

CHINESE COMMUNIST COMMUNICATION AND VALUES

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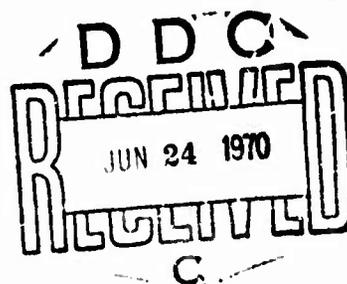
John H. Weakland

Mental Research Institute
Palo Alto, California

FINAL REPORT

May 31, 1970

Office of Naval Research,
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This is a final report on the research done on "Chinese Communist Communication and Values" under Contract No. N00014-66-00310 (NR170-703) from the Group Psychology Branch of the Office of Naval Research to the Mental Research Institute. Since details of the research done have been reported up to date in Technical Reports, no new material will be given here. Rather, this report is a brief overview and summary of the contract work as a whole.

This work may properly be regarded as the successor to a short research project on Chinese Communist political themes carried out in 1965 for Dr. Thomas Milburn's Project Michelson, under Contract N60530-11070 of the Naval Ordnance Test Station (now the Naval Weapons Center), China Lake, California. This project resulted in a report "Chinese Political and Cultural Themes: A Study of Chinese Communist Films" (NCTB TP 4029) published at China Lake in October 1966 (also available from Defense Documentation Center, number AD-489 371).

The original ONR contract following this Project Michelson work began on May 1, 1966; the research was to focus further on Chinese Communist political and cultural themes, with some comparative examination of non-Communist Chinese and Soviet Communist materials. Three subsequent modifications of the original contract, emphasizing research on continuity and change in China's "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", and Chinese patterns of strategy and negotiation, extended the contract to a final date of May 31, 1970.

Although the contract work has all been concerned with the familiar and popular topic of Chinese Communism, it nevertheless has been rather out of the ordinary run of studies; although the topics examined and reported on have varied over a considerable range, there nevertheless

has been an underlying unity to the work. This special and unitary character has been due initially and in part to the kind of data utilized, but more fundamentally to continued reliance on a psycho-cultural view of politics and a related analytic approach. Work in the early stages of this contract, in common with the Project Michelson research, was based on the study of Chinese Communist motion pictures - regular feature films - most of which were seen in Hong Kong or in Vancouver, and some Hong Kong, Taiwan and Soviet Russian films seen for comparison. As the project progressed, because the supply of available films became very limited and because research foci altered, more attention was given first to written fictional materials on Chinese Communism and finally to descriptive accounts and political statements, although the film data always remained useful. Even these latter materials, however, were utilized primarily not as specific factual data but as expressive projections of Chinese Communist attitudes and perceptions.

This selection and utilization of data itself reflected the basic approach of the research, its most characteristic and unifying feature. As the research focused progressively on various aspects of Chinese Communism, its basic aim always remained to discern the nature and interrelations of their important political themes more clearly by focusing on 1) what themes they themselves emphasize, 2) what images are used to project these themes, and 3) how the themes appear related to the socio-cultural context of Chinese Communism - which is portrayed especially vividly and concretely in fictional materials. That is, the aim was not to obtain an "outside", supposedly objective view of discrete facts about Chinese Communism; it was to build up a progressively more accurate,

comprehensive and systematic account of their views and premises (including many things taken for granted or unrecognized by them) by starting from the "inside" and viewing everything in relation to increasingly wider socio-cultural contexts. As a final step in this direction, considerable attention was given to relationships between Chinese Communist patterns and traditional Chinese cultural patterns.

The resulting work has been described in the following Technical Reports:

No.1 - "Themes in Chinese Communist Films" (Published in American Anthropologist 68, 477-484(1966))

A brief description of the nature of thematic analysis of films (with references), and a listing and discussion of nine major political themes in Chinese Communist films and some interconnections among them.

No.2 - "Conflicts Between Love and Family Relationships in Chinese Films" - September, 1967 - AD659500 (Initial version presented at American Psychological Association meeting, Washington, D.C., September 3, 1967)

An analysis of one major Chinese cultural theme with political relevance; similarities and difference in its presentation in Communist, Taiwan and Hong Kong films.

No.3 - "'The Thought of Mao Tse-tung'; Communication Analysis of a Propaganda Movement" - January, 1968 - AD664484.

An examination of the way in which the "Thought of Mao" has usually been dismissed by Westerners as absurd and irrational despite its obvious importance in Chinese politics, and an alternative approach seeking the significance of this

movement by examining its content in relation to three contexts: 1) Mao's own writings and position; 2) statements about these by the Party; and 3) the prevailing internal and external Chinese political situation - at three stages of the development of this movement.

No.4 - "Chinese Communist Images of Invasion and Resistance" -
August, 1968 - AD674869.

A study of typical images of foreign invasion and Chinese resistance to it as portrayed in Chinese Communist films, and the relationship of these images to traditional Chinese family patterns, as "non-rational" yet orderly and significant factors in understanding Chinese Communist attitudes about foreign political and military pressures.

No.5 - "Cultural Aspects of China's 'Cultural Revolution'" -
October, 1969 - AD-696671.

An examination of this major yet often puzzling recent political development from a cultural viewpoint, which indicates that, despite its apparent emphasis on a new Chinese culture and politics, the Cultural Revolution often utilizes old Chinese means, and even its goals often are but inversions or modifications of traditional ones. The Red Guards, the educational revolution, and the "new revolutionary drama" are considered particularly.

No.6 - "Chinese Communist Patterns of Strategy and Negotiation" -
May, 1970.

A discussion of how strategic maneuvering and negotiation

may be analyzed jointly as influencing processes, the significance of this for United States-China relations, and some initial analysis of major themes in Chinese Communist strategy and negotiation, in relation to basic Chinese conceptions of social interaction and relationship.

A number of publications have resulted from this research, with others contemplated for the future. In addition to the American Anthropologist article constituting Technical Report No. 1, a revised version of Technical Report No. 2 is to appear in Asian Films and Popular Cultures, edited by Dr. Charles Leslie, and a paper on "Real and Reel Life in Hong Kong - Film Studies of Cultural Adaptation?" in a special Hong Kong issue of the Journal of Asian and African Studies edited by Professor I.C. Jarvie and Dr. Marjorie Topley. A version of "Chinese Communist Images of Invasion and Resistance" is being considered by The China Quarterly. Articles based on the other Technical Reports and a book on Chinese film analysis are also being planned to bring these findings to a wider audience.

The work done under this contract adds up to one of the most extensive psycho-cultural studies made of any contemporary society. Since these studies were based largely on concerns about United States-China relations, it would be highly desirable, however, to find some means to complement them with similar studies of the United States.

The work under this contract was performed by John H. Weakland as Principal Investigator, Mrs. Jeanne Szeto as Secretary-Assistant, and during its latter stages, Alan W. Houghton, Jr. as Research Assistant, with practical support from the administrative staff of the Mental Research Institute. The professional staff of MRI and colleagues at Stanford and the Hoover Institution have provided helpful consultation.

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