3 Rejuvenation
Organizing China (1936–1956)

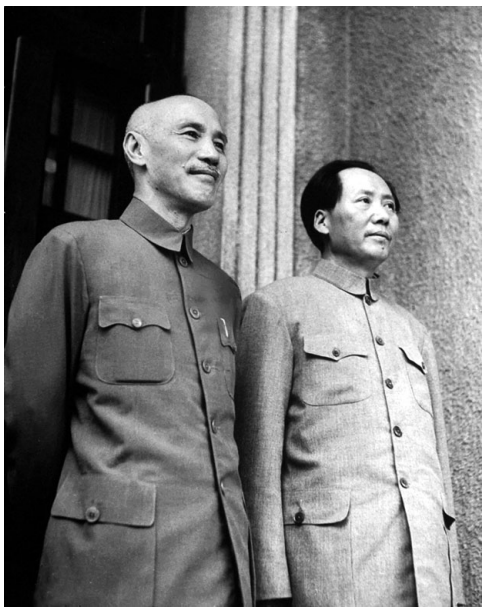

Fig. 3. Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong, Chongqing, August 1945

On August 28, 1945, Mao Zedong flew from the Communists' headquarters in Yan'an to Chongqing, the Nationalists' wartime capital. The Japanese had been defeated, their emperor had announced their surrender on August 15, and Japanese armies in China were already surrendering to local forces. With Mao on the flight was an American. Mao and Patrick J. Hurley took off from a dusty airfield outside Yan'an in the arid loess hill country north of Xi'an in Shaanxi province. They landed in Chongqing, the bombed-out wartime capital of the Nationalists in the well-watered hills above the upper Yangzi river in Sichuan. This drama was played out in the interior heartland of China, and yet there were the Americans in the background. Hurley, the American ambassador to

China, was the guarantor of the negotiations between the Nationalists and the Communists. This photograph during the Chongqing negotiations captures the realities of China in the decades from 1936 to 1956: the terrible war with Japan and the costs of fighting it; the enduring enmity between the Nationalists and the Communists, with neither being able to eradicate the other; and the looming presence of America, first as ally against Japan, backstop for Chiang, and by the late 1940s implacable enemy of "the Reds."

This meeting was important because Chiang and Mao were the two contenders for leading a new, powerful total state that had grown in forges of total war. Both the Nationalists and the Communists had built a propaganda state and the fight was on to see which one would rule China. Not since the "Literary Inquisition" of the Qianlong Emperor in the Qing Dynasty during the eighteenth century had political leaders so directly set the agenda for China's intellectuals. The two Leninist party-states offered competing ideologies and opportunities for intellectual participation in this new ideological moment of nation-building designed to rejuvenate China, but they demanded absolute loyalty and brooked no criticism. Between these poles China's liberals tried to find a place and a voice to offer a "third road."

Voices from the 1940s: three roads

[LIANG SHUMING]: *POLITICAL PROGRAM OF THE LEAGUE OF CHINESE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL GROUPS* (1941)

1. To resist Japan to the end; to recover all lost territory and sovereignty; to oppose all compromise [with the Japanese].
2. To put the democratic spirit into practice by ending one-party rule; to establish an [interim] organ, representative of all parties and groups, for the discussion of national affairs until a constitution is implemented.
3. To strengthen internal unity by fundamentally settling all current points of disagreement in order to normalize their [the diverse parties' and groups'] relations.
4. To supervise and help the Guomindang in thoroughly carrying out the "Outline of National Resistance and Reconstruction."
5. To establish actual national unity, and oppose local separatism, but also to define suitably the jurisdiction of the central and local governments.
6. To oppose all party organizations within the armed forces and the use of armed forces in inter-party struggles. The army belongs to the nation and the military personnel should be loyal to the nation . . .[1]

[1] The league's political program was published in the October 1, 1941, issue of its official newspaper, *Guangming bao* (Light) (Hong Kong), trans. in Alitto, *The Last Confucian*, p. 309.

(*cont.*)

WEN JIZE (1914–99): *DIARY OF A STRUGGLE* (1942)

Monday, June 1

Today, the central theme of the meeting progressed from eradicating extreme democratic tendencies to a discussion of Wang Shiwei's thought. The majority of the fifteen speeches in the day concentrated on this issue. The third speech was given by Li Yan. First, he gave some statistics: many of our Institute's researchers more or less sympathized with Wang Shiwei when they first read "Wild Lilies." Even those who disliked this essay did not realize the fundamental mistake of the author's position. But over two months of studying rectification documents, and, moreover, attending the meetings convened by the Central Committee Propaganda Department, studying [Mao Zedong's] "Combat Liberalism" and "On Egalitarianism," [Liu Shaoqi's] "How to be a Good Communist Party Member" and other documents and the debates on "Wild Lilies" and "Politicians, Artists" have clearly enabled everybody to know the seriousness of the errors in thought and method contained in "Wild Lilies." (How necessary is thought reform! How important are the rectification documents!) Li Yan went on to report on the process of the six talks held between Wang and the party committee. Wang did not admit his mistakes until now. In order to "cure the illness to save the patient," we must completely expose Wang's mistakes and carry out a serious ideological struggle against him.[2]

WEN YIDUO (1899–1946): *THE POET'S FAREWELL* (1946)

A few days ago, as we are all aware, one of the most despicable and shameful events of history occurred here in Kunming. What crime did Mr. Li Gongpu commit that would cause him to be murdered in such a vicious way? He merely used his pen to write a few articles, he used his mouth to speak out, and what he said and wrote was nothing more than what any Chinese with a conscience would say. We all have pens and mouths. If there is a reason for it, why not speak out? Why should people be beaten, killed, or, even worse, killed in a devious way? [Applause]

Are there any special agents [Guomindang spies] here today? Stand up! If you are men, stand up! Come forward and speak! Why did you kill Mr. Li? [Enthusiastic applause] You kill people but refuse to admit it and even circulate false rumors that the murder happened because of some sexual scandal or as the result of Communists killing other Communists. Shameless! Shameless! [Applause] This is the shamelessness of the Guomindang but the glory belongs to Mr. Li. Mr. Li participated in Kunming's democratic movement for a number of years. Now he has returned to Kunming and sacrificed his own life. This is Mr. Li's glory; it is the glory of the people of Kunming![3]

[2] Wen Jize, "Douzheng riji," *Jiefang ribao* (Liberation Daily) (Yan'an), June 28 and 29, 1942, trans. in Tony Saich, ed., *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996), p. 1115.

[3] Wen Yiduo, "Zuihou yici de jianghua" (The Last Speech), given at Yunnan University in Kunming on July 15, 1946 (Wen was shot by government agents shortly after the speech), trans. in Cheng and Lestz, *The Search for Modern China*, p. 337.

The ideological moment: building China

Revolution had brought new regimes to power—the Nationalist state officially based in Nanjing in 1928 and a series of Communist soviets, first in the mountains of southeast China (Jiangxi) and then in the northwest (Yan'an) and across north China. In the years after 1935 each was in the position to implement its revolutionary goals and each set about rejuvenating China through nation-building in the areas they controlled. All were fundamentally transformed by the experience of total war that began with Japan's full-scale invasion in July 1937. In all, there were three paths to this rejuvenation at mid-century: Sunism, Communism, and the "Third Road" of liberalism. The Guomindang Nationalists pushed the first under Chiang Kai-shek; the Communists, under Mao Zedong by 1942, enforced the second; and the "Third Road" was pursued by various liberal intellectuals through small political parties like the Democratic League. All three had their intellectuals. Hu Shi, perhaps China's most famous intellectual during these years, came to serve the Nationalists, even as China's ambassador to the US during the war, though he pushed the GMD dictatorship towards liberal democracy. Deng Tuo, a journalist and theorist for the CCP, came to define the role of the intellectual cadre. Older intellectuals, such as Liang Shuming, and younger scholars, like Wu Han, tried to serve China through the Democratic League. After the war, a generation of patriotic Chinese intellectuals trained and living overseas chose to return, largely to serve the new society under the CCP and soon its new state, the People's Republic of China. Amongst these returnees were the historian Zhou Yiliang and the rocket scientist Qian Xuesen.

The question that defined this ideological moment was, *how to build the New China?* The answers that China's intellectuals and political leaders offered all addressed national construction. Nation-building seeks to strengthen the administration of the state and make coherent the social life and public culture of a polity. It has been the enduring project of twentieth-century China and was the dominant ideological moment at mid-century and again at its end. The nation was the solution that revolution came up with. The Nationalists and the Communists each had their own version. For both regimes, the single strongest shaping force of this ideological moment was war, total war—the devastating invasion of the Japanese Imperial Army in 1937 and the eight years known in China as the Anti-Japanese War, to which the Chinese civil war was a heartbreaking coda. The dark side of each regime came to the fore in response to the years of unrelenting violence.

In response to these years of violence, the form of the nation offered to China and its intellectuals was the party-state. This was a much more

muscular, militarized, and intrusive form of modern governance that was unprecedented in Chinese history. It was much bigger—controlling not only army and police but also major industrial enterprises and much of the media—than all previous Chinese administrations and it was more demanding. It set out to manage society in the name of rejuvenating China. For that project the party-state needed intellectuals. As Matthew Johnson has argued, "Both parties needed more, and more loyal, intellectuals not only to mediate between state and society but also to help with the 'socialization' of politics through state ownership of large enterprises, community policing, resource management, and the creation of new welfare systems."[4] The challenge of the day was how to make this giant edifice work, work well, and work toward goals that could inspire China's thinkers and writers. The mid-century party-states offered an end to the alienation from the halls of power felt so passionately by Liang Qichao and his successors since the turn of the century. At the same time, these vigorous new party-states enforced participation and closed off alternative public activities for intellectuals in ways that were unlike life under the Qing. Politically active intellectuals got what they wished for: service in a state that valued their contributions. But it was a deal with the devil that came with severe constraints that began with the lives of Chen Bulei under the GMD and Wang Shiwei under the CCP but that framed the "price of engagement" for most intellectuals in this ideological moment of rejuvenation.

By 1945 both China as a nation under the Nationalists and the Communist Party under Mao Zedong had survived. In August and September 1945 a victorious Nationalist government accepted the surrender of Japanese forces in China. Earlier, in April 1945, the Communist Party had held its Seventh Party Congress in Yan'an, celebrating its survival and growth and consolidating the power of Mao. That same year, professors in China's famous Southwest United University began returning from Yunnan to their home universities in Beijing and other areas that had been occupied by the Japanese. Many of them belonged to one or another of the small democratic parties.

In truth, however, there were two Chinas in 1945, and there were two contenders for national leadership: Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Party government in southern China, as well as all the main cities around China, and Chairman Mao Zedong and his Chinese

[4] Personal communication; and Matthew Johnson, "International and Wartime Origins of the Propaganda State: The Motion Picture Industrty in China, 1897–1955," PhD dissertation, University of California, San Diego, 2008.

Communist Party government in a dozen "revolutionary base area" administrations across rural north and central China, and soon Manchuria. Both had armies at their command and both conformed to the new politics of ideological leadership. Chiang had staked his claim as the modern version of a sage leader in his immensely popular 1943 book *China's Destiny*.[5] Sun Yat-sen was the spiritual father of the Nationalist revolution, the Guomindang was his church, and Chiang was now the chief prophet. The Three People's Principles, and related writings of Dr. Sun, were the public creed of the regime. Chiang had much to bring to the table. He had endured, and contributed to victory in, the Anti-Japanese War; he had achieved the historic mission of ending unequal treaties with Britain and the US in January 1943 and had established China as a "world power" that met in conclave with the US, Britain, and the Soviet Union; and he had the political and economic support of the United States.

Mao Zedong staked his claim on his writings, many from the Yan'an Rectification Movement, that were collected in the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* in 1944.[6] Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin were the great gods of communism, the Communist Party was their church, and Mao was the Chinese prophet of this international liberation of working peoples. Mao Zedong had much to offer China's public in general and intellectuals in particular. While the truth on the ground was darker, the Communists were widely credited with major contributions to the defeat of the Japanese, the behavior of their army was seen as enlightened while still being able to keep local peace, and their local administration contrasted as beneficent in comparison with the corrupt local GMD bullies. Mao's ideas were much more inspirational to youth than Chiang's, and he had the political support of the Soviet Union.

The liberals had much intellectual power, the support of US and European governments, and popular support in the cities. But the liberals did not have an organization to match either Bolshevik party, nor did they have an army. They were the "third force," the Democratic League (disbanded in 1947) and smaller democratic parties based in the cities and populated by professionals, academics, and intellectuals.

[5] Jiang Zhongzhen (Chiang Kai-shek), *Zhongguo zhi mingyun* (China's Destiny) (Chongqing: Zhengzhong shuju, March 1943); authorized English translation by Wang Chung-hui, is Chiang Kai-shek, *China's Destiny* (New York: Macmillan, 1947) includes an introduction by Lin Yu-tang.

[6] *Mao Zedong xuanji* (n.p.: Jin Cha Ji shudian, 1944). Details on Mao's collected writings in Timothy Cheek, "Textually Speaking: An Assessment of Newly Available Mao Texts," in Roderick MacFarquhar, Timothy Cheek, and Eugene Wu, eds., *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1989), pp. 83–4.

As China's cosmopolitan elite, many liberals had trained in America and Europe, and now led major universities, government research labs, businesses, and media. They sought to bring modern society and liberal democratic politics to China. They took the Republic of China at its word and formed political parties and militated for an end to Sun Yat-sen's "political tutelage" and the installation of true constitutional government with popular elections. These intellectuals and professionals saw the road to rejuvenation and nation-building through liberalism and democratic politics. Both Chiang and Mao made overtures to the liberals, since they had considerable public credibility, especially among the educated urban populations key to their modernization drives. Yet both the Nationalists and the Communists were not above controlling, bullying, and on occasion killing intellectuals who seriously got in the way of their party plans. By 1949 liberals would be faced with a forced choice—go with Chiang to Taiwan, stay in China with the Communists, or abandon China for the life of an overseas Chinese.

War and industrialization

The total war of the previous seven years, and endemic fighting for the decades before that, had fundamentally shaped China's contending states. Full-scale war had put an end to the revolutionary efforts of the Nationalist Party.[7] During the Nanjing decade (1928–37) Chiang Kai-shek's new government had tried to build a modern nation-state, had struggled to improve public morality in the New Life Movement, and pushed to overturn the unequal treaties. The New Life Movement was launched in February 1934 to revive national morality to make China and the Chinese modern but with Confucian characteristics. Chiang started with a hygiene campaign, but the whole movement soon degenerated into a farce, seen by many as a poor copy of the fascist youth organizations in Europe.[8] However, as Wennan Liu argues, Chiang saw the New Life Movement as the fulfillment of "political tutelage" of the people promised by Sun Yat-sen to prepare them to be modern,

[7] Hans J. van de Ven, *War and Nationalism in China, 1925–1945* (London: Routledge, 2003), and Rana Mitter, *China's War with Japan, 1937–1945: The Struggle for Survival* (London: Allen Lane, 2013), published in the US as *Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937–1945* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013).

[8] Wennan Liu, "Redefining the Moral and Legal Roles of the State in Everyday Life: The New Life Movement in China in the Mid-1930s," *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, e-journal, No. 7 (June 2013), pp. 30–59. Liu provides a thoughtful review of previous studies that saw the movement as fascist and newer ones that see it as a predictable political technology of modernization, pp. 31–2.

democratic citizens. Chiang's decision to use state power to enforce the campaign did not succeed but it reflects the same effort to enforce the "renovation of the people" that Liang Qichao's generation had advocated. Meanwhile, Nationalist efforts to build sound local and central administration collapsed in the face of the Japanese invasion.

Revolution, however, proceeded apace in the CCP-controlled areas. Ironically, the Anti-Japanese War (which we know as World War II) had given the Communists their first period of sustained territorial control in which to implement their social and political revolution.[9] During their time in the northwest, soon known as the Yan'an period after the CCP capital in a Shaanxi market town after 1935 until 1947, the CCP opted for moderate rent reform in order to bring "enlightened gentry" on board. This was because of the renewed United Front between the CCP and the Nationalist government negotiated in early 1937. Nonetheless, the party in general and its emerging supreme leader, Mao Zedong, in particular used this window of relative stability to articulate and train a radically Bolshevik political system built around a robust party army that was, in fact, more solicitous to the farming population than the Nationalist or the Japanese armies had been, but was completely dictatorial in its politics. It was effective in bringing a new order to Communist areas but it demanded total commitment and obedience to Party leadership. The Rectification Campaign of 1942–4 succeeded where Chiang's New Life Movement failed; it successfully married a new public morality with Party discipline and military control within the CCP's rural "base areas."[10]

Chiang's New Life Movement may not have succeeded, but the integrated modern state his regime built was impressive and would be taken over by the Communists after their military victory in 1949. The role of "total war" on modernization is a theme not limited to China. Yasushi Yamanouchi and colleagues look at the impact of total war during the same years in Japan. They conclude that in this era not only Japan but Germany, the US, and other advanced industrial nations formed "system societies" characterized by rationalization, mobilization, and high levels of social integration and control. Yamanouchi concludes that through war there was a "shift from a class society ... to a system society." Indeed, this conclusion for Japan applies as well to China: that "rather

[9] Mark Selden, *China in Revolution: The Yenan Way Revisited* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1995).

[10] Selden, *China in Revolution*; David Apter and Tony Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994); and Tony Saich and Hans J. van de Ven, eds., *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), particularly essays in Part II.

than the postwar reforms, it was the wartime mobilization system that was responsible for creating the configuration of labor power that was the main pillar of accelerated postwar growth."[11] Intellectual labor was key to the modernizing and mobilizing goals of China's party-states and they set about recruiting and controlling their intellectuals.

Nonetheless, not all intellectuals were dragooned into either party-state or marooned in the ineffectual democratic parties. During the war a number of Chinese intellectuals remained in Japanese-controlled cities, such as Beijing, and after 1941 all of Shanghai. Some simply tried to opt out of politics, as in the famous case of Lu Xun's talented and scholarly brother, Zhou Zuoren, who chose to remain in Beijing with his Japanese wife in order to care for his students who could not flee to the Nationalist areas in the south. Others had little choice and bemoaned their unenviable circumstances under the rule of the Japanese or a Chinese puppet regime, while trying to carry on with their professional and literary efforts. However, there were intellectuals who actively chose to collaborate either with the Japanese forces or with Chinese collaborationist regimes, particularly the Japanese-sponsored version of the Republic of China led by Wang Jingwei between 1940 and 1944.[12] Thoroughly denounced in the postwar years, it is difficult to recapture the reasons why some reasonable people might have collaborated with the Japanese. One major reason was a belief in pan-Asianism, inflected by a sense that the Japanese were the only Asian power capable of booting out the Europeans and suppressing local violence in China. The pan-Asian ideology made much of traditional Chinese political philosophy, describing its approach to governance as the community-oriented Kingly Way (*wang dao*) made famous by Confucius.[13] As we will again see in the case of those who chose to serve the ultra-leftist policies of the Cultural Revolution in the 1970s, we must strive to remember the context: these intellectuals had little reason to believe that the new order (in the 1940s

[11] Yasushi Yamanouchi, J. Victor Koschmann, and Ryuichi Narita, eds., *Total War and "Modernization"* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell East Asian Series, 1998), pp. xiii and 25. For the Chinese case, see William Kirby, "Continuity and Change in Modern China: Economic Planning on the Mainland and on Taiwan, 1943–1958," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No. 24 (July 1990), pp. 121–41.

[12] Poshek Fu, *Passivity, Resistance, and Collaboration: Intellectual Choices in Occupied Shanghai, 1937–1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993); and Timothy Brook, *Collaboration: Japanese Agents and Local Elites in Wartime China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

[13] Sven Saaler and Chirstopher W.A. Szpilman, "Pan-Asianism as an Ideal of Asian Identity and Solidarity, 1850–Present," *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, Vol. 9, No. 1, April 25, 2011 (available at: http://www.japanfocus.org/-Sven-Saaler/3519).

under the Japanese) would not endure. Service to the latest regime to take the reins of government was a practical choice.

The civil war between 1946 and 1949 forced the hand of all involved, including China's liberals. There was no third option, though the liberals tried. Liang Shuming joined Westernized liberals in forming what became the Democratic League in 1941. Whether Westernizing or neo-traditional, these third-road intellectuals sought solutions for China, a road for China's nation-building that was independent of the two warring Leninist parties and their two -isms. They hoped for a more limited republican state that would keep the peace and build the roads, but leave social space for individuals and communities to address the needs of local order, community revival, and cultural resurgence and public education. One thing that the GMD and CCP agreed on was that this third option was not acceptable. Both proffered their version of Sun Yat-sen's pedagogical state that would fulfill the aspiration of traditional Chinese statecraft to "transform the people through the rites." They differed only in the rigor of their ideology and their ability to enforce it.

By the end of 1949 the Nationalists had been defeated and had retreated to the island of Taiwan. The CCP now faced the greater challenge of nation-building in China proper—some 400 million people and the huge territory of the defunct Qing empire (some 10 million square kilometers of territory, about the size of the US with Alaska or slightly smaller than the EU with Greenland), and the terrible residue of a decade of total war. The CCP administrative apparatus was disciplined and coherent after application of the Yan'an Rectification model of education and purges throughout the CCP-administered areas in the 1940s. Thus, in the wake of the PLA, CCP cadres were able to implement land reform. Landlords were shot, and, more than that, CCP cadres mobilized local villagers to try, sentence, and execute their former landlords on the theory that enacting the revolution would mobilize the masses for the next stages of the revolutionary project. Land reform also aimed to achieve the unity of intellectuals and peasants that Liang Shuming had attempted, and to some degree it achieved this utopian goal, at first.[14]

[14] The ideal image is captured in the report of an American observer in the CCP base areas in the late 1940s: William Hinton, *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997; first published in 1966); and the novel by Yuan-tsung Chen, *The Dragon's Village* (New York: Pantheon, 1980). One actual experience from Chinese villagers is reported in Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden, with Johnson, *Chinese Village, Socialist State*.

The early 1950s were a fulfillment of the plans of both governments from the 1940s: stabilization of society and modernization of industry, commerce, and culture. Intellectuals served, or endured, both Chiang's and Mao's version of this. On Taiwan, the Nationalists came as veritable invaders, speaking a different version of Chinese (Mandarin) among the Taiwanese-speaking locals who had, for the past fifty years, been subjects of the Japanese empire. Thus the GMD state was not a natural or a particularly welcomed political class in Taiwan. Tensions quickly boiled over on February 28, 1947, in what became known as the "2-28 incident" (*Er-er-ba shijian*) when a tussle in a Taipei market between a mainland soldier and a Taiwanese shopkeeper blew up into a series of a bloody confrontations between the two communities. The repression of Taiwanese elites over the next few years is still known in Taiwan as the White Terror of the Nationalists. Through such repression the GMD solidified its control of Taiwan.[15] Intellectuals who fled the mainland with the GMD forces were painfully aware of their exile; some mourned, some blamed, all looked for explanations for the defeat and solutions to be followed.[16]

The CCP forces were no more welcome in the entrepôts of Shanghai and Guangzhou than the GMD was in Taiwan. The Communist cadres, fresh from years of rural insurrection and village administration in north China, were culturally alien to the commercial and international culture of China's main cities, and generally did not speak the local dialects of southern China.[17] Like Chiang's forces, Mao's set about neutralizing competitors and laying down the law. Soon political campaigns were extended to the cities to "bring in" intellectuals, curb government corruption, and corral the bourgeoisie (most notably in the "Three Antis" and "Five Antis" campaigns of 1951–3).[18] Barely six months into their administration, the Communist government was confronted by war with

[15] Murray A. Rubinstein, *Taiwan: A New History* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2006); and Sylvia Li-chun Lin, *Representing Atrocity in Taiwan: The 2/28 Incident and Terror in Fiction and Film* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). Bruce Dickson, "The Lessons of Defeat: The Reorganization of the Kuomintang on Taiwan, 1950–52," *China Quarterly*, No. 133 (March 1993), pp. 56–84.

[16] Zhidong Hao, *Whither Taiwan and Mainland China: National Identity, the State, and Intellectuals* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010).

[17] A. Doak Barnett, *China on the Eve of Communist Takeover* (New York: Praeger, 1963); Ezra F. Vogel, *Canton under Communism: Programs and Politics in a Provincial Capital, 1949–1968* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); and Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz, eds., *The Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[18] Brown and Pickowicz, *The Dilemmas of Victory*, Part I; and Julia Strauss, "Paternalist Terror: The Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolution and Regime Consolidation in the People's Republic of China, 1950–1953," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (January 2002), pp. 80–105.

America in the Korean peninsula. It was a bloody fight, which China entered in 1950, but ended with an armistice confirming the two Koreas in 1953. By 1955, the Communists had largely succeeded, despite the draining challenge of confronting US military forces on the Korean peninsula and harrying from Chiang Kai-shek's residual forces and agents. In 1956, the CCP held its first major meeting since 1945, the Eighth Party Congress, and could not be blamed for feeling it had succeeded. Intellectuals remaining in China were not uniform: some stayed on only reluctantly, accepting that the CCP was the only practical alternative with which to work (but certainly not to join); some were willing to go along, join, and talk the talk, but their interests really lay elsewhere; but some were truly inspired, galvanized, and keen to make themselves anew and lead in the construction of New China with its new politics, new science, and new culture. After decades of marginalization and chaos, here was a chance to contribute to China's rejuvenation.

However, both avenues—service to the Guomindang state or to the Communist revolution—carried great peril for China's intellectuals. While the corruption and repression of dissent under the Guomindang only got worse after the defeat of the Japanese in 1945 and the return of the Nationalists to their capital in Nanjing,[19] service to the Communists was no idyll. Mao had consolidated his power in the Rectification Movement of 1942–4. This turned out to be a fateful development for intellectuals for several reasons. The campaign combined "political study" (closer to state-run religious conversion classes that produced "exegetical bonding" among the faithful) with authoritarian administration and uncompromising enforcement of Party policy.[20] While reactionary forces were exterminated, so too was intellectual diversity and dissent.

Modernization was a key goal of both revolutionary parties. Despite their differences in politics and policies, both the Nationalists and the Communists embraced the idea of society as something that could be managed. These years saw a shift in the object of revolution from the people to society, and in agents from independent intellectuals to integrated party-states that managed intellectual cadres. If in the 1900s Liang Qichao's generation had discovered a new people for China and how to

[19] A rich account of intellectual experience during these years is given in John Israel, *Lianda: A Chinese University in War and Revolution* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

[20] The classic dualism of the Yan'an Rectification Movement (idealism and repression) are captured in Mark Selden, *The Yenan Way in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971); and Goldman, *Literary Dissent in Communist China*. A more recent account that includes interviews with survivors of the rectification campaign that reflect the "exegetical bonding" created from the intense study sessions is given by Apter and Saich, *Revolutionary Discourse in Mao's Republic*.

use modern literature to awaken them into action, the architects of the party-state in the 1930s from Chen Lifu in the GMD to Chen Boda in the CCP had discovered *society* as an object of management, mobilization, and control, and they learned how to harness social science to serve state needs.[21]

China's propaganda states

The Nationalists and Communists provided the dominant frame for intellectual participation in public life in the middle decades of the twentieth century. Both were Bolshevik parties borrowed from the Soviet Union and both openly claimed the heritage of Sun Yat-sen's reformed Nationalist Party from the early 1920s and its role as an enlightened vanguard that would lead China to glory under their "political tutelage." These were China's propaganda states, not unlike German and Italian efforts. These systems required awakened functionaries, elite staff endowed with Sun Yat-sen's "foreknowledge." The Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek had begun the "partification" of universities and major institutions as part of this tutelage by the early 1930s. Part of their story is the failure of this effort. The most influential intellectuals, like Hu Shi, were prevailed upon to take up office (sometimes), but few "converted" to the disciplined role of an intellectual cadre for Chiang Kai-shek.

The Communists in general, and Mao Zedong in particular, succeeded in creating China's propaganda state. Beginning in the 1940s, the Communists brought this system to life through rectification campaigns designed to train, discipline, and mobilize their cadres and local populations in the service of social revolution and national wealth and power. Chinese intellectuals were a key group—among workers, peasants, and soldiers—to be transformed into cadres. This campaign style is also significant because it set the style of politics for the People's Republic of China—mass activism, led by the party-state, using straw men as "negative examples" to mobilize the public and to justify continued dictatorship of the proletariat (one-party rule). This model would continue in the PRC under Mao, reaching a crescendo in the Cultural Revolution (1966–9).

Nonetheless, from the start, there was internal dissent within the Communist movement and even within the Maoist camp. In this chapter we will see the cases of Ding Ling and Wang Shiwei, and there would

[21] Yung-chen Chiang, *Social Engineering and the Social Sciences in China*, documents the development of social-science approaches to society in the 1920s and 1930s and how this knowledge began to be used by state actors.

continue to be internal debates all through the Mao period and into the post-Mao period. There was dissent within the Guomindang and across Nationalist society as well, and some, like Li Gongpu and Wen Yiduo, got shot for their temerity. Many of the most daring, the most brave, and the most tragic of China's intellectuals took it upon themselves to speak truth to power in this most direct and dangerous manner. This history of Chinese dissent against these two revolutionary regimes is an important part of our story, a tragedy with inspiring examples of intellectual integrity and personal fortitude.

Propaganda: the directed public sphere of the party-state

By the 1940s the print communism of the propaganda state came to replace the print capitalism of earlier years as the defining institution of China's public sphere. The Communist and Nationalist parties took as their model the propaganda system first outlined by Lenin in his 1902 pamphlet *What Is to Be Done?*, and implemented in the new Soviet Union in the early 1920s under Lunacharsky's "Commissariat of Enlightenment." This is the system Peter Kenez calls "the propaganda state." Kenez's picture of the Soviet information system gives a vivid sense of the goals of print communism to which both parties aspired and which were achieved by the CCP by the 1940s:

> The newspaper was the blood-circulation system of the body politic: it carried essential information everywhere rapidly ... The average citizen learned what were the legitimate public issues as defined by the leaders and learned the verbiage of political discourse. For the activist and for the Party functionary, reading the newspaper diligently was even more important. They found out how they had to act in small and large matters and learned how to discuss political and even nonpolitical issues with their fellow citizens.[22]

The CCP borrowed more than a media system from the Soviets. It created its own version of the Bolsheviks' propaganda state. Peter Kenez calls this a state-dominated polity that co-ordinates the education of cadres, the development of political language, the politicization of ever-larger segments of life, and the substitution of "voluntary" state-controlled

[22] Peter Kenez, *Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917–1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 224. "Print communism" as a parallel to "print capitalism" (such as we discussed in Chapter 1) was coined by Christopher Reed in "Advancing the (Gutenberg) Revolution: The Origins and Development of Chinese Print Communism, 1921–1947," in Cynthia Brokaw and Christopher A. Reed, eds., *From Woodblocks to the Internet: Chinese Publishing and Print Culture in Transition, circa 1800 to 2008* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 275–311.

societies for independent organizations.[23] Propaganda was not only a total media system; it was a political project. In China propaganda provided the concrete application of what came to be known as Maoist leadership methods in political campaigns (*yundong*). Party propaganda in newspapers and other media was meant to be a major example of the "from the masses, to the masses" function of Party leadership in which Party representatives go down among the common folk, discover their problems and needs, go back and synthesize those particular problems with the insights of their ideology and finally return to the masses to publicize the party's insights among the people in such a way as to make them take on such formulations as their own values.[24] This was seen as transforming the masses through education (*jiaohua*). It fulfilled the dream of Sun Yat-sen's pedagogical state. However, the Nationalists destroyed the local infrastructure of its own Party organization as a part of their purge of leftists after their break with the Communists.[25] By the late 1930s it was only the CCP that was effectively developing the institutional capacity to bring a full propaganda state into being.

Propaganda was part of elite training and monitoring of CCP cadres, part of the "rectification" (*zhengdun zuofeng*) of cadres. Study sessions have been part of both cadre training and policy implementation in this model. From the late 1930s, propaganda writings, as well as official Party publications, have been read and discussed in orchestrated study sessions for cadres and local leaders, including intellectuals.[26] Rectification, when it works—as it did in the 1940s—is the organizational system to back up the ideological pronouncements that the Chinese Communist Party produces. Propaganda, then, is central to a system that underwrites CCP legitimacy, provides practical political feedback on current policy, and informs their cadre training and discipline system.

[23] Kenez, *Birth of the Propaganda State*, pp. 12–3 and Chapter 10.

[24] The classic formulation is in "Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership," issued by the CCP Central Committee, and included in the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. III (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1975).

[25] Bradley K. Geisart, *Radicalism and Its Demise: The Chinese Nationalist Party, Factionalism, and Local Elites in Jiangsu Province, 1924–1931* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2001).

[26] The Yan'an experience is detailed in Apter and Saich, *Mao's Republic*; and Frederick C. Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China: Rectification and the Decline of Party Norms* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1979), pp. 30–57. For the 1950s: Franz Schurmann, *Ideology & Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 60–1. The classic book on these "study sessions" is Martin K. Whyte, *Small Groups and Political Rituals in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

The propaganda state institutionalized this system in the *danwei* or work unit—a self-contained, full-service organization. For example, a Communist newspaper—be it Yan'an's *Liberation Daily* or a paper in the war-torn hinterland, such as the *Jin Cha Ji Daily*—was just such an all-embracing *danwei*. In addition to strong Party control of professional activities and personnel matters, each newspaper provided housing, health care, social services, education of children, and even approved marriage proposals. The weight of such unified social services was to make the work unit's members dependent on the leadership of their *danwei* for most aspects of their lives; this centrally controlled welfare promoted compliance, if not enthusiasm.[27] We shall see the workings of the CCP's early propaganda state in the life of Deng Tuo and his colleagues, later in this chapter.

The information system of the Chinese propaganda state corresponds in many ways to what Jürgen Habermas calls the "public sphere" in European societies. This comparison is important not only for making the Chinese experience more comparable with other examples but also for highlighting the differences that shape intellectual service in China. The key difference in the European example, of course, is that Habermas sees the public sphere as *independent* of state power. Indeed, it is unlikely that Habermas or his colleagues would call China's information system under Mao any sort of "public sphere" with any sort of "civil society." I use his terms because scholars (both Chinese and Western) interested in contemporary China use "public sphere" all the time to describe the public arena in China. But I think China does not conform to the Habermasian model because the public arena in Mao's time, and even to a large degree today, is not composed of independent intellectuals free from both state power and communal ties in the sense that Habermas uses "public sphere." Yet China had a public arena under both the Nationalists and the Communists. The Party aspired to control, and in the high Mao period pretty much did control, all public (and much private) expression. It has always sought to lead press, propaganda, public discussion, and popular mores in order to pass on the enlightenment of ideological leaders and enlightened cadres. So China had a public sphere in which individual ideas and values were made public, but compared with the Habermasian version it was a directed public sphere.

[27] Patricia Stranahan, *Molding the Medium: The Chinese Communist Party and the* Liberation Daily (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1990); Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*, Chapter 2. On *danwei*, see Andrew Walder, *Communist Neo-traditionalism: Work and Authority in Chinese Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); and Lü Xiaobo and Elizabeth J. Perry, eds., *Danwei: The Changing Chinese Workplace in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997).

China's propaganda state used the propaganda system as this "directed public sphere" in which the Party directly managed the public arena and controlled public associations of "civil society."[28] The concept of "directed" comes from Victor Serge's description of "directed culture" in Stalin's Soviet Union, in which the state controls the arts, ethics, and ideas "for the good of the people." Miklós Haraszti has shown the appeal of directed culture for intellectuals under state socialism in Hungary. In his ironic novel *The Velvet Prison*, Harazsti's cynical censor concludes, "Socialism, contrary to appearances, does not suppress the artists' Nietzschean desires but satisfies them ... The state prevents my art from becoming a commodity, and it guarantees my status as a teacher of the nation."[29] The propaganda system in China under the CCP came to include the arts and universities, as well as the media. Writers, professors, researchers, as well as journalists—indeed, all *professions*—were incorporated into the propaganda and education system under the direct management of the Propaganda Department of the CCP.[30] In Mao's China there was no other public space for intellectuals.

Intellectual cadres: servants of the propaganda state

The examination elite of Confucian scholar-officials passes in these decades, and the social space previously occupied by that group comes to be occupied by three alternatives, one of which attempted to maintain the integrated and holistic role of the scholar-official, and two of which represented real innovations in the public life of China: the cadre, the professional, and the intellectual as independent writer and commentator. The professional and the independent intellectual were important developments in these decades, but the cadre role came to dominate intellectual options by 1950. Professional organizations (including universities) and the media increasingly came under the control of one of China's party-states. The cadre, and in particular the intellectual cadre, serving either of the new Leninist party-states, the Nationalists or the Communists, combined the role of certified state administrator with a

[28] Analyzed in Timothy Cheek, "From Market to Democracy in China: Gaps in the Civil Society Model," in Juan D. Lindau and Timothy Cheek, eds., *Market Economics and Political Change: Comparing China and Mexico* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), pp. 236–45.

[29] See Miklós Haraszti, *The Velvet Prison: Artists under State Socialism* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), pp. 6 ff.; quote at pp. 24, 94.

[30] The *xuanjiao xitong* is described in Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), pp. 198–208.

person of moral training and literacy. However, the role of cadre was both more comprehensive, including low-level functionaries such as clerks and police who had fallen outside the Qing administrative system, and more diversified, including incumbents who did not consider themselves to be scholars or intellectuals. The struggles of intellectuals to cope with their reintegration into a new state system defines the intellectual history of the second half of China's long twentieth century.

These were China's *establishment intellectuals*. They were modern-day scholar-officials in Leninist regimes who traveled in the most influential of China's metropolitan cultural and political circles. They were at the same time both high-level intellectuals and high-level cadres. Their senior positions in the party-state made them high-level cadres. Their commitments to high and general intellectual culture; their engagement in intellectual activities that define the "ultimate" or the ideal (issues inseparable from political authority); and their affirmation and acceptance of, and service to, the ruling authorities make them fit Edward Shils's definition of intellectuals.[31] What makes China's establishment intellectuals different from similarly placed elites in other political systems is the system they served and the traditions from which they drew. China's version of establishment intellectuals could only exist in a system in which political control of culture is widely perceived as legitimate. Such was the CCP's propaganda state. The traditions that both state and intellectual drew from included both an idealized version of the Chinese tradition of the scholar-officials (*shi*) who had served and in turn been certified by the Chinese dynasties through the Confucian examination system, and also the elitism and social-engineering goals of Leninism.[32] Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist party-state embraced the same traditions and ambitions but was less successful in gaining popular support for its efforts to control culture. Thus Chen Bulei, whom we will meet shortly as Chiang's private secretary, was an exception to the rule of a more secular, professional role of intellectuals under the Nationalists. Deng Tuo, the cultured propagandist, became but one of generations of intellectuals—elite and ordinary—who served China's propaganda state under Mao and his successors. China's establishment intellectuals under Mao became the ideal version of the intellectual cadre.

[31] Edward Shils, "Intellectuals," in David Sills, ed., *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), Vol. VII, pp. 413–14.

[32] Defined in Hamrin and Cheek, *China's Establishment Intellectuals*, p. 4. The version of the scholar-official tradition was "idealized" because that image of state service as the *main* form of public service neglected the reality that most Qing-period intellectuals were not in service to the state (as those jobs were severely limited) but engaged in other cultural and administrative work in local society.

A defining feature of China's propaganda states has been the interpenetration of the party-state and the intellectual. This was not a one-way street in which a distant "organization" dictated to passive intellectuals. In practice, intellectuals were an important part of the party-state, often among its leadership. It is hard to think of Mao as an intellectual, despite his huge corpus of theoretical writings, because he has been the enemy of free-speaking intellectuals. However, by any reasonable definition he was an intellectual. More so, Mao provided the justification for a priestly function for intellectual cadres that recaptured some of the traditional élan of the Confucian examination elite. That is, Mao served as "the local intellectual cadre writ large" just as the Pope is the local parish priest writ large, or the emperor of the Qing was the great sage model for the local Confucian county magistrate or lineage patriarch.[33] Those who served and who enforced Maoism—including the disciplining and purging of dissenters—included similar, if less famous, intellectuals. This reminds us that, as Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik has pointed out, "in China, conflicts we normally regard as being conflicts between the Party and intellectuals are conflicts amongst intellectuals."[34]

Finally, the revolutionary propaganda state offered intellectuals a way to overcome their bourgeois status in the Marxist worldview by becoming revolutionary intellectuals. Just as seeing China in terms of Lenin's world revolution redeemed the failed empire and Republic by making China the vanguard of the oppressed world that would lead the overthrow of capitalism and the liberation of workers everywhere, so too did the Party offer to redeem intellectuals from being lackeys of the capitalist class by making them revolutionary servants to the historical force that would lead China in its global emancipatory project. The Party was always ambivalent about intellectuals—ideologically because of the link between China's intellectuals and the bourgeois world of treaty port cities and Western-style universities and practically because intellectuals criticized Party errors and could, and did, offer competing proposals, ideas, or interpretations of Marxism that challenged current Party leaders. In China's propaganda states, the way to stay safe and gain influence was to position oneself as a revolutionary, as an intellectual loyal to the revolutionary ideology of the Party. This required discipline and limited intellectual freedom, but it offered China's marginalized intellectuals of the 1930s and 1940s three appealing roles, a functional role as organizational leaders of society, an emotional role as heroes saving China, and

[33] Sun Yat-sen attempted this same role with less success; see Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*.
[34] Quoted in Hamrin and Cheek, *China's Establishment Intellectuals*, p. 20.

a cultural role as sophisticates or culture-bearers preserving and perfecting China's great cultural heritage.[35]

The perils of state service: Hu Shi, Chen Bulei, and Wu Han

The propaganda state never took hold fully under Chiang Kai-shek. Many of China's liberals tried to serve Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government as independently certified intellectuals, such as Hu Shi. Those who did serve as establishment intellectuals in the Guomindang, such as Chen Bulei, faced severe frustrations, and other liberals, such as Wu Han, were wooed successfully by Mao's Communist Party in the 1940s.

Hu Shi, China's most noted liberal, whom we met in Chapter 2, ultimately chose the Nationalists, serving as Chiang Kai-shek's ambassador to Washington during much of the Anti-Japanese War. Yet Hu Shi's relations with the Nationalist government were mixed. He worked mostly in academic institutions, and he ended up living much of the 1940s and most of the 1950s in America. Hu Shi embraced the twin identities that had emerged for many of China's thinkers and writers by the 1930s, as an independent intellectual and as a professional. As a professional, Hu Shi had status and income as a degree-holding professor (with a PhD from Columbia University) employed by modern universities in China. He served as chancellor of Peking University between 1946 and 1948 and later as president of Academia Sinica in Taiwan from 1957 until his death in 1962. As an intellectual, from as early as 1917 Hu Shi published in the new magazines and newspapers of the May Fourth era to push for the vernacular language over the literary language and to advocate the liberal pragmatism of his teacher at Columbia University, John Dewey. Hu Shi's biography highlights a central feature of Chinese liberalism in the first half of the century: its explicit link to Western ideas and civilization. Hu Shi, Ding Wenjiang, and a host of other liberals such as Luo Longji, were characterized in the press as "total Westernizers," though in fact they saw their liberalism as part of a universal civilization, of which Western and Chinese features were but concrete examples. They were as they saw themselves, cosmopolitan.

The cosmopolitanism of Hu Shi and fellow liberals, however, was distinctly shaped by their social experience. This was the premier generation of "returned students," Chinese intellectuals who had studied in

[35] Leaders, heroes, and sophisticates are the three variables in Hyung-yok Ip's fine study, *Intellectuals in Revolutionary China, 1921–1949* (London: Routledge, 2005).

Europe and America and obtained advanced degrees there in all areas, but particularly the natural sciences, political science, and history. While most Chinese students who had studied overseas at the turn of the century had gone to Japan, after the US converted its Boxer Indemnity Funds in 1908 to scholarships for Chinese students to study in America most of the intellectual leaders of the next generation studied in the West. Prominent liberal intellectuals from the 1930s onward were modern professionals, generally professors at the new universities or researchers at major state research centers. Virtually all had studied in the West or studied under Western-trained teachers. They lived a modern, westernized lifestyle in the cities: wearing what they considered "modern" clothing but that most other Chinese considered "Western" suits; living in nuclear families; enjoying the cinemas, restaurants, and other amenities of modern life in Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and other metropolises. They were an important part of China's metropolitan elite, potentially the new mandarins of China. But not quite. The role of the cadre, particularly the intellectual cadre required by both the Nationalists and the Communists, was anathema to the liberals who saw themselves as lettered *experts* and expected government to be mostly about administration constrained by a constitution and a legal regime geared to mediating disputes and protecting individual liberties. Hu Shi and his colleagues were indisputably experts, but their hopes for a liberal democratic political order were disappointed.

There were other cosmopolitans in China, as well. As we have seen, Liang Shuming was completely open to the natural sciences and technological development that had come from the West, also seeing "modern science" as something universal and not limited to this or that culture. However, Liang's openness to the broader world was founded on different assumptions about self and society. Conservatives like Liang, and even some Westernized liberals like Ding Wenjiang, talked in terms of communities rather than of individuals, seeing the individual as defined by and therefore inseparable from their community. For them, liberal democracy seemed inappropriate in China, at least under present conditions, maybe always. For Ding Wenjiang, the UK-trained geologist, the Chinese people were just not educated enough to play the role of responsible citizens in a democratic system with elections. So Ding agreed in the 1930s debates over "democracy versus dictatorship" that an enlightened dictatorship was what China needed, for the time being. Ding was critical of the newly established Nationalist regime of Chiang Kai-shek in Nanjing not for its dictatorial ways, but for its pathetic inefficiency and incompetence. He wanted the Nationalists to employ, and empower, more experts—like himself. Liang Shuming wanted science and

technological progress for China's villages in his Rural Reconstruction Movement, but he found the individualism at the heart of liberalism incongruent with Chinese culture and village communities. He favored a critical reapplication of Confucian community-oriented "compacts" to promote good government at the local level. Liang's criticism of the Nationalists was that they were urban and outsiders to village China. The central state should stay out of the way and let local society govern itself.

While the liberals, with their fierce independence, sought to serve the public good through criticism and education, others took up service to the regimes because they believed in the goals of their leaders. Hu Shi served the Nationalists reluctantly and only intermittently. Others, however, served the Nationalists and Chiang Kai-shek more enthusiastically. None more so than his private secretary and ghostwriter, Chen Bulei.

Chen Bulei (1890–1948) was a classic New Culture intellectual and a mid-level modern intellectual. Not of the stature of a Hu Shi or a Li Dazhao, Chen was an accomplished scholar, editor, and journalist. His biography in many ways is representative of the greater number of modern intellectuals in Republican China. Born in the southeastern province of Zhejiang, just south of Shanghai, Chen Bulei attended modern primary and high schools and graduated from Zhejiang University in Hangzhou in 1911. He became a journalist in Shanghai and joined Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Alliance in March 1912. By the 1920s, after a stint of schoolteaching back in Zhejiang, Chen was an established editor at the Commercial Press in Shanghai, editing its edition of *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (in Chinese), serving as an editor of *Commercial News* (*Shang bao*), and publishing as a noted political commentator in the paper, under the pen name Chen Weilei.[36] He joined the Guomindang in 1927 and served in various administrative posts, including deputy director in the Central Propaganda Department. From 1935 Chen Bulei served as private secretary and speechwriter for Chiang Kai-shek.

Chen Bulei exemplifies the challenges of state service for intellectuals in China's Republic. After years of dispiriting warlord rule, completion of the Northern Expedition in 1927 and its nationalist revolution offered the prospect of a real national revolution and a government worth serving. Although Chen was a successful journalist in Shanghai and embraced the professional identity of an independent intellectual, clearly

[36] A fine literary study of Chen Bulei and his suicide is Dahpon D. Ho, "Night Thoughts of a Hungry Ghostwriter: Chen Bulei and the Life of Service in Republican China," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Spring 2007), pp. 1–59.

part of him hankered to get beyond the world of words, to make a difference and to belong to something bigger than himself. He passed on the Communists when they came calling in 1925; class struggle did not seem right to Chen. When Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek sent feelers two years later, Chen's newspaper had disappointed him (by cozying up to the local warlord, Sun Chuanfang). A personal meeting with Chiang clinched it. Indeed, Chen's two decades of service to the Nationalist Party was really personal service to Chiang Kai-shek, a leader he deeply admired and for whom he felt great loyalty. Chen wrote brilliantly as Chiang's speechwriter, ghostwriting, for example, "Chiang's" famous account of his December 1936 capture in Xi'an that led to the second United Front with the Communists, *Fortnight in Sian* (the English edition of which gained praise from the American ambassador to China, J. Leighton Stuart, for Chiang's "elemental sincerity").

However, Chen Bulei experienced service to his great leader as an unreconcilable tension between his identity as a professional journalist and his service to the party. In the end, it wore him down. In his suicide note in November 1948, Chen wrote, "Ever since I left journalism, I have not been free to use my pen to express my own words. In truth, I am nothing more than a scribe, at most a secretary."[37] And yet those who worked within the Nationalist Party in the 1940s conceded that Chen Bulei, as the Grand Secretary in Chiang's cabinet, was a powerful gatekeeper and a major influence on the Generalissimo. In Chen's case, he could not reconcile identity and service. However, as the biographer of his suicide, Daphon Ho, notes, Chen "sheds light on the mundane world of functionaries ... probably closer to the experience of most literate Chinese who served the multitude of parties, factions, warlords, or governments through the decades of war and revolution."[38]

Liberals turned to the Communist Party, as well. The case of Wu Han (1909–69) shows both the attraction of state service under the Communists for a Chinese liberal and the personal charisma of Mao Zedong for some intellectuals. Wu Han was a liberal historian, a noted specialist on the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) and a wunderkind professor at Tsinghua University in Beijing. He was one of the few leading liberals who had not trained abroad, having studied at Tsinghua University. During the war Wu Han taught at Southwest United University in Kunming, Yunnan province, where several major universities had removed themselves safely away from the Japanese. There he wrote one of his most famous studies, a biography of the Ming Dynasty's famous and dictatorial founding

[37] Chen Bulei, quoted in Ho, "Night Thoughts," p. 22.
[38] Ho, "Night Thoughts," p. 48.

emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang, published in 1943. The biography was widely recognized as an attack on the dictatorial ways of the current "founding emperor" of the Republic, Chiang Kai-shek. After the war, Tsinghua University and Wu Han returned to Beijing.[39]

Wu became a leading member of the Democratic League, the effort by liberals to form a "third road" in Chinese politics. His criticisms of the Nationalists and his apparent sympathies for the Communists got Wu Han on the Nationalists' black list. He just managed to escape arrest by fleeing south when police swept Beijing's university campuses in August 1948. He aimed for Hong Kong to regroup with Democratic league members there, but on the way in Shanghai, Wu Han was approached by his senior colleagues in the league and asked to carry a letter to the Communist authorities in their "liberated area" in the Hebei city of Shijiazhuang about 170 miles southwest of Beijing. Wu Han agreed and by November, and by a circuitous route, he was in the Communist area with some fifty-five other league and independent democratic figures invited by the CCP to talk about China's future. As was the case with Chen Bulei and Chiang Kai-shek in 1927, so it was for Wu Han in 1948 that two personal meetings with Mao Zedong convinced him that he wanted to serve. "Wu Han left the sessions with Mao exhilarated by the charismatic leader," writes his biographer, Mary Mazur, "and inspired to study Lenin's and Mao's writings."[40] It was a case of loyalty to a leader and a revolution that seemed to Wu Han to be worthy. It was also a case that Mao had flattered Wu Han, asking for and reading the new edition of Wu's biography on Zhu Yuanzhang and discussing points of interpretation. Mao called on Wu Han's sense of loyalty to the cause of saving China but also offered him a respected role as an intellectual leader and teacher of the people. Wu Han was so impressed he immediately wrote to Mao asking to join the Party.

But the Party had other plans for Wu Han. Those plans were the United Front, a branch organization of the CCP that made common cause with non-Party political figures, a mechanism for finding temporary alliances with other classes and parties. The United Front was also the official name of the co-operation between the Nationalists and the Communists, but that had fallen apart as early as 1941 and they were now in the midst of a bitter civil war. In the 1940s the United Front became the CCP's way to work with non-Party intellectuals and business figures. The great power of the United Front was precisely its ability to

[39] Material on Wu Han comes from the excellent biography by Mary G. Mazur, *Wu Han, Historian: Son of China's Times* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009).
[40] Mazur, *Wu Han*, p. 347.

attract China's liberals.[41] The Nationalists were failing at this miserably, having just assassinated leading liberal intellectual Li Gongpu and the poet Wen Yiduo in July 1946, and rounding up other members of the Democratic League in summer 1948. The CCP used the United Front to give such liberals a place in their new government, without requiring them to join the Party, and at the same time the policy supporting the United Front explained to CCP cadres why they should co-operate, indeed respect, these representatives of the bourgeoisie. Wu Han was asked to serve the party that had attracted his loyalty as a leader of the Democratic League, but not as a Communist Party member. This Wu Han did, serving as chair of the league's Beijing branch from 1949 until 1966. In the new PRC Wu Han became vice mayor of Beijing, was active in the confidential meetings of the city's Party committee, and received classified documents, though publicly he was a league official and served as such in the municipal government under the auspices of the United Front. Privately, Wu Han was known amongst Party leaders as a "key Party member outside of the Party."[42] Wu Han was finally allowed to join the CCP in March of 1957, though even then his membership was kept secret (until all was revealed in the Cultural Revolution).

Wu Han's service was not nearly as tortured as Chen Bulei's. Wu Han continued his professional identity as academic historian and served as a high-ranking public official of some considerable prestige. It was not, however, a service without tribulations. Wu Han had to cope with the many political campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s. He weathered the earlier ones pretty well, managing to avoid having to denounce his old teacher, Hu Shi, during the campaign against the famous liberal that began in December 1954. When the Anti-Rightist Movement came in the summer of 1957, however, Wu Han was an enthusiastic participant and willingly criticized his old league comrades, Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji, in part to preserve the league for another day. Wu Han's fate in Mao's next revolution awaits our next chapter, but by 1957 Wu Han could say that he had balanced intellectual integrity and political service as a liberal. But if he had joined the CCP by then, how could he say that? A careful reading of Wu Han's many writings since 1949, according to Mazur,

[41] The United Front of 1948–53 was not concerned with co-operation with the Guomindang, but rather with co-opting non-Communist intellectuals and professionals. This policy is carefully analyzed in Mary G. Mazur, "The United Front Redefined for the Party-State: A Case Study of Transition and Legitimation," in Timothy Cheek and Tony Saich, eds., *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), pp. 51–75. Israel, *Lianda*, *passim*.

[42] Mazur, *Wu Han*, p. 377.

does not substantiate characterizing him as having adopted Communist ideology across the board ... He was selectively influenced by Marxism–Leninism and Mao Zedong's thought in thinking about China ... Wu was loyal to Communism *as he chose to understand it*, not because the powerful central authority decreed it.[43]

The intellectual cadre: Deng Tuo and Wang Shiwei

The role of the intellectual cadre faltered under the Nationalists and failed to draw many liberals to Chiang Kai-shek's vision of a New China. The Communists, however, were much more successful in attracting a range of intellectuals into service. Some, like Wu Han, served largely on their own terms, at least at first. Some found Marxism–Leninism a compelling explanation for what was wrong with China, what had to be done, and what they *personally* could do that would make a difference. Deng Tuo (1911–66), who served the Party for some thirty-five years as a journalist, propagandist, and theorist, like Chen Bulei reflects the lives of the less-than-famous intellectuals who chose to serve one of the two Bolshevik parties at mid-century. Unlike Chen Bulei, Deng Tuo found his service to the CCP as an intellectual cadre to be not only satisfying, but also an honorable vocation.[44]

Deng Tuo's career reflects the "deal" offered to intellectuals by the CCP. Born in 1911 in Fuzhou, Fujian, just across the straits from Taiwan, Deng Tuo was the fifth son of a retired Qing district magistrate (and thus also a degree holder). It was not a wealthy family, but prosperous enough and highly cultured. Elder brothers studied at universities and came to serve the Nationalist government. Deng himself was rigorously trained in the traditional arts, particularly calligraphy and classical poetry, skills in which he excelled all his life. His father's traditional Confucian erudition, however, did not conflict with new ideas. Deng Tuo read *New Youth* and other iconoclastic May Fourth journals at home, at his father's urging. This provided Deng a sound grounding in the high culture and arts of China and a faith that Chinese identity was compatible with new ideas. He was schooled in the new middle schools of the 1920s and saw first-hand what happens when the local warlord takes over. Thus radicalized, the young Deng Tuo went to university in Shanghai to make revolution.

Deng Tuo joined the CCP in Shanghai at a singularly inauspicious moment, 1930. Only a rump of the Party really functioned in Shanghai after the brutal purge by the Nationalists in 1927, even though the formal

[43] Mazur, *Wu Han*, p. 393 (italics in Mazur's original).
[44] Material on Deng Tuo comes from Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture in Mao's China*.

leadership hung on to this urban perch before decamping in 1931 to the Jiangxi Soviet in the hinterland. Deng served the Party as a street propagandist and organizer of demonstrations. He was promptly arrested by Nationalist authorities. It took his father some eight months to get his son out of jail, and not before he had been tortured and seen comrades executed for their political views. The young Deng returned to his home in Fuzhou and then a few years later moved to Henan University in Kaifeng, where he took a degree in economics in 1937. During these years he abandoned street demonstrations for his beloved scholarship, but he did not abandon his Marxism. However, he did lose organizational contact with the Party (as was often the case in the 1930s as the Nationalists intensified their repression of radicals). Nonetheless, Deng's faith in Marxism–Leninism was formed in these years of study, particularly through his research into Chinese social history. He published a half-dozen solid articles in major journals and a major historical monograph, *A History of Famine Relief in China* (1937), that is still used by scholars today. Deng's historical studies adopt the perspective of historical materialism and draw more from Engels's economic determinism of class and modes of production than from Lenin's ideas of mobilizing the proletariat. The vision of social revolution, however, captured his imagination. In 1933, in a debate with a much more senior scholar, Zhang Dongsun, the young Marxist declared

> that the society of the future will be entirely different from the present, that humanity will be able to control the natural world and moreover eliminate the natural character of society, that the development of history will be completely subject to human prescription, that people's will shall be completely free. Then human society will make unprecedented advances, developing humanity to the highest level of culture . . .[45]

To serve this revolution was, indeed, a heroic calling. The Japanese invasion in 1937 provided Deng Tuo the opportunity to take up that calling. He fled to the countryside of north China, where the Communists were setting up a base area that became known as the Jin Cha Ji Border Region (for the single-character names of the three provinces along whose borders the area was founded, Shanxi, Chahar, and Hebei). There the young radical intellectual reconnected with the Party and found the opportunity to use his writing skills to help organize the revolution in one place. He became a leading propagandist in this rural base and edited its newspaper. He also became the research adviser to its

[45] Deng Yunte (Deng Tuo), "Xinshi luoji haishi weiwu bianzhengfa?" (Formal Logic or Dialectical Materialism?), *Xin Zhonghua*, Vol. 1, No. 23 (December 1933), p. 56, quoted in Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture*, p. 42.

military leader, Nie Rongzhen, and later its Party chief, Peng Zhen. Deng served in this rural base area throughout the Anti-Japanese War. During most of these years, the border region, as a "base behind enemy lines," was subject to repeated and brutal attacks by the Japanese army. Yet these were perhaps Deng Tuo's happiest years and certainly among his most productive. There is a strange freedom in adversity, where goals are clear and a sense of historic purpose justifies effort and sacrifice.

The administrative system that Deng served in the Jin Cha Ji Base Area was the party-state of the CCP that was made famous in just a few years under Mao in Yan'an. It was an integrated system of organizations all interpenetrated by Party cadres to ensure that each moving part followed the ideological and administrative policies of the Party. It was the propaganda state of Bolshevism and Deng Tuo loved it. Writing in the summer of 1938 as editor of the border region's newspaper, *Resistance News*, Deng reflected,

> Of course, the production of *Resistance News* has its mission. It must become the propagandizer and organizer of the border region's mass resistance and salvation movement, it must represent the needs of the broad masses, reflect and pass on the real conditions and experiences of the broad masses' struggle, promote various aspects of work, and educate the masses themselves.

This comprehensive role of Party leadership would be enshrined by Mao Zedong in the 1940s as the "from the masses, to the masses" cycle of leadership. The moral idealism is palpable. "At the same time," the young editor admonishes, the paper progresses through this service work. "It is the paper of the masses; it gives impetus to others, and at the same time it also gets impetus from others. It teaches others, and at the same time is taught by others."[46] Here Deng Tuo echoes the sage-like vocation and anticipation of the reunification of the intellectual and the countryside that we saw Liang Shuming claim in 1934, albeit in service of a different ideology.

The dark side of this utopian vision is the constraint on intellectual freedom that the Party put upon its functionaries, including intellectual cadres. This had been an endemic problem for both the Nationalists and the Communists, and we shall see shortly the ugly side of this repression in Yan'an in the case of Wang Shiwei. However, it is important to note that it was not always the case, nor was it for all intellectuals. Deng Tuo's 1939 lecture and article on literature and art prefigures themes in Mao's

[46] Yin Zhou (Deng Tuo), "Kangdi bao wushiqi de huigu yu zhanwang" (Review and Prospects of *Resistance News* upon Its 50th Issue), *Kangdi bao*, June 27, 1938, p. 1, quoted in Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture*, p. 86.

famous "Yan'an Talks" that laid down the Party line for intellectuals in 1942. Before Mao spelled it out, Deng agreed that Party intellectuals had to use the language of the common people, or "national forms," to communicate their ideas and to mobilize "the masses." But for Deng this was not a matter of dumbing down for peasants, rather "best is to raise the cultural level of the masses in the midst of developing the real mass literary and artistic movement." Deng did not find popularization work to be a burden because he held a two-track policy for elite and popular culture. In Jin Cha Ji both policies could carry on side by side. Indeed, Deng Tuo joined Nie Rongzhen and other notables in a highly traditional "Yan-Zhao Poetry Society" in 1943, enjoying the exchange of refined classical-style poetry that was beyond most university students, not to mention farmers.[47] Deng prospered intellectually, turning his skills to building up the culture of his area, helping to implement a new administration, and enjoying some moments of China's grand culture. This was the Chinese Marxist revolution for Deng Tuo.

Not so for others. In Yan'an other young radical intellectuals had also gathered in the wake of the Japanese occupation of China's major eastern cities in 1937 and 1938. These left-wing writers brought with them another sort of cosmopolitanism—international, European-oriented Marxism in the form of literary modernism. Key amongst this group was Ding Ling, whom we met in the last chapter inhabiting the garrets of Shanghai and the pages of May Fourth literary journals. By 1941 Ding Ling was head of the local women's organization and a leader of the literary scene in Yan'an. She was editor of the literary page of Yan'an's major newspaper, *Liberation Daily*. She gave voice to the frustrations of these independent urban intellectuals in her own essays and by publishing their complaints, as they coped with both greater Party discipline and the considerable discomforts of rural life in this poverty-stricken backwater in northwestern China. Ding Ling called for the revival of *zawen* (the "polemical essay") in a *Liberation Daily* article in October 1941. "I think it would do us most good if we emulate his [Lu Xun's] steadfastness in facing the truth, his courage to speak out for the sake of truth, and his fearlessness. This age of ours still needs *zawen*, a weapon that we should never lay down."[48]

Mao Zedong famously decreed "the line" for revolutionary intellectuals in his "Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art" in May 1942. Mao's themes are now familiar—literature must serve the

[47] Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture*, pp. 95–8.
[48] Ding Ling, "Women xuyao zawen" (We Need *Zawen*), *Jiefang ribao*, October 23, 1941, p. 4.

workers, peasants, and soldiers; content should be Party-directed; and form should suit elementary readers' needs. Public criticism is not welcome, because "[i]f we treat comrades with the ruthless methods required against the enemy, then we are identifying ourselves with the enemy." Mao is exclusive. An act of criticism without Party permission is an act of heresy. Proletarian art, Mao holds, must be subject to the will of the proletariat, especially its leader, the Party. Any other view is the same as the Trotskyite formula, "politics—Marxist, art—bourgeois."[49] This was Mao's, and the Party's, response to Ding Ling and her fellow literary critics. The challenge by leftist intellectuals had been mounted in the main ideological institutions of Yan'an—the Party newspaper, *Liberation Daily*, and the Central Research Institute of the CCP. They were having an impact. That February, Mao had launched the study campaign (and purge) known as Rectification to improve Party ideology, clean up corruption, sideline competitors, and get the administration of this poor and marginalized area sorted out.

Some left-wing theorists took Mao at his word to "rectify our Party's work style" to criticize shortcomings in the CCP administration and to put themselves up as revolutionary artists and intellectuals, as "the conscience of the people." Ding Ling called out the gender double standard in Yan'an in which women were damned as "hussies" if they did (join in public affairs) and damned as "backward" if they didn't (and stayed at home to raise children). But it was the cantankerous theorist and translator Wang Shiwei (1906–47), who came to represent this cosmopolitan vision of Chinese socialism in Yan'an. Wang is famous for his critical essay, a *zawen* satirical piece in the style of everyone's hero (in Yan'an), Lu Xun, titled, "Wild Lilies." It lampooned the privileged food and clothing of the revolutionary elite that belied propaganda about Yan'an's egalitarian life. Wang had, in fact, outlined his approach to two main issues— language and authority—earlier. In 1941 Wang tussled with a colleague (Chen Boda) over national forms of literature—a core issue in Chinese Marxism in the 1930s and 1940s: how to mobilize China's population with a vision that the intellectuals had learned via awkward translation.[50] It was a bit like figuring out how to inspire North American workers to go on strike using only translations of Michel

[49] Mao, in the original text as translated by Bonnie McDougall, *Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art"* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1980), pp. 80–1, 75; this translation is available in Stuart R. Schram and Timothy Cheek, eds., *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings, 1912–1949*, Vol. VIII, *1942–August 1945* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 102–32, quotations from pp. 127, 121.

[50] The debate around "national forms of literature" is well covered in David Holm, *Art & Ideology in Revolutionary China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Foucault. Mao favored casting revolutionary ideas in Chinese folk symbols and idioms. Wang, however, was adamant: form was inseparable from content, and modern equaled Western:

> For example, if the communication tools of modern culture—automobiles, trains, steamboats, airplanes ... are separated from form, what content can they possibly have? "Old national forms" would have to be carts, sedan chairs, junks, paper kites, sickles, hoes, and such! But how can the essential content of this modern culture—speed, carrying power, precision, efficiency, etc.—be combined with the "old national forms"?[51]

In Wang's view, the new revolutionary consciousness from Europe and the Soviet Union also needed new foreign forms. Yet he felt the Chinese could make them their own. "I believe that whenever a people (*minzu*) are able in their own way to master something and make it serve them, then essentially it has already become 'national,' no matter if it came from outside or was originally possessed (today it's an import, tomorrow it's our own)."[52] This openness to foreign or external ideas is a fundamental criterion for any cosmopolitan stand.

In early 1942, Wang made clear his view on the second issue, authority: the role of the individual, especially the role of the revolutionary artist, under socialism. In a theory essay titled "Politicians, Artists," Wang proposes a vital, independent, and useful role for Communist writers and artists as society's caring but relentless critics of evil. He sets up revolutionary artists as the active loyal opposition, the public censor, the ombudsman of revolutionary society itself. Wang insists that the artist alone can maintain a grasp on morality and provide the spiritual inspiration to supplement the military revolution and to check its abuses. Wang borrows Stalin's term and designates artists "engineers of the soul," limiting the job to himself and fellow left-wing writers.[53] This was in utter contravention of Mao's vision of rectification. It was ideological insubordination.

Mao Zedong won this round. Wang Shiwei was purged and made a negative example for the edification of other left-wing writers (as we saw

[51] This quote from Wang Shiwei is drawn from later denunciations of his writings; the context is discussed in Timothy Cheek, "The Fading of 'Wild Lilies': Wang Shiwei and Mao Zedong's Yan'an Talks in the First CPC Rectification Movement," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No. 11 (January 1984), pp. 25–58, at 29.

[52] See Cheek, "The Fading of 'Wild Lilies'," p. 31.

[53] Wang Shiwei, "Zhengzhijia, yishujia," and other texts by Wang are available in *Wang Shiwei wencun* (Collection of Wang Shiwei's Writings) (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1998). I have translated Wang's essay in Dai Qing, *Wang Shiwei and "Wild Lilies": Rectification and Purges in the Chinese Communist Party, 1942–1944* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), pp. 90–3.

in the voices selection at the start of this chapter).[54] Ding Ling caved in, performed a public self-criticism in June 1942, criticized the unrepentant Wang, and then dutifully went off to the villages to reform herself. This was a case of "manufactured dissent" common to Stalinist regimes in which a loyal critic is transformed by the authorities into an implacable opponent.[55] The key difference with Maoism at this time was that there was a way out—groveling self-criticism would save your life, and in the case of many, including Ding Ling, ultimately get you back into the good graces of the Party. It is worth noting, nonetheless, that this was a fight *internal* to Chinese socialism; Wang Shiwei was not a liberal democrat. In many ways Wang's "Politicians, Artists" brings to mind John Milton's *Areopagitica* (1644). Both authors served a revolution fueled by high ideals, only to find a shocking intolerance when their new leaders took power; both argue the right and necessity for a more free press and betray a priestly self-importance as artists; yet both men's call for freedom of public expression diverted from liberalism in the name of activist or localist needs. There were excluded classes: Papists for Milton, non-leftists for Wang.

The contrast between Deng Tuo and Wang Shiwei in the CCP during the war years is instructive. The invidious political distinction between "national forms" of folk culture and elite literature in revolutionary society that exercised Wang Shiwei and writers in Yan'an did not arise when the content of elite literature was, as in Deng Tuo's case, not May Fourth European models but Chinese literati arts. The problems of left-wing writers which have served to set the impression for Western scholars on intellectual–CCP relations are highlighted by this contrast between the Yan'an left-wing writers and the Yan-Zhao Poetry Society of Deng Tuo and his Jin Cha Ji colleagues. The left-wing writers were generally out of power, offered a competing strategy for the rectification movement, were unable to harmonize their elite pastimes with popularization work among the peasantry, and were small in number even among the tiny class of the educated elite. On the other hand, establishment intellectuals like Deng Tuo were in positions of influence, abided by the tenets of Yan'an rectification policy, were comfortable with the peasant population, were much more numerous, and maintained friendly relations with the military and political leadership. Equally, Deng Tuo's

[54] The centrality of this campaign model for intellectual life in the PRC, of which Mr. Wang was an unfortunate early example, is demonstrated in Teiwes, *Politics and Purges*.

[55] Tom Fisher distinguishes commentary that was legal at the time of publication in China but *retrospectively* designated "dissent" from examples of "permitted dissent" in the Soviet thaw of the 1950s, in "Wu Han: The 'Upright Official' as a Model in the Humanities," in Hamrin and Cheek, *China's Establishment Intellectuals*, pp. 183–4.

two-track approach to culture was unlike that of the "cog and screw" artists in Yan'an who produced the *yang'ge* folk propaganda dramas that Wang Shiwei so detested.[56] Establishment intellectuals like Deng Tuo carried considerable cultural authority and respect in the eyes of Party and military leaders for their artistic and scholarly skills. Deng Tuo used this cultural authority to carve out a "culture-bearer" role that combined something of the moral autonomy of the left-wing critical writers and the loyalty of the *yang'ge* dramatists. It was a powerful and attractive role and Deng Tuo dedicated his life to it.

Deng Tuo entered Beijing and the life of the establishment in the People's Republic of China in 1949. He was the founding editor of *People's Daily*, the Party's paper, the *Pravda* of China. This was the peak of Deng Tuo's career, rounded out by appointments in the Beijing municipal government as head of propaganda, and formal positions such as head of the Chinese Journalists Association. He lectured at universities not only on ideological reform but also on land reform based on his work in Jin Cha Ji and earlier historical research. Within a few years he was living in a pleasant traditional courtyard house, able to bring his aging father up from Fuzhou. He returned to his beloved Chinese arts and became a notable art collector and connoisseur. He was married and his children were healthy. It was a good life.

And it was a busy life. Official service for Deng Tuo was mostly in journalism and Party theory. Looking at his official world of propaganda articles and *People's Daily* editorials compared to his private life of elite cultural interests might seem a contradiction, but as we have seen from his life in the 1940s, Deng Tuo and those around him maintained a comfort with both popular and elite culture, and with both Chinese and cosmopolitan influences. This all rested in a profound belief in the ideology and fundamental faith in Mao Zedong. In the early 1950s this worked well enough for establishment intellectuals like Deng Tuo who believed in socialism. However, Maoism had two sides. The distinction between rational and emotive versions of Maoism will help us to understand not only the tribulations that would arise in intellectual service to the Party beginning in the late 1950s, but also the growing split within the entire Party that would explode and involve everyone in the 1960s. Deng Tuo was no more free of ideological commitments than any other actor in politics, and he subscribed to Marxism–Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought, Maoism. In 1944 Deng Tuo had been the editor of the first official *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*. Unlike Wu Han, Deng Tuo did not

[56] On *yang'ge* dramas, see Holm, *Art & Ideology in Revolutionary China*.

take what suited him; he understood and accepted the whole ideological system. Deng insisted that ideology and ideological remolding (thought reform), tenets from the Yan'an Rectification Movement, were *primary* in public work. What emerges from Deng Tuo's theoretical writings in the mid-1950s, however, is that ideological remolding is a real but complicated process that must be handled in a nuanced and humane manner. It was for Deng a product of rational reflection, not emotional conversion.

In this, Deng reflected the organizational leadership of the Party. Other Party intellectuals—such as Sun Yefang, the economist, and Jian Bozan, the historian—pursued their new duties with a similar mix of professional skill and moral commitment to the new order. Deng's own work at *People's Daily* reflected that commitment. Editorials in *People's Daily* were notoriously dull. For Deng Tuo, this was not good enough; propaganda was too important for China's future to be done badly. In 1955 Deng lectured the paper's editors and journalists:

> The most common structure for a formulaic editorial cannot but begin with a discourse on current conditions, followed by a presentation of good examples and a criticism of a few bad examples. And then, the subjective causes of each. Toss in a few lessons from experience, and repeat a few generalities on advancing our work, which everyone already knows anyway. Finish up with a few sentences on how under the leadership of the Party this task will be completely achieved. Frankly, this kind of formula makes people vomit.[57]

Whether on such practical matters or on ideological questions, Deng spoke for the transformational bureaucrats of New China, serving up a very orderly, indeed rather bureaucratic, administration. He sought to regularize and tame the powerful forces that the rectification process unleashed both within the individual and in society. Mao Zedong Thought, propaganda, ideological remolding, and Party dictatorship were not problems for Deng Tuo; they were the tools of his trade. Deng Tuo's approach did not admit to the possibility of differences between the party committees that provided rational administration and the Party leader who inspired them all. Thus he saw no need for political institutions independent of the Party and never suggested them.

Deng Tuo saw himself as a culture-bearer rather than as a cog in the revolution. He embraced a bureaucratic Maoist vision of a scientific, rational, and ordered social revolution based on a complex ideology best ministered by elites such as himself. Deng Tuo accepted Mao's cultural populism but did not accept Mao's inherent anti-intellectualism. It was

[57] Deng Tuo, "Guanyu baozhi shelun" (On Newspaper Editorials) (1955), quoted in Cheek, *Propaganda and Culture*, p. 145.

one thing to have a common touch, but another altogether to denigrate learning. Deng Tuo was a scholar and he was proud. In 1955 he had no reasonable expectation to think that his world would soon blow up.

During these same years, a new generation came of age while the Hu Shis and Deng Tuos were in the midst of their careers. In the 1940s, Yue Daiyun, a schoolgirl in the embattled southwest, found in the CCP a salvation she felt she would never otherwise have found—especially with the corrupt Guomindang government she had watched plunder her hometown in Guizhou province during the Anti-Japanese War. She struggled to study and to attend the 1948 university exams in Chongqing, Sichuan province. She passed, was admitted to Peking University, and with help from American missionaries and distant relatives she got herself to Beijing. Too young to participate significantly in the revolution, she appreciated it and joined student radicals in the CCP underground.[58] The CCP was her hope and her pathway to success. Slightly older than Yue, Wang Ruoshui was active in the CCP in the 1940s and joined the staff of *People's Daily* as a junior editor. Both Wang and Yue felt they rode the crest of a wonderful historical wave propelling themselves and China into a new era. Wang also had studied at Peking University, leaving just as Yue arrived in 1948. Wang went to the nearby CCP base areas and became active in CCP journalism.[59] Wang's work was in the theoretical department—studying and applying Marxism–Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought—and in time he would catch the eye of the editor, Deng Tuo, and even Mao. For this young intellectual, Maoism and the Party that implemented it promised to end the corruption and poverty of the Guomindang government.

Western-trained scholars and patriotic returnees: Zhou Yiliang and Qian Xuesen

An important part of this ideological moment at mid-century was the existence of a significant number of Chinese intellectuals with advanced training in North America and Europe willing to return home to build this New China. This patriotic return spanned the 1949 divide and

[58] Details of Yue Daiyun's life from Yue Daiyun and Carolyn Wakeman, *To the Storm: The Odyssey of a Revolutionary Chinese Woman* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

[59] David A. Kelly, "The Emergence of Humanism: Wang Ruoshui and the Critique of Socialist Alienation," in Goldman, Cheek, and Hamrin, *China's Intellectuals and the State*, pp. 159–82, and Kelly's introduction and bibliographic note to his translations of Wang's essays in *Chinese Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (1985).

included those who came to serve the Nationalists and those who came to serve the new society under the CCP. Chinese students had been studying abroad in significant numbers since the late nineteenth century, and older reformist and revolutionary leaders, such as Liang Qichao, Zhang Binglin, and Qiu Jin, had spent time in Japan around 1900. In the twentieth century, more students studied in Europe and America. Numbers are hard to come by but one estimate figures that 150,000 Chinese students had studied abroad by 1949.[60] There were, in addition, long-standing communities of Chinese in Southeast Asia, in the settler colonies of North America and Australasia (as we saw in Liang Qichao's 1900 visit to Australia), and in Europe. By the late nineteenth century, the Qing Dynasty had acknowledged these communities as "overseas Chinese" (*huaqiao*). The linkages between these sojourning and settling Chinese communities and their native districts remained strong in most cases.[61] In the 1940s and 1950s some 300,000 overseas Chinese were convinced or volunteered to come "back" to China to serve, though the number of well-trained intellectuals who returned would most likely have been only in the hundreds.[62] Such overseas Chinese scholars were part of a larger migration of Chinese of various social circles, particularly from Southeast Asia, who became "returnees" (*guiqiao*) to China in part because of anti-Chinese discrimination in the new states, such as Indonesia.[63]

Some Chinese, such as the medical doctor Ng Leen-tuck (Wu Lien-teh, 1879–1960), performed a sort of reverse international service: born in Penang, in the Malay states (colony of the British at the time), Ng trained at the University of Cambridge and set out on a career in Malaya. Discrimination under the British frustrated his career, so he took up an offer from Yuan Shikai in 1910 to figure out what the epidemic ravaging Harbin in northeast China was. Ng did; it was the pneumonic plague, which he succeeded in controlling. He went on to serve with distinction

[60] Zhang Yufa, "Returned Chinese Students from America and the Chinese Leadership," *Chinese Studies in History* (New York), Vol. 35, No. 3 (Spring 2002), p. 52.

[61] Gungwu Wang, *The Chinese Overseas: From Earthbound China to the Quest for Autonomy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); and Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese amongst Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).

[62] Stephen Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese: A Study of Peking's Changing Policy 1949–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); and Michael Godley, "The Sojourners: Returned Overseas Chinese in the People's Republic of China," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (1989), pp. 330–52. Glen Peterson, *Overseas Chinese in the People's Republic of China* (London: Routledge, 2012).

[63] Wang Cangbai, "Guiqiao: Returnees as a Policy Subject in China," *Newsletter of the International Institute of Asian Studies* (*IIAS*), No. 50 (2009), p. 7, notes that some half-million Indonesian *huaqiao* students, petty shopkeepers, traders, and laborers return-migrated to China in the 1950s and 1960s for these reasons.

in the new Republic as the first president of the Chinese Medical Association and director of the National Quarantine Service (1931–7). He is credited with building up medicine as a modern profession in China. The book *History of Chinese Medicine*, which Ng and his colleague Wang Jimin published in English in 1932, is considered a milestone in the profession's development. Ng's career reflects, as David Luesink has shown, his "strong position in transnational networks of European, Japanese and American medicine."[64] Yet his career was cut short by the Japanese invasion and he returned to Penang, where he lived and worked until his death in 1960. Ng served China for some twenty-five years, but clearly his life and identity were not restricted to China.

There is a continuum between Chinese students who took advanced degrees in Western countries as part of a career path in China and those who established careers in the US or Europe for a decade or more, giving every indication of having made their life in their adopted country, and then chose to return to help build the New China of either the Nationalists or the Communists. Hu Shi, James Yen, and Ding Wenjiang had all studied abroad, and Hu Shi ended up spending considerable time in America during his service as ambassador during the war and again after 1949. Liang Sicheng (1901–72), the son of Liang Qichao, was somewhere between a short-term overseas student and a returning overseas Chinese. He was born in Japan when his father was in exile there. Trained in the classics by his father, Liang Sicheng entered Tsinghua Preparatory (later University) in 1915 and in 1924 he studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. He became China's most noted modern architect, bringing the U Penn curriculum first to Northeastern University in Liaoning province in 1928 and then to Tsinghua University in 1946. He continued to serve under the PRC, though he had to make a public self-confession of his ideological failings in 1956. He both endured and prospered, becoming a Party member in the late 1950s. His later fate in the Cultural Revolution sadly followed that of too many of China's intellectuals—mass criticism, purge, incarceration, and in Liang's case an early death in 1972.

One of China's premier historians of the twentieth century, Zhou Yiliang (1913–2001) was a Western-trained scholar like Hu Shi, with eight years of training in America. Zhou returned in 1946 with his Harvard PhD to serve China under the Nationalists at the missionary university, Yenching University. But unlike Hu Shi, Zhou Yiliang stayed

[64] David Luesink, "The History of Chinese Medicine: Empires, Transnationalism and Medicine in China, 1908–1937," in Iris Boroway, ed., *Uneasy Encounters: The Politics of Medicine and Health in China, 1900–1937* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 149–50.

on to serve under the Communists, as a professor of ancient and medieval Chinese history first at Qinghua and then at Peking University.[65] He made considerable contributions to historical studies in China, but also became completely tied up in CCP politics in ways that reflect the perils of intellectual service under the CCP and brought him criticism in later years.

Although Zhou had taken out permanent-residence status in America in 1945, he returned to China in 1946 to take up a promised position in Beijing.[66] The most important politics he discovered there was academic politics. His welcome at Yenching University was cool because, as continues to be the case with "returnees" in China today, he had been away for years and was not up to date on department politics. His benefactor, William Hong (Hong Ye, 1893–1980), who had been in charge of the Harvard–Yenching exchange that sponsored Zhou's studies at Harvard in the late 1930s, had by then left for Hawaii. Thus the young Zhou Yiliang did not have a patron and was treated poorly, offered only a low position and poor housing. He quickly took up an offer at Tsinghua University in the summer of 1947, for better conditions and to be closer to his teacher, the famous scholar Chen Yinke (1890–1969). Zhou Yiliang experienced the Guomindang police sweep of Beijing universities in summer 1948 that had nearly netted Wu Han, and it disgusted him. But until 1949, Zhou kept his head down and focused on his academic work. In fact, he was in academic correspondence with Hu Shi on historiographical questions. On political issues, Zhou was "middle-of-the-road." The final days of Nationalist rule in Beijing were tense, and food was scarce, but in all the transition to CCP rule was smooth. In September 1949, hearing Mao say "The Chinese people have stood up," Zhou recalled, "We were all very excited."[67]

The new regime brought an end to the insecurity, violence, and turmoil of recent years. The Party quickly extended its cadres into all sectors of society, though it had to work with existing personnel in academies, businesses, and local government. Thus the Party's second order of business was to set about transforming those "residual elites" into members of the new society. Of particular concern to the Party were the educators, particularly high-level intellectuals at the major universities.

[65] Zhou Yiliang, *Just a Scholar: The Memoirs of Zhou Yiliang (1913–2001)*, trans. Joshua A. Fogel (Leiden: Brill, 2014).
[66] Zhou, *Just a Scholar*, p. 56.
[67] Zhou, *Just a Scholar*, p. 62. Zhou misremembers hearing Mao say this "from Tian'anmen Square" at the announcement of the new PRC on October 1, while in fact Mao said these famous words earlier in September at the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and they were published in *People's Daily* on September 22, 1949.

Party-led thought reform of intellectuals in Beijing began almost immediately. Zhou Yiliang joined in enthusiastically. Zhou's thought reform was undertaken in part by joining land-reform activities for professors. In autumn 1950 he joined a team sent to Sichuan for six months to participate in land reform. "Our unit's primary task was to study en route to Sichuan and then to recapitulate the intellectual gains made after land reform was completed." When he returned to Beijing in the spring of 1951, he heard Premier Zhou Enlai's report on the thought reform of intellectuals. "Premier Zhou pointed out that, aside from passing through a number of barriers (such as those of the family), intellectuals would have to transform their stance and thinking through study, which was their basic profession. This was quite inspirational to me."[68]

Zhou Yiliang became a successful member of the PRC's new academic establishment, moving over to Peking University's Department of History. He worked to revise the curriculum to fit the pedagogical model of the Soviet Union's university system. Politics returned in the national criticism campaign denouncing Hu Shi from late 1954. Zhou Yiliang showed little hesitation about joining in, declaring Hu a war criminal, "an accomplice of the Guomindang reactionaries," and "an intellectual comprador representing the interests of the capitalists."[69] In addition, he criticized his old teacher, Chen Yinke. He even condemned John King Fairbank, America's leading China scholar at Harvard, who had lived and worked in China over the past twenty years, as a spy for American imperialism.[70] In 1956 Party authorities in an internal report decided that Zhou Yiliang was among that happy group of Peking University professors who

> were less influenced by the old society, are quick in absorbing new ideas after liberation, and have achieved conspicuous progress in their political thought. They actively study Marxist theory, Soviet experience, and consciously participate in academic and ideological criticism ... They have delivered applications for joining the party and thus can be treated as the recipients of political training.[71]

[68] Zhou, *Just a Scholar*, p. 62.
[69] Zhou Yiliang, "Pipan Hu Shi fandong de lishi guan" (Criticism of Hu Shi's Reactionary View of History), in Zhongguo zuojia xiehui Shanghai fenhui, ed., *Hu Shi sixiang pipan ziliao jikan* (Collection of Criticism of Hu Shi's Thought) (Shanghai: Xin wenyi chubanshe, 1955), p. 201, cited in Wang Ning, "Lying Prostrate before Chairman Mao: Western-Trained Intellectuals and the State in 1950s China," manuscript article, 2013, p. 17.
[70] Wang Ning, "Lying Prostrate," p. 17.
[71] Ministry of Higher Education, "Report on the Thought Reform of the Peking University Professors," January 11, 1956, cited in Wang Ning, "Lying Prostrate," pp. 14–15.

Zhou Yiliang's application to join the CCP was approved in 1956. Zhou was trusted. He was sent to represent the scholarship of New China in Leiden in 1955 and again in Paris in 1956.[72]

Why did Zhou Yiliang, a brilliant scholar and family man, participate in forced political campaigns that required him to denounce teachers, old friends, and, indeed, anyone at whom the Party pointed? Wang Ning makes a sensitive analysis of Zhou's choices, emphasizing two points. First, Zhou's own diary, as well as his public writings, reflect a sincere belief that the CCP's revolution had saved China's working masses from misery. Second, Zhou felt guilt for his privileged, gentry background. In his memoir, Zhou himself recalls that "after the liberation, I developed a deep sense of 'sin'—I came from a family of the exploiting class, and stayed abroad during the national Anti-Japanese War, thus I felt guilty when facing the people." Wang Ning concludes, "Such activism was a natural development of his self-interrogation, his own way to redeem his 'sin,' to prove himself as a 'revolutionary intellectual' with adequate political consciousness."[73]

Zhou Yiliang's life in China's academic establishment reflects the price of intellectual engagement in this ideological moment. Unfortunately, the cost would only go up in the next period, that of revolution. From 1957, political campaigns would became incessant. Even the original plan to learn from the Soviet Union, Zhou recalls, was thrown into chaos and could not be implemented as designed.[74] After 1957, Zhou stopped putting any of his political opinions into his diary, and he rarely disclosed his real feelings even to family members.[75]

In the mid-1950s the CCP made a concerted effort to recruit Chinese scholars and scientists to "serve the motherland." One unlikely recruit was a noted American rocket scientist who had been born in China. Qian Xuesen (1911–2009) returned to China only at the end of this period, in 1955, but his story was shaped by the Cold War from the late 1940s that drove him from his adopted country, the United States, back to the land of his birth. He served loyally and successfully in science, becoming the father of China's ballistic missile and space programs. In the US Qian was known as H.S. Tien, a brilliant rocket scientist at CalTech. He had been born to a teacher's family in 1911, studied in the new schools, and graduated from Shanghai Jiaotong University in 1934, majoring in

[72] Zhou, *Just a Scholar*, p. 70. In all, Zhou was sent on six international trips between 1955 and 1965, the last four being to Pakistan and Africa.

[73] Wang Ning, "Lying Prostrate," p. 18, quoting Zhou's memoir; Fogel provides a slightly different translation in Zhou, *Just a Scholar*, p. 67.

[74] Zhou, *Just a Scholar*, p. 63.

[75] Wang Ning, "Lying Prostrate," p. 21. Zhou Yiliang, *Zhuanshi hun zayi* (Memoirs of the Diamond Wedding) (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushi, xinzhi Sanlian shudian, 2002), p. 120.

mechanical engineering. Like Hu Shi and many others among China's intellectual leaders in the twentieth century, Qian Xuesen received a Boxer Indemnity Scholarship to study in America. In 1935 he went to MIT. After receiving his MA, he took up PhD study at CalTech, where he stayed for the rest of his American career. He served in the war in the US Army and was an adviser on ballistics to the US Air Force after the war. He was having a brilliant career. Back in Shanghai in 1947, he married Jiang Ying, the daughter of Jiang Baili, a senior military theorist for the Nationalists. Qian and his wife settled in America. He applied for US citizenship in 1949.

Qian Xuesen, veteran and scientific adviser to the US military with a high security clearance, provides one of the ironic stories of the Cold War. Having chosen and served America, he was driven out of the country and into the hands of the Chinese Communists by the FBI and other American security services at the height of the McCarthy period.[76] His security clearance was revoked in June 1950. It became clear that he could no longer do his work at CalTech, so he announced he had no choice but to return to China, now under the rule of Mao Zedong and the Communists. Qian was promptly arrested and incarcerated at a US naval facility under suspicion of being a Communist. Over the next five years he was held in custody of one sort or another, including house arrest, and could not work. His American colleagues came to his defense, and CalTech provided him a lawyer. In the end, the best they could get was permission for Qian Xuesen and his family to leave the US.

Chinese authorities welcomed this internationally recognized rocket scientist home with open arms. Qian reciprocated and understandably vented his spleen. Right after returning to China, Qian Xuesen gave an interview announcing, "the persecution the U.S. government committed against me has made me see clearly the fascist color of the U.S. today," and "it is difficult for upright persons to live in the U.S."[77] The rest of Qian's story to 1956 is important for being unremarkable. He did his work. He led the development of China's rocket program and he prospered. Having come home in 1955 both with an international reputation in a strategic scientific field and being willing to make the appropriate declarations of support, Qian Xuesen did not have to go through the thought-reform sessions and public confessions that Zhou Yiliang and other leading intellectuals from the old regime or from abroad endured. These must have been golden years for Qian Xuesen as a respected,

[76] Covered in Iris Chang, *Thread of the Silkworm* (New York: Basic Books, 1996).
[77] *Guangming ribao* (Guangming Daily), November 2, 1955, cited in Wang Ning, "Lying Prostrate," p. 23.

influential researcher with the full support of his government. He joined the CCP in 1958. The price of engagement would come for Qian, as it did for Deng Tuo, Wu Han, and Zhou Yiliang, but in Qian's case, a combination of impeccable political loyalty (including an unflinching willingness to criticize other intellectuals and scientists publicly) and the strategic nature of his contributions to military science kept him from the worst of Mao's revolutions in the decades ahead. We shall see in the next chapter what became of Qian's broader role in science and politics.

In the 1940s, the Democratic League, first established in 1941 and taking on its current name in 1944, offered a real democratic opposition, trying also to get the Nationalists and Communists to negotiate, but plumping for constitutional government along democratic lines. It was a coalition of parties and groups, and noted for the participation of metropolitan intellectuals. We have seen Liang Shuming help set it up, Zhang Junmai (Carson Chang) take a lead, and Wu Han become active in it and lead its Beijing section after 1949. Zhou Yiliang had joined in 1952. The league was outlawed by the Nationalists in 1947, though its members (like Wu Han) continued out of public light. In 1949 the leadership of the league went over to full support of the CCP and took on the role of one of China's "satellite parties" supporting CCP rule under the auspices of the Party's United Front Work Department.[78] As such, the league and related small parties offered a way for China's intellectuals to participate in political life outside the cadre role in either the Nationalist or Communist parties. The league carried the hopes of liberalism in China. Its subordination to the CCP reflects the failure of liberalism to take root as a political movement in China.

Many reasons have been given for this inability of liberalism to maintain a role in China's public arena—from cultural norms that find pandering to voters' interests distasteful for self-respecting leaders, to an authoritarian political culture, to a lack of a sufficient civil society to support democratic politics—but two stand out in our story. The first is the unwillingness of many intellectuals to get involved in formal political organization. There were good reasons for this—as we saw in the case of the provincial scholar-official turned businessman Ye Chongzhi in Tianjin in 1911. Political service in these years was mortally dangerous work. Second, the two Bolshevik parties exercised unrestrained brutality in suppressing any competition, failing only to annihilate each other. China

[78] See Roger B. Jeans, ed., *Roads Not Taken: The Struggle of Opposition Parties in Twentieth-Century China* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992); and James Seymour, *China's Satellite Parties* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1987).

was a revolutionary society for more reasons than simply the presence of revolutionary theorists and agitators. China was not immune to global forces that Hobsbawm describes as the age of extremes. The collapse of the imperial order of the Qing, the cultural challenge of Western science and democracy, the huge population relative to the machinery of government in the first half of the twentieth century, and decades of total war militated against the social trust, intellectual confidence, and public order needed to support effective liberal democracy. In the end, it was the Chinese Communist Party that could restore order, instill confidence, and in the early 1950s encourage at least predictable social expectations, if not actual trust. But the price was an authoritarian administration with an intrusive messianic ideology that demanded not only compliance but active endorsement.

Liberal, leftist, or apolitical, the great bulk of China's intellectuals—as is the case in other societies—were neither famous nor influential. The new society enforced by the CCP from 1949 gave ordinary intellectuals a new social role. The upside was to be loyal teachers of the nation, following the lead and content of Party propaganda, but the downside was to play the negative example for the rest of the population of what not to be. The CCP was ambivalent about intellectuals. Party leaders, mostly intellectuals themselves, were quick to define themselves as *revolutionary intellectuals* to distance themselves from the capitalist social base of most modern intellectuals. Eddy U has opened the research of ordinary intellectuals in the Mao period through archival work on Shanghai's high-school teachers. He makes the case for the "reification of intellectuals"; that is, the creation and hardening of a social role for educated people as a problematic social category reflecting those long-term anxieties in the Party. Their position as *zhishifenzi*, the term that came into use in the 1920s to describe modern thinkers, writers, and academics, became a registered social status confirmed by the state on their identity cards. He traces the formation of this social status through precisely the thought-reform movements of the early 1950s that Zhou Yiliang and other prominent intellectuals went through. Eddy U's point is a good one: not only was a certain political attitude (loyalty to the Party) affirmed, but also the identity, as well as the status, of intellectuals as important but requiring Party supervision was created.[79] While this new social identity

[79] Eddy U, "The Making of *Zhishifenzi*: The Critical Impact of the Registration of Unemployed Intellectuals in the Early PRC," *China Quarterly*, No. 173 (2003), pp. 100–21; and Eddy U, "The Making of Chinese Intellectuals: Representations and Organization in the Thought Reform Campaign," *China Quarterly*, No. 192 (2007), pp. 971–89.

offered a role for intellectuals in Mao's China, it left them vulnerable to attack as carriers of feudal habits, reactionary ideas, or, worse, counter-revolutionary aspirations. Already severely disciplined in the early 1950s, intellectuals would come under wholesale attack in Mao's revolutions.

Enduring ideas in the 1940s

The **people** by 1945 were firmly the *renmin*, invoking the popular masses, but including elites. The people were more often conceived in Nationalist writings as citizens (*gongmin*, public people, or *guomin*, people of the nation). Whether in Sunism or Communist ideology (and, by the 1940s, Maoism), or in liberalism, the people were seen as the source of political legitimacy. Claims to Heaven (*tianming*) or dynastic heritage were a thing of the past. The people were collectively the Chinese nation (*minzu*). However, the people were also seen as the object of necessary acts of cultural and political improvement before they could properly exercise their political identity, and so in the meantime revolutionaries and liberals, almost entirely made up of intellectuals, took it upon themselves to improve the people. Sunism under Chiang Kai-shek continued its policy of "political tutelage" and attempted, with little success, to educate the people in the New Life Movement started in the mid-1930s. The liberals endeavored to educate the people in how to be modern, scientific, and Chinese, from Liang Shuming's and James Yen's continuing efforts at rural uplift to Hu Shi's and Wu Han's efforts to raise the cultural level of students. For the Communists, the people were defined by Marxist categories, or more broadly as the oppressed versus the oppressors. Proletarian was the prized category of "the people," though peasants and progressive intellectuals and merchants could be their assistants. All, of course, came under the "leadership" of the voice of the proletariat, the CCP. Finally, "the people" continued to be thought of and talked about in these years as a community rather than as individuals. Both party-states focused more on *society* than on individuals in their efforts to manage their rejuvenation of China. The only exception was some liberals, like Hu Shi, who focused on the role of the individual in science, as well as in politics.

Chinese identity in these years was primarily tied to nationalism and defined as "not foreign" and especially not Western. The Nationalists embraced Sun Yat-sen's five-ethnicity model of *Zhonghua* (Han, Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan, and Muslim or Hui). Still, the presumption of assimilation toward Han cultural norms that we saw from the first

articulations of *Zhonghua* by Zhang Binglin in 1907 endured. For the CCP, Chinese increasingly became a political identity, though it carried on in unarticulated form the assumptions of the Five Nationalities Unity and Han superiority of Sunism. Two versions of Chinese identity came to the fore. One was essentially urban and modern (claiming Chinese as already modern or as working hard to modernize Chinese culture and citizens with selective imports of science and hygienic habits). The other China was defined as rural and pure.[80] The second was embraced particularly by Liang Shuming and Mao Zedong, an unlikely affinity between a non-Party Confucian liberal and China's leading Marxist–Leninist. These two images of China and Chinese as refined, educated, and urban on the one hand, and as unpretentious, pure, and practical on the other, have endured down to today. For some, as in the case of Deng Tuo, the two images were compatible; for others, like Wang Shiwei, they were not.

Democracy (*minzhu*) was not the sole possession of liberals during these years. Liberals like Hu Shi, Zou Taofen, and Luo Longji held out for parliamentary democracy and rule of law, but they were unable to find ways to convince the Nationalists or Communists to share power, nor were they inclined or able to fight them. Writing for concerned Americans in the 1940s, the China journalist Theodore White despondently concluded that if these liberals "were well organized, they could guarantee peace. But they are not. They lack an army, a political machine, roots in any social class. Only the spread of education and industry can create enough men of the modern world to give them a broad social base."[81] This was the same hope Hu Shi had raised for his education-based version of "revolution" in 1929. Two decades of near constant warfare had stymied those efforts. The Nationalists maintained that political tutelage was as democratic as one could have it until the people were more educated in political life. Thus they embraced democracy as a long-term goal. The Communists moved from Mao's "New Democracy" (a United Front of equal parties, albeit under the "leadership" of the CCP) in 1940 to the "Democratic Dictatorship" of Mao's famous essay of August 1949 on the eve of victory: a much less capacious United Front in which the proletariat (i.e. the Party) offered the democracy of participation to "the people" but exercised dictatorship over their enemies—defined as oppressors of various

[80] Another version of this divide is evocatively captured at mid-century by a sensitive foreign observer, Graham Peck, *Two Kinds of Time* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950).

[81] Theodore H. White and Annalee Jacoby, *Thunder Out of China* (New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1946), p. 313. Also Jeans, *Roads Not Taken*.

sorts, but particularly landlords, capitalists, and leading officials of the Nationalist government. Everyone talked about democracy; it had become a generally accepted value. But our three major actors—the Nationalists, the liberal intellectuals, and the Communists—had significantly different ideas of democracy: political tutelage, democracy now for the educated, and democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and their Party.