



Forging Leninism in China

Forging Leninism in China is a re-examination of the events of the Chinese revolution and the transformation of the Chinese Communist Party from the years 1927 to 1934. Describing the transformation of the party as “the forging of Leninism”, Joseph Fewsmith offers a clear analysis of the development of the party. Drawing on supporting statements of party leaders and a wealth of historical material, he demonstrates how the Chinese Communist Party reshaped itself to become far more violent, more hierarchical, and more militarized during this time. He highlights the role of local educated youth in organizing the Chinese revolution, arguing that it was these local organizations, rather than Mao, who introduced Marxism into the countryside. Fewsmith presents a vivid story of local social history and conflict between Mao’s revolutionaries and local Communists.

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Mao and the Remaking of the Chinese
Communist Party, 1927–1934

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*To the memory of Gao Hua and to the Chinese
scholars who have worked to deepen our
understanding of modern China*

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Acknowledgments

I did not intend to write this book. Having gotten some understanding about how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) worked through my work on elite and local politics in the contemporary period, I became curious about when and how this system came together. About that time, I read of Gao Hua's seminal work, *Hongtaiyang shi zenyang sheng qide?* (which has been masterfully translated by Stacy Mosher and Jian Guo as *How the Red Sun Rose: The Origins of the Yanan Rectification Movement, 1930–1945*). Gao's book opened up a party history with which I had been largely unfamiliar. It also opened up many questions, which I previously thought were unanswerable. Talking to Chinese historians and reading the many new sources that have come out in recent years, I found many clues to understanding party history. In particular, I began to probe the history of the party following the violent split with the Guomindang. I found that the ideas of Communist leaders in this period were different than I had previously thought and that local history played a much more important role than I had realized. So did violence. As I have explored this history, I have had the benefit of the guidance of many people. I greatly appreciate Elizabeth J. Perry, Joseph Esherick, and Daniel Koss for reading part or all of the manuscript. Their comments helped shape an awkward manuscript into what I hope is a readable book. I am also happy to acknowledge and thank Chris Buckley, Timothy Cheek, Chen Yung-fa, Ding Renxiang, Feng Xiaocai, Steven M. Goldstein, Han Gang, Han Shu, He Xiaocai, Huang Daoxuan, Huang Wenzhi, Jeremy Menchik, Wen Rui, Yang Kuisong, Ying Xing, and Zhang Hongqing. Needless to say, any errors in the text are solely the responsibility of the author.

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