

# iscte

INSTITUTO  
UNIVERSITÁRIO  
DE LISBOA

---

## Xi Jinping: The values and beliefs of a Political Leader

Linda Inês Rodrigues Gonçalves

*Master* in International Studies

Supervisor:

PhD Álvaro Augusto da Rosa, Associate Professor,  
Iscte - University Institute of Lisbon

November, 2020





SOCIOLOGIA  
E POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS

---

## Xi Jinping: The values and beliefs of a Political Leader

Linda Inês Rodrigues Gonçalves

*Master* in International Studies

Supervisor:

PhD Álvaro Augusto da Rosa, Associate Professor,

Iscte - University Institute of Lisbon

November, 2020

## **Acknowledgements**

This Dissertation is a passion project, and I would not be writing these words if it were not for the people in my life that supported me throughout this journey.

I want to dedicate my Dissertation to my family and friends who inspired me to do my best work. Words are not enough to thank my family members, that celebrate my accomplishments as their own.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Professor Álvaro Rosa, that since day one kept me grounded and focused.

Thank you.

## **Resumo**

Hoje, Xi Jinping está a mudar o mundo e definir o tom para as décadas seguintes sem que ninguém saiba como o faz.

Esta dissertação tem como propósito identificar os valores e crenças de Xi Jinping. O objetivo da presente tese foi conhecer Xi Jinping como líder da China através da análise dos seus próprios discursos políticos publicados no livro “A Governança da China I” (2014).

O pensamento de Xi Jinping é muito orientado para o seu povo e incumbe o partido Comunista Chinês a missão de transmitir a mensagem de rejuvenescimento nacional: um apelo a todo o povo chinês para se unir como um para construir uma grande nação no mundo. Xi Jinping parte da ideologia do socialismo chinês para construir a sociedade modelo chinesa e para satisfazer as preocupações do povo chinês.

Xi Jinping será líder da China até ao final da sua vida e isso permitirá ao presidente Chinês consolidar mais poder. Xi Jinping precisa de estabilidade dentro do PCC e, portanto, manter o sistema político é fundamental para realizar as reformas que a China precisa para continuar a crescer ao seu potencial máximo.

Concluo a dissertação tendo em conta várias considerações que a literatura tem sobre a liderança de Xi Jinping.

Xi nutre um grande sentimento nacionalista. Xi Jinping deseja que a China seja líder no contexto político internacional e assim o Presidente Chinês fará tudo o que estiver ao seu alcance para melhorar o seu país.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Xi Jinping; “Sonho Chinês”; pensamento político; discurso político; análise de conteúdo.

## **Abstract**

Today, Xi Jinping is still going strong to change the World and set the tone for the following decades without no one knowing why or how he does it.

The objective of the present research is to know Xi Jinping as the leader of China through the analysis of his own written speeches in “The Governance of China I” (2014).

Xi Jinping’s Thought is very oriented towards the People and it is the Party’s mission to deliver the message of national rejuvenation: a call for all Chinese people to come together as one to build a great nation. Xi Jinping relies on Chinese socialism to build the Chinese model society towards satisfying the concerns of the Chinese people.

Xi Jinping is on a life term as Chinese Leader and this will allow the Chinese Chairman to consolidate more power. Xi Jinping needs stability inside the CCP and so maintaining the political system is fundamental to deliver the reforms China needs for continuing to grow to its maximum potential.

I conclude the Dissertation by covering several considerations that the Literature has on Xi Jinping’s leadership.

Xi is a nationalist at his core. The “Chinese Dream” was designed to build the best version of the Chinese society together with socialism as the core values of the Chinese culture.

Xi Jinping is China’s greatest supporter and will portray the Chinese nation as an example to the world. (Xi, The Governance of China I, 2014)

**KEYWORDS:** Xi Jinping; Chinese Dream; Political Thought; political discourse; content analysis.

## Index of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Resumo</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Index of Contents</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Index of Figures</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Glossary of Abbreviations &amp; Acronyms</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Chapter I - Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter II - Theoretical Framework</b> .....	<b>3</b>
2.1 How to define a Political Leader? .....	3
2.2 Political context: Xi's predecessors .....	6
2.3 Aspects of influence in Xi Jinping .....	13
<b>Chapter III - Xi Jinping's Biography</b> .....	<b>31</b>
3.1 Who is Xi Jinping?.....	31
<b>Chapter IV - Research Methodology</b> .....	<b>35</b>
4.1 Research Question.....	35
4.2 Research Method .....	35
4.3 Social Research Strategy .....	36
4.4 Research Design.....	36
4.5 Discourse Analysis.....	36
4.6 Data collection .....	36
<b>Chapter V - Data Analysis</b> .....	<b>38</b>
5.1 Results .....	38
<b>Chapter VI - Discussion of Results</b> .....	<b>47</b>
<b>Chapter VII - Conclusions</b> .....	<b>50</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>51</b>

**Index of Figures**

**Figure 5.1: Leximancer Concept Map**..... 40



## **Glossary of Abbreviations & Acronyms**

CCP\CPC - Chinese Communist Party\Communist Party of China

PRC- People's Republic Of China

PBSC- Politburo Standing Committee

CNSC - Central National Security Council

CLDGR - Central Leading Group on Comprehensively Deepening Reforms

PLA - People's Liberation Army

GLF - Great Leap Forward

CRG - Cultural Revolution Group

LSGs - Leading Small Groups

## Chapter I - Introduction

China in the twenty-first century is a vibrant modern economy and society open to the world, with a large and well-educated urban middle class which is expected to reach 550 million people by 2022 (Shirk, 2018).

After Hu Jintao stepped down from the Party's leadership Xi Jinping rose to power at the same time as Prime-Minister Li Keqiang. Xi Jinping has come to a level of power different than his predecessors (Shirk, 2018).

China today is the combination of both Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping: Mao, who brought Communism as the struggle of the classes into peasant China; and Deng, who rebuilt China's economy and the Party's strategy so that China became sustainable. Both leaders are true nationalists, both who believed in a strong powerful China that would never be the victim of foreign aggression and humiliation ever again (Brown, The world according to Xi , 2018).

China is now the most powerful country on earth. The Chinese manufacturing controls the global economy; its military forces are growing at the fastest rate than any other nation and the Chinese Leader, Xi Jinping has changed whatever notions the World thought it had on Chinese leadership.

In 2017, Xi Jinping became part of the Constitution, an honour only the late Chairman Mao was able to achieve.

Today, Xi is still going strong to change the World and set the tone for the following decades without no one knowing why or how he does it.

Some say he is trying to become the new Mao (Lee, 2018; Lensing, 2016). When reading the literature about Chinese history it seems as if between Mao Zedong's death and Xi's appearance, China lacked a strong leader (Lensing, 2016).

Some believe Mao and Xi, share too many characteristics for it to be a coincidence, namely the cult of personality, the control and support of the PLA (People's Liberation Army) and the creation of organizational bodies within the government, and both leaders used their wives for political propaganda (Lensing, 2016;).

After ascended to power, Xi showed China his own goal through the motto "Chinese Dream" and the "Four Comprehensives", which are, according to the Chinese Chairman, the way to improve China and every Chinese person's duty to follow them (Mysicka, 2017). Further, Xi wants China to be the example of leadership in the world. But what this exactly mean? How will Xi's plan affect the world we leave in?

Despite the many theories exposed above, the literature cannot yet answer to the question: What are Xi Jinping's values? What does Xi Jinping stand for?

The present research took upon the challenge of answering this question by analysing the Xi Jinping's book of speeches – The Governance of China I, through the Leximancer programme.

To know who is Xi Jinping, is important to understand his background – professional and most importantly personal; his politics and ideology; who this politician is and what is he trying to do and how is he doing it.

The remainder of this dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter 1 contextualizes the present research and its importance for the academia; Chapter 2 presents the Theoretical Framework. Chapter 3 outlines the description and characterization of Xi Jinping’s biography. Chapter 4 presents the main methodological features of the analysis. Chapter 5 reports the empirical results conducted through the Leximancer Programme analysis’.

In Chapter 6, I conclude my Dissertation crossing the data I have as well as considerations that the Literature finds relevant. Finally, Chapter 7 summarizes the concluding remarks.

## **Chapter II - Theoretical Framework**

The present chapter will focus on the review of the main topics published regarding Xi Jinping's profile, both public and private. First, section 2.1 brings insight into previous studies about the profile of a political leader. Section 2.2 reviews the path of Xi Jinping's political predecessors in comparison with the Chinese Chairman. Finally, section 2.3 analyses the aspects of influence in Xi Jinping's political leadership.

### **2.1 How to define a Political Leader?**

The world is full of aspiring political leaders, yet we still struggle to find the right definition of a political leader and what role does one portrait in the leadership of one's people. It is no coincidence that for many people, the word "politician" has such negative connotations. In the next section of the present chapter we will explain what the literature has on political leaders and what characteristics should they have.

First, there was the idea of the "great man", the ones gifted with great intellect and leadership skills who would be best fitted to rule the others (Tucker, 1977).

The idea is that politicians are better leaders and smarter than the average population even when conditioned by the family's low economic status. This reality suggests the importance of individual characteristics to achieve political leadership (Dal Bó, Finan, Folke, Persson, & Rickne, 2017).

This theory seems to get substituted by "situationism"; a theory which explains that a certain situation would determine the kind of leader needed in that period.

Both theories can meet halfway. There are people who have natural leadership qualities and certain situations can bring out their very best instincts (Dal Bó, Finan, Folke, Persson, & Rickne, 2017; Tucker, 1977).

If a situation depends on the subject's analysis, then it seems like it depends on a leader's character more than his intellectual capacity. So far, seems like having a strong IQ wasn't a quality look for in a political leader, however, it is as important as a leader's personal character (Tucker, 1977).

Both features, intelligence, and moral character hang together in a leader's mind. Further, it is important that a leader empathizes with his people - the "political community" - otherwise, he or she will not have the sympathetic response that is expected when concerning a case of unemployment or poverty (Tucker, 1977, p. 385).

This is then connected to the concepts of "humanist" and "nonhumanist" political leadership. The intellect can be found in both; however, it is the level of empathy that distinguishes them, thus, the level of concern for the wellbeing of one's people (Tucker, 1977).

One can understand how particularly important this is because we have witnessed the consequences of extremely intelligent leaders with an alarming lack of feeling for large groups of citizens – Hitler and Stalin. The literature defines this as “antihumanist leadership” or a kind of “malevolent feeling” which can be based upon one’s culture, ideology, and personal life (Tucker, 1977, p. 385).

“Creative leadership” is the ability to read a situation and draw the right solution for it without being influenced by previous experiences. Despite its simple definition, this is not a common feature among leaders today. The ability to be creative before a new and difficult situation is very important so that the leader does not fall into the mistake of using a policy or measure which worked on another occasion ending up disregarding the new features of the present situation (Tucker, 1977).

It is necessary to have a certain level of sensitivity for the world around oneself as well as empathy for the feelings of others that are part of the political community to be a creative leader. The author describes someone willing to listen to the needs of the common people and to represent them faithfully.

Instead, we might agree with the author as it seems that confidence and selflessness are features uncommon in those who have roles in politics (Tucker, 1977).

Charismatic authority might be a religious, military, political or any other kind of leader. This leader is described as a “saviour-leader”, that means, perceived by the political community as a hero. The one and only who will “save” and guide them through the difficult times, through what path this person believes is the best solution. In so, that he or she presents themselves with absolute certainty that they can lead their people out of distress “by virtue of special personal characteristics or formula for salvation” (Tucker, 1977, p.388).

So, these charismatic leaders seem to share an irrefutable faith and confidence that the only chance to overcome a misfortune is through one’s leadership. If there is distress or fear, people will always need the charismatic qualities of a saviour-leader (Tucker, 1977).

One of the consequences of a charismatic leader is the fostering of the cult of personality, more proper to occur in authoritarian regimes due to the control of the media. Yet, this also happens in democratic liberal regimes in which the leader is always in constant evaluation through the elections. So, a well-equipped team of public relations builds a narrative that can offer a “favourable image” of the leaders to the constituents (Tucker, 1977).

Regarding this topic, follows the concept of “egocentricity in leadership”. To avoid the cult of personality in democratic states, it requires the responsibility of the constituents to elect someone with no desire for stardom or admiration, a true “fallible” human being (Tucker, 1977).

And thus far, those who are part of a political community are yet unable to distinguish between those who apply for office based on egoistic motives or those who wish to do good, through their leadership position, on behalf of their community (Tucker,1977).

Tucker (1977) considers that an individual needs a natural set of skills to become a political leader. The author explains three main characteristics a political leader should have: empathy for the well-being of others, selflessness, and creativity. He then seems to reject “charisma” as a favourable characteristic of a political leader.

According to Tucker, the political leadership nowadays it is in desperate need of both humanist and creative leadership of the highest range. To have prosperity and development, it is important not to think in short-range terms. So political leaders need to be open-minded in policymaking to make correct policies. Thus, to be creative and humanist (Tucker,1977).

Indeed, Tucker (1977) seems to have a rather naïve vision on political leaders. The author prescribes a limited list of ideals an individual must have to become a political leader – almost a romanticised version of political leaders.

However, the author does not embrace all the motivations and features of a political leader.

According to Lasswell, individuals become political leaders to compensate a low self-esteem (in Kellerman, 1986, p. 70).

Then, Alexander George explains that individuals become political leaders because they desire power. He continues describing three main reasons explaining the desire of power (in Kellerman, 1986, p. 75): to dominate or to deprive others; to not be dominated and to produce political achievements. While the second avoids any dissatisfactions the other two assure the individual’s needs. This approach seems more relevant than Tucker’s because it is more specific. However, it creates the risk of a stereotype of reasons why do individuals become political leaders.

Further, Max Weber clarifies it is the feeling of power brought by the title of “leader” that pushes individuals to become political leaders. According to the author, besides the influence and power over others, it is the opportunity to contribute to history which leads individuals to take that commitment (1965, p.59). To Weber (1965) the will to become a political leader is not enough.

Thus, Weber examines the necessary qualities of a political leader: passion; sense of responsibility and “glance”.

First, he explains that passion without the sense of responsibility, has no value. He argues, the sense of responsibility motivates the desire to pursue one’s passion and prove to the public the individual’s accomplishments.

Finally, the glance is the individual’s capacity to detach oneself from the facts. According to the author, this detachment allows politicians to not enter a "sterile excitement",

and so, represents the main force of a political figure (1965, p.60). Weber adverts that the absence of passion and the lack of responsibility are the "two deadly sins in politics" (1965, p. 60).

On this note, we believe when Weber (1965) mentions the lack of responsibility he refers to accountability. Without it seems as the leader does not respect his followers. Then, a good political leader would be honest and responsible for their own actions and someone who would be willing to admit when they have made a mistake. A good leader would focus their energies on representing the people instead of wasting time "covering their tracks".

And so, political leaders are extremely important as they represent the authority of government, they assess the distribution of power and resources, build relationships with other participants, and make decisions that can have great impact on the well-being of a nation and its people.

## **2.2 Political context: Xi's predecessors**

David Bachman (1992) believes China is governed by norms and its political system determines leadership choices. In the 1990's the question was who would lead China after Deng Xiaoping.

According to Bachman (1992) the third generation of leaders would have less power than Deng Xiaoping had, who also had less power than Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong was the founding father of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The history of China became part of his own biography.

In 1935, at 42 years old Mao became the supreme power in the Party as every development and policy were authorized by him. After 1943, Mao had the power to overrule the Central Committee's resolutions and contributed to the foundation of the Red Army, becoming its commander-in-chief.

Mao Zedong was extremely confident in his choices and would not settle for anything, as he the status quo of everything could always be changed (Bachman, 1992).

Deng Xiaoping did not have the same resources to power as Mao did. He did not have an important position within the Party before 1949, being mainly connected through his position in the army. After this year, Deng became the General Secretary (1956-1966) which gave him the opportunity to connect with top leaders of the CCP and acquire knowledge of the political system.

Deng lacked Mao's self-confidence and will power, so to achieve the CCP's top leadership he would have to gain the confidence of the established political elite.

When, in 1978, he finally rose to power in the leadership of the CCP, he was 74 years old. So, he could not expand his power resources, but he did implement some policy changes.

Although Deng was not the founder of the Chinese political system, he played an important part in the building of the Party and the state (Bachman, 1992).

Bachman (1992) predicted that Deng's successors would have "formal and technical education" and a more specialized political experience. The successor generation would focus more on economy than ideological issues and would be more "reactive" yet would have less influence over the Chinese political system.

Bachman's theory is that China would abandon its revolutionary roots and become more technocratic over time, but assures us that this technocratization would not become a problem for the Chinese leadership (Bachman, 1992).

The author also suggests that the next generation of successors, China would not have any outstanding figures after Deng Xiao Ping- and the process of succession would become a game of "alliances and coalitions" (Bachman, 1992, p. 1051). We can understand therefore Xi Jinping's rise to power and his leadership style have been the talk inside and outside of the Chinese political elite.

The succession process is not as predictable as one could expect, although there is the clear idea that succession should remain from within the political elite (Bachman, 1992).

According to Bachman (1992) a successor of Chinese leadership should always aim for the stability and unity of the party and avoid purging competitors at the same time as pushing away possible enemies. Then, should always try to support his predecessors and maintain the Chinese system a flow, as a cooperation between the military and the Party officials.

Further, the author also predicted the next new leaders would have little room for any major changes or sensible subjects. No major changes are expected in China if it continues to excel in economy (Bachman, 1992).

The successor needs the support of other top officials. It is important for a successor to keep his promises otherwise those who helped him get to the top, can get him down as well – politics serves both ends/ways. We can agree that this still applies to this day.

Bachman (1992) seems to leave a note which we could relate to Xi Jinping leadership. A Chinese top leader should be subtle in any plans to consolidate power because leadership consolidation is long term process with unpredictable outcomes. To escape any unfortunate destiny or result such as the Soviet Union, China should bet on maintaining the political system to avoid any bad results.

It is interesting to realize that during the 1990's Bachman did not believe the Chinese State to have the same amount of power as it did during Mao's rule. The central leadership still had to deal with a country fostered by corruption and local claims for autonomy (Bachman, 1992).



At the time Deng rose to power, he was unable to use force to promote his policies and to control the Chinese institutions and local interests.

After Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leadership might suffer with “competition among leaders” and conflict of interests within the political system. However, China’s strong economy might be the glue holding everything in place (Bachman, 1992).

Interestingly, Bachman was certain China would separate the economic from political domains of leadership as he put it: “the party may rule but the economy will govern” (1992, p. 1062). Also, Bachman was certain that, in twenty years’ time, China would walk the path towards democracy the same as Taiwan (Bachman, 1992).

Over time there have been many comparisons about between Mao Zedong and Xi Jinping even though both leaders ruled China in very different circumstances. The case is while observers expected to see China more democratic, Xi Jinping has been on a roller coaster of consolidating power (Lee, 2018).

The tight leadership Xi has been developing resembles some of the Maoist times and so it could mean a considerable regression in democracy in China.

By analysing the dimension Charisma, Charismatic leaders use emotion to influence their followers with a sense of unity and the need to act together as a “common mission”. Both Mao and Xi seem to fit the description. Mao was followed and quoted as the ultimate Father of the Nation. Despite the ban on personality cults since 1982, Xi is perceived as “Uncle” Xi in the media – a fatherly figure, nonetheless. Further, a popular song perceives Xi as the legacy of Mao Zedong with the lyrics: “Xi Jinping is the heir of Mao Zedong. He is the mascot of the people.” (Lee, 2018).

Political tolerance is “the degree to which a person is willing to uphold the civic and political rights of fellow-citizens” with whom they disagree. Regarding political tolerance Mao and Xi are yet again very similar. Mao was known for political purges to his enemies, justified by the survival of his own political career (Lee, 2018).

While Xi Jinping is known for using his anti-corruption campaign to purge his political rivals either in the Party or the military, it is impressive that both leaders managed to persecute other political leaders.

The need for achievement shows the perfectionism, high standards or goals of someone. Both leaders have some tough tasks in mind. Mao had the Cultural Revolution and the Great Leap Forward. Xi has the “Chinese Dream” to build the example of a perfect China for the world and the programme of “One belt, One Road” to expand China’s influence on the other continents. To achieve action on either of these plans both leaders need stability which means controlling important sectors of the Chinese society (Lee, 2018).

Mao seemed egocentric and indifferent. Likely to make harsh decisions without support. He had a low tolerance and lacked integrity (Lee, 2018). On the other hand, Xi

Jinping is self-disciplined, more organized and has a stronger motivation for achievement (Lee, 2018).

As we mentioned before, Mao Zedong and Xi Jinping are both charismatic leaders. But Xi and Mao diverge in political tolerance and need for achievement. This translates that it is possible that Xi will not repeat Mao's mistakes and fall into the madness. Regarding cults of personality Xi Jinping has a higher self-esteem which fuels the desire to be great. However, having a personality who searches for development and charisma, Xi does not have the flexibility to give up on some of the central issues of Chinese politics like the Party's ideology and conduct of national government (Lee, 2018).

Some scholars remain sceptical when it comes to the dominant effect of personality on behaviour, although it becomes more and more a matter of consensus in the scientific community that the absence of group or social pressure enhances the role of disposition on behaviour. Lee (2018) explains "the more powerful a political leader is, the less his or her political behaviour is affected by situational factors." This is the case with Mao and Xi, as both can be considered strong leaders.

In fact, when reading the literature about Chinese history it seems as if between Mao Zedong's death and Xi's appearance, China lacked a strong leader (Lensing, 2016).

The Great Leap Forward (GLF), (1958-61) was considered the dark path of Mao's rule, plagued by famine and death of millions of Chinese people. And so, after this period Mao's credibility was damaged plus the members of the Standing Committee were not supportive of Mao's domestic policies (Lensing, 2016).

In 1963, Mao established the "Four Clean Ups" for the rural areas of China through "check production team accounts, granaries, housing, and the allocation of work points" as part of the "class struggle" idea. However, besides the Vietnam War, the instability inside the Party was rising (Lensing, 2016, p. 61).

Two years later, Mao started the Cultural Revolution as a radical movement of "workers, peasants and students against party officials" hoping to change Chinese values aligned with communism. During the following Party conference, Mao's personal attacks on members of the Standing Committee backfired as he himself was a target of criticism (Lensing, 2016).

Later, in 1967, Mao starts the purge against Party officials. Later his wife, Jiang Qing, becomes part of the Cultural Revolution Group.

Mao dies in 1976 and Deng Xiaoping becomes the leader of the Communist Chinese Party (CCP<sup>1</sup>) two years later. Slowly the CCP starts to show some changes: the economy opens to the world; travelling is allowed as well as private farming and businesses. In 1982,

---

<sup>1</sup> Can also have the designation of CPC – Communist Party of China

the Chinese constitution suffers some changes establishing “two five-year term limits for the president, vice-president and members of the PBSC” (Lensing, 2016, p. 64). Ten years later, Jiang Zemin replaces Deng and the CCP becomes even further from a “strong man rule” towards a “government led by a collective group of leaders” (Lensing, 2016, p. 64). This goes on to Hu Jintao, who replaces Jiang Zemin in 2002 keeping the Chinese growth on track (Lensing, 2016).

Finally, in 2012, Xi Jinping and opponent Bo Xilai both appear on the political scene as princelings. However, in addition to Bo Xilai’s unpopularity inside the CCP later that year, his wife, Gu Kailai, was accused of murder. On the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in November, Xi was appointed the new Chinese Chairman (Lensing, 2016).

The following year, concerned with Party discipline and to connect with the people, Xi started designing a campaign called “Campaign on Mass-line Education and Practice”. Xi also created two new organisms, which he presided over: the Central National Security Council (CNSC) regarding the Chinese security forces and national security, and the Central Leading Group on Comprehensively Deepening Reforms (CLDGR) with the aim of making reforms in economy and culture easier (Lensing, 2016).

On top of this, since rising to power Xi had started an anti-corruption campaign which hits fourteen generals within the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). This shows clearly that Xi had the support of the military elite. In 2015, Xi was able to lay down a new security law as making himself the “centralized authority” in the matter (Lensing, 2016).

Regarding foreign policies and international crisis, Xi Jinping does not have the same political instability Mao had to deal with. During the ’60s, Mao Zedong had to coop with the Vietnam war and become the leader the Chinese people needed him to be which he took advantage of, to help consolidate power after the failure of the Great Leap Forward. However, in Xi’s case besides the lack of an international crisis, he was already the head of foreign policy decision making when becoming the Chinese Chairman and so, had the consensus Mao was never able to achieve. Despite not having a crisis like the Vietnam War, Xi Jinping made corruption the challenge of his mandate (Lensing, 2016).

On the topic of economic issues, once again Mao Zedong was not very popular due to the failure of the GLF, as mentioned above. On the contrary, Xi had no disagreements about economic policies inside the CCP which helped him, once again, consolidate power. Also, Xi reduced the power of China’s premier, formerly responsible for the Chinese economy - Li Keqiang – by establishing the CLGDR and making himself head of the group. Once again, it seems Xi’s actions are more concerned with politics and less into the economy (Lensing, 2016).

After 1959, a little red book with Mao’s quotes was edited and spread across China. It led to Mao’s praise by the Chinese people all the way to the PLA. Mao’s power grew so

much that no one would dare to challenge his authority inside the CCP (Lensing, 2016). When Mao died, the party cadres wanted to make sure no one could build a cult of personality like him, since the mistakes of the GLF and Cultural Revolution were still present in everyone's mind (Lensing, 2016).

So, at the time of Xi's nomination as head of the Party, the CCP had decided they wanted someone "loyal" and "not very popular" and Xi was described as exactly that: "someone who always took the middle road, and had a humble, quiet personality". However, Xi would not only become their President but also be praised as their father (Lensing, 2016, p. 71).

As Mao, Xi also published a book of speeches in two volumes named "The Governance of China". Besides this, Xi also released an app called "Little Red App" with his quotes and a map locating every quote as well as several opinion articles written by the Chinese Chairman.

Xi extends his cult of personality to all realms of society since his speeches are being included in schools and universities (Lensing, 2016). And so, Xi's strong cult of personality makes it almost impossible to disagree with him which becomes a strategy to consolidate power. Since the imperial times, the Chinese people are used to being ruled by a strong leader which perhaps explains the need for a strong communist leader nowadays and why China needs the CCP and not a democracy (Lensing, 2016).

Another factor Mao and Xi have in common: their unpredictability which makes them much more powerful inside the CCP (Lensing, 2016). Also, an important factor to both Mao and Xi's consolidation of power was the support of the PLA. First, Mao had the support of Lin Biao as his Minister of Defence and later gained control over the Public Security Forces which helped him consolidate power in himself (Lensing, 2016).

In Xi's case, he was able to establish relationships with military officials since the beginning of his career because there were many princelings inside the PLA. More than any other institution, the PLA became Xi's "major source of support" and "private think tank" throughout the years (Lensing, 2016, p.73). Also, Xi sought the support of the PLA to help him consolidate his power through the turmoil of the corruption campaign.

Further, soon as Xi became the head of the CMC (Central Military Commission) he helped promote some military officials close to him and established the CNSC, once again, showing how much, he believes the support of the PLA is fundamental for his consolidation of power (Lensing, 2016).

In 2012, together with his "right-hand man" -Wang Qishan - Xi began a reform on the Central Commission for Disciplinary Inspection by broadening its control inside the CCP. There is "a fine line" between the failure and success of Xi's Anti- Corruption Campaign so that Xi can control corrupt officials not as much as it looks like he is removing rivals from

the political sphere but just enough, so it does not weaken the Party. Nevertheless, it seems like Xi is enjoying the challenge since it allows him to remove rivals and ensure his power. Although during Mao's rule, corruption was not an important factor, when Xi became general secretary, corruption was one of China's biggest problems. (Lensing, 2016).

Besides all similar features between Mao and Xi, namely the cult of personality, the control and support of the PLA and the creation of organizational bodies within the government, it is possible to say that both leaders used their wives for the same purpose.

As mentioned before, at the time of the creation of the Cultural Revolution Group, Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, became the leading member who ran the CRG as the most "loyal and powerful lieutenant" (Lensing, 2016, p. 75).

As regards to Xi Jinping and his wife, Peng Liyuan, who was already "a famous folk singer and performer for the PLA", she was the one who helped improve Xi's image and popularity since the beginning of his career (Lensing, 2016). Some might say that without Peng Liyuan to help, Xi would never be anything beyond an ordinary provincial administrator. Others believe Peng represents a form of soft Chinese power through her "soft touch" and "fashionable public appearances". Nevertheless, she will continue to develop an important role for her husband's career, being the first to do so since Jiang Qing (Lensing, 2016, p.77).

After pointing out the similarities between the two leaders, one can evaluate the different possible outcomes of Xi's "strong man rule".

In the first scenario, the CCP would collapse if China diminishes its economic growth which would lead to an implosion headed by the political elite. Consequently, democratization would be inevitable for China and it would come as a demand from the Chinese people who are more aware of their rights and social problems (Lensing, 2016).

Moreover, Xi's Anti-corruption campaign stroke some nerves among the Party cadres which might cause the Party's division. The harder cadres might attempt Xi's assassination since he was already targeted before he took power.

Further, the Chinese political elite is still haunted by the collapse of the Soviet Union however unlike Gorbachev, Xi Jinping will not give up his power without a fight (Lensing, 2016).

Finally, there is the third scenario which means the *Status quo*: China lives on its own with no major changes. Xi Jinping will try to improve China and turn it into a "superpower" through deeper reforms which would require a larger consolidation of power for himself. It seems like he is already working towards this since he has not appointed any possible successors and has taken upon as many roles and positions as possible just as if he is staying in power for the rest of his life (Lensing, 2016).

### **2.3 Aspects of influence in Xi Jinping**

Xi Jinping believes Chinese moral traditions like Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism can help fight corruption, as the anti-corruption campaign can only cure the symptoms of corruption.

Xi has a high respect for Chinese cultural traditions, especially Chinese literature, and philosophy as he delivers his speeches and commentaries with many quotations in literary Chinese. Besides Xi Jinping, the only other leader to draw this much attention to the Chinese literary tradition was Mao Zedong (Penny, 2015).

Xi considers that being a Party official is a duty and an honour, an opportunity to serve the Chinese people. Party officials should regularly exam their consciences, analyse their flaws and guide themselves to have a good heart. To accomplish this, one must have good teachers and honest friends that keep you grounded on the right values. Only by staying true to their values, a Party member can surpass any obstacles.

In order for China to surpass its challenges it is necessary for the Communist Party and the Chinese people to have faith in the Chinese ideology and institutions (Penny, 2015).

No one could anticipate how Xi would turn out to be the utmost defender of China's interests and fight for them no matter the cost. Xi Jinping has repressed any rivals that crossed his path, lead an anti-corruption campaign and was the one who dared to defy the United States of America (Mcgregor, 2019).

Xi Jinping believes is the CCP's mission to develop China. According to Xi, a Chinese leader must be loyal to the Party and its ideology "in good times and bad" as something like a marriage (Mcgregor, 2019, p.20).

Xi had an impressive path inside the CCP. He was able to keep his record free from any accusations of corruption. Well married, Xi showed himself confident with a clear speech different from the common Party officials. This somehow allowed the big wings inside the CCP to believe Xi would be weak and easy to control. "The compromise candidate would turn out to be a most uncompromising leader." (Mcgregor, 2019, p. 22).

Xi worries about the lack of importance the Party has on ideology. Shook by the lack of leadership skills and respect for ideology from Party officials, Xi Jinping started a tightening reform – "The Chinese Dream" - amongst his officials and a purge on rivals and liberals in order to set the mark straight on how China should be ruled. More than 250 officials were questioned and those who were imprisoned wait trial for years. Since 2012, more than 2.5 million officials were investigated and more than 1.5 million were punished. These included "seven members of the Politburo and the cabinet and about two dozen high-ranking generals. Two senior officials have been sentenced to death" (Mcgregor, 2019, p. 24). One can say this campaign was designed to be a political purge on Xi's enemies, but maybe the facts show that it went far beyond this purpose (Mcgregor, 2019).

We continue to see that Xi Jinping is haunted by the Fall of the Soviet Union. “Nearly a quarter of a century later, Xi was worried enough about the state of the party to make everyone from senior leaders to rank-and-file officials go back to class and learn the lessons of the Soviet collapse again” (Mcgregor, 2019, p. 23)

In 2013, Xi developed the Belt and Road Initiative to create the path for business and technology all the way to Europe. Besides this, created the Asian Infrastructures Investment Bank and has high hopes of ending China’s poverty levels by the end of this year, as a landmark for the “100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the CCP”. Regarding the “Taiwan issue” Xi referred to it as a problem that should be solved as soon as possible. In the meantime, China is assembling military bases in the South China Sea.

According to Party records’, 2017 should have been the year in which Xi Jinping would have chosen his successor to take over in 2022, however that did not happen. Xi then altered the Chinese Constitution by removing the limit of Presidential terms from two five-year terms to life expectancy (Mcgregor, 2019).

However, every action has consequences. And Xi has been collecting rivals along the way. Those who were affected by the anti-corruption campaign, Chinese wealthy families or Party officials will wait for the opportunity to strike their anger. Also, the “technocrat elite” inside the CCP who are not satisfied with Xi’s attempts to consolidate power either through meddling in legal reforms or running the state economy might try to bully Xi Jinping (Mcgregor, 2019).

On the outside level, Xi has also ruffled some feathers. Starting by the trade war with the United States and its backlash about China’s military build-up. In contrast, Germany is worried about its industrial competitiveness. Australia concerns itself about the security of the region if the United States leave its anchor. Japan wants to reclaim the power in the South Asian Sea and settle old scores. Taiwan has a growing anxiety for its remaining independence to be taken away by the mainland. Finally, there is a common unsettling feeling amongst all southeast Asian nations.

If China has any economic setbacks, all these shadows could strike Xi Jinping before the next Party Congress in 2022. Even so, Xi is likely to take upon those rivals and respond accordingly. In what matters, Xi is prompt to use China’s domestic and external problems to justify his unlimited rule (Mcgregor, 2019). Remains the question as to whether Xi is capable to rule over the system which so often turned on CCP’s founding father, Mao Zedong.

One of the elements which is most important to Xi Jinping is the Communist Party, as it the CCP’s mission to guide and develop China’s future (Mcgregor, 2019).

Party Discipline consists of reinforcing the Party’s rules and regulations to eliminate corruption and other types of malpractice. Since 2016, Xi Jinping has made efforts to ensure

exactly this. At the Party's Central Committee, it became clear that Xi and his ideas became the new source of content of the Party's discipline (Davies, 2017).

Since Mao Zedong, Xi Jinping is the one Party leader, that has gone the extra mile in shaping official Party discourse. Further, it seems as if quoting Xi shows Party discipline in itself: in speeches of other local leaders, in government work reports, in syllabus at universities and articles and editorials in the national media. This shows a form of "rhetorical accord" with the new Party governance (Davies, 2017).

To set instructions for the whole of a large organization is different than disciplining the individual self. There are rules of conduct and punishments for those who disobey because what matters is the wellbeing of the organization. The individuals are the ones who need to adjust themselves to the greater good. Within the Party, to go against the rules is to risk expulsion or worse.

Xi Jinping is direct and assertive when addressing Party members and state officials. The "rigid formulations and verbose descriptions" give a clear sense of directions to all Party officials, in order to create order and "disciplined unity" (Davies, 2017).

Gloria Davies (2017) refers to this as "China's official discourse" which "reflects the authoritarian nature of its one-party system" (Davies, 2017, p. 117).

The Party's speech has changed since Xi Jinping. His predecessor, Hu Jintao, was several times called out for being too "contrived and wooden" (Davies, 2017, p. 118). Under the Xi administration there have been used cartoons and music videos to promote the Party and state policies, both to the mainland and globally. First there was, an animated video in English with Chinese subtitles, entitled "What's the plan?" but the government claimed no part in its production. Later, Xinhua as the official governmental news agency, released a new music video about the "Four Comprehensives" on its online video website. This video was dubbed and subtitled into eight other languages besides Chinese (English, Russian, Arabic, German, Korean and Japanese).

The "Four Comprehensives"<sup>2</sup> came to light in December 2014 and stand for "building a prosperous society, reform the nation according to the law and the CCP" (p. 119). These are part of a post-Maoist inheritance to which Xi added the fourth referring to "fighting corruption" (Davies, 2017).

---

<sup>2</sup> "Comprehensively build a moderately prosperous society  
& Comprehensively deepen reform  
& Comprehensively govern the nation according to law  
& Comprehensively strictly govern the Party" (Xi, The Governance of China I, 2014)



This form of ideological marketing is not new among the Chinese Party-state. Mao's 'Ten Major Relationships'; Deng Xiaoping's 'Four Cardinal Principles', Jiang Zemin's 'Three Represents', and Hu Jintao's 'Eight Honours and Eight Disgraces' are the exact example of it.

After Xi Jinping rose to power, the intellectual life of China suffered a visible change. Until 2016, Yanhuang Chunqiu and the Consensus website were the only two outlets for independent debate, which had survived thanks to connections with the Party elite circles. Outside China, these two publications extended criticisms on Xi's comprehensives and strict Party governance.

When Xi Jinping entered the core of the Politburo, the Consensus website was commended to shut down due to the charge of disseminating "the wrong ideas" (Davies, 2017, p. 128).

Such pressure on Party discipline from Xi and the Politburo shows "an extreme resistance to political reform" and a blind trust on controlling power. It can be considered "wishful thinking" to expect that people will be disciplined by "prescribed formulations" and speeches, especially when there is a different understanding of the reality overseas (Davies, 2017).

Since coming to power Xi Jinping has been on the path to the "Chinese dream of national rejuvenation" following socialism with Chinese characteristics.

By the end of 2016, Xi became the core of the PCP Central Committee. In October 2017 was re-elected general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and Chinese president in March 2018.

It seems reform under Xi has put China's economy in the top two of the world's economies. In 2018, it reached 90 trillion yuan (12.72 trillion American dollars). China was considered the most complete production chain in the world, with more than 220 industrial products ranked No. 1 in the world (Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019).

Xi has supported the development of the private sector and invested in technological innovation. State institutions "have expanded online approval and one-stop services" (Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019, p. 20).

Opening to the exterior has led China's consumer market closer to becoming the largest in the world.

More than numbers, Xi is celebrated by his ability to connect with the people through language which can explain how China achieved so much in so little time. Moreover, he pushes the Party cadres to out to the street to talk to the people about their lives and well-being.

Since 2013 Xi Jinping has set the goal of eliminate extreme poverty by 2020, 10 years before the United Nation's deadline leading to more than 82 million Chinese people out of poverty (Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019).

China has been increasingly connected to the world. In 2014, the country received 120 billion dollars in foreign direct investment for the first time. In the media, headlines praised how China has connections all around the world since the Xi leadership.

Xi has mentioned before how he wanted a better world. According to Xi Jinping, the Belt and Road Initiative, was exactly the answer to this: a way to connect the world through trade and investment.

Chinese media outlets claim that the goal is to help countries and regions in the world to mutual benefits from globalization. Which reflects Xi Jinping's view on international relations – “mutual respect, fairness and justice, and win-win cooperation” (Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019).

Moreover, Xi Jinping has organized several global summits with world leaders such as the APEC Beijing meeting in 2014, the G20 Hangzhou Summit in 2016, the BRICS Xiamen Summit in 2017 and the SCO Qingdao Summit in 2018.

China has risen like no other country. The PRC is involved in solving crucial global and regional issues such as climate change, terrorism, and fair trade.

In 2019, China became the United Nations' biggest contributor after the United States and also, one of the biggest peacemakers amongst the UN security council by building a one billion dollars fund for the UN Peace and Development Fund, since 2016 (Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019). Xi Jinping wants the CPC to make a positive impact on the world.

Xi Jinping is aware of the challenges that lie ahead. At an opening speech last September, Xi worn the Party cadres that to achieve the “Chinese Dream” one might have to endure some struggles. The economic downturn, poverty alleviation, pollution control and the trade war with the U.S.. Nevertheless, Xi has risen to the challenges. Xi was able to propose some structural reforms promoting high-quality development in China (Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019).

Regarding the U.S., Xi has mentioned that China is “taking important steps towards solving the issue” but prepared to fight a trade war if needed (Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019).

About Hong Kong, Xi has said that confrontation is not the answer and highlighted that the system implemented - “one country, two systems” – has always been welcomed by the people.

On Taiwan, Xi has revealed that the use of force is a possibility to protect the Taiwanese people from “external interference” and separatists. The armed forces have been reformed and updated for the possibility of confrontation.

Xi Jinping is aware and ready for the struggles of the world and China's as a developing country. Again, Xi has called upon the members of the CPC to step up and march along towards a new and "glorious" China (Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019).

Xi Jinping came to power and started using the Chinese expression "*yifa zhiguo*" (rule of law). The term "*yifa zhiguo*" has different meanings in the English language: "rule of law"; "rule by law"; and "ruling the country according to the law". Under Xi Jinping's leadership it appears to justify his policy and reform changes (Nesossi, et al., 2017).

The concept has been used in an authoritarian way within the Chinese legal system. While it has served as the motto for the anti-corruption campaign; fighting criminals, national and international threats, it also has served as a form of repression of the civil society and human rights activism.

To understand the expression "*yifa zhiguo*" and its different connotations, one must understand whether law has moral authority on its own, with no connection to political power. For Chinese Party officials, "*yifa zhiguo*" means the law as an instrument of governance. In this sense, law reflects the morality that should exist within politics and the society that follows those rules. As such, law sets the limits according to which the regime must obey (Nesossi, et al., 2017).

However, we should pay attention to the different expressions that serve "*yifa zhiguo*" in the English language. For instance, the first expression "rule of law" can describe something opposite to "arbitrary government", but when referring to "rule by law" or "ruling the country according to the law" it is unlikely for them to mean the same in Chinese official discourse.

"*Yifa zhiguo*" is better translated as "governing the nation or [the country] in accordance with the law" (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p.100). The concept came from the socialist rule spread around the 1980s. In the 1990s, it gave great emphasis on the use of law in state administration which did not mean the separation between the Party from the state. In China, there was a growing presence of the Party within the state through party groups (*xiaozu*) in all areas of government. The Party delegates authority to state institutions while maintaining the lead in all political, ideological, and institutional matters.

Jian Zemin or Hu Jintao had different understandings of "*yifa zhiguo*" than Xi Jinping. Xi Jinping sees rule-based governance as an opportunity to discipline and control the Party. While on previous decades the focus was maintaining social stability and economic growth it did not matter what methods were used to achieve such results or who was getting rich on the side (Nesossi, et al., 2017).

During Hu Jintao's administration the term "*yifa zhiguo*" was a way to achieve "rule of law obligations" and "bigger economic objectives", something that was "instrumentally good" to improve the Chinese society (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p. 102).

When Xi Jinping took over, corruption and inequality had become serious and undeniable problems in Chinese society which was leading to a “growing sense of popular injustice” that needed to be tackled. This is the reason why Xi had to regain control of the Party and transmit the right ideological discourse and this way unify it as the discourse of the Chinese people (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p.101).

In 2014, during the decision of the Fourth Plenum, Xi Jinping described the rule of law as an instrument to ensure social order and stability in the Party and the country while maintaining the economy’s sustainability. But something shifted under Xi’s anti-corruption campaign as the rule of law seeks now to “contain power” and becomes “one of a series of tools that can rectify individuals” (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p. 102).

The difference between Xi’s take on the rule of law and his predecessors is that Xi uses the rule of law to ensure the leadership of the Party, perhaps emphasize it through the rule of law. The purpose of “*yifa zhiguo*” used by Xi Jinping is to enhance the bond between the Party and the people.

To regain the trust of people in the law and the party, Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang began to introduce new concepts into the official discourse: accountability, transparency and “clean government” (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p.102). But these promises required some changes in the way the centralized power worked at the time, to reduce or even stop corruption at the local level and to fight any threats to national security. So, Xi Jinping brought back the light to Party supremacy.

In Xi’s China, the concept of “*yifa zhiguo*” gained an ideological role and allowed the Party to govern China and use the law as a “weapon” to fight “disunity, dissent and crime” (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p.102).

The way in which “*yifa zhiguo*” is intended today has suffered some changes through the years. First, the rule of law is a contrasting reality when compared with the Maoist years. Those who lived through the “lawless” years of Mao Zedong’s rule are somehow satisfied with the current legal system. Here the question is whether Chinese citizens will continue to use Mao Zedong’s nihilist legal system as a measure cup to evaluate the one they are living right now (Nesossi, et al., 2017).

Second, China has changed so much through the years and the Chinese people are changing with it while transforming the perception on rule of law. It changed the way people think about the state-centred rule, about rights, about the government and the authoritarian harmonic model established so far. The Chinese society is more open than its leaders care perhaps to admit.

Third, historical context provides us the exact frame in which “*yifa zhiguo*” influenced the Chinese official discourse. After Mao Zedong’s arbitrary government, a new system had to be built and political reform was put into place. China needed this, to

implement the rule of law at the right time. In the same way, when the time is right China might be ready “for more democratic and accountable governance” (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p.103).

In today’s China, the concept of “*yifa zhiguo*” seems to carry a connection with “*yide zhiguo*” (ruling the country according to virtue). This is connected to the two political traditions in China: Confucianism and Legalism.

Moreover, morality must be cultivated in the regime. Law is intended to guide the behaviour of Chinese officials and leaders but it is also considered as a sign of the moral of the regime (Nesossi, et al., 2017).

Xi Jinping is not responsible for this awakening back to tradition. The Chinese take on power and the relationship between state and society were not new elements that Xi brought back, but rather structural bases of Chinese culture which perhaps were fading away (Nesossi, et al., 2017).

The concept of “*yide zhiguo*” is very much linked with the Confucian mindset within Chinese politics. It means Party leaders have to politically guide and “legally illiterate citizenry” (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p. 104). Xi has done exactly that, preparing a strong Party to rule for the people.

Then, we can understand the expression “*Yifa zhiguo*” is not intended to help China turn into a more democratic path. Rule of law in China does not mean the same as it might in Western countries, instead it means stability and order. These might represent the key ingredients to a “paternalistic system” which regulates itself as “the ultimate source of moral authority” (Nesossi, et al., 2017, p. 105). One can understand that regarding democracy and accountability, China is not leading the path towards innovation.

The Chinese Communist Party understands political concepts like the rule of law as historical landmarks in a bigger and longer political path. Something to be achieved in the long-term together with economic developments. Since 2014, the members of the Party have been making the progress towards the rule of law which might transform the Chinese system of government more accountable. Still, it might not be as big of a transformation as we wanted it to be.

The rule of law entails the Party’s leadership. Xi Jinping’s push for “*yifa zhiguo*” is hoped to help bring transparency and accountability in Chinese politics. However, it will not improve the Party’s relationship with the Chinese people. Because the Party’s mission is to defend the people’s rights and interests which were designed under the same Party leadership leaving little room for the people to develop rights and interests outside of the Party’s realm of action (Nesossi, et al., 2017).

Despite what we have seen so far, the literature is torn because it points arguments as if Xi Jinping does not represent a big shift in Chinese politics because he appears to follow

the heritage of the Maoist and post-Maoist frameworks. Since 2012, the Xi administration has been keen on tightening the one-party rule over state and society (Klimeš & Marinelli, 2018).

The strength of the Chinese Communist Party relies on four key elements: its ideology spread by an effective propaganda machine together with a strong political discourse and a well-based party-state organization (Klimeš & Marinelli, 2018).

Holbig (as cited in Klimeš & Marinelli, 2018) outlines the importance of economic growth as a tool used by the Chinese political elites to legitimize the CCP. However, economic growth is not enough to prove the CCP's legitimacy towards the Chinese people and once more, the communist ideology proves to be the key to foster the legitimacy of the regime. Xi Jinping introduced then the concept of the "New Normal" to tell both the international community and the domestic setting, China's latest achievements and progress lead by the Xi administration.

Lams (as cited in Klimeš & Marinelli, 2018) claims that despite the new slogans Xi Jinping has not made a significant impact on the Party's ideology. Truly, the significant change has been on China's presentation as an international role-model through an active propaganda discourse both in the domestic and the public sphere.

Finally, Xi's administration is trying to portray China as the international diplomacy leader and as an example to be followed. The CCP uses ideology, political discourse, and propaganda to deliver an "ideal" vision of their national sphere (Klimeš & Marinelli, 2018).

In fact, Xi is not the only one behind structural change in China. There were serious problems that the CCP needed to tackle before Xi run to power (Batke, 2016).

First, the necessity to avoid the same fate as the Soviet Union (Batke, 2016; Lensing, 2016). Second, control the worldwide economic crisis and its impacts on the Chinese middle-class and last, to restore the CCP's legitimacy threatened by its internal turmoil (Batke, 2016; Lensing, 2016). Towards this scenario, Xi needed to act strongly against the wave of destruction coming headed for the CCP (Batke, 2016).

Xi's eagerness to act upon these challenges suggested that the Chinese Chairman truly believes in China's mission and the CCP to help deliver it. Although Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign and his impartial guidance through it, one could be still sceptical that Xi would conduct such an intense governance reform without personal reasons (Batke, 2016).

Xi Jinping has come to a level of power different than his predecessors, namely Hu Jintao. In this way, Xi leads the Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) and supervises over the Central Committee staff. Through the creation of LSGs (new leading small groups), which are responsible for China's policy-making process as it includes Party representatives, state institutions representatives and some Politburo members altogether. Could this mean, Xi is achieving a new form of concentrating power? If so, it is unlikely that Xi's influence

could manage all LSGs while undertaking the tasks as head of a 1.4 million country (Batke, 2016).

It is difficult to distinguish if the mentioned structural changes are based upon the CCP's needs or if initiated by Xi's quest for the concentration of power (Batke, 2016).

Regarding the accusations of Xi's cult of personality, this more "charismatic" media presence only confirms Xi's intent to create a positive reinforcement of the Party's image towards the public (Batke, 2016).

One might wonder if the CCP's propaganda system is trying to make Xi look more approachable and closer to the people. As Batke (2016) put it: "...the CCP's glossier treatment of Xi Jinping looks very much like a Leninist propaganda system trying to drag itself into the modern media and social environment." (Batke, 2016, p.75). Further, if Xi's speeches are scripted, is it possible that the Xi Jinping we know is the product of a very well organized CCP's propaganda machine. In other words, this might leave little room for any speculation about the man behind the Party (Batke, 2016).

Xi is not pushing the "cult of personality" card as Mao did since the first uses it in the context of CCP's propaganda and the latter was used as a "holy" figure (Batke, 2016).

Over and above that, it is important to understand the engine behind the CCP than just its Leader. In doing so, one can ask if Xi Jinping can be considered as the CCP's strategy to save the regime from downfall (Batke, 2016).

Since coming to power Xi has relied on three specific pillars: communism in order to strengthen the Party's legitimacy and suppress western liberal ideas; nationalism to regain the trust and support from the Chinese people and lastly, Leninism to teach both the CCP members and the people to put the Party's policy "above all else" (Zhao, 2016, p.84).

However, Xi is not allowed to concentrate all power as Mao Zedong did since repression based on ideology would not endure or solve China's pressing issues. Truly, Xi's only option seems to use Maoist ideology to centralize power and control on the CCP's regime instead of "an embarrassing confession of regime fragility in a twenty-first-century China buffeted by fears of economic slowdown" and also challenged by "impatient liberals and a public angered by rampant corruption" (Zhao, 2016, p.84).

To achieve "greatness" Xi believed China should not forget Mao's accomplishments. Through the Maoist revival, Xi wanted to collect the popular legitimacy of the CCP, to prove its "right to rule". Again, to restore the order inside the Party, Xi warned its officials to stay true to their tasks and lose any privileges because a party member who threatened the Party's stability would also lose the honour to be a part of it (Zhao, 2016).

And so, the control of Xi's administration continued to spread the Maoist heritage by pressing the media to support the CCP which in some cases lead to media control and censorship in which "Chinese journalists now risk being fired and even jailed if they publish

stories that violate Communist Party policy” (Zhao, 2016, p. 88). Following there were extreme monitoring extending Internet content available to the Chinese people through a “two-million internet army” with the purpose to “advance regime narratives and block unhealthy” online content put together by the Chinese administration based on “the right of each state to regulate its own cyberspace and to manage the flow of information into, around, and out of its country” (Zhao, 2016, p. 88). Still related to the topic of free technology and online reach, rather than the usual social media websites and media networks China displays its very own pro-Party version to create the perfect ambience for popular control and surveillance (Zhao, 2016).

Regarding the Chinese youth, Xi’s administration has been “hands-on” in order to develop an articulated propaganda system on university campuses all over the country by spreading the Party’s “three identities”: history, ideology and “emotional identity with the CCP and its policies” and reducing the influence of western ideas. Xi’s goal is to propose an enhancement on the diffusion of communist ideology in higher education in which western values would never be allowed. Likewise, there has been censorship on books and classroom material making sure on the dissemination of Chinese based socialism as well as Xi Jinping’s “Chinese Dream” thought and speeches coverage (Zhao, 2016).

As for propaganda applied to higher education, Universities can interview their student applicants to attest their Party allegiance. Indeed, “Universities are even authorized to send investigators to an applicant’s hometown to look into political attitudes” (Zhao, 2016, p.92). The purpose of increasing propaganda at campuses is based upon the idea of a strong Chinese government, however, this does not translate into the idea of a good government but rather might translate into distrust on the Communist Party (Zhao, 2016).

Further, one could wonder if the enforcement of fear and censorship by the Chinese leader is a way to stop the inevitable crumble of the regime which is still haunted by the Soviet case (Zhao, 2016; Lensing, 2016).

Xi’s new rule might reveal an intent of bringing Mao’s Cultural Revolution back to life, however, this time based upon a “new authoritarianism” in which Xi Jinping is “using Mao’s methods to walk Deng’s path”. This happens so that Xi and the CCP can make sure to remain in power to see their reforms implemented “smoothly” (Zhao, 2016, p. 92). And so, one can consider if neauthoritarianism is the path “necessary if China is to avoid disaster during its long march toward democratic modes and orders” (Zhao, 2016, p. 93).

China’s condition when Xi assumed power was not an easy one to deal with. Between the popular discontentment with the party, the serious cases of corruption, pollution and income inequality Xi had to worry about maintaining social and political stability – ergo the regime’s survival (Zhao, 2016; Batke, 2016; Lensing, 2016). Maybe this a normal reality since “the CCP is a victim of its own successes and failures. No country can modernize as



rapidly as China has in just a few decades without suffering vast social consequences” (Zhao, 2016, p. 93).

When taking over power, Xi knew the regime’s condition and its impacts on the country and it seems Xi “was eager to do all he could to shield the regime from possible overthrow or disintegration” no matter which side they stood on, both liberals or even the most devoted leftists were taught a lesson “regardless of their goals or ideology”. On one side trying to stop western influence, and on the other, avoiding Party instability at all cost (Zhao, 2016, p. 93).

Consequently, there are some concerns regarding the possible violation of human rights-based upon the statement that “national security has become regime security”. In this case, censorship is intended to avoid any collective action against the regime (Zhao, 2016, p.94).

Moreover, Xi Jinping wants to give the impression that freedom or even universal values are “un-Chinese” (Zhao, 2016). The Xi administration justifies this as the respect for Confucianism principles of hierarchy, in order to ensure the regimes legitimacy to rule, however, the CCP situation appears somehow confusing since its foundation relies on Communism which is based upon principles of equality (Zhao, 2016).

Some think that deep reforms might only be applied through authoritarianism, but reforms would not become true just by its authoritarianism. There is a difference between building a “power-consolidation agenda” and “pressing a reform agenda”. Truly, it is possible that instead of fighting his way for a “cleaner” China, Xi’s authoritarianism might just be at its most pure form (Zhao, 2016).

Then, one might wonder in terms of Chinese ideology, why is Confucianism important to Xi’s China?

The answer lies within the Confucian philosophies’ which justify the rule of law of the whole by the few. To begin with, Xi’s intention is to use Confucian laws to transform Marxism into a more appropriate Chinese form (Lin, 2017).

However, one can identify “four Confucian weaknesses” since it fosters dictatorship and lack of free speech, the ambiguity of its “ideas and beliefs” due to many subjective approaches and finally, the sense of praise of the rich despite the poor (Lin, 2017).

During the rule of Mao, there were some shifts regarding the praise and despise of Confucianism. First, Mao urged his ministers to study all Confucius’ legacy since he wished to create a version of Marxism and communism “deeply rooted” in Confucian laws. Then, after the Cultural Revolution, Mao admitted Confucianism lacked the concern for “agricultural productivity” socialism had, considering the last “superior” to the first. Further, Confucianism defended slave masters and aristocrats which according to Chinese socialism was “anti-revolutionary” (Lin, 2017, p. 49).

Regarding the government of Xi Jinping, Confucianism is once again used into the ideological battlefield. After the Mao-era, Confucius became a Chinese symbol worldwide converted as the name of the official mandarin language institutes spread all over the globe as “a means of delivering Chinese soft power” (Lin, 2017, p. 50). Besides this, under President Xi, there has been an “unprecedented return” to the cultural roots of Confucianism through the publication of books and articles about Confucian ideology in its majority targeting the Chinese youth. Also, there seems to exist an attempt to legitimize the CCP and China’s political system through Chinese traditional values along with the idea of fighting western liberal political discourse (Lin, 2017).

Confucian political philosophy explains political leaders should have high moral values as following the example of religious leaders. Thus, the Confucian thesis urges human beings to eliminate everything evil or bad within the human nature - “animal instincts” as described by the philosopher Yang Yang (cited in Lin, 2017). This means, political leaders must have a sense of virtue within themselves and in consequence become an example to their people. If not, the same ruler can become a target and judged according to the same Confucian rules (Lin, 2017).

According to this, a king, emperor, or leader acquires its political authority or legitimacy through the establishment of “moral authority” (Lin, 2017, p.53).

Confucianism relates to two principles: “pan-moralism” as “a tendency to justify political agendas through a moral purpose” and “pan-politicization” which means “a tendency to treat moral choices (...) as a political issue”. These two principles found a public opinion (“public culture”) intolerant to “doctrines” other than “state orthodoxy” which is already accepted by the people (Lin, 2017, p. 53).

In contrast, Legalism explains that all human actions are intended to serve human personal desires alone and that nothing can change this reality. Therefore, the sovereign should embrace a mix of both: his will and one of the people. To avoid untruthful government officials in using public power to serve personal interests, the sovereign would need “absolute power” (p. 53).

On the other hand, while Confucianism is based upon social hierarchical relationships established through moral values in which the leaders, as “morally superior” serve as an example to their people, Legalism claims for the application of the law since it does not believe in the selfless human actions towards the public interest (Lin, 2017).

Regarding Xi Jinping’s political theory, it can be regarded as a mix of both philosophies: “prescribed moral rules into law enforcement” - based upon the Fourth Plenum

Decision<sup>3</sup> - considering that the CCP can use the law to establish “order and stability” as well as its “absolute authority and leadership of the party” which is essential for “socialist rule of law” (Lin, 2017, p. 53). Xi’s behaviour is not new in this form, because through controlling law-making and the application of the law, the Party can really maintain social order avoiding any obstacle from corrupt government officials (Lin, 2017).

In this sense, the Decision embraces both the rule of law and the “rule by virtue” showing also a very strong Confucian influence. Besides this, since 2016 CCP officials have been encouraged to study the Party’s law alongside with Xi’s speeches to fully grasp its moral values (Lin, 2017).

Xi Jinping wishes to use Confucianism to legitimize the Communist Party and by doing so, “sinicizing Marxism” (Lin, 2017, p. 54). He argues that China needs a different political model, an alternative of the western one, because of China’s socialist tradition. In this way, he wishes to establish a Chinese political model based upon a “centralized, authoritarian socialist regime led by the CCP” (Lin, 2017, p. 55).

When talking about Confucianism, Xi explains Chinese socialism is part of the Chinese traditional culture since it “reflects the will of the Chinese people” and so the right model for the Chinese society. It seems that Xi Jinping sees Marxism through “Confucian eyes” and intends that the world does it as well (Lin, 2017, p. 55). It appears that his intent is to prove China’s historical bond to socialism and hence, influence by its principles, to silence all the western liberal voices arguing against the Chinese system (Lin, 2017).

However, there are two inconsistencies in Xi’s discourse. First, Marxism, as the official ideology of the CCP, stands as a western ideology in its core. Secondly, the question remains: how to legitimize the CCP in this situation? Xi Jinping believes the solution lies within the “Sinicization of Marxism” while he asks for confidence in the socialist theory (Lin, 2017, p. 55).

Confucianism and Legalism have successfully supported China’s authoritarian regime and its socialist principles, as well as, rejecting the western liberalism (Lin, 2017).

It seems the revival of Confucianism is part of a plan to both reinforce the CCP’s legitimacy and the trust in the Chinese socialist system. Truly, this is “increasingly dogmatic” and inconsistent with the people’s future demand for “civil liberties” (Lin, 2017, p. 56).

Stanislav Mysicka (2017) wrote in his report for the ECPR General Conference that despite relying on ideology to strengthen the Chinese collective leadership, Xi Jinping used Maoism only as a strategy to keep “better party discipline” since the main Maoist principles

---

<sup>3</sup> CCP Central Committee Decision Regarding Some Major Questions in Comprehensively Promoting Governance According to the Law

as the nonstop “revolution of the masses” were missing from Xi’s political discourse (Mysicka, 2017,p.1).

Early in his career Xi Jinping had already become a role model inside the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). After rising to power in 2012, Xi started a search for power by openly “attempting to personify his rule over the Chinese political system” and was keen on a much stronger communist ideological discourse than his predecessors (Mysicka, 2017, p. 2). Johnson (as cited in Mysicka, 2017) explains how dangerously Xi was revealing strong Maoist elements as “personal dictatorship” and persecution of his adversaries within the party.

Maoism started in China between the 1920s and 1930s in a socialist revolutionary movement initiated by the CCP. The movement called Maoism was based upon the Mao Zedong’s thought and style of leadership. Mao believed in Lenin as he believes communism could be implemented in China through the revolution of Chinese peasantry together with the supervision of the Chinese Communist Party (Mysicka, 2017).

There was this Maoist idea of the people’s control over the elites and party members who would not behave properly such as cases of corruption, ineffective work, or lack of modesty. This was to prevent communist rulers to forget the masses needs’ and only consider their own. Truly, during Mao’s rule, the Chinese regime was more egalitarian than other communist states at the time, in which China revealed less difference between political elites and the masses (Mysicka, 2017).

Along with this, Mao believed in the “necessity of intense class struggle and the idea of permanent revolution” which classifies as Mao’s contradiction: capitalism and imperialism among a socialist society and such situation would imply the use of violence in order to support the maintenance of communism and “the development of socialism in China” (Mysicka, 2017, p. 4).

Although Mao delegated tasks upon other party members, he displayed a “heavy” centralization of power in his hands as he seemed to always have the “final word” on the matter, which eventually lead to the cult of personality we can perceive today (Mysicka, 2017).

Despite Mao’s strong rule and praise as “the founding father of Chinese socialist revolution”, post- Mao rulers seemed to reject Maoist principles relying more on economic progress than on “ideological purity” (Mysicka, 2017).

After Mao Zedong, the Chinese way of leadership became more open to consensus and “joint decision-making” as Mao’s successor Deng Xiaoping reformed the Politburo Standing Committee into the “core of China’s decision making in policy formulation, implementation and coordination” (Mysicka, 2017, p. 5).

Since rising to power Xi Jinping desires to reform China, so he created a small circle of people whom he trusts in a much more “centralized decision-making” and “trusted advisory staff” (Mysicka, 2017, p. 5).

The new central coordination bodies supervised by Xi allow a higher level of control in structural economic reforms. Regarding security issues, there were established the *National Security Committee* and the *Internet Security Informatization Leading Small Group* and in the case of the military, Xi created the *Central Military Commission* in which he also presides over, making the Chinese Chairman the official “commander in chief” of China’s armed forces (Mysicka, 2017).

In what concerns Xi’s personality, the Chinese Chairman is more charismatic and closer to the people than his predecessors. He is viewed as a simple and humble person. The true father of the Nation. At least, it seems this is how he wishes to be perceived by the Chinese people (Mysicka, 2017).

In general terms, Xi has a strong ideological discourse associated with socialism as the foundation of CCP’s power and influence. After ascended to power, Xi showed China his own goal through the motto “Chinese Dream” and the “Four Comprehensives”, which are, according to the Chinese Chairman, the way to improve China and every Chinese person’s duty to follow them. The concept of the Chinese Dream is “state-centred”, calling for the young generation, deep patriotism instead of the same old criticism of Western ideals (Mysicka, 2017).

Also, regarding Mao’s ideology and form of rule, Xi does not consider it as “bad period” - which must be forgotten - but rather something that represents the history of the CCP and China itself, because without it China’s history wouldn’t be the same (Mysicka, 2017). Xi Jinping believes that to deny Mao’s historical relevance as a founder of the Chinese State can be considered “historical nihilism” as the historical disregard for an event, its values, and convictions. Xi also advocates that leaders are only human and therefore allowed to make mistakes (Mysicka, 2017).

Furthermore, Xi rejects the values and ideas of the West because these were the same ideas which caused the ruin of the Soviet Union and are contrary to the core ideas of Socialism (Mysicka, 2017).

Regarding Chinese bureaucracy, Xi wanted to reinforce party discipline to improve the officials’ efficiency and so he developed “the biggest and ruthless anti-corruption campaign”. This meant the loss of privileges and more contact with the Chinese people from party cadres (Mysicka, 2017, 9). However, in this anti-corruption campaign there are used unorthodox methods applied on Party members: “solitary confinement”; torture, sleep deprivation and non-stop interrogations. Some might say this campaign intends to trap Xi’s opponents (Mysicka, 2017, p. 10).

Xi is not a true Maoist but uses this ideology to fix CCP's problems. In fact, Xi is more realistic, more concerned with economic reforms than ideology. Xi is afraid that the "heavenly mandate" (*tianming*) will be lost due to the Party's bad example (Mysicka, 2017).

It seems strong to assume that Xi's campaign for control within the Party and his cult of personality makes him closer to Mao. In fact, some centralized policies were thought by Xi's predecessors like Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. Nonetheless, Xi requires Party discipline to undertake some of the reforms he has intended (Mysicka, 2017).

Xi's approach regarding Maoism might just be a strategy more than a revival of the past. Also, former party leaders supported Mao's ideology, but that their path in politics would end up far from it most of the times. Although Xi admires Mao, does not seem to rule by them. His intention is to achieve Party stability so he can control cadres and officials from the centre as well as, foster the Party's connection with the people. In the same way, Xi uses nationalism to unite internal divisions and anti-western feelings as to foster "national rejuvenation" (Mysicka, 2017, 16).

Truly, one can say Xi Jinping is one of the most authoritarian rulers China has ever had. However, this can become a problem for the Chinese Chairman, as his call for ideology could bring out the most leftist party members who are not in favour of economic reform and so jeopardize "the legitimacy of the Party to rule itself" (Mysicka, 2017, p. 17).

#### **2.4 Objectives and Research Questions**

This Dissertation is intended to identify the main elements of Xi Jinping's values and beliefs. The objective of the present research is to know Xi Jinping as the leader of China through the analysis of his own written speeches in "The Governance of China I" (2014).

China is one of the most powerful countries in the World today. The Chinese manufacturing controls the global economy; its military forces are growing at the fastest rate than any other nation and the Chinese Leader, Xi Jinping has changed whatever notions the World thought it had on Chinese leadership.

In 2017, Xi Jinping became part of the Constitution, an honour only the late Chairman Mao was able to achieve.

A charismatic authority might be a religious, military, political or any other kind of leader. The one who will "save" and guide the people through the difficult times, through what path this person believes to be the best solution. In so, that he or she present themselves with absolute certainty that they can lead their people out of distress (Tucker, 1977).

Today, Xi is still going strong to change the World and set the tone for the following decades without no one knowing why or how he does it.

Xi Jinping has come to a level of power different than his predecessors. Xi leads the Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) and supervises over the Central Committee staff.

Through the creation of LSGs (new leading small groups), which are responsible for China's policy-making process as it includes Party representatives, state institutions representatives and some Politburo members altogether. Could this mean, Xi is achieving a new form of concentrating power? (Batke, 2016; Shirk, 2018).

There are, naturally, accusations about Xi's cult of personality, Xi may intent to create a positive reinforcement of the Party's image towards the public. However, one might wonder if the CCP's propaganda system is trying to make Xi look more approachable and closer to the people- If so, who is Xi Jinping?

An individual needs a natural set of skills to become a political leader. Tucker (1977) explains three main characteristics a political leader should have: empathy for the well-being of others, selflessness, and creativity. He then seems to reject "charisma" as a favourable characteristic of a political leader.

The political leadership nowadays it is in desperate need of both humanist and creative leadership of the highest range. To have prosperity and development, it is important not to think in short-range terms. So political leaders need to be open-minded in policymaking to make correct policies. Thus, to be creative and humanist (Tucker,1977).

And so, political leaders are extremely important as they represent the authority of government, they assess the distribution of power and resources, build relationships with other participants, and make decisions that can have great impact on the well-being of a nation and its people.

Xi wants China to be the example of leadership in the world. But what this exactly mean? How will Xi's plan affect the world we leave in?

The present research is one of the ways to understand Xi's power. He is a very important figure who leads an extremely large country, and so it is imperative that he is understood and thought about through the research question: What characteristics define Xi Jinping's thought?

## Chapter III - Xi Jinping's Biography

### 3.1 Who is Xi Jinping?

Xi Jinping's life story has been used by the Chinese Communist Party to create an "emotional bond" between the Chinese people and their Chairman (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018, p.9).

Xi was born in 1953 amongst an elitist family. His father, Xi Zhongxun, was a military leader during Mao's rule since the 1930s. At the beginning of the 1960s, Zhongxun was caught in a political dispute and placed under house arrest for almost two decades (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018).

After the Cultural Revolution, Xi's father returned to politics as the first secretary of the Party's Guangdong Provincial Committee. Xi Zhongxun contributed for the development of the special economic zones in the province (Xi, Man of the People, 2014).

As a young teen, Xi saw his life change into a very different path. After briefly going to an elite school near the Zhongnanhai leadership compound Xi was sent to the northwest part of China's Shaanxi Province for rural labour during the Cultural Revolution. It has been said that this experience was "often traumatising and alienating" for all the children sent from the city (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018, p. 10).

Despite of it, this experience allowed Xi to understand the living conditions of the areas in the countryside. He helped the villagers through various daily life improvements by providing them with water distribution and access to electric power. Xi gained the trust and respect of the villagers and was elected village Party chief. After being awarded "model educated youth" and granted a motorized tricycle, which Xi traded for farming machinery for the villagers (Xi, Man of the People, 2014).

Afterwards, Xi continued to help the villagers by sending money to the elderly or even buying school supplies for the children. It is possible to understand that, from the Shaanxi experience Xi was "determined to do something for the people" (Xi, Man of the People, 2014, "Regarding the People as Parents," para. 14).

In the middle of the 1970s, Xi returned to Beijing to study engineering at Tsinghua University ((Brown, Xi's Story, 2018).

Xi always wanted to return to the villages to develop the countryside. After his time in Beijing, he returned to work as a deputy of the Party committee in a small county - Zhengding – part of the Hebei Province in north China's (Xi, Man of the People, 2014).

Despite being considered by many a Maoist, between the cult of personality and the favouritism it could endure him, Xi does not seem to miss the Mao Era. This could happen



due to the connection made over time between Mao Zedong's thought and the failure of the Cultural Revolution (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018).

Xi can be considered "more a survivor of Mao than a diehard follower" because he saw what happened to Mao's inner circle and understood his father had gotten "lucky" after being able to return to politics in the 1970s. Truly, what Mao taught Xi was the hard-hearted spirit needed in politics as later he saw his fellow princelings like Bo Xilai and Zhou Yongkang road to ruin. Mao was the preacher of "anything goes" in Chinese politics and in that sense, Xi can be considered a true Maoist (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018, p. 15).

Further, by analysing his path into the Party, he applied several times before being finally accepted in 1973. Between 1978 and 1982 Xi worked as the secretary of Geng Biao, who was a member of the Central Military Commission and "a key military figure". Then later, he changed his military life for a civilian post heading into rural China until landing in the coastal province of Fujian ((Brown, Xi's Story, 2018, p. 15).

In 2000, and the following two years Xi held the position of governor in Fujian. Before this, he went to Tsinghua University to complete a doctorate in law with the Marxism-Leninism Department (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018).

During his many years in Fujian, Xi was never a part of any scandal of both corruption and nepotism that were frequent at the time (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018). One can say it is due to his education.

Xi's father and his mother, Qi Xin, raised their children in a humble but strict environment. Xi's siblings were forbidden to develop any business in areas where Xi worked or make use of his name for personal interests. Since a young age Xi Jinping has shown to be against seeking personal benefits on account of the people and openly admitting he was even stricter with his own family (Xi, Man of the People, 2014).

In Fuzhou, capital of the Fujian Province, Xi was able to establish a system for Party officials to meet petitioners in person so that solutions for people's problems would be found faster. His constant connection with the citizens earned him the nickname "Secretary of the People" (Xi, Man of the People, 2014).

It seems as if the sixteen years Xi spent in Fujian allowed him to form the "backbone of his career before central leadership". It was also in the Fujianese province that Xi married his second wife, Peng Liyuan, a famous folk singer but also a lieutenant general in the People's Liberation Army. Xi's first wife was placed in the UK for diplomatic work and some assume this was the reason for divorce (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018).

Peng's public profile was already much higher than his, which had a tremendous impact in Xi's career, however, it's possible to understand that by being able to achieve such a partner, Xi was too becoming a member of the elite (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018, p.16).

Peng's music platform allowed her to become a cultural ambassador of China and despite being the reason for long periods apart, Xi has never stopped supporting his wife. For Peng, Xi Jinping is "a good husband and a good father", both "unique" and "ordinary" at once (Xi, Man of the People, 2014, "Son of a Revolutionary Family; a Good Husband," para. 18).

After 2002, Xi was assigned to go to the coastal province of Zhejiang where he was "top Party slot" for the following five years. There, he managed a blog named "New Sayings from Zhejiang" namely related to private-area business and foreign investors (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018, p. 18).

Xi also helped develop the province's industrial framework by leading enterprises to invest in Zhejiang. Simultaneously, he endorsed economic partnerships between Zhejiang and other provinces (Xi, Man of the People, 2014).

During his tenure, Xi Jinping promoted several other measures to develop the socio-economic level in Zhejiang (Xi, Man of the People, 2014).

The breakthrough happened in 2007 when Xi was asked to take office in Shanghai after the head Party leader there, Chen Liangyu, was accused of corruption. The office in Shanghai already meant as a "steppingstone before going on to higher things" in so that, in October that year Xi became a member of the Politburo Standing Committee. It seems like Xi was on the run for becoming Hu Jintao's successor (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018, p. 19).

Despite his position, Xi had little relevance or status since his primer functions were "symbolically high" related with the Party's School and Party's protocol issues, unlike his peer, Li Keqiang, who was busy with heavy issues as welfare or public health. Nonetheless, knowing the Party's favouritisms for "a low profile" type of successor, Xi kept his discretion even regarding his blogging and writing (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018).

In Shanghai, Xi gathered research about all aspects of the city, including living standards, development, and the fight against corruption. At the Ninth Shanghai Municipal Congress of the CCP, he pushed forward a five-year proposal for the city (Xi, Man of the People, 2014).

Xi Jinping (2014) says that "a county Party chief should visit all the villages in the county, a city Party chief all the districts and townships in the city, and a provincial Party chief all the counties and cities in the province". And so, he visited all 19 districts and counties in seven months. When in central leadership, Xi also visited "all the 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government on the mainland." (Xi, Man of the People, 2014, "Only by Hard Work Can We Get to the Fore" para. 24).

The years passed and finally, in 2012, luck seemed to have struck Xi's career. Bo Xilai, Xi's primer opponent, was removed from the Party after being involved in a murder investigation.

After this, there was a second surprise when in September that year, during the visit of Secretary of State – Hilary Clinton – Xi disappeared. Some say he was running from an attempt of murder, others point out that Xi went to have a secret meeting with the “core decision-makers”, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, to discuss his future (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018).

No one fully understood what happened until the Congress started and the new Standing Committee was presented (Brown, Xi's Story, 2018).

## **Chapter IV - Research Methodology**

The present dissertation is based on producing qualitative data from the analysis of Xi Jinping speeches' published book – “The Governance of China”, volume I, 2014. Within this section are presented the terms and conditions under which the research will be conducted.

### **4.1 Research Question**

The research question can be described as an important link between questions and research (Bryman, 2012).

Our research problem is Xi's political thought. In order to understand it we have elected the following set of research questions: What are Xi's values?; What factors influence Xi Jinping's “Chinese Dream”?; How is Xi influenced by Maoism; What role does sinicized communism play in Xi Jinping's leadership?.

A more general question is: What characteristics define Xi Jinping's thought?

### **4.2 Research Method**

The research method of this dissertation is content analysis. Content analysis is a research tool used for determining the presence of words or concepts in collections of textual documents. It is used for breaking down the material into manageable categories and relationships to quantify and analyse text.

Once extracted, these measurements can be used to make valid inferences about the ideas contained within the text (such as the presence of propaganda), properties of the writer or speaker (such as his or her psychological state), the audience to which the material is presented, or properties of the culture of the time in which the material was written.

Content analysis is an important research methodology as it can be used to analyse any form of verbal communication from written to spoken forms. As text documents tend to exist over long periods of time, the technique can be used to extract valuable historical and cultural insights.

As content analysis can be performed on numerous forms of data ranging from political speeches and open-ended interviews to newspaper articles and historical documents, it is invaluable to many researchers (Bryman, 2012).

This applies within this research because by analysing the text in Xi Jinping speeches' (the data) one can extract Xi's thoughts and values and answer the main question – What characteristics define Xi Jinping's thought?

### **4.3 Social Research Strategy**

On one hand, qualitative research implies Interpretivism which in epistemological considerations means the analysis of human actions and, on the other hand, Constructivism, can be considered an ontological position where the social objects and their categories are socially constructed (Bryman, 2012).

This connects to the present research in the way that by analysing Xi Jinping speeches', based on personal views and opinions, it is possible to perceive the world through the Chinese Chairman's point of view.

### **4.4 Research Design**

Within this research, the choice of research design was the case study design. As it can be understood this design entails the study of a single subject or case (Xi Jinping's thought). Then the case is the object of interest in its own importance. There is also an idiographic approach linked to a case study design, it happens when the researcher is searching for the "unique features" of the case (Bryman, 2012).

In this dissertation, the Chinese President Xi Jinping is the object of research and his characteristics, personal values and opinions will be analysed through the discourse analysis of his published speeches.

### **4.5 Discourse Analysis**

In discourse analysis the unit of analysis is pieces of text.

The present research took upon the challenge of answering this question by analysing the Xi Jinping's book of speeches – The Governance of China I, through the Leximancer programme.

### **4.6 Data collection**

In the present research, the key focus is on the reflective reading of a text (Xi Jinping's speeches as mentioned). The research method used is content analysis. The purpose of this research is to discover Xi Jinping's thought through the content analysis of the Leximancer programme.

Leximancer consists in a software which helps us to deconstruct complex pieces of text into categories and relationships making it easier to understand the message being transmitted. It allows to quantify pieces of text and reproduce it into organised information.

Generally, content analysis can fall into two major categories: conceptual analysis and relational analysis.

In conceptual analysis, documents are measured for the presence and frequency of concepts. Such concepts can be words or phrases, or more complex definitions, such as collections of words representing each concept.

One of Leximancer's main features is that it can automatically extract its own dictionary of terms for each document set using this information. That is, it can gather the concept classes that are contained within the text, explicitly extracting a thesaurus of terms for each concept. This approach also relieves the user of the task of formulating their own coding scheme (R. Gibbs, 2010).

Then the identified concepts are related to each other within the concepts. This is relational analysis.

Leximancer measures the co-occurrence of concepts found within the text, automatically extracts this information, and represents the information visually for comparison. By doing so it displays the main relationships between concepts.

One of the strengths of the Leximancer system is that it conducts both forms of analysis, measuring the presence of defined concepts in the text as well as how they are interrelated (R. Gibbs, 2010).

Since this study is about President Xi Jinping's political thought through the analysis of his public speeches it seems pertinent to conduct the research through the appropriate method for data collection.

## Chapter V - Data Analysis

In this chapter we report the results of the content analysis of Xi Jinping's speeches, assessed by the Leximancer programme. Thus, our empirical investigation seeks to answer the central questions "What factors influence Xi Jinping's "Chinese Dream?" and "What characteristics define Xi Jinping's thought?".

Further, Figure 4.1: Concept Map, shows the main concepts gathered in high-level themes – "clusters". Concepts that appear together in the same pieces of text are grouped in the same cluster.

The concepts are clustered into higher-level "themes" when the map is generated. Concepts that appear together often in the same pieces of text attract one another strongly, and so tend to settle near one another in the map space. The themes help interpretation by grouping the clusters of concepts which are shown as coloured circles on the map.

The Concept Map is coloured by importance, so the darkest clusters, like red or orange colour, are the most important themes in the text. The rest of the clusters, green and blue colour, represent the concepts less important.

### 5.1 Results

The content analysis revealed the existence of 10 themes (see figure 5.1) which stand out on the speeches by Xi Jinping. Namely, "Chinese" (2196 hits), "development" (1832), "Socialism" (1707), "reform" (1692), "International Cooperation" (973), "Party" (940), "Economy" (915), "Progress" (783), "government" (605) and "times" (100). These themes are discussed in detail below.

#### *Chinese Theme*

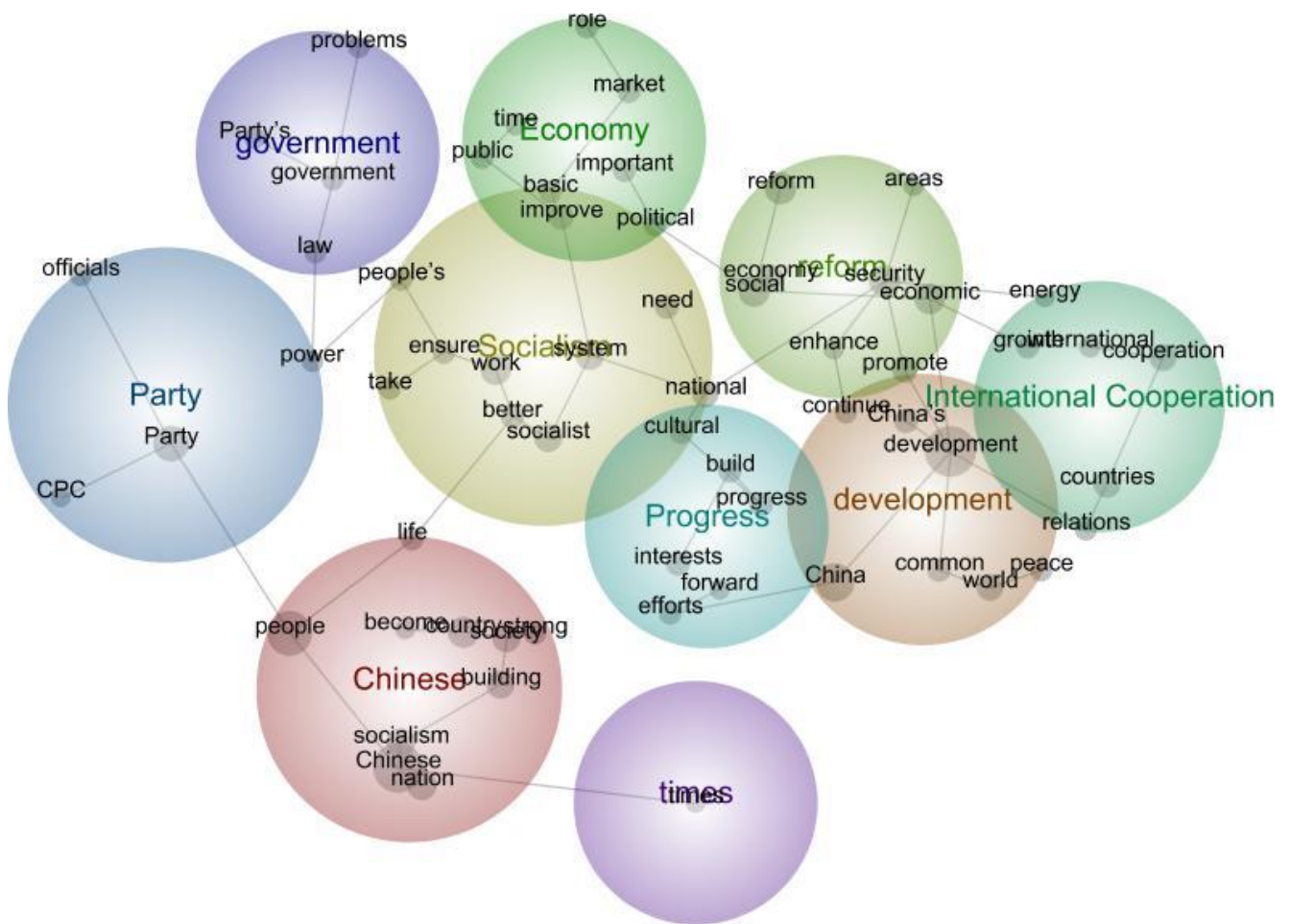
This theme includes the concepts of "Chinese" (count = 682 , likelihood = 83% ), "people" (826,100%), "country" (293, 35%), "nation" (199, 24%), "socialism" (234, 28%), "building" (182,22%), "society" (211, 26%), "strong" (101, 12%), "life" (131, 16%), "become" (96, 12%), and "time" (112, 14%). Each theme is represented with the main quotes the Leximancer software extracted from Xi's "The Governance of China" Vol. I, (2014).

- "The *Chinese Dream* pertains to the past and the present, but also the future. It is the crystallization of the tireless efforts of countless people with lofty ideals, embraces the yearnings of all the sons and daughters of the *Chinese* nation, and reveals the prospect of a bright future, when our country will be

prosperous and strong, the nation will be rejuvenated, and the people will enjoy a happy life.”

- “The construction of a strong, democratic and harmonious modern socialist country is our goal and responsibility – for the nation, for our forefathers and for our future generations. Therefore, we should maintain our willpower, intensify our faith, and walk unswervingly along the road towards our destination.”
- “*China* has set the following goals for its future development: By 2020, it will double its 2010 GDP and per capita income of urban and rural residents and realize a moderately prosperous society in all respects; and by the mid-21st century, it will have turned itself into a modern socialist country, prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious. We refer to this goal as the *Chinese Dream* of the great renewal of the *Chinese* nation.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014).





**Figure 5.1: Leximancer Concept Map**

Figure 5.1: Concept Map shows the main concepts gathered in high-level “themes” – clusters – concepts that appear together in the same pieces of text are grouped in the same cluster. The Concept Map is coloured by importance, so the darkest clusters, like red or orange colour, are the most important themes in the text.

### ***Development Theme***

This theme includes the concepts of “development” (count =789 , likelihood = 96%), “China” (528, 64%), “world” (257, 31%), “common” (155, 19%), “China’s” (160, 19%), and “peace” (130, 16%). This theme’s quotes are the following:

- “Over the past few decades *China* has consistently followed an independent foreign policy of peace and made it crystal clear that *China’s* foreign policy is aimed at maintaining world peace and promoting common development.”
- “*China* has made a substantial contribution to *Asia’s* economic development. In the next five years *China’s*

imports will reach US\$ 10 trillion-worth and its outbound investment is expected to grow rapidly.”

- “*China’s* economy is highly integrated with the world economy. A *China* that enjoys more stable, higher-quality and more sustainable growth is conducive to the long-term economic growth of the world as a whole.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014).

### ***Socialism Theme***

This theme includes the concepts of “work” (count =245 , likelihood = 45%), “system” (241, 29%), “socialist”(179, 22%), “national” (216, 26%), “improve”(192, 23%), “need” (176, 21%), “better”(133, 16%), “ensure” (139, 17%), “people’s” (151, 18%) and “take” (172, 21%). Next, we have the main quotes linked to this theme:

- “Only by upholding socialism with *Chinese* characteristics can we bring together and lead the whole *Party*, the whole nation and the people of all ethnic groups in realizing a moderately prosperous society by the centenary of the CPC in 2021 and in turning *China* into a prosperous, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious modern socialist country by the centenary of the *People’s Republic of China* in 2049, so as to ensure the people greater happiness and the nation a brighter future.”
- “We will build a consultative democracy featuring appropriate procedures and complete segments to expand the consultation channels covering organs of state power, committees of the *Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)*, political parties, and community-level and social organizations; conduct intensive consultations on issues relating to legislation, administration, democracy, political participation and social problems; give full play to the important role of the united front in consultative democracy, make the CPPCC serve as a major channel for conducting consultative democracy, improve the system of the CPPCC, specify the contents and procedures for consultation, diversify forms of consultative democracy, and more actively carry out orderly consultations on particular issues with those working.”
- “While fully affirming our achievements, we should also be aware of our shortcomings: The oversight mechanisms and pertinent systems to ensure the implementation of the *Constitution* are not yet complete; laws are not properly observed or strictly enforced, and lawbreakers are not prosecuted by some local regions and government agencies; problems concerning the people’s direct

interests remain prominent in law enforcement and jurisdiction; abuse of power, malfeasance and dereliction of duty by government employees, and lawbreaking by law-enforcement personnel for personal gain have seriously damaged the authority of the national legal system; and awareness of the need to observe the *Constitution* among citizens and some officials needs to be further enhanced.”

### **Reform Theme**

This theme includes the concepts of “reform” (count =426 , likelihood =52 %), “security” (322, 39%), “social” (280, 34%), “economic”(245, 30%), “promote”(167, 20%), “economy”(144, 17%), “continue” (128, 15%), “enhance”(108, 13%), and “areas” (108, 13%). This theme’s quotes are the following:

- “*Peaceful* development is an inevitable prerequisite of *Chinese* socialism – this is why we must pursue development through opening up and cooperation to benefit all, expand areas of common interests with all others and build a harmonious world of enduring peace and common prosperity together with other countries. The CPC is the core leadership for the cause of *Chinese* socialism – this is why we must enhance and improve the *Party’s* leadership and give full play to its leading and core role in exercising overall leadership and coordinating the efforts of all.”
- “The *Decision* states that *China* will improve the state assets management system, strengthen state assets oversight with capital management at the core, and reform the authorized operation mechanism for state capital. *State-owned* capital investment operations must serve the strategic goals of the state, invest more in key industries and areas that are vital to national security and are the lifeblood of the economy, focus on offering public services, develop important and future-oriented strategic industries, protect the ecological environment, support scientific and technological progress, and guarantee national security.”
- “Four, it had to take an active yet discreet attitude when designing the reform measures. Five, it had to plan the tasks according to the timetable, which set forth that by 2020 decisive results would have been achieved in the reform of important areas and crucial segments.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014).

### ***International Cooperation Theme***

This theme includes the concepts of “countries” (290, 35%), “cooperation” (263,32%), “growth” (141, 17%), “relations” (157, 19%), “international” (138, 17%), and “energy” (84, 10%). This theme’s quotes are the following:

- “*Fourth, China* will stay firmly committed to upholding regional and global peace and stability. We will continue to pursue peaceful development and mutually beneficial cooperation, handle differences and disputes through equality-based dialogue and friendly consultations, and work with all other countries to remove the root causes of nuclear terrorism and nuclear proliferation.”
- “No matter how international situations may unfold, we should stay committed to pursuing peaceful development and mutually beneficial cooperation. What we need is peace and cooperation, not war and confrontation.”
- “*China* will continue to develop by securing a peaceful international environment, and at the same time, it will uphold and promote world peace through its own development. *China* will continue to properly handle differences and disputes with relevant countries.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014).

### ***Party Theme***

This theme includes the concepts of “Party” (count =559, likelihood =68%), “officials” (214, 26%), “power” (125, 15%), and “CPC” (126, 15%). This theme’s quotes are the following:

- “On behalf of the members of the newly-elected leadership, I wish to express our thanks to all other members of the *Party* for their trust in us. We will do our utmost to be trustworthy and fulfil our mission.”
- “To run the *Party* with strict discipline, we have to first and foremost implement strict political discipline, which in turn starts from observing and safeguarding the *Party Constitution*. The essence of observing the *Party’s* political discipline is to adhere to the *Party’s* leadership, basic theory, basic line, basic program, basic experience and basic requirements, keep in line with the *Party Central Committee*, and conscientiously safeguard its authority.”
- “However, in view of the need to manage changes in domestic and international conditions, and to accomplish its historic mission, there is still considerable room for our *Party* to improve its art of leadership, governing capacity and organization, and the quality, competence, and practices

of its members and officials. *Party* building in the new circumstances, in particular, faces “four tests” and “four risks,” which makes it more difficult and pressing to ensure that the *Party* properly manages its own affairs and strictly disciplines itself.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014)

### ***Economy Theme***

This theme includes the concepts of “market” (count = 136, likelihood = 16%), “important” (205, 25%), “role” (161, 19%), “political” (142, 17%), “public” (143, 17%), and “basic” (123, 15%).

This theme’s quotes are the following:

- “To further balance the relationship between the government and the market we need to decide which of the two is to play the decisive role in allocating resources. To boost the economy, we must enhance the efficiency of the allocation of resources, especially that of scarce resources, so that we can use fewer resources to make more products and gain more benefits.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014).

### ***Progress Theme***

This theme includes the concepts of “interests” (165, 20%), “progress” (159, 19%), “build” (123, 15%), “efforts” (177, 21%), “cultural” (96, 12%), and “forward” (95, 12%).

This theme’s quotes are the following:

- “We must catch up and then try to surpass others.”
- “*Moreover*, we cannot always trail behind others. We have no choice but to innovate independently.”
- “A person with sharp ears can hear sounds others cannot, and a person with keen vision can see things others cannot.” There is no end to scientific and technological innovation.”
- “Our scientists and engineers should bravely shoulder their responsibilities, overtake others, and find the right direction, to which they should stick. They should have the courage and confidence to blaze new trails, overcome difficulties and seek excellence, and audaciously make world-leading scientific and technological achievements.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014)

### ***Government Theme***

This theme includes the concepts of “government” (count = 143, likelihood = 17 %), “problems” (191, 23%), “law” (140, 17%), and “Party’s” (145, 18%).

This theme’s quotes are the following:

- “Nevertheless, we should never be complacent and rest on our laurels. In the new circumstances our *Party* faces many severe challenges as well as many pressing issues within the *Party* that need to be addressed, particularly corruption, being divorced from the people, and being satisfied merely with going through formalities and bureaucracy on the part of some *Party* officials.”
- “Serious violations of *Party* discipline and state laws that have occurred inside our *Party* during the past few years are of a vile nature and have produced shockingly harmful political consequences. *Party* committees at all levels must firmly oppose and combat corruption, and prevent and crack down on it more effectively to ensure that all officials are honest and upright, governments clean and incorruptible, and *Communists* of political integrity.”
- “*Formalism*, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance are serious problems. Some sectors are prone to corruption and other types of misconduct, and the fight against corruption remains a serious challenge for us.”
- “*Extravagance* means waste, squandering resources, expensive building programs, endless festivals and ceremonies, a luxurious and dissolute lifestyle, and abuse of power that can extend to actual corruption. *Some Party* officials spend hundreds of millions of *Renminbi* on construction of a luxury office building that occupies acres of land and contains facilities for feasting, drinking and amusement.”
- “The *CPC Central Committee* has called upon us to improve our working practices by opposing formalism, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance. This serves as a focus for combating corruption and upholding integrity, as well as a starting point for consolidating popular support for the *Party’s* governance.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014)

### ***Times Theme***

This has the single concept of “times” (100, 12%). This theme’s quotes are the following:

- “Relying closely on the people, our *Party* lowered the curtain, once and for all, on a poor and weak *country* that had suffered from both domestic turmoil and foreign aggression since the advent of modern *times*, and made an epic move towards the steady growth, development and renewal of the *Chinese nation*.”
- “It is a natural choice for the *development* of *Chinese* society in modern *times*, and it is the only way to bring about the country’s *development* and stability.”
- “We should always be part of the people, work for their *interests*, and maintain close ties and share good and bad *times* with them.”
- “We must be prepared for adversity and danger, even in *times* of prosperity and peace.
- “In my opinion, achieving the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation has been the greatest dream of the Chinese people since the advent of modern times.” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014).

## Chapter VI - Discussion of Results

The objective of the present research is to know Xi Jinping's values and thoughts as the leader of China through the analysis of his own written speeches in "The Governance of China I" (2014).

The content analysis identified 10 themes (i.e. "Chinese", "development", "Socialism", "reform", "International Cooperation", "Party", "Economy", "Progress", "government" and "times") which describe the main elements in Xi Jinping's written speeches under analysis. The main themes revealed by content analysis thus reinforce other studies' findings presented in the literature.

The first Theme "Chinese" with the concepts of "people", "country", and "nation" brings up the idea of Nationalism. Xi Jinping's model of the Chinese Dream to lead the construction of a strong socialist country while respecting its Chinese roots and ancestors. Xi Jinping wants to build a strong sense of unity, in which the Chinese Dream becomes a culture. We can clearly understand Xi Jinping's undeniable nationalistic tone (Mysicka, 2017; Zhao, 2016).

This theme appears associated with the theme "Socialism" as Xi Jinping relies on Chinese socialism to build the Chinese model society towards satisfying the concerns of the Chinese people.

Xi Jinping's priority is the Chinese nation and socialism is the common Chinese culture. The Chairman makes it clear that China needs to be ruled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) through the core values of socialism, leaving behind any kind of connection with western liberal ideals. The CCP under the Xi administration has a nationalistic discourse approach and conveys socialism as a Chinese common culture (Davies, 2017; Jinye, Na, & Lingui, 2019; Lin, 2017; Mysicka, 2017).

Then the second Theme "Development" relates to China's economic growth and its impact in the progress of the World in cooperation with other countries. Xi Jinping wants China to be the number one market in the World and will do everything in his power to make it happen.

If China has any economic setbacks, it could strike Xi Jinping before the next Party Congress in 2022. Even so, Xi is likely to take upon rivals and respond accordingly. In what matters, Xi Jinping is prompt to use China's domestic and external problems to justify his unlimited rule (Mcgregor, 2019).

This theme is also connected with the themes "Reform", "Economy" and "Progress". The analysis brings us to these as it refers to all realms of the Chinese society and its relationship with the international system. Xi Jinping manifests the desire to promote China's growth and development in a peaceful environment. He shows concern for the stability and prosperity of the World and stresses the need for cooperation between nations. Xi Jinping



exposes the intention to improve the CCP to deliver the reforms China needs for continuing to grow to its maximum potential.

Xi Jinping has referred to this as “modernization with Chinese characteristics” (Xi, *The Governance of China I*, 2014).

On the theme of “International cooperation”, Xi Jinping tell us China has a different perspective of the international system and is leader in maintaining prosperity on its own path. We believe Xi wants a peaceful growth for China, only if there are not any contrary voices coming from the outside.

The trade war with the United States and its backlash about China’s military build-up can be a setback to Xi’s plans. In contrast, Germany is worried about its industrial competitiveness. Australia concerns itself about the security of the region if the United States leave its anchor. Japan wants to reclaim the power in the South Asian Sea and settle old scores. Regarding the “Taiwan issue” Xi referred to it as a problem that should be solved as soon as possible. Lastly, there is a common unsettling feeling amongst all southeast Asian nations. In the meantime, China is assembling military bases in the South China Sea (Mcgregor, 2019).

The analysis of the themes “Party” and “Government” bring us to understand Xi Jinping’s primary goal is to discipline the Chinese Communist Party and its officials.

By improving the Party’s officials, Xi restores its leadership and assures the Party’s authority in government. Xi is trying to save the Party from the hazard of corruption and restore its legitimacy to govern for the Chinese people. We can see that in Xi’s administration the CCP gained the most patriotic mission: to work as a vehicle to carry ideology and a sense of unity in the national rejuvenation of the country (Klimeš & Marinelli, 2018; Mysicka, 2017; Nesossi, et al., 2017).

Bachman (1992) also left a note which we can relate to Xi Jinping’s leadership. A Chinese top leader should be subtle in any plans to consolidate power because leadership consolidation is long term process with unpredictable outcomes. To escape any unfortunate destiny, China must bet on maintaining the political system to avoid any bad results.

So far, it all connects as Xi Jinping needs stability inside the CCP to lead for a long period of time and achieve his plans for China’s reform (Klimeš & Marinelli, 2018; Mysicka, 2017; Nesossi, et al., 2017).

Xi considers that being a Party official is a duty and an honour, an opportunity to serve the Chinese people. Only by staying true to their values, a Party member can surpass any obstacles (Penny, 2015).

Xi Jinping worries about the lack of leadership skills and respect for ideology from Party officials and so started a tightening reform – “The Chinese Dream” - amongst his

officials and a purge on rivals and liberals in order to set the mark straight on how China should be ruled (Mcgregor, 2019).

These results also allow us to put to rest the literature theories' which claimed that Xi Jinping is more concerned with politics and ideology than economic development (Brown & Bērziņa-Čerenkova, *Ideology in the Era of Xi Jinping*, 2018)

On one hand, the content analysis shows us the concepts of "Chinese", "Socialism", "Party" and "Government" and on the other hand the concepts of "Development", "Progress", "Reform" and "Economy". The frequent mentions to these themes allows us to understand that Xi Jinping is as much concerned with politics and ideology as well as China's economic development. In Xi 's administration one could not exist without the other.

The current results also allow us to refute the literature theories on Xi Jinping trying to become the "New" Mao, as we believe Xi Jinping only refers to Mao Zedong as a "luminaire" – to share the same kind of attention the Chairman Mao was able to enjoy (Lee, 2018; Lensing, 2016). Through the Maoist revival, Xi wanted to collect the popular legitimacy of the CCP, to prove its "right to rule" (Batke, 2016; Zhao, 2016).

Finally, the connection with the theme "times" comes together at the very end of this analysis as Xi Jinping explains us his plans for China have no ending in time, yet are a continuum of evolution, "growth" and "development" as we have seen in the data analysis section. We can conclude that Xi has intentions of ruling over China for as long as he shall live.

## Chapter VII - Conclusions

This Dissertation was intended to identify the main elements of Xi Jinping's values and beliefs. The objective of the present research was to know Xi Jinping as the leader of China through the analysis of his own written speeches in "The Governance of China I" (2014).

First and foremost, Xi Jinping wants China to be the best version of itself it can be, and he will do everything necessary for his country. Xi is a nationalist at his core. The "Chinese Dream" was designed to build the best version of the Chinese society together with socialism as the core values of the Chinese culture.

Xi Jinping's Thought is very oriented towards the People and it is the Party's mission to deliver the message of national rejuvenation: a call for all Chinese people to come together as one to build a great nation. Xi Jinping relies on Chinese socialism to build the Chinese model society towards satisfying the concerns of the Chinese people.

Xi Jinping is China's greatest supporter and will portray the Chinese nation as an example to the world. China must be the best at all costs. He said: "We must catch up and then try to surpass others" started a tightening reform on the Party and disciplining officials (Xi, The Governance of China I, 2014)

We cannot forget Xi Jinping is on a life term as Chinese Leader and this will allow the Chinese Chairman to consolidate more power. Xi Jinping needs stability inside the CCP and so maintaining the political system is fundamental to deliver the reforms China needs for continuing to grow to its maximum potential.

Therefore we believe it to be very important that the world pays attention to Xi Jinping's leadership. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Napoleon Bonaparte referred to the Chinese nation as the following: "Let China sleep, for when she wakes, she will shake the world". More than ever, we believe this quote still applies.

This research's main contribution is that it expands on the work done in previous studies about the Chinese Chairman. The present study provided a new perspective on this subject matter using content analysis of Xi Jinping's public speeches on "The Governance of China I" (2014). The importance of gathering this type of data – as opposed to traditional survey data – lies in how discourse analysis is truly revolutionary when it comes to analyse political speeches.

The main limitation of this study is that the problem when using political speeches is that we must be aware that these speeches are always revised by another person which makes it difficult to understand the leader's beliefs. Nevertheless, the main arguments of all public speeches must obey to the leader's opinions and values (Lee, 2018).

I believe that further research on the phenomenon of Xi Jinping, the dynamic of his ideology and the impact of China's growth in the World is needed, and I hope this Dissertation helped as a starting point.

## Bibliography

- Bachman, D. (1992). The Limits on Leadership in China. *Asian Survey*, 32(11), 1046-1062. doi:10.2307/2645270
- Brown, K. (2018). Xi's Story. Em K. Brown, *The world according to Xi* (pp. 7-24). London - New York: I.B. Tauris.
- Brown, K. (2018). Xi's Story. Em K. Brown, *The world according to Xi* (pp. 7-24). London - New York: I.B. Tauris.
- Brown, K., & Bērziņa-Čerenkova, U. (2018). Ideology in the Era of Xi Jinping. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 323-339.
- Batke, Jessica. (2016). *Xi Jinping: The man, the myth, the Party. Some western misunderstandings of Xi Jinping's Legacy*. In: Heilmann and Stepan, pp. 72–77.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods 4th edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Davies, G. (2017). THE LANGUAGE OF DISCIPLINE. In Golley J., Jaivin L., & Tomba L. (Eds.), *Control* (pp. 109-130). Australia: ANU Press. Retrieved December 12, 2019, from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1sq5tvf.13>
- FORUM: Interpreting the Rule of Law in Xi Jinping's China. (2017). In Nesossi E., Rosenzweig J., Smith E., Trevaskes S., Franceschini I., Lin K., et al. (Eds.), *Disturbances in Heaven* (pp. 98-105). Acton ACT, Australia: ANU Press. Retrieved December 12, 2019, from [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1q1crrk.21](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1q1crrk.21)
- Jinye, W., Na, M., & Lingui, X. (30 de Setembro de 2019). Xi Jinping and China's New Era. *Xinhua Net*, pp. 20-23. Accessed on: 30 Nov 2019 [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/30/c\\_138437544.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-09/30/c_138437544.htm)
- Kellerman, B. (1986). *Political Leadership: A Source Book*. Retrieved April 15, 2019, from University of Pittsburgh Press: <http://digital.library.pitt.edu/cgi-bin/t/text/textidx?c=pittpress;cc=pittpress;view=toc;idno=31735057894036>
- Klimeš, O., & Marinelli, M. (2018). *Introduction: Ideology, Propaganda, and Political Discourse in the Xi Jinping Era*. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 313-318. Accessed on: 03 Sep 2018 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-018-9566-3>
- Lee, T. C. (2018). Can Xi Jinping be the next Mao Zedong? Using the Big Five Model to Study Political Leadership. *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, 473-497.
- Lin, D.. (2017). *The CCP's exploitation of Confucianism and Legalism* from: Routledge Handbook of the Chinese Communist Party Routledge. Accessed on: 03 Sep 2018 <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315543918.ch3>

Lensing, Dexter (2016) "*From Mao to Xi: Chinese Political Leadership and the Craft of Consolidating Power*," McNair Scholars Research Journal: Vol. 12: Iss. 1, Article 15. Available at: [https://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/mcnair\\_journal/vol12/iss1/15](https://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/mcnair_journal/vol12/iss1/15)

Mcgregor, R. (2019). Party Man - Xi Jinping's Quest to Dominate China. *Foreign Affairs*, 18-25. Accessed on: 14 Aug. 2019 <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-08-14/party-man>

Mysicka, S. (2017). *Xi Jinping: Political and Ideological Turn Towards Maoism?* ECPR GENERAL CONFERENCE. Oslo.

Penny, B. (2015). Classic Xi Jinping: On Acquiring Moral Character. Em G. Barmé, L. Jaivin, & G. J., *Shared Destiny* (pp. 4-13). ANU Press. Retrieved August 22, 2019, from [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt19893k8.6](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt19893k8.6)

R. Gibbs, G. (11 de 06 de 2010). R. Gibbs, Graham. [Access from Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SZDTp3\\_New](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SZDTp3_New)

Shirk, S. L. (2018). China in Xi's "New Era": The Return to Personalistic Rule. *Journal of Democracy*, (2), 22-36.

Tucker, R. (1977). *Personality and Political Leadership*. *Political Science Quarterly*, 92(3), 383-393. doi:10.2307/2148499

Weber, M. (1965). *Politics as a vocation*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press

Willig, C. (2013). Grounded theory methodology. Em C. Willig, *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology* (pp. 69-72). London: City University London. [e-book]. Retrieved 03 Sep 2018 from [http://highered.mheducation.com/sites/9780335244/information\\_center\\_view0/sample\\_chatter.html](http://highered.mheducation.com/sites/9780335244/information_center_view0/sample_chatter.html)

Xi, J. (2014). *Man of the People*. Em J. Xi, *The Governance of China I*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.

Xi, J. (2014). *The Governance of China I*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.

Zhao, S. (July de 2016). Xi Jinping's Maoist Revival. *Journal of Democracy*, pp. 83-97.