

## Edgar Snow and the Construction of the International Image of the CPC During the Yan'an Period: Special Investigation Based on Edgar Snow's Archives

ZENG Qinhan<sup>[a]</sup>; YANG Yuxin<sup>[b]</sup>; ZENG Rong<sup>[b],\*</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup>Library, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China.

<sup>[b]</sup>School of Marxism, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China.

\*Corresponding author.

**Supported by** National Social Science Fund Project "Research on the Construction of the CPC's Foreign Language System in Yan'an Period"(NO. 23ADJ007). Guangdong Province Philosophy and Social Science Planning Project "A Study on the Chinese Characteristics of Contemporary National Identity" (No. GD23WTC05). 2022 Key Discipline Project of International Communication of Chinese Culture (No. ZHWH202201). Project of the Party Regulations Research Center of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies "Research on the Inner Party Laws and Regulations of the CPC during the Yan'an Period".

Received 14 February 2025; accepted 13 March 2025

Published online 26 April 2025

### Abstract

As the first foreign journalist to interview the revolutionary base in northern Shaanxi, Edgar Snow conducted an in-depth interview with Mao Zedong and other leaders of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Taking this opportunity, the CPC, represented by Mao Zedong, gradually conveyed the party's revolutionary principles and policies to the outside world by expressing revolutionary words to foreign journalists, and initially established the image of the CPC as a revolutionary party. At the same time, Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and other leaders of the CPC deeply explained the party's democratic political concept around what democracy is, why democracy should be implemented, and how to achieve democracy, which further promoted the spread of the CPC's democratic discourse. With Edgar Snow's publication of a series of newspaper articles overseas and the wide distribution of Red Star Over China, the CPC's idea of unity and resistance and the concept of democratic politics have been widely spread in the international community, which has strongly promoted the construction of the international image of the CPC.

**Key words:** Edgar Snow; Mao Zedong; the CPC; International Image

Zeng, Q. H., Yang, Y. X., & Zeng, R. (2025). Edgar Snow and the Construction of the International Image of the CPC During the Yan'an Period: Special Investigation Based on Edgar Snow's Archives. *Canadian Social Science*, 21(2), 1-7. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/13716>  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/13716>

### INTRODUCTION

As the first Western journalist to interview in the revolutionary base in northwest China, Edgar Snow not only published a large number of newsletters in foreign media to cover the CPC and the Chinese revolution vividly and simply, but also promoted people's understanding of the CPC around the world through the wide distribution of Red Star over China. The archives of Edgar Snow in the University of Missouri Special Collections fully preserve Snow's diaries, letters, notes, manuscripts, etc., and have extremely high historical value. By using the documents about the CPC in Edgar Snow's archives, this paper systematically analyzes Mao Zedong and others' in-depth interpretation of the party's democratic political concept around what democracy is, why democracy should be implemented, and how to achieve democracy, as well as the history of promoting the spread of the CPC's democratic discourse, in order to reveal the historical face of the construction of the CPC's international image.

In October 1935, the three main forces of the Red Army successfully met in northern Shaanxi, marking the end of the Long March of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. The victory of the Long March greatly promoted the political and ideological maturity of the CPC, fully demonstrated the purpose and proposition of the CPC, and expanded the influence of the CPC

and the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. At the same time, Japanese imperialism intensified its aggression against North China, forcing the Nationalist army to withdraw from North China, Beiping, and Tianjin in June 1935, thereby exposing the people of North China to the iron hooves of the Japanese aggressors. In order to promote the formation of the anti-Japanese democratic movement of the Chinese people, the CPC led and launched the students in Peiping to hold a massive anti-Japanese and national salvation demonstration on December 9. The parade team publicly exposed the ambition of Japanese imperialism to invade China, and severely criticized the compromise and surrender policy of the Kuomintang government. As a result, it was suppressed by the Kuomintang authorities, which immediately led to a nationwide movement, known as the December 9th Movement in history. In this context, the voice of the people from all walks of life across the country to resist Japan and save the nation from extinction is growing, which greatly promotes the awakening of the Chinese people.

From December 17th to 25th, the Central Committee of the CPC held an expanded meeting in Wayaobu, Anding County, and northern Shaanxi. The Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPC on the Current Situation and the Party's Tasks, passed at the meeting, pointed out that the current political situation has undergone a fundamental change, marking a new era in the history of the Chinese revolution. This is reflected in the Japanese imperialism turning China into a colony, and the Chinese revolution preparing to enter a nationwide revolution, which is the eve of war and revolution in the world. On the 27th, Mao Zedong delivered a report titled "On the Strategy of Opposing Japanese Imperialism" at a meeting of party activists. In the report, he criticized the erroneous viewpoint within the party that the Chinese national bourgeoisie cannot unite with Chinese workers and peasants. He emphasized that the current task of the party is to merge the activities of the Red Army with all the activities of workers, peasants, students, petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie across the country into a unified national revolutionary front, and thus formally proposed the slogan of establishing an anti-Japanese national united front. It is worth noting that, starting from the relationship between the Chinese revolution and the world revolution, Mao Zedong specifically discussed the issue of international assistance in his report, saying that the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression was fundamentally consistent with the world people's anti-fascist war. In the current anti-Japanese wave in China and the anti-fascist upsurge in the world, the Chinese people's war of resistance against Japan needs the assistance of the international community. It can even be said that international assistance was a necessary condition for China's victory in the War of Resistance

against Japan and the Chinese Revolution.

It is precisely based on the above understanding of the importance of international assistance that Mao Zedong, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai and other members of the CPC actively liaised with people from all walks of life at home and abroad and extensively carried out the work of the united front. Especially the stigmatization of the CPC by the Kuomintang authorities has led to many misunderstandings about the image of CPC leaders among the outside world, and there is an urgent need for CPC leaders to clarify this through external discourse and dissemination. Faced with the information blockade, public opinion attacks, and massive slander by the Kuomintang authorities, Mao Zedong and others actively planned and launched attacks, establishing contact with left-wing Kuomintang figures, international journalists, and others through public declarations, communication exchanges, etc., with the aim of breaking the Kuomintang authorities' news control and public opinion attacks, and promoting the party's unity and resistance against Japan.

It was in this context that American journalist Edgar Snow's visit to northern Shaanxi in 1936 was able to take place. On May 15, 1936, the Central Committee of the CPC held a Politburo Standing Committee meeting in northern Shaanxi. Mao Zedong, Zhang Wentian, Bo Gu, Wang Jiaxiang, Lin Boqu, Li Weihan, and Wu Liang attended the meeting on an equal footing. An important topic of this meeting was to discuss a list of issues submitted by Edgar Snow, which involved the relationship between China and other countries in the world under the situation of Japanese imperialism invading China, as well as China's foreign policy issues. Since these issues are major issues of international concern, the participants conducted in-depth research and discussion. They were fully aware of the importance of properly answering these issues, and agreed that by answering these questions, the CPC can spread its internal and external policies to the world, promote the development of friendly relations between the Chinese people and people around the world, and thus help build a broad international anti-Japanese united front. Mao Zedong emphasized in his concluding speech at the conference that while Japan invaded China, it also infringed upon the interests of other countries in China. Therefore, we should not only build a domestic united front, but also focus on building an international united front. Obviously, this meeting was an extensive and specific discussion of international relations and foreign policies by the CPC Central Committee at that time, and it was also the first meeting in the history of the CPC devoted to international relations.

On July 13, 1936, Edgar Snow arrived at the location of the Central Committee of the CPC in Bao'an, and the leaders of the CPC held a welcoming ceremony. On the

15th, he met Mao Zedong in a simple cave dwelling, and through dozens of long talks throughout the night, laid the foundation for writing a far-reaching work called "Red Star over China" (also known as "Journey to the West"). According to Edgar Snow's recollection, one important reason why Mao Zedong and other leaders of the CPC attached great importance to Edgar Snow's visit and discussed the issues raised at a special meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Political Bureau was that through Edgar Snow's visit, Mao Zedong had the first opportunity to speak to the world, and more importantly, to the whole of China. Although the Kuomintang adopted a cultural control policy and imposed news censorship and public opinion control on the CPC, Mao Zedong deeply realized that once his views were published in English, despite the Kuomintang's news censorship, they would still be conveyed to the majority of Chinese intellectuals.

## THE CPC'S COMMUNICATION WITH EDGAR SNOW

In the face of the blockade of Yan'an by the Kuomintang government, Mao Zedong, Zhu De and other Communist Party leaders took the initiative to contact the outside world, actively invited Edgar Snow to visit and investigate, and elaborated on the internal and external policies of the CPC through forums, speeches, widely sent letters, and revised interview records. These actions broke the news blockade and public opinion attacks of the Kuomintang government authorities against the CPC, laying the foundation for clarifying the suspicion of the international community and winning extensive assistance from people of all countries.

As early as July 1936, when the Central Committee of the CPC arrived in northern Shaanxi, Mao Zedong and other CPC leaders actively invited American journalist Edgar Snow and others to visit, aiming to smash the Kuomintang's blockade of public opinion against the CPC through the interviews and reports of journalists, and let the outside world, especially the international community, understand the political views of the CPC. On the 14th, Mao Zedong attended the welcome party for Edgar Snow's visit. The next day, Mao Zedong specifically met with Edgar Snow to answer his questions about the CPC's foreign policy. In the next few days, Mao Zedong and Edgar Snow had a long talk all night, which initially conveyed the CPC's foreign policy formulation and implementation to the outside world.

From the topic that the CPC leaders talked with Edgar Snow, it is undoubtedly a key point for the CPC to publicize the internal and external policies of the Party and spread the image of the revolutionary party of the CPC to the outside world. Strengthening the external publicity of the Party's policies and guidelines is an important measure to break through the Kuomintang's news blockade and

public opinion control over the Communist Party. On the one hand, in order to gain a legitimate domestic political space, Mao Zedong seized the opportunity of Edgar Snow's visit to the revolutionary base in northern Shaanxi to systematically expound the CPC's domestic policies, aiming to break the Kuomintang's public opinion attacks and propaganda against the CPC. On July 15, in a talk with Edgar Snow, Mao Zedong said that in the face of Japanese imperialist aggression, the Chinese people must unite to resist Japanese imperialism. He emphasized that an independent and free China will make great contributions to the world. On the 18th, Mao Zedong and Edgar Snow further discussed the issue of the CPC's domestic policy. In answering the question about the difference between the policies of the CPC and the Kuomintang, he pointed the spearhead of the struggle at the national government, exposing the fact that Chiang Kai shek borrowed a large amount of foreign debt and used it to carry out warlord civil war or fight against the Red Army. He pointed out that foreign loans and investments should only be used to develop the Chinese economy and improve people's lives, and this behavior of the Nationalist government will only cause huge losses to China's sovereignty.

At the same time, Mao Zedong elaborated on the logical relationship between the evolution of the anti-Japanese war situation and the transformation of the CPC's policies in his conversation with Edgar Snow, aiming to break the Kuomintang's false propaganda against the CPC and clarify the actual situation of the CPC's domestic policies to the international community. Especially in issues such as class struggle and land revolution, the CPC can be said to have undergone fundamental policy changes. On the one hand, the CPC has changed its previous concept of class revolution and granted political rights to both the petite bourgeoisie and freelancers Capitalists or landlords who are willing to participate in the revolution are also granted political rights. They not only have the right to vote, but can also be elected to serve in the government. On the other hand, the CPC timely adjusted its land revolution policy, advocating that the land of wealthy peasants would no longer be confiscated, and landlords could also receive land. Obviously, the adjustment of the CPC's domestic policy was based on the needs of the development of the anti-Japanese war situation, which is of great significance for uniting the anti-Japanese war, winning the support of the people, and striving for a legitimate domestic political status.

In addition, in order to promote the internal and external policies of the CPC and its anti-Japanese stance, and further refute the Kuomintang's stigmatizing behavior towards the Communist Party, Mao Zedong deeply expounded the Communist Party's unity and anti-Japanese stance during the conversation. Mao Zedong stated that the CPC not only has the determination and will to

resist Japan, but also has the ability to fight to the end. He promised that under certain conditions, the Chinese Communist Party could deploy a more powerful and efficient anti-Japanese force into the war than the entire Nationalist government. At the same time, he emphasized the importance of unity in the resistance war, stating that if we can widely unite and mobilize all the people to fight against Japan, our people's army will become an invincible force.

It is worth noting that Mao Zedong revealed a core issue of the cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party in the Anti-Japanese War, namely the issue of leadership. When answering the question of cooperation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party, Mao Zedong stated that the CPC would submit to a highest military committee for resistance against Japan based on the goal of unity and resistance. However, the CPC did not unconditionally obey the Nationalist Government, but rather adhered to the principle of national resistance against Japan. The fundamental goal of this principle is to establish a unified people's democratic government, which is in line with the interests of the people and will receive unanimous support from the people.

Mao Zedong seized the opportunity of an interview with American journalist Edgar Snow to systematically expound on the CPC's foreign policy, aiming to clarify international suspicions and strive for a favorable international public opinion environment. In response to the questions raised by the international community about the relationship between the CPC and the Communist International and the Soviet Union, Mao Zedong pointed out in an interview with Edgar Snow that the Communist International is not an administrative organization and does not have administrative power over the CPC. It can only serve as an adviser and does not have any political power. At the same time, the CPC is a political party in China. It represents the interests of the Chinese people and is the spokesman of all Chinese people. It cannot represent Russia or the Communist International.

At the same time, Mao Zedong, starting from the fundamental task of resisting Japanese aggression, profoundly pointed out the serious threat of Japanese aggression to China and world peace. He stressed that Japanese imperialism is not only the enemy of the Chinese people, but also the enemy of the people of peace loving countries all over the world, especially those countries with interests in the Pacific Ocean, namely, the enemies of the people of the United States, Britain, France, the Soviet Union and other countries, thus putting the Japanese aggressors in the opposite position of China, the United States, Britain, France, the Soviet Union and other countries. He stated that countries should establish a world alliance against Japan, aggression, and fascism, and form a common front for maintaining world peace.

## THE EXPRESSION OF REVOLUTIONARY DISCOURSE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE IMAGE OF REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL PARTIES

The CPC, represented by Mao Zedong, gradually conveyed the party's revolutionary principles and policies to the outside world by expressing revolutionary words to foreign journalists, thus establishing the image of the CPC as a revolutionary party. In the process of expressing revolutionary discourse, the CPC has combined ideological discourse power with revolutionary leadership power, making preliminary attempts to achieve the connection between competing for discourse dominance and mastering revolutionary leadership power.

Clarifying the essential attribute of the revolutionary party of the CPC is one of the main contents of the Communist Party leaders' revolutionary discourse in Yan'an. Before his interview in Yan'an, Edgar Snow asked Mao Zedong in writing about the nature of the CPC from the perspective of external concerns. In reply, Mao Zedong said that the CPC is a revolutionary party, and every party member is always a social revolutionary, not a reformist. He also pointed out that there are two themes in the process of the Chinese revolution, one is the national and democratic revolution, and the other is the social revolution. The nature of the current revolution belongs to the former, and only when the social revolution is successful can China truly enter socialism.

Clarifying the essential attribute of the revolutionary party of the CPC is one of the main contents of the Communist Party leaders' revolutionary discourse in Yan'an. Before his interview in Yan'an, Edgar Snow asked Mao Zedong in writing about the nature of the CPC from the perspective of external concerns. In reply, Mao Zedong said that the CPC is a revolutionary party, and every party member is always a social revolutionary, not a reformist. He also pointed out that there are two themes in the process of the Chinese revolution, one is the national and democratic revolution, and the other is the social revolution. The nature of the current revolution belongs to the former, and only when the social revolution is successful can China truly enter the socialist stage.

From the perspective of promoting the development of the entire nation, even if a democratic republic is established, we cannot immediately implement socialism, which is a fundamental principle. He stressed that every member of the CPC must obey this basic principle, which was determined by the objective needs of China's war of resistance and revolutionary development. In

May 1937, Edgar Snow's wife Helen Edgar Snow conducted an interview with Mao Zedong. Mao Zedong stated that the Chinese Communists are advocates of revolutionary transformation. We advocate the shift from the democratic revolution to socialism. However, the revolutionary transformation we advocate is to unite the revolutionary bourgeoisie in terms of revolutionary ideas and actions, which is a necessary bridge to socialism.

Obviously, under the circumstances of the all-out national resistance against Japan, based on the objective need to unite all forces to fight against Japanese aggression, the CPC not only could not immediately implement socialism, but also had to vigorously promote the development of national capitalism. It's true that when it comes to the historical process of the Chinese revolution, the theoretical elaboration on revolution by Marx's classic writers is the basic starting point to discuss this issue. As an important part of Marx's theoretical system, Marx's theory of leaping over the Cafudin Canyon of capitalism not only had an important impact on the study of institutional change in the developed capitalist countries in Europe and America at that time, but also had an important guiding significance for the revolutionary cause in the world. Lenin put this theoretical assumption into practice for the first time. Under the specific historical conditions of the outbreak of the first World War at the beginning of the twentieth Century, Russia, without going through the stage of full development of capitalism, realized the leap over of capitalism through social revolution. On June 24, 1,937, when talking with Helen Edgar Snow, Mao Zedong borrowed Marx's theory of crossing the capitalist kafurdin Canyon, and profoundly pointed out that China may enter socialism directly without going through capitalism. Through a profound analysis of the situation of China's revolution and the situation of the world's revolution, Mao Zedong further said in an interview that every Chinese Communist must deeply understand that China can avoid capitalism and directly achieve socialism. The length of this transitional period will depend on the world situation and China's situation, and it is not yet certain. However, it will be a long time. We are ready for a long and hard struggle. However, Mao Zedong immediately pointed out that in this process, some development of capitalism is inevitable and necessary. Through industrial development, it will also strengthen the leadership and strength of the proletariat.

Mao Zedong's above views were further verified in Helen Edgar Snow's subsequent interviews. In July and August of 1937, Helen Edgar Snow interviewed Wu Liangping, Zhang Wenbin and other leaders of the CPC. One of the core issues they talked about was the relationship between the CPC and the Chinese revolution. Wu Liangping said in an interview that as a revolutionary party, one of the goals of the CPC is to

build a socialist country. And the realization of this goal does not conflict with the promotion of the development of national capitalism, because revolution must be carried out according to different specific stages. Especially in the face of the aggression of Japanese imperialism, the Anti-Japanese and anti-imperialist struggle is the highest task. The interests of the proletariat are consistent with the interests of the same nation. Therefore, the development of national capitalism is conducive to the transformation to the socialist form in the future.

On August 19th, after interviewing Zhang Wenbin, Helen Edgar Snow lamented that the CPC, as a revolutionary party, although its members did not experience the industrial revolution stage like that in Europe and the United States, they were undoubtedly men and women with modern ideas and modern lifestyle. In the view of the CPC, socialism cannot be established without the bourgeois democratic revolution, which is obviously totally different from the propaganda of the Nationalist Government authorities and the report of public opinion.

From the revolutionary discourse content expressed by Mao Zedong and other Chinese Communists before and after the outbreak of the comprehensive anti-Japanese War, the revolutionary goal is to win the war against Japanese invaders. The people's army, represented by the Eight Route Army, becomes a revolutionary army under the guidance of the revolutionary policy, which is the main body to achieve this goal. Around the above revolutionary goals, when the CPC formulated and implemented revolutionary policies, it regarded promoting the whole nation's Anti-Japanese war as an urgent task, and regarded whether it could seize the leadership of the revolution as the fundamental path to achieve the above revolutionary goals.

It should be noted that after the outbreak of the full-scale war of resistance, the people who were considered to be representative had a high degree of revolutionary leadership, and when expressing and spreading revolutionary discourse, the process of the revolution and the purpose of seizing leadership of the war of resistance, reflecting the right to speak ideological discourse. Discourse strategy combined with revolutionary leadership. In an interview with Helen, it was made clear that the proletariat must serve as a leader, so the proletarian party must also serve as a leader, which is determined by the nature of the revolution and its historical mission. It is precisely based on this nature and historical mission that policies to promote national capitalism are adopted to strengthen the leadership and strength of the proletariat. The leadership role played by the proletariat in the fight against imperialism and feudal revolution is to make the transition to an important factor that makes it possible.

## THE EXPRESSION OF DEMOCRATIC DISCOURSE AND THE SPREAD OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL IDEAS OF THE CPC

Before and after the outbreak of the all-around war of resistance against Japan, the CPC, represented by Mao Zedong, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai and others, took the opportunity of the visit of American journalist Edgar Snow to systematically elaborate the connotation of the party's democratic centralism from the perspective of the relationship between democracy and concentration, centering on what is democracy. An innovative exposition was made on the relationship between democracy and the resistance war, focusing on the question of why democracy should be implemented. Focusing on how to realize democracy, it explained the implementation path of democratic politics of the CPC during the Anti-Japanese War. While expounding the democratic discourse of the CPC to the outside world, Edgar Snow walked into the party, government, army and people in Yan'an, experienced the implementation effect of the democratic political concept under the governance of the CPC, and widely publicized the democratic political concept of the CPC and promoted the spread of the party's democratic discourse through the publication of newspaper articles and the release of *Red Star Shines on China*, which laid an important foundation for the construction of the democratic political image of the CPC.

First of all, Mao Zedong and other members of the CPC systematically elaborated the connotation of the party's democratic centralism from the perspective of the relationship between democracy and centralism around what is democracy. In an interview with Edgar Snow on July 23, 1936, Mao Zedong pointed out that the current Chinese revolution is a bourgeois democratic revolution, which determines the revolutionary goals and tasks of the CPC. Specifically, as a firm social revolutionary, the CPC has undertaken two revolutionary tasks, which need to go through two stages: the national and democratic revolution stage, and the social revolution stage. Mao Zedong emphasized that in the two revolutionary stages, one before and one after, corresponding tasks and goals must be completed, and they must be fully achieved. The tasks and goals of the first revolutionary stage are determined by the national and democratic nature of the Chinese revolution. And when the first revolutionary task and goal are completed and developed to a certain extent, we will transition to the stage of social revolution.

With the development of democratic politics of the CPC, when the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee of the CPC was held in October 1938, Mao Zedong made a systematic exposition of the party's democratic issues, including democratic centralism, when he made a political report on the New Stage. On October

14th, Mao Zedong specifically discussed the issue of party democracy at the meeting. He pointed out that expanding intra party democracy should be seen as a necessary step to consolidate and develop the Party, and also an important weapon for us to achieve victory in the great struggle of the War of Resistance Against Japan. Especially with the development of domestic and international situations, as well as the evolution of the national anti-Japanese war situation, we are required to carry out education on democratic life, so that the vast number of party members can understand what democratic life is, the relationship between democracy and centralism, and how to implement democratic centralism. It should be pointed out that Mao Zedong's report was published in *Liberation* on November 25th, and Xinhua Daily News Agency also publicly published it in a single volume, which further promoted the development of the Party's democratic centralism.

Secondly, Mao Zedong and other leaders of the CPC made innovative interpretations on the relationship between democracy and the resistance war, focusing on why democracy should be implemented. As early as July 1936, when Edgar Snow arrived in Bao'an County in the Shaanxi Gansu Ningxia Border Region for an interview, he personally experienced the democratic style of Communist Party leaders such as Mao Zedong. During the security interview, Edgar Snow has participated in mass meetings or watched performances with Mao Zedong for several times. Mao Zedong does not specialize because of his position in the CPC, but usually sits in the middle of the audience inconspicuously. At the same time, Mao Zedong's meals were the same as everyone else's. Through face-to-face conversations with Mao Zedong, Edgar Snow deeply felt his influence within the CPC, which is probably greater than anyone else today. However, his influence was not manifested through power or hero worship, but through democratic style and personal charm. This can be seen from everyone knowing and respecting him, and never encountering anyone who did not like or admire him.

Finally, the CPC, represented by Mao Zedong, explained the practical path of democratic politics to foreign journalists from the dual dimensions of theory and practice through the formulation and implementation of democratic policies around how to achieve democracy, which further promoted the spread of the democratic discourse of the CPC and laid the foundation for building the image of CPC's democratic politics.

What left a deep impression on Edgar Snow was that the Shaan Gan Ning Border Region government was a democratic regime established on the basis of the United Front. In practical operation, the CPC has popularized the right to vote regardless of class, which is the first time in China. Specifically, the Shaan Gan Ning Border Region government has four levels of political power: township, county, province, and central Soviet. Each village elects

representatives to participate in the higher-level Soviet, and the representatives of the Soviet Congress are the highest ranking members of the border region. Anyone over the age of 16 has the right to vote. In the process of conducting election activities, tenant farmers, hired laborers, and artisans have more representative seats than other classes to ensure the implementation of democratic dictatorship of the rural proletariat in the border areas. Due to the fact that the troops were fighting against the Japanese aggressors on the front line, the security work in the Soviet area was almost entirely undertaken by organized farmers, while local security work was undertaken by farmers' self-organized security teams, agricultural guards, and guerrilla forces. Correspondingly, during the busy farming season, all party and government cadres, Red Army officers and soldiers, and guerrilla fighters took action and participated in agricultural production every week, even Mao Zedong participated in this kind of labor. It can be seen that under this democratic regime, there is a good spirit of cooperation between the military and the people in the border areas, or between different classes and those holding different political beliefs. In fact, according to Edgar Snow, the democratic regime established by the CPC is the most capable and democratic administrative institution in the hearts of the people.

---

## CONCLUSION

In a word, the CPC, represented by Mao Zedong, has initially established the image of the CPC as a revolutionary party by expressing revolutionary words to American journalist Edgar Snow and gradually transmitting the party's revolutionary principles and policies to the outside world. At the same time, Mao

Zedong and other leaders of the CPC, centering on what democracy is, why democracy should be practiced, and how to achieve democracy, explained the party's democratic political concept in depth, which further promoted the spread of the CPC's democratic discourse. With Edgar Snow's publication of a series of newspaper articles overseas and the wide distribution of *Red Star Shines on China*, the international image of the CPC has been initially constructed.

---

## REFERENCES

- Ishikawa, M. (2020). *How the red star rises: A study of Mao Zedong's early image* (p.1). Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Mao, Z. D. (1991). *Selected works of Mao Zedong* (Vol. 2, p. 151). Beijing, China: People's Publishing House.
- Mao, Z. D. (2013). *Mao Zedong chronology (1893–1949)* (Vol. 1, p. 561). Beijing, China: The Central Literature Publishing House of the Communist Party of China.
- Snow, E. (1936). *Edgar Snow diary* (Folder 121). Edgar Snow Papers, University of Missouri-Kansas City Archives, Kansas City, MO.
- Snow, E. (1939). *Questions for Mao Tse-tung* (Folder 183). Edgar Snow Papers, University of Missouri-Kansas City Archives, Kansas City, MO.
- Snow, E. (1984). *Fighting for Asia* (p. 243). Beijing, China: Xinhua Publishing House.
- Snow, E. (1984). *Journey to the west* (p. 73). Beijing, China: Oriental Publishing House.
- Snow, E. (1984). *The journey to the beginning* (p. 192). Beijing, China: Xinhua Publishing House.
- Snow, H. (2015). *Interviews in Yan'an* (p. 219). Beijing, China: Beijing Publishing House.