

THE BEDFORD SERIES IN HISTORY AND CULTURE

**Mao Zedong  
and China's Revolutions**  
A Brief History with Documents

**Timothy Cheek**  
*University of British Columbia*

2002

BEDFORD/ST. MARTIN'S

Boston ♦ New York

③ Edgar Snow

① Mao talks at Yan'an - print out  
② Chap about land reform in women book

④ Land Reform?  
⑤ Mao's 8 points

formally

firepower cannot bring the enemy down. To attain this objective, written Chinese must be reformed, given the requisite conditions, and our spoken language brought closer to that of the people, for the people, it must be stressed, are the inexhaustible source of our revolutionary culture.

A national, scientific, and mass culture—such is the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal culture of the people, the culture of New Democracy and the new Three People's Principles, the new culture of the Chinese nation.

Combine the politics, the economy, and the culture of New Democracy, and you have the new-democratic republic, the Republic of China both in name and in reality, the new China we want to create.

Behold, New China is within sight. Let us all hail her!

Her masts have already risen above the horizon. Let us all cheer in welcome!

Raise both your hands, New China is ours!

### 3

## *Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art*

1942

As Mao consolidated his power over the CCP in Yan'an in the early 1940s, he was unexpectedly confronted by biting criticism of the party's failure to live up to its own egalitarian goals. These criticisms came from the CCP's left-wing intellectuals, hundreds of whom had come to Yan'an after the outbreak of war with Japan in 1937. In May 1942, Mao paused the Rectification Movement—his broader campaign to eliminate his senior party rivals and mobilize the party rank and file to the ideals of his "On New Democracy" (see Document 2)—to discipline his way-

"Zai Yan'an wenyi zuotianlini shangde jianghua," *Jiefang ribao*, 19 Oct. 1943. Translation from Bonnie S. McDougall, Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art": A Translation of the 1943 Text with Commentary (Ann Arbor: Michigan Studies in Chinese Studies, 1980), 57–58, 60–61, 69–70, 73. McDougall carefully notes the changes made for the official 1951 *Selected Works* edition in her endnotes, which are not retained here.

ward left-wing critics. The re-  
mains and Art.

the brief extracts here from  
fundamental points: First, the  
source of the revolution) and  
it is Mao's view of art is not  
just another brigade in the re-  
they are a necessary "service"  
realizes what artists need  
to come one with the masses  
fighting against the Japanese  
declines this with a mas-  
"conversion" from bourgeois  
is a noble image of reaching  
ing when we remember the  
identical experience.

The translation here co-  
1943 in Yan'an's party in-  
all's careful translation ret-  
earthy style much better than  
Selected Works version.

## INTRODUCTION

(2 May 1942)

Comrades! I have invited  
of exchanging opinions v  
work in literature and art  
the correct development  
assistance from them in  
overthrow our national  
liberation.

There are a number  
national liberation of Ch  
is a cultural as well as  
depends primarily on ar  
army alone is not enou  
kind of army is indispe  
winning victory over th

ward left-wing critics. The result was the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art.

The brief extracts here from Mao's talks at the conference focus on two fundamental points: First, the importance of the social role of art (in service of the revolution) and the need for art to subordinate itself to politics. Mao's view of art is not romantic. He sees "cultural workers" as just another brigade in the revolutionary army. Yet he acknowledges that they are a necessary "screw" in the revolutionary machine. Second, Mao outlines what artists need to do to "serve the people." They need to "become one with the masses" by the physical act of living, working, and fighting against the Japanese with the poor farmers of China. Mao underlines this with a most astonishing autobiographical story of his "conversion" from bourgeois pride to solidarity with the working poor. It is a noble image of reaching out beyond one's social class, but it is chilling when we remember that Mao fully expected everyone to have the identical experience.

The translation here comes from the original published version of 1943 in Yan'an's party newspaper, Liberation Daily. Bonnie McDougall's careful translation retains the feel of Mao's 1940s writings and his earthy style much better than the overly polished and sanitized 1951 Selected Works version.

## INTRODUCTION

(2 May 1942)

Comrades! I have invited you to this conference today for the purpose of exchanging opinions with you on the correct relationship between work in literature and art and revolutionary work in general, to obtain the correct development of revolutionary literature and art and better assistance from them in our other revolutionary work, so that we may overthrow our national enemy and accomplish our task of national liberation.

There are a number of different fronts in our struggle for the national liberation of China, civil and military, or, we might say, there is a cultural as well as an armed front. Victory over the enemy depends primarily on armies with guns in their hands, but this kind of army alone is not enough. We still need a cultural army, since this kind of army is indispensable in achieving unity among ourselves and winning victory over the enemy. Since May Fourth, when this cultural

is objective, writ-  
nditions, and our  
for the people, it  
our revolutionary

ie anti-imperialist  
New Democracy  
re of the Chinese

e of New Democ-  
Republic of China  
create.

as all cheer in

ce

Yan'an in the early  
ism of the party's  
icisms came from  
I come to Yan'an  
1942, Mao paused  
to eliminate his  
file to the ideals  
discipline his way-

at. 1943. Translation  
Review on Literature  
for. Michigan Stud-  
carefully notes the  
notes, which are not

army took shape in China, it has aided the Chinese revolution by gradually limiting the sphere of China's feudal culture and the slavish culture that serves imperialist aggression, and weakening their strength, so that now reactionaries are reduced to resisting new culture by "meeting quality with quantity": reactionaries aren't short of money, and with some effort they can turn out a lot even if they can't come up with anything worthwhile. Literature and art have formed an important and successful part of the cultural front since May Fourth. . . . Our meeting today is to ensure that literature and art become a component part of the whole revolutionary machinery, so they can act as a powerful weapon in uniting and educating the people while attacking and annihilating the enemy, and help the people achieve solidarity in their struggle against the enemy. What are the problems which must be solved in order to achieve this purpose? They are questions relating to our position, attitude, audience, work, and study. . . .

Since the audience for literature and art consists of workers, peasants, soldiers, and their cadres, the question then arises of how to get to understand and know these people properly. To do this, we must carry out a great deal of work in Party and government organs, in villages and factories, in the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army,<sup>1</sup> getting to understand all sorts of situations and all sorts of people and making ourselves thoroughly familiar with them. Our workers in literature and art must carry out their own work in literature and art, but the task of understanding people and getting to know them properly has the highest priority. How have our workers in literature and art performed in this respect until now? I would say that until now they have been heroes without a battlefield, remote and uncomprehending. What do I mean by remote? Remote from people. Workers in literature and art are unfamiliar with the people they write about and with the people who read their work, or else have actually become estranged from them. Our workers in literature and art are not familiar with workers, peasants, soldiers, or even their cadres. What do I mean by uncomprehending? Not comprehending their language. Yours is the language of intellectuals, theirs is the language of the popular masses. I have mentioned before that many comrades like

<sup>1</sup>The Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army were the two major military forces of the CCP after the start of the Second United Front in 1937. The New Fourth Army was all but destroyed by GMD forces in 1941, but the Eighth Route Army survived and grew to become the People's Liberation Army, which conquered all of China by 1949.

to talk about "popular" means that the thought art should become of masses of workers, it should start by studying and understanding the masses of literature and art? "Here your fine principles are parade your qualifications "heroes," and the harder more the masses will stand you, if you want a firm decision to understand and hardship. At this feelings are transformed school I acquired substantial labor such as carrying were incapable of carrying out the only cleans, and soldiers were borrowed from an intellectual would not wear workers thought they were dirty workers, peasants, and and they got to know and petty bourgeois feelings to undergo a fundamental not yet reformed with that intellectuals are not even physically unclean peasants; their hands dung, but they are still This is what I call a transition one class to another. It from the intelligentsia and they must see to it that nation and reform. Our be effective. . . .

ese revolution by  
re and the slavish  
weakening their  
resisting new cul-  
ies aren't short of  
t even if they can't  
rt have formed an  
front since May  
literature and art  
ary machinery, so  
ucating the people  
help the people  
my. What are the  
eve this purpose?  
e, audience, work,

of workers, peas-  
ises of how to get  
do this, we must  
ent organs, in vil-  
the New Fourth  
s and all sorts of  
with them. Our  
wn work in litera-  
d getting to know  
r workers in liter-  
I would say that  
ield, remote and  
ote from people.  
people they write  
lse have actually  
ture and art are  
en their cadres.  
ending their lan-  
the language of  
ty comrades like

two major military  
17. The New Fourth  
th Route Army sur-  
quered all of China

to talk about "popularization," but what does popularization mean? It means that the thoughts and emotions of our workers in literature and art should become one with the thoughts and emotions of the great masses of workers, peasants, and soldiers. And to get this unity, we should start by studying the language of the masses. If we don't even understand the masses' language, how can we talk about creating literature and art? "Heroes without a battlefield" refers to the fact that all your fine principles are not appreciated by the masses. The more you parade your qualifications before the masses, the more you act like "heroes," and the harder you try to sell your principles to them, the more the masses will resist buying. If you want the masses to understand you, if you want to become one with the masses, you must make a firm decision to undergo a long and possibly painful process of trial and hardship. At this point let me relate my own experience in how feelings are transformed. I started off as a student at school, and at school I acquired student habits, so that I felt ashamed to do any manual labor such as carry my own bags in front of all those students who were incapable of carrying anything for themselves. I felt that intellectuals were the only clean people in the world, and that workers, peasants, and soldiers were in general rather dirty. I could wear clothes borrowed from an intellectual, because I considered them clean, but I would not wear workers', peasants', or soldiers' clothes, because I thought they were dirty. When I joined the revolution and lived among workers, peasants, and soldiers, I gradually became familiar with them and they got to know me in return. Then and only then the bourgeois and petty bourgeois feelings taught to me in bourgeois schools began to undergo a fundamental change. Comparing intellectuals who have not yet reformed with workers, peasants, and soldiers, I came to feel that intellectuals are not only spiritually unclean in many respects but even physically unclean, while the cleanest people are workers and peasants; their hands may be dirty and their feet soiled with cow dung, but they are still cleaner than the big and petty bourgeoisie. This is what I call a transformation in feelings, changing over from one class to another. If our workers in literature and art who come from the intelligentsia want their work to be welcomed by the masses, they must see to it that their thoughts and feelings undergo transformation and reform. Otherwise, nothing they do will turn out well or be effective. . . .





support their underestimation. Literature and art are subordinate to politics, and yet in turn exert enormous influence on it. Revolutionary literature and art are a part of the whole work of revolution; they are a screw, which of course doesn't compare with other parts in importance, urgency, or priority, but which is nevertheless indispensable in the whole machinery, an indispensable part of revolutionary work as a whole. If literature and art did not exist in even the broadest and most general sense, the revolution could not advance or win victory; it would be incorrect not to acknowledge this. Furthermore, when we speak of literature and art obeying politics, politics refers to class and mass politics and not to the small number of people known as politicians. Politics, both revolutionary and counterrevolutionary alike, concerns the struggle between classes and not the behavior of a small number of people. Ideological warfare and literary and artistic warfare, especially if these wars are revolutionary, are necessarily subservient to political warfare, because class and mass needs can only be expressed in a concentrated form through politics.

## 4

*Resolution of the Central Committee of the Chinese  
Communist Party on Methods of Leadership*

June 1, 1943

*This resolution of the CCP's politburo of the Central Committee was passed in Yan'an on June 1, 1943. It is attributed to Mao Zedong and is included in volume 3 of his Selected Works as "Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership." We have every reason to believe that he did write it or that it captures what he was telling his comrades. The resolution sums up the organizational lessons of the 1942-44 Rectification Movement in Yan'an and outlines in some detail how the party should organize mass mobilization. It is a blueprint of how to run the revolution at the local level, thus answering the challenge Mao set forth in his 1927*

*"Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu lingdao fangfa de jue ding," in Zhengfeng wenxian (Rectification Documents) (Yan'an, 1944). Translation from Boyd Compton, ed., Mao's China: Party Reform Documents, 1942-44 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1952), 176-83.*

*"Report on the Peasant Movement in Hunan" (see Document 1). It was extremely effective in the 1940s as the CCP extended its sway into new regions of China.*

*The lessons of coordinated but flexible organizing outlined in the resolution have been applied to social movements elsewhere, from the Vietcong in Vietnam to Che Guevara in Latin America to Marxist insurgents in Nepal. The key points are (1) a version of "think globally, act locally," but with a strong Leninist chain of command; (2) a hard-headed assessment of the "masses" one wants to mobilize (usually, 10 percent activists, 80 percent average, 10 percent backward); (3) a focus on nurturing that activist 10 percent to get the movement going; and (4) the importance of coordinated propaganda to guide leadership and motivate the rank and file. The philosophical method of this approach to changing society requires "theory-practice-theory," in which an ideology (Marxism) is tested by actual efforts to do something and then modified on the basis of the practical results of one's efforts. (Nick Knight provides a helpful chart of this process in Document 13.)*

*The most famous phrase from this resolution is the populist credo of Maoism: "Correct leadership must come from the masses and go to the masses." When the CCP followed this heartfelt populist method by taking the time to research local conditions and talk in advance to local people, it was extremely successful. When the increasingly powerful CCP apparatus bypassed the laborious "people's democratic methods" outlined in the resolution, it made mistakes, culminating in Mao's colossal errors in the Great Leap Forward (see Documents 8 and 14).*

*(Passed by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, June 1, 1943)*

1. Two methods must be adopted in accomplishing any task: the first is to combine the general and the particular, and the second is to unite leadership with the masses.

2. If any work or mission lacks a general, universal slogan, the broad masses cannot be moved to action, but if there is nothing more than a general slogan and the leaders do not make a concrete, direct, and thorough application of it with those from a particular unit who have been rallied around the slogan, [if the leaders] fail to break through at some point and gain experience, or fail to use acquired experience in later guiding other units, there is then no way for the leaders to test the correctness of the general slogan and there is no

way for them to carry out its the general slogan will have n

For example, in the general success had adopted the method particular guidance. All those adopt this method. In the reform committee bureaus and subbureau local Party committees must reform plan for the entire year, including two or three units from factories, schools, and military groups, studying them thoroughly, in the process whereby reform and : gaining a detailed understanding experience, thought, etc., the work of certain specific typical number need not be large), leaders of these units to come learn from the units. The same units within these organs, schools of these organs, schools, or method described above. This requires to combine guidance and fails to observe specific units or fails to refer to concrete units general guidance. This is that it can be mastered and applied

3. The experience of the reform that in the process of reform produce a leading nucleus of : administrative leadership of the reforming nucleus into close union with in this way only can reform flourish spirit on the part of the leadership empty flurry of activity on the part of the positive spirit on the part of the reforming nucleus to organize the masses' spirit then cannot flourish or be elevated to a high :

Wherever there are mass groups: those who are comp



Document 1). It was  
and its sway into new

outlined in the reso-  
here, from the Viet-  
America to Marxist  
on of "think globally,  
demand; (2) a hard-  
mobilize (usually, 10  
backward); (3) a focus  
movement going; and  
guide leadership and  
d of this approach to  
n which an ideology  
ing and then modified  
Nick Knight provides

the populist credo of  
masses and go to the  
list method by taking  
advance to local people,  
powerful CCP appa-  
ratus" outlined in the  
colossal errors in the

Committee, June 1,

ishing any task: the  
and the second is to

universal slogan, the  
ere is nothing more  
e a concrete, direct,  
particular unit who  
iders] fail to break  
fail to use acquired  
hen no way for the  
gan and there is no

way for them to carry out its contents; there is then the danger that the general slogan will have no effect.

For example, in the general reform of 1942, all those who met with success had adopted the method of combining a general slogan with particular guidance. All those who were unsuccessful had failed to adopt this method. In the reform movement of 1943, all Central Committee bureaus and subbureaus, cultural committees, and district and local Party committees must not only present general slogans (the reform plan for the entire year), but also acquire experience by selecting two or three units from their own organization, nearby organizations, schools, and military groups (the number need not be large), studying them thoroughly, gaining a detailed understanding of the process whereby reform and study have developed within these units, gaining a detailed understanding of the characteristics of the history, experience, thought, etc., the diligence in study and the quality of work of certain specific typical cadres from among these units (the number need not be large), and in addition personally guiding the leaders of these units to come to concrete solutions of the actual problems facing the units. The same should be done with a number of units within these organs, schools, or military groups, and the leaders of these organs, schools, or military groups should also utilize the method described above. This is also the method to be used by leaders to combine guidance and study. Any leader who, in his studies, fails to observe specific units and specific individuals at the lower levels or fails to refer to concrete cases, will never be able to give the units general guidance. This method must be universally promoted so that it can be mastered and applied by leaders and cadres at all levels.

3. The experience of the reform movement of 1942 has also proved that in the process of reform, the reform of each concrete unit must produce a leading nucleus of minority activists who are the core of the administrative leadership of that unit and it must also bring this leading nucleus into close union with the broad masses engaged in study; in this way only can reform fulfill its mission. If there is only a positive spirit on the part of the leading nuclei, it [the reform] becomes an empty flurry of activity on the part of a minority; yet if there is only a positive spirit on the part of the broad masses, with no powerful leading nucleus to organize the positive spirit of the masses properly, the masses' spirit then cannot endure, nor can it move in a correct direction or be elevated to a high standard.

Wherever there are masses, there are in all probability three groups: those who are comparatively active, those who are average,

and those who are backward. In comparing the three groups, the two extremes are in all probability small, while the middle group is large. As a result, leaders must be skillful at consolidating the minority activists to act as a leading nucleus, and must rely on this nucleus to elevate the middle group and capture the backward elements. A truly consolidated, uniform, and united nucleus for the leadership of the masses must materialize gradually from the mass struggle (for example, in reform and study); it cannot materialize apart from the mass struggle.

In the process of any great struggle, the leading nucleus in the initial, intermediate, and final stages should not be, and cannot be, entirely the same; activists (heroes) in the struggle must be constantly recruited to replace those elements which were originally part of the nucleus, but which have been found wanting on closer inspection, or have degenerated. A fundamental reason that the work in many areas and many organs has not progressed has been the lack of just such a constantly healthy leading nucleus, which is unified and connected with the masses.

If a school of one hundred persons does not have among its teachers, experts, and students a leading nucleus of a few or a few dozen individuals, which is formed naturally (and not assembled by compulsion) by those who are comparatively the most active, orthodox, and intelligent, the school will then be difficult to manage. In all organs, schools, or units of any size, we should start with an application of Stalin's comments on the establishment of leadership, to be found in the ninth section of his discussion of the "Bolshevization of the Party." The standards for this leading nucleus should be the four points raised by Dimitrov<sup>1</sup> in his discussion of cadre policy (unlimited loyalty, relation to the masses, ability to do independent work, observation of discipline). Whether the mission is concerned with war, production, or education (including reform), or whether the work is reform and study, supervision of work, the investigation of cadres, or any other task, we must adopt not only the method of combining a general slogan with particular guidance, but also the method of combining the leading nuclei with the broad masses.

4. In all our Party's actual work, correct leadership must come from the masses and go to the masses. This means taking the views of the

<sup>1</sup>Dimitrov: Georgi Dimitrov, the leader of the Comintern, the Communist International that ran Russia's program for international Communist revolution from 1919 to 1943. Dimitrov was the key leader in the 1930s, and his writings were used by Mao and the CCP in Yan'an.

masses (unintegrated, unrelated, concentration (they are transform systematized views), then go explanation in order to transform that these [views] are maintain their activities. It also means ascertain the correctness of the transformation from the masses and the process is repeated indefinitely and fruitfully. This is the epistemology of Leninism.

5. The idea that correct leading nucleus and the broad and in action; the idea that correct the process of concentrating in the masses; and the idea of correct guidance when the views of these ideas must be universal movement, so that mistaken views questions can be corrected. In the task of consolidating and neglect or are unskillful in nucleus and the broad masses becomes a bureaucratic leadership comrades neglect or are unskillful the mass struggle and delight in subjectivistic views; as a consequential nonsense. Many comrades their task, and either neglect direct, specific, and concrete adopted. As a consequence, a piece of paper, or a meeting. The current reform movement of study, the supervision of we must learn the methods of combining the general and the methods in all our work.

6. Correct guiding views are masses then maintained and method. In concentrating and general slogan and particular

three groups, the two middle group is large, dating the minority on this nucleus to old elements. A truly leadership of the mass struggle (for size apart from the

z nucleus in the ini-  
oe, and cannot be,  
ggle must be con-  
were originally part  
g on closer inspec-  
t that the work in  
as been the lack of  
rich is unified and

re among its teach-  
ew or a few dozen  
mbled by compul-  
sive, orthodox, and  
age. In all organs,  
an application of  
ip, to be found in  
ition of the Party."  
e the four points  
(unlimited loyalty,  
rk, observation of  
ar, production, or  
k is reform and  
res, or any other  
ng a general slo-  
of combining the

must come from  
the views of the

Communist Inter-  
duction from 1919 to  
used by Mao and

masses (unintegrated, unrelated views) and subjecting them to concentration (they are transformed through research into concentrated systematized views), then going to the masses with propaganda and explanation in order to transform the views of the masses, and seeing that these [views] are maintained by the masses and carried over into their activities. It also means an examination of mass activities to ascertain the correctness of these views. Then again, there is concentration from the masses and maintenance among the masses. Thus the process is repeated indefinitely, each time more correctly, vitally, and fruitfully. This is the epistemology and methodology of Marxism-Leninism.

5. The idea that correct relations should be created between the leading nucleus and the broad masses in organization, in the struggle, and in action; the idea that correct guiding views can result only from the process of concentrating from the masses and maintaining among the masses; and the idea of combining a general slogan with particular guidance when the views of the leadership are being carried out... these ideas must be universally propagated in the current reform movement, so that mistaken views existing among the cadres on these questions can be corrected. Many comrades neglect or are unskillful in the task of consolidating activists and organizing a leading nucleus and neglect or are unskillful in the task of closely uniting the leading nucleus and the broad masses. As a consequence, their leadership becomes a bureaucratic leadership separated from the masses. Many comrades neglect or are unskillful at summarizing the experience of the mass struggle and delight in showing off by expressing many subjectivistic views; as a consequence, their own views become impractical nonsense. Many comrades are satisfied with the general slogan for their task, and either neglect or are unskillful at providing close, direct, specific, and concrete leadership after the slogan has been adopted. As a consequence, the slogan goes no further than talk, a piece of paper, or a meeting, and becomes bureaucratic leadership. The current reform movement must correct these defects. In reform of study, the supervision of work, and the investigation of cadres, [we must] learn the methods of uniting leadership and the masses and combining the general and the particular; we must then adopt these methods in all our work.

6. Correct guiding views are those which are concentrated from the masses then maintained among the masses; this is a fundamental method. In concentrating and maintaining, the method of combining a general slogan and particular guidance must be adopted. This is an

demand for close union  
broad masses, the mo  
the close union betwe  
(the more necessary is  
bureaucratic methods o  
must forthwith adopt  
them to subjective and  
ing the latter with the f  
not understand the pri  
and combining the ger  
development of Party w  
and bureaucratic meth  
foundly promote method

*This is Mao's most famous poem, written in western China near the Yellow River. Mao has adopted the voice of classical Chinese poetry. The first stanza should outline the mental picture of the Yellow River. The second stanza reveals the historical forces of the past have stood, and the third stanza, vividly on the verge of revolution: "For men of the new era, the revolution." Written after his Japanese war effort was finishing, this poem conveys his*

Xue, in *Mao Zedong shici xuan*  
Translated by Michael Bullock in  
*Revolution* (London: Oxford Univ  
poem to 1936, but I follow Bulloc

9. Systematic attention has not been given here to questions of detail concerning methods of leadership. On the basis of the principles and directives presented in this resolution, comrades in all areas should reflect carefully and develop their own creative abilities. The more bitter the struggle becomes, the more necessary is the

specific [experi-  
general slogan):  
u must not only  
ame); then new  
periences) and  
of the masses.  
ent and should  
ly good leader-

ucation, reform  
or propaganda,  
r-level guiding  
sitions in lower-  
sume responsi-  
time achieve a  
the individual  
el departments  
contacts only  
el Propaganda  
au; the higher-  
r-level Counter-  
in lower-level  
ent heads, and  
responsibility;  
adary responsi-

imental condi-  
of the general  
d the order of  
r until definite  
ip. It is also a  
ng methods of  
rship with the

questions of  
s of the prin-  
urades in all  
ative abilities.  
essary is the

demand for close union between men of the Communist Party and the broad masses, the more necessary to Communist Party members is the close union between general slogans and particular guidance, and [the more necessary is] the thorough disruption of subjectivistic and bureaucratic methods of leadership. All leading comrades of our Party must forthwith adopt scientific methods of leadership and oppose them to subjective and bureaucratic methods of leadership, overcoming the latter with the former. Subjectivists and bureaucrats who do not understand the principles of uniting leadership with the masses and combining the general and the particular, greatly hamper the development of Party work. We must therefore oppose subjectivistic and bureaucratic methods of leadership, and universally and profoundly promote methods of leadership which are scientific.

## 5

### *Snow*

1945

*This is Mao's most famous poem, written in the Yan'an area of north-west China near the Yellow River, a dry and rugged region. Here Mao has adopted the voice of classical Chinese poetry, which is short and lyrical. The first stanza should be read like a Chinese painting—dabs of ink outlining the mental picture of Mao viewing this grandiose landscape. The second stanza reveals Mao's feelings. He stands where great emperors of the past have stood, both literally by the Yellow River and figuratively on the verge of taking power. His conclusion is resolutely revolutionary: "For men of vision/We must seek among the present generation." Written after his consolidation of power inside the CCP, as the Japanese war effort was flagging and the CCP "base areas" were growing, this poem conveys his confidence and elation.*

Xue, in *Mao Zedong shici xuan* (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1986), 61-62. Translated by Michael Bullock and Jerome Ch'en in Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 340-41. Chinese editions date this poem to 1936, but I follow Bullock and Ch'en's dating of 1945.