

## Significance of the Jiangxi Soviet (1928-1934)

Topic: The Jiangxi Soviet was an independent government established by Mao Zedong and Zhu De in China's Jiangxi province, having narrowly escaped Jiang's purge of the Communists during the 1927 Shanghai Massacre.

Thesis: The Jiangxi Soviet gained significance/was a turning point in Chinese history due to its role in the rise of Mao and the development of his ideology and policies, which would feature prominently in the years to follow.

<p><b>Military</b></p>	<p><b>Guerrilla Warfare</b> It was during the Jiangxi Soviet period that Mao was able to successfully develop and test his concept of guerrilla warfare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spent much of his time studying the tactics of famous commanders in history and was most impressed by Sun Tzu, who emphasized the military value of speed, deception, concealment and morale</li> <li>It was during this time that Mao articulated his philosophy that "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" and the value of a massive, professional army trained in guerrilla tactics to counter the GMD</li> <li>Following the failure of the Autumn Harvest Uprising in 1927</li> <li>Transformed the Red Army into a disciplined and politicized force, observed the Three Rules and served as role models for the people</li> <li>Under Mao and Zhu De's leadership, and through the use of guerrilla tactics, the CCP was able to score a series of successive victories against the GMD during Jiang's first 4 extermination campaigns from 1930-33</li> <li>However, the CCP's return to conventional warfare during Jiang's 5<sup>th</sup> encirclement campaign sent the CCP on the Long March</li> <li>The Jiangxi Soviet was significant as while it eventually collapsed due to GMD encirclement campaigns, Mao was able to learn from the successes and failures during the period</li> <li>Was thoroughly convinced of the value of guerrilla warfare and the "People's War"</li> <li>This strategy developed by Mao here would be further refined in Yan'an</li> <li>Would bring success to the CCP during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sino-Japanese War, as well as a decisive victory against the GMD during the Chinese Civil War</li> <li>Mao's insistence on the discipline of the Red Army attracted peasant recruits and deserters from warlord and GMD forces, which would prove valuable in the Red Army's military strength during the civil war</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ideological/ Social</b></p>	<p><b>Peasant-based revolution and land reform</b> It was during the Jiangxi Soviet that Mao was able to develop his Sinicized form of Communism and revolutionary land reform policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The approach of the 28 Bolsheviks was the strict adherence to the Marxist form of communist revolution</li> <li>Believed that the urban workers had to lead the revolution and that the party represented them</li> <li>Mao was concerned about the practicality of this in China, first since the proletariat population in China was small due to its lack of industrialization, second because there were no urban workers in the rural areas</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mao was thus convinced of the need to <b>change the urban revolution to one with a rural focus</b>, as shown through his moderate land reform policies</li> <li>Mao's land law in 1930 saw <b>land confiscation from landlords and redistribution to poor peasants</b>; however, rich peasants were allowed to retain their land</li> <li>Contrary to the traditional model, which sought to eradicate the landlords and relocate land to favour the poor at the expense of the rich</li> <li>Mao's land reform policies during the Jiangxi Soviet were significant as it gave Mao invaluable experience in peasant socialist organization and policies, particularly land reform and redistribution</li> <li>These policies contrasted with the GMD's failure to carry through its declared policies of land reform and equitable rents</li> <li>Mao's treatment of the peasants in Jiangxi attracted much peasant support, which led to the growth in strength of the Red Army and the CCP</li> <li>From 1929-34, Mao's revolutionary base area grew, covering over 30 counties and almost 2 million people in Jiangxi and Fujian</li> <li>Would prove to be a major asset during the CCP's engagement with the GMD during the Chinese Civil War</li> </ul>
<b>Political</b>	<p><b>Contribution to Mao's rise to power</b></p> <p>The Jiangxi Soviet placed Mao in a strategic position to rise to power later during the Zunyi Conference in 1935.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CCP was led by Li Lisan and the 28 Bolsheviks, who were pro-Stalin and had heavy Comintern influence</li> <li>Were trained in Moscow to impose Stalin's influence in the Chinese Communist scene</li> <li>Mao's position of leadership was gradually being eroded and marginalized by the 28 Bolsheviks in the early 1930s</li> <li>Mao's unique perceptions of a Sinicized form of Marxism brought him into conflict with the CCP leadership</li> <li>Mao opposed radical land reform and called for equal distribution of land to both peasants and landlords alike, and opted for the use of guerrilla tactics rather than positional warfare</li> <li>Issues under disagreement were too fundamental to be reconciled</li> <li>Mao was removed from the Central Committee, and put on probation and barred from Party Meetings in 1934 for his differences in ideological views</li> <li>Proved to be a blessing in disguise as Mao would be absent from the CCP's decision to execute a positional warfare strategy during Jiang's 5<sup>th</sup> encirclement campaign</li> <li>Led to the deaths of 30,000 men and the CCP's retreat on the Long March</li> <li>Significant as it would serve as an opportunity for Mao to denounce the 28 Bolsheviks and their erroneous military leadership</li> <li>Discredited the 28 Bolsheviks and gave Mao a position in the Politburo standing committee</li> <li>According to <b>Hsu</b> this was a giant step in Mao's quest for supreme power as he became the undisputed leader of the CCP</li> </ul>
<b>Effect on the GMD</b>	<p><b>Failure of the GMD to eradicate Communism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The CCP haven at the remote area of Jiangxi provided shelter from Jiang's 1927 Shanghai Massacre</b></li> <li><b>Jiang was unable to fully eliminate the CCP as he had initially hoped</b></li> <li>Failed rid the Communists entirely during his extermination campaigns, who were able escape on the Long March and seek refuge in Yen'an and consolidate power</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would pose a significant threat to the GMD, served as a foil to the GMD in Nanjing</li> <li>• Jiang's persistent desire to eliminate Communism also distracted him from the Japanese threat; considered the Japanese a "disease of the skin" while the Communist a "disease of the heart"</li> <li>• Following the Mukden incident in 1931, Japan invaded Manchuria and set up a puppet state</li> <li>• The invasion of Manchuria was allowed to happen as Jiang did not take concrete steps to ensure the territorial integrity of China</li> <li>• Jiang adopted a policy of passive resistance in trading space for time and viewed the Communists as a greater threat than the Japanese up until 1937, which made him appear to be persecuting political opponents for partisan objectives</li> <li>• Was too preoccupied with the struggle against internal enemies and putative opponents to resist the Japanese seriously</li> <li>• Served to accelerate the disintegration of the GMD's support base and drive many GMD supporters into the arms of the CCP, who were seen as reformers and the true nationalists in China</li> </ul>
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