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The Developmental History of News Media under Party Leadership during the Revolutionary War Period (Postprint)

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Abstract

This paper traces the developmental history of media—including newspapers and periodicals, news printing, news photography, newsreels, news agencies, and radio stations—under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party during the revolutionary war period, documenting the process by which the Party’s news media enterprise grew from its inception and modest beginnings to achieve continuous development and expansion. It aims to provide contemporary media professionals with reference and enlightenment for understanding the developmental history of the Party’s journalism enterprise.

Full Text

The Development of News Media Under Party Leadership During the Revolutionary War Period

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Abstract: This paper examines the developmental history of various media forms—including newspapers, news printing, news photography, news film, news agencies, and radio stations—under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party during the revolutionary war period. It documents the evolution of the Party’s news media enterprise from its inception to its gradual expansion and strengthening, providing contemporary media professionals with historical reference and inspiration for understanding the development of the Party’s journalism endeavors.

Keywords: revolutionary war period; news media; newspapers; news agencies; radio stations; media technology

During the revolutionary war period, under the strong leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, countless journalists overcame numerous adversities—including the Kuomintang’s economic blockades and military encirclement, as well as Japanese invaders’ “Three Alls Policy” (kill all, burn all, loot all)—to carry forward the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance, reform, innovation, and sacrifice. This enabled the Party’s news media enterprise to grow from nothing to something, from small to large, amidst the flames of revolution and the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, making tremendous contributions to the victory of China’s democratic revolution and the war against Japanese aggression.

1. From Weekly and Monthly Periodicals to Major Dailies: The Continuous Development of Party Newspapers

Even before the founding of the Communist Party of China, pioneers such as Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, and Mao Zedong had established revolutionary publications like *New Youth* and *Xiangjiang Review* to disseminate new culture and ideas, promoting Marxism and laying the ideological and theoretical foundation for the Party’s establishment. After the CCP’s founding in 1921, the Party leadership quickly recognized the value and role of news media in political struggle and revolutionary work, utilizing various channels and methods to establish the Party’s own newspapers and periodicals.

On September 13, 1922, the Communist Party launched its first publicly issued central organ, *Guide Weekly*. In 1923, *New Youth* became the Party’s official theoretical journal, followed by the monthly *Qianfeng* (Vanguard), which together shouldered the propaganda responsibilities during the Party’s early period. When the May 30th Incident occurred on May 30, 1925, *Guide Weekly* could no longer meet the needs of the rapidly changing revolutionary situation, urgently requiring a daily newspaper for timely propaganda and guidance. On June 1, the Central Committee held an emergency meeting and decided to publish a daily, with Qu Qiubai appointed as chief editor. On June 4, the Party’s first daily newspaper, *Hot Blood Daily*, was published in Shanghai—an astonishing feat accomplished in just four days. The editorial office was set up in a dilapidated bungalow on Zhongxing Road in Zhabei, with makeshift desks assembled from wooden planks. Initially printed by the Mingxing Printing House on Xinchang Road in the International Settlement, the newspaper later moved to an underground printing shop in a lane on Huiwen Road after the Mingxing shop was sealed. Despite publishing only 24 issues over less than a month before being forcibly shut down, *Hot Blood Daily* achieved a circulation of approximately 30,000 copies and exerted tremendous influence.

Following the failure of the First Great Revolution, the Party’s journalism suffered severe devastation under the White Terror, yet like wildfire that cannot be extinguished, it revived with the spring breeze. In the Kuomintang-controlled “white areas,” Communists established an underground press system. After the August 7th Conference in 1927, the Central Committee moved from Wuhan

to Shanghai, and in October decided to publish the central organ *Bolshevik*, with Qu Qiubai as director of a five-member editorial committee. Launched on October 24 in an old residence on Changning Road, *Bolshevik* published 52 issues until July 1, 1932. On August 15, 1930, the Central Committee launched *Red Flag Daily* in Shanghai, which circulated secretly in KMT-controlled areas with a circulation of 12,000 copies until it was forced to cease publication on March 8, 1931.

In the “red areas” (Communist-controlled regions), the official organ of the Provisional Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic, *Red China*, was launched on December 11, 1931, in Ruijin, Jiangxi. Initially a four-page weekly, it later became the joint organ of the Central Committee and the Soviet government. Sharing staff with the “Red China News Agency” (predecessor of Xinhua), the newspaper began with only a few desks, two or three editors, and two telegraph operators, with a circulation of about 3,000 copies. In 1931, the agency also compiled and printed *Radio Materials* (renamed *Radio Daily News* in 1933), predecessor of *Reference News*, using mimeograph printing with wax stencils, producing several dozen copies per issue for central leadership to understand enemy situations and assess conditions.

After the Central Red Army withdrew from the base area in October 1934, *Red China* temporarily ceased publication, resuming on November 25, 1935, in Wayaobu with lead type printing by the Central Printing Factory. With the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression underway, the Party urgently needed a public daily in KMT-controlled areas to propagate its policies and unite the people against Japanese invaders. Under Zhou Enlai’s direct leadership, *New China Daily* was born in Wuhan on January 11, 1938—the first major daily founded by the CCP and publicly distributed in KMT-controlled areas since the Party’s founding. When Japanese forces attacked Wuhan in August 1938, the newspaper relocated to Chongqing on October 25. Unable to move heavy printing machinery, staff used flatbed and mimeograph machines instead of rotary presses, woodcut characters instead of lead type, woodcut sketches instead of copperplate photos, and locally produced paper instead of standard newsprint. During air raid power outages, they used hand-cranked printing machines, ensuring continuous publication.

From its inception, *New China Daily* faced constant persecution and suppression from KMT anti-Communist diehards, with paper blockades being their most vicious tactic. Kuomintang secret service chief Dai Li repeatedly told his subordinates: “We cannot openly shut down *New China Daily* and *Masses Weekly*, but if we forbid merchants from selling them paper and prevent the Economic Commission from allocating paper, they’ll close on their own.” Following Zhou Enlai’s instructions, the *New China Daily* office decided to secretly establish its own paper mills, first building the Chuandong Fuxing Paper Mill. After it was discovered and shut down by the KMT, they established the Jianhua Paper Mill, along with Wenhua and Zhengda mills in Liangshan and Zhengsheng in Dazhu. Despite circulation reaching over 50,000 copies, the newspaper never

missed an issue due to paper shortages, ensuring the Party's voice reached maximum audiences in KMT-controlled areas.

To adapt to the new situation of the anti-Japanese united front, *Red China* was reorganized on January 29, 1937, as the *New China Daily* of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region government, becoming a Central Committee organ on February 7, 1939, and changing from a five-day to a three-day publication schedule with circulation increasing to 40,000-50,000 copies. Chairman Mao praised it as "the best newspaper in the country." After arriving in Yan'an in 1937, *Radio Daily News* became *Today's News*, initially mimeographed and switching to lead type printing on March 10, 1940, by the Central Printing Factory. On May 16, 1941, *New China Daily* merged with *Today's News* to form *Liberation Daily*.

2. Operating Printing Plants While Fighting Guerrilla Warfare: The Growing Strength of Party Printing Enterprises

Printing was an indispensable tool for revolutionary propaganda. After the 1927 split between the KMT and CCP, the Party established underground printing shops in KMT-controlled areas and printing factories in revolutionary base areas. Party leadership and Comrade Mao Zedong attached great importance to printing work. On May 1, 1938, Mao stated: "Printing work is very important; printing factories produce spiritual nourishment. A well-run printing factory is equivalent to a division." Between 1939 and 1940, the Central Committee issued multiple directives, initially requiring "all central bureaus, sub-bureaus, district committees, and provincial committees to use various methods to establish their own printing shops," later demanding "every relatively large base area should operate a complete printing factory," and eventually stipulating "every base area must establish a printing factory." [2]

Responding to Central Committee requirements and the needs of mobilizing the entire population for resistance and revolutionary propaganda, various anti-Japanese base areas overcame difficulties and built printing factories of various sizes, making do with limited resources. Due to Japanese mopping-up campaigns, KMT blockades, and the fact that base areas were mostly in remote mountainous regions with underdeveloped economies, journalists in these areas demonstrated self-reliance and hard work despite backward printing technology, severe shortages of professional talent and equipment, and extreme hardship. Without paper, they built their own paper mills using hemp rope, rags, straw, and wheat stalks as raw materials. Equipment was rudimentary: stone rollers, large wells, several steam pots, a few large pools, and several bamboo screens. Without ink, they mobilized peasants to sweep soot from pot bottoms, mixing it with rosin, sesame oil, and castor oil to create homemade ink. Without photographic and plate-making equipment, they used woodcuts or stone printing as substitutes.[3]

The most representative and largest operation was the Central Printing Factory

in Yan' an. Established in 1931 in the Central Soviet Area, it was forced to disband during the Long March and rebuilt in 1937 after the Central Committee arrived in Yan' an, in the Ten Thousand Buddha Caves of Qingliang Mountain. Through a dual approach of secret acquisition and indigenous innovation, the factory continuously improved its operations. Initially equipped with only two quarto presses, four folio presses, one proofing press, and one cylinder press, it later added three more quarto presses, one folio press, and two type-casting machines.[4] All equipment was purchased in KMT-controlled areas by underground Party organizations and secretly transported to Yan' an. For instance, Shanghai' s underground Party once disassembled a printing press into parts and packed them in coffins to smuggle them past KMT blockades.

While secretly acquiring equipment, workers promoted the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance and hard work, actively researching, reforming, and innovating printing technologies. Without paper, they produced "Malan paper" from local Malan grass; without ink, they made homemade ink from carbon black and tung oil; without type matrices, they made their own; lacking equipment, they designed and manufactured paper cutters, book trimmers, proofing machines, and plate-casting machines to improve efficiency and quality. Without electricity, they used foot-powered and hand-cranked presses. They also used raw-edge paper instead of thin paper for making paper molds, reformed type cases to improve typesetting efficiency, and compiled printing technology manuals to strengthen technical training.

Mimeograph technology made invaluable contributions. Not only were early publications like *Red China* initially mimeographed (switching to lead type only after 1937 when it became *New China Daily*), but early drafts of *On Practice* and *On Contradiction* also circulated as mimeographed copies. Stone printing technology also played important roles; around 1944, numerous battlefield situation maps compiled by *Liberation Daily* were stone-printed with exquisite quality. Lead type printing was even more prominent in scale and quality. Despite KMT economic blockades and severe material shortages, the Central Printing Factory' s monthly typesetting volume reached over 3 million characters, printing 320 reams of paper—while Chongqing' s Commercial Press, the nation' s largest, typeset less than 1 million characters monthly.

3. From Woodcut Illustrations to News Photography: Photography Becoming a Powerful Weapon in Revolutionary Struggle

While founding newspapers and periodicals, the Chinese Communist Party also emphasized utilizing photographic and other media technologies to enhance propaganda impact. Under extremely difficult conditions, Party publications attempted to use news photos alongside textual propaganda. In September 1922, the Party-led Anyuan Railway and Mine Workers' Strike victory was documented and publicized through photographs. *Guide Weekly*, the Party' s first organ, used news photos to expose the truth about the May 30th Incident and the Wanxian Massacre perpetrated by British imperialism in 1925-1926. The un-

derground newspaper *Shanghai Daily* run by the Jiangsu Provincial Committee published on April 9, 1930, a photo by its reporter showing Shanghai workers and students being suppressed during a demonstration on Nanjing Road.

The December 1929 resolution of the Red Fourth Army's Ninth Party Congress stated that the art section of the army's political department propaganda division should be strengthened to publish stone-printed or mimeographed pictorials. *Red China*, launched on December 11, 1931, frequently featured woodcut illustrations reflecting current events. On January 12, 1934, the Red Army's General Political Department published *Red Star Pictorial*, using stone-printed images to propagandize and motivate Red Army soldiers. For a long time, *New China Daily*, launched in 1938, published a daily woodcut on the right side of its masthead and occasionally featured news photos.

Formal news photography as a propaganda weapon under Party leadership began after the War of Resistance started. In 1939 and 1940, the Jin-Cha-Ji and Central Hebei Military Region Political Departments successively established news photography sections, with Sha Fei and Shi Shaohua serving as section chiefs, marking the beginning of news photography as part of the Party-led revolutionary cause.[5] Early achievements included three copperplate photos of Sun Yat-sen's memorial in Yan'an published in the March 1939 issue of *Military and Political Magazine*, and the first news photo *People in the Border Region Oppose Civil War* published in *Anti-Japanese Three-Day Journal* on April 14, 1941.

On May 1, 1942, using photographic equipment captured from the enemy, the Jin-Cha-Ji Pictorial Society was established in a small mountain village called Nianpangou in the Taihang Mountains of Pingshan County, Hebei, and began publishing the Party's first photographic pictorial, *Jin-Cha-Ji Pictorial* (predecessor of *PLA Pictorial*). On July 1, 1942, the first issue was bound as a birthday gift to the Party. The 16-page inaugural issue featured 162 photos in both Chinese and English, with five-color printing on the cover and back featuring *Clouds over the Great Wall* and *Iron Cavalry on Sandy Plains*. Publishing such a magnificent pictorial in a remote, impoverished mountain valley under the harsh conditions of the Japanese "Three Alls Policy" was nothing short of a miracle, generating tremendous reactions among enemies, our forces, and friendly parties. Japanese invaders targeted the pictorial society for destruction during their "mopping-up" campaigns. To cope with enemy attacks, the society relocated while digging caves and developed lightweight printing presses, successfully researching a planographic printing method using iron plates instead of copper. During a breakout in April 1943, several comrades were injured, and Comrade Lei Ye, unable to escape, destroyed his camera and committed suicide with his pistol, dying a heroic martyr. As soon as the enemy left, the pictorial society resumed work and rushed to compile issues. During the Japanese forces' largest "autumn mopping-up" campaign in September 1943, which lasted three months, the society suffered heavy losses in a December 9 breakout, with 10 comrades sacrificed and 4 injured. Relocating to Dongzigou in Fuping with

staff reduced to 26, the society published a *Current Affairs Supplement* on the autumn anti-mopping-up operations within a month, and two months later released the fifth issue—a special edition on the Jin-Cha-Ji Border Region’s Beiyue area counter-mopping-up campaign and combat heroes conference. Enemy commanders in Beiping were stunned when they saw the pictorial.

The publication of *Jin-Cha-Ji Pictorial* profoundly influenced the development of China’s revolutionary photography cause, inspiring numerous pictorials including *Shandong Pictorial*, *Battlefield Pictorial*, *Jiaodong Pictorial*, *Northeast Pictorial*, and *North China Pictorial*. In the early Liberation War, some photographers and photography enthusiasts joined Xinhua’s frontline sub-agencies for photographic reporting. In January 1947, Xinhua’s East China Field Army Front Sub-Agency Photography Group became Xinhua’s first photography institution. Although Xinhua lacked the capacity to distribute news photos at the time, photographers’ work was primarily used for battlefield exhibitions or published in *Shandong Pictorial*. Whether in pictorial societies or Xinhua, news photography served as a new force on the Party’s journalistic front line, active throughout the revolutionary war and training numerous news photography workers.

4. Two Cameras, Thousands of Feet of Film: Initiating the Exploration of News Documentary Film Under Party Leadership

In the 1920s, a new genre of news photography emerged: cinematic newsreels. During the Northern Expedition, Li Minwei and others filmed many historically valuable newsreels. In the mid-1930s, American journalist Edgar Snow shot numerous precious historical images of Chinese Communist leaders and Red Army life in the Shaanxi Soviet Area.

In 1937, a group of young photographers represented by Wu Yinxian rushed to Yan’an. In September 1938, under Zhou Enlai’s advocacy, the “Eighth Route Army General Political Department Film Group,” also known as the “Yan’an Film Group,” was established—the first professional institution for news documentary filmmaking under Party leadership. Relying on only a 35mm single-lens camera and thousands of feet of film donated by Dutch documentary master Joris Ivens, one 16mm camera purchased from Hong Kong, and three cameras personally purchased by Wu Yinxian, the group embarked on the exploration of revolutionary base area news documentary filmmaking. In the same year, Wu Yinxian and others overcame unimaginable difficulties to film *Yan’an and the Eighth Route Army* at the Yellow Emperor’s tomb in central Shaanxi, which became the first major documentary of the people’s cinema. Other documentaries from this period reflecting the Yan’an spirit—*Nanniwan*, *Doctor Bethune* showing internationalist spirit, and *Hard Entrepreneurship* documenting Chairman Mao’s speech to the 120th Division—have become priceless historical treasures of the Chinese revolution.[6]

After Japan’s defeat in 1945, the Yan’an Film Group’s advance team rushed

to Northeast China. On October 1, 1946, the Northeast Film Studio was established with Yan' an Film Group members as the core force. Between May 1947 and July 1949, the studio dispatched 32 film crews to the front lines, factories, and rural areas, braving bullets to shoot and compile 17 issues of the news documentary *Democratic Northeast*, authentically documenting parts of the Liaoshen and Pingjin campaigns. In 1950, the Ministry of Culture awarded the News Photography Team of Beijing Film Studio the honor of "People' s Film Vanguard" –the team' s predecessor being the Yan' an Film Group and Northeast Film Studio photography crews. On July 7, 1953, the Central News-reel and Documentary Film Studio (abbreviated as "Xin Ying Studio") was officially established on this foundation, tasked with documenting the historical process of the People' s Republic of China through documentary film.

5. Red China News Agency (Predecessor of Xinhua): From "One and a Half" Radios to a Journey Through Thatched Cottage, Horseback, and Cave Operations

The predecessor of Xinhua, the Red China News Agency (abbreviated as Red China Agency), was established on November 7, 1931, the day the First National Congress of the Chinese Soviets was grandly held in Ruijin, Jiangxi. At its founding, the agency had no radio of its own, using "one and a half" captured KMT army radios (one of two captured radios had been damaged by Red Army soldiers unfamiliar with radio equipment, leaving it capable only of receiving, not transmitting). Nor did it have its own communication technicians, relying instead on Wang Zheng and Liu Yin from the Central Military Commission' s Radio Team. Before the congress began, they copied domestic and international news (including from the KMT' s "Central News Agency") to provide "reference news" for the congress. On the opening day, in a brick-tiled farmhouse about 70-80 meters from the congress venue (the Xie clan ancestral hall in Ye Ping Village), they used a 100-watt command platform captured from KMT 28th Division Commander Gong Bingfan to broadcast, under the Red China Agency name (call sign CSR, abbreviation for Chinese Soviet Radio), the first messages about the congress' s successful convocation and Soviet government declarations.[6] Since the main room had no windows, a window was specially opened in the back wall to run the antenna up to the roof, earning it the name "Thatched Cottage News Agency."

Red China Agency did not have its own dedicated news-copying radio until May 1933—a regenerative five-tube receiver assembled from captured radio parts. The news station was set up in a dilapidated temple in Ruijin County, with the antenna mounted on a large tree outside. In October 1934, as the Central Red Army began the Long March for northward anti-Japanese resistance, Red China Agency followed, suspending text news broadcasts but never interrupting news reception, earning the name "Horseback News Agency." On November 25, 1935, Red China Agency resumed text news broadcasting in Wayaobu, northern Shaanxi, using a captured 50-watt transmitter powered by a gasoline generator.

On January 13, 1937, after Red China Agency moved into a cave dwelling in Yan' an city, it was renamed the New China News Agency (abbreviated as Xinhua), becoming the "Cave News Agency." Text broadcasting remained the responsibility of the Central Military Commission' s Third Bureau, using a self-assembled 100-watt transmitter with call sign QST de CSR. Without generators and lacking dry batteries, everyone from telegraph operators to top agency leaders took turns hand-cranking a dynamo during rest periods to ensure power supply. Despite harsh working conditions in Yan' an, communication operations and technical equipment made significant advances. In news broadcasting: transmitter power increased from 100 to 500 watts; single-frequency broadcasting became dual-frequency; Chinese-only broadcasting expanded to Chinese-English bilingual; there were both telegraph and spoken-word radio stations. In reception: three-tube receivers developed into ten four-tube receivers plus an AR88 receiver obtained from a U.S. observation group, capable of copying news from about a dozen domestic and international agencies. In communication: communication stations grew from none to one to four; equipment evolved from one 15-watt Hartley transmitter and one four-tube receiver to 7-8 transmitters ranging from 50 to 200 watts; communication links expanded to 19, greatly strengthening work connections and business guidance between the headquarters and sub-agencies.

In March 1947, as Hu Zongnan' s KMT forces launched a major offensive against the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region, Xinhua split into two routes: one (the "Four Great Teams") led by Fan Changjiang followed central organs in mobile warfare across northern Shaanxi; the other (the "Main Force") led by Director Liao Chengzhi crossed the Yellow River southward to join the Taihang temporary headquarters. Throughout the relocation, Xinhua' s spoken-word broadcasting, text broadcasting, and news reception never interrupted.

In 1949, Xinhua entered Beiping (now Beijing) with communications equipment that had developed to considerable scale: over 40 receivers and more than 20 transmitters (including five 500-watt, one 1,000-watt, and one 3,000-watt units), capable of copying news from about 30 agencies, communicating with 23 field army sub-agencies and independent corps sub-agencies, and conducting text and spoken-word broadcasts nationwide.

6. Simply Built with Indigenous Methods, Broadcasting Continuously Across Thousands of Miles

During the early War of Resistance, Xinhua' s text broadcasts required receivers and code translators to read, making them inaccessible to most departments and ordinary people. Therefore, establishing a radio station under Party leadership to enable listeners with radios in rear and occupied areas to directly hear the Party' s voice became an urgent and important task. In winter 1939, while receiving medical treatment in the Soviet Union, Zhou Enlai discussed with Comintern leader Dimitrov the issue of building a radio station in Yan' an. In March 1940, Zhou Enlai returned from the Soviet Union with a Soviet-

made broadcast transmitter gifted by the Comintern. The Central Committee immediately issued instructions to establish Yan' an "Xinhua Radio Station" and formed a Broadcasting Committee headed by Zhou Enlai, with Military Commission Third Bureau Director Wang Zheng and Xinhua Director Xiang Zhonghua as members, responsible for building the spoken-word radio station. The Third Bureau assembled over 30 people into the Ninth Branch to undertake construction, including tuning, power, broadcasting, and text broadcast rooms, with only a few radio technicians and announcers including Xu Ruizhang, Yao Wen, and Xiao Yan.

The station site was selected in Wangpiwan Village, about 19 kilometers northwest of Yan'an in a remote location. With active cooperation from local villagers, Ninth Branch soldiers carved two interconnected stone cave dwellings on a hillside south of the Xichuan River tributary for the transmitter room and power room, and dug two earthen caves on the opposite hillside for the broadcasting and script preparation rooms, hanging a woolen blanket produced in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region at the broadcasting room entrance for both door curtain and sound insulation. Technicians modified the transmitter Zhou Enlai brought back for spoken-word broadcasting, with most modification parts handmade by Yan' an Communication Materials Factory technicians and Ninth Branch members using indigenous methods. They erected several large wooden poles connected together on the hilltop to replace a steel tower for the transmitting antenna. The greatest difficulty was power supply, eventually solved by using an old truck engine to drive a four-horsepower generator. With no gasoline available, they converted gasoline barrels into charcoal stoves, using carbon monoxide from burning charcoal as fuel. After more than half a year of hard work, Yan' an Xinhua Radio Station was initially completed by the end of 1940, administratively under the Military Commission Third Bureau but operationally under Xinhua, with broadcast scripts provided by Xinhua' s Broadcasting Section.

On December 30, 1940, Yan' an Xinhua Radio Station began trial broadcasting with about 300 watts of power and call sign XNCR—the letter X being the International Telecommunication Union designation for Chinese stations, and NCR standing for New Chinese Radio. This was the first radio station under Communist Party leadership, marking the birth of the people' s broadcasting enterprise. Yan' an Radio' s broadcasts broke the KMT authorities' broadcasting monopoly, causing panic and unease in Chongqing, which attempted but failed to suppress it. Yan' an' s red radio waves broke through the "news blockade," with anti-Japanese base area Party and government organs and news agencies continuously listening to and transcribing important Yan' an Radio news, generating significant influence in rear and occupied areas.

On December 3, 1941, Yan' an Xinhua Radio Station began Japanese-language programming, with announcer Yuan Qingzhi, a Japanese anti-war activist, broadcasting once weekly for 30 minutes, primarily targeting Japanese invading forces with content explaining the justice of China' s War of Resistance,

publicizing Party policies, and exposing and demoralizing Japanese troops. Despite interference from Japanese high-power transmitting equipment, Yan' an' s Japanese broadcasting pioneered China' s foreign broadcasting enterprise.

Technical equipment was rudimentary and conditions poor. Without record players, they invited cultural work troupes to perform anti-Japanese songs, sometimes with announcers singing directly into the microphone. In summer 1941, the station acquired a hand-cranked record player but no records. Upon learning this, Chairman Mao gave the station over 20 music and opera records from his personal collection, instructing staff to run the broadcasts well. Due to frequent transmitter failures, broadcasting was intermittent, and the station never announced formal programming. In spring 1943, when transmitter tubes were damaged, Yan' an Xinhua Radio Station temporarily ceased broadcasting.

After the War of Resistance victory, the Central Committee decided to quickly resume Xinhua' s spoken-word broadcasting. In mid-August 1945, Yan' an Xinhua Radio Station' s machine room moved from Wangpiwan to Yandianzi Village' s Zhaizimao Mountain, two kilometers from the Third Bureau headquarters in Peizhuang. Atop the 50-meter-high Zhaizimao Mountain, a flat-roofed house served as the transmitter room with a new 500-watt BC-601 transmitter, while mid-mountain caves housed broadcasting studios and dormitories. On September 11, Yan' an Xinhua Radio Station officially resumed broadcasting. In early November, Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Ren Bishi, and other central leaders inspected the station at Peizhuang at Wang Zheng' s invitation. Comrade Liu Shaoqi discussed the importance of communication work, calling them the “eyes, ears, and voice of the Central Committee,” greatly inspiring the staff.

In November 1946, Zhou Enlai required at a war preparedness meeting that Xinhua' s text and spoken-word broadcasting must not be interrupted during wartime. The meeting decided to immediately establish a first-line war preparedness station in Wayaobu, 180 li northeast of Yan' an, while the Central Committee instructed the Shanxi-Hebei-Shandong-Henan Liberated Area to establish a second-line war preparedness station. Xinhua immediately dispatched personnel to Haopinggou in Wayaobu to set up the war preparedness station—a small, hidden mountain village where a dilapidated temple at the entrance housed the Shaanbei Xinhua Radio Station' s machine room and broadcasting studio. The Shanxi-Hebei-Shandong-Henan Central Bureau assigned the war preparedness station construction task to Xinhua' s Shanxi-Hebei-Shandong-Henan General Sub-Agency' s telecommunications section, concentrating various forces to establish a temporary headquarters telecommunications section. Wang Zheng also instructed the bureau' s communication office to prepare to take over broadcasting. Since broadcasting equipment was too heavy to move with the army, and coincidentally Chiang Kai-shek' s aircraft had mistakenly delivered two transmitters to the already-liberated Jiaozuo Airport in Xinxiang, the “transportation captain” Chiang had provided long-wave navigation machines that were converted by Wang Shiguang of the military region' s third section into 300-watt shortwave broadcasters, ensuring the Shaanbei Xinhua Radio Station'

s continuity. In January 1947, after the transmitter conversion was completed, antenna installation, broadcasting studio arrangement, and steam engine testing succeeded on the first attempt, enabling daily monitoring of Shaanbei Xinhua Radio broadcasts with readiness to take over at any time.

In March 1947, as Hu Zongnan's KMT forces launched a major offensive against the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region, our forces voluntarily withdrew from Yan'an. On March 14, Yan'an Xinhua Radio Station completed its noon broadcast and relocated to the prepared Wayaobu. On March 21, it resumed broadcasting as Shaanbei Xinhua Radio Station from Haopinggou in Wayaobu. To prevent enemy detection of the station's location, daytime broadcasting ceased, leading the enemy to claim "Yan'an Xinhua Radio Station has been destroyed." Yet every evening, Xinhua Radio's voice spread in all directions. Many inspiring victory reports from Shaanbei and national battlefields, along with important talks and commentaries by Central Committee and People's Liberation Army headquarters spokespersons, were broadcast from that dilapidated temple in Haopinggou. On March 25, Zhou Enlai and Zhu De successively inspected Haopinggou, encouraging everyone to ensure uninterrupted broadcasting. On the evening of March 28, after broadcasting the first major victory in the Shaanbei battlefield—the Qinghuabian battle report—Shaanbei Xinhua Radio Station concluded its Wayaobu broadcasting and moved to Taihang. On March 29, the Taihang temporary headquarters' transmitter officially took over Shaanbei Xinhua Radio's spoken-word broadcasting.

On September 11, 1947, the Shaanbei Xinhua Radio Station in She County officially launched English programming with announcer Wei Lin, an energetic female student—China's second foreign-language broadcast. In May 1948, the radio station moved from the Taihang Mountains to Xibaipo, located in Zhanghuzhuang a dozen kilometers from Xibaipo, equipped with three American-made BC-610 transmitter-receivers and one 10-kilowatt gasoline generator, beginning broadcasting on May 13.

In the first half of 1948, to strengthen propaganda in KMT-controlled areas, the Central Committee appointed Liu Yin as station construction office director and Li Qiang as chief designer to build a 3,000-watt large shortwave transmitting station in Kudongfeng, Jingxing County, Hebei (later moved to Tianhu Village southwest of Kudongfeng)—the largest transmitter in liberated areas. The transmitter was Japanese-made equipment captured when Japan surrendered, with five sets of antennas broadcasting toward Nanjing, Shanghai, Europe, and the United States. To prevent bombing, underground transmitter rooms were specially constructed. Completed at the end of December 1948 and handed to Xinhua for text, spoken-word, and English broadcasting, the station moved with the army into Beiping's West Chang'an Street on January 31, 1949, taking over the former Beiping Radio Station and renaming it Beiping Xinhua Radio Station, which began broadcasting on February 2, completing a two-year-long relocation with uninterrupted broadcasting.

On June 5, 1949, the Central Committee issued a notice: "To meet the grow-

ing needs of the broadcasting enterprise, the Central Committee has decided to expand Xinhua Headquarters' spoken-word broadcasting department into the Central Broadcasting Administration to manage and lead national broadcasting." Consequently, Beijing Xinhua Radio's organizational structure transferred from Xinhua to the Central Broadcasting Administration, making spoken-word radio an independent institution separate from Xinhua. On December 5, 1949, Beijing Xinhua Radio Station was renamed "Central People's Radio Station."

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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