lectures, in which he took "Western affairs for comparison and illustration,"[23] Liang gained an opportunity to air his own views as an instructor beginning in 1893.

In 1895 Liang helped Kang draft the Candidates Memorial and served the reform movement as secretary to the Society for the Study of National Strengthening. Later Liang became one of the most active spokespersons for progress and radical reform in China.

While discussing the failures of the self-strengthening movement, students of Chinese history often fail to see that in the realm of ideas, Chinese scholars had already begun to probe Western political, economic, and social institutions and the civilization that lay behind them and to seek ways of using this information to renovate China. Such progressive, reform-minded scholars were few and their understanding of the West was limited, but their influence, in the long run, would far outweigh their numerical strength.

NOTES

1. See Irwin Hyatt, "Protestant Missions in China, 1877–1890," *Papers on China* (East Asia Center, Harvard University), No. 17 (1963), pp. 67–100.
2. Edmund S. Wehrle, *Britain, China, and the Anti-Missionary Riots, 1891–1900* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966), pp. 29–30.
3. Ibid., p. 91.
4. British Public Record Office, F.O. 881/7118.
5. Marquis Zeng to the French Foreign Office, quoted in Henry McAleavy, *Black Flags in Vietnam* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 184.
6. Quoted in Lloyd E. Eastman, *Throne and Mandarins* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 211.
7. See McAleavy, *Black Flags*, p. 164.
8. T. C. Lin, "Li Hung-chang: His Korean Policies, 1870–1885," *The Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, 19 (1935), p. 214.
9. Stuart R. Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (New York: Praeger, 1963), p. 375.
10. Earl Swisher, *China's Management of the American Barbarians* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 522.
11. Harley F. MacNair, *Modern Chinese History: Selected Readings* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1923), pp. 384–85.
12. J. K. Fairbank, Katherine Frost Brunner, and Elizabeth MacLeod Matheson, eds., *The I. G. in Peking*, Vol. I (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 18–19.
13. S. Y. Teng and John K. Fairbank, *China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey, 1839–1923* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 52–53.
14. H. B. Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, Vol. II (London: Longmans Green, 1910), p. 186.
15. Ibid., pp. 190–91.
16. Ibid., p. 195.
17. See Gideon Chen, *The Pioneer Promoters of Modern Industrial Techniques in China*, Part I (New York: Paragon, 1968), p. 5.
18. For an excellent treatment of Xu Ji-yu, see Fred W. Drake, *China Charts the World: Hsu Chi-yu and His Geography of 1848* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975).
19. Teng and Fairbank, *China's Response to the West*, pp. 52–53.
20. Jonathan Spence, *To Change China* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969), p. 154.
21. See John L. Rawlinson, "China's Failure to Coordinate Her Modern Fleets in the Late Nineteenth Century," in Albert Feuerwerker, Rhoads Murphy and Mary C. Wright, eds., *Approaches to Modern Chinese History* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1967), p. 130.
22. Albert Feuerwerker, *China's Early Industrialization* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 242.
23. Quoted in Chi-yun Chen, "Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's Missionary Education," *Harvard Papers on China*, No. 15 (1962), 80.

CHAPTER 4

CHINA TURNS TO REVOLUTION: 1895–1911

The last 16 years of the Manchu dynasty, 1895–1911, witnessed hectic political activity. China's humiliating defeat at the hands of Japan precipitated a series of aggressive actions by the imperialist powers that reduced China to a semicolony and parceled up its territory as separate spheres of influence. This development in turn led to national movements for reform and revolution, culminating in the 1911 revolution and the establishment of the first Chinese Republic.

THE IMPERIALIST RAPE OF CHINA: 1895–1898

Despite their victories in China the Western powers had treated it with a certain amount of respect, but China's defeat at the hands of a small Asian nation changed their attitude drastically. Fearful that the Manchu dynasty was on the verge of collapse, the powers vied with one another to exact as many concessions as possible from the Beijing government. To a certain degree their behavior in China reflected their views of how the Treaty of Shimonoseki had altered the balance of power in East Asia.

Russia, itself interested in the warm-water harbor of Port Arthur on the Liaodong Peninsula, could not tolerate the idea of its acquisition by Japan. With the help of Germany and France, Russia forced Japan to renounce possession of Liaodong for an additional indemnity of 30 million taels. Although some Chinese viewed this as a friendly Russian action, Russia was only maneuvering to keep Japan out of what the Russians considered their area of strategic interest.

Until the First Sino-Japanese War, China had borrowed little from abroad, but now her reserves were totally depleted. To finance the war China had to borrow 4.635 million pounds sterling from the British Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank. After the war it faced an indemnity of 230 million taels (about 23 million pounds). With an annual revenue of 89 million taels, China was in no position to pay the indemnity without borrowing heavily from abroad. Countries wanting to dominate Beijing and also to profit financially from the transaction rushed to lend money to the bankrupt government. In 1895 the Russians, who had just proved their "disinterested" friendship for China, were anxious to keep China from becoming indebted to Britain. They loaned Beijing 400 million francs (15.8 million pounds) through a Franco-Russian syndicate, due in 36 years and secured against customs revenues. In 1896 an Anglo-German consortium of banks loaned 16 million pounds, also for 36 years. It, too, was secured against customs revenues. Two years later an Anglo-German syndicate

of bankers advanced another 16 million pounds for 45 years. This loan was secured against customs revenues and internal transit taxes. China's dependable revenues were now under foreign control; China was not to escape this foreign financial grip until the establishment of the Communist government in 1949.

In 1896, during his visit to Russia to represent China at the coronation of Czar Nicholas II, Li Hong-zhang signed a secret defense treaty with Russia, providing for joint Sino-Russian resistance to any Japanese aggression. (There is every reason to believe that he was heavily bribed by the Russians.) In return, China allowed the Russian trans-Siberian railway to cut across Manchuria to reach Vladivostok. Theoretically, the China segment of the railroad, later known as the Chinese Eastern Railway, was under the joint control of the two countries operating through a Sino-Russian bank; in fact, since the Chinese did not contribute their share of the capital, the railroad was operated by the Russians and gave the Russians an opportunity to extend their political and economic influence into Manchuria. The treaty gave them "absolute and exclusive right of administration" over the lands granted to the railroad, and they could move troops and munitions without interference. When the details of the treaty leaked out, the Japanese were naturally infuriated and stepped up their military preparations. The Chinese Eastern Railway was completed in 1904. The Russo-Japanese War followed in 1905.

France and Germany, the other two members of the Triple Alliance that had caused Japan to evacuate Liaodong, expected to be as well rewarded as Russia. In 1895 France secured extensive territorial and commercial concessions in Yunnan, Guangxi, and Guangdong, provinces bordering French-controlled Vietnam. The French gained mining rights in these provinces and, in 1896, a concession to construct a railroad from the border of Vietnam into Guangxi. China also agreed to the nonalienation of Hainan to any other power.

In 1896, as part of the treaty settlement, Japan had gained "most favored nation" status and the right to establish industries in treaty ports (all other powers automatically gained the same right). The immediate result was that within a year the British had established two cotton mills and a flour mill in Shanghai, the Americans a cotton mill, the Japanese a textile and a flour mill, and the Germans a cotton mill.

In February 1897 the British countered the French move in the south by gaining concessions in Yunnan and the right to extend Burmese railways into that province (which later proved to be futile).

However, the big "scramble for concessions" began after the Germans, using the pretext of the murder of two German missionaries (who had been killed along with many Chinese by bandits and not by antiforeign or anti-Christian mobs) in Shandong, occupied Jiaozhou Bay and the city of Qingdao in November 1897. Here was an example of the blatant use of military force to gain imperialistic ends. When China appealed to the other powers to intervene, Russia and France backed Germany, and England remained neutral. European international law, which China had been asked to study so assiduously, was relevant only to those who were not militarily weak. In March 1898 China signed a convention that gave Germany a 99-year lease on Jiaozhou Bay and exclusive rights to build railroads and to open mines in Shandong. Thus Germany had gained lease territory and a sphere of exclusive influence where it could invest capital in building railroads and opening mines. Other powers followed suit.

Within three days of the German convention Russia secured a 25-year lease of Port Arthur and Dalian (on the Liaodong Peninsula, which only three years earlier they had "saved" from Japanese occupation) and the right to build a railroad to connect Dalian with Harbin. France promptly demanded and received a 99-year lease of Guangzhou Bay, the right to build a railway from Tonkin to Kunming, and the nonalienation of territories bordering Vietnam. The British, not to be outdone, compelled Beijing to open inland waters to foreign steamers and to declare that the primacy of British interest in the Yangtze valley would be respected. The British also expanded the territory of Hong Kong by gaining a 99-year lease of land adjacent to Kowloon (when the lease expired in 1997, the British ended their rule over Hong Kong and the crown colony reverted to China), a lease on the port of Weihaiwei for as long as the Russians held Port Arthur, and concessions to build 2,800 miles of railroads. And Japan got Beijing to accept that Fujian, the province opposite Japan-held Taiwan, would be considered as Japan's sphere of influence.

By the end of 1898 it appeared that China was about to be dismembered. Even though this did not happen, it was clear that China's sovereignty had been seriously impaired. A helpless, impotent Manchu government had allowed the foreigners to slice the country into spheres of influence. The foreign missionaries, who had entered the interior of China propagating a foreign religion and spreading foreign ideas, were now joined by their compatriots, who were going to invest capital to exploit China's natural wealth, administer and control China's railroads, and sail their commercial vessels in all the major waterways of China. They were all protected, of course, by extraterritoriality and consular gunboats.

The only country that did not participate in the looting of China was the United States; it was busy in 1898 conquering the Philippines. Only one country, Italy, was refused a concession when it joined the scramble and, in 1899, asked for port facilities in Zhejiang.

REFORMERS AND REACTIONARIES: 1895–1898

Shocked by these events, many Chinese, including some who had attacked Kang Youwei (see last chapter) for his radical ideas, now agreed that only major political and institutional changes could save China. From 1895 there was significant open public discussion of national issues. Kang's Candidates Memorial of 1895 had shown how the literati, otherwise steeped in Confucian ideas, could respond to a national crisis and think in terms of change.

Societies promoting the study of ways and means to strengthen the nation (*qiangxue hui*) that had been proscribed in 1896 were reestablished by reform-minded scholars in various provinces, now often with government approval. For the first time privately published periodicals appeared within China (a dozen or so Chinese-language newspapers and periodicals already existed in the treaty ports, run by Chinese businesspersons or missionaries) and began to circulate new ideas. Interestingly provincial governors general often financed these activities. By 1901 there were about 120 newspapers and periodicals.

Even the young Guang-xu emperor had become interested in learning more about world affairs. When he reached the age of majority in 1889, the autocratic empress dowager had to hand over the reins of power to him. In fact she still wielded enormous influence because the emperor was her "son" through adoption, had to refer to her as his Imperial Father, and could not go against her wishes. She had also forced him to marry her niece. Moreover, Ci-xi commanded the loyalty of a large number of bureaucrats who owed their position to her patronage. So the imperial court came to be split between those who wanted to strengthen the hands of the emperor and those who still relied on the Old Buddha.

After 1895 Guang-xu's tutor, Weng Tong-he, concurrently appointed grand councilor (1894), member of the Zongli Yamen (1895), and associate grand secretary (1897), realized the necessity for reforms and began to introduce the emperor to books on world history and other Western subjects. Thus the emperor's faction came to be associated with reform and Ci-xi's with conservatism.

The most ardent and active reformers were Kang You-wei, Liang Qi-chao, and Tan Si-tong. They were helped, of course, by the writings and ideas of many other like-minded Chinese scholars like Yan Fu, and by the activities of missionaries like Timothy Richard. As noted earlier, Kang's first efforts in establishing study societies in Beijing and Shanghai and a periodical in Beijing came to naught when, in 1896, the empress dowager ordered the emperor to proscribe the *qiang-xue-hui* movement. In the same year she also terminated Weng's tutorship of the emperor.

But because of his high office, Weng still had access to the emperor, and because of the heightened imperialist activity, the "hunger for [new] knowledge" (as Liang Qi-chao later put it) could not be suppressed by the conservatives. By 1897 study circles and clubs, on *qiang-xue hui* lines, were established in Zhili, Hubei, Hunan, Guangxi, Shaanxi, and Shanghai. Among the 25 periodicals that began publication between 1896 and 1898, Kang's periodical *Shiwu Bao* (*Contemporary Affairs*) in Shanghai, Yan Fu's *Guowen Bao* (*National News*) in Tianjin, and *Xiangxue Xin Bao* (*New Hunan Study Journal;* later the *Hunan Study Journal*) played leading roles. The articles in these journals introduced ideas on modernization and reform, going so far as to suggest a constitutional monarchy for China.

Of the provincial governors general and governors, most were conservative, and even those like Li Hong-zhang and Zhang Zhi-dong, who advocated self-strengthening, trimmed their sails according to the changing winds in the capital; if the empress dowager's party was in the ascendancy, they withdrew their support from the reformers and their activities. Only the governor of Hunan took an active personal interest in reform and encouraged study circles, schools, and magazines that propagated reform ideas. The School of Contemporary Affairs was established in Changsha in 1897, and Liang Qi-chao and Tan Si-tong were invited to teach there. In 1898 the Southern Study Society (*Nanxue hui*) was established in Changsha with branches in every county. The society brought new ideas to the people through a wide-ranging lecture series. Thus Hunan became a center for reform and revolution, maintaining that position through the first half of the twentieth century; Mao Ze-dong hailed from that province.

The reformers were mostly junior officials or higher-ranking gentry. By 1897 Kang You-wei, Liang Qi-chao, and Tan Si-tong had emerged as their national leaders. To a lesser or greater extent they were all influenced by Yan Fu. The background of Kang and Liang was introduced in the last chapter; however, more needs to be said about Tan Si-tong and Yan Fu.

Tan Si-tong (1865–1898) was born into a Hunanese gentry family (his father was governor of Hubei from 1890 to 1898), but because of his unhappy family circumstances, he followed an unorthodox path to education and a bureaucratic career. He read widely and traveled extensively for ten years, visiting historical places and tombs of China's past heroes. By 1894 Tan had begun to study Western knowledge. In 1895 he was inspired by Kang's memorial and Kang's reform ideas, and he met Liang. In 1897 he went with Liang to Hunan, at the invitation of the progressive provincial governor, to help run the School of Contemporary Affairs. Later the same year he became editor of the *New Hunan Study Journal* and chairperson of the Southern Study Society.

Tan was a poet and an essayist of considerable merit. However, his most important work, as far as the reform movement is concerned, was a book entitled *A Study of Benevolence* (*Ren-xue*) in which he denounced Confucian values and expressed the need for Chinese to "break out of all entangling nets" (bureaucratism, formalistic Confucian teachings, authoritarian government, and Confucian family and social relations) so that knowledge could be sought throughout the world. He was the most forthright advocate of Westernization. He spoke of the "beauty and perfection of Western legal systems and political institutions."[1]

Yan Fu (1853–1921) came from a respectable though not very affluent scholar-gentry family in Fujian; his father was a practitioner of Chinese medicine. On his father's death in 1866, the family found itself in such dire straits that Yan Fu had to give up his classical education and all aspirations for a bureaucratic career.

In 1867 Yan Fu, then 14 years old, passed the entrance examination and was admitted, with a scholarship, as a student in the newly opened naval school attached to the Fuzhou shipyard. After his graduation he was sent to study in England at the Greenwich Naval College, from 1877 to 1879. On his return he taught at various naval academies and later became the president of Beijing University.

Yan Fu was one of the few Chinese who had mastered a foreign language (English in his case) and is best known for his translations of Western works. Like Kang and Liang, Yan Fu was deeply distressed by the humiliations being heaped on China by Western powers and Japan. And like Kang and Liang, Yan sought an answer to China's problems. During his stay in England, Yan studied the British political system and came to the conclusion that Western thought, not Western guns and technology, were responsible for Western wealth and power, and that China could regenerate itself by accepting certain elements of Western knowledge and Western practices.

In the hectic days of the reform movement, Yan Fu wrote a number of articles of current interest on subjects such as "Radical Changes in the World" and "How to Make China Strong" and he founded, in 1897, a daily newspaper, *National News*, which, besides covering domestic and foreign news, published translations of articles from the foreign press.

Yan Fu's biggest contribution to the reform movement, however, was his translation of Thomas Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* which was serialized in the *National News* and later published in book form in 1898. Yan Fu's book was the first of a kind: a serious Western theoretical work translated into Chinese by a Chinese. The publication became very popular and went through a number of printings. Huxley's application of Darwin's evolutionary theories to human societies led to the concept of social Darwinism: That societies existed in mutual competition, that they engaged in a struggle for survival in which only the strongest survived and the weak were eliminated, and that in the process the strongest and the most self-assertive tended to trample on the weak. These ideas caught the imagination of the Chinese reformers because they helped explain the dismemberment of China and also provided support to the reformers' thesis that the survival of China as a nation depended entirely on its capacity to adapt itself to changing circumstances and to make itself fit and strong.

Yan Fu said that developments similar to those that China had witnessed from 1860 to 1895, ranging from the creation of the Foreign Office (Zongli Yamen) to the construction of steamships and railways, had served as the foundation on which European states had built their strength and power. But these developments had failed to produce the desired effect in China because the Chinese were backward-looking and lacked the concept of progress. The Westerners struggled "in the present in order to supersede the past" and consider *"that daily progress should be endless"* (emphasis added).[2]

Although Yan Fu exerted a profound influence on the reformers, particularly on Liang Qi-chao, he was not directly associated with their activities; as far as action is concerned, he remained outside the mainstream of the reform movement. When the movement failed, he carried on his work of introducing the West to China by producing Chinese translations of John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty and Logic,* Herbert Spencer's *Study of Sociology*, and Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations.*

The Year of Great Reforms: 1898

In 1897, when the Germans forcibly occupied Jiaozhou Bay and the powers began to "scramble for concessions," it appeared that Kang You-wei's predictions had proved correct. He had warned in one of his 1895 memorials that the Sino-Japanese War had "opened the door to the partition of China by the powers. . . . The danger facing our country has never been so great as it is today."[3]

Before 1897 ended Kang sent his fifth memorial to the emperor, in which he used harsh language to warn that if reforms were not made, China would disappear as a nation and the emperor and his ministers might not even be able "to live the life of commoners."[4] Kang recommended three plans, the best being that the Guang-xu emperor follow the example of Peter the Great of Russia and the Meiji emperor of Japan to initiate reforms, preferably using the Japanese model. The memorial was not forwarded to the emperor, but Kang was asked to defend his case before a panel of high officials that included Weng Tong-he (January 24, 1898). His basic defense was to raise the question: When the ancestors' homeland was lost, who would remain to follow the ancestors' way?

The next day Weng Tong-he reported the discussion to the emperor and recommended that he grant an audience to Kang. But conservative officials again managed to sabotage the meeting, and Kang was asked instead to send his proposals and his books on Japan and Russia for the emperor's perusal. Kang did so and presented the emperor with a wide range of recommendations that touched on almost every aspect of political life in China.

In April Kang established the Protect the Country Society (*Bao-guo-hui*), whose constitution aimed at drawing together like-minded people to protect China's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and racial independence through selective political and economic reforms. The society was to have head offices in Beijing and Shanghai and branches in the provinces and the counties. The first signs of patriotism and nationalism were becoming evident in the younger members of the scholar-gentry-bureaucratic class, among whom it also became fashionable to talk of reform. But pro-Ci-xi conservative officials, particularly some high-ranking Manchus, attacked the reformers as men of little consequence who had the conceit to discuss weighty issues such as saving China and the impudence to belittle the illustrious Qing dynasty. Because of this denunciation, the Protect the Country Society soon ceased its activities.

Meanwhile, despite these zigzag developments, the 27-year-old emperor's imagination was fired by Kang's writings, which he reread several times, and he decided to become another Meiji emperor. On June 11 the emperor issued an addict expressing his resolution that China embark on a reform program:

> Those who claim to be Conservative patriots consider that all the old customs should be upheld and the new ideas repudiated without compromise. Such querulous opinions are worthless. Consider the needs of the times and the weakness of our Empire! If we continue to drift with an army untrained, our revenues disorganized, our scholars ignorant, and our artisans without technical training, how can we possibly hope to hold our own among the nations. . . The virtuous rulers of remote antiquity did not cling obstinately to existing needs, but were ready to accept change, even as one wears grass-cloth garments in summer and furs in winter.
>
> We now issue this special Decree so that all our subjects, from the Imperial family downwards, may hereafter exert themselves in the cause of reform. . . .[5]

Kang was finally summoned to an audience on June 16, 1898. The meeting was exceptionally long, and Kang is reported to have urged the sympathetic emperor to break through the barrier of conservatism surrounding him by appointing vigorous lower officials to carry out the program and by not throwing open the contents of the program for discussion among the senior officials, "who may refuse to put it into effect."

Before long the emperor also met with Liang and Tan Si-tong. Kang, Liang, and Tan were given posts in Beijing. Although the posts were not senior positions, the incumbents were granted permission to memorialize the emperor directly. On the basis of proposals and memorials submitted by Kang and his colleagues, the emperor issued decree after decree ordering the remaking of China. In 103 days 110 imperial edicts were issued, leading to the term *Hundred Days of Reform.*

The new order envisaged a changed examination system that would deal with practical subjects, subjects of contemporary interest, and economics; a new hierarchical school system that would include Western disciplines along with Chinese subjects; conversion of shrines and temples into schools; sending students abroad for study; encouragement of inventions; encouragement of a free press and freedom of the citizens to address the emperor; encouragement of agriculture, industry, and commerce by the establishment of specialized bureaus, specialized schools, trade journals, and chambers of commerce; government sponsorship of railroads and mining; inauguration of a nationwide postal service; rationalization and simplification of the bureaucracy and abolition of sinecure posts; centralization of the fiscal system; modernization and enlargement of the land and naval forces and standardization of the defense industry; and abolition of state allowances for Manchu bannermen.

These reforms covered almost every aspect of China's political, economic, military, educational, and cultural life; if carried out they would have radically changed China. Kang also urged that a constitutional monarchy be established and a national assembly convened, but the emperor did not issue a decree on that subject.

In early September the emperor dismissed certain high officials for obstructing the implementation of reforms. For the same reason he ordered Li Hong-zhang not to attend the Zongli Yamen. This act made the diehard conservatives and Manchu grandees in sinecure posts even more fearful of the emperor and his reforms. They had already been pressuring the empress dowager to intercede on their behalf when, on September 14, the edict stipulating that bannermen earn their own living was issued; the Manchu emperor had obviously turned against his own people. Ci-xi, however, recommended patience to the agitated Manchu grandees.

The emperor, aware of the danger he was in, accepted Kang's advice that he seek the active support of Yuan Shi-kai, the head of the New Army (with perhaps the best troops available in the country), which was quartered in the Metropolitan province (Zhili province). The easiest way to neutralize Ci-xi was to have Yuan eliminate Ronglu, her close confidant and trusted lieutenant. Ci-xi had arranged to have Ronglu posted as governor general of Zhili and commander of the Northern Armies, which included Yuan's force. The emperor summoned Yuan to an audience on September 16 and promoted him to the honorary rank of vice-president of one of the six boards and placed him in charge of army training. On the eighteenth Tan Si-tong called on Yuan, informed him of the threat to Emperor Guang-xi, and asked him to join the plot against Ci-xi to save His Majesty. Yuan is reported to have said that "killing Ronglu would be as easy as killing a dog."

But Yuan betrayed the plot to Ronglu, who warned the empress dowager. Ci-xi acted swiftly. In a countercoup she seized the emperor on September 21, 1898, and put him under house arrest. An edict was issued in the emperor's name in which he said that Her Majesty had graciously answered his prayer and "condescended . . . to administer the government." The emperor, who spent the rest of his days in close confinement, never forgave Yuan Shi-kai for having betrayed him, and it is said that his last words to his brothers before he died were that they should take revenge on the traitor. Thus ended the great promise of a China revolutionized by imperial fiat.

Warned by the emperor, Kang You-wei and Liang Qi-chao escaped, Kang to Hong Kong and Liang to Japan, but Tan Si-tong refused to flee the country and, along with

five others, was executed. For four days, until the twenty-fifth, Tan calmly waited for his arrest, telling his friends who recommended escape that without shedding blood there was no hope for a new China. The Six Martyrs of the reform movement of 1898 were executed on the twenty-eighth; many other supporters of the movement were imprisoned or dismissed from office.

The reasons for the failure of the reform movement are many. It must not be presumed that the emperor acted against Ci-xi's wishes from the beginning. On the contrary, he had consulted her and received her approval for the first reform decree, which set broad guidelines for the new policy. Indeed, the idea that reforms of some kind were necessary was accepted by many conservatives, including Ronglu who had submitted some memorials of his own suggesting reforms. Only when the edicts began to specify details of the reforms did the conservatives start having second thoughts. Even the moderates turned against the emperor when they realized that the reforms would undermine their privileges and vested interests.

Since most of the high-ranking officials were far more conservative than the low-ranking youthful reformers, the emperor had to dismiss or reprimand the politically important and depend on the politically weak junior officials. The reformers had no effective factional base and could not save the emperor when the need arose. The empress dowager had never lost her power to interfere in political affairs; she strengthened it further by having Weng Tong-he dismissed within five days of the first reform edict. The decree dismissing Weng was no doubt written by Ci-xi, and the emperor was powerless to overrule it. This weakened Guang-xu's position because he trusted Weng and depended on him to be the link between himself and the reformers (the reformers were too low on the bureaucratic scale to meet the emperor freely). She further consolidated her position by securing Ronglu's appointment as governor general of Zhili (June 14, 1898); this put him in direct control of the armies stationed around Beijing. She also appointed a henchman to head the Beijing garrison.

Orders to abolish redundant offices and to dismiss sinecure officials meant an immediate loss of jobs for many high officials, most of them Manchus. Similarly, the decree that Manchu bannermen could no longer depend on government pensions* created the impression that the reforms were at the cost of the Manchus. Indeed, the reformers were Han Chinese and belonged to the southern faction (South China had few Manchus; most lived in Beijing or in the North), whereas Manchu conservatives belonged to the pro-Ci-xi northern faction. Kang was bitterly attacked for establishing the Protect the Country Society because the task of protecting the country, according to the Manchus, fell on imperial nobles (mostly Manchu) and court ministers (many of them Manchu), not on lowly officials. A censor accused Kang of "protecting the 400,000,000 [Han] Chinese at the expense of the illustrious Qing [Manchu] Dynasty."[6]

Apart from angering the Manchus, the senior Han officials, and the bannermen, the reforms threatened the interests of thousands of literati who had studied the Confucian classics for years to take the imperial examinations; some of them had already passed the first or second levels. Abolishing the traditional examination system thus hit a class of people whose support was necessary to maintain the dynasty. Many of these scholars may have sympathized with Kang, but when they saw they would have to retrain themselves to take the new types of examinations, their essential conservatism reemerged. The pleas of the nuns and monks, whose temples or monasteries were to be converted into new-style schools, also reached the ears of the religious-minded Ci-xi.

The young, inexperienced emperor and his equally young, inexperienced, and idealistic advisors did not realize until it was too late that the supposedly all-powerful emperor of China in fact was severely limited in his exercise of power. The emperor's power was circumscribed by traditional ideology and traditional bureaucratic practices. When Guang-xu stepped out of the limits set by tradition, he found himself truly powerless. The extraordinary influence wielded by the empress dowager only added to his troubles. Guang-xu visited the summer palace every week or so to pay his respects to Her Majesty and consult her before issuing important decrees. When visiting her, he could not announce his arrival himself but had to kneel at the inner gate until the chief eunuch admitted him. He was sometimes kept waiting in this position for half an hour before the infamous Li Lian-ying, who hated Guang-xu, informed Ci-xi of his arrival—this, despite the fact that the emperor had paid the customary bribe to the eunuch!

*Manchu bannermen were considered hereditary soldiers and, therefore, automatically entitled to an emolument which may be considered a "pension" because they need not be actually working to get it.

Some 20 years later, looking back at the events of 1898, Liang Qi-chao wrote that Kang, Tan, and he had hoped to found a new school of learning that would be "neither Chinese nor Western but in fact both Chinese and Western. . . . This possibility was already precluded by that time, since not only was the indigenous traditional thinking too inveterate and deep-rooted, but the new foreign thought had too shallow and meager a source, which dried up easily once tapped and, quite expectedly, died of exhaustion."[7]

CI-XI IN CONTROL—PHASE I: 1898–1901

Ci-xi, issuing new decrees in the name of the emperor, reversed the reform policies, while blaming officials for creating confusion among the masses by not carrying out the reform orders in a "proper way." The reformers were ordered to be executed because they had taken advantage of the situation and conspired to overthrow the dynasty. "We are further informed that, greatly daring, these traitors have organized a secret Society, the objects of which are to overthrow the Manchu dynasty for the benefit of the Chinese [Han] . . . the writings of K'ang Yu-wei [Kang You-wei] were . . . depraved and immoral. . . . [He] intended to flout and destroy the doctrines of the Sages. . . . Our dynasty rules in accordance with the teachings of Confucius."[8]

A public proclamation by the empress dowager that the Chinese government would uphold the "traditional way" and her persecution of the reformers strengthened the antiforeignism of the conservatives. Their stand was further justified because the reformers had been helped by foreigners and had the backing of the foreign powers. Kang and Liang had, indeed, received the advice of the reform-minded missionary Timothy Richard in the drafting of the reform proposals, and they, along with other members of the Beijing *qiang-xue* society, often dined with Richard and other missionaries. According to Richard, "At each dinner speeches were delivered bearing on reform in China, and discussions followed in which the members took the keenest interest. They invited me to remain in Peking a few months so as to give them advice as to how they should proceed."[9] It is also true that there were proposals made publicly in the missionary press that China should appoint foreigners as advisers to the throne; that Richard had suggested to Governor General Zhang Zhi-dong that China should allow a foreign power to handle its foreign affairs and oversee a program of reform; that in 1898, Kang had suggested to the emperor that he should make Richard an adviser with ministerial rank (Richard was summoned for an audience by the emperor, but this was on the day the emperor lost power); and that Kang and Liang had sought British and Japanese aid in fleeing China.

The empress dowager was further angered when the British minister and others, believing the popular rumor that the emperor was about to be executed, warned the Chinese government that European states would view with grave displeasure the sudden death of the emperor. So, by seeking foreign sympathy and support, the reformers had proven themselves to be "traitors." The widespread disillusionment with the reform pro-

gram had turned popular sentiment against Kang and Liang and this strengthened the hands of Ci-xi, as did her reversal of the decree to abolish old-style examinations, which had shaken the loyalty of the literati.

The work of modernization, however, was not halted with the return of Ci-xi to power. It was allowed to continue in the old, diffused manner under the auspices of the provincial leaders. The most notable of these was Zhang Zhi-dong (1837–1909). Zhang, a native of Zhili, came from a family that had produced officials for many generations. He had won the *jin-shi* degree in 1863 and by 1880 had brought himself to the empress dowager's favorable attention by his strong antiforeign stand during the Ili crisis. As governor of Shanxi (1882–1884), governor general of Guangdong and Guangxi (1884–1889), and governor general of Hubei and Hunan (1889–1907, with a short break as governor general at Nanjing), Zhang proved himself to be an honest, dedicated bureaucrat and effective proponent of "self-strengthening." He was successful in improving tax-collection practices; he bought warships for the southern fleet, established military schools, and opened the first modern mint in Canton; he pushed for the building of railways, started the Han-Ye-Ping iron and steel works, and established a modern military unit drilled by German instructors in Hunan.

Zhang was initially sympathetic to the reformers but during the 1898 Hundred Days of Reform, he published an essay entitled "Exhortation to Study," which revealed that he had major differences with their views. Zhang emphasized that Chinese learning must provide the fundamental principles, and Western learning should be used only for its practical utility (popularized in the slogan *zhong-xue wei ti, xi-xue wei yong*). Unquestioningly loyal to the Manchu dynasty, Zhang believed that the dynasty and China could be saved by a revival of Confucianism, not by the introduction of anti-Confucian, foreign political practices. Proper schooling and inculcating proper Confucian virtues and the necessary "self-strengthening" subjects, such as diplomacy, industry, and commerce, therefore were absolutely necessary. Zhang felt that reformers who spoke of "people's rights" incited disorder; unity and strength could come to China not through this foreign notion but through the Confucian virtues of "loyalty and righteousness." When the reform movement collapsed, Zhang telegraphed Ci-xi, urging that the reformers be severely punished.

Zhang was the embodiment of a conservative Han reformer. He believed in the Confucian ideals, owed absolute loyalty to the empress, belonged to the northern faction, had been in the war party during the 1880s, and yet encouraged a modicum of Westernization.

The Boxer Uprising

Antiforeignism in the court was paralleled by growing antiforeignism among the peasant masses. From 1894 to 1899, three things were happening simultaneously: The Qing government, burdened by war indemnities and loans, was becoming more exploitative; foreigners, having divided the country into spheres of influence, were developing railroads and expanding their economic activities in the interior; and the missionaries, who had penetrated the countryside, were busy undermining the local social order. In one way or another, all these activities affected the peasantry.

For example, the government increased taxes to pay for the cost of the war, foreign goods displaced some local handicraft industries, and railroads threw landless labor out of employment as traditional transporters of goods. These developments created unrest in the countryside, and anger was turned against the missionaries, the local symbols of foreign aggression. In 1896–1897 there were antimissionary riots in six provinces in central China—Hubei, Hunan, Sichuan, Jiangxi, Jiangsu, and Shandong.

The province that had suffered most was Shandong. Between 1895 and 1898 there was not one year that large areas in Shandong had not been hit by natural disasters. At the same time, because of the Sino-Japanese War and the developments that followed, taxes were increased, and Shandong was forced to raise a domestic loan. After the war, Japan occupied Weihaiwei for three years, refusing to leave until the indemnity had been paid. Hardly had Japan vacated the port when the Germans took control of Jiaozhou Bay and Britain occupied Weihaiwei. Anti-Christian feelings ran high in Shandong (Shandong had to pay 104,000 taels in damages to missionaries between 1897 and 1899 for the destruction of missionary property by rioters), although the murder of two German missionaries, which led to the German military action, was not the work of any antimissionary group.

In 1898 the Germans acquired railroad-building and mining rights in Shandong and built the Jiaozhou-Jinan Railway, throwing many coolies out of work. Because of the railways and coastal shipping, commerce along the Grand Canal began to decline, and many others also lost their livelihood. In the same year the Yellow River flooded, inundating large areas of Shandong, while drought hit the rest of the province. Literally millions suffered.

Among the various secret societies in Shandong was one called *Yi-he-quan* (Society of Righteous and Harmonious Fists), a distant offshoot of the White Lotus Society, which had existed for centuries. Members of *Yi-he-quan* practiced Chinese "boxing," hence acquiring the foreign name *Boxers*. In 1898, as a result of the disturbed conditions, the society became openly active among the peasants, water and land transport workers, and handicraftsmen. At first their targets were both the Qing government and the foreigners, but by mid–1899, encouraged by some local conservative, antiforeign officials, the Boxers changed their slogan to "Protect the Qing, destroy the Foreigners." The society then changed its name to *Yi-he-tuan* (Righteous and Harmonious Militia), which gave it a semi-official standing because militias were government supported. Divided into squads and brigades, the Boxers were a fairly disciplined group, although they lacked centralized leadership.

The empress dowager was caught in a dilemma. On taking over the government she had declared that China would resist all further foreign encroachment. Indeed, in March 1899, when the Italians sent a fleet to Zhejiang and demanded that Sanmen Bay be leased to them, she ordered the local forces to resist. Italy eventually withdrew its demand, giving Beijing the impression that the new, tough line was paying off. In November an edict was issued: "Never shall the word 'peace' fall from the mouths of our high officials nor should they harbor it for a moment in their breasts."[10] The Boxers' antiforeign activities had brought protests and pressure from the foreign powers, but if Beijing were to follow the dictates of the powers, would it not prove itself to be a tool of the foreigners and would it not be suppressing Chinese people supporting the dynasty?

Foreign pressure and the advice from the moderates, who did not believe that the Boxers had magical powers that made them invulnerable to bullets, forced Ci-xi to replace Yu-xian, the governor of Shandong, with Yuan Shi-kai in December 1899. By spring 1900, with his New Army and other forces raised locally, Yuan checked the Boxer movement and brought law and order back to Shandong. The Boxers, however, shifted their main force to the adjacent Metropolitan province of Zhili (in which Beijing was located).

The Boxer bands grew and spread through Zhili, destroying churches, killing Chinese Christians, and burning railway stations. The court was divided on how to handle the situation, with the empress dowager favoring the appeasement of the Boxers. A halfhearted attempt to suppress the Boxers failed, and they defeated the imperial troops sent against them. By late April the Boxers had captured several towns and had begun infiltrating Beijing. In May the Beijing city guards were no longer checking the identity of the insurgents entering the city, which was shortly dominated by the Boxers. Among the

posters that appeared on the streets one said, "Most bitterly do we hate the treaties which harm the country and bring calamities on the people. High officials betray the country. Lower ranks follow suit. The people find no redress for their grievances."[11]

In early June, when the killings and pillage had reached intolerable levels, it also became clear that the court had decided to side openly with the Boxers. The foreign legations in Beijing felt threatened, and on June 10, the powers decided to take the matter into their own hands. Two thousand troops representing Britain, Germany, Russia, France, America, Japan, Italy, and Austria, under Britain's Admiral Seymour, started out from Tianjin to protect the Beijing legations. On June 13, the Boxers took over Beijing and besieged the legations, pillaging and burning other foreign establishments and massacring Chinese Christians.

About the same time the Boxers also entered Tianjin and spread terror there by killing Christian converts, burning churches, destroying electricity poles, wrecking the office of the intendant of customs, and attacking foreign concessions. Seymour's relief column, attacked by Boxers and imperial troops and finding that the railway line to Beijing had been cut, had to fall back to Tianjin, where it remained holed up until July 14.

On June 17 foreign warships attacked and occupied the Dagu forts and opened the passage to Tianjin and Beijing for more troops. In Beijing it was rumored that the allies had decided to demand that the empress dowager restore power to the pro-foreign Guang-xu emperor. This naturally enraged the empress, who on June 21 issued an edict declaring war on the powers and commanding the provincial leaders to mobilize for action. On the previous day the German minister, Baron von Ketteler, had been killed in Beijing, and the Boxers had begun their attack on the legations.

For all practical purposes the "war" lasted until August 14, when the international relief force of 20,000 men broke into Beijing and rescued the foreign community and Chinese Christians (nearly 7,500), who had been besieged in the legation quarters and the Beitang Roman Catholic cathedral. The force had relieved the siege of Tianjin on July 14 but had been delayed in its advance until August 4 because of rivalries between the powers. The war was fought mainly in Zhili and on the Chinese side involved both the Boxers and the imperial troops. In some of the other northern provinces, particularly Shanxi and Dongbei, the war meant a license for killing a few hundred foreigners, mostly missionaries. The rabidly antiforeign Yu-xian, who had been shifted from Shandong to Shanxi, took the declaration of war seriously and personally supervised the execution of 46 foreigners.

In the rest of China (Anhui, Jiangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Guangdong, Shandong, Zhejiang, Fujian, Sichuan, Henan, and Shanxi) the governors and governors general, some of whom had memorialized the throne to suppress the Boxers, ignored the declaration of war and came to an agreement with foreign consuls in the treaty ports for a "mutual guarantee for the protection of south and east China." In other words, the Chinese officials collaborated with the foreign powers to maintain law and order in their areas. There could be no better evidence of the weakness of the central government and the rise of regionalism in China. Governor General Zhang Zhi-dong even took it upon himself to telegraph the Chinese envoy in London and instruct him to reassure the British government that foreign life and property would be protected in south and east China. Both sides were happy to maintain the fiction that the Boxer movement was a rebellion against the dynasty.

Even in the north the war was fought halfheartedly because the court did not have a determined and fixed policy. At the end of June the Zongli Yamen sent instructions to Chinese envoys abroad to explain to foreign governments that the "mobs" in Zhili had temporarily gotten out of hand but that the legations would be protected. Powerful figures like Ronglu kept the Boxers from making an all-out attack on the legations; otherwise it would have been hard for the besieged

foreigners, despite their bravery and courage, to have held out so long. For 13 days, beginning with July 14, there was a sort of truce and the court sent cartloads of vegetables, fruit, rice, and flour to the besieged. This no doubt had something to do with the fall of Tianjin, although the legations had no information of that happening.

On August 15, before the main body of the relief force had entered Beijing, the empress dowager and the emperor (suitably dressed as peasants), along with Manchu princes and other high officials, fled Beijing. The imperial party, ostensibly on a "tour of the West," headed to Xian. The aging Li Hong-zhang, currently governor general of the distant southern provinces of Guangdong and Guangxi, was recalled to deal with the situation. Li's pro-Western stand in the south and his earlier diplomatic record were supposed to make him an acceptable spokesperson for China. Li tried hard to keep the allies from being too vindictive, and particularly from humiliating the empress dowager.

As wars go, this was a particularly dirty one. If the Boxers can be condemned for their wanton killings, rape, and looting ("women and children hacked to pieces, men trussed like fowls, with noses and ears cut off and eyes gouged out"[12]), the allied armies cannot be exonerated for their willful plunder of the innocent. In the words of Savage-Landor, "If looting is looked upon as a crime, the soldiers of all nations, none excepted, disgraced themselves alike. The Russians, the British, the American, the Japanese, the French, all looted alike. They one and all were looters of the very first water."[13] Not only did the allied armies systematically loot the city, but even the diplomatic staff, not excluding Lady MacDonald, the wife of the British minister, went out foraging. Hundreds of Chinese women committed suicide because they were afraid of being raped by the troops.

After the occupation of Beijing the allied forces, numbering around 50,000 by the end of the year, went on punitive expeditions in areas surrounding the capital. The Russians in the meantime had already occupied Manchuria. This disturbed the Japanese, who had been asked to forego their interest in Manchuria five years earlier. Incidentally, the Japanese, who had contributed the biggest unit in the relief force, had taken the brunt of the fighting and impressed the world by their strict discipline and competence.

The Russians were pleased to accept their friend Li Hong-zhang's credentials as China's plenipotentiary and hoped that he would help them gain special status in Manchuria. Afraid of just this result, Britain and Japan insisted on getting Liu Kun-yi and Zhang Zhi-dong added to the delegation. The draft protocol, prepared by the allies for the post-Boxer settlement, was accepted by the empress dowager on December 27, 1900, but because of squabbling among the powers over details (e.g., the amount of the indemnity and how it was to be collected), the final protocol was not signed until September 7, 1901.

The main terms of the Boxer protocol were

1. China had to pay an indemnity of 450 million taels of silver (about $333 million) over 39 years (the payments were secured against the maritime customs, inland customs, and salt revenues and, with interest, would amount to 982 million taels).
2. China had to raze the Dagu forts and other military installations between Dagu and Beijing and allow foreign troops to be stationed at 12 strategic points and at the legation quarters.
3. China was to execute 10 high officials and punish 100 others for their antiforeign activities, suspend for five years imperial examinations in 45 towns where foreigners had been killed or maltreated (to penalize the antiforeign gentry), dismiss any governor or governor general who allowed an antiforeign disturbance in his area, execute and publicly announce the names of all officials who joined an antiforeign society during the next two years, and erect expiatory monuments in foreign cemeteries that had been desecrated.
4. China was to send diplomatic missions to Japan and Germany to apologize for the

murder of the Japanese and German diplomats and was not to import any arms and ammunition for two years.

The allies had found it convenient to accept the fiction that the Boxer movement was a rebellion against the dynasty. Therefore the Boxer protocol was directed against those who had sided with or abetted the Boxers; the empress dowager was absolved, but not her antiforeign high ministers and the antimissionary literati. In fact, the staggering indemnity punished the country as a whole. Annual remittances on foreign debts amounted to about 40 percent of the annual revenue of the central government. In the words of Alexander Eckstein, "The fact remains . . . that from 1896 until the Second World War China's payments abroad on loans and indemnities constituted a sizable and constant financial drain which inevitably impaired her capacity for domestic capital formation, both governmental and private."[14] Furthermore, the unilateral posting of foreign troops reduced the sovereignty of the Chinese state, the punishment of officials and the suspension of examinations demoralized the gentry-bureaucrats, and the edicts threatening punishment to high officials for antiforeign disturbances reduced China to a state of vassalage.

If the history of past Sino-foreign relations had not embittered the Chinese already, the Boxer protocol ensured that a strong antiforeign streak would mark the next five decades until the foreigners were literally thrown out of China.

Some Communist Chinese historians view the Boxer uprising as a spontaneous revolutionary anti-imperialist people's movement. According to them, although the movement failed because of the "immaturity of the peasants" and the lack of progressive leadership, "it gave the invaders a taste of the people's heavy fist and shattered their fond dream of partitioning China."[15]

It can hardly be doubted that the movement was anti-Christian and antiforeign. Therefore, it was popular, attracting followers in the hundreds of thousands. To that extent it can be called anti-imperialist, as long as it is kept in mind that the Boxers had no understanding of the Marxist term *imperialism* and were only attacking the local manifestation of imperialist activity that hurt them socially or economically. But to call the movement "nationalistic" is farfetched. The tradition-minded Boxers had no concept of "nation" or "state." Similarly, although in the beginning the Boxers were anti-Manchu, too, this did not make them "antifeudal," as some Chinese Communist historians insist.

As it evolved, the simple antidynastic, antiforeign, peasant-based secret society uprising became complicated when gentry and bureaucrat elements began to support the movement and use it to their advantage. These conservative, antiforeign upper classes found satisfaction in seeing the Boxers destroy churches and kill foreigners. This tolerance allowed the uprising to get out of control (As one official put it, "The disturbances are so widespread that neither extermination nor pacification is an easy matter"[16]) and forced the court to declare its hand. In taking the fateful decision to back the Boxers, Ci-xi had countered the arguments of the anti-Boxer officials with the time-honored Confucian axiom that the ruler must rely on the loyalty of the people to maintain the state. But her rhetoric sounded hollow because there was no real union of the court and the people. Within the court, officials like Ronglu were against the Boxers; outside the court most provinces refused to go along with Ci-xi.

America's "Open Door" Notes

The Boxer story would not be complete without mentioning the American Open Door notes, the first set of which was issued by Secretary of State John Hay in September 1899. The September notes, sent to the governments of Britain, Germany, and Russia (followed by similar notes to Japan, Italy, and France in November) implied America's nonacceptance of any monopoly rights that might become associated with foreign spheres of influence in China. The notes requested the powers not to interfere with "any treaty port or any vested interest" or with the treaty tariffs or the right of the Chinese government to collect duties or to charge higher harbor or railroad dues from other nations, "within any so-called 'sphere of interest' or leased territory."

The impression given was that the United States was against the partitioning of China and thus was "saving" China from that horrible fate. Actually the first set of notes ensured not the integrity of the Chinese state but America's right to an equal opportunity to trade anywhere in China or, to put it more crudely, an equal opportunity to exploit China. The notes could hardly be anti-imperialist, coming as they did in the wake of American annexation of the Hawaiian Islands, Pago Pago, and the Philippines.

The Open Door policy in fact originally had been suggested to the Americans by the British in 1898, when they felt their interests in China threatened by the German and Russian scramble for leaseholds and concessions. By the time the notes were issued, the British had already acquired their own leaseholds and concessions and were therefore no longer interested in the "open door." The powers were halfhearted in their response to the notes, but Hay announced that he had received "satisfactory assurances," thus creating the fiction that America had saved China.

In July 1900, at the height of the Boxer trouble, Hay sent another note to the powers in which he asserted that the United States sought a solution "which may bring about permanent safety and peace in China, [and] preserve Chinese territorial and administrative entity." He went on to say that the solution would also "protect all rights guaranteed to friendly Powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire." Except for Britain, none of the powers replied to this circular, which sought a "collective guarantee" for China.

The high-sounding American moral stand on China had no practical repercussions other than to bolster the Americans' image of themselves. The United States was not strong enough to impose its policy on the other powers, although the notes did imply that America had now acquired world stature.

If China was not partitioned it was neither because of the Boxers nor because of the Americans but because of the jealousies among the powers, none of whom felt strong enough to fight a war to turn a part of China into an outright colony.

CI-XI IN CONTROL—PHASE II: 1902–1908

The empress dowager's vain attempt to stem the tide of change, resulting in the tragic developments of 1900, only heightened the consciousness among the gentry and the officials, even the conservative ones, that China absolutely had to reform its institutions to save itself from the onslaught of imperialism.

Indeed, the reform movement of 1898, which had met a temporary setback with the return of the conservatives to power, had pushed China to a stage from which there was no withdrawing. The conservatives had brought only greater disrepute to the institution of the emperor and the ruling Manchu dynasty. The feeling became sharper that the Manchus were out to protect their limited personal interest at the expense of the country as a whole. And as Confucian solutions became less relevant and change, based on the Western and Japanese experience, more acceptable, a sense of modern nationalism began to emerge in China.

The feeling gained ground that the nation was more important than any particular ruler and led many to the conclusion that to save China they did not have to save the Qing dynasty. The extreme logic of this kind of thinking was represented by the early revolutionaries, who believed that if saving China demanded the sacrifice of the dynasty, then that was the course to follow.

In the larger context Western learning had gained respectability, and new ideas were no longer as threatening as before. Newspapers, magazines, and publishing houses had brought national issues to the public forum. The number involved was still small, but

there was a qualitative change in the intellectual environment. The traditional contempt for the merchant class was being replaced by considerable respect for commercial activity, and many members of the gentry had begun to invest in industry and commerce. Similarly, a military career was no longer looked down on by respectable gentry. The demand was growing for the "people's" (meaning the gentry class's) right to participate in making national decisions.

Ci-xi herself, finally forced to accept the logic of the situation, became an enthusiastic leader of institutional change. From her return to Beijing in January 1902 to her death in November 1908, the empress dowager decreed many far-reaching reforms that gave a major impetus to the modernization of China. Even though her intention was to save the dynasty, many of Ci-xi's reforms had the contrary effect and contributed to the revolutionary overthrow of the Qing.

Although the powers had accepted the continuity of the central government under the empress dowager and there was no longer talk of partitioning China, the reforms were carried out in an international environment that continued to threaten the territorial integrity of the Chinese state. During the Boxer trouble, 175,000 Russian troops had entered Manchuria, ostensibly to protect the Chinese Eastern Railway which Russia was currently in the process of building. However, even after the Boxer protocol had been signed, Russia continued its occupation of Manchurian cities, hoping to get Beijing to grant it special rights in that province. To counter the Russian move the other powers pressured China not to sign a separate treaty with Russia, and the British concluded an alliance with Japan (January 1902) that pledged the two parties to support the "independence and territorial integrity" of China and Korea, while recognizing the special interests of Britain and Japan in China and those of Japan in Korea. This was the first alliance between a European and an Asian state, and it elevated Japan's status to that of a great power.

Russia made an agreement with China (April 1902) to evacuate its troops in stages, but instead of doing that Russia made new demands on China (April 1903) that would have turned Manchuria into a protectorate. The Japanese decided to acknowledge Russian rights in Manchuria in return for Russian acceptance of Japan's special position in Korea. Not gaining an answer, the Japanese went to war and soundly defeated Russia on land (in North Korea and Manchuria) and on sea, 1904–1905. By the Treaty of Portsmouth (September 1905) Japan acquired the Russian leasehold in Liaodong, the southern half of the Chinese Eastern Railway, and a recognition of Japan's paramount interest in Korea. In a separate treaty with China, signed in December 1905, the Japanese secured these rights from Beijing. The Qing government, aware of the new danger in the north, reorganized Manchuria into three centrally administered provinces and opened the Manchu homeland to Han migration (1907).

Within China proper the imperialist powers were focusing their attention on developing railways, which would provide access to their mineral rights and open the interior to foreign goods. Since the capital required was large, its inflow only increased the Chinese servitude to the foreigners.

The imperial reform program covered five fields: military, education, administration, state constitution, and law. In all cases the approach was radical and serious; in the cases of the military, education, and constitutional program, substantial progress changed the nature of China's future society and polity.

Military Reforms

The self-strengthening movement had led to the borrowing of Western technological innovations, but the post-Boxer reforms called for institutional reorganization of the armed forces. A percentage of the traditional Banner forces was demobilized, and old-style military examinations were replaced by a nationwide system of military academies. Modern specialized military units were created, officered by a class of specialists who received their training in the academies and often in military colleges abroad, particularly in Japan.

The key figure in the military reforms was Yuan Shi-kai, who had assumed the posts of governor general of Zhili province and commissioner of the northern ports on the death of Li Hong-zhang in late 1901. In 1903 the Manchurian situation and the possibility of a Russo-Japanese war spurred the military reform program, and Yuan was appointed assistant commissioner of the Army Reorganization Council. Although the new officer corps, having received modern education and being imbued with a patriotic spirit, became a new elite vying for power with the nonmilitary scholar class, the goal of establishing a *centralized,* national standing army of 450,000 men was never reached. The new armies remained fragmented because of regional-provincial interests.

Because of his official position and the funds that he could divert to his use, Yuan's own new army, the Beiyang Army, comprising six divisions (around 70,000 men), soon became a model for the country. The traditional sense of loyalty, which bound the officers to their generals, later created problems for China. For example, the commanders in the Beiyang Army established the Beiyang Clique, owing loyalty to Yuan. Yuan exploited this loyalty to become president of the Chinese Republic in 1911, and he maintained that position by appointing ten of his Beiyang generals as military governors. After he died, the Beiyang generals not only took over power in their areas, establishing warlord satrapies, but also contributed five presidents to the phoney republican government in Beijing.

One graduate from Yuan's Baoding military school, however, turned out to be a revolutionary who destroyed the warlords' power and established the Nationalist Republic in 1927. He was Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jie-shi) who was trained in Baoding in 1907–1908 and in Japan from 1908 to 1911.

The principal achievement of the army reform was social. As the military career became respectable, it attracted men from the scholar-gentry class who believed that the new military would help in recovering national honor and dignity. The new modern army thus became a symbol of patriotism and nationalism.

Educational Reforms

The educational reforms were the most revolutionary in their effect on China. As early as September 1901 the court decreed that a countrywide hierarchy of schools (primary and middle schools, topped by universities) be established to teach modern as well as classical subjects, that students be sent abroad for education, and that current affairs and other Western subjects be incorporated into the imperial examinations. However, shortages of teachers and educational equipment, limited finances, the ambiguous relationship between the old and the new subjects in the imperial examinations, inertia, and inexperience made the provinces hesitant to adopt the new program.

The abolition of the traditional examinations in 1905 changed the situation radically. Since the government still aimed at using the schools to train officials, the channel of upward mobility shifted from traditional education to modern schooling. Provincial authorities and the gentry enthusiastically founded various grades of schools in the county, district, and provincial-capital levels. Girls' schools, normal schools, and vocational schools were also started. Since teachers of modern subjects were still in short supply, more students were sent abroad for training. Japan became the favored country for the Chinese educationists because the Japanese language used the Chinese script and therefore was easier to learn. Besides, the proximity of Japan to China made it relatively cheaper to send students there.

The victory of Japan over Russia in 1904–1905 (which made the Japanese heroes in Asian eyes) was a further confirmation of the fact that the Japanese path to moderniza-

tion was relevant to China and added to the attractiveness of studying in Japan. The number of Chinese students in Japan increased rapidly from about 1,300 in 1904 to about 13,000 in 1906. At the same time Japanese professors were hired to teach in China.

Students also went to America and Europe, but their numbers remained small. After 1908 the United States returned a part of the Boxer indemnity to China, the funds being used to establish a college in Beijing and to support students coming to the United States. By 1911 there were about 800 Chinese students in the United States and half that number in Europe.

By 1910 China had established over 57,000 modern schools, with an enrollment of over 1.6 million. One can add to these figures the 60,000 students in missionary schools. However, the pioneering work done by the missionary schools in introducing Western ideas was now taken over by the Chinese themselves; the revolutionary potential of Western education was no longer the preserve of the Westerners.

By dissociating Confucianism from the educational system the reforms had opened new intellectual vistas for the vast majority of the gentry youths, who could now turn to Western studies with enthusiasm, without feeling alienated from the rest of society. Once this happened it was no longer necessary (as it had been only a few years earlier for Kang You-wei) to justify change on the basis of reinterpreted Confucian ideology. Confucianism began to lose its relevance, and it was only a question of time before Confucian philosophy would come under open attack.

Unlike the traditional classical education, which could be imparted informally in one's own home in a village, the new education demanded formal schoolhouses with laboratories and other physical facilities and teachers who had specialized in various disciplines. Schools, therefore, particularly middle schools and colleges, had to be located in urban centers and students had to live in dormitories. The modern students found intellectual stimulation in being in residential institutions; they could make intimate friends with like-minded students and debate issues with them, go to the library and read books on Western subjects that ranged from political philosophy to art and literature, keep abreast of current affairs by reading local newspapers, and express their opinions in the new journals. Thus a new kind of patriotic, nationalistic, yet cosmopolitan, urban, intellectual class began to replace the traditional scholar-gentry.

Fortuitously, just as the environment within China became more receptive to radical ideas, Chinese students in Japan became a rich source of revolutionary thought. Troubled by Japanese arrogance and contempt for China but desirous of learning from Japan, these students became bitter toward the Qing dynasty, which had thwarted change and allowed the Chinese image to fall so low. While in Japan they also came under the influence of reformers and revolutionaries who had found refuge in that country. Both Liang Qi-chao and Kang You-wei had fled to Japan, which had also provided a haven to the revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen (see boxed note below).

Liang, recognized as the most powerful writer of the age, immersed himself in Western knowledge and, through the various journals he edited in Japan (particularly the *Xin-min cong-bao, New People's Review*, established in 1902), introduced the students to a wide variety of subjects. He wrote lucidly and forcefully on constitutional monarchy, popular sovereignty, republicanism, nationalism, human rights, and so on. His articles on Western philosophers and historical figures dealt with a host of important personalities, such as Luther, Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Tolstoy, Kant, Cromwell, Napoleon, Bismarck, and Mazzini. There is, perhaps, no modern Chinese leader who has not been deeply influenced by Liang Qi-chao. Mao Ze-dong, who in due course would become the greatest Communist leader of modern China, was 16 in 1910 when he first read some of Liang's articles, and he recorded later that he "read

and re-read these until I knew them by heart. I worshipped . . . Liang Chi'i-ch'ao."[17] Mao modeled his writing style on Liang's.

In 1905 Sun Yat-sen, taking advantage of the large numbers of students in Japan and other revolutionary leaders who had had to flee China because of their conspiratorial activities, established an open revolutionary organization, the *Tong-meng-hui* (the United Association, which because of its goals, can be better termed the Revolutionary Alliance), Sun was elected president of the Revolutionary Alliance. In the same year the Revolutionary Alliance established its official organ, the *Min-bao* (*People's Journal*), which gave Sun an opportunity to explain his ideology of *san-min zhu-yi*, the Three People's Principles. The first principle, nationalism, was basically an anti-Manchu stand, aimed at the overthrow of the Manchus and returning political power to the Han people in a republican form of government; the second, democracy, implied modern egalitarianism guaranteed by a constitution; the third, people's livelihood, emphasized the necessity to eliminate social inequities by establishing state socialism to control industries and communications and by creating a tax system that would not allow the owners of real estate to profit from future rises in land values. Although the last principle has often been translated as socialism, Sun seemed more concerned with urban problems than with rural ones. However, his ideology was broad enough to be attractive to large numbers of Chinese who represented a wide spectrum of political opinion.

Between 1905 and 1910 the revolutionaries organized several uprisings in China that often involved students who had studied in Japan and returned to China to teach or join the military. Although the uprisings failed, the radicalization process was heightened. There was something very attractive about the idea that a single act of revolution would put China on par with the foreign nations that had been humiliating it. Even Liang Qi-chao, who attacked the revolutionaries and propagated gradual reforms and

SUN YAT-SEN (1866–1925)

Sun, born in a village near Macao, was China's first professional modern revolutionary. He left home at the age of 13 to join his elder brother in Honolulu, where he enrolled in a three-year boarding school run by the Church of England. He was given instruction in English, Christianity, science, and history. He returned home in 1882, only to be expelled by the village for his iconoclastic act of trying to smash an idol in the village temple. From 1883 he lived mostly in Hong Kong, where he received further education and gained a medical degree in 1892. In Hong Kong, Sun also converted to Christianity.

Sun's interest in China's future was quickened by China's defeats at the hands of the foreign nations, and he began to entertain ideas of rebellion against the Qing dynasty. However, he first tried the path of the reformers and in 1894 wrote a letter to Li Hong-zhang in which he made certain proposals that he thought would help China's regeneration. Li ignored his letter and did not grant him an interview. Later that year, Sun, with financial help from overseas Chinese, organized his first secret society, the Revive China Society, which aimed at overthrowing the Manchu government and establishing a republic.

In 1895 Sun plotted an uprising in Guangzhou, but the plot was discovered and several of the conspirators were arrested and executed. Sun sought refuge in Japan because the Hong Kong authorities, under pressure from Beijing, ordered him to leave the colony. From then on, until the end of his life, Sun remained committed to revolution. In China, he came to be universally recognized as a symbol of nationalism and patriotism. After his death he was canonized as Guo-fu, the father of the nation.

constitutional monarchy, contributed to this radicalization with his articles on the corruption and inefficiency of the Manchu regime (Kang and Liang were loyal to the emperor, not to the empress dowager), his propagation of nationalism, and his call for a spirit of destruction to cast off the enslavement to the past. As Timothy Richard noted in 1906, "the sons of the Chinese nobility and ruling classes are being educated in Japan by the thousands and return home fired by her example and emulous to repeat it."[18]

Anti-Manchu feeling was also growing on the mainland, where intellectuals used the protection offered by the treaty ports to establish revolutionary societies and journals. For example, in 1902 two well-respected scholars, Cai Yuan-pei and Zhang Bing-lin (who in 1900 had publicly cut off his queue, a symbol of subservience to the Manchus), established the Patriotic Academy in Shanghai International Settlement and under the guise of education carried on anti-Manchu activities. Protected in the foreign settlement, the Shanghai paper, *Su-bao* (*Jiangsu Journal*), published the radical speeches made at the Patriotic Academy and provided it financial aid. Zhang used the columns of *Su-bao* to refute the arguments of the reformers who advocated a constitutional monarchy, referring to the Guang-xu emperor by name and calling him a "little clown."

In 1903 an 18-year-old Japan-returned student, Zou Rong, published a pamphlet entitled *Ge-ming zhun* (*The Revolutionary Army*), with a forward by Zhang Bing-lin. *The Revolutionary Army,* a most outrageous and outspoken attack on the Manchus, received favorable reviews in the *Su-bao.* Zou's thesis was that the only solution to China's problems lay in the violent overthrow of the "barbarous Beijing government" and the establishment of a republic modeled on the United States:

> The autocracy of the last few thousand years must be swept away, the slavery of thousands of years abolished. The 5,000,000 barbarian Manchus . . . must be destroyed, and the great shame they have inflicted in their 260 years of cruel and harsh treatment expunged, that the Chinese mainland may be purified. . . .
>
> [The Manchus] have lived off the food of our fellow countrymen, lived off our land, and benefited from the great generosity of our compatriots to such an extent that they could not repay us with the minutest particle of gratitude, even if they drank our urine and licked our ordure.[19]

Apart from suggesting that the Manchus, including the emperor, should be killed in revenge, Zou made a remarkably clear analysis of China's current problems. His booklet reflected his admiration of America and his passionate faith in constitutional government.

At the request of the Manchu government, the authorities of the International Settlement sent out orders to arrest the various persons connected with the Patriotic Academy and *Su-bao.* Many fled from Shanghai, but Zhang and Zou stayed on to court arrest. The newspaper and the academy were closed down; Zou was given a two years' sentence and Zhang, three. Zou died in prison in 1905 and gained the martyrdom he had sought. Zou's booklet became a best seller and went through several printings.

These years of hectic anti-Manchu thinking and activity also produced the first modern woman revolutionary martyr, Qiu Jin (1879?–1907). At age 24, already married and a mother of two children, Qiu Jin was so moved by the post-Boxer developments that she decided to give up her family and dedicate her life to the revolutionary cause. She went to Japan in 1904, joined the Revolutionary Alliance, and on her return to China in 1906 became a schoolteacher in Zhejiang as a cover for her secret activities. However, her plot for an armed uprising (1907) became known and she was arrested and executed. Known as Woman Warrior of Jianhu Lake, Qiu Jin's's death inspired many young intellectuals, men and women, to follow her path.

Constitutional Reforms

The victory of Japan over Russia in the 1904–1905 war served to convince many vacillating Chinese that a constitutional monarchy was the only path to national strength. Had not the well-respected scholar-industrialist Zhang Jian written, even before the Russo-Japanese War had ended, that "the outcome of this war depends on which nation has gained a constitutional government"?[20] The new education and the new press had created a sense of nationalism among the educated and the commercial classes, which resulted in the rise of direct popular responses to political developments. For example, anti-Russian demonstrations in 1903 to protest Russian occupation of Manchuria were followed by the far more widespread anti-American boycott in 1905–1906 to protest U.S. laws prohibiting the immigration of Chinese labor into America. The effectiveness of the boycott can be seen in the fall of Standard Oil Company sales in Guangzhou by 80 percent between July and November 1905.

The empress dowager could no longer resist the growing demand of her loyal ministers and the public that constitutional reforms be instituted. In 1905 she reluctantly agreed to send five high officials on a mission abroad to investigate various constitutional governments and in 1906 finally proclaimed her commitment to the principle of constitutionalism. There were public celebrations in many cities marking the issuance of this decree. Self-government societies were established and experiments begun in local self-government.

For a whole year there was no further news on the subject. In anticipation of the constitution, the court turned to the reorganization of the executive and administrative organs of the government. The traditional 6 boards were converted into 11 Western-style ministries (some of which, like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had come into operation immediately after the Boxer trouble). Theoretically, the racial qualifications for appointment of ministers and vice-ministers were eliminated (the boards had two ministers and two vice-ministers each, one a Manchu, the other a Han) and the ministries were now headed by a single person. However, in practice these high posts were still evenly divided between the Manchus and the Han. The Ministry of War was entirely staffed by Manchus. An attempt was also made to separate the three powers of government (the executive, the legislative, and the judicial), but the country had a long way to go in establishing a parliament, assemblies, and a legal code before these schemes could become operable.

Late in 1907 the court announced that China would have a National Assembly, with half its members elected, and fully elected deliberative assemblies at the provincial and local levels. But there was still no indication when all this was to come about. The urban elite clamored for an early decision.

When the draft constitution was approved in August 1908, it turned out to be a copy of the Japanese constitution, with a few amendments that gave even more power to the throne. The most glaring of these was that members of parliament were forbidden to petition the emperor. All power was vested in the emperor and the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary were only advisory bodies. Moreover, full constitutional government was to be introduced gradually over a period of nine years. In 1908 preparations were to be made for convening the provincial assemblies in 1909; in 1910 a National Assembly, with half the members nominated and the other half representing the provincial assemblies, was to be convened to oversee the preparations for the next five years (taking a census, introducing local self-government, codifying laws, establishing local courts, collecting revenue data, etc.) and generally to ready the country for the promulgation of the constitution and the parliament in 1916.

On November 15, 1908 the empress dowager died, preceded by a day by the Guang-xu emperor. Three-year-old Pu-yi,

son of Prince Chun (half-brother of Guangxu), succeeded to the throne (reign title: Xuan-tong), with his father acting as regent.

THE END OF THE MANCHU DYNASTY: 1909–1911

It is said that the dying emperor had advised Prince Chun that when Pu-yi ascended the throne, Yuan Shi-kai should be beheaded because he was a traitor responsible for the emperor's downfall. Apparently Prince Chun did not feel confident enough to act on this advice, but early in 1909 he did order Yuan to retire from office and return to his native place to treat an imaginary ailment in his foot.

With the death of Zhang Zhi-dong, the last of the great provincial leaders, in October 1909, China was left without any mature leadership. Even Robert Hart, the grand old man of the Customs Service and longtime adviser of China, retired in 1908 and left for England. Prince Chun now became the de facto ruler of China, but he lacked the vision and the qualities of a great leader and was wholly incapable of handling the explosive political situation. The Manchu ruling clan, loath to part with power, was becoming more and more antagonistic to Han ambitions; the Han gentry and merchants were demanding greater participation in politics; the revolutionaries had spread their activities throughout the country (between 1906 and 1908, there were seven uprisings against the Manchus in Guangdong, Guang-xi, Yunnan, and Hunan); bomb-throwing anarchists were becoming popular heroes; and anti-Manchu sentiment had affected even the reform-minded Han who had no interest in revolution.

Prince Chun followed the original schedule for the constitutional program: The provincial assemblies were organized in October 1909, and in January 1910 the regulations for local government and the drafting of the law codes were announced. Since the vote was restricted to teachers at certain levels, graduates from middle schools, degree holders, officials above a certain rank, and owners of property valued at $5,000, the elected assembly members were all members of the established elite: the officials, the gentry, and the affluent merchants. As expected, the gentry predominated.

The elections gave an opportunity to these constitutionalists to heighten their activities and their demands. Representatives of the provinces met in late 1909 and established the Federation of Provincial Assemblies (FPA), which began to lobby at the national level for a change in the timetable, petitioning the court to summon parliament immediately.

By the time the FPA made its third petition, the National Assembly had been convened (October 1910), according to schedule. The petition received the backing of the National Assembly and virtually all of the governors and governors general. The court had to give in to this pressure, and on November 4 it was announced that the parliament would be convened in 1913 instead of 1916.

Having made the announcement, the court tried to reimpose control over the constitutionalists by decreeing that it was illegal to petition the court. Some provincial leaders who attempted to do so were arrested and exiled. But the National Assembly could not be dissolved and members of that body continued to question the role and the authority of the grand councilors, and they requested that a cabinet responsible to the National Assembly be appointed to replace them. The imperial reply was curt:

> Whether the grand councilors are responsible or irresponsible and whether a responsible cabinet should be organized or not, are problems to be decided by the court and should not be interfered with by the chief members of the assembly. Therefore the request is to be dismissed without any further discussion.[21]

The conflict between the members of the National Assembly and the court (for that matter, between the provincial assembly members and the government) arose out of differing perceptions of the nature of constitutional government. In the eyes of the court the National Assembly and the provincial assemblies were *advisory* bodies, not *legislative* organs. Although technically that was true, the elected representatives, having realized that they had considerable power based on national sentiment and public opinion, clamored for the right to participate in government. They wanted a genuine parliament and a cabinet that was answerable to it.

In May 1911, when the National Assembly was not in session, Prince Chun abolished the old cabinet and the Grand Council, replacing them with a new cabinet. The constitution of the cabinet dispelled any doubts regarding Prince Chun's lack of vision, his incapacity to lead the country as a whole, or his strong anti-Han bias. Of the 13 cabinet members, 8 were Manchus, 1 was a Mongol bannerman, and only 4 were Han. Imperial clansmen, close relatives of Prince Chun, were given the office of prime minister and the ministries of foreign affairs, finance, agriculture, industry, commerce, and the navy. Other Manchus looked after civil affairs, defense, justice, and territories. Of the four Han, one was vice-premier, one was vice-minister of foreign affairs, and the other two were to look after education and communications. The new cabinet was still individually and collectively responsible to the emperor. How was this cabinet supposed to lead the country to constitutional government?

As if this was not enough to shatter the new elite's faith in the Qing dynasty, the court took two further actions in May that made it appear that it was a pawn of the foreign powers and an enemy of the people: the nationalization of all private trunk railway lines and the Hu-guang railway loan agreement with Britain, France, Germany, and America.

The Qing plan was actually good for the country but it was looked upon with suspicion because of the popular impression that the court was being coerced by the imperialists for more monopoly rights to build railways in China—the railroads had become a visible symbol of imperialist aggression.

With the emergence of nationalism patriotic Chinese had begun to demand that railroad rights be recovered to ensure China's sovereignty. Indeed, the gentry and the merchants in the provinces started to set up private railway companies and raise funds to redeem foreign railway lines. This movement made the railways a provincial, rather than a national, issue. But the local funds raised were far too meager to fulfill the aspirations of the people involved.

When the court decided to centralize and nationalize the railways and to compensate local private railway shareholders, the act should have been hailed as a victory for nationalism. Instead, the provincial leaders were outraged. Sentiments of parochial provincialism and nationalism became intermixed. "Railway protection societies" sprang up in Sichuan, Guangdong, Hunan, Hubei, and other provinces to oppose the central plan and fight the nationalization of railways.

The fact that seven days after issuing the decree nationalizing railways the government had contracted a huge loan from the four-power consortium to build the Hankou to Guangzhou and Hankou to Sichuan trunk lines (Hu-guang railways) gave the impression (incorrectly) that the Manchus were buying out the Chinese and gratuitously selling national interests to foreign powers. There were mass meetings, hunger strikes, student protests, the closing of shops by merchants, strong-worded articles in the press, and a flood of petitions to the court to rescind the loans and punish the ministers concerned. Public opinion was inflamed even further when the rumor began to circulate that the foreign powers were planning to dismember China.

The gap between the reformer-constitutionalists and the revolutionaries began to close. For example, in Sichuan the movement to stop paying taxes to Beijing (on the grounds that they would be used to service foreign loans) and the anti-imperialist slogan "Sichuan for the Sichuanese," raised by the

gentry and the merchants, acquired a strong antidynastic content. On September 7, when the governor general of Sichuan arrested some leaders of the local railway company, there was mob rioting. The police opened fire, leading to the "Chengdu massacre." It seemed as if the Manchus had joined the imperialists and turned their guns against patriotic Chinese.

As the provincial leaders became estranged from the government, their views began to synchronize with those of the revolutionaries: The Manchus had no intention of sharing power with the Han Chinese, so the Manchus must go. During this entire period Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Alliance had also been active, although it suffered from many handicaps. Since the alliance had to operate from headquarters outside China and act in secrecy within China, it could not develop a strong organizational setup. The situation became worse in 1907 when the Japanese, pressured by the Qing government, expelled Sun from Japan and he moved to Hanoi in French Indochina.

During the next two years, Sun staged six fruitless uprisings in the provinces bordering Indochina before being asked by the French to leave Hanoi.

The headquarters then shifted to Hong Kong, and the Revolutionary Alliance now concentrated its activities in the Qing New Army, infiltrating its officer corps and spreading propaganda among the soldiers. On April 27, 1911, Huang Xing, a close associate of Sun, led an attack on the governor general's office in Guangzhou. Despite the planning, things went wrong: Arms did not arrive in time; there was a lack of communication between the revolutionaries and the prorevolutionary city guards; and in any case, the government had received information about the attack and was forewarned. Some revolutionaries killed one another by mistake, and Huang Xing lost three fingers in the foray. However, the uprising did produce "72 martyrs," who became a source of inspiration to others, and their common grave serves as a historic landmark in Guangzhou.

As far as the alliance was concerned, the Guangzhou fiasco was a bitter setback. Huang Xing went into hiding in Hong Kong while Sun was traveling in America. In October an uprising similar to the one in Guangzhou was planned in Wuchang (one of the three cities that form Wuhan, the others being Hankou and Hanyang), Hubei province. The revolt was planned for October 16, but because of an inadvertent explosion of revolutionary ammunition on October 9 (which made the authorities aware of the plot), the uprising was staged on October 10. The revolutionaries had infiltrated units of the New Army, won over some of the officers, and recruited 3,000 soldiers to their cause. The Eighth Engineering Battalion of the New Army was the first to revolt. Four other battalions, out of a total of 22, joined the uprising and attacked the governor general's office. The Manchu governor general, the military commander, and the loyalist troops fled the scene.

The revolutionaries had succeeded in taking over Wuchang when they discovered that they had no leader. All the major leaders of the Revolutionary Alliance were nowhere near the scene of action, and even the minor ones were not easily reachable or available. Looking for someone well known, the important members of the local revolutionary organizations chose to invite brigade-commander Li Yuan-hong to become the military governor of "independent" Hubei province. Li was anti-Republican and had nothing to do with the Revolutionary Alliance. The story goes that the revolutionaries pulled him out from under the bed where he was hiding and, holding a gun to his head, asked him whether he would like to be the George Washington of China or die on the spot. Having forced Li to be "elected" to the post of military governor, the revolutionaries then "elected" Tan Hua-long, chair of the provincial assembly, to head the civil government.

This was not an auspicious start for the revolution. The revolutionaries had handed over power to an antirevolutionary and to a constitutionalist. But the revolutionaries were right on one count: Li and Tan did lend dignity to the uprising, which may otherwise have been no more than another incident of no import. Although the activities of the Revolutionary Alliance were poorly organized and poorly coordinated and suffered from a perennial shortage of funds, its ideology and goals, however loosely defined, provided an alternative to the Qing government. The reformers and the constitutionalists found it easier to accommodate themselves to a constitutional republic than to the Manchu autocracy. The manifesto, which was to be proclaimed by the revolutionary military governors of "liberated" provinces, was drafted by the Revolutionary Alliance and spelled out the basic ideology of the Three People's Principles.

By the end of November, all provinces south of the Great Wall except Zhili, Henan, Gansu, and Shandong had established military governments and declared their independence of the Qing government. In several provinces the central authority melted away without a fight; in some there was token resistance; and in the few where there was fighting, the imperial troops lost heart when their generals were killed. After the October 10 uprising in Wuchang (celebrated today in Taiwan as the Double Ten festival—tenth day of the tenth month), the court realized that it could not do without Yuan Shi-kai because of his military talents and also because his commanders in the elite New Army units, which he had built up, refused to take orders from a Manchu general. Prince Chun, who hated Yuan, was forced to recall him by appointing him governor general of Hubei and Hunan and giving him overall military command. Yuan, however, had not forgotten the insulting manner in which he had been dismissed, so he delayed accepting the imperial order on the excuse that his foot had not yet healed. In any case, Yuan was not a loyalist and a diehard conservative, ready to sacrifice himself for the Manchu dynasty. Indeed, despite the fact that he had "betrayed" the emperor, Yuan, a protege of Li Hong-zhang and a one-time self-strengthener, had done much to introduce progressive reforms in the post-Boxer period. He now proved himself to be an astute politician by not responding to the court overtures until Beijing could meet his demands: opening of the parliament in 1912, amnesty for all revolutionaries, legal recognition of the Revolutionary Alliance, full authority to himself to reorganize the armed forces, and adequate military funds. Thus he made himself out to be a friend both of the court and the revolutionaries and emerged as the only possible arbitrator between the two.

As the situation worsened the Manchus panicked. Accepting Yuan's demands, the court appointed him imperial envoy with full powers over the army and navy; the cabinet was dissolved, and Yuan was appointed prime minister with the authority to organize his own cabinet (November 2). When the National Assembly elected Yuan as the new prime minister on November 8, he had already assumed command of the military. At this juncture, only Zhili, Shandong, Henan, and three Manchurian provinces were still loyal to the court.

Yuan's troops reoccupied Hankou and proved to the fledgling revolutionary governments that he still had the military power to undo their work. But Yuan did not proceed with the suppression of the revolutionaries because he had already made contact with them and offered to negotiate a settlement. By early November there was talk among the revolutionaries that Yuan should be offered the presidency of the republic; by mid-November, Sun, who was abroad, approved the proposal by telegraph. Yuan kept the pressure on the revolutionaries by occupying Hanyang on November 27 and threatening Wuchang, which was perceived as a sort of headquarters of the provisional revolutionary government. On December 2 the representatives of the revolutionary provinces formally resolved that Yuan be elected president if he shifted his allegiance from the Manchus to the republic. The same day, Nanjing fell into the hands of the revolutionaries and was soon declared the future capital of the republic.

Peace negotiations between the north (representing Yuan more than the Qing government) and the south (the revolutionaries) began in earnest on December 17 in Shang-

hai. The foreign powers, although "neutral," heavily favored the strongman Yuan Shi-kai, who could bring peace to the country. The compromise solution worked out by the negotiators was that Yuan would be made president if he could persuade the Manchu emperor to abdicate.

On December 25 Sun returned to China and was elected president by representatives of 17 revolutionary provinces (December 29). Sun agreed to concede the post to Yuan if Yuan joined the republican cause. On January 1, 1912, Sun took the presidential oath and declared the founding of the Republic of China. Li Yuan-hong was made vice-president, a cabinet was appointed, and the provisional government of the Republic of China came into existence. On January 22 Sun informed Yuan that as soon as the emperor abdicated and Yuan publicly declared support for the republic, Sun would resign in favor of Yuan. Having been convinced by Yuan that the future safety of the Manchus lay in their voluntary acceptance of the republic, the emperor abdicated on February 12. The abdication edict vested sovereignty in the people and gave Yuan Shi-kai full powers to organize a provisional republican government. Sun resigned on February 14 and, on the following day, Yuan was elected president unanimously by the representatives of the 17 provinces.

It was with surprising ease that the 2,000-year-old Confucian imperial structure was abolished, but the manner in which the transfer of power took place did not augur well for the future of either the revolutionaries or of the constitutionalists.

NOTES

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CHAPTER 5

THE REPUBLIC THAT NEVER WAS: 1912–1927

THE FAILURE OF THE REVOLUTION

The way the revolutionaries and the constitutionalists had joined hands in the final act of the revolution, the way the revolution was carried out, and the way Yuan Shi-kai ascended to the presidency meant several things, none of which boded well for the future of constitutionalism in China.

At the national level Sun Yat-sen's ideas of the revolutionary process and the stage-by-stage organization of the government had to be abandoned. Sun had envisioned a three-stage introduction of democracy. The first stage was to be a military unification of China, with the military exercising authority at all levels, from the center to the districts. After three years of this purely military government, the next stage (lasting six years) was expected to oversee the introduction of provisional constitutional government under military tutelage. At the end of nine years a full-fledged constitutional government was to be established, and the military government was to cease functioning. This plan could have been followed only if Sun Yat-sen and the Revolutionary Alliance had led the military insurrection and been in total command of the situation.

The revolution, as it had taken place, was, however, the combined product of reformist and revolutionary forces. The reforms produced social disequilibrium by creating new values and rising expectations among the politicized intellectuals and the new merchant class, which in turn put pressure on an inept leadership to concede even greater reforms, which were not forthcoming. This fostered a "revolutionary" ambience. The Revolutionary Alliance, exploiting the new values and the new nationalism, provided an alternative to the traditional monarchical system (a democratic republic), and by staging rebellions, added to social dysfunction. Both forces found common ground in constitutionalism, and growing anti-Manchu sentiment weakened the stand of those who favored a constitutional monarchy.

At the provincial level the provincial assemblies and local self-government had brought local leadership to the fore and bred provincialism; slogans such as "Guangdong for the Guangdongese" and "Sichuan for the Sichuanese" became popular. These tendencies were strengthened when the provinces declared themselves independent of the national government. The heightened autonomy of the provinces made it difficult to reimpose central authority, revolu-