

Nationalism and Patriotism in China

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In recent years, Beijing has often urged Taiwan to contribute to the “overall interests of the Chinese nation.” However, it has appealed to “patriotism” rather than “nationalism,” as the Chinese Communists define nationalism as a bourgeoisie principle and policy approach toward the nationality problem and national relations which gives top priority to the bourgeoisie’s own interests and rule. Influenced by their Marxist stand and the existence of many minority nationalities in mainland China, the Communists have done their utmost to criticize and eliminate “nationalism” since they took over the Chinese mainland in 1949. To consolidate their rule, they have not only emphasized adherence to the Four Cardinal Principles, but also advocated patriotism, stressing its inseparability with the proletariat, internationalism, and socialism. Therefore, patriotism promoted by the Chinese Communists has become an instrument in the service of Communism. It is very different from nationalism, which has an important link to the Three People’s Principles.

Keywords: nationalism; patriotism; Three People’s Principles; Sun Yat-sen; proletariat; CCP; KMT

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Republic of China (ROC) President Lee Teng-hui’s visit to the United States in June 1995 aroused strong protests from Beijing. This has led some observers to conclude that the force of mainland China’s nationalism cannot be underestimated. In recent years, in addition to advocating “one country, two systems,” Beijing has often urged Taiwan to contribute to the “overall interests of the Chinese nation.” However, it has never used the term “nationalism.” Instead, it has called for “patriotism.” This paper will explore the differences between these two terms.

Nationalism and China

Nationalism has existed in China since ancient times. Sun Yat-sen, founder of the ROC, pointed out that his principle of nationalism

was an extension of the nationalist aspirations inherited from ancestors.¹ Nationalist aspirations of Chinese ancestors were chiefly manifested in defending China from foreign domination, and Sun's enhancements included such ideas as helping the weak and the endangered, the equality of all races, national assimilation, nationalism as the basis of cosmopolitanism, and Pan-Asianism.

The essence of China's nationalism is that China is a nation of the Chinese people, as Sun mentioned in the "Military Government Declaration" issued by the Tungmeng Hui (Alliance Society). He also stated the following points: (1) nationalism is equivalent to the "doctrine of the state" as China has been developing a single state out of a single race ever since the Qin and Han dynasties; (2) nationalism is the key to the development and survival of the Chinese nation; and (3) nationalism calls for equality of all human races and is the way to restore freedom and equality to China.

According to Sun, nationalism's chief concern is to ensure the survival of the nation because China, as a nation which has suffered from foreign aggression, is not qualified for pursuing cosmopolitanism before regaining freedom and equality in the international community. In his fourth lecture on nationalism, Sun asserted that nationalism takes precedence over cosmopolitanism, pointing out that those desiring to pacify the world must first run their own state well. He contended that the Chinese people should revive their lost nationalism and make it shine with greater splendor before discussing cosmopolitanism.² The idea that "those desiring to pacify the world must first run their own state well" shows exactly how nationalism is different from Marxism. Karl Marx emphasized the theory of the withering away of the state, believing that "those desiring to pacify the world must first destroy their own state"; in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Frederick Engels even said that workers have no country and cannot be deprived of things they do not have.³ This was their defense against the accusa-

¹Sun Yat-sen, "History of the Chinese Revolution," in *Guofu quanji* (Complete works of Sun Yat-sen), ed. KMT's Department of Party History, second edition (Taipei: Zhongyang wenwu gongyingshe, August 1981), 2:181.

²Sun Yat-sen, "Lecture Four on the Principle of Nationalism," *ibid.* 1:44.

³Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Selected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), 51.

tion that the communists wanted to abolish their state. In January 1873, Marx asserted that to combat the state is to recognize the state, and this is contrary to eternal principles. Therefore, he said, workers in their hearts should energetically protest against the existence of the state and give proof of their profound theoretical contempt for it by acquiring and reading literary treatises on its abolition.⁴ In addition, Engels also expounded the theory of the withering away of the state in "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State" and "Anti-Duhring." Thus, internationalism that calls for unity of all proletariat in the world does not support nationalism.

Sun understood the communists' desire to extinguish the state. Therefore, even during the period of alignment with Russia, he pointed out that some English and Russian intellectuals had proposed a new theory that opposed nationalism on the ground that it was narrow and illiberal—simply a doctrine of cosmopolitanism. He explained that the nations which had conquered others with imperialism and were trying to maintain their own favored positions as sovereign lords were advocating cosmopolitanism and wanted the world to join them.⁵ This kind of imperialist cosmopolitanism existed even in ancient times. For instance, the Roman Empire used army and diplomacy to invade other countries. Sun thus indicated that the Marxists' use of ideology to deny nationalism was also an imperialist tool and that such an ideology should be judged by its applicability; thus, whether nationalism or Communism was more suited to China should be observed from the viewpoint of modern Chinese history.

Since the Opium War (1839-40), which exposed imperialist cruelty and also exhibited China's weaknesses, the Qing Dynasty had been repeatedly humiliated in its relations with foreign countries. Sun thus established the Hsing Chung Hui (Revive China Society), calling to save China and its people from foreign aggression.⁶ Sun's aspirations for preventing Chinese descendants from being enslaved by other nations showed that nationalism, not class, was the problem in need of an urgent solution in modern China.

It should be noted that Sun tried to overthrow the Manchus because he wanted to establish a republic to save the people from

⁴Karl Marx "Political Indifferentism," in *Karl Marx, Frederick Engels: Collected Works*, vol. 23 (New York: International Publishers, 1988), 392-93.

⁵Sun Yat-sen, "Lecture Three on the Principle of Nationalism," in *Guofu quanji* 1:30.

⁶Sun Yat-sen, "Declaration of the Founding of Hsing Chung Hui in Honolulu," *ibid.* 1:755.

misery. He asserted that even if the country were under the rule of a Han, revolution would still be necessary.⁷ Thus, after the establishment of the ROC, he emphasized not taking revenge against the Manchus. He explained that overthrowing the Qing Dynasty was nationalism's "negative" objective; its "positive" objective was for the Hans, who were the majority of the Chinese population, to sacrifice their blood lineage and traditional dominance in order to sincerely get along with the Manchus, Mengs, Huis, and Tibetans and form a Chinese nation. This principle was defined by Sun as "national unification" when he was sworn in as the ROC's provisional president in 1912. It was referred to as "national assimilation" in the General Rules of the Tungmeng Hui and the Covenant of the Kuomintang (KMT) adopted in the same year. Therefore, Sun's nationalism emphasized unity and harmony while opposing splittism.

During a visit to Europe in the spring of 1905, Sun openly promoted his Three People's Principles (the principles of nationalism, democracy, and people's livelihood) and called for the organization of a revolutionary society. When he visited Japan in July that same year, he was welcomed by overseas Chinese students with great enthusiasm and was praised as a hero creating a new era.⁸ On August 20, the Tungmeng Hui was established in Tokyo with Sun as the president, and subsequently became the leading center of the Chinese revolution. The society's members, including scholars, students, workers, businessmen, soldiers, politicians, and associations, all worked under the guidance of the Three People's Principles.⁹ A series of failed revolts finally led to the successful Wuchang Uprising and the ROC's establishment in 1911. During the Wuchang Uprising, the revolutionaries had a password: "Work together with one heart." All this indicates that unity was the cause of a successful revolution. In retrospect, Sun concluded that the success was not accidental, as people from all walks of life had all done their best to contribute to the revolution. In other words, the revolution was launched and

⁷Sun Yat-sen, "The Three People's Principles and the Prospects of the Chinese Nation," *ibid.* 2:201.

⁸Guoting [Chen Tianhua], "Sun Yat-sen Welcomed by Overseas Chinese Students in Tokyo" *Minbao*, no. 1:66-67; quoted in Wu Hsiang-hsiang, *Sun Yat-sen xiansheng zhuan* (Biography of Dr. Sun Yat-sen) (Taipei: Yuandong tushu gongsi, November 1982), 1:404.

⁹Sun, "History of the Chinese Revolution," 185.

accomplished by the people. The Chinese Communists thus have been mistaken in classifying the 1911 revolution as a “bourgeois revolution” according to Marxism.

The most important movement after the ROC's establishment began on May 4, 1919. Students in Beijing demonstrated to protest against Japanese aggression and the poor performance of Chinese officials in negotiations, resulting in the rise of an all-out patriotic movement and the expansion of the New Culture Movement that had already gained some momentum. The foremost objective of the May Fourth Movement was to resist the Japanese and save the country; in short, the movement was inspired by nationalism. Modern China's nationalism, a product of imperialist aggression, can be called “defensive nationalism,” which was very different from ancient China's “cultural nationalism.” Similarly, the modernization drive launched to ensure the nation's survival was a kind of “defensive modernization.” In a broad sense, the May Fourth Movement was thus a dual defensive movement, emphasizing both nationalism and modernization.

The May Fourth Movement's chief emphasis was nationalism, but nationalism was not its limit. It had two main objectives: to safeguard China's sovereignty and the Chinese people's dignity. The former was achieved by telling foreigners that the Chinese people had the courage to protect China against foreign aggression, and the latter through warning Chinese public officials not to overstep their authorities because the masters of the country were the people.¹⁰ Thus, the former was a manifestation of nationalism and the latter a manifestation of democracy. Both versions of the May Fourth Movement declaration (classic and vernacular Chinese) mentioned that a national assembly should be convened, thus issuing another call for both nationalism and democracy. In March 1925, before Sun died of illness, he reiterated the importance of the convocation of a national assembly and the abolition of unequal treaties. Therefore, the May Fourth Movement's mainstream joined the tide of the people's revolution just as the Yangtze River flows into the East China Sea.¹¹ Later, under the National Government's leadership, a

¹⁰Yang Liang-kung and Tsai Hsiao-chou, eds., *Wusi—Diyiben Wusi yundong shiliao* (May Fourth—The first book of historical materials on the May Fourth Movement) (Taipei: Zhuanji wenxue chubanshe, May 1983), Foreword:1.

¹¹T'ao Hsi-sheng, “The Original Shape and Essence of the May Fourth and June Third Incidents and a Discussion of the Mainstream and the Countercurrent of the New

large number of unequal treaties were abolished and a national assembly was formally convened. Hence, the May Fourth Movement was politically significant in that it safeguarded the results of the 1911 revolution, gave impetus to the subsequent Northern Expedition against warlords, and helped bring about China's unification.

China's nationalism reached its peak during the War of Resistance Against Japan. The heroic sacrifices of civilians and soldiers won a final victory for China, but eight years of war had weakened the country and the National Government. The Chinese Communists seized the opportunity to expand. With Soviet military support, they were able to take over the Chinese mainland and established the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Beijing on October 1, 1949. Thus, China's nationalism encountered unprecedented frustration shortly after it had gained unprecedented success. Earlier that year, KMT president Chiang Kai-shek had considered reforming the party in order to save the country. After the move of the National Government to Taiwan, the Nationalists believed that they could revive the Chinese nation from this island base. Since then, Taiwan has become a symbol of unyielding opposition to Communism and a laboratory for China's modernization.

Patriotism and the Chinese Communist Party

Decades of Communist rule have led most mainland Chinese people to lose faith in Communism and confidence in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Since the end of the Cultural Revolution, Beijing has tried to cope with the crises of faith and confidence by emphasizing patriotism. In a *People's Daily* commentator's article entitled "Patriotism Is a Tremendous Spiritual Force for Building Socialism" published on March 20, 1981, Bai Hua's screen play *Kulian* (Unrequited love) was criticized for violating patriotism. In fact, what Bai Hua had violated was not patriotism, but love for Communism. However, patriotism has since become an indispensable term in Beijing's propaganda.

In July 1983, the CCP Central Committee's Propaganda Department and Secretariat Research Office jointly issued opinions on

Culture Movement," *Dongfang zazhi* (The Eastern Miscellany) (Taipei) 17, no. 1 (July 1983): 7.

strengthening patriotism propaganda and education, which consisted of the following points:

1. In the course of socialist modernization, strengthening patriotism propaganda and education to foster and increase the patriotic spirit among the people, especially youths, is a basic item of politico-ideological work which will build a socialist spiritual civilization with Communism at its core.

2. The content of patriotism, the form, scope, and scale of patriotic movements, and the social forces that drive the patriotic movement forward are developing according to changes in historical conditions.

3. Materials for the patriotism propaganda and education should include the motherland's new achievements; deeds of heroes and advanced collectives; successful construction experiences; the motherland's scenic spots and historical sites; important historical facts and renowned historical figures; outstanding artists and writers and their works; outstanding scientists and their contributions; cultural relics; historical contributions of various nationalities to the motherland; overseas patriots; and renowned patriots of foreign countries.¹²

Judging from all this, Beijing has attempted to merge Communism with patriotism and national culture.

According to the Chinese Communists, patriotism is not an abstract social consciousness transcending time and classes. Its content varies in different historical periods and it is interpreted differently by different classes. Mao Zedong himself said that the specific content of patriotism is determined by historical conditions.¹³ The patriotism of exploiting classes is progressive under specific conditions, but since its foundation is private ownership of the means of production, it has many class limitations. The patriotism of the proletariat is true and thorough patriotism representing the common interests of the people of both one's own country and the people of all nations in the world. In other words, patriotism in mainland China has a meaning that is different from the common definition of the term.

Beijing's advocacy of patriotism has always been linked with united front work. Addressing the CCP's Twelfth National Congress

¹²Chou Yu-sun, "Patriotism and the CCP," *Zhongguo luntan* (China Tribune) (Taipei), no. 190 (August 25, 1983): 61.

¹³Mao Zedong, "The Role of the CCP in the National War," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), 2:196.

on September 1, 1982, Deng Xiaoping said: "We, the Chinese people, have our national self-respect and pride. We deem it the highest honor to love our socialist motherland and contribute our all to her socialist construction. We deem it the deepest disgrace to impair her interests, dignity, and honor."¹⁴ This indicates that Deng regards patriotism as love for Communism. Jiang Zemin has accepted the same criterion. On May 3, 1990, he declared at a report meeting commemorating the May Fourth Movement that patriotism is mainly manifested in devotion to building and safeguarding the causes of socialist modernization and the motherland's unification. He has hoped to transform patriotism into an efficient weapon against "peaceful evolution" so that it will appeal to young people and blur their memories of the bloody Tiananmen massacre on June 4, 1989.

Since 1990, Beijing has repeatedly advocated patriotism in an attempt to regain the people's support. Jiang's speech at the meeting commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the CCP's founding on July 1, 1991, focused on patriotism after eulogizing Mao and Deng. He said:

The united front is a magic weapon which our Party uses to unite all forces possible and continue to attain success in revolution and national development. In the drive for socialist modernization, we should continue to consolidate and expand the patriotic united front as much as possible, and mobilize all positive factors in a joint effort to promote economic and social development and the great cause of reunifying the motherland.¹⁵

He also mentioned Beijing's victory as the premise for a reunified China.

Beijing has recently felt the need to combine patriotism with the fight against peaceful evolution because, as Jiang noted, peaceful evolution and bourgeois liberalization have posed a practical threat to China's independence and sovereignty, national development, and reform and opening-up policies.¹⁶ In actuality, reform and opening up are a kind of peaceful evolution in the economic sphere. Beijing has obviously violated Marxist historical materialism by promoting peaceful economic evolution while resisting peaceful political evolu-

¹⁴Deng Xiaoping, "Opening Speech at the Twelfth National Congress of the CCP," in *Selected Works of Deng Xiaoping 1975-82* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1983), 396.

¹⁵Jiang Zemin, "Speech at the Meeting Commemorating the Seventieth Anniversary of the CCP's Founding," *People's Daily* (Overseas edition), July 2, 1991.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

tion. The Chinese Communists have claimed that those who follow world trends will thrive and those who go against them will perish. However, in the face of the world trend toward democracy, Beijing has published books on the origin and development of the peaceful evolution strategy in order to prove that "international bourgeois hostile forces headed by the United States" have adopted an "undisguised and evil" strategy against mainland China.¹⁷ Beijing has also repeatedly emphasized that the struggle against peaceful evolution is necessary and pressing. For instance, on both the forty-second anniversary of the PRC's founding and the eightieth anniversary of the 1911 revolution, Beijing leaders not only trumpeted patriotism, but also noted that mainland China would never yield to any pressure or difficulty.¹⁸ All this indicates that, fearing the collapse of the CCP and the Communist government, they will carry on the struggle.

The Chinese Communists have violated Marxism many times for their practical interests. After the Shenyang (Mukden) Incident on September 18, 1931, the Chinese people developed a strong anti-Japanese feeling. The Soviet Union was China's neighbor at its northeast border, and since the dictatorial governments of Japan, Germany, and Italy had gradually formed an anti-Soviet axis, the Soviet Union sought compromise with these three countries while calling for the establishment of a united front in the Comintern's name and requesting communist parties of all countries to support it and fight against imperialism. At the end of September 1934, the Chinese Communists began a 25,000-*li* flight that they euphemized as the "long march." The Soviet Union thus found that the CCP was not only unable to overthrow the National Government but faced the danger of being annihilated. To help them, Stalin proposed the use of united front tactics, instructing them to expand the national liberation movement to absorb national forces determined to resist Japan and other imperialist countries. At the Seventh Comintern Congress held in July-August 1935, Chen Shaoyü made a report on the CCP's behalf, pointing out that only an anti-imperialist united

¹⁷Qi Fang, ed., *Heping yanbian zhanlüe de chansheng ji qi fazhan* (The origin and development of the peaceful evolution strategy) (Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, February 1990), 1.

¹⁸"President Yang Shangkun's Speech at the Meeting Commemorating the Eightieth Anniversary of the 1911 Revolution," *People's Daily* (Overseas edition), October 10, 1991.

front could mobilize all Chinese people to engage in a sacred national revolutionary struggle against Japanese imperialism.¹⁹ In accordance with a Comintern resolution, he issued from Moscow the renowned "August 1 Declaration" in the name of the CCP Central Committee and the Chinese Soviet Government, requesting all parties, associations, well-known personages, scholars, politicians, and local governments and military organizations to hold talks for establishing a united Chinese national defense government and a united Chinese armed force for resistance against Japan. Later, the CCP claimed that it was the leader of this patriotic national united front.²⁰ If this claim was true, the merit should have been attributed to Soviet and Comintern leadership in the CCP's action.

After the peaceful settlement of the Xi'an Incident in December 1936, the Nationalists and the Communists entered a cease-fire period. The outbreak of the Lugouqiao (Marco Polo Bridge) Incident on July 7, 1937 then provided the CCP with a good pretext to issue a Declaration on Joint Effort to Meet the National Emergency on September 22 in which it made a four-point pledge as follows:

1. The Three People's Principles constitute the needs of China today, and the CCP is willing to work for their thorough realization.

2. The CCP will abandon its policy of armed uprising against the National Government and its communization movement and cease its policy of forced confiscation of the landlord's land.

3. The Chinese Soviet Government will be abolished and democratic rule will be enforced so as to achieve government unification throughout the country.

4. The Red Army will drop its title and identity and reorganize itself into National Revolutionary Forces placed under the command of the National Government's National Military Council, and it will wait for orders to move out to shoulder front-line duties in the anti-Japanese war.²¹

¹⁹Wang Ming [Chen Shaoyü], "On the Anti-Imperialist United Front," quoted in *GuoGong guanxi jianshi* (A brief history of the KMT-CCP relationship) (Taipei: Institute of International Relations, April 1983), 124.

²⁰"The Patriotic National United Front," in *Aiguo zhuyi jiaoyü da cidian* (A dictionary of education in patriotism), ed. Tang Wuren (Beijing: Haiyang chubanshe, December 1992), 6.

²¹"Declaration on Joint Effort to Meet the National Emergency," in *Zhonggong tongzhan wenjian xuanbian* (Selected documents on the Chinese Communist united front) (Taipei: Zhongguo wenti yanjiu chubanshe, July 1983), 98.

This declaration indicates that for the sake of expedience and survival, the Chinese Communists were willing to abandon Communism and their organization.

At the Sixth Plenum of the CCP's Sixth Central Committee in October 1938, Mao Zedong reported on the CCP's role in the national war, pointing out that a communist can be both an internationalist and a patriot. He continued:

For only by fighting in defence of the motherland can we defeat the aggressors and achieve national liberation. And only by achieving national liberation will it be possible for the proletariat and other working people to achieve their own emancipation. The victory of China and the defeat of the invading imperialists will help the people of other countries. Thus in war of national liberation patriotism is applied internationalism.²²

Mao did not explain why the past slogans such as "Unite, proletariat of the whole world!" and "Workers do not have a country" were inapplicable at this moment. However, he did disclose that for the Chinese Communists, patriotism was only a means, not an end. Beijing's leaders, including Mao, Deng, and Jiang, have promoted patriotism to cope with political realities in different periods. Compared with the Four Cardinal Principles, patriotism is only a practical means without far-reaching significance. It has never been the CCP's "state policy" and is not to be compared with Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

A Comparison of Nationalism and Patriotism

China was a culturally advanced country in ancient times, and Confucius' emphasis on "drawing a clear distinction between the Chinese and the foreigners" may be called cultural nationalism.²³ Since China has a long history and rich cultural heritage, Sun emphasized in one of his lectures on nationalism the importance of carrying forward the traditional culture, though an anti-tradition atmosphere had been developing in academic circles. He expounded that "the nationality or race is formed on the basis of five factors: blood lineage, livelihood, language, religion, and customs and habits.

²²See note 13 above.

²³Hu Chiu-yuan, *Guofu sixiang yü shidai sichao* (Sun Yat-sen's thoughts and the ideological trend of the time), second edition (Taipei: Youshi wenhua gongsi, February 1977), 113.

All the last four factors are undoubtedly cultural. Blood is of course physical, but relationship on the basis of blood lineage is also cultural."²⁴ According to Chiang Kai-shek, nationalism is a manifestation of cultural consciousness which has its roots in national ideals and indigenous sentiments; the spirit of nationalism is best expressed in the way a people values its own history, loves its own culture, safeguards its own dignity, and fights, if necessary, to ensure the independence of its own country.²⁵ Thus, a nationality is formed by people of common blood on the basis of common culture; culture is the soul of a nationality; and nationalism cannot be separated from national culture.

The communists oppose nationalism and also national culture. Marx believed that the development of the bourgeoisie, commercial freedom, and world market would gradually extinguish nationalism and national culture. He was of the opinion that most proletarians had naturally shaken off national prejudices and culture and that all their campaigns are essentially for mankind and against nationalities. His stand was proof of the incompatibility between internationalism and nationalism. Lenin and Stalin were also both against national culture because they believed that it was a bourgeoisie instrument used to deceive people, split the proletariat of various nationalities, and disrupt the proletarian international culture.

Nationalism is essentially defined in a Communist Chinese dictionary as follows:

Nationalism is a bourgeois principle and policy toward the nationality problem and national relations. It has a special characteristic; that is, the bourgeoisie obliterate class contradictions; consider themselves the representative of the whole nationality; place the interests of their own nationality, in fact, the interests of the bourgeoisie of their own nationality, over those of other nationalities; incite the people to reject, discriminate, or even oppress and plunder other nationalities; and try to replace the class struggle with a national struggle so as to maintain their own rule and seek their own interests. Nationalism plays different roles under different historical conditions. Lenin pointed out that it was necessary to distinguish the nationalism of the oppressed nations from that of the oppressor nations, and also that of large nations from that of small nations. In the movement to resist feudal foreign rule and strive for national independence in the periods when capitalism is on the rise; the national liberation movements of modern colonial and semi-colonial nations; and the struggle

²⁴Hu I-kuan, *Sanmin zhuyi yü gongchan zhuyi* (The Three People's Principles and Communism) (Taipei: Zhongyang wenwu gongyingshe, August 1981), 161.

²⁵Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China*, revised edition (Taipei: China Publishing Company, 1969), 267.

against imperialist and hegemonist aggression, the bourgeoisie have allowed nationalism to play a positive role so long as their own interests are enhanced. However, after they have seized and consolidated political power, they have often stepped up their exploitation and enslavement of the people of their own nation under the disguise of "national interests" and at the same time used various methods to encroach on the interests of other nations. The imperialists and colonialists regard nationalism as an ideological instrument for invasion and expansion. In defense of their own policy of oppressing other nations and their initiation of aggressive wars, they advocate national discrimination and incite national hostility. The proletariat support the positive nationalism of oppressed nations and oppose the reactionary nationalism of the oppressor nations. The principle of the proletarian political parties in addressing the nationality problem is internationalism, not nationalism. They hold that all nationalities are equal and have the right to self-determination and that the proletariat of all nationalities should unite.²⁶

Judging by this negative definition, the Chinese Communists regard nationalism as the domain of the bourgeoisie. Affected by Marxism and the existence of many minority nationalities in mainland China, Beijing has done its utmost to criticize nationalism, though it has sometimes used the doctrine as a political strategy to gain profits. Nevertheless, the Communists cannot be called nationalists.

The same dictionary also gives a secondary definition to nationalism as follows:

Nationalism is a component part of the Three People's Principles. It is the Chinese bourgeois democratic revolution's guiding principle for the nationality problem proposed by Sun Yat-sen. At first, the General Rules of Tungmeng Hui and the Military Government Declaration issued in preparation for the uprisings called for "overthrowing the Qing Dynasty to revive China." Later, influenced by the Russian October socialist revolution and with the help of the CCP, Sun explained in a declaration issued by the KMT's First National Congress in 1924 that nationalism has two meanings: the Chinese nation seeks to liberate itself and all nationalities within China are equal. He also pointed out that for most people, the struggle for national liberation has only one objective, that is, to fight against imperialism. In his lecture on the Three People's Principles, he further expounded that he advocated nationalism because he wanted to urge the people of the whole country to unite and form a strong nation capable of resisting the aggression of world powers.²⁷

The Chinese Communists have made a point of emphasizing their "help" to Sun. However, what they have said is not true.

²⁶"Nationalism," in *Jianming shehui kexue cidian* (A concise dictionary of social sciences), ed. Song Yuanfang, second edition (Shanghai: Cishu chubanshe, December 1984), 291.

²⁷*Ibid.*

The CCP was established in Shanghai in late July 1921, twenty-seven years after the establishment of the Hsing Chung Hui, the KMT's predecessor. At that time, the proletariat accounted for only 0.37 percent of China's total population and most were farmers who had just moved into cities, handicraftsmen, and bankrupted petty bourgeoisie. They possessed only the consciousness of peasantry, guild, and lumpen-proletariat, and did not feel the necessity of forming a political party.²⁸ Therefore, the Comintern placed the responsibility of creating a communist party in China on the shoulders of a small number of intellectuals to whom it provided both financial support and training. When the CCP was established, it had fifty-seven members, only thirteen of whom took part in its first national congress, but at that time the KMT was already a political party strong enough to contend with the northern warlords and had over 300,000 members in Guangdong province alone.

What the Chinese Communists have called the influence of the Russian October socialist revolution was actually Sun's own view of the Russian situation. When Sun received Comintern Representative G. Maring in Guilin in December 1921, the latter made a proposal for KMT-CCP cooperation, which Sun tactfully refused on the spot. He said that as revolutionaries, the Nationalists certainly had sympathy for the Russian revolution. However, he pointed out that different countries had different principles for revolution, and that a principle workable in one country could be inapplicable in another one. He made it clear that Communism would be inapplicable in China, though it had worked in Russia.²⁹ In May 1922, S. A. Dalin, representative of the International Communist Youth League, came to China and made a proposal to the KMT for establishing a united front of democratic revolutionaries. His proposal was also rejected. Sun only agreed to allow members of the CCP and the Communist Youth League to individually join the KMT and rejected an alliance between the KMT and the CCP. In August of the same year, the Comintern sent Maring to China again and convened a CCP Central Committee plenum in Hangzhou at which the Communists finally

²⁸Warren Kuo, *Analytical History of the Chinese Communist Party* (Taipei: Institute of International Relations, 1969), 1:3.

²⁹"The True Record of Maring's Audience by Sun Yat-sen," in *Geming wenxian* (Documents on revolution), ed. KMT's Department of Party History (Taipei: Zhongyang wenwu gongyingshe, June 1955), 9:1409.

decided to accept Sun's conditions. Li Dazhao went to Shanghai afterwards to inform Sun that the Communists were willing to individually join the KMT in order to jointly work for a national revolution. Finally, the KMT agreed to admit CCP members into the party. Later, Sun told Maring that since the Communists had joined the KMT, they should observe party discipline and not openly criticize the KMT. He declared that if the Communists did not obey the KMT discipline, he would expel them and if the Soviet Union was partial to the CCP, he would oppose the Soviet Union.³⁰ The Soviet Union was expected to favor the CCP since they both practiced socialism and were very different from the KMT, which was born of nationalism.

In early 1923, Soviet representative Adolph Joffe came to Shanghai and tried to persuade Sun to form an alliance with the Soviets, emphasizing that the Comintern had ordered CCP members to join the KMT in order to help China's national revolution. He agreed that China could only practice the Three People's Principles and could absolutely not practice Communism. He asserted that even the Soviet Union was not yet practicing Communism and that it was questionable whether Communism would be really implemented there for one or two hundred years.³¹ On such a basis, Sun and Joffe issued a joint declaration on January 26 of the same year, stating that Sun himself considered the communist organization and the Soviet system inapplicable in China because China did not have the conditions for such a system to succeed, and that Joffe completely agreed with Sun's stand and understood that China's most important and most urgent problem was unification of the country and achieving complete national independence.³² That a leader of a non-ruling party could impel a representative of a world power to make a declaration disadvantageous to the interests of his own country was unprecedented in history. The declaration also revealed Sun's own understanding of Marxism, as Marx claimed that communist revolution would appear in countries where capitalism was highly developed; China was not

³⁰Chen Duxiu, "Message to Comrades of the Whole Party," in *Gongfei huoguo shiliao huibian* (A collection of historical materials on calamities caused by the Chinese Communists), second edition (Taipei: Zhonghua minguo kaiguo wushinian wenxian bianzuan weiyuanhui and Institute of International Relations, October 1976), 1:429.

³¹*Zhongguo guomindang yu Zhongguo gongchandang* (The Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party) (Taipei: Political Warfare Department, Ministry of National Defense, October 1974), 6.

³²See *Gongfei huoguo shiliao huibian* 1:38.

yet highly industrialized at that time. Sun had his own party, principles, and revolutionary objectives. He therefore wanted to thwart Soviet ambitions before agreeing to an alliance. In short, his policy of "alliance with the Soviets and admission of the Communists" had three objectives: turn the Communists into Nationalists, convert Communism into the Three People's Principles, and transform the class revolution into a national revolution. China's unification and independence, the objectives mentioned in the declaration, were ideals of China's nationalism contradictory to Communism's internationalist objectives.

At the KMT's First National Congress on January 20, 1924, Li Dazhao declared that CCP members joined the KMT as individuals because they wanted to observe its principles, abide by its Constitution, and contribute to the cause of the national revolution, and added that the Communists had no intention of transforming the KMT into a communist party.³³ He also distributed a 2,000-character "Opinions" in which he solemnly pledged support for the national revolution. This pledge helped reassure the KMT that the policy of admitting the Communists could be workable. Finally, the Congress made it clear that the Communists who had joined the KMT had all vowed to abide by the Three People's Principles, and should not violate party discipline. This was the first time that the Chinese Communists openly identified themselves with the Three People's Principles, and the first victory of China's nationalism over Communism. The next victory took place on August 22, 1937, when the National Government issued the order to incorporate the Northwest Red Army into the National Revolutionary Forces. On September 22 of the same year, the National Government made public the CCP's Declaration on Joint Effort to Meet the National Emergency. According to a speech delivered by Chiang Kai-shek on the next day, the CCP's Declaration proved that national consciousness had triumphed over all. The points contained in the Communist declaration, including the abandonment of armed uprisings and the Sovietization movement, and the abolition of Soviet areas and the Red Army, were all necessary conditions for mobilizing the nation's strength against

³³Li Yun-han, *Cong rongGong dao qingdang* (From the admission of the Communists to the KMT to their purge from the party) (Taipei: Zhongguo xueshu zhuzuo jiangzhu weiyuanhui, May 1966), 178.

aggression. The reference to the Communists' readiness to work for the realization of the Three People's Principles further indicated that all of China's efforts could be directed toward one goal.³⁴ Nationalism thus proved far superior to Communism.

In September 1937, soon after the National Government had declared the incorporation of the Red Army into the National Revolutionary Forces, Mao Zedong told his troops that the Sino-Japanese War was a superb opportunity for the CCP's development. He said that its policy would be to use 70 percent of the Communists' efforts for self-expansion, 20 percent for "dealing with" the Kuomintang, and only 10 percent for fighting the Japanese.³⁵ His speech indicated that the CCP's chief objective was self-expansion. On July 10, 1964, when Mao received Kouzo Sasaki, Hisao Kuroda, and Kanemitsu Hososako of the Japanese Socialist Party, he openly thanked the Japanese for invading China, stating that China had greatly benefitted from Japanese militarism without which the CCP would not have been able to seize political power.³⁶ This viewpoint indicated that the CCP gave no thought to nationalism, and that the patriotism Mao advocated was not "love for the motherland," but "love for Communism."

After China's victory over Japan, the CCP expanded its armed forces and stepped up preparations for seizing political power. During this period, the Soviet Union provided the CCP with 700,000 rifles, 11,000 light machine guns, 3,000 heavy machine guns, 1,800 cannons, 2,500 mortars, more than 700 tanks, nearly 900 planes, and nearly 800 large arsenals.³⁷ Grateful for Soviet military aid, the Chinese Communists established a "people's republic" after they had taken over the Chinese mainland. However, after a period of closer ties to the Soviet Union, the PRC contended with the latter for leadership in the communist camp, posing themselves as orthodox Marxists and Leninists while accusing the latter as "revisionist."

Since the late 1970s, the Chinese Communists have tried to consolidate their government by emphasizing adherence to the Four Cardinal Principles and patriotism. The above-mentioned Chinese

³⁴Chiang, *Soviet Russia in China*, 87.

³⁵See *GuoGong guanxi jianshi*, 135.

³⁶See *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui* (Long live Mao Zedong thought) (n.p., 1969; reprinted, Taipei: Institute of International Relations, July 1974), 1:534.

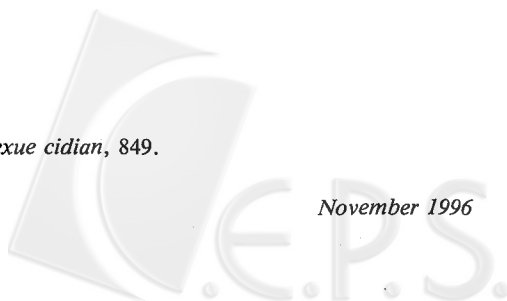
³⁷*Mosike Huayü guangbo* (Radio Moscow Broadcasts in Chinese), September 4, 1967.

Communist dictionary gives the following definition of patriotism:

Patriotism is loyalty and love for the motherland. Mao Zedong pointed out that the specific content of patriotism is determined by historical conditions. The patriotism of the exploiting class is narrow and has class limitations, but it has positive significance under specific conditions. With the intensification of the internal and external contradictions of capitalist countries, bourgeois patriotism's hypocrisy has become more and more apparent. Under the pretense of patriotism, the bourgeoisie often oppress the exploited classes of their own countries, plunder other races, and disseminate distrust of and hatred against other races. The so-called patriotism of the imperialists and hegemonists is in essence national egoism and chauvinism in the service of hegemonist, invasive, and war policies. The proletariat's patriotism integrates with internationalism and proceeds from the common fundamental interests of the people of their own country and those of world countries. The Chinese have a patriotic tradition. With the PRC's establishment, the loyalty of the proletariat and the laboring people for the motherland was completely combined with their love for the new social system and people's country, so that patriotism was displayed at an unprecedented level. Patriotic spirit is part of the most important content of the socialist spiritual civilization.³⁸

Judging from this definition, communist patriotism is inseparable with the proletariat, internationalism, and socialism, and is very different from nationalism. When the Chinese Communists criticize nationalism, they always mention imperialism, and they do the same when eulogizing patriotism. Imperialism is fundamentally opposed to nationalism and capitalism is fundamentally opposed to Communism. Lenin used theories and tactics to equate imperialism with capitalism, thus cleverly equating nationalism with Communism. The Comintern's painstaking effort in this respect was one of important factors that led Chinese youths of the 1930s to switch from nationalism to Communism. This indicates that the seed of Communism came from foreign countries and the soil from which it grew was not class struggle, but the patriotism of the Chinese people aroused since the Opium War. Thus, it can be observed that Leninism is different from Marxism: Leninism's success was tantamount to a declaration of Marxism's bankruptcy, though Marxism was what won the hearts of Chinese intellectuals in the 1930s. Modern Chinese history has consisted mainly of tragedies with the people as players and intellectuals as the leading actors, and patriotism has been one of the play's main themes under the Chinese Communists.

³⁸“Patriotism,” in *Jianming shehui kexue cidian*, 849.



Conclusion

It is fair to attribute the CCP's appearance on the stage of modern Chinese history to the Comintern. At the beginning, most CCP members were intellectuals, and more intellectuals were attracted to join the Party later. Amid China's serious cultural crisis after the May Fourth Movement, these intellectuals became drifting ideology pursuers. When Westernization did not work as they had wished, they accepted Russianized Marxism and regarded it as a panacea. For instance, most Chinese writers of the 1930s were from families that had previously been wealthy or influential; disappointed in society, they misjudged Communism's potential to efficiently reconstruct China and devoted themselves to serving it. They believed that Communism's main objectives were the liberation of individuals and the revival of China,³⁹ but failed to notice that liberalism and nationalism are exactly the opposite of Communism. When these writers' services were no longer necessary, the Chinese Communists tried to suspend their thoughts and even take their lives.

Modern China's nationalism, which was mainly a product of Western invasion, can be called defensive nationalism. After the Russian October Revolution, the Comintern and the Soviet Union capitalized on Chinese intellectuals' patriotism to trumpet a national liberation movement, which was actually a stepping stone for the Communization movement. In view of China's demographic structure, they did not hesitate to contradict the Marxist stand on peasantry and promote a worker-peasant alliance in order to win over the majority of the Chinese people. The Communists finally took over the Chinese mainland in 1949, but the ROC has continued to implement the Three People's Principles on Taiwan with great success, thus accentuating these principles' contrast with communist doctrines. The Three People's Principles emphasize developing the cultural creativity of the Chinese, enhancing freedom and democracy in China, building a wealthy and strong China, and promoting world peace and prosperity. Today, reviving national culture is already an important part of China's nationalism, since the Chinese Communists' strangling of the mainland's cultural creativity has seriously hampered the devel-

³⁹Hsia Chih-ch'ing [C. T. Hsia], *Wenxue de qiantu* (The prospects of literature) (Taipei: Chunwenxue chubanshe, October 1974), 32.

opment of the Chinese nation.

However, the Chinese Communists' recent policy has been to toe a politically-leftist but economically-rightist line while advocating patriotism. They have described patriotism as "fervent love for one's own socialist country, and the consciousness and enthusiasm for defending the results of the victories of socialist countries and building socialism."⁴⁰ Therefore, the patriotism promoted by the Chinese Communists has nothing to do with reviving the Chinese culture, which is the essence of China's nationalism; it is only an instrument of Communism.

⁴⁰"Patriotism," in *Zhexue zidian* (Dictionary of philosophy), ed. Liu Yanbo, Zhang Gongchang, Ma Ganle, and Zhang Nianfeng (Jilin: Renmin chubanshe, February 1983), 548.