Wang Qishan held various positions in the leadership of the country, while remaining a friend and ally of Xi Jinping. This led to the fact that in 2018 after he resigned from the Standing Committee (SC) of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee and other positions that he held before, Wan Qishan was elected to the post of Vice President of the PRC. Informally, Wang Qishan became the eighth member of the Politburo SC and continues to remain in this position for 2023. [6]

An important role in the formation of the "Xi Clan" had played his service in the provinces of Hebei and Fujian. This time is characterized by both Xi Jinping's successful career growth, who eventually took the post of governor of Fujian province and even greater strengthening of his ties with the military. This is because Fujian due to its geographical proximity to Taiwan plays a special role in PLA military planning. Thus, he developed close relations with two generals from the now-defunct Nanjing Military Region, Zhao Keshi and Cai Yingting. Later, already during the reign of President Xi, they took the positions of Head of the Department of Logistics of the Central Military Commission (until 2017) and President of the Academy of Military Sciences of the PLA (from 2016 to 2017), respectively. In addition, in the early eighties, Xi Jinping worked as a secretary to Chinese Defense Minister Geng Biao, which also helped to strengthen his ties with the military [2, p. 7].

During this period, he met and promoted the careers of future Politburo members Li Zhanshu (19th Politburo SC member), Huang Kunming (Guangdong Party Committee Secretary, 19th and 20th Politburo member), Cai Qi (20th Politburo SC member) and many others. In addition, researchers in Western think tanks refer to the "Fujian gang" general He Weidong (Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China, member of the Politburo) and admiral Miao Hua (Director of the Political Work Department of the Central Military Commission) [7].

An important place in modern Chinese politics is occupied by the so-called "New Zhejiang Army". The group is named after Zhejiang province, as many of its members held various positions in the provincial administration at a time when President Xi himself served as its governor [4, p.21-22].

Among the politicians from Zhejiang, analysts highlight Li Qian, who, according to the results of the 20th CPC Congress, became one of the seven members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, as well as Chen Minyer, since 2022, the secretary of the Tianjin City Committee of the CPC [7].

A special place in the formation of a group of supporters of Xi Jinping is played by the city of Shanghai. Because of its role in the economy of the PRC, the city of Shanghai and its power structures act as a kind of springboard for the further career growth of party functionaries. For example in 2007, Xi Jinping headed the CPC's Shanghai City Committee. However, subsequently, many politicians and military personnel associated with Xi also held positions in the government structures of the city of Shanghai. Among them is the aforementioned "Zhejiang gang" member Li Qian, who was the head of the CPC Shanghai City Committee from 2017 to 2022. The same applies to another member of the Politburo SC, Li Xi [4, p. 32-34].

It is worth clarifying that, unlike the "Tuanpai" faction, led by Hu Jintao and Li Keqiang, whose representatives did not even enter the Politburo following the results of the 20th CPC Congress, the "Shanghai gang", supporters of the recently deceased former Chinese President Jiang Zemin continues to hold its positioning, having allied with President Xi and his supporters. The most prominent representatives of the faction are one of the leading political ideologists of modern China, Wang Huning (19th and 20th Politburo SC) and Ding Xuexiang (20th Politburo SC) [7].

Thus, one can notice an important trend in the formation of the ruling elites of the PRC. In recent years, the role of regional political, military and economic elites, which participate in government through their representatives in the highest authorities, has been steadily increasing. Representatives of the provinces Hebei, Fujian, and Xi's home province of Shanxi (Zhao Yuxia and Wang Qishan are classified as members of the "Shanxi gang") formed a coalition government based on the results of the 20th Congress of the CPC, headed by Xi Jinping. Jiang Zemin's former "Shanghai gang" and many senior officers of the People's Liberation Army of China also join the coalition. If earlier there was a struggle between the "Tunapai" and "Shanghai gang", now a hierarchical system of governance has been formed in the central authorities, shaped around the figure of President Xi. And taking into account the variety of the forces represented in the coalition, one can put forward an assumption about a consensus among the Chinese political elites regarding the formation of government bodies for the coming years.

Such an assumption follows from the intensification of the foreign policy of the PRC in the context of the escalating geopolitical confrontation between the leading political powers of the planet, especially the rivalry between the PRC and the United States of America. In addition, the

Chinese political elites feel the need for consolidation because of the current long-lasting projects, such as the "Belt and Road" initiative and numerous financial and economical projects in Eurasia and Africa. The billions of dollars, spending by state and non-state Chinese companies, the involvement of the central and regional governments in BRI and other similar projects show us consensus of PRC ruling elites on, at least, foreign policy [5].

This is the reason that they agreed to replace the old model of the predominance of two factions, "Tuanpai" and the "Shanghai gang", which received the unofficial name "one party - two factions" and was potential source of inner conflict by the hierarchical structure of informal governance with President Xi on its top.

Summing up, it can be told that the current balance of power in the highest echelons of power in China is the result of not only a wide consensus among the elites because of the situation in foreign policy, but also connected with the figure of President Xi himself. During his formation as a politician, President Xi managed to establish a sufficient number of horizontal ties, which allowed him to enlist the support of a broad coalition of different factions, which ensured that he was not only elected in 2012 and re-elected in 2017, but also changed the Constitution and prolonged his powers for a third term.

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