

The Chinese Blue Shirt Society

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The Chinese Blue Shirt Society

Fascism and Developmental
Nationalism

MARIA HSIA CHANG

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To my father and mother,
Chang Pao-en and Huang Lu,
who named me *Hsia*.

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MARIA HSIA CHANG

Stanford, California
December 1984

I concluded that villains in [history] are not inherently evil—they're villains only because they end up on the losing side. It's the winners who end up writing histories and myths.

MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY

I

The Problem

On the eve of China's War of Resistance against Japan...there appeared a political movement of great power and influence, which, for one shining moment, restored to the Chinese the self-confidence they had lost since the Opium War.¹

The effort to provide an account of any historical phenomenon is an inherently problematic endeavor. Historical occurrences are not simply comprehensible on their face; their meaning is not self-evident. The insistence, by some, that a historian can write a "pure" account of some phenomenon, confining himself to an "exact description" of what happened, a "plain narrative" of past events,² is an indefensible position.³ The distinction drawn between a plain narrative and a historical interpretation is a spurious one. "Just to do history at all is to employ some over-arching conception which... goes beyond what is given."⁴

To begin with, any account of the past involves selection and emphasis, which presuppose some criteria of relevance since the account cannot include everything.⁵ A more fundamental way in which rendering an account of the past must invariably involve the "inexpungable subjective factor" is our employment of "project verbs" and "narrative sentences."⁶ For the philosopher of history Arthur C. Danto, historical

¹ Kan Kuo-hsün, "Min-tsu fu-hsing yün-tung chi" [A record of the National Renaissance Movement], in *Chung-wai tsa-chih (Kaleidoscope Monthly)* [hereafter cited as *CWTC*], 16, no. 1 (July 1974): 38.

² W. H. Walsh, *An Introduction to Philosophy of History* (London: Hutchinsons' University Library, 1951), p. 31.

³ L. O. Mink, "The Anatomy of Historical Understanding," in William Dray, ed., *Philosophical Analysis and History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 184–191.

⁴ Arthur C. Danto, *Analytical Philosophy of History* (London: Cambridge University, 1965), p. 115.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 142; see also, pp. 143–181.

events and behaviors become meaningful and comprehensible only when they are conceived as constituent elements in some conscious or unconscious “project.” Projects are “time-extended events,” typically represented by predicates like “is-R-ing,” as in “is planting roses”: a project that includes a range of behavior, such as digging, fertilizing, sowing, purchasing shovels and seeds, even reading seed catalogues. According to Danto, “The presence of roses is the *result* which all these separate pieces of behavior are meant to lead to; and because we see some connection between them and such a result, we tend to describe these different pieces of behavior in terms of the result.”⁷

It is only in such a context that a bit of behavior, as the digging of a hole, takes on “meaning” and can be “understood.” In the absence of a project, the digging of a hole becomes uninterpretable, a behavior fraught with ambiguities, for although “digging holes is part of what a man of whom ‘planting roses’ is true *does*, we could not infallibly infer that [he]... is planting roses: he may be planting lilacs or *just* digging holes.”⁸ Not to have project words, then, is to render ourselves “incapable of describing what men are doing”⁹ and of writing history itself.

Most project terms as they are employed in the social and narrative sciences are ill-defined. Phrases and terms such as “making revolution” have no generally accepted meaning.¹⁰ Concepts such as “modernization” and “countermodernization” are no less vexed.¹¹ There are those who argue that such must be the case, either because of the intrinsic character of the language of social science or because porosity allows for cognitive development.¹² Whatever the case, the open texture of such conceptual terms makes understanding difficult.

These kinds of problems become particularly urgent when research on a given historical period is in a relatively primitive state. For present purposes, it is of particular relevance that research on the Republican period in China remains in such a state.¹³ Even scholarly writers

⁷ Ibid., p. 160.

⁸ Ibid., p. 162.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ See Eugen Weber, “Revolution? Counterrevolution? What Revolution?” *Journal of Contemporary History* 9, no. 2 (1974): 3–47.

¹¹ See, for example, the exchange on “Fascism and the Counter-modernization of Consciousness,” in *Comparative Political Studies* 10, no. 2 (July 1977): 230–265.

¹² See Michael Scriven, “Truisms as the Grounds for Historical Explanation,” in Patrick Gardiner, ed., *Theories of History* (New York: Free Press, 1959), pp. 443–475; and Abraham Kaplan, *The Conductive of Inquiry: Methodology for Behavioral Sciences* (Scranton, Penn.: Chandler, 1964), chap. 2, pp. 68–71, 77–78.

¹³ Lloyd E. Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution: China Under Nationalist Rule, 1927–1937*

frequently deal with the period as though it were a parenthesis in the millennial history of China, a brief way station on the road to the Maoist succession of 1949.¹⁴ Why this should be so is not difficult to appreciate. The historical data for the Republican period are more often than not fragmentary. As a consequence, there is sometimes a tendency to apply some familiar conceptual category to this entire sequence in an effort to impart meaning to a period that would otherwise remain impenetrable.

And if the entire history of Republican China before the accession of the Communists to power in 1949 remains obscure and controversial, that of the Blue Shirt Society (*Lan-i she*), reputed to be one of "the most influential and feared political movements"¹⁵ of the time, is still more obscure and consequently more controversial.

The Blue Shirt Society

The information we have on the Blue Shirts is sketchy and fragmentary. Founded on March 1, 1932,¹⁶ in Nanking, the Blue Shirts was a secret organization operating within the then ruling party of China, the Chung-hua Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party).¹⁷

Founders. The original founders were a group of about twenty men¹⁸—such men as T'eng Chieh, Ho Chung-han, K'ang Che, Feng T'i, Teng Wen-i, Cheng, Chiai-min, Ch'iu K'ai-chi, Kan Kuo-hsün—of varying class and provincial backgrounds. Class origins ranged from landlord, to middle peasant, to poor tenant farmer. Provincial origins also varied, although a majority came from the provinces along the Yangtze River, particularly the province of Hunan. There were, however, certain striking similarities. The founders were all young men, from 20 to 30 years of

(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1974), p. xiv.

¹⁴ See the discussion in Robert E. Bedeski, "The Evolution of the Modern State in China: Nationalist and Communist Continuities," *World Politics* 27, no. 4 (July 1975): 541-568.

¹⁵ Lloyd E. Eastman, "Fascism in Kuomintang China: The Blue Shirts," *The China Quarterly*, no. 49 (Jan.-March 1972): 1.

¹⁶ Some accounts identify the founding date as February 29, 1932.

¹⁷ T'ang Liang-hsiung, "Tai Li yü Li-hsing she" [Tai Li and the Earnest Action Society], *Chuan-chi wen-hsiieh* [Biographical literature; hereafter cited as *CCWH*], 36, no. 2 (February 1980): 98.

¹⁸ Teng Yüan-chung, "San-min chu-i li-hsing she shih ch'u-kao" [A preliminary draft of the history of the Three People's Principles Earnest Action Society], part 3, in *CCWH* 40, no. 1 (January 1982): 81-88. For biographical details of some of the Blue Shirt elites, see the twenty-eight articles written by Chü-wai jen (pseudonym), "Chi tang-nien ch'uan-shuo chung ti 'shih-san t'ai-pao'" (Recollections of the legendary "thirteen princes"), serialized in *Ch'un-ch'iu* (*The Observation Post Semi-Monthly*), nos. 95 to 122 (16 June 1961 to 1 August 1962).

age. Many had studied abroad, in the Soviet Union or Japan. All were members of the Kuomintang. All were graduates from the first six classes of the Whampoa Military Academy at the time when Chiang Kai-shek served as principal.¹⁹ All acquiesced to the selection of Chiang as the leader of their new society.

Organization and Structure. As a secret organization and movement within the Kuomintang with objectives that were nothing less than the total transformation of China and the complete reformation of the Kuomintang itself, the organizational structure of the Blue Shirt Society necessarily reflected its covert character. The Blue Shirts was organized as a series of concentric circles. The innermost ring, the core of the movement in charge of decision making and policy making, was the *San-min chu-i li-hsing she* (Three People's Principles Earnest Action Society). At the apex of the movement, in 1938, the membership of the *Li-hsing she* numbered more than 300, including Chiang Kai-shek, the original founders, and a number of cadres recruited from the movement's next ring.

This second ring contained two elitist organizations: the Revolutionary Youth Association (*Ko-ming ch'ing-nien t'ung-chih hui*) and the Revolutionary Soldiers Association (*Ko-ming chün-jen t'ung-chih hui*). In 1938 members numbered more than 30,000, recruited from the outermost ring of the movement.

This third ring consisted of mass organizations that were open in membership and public in nature. There were, for example, the Loyal Patriots Association (*Chung-i chiu-kuo hui*) and the Overseas Chinese Youth Society (*Hua-ch'iao ch'ing-nien she*). Both, however, were dwarfed in size and influence by the Chinese Renaissance Society (*Chung-hua fu-hsing she*), a national organization with a total membership numbering more than 100,000 in 1938; it was charged with the responsibility of executing the decisions made by the center and of mobilizing public support for the movement's goals and programs.²⁰

From the time of its inception, when a central office (*tsung-she*) was established in the national capital of Nanking, the Blue Shirt movement rapidly expanded its scope and influence. In just a few months, by the end of 1932, it had established divisions (*fèn-she*) in each provincial capital. After 1934 the movement had offices in every major city, branches (*chih-she*) in each county capital, and small groups (*hsiao-tsu*) in

¹⁹ Teng Yüan-chung, "San-min chu-i."

²⁰ T'ang Liang-hsiung, "Tai Li," p. 99; Ch'en Tun-cheng, "Fu-hsing she, Lan-i she, Ch'ing-pai she" [The Renaissance Society, the Blue Shirt Society, the Blue and White Society], part 1, in *CCWH* 34, no. 6 (June 1979): 118.

a whole array of institutions, including local KMT party committees, military units, newspapers, radio stations, and schools; its members came from all walks of life: there were soldiers, high school and college students, scholars and intellectuals, businessmen and workers.²¹

At the heart of the movement was the central office in Nanking, headed by a director, Chiang Kai-shek. Beneath him were two committees: an Executive Committee (*kan-shih hui*) and an Inspection Committee (*chien-ch'a hui*). Under the Executive Committee were six departments: a Secretariat (*shu-chi*) and departments of Organization (*tsu-chih*), Training (*hsün-lien*), Propaganda (*hsüan-ch'uan*), Military Affairs (*chün-shih*), and Special Forces (*t'e-wu*).²²

Activities and Accomplishments. Since the Blue Shirt Society was a secret organization within the Kuomintang, whatever policies and programs it espoused would have to be carried out through the existing organs of the party government.²³ In the words of one author on the Blue Shirts, "Its secretive nature makes it difficult [for the historian] to identify its precise activities, and to assess their political impact."²⁴

Other authors, including surviving members of the society, have attributed at least four mass campaigns of the 1930s to the Blue Shirts. These were the New Life Movement (*Hsin sheng-huo yün-tung*), the National Voluntary Labor Movement (*Kuo-min i-wu lao-tung yün-tung*), the National Economic Reconstruction Movement (*Kuo-min ching-chi chien-she yün-tung*), and the National Military Education Movement (*Kuo-min chün-shih hsün-lien yün-tung*).²⁵ The last of the four, the Military Education Movement, was responsible, among other things, for huge mass projects that seem to anticipate Maoist China. In February 1937, for example, 60,000 people were mobilized to clear the Ch'in-huai River in two months. And in August 1937, 20,000 people were mobilized to construct a line of defense 107 miles long in a doomed effort to resist the Japanese onslaught on Nanking.²⁶

²¹ Ch'en Tun-cheng, "Fu-hsing she," p. 118; T'ang Liang-hsiung, "Tai Li," p. 99.

²² Ch'en Tun-cheng, "Fu-hsing she," p. 118.

²³ This was accomplished through the infiltration, by individual Blue Shirts, of established party, government, and military institutions. With Blue Shirt elites holding commanding offices in these institutions, these organizations soon came "under the direction" of the Blue Shirts, and were used to promote and effectuate Blue Shirt objectives. See Kan Kuo-hsün, "Li-hsing she yü Chün-t'ung chü" [The Earnest Action Society and the Bureau of Military Control], *CWTC* 31, no. 1 (January 1982): 70.

²⁴ T'ang Liang-hsiung, "Tai Li," p. 99.

²⁵ Ho Chih-hao, "Li-hsing she yü kuo-min chün-hsün" [The Earnest Action Society and national military education], *CWTC* 31, no. 6 (June 1982): 117.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.

Dissolution. In March 1938 the Kuomintang convened an Extraordinary National Conference at Wuchang where, in addition to other policy decisions, the decision was made to dissolve the Blue Shirt Society. The society was summarily disbanded in July, merging into a new entity, the Three People's Principles Youth Corps. No reason was ever given for the dissolution.

The Blue Shirt Project: Fascism

Such, then, are the rudiments of what historical data we have on the Blue Shirt Society, whose existence has yet to be formally recognized or acknowledged by the Kuomintang.

Where there is a paucity of historical data on a particular period, narratives of that period become increasingly speculative. There is an increased tendency to attempt to impart meaning to the obscure sequence of events by exploiting project terms: consigning the sequence to some familiar category. Thus a fragmentary collection of behaviors and events seems to take on substance if, for example, it is identified as "revolutionary" or "reactionary." Such categories are familiar, and serve as mnemonic and didactic aids. They are conceptual boxes into which otherwise disjointed sequences can be stored for recall and interpretive conveniences. These mnemonic and didactic conveniences often fail, however, to provide credible explanatory yield and theoretic purchase on events. They merely give the illusion of understanding. The use of project terms of this abstract and porous nature often acts as a selective device that insures that only given events or behaviors survive the investigator's scrutiny; or should some others survive, they will be reinterpreted to suit the preselected project term.

In the recent past there has been just such an effort, by writers such as W. F. Elkins, Hung-mao Tien, and Michael Godley, to achieve some understanding of the Blue Shirt phenomenon by associating it with a reasonably familiar category: "fascism."²⁷ Hung-mao Tien, for one, described the Blue Shirts as having attempted to transform the Kuomintang "into a party of a fascist nature."²⁸ Presumably, the project of the Blue Shirt Society was that of producing a Chinese fascism.

²⁷ W. F. Elkins, "'Fascism' in China: The Blue Shirts Society, 1932-1937," *Science and Society* 33, no. 4 (1969): 426-433; Hung-mao Tien, *Government and Politics in Kuomintang China, 1927-1937* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University, 1972); Michael R. Godley, "Fascismo e nazionalismo cinese: 1931-1938. Note preliminari allo studio dei rapporti italo-cinesi durante il periodo fascista," *Storia contemporanea* 4, no. 4 (Dec. 1973): 739-777.

²⁸ Tien, *Government and Politics*, p. 179.

Such accounts of the Blue Shirts clearly are not the first attempts to arrive at some understanding of the Republican period by characterizing it in terms of "fascism." The standard Maoist treatment of KMT China was to characterize it as a "fascist dictatorship."²⁹ Even the conventional wisdom of Western scholarship has often portrayed the Kuomintang regime and its founder, Sun Yat-sen, as "fascist."³⁰

The immediate difficulty that attends such a strategy turns on the fact that the various authors who have invoked the term have not provided clear and unambiguous definitions for "fascism." This lack of definition is not difficult to understand. Efforts made by those trying to understand the fascist experience in Europe have left us with very unsatisfactory definitions.

DEFINING GENERIC FASCISM

The most popular and enduring effort to understand European fascism has been identified with interpretations that are Marxist in inspiration. For the Marxists of the Third International, fascism constituted the final efforts of capitalism to solve the economic crisis that signaled its supposed demise.³¹ Fascism, for the Marxist, serves essentially one purpose: the "exclusive class interests of monopoly capital" and the big bourgeoisie.³² Other theoreticians, however, see fascism as the reactive, antimodernist response of the "insecure lower middle classes" to the concentration of industry on the one hand and the organization of labor on the other.³³ Still others have argued that it was the "retrograde peasantry," fearful of the changes wrought by modernization, who constituted the human resources for fascist movements.³⁴

²⁹ For characteristic instances, see Mao Zedong, "A Comment on the Sessions of the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee and of the People's Political Council," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* (Peking: Foreign Languages, 1965), 3, pp. 144-145; and idem, "Greet the New High Tide of the Chinese Revolution," in *Selected Works* 4, p. 120.

³⁰ See, for example, Paul M. A. Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-sen* (Westport, Conn.: Hyperion, 1973), p. 146; M. N. Roy, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China* (Calcutta: Renaissance, 1946), p. 283; and the discussion in Robert E. Bedeski, *State-Building in Modern China: The Kuomintang in the Prewar Period* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1980), p. viii.

³¹ See R. Palme Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution* (New York: International, 1934).

³² Karin Priester, *Der italienische Faschismus: oekonomische und ideologische Grundlagen* (Cologne: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1972), pp. 292, 305; Guido Quazza, ed., *Fascismo e società italiana* (Turin: Einaudi, 1973), pp. 8ff.; A. Kuhn, *Das faschistische herrschafts System und die moderne Gesellschaft* (Hamburg: Hoffman and Campe, 1973), p. 113.

³³ F. L. Carsten, *The Rise of Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California, 1967), pp. 9, 10, 56.

³⁴ See Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1970).

In effect, the specialists who have dealt with European history have not reached any consensus regarding how fascism is to be understood or interpreted. There is no agreement about its class basis: whether fascism represented the interests of finance capitalists, the national bourgeoisie, the petit bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie in general, the landed aristocracy, the peasantry, all these classes taken together, or none of them.³⁵ There is no agreement about its theoretical or philosophical basis: whether fascism was revolutionary or counterrevolutionary, whether it represented a "crisis in morals" or was the result of collective psychopathology or an instance of the demonic possession of the masses.³⁶ Given this confusion, it is not surprising that the most recent efforts to achieve some theoretical understanding of generic fascism, having recognized this lack of consensus concerning the nature of fascism, have been far less ambitious.³⁷

DEFINING CHINESE FASCISM

When one turns to the use of the project term "fascism" to characterize the government of the Kuomintang in China, one finds no less confusion and lack of consensus concerning the meaning of this Chinese fascism.

To begin with, it is not at all clear what classes comprised Kuomintang fascism. For the Maoists, they were the landed gentry and the comprador bourgeoisie.³⁸ For W.F. Elkins, they were the national bourgeoisie, together with the comprador and landlord classes, "under the influence of European-American imperialism."³⁹ Others, such as Mary C. Wright, consider the discussion of class constituency far too arcane. According to Wright, the Kuomintang was fascist not necessarily because it served some special class interests but simply because its leadership had,

³⁵ For a discussion of the various efforts to interpret fascism, see A. James Gregor, *Interpretations of Fascism* (Morristown: General Learning, 1974); Renzo De Felice, *Interpretations of Fascism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1977).

³⁶ There is considerable literature that attempts to understand fascism as an occult phenomenon. See, for example, C. Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier, *The Morning of the Magicians* (New York: Avon, 1968); Trevor Ravenscroft, *The Spear of Destiny* (New York: Bantam, 1974); J. Herbert Brennan, *The Occult Reich* (New York: New American Library, 1974).

³⁷ Stein U. Lagen, Bernt Hagtvet and Jan P. Myklebust, eds., *Who Were the Fascists? Social Roots of European Fascism* (Bergen: Universitets-forlaeget, 1980).

³⁸ Wang Shihan, "Sun Yat-sen's Friendship with Communist Li Dazhao," *China Reconstructs* 30, no. 9 (September 1981): 14; "The Great Life of Soong Ching Ling," in *In Memory of Soong Ching Ling* (Beijing: China Reconstructs, 1981), p. 3.

³⁹ Elkins, "'Fascism' in China," p. 427.

over the years, become increasingly “reactionary,” antimodernist, and “restorationist.”⁴⁰

Thus, while a number of credible scholars seem reasonably convinced that the concept of “fascism” can be applied with profit to the political history of Kuomintang China, it is not at all clear how and in what sense it might be so employed. There seems to be no consistency in the literature about what fascism, generic or Chinese, might have been; how the ideology of fascism might best be characterized; what a fascist system of government might involve; or what the socioeconomic functions and political properties of fascism might be. And unlike “planting roses,” the end product of “making fascism” is far from self-evident.

THE EASTMAN THESIS

Among those who have mobilized the concept “fascism” in the effort to understand modern Chinese history, Lloyd E. Eastman is the most prominent. His work—beginning with a communication presented before a conference of the Association for Asian Studies in March 1971 that was subsequently published as an article in *The China Quarterly* in 1972, as a book, *The Abortive Revolution* (1974), characterized as “richly documented and painstakingly reconstructed,”⁴¹ and finally in summary form in an interpretive article in 1976—provided both the inspiration and much of the initial substance for the assessments found in the work of other writers.⁴²

In his work Eastman has chosen to employ the project term “fascism” to illuminate the history of the Blue Shirt Society as well as the “nature of Kuomintang rule” in China.⁴³ Eschewing the standard Marxist interpretation, Eastman believes that the fascism of the Kuomintang and the Blue Shirts did not serve the interests of the bourgeoisie or the landlord class. According to Eastman, although some landlords and some capitalists had indeed benefited from the patronage of individual KMT officials, nevertheless,

⁴⁰ See Mary C. Wright, “From Revolution to Restoration: The Transformation of Kuomintang Ideology,” *Far Eastern Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (August 1955): 515–532, especially p. 517.

⁴¹ S. M. Jones, review of *The Abortive Revolution*, by Lloyd Eastman, *American Political Science Review* 72, no. 1 (March 1978): 309.

⁴² Both Godley and Tien specifically refer to Eastman’s works in support of their major thesis. See Godley, “Fascismo e nazionalismo cinese,” p. 742, n. 2, and Tien, *Government and Politics*, p. 213.

⁴³ Eastman, “Fascism in Kuomintang China,” p. 1.

[T]here was an inherent tension between them: the landlords and the capitalists aspired to preserve the existing order; the regime, by contrast, was working to maximize its power and to construct a new political system. The long-term goals of the regime and of the landlord and capitalist classes were therefore fundamentally dissimilar.⁴⁴

In Eastman's conception modern Chinese fascism had no class constituency, serving, as it did, no identifiable class in China. Referring to the Blue Shirts, Eastman concluded that "this political movement has no social base, no political constituency outside itself."⁴⁵ Referring to the regime itself, Eastman wrote that the government of the Kuomintang "tended... to be neither responsible nor responsive to political groups or institutions outside the government. It became... its own constituency, ruling in the interests of its own members."⁴⁶ Eastman rejects the notion that fascism is to be understood in terms of some class-related socioeconomic function. Rather, he identifies fascism with "a political ideology that has historically proven to be attractive to widely disparate social groups in widely diverse societies."⁴⁷

Nor did Chinese fascism seem to have the political function usually attributed to generic fascism: that of being "antimodernizing" or "restorationist." According to Eastman neither the Blue Shirts nor the Kuomintang "proposed a strategy for restoring the traditional order..." Rather than the antimodernizers of Wright's vision, the leadership of the Kuomintang and of the Blue Shirts anticipated a planned economy that would see rapid industrial development and agricultural expansion in China.⁴⁸ Rather than being restorationist, China's fascists "perceived that the ultimate solution for China lay in creating a wholly new political, economic, and cultural system."⁴⁹

Eastman's Chinese fascism thus discharges no specific socioeconomic or political function usually attributed to fascism since it is not class-based, reactionary, or restorationist. Instead, Eastman identifies the Blue Shirts as fascist because its leadership, like the "participants in the various

⁴⁴ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 243.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34, 50–53.

⁴⁹ Lloyd Eastman, "The Kuomintang in the 1930s," in Charlotte Furth, ed., *The Limits of Change: Essays in Conservative Alternatives in Republican China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1976), p. 192; cf. Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, pp. 34, 50–51; and idem, "Fascism in Kuomintang China," pp. 10–11, 13–14.

fascist movements, have...shared a sense of political desperation, that often stemmed from threatened or real economic impoverishment, national humiliation, or a sensed loss of cultural roots.”⁵⁰ It was this “sense of political desperation,” one that was largely induced by the Manchurian Incident of September 18, 1931, that led a group of young Whampoa graduates to imitate the ideological postures of the fascisms in Europe “so that fascism, rather than the Three People’s Principles of Sun Yat-sen, became the guiding ideology of the Blue Shirts.”⁵¹

According to Eastman all fascist movements, including China’s Blue Shirt Society, generally displayed the following ideological traits:

1. Exaltation of the state and the advocacy of totalitarian controls.
2. One-party rule and the glorification of the leader... the rejection of democracy.
3. Nationalism, which often invoked the restoration of traditional cultural values. . . .
4. The goal of creating a new fascist man, who would subordinate his individual will and aspirations to the collective will. . . .
5. The glorification of violence and terror.⁵²

For Eastman, then, “fascism in China” refers to nothing more than this collection of ideological traits. The fascism of the Blue Shirts is, thus, singularly ideological, bereft of social roots, having no discernible social, economic, or political implications. It is the product of a general malaise, but there is no suggestion that there is a necessary connection between economic impoverishment, political desperation, and the adoption of fascism by the Blue Shirts. From Eastman’s account we learn little about why desperation and the threat of economic privation drove some Chinese to advocate fascism, rather than, say, Marxism-Leninism. In effect, according to Eastman, the fascism of the Blue Shirts seems to have been nothing more than a piece of political mimicry.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EASTMAN THESIS

In 1980, in a seminal and soon-to-be-controversial article on the state of modern China studies, Thomas Metzger and Ramon Myers took American sinologists to task for what the authors described as their skewed, “deterministic, Hegelian” view of modern Chinese history: “Defining the [Chinese Communist] government as the outcome of historical logic and the [Kuomintang] government as a historical leftover,

⁵⁰ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 80.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 80–81.

this ideological vision of modern Chinese history...prevented many American intellectuals from thinking about the two Chinese governments in a fair and sober way."⁵³

Leaving aside the matter of the validity of the many other assertions advanced by Metzger and Myers in their article, assertions that continue to generate and incite heated debates in academic circles, their admonishment to sinologists on the contaminating effect of ideology on the study of China is merely a contemporary extension of Max Weber's classic treatise on values and social science. While recent scholarship on the Republican era is a distinct improvement over the past, the conventional wisdom on Kuomintang China continues to attribute its ultimate failure in 1949 to its moral bankruptcy: its corruption, decadence, and antidemocratic predilections. An account, such as Eastman's, of a mimetic fascist movement in the 1930s, one personally led by Chiang Kai-shek, only reinforces this moralistic interpretation, conjuring up, as it were, automatic images of mass murder, concentration camps, and the perverse celebration of sadism and violence.

Thus, the issue of whether the Blue Shirt Society was fascist or not transcends the particular to the larger question of how one is to conceptualize and understand the Kuomintang, the Republican period, and modern Chinese history itself. It is in this context that the Eastman thesis on the Blue Shirts must be examined.

⁵³ Thomas A. Metzger and Ramon H. Myers, "Sinological Shadows: The State of Modern China Studies in the U.S.," in Amy A. Wilson, S.L. Greenblatt, and R. W. Wilson, eds., *Methodological Issues in Chinese Studies* (New York: Praeger, 1983), p. 15. The article was first published in *Washington Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (Spring 1980): 87-114.

II

The Documentary Evidence

Our conceptual evidence has to be modified in the light of documentary evidence....Without this further independent evidence...our narrative would float on air: it would, for all we knew, be fiction.¹

Generally, we take historical narratives to be convincing when two conditions obtain: when the events or behaviors contained in these narratives are well confirmed and when the project terms that lend them significance are employed persuasively. These two conditions are interdependent. The events and behaviors of history require project terms to give them definition and meaning, while project terms depend on the documentary evidence of events and behaviors to lend them substance and credibility, for it is this documentary evidence that provides the controls over the narratives we project.

A serious consideration of Eastman's account of the Blue Shirt Society requires, then, a review of the data that provide the substance of his argument and a critical analysis of the assumptions and presuppositions that lace the argument together. Only after such considerations can one rationally assess the merits of his argument and, should it be found wanting, consider some alternate interpretation for the same phenomena.

The Data Base

Eastman's thesis on the Blue Shirts turns on three kinds of documentary materials: (1) judgments issued at various times by individual observers: foreign missionaries and other commentators,

* Portions of this chapter have appeared in Maria Hsia Chang, "'Fascism' and Modern China," *The China Quarterly*, September 1979, pp. 553-567.

¹ Arthur C. Danto, *Analytical Philosophy of History* (London: Cambridge University, 1965), pp. 123, 127.

novelists, anti-Kuomintang critics, both Communist and non-Communist; (2) Japanese materials generated for Japanese military officials or government services; and (3) Chinese materials, primarily the publications *She-hui hsin-wen* (*Society Mercury*) and *Ch'ien-t'u* (*The Future*). The first Eastman purports to be a Blue Shirt publication; the second unquestionably is. These documentary materials are supplemented by "secret" interviews conducted with a few surviving members of the Blue Shirts some thirty-five or forty years after the events in question.

The personal interviews add little to the substance of Eastman's account and for the sake of analysis can be dismissed. Similarly, comments by unnamed missionaries or officials of the YMCA can hardly be considered anything other than dramatic fill, and it is quite clear that they do not carry critical weight in Eastman's exposition. Much the same can be said with respect to historical novels such as Ch'en Shao-hsiao's *Hei-wang lu* (*Record of the Black Net*). Eastman cites this as evidence of a relatively minor point. His case, however, would be unimpaired without its dubious support.

The matter of the Japanese sources presents a different problem. All the evidence presented by Eastman concerning Chiang Kai-shek's personal identification with fascism comes from such sources.² The source of every direct quotation attributed to Chiang in which he is reported to have made such statements as "Fascism is what China now most needs" or "Fascism is a wonderful medicine exactly suited to China" is invariably a Japanese manuscript prepared for the Japanese Foreign Ministry. In the only instance in which Eastman attempts to trace a Japanese quotation attributed to Chiang to a Chinese source, he claims that the Chinese Nationalists have somehow failed to include the speech in Chiang's collected works.³ As a consequence, Eastman does not cite a single

² See references to Chiang Kai-shek's speeches and motives in Lloyd E. Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution: China Under Nationalist Rule, 1927-1937* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1974), pp. 40, 43-44, 46, 68. The sources for these citations are all, without a single exception, from Japanese documents. See p. 325, n. 19; p. 326, nn. 36, 44; p. 330, nn. 123, 125.

³ Lloyd E. Eastman, "Fascism in Kuomintang China: The Blue Shirts," *The China Quarterly*, no. 49 (Jan.-March 1972), p. 6, n. 25. Eastman claims that Chiang's speeches of 20 September 1933 (in Hsing-tzu hsien) and 22 September 1933 (in Lu-shan) were not included in Chiang's collected speeches—*Chiang tsung-t'ung szu-hsiang yen-lun chi* [A collection of President Chiang's thought and speeches] (Taipei: Chung-yang wen-wu kung-ying she, 1966). However, I was able to locate both speeches, the first dated 20 September in Hsing-tzu hsien, the second dated 21 September in Lu-shan, in *Chiang tsung-t'ung chi* [Collected works of President Chiang] (Taipei: Kuo-fang yen-chiu yüan, 1963), 1, pp. 716-720, 720-723, respectively. In the version published in chapter 2 of *The Abortive Revolution*, all reference to such a search is simply dropped (see Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 326, n. n.

Chinese source in which Chiang delivers a clear and personal statement of fascist enthusiasm. Eastman's entire case for identifying Chiang with explicit fascist sympathies rests exclusively on Japanese sources.

Eastman argues for the credibility of his Japanese sources by suggesting that since some of these reports were classified "secret" and hence "not intended for public eyes," there was little motive for fabrication.⁴ A reasonable case for their credibility requires something more than that. A good case can be made, in fact, for a deliberate attempt on the part of the Japanese government to fabricate evidence toward the fascist self-identification of Chiang Kai-shek and the Blue Shirts.

To begin with, the Japanese government was hardly a neutral commentator on the Blue Shirt Society. One of the avowed objectives of the society was the mobilization of an effective resistance against Japan's designs on China.⁵ According to an intelligence report prepared by the Japanese, the Blue Shirts constituted "the core" of Chiang's "anti-Manchukuo, resist-Japan" policy.⁶ Toward that objective the Blue Shirts had organized anti-Japanese militia in the puppet kingdom of Manchukuo, led boycotts against Japanese goods, and dispatched assassins to kill Chinese traitors and high-level Japanese and Manchukuo officials. These activities were sufficiently effective that in the Sino-Japanese negotiations for the Ho-Umezu Agreement of June 1935 the Japanese insisted that provisions for the suppression of the Blue Shirts be included.⁷ Eastman himself admits that "no one...was more disturbed by the Blue Shirts than were the Japanese."⁸

Identifying Chiang Kai-shek and the Blue Shirts as fascists would have served at least two purposes, both of which would enhance Japanese objectives in China. The identification of Chiang and certain members of the Kuomintang with a foreign ideology would serve to alienate the

36). In addition, the passage that Eastman cites is incorrectly attributed to a speech Chiang delivered on 22 September 1933 at Hsing-tzu hsien. I located the passage in his speech of 21 September 1933, at Lu-shan (see *Chiang tsung-t'ung chi*, p. 722). I was also unable to locate references to fascism, such as "for the first time we can truly be called fascists," which Eastman cited as being a part of Chiang's speech at Lu-shan.

⁴ Eastman, "Fascism," p. 16; idem, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 55.

⁵ Eastman himself concludes that "there can be no doubt that the Blue Shirts were profoundly anti-Japanese." See *Abortive Revolution*, p. 78.

⁶ "Ranisha no kaiso shugi no tenkō nara ni saikin no dōkō" [The shift of Blue Shirt reorganizationist thought and most recent trends], in *Ranisha ni kansuru shiryō* [Materials on the Blue Shirts], p. 4, as cited in Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 78 and p. 332, n. 171.

⁷ T. A. Bisson, *Japan in China* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), p. 55.

⁸ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 78.

Nationalist regime from the Chinese populace, in particular from those Chinese officials who might be solicited to serve as collaborators with the Japanese. Identifying the Blue Shirts with the fascists would also steel the resolve of those members of the Japanese military and government who might have to deal with the Chinese Nationalists. In the 1930s Japanese officials had every reason to be suspicious of “fascists.” They had had experience with men like Kita Ikki, Okawa Shumei, Takabatake Motoyuki, Tsukui Tatsuo, and Akao Bin, who were capable of using “fascist” themes to undermine the discipline and authority, as well as threaten the lives, of military and government officials.⁹

Documents prepared to make a case for Chiang’s fascism thus need not have been for the general public in order to work their effect. Indeed, such deliberately fabricated and colored documents might have been reserved for the indoctrination of high-ranking Japanese military officers and government personnel, designed to denigrate and compromise the Kuomintang. Eastman admits that “the term Blue Shirt had been used first by the Japanese to slander the movement by equating it to Mussolini’s Black Shirts.”¹⁰ Given such considerations, it is difficult not to treat the Japanese sources as suspect and self-serving unless supported by more credible evidence.

As a matter of fact, the Japanese sources actually lend little substance to Eastman’s general account. All they do is provide the basis for the contention that Chiang Kai-shek personally and consciously embraced fascism, a claim that is, in itself, neither crucial nor important to Eastman’s thesis. Whether Chiang personally identified himself as a fascist might be important to political polemicists. More to the point is whether Chiang held fascist beliefs and employed fascist methods, whether or not he so identified them.

To begin to make that case, all that is required is adequate documentation of the prevalence of such themes in Chiang’s own writings or in those of the theoreticians of the Blue Shirt Society. That can be done by discovering and cataloguing the requisite themes in the primary Chinese sources.

⁹ See G. Wilson, *Radical Nationalist in Japan: Kita Ikki, 1883–1937* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1973), p. 94, chaps. 5 and 6.

¹⁰ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 61. Cf. the memoirs of a prominent Blue Shirt, Kan Kuo-hsün, in which he stated that “the Japanese espionage network in China at the time, and the United Front division of the Chinese Communist Party, in order to slander and destroy this movement, calumniated the Blue Shirt Society as a ‘fascist’ movement in all their publications.” Kan Kuo-hsün, “Min-tsu fu-hsing yün-tung chi” [A record of the National Renaissance Movement], in *Chung-wai tsa-chih (Kaleidoscope Monthly)* 16, no. 1 (July 1974): 38.

The Testimony of the Primary Sources

Among the primary source materials from the 1930s Eastman includes the periodical *Ch'ien-t'u* and the newspaper *She-hui hsin-wen*, as well as the volume published by Liu Chien-ch'ün,¹¹ the ideologue who purportedly inspired the "fascist" revision of the political doctrines of the Kuomintang.¹² To that body of materials one might add the collected works of Chiang Kai-shek and supplementary materials published by Liu Ping-li, the editor of *Ch'ien-t'u*.¹³ It is to these materials that one would have to appeal to make a responsible case for any "fascism" that might have existed in China during the 1930s.

Eastman's case that the Blue Shirts were indeed a fascist movement is constructed on essentially three claims. The first is that the Blue Shirts had displayed the five ideological traits that characterize, in Eastman's judgment, all fascist movements (see chapter 1).¹⁴ Eastman's second claim is that the Blue Shirts and Chiang Kai-shek himself had expressed admiration for Mussolini and Fascist Italy and Hitler and Nazi Germany and had advocated the adoption of these two countries as models for China. Third, Eastman claims that the Blue Shirts were prepared to forsake the traditional ideology of the Kuomintang: Sun Yat-sen's *San-min chu-i* (Three Principles of the People). In its place would be a new ideology, that of fascism, for China.

THE BLUE SHIRTS AND THE FIVE IDEOLOGICAL TRAITS OF FASCISM

Using the writings of the Blue Shirts from the 1930s, Eastman claims to be successful in identifying all of his five ideological themes of fascism. In making his case Eastman treats the primary materials responsibly, granting the errors that sometimes appear in putting together source citations.¹⁵ Indeed, one does find in the editorials and articles of

¹¹ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming chih lu* [The road to regenerating the Chinese revolution] (Nanking: Chung-kuo wen-hua hsüeh-hui, 1934).

¹² Liu is identified as one of the founding members of the Blue Shirts in Chü-wai jen (pseudonym), "Chi tang-nien ch'uan-shuo chung ti 'shih-san t'ai-pao'" [Recollections of the legendary "thirteen princes"], in *Ch'un-ch'iu* (*The Observation Post*) 95 (16 June 1961): 5.

¹³ Liu Ping-li, *San-min chu-i yü Chung-kuo ko-ming* [The Three Principles of the People and the Chinese revolution] (n.p., 1940).

¹⁴ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 81.

¹⁵ For instance, in Eastman's article "Fascism in Kuomintang China," p. 4, n. 13, and in his book *Abortive Revolution*, p. 326, n. 25, I found his citation on p. 1, not p. 3, of *Ch'ien-t'u* (*The Future*) [hereafter cited as *CT*] (Shanghai: Ch'ien-t'u tsa-chih she), 1, no. 8 (1 Aug. 1933). On p. 6, n. 24, of the article and p. 326, n. 35, of the book he cites *She-hui hsin-wen* (*The Society Mercury*) [hereafter cited as *SHHW*] (Shanghai: Hsin-kuang shu-tien), 3, no. 15 (15 May 1933), p. 226, as the source of the quote "We must not disguise that we demand

Ch'ien-t'u and *She-hui hsin-wen* Blue Shirt advocacy of the "exaltation of the state," "totalitarian controls," "one-party rule," and "glorification of the leader." Indeed, the Blue Shirts did emphasize the urgent need to instill a sense of "nationalism" and of "creating a new man," one who would "subordinate his individual will and aspirations to the collective will." However, the documentary evidence on at least two of Eastman's five ideological traits of fascism is ambiguous at best, if not entirely lacking. These two ideological traits are the "rejection of democracy" and the "glorification of violence and terror."

The Rejection of Democracy. On the issue of the suitability of a democratic government for China, there appear to be at least two discernible Blue Shirt factions. One faction was disposed to reject outright a democratic parliamentary system for China. The other retained Sun Yat-sen's objective of, ultimately, a democracy for China.

Blue Shirts of the first faction saw no intrinsic merit in democracy. For them the critical criterion was a pragmatic and utilitarian one: China would model itself after the political system that proved to be most successful. In their judgment democratic government had been the most successful, therefore advanced, system of government. By the 1930s, however, this "product of eighteenth-century West Europe" had become "totally bankrupt," giving every evidence of its inability to address itself to contemporary problems.¹⁶ Nations like England, France, and the United States seemed to be helpless in the face of an economic crisis of unprecedented proportions: rising unemployment, a disintegrating social order, and a society whose very fabric seemed undone. In stark contrast to the paralysis of these parliamentary systems, single-party states such as Italy and the Soviet Union not only overcame their economic problems

China's Mussolini, demand China's Stalin!" The quote instead should read "We must not disguise that we demand China's Mussolini, demand China's Hitler, demand China's Stalin!" and is located in *SHHW* 3, no. 16 (18 May 1933): 243. In *SHHW* 3, no. 15 (15 May 1933), p. 226, is part one of the same article, "Tsu-chih yü ling-hsiu" [Organization and the leader], which included an extended discussion of the leadership abilities of Lenin and Kemal Atatürk. Eastman's quote—that *SHHW* demanded a Chinese Mussolini and a Chinese Stalin—is, therefore taken slightly out of context. Again, in his article, p. 16, n. 76, and in his book, p. 328, n. 73, the quote cited is on p. 397 instead of p. 413 of *SHHW* 4 (18 Sept. 1933). In his article, p. 24, n. 114, and in his book, p. 331, n. 158, the passage from Tai Li's *Cheng-chih cheng-t'an* [Political espionage] (n.p.: Kuo-min cheng-fu chün-shih wei-yüan-hui cheng-chih pu, 1938) is to be found on p. 38 rather than on pp. 61–62. Finally, in his article, p. 24, n. 116, and in his book, p. 331, n. 160, I found the passage quoted by Eastman on pp. 77–78, not on p. 127, of *Cheng-chih cheng-t'an*.

¹⁶ Editorial, "Lun min-chu cheng-chih" [On democratic government], *SHHW* 3, no. 7 (21 April 1933): 98.

but became “more and more developed.” For these Blue Shirts, then, the evidence was clear. The twentieth century was a time for the “ascendance of one-party dictatorships.”¹⁷ The suggestion that China should adopt parliamentary democracy was thus conceived to be as anachronistic as suggesting that modern agriculture utilize the plough and modern defense the bow and arrow.¹⁸

A second more dominant Blue Shirt faction continued to find democracy intrinsically appealing. While it retained Sun Yat-sen’s vision of democracy as the ultimate end, it nevertheless believed that democratic government was premature for China at that time. For these Blue Shirts a fully functional democracy required certain conditions that did not yet obtain in China. It required, minimally, political stability and security and an informed citizenry free from want. China, however, was neither stable nor secure, threatened as it was by disunity within and a militaristic Japan without.¹⁹ Nor did China have the informed citizenry that made for stable party politics. Instead, there was endemic poverty and illiteracy. In this context the insistence on a democratic government was neither appropriate nor useful, for “what the Chinese people need is not the right to vote, but the fundamental and simple right of freedom from hunger and cold.”²⁰

For this second Blue Shirt faction, then, China’s particular circumstances made necessary a transitional period wherein it would be governed by an authoritarian, single-party state, a “tutelary” state that would introduce order, secure unity, and create the economic conditions for the instauration of full democracy. Democracy, while postponed, remained the ideal form of government for China.²¹ There would be no “rejection of democracy” as Eastman maintains.

The Glorification of Violence and Terror. To substantiate his assertion that Blue Shirt ideology displayed his fifth criterion of fascism, Eastman cites as evidence an editorial from *She-hui hsün-wen* that gave hearty approval to such acts of violence as the burning of books and the burying of scholars alive²² and an instruction from Chiang Kai-shek to the Blue

¹⁷ Editorial, “Tsai-lun min-chu cheng-chih” [More on democratic government], *SHHW* 3, no. 9 (27 April 1933): 131.

¹⁸ Editorial, “Lun min-chu cheng-chih,” p. 98.

¹⁹ Editorial, “Chin-jih chih shih” [The task of today], *CT* 1, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 2.

²⁰ Liu Chien-ch’ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, pp. 14–15.

²¹ According to Liu Chien-ch’ün, although the Chinese revolution “cannot depart from the *San-min chu-i*, the realization of which would mean [democratic] party government, at the present stage [of the revolution, the Chinese] cannot yet speak of the implementation of constitutional democracy.” *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²² “In order to create a new culture, Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, and Hitler launched an un-

Shirts to “handle all matters in accordance with the principle of fighting violence with violence.”²³ And as further evidence for the Blue Shirt “glorification of violence and terror,” Eastman cites the political assassinations and abductions attributed to the Special Services (*i'e-wu*), the espionage division of the Blue Shirts, including the curious little tract written by Tai Li,²⁴ the head of the Special Services.

In appealing to such evidence from the primary sources, Eastman seems to have confused an instrumental conception of violence with the glorification of violence. When the Blue Shirts proclaimed that “blood must flow in political struggles,”²⁵ the violence they recommended was for instrumental purposes to be applied toward those judged to be inimical to China’s well-being. For the Blue Shirts these would include traitorous merchants, corrupt warlords and officials, the Communists, the Japanese, and political rivals. According to the Disciplinary Code of the Blue Shirts, if tolerant methods continued to be used to deal with these “rotten elements,” they would never be “completely exterminated.”²⁶

Such a treatment of violence is manifestly different from its treatment in the doctrinal literature of Italian Fascism or German National Socialism. The Blue Shirts asserted that violence was sometimes necessary and could play an instrumental role, whereas Italian Fascism provided a philosophical rationale for violence. For the Fascists, violence was a necessary, natural evil. They conceived violence as somehow critical and essential to man’s fulfillment as a moral agent. Only in making a final sacrifice of life in mortal challenge might man achieve complete spirituality.²⁷ This cult of “beautiful death” (*la bella morte*) was characteristic of Fascists and perhaps of the S.S. and the Japanese *bushidō* code, but it was not a feature of Blue Shirt ideology.

As for the Special Services of Tai Li, the episodic employment of terror or assassination seems to be among the standard operating

feeling, cruel attack on the old culture, replaying the drama of the First Emperor [of China, 221–210 B.C.], burning books and burying scholars alive. Naturally, this cannot but be done!” Editorial, *SHHW* 3 (9 June 1933): 354, as cited in Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, pp. 45–46.

²³ “Ranisha no soshiki to hanman kōnichi katsudō no jitsurei!” [The organization of the Blue Shirts and examples of anti-Manchukuo, anti-Japanese activities], in *Ranisha ni kansuru shiryō*, p. 5, as cited in Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 46. Chiang’s expression “fighting violence with violence” (*i pao chih pao*) is a common expression among the Chinese.

²⁴ Tai Li, *Cheng-chih cheng-t’an*.

²⁵ Editorial, “An-sha chih feng” [The wave of assassinations], *CT* 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 5.

²⁶ “Ranisha no soshiki,” as cited in Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 47.

²⁷ In this regard, see S. Panunzio, *Diritto, forza e violenza* (Bologna: Capelli, 1921).

procedures for such agencies, not excluding our own CIA. Tai Li's little pamphlet is a handbook for standard espionage operations. Nowhere in the text of the handbook is there a "glorification" of this instrumental political violence. Thus, in trying to force the Blue Shirts into the "fascist" category, Eastman has identified it with a cult of violence for which there is no evidence in the primary sources.

BLUE SHIRT ADMIRATION FOR ITALY AND GERMANY

The second claim on which Eastman makes his case for the fascism of the Blue Shirts is that Chiang Kai-shek and the Blue Shirts admired Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany and advocated the emulation of these two as models for China. The primary sources do indeed evidence a frank admiration on the part of Blue Shirt intellectuals for Fascist Italy and Germany. We are told, in editorials and articles from *She-hui hsin-wen*, that the results of Fascist rule in Italy were "extraordinary"²⁸ and that the "fascist dictatorship of Italy" had in eleven years taken a "broken and divided Italy" and rendered it a "leading power" in Europe.²⁹ There was similar talk of Germany's National Socialist Party having achieved "great successes."³⁰

Chiang Kai-shek made no attempt to conceal his own admiration for authoritarian regimes during this period. In his *Outline of the New Life Movement*, written about the time in question, Chiang addressed himself to China's need for rigorously controlling consumption, systematically inculcating the work and sacrifice ethic among the Chinese, and cultivating the civic virtues of loyalty and obedience among the nation's citizenry. According to Chiang, National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy had achieved such effects in their respective nations. That, in his judgment, was the "primary cause" of their strength.³¹

None of this is exceptional nor particularly significant if one restores such sentiments to the appropriate context. During this period a great many people were prepared to listen to fascist ideas with considerable sympathy. Winston Churchill and George Bernard Shaw, among a great many others, expressed admiration for Mussolini and Fascism. In China,

²⁸ Wang T'ieh-fu, "I-ta-li chiao-yü chih chin-hsi" [The past and present of Italy's education], *SHHW* 3, no. 17 (21 May 1933): 267.

²⁹ Editorial, "Tsai-lun min-chu cheng-chih," p. 131.

³⁰ Editorial, "Tsu-chih yü ling-hsiu" [Organization and the leader], *SHHW* 3, no. 15 (15 May 1933): 227.

³¹ Chiang Kai-shek, *Outline of the New Life Movement*, translated by Madame Chiang Kai-shek (distributed by the Association for the Promotion of the New Life Movement, Nanchang, Kiangsi, n.d.), p. 12.

as early as 1928, the *North China Standard* of Tientsin remarked that "China needs... a Chinese Mussolini."³² In 1929 the *China Truth* of Canton spoke of Mussolini as a "hero out of Carlyle," at about the same time that the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* spoke of him as a "legendary figure."³³ And when Chang Hsüeh-liang, who kidnapped Chiang Kai-shek in the famous Sian Incident of 1936, returned from Europe in the early 1930s, he too brought back an irrepressible enthusiasm for fascism.³⁴ In effect, it is safe to say that during this period sympathy and admiration for fascism were not uncommon, in China or in the world at large.³⁵

But Blue Shirt admiration for Italy and Germany was not entirely without critical thoughts or reservations. The admiration was tempered with a wariness that these were also imperialist powers with acquisitive designs that threatened the very existence of China.³⁶

In the case of Germany, the Blue Shirts took particular exception to the racism contained in the ideology of National Socialism. In 1933 *Ch'ien-t'u* carried an article that expressed the outrage Chinese felt at being identified as inferiors by the Germans, who persisted in their "imperialist disposition" to calumniate the Chinese.³⁷ At about the same time *She-hui hsin-wen* carried an article devoted to Albert Einstein in which manifest sympathy was displayed for the plight of German Jews who, like the Chinese themselves, had so long suffered racial prejudice

³² *North China Standard*, 12 May 1928.

³³ Fascists took evident pleasure in collecting these quotations. These and many, many others can be found in S. Marzano, *Luce nell'occidente* (Milan: Impresa editoriale italiana, 1933).

³⁴ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Yin-ho i-wang* [Memories at Yin-ho] (Taipei: Ch'uan-chi wen-hsüeh ts'ung-k'an, 1966), p. 233; see also Kao Shan-liu, *Chang Hsüeh-liang yu-chü sheng-huo shih-lu* [A true account of Chang Hsüeh-liang's life in seclusion] (Hong Kong: Observation Press, 1971), p. 80.

³⁵ While sentiment was divided in the United States, there was considerable support for Mussolini and his Fascism. See J.P. Diggins, *Mussolini and Fascism: The View from America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University, 1972). Some of the more important officials associated with the New Deal administration of Franklin Roosevelt were influenced by fascist political notions. See also A. Galatoli-Landi, "Il corporativismo e il New Deal," in S. Betti and F. Rogivatti, eds., *Il pensiero di Giovanni Gentile* (Rome: Enciclopedia Italiana, 1977), pp. 525-533.

³⁶ "Since the world economic crisis of 1929, all the imperialist powers have proceeded to enlarge their markets in China in their scheme to acquire huge profits.... Even the newly risen Italy and Germany are competing to have their share of China." Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi chi wo-men chin-hou chih jen-wu" [The Chinese people's crisis and our mission from now on], *CT1*, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 11-12.

³⁷ Hsia Chih-jen, "Te-jen yen-mu chung chih Chung-kuo jen" [Chinese in the eyes of the Germans], *CT1*, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 4.

and discrimination.³⁸ In any event, the very notion of Nordic superiority could only have constituted a howling absurdity in the Chinese context of the “Middle Kingdom.”

Similarly, with respect to Italian Fascism, their admiration notwithstanding, Blue Shirt intellectuals expressed considerable reservation concerning Mussolini’s regime. They reminded their readers that Italians suffered from massive restrictions on their personal liberty, that there was systematic suppression of opposition, and that the Italian national economy was burdened by excessive military expenditures. They warned that Fascism’s insistence on high reproductive rates might well overburden the support capabilities of the peninsula and that because of Mussolini’s personalist style of leadership, his death might well threaten the survival of his party and of the national revolution.³⁹ As though to highlight some of these reservations, the editors of *Ch’ien-t’u* published a translation of an article by Benedetto Croce, “On Liberty,” from a 1932 issue of *Foreign Affairs*.⁴⁰ Croce, of course, was an internationally recognized opponent of Mussolini, and the publication, without comment, of an explicitly anti-Fascist work by an “avowedly” Blue Shirt publication is significant.

What is more important than evidence of Blue Shirt admiration for the fascists, however qualified this admiration, is why and how Fascist Italy and Germany were found to be so admirable. In this regard, the testimony of the primary sources seems unequivocal. In an article in *She-hui hsin-wen*, Wang T’ieh-fu extolled the virtues of Fascist Italy. According to Wang, Italy, though afflicted by limited resources and surrounded by hostile neighbors, had nevertheless succeeded in “clearing a path out” for herself and fashioned “a modern nation” in a mere fifteen years.⁴¹ Writing in *Ch’ien-t’u*, Huang Hao recommended emulating the renascent Italy and Germany for their ability to “resist the incursion of imperialism,” “unify the nation,” and achieve economic development.⁴²

Clearly, then, what the Blue Shirts found so admirable in Fascist Italy and National Socialist Germany was their ability to overcome certain

³⁸ Hsi Yü, “‘Ai-yin-ssu-t’an chih kuo-chi” [The nationality of Einstein], *SHHW* 3, no. 3 (9 April 1933): 44.

³⁹ Wang T’ieh-fu, “‘I-ta-li ti wei-chi” [Italy’s peril] *SHHW* 1, no. 1 (4 October 1932): 11–13.

⁴⁰ See *CT* 1, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 1–6.

⁴¹ Wang T’ieh-fu, “‘I-ta-li chih chung-kao teng chiao-yü” [Middle and higher education in Italy], *SHHW*, 3, no. 18 (24 May 1933): 284.

⁴² Huang Hao, “‘Yu wu-ssu tao i-erh-pa chih min-tsu wen-hua yün-tung” [The national cultural movement from May Fourth to January 28th], *CT* 1, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 8.

problems that also afflicted China⁴³: economic underdevelopment, political disunity, and threats from without by hostile and powerful enemies. The Blue Shirts admired the fascists not for their ideology but because they were successful.

And thus it was that nations and leaders, other than those of Italy and Germany, that had demonstrated similar successes also met with the approval of the Blue Shirts. It was not fascism, per se, that was the object of Blue Shirt admiration. It was any movement's ability to effectively implement its program. These movements ranged across the ideological spectrum from the Italian Fascism of Mussolini and the National Socialism of Hitler to the Bolshevism of Lenin and Stalin,⁴⁴ the nationalism of Turkey's Kemal Ataturk,⁴⁵ and the pacifist nationalism of India's Gandhi.⁴⁶ The Blue Shirts were concerned not with ideological mimicry but with effective practice. They were as unprepared to adopt the ideology of Italian Fascism as the ideology of National Socialism or Marxism-Leninism.⁴⁷ What Chiang and the Blue Shirts sought was not a new ideology for China but the organizational and control principles that informed an entire class of modern revolutionary movements. In the words of Liu Chien-ch'ün, "China needs a party with an organization that is extremely strong and healthy."⁴⁸

A decade before, in the crisis of the early 1920s, Sun Yat-sen himself had looked to the Soviet Union for the organizational principles that would revitalize his revolutionary party. Whatever advantages he saw in Bolshevik party organization, Sun saw very little merit in the

⁴³ "The misfortunes experienced by the Chinese people resemble...those of the Germans after the First World War." Ch'iu Ch'un, "Chiao-yü yü Chung-hua min-tsu-hsing chih kai-tsoo" [Education and the reform of the Chinese national character], CT, 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 1. "China's oppression by other powers is like that suffered by Germany after the war...." Jen [pseud.], "I chien-she ch'iu t'ung-i" [Unification through reconstruction], CT, 1, no. 8 (1 Aug. 1933): 4-5.

⁴⁴ "[O]nly with the power and authority...of a leader like Lenin could the Russian Revolution have succeeded." Editorial, "Tsu-chih yü ling-hsiu," p. 226.

⁴⁵ Liu Ping-li, "Min-tsu t'u-ts'un ti chi-pen t'iao-chien" [The fundamental conditions for national survival], CT1, no. 8 (1 Aug. 1933): 4.

⁴⁶ "Gandhi, of the Indian revolution, [like Sun Yat-sen,] is also well known for his oath of poverty and his bitter struggles." Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 86.

⁴⁷ In an article on education, Chao Yen wrote unequivocally that "the future of China will be different from that of Europe or America." What China needed were "innovative and adaptive" ideas rather than pale "copies" and "blind imitations" of other countries. Chao Yen, "Min-tsu chiao-yü chih pi-jan-hsing" [The necessity for a national education], CT1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 6.

⁴⁸ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 52.

“Marxism” of Lenin. The organizational and institutional principles of a reorganized Kuomintang might have been inspired by the Bolsheviks, but the ideology was to remain that of the *San-min chu-i*.⁴⁹ No less can be said of the Blue Shirts.

In their judgment, China’s circumstances had deteriorated measurably even since the time of Sun.⁵⁰ If he had felt compelled to advocate the hierarchical and authoritarian principles of the Bolshevik mode, they apparently felt equally justified in employing a similar model recommended by fascism.⁵¹ And thus, when the Blue Shirts spoke of a “fascism” that might save China, they were alluding not to the ideology of fascism but to its mobilizing and control capabilities. For in the last analysis,

fascism must be understood to be devoid of specific content. Each society provides its own specific constituents. Without a doubt, China needs fascism’s organizational energy and discipline. China’s ideals, however, continue to be Sun Yat-sen’s *San-min chu-i*. China needs the Three People’s Principles, but effective organization is needed for their realization. Fascism affords that organization.⁵²

THE ABANDONMENT OF SUN YAT-SEN’S SAN-MIN CHU-I

All of this leads us to an examination of the third claim upon which Eastman has constructed his case for the fascism of Chiang Kai-shek and the Blue Shirts. This last claim insists that the Blue Shirts so admired the fascism of Italy and Germany that they were prepared to have “fascism, rather than the Three People’s Principles of Sun Yat-sen, [be] the guiding ideology of the Blue Shirts.”⁵³

⁴⁹ See in this regard the detailed discussion in C. M. Wilbur, *Sun Yat-sen: Frustrated Patriot* (New York: Columbia University, 1976), pp. 207–228, 243–245.

⁵⁰ See Li K’ang, “Wu-wu chi-nien Chung-shan hsien-sheng” [Commemorating Mr. Sun Yat-sen on May 5th], *CT1*, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 2.

⁵¹ “Italy, after World War I, was almost in a state of national extinction. If it did not have a fascist movement, then Italy would have been condemned to dissolution with no hope of restoration. Germany’s case was similar. . . . China’s present danger exceeds that of Italy and Germany.” Mao Kuan-shan, “Kuo-min-tang yü fa-hsi-ssu-ti yün-tung” [The Kuomintang and the fascist movement], *SHHW* 4, no. 18 (24 August 1933): 274.

⁵² “Fa-hsi-szu-ti yü Chung-kuo ko-ming” [Fascism and the Chinese revolution], *SHHW* 4, no. 25 (15 September 1933): 397.

⁵³ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 54. Although Eastman seems undecided on this issue and ultimately sought refuge through obfuscation when he wrote that “the ‘fascitization’ of the Blue Shirts was an accomplished fact, whether or not the Three People’s Principles continued to be its ideological bedmate” (p. 55), nevertheless, in stating that the Blue Shirts adopted fascism, a foreign ideology, he implies that they were prepared to desert the traditional ideology of the Kuomintang—Sun’s *San-min chu-i*. Unless Eastman can offer a con-

Regarding this third claim, the testimony of the primary sources is clear and unambiguous. As we have seen, when the Blue Shirts advocated the emulation of fascism their objective was to adopt the organizational and institutional instrumentalities of fascism that had been effective, not only in Italy and Germany but also in other revolutionary nationalist movements of the period.⁵⁴ Thus we find Chiang Kai-shek, in 1934, noting that the “fundamental reason” for the successful nation-building of Turkey, Italy, and Germany was that their citizens “all adhered to social discipline and organizational rules.”⁵⁵

The appeal that these nations had for the Blue Shirts clearly did not lie in their ideologies. When *She-hui hsin-wen* commended the Bolsheviks for their construction of a strong state and economy, it was nevertheless careful in stating that “we are resolutely opposed to the Bolshevik ideology.”⁵⁶ And when Chiang sought instruction from the National Socialists, he was not concerned with information about the ideology of National Socialism but with how Hitler had succeeded in maintaining “strict discipline among [party] followers.”⁵⁷

Not only were the Blue Shirts uninterested in the ideology of these movements, they were adamantly opposed to Chinese mimicry of foreign ideas. Blue Shirt intellectuals emphasized that “taking the Turkish, German or Italian road of restoration is not to imitate them.”⁵⁸ China already possessed a revolutionary ideology: Sun Yat-sen’s *San-min chu-i*. But the realization of this ideology required effective organization, discipline, and sacrifice.⁵⁹ As Liu Chien-Ch’ün insisted, “The Chinese revolution cannot depart from the *San-min chu-i*.” Its realization,

vincing explanation of how the Blue Shirts could adopt a foreign ideology yet remain loyal to the *San-min chu-i*, the conclusion that the Blue Shirts did jettison Sun’s ideology is inescapable, whether or not Eastman explicitly commits himself to such a conclusion.

⁵⁴ Liu Ping-li, in an article in *Ch’ien-t’u*, maintained that China could be saved “only if Chinese politics take the same road of restoration as that of Turkey, Germany or Italy.” See *CT* 1, no. 8 (1 August 1933): 4.

⁵⁵ Chiang Kai-shek, “Hsin sheng-huo yün-tung chih chung-hsin chun-tse” [The central principles of the New Life Movement], speech of 5 March 1934, in *Chiang tsung-t’ung chi*, p. 738.

⁵⁶ Editorial, “Tsai-lun min-chu cheng-chih,” p. 131.

⁵⁷ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, pp. 34–35.

⁵⁸ Liu Ping-li, in *CT* 1, no. 8 (1 August 1933): 4.

⁵⁹ According to *She-hui hsin-wen*, “Without unity, there can be no strength, and without strength, nothing will be accomplished. . . . For unity, there must be organization. Therefore, organization is the prerequisite for success. . . . China is now freighted with internal and external problems of crisis proportions. . . . A strong organization is more imperative than ever.” Editorial, “Tsu-chih yü ling-hsiu,” p. 226.

however, necessitated “effective party rule.”⁶⁰ China needed not a new ideology but the strategies and tactics of effective party government. This, the Blue Shirts thought, could be learned from the experiences of other revolutionary movements.

The identification by the Blue Shirts of these strategies with fascism was, at least in part, prompted by circumstances. Between 1933 and 1935, for instance, the Italians undertook a coordinated effort to assist the Kuomintang in the development of Chinese military and civilian aviation, assisted in her trade and commerce, and showed overt sympathy for her cause.⁶¹ Mussolini alluded to the shared aspirations that animated the revolutionaries of “oppressed Asia” and an Italy long oppressed by “plutocratic imperialism.” He recognized the resentments of the Asians, and in their comprehensible reaction, Italian Fascism “saw itself reflected.” “The differences are in form and detail, but the basis is the same.”⁶²

The Blue Shirts did not consider themselves aping Italian Fascism. On the contrary, they understood Italian Fascism to be a variant of the ideology of Sun Yat-sen. Liu Chien-ch’ün articulated this conviction when he maintained that every successful revolutionary movement in the modern world, whether in the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, or National Socialist Germany, was informed by the ideological principles of the *San-min chu-i*.

Although they do not speak of the *San-min chu-i*, in reality, they are constructing a new society in accordance with its principles. In the first place, their central ideological concern is their respective nation’s interests; secondly, they undertake to eliminate illiteracy, train and educate the masses in order to lay the foundation for a people’s democracy; thirdly, they invoke the power of the state to centralize the economy in order to provide for the people’s livelihood. Superficially their slogans and proposals appear different, but their overt actions are fundamentally the same.⁶³

Given these analyses, irrespective of their evident admiration for fascism, the ideologues of the Blue Shirts could insist with perfect coherence and conviction, “Comrades! We are the disciples of the *San-*

⁶⁰ Liu Chien-ch’ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, pp. 3, 14, 42, 44.

⁶¹ See A. N. Young, *China’s Nation-Building Effort, 1927–1935* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1971), pp. 354–356; G. Scarpa, “I problemi dell’Asia,” *Civiltà fascista*, 1, no. 10 (October 1934): 870–899.

⁶² Benito Mussolini, “Oriente e occidente,” *Opera omnia* (Florence: La fenice, 1951–1964), 26, pp. 127–128.

⁶³ Liu Chien-ch’ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 12.

min chu-i,"⁶⁴ while in 1934 (when, according to the Japanese, he was prepared to abandon the ideology of Sun Yat-sen), Chiang Kai-shek could, with genuine conviction, reaffirm that "the best revolutionary ideology to save the nation and the people is our *Tsung-li*'s Three People's Principles. Our revolutionary success depends, therefore, on the sincerity with which we commit ourselves to the *San-min chu-i* and the determination with which we carry out its precepts. We must not entertain the slightest doubt, the slightest criticism, of the *San-min chu-i*."⁶⁵

Conclusion

To be persuasive, Lloyd Eastman's account of the Chinese Blue Shirt Society must, like any other historical narrative, be conceptually and logically clear and be supported by the documentary materials. Regarding the latter, Eastman asserts that the documentary evidence on the Blue Shirt Society supports his thesis that the society was a fascist organization. A review of the primary sources, the very same material he used, fails to establish this putative match of evidence to knowledge. Instead, the documentary evidence is indeterminate and equivocal.

Regarding Eastman's first claim—that the ideology of the Blue Shirts displayed all five of his criteria of fascism—the documentary evidence fails to confirm at least two of the five traits: the "rejection of democracy" and the "glorification of violence and terror." While a dominant faction within the society argued for a postponement of democracy until the necessary conditions that make for a stable and viable democratic government were in place, democracy as the ideal end-state retained its appeal. As for the "glorification of violence and terror," Blue Shirt intellectuals advocated the same instrumental employment of political violence as that which is practiced by our own CIA, a position markedly different from Fascism's philosophical cult of violence.

Regarding Eastman's second claim—that Chiang and the Blue Shirts admired Fascist Italy and Germany and advocated the adoption of both as models for China—a careful review of the documentary evidence counsels against a simplistic interpretation. Blue Shirt admiration was not limited to fascist nations or ideology. The Blue Shirts admired any movement's effectiveness in realizing its ideological objectives. Such an efficacy requires the employment of certain strategies and tactics, the most

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁶⁵ Chiang Kai-shek, "Tsung-li sheng-p'ing chih ken-pen ssu-hsiang yü ko-ming jen-ko" [The fundamental thoughts and revolutionary character in the life of Sun Yat-sen], speech of 12 March 1934, in *Chiang tsung-i'ung chi*, p. 743.

important of which seemed to be an effective revolutionary party of discipline, fortitude, and commitment. It was this—the instrumentalities that make for an effective party—that the Blue Shirts recommended as a model for China.

Regarding Eastman's third claim—that the Blue Shirts advocated the abandonment of the ideology of Sun Yat-sen for that of fascism—the testimony of the empirical evidence is clear. Nowhere in the primary sources can one find the advocacy of an abandonment of the *San-min chu-i* in order to espouse fascism. One finds, instead, only an insistence that the "spirit" and "organization" of fascism be adopted in order to realize Sun's principles. Not a single primary source documents the claim that the leadership of the Blue Shirts advocated the abandonment of the thought of Sun for the mimetic emulation of fascism.

Israel Scheffler, the eminent philosopher of science, once wrote that "since we cannot... be obliged to do what is impossible for us to do, we cannot be obliged to attain certainty in *any* case of empirical fact. We *can*, however, be expected to fashion our attributions in accordance with the evidence available to us, and to treat them as subject to public criticism and to revision upon the emergence of contrary evidence."⁶⁶ A review of the primary materials on the Blue Shirts produces the conclusion that Eastman's narrative must be modified in the light of contrary empirical evidence.

Certain problems nevertheless remain. The primary sources do attest to the presence in Blue Shirt publications of at least three of Eastman's criteria of fascism. How could the Blue Shirts display these "fascist" traits yet continue, as they alleged, to be "loyal disciples" of Sun Yat-sen? How credible is their insistence on their fidelity to the thought of Sun? It is an unfortunate truth that, throughout its history, the Kuomintang had been plagued with factional disputes. Yet these disputes, often bitter, did not seem to have prevented differing factions from professing their fundamental commitment to the *San-min chu-i*. Factional disputes within an ideocratic party are rarely expressed as deviations from the orthodox ideology. How much credence, then, should one invest in the protestations of loyalty to the thought of Sun by the faction of the Blue Shirts? In other words, although the emergence of contrary evidence would counsel for a modification, if not the rejection, of the Eastman thesis, this very same new evidence also reveals anomalies that await resolution.

⁶⁶ Israel Scheffler, *Conditions of Knowledge* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1965), p. 53.

III

Sun Yat-sen, the Blue Shirts, and Fascism

The historian's problem is to discover *what it really was* that happened. And he deals with it by offering an explanation of the form, "It was a so-and-so." . . . [T]he explanation is given by finding a satisfactory *classification* of what seems to require explanation.¹

As early as the mid-1930s M. N. Roy had argued that the ideology of Sun Yat-sen cast "the ominous shadow of Fascism," while Paul Linebarger intimated that the *San-min chu-i* had "something in common with [Italian] Fascism."² Anthony Smith recently alluded to a sort of family resemblance shared by fascism and Sun's revolutionary nationalism.³ Mary Matossian also noted the similarities between Sun's ideology and Italian Fascism, among others.⁴ And indeed, if one inspects the writings of Sun Yat-sen, it is not at all difficult to find in the pages of the *San-min chu-i* those very same ideological traits judged by Eastman to be characteristic of fascism.

To begin with, Sun was clearly convinced that the contemporary fate of China turned on the rekindling of nationalist sentiment among the Chinese people. His self-appointed task was to insure the survival of China by restoring to the Chinese people the lost "jewel" of nationalism.

* Portions of this chapter have appeared in A. James Gregor and Maria Hsia Chang, "Nazionalfascismo and the Revolutionary Nationalism of Sun Yat-sen," *Journal of Asian Studies* 39, no. 1 (November 1979): 21-37.

¹ William H. Dray, "'Explaining What' in History," in May Brodbeck, ed., *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences* (London: Macmillan, 1968), p. 344.

² M. N. Roy, *Revolution and Counter Revolution in China* (Calcutta: Renaissance, 1946), p. 283; Paul M. A. Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-sen* (Westport, Conn.: Hyperion, 1973), p. 146.

³ Anthony Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 260.

⁴ Mary Matossian, "Ideologies of Delayed Industrialization: Some Tensions and Ambiguities," in John Kautsky, ed., *Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries: Nationalism and Communism* (New York: John Wiley, 1966), pp. 252-253.

He was convinced that the Chinese faced virtual extinction unless nationalism could be reinvoked among the passive, ignorant, individualistic, and selfish masses of China.⁵

In Sun's judgment, China's problem was that the Chinese had, for too long, enjoyed too much individual freedom. He sought to create a new "nationalist man," one who would dedicate himself to the survival of his people, who would sacrifice his personal interests and his individual freedoms in the service of his community.

The grains of sand are individually very free. If they were mixed with water and cement they would harden into stone. The concrete would be a solid body, but the freedom of the individual grains of sand would necessarily be sacrificed. Thus it is with our people. We enjoy too much individual freedom....The fact that we are as incohesive as sand establishes that we have too much freedom. Because of that excess of individual freedom we have no solidarity.⁶

Sun sought to awaken among the Chinese the spirit of collective identity, a consciousness of belonging that would make the interests of each the interests of all.⁷ To accomplish that end, he invoked traditional teachings. He appealed to a modified Confucianism in the effort to restore China's "old virtues," without which the nation could not "recover its viability."⁸

For Sun, national survival required a mix of contemporary science and traditional teachings. The technology of the West would be to little purpose without the extension of the traditional virtue of filial loyalty to the state, a loyalty that would make the Chinese assume their national obligations "to the point of sacrificing their very lives."⁹ In his judgment the Chinese had lost this traditional virtue. A vast project of national reeducation was thus required to inculcate this loyalty. False ideas must be "rectified," false teachings rebutted. The restoration of the Chinese "national character" must be supplemented by the best of Western

⁵ Sun Yat-sen, *The Three Principles of the People*, translated in L. S. Hsu, *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals* (Los Angeles: University of Southern California, 1933), pp. 164, 199–208, 212.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 285–286, 293–294. These passages have been retranslated to better accord with the Chinese original, but their substance has not been altered. Cf. the Chinese text of the *San-min chu-i* in Sun Yat-sen, *Kuo-fu ch'üan-chi* [Complete works of Sun Yat-sen] (Taipei: Party Historical Archives Committee, 1973).

⁷ See Linebarger, *Political Doctrines*, chap. 1; Shao Chuan Leng and N. D. Palmer, *Sun Yat-sen and Communism* (New York: Praeger, 1960), pp. 132–133.

⁸ Sun Yat-sen, *Three Principles*, pp. 248, 252.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 249. See also Linebarger, *Political Doctrines*, pp. 170, 171; A. James Gregor and Maria Hsia Chang, "Wang Yang-ming and Sun Yat-sen," *The Review of Politics*, 42, no. 3 (July 1980): 388–404.

knowledge. Only then might China, once again, become "one of the leading powers of the world."¹⁰

The realization of such tasks must be left to "seers" or "geniuses" (*hsien-chih hsien-chüeh*): men specially gifted by natural talent to lead. For Sun was convinced that men were, by nature, unequal, and that the inequality was inevitable. A few individuals were "born leaders," and some were "administrators" or "managers" (*hou-chih hou-chüeh*); but most people belonged to the "unthinking" and "thoughtless" masses (*pu-chih pu-chüeh*) who, "without foresight and knowledge, should attend to their duties and serve."¹¹

It is clear that Sun, as *Tsung-li*, the lifetime leader of the Kuomintang, saw himself as born to lead. After the defeat of the first Kuomintang at the hands of Yuan Shih-k'ai, its reorganization began with the requirement that all candidates for membership take an oath of loyalty to Sun Yat-sen. Sun expected obedience, sacrifice, and dedication from the *hou-chih hou-chüeh* of the party, and loyalty and service from the *pu-chih pu-chüeh* of the nation.

Moreover, there is ample evidence that Sun's preoccupation with the divisiveness and rampant individualism that characterized Chinese politics prompted him to support one-party rule. When he was preparing his lectures that have come down to us as the *San-min chu-i*, he clearly expressed his admiration for the totalitarian policies (*tu-ts'ai cheng-chih*) of Lenin's Bolsheviks. He insisted that Bolshevik totalitarian politics constituted a "model" (*mu-fan*) for the Kuomintang.¹²

Sun's advocacy of totalitarian one-party rule during a period of political tutelage (the length of which varied with the circumstances) was clearly elitist and paternalistic. He was convinced that "the enlightened few (an aristocracy of intellectuals) must lead the ignorant masses. He believed in the sovereign right of the people but had little confidence in their intelligence and ability."¹³ As a consequence he was an advocate of a "strong government," a "powerful and efficient government" whose officers might enjoy "full liberty in their actions."¹⁴ Sun did hold that

¹⁰ Sun Yat-sen, *Three Principles*, pp. 257-258.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 300, 301, 302, 310, 317-318.

¹² Sun Yat-sen, "Statement on the Formation of National Government," in *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction* (Taipei: Sino-American, 1953), pp. 161-162.

¹³ Shao Chuan Leng and Palmer, *Sun Yat-sen and Communism*, p. 147.

¹⁴ Sun Yat-sen, *Three Principles*, pp. 350, 361, 362. The "model" for such a government is that of the "modern business corporation" in which "shareholders" may have "final authority," but they meet "only once or twice a year" and "make only a very general examination into the conditions of the corporation. A majority of the shareholders do not know the inside of the business at all. It is the general manager who knows the inside of the busi-

such a government must ultimately be responsible to its citizenry, but the education of that citizenry be “entrusted to the central government, whose very hold on power [consisted] of a high degree of centralization and the support, not of a universal citizenry, but of a highly selected party membership.”¹⁵

In effect, if we look no further than the *San-min chu-i*, we find every theme Eastman has identified as “fascist.” We find something very much like the “exaltation of the state and the advocacy of totalitarian controls.”¹⁶ We find “one party rule and glorification of the leader.” “Nationalism” attends all of this, accompanied by “the restoration of traditional cultural values.” And in the process, a “new man” was to be created.

In other words, whatever “fascism” Eastman finds in the pages of the *She-hui hsin-wen* and the *Ch'ien-t'u* had long been present in the thought of Sun Yat-sen. The Blue Shirts did not have to seek out any of these themes in the literature of a foreign political ideology, that of European fascism. These themes were already available in the traditional ideology of the Kuomintang. The Blue Shirts, thus, were articulating reformulations of the ideological legacy of Sun Yat-sen, rather than advocating a mimetic form of European fascism. That Eastman should find these themes in the *She-hui hsin-wen* and the *Ch'ien-t'u* is, therefore, not in the least surprising. What is significant, for our purpose, is the awareness that this ideological legacy of the *San-min chu-i* had become fully mature by 1924, when there was as yet no real possibility of either fascist influence or example.

Nazionalfascismo and the Revolutionary Nationalism of Sun Yat-sen

Mary Matossian once suggested that some of the most significant revolutionary ideologies of the twentieth century might best be understood as common functional responses to determinate historical,

ness and who has the immediate control of... affairs.... The principles of a modern corporation would be applied to the government of a political state.”

¹⁵ Lyon Sharman, *Sun Yat-sen: His Life and Its Meaning* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1968), p. 298.

¹⁶ Linebarger speaks somewhat artlessly of the Confucian “pedagogical state,” which inspired Sun with its totalitarian intentions. In such a state, we are informed, “once right views are established, no individual is entitled to think otherwise. Government must treat the heterodox as malefactors.... The government becomes, in maintaining the ideology, the educational system. The whole political life is education, formal or informal. Every act of the leader is a precept and an example.” Linebarger, *Political Doctrines*, pp. 34, 35; see also pp. 33, 37–38, 193.

social, and economic challenges. Some of the most important of those challenges arise when an industrially backward nation finds itself in sustained contact with industrially advanced nations. Such contact produces a native intelligentsia increasingly exposed to modern education, afflicted with a sense of its own vulnerability, and actively receptive to large-scale industrialization and modernization as a means of regaining control of its destiny. The ideologies that have emerged out of such a set of circumstances share certain similarities and include, among others, Marxism-Leninism, Italian Fascism, Kemalism, Gandhism, the Indonesian Pantjasila, the Egyptian Philosophy of the Revolution, and Sun Yat-sen's *San-min chu-i*.¹⁷ Thus it is perfectly comprehensible that Sun's ideology contains themes in common with that of fascism, for both ideologies constitute common functional responses to more or less similar problems. It will be argued here, however, that whatever similarities are to be found between Fascism and the ideology of Sun Yat-sen derive almost exclusively from the nationalist components that entered into the belief system of Italian Fascism.

Among the several currents that fused to produce the native ideology of Italian Fascism,¹⁸ one traced its origins to a pre-Fascist Italian Nationalist tradition that began around the turn of the century and that took on a fairly rigorous doctrinal form among members of the *Associazione nazionalista italiana* between 1910 and 1912.¹⁹ Of those generally recognized as the intellectual leaders of the pre-Fascist Nationalist Association, Enrico Corradini and Alfredo Rocco stand out as prime movers.²⁰ So prominent, in fact, was the influence of Italian Nationalism in the articulation of Fascism that Luigi Salvatorelli coined the expression "*nazionalfascismo*" to emphasize its decisive role.²¹

For our purposes, it is significant that Italian Nationalism embodied a collection of ideas that was being put together at about the same time

¹⁷ Matossian, "Ideologies," pp. 252-253.

¹⁸ These included F.T. Marinetti's Futurism, and much of the revolutionary syndicalism of Roberto Michels, Sergio Panunzio, and A.O. Olivetti. See A. James Gregor, *Sergio Panunzio, sindacalismo e il fondamento nazionale del fascismo* (Rome: Volpe, 1978); idem, *Roberto Michels e l'ideologia del fascismo* (Rome: Volpe, 1979); idem, *The Young Mussolini and the Intellectual Origins of Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California, 1979).

¹⁹ Paola M. Arcani, *Le elaborazioni della dottrina politica nazionale fra l'unità e l'intervento (1870-1914)* (Florence: Marzocco, 1939) 2, sec. 4.

²⁰ Mussolini had mentioned both Corradini and Rocco when he spoke of the ideologues of Italian Nationalism as having "given to Fascism the illumination of doctrine." See Benito Mussolini, "Pensieri Pontini e Sardi," *Opera omnia* (Florence: La fenice, 1951-64), 34, p. 288.

²¹ See Luigi Salvatorelli, *Nazionalfascismo* (Turin: Gobetti, 1923), pp. 24-25.

that Sun Yat-sen, half a world away, was searching for a nationalist formula with which he might regenerate China. Whatever similarities one finds between Sun's ideology and that of Italian Fascism are, in fact, indicative of their mutual nationalist preoccupations. The similarities alluded to by Roy, Linebarger, Smith, and Matossian are not specifically fascist; rather, they are characteristic of the reactive nationalism of communities suffering the disabilities that attend retarded industrialization and modernization.

REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM

Nationalism is generally understood to refer to those peculiarly modern ideological movements, probably dating back no further than the French Revolution, which have as their avowed purpose "the attainment and maintenance of self-government and independence on behalf of a group, [at least] some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential 'nation.'"²² As such, simple nationalism probably animated efforts as varied as those of the Meiji oligarchs, the political reformers of the Ch'ing Dynasty, and the leaders of the Risorgimento in Italy.²³

Beyond such generic nationalism, however, is a subset identified as "revolutionary nationalism." The latter differs from simple nationalism in its concern with forging a politically integrated and powerful nation-state from a homogeneous collection of people. The basis of that homogeneity is conceived to be some sort of shared ethnic or cultural identity, one which turns on a myth of origins and of the group's "historic mission." The defense and realization of this myth demand that the national community's international status and prestige be enhanced and that such enhancement be through maximal economic autarky and self-sustaining economic and industrial growth—all of which necessitates the

²² Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, p. 171. In this connection, see also Konstantin Symmons-Symonolewicz, *Nationalist Movements: A Comparative View* (Meadville, Penn.: Maplewood Press, 1970), introduction and chap. 1; Hans Kohn, *The Age of Nationalism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), part 1; Eugene Kamenka, "Political Nationalism: The Evolution of an Idea," in idem., ed., *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1973).

²³ See Tsao Po-i, "The Development of the Modernization Movement in China," *China Forum* 3, no. 2 (July 1976): 38; Gioacchino Volpe, *Italia moderna* (Florence: Sansoni, 1973), 1, chap. 1; Renato Soriga, *L'idea nazionale italiana dal secolo XVIII all'unificazione* (Modena: Società tipografica modenese, 1941). In this regard see also Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, "I-ta-li chien-kuo san-chieh chuan" [Biographies of the three heroes of the building of Italy], *Yin-ping shih wen-chi* [Collected essays of the ice-drinkers' studio] (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1925), pp. 42.1-47b.

mobilization of human and material resources and the regeneration and renovation of the cultural and social fabric of the nation through substantial institutional and social changes.²⁴ Revolutionary nationalism can therefore be conceived of as a species of the genus "nationalism." In this restricted sense, Italian Nationalism and the revolutionary nationalism of Sun Yat-sen are related ideological species.

As a case in point, Sun insisted as early as 1894, in the manifesto of the *Hsing-Chung hui* (Society for the Regeneration of China), that its political purposes extended beyond the simple overthrow of Manchu domination. He held that its goals included the full integration and sovereignty of all the Chinese people and the construction of a strong centralized and unified state.²⁵ He predicated the unity of the Chinese on a putative shared biological or ethnic identity that allowed every Chinese to recognize his fellow nationals immediately.²⁶ Furthermore, Sun understood that a unified nation-state on the Western model would be instrumental in transforming such a natural community of "similar" into "a strong nation comparable to Europe and America."²⁷

Substantially the same collection of ideas surfaces in the prose of the first Italian Nationalists. According to Corradini, Italians were a "community of similars," sharing as they did the natural affinities of "geography, ethnicity, language, art and common history." Although unified by 1871, Italy still lacked a sense of unity. What was required was a strong and centralized state apparatus that would generate that needed sense of national solidarity. For it was only such a union that could reduce the feelings of inferiority and humiliation that afflicted Italy as a nation. In Corradini's judgment, then, only an enhanced nationalism could transform Italy's "servile disposition" into a firm resolve that might allow it to compete effectively with Germany, France, and Great Britain.²⁸

²⁴ This collection of traits is a paraphrase of those provided in Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, p. 171. For a discussion of the role of national myths, see Roberto Michels, *Der Patriotismus: Prolegomena zu seiner soziologischen Analyse* (Munich: Duncker and Humblot, 1929).

²⁵ *Kuo-fu nien-p'u* [Chronology of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's life] (Taipei: Committee for the Centennial Celebration of Dr. Sun's Birthday, 1965); see also Harold Z. Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California, 1968), pp. 42-44.

²⁶ Sun Yat-sen, *Kuo-fu ch'üan chi* 1, pp. A174-175.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. A173. See also Sharman, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 74-79.

²⁸ See Enrico Corradini, *Discorsi politici (1902-1923)* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1923), pp. 17, 36, 38, 41, 43, 46, 47, 74, 87.

Thus, by 1910 both Chinese and Italian nationalists had begun to put together the ideology of revolutionary nationalism.²⁹ Given the vast differences in political circumstances, the particulars in each case differed in emphasis and specific content, but their similarities are unmistakable. More significant for our exposition is their shared preoccupation with industrialization and economic modernization.

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ECONOMIC MODERNIZATION

Beginning with the Opium War of 1840, a humiliating series of defeats at the hands of "barbarians" had precipitated various efforts at substantive change in China. The self-strengthening movement in the nineteenth century, for example, clearly prefigured a concern with modernization and industrialization. Well before the end of the century a preoccupation with the manufacture of ordnance for national defense had emerged. But it remained for Sun Yat-sen to formulate a distinctive and revolutionary program of industrialization and economic modernization.³⁰

By 1920 Sun had developed a program that later became an integral part of the revolutionary nationalism of the *San-min chu-i*.³¹ An elaborate scheme for infrastructural development included the construction of railways and macadam roadways, telephone and telegraph systems, irrigation and transport waterways, and publishing facilities for mass communication. Sun further anticipated a vast program of hydroelectric power development, fossil fuel excavation, harbor improvement, urban and agricultural modernization, resource management, conservation, and the development of extractive and heavy industry and effective commodity distribution.³² Such a program was to use both private capital

²⁹ No attempt can be made here to trace the evolution of these ideologies. Alexander J. DeGrand, *The Italian Nationalist Association and the Rise of Fascism in Italy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1978); Schriffin, *Sun Yat-sen*; and Martin Bernal, *Chinese Socialism to 1907* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1976) provide some of the substance of that process for the Italian Nationalists and Sun Yat-sen, respectively.

³⁰ For a discussion of this background period, see Key Ray Chong, "Cheng Kuan-ying (1841-1920): A Source of Sun Yat-sen's Nationalist Ideology?" *Journal of Asian Studies* 28, no. 2 (February 1969); Schriffin, *Sun Yat-sen*, chap. 2.

³¹ In his political testament Sun indicated that one of the principal planks of his program was the "material reconstruction" of China. The reference was to the text of the *International Development of China* which he had published in 1920; the text appears as "Material Reconstruction" in his *Collected Works*. Compare Sun Yat-sen, *International Development of China* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1920); and "Wu-chih chien-she" [Material reconstruction], in *Chien-kuo fang-lüeh* [The strategy for national reconstruction], Sun, *Kuo-fu ch'üan-chi* 1, pp. 507-654.

³² For a more detailed treatment of the developmental program of Sun Yat-sen, see A. James Gregor, Maria Hsia Chang, and Andrew B. Zimmerman, *Ideology and Development:*

and state initiative. According to Sun, capitalists would “create socialism in China so that the two economic forces... [would] work side by side.”³³ Clearly, Sun was not opposed to the principle of private ownership. He maintained that private capital must be allowed the widest possible latitude, although on the condition that it not serve the exclusive interests of the capitalists themselves but those of the entire nation. Sun recommended that some undertakings, such as the manufacture of mining machinery, might best be left entirely to private concerns; the ultimate control of production and distribution, however, would be vested in the state, under “one central national control” and “one central management.”³⁴ This was the “socialism” of which Sun spoke in 1920: a form of state socialism in which the interventionist state would undertake the scientific planning that would govern the collaboration of private and state capital in a comprehensive program of national industrial development and modernization.

All of these changes were considered crucial to the development of China’s defense capability against real or potential predators. To further enhance that capability, Sun argued that any form of class warfare, specifically that between capital and labor, was to be rejected. As early as 1906 he had emphasized the need to avert a “social revolution.” Such an internecine struggle could only impair the unity he considered necessary for national survival and development.³⁵

During the same period, Italian Nationalists advocated a similar program for essentially the same reasons. By 1914 Alfredo Rocco identified massive and regular increments of production as central to the concerns of Italian Nationalism.³⁶ In Rocco’s judgment, Italy required an economic plan that included the infrastructural development of modern road, rail, telephone, and telegraph systems, and the expansion of hydroelectric generating plants. Heavy industry would be developed and

Sun Yat-sen and the Economic History of Taiwan (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1981), chap. 1.

³³ Sun, *International Development*, p. 165.

³⁴ “The industrial development of China should be carried out along two lines: 1) by private enterprise; and 2) by national undertaking. All matters that can be and are better carried out by private enterprise should be left to private hands which should be encouraged and fully protected by liberal laws.” *Ibid.*, p. 9; see also pp. i–iii, 1, 2, 137, 144, 145, 147, 153–155, 159, 160.

³⁵ Sun, *Kuo-fu ch’üan-chi*, pp. A175–176; see also Bernal, *Chinese Socialism*, pp. 185–187.

³⁶ Alfredo Rocco, “Il problema economico italiano,” in *idem*, *Scritti e discorsi politici* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1938), 1, pp. 15, 17–19, 21; and *idem*, “Economia liberale, economia socialista ed economia nazionale,” in *ibid.*, 1, pp. 54, 56.

agriculture modernized.³⁷ Such a program would require an intensive and extensive "collaboration of industry and the state."³⁸ This did not imply a wholesale abolition of private property but rather a principled subordination of private initiative, profit, and ownership to the "superior interests of the nation, the fatherland."³⁹ Those superordinate interests would find expression in the "rational and perpetual organization of the state," for the state must necessarily be the ultimate agency of national organization and discipline.⁴⁰ Rocco did not hesitate to identify this mixed system of private initiative and private ownership, subject to the regular tutelary control of the interventionist state, as a "socialism" for the nation.⁴¹ It was a socialism that would provide Italy with a defense against the "superimperialism" of the predatory "plutocratic" powers of the Continent.⁴²

Furthermore, the Italian Nationalists, like the Chinese revolutionaries, deplored class warfare as inimical to the national purpose.⁴³ They regarded classes as organic components in the "grand unity of forces" that must collaborate in the industrial development and economic modernization of the nation⁴⁴ if the Italians were to rise above their "proletarian" status.⁴⁵

³⁷ Alfredo Rocco, "L'ora del nazionalismo," in *Scritti* 2, pp. 513–514; idem, "Il programma politico dell'associazione nazionalista," in *ibid.*, 2, pp. 477–481; and idem, "Il programma nazionalista," in *ibid.*, 1, pp. 502–504.

³⁸ Rocco, "Economia liberale," pp. 57, 62; see also Enrico Corradini, *La marcia dei produttori* (Rome: L'Italiana, 1916), pp. viii, ix–xi, 6, 62.

³⁹ Rocco, "Che cosa è il nazionalismo e che cosa vogliono i nazionalisti," *Scritti* 1, p. 76.

⁴⁰ Alfredo Rocco, "La resistenza civile," in *Scritti* 1, pp. 412–413; idem, "Il momento economico e sociale," in *ibid.*, 2, pp. 586–587; see also idem, "L'ora del nazionalismo," in *ibid.*, 2, p. 516; and Enrico Corradini, "Sindacalismo, nazionalismo, imperialismo," in idem, *Discorsi*, pp. 54, 60, 63.

⁴¹ Rocco, "L'ora del nazionalismo," p. 512.

⁴² Alfredo Rocco, "Replia agli oratori," in idem, *Scritti* 2, p. 486; Enrico Corradini, "Nazionalismo e socialismo," in idem, *Discorsi*, pp. 227–228; idem, "Stato liberale e stato nazionale," in *ibid.*, p. 235.

⁴³ Sun Yat-sen, "Die drei Prinzipien in der Manifests des Reorganization-sparteitages der Kuo Min Tang (1924)," in Karl A. Wittfogel, *Sun Yat-sen: Aufzeichnungen eines chinesischen Revolutionäres* (Berlin: Agis, n.d.), p. 318.

⁴⁴ Enrico Corradini, "Le nazioni proletarie e il nazionalismo," in idem, *Discorsi*, pp. 107, 114; idem, "Per la guerra d'Italia," in *ibid.*, p. 272.

⁴⁵ Enrico Corradini, "Politica ed economia della nazione e delle classi," in idem, *Discorsi*, pp. 374–390; idem, "Il nazionalismo e i sindacati," in *ibid.*, pp. 412–425; Sun Yat-sen, "Chung-kuo kung-jen suo-shou pu p'ing-teng t'iao-yüeh chih hai" [The disabilities suffered by Chinese workers under the unequal treaties], in idem, *Kuo-fu ch'üan-chi* 2, pp. 683–684.

THE MATURE IDEOLOGY OF SUN YAT-SEN

Toward the end of his life in 1924, Sun reformulated his convictions in lectures on the *Three Principles of the People*. It is to that document, and to a comparative exposition of the Italian Nationalist doctrine, that we now turn.

To begin with, the conviction that nationalism is absolutely essential to the survival of the Chinese people is central to the mature ideology of Sun Yat-sen. Sun argued that multiple threats, ranging from external political, military, and economic aggression, to internal disintegration due to excessive individualism and regional and parochial loyalties could be offset only by an invocation of national loyalty. Only nationalism could unite the four hundred millions of China and "save the nation." Only such a union could forestall "racial destruction."⁴⁶

Precisely the same convictions are recurrent in the literature of Italian Nationalism. Rocco argued that if Italy were to survive in the incessant struggle that typifies the contemporary world, it would be necessary to evoke a sustained sense of national consciousness among its citizens. The nation's ability to survive was impaired from within by egoism, factionalism, primitivism, underdevelopment, and an almost total lack of civic virtues. The advanced and "plutocratic" nations of the Continent had surrounded Italy on all sides, choked its waterways, and dominated its culture. Nationalism was necessary "if the Italian race is not to perish."⁴⁷

The reference to the "race" was characteristic of the exposition of both Sun and the Italian Nationalists. The use of the term was not merely a thoughtless exploitation of commonplace usage. Sun, Rocco, and Corradini were all well aware of the standard biological conception of race. In the *San-min chu-i* Sun fully recognized that the Asiatic or "yellow" race, one of the five principle biological races, was distributed over several nations. When he spoke of the Chinese as a race, his reference was to what the French have felicitously termed an *ethnie*, a breeding community that shares a cultural distinctiveness and is generally coextensive with long-established political boundaries. Such circumstances, over time, produce a network of bloodlines within the *ethnie*, ultimately producing a

⁴⁶ Sun Yat-sen, *San-min chu-i*, trans. in Leonard Shihlien Hsü, *Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals* (Los Angeles: University of Southern California, 1933), pp. 168-169, 179, 231. Some passages have been retranslated, without altering the intent, to accord with contemporary usage. See also Linebarger, *Political Doctrines*, pp. 62-63.

⁴⁷ Alfredo Rocco, "Che cosa è il nazionalismo," p. 80; see also the entire exposition in *idem*, *Scritti* 1, pp. 69-89.

measure of biologic homogeneity (what some physical anthropologists call a “mesodiacritic race”).⁴⁸

Sun clarified his notion of the kinship relationship shared by the “race” by arguing that there were probably “about four hundred clans in China,” and that clans were extended families. Inter-marriage between such extended families had united all Chinese in a complex pattern of “blood relationships.” The same loyalties that animated families could thus be extended to the nation, the “one great indivisible nationality-group (*kuo-tsu*).”⁴⁹ China was, in effect, a nation-race, sharing a common biological heritage, economy, language, and culture.⁵⁰

Much the same argument appears in the writing of Enrico Corradini. He was clearly aware of the existence of biological or anthropological races and was careful to distinguish the Italian “race” from such biological entities.⁵¹ Corradini considered the Italians a “historical race,” the product of ethnic, political, economic, and cultural affinities. In-group amity and extended bloodlines gave the nation unity and a common consciousness.⁵² An awareness of common descent and shared similarities and a sense of common mission equipped the Italian nation with a familial solidarity.⁵³

Whatever the defects of such an argument, it affords one basis for the sense of collective identity so necessary in a world riven by an international struggle for existence. Sun speaks of that struggle as a “law of social evolution”;⁵⁴ Rocco and Corradini speak of it simply as an

⁴⁸ See Arthur Keith, *A New Theory of Human Evolution* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949).

⁴⁹ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 242–243, 247. The situation was not so simple, of course. The relationship between family and clan names in China is considerably more complicated. See P'eng Kuei-fang, *Wu-pai nien-ch'ien shih i-chia* [A single family five centuries ago] (Taipei: National Defense, 1972), 1, introduction, particularly pp. 8–9. Moreover, Sun recognized that the China of his time was composed of at least five *ethnie*: Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Mohammedans, and Han. He was convinced, nonetheless, that political integration could be effected, and that biological affinity was one of the “natural” grounds of such a union. See Sun, “Die drei Prinzipien,” p. 230. There are many difficulties in trying to explicate Sun’s “natural” or biological” basis of Chinese nationalism, not the least of which is the variable meaning to be assigned the Chinese terms *tsu*, *kuo-tsu*, and *tsung-tsu*, for example. For the purposes of this account, however, the conceptual similarities shared in this regard by Sun and the Italian Nationlists are notable.

⁵⁰ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 167–168.

⁵¹ Enrico Corradini, *L'ombra della vita* (Naples: Ricciardi, 1908), pp. 285–286.

⁵² Enrico Corradini, *L'unita e la potenza delle nazioni* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1922), pp. 89–91; see also idem, “La vita nazionale,” *Discorsi*, pp. 36, 37, 43.

⁵³ Enrico Corradini, “Principii di nazionalismo,” in *Discorsi*, p. 101; idem, *Il volere d'Italia* (Naples: Perrella, 1911), pp. 164–165.

⁵⁴ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, p. 213.

“incessant” struggle.⁵⁵ To prevail in that struggle, each nation required the force of numbers. Both Sun and the Italian Nationalists were consequently preoccupied with the demographic strength of their respective national communities. Thus Sun rejected Malthusian arguments for the limitation of China’s reproductive rate.⁵⁶ Even though he granted that China already labored under “the pressure of population,” he insisted that ways be found to increase its rate of growth.⁵⁷ The identical argument appears in the formulations of the most prominent Italian Nationalists. Numbers, according to Rocco, constituted the “veritable force of the race”;⁵⁸ any voluntary limitation of the number of births would do irreparable damage to the ability of the nation to survive.⁵⁹ Only an impaired sense of national responsibility could explain citizens’ reluctance to reproduce, to insure the continuity of the race. Decadence, preoccupation with personal well-being, exaggerated egotism, or abstract universalism might cause individuals to fail in their reproductive responsibilities to the national community. Both Sun and the Italian Nationalists rejected cosmopolitanism and individualism as inimical to the well-being and survival of the nation.

Sun believed that the antinational doctrine of “cosmopolitanism” or “universalism” was a consequence of China’s early dominance of its own known world. Because China became Asia’s hegemonic imperialist power at a very early date, Chinese thinkers abandoned nationalism in favor of a more cosmopolitan political conception that might effectively unite China’s tributaries to *Chung-kuo*, the “Middle Kingdom.”⁶⁰ But the abandonment of nationalism left China exposed to the incursions of foreigners until she found herself helpless before the onslaught of the European powers.

Corradini argued a similar case. Italian universalism and cosmopolitanism were a product of the ancient Roman empire uniting its known world.⁶¹ For a thousand years Italy remained fragmented and

⁵⁵ Corradini, *L’unità*, p. 231.

⁵⁶ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, p. 177.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 178–179.

⁵⁸ Alfredo Rocco, “Che cosa è il nazionalismo,” p. 71; see also p. 83.

⁵⁹ Rocco, “Il valore sociale del femminismo,” in *Scritti* 1, pp. 62–63.

⁶⁰ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, p. 208–209.

⁶¹ Enrico Corradini, “Le opinioni degli uomini e i fatti dell’uomo,” in *Discorsi*, pp. 28–31. Interestingly enough, Liang Ch’i-ch’ao made the same assessment of the origins of Chinese and Roman “cosmopolitanism.” See Liang, “Chung-kuo ch’ien-t’u chih hsi-wang yü kuo-min tse-jen” [China’s hopes for the future and national responsibilities], in *Yin-ping shih wen-chi*, p. 18.49b.

impotent before the universalisms of a world Church, foreign emperors, and finally international capitalism. Only the rejection of cosmopolitanism and the reinvoation of nationalist sentiment could restore Italy to the vanguard of civilization.

If cosmopolitanism constituted a solvent of regenerative nationalism, individualism, in whatever guise, was equally pernicious. Sun clearly rejected any contract theory of the state that sought to understand the nation as the product of individual choice and individual commitment. Sun objected to the notion that individuals possessed certain inherent and inalienable rights independent of and antecedent to society or the state. Such a conception of natural rights would weaken the integrity of the "nation group," undermine its organization, and leave the Chinese "as loose as scattered sands."⁶² Sun was convinced that the Chinese people had too much personal and individual freedom. It would be a mistake, therefore, for them to search out more liberties. For Sun, individual liberty was not sacrosanct but something that must be restricted. In Sun's judgment the Chinese required organization, discipline, loyalty, and a disposition to sacrifice unto death for the national community.⁶³

The same set of ideas is easily discernible in the literature of the Italian Nationalists. They specifically rejected the contract theory of the state, conceiving it as nothing more than a fiction produced by the excessive individualism of bourgeois revolutionaries in the eighteenth century.⁶⁴ They conceived of society and the state as organic and natural entities serving purposes that transcended the individual. Any emphasis on individual rights and individual liberties would impair the nation's prospects for survival and would be the harbinger of national disintegration and extinction. Individualism, Rocco insisted, "pulverizes society." Nationalism, on the other hand, conceives the individual's rights and liberties as conditional grants of the state and of society, made only insofar as they contribute to the maintenance and perpetuation of the community.⁶⁵ In the judgment of Italian Nationalists, Italy required the cultivation of collectivist sentiments that would make the "sacrifice of individuals, even unto death," a natural response of Italians.⁶⁶

⁶² Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 240–243, 274, 285, 353.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

⁶⁴ See Alfredo Rocco, "Cause remote e prossime della crisi dei partiti politici italiani," in *Scritti* 1, p. 6; idem, "Economia liberale, economia socialista ed economia nazionale," in *ibid.*, 1, pp. 30–33, 42, 51.

⁶⁵ Rocco, "Che cosa è il nazionalismo," p. 78; idem, "Esame di coscienza," in *Scritti* 1, p. 98; see idem, "L'imperio d'Italia," in *ibid.*, p. 257.

⁶⁶ Corradini, "La vita nazionale," p. 46.

Sun saw China as the victim of “imperialist” and “oppressor” nations; the Italian Nationalists conceived of Italy as a “proletarian” nation subject to the impositions of the “plutocratic” powers of the Continent.⁶⁷ Sun held China to be a “hypocolony” of foreign capitalism; Italian Nationalists saw Italy, for all its nominal independence, as an “economic colony” hostage to foreign culture, capital, and political influence.⁶⁸

Both Sun and the Italian Nationalists saw Marx’s social theories to be fundamentally wrong.⁶⁹ In their judgment the struggle that characterized history and the twentieth century in particular was not a conflict between classes but a conflict between nations. For both Sun and the Italian Nationalists a society was an organic unity, which had to be composed of functionally integrated and mutually supportive parts if it was to survive. When those parts were in conflict, the entire organism was threatened with dissolution. Class struggle among members of the same community was thus “pathological” and unnatural. “Class struggle,” Sun insisted, “is . . . a kind of social disease.”⁷⁰

The invocation of the organic analogy carries in its train the image of an organization of parts performing different functions, some subordinate and others superordinate, implying a “natural” inequality. Sun, as we have seen, was convinced that people are not born equal⁷¹ and that society was divided into functionally distinct classes: the leaders, the administrators, and the “unthinking” masses.⁷² The earliest Italian Nationalists likewise insisted that society was composed of elements each having distinct, hierarchically arranged functions. There was talk of a “heroic” and “ingenious” minority that necessarily undertook the “directive function” in society while the majority subordinated itself to its strategic leadership.⁷³

⁶⁷ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 184–185; Rocco, “Il problema economico italiano,” p. 14; Corradini, “Principii di nazionalismo,” pp. 92, 93, 100; idem, “Nazionalismo e democrazia,” in *Discorsi*, p. 161.

⁶⁸ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, p. 186; Corradini, “Le nazioni proletarie e il nazionalismo,” pp. 109–111; idem, *La marcia dei produttori*, pp. 4, 5, 6, 7, 16, 21.

⁶⁹ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, p. 407; Rocco, “Economia liberale,” pp. 35–36.

⁷⁰ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, p. 405.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 301, 310, 314, 330, 331.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 317.

⁷³ This is most explicit in Giovanni Papini, “Un programma nazionalista,” in Giuseppe Prezzolini and Giovanni Papini, *Vecchio e nuovo nazionalismo* (1914; reprinted Rome: Volpe, 1967), pp. 6, 14, 15, 39, 42. Papini speaks of the nation as an “organism” and the “elite” as performing “directive functions.”

Both Sun and the Italian Nationalists had serious reservations about the effectiveness of liberal Western parliamentary government.⁷⁴ By 1924 Sun considered representative government of the British and American type a “decided failure” in China, since parliamentary representatives had proved themselves venal and corrupt.⁷⁵ He advocated, instead, an innovative type of Chinese democracy, in which competence would be insured by public examination. Officeholders would exercise effective managerial control on the model of a modern business corporation in which shareholders, meeting only once or twice a year, have final authority over the corporation but in which effective management rests with the general manager. Such an administration would have a free hand in the affairs of the nation, creating a government characterized by strength and efficiency. The final authority exercised by the people would make them “all-powerful,” while the freedom to manage would make the government “all-mighty.”⁷⁶

The Italian Nationalists expressed similar reservations concerning liberal political institutions. “True Italian democracy” would be a democracy of efficiency and competence, not a democracy of corruption and parasitism.⁷⁷ It would be a new and perfect democracy, according sovereignty to all the Italian people, rather than to a class, a sect, or a faction.⁷⁸ Government would be handled by competent representatives of productive corporate bodies. It would be a government of “force and authority.”⁷⁹

For both Sun Yat-sen and the Italian Nationalists, this goal presupposed significant changes in the collective psychology of the nation. For Sun it meant the recovery and renovation of traditional Chinese virtues, the most fundamental of which was loyalty (*chung*). The Chinese must render loyalty to the nation. What was required was a “new man,” prepared to “sacrifice for the public welfare, even to the giving up of his life.”⁸⁰ For the Italian Nationalists, “only a spiritual reformation could

⁷⁴ Franco Gaeta, *Nazionalismo Italiano* (Naples: ESI, 1965), pp. 136ff.; Sun Yat-sen, “Five Power Constitution,” in idem, *Fundamentals*, pp. 20–38.

⁷⁵ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 314, 330, 331.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 361, 364, 377, 385.

⁷⁷ Corradini, “Sindacalismo, nazionalismo, imperialismo,” p. 63; idem, “Nazionalismo e democrazia,” pp. 158–160, 162, 165.

⁷⁸ Enrico Corradini, “Liberale e nazionalisti,” in *Discorsi*, pp. 192, 194.

⁷⁹ Rocco, “Che cosa è il nazionalismo,” p. 79; idem, “Il programma politico dell’Associazione Nationalista,” in *Scritti 2*, pp. 475, 478.

⁸⁰ “The people must,” Sun maintained, “fulfill their duties of citizenship toward the

transform Italian life.” It was the state’s obligation to superintend and direct that reformation and rededication to the civic and patriotic virtues of ancient Rome. Only such a “formation of true political consciousness among the masses” would make the new democracy operable.⁸¹ Both Sun Yat-sen and the Italian Nationalists considered these reforms a major part of the solution to the central problem besetting their respective nations: the problem of economic modernization and industrialization. Both Sun and the Italians believed that classical Marxism was irrelevant to this problem since classical Marxism was a program of social revolution for industrially mature societies.⁸²

By 1924 Sun was prepared to argue that the “Marxist” revolution in Russia was anything but Marxist. Anticipating by almost a half century an assessment now common in the professional literature,⁸³ Sun saw the Bolshevik revolutionaries as advocates of revolutionary nationalism rather than as Marxists in the strict sense. However else they might conceive of themselves, the Russian revolutionaries were in the real service of a nationalist and developmental struggle against advanced capitalist oppressor nations. Given this analysis, Sun concluded that “the Russian revolution was in fact a *San-min chu-i* revolution.”⁸⁴ Much the same analysis appeared in the literature of Italian Nationalism at about the same time. Dino Grandi, a young Nationalist ideologue, insisted in 1919 that the Russian Revolution should more accurately be understood as an expression of national resistance to the impostures of foreign “plutocracies.”⁸⁵

state; anyone who does not... forfeits his rights of citizenship and his privilege of being a master of the nation. He is only a vagabond and a common enemy of the state.... In that case, the government should resort to legal or forceful methods to transform [him] into a sacred worker.” Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 284–285, 490–491.

⁸¹ Alfredo Rocco, “Ordine del giorno,” in *Scritti* 2, p. 491; idem, “Che cosa è il nazionalismo,” p. 79.

⁸² Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 400–401, 419; Rocco, “L’ora del nazionalismo,” p. 515; idem, “Economia liberale,” p. 33.

⁸³ See John Kautsky, “Neo-Maoism, Marxism and Leninism,” and “From Proletarianism to Modernizing Movement,” in his *Communism and the Politics of Development* (New York: John Wiley, 1968), pp. 42–102.

⁸⁴ Sun Yat-sen, “Statement on the Formation of National Government,” in idem, *Fundamentals*, p. 162.

⁸⁵ Dino Grandi, “La liberta comunista” and “La cosienza nazionale,” in idem, *Giovanni* (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1941), pp. 85, 94–96—this is a reprint of articles of the pre-Fascist period; see also “Lettera a un socialista,” pp. 224–225.

REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM AND EXACERBATED REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM

Although Sun and the Italian Nationalists share marked similarities, the two ideologies are by no means identical. One difference between the two might most adequately be described as the aggressiveness and expansionistic tenor of Italian Nationalism. Italian Nationalists, while adamantly opposed to the imperialism of the "plutocratic" powers, nevertheless anticipated and advocated an imperialism of the Italian nation.⁸⁶

Sun did speak of the time when China would become strong and would easily win "first place in the council of nations." He even alluded to the possibility of constructing a new system of voluntary dependencies—tributaries attracted by China's power—around a restored China.⁸⁷ Such locutions are only to be expected from a nationalist convinced that his nation's political thought was the most perfect in the world and convinced that God had "laid . . . some great responsibility" on China.⁸⁸ The tone and temper of the imperialism of Italian Nationalists, however, were more strident and insistent than anything found in Sun's writings. Italian Nationalism spoke frankly of the conquest of territories that had never been part of historic Italy, or historic Rome, for that matter. The subsequent conquest of Ethiopia by Fascist arms was the concrete expression of that disposition. No similar attitude is to be found in Sun's work.

A partial explanation of this difference seems to lie in the fact that the Italian Nationalists, like Sun Yat-sen, advocated a self-contained or autarkic national economy.⁸⁹ In their judgment, proper national defense, political autonomy, and international sovereignty required maximum economic independence. For this reason both Sun and the Italian Nationalists advocated protectionism as a national economic policy. They sought inspiration not in the free-trade economic policies of Adam Smith but in the national protectionism of Friedrich List.⁹⁰ But self-sufficiency and self-sustaining economic growth required adequate resources and lebensraum. In this regard Italy, in the view of Italian Nationalists, was

⁸⁶ This theme runs throughout Italian Nationalist literature. See Corradini, *La marcia dei produttori*, pp. ii–iii, 27, 180–181, 184–199 for characteristic treatment.

⁸⁷ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 227, 257–258.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 216, 153. For early evidence of Sun's cultural "chauvinism," see Chong, "Cheng Kuan-ying," pp. 253–254; but compare this with Cheng Pao-nan's review of Ts'ui Ch'ui-yen, "An Explication of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Thought," in *China Forum* 2, no. 2 (July 1975): 307–309.

⁸⁹ Rocco, "Il problema economico italiano," pp. 18–19; *idem*, "Economia liberale," p. 45.

⁹⁰ Sun, *San-min chu-i*, pp. 485–486; Rocco, "Economia liberale," pp. 40, 47.

hopelessly malprovisioned. Italy, possessing less arable soil per capita than any other nation in Europe, lacked all the subsoil resources requisite to massive industrialization or economic self-sufficiency.⁹¹ As a consequence, Rocco insisted that “for Italy, a nation without raw materials, capital-poor and under enormous population pressure, only an expansive foreign policy can resolve the...fundamental problems of economic life.”⁹² Should there be no other alternative, “war and conquest will radically solve such problems.”⁹³ Sun Yat-sen, on the other hand, had every confidence that China’s resources were more than adequate. “China,” he told his audiences, “equals America in the vastness of territory and the richness of resources, and her agricultural and mineral wealth potentially is even greater than that of America.” He was convinced that China possessed “unlimited supplies of raw materials and cheap labor.”⁹⁴

In effect, Italian Nationalism was an exacerbated revolutionary and developmental nationalism. It faced, in its own judgment, problems of almost unmanageable magnitude.⁹⁵ As a consequence, Italian Nationalism was assertive and bellicose. While Sun Yat-sen could speculate on a time when the nations of the world might settle into an “ideal brotherhood,” Italian Nationalism could only see a future in which the Italian nation, having wrested its place in the sun from competitive and potentially stronger powers, would have to remain forever prepared to defend itself and its hard-won empire.

It was also this exacerbated expression of revolutionary nationalism that lent the subsequent foreign policy of fascism its particular cast. Moreover, this vision of a world forever in the grip of international tension made the commitment to a more perfect democracy little more than a pious hope for Italian Nationalism. Sun Yat-sen clearly had a wider variety of options. While he anticipated a period of tutelage for China, under single-party auspices,⁹⁶ he was committed to an ultimate form of

⁹¹ Rocco, “Il problema economico italiano,” p. 21; idem, “Economia liberale,” p. 56; idem, “Il programma politico dell’Associazione Nationalista,” pp. 475, 477; idem, “L’ora del nazionalismo,” p. 513.

⁹² Rocco, “Il programma nationalista,” p. 496.

⁹³ Rocco, “Economia liberale,” p. 54.

⁹⁴ Sun Yat-sen, “How to Develop Chinese Industry,” in idem, *Fundamentals*, p. 186; and Sun, *International Development*, pp. ii, 47, 85, 135, 138.

⁹⁵ Rocco, “L’ora del nazionalismo,” pp. 511–512.

⁹⁶ Sun anticipated the extension of suffrage rights to the various regions of China only after each local administration had “succeeded in getting more than half of its population to understand the *Three Principles of the People*,” that is to say, when they had agreed to conform to the ideological criteria of the Kuomintang. Sun Yat-sen, “History of the Chinese

political rule that bore at least the major properties of representative democracy. The interim tutelary period would be an interval in which Russia's Bolshevik model might serve as a guide and in which the nation would be "governed entirely by one party." It would be a time of construction and reconstruction during which the party must be placed above the state.⁹⁷ But that tutelary stage was eventually to give way to a Five Power Constitution, under which all citizens would enjoy the rights of suffrage, referendum, recall, and legislative initiative. Thus Sun could anticipate a time, however remote, when China would enjoy a tranquility, self-sufficiency, and security that would make political democracy possible. No such vision seems to have inspired the ideologues of Italian Nationalism.

REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM AND FASCISM

If the category of revolutionary nationalism includes the ideology of Sun Yat-sen and that of Italian Nationalism as related instances, Italian Fascism can, at best, be considered a subspecific variant. Although Italian Nationalism passed virtually intact into Italian Fascism, Fascism was, nonetheless, something more than Italian Nationalism. Some of the traits that specialists identify as specifically Fascist originated in the lucubrations and experience of the theoreticians of pre-Fascist revolutionary syndicalism. Fascism's "cult of violence," for example, was an inheritance from the Sorelian syndicalism that influenced the political thought of the young Mussolini.⁹⁸

While both Sun Yat-sen and the Italian Nationalists asserted that violence was sometimes necessary and could play an instrumental role, neither provided a sustained rationale for the moral virtue of conflict. The Sorelian syndicalists, on the other hand, saw violence as a special test of individual and collective virtue. The intellectual rationale for such a conception comes directly out of syndicalism and Italian neo-idealism. Calculated violence, then, was central to the Italian Fascists' conception of humans as moral agents.⁹⁹

Italian Fascism distinguished itself from the general class of revolutionary nationalisms in other respects as well. By the time it seized power in Italy, for example, Italian Fascism had developed a unique strategy and set of tactics for mobilizing and manipulating the masses.

Revolution," in idem, *Fundamentals*, p. 84.

⁹⁷ Sun, "Statement on the Formation," in idem, *Fundamentals*, pp. 161-163.

⁹⁸ This theme is developed more fully in Gregor, *Young Mussolini*.

⁹⁹ In this regard, see S. Panunzio, *Diritto, forza e violenza* (Bologna: Cappelli, 1921).

Mussolini based this strategy on the thought of such syndicalists as Sergio Panunzio, Roberto Michels, A. O. Olivetti, and Agostino Lanzillo. The plan exploited the mimetic dispositions of the displaced and restive masses of Italy for its purposes, invoking myths and symbols in a program of moral suasion that was to prove eminently successful in the charged atmosphere of post-World War I Italy. Corradini recognized the special competencies of Fascism in this regard.¹⁰⁰

In contrast, neither Sun nor the Italian Nationalists developed on their own the mass mobilization capabilities that would have given their developmental and revolutionary nationalism a broad, effective mass basis. In the case of Sun, it was only during the last years of his life that he began seriously to consider mass mobilization as a critical prerequisite to his developmental nationalism.¹⁰¹ Similarly, the Italian Nationalists did not embrace the need for a mass political base before their union with the victorious Fascist movement. Without Fascism and its mass mobilization capabilities, the Italian Nationalists would have remained a marginal party of intellectuals.

The "cult of leadership" that is recognized as peculiar to Fascism also distinguishes it from revolutionary nationalism in general. While elements of such a cult can be found in the response of Chinese revolutionaries to the leadership of Sun as their *Tsung-li*, this cannot be equated with the Fascist cult of "Il Duce." Fascism had articulated a concept of personal leadership long before its adherents acceded to power in Italy. Influenced by the thought of Michels and Pareto, it conceived of the "charismatic leader" as the linchpin of a system of "charismatic rule," something theoretically absent from the thought of both the Italian Nationalists and Sun Yat-sen.¹⁰² Even when Sun's revolutionaries sought strong leadership, committing themselves almost without reservation to

¹⁰⁰ Corradini, preface to *Discorsi*, p. 13.

¹⁰¹ Sun Yat-sen, "Ueber die Notwendigkeit der Reorganization der Kuo Min Tang," in Wittfogel, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 313-316.

¹⁰² One can find an account of "charismatic leadership" in R. Michels, *First Lectures in Political Sociology* (New York: Harper, 1949), chap. 6. There is no analogous treatment in Sun's writings. It is clear that Sun was convinced that only disciplined obedience to his personal leadership could serve the revolution, but he does not develop the specific and complex notion of charismatic leadership. See also Edward Friedman, *Backward toward Revolution: The Chinese Revolutionary Party* (Berkeley: University of California, 1974), pp. 57-58, 60-61, 64-68. Sun found support in Michel's ideas, but incorporated little of their theoretical substance into his arguments. Cf. Sun Yat-sen, "Chih Nan-yang Hung-men t'ung-chih lun Chung-hua ko-ming tang i fu-ts'ung tang-k'uei wei wei-i t'iao-chien shu" [Letter to Hung Men comrades in the South Seas on obedience to the leader as the sole criterion of the Chinese Revolutionary Party], 29 July 1914, in *Kuo-fu ch'üan-chi* 3, p. 290.

the leader's will, one finds little that might pass as a theoretical rationale for charismatic leadership as the necessary condition for charismatic rule. Similarly, one finds little of such theoretical vindication in the writings of the principal Italian Nationalist intellectuals.

Finally, the notion of the "Corporative State"—the functional representation of occupational and productive categories in the national legislature, which Mussolini identified as one of the defining attributes of Fascism—is absent from the thought of Sun Yat-sen. Sun's conceptions of political representation remained relatively orthodox throughout his life. Most of his ideas on representation were borrowed from the American and English political traditions, in which "corporativism" was almost unknown.

Conclusions

In sum, it can be argued that the revolutionary nationalism of Sun Yat-sen shared substantial affinities with the Italian Nationalism of the pre-Fascist period. Their goals and many of their detailed analyses were remarkably similar. Both advocated an authoritarian, class-collaborationist, anticapitalist, state-sponsored, and state-directed program of economic development under a single party. Both sought to protect their nations from the impositions of foreign imperialism. In that sense, both are instances of developmental, revolutionary nationalism, itself a reactive product of thwarted or delayed modernization in a world of competitive nation-states.

Italian Nationalism was distinct from the ideology of Sun Yat-sen in that it was an exacerbated form of revolutionary nationalism, seeking resolution of its resource and space inadequacies in military conquest. Given its program of developmental self-sufficiency, only territorial expansion or political dominance over foreign sources of supply could redress its disabilities. Similarly, Sun's preoccupation with China's agrarian problems was a consequence of China's particular circumstances. Finally, neither Sun's ideology nor that of Italian Nationalism can be identified as Fascist, since Fascism possessed a number of subspecific traits that distinguished it from both.

Sun's ideology clearly had more in common with Italian Nationalism than with Italian Fascism. The similarities Linebarger and others found between Fascism and the thought of Sun Yat-sen turn on their common borrowings from Italian Nationalism. The "exaltation of the state and the advocacy of totalitarian controls," "one-party rule and the glorification of the leader," "nationalism, which [invokes] the restoration of traditional

cultural values,” and the goal of creating a “new man”¹⁰³ are not specifically “fascist” traits. The family resemblance among Fascism, the *San-min chu-i*, and Italian Nationalism is evidence of their membership in the broad category of developmental, revolutionary, and nationalist ideologies that typify the modern world.

Thus it was that the Blue Shirts could articulate ideological themes identified by Eastman to be fascist, yet remain resolutely faithful to the *San-min chu-i*. The Blue Shirts neither advocated nor needed to advocate a new ideology of fascism. Any elements in fascism with which the Blue Shirts were in sympathy had long been part of the traditional ideology of the Kuomintang. Those ideological themes absent from the *San-min chu-i* but intrinsic to Fascism held little attraction for the Blue Shirts. What they wished to acquire were the techniques and strategies that would effectively actualize Sun’s ideology.

All of this leads us to reconsider the term “Blue Shirts,” which has been regularly employed in the literature to identify the ideologues with whom we are concerned. The choice of the name itself entails a tendentious interpretation of the political intentions of this organization. As Eastman suggests, the name “Blue Shirts” was probably coined by the Japanese as a term of derogation, to suggest that the Kuomintang had chosen to abandon the ideology of Sun Yat-sen for the political ideology of Mussolini’s Black Shirts or Hitler’s Brown Shirts.

The men responsible for this organization chose to call themselves not the “Blue Shirts” but the *San-min chu-i li-hsing she* (Three Principles of the People Earnest Action Society). Since the *Li-hsing she* was a secret organization within the Kuomintang, its name also remained a secret, thereby giving rise to speculations and rumors that even the members could neither confirm nor deny.¹⁰⁴ More widely known was the name of the movement’s outer, public organization: the *Chung-hua fu-hsing she* (Chinese Renaissance Society).¹⁰⁵ It was through the Renaissance Society that the *Li-hsing she* was able publicly to attract recruits and mobilize support for its mission.

There were many reasons for the *Li-hsing she*’s misnomer as the

¹⁰³ Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution: China Under Nationalist Rule (1927–1937)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University), pp. 80–81.

¹⁰⁴ Teng Yüan-chung, “San-min chu-i li-hsing she shih ch’u-kao” [A preliminary draft of the history of the Three Principles of the People Earnest Action Society], part 1, in *Chuan-chi wen-hsiieh* [Biographical literature; hereafter cited as *CCWH*], 39, no. 4 (October 1981): 65.

¹⁰⁵ Ch’en Tun-cheng, “Fu-hsing she, Lan-i she, Ch’ing-pai she—i-ko ‘Fu-hsing she’ ts’an-chia-che ti tzu-shu yü kuan-ch’a” [The Renaissance Society, the Blue Shirt Society, the Blue and White Society: an account by a member of the Renaissance Society], part 1, in *CCWH* 34, no. 6 (June 1979), p. 113.

Blue Shirt Society.¹⁰⁶ Not the least of these was the name proposed by Liu Chien-ch'ün in *The Road to Regenerating the Chinese Revolution*. In that pamphlet, Liu suggested the name *pu-i t'uan* (cotton-cloth corps) for the activist organization he was proposing. Liu specified that "all of the members of this corps . . . must wear the *chung-shan* uniform fashioned out of *t'u-pu*."¹⁰⁷ Since the *chung-shan* jacket—that jacket popularized by Sun Yat-sen and adopted as a party uniform by the Kuomintang¹⁰⁸—was fashioned out of a blue-grey cloth, it is not difficult to imagine how the misnomer of the Blue Shirt Society might have arisen from Liu's proposal.

It is unlikely, however, that Liu intended or espoused the mimetic implications and suggestions of a name such as "Blue Shirts." On the contrary, Liu's insistence that the members of the corps wear *t'u-pu* was the antithesis of such mimicry. The term *t'u-pu* may mean either "locally produced cloth" or "rustic coarse cloth." That the garments to be worn by the members of the corps be locally produced was symbolic of their nationalism. That it be coarse and rustic was taken to be evidence of their frugality and selflessness. That this cloth be fashioned into a *chung-shan* jacket was understood to exemplify an "absolute faith in the *San-min chu-i*."¹⁰⁹

Thus, whether it be Liu's *pu-i t'uan* or the name actually adopted by the movement's secret core organization (*Li-hsing she*) or the name with which the movement publicly identified itself (*Fu-hsing she*), the spirit and intention of the members are clear. These names were common expressions of the resolution to revive China through a rededication to the nationalist revolution of Sun Yat-sen. Academics, for reasons of their own, have chosen to adopt the term "Blue Shirts"—a term that implies an endorsement of a foreign ideology and an abandonment of the doctrines of Sun Yat-sen.¹¹⁰ Having settled on a name, it would appear that

¹⁰⁶ Teng Yüan-chung provides a detailed treatment of these various reasons. See Teng Yüan-chung, "San-min chu-i," pp. 65–66. Teng, the son of Teng Wen-i, a founding member of the *Li-hsing she*, has recently completed the most exhaustive historical account of the society to date.

¹⁰⁷ Liu Ch'ien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming chih lu* [The road to regenerating the Chinese revolution] (Nanking: Chung-kuo wen-hua hsüeh-hui, 1934), p. 74.

¹⁰⁸ The Chinese usually refer to Sun Yat-sen as Sun Chung-shan. Hence, *chung-shan chuang* was used to refer to the jacket he popularized. It is ironic that Westerners now recognize the Sun jacket as the "Mao jacket" since the Chinese Communists also made it their official party uniform.

¹⁰⁹ Liu Ch'ien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 75.

¹¹⁰ "Those who are ignorant of the organization or who harbor ulterior motives falsely accuse it of being the Blue Shirt Society, thereby equating it with the Italian Fascists' Black Shirts. This is utterly ludicrous. As its name suggests, the *San-min chu-i li-hsing she*'s mission is to earnestly and vigorously actualize the Three People's Principles. . . . How could that

modern scholarship has also settled on an interpretation. That the name is inappropriate suggests that the interpretation may be lacking.

The materials at our disposal clearly indicate that the Chinese Renaissance Movement was not interested in acquiring a new ideology for China. To make such a case it is necessary to present a systematic exposition of the ideology of the Renaissance Movement. It is only with such an exposition that an alternate account of the movement can be considered, laying to rest, once and for all, the Eastman paradigm.

be distorted into the fascism of Italy?" Ho Chih-hao, "Li-hsing she yü kuo-min chün-hsün" [The Earnest Action Society and national military education], *Chung-wai isa-chih (Kaleidoscope Monthly)* 31, no. 6 (June 1982), pp. 115–120.

IV

The Ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Movement: The Economic Development of China

With the international and national situation becoming increasingly perilous with each passing day, we have arrived at the zero hour when the survival or extinction of our nation and people is decided. Unless we make a determined and concerted effort to seize the moment and undertake this gravest of missions, our... race will face certain extinction.¹

In the seven months before the founding of the *Li-hsing she*, China seemed to be teetering on the brink of total collapse. On July 3, 1931, the Japanese intervened in a land dispute between Chinese and Korean farmers in Wanpaoshan, a locale of Ch'ang-ch'un hsien in the northeastern province of Kirin. Under the pretext of protecting the Koreans from the Chinese, the Japanese military occupied Wanpaoshan, forcing the Chinese to abandon their farmland. The Wanpaoshan Incident was to become the prelude to the subsequent full-scale Japanese invasion of Manchuria that began with the Manchurian Incident of September 18, 1931.

The Japanese assault on the northeastern region of China coincided with a disastrous overflowing of the Yangtze River, which flooded at least four provinces in the central region of the Yangtze, making millions of peasants homeless. These swelled the ranks of the Chinese Communists such that the Red Army, seemingly overnight, doubled its size to almost

¹ Li Ping-jo, "Min-kuo erh-shih-wu nien ti chan-wang" [The outlook for the twenty-fifth year of the Republic], in *Ch'ien-t'u* [The future; hereafter cited as *CT*], 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936), p. 20.

400,000.² On November 7, 1931, the Communists installed the provisional government of the Chinese Soviet Republic in Kiangsi, thereby launching a formal challenge to the Nanking regime.³

The conjunction of natural disasters, Japanese invasion, and the Communist challenge exacerbated the already existing factional cleavages within the Kuomintang. All this, along with the endemic problems of political corruption and financial insolvency, precipitated a crisis within the Nanking government. On December 15, 1931, forced to a political compromise by rival party faction members in Kwangtung,⁴ Chiang Kai-shek resigned from his posts as Chairman of the Republic and President of the Executive Yuan. The nation thereby lost the one leader possessed of unquestioned national stature.

What was later to become a full-fledged Renaissance Movement began in Tokyo in July 1931, in direct response to the Wanpaoshan Incident. A group of about twenty Chinese students in Tokyo, all graduates of the Whampoa Military Academy, met to discuss the significance of Japan's latest action. They concluded that the incident would merely be the beginning of more aggression by Japan. Two from among this group immediately returned to China with the express purpose of finding a way to "save the nation." In October 1931 a second meeting was called in Nanking. By the third meeting, held a month later, an informal office was established.⁵ It was during this meeting that the nascent organization found a name for itself—the *San-min chu-i li-hsing she*.⁶

Between mid-December 1931 and late February 1932 the movement sought to establish organizational roots in the major cities in China. Meanwhile, Chiang Kai-shek was informed of the formation of the society.⁷ Finally, on February 19, 1932, Chiang met with the founding

² Kan Kuo-hsün, "Min-tsu fu-hsing yün-tung chi" [A record of the national renaissance movement], *Chung-wai tsa-chih (Kaleidoscope Monthly)* 16, no. 1 (July 1974): 38, 40.

³ Teng Yüan-chung, "San-min chu-i li-hsing she shih ch'u-kao" [A preliminary draft of the history of the Three Principles of the People Earnest Action Society], part 4, *Chuan-chi wen-hsüeh* [Biographical literature; hereafter cited as *CCWH*], 40, no. 6 (June 1982): 103.

⁴ *Chiang tsung-t'ung pi-lu* [From the private files of Chiang Kai-shek], Chinese translation of a serial in the Japanese newspaper *Sankei Shimbun* (Taipei: Central Daily News, 1974), 8, p. 113.

⁵ Kan Kuo-hsün, "Min-tsu fu-hsing," p. 40.

⁶ Teng Yüan-chung, "San-min chu-i," p. 106.

⁷ According to Kan Kuo-hsün, one of the founding members of the *Li-hsing she*, the de-

members of the Renaissance Movement in Nanking's Chungshanling Garden. Thus it was that the organization that outsiders would later know as the Blue Shirt Society was formally inaugurated.⁸

As a patriotic organization formed to "save China," the Chinese Li-hsing Society was neither unique nor unusual for the times. After the Manchurian Incident innumerable patriotic organizations were formed, such as the Iron and Blood Army, the Anti-Japan Association, and the Young Martyrs Corps.⁹ The Li-hsing Society shared the same sense of urgent patriotism. What distinguished the Renaissance Movement from these other groups were their success as a movement and their possession of a systematic, well-articulated ideology.

The ideology of the Renaissance Movement, which found its full expression in the pages of the movement's monthly publication, *Ch'ien-t'u*, was articulated as early as 1931 in a rough draft prepared by T'eng Chieh, one of the movement's founders.

China has expansive land, rich resources and plentiful population. All she needs is the leadership of a strong organization, one which, in accordance with the teachings of Sun Yat-sen, would realize the full potential of people and land, develop economic power, increase government effectiveness, strengthen the military... [With this organization] the Communist threat and the Japanese invasion may be repelled... [O]nly under the leadership and guidance of a powerful organization will the national character of the Chinese find... the strength to resist attacks.¹⁰

In effect, the ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Society articulated a program for the renaissance of China via the economic, political, and social modernization of Chinese society, a program necessitated by a series of unprecedented crises, which threatened China with the prospect of imminent extinction.

cision was made to to inform Chiang Kai-shek of the nascent organization in late December 1931 only when one of their own had threatened to inform. Since it was then a violation of a Kuomintang regulation to form covert organizations (factions) within the party, the *Li-hsing she* members decided to "make a preemptive move" by notifying Chiang themselves. See Kan, "Min-tsu fu-hsing," p. 41.

⁸ The founding date of the *Li-hsing she* varies with each account, ranging from late February to early March of 1932. This date, that of February 29, is taken from an unpublished diary on the *Li-hsing she*, handwritten by Chiang Kai-shek, which was provided to this author by the KMT Party Archives at Yangmingshan, Taipei.

⁹ Teng Yüan-chung, "San-min chu-i," p. 105.

¹⁰ As quoted in Kan Kuo-hsün, "Min-tsu fu-hsing," p. 40.

The Ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Movement

A TIME OF NATIONAL EXIGENCY

For the members, and particularly the ideologues, of the Chinese Renaissance Movement, the significance of September 1, 1931, exceeded the brutal reality of the invasion and occupation of one country's territory by another. The Manchurian Incident seemed, rather, to embody the total disintegration of a nation and a people—a disintegration that had been going on for a century, since the Opium War in 1840. With the Nanking Treaty, the first in a series of unequal treaties that sealed China's humiliating defeat in the war, the steady incursion of the imperialist powers into China began, with ultimately disastrous effects on its culture and society, its polity and economy.¹¹

Culturally, the net effect of repeated humiliations incurred in lost wars and forced concessions was the breakdown of the traditional culture and the search for a replacement. Bewildered and bitter, the Chinese would come to repudiate their very national character.¹² In their desperation, they would look to all the variants of Western ideologies for a replacement, from the magical cure of science and democracy of the May Fourth Movement to the elixir of Marxism-Leninism of the Chinese Communists.

Socially, imperialism's net effect was the induction of China into the modern age—an age of machine production and its attendant values and mores. A new class, the proletariat, was born. The migration from the countryside to the cities began. The hold of the family on individuals loosened. Society became more atomized. Individuals were released from traditional values and mores, becoming available for attachment to new roles and commitments and for recruitment into mass mobilizational movements.¹³

Politically, imperialism accelerated the tempo of the traditional dynastic cycle and, with the fall of the Manchu dynasty, contributed to the intractable malady of political fractionalization through its support of vying warlords.¹⁴

¹¹ Ho Jo-hui, "Chung-kuo ching-chi fa-chan ti lu-hsien" [The course of China's economic development], *CT* 1, no. 8 (1 August 1933): 2.

¹² Liang Yüan-tung, "Chung-kuo min-tsu chih t'e-tien" [Special features in the Chinese national character], *CT* 1, no. 4 (1 April 1933): 1-10.

¹³ Marion J. Levy, Jr., "Contrasting Factors in the Modernization of China and Japan," in Research Center in Economic Development and Cultural Change, *Economic Development and Cultural Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1953), 2, pp. 173-177.

¹⁴ Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi chi wo-men chin-hou chih jen-wu" [The

The effects of imperialism on Chinese society would prove to be the most ruinous on the economy, leading one commentator to conclude that both "the agrarian economy and the new national capital of the cities are bankrupt."¹⁵ China's "economy has been fundamentally ruined."¹⁶

The pace of the disintegration of Chinese society seemed, to the Renaissance ideologues, to have quickened, leading one contributor to *Ch'ien-t'u* to inquire, "In these past twenty years, what year had not seen internal unrest, in which year had we not had natural calamities, which province had been free from bandits, which place was able to enjoy peace and prosperity, how many officials were... uncorrupted?"¹⁷ With the Manchurian Incident, China was judged to have reached the nadir in this process of disintegration.¹⁸ With Japan intensifying its attacks, China could no longer maintain even its hypo-colony status. China could soon become extinct.¹⁹ Thus it was that Huang Hao-jan entreated his countrymen, "We are living on a lone raft which is filled with leaks. If we are not able, in the near future, to make a concerted effort to repair this raft, our fate, on this vast ocean, will be certain destruction."²⁰

THE HISTORIC MISSION OF THE CHINESE

A civilization that once had achieved great heights in culture and in the art of government and that had long prided itself on its singular record of having five thousand years of recorded history found itself backward in almost every facet of the modern world.²¹ It seemed that what the foreign imperialists had said of the Chinese was indeed true. The Chinese had grown senile and weak. There could be no future for such a people. The Chinese, as a people, would become extinct.²²

Although the Renaissance ideologues berated their compatriots for their complacency in the face of mortal peril, they nevertheless refused to

crisis of the Chinese people and our mission from now on], part 2, *CT* 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 6.

¹⁵ Ho Jo-hui, "Chung-kuo ching-chi," p. 1.

¹⁶ Chang I-fan, "Shih-chieh ching-chi hui-i shih-pai yü wo-kuo" [The failure of the world economic conference and our nation], *CT* 1, no. 8 (1 August 1933): 2.

¹⁷ Huang Hao-jan, "Kuo-nan yü tzu-chiu" [National crisis and self help], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 79.

¹⁸ According to *Ch'ien-t'u*'s estimate, by 1936 China had lost 4,000,000 square *li* (or about 1,431,818 square miles) of territory to the Japanese. See Li Ping-jo, "Min-kuo erh-shih-wu nien," p. 15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Huang Hao-jan, "Kuo-nan," p. 78.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

²² Li Ping-jo, "Min-kuo erh-shih-wu nien," p. 15.

see, in their present predicament, the inevitability of the decline and death of their people. Instead, the ideologues believed that the Chinese, because of their own faults, were experiencing a temporary setback in their national fortunes. The Chinese remained “the finest of the world, a people that had not grown senile.” Their current exigency was not a harbinger of the dying out of a people. Rather, it presented an opportune occasion for the rebirth of China.²³ Thus, although the secret core organization of the movement, the Li-hsing Society, was named to signify the members’ resolution to “carry out” (*hsing*) the teachings of Sun Yat-sen “in earnest” (*li*), seeking to reverse what they took to be the Chinese penchant for talking but aversion to doing,²⁴ the founders conceived their larger mission to be nothing less than the renascence of China. This mission became the namesake for their public, mass organization, the Chinese Renaissance Society.²⁵

For the ideologues of the Renaissance Movement the most immediate task was simple survival: “save the people, save the country.”²⁶ “We must . . . break out of this predicament, carve a path out with our blood . . . in order to preserve our . . . people.”²⁷ Rather than wait passively for their death, the Chinese must find the courage to battle their aggressors, until death if necessary. Only by preparing for and engaging in “a war of national defense” could the Chinese find salvation. Their survival as a people could be sought only by confronting the Japanese in war.²⁸

Beyond the immediate task of simple survival, the Renaissance ideologues conceived their larger mission to be the rebuilding of a fallen people into a new society. “Only the construction of a new China can truly cleanse away the humiliations of past defeats.”²⁹ The Chinese had a responsibility to their heritage: the obligation to develop fully the special

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Unpublished diary of Chiang Kai-shek on the *Li-hsing she*, p. 1.

²⁵ Ch'en Tun-cheng, “Fu-hsing she, Lan-i she, Ch'ing-pai she—i-ko ‘Fu-hsing she’ ts’an-chia-che ti tzu-shu yü kuan-ch’a” [The Renaissance Society, the Blue Shirt Society, the Blue and White Society: an account by a member of the Renaissance Society], *CCWH* 34, no. 6 (June 1979): 113.

²⁶ Ju Ch'un-p'u, “Fu-hsing min-tsu yü fa-lü kuan-hsi” [The relationship between national renaissance and law], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 50.

²⁷ Li Ping-jo, “Min-kuo er-shih-wu nien,” p. 15.

²⁸ Shu I-fan, “Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan chih po-ch'ieh yü Chung-kuo ying-yü chih chun-pe'i” [The coming Second World War and China's necessary preparations], *CT* 2, no. 10 (1 October 1934): 11.

²⁹ T'ang Erh-wen, “Tsen-yang ch'ung-shih min-tsu ti chan-tou li” [How to fortify our people's fighting force], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 87.

talents of their people³⁰ and to continue the achievements of their forefathers. Thus it was that Shu I-fan, writing in *Ch'ien-t'u*, appealed to his compatriots, "Wake up, countrymen!... [I]f we do not bestir ourselves, our race and nation will become extinct, and we will be as cattle in slavery; if we, [on the other hand,] are able clearly to see our reality, recognize our mission, struggle and die for our country, then the beginning of the Second World War will also be the dawn of the renaissance of China."³¹

EFFECTING THE HISTORIC MISSION

This vision of a China strong enough to protect and preserve its people, sufficiently revitalized to assume its rightful place in the modern world, served, then, as the inspiration for the Renaissance Movement. The program to fulfill this vision—those projects deemed necessary for effecting the historic mission—constitute the substantive ideology of the movement. The content of this program, in turn, was contingent upon the Renaissance ideologues' understanding of the reasons that accounted for their nation's distress.

Reasons for China's Predicament. The contributors to *Ch'ien-t'u* held divergent views concerning those reasons that could account for the distressful conditions of 1931. Some, like Lu I-yüan, placed the burden of responsibility outside China, preferring to attribute only a secondary role to the mistakes and flaws of the Chinese. "Many reasons may account for the unemployment of workers and intellectuals, and for the loss of land of the peasants, such as political unrest, warlord exploitation, and the extortions of local rascals and corrupt gentry. But the fundamental reason is still imperialism's oppression."³²

Others were less strident and censorious; while not entirely exculpating the imperialists, they believed that China's vulnerability could only have resulted from its own weaknesses. This more self-critical view constituted the dominant interpretation within the Renaissance Movement. As Huang Hao-jan admitted, "[O]ur flaws are many. It is precisely these flaws of ours which have led to this unprecedented crisis."³³

³⁰ Ch'eng Chung-wen, "Ch'ing-nien hsün-lien chi ch'i shih-tai hsü-yao" [The training of youth and the demands of the times], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 87.

³¹ Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," p. 17.

³² Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi chi wo-men chin-hou chih jen-wu" [The crisis of the Chinese people and our duty from now on], part 1, *CT* 1, no. 6 (1 June 1933): 12.

³³ Huang, "Kuo-nan," p. 80.

What were the weaknesses that had rendered China so vulnerable to the exploitation of the imperialist powers?

For T'ang Erh-wen the explanation for China's predicament was blatantly simple: China had been defeated in war. All other reasons that might account for the "precipitous fall" of a formerly "great nation" were reducible to that simple reality. The poverty and weakness of China were due to its military defeats.³⁴

The Renaissance ideologues, however, did not hold a naive and simplistic view regarding the remedy for China's military deficiencies. Unlike the T'ung-chih reformers of the Ch'ing dynasty, the Renaissance ideologues believed that the root cause for the military setbacks of the Chinese was the backwardness of Chinese society itself. For "war is not simply a contest between the military [of two nations], but a contest of the capabilities of the total nation. Thus, the victory or defeat in war, the rise or fall of nations, are both determined by the level of a nation's civilization and by the strength of its spirit."³⁵

No simple updating of military weapons could suffice to reverse the national fortunes of the Chinese, for their vulnerability stemmed from the backwardness of not only the country's military but its culture and society, its science and economy.³⁶ And, according to one commentator,

[If] the winning or losing in modern warfare is not solely dependent on the military power of the moment but on the achievements of the years of the total society, [and since China] has, for the past several centuries, lagged behind the other powers in scientific knowledge, social organization, economic development, and military expansion . . . , is it any wonder, then, that we have lost every war?³⁷

Projects to Revive China. Given this analysis, if China were to flourish anew, it would be necessary to rectify the country's backwardness. The renaissance of China would thus require a systematic program for the modernization and development of Chinese society.

Since the members of the Renaissance Movement took as their most immediate mission the preservation and continuation of their nation, such a program required a modernization of the Chinese military. To survive the military assaults of Japan, China had to place the highest priority on modernizing its defense capabilities. China must, "within the nearest

³⁴ T'ang Erh-wen, "Tsen-yang ch'ung-shih min-tsu ti chan-tou li," p. 83.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

³⁶ Li Jo-fei, "Hsüeh-sheng ai-kuo yün-tung ti tsung chien-t'ao" [A general assessment of the student patriotic movement], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 73, 75.

³⁷ T'ang Erh-wen, "Tsen-yang ch'ung-shih min-tsu ti chan-tou li," p. 84.

future, . . . centralize her military forces . . . and complete the construction of . . . a national defense industry."³⁸ However, the Renaissance ideologues believed that certain tasks either had to precede or be coterminous with this construction. Such projects were necessary not only for the achievement of a strong and viable military, but also for the realization of their larger vision of a China restored to all its greatness. These projects would institute the economic, political, and social development of China.³⁹

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF CHINA

Industrialization and the Modernization of the Military. For the members of the Chinese Renaissance Movement, the twentieth century was a tumultuous and hazardous time of brutal competition, a demoralized age when nations made cynical use of the abstract values of peace and justice as mere ploys.⁴⁰ For individual nations to survive with freedom and independence in such times, they must possess the "real strength" of an effective military defense.⁴¹

Even a cursory inspection of the military capabilities of China in 1931, however, would reveal just how deficient the Chinese were in this "real strength." To begin with, although an air force had become crucial to the defense of a nation, China's total air power consisted only of five hundred aircraft, one-quarter of Japan's.⁴² And although the length of China's coast made a strong navy vital to the country's defense, the navy was so antiquated that, in Li Ping-jo's opinion, China's "naval power is nonexistent."⁴³ As for the army, the Renaissance ideologues found both its weaponry and its training to be inferior and outmoded. The Chinese army required reinforcement with modern armament. It needed better training and discipline. Moreover, the dissipation of resources in the extant system of provincial armies needed to be eliminated through their amalgamation and centralization into one national defense force.⁴⁴ Above

³⁸ Huang Hao-jan, "Kuo-nan," p. 80.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 80–81.

⁴⁰ Yü Wen-wei, "Chung-hua min-tsu hsien-tsai hsü-yao ho chung chiao-yü" [What type of education does China need now?], *CT* 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 4.

⁴¹ T'ang Erh-wen, "Tsen-yang ch'ung-shih min-tsu ti chan-tou li," p. 82.

⁴² Shu I-fan estimated that, in 1934, France had 4,000 aircraft; the United States had 3,000; Britain, the U.S.S.R., Italy, and Japan each had 2,000; while the air capacity posed in readiness along the Sino-Soviet and the Sino-Manchukuo borders each totaled 500 aircraft—the same number of craft for the entire air defense of China. Shu, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," p. 15.

⁴³ Li Ping-jo, "Min-kuo erh-shih-wu nien," p. 18.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

all, the Chinese had to produce their own arms. China's heavy and major weapons—cannons, tanks, naval vessels, and aircraft—were all purchased from other countries. In the event of a naval blockade, arms supply would be effectively terminated, leaving China to the mercy of her conqueror.⁴⁵ As the ideologues asked, “[With] weapons that are inferior to those of others, how can mere mortals of flesh and blood withstand the latest weapons of the age?”⁴⁶

Since “the most important task” in the renaissance of China was the “struggle for survival,” national military defense must be “the heart” and war “the objective” of that renaissance.⁴⁷ But how was China to develop the “real strength” that would ensure her survival in the twentieth century?

According to the Renaissance ideologues, the art of warfare had been revolutionized. The First World War witnessed a fundamental change in the nature of war. Whereas in the old days wars were limited affairs between contending armies of mercenaries, modern warfare involved the masses in a total “war of endurance.”⁴⁸ And whereas “in the past, warfare was entirely dependent on manpower and thus a strong people could insure victory, modern wars are totally reliant on science.”⁴⁹ Consequently, in the twentieth century the production of viable armament became vitally dependent on progress and development in the science and technology, industry and the economy of a nation.

The Renaissance ideologues believed that the natural sciences were crucial to national defense. Military power could not simply be reduced to cannons, planes, and warships. An effective military depended on the laboratories of the chemists and physicists and on the achievements of science, for the “possession or absence of military power, the winning or losing of wars are fundamentally contingent on basic research in the natural sciences.”⁵⁰ An effective defense also depended on the

⁴⁵ According to Shu I-fan, China lost her largest arms factory, the Shen-yang factory, when the Japanese took over the Northeast. At the time of the Manchurian Incident, when many Chinese clamored for confronting the Japanese in war, the total capacity of China's arms industry would have produced sufficient ordnance to last for only a few days. See Shu, “Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan,” p. 14.

⁴⁶ Li [pseud.], “Ch'ang-ch'eng Luan-tung chih chan i-hou” [After the battles of Ch'ang-ch'eng and Luan-tung], *CT* 1, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 2.

⁴⁷ Li Ping-jo, “Min-kuo er-shih-wu nien,” p. 18.

⁴⁸ Hu T'ien, “Hsien-tai chan-cheng yü i-pan kung-yeh” [Contemporary warfare and general industries], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 101–102.

⁴⁹ Shu I-fan, “Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan,” p. 13.

⁵⁰ Yü Wen-wei, “Chiao-yü,” p. 4.

development of a nation's basic industries, particularly those of coal, petroleum, iron, and steel production, for "arms production requires... coal, iron, and steel, while military transport requires... petroleum."⁵¹

Ultimately, however, the ability of a nation to defend itself in the twentieth century depended on the development and productivity of its overall economic system. The Renaissance ideologues understood modern military technology to be the direct consequence of the increase in productive capacity made possible by the industrial revolution. Developments in metallurgy led to the production of cannons, tanks, and other power machines. The technology of machine production led to the development of modern explosives and military communications. In the twentieth century the development of a nation's productive capacity to its "highest level" constituted "the necessary prerequisite for a revolution in military technology."⁵² In other words, the Renaissance ideologues believed that the survival of their nation required nothing less than the industrialization and economic development of China.

Economic Conditions in China. By the mid-1930s it had become clear that the economy of China was perilously close to collapse. In 1934 China suffered a trade imbalance amounting to about \$5 billion.⁵³ The agrarian sector, the mainstay of the national economy, was increasingly afflicted with disturbing signs of failure: a secular decline in per capita productivity, a manifest decline in the self-sufficiency of the Chinese peasant, and an increase in the incidence of famine in the countryside.

China, the world's principal producer of wheat as recently as 1918, found itself importing both wheat and flour. In 1933, for example, grain imports (including rice and wheat) amounted to almost 20 percent of China's overall imports.⁵⁴ Circumstances were much the same in cotton farming. China had been self-sufficient in cotton production. Since 1920, however, there had been a continuous decline in annual yields even though the acreage devoted to cotton cultivation had increased.⁵⁵ The consequence of all this was outmigration from the rural areas to the cities,

⁵¹ Wu Yü-kan, "Chung-kuo min-tsu kung-yeh ti ch'ien-t'u" [The future of China's national industry], *CT* 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 1.

⁵² Hu T'ien, "Hsien-tai chan-cheng," p. 100.

⁵³ China's total imports, for the year 1934, was \$10.029 billion, while her exports amounted to only \$5.035 billion. See Huang Hao-jan, "Kuo-nan," p. 79.

⁵⁴ Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," p. 15.

⁵⁵ Pai Yü, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo nung-ts'un shuai-lo yü fu-hsing ti hsien-chüeh wen-t'i" [The abnormal decay of the Chinese countryside and the priority issue in its revival], *CT* 1, no. 9 (1 September 1933): 5.

increasing the social service costs there and taxing the support capabilities of urban governments.

The impoverishment of the rural population arose out of a multitude of factors, but one of the most immediate causes seemed to have been the proliferation and increases in land taxes and correlative land rents. Land taxes were invariably transferred to the peasants, causing them to borrow money at usurious rates. This not only drove peasant family incomes below the poverty line,⁵⁶ it forced many peasants to abandon the cultivation of the soil and seek employment in the already congested cities, join the mercenary armies of the warlords, or become recruits in the ranks of the Communist party.

Conditions in the industrial sector of China's economy were not much better. China possessed few basic industries and its extractive industries were primitive. In spite of its large reserves of oil, for example, China remained a net importer of foreign oil.⁵⁷ Even in the light industry sector, the only sector of the economy that was reasonably well developed, conditions in flour milling, silk filature, and cotton textile mills were parlous at best. As a case in point, by the mid-1930s China had lost its preeminence in the silk trade, losing not only its market share but earning less each year from the product sold.⁵⁸ Similar evidence of secular decline was evident in the flour mills and textile factories.⁵⁹ The ideologues of the Renaissance Society anticipated the total collapse of China's light industries unless there was massive, and successful, intervention.⁶⁰

What interventions were to be undertaken became a central concern of the members of the Chinese Renaissance Movement. In general, the theoreticians of the Renaissance Society offered three types of explanation

⁵⁶ "Chung-kuo nung-min ching-chi ti k'un-nan ho pu-chiu" [The difficulties of and remedies for the Chinese agrarian economy], *Tung-fang tsa-chih (The East)* 26, no. 9 (author and date of periodical not specified), as quoted in Sun Pai-chien, "Chung-kuo nung-ts'un-chung ti po-hsüeh kuan-hsi yü nung-ts'un ching-chi ti Chiang-lai" [The exploitative relations in the Chinese countryside and the future of the rural economy], *CT* 1, no. 9 (1 September 1933): 14.

⁵⁷ Given this underdevelopment of the extractive and heavy industries, "in the future in the event of a blockade of [China's] harbors, all supplies would be cut off. Without iron and steel, guns, cannons, warships, and planes cannot be manufactured. Without oil, military weaponry cannot be transported." Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," p. 15.

⁵⁸ *Kuo-chi mao-i tao-pao* [Guide to world trade], 6, no. 11: 118, as cited in Tung Hsiu-chia, "Chin-hou ju-ho chien-she Chung-kuo chih kuo-min ching-chi" [How to reconstruct China's national economy], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 24.

⁵⁹ Pai Yü, "Chung-kuo min-tsu mien-chih kung-yeh shu-lun" [On China's national cotton textile industry], *CT* 1, no. 6 (1 June 1933): 2-4, 9; Wu Yü-kan, "Kung-yeh," pp. 4, 5.

⁶⁰ Pai Yü, "Chung-kuo min-tsu mien-chih kung-yeh," p. 8.

for China's economic disabilities. Some, like Chou Fang, attributed the decline in the rural economy to the land tax policies of the central government. Not only were land taxes burdensome, they were supplemented by special taxes, episodic reassessments, and unpredictable surtaxes. These burdens invariably fell most heavily on the working peasant, undermining his incentive and crippling his enterprise.⁶¹

Others, like Lu I-yüan, held imperialism to be the principal cause of economic decline in the countryside. In his judgment, the disposition of the advanced capitalist countries to treat the less developed countries as "dumping grounds" (*wei-liü*) reduced the profitability of China's domestic agriculture and undermined the viability of its domestic handicraft industry, upon which peasant families depended for supplementary income.⁶² Additionally, the burdens imposed by the imperialist powers on China in the form of war indemnities and foreign loans compelled the central government to increase its taxation of the agrarian population.⁶³ In such fashion the imperialist powers directly contributed to the shortage of capital in China, the stagnation of its rural economy, and its inability to improve total factor productivity.⁶⁴

Finally, there were those, like Liu Ping-li, who attributed China's economic disabilities to much more deeply entrenched causes than corrupt and burdensome government policies, oppressive landlords, or the influence of imperialists. They saw China's fundamental difficulty to be its "Asiatic mode of production," with its "stagnant" and "nonprogressive" character. It was the very failure of China's agriculture to develop modern modes of production that impaired the nation's overall economy. Without surpluses generated in the rural area, the modern industrial sector could not grow. The consequence was China's exploitation at the hands of more advanced industrial powers.⁶⁵

The light industries that China had developed by the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries were largely noncompetitive because of the dearth of domestic capital. That capital would have underwritten technological improvement. The lack of surpluses in the rural area meant that Chinese industries would either be

⁶¹ Chou Fang, "Keng-che yu ch'i-fu" [Tax to the tillers], *CT* 1, no. 9 (1 September 1933): 1-6.

⁶² Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi," part 1, p. 6.

⁶³ According to Lu I-yüan, a recent survey showed that China's foreign debt totaled \$2.056 billion, while her domestic debt totaled \$1 billion. See *ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁵ Liu Ping-li, "Nung-ts'un fu-hsing ti i-i" [The meaning of a renaissance of the countryside], *CT* 1, no. 9 (1 September 1933): 1-2.

alienated to foreign capital or remain competitively marginal.⁶⁶ Without the requisite capital base, moreover, China's transportation infrastructure remained inadequate to the development of industry. The lack of purchasing power in the countryside further impaired the potential of domestic industry to survive.⁶⁷

Because of the failure of Chinese agriculture to produce the surpluses necessary to support self-sustained, overall economic growth, the central government found it necessary to seek revenues wherever it could. Heavy and arbitrary taxation was the result. Chinese peasants as well as Chinese manufacturers were burdened with excessive tax obligations, further reducing their competitiveness and their capability to survive.⁶⁸

Thus, by the time the theoreticians of the Renaissance Society began putting together their own program for the salvation of China, they were already well aware of the complexity and gravity of their nation's economic problems. Their program for the agricultural and industrial development of China was addressed to what they understood to be the economic causes of the country's disabilities. They were also aware of political factors that influenced their nation's destiny and that would require political remedies. For the purposes of the present discussion, however, the exposition will deal with the program offered by the Renaissance Society for the solution of China's specifically economic problems.

The Renaissance Program for the Economic Development of China

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

For the ideologues of the Chinese Renaissance Society, the statistics from Chinese agriculture were a grim testimony to the gravity of the impoverishment and deterioration of the countryside. In their judgment, China needed a "fundamental solution," one that would require a "revolution" in the agrarian economy. This was expressed by Liang Yüan-tung as follows:

[W]arlords and the civil war with the communists...are not the causes but the effects of the decay of the countryside. Being only the effects [of the decay of the countryside], their eradication would require a fundamental solution for the relief of the villages. The

⁶⁶ Tung Hsiu-chia, "Chin-hou ju-ho chien-she," p. 26.

⁶⁷ Wu Yü-kan, "Kung-yeh," p. 5.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

mere suppression and eradication of warlords, bandits, and civil war, in the absence of a fundamental solution, would be confusing effect for cause. The result can only be the repetition and continuation of the same pattern we have had: the rapid succession of corrupt governments and unending battles with warlords.⁶⁹

For Shu I-fan this "fundamental solution" for Chinese agriculture would include improvements in technology, the application of science to agriculture, the establishment of farmers' banks and village cooperatives, and the construction of grain storage facilities and an effective transport system.⁷⁰ For Liu Ping-li this solution would have to include the transfer of capital from the cities to the countryside, which would entail an equalization of wealth between urban and rural sectors, and a "transfer" of the "technology and expertise" of the more advanced nations to China.⁷¹ All agreed that to increase productivity China's agricultural production would have to be "industrialized" and "mechanized."⁷² Unhappily, however, China's arable land had, through the centuries, been divided and redivided into a plethora of individual small plots, a decided obstacle to mechanization. Thus, in the opinion of the Renaissance ideologues, before mechanization and the resultant increase in agricultural productivity could be effected, a reform in the existent system of land tenure would be necessary.⁷³

There appeared to be at least two sets of opinions among the Renaissance ideologues on the subject of what reform in the land system would be most instrumental in bringing about the agricultural development of China. There were those, like Chou Fang, who preferred adherence to the original proposals of Sun Yat-sen. "The land policy of the Kuomintang [should be] the equalization of land rights... and land to the tillers." Not only would this policy achieve Sun's intended effects of preventing landowners from profiting from "unearned increments" in land value resulting from modernization,⁷⁴ the enactment of this policy would also ensure the disappearance of both landlords and agricultural laborers from the countryside. Instead, everyone who farmed would be a

⁶⁹ Liang Yüan-tung, "Lun fu-hsing nung-ts'un ti li-lun yü shih-chi" [On the theory and reality of an agricultural renaissance], *CT* 1, no. 6 (1 June 1933): 2.

⁷⁰ Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," pp. 15-16.

⁷¹ Liu Ping-li, "Nung-ts'un fu-hsing," pp. 3-4.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 2; Liang Yüan-tung, "Lun fu-hsing nung-ts'un," p. 2.

⁷³ Liu Ping-li, "Nung-ts'un fu-hsing," p. 4.

⁷⁴ See A. James Gregor, Maria Hsia Chang, and Andrew B. Zimmerman, *Ideology and Development: Sun Yat-sen and the Economic History of Taiwan* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1981) chap. 1, pp. 1-22.

“self-tiller.” Land taxes would then be justly and equitably distributed.⁷⁵

Other ideologues, however, thought that such a policy was not only inappropriate to the real problems in Chinese agriculture but would exacerbate existing conditions. According to Liang Yüan-tung the equalization of land rights, or “more thoroughly,” “the equal distribution of land,” would be both “unnecessary” and “counter-productive.” In his judgment the “chief effect” of land redistribution would be the overthrow of the landlord class. A policy of the equal redistribution of land would be appropriate and ameliorative if the landlord class were the sole, or even the major, reason for the “arrested development” of Chinese agriculture. In the case of China, however, landlords constituted only one of many reasons for the conditions in the countryside. Compared to the landlords of pre-Revolution Russia who owned, on the average, more than 75,758 acres (500,000 *mou*) of land, China’s landlord problem was on a more modest scale, with the majority of landlords owning between 4½ and 30 acres of land. Consequently, the “small farmer economy” (*hsiao-nung ching-chi*) of China would have “less need” for land redistribution as a curative measure.⁷⁶

Liang argued that it was the proliferation of individual private plots, not the landlord system, that was the “major force” “fettering” China’s development. The equal redistribution of land would only multiply the number of self-tillers and thereby the number of individual “selfish” plots. Such a development would present an even greater obstacle to the mechanization of agriculture and the utilization of “new tools and technology.” The result of land distribution, then, could only be the “equal distribution of poverty,” rather than agricultural development. Furthermore, since “private ownership” remained the “foundation” of a policy of land redistribution, the sale and purchase of land could not be prevented or avoided. Thus, a reform of the land system through land redistribution would be a self-defeating act of futility, for what was to prevent the gradual accumulation of land by individuals and the return of the landlords?⁷⁷

For ideologues like Liang Yüan-tung, then, measures such as land redistribution or the equalization of land rights were inadequate because they seemed to deal only with the superficial features of the problems of

⁷⁵ Chou Fang, “Keng-che,” p. 6.

⁷⁶ Liang Yüan-tung, “Lun fu-hsing nung-ts’un,” pp. 4–5.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5, 6. For a detailed treatment of the flaws in a program of land redistribution proposed by Yen Hsi-shan, a senior administrative official in Sui-ching, Shansi, see Sun Ch’un-ning, “‘T’u-ti kung-yu’ chih-tu chih shang-ch’üeh” [On a policy of the collective ownership of land], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 89–96.

the countryside. These ideologues believed that China's agrarian condition called for a strategy that could address the root of the problem. Chinese agriculture needed a restructuring, a new organization (*tsu-chih*): "If agriculture is to be saved, it is necessary to begin with a totally new structure. Solutions and strategies that are removed from a discussion of structure will inevitably be futile."⁷⁸

What was this "new structure" to be? For Liu Ping-li it would be the "collective" (*chi-t'uan*) or "socialist management of agriculture" (*she-hui nung-yeh ching-ying*).⁷⁹ For Liang Yüan-tung it would be "collective farms" (*chi-t'i nung-ch'ang*).⁸⁰ For Pai Yü it would be the new policy of the "state management of land" (*kuo-ying t'u-ti*).⁸¹ In effect, what these ideologues advocated was a new agricultural system, one which would no longer allow the private ownership of land. Instead, all land would be owned by the state. Land would be distributed to and divided among the tillers, but managed either collectively or by the government.

For these Renaissance ideologues, the proliferation of private plots that thwarted the mechanization of Chinese agriculture needed to be eliminated, amalgamated into larger expanses. Mechanization would also require "huge capital investments," a resource that the individual farmer would not have but which the capitalists of the cities might possess. In the judgment of Liang Yüan-tung, however, these capitalists, being "clever" (*ching-ming*) and calculating, could not be counted on to make "stupid" investments in land.⁸² Thus the state, having the requisite capital reserves but not the primary motive of quick profit making, would be the only source for such capital.

There were other compelling reasons for agricultural collectivization besides mechanization. Unlike the program for land redistribution, collectivization would eliminate the exploitative landlord class once and for all. Collectivization would also be a "force" that would "enhance social unity" thereby "bringing an end to the unending series of internal warfare." Furthermore, it was the "divisive" system of private plots that had rendered the peasants "dissipated," "unorganized," and consequently, vulnerable to the exploitation of warlords and oppressive taxation. It was the "old productive relations" in Chinese agriculture that had produced the bane of warlords and corrupt government.⁸³ Agricultural

⁷⁸ Sun Ch'un-ning, "'T'u-ti kung-yu,'" p. 4.

⁷⁹ Liu Ping-li, "Nung-ts'un fu-hsing," p. 4.

⁸⁰ Liang Yüan-tung, "Lun fu-hsing nung-ts'un," p. 5.

⁸¹ Pai Yü, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo," p. 11.

⁸² Liang Yüan-tung, "Lun fu-hsing nung-ts'un," p. 3.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 6.

collectivization would not only improve agriculture but would end some of China's political problems as well.

Additionally, collectivization would also prevent the "capitalist conversion" (*tsu-pen hua*) of agriculture. According to Pai Yü, the most important question revolved around the "right of ownership" (*ching-ying chu-ch'üan*).

If this falls into the hands of private entrepreneurs, then the capitalist conversion of the villages would easily develop. [But] if the state directly owns and manages [agriculture], increases in productivity could still be accomplished. Private individuals, however, would no longer reap the profits, the sine qua non of capitalism. . . . [I]f we rely totally on private capital, the villages may well be revived, but the lives of the peasants would not only not improve but would be increasingly embittered.⁸⁴

With the state ownership of agriculture, however, not only would the "needless wastes and economic crises" of capitalism be avoided,⁸⁵ farmers and agricultural laborers would be better treated and compensated since the state, unlike private entrepreneurs, is not driven by the "avarice for profits." Peasant unemployment would also be reduced or altogether eliminated since the state could devise systematic plans and production would be "controlled." Finally, with the state managing agricultural production, profits would also be used more wisely and productively, with surpluses transferred to the modern sector.⁸⁶

Thus, in the final judgment of these ideologues, agricultural collectivization was "China's most needed and urgent reform."⁸⁷ On only one point did they diverge: how this reorganization of the agrarian economy could be brought about. The more moderate ideologues advocated a reformist mode. According to Liu Ping-li, "under the principle of Sun Yat-sen's equalization of land rights" the state would buy land from the owners at the price reported to the government. The state would then distribute it to the tillers. Ownership would be retained by the state, while management, although controlled and directed by the state, would be collective.⁸⁸

The more radical ideologues, however, advocated a method having overtones of revolutionary violence. In the judgment of Liang Yüan-tung,

⁸⁴ Pai Yü, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo," pp. 10, 11.

⁸⁵ Liang Yüan-tung, "Lun fu-hsing nung-ts'un," p. 5.

⁸⁶ Pai Yü, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo," p. 11.

⁸⁷ Liang Yüan-tung, "Lun fu-hsing nung-ts'un," p. 5.

⁸⁸ Liu Ping-li, "Nung-ts'un fu-hsing," p. 4.

“The most difficult part of realizing the collective farms system would most certainly be the extinction of private ownership. How can the landlords, rich farmers, and self-tillers be made to surrender their land for conversion to collective ownership? It seems that the preliminary estimate is that this cannot be accomplished without revolutionary methods. . . . [F]or any fundamental change to take place, a revolution is unavoidable.”⁸⁹

A difference of opinion, then, existed among the ranks of the Chinese Renaissance Movement on the subject of land reform as a means toward the maximal development of agriculture. The least extreme among them advocated Sun Yat-sen’s equalization of land rights, a program that would ensure a modicum of justice in the countryside by preventing landowners from profiting from unearned increments in the value of their land. Instead, the state would see to it that these unearned increments—unearned because they were the fruits of the modernizing efforts of the whole populace—would be transferred to the rural sector. Thus, the entire nation would ultimately share in the enhanced livelihood of an economically developed society.

Some, however, wanted more than an equalization of land rights. For these Renaissance members such a program would merely ensure that the “haves” in the countryside would not unduly benefit from the efforts of others. But what about the “have-nots”? This second group of Renaissance members understood Sun’s suggestions for a program of “land to the tillers”⁹⁰ to mean a program of redistributive justice. They advocated land reform through the “equal redistribution of land.”

But for a third group of Renaissance members such a program of land redistribution not only happened to be what their political rivals, the Chinese Communist party, were advocating at the time,⁹¹ but also contained what they took to be serious fundamental flaws. These members of the Renaissance Movement advocated a “revolution” in the structure of Chinese agriculture itself: collectivization and the state ownership of land.

Thus there was no unanimity of opinion in the movement concerning how China’s land system should be reformed. In the place of unanimity were continuing debates, criticisms, and counter criticisms. All

⁸⁹ Liang Yüan-tung, “Lun fu-hsing nung-ts’un,” p. 6.

⁹⁰ See Sun Yat-sen, “Keng-che yao-yu ch’i t’ien” [Tillers must have land], speech of 21 August 1924 in Kwangchou, in idem, *Kuo-fu ch’üan-chi* [Complete works of Sun Yat-sen] (Taipei: Party Historical Archives Committee, 1973), pp. 719–723.

⁹¹ “[M]any are finding the Communist party’s ‘land revolution’ to be bewitchingly enticing.” Sun Ch’un-ning, “T’u-ti kung-yu,” p. 89.

groups, however, agreed on certain essentials. All were adamant on their distaste for a "capitalist conversion" of the countryside. In the words of Pai Yü, China should not tread the footsteps of the industrialized nations that had permitted the uneven development of their industrial and agricultural sectors. In these nations, "the countryside, along with the development of industries, had also adopted the productive methods [and relations] of capitalism. Although agricultural production was increased, the sufferings of the peasants remained the same as they were under the exploitation of a feudal society."⁹² The Renaissance ideologues also agreed on certain needed reforms, advocated even by the radicals as interim, transitional measures. These were reductions in land taxes and land rent,⁹³ limitations on landholding (*hsien-t'ien fa*), and agricultural cooperatives.⁹⁴ Finally, all were critical of the Kuomintang's land reform efforts to date. According to Chou Fang, although "the Kuomintang's [professed] land policy is the equalization of land rights and land to the tillers . . . , except for the formal acknowledgment of these basic principles, the Kuomintang has not as yet actively carried it out."⁹⁵ This failure, as Liu Ping-li noted, could have dire consequences: "The *San-min chu-i* revolution, to this day has not dealt with the problem of land. It is precisely because of this that we must champion and actualize this revolution. For if the Chinese revolution neglects the land problem, it is proclaiming its own death sentence."⁹⁶

INDUSTRIALIZATION

There seemed to be more agreement about the Renaissance program for the industrial development of China. The discussions on industrialization were free of the disagreements and contention that characterized the proposals concerning land reform, and the plans put forward were self-avowedly modeled on Sun Yat-sen's plan for the material reconstruction of China.⁹⁷

The Renaissance ideologues were confident that China had the necessary resources for industrialization: a large population that provided

⁹² Pai Yü, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo," p. 9.

⁹³ Chou Fang, "Keng-che," p. 6.

⁹⁴ Pai Yü, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo," p. 11.

⁹⁵ Chou Fang, "Keng-che," p. 6.

⁹⁶ Liu Ping-li, "Nung-ts'un fu-hsing," p. 4.

⁹⁷ "Establishing national capital is what our founding father, Sun Yat-sen, had advocated, and constitutes the essence of the principle of people's livelihood." Ho Jo-hui, "Chung-kuo ching-chi," p. 5. See also the reference to Sun's plan for railway construction in Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," p. 16.

both a plentiful labor supply and a large domestic market, and an abundance of raw materials. According to a survey in 1921, China ranked first among the Asian nations in iron, with a reserve equivalent to that of industrial England. China ranked third among the world's nations in coal, preceded only by the United States and Canada. As for hydroelectric power, China ranked fourth in the world, with a substantial portion of the world's water supply.⁹⁸ Given these endowments, the Renaissance ideologues were confident that with the "aid of the real strength of the government," China would become industrialized.⁹⁹

On the issue of how China was to industrialize her economy the ideologues were unequivocal in their repudiation of industrialization via the mode of capitalism. In the judgment of Ho Jo-hui, the capitalist mode of economic development had to be rejected because it is intrinsically flawed, both in its production and distribution. Since capitalism produces only for profit, the needs of the consumers are neglected, resulting in the over- and under-production of goods and supplies. Capitalism is also characterized by an inequitable distribution of its gains. Since it is erected on the principle of the private ownership of property, profits are monopolized by the capitalists, while the workers are "oppressed and exploited." Thus, the rich become richer, while the poor workers become increasingly impoverished. This growing "alienation" between the proletariat and the capitalists must inevitably result in the "greatest evil of capitalism": class war. Given these "evils" of capitalism, it would be the "height of folly" for China to follow in the footsteps of the imperialist powers.¹⁰⁰

Folly aside, the Renaissance ideologues believed that China could not develop capitalism even if she wanted to. They argued that international imperialism was determined to maintain its "grip" on China. This grip would never be loosened sufficiently for China to develop her economy through the slow and gradual accumulation of private capital. For when capitalism had reached its highest stage of development, it had long abandoned the economy of *laissez faire*. Instead, capitalist production had taken the "monopolistic" form of trusts and syndicates, with their huge concentrations of capital, their gigantic scale, and their resultant capability to minimize both costs and expenditures. Confronted with these formidable competitors, the small entrepreneurs of China were doomed to failure. Under these conditions the capitalist class of China

⁹⁸ Pai Yü, "Chung-kuo min-tsu mien-chih kung-yeh," p. 14.

⁹⁹ Li Ping-jo, "Min-kuo erh-shih-wu nien," p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ Ho Jo-hui, "Chung-kuo ching-chi," pp. 2-3.

could not possibly develop, nor could China become capitalist. And since "China had neither the need nor the opportunity for capitalism," then "the only possible mode for her economic development must be a non-capitalist one."¹⁰¹

What was this non-capitalist mode of economic development? For Shu I-fan and Tung Hsiu-chia it was a "controlled economy" (*t'ung-chih ching-chi*).¹⁰² For Ho Jo-hui it was a "national capitalism" (*min-tsu tzu-pen*).¹⁰³ Both terms were expressions of the same idea, namely, the economic development of China through a combination of "state capital" (*kuo-chia tzu-pen*) and private capital.¹⁰⁴

In the new economic system of national capitalism, the state would use its considerable power and resources to accumulate the capital needed for "large-scale production." Enterprises requiring huge capital investments and having a crucial and determinate role in industrialization would be undertaken by the state. These would include the establishment of a national transport system, hydroelectric power, mining, machine production, and heavy industries. The state must also shoulder those tasks only it could undertake, for example, the reform of the monetary and banking system. Giving the state the dominant role in the industrialization of China, however, would not mean abolishing private property. Those enterprises that the state either "need not undertake" or "[found] itself unable to take on because of inadequate resources" would be the domain for private capital initiative and investment, provided that these investments were not injurious to the public interest. Nevertheless, to prevent the "development of small capitalists into big capitalists," private capital would remain limited and restricted. Thus, it is the combination of state and private capital that makes for an economy of "national capitalism."¹⁰⁵

In the judgment of the Renaissance ideologues, the state needed first to establish a national transport infrastructure: building railways, roads, and canals and opening harbors and rivers. For "not only is transportation crucial in the opening of resources and the development of the economy . . . , it is also important for political, military, and cultural affairs."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

¹⁰² Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," p. 17; Tung Hsiu-chia, "Chin-hou ju-ho chien-she," p. 28.

¹⁰³ Ho Jo-hui, "Chung-kuo ching-chi," p. 7.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 4, 7.

¹⁰⁶ Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," p. 16.

According to Shu I-fan, a national railway network was essential to China's military defense. China had only one mile of railway for every 47,000 people, a totally inadequate ratio for a country of its size and population. A journey from the interior to the borders took at least eighty days. At the same time, the colonial powers on China's borders—Britain, France, Russia, Japan—were well equipped with railroads in India and Tibet, Annam and Siam, Siberia and China's northeastern provinces in Manchuria. Thus, in the event of an aggression, the Chinese military would still be en route while China's territories would already be occupied.¹⁰⁷

Industrialization and development also required construction of a national transport system. According to Ho Jo-hui, China's industries and agriculture depended on such an infrastructure for the transport of raw materials and supplies as well as their products. The development of China's heavy industries—of iron and steel, and cement—was contingent on the availability of hydroelectric power.¹⁰⁸ In effect, infrastructural development was a precondition for the effective development of China's heavy and light industries.

In the case of the heavy industries, the highest priority must be accorded to the manufacturing of machinery since it is "the mother of all industries." In the judgment of Tung Hsiu-chia such manufacturing should be the province of the state since a machinery industry "requires not only a substantial capital investment but also skilled experts and excellent facilities so that quality machinery can be manufactured." Private individuals, hampered by limited capital resources, would economize on technology and facilities, producing machinery inferior to that produced by the industrial powers. As a result, China's industries would have to resort to foreign imports, a practice that would be "detrimental to the vested interests of China."¹⁰⁹

To conduct these "large-scale productions," huge capital reserves would have to be accumulated, a monumental task only the state could assume. Under the aegis of the state, domestic capital would be "concentrated."¹¹⁰ The ideologues argued that a good part of this capital could be derived from the savings resulting from the reform of government bureaucracies. Institutions and organizations could be streamlined and amalgamated; superfluous staff could be eliminated.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ho Jo-hui, "Chung-kuo ching-chi," p. 7.

¹⁰⁹ Tung Hsiu-chia, "Chin-hou ju-ho chien-she," p. 28.

¹¹⁰ Ho Jo-hui, "Chung-kuo ching-chi," p. 5.

Overall, the machinery of government could be “tightened,” and with the effective coordination and enforcement of taxation, the national treasury would be expanded.¹¹¹ Additional capital could be procured from foreign sources. Unlike the contemporary neo-Marxist dependency theorists, the Renaissance ideologues believed that China could thoroughly exploit the “surplus capital” of the imperialist powers without incurring detrimental effects on its economic system. Two conditions, however, had to obtain for the harmless employment of foreign capital. First, China had to be politically integrated and unified.¹¹² Then, with the strength of a government fortified with the support and allegiance of an integrated nation, the second condition could be secured: the import of foreign capital into China under “terms of reason and equity” (*ho-li t'iao-chien*).¹¹³

National capitalism would also mean the “socialization of the means and technology of production.” Ownership of the means of production—raw materials, factories, machines, and capital—would be public, and the goals of production would be the public interest rather than private gains. The state would devise “total” economic plans, establishing production priorities in accordance with the needs of society. Production would be systematized and rationalized.¹¹⁴ The most advanced technology would be imported from the industrialized nations, foreign experts would be consulted, and technological cooperation and coproduction would be encouraged.¹¹⁵

As for China's light industries, the Renaissance ideologues believed that, because of their number and variety, the state should leave these largely to private ventures while “aiding” and “promoting” them through a policy of “state control.”¹¹⁶ In the case of the three largest light industries—textile, silk, and flour—the ideologues advocated certain immediate ameliorative measures, to be shared by both industry and government. Members of all three industries should unite and form trade associations. These “united associations” (*lien-ho hui*) would seek to accomplish certain tasks on behalf of the individual entrepreneurs. They would (1) request a reduction in taxation on raw materials such as wheat and cotton and on their processed or semiprocessed products; (2) ask for

¹¹¹ Shu I-fan, “Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan,” p. 17.

¹¹² Pai Yü, “Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo,” p. 7.

¹¹³ Li Ping-jo, “Min-kuo erh-shih-wu nien,” p. 18.

¹¹⁴ Ho Jo-hui, “Chung-kuo ching-chi,” pp. 4–5.

¹¹⁵ Pai Yü, “Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo,” p. 7.

¹¹⁶ Tung Hsiu-chia, “Chin-hou ju-ho chien-she,” p. 28.

supplementary capital investment from the state for their larger factories while promoting mergers of the smaller, weaker factories with the larger ones, thus minimizing the destructive and wasteful competition within the domestic industries; (3) employ experts, foreign if necessary, to suggest improvements in management and facilities; (4) ask the government to raise tariff duties on their foreign competitors, such as synthetic silk and flour imports; (5) seek a reduction in interest on bank loans by asking the Central Bank of China to decrease interest rates to 5 *li*¹¹⁷; (6) establish a code of business ethics for self-policing the business operations and product quality of the members; and (7) serve as arbitrator in disputes between member entrepreneurs.¹¹⁸

The government's role in all this would be that of a facilitator. Not only would it reduce the taxes on domestic products while increasing the duties on foreign imports; the state would also help to effect increases in the sale of domestic goods by promoting "buy Chinese" campaigns.¹¹⁹ Not only would it supplement the capital of the larger factories; the state would also aid these industries by increasing the production of cotton, wheat, and silk through improvements in irrigation and flood control and the development of enhanced seeds and crops. The state could also help to reduce transport costs by constructing an efficient national network of railways, roadways, and waterways. Lastly, where the industry associations were unsuccessful and ineffective, the state, with its greater power and persuasion, would serve as their surrogate.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Since one *li* equals 1/1000 of an ounce of silver, 5 *li* would be 1/200 of an ounce of silver. The interest rate on bank loans for Chinese entrepreneurs was between 9 and 10 *li*. The rate for Japanese entrepreneurs in China, however, was only 2 to 3 *li*. See Tung Hsiu-chia, "Chin-hou ju-ho chien-she," p. 22. Such a reduction would presuppose a considerable reserve on the part of the Central Bank, which could be accumulated only if the state undertook a monetary and banking reform.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹¹⁹ The government-sponsored "buy Chinese" campaign is a much neglected part of scholarly treatments of the New Life Movement of the 1930s. Since the Chinese government could not yet negotiate an end to the unequal treaties that wrested control over tariffs from the Chinese (this would come about during World War II), Japanese cotton textile imports in China continued to be a formidable competitor for the domestic mills. The combination of lower prices (in part due to low tariff rates), better quality, and greater variety in color and design made the Japanese imports much more attractive to the Chinese consumer. And thus, the Chinese government resorted to a campaign to promote and encourage the wearing of "*yin-tang shih-lin pu*"—the domestically produced, coarse, indigo-blue cotton cloth.

¹²⁰ Tung Hsiu-chia, "Chin-hou ju-ho chien-she," pp. 27–28.

Through these reform measures undertaken by the industries concerned, and particularly through an activist state policy of a "controlled economy," the light industries of China could increase their capital, reduce expenditures, improve facilities and management, and produce products of quality that would be competitive with foreign imports.

PROGRAM PREREQUISITES

This, then, was the Renaissance program for the economic development of China. For the agricultural sector, the ideologues of the Chinese Renaissance Movement advocated, minimally, Sun Yat-sen's proposal for the equalization of land rights. Maximally, the existing system of land tenure would be abolished, to be replaced by state collectivization. For the industrial sector, the ideologues advocated a new economic structure of national capitalism, whereby the heavy industries would be the domain of the state, while private capital would operate the light industries. In all this the state was to assume a pivotal role. The development of even the light industries, which would be primarily private ventures, would be largely dependent on the facilitating ministrations of the state.

Such a program of economic development assumes certain indispensable prerequisites: political unification, national integration, and a strong and effective government. There can be no better expression of this than the words of the ideologue Pai Yü.

[T]he restoration of the agrarian economy requires the precondition of a unified government. . . . An *ex parte* agricultural restoration. . . while neglecting the development of industry, could only result in China serving as the source of agricultural raw materials for the imperialist powers. Not only would this be detrimental to our overall economic interests, in the event of a reduction in the overseas market or the monopoly of prices by the imperialists, our agriculture would be exposed and vulnerable. . . . The restoration of the agrarian economy must therefore be co-extensive with the total development of the Chinese economy. . . . To do so, the warlords—remnants of feudalism and obstacles to development—must be expunged. It is only then that the political barriers to a national transport network could be removed, and the practice of forced taxation suppressed. These will only come about when the Chinese government is truly integrated.¹²¹

The Renaissance ideologues thus believed that the industrialization and agricultural development of China necessitated the completion of certain preliminary tasks: political unification and national integration. Their

¹²¹ Pai Yü, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo," p. 7.

proposals for the attainment of these tasks constituted their program for the political development of China.

V

The Ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Movement: The Political Development of China

One of the great paradoxes of political development is that newly formed governments...are typically faced with the severest loads...Where the demand for participation and distribution materializes before the prior crises of legitimacy and national integration have been laid reasonably to rest, great instabilities are introduced into the political system and extreme solutions are, more often than not, resorted to by the groups or parties in power.¹

In his book *The Abortive Revolution* Lloyd Eastman avers that "there is no single form or simple definition of fascism." As a political ideology, fascism "has historically proven to be attractive to widely disparate social groups in widely diverse societies."² Eastman's case for the fascism of the "Blue Shirt Society," consequently, depends almost exclusively on what he took to be the ideological traits shared by the "Blue Shirts" and the other fascist movements. In Eastman's judgment, since the political program of the "Blue Shirts" emphasized the primacy of nationalism, the state, and the leader, and advocated one-party rule, totalitarian controls, and the rejection of democracy, the society should be characterized as fascist. Few things in life, however, are this unequivocal. An alternate interpretation is available. In fact, one can persuasively argue that, rather than being indicative of an affinity for fascism, the presence of these traits

¹ Myron Weiner and Joseph LaPalombara, "The Impact of Parties on Political Development," in Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, eds., *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University, 1969), pp. 427-428.

² Lloyd Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution: China Under Nationalist Rule, 1927-1937* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1974), p. 80.

in the ideology of the Renaissance Movement can be satisfactorily explained through a recourse to the concept of political development. The emphasis on nationalism may indicate a concern for national integration. The touting of the charismatic leader may serve elite-mass integration. One-party rule and the rejection of democracy might be functional expedients in the service of value integration and political institutionalization. In effect, a case can be made for interpreting the ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Movement as a program for the political development of China.

The Concept of Political Development

As with most of the language employed in the social sciences, there is no consensus on the meaning of the concept of political development. As early as 1965 Lucian Pye noted that although the importance of understanding the nature of political development is generally accepted, the use of the term, nevertheless, suffers from "considerable ambiguity and imprecision."³

What was true in 1965 is no less true today. Although Pye was able to discern, from its usage, ten different meanings of political development, at least some of these meanings may be subsumed under a few more inclusive definitions. Two definitions, in particular, seem to be dominant in the literature. The first defines political development as the building of a nation-state. Political development is thus "the process by which communities that are nation-states only in form and by international courtesy become nation-states in reality."⁴ The second understands political development to entail the balanced achievement of the dual task of political participation and political institutionalization. Political development, according to this definition, "involves the creation of political institutions sufficiently adaptable, complex, autonomous, and coherent to absorb and to order the participation of... new groups and to promote social and economic change in the society."⁵

Although these two definitions are the most representative of the various meanings of political development, in the case of the Chinese Renaissance Movement certain prior considerations seem to be in order.

³ Lucian W. Pye, "The Concept of Political Development," in Jason L. Finkle and Richard W. Gable, eds., *Political Development and Social Change* (New York: John Wiley, 1971), p. 43.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University, 1972), p. 266.

As Myron Weiner once noted, “‘Nation-building’...presumes the prior existence of a state in control of a specified...internationally recognized...territory.”⁶ This is to say that before political development, as nation-building or as political institutionalization and participation, becomes a concern, the precondition of “the existence of central authority with the capacity to control a given territory”⁷ necessarily recommends itself. In effect, territorial integration precedes political development. The Renaissance ideologues said as much. According to Liu Ping-li, “Emulating the achievements of Western civilization is not a simple matter. It requires, as a precondition, territorial unification and the restoration of peace and stability...It is only when the nation is unified... that we can speak of other forms of reconstruction.”⁸

Weiner’s analytic framework seems to be the most useful for understanding the political ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Movement as a program for political development. According to Weiner,

When we speak of political development,...we are concerned, first, with the expanding functions of the political system, secondly, with the new level of integration thereby required to carry out these functions, and finally, with the capacity of the political system to cope with these new problems of integration.⁹

Political development can thus be understood as the capacity of the political system to accomplish certain tasks of integration. These are:

1. Territorial integration: “the integration of political units into a common territorial framework with a government which can exercise...objective control...over the entire territory under its claimed jurisdiction.”
2. National integration: “the integration of diverse and discrete cultural loyalties and the development of a sense of nationality.”
3. Value integration: “the minimum value consensus necessary to maintain a social order.”
4. Elite-mass integration: “the integration of the rulers and the ruled... [T]hose who are governed accept the right of the governors to govern” and are “readily available for mobilization by the govern-

⁶ Myron Weiner, “Political Integration and Political Development,” in Finkle and Gable, *Political Development*, p. 648.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Liu Ping-li, “Chung-kuo min-tsu tzu-chiu yün-tung chih fa-tuan” [The beginning of the Chinese national self-help movement], *Ch’ien-t’u* [hereafter cited as *CT*], 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 4.

⁹ Weiner, “Political Integration,” p. 645.

ment” while “those who govern are accessible to influence by those who are governed.”¹⁰

The analytic framework offered by these four tasks of integration seem to incorporate both of the popular definitions for political development. Political development as nation-building seems to be contained within the tasks of territorial and national integration, while the definition of political development as institutionalization and participation seems to be addressed by the remaining tasks of value and elite-mass integration.

The Renaissance Program for the Political Development of China

TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION

Among the various competing definitions of political development, one of the simplest is that which conceives it as being the political prerequisite of economic development. Political development is thus that “state of the polity which might facilitate economic growth.”¹¹ Although this definition, as Lucian Pye indicated, is flawed by its gross imprecision as to specifically how a political system may facilitate or impede economic growth, a case nevertheless can be made, albeit circumscribed.

Restated in a limited and less ambitious form, political development may be conceived of as being the political prerequisite of economic development if it is understood as territorial integration, that is, “the objective control which central authority has over the entire territory under its claimed jurisdiction.”¹² To say that for a people mired in internal warfare between the government, on the one hand, and the assorted warlords and a rival Communist government, on the other, significant economic growth and development can come about only through territorial integration is not implausible. In the case of China in the 1930s, precisely such a course was recommended.

For the ideologues of the Renaissance Society, the Revolution of 1911 had produced a nation in name only. In the words of Feng K’o-fa,

After the change of reign to a Republic, China was declared to be unified. In reality, however, the provinces had but a formal attachment to the central government and rendered it only their outward allegiance. Few provinces forwarded their tax revenues to

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 644–645, 650–652. Weiner’s definitions for “value integration” and “elite-mass integration” have been integrated by this author in the interest of analytic clarity.

¹¹ Pye, “The Concept of Political Development,” p. 43.

¹² Weiner, “Political Integration,” p. 644.

the center.... As a result, the center's revenue sources were limited to only those provinces over which it exercised real authority. For the rest, the government had to rely on bond issues and foreign loans.¹³

Such a condition could only impede efforts toward economic development. One example was infrastructural development. As one Renaissance ideologue pointed out, the construction of a water system alone, as in the case of the regulation of the Yangtze River, was impeded by the lack of territorial integration since the river traversed several provinces. "Without the political integration of these provinces, how can the work of regulation be put into operation?"¹⁴

Another example was the cotton industry. In a statement at its annual meeting in April 1933, the United Association of Chinese Cotton Mills enumerated the difficulties afflicting Chinese cotton entrepreneurs. One of these was the burden imposed by heavy taxation. Much of this was due to the flagrant violation of the government's law on tax and duties, which had specified that cotton products would not be subject to taxes other than the tax exacted by the central government. In clear defiance of this law, "special taxes" were arbitrarily imposed on cotton goods by the provinces.¹⁵ Such conditions prompted Pai Yü to conclude that "this arbitrary taxation by the local governments," which constituted "the single greatest obstacle to economic development," was entirely due to "the inability of the center to exert its authority." "Unless the authority of the central government is fortified," he continued, "it is pointless to even discuss a reduction in taxation."¹⁶

What was preventing the territorial integration of China? And why was the Nanking government unable to exercise authority?

THE IMPEDIMENTS TO TERRITORIAL INTEGRATION

The Warlords. In the judgment of the Renaissance ideologues, the warlords constituted one of the groups that must bear primary responsibility for China's political situation. The ideologues believed that

¹³ Feng K'o-fa, "Chung-Mei mien-mai ta chieh-k'uan ti fen-hsi" [An analysis of the huge Sino-American cotton and wheat loan], *CT* 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 2.

¹⁴ Li, "Chi-shu ho-tso" [Technological cooperation], *CT* 1, no. 8 (1 August 1933): 2.

¹⁵ For example, in the winter of 1931 the province of Hunan levied a tax of six yuan on every bag of cotton yarn. Cities were no exception. In the autumn of 1931 Changsha levied a special tax on cotton cloth for the construction of dikes. Pai Yü, "Chung-kuo min-tsu mien-chih kung-yeh shu-lun" [On China's national textile industry], *CT* 1, no. 6 (1 June 1933): 12.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

it was the warlords' "interference in politics" that accounted for the "political unrest, the increase in human misery, and the general inability of government to proceed with unification and economic construction."¹⁷ In this belief the ideologues were not unique or even unusual. Indeed, their characterization of the warlords as China's "bane" and "the people's enemy" merely reflected the public opinion of their time.

The ideologues were convinced that the warlords had, directly and indirectly, contributed to the impoverishment of China and obstructed the development of its economy. Directly, the warlords had impoverished the people with oppressive taxes, extortions, and forced conscriptions into their armies. They had inflicted damage on the national economy by their massive foreign loans and their profligate issuance of paper currency.¹⁸ Indirectly, the warlords, by wresting control of the provinces from the center, effectively thwarted any meaningful effort at economic construction. Their continuous battles against government forces had drained the resources of Nanking. Much needed government resources were squandered in military campaigns instead of being invested in development projects.¹⁹

The indirect costs that the warlords had imposed on China's economy were especially striking. According to Lu I-yüan, in the twelve years from 1916 to 1928 the military expenditure of the Nationalist government, necessitated by the constant skirmishes with one warlord after another, increased by as much as eight times. Foreign loans provided for part of these military expenses. Of an estimated national total foreign debt of 3.25 billion dollars, 1.55 billion was spent on the military. The remaining 1.70 billion had ostensibly been set aside for the development of a transportation system. In reality, however, only half of this 1.70 billion was so employed. Thus, only 27 percent of China's foreign loans had actually been spent on economic development.²⁰

A second source for the massive military expenditure was domestic debt. In a report on government income for the year 1929, Sung Tzuwen, the Nanking government's Minister of Finance, concluded that "the Republican government is totally dependent on the public debt for its

¹⁷ Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi chi wo-men chin-hou chih jen-wu" [The crisis of the Chinese people and our mission from now on], part 2, *CT* 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 1.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁹ Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan chih p'o-ch'ieh yü Chung-kuo ying-yu chih chun-pei" [The coming Second World War and China's necessary preparations], *CT* 2, no. 10 (1 October 1934): 12.

²⁰ Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi," part 2, p. 3.

livelihood.” Military expenses consumed some 49 percent of this public debt, while 37.5 percent went for the repayment of loans and 12.9 percent was spent on administration. According to Sung, not a single penny of this public debt was allocated for cultural, social, or economic purposes.²¹

Tax revenues constituted yet another major source for the financing of the military campaigns. In this, both Nanking and the various warlord “governments” displayed maximum creativity in the number and variety of taxes they imposed on the people. There were taxes on farm land and on land for the cultivation of opium. Taxes were levied on salt, kerosene, transit, agricultural products, contracts, alcohol, advertisements, fertilizers, businesses, stamps, and tinfoil. Additionally, there were supplementary taxes attached to each item. In the case of salt alone, supplementary taxes reached a staggering total of 299 separate duties.²²

And as military expenses grew, so did the taxation. For example, between 1911 and 1928 the full tax on land increased by 39.3 percent. By the late 1920s this panoply of taxes had become truly burdensome. The consumers, of course, were the most exploited since, as Sung Tzu-wen reported, Nanking’s tax revenue was largely derived from the tax on such everyday consumer items as salt, tobacco, alcohol, stamps, and flour. The tax burden thus fell disproportionately on those who could least afford it.²³

The problems posed by the warlords, then, went beyond those of territorial disunity and a government incapable of exercising national authority. The proliferation of warlords in China exacted also incalculable costs, both direct and indirect, on the nation. Precious government resources were channeled into military campaigns instead of into economic development. As military expenditure grew, Nanking found itself deeper and deeper in debt. And as Nanking and the warlords found themselves increasingly in arrears, they turned to the people, the innocent bystanders, burdening them with increasingly oppressive taxation.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Another impediment to the territorial unification of China was the Chinese Communists. In the

²¹ As cited in *ibid.*, p. 4.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 5.

²³ *Ibid.* For instance, for 1926 it amounted to 30 percent to 40 percent of the peasants’ total annual expenses. In the case of kerosene, in 1928 Nanking levied a “special tax” of five cents per gallon, equivalent to more than 26 percent of its retail value. This was in addition to the import and supplementary taxes on kerosene, imposed in 1924, which amounted to 5 percent and 2.5 percent of its value. There are other examples. In the province of Chihhi the tax on cotton was 17 percent of its retail value. In Kiangsu both silk and tobacco carried a tax which amounted to 68 percent of their retail value.

judgment of Lu I-yüan, the Communists constituted one of four “great threats” to the well-being of China, ranking only after imperialism, the “greatest enemy” of the Chinese, in their destructive effects.²⁴

The Renaissance ideologues were only too aware of the growing power of the CCP. In their judgment, the Communist party “[could] not be compared with... the political organizations and parties of the past,” which it had surpassed. With its superior organization and meticulous planning and its demonstrated ability to foment discord and divisiveness within the government and the military, and, most significantly, by the scope of its ambitions, the CCP had made fully evident the dangers it posed to the Nanking regime.²⁵

Of the many strengths of this new political party, the Renaissance ideologues recognized that two in particular constituted formidable challenges to the Kuomintang regime. The first was party organization. In *The Road to Regenerating the Chinese Revolution*, Liu Chien-ch'ün candidly acknowledged that the Kuomintang was not the CCP's equal where party discipline and organization were concerned. It was the Communists' ability to erect and maintain a “strong and unyielding” party organization that accounted for their considerable potential for disruption and agitation.²⁶

The second major strength of the CCP stemmed from its adroit exploitation of the agrarian problem. The Renaissance ideologues believed that the Communist appeal in the agrarian sector was, as in the case of their superiority in party organization, more a result of the failures and weaknesses of the Kuomintang than the actual strengths of the CCP. According to Yen Hsi-shan, a high-level provincial official in Shansi, the Kuomintang, through its inaction in land reform, had created a dangerous “time-bomb” for China and “an enormous vacuum for the CCP.”²⁷ In effect, the Kuomintang had made it possible for the Communists to coopt the agrarian revolution.

The Renaissance ideologues recognized that the continual existence of the CCP, Nanking's “bandit extirpation” campaigns notwithstanding,

²⁴ The other three are imperialism, warlords, and a third danger comprising compradores, corrupt officials, and gentry. Lu I-yüan, “Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi chi wo-men chin-hou chih jen-wu” [The crisis of the Chinese people and our mission from now on], part 1, *CT* 1, no. 6 (1 June 1933): 11.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

²⁶ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming chih lu* [The road to regenerating the Chinese revolution], (Nanking: Chung-kuo wen-hua hsüeh-hui, 1934), p. 82.

²⁷ As cited by Sun Ch'un-ning, “T'u-ti kung-yu chih-tu chih shang-ch'üeh” [On a policy of the collective ownership of land], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 89.

was indicative of “a substantial social base” comprising unemployed workers, the intelligentsia, and landless peasants.²⁸ Of these, one Renaissance ideologue found that the agricultural renters and laborers were particularly susceptible to the CCP’s appeals and accounted for many of the Red Army’s recruits. In the face of Nanking’s paralysis in reducing land rent and its irrational policy of exacting land tax from the renters rather than the landlords, the professed land reform policy of the CCP could only become increasingly attractive.²⁹

This recognition that the Kuomintang had inadvertently allowed the CCP to coopt the agrarian issue was all the more distressing to the Renaissance Society since it found the ideology and program of the Communists to be so objectionable. To begin with, the Renaissance ideologues harbored genuine skepticism regarding the ideological sophistication and authenticity of the Chinese Communist party. In a speech delivered in August 1934, Liu Chien-ch’ün anticipated much of contemporary academia’s skepticism concerning the Marxist credentials of the Communist revolution and regime on the mainland when he said, “There are a great many Communist party members in China. But how many [of these so-called disciples of Marxism] have actually read *Das Kapital*? How many of these know whether the Soviet Union is indeed practicing Marxism? How many have even considered whether the Soviet system is actually appropriate for China?”³⁰

The authenticity of their Marxist credentials aside, what the Renaissance ideologues found most objectionable in the Chinese Communist program was its advocacy of a class revolution in China. For Liu Chien-ch’ün such an advocacy betrayed an incredible naiveté and an ignorance of both Marxism and the contemporary world. Liu believed that the Marxist diagnosis of the trend of world history was completely mistaken. Rather than a world of “class against class,” Liu believed that the twentieth century was one of “nation against nation.” World War I provided a striking confirmation of this thesis when the workers of the world who, according to classical Marxism, had no fatherland, instead found their respective nationalism with a vengeance. At the same time, nationalism, rather than retreating in the inexorable tides of history, was rife in the colonies. All of this, in Liu’s judgment, provided “ample evidence of the emptiness of Marx’s predictions.”³¹

²⁸ Lu I-yüan, “Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi,” part 1, p. 12.

²⁹ Chou Fang, “Keng-che yu ch’i-fu” [Tax to the tillers], *CT* 1, no. 9 (1 September 1933): 5.

³⁰ Liu Chien-ch’ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 38.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

In the case of the Soviet Union, the evidence was even more compelling. The very success of the October Revolution in a predominantly agrarian country constituted "a direct refutation of [classical] Marxism." In its behavior, moreover, the Soviet Union had repeatedly belied its professed beliefs. As one ideologue put it, "Had not its national interest dominated all of its revolutionary activities?" This was only too apparent in the case of Sino-Soviet relations. "When the Russians sell us kerosene and textiles, have they ever given preferential treatment to our workers and peasants?" And "if the Chinese proletariat should organize to effect the requisition of the Trans-Siberian Railway, will the Soviet Union acquiesce?" According to the Renaissance ideologues, Marxism was being used by the Soviet Union as Confucianism had been used by the Chinese emperors—to maintain political rule. Marx was being used by "the new emperors" of Russia to elevate the Soviet Union to the leadership of the world revolution. "Marxism in Russia is merely a shop-sign" to gull the innocent.³²

For Pai Yü and Lu I-yüan the CCP's strategy of a class revolution in China seemed, at best, to be based on an entirely erroneous understanding of the class dynamics in Chinese society. To begin with, Lu I-yüan believed that the seeming existence of classes in China was itself an illusion. Since international imperialism had impeded the growth of the Chinese economy, the various constituents of the Chinese economic system were "all arrested at the same level of development." Whatever differences there were among the classes were, thus, neither "critical nor acute." For a society such as China, then, whose economy remained "infantile," the classes must eschew class struggle and work instead in unison toward the development of the entire economy.³³

To Pai Yü, the CCP's mobilization of peasants in its class revolution constituted a direct challenge to classical Marxism. In a society "that has not yet achieved communism, the peasants remain the class of the small capitalists... and are actually in opposition to the proletarian class, the constituents of the Communist party." Displaying a remarkable prescience of the events of the 1950s on the mainland, Pai Yü judged the appeals of the CCP's land redistribution program to be a "deception" that would ultimately be "unmasked." Sooner or later, in his judgment, the inherent contradictions between the peasants and the Communists would escalate into a "life and death struggle." "The skeptics [needed] only to consult the recent history of the Soviet Union for confirmation."³⁴

³² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³³ Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi," part 1, p. 11.

³⁴ Pai Yü, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo nung-ts'un shuai-lo yü fu-hsing ti hsien-chüeh

But above all else, the Chinese Communist advocacy of a class revolution was rejected because it endangered national unity and survival. Lu I-Yüan spoke for the Renaissance Movement when he thus indicted the Communists:

The Communist party is oblivious to the gravity of our national situation....It asks not if communism is suitable for China but, instead, relies exclusively on class struggle as its instrument for provoking riots and insurrections in order to usurp political power and install a Soviet government. In effect, we are being used as subjects in an experiment in communism....The Communist party knows only of classes but not of the nation. It is concerned only with class interests and remains oblivious to the perils of the nation.³⁵

When a nation is increasingly subjected to the partitioning and incursions of imperialist powers, its very survival is in question. In the judgment of the ideologues, to engage in class warfare at such a time constituted "a sure path to national and racial extinction,"³⁶ for, in the final analysis, "when the nation itself is extinct, classes, too, will not live."³⁷

Objectionable though the Communists might be, however, the Renaissance ideologues found that it was the Kuomintang that bore ultimate responsibility, for it was the failures of the Kuomintang that had made the persistence of a Chinese Communist party possible. Liu Chien-ch'ün admitted that

we must recognize that the Communist problem is really our problem. Even if the Third International were to command the CCP to cease its activities today, China's bandit affliction would not disappear. But if we are able to systematically revivify the agrarian economy, enabling the ordinary peasant to achieve a stable minimum standard of living, I believe that...even if Stalin himself were to come to China to personally lead the Communists, he would not be able to win the following of our farmers.³⁸

Thus, the Renaissance ideologues were convinced that the resolution of the Communist problem would depend not only on the military and political extirpation of the Communist party but also on the "resolution of the problem of the livelihood of the people, the disposition of the jobless and the landless.... Ultimately, therefore, the resolution of the problem of

wen-t'i" [The abnormal decay of the Chinese countryside and the priority issue in its revival], *CT* 1, no. 9 (1 September 1933): 8-9.

³⁵ Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi," part 1, p. 11.

³⁶ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 11.

³⁷ Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi," part 1, p. 11.

³⁸ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 32.

livelihood relies on the development of the economy of China.”³⁹

Imperialism. Although the warlords and the CCP were major forces standing in the way of the territorial integration of China, the Renaissance ideologues believed that neither could be as formidable an obstacle as international imperialism, China’s “greatest enemy,”⁴⁰ for it was imperialism that made possible the existence and prospering of both the warlords and the Communists.

According to Ch’en Hsüan, international imperialism had moved to a higher stage of development. He believed that “when the economic foundations of imperialism” in the underdeveloped society “have become firm and stabilized, it will then seek . . . through political means . . . to make its invasive presence a permanent one.” This extension of the political power of imperialism was typically achieved by “exploiting” the “weaknesses” of the host society; in the case of China this included unequal treaties and “collusions” with warlords. Imperialism was no longer primarily economic in character but had taken on a new, political form.⁴¹

Under the guise of its new pernicious form, imperialism labored to keep its host society splintered and disunified. For should the underdeveloped nation achieve true political unity, it might proceed to develop its economy, thereby depriving imperialism of its foreign market. Thus, to “preserve [its] markets,” imperialism must impede the political unification and territorial integration of the host societies.⁴² As a consequence, imperialism was ultimately responsible for the phenomena of warlords and Communists in China.

Indirectly, imperialism gave birth to the warlords when it usurped control over China’s tariffs and customs from the central government. The loss of tariff control meant also the loss of control over a major source of government revenue: tariffs and the salt tax. As a result of this (and of the huge war indemnities exacted by the unequal treaties), the Chinese government became increasingly insolvent. The government found itself unable to maintain the provincial armies, “a major factor leading to the formation of the warlords.”⁴³

³⁹ Lu I-yüan, “Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi,” part 1, p. 12.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴¹ Ch’en Hsüan, “Wu san-shih shih-chien yü min-tsu k’ang-cheng” [The May 30th incident and national resistance], *CT* 1, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 3.

⁴² Pai Yü, “Fei-ch’ang-t’ai ti Chung-kuo,” p. 6.

⁴³ Lu I-yüan, “Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi,” part 2, p. 6.

For the rise of the warlords Lu I-yüan held the imperialist powers directly responsible as well. Once formed, the warlords enjoyed the active and direct assistance of the imperialists. Through the extension of loans,⁴⁴ the imperialist powers “nurtured and supported” warlord against warlord in the hope of extending their “spheres of influence” into the territories of defeated warlords, thereby “expanding the markets” for their products.⁴⁵ Thus, imperialism was “the reason behind the continuing warlord affliction of the past twenty years in China. . . . In order to combat the warlords, therefore, we must, at the same time, oppose that which sustains them.”⁴⁶

The imperialists were also responsible for the persistence of the Chinese Communist party. It was imperialism’s disruption of the Chinese economy that, in the opinion of the Renaissance ideologues, “bankrupted the urban and rural economy.” Untold numbers of workers, peasants, and intellectuals found themselves bereft of land and work. “Having lost their place in society, it [was] inevitable that they became revolutionized, becoming available for the CCP’s mobilization.”⁴⁷

The Renaissance ideologues recognized that the extirpation of the Communists required the removal of their recruitment base. Past strategies had erred by relying exclusively on military and political solutions without attacking the problem at its source. Ultimately, therefore, the effective extirpation of the Communists could be achieved only through the economic development and revival of China.⁴⁸ China’s economic development, however, would have to await the satisfaction of the minimum precondition of territorial integration. For so long as warlords and the CCP remained to challenge and defy central rule, the government at Nanking would remain a government incapable of exercising authority over its domain. In the words of one ideologue,

No one denies that China must be unified. There are many roads to unity: economic, political, and military. All of these constitute solutions. . . . While it is true that the power of an economic solution is great, it is, however, slow and time-consuming. It is appropriate during times of normalcy, but not for unusual and extraordinary times [such as the China of today]. In extraordinary circumstances, political means should be used, and if necessary, military power. The success of the Russian Revolution, in large part, was due to the Red

⁴⁴ Pai Yü, “Fei-ch’ang-t’ai ti Chung-kuo,” p. 6.

⁴⁵ Lu I-yüan, “Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi,” part 2, p. 6.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Army; Turkey's renaissance to Kemal's military; and the success of Hitler's political movement to... his military organization. The chaos and paralysis that characterize China today are comparable to Russia and Turkey of ten years ago and Germany of the postwar period... For the swift and effective integration of China, we must, therefore, first resort to military means, and then, to political means... [I]n the past, we had attempted national unification through military power. The fact that China remains disunified does not reflect on the efficacy of a military solution. Rather, it is because our political methods had been ineffective, and the military power that was used was insufficient for the task.⁴⁹

NATIONAL INTEGRATION

Myron Weiner once noted that a useful distinction may be made between the state and the nation, with "the former referring to the existence of central authority with the capacity to control a given territory and the latter to the extent of subjective loyalty on the part of the population within that territory to the state."⁵⁰

Thus "unpacked," the concept of nation-state suggests that, minimally, two distinguishable processes must take place for a nation-state to be built. The first process, that of state-building, may be conceived of as territorial integration: the process whereby central authority exerts objective control over the territory under its claimed jurisdiction. In the case of China during the 1930s, state-building meant the extension of the authority of Nanking over China, effectively overriding challenges from warlords and the Communists. This authority may well be a purely coercive form of control: government understood as possessing monopoly over the exercise of violence.⁵¹ The building of a nation-state, however, requires the consent of the governed, a consent freely given that transcends what mere coercion could elicit. A nation-state thus entails a second process, that of nation-building: the process whereby the governed extend their subjective loyalty to the state. It is to this second process that the task of national integration is addressed.

National integration is defined by Weiner as "the integration of diverse and discrete cultural loyalties and the development of a sense of nationality."⁵² The process involves a fundamental and profound

⁴⁹ Jen [pseud.], "I chien-she ch'iu t'ung-i" [Unification through construction], in "Ch'ien t'u lun-t'an" [*The Future's* forum], *CT* 1, no. 8 (1 August 1933): 5.

⁵⁰ Weiner, "Political Integration," p. 648.

⁵¹ David Easton, *A Framework for Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 54.

⁵² Weiner, "Political Integration," p. 645.

alteration in loyalties. Loyalty to the state becomes superordinate to the loyalties to such traditional units as tribal, regional, ethnic, or linguistic groups.⁵³ National integration, in effect, is the creation of a new identity—nationalism—the absence of which, in the judgment of Eric Nordlinger, would “warp and weaken governmental institutions.” For without a sense of national identity, government would act “by itself and for itself,” becoming detached from society. It would degenerate into a means for “personal advancement and the furtherance of narrowly conceived group interests.”⁵⁴

The Renaissance ideologues believed that the lack of nationalism among the Chinese had exacted an even higher price. It had provoked the invasion of China by Japan. Indeed, one ideologue believed that the Japanese had found encouragement in a study of the Chinese national character, written by a Japanese, which concluded that “in general, most Chinese are motivated, not by altruism, but by selfishness. Few would sacrifice themselves for their country.”⁵⁵ In the judgment of the Renaissance ideologues, then, the survival of the Chinese depended on a reconstitution of the Chinese character. “Unless this vile nature [were] thoroughly eradicated, the Chinese need never aspire to the first rank.”⁵⁶

What was this “vile nature” of the Chinese? Why was nationalism so wanting in the Chinese?

The Renaissance ideologues saw the Chinese national character as one that encompassed the two extremes in a continuum. Rather than be animated by sentiments of nationalism, the Chinese were motivated by individualism, familism, and clanism, on the one hand, and by the utopian ideal of cosmopolitanism, on the other. Neither of these extremes was conducive to the development of nationalism.

The traditional culture of China had left a lasting legacy of familism and universalism. Regarding familism, Ju Ch’un-p’u believed that the traditional autocracy of family and clan elders became institutionalized because it so well served the interests of feudal rule. A feudal state would have little use for people as “free and independent” citizens with rights and obligations. What did serve the interests of the emperors was the

⁵³ Lester G. Seligman, “Elite Recruitment and Political Development,” in Finkle and Gable, *Political Development*, p. 242.

⁵⁴ Eric A. Nordlinger, “Political Development: Time Sequences and Rates of Change,” in Finkle and Gable, *Political Development*, p. 460.

⁵⁵ Tu-pien hsiu-fang, *Chung-kuo ti kuo-min hsing* [The national character of the Chinese], p. 73, as cited in Ch’iu Ch’un, “Chiao-yü yü Chung-hua min-tsu-hsing chih kai-tsao” [Education and the reform of the Chinese national character], *CT* 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 3.

⁵⁶ Ch’iu Ch’un, “Chiao-yü,” p. 4.

conception of the governed as subjects, bereft of an identity as autonomous individuals, to be disposed of at will in accordance with the dictates of the family collective. A feudal ruler, then, would have to actively discourage an ideology such as nationalism, which assumes that individuals, rather than groups, constitute the basic units of society, for it could only "sow the seeds of revolution."⁵⁷

As for cosmopolitanism, another legacy of the traditional culture, it too had worked to undermine nationalistic sentiments. Although the Confucian ideal of the universal brotherhood of men (*ta-t'ung*) was laudable, the Renaissance ideologues believed that the Chinese, in particular the intellectuals, held a premature and unhealthy fascination for this ideal, to the detriment of a much-needed concern for the national well-being and interests of the Chinese. In the words of Chiang Ch'i, "To speak of the disappearance of nations, at a time when the conditions for cosmopolitanism remain yet incomplete, amounts to mere daydreaming... The only path to *ta-t'ung* is through the attainment of national self-determination."⁵⁸

Burdened thus with the cultural legacy of the past, the Chinese, in the judgment of Hung T'ao, had been further handicapped by unwise borrowings from the West. Two, in particular, impeded the development of nationalism in the Chinese. These were individualism and materialism. Embracing these ethos, the Chinese had little regard for the public good or the national interest. Instead, "self-realization," individual "rights and freedoms," and "material pleasures" became their exclusive concerns.⁵⁹

For the Renaissance ideologues, these individualistic preoccupations rested upon an erroneous understanding of human nature. Agreeing with, and often quoting from, the American sociologist Hankins, Yao Pao-hsien believed human nature to be indisputably social, for the individual could not exist separate and apart from the group. Like the bee or the ant, man finds strength and viability only as a group. Each individual, when he realizes how much his survival is dependent on others, "naturally becomes profoundly aware of his need for the collective." "The love of the collective," then, is only the "natural manifestation of our deepest

⁵⁷ Ju Ch'un-p'u, "Fu-hsing min-tsu yü fa-lü kuan-hsi" [National renaissance and its relationship with law], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 45.

⁵⁸ Chiang Ch'i, "Chung-kuo Kuo-min-tang chih chuan-chi yü Chung-kuo ch'ien-t'u" [The turning point of the Chinese Nationalist Party and the future of China], part 2, *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 38.

⁵⁹ Hung T'ao, "Chung-kuo cheng-chih ssu-hsiang ti t'e-chih chi ch'i shih-tai hsü-yao" [The special characteristics of China's political thought and the needs of the times], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 58.

nature.”⁶⁰ According to Yao, nationalism was one form that this love for the collective might take. Yao believed that “love of the motherland” is a natural, though gradual, outgrowth of one’s love for smaller collectives, such as families and clans. “Our love of the land comes naturally from our veneration of the clan, tribe, and family.” Nationalism, then, is the natural outgrowth of certain “unifying factors”: geography and land, race, a common culture (which includes language, literature, art, religion, custom, and history), past trials and triumphs, and shared economic interests and cooperation. Of these unifying factors, one in particular acts as a sure catalyst for nationalism. “When one’s collective comes into contact with another, there then develops a feeling of group self-consciousness.” These nationalistic sentiments are particularly enhanced when the survival of the group is being threatened by another. And since the well-being of the individual is so entwined with his group’s survival, when the nation is in jeopardy, or “when the development and progress of the collective are impeded,” the nation has every right to impose controls or constraints on the individual in the interest of group survival.⁶¹

In China, where the natural development of nationalism had been stifled, the Renaissance ideologues believed that the state must assume the responsibility of actively inculcating a sense of nationalism in the Chinese. Education would be the primary medium for this inculcation. Past practices had not only failed to promote nationalism but had discouraged it. As one ideologue expressed it,

For some unfathomable reason, China’s educators had particularly devalued the history and geography of China. As a result, many students are familiar with Napoleon, but are ignorant of Chinese heroes like Yüeh Fei and Wen T’ien-hsiang. . . . It is as if the history and geography of China do not deserve study, while special attention should be paid to those of other countries. . . . This is an extremely unhealthy sign. If we are to arouse the patriotism of our students, we must first familiarize them with this country’s history and geography.⁶²

Believing that education should serve the national interest, the ideologues proposed that the state must determine the content of education.⁶³ Rather than emphasizing the family, the party, or a particular

⁶⁰ Yao Pao-hsien, “Min-tsu-hsing chih ch’i-yüan yü fa-chan” [The origin and development of national character], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 107.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 106–108.

⁶² Liu Ping-li, “Fei-ch’ang shih-ch’i ti chiao-yü” [Education during times of crisis], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 8.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

class, all of which “served only to promote selfish preoccupations and dispositions,” future education would take the nation as its focus (*kuo-chia pen-wei*). According to one ideologue, “Our basic assumption is this: education is not the business of the family, the church, the party, a class, the children, or even the world. Education is the concern of the nation and the entire people. Only a national education, therefore, has the ability to promote and instill a spirit of patriotism.”⁶⁴ The Chinese could not afford the luxury of the gradual emergence of nationalism. With the survival of the nation at stake, China could be saved only with an “enhanced and passionate” nationalism: a patriotism that would spur men to sacrifice their lives, if need be, so that their nation might live.⁶⁵

VALUE INTEGRATION

Of the four tasks of integration that together constitute our working definition of political development, the integration of values represents the third challenge to a political system. Value integration may be defined as “the minimum value consensus necessary to maintain a social order.” This minimum level of consensus may refer either to end values or instrumental values. One of the most important instrumental values, in the judgment of Weiner, concerns the techniques of conflict resolution. Is there basic agreement on the “acceptable procedures for the resolution of conflict?”⁶⁶ A society that resorts to extralegal, capricious, or violent means for the resolution and management of conflict and disputes can hardly be deemed “politically developed.”

Developing societies approach the task of value integration in different ways. Weiner has identified two modal strategies for integrating values in a developing society. The first defines value integration as consensus and uniformity. Since conflict and competition disrupt consensus, they are viewed as threats to the social order and are devalued and discouraged. In the extreme, conflict and competition are avoided or suppressed through coercion and/or exhortation. The other modal strategy for integrating values is pluralism, a strategy that “emphasizes the interplay of individual and group interests,” regarding differences of interests and values as legitimate. Consensus and uniformity are not of the highest salience. Public policy, in such a society, is thus “not the consequence of a ‘right’ policy upon which all agree” but the result of

⁶⁴ Ch’iu Ch’un, “Chiao-yü,” pp. 8–9.

⁶⁵ Ch’eng Chung-wen, “Ch’ing-nien hsün-lien chi-ch’i shih-tai hsü-yao” [Youth education and the needs of the times], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 62, 66.

⁶⁶ Weiner, “Political Integration,” pp. 644, 649.

brokerage and negotiations among competing interests and sentiments.⁶⁷

The ideologues of the Chinese Renaissance Society believed that China, given the crises it faced, could not afford a pluralistic strategy toward value integration. Instead, China needed a strategy that maximized consensus and uniformity. Rather than remain “a tray of loose sand,” a society in which 400 million inhabitants were like “400 million separate nations,” the Chinese must overcome their disposition toward selfishness and their indisposition to give their collective allegiance to a single leader.⁶⁸ The “only salvation” for the Chinese lay in the abandonment of “personal prejudices” and “individual interests.” In their place would be a willingness to sacrifice individual welfare in the interest of the national good.⁶⁹ In the words of I Jen, “When a nation is in chaos, . . . when a people find themselves at a dead end, only their united and concerted effort has the power to move them onto a new path.”⁷⁰

In the judgment of the ideologues, this unity and consensus find their most effective expression in political centralization. It is only when political power is “concentrated” (*chi*) that it becomes “congealed” (*ning-chieh*) and “strengthened,” thereby becoming that “great and immense force” China needs for her crisis.⁷¹ According to Wen Ching, if political power is not centralized, government would remain “cowardly and impotent,” unable to deal with crises. With unification and political centralization, however, China would not only be able to weather the immediate crisis but would also “find the strength for a renaissance.”⁷²

The ideologues believed that it would be ruinous and destructive for a country such as China—economically underdeveloped and politically splintered, under the threat of imminent annihilation from a foreign power—to engage in pluralistic democracy at such a time. According to I Jen, since parliamentary democracy is the “political reflection” of laissez-faire capitalism, the code of economic “free competition” is extended to the political sphere. But when everyone pursues maximal and “limitless freedom of development,” conflict becomes a certainty. Regardless of the particular issue, conflict and disputes are assured in a parliamentary

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 649.

⁶⁸ Ch'iu Ch'un, “Chiao-yü,” p. 4.

⁶⁹ Shu I-fan, “Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan,” p. 12.

⁷⁰ I Jen, “Min-chu yü tu-ts'ai” [Democracy and dictatorship] *CT* 1, no. 8 (1 August 1933): 4.

⁷¹ Liu Ping-li, “Ko-ming chen-hsien yü ssu-hsiang p'i-p'an” [The front of the revolution and thought criticism], *CT* 5, no. 2 (16 February 1937): 10.

⁷² Wen Ching, “Kuo-ch'ih ts'ung-chi ti wu-yüeh” [The month of May of national shame], *CT* 1, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 2.

system. Such disputes could only “impede social progress,” while the resulting confusion and paralysis would effect the exercise of state authority and hamper the formation of “strong, powerful, and stable policies.”⁷³

The Renaissance ideologues believed that democracy requires the satisfaction of certain preconditions. Sun Yat-sen had provided a framework for the satisfaction of these preconditions when he envisioned a three-step sequence of political development. During the first phase, the period of military government (*chün-cheng*), the territorial unification and integration of China would be completed. When peace and stability were restored and a central government firmly entrenched, China would enter a second phase: the period of the tutelary state (*hsün-cheng*). Preconditions for democracy would be laid down: mass literacy, improvements in livelihood, and instruction in the basic tenets of democratic citizenship via the implementation of local self-government (*ti-fang tzu-chih*). When the conditions for democratic government had matured the state would finally shed its tutelary mantle and install the full democracy of a constitutional government (*hsien-cheng*).⁷⁴

The Renaissance ideologues thought that the establishment of a Republican government at Nanking had given the illusion of progressive development, leading to increasingly insistent public demand for full constitutional democracy. The ideologues, however, believed that China remained stalled in the first phase of Sun’s sequence. At a time when imperialists, warlords, and Communists continued to plague society, the essential tasks of territorial integration remained unresolved. China had yet to move beyond the initial phase of military rule.⁷⁵ Democratic preconditions remained unfulfilled. And in a country where illiteracy was pandemic, democratic elections as ostensible demonstrations of “the people’s will” would only be exercises in futility. In the words of Liu Chien-ch’ün,

To speak of democracy when illiteracy has not yet been eradicated and education not universalized is to use democracy as a lure to deceive the people... For China to install a democracy today would be like asking a girl with bound feet to dance on high heels. [Rather

⁷³ I Jen, “Min-chu yü tu-ts’ai,” p. 2.

⁷⁴ Sun Yat-sen, “Chung-kuo ko-ming shih” [The history of the Chinese revolution], *Kuo-fu ch’üan-chi* [The complete works of Sun Yat-sen], (Taipei: KMT Party History Committee, 1973), 2, pp. 183–184.

⁷⁵ Lu I-yüan, “Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi,” part 2, p. 15. See also the editorial, “Hsien-ts’ao kung-pu i-hou” [After the promulgation of the provisional constitution], *CT* 4, no. 5 (16 May 1936): 1.

than the right to vote, what the Chinese most need is] the simple and basic right to life: freedom from hunger and cold.⁷⁶

Given the particular circumstances of China in the 1930s, the Renaissance ideologues believed that this "fundamental right to life" could not be effected by a democratic system. In their judgment, what China needed was the successful resolution of the first step in Sun's sequence of political development: the realization of military rule through the one-party dictatorship of the Kuomintang.⁷⁷

The ideologues were convinced that the remedy for China's ills lay in the direction of a single-party state. The "extraordinary" and "chaotic" conditions in China during the 1930s called for the extraordinary solution of a "dictatorship" (*tu-ts'ai*), for only a dictatorship could overcome the intractable problems that a democracy could not resolve. Citing the examples of post-World War I Russia, Italy, and Germany, I Jen argued that these countries were able to overcome their problems only with the policy resolve and unitary leadership of a "one-party dictatorship" (*i-tang chuan-cheng*). Since the situation in China was, in I Jen's judgment, even more acute than that of those nations, a one-party solution was all the more necessary. The Chinese, however, would borrow only the "form" (*hsing-shih*) of dictatorship. A one-party dictatorship in China would have ideological "content" (*nei-jung*) different from that of the dictatorships of Soviet Russia, Fascist Italy, and Nationalist Socialist Germany.⁷⁸

Not only would the immediate salvation of China depend on the one-party formula; a competitive multiparty system would have to be postponed for some time even after the crisis had abated. The ideologues believed that the historic mission of the Chinese—a national renaissance—could be realized only if the Kuomintang retained its authority. In the first place, the modernization of the national economy depended on the persistence of a powerful and authoritative state, one that could command the resources for the massive accumulation of capital and the mobilization of men and materiel. Rapid economic development would also require the consensus of vision and systematic planning of a one-party state. The fractious quarreling of a multiparty system could only delay and impede economic reconstruction.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, pp. 14–15.

⁷⁷ Lu I-yüan, "Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi," part 2, p. 16; Hua [pseud.], "Tui-yü 'kung-hsien i-tien cheng-li pen-tang ti i-chien' ti shang-ch'üeh'" [On "Suggestions for the reform of our party"], in Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 153.

⁷⁸ I Jen, "Min-chu yü tu-ts'ai," pp. 3–4.

⁷⁹ Ho Jo-hui, "Chung-kuo ching-chi fa-chan ti lu-hsien" [The course of China's econom-

A one-party system would also serve the political development of China. As we have already seen, the ideologues believed that government would remain "cowardly and impotent" unless political power was centralized. The more "concentrated" the power, the "stronger" it would become.⁸⁰ In other words, the concentration of power in a single party would enhance government effectiveness and the institutionalization of authority.⁸¹ One-party authoritarianism would be more efficacious for political institutionalization and national integration.⁸²

In its tutelary capacity, the authoritarian rule of the Kuomintang would also perform the much needed task of value integration. Weiner and LaPalombara have noted that in our discussions of the political instability that typifies the less developed nations we tend to forget that much of the facility of the functioning of Western multiparty systems derives from their diffused political culture: the integration of fundamental political values throughout society. As they note,

The literature on parties, especially on American and British parties, assumes that the political system in which parties operate is accepted by most of the population as legitimate, that the public is loyal to the national state, and that there are more or less accepted relationships between political participants and the state and among the participants themselves. *These assumptions are not valid in most of the developing areas today.*⁸³

In effect, the stability of Western party systems owes a great deal to the way their political parties were formed. This process had been gradual and cumulative, involving the formulation of a complicated set of rules concerning competition. What accrued was a consensus of values

ic development], *CT* 1, no. 8 (1 August 1933): 8.

⁸⁰ Wen Ching, "Kuo-ch'ih," p. 2; Liu Ping-li, "Ko-ming chen-hsien," p. 10.

⁸¹ See I Jen, "Min-chu yü tu-ts'ai," p. 3.

⁸² "One-man one-party regimes are necessary in Africa precisely because the nations rest on such shaky foundations and are confronted by such urgent and monumental tasks of integration and development. The existence of a single national party is obviously no guarantee of successful national integration, but it is plausible to assume that one party will do a more successful job than two or more, particularly if the two or more... have little, if any, comprehension of the proper functioning of a loyal opposition." Rupert Emerson, "Parties and National Integration in Africa," in LaPalombara and Weiner, *Political Parties and Political Development*, p. 296. Cf. also "Where traditional political institutions are weak or non-existent, the prerequisite of stability is at least one highly institutionalized political party.... States with no parties or many weak parties are the least stable." Samuel P. Huntington, "Strategies of Institutional Development," in Finkle and Gable, *Political Development*, p. 483.

⁸³ Weiner and LaPalombara, "Impact of Parties," p. 399. Emphasis supplied.

concerning not only end values but important instrumental values as well, particularly those values and expectations regarding the rights of the opposition. In the developing nations, however, the process of party formation was abrupt rather than gradual, exogenous in impetus rather than internally created. And thus, for developing nations like China, the drive for power will be much more raw and untempered by the restraining influence of long-established participation in a competitive parliamentary framework.⁸⁴

China's lack of a common and diffused democratic political culture presented a particularly troublesome dilemma for the Nanking regime. At a time when not even the political elites were in full agreement on the "rules of the game," should Nanking give in to the rising demand for constitutional rule? Of particular concern was the matter of the Chinese Communist party—an avowedly nondemocratic party committed to a vision of the dictatorship of one class over others—which participated in competitive politics only in order to overthrow the system. The dilemma for Nanking was as Weiner and LaPalombara stated.

Under such circumstances a fundamental issue . . . is whether to admit non-democratic parties into government . . . with a high risk that the system may be subverted, or deny them the opportunity for sharing or influencing power, thereby ensuring that such groups will continue to remain alienated and that they will strengthen their efforts to convince supporters that the system does not work precisely because it does not permit them to share power.⁸⁵

Faced with such a dilemma, the Renaissance Society proposed to adopt the form of the one-party state as an instrumental value, with the clear understanding that democracy remained the end goal.⁸⁶ With the

⁸⁴ Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, "The Origin and Development of Political Parties," in LaPalombara and Weiner, *Political Parties and Political Development*, pp. 25, 30. Cf. also "Among emerging non-Western political systems, elite political differences tend to be ideological and intransigent. Competition among elites is enacted in a concealed and secretive manner. Opposition tends to be extremist, extravagant, and conspiratorial. . . . Political parties view the acquisition of power as their permanent monopoly. In old Western systems, . . . parties operate on expectations of some alternations in power. . . . [A] common framework of rules of the game and substantive values reduces differences to conflicts over issues. . . . Competition among rival elites is open. . . [and] there is a general commitment to common values." Seligman, "Elite Recruitment," p. 247.

⁸⁵ Weiner and LaPalombara, "Impact of Parties," pp. 25, 30.

⁸⁶ "For the time being, we will do without democratic government." Pai Yu, "Fei-ch'ang-t'ai ti Chung-kuo," p. 10. As a matter of fact, the Renaissance Society anticipated the disappearance of political parties at some future date when China had achieved political maturity. "In the future, when every Chinese has the ability and the qualifications for suffrage, and when we have attained the level of complete self-government, then, the party

Kuomintang securely in power, China would be territorially unified. The aggression of imperialists would be resisted; peace and stability would be restored. The state would then proceed with the rapid development of the economy while at the same time preparing the conditions for democracy. Illiteracy would be eradicated; the people would acquire that knowledge and education that make the informed citizens of a democracy. Through the gradual implementation of local self-government, the people would learn, through practice, the operational meaning of democracy. And when local self-rule was universalized, the time would come for the full conversion to constitutional government. By then, the fundamental values of a democratic system would be thoroughly diffused and integrated.⁸⁷

ELITE-MASS INTEGRATION

One way to define Weiner's fourth task of integration, that of elite-mass integration, is to compare it to and contrast it with the task of value integration. While it is true that a society with poor value integration would also be poorly integrated as far as the relationship between its elite and masses is concerned, one cannot be certain that a society that enjoys "the minimum value consensus necessary to maintain a social order" will also enjoy elite-mass integration. Conceivably a society may share a fair degree of value consensus while its elites and masses remain alienated from each other. On the other hand, a society may be characterized as having a good elite-mass relationship, even though there are considerable differences in goals and values between the rulers and the ruled, as long

will naturally disappear, and there will no longer be such things as parties." Chiang Ch'i, "Chung-kuo Kuo-min-tang chih chuan-chi," part 2, p. 38. However, there was a minority segment within the Renaissance Society that seemed to advocate dictatorship as not merely an instrumental value but an end value as well. This minority, represented by I Jen, argued that democracy was merely the "political reflection" of laissez-faire capitalism. Since the latter was "on the verge of collapse" because of its insurmountable problems, it would be replaced by monopolism (*tu-chan*), which had the capacity to overcome the problems created by capitalism. With the demise of laissez-faire capitalism, democracy would also collapse since "democracy itself has no particular intrinsic substance." Just as free competition would be replaced by economic monopolism, so democracy would be replaced by dictatorship—the "political reflection" of monopolism. I Jen, "Min-chu yü tu-ts'ai," p. 1.

⁸⁷ There is considerable skepticism in the professional literature as to how easy the transition of an authoritarian system into a democratic polity would be. Weiner and LaPalombara have raised the question of how a tutelary system can prepare a nation for democratic rule—"That a tutelary government can be an instrument for establishing effective central authority there can be little doubt; but whether the attitudes of mind, the tolerance for widely divergent views, and the readiness to see one's opponents in office can be cultivated seems unlikely in the atmosphere of an authoritarian regime." Weiner and LaPalombara, "Impact of Parties," p. 413.

as the elite's right to govern has legitimacy in the eyes of the governed. As Weiner has said, "In all political systems, . . . there are differences in outlook between those who govern and those who are governed. In a developed system, however, those who govern are accessible to influence by those who are governed—even in a totalitarian system—and those who are governed are readily available for mobilization by the government."⁸⁸

Accordingly, elite-mass integration may be defined as a relationship between the rulers and the ruled wherein (1) government enjoys political legitimacy: the rulers have the consent of the governed; (2) there is effective mass mobilization: the people are "readily available for mobilization by the government"; and (3) government is "accessible to influence": the ruling elite is not alienated from the masses.⁸⁹

Promoting elite-mass integration seems to depend largely on the quality of the two-way communication between government and populace. This communication, in turn, is dependent on the development of effective communication "infra-structures,"⁹⁰ such as the media, the press, universities, and political parties. It is through these infrastructures that the ruling elite communicates its political vision, thereby mobilizing the masses toward the fulfillment of specific policy objectives, from the mundane—paying taxes, obeying laws—to the more Herculean undertakings of a developing nation. Through these infrastructures, too, the people can gain access to government: providing their feedback and reactions, expressing their needs and desires.

One of the most important of these infrastructures is the political party. According to Weiner and LaPalombara, political parties are more flexible instruments for winning popular support than are armies and bureaucracies because of their greater facility in establishing legitimate national authority.⁹¹ In a developing society, the potential role of the political party assumes even greater importance. In such societies, where traditional political institutions are either nonexistent, weak, or have collapsed altogether, the parties are often the strongest political organizations able to provide stability through the institutionalization of authority. In the absence of traditional sources of legitimacy, the political parties must find new sources of legitimacy in an ideology, the charisma of a revolutionary leader, or in the notion of popular sovereignty.⁹²

⁸⁸ Weiner, "Political Integration," p. 651.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 650–651.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 652.

⁹¹ Weiner and LaPalombara, "Impact of Parties," p. 410.

⁹² Huntington, "Strategies of Institutional Development," p. 483.

Apart from political parties, charismatic leaders are also highly functional as a channel of communication between the elite and the masses of a developing society. According to Samuel Huntington, "Where traditional political institutions are weak, or collapse, or are overthrown, authority frequently comes to rest with charismatic leaders who attempt to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity by a highly personal appeal."⁹³

Standing above the traditional cleavages of the developing society, the charismatic leader promotes national integration by becoming the symbol of the unified nation to all segments of the population. By inviting identification with himself, he fosters a broader identification with the nation. As the central figure within the national movement who can balance contending interests, the charismatic leader fosters and promotes the integration of values. And finally, in his role as the architect and spokesman for the drive for economic development, the charismatic leader, with his mass following and his ability to attract and recruit elites, also serves as an effective channel for mass mobilization and the integration of the governing elite with the masses.⁹⁴

In effect, as far as Myron Weiner's fourth task of integration is concerned, the theoretical literature on comparative politics assigns great importance to the political party and the charismatic leader as instrumentalities for furthering elite-mass integration. In fact, some would argue that, in the case of developing nations, a one-party system may better facilitate mass mobilizations and the establishment of a sense of legitimacy than would multiparty or nonparty systems.⁹⁵

It is in this context that the Renaissance Society's advocacy of a "one-party rule and glorification of the leader"⁹⁶ must be lodged. For Lloyd Eastman, this advocacy simply served as one of the species traits of fascism. A careful review of the Renaissance ideologues' discussion on the Kuomintang and the supreme leader would, however, offer compelling reasons for an alternate interpretation. Rather than the advocacy of a mimetic fascism, the writings of the Renaissance ideologues reveal a

⁹³ Ibid., p. 482.

⁹⁴ Seligman, "Elite Recruitment," pp. 242-243.

⁹⁵ "There is some evidence to suggest...that systems without parties and those with a multiplicity of parties have been among the least successful in establishing a sense of legitimacy..." Weiner and LaPalombara, "Impact of Parties," p. 408. For a dissenting viewpoint on the efficacy of a one-party system in promoting a sense of legitimacy, see Lucian Pye, "Party Systems and National Development in Asia," in LaPalombara and Weiner, *Political Parties and Political Development*, p. 394.

⁹⁶ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 80.

theoretically sensitive appreciation of the importance of precisely those outcomes that contemporary analysts now identify with elite-mass integration.

The Kuomintang. In their writings on the Nationalist party, the theoreticians of the Renaissance Movement clearly displayed a sophisticated understanding of the importance of political legitimacy in the successful integration of people with government. When the Renaissance ideologues argued for the authoritarian rule of the Kuomintang, they were fully aware of what the legitimation of a one-party state would require.

According to one ideologue, party and state are fused as one in a single-party state. "The party is merely the state in miniature, while the state is the party expanded and magnified." In such a system the single party is necessary as a vanguard. Since the masses in a politically retarded society do not yet possess the prerequisites for self-government, the party would act as their "representative in governing." In effect, single-party rule would substitute for popular sovereignty. And since "the party is the state, and the state is the party," the legitimation of a one-party state must then depend on whether the party is truly acting in the interests of the state. In the words of Chiang Ch'i, "For us to determine whether or not the Kuomintang has the right to exist, we need only ask if it is genuinely concerned with the future of the Chinese."⁹⁷

The reality of the Kuomintang, however, was far from this ideal state. The Renaissance ideologues believed that instead of acting in the interest of the state their party had become corrupt and dissipated. It had failed to gain legitimacy in the eyes of those it sought to govern: "Our party has been a great disappointment to the people! Not only is it alienated from the masses; in many areas, it is actually hated by the people. He who cherishes me will be my king. He who abuses me has only my hatred."⁹⁸

For the Renaissance ideologues, this fallen Kuomintang seemed to mock the very reason-for-being of a political party. According to Liu Chien-ch'ün, the fundamental reason for the existence of political parties is "the alleviation of the sufferings of the people." A political party must not simply be a party for its members, it must also be "a party of the people." As such, it must seek to penetrate the masses, to lead and guide them, so that it may win their trust. Thus firmly grounded in the people, its identity as a bona fide party is secure. Should it, on the other hand, "depart from the people, it will have lost all meaning."⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Chiang Ch'i, "Chung-kuo Kuo-min-tang chih chuan-chi," part 2, p. 38.

⁹⁸ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 56.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

In effect, when the Renaissance ideologues vowed that "the interests of the Kuomintang must be made inseparable from those of the toiling masses of China,"¹⁰⁰ they were recommending that their party transform itself into a populist party, one that could claim the broadest representation of the people as a whole.¹⁰¹ But in the judgment of the ideologues, the Kuomintang was precisely the opposite of a populist party. Its membership had become heavily skewed toward politicians and the military, with a sprinkling of schoolteachers and students. Members who were from the "productive masses" of peasants and workers were "virtually nonexistent." According to one ideologue, this unfortunate development was partly due to the Kuomintang's own negligence in cultivating support among the laboring sectors, thereby allowing the Communists to "coopt" this vital "social base of support." But much of this was also due to the party's indiscriminate expulsion, along with the Communists, of its workers and peasants, who were assumed to be "leftist elements" in collusion with the Communist party. The outcome of this "party purification" (*ch'ing-tang*) that brought the first KMT-CCP United Front to an abrupt end was the abandonment and cessation of Kuomintang-sponsored "mass mobilization" (*min-chung yün-tung*) and the devolution of a formerly revolutionary party into "a bastion of officialdom" (*kuan-liao chi-t'uan*).¹⁰²

The ideologues of the Renaissance Society recognized that many of the difficulties of the Kuomintang were attributable to its poor record on mass mobilization, its neglect of basic "grass roots activities" (*hsia-ts'eng kung-tso*).¹⁰³ As Liu Chien-ch'ün observed, "Being thus estranged from the everyday life of the villages and factories, . . . is it any wonder that the Kuomintang should feel it has neither the understanding nor the support of the people? The Kuomintang, by abandoning the work of mass mobilization is, in effect, leaving the people to the enemy, which is precisely what the Communist party wanted."¹⁰⁴ It is clear that the Renaissance ideologues were sensitive to the negative effects of their party's short-sighted neglect of grass roots party politics. Equally clear is that they were also fully cognizant of what an effective strategy of mass mobilization could accomplish for the government at Nanking.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁰¹ According to Seligman, the fact that populist parties can claim the broadest representation of the people as a whole certifies their credentials as genuinely nationalist parties. Seligman, "Elite Recruitment," p. 244.

¹⁰² Hua, "Tui-yü 'Kung-hsien i-tien cheng-li pen-tang ti i-chien,'" pp. 155-156.

¹⁰³ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 83.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 57, 80-81.

That the Renaissance Society had a well-articulated program of mass mobilization is demonstrated by their writings on the policy initiatives the Kuomintang ought to apply toward the masses. Such a program would involve, in the first place, a comprehensive effort to interject the party into the grass roots level. Since the ideologues were convinced that much of the ineffectiveness of the Nanking government had to do with its estrangement from its constituency,¹⁰⁵ only the intimate reinvolvement of party cadres with the masses could rectify this failing.

According to Liu Chien-ch'ün, the Kuomintang should send its cadres to live among the people. Cadres in charge of "peasant mobilization" (*nung-min yün-tung*) would become peasants or village schoolteachers.¹⁰⁶ Those responsible for youth mobilization would become students, teachers, and professors. Those responsible for the mobilization of soldiers would become soldiers and officers. Those in charge of the workers would strive to penetrate the organizations of both labor and management.¹⁰⁷ Through this intimate involvement with the daily lives of their constituencies, the cadres would "experience their bitterness and pains, understand their problems and conflicts, know their dreams and desires." So knowing, the cadres would be able to provide guidance and assistance to the people. When their responsibilities exceeded their capability, the party center would assist. At the same time, the cadres would be "organizing, instructing, and disseminating propaganda" to the masses. In all

¹⁰⁵ "There are three reasons which could explain why the Communist party is able to fool the 'ignorant masses' of China... (1) their interests are not being met; (2) they are ignorant of the efforts the government has been making and its policy orientation; (3) they have no sense of nationalism.... One explanation for their lack of understanding of the government is the government's own neglect of propaganda. For example, the government has not informed the people of the recent efforts it has made in economic development, specifically in railway and road construction...." Liu Ping-li, "Ko-ming chen-hsien," pp. 8-9.

¹⁰⁶ Liu proposed that since China had altogether over a thousand counties (*hsien*), the Kuomintang could dispatch at least five cadres for each county to serve as village schoolteachers. These cadres would provide assistance to the peasants and strive to improve their livelihood. When necessary, help from the party center would be sought for particularly intractable problems. If the cadres could accomplish all this, then the peasants would think of them as "living Buddhas," and would come to "love and trust the Kuomintang." Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, pp. 82-83.

¹⁰⁷ "[I]f we want to reconcile class interests and eradicate class struggle, we must take pragmatic measures. For instance, in the matter of labor-management relations, our cadres must deeply penetrate into the midst of worker and management organizations, and come to grips with the focal point of their conflict so that it can be appropriately resolved. Then, conflict and struggles [between workers and capitalists] would naturally disappear." *Ibid.*, p. 80.

these activities, their "sole objective" would be to "satisfy the wishes" of their constituencies, so that they would come to "understand and trust the Kuomintang."¹⁰⁸

In addition to these grass roots activities, the Renaissance Society's program for mass mobilization had a second dimension. Here, the notion of mass mobilization was understood to mean "controlled participation." According to Weiner and LaPalombara:

Movements or demands for political participation are a characteristic feature of political development... [I]ncreased urbanization, the growth of mass communications, and the spread of education appear to be accompanied by an increased desire for some forms of political participation... The establishment of the first party government [alone] often creates a wide-spread expectation that individuals can now share in the exercise of political power.¹⁰⁹

However, as Huntington observed, developing societies are typically under-institutionalized. In these societies the pace of political mobilization often outstrips that of political institutionalization. If political participation is unchecked or uncontrolled, it typically overwhelms the nascent institutions, resulting in social turmoil and great political instabilities. Decelerating or controlling social mobilization helps institutional development to continue and flourish.¹¹⁰

One manner in which governments, particularly one-party governments, manage the demands for greater political participation is to control and channel participation.¹¹¹ Weiner and LaPalombara refer to this "controlled participation" as "mobilization." The state welcomes, even encourages, political participation, as long as it is under carefully controlled and prescribed limits. Typically, the one-party leadership is concerned with providing the appearance of participation; at the same time, it is reluctant to relinquish the control of power generally associated with the admittance of additional actors into the political system. Through "controlled mobilization," the state is able to affect the political attitudes and behavior of the population (as in the development of a sense of nationalism). The masses have a subjective sense of participation, but objectively, they are effectively prevented from exercising any real political influence.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Weiner and LaPalombara, "Impact of Parties," p. 400.

¹¹⁰ Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, pp. 55, 82, 88-92.

¹¹¹ According to Weiner and LaPalombara, "controlled participation" or "mobilization" is one of four patterns of response by party governments to demands for greater political participation. The other three patterns are "repression," "limited admission," and "full admission into the party system." Weiner and LaPalombara, "Impact of Parties," pp. 400-405.

In this way, mass “mobilization” replaces genuine mass “participation” in politics.¹¹² Political participation comes under the management of the one-party state. With the threat of runaway participation effectively nullified, government can proceed with the tasks of institutionalization and state building.

In the case of the Nanking government, uncontrolled political participation had become a serious problem by 1931. Provoked by the Manchurian Incident in September of that year, the students of China expressed their outrage in a sustained outburst of patriotism. For three months, beginning with the demonstration of Nanking’s university students on September 28, thousands upon thousands demonstrated in the major cities, demanding Nanking’s immediate declaration of war against Japan. Skirmishes and actual violence broke out during many of these demonstrations.¹¹³ Nanking responded with “A Statement to the Nation’s Students” which detailed and explained the government’s policy and strategy vis-à-vis Japan. In spite of this and repeated appeals for order by the Kuomintang, including a personal audience with Chiang Kai-shek, the students continued to pour into the capital in ever increasing numbers, demanding “the overthrow of the traitorous Kuomintang government” while hailing “Long Live the Chinese Communist Party!” Finally, on December 15, under this unrelenting pressure, Chiang resigned from his posts as Chairman of the Republic and President of the Executive Yuan. Even after his resignation, the demonstrations continued. It was only after Chiang left Nanking for his ancestral village in Chekiang that the demonstrations gradually subsided.¹¹⁴

And thus, at least according to one well-documented account of the events of 1931, the uncontrolled mobilization of patriotic students had become enough of a threat to force the resignation of Chiang Kai-shek. It is in this context that one Renaissance ideologue made his proposal on the proper conduct of political participation.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 402–403.

¹¹³ For example, on September 28, the student demonstrators in Nanking attacked and injured the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Cheng-yen. On December 10, demonstrators in Hankow attacked the provincial headquarters of the KMT. On December 15, Pei-ta university students demonstrating in Nanking attacked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and injured Ts’ai Yüan-p’ei and Ch’en Ming-shu. On December 17, students from Peking and Tientsin attacked the KMT headquarters in Nanking and the office of the *Central Daily News*. See Teng Yüan-chung, “San-min chu-i li-hsing she shih ch’u-kao” [Preliminary draft of the history of the Three Principles of the People Earnest Action Society], part 4, *Chuan-chi wen-hstüeh* [Biographical literature], 40, no. 6 (June 1982): 104–105.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

[It is well and proper that our] students' patriotic movement should be the vehicle for the expression of the will of the people, and for the supervision and oversight of government. . . . However, the methods employed by this movement should not be those of student strikes, petitions, and demonstrations. Methods that are more appropriate are: (1) the dissemination of political propaganda to keep the masses informed of current events and to arouse the patriotism of the people; (2) [exercise one's right to] influence government via such means as letters and telegrams to the government, or as essays and commentaries in the press. Petitions should be resorted to only when needed; (3) maintain positive, rather than negative, outlets for creativity and talent. Positive outlets are, for example, art and literature that promote nationalism and patriotism. [If the student movement were to utilize] these methods, the people's will would be expressed, government would be reinvigorated, while at the same time the patriotism of the masses would also be aroused. Demonstrations would only add to the already considerable troubles of our nation.¹¹⁵

Thus, it is clear that the ideologues of the Renaissance Movement were concerned with the destabilizing and disruptive effects of political participation in a political system of fragile and struggling institutions. Their prescription for this imbalance of participation over institutionalization was for the government to control and channel political participation. Rather than allow political actors to have free rein in their expressions, government would channel their energies into politically less disruptive activities. Not only would the masses continue to have a subjective sense of political involvement, but real "substantive participation"¹¹⁶ would also continue, as the masses could continue to exercise influence on government through such means as letters and telegrams to political leaders, public criticisms, and dialogues in the press. However, these modes of participation would be peaceful rather than disruptive, without necessarily sacrificing their power to influence public policy.

Lloyd Eastman, commenting on the mass politics of the Renaissance Society, summarily dismissed it as "not [having] transcended . . . the traditional concept of elitist rule over a politically passive population."

¹¹⁵ Li Jo-fei, "Hsüeh-sheng ai-kuo yün-tung ti tsung chien-t'ao" [A general assessment of the student patriotic movement], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 75-76.

¹¹⁶ LaPalombara and Weiner make a distinction between "psychological participation" and "substantive participation." The first refers to the individual's subjective sense of political participation. The second refers to activities that could, in fact, have a potential impact on government. Examples are voting, lobbying, attendance at political rallies. LaPalombara and Weiner, "Origin and Development," pp. 4-5.

According to Eastman, the "Blue Shirts," in contrast to Mao and the Chinese Communists, failed to display sensitivity to the great potential source of political power in the Chinese masses. Mao had learned that the masses could be used to create political power. The "Blue Shirts," however, "seemed to believe that the masses were simply objects to be manipulated." As a matter of fact, Eastman believed that it was precisely because the "Blue Shirts" were "essentially elitist in their concept of political power" that they were doomed to ultimate failure: "Without a new concept of political power . . . fascism in China became a victim of the same factionalism, empty rhetoric and petty politicking that afflicted the Kuomintang throughout its tenure as the government of China."¹¹⁷

But the documentary evidence of the period testifies otherwise. The legacy of the ideological writings of the Renaissance Movement testifies to an eminently sophisticated conception of mass politics. Rather than lacking cognizance of the "great potential source of political power" in the masses, the members of the Renaissance Society were only too conscious of the great, disruptive, and destabilizing power of uncontrolled political participation. Rather than believing that "the masses were simply objects to be manipulated," the Renaissance Society, knowing that sovereignty rested ultimately with the people, proposed instead that government must make itself accountable and responsive to the people's needs. If the Renaissance Movement truly believed that the masses were "simply objects to be manipulated," it would have advocated the repression of political mobilization, rather than the control and channeling of political expression. Only a movement that recognized the principle of popular sovereignty would prefer a strategy of controlled participation over that of coercion, so that the voice of the people might still be heard, though in a more orderly and peaceful way.

Rather than being essentially traditionalist in its "concept of elitist rule over a politically passive population," the Renaissance Movement, as its writings testify, entertained a contemporary conception of the moderating role of the political party. They show that the ideologues were aware of the instrumental importance of the party in establishing political legitimacy in the absence of surviving traditional institutions.¹¹⁸ The

¹¹⁷ Lloyd E. Eastman, "Fascism in Kuomintang China: The Blue Shirts," *The China Quarterly*, no. 49 (January-March 1972): 29-31.

¹¹⁸ According to Lu I-yüan, "The reason why the Kuomintang has not been able to effect a one-party rule lies not in party ideology or party policies. The reasons are rather that our party lacks a tight organization, a determined and distinguished revolutionary leader, able cadres, and good relations with the masses." Lu I-yüan, "Chung-kuo min-tsu chih wei-chi," part 2, p. 16.

ideologues, sensitive to the need for better government-people relations, advocated a program of active grass roots party involvement. Through the medium of the local cadres, a two-way channel of communication between government and people would be established. Through this channel, government would be able to communicate with, instruct, influence, and mobilize the masses. This channel would also allow the people to communicate their needs and wants to the leadership. Government would be provided with the information it needed to make policies and plans and intelligent, moderated responses to political events.¹¹⁹ And when the masses perceived that the government was genuinely concerned with their well-being and was making genuine efforts to promote their interests, they would give freely that consent to be governed that is so vital for elite-mass integration. Political legitimacy for the party rule of the Kuomintang would be the ultimate result.¹²⁰

The Charismatic Leader. Machiavelli once argued that the reform of corrupt states or the creation of new ones must be the work of one man alone.¹²¹ For Machiavelli, government by a single individual is to be understood as being functional toward political reform and/or revolution. This same leadership principle, when put in the context of allegedly "fascist" states, takes on a wholly different meaning. Here, the advocacy of a supreme leader becomes the defining attribute, the sine qua non, of fascism. For many, the leadership principle means the Führer principle, automatically qualifying the political phenomenon under study for classification as "fascist."¹²²

Since the leadership principle seems, in the opinion of so many, to occupy such a pivotal role in the determination of the nature of a

¹¹⁹ According to Liu Chien-ch'ün, the Kuomintang would be able to react more intelligently to political surprises if it had better access to information. "[O]ur cadres had not penetrated the villages and factories to gather information concerning the lives of the people... As a result... when strikes and riots occur, we do not know whether these are genuine expressions of discontent or whether the people are being used and manipulated by others. Our typical response is that of political suppression. After a while, [it is not surprising that] we begin to feel that the people neither support nor understand us." Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 57.

¹²⁰ "The people of China are a docile and long-suffering people. They neither hope for the unexpected nor ask for the impossible. If our party offers them even the slightest benefit, they would dance for joy and be eternally grateful to the party." Ibid.

¹²¹ As cited in Huntington, "Strategies of Institutional Development," p. 482.

¹²² See, for example, Michael T. Florinsky, *Fascism and National Socialism* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), pp. 63-64; Peter Nathan, *The Psychology of Fascism* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943), p. 14; F. L. Carsten, *The Rise of Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California, 1967), p. 231.

particular political movement, any treatment of the Chinese Renaissance Society must necessarily include an analysis of its position on the issue of leadership.

Even a cursory reading of the writings of the Renaissance ideologues would show that they unquestionably favored the emergence of a "highest leader" (*tsui-kao ling-hsiu*). Equally unquestionable was their insistence that the masses must "uphold" and "obey" this highest leader.¹²³ For Eastman, believing as he does that "obedience to a supreme leader" constitutes a fundamental principle of fascism, the fact that the leadership principle was "an integral part of the Blue Shirt ideology"¹²⁴ is sufficient in and of itself. Such analytic simplism, however, does the Renaissance Movement a disservice. It merely encourages the vision of a Chinese Führer, who demands absolute obedience out of sheer perversity. What is at issue here is why the Renaissance Society wanted a highest leader. What were their reasons for their "glorification" of the supreme leader?

The Renaissance ideologues' articulation of China's need for a highest leader begins with their party, the Kuomintang. In the judgment of the ideologues, since the Kuomintang was, presumably, a revolutionary party organized in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism, for it to function at all, authority must ultimately rest in the hands of a single individual.¹²⁵ Such was the case during the time of Sun Yat-sen. Since his death in 1925, however, the party had lost its center. In effect, the Kuomintang had not been able to pass a critical test of party institutionalization and system legitimacy: the successful resolution of political succession.

The Renaissance ideologues were convinced that much of the ineffectiveness of the Kuomintang stemmed from this inability to produce a truly "determined and eminent leader."¹²⁶ Instead of a party unified under a single command, the Kuomintang had been dissipating its energy and resources in factional disputes. This factionalism, never formally acknowledged by the party, did receive both the direct¹²⁷ and the oblique

¹²³ Li Ping-jo, "Min-kuo erh-shih-wu nien ti chan-wang" [The outlook for the twenty-fifth year of the Republic], *CT* 4, no. 2 (16 February 1936): 15, 16.

¹²⁴ Eastman, "Fascism in Kuomintang China," p. 5.

¹²⁵ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 44.

¹²⁶ Lu I-yüan, "Chung-kuo min-tsu chih wei-chi," part 2, p. 16.

¹²⁷ "Ever since the coming to power of the Kuomintang, it has been proclaiming that there is no party other than the Kuomintang and no factions within the Kuomintang. But, in reality, not only are there rival parties other than the Kuomintang, the Kuomintang itself is rife with factions such as the Reorganization faction, the Hsi-shan Conference faction, the A B Corps, the Big Alliance, etc. . . . [If] a party has factions, then its authority is inevitably dissipated and its power diminished. [And when one adds] onto this the mutual suspicions

reference of the Renaissance ideologues. In a long, two-part essay on the party, Chiang Ch'i called for the unity of the "four highest party leaders," in the interest of party and national well-being. These four were Wang Ching-wei, Hu Han-min, Chiang Kai-shek, and Ts'ai Chieh-min, representing, respectively, the four major institutions of the party, the government, the military, and education.¹²⁸

Turning from the party to the national situation, the Renaissance ideologues believed that single leadership was also necessary for the nation as a whole. In their judgment, the leadership principle could be deemphasized only in those countries, like England and the United States, that had developed to a stage of stability and maturity. Since the "political center of gravity" in these mature political systems rested on the "middle-level cadres, and not on the political leader, a less-than-perfect leader could inflict little damage on the system."¹²⁹ China, however, was a different matter. Her backwardness made it necessary for a single individual to serve as the center and focus. According to Liu Chien-ch'ün,

In the case of China, for thousands of years, her political center had been the autocratic monarch. The fortunes of the nation rose and fell with the quality of its leadership. Since the masses remained disorganized like a tray of loose sand, when the monarchy was overthrown, the nation also lost its center. The task of revolution became the exclusive responsibility of this party... If our leader is superior, then the revolution he leads progresses in leaps and bounds. But if our leader is inferior, the revolution stalls. That is why it is so important for the Chinese national revolution to have able leadership.¹³⁰

The Renaissance ideologues, thus, had a sophisticated and reasoned argument for China's need for a personalistic system of government. Such had been its government for thousands of years. China's people had been inured to centuries of autocracy and had not developed the skills and habits of modern citizenship and democratic self-rule. And now, poised in the uneasy transition between tradition and modernity, the responsibility of government had fallen on the political party. Not only was this

and jealousies, the inability to cooperate with each other, then the result is the failure of party government, with the nation finding itself in chaos and disunity." Shu I-fan, "Ti-erh-tz'u shih-chieh ta-chan," p. 11.

¹²⁸ See Chiang Ch'i, "Chung-kuo Kuo-min-tang chih chuan-chi" part 2, p. 37. Part one of his essay appeared in *CT* 4, no. 1 (16 January 1936). A similar appeal was also made in Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 87.

¹²⁹ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 86.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

party, the Kuomintang, organized along the essentially authoritarian lines of democratic centralism which demanded the centralization of authority, but the times also called for the Kuomintang to resurrect its revolutionary character. The Chinese revolution, begun in 1911, had not been completed. The nation remained disunified. The economy was in shambles. Imperialists continued to exploit and threaten China. The crises facing China made the emergence of a charismatic leader necessary. In the words of the Renaissance ideologues:

China's real weakness is that she lacks first-rate leadership material... [W]e have no one who can bring the nation's centrifugal forces under his command.¹³¹

These are extraordinary times! Extraordinary times produce the need for extraordinary action and extraordinary leadership. If only Sun Yat-sen were here today... to unify the military, command the economy, monopolize political power... for the resistance against Japan! How I pray that this extraordinary leader, the vanguard of our national renaissance, ... could swiftly appear.¹³²

When he appears, our sacred duty is to give our support and obedience to this highest of leaders... [U]nder his leadership we will together fight for the survival and preservation of our nation. We will liberate our people from their sufferings, rescue them from the clutches of the enemy, so that we may, finally, someday, be equal and free.¹³³

Thus, when the ideologues of the Renaissance Society "glorified the leader," referring to him as "the essence of the Chinese people" and "the pillar of the nation,"¹³⁴ they were not engaging in the bombastic eulogy of the sycophant. The ideologues had a clear conception of the charismatic leader's functional value in a politically underdeveloped and underinstitutionalized system amid conditions of extreme peril. Under these conditions, the personalistic appeal of the charismatic leader is needed to rally and mobilize the population. Through him, elites and masses come together in a purposeful union. The charismatic leader becomes the embodiment of the nation.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Ch'iu Ch'un, "Chiao-yü," p. 4.

¹³² Li K'ang, "Wu-wu chi-nien Chung-shan hsien-sheng" [Remembering Sun Yat-sen on May 5th], *CT* 1, no. 5 (1 May 1933): 2.

¹³³ Li Ping-jo, "Min-kuo erh-shih-wu nien," pp. 15-16.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ "His individual life becomes the people's life! His individual calling becomes the cal-

Given this, it is not surprising that the roster of great leaders that received the unstinting acclaim of the ideologues was not exclusive to fascist leaders like Mussolini and Hitler, as Eastman would have us believe. Instead, the Renaissance ideologues expressed their admiration for all types of leaders, from the great emperors and heroes of traditional China (T'ang T'ai-tsung, Ming T'ai-tsu; Kuo Tzu-i, Yüeh Fei, Hsü Ta), to the great men of contemporary China (Sun Yat-sen, Ch'en Ying-shih), to foreign political leaders such as Washington, Bismarck, Lenin, and Clemenceau.¹³⁶ It would seem that what these men have in common is neither the autocratic character nor a particular political persuasion. Certainly, none of them can sensibly be characterized as fascist. What these men do have in common is their leadership ability: the charisma that unites and inspires men and women to heroic feats.¹³⁷

Nor can we say that the Renaissance ideologues advocated government by "a highest leader" as a permanent arrangement. Their writings indicate, rather, that they envisioned the time of the charismatic leader to be temporary, a transitional period between times of normalcy and stability. When the national crisis was weathered and the danger passed, when party and government had become sufficiently developed and institutionalized and "the foundations of society...secure,"¹³⁸ then rule-governed behavior would replace the charismatic mobilization of masses. At that time the charismatic leader would have thoroughly fulfilled his functional value. There would no longer be a need for heroes.

All of this brings us to a reconsideration of the Eastman thesis. According to Eastman, the "Blue Shirt" advocacy of obedience to a supreme leader was, in part, an effort to promote one man: Chiang Kai-shek. Using a secret report of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Eastman quoted the "Blue Shirt" "Programme" as reading: "Chiang Kai-shek is the Kuomintang's only supreme leader and also China's only great leader; therefore, members must absolutely support him, follow his orders only, and make his will their own."¹³⁹

ling of the entire nation!" Ibid., p. 16.

¹³⁶ Ibid.; Wen Ching, "Kuo-ch'ih," p. 2.

¹³⁷ "[A]t a time when their countries were in jeopardy, each of these men was able to mobilize and gather the strengths of each and every party and faction into a united political front against the enemy." Wen Ching, "Kuo-ch'ih," p. 2.

¹³⁸ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, p. 85.

¹³⁹ Eastman, "Fascism in Kuomintang China," p. 5. The secret Japanese report is Iwai Eiichi's *Ranisha ni kansuru chosa* [An investigation of the Blue Shirts] (issued by the Research Division of the Foreign Ministry), p. 188.

The evidence from the primary sources, however, is not nearly as unequivocal and incontrovertible. As an example, the tract that Liu Chien-ch'ün wrote in 1931, before the formation of the Renaissance Society, contained an extended discussion on "The Problem of the Leader." Nowhere in this discussion did Liu propose that Chiang Kai-shek be made the supreme leader of the party. In fact, Liu did not even mention Chiang's name.¹⁴⁰ And as for the other ideologues, we have already seen how they had, again and again, bemoaned the fact that China lacked "first-rate leadership material" and argued that there was "no-one who can bring the nation's centrifugal forces under his command." A review of the many issues of *Ch'ien-t'u* shows that it was only in April 1939, eleven months after Chiang was made Generalissimo by a KMT Extraordinary Conference held in March 1938, that a contributor to *Ch'ien-t'u* finally referred to him as "the highest leader."¹⁴¹ It is perhaps worthwhile, in light of this, to recall that the founders of what was later to become the Renaissance Movement had been reluctant even to inform Chiang of their activities. They notified him only to preempt and prevent his likely reprisal for having violated the Kuomintang's stricture on forming "factions" within the party.

Perhaps it is better to leave the final word on this matter to the ideologues themselves.

There are those who think that our advocacy of the leadership principle is for the promotion of one particular individual. Such vulgarity and ignorance are beneath our contempt.... A revolutionary leader must be the natural product of history.... He will win the following of the masses only if his spirit and character are superior to those of others. Those with leadership qualities must neither think of themselves as leaders nor insist that they must be made leaders.... The true revolutionary leader uses only the force of his spirit to subdue and conquer his colleagues.... [H]is most prominent characteristics are that he works harder than others, but indulges in fewer pleasures. He is more loving and sincere than his peers. In the past, those who followed our *Tsung-li* [Sun Yat-sen], sacrificing their lives in the process, might not have even understood what his thoughts meant. They followed him because they respected his moral character.... When a man thinks only of the future of the revolution but is oblivious to his personal glories; when his colleagues feel shame, but not fear, when they see him—that man is the true leader

¹⁴⁰ Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, pp. 47-89.

¹⁴¹ See Ju Ch'un-p'u, "Ts'ung li ti i-i chung jen-shih min-tsu ching-shen" [Recognizing the spirit of nationalism from the meaning of *li*], in *CT* 7, no. 8 (24 April 1939): 5.

of the revolution.¹⁴²

Conclusion

The political ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Society, then, rather than being specifically fascist in character, constitutes a systematic program for the political development of China. Using Weiner's definition of political development, which conceives of political development as the achievement of the four tasks of territorial, national, value, and elite-mass integration, we see that the same ideological traits that, to Eastman, are indicative of fascist dispositions—"exaltation of the state," "advocacy of totalitarian controls," "one-party rule," "glorification of the leader," "rejection of democracy," and an emphasis on "nationalism"—can be better understood as being functional toward the political development of China.

In the judgment of the Renaissance Society, it was imperative that China be territorially integrated, for the anticipated economic development of China required the preconditions of territorial unity and a government that could exercise objective authority and control over the territory under its claimed jurisdiction. The Renaissance ideologues were convinced that existing conditions greatly hampered any effort toward economic reconstruction. In particular, the ideologues believed that three major impediments to the territorial integration of China—the warlords, the Chinese Communists, and imperialism—must be removed. Toward that objective, the Renaissance Society proposed that Nanking pursue a vigorous military and political strategy for the territorial unification of China. Both the warlords and the Communists must either be militarily extirpated or be brought under the political control of the state. With the nation unified, and the central government firmly in power, the state could proceed with the nation's economic development and the remaining tasks of political development.

¹⁴² Liu Chien-ch'ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming*, pp. 17, 85–86. It is interesting that these qualities of the ideal Chinese leader are similar, not only to those of the traditional conception of the leader in China, but also to the qualities of contemporary charismatic leaders across cultures. Cf. R. Ruhlmann, "Traditional Heroes in Chinese Popular Fiction," in Arthur F. Wright, ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1960); and Seligman, "Elite Recruitment," p. 242—"Charismatic leaders... in the new states... are usually 'heroes of renunciation,' who gave up much of their lives for the sake of the cause and earned their right to power in this way. They epitomize in their lives the sacrifice and struggle against colonial rule."

National integration, the essence of which is the development of a sense of nationalism, would be one of these remaining tasks. For the ideologues, nationalism was a natural emotion, stemming from man's dependence on the collective for his survival. In the case of the Chinese, however, the natural development of nationalism had been both thwarted and distorted. Instead of nationalism, the Chinese were motivated by the counterproductive sentiments of individualism, familism, clanism, and utopian universalism. Faced with this obdurate national character, the ideologues believed that the state must assume the responsibility of actively inculcating, through education, a sense of nationalism in the Chinese.

Value integration constitutes yet another of the remaining tasks of political development. There are essentially two strategies toward the integration of any society's vital values: the strategy of consensus and uniformity or that of democratic pluralism. The ideologues of the Renaissance Society argued that the crises facing China made the consensus strategy toward value integration necessary. At a time when the survival of the nation was in jeopardy, a strong and effective government was essential. This strong and effective government could be nurtured only if political power was concentrated, rather than dispersed. What China needed was the one-party dictatorship of the Kuomintang. Preconditions for democracy had yet to mature in China. China had yet to move beyond the period of military rule. Government by a single party would enable her to mobilize her resources to weather her immediate crisis. The concentration of state power would also be necessary if the Renaissance plan for the economic development of China via state capitalism was to unfold. One-party dictatorship would continue through the period of the tutelary state, until the political system had become sufficiently stable and institutionalized for the full conversion to constitutional rule. By then, the tutelary state would have laid down those preconditions of democracy that, in the case of the multi-party systems of the West, had taken centuries to evolve.

A last remaining task in political development is the integration of the government elite and the masses. This task is completed only when government has political legitimacy, is able effectively to mobilize the population, and remains accessible to influence by the masses. Much would depend on the quality of the two-way communication between elite and masses. Of the various channels of communication between government and people, two in particular received the attention of the Renaissance ideologues: the political party and the charismatic leader. With

respect to the Kuomintang, the ideologues held their party responsible for much of the national situation. Being both unresponsive to the people's needs and removed from their daily lives, the Kuomintang should not be surprised that it lacked the political support and legitimacy for effective rule. The Renaissance ideologues proposed a new conceptualization of mass politics to rectify these failings. It included a comprehensive program of grass roots party activities and an effort to control and channel runaway political participation. In the case of the charismatic leader, the ideologues argued that the crises facing China and the backwardness of the country's political system made the personalistic rule of a highest leader necessary.

Thus, when the members of the Renaissance Movement "exalted the state," their concern was for the need for territorial integration and the institutionalization of state power. Their emphasis on "nationalism" was an expression of their concern for national integration. Their advocacy of "one-party rule," "totalitarian controls," and the "rejection of democracy" was founded on their conviction that these would be instrumental toward the integration of values. And when the Renaissance Society "glorified the leader" and advocated the reform of their party's policy on mass mobilization, they anticipated that improved elite-mass relations and the legitimation of the rule of the Kuomintang would be the ultimate results. In effect, the same ideological traits that appear to be "explicitly fascist" to Eastman can be fully redescribed in the value-neutral language of political development.

Thus we come to a final consideration and reassessment of the Eastman thesis on the Renaissance Society.

VI

Summary and Assessment

China, today, has only the force of *San-min chu-i*. . . There is no fascism, nor is there a need for fascism. Fascism is applicable only to Italy. Transferring it to China would not only be inappropriate but could in fact aggravate her existing circumstances. Its unsuitability and destructiveness would be comparable to the effects of the transplant of Marxism to China.¹

Paul Lazarsfeld, the philosopher of science, once wrote that “[n]o science deals with its objects of study in their full concreteness.”² That is not the task of science. The goals of science are explanations and prediction: the construction of theories and law-like generalizations. Toward that purpose, science selects certain of the properties of its object of study and attempts to establish relations among them. This selection of relevant properties is variously referred to as description, measurement, or classification. Classifications, or taxonomies, are pretheoretical in that they are used as a preliminary to theorizing. To label and classify phenomena is not to explain them. What results from the effort is merely “a sorting out of things,” a systematization via classification:³ the introduction of a degree of order to the available material that allows for increased comprehension.

In the social sciences, however, the effort to classify—the selection or “singling out” of relevant properties—is in itself a major problem.⁴ In the case of political science, the problem of classifying political ideologies

¹ Liu Ping-li, “Ko-ming chen-hsien yü ssu-hsiang p’i-p’an” [The front of the revolution and thought criticism], *Ch’ien-t’u* [The future; hereafter cited as *CT*], 5, no. 2 (16 February 1937): 7.

² Paul F. Lazarsfeld, “Evidence and Inference in Social Research,” in May Brodbeck, ed., *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences* (London: Macmillan, 1968), p. 609.

³ A. James Gregor, *An Introduction to Metapolitics* (New York: Free Press, 1971), p. 171.

⁴ Lazarsfeld, “Evidence,” p. 609.

and political systems is particularly complicated. Omnibus terms, such as "fascism," are conceptually porous. At best, we have but preliminary classificatory frameworks, with classes and subclasses defined lexically, their defining properties characterized in loosely framed descriptions that make operationalization difficult.⁵ One has an intuitive grasp of what is being said and of the general nature of the political ideologies and political systems to which one is referred, but it is difficult to invest unqualified confidence in the consistency and intelligibility of taxonomies so characterized.

All of this is complicated by the fact that although taxonomies are logically a preliminary to theorizing, in practice most of the classificatory efforts of social scientists harbor an implicit explanatory motive. A concept in social science is often not at all a single concept or even a conjunction of concepts, but a "suitcase term" for a whole set of rather crude generalizations. The concept of "national character," for instance, is more than a classificatory label. It implies, instead, a collection of generalizations as to how the individuals of a nation characteristically tend to behave under certain circumstances.⁶

In the case of political science, categories, such as "fascism," are frequently a function of the political scientist's interpretation of a "project"—his notion of programmatic intentions on the part of human collectivities. This implicit project governs the selection of what constitutes the "relevant" properties of the object of study, for it is in the context of a project that these properties take on meaning. Thus, the classification of a political ideology and/or movement as "fascist" frequently implies a particular project on the part of the "fascist" political actors. Fascism in general and Italian Fascism in particular have been identified with the defense of class privilege and capitalist institutions. According to this view, fascism's historic project was the defense of a moribund economic system.⁷ For others generic fascism was a particularly European phenomenon, designed to defend the integrity of European

⁵ Most of the efforts of political scientists have not moved beyond the second step in the process by which concepts are translated into empirical indices—that of "the specification of dimensions." According to Lazarsfeld, the first step in this process is the "initial imagery of the concept," while the third and fourth steps are "the selection of observable indicators," and "the combination of indicators into indices." *Ibid.*, p. 610.

⁶ Introduction to part 5 on "Explanation, Prediction, and Imperfect Knowledge," in Brodbeck, *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, p. 340.

⁷ This is the thesis of works such as R. Palme Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution* (San Francisco: Proletarian, 1974) and Daniel Guerin, *Fascism and Big Business* (New York: Pathfinder, 1973).

values against the decadence of the modern world.⁸ For still others, Italian Fascism, and perhaps generic fascism as well, was a “developmental dictatorship,” given to the attainment of the general purposes that characterize all reactive, developmental nationalisms.⁹ Then there are those who would maintain that fascism had no historic project other than one man’s pursuit and maintenance of power.¹⁰ To them, Fascism was nothing other than a “gigantic confidence trick perpetrated on the Italian nation by Benito Mussolini.”¹¹

There is no consensus regarding what the historic project or projects of generic fascism might have been, if there were any projects at all. Very often, as a consequence, those who would address themselves to historical or contemporary fascism are content simply to list some attributes that identify fascist movements rather than to speculate on their projects. This provides a checklist of traits that permits one simply to identify a subject political movement as fascist without attempting any interpretation of its historical role or function.¹² The suggestion is that such a list serves some constructive purpose. Minimally, it allows the scholar to distinguish one political manifestation from another. This apparently is the strategy settled upon by Lloyd Eastman in his effort to deal cognitively with the Chinese Renaissance Society.¹³

Fascism, for Eastman, “is not easily defined in either sociological or economic terms. . . . There is no single form or simple definition of fascism”; rather it is “a political ideology that has historically proven to be attractive to widely disparate social groups in widely diverse societies.” What fascist movements do have in common are certain stimuli: “a sense of political desperation, that often stemmed from threatened or real economic impoverishment, national humiliation, or a sensed loss of cultural roots.”¹⁴ Fascism is thus a response to a set of environmental

⁸ See Adriano Romualdi, *Il fascismo come fenomeno europeo* (Rome: Italiano, n.d.). See particularly the introduction by Giuseppe Tricoli.

⁹ A. James Gregor, *Italian Fascism and Developmental Dictatorship* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1979); Otto-Ernst Schueddekopf, *Revolutions of Our Time: Fascism* (New York: Praeger, 1973), p. 99. See also Anthony James Joes, *Fascism in the Contemporary World: Ideology, Evolution, Resurgence* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1978).

¹⁰ This is essentially the thesis of Laura Fermi, *Mussolini* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1961).

¹¹ Alan Cassels, *Fascist Italy* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1968), p. 1. See also Alastair Hamilton, *The Appeal of Fascism* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. xix.

¹² This is what is found in such volumes as Paul Hayes, *Fascism* (New York: Free Press, 1973) and S. J. Woolf, ed., *European Fascism* (New York: Random House, 1968).

¹³ The word “apparently” is used here because it does appear that Eastman has an *implicit* definition of fascism. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁴ Lloyd E. Eastman, “Fascism in Kuomintang China: The Blue Shirts,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 49 (Jan.–March 1972): 27–28.

stimuli, but it is a response that cannot be interpreted in functional or instrumental terms. In effect, fascism, as understood by Eastman, has no discernible historic project to speak of.

Having chosen to refrain from speculation as to what the project(s) of fascism might have been, Eastman has opted instead for a criterial definition of fascism. According to Eastman, whatever the stimuli of fascist movements, they have generally displayed (1) exaltation of the state and advocacy of totalitarian controls; (2) one-party rule, glorification of the leader, and the rejection of democracy; (3) nationalism, which often invokes the restoration of traditional cultural values; (4) the goal of creating a new fascist man who would subordinate his individual will and aspirations to the collective will; and (5) the glorification of violence and terror.¹⁵ With this we are provided a short checklist with which to distinguish “fascist” from “nonfascist” political movements and ideologies.

The Eastman effort to identify the Renaissance Society as “fascist” is unconvincing for several reasons. In the first place, the definition of “fascism” that he invokes is inadequate to the task. The concepts contained in his criterial definition are couched in the ordinary language of the layman, so loose and ambiguous in meaning that it is difficult to determine if one has, indeed, identified a “fascist” trait in the ideological writings of the Renaissance Society. As an example, it is difficult to know how much “exaltation” of the state is necessary to qualify as “fascist” exaltation. How much “rejection” of democracy is needed to constitute a “fascist” rejection of democracy? Nor does one know exactly what empirical indicators certify the presence or absence of a certain ideological trait. What does “glorification of the leader” mean in terms of identifiable behavior? In other words, the task of conceptual clarification, which would “reduce the likelihood that spurious empirical findings will be couched in terms of given concepts,”¹⁶ has not been undertaken.

Since the language of these component traits suffers from vagueness and ambiguity, it is not surprising that Eastman’s overall category of “fascism” is likewise fraught with uncertainty. For a particular political movement and/or ideology to qualify as “fascist,” must it exhibit all five of his criterial traits? Are certain of these traits more important than others? Do these traits function as necessary or as sufficient conditions

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Robert K. Merton, “The Bearing of Sociological Theory on Empirical Research,” in Brodbeck, *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, p. 470.

for qualification as “fascist”? As a case in point, since the ideology of the Renaissance Society did not wholly reject democracy but advocated instead that it be postponed until the preconditions for democracy in China had matured, does this mean that the society ought not to be characterized as “fascist”? And, does the fact that the society, as we have found, did not “glorify” violence and terror, having as it were, developed none of the philosophical rationale for violence of the Italian Fascists, also disqualify the movement for consideration as “fascist”? In other words, if the “rejection of democracy” and the “glorification of violence and terror” are necessary conditions for fascism, then the absence of these traits in the Renaissance ideology would suffice to falsify Eastman’s claim regarding the fascist nature of the Renaissance Society.¹⁷

Being unclear as to whether these criterial traits are necessary and/or sufficient conditions for fascism, and furthermore being equally uncertain whether these traits are exclusive to the ideology of fascism, Eastman also leaves open the possibility that the same traits may well be descriptive of a different ideology altogether.¹⁸ To be more precise, one can say that Eastman’s criterial definition of fascism could just as suitably be applied to “Marxist totalitarianism.” It would not be difficult to isolate all these traits in one or another Marxist-Leninist system.

As a case in point, since we are unclear about how much of the traditional culture must be restored before it qualifies as a “restoration of traditional cultural values,” there seems to be no intrinsic reason for denying that Castro’s appeal to the tradition of José Martí constitutes just such an instance. The Maoist recourse to the Legalist tradition against Confucianism would seem to qualify equally well, as would Lenin’s lifelong infatuation with the elements of Russian social and political thought exemplified in the work of Nikolai Chernyshevsky. No less could be said for the “glorification of violence and terror.” Marx himself had insisted that terror might be necessary to shorten the birthpangs of the

¹⁷ As Danto has stated, “[L]et us assume that there is a definite range of operations, the doing of which constitutes planting roses, and let us suppose further that these operations constitute necessary conditions for the coming forth of roses... [T]hen failure to do these things would not merely guarantee the non-coming-forth of roses... but would also falsify the claim that the person was planting roses.” Arthur C. Danto, *Analytical Philosophy of History* (London: Cambridge University, 1965), p. 163.

¹⁸ “[S]uppose a man does B_i and B_i is in a range marked out by ‘is R -ing’. Still, it would not immediately follow that he is R -ing. Thus Jones may be digging holes, and though digging holes is part of what a man of whom ‘planting roses’ is true *does*, we could not infallibly infer that Jones is planting roses: he may be planting lilacs or *just* digging holes.” *Ibid.*, p. 162.

new society and that force would be the midwife of socialism. And it was Mao who had spoken, with evident approval, of the wave of terror that would attend the righteous uprising of the peasants, while in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution the violent destruction of the old became a revolutionary virtue.

In effect, because no measure of such traits can be taken, Marxist-Leninist systems would seem to qualify as readily as fascist ones. If anything, Eastman's criterial list has "totalitarianism" rather than "fascism" as its referent. Furthermore, these characteristics are shared by any number of nonfascist movements and regimes. They could equally well characterize the Soviet Union in both the past and the present, Maoist and post-Maoist China, Castro's Cuba, Nkrumah's Ghana, Nyerere's Tanzania, as well as any number of past and extant nonfascist states and movements. Eastman himself has granted that his criterial definition hardly distinguishes the "fascism" of the "Blue Shirts" from the communism of Mao Zedong.¹⁹ It would seem, then, that Eastman's characterization of fascism fails to perform the necessary function of a classificatory concept in science: the identification of a category "which will tell us more about our subject matter than any other categorial sets."²⁰ As a consequence, the need for an alternative cognitive strategy seems evident.

Any alternative account of the Renaissance Society would have to accomplish more in terms of classificational coherence and interpretive yield than that of Eastman. Minimally, it would have to correspond to generally held informed opinion. That many competent scholars have identified the Renaissance Society, or the larger Kuomintang, with "fascism" requires either acquiescence or accounting. This accounting should not only tell us something about the Kuomintang or the Renaissance Society we did not already know or reorganize whatever we do know in more instructive fashion, it should also afford novel insights into "fascism" as a determinate class of contemporary political phenomena.

The argument here has been that there is a clear alternative account to that provided by Eastman and any number of lesser lights that better conforms to the available evidence and delivers greater theoretical yield. To borrow an expression from Abraham Kaplan, the concept of fascism in this alternate account would constitute a more "natural" rather than an

¹⁹ Eastman, "Fascism in Kuomintang China," p. 29.

²⁰ Abraham Kaplan, *The Conduct of Inquiry: Methodology for Behavioral Science* (Scranton, Penn.: Chandler, 1964), p. 52.

“artificial” class—“one which allows the discovery of many more, and more important, resemblances than those originally recognized.”²¹

The Chinese Renaissance Society: An Ideology of Delayed Industrialization

By the mid-1930s the ideologues of the Renaissance Society had fully articulated a collection of ideas calculated to satisfy the essential preconditions for national regeneration and self-sustained economic development. The ideology of the *Fu-hsing she* revealed itself unmistakably as a form of reactive, developmental nationalism, born of a series of protracted and humiliating crises that threatened the very survival of China. The Renaissance ideology was one of a large class of such ideologies that made their appearance toward the end of the nineteenth century and that have flourished in profligate abundance in the twentieth. This is the class of ideologies that Mary Matossian has identified as “ideologies of delayed industrialization.”²²

These ideologies share characteristic reactions to the impact of the industrialized West on industrially backward communities. Among the first consequences of that contact is a pervasive sense of impotence and threat among the inhabitants of the industrially underdeveloped economies. The capabilities of the advanced societies appear so overwhelming that an oppressive awareness of a loss of control of one’s own environment assails a significant segment of the intelligentsia native to the backward societies. There is a loss of confidence in traditional institutions and established values. Among the more aggressive of the native intellectuals, there is a clarion call to the nation’s defense to resist the “foreign oppressors”: those who have inflicted defeat on the community, impugned its culture, and humiliated its citizens.

The defense of the imperiled community invariably involves a commitment to improving military capabilities supported by broad-gauged economic development. Equally invariable in such circumstances is the recognition that such improvement requires collective dedication and selfless sacrifices. There is an insistence that a “new man” is required to replace those of the old society who have failed to meet the challenges of the time. There is a selective rummaging through the traditional culture

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 50–51. A classification is “artificial” when “we cannot do more with it than we first intended.”

²² See Mary Matossian, “Ideologies of Delayed Industrialization: Some Tensions and Ambiguities,” in John H. Kautsky, ed., *Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries: Nationalism and Communism* (New York: John Wiley, 1966), pp. 252–264.

to identify, preserve, and foster those elements understood to strengthen the survival capabilities of the nation. There is a tension between appeals to some select traditional traits and the effort to instill new virtues and new strengths. Thus, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk could exult in the barbaric virtues of the Osmanli nomads and yet insist on elevating the “general mentality” of Turks to that of “modern civilization.”²³ Mussolini could appeal to the millennial virtues of “Romanità” and yet urge Italians to equip themselves with all the sophistication of contemporary science. Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek could exhort the Chinese to revive Confucian ethics, but not at the expense of modern science.

Among those movements that have succeeded to power, animated by these ideologies, the political form chosen is almost invariably authoritarian—some variant of “guided” or “tutelary” democracy. This can assume the guise of one-party, elite, military, or military-bureaucratic dominance.²⁴ Given the tasks identified by such ideologies and assumed by such movements, the choice is rarely, if ever, pluralistic or multiparty in form. The state, as an institutionalized means of control and resource allocation, frequently becomes a critical component of the system. Nationalism is systematically inculcated, even in those systems that originally characterized themselves as “internationalist” and “antinationalist.”

Finally, given the charged atmosphere of protracted crisis and the rigorous mobilization of material and human resources, the revolutionary “leader” looms large in the configuration of recurrent features. The “Duce,” the “Lider Massimo,” the “Osagyefo,” and the “Tsong-li” make their predictable appearance. Even those movements that subscribe to belief systems that deny the individual any special historic function find it necessary to produce their own “Great Helmsman,” their own “Never Setting Red Sun.” The cult of the leader was no less in evidence in Maoist China than it was in Fascist Italy.

The authors of these ideologies of delayed industrialization typically commit themselves to one or another of the following historic projects: the restoration of their nation’s integrity, security, and viability in a complex and threatening world. All of these projects include activities that take on meaning, or at least more meaning, only in the context of the principal project(s) that inspire the entire undertaking.

²³ See Halide Edib Adivar, *Turkey Faces West* (New Haven: Yale University, 1930), pp. 1–9.

²⁴ See the discussion in Amos Perlmutter, *Modern Authoritarianism: A Comparative Institutional Analysis* (New Haven: Yale University, 1981).

As a member of this class of ideologies of delayed industrialization, the program of the Chinese Renaissance Society displays some of the traits Eastman identifies with fascism simply because those traits are the traits shared by the larger class. This provides a plausible explanation of why so many competent scholars have insisted that the Renaissance Society and/or the Kuomintang were "fascist." At least some of the confusion arises from the fact that many conceive the traits common to developmental nationalism to be peculiar to fascism. The result of such a conviction is the proliferation of "fascist" movements and regimes. Ludovico Garruccio, for example, having identified fascism with movements of delayed industrialization, finds "fascisms" in every part of the contemporary world, ranging from Peronism in Argentina to Nkrumahism in Ghana, Sukarnoism in Indonesia, and Nasserism in Egypt.²⁵ Maurice Bardeche, having made the same kind of analytic assessment, finds fascism in the historical regime of Mustafa Ataturk as well as in the contemporary Lebanese Phalange and any number of equally contemporary "national liberation movements."

Given this kind of cognitive strategy, there is little wonder that the ideology of Sun Yat-sen, the Kuomintang, and the Renaissance Society should all be characterized as "fascist."

Generally, this kind of inclusiveness is considered a cognitive disability, and most analysts would prefer to reduce the range of any particular descriptive category by introducing a more extensive list of qualifying traits.²⁷ To the general traits shared by almost all developmental nationalisms is added the specific properties peculiar to only a subset of such systems. Most of the specific traits used to sort out subsets of systems from the more inclusive category of developmental nationalisms are those that characterize the instrumentalities used by any given movement in the pursuit of its ends.

In the case of fascism, and Italian Fascism in particular, the general traits that they share with the larger class of developmental nationalisms are those traits that were inherited from Italian Nationalism. These are the same species traits that they share with any number of past and con-

²⁵ Ludovico Garruccio, *L'industrializzazione tra nazionalismo e rivoluzione: Le ideologie politiche dei paesi in via di sviluppo* (Bologna: Il mulino, 1969).

²⁶ See Maurice Bardeche, ed., *I fascismi sconosciuti* (Rome: Il borghese, 1969); and idem, *Che cosa è il fascismo?* (Rome: Volpe, 1964).

²⁷ "In actual research practice, a larger number of items rather than one item alone is used for the purpose of classification. This has a variety of reasons. For example, indices based on more items permit finer distinctions, and they tend to cancel out the peculiarities of any single item." Lazarsfeld, "Evidence," p. 616.

temporary developmental nationalisms, such as Afrikaaner Nationalism, Black Nationalism, Cuban Nationalism, and including those of the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, the Kuomintang, and the Renaissance Society. Fascism thus shared in the programmatic goals of the general class of developmental nationalisms (economic modernization, for example), but distinguished itself in its choice of strategies and instrumentalities for the accomplishment of these ends.

As a case in point, in order to control an economy that responded largely to market signals, Fascist Italy put together a control apparatus that Mussolini identified with "corporativism." In the mixed economy that endured during the Fascist period in Italy, the Fascist Corporations were to serve as "instruments which, under the aegis of the state, carry out the complete organic and totalitarian regulation of production."²⁸ The organization of all functional groups in the community into representative corporations became a specific trait of Fascism. For Mussolini, "The syndical and corporative structure of the state is that which confers originality on the Fascist Revolution. . . . The Fascist State is corporative, or it is not fascist."²⁹

Equally specific to Italian Fascism were reasonably coherent conceptions of mass mobilization and charismatic leadership that influenced the overt behaviors of the regime. Fascist rites, rituals, and symbolisms were all calculated to produce specific patterned responses among the citizenry. There was, in substance, a "fascist style" of governance that involved not only display and political theater but rested on a conception of "charismatic rule" that conceived the relationship of the leader and the masses to be direct and intimate.³⁰

A feature of fascist style was the place accorded voluntarism and violence in revolutionary success, personal development, and the moral evolution of the collective. At the doctrinal level, it received expression in a "theory of violence."³¹ At the tactical level, it became the organizational rationale of the *squadristi*, the paramilitary organization of the Fascist party, and subsequently that of the Fascist Militia.³² When commenta-

²⁸ Benito Mussolini, *The Corporate State* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1938), p. 7.

²⁹ Benito Mussolini, "La crisi economica mondiale," in idem, *Discorsi del 1930* (Milan: Alpes, 1931), pp. 163–164.

³⁰ See the discussion in Robert Michels, "Charismatic Leadership," in idem, *First Lectures in Political Sociology* (New York: Harper, 1949), pp. 119–133.

³¹ See A. James Gregor, "Fascism's Philosophy of Violence and the Concept of Terror," in David C. Rapoport and Yonah Alexander, eds., *The Morality of Terrorism: Religious and Secular Justification* (New York: Pergamon, 1982), pp. 152–168; Sergio Panunzio, *Diritto, forza e violenza* (Bologna: Cappelli, 1921).

³² See Guido Fracastoro di Fornello, *Noi squadristi* (Verona: Albarelli-Marchesetti, 1939);

commentators speak of the “militarization” of society by fascist movements, they generally allude to just such a rationale and just such tactical posturing.

Finally, there are traits specific to Italian Fascism which seem to have been the result of particular time-conditioned, objective circumstances and specific cultural-political antecedents. It has been already suggested, for example, that Italian Fascism was expansionist. Its expansionism was as much dictated by the poverty of Italian resources as by the assertive character of the reactive nationalism that animated its leadership and the aggressive psychology of the war veterans who made up its first cadre and rank and file. The histrionic commitment to war and violence that found expression in the Futurism of Marinetti and his followers and that passed, without remainder, into Fascism contributed to its “cult of violence.”³³

What results from all this is a recognition that any effort to generate a convincing and comprehensive taxonomic schema that might coherently and consistently distinguish developmental nationalist movements and regimes from those that are specifically fascist is no easy task. These descriptive categories remain open-textured and correspondingly vague. Some of the properties used to define fascism seem to be intrinsic, while others seem contingent. Some of the traits of Italian Fascism seem to be essential, while others appear to be accidents of time and circumstance. To make the appropriate distinction constitutes one of the central problems of these kinds of analyses.

In at least one critical sense, however, the ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Society was not only distinct from that of fascism, but from that of totalitarianism as well. The thinkers of the Renaissance Society did not unequivocally abandon political democracy as an ultimate goal. The political posture assumed by the principal spokesmen of the society was essentially that of Sun Yat-sen. The ultimate and ideal political system anticipated by both Sun and the Renaissance Society was indistinguishable from the pluralist democracy with which the West is familiar.³⁴ Conversely, there is not the least suggestion that Fascists anticipated any such ultimate outcome for their revolution, while the explicit objections to “bourgeois democracy” of Marxist-Leninists would

Asvero Gravelli, ed., *Squadrisimo* (Rome: Antieuropa, n.d.).

³³ A. James Gregor, *The Ideology of Fascism* (New York: Free Press, 1969), pp. 83–85; Antonio Vinci, *Prefigurazioni del fascismo* (Milan: Celuc, 1974), chap. 4.

³⁴ See Sun Yat-sen, “Five Power Constitution” and idem, “Kuomintang’s Political Program of 1924,” in idem, *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction* (Taipei: China Cultural Service, 1953), pp. 19–60.

also exclude the democratic commitment from the totalitarianism of the generic left.

Whatever “fascism” or “totalitarianism” there might have been among the convictions held by both Sun and the members of the Renaissance Society can be better understood as a functional and contingent response made by developmental nationalists to the urgent problems of an economically backward and politically threatened community. Almost without exception, every political posture assumed by the ideologues of the Renaissance Society which Eastman identifies with “fascism” was instrumental in character. These postures were either instrumental toward the establishment of democratic preconditions or functional toward the resolution and management of a protracted crisis. None of these political strategies signaled an intrinsic commitment to an antidemocratic persuasion.

Like Sun, the ideologues of the Renaissance Society understood that political democracy required the satisfaction of necessary preconditions. Among these perhaps the most essential are (1) the existence of a nation-state; (2) the existence of a “civic culture”: the diffusion of democratic values and “rules of the game” throughout society; and (3) the existence of an informed citizenry with the literacy and educational sophistication for the making of intelligent electoral choices. These preconditions are understood, in the contemporary literature of comparative politics, to be essentially the results that would obtain from the political and economic modernization of a society. Being a “late-comer” to modernization, China did not have the luxury of the natural and gradual evolution of democratic preconditions that the West enjoyed. As a country that aspired to a delayed but rapid industrialization, it was necessary that the modernization of China’s economy and polity come under the aegis of the state. State building, then, became a necessary priority. Furthermore, as a transitional system in which traditional political institutions and sources of legitimacy were no longer viable while the new institutions of a modern polity were yet unborn, state building became the responsibility of the revolutionary party.³⁵

During this transitional period the dominant party would be “above the state,” and the controls exercised would be “comprehensive.”³⁶

³⁵ Myron Weiner and Joseph LaPalombara have singled out five “problems of political development” for which, in their judgment, political parties are particularly relevant. These are national integration, political participation, political legitimacy, the management of conflict, and political socialization. Myron Weiner and Joseph LaPalombara, “The Impact of Parties on Political Development,” in Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, eds., *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1969), pp. 413–427.

³⁶ Sun Yat-sen, “Statement on the Formation of National Government,” in *idem*, *Fun-*

Under the aegis of the dominant party, the government would attend to the construction of a nation-state—the institutionalization of authority—which Sun Yat-sen and the Renaissance Society had understood to be one of the essential tasks during the period of military government. Under the aegis of the dominant party, the state would also attend to the establishment of a “civic culture”: the diffusion of the values and norms of a democratic society. Sun and the Renaissance ideologues had understood this to be the primary task during the period of the tutelary state. Finally, under the aegis of the single-party state, agricultural modernization and industrialization would be effected, which would make possible the increased well-being, universal education, and mass literacy that form the foundations for the informed citizenry of a functional democracy.

To accomplish all this, the Renaissance Society proposed the pursuit of certain facilitating political strategies. In a society that was still imbued with the parochial and sectarian attitudes of a traditional society but which, at the same time, had become increasingly infused with the participatory ethos of the modern mass society, it would be useful if the state could exercise extensive controls on culture and education and on political participation. For a society in transit between the old and the new, with a fragile institutional infrastructure, the personalistic rule of a “highest leader” would provide the firm leadership needed for the mobilization of energy and resources. Ultimately, however, when the institutions of a democratic society had fully matured, the charismatic leader would no longer be needed. Lastly, for a society undergoing rapid industrialization, the requisite massive accumulation of capital would demand from the people not only commitment and dedication but also the ability to sacrifice and delay gratifications. For all this, a “new man” would have to be created—one who would be self-denying and abnegating, animated by the spirit of an “enhanced nationalism.”

These strategies and political instrumentalities were made all the more urgent and imperative because of the threat of imminent war with Japan. The urgency for the territorial integration and political unification of China, in particular, became the focal concern of the Renaissance Society.

In effect, then, the ideology of the Renaissance Society was composed of functional proposals for the resolution of the critical problems of economic and political modernization under the exacting conditions of protracted crises. Animated by the developmental

damentals of National Reconstruction, pp. 161–163.

nationalism of Sun Yat-sen, the ideologues of the Renaissance Society tailored Sun's doctrinal injunctions to the tasks of territorial, national, value, and elite-mass integration to produce a surprisingly modern political program. That such was the case explains why the strategies recommended by the Renaissance ideologues were always instrumental in character. While Fascist ideologues had elaborated a theoretical rationale for "charismatic government," the intellectuals of the Renaissance Society addressed themselves exclusively to the functional role of the "highest leader." While Fascist intellectuals had articulated a complex theory of the dynamics of collective mimesis and the suggestibility of crowds which provided the rationale for Fascist mass mobilization, the ideologues of the Renaissance Society spoke simply of a strategy of grassroots politics, with Kuomintang representatives penetrating local associations, schools, and military units both to instruct and to be instructed. While Fascist ideologues spoke of dynamic mass mobilization through ritual and theater, the Renaissance intellectuals addressed themselves simply to the control and channeling of political participation. While Fascist philosophers spoke of the moral implications of revolutionary violence, the Renaissance ideologues saw violence only as a necessity conditioned by time and circumstance.

Fascism's political behaviors represented a commitment to an alternative, nondemocratic political ideal. While a case can be made that Italian Fascists had attempted to address many of the same problems confronted by the Renaissance Society, their proposed strategies could rarely be taken to be simply functional responses. Fascists understood their policies as representing not responses to immediate problems but preliminary moves toward the construction of a world other than that to which political democrats were committed. Renaissance ideologues, on the other hand, always characterized their proposals as functional and problem-specific, for unlike the Fascists, the Renaissance ideologues did not anticipate a future that was other than democratic in form and character.

In that sense the Renaissance ideologues have more in common with the various forms of developmental nationalisms found in such abundance in the developing world today than with any form of fascism or totalitarianism. Many of the developmental nationalisms that made their appearance after the Second World War have taken on authoritarian traits. Many have put together "one party systems," and not a few have produced a "charismatic leader" who functions as "President-for-Life." The ideologues of almost all such developing systems speak of fashioning "new men," and more than one has spoken of the necessity of violence

to free his oppressed community from the dominance of imperialism. Some have even alluded to the regenerative value of violence. Almost all have "exalted the state" and sought to create a network of controls designed to channel energies to national purpose.

Some have chosen to see in all of this the "second coming of fascism."³⁷ The present analysis suggests something different. What we are seeing may be the response of systems attempting to solve the problems of delayed economic and political modernization in a world environment fraught with crises. That some of these efforts might devolve into some form of fascism or totalitarianism seems evident. When that occurs, authoritarianism is no longer an adaptive response to crisis but becomes the first stage in the evolution of an antidemocratic political arrangement.

We know far too little about the dynamics of such political systems to be able to predict their futures, but one factor appears to be of sufficient importance to merit its identification. Any ideology that regularly reaffirms its ultimate commitment to pluralistic democracy creates a political culture supportive of democratic purpose. However long an emergency regime endures under such circumstances, the continued commitment to democracy becomes a promissory note on the future. Whatever the temporary derogation of individual and collective rights, whole populations expect the ultimate attainment of all the rights and safeguards of a true democracy.

In this explicit sense the ideology of the Chinese Renaissance Society was fundamentally different from that of totalitarianism in general and fascism in particular. In the final analysis, the effort to employ the characterization of "fascist" in providing an account of the Renaissance Society provides little leverage on coming to understand the society, the Nanking regime, or fascism. Coming to understand something of the Chinese Renaissance Society, on the other hand, might well contribute to our comprehension of all those developmental nationalisms that have given the twentieth century its distinct character.

Conclusion

Arthur C. Danto once wrote that "not to have the use of project verbs is to lack the linguistic wherewithal for organizing." Not to have project words would render the historian "incapable of describing what men are doing—and so [would] disqualify [him] from setting down

³⁷ Walter Laquer, "Fascism—the Second Coming," *Commentary* 61, no. 2 (February 1976).

whatever happens, as it happens, the way it happens.” It is in the context of a “project” that individual pieces of behavior take on “meaning” and can be “understood.” For, as Danto’s example of hole-digging illustrates, in the absence of a project, a piece of behavior such as the digging of a hole becomes uninterpretable, being as it were a behavior fraught with ambiguities. For although “digging holes is part of what a man of whom ‘planting roses’ is true does, we could not infallibly infer that Jones is planting roses: he may be planting lilacs or just digging holes.”³⁸

The same can be said of Lloyd Eastman’s approach to the enigma of the *Fu-hsing she*. Having recognized that “the term ‘fascism’ is one of the most ambiguous and emotion-laden words in the political science lexicon,”³⁹ Eastman chooses not to define “fascism” by a project but relies instead on a descriptive strategy: defining “fascism” by a criterial list of its presumed ideological attributes. In effect, by his refusal to speculate on what he takes the project of fascism to be—what all the separate pieces of behavior that constitute “doing fascism” would lead to—Eastman has rendered the ideology and the behaviors of the Chinese Renaissance Society uninterpretable.

It is thus that specific behaviors of the Renaissance Society—such as political “indoctrination” and “repression,” the establishment of “public security organizations,” “censorship,” the *Pieh-tung tui*’s (Special Movement Corps) extirpation of Communists, the political “assassinations” and “terrorism” attributed to Tai Li’s Special Services⁴⁰—become open to any number of interpretations. Within the context of the Renaissance Society’s self-avowed project of the rebirth of China through modernization, these behaviors are perfectly comprehensible as instrumental toward the integrative tasks of political development. Divorced from a project, however, these behaviors lose their contextual grounding, and their meaning becomes correspondingly porous and ambiguous.

Having the benefit of the knowledge of the past—knowing that in March 1938 Chiang Kai-shek finally acceded to the post of *Tsung-ts’ai* (Generalissimo) of the Kuomintang, becoming, in effect, the “highest leader” of the nation, and knowing also that the republican regime of the Kuomintang would become increasingly ineffective and corrupt with the years and would ultimately collapse in defeat in 1949—Eastman exercises

³⁸ Danto, *Analytical Philosophy of History*, p. 162.

³⁹ Eastman, “Fascism in Kuomintang China,” p. 27.

⁴⁰ See Lloyd E. Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution: China Under Nationalist Rule, 1927–1937* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1974), pp. 64–78.

the clarity of hindsight to arrive at this final assessment of the Renaissance Society:

[P]olitical principles have no momentum of their own; they are borne by men, by a party, by a political movement. And if this political movement has no social base, no political constituency outside itself, it lacks a keel to keep it committed to those principles. Without a social base, the struggle for power soon becomes an end in itself, and programmatic statements cease to have meaning except as a political weapon with which to attack factional rivals.⁴¹

With this Eastman arrives at his understanding of the phenomenon of the Chinese Renaissance Society—it was “purely and simply a clique bidding for power within the Party.”⁴² The members of the Renaissance Society, like their leader, Chiang Kai-shek, were “primarily interested in seizing positions and influence in government and business.”⁴³ What motivated them was the desire for personal power and the advancement of private interests. Their purported ideology was essentially meaningless, an elaborate disguise for personal advancement and political ambitions. For, according to Eastman, although “hundreds and perhaps thousands of articles and books were written about interpretations of Sun Yat-sen’s doctrine, . . . these ideological polemics and doctrinal explications were little more than froth covering the struggle for office and political power.”⁴⁴

All of this leaves the interested observer in a state of perplexity. For if the ideology of the Renaissance Society was a mere cover for political ambition, why did Eastman go to such lengths to “prove” that it was a “fascist” ideology? That seems to be an exercise in futility—unless, of course, this is precisely what Eastman understands “fascism” to be: a political ideology and movement that comprise, as a program, nothing other than the pursuit of the private interests of politically ambitious individuals. The “project” in this “implicit definition” of fascism is none other than the pursuit of power for the sake of power. The political means, the “behaviors” of such movements, are the ruthless tactics of the amoral opportunist. Fascism, of whatever national variety, is really nothing other than “a gigantic confidence trick”

⁴¹ Eastman, “Fascism in Kuomintang China,” p. 30.

⁴² Franklin L. Ho, “The Reminiscences of Ho Lien (Franklin L. Ho),” as told to Crystal Lorch, postscript dated July 1966 (unpublished manuscript in Special Collections Library, Butler Library, Columbia University), p. 314, cited in Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 305.

⁴³ Hsu Dau-lin, “Chinese Local Administration under the National Government: Democracy and Self-Government Versus Traditional Centralism” (unpublished ms.), chap. 1, p. 31, cited in Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 305.

⁴⁴ Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 306.

perpetrated on entire nations.

Danto, in a discussion on the falsification of project terms, maintained that it may be the case that a man is pursuing a project without it having to be the case that that project is realized. Hence, though a sentence that asserts a project verb of someone may indeed refer to two time-separated events—that which the man “*literally* does” and the goal that is the “expected result”—and describe the earlier event in the light of the later one, “it is not *logically* required that the later event take place for the sentence to be true.”⁴⁵

Using his example of a man’s “rose planting” project, Danto observed that “if roses fail to come forth, this does not falsify our proposition, so long as he did whatever might, by current criteria of rosiculture, count as planting roses.” For even if he should do all of the necessary operations in rose-planting, “there would be no guarantee that roses would come forth—a hurricane might come up and undo all [of his] labours—but it *would* be true that [he] was planting roses.”⁴⁶

In other words, the fact that the avowed “project” of the Chinese Renaissance Society—the rebirth of China through the modernization and development of her economic, political, and social systems—failed to materialize does not, in itself, disconfirm the society’s commitment to such a project. In the first place, the Renaissance Movement might not have had the time and the opportunity for the full realization of its program. The society was summarily dissolved in 1938 as a result of a decision made by the Kuomintang Extraordinary National Conference held in Wuchang in March of that year, the same conference that made Chiang Kai-shek *Tsung-ts’ai*. During that conference the decision was made to dissolve and abolish three intraparty factions; their members were to be amalgamated into a new organization under the formal and direct auspices of the party center: *San-min chu-i ch’ing-nien t’uan* (Three Principles of the People Youth Corps). These three factions were the Renaissance Society, Ch’en Ch’eng’s Resistance Society (*Kan-ch’eng she*), and the Nationalist or Blue and White Society (*Ch’ing-pai she*) of the Ch’en brothers, Li-fu and Kuo-fu.⁴⁷

One of the primary missions of the Renaissance Society was the reformation and “resuscitation” of the Kuomintang from within, so that

⁴⁵ Danto, *Analytical Philosophy of History*, p. 164.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁴⁷ See Pai Yü, “Ying-Mei chih-lü ti tsa-i yü tsa-kan” [Recollections and impressions from my travels in England and the United States], *Chuan-chi wen-hsiieh* [Biographical literature], 36, no. 6 (June 1980): 100.

“a true *San-min chu-i* party could be created anew.”⁴⁸ Recognizing the functional importance of the political party in the development of their nation, the Renaissance ideologues proposed that the Kuomintang return to the authoritarian discipline of the revolutionary party and revive the spirit of commitment and dedication of its early years. Toward that end, the society advocated that Kuomintang members purify themselves of the materialistic accretions they had acquired over the years. The party would put limitations on the property holdings of its members. Party discipline would also be tightened. The daily life of the members would be subject to the scrutiny of the center. No longer would members of the Kuomintang be able to live, as they had, “in the affluent manner of the aristocracy.”⁴⁹

All of this could only have provoked the ire and resentment of those members of the Kuomintang who were not of the same persuasion as the Renaissance Society. In effect, opposition from other factions within the party could have been the major reason for the society’s dissolution. Perhaps it was the strenuous opposition from factions led by Ch’en Ch’eng and the CC brothers (Ch’en Li-fu and Ch’en Kuo-fu) that forced Chiang Kai-shek to dissolve the Renaissance Society as a concessionary gesture to appease these factional leaders in exchange for their support of his accession to the position of *Tsung-ts’ai*.⁵⁰ Liu Chien-ch’ün, in an interview with Eastman, had said as much, contending that opposition from the CC clique did contribute “decisively” to the failure of his

⁴⁸ Lu I-yüan, “Chung-hua min-tsu chih wei-chi chi wo-men chin-hou chih jen-wu” [The crisis of the Chinese people and our duty from now on], part 2, *CT* 1, no. 7 (1 July 1933): 12.

⁴⁹ Hua, “Tui-yü ‘kung-hsien i-tien cheng-li pen-tang ti i-chien’ ti shang-ch’üeh” [On “Suggestions for the reform of our party”], in Liu Chien-ch’ün, *Fu-hsing Chung-kuo ko-ming chih lu* [The road to regenerating the Chinese revolution] (Nanking: Chung-kuo wen-hua hsüeh-hui, 1934), pp. 157–158.

⁵⁰ According to Teng Wen-i, a founding member of the *Li-hsing she*, “For the sake of the unity of the whole [Kuomintang] party... [the decision was made to] abolish the *San-min chu-i li-hsing she* and the Chinese Renaissance Society....” The suspicion that the Renaissance Society was abolished as a gesture of appeasement to other intra-party factions is enhanced when, according to Teng, the organization that replaced the Renaissance Society—the *San-min chu-i Youth Corps*, which was formed from the amalgamation of at least three KMT factions—proved to be ineffectual and spiritless from its inception. “From its very beginning, since its founding on March 29, 1938, the *San-min chu-i Youth Corps* lacked the spirit of Huang-hua Kang and Whampoa.... [T]he scale of the organization was large, but the actual work it undertook was empty and hollow.... [H]aving neither the revolutionary spirit nor the activities of a revolution, the *Youth Corps* also failed to inspire and arouse our youth to personal sacrifices....” Teng Wen-i, *Mao-hsien fan-nan chi* [A record of risky adventures and hardships] (Taipei: Hsüeh-sheng shu-tien, 1973), 2, p. 110.

society.⁵¹

Other factors might account for the ultimate failure of the Renaissance Movement. Although the Renaissance Society was dissolved in 1938, having had only six years to carry out its project, it nevertheless made significant progress toward its overall attainment. Eastman himself has acknowledged that by 1937, when the war with Japan formally began, China had become a far more cohesive and integrated society.

China in 1936 and 1937 was...being integrated politically and territorially to a degree not known since at least 1915.... The unequal treaties...had in most cases been abrogated.... [T]he number of students in primary schools had increased between 1931 and 1937 by 86 percent and by 94 percent in the universities. And for the first time in China's history, the currency of the nation was unified.⁵²

Eastman went on to observe that by the eve of the war with Japan the Nanking government

had made considerable progress in riveting together the framework of a Chinese state. As compared with March 1929, for example, when it controlled only 8 percent of the nation's area and 20 percent of the population, the Nationalist government on the eve of the war with Japan could credibly claim to govern 25 percent of the area and 66 percent of the population of China. True, such statistics disguise the fact that the loyalties of many officials and army commanders in the areas "controlled" by Nanking were exceedingly tenuous. [But]...it remains true that the Nationalist authorities had made progress toward creating one of the primary conditions for a viable political system: political control over a unified territory.... [I]t appears as though they had forged an environment within which the forces of social and economic change could develop.⁵³

We do not know how much of this is attributable to the activities of the Renaissance Society, but clearly, their activities had some impact.⁵⁴ All of these accomplishments, however, might have been undone by

⁵¹ As cited in Eastman, *Abortive Revolution*, p. 83.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 244.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁵⁴ According to Teng Wen-i, "In the six years since its founding in March 1932..., the Chinese Renaissance Society had extirpated the Communist Party and its Red Army. The society had withstood the incursion of imperialist Japan, dealt harshly with traitors and spies, reformed political corruption, promoted the New Life Movement, altered habits and customs, initiated a national renaissance movement and a movement for the reconstruction of our national economy.... Towards the history of the Republican revolution and that of the Kuomintang, the Renaissance Society had contributed a glorious chapter." Teng, *Mao-hsien fan-nan chi*, p. 109.

intervening forces that were beyond their control—the “hurricane” that undid all of the “rose-planting” labors of the Renaissance Society. Of these intervening variables, perhaps the most important was the destructive effects of the war with Japan.

Thus, the full story of the Chinese Renaissance Society can be told only upon the completion of further research into the factional politics within the Kuomintang and some assessment of the effects of the war with Japan on the Nationalist regime. Happily, with the recent opening to the public for the first time of the historical documents and material of the wartime period by the Kuomintang party archives in Yangmingshan, Taipei, and the increasing openness and liberality of the authorities on Taiwan that have encouraged the publication of more and more biographical accounts and memoirs by surviving Renaissance members, such research becomes increasingly likely. It is only then that we may, finally, be able to deliver a full account of the Chinese Renaissance Society: setting down whatever happened, as it had happened, the way it happened.

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