# Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power

THE EMERGENCE OF REVOLUTIONARY CHINA
1937–1945

Chalmers A. Johnson

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# ONE

## Peasant Nationalism in China

The Communist government of China was formally proclaimed on October 1, 1949, and it is this date that is celebrated today as the national anniversary of its accession to power. However, to regard 1949 as the beginning of Communist government in China obscures the fact that the Communist Party actually ruled a large part of China for at least ten years before that time. Following the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, the Communist Party enlarged the territory under its control to a degree previously unimagined even by the Communist leaders themselves. This enlargement took the form of "guerrilla bases," which were established in rural areas behind the Japanese lines. Before Japan's capitulation in 1945, one-fifth of the population of China was living in these guerrilla bases and following the leadership of the Communist Party. Thus, it is from the early stages of the Sino-Japanese War that we should date the Chinese Communists' true rise to power.

The Communists' success during the war was in marked contrast to their experiences in the decade preceding the war, when they first undertook seriously to organize the peasantry. Although the Communists were in effective control of various small enclaves in the Chinese countryside from 1927 on, their painful efforts during that period to set up rural "soviets" were incomparably less successful than their activities during the blackest period of the Sino-Japanese War. The Party's prewar failure was not the result of a lack of effort. From the first Communist-led jacqueries in 1927 until the beginning of the Long March in 1934, the Communists utilized every available economic, ideological, and military tool to establish a durable political order in the territories defended by their army. In 1938, however, using essentially the same organizational techniques they had used in the past, the Chinese Communists were successful in rural

China as they had never been before. An understanding of the factors that brought about this development is crucial to an assessment of Chinese politics today and to an appreciation of what a "Communist" China means in the twentieth century.

## PEASANT MOBILIZATION

The critical difference between the two periods was that the Communist Party failed to obtain mass support in the Kiangsi period, but did achieve such a following during the Resistance War.[1] Prior to 1937, although the peasantry collaborated half-heartedly with the Communists (the Communists purchased peasant support of the Red Army with their anti-landlord economic policy), the relationship established between the two was contingent upon Communist military successes and the failure of other contenders to make the peasants a better offer. As we know, the Communists were not successful militarily in the Kiangsi period, and the Kuomintang did make the peasantry at least an equally good offer.[2]

However, after the outbreak of the war the situation changed; it became much more fluid, much more dynamic. The politically illiterate masses of China were awakened by the Japanese invasion and its aftermath; wartime conditions made them receptive to a new kind of political appeal—namely, the defense of the fatherland. The war presented the peasantry with a challenge to its security of such immediacy that the peasants could not ignore it. Prewar pressures on the peasantry—such as economic exploitation, Communist ideology, warlord wars, and natural calamities—had never been sufficiently widespread or sufficiently intense to give rise to a peasant-based mass movement. But after July 7, 1937, the peasants spontaneously created resistance organizations in many areas of China; and they felt a heightened sensitivity to proposals for defensive organization throughout the entire occupied area. There were several specific influences that promoted this new activity among the peasants.

First, as the armies of the Central Government retreated from north China and the lower Yangtze Valley after the Japanese invasion, and as the majority of the officials and other agents of the existing establishment retreated with them, anarchy settled on the Chinese villages. The U.S. War Department has described the situation in the occupied areas as follows:

> While the Japanese set up a Chinese puppet administration, and through this and their army authorities maintained a measure of order in their occupied zones in North China, the rural areas around these zones fell prey to ravaging hordes of Japanese soldiers engaged in grain confiscations and "mopping up" operations against Communists and remnants of Chinese provincial forces, roving units of disorganized Chinese soldiers who had turned bandits, and bandit groups formed out of peasants who had collected arms on various battlefields.[3]



The rural villages responded to this situation by establishing self-defense forces and, in some cases, guerrilla corps. In their efforts at defensive organization, the villagers welcomed whatever capable military and political leadership they could find—Communist, Nationalist, Sacrifice League (Shansi), secret society, KMT Army remnants, or purely local leaders. Hundreds of new, anti-Japanese popular governments were set up behind the Japanese lines at the basic level of Chinese local government—the hsien, or county.[4] These rear-area governments, led by local men or Partisans of battle-proved integrity, filled the vacuum left by the retreat of the former authorities. Such governments provided for self-defense, education, agricultural cooperation, support for full-time guerrillas, and other needs of the villages; most important, they served as instruments for helping the rural masses attain a political understanding of the war to serve as a gloss on their personal experience. While mining a road, or guarding a village, or attending a meeting of one of the mass associations (some of the many activities sponsored by the guerrilla governments), the rural "common man" learned that his peril was also China's peril.

Many of these governments were, of course, sponsored by or under the influence of the Communist Party; but, as William G. Carleton has put it, "Under Communism, the mass of Asiatics in some countries may come into close contact with their governments for the first time in their history; and this contact, because of the many functions exercised by Communist governments, will be far more intimate than the contacts of the mass of Europeans with their national governments in the days when European nationalism was emerging."[5] These wartime governments were not democratic (there was virtually no opposition), but the masses did participate on an enormous scale in "governmental" activities via the so-called "mass movement" (*min-chung yün-tung*). The feeling of belonging and of having a stake in government that grew up in this period was entirely novel to the Chinese masses; and it brought with it an exhilarating sense of self-determination. At the same time, villages in which the population decided to cooperate with the Japanese generally suffered for their decision, and this also had its educative effect. Thus, the very setting of the war proved favorable to Communist propaganda.

A second factor that influenced the peasants after 1937 was the propaganda and educational effort launched by the Communist Party. This propaganda was remarkably free of a "Communist" quality; it stressed *chiu-kuo,* or national salvation. The Communists had, of course, used patriotic and anti-Japanese appeals in their propaganda since the Manchurian Incident (1931). What was actually new in the propaganda field after 1937 was that the Japanese Army had created a huge ready-made audience for Communist propaganda as a result of its conduct of the invasion. The Communists themselves took no chances on repeating their failure to unite the masses in the Kiangsi Soviet; they eschewed their old slogans of class warfare and violent redistribution of property in their post-1937 propaganda and concentrated solely on national salvation. As one example of the wartime orientation of this propaganda, here is part of a leaflet prepared by the CCP-dominated Shansi Sacrifice League and captured by the Japanese Army in Chiehhsiu hsien, Shansi, in September 1938.[6] It reads:

> Exterminate the Traitor Peace Preservation Committees! Comrades! Japan has invaded our Shansi, killed large numbers of our people, burned thousands of our houses, raped our women in countless numbers, robbed us of our food and wealth, trampled on the graves of our ancestors, forced our wives and children to flee, destroyed our famous places, . . . and made the joy of peace impossible. . . . Everybody! Rise up and join a guerrilla self-defense unit! Exterminate the Peace Maintenance Committee which sells out the nation! Defend our anti-Japanese patriotic people's government! Assist the all-out resistance of Commander Yen [Hsi-shan]! Act in unison with Army and people to overthrow Japanese imperialism![7]

This is merely one sample of the propaganda—itself only one tool of the total Communist effort—employed by the Party behind the lines to help the peasantry help themselves, and also to obtain from them assistance for the Communist Army in its efforts to hamper the invasion. These activities promoted mobilization in the countryside and, at the same time, fed upon the spontaneous peasant unrest. Nationalistic propaganda from Communist sources fell on fertile ground, where it both furthered the mobilization of the masses and helped determine the form this mobilization took.

Still another component in the complex of forces that assaulted the Chinese peasant after 1937 was the policy of Japanese reprisals. Because the Japanese Army was suffering from Communist military pressure and from a situation in which it could not distinguish a guerrilla from a villager, the Japanese and puppet forces took ruthless action against the



rural population, action that resulted in the depopulation of several areas.[8] The effect of this policy—as in Yugoslavia under similar circumstances—was to arouse even the most parochial of village dwellers to the fact that politics could no longer be ignored. The "mop-ups" (Chinese *sao-tang;* Japanese *sōtō*) tended to confirm the charges made against the Japanese by the Communists, notably that there was no way of accommodating to Japanese rule short of slavery. Peasants who survived the mopping-up campaigns were forced to conclude that their only hope lay in resistance, and the Communists were widely regarded as the most competent organizers of resistance. The question of whether or not Communist activity provoked Japanese reprisals will be considered in a later chapter; the point to be stressed here is that the peasants of the occupied areas faced the continuous threat of military attack from the Japanese Army throughout the eight years of the Sino-Japanese War. The dislocations produced by the invasion itself were relatively minor compared with the destruction caused by the mopping-up campaigns, for example those of 1941 and 1942 in Hopei and Shansi provinces.

All these forces—the evacuation, the establishment of *ad hoc* governments, Communist propaganda, and Japanese reprisals (plus other influences, such as the policies of the puppets and the incipient KMT-CCP civil war, which we shall discuss subsequently)—broke the hold of parochialism on the Chinese peasant. Before the Japanese invasion the Chinese peasantry was indifferent to "Chinese" politics, being wholly absorbed in local affairs. The war totally destroyed the traditional rural social order and sensitized the Chinese peasantry to a new spectrum of possible associations, identities, and purposes. Foremost among the new political concepts were those of "China" and "Chinese nationality" (as distinct from one's normal identity as a mere resident of the warlord satrapy of, for example, Han Fu-ch'ü). During the war, the peasants began to hear and use such terms as *Han-chien* (Chinese traitor), *wei-chün* (bogus army, i.e., the puppet forces), *wan-chün* (reactionary army, i.e., the KMT forces as seen by Yenan), and *Jih-k'ou* (Japanese bandits). The intrusion of these terms into the peasants' vocabulary signified the spread of a force that hitherto was prevalent only among the intelligentsia and city-bred people —namely, nationalism.[9]

Like all illiterate populations in such circumstances, the Chinese masses themselves—the peasants[10]—have left no record of the transformation wrought in their lives and thoughts when they were assaulted from the east by the Japanese and invaded from the west and north by the Commu-

nists. This study attempts to reveal the nature of that transformation as it is unwittingly disclosed in the archives of the Japanese government. Later on in this chapter I offer an abstract explanation, in terms of a theory of nationalism, of what the Chinese peasants experienced during the war; and in succeeding chapters I shall detail the actual experiences that support such a theory. Before we proceed to these subjects, however, it is necessary to discuss the Communist victory, which was one of the products of the transformation of the peasant masses.

## THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

If one were to make a diagram of the fortunes of the Communist Party of China in terms of its popular following, the result would be an undulating line. Starting with the Party's foundation in 1921, a slowly ascending curve rises to 1927; then, with the Nationalist-Communist split and the Kuomintang's purge of the Communists, the line descends precipitously. Next comes the ascent from approximately 1929 to 1934, representing the growth of the Kiangsi Soviet, followed by the sharp dive when the victorious Kuomintang armies drove the Communists from south China. Starting after the period of the Long March, the line begins again from the bottom of the graph, ascends slowly to the peak of 1940, dips sharply in 1941 and 1942 (recording the effect of the Japanese mopping-up campaigns) and then rises from an already fairly high level up and off the top of the page. In the first hump, the Party made a strong economic appeal to the urban workers and shared with the Kuomintang the leadership of the early anti-imperialist, anti-Japanese nationalist movement among the intellectual and urban classes. In the second period, the Party sought to profit from the endemic land hunger of the Chinese tenants and farm laborers and promised them a radical redistribution of farmlands. In the third period, the Party joined its experienced guerrilla cadres with the violently uprooted peasants of the Japanese-occupied areas in tactical alliances against the invader and his puppets. This last period was the one in which the Chinese Communist Party won the Chinese masses to its cause.

Again, we might view this 25-year history in terms of a metaphor from the laboratory. If we think of the Chinese population as a culture plate and of the Communist Party as a colony of viruses growing on its surface, we may suggest various ways in which the Party and the population influenced each other. In the periods before the Japanese invasion, the culture nourished the Communist virus scarcely at all and only sustained the life of other viruses in specific and atypical patches. The Party attempted to adapt itself to its environment and in the process displayed the entire spectrum of Leninist and Comintern disguises, in addition to a few that it created itself. However, it failed and was in its worst straits just prior to the Japanese invasion. After the invasion of 1937, large patches of the culture plate that had previously inhibited political growths of any variety became highly receptive to a particular kind: one that was anti-Japanese, possessed organizational and military abilities, and recognized that a change had occurred in the culture. In other words, from 1921 to 1937 Communism failed in China because the Chinese people, in general, were indifferent to what the Communist Party had to offer. After 1937, it succeeded because the population became receptive to one particular kind of political appeal; and the Communist Party—in one of its many disguises—made precisely that appeal: it offered to meet the needs of the people for leadership in organizing resistance to the invader and in alleviating war-induced anarchy in the rural areas.



A similar process brought the Yugoslav Communist Party to power at the end of World War II, and a study of the better documented and more realistically observed Yugoslav revolution accordingly offers us useful comparative insights into the dynamics of the Chinese revolution. (The Yugoslav comparison is taken up in detail in Chapter Six; for the present we are interested only in the general similarities.) There were two forms of Communist territorial expansion in the 1940's. The first was by means of the Soviet Red Army (Czechoslovakia, although not invaded, was included in the sphere of influence created by the Red Army); the second was by means of Communist-led, rural-recruited partisan armies united under the banners of defense of the fatherland and anti-fascism.

There are only two cases in which the second method was employed successfully: China and Yugoslavia. The rise to power of the YCP was remarkably similar to that of the Chinese Communist Party. The Yugoslav Party enjoyed only a limited base of popular support in the 1920's and 1930's, and this situation became reversed during World War II. Forces similar to those in China operated to bring about a situation favorable to the Yugoslav Communists. The German invaders carried out unenlightened occupation policies. The war offered an opportunity for the Communist Party to discredit the "legal" wartime government of Drazha

Mihailović, first by gaining access to the realm of nationalist sentiment in which the Chetniks had claimed a monopoly, then by emasculating the Chetniks' remnant claims to the mantle of nationalism, and finally by denouncing them as traitors. And, above all, the political role of the peasantry was drastically increased—a result of the dislocations produced by invasion and of Communist engineering. As in China, the Yugoslav Partisans participated in the resistance movement as defenders of Yugoslav national integrity and set aside, for the duration of the war, elements of Marxist dogma that would have conflicted with the interests of the mass movement. As one of the leading non-Communist analysts of the Yugoslav revolution has observed:

> The Yugoslav Communists appealed to the peasants with slogans that were not economic but purely patriotic. The peasants had no idea what would happen to them in the event of a Communist victory. For example, in the locality of Srem [the region between the Danube and the Sava in Serbia], one of the most fertile regions, they fought valiantly in the ranks of the Partisans without ever reflecting that the next day their property might be redistributed or collectivized by Tito.[11]

Thus Communism and nationalism were fused in wartime China and Yugoslavia as a result of the identification of the CCP and YCP, respectively, with the resistance movements of the two countries—movements that the Communist parties themselves were not primarily responsible for setting into motion. The result of this fusion was the creation of Communist nation-states that were not subordinate to the Soviet Union, specifically because the traditional party allegiance to Moscow counted for less than the national unity created between the agricultural masses and the Party by their close cooperation in wartime. Milovan Djilas stresses the difference between the Yugoslav-Chinese experience and the cases of the Soviet satellites in his discussion of national Communism:

> The differences between Communist countries will, as a rule, be as great as the extent to which the Communists were independent in coming to power. Concretely speaking, only the Communists of three countries—the Soviet Union, China, and Yugoslavia—independently carried out revolutions or, in their own way and at their own speed, attained power and began "the building of socialism." These three countries remained independent Communist states even in the period when Yugoslavia was—as China is today—under the most extreme influence of the Soviet Union; that is, in "brotherly love" and in "eternal friendship" with it. In a report at a closed session of the Twentieth Congress, Khrushchev revealed that a clash between Stalin and the Chinese government had barely been averted. The case of the clash with Yugoslavia was not an isolated case, but only the most drastic and the first to occur. In other Communist countries the Soviet government enforced Communism by "armed missionaries"—its army.[12]



The fact that wartime alliances between uprooted peasants and the pre-existing Communist parties of China and Yugoslavia brought the second and third independent Communist governments into being presents many different problems of analysis. Our primary concern in this study is with the origin of the alliances themselves and particularly with the peasants' side in these alliances. To place such concerns in their correct context, however, it is first necessary to consider what this particular mode of political success meant to the Communist movement, and to discuss certain aspects of postwar Communist government that cause many people in the West to doubt that the Chinese or Yugoslav governments could possess a popular basis of support. Among the various problems that require mention are those of the "Leninist party," Comintern direction, and the United Front. We might call the first problem that of "totalitarianism and legitimacy."

In both China and Yugoslavia, Communist governments came to power after the collapse of the Axis governments and proceeded to implement a broad program of national reconstruction. Although this was undertaken in the name of Communist ideology and the historical mission of the Communist parties as the vanguard of the working class, both parties' popular basis of support in fact derived from peasant armies whose chief and almost sole concern had been successful resistance against fascist invaders. Did the peasants, therefore, regard their postwar governments as a betrayal of the wartime alliances with the Communists? There is every indication that they did not. Although it is true that the Communist parties eschewed Marxist-Leninist dogmatism in their efforts at wartime mass organization, they nevertheless transmitted their ultimate objectives and their world view to the population by means of propaganda and education, particularly in the later periods of the war, when victory was in sight. This ideology was, in turn, given legitimacy by the fact that the Communist parties were proving their ability to lead and govern during the resistance. The peasants thus did not question the nature of their postwar governments, because the Communist parties had achieved not only power but also authority.

A relation between ruler and subject based solely on power implies nothing more than the possession of superior coercive instruments in the hands of the ruler, regardless of the attitudes of the ruled. A relation based on authority is another matter: here a dialogue of mutual interest exists between ruler and subject. Superior means of coercion may still be present (in fact, such means are part of the definition of a "state"); but a government possessing authority can execute its policies without an overt show of force because the citizens feel that it is to their advantage to follow governmental directives, and because they feel that the government itself was legitimately placed in its position of command. On authority in general, Max Weber has written: "The motives of obedience to commands . . . can rest on considerations varying over a wide range from case to case; all the way from a simple habituation to the most purely rational calculation of advantage. A criterion of every true relation of imperative control, however, is a certain minimum of voluntary submission; thus an interest (based on ulterior motives or genuine acceptance) in obedience."[13]

What were the interests of the Chinese masses at the time that they accepted the leadership of the Chinese Communists? Their interests lay with plans and abilities that offered a means to cope with conditions of mass destruction and anarchy. The Chinese Communists had such plans, had veteran guerrilla cadres to put them into effect, and possessed the imagination to offer their leadership to the peasants. By 1945, the peasants of north and central China had experienced at least six years of life and work in the Communist-led anti-Japanese guerrilla bases. With the victory, for which the Communists logically took credit, the interest of the masses in continuing Communist leadership was further strengthened. The Communists had proved their abilities through years of difficult war; far from questioning the value of the Communists' newly unfurled ideology, the peasant felt that his own experience during the war indicated a need for him to learn the new ideas which promised so much and which, viewed retrospectively, had already succeeded in defeating the Japanese Army.[14]

The distinction here is between the usurpation of power and the achievement of a position in which power is exercised in pursuit of goals shared by the entire community. War provided the means by which the Communist Party re-entered Chinese political life; its war record made its Communist ideology legitimate (although the ideology itself may have been altered in major respects in the process—a subject to which we shall return later). In what sense "legitimate"? In the sense that the Chinese



Communist Party came to power on the basis of a loyal constituency of about 100,000,000 peasants *during* the war, and that this constituency was still further expanded as a result of Japan's capitulation and the Communists' successful discrediting on nationalist grounds of the semi-exiled government of Chiang Kai-shek during and after the war. (Many peasants of north China were scarcely aware of the Chungking government's existence during the war; or they confused it with the Nanking puppets, who also called themselves the "Kuomintang.")

All this is not to ignore that the Chinese Communist government is totalitarian—i.e., that it is committed to the wholesale reorganization of society under conscious direction from above, and that it has enlisted all the institutions of the society (particularly the state) in the service of this single aim. Moreover, as we shall see, even during the war the Chinese Communist Party showed its Leninist virtuosity in organizing mass associations for ensuring total involvement of the peasants in the war effort and for isolating dissenters. The point, however, is that the Chinese masses—at least during the war and at the beginning of the regime—placed themselves at the disposal of the Communist Party to be used for nationalistic purposes. The travesties of individual human dignity perpetrated by totalitarianism were accepted during the war and in the first years of the regime (no one can speak authoritatively of contemporary internal conditions) as the necessary labor pains of China's renaissance. It was not totalitarian instruments of mass manipulation that originally led the Chinese masses into their pact with the Communist elite; it was, rather, the effects of the war and the national awakening that the war induced. Regardless of how well a Communist party masters Leninist theory, it is destined to remain a minor party without a mass following unless at some point it brings its interests into correspondence with those of the people (even if it subsequently reorients the interests of those people). Communist "organizational weapons" are important, but they scarcely account for the entire dynamic of a Communist society, or for that matter any other totalitarian society.

Totalitarianism is not incompatible with legitimacy, or nationalism, or the self-appraised interests of the masses; in fact, totalitarianism usually seems to depend upon the existence of these factors. As George Lichtheim has observed, "Since it is of the essence of a totalitarian regime to be dynamic, it cannot function in an atmosphere of public indifference."[15] We run the danger in contemporary Western studies of Chinese Communism

of elevating "organization"—the party structure, communes, the cult of Mao, brainwashing, and so forth—to the level of a sociological secret weapon and, as a result, of accepting the "manipulation hypothesis" as a satisfactory explanation for the entire Chinese Communist work ethic. The present study is not concerned with the policies of the Communist government in power; but as for the *origin* of Communist power, this was simply the mutual interest of the Party and the masses in fighting the Japanese, and this interest developed in a normal fashion to the point at which the Party's directives were obeyed as those of a legitimate authority.

There are those, of course, who believe that the Communist rise to power in China can be explained without reference to the peasantry. Such persons pay little attention to the problems of the mass basis of Communist power and focus directly on Moscow's leadership of the international Communist movement. According to this view, if one possesses a knowledge of the "classical" Comintern-directed (i.e., Moscow-directed) Communist revolution, the formulas for which have been given wide publicity, the idea that indigenous forces could bear any responsibility for the revolution becomes absurd. As Jules Monnerot has described it, "What is happening . . . can be compared to what the situation would have been in the Roman world of the third century if there had been *international* and *preconcerted* synchronization between the Christian refusal of obedience and the successive thrusts of barbarian invasion; in other words, if a *single general staff,* devoted to the ruin of the ancient world, had had command of both the Christian church and the barbarians."[16] Clearly, the emphasis here is upon a "general staff" that plans the entire operation. To extend the analogy, the Chinese peasantry, which supported the Communist armies with men and provisions but denied them to the Nationalists, would be the Christian subversives in the grip of a foreign religion, while the Soviet's Far East General Army under Marshal A. M. Vassilievsky, which invaded Manchuria on August 9, 1945, becomes the barbarian horde. The general staff, needless to say, is the Comintern and its successors.

One of the difficulties of this theory is in proving that communications existed between the two control centers, Moscow and Yenan.[17] It may be argued, of course, that whether contacts existed or not the Chinese Communist leaders were still Communists. Although the success of the Communist Party may have been based upon an alliance with a nationalistically aroused peasantry, this does not—in and of itself—make the Communist Party any less Communist. Article I of the Party statutes of 1928 states



that, "The Chinese Communist Party is a part of the Communist International"—that is, subject to Moscow—and the Party did not repudiate this tie during the period under study. It may also be advanced that the essence of Leninist theory and of Maoist practice is the use of professional revolutionaries to capitalize on mass discontent, regardless of its origin. Thus, one may ask, what difference does it make whether or not the Communists manipulated the symbols of nationalism or of any other sufficiently widespread ideology, so long as they were successful? They were and still are Bolsheviks.

The major feature of the Sino-Japanese War which supports the contention that the Communist Party acted as a Soviet tool was the creation of the KMT-CCP "United Front" against Japan. As is well known, the United Front tactic was ordered at the Comintern Congress in 1935 and was successfully implemented in China following the Sian Incident.[18] But one can scarcely regard the United Front as the vehicle by which the Communists came to power. In the first place, the United Front between the KMT and CCP was clearly a sham after the establishment of the blockade against Shen-Kan-Ning in 1939, and ceased to exist after the New Fourth Army Incident of January 1941. Despite this, Communist forces continued to expand their territories and popular following. Moreover, this expansion was not into areas in which the United Front had been strongest, such as the Hankow area, or into areas in which the façade of the United Front was still maintained (it is doubtful whether the publication of the Communist *Hsin-Hua jih-pao* in wartime Chungking can be credited with converting anyone to the Communist side, except possibly some Western journalists). The expansion was, instead, into areas that the Japanese armies had overrun.

In the second place, use of the United Front tactic in China had developed prior to and independent of the Seventh Comintern Congress; in the pre-1937 period it was predominantly an anti-KMT device used in the cities.[19] Party propaganda of that period was not an actual call to the colors for war with Japan, but a way of developing popular pressure on Chiang to call off his Communist-suppression campaigns. Least of all was the United Front used to legitimatize the Communist Party in the eyes of the peasantry—the only group whose support was of lasting importance to the Communists.

In actual fact, the United Front was irrelevant to the peasantry. The so-called "three-thirds" system—the practice whereby the Communists

occupied no more than one-third of the posts in the guerrilla area governments—was not a "United Front" in any functional sense, i.e., in the sense of its being necessary for peasant support. Unity between the peasants and the Party was not based upon the three-thirds system, because the peasants actually supported the Communists through the mass organizations and the army.[20] The three-thirds system was a device for incorporating local non-Communist leaders, landlords, rich peasants, and other well-known people into the regional governments; it was similar to the system of "democratic parties" adopted in post-1949 Communist China.

The only concrete benefit obtained by the Communist Party as a result of its implementing the Moscow line on the United Front was that it permitted the recruitment, for a short period of time, of comparatively large numbers of students from urban areas. These students, after completing the course at Yenan's Anti-Japanese Military-Political University (K'ang-jih Chün-cheng Ta-hsüeh, abbreviated K'angta), generally served in the Communist forces as lower-level political officers. The existence of the United Front thus gave one important advantage to the Communists. However, other features of the United Front that the Communists viewed as desirable prior to 1937, such as the calling off of Nationalist attacks on Communist areas, all evaporated with the advance of the Japanese armies.

In short, we must conclude that the United Front was not the basis upon which the Communist Party built its strength in China. It did not prevent continual armed clashes between KMT and CCP troops; it did not facilitate the large-scale supply of arms by the Western Allies to the Communists; and it did not allow the Communists to subvert the legitimate government from within (as in Spain). Most important, it did not promote acceptance of Communist Party leadership in the north China guerrilla bases (north China was a traditionally conservative area where even the KMT was almost unknown); yet it was in the guerrilla bases of north China that the Communist Party came to power.

### THE ECONOMICS OF THE COMMUNIST-PEASANT ALLIANCE

Among the many scholars who have recognized that the ranks of the victorious Communist armies were filled with peasants, there exists a great deal of confusion about the nature of the Communist-peasant partnership. Much of this confusion derives from the view that Communism should be understood solely or chiefly as an economic doctrine and that the peasant-based Communist revolutions should be regarded as a rural analogue of the Marxist proletarian revolution. This view has promoted two different kinds of erroneous interpretations. On the one hand, some writers see the impoverishment of the Chinese peasantry as the primary motivating force that drove them into alliance with the Communists, who are, in turn, regarded as agrarian reformers. On the other hand, those who regard the twentieth-century Communist movement as an elitist conspiracy primed to capitalize upon any crisis or fissure in the society that it hopes to capture are at pains to expose how little Communist parties promote the class interests of their followers. Although the latter theorists object, correctly, to regarding the Chinese Communist revolution as a "peasant rebellion," they ignore the possibility that the peasants had other motives than the economic interests of their class; and they insist that the Communists won over the peasantry by manipulation and fraud.



This failure to consider the basis of the wartime Communist-peasant alliances reflects the general lack of attention paid to the wartime resistance movements (by which the Communists of China and of Yugoslavia actually came to power) and the lack of inquiry into the origins of the nationalistic policies pursued by the Communist governments that achieved power independently of the Soviet Union. As examples of these policies, one need mention only the Soviet-Yugoslav dispute beginning in 1948 and the Sino-Soviet controversy of the early 1960's. We shall return in a later chapter to the problems of "national Communism"; for the present we must deal at greater length with the question of economic determinants in the Communist-peasant wartime alliances.

"Pure" peasant rebellions, in the sense of sporadic outbursts against local misery, are commonly met with in the histories of agricultural societies. Rarely, however, have they had any significant political effects. Thus, when the interpreters of the rise of Communism in China refer to the Communist revolution as a "peasant rebellion," they do not mean by that term merely a spontaneous demonstration or a local rebellion. The reference in the following remarks by Professor Mary Wright is not to a small-scale effort or to a movement lacking purpose or direction. She observes:

> The Chinese Revolution of which the Communists have secured leadership was and is a peasant revolution. . . . There [in the countryside prior to 1930] Mao Tse-tung's group survived because it found the key to peasant support and control, land reform and a host of subordinate policies designed to mobilize the peasantry, improve agrarian production,

and secure its fruits. . . . Communists do not have to fabricate figures to prove the poverty of the Chinese peasant. In actual fact, conditions are intolerable, and peasant revolt has long been endemic.[21]

The inspiration for these remarks comes predominantly from a knowledge of Chinese social history. Large-scale peasant rebellion in response to intolerable conditions of land tenure, food shortage, natural calamities, excessive taxation, usurious moneylending, and general misery in the villages has long been identified as the crucial event in the spectacular upheavals associated with changes of regime in China. The most recent of these disturbances occurred slightly more than a century ago, when the Taiping Rebellion erupted across south China as a reaction to population pressure and to the great famines of 1847 and 1849. That rebellion combined a quasi-Christian religious movement with a movement for agrarian reform. The result was a revolutionary effort of such scale that its ultimate failure seems more remarkable today than its successes. Professor Wright characterizes the Taiping Rebellion as an "agrarian revolution," i.e., one in which economic conditions were the primary determinants, and places it squarely in the history of the Communist revolution: "Today's agrarian revolution began a century ago when the Chinese peasantry rose against the existing order in the great Taiping Rebellion."[22] Even if Mao's effort does not actually span the century and link with the "long-haired thieves" (*ch'ang mao tsei*) of the Taiping leader Hung Hsiu-ch'üan, persons who agree with the peasant-rebellion theory argue that the Communist Party of China, after slowly coming to an appreciation of the potentialities of rural revolution, abandoned its futile attempts at urban insurrection and won the support of the peasantry by transforming itself into the scourge-of-the-landlords. Certainly Mao Tse-tung's Communism was as adaptable to this purpose as Hung's Christianity.

The essence of this analysis is the identification of rural economic distress as the cause of peasant rebelliousness. Although this may have been the crucial inducement to rebellion during certain periods of Chinese history, it fails to explain the success of the Communist-rural coalition of World War II. During the war the Communists did not contemplate the redistribution of land or any other class-oriented measures that would have radically altered the pattern of land ownership. Instead, the economic policies implemented by the Communist Party during the Sino-Japanese War were designed to create maximum unity—"to protect everybody from everybody else."[23] As Mao has put it, "The agrarian policy is a dual policy of demanding that the landlords reduce rent and interest, stipulating that the peasants pay this reduced amount of rent and interest."[24] This moderate wartime policy did not, of course, necessarily alienate the peasantry; but the Communists' success in winning peasant support cannot be attributed to their carrying out an "agrarian revolution."



It is in fact very difficult to apply economic criteria to either the Taiping or the Communist revolution. No answer can be given to a specific question dealing with the course of these revolutions in terms of economic forces alone. In the case of the Taipings, the desperately poor Hakka and Miao inhabitants of south China, who were the first to join Hung, came not out of economic motives but as converts to his religion.[25] The majority of peasants joined him as the rebellion gained momentum and after traditional rebels and local leaders had allied themselves with the Taiping objectives. Economic motives certainly underlay specific decisions to rebel, but they can be understood only as necessary, not as sufficient, causes. Relative economic deprivation came to a head in the Tao-kuang period (1821–50) and was a constant circumstance in various areas of China thereafter; however, it influenced but did not direct rebellion. The economic variable does not account for particular targets of rebellion (the dynasty, foreigners, invaders, or traitors); and it does not explain why rebellion occurs in one area, and then in another, but not in all places that have grievances and have given expression to them in the recent past. Underlying economic pressures also existed during the resistance war and exist today, but again an analysis purely in terms of economic forces leaves most political questions unanswered. Why is it that the peasantry did not support the Japanese and their puppets after 1937? Why did huge numbers of north China peasants volunteer for the Communist armies only after the Japanese invasion? Obviously, an argument based solely on the economic situation in China ignores the influence of the Japanese invasion, and thereby misinterprets the role of the Communist Party as leader of the anti-Japanese peasant armies.

This is not to argue that if the Japanese invasion of China or the German invasion of Yugoslavia had not occurred, the prewar governments could have continued to exist unassailed or that the process of social change associated with the Communist governments would never have begun. If the invasions had never occurred, a severe economic catastrophe in the future, or a prolongation of the rural depression of the 1930's, might well have produced revolutionary mobilization. But a constant, or slowly evolving, rate of economic deprivation would still have constituted only a conditioning

factor in the subsequent revolutionary movements; and it is unlikely that such revolutionary movements would have confined themselves to economic reforms, just as the Chinese Communist government aims at more ambitious goals than the relief of rural misery. The movement of Fidel Castro in Cuba, for example, can hardly be accounted for by reference solely to the economic conditions of the Cuban peasants—conditions that have existed for decades. An economic analysis alone offers no insights into the potentiality of success of a revolutionary movement, and commonly distorts attempts at political analysis of the policies pursued by postrevolutionary governments.

There are other critics of Professor Wright's views, but, paradoxically enough, they seem to accept her idea that economic hardship is the only logical motive for peasant rebelliousness. Their argument with her turns on the question of whether the Chinese Communists were true agrarian reformers; they accurately point out that the CCP did not offer to advance the economic interests of the peasants during the war. Thus, they conclude (very like those who consider Chinese Communism the result of a Moscow-directed conspiracy), the Communists cynically manipulated the peasantry, and the peasants had no stake, real or imagined, in Communist leadership. Professor Franz Michael, for example, has stated:

> The fact that the Communist armies were enlarged by recruiting from the peasantry does not make them any more or less peasant armies than the nationalist troops with which they are contrasted and which drew their recruits from the same source. That the Communists had a land policy which in different forms favored the small peasants does not alter the fact that the Communists and not the peasants commanded the army. The term "peasant armies" implies an expression of the peasant will and peasant control which obviously did not exist, and the term "peasant leader" implies a man who represents the peasants rather than the Communist Party and its policies.[26]

This type of analysis does not, of course, explain what the basis of the Communist-peasant alliance was, nor does it in any way account for the development of national Communist states. Professor Michael implies that the peasantry played no role in the revolution other than to provide soldiers and services for the armies of either the Kuomintang or the Communists (ignoring, among other things, the fact that the KMT had to utilize conscription from March 1936 on, whereas the Communists, in the main, relied upon volunteers both for their regular forces and for what was surely the world's largest militia system).



The major difficulty, as Professor Michael sees it, is the lack of correspondence between the "peasant will" and the "Communist Party and its policies." This use of the term "peasant will," and the implication that the peasant will is not equatable with Communist policies, suggests a confusion between the Communist Party's acting on the *side* of the peasantry and their acting for the *sake* of the peasantry. "For the sake of the peasantry" refers specifically to Communist policies that appealed directly to the economic interests and class-consciousness of the landless farm laborers, and that were directed against landlords and middle and rich peasants. This type of land policy was on the statute books in the Kiangsi Soviet Republic, but it was unsuccessful in creating a mass basis for the Party. The Party faced a dilemma in Kiangsi that became more difficult as the Party tried to deal with it. If the "radical" agrarian reform law were strictly implemented, it would alienate all but the poorest section of the peasantry, thereby defeating its purpose, which was to gain general rural support. On the other hand, if it were honored in the breach, as was the common practice in Kiangsi, it not only failed to gain supporters, but also left the Communist Party open to invidious comparison with the Kuomintang's announced land program.[27] The failure to resolve these questions of mass support was one of the strategic weaknesses of the Kiangsi Soviet, and thereby contributed to its military failure.

During the Anti-Japanese War period the Party abandoned the "radical" land program altogether and carried out a policy designed to create maximum unity for national defense.[28] All plans for agrarian reform were abrogated during the war while a mild policy of rent reduction and general rationalization of debts was carried out. Despite this, the Communists achieved their greatest popular following precisely during the period in which their unity policy was in effect. Clearly, their acting on the *side* of the peasantry—i.e., their successful opposition to the Japanese invaders—had become more important than their actions for the *sake* of the peasantry. In retrospect, the Communist Party was successful only when it ceased acting solely for the sake of the peasantry and began acting on the side of the peasantry instead. The interesting question, of course, is how the peasantry came to have a side at all.[29]

## MASS NATIONALISM IN CHINA

It is the thesis of this study that the rise to power of the CCP and YCP in collaboration with the peasantry of the two countries can best be under-

stood as a species of nationalism. A definition is necessary here because so many different usages for the term "nationalism" exist. In the past "nationalism" has been employed to refer to the postfeudal monarchies of western Europe, to certain romantic doctrines of the nineteenth century, and to the underlying dynamic of Communist Russia. The word has been equated with "a daily plebiscite," "political *bovarysme*," and a form of tribalism; persons as different as Theodore Roosevelt, Mahatma Gandhi, and Fidel Castro have been called "nationalists." Thus, in order to avoid confusion, it is necessary to consider at some length the meaning of nationalism in general and, more particularly, of nationalism in China during the period under investigation.

The first distinction to be made in the use of the term involves its altered scope over time. There has been a long-range trend toward the expansion of the numbers of persons subject to nationalism; and, as a result, the use of the term in 1960 is very different from its use in 1789. E. H. Carr's periodization of this expansion is standard: originally, national "populations" consisted of only the ruler and the nobility, and "the first period begins with the gradual dissolution of the mediaeval unity of empire and church and the establishment of the national state and the national church."[30] The second period occupies the century of the "Third Estate" (1789–1914), during which nationalism spread to the bourgeoisie; the contemporary third period is characterized by "the bringing of new social strata within the effective membership of the nation, the visible reunion of economic with political power, and the increase in the number of nations."[31] Contemporary studies of nationalism are concerned with mass nationalism, i.e., the third period; in China, this means peasant nationalism. A successful nationalist movement today—one that succeeds in founding a nation state—must be a mass movement; and a regime that rules a people indifferent to or unaware of government, such as that of Chiang Kai-shek or of the late Rafael Trujillo, cannot properly be called "nationalist."

A second distinction must be made between two analytical uses of the term nationalism: nationalism understood as a condition already in existence, and nationalism understood as a process of coming into being. An example of nationalism understood as a condition occurs in the work of the historian Carlton J. H. Hayes. He writes: "I would define nationality as a cultural group of people who speak a common language (or closely related dialects) and who possess a community of historical traditions (religious, territorial, political, military, economic, artistic, and intellectual)."[32] Many students of nationalism would take exception to this definition, particularly to the insistence upon linguistic homogeneity; however, the important point here is that Hayes considers nationalism as a static condition —namely, as consciousness of nationality.[33] How people become conscious of their national characteristics, or what their self-image was before they were conscious of nationality, is not considered.



The deficiency of this definition lies in its lack of differentiation between "national movement" and "nationalism." Hayes's definition will not help us to explain why, for example, the Japanese were more nationalistic in 1930 than in 1830, since at both times they spoke the same language, held roughly the same religious views, and painted the same kinds of pictures. Professor Hayes mentions the importance of political, military, and economic traditions; but by not asking what lies behind these traditions or why certain traditions are honored over others, he is considering only the plumage of nationalism. For purposes of studying the spread or onset of nationalism, we must identify the forces that cause populations to form nation states and isolate the circumstances under which groups of human beings are transformed into national citizens. Also, in order to understand why the particular traditions and characteristics mentioned by Hayes are valued by a given national community, we must relate these elements of "national plumage" to a functional model of the nation.

Karl W. Deutsch has summed up the failure of writers to use functional concepts in early studies of nationalism: "The dangerous result was that nationalism came to be widely accepted as a mere 'state of mind' with *few tangible roots*."[34] Deutsch himself has done much to correct this deficiency by developing a functional definition of nationalism—one that is helpful in understanding nationalism among the peasantry in China. Deutsch's central concept is that of a "people," which he defines in the following way:

> The community which permits a common history to be experienced as common is a community of complementary habits and facilities of communication. . . . A large group of persons linked by such complementary habits and facilities of communication we may call a people. . . . All the usual descriptions of a people in terms of a community of languages, or character, or memories, or past history, are open to exception. For what counts is not the presence or absence of any single factor, but merely the presence of sufficient communications facilities with enough complementarity to produce the over-all result.[35]

Thus Deutsch regards the ability of members of one large group to communicate with each other as the basic "root" of nationalism. "The essential aspect of the unity of a people . . . is the complementarity or relative efficiency of communication among individuals—something that is in some ways similar to mutual rapport, but on a larger scale."[86] The important question is how does such a mutual rapport (identity of interest, intermingling of wills, sharing of responsibility, and so forth) come into existence among a specific population at a given time and place?

"Social mobilization" is the shorthand term generally used to describe the dynamic process whereby pre-national peoples enter into political community with their fellows. This is the primary conceptual tool in contemporary studies of nationalism.[87] Social mobilization refers to the pressures that cause populations to form political communities—in other words, the changes that cause people of towns, villages, and regions to knit together into new political orders which transcend these areas as their inhabitants realize that their mutual interests extend beyond daily contacts. The pressures that cause social mobilization may be evolutionary, revolutionary, or both. Deutsch, in his study of social communication, is concerned primarily with how national communities developed out of European feudal society; he points particularly to the importance of the growth of towns, the shift from a subsistence economy to an exchange economy, and the enlargement of basic communications grids in promoting this development. However, although the evolutionary growth of physical links was an important mobilizing agent in early modern Europe, it is not the only source of effective social mobilization; and towns, regional communications, and markets all emerged in China many centuries ago without producing a nation state. In the twentieth century, evolutionary pressure has been accelerated and supplemented by more immediate and violent ways of mobilizing a population.

E. J. Hobsbawm in his study of pre-national mass movements (particularly among peasants) describes some of these other, more immediate, forces that may mobilize populations:

> [Pre-political] men and women . . . form the large majority in many, perhaps in most, countries even today, and their acquisition of political consciousness has made our century the most revolutionary in history. . . . They come into it [the modern political world] as first-generation immigrants, or what is even more catastrophic, it comes to them from outside, insidiously by the operation of economic forces which they do not understand and over which they have no control, or brazenly by conquest, revolutions and fundamental changes of law whose consequences they may not understand, even when they have helped to bring them about.[88]



Among the forces listed by Hobsbawm, foreign invasion and internal resistance organization have taken, in recent years, a predominant role in mobilizing pre-political populations. World War II, in particular, unleashed forces of mass awakening in countries such as China and Yugoslavia, where previous "national movements" had appealed only to educated elites. War-induced anarchy and the organization of guerrilla resistance gave the Chinese and Yugoslav peasant masses new experiences and a new history. Their common action in defending and governing large areas of occupied territory and in solving specific political, economic, and military problems laid the foundation for social communication.[89] That is to say, the masses of China and Yugoslavia were socially mobilized by the war.

In making this observation we are not overlooking the prewar movement in China that centered upon the Kuomintang. Nationalism in China did not, of course, make its first appearance during the Sino-Japanese war; at the time of the invasion a nationalist movement had already existed for at least forty years. However, the National Movement (with capital letters) that began with Sun Yat-sen and developed among the students and educators in Peking after May 4, 1919, was not a mass movement; it was confined almost entirely to the socially mobilized but unassimilated intelligentsia and to the small middle classes that grew up in the treaty ports. Sun himself acknowledged the popular weakness of his party when he sought alliance with the CCP, and when he initiated the KMT reorganization as an elite association in 1924. Early Kuomintang nationalism bears a strong resemblance to nineteenth-century nationalism among central European intellectuals and to the formative periods of colonial or non-European nationalism in this century—for example, the movements in Egypt, Tunisia, and Turkey. Because of this similarity, the term "nationalist" has commonly been used to characterize the activities of intellectuals in their creative search for doctrines of national identity and uniqueness. Although this usage has been bolstered by general acceptance, it must be clearly understood that nationalism among intellectual elites and mass nationalism are two distinct, if related, phenomena.

Such early intellectual nationalism in China was peculiarly the product

of Westernized, or cosmopolitan, educated Chinese. They sought a new understanding of Chinese culture and history that would facilitate the acceptance of China into the modern world and rationalize their own discontent at China's backwardness. It is not surprising that the various doctrines to emerge from this intellectual ferment were amalgams of Western revolutionary thought, violent reactions to contemporary Japan, and drastic revisions of traditional Chinese philosophy.[40] For a century Chinese culture had been under continuous assault both from abroad by missionaries and merchants and from within by native iconoclasts; during this time Chinese intellectuals consulted a broad range of social theorists (from Henry George to Japanese militarists) in order to explain and to overcome China's political backwardness. Equally important, prewar intellectual nationalists were concerned with the obstructions to China's reform created by imperialism and the unequal treaties. The wars, humiliations, and material and territorial losses suffered by the Ch'ing empire and the stillborn Republic during the century of contact with modern imperialist states were continuous sources of outrage and inspiration to the new nationalist ideologues.

For all the political activities of the prewar Chinese educated elites, theirs was a nationalist movement with a head and no body. The Chinese peasantry was isolated from the long-standing Chinese nationalist movement, having neither a stake in Chinese literati culture nor any direct contact with the imperialists. The humiliations to China were largely meaningless to the agricultural masses; and when imperialism did impinge upon their lives in a direct way, as at the time of the Boxer Rebellion, their reaction was essentially nativistic and pre-political.[41] The peasants did not share the intellectuals' idealized vision of the Chinese state; they had no theory of tutelage by which it should be achieved, no "Three Principles of the People" which, if fully implemented, would restore China to a position of equality as a sovereign nation.

If this indifference of the Chinese masses to prewar politics is ignored, a realistic appraisal of the Nanking Government (1928–37) cannot be made. That is to say, if we characterize Chiang Kai-shek's government as nationalistic, we overlook the opportunistic alliances among military leaders that underlay Chiang's power, and we disregard the ceaseless efforts made by Nanking to unify the country after 1928 by direct military action. Prior to 1937, nationalism in China was a powerful sentiment among many leadership groups, but the social milieu in which they acted was not



nationalistic. When, during the war, the peasants were mobilized and the Communist Party identified itself with Chinese nationalism, the Nationalist Government was slow to recognize the implications that this development had for its own future. The failure of the wartime KMT to understand that its own claims to nationalist leadership were not accepted by the whole population and that it was vulnerable to an attack on purely nationalist grounds contributed directly to its defeat by the Communist-peasant alliance.

Mention of the fact that prewar Chinese nationalism was primarily an ideological phenomenon restricted to educated elites raises further questions in the definition of nationalism. In the past, particularly in the nineteenth century, nationalist activities appeared to be confined exclusively to the sort of ideological controversy that we associate with the May Fourth period in China. Nationalist intellectuals sought, in their polemical and creative activities, to identify the peculiar characteristics of a particular people (usually their own) or to establish a historical, linguistic, or racial tradition that would support a claim for these people to form a nation-state—for example, early German claims of linguistic unity, Slavic claims of religious uniqueness. As a result of the predominance of ideological disputation in nationalist movements, the study of nationalism has often become the province of the intellectual historian; and the establishment of an intellectual claim to "self-determination" (or to "manifest destiny") was often thought to constitute all that was meant by nationalism.

An exclusive concern with nationalism as nationalists themselves define it is of almost no use for purposes of general analysis; and it ignores the question of timing in the onset of a particular search for nationalist doctrine by given intellectual circles. Today such nationalist activity is understood as a product of the social mobilization of nationalist intellectuals—usually prior to the mobilization of the general population and as a result of causes different from those that affect total populations. Education, or foreign residence, is a common mobilizing agent among intellectual elites —particularly when colonial domination, racial discrimination, or other circumstances prevent the people concerned from achieving a social status commensurate with their education. The origins of the early twentieth-century Chinese nationalists, in these terms, are well known: Sun Yat-sen's intimate association with overseas Chinese and his extensive foreign travel, the creation of the T'ung Meng Hui among Chinese students in Japan, the peculiarly elevated position of Peking University students at

the time of World War I, and the extensive European travel and education of the early Chinese Communist leaders.[42] Thus, in recognizing the existence of a nationalist movement in China before the wartime peasant mobilization, we are not recognizing a different kind of nationalism, but only one that was prior to the mass movement, restricted to specific types of people, and energized by different but analogous forces. It is perfectly possible that an intellectual nationalist movement will not ever possess a mass nationalist following; or that a later mass nationalist mobilization will unseat a pre-existing nationalist elite and install its own leadership; or that intellectual nationalists may guide and control, particularly by education, the subsequent development of mass nationalism. China offers an example of a mass nationalist movement unseating a previously mobilized and installed nationalist elite.

So far in this discussion of the meaning of nationalism, we have stressed the central importance of the process by which a people become a nation. We have labeled this process "social mobilization," and we have indicated that a variety of forces may be responsible for bringing it about—particularly a social cataclysm such as war, or the collapse of a colonial government, which acts as a catalyst for more general pressures of social change. Many years ago Max Weber noted the important fact that nations and nationalism do have a beginning and suggested the need for studying the activating forces in nationalism. His observation, interestingly enough (although erroneously) based on a Chinese example, was: "Only fifteen years ago [from c. 1914], men knowing the Far East, still denied that the Chinese qualified as a 'nation'; they held them to be only a 'race.' Yet today, not only the Chinese political leaders but also the very same observers would judge differently. Thus it seems that a group of people under certain conditions may attain the quality of a nation through specific behavior, or that they may claim this quality as an 'attainment'—and within short spans of time at that."[43] Despite the fact that Weber, along with Sun Yat-sen and many other Chinese, was to be disappointed by the 1911 revolution, his point is very valuable. Social mobilization, as we have used it, corresponds to Weber's "certain conditions" under which a given people attain the quality of a nation; on the basis of evidence presented in subsequent chapters, it is advanced here that the peasants of the occupied areas in China were socially mobilized by war and resistance organization, and thereby became a national population.[44]

However, social mobilization itself is not all that is meant by nationalism; it is, rather, the crucial occurrence in the onset of nationalism. There is another constituent in mass nationalist movements, which usually appears simultaneously with or shortly after mobilization; this is ideology. Following upon a given national mobilization, the newly mobilized people will commonly receive from their leadership a more or less elaborate doctrine that serves to idealize the activities undertaken by the people in common. In model form, such a doctrine will provide an ideological framework within which the mobilized people may understand and express their behavior as a nation. Often it will portray the given nationalist movement as undertaken in behalf of an ultimately triumphant cause; and it will draw upon allegedly universal religions or philosophical systems for "proof" of the justness or inevitability of nationalist activities.[45] Such a national myth usually exalts the leadership elite that directs the work of the mobilized population and places an ideological support under the claims to legitimacy that the elite enjoys.



The content of these national myths ranges widely over the entire spectrum of human thought; "racial science" or "geopolitics" may support certain national communities, enlightenment philosophy supports others. Buddhism is enlisted in the service of Burmese nationalism, Islam in the Middle Eastern states, Catholicism in Ireland, and an undifferentiated protestantism in the United States. Professional exponents of particular religions as well as *bona fide* scientists may, and often do, object to the use of religion or science in the service of nationalist doctrines. It must be understood, however, that national myths drawn from nonnationalist systems of belief or analysis do not have the effect of placing the nation-state under the guidance of popes or scientists; rather, they are intended to reinforce the legitimacy of the nation by incorporating the legitimacy of priests, scientists, or philosophers into it. In other words, myth draws from doctrines that are independently respected in society and reinterprets such doctrines so that they will tend to mobilize popular imagination in support of a national government—a government that in all probability is already supported on the basis of interest.

Although national myth is constructed by nationalist intellectuals from among all the diverse historical, religious, and philosophical influences present in a people's past, a given myth is not, of course, selected at random. The study of both the transmission of myth to nationalist ideologues and the current intellectual and philosophical trends that dictate "choice" among national myths is of great importance. As Professor Hatfield has observed

in connection with Nazi myth, "Did these dogmas actually determine events, or were they a mere ideological façade? Even if they were only that, it would remain a matter of some importance to discover why one façade was chosen rather than another, and why it impressed so many people, not all of them Germans, by any means."[46] This observation is true, but it must be clearly understood that the subject of ideological inquiry is a national myth overlaying the social mobilization of a given people. Failure to bear this in mind has produced, for example, the plethora of uniformly ineffectual anti-Marxist books that aim at "meeting Communism on its own terms"; and it likewise explains the weakness of the counter-ideological approach to Communism—for example, that of Moral Rearmament.

With regard to the question, raised by Professor Hatfield, of a functional role for myth in determining events, this is found as a general rule not to be the case. Myth is most often an *ex post facto* revision either of written history or of the nonnationalist ideology that is being used as the basis of the myth. This is not to say that national myth does not exist prior to the victory of a mass nationalist movement; of course it does. But ideology itself—whether fascism, communism, or only a belief in a glorious ancestral history—does not in and of itself mobilize either intellectual elites or nationalist masses. Such mobilization is produced by other more immediate and less abstract pressures, as discussed earlier. Myth exists before mass mobilization because the elite is usually mobilized before the masses. A nationalist elite will acquire or create a fairly well developed "explanation" of its "mission," looking to the time when mass mobilization might occur. However, as the two cases of China and Yugoslavia strongly suggest, the prewar elite ideology itself will probably undergo an extensive process of renovation and "nationalization" at the time when elite mobilization is translated into mass mobilization. Thus we commonly find that the ideological history of an elite group prior to the time it comes to power is largely irrelevant to its subsequent ideological activities and pretensions. In such cases, it is convenient to distinguish pre-mobilization ideology and post-mobilization ideology as two separate entities—for example, to distinguish the Yugoslav Communist Party's Stalinism of 1939 from its Titoism of 1948 and after.

This general idea of national myth following upon and supplementing social mobilization is useful in understanding the political history of the national Communist states. When we assert that the Chinese and Yugoslav Communist movements can best be understood as a species of nationalism, we have in mind other considerations than just the two movements' wartime origins. Most important of these considerations is the marked eccentricity displayed by China and Yugoslavia in their relations with the other eleven Communist governments.[47] This eccentricity goes beyond the possibility that China and Yugoslavia merely consider Moscow's leadership to have been faulty in particular instances; both states have broken with the USSR in response to different types of Soviet leadership, and the Soviet Union has been unable to reconcile its differences with the two nations by either enticement or discipline. Although it is possible to maintain that national Communism in China and Yugoslavia represents simply a reaction to national Communism in the USSR, one must still account for the fact that only the Chinese and Yugoslav parties have successfully given expression to their resentment.



We observe the emergence in both China and Yugoslavia of indigenous brands of Communism. The propounders of these new formulations claim that Chinese and Yugoslav revolutionary experiences, respectively, constitute an advance over Soviet revolutionary tradition, and at the same time insist that they are squarely in the line of development predicted by "scientific socialism." In view of the existence of the wartime resistance movements in both Communist China and Yugoslavia, as well as the subsequent development of national Communism in both states, it is necessary to reexamine their particular histories from the point of view of nationalism. It appears today that China and Yugoslavia, from the time of the invasions to the present, offer typical examples of mass nationalist movements in which Communism serves as an official rationale for nationalist policies.

Communism, in the sense of the philosophy of Marx and Lenin, is remarkably well suited to the role of national myth. In addition to proclaiming the inevitability of success in the work of national construction under Communist auspices, it also partakes of the single most widely accepted ideology of the present age—science. With the necessary revisions, Communism legitimatizes the totalitarian rule of the national directorate ("the vanguard of the working class"), and it provides a Manichaean identification of the nation's enemies ("the imperialists") to be used as an ever-present scapegoat in case of nationalist setbacks.

Although we often read that the "Chinese Communists have stood Marx on his head,"[48] we rarely consider why Marxism has such a grip on the Chinese. We do not consider how revised Marxism eases the tremendous

sacrifices required for national construction, or how it reinforces the desire of many Chinese to make China a powerful nation. We do not contemplate the demands of Chinese nationalism or the place of Communism in its support; as a result, we are astonished when the Communist leaders resort to ideological pedantry to explain reverses in the development program. The defense of Chinese Communist ideology is as important to Chinese nationalism as the successful raising of bumper crops. It is because he is a nationalist that the Communist leader claims Marxist legitimacy: "While revising Marxism in accordance with the national environment and his own beliefs . . . the local leader always claims that he is not revising Marxism, but is only 'applying it creatively.' Furthermore, he usually asserts that his interpretation of Marxism is the only correct one and might well be imitated by other countries. For this reason, national Communists refuse to admit that they are national Communists."[49] Obviously, if a national Communist declared that his revisions diverged from Marxism as a consistent system, he would forfeit the advantage he obtains from being a Marxist—the participation in a widely accepted theory that underwrites his actions as "scientific."

In a later chapter of this study we shall review certain of the nationalist manifestations in Chinese and Yugoslav Communist ideology. For the present, my intention is only to introduce the concept of national myth as complementary to social mobilization in the present use of the term "nationalism." In essence, I understand a mass nationalist movement as a combination of the concepts of social mobilization and national myth. My purpose in advancing this hypothesis is not to offer a general theory of nationalism describing the basic circumstances in which all nations have been formed. It is, rather, to seek an understanding of the remarkable change in fortunes experienced by the Chinese Communist Party during World War II—a question that has been ignored in the past largely because of insufficient data. On the importance of the war, Fitzroy Maclean, Commander of the British mission to the Yugoslav Partisans, once wrote: "At the bottom of their dispute with the Kremlin lay Tito's claim that 'the Jugoslav brand of Communism was not something imported from Moscow but had its origin in the forests and mountains of Jugoslavia.' "[50] Similarly, I suggest that the origins of the Sino-Soviet dispute are to be found in the plains of central Hopei and in the mountains of Shantung at the time of the Japanese invasion.

# TWO

# The Japanese Role in Peasant Mobilization

The role played by the Japanese Army in bringing the Chinese Communists to power has never been fully appreciated by foreign observers. In addition to their mopping-up campaigns and reprisals against the civilian population, which accelerated the process of rural mobilization, there were other activities of the Japanese that further strengthened the position of the Chinese Communists. For example, the Japanese unwittingly advanced the Communists' claim to national legitimacy by singling out the Communists as their special enemies and by giving puppet regimes the special task of Communist "extermination." Conversely, the cavalier treatment of the Chungking government in Japanese propaganda tended to weaken Chungking's attempts to guide and control the resistance behind the Japanese lines; and thus it also aided the Communist cause.

Still another ingredient of the political situation in the occupied territories was the disillusionment that seized the traditionally more conservative northern Chinese. Prior to 1937, the population of north China was more willing than the Chinese of other areas to countenance a Japanese-sponsored government; the Japanese actually possessed such a potential for popular support in the rural areas that, according to Michael Lindsay, they could have succeeded if they had only taken the trouble to shoot a few hundred of their own officers![1] In actual fact, the devastation and exploitation that accompanied the Japanese invasion produced a radical change in the political attitudes of the northern Chinese. The peasants of north China gave very strong support to Communist organizational initiatives during the war, and the largest number of Communist guerrilla bases was located in the rural areas of the north.

In order to understand why the Chinese Communists were successful

# SEVEN

# Communism in the Service of the Nation-State

In the previous pages, we have seen how World War II accelerated the social mobilization of the Chinese and Yugoslav peoples and how this mass awakening became the foundation for the postwar governments. It remains for us to inquire into the consequences that this particular mode of political success held for the foreign policies and ideologies of the resultant states. After coming to power, both the Chinese and the Yugoslav Communists concluded alliances with the Soviet Union, which for nearly thirty years the world's Communists had looked to as the fountainhead and exemplar of Communism in power. The masses of China and Yugoslavia also welcomed an alliance with the first Communist state as the natural concomitant of their acceptance of domestic Communism. However, neither China nor Yugoslavia became constituent republics or satellites of the USSR; and, as time passed, it became clear that the Marxist ideal of "proletarian internationalism" could not transcend three different conceptions of national—albeit Communist—interest, or reconcile three conflicting ideas of what foreign policy might best be pursued by the Communist bloc.

Yugoslavia clashed with the Soviet Union over the activities of Soviet intelligence organs and the conduct of Soviet troops on Yugoslav territory; it also began to pursue foreign policies designed to secure its economic and political interests in the Balkans, despite the fact that the Soviet Union had different plans for this area. This led to the rupture of 1948 and to the adoption, since that time, of an independent Communist policy by the Yugoslav government.

China's relations with the USSR preserved a semblance of equality from the start; but even in that context China had to defend its national



interests—for example, in obtaining Russian aid and trade; in securing the renunciation of Soviet claims to Port Arthur and railroad interests in Manchuria; in ousting the pro-Russian leader in Manchuria, Kao Kang, who sought to establish his independence from Peking;[1] and in negotiating the abolition of the Sino-Russian Joint Stock Companies. At the same time, the Chinese Communist government actively upheld China's pre-eminent interest in the Far East by intervening in the Korean War. In more recent years, Chinese independence of the Soviet Union has been made fully manifest by open criticism of de-Stalinization, of Soviet policy toward the United States, of Soviet aid policy toward "bourgeois nationalist" leaders such as Nasser and Nehru, and of the Soviet attitude toward the developing revolution in former colonial territories. In turn, Chinese independence has provoked Soviet criticism of the Chinese communes and has led to Russian neutrality in the Sino-Indian border dispute.

This divergence in policies among the three independent Communist states—or, as it is called, national Communism—is a natural outgrowth of the politicization of the masses in China and Yugoslavia during the war. The spread of nationalism among the Chinese and Yugoslav peoples placed limitations on the extent to which the Chinese and Yugoslav leaders could follow the dictates of Moscow, or for that matter of any other external authority. Nowhere was this influence of mass participation in Communist politics more clearly felt than in the Soviet-Yugoslav dispute of 1948. As Fred W. Neal has observed,

> As a result of the wartime coalition on which it rode to victory, the Tito regime, minority dictatorship though it was, had a wider popular following than did the regimes in the satellites-proper, and this in itself was a factor in Tito's power position. To comply with all Soviet wishes in the realm of either political or economic policies would have adversely affected that position. . . . It was certainly the refusal—or, better said, inability—of the Yugoslavs to follow Soviet dictates generally that led to their excommunication.[2]

Thus, the crucial element in the emergence of Yugoslav national Communism in 1948 was the earlier mobilization of the popular will behind Tito, a mobilization that took place independently of Soviet initiatives.

However, as the Soviet-Yugoslav dispute also reveals, Soviet demands on Yugoslavia were the catalyst that brought Yugoslav national Communism into the open. This fact tells us much about the relationship between Communism and nationalism in the contemporary world. For national Communism already existed in the Soviet Union when the revolutionary

governments of China and Yugoslavia came to power. As is well known, the international Communist movement was conscripted into the service of the Soviet Union before World War II; but Soviet propaganda in that period effectively camouflaged the degree to which Communist ideology had been subordinated to Russian nationalism. It required the creation of truly "fraternal" Communist governments in China and Yugoslavia after the war to point up just how national the national Communism of the Soviet Union was. Today we are able to recognize that Communism in all Communist states other than the East European and Asian satellites rests basically upon an indigenous national awakening. Indeed, one of the main lessons to be derived from this study is the extent to which nationalism and Communism have become synonymous.

We may illustrate this conclusion by comparing the popular weakness of the non-Russian Communist parties in the Comintern period with the popular support enjoyed by the Chinese and Yugoslav Communist parties at the time of their founding. With regard to the impact of Russian national Communism upon other Communist parties before the war, Hammond has noted that the USSR emasculated the local parties' effectiveness by forcing them to serve Soviet national interests: "For Stalin thereby brought Communism into conflict with nationalism. Being a Communist implied being an agent of a foreign power, which to most people seemed abhorrent. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the greatest deterrent to people becoming Communists has been the feeling that Communism implied disloyalty to one's own country."[3] But in China and Yugoslavia just the opposite is true: there, being a Communist is synonymous with advancing the interests of one's own country; and it is precisely this advancement of nationalism under Communist auspices that explains the great strength of Chinese and Yugoslav Communism. Moreover, if in the near future the Communist government of China or of Yugoslavia should be repudiated by the masses, it would probably be for nationalist reasons: for example, a conspicuous failure in the government's program of national construction (particularly in China), or a foreign policy seen by the masses as counter to the national interest.

A second illustration of the importance of the national component in national Communism is to be found by considering the nature of Communist authority in the East European satellites. These puppet governments were created by Soviet military power after World War II, and the agents of Moscow who rule in these territories do so by virtue of the Soviet military forces based in or near their areas. National Communism—the expression of nationalist impulses through Communist institutions—does not exist, save in a cautious and attenuated form in such a leader as Gomulka. Instead, in these areas nationalism is opposed to Communism, since Communism has meant only the furthering of Russian interests; and nationalist revolt against Russian Communism has long been endemic (it has, of course, actually broken out in Hungary, East Germany, and Poland, on different occasions). After the death of Stalin, the Soviet Union sought to soften the impact of the identification between Communism and Russian nationalism by the policy of de-Stalinization, which introduced the tolerance of what Hammond calls a "housebroken Titoism" (particularly in Poland). This policy, combined with a recognition of geopolitical realities by the satellites, has produced acquiescence in the status quo. Precisely because nationalism and Communism do not coincide, Communist government in the satellites must inevitably suffer from the instabilities of colonial regimes—a situation very different from that in China, Yugoslavia, and the USSR. For *popular* Communism without a basis in nationalism does not exist.



In recognizing the nationalistic basis of Communism in the independent Communist states (and, conversely, its purely military nature in the satellites), we are explicitly asserting that Communism itself is not either the focal point or the prime mover of these states, and that the reality underlying the creation of the independent Communist states is the social mobilization of their masses. In this study of the Chinese and Yugoslav resistance movements, we have touched upon only one aspect of the social mobilization of these peoples. In a sense, the conditions created by World War II in China and Yugoslavia served only to catalyze and channel the slowly developing forces of social change that had been undermining the traditional societies for decades. These long-range forces are essential to social mobilization, but it would be a mistake to overrate them—for example, to overrate the influence of imperialism and modern technology in rendering China's traditional social institutions obsolete. The short-range cataclysmic effects of direct physical assault upon populations can be just as important. In recent times, the two world wars have had as great a role in social mobilization as the spread of modern scientific culture.

Even when we expand the idea of social mobilization to include the effects of war and civilian resistance, we are still dealing with only one half of the over-all process. As much as social mobilization is concerned with the *destruction* of pre-modern social fabrics—detribalization, the evolution out of feudalism, the collapse of agrarian bureaucracy—it also deals

with the subsequent reintegration of the affected populations into new, typically modern, political communities. Deutsch, the leading commentator on the concept of social mobilization, finds "two distinct stages to the process: (1) the stage of uprooting or breaking away from old settings, habits, commitments; and (2) the induction of the mobilized persons into some relatively stable new patterns of group membership, organizational commitment."[4] In narrowing down this general understanding to historical cases, we have attempted to specify more directly what is involved in the second stage of mobilization; our interpretation of the role played by "national myth" in reintegrating mobilized peoples corresponds generally to Deutsch's second stage. The acceptance by the mobilized people of a specific ideological construct that rationalizes and sanctifies their endeavors is one sure sign that reintegration is taking place. Such integrative ideologies are as varied as the number of national communities; they include a self-righteous anti-colonialism, philosophies of individualism, and religious or racial extrapolations reworked to fit given circumstances.[5] Communism is only one—if a very important one—of the various unifying and self-dignifying ideologies that serve mobilized communities.

Our characterization of Communist ideology in the independent Communist states as "national myth" is not primarily intended as a philosophical critique of Marxism; rather, it is an attempt to explain in functional terms the presence of a Marxist-derived ideological structure in mobilized national communities in which Marxism itself has no prescriptive role. What evidence do we have that Communism serves as a nationalist ideology? In addition to our study of the resistance movements, which indicates that the demands of national crisis rather than the logic of Communism brought the Chinese and Yugoslav Communist parties to power, there is a second form of evidence. This is the extensive revision and manipulation of Communist theory undertaken by the Chinese and Yugoslav Communists in order to bring it into line with various policies of a nationalist character: for example, the enlargement of the industrial and agricultural capacity of their nations, a single-party dictatorship, totalitarian control of society, the creation of buffer states surrounding the national territory, and the glorification of the activities of the national population and its leaders. Most significantly, this reinterpretation of Communist ideology for nationalist purposes has its roots in social mobilization—a subject to which we shall return presently.

It is rather a misnomer to describe the adaptation of Communism to national circumstances as "revisionism," since the orthodox Communism



that is allegedly being revised is actually Soviet national Communist ideology. From the time of the Bolshevik Revolution to World War II, Communism was the ideological property of the Soviet Union, and during that period the Russians interpreted it in such a way as to legitimatize Stalin's development program and foreign policies. It was only with the occurrence of social mobilization under Communist Party leadership in two other areas that the Russian monopoly was broken. Chinese and Yugoslav leaders also began to adapt the Communist ideological heritage to their own political environments; and as substantive differences between the three independent Communist states emerged, these differences began to be reflected in intrabloc ideological conflict. However, it can only be a matter of personal choice to determine which version of Communism, or which side of a given dispute (the USSR's, China's, or Yugoslavia's) is orthodox, particularly when most of the subjects that give rise to ideological controversy have no connection with nineteenth-century Marxism. Much of the current "revisionism" naturally originates with the Chinese or Yugoslavs, since it is they who seek to challenge—on the basis of their national needs—the long-unchallenged tenets of Leninism and Stalinism. The Chinese and the Yugoslavs have had not only to adapt Communism to their own environments, but also to do this in the face of earlier Russian-oriented pronouncements on ideology.

The manipulation of ideology in China actually began during the war, simultaneously with the awareness of the Chinese leaders that they had finally achieved leadership of a mass movement. In Yenan in 1942, the Chinese Communist Party began the first of a continuing series of movements for internal Party education. These so-called *cheng feng,* or rectification, movements are peculiar to the Chinese Party in that they are not purges but, rather, intensive indoctrination sessions. *Cheng feng* movements are designed to ensure that the rank-and-file not only follow the directives of the Party's Central Committee in accordance with the principle of "democratic centralism," but also grasp and accept positively the rationale advanced by the Party to support its policies. The *cheng feng* of 1942 exhibited the first concrete manifestation of the CCP's well-known indoctrination technique: *ssu-hsiang kai-tsao* (thought reform)—a method sensationalized in the West as "brainwashing." Although it is doubtful that *cheng feng* possesses the Orwellian attributes claimed for it by some Western commentators,[6] it is unquestionably a powerful method for eliciting enthusiastic support from Party members and for isolating people who disagree with Party policy.

The Yenan *cheng feng* of 1942 concentrated upon the related problems of elevating the Chinese Communist Party at the expense of other Chinese political groups and elevating Chinese Communism at the expense of Soviet Communism. In concrete terms, it was aimed at two main targets: (1) the vast numbers of new members who had joined the Party primarily for patriotic reasons and who confused the CCP with other anti-Japanese organizations; and (2) "Russian formalists"—those Party members who were well drilled in Marxist, Leninist, and Stalinist maxims, but who failed to grasp the fact that the Chinese revolution required a new interpretation and application of the basic canon. The former were required to learn the Maoist version of Communism and to prepare themselves for a life of service in a Leninist organization. The latter, particularly the Moscow-trained group around Wang Ming (Ch'en Shao-yü), were told, in effect, that the CCP no longer required Russian translators; and they were demoted to minor positions in the Party hierarchy.

These activities by the Chinese Party were not so much anti-Russian as they were pro-Chinese—they represented the "Sinification" of Communism at the time when the CCP had graduated from Comintern agency to mass revolutionary vehicle. This conclusion is supported by other investigations into the 1942 *cheng feng*. Boyd Compton, who has translated the Party Reform Documents that were used in the Yenan *cheng feng*, observes that "[the movement's] principal importance to the entire Party was intensive indoctrination and education in the principles of Mao Tse-tung's communism. *Reform Documents* presented the Chinese Communist Party with an ideology. Since the war this ideology has come to be generally known as the thought of Mao Tse-tung."[7] The authors of the *Documentary History* reach a related conclusion: statements by Party leaders in the *cheng feng* movement "seem clearly to reflect the far-reaching influence of a sentiment of nationalism which affected the CCP during the Sino-Japanese War."[8] Precisely at the time when Chinese Communism had obtained a mass following, Mao was calling for "a theory which is our own and of a specific nature."[9] Mao himself soon supplied a theory that was conveniently both Communist ("scientific and universal") and Chinese ("nationalistic"); it satisfied the need for an integrative ideology during the last years of the war, and it continues to serve today as the state ideology of the new Chinese nation.[10]

Postwar Yugoslavia reveals more clearly than Communist China both the existence of ideological divergence from the other independent Communist states and the roots of this divergence in indigenous social mobilization. There is no question at all about the prewar political and ideological position of the YCP: it was the instrument of the Communist International, and its ideology was Stalinism. From the time of the dispute with Moscow in 1948, however, the Yugoslav Communist Party began reinterpreting Communist doctrine *ex post facto* in order to bring it into line with the new policies forced upon it by nationalist differences with the Soviet Union. If Yugoslavia was to maintain the unity and stability created by the Partisan resistance movement, it could neither become a Soviet satellite nor denounce Communism altogether. Stalin failed in his attempt to force the YCP's rank-and-file to unseat Tito and his politburo precisely because this rank-and-file owed an allegiance to Tito that canceled the Party's prewar loyalty to Stalin. At the same time, the YCP refused to admit that it was taking the national Communist path in order not to forfeit the real value of Marxism as national myth and legitimator of the regime.



Although "revisionism" in Yugoslavia did not come into the open until after 1948, its roots lay in the resistance movement. The expulsion from the Cominform only brought matters to a head. Tito had in fact made it clear as early as 1943 that he envisioned postwar Yugoslavia as anything but a Soviet colony; at the Jajce Congress of AVNOJ, he stated:

> I may boldly claim that the creation of a national army under such conditions as ours is unique in history. From barehanded partisan detachments, without factories, arms or ammunition, without store houses, military supplies or provisions, without assistance from any side, an army of about a quarter of a million has been created, not in a peaceful period of time but in the course of the most terrible and bloodiest struggle waged by the nations of Yugoslavia. This is a gain of which the nations of Yugoslavia may be proud and of which their future generations will boast.[11]

Indeed, the Yugoslav Partisans had earned the right to boast, but we must recognize that their claims derive less from Marxism than from more ancient and emotional sources of unity:

> . . . gentlemen in England now a-bed
> Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
> And hold their manhoods cheap while any speaks
> That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

After the war, the Yugoslav Party and people, still proud of their wartime accomplishments and confident of the acclaim that they felt would come from Moscow, closely allied themselves with the new Soviet empire.

But instead of celebrating the accomplishments of its most leftist ally, the Soviet Union persisted in regarding Yugoslavia as another of its satellites and, most irksome of all to the Partisans, as one that had been created by the Soviet Army just like all the others.[12] The ostracism imposed on Yugoslavia by the Cominform after 1948 forced the Yugoslavs to reappraise their own Communism vis-à-vis that of the Soviet Union and the satellites. In so doing, they created a new version of Marxist ideology that underwrote their independent road to Communism and retroactively ascribed a socialist character to the anti-fascist resistance. As evolved in recent years, the new ideology of Yugoslav Communism is one of the clearest examples of Communism in its role as national myth. On the one hand, it identifies the Yugoslav government's actions with "science" and "general human progress";[13] on the other hand, it conveniently ignores all aspects of the state's origins or subsequent policies that contradict Marxism-Leninism. While this development would assuredly have appalled Marx himself, he might at least have taken heart from the fact that his theory explaining ideology as the reflection of an "underlying reality" was being borne out. Of course, he had a very different sort of underlying reality in mind.

Given that the present Chinese and Yugoslav governments are the offspring of indigenous nationalism and that Communist ideology serves as the theoretical expression of these nationalisms, there remains the difficult problem of the extent to which Communist ideology *prescribes* policy for the Chinese and Yugoslav nations. In Chapter One, we stated that national myth is generally found not to possess a prescriptive function insofar as it relates to social mobilization; and this observation is borne out by the Chinese and Yugoslav cases. Communism did not mobilize the Chinese or Yugoslav masses; rather, Communism was legitimatized by the nationalistic credentials established by Communist parties in the period of mobilization. However, in the period after the Communist parties were installed in power and their national Communist ideologies—Maoism and Titoism—were accepted by the masses, ideology did begin to play a part in the over-all process of decision-making.

Today, Communist ideology makes itself felt primarily as a conditioning and limiting factor. It may, for example, restrict knowledge of unknown quantities—such as the internal politics of foreign countries, or the potentialities of literature and the arts—by burdening the leadership with ideological stereotypes. And it may exacerbate mistaken or unsuitable policies, even to the point of national disaster, by prescribing the form of



institutions or by freezing information about the performance of the economy into an ideological gestalt. In all this there is very little Marxism, and what little there is in no way represents a source of authority independent of nationalism in policy formulation. The national Communist states are no more immune to the dangers of blindly pursuing nationalist impulses than non-Communist nationalist regimes. Nationalist ideology may influence any nationalist movement, and the extent to which national Communist ideology affects the independent Communist states should be a subject of continuing investigation. With regard to the Chinese and Yugoslav revolutions, however, we may reassert that ideology did not become operative until after mobilization was well advanced.

## CONCLUSION

The social mobilization of large populations and the emergence of mass political communities must be ranked along with the host of other forces—scientific, medical, and technological—which have transformed the globe in less than a century. The acceptance by large groups of human beings of new or initial political identities has created unprecedented social needs, both rational and emotional, and has produced a type of nation-state not imagined at the time that political configuration first appeared. The current social mobilization of China's huge population dwarfs the now almost forgotten antagonisms that led to Japan's continental intrusion. For the sake of focus, I have consciously underemphasized some of the long-range factors that contributed to the mobilization of the Chinese people: imperialism, the deficiencies of indigenous political institutions and elites, the pathological condition of the former land tenure system and the like. Other studies have dealt at length with these problems. What this study seeks to emphasize is that the boiling point in China was reached during the period of the Japanese invasion.

The fact that this "boiling point" took the form of a war between the Chinese peasants and the Japanese Army is important. The war was not merely the final aggregate of foreign pressure on China; it ruptured the old order in a particular way. The invasion and the resistance movement gave definition to the Chinese mobilization: it placed the leadership of the awakened people in the hands of the Communist Party, and it determined the means by which the new Chinese nation was to emerge—namely, the military unification of China by its armed and militarized population. It discredited the Kuomintang government and, by extension, the KMT's

foreign allies, not merely as political rivals of the Communists but as traitors and enemies to the cause of Chinese independence and sovereignty.

The experiences of the Party and its followers during the resistance are reflected in innumerable ways in the post-1949 government: the use of "thought reform" and "self-criticism" to do for the whole society what they did for the Party in Yenan in its darker hours; the more than passing similarity between the rural communes and the guerrilla bases; and the emphasis upon the organization of the popular will, rather than upon capital equipment and technical competence, as a means to accomplish difficult tasks. A full evaluation of the significance of the resistance for the postwar political order cannot yet be made; but it is not accidental that the leader of the Communist Party is also China's first thinker on military affairs, that the present head of state served as the political commissar of the New Fourth Army, and that the present foreign minister was the victorious commander of Communist forces in central China. In short, China's social mobilization was accomplished under fire, and this experience has exerted a greater influence upon the temper and policies of the post-mobilization government than is commonly appreciated among China's former allies.

In noting the military quality of the Communist rise to power, one should not be led into the mistake (or apologia) that the Chinese Communists succeeded solely through military prowess. Guerrilla warfare is not so much a military technique as it is a political condition.[14] It does not depend primarily on favorable geography, or mobility at the expense of supply trains, or the adroit employment of commando tactics; rather, guerrilla warfare is civilian warfare—that is, conflict between a professional army, possessing the advantages of superior training and equipment, and an irregular force, less well trained, less well equipped, but actively supported by the population of the area occupied by the army. It is precisely this mass backing for the full-time guerrillas that gives rise to the characteristic tactics employed by guerrillas: surprise attack or ambush, extreme mobility, and fighting only at times and places of their own choosing. The population aids the guerrillas by freeing them from logistic anchors, providing them with near-perfect intelligence concerning enemy movements, and hiding fugitives when the need arises.

This presence of an overtly neutral but covertly engaged population is made a prerequisite for the employment of guerrilla tactics by virtually all major guerrilla leaders. Mao Tse-tung states unequivocally, "Because guerrilla warfare basically derives from the masses and is supported by them,



it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and cooperation."[15] Thus, Communist military successes during the resistance must be understood, fundamentally, as a concomitant of peasant mobilization and of the Communist-peasant alliance. Otherwise, the successes of the Communist armies could only be explained by the incompetence of the Japanese and puppet troops—for which there is no objective evidence.

By way of conclusion, we may observe that the Communists' overwhelming victory in the civil war of 1947–49 clearly followed from their achievement of general rural support in occupied China during the war. The celebrated "military tactic" of "surround the cities" employed by the People's Liberation Army (the name of the Communist Army after March 5, 1947) reflected the Kuomintang's weakness more than the Communists' military ingenuity. The Kuomintang troops had to stay in the cities—there to be surrounded—because they were unwelcome in the countryside; most of the rural areas of occupied China had been in Communist hands since 1939. The political basis of the Communists' eventual military triumph was summarized by Mao Tse-tung himself as early as December 25, 1947. He wrote then:

> The Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang and the U.S. imperialist military personnel in China are very well acquainted with these military methods of ours. Seeking ways to counter them, Chiang Kai-shek has often assembled his generals and field officers for training and distributed for their study our military literature and the documents captured in the war. The U.S. military personnel have recommended to Chiang Kai-shek one kind of strategy and tactics after another for destroying the People's Liberation Army; they have trained Chiang Kai-shek's troops and supplied them with military equipment. But none of these efforts can save the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang from defeat. The reason is that our strategy and tactics are based on a people's war; no army opposed to the people can use our strategy and tactics.[16]

Whatever Chiang's advisers may have thought at the time, it seems clear now that Mao was being candid, and clear also that he was correct. The truly significant element in both the resistance war and the civil war was the fact that the Chinese people were awakened and united behind the banner of Chinese Communism.