

slandered as anarchists and cautioned that the revolution could not be opposed on the pretext that it would result in anarchy.<sup>64</sup> But the time was ripe for some Chinese to discover anarchism as a system of thought appropriate to their circumstances.

The future anarchists reached political maturity in an atmosphere of rising anger, frustration, and hope. The Tongmenghui soon broke up in clique disputes. Despair over the inability of the Qing to ward off foreign aggression gave way to new theories of nationhood. Nationalism, however, did not seem the final solution to all Chinese. One strand of the times was the revival of Buddhism.<sup>65</sup> (Huang) Zongyang was not the only monk to support the revolutionaries openly or surreptitiously. The famous Taixu (1890–1947) read Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, Yan Fu, Tan Sitong, and Zou Rong; finally, in the year before the revolution he encountered anarchism, about which he probably learned from *Natural Justice* (*Tianyi Bao*) or *New Century* (*Xin Shiji*).<sup>66</sup>

And as of 1905, the Qing government itself finally turned to reform. A constitution was promised within twelve years; students were encouraged to study abroad; the traditional examination system was abolished. Some intellectuals took comfort in the thought that the court was finally moving; assemblies at the country and provincial level were established and became important for those with the property qualifications to vote and run for office. Others, however, were all the more impressed by the urgency to move on to much deeper change. Convinced that the Qing would always do its best to stall the distribution of power downward from the court, they were only encouraged to press on toward the revolution.

Perhaps the reform that was the most far-reaching in its consequences, at least in respect to its effects on both individual literati

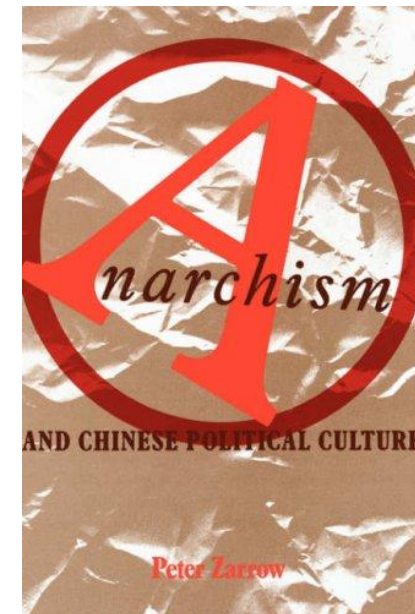
<sup>64</sup> Ye Xiasheng, “Wuzhengfudang yu gemingdang zhi shuoming” (An explanation of anarchists and socialists), *Minbao* no. 7 (5 November 1906), pp. hi, 122–123.

<sup>65</sup> See Welch, *The Buddhist Revival in China*, especially ch. 1.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 15–16.

## Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture

Peter Zarrow



1990

ferent social policies.<sup>61</sup> Not only did it supply pictures of revolutionary heroes—such as Bakunin, “founder of anarchism”—but it also began to give a more substantial impression of anarchist beliefs even in critical articles. One article, anonymously translated from Japanese in the spring of 1906, presented a fair precis of anarchism as well as of socialism.<sup>62</sup> Anarchism received as much attention as socialism or land redistribution. And the author had something good to say about all of them. Philosophical, Christian, and terrorist (*pohuai*) forms of anarchism were each seen to be dedicated to individual liberty and social equality, and Bakunin, Kropotkin, Jean Grave, and Errico Malatesta received mention. In fact, the author saw all social movements as tending toward the same goals, fundamentally divided only by their opinion of government. A brief section translated from Kutsumi Kesson’s 1906 *O-Bei no museifushugi* (Anarchism in Europe and America) served further to introduce the subject, distinguishing between individualistic anarchism and the more socially minded tradition of Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin.<sup>63</sup> Revolutionaries also criticized anarchism. One complained that the revolutionaries were all being

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wan shangwu yinshuguan, 1966), pp. 145–234; and Michael Gasser, *Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911*, pp. 65–151.

<sup>61</sup> See Bernal, *Chinese Socialism to 1907*, pp. 107–128. Proposals ranged from Sim’s “people’s livelihood,” land rights, and the single tax to Feng Ziyou’s almost Bismarckian state socialism and Zhu Zhixin’s sophisticated appreciation of Marxism. Bernal has periodized *Minbao*’s approach to anarchism and socialism, pp. 217–218: interest in socialism decreased as favorable interest in anarchism increased; however, Bernal counted only those articles that were wholly focused on the subject and did not consider whether the Chinese perceived anarchism as a kind of socialism.

<sup>62</sup> “Oumei shehui geming yundong zhi zhonglei ji pinglun” (The typology and critical assessment of social revolutionary movements in Europe and America), *Minbao* no. 4 (28 April 1906), pp. 123–133.

<sup>63</sup> Kutsumi Kesson, “Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi erpai” (The two wings of anarchism), *Minbao* no. 8 (8 October 1906), pp. 131–138. Kutsumi was a Nagasaki-based journalist sympathetic to anarchism and friendly with the Japanese anarchist Kotoku Shusui.

only a modest nudge toward revolution but greatly added to a climate of opinion in which the government further lost prestige. Throughout the affair, a number of important officials in Shanghai gave aid to the radicals. Agreeing with most of their specific goals and concerns—such as the need to deal with the Russian threat—these officials demonstrated, more than did anything else, the Qing’s loss of legitimacy. Wu Zhihui, for one, was indirectly warned by the Daotai to get out of the city. While most officials remained loyal, this collusion between alienated government officials and revolutionaries is a motif of the Revolution of 1911, and perhaps of most revolutions. Officials who bend the rules and revolutionaries who keep their contacts with the ruling classes form a kind of father-son relationship. In the murkiness of a revolutionary atmosphere, publicity-seeking radicals and quite respectable reformers can make common cause.<sup>59</sup> The Chinese revolutionaries were often close enough to the ruling class to be able to take advantage of personal contacts.

Between 1905 and 1907 increasing numbers of Chinese literati—men and some women, all trained in the classics—gave conscious support to armed rebellion. Sun Yat-sen became respectable. On his release from prison in 1907, Zhang moved to Tokyo where he assumed editorship of *The People’s Journal* (*Minbao*), organ of the Tongmeng-hui, the umbrella revolutionary organization that Sun had founded in 1905. *The People’s Journal* was by far the most important and widely read revolutionary journal between 1905 and 1908.<sup>60</sup> The outlines of various types of socialism and anarchism became clearer to the Chinese; Tongmenghui members debated dif-

<sup>59</sup> This was seen as well when the village gentry tried to release the terrorist and future anarchist Liu Shifu from jail in 1909, and perhaps today white support for blacks in South Africa works in a similar way. A jaundiced view of the phenomenon is presented in Feodor Dostoyevsky’s *The Possessed*.

<sup>60</sup> Many issues were reprinted; circulation was perhaps thirty thousand, see Qu Jinyu, “Minbao,” pp. 504–550. An overview of the journal’s history may be found in Qi Bingfeng, *Qingmo geming yu junxian de lunzheng* (The debate between revolutionaries and constitutionalists at the end of the Qing) (Taipei: Tai-

## Contents

<b>PREFACE. <i>Apologia and Acknowledgments</i></b>	<b>7</b>
<b>CHAPTER I. <i>Antecedents and Auguries of Anarchism in Traditional Chinese Thought</i></b>	<b>11</b>
ANARCHISM IN CHINESE THOUGHT . . . . .	19
THE BREAKDOWN OF IMPERIAL LEGITIMACY: THE SETTING FOR ANARCHISM . . . . .	40
HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS . . . . .	54
<b>CHAPTER 2. <i>The Route to Anarchism Through Tokyo</i></b>	<b>61</b>
THE EDUCATION OF LIU SHIPEI . . . . .	62
ZHANG JI AND ZHANG BINGLIN . . . . .	84
CHINESE AND JAPANESE RADICALS . . . . .	94
<b>CHAPTER 3. <i>The Route to Anarchism Through Paris</i></b>	<b>104</b>
THE EDUCATION OF WU ZHIHUI . . . . .	105
THE GOLDEN BACKGROUNDS OF LI SHIZENG AND ZHANG JINGJIANG: FOUNDING <i>NEW CENTURY</i> . . . . .	125
PARIS: CAPITAL FOR A NEW CENTURY . . . . .	132
<b>CHAPTER 4. <i>Utopian Visions and Social Analysis</i></b>	<b>140</b>
LIU SHIPEI AND THE UTOPIA OF EQUALITY . . . . .	141
WU ZHIHUI AND A FREE-AND-EASY UTOPIA . . . . .	161
<b>CHAPTER 5. <i>Revolution and Social Change</i></b>	<b>166</b>
ANARCHISM AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION . . . . .	167
CLASS STRUGGLE AND REVOLUTION . . . . .	177

ENLIGHTENMENT AND REVOLUTION . . . . .	188
<b>CHAPTER 6. <i>Women's Liberation and Anarcho-Feminism</i></b>	<b>211</b>
WOMEN: DEPENDENCY AND LABOR . . . . .	212
CONFUCIANISM, FAMILY, AND SEXUALITY . . . . .	218
LIBERATION AND ANARCHISM . . . . .	231
THE ANARCHIST CONTRIBUTION TO CHINESE FEMINISM . . . . .	239
<b>CHAPTER 7. <i>Culture and Nation</i></b>	<b>249</b>
SCIENCE, HUMAN NATURE, AND MORALITY . . . . .	250
HISTORY AND NATION . . . . .	263
WESTERN IMPERIALISM AND CHINESE NA- TIONALISM . . . . .	275
WU ZHIHUI VERSUS ZHANG BINGLIN . . . . .	289
<b>CHAPTER 8. <i>Old Anarchists in a Brave New World</i></b>	<b>294</b>
SOCIAL ACTION IN A NEW CHINA . . . . .	297
MOVING TO THE RIGHT . . . . .	309
<b>CHAPTER 9. <i>The Second Generation of Chinese Anar- chists</i></b>	<b>328</b>
LIU SHIFU AND THE CHINESE CONSCIENCE . . . . .	333
NEW CULTURE ANARCHISM . . . . .	342
MARXISM, CHINESE COMMUNISM, AND ANAR- CHISM . . . . .	350
ANARCHISM AND MAOISM . . . . .	363
<b>CHAPTER 10. <i>The Sources and Significance of Chinese Anarchism</i></b>	<b>372</b>
THE SPECIAL NATURE OF CHINESE ANARCHISM	374
THE SOURCES AND TENSIONS OF CHINESE AN- ARCHISM . . . . .	378
TOKYO VERSUS PARIS . . . . .	392

brotherhood with Zhang, the anarchist Zhang Ji, and Zhang Shizhao (who had assumed the editorship of *Subao* in May).<sup>58</sup>

Thanks to the incompetence of Qing prosecutors and the niceties of the Mixed Court in Shanghai, the case against Zhang and Zou became a cause celebre for the revolutionaries. During long maneuverings over custody and then the trial itself, the Qing demand for the death sentence began to appear excessive. On the one hand, moderate public opinion in China not only disliked the foreign concessions (which, ironically, acted to protect the revolutionaries) but felt the government had a right to protect itself. On the other hand, it increasingly tended to view the government as overreacting to a small and somewhat naive movement, the sincerity of which was clear and the goals of which (nationalism, modernization) were largely laudable. The trial itself centered around Zhang's alleged slander of the emperor as opposed to weightier issues. In the end (May 1904), Zhang was given a sentence of three years and Zou two (minus time already served awaiting trial); the other prisoner were released. Zou died in jail. Zhang emerged as a hero in 1906. (Zhang later accused Wu Zhihui of betraying them to the government in return for free passage out of China, but there does not seem to be any basis for this; *all* the radicals had an opportunity for escape. Wu claimed to have personally tried to warn Zhang of the impending arrests.)

The results of the case were a great clarification of the line between nationalistic reform and nationalistic revolution and widespread sympathy for the revolutionary cause even among those who would not cross the line. The government appeared to be prosecuting people not for treason but for their opinions on Russian aggression. On the other hand, the issues of republicanism and anti-Manchism as such were not brought up during the trial; rather, they were in the air. The *Subao* affair in itself gave China

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<sup>58</sup> One of the most famous early revolutionary tracts, *Gemingjun* (Revolutionary army) was originally published as a pamphlet in Shanghai in 1903.

sympathetic neither to Western political ideas nor to the concept of student power. Cai and Wu tended toward a broader concept of nationalism, and other members remained more moderate yet. Wu supported student desires for greater independence from the association, which aroused Zhang's anger. Though agreed on the need to keep both the association and the Patriotic School involved in radical activities, Zhang wanted to maintain association control of the school while Wu maintained that the students should be allowed to form their own political organs and receive funding directly from *Subao*. In June the school split from the association. Cai Yuanpei, disgusted with the dispute and also foreseeing the government crackdown, took the opportunity to pursue further language training at the German concession of Qingdao before going on to study in Germany. Wu and Zhang were left to nurse their mutual enmity.<sup>57</sup>

Qing officials were understandably concerned by the open calls for revolution that *Subao* began to publish, and government spies kept an eye on the Patriotic School. An agent provocateur tried to entice Wu and Cai outside of the International Settlement by inviting them to address a meeting; settlement police investigated whether the radicals had plans for an armed uprising. Finally, the municipal council (Shanghai's British-dominated government) agreed that *Subao* had become treasonable largely on the basis of articles by Zhang considered to be lese-majeste. Warrants were issued for most of the prominent radicals. However, a number of important Chinese officials were friendly with the radicals or sympathetic to their goals, and all the radicals were warned of the impending arrests. Wu fled to Hong Kong and others to Japan. Zhang Binglin on the other hand gave himself up. Zou Rong, who had at first gone into hiding, responded to Zhang's urgings that he too give himself up. Zou (1885–1905) was a student who had written the fiery "Revolutionary Army" manifesto and had sworn

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<sup>57</sup> For the relationship of Wu and Zhang, see ch. 3.

THE PLACE OF ANARCHISM IN CHINESE POLITICAL DISCOURSE . . . . . 394

*Selected Bibliography* . . . . . 399  
 ABBREVIATIONS . . . . . 399

over restrictions on their political freedoms there (the usual trivial incidents led *to* a final explosion). Cai then became principal of the Patriotic School and Wu assistant principal. The third venture of the association was the *Subao*, which was originally founded in 1896 as a business journal.

Running the schools and writing for *Subao* proved to be pivotal experiences in radicalizing most of the association's members; then the "*Subao* case" forced men like Wu to clarify finally their own revolutionary positions. In early 1903 *Subao*'s owner had agreed to make monthly contributions to the Patriotic School in return for articles by students and association members. The radicals also held weekly public meetings. As Russia continued to nibble away at Manchuria in the spring months, the atmosphere of protest in Shanghai thickened. The Qing government looked at the association's ventures with increasing disfavor. The public meetings were often rowdy, demagogic affairs; the schools were teaching more about sedition (including military drill) than academic subjects; and *Subao* verged on open calls for revolution. Like filings attracted to a magnet, radicals from other parts of China traveled to Shanghai: Liu Shipei joined the staff of the Patriotic School and his wife, He Zhen, enrolled at the Patriotic Girls' School. Li Shizeng and Zhang Jingjiang made a point to stop in on their way to France. Among a host of articles for a strong China, for Darwinism, for student movements, and against foreign threats, *Subao* also covered the nihilists. These were invariably Russian revolutionaries whose extremism had been brought about by the absolutist nature of Czarist government.<sup>56</sup> Like Liang Qichao, *Subao* writers praised the nihilists for their sanguinary techniques and self-sacrificing spirit.

Not all the association members were equally radical in all respects. Zhang Binglin hated the Manchus, for example, but he was

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<sup>56</sup> "Xuwudang" (The nihilists), *Subao*, 19 June 1903; see also "Sharen zhuyi" (The doctrine of assassination), *Subao*, 22 June 1903.

Just after the turn of the century, many young Chinese were radicalized by their involvement in the famous *Subao* case.<sup>54</sup> Before 1902 the division between reform and revolution was far from generally clear. Protest in the name of nationalism did not necessarily indicate that the protestor had given up on the Manchus entirely or was willing to join an armed uprising. But when the dust of the case had settled, the line between protest and revolution was drawn a level deeper.

Early in 1902 in the International Settlement in Shanghai, Cai Yuanpei (1868–1940) founded the Chinese Educational Association (*Zhongguo jiaoyu hui*). His goal was to produce textbooks better suited to Western learning. He was soon joined by a number of supporters, including Zhang Binglin and Wu Zhihui, all of whom had been involved in education for a number of years and all of whom were progressive. The Buddhist monk Huang Zongyang (1865–1920) was an important fundraiser, able to obtain money for the cause from wealthy and sympathetic devotees.<sup>55</sup> Only Zhang Binglin had explicitly and publicly advocated revolution (and cut off his queue) before the association was founded, but the others essentially joined him over the course of the next year. At this time, many Chinese were concerned with Russian moves in Manchuria and the reluctance of the Qing to take a firm stand. Radicalization was a quick process. By the end of the year the association had started the Patriotic Girls' School (*Aiguo niixuexiao*) and soon was sponsoring the Patriotic School (*Aiguo xueshe*). Students came from the South Seas Academy (*Nanyang gongshe*, where Wu Zhihui had briefly taught and Cai was still teaching) in protest

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<sup>54</sup> I base my remarks on the excellent summary of the case and its background in Mary Backus Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries*, pp. 50–95; and the memoirs in Wu Zezhong, ed., *Zhihui xiansheng yipian zhongyao huiyi* (An important memoir of Wu Zhihui). Since so many of the future anarchists were involved, I will briefly outline the major events of the incident here.

<sup>55</sup> Holmes Welch, *The Buddhist Revival in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 16–17.

## PREFACE. *Apologia and Acknowledgments*

This monograph, like most first scholarly productions, is essentially a revised doctoral dissertation. Throughout the long years of graduate study and while I was putting this work into its final form, I was asked, a surprising number of times, whether I was myself an anarchist. So far as I know, few students of Maoism, or for that matter fascism, are asked whether they are adherents of the political philosophy they are studying. It could, of course, be something about my personality that provoked the question, or it could have resulted from the belief among some sinologists and historians that anarchism was irrelevant to China and that therefore its students must be motivated by peculiar personal reasons. It is true that questions about the role of anarchism in modern Chinese history did not particularly suggest themselves from the standard sources; anarchism does not appear high on the agenda of unsolved problems that graduate students commit to memory.

On the other hand, it is my impression that many scholars understand anarchism to have had a notable if limited effect on the Chinese intelligentsia but believe that the subject has been “done.” This view perhaps stems from an older notion of sinology: since the problems are so vast and scholarly resources so scarce, these resources must be carefully husbanded and multiple analyses of most problems are a wasteful duplication of effort. In fact, Chinese anarchism has not been “done”; to the extent that it has, I hope immodestly that this study can prove the once-over approach to sinology wrong. More to the point, sinology within

the various standard disciplines—history, political science, sociology, anthropology—has reached such a level of sophistication that a genuine historiography has formed. Therefore secondary and tertiary analyses are not only desirable but necessary to the momentum of the discipline. Moreover, as there are countless (and valuable) studies of, say, Maoism, so the events since Mao's death should have made obvious the importance of studying other strains of Chinese thought, radical as well as conservative. Indeed, if it sometimes appears that Chinese Marxism is itself unraveling, perhaps a study of anarchism can shed light on important possibilities that have been suppressed.

It is my contention that the effects of anarchism on China have not been properly understood. Anarchists stood in the forefront of the radical intelligentsia at the beginning of this century, a century during which the impact of the radical intelligentsia has been unprecedented. The history of the Chinese revolution is not coterminous with the history of Chinese Marxism.

I do not entirely understand what impelled me to devote nearly a decade of study to the Chinese anarchists. My worldview was strongly influenced by the peace movement during the war in Vietnam. This introduced me to Marxism and also to a more generic kind of radical analysis. Although not an anarchist, I find anarchism attractive and some of its arguments compelling. Anarchism is not “dead”: certain members of each generation will grapple with the anarchist classics and so find their opinions on freedom better informed. Anarchism remains an alternative radical ideology, even in China. My interest in Chinese anarchism was provoked by its problematic relation to Marxism and also by its complex relation to Confucian political discourse. In terms of disciplinary problems, the study of Chinese anarchism provides an opportunity to explore the historical continuity of traditional thought (that is, even in radical and iconoclastic vessels) and contemporary issues of the contexts of Chinese political culture.

the government into correct policies or bring better men to the fore. The Russian nihilists, he thought, were achieving great success with this technique, and he listed a number of reforms that he claimed terrorism had induced. But Liang's real subject was China; ultimately, he feared the chaos of revolution and was groping for a way to prick the Qing into action. In repeated debate with revolutionaries of all stripes Liang constantly argued that the revolutionary movement, successful or not, would lead to further foreign encroachments. In this article of 1903, he concluded,

I admire the methods of the nihilists, but I cannot agree with their doctrines. Their ultimate goal is anarchism (*wuzhengfu*). . . . But how can anarchism be established in the world of today? Not only that, but even if the Datong and “great peace” were reached today, it still would not be possible. Thus, it is the anarchists who truly have the most idealistic and egalitarian goals of all the socialists of today, but who have to operate through the most dictatorial centralization. They not only oppose humanity (*rendao*), they contradict [human] nature (*tianxing*) as well.<sup>52</sup>

Liang still did not know what either anarchism or nihilism was really about, though he certainly knew what he wanted for China. Nonetheless, the division between goals and methods could not be long maintained. As one student recalled meeting actual Russians, “We Chinese revolutionaries in Japan then were not only influenced by their anarchist thought, but we also learned how to practice terrorism and especially how to make bombs.”<sup>53</sup> Liang himself consistently attacked autocracy and called for a “new people” to practice public morality, or civic virtue (*gongde*). He introduced Western conceptions of history: struggle, progress, and revolution.

<sup>52</sup> Liang Qichao, “Lun Eluosi xuwudang,” p. 74.

<sup>53</sup> Wu Yuzhang, *Huiyi lu* (Memoirs), p. 51, writing about the year 1905.



Buddhist monk, and revolutionary, took an interest, contributing an article on Emma Goldman to a revolutionary journal.<sup>49</sup> This article was as much about assassinations in the West as about Goldman's life. Information about anarchism as an intellectual system was obscured by the focus on action. Not until sustained study groups were formed in mid-1907 did the principles of anarchism receive attention. Then, hundreds of Chinese students were streaming to Japan, often for very short periods but sometimes to attend Japanese schools for a year or more. They formed a kind of subculture in the Kanda district of Tokyo; they were for change, if not necessarily for revolution, and eager for the chance to make their own mark on China.

Liang himself, then just ending his radical phase, published a number of articles in his popular *Xinmin congbao* (New People's Miscellany) designed to encourage assassination as a revolutionary technique.<sup>50</sup> He sought to publicize the activities of Russian nihilists, but he feared the effects of popular revolution.<sup>51</sup> Liang's point was that since the people were too immature to conduct a wise and successful revolution, assassination would either scare

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<sup>49</sup> Su Manshu, "Zigu," "Nujie Guoerman" (The Heroine Goldman), pp. 330–331 and 340–341. Liu Shipei and his wife He Zhen lived with Su in Tokyo after their arrival in 1907; He Zhen was later said to have had an affair with Su, see ch. 2.

<sup>50</sup> Published from the beginning of 1902 to the end of 1907, about nine thousand copies of each issue were printed; copies were shared among a number of readers both in Japan and, surreptitiously, in China; see He Bing-ran, "Xinmin congbao," in *Xinhai geming shiqi qikan jieshao* (Introduction to periodicals of the Revolution of 1911 period) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1982), 1:143. The line between Liang's radicalism and his return to a more moderate belief in modernization directed from above should not be exaggerated; still, his enthusiasm for revolution and republicanism was distinctly in decline by the end of 1903. In any case, his role in introducing anarchism to China was pivotal.

<sup>51</sup> Liang Qichao, "Zhongguo zhi xinmin," "Lun Eluosi xuwudang" (The Russian nihilists), *Xinmin congbao*, no. 40–41 (November 1903). This essay was largely based on Japanese sources and is usefully analyzed in Don C. Price, *Russia and the Roots of the Chinese Revolution, 1896–1911*, pp. 131–134.

In more general terms, it would appear undeniable that civilized people want, on the one hand, to be dominated and lied to (and to dominate and lie in turn). But, on the other hand, they seek and indeed yearn for freedom (and for a life among free people). Like the rest of the world, so is China. In the breakdown of the old order in China, anarchism came to represent this yearning for political, economic, social, and cultural freedom.

For their careful readings of various versions of this manuscript, helpful suggestions, and encouragement, I owe great thanks to many people. First, to my dissertation adviser, Professor William Theodore de Bary, and also to Professors Andrew J. Nathan and Madeleine Zelin, all of Columbia University and all remarkably patient, interested, critical, helpful, and wise. For critical and helpful comments I would like to thank my fellow graduate students there, Richard Lufano and Anne Osborne, and also David Shillieto. For hours of patient help and illuminating guidance with often difficult texts, Professor Pei-yi Wu has my gratitude. Arif Dirlik, Paul Avrich, Diane Scherer and Marilyn Levine have all given advice, aid, and encouragement. Marianne Bastid sent me some of her work on Li Shizeng. Joshua A. Fogel gave the manuscript a meticulous reading and was especially helpful on Japanese sources. My friend Armando de Sousa reminded me from time to time that in the real world fences need mending and goats milking, and I am grateful. In graduate school I received support from the Herbert H. Lehman fellowship program of New York State, from the Whiting Foundation, and from Columbia University, and I am obliged to the respective authorities. Faults of commission and omission remain my responsibility,

Chapter 1 discusses a number of background issues, including anarchist antecedents in traditional Chinese thought and the political and intellectual confusion of the late Qing, I begin my examination of Chinese anarchism with a discussion of the background of the two early anarchist schools (chapters 2 and 3), centered in Tokyo and Paris. Chapters 4 through 7 explore the main themes

of Chinese anarchism: utopianism, revolutionary theory, feminism, and culture and nation. These four chapters provide, I hope, a sense of what the anarchists stood for in the context of revolutionary change in China and how anarchism worked as political philosophy. This is followed by an attempt to understand the role that the anarchists played in the Revolution of 1911 and an account of the later careers of the early anarchists in the republic, as they edged away from anarchism (chapter 8). Finally, I briefly examine anarchism in the 1910s and 1920s, when its direct influence was most noticeable, and glance at the relation between anarchism and Maoism (chapter 9). Chapter 10 reviews the question of the sources of Chinese anarchism and provides a short summary of my conclusions.

breathless, busy institutional reform, Tan, though he remained unacknowledged by the anarchists, was closer to their own sense of undifferentiated utopianism. He believed the world was heading toward a stateless realm of freedom, where Buddhahood would be universal. At the same time, Tan supposed that such sciences as plant breeding would solve a great many practical problems and that industry and technology would continue to improve the material state of man. Spiritually, Tan believed that Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity had essentially the same message, though Buddhism expressed it best. But he believed that there was no true division between practical reform and religious regeneration. Tan's concern with the well-being of the people—his criticisms of the monarchy, traditional ideas of thrift, and the inequality inhering in the Chinese idea of human relations—presaged the anarchist approach. And his view of *ren* as a unifying power included, in Tan's creative use of Chinese metaphysical terms, the goals of the French Revolution. If he may be regarded as a philosophical idealist intellectually descended from Wang Yangming, then his politics flowed out of his sense of cosmic unity. In any case, Tan's politics and much of his cosmology looked forward to the antielitism and anti-authoritarianism that has marked the twentieth century.

Liang Qichao began a great journalistic enterprise that brought all kinds of information to eager Chinese readers after he fled to Japan in 1898. Liang published Tan's *Rmxue* and also some of the first Chinese references to anarchism. The Japanese had discovered anarchism in about 1902 (much of the interest was purely academic or journalistic), but in fact anarchism was confused with nihilism and associated with Russian revolutionaries. Still, the news soon spread to Chinese radicals.<sup>48</sup> Su Manshu (1884–1918), the writer,

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<sup>48</sup> Martin Bernal has traced early publications in Chinese and Japanese dealing with nihilism and anarchism; see "The Triumph of Anarchism over Marxism, 1906–1907," pp. 116–123, and footnote 11, p. 100; see also his *Chinese Socialism to 1907*, pp. 99–100 and 201–217 for additional early references.

Datong), after the “Li Yun” phrase. Weighing in at over 150,000 characters, the *Datong shu* was not published during Kang’s lifetime but was substantially completed by 1902 and circulated privately.<sup>46</sup> Publicly, Kang opposed revolution in any form and held that a constitutional monarchy was the only political form appropriate to China. Therefore the fact that his ultimate beliefs transcended nationalism has special significance. Kang advocated the abolition of nations and the establishment of a world parliament, public housing, vegetarianism, equality, and indeed, eventually, universal Buddhahood. There was a certain amount of overlap with anarchism in Kang’s thought, but his approach was ultimately more spiritual than social. The world was filled with suffering because of human institutions such as the state, race, and even family; if people could free themselves from these artificial boundaries (*jie*) they would attain happiness. The roots of the Chinese revolution in society and culture, which the anarchists did so much to promote, can be seen here.

Tan Sitong’s reformism was based less on social utopianism than on an idealistic philosophy that was itself rooted in Buddhism, Western science, and the Wang Yangming school of Neo-Confucianism.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, if Kang conveyed a sense of

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<sup>46</sup> Kang wrote an early draft in 1884–1885; the book was first published in 1935; see Laurence G. Thompson, *Ta Tung Shu: The One-World Philosophy of Kang Yu-wei* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1958), pp. 13–19.

<sup>47</sup> The main expression of Tan’s brief life—he was executed at the end of the 1898 reform movement—was, after his martyrdom itself, *Renxue*. This paragraph is primarily based on Koichi Sinohara, “*Weltanpassung*’ and Rationalization in Max Weber’s Study of Religion and Society in China: An Examination of the Weberian Interpretation in the Light of an Analysis of T’an Ssu-t’ung’s ‘Jen-hsueh’” (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1977); Shimada Kenji, “Chugoku kinsei no shukan yuishinron ni tsuite: banbutsu ittai no jin no shiso” (Subjective idealism in modern [Song and post-Song] China: The philosophy of humanity that all things form one body), *Toho gakuho* (Kyoto), no. 28 (March 1958), pp. 1–80; and Chang Hao, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis: Search for Order and Meaning 1890–1911* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987). For a complete translation of Tan’s *Renxue*, see Chan Sin-wai, *An Exposition of Benevolence*.

## CHAPTER I. *Antecedents and Auguries of Anarchism in Traditional Chinese Thought*

Anarchists have been spoken of so much lately that part of the public has at last taken to reading and discussing our doctrines. Sometimes men have even given themselves the trouble to reflect, and at the present time we have at least gained the admission that anarchists have an ideal. Their ideal is even found too beautiful, too lofty for a society not composed of superior beings...

While a new philosophy—a new view of knowledge taken as a whole—is thus being worked out, we may observe that a different conception of society, very different from that which now prevails, is in process of formation. Under the name of anarchism, a new interpretation of the past and present life of society arises, giving at the same time a forecast as regards its future, both conceived in the same spirit as the above mentioned interpretation in natural sciences... In fact it is certain that in proportion as the human mind frees itself from ideas inculcated by minorities of priests, military chiefs and judges, all striving to establish their domination, and of scientists paid to perpetuate it, a conception of society arises in which there is no longer room for those dominating minorities.

Anarchists were part of the mainstream of modern Chinese thought. Their concerns in the first decade of the twentieth century with dismantling the old culture and the old society, as well as with the very legitimacy of the state, made them the first group of Chinese intellectuals to realize the futility of political reform alone. In the second decade they contributed to a wider discourse about cultural and social revolution. If their relentless attacks on the very idea of government and nation seem now to have placed them outside the sphere of serious social philosophy, this was not the opinion of their contemporaries. Even as the twentieth century gave China both nationalism and governmental breakdown, thus giving rise to militarist, republican, and socialist ideologies, the anarchists commanded attention for their critique of authority.

The first Chinese anarchists helped to introduce Marxism to China. Indeed, the significance of Marxism began with the anarchists. However, this is but one aspect of the contribution of the anarchists to modern Chinese political discourse. The anarchists were among the first to condemn Confucianism, to discuss feminism, and to promote language reform. Their antielitism, their radical egalitarianism, their critique of traditional justifications for social and sexual hierarchy, their faith in progress, their desire to redefine China and all “nations” in the creation of a cosmopolitan world, their belief in the people, and their exaltation of revolution—all these themes, some of which were to be found only in the currents of Chinese anarchism, became part of the modern transformation of China. In this sense, the New Culture Movement (1915) and the May Fourth Movement (1919), often understood as turning points in Chinese history, can also be recognized in part as the products of the preparatory work of the anarchists of the previous decade, just as they were directly made

<sup>1</sup> Roger N. Baldwin, ed., *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968), pp. 115, 122–123.

(1853–1921), Kang Youwei (1858–1927), Tan Sitong (1865–1898), and Liang Qichao (1873–1929), among others, and the Chinese focus of concern, especially among the young, moved rapidly toward increasingly radical proposals.<sup>44</sup> In social terms, this readership probably constituted a spectrum of classes and individuals, especially in the coastal cities, where national affairs were beginning to become a public concern. Candidates for the civil service examinations and successful candidates waiting for government employment had opportunities to meet and discuss China's problems.<sup>45</sup> Reforms were only fitfully and reluctantly adopted by the political establishment, thus breeding discontent. Yan Fu, trying to firm up China on the “rich nation, strong army” model of the Meiji government in Japan, actually included social Darwinism and parliamentary democracy in his teaching. The implication that China should do whatever was required to survive in a world of nation-states red in tooth and claw—not his hope for an enlightened elite to educate the people—was Yan's real challenge to the traditional polity.

Kang Youwei, speaking in the name of New Text Confucianism, not only proposed extensive institutional reforms in 1898 but, while remaining loyal to the emperor, wrote China's first full-fledged utopian tract. He called this *Datong shu* (Book of the

<sup>44</sup> The story of the shifting sands of modern Chinese political philosophy has been told by Xiao Gongquan (Kung-ch'uan Hsiao), *Zhongguo zhengzhi sixiangshi* (A history of Chinese political thought), parts 4 and 5; Hou Wailu, ed., *Zhongguo jindai zhhexueshi* (A history of modern Chinese philosophy); and Jerome B. Grieder, *Intellectuals and the State in Modern China*; the following remarks are largely based on these sources. As in the sections above, I will bring out only those points about the setting that are of particular interest for the study of anarchism.

<sup>45</sup> Mary Backus Rankin has concluded, “In the late 1890s, political and ideological changes produced dramatic episodes of reform and revolution that in 1911 ended the imperial system in China. Part of this process was the growth of a nationally conscious public opinion, which stimulated demands for redistribution of political power and led to new forms of group organization and action... Expanding political awareness led to alienation from existing authority.” “Qingyi in Late Nineteenth Century China,” *Journal of Asian Studies*, 41(3) (May 1982)1453.

twentieth century. Perhaps also the old notion that the people would flock to a good kingdom resurfaced in the anarchists' notion of the ease with which the masses would come around to their ideas. Most traditional discussion of the state took place in terms startlingly similar to anarchist discussions of society: an utterly moral and serious tone of discussion, the notion of individuals finding their proper places and sharing goods without examining the exact economic quid pro quo, a high-minded disdain for profit (*li*), and a kind of benevolent natural order at work.

The discourse concerning private or selfish (*si*) versus community (*gong*) would also be continued by the anarchists. The anarchists who were involved in the Revolution of 1911 were part of the last generation to be thoroughly educated in the Four Books and Neo-Confucian commentaries. They were thus bequeathed an extensive set of political categories, metaphors, and terms that informed their anarchism even while they sought to reject so much of the past. The levers they tried to use to turn over the past included symbolic resources recovered from their Neo-Confucian education.

## THE BREAKDOWN OF IMPERIAL LEGITIMACY: THE SETTING FOR ANARCHISM

The anarchists began their political careers, at the earliest, in the late 1890s. Already by this time the Qing had lost a significant degree of its legitimacy. And at least *among* certain intellectuals, the root of the problem was seen to be the imperial state system, not merely the problems of one dynasty. Even before this stage was reached, important supports of the justification for Qing rule were being subverted, and what had been a complex unity was fractured. Attentive readers sooner or later caught up with the radical implications of the writings of Wang Tao (1828–1897), Yan Fu

in part by a second generation of Chinese anarchists. The later development of Chinese Marxism at the hands of Mao Zedong was highly colored by anarchist strains.

Overall, I seek the answers to three questions. First, how did the anarchists fit into contemporary Chinese political discourse, largely revolving as it did around axes of nationalism and communism? Second, how did the dominant political philosophy of late imperial China, Neo-Confucianism, influence the Chinese formulation of anarchism? And third, as anarchism unraveled in the second and third decades of this century, why did so many of the most prominent early anarchists become pronouncedly conservative? Aside from their intrinsic interest, the anarchists offer a good opportunity to test hypotheses about the continuing role of Neo-Confucianism in the early twentieth century and about beliefs and assumptions shared across a wide political range, precisely because the anarchists ostensibly offered such a radical alternative to the better-known constitutionalists, nationalists, socialists, liberals, communists, and Confucianists.

Anarchism can be broadly defined as the belief that individual freedom and social good can be reconciled without coercive agents. In this view, the state may be abolished or brought to a level of minimal functions. Chinese anarchism might best be understood as part of a broad kind of antiauthoritarianism.

Radical critiques of the existing order flourish in times of dislocation. The Chinese anarchists comprised one of the responses to Western encroachments and the decline of the Qing dynasty, and to setbacks to the revolutionary movement in 1907 in particular. Before 1907 Chinese anarchism consisted of a few slogans. By 1909, it was a fullblown political philosophy. And by 1919 it probably represented the focus of attention for China's educated youth more than any other "ism." Narrowly, it can be seen as a set of dogmatic strictures, sometimes competing in different interpretations. More significantly, however, Chinese anarchism broadly represented a set of beliefs about the moral basis for action. To many, it seemed

no less possible, no more utopian than republicanism, communism, or any other program for change.

In numbers the Chinese anarchists began as a minority among the minority of exiled activists and youth studying the new curriculum. They were part of the anti-Qing revolutionary movement which had begun to form in the last years of the nineteenth century. In Tokyo: Liu Shipei, his wife He Zhen, Zhang Ji, and, for a moment, Zhang Binglin; in Paris: Wu Zhihui, Li Shizeng, Zhang Jingjiang, and Chu Minyi. No self-avowed anarchist movement existed in China itself until 1912. Through the 1910s it grew steadily though without much further doctrinal innovation. Committed followers perhaps numbered no more than the leaders, though correspondence to the anarchist journals reveals an excited audience, and attendance at meetings was reported to be high. Organizations and groups were short-lived. Anarchists generally owe such fame as they have to their other activities. Liu was a prominent classical scholar. He Zhen was a leading feminist. Wu became prominent as a promoter of science, language reform, and the Guomindang. Li Shizeng ran a number of study-abroad programs. Zhang Jingjiang was an early backer of Chiang Kai-shek. Ba Jin's novels of youthful revolt are still read. The backgrounds of these early figures were no less diverse: some were rich and powerful, some merely rich; some came from declining gentry families and some were poor but had scholarly ancestors. The anarchists of the first generation tended to have had classical education and experience abroad. Those of the second generation tended to come out of the modern school system. The only generalization possible is that none came from the lowest rungs of society.

The first generation participated in the Revolution of 1911. More to the point here, their anarchist activities from about 1907 onward briefly put them in the Chinese revolutionary vanguard. They were intellectuals. They spun theories. Their organizational activities were minimal and mainly related to study groups and propaganda organs. (Part of their theory was that China had a press-

The great man regards Heaven and Earth and the myriad things as one body. He regards the world as one family and the country as one person.

As to those who make a cleavage between objects and distinguish between the self and others, they are small men... Even the mind of the small man necessarily has the humanity that forms one body with all. Such a mind is rooted in his Heaven-endowed nature.<sup>42</sup>

Like Zhu Xi, Wang emphasized the role of education in a meritocratic golden age when the people "regarded one another as belonging to one family" like the parts of a body (that is, with different but complimentary functions). If only selfish desires are abolished, nothing can block the attainment of this somewhat mystical-sounding community. Nevertheless, Wang's vision was primarily social, not mystical: all men are potentially sages; sagehood is practiced *in* society. The egalitarian strain is evident. Additionally, Wang taught the unity of knowledge and action. The practical social implications of this may be seen in the community compact (*xiangyue*) he designed in 1518: Wang did not in practice assume that people were good; rather, he believed that they could help themselves by practice and improve their virtue through participation in community activities.<sup>43</sup>

The themes of sincerity, selfishness, innate knowledge, human goodness, egalitarianism, and knowledge and action—all found clearly but hardly uniquely in Wang Yangming—were to echo noisily in the formulations of the first Chinese anarchists of the

<sup>42</sup> From the "Inquiry on the *Great Learning*' (*Daxue wen*); tr. in Chan, *Source Book*, pp. 659–660. Wang worked out the social implications of this in "Pulling up the roots and stopping the source," in Wing-tsit Chan, *Instructions for Practical Living and Other Neo-Confucian Writings by Wang Yang-ming* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 117–24; discussed in Ching, "Utopian Theories," pp. 20–25.

<sup>43</sup> Wang's *xiangyue* is translated in its entirety in Chan, *Instructions for Practical Living*, pp. 298–306.

the point of the view of the individual, a true Confucian did not, in the end, allow ruler or predecessor to tell him what the truth was. (One was not to make it up either; Zhu Xi and his cohorts paid close attention to the fine points of doctrine, but they taught that a sense of the truth had eventually to be corroborated by the inner self.) Moreover, Zhu's utopian glimpse back to the age of the sage-kings contained a concrete institutional suggestion for his own times: establish schools. If social and political improvements depended on virtue, virtue itself could best be encouraged in specific settings.

This view was further developed by Wang Yangming (1472–1529) and his followers.<sup>41</sup> Wang's exaltation of the mind, sincerity of will, and innate (that is, good) knowledge (*Hongzhi*) had, at least potentially, two social implications. First, people were thereby justified in following their own bent. At its extreme, subjective intuition actually replaced Zhu Xi's more objective investigation of things. But the point for Wang was that innate knowledge was the faculty distinguishing right from wrong, selfish from unselfish. Thus, second, Wang believed also that people would in fact choose to live in harmony. In his vision,

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proposed by the *Ta-hsueh* and thereby join the moral elite rested on the philosophical premise, laid out in the opening lines of the *Ta-hsueh* according to Chu's reading, that each and every individual is born good—with an inborn luminous Virtue—but must struggle throughout life to keep from falling away from that good... Morally perfected oneself, one would then have a morally transforming effect on others—this was what the text meant by 'renewing the people.'

<sup>41</sup> For an account of Chinese individualism in the Taizhou school of Wang's followers, see Wm. Theodore de Bary, "Individualism and Humanitarianism in Late Ming Thought." De Bary distinguishes between the private or negative individualism of the hermit and the "more 'positive' and public individualism which seeks to establish the place of the individual or self in relation to others... such an individualism must be 'social' " (pp. 146–147). This Confucian view of the individual shares a crucial point with the mainstream of modern anarchism: the determination to reconcile individual liberty and the needs of society (or liberty and equality, in the anarchist version).

ing need for education.) They believed that correct learning was the first step to social improvement and that rational understanding of the world was both possible and necessary. They *argued*. Thus, they shared none of the antiintellectualism of European and in particular Russian anarchists of the period.<sup>2</sup> Like traditional literati, they often turned to books for answers. Like a modern intelligentsia, they were self-righteous and alienated radicals. The anarchists were particularly critical of attempts to modernize—for China to adopt Western technology without social reform.<sup>3</sup> They supported technological progress, material civilization, and modern science, while absolutely demanding social justice. Their definition of social justice differentiated them from the rest of the intelligentsia, and it drew them together in spite of profound differences of temperament and outlook.

The early anarchists were all educated in the classics and sometimes much more (Buddhism, noncanonical philosophers, and literature); most took (and passed) the civil service examinations. Thus they came to the study of anarchism with a complex set of tradi-

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<sup>2</sup> See Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists*, pp. 91–112. Much anarchist antiintellectualism was a reaction to the dogmatic systematizing of Marxists and more generally to the notion of social and historical laws. But Kropotkin himself was profoundly reasonable and his method "scientific," and his particular appeal for many Chinese anarchists derived partly from his intellectualism.

<sup>3</sup> The Chinese anarchists and their comrades of other persuasions seem analogous to the Russian intelligentsia of the 1860s. Abbot Gleason relates the intelligentsia to both technological improvement and social idealism: "An intelligentsia is an essentially modern phenomenon, related to the process of secularization: its members perform at least some of the functions earlier fulfilled by priests or other representatives of religion... In general the less wealth and power a nation has, the more 'backward' and powerless it seems to be, the more sharply its intelligentsia is likely to focus on the achievement of material power. This diminishes the stream of social idealism, though rarely dams it up entirely... [But] for all its attraction toward power, the intelligentsia's critique of modern Western civilization has at bottom been a moral one and is a derivative of the intelligentsia's sacerdotal inheritance." "Abbot Gleason, *Young Russia: The Genesis of Russian Radicalism in the 1860s* (New York: Viking Press, 1980), pp. 18–19.

tional beliefs and mental habits: some of these could be happily and consciously abandoned; some could be challenged and changed; some were already compatible with the new system; and some remained conscious or unconscious elements of their mind-set, affecting their formulations of anarchism and their world outlooks in general. Their perception of the world was necessarily predicated on a system of assumptions about reality that was deeply textured. Traditional political thought played a partly hidden role in modern Chinese worldviews, involving as it did not only notions dealing explicitly with the state, such as the Mandate of Heaven, but also assumptions indirectly supporting the sociopolitical order, for example the notion that the sage affects the entire cosmos through his exemplary virtue. Already so complex as to defy description in terms of orthodoxy and heresy, and already in unpredictable dialectical motion, traditional worldviews were all the harder to dislodge totally at the turn of the century.<sup>4</sup> The very richness of traditional political thought meant that Chinese intellectuals would confront Western ideologies in a spirit of creative eclecticism. The anarchists provide a laboratory setting to examine the weaving together of these separate strands. Chinese anarchism was a tension-filled and creative response to the problems faced by Chinese intellectuals, by China as a whole, and in fact by humankind at the dawn of the twentieth century.

Anarchism in China may loosely be conceived as an ideology, but more usefully as a tendency to emphasize freedom and individ-

<sup>4</sup> I am referring to what was at least a partial deconstruction of Neo-Confucianism at the hand of textual studies (*kaozheng*) scholars beginning in the seventeenth century, and the attacks on *kaozheng* learning in the name of moral philosophy—a higher synthesis rather than a simple return to Neo-Confucianism—that were well under way by the nineteenth century. For this and other reasons Chinese intellectuals were becoming increasingly marginal to society at large, and thereby “modern” by the dawning of the twentieth century. See Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), pp. 233–253.

principle, setting the mind in the right, cultivating oneself, and governing others (*xiju zhiren*).<sup>38</sup>

The *Great Learning*, with Zhu Xi’s commentaries and prefaces, had by Qing times long been basic to the standard educational curriculum and was indeed the first classic to be mastered by most students. Zhu Xi saw the long decline from this golden age as but the downturn of a cycle; on one level, he hoped that the work done to reestablish the *Great Learning* would itself aid in improving the empire. He also emphasized that education could enlarge the individual. One of the products of self-cultivation was to be self-realization.<sup>39</sup> Zhu Xi’s notion of “cultivating oneself and governing others” raised the question of who was to perform the tasks of cultivation and governance. Zhu at least extended the subject of self-cultivation from an aristocracy to a moral or intellectual elite, and self-cultivation was a moral exercise potentially open to all. The political implications as actually drawn were not so radical, for after all, this exercise took a great deal of education in the classics as well as more introspective struggles. On the other hand, Zhu explicitly reduced (or raised) the chief function of the ruler to that of a teacher, and just how well the populace learned to govern itself could become a yardstick for measuring the ruler’s success.<sup>40</sup> From

<sup>38</sup> From the “Daxue zhangju” (“Commentary on the *Great Learning*”), *Zhu Wengong wenji*, 15:1b, tr. Daniel K. Gardner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh*, pp. 79–81. Ching, “Utopian Theories”, p. 19, aptly stresses that this was a “moral utopia, where all men were educated in the practice of virtue, and in which wise and benevolent scholar-officials, well trained in the classics, could form a ruling class of intellectual and moral aristocracy.”

<sup>39</sup> Other Zhu Xi formulations included “learning for the sake of the self” (*weiji zhi xue*) and “mastering the self” (*keji*) to achieve a kind of freedom. See de Bary, *Liberal Tradition*, pp. 21–42.

<sup>40</sup> As Daniel K. Gardner, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh*, pp. 58–59, puts it: “In Chu Hsi’s hands, the entire orientation of the *Ta-hsueh* (Great Learning) text had changed; a sort of ‘democratization’ of the work had taken place. A guidebook for the political elite had now become a guidebook for anyone and everyone hoping to become part of the moral elite. That anyone might follow the program



original formulations of Neo-Confucianism. In claiming an area of independence from the state, he was giving a new twist to the possibility that education might foster moral regeneration.

Utopian impulses surfaced, occasionally, in the thought of the great synthesizer of Neo-Confucianism, Zhu Xi (1130–1200). In general, the Neo-Confucians favored pragmatic reform, but on the other hand they criticized the archreformer of the Northern Song, Wang Anshi (1021–1086), for excesses of formal, interventionist government. Rather, Zhu Xi favored a kind of grass-roots effort to maintain and improve society at the village level.<sup>37</sup> Zhu Xi believed profoundly in the importance of education, but to inspire individual transformation and to foster a community-wide sense of mutuality. In his version of the golden age, neither was society to be classless nor was hierarchy to be simply the product of birth. Human nature was good, though not all people could fully unblock the obstacles that prevented them from realizing their natures. To help people to know their own natures is the role of education and, ultimately, of ruler ship. Thus Zhu Xi believed that in the time of the sage-kings,

schools were found everywhere, from the Imperial Palace and the state capitals on down to the villages. At the age of eight, all the male children, from the sons of kings and dukes to the sons of commoners, entered the school of lesser learning... At the age of fifteen, the Son of Heaven's eldest son and other imperial sons on down to the eldest legitimate sons of dukes, ministers, high officials, and officers of the chief grade, together with the gifted from among the populace, all entered the school of greater learning; there they were instructed in the Way of probing

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<sup>37</sup> Zhu penned a community compact (*xiangyue*), for example, which stressed voluntary cooperation; it is discussed in de Bary, *Liberal Tradition*, pp. 32–34.

ual rights over other social goods, and at the same time as a communitarian vision of sharing, or perhaps, more familiarly, Datong. As late as 1890, the language in which Chinese political discourse was conducted was largely Confucian. By 1920 the familiar symbolism had been abandoned. A new political language was coming into being, and anarchism played a great role in determining its nature. Today, no single thought system suffices to provide a label for Chinese political discourse; even Marxism, as broadly defined as possible, fails to describe the range of possibilities made obvious since Mao's death. Indeed, the revival of an acute concern with individual rights, at least in some quarters, may be traced back to the anarchists. This is not, of course, to call any Chinese intellectual today an anarchist, though their ideological opponents may feel they are such. But it is to point out that the symbolic resources currently available were created out of the ruins of Neo-Confucian discourse.

Nonetheless, new political languages did not emerge Phoenix-like out of Confucius' ashes; rather, a complex relation was formed of conscious and unconscious influences from Neo-Confucianism and from rebellion against it. New realities were initially seen through old lenses. New circumstances of course also gave rise to new needs to find meaning in the world. Above all, many Chinese feared partition, colonization, loss of national identity, and even genocide. This last fear—of racial or national extinction—was perhaps more metaphorical than literal. But it expressed a despair caused not solely by international politics but also by the collapse of an entire sociocultural sense of order. Riots and small-scale revolts, banditry, misery in the countryside, oppression in the cities: all this occurred alongside the collapse of universal Confucianism and its political corollary, the cosmological kingship of the traditional dynastic emperors.

Great hopes matched the despair, hopes of starting over again, of redefining both the world and the self within it. The attempt to see the world through old lenses resulted in the repolishing of

those lenses until they refracted light in an entirely new way. The Chinese anarchists were particularly assiduous lens makers. As previously unquestioned assumptions were not merely questioned but ridiculed and thereby permanently shaken, the anarchists attempted systematically to explain the nearly inexplicable: a brave new world of competing imperialism, capitalism, and warfare, and of undeniable technological progress.

Chinese anarchism was thus born in an age when Chinese political culture was in tumultuous transition. One approach to understanding how this transition worked itself out is to focus on culture as a set of symbols designed to give meaning to a chaotic or seemingly chaotic world.<sup>5</sup> A proper understanding of the language—vocabulary and as it were syntax—and of the behavior of intellectuals is necessary because in China as nowhere else they were the symbol makers *par excellence*. Whereas the vocabulary and its attendant meanings were often borrowed from abroad, the syntax and the uses and larger meanings to which the vocabulary was applied were often indigenous. (*Indigenous* is not to say traditional, although of course it may be.) Thinking about cultures tends to be systematic, if only for heuristic purposes, but there was little that was systematic about Chinese political culture through the 1920s. Perhaps a better model may be of competing political cultures, existing side by side yet shading into one another, until stability and system were restored by the communists.

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<sup>5</sup> For the psychological-reductionist approach to political culture, perhaps dominant in Chinese studies, see Lucian W. Pye, *The Spirit of Chinese Politics*, and Richard H. Solomon, *Mao's Revolution*. A fellow-traveler is Thomas A. Metzger, *Escape from Predicament*. A useful survey, which also analyzes other approaches, is Lowell Dittmer's "The Study of Chinese Political Culture."

For guidelines to a broader approach to political culture, which have particularly informed my own approach to intellectual history, see Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*; the essays of Clifford Geertz in *The Interpretation of Cultures*; and the essays of J.C.A. Pocock in *Politics, Language, and Time* (New York: Atheneum, 1971).

others all the loss. They made it so that no man dared to live for himself or seek to benefit himself. Thus the prince made his own private interests the common end of all... [The prince] looked upon the world as an enormous estate to be handed on down to his descendants, for their perpetual pleasure and well-being... Now the prince is host and the people are guests. Because of the prince people can find peace and happiness nowhere. In order to achieve his ends, people must be harmed and killed and their families broken up—all for the aggrandizement of one man's fortune... Thus, the greatest enemy of mankind is the prince and nothing but the prince.

Most revealing of all, though not fully in character, Huang immediately continued, "If there had been no rulers, each man would have lived for himself and secured what was to his own benefit." This is something close to an anarchist analysis of the state. Huang also advocated a large measure of intellectual liberty.<sup>35</sup> Not only should scholars be intellectually and politically free, but education should be universal. The Neo-Confucian believed that education was necessary as "self-cultivation" to develop the "sagehood within." Often the social implication of this attitude was drawn explicitly: "The sage institutes education so as to enable people to *transform their evil by themselves*. ... As the way of teachers is established, there will be many good people. With many good people the government will be correct and the empire will be in order."<sup>36</sup> Huang derived many of his views from the

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<sup>35</sup> De Bary, *Liberal Tradition*, pp. 86–90.

<sup>36</sup> My emphasis; Zhou Dunyi (1017–1073), an early Neo-Confucianist; tr. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 468. This view of education could either have authoritarian implications (correcting the people) or emphasize the people itself (as here). As Donald J. Munro put it in *The Concept of Man in Early China*, "The Confucians expected miracles of moral education," and "A change in educational techniques is a key in changing human behavior" (pp. 16, 163).

nor in nonaction (he wanted the ruler to educate his people), he nonetheless considered the emperor but one aspect—like the people although ritually more important—of the balanced workings of the cosmos and equally subject to those workings.<sup>32</sup> Confucianism held that the social order should reflect the natural order, working without undue force. Some sort of notion of natural order (without rulers) is essential to modern anarchism as well.

The revival of Confucianism in the Song (960–1279) led to the formation of a more complex ideology that contained conflicting impulses about the exact scope of government in particular and the nature of authority in general.<sup>33</sup> One ideal was still minimal government, which culminated in the political conceptions of Huang Zongxi (1610–1695). “In the beginning of human life each man lived for himself and sought to benefit himself. There was such a thing as the common benefit, yet apparently no one promoted it; and there was common loss, yet apparently no one eliminated it.”<sup>34</sup> It was not entirely clear that civilization represented improvement, yet Huang turned to the notion of good government, not anarchism. He praised the ruler who “sought to benefit all under Heaven,” and made contributions to statecraft theory. But his use to later radicals came in his trenchant and historically grounded criticisms of misrule. Huang wrote the sharpest critique of Chinese politics since the Daoists of the late Tang.

However, with those who later became princes it was different. They believed that since they held the power over benefit and loss, there was nothing wrong at all in taking for themselves all the benefits and leaving to

<sup>32</sup> Cf. John B. Henderson, *The Development and Decline of Chinese Cosmology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 37.

<sup>33</sup> This discussion is largely based on Wm. Theodore de Bary, *The Liberal Tradition in China*, and Julia Ching, “Neo-Confucian Utopian Theories and Political Ethics.”

<sup>34</sup> All quotations of Huang are from the *Mingyi daifang lu*, translated in de Bary et al., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 1:532–533.

## ANARCHISM IN CHINESE THOUGHT

Anarchism existed at least as a latent tendency in traditional China just as it had existed in premodern Europe: undeveloped, utopian, and generally isolated.<sup>6</sup> A copious reservoir of symbolic resources was available for the twentieth century. The truest forms of traditional anarchism in China were thoroughly Daoist.<sup>7</sup> Although Daoism admitted the legitimacy of government (if minimalist and *wuwei*), its overall thrust was clearly in line with anarchist tendencies.

Let there be a small country with few people.

Let there be ten times and a hundred times as many  
utensils

But let them not be used.

Let the people value their lives highly and not migrate  
far.

<sup>6</sup> For classical and European anarchism, see inter alia George Woodcock, *Anarchism*, and James Joll, *The Anarchists* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979). For more specifically regionalized studies, see inter alia Jean Maitron, *Histoire du Mouvement Anarchiste en France (1880–1914)*; Murray Bookchin, *The Spanish Anarchists* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978); and Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists*. For biographies of leading theoreticians, see inter alia John P. Clark, *The Philosophical Anarchism of William Godwin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); Robert L. Hoffman, *Revolutionary Justice: The Social and Political Theory of P.-J. Proudhon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972); Edward Hyams, *Pierre-Joseph Proudhon: His Revolutionary Life, Mind and Works* (London: John Murray, 1979); and George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic, *The Anarchist Prince* (London: Boardman, 1950). In the last twenty years European and American historians have devoted a good deal of attention to the anarchists, often explicitly citing their relevance to the libertarian movements that seemed to spring up in the industrialized world in the mid-1960s. In addition, numerous editions of the works of Kropotkin, Bakunin, Proudhon, and other anarchists are available.

<sup>7</sup> For Daoist anarchism see the symposium in the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 10, no. 1 (March 1983); Kung-ch'uan Hsiao, “Anarchism in Chinese Political Thought”; and Etienne Balazs, “Nihilistic Revolt or Mystical Escapism.”

Even if there are ships and carriages, none will ride in them.

Even if there are armor and weapons, none will display them.

Let the people again knot cords and use them (in place of writing).

Let them relish their food, beautify their clothing, be content with their homes, and delight in their customs.

Though neighboring communities overlook one another and the crowing of cocks and barking of dogs can be heard,

Yet the people there may grow old and die without ever visiting one another.<sup>8</sup>

The Daoist expression of utopian longing was a backward-looking one. The call for a simpler world nonetheless represented a kind of protoanarchist social vision. In essence, a key belief in anarchism is order without coercion. Therefore Laozi cautioned rulers that the best of them “are those whose existence is [merely] known by the people.”<sup>9</sup> More specifically, he urged,

Abandon sageliness and discard wisdom;

Then the people will benefit a hundredfold.

Abandon humanity and discard righteousness;

Then the people will return to filial piety and deep love.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> (Laozi) *Daode jing*, ch. 80, in Wing-tsit Chan, tr., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, p. 175.

<sup>9</sup> Ch. 17, Chan, *Source Book*, p. 148.

<sup>10</sup> Ch. 19, Chan, *Source Book*, p. 149.

or at least of original human nature, is a notion crucial to modern anarchism as well. Only if people can live together without the restraints of government and law can a free society survive. Mencius’ famous parable about a bystander instantly feeling empathy and concern when he sees a child about to fall into a well can be explained in the following manner:

If you let people follow their feelings (original nature), they will be able to do good. This is what is meant by saying that human nature is good.

If man does evil, it is not the fault of his natural endowment. The feeling of commiseration is found in all men; the feeling of shame and dislike is found in all men; the feeling of respect and reverence is found in all men; and the feeling of right and wrong is found in all men.<sup>30</sup>

As its logical extreme this led to the justification of regicide that appealed to a variety of twentieth-century revolutionaries:

The King asked, “Is it all right for a minister to murder his king? Mencius replied, “He who injures humanity is a bandit. He who injures righteousness is a destructive person. Such a person is a mere fellow. I have heard of killing a mere fellow Zhou, but I have not heard of murdering [him as] the ruler.”<sup>31</sup>

This tender-minded strain of Confucianism stands in a somewhat ambiguous relation to anarchism; there are points of contact in Mencius’ grounding of social liberty in human nature. The organic conception of rulership may have reached its apogee in the thought of Dong Zhong-shu: believing neither in equality

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<sup>30</sup> 6A.6, tr. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 54. The well parable is told in 3A.5.

<sup>31</sup> 1B.8, u\ Chan, *Source Book*, p. 62 mod.

tuals turn to anarchism in the twentieth century. Nonetheless, if anarchism as a whole seemed shocking and terrifying at first, further study in the twentieth century revealed surprisingly familiar aspects.

Memorized by educated people at an early age were the following passages:

The Master [Confucius] said, Among those that “ruled by inactivity” (*wuwei*) surely Shun may be counted. For what action did he take? He merely placed himself gravely and reverently with his face due south; that was all.

The Master said, He who rules by virtue is like the polestar, which remains in its place while all the lesser stars do homage to it... The Master said, Govern the people by regulations, keep order among them by chastisements, and they will flee from you, and lose all self-respect. Govern them by virtue, keep order among them by ritual and they will keep their self-respect and come to you of their own accord.<sup>29</sup>

Two aspects of Mencius relate to the Confucian belief in minimal government. His conception of the goodness of human nature,

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<sup>29</sup> *Luhyu*, 15:4, 2:1–3, following Arthur Waley, tr., *The Analects of Confucius* (New York: Vintage Books, 1938), pp. 193, 88. Shun was a legendary sage-king of the third millennium B.C. For similar Confucian sentiments, see 12:7, 13:6, 16:1, 15:38; and for a different view see 8:9, 3:19. In a recent reappraisal of Confucius, David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames write: “Given that Confucius’ program for person-making presumes the disciplining of oneself and the practice of ritual action (*keji fuli*), attitudes such as respect, tolerance and deference are a precondition for any kind of personal growth... Taken to its ultimate degree, this sense of allowing social and political order to emerge from below renders the ideal ruler ‘non-active’ (*wuwei*): clear of any im- positional or coercive activity. “*Thinking Through Confucius* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), pp. 167–168. As we will see, the Neo- Confucians did indeed draw some of these implications.

Thus Laozi accepted rulers, in a sense, but negated their significance.<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless, he expressed in terms of organic wholeness something of anarchism’s sense of natural order. Laozi, however, lacked a sense of the dynamic and revolutionary belief in equality stressed in modern anarchism. On a general plane, he believed that, “By acting without action (*wei wuwei*), all things will be in order,”<sup>12</sup> *Wuwei* on a political level did not refer to nonaction but expressed a rejection of coercive authority.<sup>13</sup>

Zhuangzi’s (fourth century B.C.) attitudes are much clearer. Scattered comments illustrate his opinion of the ruling classes: “The petty thief is imprisoned but the big thief becomes a feudal lord.” Or: “He who steals a belt buckle pays with his life; he who steals a state gets to be a feudal lord—and we all know that benevolence and righteousness are to be found at the gates of the feudal lords.”<sup>14</sup> But Zhuangzi reserved his harshest words for those “sages” and “righteous scholars” (Confucians advocating conventional morality) who flocked to support the robber barons. Writing in the turmoil of the Warring States era (403–221 B.C.), he turned away from politics:

Tian Gen was wandering on the sunny side of Yin Mountain. When he reached the banks of the Liao River, he happened to meet a Nameless Man. He questioned the man, saying “Please may I ask how to rule the world?”

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<sup>11</sup> Other chapters, however (e.g., ch. 3, 5, 65), appear more receptive to rulership.

<sup>12</sup> Ch. 3, Chan, *Source Book*, p. 141.

<sup>13</sup> This is the interpretation of Rober T. Ames in “Is Political Taoism Anarchism?” *Wuwei* represented “the negation of the authoritarian determination of one thing by another” (p. 34).

<sup>14</sup> From ch. 29 (*Dao Zhi*) and ch. 10 (*Qu qie*); in Burton Watson, tr., *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 332, 110.

The Nameless Man said, “Get away from me, you peasant! What kind of a dreary question is that! I’m just about to set off with the Creator. And if I get bored with that, then I’ll ride on the Light-and-Lissome Bird... What business do you have coming with this talk of governing the world and disturbing my mind?”

But Tian Gen repeated his question. The Nameless Man said, “Let your mind wander in simplicity, blend your spirit with the vastness, follow along with things the way they are, and make no room for -personal views—then the world will be governed.”<sup>15</sup>

This view did not represent merely an antisocial primitivism or mystical escapism. Rather, Zhuangzi was denying that rulership could be justified. Even society was a myth; Zhuangzi thought that a world without class distinctions might exist when natural liberty was achieved. But he had a glimpse of an egalitarian and communitarian world.

The people have their constant inborn nature. To weave for their clothing, to till for their food—this is the Virtue they share. They are one in it and not partisan, and it is called the Emancipation of Heaven. Therefore in a time of Perfect Virtue the gait of men is slow and ambling; their gaze is steady and mild. In such an age mountains have no paths or trails, lakes no boats or bridges. The ten thousand things live species by species, one group settled close to another. Birds and beasts form their flocks and herds, grass and trees grow to fullest height. So it happens that you can tie a cord to the birds and beasts and lead

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<sup>15</sup> *Zhuangzi*, ch. 7 (*Ying dizhu*), in Burton Watson, tr., *Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 90–91.

fect government as *wuwei*, the ruler without punishments, and the individual in the place that suits him.<sup>28</sup>

However, the first modern Chinese anarchists were not Daoists but were primarily educated as Confucians and originally considered themselves to be scholars in the line of their ancestors. While Buddhism was undergoing something of a revival at the turn of the century, it had little to say about politics. Liu Shiwei grew up concentrating on the abstruse lore of Old Text *kaozheng* learning but shared with Wu Zhihui, who was a follower of Tongcheng synthesis, a thorough knowledge not only of the classics but of the Zhu Xi commentaries as well. Even Ba Jin spent some of his childhood memorizing the classics and preparing for the exams. Certain aspects of Confucianism may be considered, at least when extracted from their original context, amenable to certain notions of anarchism. With the breakdown of the legitimacy of the imperial state in the late nineteenth century, intellectuals found it easier to abandon holistic versions of Confucianism and use particular parts to help create a new philosophy. Above all, Confucian stress on minimal government, the goodness of human nature, and a notion of equality provided some of the tools for understanding Western anarchism.

Its “secular humanism” and the central importance it places on social cooperation made Confucianism important in the development of various modern Chinese ideologies. Indeed, it was precisely these qualities that Daoist anarchism lacked. While Confucianism in general stressed hierarchy over practicing equality and familialism over self-sacrifice for the community, it contained the materials necessary to make the transition to anarchism possible without undue psychological stress, if not actually to predispose individuals to anarchism. Obviously, Confucianism did not lead directly to anarchism, nor did any but a tiny minority of intellec-

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<sup>28</sup> Max Raltenmark, “The Ideology of the T’ai-p’ing Ching,” in *Facets of Taoism*, pp. 19–52.

mer's unique emphasis on a noncoercive social order made it a prime source for anarchist notions in premodern China.<sup>26</sup>

When popular rebellions occurred during the imperial era (221 B.C.—a.d. 1911), they displayed certain traits of anarchistic Daoism and, especially in the last few centuries, of millenarian Buddhism.<sup>27</sup> Episodic uprisings of subjugated farmers have marked all agrarian societies. In China rebellions large and small were frequently organized around religious institutions and infused with millennial expectations. The attempt to reverse the order of the state usually resulted in a new and highly stratified hierarchy ostensibly based on religious merit. Nonetheless, time and time again since the Han dynasty the peasantry has inscribed “great peace” (*taiping*) or “equality” (*pingjun*) on its banners. Revolution was to bring forth abundance, wealth for all, perhaps even food without labor; in practice, it sometimes brought about brief regimes that confiscated property, redistributed land, and gave away food. Thus, some of the anarchist notions of philosophical Daoism reached the masses. The *Taiping jing* (*Classic of Great Peace*), which circulated in the second century and helped inspire contemporary rebels, speaks of the per-

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<sup>26</sup> Legalism seems to have adopted some Daoist metaphysics: seeing the (absolute?) ruler himself and civilization generally as manifestation of the Dao, and the best techniques of rule as natural and *wuwei*. Perhaps the link between libertarianism and totalitarianism goes deeper, as Mussolini the anarchist becomes Mussolini the fascist.

<sup>27</sup> See Yuji Muramatsu, “Some Themes in Chinese Rebel Ideologies,” in Arthur F. Wright, ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), pp. 241–267; and Susan Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion in China: The Eight Trigrams Uprising of 1813* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976). The most thorough survey of the subject is Suzuki Chusei, *Chugoku ni okeru kakumei to shukyd* (Revolution and religion in China). Suzuki finds very little religious impulse in the Revolution of 1911, citing a new kind of organizational structure that stemmed from the unprecedented role of the intelligentsia (pp. 307–309). I know of no full-fledged anarchist rebellion in Chinese history.

*them* about, or bend down the limb and peer into the nest of the crow and the magpie.

In this age of Perfect Virtue men live the same as birds and beasts, group themselves side by side with the ten thousand things. Who then knows anything about “gendeman” or “petty man” (*junzi xiaoren*)?<sup>16</sup>

Zhuangzi's powerful commitment to egalitarian and communitarian goals, in addition to his libertarianism, remained a challenge to Confucian morality.<sup>17</sup> Daoists did not set the individual against society: both participated in the Dao while neither could be imagined alone. Perhaps partly for this reason, no revolutionary program ever emerged out of Daoism. Rather, progress consisted in abandoning civilization; education and conventional morality were attacked with particular vigor. In this regard, very little exists in common between Daoist utopian primitivism and modern Western anarchism, with its emphasis on revolution, technology, and the purposive creation of a new social order.

Nonetheless, Daoism provided China with most of the vocabulary necessary to discuss anarchism. The vision of a noncoercive social order simultaneously libertarian and egalitarian is the essence of anarchism.

Anarchism begins as a critique of the status quo. One such critique was contained in the “Li Yun” chapter of the *Liji* (*Book of Rites*):

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<sup>16</sup> Ch. 9 (*Mati*), in Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, p. 105; see also Hsiao, “Anarchism in Chinese Political Thought,” pp. 250–252. Cf. modern Chinese anarchist utopias, ch. 4.

<sup>17</sup> Donald J. Munro discusses Zhuangzi's sense of the “natural equality” of all people based on “the doctrine that each thing in the universe embodies an eternal metaphysical principle determining its nature.” *The Concept of Man in Early China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 124. This did not apply only to humans, but the social-political implications were clear.

When the Great Way was practiced, the whole world was shared by all alike (*da dao zhi xingye, tianxia wei gong*). The worthy and the able were promoted to office and men practiced good faith and lived in affection. Therefore they did not regard as parents only their own parents, or as sons only their own sons. The aged found a fitting close to their lives, the robust their proper employment; the young were provided with an upbringing and the widow and widower, the orphaned and the sick, with proper care. Men had their tasks, and women their hearths. They hated to see goods lying about in waste, yet they did not hoard them for themselves; they disliked the thought that their energies were not fully used, yet they used them not for private ends. Therefore all evil plotting was prevented and thieves and robbers did not arise, so that the people could leave their outer gates unbolted. This was the age of Grand Unity (*Datong*).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Li Ji (Book of Rites)*, ch. 9 (“Li Yun”), tr. in Wm. Theodore de Bary, Wing-tsit Chan, and Burton Watson, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 1:176. The *Li Ji* was compiled during the Han dynasty, though the “Li Yun” chapter may be older. Moist and Daoist overtones are evident.

Jie passage continues, in a bitter attack on Confucian morality: “Now the Great Way has become hid and the world is the possession of private families. Each regards as parents only his own parents, as sons only his own sons; goods and labor are employed for selfish ends. Hereditary offices and titles are granted by ritual law while walls and moats must provide security. Ritual and righteousness are used to regulate the relationship between ruler and subject, to insure affection between father and son, peace between brothers, and harmony between husband and wife, to set up social institutions, organize the farms and villages, honor the brave and wise, and bring merit to the individual. Therefore intrigue and plotting come about and men take up arms. Emperor Yu, Kings Tang, Wen, Wu, and Cheng, and the Duke of Zhou achieved eminence for this reason: that all six rulers were constantly attentive to ritual, made manifest their righteousness and acted in complete faith. They exposed error, made humanity their law and humility their practice, showing the people wherein they should con-

the strengths of their opponents (or if they did, in their recognition of the use of force and cleverness, they saw little hope for change). Rather, they still hoped to appeal to the king’s better nature.

Therefore, traditional anarchism might best be understood as a vehicle for criticism or protest. In a sense, Zhuangzi appealed to the individual only and lacked a sense of the interconnectedness of individuals operating inside of social structures. The Dao was an undifferentiated whole. Zhuangzi stopped at the metaphors of princes as robbers and of freedom in primitive simplicity. Bao Jingyan came closer to a modern conception of society (involving a degree of class consciousness, for example), but even he could not, apparently, imagine revolution. Traditional anarchism was too closely linked with primitiveness, which is only one strain of modern anarchism.<sup>24</sup>

Still, in sum, Daoism supplied the Chinese consciousness with anarchist provisions. Of all the various forms of utopia conceived by the Chinese mind, the Daoists had sketched a purely secular and social vision that anticipated modern anarchism in many ways.<sup>25</sup> Not only did Daoism clearly reject authoritarianism and provide an image of a free society, but it also rooted this image in an understanding of the individual as developing properly—naturally—only if free. Human nature is not to be feared. In spite of the well-known points of contact between Daoism and Legalism, the for-

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<sup>24</sup> One of modern anarchism’s most appealing strains, however. If both European and Chinese anarchism in the early twentieth century were in harmony with technological development, contemporary anarchists (the American poet Gary Snyder, for example) have sometimes linked themselves with the back-to-the-land movement, which has a critical attitude toward most contemporary uses of technology although it is sometimes eager to harness nondestructive technologies such as solar energy.

<sup>25</sup> See inter alia the general survey of Chinese utopianism by Wolfgang Bauer, *China and the Search for Happiness* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976). The politically minded Daoists were but a drop on a vast ocean of thought that, in one way or another, did not find the status quo acceptable.



not in use, moats and ramparts did not have to be built.<sup>22</sup>

After Bao Jingyan, philosophical anarchism apparently fell into decline. A certain Wunengzi (“Master Incompetent,” ninth century) also traced the devolution of society from ancient community to agriculture and selfishness, kings, bureaucracy and the institution of morality, laws, wars, and constant suffering.<sup>23</sup> Wunengzi was closer to being a total cynic than a constructive social thinker. Like Bao Jingyan, or for that matter Zhuangzi himself, he wrote at a time of political and social disintegration, in the last decades of the Tang dynasty.

Without a theory of historical progress, Daoist outrage had little practical scope. It was the Western notion of revolution itself, rather than any particular content of anarchism or socialism, that struck Chinese thinkers at the end of the nineteenth century. Looking to the past did not attenuate the anarchistic critique of Confucianism, authoritarianism, and the state. It may not even have diminished the utopian appeal of their alternative social visions. But traditional anarchistic tendencies, in China as in the West, were not associated with a full-fledged theory of social reconstruction. An alternative vision is not the same as a sense of how real people can create and respond to a new social structure. This traditional anarchism, then, lacked revolutionary self-awareness. Philosophical Daoists issued no calls for organizing the people or fostering resistance to the rulers they so condemned, for such calls would themselves be unnatural and interfering. Nor did the Daoists grasp

<sup>22</sup> Tr. Etienne Balazs, *Chinese Civilization and Bureaucracy*, pp. 243–244.

<sup>23</sup> Nothing is known of Wunengzi: Hsiao, “Anarchism in Chinese Political Thought,” pp. 256–262. Hsiao calls Wunengzi a spokesman for “pure negation” who lacked constructive suggestions. This does not, however, justify the generalization, “Western anarchism therefore is a doctrine of hope, whereas Chinese anarchism seems to be a doctrine of despair.” From Laozi to Bao Jingyan, Chinese thinkers with anarchist predilections are not mere critics of misrule but possess an alternative social vision; Wunengzi is an exception.

Ostensibly quoting Confucius, the passage actually criticized elite norms of society and state: rites and human relations (the Confucian hierarchies of ruler-minister, father-son, elder brother-younger brother, and husband-wife), and even filial piety and righteousness. The passage became a model of a subversive kind of idealism hidden within the orthodox canon. Datong signified an entirely higher plane, a communitarian (*gong*) vision at odds with the lesser tranquillity (or prosperity, *xiaokang*). This vision was then incorporated into the New Text *Gongyang zhuan* tradition of the later Han dynasty (a.d. 25–220).<sup>19</sup> Here, the vision was not left

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stantly abide. If there were any who did not abide by these principles, they were dismissed from their positions and regarded by the multitude as dangerous. This is the period of Lesser Prosperity (*xiaokang*)

<sup>19</sup> For the New Text school, cf. Kung-ch’uan Hsiao, tr. F. W. Mote, *A History of Chinese Political Thought*, vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to the Sixth Century A.D.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 124–42. Also see Martin Bernal, *Chinese Socialism to 1907*, pp. 12–18, and Frederic Wakeman, Jr., *History and Wu: Philosophical Perspectives of Mao Tse-tung’s Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), pp. 100–136. Briefly, Confucius was thought to have written the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu*), a sparse chronicle of his own state of Lu. A number of commentaries were then written to explain the work: the *Zuozhuan*, the *Gongyang zhuan*, and the *Guliang zhuan*. The *Zuozhuan* gave a good deal of historical and anecdotal information about the entries in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and became more important, while the *Gongyang zhuan* emphasized a more mystical view of Confucius as something of a prophet. The *Gongyang zhuan*, however, was preferred by the great Han philosopher Dong Zhongshu (C.179–C.104 B.C.). Later, He Xiu (a.d. 129–182) wrote a subcommentary on the *Gongyang zhuan* which proposed a theory of linear progress: three stages in which chaos (*juluan*) would give way to rising peace (*shengping*) and finally to great peace (*taiping*). (He Xiu himself evidently associated the time of great peace with Confucius’ own lifetime, but this evolutionary scheme was also projected onto the future.) The *Gongyang zhuan* and its accompanying apocrypha became associated with the New Text school, so called because after the Qin dynasty (221–206 B.C.) attacks on Confucianism, texts had to be reconstructed—both from memory and thus written in the “new style” of calligraphy (which included the *Gongyang zhuan*), and from allegedly hidden copies written in the “old style.” After the Han, the Old Text school (which then included the *Zuozhuan*), having incorporated much New Text material, predominated.

in the past but planted into the future in a progressive conception of history resulting in the great peace (*taiping*), the content of which, especially its communitarianism, resembled the Datong. This strain of political thinking was at best a subterranean flow throughout the post-Han imperial ages, until a revival of interest in New Text works in the eighteenth century.<sup>20</sup>

During the decline of the Han (third century), the Daoist tradition gave rise to an impressive body of anarchistic writings. “For there were no kings, and everything was in order; there were no officials, and every matter went well,” wrote Ruan Ji.<sup>21</sup> More explicit was the *Baopuzi* by the Daoist He Gong (253–333), which quotes a certain Bao Jingyan (and was later rediscovered by Liu Shipai). Bao also placed his golden age in the past; he traced the descent from paradise through greed for power and wealth without saying what triggered the fall. But his point was not to trace the history of oppression but to discuss its causes and to present an alternative. He raised to new heights earlier Daoist critiques of intellect in service to oppression. Bao saw technology as a threat and thought col-

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<sup>20</sup> In the hands of one of its last practitioners, Liang Qichao, writing in 1899, a New Text understanding of history read thus: “When human society was first established there was scarcely any difference between rulers and ruled ... this was the epoch of ‘chaos.’ After this, differences grew, and with them developed the rights of the nobility over the common people and men over women. This was the epoch of ‘rising peace.’ The world continued and knowledge developed and the common people and women who had previously been weak began to gain rights and attain equality... This was the third epoch of ‘great peace.’ ... Today the classes of capitalists and workers, and men and women have still not been eliminated. There are still great differences between them. Therefore two events are certain to happen in the future: economic revolution and the women’s rights revolution. Only after these two revolutions will all mankind have rights.” From “Lun qiangquan” (Authoritarianism), in *Qingyi* (Pure criticism), no. 31, 4–7, tr. Bernal, *Chinese Socialism to 1907*, p. 92, mod. Passages such as this appear seven years later to provide the starting point for anarchist analysis.

<sup>21</sup> Ruan (210–263) was one of the “seven sages of the bamboo grove,” famous as a free-thinking, hard-drinking poet-philosopher. This passage is cited in Hsiao, “Anarchism in Chinese Political Thought,” pp. 253–254.

lectivism would work only in a quite simple society. Nonetheless, technology was not the ultimate cause of current problems; rather, Bao implied that as long as people kept to the path of virtue, they would not seek the tools they needed to oppress. If spears were a genie that was hard to put back into the bottle, his discussions of the origins of war and poverty were nonetheless firmly rooted in social reality. And his utopia is perennial.

The Confucian literati say: “Heaven gave birth to the people and then set rulers over them.” But how can High Heaven have said this in so many words? Is it not rather that interested parties make this their pretext? The fact is that the strong oppressed the weak and the weak submitted to them; the cunning tricked the innocent and the innocent served them. It was because there was submission that the relation of lord and subject arose, and because there was servitude that the people, being powerless, could be kept under control... Blue Heaven has nothing whatsoever to do with it.

... In the earliest times there was neither lord nor subject. Wells were dug for drinking-water, the fields were plowed for food, work began at sunrise and ceased at sunset; everyone was free and at ease, neither competing with each other nor scheming against each other, and no one was either glorified or humiliated. The waste lands had no paths or roads and the waterways no boats or bridges, and because there were no means of communication by land or water, people did not appropriate each other’s property; no armies could be formed, and so people did not attack one another... Since no one even began to think of gaining power or seeking profit, no dire events or rebellions occurred; and as spears and shields were

## CHAPTER 3. *The Route to Anarchism Through Paris*

All of you! Think! China has existed for five thousand years but has never once known patriotism. Though we have had the word, this word “patriotism,” what it used to mean is totally different from the “patriotism” in everyone’s heart today. The patriotism that is in everyone’s heart today has just been criticized as “unlucky.” How do they know? Because just when they are happily criticizing it as “unlucky, unlucky,” it becomes hard and difficult, Patriotism does not lead to glory. Patriotism does not lead to wealth. In fact, patriotism means that you may have to sacrifice yourself. Patriotism means that you may have to sacrifice your family. The number of patriots, though, is growing everyday. It has reached the point where all of you have come here today. That this many patriots have gathered at such a hard and difficult time is truly a great victory. Congratulations! Long live everyone here!

Now, in these hard and difficult circumstances, patriots are using every means at their disposal and they are tackling numerous jobs... They have also established this Patriotic School. From now on, the difficulties will never cease, and as our difficulties will never cease so too the school will never cease. And patriotism will never cease. And our nation will never cease! We are now taking the first steps down a road

and the gentry as a class, was the abolition of the examination system. This placed in question the practical value of the intellectual efforts that some men had been pursuing for their entire lives. In a sense, the court had abandoned its natural constituency. In the long run, the entire Chinese sense of culture was irrevocably altered, for the ancient connection between government service (a moral ideal as well as a living) and immersion in traditional philosophy and literature was severed. The traditional Chinese literati were thus alienated from much of their cultural mission—but the new Chinese intellectuals were also liberated from traditional restraints: family, state, social hierarchy, and the formalistic rituals (*li*) of Confucianism. Anarchism, then, offered a kind of intellectual continuity while it spoke to radical sense of dislocation that a few Chinese around the beginning of the century could use as the basis for an exploration of the realms of freedom.

The anarchists were to deal with the question of Chinese culture in drastically different ways. But faith in some definition of Chinese culture even at the time implied no necessary loyalty to the dynasty or the dynastic system. Indeed, such a stalwart supporter of traditional culture as Zhang Binglin not only joined the revolution but did so precisely in the name of tradition, which he defined to include a notion of Han racial identity. In any case, the question dividing Chinese intellectuals at the start of the twentieth century was not whether to pursue radical political change but how to do so and toward what object. At the bottom of society, an ever increasing number of revolts, especially peasant uprisings, occupied the government’s forces of order.<sup>67</sup> The Qing might have resisted either the new intellectuals or the peasants alone, but the two forces acting together (though without coordination) created a revolutionary situation.

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<sup>67</sup> C. K. Yang, “Some Preliminary Statistical Patterns of Mass Actions in Nineteenth-Century China,” pp. 174–210, especially 177.

## HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A number of studies of Chinese anarchism and specific anarchist figures is beginning to round out our understanding of the Chinese revolution.<sup>68</sup> Chinese scholars are in the midst of a new attempt to understand their own anarchists. Although most of the substantial studies of the subject to date have been by Japanese scholars, since 1980 over fifty articles on anarchism have been published in Chinese journals, some of them merely tendentious but many of them about China's historical experience.

The key to the contemporary Chinese understanding of anarchism is a distinction between anarchism as a philosophy, or Western anarchism, and the role that anarchism actually played in China's particular historical circumstances. This allows scholars to condemn anarchism as an ideology while analyzing its progressive aspects with a kind of historical relativism. The anarchists are numbered among the petty bourgeoisie, but in the socialist tradition, emerging out of the contradictions of modern capitalism (and the hopes of the masses).<sup>69</sup> Anarchism was introduced to China by bourgeois reformers such as Liang Qichao and revolutionaries such as Sun Yat-sen's followers as part and parcel of a larger introduction of Western socialist thought. This is surely correct. Their progressive role was to oppose feudalism and religious

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<sup>68</sup> For a fuller analysis of the historiography of Chinese anarchism, see Peter G. Zarrow, "Chinese Anarchists: Ideals and the Revolution of 1911" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1987), ch. 10.

<sup>69</sup> See Chen Hanchu, "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zai Zhongguo de quanbo he yingxiang" (The dissemination and influence of anarchism in China), pp. 216-240; Chen nonetheless finds anarchism to be opposite rather than complementary to Marxism. See also Shen Jun, "Zhongguo zaoqi wuzhengfu zhuyi sichao chutan" (A preliminary exploration of the extent of early Chinese anarchist thought), *Huazhong Shiyuan xuebao*, Zhexue shehui kexue ban, no. 30 (1981, no. 2), pp. 45-55. A manuscript by Lu Zhe, of Nanjing University, *Zhongguo wuzhengfu zhuyi shi* (The history of Chinese anarchism), came into my hands too late for thorough review. However, it is clear that Professor Lu believes anarchism to have been an extremely influential movement in the twentieth century.

to the poor." But Liu did not suggest what China was to do in the future.<sup>69</sup>

Yet a few faithful anarchists persisted in their beliefs, although they were temporarily quiet. In his memoirs, Jing Dingcheng records his continued faith in anarchism and socialism throughout his time in Tokyo and even after he moved back to China, first to Qingdao, Shandong to teach school (and organize workers), and then home to Shaanxi in time for the revolution.<sup>70</sup> Meanwhile, a young stalwart of the Tongmenghui was at this time in Guangdong reading his first anarchist tracts—Liu Shifu.

And the Paris group of Chinese anarchists was able to continue its work.

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<sup>69</sup> "Lun Zhongguo gudai caizheng guoyou zhi bi" (The harm of fiscal policies of state ownership throughout China's history), *Guocui xuebao*, year 5 (1909), no. 50, *zhengbian*.

<sup>70</sup> Jing Dingcheng, *RyuNichi kaiko*, pp. 145-148, 180-183.

fled to Europe. Liu Shipai, accompanied by He Zhen and Wang Gongquan, had betrayed the revolution. Zhang Binglin had ended his flirtation with anarchism to pursue Han nationalism and the Chinese national essence and to battle with Sun Yat-sen and Wu Zihui. Pressure from the Japanese may have affected at least the timing of these events. The Tokyo government ordered *Hengbao* closed in October.

The lull in revolutionary prospects occurred not just in Tokyo. In China, a wave of armed uprisings in 1907 met defeat. Perhaps this had something to do with the attention that various more moderate and conservative elements of the gentry were focusing on the Qing reforms. Neither questions about a parliament under the Manchus nor agitation over railroad ownership were radical concerns. Perhaps these three years represented the Qing's last chance to come to terms with a nationalism that, in diluted form, spread from a radical intelligentsia to provincial and county power holders and New Army officers. At any rate, the radical intelligentsia metaphorically held their collective breath. Nonetheless, the silence was not absolute. More or less anarchist notions can be traced throughout the period.

Liu Shipai continued to use the pages of *the National Essence Journal* to berate Chinese governments of the past for practicing state socialism. State ownership of the land, state monopolies of tea, liquor, salt, and iron, and various state restrictions on trade—this familiar litany represented a retreat from anarchism but at the same time demonstrates Liu's continued basic accord with some anarchist, or libertarian, assumptions. "Thus, policies of state ownership are said to suppress rich merchants and aid the poor but in fact do not harm rich merchants in the least while they do harm

superstition—defined more or less in terms of the imperial state and the hierarchical human relations of the "three bonds" and the like. Thus the anarchist notion of equality was a true revolutionary breakthrough. If only because China was so backward, anarchism served to encourage a bourgeois revolution. Then history moved on.

Nonetheless, after 1911, anarchism appears in a darker light, as revealed falsehood and utopian (*kongxiang*) socialism: the reactionary thought of the petty bourgeoisie. Some scholars see even this phase as containing positive elements, forming a broad-based progressive movement in the 1910s and 1920s.<sup>70</sup> Kropotkin's concept of mutual aid, the work-study movement, and the New Village movement all influenced progressive youth. Mutual aid was particularly influential on early Marxism through Li Dazhao.

These views are quite different from the more traditional Marxist scholarship of, say, Hou Wailu.<sup>71</sup> Here anarchism is seen in the context of the importation to China of bourgeois idealism and republicanism from the West—Kant and the French Enlightenment. But Hou sees anarchism, though fortunately an aberration of intellectuals never influential among the masses, as entirely destructive. A different kind of anarchist-bashing is found in the post-Maoist tumult. Lin Biao and the Gang of Four could be associated with anarchism.<sup>72</sup> Thus anarchism became reactionary through the 1949 divide, if not earlier.

The leading anarchists are put into some such framework. Zhang Binglin has garnered a remarkable amount of scholarly

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<sup>70</sup> See Peng Ming, "Kongxiang shehuizhuyi zai Zhongguo de pochao" (The bankruptcy of utopian socialism in China), in *Zhongguo xiandai zhengzhi svdangshi shijiang* (Honan renmin chubanshe, 1986), pp. 77–110. Peng minimizes the anarchism in the phenomena with which he deals but is in fact describing heavily anarchist-influenced movements.

<sup>71</sup> Hou Wailu et al., *Zhongguo jindai zhhexueshi* (History of modern Chinese philosophy). See also Cai Wei, *Wusi shiqi makesi zhuyi*,

<sup>72</sup> Li Zhenya, "Zhongguo wuzhengfu zhuyi de jinxi" (Chinese anarchism, past and present), *Nankai xuebao* no. 33 (January 1980, no. 1), pp. 7–12.

attention. This is understandable since Zhang's primary political identity stems from his nationalism. Chinese historians have ranged from regarding him as a spokesman for the bourgeoisie to tarring him as the most reactionary feudal obscurantist—as Western scholars have variously emphasized his nationalism, his legalism, and his Buddhism. Li Runcang proposes that Japanese anarchism markedly influenced Zhang.<sup>73</sup> In contradistinction to the views of other Chinese scholars, Li believes that one of the prime effects of anarchism on Zhang was to heighten his anti-imperialism.<sup>74</sup> In particular he became infected by Kotoku Shusui's dream of a united Asian socialist party. Secondly, Li believes that Zhang's critique of parliamentary democracy stemmed from the Japanese anarchist exposure of the sham and corruption of Meiji politics. And thirdly, he points to Zhang's advocacy of the general strike and assassinations. None of these themes is unique to anarchism, but together they were more closely associated with anarchism in the first decade of the twentieth century than with any other ideology. Li's evidence is not any explicit anarchist statements but rather the timing of Zhang's shifts of opinion; his thesis is not that Zhang was an anarchist but simply that he was influenced by anarchism. This indeed seems worth noting though it seldom is.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Li Runcang, "Zhang Taiyan yu Riben de wuzhengfu zhuyi" (Zhang Binglin and Japanese anarchism), *Xueshuyuekan* no. 157 (June 1982, no. 6), pp. 57–64.

<sup>74</sup> Li Fan, for example, while granting that Zhang "joined the anarchist movement" between 1907 and 1908, tends to minimize its actual influence on Zhang's thought. See Li Fan, "Zhang Taiyan zai Riben" (Zhang Binglin in Japan), *Dongbei Shida xuebao*, *Zhexue shehui kexue ban*, no. 85 (1983, no. 5), pp. 102–103.

<sup>75</sup> From a more philosophical perspective, Tang Wenquan sees a shift in Zhang's thought in 1907 toward a Daoist relativism and nihilism and a Buddhist subjective idealism—"Zhang Taiyan zai 'Minbao' shiqi de sixiang yanbian" (The changes in Zhang Binglin's thought during his *Minbao* period), *Huazhong Shiyuan xuebao*, *Zhexue shehui kexue ban*, no. 23 (1979 no. 4) pp. 67–76. See also Yang Zhijun, "Xinhai geming qianxi de Zhang Taiyan" (Zhang Taiyan on the eve of the Revolution of 1911), *Xinhai gemingshi congkan* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 2:37–47, who concludes that Zhang remained committed to the revolution

and the intellectual prestige of Kropotkin's writings).<sup>66</sup> The Chinese brought a unique heritage of political and bureaucratic experience and antistate theory to the questions posed by anarchism. Interest in nationalism, revolution, socialism, and antistatism combined, most effectively in the writing brush of Liu Shiwei, to create Chinese anarchism. If some of the appeal of anarchism lay in its appearance as an up-to-date, properly vetted Western doctrine (a necessarily unprovable proposition), and if a man like Kotoku looked constantly to the frontiers of Western thought,<sup>67</sup> men like Liu and Zhang Binglin had different standards. Impressed by some aspects of the West, put off by much of it, their anarchism was rooted in Chinese soil.

The peak of Chinese anarchism in Japan was brief. When the Meiji government cracked down on the radical movement, Liu started a new journal, *Hengbao*, registering it in Macao, though he printed it in Tokyo.<sup>68</sup> For about a year and a half, Liu and He Zhen assiduously propagated their versions of anarchist doctrine. But by the end of 1908, there was little left of the Chinese anarchists as an organized group within the overall radical scene. Zhang Ji

<sup>66</sup> Bernal's conclusion ("Triumph," p. 140; *Chinese Socialism to 1907*, p. 223) that the fundamental causes of the Chinese shift to anarchism lay primarily in the "increase of interest in Russian terrorism stemming from the activities of the Social Revolutionaries and the conversion of the Japanese Socialist movement to anarchism, which itself had the same origins" is too narrow. For while it is true that Japanese and Chinese were impressed by Russian terrorism (and confused enough to think most of the Russian populists were anarchists), their interest in anarchism went far beyond revolutionary techniques. The Russian Revolution of 1905 explains some of the timing, but the content of the Chinese writings on anarchism reveals, as we shall see, a real appreciation of its substance.

<sup>67</sup> According to Notehelfer, *Kotoku Shusui*, pp. 113–114.

<sup>68</sup> Half a dozen articles from *Hengbao* are reprinted in Ge Maochun et al., eds., *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiatg ziliaoxuan* (Selected materials on anarchist thought) (Beijing: Daxue chubanshe, 1984), pp. 139–166; hereafter WSZ. I am grateful to Diane Scherer for giving me copies of the issues of *Hengbao* on microfilm at the Centre Chine in Paris.

another side of Chinese radicalism, which, like certain strains of Japanese thinking, saw Western imperialism as a threat to both national identity and social progress. It evidently attempted to combine all Asian nationalists who were socialists and those who were not. Such a broadly drawn group could become little more than a debating society and did not survive Zhang Ji's departure for France in early 1908.

Together, the Society for the Study of Socialism and the Asiatic Humanitarian Brotherhood provided an organizational framework for Chinese students interested in more than an anti-Manchu revolution and the vague Three People's Principles of Sun Yat-sen. Jing Dingcheng tells of attendance at the society's meetings of forty to fifty Chinese who came to hear about such topics as the history of socialism, socialism in China, Darwin, the mutual aid theory of Kropotkin, and nihilism in Russia.<sup>63</sup> The group appears also to have been the base for demonstrations against Liang Qichao on occasion.<sup>64</sup> At one meeting of Liang's Zhengwenshe (Political Information Society), Zhang Ji led a group of revolutionaries in calling Liang a "horse's fart,"<sup>65</sup> which promptly started a melee resulting in the revolutionaries' seizing the podium.

The Chinese turn to anarchism thus followed the Japanese turn—not that either was more than a minority position even among radicals. However, there would have been a Chinese movement even without the Japanese. Both took place against the background of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and a Western upsurge of anarchism (the syndicalist movement in France, the International Workers of the World in the United States, terrorism in southern Europe,

<sup>63</sup> Jing Dingcheng, *Ryu Nichi kaiko*, p. 125.

<sup>64</sup> See Zhang Binglin (Taiyan), "Zhengwenshe yuan dahui pohai zhuang" (Trashing the meeting of the Zhengwenshe), *Minbao* no. 17 (25 October 1907), pp. 2795–2801.

<sup>65</sup> Or "brown-nose" to the Qing.

Liu Shipei may be more easily classified as petty bourgeoisie, though sympathetic to armed mass revolution.<sup>76</sup> Wu Zhihui has received a good deal of attention, especially from scholars on Taiwan. However, this attention is remarkable for the extent to which his anarchism is glossed over. A book dealing with his later career might legitimately conclude (after consideration) that Wu's anarchism meant little after, say, 1920 (though this was not Wu's own opinion). But discussion of his activities as a 1911 revolutionary propagandist is bizarre without full treatment of his basic beliefs at that time—that is to say, anarchism.<sup>77</sup> In considering this whole generation, the intellectual historian Guo Zhanbo has come to an appreciation of the influence of anarchism on Cai Yuanpei, Zhang Binglin, and even Hu Shi, as well as Wu Zhihui, Li Shizeng, Liu Shipei, and Liu Shifu.<sup>78</sup> Guo considers mutual aid to have been influential second only to Darwinian evolution itself among intellectual systems imported from abroad before the May Fourth Movement.

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but was a divisive force in the politically immature movement; and Kong Fan, "Zhang Taiyan zai zhubian 'Minbao' shiqi de zhexue sixiang" (The philosophical thought of Zhang Binglin during his *Minbao* period), *Zhexueyanjiu*, 1978, no. 5, pp. 56–64.

<sup>76</sup> See Wu Yannan, "Liu Shipei de wuzhangfu zhuyi" (The anarchism of Liu Shipei), *Guizhou shehui kexue*, no. 8 (1981 no. 5), pp. 5r–58.

<sup>77</sup> Wu's biographer Zhang Wenbo limits his discussion of Wu's anarchism to a few pages—*Wu Zhihui xiansheng zakuanji* (A biography of Wu Zhihui) and *Zhilao xianhua* (Idle chats with Wu Zhihui). Li Wenneng's more recent work is somewhat more successful in incorporating Wu's anarchism into his overall attitudes toward the anti-Qing revolutionary movement—*Wu Jingheng dui Zhongguo xiandai zhengzhi zhiyingxiang* (The influence of Wu Zihui on contemporary Chinese politics), although Li too underestimates the role of anarchism in later facets of Wu's career such as his promotion of work-study and his refusal to take government office.

<sup>78</sup> Guo Zhanbo, *Jindai Zhongguo sixiangshi* (Intellectual history of modern China), p. 3.

A Japanese author, Tamagawa Nobuaki, has written the only full-length treatment of the Chinese anarchists.<sup>79</sup> Tamagawa posits that anarchism had a wide if vague influence on overseas students, who in turn played an important role in the Revolution of 1911 and beyond. He believes that anarchism formed an important strand of Chinese Marxism, and of Maoism in particular. In claiming anarchist sympathies for Sun Yat-sen, however, he overstates his case. Tamagawa's generalities tend to be excessively broad, and his exaggerated claims for anarchist influences (although an important corrective to earlier scholarship) give a teleological cast to his discussion.<sup>80</sup>

In general, Japanese scholars see Chinese anarchism primarily as a transitional stage to Marxism, but a stage crucial both to the antiimperialist struggle and to modernization.<sup>81</sup> Early Chinese anarchism was superficially antibourgeois, but in effect it was fundamentally tied to the bourgeois revolution in its support for individual freedom and also its support for total equality: a notion that plays a modernizing role in backward societies. Anarchism also served to extend the scope of natural science in China and thereby provide a weapon for opposing fixed values. As Wu Zhihui promoted science, so Liu Shipai concretized the people as workers and tenant farmers. The reactionary qualities of Liu and Zhang

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<sup>79</sup> Tamagawa Nobuaki, *Chugoku no kuroi hata* (The Chinese black flag) (Tokyo: Shobunsha, 1981).

<sup>80</sup> In English, Robert A. Scalapino and George T. Yu coauthored a brief overview of the subject in 1961. At 81 pages, this is still the longest single English-language study of Chinese anarchism. It gives a good summary of the anarchists' main arguments through about 1922, but neither author analyzes them nor adequately traces their origins. The authors do not consider the tensions between differing impulses that permeated Chinese anarchism.

<sup>81</sup> See inter alia Arita Kazuo, "Shinmatsu ni okeru anakizumu" (Anarchism at the end of the Qing), *Toho gaku* no. 30 (July 1965), pp. 80–89; and Maruyama Matsuyuki, *Chugoku kindai no kakumei shiso* (Revolutionary thought in modern China) (Tokyo: Kenben shuppan, Matsumoto shoten, 1982).

guides, and also pursuing their interests in Chinese culture. The society originally met once a week, then every other week. Japanese speakers included not just Kotoku, but also Sakai Toshihiko, who spoke on scientific socialism, Osugi Sakae, who spoke on antimilitarism, Yamakawa Hitoshi, and Miyazaki Tamizo. Chinese speakers, aside from the founders, also included the revolutionaries Tao Cheng-zhang, Jing Dingcheng, and Qiao Yisheng. The society itself outlasted the departure from Japan of its founders and continued at least through 1909-

Contacts between Chinese and Japan radicals were not limited to the Chinese society; the Japanese Society for the Study of Socialism welcomed the participation of Chinese students at its meetings, and the Friday Club (*Kinydkai*) that Kotoku founded in 1907 for the truly left-wing was regularly attended by a handful of interested Chinese. In addition, more intimate gatherings were occasioned by picnics and blossom viewings.

Nor was interest in radicalism in Tokyo limited to Chinese and Japanese. Not only were passing Westerners (such as the British labor leader Kier Hardy) snared into lecture halls, but Zhang and Liu, with Zhang Binglin's *encouragement*, also founded a kind of pan-Asian nationalism group.<sup>62</sup> The summer of 1907 saw the emergence of the "Asiatic Humanitarian [*sic*] Brotherhood" (Yazhou heqinhui), which was to include Indians (hence the use of English), Koreans, Vietnamese, Filipinos, and Burmese in addition to Chinese and Japanese members. Su Manshu and Chen Duxiu were also members. Judging by its charter, this organization was distinctly less socialist and more antiimperialist and nationalist. It represented

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<sup>62</sup> The brotherhood is discussed and its charter reprinted in Yang Zhijun, "Guanyu Yazhou heqinhui" (The Asiatic Brotherhood), *Xinhai gemingshi congkan* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 1:79–84. Nationalists from southern Asia appear to have been enthusiastic, but evidently no Koreans—facing, of course, Japanese rather than Western imperialism—joined. Zhang Binglin had a deep interest in India, both as the birthplace of Buddhism and more immediately for its independence movement—see Shimada Kenji, "Sho Heirin ni tsuite," pp. 252–260.



government, things would work out socially: liberty and equality would follow the political phase of the revolution. Kotoku himself emphasized industrial workers over peasants; Chinese anarchists tended to drop this when discussing revolution.

To encourage attendance at the meetings of their Society for the Study of Socialism, Liu Shipai and Zhang Ji advertised in nearly every issue of *Natural Justice*:

In recent times, socialism has flourished in Europe. It has spread to Japan. But few Chinese scholars have heard of it. Although we have men of determination advocating nationalism, they only analyze the differences and similarities among nationalities. They do not take the joys and sorrows of the people's livelihood (*minsheng zhi xiuqi*) into account. Even if the Restoration succeeds in the end, we are afraid that in practice, oppression will simply have replaced oppression (*yibaoyibao*).<sup>60</sup>

Meeting twice a week, the group discussed the need to feed China's people and the sources of socialist philosophy in both Eastern and Western traditions. They were especially influential because the Tongmenghui leadership was so seriously divided; and more than one student reports his initial favorable reaction to the Japanese speakers known for their radical scholarship.<sup>61</sup> The organization had no real requirements for membership; it grew out of the interests of old movement friends and connections—Liu, Zhang Ji, and Zhang Binglin—now meeting together again in Tokyo, giving each other support within the factionalized Tongmenghui, exploring radical political doctrines with Japanese

<sup>60</sup> See inter alia *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), p. 171.

<sup>61</sup> See Yang Tianshi, "Shehui zhuyi jiangxihui' ziliao" (Materials on the 'Society for the study of socialism'), *Zhongguo zhaxue*, no. 1, esp. pp. 378–405, for examples.

Binglin (their antimodernism) are thus balanced in a sense by their populism.<sup>82</sup>

Of scholars writing in English, whereas Michael Gasster tended to marginalize the anarchists, understanding them as "discordant elements in the revolutionary movement,"<sup>83</sup> Arif Dirlik focuses on the anarchist formulation of the problem of social revolution as "the distinctive anarchist contribution" to Chinese political discourse.<sup>84</sup> Dirlik emphasizes that the anarchist rejection of the state led to a focus on society and cultural change and, in contrast to the older scholarly view, believes that anarchist influence was both broad and deep.<sup>85</sup> Martin Bernal's useful research attempts to determine why certain Chinese turned to anarchism precisely in 1907, and what this implied for their contemporary and future understanding of socialism, but it definitely treats anarchism as part of the rise of Chinese socialism and then of Marxism.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Other, somewhat more in-depth studies of Liu and He Zhen include Onogawa Hidemi, "Ryu Shibai to museifushugi" (Liu Shipai and anarchism), pp. 695–720; Mori Tokihiko, "Minzokushugi to museifushugi—kokugaku kyoshi Ryu Shibai no kakumei ron" (Nationalism and anarchism—The revolutionary theory of the great national learning scholar, Liu Shipai), pp. 135–184; Suetsugu Reiko, in "Shingai kakumei no fujin kaiho undo to Purotesu-tanto joshi kyoiku" (The movement for women's liberation during the Revolution of 1911 and Protestant women's education); and Bernal, "Liu Shih-p'ei and National Essence."

<sup>83</sup> Gasster, *Chinese Intellectuals*, p. 153.

<sup>84</sup> Arif Dirlik, "Vision and Revolution: Anarchism in Chinese Revolutionary Thought on the Eve of the 1911 Revolution," p. 123. See also his "The New Culture Movement Revisited: Anarchism and the Idea of Social Revolution in New Culture Thinking" and Arif Dirlik and Edward S. Krebs, "Socialism and Anarchism in Early Republican China."

<sup>85</sup> Nonetheless, Dirlik's denial that traditional Chinese thought played a role in the formation of modern Chinese anarchism is not convincing; see Arif Dirlik, "Vision and Revolution," pp. 155–158. He discusses the importance of anarchism to May Fourth thought in Arif Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese Communism*.

<sup>86</sup> See especially Bernal, "The Triumph of Anarchism over Marxism, 1906–1907." But in Tokyo the contest between Marxism (or, better, state socialism) and anarchism among Chinese was by no means as sharp as Bernal suggests.

The works outlined above represent considerable achievement, but the implicit teleological assumption of most of them—that Chinese thought culminates in Marxism—forces anarchism into a modernizing role it actually did not fit. Nor, certainly, should the anarchists be dismissed as millenarian dreamers. All true, but anarchism must also be understood as one of those usually underground streams that flow through all cultures.<sup>87</sup> Emerging in the first decades of the twentieth century, anarchism provided a new and powerful language which intellectuals could use to understand better such modern and perennial phenomena as imperialism, class struggle, the nation-state, and the individual's role in a shrinking world.

One center of Chinese understanding of these issues lay in Tokyo.

According to the Chinese translation, Kotoku argued that since the split in the International in 1864, socialists, although largely agreed as to ends, had had to choose between the “peaceful” methods of Marx and “extremist” (*jilie*) methods of Bakunin. The former wished to use the powers of the state to make all wealth public, whereas the latter wished only to use the powers of the workers. Anarchism differs from socialism because it would abolish capitalists and the state to enable the workers to plan for their own welfare. Socialism might make land and wealth public but would end by handing them over to government. Government is not necessary; it is historically contingent: the result of a minority using coercion and then making laws. This can benefit only the haves. Moreover, people are not by nature violent but rather enjoy peace and security. It is government that obstructs the development of human nature. Kotoku borrowed Kropotkin's biological notion of mutual aid to explain how human being could live together and Marx's historical notion of stages to explain why primitive communism failed. People in the distant past were led to the use of force by the limited productive potential of the age, but today farming, manufacture, and trade (*nong gong shang*) are flourishing—who can doubt that everyone will be provided with sustenance?

Given a choice between anarchism and Marxism, it is little wonder that Asian socialists chose anarchism. Once Kropotkin had made anarchism as quasi-scientific as Marxism (by adopting much of Marxist economics and Darwinian evolution), they could stop worrying about class struggle (distasteful to nationalists and Confucians alike) and such prerequisites as the creation of industry and a proletariat. They could concentrate on promotion of a mass revolution (the masses being anyone from students to peasants), the abolition of the state, and the formation of voluntary, decentralized associations (a Neo-Confucian echo). Anarchism, in its unselfish asceticism, appeals to moralists. They could get on with the revolution, secure in the belief that as long as they did not make the mistake of reestablishing organs of

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<sup>87</sup> More inner-directed approaches to the anarchists include Charlotte Furth, “Intellectual Change: From the Reform Movement to the May Fourth Movement, 1895–1920.” See also Chang Hao, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis*, on Liu Shipei.

Kropotkin in jail, corresponded with anarchists in America, and pondered more deeply the similarities between supposedly constitutional Japan and autocratic, revolutionary Russia and China. When he returned from a trip to America in June 1906, he electrified the radical scene in all Japan with his rousing lecture “Trends in the World Revolutionary Movement.” Marxism (which he associated with electoral politics on the German model), universal suffrage, and all ameliorative reforms were outmoded. Direct action and anarcho-communism were the means and ends of the future. Kotoku both split and radicalized the Japanese socialist movement. Part of his appeal may have come from the spectacle of the altogether non-Marxist revolution then gripping Russia and an exaggerated association between Russian revolutionaries and Western anarchists.

Part of Kotoku’s shift to anarchism was based on the manner in which he gradually came to question any kind of authority.<sup>57</sup> This was the new lesson he had to impart. At the same time, Kotoku linked the anarchist revolution to national liberation (anti-imperialism) across Asia.<sup>58</sup> After his return to Japan, Kotoku deliberately sought out the Chinese students and was the featured speaker at the first meeting of the Chinese Society for the Study of Socialism, which Zhang Ji and Liu Shiwei had just founded, in August 1907. More than ninety Chinese attended, and Kotoku’s remarks appeared not only in *Natural Justice* (*Tianyi Bao*) but in Paris’ *New Century* (*Xin Shiji*) as well.<sup>59</sup> Kotoku’s central point was that anarchism was practical as well as good.’

<sup>57</sup> Notehelper, *Kotoku Shusui*, pp. 116–117.

<sup>58</sup> Ishimoda, “Kotoku Shusui to Chugoku,” pp. 387–388.

<sup>59</sup> The first reporting of the meeting was in *Tianyi Bao*, “Shehuizhuyi jiangxihui diyici kaihui jishi” (Record of the first meeting of the Society for the Study of Socialism), no. 6 (1 September 1907), pp. 151–155, though without Kotoku’s speech, which was presumably carried in issue no. 7, unavailable to me. See *Xin Shiji* no. 22 (16 November 1907), no. 25 (7 December), and no. 26 (14 December). All references to *Tianyi Bao* and *Xin Shiji* will be to the Daiyasu reprints unless otherwise specified: Daiyasu, Tokyo, 1966.

## CHAPTER 2. *The Route to Anarchism Through Tokyo*

The garden willow turns yellow,  
The dike grasses sprout green.  
I feel these minor things Are also equipped with the  
will for survival.

The Spring breezes move mild and warm,  
The peach and the plum compete to be the most alluring.  
How long will their intense blossoms last?  
In an instant I will lament their withering.  
The old pine, proud in the cold season,  
Treasured as the last to fade.

The hibiscus is fresh and green,  
Brightly rising around the fragrant pond.  
The Autumn winds rise up and then Disperse so many  
of the blossoms.

How can they lack the will to glory?  
Waving and falling, out of control,  
I wish to cross the river’s form.  
Sweet smells, who will hand them on?  
The lotus sinks in the cold waves.  
Great pains in the end change nothing.

—Liu Shiwei, “On Reading ‘The Theory of Evolution’ ”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Probably written about 1905, reprinted in *Liu Shenshu xianshengyi shu* (Collected Works of Liu Shiwei [at Shenshu]), vol. 6, no. 61, *zhuan* 1, 2a.

Liu **shipei**, He Zhen, and Zhang Ji were the first Chinese, at least outside of Europe, to adopt anarchism. They arrived in Tokyo with experience in the anti-Manchu movement but without a thought-out revolutionary position. They converted to anarchism in Tokyo. Zhang Ji first reached Japan in 1899; Liu and He Zhen arrived in June 1907. Supported to a modest extent by revolutionary funds, and perhaps by money from home, life consisted of the movement: working on *The People's Journal* for Liu, reading various student journals, intense talks with radicals of all stripes in coffee shops and small rented rooms, walking around and wondering at the city—Tokyo had streetcars, electric lights, department stores with big display windows—and numerous political meetings. Crisis was in the air.<sup>2</sup>

Liu Shipei was clearly the leader of the Chinese anarchists in Tokyo. His was the dominant voice, and it is easy to believe that his was the dominant personality. Probably he influenced the otherwise independent Zhang Binglin to flirt with anarchism; though in spite of Liu's long-standing attraction to a libertarian viewpoint, Zhang Ji had to introduce him to anarchism before he could find his new voice in Tokyo.

## THE EDUCATION OF LIU SHIPEI

Before the Revolution of 1911, Liu Shipei and Wu Zhihui were the most important Chinese theorists of anarchism. And Wu's

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<sup>2</sup> The place of the Chinese students in Tokyo has been discussed by Saneto Keishu, *Chugokujin Nihon ryugaku ski*; Huang Fuqing, *Qingmo liu-Ri xuesheng*; Marius Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* and "Japan and the Chinese Revolution of 1911" in *The Cambridge History of China*; and Robert A. Scalapino, "Prelude to Marxism: The Chinese Student Movement in Japan, 1900-1910." Although he was friendly with many of the Chinese exiles, Kita Ikki's *Shina kakumei gaishi* (An unofficial history of the Chinese Revolution) provides little color on the anarchists.

much Chinese revolution and much anarchism. And feminism had been linked with radical politics in Japan since the political rights movement of the 1880s.<sup>53</sup> Although little was published on Chinese women in such Japanese journals as *Women of the World*, there was a great deal on the women's movement in Europe and on women and socialism, as well as attacks on the old morality.<sup>54</sup> He Zhen would follow Fukuda in linking feminism and radicalism. Feminism itself had existed in China at least since the 1890s,<sup>55</sup> and in Japan a great deal more information became available to Chinese feminists.

Knowledge of contemporary social movements in the West had grown dramatically among Japanese intellectuals (teachers, journalists, activists) and was spreading rapidly among Chinese students in Japan. Zhang Ji's survey of anarchism, *Wuzhengfu zhuyi*, was published in 1903 and Jin Yi's (Jin Songcen) *Wuzhengfu zhuyi* (later retitled *Ziyouxue—Freedom's Blood*), a translation of Kemuyama Sentaro's *Kinsei museifu-shugi* (*Modern Anarchism*), was published in 1904. Conditions in Japan do not explain the birth of the Chinese anarchist movement, but they explain how the movement managed to exist.

Kotoku Shusui was one of Japan's leading socialists and, when he went to prison in 1905, considered himself to be a Marxist social democrat looking toward constitutional change.<sup>56</sup> But he read

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<sup>53</sup> See Sharon L. Sievers, *Flowers in Salt*, chs. 3 and 6. For a similar analysis of the way Qiu Jin linked feminism, revolution, and Chinese nationalism, see Mary Rankin, "The Emergence of Women at the End of the Ch'ing: The Case of Ch'iu Chin," in Margery Wolf and Roxane Witke, eds., *Women in Chinese Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), p. 57.

<sup>54</sup> *Sekai Fujin* (Women of the World), 1 January 1907–5 July 1909, reprinted by Meiji bunken shiryō kankokai, Tokyo, 1947.

<sup>55</sup> Margery Wolf and Roxane Witke, eds., Introduction in *Women in Chinese Society*, p. 4. See also ch. 6.

<sup>56</sup> See Ishimoda Sho, "Kotoku Shushi to Chugoku" (Kotoku Shusui and China), in Takeuchi Yoshimi, ed., *Ajia shugi*, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Chikuma shoten, 1963), pp. 384–410; and F. G. Notehelfer, *Kotoku Shusui: Portrait of a Japanese Radical*.

a world on a real foundation; his pessimistic opinion of human nature drove his anarchism into nihilism. As he wrote elsewhere:

(a) The state (*guojia*) lacks authentic existence (*zixing*, self-nature); (b) the functions of the state were not formed naturally by principle (*li suo ziran*), but determined by happenstance; (c) the practices of the state are base and corrupting, not lofty and spiritual.<sup>51</sup>

## CHINESE AND JAPANESE RADICALS

In spite of censorship and outright persecution by the Meiji government, radicals of various stripes—the future fascist Kita Ikki, the socialist-Marxist-anarchist Kotoku Shusui, the feminist Fukuda Hideko—were firmly committed to social change in Japan and China. Such broadly socialist journals as *The Commoner* (*Heimin shimbun*) and especially *The Review of Revolutions* (*Kakumei hyoron*) contained news and background information about anarchists in the West and Russia.<sup>52</sup> Radical social progress was treated as an inclusive worldwide movement that took different political forms depending on local conditions. While no Chinese anarchist revolution was found in these pages, there was

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<sup>51</sup> Taiyan, “Guojia lun” (The state), *Minbao* no. 17 (25 October 1907), p. 1. Whatever problems of interpretation may apply to Zhang’s intentions in “Wuwulun,” “Guojialun” expresses in straightforward terms his deep doubts. But he concluded that statehood for China was nonetheless necessary as long as other countries failed to disband.

<sup>52</sup> *Heimin shimbun* (*The Commoner*) was published from November 1903 to January 1905, and *Kakumei hyoron* (*The Review of Revolutions*) from September 1906 to March 1907 (both reprinted by the Meiji bunken shiryō kankokai, Tokyo, 1948). These Japanese journals had a certain influence on Chinese student opinion and probably presented the first positive introduction to socialism (as opposed to the critiques of Liang Qichao and Yan Fu), at least for those who could read Japanese; see Jing Dingcheng’s memoirs, available in Japanese translation: Kei Baikyū (Jing Meijiu) (Otaka Iwao and Hatano Taro, tr.), *Ryū Nichi kaiko* (Remembering student days in Japan) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1952), p. 115.

influence was limited because of his much greater distance from China.

Intellectual pursuit—an interest in Chinese culture broadly defined—was the constant thread that ran through Liu’s life. Whether teaching middle school or at Beijing University, whether as an anti-Manchu revolutionary or as a traitor to the revolution, Liu was engaged with the Chinese classics of philosophy and history. Heir to three generations of noted *Hanxue* scholars, Liu shaped his life so as to continue their work. Sometimes seen as the last representative of the Yangzhou school of scholarship,<sup>3</sup> Liu also branched out to discuss numerous other classics. He wrote textual commentaries on everything from the *Shujing* (*Book of Documents*) and the *Yijing* (*Book of Changes*) to Tang poets. But chiefly, Liu continued the researches of his great-grandfather, grandfather, uncle, and father into the *Zuozhuan* commentary on the *Chunqiu* (*Spring and Autumn Annals*). This work was an incomparable source for preimperial history, which was one of Liu’s passions. Through many shifting positions—anti-Manchu racism, political revolution, anarchism, the national essence, conservatism—Liu never wanted to separate politics from culture. His interests crossed a spectrum of action; they did not divide into two spheres.

More broadly speaking, Liu was heir to the entire textual studies trend (*kaozheng*), also called Han learning (*Hanxue*), of the Qing dynasty.<sup>4</sup> Although textual studies had originally given rise to the New Text criticism of the old texts, including the *Zuozhuan*, the house of Han learning was large enough to shelter adherents of the old texts also. As critical of Song “airiness” as their New Text col-

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<sup>3</sup> See Morohashi Tetsuji, *Dai Kanwa Jiten*, entry for “Yoshu gakuha.” Ruan Yuan (1764–1849) was the founder of the school.

<sup>4</sup> See Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), for a general introduction to the subject. Mori Tokihiko, “Minzokushugi to museifushugi,” pp. 136–152, discusses the radical potential of *kaozheng* in Liu’s hands.

leagues, they analyzed the linguistic problems with both the new texts and the old. The intellectual challenge was to establish what parts were written when. Liu did not despise New Text scholarship (as did Zhang Binglin) and indeed cited the *Gongyang* commentary to the *Spring and Autumn Annals* a number of times.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, precisely because he was not an adherent of the Next Text school, Liu denied that Confucius was a reformer; thus faced with the choice of sticking with the old Confucius and denying reform or moving beyond Kang's radicalism by abandoning Confucianism altogether, Liu denied Confucius. This did not mean denying either Chinese culture or all aspects of Confucianism. All in all, Liu's intellectual life was not devoted to philology for its own sake; rather, he was captivated by the challenge of understanding ancient China and interested in moving beyond narrow textual studies to consider broader historical and philosophical questions.

What of the man's life? Liu was born in 1884 and was soon known to be a very good student, if not quite a child prodigy.<sup>6</sup> His family had long been distinguished, if not rich, members of the scholar-gentry of Yangzhou (though the ancestral home was in Yizheng county in Jiangsu). Liu himself had read the Four Books and the Five Classics by the time he was twelve. At eighteen, he passed the local exams, at nineteen he became a *juren*, and at twenty he traveled to Peking for the metropolitan exams. He failed them and on the way home in 1903 stopped in Shanghai.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, *Rangshu*, Yiyibian; *Zhongguo minyueh jingyi*, zhuan 1, and the *Zhoumo xueshu shixu*, all of which I shall discuss.

<sup>6</sup> There is minor disagreement over his exact birth date. I have relied in this biography of Liu mainly on the *nianpu* and short biographies by Qian Xuantong, Cai Yuanpei, Chen Zhongfan, Liu Fuceng, and Yin Yanwu, all of which appear in *Liu Shenshu xiansheng yishu*, zhuan 1. See also Liu's own Poetic Autobiography in 1904 (*Jiazhenian zishushi*, published in *Jingzhong ribao*, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 September 1904 — obviously covering only his early life; Feng Ziyou, *Gemingyishi*, 2:231–233 and 3:190–192; and Zhou Zuoren, “Beida ganjiu lu,” *Zhitang huixianglu*, pp. 476–525. In English, see Martin Bernal, “Liu Shih-p'ei and National Essence,” pp. 90–112.

If people today do not dare to escape from Heaven but simply accept natural constraints, then nations and governments will certainly [continue to] exist. But the scope of nations and governments is very narrow. This is because racial consciousness (nationalism, *rrrinzuzhuyi*) is also very narrow. If one accepts that racial consciousness is too narrow but does not apply [this understanding] to the concept of the nation (*guojia*), then one is engaging in “self-contradiction.” ... Now, in this multitudinous, universe, the earth is but a small grain of rice in a vast granary, yet today [we] who live on it have divided it up into territories, we protect what is ours, and call it a “nation.” Then we established institutions (*jiguan*), divided [ourselves] into various classes, and called it “government.” ...

If we sincerely want to broaden [ourselves], we should not divide ourselves into races, much less into nations... Alas! When we travel across the plains and enter the walls, we first see the land, and then the people. Who sees the so-called nation? Nations are like automatons: they have a function (*zuoyong*) but no self-nature (*zixing*). Like the hair of a snake or the horns of a horse, there is a name for it but no reality.

In other words, anarchism may be a first step toward ultimate reality. The father of *minzuzhuyi* thus questioned his own child; he sought a “boundaryless realm,” in echo of Kang Youwei's *Datong*. Racism, like clan laws, artificially set up boundaries; and so nationalism, like little villages, also divided.

The ontological basis of his five negations may have lain in Zhang's resistance to abstractions. Zhang simply did not believe in the reality of collectivities. Only the concrete individual truly existed. Individually people were real, but as groups formed into nations, they were false. In the end, he could never place such

thunders against property holders, topples the high and raises the low ... with aid and compassion for the helpless.”

If anarchism exerted a modest appeal on Zhang’s sense of individualism, it also appealed to his sense of justice, his somewhat lofty compassion for the suffering masses. Anarchism seemed reasonable to Zhang when compared to republicanism, which he regarded by 1908 as a sure way to provide China with corruption, hypocrisy, and exacerbated class distinctions. In spite of the popularity of his nationalism, Zhang’s acute cynicism and pessimism were out of step with the temper of his times. Perhaps Zhang considered himself beyond anarchism. After all, as a doctrine opposing politics, anarchism is itself a kind of political view and thus trapped in the world of desire, selfishness (*si* as opposed to the public *gong*), and suffering. No-government: superior to government, but on the same plane.

Zhang specifically treated anarchism as one category of the negative in a lengthy essay, “On the Five Negations.”<sup>49</sup> Zhang’s negativism is so overwhelming it is hard to take it seriously.<sup>50</sup> Probably, although he did not fully believe in his five negations, something in him longed for them. In order, they were no-government, no-homes, no-humans, nolife, no-world. In any case, most of his young readers grappling with the difficult and allusive prose must have taken him seriously, even grimly, if with bemused wonderment. The end of the human species? No animals or plants? But no-world was not so far from certain strains of Daoism and Buddhism. Zhang began on an almost Sorelian note:

<sup>49</sup> Taiyan, “Wuwulun,” *Minbao* no. 16 (25 September 1907), pp. 1–22.

<sup>50</sup> The essay has been read as total sarcasm (Furth, p. 145); as deeply felt pessimism (Gasster, pp. 210–212); and as criticism of bourgeois democracy (Li Runcang, “Zhang Taiyan yu Riben de wuzhengfu zhuyi” (Zhang Binglin and Japanese anarchism), *Xueshuyuekan*, no. 6, 1982, pp. 57–64). However, Guo Zhanbo, *Jindai Zhongguo sixiang shi* (A history of modern Chinese thought), p. 269, takes the essay as a serious expression of anarchism.

There he became friends with Zhang Binglin and fell in with the Patriotic School crowd, just before the *Subao* arrests. He had read Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao, and Yan Fu by the time he moved to Shanghai.

Liu became a revolutionary at this time of growing activism. He joined the Restoration Society (Guangfuhui) and helped Cai Yuanpei found the journal *Alarming News About Russia* (*Eshi jingwen*, later called the *Awakening Bell*, *Jingzhong ribao*). Concentrating on the Manchu failure to eliminate the Russian threat to the northeast, this journal appeared daily throughout 1904 and contained ordinary news, information about Russian nihilism, and revolutionary propaganda. Liu also worked with the veteran revolutionary Lin Xie on another journal, the *Chinese Vernacular Journal* (*Zhongguo baihua bao*). During this time Liu returned home to be married (as arranged by his parents) but soon went back to Shanghai, accompanied by his wife, He Zhen. She enrolled at the Patriotic Girls’ School.

Liu took the name Guang Han (“restore the Han”). Under this nom de guerre, he wrote the *Rangshu* (Book of Expulsion) in reference to the Manchus and modeled on Wang Fuzhi, and his treatise on the social contract in China, demonstrating both his anti-Manchu convictions and his desire for limited government and modeled on Huang Zongxi. He was even involved in an unsuccessful plot with Wan Fuhua to assassinate Wang Zhiqun, the former governor of Guangxi who was considered friendly to Russia. Liu apparently procured a gun for Wan, who otherwise acted alone. At the same time Liu was a founder of the National Essence Society and a chief contributor to their journal of Chinese history, philosophy, and literary criticism. The national essence movement eventually turned conservative; by 1920 it opposed westernization with tradition, popular forms of culture with aristocratic ones, and polit-

ical change with order.<sup>7</sup> But that was nearly a generation down the road; before 1911 the movement, however culturally conservative some of its adherents, was politically radical. To Liu, the national essence must have seemed a logical extension of his life's work (though he was only 21) and his ancestral burden. Though the phrase was relatively new, national essence was heir to his grandfather's *kaozheng* scholarship. Moreover, the movement frequently "used tradition to attack tradition." Liu Shipei was not the only member of this group to prefer preimperial ways of life to the immediate past two thousand years of history, to reexamine non-canonical philosophers, and to oppose the very institution of the Chinese monarchy.<sup>8</sup> It fitted comfortably into a movement fighting against foreign (Manchu) rule in the name of the Han race and of justice and less comfortably looked for ancient Chinese versions of democracy and socialism. Therefore a man like Liu could combine his investigations into the institutions of the sage-kings of old with the promotion of vernacular Chinese with no sense of contradiction.

Liu fled arrest in 1905 when the government closed the *Awakening Bell* in response to a complaint from the German consul. Liu wandered to Zhejiang and in 1906 to Anhui, staying with the families of revolutionary comrades and acquaintances and finally teaching middle school in Wuhu, a center of radical activity. In 1907, Zhang Binglin was made editor of *The People's Journal* (*Minbao*) in Tokyo, and he invited Liu to join him. Liu moved with his wife and her nephew Wang Gongquan to Tokyo, joined the

<sup>7</sup> See Zhang Nan and Wang Renzhi, "Dierzhan xuyan" (Preface to vol. 2), *Xinhai geming qianshi nianjian shilun xuanji* (hereafter XHGMSQSNJ), 2A: 1- 21; Laurence A. Schneider, "National Essence and the New Intelligentsia," in Charlotte Furth, ed., *The Limits of Change*, pp. 57-89.

<sup>8</sup> Mori Tokihiko, "Minzokushugi to museifushugi," pp. 136-37; for Zhang Binglin and national essence thinking, see Shimada Kenji, "Sho Heirin ni tsuite: Gakujustu to kakumei" (Zhang Binglin: Chinese traditional scholarship and revolution), in his *Chugoku kakumei no senkushatachi*, pp. 167-271, especially 220-252.

usually like and dislike, to know that the self is already complete, and to make no discriminations between things so that love and hate never arise.<sup>47</sup> Next best is the peaceful solitude and perfect disinterestedness of the hermit-sage.

Zhang's egalitarianism remains highly qualified. Given the unjust class system of the present day, some must inevitably suffer while others are happy. Even if the classes were made equal, everyone would still experience suffering as well as find a degree of happiness. For "if someone wanted to ride a steamboat, someone else would first have to mine the coal." But "the happiness of riding a steamboat is not worth the suffering of opening a mine." In other words, labor (suffering) is an inevitable part of civilization. Suffering could be abolished or at least minimized only if everyone followed a simple, nonacquisitive life.

Zhang may here have been criticizing Liu Shipei's recipe for equalizing if not abolishing suffering, whereby all necessary jobs would rotate and everyone would have the same share of pain.<sup>48</sup> Zhang strongly urged that the simple life was fully practical: a slow boat reaches its destination as surely as a steamboat; regular farming produces enough to eat so machinery is not needed. The solution to the problem of suffering, then, lies not in technology or even revolution but in curtailing human desire (for speed, for convenience, for material wealth). We should *not* seek progress and development.

At the same time, Zhang saw hope only in a kind of individualism (and only a little hope). A positive image of the hermit-sage, the man against the crowd, ran through his preface. Zhang had no kind words for "the people" and charged that Malatesta did not sufficiently appreciate the value of eccentrics. However, "his attack on politicians ... arouses the West wind to stir up some dust. And he

<sup>47</sup> See Zhuangzi, "Qiwulun"; *Mencius* 7A.4.

<sup>48</sup> See ch. 4.



Anarchism could ultimately play only a small role in such a worldview; nonetheless, Zhang's interest in anarchism was a phase of his development as a political thinker. His deep cynicism, his contempt for republican theories, and his fear of racial and cultural genocide led Zhang to denigrate the compromises and conflicts of interest inherent in any kind of actual politics. Hence, anarchism's appeal lay in its moral purity, its transcendence of the merely political.<sup>44</sup> Despotism was the other side of the coin. For only under the disinterested, objective order that a despot provided could humanity pursue its various concerns free of arbitrary restraints and on an equal footing.<sup>45</sup> Both despotism and anarchism were public (*gong*). Zhang also turned to Buddhism and Daoism, especially Zhuangzi. There were limits to the reality of a world of strife and ego. This too brought him to consideration of anarchism. Finally, the personal work of Zhang Ji and the Japanese anarchists may have sparked Zhang's interests. For he was a deeply curious man and may well have been impressed by Kotoku's own somewhat more broadly drawn reputation as a scholar.

At any rate, Zhang Binglin thought enough of the preface he had written for Zhang Ji's translation of Malatesta to republish it in *The People's Journal* in April 1908.<sup>46</sup> Writing in his usual recondite style, Zhang began with both praise and criticism of this work. It "condemns corruption and breaks open the chains, with empathy for all life ... but it is somewhat inflexible regarding the goal of self-enlightenment." Zhang did not think Malatesta had said anything particularly new. The ultimate ideal, with nods to Zhuangzi, Mencius, and Buddhist scripture, is still to treat as equal all that we

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>45</sup> This notion may be found in some guise in doctrines ranging from the "Huang-Lao" Daoist-Legalism of the third century B.C. to modern fascism. More particularly, the parallels between Zhang and Li Zhi (1527–1602) are striking—cf. de Bary, "Individualism and Humanitarianism in Late Ming Thought," pp. 207–209.

<sup>46</sup> Taiyan, "Wuzhengfu zhuyi xu," *Minbao* no. 20 (25 April 1908).

Tongmenghui and worked for *The People's Journal*. The official organ of the Tongmenghui soon became more historical and abstruse, and more anarchistic and socially aware. Liu and He Zhen also established the anarchist *Tianyi Bao* (*Journal of Natural Justice* or *Journal of Heaven's Righteousness*), its successor *Hengbao* (*Journal of Equality*), and, with Zhang Ji, the Society for the Study of Socialism. In Tokyo, Liu and He Zhen lived with Zhang Binglin and the revolutionary "Chinese Byron" Su Manshu, with whom He Zhen was said to have had an affair.<sup>9</sup> Liu became close to Japanese socialists and also supported Zhang Binglin and the veteran revolutionary Tao Chengzhang in an unsuccessful move to oust Sun Yat-sen as head of the Tongmenghui.

As it turned out, Liu stayed less than two full years in Japan, returning to China and betraying the revolution to the Manchu governor-general Duanfang by the winter of 1908. Duanfang, who had served as governor-general of Hunan, Hubei, and Jiangxi, was a reform-minded member of the government's elite, who nevertheless had no mercy in pursuing revolutionaries. Cai Yuanpei blamed He Zhen for fomenting quarrels between Liu and Zhang Binglin which led to Liu's defection, but his basis for saying this is unknown. Nor did Cai explain why a quarrel with Zhang would lead Liu to abandon the anti-Manchu effort in the first place. Feng Ziyou, who was closer to the Tongmenghui, strongly hints that Duanfang bribed He Zhen and Wang Gongquan to incite Liu to leave the Tongmenghui with the excuse that it had rebuffed Liu's reorganizational efforts.<sup>10</sup> It seems safest to say that Liu was disillusioned

<sup>9</sup> Zhou Zuoren, *Zhitang huixianglu*, p. 481, reports this as a widespread belief at Beijing University in the late 1910s.

<sup>10</sup> Feng, *Geming yishi*, 2:232. Bernal believes Liu was not influenced by He Zhen but was already in Duanfang's pay when he went to Tokyo in 1907; personal communication, 17 January 1973: "So, to that extent his anarchism, though at some level sincere, was part of a Manchu scheme to split the revolution movement." (See also Bernal, "Liu Shih-p'ei and the National Essence," p. 92.) But the evidence for this is circumstantial at best. I have not found any indication in Duanfang's memorials of early plotting with Liu.

with the behavior of his comrades and disgusted by the infighting and what he perceived as selfishness and corruption. He did not find “universal principles” being put into practice in Tokyo.<sup>11</sup>

Apparently some revolutionaries had to flee Shanghai because of the information Liu gave Duanfang, but the greatest harm Liu did the revolutionary cause probably lay not with any specific information he was able to give Duanfang, but in the effect on the revolutionaries of such a prominent young stalwart’s abandoning the movement. In this act, Liu was adding to what was already great disarray among revolutionary ranks. Already by 1908 hardly any two notable revolutionaries were on speaking terms with each other.

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It seems likely that Liu turned against the revolution and met with Duanfang during his trip to China in December 1907, if the letters allegedly unearthed between Liu and Duanfang are reliable evidence. Originally published by Hong Weilian in *Dagong bao* (Tianjin) (2 November 1934) on the weekly historical page under the title “Qingmo geming shiliao zhi xinfaxian: Liu Shipei yu Duanfang shu” (A new discovery in historical materials on the late Qing revolution: The letters from Liu Shipei to Duanfang), the letters were apparently undated. Nor did Hong provide any explanation of their discovery. If they are valid, it can be deduced from the internal references that Liu was at least making overtures to Duanfang by the end of 1907, though he still may not have submitted to Duanfang until the following year, cf. Gao Liangzuo, “Lun Liu Shipei yu Duanfang shu,” *Jianguo yuekan* (Nanjing) no. 4 (10 April 1935). Aside from self-serving statements, the material in the letters was a general report on the student scene in Japan and contained little that Duanfang would not have already known; indeed, some of the “facts” Liu reported were downright misleading, such as the claim that Zhang Binglin was not really dedicated to a nationalist revolution but preferred the study of Buddhism.

<sup>11</sup> Mori Tokihiko concludes that Liu’s anarchism was itself essentially anti-revolutionary, representing a rejection of nationalism and people’s rights—“Minzokushugi to museifushugi,” pp. 175–176. Therefore, Liu’s betrayal of the revolutionary movement was consistent with his stance of opposition to Sun Yat-sen. Mori would appear to be correct insofar as he focuses on Liu’s disdain for narrow-minded anti-Manchu nationalism, but Liu’s anarchism rested precisely on a doctrine of human rights and, whatever its inconsistencies, had an obvious revolutionary thrust. It is even more absurd to equate opposition to Sun with counterrevolutionary activities.

come one of the main leaders of the unsuccessful effort to remove Sun Yat-sen as head of the Tongmenghui. He also pursued his interests in Buddhism. After the Revolution of 1911, Zhang briefly backed Yuan Shikai but supported the “second revolution” in 1913 and ended up under house arrest until Yuan’s death in 1916. After another effort to work with Sun Yat-sen, Zhang thereupon followed the advice he is said to have given Liu Shipei and devoted the rest of his life to the study of Chinese cultural history. Zhang still followed politics, however, calling in 1924 on former Tongmenghui members to meet to discuss how to halt Communist activities in the Guomindang.

Zhang’s political theories were largely shaped by Wang Fuzhi and, from Yan Fu’s translations, Herbert Spencer.<sup>43</sup> Together, they gave Zhang the grounds for supposing that a specific “race,” the Han, though long oppressed by the Manchu, was actually in a good position in the struggle for survival because it possessed a strong culture, which itself was based on biological chains stretching back to pre-Qin rulers and ultimately to Huang Di. By about 1900, Zhang had given Chinese nationalism a sense of self that combined biology and culture, blood and spirit—national essence. Liu Shipei joined Zhang in the academic research into the *Zuozhuan*, the *Li Ji* and *Shangshu*, and other ancient records necessary to substantiate the national essence. But Zhang did not believe in progress (world bettering) and therefore believed that for China to survive in a world of sharks she must emphasize the public good above private morality (a Legalist stance). The problem with Chinese constitutionalists and Western democracies alike, according to Zhang, was their pursuit of elite private interests; Zhang concluded that a kind of disinterested despotism was necessary to enforce impartial law. But he did not know how to achieve this.

How did a man who praised China’s conventionally evil first emperor, Qin Shihuang, come to concern himself with anarchism?

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<sup>43</sup> Furth, “The Sage as a Rebel,” pp. 128–139.

the civil service examinations but instead pursued his interest in *Hanxue* and philology, studying with the famous scholar Yu Yue until 1896 and specializing in the *Zuozhuan* (like Liu Shipai). He supported the reform efforts of 1898 and worked from 1896 to 1898 with Liang Qichao on a reformist journal in Shanghai, the *Shiwu Bao* (*Chinese Progress*). After the Empress Dowager's coup, he fled to Taiwan and Japan and split with the most prominent reformers, Liang and his teacher Kang Youwei, when they proclaimed their support for reform under a restored emperor. Back in Shanghai in 1900, Zhang cut off his queue to show his dedication to revolution.<sup>42</sup> Zhang was also an opponent of Kang and Liang in the field of scholarship, being a firm adherent of the Old Text tradition (hence his high opinion of the *Zuozhuan*). In Japan again in 1902, he became friends with Zhang Ji, as fervent an anti-Manchu as he himself was, and tried to organize a mass meeting to mark the fall of China to the Manchus. The Japanese authorities prohibited the meeting, but the whole incident aroused a good deal of patriotic feeling anyway. Zhang believed that to instill a sense of Chinese history into students was the best way to promote revolution.

In Shanghai at the Patriotic School Zhang met the young Liu Shipai. They found a strong bond both in their Old Text scholarship and more specifically in their current interest in the Han dynasty *Shuowen* dictionary. He wrote academic articles for the *National Essence Journal* (*Guocui xuebao*) that Liu had cofounded. He also brought Liu over to Tokyo to help him on *The People's Journal* in 1907, and together they made the journal into a schizophrenic melange of antireformist revolutionary polemics on the one hand and erudite national essence studies on the other. The Japanese closed the journal after Zhang advocated assassination in the 10 October 1908 issue. Meanwhile, Zhang (supported by Liu) had be-

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imperial bureaucratic ethos; they approved of his promotion of the people (*min*) and the public (*gong*).

<sup>42</sup> Zhang, "Taiyan xiansheng ziding nianpu," p. 7.

Liu's subsequent life in China was peripatetic. He traveled with Duanfang to Sichuan, taught school, and wrote articles about Chinese studies, and when Duanfang was killed in the course of the revolution in November 1911, Liu fled to Chengdu, where he again taught school and wrote for a Chinese studies journal. Tongmenghui stalwarts in Sichuan were prepared to kill Liu at this time, but Zhang Binglin heard of their plans and urged them to reconsider in a telegram. (Wang Gongquan had been killed earlier by the Tongmenghui in Shanghai.)

Liu had a stint with Yan Xishan, a 1911 revolutionary who became military governor of Shanxi in 1912 and remained there to become a major warlord of the northwest; there, Liu started yet another journal of Chinese studies. Liu moved to Beijing in 1914 as a supporter of Yuan Shikai's attempt to make himself emperor, becoming one of Yuan's "six gentlemen," along with the old liberal Yan Fu. He moved again to Tianjin when Yuan died in 1916. The efforts of Cai Yuanpei (then president of Beijing University) and Zhang Binglin kept Liu out of serious political trouble and he became a professor at Beijing University, although already ill with tuberculosis, in 1917. He taught in the Chinese department with Zhou Zuoren, who considered him the second most eccentric teacher at the university.<sup>12</sup>

Having pursued through teaching and writing his interests in the Chinese classics and philology without interruption, Liu died in the winter of 1919, a political embarrassment to his friends and disciples but leaving an important legacy to Chinese studies of the early twentieth century. When Liu died, his anarchism was remembered, if at all, as a brief phase of "extreme socialism" before his great and puzzling betrayal of the revolution.<sup>13</sup> But the year he

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<sup>12</sup> Gu Hongming was Beida's chief eccentric in Zhou's estimation. Gu (1857–1928) promoted Confucian values, refused to cut off his queue, and during his brief tenure at Beida taught Latin.

<sup>13</sup> Although the thread of scholarship obviously runs through Liu's life more consistently than his political views, Qian Xuantong thought that 1908 marked

died also saw a great wave of Chinese enthusiasm for anarchism,<sup>14</sup> which was directly indebted to his political work.

And what of Liu's intellectual life? Before he was an anarchist, Liu had become at least superficially familiar with much Western thought. When he was only twenty, Liu coauthored the *Essence of the Chinese Social Contract* with Lin Xie, the Shanghai-based revolutionary from Fukien who had founded the *Chinese Vernacular Journal*.<sup>15</sup> In the introduction they tell of reading Yang Tingdong's translation of Rousseau; what appears to have impressed them most was not the power of Rousseau's argument but the effect the book had on European history. They were taken by the idea that the ruler's rights are limited by the people's. For this treatise, Liu and Lin simply scoured the literary heritage of China for reasonably democratic-sounding passages and added sometimes lengthy annotations to each. They made stops at the *Zuozhuan* and other commentaries on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, Confucius, Mencius, Laozi, Zhuangzi, Xunzi, Mozi, Dong Zhongshu, Sima Qian, Ban Gu, the Cheng brothers and Zhu Xi, Wang Yangming, Wang Fuzhi, and Dai Zhen. Huang Zongxi was quoted extensively, but Li Zhi was left out entirely. Liu began with the *Book of Changes* "The high and low are in communication with each other and possessed by the same aim" and ended with Dai Wang's description of the Three Dynasties as an age when

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a great change in Liu's scholarship as well as in his politics. According to Qian, as Liu moved in terms of his fundamental beliefs from "pursuing truth in facts" (*shishi qiushi*, an old slogan of the school of Han Learning), to Buddhism and the past, from reformism to conservatism, so in his scholarship he turned away from some flexibility and support of language reform, use of colloquial Chinese, the creation of new terms, and unification of the language (see Xu [Preface] in *Liu Shenshu xianshengyishu, zhuan 1*).

<sup>14</sup> See Arif Dirlik, "The New Culture Movement Revisited."

<sup>15</sup> The *Zhongguo minyue jingyi* may be found in *zhuan 16* of *Liu Shenshu xiansheng yishu*. This work has been analyzed by Onogawa Hidemi, "Ryu Shibai to museifushugi," and Bernal, "Liu Shi-p'ei and the National Essence." I will not discuss it in detail; it is only indirectly related to anarchism.

If Zhang Ji was a bit of a will-o'-the-wisp, Zhang Binglin (1868–1936) was made of sterner stuff.<sup>39</sup> In his forties Zhang went through a period (1907–1908) of fascination with anarchism; the fruits of his studies ripened into a number of ambiguous essays in which he wrestled with his other—and ultimately deeper—beliefs in a kind of racial purity, in institutional and state reform, and in Chinese culture.<sup>40</sup> Like Liu Shiwei, he loved the multitudinous byways of Chinese culture, and his politics sometimes verged on the crackpot. Although passionately anti-Man-chu, he probably saved Liu's traitorous life from righteous revolutionaries in 1911. He managed to quarrel at one time or another with all his colleagues. His contribution to the intellectual respectability of the revolution was nonetheless immense.

Born in Yuhang, Zhejiang, Zhang studied such Ming loyalists as Wang Fuzhi and Huang Zongxi early on. Wang's influence on Zhang's nationalism is clear, Huang's less so. But Takeuchi Zensaku, a Japanese radical who associated with Zhang in Tokyo, thought he was heavily influenced by Huang.<sup>41</sup> Zhang never took

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<sup>39</sup> Zhang Binglin (Taiyan) has proved fascinating for historians and is usually prominent in surveys of modern Chinese thought or politics. For a recent essay in English, see Charlotte Furth, "The Sage as Rebel: The Inner World of Chang Ping-lin," in Charlotte Furth, ed., *The Limits of Change*, pp. 113–15. Some sense of the man emerges from Zhang's spare "chronological autobiography," *Taiyan xiansheng ziding nianpu*.

<sup>40</sup> Though a minor strand in the overall texture of his nationalism, Zhang Binglin's anarchism has received less attention than it deserves; it is certainly indicative of the startling appeal that anarchism could exert. Zhang's nationalism is beyond the scope of this volume, but students of Zhang should consider whether his period of toying with anarchism, of trying to transcend the narrow racism of his *Subao* period, may have given Zhang in the end a strengthened and deepened nationalism.

<sup>41</sup> Takeuchi, "Meiji makki Chu-Nichi kakumei undoteki koryu," p. 80. Furth, in "The Sage as Rebel," p. 141, points out that Huang appealed especially to constitutionalists seeking moderate institutional and legal reform, yet all the forces favoring change were impressed by his at least protodemocratic views. If Zhang (and Liu) disliked Huang's Confucianism, it was because he remained within the

made it clear that solidarity was to create group cohesion. Individual and society were mutually dependent. Chinese intellectuals who were critical of Manchu excesses potentially could be led to criticism of all governments. For were the Man- chu's crimes due to some barbarian waywardness alone? Most Chinese revolutionaries wanted to restore not the Ming dynasty but the Han race. Yet, some asked, how could the Han race governing the Manchus be morally superior to its opposite? And if Manchus were given their own country, what of the country of China? Malatesta's solidarity provided an answer to both of these problems.

When the Confucian imperial institution began to be questioned, constitutional monarchy, republicanism, and other forms of statehood might be conceived. Or all political authority—politics itself—could be challenged. Zhang Ji's contact with a wide variety of radical Japanese led him to doubt the legitimacy of the constitutionalism of Meiji Japan. Anti-Manchuism offered the hope of greater political reform. Further, in the social sphere, the Japanese radicals constantly attacked the process of industrialization, the abject poverty of the workers, and the plight of the peasants and unemployed. Anarchism, with its workers' cooperatives, offered China a way out here, too. Malatesta's pamphlet made a nice introduction to the ideology.

Over the next year, the Japanese government began to put the entire movement under increasing pressure. Sun Yat-sen was persuaded to leave, and in February 1908 Zhang Ji left for Europe, where he joined forces with the Paris anarchists and visited a number of socialist and utopian communes, where we will meet him again.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Zhang Ji was implicated in the Kinyokai (Friday Club) Rooftop Incident of 17 January 1908 in which a number of Japanese radicals were arrested. This occurred when the police moved to halt a meeting of the group and some members climbed to the roof to avoid the police and began lecturing passersby. See Takeuchi Zensaku, "Meiji makki Chu-Nichi kakumei undoteki koyru," *Chugdku kenkyu*, no. 5 (September 1948), p. 79.

government employed officers according to the people's will, without bias or selfishness.<sup>16</sup> This was not exactly the stuff of social contract or democracy, and yet it traveled along the lines of limited government, duties to the people (implying contract), and the assent of the governed. Liu and Lin thus sought an indigenous tradition of what might be called moderate democracy, with no claims to utopianism or anarchism. Indeed, the claims of morality and the creation of an ultimately just society are important to any Confucian.

In the same year, Liu wrote the *Rangshu*.<sup>17</sup> This pamphlet dealt with the need to expel the barbarian Manchus. Liu's reasoning was based on a traditional understanding of Chinese civilization opposed to barbarism, probably best seen in the seventeenth-century Ming loyalist philosophers Gu Yanwu and Wang Fuzhi, and a theory of racism developed by nineteenth-century ethnology. Perhaps following the lead of Zhang Binglin, Liu tried to link geography, culture, and civilization in a way that would exclude the Manchus from any claim to participation in Chinese civilization. Liu never fully shook off this nationalism, but he largely abandoned it in his turn to the universalism of anarchism.

At this stage of his intellectual development, Liu was a typical member of the young and politically disaffected gentry of China's coastal cities. They were impressed by Western civilization, including its ideas. However, they still participated in a more familiar and ancient discourse. They still not only believed in Chinese civilization but also took for granted that traditional culture and philosophy were still living and could encompass foreign imports without being distorted out of recognition. For them, China's civilization

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<sup>16</sup> *Yijing*, appendix 1, "Tai" hexagram; see James Legge, *I Ching: Book of Changes* (Secaucus: University Books, 1964), p. 223,

<sup>17</sup> *Rangshu* may be found in *Liu Shenshu xianshengyishu, zhuan* 18. Again, see Onogawa, Ryu Shibai to museifushugi," for a discussion of this work. See also Liu's *Zhongguo minzuzhi* (The will of the Chinese people, 1905), *Liu Shenshu xiansheng yishu, zhuan* 17.

had been widening tremendously over the past century or so as noncanonical Warring States philosophers were rediscovered as a by-product of the *kaozheng* movement; the terms of discourse were then further expanded by Western concepts.<sup>18</sup> *The Essence of the Chinese Social Contract* and the *Book of Expulsion* are good examples of broadened political understanding that stretched without breaking the traditional fabric of discourse. Liu himself saw these works as continuations of Huang Zongxi's *Plan for the Prince* (*Mingyi diafanglu*) and Wang Fuzhi's *Yellow Book* (*Hnangshu*) respectively.<sup>19</sup> He wished for a restoration of Han China, the political fallout of which might be revolution and republicanism as a secondary consideration; he did not wish at this time for a fundamental political and social revolution. Only later, as an anarchist, did he go beyond the limits of traditional discourse and threaten China's entire class system with real social revolution as the primary goal.

Yet much of Liu's reading and writing in the years before he moved to Tokyo shows an anarchist bent. His passionate demands were by no means limited to the realm of politics. He was already urging immediate and something like total change. He said China needed "extremism" (*jilie*).<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> It does not follow that men like Liu Shipei were primarily motivated by a desire to claim equivalency with some clearly superior "West," that is, abandoning Chinese standards in fact but not in name—see Joseph Levenson, *Confucian China and its Modern Fate*. This psychological reductionism is the kind of thesis that cannot be tested; it assumes that China's own intellectual heritage was stationary. In the case of Liu, at least, the Chinese intellectual was operating out of a great deal of confidence and freely gave credit, for example, to Rousseau and other Western philosophers where he thought credit was due, precisely because he was working in the realm of ideas without giving undo weight to national pride. Western physicists praise Zen, and Christian theologians cite Hinduism for inspiration in much the same way. The "Levensonian thesis" may apply after 1911 or to intellectuals of the May Fourth era, but probably not earlier.

<sup>19</sup> Chen Xuanton, "Xu," 2b.

<sup>20</sup> "Lun jiliede haochu" (The good points of extremism), *Zhongguo baihua-bao*, no. 6, 1 March 1904, reprinted in XHGMQSNJ, 16:887–90.

give a rousing speech. He swore brotherhood with Zhang Binglin, Zou Rong, and Zhang Shizhao (*si* Xingyan, the editor of *Subao*). When the government cracked down, Zhang Ji was not arrested and continued to work for the revolutionary cause with such men as Cai Yuanpei and Huang Xing. The year 1904 briefly saw him teaching Western history in Changsha and continuing to plot revolution around Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai, but in the wake of the various failed plots he traveled yet again to Japan in 1905. Ardor undampened by a price on his head, he was involved in the great meeting of disparate students and revolutionaries from different provinces that resulted in the formation of the Tongmenghui that year.

Zhang Ji became publisher of the Tongmenghui's organ, *The people's Journal*, which disseminated much information about political developments and theory outside of China, as well as a wide range of revolutionary propaganda, while Hu Hanmin did most of the actual editorial work. When Zhang Binglin took over *The People's Journal*, Zhang Ji continued to work on its business side. In 1907, with Liu Shipei, he founded the Society for the Study of Socialism, and the notorious Japanese radical Kotoku Shusui accepted their invitation to speak. Zhang Ji had also begun to meet with Kotoku, Osugi Sakae, and Sakai Toshihiko, anarchists all, and, "much admiring Kotoku's learning," translated Errico Malatesta's pamphlet on anarchy into Chinese from the Japanese version. Zhang Binglin wrote a preface, and the National Essence publishing house, in spite of its mandate to concentrate on Chinese culture, printed the piece.

Malatesta believed that society has value but that the state consists of specific institutions (e.g., legal, political, military) by which certain individuals arrogate powers that should remain with the people.<sup>37</sup> Overall, Malatesta's tone is practical and homely, not abstract, and his ideas were not necessarily shocking to Chinese readers. For whereas Malatesta spoke in terms of individuals, he also

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<sup>37</sup> E. Malatesta, *Anarchy*.

## ZHANG JI AND ZHANG BINGLIN

THE TWO Zhangs, unrelated, were not so important to the development of Chinese anarchism as Liu. But Liu was preceded in Japan and in anarchism by Zhang Ji, a northerner (hence outside of the usual radical circles), who first went to Japan in 1899, wrote on anarchism as early as 1903, and helped Liu find his feet in Tokyo when Zhang Binglin brought him over in 1907.<sup>34</sup> Kita Ikki credited the Chinese nationalist movement to the researches of Zhang Binglin into the national essence and to the “thunder” of Zhang Ji.<sup>35</sup> Zhang Ji was born in 1882 into a scholar-gentry family in Zhili. His father taught at the Baoding Academy, where Zhang met a Japanese student who encouraged him to go to Japan in 1899. He thus joined a small but rapidly growing population of Chinese students in Japan. It was a time before the split between revolutionaries and conservatives, and, though anti-Manchu, he kept his queue.<sup>36</sup> He returned to China within the year, at the time of the Boxer uprising, but quickly went over to Japan again to study political economy at Waseda Special School (later the university). Zhang was impressed by what he learned of the French Revolution and read Rousseau’s *Social Contract*, and he became involved in radical student politics. In 1902 he met Sun Yat-sen and he met Zhang Binglin when the great scholar visited Japan.

From this time on, Zhang was a fully committed revolutionary. He joined Zou Rong in cutting off the queue of a Chinese official sent to Japan and then fled to Shanghai, only to become involved with the Patriotic School and *Subao*. Though not much of a writer, he evidently made himself useful on the production side and could

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<sup>34</sup> This section is largely based on Zhang’s memoir (“Huiyilu”) and diaries, *Zhang Puquan xiansheng quanji* (The works of Zhang Ji). See also his entry in Howard L. Boorman, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

<sup>35</sup> Kita Ikki, *Shina kakumeigaishi*, p. 49.

<sup>36</sup> Zhang Ji, “Huiyilu,” p. 232.

And every single thing about China needs to be destroyed: family (*jiazu*) oppression, political autocracy, customs, social restrictions, they will never be changed for the better unless someone is willing to destroy. Although the era of destruction will produce much disorder and the Chinese people will hurt, if they don’t hurt a little now, they will never be able to achieve happiness.

Nihilist influence, as filtered through the prism of Liang Qichao and others, is apparent in this passage. Aside from willingness to destroy, the other characteristics Liu attributed to extremists were decisiveness (instead of prevaricating, they acted) and an ability to rouse the people. All this was to be done in the name of preserving the nation: Liu still shared with his cohorts the general belief in nationalism.

In 1905 a small group of scholars became determined to “protect national studies” and founded the *National Essence Journal* (*Guocui xuebao*). They wanted to preserve Chinese culture as a means of national identity vis-a-vis both Manchus and Westerners. They republished landmarks in Chinese thought from the writings of Ming loyalists to more standard fare, as well as previously unpublished letters, poems, and the like. Their mission was to keep Chinese philosophy—the entire “hundred schools”—alive. The *National Essence Journal* often reads like straightforward academic articles on the history of philosophy, sometimes eccentric but never antiquarian. For the national heritage was more than natural; it was useful and would help the Han people to become a nation. These men knew that China, both the physical nation and the spiritual culture, was threatened; they explicitly linked revolution to the restoration of the Han race through national learning: language, literature, history, and philosophy.<sup>21</sup> In the context of the times, the

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<sup>21</sup> See the introductions by Huang Jie and Fan Bo, *Guocui xuebao*, year 1, vol. (ce) I.

national essence was revolutionary because it was antiimperialist; as long as the Manchus cooperated with the powers, China was doomed. It looked forward to political change, or at least it made friends of those who did, and looked backward as well to Huang Di and Confucius. Looking backward to Confucius, much less Huang Di, implied no loyalty to the imperial system, which could be seen as a dictatorial excrescence on a national spirit too easily manipulated by foreign races. For the imperial system had itself begun in the Qin's book-burning repudiation of the culture and now, two thousand years later, seemed to be failing. The noncanonical classical philosophers had been discovered by the mid-Qing; now they opened up a broader vision of China.

This does not seem a promising approach to an anarchist career. However, Liu's writings, which filled many issues of the weekly journal, reveal a determination to find some kind of Chinese essence which transcended imperial Confucianism. Rather than supporting the Next Text idolatry of Confucius, Liu turned to a time before Confucius, that is, to the land of the sage-kings, and to ideas independent of a Confucian tradition that had been so long and so intimately implicated with imperial government. Liu might thus conceive of a Chinese essence that did not require any kind of government whatever. Furthermore, the roots of a universal, utopian ideology with truly radical implications might be found as one pondered the historical and prehistorical roots of the Chinese essence. This is precisely the road that Liu began to follow in the pages of the *National Essence Journal* and that took him to anarchism in Tokyo.

In sum, Liu was not suddenly converted to anarchism some time after his arrival in Tokyo; he was well on his way during his last two years in China. Without serious exposure to the Western doctrine, he did not quite come explicitly to an antistatist social vision, but as he subjected all of imperial Chinese history to serious criticism that obviously went beyond the limits of Confucian theory, he began to question the role of government. This question was

ing profit and harm both to be false phenomena will the profit and harm perceived by the consciousness leave the mind undisturbed ... and completely return to equality." This process can lead people to act with full confidence or faith in their own minds (*xinxin*). And confidence in one's mind, supported by knowledge of the falsehood of dichotomies, results in the strengthening of one's own standards. At this point in the process one can become immune to fear or partiality. One can "accept responsibility like a hero," and because of "confidence in their own minds" countless patriots will arise who care nothing of the cost to themselves—that is, who have transcended profit and harm.

This essay represents the philosophical foundations of Liu's political views or, to put it another way, the epistemology that supported his ethics of revolution. Anarchism was still a further step, but Liu was soon to base his anarchism on these principles, which in themselves were familiar in the Chinese political discourse of the nineteenth century. Through something like a leap of faith on his own part, Liu believed that people contained something within themselves worthy of trust, something beyond goodness: Individuals can trust in their own minds; when the masses do this, China will finally have a revolution. Liu had many things in his own mind when he wrote this essay. The heroic Japanese "men of resolution" (Chinese *zhishi*, Japanese *shishi*) who made the Meiji stand in the background. Liu sought a justification for resolute action and found it through barely navigable byways of subjectivity.

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emphasis on mind are derivative of Wang Yangming. In particular, Liu struck a Neo-Confucian note with the statement "All things form one body." Although evidently considering it secondary, Liu was aware of Confucian antecedents for a philosophy of subjectivity, and he referred to Mencius and especially to the "innate knowledge of the good" (*liangzhi*) of Wang Yangming, that the Way of the sages is complete in one's own mind. Cf. Wing-tsit Chan, tr., *Instructions for Practical Living by Wang Yang-ming*, sec. 142 (pp. 118–119), sec- J79 (P- 167), sec. 221 (p. 199). Liu himself pointed out his indebtedness to Confucianism on the point of individual self-reflection, which he defended as not empty and rotten. Liu cited or alluded to the *Lun Yu*, *Zhongyong*, *Mengzi*, *Daxue*, and Zhu Xi.



“small self” (*xiaowo*) consisted of the individual. “Earth, water, fire, and air created the myriad things. The four elements then formed the ‘self’ (*jishen*) as well. But they are not private to the self; they are shared with other things. Before our bodies, all things were one body; the body of the self has the same origin as the myriad things. [Therefore] the term *self* is not limited to the body.” Thus, when people separate themselves from the world and assume an opposition to others, they act like those who cut off their own flesh to cure a wound. “When the large self loses, what can the small self gain?” Liu saw that “self-benefit is one part of human psychology, but not the whole.”

Yet if so much is illusion, how can one act? Liu was aware of this question. His answer was that people *could* break out of the world of appearances. The self-nature (*zixing*) was unpolluted; as polishing the dust off a mirror allows its original brightness to return, so the individual who returned to his nature could solve this conundrum. “The way to leave pollution behind lies in examining one’s heart-and-mind (*guanxin*). When that is clear, one can break the world of appearances (*poxiang*). The requirements for breaking the world of appearances are, first, selflessness (*wuwo*) and, second, breaking out of profit and harm (*pochu lihai*)” This can be done because the self is an illusion and profit and harm are equal—the dichotomies must be wholly transcended.<sup>33</sup> “Only in understand-

<sup>33</sup> Liu attributed this insight to Buddhism and Daoism, especially the “Qiwu” of Zhuangzi; see Burton Watson, tr., *Ckuang Tzu: Basic Writings*, “Discussion on Making All Things Equal,” pp. 31–45. Liu alludes to the paragraph, “Everything has its ‘that,’ everything has its ‘this.’ From the point of view of ‘that’ you cannot see it, but through understanding you can know it.” Note the positive confidence. “So I say, ‘that’ comes out of ‘this’ and ‘this’ depends on ‘that’—which is to say that ‘this’ and ‘that’ give birth to each other. But where there is birth there must be death; where there is death there must be birth... A state in which ‘this’ and ‘that’ no longer find their opposites is called the hinge of the Way” (Watson, p. 34).

Yet many of these notions are at least as reminiscent of Neo-Confucianism. Both Liu’s image of the purity of one’s original nature and his

also prompted by following the implications of an anti-Manchu ideology. If the crimes of the Manchus were not inspired by their uniquely beastly racial makeup, one might wonder whether it was power that corrupted and what the divisions among peoples and the people should be.

Scholarship and political truth were, for Liu, one. In a series of articles, all published in the *National Essence Journal* between 1905 and 1907, he addressed such topics as “The Origins of Learning in Ancient Times” and “The Origins of Government in Ancient Times.”<sup>22</sup> Liu basically outlined a theory of Chinese history in which political power arose out of force in the misty beginnings of civilization itself; learning was monopolized by agents of the government (the official historians). Tribal wars led to the caste systems and the basic divisions between ruler and ruled. Since the institution of the monarchy under the Qin, tyranny has reigned. This is the same analysis Liu later gave in support of his anarchism.<sup>23</sup>

In the most ancient times everyone lived without rulers or followers. But when there arose elders, they could support the people with food and drink, subdue them by force of arms, and make them ignorant with spirits and ghosts.<sup>24</sup>

In contrast stood life in the days of the Yellow Emperor (traditionally dated in the third millennium B.C.). With Huang Di, the

<sup>22</sup> “Guxue qiyuanlun,” *Guocui xuebao*, year 1, vol. 1, nos. 8, 11; “Guzheng yuanshi lun,” *ibid.*, year 1, vol. 2, nos. 4, 6, 8, n. 12. See *Liu Shenshu xiansheng yishu, zhuan* 19, p. 18.

<sup>23</sup> Overall, Liu shared but went far beyond standard anti-Manchism. See Schneider, “National- Essence and the New Intelligentsia,” pp. 64–68, for a description of the, journal’s interpretation of the national essence as the literary heritage of Han Chinese and its emphasis on heroes, including Ming loyalists, who resisted barbarian encroachments.

<sup>24</sup> “Zhengfa xueshixu” (Introduction to the History of the Learning of Administration and Laws), *Guocui xuebao*, year 1, vol. 4, no. 2.

people were roughly equal. Wealth was shared (*gongcai*) and the land distributed to all. Households were self-sufficient. So far, this was a more or less standard interpretation of the Golden Age. Then, Liu said, laziness on the part of a majority and the diligence of a minority led to inequality. And, worse, the rulers began to want more and more for themselves; they saw the world as their private property. Liu's radical challenge to the legitimacy of the status quo is evident. Yet he stayed within traditional political discourse. For this was perhaps the fundamental point of Huang Zongxi's *Plan for the Prince*, though Huang refrained from explicitly concluding that no prince at all was needed.

Elsewhere, Liu emphasized the role of superstition in creating societies. The power of ruler ship (*junquan*) linked itself to spiritual power (*shenquan*). In other words, superstition was used to control people: religion became a part of learning and government, as in astronomy. Anciently, shamans and chieftains were the same persons and later the emperor's ministers had sacerdotal functions. The terms *son of Heaven* and *heavenly mandate* show the religious origins of political power. At this time Liu simply noted that religion and rulership arose together as historical fact. Later, Liu used this link as an important piece of evidence as to the uselessness of rulership.

Anciently, Liu said, learning was based on experience rather than on books or original notions. Learning was practical and materialistic, not theoretical. It was geared toward the daily necessities of the people. Hunger and cold obviously led to inventions of food and clothing. Immediate needs led to practical discoveries in fields from medicine to the military. Later, empty and class-based theorizing arose after Yao and Shun (traditionally dated as ascending the throne in 2356 and 2255 B.C. respectively). Liu specifically criticized Neo-Confucianism and its efforts to "plumb principle" (*qiongli*) in the Song dynasty. What was useful (*yong*) became separate from what was considered learning (*xue*). Liu's views were fully in accord with the *kaozheng* movement's emphasis on

tain is extremely limited. So that all systems of morality are totally subjective, while current systems of morality protect the interests of a ruling minority. That subjectivity itself can break through the world of illusions and that people can develop their own natures to the point of acting with full confidence in themselves. That the path to revolution consists of trusting in the masses. Above all, that calculation of means and ends is wrong, unnatural, illusionary, and self-defeating.

Liu appears to have sought an intuitive and immediate grasp of goodness as opposed to an analysis of morality. He attacked the usual Confucian distinction between duty (*yi*, which was associated with principle, *It*), on the one hand, and profit (*li*, associated with desires, *yu*), on the other. Liu did not believe these two categories were distinct, much less opposite, for, he implied, in this insidious distinction lay the alternative view that one should benefit oneself—the selfishness that Mencius scorned in Yang Zhu.<sup>31</sup> Either way the self is separated from the world and selfishness will follow. The Confucian view is worse than the hedonistic view because it sweeps the problem under the rug and thereby fosters hypocrisy. In the material sense, there is nothing wrong with selfishness: "Only if the people are granted their demands, and only if their wishes are fulfilled, can they then extend their selves to others (*tuijijiren*) and actually enlarge their selfishness (*si*) to the point at which it becomes universal (*gong*, public)." But Liu criticized Western utilitarianism for its conception of the individual seeking profit, so that "love of others is merely self-love in disguise."<sup>32</sup>

Liu followed a theory of the ego whereby individuals shared the world. The "large self" (*dawo*) encompassed the world while the

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<sup>31</sup> See *Mencius* 3B.9, tr. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 72. Liu complimented Yang Zhu and Dai Zhen for allowing profit and desires to play their proper role. Mori Tokihiko, "Minzokushugi to museifushugi," pp. 137–142, points out that Liu Shipei understood Dai Zhen as attacking "feudal ethics" as such.

<sup>32</sup> "Lihai pingdeng lun," pp. 1–2. Liu attacked Yan Fu as a utilitarian for fostering selfishness in China.

of the people (*minxin*). The [reason why] they have been nourished without actually coming out into the open was that the mentality of interest (*lihai*) was so strong. And a handful of deluded people kept the theory of profit and harm stirred up. The mentality of profit grew daily until it reached the point at which [the people] lost their true-minds (*zhenxin*). If everyone understood that profit and harm were illusions, rejected the absurd notion of pursuing profit and avoiding harm, and used their true-minds, then they would become the teachers of the world. If not, then China will become a barren wasteland. Again, which action should be avoided? (Today, a number of deluded people think that the Chinese people do not have the qualifications necessary for revolution, and so cannot conduct a revolution. [They] fear that a revolution will be harmful and not profitable. [But] today when we understand that profit and harm do not have any meaning, how can [we] question their qualifications?)<sup>29</sup>

But Liu reached this justification of risk only by hacking his way through extremely thorny thickets of Buddhist theories of the self, Kant's theory of what can be known, Confucian theories of the state, Western liberal theories of utilitarianism, and other hardy perennials.

Liu's essay centered around certain themes: That the "self and others can be mutually beneficial" (*renji jiaoli*)—that is, that the individual and the world are *not* in conflict.<sup>30</sup> That people are not intrinsically selfish but have a tendency toward goodness. That human potentiality is unlimited. But that what we can know for cer-

<sup>29</sup> "Lihai pingdeng lun," pp. 15–16.

<sup>30</sup> Liu attributed this point to Dai Zhen, in opposition to traditional Confucianism.

practicality and its criticisms of Neo-Confucianism. However, Liu was considerably clearer in discussing what he disliked in past philosophies than in what he was actually advocating as useful and true. Both *yong* and *shixue*, or real, practical learning had of course been values of Confucian thought for some time.<sup>25</sup> Liu was certainly not concerned with a philosophy of utilitarianism but appears to have been attracted to the old statecraft ideal of feeding the people. Later, Liu brought out the anarchistic implications of his critique of a style of rulership that monopolized abstract learning while people starved.

In a broader sense, the emphasis Liu gave to learning illustrated the concerns of a traditional scholar. As learning flourished during Europe's Renaissance, when education was taken out of the hands of religious institutions and more widely disseminated (Liu said), so the Warring States period in China saw great intellectual activity. For with the decay of the Zhou state, learning was taken out of the hands of the official historians and spread by numerous masters and their disciples. Official learning (*guanxue*) was private learning (*sixue*).

Liu used the pages of *the National Essence Journal* to praise Confucius' demand that there be no classes in education and that the rulers form one body with the people; he also noted Mencius had called upon the people to approve their rulers. This fell short of the ideal because Confucians still wanted to maintain hierarchy, but at least, Liu felt, their reliance on moral sanctions over force and law was a step forward. In Liu's view, Mozi's desire to institute absolute equality was more advanced yet, because by raising the people (*min*) he would limit rulers even more effectively. Looking over the Warring States period's ideologies, Liu also cited the Daoists' view of government itself as the source of disorder, but,

<sup>25</sup> See Wm. Theodore de Bary, "Introduction," de Bary and Irene Bloom, eds., *Principle and Practicality: Essays in Neo-Confucianism, and Practical Learning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 1–35.

alas, with the Qin's founding of the empire (221 B.C.), Legalism was established in Confucian dress. This interpretation of the Warring States era obviously fits into an anarchist framework also. Liu explicitly criticized Confucius, or at least the New Text interpretation of Confucius.<sup>26</sup> For Liu had little difficulty in proving that Confucius was basically a monarchist and that any other image of him was not historical.

Certain contradictions are at least implied in these essays, written after all over a two-year period and designed to answer different historical problems. Relying on questionable historical records, Liu praised the world of Huang Di. It is difficult to tell to what extent Liu was simply using the past to criticize the present, but judging from his writings overall, a kind of intellectual dialectic was informing his developing opinions. Liu was attracted to the world of Huang Di because its alleged egalitarian order coincided with independently derived social standards (Rousseau and Huang Zongxi). At the same time, Liu was directed toward a loose vision of anarcho-socialism because of Zhou and Han dynasty descriptions of Huang Di. Liu's attention may have originally been drawn to Huang Di in particular because he was undergoing great popularity as a Han Chinese. In 1904 Liu had proposed that China use a dating system based on Huang Di's birth as Western countries dated from the birth of Christ, a fairly widespread nationalistic notion of the day.<sup>27</sup> However, by 1905 Liu's interest in Huang Di was primarily in his role as a symbol of a social order. Still, respect for any ruler would seem to contradict the equation Liu was beginning to make between rulership and tyranny. The primitive communism

<sup>26</sup> "Lun Kongzi wu gaizhi zhishi" (Confucius was not a reformer), *Guocui xuebao*, year 2, vol. 2, nos. 23–25; also *Liu Shenshu xiansheng yishu*, zhuan 45.

<sup>27</sup> "Huang Di jinianlun" (Dating from Huang Di), *Guomin riribao*, Hui-bian, No. 1, reprinted in XHGMQSNJ, 1B721-722. Liu also criticized here the proposal that China date from the birth of Confucius, which he said Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao favored "in order to preserve Confucianism. We favor dating from the birth of Huang Di in order to preserve the race."

Liu also described in favorable terms is as thoroughly spoiled by a Huang Di as by a Zhou or a Jie. This leads to the other main unresolved contradiction in Liu's political philosophy at this time. Is history progressing, or are things steadily getting worse? Although an Old Text adherent, Liu did not dismiss the New Text interpretation of the *Gongyangzhuan* as describing or predicting human progress. He had hope in the future and wanted to rebuild the nation. But he also believed in a distant past that was better than the last several thousand years of history.

Liu's mode of argument—appealing to the semilegendary past in order to attack the present—was neither new with Liu nor rare at the turn of the century. But the specific uses to which he put the past went beyond the efforts of his contemporaries. Obviously more than slightly tinged by Victorian anthropological theories of the origins of civilization, Liu had nonetheless put together on his own a *critique* of the immediate past that laid the basis for his anarchist interpretation of past and present.

The final essay Liu wrote before he became an out-and-out anarchist did not directly deal with government or history, but it displays much of the metaphysics that lay behind Liu's anarchist synthesis. He approached the question of social justice—how to devise a just human society—and based revolution on the selfless ego. "Equalizing Profit and Harm" was published by Zhang Binglin as the lead article in the 5 May 1907 *People's Journal*.<sup>28</sup> Liu sought to break down the usual categories of thought, concluding:

The justifications (*li*) for a racial [or nationalist, *zhongzu*] revolution, a political revolution, and an economic revolution have long existed in the minds

<sup>28</sup> "Lihai pingdeng lun," *Minbao* no. 13 (5 May 1907), pp. 1–16. For a more complete discussion of this essay, see Peter Zarrow, "Chinese Anarchists: Ideals and the Revolution of 1911" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1:987), pp. 85–94. Onogawa Hidemi, "Ryu Shibai to museifushugi," pp. 706–707, emphasized the Buddhist influences on the essay.

and make the populace obey them, and, in effect, the great majority of the people will become the slaves of a small minority.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, a majority, even if truly elected, would still have no right to dictate to a minority.

Here are the origins of Liu's paradox that the civilized nations have lost all their liberties while the barbarian countries have maintained a degree of freedom.<sup>30</sup> Chinese governmental power traditionally failed to extend beyond the capital city and upper class, and in medieval Europe the rulers could not prevent their people from forming village and town associations and commercial guilds. Liu again demonstrated his scholarship and his appreciation of China's heritage. Confucians since the Han, and especially Neo-Confucians during the northern Song, had urged emperors to adopt a relatively hands-off posture. Liu shared an antimodern nostalgia with a number of European anarchists. However, his point that the effective power of governments had grown was perfectly well taken. He pointed to improvements in transportations, communications, and weaponry, all in the hands of governments of whatever configuration.

If Liu saw politics as one sphere of inequality, economics was another. He found that capitalists were in the position of "only enjoying privileges, without performing duties" to a degree historically unprecedented outside of caste societies.<sup>31</sup> Workers were in the opposite position, and therefore the capitalists combined in themselves the privileges of the ancient aristocrats, officials, and religious establishments. With a traditional distaste for profit (*li*), and quoting Proudhon, Liu condemned private property. Although traditional Confucian disdain for merchants may have been exaggerated by modern scholars, profit (*li*) was long and consistently

<sup>29</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," p. 926.

<sup>30</sup> This argument is developed in He Zhen and Liu Shipai, "Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshi" (The pros and cons of racial revolution and anarchist revolution), *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), esp. pp. 135-137-

<sup>31</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhi pingdeng guan," p. 926.

of difficulties, and these difficulties are themselves a great thing. Congratulations! Long live our hardships! Long live the Patriotic School! Long live China!

—Wu Zhihui, in a speech at the Patriotic School, Shanghai, 1902<sup>1</sup>

Four men led the Chinese anarchist movement in Europe. Wu Zhihui, Li Shizeng, Zhang Jingjiang, and Chu Minyi joined forces in Paris in 1906 to promote revolution. Supportive of Sun Yat-sen's *putsch* attempts, they linked a Chinese national revolution to an avant-garde anarchist movement. More than the Chinese anarchists in Tokyo, they represented an extroverted, cosmopolitan, and optimistic strain of social thinking which was gloriously oriented to the twentieth century.

## THE EDUCATION OF WU ZHIHUI

Educator. Linguist. Philosopher. Polemicist and revolutionary. Politician (of a sort). Journalist. Printer. Historian. Labor organizer. Professional calligrapher.

Wu Zhihui was born in 1865; passed the examinations to become a *juren* in 1891; defended the Manchu dynasty against radical *reformers* while teaching school in 1898; joined the revolution by 1903; became an anarchist in 1906; joined Sun Yat-sen's Canton regime in 1912 and became interested in educating workers and working students; helped form the right wing of the Guomindang by 1927; wrote widely in the 1920s and 1930s in an antitraditional, iconoclastic vein; and spent the postwar years as an advisor to Chi-

<sup>1</sup> Wu Zhihui, "Zai Aiguo xueshe yanjiang," *Wu Zhihui xiansheng quanshu*, 2:185 (hereafter *Collected Works*).

ang Kai-shek and a dignitary on Taiwan. He died in 1953. Wu's life, like his writing style, was remarkable for its vigor and punch.<sup>2</sup>

Wu was born to a family that traced its descent from a man who fled to the Suzhou area during the troubles of the Yuan-Ming transition. Neither as illustrious in scholarship as Liu Shipei's forebears nor as successful in the corridors of power as Li Shizeng's immediate family, Wu's ancestors achieved some local success in Yanghu xian (now Wujin xian, by Lake Tai), in Jiangsu Province, before the devastation of the Taiping Rebellion. Wu's mother died when he was five, and Wu and his younger sister went to live with his maternal grandjmother, Madame Chen, in Wuxi. His father managed Madame Chen's pottery business and Wu attended local schools as the family increasingly fell into poverty. Wu's education covered the classics and their standard Zhu Xi commentaries. In his late teens, Wu made some money tutoring and, of course, practiced his "eight-legged essays" for the endless round of examinations. He became a *shengyuan* in 1887, at twenty-two.

At twenty-three, Wu married the woman selected by Madame Chen, and the marriage was traditional in that his wife played virtually no role in Wu's subsequent public life.<sup>3</sup> They soon had a daughter. Wu continued his studies at the famous Nanjing Academy, a school associated with modernizing reforms in Jiangyin. According to a schedule that Wu drew up for himself at this time, his day was divided among five activities: examining important texts (*kan*), pe-

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<sup>2</sup> See the sketchy diary that Wu kept from about 1890 to 1911 in vols. n-13 of his *Collected Works*, several travel journals and a few short memoirs; there are also a number of reminiscences about Wu by such men as Cai Yuanpei, Li Shizeng, and Hu Shi; and the chronological biography by Chen Linghai, Wu's nephew, "Wu Zhihui xiansheng nianpu jianbian," *Collected Works*, 18:1-124 (hereafter "Nianpu"). See also Richard Tse-yang Wang, "Wu Chih-hui, an Intellectual Biography" and Paul Clifford, "The Intellectual Development of Wu Chih-hui."

<sup>3</sup> Chen, "Nianpu," p. 29, credits Madame Wu with running an efficient household and having no interest in Wu's outside activities. She may have been illiterate; they later corresponded in the syllabary that Wu had developed. These letters are not in Wu's *Collected Works*.

right of equality. Not a single day passes when the noble do not mistreat the base, the rich mistreat the poor, and the strong mistreat the weak. Not a single day goes by without enforced labor (*yi*)..."<sup>27</sup> His indignation was based logically on his premises about equality. The spheres of inequality's unjust success included the political (status), economic (wealth), and racial (imperialism, nationalism).

For Liu, this analysis applied to all real and conceivable forms of government, to republics as well as autocracies,<sup>28</sup> and this is why he was an anarchist as opposed to some other kind of socialist. In political terms, class divisions define republics as well as the imperial state. Liu was thus accusing his fellow intellectuals of massively missing the point in all their discussions about (x) displacing the Manchus and (2) replacing them with a new form of government. From its beginning the Chinese discourse about republicanism included the unhappy insight that the political myth could not live up to its own ideals in a capitalist world. Eighteenth-century republicans had only to rebut monarchists; Chinese republicans in the early twentieth century were buffeted from both sides. Liu's anarchism challenged republicans to provide real equality.

Specifically, Liu criticized modern republics for massive oppression of their workers, seen in their police spies and unjust laws; corruption, such as political parties which tricked the electorate with empty speeches and stuck their hands in the public till; and a kind of conceptual flaw:

<quote> Even if a monarchy becomes a democracy, as long as it retains a government, it will have organs of rule, and the existence of these organs, which are focal points of collected powers, means that someone is going to seize control of them. And the people who seize the organs of rule are going to take privileges for themselves,

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<sup>27</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," p. 925.

<sup>28</sup> This argument is developed in "Renlei junli shuo," p. 25; "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," pp. 925-928.

utopia also shows. Perhaps equality plays the role in Kropotkin's conception of liberty that liberty plays in Liu's conception of equality, which so tended toward literal sameness. Liu's way out of the maze that these three terms create was \_ to focus on labor and education. In his utopia, education prepared all people for all tasks, and if only they could accept a minimum amount of labor (necessity), they would be free as well as equal.

Liu devoted a great deal of attention to proving how natural equality was.<sup>[24</sup> In sum, Liu determined that all humans are alike biologically and that furthermore Christian theology, Greek myth, and Chinese history agree that humans came from a single source. Liu met the difficulty, so overwhelming to his contemporaries, of the obvious racial and individual differences among peoples by concluding that evolution operated at different rates throughout the world. But the differences are the superficial results of unique environments and not essential. Perhaps Liu was ahead of his time. Certainly this fundamental assumption explains much of his relative moderation at this time on the Manchu question.<sup>25</sup>

Another proof for Liu of the naturalness of equality was its presence in human nature. All classes systems are contrary to human nature because, in essence, people do not like to be oppressed. Moreover, people motivated by greed or envy do not want to see anyone better off than themselves, whereas good people naturally want to help all others up to their own level. Either way, equality can be reached and maintained. People also like change for its own sake and would be happy to change jobs every few years.<sup>26</sup>

But when Liu turned to the present world, he found inequality triumphant on all fronts. "Truly a majority of society has lost its

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<sup>24</sup> See "Renlei junli shuo," pp. 24–26; "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," pp. 923–925.

<sup>25</sup> The possibility arises that Liu did not join in the racial vituperation of his Tongmenghui colleagues because he was already a secret supporter of the Manchus. However, his commitment to revolution remained firm.

<sup>26</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," p. 30.

rusing other writings (*du*), writing poetry, composing essays, and quiet-sitting.<sup>4</sup> Wu read Zhu Xi's *Jinsttu*, the dynastic histories, the *Zuoshum*, and a fair amount of literature at this time.

In 1891, just a few weeks after Madame Chen died, Wu passed the provincial examinations to become a *juren* at the respectable but not astonishing age of twenty-six. The first thing he did was take the metropolitan examinations to achieve *jinshi* status, in 1892, and then again in 1894 and 1895. He failed each time (at least once his examiners included Li Shizeng's father). In 1892 Wu supported some fellow students who had stoned a magistrate for failing to get out of his sedan chair when he passed a Confucian temple.<sup>5</sup> Wu thereupon lost his position in Jiangyin and moved to an academy in Suzhou. The Confucian tradition sanctioned such righteous acts, which were judged on the sincerity of their motivation, and they could also serve to make a man's name better known. Wu himself was not satisfied with his studies and tried to give up novels and other mean amusements; his daily activities included reading classics and history, writing, copying, and quiet-sitting.<sup>6</sup>

Wu's life was not all books; he recorded long walks and talks with friends and also frequent attendance at the opera throughout these years. When the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) broke out, Wu was again in Beijing taking the *jinshi* examinations; failing them, he took a job at an academy in Tianjin. But China's defeat shocked and scared the entire world of the literati. Wu appears to have been on the fringes of those groups criticizing the court, though he also returned to Wuxi and Suzhou as a tutor in

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<sup>4</sup> "Zai Nanjing shuyuan shi ziding keyi guiyueh" (Self-determined course schedule while at Nanjing Academy), *Collected Works*, 16:64–66.

<sup>5</sup> This story is told in Chen, "Nianpu," 12–13. However, according to Li Shuhua, Wu was directly involved in the stoning incident and was arrested along with the others, but he was released when the police discovered he was a *juren* and a student at the Nanjing Academy—Li Shuhua, "Chinese Oral History Project," Columbia University, based on interviews in 1960–1961, MS., pp. 200–201.

<sup>6</sup> See "Diary," *Collected Works*, 11:72–73, 87.

several important families; he was now hooked into a network of powerful recommendations. (It was also at this time that Wu first began work on a Chinese syllabary.) Wu regarded himself as a supporter of Zhang Zhidong, the Zhili governor-general who believed in moderate institutional reform; therefore he did not particularly sympathize with the more radical efforts of Kang Youwei. Wu's son was born in 1896.

Wu was teaching Chinese at the Beiyang Institute in Tianjin in 1897 when he met Kang for the first and only time, but he met with Yan Fu, who was also in Tianjin, fairly often. Wu now considered himself sympathetic to reform; he apparently agreed with Kang's analysis of China's three greatest needs: abolishing foot binding, opium, and the eight-legged essay.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, Wu declined to support the "hundred days of reform" in the spring of 1898. He resigned from the Beiyang Institute and moved to Shanghai and the Nanyang School, which had a somewhat reformist reputation. He was thirty-three. Perhaps, in intellectual terms, Wu considered the reforms tantamount to disloyalty. Wu later said he had been gravely mistaken in his opposition to the reform movement.<sup>8</sup>

Wu's father died in 1899, and Wu began to be radicalized by his experiences at the Nanyang School. He became one of its principals and instituted modest educational reforms, asking students to speak out on current events, for example.<sup>9</sup> (Cai Yuanpei later taught Japanese at Nanyang, in 1901.) During the Boxer uprising and the allied invasion that followed, south China remained neutral, but the effects of the disturbances rippled to Shanghai. Wu

<sup>7</sup> Chen, "Nianpu," pp. 17–18.

<sup>8</sup> In 1903 Wu said he had seen nothing questionable about his stance at the time (1898) but now realized it was nonsense; see his comments in "Wuxunian zhijiao Beiyang daxue duiyu zhongjun aiguo zhi yijian" (Notes made in 1898 on loyalty to one's ruler and patriotism, by a teacher at Beiyang Institute), *Collected Works*, 16:142.

<sup>9</sup> See Chen, "Nianpu," p. 19; and, for more detail, Wu's collection of documents from his days at Nanyang Gongxue in *Collected Works*, 2:71–112.

Humankind has three basic rights: equality, independence and liberty (*ziyou*). Equality consists in everyone having the same rights and duties. Independence consists in neither enslaving others nor depending on others [as their inferior]. Liberty consists of being neither controlled by nor enslaved by others. We consider these three rights to be natural (*tianfu*).<sup>22</sup> Independence and liberty treat the individual as the basic unit; equality must be considered in terms of humankind as a whole, and thus one must emphasize equality in planning for the happiness of the whole human race. Independence is what maintains equality. However, since the excessive exercise of the liberties of one conflicts with the liberties of another, and since the liberties of one tend to conflict with the overall goal of equality, individual liberties must be limited.<sup>23</sup>

Liu sought a balance between individual and group weighted, by traditional standards, on the side of the individual. Equality itself was a radical demand applied to individuals, and in those terms Liu was denying the importance of group rights. Yet he understood this equality as a set of relationships that worked only within an actual group. In this respect, he was no different from an anarcho-communist such as Kropotkin, but unlike Kropotkin he defined equality as "the *same* rights and duties" (my emphasis), as his

<sup>22</sup> For the notion of *tianfu* in modern Japan, see Sannosuke Matsumoto, "The Idea of Heaven: A Tokugawa Foundation for Natural Rights Theory" in Tetsuo Naito and Irwin Scheiner, eds., *Japanese Thought in the Tokugawa Period, 1600–1865* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 181–199. Matsumoto traces a link in premodern Japanese thought between the notion of the ruler's responsibilities to the people and Heaven (C. *tiari*) as political arbiter, as moral force, and as fate. This linkage eased the Meiji interpretation of inborn rights (J. *tenpu jinken*, C. *tianfu renquan*) in terms of political freedoms.

<sup>23</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," p. 918.



and those who work with their minds. They don't realize that the so-called mind-workers are simply assuming an arrogant and conceited pose while secretly indulging their lazy natures... The system of unequal happiness is wrong.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps Liu saw a deeper problem than inequality per se. *Humanity* refers to that which all humans share; Liu believed not only in fraternity but also in individual self-fulfillment. He approvingly quoted Mencius: "All things are already complete in us."<sup>20</sup> Liu's point, if not the one Mencius intended, was that the generalization of labor was necessary to make all people complete. "Today all necessities are made by others. Others can know something yet we ourselves not know it; others can do something but we ourselves not know how." Did Liu have a notion of alienation? At any rate he wished to counter the social fragmentation to which specialization gives rise. His idea of the individual was very much the capable generalist that Confucius sought in the *junzi*.

The crux of all these issues lay for Liu in dependency and servitude (*yiyu taren, yiyu taren*). Women, who are dependent on their husbands, are enslaved; so workers dependent on the capitalists are also enslaved. So too the people and their rulers. None can claim equality. Actually, dependency and servitude amount to the same thing. Liu specifically defined independence (*duli*) as their opposite (*buyi taren, buyi taren*).<sup>21</sup> In "The Anarchist View of Equality" Liu sought to prove the naturalness, justice, and practicality of what might be called anarcho-egalitarianism.

<sup>19</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," p. 922; see *Mencius* 3A.4: "There are pursuits proper to great men and pursuits proper to lesser men.

... Therefore it is said, 'some labor with their hands, and some labor with their minds. Those who labor with their minds govern others. Those who labor with their hands are governed by others' (tr. Dobson, *Mencius*, p. 117).

<sup>20</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," p. 31; see *Mencius* 7A.4 (Dobson, p. 147).

<sup>21</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," p. 918.

resigned as one of the principals, but not as a teacher, when the head of the school refused to allow students to form a sort of militia reserve and practice military training. After another disagreement with the head, this one prompted by Wu's urging that students be given a voice in running the school, Wu received the school's blessing and some financial assistance to lead a group of Nanyang students to Japan in 1901. Wu himself enrolled in the Tokyo Koto Shihan Gakko (higher normal school). Wu refused to meet Sun Yat-sen, whose uncouth and rebellious reputation preceded him. Nor does Wu seem to have met with Liang Qichao. Wu's intentions were still more academic than political.<sup>10</sup>

There were as yet only a few hundred Chinese students in Japan, but Wu soon found himself embroiled in an incident that finally put him in a clearly antigovernment, if not actually revolutionary, position.<sup>11</sup> As usual, Wu did not immediately display intransigence on his own account. He appears not to have possessed the personality of a rebel, despite the vehemence of his writings and the radicalism of his later views. Rather, Wu was drawn into the imbroglio out of sympathy with the students, just as he tried to help the young men who had stoned the magistrate in 1892. This time, Wu came into a situation where tensions between nascent nationalistic students and a suspicious Chinese government were already high following Zhang Binglin's anti-Manchu rally in the spring of 1902. Nine self-supporting students (that is, not sponsored by the government) of the group Wu had brought over to Japan applied that summer to the Seijo military school, an institution specifically set up for the

<sup>10</sup> See Wu's comments in Japan, "Yu Riben Benzhuang Tai'yilang bitan" (Written conversation with Honjo Taichiro), *Collected Works*, 2:233-234.

<sup>11</sup> There are numerous accounts of this incident, including Saneto Keishu's patient reconstruction, *Chugoku Nihon ryugaku shi*, pp. 424-460. See also the more recent Paula Sigrid Harrell, "The Years of the Young Radicals: The Chinese Students in Japan, 1900-1905," pp. 62-82, and Li Wenneng, *Wu Jingheng dui Zhongguo xiandai zhengzhi de yingxiang*, pp. 55-56. But the story is worth outlining here because it appears to have been pivotal in Wu's turn from moderation to radicalism.

Chinese students to learn Japanese and receive officer training. The Chinese minister, Cai Jun, refused to give them his approval and the Japanese authorities went along with him.

After other attempts at mediation had failed, Wu, accompanied by his cohort of students, tried to offer Cai bonds of guarantee, but the two only argued. When Cai left his office, Wu and his students conducted a sit-in that was ended only when the Japanese police arrived. Wu was placed under arrest and held for deportation. Under police escort Wu threw himself into the imperial moat. The suicide attempt was designed to “awaken a slumbering country” and also to demonstrate Wu’s own sincerity and resolution. In the event, the Japanese police rescued him with little difficulty, since the water was only waist deep. Cai Yuanpei then decided to accompany Wu back to Shanghai.

From this point, Wu, though he may not have fully realized it, was on the road to revolution. If he had had a small reputation as a broadminded classicist and educator before, he now had a fairly large reputation as an anti-Qing stalwart. He was seen off at the station in Tokyo by Liang Qichao and over a hundred Chinese students. In the mood of radicalism and dissatisfaction, no one had to decide whether they were most angered by the actions of a particular ambassador, Japan, the Qing government, or the dynastic system itself. The Manchu government ignored Wu on his arrival back in Shanghai, relieving or perhaps disappointing his fears of arrest. Cai and Wu, joined by Zhang Binglin and Huang Zongyang, promptly organized the Chinese Educational Association, established the Patriotic School, and worked on the *Subao*. When Li Shizeng met Wu on his way to Paris, he invited Wu to join him there. The world of Chinese radicals was small, almost inbred, and quite influential on a generation of students. When the government clampdown came the following year, Wu made his way out of Shanghai to Hong Kong, where he toyed with the idea of joining forces with Feng Ziyou or Hu Hanmin, but he eventually decided to study in Europe.

Liu found that the origins of inequality lay in class, labor, and sex.<sup>17</sup> Class divisions arose out of the religions of primitive peoples. Crafty shamans pretended to supernatural powers and the people, believing in gods, also believed that the shamans were worthy of respect and obedience. When shamans began to govern primitive tribes, chieftains came into power, and secular rule acquired a religious sanction. Over time, as people obeyed laws, followed orders, and feared their rulers, the imperial clans, the aristocracy, officialdom, and the capitalists rose as intermediate classes.

Second, people became unequal through the medium of their work. Although primitive peoples were self-sufficient and independent, as soon as their populations grew and land became scarce, war resulted. Victorious tribes enslaved their prisoners. These slaves became both farmers and craftsmen; specialization was born. Even as they earned a bit of freedom through their skills, they remained subservient to the former masters, aristocrats and officials living in outrageous idleness. Liu had no special respect for the class he came from.

The third origin of inequality was the subservience of women. Again, in the most primitive times both husbands and wives were shared in common; but with war, victorious soldiers seized the women of the defeated tribes and turned them into their private property.<sup>18</sup>

Liu believed that inequality was the result of oppression, not nature. For example, with the loss of freedom for women, men made polygamy into a kind of natural law. He rebutted Mencius’ famous justification of a ruling class.

Some people who don’t think, claim wrongly that humans are unequal, that there should be a distinction between those who work with their physical strength

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<sup>17</sup> Liu developed this argument in “Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan,” pp. 920–923.

<sup>18</sup> See ch. 6 for a discussion of anarcho-feminism.

guarantee. The first freedom is a necessary element of freedoms of action and the civil liberties that the West now associates with the term, but it did not necessarily imply individualism. Liu's was a social vision; he would not bend equality to the strains that unfettered individualism must put on it. In other words, if in conflict, freedom would bend to equality, or individual will to social existence. Like many Western anarchists, Liu looked back to a vague golden age of equality. But despite his nostalgic side, Liu also believed in the role that advanced technology would play in reducing human desires by meeting human needs.

Chinese political thought had for centuries centered around the questions of how to make sure the people had enough to eat, and Liu continued this discussion from the perspective of eliminating an idle class. Technology, of course, did not solve the problem of equality, but it did—push the realm of freedom considerably closer. With freedom supported if not guaranteed by making labor much more productive, independence for the individual and equality among individuals thereby became practicable. In fact, Liu appears to have believed that they always had been—that the cruelties of imperial China were not the products of an inevitable historical phase but rather, Liu might have said, a moral failure.

Utilizing premises familiar to nineteenth-century ethnology, Liu traced the origins of inequality to primitive society when differences first arose among people on the basis of intelligence and strength. Liu attributed far-reaching historical results to individual desires for dominance. “The strong threatened the weak, the many used violence on the few, the clever tricked the stupid, the brave lorded it over the cowards.” And so a nobility came to rule the people, the rich to rule the poor. Finally, “*Those at the top live in idleness while those at the bottom labor. The idle are happy and the laborers suffer.* This is clearly the result of class politics (*jieji zhengzhi*).”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> “Renlei junli shuo,” pp. 24–26.

Wu ended up in London, where he apparently was accepted by the Chinese community. Wu worked on his English and, like others before him, on his knowledge of revolutionary doctrine, and he learned copper plate printing. He visited the museums and watched the Oxford-Cambridge boat races on the Thames. Overall, Wu was clearly struck by China's relative backwardness and the contempt with which the English looked upon his country. He was impressed by British technology in the broadest and most visible sense—transportation, communication, sanitation, electricity.<sup>12</sup>

In 1905 Sun Yat-sen, after a whirlwind recruitment drive through Belgium, France, and Germany, visited Wu in London. Later in the year Wu joined the Tongmenghui, which Sun had just established in Tokyo as an umbrella organization of revolutionary factions. Late in 1906 Wu answered the promptings of both Li Shizeng and Zhang Jingjiang and moved to Paris.

This was his anarchist period. Wu's years in France included long talks with Cai Yuanpei and Wang Jingwei and theatrical evenings with Zhang Jingjiang. He watched the French parliament at work, admired the government printing office, and followed the spring election returns in Paris. But most of the time, he worked as chief editor, writer, and printer for *New Century* (*Xin Shiji*). In 1909, he borrowed the money from Li and Zhang to send for his wife, daughter, and son and settled them in London.

<sup>12</sup> Wu's first impressions of England are recorded in his “Lu Ying shi youlan qingxing” (Touring England), *Collected Works*, 16:161–173. He was struck by how expensive everything was and also by such Western institutions as Sundays and museums (with Chinese artifacts), and he noted the existence of widespread poverty, concluding in an uncharacteristically cynical moment, “What do we mean by ‘civilization’? Having money is civilization” (p. 164). After a couple of years in Europe, Wu also wrote a “Guide to studying in England” (*Yingguo youxue nanzhi*, *Collected Works*, 2:260–275), dealing with such questions as the clothing to wear in England, what steamship line to take, how the post office works, and how to figure out financial transactions. See also Wu's various diaries of those years, in *Collected Works*, 12:728–1017.

Wu returned to London in 1910, and for a few more months sent his articles by mail to Paris. He published a few translations about evolutionary theory in Shanghai. The revolutionary tides were out: *Natural Justice* and *The People's Journal* had also folded, and raising money had become nearly impossible even for Sun Yat-sen. However, soon after news of the Wuchang uprising reached Europe, Sun arrived from America to seek aid from European governments, and as the uprising spread, he quickly left for China, giving Wu enough money to follow. Wu arrived in Shanghai early in 1912. Cai Yuanpei became the Minister of Education in the brief Nanjing government and asked Wu to work on the unification of pronunciation, with the ultimate goal of replacing China's numerous dialects with a single standard speech. Wu had long been interested in Chinese phonetics and this work eventually culminated in the phonetic symbols still in use (*guqyu zhuyin fuhao*). Wu believed his work would help to wipe out illiteracy.<sup>13</sup>

Wu was a cofounder of the Society to Advance Morality, arguing that social reform and individual self-improvement had to accompany political change. Wu also helped found the Society for Frugal Study in France, which got some government support through Cai and then continued on its own momentum for many years. After Yuan Shikai's 1913 coup, Wu fled to London and led Sino-French and British work-study programs for several years. He founded *Laodong (Labor)*, China's first syndicalist magazine, in Shanghai in 1918. Its five issues promoted Proudhon, Tolstoy, Lenin, and the Russian Revolution. This heady combination was the basis for support of the formation of various unions and several strikes, including those of rickshaw men and carpenters.<sup>14</sup>

Wu jumped into the science-metaphysics debates of 1923 after another visit to France. He is probably best known, from these

<sup>13</sup> "Sanshiwu nian laizhi yinfu yundong" (The past thirty-five years of the phonetics movement), *Collected Works*, 5:315–336.

<sup>14</sup> See Chow Tse-tung, *The May Fourth Movement*, p. 255; and Jean Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labor Movement, 1919–1927*, p. 136.

eratives.<sup>14</sup> The current form of household production would thus come to an end.

Liu himself distinguished the anarchism of the Tokyo group from such variants as individual anarchism, anarcho-communism, and anarcho-socialism on precisely the grounds of its emphasis on equality.<sup>15</sup> In pursuing the grail of equality Liu sought to end the pernicious distinctions between people (and peoples). He saw equalizing labor as the only route to individual economic independence, and in turn independence was to allow individuals to lay claim to the equality that was rightfully theirs. Along the way, Liu trusted, freedom would be achieved. And in turn only free individuals could be equals. Equality must be grasped through revolution: only such means are consistent with such an end.

Reduced to stark definitions, Liu sounds rather Hegelian, but he remained for the most part a natural materialist lacking any faith in a purely spiritual goal or force. Liu sought to reorder human society without the state, to rectify wrongs and to end suffering. These goals are the negative side of equality and freedom. Yet the content of Liu's positive categories throws the spirit of his anarchism into question. In contrast to the mainstream of Western anarchism, which essentially trusts that humans could do a decent job of organizing themselves if they could only secure the absence of the state, Liu wanted to erect all kinds of safeguards, be they rules or universal customs.

Perhaps utopias suffer inherently from the problem of rigidity, but Liu's is nonetheless extreme. Furthermore, Liu's ideas about human nature—that it is not necessarily good, but can be manipulated—are consistent with a diluted definition of freedom if not of equality. His idea of freedom was, first, the freedom from want, that is, independence, that economic security alone can

<sup>14</sup> "Cunluo gongyезhi yu geguo" (Village work-sharing systems in various countries), *Hengbao* no. 11 (28 September 1908), p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," p. 918.

of Kang's essentially religious concern with benevolence (or goodness, *ren*) nor, as an anarchist, did he care about the minutiae of democratic local and world government explicated in Kang's detailed utopia. When Kang called for abolition of that most Confucian of entities, the family, he sounded thoroughly radical; yet he tempered this radicalism with short-term moderation, calling for constitutional monarchy under the Manchus and a Confucian church. Liu called for untempered political and social revolution. They might have agreed that one root of suffering (*ku*) was the institution of private property. Kang located the notion of property within the family, where it naturally led to selfishness and clanishness. Liu did not value the family either, but his analysis of the roots of suffering differed, being based first on economic structures. Liu and Kang differed as well in terms of their adherence to the Old Text and New Text schools of Qing scholarship.

After he had read more of Kropotkin, Liu advocated a looser system of decentralizing small-scale industry.<sup>13</sup> Anciently, Chinese peasants had manufactured various goods on the side or worked in towns and cities during the slack season. Now, however, capitalists were monopolizing the means of production and preventing peasants from working, except in the capitalists' factories. Modern machinery could underprice traditional handicrafts while at the same time rural folk could not afford to buy the machinery themselves. But if industry were scattered about the countryside, then peasants could run factories alongside of their farming, and their industries would in addition be nearer to the raw materials. Liu went so far as to proclaim, "The most urgent task facing China today is to unite agriculture and industry," and he called for village production coop-

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<sup>13</sup> "Lun nongye yu gongye lianhezhi kexing yu Zhongguo" (The system of combining agriculture and manufacturing can be practiced in China), reprinted in Ge Maochun et al., eds., *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliaoxuan* (hereafter WSZ), pp. 163–166 (originally published in *Hengbao* no. 7, 28 June 1908).

debates, as a materialist who attacked Confucianism and all traditional thought in the name of science. This intellectual position was first forged in his *New Century* writings, and if Wu's materialism is open to question, his knowledge of science was undoubtedly formidable.<sup>15</sup> Wu also began to become involved in Guomindang affairs in the 1920s. Although, abiding by anarchist principles, Wu never took a government position, he was elected to the party's central supervisory committee at the first national congress in 1924. He was present at the signing of Sun Yat-sen's deathbed political testament.

Wu originally supported the admission of communists to the Guomindang: "The Communists intend to cooperate with the Guomindang, just as we anarchists want to help the Guomindang for the benefit of the people." (Wu also made it clear that his political beliefs were no threat to the republic: "My anarchism cannot be realized before three thousand years.")<sup>16</sup> But in 1927 Wu supported Chiang Kai-shek's purge of communists and suspected communists. He became one of the four elder statesmen of the party, along with Cai Yuanpei, Li Shizeng, and Zhang Jingjiang. Wu also supported Chiang against the Wuhan government of his former associate in the Society to Advance Morality, Wang Jingwei. Nonetheless, Wu continued to refuse all government jobs, though he presided over the 1931 constitutional convention. During the war, he lived in Chongqing and sold calligraphy. In 1948 he administered the presidential oath to Chiang and a year

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<sup>15</sup> See inter alia "Kexue zhoubao bianji hua" (Editor's comments, *Science Weekly*), *Collected Works*, 4:347, for a fairly sophisticated discussion of modern developments in physics, including the general theory of relativity. I say this notwithstanding the reservations of James Reeve Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, p. 384, who criticizes the earlier Wu of the *New Century* days regarding his knowledge of biology.

<sup>16</sup> Both quotations are from Tang Leang-li, *The Irmer History of the Chinese Revolution*, p. 194.

later fled to Taiwan. He died there in 1953, at the age of eighty-nine. His ashes were lowered into the sea near Jinmen.

What twists and turns in Wu's beliefs explain such a life? Wu's thought before he turned to revolution is unusually clear, though the basis for his leaps of faith is not. Wu turned to revolution in his maturity and thus had to abandon many of the beliefs he had been raised on and indeed had taught to others. Three great intellectual transitions mark Wu's political philosophy: from imperial Confucianism to nationalism in about 1902, from nationalism to anarchism in about 1906, and from anarchism to "guided democracy" in the 1920s. Not all the steps between these leaps are clear. Wu's worldview, the basic sense of the universe that underlay his political opinions, had only changed once, by 1907, from what might be loosely called Confucianism to what might be loosely called evolutionism, progressivism, or even positivism—which could support an ideology of modernization as well as his anarchism.

The road that Wu followed from traditional ambitions to nationalism and then to anarchism and socialism does not seem to have been easy. Such wrenching contrasts in philosophical position might have produced corresponding psychological tensions, if not crises. But there is no clear evidence for the latter. At the same time, there is little indication in Wu's earlier writings of a tendency toward some of the fundamental beliefs of his later life. Wu's early loyalty excluded the slightest sedition. And later, within his theory of progressive evolution, no room existed for Confucianism or conservatism of any sort. Nonetheless, certain themes and approaches mark a kind of continuity underlying Wu's two worldviews.

In terms of behavior, the morally upright individual who looks to his own conscience as his guide, a sort of "Confucian hero," was a traditional ideal that Wu adopted. Wu was not tempted to "get along by going along" but displayed a critical attitude: toward Qing Confucianism, toward what he regarded as excessive reform in the

air]. Today, scientists have discovered that all people are combined from the [same] original chemicals... Mencius of China also said, "Thus things of a kind resemble each other. And can we doubt that human beings are any different? The Sages and we ourselves are things of a kind." Wang Yang-ming extended this principle: "If we speak of innate knowledge of the good, this is what everyone naturally has..." Recently, the Western scholar Rousseau also created the theory of natural rights (*tianfu renquan*).<sup>11</sup>

Liu clearly considered his ideas universal, itself a view in accord with traditional philosophy.

Much of this utopia more specifically seems to echo Kang Youwei's *Datong Shu*. Almost certainly available to Liu in draft, *Datong Shu* also called for abolition of national boundaries, class divisions, racism, sexism, and current forms of government. Children were to be born in nurseries and raised and educated by the community until they reached the age of twenty. Machines and human cooperation would increase productivity and provide more leisure; agriculture, industry, and commerce were to be made public (*gong*). More explicitly, Kang foresaw the end of private property as communism (*gongchan*) and *Datong* were extended to economic life. Moreover, like Liu, Kang had been overwhelmingly concerned with a vision of equality and with suffering. Suffering comes from inequality. "When all humans are equal, the great goodness will prevail."<sup>12</sup>

The differences between Kang and Liu remained profound, and not just on the level of immediate political questions. Liu had none

<sup>11</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," p. 24; *Mencius* 6A.7 (tr. after Dobson, *Mencius*, p. 114); Wang Yang-ming, *Chuanxi lu*, sec. 221, tr. Wing-tsit Chan, *Instructions for Practical Living*, p. 199.

<sup>12</sup> Kang, *Datong shu*, p. 167; Thompson, *One-World Philosophy*, p. 134. Kang, p. 431; Thompson, p. 264. "Renlei ji pingdeng zhi hou, daren yangyang yi."

the *machina ex dei* that life would consist primarily of leisure anyway, thanks to better technology. Anyway, to be human is to be active, even as machines make life easier.<sup>8</sup> In its fundamental terms, Liu's scheme is more totalitarian than free; he saw that the price of happiness was brief, shared labor. Freedom, even defined as individual choice, and equality were not in contradiction for Liu. Did not the present system of political and economic rule minimize both? Would not equal work maximize both, even if it could not make them absolute? At his most optimistic, Liu believed that "When everyone is equal, everyone will be free,"<sup>9</sup> presumably as night follows the day. Above all, the patterns of dependency have to be broken. Then, individual independence (*duli*) can bring about equality of obligation, and anarchism. Finally,

*Suffering and pain will be equalized (shijun), and there will be no more worries about a lack of goods. When regarded as within society, everyone will be equal (pingdeng). When regarded as apart from society, everyone will be independent. Everyone will be a worker, everyone will be an agriculturist, everyone will be a scholar (ski). Rights and duties will both be equal. Would not this be a world where the great way and public spirit prevail (dadao wet gong zhi shi)?*<sup>10</sup>

Liu's last rhetorical flourish was a direct reference to the "Li Yun" chapter of the *Li Ji*. Liu sought the sources of his utopia in both East and West.

The *Buddhist classics say that all human bodies are made up of the four elements [earth, fire, water, and*

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>9</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan" (The anarchist view of equality), reprinted in *Xinhai geming qian shinianjian shilun xuanji* (hereafter "XHG-MQSNJ"), 2B:93i.

<sup>10</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," p. 30.

1890s as well as excessive conservatism in the government, and toward anything smacking of the status quo in the early 1900s. He was thoroughly a "man of resolve" (*zhishi*).<sup>17</sup> Intellectually, Wu remained wedded to the pursuit of moral principle his whole life. A concern with right and wrong (*shifei*) runs through his early writings as well as his later ones. His opinions about the content of right and wrong changed remarkably over the years but not his faith that, first, right was right, and second, that it could be known with certitude, determined rationally on the basis of a few self-evident propositions. He was always concerned with a larger moral framework. He first linked self-strengthening, for example, to loyalty; later, he saw anarchism as a product of evolution.

In 1892 Wu harshly criticized the Confucianism of the Qing dynasty.<sup>18</sup> Wu was already searching for a new Way appropriate for his own times, for a synthesis that would resolve the dialectic between the Han and Song schools. In no sense was Wu writing outside the tradition he was judging; indeed, Wu was typical of an intellectual current that went back at least to the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>19</sup> Wu utterly deplored the Qing preference for Han over Song, in other words, for pedantry over exploration in more general terms of the meaning of the Dao. But he criticized the airiness of the Song school as well; In the end, Wu did not find any new synthesis; he rather lamely called for balance, a combination of following the Way and learning the six arts.<sup>20</sup> Western learning remained irrelevant to the basic questions that mattered to Wu at this time.

<sup>17</sup> In Japanese, *shishi*, the heroes of the Meiji Restoration.

<sup>18</sup> "Lun Qingchao jingxue deshi" (Critique of "learning of the classics" in the Qing dynasty), *Collected Works*, 16:127–131. Some of the harshness may have been rhetorical.

<sup>19</sup> Benjamin A. Elman, in *From Philosophy to Philology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), pp. 233–256 passim, speaks of a "fracturing" of Hanxue as the Chinese intellectual climate became considerably warmer once again to moral speculation.

<sup>20</sup> The "six arts" (*liuyi*), from the *Analects*, were propriety, music, archery, charioteering, writing, and arithmetic.

Yet perhaps this early essay foreshadows Wu's eventual openness to new ideas: his wide reading and his synthesizing turn of mind would soon lead him to consider Western notions, and his critical judgement had led him by the 1920s to reject Chinese culture out of hand. When he did so, he rejected not merely the hegemony of Confucianism as had Liu Shipei and Zhang Binglin, but Chinese culture as a whole.

Like all Chinese intellectuals, Wu was profoundly shaken by China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese war. He himself traced the initial awakening of his critical capacity and spirit to this catastrophe.<sup>21</sup> At the time, he was intensely interested in the military aspects of the struggle and had some appreciation for the potential of popular mobilization.<sup>22</sup> Wu was critical of the measures adopted for the war but supported the war effort.<sup>23</sup> He condemned Li Hongzhang's timidity and considered that China could eventually defeat Japan. These opinions were quite common among out-of-office literati; Wu also took 1894 in a personal sense: "This year I suddenly thought of these four words: 'broad-minded, deeply indomitable' (*hongda shenyi*). They are the necessary encouragement for a man of resolution (*zhishi*)."<sup>24</sup> The habit of self-cultivation, the belief in its cosmic importance, was deeply ingrained.

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<sup>21</sup> "Huiyi Jiang Zhuzhuang xiansheng zhi huiyi" (Memoirs concerning the memoirs of Jiang Zhuzhuang), *Zhihui xiansheng yipian zhongyao huiyi* (An important memoir about Wu Zhihui), Wu Zezhong, ed., p. 21. This piece was originally published in *Dmgfang zazhi* (1 January 1936), 133(1): 17–37; it can also be found in Wu's *Collected Works*, 7:319–359.

<sup>22</sup> See "Tanlun jiawu Zhong-Ri zhi zhan yingcai duice" (A discussion of policies that ought to be adopted in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894), *Collected Works*, 9:1001–1003; and see Wu's letter to Lu Erkui (Weishi) on the war, *Collected Works*, 10:1105.

<sup>23</sup> According to Chen, "Nianpu," p. 14, Wu was kept informed of the course of the war by Xu Zhonghu (a fellow townsman), who was in contact with Rong Lu, general and confidante of the Empress Dowager.

<sup>24</sup> "Jiawu congchao" (Miscellaneous jottings, 1895), *Collected Works*, 18:966.

resembling the original primitive stage that allowed the strong and crafty to seize the advantage. At the least, envy and fighting would result.

Nor could individuals simply be allowed to choose their own jobs as their inclinations tended. Here Liu differed from the anarchist mainstream, for he had little faith in the altruism of human nature. Who would volunteer to do the hard jobs? To suffer? Should people be tricked by the stratagem of giving these jobs the best-sounding titles? Under such a system, "*Rights (quanli) might be equalized, but duties (yiwu) cannot be equalized*"<sup>7</sup> That is, at a given point in time, literal equality of labor is impossible. The only hope lay in tight scheduling. The various types of work would be allotted across each individual's lifetime, as Liu's chart above demonstrated.

Liu replied to specific criticisms of egalitarian anarchism. One obvious point was that it was unrealistic to expect everyone to do every job; people have their strong and weak points. Liu considered this simply an underhanded way of trying to justify class divisions. The lower classes "specialize" in menial jobs not because of fate or native ability but because of specific circumstances. Indeed, nothing is impossible. As long as someone can produce an item of food, clothing, or shelter, then anyone can do so. Liu cited the high ministers who proved themselves capable of carrying nightsoil when the allies entered Peking in 1900.

Similarly, education would not suffer. Liu cited the ancient scholars Yi Yin, who plowed his own fields, and Fu Yue, who did construction. More to the point, education would at last assume its rightful place when work and society were better organized. Today, said Liu, studying is done under compulsion, for others. In the future, it would be done for pleasure, following one's own aptitude (*xinde*). In a world without poverty, learning would flourish.

Also aware of qualms about the coercion of the individual or about suffering under such a scheme, Liu comforted himself with

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.



Marxist economics through his encounters with Kotoku Shushi.<sup>5</sup> As with any utopian vision, elements that must have seemed equally fantastic (or possible) to Liu—that the world would see a universal language, that a single farmer could feed as many as five people—hindsight can divide into the few that have indeed come to pass and the many that have not. Liu’s utopia was one specific version of a vague goal. As a glimpse of the future it was subject to dissonances between its various pans, but as a vision it illuminated parts of that future. The logic of Liu’s emphasis on literal equality of labor drove him to work out communitarian systems new to China, such as the nurseries that are now fairly common if modified somewhat from those in Liu’s vision. If enforcement of equality drove Liu into the absurd age-occupation scheme which is so clearly opposed to the kind of freedom anarchism represents, it also illustrates his faith in the ability of people to master the various skills of the modern world. Specialization is necessary but does not take a lifetime.

A belief in equality, then, was the foundation for Liu’s entire political philosophy. Equality depended on a society’s economic structure, which was intimately related to the role of government. Liu concluded that all persons had to do all jobs, for as long as some were managers while others had harder work, inequality would result—and “how would this differ from government?”<sup>6</sup> Liu was not so impractical as to think that each individual could be self-sufficient or that the family unit could perform all the necessary tasks at the same time. He postulated a complex, technologically advanced society wherein individuals performed only one economic task at a time. But over their lifetime, each individual did nearly every job. Jobs could not be assigned according to some system based on the individual’s strength or talent. That would create a situation

<sup>5</sup> But see Ishimoda Sho, “Kotoku Shusui to Chugoku” (Kotoku Shusui and China), in Takeuchi Yoshimi, ed., *Ajia Shugi* (Tokyo: Chikuma shoten, 1963), PP-392-397-

<sup>6</sup> “Renlei junli shuo,” p. 26.

After China’s defeat, Wu signed Kang Youwei’s second petition to the emperor, then being circulated among the literati who were in Beijing to take the *jinshi* examination. This lengthy document, with its twelve hundred signatures, urged the court to undertake wide-ranging reforms in the military, administrative, economic, and educational realms. Thus Wu considered that he had become a reformer, looking to the West for technology, but little more than technology.<sup>25</sup> He read the reformist journals of the day, those edited by Kang, Liang Qichao, and Yan Fu, without necessarily agreeing with their every word. In 1897, he attempted to present his own memorial advising the emperor how to conduct reforms. Of course, like Kang, he was not in a legal position to do so, and their memorials never got very far. The movement Wu joined was not radical in its prescriptions (“self-strengthening” had been around for a generation) but in the very fact of its existence. That a mere *juren* with no government post would consider his opinion worth the emperor’s attention, and that a number of such men would organize into groups, clubs, publishing societies—that was of revolutionary potential. Wu considered that “social reform lies not in the court but in the men of resolve.”<sup>26</sup> After the suppression of the hundred days of reform of 1898 Wu still considered himself a reformer, though in one of his typically punchy phrases, he declared, “The reason why we are reformers is precisely to save the queue.”<sup>27</sup>

In fact, Wu had responded to the flurry of excitement that Kang Youwei inspired in 1898 with a reserve that amounted to a silent

<sup>25</sup> According to Wu’s memoir “Huiyi Jiang Zhuzhuang xiansheng zhi huiyi,” pp. 21–26. “The name for reform—‘restoration’ (*weixin*)—was that of Japan’s Meiji Restoration, which had just defeated us. So we also believed in self-strengthening. If you had reforms, we should have reforms” (p. 22).

<sup>26</sup> “Gailiang shehui” (Reforming society), *Collected Works*, 18:1009.

<sup>27</sup> In other words, out of loyalty to the Qing, “Huiyi Jiang Zhuzhuang xiansheng zhi huiyi,” p. 24.

defense of the status quo.<sup>28</sup> In opposition to what he considered the wild notion prevalent among his students that the emperor was the servant of the people (*gongpu*), Wu suggested that nearly absolute loyalty was owed to rulers and fathers (*junfu*). He criticized a student who proposed a Mencian-sounding list of obligations for the ruler lest he drive his people into rebellion, and rebuked another student who wanted to “renew the corrupt court” and remake the country. Wu dismissed the “poisons” of democracy (*minzhu minquan*) as rising out of an immature penchant to “dislike the old and like the new, to love confusion and hate order.” He even cited the old saw, “A virtuous woman does not serve two husbands; a good minister does not serve two rulers.”

Though initially sympathetic to reform, Wu had a glimpse of chaos beyond the brink. Wu could neither abandon his standards of Confucian morality nor accept Kang Youwei’s Confucian rationalizations. Perhaps, too, he was upset by his students’ behavior or by the Guangdong cliquishness of the reformers. Or was Wu’s reaction to reform movement the kind of defensiveness that precedes conversion? It was, at any rate, an example of an all-or-nothing, totalistic style of thinking typical of Wu. Either China had rulers (and Confucianism and order), or it had democracy and chaos.

Those who disagree with me also attack Mencius, though they claim that Mencius emphasized the people over the ruler. This is not an original discovery. Alas! In Mencius, this type of speaking was directed to the ruler as an admonition, not to the people and ministers of the Empire.

<sup>28</sup> “Wuxunian zhijiao Beiyang daxue duiyu zhongjun aiguo zhi yijian” (Notes made in 1898 on loyalty to one’s ruler and patriotism, by a teacher at Beiyang Institute), *Collected Works*, 16:134–144. This comprised students’ papers that Wu put together. Naturally enough, the students were angered by the topic Wu assigned: “The people in the land of the Emperor are his subjects.” Wu thereby gained a reputation at Beiyang as an utter reactionary, according to Chen, “Nianpu,” pp. 18–19.

AGE	JOB
21	Road construction and agriculture
22	Mining, timbering, and agriculture
23–26	Construction and agriculture
27–30	Manufacturing: iron, porcelain, etc.
31–36	Weaving and manufacturing of clothing, and agriculture
37–40	Cooking
41–45	Transportation of goods
46–50	Engineering and medicine
50 and over	Enter the residences to raise and teach youth

would have to work more than two hours a day, and even that no more than a few weeks a year, for rational social organization and machines would have so improved productivity that hard work would disappear. The efforts of one farmer would actually feed as many as four to five people! Liu did not clearly explain how goods would be distributed, but presumable a sufficient production makes this a less pressing question. “Thus everyone would participate in manufacturing the goods which are needed by all. Other items people can make for themselves as they see fit.”<sup>4</sup> The handicapped, too, would be provided for and would possess the same rights as everyone else. The blind might go into music and the deaf into printing.

Liu’s emphasis on labor is reminiscent of Marx. He was familiar at the very least with *The Communist Manifesto* and perhaps with

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

beings in Buddhism and Daoism as well as in Rousseau. He did not hesitate to refer to the coming Datong, nor to mine such Confucian classics as Mencius, Xunzi, and the Great Learning for whatever useful veins he could find.

At the center of Liu's anarchism lay equality. He referred time and time again in the pages of *Natural Justice* to the equality of all human beings and to the need to rectify the current inequalities of race, employment, and social status. The need to imagine a social system that could plausibly foster economic equality brought Liu close to outlining a utopia. His essay "On Equalizing Human Labor," published in July 1907, included a section, complete with charts, about organizing the future society.<sup>2</sup>

The key was to make labor equal, to abolish the inequalities that arose from dependency or employment—for example, the positions of wives and workers: "everyone must be made independent."<sup>3</sup> All national boundaries would be abolished. Districts of a thousand people each would be formed. Older people (fifty years of age or more) would raise all the children in residence halls. At six, the children would learn how to read the new universal language. (Everyone would be able to travel the whole world once national boundaries were abolished and a universal language put in place.) From the age of ten, children would spend half of every day in study and half in manufacturing. Their elders would teach them useful "practical knowledge" (*shixue*), such as geography, history, mathematics, the natural sciences, art, and music. Engineering skills would allow them to produce what they needed, that is, clothing, food, and shelter. Liu detailed how the children would "graduate" at twenty and embark upon the following course:

Except for the busy seasons in agriculture, when all people would leave their regular jobs to help with the crops, no one

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<sup>2</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," *Tianyi* no. 3 (10 July 1907), pp. 24–36. Throughout, where the original text uses larger, boldface characters, I use italics.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Thus the writing of the worthies and gentlemen [Wu probably had Kang Youwei and Yan Fu in mind] of our times were originally intended to warn and alter the ruler. I never thought that their numerous mistakes would result in this and that their fantasies would multiply as they went on polishing each other's words. This is what Mencius said about blaming the ruler: Blaming the ruler, if spoken *to* the ruler, is permissible. But our people in discussing his mistakes among themselves are in revolt (*bet*).<sup>29</sup>

Wu was disturbed by a current of anti-Manchuism among his students. But he continued to support self-strengthening and, specifically, learning how to deal with Western notions of international law, that is, using even the unequal treaties to China's benefit. These were political attitudes that can be traced to the Tongzhi Restoration and perhaps represented Yan Fu's influence.<sup>30</sup> But if Wu approved institutional reforms such as abolition of the examination system and social reforms such as a prohibition of foot binding, he would not consider any change that seemed to strike at the moral roots of the state. What Wu clearly feared in his students was talk that bordered on revolution. If the notions of democracy and human rights logically led to revolution (*ge guom-ingj*), Wu wanted nothing to do with them. Wu, at any rate, feared anarchism at this time, without putting the word to it: he defined *nation* as "having a political system" (*you zhmgzhi*) and spoke of the demise of the nation as "lacking a political system."<sup>31</sup> Wu also considered the question of a Confucian religion for China in

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<sup>29</sup> "Wuxunian zhijiao," p. 138.

<sup>30</sup> Although sympathetic with most of Kang Youwei's basic goals, Yan was skeptical of Kang's abilities to lead a reform movement—see Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power*, pp. 84–86. However, there is little indication that Yan would have been so sympathetic to Wu's own moral concerns with loyalty and order.

<sup>31</sup> "Wuxunian zhijiao," p. 142.

these years.<sup>32</sup> Wu concluded that no religion was truly compatible with education in a civilized country. For the new discoveries of the twentieth century meant that religion was something of the past. Although much of Confucianism, to which Wu held in 1901, was religious, Confucian education was distinct from religious superstition (*mixin*). As a reformer, Wu announced his respect for Confucius but declined to worship him. Wu's attitude was formed by both a traditional—Confucian—distaste for the superstitions of women and primitive peoples (and Christian missionaries) and what he perceived to be the needs of a developing nation. Wu also pointed out that anybody could worship Confucius who wanted to: no government prohibited it. But he did not think Confucianism should become China's established religion, and in personal terms Wu announced that he joined Spencer and Darwin in their lack of belief in religion, which would have surprised the latter had he ever heard of it but perhaps represents Yan Fu's influence. Wu also appears never to have had any interest in Buddhism.

Already, many of the themes of Wu's anarchism are present alongside of determinedly moderate political beliefs: His faith in civilization was foreshadowed, he cited the testimony of Western scientists, and he hinted at a role for progress in ameliorating the human condition. By 1902, Wu was being radicalized, as much by personal experiences as by intellectual choice. His third-person explanation of the deportation proceedings out of Japan, including his suicide note, reads:

In the past when he was residing in Japan, he was personally humiliated by the dwarf-Japanese... When he was detained, he realized that a scholar (*shi*) might be killed but not insulted. He wished to awaken the masses from their dreams with his death, [to stimulate the thinking of the citizenry (*guanin*) about their

<sup>32</sup> First promoted by Kang Youwei in the 1890s; see Wu's "Shang Subaoguan dajizhe shu" (Letter to a reporter at the *Subao*), *Collected Works*, 2: 112–117.

—Wu Zhihui, "Postscript to the Truth Society's Freedom Record," 7917<sup>1</sup>

Anarchists often deny that they are utopia builders—wishing to avoid association with "unrealistic," "fantastic," "stagnant" and like criticisms—and of course most utopia-builders are not anarchists. Yet every anarchist seems to have a vision or a glimpse of a perfect society. This may provide the basis for their social analysis and also comfort them in times of stress.

A millennial tone had become common at the dawn of the twentieth century. A note of optimism graced the opinions of the most cynical of Chinese political observers, from supporters of the Manchu reforms to hardened revolutionaries. Chinese opinion felt despair and fear. Threats came from Japan and the Western powers; no one failed to notice China's social evils, from opium addiction to famine. But at the same time a faith in China's capacity for change was universal. Despair and excitement complement one another; the darker the present, the more attractive the future and the more it seems to offer boundless possibilities. The anarchists orchestrated these notes of optimism into a vision of an alternative future for China and for the world as well.

## LIU SHIPEI AND THE UTOPIA OF EQUALITY

**like all** anarchists, Liu Shippei generally resisted the temptation to outline a utopia. The future cannot be pinned down, made solid and impervious to change. However, unlike his comrades in Paris, Liu frankly rooted his visions of the future and the nature of human

<sup>1</sup> "Shishe 'Ziyoulu' ba," *Collected Works*, 16:267–268. For the Truth Society (*Shishe*), see ch. 10. Was Wu replying here to the *Great Learning* in his opening lines? Cf. the *Daxue's* "The Way of learning to be great consists in manifesting the clear character, loving the people, and *abiding in the highest good*." Tr. W. T. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 86 (my emphasis).

## CHAPTER 4. *Utopian Visions and Social Analysis*

We do not know where the universe came from or where it is going. We cannot speak of beginnings and ends and so there is no “highest good” (*zhishan*). We can only base [our behavior] on the shared awareness of our consciences. We cannot slander people according to our private notions of good and evil but can only point to the degree of truth (*zhenli*) present. Those closer to the truth are relatively good. The relatively good, we call progressive (*jinkua*). One characteristic of the human race is that it comprises an exceedingly tiny part of the universe. Incomplete societies gave rise to the various nations, and these unnecessary nations gave rise to improved societies. Thus: “totemism,” “dictatorships,” “anarchism.” The concerns of sociology are only the tiniest part of the life and death of the human species. The people who are relatively good will become more so. They each follow the route of progress... Today we are in the transitional stage of republicanism and anarchism. From dawn to dusk, will it truly take a hundred years? a thousand? No one can yet say, for we only know it will take a long time. But if we acknowledge the infinitude of the universe, then the number of years it will take is just the time from dawn to dusk.

rights (*quanli*)]. When the police officer pulled them in for deportation, he tried to drown himself in the imperial moat. Fortunately, he was rescued and regained his life... [The suicide note:] “One who believes to the death is clearly not a criminal. Human rights and freedom (*minqmn ziyou*) can create a nation in accord with natural law (*tianze*). If we take the vows for a Restoration, a few words will suffice. I offer my corpse as an admonition... What does the Minister [Cai Jun] have to do with this? Confucius said “Achieve benevolence” and Mencius said “Choose justice.”<sup>33</sup> The disaster of the destruction of the nation will happen like this. But if everyone will unite their efforts, I will truly not have died.”<sup>34</sup>

In their attitudes toward this incident, both Wu and Liang Qichao displayed a new meld of traditional concerns and attitudes with such modern concepts as citizenry and human rights. Wu’s sense of outraged honor fairly burns the page. These heroics indicated disaffection rather than a fully developed revolutionary position. But events were moving faster than Wu’s thought; Wu seems to have drifted toward nationalism and revolution in the

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<sup>33</sup> That is, to commit suicide rather than compromise one’s integrity. *Lunyu* 15:8, “Those who are resolved (*zhishi*) and those who are benevolent will not seek life at the expense of benevolence. They will even sacrifice their lives to achieve benevolence (*chengren*).” *Mencius* 6A.10, “I care about life, but, too, I care about Justice. If I cannot have both, then I choose Justice. I care about life, but then there are things I care about more than life. Thus I will not seek life improperly. I do not like death, but then there are things I dislike more than death.” Tr. following Legge, *The Four Books*, p. 345, modified, and Dobson, *Mencius*, p. 142, respectively.

<sup>34</sup> “Wu xiansheng liu-Ri touheshi zhi yishu” (Suicide note when Master Wu tried to drown himself in Japan), *Collected Works*, 2:260; also 9:1003. The note was printed at the time by Liang Qichao in *Xinmin congbao* (no. 13) along with an indignant editorial that cited China’s desperate need for talented men (*rencai*). (The portion of the text in brackets is found in the *Xinmin congbao* version.) See also Chen, “Nianpu,” p. 23.

current. The Boxer movement left him cold. His break with the Manchu court began in Japan with the personal ignominy of deportation after bashing his head on the stubbornness of the Chinese ambassador. The first real break with Confucianism, and it was not necessarily a large one, came in the radical nationalist atmosphere of Shanghai. Wu's own writings from this period (1902–1903) are sparse. However, the change in Wu's opinions is clear. In his own words, Wu favored the people over the government, students over teachers, and the young over the old.<sup>35</sup> Yet Wu still linked patriotism with loyalty to one's ruler (*zhmgjun*).

In Britain after 1902, Wu contemplated the nature of national power.<sup>36</sup> He was having trouble determining the proper relation between the individual and the state. Should the patriot die for his country? Can one benefit oneself and one's country at the same time? However, in an environment apolitical when compared with Shanghai and Tokyo, Wu's radicalism appears to have lost its momentum. He nonetheless remained a prominent and distinguished critic in exile of the Qing, interested in various aspects of Western civilization. For example, it was during his stay in England that Wu's interest in customs and habits began and he never forgot that such practical questions as sanitation were as important as larger issues such as justice.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Wu claimed that he had held these views before 1902, "Huiyi Jiang Zhuzhuang xiansheng zhi huiyi," p. 26.

<sup>36</sup> See "Lutu riji" (Travel diary), *Collected Works*, 12:767–771.

<sup>37</sup> There is little evidence about Wu's intellectual development during his days in Britain. The diaries reveal only sporadic and minimal interest in either Chinese politics or Western philosophy. Wu scarcely seems to have vegetated, between learning English, taking numerous trips to museums, and engaging in serious discussions with his countrymen. But he does not appear to have had a study program or done much writing. Nor is it clear how Wu supported himself during this time, unless the money his friends gave him when he left China was enough to last awhile. He may even have borrowed a little money from Kang Youwei (£10) early in his stay in England—according to Li Shuhua, "Wu Zhihui xiansheng shengping lueshu," p. 32—which would indicate either desperation or a feeling on Wu's part that the divisions between them were still not so great.

discouragement and delay, but the Paris-based anarchists did not abandon their work of enlightening the Chinese people.

One of the most appealing forms this enlightenment took was the creation of a utopian vision.

had a short international column, to which Li occasionally, contributed notes about the Chinese revolution.<sup>71</sup> Japanese anarchists sent copies of their journal *The Review of Revolutions* (*Kakumei hydron*), provoking Grave to suggest, since he did not know anyone who spoke Japanese, that the review should add an English language column.<sup>72</sup> Evidently the anarchist use of Esperanto was still limited.

The end came when Zhang Jingjiang decided he could no longer support *New Century*. He does not seem to have come to any crisis of conscience over anarchism but wanted to focus more support on the direct efforts of Sim Yat-sen.<sup>73</sup> An attempt was made to solicit funds from other sources, particularly English and French sympathizers, but it was not sufficient. Zhang himself continued to travel around the world in pursuit of his business ventures. Li worked on his beancurd company in Paris, continuing to send for worker-students from China. Wu had already by 1909 been spending much of his time in London where he had moved his wife and children. After the demise of *New Century* he shifted more into translation work, selling such pieces as Dennis Hird's *A Picture Book of Evolution* and an account of the expedition to the North Pole to Shanghai publishers. He also gave lodging to Sun Yat-sen when Sun was in England. The end of the journal thus meant no lessening of revolutionary commitment. Anarchist theory had been worked out. The last few years before the revolution may have been a time of

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<sup>71</sup> See inter alia "Tsunmin" (Li Shizeng) in *Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. 12, no. 46 (16 March 1907) on Ma Fuyi's abortive uprising in Hunan of the previous December. While not referring to a Chinese anarchist movement, Li mentioned secret societies, student revolutionaries, and Wu Yueh's bombing of the Manchu commission appointed to investigate European constitutions.

<sup>72</sup> *Les Temps Nouveaux* (3 November 1906), 12(2.7):]. *Kakumei hydron* began publishing an English language column with its third issue (5 October 1906) (reprinted Tokyo: Meiji bunken shiryō kankokai, 1962), p. 143.

<sup>73</sup> Feng Ziyou, *Gemingyishi*, 2:229.

The basically nonideological trend of Wu's thought is perhaps best illustrated by his remarks when invited to join the Tongmenghui. Sun Yat-sen, in his first meetings with the now famous scholar early in 1905, engaged him in long discussions but refrained from inviting him to join any specific organization. A few months after the Tongmenghui was founded in Tokyo, Cao Yabo went to London to study and presented Wu with the Tongmenghui's oath, which included the three principles of nationalism, democracy, and equalization of land rights. Wu's first reaction was, "But our goal is just the revolution. Why are you imitating Kang Youwei?" That is, Wu objected to the ritualistic oath and perhaps to the program for the future; he wanted the simple act of revolution to be their only goal. However, Wu soon saw the light and joined the organization.<sup>38</sup>

Wu's conversion to anarchism came with his move to France at the invitation of Li Shizeng and Zhang Jingjiang. Perhaps Wu had read Kropotkin in England, where *Mutual Aid* had been published a few years before; this is pure conjecture. Although Wu never spoke of anything like a conversion experience, Li had little trouble convincing him of the scientific beauty of anarchism. Wu was predisposed to the moral certainties of a radical doctrine. Anarchism's special appeal lay in its all-encompassing explanations based on a cosmic optimism masquerading as scientific evolution. Unlike his transition to nationalism, which was a course prompted by historical circumstances and shared by most of his peers (if not to the point of exile), Wu's approach to anarchism was cerebral. In his case, however, the cerebral involved passionate argument and he was soon wholly committed to anarchism. If his commitment

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Wang, "Wu Chih-hui," pp. 71–72, points out that D.W.Y. Kwok, *Scientism in Chinese Thought, 1900–1950*, p. 34, was mistaken when he attributed some of Wu's translations to this period; actually they were done after 1909.

<sup>38</sup> This was in late 1905—Chen, "Nianpu," p. 30. For Cao Yabo, who also knew Zhang Ji, see Feng Ziyou, *Gemingyishi*, 2:58–61. Feng here says that Wu joined the Tongmenghui in 1909, but this is contradicted by the bulk of the evidence.

moved from the immediate and political to the distant and philosophical in later years, anarchism nonetheless remained a part of his inner identity. He is said to have commented: “As coal I burn for the Guomindang; when burned to ash I am an anarchist.”<sup>39</sup>

Before becoming an anarchist as well as after, Wu phrased political questions as moral problems that had absolute answers. And while he sought to resist imperialist aggression against China, he also expressed his contempt for racism. As Confucianism applied to all races—all peoples have parents and rulers and thus by implication a kind of natural inequality—so anarchism would universally apply to all peoples. Nonetheless, if the continuity of certain structural elements of Wu’s thought is striking, it is so only because of the disparity between the substance of his two belief systems, in terms both of their “branches” (belief in loyalty as opposed to belief in anarchism) and of their “roots” (Confucianism versus science and evolution). He did not slide along an almost Confucian path to *laissezfaire* minimalist government as did Liu Shiwei. Nor could he find a Confucian path to institutional change and finally national revolution in New Text esoterica. Rather, his moral principles were rooted in a conception of righteousness that demanded loyal remonstrance—criticism of the ruler, but offered only to the ruler, from a position that abjured any thought of rebellion. This style of Confucianism was, if anything, more orthodox than the temper of the times and it would have to break, not bend, when Wu turned to revolution.

“Seek the truth in facts, and do not trick people” (*shishi qiushi mozuotiaoren*). These eight characters were Wu’s watchwords

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<sup>39</sup> Cited in Edward Skinner Krebs, “Liu Ssu-fu and Chinese Anarchism, 1905–15,” p. 329 n. 126, quoting Mo Jipeng, both in an unpublished manuscript and in personal communication to Krebs. In a 1925 letter to Hua Linshu explaining why anarchists could join the Guomindang, Wu quoted himself as saying (rather less felicitously), “If I am burned to ashes, I will remain a Guomindang party member, but at the same time I still believe in anarchism.” Wu Zhihui, *Collected Works*, 10:1582.

originally regarded as a struggle within the bourgeoisie.<sup>68</sup> He was closely associated, both personally and in his political stance, with Kropotkin. The journals he edited included not only topical articles on social misery and the anarchist theory of revolution, but also literary criticism and fiction, historical discussions, and articles on philosophy.

The Chinese anarchists probably developed their doctrines less through discussions with Grave than on the basis of direct encounters with the works of Kropotkin, Proudhon, Elisee Reclus, and Malatesta, and their perceptions of the needs of the Chinese revolution. But if the specific influence of Grave on the Chinese anarchists is untraceable, his help and example were both appreciated. Grave briefly reported that some “young Chinese” asked him for the use of the address of his journal *Les Temps Nouveaux*, which he gladly gave them.<sup>69</sup> *New Century* discussed Grave as the author of “Society on the Brink of Death,” an anarchist classic, and as editor of the French *New Century*.<sup>70</sup> Li Shizeng made a number of translations of articles, including some by the polyglot Kropotkin, from *Les Temps Nouveaux*. The journal came out weekly from 1895 to (with a few interruptions) the 1920s, with eight to twelve pages an issue. For the most part it dealt with French affairs, but it also

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<sup>68</sup> Maitron, *Mouvement Anarchiste*, pp. 311–322, cites Grave as one of a few early voices that spoke out following the initial revelations of the anarchist-journalist Bernard Lazare.

<sup>69</sup> See Grave’s autobiography, *Quarante Arts de Propagande Anarchiste* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973), p. 541. He was slightly mistaken as to the date: “About 1908 or 1909 I began to deal with a group of young Chinese who wanted to support from a foreign country those of their comrades who were working to bring about a revolution in China. They had sent for Chinese print and intended to publish a journal that would be exported to China and to groups of Chinese scattered at various points around the world... I believe that they contributed greatly to the success of the Revolution which put an end to China’s Old Regime.” Grave, writing in about 1920, also noted the existence of a strong contemporary Chinese anarchist movement.

<sup>70</sup> “Xu Faguo wuzhengfudang zhi yiduan lishi” (A history of French anarchism, continued), *Xin Shiji* no. 63 (5 September 1908), p. 368.



(anticlerical thought) were growing vigorously, rooted in a wide spectrum of French society. Workers were on the march (May Day became an institution in 1899), and socialists were elected to the Chamber, thirty-seven elected by half a million votes in 1893; and in 1906, the year the Chinese founded the World Society, nearly nine hundred thousand voters elected fifty-four socialists.<sup>66</sup>

It was probably the Dreyfus Affair that provided the fertile soil for the regeneration of French radicalism in the following decade. It gave a sense of unity to the disparate elements of the French left. Given the affair's importance as a symbol—or example—of all that was wrong with the status quo, the Chinese seem to have taken remarkably little interest in it, though it was only a couple of years old when Li and Zhang first arrived and less than a decade old and still controversial when *New Century* began publication. But even without the language barrier the Dreyfus Affair may have seemed to the Chinese to be unconnected to larger issues, foreign, and bogged down in confusing minutiae. Its effect on Chinese anarchism was therefore indirect but was still, through the agency of French radicals, profound: it was the final proof that truth, freedom, and justice remain outside the established order and could be reached only through battle with the state.

Jean Grave (1854–1939) was a leading French anarchist, a son of the proletariat who turned himself into a respected intellectual. He was influential in the development of French anarchism during its syndicalist phase, although he tried to keep it from becoming exclusively a union movement, and he was also a kind of spokesman for anarchism to the larger French public.<sup>67</sup> Anarchism was for Grave a form of broad humanism rather than a narrow politics of workers' interests. He soon joined the movement among radicals taking an interest in the Dreyfus Affair, which French anarchists had

<sup>66</sup> Tuchman, *Proud Tower*, pp. 420, 438.

<sup>67</sup> See Louis Patsouras, *Jean Grave and French Anarchism* and the extensive treatment in Jean Maitron, *Histoire du Mouvement Anarchiste en France (1880–1914)*.

from 1888 onward. According to Hu Shi, it was the unusual juxtaposition of the two phrases on a scroll in a teacher's study at Nanjing Academy that attracted Wu's attention, and he made them his own.<sup>40</sup> Hu attributed Wu's uncompromising integrity to these two phrases. The first phrase was associated with the *kaozheng* movement; together, they served to bridge the leap from Confucianism to anarchism.

In 1898 Wu believed in two principles that ultimately proved impossible to follow simultaneously: loyalty to ruler and love of country. Patriotism soon drove Wu into revolt; his essential faith in universal moral principle then drove him beyond patriotism to anarchism. In the pages of *New Century*, in his forties, Wu found the voice, strident and clarion, that continued to sustain him the rest of his life. His soon became the dominant voice among the Paris anarchists.

## THE GOLDEN BACKGROUNDS OF LI SHIZENG AND ZHANG JINGJIANG: FOUNDING *NEW CENTURY*

Less intellectually prepossessing than Wu, Li Shizeng and Zhang Jingjiang preceded him in anarchism. Li (1881–1973) was the third son of a powerful member of the Grand Secretariat and a nephew of Li Hongzhang.<sup>41</sup> He was brought up in Beijing. Li's father was associated with the reformist wing of the Qing court and after the

<sup>40</sup> Hu Shi, "Zhuinian Wu Zhihui xiansheng," in *Geming xianlie xianjin zhuan* pp. 736–737.

<sup>41</sup> There is no biography of Li outside of three brief sketches: Li Shuhua, "Xinhai geming qianhou de Li Shizeng xiansheng" (Li Shizeng around the time of the Revolution of 1911); "Li Shizeng xiansheng jiashi ji shaonian shiqi" (The ancestry and youth of Li Shizeng), in *Li Shizeng xiansheng jinianji*, pp. 185–196, 196–206; and "Li Yuying Shizeng xiansheng shilue" (Sketch of Li Shizeng's life), in *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji* (The literary works of Li Shizeng), 2:388–394. These were adequate for my purposes. Li's *Shiseng biji* (Notes of a stone monk) also con-

Sino-Japanese war of 1895 hired a new tutor for Li. This man, Qi Lingchen, a *jinshi* of 1894, was associated with Kang Youwei's reform efforts. Henceforth, Li's education included astronomy, geography, mathematics, English, and a general introduction to Western thought. Li's father died in 1897. During the Boxer uprising, Li's whole family fled Beijing, but in 1901 Li traveled back to the capital to work out his plans to study abroad. There he met Zhang Jingjiang.

Li lived in an environment far from revolutionary; he asked his uncle Li Hongzhang for approval before announcing his plans to study in Europe to the rest of his family. But if Li (and Zhang) stayed within bounds acceptable to their elders, they nonetheless shared the alienation and dissatisfaction common to the educated men of their generation. And their determination to study abroad when there were still but a few hundred Chinese students concentrating on Western subjects, most of whom were selected from outside of the ruling elite, demonstrated their commitment to a somewhat unorthodox path. Li and Zhang received jobs as attaches to the new ambassador to Paris in 1902, and Li stopped in Shanghai on his way to France specifically to introduce himself to Wu Zhihui. In France, Li threw himself into studying the language and soon resigned his post to attend the agricultural school *Ecole Pratique du Chesnoy* in Montargis (Loiret), graduating in three years. Back in Paris in 1906, he began his study of the chemistry of the soybean at the Institut Pasteur under the famous biochemist Gabriel Emile Bertrand,<sup>42</sup> and read the evolutionary theories of Jean Baptiste Lamarck and Kropotkin. At his *pension* Li met Paul Reclus, nephew of the famous anarchist geographer Elisee Reclus and himself an anarchist. Paul Reclus introduced Li to the study of anar-

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tains some autobiographical information. This is reprinted in *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 2:1-226.

<sup>42</sup> Bertrand (1867-1962) worked on sugars and latex enzyme functions. Soybean research obviously offered special benefits to China.

currents of thought, but they found a milieu that both valued intellectuals and expected them to be critical of society. Whatever their metaphysical predispositions, French intellectuals tended toward disapproval of the status quo. Anatole France, for example, moved sharply to the left as a result of the Dreyfus Affair.<sup>64</sup>

The Paris that the Chinese found was the primary site of the technological and political achievements of the Third Republic: by the end of 1906, a new and moderately leftist government under Georges Clemenceau. The anarchists, of course, despised all electoral politics, and Clemenceau's name had been tarnished in socialist circles ever since, as interior minister, he had clamped down on the general strike proposed for May 1906. Nonetheless, the Clemenceau cabinet offered -several years of relative toleration of radical politics and the union movement and guaranteed the freedoms of speech, press, and assembly. The Chinese radicals could not have operated as they did had they been in, say, Berlin. The material wonders of Paris were equally dazzling: by the time Li and Zhang arrived, automobiles occasionally cruised some of the gas-lit streets, the metro was two years old, street cars and the railroad were omnipresent, and zeppelins had flown over the city.

Paris had long been the capital of radical thought. The cradle of liberty. Plenty of Parisians in the early 1900s remembered the heavily anarchist-tinged Commune of 1871 (which Jean Grave witnessed as an adolescent). *New Century* would often mention those heady days of street committees and revolutionary bravery, serving to introduce Chinese to a topic that became of great interest to Chinese communists.<sup>65</sup> The bloody defeat of the Paris Commune led to a reduction of radical energy but also convinced many that only a revolution could lead to a better society. By the 1890s various strains of radicalism, socialism, and liberalism

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<sup>64</sup> Barbara Tuchman, *The Proud Tower* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), p. 225.

<sup>65</sup> See Maurice Meisner, *Marxism, Maoism, and Utopianism*, for a discussion of the role of the Paris Commune of 1871 in the Cultural Revolution.

ary propaganda as the students in Japan.<sup>62</sup> Although most of them did not have so rich and engaging an experience as Zhang Ji, Europe still seemed to offer them a glimpse of the future.

The Europe that the Chinese students and radicals found was, like China itself, full of rapid and bewildering change but, unlike China, confident of controlling its own fate. If nothing else, a literary vision expressed this trust in both humans and technology. The Chinese anarchists in Paris joined the huge number of Utopians who were active between 1880 and 1910. The American Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888) presented a socialist if genteel portrait of the year 2000. In England, William Morris' *News From Nowhere* appeared in 1890 and presented a world of only pleasant work and limited wants, and Edward Carpenter was presenting even more radical portraits of the future. And in France in the early 1800s Charles Fourier had outlined his fantastic system of phalansteries of free love and harmony. Even Anatole France wrote a utopian novel in 1903, and Jules Verne studied his fictions with many futuristic props. Perhaps Kang Youwei's *Datong Shu* was simply the preeminent Chinese contributions to a worldwide trend.

By the turn of the century a new skepticism was taking hold among European intellectuals, a skepticism which was so pervasive as to doubt even the possibility of understanding the world and which certainly questioned the Enlightenment's trust in science and progress.<sup>63</sup> Nonetheless, faith in materialism, progress, and the invincibility of science persisted on a more popular level. The Chinese in Paris found science and the assumption that scientific approaches could explain all human questions to be revolutionary enough. They remained largely unaffected by the new

<sup>62</sup> See Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi*, 2:132–141, on Tongmenghui recruitment.

<sup>63</sup> See H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, pp. 36–38, for a description of a revolt against positivism, loosely taken “to characterize the whole tendency to discuss human behavior in terms of analogies drawn from natural science ... a diffused intellectual tendency” associated with Auguste Comte, utilitarianism, Darwinism, and Herbert Spencer.

chism.<sup>43</sup> And through Reclus, Li met such prominent French intellectuals as Paul Painlevé and Edouard Herriot.<sup>44</sup>

Even while working on various revolutionary and anarchist causes, Li continued his research at the institute. He established a bean curd company in Paris in 1907 and set up a factory in 1909, advocating vegetarianism. Dofu became quite popular as “le fromage Chinoise” and Li coauthored a book, in French, on the soybean. More to the point, Li used the factory and teahouse to give employment to young Chinese interested in studying in France. It soon employed thirty students at a time and might be considered the beginning of the famous work-study program in France. Li joined the Tongmenghui in 1906 at Zhang's invitation. Visiting China in 1911, he supported the Wuchang uprising and soon joined Sun Yat-sen in Canton. He helped organize the Society to Advance Morality and, with Tang Shaoyi and Song Jiaoren, the Society for Social Improvement. He also joined with Wu Zhihui in 1912 to lead the effort to send students to France in work-study programs. Li returned to France after Yuan Shikai's coup of 1913 and continued to bring students over to Europe. Later he taught biology and sociology at Beijing University under Cai Yuanpei. In the 1920s, like Wu, Cai, and Zhang Jingjiang, Li became increasingly involved with Guomindang affairs, supporting Chiang Kai-shek against Wang Jingwei and condemning communism. He served as the head of various universities until Japan invaded in 1937, whereupon Li traveled in Europe and America urging sup-

<sup>43</sup> Xiao Yu, “Li Shizeng xiansheng” (Mr. Li Shizeng), p. 9. Xiao was a kind of disciple of Li and wrote this sketch based on conversations with Li about his past.

Elisee Reclus (1830–1905) had fought on the barricades for the Paris Commune and later taught geography in Belgium. He was a friend of Kropotkin and a dedicated anarchist pamphleteer. His twenty-volume *Nouvelle géographie universelle* appeared 1875–1894.

<sup>44</sup> Marianne Bastid, “Li Yuying [Shizeng] (1881–1973) and the Image of France in China,” paper delivered to the Conference of the European Association for Chinese Studies, Tübingen, September 1984, MS. p. 5.

port for the Chinese war effort. After 1949, Li lived in Switzerland and Uruguay until he settled in Taipei in 1956.

Zhang Jingjiang (Renjie, 1877–1950) was the scion of wealthy silk merchants on both sides of his family. Zhang was born in Wuxing *xian*, Zhejiang, and his father may have been the owner of the famous “Zhang’s garden” in Shanghai where many rousing speeches, much like the one quoted at the beginning of this chapter, were given in 1902 and 1903.<sup>45</sup> Zhang met Li in 1901 in Beijing (his father had purchased him a degree and he was looking for a suitable post) and decided to join him in going abroad with the new ambassador. In France, he soon surveyed the European market and established plans for a trading company. This proved to be a quite successful operation, although at the time only his father would invest in it. Based on Paris, the Ton Ying Company (*Tongyun gongsi*) sold Chinese silk, tea, pottery, antiques, paintings, jade, and the like. Zhang thus financed a teahouse,

Li’s bean curd operation, and various revolutionary ventures. Meanwhile, Zhang began to read anarchism with Li in Paris. He had met Wu in London in 1905 and discussed the possibility of establishing a publishing company, but nothing came of it initially. In 1906 Zhang traveled to Singapore to buy a printing press and hire a printer. There he met Sun Yat-sen and joined the Tongmenghui. Zhang was generally distrusted by Chinese students in Europe because he had been connected with the embassy until 1905, and his generous financial support for various of Sun’s ventures was largely kept secret.<sup>46</sup> Zhang was also the financial mainstay of *New Century* until it folded in 1910.

Feng Ziyou, of the Hong Kong chapter of the Tongmenghui, has recounted Zhang’s visit to him in mid-1908. At a dinner with Li Jitang and Hu Hanmin, Zhang “spoke freely of the anarchist, the

<sup>45</sup> According to Feng Ziyou, *Geminyishi*, 2:227—but there appears to be no other reference to this possibility.

<sup>46</sup> Feng Ziyou, *Geming yishi*, 2:225–226.

Zhang Ji noted as much when he arrived in Paris in the spring of 1908, Japanese gendarmes virtually on his heels.<sup>59</sup> He was particularly impressed by the fact that Jean Grave, editor of *Les Temps Nouveaux* and friend to the Chinese anarchists, set his own type: “I sincerely think that all revolutionaries should have this attitude.” He found Wu and Li Shizeng busy with *New Century* (*La Nova*] *Tempoj* in Esperanto), named after Grave’s journal but written entirely in Chinese. Zhang stayed with Wu and Chu Minyi until early summer when he visited a commune on the Belgium border. This was the Colonie d’Aiglemont in Ardennes.<sup>60</sup> In spite of his minimal French, Zhang joined radicals from France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and Russia, tended the milk cows, and studied anarchism for three months. Back in Paris, he soon became friends with revolutionaries from Germany and Russia, audited classes in European history and philosophy at the Sorbonne, and enjoyed Italian restaurants. Zhang also spent a good deal of time in Switzerland, on speaking terms with the revolution but not intimate with it.

In all, there were several hundred Chinese students in Europe by mid-decade.<sup>61</sup> Their studies had branched out from technical subjects to include the sciences and even the humanities at a wide variety of secondary schools, colleges, and graduate centers. The students comprised an audience almost as receptive to revolution-

<sup>59</sup> Zhang Puquan, “Huiyi lu,” p. 236; see also his “You Bali riji” (Diary of Paris travels), pp. 253–268, dealing with the years 1910–1911. The Japanese police, of course, were not interested in Zhang once he left the country.

<sup>60</sup> See also Wu Zhihui’s “You Yingshancun zhimindi ji” (Notes on traveling to the Colonie d’Aiglemont), *Xin Shiji* no. 53 (27 June 1908), pp. 211–216.

<sup>61</sup> An exact figure is hard to come by since there was a good deal of coming and going by students on government scholarship, students sponsored by provincial governments but paying their own way, and students entirely on their own. See Wang Huanchen, ed., *Liuxuejiaoyu* (Education abroad) (Taipei: Guoli bianyiguan, 1980), p. 583; Lin Zixuan, *Zhongguo liuxue jiaoyu shi (1847–1975)* (A history of Chinese education abroad) (Taipei: Huagan chuban youxian gongsi, 1971), p. 86.

publication belonging to the rebels which disseminates false doctrines and misleads people. However, France is one of those countries that have free speech, and the press laws of this country do not allow closing publications that disturb the peace of other countries.<sup>57</sup> The Qing tried to shut them down again a year later, informing the French government of connections between Chinese revolutionaries and the anticolonial movement in Indochina.<sup>58</sup> The Paris anarchists were further gratified by Sun Yat-sen's occasional visits to their offices at 25 Rue Dareau on one of his around-the-world fund-raising trips. Or Cai Yuanpei, who was studying philosophy (and anarchism) in Leipzig, might drop by for some improving conversation.

## PARIS: CAPITAL FOR A NEW CENTURY

In Europe, the Chinese anarchists found themselves pushed even farther from the core of the Chinese revolution than their comrades in Tokyo. But France was a more cosmopolitan country than Japan, and if the Chinese student scene was more limited, international anarchism had a more prominent part to play. Perhaps the rewards made up for the disadvantages. The Chinese anarchists in Paris were less a part of the world of the Chinese revolution than were Liu Shiwei and his cohorts but much more a part of the "world revolution" itself.

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<sup>57</sup> Chen Linghai, "Nianpu," p. 32. The story was also recounted as "Daiwei guangdeng gaobai—xiexie" (Thanks for the publicity!), *Xin Shiji* no. 19 (26 October 1907), p. 75.

<sup>58</sup> According to Wu, "Manzhou zhengfu zhi wulai er kelian" (The villainy and desperation of the Manchu government), *Xin Shiji* no. 54 (4 July 1908), pp. 228–29.

anti-religious and the anti-family theories that he so deeply believe in." On the subject of sex Zhang said, "People usually make too much of sexual relations; this is a mistake. It is obvious that the reason why society is divided along sexual lines is because of traditional customs, and this had led to all kinds of abuses. It's not impossible to reform these sorts of customs."<sup>47</sup> Feng and Hu also officially swore Zhang into the Tongpaenghui, allowing him as a principled anarchist and atheist to omit the oath "by Heaven."

After the revolution Zhang settled in Shanghai, became even wealthier playing the Shanghai stock exchange, and supported the Guomindang's right wing. He backed Chiang Kai-shek from the beginning; they met when Chiang was working as a stockbroker in Shanghai with underworld contacts.<sup>48</sup> Zhang supported Chiang both financially and in his efforts to gain control of the Guomindang after Sun Yat-sen's death. Chiang made Zhang effective head of the party during the Northern Expedition and appointed him governor of Zhejiang 1928–1930. However, Zhang's real interests did not lie in politics and he soon retired from an active role, although his personal lines of communication to Chiang remained open till his death.

Zhang never explained in writing what anarchism meant to him. Perhaps his refusal to continue funding *New Century* in 1910, even while he continued to back Sun, indicated a cooling toward his former ideals. Probably he had originally been led toward anarchism, in the heady atmosphere of Paris, by Li Shizeng and been attracted by its aura of science and its iconoclastic demands for cultural reform. For could the socialist side of anarchism have greatly appealed to a man whose first action in a foreign country was to establish his own business? Judging from the vary spare remarks of Feng Ziyou, Zhang was primarily interested in social reform.

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229. Feng considered these remarks to be similar to Tan Sitong's *Renxue*. (Li and Hu were important Tongmenghui members.)

<sup>48</sup> Harold R. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, p. 83.

Chu Minyi was, after Wu and Li, the third major writer for *New Century*. Zhang had met Chu, a fellow townsman, on his trip back to China in 1906.<sup>49</sup> Chu (1884–1946) was from a scholar-gentry family and had studied science and English in addition to the standard classics and commentaries to pass the civil service examinations. He accompanied Zhang on his return to France and became a kind of junior partner in *New Century* and related ventures. He continued his association with Li and Wu after the revolution, working on the Sino-French educational organizations, but struck an independent line in his support of Wang Jingwei and the left wing of the Guomindang in the late 1920s and the 1930s. He then joined Wang's pro-Japanese government in 1939 as foreign minister, for which he is perhaps best known. He was executed as a collaborator in 1946.

Wu Zhihui visited Paris at the end of 1905, staying with Li Shizeng. He may have wanted to continue discussions of a publishing enterprise that Zhang had begun with him a few months earlier.<sup>50</sup> In Paris, Li regaled Wu with anarchism but Wu did not agree to wind up his affairs in London and move to France until the end of 1906. Probably, Li and Zhang invited Wu to head their publishing company.<sup>51</sup> In any case, according to Li's memoirs, Wu still believed that revolution consisted primarily of expelling the Manchus. Li called this mere nationalism and urged expansion of the scope of Wu's political ideas to include world revolution, social reform, freedom, and opposition to authority.<sup>52</sup> The following day Wu commented, "Although the theories of Kropotkin and

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<sup>49</sup> See Boorman and Howard, eds., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, 1:467–469.

<sup>50</sup> See Wu's diary for June and July, *Collected Works*, 11:895–902.

<sup>51</sup> While contemporary sources are not explicit, it seems fairly clear that Li and Zhang had been interested in securing Wu's editorial services for some time but were prepared to go on without him; see Li's 1906 letter to Wu about establishing a publishing company, in *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 2:285–289.

<sup>52</sup> According to Xiao Yu, "Li Shizeng xiansheng," p. 9.

Bakunin are good, I'm afraid it would take three thousand years to put them into practice. It's not possible today." Indeed, Wu never entirely lost his skepticism; although converted to anarchism for a few years, his primary concerns centered around science and cultural change, and he soon reverted to thinking of anarchism as a distant ideal.

Wu, Li, and Zhang then founded the World Society (Shijie she) in Paris with Europe's only Chinese printing press. They published a variety of revolutionary propaganda and such items as a Chinese biography of Darwin.<sup>53</sup> Their goals stretched beyond politics to "importing civilization and communicating information."<sup>54</sup> The World Society published its first issue of *New Century* on 22 June 1907. The journal grew to fifteen pages and came out every Saturday, although printing schedules were somewhat disrupted toward the end, to 21 May 1910. Its 121 issues make *New Century* the most long-lived of all the revolutionary journals. It was geared toward the world of Chinese students in both Europe and Japan and specifically designed to be smuggled back into China; the size of the journal enabled it to be put inside the bedding of Chinese merchant seamen.<sup>55</sup> Some of the influence of *Xin Shiji* can be seen in the career of Liu Shifu, who carried the mantle of radical anarchism after the revolution. Copies were smuggled into his jail cell while he was awaiting trial (for two years) after a bomb he was making exploded and injured him in 1907.<sup>56</sup>

In addition, the government in Beijing took notice of the journal, wiring their ambassador to France, Liu Shixun, to have it shut down. Liu replied, "The journal is indeed a privately established

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<sup>53</sup> See Wu's diaries for 1907, "Minguo qianwunian riji," *Collected Works*, 12: 1029–1087.

<sup>54</sup> The society's precepts are reprinted in *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 2:286.

<sup>55</sup> According to Hirano Yoshitaro, " 'Shin Seiki' kaidai" (An explanation of 'Xin Shiji'), in *Xin Shiji*, p. 2. All references to *Xin Shiji* will be made to this edition unless otherwise noted. I have not been able to find any circulation figures.

<sup>56</sup> See ch. 9 for Liu Shifu.

lution (or progress, *jinhua*). He also referred to community (*gong-tong*), fraternity (*boai*), equality (*pingdeng*), and liberty (*ziyou*).<sup>106</sup> This interlocking directorate of notions' from the French Revolution defined his anarchism. Wu was a sort of primitive Hegelian in the sense that his evolution worked, like the world spirit, dialectically. It pushed forward to the higher stage, at which point further opposition was encountered and the forces of greater morality had to slog on.

Li, who had had a better scientific education than any other anarchist, or for that matter than nearly any Chinese intellectual of his day, possessed a more naturalistic understanding of social change. He deprecated the understanding of evolution as a cruel process of the struggle for existence and natural selection where only the strong survive.<sup>107</sup> When this view was transferred from the plane of the individual to the plane of nation-states, of course the message was for China to strengthen itself to survive, conquer, and then, perhaps, promote higher ideals. But Li disapproved of competitive evolution on either plane.

The "struggle for existence" is naturally an unchangeable principle of evolution; however, survival goes not to the strong in authority or the strong physically but in truth to the strong in wisdom. [This applies] not only to existence but also to progress. In the case of animals, their strength is far greater than that of humans but they have not prospered like people because their intelligence and capacity for thinking is inferior to that of humans. The superiority of humans over animals does not rest on their ability to kill but truly on the flourishing of civilization... People are superior to animals because of their ability to unite in groups (*hequn*), not because of their ability to wage war. Thus, as hu-

<sup>106</sup> See inter alia, *ibid.*, p. 408.

<sup>107</sup> "Moushi yu *Xin Shiji* shu (fuda)," p. 30.

linked with such negative traits as selfishness, meanness, and lack of principle. Liu argued that the wealth of the capitalists came originally from the land, from the grants of monarchs, or from the theft that comes with conquest; taking advantage of hard times to buy cheap and sell dear, the budding capitalists built up their wealth, causing progressively larger pools of poor workers to form, and monopolized the market; small enterprises collapsed, luxuries flooded the markets, and the price of necessities continued to rise.

By the terms of Liu's interpretation of equality, dependents are cursed precisely because they are not economically independent; only equal labor can set them free. "*Because they cannot be independent, naturally they lose the rights of freedom. Because they cannot be free, naturally they lose the rights of equality.*"<sup>32</sup> People have been subjugated a long time, Liu noted. Morally, "all the wealth of the rich comes from the workers; if not for the labor of the workers, the rich couldn't nourish their wealth. They have forgotten morality..."<sup>33</sup> This almost sounds like the young Marx on the subject of surplus labor. For Liu, the same capitalist fate awaited China unless the nation adopted anarchism.

The third sphere of inequality, said Liu, was racial (*zu*). The world had become a battleground, the strong races attacking the weak; national power combined with capitalism to create a "murderous world."<sup>34</sup> Europe and the United States actually boasted of their imperialism. Liu believed that race war and imperialism were approximately the same thing; nationalism was the cause of both. Therefore, Liu concluded, the state once again was to blame. If from China's point of view imperialism was a threatening web of encroachments, to Liu it was only one aspect of immoral power, which anarchism could cut clean through.

<sup>32</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," p. 25.

<sup>33</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," p. 927.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 928.

In sum, the fundamental hindrance to equality in Liu's vision was inherent in economic relations. Political forms were secondary, insofar as he detested politics in any form. Or perhaps he simply did not distinguish analytically between the political and the economic orders. At one point, Liu lumped together "the system of rule, the system of distribution, the system of supply."<sup>35</sup> Elsewhere, he specifically linked the direct power of physical force and the indirect influence of money.<sup>36</sup> Nonetheless, even in this context, Liu was entirely preoccupied with the role of labor: military prowess might have caused certain distinctions, but today's rulers overlapped with capitalists, and military might oppressed the people while wealth enslaved them. Thus Liu thought of force as instrumental—and vital. If there were ever to be a general strike, capitalists would attempt to use the army to suppress it. The military would disappear only with the arrival of anarchism.

In sum, it is the fault of government that those above mistreat those below [referring to class or status]. It is the fault of capitalism and private property that the rich rule the poor [referring to economic class]. It is the fault of the state that the strong mistreat the weak [referring to racism and imperialism]. When there are governments, they only help themselves, and are too busy to help the people. When there are capitalism and private property, they only help the individual, and are too busy to help the masses (*gongzhong*). When there are states, they only help the state, and are too busy to help the world. However, it is government that protects the capitalists, it is government that represents the state, and so it is government that is the source of all evil.

<sup>35</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," p. 25.

<sup>36</sup> In an earlier essay, "Feibing feicai lun" (Abolishing the military and abolishing wealth), XHGMQSNJ, 28:900–904 (originally in *Tianyi* no. 2, 25 June 1907).

proportion of good morality was small. When the stage of evolution is relatively high, as today when people hope for socialism, the proportion of good morality is great. Thus the "selflessness" (*wuwo*) and "fraternity" (*boai*) previously discussed in this journal were only slightly represented in religion, while the socialism of today encompasses them Completely.<sup>103</sup>

In other words, Wu believed that morality was inherent in the human condition but that the degree of excellence it attained depended on evolutionary progress. Furthermore, socialism was scientific for Wu (though he never used the Marxist term *scientific socialism*, which was designed in part to distinguish Marxism from utopianism) because he considered it to be determined by the laws of evolution. These laws did not demand small, discrete steps forward; peoples could jump to higher stages as well. For example, France, a Catholic nation, was proceeding nicely to atheism without going through what might seem to be the next logical stage, Protestantism.<sup>104</sup>

Anarchism was the most progressive doctrine to date; it would not necessarily be so for all time. Wu called anarchism "relatively advanced" (meaning more advanced than anything else at the moment), his highest term of praise, which connoted both description of an ongoing progress and prescription for his countrymen.<sup>105</sup> His was less a vision of anarchism providing social justice than of *jinhua* providing all kinds of benefits, including anarchism in the political realm and justice in the social. Wu favored universal, fundamental principles such as truth (*zhenli*), justice (*gongdao*), and evo-

<sup>103</sup> "Shu moujun youjian hou," p. 166.

<sup>104</sup> "Chengdu" (Stages), *Xin Shiji* no. 2 (29 June 1907), p. 5. Wu also made his reservations about the French clear: "Although the morality these people embrace is not the very pinnacle of civilization ..."—"Shu moujun youjian hou," p. 167.

<sup>105</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi yi jiaoyu wei geming," p. 408: "Thus for those who believe that a sense of civic virtue is [the essence of] revolutionary education, only the relatively advanced anarchism of today is reasonably appropriate."



Similarly, Wu Zhihui's anarchism was rooted in a belief that unceasing progress led through various stages of civilization to anarchism. This belief in progress—and his own ability to recognize it—he held throughout his long life.<sup>101</sup> This progress was decreed by science (“the universal truth of evolution,” *jinhua zhi gongli*)<sup>102</sup> and took the form of scientific improvements. Wu looked toward the future (emphatically not, like Liu Shipai at times, to the past). But even more notably he looked around at the present and managed to combine outrage at China's backward state with complacent optimism at the current trends of the new century. Challenged on the practicability of anarchism, Wu responded that progress and evolution led naturally to a fairer society. Collapsing an Enlightenment view of progress that was Jeffersonian in its scope with a late nineteenth-century view of evolution that demanded scrupulous adherence as biological doctrine, Wu translated them both into ethical terms. Thus in a discussion of religion and socialism, the latter comprising a more advanced evolutionary stage, Wu also pointed out,

Religion and socialism both praise the morality (*daode*) which is in accord with justice and truth. This stems from the evolutionary good morality (*jinhua zhi liangde*) that all humankind shares. Thus everyone praises morality and no one can push it away. However, when the stage of evolution was relatively low, as during all the previous religious eras, the

<sup>101</sup> Wu had encountered the notion of evolution by 1900 in the works of Yan Fu. At the time Wu did not become a convert; rather, he fit evolution into a basically Confucian mental world. Wu discussed Yan's works with his students at Nanyang; see “Qunzhihui jishi” (A record of the Society for Group Knowledge), *Collected Works*, 16:142–145.

<sup>102</sup> “Tan wuzhengfu zhi xiantian,” p. 191. Essentially, Wu equated progress and evolution; in 1907–1908 his grasp of Darwinian evolution as something operating without direction through natural selection was weak, but he already considered his system to be scientific.

But Liu constantly returned to economic relations. He pointed out that there was a voluntary (*gan*) element in the behavior of those who had lost their rights which accounted for strikes by factory workers or work stoppages by peasants; through these actions they exercised the will or choice that they had always had, and the rulers thereby lost those on whom they had depended. However, Liu knew perfectly well that the evil was not to be corrected so simply. The root of subjugation lay in the lack of economic independence, the lack of self-sufficiency in the sense of doing without rulers and thus avoiding servitude. If rulers and employers depend on their workers, so too in a fundamental sense do the workers depend on their bosses for employment. They are in a perilous position. The introduction of trolleys to Japan meant that rickshaw pullers lost their jobs. Although Liu looked to machines to improve the human condition and alter the kinds of labor that would be necessary in the future, he was not an indiscriminating champion of technological progress. Although not fully explicated, his voluntarism required that the workers and peasants free themselves and not wait for technological liberation—machines to make leisure—or for the government to wither away. Indeed, these points are fundamental to anarchism itself.

Leo Tolstoy's pure and shining faith in the human capacity for goodness provided some backing for Liu's arguments. Although Tolstoy was no revolutionary, he was sharply critical of existing social orders. His traditionalism, his emphasis on the farmer, and his attacks on wholesale westernization also had a certain appeal. The editors of *Natural Justice* appreciated his view that China could and must achieve anarchism without following the West. Liu Shipai also noted Tolstoy's equation of capitalism with “false civilization” (*wei wenming*).<sup>37</sup> However, the overall tone of *Natural Justice* and of Liu's conception of anarchism, when compared with Tolstoy's, was progressive and scientific and emphasized an essential notion

<sup>37</sup> “Dushu zaji” (Reading notes), *Tianyi* no. 11–12 (30 November 1907).

of justice. The Chinese utopian schemes were not Christian and were not created with static faith in natural man.<sup>38</sup>

Most of the translations and scholarship in *Natural Justice* were devoted to anarchism, especially Kropotkin. Kropotkin's *The Conquest of Bread* was originally published in 1906 and excerpts appeared promptly in *Natural Justice*. Liu translated its first chapter, "Our Riches," with minimal comment.<sup>39</sup> This provided a clear ethical justification for anarchism and socialism that must have appealed directly to Liu's sense of outraged justice. Kropotkin pointed out the source of wealth: "Millions of human beings have labored to create this civilization on which we pride ourselves today." And this outrage was moral: "By what right then can any one whatever appropriate the least morsel of this immense whole and say—This is mine, not yours?"

All belongs to all. All things are for all men [*wanwu shuyu wanrenj*, since all men have need of them, since all men have worked in the measure of their strength to produce them [*wanren zhi li er gongwei*], and since it is not possible to evaluate everyone's part in the production of the world's wealth.

Liu also turned to Kropotkin's fairly technical analysis of the economics necessary to a good, common life.<sup>40</sup> Liu was attracted to this difficult passage in Kropotkin's long book about finding and

<sup>38</sup> Therefore to take *Tianyi Bao* as representative of an "antimodernist, Tolstoyan type of anarchism," as do Arif Dirlik and Edward S. Krebs in "Socialism and Anarchism in Early Republican China," p. 119, is simplistic.

<sup>39</sup> "Mianbao lueduo La Conquete du pain," *Tianyi* no. 16–19 (Spring 1908), pp. 549–561. For the English-language version, see P. Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968), pp. 1–15. My quotations are from the English.

<sup>40</sup> "Weilai shehui shengchan zhi fangfa ji shouduan" (Methods and techniques of social production in the future), *Tianyi* no. 115, pp. 475–480; this was a translation of the second half of ch. 8, "Ways and Means," of *The Conquest of Bread*.

progress, and so revolution is nothing more than seeking progress.<sup>97</sup>

Rather like a sociological functionalist, Li believed that since evolution was inevitable, revolution was merely the form it took when its "normal course" was blocked. "One cannot have an understanding of 'progress' as good but revolution as 'bad.'" <sup>98</sup> For Li also believed that progress, or evolution, was itself exercised in seeking goodness (*qiu liang*). This was in accord with human nature; even officials were not originally without conscience (*ben wuliangxin*).<sup>99</sup> On the metaphysical level, Li attempted to prove not just that evolution was natural, but even more importantly that it was universal. He drew examples from geology—the gaseous earth became liquid and then finally solid; from biology—life forms moved from the simple to the complex; from history—people, themselves a product of biological evolution, also moved from stupidity to cleverness—"this is the evolution (*jinhua*) of humans."<sup>100</sup> And finally, humans produced society, which Li, perhaps thinking of the cooperation inherent in any society, also regarded as having improved to a "relatively correct" state. Li appears to have regarded present-day society as the most advanced stage of evolution to date but as still requiring several degrees more of progress.

<sup>97</sup> "Jinhua yu geming" (Progress and revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 20 (2 November 1907), p. 77.1 usually translate *jinhua* as evolution since Wu and Li believed it to be a universal principle with scientific backing, not merely a linear view of history (they generally used *jinbu* for the more prosaic progress), but here Li appears to be taking *jinhua* as one form of *tianyan* (Yan Fu's translation for evolution, published in 1898), thus distinguishing between two concepts that were usually conflated. *Jinhualun* is the standard translation of Darwin's theory of evolution, and Li himself translated Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* as *Huzhulun: Jinhua zhi yi yaoyin*.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>99</sup> "Bo guan bi baixing hao" (Contra officials are better than the people), *Xin Shiji* no. 4 (13 July 1907), p. 13.

<sup>100</sup> "Jinhua yu geming," p. 77.

Regardless of the [current] level of civic virtue, all we have to do is explain revolutionary justice and truth, and the people will immediately reform their customs. The big-mouths who berate the people are mostly great thieves sneering at common muggers, ... Thus humankind is prone to progressive models. The so-called love of goodness that people have—who is not my equal there? And when the sense of justice is perfect in everyone, the revolution will result immediately.<sup>96</sup>

With his almost cosmic faith in progress and also a faith in the people's capacity for betterment, Wu came honestly to his trust in anarchism. And it was a revolutionary anarchism for the present, not a sometime-or-another anarchism.

If the Tokyo anarchists understood anarchism in a framework of social revolution, the Paris group worked in a cultural context. The true source of their optimism lay in their faith in progress. Li Shizeng gave revolution the ultimate sanction: it was evolutionary. To define the content of revolution, he looked to secular progress.

Progress (*jinhua*) means going forward without stopping; it means endless change (*gengkua*). There is nothing that does not go forward. This is the nature of the evolution (*tianyan zhi ziran*). If people don't progress, or if they only progress slowly, we call them sick. And in the case of things, we say there is a flaw (*bi*). Both sickness and problems are things that people want to correct (*ge*). We have no choice but to correct sickness and problems, and this is called "revolution" (*geming*). Revolution is getting rid of that which hinders

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 409.

building socialism and anarchism because he saw confirmation of his faith that all would work equally at all jobs—equally but not too hard because technology was to reduce drudgery. Some of the appeal for him of this passage of technical microeconomic calculation must have lain also in its promise of leisure, which might have been closer to true civilization in Liu's mind than material security. In the end, Kropotkin's scheme was looser and less utopian than Liu's tightly structured plan for equal labor; if Liu's vision of required labor sounded like a concentration camp without a commandant, Kropotkin's reminded one more of a family with family chores. But they shared a technological faith in the minimizing of labor and a faith in human willingness to work. They both pictured a society wherein people volunteered for those jobs generally deemed necessary and children were brought up to be familiar with both mental and manual labor, with limited work necessary and that freely chosen. "Such a society could in return guarantee wellbeing (*anle*) to all its members, a well-being more substantial than that enjoyed today by the middle classes."<sup>41</sup>

## WU ZHIHUI AND A FREE-AND-EASY UTOPIA

wu zhihui was an anarchist because he believed in the possibility of a noncoercive social order. His primary interests were ethical and behavioral, not political or social. Wu's faith in progress led him to anarchism and by the 1920s had outlasted his belief in the imminent practicability of sweeping political change. Early in the century, however, he devoted his efforts to combining the doctrines of anarchism with the simultaneous betterment of technology and morality. Throughout this period, he remained a staunch nationalist and anti-Manchu, positions he justified by insisting

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<sup>41</sup> Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread*, pp. 131–132.

that they did not detract from his larger commitment to a stateless, borderless world and that in fact their realization was the first step toward such a world.

Usually writing under the penname of “Ran” (Burning), Wu sketched in the pages of *New Century* a vision of an anarchist paradise. He pictured a society of ease and pleasure made possible by the progress of science and technology.<sup>42</sup> Although a decade later he had changed his mind, at this point he considered anarchism to be immediately practicable. His utopian vision was of a stateless world united by a single language, devoted to scientific endeavor and improvement, with food, shelter, and clothing provided by all working for all. Wu abolished cities and placed the world’s people in smaller, numbered “dwelling communities” into which he put little houses with flowers in front and trees behind. Perhaps influenced by Fourier or the emerging field of urban planning, Wu gave each dwelling community rooms for sleeping^ eating, leisure, study, and work and, outside, a hospital. In between the dwelling communities would be broad tree-lined avenues and also gardens and pastures, farms and factories.

This green and pleasant land also featured the latest in transportation and communication: zeppelins and people movers. (“The road surfaces will be made of something like very thick rubber and every thirty to fifty feet will be one section, which will go around unceasingly day and night. People will only have to lift a foot to step across the gaps between sections. It will be possible to move freely across many miles and even throw away motor cars and trams and the like, though we may keep bicycles and such as equipment for fun and exercise in the parks.”) People would travel freely, if they so desired, stopping at convenient dwelling communities for sun and fun.

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<sup>42</sup> “Tan wuzhengfu zhi xiantian” (A chat about anarchism), *Xin Shiji* no. 49 (30 May 1908), pp. 191–192. A number of Wu’s anarchist essays are reprinted in his *Collected Works*.

there are bounds to action. Knowledge may be independent and free whereas action depends on shared relationships. Knowledge may follow a straight line while action may have to wind about.<sup>94</sup>

Wu wove all these notions—of morality and religion, of socialism and education, and of revolution—together on the warp of progress and the woof of anarchism. The core of education was to be science and a morality of the right sort. This would inevitably beget—this in fact was—revolution and, revolution being change for the better, must in turn lead to anarchism, including justice, liberty, and equality among other fine hopes. Wu linked contempt for Chinese customs with faith in her people, admiration for aspects of the West with recognition of its failures. The core of this civilized, evolutionary morality was the universal human rights of the French Revolution, including not just liberty, equality, and fraternity, but also truth, justice, and civic virtue. Big words, but not, in Wu’s eyes, empty. He repeatedly defended himself and anarchism from the charge of spouting empty words (*kon-gyan*). He warned skeptics that, “when the empty words of anarchism become more and more widespread—this is precisely like establishing countless schools to nourish the sense of civic virtue and schools to nourish the revolution as well.”<sup>95</sup>

Revolution for Wu was something like civic virtue in action. At the base of this faith was Wu’s belief that the people did indeed have a sufficiency of civic virtue to become anarchists, that they did not need a government to control their baser instincts but were ready to reform their own habits upon receipt of true education. For Wu’s optimism in this view of progress led him to believe that even if people were not already good, they could in the right circumstances easily follow the way of civic virtue.

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>95</sup> “Wuzhengfu zhuyi yi jiaoyu wei geming,” p. 408.

What is selfish learning? It is learning for [the purpose of] making a living, supporting a family, enriching the country and strengthening the race. It is learning for becoming an official and getting rich. It is learning for becoming famous and raising the standing of one's family... What is public learning? It is learning for the improvement of society. It is learning for the evolution of the world.<sup>91</sup>

True education was thus to be found in the conscience (*liangxin*) and was in accord with principle (*gongli*). Furthermore, learning was linked to practice, since learning for the sake of the world would lead to serving the world. This highly idealistic view was only implicitly revolutionary, but the denial of family, nation, and even race was clearly anarchist.

A concern with means as well as ends and a concern with culture and habits as well as political forms thus made it difficult for the anarchists to take concrete actions outside of the propaganda realm. This was a big realm, and the easiest for exiles to operate in. Critics noted the lack of action.<sup>92</sup> The anarchists could but point to rising tides of revolutionary sentiment, assassinations, and uprisings as their reply. Wu claimed that the time was one of *preparation* for anarchism (including assassination). Anarchists could not force their doctrine on others.<sup>93</sup> The root of the issue was that action could seldom meet all the demands of knowledge.

Knowledge is a matter of the spirit while action is a matter of the body. Thus knowledge is infinite whereas

<sup>91</sup> "Qianye zashuo" (Random comments to occupy a thousand nights), *Xin Shiji* no. 21 (9 September 1907), pp. 82–83.

<sup>92</sup> See for example a letter, "Yanlun yu shixing zhi quanxi" (The relation between words and action), *Xin Shiji* no. 105 (24 July 1909), Shanghai ed., pp. 6–7.

<sup>93</sup> "Zhi yu xing" (Knowledge and action), *Xin Shiji* no. 114 (16 October 1909), Shanghai ed., p. 3.

The economic basis for this life of leisure was to be universal recognition of necessity: "And so all people work to the best of their abilities." Wu's blithe and breezy assumption that people would willingly labor to produce food, shelter, and clothing for the entire society rested on his faith in a progress that was occurring both materially and spiritually—what he called advances in learning.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps Wu was influenced by Marx's glimpse of man as a laboring animal.<sup>44</sup> In any case, Wu turned to experts to reorder natural and human resources rationally:

First, the earth's geography will be surveyed. What places are suitable for construction of housing? What places are suitable for parks, for pleasure and sight-seeing? What places should be reserved for cattle and sheep pastures? For grain fields? ... Although these crucial questions have now been investigated for centuries, there are still dishonest and imprecise thinkers. In the future, three months will be enough to decide things because no place will be obstructionist and everyone will gladly help.<sup>45</sup>

Thus Wu built a world of comfort, leisure, and cooperation, a world without pain. It might seem an excessively rationalized and

<sup>43</sup> Wu associated *jiaohua* (learning, educational transformation, persuasion) with enlightenment (*kaiming*) and the trend "toward a morality of interpersonal relationships," as opposed to religion, in "Shu moujun youjian hou" (Postscript to a letter from a certain gentleman), *Xin Shiji* no. 42 (17 April 1908), p. 167. "Jiaohua" here seems almost to signify "civilizing forces." It appears in the classics in the sense of transformation. See ch. 5 for Wu's view on education, and ch. 7 for Wu's views on religion and culture.

<sup>44</sup> See Karl Marx, "Marginal Notes to the Program of the German Workers Party," in Saul K. Padover, ed., *On Revolution* p. 496: "after labor has become not only a means of life but life's prime want." This is the passage in which Marx postulates "a higher phase of communist society" which is essentially anarchism, and acknowledges the applicability of "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," at least in a society of plenty.

<sup>45</sup> "Tan wuzhengfu zhi xiantian," p. 191.

regimented world, but Wu's conscious vision was one of material and spiritual freedom.<sup>46</sup> People would take what they needed from supply depots located in every dwelling community, "So the world will lack such divisions as between cities and villages, and also lack markets, shops, and similar structures."<sup>47</sup> Moreover, education—always a central concern for Wu—would now consist primarily of engineering, public health and medicine, and the natural sciences (whence continued material progress), and finally of "anarchist morality" (*wuzhengfu zhi daode*) (whence, presumably, a more cooperative spirit among people). Wu did not claim to be engaged in a thorough discussion of anarchism but simply to be chatting about "nothing more than the most superficial new tendencies of recent evolution" (*zuijin jinkua xin xianxiang*). In sum, Wu emphasized,

Anarchists believe in "morality" but not in "law." We say "from each according to ability" but one cannot call this "obligation." We say "to each according to needs" but one cannot call this "privilege." All humans "will limit themselves according to truth and justice" (*zhenli gong- dao*), and there will be no "rulers and ruled." This is called "anarchy."<sup>48</sup>

Wu later considered the problem of what might happen if people were not willing to work according to their abilities.<sup>49</sup> His response

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<sup>46</sup> Wu himself appears to have taken his sketch of the future with a grain of salt, giving the funniest lines to an imaginary debating partner: "Now, Mr. X says, 'Sure, you can use these confused and tired old ideas to have a pleasant little chat, but even if you speak for a million years, it will still amount to just an endless bunch of far-fetched stories and wild exaggerations. You've already said enough in this issue. Put down your pen and you can talk about it again when you next have the spare time.'" Ibid., pp. 191–192.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> "Linlin guagua" (Trifles), *Xin Shiji* no. 70 (24 October 1908), p. 443. This is, of course, one of the classic criticisms of anarchism.

otherwise his refrain of reforming old customs makes no sense. He spoke not of economic inequality, social stratification, landlord-tenant relations, but of liberty and equality, and truth and justice, as if these terms were self-explanatory and would win universal acceptance.

Wu contrasted his vision of true education for both the present and future with the existence of a "slave education" promoting the government of the day.

Take government education. If it is not reliable, they ... bring in the judges and police and also the regular troops. One can see that this is the limit of government power, so why bring up the meaningless facade of "education"? ... Maybe twenty percent of so-called education today dispenses a bit of knowledge. The remaining eighty percent consists of nothing but so-called morality. Moralizing nonsense all over the place! Let's not even talk about the old Chinese crap of "Be loyal to the Emperor and venerate Confucius." Even the doctrines of the supposedly enlightened countries, their "love of country," "martial spirit," "public mindedness," and "obedience to the laws," may all be summed up in a single phrase: "safeguard the government." Thus, education in the schools today, to put it plainly, *consists of brazen government propaganda to further its own aims.*<sup>90</sup>

Wu's condemnation of the Chinese present was as wholehearted as his hope in the future.

In contrasting selfish learning (*sixue*) with public learning (*gongxue*) or learning for the sake of society, *New Century* not only called for a new kind of education but criticized both numerous aspects of Chinese tradition and reform slogans as well:

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<sup>90</sup> "Tan wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi xiantian," p. 191. "Moralizing nonsense .. *dao qi suowei dao, de qi suowei de*: literally, "Way that which is called the Way, and virtue that which is called virtue." The term *slave education* is also used in "Wuzhengfu zhuyi yi jiaoyu wei geming," p. 408.

tion. Revolution is nothing more than what happens when education is widespread, when everyone has abandoned their old customs and created a new life. This is the inevitable consequence [of education]. Thus, as for this consequence, we want to implement a pre-revolutionary education that will prepare for the revolution—this is called promoting revolution, and there is nothing impossible about it.<sup>87</sup>

Wu could in fact see education's increasing emphasis on the sciences he had such faith in, both in Europe and China. With the addition of Esperanto and anarchist morality, "if education is practiced along these lines, then it will make anarchism absolutely inevitable."<sup>88</sup> The content of true education is precisely identical with the process of revolution for Wu. But he deliberately refrained from discussing a curriculum except in quite broad categories:

Thus, there is nothing that can be called "education" outside of the morality contained in truth and justice, such as community, fraternity, equality, and liberty, and so forth, or outside of the knowledge contained in truth and justice, such as experimental science and so forth, as implemented in anarchist education.<sup>89</sup>

This broad curriculum was, of course, revolutionary, not liberal arts. Wu was here clearly engaged in propaganda rather than the educational work to which he did indeed turn after 1911. He believed in education because he believed the Chinese people were ready to change; revolution could not come from above but only from within the people. Wu, furthermore, must have believed that change came from within the conscience of each individual, for

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<sup>87</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi yi jiaoyu wei geming," pp. 407–408.

<sup>88</sup> "Tan wuzhengfu zhi xiantian," p. 191.

<sup>89</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi yi jiaoyu wei geming," p. 408.

was essentially to demand whether things worked better in the present world. "Today, too, there are people who only keep their privileges but do not fulfill their duties," so change of some sort was clearly necessary. That is, Wu recognized that there seemed to be a parallel between working to one's ability and duty, and taking what one needed and privilege, but he felt these terms of the "morality of the old world" were manipulated by the powerful to their own benefit. The standard anarchist slogan, on the other hand, represented the "correct morality" (*zhengyi*) of a "mutuality among people in the new era."

Wu Zhihui and the other Chinese anarchists in Paris never analyzed the origins of the existing unequal social order as systematically as did Liu Shiwei. Probably their views on the subject did not differ much. Wu, especially, referred to the problem of ignorance and appears to have assumed that ignorance was not a natural state but had resulted from manipulation; crafty religious leaders had spread superstition in the early stages of social evolution. Liu certainly agreed, but Wu's and Li Shizeng's emphasis on evolution also implied that humankind went through, a process of natural development before anarchism could be achieved and thus that more than manipulation and coercion had produced the *status quo*. Faith in the workings of nature might imply a great optimism. Liu, on the other hand, emphasized the intractability of artificial social structures and felt the appeal of the vision of a golden age gone awry.

Their differing perspectives on this problem go far to explain their different approaches to revolution.

## CHAPTER 5. *Revolution and Social Change*

Our little cart rumbles along.  
Suddenly, walking on the side of the road,  
What is this next to our cart,  
With gray hair tangled in her face?  
It is a starving woman  
Who left her child by the fork in the road,  
Crying and clutching its mother's clothes,  
Wailing and crying, but she does not turn back.  
We ask where she is from.

I am registered in southern Yunnan  
Where the mountains are steep and high  
And the barren land not seen good harvests for years.  
Last year no rain at all  
And flying locusts filled the sky.  
We didn't save a single grain of rice And millet with  
stones cost 10,000 cash.  
Greedy agents invaded like tigers Demanding our  
rents like a raging fire.  
We sold our fields to repay the officials But who can  
remain without food?  
Sadly, sadly, we left our home And traveled over three  
thousand *li*,  
Eight of us, all coming down sick.  
Our tattered clothes lack even cotton lining.

hindered revolution; rather than a scaled-down version of revolution related by its antigovernment feelings, riots were "mindless." Revolution, by contrast, had a goal.<sup>84</sup> Wu granted that riots were the natural response provoked by suffering but felt that they actually helped those in power (since they were easily put down).<sup>85</sup> This aspect of revolution as a sophisticated undertaking is in accord with the notion of revolution as education. There was an elitist ring to Wu's revolution, for all that he defended the Chinese people against charges of backwardness, and for all that he expected everyone to join it.

Wu implied that violence would result only if the revolution became a struggle for power, a condition that anarchist education with its emphasis on civic virtue (altruism) could circumvent. The content of education should not and need not be simple propaganda but what Wu considered the most advanced form of knowledge: science. In the future world of anarchism, education would be seventy to eighty percent science and engineering and the remainder "anarchist morality," including vegetarianism.<sup>86</sup> Meanwhile, he called on anarchists and other advanced thinkers to do what they could to teach the people to reform their uncivilized customs, small and large. While "revolution is destruction," it could also be constructive. It might indeed turn violent, but only if people in power attempted to stop the natural process of education.

The essence of anarchism is arousing the civic virtue of the people, attending to the relationship between the individual and society, and abolishing all privilege (*quanli*) to plan for the common happiness. This is truly discussing education, not talking about revolu-

<sup>84</sup> "Zhina jinri zhi yulun" (Public opinion in China today), *Xin Shiji* no. 64 (12 September 1908), p. 387.

<sup>85</sup> In Wu's example, the power of the Western imperialists. See "Zhina jinri zhi yulun," p. 387.

<sup>86</sup> "Tan wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi xiantian," p. 191.



forcibly reforming old customs, *this is* a great revolution... Truth and justice (*shenli gongdao*) progress every day; education does not rest for a second and also the revolution never stops. The consequences of education are certainly nothing but revolution. And in the course of revolution, the sense of civic virtue (*gongde*) of humankind is enlarged.<sup>80</sup>

Revolution was the creation of true education. The tasks of revolutionaries were not primarily violent. Rather, “the duty of all our comrades is to propagate the revolution in books and journals, and to send ^people textbooks. Do not doubt yourselves because evil men consider the revolution ‘empty talk.’”<sup>81</sup> Education was Wu’s means of avoiding the violence that would contradict his larger principles (truth, justice, evolution), though he recognized the possibility that adherence to those principles, resistance to the evil and the outdated, might make violence necessary. On occasion, Wu noted his approval of assassination and other violent techniques of revolution.<sup>82</sup>

Wu specifically condemned militarism (*shangwu*) even for the cause of resisting authority: “When you [truly] know about revolution, you will cease talking about militarism.”<sup>83</sup> Wu admitted that armed struggle might be necessary at some point but clearly considered militarism itself uncivilized. For Wu feared that a militaristic (or nationalistic) philosophy among revolutionaries would produce replacements for governors and privilege instead of help for the world along its way to Datong. He even felt that rioting

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 408.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 409.

<sup>82</sup> Like virtually all Chinese revolutionaries (and many moderates), Wu followed the Russian revolution with shouts of encouragement. See “Xu Eguo geming” (The Russian revolution, continued), *Xin Shiji* no. 35 (22 February 1908), p. 138.

<sup>83</sup> “Linlin guagua,” p. 442.

Infants do not reach childhood But are always hungry  
for gruel.\_

For the child to live the mother must die of hunger,  
And if the mother is dead then who will pity the  
child? We do not know where we will die.

How can we both live?

Many soldiers on the side of the road Heard her words  
and tears streamed down.

Who are you to eat fine foods?

Let us chant “The Song of the Refugees.”

—Liu Shiwei, “Fleeing the Famine in Yunnan”<sup>1</sup>

The anarchists were aware that China was in a revolutionary situation. Indeed, they gloried in it. From across the seas they noted all the symptoms of crisis and provided a dual description-prescription. They saw the Chinese revolution as a people’s movement for liberation against the political repression of the Manchus, the social and economic repression of the gentry, and the looming threat of Western imperialism. And more: they saw the world as facing revolutionary crisis. The Chinese revolution was thus occurring in a larger context of changes in the West as significant as those in China. Class struggle and the amazing advance of scientific knowledge struck the Chinese anarchist observers of the West as changing the ground beneath their feet.

## ANARCHISM AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

**in tokyo**, Liu Shiwei and He Zhen dedicated themselves to the general political awakening of their readers as much as to their personal Interpretations of anarchism. The editors of *Natural Justice*

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<sup>1</sup> Liu Shenshu *yishu*, vol. 6, no. 61, *zhuan* 4, p. 33a.

made their principles clear from the beginning: “To destroy traditional society, to realize human equality.”<sup>2</sup> The Chinese anarchists believed that their principles necessitated, “aside from promoting women’s revolution, also promoting racial, political, and economic revolution.” Beginning with the issue of 30 October 1907, they amplified these principles: “To destroy national and racial borders and to realize internationalism (*shijie zkuyi*). To resist all authoritarianism (*qiangquan*) in the world. To overthrow all present-day ruler-ship. To practice communism. To realize absolute equality of the sexes.”<sup>3</sup>

The pages of *Natural Justice* held the first Chinese calls for a revolution of and by peasants and workers, for all humankind. In pursuit of an anti-authoritarian ideology, the writers on *Natural Justice* forged a theory of revolution rather more sophisticated than generally found in the pages of, say, *The People’s Journal*. This coterie of Chinese anarchists also held firmly to anti-Confucianism, to sexual equality, and to communism and demanded social revolution to rectify economic injustice. In a sense, their views even included nationalism; that is, although anarchism precludes true nationalism, the Tokyo-based anarchists were proud of their cultural heritage. Their anti-Confucianism was not equated with opposition to all Chinese culture. In all, these views mixed into the average opinion of Chinese students in Tokyo, whose numbers were nearing ten thousand in 1908. Opinions, views, stances, doctrines, even underlying assumptions were prodded, poked, and partially shaped by *Natural Justice*. Not anarchism itself, but certain strains permeating the formal ideology became acceptable, reinforced and echoed by radical streams that were not specifically anarchist.

The readers of *Natural Justice* could well have felt they were part of an up-and-coming world movement. Kotoku Shusui wrote to welcome the journal into the fold; he wrote that he “pounded the

<sup>2</sup> See *Tianyi* no. 3 (10 July 1907), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Tianyi* no. 8–10, p. 174.

encompassed the anti-Manchu movement as it encompassed the overthrow of all governments; that revolution was simply an aspect of truth; and that anarchism was indeed possible as well as moral. He was keenly aware of the paradox that as material civilization advanced, the poor seemed to be left further and further behind.<sup>76</sup> His analysis of the advanced nations emphasized the contradictions (without using the term) of capitalism. Chu noted that advances in industrial techniques were making workers redundant; as unemployment soared, the rich would not be able to buy all the goods being produced, and the entire system would collapse under the weight of a surfeit of luxuries.<sup>77</sup>

Wu Zhihui emphatically did not believe in a violent revolution, or direct struggle against power, for this might well lead to the mere seizing of power, to superficial *coups*; he turned to education as both the means of revolution and indeed its very essence. “If revolutionary thought is extended to everyone, then the results of revolution will spontaneously occur.”<sup>78</sup> That is, true education— anarchist education— would result in what Wu called “civic virtue” (*gonde*). Civic virtue was a key element in Wu’s political thought; he appears generally to have associated it with altruism. “A sense of civic virtue is formed by uniting all individuals to work to their utmost.”<sup>79</sup>

Actually, education on an everyday basis is revolution every day. When there is a relatively small manifestation of education, slightly reforming minor customs of the society, this is a small revolution... If the educational manifestation is great, swifdy, completely and

<sup>76</sup> See “Gongren” (Workers), *Xin Shiji* no. 79 (25 December 1908), Shanghai ed., pp. 4–6.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

<sup>78</sup> “Wuzhengfu zhuyi yi jiaoyu wei geming shuo” (Anarchism considers education to be revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 65 (19 September 1908), p. 407.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 409: “Yi ge geren zijin zhi xin, zouhe er cheng.”

Their strength lay in the unity of their individual members, and as they battled specific capitalists they represented, in a sense, the people in its own battle against state oppression. Li believed that the economic revolution was as important as any purely political revolution. Indeed, the two were intimately related since capitalism and the state supported each other in oppressing the people.

Li's colleague Chu Minyi proclaimed, "Revolution is to society as a rudder is to a steamboat"—the one rests on the truth while the other is determined by a compass, and they both lead in a forward direction.<sup>75</sup> Chu emphasized that revolution was in effect an aspect of truth, the opposite of which was authority. Therefore revolution had to begin by overthrowing authority, the primary manifestation of which was government. Revolution consisted in converting people away from their selfish ways. Otherwise, Chu feared, a new form of despotism would arise through force. Chu's revolution was also one of the word: written and spoken propaganda, of careful explanation to the people of where truth lay. In other words, education. This was to be followed by assassinations and strikes until the human race reached the point at which it could practice fraternity. Chu's justification of assassination emphasized that it was, or should be, committed not for any selfish motive: not to gain fame or profit, as armed rebellion might lead to power, but simply to eliminate evil, in retribution for crimes committed in the name of law and government. But unlike Wu and Li, he emphasized that the ability to love was the trait that distinguished humans from other animals. Love and wisdom were themselves evolving. And now the chance had come for a "single great revolution" to wipe away thousands of years of evils.

Chu Minyi was the most socially aware of the Paris group, placing an almost Marxist emphasis on an economic base that underlay oppression. He emphasized the unity of revolution: that socialism

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<sup>75</sup> "Puji geming" (Universalizing revolution), *Xin Shiji* nos. 15, 17–18, 23 (28 September, 12–19 October, 23 November 1907), pp. 59, 66, 70–71, 91–92.

table and cried with joy" upon reading the first issue.<sup>4</sup> The story of the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881 was told and re-told in word and picture, and the course of the Russian revolution was followed. The events and background of European and especially Japanese workers' strikes were covered in bloody detail. A travelogue of the slums of London appeared.<sup>5</sup> Above all, protests and revolts in China were lovingly described with faith and hope.<sup>6</sup>

*Natural Justice* also published the first lengthy Chinese translation from *The Communist Manifesto* as well as other Marxist texts. A woman writing under the pen name "Zhida" (He Zhen?) translated an excerpt from Friedrich Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*<sup>7</sup> The first chapter (about a third) of the *Manifesto* was translated in the spring of 1908 by "the Voice of the People" from Sakai Toshihiko's 1904 Japanese translation of the English version.<sup>8</sup> *Proletariat* was translated as "common people" (*pingmin*) and *bourgeois* as "gentry" (*shenshi*) but both were defined as Marx and Engels specified in terms of wage labor and ownership of the means of production respectively. In an afterword, Liu Shiwei claimed that the English term *bourgeoisie* included

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<sup>4</sup> "Xingde Qiushui laihan" (A letter from K5toku Shusui), *Tianyi* no. 3 (10 July 1907), pp. 51–52.

<sup>5</sup> See inter alia "Lundun zhi pinminku," *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907) pp. 269–270.

<sup>6</sup> "Ai wo nongren" and (written by Gongquan) "Wuhu Wanqinghu nongmin kangzu ji" (Alas for Chinese farmers, and The tax resistance movement of Wanqing Lake), *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907), pp. 249–250, 251–255. This was but one of many tax protests.

<sup>7</sup> "Nuzi wenti yanjiu" (Research on women's issues), *Tianyi* no. 16–19, pp. 645–49. See Engels, *The Origin of Family, Private Property and State* pp. 78–82. Other Marxist works translated included "Shehui zhuyi jingji lun" (Socialist Economics), translated from H. M. Hyndman, the Marxist leader of the Social Democratic Federation in England, *Tianyi* no. 16–20, pp. 531–40.

<sup>8</sup> Tr. Min Ming, "Gongchandang xuanyan," *Tianyi* no. 16–19, pp. 511–29. Brief excerpts from the *Manifesto* had been published in *Minbao*, including Zhu Zhixin's translation from the Japanese of its ten points in *Minbao* no. 2, p. 4—see Bernal, *Chinese Socialism to 1907*, pp. 115–117.

capitalists proper plus rich families and the ruling class. According to Liu, the term was like the colloquial Chinese “old master” (*laoye*), not to be limited to government officials nor yet a true aristocracy. As interpreters of Marxism, the Chinese anarchists were already altering Marx’s emphasis on the industrial working class. The Chinese stuck to a more generalized notion of a class division between oppressive rulers who used state mechanisms and the mass of peasants and workers.

Terminology aside, the translation generally followed Marx’s and Engels’ rapturous praise of the bourgeoisie’s historical role, including its enticement of backward nations “into civilization” and the way in which its cheap commodity prices batter down “all Chinese walls.”<sup>9</sup> It traced the rise of the bourgeoisie through urbanization, political centralization, imperialism, and the creation of massive industries. As description, this surely seemed right to Chinese radicals, buffeted by economic as well as military winds from the West. And it traced the imminent fall of the bourgeoisie through periodic economic crisis and the creation of the common people—the class of wage laborers. A few Chinese from the cities of the littoral might understand *pingmin* as something like Marx’s proletariat, for a new class of permanent urban workers was being created in cities like Shanghai. But the translation tended to obscure the point of the original that revolution would come from workers in the cities, not peasants in the countryside. While “the Voice of the People” managed to present Marxist categories of analysis in roughly their original form, the sinification of Marxism had begun. Lu Xun, for one, first read the *The Communist Manifesto* in *Natural Justice*.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> “Gongchandang xuanyan,” p. 518: “... Zhina chengbi yi wei suocui.”

<sup>10</sup> Chen Shuyu, “Lu Xun liu-Ri shiqi jiechu ‘Gongchandang xuanyan’ de yixie xiansuo” (A few clues concerning Lu Xun’s encounter with *The Communist Manifesto* during his stay in Japan), *Lu Xunyanjiu ziliao*, 1:294–298. Lu also submitted literary manuscripts to *Natural Justice*, but apparently they were not published.

oppression, but he spoke in favor of assassination. “Revolutionary assassination” represented “individual self-sacrifice for the sake of wiping out the enemies of humanity and extending justice through the world.”<sup>71</sup> The ultimate danger Li foresaw was that nationalists and militarists would work on their own behalf instead of for humanity (*rendao*). Anarchist antimilitarism was an attempt to leap out of a self-perpetuating circle of coups, to reach a higher plane where the wishes of the majority of people could lead without the biases of nationalism. Li thought of it tactically as well:

If no people of any nation wished to go to war, their generals would be stuck. Then if one day there were no armies the powers of their government would be nil. Internally, they would not be able to coerce their people and externally they would not be able to invade other nations. Thus, antimilitarism is truly a very useful aspect of anarchism.<sup>72</sup>

Li believed that propaganda—theory—was itself a form of practice (*shixing, shijian*).<sup>73</sup> The deeds of the Chinese anarchists might not compare with the spectacular assassinations of France or Russia, Li admitted, but he seemed to think that different national conditions warranted the different approaches. Propagandists, too, faced risks as they fulfilled their duty to speak out fully, he said.

Strikes were another important tool of the revolution. Although brought about because of immediate grievances, they also were a means of long-term “opposition to capitalists and resistance to authority.”<sup>74</sup> Li strongly supported the formation of labor unions.

<sup>71</sup> “Bo *Xin Shiji cong shu* geming (fei shehuidang laigao) fuda,” p. 18. See also “Laishu (junhun) fuda” (A letter [from Military Spirit] and reply), *Xin Shiji* no. 6 (27 July 1907), pp. 21–22, and “Da junhunshi dierci shu” (Reply to the second letter from Military Spirit), *Xin Shiji* no. 8 (10 August 1907) p. 30, for views of the nationalists.

<sup>72</sup> “Laishu (junhun) fuda,” p. 21.

<sup>73</sup> “Da pangguanzi,” pp. 25–26.

<sup>74</sup> “Bagong” (Strikes), *Xin Shiji* no. 92 (14 April 1909), Shanghai ed., p. 5.

the process of joining world progress, Li foresaw, China would experience social revolution. However, his fundamental categories of social judgment remained, linguistically at least, traditional: public (*gong*) and private (or selfish, *si*). Time and again Li uses this dichotomy, in a variety of ways from simply condemning an opposing view as “selfish” to raising *public* to a kind of realm of true freedom.<sup>67</sup> Look at the *goal* of an uprising, Li urged. If public, then it was a true revolution. If private, then it was simply a *coup d’etat* of a minority. If revolutionaries tried to overthrow authority, assassinate officials, and in general improve the human lot, then Li considered them public.<sup>68</sup> That is, the proof of the public nature of a revolutionary act depended not on the extent of its support but on its intentionality: whether it was motivated by the desire to see a revolution of the masses (*zhongren geming*).

On occasion, Li also put his demand for revolution in moral or even religious terms. He spoke of obligation (*baode*) to the people and the need to show gratitude (*baoen*).<sup>69</sup> These were strong words that also contained a certain Buddhist religiosity. He also urged self-sacrifice on those who would pursue revolution, at the same time that he believed that revolution was inevitable.<sup>70</sup> For the spirit of self-sacrifice necessary for successful revolution would itself arise naturally, without reluctant souls having to force themselves into difficult postures.

In the end, Li’s vision of revolution had little—though some—room for violence. Like all anarchists, he abhorred militarism and feared the capacity of armed revolution to establish new forms of

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<sup>67</sup> See “Da pangguanzi” (Reply to Bystander), *Xin Shiji* no. 7 (3 September 1907), p. 26.

<sup>68</sup> For example, Li praised Ma Fuyi for having these characteristics, even though his rebellion did not carry majority support at the time. Ma led the Pingxiang uprising in Hunan in late 1906.

<sup>69</sup> “Da moushishi shu” (Reply to a letter), *Xin Shiji* no. 8 (10 August 1907), p. 31.

<sup>70</sup> “Xisheng jishen jili yi qiu gongdao zhi daibiao Xu Xilin,” p. 46.

Additionally, one of the Engels’ prefaces to *The Communist Manifesto* appeared in *Natural Justice* about the beginning of 1908.<sup>11</sup> Chinese readers thus could learn something of the failed European revolutions of 1848, Marx’s trust in the intelligence of the working class, and a somewhat specialized printing history of the *Manifesto* (which did, however, make plain the international appreciation of communism). Above all, the Preface contained a concise statement of historical materialism:

in every historical epoch, production and distribution always take on a special economic form. Social organization necessarily follows from it, and produces political and cultural history. They are constructed on its base and can only be explained in terms of this base. Thus the entire history of humankind, since tribal society holding land in common dissolved, has been a history of class struggle (*jieji douzheng zhi lishi*), that is, contests between exploiting (*lueduo*) and exploited classes, oppressive (*yazhi*) and oppressed classes. And this history of continuing class struggles has now, through a series of stages of social evolution, reached a new stage, in which the two classes [*sic*] of the exploited and the oppressed wish to throw off the authority of the exploiting and oppressing classes to liberate themselves. And in destroying distinctions of exploitation and oppression, they will terminate class struggle. One can thus conclude that the whole of society will reach an unprecedented liberation.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Tr. “Min Ming” (Voice of the People), “Gongchandang xuanyan The communist manifesto xuyan” (*sic*), *Tianyi* no. 15, pp. 461–468. This translation was based on the Preface to the English edition of 1888 (presumably through a Japanese translation).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 466; cf. *The Communist Manifesto*, pp. 50–51.

The Chinese version dropped Engels' specific reference to the role of the proletariat, but the fundamental point was faithfully translated: that social revolution would bring about a wholly new stage in history and that the process was based on modes of production (imperfectly but clearly translated as "special economic methods" *jingjishang teshu zhi fangfa*). Liu Shiwei, in his preface to the translation, criticized Marx and Engels for their supposed devotion to parliamentary niceties (an opinion based on the activities of the Social Democrats in Germany). "If their so-called communism is that of a democratic system, then it is not anarcho-communism."<sup>13</sup> (Indeed, Marx was, to a degree, sympathetic to the possibilities of peaceful, "democratic" change.)<sup>14</sup> Neither collectivism nor state socialism was acceptable to Liu. Though he criticized Marx for supposedly turning away from revolution in his later years, he praised the *Manifesto* as a product of Marx's younger years for its unwavering devotion to class struggle and revolution. "If one wishes to understand the development of European capitalism, one must study this work." Furthermore, it demonstrates "that from ancient times to today all social change stems from class struggle."

The Chinese in Paris also followed events back home avidly; Xu Xilin and Qiu Jin were idolized. The slightest uprising or protest received prompt attention.<sup>15</sup> As well, international revolutionary trends were closely followed. Nearly every issue of *New Century*

<sup>13</sup> "Gongchandang xuanyan xu," *Tianyi* no. 16–19, p. 510.

<sup>14</sup> Though, for example, he considered universal suffrage good not in itself but as a means to further class consciousness. See Thomas, *Karl Marx and the Anarchists*, pp. 343–346.

<sup>15</sup> Wu Zhihui wrote on Duanfang—*Xin Shiji* no. 9 (17 August 1907)—and court politics. For notice of revolutionary uprisings, see inter alia "Saoke," "Yikai juidiao Xu Bo xiansheng shenghui" (A memorial service for Xu Xilin), *Xin Shiji* no. 10 (24 August 1907); "Zhen" (Li Shizeng), "Xisheng jishen jili yi qiu gongdao zhi daibiao Xu Xilin" (Xu Xilin, who sacrificed his body and his self-interest to seek justice), *Xin Shiji* no. 21 (7 September 1907), p. 46; "Shenbao zhi diaoxi niitongbao (Memorializing a woman comrade [Qiu Jin] from *Shenbao*), *Xin Shiji* no. 11 (31 August 1907), p. 44; "Xu Qiu erjun shilue" (A brief account of the two heroes Xu

rulers and the people, between the rich and the poor, and between men and women.

It operated through force and through superstition (*mixin*).<sup>64</sup> In other words:

What is revolution? Exterminating kings and emperors, and overthrowing governments, Why do we want to exterminate kings and emperors and overthrow governments? Because kings, emperors, and governments, though a tiny minority, have taken for themselves all the happiness (*liyi*) and the very lives that should belong to the vast majority of the people. Is there anything else to revolution? Only the search for justice (*qiugongdao*).<sup>65</sup>

Those who blindly followed authority were stupid.<sup>66</sup> In Li's view, authority originally grew out of force but soon depended on superstition (or false morality, *weidaode*) to maintain itself. And "if superstition is broken then the authority of force cannot stand alone." Thus, Li must have believed the first task of revolution to be ideological. Once people realized that, say, men should not have special rights over women, then pure force would not be able to withstand the onslaught of the truth.

From this basic position, then, Li's anarchism was as inherently social as it was cultural or political. Not just government but economic institutions and all human relations were *questioned*. He would challenge the whole basis of Chinese thinking and replace it with the dynamic force he considered science to be. And in

<sup>64</sup> By superstition Li meant a whole gamut of ideological reasoning, propaganda, and unquestioned premises along the lines of the Gramscian "hegemony." Li developed this notion in his discussion of sexual revolution; see ch. 6.

<sup>65</sup> "Xisheng jishen jili yi qiu gongdao zhi daibiao Xu Xilin" (Xu Xilin, representative of self-sacrifice in the search for justice), *Xin Shiji* no. 12 (7 September 1907), p. 46.

<sup>66</sup> "Moushi yu *Xin Shiji* shu (fuda)", p. 31.

society.” Otherwise, Li predicted, a revolution would represent only the victory of an armed minority establishing its own authority.

Although never as specific as Liu Shiwei about what he expected the masses to do—or who the masses were—Li too believed that the revolution would be made only by the masses. The masses were in a sense a tool of evolution, but also independent agents. “The way to breach Datong is for the masses to know the truth and believe the truth (*zhongren zhidao xindao*), and then proceed to destroy that which hinders universal principles and justice (*gongli gongdao*), the greatest hindrance being government...”<sup>60</sup> It is in this sense that Li defined *gongli* as “that which human wisdom agrees on.”<sup>61</sup>

Li strongly defended the Chinese people against the charges of being immature, illiterate, and backward.<sup>62</sup> While Li did not deny that education produced more progressive (*kaitong*) people (otherwise, he might have had to question his favorite route to progress and the role of anarchist propaganda), he strongly denied that the only Chinese with education were officials. Thousands of students, in one of Li’s examples, belonged to “the people” (*baixing*) and would never join the government. On the other hand, Li’s view was limited by his failure to consider specifically the revolutionary potential of the peasants or even urban-based small merchants. Unlike Wu Zhihui, he was not hostile to peasant uprisings on the grounds that they were putschist, but he still looked to students to water the roots of the tree of evolution.

Li defined revolution as opposition to those who turned their back on universal principles or justice (*gongli*), that is, those in authority.<sup>63</sup> Authority took three forms of inequality: between the

<sup>60</sup> “Laishu (junhun) fuda,” p. 21.

<sup>61</sup> “Jenzhi zhi tongcheng” “Moushi yu *Xin Shiji* shu (fuda)” (A letter to *Xin Shiji* and reply), *Xin Shiji* no. 8 (10 August 1907), p. 30.

<sup>62</sup> “Bo guan bi baixing hao” (Contra officials are better than the people), *Xin Shiji* nos. 4, 6 (13, 27 July 1907), pp. 13–14, 23.

<sup>63</sup> “Narinii zhi geming” (The sexual revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 7 (3 August 1907), p. 27.

contained a column on the week’s revolutionary events (from labor unions in Britain to bombings in Portugal) and many featured a kind of almanac of historical uprisings of the week in question.

Like the Tokyo group, *New Century* writers considered Marxian socialists the least revolutionary in the movement because of their acceptance of electoral politics and the ensuing tendency to seek power for its own sake.<sup>16</sup> (Li Shizeng compared this sort of European socialist to China’s constitutionalists.) Unlike *Natural Justice*, *New Century* did not present any Marxist translations, though Engels was occasionally cited. However, both revolutionary socialists and anarchists won praise, even while the Chinese recognized that anarchism had split off from socialism because of “socialism’s dictatorial nature.”<sup>17</sup>

The antimilitarist movement was thoroughly covered, and if *New Century* tended to exaggerate its importance, it was nonetheless an article of faith for socialists and anarchists that workers would refuse to join another war. Indeed, some members of the upper classes were interested in ending warfare as well.<sup>18</sup> The Chinese were not alone in linking science to politics. *New Century* translated an article by Alfred Russel Wallace, the codiscoverer of natural selection entitled “Militarism—The Curse of Civilisation.”<sup>19</sup> And the alienist Enrico Ferri’s “Socialismo e Scienza Positiva” also tried to put politics onto the firm bed of science.<sup>20</sup> Without some kind

[Xilin] and Qiu [Jin]; *Xin Shiji* no. 14 (21 September 1907), pp. 54–55. Articles from student journals in China and Japan on Xu and Qiu were reprinted as well.

<sup>16</sup> Li Shizeng, “Ji shehui dang wuzhengfudang wanguo gongjuhui” (The international meetings of the socialists and anarchists), *Xin Shiji* no. 41 (21 September 1907), pp. 53–54.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>18</sup> For the inclusive nature of the antimilitarist movement in Europe, see Tuchman, *The Proud Tower*, chs. 5 and 8.

<sup>19</sup> “Paichi junguo zhuyi” (A condemnation of militarism), *Xin Shiji* no. 39 (21 March 1908), pp. 153–154.

<sup>20</sup> “Shehui zhuyi yu shiyan kexue” (Socialism and experimental science), *Xin Shiji* no. 45 (2 May 1908), pp. 179–180. See also Li Shizeng, “Aierwei fandui zuguo

of faith in European antimilitarism the Chinese anarchists could not have urged China to lay down her own arms and risk further imperialist assault.

*New Century* also presented international anarchism, its organization, and some sense of its inner theoretical struggles. The debates within the anarchist movement about collectivism, syndicalism, and the degree of organization that might be permitted were introduced.<sup>21</sup> Articles on Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin filled several issues.<sup>22</sup> Li Shizeng translated Kropotkin's "The State: Its Historic Role."<sup>23</sup> This work was a kind of summary of *Mutual Aid* and dealt with the reasons why the state could not be used to further socialism, that is, as Kropotkin put it, why the state "both in its present form, in its very essence, and in whatever guise it might appear [is] an obstacle to the social revolution." He distinguished on the one hand between state (*guojia*) and society (*shehui*) and on the other hand between state and government (*zhengfu*). While the latter two are linked because "there can be no state without government,"

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zhuyi" (Herve's opposition to nationalism), *Xin Shiji* no. 18–19 (19, 26 October 1907), pp. 69–70, 73; and Wu Zhihui, "Deguo fandui junguo zhuyi zhi fengchao" (Antimilitarist tendencies in Germany), *Xin Shiji* no. 19 (26 October 1907), p. 74.

<sup>21</sup> For notices of meetings in Amsterdam, see *Xin Shiji* no. 6 (27 July 1907), p. 22; Li Shizeng reported on the meeting in "Ji shehuidang yu wu-zhengfudang wanguo gongjuhui" (The international meetings of the socialists and anarchists), *Xin Shiji* no. 41 (21 September 1907), pp. 53–54.

<sup>22</sup> See inter alia "Puludong" (Proudhon), *Xin Shiji* no. 7 (3 August 1907), p. 27; with numerous excerpts translated by Li Shizeng, "Bakuning xueshuo" (The theories of Bakunin), *Xin Shiji* no. 9–10 (17–24 August 1907), pp. 33–34, 37, and "Kerupotejin xueshou" (The theories of Kropotkin), *Xin Shiji* nos. 12, 15, 16, 17 (7, 28 September, 5, 12 October 1907). Kropotkin's "Law and Authority" was translated as "Falu yu chianquan" (*Xin Shiji* nos. 40–43, 47 (28 March, 4–18 April, 16 May 1908), pp. 157, 161, 165, 186.

<sup>23</sup> "Guojia jiqi quoku zhi renwu," *Xin Shiji* nos. 58–62, 66–83 (carried from August 1908 to February 1909); see the Shanghai ed. See also Kropotkin, *Selected Writings on Anarchism and Revolution*, pp. 210–264 (originally published in *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 19 December 1896.

related how he had been gradually brought around by the force of the anarchists' arguments and concluded:

Today the opinions in *New Century* are considered terrifying while just ten years ago the ideas of abolishing the eight-legged essay and establishing a constitution and the like were considered terrifying.<sup>57</sup> Today [everyone agrees] the eight-legged essay should be abolished and a constitution established. In the future, the ideas of *New Century* will also be put into practice... Who knows if in another ten or twenty years people won't regard the ideas in *New Century* as utterly ordinary.<sup>57</sup>

When they heard of the establishment of the Society for the Study of Socialism in Tokyo, the Chinese anarchists in Paris greeted the news of distant comrades not only with a euphoric "We are not alone," but also with the comment, "In the world today, travel is at the speed of a shooting star, the mails fly on electricity... [This demonstrates] the quickening pace of evolution."<sup>58</sup>

Li Shizeng and Wu Zhihui regarded revolution as just another manifestation of evolution. They shared a distaste for violence. Yet Li's own faith in the masses was clear, if seldom expressed. It was the masses (*zhongren*) who would make an economic revolution. It was the masses who had "revolutionary spirit and ability."<sup>59</sup> They, not critics and not even socialists, would create the "correct

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<sup>57</sup> "Quandu *Xin Shiji* zhe wuhai *Xin Shiji* zhi yilun" (Advice to *New Century* readers not to be alarmed at the ideas in *New Century*), *Xin Shiji* no. 16 (5 October 1907), p. 63.

<sup>58</sup> "Wudao bugu" (We are not alone), *Xin Shiji* no. 13 (14 September 1907), p. 51.

<sup>59</sup> "... Geming zhi jingshen nengli": "Bo *Xin Shiji congshu* geming (fei shehuidang laigao) fuda" (Contra the revolution of *Xin Shiji congshu* [a letter from an antisocialist] with reply), *Xin Shiji* no. 5 (20 July 1907), pp. 17–18. Many of Li's anarchist essays are also reprinted in his collected works, *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 1:1–173.



nature—and science—it referred to valid models and paradigms; it also implied what was right: justice. As it was outlined over the next three years, scientific principle loosely implied (a) the overthrow of physical superstitions ranging from ghosts to spontaneous generation; (b) the overthrow of social superstitions from inequality and monarchy to the inferiority of women; and (c) a verifiably correct worldview. This scientific principle was thus inherently revolutionary; given certain social strains, actual revolutionary conditions were seen to react dialectically with scientific principle; the two forces were seen as leading each other to progressively higher levels throughout the nineteenth century. The anarchists believed that a natural process resulting in constant social betterment had begun.

Thus *New Century* reflected attitudes widely shared among the Chinese intelligensia. All believed in the need for fundamental change—in political and social structure and in national character and mental habits—and, with a strong dose of idealism, sought universalist explanations in science and progress. Some believed in a kind of evolutionary determinism. On the other hand, evolution, or progress, had also to be sought. “The greatest cause of evolution is wide learning through which new truths are discovered”; since recently it had been Europeans who discovered most of the new truths, Chinese should travel to Europe to experience the “fresh air.”<sup>56</sup> One had to make evolution work; it would not otherwise come naturally. Neither the leadership of a hero nor the moral transcendence of a sage, but the voluntarism of the ordinary person would lead China into civilization. Nonetheless, whatever the motive force, the fact of rapid progress seemed evident. There was one side of evolution that all agreed was proceeding as if it were a self-propelled force: technology. One correspondent

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<sup>56</sup> By “Qing” (Green), “Luzhou jigan” (Feelings recorded on a ship), *Xin Shiji* no. 7 (3 August 1907), p. 28. Qing’s main point was that Chinese should not be put off by European insults or by their own prejudices but needed to study abroad.

it seems to me that in state and government we have two concepts of a different order. The state idea means something quite different from the idea of government. It not only includes the existence of a power situated above society, but also of a territorial concentration as well as the concentration of many functions of the life of societies in the hands of a few.<sup>24</sup>

The bulk of the article dealt with the evolution of society from tribal clans (never isolated families) through village communities and the trend toward private property, village federations, the unholy alliance between church and princely authority, feudalism and serfdom: “The whole of Europe appeared to be moving toward the constitution of those barbarian kingdoms similar to the ones found today in the heart of Africa or of those theocracies one learns of in Oriental history.”<sup>25</sup> But, in Europe, the rise of free towns constituted a true revolution in the Middle Ages, based on brotherhoods and guilds. Kropotkin, and Li, saw the future foreshadowed in the commune (*zizhi rongmeng*), the free town of the Middle Ages. (However, alas, the free town went the way of the Roman Empire itself, and the rise of the nation-state in the sixteenth century brought authority back into the lives of all people.) The point: society—humans working out different arrangements by which they could get along—was the norm, not the state.

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<sup>24</sup> Kropotkin, p. 213; Li, p. 288. Li, pp. 303–304, also translated Kropotkin’s delicious satire of the social contract: “... In the beginning men lived in small isolated families, and perpetual warfare between them was the normal state of affairs. But one fine day, realizing at last the disadvantages that resulted from their endless struggles, men decided to join forces. A social contract was concluded among the scattered families who willingly submitted themselves to an authority which—need I say?—became the starting point as well as the initiator of all progress,” p. 214.

<sup>25</sup> Li, p. 352; Kropotkin, p. 226.

Li Shizeng also began the translation into Chinese of Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*.<sup>26</sup> This job was suited to a person with Li's training in biology and he considered the work both scientifically valid in filling Darwinism's major hole and also socially valuable. Li abridged the work slightly and stopped at the end of the second chapter ("Mutual aid among animals"), but Kropotkin's essential message and the biological aspect of his supporting arguments were successfully translated. Although Li thus omitted Kropotkin's historical arguments, these were largely recapitulated in "The State: Its Historic Role." In any case, Li put one of the major social documents of the twentieth century into Chinese hands only a few years after it was first published in 1902 and introduced the term mutual aid (*huzhu*), which became an influential if ambiguous construct.<sup>27</sup> In his own words, Li concluded,

The twentieth century is truly the century for revolution. All nations—autocracies, constitutional monarchies, and republics, differing in government forms and the wills of their peoples, differing in revolutionary thought, methods, and readiness—all nations are facing rising revolutionary tides... The revolution of the twentieth century will be a revolution of the whole world... This [world] revolution will be as great as the ocean while the courses of the various revolts are like small streams. But streams all enter the ocean, some from close by, some from afar, some smoothly, some with difficulty; they each follow their individual terrain and their courses differ, but they all flow toward the sea.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Taking up twenty issues of *Xin Shiji* in the first six months of 1908 (nos. 31–51).

<sup>27</sup> Li went on to translate two more chapters, over half the work; see *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 1:102–173.

<sup>28</sup> "Wanguo geming zhi fengchao" (International revolutionary tendencies), *Xin Shiji* no. 32 (1 February 1908), pp. 125–126.

and revolution aims to carry out principles. Thus, the goals of science and revolution both lie in seeking principle. Their difference lies -, in the difference between underlying principle (*yuanli*) and practice.<sup>54</sup>

The Chinese anarchists sought a "progressive revolution" (*jinhua zhi geming*): a fundamental revolution of the majority of people. A true revolution would be unprecedented, for previous revolutions had, at best, only partially succeeded. The Chinese acknowledged the French Revolution of 1789, with its regicide and emphasis on human rights, as an important milestone, and the Paris Commune of 1871, with its socialist propaganda, as a precursor of social revolution. Nonetheless, they saw their own world at a major turning point:

The discoveries of scientific principle (*kexue gongli*) and the rising storms of revolution have truly distinguished the people of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These two phenomena have interacted upon each other to produce the natural principle of social progress (*shehui jinhua ziran zhi gongli*). -This principle is the goal of revolution, and revolution is the means for seeking principle. Thus, without principle, there can be no revolution, and without revolution, there is no method for extending principle.<sup>55</sup>

A concern with means as well as ends is evident. If Western anarchists more or less took science for granted, for the Chinese, it seemed as revolutionary as any purely social or political principle. But what was meant by *principle*? This ambiguous term collapsed description and prescription, science and morality. As part of

<sup>54</sup> "Geming yuanli" (The principles of revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 22 (16 November 1907), p. 85.

<sup>55</sup> "*Xin Shiji zhi geming*," p. 1.

Liu and He Zhen did not believe in incremental improvement. They believed in revolution.

## ENLIGHTENMENT AND REVOLUTION

revolutionary optimism inspired the Paris anarchists. Justice and altruism (*gongliyu liangxin*) were the first of their many principles. Not simply revolution but evolution and “the revolution of daily renewal” were their means.<sup>51</sup> The fight against privilege took in the whole world. The journal itself was to be edited cooperatively, and correspondents were told they could remain anonymous, an option clearly necessary for a revolutionary publication that the Chinese government did indeed monitor. After a year of publishing, the editors declared that anarchism could be understood as opposition to religion, family, private property, patriotism, and militarism, “in a word, ‘opposition to authority.’”<sup>52</sup> After a year, the editors found, people were no longer startled and terrified by such ideas, the positive side of which, after all, was no more than “perfect benevolence, perfect kindness, perfect public-spiritedness, and perfect rectitude (*zhiren, zhici, zhigong, zkizheng*).”

The inaugural issue related “scientific principle,” revolution, and social progress to a uniquely revolutionary moment.<sup>53</sup> As Li Shizeng later put it:

The correct principles of revolution stem from true science. Recently, the burgeoning growth in social revolutionary trends has progressed hand in hand with science. Science seeks the discovery of principles (*gongli*)

<sup>51</sup> “... Riri gengxin zhi geming,” “*Xin Shiji fakan zhi quyī*” (Precepts for publishing *Xin Shiji*), *Xin Shiji* no. 1 (22 June 1907), p. 1. This article, like most of the unsigned pieces in the magazine, was by Wu.

<sup>52</sup> “Benguan guanggao” (A notice from this publishing house), *Xin Shiji* no. 52 (20 June 1908), p. 201.

<sup>53</sup> “*Xin Shiji zhi geming*” (The *Xin Shiji* revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 1 (22 June 1907), pp. 1–2 (probably by Li Shizeng).

## CLASS STRUGGLE AND REVOLUTION

Liu shipei altered the emphasis. He argued that revolution offered hope to oppressed people. His references to the general strike and the overflowing goodness of the people imply a spontaneous mass movement of such magnitude that its enemies will simply crumble. Like the Russian populists (and the future Mao), Liu believed that peasants, too, will and must rebel. Given time, the “whole people” (*quanti zhi min*) will free itself.<sup>29</sup>

Liu’s call for the entire people—men, women, peasants, workers—to revolt was an important exception to the general idea of the time that change would come to China at the hands of students, or secret societies, or the new armies, or even the gentry. If it seems unremarkable in view of the overwhelmingly obvious peasant question facing China, and anarchist and populist attempts to involve peasants in movements in Russia and southern Europe, Liu’s call was nonetheless a significant breakthrough in Chinese revolutionary theory. Although probably not the first to mention the role of peasants in the coming revolution, Liu was unique in giving them a considerable amount of attention. In general, revolutionaries made little effort before 1911 to mobilize the masses, though contact was made with rural secret societies. Writers in *The People’s Journal* occasionally recognized workers and peasants as a “dynamic force,”<sup>30</sup> but it was Liu who worked out the notion so thoroughly that it became central to his theory of revolution. This aspect of Liu’s thought remained primitive and purely theoretical, but his active sympathy for the plight of the peasant gave his theoretical writings an unusually immediate quality.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> “Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshī,” p. 143.

<sup>30</sup> See Price, *Russia*, pp. 156–157.

<sup>31</sup> In contrast, as Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries*, p. 157, correctly generalizes, most revolutionaries “were not prepared to lead a purely peasant revolt against rents and taxes even though they might deplore the oppression of the

“Once China’s peasants engage in revolution, the anarchist revolution will be complete.”<sup>32</sup> Liu’s hopeful analysis rested on a number of assumptions about the peasantry: that they were naturally cooperative (and could be organized into a fighting force); that they were already Unconscious anarchists, resistant to authority; that they were basically communistic, sharing goods even while their fields were privately owned; and that they were capable of revolt, as shown throughout Chinese history. Of course, Liu noted that the peasants comprised the vast majority of Chinese population, thus making their revolution both just and easily effected. Equally important for Liu’s analysis of the revolutionary potential of the peasantry was his point that the majority of capitalists in China were in fact landlords. As such, they were directly vulnerable to a peasant revolution, which would result in the overthrow of capitalism in addition to the government. Overall, Liu neither exalted nor minimized class struggle. The emphasis that Liu (and He Zhen) gave to a revolution of the whole people (only excluding a tiny minority of big capitalists, landlords, and state bureaucrats), and especially to peasants, was obviously prescient. Perhaps Liu’s emphasis on tax resistance, a form of class struggle that could be either violent or peaceful, stemmed from China’s vibrant history of tax protests and occasional remissions.

Over the course of 1908, Liu particularly focused on these questions, saying that the revolution must indeed be made by workers (*laomin*)<sup>33</sup> Liu thought that the consciousness of China’s workers was rising and that the general strike could defeat the relatively

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masses... They sought to use, lead, and educate the people, but not to bridge the social gap and identify themselves closely with the attitudes and problems of the peasantry.”

<sup>32</sup> “Wuzhengfu geming yu nongmin geming” (Anarchist revolution and peasant revolution), WSZ, pp. 158–162 (originally published in *Hengbao* no.4, 28 June 1908); quotation from p. 158.

<sup>33</sup> “Hankou baodong lun” (The riots in Hankou), WSZ, pp. 142–151 (originally published in *Hengbao* no. 4, 28 May 1908).

can use it to benefit the people. Otherwise, reforms only benefit the upper classes.

In some detail, Liu discussed how new schools, new parliaments, new industry, and so forth were all controlled by those who already held power. Thus they become new instruments of control and domination. In addition, Liu noted, taxes go up and inflation follows. The reforms are class-based, stem from feudalism, and lead to a new form of feudalism. The proper course for China, Liu implied, is to take advantage of her traditions and use the progress that has been made in material civilization to benefit the masses (*zhongmin*) without creating new class divisions. “Reforms are even worse than conservatism, constitutionalism is even worse than autocracy... But, alas, the population is bewitched and few understand this notion.”<sup>49</sup>

Liu’s criticism of the modern world was informed by his nostalgic view of the past. Yet his vision of a superior future also shaped his criticism of reform—and of the West.<sup>50</sup> Liu judged reform proposals on the basis of a simple standard: would they benefit the people? Occasional bouts of evolutionism to the contrary, Liu fundamentally saw nothing inevitable about progress (or anything progressive about it either). He condemned industrialization for reducing living standards. He noted that indeed modern industry was more efficient: that was precisely the problem, for it could drive traditional businesses to bankruptcy. Liu was a *Luddite*; he believed in modern industry only if machines really benefited all the people, which is to say only if anarchism were already in place. Politics (or nonpolitics) should be in command; and this was his utopian vision.

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 193, 201.

<sup>50</sup> This criticism was not based solely on the “all or nothing” belief but was also quite specific. A translation of a Japanese report appended to “How Reforms Hurt the People” described conditions in London’s slums, murder rates in the West, beggars in Japan, and the like; *ibid.*, pp. 201–203.

whether planned by the Qing government or by revolutionary theorists. For about the same reasons that made republicanism worse than traditional, weak autocracy, Liu found reform proposals sickening. He was writing in 1907; after the Western powers and Japan had occupied Peking six years before, the Qing finally had turned to consistent, if slow, policies of modernization. For all revolutionaries, it was too little too late (or worse, a threat in the sense that the government might attract some borderline support). From the point of view of the court, reforms were supposed to strengthen the government, but in effect military organization put power into the hands of Yuan Shikai; fiscal restructuring required foreign loans, which further disillusioned local leaders; and educational reforms, aside from costing a lot of money, produced both an angry group of traditionally educated gentlemen who keenly felt the futility of the years of study that they had hoped would provide personal advancement, and also increasing numbers of people educated in a Western curriculum, which produced thousands of revolutionary sympathizers. Fairly vague promises of representative government produced demands for more.

Liu's analysis at the time was a little different. His main complaint was that insofar as the reforms succeeded, they benefited the government and the few at the top of society, while they harmed the vast majority of Chinese peasants and workers. Education, government, industry, law, local security, and fiscal policies—the hands of government grew stronger while the scope of freedom left to the people shrank.<sup>48</sup> Liu's occasional tone of gentle antiquarian scholarship came out in this essay: China's past was not so bad, at least in contrast to proposals for the future; rather, it had been laissez-faire, even containing elements of egalitarianism, allowing, for example, social mobility through the old examination system. Western material civilization is useful, but only an anarchist world

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<sup>48</sup> “Lun xingzheng wei bingmin zhi gen” (Reforms are the root of harming the people), *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907), pp. 193–203.

small numbers of police and troops that the officials and capitalists were able to raise. What the workers needed was unity and organization.<sup>34</sup> These Liu saw in embryonic form in traditional craftsmen's associations, modern unions, provincial and town loyalties, and the secret societies.

Liu was waiting for a spark to ignite a conflagration across all of China, urban and rural. Anarchists can encourage by teaching, terrorism, and even organization but cannot command in a movement designed to do away with leaders. Means and ends must fit each other. Thus revolution for Liu involved as many elements of positive cooperation as it did of destruction. Like Kropotkin, he considered the Red Cross, international peace societies, socialist parties, and the international mail and telegraph system to be harbingers of the world to come. But in the end a violent uprising would be necessary to overthrow the state. Liu distinguished between individual anarchism, which emphasized complete freedom, and his more social anarchism:

Thus we believe in practicing the equality natural to humans, eliminating artificial inequality, overthrowing all the organs of rule, destroying every society divided by social or economic classes, uniting with all the people of the world, and planning for the complete happiness of the people...

... An anarchist world would have neither a center [of concentrated power] nor borders. Without a center, there is no need for government; without borders, there is no need for states.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> “Lun Zhongguo yi zuzhi laomin xiehui” (Workers' associations can organize easily in China), *WSZ*, pp. 153–158 (originally published in *Hengbao* no. 5, 8 June 1908). The article was continued in *Hengbao* no. n (28 September 1908).

<sup>35</sup> “Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan,” pp. 931–932.

Liu believed that anarchism was consistent with world progress, particularly the increase in general scientific knowledge.<sup>36</sup> Here, Liu agreed with a point central to Wu Zhihui's understanding of anarchism. On the other hand, Liu also believed that people had to be first convinced of anarchism, then organized, and governments threatened and leaders assassinated. Then a mass movement involving both workers and peasants would result in revolution, and governments would finally be overthrown for good. Although Liu sharply criticized socialists, Jie agreed that anarchists should cooperate with them for the time being in order to organize workers.

Thus Liu illustrated a very modern understanding of society as a complex structure, although he never used the word structure. At the same time he displayed a certain naivete about how easy a revolution would be to bring about. In effect, Liu transferred Confucian ideals about the transcendent transforming powers of a *junzi* to the people as a whole. More specifically, revolution would come out of the general strike—the people's will; it would as well come about because of more direct methods. Liu's goals remained pure: "Those who promote communism today want to sweep away authority (*quanli*), disestablish government, share all the land, make capital work for society, and have everyone engage in labor."<sup>37</sup>

Liu also believed that China was uniquely suited for anarchism. This remarkable opinion he supported by a historical interpretation of China's laissez-faire (*fangren*) government.<sup>38</sup> It is consistent with his biting criticism of republicanism and even socialism. In sum, Liu believed that the politics of China had long been shaped by Confucianism and Daoism, both of them essentially theories of noninterference (*fei ganshe*). Confucianism emphasized ethics (*tijiao*) and sought to transform the people with morality and ritual, not to control them by laws and punishments

<sup>36</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," p. 31.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>38</sup> See inter alia, "Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshi," pp. 135–140.

with its origins in Greek philosophy and evolution through European history, demanded that the organs of production be publicly owned (*gongyou*). This doctrine presumed that shared labor would produce the capital necessary for "socially shared production," which would then be distributed to all the people. Well and good. However, Liu pointed out that all the varieties of socialism shared one mistaken goal: to concentrate power.<sup>45</sup>

In sum, socialism and anarchism can ally themselves in such positive actions as organizing workers. But socialism is in the end impossible:

As soon as there is a government, then there are people on the top ruling, and organs of distribution below them. Both contradict the goal of equality... Socialism desires to use the power of the state to equalize wealth, but this is easily misused by the state.

Indeed, Liu thought true socialists would probably just follow their own ideals and become anarchists one day.<sup>46</sup> In other words, Liu seemed also to believe that the problem with socialism was that it did not stem from the whole people. The revolutions of the past suffered from this: the French Revolution was limited to Paris, and the American Revolution, limited to merchants, did not help the majority of poor Americans.<sup>47</sup>

If Liu felt sympathy with socialism and appreciated anarchism's debt to the older doctrine, he had only bitter words for reform,

<sup>45</sup> This position is made clear in "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," pp. 930–931–

<sup>46</sup> "Ouzhou shehui zhuyi yu wuzhengfu zhuyi yitong kao" (An examination of the similarities and differences of European socialism and anarchism), *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), pp. 145–148. This essay represents Liu's scholarly tendencies applied to European intellectual history. He was quite aware of such elements in the background of anarchism as the debates between Bakunin and Marx.

<sup>47</sup> "Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshi," p. 144.

revolutionary debating partners that they would lead China into a chaos that would only act as an invitation for further encroachments, and the mainstream revolutionaries hurled similar charges against the anarchists. For them, political revolution was to make China stronger, more heavily militarized and more closely united; anarchism sounded nice but what good could come of disbanding government, eradicating the military, eliminating borders? Liu and He Zhen had a reply that worked on three levels. First, they conceded that an anarchist revolution might temporarily establish a foreign office and war department. Like the anti-Manchus, they believed that a revolutionized China would be a stronger entity; in fact, a communist system would produce military supplies and weaponry more efficiently. Second, beyond that, an alliance of all the weak countries of Asia would be able to cooperate with the anarchists of Europe and the United States to destroy the authority of the whites and overthrow their governments. Thus, third, a world without nations would attain Datong and equality.

Liu and He Zhen seemed to be saying that imperialism was a paper tiger. At the same time, Liu accused any revolutionary who thought that the West would tolerate a revolution in China (Sun Yat-sen?) of making a sad mistake.<sup>44</sup> But he cited Tolstoy's belief that even if China alone were to become anarchist, it would still be impossible to repress the Chinese. There would be no government to grant concessions or extraterritoriality to the imperialists. The capability of the people to protect themselves is far greater than that of any government. And here Liu turned to the Paris Commune and the Sanyuanli incident when, as he saw it, the common people defeated British troops during the Opium War (pride in Sanyuanli is still promoted in Chinese communist historiography).

Socialism shared many traits with anarchism. Both doctrines sought to revolutionize social relations. As Liu put it, socialism,

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<sup>44</sup> Liu makes this remark in "Yazhou xianshi lun" (Current conditions in Asia), *Tianyi* no. 11–12, pp. 345–368.

(*yi deli huamin, buyuyi zhengxing gi min*). And Daoism wanted to eliminate entirely the governing of people (*renzhi*), substituting the natural workings of Heaven (*tianxing zhi ziran*). Autocracy was thus limited in practice to the ruling class; the majority carried on their lives, avoiding officials and courts and even, to a degree, taxes. In this view, ruling class incompetence and corruption allowed the people a certain sphere of action. The Manchu invasion also meant that China lacked a traditional aristocracy. No Han Chinese enjoyed hereditary caste privileges vis-a-vis the Qing court. Furthermore, an aristocracy of wealth never arose since merchants were suppressed and profit disdained.

Liu felt that communism, or anarcho-communism, was especially suitable for a China that had barely developed the notion of private property.<sup>39</sup> From ancient rituals of sharing recorded in the *Li Ji* to their remnants today, Liu pointed to examples of communism (distribution of wealth) within clans, villages, and secret societies. And, "When we compare Chinese society to European or American society, then we find that the laws of the latter emphasize individual property rights to the point where even parents and children keep their wealth to themselves." China, by contrast, long had had informal mechanisms of sharing among the people. Thus, Liu consoled, the task now facing peasants was to seize and redistribute the property of the rich and of officials within each village and town; this would result in higher production levels and satisfy the needs of the populace.

In a sense, all this is pursuit of the advantages of backwardness. If united, the Han people could resist their opponents. Liu and He Zhen believed that if the gentry were freed of Confucian ethics, they would then rebel, and if the lower classes were freed of their superstitious belief in fate (*ming*), then they would rebel. Thus,

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<sup>39</sup> "Lun gongchanzhi yixing yu Zhongguo" (Communism will be easy to practice in China), *WSZ*, pp. 139–141 (originally published in *Hengbao* no. 2, 8 May 1908). See also "Lun Zhongguo yi zuzhi laomin xiehui," *WSZ*, pp. 153–158.

education is again a key element of anarchist revolution. Moreover, Liu and He Zhen saw education as a key to solidarity as well as change.

Peasants will resist their landlords, workers will resist their bosses, the people will resist the officials, the soldiers will resist their officers. They will unite firmly... Some will unite to resist taxes. Some will conduct the general strike.<sup>40</sup>

This understanding of social revolution had to deal with the fact that the theoretical core, the overwhelming emotion of the Revolution of 1911, and the rationale that led up to that event, was anti-Manchu racism. Although most revolutionaries did not stop at anti-Manchism, they invariably agreed on its virtues as a starting point. The concept of *minzu zhuyi* included both nationalism in the sense of Chinese people and also a Han ethnic consciousness. Once the Manchus were out of power, by 1912, talk of racial revolution (*zhongzu geming*) ceased; the Manchus were truly not hated because of their race. Out of power, they did not continue as scapegoats for China's problems. But the perception of the time was of Han subject and Manchu lord. In 1907 the evil Manchus were a more emotional issue to most revolutionaries than Western encroachments and much more important than the question of just what revolution was supposed to produce. If the Manchus lost their mandate precisely because of their incompetence at warding off the West, it was still one of the myths of the mainstream of the revolutionary movement that instant solution lay in getting rid of them. In retrospect it seems a tragic and irresponsible abdication of the intellectual's responsibility, of the radical's duty, that more ink and blood were shed on the Manchu question than on more im-

<sup>40</sup> "Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshi," p. 139.

portant issues—though it is hard to imagine what else could have held the Tongmenghui together.<sup>41</sup>

Liu Shiwei and He Zhen denied that racial revolution had to come before an anarchist revolution.<sup>42</sup> They stated that the opposition to anarchism comes only from those who believe that any revolution would spell disaster and those who think they might personally benefit from government. Racial revolution is not wrong; the Manchus must be expelled. But not because of their race; rather, only because they stole China and seized privileges for themselves. As a former anti-Manchu stalwart, Liu was well aware of their various crimes. They did not farm for themselves; they demanded a special status in the bureaucracy, in law, and in the labor conscription system; they extended their power as a monarchy. However, Liu and He Zhen argued that racism implied either that each people must have its own nation and ban miscegenation, or that all of China's minority groups ought to be under the rule of the Han. Neither view was acceptable. Beyond that, they accused individual revolutionaries of simply pursuing power for themselves. "But we should only consider principle (*gongli*) and not profit (*liyi*)... If a revolution is pursued for self-gain (*zili*), then the revolution will be motivated by private aims (*si*), and its goals limited to self-advancement and self-enrichment."<sup>43</sup> Clearly, no good could come of any movement so limited. Liu and He Zhen pointed out that the revolutionaries' limits were even more evident in the fact that although most citizens (*guomin*) wanted to get rid of the Manchus, the revolutionaries managed to attract only students and secret society members to their side. This criticism is consistent with Liu's wish for all the people to make revolution.

Many Chinese worried about Western imperialism and the possibility of dismemberment. Liang Qichao hurled the charge at his

<sup>41</sup> For a superb discussion of the role of nationalism in radical thought, see Gasster, *Chinese Intellectuals* especially ch. 3.

<sup>42</sup> "Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshi," pp. 135–144.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.



that religion was then used by crafty leaders to support antievolutionary evil customs.

Setting up his straw man, Wu could imagine a number of reasons for respecting religion: that there was indeed morality in religion, though no religion was entirely moral; that morality can be improved by improving religion; that spirits can keep people on the straight and narrow better than a distant morality; and, on a somewhat secular note, that religion can help people cultivate their characters: “Although the Way of Heaven is far, the Mind of the Way (*daoxin*) is firm,” a proposition Wu immediately labeled Confucian. Wu’s fundamental point was that at this stage of history, religion in any form must be opposed as inimical to evolution and socialism. It was associated with law and government. Religion in the past was related not only to the continuation of evil customs but to the perpetuation of the class system as well. People interested in improving morality must be on the side of evolution, which is to say, socialism. “That which is in accord with reason (*daoli*) is morality, and that which makes it possible for it to be in accord with reason is ‘virtue’ (*liangde*). Good morality is the universal principle of evolution.”<sup>24</sup> The entire discussion was about religion in the abstract. No mention was made of any specific religion or historical incident in the entire “debate.”

Another correspondent wrote to *New Century* questioning how to “cure the world.” Human nature, this writer felt, tended to be “selfish, self-interested ... certainly avoids suffering (*ku*) while seeking pleasure (*gan*) ... and certainly avoids harm (*hai*) while seeking benefit (*li*).”<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, this view, which was remarkably similar to Liu Shipei’s opinion of the human condition, need not lead to despair. The correspondent (unlike Liu, who thought faults could be made into virtues by a superior social system) seemed to

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>25</sup> “Tuiguang renshu yi yi shijie guan” (Extending the way of humanity to cure the world), *Xin Shiji* no. 37 (7 March 1908), p. 147.

man intelligence advances they part more and more from the animal state and war will become less frequent.<sup>108</sup>

Li’s emphasis on groups was both Confucian and Kropotkinist, but his faith in progress was uniquely of the nineteenth century.<sup>109</sup> He saw two areas wherein revolution and evolution were working great changes: the world’s various languages were evolving into a single, vastly improved language, and Chinese political and social thought was evolving toward anarchism.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, China could leap from addition and subtraction straight to calculus, without stopping at decimals, fractions, algebra, and the like.<sup>111</sup> This was because, as Li put it, knowledge was the result of the work of many people over time; individuals did not have to relearn old discoveries for themselves. This vision of vast cooperation applied to society also:

Social evolution proceeds from autocracy to freedom, from selfishness to Datong. These theories are not the discovery of an individual in a particular time; thus, today we can learn them quickly, and when we know them we are ready to put them into practice (*zhizhishiyu xingzhishi weiyuan*). For example, the use of the theory of merciless assassination is quite young, yet Chinese have already put it into practice.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., pp. 30–31.

<sup>109</sup> See Pusey, *China and Charles Darwin*, pp. 373–374, 412–413, for another view of Li’s evolutionism.

<sup>110</sup> See “Jinhua yu geming,” pp. 77 ff.

<sup>111</sup> “Bo *Xin Shiji congshu* geming (fei shehuidang laigao) fuda,” p. 18. This is rather like Sun Yat-sen’s famous locomotive analogy—one did not have to recapitulate all the stages of development of an invention before one could use it and even improve upon it.

<sup>112</sup> “Bo *Xin Shiji congshu* geming (fei shehuidang laigao) fuda,” p. 18.

Li's cheerful determinism meant that any force, mental or physical, that stood against evolution would be eliminated by natural selection. Li went so far as to state that ideological progress could neither be made nor be stopped by human intention.

Evolution in thought is the same as other sorts of evolution. There are two related aspects: the internal and the external. The internal refers to intellectual change and the external to influences from other sources. Thus people cannot make mental evolution, and people cannot stop it. This is a law of evolution... According to the principle of the survival of the fittest, first there is debate and then reform. This is a revolution in thought (*sixiang geming*).<sup>113</sup>

Yet Li was not a pure materialist; in his version, mental revolution was part and parcel of all kinds of change, progression, and revolution. But his attention was given over to ideology both as the first task of revolutionaries and also as the means of understanding social evolution. While he found Chinese anarchism to be an "immature sprout," it was rapidly ripening. In the end, Li's determinism was modified drastically by his belief that people could change themselves, that they could make revolution almost as an act of will. But by and large he apparently thought of evolution as a kind of train that the Chinese had to jump onto; the very success of revolution would then prove how revolution fit into evolutionary progress. The only choice was to jump on or stay off; there was no alternate future.

One aspect of revolutionary endeavor involved half the human race: women's revolution.

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<sup>113</sup> "Jinhua yu geming," p. 78.

the people, an intellectual task, their character must be left to traditional religious morality until socialism is achieved. Wu replied to this point by first linking knowledge and character. "Character is cultivated by morality. Morality is determined by beliefs (*zhuyi*),"<sup>21</sup> Wu concluded that any attempt to improve them one at a time was bound to fail; furthermore, the correspondent erred in taking religion to be compatible with socialism.<sup>22</sup>

Wu not only preferred socialism to religion because it contained a more thorough and better morality; he also conceived of socialism as the successor to religion. As civilization progressed, people turned from one set of related beliefs (and institutions such as classes) to another. Wu would refute the correspondent's doubts about the morality and character of the Chinese people with the doctrine of socialism and socialist morality; that is, the content mattered more than the vessel.

The correspondent wrote back some months later as a kind of "religious socialist" (an absurd proposition to Wu).<sup>23</sup> He pointed out that religion and socialism could not be absolute opposites if Wu himself admitted that religion had an element of morality; they were in fact complementary (*xiangdui*). Wu thereupon claimed that the one confused morality with superstition, whereas the other destroyed superstitions on the basis of morality; the one dealt with the relation between people and spirits, the other with the relations among people. Ironically, it was the correspondent who found an evolutionary role for religion as the carrier in ancient times of some morality, if not much by contemporary standards; it "fit the needs of evolution" in its day as socialism may now—further relating the two. This all seems perfectly progressive, but Wu would have none of it. In his view, religion had retarded evolution. Wu granted that an ignorant, primitive people might turn to religion but asserted

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>23</sup> "Zongjiao wenti" (The religious question), *Xin Shiji* nos. 54–55 (4 and 11 October 1907), pp. 224–228, 240–247.

pay heed to Confucius himself. Until the day when we burn up the memorial tablets in the temples, the political revolution will not succeed. Why even speak of the sexual revolution or of an anarchist revolution?" Chu Minyi put the same point in a broader context when he criticized the Confucian tendency to love the past (*haogu*) instead of looking to a better future.<sup>17</sup> Zhang Binglin had attempted to demystify Confucius in the face of Kang Youwei's New Text religiosity, but the anarchists went much farther.<sup>18</sup>

Li Shizeng ridiculed ancestor worship, which he saw as just another prop for authority rooted in superstition.<sup>19</sup> He pointed out that after all his distant ancestors had included monkeys and other animals! In a sense, Li did not blame his own ignorant ancestors for starting ancestor worship and other religious forms, but in the light of today's science "the people who don't advocate ancestor revolution are either stupid or selfish." Li urged that all rites surrounding ancestors be ignored, even to the point of abandoning funeral ceremonies, that grave mounds be leveled, and that spirit tablets destroyed.

Wu Zhihui considered religion in some detail. A reader of *New Century* had declared religion to be necessary for the Chinese people because their knowledge was "thin and weak" and their character "vile and dirty."<sup>20</sup> Wu's fundamental critique of religion did not change from his preanarchist days but became considerably more systematic. Since the first task of the revolution was to enlighten

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<sup>17</sup> "Haogu" (Loving the past), *Xin Shiji* no. 24 (31 November 1970), p. 94; cf. *Analects* 7.19: "The Master said, I for my part am not one of those who have innate knowledge. I am simply one who loves the past (*haogu*) and who is diligent in investigating it." (Tr. Waley, *Analects*, p. 127.)

<sup>18</sup> Shimada Kenji, "Shingai kakumei no Koshi mondai" (The problem of Confucius during the 1911 Revolution), pp. 27–31.

<sup>19</sup> "Zuzong geming" (The ancestor revolutionary), *Xin Shiji* no. 2–3 (29 May–6 June 1907), pp. 7–8, 12.

<sup>20</sup> "Shu moujun youjian hou," p. 166. Like Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor, the correspondent evidently feared that people might commit any crime without the ultimate sanctions of religion.

## CHAPTER 6. *Women's Liberation and Anarcho-Feminism*

The sun, the moon are dim / heaven and earth dark.  
Doomed and desperate women / who will save you?  
Pawning hairpins and rings / crossing the boundless  
    sea  
Tearing flesh from bones / leaving by the jade gate  
Freeing bound feet, burned clean / of a thousand years  
    of poison  
Eager to arouse the souls / of hundreds of flowers.  
  
How pitiful a scene in thin silk veils,  
Half-covered with blood, half with tears.

—*Qiu Jin*, "An Emotion"; Tokyo, 1904<sup>1</sup>

The anarchists turned to the issue of women's liberation with enthusiasm. It naturally fit closely with their ideas of anarchism: state and family were related forms of authoritarianism. He Zhen in particular identified herself as a feminist as well as an anarchist. While her husband emphasized social equality, He Zhen stressed the centrality of women's liberation in a true revolution. *Natural Justice* apparently began as a feminist journal under He Zhen's ed-

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<sup>1</sup> This poem is reprinted in Guo Tingli, ed., *Qiu Jin shiwen xuan* (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1982). For a slightly different translation, see Jonathan D. Spence, *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, p. 52.

itorship; it was feminism that brought her to anarchism.<sup>2</sup> He Zhen never sacrificed her belief in the equality of women for any political considerations; at the same time, women's liberation was but one aspect of the anarchist revolution. Perhaps it was He Zhen who originally turned Liu Shipei's interest to the issue of equality in general, of which women's equality was so clearly an important part.

## WOMEN: DEPENDENCY AND LABOR

Fleeing to Tokyo with Liu, He Zhen organized the Women's Rights Recovery Association (*Nuzi fuquan hut*). This group called for the forcible suppression of male privilege and "interference" with the women who submitted to this oppression. Society, the ruling class, and capitalists were to be resisted. The association's bylaws prohibited support for governments, subservience to men, and becoming a concubine or secondary wife.<sup>3</sup> The section on behavior, heavily influenced by traditional morality, demanded that members persevere through hardships, brave dangers, know shame, respect the larger community (*guigong*), and rectify themselves (*zhengshen*). By way of benefits, the association would come to the aid of any member oppressed by her husband or attempting to resist male dominance in any way.

He Zhen expected women to free themselves; no one would give them their rights. Thus she often adopted a critical and admonitory stance toward her fellow women. But her basic emotions were pity and outrage. A brief catechism in the vernacular, "Women Ought To Know About Communism," summarizes He Zhen's idealism.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See He Zhen's speech to the first meeting of the Society for the Study of Socialism, printed in *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), p. 154.

<sup>3</sup> Hirano Yoshitaro, "Chugoku kakumeiho 'Tengi' no Nihon ni okeru hakkan," pp. 3–4.

<sup>4</sup> "Lun niizi dangzhi gongchanzhuyi," *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907), pp. 229–232.

The Chinese anarchists in Paris specifically emphasized cultural revolution. Confucius was ridiculed.<sup>14</sup> Aside from his attacks on the traditional position of women, Li Shizeng repudiated the three bonds and demanded that the truth of science be recognized over the "religious false morality" that placed ruler, father, and husband over minister, son, and wife.<sup>15</sup> The truth of science was that all were equal. "In the 20<sup>th</sup> century ...," Li pounded home, "truth will drive out superstition in a revolution of thought, and, secondly, individual autonomy (*zili*) will drive out privilege..." For the cant of the three bonds— filial piety, loyalty, virtue, and the like—simply covered up self-interest.

From morality in general to specific customs such as funeral rites, *Xin Shiji* attacked the Chinese tradition. Confucius was too apt a symbol to miss. One writer, making the distinction that government rests on terror and supports itself with superstition, whereas religion rests on superstition and supports itself with terror, considered religion the harder to overthrow.<sup>16</sup> China he found to be a particularly pernicious Confucian theocracy; revolution in countries where religion and government were intermixed was difficult. The author also expressed the fairly subtle point that at a given time superstition could be useful in promoting evolutionary growth; however, science today stood for civilization, in opposition to religion. The point was that regardless of Confucius' relation to his own times, he was today being used by those who wished to retard change in China. Moreover, "I am just amazed that those who favor revolution will praise the various [non-Confucian] schools of the Zhou and Qin or attack the [Neo-Confucian] scholars of the Song and Yuan, but never

<sup>14</sup> "Cizhi wei Zhongguo shengren" (This is what we call a Chinese sage), *Xin Shiji* no. 1 (22 June 1907), p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> "Zhen" (Li Shizeng), "San'gang geming" (The revolutionary against the three bonds), *Xin Shiji* no. n (31 August 1907), pp. 41–42.

<sup>16</sup> "Pai Kung weiyao" (Subtle words to attack Confucius), *Xin Shiji* no. 52 (20 June 1908), p. 204.

Liu for that reason. Liu had no objections to the age-old Chinese practice of analogizing from cosmos to man.<sup>11</sup> Rather, he proposed his own up-to-date model of Heaven for people to imitate. And when it came to distasteful analogies, Liu was suitably critical. The idea that human societies should emulate the bees or the ants and have a ruling nobility is obviously false, said Liu, because after all the queen bee is important because she produces all the eggs for the hive. Human rulers have no such talents.

*Natural Justice's* attack on traditional morality was unrelenting. One little essay, for example, praised Dai Zhen for being the first Confucian to attack the inequality of traditional Confucianism.<sup>12</sup> For in this view Dai had laid the basis for the attack on the philosophy behind the three bonds. The essay stressed that the primacy of a ruler over his ministers, a father over his sons, and a husband over his wife was related to a Confucian linking of status and duties (*mingfen*) to principle (*li*), and principle to heaven. Dai's attack on principle, then, threw into question the whole basis of the Confucian hierarchy of moral relationships. Another article, "Abolishing the Three Bonds," strongly urged their replacement with a kind of communist system without private property—a land of equality.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See John B. Henderson, *The Development and Decline of Chinese Cosmology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), especially ch. 1, "Correlative Thought in Early China." As with many early civilizations, the Chinese state was putatively modeled on (and, as Liu would perhaps say, thereby derived legitimacy from) the heavens; in time Heaven came to play a role fraught with ambiguities in Chinese political thought. Most obviously, Heaven can in a sense become angered by misrule, which takes it out of correlative into active thought.

<sup>12</sup> By *Qufei* (Abolition)—possibly this was written by Liu, a man with many opinions on Dai Zhen; it seems in tune with his relatively mild views of the time though it is not written in his usual style. "Dai Yuandong xiansheng xueshu" (The learning of Dai Zhen), *Tianyi* no. 3 (10 July 1907), pp. 37–38. For the influences of Dai on Liu's early thought, see Mori Tokihiko, "Minzokushugi to museifushugi," pp. 137–142.

<sup>13</sup> Gao Yabin, "Feigang bian," *Tianyi* no. 11–12 (30 November 1907), pp. 425–428.

"What's the most important thing in all the world? It's eating. Why do you women allow people to maltreat you? Because you depend on others to eat." Like Liang Qichao, He Zhen saw dependency as the problem, but she saw different causes at work: not male dominance alone but also the unequal distribution of wealth. Or, to put it another way, male dominance operated through the unequal distribution of wealth, which led to relationships of dependent and master.

He Zhen singled out three groups of women as particularly unfortunate: housemaids, factory workers, and prostitutes. Maids are constantly terrorized by their employers, beaten, cursed, and made to work day and night. They cannot even think of resisting. "What are the reasons for this? It's because the masters have money and I depend on them for eating." Women workers fill the textile factories of Shanghai. They too work long hours, have no freedom, and are growing blind and bent. "What are the reasons for this? It's because the factory owners have money and I depend on them for eating." Finally, prostitutes are "beaten by the turtle-heads,"<sup>5</sup> called whores, and looked down upon. In Shanghai, the "wild chickens" stand on the street half the night, in the wind and snow, waiting for customers. "What are the reasons for this? It's because people with money take me and buy me, and I depend on this kind of business for eating."<sup>6</sup>

In addition to working women, He Zhen believed that wives and concubines also suffer mistreatment, and for the same reason: They depended on men to eat. He Zhen noted that widows were supposed to be prohibited from remarriage. But while very few rich widows died in the defense of their virtue, many poor ones died if they had no children to support them. Even if not faced with starvation, their lives were so miserable that they wanted to die.

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<sup>5</sup> *Guitou* normally refers to penises; it may also signify pimps. I am grateful to Dorothy Ko for this gloss.

<sup>6</sup> "Lun niizi dangzhi gongchanzhuyi," p. 229.

The peasant women who had to work in the fields and raise silkworms also suffered greatly. And He Zhen stated that substituting the pressures of making a living with marriage simply meant that they could not protest even when their husbands beat them for no reason. Women get married “truly not because of the appearance of the man, but because of the appearance of a rice bowl.” However, He Zhen demanded:

You women, do not hate the man: hate that you don't have food to eat. Why don't they have food to eat? Because they can't buy food without money. Why don't they have money? Because the rich have stolen our property and walk all over the majority of the people. The poor don't even have food... [But] some don't have to worry about going without food. Why do you have to worry about starvation every day? The poor are people and the rich are people. Think about it for yourself; this ought to produce some disquieting feelings!<sup>7</sup>

Turning to the modern economy, He Zhen countered the argument that women could become independent by learning trades. In this scheme, the middle class would send its daughters to school for academic and vocational training, and after marriage these women could become teachers. They would not have to depend on men for their livelihood. And poor families could send their daughters to work in the factories without fearing that they would become servants or prostitutes. He Zhen thought that this argument, at best, did not go far enough. For it took a great deal of money to open a school or a factory; in the one case, women depended on the school's founders for their livelihood, and in the other case, they depended on the owners of the factory. And “as long as they depend on others for food, they will have absolutely no freedom (*ziyou*).” The crucial point for He Zhen was that these

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 230.

skepticism about a vision of the cosmos red in tooth and claw, that set him apart from so much of his generation. Liu simply did not believe that survival had to be a struggle or that it was or should be reserved for the fittest. A revolutionized, anarchist China would be strong through solidarity. Granted, violence has had its sway, especially since the invention of agriculture (Liu thought in the long term). However, it still was not natural and certainly not inevitable. His solution to being a member of the “weaker races” was to promote solidarity. In a sense, solidarity was Liu's avenue to strength, his reply to cruder theories of wealth and power. As Kropotkin said, mutual aid can be found in animals, primitive man, semicivilized man, and the man of today as well.<sup>9</sup> Liu stressed equality within the group and expanding the group until it encompassed all humanity.

Of course, when science agreed with him, Liu would take the rhetorical point gladly. If he sometimes used the imprimatur of science, like his other citations, more to bolster than form an argument, he appeared to be genuinely attracted to what he called Kropotkin's theory of “no centers,” based by analogy on astronomy, physics, and biology. Just as human society does not need to be centralized in order to function (on the contrary!), so our earth is not at the center of the solar system nor our sun at the center of the universe, so even electrical and magnetic energy are composed of ever smaller particles and atoms, and so even humans are made up of organs, which are in turn made up of cells and down to atoms, “each piece forming a whole without center or outside *control*.”<sup>10</sup> Surely, then, anarchism represents a natural order—there is no need for governments at the center of societies. This irresistibly sounds like the nonanthropomorphic workings of the Chinese cosmos of Han and pre-Han philosophers, and it probably appealed to

<sup>9</sup> “Kulubatejin xueshu hieshu” (A brief discussion of the learning of Kropotkin), *Tianyi* no. 11–12, pp. 383–388.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 388.

to behavior that supported equality. In a sense, human nature was a secondary consideration. But harnessing certain natural foibles could support an anarchist order. The individual's desire to have as much as another would assure literal equality of goods.

This view of human nature set Liu apart from other anarchists. If human nature is good, then anarchism may follow smoothly. Liu had to demonstrate that anarchism was compatible with a more plastic view of people. Greed and envy are innate possibilities, latent attributes, *but* they should not arise after anarchism is achieved. For Liu believed that these ugly characteristics were themselves the products of an unequal society. In an anarchist world—no envy over status, no lordship over one another—people would have no reason to quarrel, struggle, or resort to force. Nonetheless, Liu did not exactly think that this made human nature good. For *tianxing* is somehow outside of time and place; if it depended on anarchism it was not truly human nature. Yet the inequality of the present world, Liu felt, was itself not natural.

Liu therefore cited Kropotkin's view of man's innate capacity for cooperation, or "mutual aid," and he cited the man in Mencius who could not but want to save the child about to fall into the well: goodness is the *ren* of the Confucianists, the universal love of Emmanuel Kant, and the mutual aid of Kropotkin—"People develop their goodness by commiserating (*min*) with others who are not equal to themselves."<sup>8</sup> At the least, man is certainly not evil, and this message comes with the imprimatur of both modern science and a Chinese sage.

Liu did not much believe in science. He certainly was never tempted to believe in those aspects of social Darwinism that emphasized struggle and war. If there is any proof of the genuine hold of Chinese thought on his mind, it is this negative proof, this

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925. For an additional view (human nature as curious but still, therefore, plastic), see "Renlei junli shuo," p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," p. 924; see *Mencius*, 2A.6, on goodness through commiseration.

women lacked *independence*, even with skills, given the existing economic structure of society. They were subject to the closing of the factory or the school, to being fired because someone disliked them, to being unneeded. "Thus, this matter of depending on others for food is fraught with danger."<sup>8</sup>

Where did the solution lie?

Don't rely on other people. There will be food naturally. How? By practicing communism (*gongchan*). Think of the various objects in the world. They were not made by Heaven but by individual people. Why can people with money buy them but people without money can't? Because the world uses money, because when people buy something they make it into their private property. All women know that nothing is more evil than money. Everyone, become of one mind! Unite with men and completely overthrow the upper classes and the rich! Then money will be abolished. Nothing will be regarded as an individual's private property. All items that are eaten, worn or used—everything—will be put somewhere so that everyone who has performed some labor, men and women alike, can take whatever and however much they want. It will be like water in the sea: this is called communism. At this time, not only will eating not require reliance on others, but the food to be eaten will all be good food, too.<sup>9</sup>

This angry naivete reflected real themes of unity and revolution and displayed He Zhen's awareness of the relationship between gender and class. She firmly linked women's liberation to the notion of "revolution," a remaking of society in political, economic,

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231–232.

and class terms. In a sense, women's liberation depended on the liberation of all. Or, to put it another way, women were uniquely oppressed—half of society left out because of its gender—but not oppressed in unique ways. The roots of oppression lay in the unfair economic system; the solution lay in anarcho-communism's doctrines of sharing. He Zhen clearly believed in anarchism's motto, "To each according to need." She stipulated only that some work be done. Given women's universal inferiority in society, He Zhen focused on women in particular positions in a particular class of society, on poor and middle-class women, not on the rich. The fact that even a rich woman might be oppressed by family, husband, bound feet, and duty, although true, was of less moment than the fact that housemaids, women workers, and prostitutes, all of whose positions were determined in part because of their sex, had to choose immediately between subservience and starvation. On the other hand, the idea of dependency applied to wives and concubines as well, and for that matter to the overwhelming majority of men.

Liu Shipai also organized his social analyses around the notion of dependency.<sup>10</sup> He specifically found the origins of inequality to be in class, labor, and sex.<sup>11</sup> As primitive shamans had evolved into an aristocracy, and as occupational specialization had produced subservient laborers, so women had been turned into private property with the advent of complex societies. With war, women of defeated tribes became booty.

Liu believed that inequality was the result of oppression, not nature. Men made polygamy into a kind of natural law only when women lost their freedom. Even in monogamous cultures women were still seen as inferior and prohibited from politics and the military. The result of these unnatural developments was dependency and servitude. Women, who are dependent on their husbands, are

<sup>10</sup> See his "Renlei junli shuo" (Equalizing human labor), *Tianyi* no. 3 (10 July 1907), pp. 24–36.

<sup>11</sup> This argument is laid out in "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan."

dictatorships is because dictatorships are inherited (*yichuan*). In the evolution of humankind today goodness has still not defeated heredity... As for the Chinese, even those who accidentally oppose an official of the autocracy and get their asses kicked by that dog official still want their sons to study all day, graduate, and become an official so that they can kick people in the ass.<sup>6</sup>

In Tokyo, Liu Shipai's views on these points were not so clearly spelled out, but he shared neither the optimism of Li and Wu nor their dialectical approach. His nearly constant indignation was based on an intuitive notion of fairness (universal principle or justice, *gongli*) and humanism (the human way, *rendao*), general notions that he applied very specifically. Promoting equality between each and every individual, Liu judged all things from the question, Who benefits—the vast majority? Any special privileges are immoral, unjust, and harmful.

Liu criticized the Mencian distinction between ruler and ruled. Indeed, if fairness and humanism are applied equally to all persons, then such normally acceptable behavior as hiring employees, charging rent, and becoming an official are the acts of thieves. Liu was an absolutist; there was no relativity to his moral standards. Yet Liu did not have a particularly high opinion of human nature (*tianxing*). He thought instead that structural changes in society could harness even greed and selfishness. People are not good (as with Mencius), nor bad (as with Xunzi), nor yet a blank sheet. Rather, Liu appears to have believed, some are mostly selfish whereas others tend to be more altruistic.<sup>7</sup> Various kinds of motives would lead

<sup>6</sup> "Junren yu fucong" (Soldiers and obedience), *Xin Shiji* no. 29 (11 January 1908), p. 115.

<sup>7</sup> See inter alia his speech to the first meeting of the Society for the Study of Socialism, "Jishi" (Notes), *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), p. 152. Liu discusses human nature most thoroughly in "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," pp. 923–



science; he added in an aside important to his audience and not yet chilled by the new century, “and if everyone is educated then there need be no more fears of genocide.” Second, education would include the principles of justice and liberty. Only the old social system was bottling up the natural extension of science to the masses.

As science promoted liberty, so liberty would allow the masses to benefit from the strides science was making in medicine, agriculture, industry, and even the arts. Science was the same in both worlds—the new as well the old—but its monopoly by a minority would be broken in the new age.

Li was a natural dialectician. And like countless Confucian intellectuals before him, Li deplored those who studied in order to get office. He also condemned “studying for the sake of the nation.”<sup>4</sup> This would seem to be in accord with anarchism’s cosmopolitanism, but the reason Li gave was that “for the sake of the nation” was in fact too often a cover for personal advancement. Instead, he called for “evolutionary learning.” He cited three aspects of learning that were to lead humanity along evolution: improving one’s thinking, increasing one’s knowledge, and discovering scientific truths. Again, these aspects of learning do not appear to be too far from the Neo-Confucian ideal as found in Zhu Xi’s understanding of the *Great Learning*. Li’s emphasis on individual improvement echoes calls for self-cultivation, and his scientific truths recreate the balance between individual growth and the investigation of things (*gewu*). Li saw learning as a never-ending progress constantly leading, in Wu’s later formulation, to a “relatively correct” morality. As Wu also said, “Reason (*daoh*) is universal (*gong*) throughout the world.”<sup>5</sup> In a typical passage, Wu declared,

That people love freedom is because they are good-hearted (*liangxin ye*) while the preference for

<sup>4</sup> “Tanxue (2)” (On learning), *Xin Shiji* no. 21 (9 November 1907), pp. 83–84.

<sup>5</sup> “Gao guohun” (Report on the national spirit), *Xin Shiji* no. 7 (3 August 1907), p. 27.

enslaved; workers, who are dependent on the capitalists, are enslaved. So, too, the people and their rulers. None can claim equality. Liu defined independence (*duli*) as the opposite of dependency and servitude. Independence, liberty, and equality were basic human rights, and “we consider these three rights to be natural (*tianfu*).”

He Zhen condemned Western-style capitalism for turning women into “tools for producing wealth.”<sup>12</sup> And, she observed, this system was coming to China. As men had traditionally been economic tools, so, too, women were now caught up in capitalism. He Zhen attributed the traditional sexual division of labor to the nature of preindustrial societies. Today, however, she saw machines as drawing women out of household handicrafts. In other words, before technology allowed capitalism to spread, women played an economic role but one that was limited to the household, such as weaving. More specifically, she saw that inflation, caused by unnecessary factory-made goods, was forcing women into the job market. He Zhen displayed a certain nostalgia; in her terms, handicrafts had been an example of free labor and free markets. Women had been able to make and sell such items as clothing or could decide not to do so. But factories and modern machinery had given the rich more advantages over the poor. No poor person could now buy the equipment to establish a factory. No poor woman could compete against the goods that factories produced. Therefore all now had to go to work for the capitalists.

He Zhen noted that women workers had become common in Western countries and Japan, and women were forced to labor in factories in increasing numbers. If women workers married and had children, they then had at least twice as much to do. Worse, husband and wife were barely able to survive even if they both worked. The slightest economic disturbance would wreck the home: “Work

<sup>12</sup> See “Lun niizi laodong wenti” (The question of women’s labor), *Tianyi* no. 5 (10 August 1907), pp. 71–80 (the quotation is from page 75), and its sequel “Niizi laodong wenti (xu),” *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), pp. 125–134. He Zhen probably wrote these pseudonymous articles.

not only harms the women themselves but will in turn destroy the peace of the home.”<sup>13</sup> He Zhen was not saying that the traditional position of the wife was superior, though perhaps she felt it could on occasion be a less exacting task master; she was saying that it was in the nature of capitalism to present an unpalatable choice between economic servitude and starvation. He Zhen did not believe feudalism was superior, just that capitalism did not promise improvement of women’s inferior position. Capitalists

only force countless women into selling their bodies... , they make other people labor in order to become rich themselves. Then they force people into poverty, and even use their poverty to increase their own wealth. Is this not the same as regarding laborers as no more than tools? Alas, anciently, people regarded women as playthings; today, they regard women as tools. Regarding women as playthings insulted their bodies alone; regarding women as tools both insults their bodies and exhausts their strength. Truly the crimes of the capitalists reach to Heaven.<sup>14</sup>

## CONFUCIANISM, FAMILY, AND SEXUALITY

The anarchists wanted to make a new start through revolution. Li Shizeng dismissed the past as nothing but a tissue of superstition. Li blamed authority (*qiangquan*) for male dominance.<sup>15</sup> Unlike the authority of rulers over ruled, and rich over poor, which had seen historical shifts, men and women had never changed their posi-

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 78–79.

<sup>15</sup> “Nannii zhi geming” (The sexual revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 7–8 (3, 10 August 1907), pp. 27–28, 29. See also “Nijie geming” (Women’s revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 5 (20 July 1907), pp. 18–19.

vation and their undertakings, and every one of them originated in science.”<sup>2</sup> China needed more scientists.

In the past few years more and more Chinese students have arrived in Europe. Most of them study politics and law (*zhengfa*), but we often tell them, “What science proclaims are true laws (*shili*), while politics is a creation of human intention (*renyi zhi chuangzao*).” This is speaking of theory, but the real reasons why more Chinese students want to study politics than science is because politics is vague and airy and the course can be finished quickly. Science is different. Political studies can produce administrators, but science, in the view of the Chinese, is just a minor aft. Thus they exhibit snobbishness...

A friend of mine who recently arrived from London [probably Wu Zhihui] told us, “In all the fields of learning, only science is correct learning. Since science does not stray from the truth, it does not vary from one country to another. Political studies and literature, on the other hand, are different in each country. This is why science can be called universal learning (*gongxue*) while politics and literature have to be called private learning (*sixue*).”<sup>3</sup>

Thus science was truth, and truth science. In itself, this view perhaps represented little more than standard Victorian optimism, but Li adduced a series of arguments designed to show how the world would achieve anarchist freedom on this basis. First, Li said, social reforms would come through the extension of education and

<sup>2</sup> “Tanxue (1)” (On education), *Xin Shiji* no. 7 (3 August 1907), p. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 26. Li’s belief in learning for its own sake is also made clear in “Zai Ouzhou zhi Zhina ren” (Chinese in Europe), *Xin Shiji* no. 15 (28 September 1907), p. 59.

good because they hope to get into Heaven or avoid doing evil because they fear Hell, this is low and vulgar behavior. How can we call this morality? ... [Natural morality] is based on biology. The basic nature of all living creatures, including the human race, not only nourishes self-interest but also unfolds as support of the group. This is the root of morality... In sum, natural morality is more than enough to benefit the human group and there is no need for religious morality to support it.

—Li Shizeng, excerpts from an address to the Beijing Atheists' League,

September 1922<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese anarchists linked problems of individual, social, and national identity to questions about the nature of the cosmos and the species. The variety of answers they reached on these immense issues demonstrates the flexibility of anarchism itself. In particular, anarchism proved to be a useful tool to robe and manipulate Chinese culture.

## SCIENCE, HUMAN NATURE, AND MORALITY

science, at least to the Paris anarchists, represented universal truths. But could these be made to benefit the world? Wu Zihui and Li Shizeng thought science was the core of a good education. Li even linked science to freedom. More practically, he propagandized his readers: “Since coming to Europe I have seen their culti-

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<sup>1</sup> Li Shizeng *xiansheng wenji*, 2:236–239.

tions. “Even today, other kinds of revolution have made advances but the inequality between the sexes remains as dark as ever.”<sup>16</sup>

Li's basic category of analysis was the dichotomy between science and superstition. The superior position of men was due entirely to superstition in tandem with oppression.<sup>17</sup> Fortunately, once people understood the truth, they would begin to fight against false morality, which Li defined as those elements of traditional thought which contradicted science and justice (*kexue gongli*). Specifically, he contrasted science, and superstition on four sexual questions. First, whereas science found no physiological differences between the sexes (except for genital organs), superstitions would reduce women to an inferior position on the irrelevant grounds that they get pregnant. Second, science had no problem with a woman's having two husbands; the offspring would not be tainted in any way. But superstition and false morality declared this improper

in order to protect the positions of those in authority [men]. Men regard women as their playthings and don't want other men to take what they themselves enjoy. Nor do they want their playthings to love other men. Thus, they have made up all kinds of rules to tie their women down, just because of their monopolizing and jealous natures. Not only that, but even when these men die, they still force their wives to remain [unmarried] widows. Although this is not enforced by law, it is still custom and habit and above all is enforced through such superstitions as receiving imperial honors and temple acknowledgments. Any time a man no longer loves his wife, he has the right to get rid of her. There are the “three followings” and the “seven

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>17</sup> “San'gang geming” (The three bonds revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 11 (31 August 1907), pp. 41–42.

expulsions”; all the rights are on the man’s side. If the man likes other women, he can take second wives and concubines. Women cannot... If a man can have other women, a woman ought to be able to have other men. This would be a start toward justice.<sup>18</sup>

Not, Li thought, that the Western nations were much better.

Li’s third contrast between science and superstition dealt with the question of intelligence. He condemned the old saws, “When a woman is stupid, she’ll be good” and “When the hen crows at dawn, it’s the end of the family.” Fourth and finally, Li proclaimed that according to science women were equal to men in ability (*nengli*); women did what men could do in the countryside, and in Europe women were teachers, doctors, and so forth. “That today there are some who can do these things proves that they do not inherently lack the ability but that they are restricted.”

In other words, Li considered that male hegemony restricted women in two ways: by demanding that they ought not do certain things (the prohibitions of false morality) and by declaring that they *could* not do certain things.<sup>19</sup> “Thus women are not equal to men purely because of the techniques of the oppressors (*qiangzhe*), and not because of Nature.”<sup>20</sup> Li held that the problem of oppression was rooted in cultural attitudes. He attacked the Confucian notion of hierarchy, linking hegemonic techniques to Confucius, who said, “ ‘Only women and small people are difficult to deal with.’ ”<sup>21</sup> But break down the superstitions and the authoritarianism, and revolution will follow. On the one hand, Li thought that social change

<sup>18</sup> “Nannii zhi geming,” p. 28. The “seven expulsions” refer to a man’s right to divorce his wife for failure to have a son, adultery, disrespect to her husband’s parents, quarrelsomeness, stealing, jealousy, and severe illness.

<sup>19</sup> “Nijie geming,” p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> “Nannii zhi geming,” p. 29.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. Cf. *Lunyu* 17:25, tr. after Waley, *Analects*, pp. 216–217; the passage is sometimes interpreted as originally referring to concubines and (male) servants or the common people, not simply women and men of lesser virtue.

## CHAPTER 7. *Culture and Nation*

Religion is intrinsically old and corrupt: history has passed it by. In terms of learning it is like the stone tools used by primitive peoples. Why are we of the twentieth century, who are now engaged in this discussion among fellow scholars, even debating this nonsense from primitive ages? Thus, before I began speaking, I felt I had nothing to say. But we must continue to speak out: the students of Christianity are still, even in this twentieth century, spreading primitive stories and want them to become accepted...

Learning and religion—When the human race was immature, the limitations of its knowledge and tools prevented it from understanding various questions. Terror and faith cannot come out of knowledge: they stem from religion. But as learning advanced, terror and faith both began to change and diminish. As Western scholars often say, “Science and religion advance and retreat in inverse proportion.” ... In sum, as humankind becomes more advanced, learning becomes clearer and religion retreats.

Morality and religion—... Morality is the natural motive power for goodness. Religious morality, on the other hand, really works by rewards and punishments; it is the opposite of true morality. When people do

if a few women succeeded in joining the ruling class, the majority of their sisters would remain mired in misery. Conversely, He Zhen emphasized that men could not achieve a meaningful revolution in political or economic terms unless there was a concurrent women's revolution as well.

This discussion of women's issues inevitably involved consideration of China's culture and society.

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roles in the nation for women. Ono even charges that anarcho-feminists "became deluded by the idea that men were ultimately the enemy" (p. 70). In fact, anarchists recognized that the "enemy" was systemic: state, family, capitalism—as Ono's own analysis makes clear. Though it is true that He Zhen's goals were frankly utopian, the anarcho-feminist analysis nonetheless, even from a purely feminist perspective, served positively to focus attention on women themselves and on the implications of gender equality.

would come about through natural evolution; on the other hand, he predicted a "family revolution" that was itself a part of evolution. Either way, or both, he failed to ask women to struggle for themselves. On a falling note, he counseled young people desiring independence to appeal to their parents' memories of their own youths.<sup>22</sup>

If the Chinese anarchists in Paris and Tokyo seldom engaged in direct discussion, they were nonetheless aware of each other's writings. He Zhen basically agreed with Li about causes: several thousand years of Chinese tradition had treated women as slaves and forced them to be subservient.<sup>23</sup> Thus, He Zhen said, men had thought of women as their own private property, objects that must be prohibited from loving other men. It was men who had established a political system to this end and moral teachings (*zhengjiao*) that emphasized taboos (*fang*) and differentiation (*hie*) between men and women. Women were forced to live deep in the women's quarters; Confucians defined differentiation as the ideal that married women should have no outside concerns. As a result, women were considered to be capable only of raising the children and running the household. Chinese religion valued having children, propagating the species so that descendants could maintain the ancestor's spirits. The political order then treated children and grandchildren as property and in popular opinion fertility was equated with wealth. Thus, men finally reduced women to instruments for nourishing the species (*renzhong yangcheng*).

He Zhen also examined the historical relation between militarism and sexism.<sup>24</sup> She found that the inequality between men and women was related to the fact that men became soldiers.

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<sup>22</sup> "San'gang geming," p. 42.

<sup>23</sup> "Niizi jiefang wenti," "Furen jiefang wenti" (The question of women's liberation), *Tianyi* nos. 7 and 8–10 (1 September and 30 October 1907), in XHGMQSNJ, 2B:959–968.

<sup>24</sup> "Niizi feijunbei zhuyi lun" (Women's antimilitarism), *Tianyi* no. 5 (10 August 1907), pp. 369–376.

Men-soldiers looked upon women as booty, and He Zhen thought it a short step from conquest to polygamy. She wrote that men assumed a heroic and commanding role, while through eons of subjugation women became subservient. He Zhen appears to suggest that if there were a single cause for sexual inequality, it was war, or at least the superiority accruing to men from their monopoly of the instruments of force. And she complained that the inferiority of women was still maintained by pointing to their inability to be good soldiers (not, of course, that she wanted women to become soldiers for the state). "If antimilitarism is made a reality and if men are liberated from being drafted as soldiers and revert to equality with women, then they can neither look down on women by pretending to be concerned about protecting the nation nor again coerce women into obedience by force."<sup>25</sup> Thus antimilitarism is an important part of the women's movement. Although He Zhen did not bring her thesis into a specifically anarchist context, anarchism lay at the base of her remarks. For antimilitarism was intimately connected with the stand against the state. Moreover, her cosmopolitan call for women to unite across national boundaries also stemmed from an anarchist view of the world.

In effect, He Zhen acknowledged that women's position was in part or indirectly related to biology. At any rate, something more than economic relationships was involved. In the same way that women depended on men for their survival, they were confined by men to the house and in a sense taken out of the economic sphere. This was not to deny that women made economic contributions to their families and even to society through work within the family, but to point out that women were denied the slightest independence vis-a-vis the larger economy. He Zhen evidently believed that as men locked women up for reasons ultimately stemming from biological reproduction and the *cultural* importance of con-

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 376.

unequivocally put women's rights on the same level as political and social change, who indeed linked them so closely that the one could not be considered without the other. Instrumentalist arguments are clearly dangerous. What if China's national needs included keeping women subservient? The Communist Party does not always find this question easy; women's desires for freer divorce in the countryside, for example, conflicted with the need to appeal to the peasantry as a whole, especially peasant men.

By severing feminism from nationalism, the anarchists promoted women's liberation not for the sake of the nation but out of moral necessity. However, anarcho-feminism was still embedded in a larger political context. The anarchists spoke less of women's rights as an independent variable and more of how the liberation of one oppressed element in society depended on the liberation of all. Thus the anarchist position on women contributed to freeing Chinese feminism from the demands of nationalism while the cause of women remained indissolubly connected to the larger liberation of society as a whole, not a separate, independently achievable goal. Similarly, feminism in contemporary China stands in ambiguous relation with the larger goals of the socialist state.

The Chinese anarchist movement overlapped with the Chinese feminist movement which began in the last years of the nineteenth century, and they inspired each other to a degree. The anarchists, however, ridiculed ameliorative efforts to improve women's education, to win jobs and a place in civil society, and to use the women citizenry to strengthen China. Their goals may have been unrealistic; indeed, they called for total structural change, for only when all humans attained equality and freedom would women cease to be oppressed.<sup>76</sup> Class society was by its very nature corrupt, and, even

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<sup>76</sup> Ono Kazuko, *Chinese Women in a Century of Revolution*, pp. 68–70, concludes that anarcho-feminism undermined the feminist movement. She argues that He Zhen's pipe dreams diverted attention from realizable goals and derailed a movement that had been focusing on jobs, independent economic status, and

advanced skills—education like that available to men, rather than the new education for both sexes that the anarchists promoted. At least some of the group’s members saw what now might be called feminine values coming to the fore. “The function of the new morality is to make kindness and love its most basic principle.” They emphasized both self-respect and a respect for others.<sup>75</sup> These feminists rooted the new morality in evolutionary change and sharply criticized what they saw as the traditional teaching for women: obedience (*fucong zhuyi*). But a strong current of patriotism continued to stir the group’s desire to create an enlightened “women citizenry,” and their new morality stopped short of advocating a family revolution or a revolution against the three bonds (ruler-subject, parents-children, husband-wife) of Confucianism.

Thus the anarchist attack on the nation put feminism on an entirely new basis. Women’s liberation was no longer to be contingent—or dependent. Many of the anarchists’ charges would have been familiar because, to an extent, the argument through nationalism was instrumental. It could be a convenient means for promoting such goals as economic rights, independence from family, political rights, and the like, that is, for promoting complete equality with men. Indeed, during the heyday of the imperialist scramble for concessions of the early twentieth century, the argument that China needed the support of her women, who therefore had to be unshackled, might have appealed to otherwise conservative men. Neither women’s rights nor certainly nationalism necessarily entailed a thoroughgoing radicalism. Nor was any hypocrisy involved in the argument: the most fiery feminists, such as Qiu Jin, were simultaneously the most ardent of patriots and therefore anti-Manchu revolutionaries. From Liang Qichao in 1896 to Yan Wu in 1907 feminist theory became increasingly militant. Nonetheless, it was the anarchists, particularly He Zhen, who

<sup>75</sup> “Benbao wuda zhuyi yanshuo” (On the five basic principles of this journal), *Zhongguo Xinnujie Zazhi*, no. 4 (5 May 1907), p. 21.

continuing the family line, women lost any chance to achieve the independence necessary for equality. Or as she also put it, according to tradition

women have duties but do not have rights... Diligently working on household matters is not something that men can do, but they have given women the responsibilities of service. They are also afraid that women will interfere in their affairs and so they abrogated the natural rights (*tianfu, zhi quart*) of women with the theory that women have nothing to do outside the home. On the basis of the former theory [that women have no rights] *men allow themselves to live in idleness while they make women work*. On the basis of the latter theory [that women have no business outside the home], *men try to make themselves wise while they condemn women to ignorance...* The right of women to leave [their husbands] is in the hands of men... , Husbands can divorce their wives but wives cannot divorce their husbands.<sup>26</sup>

In a long series of articles with “revenge” or “enmity” in the titles, He Zhen sketched a history of the position of women in China (and the world), discussing polygamy, slavery, divorce, confinement, Confucianism, ownership of property, harems, and the like.<sup>27</sup> He Zhen’s concern for upper-class women and her participation in elite culture are obvious here. In general, she believed that men had monopolized learning throughout Chinese history and therefore the great works of all ages slighted women. Since

<sup>26</sup> “Niizi fuchou lun” (Women’s revenge), *Tianyi* no. 3 (10 July 1907), pp. 16–17.

<sup>27</sup> The series is not complete, since the complete run of *Tianyi Bao* is not extant, but see “Niizi fuchou lun,” *Tianyi* nos. 3 and 5 (10 July and 10 August 1907), pp. 7–23 and 65–70; and “Niizi shuochou lun” (Women articulate their enmity), *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907), pp. 205–211.

the Han dynasty, Confucianism has *taught that women occupied a lower position*. He Zhen argued that Confucius himself had articulated the traditional double standard for divorce and advocated the “arbitrary use of power over wives.”<sup>28</sup> And she cited Mencius’ plans for divorce when his wife failed to welcome him back from a trip properly. During the Song dynasty, these doctrines were exacerbated. “Sly people used these doctrines to pursue their own advantage while the stupid believed them as superstitions. There is no telling how many of our women died because of them. Thus all of the learning of Confucianism is the learning of murder.”<sup>29</sup> Song Confucians went so far as to say that starving to death was of minor importance but losing one’s chastity was a terrible thing. Not only married women were to be pure; even betrothed girls were to be absolutely loyal. If their husband or fiance died, they could not marry another. “The words ‘virtuous’ and ‘pure’ were enough to kill.”<sup>30</sup>

In cosmological terms, He Zhen attacked the association of men with Heaven and *yang* and women with earth and *yin*; these categories led inexorably to absolute inequality.<sup>31</sup> Women were taught exclusively the way of serving others. The Confucian virtue of “yielding” (*rouxun*) was for He Zhen a euphemism for subservience (*qufu*). She said it was men who had made *yielding* into a term of praise because they hated women to resist them. Men placed women outside of humanity. Thus He Zhen drew a connection between making women into good, willing, obedient, yielding creatures and their being something other than human. Overall, however, she appears not to have believed that traditional thought saw women as a mysterious “other”; they were simply inferior servants, perhaps something like oxen. At the same time, once women were confined to the home; they were blamed for

<sup>28</sup> “Niizi fuchou lun,” p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

clusion that family revolution would save both Chinese national sovereignty-and the Chinese people.<sup>71</sup> *Women’s World* (*Niizi shijie*), a journal published in Shanghai between 1904 and 1906, claimed that women had both natural rights and the capacity to join the Darwinian struggle for survival. “Thus in civilized nations, men and women are valued equally, learning advances constantly, and the nation is strengthened daily.”<sup>72</sup> After all, women are clearly “the mothers of the citizenry.”<sup>73</sup> Moreover, Liang Qichao’s very language was still being used nearly a decade later: Chinese women were, alas, dependents and thus through no fault of their own continued to be idle consumers rather than producers.

In 1906 about seventy Chinese in Tokyo organized the Association of Women Students in Japan (*Liu-Ri nuxuesheng hui*) under the leadership of Yan Wu (b. 1869) and others, and during the first half of 1907 they published six issues of *The New Chinese Women’s World* (*Zhongguo xinnijie zashi*).<sup>74</sup> This group was considerably less radical than the anarcho-feminist group organized in mid-1907, but it shared a number of concerns with the anarchists. By its second issue *Women’s World* was proclaiming its allegiance to new theories concerning women and indeed of “new civilization” (*xin wenming*), to mortality, to education and the destruction of traditional ignorance, and to the construction of a new society. Yet this approach was gradualist if not exactly moderate: education remained the key, and not education in the sense of revolutionary propaganda or education related to a radical analysis of society. Rather, *Women’s World* promoted schools to teach simple literacy and more

<sup>71</sup> See “Jiating geming shuo” in XHGMQSNJ, iB: 833–837.

<sup>72</sup> “Lun Zhongguo niixue buxing zhi hai” (The problems stemming from the absence of women’s education in China), *ibid.*, p. 922.

<sup>73</sup> “Lun zhuzao guomin mu” (To educate the mothers of the citizenry), *ibid.*, pp. 929–932.

<sup>74</sup> For a thorough analysis of the journal, see Li Youning, “*Zhongguo Xynnujie zazhi de chuangan ji neihan*” (The founding and contents of the *New Chinese Women’s World* journal), pp. 205–241.



“four hundred million” to awake were meaningless without special attention to its most backward “two hundred million.”

In 1904 Jin Yi, writing as a “lover of freedom,” published a translation of Kemuyama Sentaro’s *Modern Anarchism (Kinsei museifushugi)* which was later popular under the title of *Freedom’s Blood (Ziyou xuej)*.<sup>69</sup> In 1903 Jin had published *Women’s Bell (Nujie zhong)* in Shanghai, which already rigorously condemned the wrongs done to Chinese women such as foot binding, criticized superstitions and called for good conduct in this life, and encouraged women to adopt a simpler life-style by abandoning their jewelry and elegant (and time-consuming) clothing. More to the point, perhaps, Jin demanded recognition of women’s right to education, business, property, free marriage, and friendship, and the further right to become politically involved. Nonetheless, *Women’s Bell* called for political changes and still conceived of feminism only within a larger nationalist context.

The extinction of races and the destruction of nations, since ancient times, has always been self-inflicted, not caused by outsiders. Through opium smoking and footbinding, Chinese men and women, each in their own way, are becoming more and more like wild animals and ghosts and will of themselves soon lose their spirit and cut off the ancestral succession [i.e., die out].<sup>70</sup>

By 1904 the journal *Jiangsu* could call for “family revolution,” though a familiar chain of reasoning brought the author to the con-

<sup>69</sup> Bernal, “The Triumph of Anarchism over Marxism, 1906–1907,” p. 117. For a description of the book, see Bao, “Xinhai geming shiqi de funii sixiang,” pp. 276–281. “Jin Yi” was Jin Tianhe (zi Songcen, 1874–1947), who had been involved with the Patriotic Girls’ School and helped Zou Rong publish his notorious attack on the Manchus, “Revolutionary Army” (*Geming jun*).

<sup>70</sup> Cited in Chen Dongyuan, *Zhongguo funii shenghuo shi* (A history of Chinese women’s lives), pp. 330–331; further excerpts from *Women’s Bell* appear in *ibid.*, pp. 329–341 and Bao, “Xinhai geming shiqi de funii sixiang,” pp. 276–281.

all the problems in the home. Even the downfall of states was blamed on the supposed quarrelsomeness of women. “Nothing in the world is lower than women, and all the most hateful names in the world collect around them.”<sup>32</sup>

The tragedy of Chinese traditional learning lay in the fact that, although men and women were different by nature (*fuzhi*), they were one in being human. However, while a few men in the past had recognized some such notion and had advocated equality, they remained a minority. Women too had internalized sexist values and willingly accepted subjugation. He Zhen drew an analogy, most appropriate for an audience of angry young Chinese students, between Manchus who used the doctrines of Confucianism to oppress the Han and men who used Chinese learning to oppress Chinese women. That some Chinese women believed in this false morality was like Zeng Guofan fighting for the Manchus (both were traitors). The cure lay in the axiom that we must “totally sweep away the false theories of the Confucian texts to reestablish the truth.”<sup>33</sup> For male dominance was rooted in the law, and the law stemmed from traditional learning, which was itself based on Confucian texts.

On the one hand, feminism cut across the entire class struggle as it presaged social revolution. On the other, He Zhen could be quite critical of her own sex. The traditional isolation of women, at least in the middle classes and above, had led to superficiality, idleness, and lascivious behavior (*yin*).<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, as long as their parents arranged their marriages, many women would never be satisfied with their new families, even sometimes murdering their husbands and children.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>34</sup> See “Niizi jiefang wenti,” XHGMQSNJ, 28:959–968, including “Furen jiefang wenti” and “Niizi laodong wenti (xu).”

This proves that the system of isolating women will never stop their sexual drives (*yin*)... The people who are horrified by women's liberation and think that after liberation women will behave more wantonly, restrict them more and more tightly. Thus the idea of restricting women grows daily, but it is when there is little hope of liberation that wantonness arises... Wantonness arises out of isolation, not out of liberation.<sup>35</sup>

This call for liberation was, however, tempered with a warning. Today women "are drunk with freedom and equality and will not accept any restraint."<sup>36</sup> He Zhen criticized women who appeared to be activists but were really seeking a pretext for shocking and wanton practices. The very term *yin* was heavily weighted with disapproval, and in effect He Zhen was complaining that sex could compete with the true goals of social transformation. If this sounds surprisingly repressed, He Zhen evidently felt that women had been suppressed for so long and sexuality used for so long by men as a tool of oppression that women's liberation could not take sexual liberation at face value. She supported free love (*ziyou. lian'ai*). But she felt that the majority of "free women" did not believe in the principle of free love; rather, either they were trying to get something for themselves or else men had tricked them. He Zhen appears to have believed that some of these women were victims, making love without being in love. "As soon as they become liberated after long confinement, their lasciviousness is given free reign."<sup>37</sup> Still, if women were neither tricked nor motivated by profit, in other words, if they were acting out of free will, He Zhen believed that to have many lovers was perfectly

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 961.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 964.

<sup>37</sup> See also "Zhida," "Nandao niichang zhi Shanghai" (The Shanghai of male thieves and female prostitutes), *Tianyi* no. 5 (10 August 1907), pp. 95-97-

Women, though the fault lay with men who monopolized employment, were holding China back. Women were treated like "beasts and slaves" precisely because they depended on men—but men also suffered from the burden of having to support dependents. Liang thus pointed out that women are idle and disparaged, whereas men labor and are honored. The cure for all of these problems lay in women's education. Although Liang tempered his nationalism by pointing out that women were as naturally intelligent as men and that each sex had its strong points and although he condemned many of the evils in the traditional treatment of women, the entire series of articles on reform spoke to strengthening China.

The concern with nationalism continued, even among women leaders, in the early years of the twentieth century. In Shanghai, where criticism of the Manchus for their failure to protect China's sovereignty was sharpest, a number of women's journals were founded between 1902 and 1911, and the revolutionary Patriotic Girls' School (*Aiguo nil xuexiao*) briefly joined the ranks of missionary schools and other schools for women. Cai Yuanpei taught the history of the French Revolution and proclaimed that women were especially suited for assassination work. Qiu Jin perhaps began to temper nationalist rhetoric with a larger concern for justice and equality with men during her stay in Tokyo (1904–1905). Yet she clearly identified herself as a patriot first.<sup>67</sup> On the conservative side, some called for women's education to promote traditional virtues.<sup>68</sup> Nonetheless, the trend was to speak of the promise of women's rights and to contrast these with the reality of their current sufferings—all within the larger context of China's need to utilize the abilities of its women to avoid national disaster. Chinese feminist revolutionaries often pointed out that the repeated calls of their male comrades for China's

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<sup>67</sup> See her "Call to my sisters" (Jinggao jiemeimen), XHGMQSNJ, 28:844.

<sup>68</sup> Bao Jialin, "Xinhai geming shiqi de funii sixiang," p. 289.

in women's issues.<sup>65</sup> In the 1890s, Chinese women were charged with the task of bearing and raising the nation's youth and could be neither maimed nor ignorant. Kang's disciple Liang Qichao, in his "General Discussion on Reform" (*Bianfa tongyi*), published serially over 1896–1897, included a section on women's education (*Lun mixue*) which cited China's pressing need to make its women productive members of society. Liang connected dependency and idleness, a theme the anarchists were to pick up. He claimed that nations were well off when everyone was employed and thus self-sufficient.

But if this cannot be brought about, then the number of unemployed can be taken as an inverse ratio of [the nation's] strength. Why is this? Because the unemployed have to depend on the employed for their support. Without such support, the unemployed will fall into danger. With the support, the employed will fall into danger.

How can the nation be strengthened? If the people are enriched, the country will be strengthened. How can the people be enriched? By making everyone self-sufficient and by not relying on one person to support many.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Yuan Mei (1716–1797), whose interest in women's education was remarkable for the Qing dynasty, had no successors, for example. The relatively high status held by women in the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864) has led a number of scholars to begin the story of modern Chinese feminism there. Ono Kazuko, in *Chinese Women in a Century of Revolution*, p. 22, concludes, "In marked contrast to the urban origins of the emancipation of women in Europe, it should be emphasized, the emancipation of Chinese women got its start in rural revolution." However, important as the Taiping women may turn out to be to our understanding of the complete story of Chinese feminism, scholars have not demonstrated any links between them and the self-consciously feminist discourse of the late nineteenth century, which is undoubtedly tied to contemporary feminism.

<sup>66</sup> Liang Qichao, *Yinbingshi wenji* (Collected essays from the Ice-drinker's studio), *zhuan* 2, I4b-i5a.

acceptable and could be an act of freedom. She was not really a puritan.

He Zhen thus took a middle road between sexual license, which she saw could be a cover for male exploitation, and free love, which could occur between equals. To a degree, she appears to have accepted a conservative criticism of women as overly sexual (*yin*) but attributed this to years of isolation and oppression, not to nature. If anything, she implied that men were by nature *yin*. But she was concerned with women first. If the path to liberation brought excesses, this was the legacy of the past, not a glimpse of the future. She was also aware of the role that class played in sexual exploitation, especially through concubinage and prostitution.<sup>38</sup> Sexuality was ultimately a secondary issue to He Zhen. As an anarchist feminist she thought the problems of sexual morality could be solved by bringing about a world of equality. As she put it in "The Problem of Women's Liberation," "For thousands of years this has been a world of rulership (*renzhi*), and a world of class systems, and therefore the world has become the exclusive property of men. To correct this fault, it is necessary to abolish rulership, practice human equality, and make the world something shared by both men and women. To do this, it is necessary to start with women's liberation."<sup>39</sup>

The family was not, for He Zhen, the *bite noire* that it would become for later feminists, perhaps because she took the need for its demise for granted. She condemned traditional society completely. She specifically and repeatedly criticized such institutions as polygamy, concubinage, and the authority of the mother-in-law; her indictment of Confucianism entailed a critique of the traditional family. (Nor were Western nations, with their emphasis on marrying for money, any better.) He Zhen appears to have believed that, ideally, relationships should be monogamous and based on mutual respect—that is, equality. She granted that

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<sup>38</sup> "Niizi laodong wenti (xu)," p. 127.

<sup>39</sup> "Nuzi jiefang wenti," p. 959.

love had a role to play but did not think it should be confused with sexual desire (*yu*). Logically enough for an anarchist, He Zhen did not seem to care whether a marriage was sanctioned by the state, much less a church; nor did she quite say that even monogamy was essential. Perhaps she thought most problems of the family would be resolved once women achieved liberation. And perhaps she assumed that the family, however defined, would simply become much less important when worth and goods were shared equally among all members of the larger society.

One article in *Natural Justice* not only called for the abolition of the family but claimed that social revolution itself must start with a “sexual revolution.”<sup>40</sup> More of a brief cry of anguish than a reasoned argument essay, the article found that the root of sexual revolution lay in destroying the family, which had given rise to selfishness, male dominance, patriarchy, private property, and other unnatural perversions. Without the family system to rely on, men would be unable to suppress women and the people would be public spirited (*gong*) rather than selfish (*si*). The author’s unstated premise was a historical link between family, patriarchal dominance, particularism, private property (including women and children), and therefore a general system of selfish competition which might or might not include capitalism—all in contrast to the earlier natural man of Rousseau or Zhuangzi.

He Zhen particularly felt that freeing women from the burden of raising their children was one of the key elements in achieving equality. She liked the notion of raising all infants in public nurseries, since men were already free of this task.<sup>41</sup> Since He Zhen felt that the theory behind male dominance rested on the assumption that women could not fulfill certain tasks as well as men, she foresaw its destruction when women were allowed to work freely.

<sup>40</sup> “Huai’jia lun” (Destroy the family), in XHGMQSNJ, 26:916–917. I think the article, signed “A member of the Han race” (*Han yi*), is by Liu Shippei.

<sup>41</sup> “Renlei junli shuo,” pp. 35–36.

main chaste (widows, at least among the gentry, were expected not to remarry) while men were considerably freer; and socially they were subject to the three followings, in turn subservient to father, husband, and son. Even if a few women could break out of this system, the inferior position of women was nonetheless taken for granted. Although earlier eras had seen occasional concern among literati over women’s place in the family, suicide, foot binding, and education, not until the waning years of the Qing dynasty was a serious challenge to social and cultural norms of male dominance mounted and were women themselves involved. Yet the thrust of the movement remained largely nationalist. The feminist argument ultimately rested not on justice or self-evident rights, but on China’s need to liberate her women in order to save the nation (*jiuguo*).<sup>64</sup>

Modern Chinese feminism perhaps began when Kang Youwei started organizing antifootbinding societies in the 1880s, and by the end of the century tens of thousands of members belonged to such societies, the men promising that their sons would marry only women with natural feet. With this movement, a continuous discourse over raising the status of women began. It quickly ramified into a complex feminist discourse marked by internal debates as well as a challenge to the status quo, in contrast to earlier interest

<sup>64</sup> This nationalistic form of early Chinese feminism has been discussed by Bao Jialin, “Xinhai geming shiqi de funii sixiang” (Women’s thought at the time of the 1911 Revolution); Lin Weihong, “Tongmenhui shidai nii geming zhishi de huodong” (The activities of women revolutionary heroes during the Tongmenghui era); Ono Kazuko, “Shinmatsu no fujin kaiho shiso” (The ideology of women’s liberation in the late Qing); Ono Kazuko, *Chinese Women in a Century of Revolution*, especially pp. 23–46 and 54–65; and Suetsugu Reiko, “Shingai kakumei no fujin kaiho undo to Purotesutanto joshi kyoiku” (The movement for women’s liberation during the Revolution of 1911 and Protestant women’s education).

For a general history of Chinese feminism, see Croll’s *Feminism and Socialism in China*.

talism were hierarchical, economic betterment could only affect a few. Even if no other concerns motivated them, their feminism alone would have brought the anarchists to a thoroughgoing social revolution. Nonetheless, their view of the human predicament did not ultimately allow a separate sphere for women's interests but focused on women as one of a number of historically oppressed groups. It was women's nature as humans that entitled them to rights and brought them into a discourse about liberty and equality: women were inherently neither better nor worse than men.

He Zhen's vision of individual women who had achieved autonomy and as such remained within or rejoined the larger community. Their liberation was not of the individual *from* society but could only be achieved through the liberation of society as a whole. The significance of anarcho-feminism lay in its rigorous if sometimes simplistic analysis of Chinese social structure and cultural constrictions. He Zhen sought not merely to achieve the gains of women in the West, but much more —not reform, but revolution. At the same time, anarcho-feminism spoke to all Chinese women. Even if rather more moderate, they could appreciate the anarchist sense of perfectibility.

Much of what the anarchists had to say about the traditional place of women in China, their current needs, and their potential to contribute to a new society was familiar if still distinctly part of a minority position. Nonetheless, these ideas freed feminism from its old context. Modern feminism had started in China in association with the reform movement of the mid-1890s. A growing number of feminists, men and women located in the cities of the littoral, especially Shanghai, were struck by the plight of Chinese women and the ways in which they were holding back national progress. Traditionally, the new feminists concluded, China was frankly male-dominated and patriarchal. By late imperial times, women almost universally had their feet bound at a young age; their legal independence was precarious; they were expected to re-

Moreover, men would no longer depend on their wives to manage the household, and women would no longer depend on their husbands for economic survival. In other words, the family as an institution marked by biological reproduction, strict sexual division of labor, and continuance of the family line would no longer exist. Economics, not customs or morals, remained the key to her analysis.

The views of the other anarchists on these intimate questions differed slightly. Wu Zhihui once noted that men and women should join each other purely out of love; he even believed that the children born of such a relationship would be superior to those of an arranged marriage and that those from a racially mixed alliance would be best yet.<sup>42</sup> Wu wanted to abolish marriage and allow both partners freedom within a relationship and freedom to leave it. He did, nonetheless, appreciate He Zhen's warning that the call for sexual liberation could mask libertinism.<sup>43</sup>

Li Shizeng also attacked the traditional Chinese family mercilessly. He ridiculed ancestor worship, which he saw as just another prop for authority rooted in superstition.<sup>44</sup> He pointed out that after all his distant ancestors included monkeys and other animals! Li did not blame his own ignorant ancestors for starting ancestor worship and other religious practices, but in the fight of today's science "the people who don't advocate ancestor revolution, are either stupid or selfish." In terms of action, Li urged that all rites surrounding ancestors be ignored, even to the point of abandoning funeral ceremonies, that grave mounds be leveled, and that spirit tablets

<sup>42</sup> "Nannii zajiao shuo" (Miscegenation) *Xin Shiji* no. 42 (u April 1908), pp. 167–168. See also "Da moujun" (Reply), *Xin Shiji* no. 56 (18 July 1908), pp. 264–266. In general, Wu did not write on the subject of women's rights or liberation, but he ridiculed those who did not wish to extend full equality to women, see inter alia "Linlin guagua" (Trifles), *Xin Shiji* no. 73 (14 November 1908), p. 475.

<sup>43</sup> "Zhi yu xing" (Knowledge and action), *Xin Shiji* no. 114 (16 October 1909), Shanghai ed., p. 2.

<sup>44</sup> "Zuzong geming" (The ancestor revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 2–3 (29 May–6 June 1907), pp. 7–8, 12.

destroyed. In terms of analysis, Li used his customary categories—superstition, related to authority, and science, related to freedom—in his discussion of sexual relations.

Li proffered a modest proposal for free love.<sup>45</sup> He urged moderation between pairs of consenting adults of the opposite sex. Li first analogized between machines and the human body—as a lamp needed oil, so the body needed food and drink. Then he pointed out, “While the relations between the sexes are not the same as food and drink, they also are rooted in biology. Food and drink supplement a lack in the body’s constitution while copulation reduces the fullness of the body’s constitution (*jian tizhi zhiying*). When the need is for supplement, then hunger arises; when the need is for reduction, then sexual desire arises.” Does this echo Daoist sex manuals or the rebellion against Victorian shibboleths? As long as two people were in good health and “of suitable age,” Li believed their mutual love (*xiang’ai*) constituted a moral (*gongdao*) relationship.<sup>46</sup>

One correspondent to *New Century* urged the abolition of marriage not because traditional families were unhappy but because they were the prime hindrance to achievement of Datong.<sup>47</sup> For the road to Datong was blocked by four “private groupings” the

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<sup>45</sup> “Shu Saoke duiyu youxue dangzi zhi kaiyan hou” (An afterword to Saoke’s indignant comments about no-good Chinese students abroad), *Xin Shiji* no. 27 (21 December 1907), pp. 105–106.

<sup>46</sup> Furth, in “Intellectual Change: From the Reform Movement to the May Fourth Movement, 1895–1920,” p. 384, has usefully suggested that anti-familialism was a part of the anarchists’ antagonism to “boundaries” also found in Kang Youwei’s early critiques of Confucianism, but I think she errs in emphasizing the anarchists’ belief in the “autonomous individual” and “the emancipation of the individual from all group attachment,” for the anarchists were also driven by a compelling egalitarianism and put their faith in brotherhood (so to speak) rather than individualism.

<sup>47</sup> “Juehunpei yijie situanti” (Abolish marriage to dissolve private groupings), *Xin Shiji* no. 35 (22 February 1908), p. 139. See also Jupu (Cai Yuanpei?), “Huai’jia tan” (A conversation on destroying the family), *Xin Shiji* no. 49 (30 May 1908), p. 192; and the anonymous “Wu jiating zhuyi” (Against the family), *Xin Shiji* no. 93 (17 April 1909), Shanghai, ed., pp. 11–13.

## THE ANARCHIST CONTRIBUTION TO CHINESE FEMINISM

Feminism clearly constituted an important part of Chinese anarchism. But what of the role played by anarchism in the history of Chinese feminism? The influence of anarcho-feminism in China, like that of anarchism in general, must be sought in the long term, not the short, and often in fundamental attitudes rather than political expression. Chinese women continued to stress the importance of women’s rights to the health of a nation beset with external threats and internal problems. Perhaps a new tone of militancy crept into the discussion; after He Zhen, there were increasingly harsh condemnations of traditional morality, superstition, and the fundamentals of male dominance. Certainly she was read.<sup>63</sup> Nonetheless, it was only in the 1920s, when large numbers of students and intellectuals condemned China’s cultural heritage in the most sweeping terms, that He Zhen’s challenge was taken up. Not just foot binding, the three followings, and polygamy, but also filial piety, legal marriage, and even the family, were rejected. Communist feminists, a number of whom had studied anarchism, agreed that women had to organize themselves, that they faced a double oppression of male domination and class subordination. Chinese Marxists linked women’s liberation to a complete rejection of traditional society and patriarchy.

The Chinese anarchists went beyond the utilitarian argument to teach that human rights, including women’s rights, were not contingent. He Zhen in particular taught that women needed to free themselves. They faced a paradox: on the one hand, if the essence of sexual inequality lay in the economic dependence of women on men, then raising the economic position of women offered some hope; on the other, if the structures of both feudalism and capi-

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<sup>63</sup> In 1909 *Woman’s Journal* (*Ntibao*) included He Zhen in a list of seven pioneer women publishers; see XHGMQSNJ, 3:481.

terminated to picture Qiu as something other than a revolutionary, perhaps because revolution still had such negative connotations. Even supposedly revolutionary journals claimed that Qiu was executed only because of her revolutionary associations (with the man Xu Xilin), not because of her own actions. Zhida also seemed to think that too much emphasis on Qiu's interest in women's issues had detracted from her position as a revolutionary. Zhida did not consider whether a fairly innocent picture of Qiu made for even greater, if less accurate, propaganda value against the government. She did not want to allow any of the living to stray from the true path of revolution by possibly imitating a less than politically correct image of Qiu. People not clearly in favor of revolution were, so far as she was concerned, supporters of the government.

Zhida thus traced Qiu's career as a revolutionary, working with secret groups dedicated to armed uprising and assassination, in some detail, and concluded that Qiu Jin died for the revolution. She will inspire hundreds of thousands of people to follow her example, said Zhida. China should not malign such heroes as Qiu Jin by making them out to be mere blameless victims. Zhida contrasted the Chinese misunderstanding of Qiu Jin to Russian admiration for the revolutionary dedication of Sofya Perovskaya and French attitudes toward Louise ' Michel.<sup>61</sup> Zhida exhorted her readers: only the Chinese remain unaware Of the "principles of revolution and that revolution is a beautiful concept. Thus the revolutionaries among both men and women are not only suppressed during their lifetime, but maligned after their deaths to destroy any revolutionary traces."<sup>62</sup> Zhida thus expected revolution to arrive through violence, propaganda, self-education, and self-sacrifice.

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<sup>61</sup> Perovskaya was a leader of the People's Will, which assassinated Czar Alexander II. Michel, who had participated in the Paris Commune of 1871, remained an active anarchist until her death in 1905.

<sup>62</sup> "Qiu Jin sihou zhi yuan," p. 474.

natures of which led to struggle: jealousy, war, genocide, and capitalism (not necessarily in that order). Family (which the correspondent noted was universal in all known human societies), town, country, and race were groupings that all rested ultimately on the mating of males and females. Looking forward to the day when children would "be shared by the world," the correspondent favored "the abolition of marriage and government, communism, and the equalization of rich and poor, noble and mean." Wu Zhihui also attacked the institution of marriage, though he showed no signs of dissatisfaction with his own fairly traditional family.<sup>48</sup> For his part, Li Shizeng was married three times, the last time at the age of seventy-six.

## LIBERATION AND ANARCHISM

Li Shizeng, for one, specifically called for "women's revolution." He believed that women could achieve freedom (*ziyou*) and independence (*zili*), including free marriage (or companionship, *peihe*), if they could achieve economic equality. Li traced the current forms of economic inequality and hence servitude in marriage to law and ultimately to government. Therefore "a revolution that overthrows government is an important requisite for a woman's revolution," which can finally lead to the "freedom and self-sufficiency (*ziyou zide*) of women."<sup>49</sup>

Again, Li stressed the practical importance of ideology; he almost seemed to consider truth itself to be a social force. Overall, his analysis had much in common with that of Liu Shippei and He Zhen, but Li emphasized the role of cultural factors. Science led to freedom.

For He Zhen and Liu Shippei, on the other hand, women remained part of a larger revolution—the "whole people" (*quantu zhi min*)

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<sup>48</sup> "Nannii zajiao shuo," p. 168.

<sup>49</sup> "Nannii zhi geming," p. 29.

would oppose the ruling classes.<sup>50</sup> Yet their call for peasants and workers to revolt did not preclude a women's revolution. Women too had to liberate themselves. In He Zhen's words,

Chinese society in recent years has seen a little liberation of women. However, has this women's liberation truly come from women being active agents (*zhudongzhe*)—or from being passive agents (*beidongzhe*)? What is “being an active agent”? It is women struggling for liberation with their own might. What is “being a passive agent”? It is men granting liberation to women. When we look at the liberation of Chinese women today, most of it has come about from being passive and less of it from being active agents. What active forces there have been, have come from men, and so as a result the benefits to women have not equaled those garnered by men.<sup>51</sup>

When He Zhen turned her attention to the West, she recognized some of the ways in which the West was moving toward women's liberation. Monogamy, civil marriage, and divorce won her qualified praise, even though they clearly did not go far enough even in theory, much less in practice. She also approved of coeducation and of allowing boys and girls to mix socially. In the end, however, He Zhen found that none of this represented the liberation of women except in the most superficial way. Chinese feminists could not assume that the path of liberation had already been forged in the West. He Zhen also distrusted reforms. To refute the reformist quest to give women economic independence through jobs, she contrasted individual (*geren*) and group (*quanti*) economic independence. On an individual basis, economic independence simply meant that a given woman had some freedom of action, but

<sup>50</sup> “Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshi,” p. 143.

<sup>51</sup> “Nuzi jiefang wenti,” p. 962.

cuted in July 1907, righteous and steadfast unto death. The heavy-handedness of the authorities had as much to do with making Qiu Jin an instant martyr as did the efforts of the revolutionaries. But necrophilia (or ancestor worship) was important to the Chinese as to all revolutionaries. A “Saddened student” (*Beisheng*) wrote *Natural Justice* that Qiu Jin's first task had been “to hoe, not to plant”; weeding out the traitors came first.<sup>56</sup> Qiu had founded propaganda organs using colloquial Chinese that ordinary people could understand. Her efforts had not been limited to political revolution; she also worked for women's rights, desiring to awaken women and found schools. She was dedicated, selfless, noble, a *xia* (crusader) who loved her country.

Zhang Binglin introduced her poetry.<sup>57</sup> And a correspondent from Shaoxing (Qiu's base at the time of her last plots and site of her execution) wrote in to demonstrate that Qiu Jin's “confession” was actually concocted by the government.<sup>58</sup> In essence, the correspondent argued that much of the confession must be false because it contradicted known facts of Qiu Jin's life. “I am not denying that Qiu Jin was a revolutionary, but the murder of her by the Shaoxing authorities was done without reliable testimony.”<sup>59</sup>

Zhida (He Zhen?) wrote an editorial headed “The injustice that occurred after Qiu Jin's death.”<sup>60</sup> She wanted to correct any misapprehensions that “Saddened student” and others might have left; Qiu Jin had definitely been a revolutionary. She was not an innocent victim randomly slaughtered by an oppressive state, but a dedicated martyr, aware of the risks she took in struggling against an oppressive state. Public opinion in China seemed to Zhida to be de-

<sup>56</sup> “Qiu Jin zhuan,” *Tianyi* no. 5 (10 August 1907), pp. 103–106.

<sup>57</sup> “Fu Qiuntishi yishi xu,” *Tianyi* No. 5 (10 August 1907), pp. 106–108.

<sup>58</sup> “Shaoxing moujun laihan lun Qiu Jin shi” (Letter from a certain gentleman from Shaoxing about the Qiu Jin affair), *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), pp. 157–160.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>60</sup> “Qiu Jin sihou zhi yuan,” *Tianyi* no. 15, pp. 469–474.



privileges and become equal to women, and make a world with neither the oppression of women nor the oppression of men.<sup>54</sup>

*Natural Justice* also fostered the women's revolution through the wide range of remarkable women it presented for readers to admire and possibly emulate. Some of these feminist models were anarchists, some were terrorists, and some were scientists. Pictures of E. P. Rago-zennikova and Louise Michel were printed, Emma Goldman and her journal *Mother Earth* extensively covered. One report proclaimed that the ranks of the Russian nihilists contained a majority of women.<sup>55</sup> Anarchist journals and radical books from Europe and the United States were available—and read—in Tokyo. These obviously gave an unflattering view of the West. Moreover, they helped to create the feeling of belonging to a worldwide movement. Readers were told of a socialist women's journal in Germany with sixty thousand readers, uprisings led by women nihilists in Russia, and how a majority of Irish women participated in riots against soldiers.

From within the ranks of Chinese womanhood itself the coming Revolution of 1911 did not lack martyrs, and perhaps the most famous was Qiu Jin, the woman who left her husband and family to study in Japan, liberating herself to fight for justice upon her return to China. *Natural Justice* was a leader in the hagiography movement; the problem was whether to play up Qiu's victimization, hence emphasizing the evil of the government, or her heroism, thus emphasizing the strength of the revolution? Certainly, after a failed and somewhat ridiculous uprising, Qiu Jin was exe-

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., pp. 188, 192.

<sup>55</sup> See inter alia, "Xinkan jieshao" (Introducing new publications), *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), p. 160; "Nijie jinshiji" (A record of recent events concerning women), and "Eguo ntijie yishi huiyi" (Translation of the legacies of Russian heroines), *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October), pp. 262–263 and 277–282.

it did not affect the majority of women. As long as a small body of rich people monopolized the organs of production and unemployment was rising, economic independence remained merely a slogan meant to disguise wage slavery.<sup>52</sup> To have a few women join the working class would not challenge sexual inequality. In He Zhen's vision, true economic independence for women (or, better, for everyone), lay only in anarcho-communism.

Political reformism was no better than economic reformism because the lower classes would be at the mercy of the capitalists, even as to their votes. Suffragettes were wrong, because people dependent on others for their living have to do what they are told. He Zhen examined in some detail the parliaments of various nations; her conclusion might be summarized, "All government corrupts and democratic governments corrupt more," as when socialists join the government and forget their former principles. He Zhen thought that women who managed to join a government would not do much better. She believed that a few women might join the ruling class but that change could come only from the outside. When upper-class women joined governments, they joined men as an oppressive force and did not necessarily support the needs of women. He Zhen understood rulership and male dominance as operating together; therefore they should be overthrown together. Otherwise, attempts at liberation could not succeed. This is what she meant by basic change.<sup>53</sup> She averred that any attempts to rein in the aristocracy or gain privileges equal to men's (like the vote) by using government, even if successful, would leave oppressive governments even more powerful.

In that respect she distrusted Chinese men who advocated women's liberation for the wrong reasons. If they wished to make China strong by imitating what they thought were the practices of Europe, the United States, and Japan, He Zhen doubted their

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<sup>52</sup> "Furen jiefang wenti," p. 192.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

desire really to see women liberated. Even though they sent their daughters to school and prohibited their womenfolk from binding their feet, even though they spoke of civilizing the whole household, not just themselves, He Zhen asked whether they were not merely using women to garner praise for themselves. In other words, she saw reforms as hypocritical gestures inadequate to deal with the real problem.

He Zhen cited the example of Chinese men who required educated wives and ended by enslaving them all the more. Since the true concern of these men was the continuation of their family, they no longer wanted their households managed and their children educated by ignorant women. And so, He Zhen said, these men backed such reforms as women's education. But of course she did not believe that education undertaken with this kind of support could possibly free women, for it was designed solely to produce more efficient labor. Indeed, she accused the male reformers of seeking their own ease.

He Zhen's views on revolution might be summarized thus: Oppression and liberation share the same roots, which lie imbedded in society's economic and political structures. Power has for historical reasons combined suppression of economic classes with suppression of women. Both groups (overlapping but far from identical) will overthrow their oppressors by some kind of communist revolution involving violence and also fundamentally involving new cultural forms. He Zhen appears to have believed that a women's revolution would follow when women fully understood their position. This is why she devoted so much effort to explaining the historical background behind the male-dominated structure of Chinese society.

She could not imagine free women in either traditional or capitalist society. Nor did she believe in freedom or equality as we normally use the terms. If equality for women meant the burden of increased responsibilities and labor or participation in an unfair and hierarchical society, then equality was the wrong goal. Substituting

forced work for the enforced isolation of tradition was not liberation. This idea, contrary to much of the focus of the women's movement in the late twentieth century, was clearly related to He Zhen's ideas about anarchism. And if liberty meant licentiousness, insincerity, and trickery, then it too was wrong and selfish. Women's liberation was inseparable from the liberation of all; thus, like equality, true liberty implied for He Zhen a sense of community.

He Zhen, at least, sought no authority for her call for equality in China's past and acknowledged none. She grounded her call for revolution on a transcendent sense of justice, of sexual equality. Her ability to quote from the classics and more recent Confucian texts to make her historical points, however, is evidence that she had a thorough traditional education. This education must have included the Confucian classics, women's manuals, and a good deal of literature. It probably did not include much philosophical exegesis, *kaozheng* studies, or New Text interpretations. She did not show the same wide-ranging knowledge of noncanonical traditions that Liu Shipai displayed, nor do her writings indicate any interest in the national essence. Compared to Liu, she seemed more at home in what might be called the world of neologisms—she did not use more traditional equivalents for such concepts as freedom, liberation, equality, socialism, communism, individual, and the like. Women were to begin by changing themselves, preparing themselves through education for the tasks of revolution.

The marriage between feminism and anarchism was consummated in revolution against all forms of inequality and unfreedom. In He Zhen's words,

What we mean by equality between the sexes is not just that men will no longer oppress women. We also want men no longer to be oppressed by other men, and women no longer to be oppressed by other women...

[Therefore, women should] completely overthrow rulership, force men to abandon all their special

sory, the anarchists could only continue to work within the Guomindang for the long-range cultural changes they hoped would eventually change society. They were, however, subject to Chiang Kai-shek's manipulation.

Wu Zhihui's first reaction to the notion of anarchism had been that it was beautiful but possible only in three thousand years. By the 1920s, but now with a worldview based in large part on his absorption of a good deal of anarchist philosophy, Wu was again pushing the anarchist political program into the future. The paradox he discovered was that he needed political order for the kinds of social changes he wanted. Yet the political order he found attempted to suppress social change. For Wu, true change had always run deep, below the surface of political happenstance: that was why he was an anarchist, adjuring politics itself. Politics indeed having failed, from 1912 on he desired to reach the social and cultural life of the people itself—to transform China's mentality. And yet there was *no* public life in *China* that did not involve politics. Wu moved from the Tongmenghui to the Guomindang. For a few years all was fine. He appears to have enjoyed himself during the heyday of the importation of Western ideas that is generally dated to Chen Duxiu's founding of *New Youth* (*Xin qingnian*) in 1915. For a few years, into the May Fourth era, all progressives shared a common enemy—old China—and could unite in a kind of friendship of sarcasm. It was for the debate on science and metaphysics of 1923 that Wu wrote the culminating distillation, seventy thousand characters long, of his life view.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> "Yige xin xinyang de yuzhouguan ji renshengguan" (A view of the cosmos and a view of human life: A new belief), in *Collected Works*, 1:1–95; originally published in *Taipingyang zazhi*, Shanghai, August 1923–March 1924. Wu's role in the New Culture movement is covered in Wang, "Wu Chih-hui," pp. 142–196, and included in the standard histories of the May Fourth Movement. I will look at only a few of his later writings for clues to the fading of his once full-blown anarchism.

feel that as biology and medicine could cure the ailments of people, so religion and morality (*daode*) could cure their behavioral problems (*xingweibing*). For the world today was "extremely immoral and uncivilized" and needed, in the correspondent's opinion, two notions of morality: selflessness and fraternity (*wuwo boai*). Life itself was an illusion and selfishness only arose out of a mistaken belief that the self had a reality of its own. When this is fully realized, the correspondent implied, then evil and wars would disappear. In a similar way, when people realize that there are no true distinctions between *this* and *that*, they would be capable of fraternity. The correspondent said this transcendental love that he put in such Buddhistic terms was the ideal of Buddhism and Christianity alike and was capable of reforming all of society, not just the individual like medicine. Wu Zhihui, perhaps surprisingly, began his response by expressing substantial agreement: behavior was a more pressing problem than physical ailments, selflessness and fraternity were the means to effect a cure. However, Wu wanted to put this into an evolutionary framework and, of course, rejected the claim that morality had anything to do with religion. Rather,

Selflessness and fraternity are the natural virtues (*ziran zhi liangde*) of humankind and the seeds of world evolution... [Now that the world is] relatively civilized, most people believe in good morality and so agree on selflessness and fraternity. The beliefs of ancient peoples have nothing in common with those of people today. The anarchists have no need to yield one iota. We can say without hesitation or ambivalence that our notions of "selflessness" and "fraternity" today are something that Christianity and Buddhism cannot even dream of. In an analogous way, the "selflessness" and "fraternity" of Christianity

and Buddhism are something that Confucianism and Moism cannot even dream of.<sup>26</sup>

Not only was religion worthless so far as Wu was concerned, but also all traditional thought (Confucianism as both religion and philosophy) as well. He appears to have believed that evolution had progressed to such an extent that a kind of leap of consciousness was now possible—and necessary. That is, that consciousness of, say, fraternity did not proceed in steady, logical, and painless steps from Confucianism to Buddhism to the age of science, but rather that each stage was a struggle.. Wu denied that any traditional thought system contained ethics relevant to the present.

Even anarchism was subject to progress, in a sense. In another context, Wu had noted in passing that while it was natural that many people believed primitive peoples had been anarchist, their anarchism was not the same as the anarchism of the future.<sup>27</sup> He admitted that a few philosophers of old may have had their good points; however, he also claimed that seeking ancient precedents for the unprecedented was a particularly Chinese superstition. Wu's perception of the uniqueness of each historical moment, in the context of his linear view of history, might have made him unusually aware of historical trends and the ways in which historical foreshadowings were and were not true precedents. However, his real interest was the present and future, not the past. Overall, Wu was not as historically minded as Li Shizeng, much less Liu Shipai. He was too engrossed in the debates of his present to search with even a semblance of objectivity for traces of historical progress. Religion, for example, was a present evil; therefore, Wu decided it must have been mostly evil in the past: it must be given no quarter.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>27</sup> “Nannii zajiao shuo” (Miscegenation), *Xin Shiji* no. 42, 11 April 1908, p. 168.

with Sun Yat-sen's attacks on the warlords in the early part of the decade.

In these circumstances, the cracks in their anarchism became evident: their priorities showed through. For example, although Wu Zihui was interested in the labor movement, possibly as it could be linked to anarcho-syndicalism, in the end he stressed China's need for cultural change. That is, the people had to be educated before they could assume new responsibilities. The corollary to this was that radical social change would disrupt the process without achieving its objectives. The trap was that Wu could not really get very far in cultural revolution without deep social change. In practice, anarchism became increasingly attenuated and the first generation of anarchists attempted to apply selectively at least some of the values they had developed through their anarchism. In the end, they found themselves enemies of further social and political revolution. In another sense, the anarchists of the first generation were left behind by the May Fourth Movement. Having settled into jobs in education or party, they could not deal with the new political stridency, the uncompromising antiimperialism, nationalism, and disillusionment with “Western values.” Many of these slogans must have seemed familiar but by the 1920s the former anarchists were tired of slogans and wanted hard work. Perhaps they were disillusioned by calls for revolution, having turned to the grindstone of gradualism when they realized that 1911 offered no panaceas.

The logic of the situation by the time of Sun Yat-sen's death in 1925 demanded a response to the growth of communism, both as an intellectual phenomenon and as a challenge to the republic of the Guomindang's dreams. From the beginning, the anarchists seemed suspicious of the Chinese Communist Party as an alien force within the Guomindang. Heirs of Bakunin's attacks on Marx, they had long criticized Marxism's dependence on the state. Yet at the time this terrible choice between repressive political forces did not seem so stark; it was softened by the misty hope that the two parties would coexist as friendly rivals. Then, when this hope proved illu-

had faced another kind of choice entirely. Zhang soon became an especially trenchant *critic* of leftists in the Tongmenghui and the Guomindang. Part of the attraction each man had felt for anarchism stemmed from their disgust with the modern, with the West, with capitalism. They turned, therefore, to a rigorous nostalgia. Perhaps the bond between Zhang and Liu lay in their shared despair over the alternatives open to China even more than in their interest in classical studies in philology. It certainly did not lie in any shared positive political views—after 1908 Zhang continued to support revolution, at least formally, while Liu supported the Manchus; after 1914 Liu supported Yuan while Zhang was under arrest; after 1916 Zhang offered some support for Sun Yat-sen while Liu taught literature at Beida. Yet Liu kept alive the spark of his utopianism. The rationale that Liu gave in support of the ascent of the Hongxian Emperor (Yuan Shikai) to the throne demonstrated the totality of his retreat from anarchism. The people, he now believed, needed a strong ruler or else disorder would ensue.<sup>30</sup> But more importantly, Heaven manifests its own virtue in the emperor. Liu also implied, more prosaically, that imperial rule would be superior to the hypocrisy and corruption of a supposedly republican Beijing.

Noticeably, although to a lesser extent than Zhang and Liu, the Paris group of anarchists moved to the right in the 1920s. The end of the decade saw them firmly within the Guomindang and specifically in Chiang Kai-shek's camp. Nonetheless, this was a gradual and logical outgrowth of their interest in radical social and cultural change, not a sudden lurch into reaction. In the context of the times their move to the right stemmed from their decision for political engagement. Only the Guomindang seemed to offer a chance of directing the entire nation. Therefore to influence national policy required party activities. Furthermore, as members of the original Tongmenghui, they found themselves more or less cooperating

<sup>30</sup> “Junzheng fugu lun (shang)” (Monarchical government and restoring antiquity, part 1), *Liu Shenshu xiansheng yishu, zhuan* 55, p. ia.

Socialism too was, in the end, another sign for Wu that progress—the evolution to which he attributed a transcendental nature—gave of its existence and not so much an end in itself. Defined as humanitarianism (*rendao*), socialism gave rise to anarchism as its newest and most nearly perfect form. The essence of anarcho-socialism was for Wu “selflessness and fraternity” (*wuwo boai*), qualities that religion could only falsely claim, and moreover presumably unique to anarchism. Since -Wu's evolution worked as a whole, not in pieces as if political forms might take a step forward while ethics remained bogged down, then morality, as a basic rather than superstructural element, both operated independently in its own sphere and turned out to be the essence of Wu's revolution.

## HISTORY AND NATION

The pursuit of politics need not be linked with the study of history. But the two tended to be found together in China from the 1890s onward, and Liu Shippei's interest in China's heritage was at all times sincere, not instrumental. It did not cease with his adoption of radical politics. He put his considerable familiarity with the classical traditions of China to the service of his anarchism, as has been evident throughout. Passing citations of historical precedent and ancient philosophical admonition filled his essays. Liu consistently put Chinese history in a new perspective.<sup>28</sup>

In addition, he devoted several articles to new areas of scholarship that interested him. Generally unpolemical in tone, these

<sup>28</sup> Liu referred often, for example, to Han Wu Di and Wang Mang as state socialists who, however, accomplished little but enlarging the powers of government. See inter alia “Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan,” pp. 930-931, and immediately below. His essays are sprinkled with such comments, reflecting both his anarchist perspective and his thorough grounding in Chinese history.

articles dealt with antecedents of socialism and anarchism.<sup>29</sup> Liu was trained from childhood in critical exegesis, that is, Confucian hermeneutics; after he ceased to believe in revolution, he continued to expound on the classics and on literature as well. But even while he was an anarchist, Liu annotated several rediscovered works of the Chinese tradition.

Bao Jingyan was a fourth century Daoist who, among other things, severely criticized the state. He “thought that people in ancient times had no rulers, and that those times were better than today.” Liu wanted to “develop Bao’s subtle points” and annotated and punctuated the entire text of Bao’s original description of a Daoist but concrete utopia (about 700 characters).<sup>30</sup> Liu pointed out that Bao sought to destroy the theory that Heaven had granted rulership to certain men, believing instead that the clever and strong had created a system that forced the common people into submission. People are naturally free while rulership is something imposed, in contradiction to equality. Indeed, Liu’s other essays clearly resonate with the language of Bao Jingyan.

Bao pointed out that the people were forced to labor to keep the officials fat, the one poor and the other rich. Liu added that Bao was in effect attacking the entire distinction between ruler and ruled, which stemmed precisely from the forced labor of the poor. He also commented that evil times bring about loyalty and righteousness, whereas discord brings about filial obedience and parental love—a standard *Daoist* attack on Confucianism. Liu interpreted: “Bao is *criticizing* false morality (*wei daode*). He thinks that the times when false morality is widespread, that is, when the people are suffering greatly, are inferior to the times before morality

<sup>29</sup> See “Baosheng xueshu fawei” (The subtleties of Master Bao’s scholarship), *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907), pp. 233–238; “Xihan shehui zhuyi xue fadaka” (An examination of the development of socialism in the Western Han), *Tianyi* no. 5 (10 August 1907), pp. 91–94; “Fei liuzi lun” (Contra six scholars), *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907), pp. 219–228.

<sup>30</sup> -Baosheng xueshu fawei,” pp. 233–238.

but his real concern, as of June 1912, was to help make the republic work. Nonetheless, he also pointed out that as events unfolded, the old canard “bad government is better than anarchism” was losing its appeal.<sup>28</sup> In other words, Wu saw no reason to change his fundamental political philosophy: a republic was second-best. In the late 1910s he displayed great interest in the labor movement. Wu’s solution remained two-pronged: political revolution and long-term social change, both related to cultural transformation. He would support all efforts in those directions, anarchist or not.

## MOVING TO THE RIGHT

As the popularity of anarchism in China reached its height in the May Fourth era, China’s first anarchists grew increasingly worried about the direction in which radicalism was tending. Yet their move to the right was actually quite slow. The May Fourth incident itself—a demonstration by three thousand Beijing college students in 1919—was organized to an extent by anarchists.<sup>29</sup> Increasingly, however, as the decade continued, radicals had to choose not within a general leftist framework but specifically between a diffuse anarchist movement and the Chinese Communist Party.

About a decade before Chinese radicals were asked to choose between anarchism and communism, Liu Shiwei and Zhang Binglin

<sup>28</sup> “Zhengfu wenti” (The political problem), *Minli bao* (25 July 1912), reprinted in *Collected Works*, 10:1486. Richard Wang, “Wu Chih-hui,” pp. X20–22, and Li Wenneng, *Wu Jingheng dui Zhongguo xiandai zhengzhi de yingxiang*, pp. 87–89, emphasize Wu’s support for a party system at this time, but Wu’s defense of constitutional strife against Yuan’s claim to need national unity was qualified.

<sup>29</sup> Such as Kuang Husheng—see Arif Dirlik, “The New Culture Movement Revisited,” pp. 251–252. For a discussion of the new anarchists of the 1910s and 1920s see ch. 9. Works on the subject include Scalapino and Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement*, pp. 54–61; Olga Lang, *Pa Chin and His Writings*; Tamagawa Nobuaki, *Chugoku no kuroi hata*, pp. 161–246; Nohara Shiro, “Anarchism in the May Fourth Movement,” *Libero International* nos. 1–4 (January 1975–April 1976) (originally *Anakisuto to goshi undo*).

only a symptom of a power vacuum, a sign that political revolution without social transformation meant nothing. While this was the opinion of Liu Shifu, the first generation of anarchists looked upon the unhappy events of 1913 with considerable ambivalence.

On the one hand, their return to China implied that social institutions were not yet ready to replace the state; a proper parliament still seemed the best alternative to Yuan. Therefore they emphasized longterm work in education and moral improvement over more calls for anarchist revolution. On the other hand, the anarchists noted approvingly a decline in political posturing and a rise in altruism that the crisis seemed to be causing,<sup>24</sup> and in any case they had long believed that education was the route to anarchism. But now Li Shizeng was willing to support the republic. He saw the role of the president as pivotal: either China would achieve the stability necessary for further growth, or it would experience the chaos of the South American nations.<sup>25</sup> The president must respect the will of the people, both through their representatives in parliament and as “public opinion.” Li concluded that Yuan must go.<sup>26</sup>

Wu also was coming to believe in the republic, at least as a set of institutions superior to monarchy and possibly leading to anarchism. He emphasized the ideal nature of a republic as “a public object” (*gonggong zhi wu*)?<sup>27</sup> He supported the desire held so strongly by Song Jiaoren for a British or American style of politics marked by political parties, hoping, however, for a relatively decorous discourse between opponents. Wu could not imagine a politics of disinterested statesmen until the anarchist era arrived,

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<sup>24</sup> See Li Shizeng’s “letter” to Yuan Shikai of July 1913, in *Li Shizeng wenji*, 2:293–294, for both these tendencies.

<sup>25</sup> “Minguo zongtong zhi taidu” (The attitude of the president of the Republic), *Minli bao* (May 1914, pp. 26–27); reprinted in *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 1:192.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 194–195.

<sup>27</sup> “Shu moubao duanping hou” (Afterword to a brief criticism in a newspaper), *Minli bao* (4 June 1912), reprinted in *Collected Works*, 10:1484. I do not know if Wu was thinking of the Latin etymology of *res publica*.

had begun, when there was still freedom.”<sup>31</sup> Liu emphasized Bao’s antimilitarism. Bao’s *destruction of rulership* is the equivalent of *anarchism*. Bao was clearer than Laozi or Zhuangzi in his call to seek equality and complete liberty. Liu thought Bao’s only mistake was to place his theory in antiquity instead of in the future, but even this misstep illuminated the equality of primitive peoples.

Liu’s scholarship was not limited to rescuing Bao Jingyan from obscurity or redirecting the text to the future. Liu did not place Bao in his times, the anarchy, so to speak, following the collapse of the Han dynasty. Rather, Liu sought to highlight elements of his own world, the twentieth century, in pointing out genuine resemblances between the beliefs of the ancient Daoist critic and the modern creed of anarchism. Bao was indeed a very socially minded thinker who was, in Liu’s view, a harbinger.

Similarly, Liu traced socialism to the former Han dynasty when a group of Confucians sought to “destroy the special privileges of the rich.”<sup>32</sup> With extensive quotations from certain Han figures (Kuang Heng-, Gong Yu) critical of the rich clans, Liu summed up their goal as “making everybody look down on wealth” and respecting the farmer over the merchant. Liu, however, failed to point out that Kuang and Gong had been ministers to the Han emperors and may have simply had imperial interests at heart. In any case, Liu pointed to a current in Han thought sharply critical of profit and wealth, a current that affected the great philosopher Dong Zhongshu. Liu’s concern here was not anarchism but some form of socialism. He praised the ancient thinkers who sought to “block the desire of the people to become rich... Thus the days of the rich were numbered,” or sought to “prevent the property of the poor being monopolized by the rich.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234.

<sup>32</sup> “Xihan shehui zhuyi xue fadaka,” p. 91.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

However, Liu felt less sympathy with Wang Mang's plans to equalize wealth by nationalizing all land and property. For Liu, Wang represented all the reformism and statism among the revolutionaries that he so detested. Liu accused Wang, in his efforts to prevent sale of land through nationalization, to prevent the sale of slaves, and to enforce government monopolies in the sale of alcohol, salt, metals, and the minting of currency, of seeking to monopolize all sources of profit for the autocracy. While Liu praised Bao Jingyan's understanding of anarchism and clearly favored socialism if it came from the people, his brief analysis of Han socialism was in effect a reply to certain members of the Tongmenghui who were taking pride in China's ancient "discovery" of socialism and her early attempts at land equalization. As long as the government was involved, Liu wanted nothing to do with it. Through historical review, Liu saw the same mistaken tendency toward state power in the West's history of socialism as well.

In terms of China's immediate heritage, Liu was sharply critical of the Qing philosophical mainstream.<sup>34</sup> Yet his criticism differed from a later generation's charges of sterility and irrelevance. Liu began with the Ming-Qing transition philosophers. Probably because some revolutionaries and reformers had rediscovered Huang Zongxi and Gu Yanwu as protodemocrats and Wang Fuzhi as a kind of early nationalist, these gentlemen became Liu's special targets. Given Liu's impatience with policies of amelioration and racism, this is scarcely surprising. Liu found Gu's call for more local government a kind of feudalism that would benefit only the big clans, Huang, too, still believed in having rulers. Wang, in establishing the notion of China as a political- racial entity, was guilty of encouraging her to become a military empire. Then, Yan Yuan, Jiang Yong, and Dai Zhen were excessively interested in profit, wealth, merchants, and the military. According to Liu, the Qing intellectual movement of "seeking facts" (*qiushi*) gradually replaced the

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<sup>34</sup> "Fei liuzi lun," pp. 219–221.

and there was no head and no membership fees. A first class of more than thirty students was established in Beijing for a six-month French course before leaving for France. The class arrived in Montargis at the beginning of 1913 and included the future physicist and educator Li Shuhua. Over eighty students had arrived by the end of the year. Again, the first generation of anarchists was counting on a few leading spirits to show the way. While proud of the students they brought over, whose total number compared favorably with the students on government scholarships over the years, any importing of "world civilization" was going to have to work by indirection.

These educational organizations later became embroiled in France's need for manual laborers during the First World War and the Chinese government's official support for the Allies. The movement broke down horribly in the early 1920s, leaving many student-workers broke and stranded in France, owing to financial difficulties and infighting between communists and anarchists. Nonetheless the Society for Frugal Study in France marked a new era of overseas studies, and its leaders went on to found the first Chinese university abroad, in Lyon.<sup>23</sup>

The collapse of republican pretensions under Yuan Shikai's dictatorship led to much recrimination and further fracturing of the revolutionary movement. The anarchists—Wu, Li, and Cai Yuanpei—might have claimed with some logic that the roots of the current mess lay in an incomplete revolution. With the bureaucracy largely intact and the attempt to build new political structures, they might have argued, a new autocracy would of course form. The welter of political parties of late 1912 and 1913 could have been seen as

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<sup>23</sup> This is the judgment of Shu Xincheng, *Jindai Zhongguo liuxueshi*, p. 99. As is well known, students who eventually made it to France included the future communist leaders Li Lisan, Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping. The movement is discussed by Paul Bailey, in "The Work-Study Movement in France," *The China Quarterly*, no. 115 (September 1988), pp. 441–461.



he was not alone in believing that science, education, national and racial survival, and world civilization were all linked. One form that this concern took was the Society for Frugal Study in France (*Liu-Fa jianxue hui*). Founded by Wu, Li, Wang Jingwei, Zhang Ji, and Zhang Jingjiang among others, this was not the only organization designed to improve Chinese education, but it stood out in its clear anarchist orientation. It was also more successful than most, if one counts the efforts of its various metamorphoses.

The organizers established a preparatory school in Beijing to teach the students enough French to enter French lycees and universities.<sup>18</sup> They could not make it free but attempted to subsidize the students to a modest degree.<sup>19</sup> They expected to coordinate the education of students who could pay their own way, to help them get part-time jobs and introductions to schools, all to supplement the program of government scholarships. A slight anarchist influence may be detected in the curriculum of the Beijing school, which included, besides French, Chinese, and mathematics, “practical knowledge” such as “public health and Western customs”—items that although certainly not anarchist by definition, reflected Wu’s concerns. Additionally, the school had no servants except for one cook; all janitorial work was done by the students themselves.<sup>20</sup> Provincial affiliates like the Sichuan Society for Frugal Study and a women’s group (*Niizi jianxue hui*) also sprang up.<sup>21</sup>

The anarchist influence on the society, while tenuous, was shown in its declaration of a few years later.<sup>22</sup> Rules were few

<sup>18</sup> “Beijing liu-Fa jianxue hui yubai xuexiao jianzhang” (Regulations for the Society for Frugal Study in France’s preparatory school in Beijing), *Li Shizheng xiansheng wenji*, 1:185.

<sup>19</sup> Tuition plus living expenses were expected to total about Chinese \$70–80 for a six-month term; *ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>20</sup> Li Shuhua, MS., p. 17.

<sup>21</sup> Shu Xincheng, *Jindai Zhongguo liuxueshi* (A history of modern Chinese study abroad), pp. 87–88.

<sup>22</sup> “Beijing liu-Fa jianxue hui jianzhang” (Regulations for the Society for Frugal Study in France, Beijing), *Xin gongnian* (New Youth), vol. 3, no. 2 (1 April 1918).

Ming’s devotion to practicality. Liu implied that unfortunately the Qing’s emphasis on evidential research and philology (*kaozheng* or Han learning), while tolerably factual was also a kind of escape into scholarly minutiae.

Liu saw in the entire statecraft tradition a desire for selfish gain, not a desire to benefit the people (*minsheng*). He criticized all the current interest in town and village government for displaying ignorance or worse of the bullying and corrupt gentry who were making mincemeat of the people. As for the Qing philosophers, no matter what or how many their good points, Liu thought their theories of ruler ship worse than religion. At least the Ming intellectuals had been brave men confronting an oppressive court.<sup>35</sup> The Ming spent less time on hairsplitting. They studied the laws of the state and put duty (*yi*) ahead of profit (*li*). In Liu’s view the Ming literati had responded to events whereas the Qing worked to protect themselves; the Ming literati were straight and naive, the Qing clever and deceitful. This line of thought led Liu back to statecraft thinkers who simply “pursue profit under a high sounding rubric,” much as the Song school (*yili zhi xue*) “sought fame in the name of morality.”<sup>36</sup>

This was pure iconoclasm, a momentary spasm of distaste for careful philological study. Liu wanted to get back to the larger picture, to reverse the verdict that the Qing had made on their Ming predecessors as airy theorists involved too often in partisan politics at court. At the same time, he did not reverse the Qing’s verdict on Song Neo-Confucianism as moralistic.

Liu’s internationalism was demonstrated in his support of Esperanto, even in opposition to Zhang Binglin. At the same time, Liu favored retention of the Chinese literary heritage in opposition to the Paris anarchists. In an essay published in the *National*

<sup>35</sup> Liu turned to the Ming in the pages of *Minbao*, perhaps wishing to inspire that larger but relatively naive audience; “Qingru deshi lun” (The pros and cons of the Qing literati), *Minbao* no. 14 (8 June 1907), pp. 23–38.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37–38.

*Essence Journal* entitled “Chinese ideographs can be of benefit to the world” Liu proposed that the *Shuowen*, the great etymological dictionary compiled in the Han dynasty, be translated into Esperanto.<sup>37</sup> Liu wanted Esperanto and Chinese to complement one another; ideographs may be useful when local pronunciations differ and are necessary for historical research in Asia. *Natural Justice* itself promoted Esperanto as a means to foster international unity and sought to instruct its readers in the good points of the new language.<sup>38</sup>

Some of this scholarship in supposedly revolutionary journals must have been designed to establish Liu’s credentials. Either traditional or Western learning could have given him prestige (traditional to a greater degree than Western) and the combination—seen also in the citations of his articles—was a perfect imprimatur. Liu was also following both his natural bent and the tendency of radicalism to root itself in the past in order to clear away much intellectual debris. (As, for example, criticism of the United States’ war effort in Vietnam was originally voiced on practical, then moral grounds but evolved into a thoroughly revisionist historical understanding of the cold war and even the nature of the American imperial state.)<sup>39</sup>

Liu’s very self-identity deeply involved scholarship, and when he called anarchism “the most perfect theory” (*xueli*), he was probably taking a kind of aesthetic pleasure in its intellectual simplicity.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> “Lun Zhongtu wenzi youyi yu shi,” *Guocui xuebao* no. 46 (October 1908).

<sup>38</sup> (Anon.) “Esperanto cili tongshi zongxu” (A comprehensive explanation of the Esperanto language: General introduction), *Tianyi* no. 16–19, PP- 655–668.

<sup>39</sup> For a cogent discussion of the radical drive to root itself in history, see J. G. A. Pocock, “Time, Institutions and Action: An Essay on Traditions and Their Understanding,” in his *Politics, Language, and Time* (New York: Atheneum, 1971), pp. 233–272.

<sup>40</sup> Liu’s speech to the first meeting of the Society for the Study of Socialism, *Tianyi* no. 6 (1 September 1907), p. 152.

centuries, the real advances came only in the nineteenth century, and the greatest spurt of growth was most obvious only in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Chinese knowledge was transmitted from ancient times and until the nineteenth century it still had a certain usefulness within its small scope. However, the rate of progress of civilization has increased recently...<sup>16</sup>

The point was that China should join the world of science, not compete with it. Wu called for a school system that would give all youngsters, regardless of family wealth, an education. The content of this education was to include such sciences as chemistry and physics. These in turn were to be useful. Although Wu did not refer to the anarchist morality of his earlier essays on education, he demanded that the students “utilize the practical aspects [of science] to benefit the people’s livelihood.”<sup>17</sup> Wu saw the question of the benefits of education as the chief difference between traditional and modern Chinese schooling. Acknowledging that the uses of basic science and such theoretical breakthroughs as Darwinism might not be immediate, Wu claimed them to be indirectly but fundamentally important to the educational level of the Chinese people as a whole. The rest would follow. Wu paid scant attention to the question of why China did not develop modern science in the first place; his polemical point was that the nation had to develop it now. At the same time, science was international, cosmopolitan in nature: while it was no accident that Darwin was born in Europe, the truths that he discovered applied equally to China and could be understood by Chinese.

This concern with modern education for a modern nation, even with its internationalist overtones, was shared by a number of intellectuals. Wu was perhaps its preeminent spokesman, but

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 631.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 632.

of the patriarchal society. This was part of the anarchist social program that had been outlined over the preceding five years, slightly watered down, but made specific for current Chinese conditions.

Wu Zhihui's thinking in 1912 continued to revolve around the questions of education, moral progress, and national survival. In an address to a middle school in June, Wu defined true knowledge as systematic learning and as the getting rid of superstitions and "wild fancies."<sup>15</sup> In other words, science. And without science, China's position in the world was perilous. Wu goaded his audience with the taunt that perhaps the Chinese were an inferior race and might become extinct. But he made it clear that actually he expected China to catch up fast— through proper education. This was consistent with his anarchist faith in education, only now he had some hope that a state school system, headed by Cai Yuanpei in 1912, might offer some degree of science. Too many Chinese, he warned darkly, still believed in the "eightlegged essay," that is, knowledge useless except for the purpose of individual advancement.

Ten years ago, I was struck by the perils facing the nation and often studied their origins with my comrades. We discovered that the reason China did not rise up was the deplorable ignorance of her people. The Germans say that without true knowledge, there cannot be true morality. This is exactly right... But if we ask whether there are a few thousand Chinese who really understand systematic learning, then the answer is no. Can mastery of the various sciences be wrested from the Powers, the European nations and the United States? No... [However,] while world learning sprouted in the sixteenth and seventeenth

<sup>15</sup> Wu Zhihui, "He wei zhen zhishi" (What is meant by 'true knowledge?'), *Collected Works*, 3:631; originally published in *Minli bao* (June 1912), pp. 19–20.

Although Wu Zhihui could be an astringent critic of his countrymen, he was in fact intensely loyal to a renovated version of what it meant to be Chinese. He tirelessly refuted aspersions cast on the Chinese character and the nation's maturity. While Wu agreed that the Chinese were "semi-civilized" and "half-enlightened," he evidently saw this as being half full, not half empty, of the requisite human qualities. After all, the Western nations were not much more advanced, oppressing the people, persecuting innocent revolutionaries, and inflicting barbarian punishments on ordinary law-breakers. Not to mention practicing the corrupt arts of religion and politics. Republicanism led to despotism.<sup>41</sup> It was as if evolution would take care of the second half of the trip to full civilization; his burning faith in human potential for goodness led to the conclusion that advancement to the reordering of society needed little preparation. Thus Wu could conclude that the Chinese did not have to wait for the aftermath of a socialist revolution to practice socialist-anarchist morality and abandon religious superstition.

On the other hand, Wu could also be minatory. "The Chinese people are inherently corrupt. The whole world knows this," he hectorated.<sup>42</sup> In one essay, he pessimistically took the younger generation to task for doubting the value of education. He hoped that they would be angered by the corruption around them and by people who merely used education to get ahead in life and that they would not wish to become hermits. For, it seemed, evolution did not operate without help: "The point of learning is to foster the

<sup>41</sup> See inter alia "Hundan shijie" (A mixed-up world), *Xin Shiji* no. 53 (17 June 1908), pp. 216–218. Wu took it for granted that the Chinese were "half-enlightened" (*ban kaihua*), putting this epithet in his dependent clauses where it served as a premise, not a point of argument, see inter alia "Bali zhi qingzao" (Dawn in Paris), *Xin Shiji* no. 43 (18 April 1908), p. 117; and "Shinian youchou" (Still stinking after ten years), *Xin Shiji* no. 73 (5 September 1908) p. 369. For republicanism, see "Yiyuan wei heru zhi yiwu hu" (What sort of thing is a parliament?), *Xin Shiji* no. 81 (30 January 1909), Shanghai ed., pp. 5–6.

<sup>42</sup> "Zhongguoren zhi fubaibing" (The corruption of the Chinese people), *Xin Shiji* no. 59 (8 August, 1908), pp. 312–315, quotation from p. 312.

improvement (*gailiang*) of people, to bring about the evolution of society. Or to put it simply, this is nothing more than the duty of the species. Men of determination (*zhishi*) now agree on this.”<sup>43</sup> Politically, Wu was calling for action and decrying its lack. Philosophically, he was attacking what he saw as an overly utilitarian attitude, too much emphasis on *yong*. Wu felt the association of education with personal advancement was a form of corruption that led to the notion that learning was the opposite of useful (*yong*). *Learning* seems to have meant *truth* to Wu, and truth would lead to progress, useful in a higher sense. The Chinese corruption he saw threw doubt on this ultimately optimistic view.

Wu also noted the discrimination against Chinese in Europe; one correspondent wrote that white women refused to dine in the same room with him.<sup>44</sup> Like a *Miss Manners* of 1908, Wu counseled his readers that cleanliness and, above all, education would prevent their being confronted with such embarrassing incidents. The potential of the Chinese was important for Wu’s refutation of the constitutionalist claim that China was not ready for any kind of revolution, nationalist or socialist. In the view of constitutionalists sympathetic to anarchism (the kind most likely to write to *Xin Shiji*), constitutional government might merely be a stage before another revolution, but China was still not ready for socialism or anarchism until parliamentary forms were practiced and the general level of the people thereby raised. This view seems to imply that China had to follow a Western model step by step, but Wu did not comment on this point.

However, Wu considered that his goal of abolishing the state was entirely reasonable and that the Datong was actually closer than the lesser tranquility. For “we can see that it is the people who create the stage (*chengdu*); we certainly cannot say that the

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 313, emphasis deleted.

<sup>44</sup> “Linlin guagua,” *Xin Shiji* no. 70, pp. 441–42 (this section of the article is unsigned but appears to be in accord with Wu’s ideas and style).

form this Society [on the basis of Republican thinking] in order to dissolve the autocracy of monarchical authority with humanism (*ren- dao zhuyi*), and to dissolve the superstitions of religious authority with scientific knowledge. We have listed a number of matters that should prompt us to encourage each other, in the hopes of maintaining the people who are the citizens of the Republic, of seeking progress, and of gradually attaining the prosperity of the time when the Great Way prevails. Thus this Society heralds [what is to come].<sup>14</sup>

The society called for personal abstention from prostitutes, concubines, gambling, and the like. But it went beyond concerns of individual morality to consider a broad range of social questions. The society stood for sexual equality: an end to early and arranged marriages, equal rights to divorce, remarriage for women as well as for men, and the abolition of foot binding. It attacked a number of specific customs surrounding funerals, weddings, and the like. It would prohibit pornography, opium, spitting in the street; it disapproved of excessive makeup and fancy clothes. The society was concerned with what might be called individualism in the sense of giving everyone a set of social as well as legal rights. Thus it urged that individuals be granted economic independence (from their fathers) upon achieving their majorities; bastards should not be looked down on; and workers should be respected. It specifically called for an end to mistreatment of rickshaw pullers. Government officials should not take bribes. In effect, it called for the abolition

<sup>14</sup> “Faqi Shehui gailiang hui xuanyan” (Declaration of the founding of the Society for Social Reform), *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 1:178. “The prosperity of the time when the Great Way prevails,” literally “*dadao weigong zhi sheng*,” is a fairly common way of saying utopia and alludes to the “Li Yun” chapter of the *Liji*: “When the Great Way prevailed, the whole world one Community” (*dadao zhi xmgue, tianxia weigong*)—see ch. 1.

Tongmenghui members were to set up a coalition government with Yuan Shikai at its head.<sup>13</sup>

The Society for Social Reform had thirty-one regulations, making its concern for proper behavior more detailed than that of the Society to Advance Morality. However, the real difference was that unlike the Society to Advance Morality, it specifically tied its principles to the political question of the day: how to make a republic in substance as well as form. More people than just the anarchists thought this was linked to social questions.

Ever since our people began to plan a Republic, the foreigners who have been watching China always said that we were not ready. Today, a Republican form of government has been established and we will soon show the world whether we are ready... The so-called readiness of the citizenry of a Republic does not follow a particular progression, but the essentials of Republican thinking must be complete. They are: honoring public morality (*gongde*), respecting human rights (*renquan*), the equality of high and low (without being overbearing or submissive), freedom of will (without being “lucky”). Do not follow the paths of dissipation where the law does not go; and do not act wrongly when you have power: these are the essentials of Republican thinking... We have joined to

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Yuan Shikai, and Yuan made him premier; however, Tang essentially switched allegiance to the Tongmenghui in early 1912. Dai (1891- 1949) had translated for Sun Yat-sen in Japan, became Sun’s personal secretary in 1912, toyed with Marxism, and after Sun’s death became a prominent anticommunist theorist in the Guomintang.

<sup>13</sup> Part of the original compromise agreement between Sun Yat-sen and Yuan Shikai was for Yuan to assume his presidency in Nanjing, where the provisional assembly had met and Sun was reasonably strong. The trip was an unsuccessful effort to make Yuan keep his word. After Yuan made it clear that he was staying in Beijing, the Tongmenghui soon dissolved into competing factions.

stage creates the people.”<sup>45</sup> The essential thing was to aim toward a worthy goal and then see what was possible (not start with reduced expectations). In any case, it was the stage of constitutionalism that was a self-contradictory goal, in Wu’s analysis. The Manchu government was at best offering only a false constitution, akin to the states of Russia, Turkey, and Persia (more than England or France). “Their people not only can achieve the Lesser Tranquility, but the sun sinks over great suffering.” Even if there was something to be said for a constitutional government in theory, Wu implied, the political reality of imperial rule made it impossible. Therefore revolution was China’s only real hope.

Wu also questioned the motives of the constitutionalists, accusing them of everything from currying favor with the Manchus to get good jobs, to tricking the people with platitudes.

Then what is the goal of these busybodies? I respond to this question with the answer that their goal is to crush the revolution. Their turning the people into slaves reaches higher and higher levels every day. To humor the people with constitutional theories is to deepen our suffering.

... The closer that the danger of revolution gets, the more the heartless and rotten beastly government supporters begin by confusing and dividing the people with “political reform” (*bianfa*) and then move on to perpetuate the confusion with “constitutional government.” Even if this tragedy is played daily with pus and blood, I am afraid that in the end we will see no heavenly days, nor will we ever be able to catch up with Western Europe.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> “Zhina jinri zhi yulun” (Public opinion in China), *Xin Shiji* no. 64 (12 September 1908), p. 386.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 386. Wu managed to libel the constitutionalists, at least in asides, in nearly every essay he wrote for *Xin Shiji*.

Thus Wu dismissed those who thought that constitutional government might be a stage on the way to revolution as either hypocritical or deluded, knaves or fools. No constitution granted by the Manchus could lead even to the lesser tranquility. “Gentry students who want to succeed utilize this kind of debate to seem enlightened while they avoid [personal] suffering.”<sup>47</sup>

Perhaps Wu feared that a constitution would be seen as moderate reform and attract enough sympathizers away from revolution to be a threat to his cause. He feared that some sort of constitutional system might unite three groups: the Manchus, the conservative gentry, and the reformist, younger gentry and students.<sup>48</sup> But his fundamental point remained that the constitution, in any case, was false. While the Manchus appeared to proffer this carrot, they raised taxes and increased their military. Even if the constitution were real, even if enlightened autocracy (*kaiming zhuanzhi*) made sense, Wu argued that the stage of world enlightenment had surpassed constitutionalism and had reached revolution.<sup>49</sup> He had to attack the constitutionalists not only because they supported a continued role in China for the Manchu ruling house (this was more a club he used to beat them with), but also because they perceived themselves as progressive. Wu sought to keep the mantle of progress for anarchism.

In all, Wu appears to have perceived the constitutionalists as his and truth’s greatest enemy. Perhaps this was because on the philosophical plane he was not so far apart from them. Although politically the constitutionalists ranged from fairly conservative support for a modified Manchu regime to quite radical but nonrevolutionary images of the future, many of them shared Wu’s concerns with the larger issues of truth and progress, education and liberty, jus-

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 385.

<sup>48</sup> This argument seems implicit in “Aizai cunwei Han” (How sad the pig-tailed Han), *Xin Shiji* no. 74, 12 September 1908), pp. 387–390.

<sup>49</sup> In fact, Wu described enlightened autocracy as a “stinking dog’s fart”; *ibid.*, p. 389.

of the Ministry of Education), but what they actually counted on was that most good people would exert a moral influence, less direct but also less compromised, on society at large. Wu and Li assigned themselves the task of prompting social evolution from off-stage. The society, with its different classes of membership, was meant to encourage a morality appropriate to the republican age across a spectrum of social levels.

Wu made it clear that society members did not look down upon “our friends in government and parliament.”<sup>8</sup> Li Shizeng had also been worried about being misunderstood on this score.<sup>9</sup> The society renamed its categories of membership, to make it clearer that membership could start with simple renunciation of gambling, prostitutes, and concubines. Cai Yuanpei and several of Wu’s old students and friends belonged to this category.<sup>10</sup> Zhang Ji and Zhang Jingjiang belonged to the next highest category, giving up bureaucratic service as well. Wang Jingwei and Chu Minyi belonged to the new third category, swearing to avoid parliaments and cigarettes, and Wu and Li to the highest, which included vegetarianism.<sup>11</sup> (Li had been a vegetarian since his early days in France and remained one for his entire life.)

More receptive to the possibility of good coming out of government was a second voluntary association, called the Society for Social Reform (*Shehui gailiang jiuji*), which Li and Cai Yuanpei founded with Wang Jingwei, Tang Shaoyi, Song Jiaoren, and Dai Jitao.<sup>12</sup> This society was formed on a February trip to Beijing where

<sup>8</sup> In a letter to *Minli bao*, 22 April 1912, reprinted in his *Collected Works*, 3:634–635.

<sup>9</sup> See Li’s letter to Wu and Zhang Ji, recounting opposition to the prohibitions on entering government service or parliaments, *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 2:292–293.

<sup>10</sup> A membership list is printed in Wu Zhihui, *Collected Works*, 3: 635–637.

<sup>11</sup> However, Xiao Yu, in “Li Shizeng xiansheng,” claimed that Wu continued to eat meat.

<sup>12</sup> A total of twenty-six men signed the initial declaration, largely written by Li and Cai, on the boat to Beijing. Tang (1860–1938) had long been associated with

jongg, and taking second wives had to be eliminated lest the republic also be contaminated. This process, it was felt, could start with a few virtuous individuals (*youdao zhi shi*). Then, as the news of their oath spread, it could serve as the basis of the new society.

More of the ideals of the society can be seen from its regulations than from its selective list of corruptions. No member was to hire prostitutes, gamble, or take concubines (though it was explained that in the case of those who already had concubines, refraining from adding to their collections would suffice). These three prohibitions were considered the natural minimum necessary to advance morality. However, that was not all that there was to the society. Three further classes of members were designed to reflect increasingly advanced morality. Thus Class A members were also to refrain from becoming government officials. For although officials might ideally serve the people, the lesson of the Qing was that in fact they served themselves. Class B members refrained from all of the above and in addition pledged not to join parliament or smoke. This somewhat startling juxtaposition of vices reflected the anarchists' distrust of representative bodies. Finally, Class C members added temperance and vegetarianism to the above lists. The anarchist roots of the society are further shown by its structure: there were no officers, dues, regulations, or fines. Members who broke their agreements might be shunned but not otherwise punished.

Questions of social custom, from smoking to concubines, were longstanding concerns especially of Wu Zhihui and also of countless concerned Chinese from Kang Youwei and Yan Fu on. To Wu, these were not abstract, minor vices but causes of national weakness. At the same time, the overall anarchist conception of the nature of morality in this document is obvious. Suppression of the role of the state meant that individual morality must improve, not devolve. The additional condemnations of officials and politicians were clearly a part of the anarchist prescription for China. Under the republic, Wu and Li hoped, good people would fill the new government positions (they supported Cai Yuanpei's assuming charge

tice and morality.<sup>50</sup> Wu strongly felt that the Manchus were using the constitutionalists (and their own promises of reform) to bamboozle the Chinese people. Under the banner of anarchist internationalism and cosmopolitanism, Wu retained strong national feelings. Therefore the subject of the Manchus aroused him even more than did the constitutionalists.

In their general attitudes toward the West, the anarchists decided that much was superior, if still far from perfect. Aside from noting more equitable sexual relations, the Chinese found tempered praise for precisely those aspects in which many Westerners took pride: the rise of science and the gradual elimination of ignorance and superstition through public schooling, the awesome technological achievements in engineering and communications: the inner and outer signs of civilization. Nonetheless, the Chinese anarchists slighted neither the corruption of the democracies nor the suffering of their poor.<sup>51</sup> And in the cultural sphere the Chinese realized perfectly well that not all was perfect between the sexes.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, the West became a kind of mirror for China to look upon in order to improve herself. The doctrine was so firmly assumed that

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<sup>50</sup> Wu's attacks on constitutionalism range from "Wuhu lixiandang" (The poor constitutionalists), *Xin Shiji* no. 33 (8 February 1908), p. 132, to "Maiyin shizhuang" (The true appearance of the whore [Cixi]), *Xin Shiji* no. 76 (5 December 1908), pp. 515–517, with at least half a dozen essays in between, many of which dealt at some length with not just the issues but some of the persons involved in constitutionalism as well, see, e.g., "Wuhu lixiandang," *Xin Shiji* no. 61 (21 August 1908), pp. 341–348. This was an important issue for Wu, but repetitive.

<sup>51</sup> Readers learned that in New York City, workers who lost their jobs faced hunger and cold, "Niuyue gongmin zhi pinkun" (The poverty of workers in New York) (translated from a French journal), *Xin Shiji* no. 31 (25 June 1908), pp. 121–122.

<sup>52</sup> See the article on French prostitution, "Guanchang gannian" (My feelings after seeing prostitutes), *Xin Shiji* no. 54 (4 July 1908), pp. 233–235 (the point of the article was how professional even European prostitutes were when compared with the half-hearted ways of the Chinese, but the degrading qualities of the institution were evident).

it became both parenthetical and a matter for dependent clauses: “(Though Europe and America are not as barbarian as China, they still have not reached true civilization)...”<sup>53</sup> At least by implication, the Chinese anarchists had concluded that the West was further advanced on a universal line, be it the linear development of wealth and technology, where the United States was cited, or revolutionary civilization, where France was seen in the lead.<sup>54</sup> The one-hundred-twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Bastille was noted—with the complaint that most Parisians simply regarded it as an excuse for a holiday.<sup>55</sup> When the West was the topic, its civilization was seen as woefully inadequate. But when the Chinese considered the state of China, the West became a target *aiji* a goal. One correspondent compared China not to an immature youth that could learn from the West’s new civilization, which was young in fact and spirit, but to an old and ignorant man steeped in an ancient culture (*jiu jiaohua*),<sup>56</sup> “It is necessary to realize that this is the twentieth century and that the Chinese people have definitely not been civilized for a single moment.”<sup>57</sup> The conclusion nonetheless consisted of the optimistic thought that evolutionary stages could be rushed, if not skipped. The material civilization of the West, with or without consideration of its social costs, was lauded in *New Century*. One writer even linked the spirit of modernity with liberty

<sup>53</sup> “Yu youren lun *Xin Shiji*” (Discussing *Xin Shiji* with a friend), *Xin Shiji* no. 3 (6 July 1907), p. 9.

<sup>54</sup> See “Niuyue gongmin zhi pinkun,” p. 122; and Li Shizeng, “Wanguo geming zhi fengchao” (International revolutionary tendencies), *Xin Shiji* no. 32 (1 February 1908), p. 126. See also “Jupu,” “Datong xinli,” p. 184, for the notion that some nations are ahead of others in terms of approaching Datong.

<sup>55</sup> “Qiyue shisi zhi Bali” (Paris on 14 July), *Xin Shiji* no. 56 (18 July 1908), p. 258 (actually, it was the 119<sup>th</sup> anniversary).

<sup>56</sup> “Zhongguoren zhi chengdu” (The stage of the Chinese people), no. 64 (12 September 1908), pp. 384–385. For a stage approach more critical of the Chinese, see “Dubao yougan” (Feelings on reading your journal), *Xin Shiji* no. 66 (26 September 1908), pp. 418–422, possibly written by Wu Zhihui.

<sup>57</sup> “... Juefei kaihua weijiu,” “Zhongguo zhi chengdu,” p. 385.

mindang and Yuan in Beijing resulted in the abortive second revolution of 1913. Song Jiaoren (1882–1913), led the effort to limit Yuan’s powers and through electoral victories was about to become premier of Yuan’s cabinet when he was assassinated on 20 March. Cai Yttanpei thereupon resigned his post as minister of education and Wu resigned as head of the national language unification program. Wu supported the effort to resist Yuan in the south militarily, but when it was clear by August that Yuan would win, Wu (and Cai) fled back to Europe. Li Shizeng and Wang Jingwei also left for France, while Sun Yat-sen retreated to Japan and Huang Xing to America. It must have reminded them of the *Subao* aftermath, but it must also have tasted even more bitter. Wu was forty-eight when he arrived back in England toward the end of 1913. But in the early days of the republic amid the optimism of reconstruction, this outcome was far from evident.

What might be called “applied anarchism” seemed to offer practical avenues for the energies of a number of prominent intellectuals and activists. The Society to Advance Morality (*Jindehui*) was founded in January 1912 by Wu and Li, joined by Wang Jingwei and Zhang Ji (though Zhang was a member of the provisional assembly from Fujian and hence already in violation of pure anarchism).<sup>6</sup> The society was also known as the “Eight-don’ts” for its eight-fold prohibitions. Membership seems to have been strongest in Shanghai and Beijing.

The society was based on the assumption that social corruption had caused the general decadence that had prevailed under the Qing.<sup>7</sup> Thus such evils as stag parties and drinking, playing mah-

<sup>6</sup> Society documents were largely written by Wu. The Society’s declaration was published in *Minli bao* (Shanghai), 19 January 1912; it is reprinted in Wu Zhihui, *Collected Works* 3:627–629, and Li Shizeng, *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 1:175–178. The society was *not* founded in April, as Chen Linghai, “Nianpu,” p. 40, implies. Li credited Wu with writing the declaration in Shanghai; *Li Shizeng biji*, p. 68 (*Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 2:87).

<sup>7</sup> See the “Preamble” (*Yuanqi*), *ibid.*



roads there. Liu then escaped to Chengdu, where he spent the next few years almost underground, teaching and writing about Chinese studies away from the currents of political change. However, by 1915 he had moved to Beijing as a supporter of Yuan Shikai's attempt to become emperor. Zhang Binglin, believing that the revolution had achieved its goals by the end of 1911 (Manchu abdication), resigned from the Tongmenghui and returned to Shanghai. He nonetheless accepted Sun Yat-sen's offer to become his personal advisor in Nanjing.<sup>4</sup> When Yuan Shikai assumed the presidency, Zhang gave him cautious support and was given a job in Manchuria. He attempted to organize a political party that would be independent of the Tongmenghui and former Tongmenghui radicals (so called), but his efforts never got very far.<sup>5</sup> Growing dissatisfaction with Yuan's performance in office topped by Yuan's assassination of Song Jiaoren drove Zhang into opposition by mid-1913. He remained under arrest from the failure of the second revolution to Yuan's death in 1916.

Unlike Liu and Zhang, Wu Zhihui and Li Shizeng returned to China still dedicated to anarchism. They chose to spread the doctrine not through pursuing further revolutionary upheaval but by practicing certain selected anarchist ideals. In effect, they emphasized two aspects of the anarchist theory they had developed over the preceding five years: they started organizations designed to encourage individual, inner reform and to improve Chinese education quickly, especially by sending students to Europe. In the optimistic and politically relaxed conditions of 1912 Wu and Li found the space to begin to build a new China. First under Sun Yat-sen as provisional president, then under Yuan Shikai, they began organizational and propaganda work. This lasted about a year before the breakdown of cooperation between the southern-based Guo-

<sup>4</sup> "I could not refuse": "Taiyan xiansheng ziding nianpu," p. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Zhang feared the disunity that an attempt to emulate French or American republicanism would engender; *ibid.*, pp. 19–20.

itself, through the avenue of education.<sup>58</sup> This kind of linkage lay at the heart of cultural revolution generally associated with the later May Fourth era.

The West as a source of threat to Chinese culture and identity was of course another problem, but even here the anarchist position remained ambiguous.

## WESTERN IMPERIALISM AND CHINESE NATIONALISM

LIU SHIPEI hoped to solve the problem of imperialism indirectly, with an anarchist revolution. Yet if imperialism was a secondary issue in theory, it proved impossible to ignore in practice. As another form of inequality, in Liu's terms, imperialism was based on racism.<sup>59</sup> Liu analyzed its political effects in a lengthy essay, "Current Conditions in Asia," late in 1907.<sup>60</sup> He presented an ingenious if ultimately unworkable strategy for combining independence movements with anarchism. As Liu had called upon the whole people of China to overthrow its government, so here he called on the world's masses to resist imperialism, attack their governments, and establish anarchism together. Again, the theme was solidarity.

Liu was probably considerably more anti-Western in temperament than most Chinese revolutionaries, who after all, no matter how dismayed by Western encroachments on China's sovereignty, still sought to emulate the West in various ways. As a national essence theorist, Liu must have resented Western cultural imperial-

<sup>58</sup> "Gemingdang yifenzi," probably Wu Zhihui; see "Touan yujiu geming zhi daijia yuzhong" (The longer our so-called peace, the heavier the price of revolution), *Xin Shiji* no. 83 (6 February), Shanghai ed., pp. 10–12.

<sup>59</sup> "Wuzhengfu zhuyi zhi pingdeng guan," pp. 928–929.

<sup>60</sup> "Yazhou xianshi lun," *Tianyi* no. 11–12, pp. 345–368. See also "Feibing feicai lun," p. 902.

ism. He admired only the most alienated element in the West—the anarchists. On the other hand, Liu’s feelings about modern technology were ambiguous; he was not entirely contemptuous of the West. In any case, resisting entanglement in the Manchus question, Liu condemned the European powers, the United States, and Japan as the true imperialists in Asia. India, Vietnam, Korea, the Philippines, Burma, Thailand, and Persia were all either colonies or directly threatened. As were, for China, Manchuria, Tibet, Shandong, and the southeast.

The threat of the white races (and Japan), Liu thought with some justification, was historically unprecedented. The imperialists killed or enslaved primitive races and worked out subtler methods of control when faced with more advanced groups. Liu saw racism and nationalism, themselves ultimately attributable to old notions of in-group exclusivity, as the root causes of imperialism. This is in accord with his deepest feelings about anarchism: equality and independence. For “imperialism is the greatest thief in the world today.”<sup>61</sup>

Liu was also well aware of the economic aspects of imperialism. One of its primary motivations was to suck up the wealth of its victims, and it used its economic powers as a substitute for military control to subjugate foreign peoples. Liu did not precisely anticipate Lenin’s analysis of imperialism, which found that the advanced nations used capital and commodities export to reinvigorate economies beginning to suffer from the contradictions of monopoly capitalism. But he strikingly foreshadowed Lenin’s notion that liberation struggles in the colonies were a part of revolution in the metropole. Indeed, he went beyond Lenin in locating the key to revolutionary endeavor in the peripheries. Thus the Chinese anarchists not only began the process of the sinification of Marxism, but independently reached conclusions similar to those of European Marxists.

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<sup>61</sup> “Yazhou xianshi lun,” p. 348.

away not just a foreign dynasty but an antediluvian empire, then the various messages of the revolutionary intelligentsia can be put in their place. To a great extent, both the dynasty and the dynastic system collapsed of their own weight. To a great extent, the revolution was a generational conflict within that tiny segment of the Chinese population that traditionally had had a claim to rule China. Time and time again, from about 1900 on, an ostensibly loyal official gives a revolutionary a break; the revolutionary is warned of impending arrests, or given help escaping, or given favorable treatment in jail, or given a donation to continue his seditious activities. As the Qing lost legitimacy even with those who would be its servants, so its claim to the throne, which rested, beyond conquest, on the hoary Confucianized Mandate of Heaven, was shown to be hollow. And by demystifying the emperor, the revolutionaries determined that China would have a revolution. They did not exactly determine China’s future course, but they eliminated one, the traditional, alternative.

## SOCIAL ACTION IN A NEW CHINA

THE anarchists hurried back to China shortly after the news of the Wuchang uprising and its aftermath reached Japan and Europe. Li was already in Beijing on a visit, where he may have participated in an attempt to assassinate Yuan Shikai.<sup>3</sup> Wu borrowed the money from Sun Yat-sen and arrived in Shanghai at the end of the year. The movement in Tokyo had by then disintegrated; the former anarchists had no further role to play, at least as anarchists. Liu Shipai had been caught in Sichuan when the revolution broke out there, since he had followed his patron, the Manchu Duanfang who had been sent to quell opposition to the plan to nationalize the rail-

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<sup>3</sup> According to Li Shuhua, “Xinhai geming qianhou de Li Shizeng xiansheng,” pp. 192–194. The account of his life, “Li Shizeng xiansheng shilue,” *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 2:390, says he returned to China only in 1912.

the Leninist dictatorship... As long as the revolutionary spirit persists, I somehow believe that the Guomindang and the Communist Party will take part of the anarchist road together. As for me individually, I have been oppressed by the machine guns of the yellow-haired and green-eyed people [whites]. I only hope that someone can use those machine guns to make them call themselves our brothers...

— Wu Zhihui, in a letter explaining how he could be both a loyal member of the Guomindang and also an anarchist, 1925<sup>2</sup>

Anarchism and the anarchists played a small but notable role in the 1911 Revolution. The anarchists participated as individual theoreticians, propagandists, and plotters, while anarchism served as the idealistic wing of the ideology of revolution. The anarchists propagandized for revolution in general and the anti-Manchu revolution in particular. Wu Zhihui, Li Shizeng, Liu Shipei, Zhang Binglin, Zhang Ji, Zhang Jingjiang, and possibly He Zhen were all members of the umbrella revolutionary organization, the Tongmenghui. One role the anarchists fulfilled was to keep alive radical idealism after it apparently fell on hard times in 1908 after a spate of rebellions failed and the Japanese government cracked down on student journals. *New Century*, for one, kept publishing into 1910, and Liu Shipei and Wang Jingwei responded to censorship in Tokyo by going underground.

When the chain of events that toppled the Qing dynasty was finally forged late in 1911 and the various provinces began to declare their independence, military officials and figures from the traditional gentry rose to even greater prominence and power. The Tongmenghui had but a small part to play and the anarchists an even smaller part. But if the revolution is seen as a storm that swept

<sup>2</sup> “Zhi Hua Lin shu” (Letter to Hua Lin), *Collected Works*, 10:1582–1584.

Liu felt that imperialism hurt the people of the imperialist states as much as it did its more obvious foreign victims.

Why is the power of the governments and the rich of Japan, Europe and the United States growing while the people are ever poorer? ... The reasons for the development of imperialism include the desire of governments and capitalists to steal the wealth of other nations and take advantage of their backwardness and weakness to rule them through force. Thus they use the excuse of colonizing to extend their own powers, and the end result is that they not only harm weaker races but ultimately harm the people (*renmin*) of their own countries as well.<sup>62</sup>

And the imperialists raise taxes at home to finance their conquests abroad. Citing conditions in contemporary Japan, Liu claimed that the imperialist rulers, uniquely strengthened, then exert ever tighter control at home; This led him to a new form of his usual paradox, “The smaller a country, the more its people are content; the stronger a country, the more its people suffer.”<sup>63</sup>

Liu saw anti-imperialist, nationalist, populist struggles on the rise throughout Asia. He believed that Asia as a whole was turning to socialism and unity, as students abroad met other victims of imperialism. Other sources of unity included such historical factors as China’s huge cultural sphere and, from the imperialists, the English language. Nationalism, in Asia, thus had internationalist implications. And internationalism, for Liu, was inseparable from anarchism.

The elements were now in place for Liu’s synthesis of world revolution. The weak races will strengthen themselves through unity (and education—Liu wanted them to read Marx and Proudhon),

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 355.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 356.

They will struggle to overthrow imperialism, which also means overthrowing their own governments, which serve the invading races. And in those very imperialist nations themselves, revolution is brewing. Populist groups are growing as their ruling classes benefit only themselves, monopolize markets, and put increased strains on the whole society. When Asian revolutionaries and Western radicals linked up, then a series of revolutions would occur throughout the world. Liu thought that Asian resistance movements would probably precipitate some pressure on imperialism, and in turn Western radicals could overthrow the home governments. Liu anticipated two tenets of Maoism here: that the weak will become strong in unity—that the “countryside” of the world will surround and capture the world’s cities—and that imperialism was a paper tiger. However, Liu trusted that no new states would be formed after the revolution:

If the weak races unite there is no doubt but that they will have the strength to expel the [imperialist] powers, and the day that the weak races expel the imperialist powers *will be the day that the imperialist governments are overthrown*. This will be the beginning of world peace...

When the Asian colonies throw off their subjugation, the imperialist powers will lose their ability to inspire awe and their own people will become aware of the fact that they do not need to fear their government.

If [the Asians] reestablish governments after the revolution, even if they be republican, they will merely follow in the dust of the French and American Revolutions in replacing violence with violence (*yibao yibao*).

If they all establish states, then quarrels and wars will recur... If they establish governments at the time of independence, then the populist parties of the imperialist countries will not help. Thus,

world should be anarchist regardless of nationality. It is not a theory applicable to just one nation.

—*Liu Shifu, 1913*<sup>1</sup>

What is the Guomintang? I have always maintained that it is a revolutionary party, an extremely radical party. Whatever the people, whatever the society, three groups always exist as a matter of course: the conservatives (antirevolutionaries), the moderates (compromisers), and the radicals (revolutionaries)... Thus, if we examine the question historically, all anarchists were converted out of the ranks of revolutionaries. All anarchists also want to aid the revolutionaries. You don’t want to be regarded as part of the old Guomintang, do you? (The Tongmenghui was simply another name for the Guomintang.) However, we ourselves take the name of anarchists, and we warn ourselves only to help the revolution, not to help people become officials and get rich. Has the Guomintang today become an instrument for pursuing selfish ambition? Yes, it is nothing but a revolutionary party that has been stolen away. If we don’t “unsheathe our knives to help one another when the road gets rough,” then we can’t consider ourselves anarchists. The communists exerted themselves to join [the Guomintang] because they wanted to help when the road was rough...

Anarchism is based on a belief in justice (*daoyi*), and though it does not condone destruction, it was formed out of endless destruction and education. This is not

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<sup>1</sup> “Zaizhi Wu Zhihui shu” (Second letter to Wu Zhihui), *Huiming lu* (in *Minsheng*, reprinted, Hong Kong: Longmen shuju, 1967) no. 2 (27 August 1913)= PP-7-9-

## CHAPTER 8. *Old Anarchists in a Brave New World*

Zhang Ji and Wu Zhihui were among the vanguard of Chinese anarchists. A few years ago they wrote about government for *New Century* and they held radical opinions. But now Zhang is in the Assembly and Wu sometimes hovers around the Guomindang. They are getting closer and closer to the political parties, and this is how the socialists and the anarchists are beginning to part paths...

In my previous letter I was unable to understand the reasons why Zhang Ji joined the National Assembly. I had truly taken him to be a man who tirelessly advocated anarchism and condemned politics. He should not have changed his mind and thrown himself into politics...

Today in Europe the Socialists and the Anarchists are not so far apart in their aims. It is only that the Socialists join the political struggle and want to use parliamentary powers to attain the goals of socialism, whereas the Anarchists condemn politics as hopeless. They work together on social movements... Anarchism is a cosmopolitan ideology. One cannot ask whether it is useful or not for a particular country. Anarchists promote anarchism in the belief that the

when the weak races achieve independence, they will certainly become anarchist.<sup>64</sup>

Imperialism was seldom a featured topic in the pages of *New Century*. Wu Zhihui preached anti-Manchism most of the time. However, one writer squarely blamed the white races for obliterating the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Greece, Hungary, and, worst of all, the blacks of Africa and Indians of America.<sup>65</sup> As this form of strong-arm robbery spread in the nineteenth century, he said, goodness was being driven out of the world. Military forces were on the increase, new weapons were being invented, “false religious leaders practiced nonliberty, nonfraternity, and nonequality on other peoples while saying that they were following liberty, fraternity, and equality.” Lands were taken; the wealth of other peoples seized, while “the average blindly patriotic citizens were all poisoned by imperialism.”

The writer both noted the popular support given imperialism in Europe and refrained from placing primary responsibility for imperialism on its victims, either for being unprepared by evolution or for having decadent leaders. He noted that imperialism had recently spread with virulence in Japan, to such a point that the people had protested the 1905 peace treaty with Russia. In China he felt that the West was going to face opposition from a people that was “turning over” (*fanshen*), though at the moment still too pacific. He hinted of imminent colonization and urged that the Manchu imperialists be expelled. Still, his loathing of Western imperialism was clear; it had made the twentieth century a time of wars of aggression. These wars benefited only the power holders of the victor and hurt the common people of both sides. The writer concluded that the solution therefore lay in the assassination of the handful

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp. 348, 357, 363–364.

<sup>65</sup> “Diguo zhuyi zhi jieguo” (The result of Imperialism), *Xin Shiji* no. 63 (5 September 1908), pp. 375–377. Judging from the satiric style, this article was probably written by Wu Zhihui.

of leaders, kings, and emperors responsible for, and reaping the benefits of, imperialism. This conclusion neatly ignored the implications of his own insight, unusual for the time, of the popularity of imperialist policies among the people themselves.

While the fear of Western imperialism did not play a major role in Wu Zhiljpi's thought, he nonetheless came close to a materialist understanding' of the economic role of imperialism. The fundamental reason for his relative inattention to the issue would seem to be once again his faith that progress, in the West as well as in China, would take care of the problem in time. Moreover, living in the heart of the beast, so to speak, and in touch with French anarchists, who were more concerned with internal problems with international ones (since borders would crumble after the revolution), Wu generally focused on what he regarded as basic issues—reforming education and customs.

Nonetheless, he shared the universal Chinese antipathy to Western encroachments and the revolutionary analysis that the Manchus were at fault for allowing spheres of influence on Chinese soil. This tied into his argument against the constitutionalists who would accept the gradual colonialization of China that must follow from Manchu rule and join with the Western powers in supporting that rule. Without revolution, Wu wrote, “there will be the reality of partition (*guafen*) even without the name.”<sup>66</sup>

... The power of the white people will increase accordingly. Thereupon, all of them who cannot find work will be sent to colonize in China. Then the Chinese people's means of livelihood will diminish, and the population will shrink... The four hundred million of former times will soon shrink to just four million. Who says this shouldn't be called genocide (*miezhong*)?<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup> “Zhina jinri zhi yulun,” p. 387. “Wuhu lixiandang,” *Xin Shiji* no. 61, p. 348, also made this point.

<sup>67</sup> “Zhina jinri zhi yulun,” p. 387.

Nonetheless, this first generation of radicals tended to become considerably more conservative after the revolution.

spoke of the frustrations of traveling abroad and being unable to communicate with various other travelers and the people of the host country. They saw no other candidate for the role of international language than Esperanto. Furthermore, Esperanto would help people to break down the pernicious barriers, especially the nation-state, that divided them. The editors dwelt at length on the history and grammatical details of the new language.

Wu Zhihui attempted a specific reply to Zhang's criticisms on primarily utilitarian grounds.<sup>97</sup> "Language ... is a tool for mutuality between people ... [that may be] improved by unification through human efforts."<sup>98</sup> Once again, he saw the course of evolution as tending toward a kind of overall centrality. At the least, the technology of transportation and communications was advancing so markedly that people were realizing the disadvantages of a lack of a world language. Unlike Zhang, Wu did not believe that there was anything unnatural about this process. As Meiji Japan was making Tokyo speech the national standard, so the European countries in the past had unified in part on the basis of a deliberate policy of choosing some particular dialect for all their people to use. The extinction of such languages as ancient Saxon became for Wu a matter of natural selection. In other words, humans and human choices were part of nature and evolution. The future of science would be aided by a common world language. Therefore, Wu believed, the adoption of Esperanto would continue a line of progress that was of long standing. He had no sympathy for Zhang's almost anguished concern over the meaning of Chinese identity and traditional culture.

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and anarchism, even though he did not abandon research into national essence questions or the general *People's Journal* attacks on the Manchus, led to the rift between him and Zhang.

<sup>97</sup> "Shu 'Bo Zhongguo yong wanguo xinyu shuo' hou" (After reading "Contra the Chinese adoption of Esperanto"), *Xin Shiji* no. 57 (25 July 1908), pp. 280–284.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

If China was threatened with the loss of jobs and therefore livelihood, population decline would follow. This alarming prophecy was certainly sincere, though it came in support of Wu's argument that the Manchus were selling out the nation rather than as an independent thesis. Wu's main interest in imperialism was the case of the seventeenth-century Manchu invasion of China.

Wu had originally joined the revolutionary movement as an anti-Manchu and he remained one. As an anarchist, he opposed the Manchus because they had seized power (*zhi qiangquan*), and as a patriot he wanted to expel the Manchus because they were barbarians and dogs who turned the Chinese into slaves wearing "pig's tails" by dividing them and by supporting Confucianism.<sup>68</sup> "Clearly the Tartars want to oppress the Chinese and make them slaves forever." And equally bad, the Manchus "say that each time China cedes land or pays an indemnity [to the West], it is the same as making peace."<sup>69</sup> Wu's feelings about the Manchus were not unusual, but his extreme language had the effect of making any residual respect the overseas student or revolutionary might have toward the throne seem ridiculous. His was a psychological attack in addition to the substantive argument.

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<sup>68</sup> I.e., the queue or pigtail. These points are made in the hilarious "Guipi" (Ghost farts, or lies), *Xin Shiji* no. 74 (21 November 1908), pp. 482–86. This essay paraphrased and commented on the last imperial wills of the Empress Dowager and the Guangxu Emperor, who both died in November 1908 (most historians presume that the emperor was killed at Cixi's orders the day before she died), giving Wu the opportunity to review the last sixty troubled years of China's history. Wu's version of the last imperial will begins: "Your humble slave calculates that she has not accumulated virtue but rather depended on dog luck. We entered the Imperial dog army of Xian Feng's old ladies as a lesser old lady and gave birth to a piglet, who was called the Tongzhi Emperor..."

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 483, 485. See also "Yulun" (Public opinion), *Xin Shiji* no. 120 (23 April 1910), Shanghai ed, pp. 1–6.

Wu was obviously in the anti-Manchu camp.<sup>70</sup> However, with his anarchist hat firmly on, Wu told a critic that he wanted to abolish all government and specifically that the power (*qiangquan*) the Manchus had seized had to be completely extirpated.<sup>71</sup> Wu pointed out that not only was government abhorrent to him, but imperial governments especially so, and the corruption of the Manchu imperial government worse yet. The Manchus, he said, were a kind of pronoun used for the noun *power*.

The issues of Manchu oppression, incompetence, and Western encroachments were linked, as much for Wu as for the mainstream of the Tongmenghui. He defended his anti-Manchism against the charge that people who believed in Datong ought to be above ethnic antagonism:

Who does not know that all the people who embrace Datong would always repel brute force? Anyone who wants to expel the Manchus does so simply because they seized China with brute force; otherwise, they wouldn't be any different from the Mongolians or Muslims. Are these peoples any less great than the Han? Not only people who embrace Datong support

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<sup>70</sup> For attacks on Han Chinese who cooperated with the Manchus see inter alia "Shinian youchou," pp. 370–71; Li Hongzhang was "first-class barbarian" and "the insincere Zhang Zhidong." Zeng Guofan was the "Master from Hunan" who "killed his fellow provincials for the [official] cock-red hat (*jiba hong dingzi*)" "Guipi," p. 483.

Other examples of Wu's willingness to shock: "Those who believe in government think that ordinary people are basically dogfuckers, bastards, and need to be whipped." "Tan wuzhengfu zhi xiantian," p. 191. In another essay Wu wrote, "[A London-based Chinese journal] today, Tuesday, printed together the Last Imperial Wills of the two old whores, the Manchu dogs, one male and one female [The Empress Dowager, Cixi, and Guangxu Emperor], who dropped dead only two days ago ... nothing but a bunch of dog slaves making up lies." "Guipi," p. 482.

<sup>71</sup> "Xu laishu lun Xin Shiji fakan zhi quyī" (Letter on the publishing precepts of Xin Shiji, continued), *Xin Shiji* no. 5 (20 July 1907), p. 20.

ing its language. Esperanto merely represented an amalgamation of the languages of one such people. If it had genuine historical roots at all, they existed only in Europe. Zhang's opposition to Esperanto was motivated by his understanding of the relationship between a people's language and their collective cultural identity, by his sense of Chinese nationalism and also by his identity as a *Hanxue* scholar. History, language, and national identity were inextricably linked for Zhang. "Do today's anarchists want to destroy authority (*qiangquan*) or do they want to destroy learning (*xueshu*)?"<sup>94</sup> Thus, for Zhang, more than language was involved. Ultimately what probably maddened him most was Wu's contempt for the national essence (*guocui*). Nonetheless, Wu had put Zhang in the ridiculous position of having to defend the revolutionary implications of national essence.<sup>95</sup> Zhang could not accept a secular and cosmopolitan anarchism because in the immediate, worldly realm he saw the needs of the Chinese people as paramount.

*New Century's* espousal of Esperanto was a consistent feature of its anarchism. Like Liu Shipai, the Paris anarchists thought that an international language would help to unite the world.<sup>96</sup> They

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<sup>94</sup> "Bo Zhongguo yong wanguo xinyu shuo," p. 55.

<sup>95</sup> "Fu Wu Jingheng han," pp. 117–118. Zhang had to protest that Governor-general Zhang Zhidong and the savior of the Manchus, Zeng Guofan, had not been typical examples of the national essence school. This was true, but not a very strong argument.

<sup>96</sup> Esperanto was a frequent topic in *New Century*; see inter alia "Wanguo xinyu" (Esperanto), *Xin Shiji* no. 6 (27 July 1907), p. 23; "(Xu) Wanguo xinyu zhi jinbu" (The progress of Esperanto, continued), *Xin Shiji* no. 35–36 (22, 29 February 1908), pp. 140, 141–142; (by Wu Zhihui), "Xinyu wenti zhi zada" (Miscellaneous replies to questions about Esperanto), *Xin Shiji* no. 45–46 (25 April, 2 May 1908), pp. 174–175, 178–179.

Wu's own linguistic analysis was printed as a reply to a review article and encompassed a discussion of Western translations of Oriental texts as well as the feasibility of adopting some kind of alphabet; see "Shu *Shenzhou ribao* 'dongxue xijian' bianhou" (On "The advancement of the West in Oriental Studies" in the *Shenzhou Daily*), *Xin Shiji* no. 101–103 (12–26 June 1909), Shanghai ed., pp. 5–11, 10–15, 6–10. It is possible that Liu's continuing espousal of Esperanto



Han people, not to the Manchus, nor to the Miao. Zhang recounted China's racial-tribal history to establish the Han claim.

Zhang would give China to the Han but not pieces of China to ethnic minorities, such as Manchuria for the Manchus. Zhang wanted to rebut not only the constitutionalist argument that the Manchus had a proper role in a future China, as well as the past and present, but also the absolutist morality of the anarchists. The immediate task of expelling the Manchus could only be confused by "high-flown and suicidal doctrines."<sup>90</sup>

But why was anarchism incompatible with a Han culture? Because nationalism remained Zhang's first priority. He could not imagine a Han culture surviving outside of a Han nation, which implied the necessity of a Han government. He was willing to countenance state building even if he also recognized the ephemeral nature and limitations of the state as such. He made this irrefutably clear in the autumn of 1907.<sup>91</sup> Zhang wrote that he wished to clear up any misunderstanding that he was purely an anarchist. On the contrary, even though the state is awful, it is necessary. Zhang criticized the state as a soulless, irrational, but unavoidable response to circumstance. He implied that if other nations disbanded, China might also, but unlike the real anarchists he did not anticipate this happy event. "As long as other countries do not disband even for a single day, China must continue to be involved [in such a system] for self-preservation. In theory one might keep national borders while doing away with governments," but the vacuum will inevitably attract new forms of government.<sup>92</sup>

Zhang also despised the attempt to spread Esperanto.<sup>93</sup> Zhang emphasized that each people had its unique characteristics, includ-

<sup>90</sup> "Pai Man pingyi," p. 12.

<sup>91</sup> "Guojia lun" (The nation), *Minbao* no. 17 (25 October 1907), pp. 1–14.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.

<sup>93</sup> Taiyan, "Bo Zhongguo yong wanguo xinyu shuo" (Contra the Chinese adoption of Esperanto), *Minbao* no. 21 (10 June 1908), pp. 49–72. A summary of Zhang's views on language is presented in Furth, "The Sage as Rebel," pp. 125–128.

them like brothers, but the people who only want to expel the Manchus even support them like brothers. Now, this use of brute force demonstrates why the Manchus must be expelled. So too the idea of our correspondent to expel the white men who use brute force is shared by those of us who believe in Datong.<sup>72</sup>

Of course Wu opposed the monarchy as such.<sup>73</sup> But his special persistence where Manchus were concerned casts doubt on his assertion that he regarded them merely as a particular form of that general evil, government.

Li Shizeng shared many attitudes and opinions with Wu and even with Liu, but from his first stay in France Li remained devoted to the cause of internationalism. At the same time, he held his hand out to Chinese nationalists. Li's view of revolution was basically inclusive; he thought the various revolutionaries could work together for their common goal and seemed distressed that the fighting among revolutionaries, who after all shared the same enemy, should have become so intense.<sup>74</sup> Perhaps Li saw the different forms of revolution as stages in a progression from racism (or nationalism, *zhongzu zhuyi*) to anarchism.

Today, you advocate revolution; and we [anarchists] also advocate revolution. Thqs our goal is the same. Today, you advocate overthrowing the Manchu government just because it is Manchu, and you call this a racial revolution. We advocate overthrowing the Manchu government just because it is government, and call this [an anti-] monarchical revolution. Although the scope of our theories differs, our proposed

<sup>72</sup> "Zhina jinri zhi yulun," p. 387.

<sup>73</sup> See "Yuan shengsheng shishi wusheng diwangjia," pp. 433–435.

<sup>74</sup> See inter alia "Yu youren lun zhongzu gemingdang ji shehui geming dang" (Discussing racial revolutionaries and socialist revolutionaries with a friend), *Xin Shiji* no. 8 (ro August 1907), pp. 29–30.

actions are the same. You (racial revolutionaries) and we (socialist revolutionaries) now have the same goals. We should join forces to promote what we have in common. There is really no point in fighting among ourselves.

Later, after the revolution, you will advocate establishing a new, republican government, while we will advocate establishing organizations based on free cooperation (*ziyou xiehe zuzhi*). This is what we fail to have in common. Later, after the revolution, you will advocate a national military in order to protect the people of the nation, while we will advocate the abolition of national armed forces in order to protect the people of the world. This too we fail to have in common. But today these factors are both a matter of theory (*zhuyi*), not practice (*zuoyong*).<sup>75</sup>

Thus Li maintained his cosmopolitanism even when trying to appeal to nationalists. On the one hand, Li saw anarchism as encompassing political revolution: “The revolution to expel the Manchus is to the socialist revolution as a limb is to the human body.”<sup>76</sup> On the other hand, even though Li promoted the idea that each group should freely develop its theories, he sharply criticized any nationalist or militarist approach to China’s problems,<sup>77</sup> for that was the way to neglect the question of justice. *Gongli*, Li thought, had to be kept in mind at all times. Li also defended anarchism for the accusation that the foreigners encouraged it in order to weaken and partition China. All governments hated anarchism, he said. Meanwhile, French anarchists agitated in France, German anarchists in Germany, and “Chinese naturally should disseminate their ideas

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>76</sup> “Da pangguanzi,” p. 25.

<sup>77</sup> “Da CHEE shi” (Reply to Mr. Chee) *Xin Shiji* no. 3 (6 July 1907), pp. 10–11.

## WU ZHIHUI VERSUS ZHANG BINGLIN

the running personal battle between Wu and Zhang represented a clash between different views of the importance of Chinese culture. They dealt with revolution, anarchism, and history. Zhang’s challenge to the Paris anarchists was also his challenge to all optimism, but it was directed in particular toward Wu Zhihui. Fundamentally, Zhang believed neither in evolution nor in progress.<sup>87</sup> For, he said, if indeed one could speak of the advancement of knowledge, this was meaningless in moral terms because evil advanced equally with the good. Using the standard of pain-pleasure, Zhang decided that evolution did not lead to the victory of either one: progress did not lead to a change in the balance between pain and pleasure any more than to the balance of good and evil, but rather to intensification of both.

Zhang did not believe anarchism fit China’s current needs: it was inappropriate to “present social conditions.”<sup>88</sup> It was shallow and incomplete, not even worthy of being called a philosophy. Zhang went on to criticize the goals of equality and liberty as impossible so long as life itself persisted.<sup>89</sup> In the case of China, then, nationalism (*minzu zhuyi*) was superior to anarchism. Zhang makes this argument on the basis of history. Different peoples have made themselves the possessors of certain places through force (questions of morality do not apply but cultural growth and identity do). Thus, to reduce Zhang’s argument to its conclusion, China belonged to the

<sup>87</sup> Except in a very limited sense of pointless change. See Taiyan, “Jufen jin-hua lun” (The theory of dual evolution), *Minbao* no. 7 (November 1906), pp. 1–13. This is discussed in Pusey’s excellent description of Zhang’s evolutionism, *China and Charles Darwin*, pp. 413–419. For a summary of the debate between Wu and Zhang, see Gasster, *Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolution of 1911*, pp. 222–225.

<sup>88</sup> “Pai Man pingyi” (A balanced discussion of expelling the Manchus), *Minbao* no. 21 (10 June 1908), p. 1; “Fu Wu Jingheng han” (Reply to Wu Zhihui), *Minbao* no. 19 (25 February 1908), p. 117.

<sup>89</sup> “Pai Man pingyi,” p. 1.

get what they desired to the point of satiation. People would not labor equally but clothing and food would be sufficient. Without working according to their capacity, buildings would be built... Without pursuing science, science would advance on its own. Without cultivating morality, morality would progress by itself.<sup>86</sup>

Saoke's case for nonaction rested on the belief that no one could know what was right for another. His attack on the anarchists, then, was threefold: their actions were pointless if not counterproductive, for they could not really know the truth, which differs for each person and era. Li admitted that truth was relative to the age: the "truth and justice" (*zhenli gongdao*) of times past was not today's anarchist truth, while the future would be different yet.

Nonetheless, Li's truth appears to have been an absolute quality, a kind of Platonic essence, that people could approach in varying degrees. The effect was a cautious relativism: "What I mean by truth and justice is not an unchangeable principle for all times but that which is closer to truth and justice than before." However, he denied the solipsism that truth also depended on each individual's perspective and reasonably pointed out that the truth of the future was, after all, beyond his ken. Li also appears to have enjoyed the chance to rebut somebody whose vision of the future was even wilder than his own, pointing out that the prospect of people growing wings and learning to fly, while wonderful, was presently impossible in a way that the practice of anarchism was not. For, Li believed, his own faith rested on observable phenomena, such as the collapse of autocracy, whereas flying people were only a possibility of the distant future.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

in China. This is neither favoritism nor enmity to one's own country."<sup>78</sup>

The charge that anarchism would lead to the victimization of China was a hardy perennial that Li sought to uproot in the same manner as had Liu Shiwei. But faith in world revolution, in the inner weakness of the imperial powers, was predicated on an internationalist perspective probably not granted except to a few intellectuals outside of China's borders. Li spoke of resistance and unity, but he kept both his tactics and his strategy pruned to a minimalist shape. He offered little direct opposition to imperialism besides the "search for justice" and "opposition to all authority." Like Wu, Li thought the constitutionalists were beyond the pale, although he seldom even bothered to rebut them.<sup>79</sup> Whatever meager good points a constitution might have Li attributed to the revolutionary movement for having forced one upon the Qing. And he twitted the nationalists for throwing the same mud on the anarchists that the constitutionalists had thrown on the nationalists—that their irresponsible and disruptive actions would result in the Western imperialists' partition of China.

Since evolution occurred on universal lines, and since the human race was one species, Li naturally believed that truth belonged neither to China nor to the West in any exclusive sense. As an anarchist, he could only ridicule the conservative concern with national, or ethnic, identity, which had no place in a stateless world. More substantively, Li denied that anarchism could be deduced from any aspect of Chinese history. He demonstrated that the ancient well-field system was in fact a form of state or feudal taxation, noth-

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 11. See also "Bo *Xin Shiji congshu* geming (fei shehuidang laigao) fuda," pp. 17–18.

<sup>79</sup> However, he attacked Qing edicts on preparations for a constitution, referring to the flurry of government proclamations and appointments detailing with the issue, in "Zaping" (Miscellaneous criticisms), *Xin Shiji* no. 10 (24 August 1907), pp. 39–40.

ing like communism, and that old notions of purity and nonaction and keeping the emperor at a distance had nothing in common with anarchism. “Anarchism is a radical and active philosophy, precisely the opposite of purity and nonaction, and anarchism not only wants to keep the emperor away from us, ourselves, but also away from others. Anarchism not only regards the Emperor as useless, but also plans to abolish the institution itself.”<sup>80</sup> Li credited traditional Chinese Daoism with having approached anarchism in some ways, but he refused to equate the two. Not culture, race, or nationality, but only truth as determined by universal principles (*gongli shifei*) met Li’s demands.

In a discussion of the differences between nationalism and socialism Li once wrote: “The correctness of a theory depends solely on whether it is true (*gongli*); theories cannot be changed on the basis of expedience (*lihai*).”<sup>81</sup> Li attributed the dominance of authority more to superstition than force because he thought in effect that truth was itself a force; he condemned superstition as false, not hegemonic—for what it was, not for what it did. That is, the reason why superstition could be used to buttress authority in the first place was that it was false; truth, then, had to lead to freedom.

Accused of being drunk on the arrogant theories of Westerners and of worshipping former enemies, Li’s reply centered on the universal nature of truth.<sup>82</sup> He drew the analogy that traditional Chinese knowledge of mining existed (as in *Guanzi*) but today more modern metallurgical techniques had to be learned from the West. So, too, Daoism had points in common with anarchism, but they were certainly not synonymous. Thus:

It is not that we are infatuated with Europeans while we slight Guanzi and Laozi. Guanzi and Laozi were bom in their times and they could not be aided by all

<sup>80</sup> “Da CHEE shi,” p. 10.

<sup>81</sup> “Yu youren lun zhongzu gemingdang ji shehui gemingdang,” p. 30.

<sup>82</sup> “Da CHEE shi,” pp. 10–11; “Da pangguanzi,” pp. 25–26.

the discoveries of today. Naturally, what they had to say is not fully relevant to events that are occurring several thousand years later and this is not a fault of theirs. We adopt theories only on the basis of whether or not they are correct (*zhengdang*) and whether or not they are suitable. We certainly do not inquire if they originate in the words of yellow people or white people.<sup>83</sup>

Li’s sense of progress in history meant that each age had its own truth. Cosmopolitanism and a certain amount of defiant unfiliality went hand in hand.

We are only seeking truth and justice (*gongli*) without holding to biases. Thus we would learn about everything that is in accord with truth and justice, regardless of who says it or what nation it comes from. And if it is not in accord with truth and justice, even if it comes from our parents or brother, we will not acknowledge it.<sup>84</sup>

Challenged from the left by a Daoist point of view, Li admitted to a certain relativism.<sup>85</sup> Saoke (a poet) presented Li with a charming view of life in the future, when houses would be built in space and when people would wander about the cosmos and

have no thoughts about the abolition of government or national boundaries. As they traveled through the wilderness they would forget about equalizing both class and wealth. Communism would not be practiced but people would obtain just what they needed. Collectivism would not be enforced but people would

<sup>83</sup> “Da CHEE shi,” p. 10. *Guanzi* was the book of Guan Zhong, a statesman of the seventh century B.C.

<sup>84</sup> “Da pangguanzi,” p. 25.

<sup>85</sup> “Da Saoke shu” (Reply to a poet), *Xin Shiji* no. 29–30 (11, 18 January 1908), pp. 113–14, 120.

of Chinese anarchism.<sup>84</sup> Maoism in both its early and mature forms shared certain motifs with anarchism. Mao emphasized the role that oppression played in fostering rebellion and often downgraded the analytical usefulness of socioeconomic structures. Indeed, the more oppressed the better: poor and blank could be useful qualities. And Mao also emphasized the role of revolutionary will, making revolution into a kind of moral quest, involving at least on one level the purification, or proletarianization, of the individual.

As Maoism grew and developed from the awakenings of Mao's political consciousness through his leadership of the CCP, its libertarian strains waxed and waned, always present though never dominating. Before his conversion to Marxism, Mao's eclectic devotion to individualism, liberty, nationalism, and the like was typical of the May Fourth student generation. His famous remark to Edgar Snow about the "confused" nature of his intellectual background is confirmed by his first writings, which show both anarchist and liberal influences.

At this time [about 1915] my mind was a curious mixture of ideas of liberalism, democratic reformism, and Utopian Socialism. I had somewhat vague passions about 'nineteenth-century democracy', Utopianism and old-fashioned liberalism, and I was definitely anti-militarist and antiimperialist... My interest in politics continued to increase, and my mind turned more and more radical... But just now I was still confused, looking for a road, as we say. I read some pamphlets on anarchism and was much influenced by them. With a student named Chu Hsun-pei, who

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<sup>84</sup> I am heavily indebted to the large scholarship on Mao and Maoism, especially to the work of Stuart R. Schram and John Bryan Starr, as well as Raymond F. Wylie, Brandy Womack, Frederic Wakeman, Jr., Benjamin I. Schwartz, Maurice Meisner, Mark Selden, Franz Schurmann, and Richard H. Solomon.

This life view was materialistic and considerably more sophisticated than the crude positivism of his Paris days. Wu wrote that he believed that the point of metaphysics (*xuanxue*, that is, unfounded speculation) was to suggest paths for science to explore more fully. But only science could answer any of the questions we may have about life. Wu's framework was, as always, evolutionist. Thus, when he turned to the question of acquiring necessities, his tone was optimistic. The whole world, for example, aided Tokyo's earthquake victims. Yet Wu no longer believed that what he called the Datong ("when 'each according to his needs' will serve as the means of exchange for 'each according to his ability' ") was imminent.<sup>32</sup> He cautiously advised, "Of course, it is best if you can think of ways to give some food to other people, but, on the other hand, it is wrong to take the food of other people and give it to your own relatives who haven't worked for it." Wu thought that while all people should work for their own food and not rely on others ("sacrificing their labor"), one should never rob, even if one has worked but still could not obtain food. Wu no longer believed that improving morality would answer the problem of everyone's obtaining enough food. Rather, he emphasized that science (meaning technology) would be needed to produce enough goods so that people would not be fighting over scraps.

Wu's views of 1923 represented a retreat from the social to the technological; they represented an emphasis on one aspect of what had been Wu's more balanced view in Paris. Wu's emphasis shifted from fast and easy solutions to long and complex struggles: he had learned (he was now sixty) to hope to see small improvements. Nonetheless, these views were fundamentally in accord with most of the principles he outlined as the parts of his anarchist philosophy in Paris: above all, his understanding of evolution remained active. People had to go on trying to transform the world.

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<sup>32</sup> "Yige xin xinyang ...," pp. 23–24.

I firmly believe that the universe is in a state of eternal transformation. At no time should people cease to improve their environment as they follow the changes of the universe... I believe that the further material civilization progresses, the fuller will be the supply of goods, the more unified humankind will tend to become, and the earlier will be the solution of difficult problems.<sup>33</sup>

In political terms, Wu walked away from strict adherence to anarchism in a series of small steps. On one level, some of the tensions within the anarchism he formulated while in Paris simply worked themselves out in his concerns with improving, stabilizing, and unifying postrevolutionary China. The basically anarchist formulation of the Society to Advance Morality was still obvious in 1912, though it was criticized as insufficiently pure by the new true believers in anarchism. Wu participated in the successful attempt in 1912 to form a new party, the Guomindang, which was still in line with his participation as an anarchist in the Tongmenghui.<sup>34</sup> But in a long letter to Cai Yuanpei about 1916, Wu acknowledged that China might benefit from a dose of reforming nationalism to accompany the internationalism he so deeply believed in.<sup>35</sup> His immediate prescription emphasized the reform, for he pointed out that dictatorships, which could be justified on the grounds of nationalism, were not necessarily committed to doing good but might, once given the power, do great harm. Wu specifically said he would trust neither Yuan nor Sun Yat-sen. For reform, however, Wu could point to little more than “education to save the country.” He still hoped for world revolution, but nonetheless he had taken another step away from anarchism.

<sup>33</sup> From points 2 and 5 of Wu’s summation, *ibid.*, pp. 67, 69; I follow Wang’s translation, “Wu Chih-hui,” pp. 181–182, with minor modifications.

<sup>34</sup> Chen Linghai, “Nianpu,” p. 41.

<sup>35</sup> “Da Cai Yuanpei shu,” *Collected Works*, 10:1570–1575.

Like Liu Shipei, he believed that historically China was virtually without government. The imperial administration represented not government but only a special kind of parasitic class. Chinese philosophical concepts also fit anarchist needs: yielding (*qianrang*), non-struggle (*buzheng*), and harmony (*heshan*). Not these very Chinese ideas, Zheng said, but other causes had hindered the development of material civilization in China. Like Liu Shipei earlier, Zheng combined nostalgia with a certain respect for modern technology.

Zheng defended the fit between anarchism and contemporary China as well. He noted that whatever students were learning abroad, ordinary villagers still knew virtually nothing of government. China had not been anarchist in the past but the base for anarchism had been laid; now she had only to abolish a few useless remnants. But would an anarchism limited to China not result in further imperialist incursions? Hardly, since it was the government that was selling out the nation. Zheng dismissed two main rivals to anarchism. The liberal followers of *New Tide* (*Xinchao*) were too intellectual and imitative of Europe. The Marxists, though slightly more enlightened, misunderstood the true nature of the state, offering mere collectivism and pretensions to “scientific socialism.” Neither group was thinking about how to get true equality, liberty, and happiness for the Chinese, and, Zheng implied, their doctrines were too foreign.

## ANARCHISM AND MAOISM

Chen Duxiu appears to have put his faith in organization whereas the anarchists put their faith in the masses. Where did Mao Zedong stand? The following paragraphs cannot provide a balanced appraisal of Mao’s thought but attempt to suggest connections between certain Maoist motifs and the familiar themes

was that through a return to the primitive or natural, and without such traditional institutions of civilization as state and family, people would be free of the usual social demands and constraints, including those of the family structure and the requirement to produce offspring. However odd or satirical Zhu's style in this essay, his frequent use of a particular trope was fully in accord with the intellectual spirit of the day. People had to be "freed from their chains." More specifically, Zhu foresaw not only an end to all the hypocrisies surrounding betrothals and marriages, and a new equality between the sexes and the generations—all stemming from free love—but also the leisure to lead lives of enhanced intellectual activity, idealism, and spirituality.

Zhang Binglin's five negatives had also constituted a *reductio ad absurdum* of total extinction and the two men appear to share a common sense of despair.<sup>80</sup> But Zhu was genuinely committed to social rather than nationalist revolution. Revolution he accepted as a part of the universal law of progress.<sup>81</sup> Evolution is as central to Zhu's thought as to that of the May Fourth intellectuals in general. The future would be "light" (*guangming*) as opposed to the darkness.<sup>82</sup> But revolution was simply an endless process of forward motion, with no final goals.

Zheng Xianzong (1901–1949) also held a romantic view of revolt but returns to Planet Earth. He briefly joined the CCP while studying in Germany but later supported the "third party" movement, which sought alternatives to the CCP and the GMD. As an anarchist, he simply felt that China was uniquely suited to freedom.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> See ch. 2.

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, A. A., "Gemingjia de xingge yu jingshen" (The character and spirit of revolutionaries), *WSZ*, pp. 442–446 (originally in *Fendou* no. 2, 24 February 1920).

<sup>82</sup> A. A., "Geming de mudi yu shouduan" (The goals and methods of revolution), *WSZ*, p. 450 (originally in *Fendou* no. 4, 20 March 1920).

<sup>83</sup> "Taipu," "Wuzhengfu zhuyi yu Zhongguo" (Anarchism and China), *WSZ*, pp. 494–500 (originally in *Ziyou* [Freedom] no. 1, December 1920).

As China slipped further into warlordism, Wu attempted to remain above politics. In the interest of "social undertakings," Wu urged in 1917 that "national politics should be kept calm."<sup>36</sup> This was a futile plea that the various forces from militarists and Qing restorationists to revolutionaries respect each other's strength, not an outright abandonment of anarchism. Wu had already become attached to the republic. However, he wrote as an outsider to the various political conflicts, as a concerned intellectual calling for unity, and still, in his own estimation, as a loyal anarchist supporter of the general revolution.

Out of the country again after 1921 (he had spent the years 1913–1916 working on the study-abroad program in France), Wu returned in 1923 to find a revitalized political situation. Spurred by the May Fourth Movement, the Guomindang was reorganized under Sun Yat-sen's leadership. With the aid of communist advisers sent by the Third International, in January 1923 the Guomindang conquered a secure territorial base in Guangzhou, more or less independent of local warlords. In a sense, the Northern Expedition had begun. In any case, Wu identified with the new Guomindang; he visited Sun Yat-sen a number of times and was elected to the central supervisory committee at the party's first national congress in 1924; other members included Li Shizeng and Zhang Ji.<sup>37</sup>

To justify his first real involvement in party affairs—something more than just membership, indeed a position of leadership in a party that for the first time had a degree of real power—Wu turned to the example of Kropotkin working for the Russian revolution. Wu neglected to mention that Kropotkin, however, did not join the Communist Party. Wu's real point was that the Guomindang was

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<sup>36</sup> "Lun jinqu yixian wurao" (Let us advance by making calm a priority), *Collected Works*, 8:470 (the article originally appeared in *Zhonghua xinbao*, a journal Wu had recently founded in Shanghai, 23–24 May 19x7).

<sup>37</sup> Chen Linghai, "Nianpu," pp. 56–57; central supervisory committee for *zhongyang jianchayuan*, sometimes translated control yuan.

the only revolutionary force that had a real chance to change China. His analysis of why the party could be trusted rested upon a theory of three political categories: conservative, moderate, and radical. Coalitions of moderates and conservatives had only resulted in the warlords and further imperialist predations. Now, Wu urged all radicals to band together, attracting moderates if they could, but in any case using the Guomintang, as they had used the Tongmenghui, as a coalition agreed on a minimum goal. Wu saw no point in directly pursuing the anarchist revolution, which (as always) he saw coming along in time. "China belongs to all of us," he scolded. "If someone is dedicated to reform, you should let them go ahead and try since you do not want to participate."<sup>38</sup> Wu saw the communist members of the Guomintang similarly: fellow radicals on the same road. Wu indignantly denied that support for the Guomintang amounted to "fighting poison with poison."<sup>39</sup>

Al Wu's stature in the Guomintang grew, he continued to support communist participation for three years.<sup>40</sup> Sun Yat-sen had agreed to admit members of the Chinese Communist Party as part of his deal for aid from the Third International. Zhang Ji played an important role in this decision, traveling with Maring in 1921 and formally introducing Li Dazhao to the Guomintang in 1922.<sup>41</sup> Wu was nonetheless wary of communist intentions as the alliance headed into trouble after Sun's death. By 1927, Wu supported a purge, which is not to say that he foresaw the bloody suppression

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<sup>38</sup> "Zhi Hua Lin shu," pp. 1585–1586.

<sup>39</sup> As Hua Lin put it in his second letter to Wu; see "Da Hua Lin shu," *Collected Works*, 10:1588–1589.

<sup>40</sup> Wang, "Wu Chih-hui," pp. 216–223 and 318–319 note 22, convincingly demonstrates that Wu was *not* involved in the attempt of the Western Hills conference (near Beijing) in 1924 to purge communist members and expel Wang Jingwei. Rather, Wu walked out of the rump session when he realized that the Guomintang rightists would not support a compromise.

<sup>41</sup> George T. Yu, *Parly Politics in Republican China*, pp. 162–165.

Basically, the anarchists' views sketched above combined the positivism and materialism of the old *New Century* group with the concerns for social revolution and revolutionary means found in *Natural Justice*. Their increasing sophistication, particularly in economic argument, was partly the result of the influence of Marxist analytical language. Selected marxist concepts such as class struggle and a special, though not exclusive, historical role for the proletariat did not attenuate the libertarian message of the anarchists. Indeed, a few were even outside of the mainstream of anarchist positivism. Zhu Qianzhi (1899–1973) was perhaps more nihilist than anarchist and wrote in the romantic, idiosyncratic tradition of a Zhang Binglin or Georges Sorel (whom he cited). His call for a "cosmic revolution" (*yuzhou geming*) attacked knowledge and rational thinking.<sup>78</sup> Zhu called for a return to emotion and made a vague appeal to the primitive. It is clear why he disgusted Chen Duxiu.

Zhu refused to predict the exact course of the revolution, since rationality cannot be a guide to the future. However, he seems to praise simplicity and purity as the goals toward which it should head.<sup>79</sup> Or, more extreme, all things existing in the universe should be annihilated, the human race made extinct, and the world destroyed. Turning to means rather than ends, Zhu recommended suicide and free love. Inspired by Schopenhauer, Zhu himself tried, and failed, to commit suicide. However, even if a number of individuals do successfully commit suicide, the human race will hardly become extinct. Therefore Zhu was forced to turn to free love, which he clearly saw was of more universal appeal than suicide. It was not only natural but especially popular in the contemporary social climate. But would it not lead to continuation of the species? No, because the result of free love would be that people did not want to have children. What Zhu was perhaps getting at, if anything,

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<sup>78</sup> "Yuzhou geming de yuyan" (Preface to cosmic revolution), WSZ, pp. 477–488; (originally in *Geming zhaxue* [Revolutionary philosophy], August 1921).

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 478–479.



of society; thus in order to pursue individual liberty, we should first pursue society's liberty... The individual liberty that ignores the common good is not liberty but rather the enemy of liberty."<sup>76</sup> Yet, falling for the way in which Chen insistently harped on social elements, Ou rather lamely granted that certain "reactionary" individuals would need special attention: sincere argument if not legal coercion. And in the end, Ou conceded, they would need to be treated "the same way we treat capitalists."<sup>77</sup>

Chen presented himself as the pragmatic reformer: the real point was that he conceived social change as occurring through structural alternations in social relations. Chen did not believe that revolution obviated the need for process. He took Ou's faith in progress and education to be little better than individualistic quietism: how can education be improved in a bad age? If the revolution depends on education, it will never come. Chen was not going to wait for human nature to improve, for science to pave the way, for education to produce better people, or, perhaps, for the masses to see the light. (Chen predicted that the social revolution would occur in China once it had won 100,000 converts, and he was not going to worry about their oppressing the remaining 300 million Chinese.) Chen was certainly willing to accept the historical necessity for restrictions on individual freedoms, which he felt were shrinking willy-nilly as society itself grew more complex. Therefore a devotion to individualism required an antiindustrial nostalgia that he held to be mere romanticism. Chen not only wore his pragmatists mask here but was still a recent and hence especially firm convert to hard-boiled thinking. Did Ou represent Chen's former self? The opposition between individualism and industrialized—bureaucratized—societies has since become a commonplace, but the role of individualism in postindustrial societies is not so clear.

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

of the Shanghai massacre.<sup>42</sup> He worked with the Guomindang in Shanghai in 1926 publicly to further the Northern Expedition and secretly to isolate the communists. The immediate reason Wu gave for his support of a purge was a conversation he had with his old friend Chen Duxiu, chairman of the Chinese Communist Party. As Wu reported to the central supervisory committee,

At eight o'clock on the evening of March 6<sup>th</sup>, I [and other Guomindang members] met with Chen Duxiu, the leader of the Chinese Communist Party and Luo Yi'nong, the leader of the CCP's Shanghai branch...

We talked a good deal but the brunt of our conversation was that I told Chen, "It is naturally the responsibility of communists to study the theory of communism. But the Soviet emissary Joffe told Sun Yat-sen some five or six years ago in Guangzhou that it would take two hundred years to put communism into practice... Your idea of going into business immediately is phony."

Chen said, "You're really crazy! May I ask whether the present Chinese Republic is not false? Which do you think is superior—Kang Youwei's idea to restore the monarchy to a pseudo-republic?" Then I knew that the CCP wanted to put its pseudo-communism into practice, though this hadn't been said.

Then I suddenly asked the basic question, "How long do you think it will be before you bring about the Leninist style of communism in China?"

Without hesitation Chen replied, "Twenty years." ...

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<sup>42</sup> The classic account of the subject is Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*. For Wu's involvement, see also Li Wenneng, *Wu Jingheng*, pp. 110–122; Wang, "Wu Chih-hui," pp. 232–250; and Chen Linghai, "Nianpu," pp. 64–68.

“Then the Guomindang only has nineteen years left. Earlier, Sun Yat-sen told Joffe that the national revolution of the Guomindang would take thirty years to complete. If you’re in such a hurry, you’re going to take the life of the Guomindang a bit too soon. We should have a thorough talk about this!”<sup>43</sup>

Members of the central supervisory committee in Shanghai in April included Li Shizeng, Cai Yuanpei, and Zhang Jingjiang. They voted to expel from the party and arrest communists in Shanghai. All remained implacable foes of communism the rest of their lives. Wu thenceforth gave loyal if sometimes critical support to Chiang Kai-shek, in what seems like a reversion to the ideal he held of a *junzi* in 1898. As it turned out, Chen Duxiu’s prediction was more accurate than most. Wu and Chen were old allies—though Chen was fourteen years younger, they had both supported revolution in 1911 and opposed Yuan Shikai in 1913, and they had worked to promote materialism and science since 1915—and the image of them playing games with each other as a curtain-raiser for civil war reflects the inability of Chinese intellectuals in the twentieth century to affect directly the political, social, and moral chaos that so deeply concerned them.<sup>44</sup>

Li Shizeng, like Wu, supported the Tongmenghui vision of a republic in 1912, and after Yuan’s counterrevolution he had to move back to France. There he continued to run the Chinese work-study

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<sup>43</sup> “Zhi zhongyang jiancha weiyuanhui qingcha ban gongchandang wen,” *Collected Works*, 9:810–11. Luo Yi’ong (b. 1901) was executed in 1928.

<sup>44</sup> Intellectuals who were also politicians played serious games, of course. Wu is often held responsible for the execution in 1927 of Chen’s eldest son, Chen Yannian, whom he denounced to the police. (See Lee Feigon, *Chen Duxiu*, pp. 231–232). Chen’s other son, Chen Qiaonian, was also executed in the 1927 purges. Chen Duxiu himself escaped to the foreign concession in Shanghai, though he was expelled from the CCP. Guomindang authorities finally placed him under arrest in 1932 and released him in 1937.

chism.”<sup>73</sup> Perhaps more significant than the content or arguments of the debate, already familiar to most Chinese intellectuals if important in the development of a Chinese Marxism, was its tone. Chen persistently pressed Ou to outline how anarchist societies would function in practice and remorselessly pursued the inconsistencies that inevitably resulted from Ou’s attempt at futurology. Chen’s pessimism, not to say cynicism, about the human condition in general and the Chinese condition in particular allowed him to turn Ou into a blatant *naif*.

Each of the dualists courteously acknowledged their common ground. Ou granted that Soviet Russia was undergoing a revolutionary transitional period. He was also at pains to indicate that he was a scientific Kropotkinist and did not countenance extreme individualism. Chen rather condescendingly noted that in his behavior Ou was a “pure youth” who believed in class struggle and revolutionary action and not one of those nihilistic, pacifistic, Daoist anarchists.<sup>74</sup> But Chen kept picking on the details; for example, would there not always be at least a few criminals, a few lunatics, and therefore the need for some unanarchistic laws? Ou attempted to speak of “common consciousness” (*gongyi*) in place of laws and the role of public assemblies, but Chen concluded, “Except for the individual who escapes from society, there is no absolute freedom and no capacity to put anarchism into practice.”<sup>75</sup> How could organizations function if members were allowed to come and go freely? How could society function if small minorities could block the public good? Ou denied the conflict between individual and society by postulating a kind of organic relationship between them: “We depend on society for our survival and the individual is a member

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<sup>73</sup> “Taolun wuzhengfu zhuyi,” *Xin qingnian* vol. 9, no. 4 (1 August 1921); summarized in Scalapino and Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement*, pp. 55–59, which may be consulted for the main points of the debate. I make no attempt to describe the debate comprehensively.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Revolution is class struggle; class struggle is a dictatorship; the nation is this dictatorship enforced by a class; opposition to a proletarian state is opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat; opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat is opposition to the class struggle of the proletariat... Thus when you say “class struggle is one thing but the dictatorship of the workers quite another,” this statement is illogical.<sup>71</sup>

Much of Yin’s stance was defensive. Communists do not want to give the state control over society but want shared production and distribution of goods and wish to abolish nation, family, class, and government. Russia was not a land of state control, but “in a word, Russia is today a nation of the workers and peasants, not a nation of the propertied classes.”<sup>72</sup> The communists did not represent a political party of the kind found in the bourgeois states; the dictatorship of the proletariat was necessary because antirevolutionary forces would not give up easily. Continued use of coercion would be necessary—but not forever.

Even here the divisions between communism and anarchism remain narrow, if deep. Yin’s opponents in the debate favored class struggle, and they would grant transitional powers to revolutionary organizations if not to a government. Yin adopted the evolutionary positivism of the anarchist mode of argumentation and emphasized that the difference between the two doctrines lay more in means than in ends.

All these issues had been thrashed out in China in 1921 when the anarchist Ou Shengbai took on Chen Duxiu in six rounds. Neither side could effectively claim intellectual victory as a consequence of the debate. Chen published the complete exchange, giving himself the last word, in *New Youth* under the title “discussing Anar-

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 226.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., pp. 216–217.

program, which blossomed during the First World War. When Li returned to China after a few years, he taught biology at Beida and headed various universities, including Beida and Beijing Normal University. He worked on publishing Western books for Chinese students and helped establish the Academia Sinica. He continued as head of China’s largest study- abroad program. As the communist students in France began to organize, he grew increasingly disaffected with them. The Societe Franco- Chinoise d’Education (*Hua-Fajiaoyu hui*), as the Li-Wu-Cai organization was then named, finally ended operations after an embarrassing contretemps in 1921, which involved a series of disputes between anarchist and communist student groups.<sup>45</sup> The Franco-Chinese Institute attachment to the University of Lyon continued until 1947.

At the same time Li became increasingly involved in the Guomindang. In 1924 he was elected to the central supervisory committee of the party (with Wu Zhihui). He thus participated in the April 1927 decision to purge the communists. As always, Li was allied with Wu, Cai, and Chiang Kai-shek’s great backer, Zhang Jingjiang, in party affairs.

Li used anarchist arguments to combat Marxist communism. In an article written as an apology for the party purges, Li put them into the context of a worldwide struggle that in China was taking the specific form of the Three People’s Principles versus “pseudo-communism.”<sup>46</sup> Li defined human revolution as a part of evolution, as he had in 1907. Now, Li used biological evolution as teleological metaphor, claiming that- all other life forms represented stages to human life and that ontogeny recapitulated phylogeny (that the human embryo passed through various evolutionary stages, from the worm to the fish to the mammal). Li’s point was that the Chinese revolution could not skip stages. Whether over a long period

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<sup>45</sup> See Y. C. Wang, *Chinese Intellectuals and the West*, pp. 106-m.

<sup>46</sup> “Xianjin geming zhi yiyi” (The significance of the present revolution), *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 1:236. The essay is not dated but was probably written about 1928.

like the evolution of the human species, or a short period like the development of an embryo, China would follow general rules of social evolution. Li listed four stages to revolution:

1. Monarchical revolution (the palace or dictatorship revolution)...
2. Democratic revolution (the national or political revolution)...
3. Class revolution (property or economic revolution).
4. People's livelihood (*minsheng*) revolution (the social or Datong revolution).<sup>47</sup>

Li said that the American and French revolutions had achieved the second stage, and he cited the Leninist version of Marxism in Soviet Russia as an example of the third stage. No one had reached the fourth stage, but it was typified by the thought of Proudhon and the *minsheng* principle of Sun Yat-sen. Applying this scheme to China, Li found that several thousand years of normal revolutionary growth had occurred in just the past few years. Thus, China had reached the first stage with the Reform Movement of 1898, the second stage with the Revolution of 1911, the third stage with the "Russian-ization program of the Wuhan government," and the fourth stage with the "Shanghai party protection movement to preserve the revolution of the whole people [the anticommunist purges], and the development of the principle of people's livelihood." The ideological point of Li's fourth stage was that only the Guomindang offered a revolution for the whole people, a Datong in its broad sense of commonality. This was thus going to transcend mere class war. Li did not claim that it was yet completed. Nor did he explain the content of the people's livelihood. Much of his case

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 237.

In fact, Chen, co-founder of the CCP, had a career roughly parallel to, say, Wu Zhihui's until the 1920s and even after.<sup>66</sup> Chen, too, joined the revolutionary movement in the decade before 1911, though not the Tongmenghui itself, and afterward became ever more stridently opposed to tradition. As editor of *New Youth*, he praised the West, "science and democracy," and called for fundamental moral and spiritual change in the Chinese body politic. The two men were allies in attacking Confucianism, but with Chen's turn to Marxism and Wu's to the Guomindang, the two became enemies.<sup>67</sup> Chen had long had a deep distrust of the state, which, although he had never been an anarchist, perhaps gave his communism a defensive edge and partially explains his evolution into a Trotskyite sharply critical of the CCP.

Polemics among the Chinese studying in France were at least as fierce, especially after the formation of communist groups in 1922.<sup>68</sup> A certain "Y. K.," probably Yin Kuan,<sup>69</sup> charged anarchists with being impractical and ineffective.<sup>70</sup> Yin pictured the state not as a sort of monster but simply as the result of the same social evolution that produced classes. It can be a tool in the era of transition from capitalism to communism, necessary to secure the revolution.

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<sup>66</sup> For Chen, see Lee Feigon, *Chen Duxiu*; Lin Yu-sheng, *The Crisis of Chinese Consciousness*, pp. 56–81; and Benjamin I. Schwartz, "Ch'en Tu-hsiu and the Acceptance of the Modern West."

<sup>67</sup> For their personal relationship, see ch. 8.

<sup>68</sup> See Marilyn Levine, "The Found Generation: Chinese Communists in Europe, 1919–1925" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1985); and John Leung, "The Chinese Work-Study Movement: The Social and Political Experience of Chinese Student-Workers in France" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, 1982).

<sup>69</sup> In the opinion of Marilyn Levine, personal communication, 28 June 1988.

<sup>70</sup> "Yige wuzhengfudang he yige gongchandang de tanhua" (A conversation between an anarchist and a communist), originally in *Shaonian* (Youth), nos. 7–8, 10–11 (1 March, 1 April, 1 July, 15 August 1923); reprinted in *Fu-Fa qingong jianxue yundong shiliao* (Historical materials on the diligent-work, frugal-study movement in France) (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1981), 3:215–245.

“Chinese-style anarchism.”<sup>62</sup> Lazy, dissipated, and unlawful intellectuals were creating an ideology of liberty, unfortunately popular among Chinese youth. This anarchism represented not only the ideas of Western anarchists but also a rebirth of traditional Daoism. It would result in “taking vows, going mad, and committing suicide,” Chen stuttered. Although Chen had once considered anarchists rare and largely fabulous beasts,<sup>63</sup> he later grew afraid of them or, more precisely, afraid of their influence. For Chen appears to have seen the anarchists as appealing to what he detested most: the “old thought,” negative, nostalgic, and ultimately corrupt. By the 1920s he believed that only long, hard, and organized work could improve China: “the individual cannot by himself achieve liberty and liberation,” nor could the small groups of the work-study programs or mutual aid movement. These were romantic illusions.<sup>64</sup> If these dreadful nihilists roused Chen’s ire, they were nonetheless “superior-grade anarchists.” The inferior-grade, self-proclaimed anarchists were even more disgusting, nothing but political figures, parliamentarians, bureaucrats, opium addicts, jailers, thieves, and charlatans. Not to mention “those who tell people that they often go with Mr. Wu Zhihui to the whorehouses of Shanghai.”<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> “Zhongguo shide wuzhengfu zhuyi,” *Xin qingnian* (New Youth), (i)(i May 1921):5–6; this article is reprinted in *Duxiu wencun*, 2:27–29. Chen’s remarks were evidently prompted by Zhu Qianzhi (for whom see below).

<sup>63</sup> “Tongmenghui yu wuzhengfudang” (The Tongmenghui and anarchists), *Duxiu wencun*, 2:44. Chen’s point was simply that the government and police were using “anarchist” as a convenient criminal category, mislabeling people to cover their arrests.

<sup>64</sup> “Xuwu de gerenzhuyi ji ren ziranzhuyi” (Nihilistic individualism and nature-worship), *ibid.*, 2:107–109.

<sup>65</sup> “Xiapin de wuzhengfudang” (Inferior-grade anarchists), *Xin qingnian* yol. 9, no. 2 (1 June 1921); reprinted in *Duxiu wencun*, 2:119–121.

against communism rested on his ability to prove that *minsheng* encompassed many of Marx’s promises while at the same time the Soviet style of communism was a detour from the evolutionary path leading to true Datong.

Li characterized the Marxism of the Soviet Union as encompassing class struggle, the dictatorship of the proletariat, statism, centralization (*jiquan*), and stealing power. These accusations clearly betrayed his anarchist fears of the state and centralization of authority. Li criticized Proudhonism: reconciliation of the classes and Datong, mutual aid anarchism, localism, decentralization, and the social contract (*shehui zuhe*). Li was thus backing away from the anarcho-communism of Kropotkin.<sup>48</sup> Li’s socialism may have been perfectly sincere but he himself referred to the role of the Guomindang and the Three People’s Principles, not to socialism. Li gave his party credit for “respecting freedom,” although, he noted, not to the degree Proudhon had advocated, and for having a great capacity to contain various tendencies.<sup>49</sup> He also credited it with standing for decentralization.<sup>50</sup>

This was an important step on Li’s journey away from anarchism. Though still never accepting a government job, he had sided with the Tongmenghui and Guomindang against a series of evils: Yuan Shikai, the warlords and now the communists. Nonetheless, subjectively Li continued to act from anarchist motives.

Cai Yuanpei came to the same conclusion. Caught up in the initial student demonstrations in Beijing in May 1919, he tried to protect the students against the northern warlords, and he tried to

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<sup>48</sup> Li’s translation of Proudhon’s mutualism, which essentially referred to the kind of voluntary economic associations (modeled on the family-run workshop) that Proudhon hoped would characterize the new society, as “mutual aid” was a minor distortion induced by the overwhelming vision of Kropotkin, and was just as useful for combatting Marxist premises.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>50</sup> “Fenzhi hezuo wenti” (The question of decentralized cooperation), *Li Shizeng xiansheng wenji*, 1:251–254 (originally published in 1927).

convince the students not to march. In 1912 Cai considered himself philosophically an anarchist, but this was a commitment to the ethics of Kropotkin, not an exact political stand. He believed in strengthening the Chinese nation at the same time. Thus, as minister of education he briefly attempted to move the government in a reformist direction. Cai desired mass education for both sexes and for adults as well as the young. Elementary schools were forbidden to teach the classics; he sought “republicanized” texts for all levels.<sup>51</sup> The point here is not Cai’s specific reforms but that he tried to institute them from the top down, in a form that owed nothing to anarchism. Nonetheless, he also emphasized that part of schooling should be devoted to modern ethics. Cai wanted to replace the traditional five relationships with liberty, equality, and fraternity. And he wanted Chinese students to learn not only about the various religions, philosophies, and cultures of different societies, but about their common human basis as well.

In an essay on the relationship between education and society published in early 1912, Cai reflected on the kind of nation China had been and should be, and what kind of schooling could genuinely improve the country. To avoid the evils of rampant militarism and capitalism, Cai suggested, as had Wu Zhihui five years earlier, that China needed education that stressed civic morality (*gongmin daode*). Note the classical citations:

What is civic morality? It is the French Revolution—its slogans of liberty, equality and fraternity. The essence of morality is here. Confucius said, “... you cannot deprive the humblest peasant of his opinion.” Mencius said, “A great man ... is one whom riches and honors cannot taint, poverty and lowly station cannot shift, majesty and power cannot bend.” This is a definition of liberty, and so this is what the ancients called righteousness or justice (*yi*). Confucius said, “Do not do

<sup>51</sup> William Duiker, *Ts’ai Yuan-p’ei*, pp. 37–48.

endeavors have been unable to reach fruition. Now that we are tending toward more organization, we should begin with our propaganda work.”<sup>59</sup> Yet neither the concern for liberty in the abstract nor the passion for concrete individual rights (which the anarchists frequently accused the communists of disdain) dropped out. In the end, China never had a national anarchist organization of any kind and perhaps never had a unified anarchist movement. Disparate voices always demanded to be heard.

In sum, the anarchists’ main criticism of Marxism was that government was intrinsically oppressive—more than that, intrinsically capitalist. That is, “regardless of whether you have a democratic government or a government of the workers and peasants, in fact they all exploit the blood of the workers for the benefit of the minority who have special privileges.”<sup>60</sup> Revolutionary organization must not be centralized; rather, the anarchist goal of free association can be brought to workers by letting them occupy factories and run them without interference. Peasants can be brought into the struggle through farmers’ cooperatives that would skip the middleman when agricultural and industrial goods are exchanged. They can be taught the value of the anarchist free association, even if ultimately, they will be freed completely from their petty bourgeois mentality by mechanization. Distribution of goods would be basically equal, not based on value, or wages. Above all, no privilege: “we absolutely cannot distinguish the consumption rights of intellectuals and specialists from those of workers.”<sup>61</sup>

Chinese communists in both China and Europe responded vigorously. Chen Duxiu was particularly irritated by what he considered the nihilist or Daoist strain of irresponsible individualism in

<sup>59</sup> “Women muqian de wenti” (The problems now before us), WS 4:264; WSZ, pp. 710–712 (originally in *Minzhong* no. 12, July 1925).

<sup>60</sup> “Zhongguo wuzhengfutuan gangling caoan,” WS, p. 267.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

ing a self-consciousness that would allow them to represent others in the struggle. (Nonetheless, there was also a fear that a minority intellectual class would take control of what should remain a workers' movement.)<sup>55</sup> Moreover, anarchists saw China as a semi-colony, with a growing exploitative finance capitalist class (*caizheng zichanjieji*).<sup>56</sup> The historical responsibility of the proletariat was to overthrow not just the imperialists and the warlords, but native capitalists as well, for these men were in fact simply the servants of imperialism. Native capitalists, even if they seemed to oppose imperialism, would in the end unite with it in order to oppose the proletariat. Indeed, this is the heart of the analysis, sometimes associated with Trotsky, that underlay CCP dissatisfaction with the First United Front as imposed by the Comintern. "The responsibility of the anarchists is simply to help the Chinese proletariat to unite with the proletariat of the advanced nations in order to carry out social revolution."<sup>57</sup> Peasants in this view are backward elements with a weak class consciousness. They are nonetheless crucial, as the majority of society, to the course of the revolution. Poor peasants can be organized to oppose landlords and the government and become allies of the workers. In other words, "Anarcho-communism isn't a kind of ideology but rather the revolutionary theory of the working masses."<sup>58</sup>

The most striking result of syndicalism and the communist challenge was the recognition, even among purely intellectual anarchists, of the need for better organization. In 1925 the *People's Bell* called for anarchist publishing to be coordinated on a national basis. "We have hitherto lacked organization and so all our revolutionary

<sup>55</sup> "Laodong yundong" (The workers' movement), WS 4:223–225; WSZ, pp. 697–681 (originally in *Huzhuyuekan [Mutual Aid Monthly]*, March 1923).

<sup>56</sup> "Zhongguo wuzhengfutuan gangling caoan" (Draft provisions for Chinese anarchist groups), WS 4:266–270; WSZ, pp. 712–716 (originally in *Minzhong* no. 13, September 1925).

<sup>57</sup> "Zhongguo wuzhengfutuan gangling caoan," WS, p. 266.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

to others what you would not like yourself." Zi Gong said, "What I do not want others to do to me, I have no desire to do to others." The "Great Learning" in the *Liji* says, "... what [a man] dislikes in those in front of him, let him not show it in preceding those who are behind; what he dislikes in those behind him, let him not show it in following those in front of him; what he dislikes in those on the right, let him not apply it to those on the left; and what he dislikes in those on the left, let him not apply it to those on the right." This is a definition of equality, and so this is what the ancients called reciprocity (*shu*). Liberty is generally understood subjectively, yet in one's desire for liberty one ought to respect the liberty of others. Thus, liberty also has an objective framework. Equality is generally understood objectively, yet as one does not treat other people as unequal, so one does not allow others to treat one as unequal. Thus, equality also has a subjective framework. The two [liberty and equality] are opposites but are truly reached together...

An education that would encompass civic morality cannot yet attain its ultimate goal. It is still unable to rise above politics. The world's "best politics" consists of trying to make "the greatest good for the greatest number." The "greatest number" is formed out of aggregating the smallest number: the individual. The individual's good—a sufficiency of clothing and food, the absence of disaster and harm—forms the world's good... It is politicians who try to form the world's good. Educators have other business. There are two aspects to the world, like the two sides of a piece of paper. One is phenomena and the other is reality. The business of politics is the phenomenal world—to try

to create the world's good. The business of religion is the real world... Education, however, is established in the phenomenal world while it functions in the real world.<sup>52</sup>

This is another example of the effort to apply anarchism to China. Cai tried to define his goals, which he conceived as both universal and immediate, simultaneously in terms from modern France and ancient China, and he tried to summarize his whole philosophy of education in this essay. The influence of German idealism is evident. A number of anarchist motifs run through the essay: the dislike and distrust of politics in any sense of the word, the desire for universal truths and the belief that they had direct applicability in all times and places, and the faith in the final realization of politically transcendent but socially concrete goals, whether these are defined by the French Revolution or by Confucianism, or both. The essay thus demonstrates how anarchism corresponded to more general Chinese perceptions.

Anarchists were not alone either in resting their hopes in education or in noting their reservations about politics. However, Cai was also concerned with limiting what might be called anarchist extremism. He wanted to establish a balance between inner subjectivity and outer subjectivity (a social framework), in order to reconcile liberty and equality. This further implies that anarchism will not occur naturally; rather, a specific kind of education is necessary. Education, existing both in the "real world" like religion and in the "phenomenal world" like politics, could, Cai hoped, bridge the gap between absolute values and what we normally call the real world: of hurly-burly, of compromise, of warlords.

<sup>52</sup> "Duiyu jiaoyu fangzheng zhi yijian" (My views on the aims of education), *Cai Yuanpei xiansheng quanji*, pp. 453–454, originally published in *Jiaoyu zazhi*, 12 February 1912; summarized in Duiker, *Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei*, pp. 45–46. Citations are from the *Analects* (9:25, 12:2, 5:11), *Mencius* (3B.2), and the *Great Learning* (commentary 10); and translations are by Waley, Dobson, and Chan, respectively. Zi Gong was a disciple of Confucius.

even Lenin did not explain how to tell whether a party was merely pretending to represent the proletariat.

As early as 1920, the Soviet Union was condemned for seizing the land of the peasants and meddling in education, publishing, and marriage.<sup>52</sup> When in 1919 Huang Lingshuang had reviewed *Das Kapital* in *New Youth*, he praised dialectical materialism as a powerful method of investigation, but he charged that Marx brought preconceptions to his study.<sup>53</sup> Huang found Marx's explanation of the rise of capitalism convincing but failed to see the proof of capitalism's decline. More to the point, nationalization as demanded in the *Communist Manifesto* represented the threat of dictatorship. Huang was particularly disturbed by the thought of labor troops and farmer soldiers. On the other hand, Marx did not go far enough in reshaping economic activity: collectivism would still allow private property while socialist payment according to production would penalize the worker. Marxist retention of the wage labor system, anarchists also said, would lead back to private property.<sup>54</sup>

At the same time, Chinese anarchists learned a great deal from Marxism. Partly through their involvement in the practical issues of the labor movement and partly from their reading of communist polemics, anarchists acquired a political-economic language which could be partially absorbed into their own primarily ethical language. Kropotkin himself had considered Marxist social analysis to be largely correct, but the Chinese amalgamation was broader. The Mutual Aid Society of Beijing took it as axiomatic that the rise of a working class movement was the natural result of the development of capitalism, and that workers were develop-

<sup>52</sup> A. D. (Jia Yue), "Women fandui Buerzhawei," *WSZ*, p. 195.

<sup>53</sup> "Makesi xueshuo de piping" (A critique of Marxist theory), *Xin qing-nian*, vol. 6, no. 5 (May 1919); reprinted in Gao Jun et al., *Wuzhengfu zhuyi zai Zhongguo*, pp. 295–300, and in *WSZ*, pp. 556–560.

<sup>54</sup> "Minzhong xuanyan" (Declaration of the *People's Bell*), *WS* 4:248–250 (originally in *Minzhong* no. 1, 1 July 1922).



archist attention to means over ends and organizational weakness were probably fatal in the long run. Anarcho-syndicalism taught not simply that unions were to be instruments of social revolution but taught embryonic forms of the free organizations of the future.

The irreconcilable differences between anarchists and Marxists lay in their attitudes toward the state specifically and toward coercion in general. An early anarchist critique demanded to know, “What is coercion (*qiangquan*)? We do not recognize the coercion of the capitalists; we do not recognize the coercion of the politicians; and we do not recognize the coercion of workers either.”<sup>50</sup>

Russia became a focal point of Chinese interest. Learn someone’s opinion of the Bolshevik revolution and one knew what he wanted for China. Anarchists eyed the Soviet Union with some sympathy, but warily. Bolsheviks were not even true to Marx. “Russia is certainly not a dictatorship of the proletariat but a dictatorship of the communist party over the workers.”<sup>51</sup> Nationalization left the workers and peasants as powerless as they had been under capitalism. The anarchists worried that if Marxism strengthens political parties, then it leads away from a classless society, for political struggles lack a firm class basis. To Marxists, of course, this was absurd: even a Marxist who repudiated Lenin could not accept the gap between politics and class struggle— but on the other hand

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<sup>50</sup> A.D. (Jie Yue), “Women fandui Buerzhawei” (Our opposition to Bolshevism), WS, 4:195 (originally in *Fendou* [Struggle], January 1920). An abridged version of the article is reprinted in WSZ, pp. 439–441.

<sup>51</sup> “Sanbo,” “Gongchan zhuyi shimeiyou shibai ma?” (Isn’t communism defeated yet?), WS, 4:210; WSZ, pp. 602–605 (originally in *Gongyu* [After work] no. 14, 2 February 1923). The dictatorship of the proletariat was anathema to most anarchists. Bi Xiushao (among others) continued the attack in an eloquent 53-page pamphlet, “Lun wuchan jieji zhuanzheng” (The dictatorship of the proletariat) (Shanghai: Geming Zhoubaoshe, 1928). Bi essentially changed that “dictatorship of the proletariat” was an oxymoron. Real proletarians were interested in freedom, not dictatorship. (I am grateful to Diane Scherer for sending me a copy of this pamphlet.) Cai Wei, in *Wusi shiqi Makesi zhuyi*, pp. 100–102 ff, presents several more examples of anarchist criticism of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In the end, Cai appeared willing to consider all kinds of compromises with political reality for limited but immediate educational improvements, such as vocational schools to produce workers capable of manning the capitalists; factories of which he disapproved in principle. He would tolerate a kind of utilitarianism. Still, he conceived of an education with an internationalist basis. Also in line with his philosophical anarchism, Cai wanted schools to be directed at a district level rather than from the central government. He urged that each student’s individuality be nurtured.

Four years later, as president of Beijing University, Cai encouraged hundreds of flowers to bloom and contend.<sup>53</sup> Cai is known today as a liberal and a humanist, but his administration also owed a great deal to his anarchism.<sup>54</sup> He wrote the statement of goals for the Beida Society to Advance Morality in 1918.<sup>55</sup> Wu Zhihui had been concerned with the corruption of Qing China. Cai faced a new problem: “In the past five or six years in China both the political and economic realms have become extremely corrupt.” But the cure was the same: individual moral effort that would affect society at large.

Anarchism was certainly one of the blossoms that emerged not simply from Cai’s personal beliefs but also from his tolerant administration of the university through the May Fourth era. By the late 1920s, following his forced resignation from Beida and a trip

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<sup>53</sup> This aspect of Cai’s career is covered in Duiker, *Ts’ai Yuan-p’ei*, pp. 53–80; see also Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement*, pp. 47–54.

<sup>54</sup> Chow Tse-tsung, in *The May Fourth Movement*, p. 47, calls Cai “one of the greatest educators and liberals in modern China.” This refers to Cai’s approach to renovating Beida by trying to keep politics out of university decisions. To this end he hired faculty with a wide range of opinions and encouraged students to express themselves. Cai was a liberal in openness and tolerance, in the value he placed on the individual, and also in his belief that truth comes out of intellectual ferment. Nonetheless, Cai’s anarchist beliefs in mutual aid and liberty remained important stimuli to his thinking.

<sup>55</sup> “Beijing daxue jindehui zhi zhiqu shu,” *Cai Yuanpei xiansheng quanji*, pp. 469–479.

to Europe, Cai joined Wu, Li, and Zhang Jingjian as the four elder statesmen of the Guomindang. In 1926 he urged a kind of corporatist approach, adding, "One can only say in general that ... the Mutual Aid of Kropotkin will be of more value to us than the class struggle of Marx."<sup>56</sup> He thus joined the anticommunist purge of 1927.

In sum, the first generation of anarchists learned the value of order (generally, *zhi'an*) during the long years of political collapse that followed the Revolution of 1911, precisely because of their interest in cultural and social change. Yet here, too, 1911 was the true dividing line. The early anarchists no longer wanted a political revolution after 1911, if, as anarchists, they were ever supposed to have done so. The reason was that they no longer truly wanted a social revolution. They wanted the kind of change that they had despised as anarchists—real change, but safe and gradual. They had always recognized the possibility of a revolution that might come without violence, and later that was the only kind of revolution they could countenance. Cynically, Guomindang China gave them a living and freedom of intellect. Idealistically, the only road they saw heading toward the Datong first went through a long stretch of cultural changes—Puritan resolutions like giving up gambling and expensive funerals, egalitarian rules like having only one wife and living without servants, and a modern faith in science and industry.

Li continued to praise decentralization, Wu looked to technology, and Cai trusted that mutual aid could fuel the journey of progress. Perhaps they feared that as political revolution had failed to remake China, so anarchism, which must begin as political revolution, was fated never to arrive. But they did not want to risk another revolution, another failure. They chose to pursue revolution by redefining it; they engaged in the plausible myth

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<sup>56</sup> Cited in Duiker, *Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei*, p. 83.

Marxism.<sup>49</sup> "From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs" was apparently an afterthought for Karl Marx but a basic belief of most of the first members of the CCP. Nonetheless, anarchism became defined in opposition to communism, in China as in the West. The famous exchange between Ou Shengbai and Chen Duxiu, reprinted in its repetitive entirety in *New Youth* in 1921, established the terms of debate.

The two groups were rivals for adherents, for resources, and ultimately for the central place in history. On the one hand, to a great degree, they shared a common agenda, even in effect altering the original European differences between the doctrines to make the one more like the other: utopian Marxists met organized, class-conscious anarchists. Yet, on the other hand, irreconcilable differences remained. Moreover, the struggle was not equal. The intellectual tools of the anarchists included ideas about the evolution of societies, human nature, and human potentiality for which the evidence remained ambiguous. But the Marxist intellectual analysis in China led directly to effective practice: linking communist organization with worker and then peasant movements, in order to give these movements a revolutionary thrust, and the use of trained armies. In some cases, especially in labor organization, the anarchists were there first. The struggle between anarchists and communists was by no means limited to the intellectual sphere. But an-

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<sup>49</sup> See Maurice Meisner, *Marxism, Maoism, and Utopianism*, though Meisner tends to focus on the development of Maoism rather than early Chinese Marxism. Arif Dirlik, in *The Origins of Chinese Communism*, takes a slightly different tack. Though I do not think he would deny that China's first Marxists possessed utopian hopes, he emphasizes that China's first *communists* were frustrated with the problems facing the radical movement as May Fourth politicization began to become attenuated in 1920. "The basic contradiction was between the peculiar features of May Fourth socialism: the socialist promise of social transformation, and the reified intellectualism of May Fourth socialists" (p. 184). For some radicals, anarchism and the other forms of radical activity no longer offered a sufficient basis for action. Cai Wei, in *Wusi shiqi Makesi zhuyi*, ch. 5, offers a useful overview of the debates of the 1920s between anarchists and communists.

could be antimilitarist without being a pacifist, for example. The times demanded broad-based armed struggle against the warlords. Ba Jin was clearly urging anarchist support for the United Front back in China (before the April purges). Seeking universal happiness, however, might still take back seat to class struggle for the time being. Indeed, class struggle represented the self-defense of the proletariat as anti-imperialist efforts represented the self-defense of colonized people. Ba Jin's sympathy with the communist line is evident. Above all, anarchism was the result of concrete historical circumstances, and for Ba Jin anarchism in China was a product of the mass movement of the day, which had nothing to do with the ancient formulations of Laozi or Zhuangzi.

## MARXISM, CHINESE COMMUNISM, AND ANARCHISM

Chinese anarchism and Marxism acted dialectically in the 1920s to influence each other's formulations. As anarchist language and concepts fed the currents of May Fourth radicalism, anarchism in turn grew increasingly receptive to party organization, though not in the form of Leninist centralization. Anarchism had for some time taught class analysis and discussed the role of class struggle in revolution, of course, though perhaps not very rigorously. Some anarchists even accepted Marxism's particular emphasis on the proletariat, but never its right to form a dictatorship. Although Chinese communism emerged largely out of something that might almost be called anarcho-Marxism, and was indeed called anarcho-communism, by the mid-1920s the split between the two groups was deep and bitter. Anarcho-Marxism here refers not only to the presence of anarchists among the founders of the Chinese Communist Party but more importantly to the utopian origins of Chinese

that the Northern Expedition was in fact itself a revolutionary act, that *minsheng* had substance, and so on. In a ritualization of rhetoric, Wu professed to find that Sun Yat-sen had encompassed both communism and anarchism in his Three People's Principles. And Li talked of a fourth stage of revolution. The Guomindang offered such hopes then. But by the 1930s such talk was becoming indeed empty words. Social reform and modernization of any sort were falling behind. Anticommunism was the fuel the former anarchists burned.

But meanwhile a new generation of anarchists had begun to propagate the faith.

## CHAPTER 9. *The Second Generation of Chinese Anarchists*

Our country is both poor and blank: the poor own nothing, and the blank is like a sheet of white paper. It is good to be poor, good for making revolution; when it is blank, one can do anything with it, such as writing compositions or drawing designs; a sheet of white paper is good to write compositions on...

In making revolution, it should be like striking the iron when it is hot, one revolution to be followed by another, and the revolution must yance without interruption. As the Hunanese would say: “Straw sandals have no shape, but they look more and more like sandals as one knits on.”

—Mao Zedong, 1958<sup>1</sup>

Marxism consists of thousands of truths, but they all boil down to the one sentence, “It is right to rebel.” For thousands of years, it had been said that, it was right to oppress, it was right to exploit, and it was wrong to rebel. This old verdicts was only reversed with the appearance of Marxism. This is a great contribution. It was through struggle that the proletariat learned this

<sup>1</sup> Speech at the Supreme State Conference; tr. follows *Chinese Law and Government*, 1(4) (Winter 1968–69): 10–14.

theft). Indeed, the masses needed education, but society’s schools simply fostered exploitation.<sup>46</sup> Science had hitherto benefited only the capitalists; scientists themselves lived far better than the common people. Yet science itself was not to blame. The people would seize control of their fate through a self-education movement, thus ultimately producing scholarship and science dedicated to social betterment.

Passionate anger over injustice continued to fuel much of the movement. Guangdong anarchists declared,

We ordinary people, all of us everywhere are completely fettered and chained, and this has been so since the beginning of human history— too long! Too long! Ordinary people simply lack status in society. They are the slaves, the machines; they merely obey without resisting. Alas! Why is it that the human race—and we are all human beings—tolerates this kind of inequality?<sup>47</sup>

The roots of the problem are state and government, private property and wage labor, religion, and the family. The Guangdong group surrounding *The People’s Bell* from 1922 to 1927 was influenced by former associates of Liu Shifu.

Anarchists remained utopian thinkers seeking an inclusive revolution, but Ba Jin denied that anarchists were empty-headed idealists. Writing from France in early 1927, he was nonetheless concerned enough to urge them to be practical and flexible.<sup>48</sup> One

<sup>46</sup> This line of argument is expressed, for example, by the Shanghai-based *The Masses* journal, in “Chuban *Minzhong* banyuekan xuanyan” (Declaration of principles for the bi-monthly publication of *The Masses*), WS 4:313–314 (originally in *Minzhong* no. 13, September 1925). Its members included Li Jianmin, Li Shading, Wei Huilin, and Ba Jin.

<sup>47</sup> “*Minzhong* xuanyan” (Declarations of principles of the *Peoples Bell*), WS, 4:248 (originally in *Minzhong* no. 1, 1 July 1922).

<sup>48</sup> “Wuzhengfu zhuyi yu shiji wenti” (Anarchism and practical problems), WSZ, pp. 830–838.

and work-study organizations, though of course in the context of ongoing revolution.

Revolution itself was now generally seen to be in the hands of the workers and peasants. Indeed, the task of anarchists might be not to lead but simply to join and help preexisting grassroots organizations. In terms of labor, for example, having helped workers to gain wage concessions, the anarchists would be in a position to teach them gradually about the fundamental necessity of overthrowing the government.<sup>44</sup> In this view, assassination and riots were useful propaganda but could not be a fundamental part of the movement. They should be used sparingly since they were insufficient to make a social revolution and could be misconstrued as well. Strikes and tax resistance movements were also insufficient by themselves but even so were genuine revolutionary techniques that would help lead to a full-fledged popular revolution.

Propaganda itself nonetheless remained central, because it was felt a variety of incorrect theories were hindering progress.<sup>45</sup> Militarists used the population theory of Malthus and the struggle for survival of Darwin to justify their killing, as opposed to Kropotkin's mutual aid. Similarly, capitalists used the free competition notion of the physiocrats and Adam Smith to justify their exploitation, as opposed to Proudhon's definition of property (as

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<sup>44</sup> Anarchists were among the first Chinese intellectuals to become interested in labor as a social force. The journal *Labor (Laodong)* was founded in 1918 under Wu Zhihui's leadership; *Laborers (Laodongzhe)* was founded in 1920 by the younger anarchists Liang Bingxian and Liu Shixin—see Chen Mingqiu (Ming K. Chan), “‘Zhishi yu laodong jiehe’ zhi jiaoyu shiyan,” pp. 62–64. In 1925 anarchists wanted anarchism to become the basis of the labor movement, which they saw as part of the Chinese revolution. The movement should therefore be organized along principles of free association rather than political factions—see “Kuli” (Coolie), “Zhongguo wuzhengfutuan gangling caoan” (Draft provisions for Chinese anarchist groups), *WS*, 4:269–270; *WSZ*, pp. 712–716 (originally in *Minzhong* no. 13, September 1925).

<sup>45</sup> “Guangzhou Zhenshe xuanyan” (Declaration of the Truth Society of Guangzhou), *WS*, 4:300–302 (originally in *Minzhong* no. 6, addendum, 25 September 1923).

truth, and Marx drew the conclusion. And from this truth there follows resistance, struggle, the fight for socialism.

—*Mao Zedong, 1962*<sup>2</sup>

The years from the Revolution of 1911 through the 1920s were the heyday of Chinese anarchism, especially from the New Culture movement of the mid-1910s to about 1925. These years saw a good deal of organizational activity, especially anarcho-syndicalism, as well as ideological refinement. Yet after the long years of war with Japan, Guo- mindang decadence, and civil war, by 1949 most of the young people who would have considered themselves anarchists in the 1920s in Shanghai, Guangzhou, Beijing, and provincial cities welcomed the liberation proffered by the Chinese Communist Party. Some joined the party.<sup>3</sup> It appears, however, that perhaps as many as half of the leading anarchist authors left China after 1949. Huang Lingshuang, Liang Bingxian, Wei Huilin, and Li Shading ended their days in Hong Kong, Taiwan, or the United States. Ou Shengbai was considered a traitor during the war, and he died in the New Territories in 1973.<sup>4</sup> Others stayed in China, often in fairly sensitive positions, becoming university teachers, journalists, and editors. The philosopher Zhu Qianzhi became a

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in David Milton, Nancy Milton, and Franz Schurmann, eds., *People's China* (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1974), p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> Zheng Peigang felt that the tendency among young anarchists was to support CCP efforts; *WSZ*, p. 971.

<sup>4</sup> *WSZ*, p. 358; Lucien Bianco and Yves Chevrier, eds., *La Chine: Dictionnaire Biographique du Mouvement Ouvrier International* (Paris: Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, n.d.), pp. 488–489. My account of anarchist authors cannot be considered statistically meaningful because I could not check the later careers of most anarchist authors, much less followers, nor could I ensure a random sample. Nonetheless, it makes sense that deeply committed anarchists would feel threatened by the communist regime, both as critics of Marxism and as independent intellectuals; younger anarchists, finding in communism an effective revolutionary tool, proved more adaptable.

Maoist.<sup>5</sup> Jing Dingcheng, who was perhaps never a very strict anarchist, continued to hold political posts in Shaanxi in the 1950s.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, anarchists had been among the first Chinese to cooperate with the Comintern representatives sent to China in the early 1920s and to aid Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu in their first attempts to establish communist organizations in Beijing and Shanghai. It was Huang Lingshuang who introduced the Soviet representatives around Guangzhou in 1920.<sup>7</sup> It is not generally recognized that the founding members of the Chinese Communist Party at its organization meeting of 1921 in Shanghai included anarchists. This does not mean that the CCP was uncommunist; rather, it is simply an indication of the appeal of anarchism at the time, and perhaps of how desperately the Comintern wanted an organization in place. As the CCP found its identity anarchists left or were ultimately expelled. But the two groups found they shared a great deal.

This chapter takes a fairly cursory overview of the intellectual developments of Chinese anarchism through the 1920s. Most of the major themes had already been developed by the first generation of Chinese anarchists, but new historical circumstances demanded new approaches as well. Chinese anarchism became less uniform than ever. Hundreds of short-lived anarchist groups surfaced in China's major and provincial cities in the 1910s and 1920s, usually leaving behind little more than a few ephemeral pamphlets and the police order shutting them down. Publications included reprints from *New Century* and *Natural Justice*, new translations, news items, and original commentary. Organiza-

<sup>5</sup> Lung-kee Sun, "Mystical Aspects of May Fourth Thinking," *Republican China*, (November 1986), 12(i):66, n. 95. Sun presents a synopsis of Zhu's intellectual development that can put his political anarchism into better perspective, pp. 49–57.

<sup>6</sup> WSZ, p. 914; for Jing, see above, ch. 2.

<sup>7</sup> See inter alia Fan Tianjun, in Gao Jun et al., eds., *Wuzhengfu zhuyi zai Zhongguo*, pp. 524–525. The prominent role played by anarchists in the early Chinese communist movement is a recurring motif of Arif Dirlik's *The Origins of Chinese Communism*.

1889–1968) claimed that the natural course of human nature was to follow anarchist morality (equality, fraternity, liberty), as opposed to the useless old morality of filial piety, loyalty, and fatalism (accepting one's lot in life). The question for Qu was not one of the prerequisites for self-government but of unblocking natural human nature, through education. Immorality and criminality were simply creations of the government-supported system of private property. Of course the poor steal from the rich, but the real robbers are the officials and the rich. Left to themselves, the people are honest.<sup>41</sup>

While Qu's naive optimism is a form of modern Chinese evolutionism, on at least one level much of his reasoning is a continuation of Neo-Confucian discourse. The metaphor of blockage (*shang'ai*) is a definitive Neo-Confucian trope. The significance of the natural seems to be that of a force that can be tapped but that lacks any implication of inevitability. At the same time, however, Qu knew that anarchism was not just empty ideals, nor was it dependent on reaching a certain level of production, precisely because it "is absolutely and truly in accord with the results of scientific experience." Huang Lingshuang followed Qu's emphasis on evolution, pointing out in 1919 that knowledge (science) and morality evolve just as life forms do. An appropriate system was needed for the new, improved society.<sup>42</sup> Huang combined progress with the traditional-sounding desire to "encourage morality and improve learning."<sup>43</sup> Anarchist notions of proper and efficacious means remained the same: publishing

<sup>41</sup> Taijun, "Fule Sengjun" (Reply to Mr. Seng), WS, 4:167–168; WSZ, PP- 350-353-

<sup>42</sup> Lingshuang, "Benzhi xuanyan" (Statement of principles), WS, 4:183–186; WSZ, pp. 381–382 (originally in *Jinhua* no. 1, p. 20, January 1919). The Jinshe (Evolution Society) was essentially a successor to the Truth Society and also an attempt, according to Diane Scherer, to forge a nationwide anarchist federation (personal communication, 27 May 1989).

<sup>43</sup> Lingshuang, "Da Siming jun" (Reply to Mr. Siming), WS, 4:170–171; WSZ, pp. 354–355 (originally in *Ziyou lu* no. 1, July 1917).

Republican and democratic institutions were obviously unable to tame the beast. This was in part because, as Ye also noted, the state possessed noncoercive resources: schools, churches, and judges (he appears to have understood criminal law not in the sense of enforcing approved behavior but of defining criminality). These three hegemonic categories seem to have been for Ye essentially irrational: the opposite of anarchist rationality.

But had not the state evolved out of society in the course of history as an adaptation to particular conditions? Ye might have admitted the point and tried simply to prove that society had progressed beyond the need or desire to retain the state. However, he claimed that in all its forms government was artificial, directly opposed to humanity's natural social instinct, mutual aid. Ye returned to the problem of human nature. With superior machinery and social organizations, as Wu Zhihui had said over a decade before, an anarchist society of abundance would abolish all division of labor. Laziness and crime would virtually die out. Morality would survive and even flourish without state backing, for it is constantly defined in the natural evolution of social life. Already, mutual aid and self-sacrifice are seen in nature. Thus Ye Lin added his voice: dry, reasonable, and wildly hopeful, to the angry young chorus calling for an end to the warlords, the capitalists, and the gentry.

Among anarchists proper, members of the Truth Society (*Shishe*) founded the *Freedom Record* (*Ziyou lu*) in 1917 with Li Shizeng's encouragement. Centered at Beijing University, and without a formal head, Huang Lingshuang, Qu Taijun, Ou Shengbai, Yuan Zhenying, and Hua Lin dealt with the standard range of questions facing anarchists. They saw these questions in the context of world evolution.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, they cited human nature to rebut the argument that the people are not ready for self-government. Qu Taijun (Qu Ji,

<sup>40</sup> "Shishe yiqu shu" (The intentions of the Truth Society), WSZ, pp. 349–350; and Zhang Yunhou et al., eds., *Wusi shiqi de shetuan 4:162* (hereafter WS; originally in *Ziyou lu* no. 1, July 1917).

tion was loose, party discipline anathema. And finances were a problem assuring most groups of short lives. Yet if one group fell, another, perhaps largely comprised of the same people or perhaps new converts altogether, would rise to replace it. Guangzhou, Beijing, Chengdu, and Shanghai were seldom without an active and organized anarchist movement; Nanjing, Tianjin, Changsha, Hankou, Taiyuan, and other cities also saw them, as did Chinese communities in North America, Europe, and Southeast Asia.

If there was a pattern to becoming an anarchist in the 1910s and 1920s, it was of a youth in his mid-teens to early twenties coining across a pamphlet by Kropotkin or Liu Shifu. Then he might meet anarchists in the city, or perhaps in France through the Frugal-Study program. This was the basic course taken by Ba Jin and Bi Xiushao. Zhu Qianzhi recalled that he encountered anarchism after he enrolled in Beijing University in 1917, and he became an anarchist after Hu Shi attacked the doctrine in the "problems and isms" debate of 1919.<sup>8</sup> Others, such as Zheng Peigang, Huang Lingshuang, and Liu Shixin, were swept along by Liu Shifu's magnetic personality.<sup>9</sup> Ba Jin recounted how deeply his reading of Kropotkin's "An Appeal to the Young" affected him:

I had never thought that writing like this still existed. Everything in it was what I had always wanted to say but never been able to put clearly. It was all so obvious, so reasonable, so eloquent. And moreover, with such a stirring style it was easy to set a 15-year-old child's mind on fire. I put the little pamphlet by my bed and every night took it down. I read it all with a trembling heart. While I read, I cried, and after I cried, I laughed. An epigram of sorts was appended at the end of the

<sup>8</sup> Zhu's 1956 interview is reprinted in Gao Jun et al., *Wuzhengfu zhuyi zai Zhongguo*, pp. 507–512. For this famous "debate," see Grieder, *Intellectuals and the State in Modern China*, pp. 326–331.

<sup>9</sup> See their reminiscences in WSZ, pp. 939–971 and 926–939, respectively.

book which said something to this effect: "There is no greater pleasure in this world than to read forbidden books behind a closed door on a snowy night." I felt this axiom to be absolutely real and true.<sup>10</sup>

In the years immediately following the Revolution of 1911, Liu Shifu effectively represented Chinese anarchism, and after his early death in 1915 his followers, though devoted to his memory, inevitably found themselves moving in new directions. Liu's followers do not appear to have maintained his consuming interest in personal morality, and the urban anarchists emerging from about 1917 were in general part of the New Culture movement. A kind of secularization was taking place; anarchism became a political philosophy, almost a feat of social engineering, as much or more than it was a personal utopian faith. Through the early 1920s, even after the differences between anarchism and Marxism, and anarchists and communists, had been clarified, the two groups each tried to build the urban workers' movement, especially in Guangzhou and Shanghai. Personal ties bound some of the rivals together in the still small world of Chinese intellectuals and activists. Yuan Zhenying, one of the anarchists who helped found the CCP, recalled the era as charged with the feeling that the Datong could be realized and "true communism" achieved.<sup>11</sup>

This optimistic and cooperative spirit did not last, but anarcho-syndicalism continued to be a real force among urban workers until the clampdown on all organizing efforts that followed the breakup of the First United Front between the Guomindang and the CCP in 1927. At this point, whatever the new generation of anarchists thought of Wu Zhihui and Li Shizeng, the two GMD stalwarts protected their radical young friends from the White Terror in 1927–

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<sup>10</sup> "Wode younian" (My youth), reprinted in WSZ, p. 1003; see also Lang, *Pa Chin And His Writings*, pp. 43–45.

<sup>11</sup> WSZ, p. 974.

in substance he wrote as a believer. Ye emphasized the science of anarchism's claims: biological laws are analogous to social trends. In Kropotkinist fashion, Ye counseled that groups, not individual organisms, adapted to changing environments. Thus the society that encouraged individual abilities (as it taught the lessons of interdependence) was the society that would survive. In contrast to the firm scientific roots of anarchism, Ye believed, natural rights (*tainfu de quanli*) theory was utopian and metaphysical. It may be that the association of *nature* and *Heaven* in the Chinese character *tian* makes the notion sound less plausible in Chinese than the familiar phrase seems in English. Nonetheless, the main point for Ye was that natural rights theorists believed the state had a necessary responsibility to guarantee these rights, whereas in fact the state was nothing but one form of social organization, historically contingent. Only society is real.

Ye did not believe in abstractions that transcended society. Morality was ultimately a matter of society's needs and conventions; moral evolution depends not on individual reform but on the amelioration of social conditions.<sup>39</sup> Ye here finally stepped away from the Neo-Confucian emphasis on the moral nature of the individual in society and approached questions of change wholly at the level of society. Like the Marxists, he focused on questions of living standards, structural change, and fundamental social and economic reorganization. Yet the fulcrum of social change could not, for Ye, be the state because the chief problem facing society was precisely the aggrandizing nature of governments. While Ye noted his agreement with the economic reforms promoted by the socialists, for example, he criticized them for further concentrating state powers. He also agreed with the fundamental Marxist analysis of the contemporary state as the representative of property holders. But the implication Ye drew was the governments were in their very essence organs of oppression.

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 446.



struggle, dissolution of the family—for larger unities are taking hold.

Gao Yihan, a prominent political scientist at Beida, though considering himself more of a liberal than a radical or anarchist, nonetheless accepted a number of essentially anarchist premises. On the level of the individual, Gao linked liberty to the capacity for self-direction.<sup>36</sup> Gao's *zizhi* (autonomy, self-control), while owning something to the New-Confucian practice of self-cultivation (*xiushen*), strongly suggested that the goal of self-direction was liberty. Liberty as moral capacity was perhaps emphasized in some strains of traditional political discourse, but Gao specifically defined liberty in terms of individual will. The individual who attempted to live only selfishly (*xiaoji*) could never achieve liberty, which would come through self-direction to those with a sense of the larger community (*daji*). Although there was a conservative thrust to Gao's interpretation of the individual, another essay put the political point quite clearly: "The nation is not humanity's final goal."<sup>37</sup> Here Gao warned against the aggrandizing state; he felt that nationalism threatened to crush the individual. On the contrary, Gao urged Chinese to recognize the truth of modern political thought, which "considers the state to be simply an institution, an agency or instrumentality by means of which the collective ends of society may be realized, instead of itself being an end."

Another *New Tide* author put anarchism on a philosophical basis.<sup>38</sup> Ye Lin's approach was objective and his tone scholarly, but

<sup>36</sup> "Zizhi yu ziyou" (Autonomy [or self-control] and liberty), *Xin qingnian* (New Youth) vol. 1, no. 5 (January 1916).

<sup>37</sup> "Geuojia fei rensheng zhi guisulun," *Xin qingnian* vol. 1, no. 4 (15 December 1915).

<sup>38</sup> Ye Lin, "Wuqiangquan zhuyi de genju' ji 'wuqiangquan de shehui' lueshuo" (A brief analysis of "the basis for antiauthoritarianism" and "antiauthoritarian societies"), *Xinchao* vol. 2, no. 3; reprint 2:436–466. Ye made it clear that his subject was anarchism, the term *anti-authoritarian* (*wuqiangquan*) chosen specifically to satisfy censors' objections.

1928 and even found jobs for some of them.<sup>12</sup> Chiang Kai-shek clearly saw anarchism as a lesser threat than the rapidly growing and increasingly effective organization of the CCP; Chiang contented himself for the most part with the suppression of anarchist journals.

## LIU SHIFU AND THE CHINESE CONSCIENCE

after the Revolution of 1911 and especially after the failure of the second revolution in 1913 the mantle of Chinese anarchism was assumed by Liu Shifu (1884–1915).<sup>13</sup> Liu was a stern critic of his predecessors. He condemned the compromises made by the Society to Advance Morality (though his own Conscience Society allowed "part-time" members). He attacked the belief, now extolled by Wu Zhihui, that China was somehow not ready for anarchism. However, as Liu himself acknowledged, he depended on the pioneering work of the Paris-based anarchists for his own studies. Liu was from a fairly well-to-do family in Guangdong and had been

<sup>12</sup> Zheng Peigang, in *WSZ*, pp. 969–970. For a typical, quite measured criticism of Wu, see Jia Wei, "Wu Zhihui de wuzhengfu zhuyi" (Wu Zhihui's anarchism), originally in *Minzhong* (The masses) no. 14–15 (1 October 1926); reprinted in *WSZ*, pp. 790–794.

<sup>13</sup> Liu's personal name was Sifu, but in 1912 he dropped his family name and adopted the name Shifu ("father-master," a Buddhist term); properly he should be called either Liu Sifu or Shifu but I have found it convenient to combine the two. This sketch is based largely on Krebs, "Liu Ssu-fu and Chinese Anarchism 1905–1915," and Pik-chong Agnes Won Chan, "Liu Shifu (1884–1915): A Chinese Anarchist and the Radicalization of Chinese Thought" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1979). See also Dirlík and Krebs, "Socialism and Anarchism in Early Republican China, *Modern China*"; Hazama Naoki, "Ryu Shifuku to 'Minsei' Tamagawa Nobuaki, *Chugoku no kuroi hata*, pp. 132–160; Guo Zhanbo, "Liu Shifu," *Jindai Zhongguo sixiangshi* (Hongkong: Longmen shudian, 1974). His revolutionary career is sketched in Feng Ziyou, *Gemingyishi*, 2:207–210. Liu's writings are available in *Shifu wencun* (Literary heritage of Shifu).

educated in the classics, becoming a *xiucai* in 1898. He was also influenced by the late Qing Buddhist revival and the interest of *kaozheng* philology in the unorthodox “hundred schools” from the Zhou. This brought him to the national essence (*guocui*) school and its concern with non-Confucian Chinese culture. Liu joined the revolution and the Tongmenghui, like so many others, as a student in Japan. He returned to China in 1906 ready to assassinate those who were blocking the revolution, but the police swooped down when he blew off his left hand trying to make a bomb and he spent the next two years in jail, where he read *New Century* and *Natural Justice*, among other revolutionary tracts. However, Liu publicly proclaimed himself an anarchist only after the revolution. He resumed contact with the Tongmenghui and plotted assassinations after his release in 1909.

Liu began his anarchist career in 1912 largely by republishing collections of articles from *New Century*.<sup>14</sup> Five thousand copies each of at least four volumes of anthologies were published. In all, Liu claimed to have published tens of thousands of pamphlets.<sup>15</sup> His journal *Minsheng* (*Voice of the People*, originally *Huiming lu*, *Cock-crow Record*) was inaugurated in the summer of 1913. Writing at the height of Yuan Shikai’s counterrevolution, Liu held that the political and military crisis only demonstrated China’s need for anarchism.

As long as people have a government over them, they cannot possess true freedom. The Guomindang now calls for Yuan’s resignation, accusing him of destroying the Republic and plotting revolt against the nation. But these accusations fall within the purview of nationalism (*guojia zhuyi*). ... Even if we got rid of Yuan,

<sup>14</sup> E.g., *Xin Shiji congshu*; these are listed in *Minsheng* no. 30 (15 March 1921) (Esperanto-English ed.), p. 4. See also Krebs, pp. 230, n2, 270.

<sup>15</sup> “Fulu Shifu da Fan Fu shu” (Addendum: Shifu’s reply to Fan Fu), *Minsheng* no. 5 (n April 1914), p. 10.

their separate identities and unite—in China: Han, Manchu, Mongolian, Muslim, and Tibetan. Individuals had certain rights and freedoms and at the same time a shared nature (*gongxin*). China had to be unified. Government was necessary only to provide the stability necessary for equality and mutual aid. For the future, Li saw a historical progress to higher levels of organization. He had high hopes for the League of Nations but looked to internal forces to generate the federation of larger, racially complex states. Then the Americas, Europe, and Asia would each unite. Finally, they would join together and abolish all racial and national boundaries.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile, the time of liberation has arrived:

The people demand liberation from the state; localities demand liberation from the center; colonies demand liberation from the colonizer; small, weak races demand liberation from larger, strong races; peasants demand liberation from landlords; workers demand liberation from capitalists; women demand liberation from men; children demand liberation from their elders.<sup>35</sup>

Li’s ultimate vision here is clearly an anarchist one. He felt that humans possessed the capacity to govern themselves directly, preserving their individual freedoms within a cooperative context. Like many, Li felt the appeal of Kropotkin’s mutual aid, both as an ethical ideal and as a way to dilute the Darwinian notion of ferocious struggle while still remaining within evolutionary thinking. All humanity was progressing on the same road, and one need not fear the forms liberation takes—local autonomy, class

pp. 11–14, found that Li was fundamentally opposed to anarchism. But there was a libertarian side to Li, not to mention his voluntarism and populism. Meisner himself pointed out that Li “tended to view with suspicion the intrusion of political power upon the ‘natural’ condition of man’s social life.” Arif Dirlik, in *The Origins of Chinese Communism...*, pp. 25–26, concludes that Li’s first discussions of Marxism and the Russian Revolution, in 1918, “were infused with the vocabulary of anarchism.” Dirlik suggests that Li’s ideas may have been influenced by anarchism as well, though this remains speculative.

<sup>34</sup> *Xinchao*(i February 1919), i(i): 155.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

pression. Utopianism, even if masked, remained near the heart of much Chinese political thinking in the following decades, including Marxist discourse.

## NEW CULTURE ANARCHISM

Anarchism was a major part of the New Culture (1915-) and May Fourth (1919-) movements. Anarchist journals flourished; leading general interest magazines treated the doctrine with considerable respect and published articles by anarchists. Prominent intellectuals such as Li Dazhao, though already on his way to Marxism, displayed an anarchist strain. Indeed, his initial understanding of the Russian Revolution was couched in essentially anarchist terms:

Bolshevism is the ideology of the Russian Bolsheviki. What kind of ideology is it? ... There will be no congress, no parliament, no president, no prime minister, no cabinet, no legislature, and no ruler. There will be only the joint soviets of labor, which will decide all matters. All enterprises will belong to those who work therein... In the course of such a world mass movement, all those dregs of history which can impede the progress of the new movement—such as emperors, nobles, warlords, bureaucrats, militarism, capitalism—will certainly be destroyed as though struck by a thunderbolt.<sup>32</sup>

Writing in *New Tide* (*Xinchao*, or Renaissance) the following year, Li defined the Datong in terms of both individual liberation and community solidarity.<sup>33</sup> Peoples could simultaneously keep

<sup>32</sup> “The Victory of Bolshevism,” tr. in Ssu-yu Teng and John K. Fairbank, *China’s Response to the West* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), pp. 247–248.

<sup>33</sup> *Xinchao* (1 February 1919), i(i):i5i–155. Maurice Meisner, in *Li Ta-chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967),

would not someone else like Yuan rise up and replace him?

[True] socialism rejects all presidents and all governments. Why, in the case of an autocratic president, blame all evil on Mr. Yuan? Our goal must be that one day every last Emperor, king, nobleman and president in the world will be thrown down... The origin of Yuan Shikai lies in political competition... Politicians say that parliaments represent the people. But if the National Assembly truly represented the people, then in order to prevent disaster for the people, it ought to pass a motion to impeach Yuan Shikai.<sup>16</sup>

Despite his last sentence, and although he had been a loyal and stalwart member of the Tongmenghui for six years, Liu consistently refused to cooperate with other political or military responses to Yuan. For he saw that any political system led to dictatorship.

When the success of the revolution became clear in early 1912, Liu and his lover and a few comrades had retired to West Lake in the lower Yangzi River valley. There in the serene hills they established the Conscience Society (*Xinshe*) and considered how to fulfill the revolution. Its twelve admonitions were inspired by an allegiance to anarchism that was not made explicit. Individual perfection was again related to social improvement; anarchism was assumed but not proclaimed. Specifically proscribed for members were meat, liquor, tobacco, servants, riding in rickshaws, marriage, family names, becoming an official, becoming a delegate to an assembly, joining a political party, serving in the military, and join-

<sup>16</sup> “Zhengzhi zhi zhandou” (Military politics), *Huiming lu* no. 1 (20 August 1913) > PP. 8–10.

ing a religion.<sup>17</sup> The Conscience Society thus bested the Society to Advance Morality and the Society for Social Reform by a hair in the iconoclasm race.

Today we live in an unjust (*bu zhengdang*) society. We are contaminated by every kind of false morality and evil institution. Our actions and our conduct are the unconscious result of daily contact with what is wrong (*feili*). But every individual possesses a conscience. If we recognize clearly what is wrong, then how can we tolerate our own willful transgressions? ... The end of all false morality and evil institutions is fairly close.<sup>18</sup>

The individual had to be as pure as the society he hoped to create. Liu would allow no compromise with politics. Nor would he tolerate cooperation in modes of oppression—whereas the older anarchists urged respect for workers, Liu proscribed the use of rickshaws and sedan chairs altogether. Finally, he implicitly condemned any toleration for the traditional family, unlike the earlier anarchists, he abjured formal marriage to live with a lover, the teacher Ding Xiangtian, and he gave up his surname.

Basing his small group in Guangzhou near his hometown, Liu established the Cock-crow Studio (*Huiming xueshe*) and the Esperanto Study Society. Guangzhou was a bustling metropolis which lacked both the cool eye of the government censors in Beijing and the limited freedoms offered by the foreign concessions in Shanghai. Even after Liu's death, the city remained fairly hospitable to the anarchists because of the old 1911 comradeship between Liu and the military strongman Chen Jiongmeng.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The Conscience Society's declaration may be found under "Xinshe yiqu shu" (Declaration of intent of the Conscience Society), *Minsheng* no. 14 (13 June 1914), p. 12; see Krebs, pp. 246 ff.

<sup>18</sup> "Xinshe yiqu shu," p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> According to Liu Shixin, in *WSZ*, p. 935. There were personal ties between Chen and some of the other anarchists as well, and of course Chen at various

commoner; so-called dogs all possess the Buddha-nature."<sup>29</sup> Like Liu Shipei, the author deeply mined classical texts for notions of egalitarianism and brotherhood. "The old philosophers still have something to teach us."<sup>30</sup>

But how was this ideal to be achieved? The root of the matter lay in one's learning to be independent—again, a common theme not unique to the anarchists. International socialist parties would then overthrow the various nations. Gradually the functions of government would be decreased as people learned to govern themselves (*zizhi*). Then contracts freely agreed upon would replace the legal system (an idea of great appeal at the time), until, in this view, they too could be replaced by the human Way (*rendao*), "Humans have their Way as all things have their natures, as apples fall down." It will remain after all that is artificial has been abandoned. In this ultimate stage the human Way is that of "pure reason," and "real liberty, real equality, and real love" mark the Datong.<sup>31</sup> The article modestly concluded that civilization and progress would not necessarily then cease, but that it is beyond our present knowledge to foretell further. Taixu's three negations overlapped with Zhang Binglin's five negations of 1907 (no government, no homes, no humans, no life, no world), though they sounded rather more reasonable. With Taixu, as with Zhang and even Liu Shipei, it is impossible to believe that the use of traditional vocabulary is simply designed to convey modern sociopolitical ideals. Rather, it reflects certain, perhaps largely latent, elements of the traditional value system, especially its universalism.

Most Chinese anarchists would later abjure this kind of blatant utopianism, even without the mystical overtones. But they still shared a faith in social evolution, a sense of the perfectibility of the individual, and a determination to rid the entire world of op-

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234.

especially appealing. He found that socialism was “premised on the nation” whereas anarchism was “premised on the world.”<sup>26</sup> Taixu complained that socialism was meager even as a first step: it did not lead to real social improvement but would tend to increase government authority. Only anarchism recognized the intrinsic evil of social structures and took responsibility for the entire human race. Anarchism encouraged self-sacrifice and would help people escape their respective hells into the heaven of equality, liberty, and happiness.<sup>27</sup> The religious metaphors do not lessen Taixu’s basically this-worldly orientation. Yet his emphasis on the totalistic nature of the evil of the present system, his impatience with reformist socialism, and his respect for self-sacrifice probably owe something to his Buddhism; Taixu not only despairs over China’s situation but also distrusts the world. There is a note of pessimism in his writing unusual for the times.

Taixu also published a call for three negations: no religion, no family, no government.<sup>28</sup> In itself, this did not go much beyond *New Century* iconoclasm; the essay logically derived the three negatives from freedom, equality, and love (*qin'ai*). Its author also taught that religions represent superstition and outmoded customs. The family represents private or selfish interest. However, the reasoning, or at least the language, behind the author’s attack on government was new. The implication of the proposition that all people are equal is that a government can only be composed of ordinary people. As one who uses force (*qiangquan*) to rob others is a thief, so government by its use of force is a thief. “If government is abolished, then each person will be his or her own government and each will be a

<sup>26</sup> “Shehuidang yu Zhongguo shehuidang zhi bamianguan” (The eight faces of the Socialist Party and the Chinese Socialist Party), in WSZ, p. 226 (originally in “Shehui shijie” [Socialist World], no. 5, November 1912).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

<sup>28</sup> “Sanwu zhuyi zhi yanjiu” (Study of the three negatives), in WSZ, pp. 231–234 (originally in *Shehui shijie* no. 5 (November 1912)). Taixu perhaps did not write this article but he served as an editor of *Shehui shijie*.

When Yuan’s forces retook the south, the group moved to Shanghai by way of Macao. Liu managed to get the *Voice of the People* out weekly for four months in 1914, before his health broke completely. He died of tuberculosis in March 1915, after which his followers published the journal only sporadically. Liu’s mature view of anarchism was outlined during 1914. Most his energies were devoted to attacks on the somewhat muddied socialist views of Sun Yat-sen and Jiang Kanghu as mere state collectivism.<sup>20</sup> But in his positive formulation of anarchism, Liu asked, “What are anarcho-communists?”

[We] advocate the abolition of the capitalist system and the creation of a communist society, all without the use of governmental coercion. In sum, we seek absolute liberty on both the economic and the political planes... Through the true spirit of liberty, equality, and fraternity we will attain our ideals: a society without the institutions of landlords, capitalists, leaders, officials, representatives, family heads, soldiers, jails, police, courts, laws, religion, or marriage. Then society will consist only of liberty, only of mutual aid and only of the joy of labor... Anarchism is the inevitable end of evolution... Thus, it is mistaken to say that anarchism is idealistic and impossible.<sup>21</sup>

times sought allies among the radical intelligentsia. Dirlik, “The New Culture Movement Revisited,” pp. 268–269, suggests Chen was personally sympathetic to anarchism.

<sup>20</sup> Liu defined his own anarcho-communism in part through attacks on numerous groups which dared to call themselves socialist; for this whole topic, see Krebs, pp. 334–368. Important excerpts from this debate have been reprinted in no. 2 Historical Archives, *Zhongguo wuzhengfu zhuyi he Zhongguo shehuidang* (Chinese anarchism and the Chinese Socialist Party), (Jiangsu: Renmin chubanshe, 1981).

<sup>21</sup> “Wuzhengfu gongchan zhuyi tongzhishe xuanyan shu” (Declaration of the Anarcho-communist Society), *Minsheng* no. 17,4 July 1914), pp. 1–2.

Liu's faith in evolution followed that worked out by the Paris anarchists. One of the few ideological conflicts that Liu had with the *Xin Shiji* philosophy lay in the theoretical path to revolution. In practice both placed propaganda and education at the fore, but in contradistinction to Wu Zhihui's formulation that true education would lead both to true morality among the people and thence in-standy to revolution, Liu, in spite of his insistence on individual perfection, placed revolution before morality. He advised a number of people to remain in China (to fight) rather than study abroad (and improve themselves).<sup>22</sup> This advice echoed Wu's cries against studying to fulfill selfish ambitions, but Liu's point was that as long as society remained corrupt, only a minority would ever subscribe to the worthy principles of the Conscience Society. If China waited for a majority to become truly educated or truly moral, anarchism would never arrive. Since immorality basically stemmed from the perversions of the social system, a social revolution would logically lead to a new moral standard, rather than the other way around. The present

faults, in human morality stem from the evils in society. Social evils in turn stem from the existence of government. Once the affliction of government is removed, human morality will immediately revert to its pure state. We do not have to wait a long time for the effects of a lofty education to take hold.<sup>23</sup>

Overall, Liu presented themes that were familiar to Chinese who had read *Xin Shiji*, but they bore repeating to a generation disillusioned in the aftermath of 1911. Liu Shifu was an inspiring leader and a transmitter, not a creator or original interpreter. His anarchism was not a new ideology, being so heavily indebted to the

<sup>22</sup> See Chan, "Liu Shifu," p. 56.

<sup>23</sup> "Wuzhengfu qianshuo" (A simple explanation of anarchism), *Minsheng* no. 1 (20 August 19x3), p. 4.

formulations originally coined by Wu and Li.<sup>24</sup> His sincere devotion to the cause, however, and his tireless efforts to spread the gospel made him the Chinese anarchist best known in China and the world. Living and writing in deep shadows of the failure of 1911, as the former revolutionaries soon came to see it, Liu typified uncompromising moral integrity. His analysis of the failure of 1911—in terms of the intrinsic faults of political revolution and the need for social and cultural revolution—carried considerable weight. And he taught that a new society would need new values. Even Chinese who were not convinced by Liu's idealism found themselves further radicalized by Yuan's counterrevolution.<sup>25</sup> That is, a belief in the need for fundamental, total change spread among the students and intellectuals—teachers, journalists, a few lower-level government officials—who were far from any sort of power in any case. The Chinese state, with or without Manchus, with or without an emperor, was still illegitimate.

Liu tied together practice and theory for Chinese anarchism. Theory had to be pure; hence his acerbic attacks on the muddleheadedness of Sun Yat-sen and Jiang Kanghu. And practice began with the inner self. In spite of his awareness of human frailty, and in spite of his realization that structural change—revolution—had to precede any widespread moral regeneration, Liu still expected true anarchists to be paragons of anarchist virtues.

If Liu gave a somewhat religious cast to essentially secular anarchism, the famous Buddhist monk Taixu ("Great Nothingness", Lu Gansen, 1890–1947) found anarchist internationalism

<sup>24</sup> Or to the formulations originally coined by Kropotkin and interpreted by Wu and Li; cf. Krebs, "Liu Shifu," pp. 294, 395–396. But evolutionism was a uniquely Chinese sort of anarchism. Yang Caiyu, "Ping Min'guo chunian de wuzhengfu zhuyi xichao" (Theoretical trends in anarchism in the early Republic), *Xueshuyuekan* no. 165 (1983, 2), pp. 77–81, argues that Liu Shifu presented a more systematic and practical form of anarchism than did the first generation.

<sup>25</sup> Escapism was also common, literally, in the sense of trips and study abroad for Tongmenghui members who had briefly held power.

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used to visit me, I often discussed anarchism and its possibilities in China. At that time I favored many of its proposals.<sup>85</sup>

In calling for “A great union of the people” in 1919, Mao wanted resistance against the “aristocrats, capitalists, and other powerful people (*qiangquanzhe*).”<sup>86</sup> Nonetheless, Mao emphasized unity over class struggle. More importantly, he emphasized fundamental change, including moral ameliorization, over political steps.

As to the actions which should be undertaken once we have united, there is one extremely violent party... The leader of this party is a man named Marx who was born in Germany. There is another party more moderate than that of Marx. It does not expect rapid results, but begins by understanding the common people. Men should all have a morality of mutual aid, and work voluntarily. As for the aristocrats and capitalists, it suffices that they repent and turn towards the good, and that they be able to work and to help people rather than harming them; it is not necessary to kill them. The

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<sup>85</sup> Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China*, pp. 147–148. Arif Dirlik, in “The New Culture Movement Revisited,” pp. 253–254, follows Chow Tse-tsung in emphasizing that Mao’s self-characterization describes the intellectual posture of many at the time: “A generation that sought liberation in ideas absorbed as the proverbial sponge every idea that promised liberation without much regard for its ideological origin or social and political implications.” Robert A. Scalapino also emphasizes the ideological eclecticism of the early Mao, in “The Evolution of a Young Revolutionary—Mao Zedong in 1919–1921,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* (November 1982), 42(1):29–6i. The eclecticism included strains of anarchism but was by no means limited to them. Scalapino usefully points out, on p. 38, that Mao did not “seem uncomfortable with his eclecticism,” which suggests that Mao did not think of himself as eclectic.

<sup>86</sup> “Minzhong de dalianhe,” *Mao Zedong ji* vol. 1, Takeuchi Minoru, ed., (Tokyo: Hokubosha, 1972), pp. 57–69; tr. Stuart R. Schram, “A great union of the popular masses.”

ideas of this party are broader and more far-reaching. They want to unite the whole globe into a single country, unite the human race in a single family, and attain together in peace, happiness and friendship... The leader of this party is a man named Kropotkin, who was born in Russia.<sup>87</sup>

Essentially, then, Mao divided China into a small minority of power holders and a vast majority of commoners, including peasants, workers, and most merchants. His favorable view of the anarchists rested not only on their broader ideas but also on their notions of organization. Mao promoted the vision of a great unity founded on small associations of like-minded individuals: peasants, workers, students, women, teachers, and so forth. These unions are like the free associations of the anarchists in that they would provide the fundamental building blocks of the new society as well as the revolutionary endeavor. In turning to the revolutionary potential of the Chinese people Mao cited the numerous associations already being formed. He appeared less sure that the masses themselves had awakened but again saw a worldwide trend in that direction. Whatever the historical constraints, “Our Chinese people possess great inherent capacities! The more profound the oppression, the greater its resistance; that which has accumulated for a long time will surely burst forth quickly.”<sup>88</sup> This revolutionary faith represents the authentic Maoist voice, however much Mao later followed a stricter class analysis.

The main sources of Mao’s political beliefs at this time may have been the famous Sino-liberals Yan Fu, Liang Qichao, Hu Shi, and Mao’s teacher Yang Changji rather than anarchism or any other specific school,<sup>89</sup> but Mao certainly came close to a number of anarchist positions or predispositions. Witness his view of oppression

<sup>87</sup> Tr. Schram, “A great union of the popular masses.”

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>89</sup> This is the opinion of Schram, *Mao Zedong*, pp. 5–6.

Zhang Ji. *Zhang Puquan xiansheng quanji*. Taipei: Zhongyang wenwu gong- yingshe, 1951–1952.

Zhang Nan and Wang Renzhi, eds. *Xinhai geming qianshi nianjian shilun xuanji*. Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1963.

Zhang Wenbo. *Wu Zhihui xiansheng zhuanji*. Taipei: Wenxing congkan, 1965.

*Zkilao xianhua*. Taipei: Zhongyang wenwu gongyingshe, 1952.

Zhang Yunhou et al., eds. *Wusi shiqi de shetuan*. Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1979-

*Zhongguo wuzhengfu zhuyi he Zhongguo Shehuidang*. Zhongguo dier lishi dang- anguan bian (no. 2 Historical Archives), Jiangsu: Renmin chubanshe, 1981.

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– *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*. Tr. Burton Watson. New York:



- *Wu Zhihui xiansheng quanshu*. 18 vols. Taipei: Zhongguo guomingdang zhongyang weiyuanhui dangshi shiliao biancuan weiyuanhui, 1969.
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- Xiao Gongquan (Kung-ch’uan Hsiao). *Zhongguo zhengzhi sixiangshi*. (A History of Chinese Political Thought) Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1982.
- Xiao Yu. “Li Shizeng xiansheng.” *Zhongyang ribao*, Haiwaiben, 28 March 1974. P- 4-
- Xin Shiji*. Paris, 1907–1910. Partial reprint, Tokyo: Daiyasu, 1966; complete reprint Shanghai: 1947.
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- Xinchao*. Reprinted Taipei: Dongfang wenhua shuju, 1971.
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- “Guojia lun.” *Minbao*, no. 17.
- “Pai-Man pingyi.” *Minbao* no. 21.
- *Taiyan xiansheng ziding nianpu*. Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1971.
- “Wuwulun.” *Minbao* no. 16.
- “Wuzhengfu zhuyi xu.” *Minbao* no. 20.
- “Zou Rong zhuan.” *Kakumei hyoron* no. 10.

as a fairly simple matter, basically a political question rather than one based on economic structures: of the inherent capacity of the repressed to revolt and thus spontaneously make revolution; and of the role of noncoercive associations. On the one hand, Mao was clearly neither ready to jettison the state nor willing to abandon his Chinese patriotism. On the other, his attention to society and nonpolitical organizations displays direct anarchist influence.

Of the influence of anarchism on Mao’s early thought there can be no doubt. But what of Maoism? The party worker of the 1920s and leader of the 1930s and 1940s pulled back from any millennial expectations. He developed a theory of rural and peasant-based revolution, with a strong military component, and tight, Leninist party organization. What remained of his earlier views was a strong element of subjectivism or voluntarism—the main requirements for becoming a revolutionary were moral and political—and the development of the “mass line.” One could learn to be a revolutionary regardless of class background. Indeed, the logic of Mao’s new positions implied this, because otherwise he could not hope to make a Marxist revolution but only a rural jacquerie. And one learned to be a revolutionary through contact with the masses, especially peasants. When Mao turned to a more intense study of Marxism in the late 1930s the results were largely mechanical, though quite un-Stalinist in their continuing emphasis on subjective factors and superstructural elements such as culture.

Maoism may, among other possibilities, be taken to refer particularly to the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Although quite distinct, both movements minimized party discipline and placed more reliance on voluntarism and social forces with but minimal direction from above. In this sense the Maoist process of revolution had much in common with anarchist revolution. Both sought the sources of revolution in an essentially spontaneous reaction against oppression. Moreover, a revolution may be ignited and to an extent fueled through propaganda. For as Mao noted in 1963, “Once the correct ideas characteristic of the

advanced class are grasped by the masses, these ideas turn into a material force which changes society and changes the world.”<sup>90</sup> Mao was no idealist but recognized that in certain circumstances correct ideas could effectively have a force of their own. Correct ideas can be determined only through practice. Thus, like the anarchists, Mao possessed a flexible epistemology. In general, Mao’s pronounced willingness to modify Marxist-Leninist concepts—the Maoist sinification of Marxism, primary examples of which include redefining the proletariat and proletarian spirit, praising the advantages of backwardness, finding the source of revolutionary spirit in the countryside—are reminiscent of anarchist flexibility. Mao specifically abandoned the notion that capitalism must precede socialism; in this respect he stood with the anarchist view of social evolution.

The populist side of Maoism, if not egalitarian, was “profoundly nonelitist.”<sup>91</sup> Mao urged cadres to “merge with the masses” and to “become students of the masses.”<sup>92</sup> The mass line represented a kind of compromise between the Leninist party and Mao’s skepticism about the abilities of any elite to remain untainted by bourgeois privilege. The radical potential of the mass line emerged most clearly during the Cultural Revolution, of course, but was implicitly expressed in the party rectification movement of the early 1940s. Mao’s antipathy to specifically bureaucratic forms of elitism was even more consistent than his egalitarianism throughout his career.<sup>93</sup> Mao’s desire for a bureaucracy that was both red and expert was essentially a reflection of his antielitism.

Mao had very little use for individualism, at least as understood in the tradition of Western liberalism: defining the relationship between individual and society, demarcating individual rights and

<sup>90</sup> Cited in John Bryan Starr, *Continuing the Revolution*, pp. 59–60.

<sup>91</sup> In the words of Meisner, *Marxism, Maoism, and Utopianism*, p. 94; see pp. 76–117 for Maoist populism.

<sup>92</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

- Suzuki Chusei. *Chugoku ni okeru kakumei to shukyo*. Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 1983.
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— “Shingai kakumei no Koshi mondai.” In Onogawa Hidemi and Shimada Kenji, eds., *Shingai kakumei no kenkyū*, pp. 3–35. Tokyo: Chikuma sho- ten, 1978.

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Su Manshu. “Ntjijie Guoerman.” *Guoming riribao*, 7–8 October 1903, pp. 330–331, 340–41. Reprinted in *Guomin riribao huibian*, vol. 3. Taipei: Zhonghua minguooshi liaocongbian, Zhongguo guomin-dang zhongyang weiyuanhui, dangshi shiliao biancuan weiyuan-hui, 1968.

*Subao*. Shanghai, 1902–1903.

Suetsugu Reiko. “Shingai kakumei no fujin kaiho undo to Purotesutanto joshi kyoiku.” *Rekish hydron* no. 280 (September 1973), pp. 95–105, and no. 281 (October 1973), pp. 101–110.

civil liberties, and setting limits on the state. Instead, he stipulated: “By civil rights we mean, politically, the rights of freedom and democracy... But this freedom is freedom with leadership and this democracy is democracy under centralized guidance, not anarchy. Anarchy does not accord with the interests or wishes of the people.”<sup>94</sup> But Chinese anarchists also tended to consider society as an organic whole, not divisible into its individual parts. While the anarchists certainly would have abhorred Mao’s unbridled state and his generally favorable view of party leadership, and would have criticized it in part in the name of the individual, they in fact felt profoundly torn by the question of individual rights, seeking to transcend the problem not through the dictatorship of the proletariat or any other political form, but through society itself. This vision of society as an organic whole Mao could not share.

For Mao was in no sense an anarchist (though the charge has been made, particularly in the Soviet Union in the 1970s). He shared some of the dispositions of the Chinese anarchists, and these premises informed his understanding of Marxism-Leninism. Mao seems to have considered anarchism an extreme route, “ultra-democracy”—an error opposite but equal to commandism and excessive centralization. Perhaps the latter problems were more on Mao’s mind, especially toward the end of his life, and therefore at times he was willing to risk anarchy in order to encourage local, lower-level initiative. Nonetheless, he always pulled back to reconstitute the party, as seen in 1959 and 1968–1969. Faced with the prospect of the destruction of the CCP in February 1967, Mao told Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyan:

The slogan of “Doubt everything and overthrow everything” is reactionary. The Shanghai People’s committee demanded that the Premier of the State Council

<sup>94</sup> “Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People,” 1957, cited in Starr, *Continuing the Revolution*, p. 154.

should do away with all heads. This is extreme anarchism, it is most reactionary. If instead of calling someone the “head” of something we call him “orderly” or “assistant,” this would really be only a formal change. In reality there will still always be “heads.”<sup>95</sup>

Obviously, important theoretical elements of radical Maoism remained wholly outside of libertarian provenance. For example, the notion that socialist societies could still produce bourgeois elements, key to the Cultural Revolution’s call to continue the class struggle, runs fundamentally counter to the anarchist expectation that revolution will produce few individuals of antisocial disposition. Moreover, Mao’s metaphysical belief in contradiction as the mainspring of reality, although not necessarily precluding anarchism, was foreign to the essentially harmonious views of most Chinese anarchists. Nonetheless, the Maoist notion of continuous revolution may have owed something to the anarchists’ picture of revolution as a creative process that occurs naturally within the scope of evolution.

Communism and anarchism are, ultimately, synonymous. Marx’s final goal was not the dictatorship of the proletariat but the abolition of class society as such. The proletariat was merely an agent. “The condition for the emancipation of the working class is the abolition of every class,” Marx wrote in *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847). “The working class, in the course of its development, will substitute for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and *there will be no more political power properly so called*, since political power is precisely the official expression of [class] antagonism in civil society.”<sup>96</sup> Moreover, Marx defined communism itself in anarchist terms in one of his few attempts to describe, however briefly, the future:

<sup>95</sup> Cited in Schram, ed., *Chairman Mao Talks to the People*, p. 277.

<sup>96</sup> Cited in Padover, ed., *On Revolution*, pp. 24–25 (my emphasis).

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In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labor, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labor, has vanished; after labor has become not only a means of life but life’s prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of cooperative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!<sup>97</sup>

So, too, Mao. During the Great Leap Forward (1958–1960) Mao’s goal was to meet the material requirements of Marx’s premise in order to satisfy his conclusion. Although Mao often spoke of the inevitability of historical progress even beyond communism, which was not immune from the laws of dialectics, he also sought to institute full communism considerably faster than most Chinese leaders thought possible. Finally, in the Cultural Revolution (1966–1969), Mao experimented with abandoning the material base Marx considered necessary. Perhaps Mao was inspired by the anarchist vision of the replacement of the political arena with society as a whole, an act of will independent of material requirements.

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<sup>97</sup> “Marginal Notes to the Program of the German Workers’ Party” (1875), in *ibid.*, p. 496.

## CHAPTER 10. *The Sources and Significance of Chinese Anarchism*

Of all social theories Anarchism alone steadfastly proclaims that society exists for man, not man for society. The sole legitimate purpose of society is to serve the needs and advance the aspiration of the individual. Only by doing so can it justify its existence and be an aid to progress and culture.

The political parties and men savagely scrambling for power will scorn me as hopelessly out of tune with our time. I cheerfully admit the charge. I find comfort in the assurance that their hysteria lacks enduring quality. Their hosanna is but of the hour.

—Emma Goldman, “*The Individual, Society and the State*,” (1940?)<sup>1</sup>

In Europe and the Americas, the anarchist movement grew substantially in the 1880s and 1890s. Anarcho-communist theory, syndicalism, and assassinations reached their height of popularity. Yet by the turn of the century it was becoming obvious that something was delaying the millennium. In particular, assassination designed to knock out the Old Regimes lost favor as anarchists began to refine their theory and work on organizing a mass base among work-

<sup>1</sup> *Red Emma Speaks: Selected Writing and Speeches by Emma Goldman*, Alix Kates Shulman, ed. (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 100.

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ers. These, roughly, were the circumstances that Chinese intellectuals found in the first decade of the twentieth century.

A handful of Chinese radicals found in anarchism both a means to explain the world and a means to change it. They accordingly pronounced themselves to be anarchists and embarked upon a study of Western anarchism. Their results necessarily differed from the conclusions of their teachers. This gives rise to the question whether they were indeed real anarchists. The answer rests on the framing of an abstract definition of the doctrine, a difficult task because in the West alone the last two centuries have seen many different forms of anarchism. The mere disdain for government is far from the core of anarchism. John P. Clark suggests the following definition:

In order for a political theory to be called "anarchism" in a complete sense, it must contain: (1) a view of an ideal, noncoercive, nonauthoritarian society; (2) a criticism of existing society and its institutions based on this antiauthoritarian ideal; (3) a view of human nature that justifies the hope for significant progress toward the ideal; and (4) a strategy for change, involving immediate institution of noncoercive, nonauthoritarian, and decentralist alternatives.<sup>2</sup>

The early Chinese anarchists do appear to meet all four requisites, at least to a degree. Their proposals under the fourth category, for example, emphasized schools to be run from the bottom up, whereas Western anarchists often emphasized labor unions, but both alternatives represent nonauthoritarian strategies of change.

<sup>2</sup> John P. Clark, "What Is Anarchism?" p. 13.

## THE SPECIAL NATURE OF CHINESE ANARCHISM

When Chinese anarchists are seen as components of world anarchism, they become participants in an anarchist discourse. Nonetheless, they wrote only in Chinese and probably saw themselves as interpreters of a specific set of ideas to the Chinese. Their contributions to the theory of anarchism came indirectly, through the effort to apply anarchism to Chinese conditions, and the West took little notice.

One circumstance that all Chinese intellectuals had to explain was Western imperialism. The Chinese anarchists were among the earliest theorists of modern empire; Liu Shipei in particular began to work out an anarchist conception of antiimperialist struggle. His central notion was that Asian nationalists and anarchists would join with European revolutionaries to free the various Asian peoples from outside controls and overthrow established governments in Europe simultaneously. Wu Zhihui, without working it out, seemed to hope that something similar would happen through a parallel process of evolutionary development in the different societies. This was a distinct contribution to anarchist theory. However, what did anarchism have to offer China when revolution in the West tarried? Liu Shipei did not see national liberation struggles in isolation but assumed that strains in the periphery would encourage revolution in the metropole.

Feminism was another area in which the Chinese made an original contribution to anarchist theory. He Zhen's clear analysis of the subjugation of women in statist structures linked women's liberation to the liberation of all. In this view, women are oppressed because they are women; yet simply attaining equality with men would not offer liberation because men are themselves oppressed by class, race, and nationality. Since feminist struggle had to grapple with the prejudices of all men, liberation would not necessarily

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follow upon revolution. By contrast, Western anarchists had generally been as slow as anyone else to examine the sexism of the Victorian world.<sup>3</sup>

The early Chinese anarchists' interpretations of anarchism shared a social, not an individualist, vision of anarchism. They unanimously chose to emphasize anarcho-communism over such other breeds as individualist anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism, and mutualism. However, while in Western terms they were fully in the camp of the socialists (that is, opposed to the Superman myth or the narcissistic egoism of Max Stirner), in the Chinese world they championed individual rights. Individualism, which in the West might mean something opposed to society or community, was in China the corollary of attacks on the patriarchal family, traditional marriage system, and Confucian morality. The Chinese vision of an anarchist world did not make much of the individual as *against* society, but as free within a true society. If part of anarchism's appeal in the West lay in its romantic unshackling of the individual from trite conventions, so too in China. But the actual meaning of the image differed in the two settings. This grew particularly acute in the 1920s when Chinese anarchists attempted to reconcile their view of social man with an anticollectivism brought to the fore through their debates with Marxists.

Chinese anarchists also inherited an easy philosophy of human goodness, which was a problem that bedeviled their Western counterparts. They had no heritage of a concept of original sin to explain their way out of, though they still had the problem of why the world was so bad. The Chinese attitude toward the fundamental question of anarchism—do not humans have to be forced to be decent to one another?—was quite matter-of-fact compared to the religious anguish of a Westerner trying to throw off the no-

<sup>3</sup> Emma Goldman, writing in the first decade of the twentieth century in her New York-based journal *Mother Earth*, is the exception. Unlike He Zhen, Goldman advocated free love.

tion of the fall of Adam. Liu Shipei accepted human peccadillos and would use them to structure a fairer society: envy as the enforcer of equality. He still saw nothing inherently evil in man or the world. And the ready acceptance in China of the Kropotkin-ist mutual aid, which rapidly spread beyond the fervent evolutionism of a Wu Zhihui or Li Shizeng, demonstrated the capacity of Chinese intellectuals to absorb the fundamental premises of anarchism. The early Chinese anarchists added an “of course” to Kropotkin’s description of the tendency to mutual aid as innate. The widespread acceptance of evolutionism in China was aided by a fundamental, though not naive, optimism. Indeed, Chinese anarchists never accepted the standard Western dichotomy between history and nature, that is, between reason, spirit, civilization on the one hand, and brute or irrational forces on the other. Evolution reconciled the two, for man was of course part of nature and history its working-out. Yet tensions remained. Had the coercive state and authoritarian religion once been progressive or were they antievolutionary forces from the deep? Such tensions led to an occasional nostalgic primitivism.

One of the largest problems facing anarchist theory in the west is a well-grounded theory of the individual. Although anarchists need not believe in the goodness of human nature to support their beliefs—on the contrary, many support anarchism precisely on the grounds that power corrupts—they have to believe that people are capable of self- rule. It helps to disbelieve in the Hobbesian vision of the antisocial individual. Chinese political discourse perhaps has a longer tradition of trying to integrate the individual and the social sides of the person than does Western philosophy. Neo-Confucianism provided the anarchists with the self-governing individual.

As for the means by which anarchist revolution was to come, the frank Chinese emphasis on education and propaganda could have clarified a number of anarchist muddles in the early part of the twentieth century. Radical social action, for the Chinese, de-

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ended not precisely on the masses but on the clear thinking of the masses. They saw themselves as teachers as well as political agitators. This is the role adopted by such contemporary anarchists as Paul Goodman in the United States.

World anarchism has been defeated. The modern state with its massive and uniquely efficient bureaucracy has claimed this century as its own. While many anarchist social and cultural goals may have infiltrated the modern consciousness and achieved a certain respectability, the state itself remains impregnable, authoritarianism exists in nearly every social organization, and economic exploitation continues. Yet is not antielitism still inspired in part by an anarchist vision? As the anarchists pointed with hope to such international eleemosynary institutions as the Red Cross around the turn of the century, so too the 1980s had its Amnesty International and its Greenpeace, broadly based human rights and environmental organizations. Decentralization, democratic socialism, participatory democracy, and consumer and marketing cooperatives have remained attractive goals in America and Western Europe since the 1960s. These movements probably owe some of their ideological appeal to notions originally formed in the anarchist struggle. But anarchism as a gut-wrenching call for the downtrodden to rebel is dead (notwithstanding an anarchist underground allegedly alive in China today).<sup>4</sup>

In one standard historical view, this is not surprising: For anarchism was the ideology of merely transitional classes: peasants facing modernizing markets and agrarian relations, and especially first- and second- generation artisans and petty merchants in industrializing cities. But Chinese anarchism, at least, was rather more—and less. Not so much an agonized cry from whole classes being squeezed, it was from the beginning a powerful tool of cultural and social analysis wielded by a prominent segment of the intelli-

<sup>4</sup> Albert Meltzer, "The Origins of the Anarchist Movement in China," pp. 102–103.

gentsia, an instrument of moral regeneration, and finally a fairly successful approach to labor organizing.

## THE SOURCES AND TENSIONS OF CHINESE ANARCHISM

both major schools of early Chinese anarchism, in Tokyo and in Paris, relied largely upon Kropotkin and the Kropotkinists Jean Grave and Errico Malatesta. The point about the education of the Chinese anarchists in the Neo-Confucian curriculum is not that the route from Neo-Confucianism to anarchism is easy or direct. Rather, their education provided them with a set of basic assumptions and orientations that informed their understanding of anarchism and the immediate problems that China faced.

In the realm of strategy and notions of change, the anarchists' reliance on education stemmed from currents in modern anarchism and from the Neo-Confucian faith in government through self-cultivation and the moral value of education. Schools provided most of the focus for traditional Chinese thought about noncoercive social institutions. Change comes through schools as they provide individuals with the education necessary for moral transformation; the masses are educable. For modern Chinese anarchists, the role of teacher was culturally congenial. Indeed, like the Neo-Confucians, the anarchists could achieve full responsibility for both themselves and society only as teacher. The impending collapse of the Qing dynasty and the entire imperial system freed them from many traditional restraints but did not alienate them from their duty to serve society.

The ability of the anarchists to transcend such notions of the day as nationalism may have owed a great deal to the universal tendencies of Neo-Confucianism. Anarchist criticism of selfishness (*si*) and profit (*li*) was familiar ethics; the very term of which they were so fond, *gongli* (universal principle or justice), is a neologism

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formed out of two Neo-Confucian terms. That these universal principles are in the hearts and minds of all persons is a fair deduction from the Zhu Xi commentaries on *xht Great Learning*. Thus the anarchists would give the masses an unprecedented freedom, but these masses grew out of the potentially self-sufficient *min* (people) of the Neo-Confucians. The interest of both Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming in village compacts (*xiangyue*) illustrates their concerns with the need of the Chinese peasant for self-help organizations, or mutual aid, and their desire to keep the government out of the village. Also long familiar to Chinese thought was the anarchist praise of an individualism based on autonomy and independence yet without private (selfish) interests. The anarchists’ training in metaphysical and ethical principles foreign to the West gave the Chinese interpretation of anarchism its unique slant.

Liu Shippei and Wu Zhihui illustrate with unusual clarity their connections with the past even as they were intensely concerned with the present.

Certain fundamental tensions marked the thought of Liu Shippei. These included, as discussed above, the problem of reconciling group equality and individual liberty; the nature of revolution (the role of the individual, society, and world); the nature of progress, if any; and his understanding of Chinese history and the role of the national essence.

These are problems, not fatal flaws. Liu himself tried to deal with liberty and equality in a variety of ways. Suffice it here to note that Liu’s was ultimately a social vision: individuals could not be free in private. They must learn to share their liberty, which is the only way to give it definition. Revolution would obviously have to take different forms in different societies; Liu did not come to the notion of a dialectical relationship between Asian and Western anarchist revolution until relatively later. He always believed that true revolution had to come from the majority, “involving the peasants and

workers as its basic element.”<sup>5</sup> He gave progress a role in history: it was clear to Liu that the human species had developed increasingly complex social forms over time. But he did not believe in progress as a religion or a kind of mystical force that leads ever onward and upward. The notion of progress simply was not very relevant to Liu’s overall thought. And as for China and her history, Liu never made up his mind whether to be critical or sympathetic, whether the masses suffered or whether they were more or less left alone. He appeared to be sympathetic, or nostalgic, perhaps most of the time. And the distant past (China’s preimperial sage-kings or the primitive communism of the ethnologists) was even more attractive—no wonder he was ambivalent about progress. Yet Liu the anarchist never confused the Chinese past with the Datong future.

There is nothing odd about a highly trained, even inbred, classicist turning radical. Traditionalism and conservatism have no historical monopolies; in China, the classical tradition indeed included a notion of the decadence of the imperial world judged from the vantage point of absolute values. If Liu’s road to anarchism started in a curious way with the Chinese national essence, perhaps after 1908 the national essence reclaimed him as well. But there is no evidence that he ever worried about some “Chinese identity” being lost in an anarchist world. Anarchism, it is true, offered a way out of China’s current problems. If Liu was moved either by a desire to prove Chinese equivalency to a Promethean West or by simple rejection of the West’s political and social forms, anarchism met both his objectives.<sup>6</sup> Yet it was not the simplest solution. Liu was too serene and confident of both his anarchism and his standing as a stalwart of the national essence school to assume that he was primarily reacting to a foreign cultural threat. He did not suffer from

<sup>5</sup> “Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshi,” p. 144.

<sup>6</sup> For this reductionism, see Joseph R. Levenson on what he called the “search for equivalency” and the appeal of communism to China’s intellectuals, *Confucian China and its Modern Fate*, i:i34-i36ff.

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a sense of intellectual inferiority. He created a unique interpretation of anarchism. Liu treated equality as an ideal having roots in both China and the West, and as equally new and foreign to each. This was approximately true, after all. Liu did not feel that equality and China were in special opposition. Anarcho-egalitarianism could encompass Chinese culture (which had been redefined to include the non-Confucian philosophers and much, much more), and vice versa. There is no reason to think Liu feared that a world language would prevent people from continuing their research into China's heritage. On the other hand, after 1908 this synthesis broke down; anarchism retired from Liu's field of vision.

What were the sources of Liu's social thought? Rigorous egalitarianism was a radical departure from the mainstream of Chinese (or Western) thought, although Liu supposed he had found antecedents in the pages of the past and practiced the age-old scholarly tradition of quoting out of context. He took support from wherever he could find it; therefore Liu's citation of a work does not necessarily mean it was a source of his thought. It could be a prop added after the structure was nearly complete.

In general, judging from both his preanarchist writings and his anarchist propaganda, Liu was heavily influenced by classical Chinese writings, and by his image of a relatively benign preimperial state. This allowed the scholarship to which his life was dedicated to remain relevant and in fact represented continuation of the *kaozheng* trend of research into non-Confucian problems. Also, he was influenced by Rousseau, whose *Social Contract* he had read in Chinese translation; Liu's thought touches Rousseau's in too many ways for this to be a coincidence. It could be that Rousseau's General Will meshed with the undifferentiated nature of the phenomenal world of Zhuangzi to produce Liu's absolutist egalitarianism. At the same time, Liu was a product of a sort of mainstream of continuing Chinese philosophical discourse. His interpretation of education, for example, was along the lines both of Zhu Xi's "learning for the sake of the self" (*weiji zhi me*) and, using the same

term as Zhu and many other Chinese thinkers, of practical learning (*shixue*),<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Liu's emphasis on independence intertwined in various ways with the Confucian tradition. A concept of the autonomy of the individual can also be traced to the Neo-Confucian revival of the Song dynasty and may have breached the limits of respectability in the Taizhou school of the mid-Ming dynasty.<sup>8</sup>

More to the point, the link in Neo-Confucianism between rulership and education had provided the theoretical basis for the *laissez faire* imperial state in which Liu believed. It formed the unconscious basis for his faith in the compatibility between independence (individual liberty) and equality (social necessity). In his discussion of the *Great Learning*, Zhu Xi had developed his notion of "cultivating oneself, and governing others" (*xiuji zhiren*) and thus forcefully raised the question as to how China could promote a moral elite in place of the traditional aristocracy. The implication was that those who could achieve self-cultivation were capable of rule, beginning with themselves. Once morality (self-cultivation) is linked to self-government, Liu could extend Zhu Xi's moral elite to encompass the "whole people." Not that Liu promoted self-cultivation; rather, the various techniques of self-discipline historically associated with *xiuji* became related in his thought to the masses' capacity for selflessness. As Liu wrote in 1907: "Only if the people are granted their demands, and only if their wishes are fulfilled [through revolution], can they then extend their selves to others and actually enlarge their selfishness (*si*) to the point at which it becomes universal (*gong*)."<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Zhu Xi's interpretation of the *Great Learning's* phrase *qinmin* (loving the people) as renewing the people (*xinmin*) could be taken to imply that ruler-

<sup>7</sup> See Wm. Theodore de Bary, *The Liberal Tradition in China* p. 21 ff; and Introduction, *Principle and Practicality*, de Bary and Irene Bloom, eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), pp. 1–36, especially 25 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Wm. Theodore de Bary, "Individualism and Humanitarianism in Late Ming Thought," pp. 145–247 and *Liberal Tradition*, p. 43ff.

<sup>9</sup> "Lihai pingdeng lun," p. 1 (my emphasis).

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### ABBREVIATIONS

WS: Zhang Ytinhou et al., eds. *Wusi shiqi de shetuan*. Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1979.

WSZ: Ge Mafchun et al., eds. *Wuzhengfu zhuyi sixiang ziliaoxuan*. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1984.

XHGMQSNJ: Zhang Nan and Wang Renzhi, eds. *Xinhai geming qianshi nian- jian shilun xuanji*. Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1963.

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about the nature of politics itself. They demanded that any form of ordinary politics be replaced with a politics of individuals who were both autonomous and without private interests. It is not wonder that a majority of thoughtful people did not feel themselves worthy of this ambition. The move to more conservative positions on the part of the early anarchists was perhaps related to their inability to resolve these tensions. It was certainly related to the failure of the anarchist millennium to arrive on schedule.

The anarchists failed: China did not become an anarchist paradise. The anarchists succeeded: they lived to see many of their goals and even their cranky opinions win out. Scholars, students, journalists, teachers, government workers, merchants, and company employees came around to proposals originally made by the anarchists for women's liberation, socialism, equality, and, above all, the negative counterparts: overthrowing oppression, traditional morality, and sexism. Chinese anarchism offered a way out of the nightmare of the present. By the 1930s it was evident that most Chinese believed the state to be necessary to carry out the social revolution and to resist imperialism. But the small group of intellectuals who discovered and reinvented anarchism just after the turn of the century made their point, too: the highest human goal is to combine liberty and equality.

ship should wither away when the people are ultimately renewed. When Liu attributed ideals traditionally associated with a *junzi* or even the sage to all people—such attributes as goodness (*ren*) or the universal knowledge of the generalist—he was linking himself to perennial Confucian themes. The difference is that Liu believed that justice was a challenge for society, not for individual introspection.

The main classical example Liu found to illustrate his ideal was that of Xu Xing, a Warring States figure known from Mencius' refutation of his doctrines. As Xu is said to have put it, the "wise and able princes should cultivate the ground equally and along with their people, and eat [with them]... They should prepare their own meals, morning and evening, while at the same time they carry on their government. But now the prince of Teng has his granaries, treasuries, and arsenals, and oppresses the people so that he can enrich himself."<sup>10</sup> Liu commented, "Berating Duke Teng for enriching himself at the expense of the people was the equivalent of attacking the class system." Xu was the first Chinese to advocate "plowing together," that is, that all people share the necessary labor.

History itself offered little encouragement. Liu attacked China's centuries-old land system as unjust. More surprising, he attacked the well-field (*jingtian*) ideal that was beginning to be praised by contemporary Chinese socialists. Writing for a larger audience in the pages of *The People's Journal*, Liu stated that the so-called public field of the well-field system was simply a means of (harsh) taxation.<sup>11</sup> Liu moved through masses of Chinese historical records, concluding that as long as the distinction was maintained between rulers and ruled, the majority of peasants would have to slave so a

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<sup>10</sup> "Renlei junli shuo," p. 34; the quotation is from *Mencius*, 3A.4, following Legge, *The Four Books*, pp. 623–624. For historical background on Xu Xing, see A. C. Graham, "The *Nung-chia* 'School of the Tillers' and the Origins of Peasant Utopianism in China."

<sup>11</sup> "Beidian pian" (Alas for the tenant farmer), *Minbao*, no. 15 (5 July 1907), pp. 19–34.

minority could live in idleness. Liu brought the story down to the Qing dynasty and, emerging from this wealth of historical detail about laws and taxes, concluded:

The nation's land ought to be distributed among the nation's people. Today, some people have a lot of land while others have just a little, and some do not have any land at all. This is injustice in land rights. Workers have a lot of duties and fewer rights while those who eat in idleness have light duties but preeminent rights. And the workers are ruled by those who eat in idleness.

... The class system of noble and base must be totally destroyed, and the lands of the wealthy abolished, so that all the land can be shared by the people.<sup>12</sup>

Liu said that if the goal of the revolution was to redistribute the lands of the rich, the revolution itself must be made by farmers. Using standards of traditional morality, he claimed that landlords were nothing but big thieves and despots (*baqjun*). To redistribute their lands equally among the people would be perfect goodness (*ren*). There is no reason to doubt that these categories of morality were as real to Liu as he trusted they were to his audience.

Perhaps the distinct notion of egalitarian revolution that Liu held was shaped by the organic conception of society held in traditional Chinese thought. Liu was unusual among Chinese revolutionaries of this era in considering the social questions (as opposed to political questions) facing China and calling in a sense for class war. Yet he too saw the ameliorative side of traditional Chinese class relations and agreed with the complacent assumption that class divisions were deeper in the West.<sup>13</sup> Liu often attributed the ideals of the *junzi* or even the sage to all people, and this linked

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 32–33; 34.

<sup>13</sup> “Lun zhongzu geming yu wuzhengfu geming zhi deshi,” p. 139.

it was the anarchists who took these last two premises to their logical conclusion. If all the hucksters in the wide-open intellectual marketplace that marked the demise of imperial Confucianism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were selling salvation, the anarchists proffered a remarkably open community. They promised a sense of belonging to the ultimate community—the human race as a whole—while maintaining and indeed fulfilling individual identity.

Anarchism, therefore, was reasonable and radical. In the Chinese context, it sought economic—technological—freedom for the masses, for workers and for peasants. It offered no compromise with the elite. It sought to dignify every man, woman, and child with the education necessary for citizenship in the sense of citizen of the world. It put the people's enemies on the same plane: Manchus and Han Chinese gentry, English and German imperialists, landlords and bourgeoisie.

However, the tension between the higher concerns of their interpretation of anarchism and their own unavoidable concern with the seemingly endless crises of Chinese identity and survival right through the Revolution of 1911 in the end brought the anarchists down. Liu Shiwei returned to the scholarship of the national essence—what might be called in his case, philological notes on Chinese culture. Wu Zhihui and Li Shizeng turned to whatever they could make of improving the prospects of the new fledgling country. Men like Huang Lingshuang foresaw the tyranny of the Marxist Chinese state, even as Marxists claimed the exclusive right to offer real social change. If politics is defined as the arena in which public questions are considered, then anarchists are interested in politics. What they wished to abolish was not the arena itself but what they regarded as a purely historical, rather than inherent, accretion of coercive institutions and mentalities. Thus to speak of the anarchist contribution to Chinese political discourse is not a contradiction in terms. They participated in the unconscious decisions that many Chinese citizens were making

a strong current. It may also point to the reasons why Marxism failed to become truly hegemonic.

As forerunners, the anarchists were also among the first Chinese to attack Confucianism directly and to protest against the oppression of women. Their use of the vernacular, though less exceptional, was based on a firm theory of the evolution of Chinese culture. Their critique of economic exploitation was also prescient; they brought class analysis to China both through Kropotkin and through Marx. And finally, the anarchists were ahead of their time in their devotion to science and technology. Wu Zihui and Li Shizeng became important spokesmen for modernization, and even Liu Shipai appreciated the labor-saving potential of machines. By the 1920s the primitivist strain of anarchism had virtually disappeared. The radical nature of anarchism meant that the group of pre-1911 anarchists anticipated most of the iconoclasm of the May Fourth era by a decade. At the same time, anarchism continued through the May Fourth era to provide a natural home to Chinese radicalism, including communal experiments and labor organizing.

The anarchists also represent one segment of a general questioning of political institutions. Indeed, their questioning of the utility of the nation-state and of nationalism was soon found to be empty and anti-patriotic. Yet the early anarchists shared a number of important assumptions with their generation. Aside from the centrality of education to any strategy of change, these included a faith in the masses, that is to say, a belief that the people themselves had the capacity not simply to run their own lives but to expand the boundaries of the present world in as yet unimaginable ways. As Yan Fu had praised democratic institutions in the West for unleashing the energies of the people, so the anarchists appreciated voluntary social organizations for their secondary characteristics. As Liang Qichao wanted to re-form the Chinese people, so the anarchists sometimes spoke of the new citizens of the world. Above all, freedom and equality were seen as linked, not opposed, because the individual and the group were seen as linked, not opposed. Indeed,

him to the subcurrent of Chinese philosophy that claimed sagehood resided in all people if only they could find it within themselves. The difference is that for Liu it was a challenge for society as a whole to reach this stage by guaranteeing individual social and economic equality, not first a challenge for individual introspection. On the other hand, how was society to change? The answer came back to the individual.

Compared to Rousseau, Liu was an optimist, a difference that may ultimately reflect the Christian and Confucian conceptions of human nature and evil. Rousseau's vision of bare subsistence, rustic simplicity, and static civil virtue contrasted with Liu's progressive, scientific paradise. Yet they both would minimize the division of labor, thereby making citizens independent, and mobilize a vast consensus, making the question of liberty superfluous. They shared a vocabulary of suffering and indignation. In Judith N. Shklar's interpretation, "Rousseau was preeminently the philosopher of human misery. His entire design was to show how mankind had built a social prison for itself. In the course of this enterprise Rousseau produced a veritable encyclopedia of egalitarian ideas."<sup>14</sup> Freedom for Rousseau consisted of depending on the state (composed, it is true, of the people) to enforce equality through equal application of the laws. Obviously the anarchist Liu, believing that equality was natural, supported neither the state nor its laws. Believing that equality was natural, Liu could conceive of a liberty that, while not absolute, still allowed a wide freedom of choice for the individual. Liu's interest in the peasantry was of long standing. He firmly believed in the Confucian-physiocratic idea that agriculture was the basis of wealth, and he believed in anarchism partly because he considered that it could best provide for the majority of China's population, the peasantry. He undertook demographic studies himself and called for an investigating commission to con-

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<sup>14</sup> Shklar, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Equality," p. 13.

duct research into the specific conditions of the peasantry in the different regions of China and to plan for equalizing the land.<sup>15</sup>

In the end, Liu's equality was beyond race, culture, and history. It almost seems as if he had turned to anarchism to give his view of equality political form and to provide a means of enforcing equality. Anarchism, then, was Liu's way of achieving his social goals. The present was in crisis, the past not good enough, socialism and communism compromised by their support of the state which could only lead to new crimes. Liu had nowhere to turn but anarchism, that most total of social critiques. Liu was a moralist, trying to pique the consciences of relatively well off students, and he was a social scientist trying to describe objective conditions. Above all, he was a revolutionary motivated by outrage over inequality. He noted three areas of inequality in particular: the Chinese peasant dominated by the landlord and social order, the Chinese and other "weak races" dominated by the imperialist West and Japan, and the workers in the industrialized countries dominated by capitalists. Anarchism was a cure for suffering and a solution to dominance throughout the world.

Wu Zhihui was torn between his residual yet still powerful nationalism and a more cosmopolitan anarchism. Anti-Manchuism could in theory be reconciled, for example, as either a stage on the way to world revolution or as one expression of a universal distaste for rulership. Wu's position clearly went beyond this, but he did not recognize a contradiction. He appears to have put the Manchus and their constitutional lackeys on a different plane from suprapolitical speculation— anarchist theory, morality, and evolution.

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<sup>15</sup> See "Nongmin jiku chahui zhangcheng" (Precepts for investigating the suffering of the farmers), unsigned but probably by Liu, *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907), pp. 313–314; and "Zhongguo minsheng wend lunyi" (The problems of the Chinese people's livelihood, part one), *Tianyi* no. 8–10 (30 October 1907), pp. 213–218.

ing of the Chinese predicament by questioning the assumptions of their contemporaries. The anarchists, in the decade preceding 1911, posed more of these challenges than any other group of Chinese intellectuals. Liang Qichao drew back at the prospect of a China chaotic without a monarch; Sun Yat-sen proposed that China make a new start on the basis of its institutional history (the censorate). The anarchists, for all the differences between them, believed that all was possible, while their conclusions were formed by their view of history.

The thrust of their concern was not in the details of the future but in creating a new definition of politics. Their idealism lay in their faith in the new, the future. This was not an approach—antipolitical politics—articulated by the anarchists themselves, but is implicit in their demands for change and their descriptions of current trends. They sought to change, and capitalize on, both the individual and social structures. They were not merely radicals or critics, but true revolutionaries who proposed to remake reality itself.

The contribution of the anarchists becomes particularly difficult to assess when one realizes that they lay in the mainstream of Chinese political discourse. They spoke to the same concerns that exercised most of their contemporaries and participated in reforming the very language of political thought. No single anarchist stance was unique to them. Others shared, for example, the emphasis on education, the criticisms of Western democracy, the respect for communism, the desire for liberty, while anarchism retained its unique formulation of these various elements. The anarchists were among the first to introduce Marx to China, and they gave him a strong populist twist if only by association, emphasizing the role of the peasant masses in making revolution. And they sought to give the "backward" regions of the world a key role in making the world revolution. But more: to say that the anarchists stood in the mainstream in the early twentieth century is to stress the radical nature of Chinese political thought long before Marxism became

dictum that evolution was a natural law governing people and society, that China could not help but progress, and the Tokyo interpretation of social revolution were part of the mainstream of Chinese political discourse in this century.

## THE PLACE OF ANARCHISM IN CHINESE POLITICAL DISCOURSE

the significance of Chinese anarchism lies in the roles that the anarchists played in the transition from imperial Confucianism to Marxism as they presented their contemporaries with new options. It also lies, from a slightly different perspective, in their historical position as carriers and transformers of a worldview that changed drastically between the 1890s and the 1930s. The significance of the early anarchists is not the same as their influence, or the immediate impact of their ideas, however popular or unpopular.

The anarchist critique was not simply of dynastic power but of the very principle of authority. This became a demand for moral clarification that both conservatives and revolutionaries had to heed if they were to be serious. By attacking the Confucian notion that hierarchy and inequality were rooted in nature, the anarchists forced all the participants in China's political discourse to find new ethical bases for their proposals.

(In every field, the anarchists challenged both the status quo and such other ideologies as republicanism and Marxism. In the spheres of politics, society, family, sexual relations, economics, philosophy, and religion they tried to attack oppression at its roots. To a greater degree than Western radicals, they were willing to abandon great chunks of their past; perhaps they were more free than their Western confreres. Yet they did not see themselves as copying the West, for the obvious reason that the West itself was so far from achieving anarchism, and also because their goals were proclaimed in the name of all humanity. They sought a fundamental understand-

A set of mutually reinforcing notions whirled around Wu's essays. Most of these notions continued to attract him long after he conceded that the world was not ready for anarchism. He continued to look toward education, civic morality, and evolution itself to provide for the future. In spite of Wu's intense concern with politics, his notion of revolution, in the 1920s and 1930s as well as in the days before the Revolution of 1911, was ultimately cultural. He sought to change Chinese habits and customs. These were a greater obstacle than the Manchus or political forms, as damaging as those were, since old-fashioned, barely civilized ways of life, as Wu saw them, lay behind more superstructural elements. Anarchism was a part of his positivism. It had a place in Wu's thought almost as a metaphor for progress and less as a concrete means for reordering social and economic relations.

There was a note of authoritarianism and elitism in Wu's anarchism. It was perhaps merely a grace note, but the role that experts and science and education were to play in the future implied the existence of a hierarchy. Wu did not confront this implication. He failed to define civic virtue in such a way that it could resolve conflicts between liberty and necessity, individual and society (as, say, Rousseau's notion of the General Will, however flawed, attempted to do). This failing appears to be linked to the startling lack of social thinking in Wu's anarchism. Classes and class conflict are virtually nowhere discussed (in contrast to Liu Shipei). While demanding that education be extended to all, Wu in fact seemed comfortable in writing for an audience limited not only by political sympathy but by past education as well.

Nonetheless, Wu's failure was not in the job that he attempted. His vision of a better future was moral, not social. In his chosen arena Wu reached the peak of his intellectual and political influence in the course of the May Fourth Movement and the rise of the Guomindang, both occurring in the 1920s. His intellectual reputation was made on the basis of an uncompromising hostility to old culture, Confucianism, and traditional thought and morality, and

nearly as unreserved a promotion of Western models, particularly what Wu called scientific thought. These were views that implied only a gradual broadening of an elite, not its abolition. All of these traits can be seen in Wu's earlier days. Wu was not an extremist by nature. His violent language was a rhetorical device designed to shock, not an expression of generalized aggressiveness. The reputation of anarchism and the vituperation of Wu's language notwithstanding, his doctrines actually remained quite mild, and his opposition to violence was clear. If Wu saw change as stemming from evolution, it is equally significant that he saw evolution as operating through individual conscience.

Did the traditional Chinese conception of a nonanthropomorphic but coherent cosmos clear the way for Wu's adoption of evolution? This might explain why someone so intelligent as Wu took evolution as an explanation for all things and why he repeatedly begged the tough questions: What was really scientific about doctrines of progress? What if there were dark sides to human nature after all? And how could one know that endless evolution and liberty meant increasing degrees of freedom in human terms?

Kropotkin was the inspiration and main guide for Wu's anarchism, but he was clearly not the sole source. It was Wu's long and intense education in the Confucian classics, only reluctantly abandoned, that shaped his anarchism in distinctively Chinese ways. Thus his passionate references to education and morality are not found to such a degree in any Western anarchist. Neo-Confucianism (the form in which traditional Chinese thought reached Wu) must be accounted for in two ways: structurally, in terms of some of Wu's predispositions or modes of thought, and linguistically, in terms of some of his basic categories of analysis. Wu's reign of virtue grew out of his reading of the Chinese classics in light of both the Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming commentaries. This became in Wu's hands the unique combination of morality and education, or moral education, that he took the further step of linking with revolution and indeed with the content of anarchism.

peal more directly to those looking for familiar signposts, such as an agrarian utopianism.

However, neither group was more westernized than the other. The Tokyo anarchists were, if anything, more rigorous materialists than the Paris group. They consistently analyzed social problems from a class viewpoint and often argued that the route to the future lay along the lines of class war. The Paris anarchists, on the other hand, tended to downplay concrete social questions while waiting for evolution's invisible hand to prod history forward. Hence the paradox that although Liu Shipei gave a conservative tone to his anarchism, he also was one of the first Chinese to discuss the future of China's working class and the revolutionary role of the peasantry, whereas Wu Zhihui and Li Shizeng, although closer to the standard of Western anarchism set by Kropotkin and much more critical of every Chinese tradition they could think of, were nonetheless little concerned with the specific features of social change in backward China. The Paris group was content with the prospect of freeing individuals by abolishing all privilege (*quanli*). The fairly crude positivism of the Paris group contrasts with the subtler eclecticism being taught in Tokyo.

Another way to view this paradox is through the contrast between spoken and terminated dialogue with the past. The Tokyo group, while willingly and admittedly seeking to continue a discourse long under way—with Mencius, with Xunzi, with Buddhism—also broke with traditional utopian visions by turning to clearly Western notions of class analysis and revolution. The Paris group, while proclaiming its devotion to a clean break and a new start, was also influenced by two more sorts of traditional utopian elements: the sense of undifferentiated wholeness and loss of self associated with a cosmic Datong and the sense of free and easy Daoist wandering that technological advances were to make literally possible. In spite of all these contrasts, the two groups shared an antiauthoritarian commitment to socialism, revolution, equality, feminism, and eradication of Manchu rule. Both the Paris

## TOKYO VERSUS PARIS

Although both the Tokyo and the Paris groups of exiles called themselves anarchists, remarkable differences separated the two circles. With one important exception, they carried on a polite and even supportive disagreement about the meaning of anarchism for China. For the most part the two groups went their own ways, sometimes reprinting articles from the other's journal and always printing each other's advertisements, but only seldom engaging in direct debate. But disagree they did.<sup>18</sup>

The group in Tokyo was clearly driven by its vision of an egalitarian future: equality through liberty. The Paris anarchists did not ignore equality but stressed other issues. They particularly looked forward to progress in civilization itself to bring about social reforms. Liu Shippei, on the other hand, endowed his anarchism with an unmistakably nostalgic cast. He looked back to China's past to find a simpler, better world, one closer to anarchist ideals. (This was a view not entirely absent from Western anarchism, but certainly not so prominent). Liu thus used institutional history, the wisdom of the sages and protoanarchists such as Zhuangzi and Bao Jingyan to supplement definitions derived from the West. The Paris anarchists by contrast rigorously insisted that *universally true* only applied to evidence derived from scientifically provable facts and that Chinese tradition had nothing to say on the subject. They claimed that biological evolution also explained social progress. The Tokyo group granted more validity to science and technology than the Paris group did to history, but they maintained different notions of how to demonstrate universal truths. Thus, the Paris group affected a more iconoclastic look while the Tokyo group could ap-

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<sup>18</sup> The two schools of anarchism have been contrasted with a focus on Wu Zhihui and Liu Shippei, by Arita Kazuo, "Shinmatsu ni okeru anakizumu," *Tohō gaku* no. 30 (July 1967), pp. 80–89; and Arif Dirlik, "Vision and Revolution." I confine myself to a few broad comments here.

The *content* of education that Wu advocated and that which Zhu had advocated were obviously worlds apart, but the fact that education was so intimately linked with individual morality, and individual morality to the common good, demonstrates a structural filiation.

Wu was responding to the specific crisis of his own day. He was not alone; education of the masses, moral improvement of the lower (and for that matter the upper) classes, and a fairer distribution of power as well as wealth were all issues high on the progressive agenda of the early twentieth century. But his nonmaterial approach to concrete social questions, which caused him to emphasize morality to a degree surprising for someone who was basically a positivist, and his concentration on the conscience of the individual (there being no other kind of conscience or goodness outside of the individual) were influenced, "briefed" as it were, by the millennium-old tradition of Neo-Confucian self-cultivation. As Liu Shippei, so Wu Zhihui. Furthermore, Wu thought education itself could revitalize the human spirit—a thoroughly Confucian view. On the one hand, anarchism as such tended to emphasize propaganda and education more than most radical philosophies, perhaps because its very nature denied the legitimacy of extensive organization. On the other hand, Wu's educational background disposed him toward that emphasis and led him to intensify it. Even in his brief sketch of an anarchist paradise, education, including the faults of the present system and the joys of the future, forms the main element. The addition of science, a term Wu does little to define, did not change the basic trust that goodness starts in the child's mind.

The equation Wu makes between revolution and education is not as strange as it sounds, given his intellectual background. It is neither excessively idealistic, in the sense that Wu thought educated or morally superior people would find oppressive forces easy to overthrow, nor excessively cynical, in the sense that Wu was trying to avoid tough questions about revolutionary organizing and

violence. Rather, Wu inherited a faith in the educability of the people and in education as a specific institutional means of promoting moral and thereby eventually social change. This structure of belief remained long after Wu consciously rejected Confucianism and indeed moved that China dump all the old “silk-bound” books in the latrine. While the content of Wu’s education obviously differed from the traditional, even here the distinct moral connotations in his use of the word *science* belied its superficially objective nature.

Wu, the ex-Confucian, could not shake off a thoroughly Confucian notion of character (*renge*) even as he tried to imagine a stateless world. Wu would make the state unnecessary by making character perfect. Once morality, in other words, had reached the point of receiving voluntary adherence, Wu foresaw the Datong. His good or innate morality (*liangde*) shared more with Wang Yang-ming’s *liangzhi* than a syllable; both proclaimed the importance of the self, signaled an avenue to betterment and an optimism regarding the nature of human character. Insofar as Western anarchists looked to social structure to explain the fallen state of the world, Wu’s treatment of evolution as a kind of cosmic harmony stemmed from deeply embedded Chinese political discourse. Evolution did more than replace yin-yang, of course; but it was a logical heir.

In terms of ethics, Wu’s concept of the individual seems to boil down to a selflessness for the sake of civic morality. He believed not in the wild heroism of the knight-errant (*xia*), but rather in a humbler kind of revolutionary determination (*zhishi*). Selflessness (*wuwo*) is also self-righteous.<sup>16</sup> For Wu, it signified the ultimate in personal morality. Fraternity and even goodness in other areas merely followed. However, the individual did not exist alone;

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<sup>16</sup> The term *zvuzvo* can be found in the *Analects* describing Confucius (in the West it originated in the nineteenth century describing God or motherhood). *Lunyu*, 9:4: “Confucius was completely free from four things: he had no arbitrariness of opinion, no dogmatism, no obstinacy, and no egotism (*wuwo*),” tr. Chan, *Source Book*, p. 35. Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford University Press: 1971). The term also contained Buddhist overtones by the nineteenth century.

only civic morality made selflessness or any other individual virtue meaningful.

Wu’s anarchism was a response both to the Chinese imperial state and to Western imperialism. Like most Chinese intellectuals, Wu was reacting to the central problem of the day—the threat to Chinese national and cultural identity from without and within. The goal of evolution was civilization, and neither aggressor nor victim had much claim to it. He prescribed strong doses of liberty, equality, and fraternity for both parties. If today this triad seems vague and trite, it was for Wu a meaningful and potent way to challenge old political doctrines, and it certainly was not trite. Of the three ideals, Wu most strongly emphasized fraternity (*boai* or universal love), a term which echoes both with the Moist mutual love (*jian’ai*) and, conceptually, with the impeccably Confucian *ren*.<sup>17</sup>

Thus the westernization of Wu Zhihui—or, as he might have preferred to put it, his adherence to the universal truths of logic and science—was compatible with selected strains of traditional Chinese thought. Wu’s anarchism was hammered into a broadly humanist, Kropotkinist shape yet can neither be reduced to Kropotkin’s anarchism nor be entirely derived from it. Wu used logic and science as the premises of conclusions he had in fact already reached. He hoped China’s path to independence was the same route as that form of civilization of which he saw hints in France, where education was advanced, monuments were erected to revolution, and religion was out of fashion.

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<sup>17</sup> Han Yu (768–824) actually defined *ren* as *boai* in his famous *Yuan Dao* (An inquiry on the Way); this passage is translated in Chan, *Source Book*, pp. 454–455. All these terms were also used by Christian missionaries throughout the nineteenth century.