

## Domination and Mobilization

Examining the miraculous rise of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the surprising downfall of the Kuomintang (KMT) in the early twentieth century, Xiaobo Lü reveals that domination and mobilization are key for revolutionary parties to seize state power, challenging the prevailing wisdom on power-sharing in authoritarian parties and emphasizing the importance of dominant party leaders for organizational strength and resource mobilization. Lü further demonstrates that the CCP's mass mobilization infrastructure, initially seen as a disadvantage before the Sino-Japanese War, became a powerful asset during the war and led to its victory. The KMT's elite mobilization infrastructure, conversely, was decimated by the war, and its lack of a strong leader prevented a successful shift in party-building strategy. Party building subsequently played a pivotal role in shaping the successes and failures of resource mobilization for both parties. The book sheds new light on the origins of the CCP and the inner workings of revolutionary parties, making it a landmark study in Chinese politics.

Xiaobo Lü is Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley. His research centers on distributive politics of fiscal policies and party building in authoritarian regimes, with a focus on China. Lü is particularly interested in how fiscal extraction shapes state–society relations and its implications on the evolution and functioning of authoritarian parties.

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## *The Rise and Fall of Political Parties in China's Republican Era*

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This was not the book I originally set out to write. My initial interest lay in studying state-building under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in mainland China and the Kuomintang (KMT) in Taiwan after 1949. During the early stage of my research of the original topic, I cannot escape the lingering questions concerning the political development experienced by these two parties prior to 1949. It soon became clear that the reversal of fortunes between these two parties during the pre-1949 era was a far more fundamental and intriguing topic. After all, this is perhaps the only time in history when the CCP faced intense political competition from another political party. Unlike its dominance today, the CCP was the underdog in its struggle with the KMT, and the reversal of fortune between these two parties took everyone by surprise.

The deeper I ventured into this research, the more captivating it became, despite the challenges of navigating unfamiliar territory in both subject matter and research methodologies. I had to immerse myself in party histories through archival research and employ qualitative methods to uncover key empirical insights. Ultimately, the research process for this book became a highly rewarding journey, as I learned far more than I had anticipated. Most importantly, it provided me with new perspectives on the formation and evolution of political parties operating outside electoral institutions, as well as on the logic of CCP rule in contemporary China and political development under the KMT in Taiwan.

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