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Author(s): Albert A. Altman and Harold Z. Schiffrin
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Sun Yat-sen and the Japanese: 1914–16

ALBERT A. ALTMAN AND
HAROLD Z. SCHIFFRIN

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

THE First World War changed the pattern of international relations in East Asia. What had previously been another arena for the European power struggle became the cockpit for two regional forces, Japanese expansionism and incipient Chinese nationalism. The confrontation between the two, which was to last for a quarter of a century, began as a most unequal contest. Great power rivalry had enabled China to balance off her enemies and to maintain her status as a sovereign entity. But with Europe distracted, China was helpless, and Japan had a unique opportunity to pursue an independent expansionist policy. Instead of cooperating with England and the other powers in order to get a fair share of the China spoils, after 1914 Japan could make her bid for the grand prize, exclusive access to China's resources. Thus the European powers' pre-occupation with mutual slaughter exposed China to extreme danger, greater than that which she had faced during the heyday of classical imperialism.[1] But Japan was not alone in welcoming the European retreat. Japan's opportunity was also Sun Yat-sen's opportunity.

Since August, 1913, Sun had been an isolated and frustrated exile in Japan. After the failure of the Second Revolution in July, the foreign powers continued to sustain his enemy, Yuan Shih-k'ai, who made a mockery of the republic which was to have been the crowning edifice of Sun's career. Yet the powers, and especially England, welcomed Yuan as a respectable stabilizing force. They had breathed a collective sigh of relief when Yuan first replaced Sun in 1912, and did not shed any tears when Sun fell into deeper obscurity in 1913.[2]

In an effort to recoup his losses Sun created a secret, monolithic political organization to replace the Kuomintang.[3] He had failed in

A preliminary version of this paper was presented by H. Z. Schiffrin at the 28th International Congress of Orientalists in Canberra on 11 January 1971.

[1] G. F. Hudson, *The Far East in World Politics* (Oxford, 1937), pp. 172–6.
[2] Jerome Ch'en, *Yuan Shih-k'ai* (Stanford, 1961), pp. 166–77.
[3] George T. Yu, *Party Politics in Republican China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1966), pp. 117–32.

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the past because he had relied upon the power of ideas—anti-Manchuism, republicanism and socialism—to launch China on a crash course toward modernization. He had relinquished his personal ambitions in 1912 because, among other reasons, he had felt that at least his basic principles had prevailed. Now, however, it was not the power of ideas, but the idea of power and the instruments of power that fascinated him. This was not blind obsession with power, but the desire for strong personal leadership in order to sweep out the enemies of republicanism, and to realize the ambitions he had for China.

Nevertheless, the new organization that Sun created for this purpose, the Chinese Revolutionary Party, was not a success. Only a fraction of the Kuomintang joined the party when it was established in Tokyo in June, 1914. Some of the leading figures of the 1911 Revolution, including its military hero, Huang Hsing, refused to give Sun the personal oath of loyalty he demanded from all members. They had previously denied Sun leadership of the Second Revolution and preferred to continue the struggle independently.[4]

This internal dissension led to competitive fund-raising among the overseas Chinese. Though the Cantonese and Fukienese emigrants who had financed the 1911 Revolution and who identified republicanism with the political ascendancy of the south, felt strongly about the need to wage an anti-Yuan campaign, their remittances to Sun were insufficient. In 1913 the defeat of Yuan posed a more difficult problem than had faced Sun Yat-sen before the 1911 Revolution. While he could apply a 'domino' strategy against the bankrupt and ineffectual Manchu dynasty, Sun could not expect to overthrow Yuan and his generals by merely capturing a single provincial capital or province. A revolutionary war against a well-armed enemy required massive funds and access to modern arms. Thus in addition to a disciplined party, Sun saw the need for foreign assistance. The Chinese of his generation had to consider the influence of foreigners whenever contemplating political action, and this never appeared truer than in 1913 when a solid international front sustained Yuan Shih-k'ai.

Several months before the final break with Yuan, Sun apparently looked to Japan as the only possibility of breaking this front. In February, 1913, when he visited there in connection with his railroad project, he was deeply impressed with the anti-British, Pan-Asian theme expounded by Katsura Tarō, acting Prime Minister whose third

[4] Chün-tu Hsüeh, *Huang Hsing and the Chinese Revolution* (Stanford, 1961), pp. 160, 167–8.

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cabinet had fallen a few days earlier.[5] Katsura, a soldier-politician, and *bête noire* of Japanese parliamentarians, spoke of a joint Sino-Japanese effort to liberate India and resuscitate the colored races of the entire world. With this accomplished, he argued, Japan 'would never have to worry about land for colonization and commerce, and would never pursue the crude policy of conquest.'[6] Though he warned Sun against Yuan's intentions, Katsura advised postponing the showdown until Sun was better prepared.

In his talks to the *hua-ch'iao* in Japan Sun elaborated on the subject of Sino-Japanese friendship. He emphasized the common racial and cultural ties as well as complementary geographical positions. China, the continental power, and Japan, the maritime power, were as mutually dependent as 'lips and teeth'. According to Sun this was the foundation for true friendship, unlike earlier Sino-Russian agreements which had resulted in Russian territorial expansion at China's expense. The pro-Russian policy had lost Mongolia for China, and a pro-Russian orientation in the future, Sun argued, might lead to the loss of the eighteen provinces.[7] He also discounted the possibility of American help because of her isolationist policy: 'Will China be able to rely completely upon the America of the Monroe Doctrine? Will America be able unequivocally to help China realize her destiny?'[8] And since he considered Britain his major foreign enemy, Sun's only alternative was Japan. Although the Japanese government had disappointed him, Sun knew that there was no other country where he had so many influential friends. He furthermore believed in the logic and inevitability of a Sino-Japanese alliance.

However, when he returned to Japan as an exile in August, Sun found it difficult to convince the Japanese that they needed him in order to establish a special relationship with China. Until the European war, they were satisfied to get railroad concessions from Yuan Shih-k'ai in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, just as the Russians and British were

[5] Marius B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), pp. 158–9; and Sung Yüeh-lun, *Tsung-li tsai Jih-pen chih ko-ming huo-tung* [Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary Activities in Japan] (Taipei, 1953), pp. 54–5. According to Sung, Akiyama Teisuke, who introduced Sun to Katsura, wanted to break Sun's ties with Inukai and Toyama, who were among Katsura's political enemies.

[6] *Kuo-fu nien-p'u* [Chronological Biography of Sun Yat-sen] (Rev. ed., Taipei, 1969), I, 496.

[7] Sun's speech to Chinese students in Tokyo on 23 February 1913, in *Kuo-fu ch'üan-chi* [Collected Works of Sun Yat-sen] (abbreviated hereafter as KFCC) (Taipei, 1957), III, 119–20.

[8] From Sun's speech in Nagasaki on 21 March 1913; quoted in *Kuo-fu nien-p'u*, I, 503.

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getting other concessions.[9] In the spring of 1914 Sun's overture to Prime Minister Ōkuma, promising Japan 'over-all commercial domination' of China, and profits exceeding Britain's in India, went unheeded.[10] And after the war broke out, the Japanese continued to ignore him: they hoped to take from Yuan Shih-k'ai that which Sun had merely promised.

After the presentation of the Twenty-one Demands in January, 1915, many Chinese leaders, including some of Sun's colleagues, decided that resistance to Japan had precedence over the anti-Yuan struggle.[11] Now it was even more difficult for Sun to explain his position to the *hua-ch'iao*. His obsession with overthrowing Yuan had isolated him from the main course of Chinese nationalism. For that matter, he had omitted the nationalist slogan from the platform of his new party.[12] Sun felt that this goal had been achieved with the overthrow of the Manchus. Instead of joining the national protest against Japan and her demands, two months later, on 14 March 1915, Sun wrote to the Japanese Foreign Office offering better terms than they were trying to extort from Yuan.[13]

Without knowing the details of Sun's offers, his friends sensed that he had become an unwitting pawn of Japanese expansionists. It was strongly suspected that the Japanese used him as a threat to soften Yuan's resistance.[14] Among those who expressed this fear was Dr H. H. Kung, Sun's new brother-in-law, and a veteran of the 1911 Revolution. In April, 1915, Dr Kung wrote a remarkable letter to G. E. Morrison, Yuan Shih-k'ai's British adviser, and described how Japan intended using Sun to facilitate her hegemony over China:

> Japan dares to make her unreasonable demands and to send over her armies because she thinks China is not united. With spies in every important city of China, and Chinese refugees in Japan who are supported by Japanese 'friends', supplied with funds and munitions of war from hidden sources, and guarded by Japanese police and special detectives, a ready-made revolt can be imported into any Chinese center where it may help Japan's schemes. It is not necessary that this revolt should be strong enough to overthrow the central government. It will serve Japan's purpose to have it create a disturbance in some place where she has property or where one or two Japanese can

[9] Herbert H. Gowen and Josef W. Hall, *An Outline History of China* (New York, 1929), p. 369; and Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 169.

[10] Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 188–9.

[11] Hsüeh, *Huang Hsing*, p. 177; and Yu, *Party Politics*, pp. 137–8.

[12] Yu, *Party Politics*, p. 123.

[13] Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 192–3.

[14] Paul S. Reinsch, *An American Diplomat in China* (New York, 1922), p. 130. See also *San-shui Liang Yen-sun hsien-sheng nien-p'u* [Chronological Biography of Liang Shih-i] (Reprinted, Taipei, 1962), I, 225; and Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 189.

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be mobbed for the good of their country. Then she can send her gunboats to protect her interests, and her troops can take possession of any place where her political strategy has paved the way. China may refuse to sign the twenty-one demands, but Japan's great continental scheme, which includes even India, will be only delayed, not thwarted, if she can nourish local insurrections or import ready-made ones. For the broad success of this scheme it is necessary that she have under her protection and influence prominent Chinese revolutionists or suspects . . . The writer of this statement through American and other friends, had interviews with Dr. Sun in Shanghai before the second revolution (in which he was dissuaded from taking any active part) and in Tokyo during the past year . . . He is convinced through these interviews and others reported by American friends that Dr. Sun truly desires the good of his country, but because of some mistaken ideas he can easily be 'worked' by the Japanese. After the Japanese had invaded Shantung to attack Ch'ing-tao, in reply to the remark 'You ought to be in Peking helping the President and your country,' Dr. Sun said, 'I have no power. It is not for me to say.' When conversing with an American friend on the situation in China he wept. Some think that his dangers and anxieties have affected his nervous system. The facts in regard to Japanese machinations and their manipulation of Dr. Sun are known to the writer through personal investigagations and from reliable sources. He feels it his duty to report the situation to those who are in close connection with the government, and asks that what has been written be considered strictly private and confidential.[15]

Dr Kung stated that Sun had been turned into a tool for Japanese 'mischief-making', and that his name and prestige were worth more than 'several divisions of an army'. To defeat the Japanese design, Kung suggested that Yuan Shih-k'ai write a personal letter to Sun, inviting him back to China, like other revolutionaries who had accepted the President's offer of an amnesty. The important thing was to get Sun out of Japan.

Though it had previously been reported than Yuan had made generous offers to both Sun and Huang Hsing,[16] Sun was in no mood for compromise. The war in Europe, he felt, had given the anti-Yuan movement a new lease on life. In September, 1914, he had written to his fund-raiser in South-east Asia, Teng Tse-ju, that 'With the eruption of war, Europe would have no time to pay attention to the East, and the national traitor will be deprived of foreign loans and military equipment. This is our opportunity to rise . . .'[17] Though Sun kept

[15] Morrison Papers (The Mitchell Library, Sydney), Item 136. Kung's letter is dated 3 April 1915. We are grateful to Professor Ernest P. Young for sending us a copy of the letter.

[16] See Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 191; and Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), p. 23.

[17] Sun's letter to Teng Tse-ju, 1 September 1914, in KFCC, V, 178.

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repeating this message,[18] it evoked little response as long as most Chinese were more disturbed by the Japanese threat. The anti-Yuan campaign lacked impetus until Yuan himself supplied it with a powerful propellant. When he gave vent to his imperial aspirations, Yuan became more than the personal enemy of Sun Yat-sen. He invited the hostility of every Chinese who identified republicanism with modernization.

In the autumn of 1915 when Yuan's monarchical scheme moved into full swing, Sun exuberantly exclaimed that his enemy was 'riding a tiger'.[19] Though encouraged by the hesitancy of Yuan's generals, especially when the foreign powers evinced disapproval of a monarchical restoration, Sun reaffirmed his determination to pursue an independent course. The frustration of Yuan's monarchical ambitions was only a minor consideration. Nor would the retirement or overthrow of Yuan serve Sun's purpose unless it enabled him and his party to assume control themselves. Thus Sun warned his followers that they 'must be in control of key points', and he declared his refusal to cooperate with defectors from Yuan's camp.[20] This strategy seemed promising when Sun's followers assassinated Yuan's commander in Shanghai, Cheng Ju-ch'eng, on 10 November.[21] In December, however, Ch'en Ch'i-mei's attempted *coup* in Shanghai failed miserably,[22] and by the end of the month Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's supporters had raised the flag of rebellion in Yünnan.[23] The anti-Yuan crusade had begun, but not under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen.

It was at this time, in the beginning of 1916, that the Japanese finally decided to work for Yuan's removal. The precise reasons for the change in Japanese tactics are still not clear, but we can suggest the following considerations.

First of all, Yuan's stubborn resistance to the Twenty-one Demands, which he finally accepted in truncated and less drastic form in May, 1915, and his procrastination in carrying out their terms, aroused Japanese suspicions.[24] They remembered Yuan as a formidable and shrewd antagonist in Korea during the 1880's.[25] They never completely trusted him, and feared his manipulatory ability. Even now there were

[18] See Ko-ming-tang Manifesto, 1 September 1914, in *Kuo-fu nien p'u*, I, 559; and KFCC, V, 182, 205.

[19] KFCC, V, 211.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] Li Chien-nung, *The Political History of China, 1840–1928*. Translated and edited by Ssu-yu Teng and Jeremy Ingalls (Princeton, 1956), p. 326.

[22] *Ibid.*, and *Kuo-fu nien-p'u*, I, 612–14.

[23] Li, *Political History*, pp. 327–9.

[24] Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen*, p. 194.

[25] *Chronological biography of Liang Shih-i*, I, 221.

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signs that he was bargaining with the French and the Russians, and seeking their support for his monarchical scheme in return for a declaration of war against Germany.[26] There was also strong suspicion that failing an arrangement with the Entente powers, he would cooperate with the Germans and Austrians who had hastened to offer congratulations on the forthcoming establishment of the monarchy.[27] Far from having been cowed into subservience by Japanese threats during the first half of 1915, Yuan appeared more confident than ever that he was still his own master. This was especially true when as the war in Europe seemed to drag on interminably, Chinese participation became a more important factor.[28] There had never been unanimity among Japanese policy-makers in evaluating their hand, and now it seemed that Yuan held a card or two of his own.

Secondly, the Japanese were disturbed by Yuan's plan to establish himself as emperor which became an open movement in August, 1915, a few months after his protracted negotiations over the Twenty-one Demands. If he became emperor now it would be as if he had received a vote of confidence to resist Japan, and Yuan the Emperor would be a more prestigious and powerful enemy, especially after the war, when he could expect to balance off the great powers. Hence the Japanese diplomatic initiative against the monarchy on 23 October 1915.[29] By the end of the year, Yuan's continued imperviousness to Japanese suggestions confirmed their fears of his unreliability.

Furthermore, the emergence of the Yünnan anti-monarchical movement revealed the possibility of the Chinese removing Yuan themselves. In this case the Japanese wanted to ensure that their own interests would be protected. Kokuryūkai (Black Dragon or Amur River Society) activists like Uchida Ryōhei had long pressed for a more forceful interventionist policy,[30] but this was too important a matter to leave in the hands of adventurers. The Japanese Army General Staff, working in tandem with the Foreign Office, took charge.

[26] Thomas E. LaFargue, *China and the World War* (Stanford, 1937), pp. 83–4.

[27] Madeleine Chi, *China Diplomacy, 1914–1918* (Harvard East Asian Monographs, No. 31, 1970), p. 76.

[28] A. Whitney Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New York, 1938), p. 198.

[29] The British and the Russians reluctantly joined the Japanese on this occasion. France and Italy followed suit a few days later. See Kwanha Yim, 'Yuan Shih-k'ai and the Japanese', *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXIV, (November, 1964), pp. 65–6. However, as early as August, Japan let Britain know of her reservations concerning the monarchy. See Tōa Dōbunkai (ed.), *Taishi Kaikoroku* [Memoirs of Relations with China] (Reprinted, Tokyo, 1968), I, 762; and Chi, *China Diplomacy*, p. 65.

[30] Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 186–7, 194.

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Lieutenant-General Tanaka Gi'ichi, Deputy Chief of Staff, was a central figure in the Army's plan. In December Tanaka arranged for the transfer of Lieutenant-General Aoki Nobuzumi to Shanghai. Aoki, with his long experience in China affairs and his animosity toward Yuan Shih-k'ai, was the ideal person to encourage and possibly assist anti-monarchical forces. Another officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Matsui Iwane, accompanied him.[31] And in the beginning of January Sun Yat-sen telegraphed his people in Shanghai to explore the possibility of 'using him [Aoki] secretly and indirectly'.[32]

On 15 January 1916, Tanaka submitted a memorandum to the Foreign Minister outlining the Army's position: Japan should not recognize Yuan as Emperor, no matter what her allies might do, and she should be prepared to act in 'self-defence'.[33] Four days later the government adopted the non-recognition policy.[34] The following month, when the southern anti-monarchist army still encountered strong resistance,[35] the Japanese finally decided to play their Sun Yat-sen card, but through private, unofficial channels.

This of course is a familiar ploy when the ends of foreign policy require unsavory means, and is not uniquely Japanese. What was unique in pre-Second World War Japan was the plethora of ultra-nationalistic organizations, business firms and individuals eager to serve the cause of expansionism, even without official approval. In this case the key agent in the execution of Japanese policy was Kuhara Fusanosuke (1869–1965). Kuhara, who had been closely associated with Tanaka since the turn of the century, and who would serve in the latter's cabinet in 1928, is a shadowy figure whose half-century career in mining, industry, politics and right-wing military intrigue deserves a study in itself.[36] According to Kuhara, the government and the Army

[31] Yim, 'Yuan Shih-k'ai', pp. 68–70.

[32] KFCC, IV, 237.

[33] Yim, 'Yuan Shih-k'ai', p. 70.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] Ch'en, *Yuan Shih-k'ai*, p. 225.

[36] On Kuhara, see among others Ivan I. Morris, *Nationalism and the Right Wing in Japan* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 444, 76, n. 4; G. C. Allen, *A Short Economic History of Modern Japan* (London, 1946), p. 75; O. Tanin and E. Yohan, *Militarism and Fascism in Japan* (London, 1934), pp. 51, 257, 269, 274, 279, 294; Ben-Ami Shillony, 'The February 26 Affair: Politics of a Military Insurrection', in George M. Wilson (ed.), *Crisis Politics in Prewar Japan* (Tokyo, 1970), p. 32; Robert A. Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement in Pre-war Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1953), pp. 238, 287–8, 368, 379; James W. Morley, *The Japanese Thrust into Siberia, 1918* (New York, 1957), pp. 98–9; *Nihon Kindaishi Jiten* [Encyclopedia of Modern Japanese History] (Tokyo, 1958), p. 135; *Japan Biographical Encyclopaedia and Who's Who, 1964–1965* (Third ed., Tokyo, n.d.), p. 2254.

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(probably in the person of his friend, Tanaka) requested him to help Sun, but he added that he 'sympathized with Sun's spirit of revolution', and that he considered the loan a 'philanthropic' enterprise.[37] Kuhara's Pan-Asian, anti-Western predilections may help explain his readiness to subsidize Sun, but it should be noted that the identity of ideological and entrepreneurial interests, so characteristic of Kuhara's career, was not lacking on this occasion either.

Akiyama Teisuke, the journalist-politician who had three years previously arranged for Sun's meeting with General Katsura, another disciple of anti-Western Pan-Asianism, acted as intermediary. Akiyama accompanied Sun to Kuhara's home in Tokyo on 20 February 1916.[38] Sun received a loan of 700,000 yen, and signed a receipt in which he pledged his dedication to the cause of 'peace in the Orient and amity between China and Japan'.[39] Sun promised that the loan would be repaid either by the republican government or by himself. He also promised to use his good offices to assist Kuhara's industrial enterprises in China. Similar sentiments and promises were expressed by Sun in a thank-you note sent to Kuhara three days later. On 8 March, one of Sun's followers, Wang T'ung-i, received 200,000 yen from Kuhara. The receipt was written on the stationery of the Chinese Republican Navy. On 16 March, Sun and Wang jointly acknowledged a loan of 300,000 yen. On 8 April and 27 April, Sun received additional loans of 100,000 yen each, the last one being transmitted to him through General Tanaka, thus offering conclusive proof of the Kuhara–Tanaka connexion.

Altogether Sun and Wang received 1,400,000 yen from Kuhara. (The exchange rate for the yen was about \$.50; thus the total amounted to \$700,000). This sum was greater than all the money Sun received from the overseas Chinese in America during his three-year campaign against Yuan Shih-k'ai.[40] (According to Kuhara's recollection, he actually gave Sun two million yen, but he did not have all the receipts. The smaller sum seems more consistent with Sun's military expenditures at this time.)

This was not the kind of alliance Sun had contemplated. It was not unconditional; nor was it exclusive. Continuous and extensive support

[37] H. Z. Schiffrin's interview with Mr Kuhara in Tokyo, 5 December 1963. The first loan is also recorded in Japanese Foreign Ministry (ed.), *Nihon Gaikō Nenpyō narabi ni Shuyō Bunsho, 1840–1945* [A Chronology and Major Documents of Japanese Foreign Relations, 1840–1945] (Reprinted, Tokyo, 1965), I, p. 210. See also Fujii Shōzō, 'Dai ichiji taisenchū Son Bun to Nihon' [Sun Yat-sen and Japan During World War I], *Rekishi kyōiku*, VIII, No. 2 (1960), 31.

[38] Interview with Kuhara.

[39] This and other receipts in Kuhara's possession were seen by H. Z. Schiffrin.

[40] Huang Fu-luan, *Hua-ch'iao yü Chung-kuo ko-ming* [The Overseas Chinese and the Chinese Revolution] (Hong Kong, 1954), p. 216.

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would depend upon tangible achievements, and in the meantime the Japanese invested in other anti-Yuan elements as well. The purpose and methods of Japanese policy were elaborated upon in the cabinet decision of 7 March, two weeks after the Sun–Kuhara agreement. At that time it was decided that the promotion of 'Sino-Japanese amity' required the establishment of Japanese hegemony in China. In order to remove Yuan Shih-k'ai, who was considered the chief obstacle to this goal, the cabinet agreed to accord belligerent status to the southern rebels, and at the same time, to support every anti-Yuan faction through quasi-civilian agencies.[41] Thus on 22 March, Kuhara loaned a million yen to Ts'en Ch'un-hsuan, a former Governor and Governor-General under the Manchus, who was in Japan after breaking with Yuan.[42] That same month, Ōkura Kihachirō, another businessman who had often handled discreet matters for the Japanese Army, advanced one million yen to Prince Su, leader of the Manchu Royalist Party (Tsung-she-tang), who had an army, including Mongolian bandits, in the north.[43] Half this amount was used to purchase arms through the Taihei Company, a concern that had been jointly established in 1908 by Ōkura, Mitsui and Takada to handle the export of the Army's obsolete equipment.[44] At the end of March a four-man military

[41] Yim, 'Yuan Shih-k'ai', pp. 70–1. The text of the cabinet decision appears in *Nihon Gaikō Nenpyō*, I, 418–19. Implementation was coordinated by Tanaka and Koike Chōzō, chief of the Foreign Ministry's Political Affairs Bureau, 1913–16. Koike, a *kohun* of Katō Takaaki, whom he had served as private secretary, had considerable experience in China affairs. The Kokuryūkai history praises him for his 'hard line' on China. He had been Consul General in Mukden in 1908–11, and had drafted the text of the Twenty-one Demands. He became head of the Political Affairs Bureau when Katō, who had just received the Foreign Affairs portfolio in the Ōkuma Cabinet, transferred him from London to Tokyo. In 1916, he left the Foreign Ministry, and became a director of the Kuhara interests. See Kokuryūkai, (ed.), *Tōa Senkaku Shishi Kiden* [East Asian Ronin Pioneers: A History and Biographies] (Tokyo, 1933–36), III, 546–7; and Morley, *Japanese Thrust*, p. 13.

[42] Receipt in Mr Kuhara's possession.

[43] *Nihon Gaikō Nenpyō*, I, 211.

[44] Takakura Tetsuichi, *Tanaka Gi'ichi Denki* [Biography of Tanaka Gi'ichi] (Tokyo, 1958), I, 634; Inoue Kiyoshi (ed.), *Taishōki no seiji to shakai* [Politics and Society in the Taishō Period] (Tokyo, 1969), p. 378, n. 1. Conflicting rumours circulated in Tokyo concerning the covert aid being extended to the anti-Yuan Chinese. Thus Hara Satoshi made a diary entry for 13 March stating that he had heard that the Bank of Taiwan had been secretly instructed to lend five hundred thousand yen to the Revolutionary Party (Hara Keiichirō (ed.), *Hara Satoshi Nikki*, (Tokyo, 1950–52), VI, 387). On 4 April he wrote that Miura Gōrō had told him that Ōkura, Kuhara and Yasukawa Keiichirō were also to lend funds to the revolutionaries (*ibid.*, VI, 397). According to the Kokuryūkai history, the sum of two million yen was made available to the Manchu independence movement. See Jansen, *Sun Yat-sen*, pp. 196, 262, n. 59.

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delegation was sent to Manchuria to supervise the disbursement of funds, the purchase and transport of arms, as well as to supervise operations. Besides an Army Paymaster with the rank of colonel, the delegation consisted of Colonel Doi Ichinoshin and his aide, Captain Koiso Kuniaki, both of whom had been transferred to Port Arthur in December.[45] The boundary between direct and indirect intervention was narrowing, and in subsequent months Tanaka would have trouble restraining his South Manchurian officers who were anxious to fight under the banner of Prince Su, a long-time candidate for the role of Japanese puppet in Manchuria.

As originally planned, Tanaka's program called for an 'all-azimuth' attack on Yuan. The Manchu Royalists were to capture Mukden, set up an independent Manchu state north of the Wall and attack Peking. These actions were to be timed so as to be coordinated with the rebellion in the south. The rising was to have been started in the north on 15 April. But it proved impossible to coordinate the march of events.[46] Though the Japanese made every effort to support the Yünnan rebels, in the beginning of March the southern army had still not made any spectacular gains.[47] In the meantime Yuan's cancellation of his monarchical scheme on 22 March created doubt as to whether the civil war would be continued. At all events, Tanaka could not get arms and funds to the southern insurgents until the end of May. Fearing that a premature rising of the Manchu and Mongol independence movements would enable Yuan to come to terms with the southerners, he issued an order on 4 April to suspend operations in the north.[48]

As for Sun Yat-sen, the enrolment of other claimants in the anti-Yuan campaign lent urgency to his own military plans. While new defectors raised the banner of independence in various provinces, Sun was determined not to repeat the mistakes of 1911 when bureaucrats and generals with spurious republican sympathies stole a march on the revolutionaries. In correspondence with overseas followers Sun insisted that the initiative rest with his Chinese Revolutionary Army. Tradi-

[45] Takakura, *Tanaka*, I, 629, 633.

[46] *Ibid.*, I, 633–4; Kobayashi Yukio, 'Teikokushugi to minponshugi' [Imperialism and democracy] in *Iwanami Kōza Nihon Rekishi* [Iwanami Lectures on Japanese History] (1963), (Modern period, vol. II), p. 74.

[47] A Japanese officer, and former teacher of the rebel general, Ts'ai O, joined the insurgents in Yünnan in January. In March the Japanese established a consulate there. See Chi, *China Diplomacy*, p. 80. On 3 March 1916, Hara recorded in his diary that Tanaka had informed him that the Yünnan rebels were low in funds, weapons and ammunition, and that it appeared that they might be wiped out in a week. See *Hara Nikki*, VI, 383.

[48] Takakura, *Tanaka*, I, 630, 634.

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tional bureaucrats like Ts'en Ch'un-hsuan, he declared, were incapable of preserving China.[49] At the end of March he was worried over a report that G. E. Morrison was advising Yuan to retire temporarily, and to return after the war, backed by British power.[50] In April it was not Yuan Shih-k'ai but other anti-Yuan competitors who were Sun's greatest concern. He warned his followers that China might fall into the hands of a 'second or third Yuan Shih-k'ai' unless they assumed control themselves.[51] While the Japanese would have preferred a united effort under their tutelage, Sun continued to reject the prospect of Chinese allies, and depended upon Japanese subsidization of his own forces.

Everything now depended upon a single spectacular military success. Sun had small forces in various parts of the country, but his main hope alternated between Shanghai and Shantung, where he sent most of the Kuhara money. He had reason to believe that if he could only capture Shanghai or Tsinan he might get millions from the Japanese, whose liaison agents assisted him in both places.[52] Kayano Chōchi was in close contact with Chü Cheng, Sun's commander in Tsingtao, which was under Japanese control. In Shanghai's International Settlement, Yamada Junsaburō, a former Mitsui functionary, worked with Ch'en Ch'i-mei.[53] The Japanese officers, Aoki and Matsui were also available there. In other parts of China Sun instructed his lieutenants to communicate with him through the local Japanese consulates.[54] Two Japanese banks, the Yokohama Specie and the Bank of Taiwan, handled most of Sun's remittances to the Mainland.[55] Some Japanese arms were purchased in Dairen through Kayano,[56] and Sun himself sent a shipment from Yokohama in April and addressed it to the Tsingtao (Japan-

[49] Letter to Hu Wei-hsün, 10 April 1916 in KFCC, V, 225.

[50] Telegram to Shanghai, 26 March 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 243.

[51] Letter to Teng Tse-ju, 10 April 1916, in *ibid.*, V, 226.

[52] Telegram to Chü Cheng, 1 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 247; Telegram to Shanghai, 7 April 1916, *ibid.*, IV, 249.

[53] On Yamada's role, see Yamada Junsaburō, 'Shina kakumei to Son Bun no Chūnichi remmei' [The Chinese Revolution and Sun Yat-sen's Sino-Japanese Alliance], in Kaji Ryūichi (ed.), *Dai ichi nin sha no kotoba* [Words of the Number-one Men] (Tokyo, 1961), p. 274. Both he and Kayano are mentioned in Sun's telegrams to Shanghai and Tsingtao during this period. These Japanese friends were especially important at a time when influential Kuomintang leaders rejected Sun's leadership. In March 1916, for example, Sun suggested using Kayano to 'remove' Po Wen-wei in Tsingtao if the latter refused to obey him. See letter to Chü Cheng in KFCC, V, 223–4.

[54] Telegram to Swatow, 4 April 1916, in KFCC, IV, 248; telegram to Hankow, 14 April, in *ibid.*, 252.

[55] See, for example, *ibid.*, 239, 241, 242, 246, 249, 253.

[56] *Kuo-fu nien-p'u*, I, 607, 611.

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ese) Military Government office.[57] Japanese merchants seemed to have made a good profit in supplying Sun's forces, just as they had in the past. This time they sold him thirty-year old rifles and worthless machine-guns that had to be discarded.[58] Because of the European war it was difficult to procure weapons.

Essentially, Sun's problem was that he was trying to fight a war without a proper army and without a solid political base in China. He urged the overseas Chinese to send volunteers who could serve as junior officers.[59] He asked the American *hua-ch'iao* to send airplanes and pilots.[60] In Shantung and Shanghai he tried to use his Japanese funds to persuade regular troops to defect. He was willing to offer a million yen to leaders of a defecting division, and double salary for life to the rank and file.[61] In Shanghai he had hopes of winning over some naval squadrons, since the Navy had always had strong southern sympathies.[62]

Sun's Japanese creditors were pressing for results, and in April, he sent frantic telegrams to his lieutenants warning that without victories there would be no additional funds. He could no longer maintain his earlier determination to rely solely upon a loyal party army, and was reduced to Yuan's tactic of bribing troops. He instructed his colleagues to 'act according to circumstances' and to exploit every opportunity to deal with elements which he had previously considered unreliable.[63] On 20 April he tried to encourage Chü Cheng with the hope that 'although the others declare independence, we will still attack, and it will be that much easier to win'.[64] But on that same day he sent another telegram to Chü complaining that the Japanese Army was giving him trouble: 'Until now the various loans our party received have not produced results. I am afraid that we will not be able to secure their [the Japanese Army authorities] agreement again.'[65] A telegram in a similar vein was sent to Shanghai four days later—he had lost his credit with the Japanese and there was no way of getting more money. He now advised caution in bribing army defectors: they would receive

[57] Telegram to Chü Cheng, 15 April 1916, in KFCC, IV, 253.

[58] Letter to Chü Cheng, 4 April 1916, in *ibid.*, V, 224; telegram to Swatow, 7 April, in *ibid.*, IV, 248.

[59] Letter to Teng Tse-ju, 10 April 1916, in *ibid.*, V, 227.

[60] Telegrams to San Francisco, 21 March and 9 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 240–1, 250.

[61] Telegram to Chü Cheng, 29 March 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 245.

[62] Telegram to Ch'en Ch'i-mei, 11 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 250.

[63] Telegrams to Ch'en Ch'i-mei, 25 March and 11 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 242–3, 250.

[64] Telegram to Chü Cheng, 20 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 255.

[65] Additional telegram to Chü in *ibid.*

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'double remuneration' afterward, but no money was to be thrown away beforehand.[66]

It was difficult to maintain secrecy amidst the frantic plotting, and on several occasions Sun warned his followers against embarrassing revelations concerning his Japanese connexions. He asked that Yamada stop sending telegrams; otherwise 'people will look upon our party as "Children at play"'.[67] Chü Cheng had caused trouble by mentioning Kayano's name in a telegram to Chin Yün-p'eng, the Tsinan Army commander, and Sun decided that perhaps Kayano ought to be sent away. 'Outwardly,' Sun cautioned Chü, 'we must shun any connection with the Japanese, and not arouse the envy of other countries.'[68] He also complained that his plans for the Navy in Shanghai were being leaked to the newspapers.[69]

Near the end of April, though hope was swiftly fading, Sun still looked for a major victory that could impress his creditors. While waiting in vain, he decided to return to China and to take charge himself. On 27 April he received his last loan from Kuhara and sailed for Shanghai, having previously requested that General Aoki be informed, in case the Japanese wanted to send someone to meet him.[70] While en route he wired Chü Cheng to exert every effort to join with elements 'within our party and without'. He himself, he informed Chü, was returning for that purpose. 'Otherwise,' he continued, 'we will not be able to get outside help.'[71] This further compromise was undoubtedly the condition dictated by Tanaka when he transmitted Kuhara's money.

The compromise mood was reflected in Sun's anti-Yuan statement issued in Shanghai on 9 May.[72] Sun now called for unity of all forces committed to republicanism, and on the 23rd he telegraphed Ts'en Ch'un-hsuan, now leading the southern anti-Yuan forces, and asked for cooperation from the man whom he had previously disqualified as a republican ally.[73] That same day he ordered his followers to fly the

[66] Telegram to Shanghai, 24 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 257.

[67] Telegram to Shanghai, 13 April, in *ibid.*, IV, 251–2.

[68] Telegram to Chü Cheng, 22 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 256.

[69] Telegram to Shanghai, 21 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 255.

[70] Telegram to Shanghai, 26 April 1916, in *ibid.*, IV, 258. Aoki's aide, Lieutenant Colonel Matsui, served as a bodyguard for Sun when the latter arrived in Shanghai. (Twenty years later Matsui commanded Japan's Shanghai Expeditionary Army in the Sino-Japanese War.) See *Tōa Senkaku*, II, 611; and Chalmers A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power* (Stanford, 1962), p. 35.

[71] Telegram to Chü Cheng, 30 April, in *ibid.*

[72] *Ibid.*, IV, 16–19. While in Shanghai, Sun stayed at the home of Murai Keijirō, head of the local office of the South Manchurian Railway Company. See Yamada, 'Shina Kakumei', p. 274.

[73] *Ibid.*, IV, 259–60.

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five-star flag of the southerners instead of his own blue-white banner.[74] In the meantime, the successes that might have improved his bargaining power did not materialize. On 18 May Ch'en Ch'i-mei was assassinated, and the Shanghai operation failed.[75] In Shantung, Chü Cheng won a victory at Wei-hsien on 23 May, but failed to capture Tsinan two days later.[76] There was no spectacular victory, and no further chance of Japanese assistance.

On 6 June Yuan Shih-k'ai died and his generals took over. Sun Yat-sen was as far from power as ever, and the Japanese began looking for more promising investments.

In retrospect, the Japanese experience during this period points up the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of dictating the course of events in China through manipulation or intervention. It is true that Japan wanted to remove Yuan Shih-k'ai and that her various maneuvers accelerated his collapse. In this respect her success in throttling Yuan's financial sources was probably more important than her subsidization of anti-Yuan military ventures.[77] Yet it is questionable whether Japanese initiative was decisive to his downfall. When he chose to become emperor, Yuan committed political suicide. He failed to harness the full support of his leading generals—there had been dissatisfaction in this quarter even earlier[78]—and he aroused the wrath of Chinese intellectuals. While China was still not prepared for true constitutional government, she was even less prepared for a reversion to a monarchy whose ideological justification had been completely undermined.[79] Although it was easier to spread new ideas than build new institutions, public opinion was becoming a force in Chinese politics.

And what is more important, Japan's clumsy extortion technique of 1915 had aroused a wave of popular resentment. The Chinese reaction to the Twenty-one Demands foreshadowed the nationalist furor of 1919 and subsequent decades.[80] Chinese public opinion, in the service of nationalism, rendered it impossible for Japan to achieve hegemony through proxies. Despite her weakness, which was essentially a lack of organized strength, China was not for sale. In attempting to realize her continental ambitions, Japan would eventually have to choose the method advocated by the Army in 1916, i.e. fight on Chinese soil in

[74] *Ibid.*, 259. [75] *Kuo-fu nien-p'u*, II, 639–40. [76] *Ibid.*, 642–3.

[77] Yim, 'Yuan Shih-k'ai', pp. 72–3.

[78] Ch'en, *Yuan Shih-k'ai*, pp. 169, 197–9; and Li, *Political History*, pp. 320–1.

[79] See Joseph R. Levenson, 'The Suggestiveness of Vestiges: Confucianism and Monarchy at the Last', in David S. Nivison and Arthur F. Wright, (eds.), *Confucianism in Action* (Stanford, 1959), pp. 244–67.

[80] See Chow, *May Fourth Movement*, pp. 20–5.

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order to establish puppet rule. Thus aside from dubious short-term advantages, the Japanese gained very little by the removal of Yuan Shih-k'ai.

Sun Yat-sen gained even less. Driven to desperation by political weakness, he succumbed to his old dream of Pan-Asianism and Sino-Japanese partnership. It should be noted, however, that he was not the only rival of Yuan Shih-k'ai who sought Japanese help. In fact almost every political aspirant in China, including Yuan, courted the Japanese. Until political power became fully organized, and struck roots in mass sentiments and interests, such as nationalism and social revolution, foreign approval would carry heavy weight in China.

Yet neither Sun nor his contemporaries intended to become foreign puppets. They hoped to exploit foreigners no less than foreigners sought to exploit them. Given the opportunity, Sun proved his adeptness at bargaining with foreigners. In the summer of 1917 he accepted two million dollars from the German government in order to combat Yuan's successor, Tuan Ch'i-jui, who with Japanese approval, was about to bring China into the war on the side of the Allies. Yet four months later Sun's Canton government also declared war on Germany.[81] As his indigenous power-base grew stronger, as compared with the dismal years of exile, Sun could demonstrate his ability to strike a favorable bargain with foreigners. His negotiations with the Russians in 1923, which gave him a monopoly of Soviet aid,[82] stand in sharp contrast to the desperate pleas for assistance from Japan in 1914–16.

[81] J. Fass, 'Sun Yat-sen and the World War I', *Archiv Orientalni*, No. 35 (1967), pp. 111–20.

[82] See Conrad Brandt, *Stalin's Failure in China, 1924–27* (Cambridge, Mass; 1958), and especially Chapter II.

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