

place. It also provided the context within which most individual rights and obligations were defined. In this society, it was morally imperative for a man to take care of his offspring or next of kin to the best of his ability.¹

In the military factions, we have ample evidence that this tradition was honored. For example, Chang Ts'o-lin of Fengtien gave his son important assignments at a very young age to prepare him for eventual leadership in the faction.² In Chihli, after the victory over Anhwei in 1920, Ts'ao K'un made one brother (Ts'ao Jui) the civil governor of Chihli province, another (Ts'ao Yin) the commander of the 26th Division, and a nephew (Ts'ao Shih-chieh) the commander of his bodyguard brigade. In Yunnan, T'ang Chi-yao's two brothers also held important positions; T'ang Chi-yü was the acting civil governor and director of military training, and T'ang Chi-lin was a division commander in the 1920's. It was quite common for a man to help other members of his family or clan to join the same faction so that they could rely on each other. This practice was universal, with little appreciable difference either between the north and the south or among the provinces.

The role of family and clan ties in the military factions differed significantly from that prevailing under Imperial bureaucratic practices. In the traditional bureaucracy, entry into officialdom was regulated to a large extent by the uniform examination system, which quite effectively barred nepotism. Thus traditional nepotism usually took the form of granting to family members sinecure positions over which the official had control. When politics was a vocation with limited and predictable payoffs and risks, most people were satisfied with giving their relatives and kinsmen relatively unimportant (though well-paid) positions and entrusting serious administrative business to talented people. But when political activities became strategic in nature—that is, when one's political future no longer depended on adherence to definite institutional criteria, but on the ability to survive in a hostile environment where rules of behavior were ill-defined—the family and clan, as the most cohesive social group, tended to assume a larger political role.

Furthermore, the abolition of the regular recruitment channels in 1905 and the decline of traditional political morality removed the institutional and moral restraints upon nepotism. Consequent-

CHAPTER 3

The Composition of the Military Factions

OUR task in this chapter is to examine the membership and sources of cohesion of the military factions. Unfortunately, the available literature provides us with little systematic analysis of this subject. We need to examine the plausible motivations and underlying causes that affected the militarists' choice of political behavior if we are to discover how strong and enduring these factions were in terms of the nature and composition of their internal organization.

It is my contention that while the membership of each faction displayed considerable fluidity over the twelve-year period, the basic factors affecting an individual's choice of faction remained relatively stable. An exploration of these factors constitutes the first step toward a more systematic study of early Republican military politics in China.

It is possible to classify these factors into three major categories: personal associations, calculations of self-interest, and ideological ties.

Personal Associations

The militarists' personal associations that are relevant for our analysis included both the primary ties of blood and marriage and secondary ties, such as teacher-student ties, institutional relationships, old school ties, or geographical origins.

The first and most important of all personal ties were those within the family. In China's tradition-bound society, the family was the major building block of the social universe. It constituted the primary social unit within which most human interactions took

ly, in the military factions, nepotism became widely practiced. Relatives and clan members were given key positions far more often than their competence warranted. Family ties constituted the most useful instrument for moving directly into high political circles.

Intrafamily relationships generally facilitated centralization. A man's status as the father in a family or the head of a clan helped stabilize his official leadership position. The fact that he was the undisputed source of social and moral authority strengthened his political authority. By delegating power to members of the family, he was able not only to live up to the image of a patriarch dispensing favors but also to transplant the social cohesion and personal loyalty of the Chinese family structure into the political arena and achieve a high degree of political solidarity with these same people. When the diffuse and affective relationships governing family members were directly transferred to the political arena, the consequence was an even higher measure of congruence between the family and political patterns of authority. This was most conducive to political integration within the factions, at a time of great political uncertainty.

This does not mean that the two quite different relationships of commander-subordinate and father-son would automatically coincide. But the family relationship always took precedence over the commander-subordinate relationship and remained the final reference of proper conduct, political or otherwise. In this sense, role conflict was not likely to occur, because all other roles were subordinate to a man's family role, especially when a father-son relationship was involved.

Marriage provided another important means of creating political ties. An existing marriage tie might be used to cement factional ties, or a marriage might be concluded explicitly for such a purpose.

Of course, marriage had long been used as a diplomatic instrument in China, where parents had complete authority over the choice of their children's spouses. In the early days of the Republic, Yüan Shih-k'ai employed it with remarkable finesse. He gave Tuan Ch'i-ju his adopted daughter and Feng Kuochang his family governess in marriage to strengthen his personal connections with these two most powerful figures in the Peiyang Army. He also

married one of his sons to Vice-President Li Yüan-hung's daughter. In 1920, Ts'ao K'un and Chang Tso-lin became in-laws by a marriage between their children, paving the way for closer cooperation. In the south, marriage ties also linked important militarists.³ In numerous cases, marriages were instrumental in fostering a sense of common interest and a closer political relationship between otherwise independent parties. If one party to a marriage was decisively stronger than the other, the result was usually co-optation rather than alliance. This kind of marriage was common; a militarist who wanted to show special favor to a promising subordinate, for example, might offer his daughter or other female relative as a way of cementing a lasting political bond. Yüan Shih-k'ai's relationships with his generals fall into this category. The wider the social gap between the parties concerned, the stronger the political bond, since the inferior party would feel more grateful to the superior party. The most effective method of co-operation was to marry off one's daughter to a young junior officer from a very humble background who would otherwise have difficulty in advancing professionally. In these cases, the relationship could approach one between father and son.

While this kind of marriage was quite common between superior and inferior within the same military unit, it did not occur frequently between members of different units who already had different political loyalties, because the difference in loyalties might not be removed by the marriage ties. When marriages were made between different political camps, the parties usually were of approximately equal strength so that the use of coercion would be unprofitable. Under these circumstances, marriage might bring the parties into a temporary alliance or a permanent coalition. When marriages of this type played a role in the formation of factions, the outcome was usually a pluralistic rather than a unitary and integrated organization.

In Chinese society, the most significant nonfamilial association was doubtless that between a teacher and a student. Sometimes the teacher-student relationship surpassed the husband-wife relationship or even brotherhood in importance, as evidenced in the common saying, "a teacher for one day is a father for a lifetime." Whenever such a teacher-student relationship existed, it was used to good political advantage.

In early Republican China, this tie was used as one of the cornerstones in faction building. Some militarists deliberately cultivated this relationship in order to bind their followers to them permanently. A purely political relationship might change in accordance with issues or relative power positions, but a teacher-student relationship, by virtue of its nonpolitical nature, could never be altered. Yüan Shih-k'ai realized this and developed a teacher-student relationship with his subordinates.⁴ Chiang Kai-shek later adopted the same approach with even greater success. As the Whampoa graduates, who formed the backbone of the KMT's military structure, advanced in rank and achieved fame and high official positions, they still referred to Chiang as a teacher regardless of his current title.

Another widespread secondary tie stemmed from the institutional ties that many militarists had acquired. One was a superior-subordinate relationship in a particular military unit. Although the institutional tie between superior and subordinate was often likened to that between father and son or teacher and student in hierarchical terms, its political effect was not nearly as enduring. For one thing, the generational difference was not always clear. A superior might be no older than his subordinate, and thus not enjoy the prestige that traditionally was bestowed upon age. He might also be unable to claim seniority in service; his subordinate might have joined the unit earlier but advanced more slowly. More important, a superior-subordinate tie in its purest and simplest form was a contractual tie, a result of the chance meeting of two persons on different rungs of the bureaucratic ladder. An institutional superior-subordinate tie did have stronger political implication if the superior was older, clearly belonged to a senior generation in professional terms, and had held the superior position in the institution with the same subordinates for a prolonged period of time.

Thus, the superior-subordinate relationship as such contributed little to cementing political bonds. This point needs to be emphasized, because many writers seem to see any previous institutional tie between two persons as an adequate explanation for the political relationship that existed between them at a later stage. Their view, however, fails to explain why some institutional superior-subordinate ties did not bring about closer political rela-

tionships. For example, a common explanation of Ts'ao K'un's hold on the 3d Division and Wu P'ei-fu is that Ts'ao, as the commander of the 3d Division, had a superior-subordinate tie with the men of this division. But this explanation fails to take into account the fact that Tuan Ch'i-jui had created the 3d Division and had also been its commander on at least two occasions. And Wu P'ei-fu actually joined the division when Tuan, not Ts'ao, was the commander.⁵

These observations led us to realize the political importance of patronage ties, which usually developed coincidentally with superior-subordinate institutional ties but sometimes were quite independent of them. Historically, Chinese bureaucrats often played the role of patron to some promising young subordinate as a way of building up their own political power. Since the acts of patronage were performed as personal favors beyond the patron's official calling, the protégés were expected to reciprocate in a nonofficial capacity. What was demanded from the protégé was unswerving loyalty.

The relationship between Ts'ao and Wu is a good example of the strength of the combination of patronage ties and superior-subordinate relationship of long standing. When Wu was a junior officer, Ts'ao rewarded his talents with rapid promotion. By 1918, when Ts'ao made Wu the acting commander of the 3d Division, everybody, including Wu himself, regarded Wu as Ts'ao's protégé. Wu, being deeply imbued with traditional morality, reciprocated by giving Ts'ao his unquestioning loyalty. After 1920, and especially after 1922, as Ts'ao removed himself from active military duties to go into politics, Wu became the most powerful military commander of his time. Despite the fact that Ts'ao had obviously become a political liability, Wu continued to tolerate the machinations of Ts'ao's underlings to the extent of suffering political defeats and sometimes even public humiliation for the sake of maintaining his personal relationship with Ts'ao.⁶ When Ts'ao's political life was threatened in 1924, Wu did not hesitate to come to his aid, even at the risk of his own eclipse.

Militarists were often drawn into the same faction because they had attended the same military school. The few national military schools for advanced learning and a host of provincial military schools constituted the major suppliers of officers. (Military edu-

cation will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.) While the provincial schools trained cadets mainly for local use, the national schools inevitably attracted ambitious young men from all over the country. These schools thus provided a chance for students to broaden their social horizons and acquaintances. After graduation, they usually returned to their native provinces for service in local units, but the lasting friendships they had made during the school years and their membership in a particular graduating class bore a special meaning for them, as had always been the case in traditional China. When a militarist was faced with a choice of joining one faction or another, everything being equal, he would join the faction where he had schoolmates whom he had previously befriended and trusted.

Nationally, the military schools created by the Peiyang Army were certainly the most influential. The Peiyang Military Academy founded by Li Hung-chang in 1885 was the precursor of all the Peiyang military academies. Wang Shih-chen, Tuan Chi-jui, and Feng Kuo-chang were all graduates of this school and were recruited by Yuan Shih-k'ai to train the new army.⁷ Later, Yuan expanded his own training program at Hsiao-chan by establishing more military schools and by giving enlisted men in-barracks instruction. The people involved in various aspects of the Hsiao-chan program, together with the graduates of the Academy recruited by Yuan, came to be known as the hard core of the Peiyang group. By all standards, this was the most important single group in Chinese politics during 1916-28. A partial listing of those graduated from the Peiyang Military Academy and the highest position they held prior to 1920 shows their importance:

Chang Huai-chih	Military governor of Shantung
Ch'en Kuang-yüan	Military governor of Kiangsi
Ch'i Hsieh-yüan	Division commander
Chiang Yen-hsin	Military governor of Suiyuan
Chin Yun-p'eng	Prime minister
Feng Kuo-chang	President
Ho Tsung-jien	Military governor of Chahar
Ho Feng-lin	Defense commissioner of Shanghai
Li Ch'ang-t'ai	Division commander
Li Hou-chi	Military governor of Fukien
Li Shun	Military governor of Kiangsu
Lu Yung-hsiang	Military governor of Chekiang
Pao Kuei-ch'ing	Military governor of Kirin

T'ien Chung-yü	Military governor of Shantung
T's'ai Ch'eng-hsün	Military governor of Suiyuan
T's'ao K'un	Military governor of Chihli
Tuan Chi-jui	Prime minister
Tuan Chih-kuei	Military governor of Fengtien
Wang Chan-yüan	Military governor of Hupeh
Wang Chin-ching	Division commander
Wang Hsia-ch'ing	Commander in chief of metropolitan gendarmerie
Wang Ju-hsien	Division commander
Wang Shih-chen	Prime minister
Wang Ting-cheng	Military governor of Chahar
Yang Shan-teh	Military governor of Chekiang

The successor of the Peiyang Military Academy was the Paoting Military Academy. It also produced a corps of well-known officers, including Chang Ching-yao, Wu Pei-fu, Chen Shu-fan, Liu Wen-hui, and Tang Sheng-chih. A smaller but more select group of students received military training in the Japanese military academy, Shikan Gakko, or its affiliated preparatory schools. Unfortunately, because of the large number of graduates of these schools and the paucity of information about them, we are unable to trace their career patterns with a high degree of accuracy. It is also extremely difficult to document the extent to which militarists from these schools were drawn together exclusively by virtue of being schoolmates. However, commentators on modern Chinese history often employ such expressions as "the Paoting clique" or "the Shikan Gakko clique" in the armies. The heavy recruitment of Paoting graduates into the KMT military structure was partly due to the fact that Chiang Kai-shek himself had attended the Army Short-Course School—the predecessor of Paoting—in 1907-8. Wang Po-lin, the academic dean of Whampoa Military Academy, once estimated that Paoting graduates usually occupied posts at the intermediate level of the Whampoa faculty and constituted about 20 percent of the entire faculty. The lower stratum of Whampoa's faculty was composed largely of graduates from the Yunman Military Academy, who constituted 60 percent of the faculty. (There too, we may be witnessing personal and school ties at work, for Chu P'ei-teh, who was undoubtedly one of the most powerful of the KMT militarists, was a graduate of the Yunman school.) On the highest level, the principal members of the Chinese faculty were trained in the Shikan Gakko. These included Chiang Kai-

shek, Ho Yin-ch'in, Wang Po-lin, and Ch'ien Ta-chün. Three of the four department heads at Whampoa were trained in Japan.

In fact, the Whampoa Military Academy itself offers an excellent case of how a school tried to imbue its cadets with a sense of identity with the school and to create an effective bond among themselves that would remain strong long after they left. The Whampoa Academy was extremely successful in inculcating an esprit de corps among its graduates, almost to the point of being clannish. As modern Chinese history amply proves, there was no other institution that succeeded in serving as the focal point of the political loyalty of its members as well as Whampoa did.

Geographical ties had always been a powerful force for drawing people into social and political groupings throughout Chinese history. Partly this can be explained by the lack of physical mobility in agrarian China. Although the same written script had been in use for nearly two thousand years, different localities still preserved their own very different folklores and dialects. These differences naturally fostered a strong local identity among the residents.*

The factional politics of the 1916-28 period also reflected geographical ties. The militarists preferred to recruit people from their own provinces or districts whenever possible. Regional armies were common. In addition to historical and cultural reasons, militarists usually avoided recruiting from remote places for two practical reasons: the soldiers might desert and return to their homeland, or worse, they might rebel or defect, especially when ordered to fight against their own provincials. A slightly less important reason was that an army of mixed geographical origins would have serious administrative problems, caused by different dialects, eating habits, and general styles of life.† By and large, the Peiyang militarists at least tried to recruit only north-

erners, even when they possessed territories south of the Yangtze River.

The militarists' propensity to stay close to their fellow provincials was exhibited not only in recruiting policies but also in the search for political allies. They preferred other militarists who came from the same or neighboring areas. In both the Chihi and the Fengtien factions, a large proportion of the initial membership came from a few provinces. While the geographical distribution of members of the Anhwei faction was more dispersed, Tuan seemed to be closest to the people from Anhwei. Having said this, let me hasten to add that the conventional explanation of the factions is misleading, because it focuses on geographical origin alone as the organizing principle of the factions. If a member's geographical origin was not the same as the leader's, it is considered a deviation. This is too simplistic. Our analysis will show that geographical origin was but one variable influencing a militarist's choice of factions, and it was not always the most important one.

Local ties differed in the extent of their emotional content. Their intensity was in inverse relationship to the size of the geographical referents: the smaller the area, the stronger the identity. The tie was more intense when the community had a common language and was more isolated from the outside world. And, of course, individuals differed in the intensity of their sense of affinity with others from the same area. And last, all these factors were affected by the scope of the faction's operations. When a faction operated over a large geographical area, then a person's home province had significant meaning. When a faction operated over a small geographical area such as a single province, then a county or district tended to be a more important point of identification.

Occasionally, a number of people from a few counties or districts achieved a particularly high level of solidarity for historical reasons. In the factional politics of the early Republican period, for example, Anhwei's Ho-fei county stood out as a very significant locality, mostly because an antecedent of the Peiyang Army, the Huai-chün, had been founded by a Ho-fei man, Li Hung-chang. At least six Ho-fei men (Tuan Ch'i-jui, Tuan Chih-kuci, Chia Te-yao, Wu Kuang-hsin, Wu Ping-hsiang, and Nich Hsien-fan) played very conspicuous roles in the Anhwei faction.

* There are other historical factors that gave the concept of locality a particular political importance. As Ho Ping-ti (*Chung-kuo hui kuan shih lun*) points out, the concept of locality was drilled into the minds of the politically conscious members of the traditional society through a number of institutions and regulations.

† For instance, when Feng Yü-hsiang was in Szechwan in 1915-16, he recruited some local soldiers. When he left the province, however, he released the Szechwan soldiers because he felt they would have difficulty adjusting to the life outside. Liu Ju-ming, "I ko hang wu chün jen ti hui i," *Chuan chi wen hsüeh* (hereafter referred to as *GCWH*), 5, no. 4 (Oct. 1964): 21-22.

Usually, however, the province was taken to be the basic unit in identifying people's geographical origin. Although there is little comparative study of the varying strengths of provincial sentiments, my impression is that northerners were less identified with their provinces when they dealt with other northerners. Southerners were more conscious of their provincial differences even when they dealt with other southerners. Looking at the composition of various military factions, we find that southerners seldom crossed provincial boundaries to join the army of another province, while northerners from the provinces of Chihli, Shantung, and Honan often were found in the same faction but almost never in a southern faction.

Thus we label the factions Anhwei, Chihli, or Fengtien only for convenience. The nature of the faction as a political organization cannot be wholly understood in such restricted geographical terms.

Our analysis of the political functions of interpersonal relationships cannot be complete without a discussion of some other relationships that had been important in traditional Chinese bureaucratic circles. One is the so-called "shih-chiao," or friendship between two families that extended over more than one generation. Once a close political relationship had developed between bureaucrats, there was a great likelihood that their descendants would preserve and exploit it. Among families with a long tradition of academic and bureaucratic success, such ties could be very enduring and self-reinforcing. The militarists of the early Republic period, however, usually came from nonbureaucratic backgrounds with few preexisting political ties. Most of them were first-generation successes themselves. Therefore, the "shih-chiao" ties did not play a noticeable role in attracting people into the same military faction.

Another traditional tie was friendship. Historically, the idealized notion of friendship and sworn brotherhood had provided the dominant organizational ethos for many political groups, especially the secret societies. Although it was at times a stronger political force than many other personal ties, the political significance of friendship is more difficult to define. Friendship as an affective tie pure and simple was totally subjective. Unless two persons were locked into a sworn brotherhood, we have little basis for judging whether their political relationship was an extension

of their friendship. The task is made harder by the fact that friendship usually did not exist in isolation, but developed alongside other ties, such as classmate or colleague ties. Thus, while recognizing the profound importance of friendship in influencing political behavior, I can think of no way to measure it.

Calculations of Self-Interest

We are occasionally confronted with cases in which none of the personal ties described above was present in any significant degree. One plausible explanation in these cases is that the militarist's alignment policy was shaped by his perception and definition of self-interest. In order to analyze the utility of self-interest as a guide to understanding the faction-building process, we must differentiate several types of militarists with divergent configurations of interests.

First of all, there were those who had very little or no control of territory. This situation was most common at the beginning of the period, when boundary lines between militarists were ill-defined or unstable; between 1916 and 1920 there were many itinerant militarists.* There were great discrepancies in the strength of the militarists in this category. One might command a division with close to fifteen thousand men, another a battalion with a couple of hundred. Sooner or later these militarists would be forced to try to align themselves with a strong militarist with a territory, in exchange for recognition—and thereby some guarantee—of their status. A militarist who conducted these negotiations well and then judiciously employed force to capitalize on his diplomatic gains might even obtain great power and position within a very short time.

The rise of the new Kwangsi army is a vivid illustration of how an upstart army found a way to survive and prosper. According to Huang Shao-hung, a Kwangsi general who rose to great fame

* Wu P'ei-fu and Feng Yu-hsiang are two good examples. Before 1920, Wu's 3d Division was in Hunan and had to depend on Tuan Chi-jiui for financial support as well as military supplies. Wu also had to depend on local funds contributed by chambers of commerce channeled through Chang Ching-yao. At times, Chang detained the funds, causing Wu considerable hardship. *HSCTK*, no. 109. Feng's 16th Mixed Brigade was equally shiftless during those years. He also had to depend on the Peking government and the local governors for a living. For a detailed chronology of Feng's movements, see Sheridan, *Feng Yu-hsiang*.

in the Nationalist era, when Lu Jung-t'ing was driven out of Kwangtung in 1921, his rule over Kwangsi also started to crumble and Shen Hung-ying became a new military power in Kwangsi. At this time Huang himself and Li Tsung-jen commanded very meager forces and were barely able to survive, often moving from place to place. In 1922, Huang and Li, who had been classmates at the Kwangsi military school years before, decided to join forces. Their combined strength was still only about three thousand men and two thousand rifles. Of course, they could not expect this new force to be tolerated by Shen Hung-ying. Therefore, Huang approached Shen and offered to be his subordinate. As a result of the negotiations, Huang accepted Shen's commission as a brigade commander, and Shen supplied Huang's brigade with arms, ammunition, and funds. In this manner, the Huang-Li combination not only kept a piece of territory without harassment, but also received supplies and protection from a stronger power, all at the cost of being a nominal subordinate to Shen. In 1923, when Shen attacked Kwangtung, he left his rear undefended. After Shen was rebuffed in Kwangtung, Huang and Li disarmed the defeated soldiers and took away a large quantity of matériel, which greatly strengthened their forces. Turning again to diplomacy, they then persuaded Shen to bury the hatchet and join forces with them to attack Lu Jung-t'ing's remaining forces. In the autumn of 1924, these allied forces defeated Lu and drove him out of Kwangsi. Almost immediately Huang and Li turned around to attack Shen Hung-ying and totally defeated him. By the summer of 1924, when they repulsed an invasion of the Yunnan militarists, they had become the only military power in Kwangsi. Thus, through a judicious combination of force and diplomacy, a nomadic force of a couple of thousand men were able to expand to forty thousand men and to conquer an entire province.⁸

The Kwangsi force was outstanding for its phenomenal success, but its approach was not unique. Some militarists, satisfied with finding shelter and a regular source of income, remained subordinate to a stronger force; others went all the way for greater power and larger territory. In any event, they sought a territorial base, because the disadvantages of being without a territory were great. In the first place, defense posed enormous problems. Without a home base, the militarist was unable to develop a defense plan in advance. He had to fight on unfamiliar terrain and to impro-

vise his defense from battle to battle. In the second place, a militarist who had to wage wars constantly without an assured source of human and material resources could not expect to survive for long. He needed at least enough men to replace battle casualties. He needed arms, preferably from his own arsenal, and food. He also needed money to pay his expenses and to enrich himself. Furthermore, he needed civilian labor to perform such chores as transporting supplies and digging trenches. All these needs could be met only when a territorial base was secured.

Thus, strategic considerations and sheer survival sooner or later compelled all such forces to seek a territorial base, through alliance or conquest, or both. Even as large and strong a force as Feng Yü-hsiang's found it expedient to join the Chihili faction, if only to bail itself out of a financial predicament. For these reasons, the militarists without territory were only a transient group. Those who realized where their self-interest lay attached themselves to a faction. Those who failed to do so simply vanished from the political landscape.

A second category of militarists included those who had some definite territorial base. Again, their strength varied. Although in theory the military governor was the sole authority in his province, in practice he did not always possess such authority. In some cases, other officials, with such titles as "Defense Commissioner of the Upper Yangtze Valley," or "Commander of Bandit Suppression Army," might claim authority over several provinces or parts of provinces. The overlapping structures of authority tended to produce clashes of interest between these officials and the provincial military governors.*

The military governor's authority could also be undermined from within. Usually the local militarists within a province had their own smaller spheres of influence, over which the military governor had only intermittent or poor control, if any.† They

* One dispute involved the strategically and commercially important city of Hsichow. Although located in Kianguo province, it was occupied by Chang Hsin after 1913 as the site of his Office of the Inspector General for the Yangtze Valley. This caused a lot of hard feeling between Chang and Feng Kuo-chang, the military governor of Kianguo. *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, 1: 70; and *NCH*, Sept. 2, 1916; Oct. 14, 1916.

† Typically, the military structure of a province was very confused. First, there were units of the national army—divisions, brigades, regiments, etc.—many of which were independent or semi-independent of both the central and

collaborated with the military governors only to the extent that their own interests were not jeopardized. Since the majority of militarists during the early stages controlled only parts of a province, their main task was to reintegrate the politico-military forces and reassert their authority within their own provinces.

While internally the provincial governors spared no effort to suppress autonomous tendencies, externally they tried to follow a policy of neutrality or noninvolvement. This was especially true when they were sandwiched between strong neighbors. Under these circumstances, they would scrupulously follow the dictum of being "friendly to all but ally of none," and they often played one neighbor against another in the hope of retaining their independence. Shansi achieved admirable results by following this policy. Hunan also tried to stand aloof from the north-south constitutional dispute, but its chances of success were severely compromised by its geographical position.

When militarists were compelled to take sides in order to protect their own interests, their best policy was to join the militarists who posed the least potential or actual threat to their security, against those who posed the greatest threat. Here, the geographical constraint played a key role in their decisions. Since the most immediate threat usually came from one's closest neighbors, it would be wise to enter an alliance or a faction with a distant militarist who felt the same threat. This would reduce friction between partners and increase mutual security by confronting the opponent with a two-front problem. In this light, it seems perfectly logical that Chekiang, in order to keep Shanghai, entered into a closer relationship with Anhwei, which also had territorial problems with Kiangsu. Both, in turn, wanted to ally themselves with a stronger power

the provincial governments. Next, there were the strictly provincial units (*hsünn-fang-tui*), which were raised, funded, and controlled by the powerful men in the province for garrison duties. Occasionally remnants of the Manchu Green Standards continued to exist under their old commanders and stood outside the provincial military structure. Further, there were a variety of military units under special administrative agencies, such as the water police, anti-smuggling forces, the salt gabelle troops, transportation protection forces, reserves or temporary forces, and numerous other emergency troops, constabularies of one kind or another, and personal guards. And last, there were numerous local militia organized on a voluntary basis, either by local gentry or by prominent merchants. For a discussion of these forces, see *The China Year Book, 1921-1922* (henceforth referred to as CYB), p. 536.

to counterbalance the potential threat of Kiangsu's allies, and they found Tuan eager to help. This pattern, which was followed with considerable consistency, probably helps to explain the territorial fragmentation of some factions.

The third and final category of militarists included the really powerful ones. Their great capabilities enabled them to pursue flexible external policies toward weaker militarists, through either peaceful incorporation or armed aggression. Generally, the powerful militarists were quite willing to forgo total integration in exchange for nominal allegiance and to postpone consolidation. At times, however, they also used physical force to bring recalcitrant militarists into the faction. The many wars fought in the early period and the drastic revisions in the constellation of each faction attest to the fact that physical conquest always remained as an ultimate means of faction building.

The presence of some very powerful militarists was catalytic to the division of militarists along factional lines. In general, weak and medium-strength militarists decided to enter permanent factions only after the other militarists had clearly demonstrated their superior political, military, and economic capabilities. An added incentive for joining a faction was provided if a militarist would thereby greatly increase his capabilities in comparison either with his own past or with neighboring territories.

Surveying the political landscape of China between 1916 and 1920, we see that the militarists who later became the rallying points of factional struggle had already distinguished themselves in many ways. In Manchuria, Chang Tsolin was definitely the fastest rising star in the military hierarchy. He was a dynamic and aggressive leader, was widely popular, and possessed great political acumen. In 1916, Chang, who commanded one of the two Fengtien divisions (the 27th), forced the military governor of Fengtien to resign his post and then succeeded him. By 1917, he had outmaneuvered his rival, Feng Teh-lin, the commander of the 28th Division, and absorbed his force. The other militarists in Manchuria, such as Pi Kueifang, Hsü Lan-chou, and Meng En-yuan, were too old or weak, had rather colorless personalities, and had very little ambition. All were from Chihli province, rather than natives of Manchuria, which gave Chang an added advantage in the political struggle. Pi Kuei-fang knew nothing about military

affairs, while the other two commanded only small forces. Under these circumstances, it became quite natural for other militarists in Manchuria to flock around Chang.⁹

Tuan Ch'i-jui was another dynamic leader and a militarist of great stature. He played an important role from the beginning of the Newly Established Army program at Hsiao-chan and developed a close relationship with Yüan Shih-k'ai. As the Peiyang Army expanded, Tuan assumed command of a number of its new units, including the 3d, 4th, and 6th imperial divisions. In these capacities, he acquired a wide range of institutional connections with most of the important militarists who rose from the Hsiao-chan background. Furthermore, as the primary architect of the Peiyang training programs, Tuan developed a lasting teacher-student relationship with many second-generation Peiyang officers. Shortly after the Republic was founded, Tuan became Yüan's minister of war; in 1913 he served briefly as acting premier. In later years, especially after Yüan's death, both posts were to become Tuan's primary bases of political operations. In three years (1916-19), Tuan not only had the power to oversee the organization and training of his own army (the Northwestern Frontier Army), but also had more opportunity than any other militarist to affect the transfer, promotion, and appointment of officers of other military units loyal to the Peking government, which enabled him to play the role of patron to a large number of young militarists. Last, by virtue of his control over the finances of the Peking government, he had a decisive voice in the distribution of funds, arms, and ammunition. Even the non-Peiyang militarists had to ingratiate themselves with Tuan in order to maintain a viable political life. Thus, Tuan was in a unique position to build a political following and to develop his own military power (the War Participation Army).¹⁰

In central China, we find another formidable figure in the person of General Feng Kuo-chang. Feng's major military activities during the Hsiao-chan period were in the area of military education, through which he came into contact with a large number of Peiyang soldiers and officers; with some of them he developed a direct teacher-student relationship. Moreover, Feng had served as the commander of different Peiyang units, and he later led the First and Second Imperial Armies in the suppression of the revolu-

tionaries. After the second revolution of 1913, Feng succeeded Chang Hsün as the military governor of Kiangsu, a post that he held for four years. During this period he expanded his personal military power to two divisions and acquired a sphere of influence over Kiangsi and, to a lesser extent, Hupch. In July 1917, in the aftermath of the monarchist debacle, Feng succeeded Li Yüanhung as the president of the republic, thereby further enhancing his political prestige.¹¹

Only in Manchuria, Peking, and the Yangtze valley, however, were there such prominent figures ready to assume leadership of any large-scale political groupings. In the rest of the country, no one of comparable stature could be found. In the south, despite the presence of the KMT military government, there was no single center of gravity. One militarist was powerful in Kwangsi and parts of Kwangtung, another in Yunnan, still another in Kweichow. Similar situations existed in Hunan and Szechwan, except that there was more than one center of power within each province. Therefore, in the formation of the Fengtien, Anhwei, and Oihli factions, there is a discernible correlation between the configuration of the militarists and the existence of a particular militarist whose capabilities were markedly superior to his neighbors'. In each case, he commanded enormous personal prestige, had wide political connections, and controlled a large army.

On the other hand, where no such sharp disparity existed among the militarists in a given area—such as the south, Hunan, and Szechwan—considerations of self-interest might dissuade militarists from joining any specific group. For instance, in the territory nominally held by the KMT, Lu Jung-t'ing was the most powerful militarist in Kwangsi and western Kwangtung. However, he could not serve as a rallying point, because there were local militarists in Yunnan and Kweichow whose personal stature and military or economic capabilities were not markedly inferior to Lu's. The southern militarists therefore had little motivation to integrate. These factors help to explain why the KMT was dormant as a political actor prior to 1924. The KMT existed largely by grace of the cooperation of the various local militarists for a very limited purpose, i.e. to preserve the legal façade of a constitutional movement to protect them against northern military encroachment. The KMT finally succeeded in integrating Kwangtung and Kwangsi

only after the KMT's elite army had scored several impressive victories over these militarists and after financial and administrative reforms had greatly augmented its power. In other words, the southern militarists became reluctant supporters of the integration policy only after they had seen clearly that there was a great future for the KMT and that it would be better to jump on the bandwagon now than to be coerced onto it later.

In Hunan and Szechwan, a single center of power never developed. In both provinces, there were several semi-independent units, each ruling a small territory with equally meager resources. None of the militarists ever succeeded in enhancing his own capabilities enough to upset the existing distribution of power and to thrust himself forward as a leader. As a result, throughout the entire period, both provinces remained fragmented. The rare occasions when they displayed some potential for solidarity were prompted by imminent danger of invasion; as soon as the danger subsided, old divisions and rivalries returned to the fore. It was not until the very end of the period, when the possibility of KMT hegemony loomed large, that they reversed their independent lines of policy and joined the roll-up process.

Ideological Ties

The third factor that might affect a militarist's choice of faction is ideology. Almost immediately, we are confronted with the need for a functional definition of ideology. David E. Apter's definition, as "the explicit and derivative articulation of political norms," seems to imply that the articulation must also be coherent, systematic, and organized, because the formation of ideology itself represents a process of intellectual and moral maturation.¹² If such a rigorous definition is used, then very few Chinese militarists could be said to have had an ideology. If ideology is broadly defined as any system of beliefs or values, explicit or implicit, then many of them could be said to have had some ideology. We will use the broader definition in this discussion.

The Chinese militarists fall into two groups according to the degree of articulation of their ideological orientation. The overwhelming majority of them could be characterized as having implicit and unarticulated ideologies. That is, to some extent they

marshaled certain moral and political principles to justify their existence, and they had conceptions of right and wrong. But in general these militarists made little attempt to raise their political principles or moral standards to the articulate and conscious level. No major ideological differences distinguished one militarist from another. Consequently, no militarists in this group were in a position to utilize ideology to win over a large number of followers to their faction.

The second group includes a much smaller number of militarists who had explicit and articulate ideologies of some kind. Militarists like Chang Hsin, Wu Peifu, Ch'en Chung-ming, Li Tsung-jen, Feng Yu-hsiang, and Yen Hsi-shan all came to be identified with some ideas or programs. Their ideologies varied, from Chang Hsin's loyalty to the deposed Manchu monarchy and veneration of the imperial ways to Feng Yu-hsiang's and Yen Hsi-shan's mixture of many creeds, some moral, some political, and others religious in nature.

Among those who consciously cultivated an ideological image, there were two different approaches to the forms of indoctrination. One approach, of which Chang Hsin is an example, involved no organized attempt at systematic orientation of the rank and file. The ideological orientation of the army was determined by the top commander, who at most used informal indoctrination sporadically, such as through the occasional use of symbols and slogans, or through rewards for approved behavior. The other approach, typified by Feng and Yen, involved the conscious pursuit of systematic indoctrination. Formal indoctrination constituted an important part of the soldiers' daily routine. In Feng's army, for example, catechisms, songs, slogans, moralistic stories, lectures by officers, sermons by chaplains, and propaganda by cadres from the political department were orchestrated to drill the ideology into the soldiers' minds.¹³

Formal, systematic indoctrination seems to have been more conducive to enhancing internal solidarity than informal and intermittent indoctrination. The more the rank and file were exposed to an intense and deliberate indoctrination program and the more they acquired a sense of active participation, the more strongly they would identify with the unit. It was not at all accidental that

Feng and Yen commanded some of the most cohesive forces in the Chinese system.

Of more immediate concern to us in the present context, however, is the effect of ideology on recruitment or formation of factions. On this point the available evidence is very sketchy. Although Feng Yu-hsiang's army was quite well known for its ideological coloration, for example, most of the men joined it for non-ideological reasons. Indeed, one of Feng's most impressive achievements was to convert men with a mercenary mentality into ideological soldiers.

Whether Yen Hsin-shan's ideological program in the Shansi army helped him to attract more followers is even more difficult to ascertain. Yen's regime was the only power structure in Shansi that could dispense political, economic, and social rewards. Ambitious individuals seeking advancement within the province had no alternative but to join him. It is therefore hard to establish the degree to which career and other interest calculations or personal or ideological ties brought them to support Yen Hsi-shan. The most that can be said is that Shansi represents a case where ideology might have attracted some individuals who otherwise would not have joined political forces with it.

Thus, up until 1923, when most military factions had already been formed, ideology as such played a minor role. And even after 1923, the only clear case of an ideological actor was the KMT. In the span of two years, between 1924 and 1926, the KMT became the champion of anti-warlordism, anti-imperialism, nationalism, responsible government, and the people's livelihood. Under Sun Yat-sen's leadership, the aim of the KMT reorganization was not only to improve internal solidarity by borrowing the Bolshevik model but also to develop into a broad-based multiclass national political movement. By the time it launched its Northern Expedition, the KMT's internal structure was already radically different from an ordinary military faction that drew its main support from the army. The KMT, in addition to having an army, had attracted significant elements from the workers, the peasants, and the new intelligentsia. Thus ideology and organization combined to attract many people into the KMT camp. The KMT was the only case in the Chinese system in which ideology was a major factor in the growth of a formidable political force.

The Effects of These Ties on Factional Cohesion

Having described the three groups of factors conducive to the formation of factions, we shall now turn to the question of how much they contributed or hindered the cohesion of these politico-military organizations. We shall begin with the factor that contributed the least to cohesion, self-interest.

The relationship between interest calculations and group cohesion is difficult to generalize. Under some circumstances, calculations of self-interest would be conducive to group cohesion. If a militarist joined a faction in order to achieve some nonaffective goals (such as power, wealth, career), then he would stay with the faction as long as these goals were achieved. Furthermore, even when a militarist's original motives were utilitarian, he might later develop affective attitudes to the leader or to the faction and then stay in the faction because of them.

Nonetheless, it is fair to say that interest calculations generally provided a rather weak incentive to uphold group cohesion, because the military factions were not ordinarily interest groups and the Chinese political system was different from ordinary national political systems. Most interest groups—farmers' associations, labor unions, chambers of commerce—have relatively stable and easily identifiable interests. They fight for limited stakes, for more or less share in the distribution of available resources, not for total interest or life or death. When people want to promote different interests, the logical thing to do is to join different interest groups. When each interest group is identified with one or a few specified interests, when the interest structure of its membership can be expected to stay constant over a long period of time, when the demands placed by the members upon the group are few and specified, and when the group's political activities are restricted to promoting these few well-defined interests, interest calculations can prove to be an exceedingly strong force for group cohesion.

The Chinese military factions were a different kind of political creature. Each militarist had a large number of interests (political, military, financial, territorial, social, private, etc.), but there were only a few military factions. None of the factions was identified with a specific interest, such as financial or territorial. Instead, every faction was a total-interest group. Since the interests were

many and the interest groups were few, members inevitably tended to place heavy demands upon and entertain high expectations for the military faction, which naturally placed more stress on its cohesion. In other words, when the members expected a single faction (or interest group) to take care of many of their diverse interests, they had a greater chance of discovering that some of them were not served by the faction. Thus, when interest calculation alone was the reason for a militarist's joining a faction, his linkage with the faction was weak. As soon as his interests were significantly threatened, he would seek another faction.

Moreover, under the Chinese political system, participation in the political process involved more than the issue of how great a share of the resources a militarist was to get; it often involved his very existence. The Chinese militarists could not be expected to remain loyal to a faction in the face of serious threats to their personal interests. If they allowed themselves to suffer serious harm, they would not be around to fight the next round regardless of how the faction as a whole had fared. These militarists joined a faction not to promote one or two specific interests, but to fight for their political existence or total interest. Therefore, if a militarist joined a faction solely for self-interest, there was a high probability that he would feel dissatisfied with that faction. The division of labor, the distribution of rewards (in weapons, manpower, territory, offices, funds, etc.), personality conflicts, the threat of war and defeat, or any of a host of other reasons could persuade a militarist that his interest was being jeopardized and that he would do better by joining another faction. The abundant evidence of flux in military factions, of frequent defections, mutinies, desertions, and surrenders bears testimony to the fact that self-interest by itself was the least conducive to group cohesion.

Ideology presents an equally complicated problem. In its ideal form, ideology undoubtedly can be a very cohesive force. In the Chinese political reality, however, conventional social norms and relationships exerted a strong influence. Ideology was not locked in a fierce combat to dislodge and repudiate all traditional ties; rather, it operated in conjunction with them. Although ideology provided a basis for a radically different definition of its political goals, even the KMT, the foremost ideological power, did not hes-

itate to exploit personal, nonideological approaches whenever they served a useful purpose. Ideology had indeed introduced a number of structural mechanisms and innovations into the KMT's internal organization that contributed greatly to the party's cohesion, but its cohesion was also supported by extensive personal ties. Since personal relationships were so pervasive and important in shaping Chinese politico-military factions, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a further exploration of their effects on the internal organization of the factions.

When we consider the effects of personal associations, we should remember that these associations existed as part of the larger social order. A faction that was formed principally on the basis of these associational ties was likely to achieve great internal cohesion, because its internal organization was consistent with the prevailing social order and ethical values and because its claim of legitimacy was sanctioned by them. This was most true when the faction grew from an original small nucleus of militarists who were closely related by such ties. These militarists owed personal loyalty to their leader. As the group expanded, they also grew in power and rose in rank; a centralized recruitment policy could further safeguard the homogeneity of the faction and prevent divergent centers of power from developing.*

These ties, however, did not always produce group solidarity. If the faction did not grow out of a parent unit but resulted from a merger of separate units, personal bonds might fail to bring any great stability to the faction's structure. Two factors contributed to this failure. First, there was difficulty in identifying the object of loyalty. The personal ties, being affective ties, worked best as guides to political choices when they were sharply defined, bilat-

* A case in point is Feng Yu-hsiang's army. The nucleus of his force consisted of men who served in Feng's unit either just before or immediately after 1911. The various ties among members of this nucleus were conscientiously preserved even after Feng's force had expanded into a huge army. Because of his stringent centralized control over recruitment, none of his lieutenants even tried to create a separate power base. As a regular practice, Feng often rotated his chief commanders among different units, possibly to prevent them from cultivating close institutional ties with the members of any unit over a period of time. When recruits joined Feng's army, they were instructed to be loyal to Feng, but their loyalty to their immediate superiors was never cultivated. Sheridan, p. 89.

eral, few in number as well as in kind, and noncontradictory. As these ties became more extensive, diffused, and multilateral, their utility as guides for political behavior diminished correspondingly. Consequently, when a militarist had to deal with a number of other militarists who were connected with him in different ways, it was very difficult for him to choose purely on the basis of personal or institutional relationships.

Worse still, as these ties multiplied, their relative importance became less susceptible to sharp definition. To be sure, a blood relationship was always paramount. Beyond that, it could be quite difficult for some militarists to rank other relationships on a scale and to state with certainty which relationships were more important. The difficulty was compounded when two militarists were related to each other in more than one capacity. The relations between Wu Peifu and Ch'ü Tung-feng illustrate this point. Both came from Shantung; there existed a teacher-student relationship between them, since Wu was a cadet at Paoting while Ch'ü was its commandant; Ch'ü was Tuan's protégé and Wu was Tuan's subordinate when Tuan was the commander of the 3d Imperial Division.¹⁴ These relationships seem close enough and seem to reinforce each other. But, on the other hand, Wu also had institutional and patron-protégé relationships with T'sao K'un when he succeeded Tuan as the commander of the 3d Imperial Division. In the factional line-up after 1918, Ch'ü stayed in Tuan's camp while Wu followed his new master, T'sao. Wu and Ch'ü ended up fighting against each other in 1920. Thus, on the basis of the affective ties between these two men, their decisions to join different factions were anything but simple choices. In both cases the patron-protégé ties seemed to have overshadowed the other conflicting ties.

Therefore, as soon as the network of relationships became too complicated, its utility as a guide to alignment policies decreased correspondingly. Faced with many different claims, a militarist often felt at a loss to identify the proper recipient of his loyalty. Of course, looked at from a different angle, it may be argued that the complicated social web actually increased many militarists' flexibility in their alignment policies. When the connections were few and bilateral, it could be psychologically difficult for a militarist to depart from them. When the connections were many and

multilateral, there was more room for exercising personal discretion and preference. A militarist could then bring his alignment policies into greater agreement with his self-interest, while still claiming to abide by the prevailing social norms.

Second, even after the object of loyalty had been identified, complications might arise in communication. For it was relatively easy for junior members of a military unit to direct their loyalty to their immediate superiors when identification was easy and face-to-face communication existed. When the unit became part of a larger group, the distance between the leader and the rank and file was lengthened, and new communication barriers were introduced. These barriers could affect group solidarity in two directions, horizontally and vertically. Since the larger group was usually composed of several militarists who had different kinds of relationships with the group leader, it was often hard for junior members of each military unit to extend the same kind of loyalty horizontally to the other militarists' units simply because they now belonged to the same larger group. There resulted a lack of horizontal coordination, and even of horizontal communication, among militarists on the same organizational rung. This peculiar situation, in turn, was related to the character of vertical communication within the larger military organization. Distance alone constituted a significant barrier in the flow of vertical communication; as the distance between the group leader and the members of the participating units lengthened, the identification of the object of loyalty was obscured, because the ties which bound the militarist to a particular group and to the group leader were usually not the same as those that bound him with his own followers. Although the militarist was supposed to serve as an intermediary between his unit and the larger group, in actuality he might not want to do so.

Here it is necessary to point out that in essence these armies were personal armies. The militarists realized that they owed their positions in a particular group to the troops they possessed. In this case, it would be foolish of them to tolerate a direct affective relationship between their troops and the group leader, for once their followers began to view the group as their own, then the group leader could exert direct pressure upon them and the intermediary role of the militarists would lose utility.

'True to the style of personal armies, each militarist wanted to

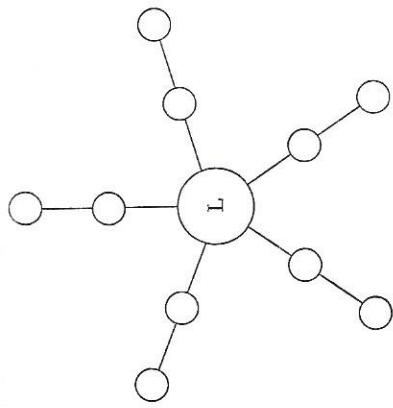


Fig. 1. The Kretch-Crutchfield-Ballachey sociometric model

act as the sole spokesman for his troops. His troops were his clients and political capital, he their negotiator. He tried to satisfy their needs to retain their service; he in turn negotiated with the other militarists to serve his own interests. In order to insulate the troops from any pressure from the larger organization, the militarists must see to it that the vertical flow of communication was severely curtailed. As it went, the group leader could issue orders only to his immediate subordinates, who then relayed them to their immediate subordinates, and so on.

The desire for organizational insulation also caused most militarists to eye with suspicion any suggestion of increased horizontal communications, for they also had to guard against any attempt by their colleagues to swallow up their units. One easy way to augment one's influence within a group was to win over a colleague's troops, by persuasion, promise of promotion, the mobilization of affective ties, or bribery. There were many cases in which militarists suffered sudden political death because their colleagues swallowed up their troops. Hence, most militarists tried to discourage the development of friendly social contacts or of any other modes of communication between their own subordinates and other militarists.

The organization that emerges from our analysis of Chinese military factions bears a close resemblance to the star-shaped socio-metric picture described by Kretch, Crutchfield, and Ballachey (Figure 1).¹⁶ The main characteristic of this type of organizational

relationship is that the "intercommunication among the members is held to a minimum and wherever possible the avenues of inter-communication are through the leader or are under his immediate supervision."¹⁶ And in the case of Chinese military factions, even the vertical communication flow was drastically reduced in many instances.

The Chinese military factions, like other Chinese organizations, were both hierarchical and authoritarian. A man should never try to communicate with a higher authority over the head of his own immediate superior, and even his contact with his immediate superior should be limited to periodic reaffirmation of his loyalty and silent obedience to his orders. To the average Chinese political actor, political issues came and went, but the basic personal relationships must remain intact at all times. In Richard Solomon's term, this "holding in" of feelings became the best way to preserve the interpersonal relationships between the leader and the led.¹⁷ In this sense, a man's loyalty to the leader was measured not by how much he could contribute to the resolution of issues, but by how well he could restrain his expression of disagreement and swallow his pride. Literally, the leader was to lead and do all the worrying, while the others just waited to be led.*

The personal nature of many of the militarists' political relationships and their peculiar notions of how loyalty and subordination should be demonstrated posed great threats to the integration of the faction as an effective politico-military organization. Political conditions being as volatile as they were, there was great need for the leader and the followers of a faction to exchange views and to pool their collective talents in arriving at rational strategies. When his subordinates refrained from candid expression of their inner thoughts or merely told him what he wanted to hear, there was real danger that the leader would be cut off from political realities and make major decisions on the basis of false assumptions or erroneous information. As the leader became less and less aware of the sentiments and thoughts of his subordinates, the sub-

* For instance, according to the reminiscences of Ch'in Te-shun, a noted Nationalist general who had served in Feng Yü-hsiang's army, Feng saw that all his officers followed his orders, that they never ventured an opinion on important matters, and that all major military and political decisions were dictated by the commander in chief personally. *Ch'in Te-shun hui i lu*, p. 149.

ordinates became more and more estranged from him. Thus, for instance, while Tuan was a leader respected by his fellow militarists (including his rivals), his confidant Hsü Shu-cheng was widely hated. Tuan's loss of prestige within the Peiyang hierarchy was due in no small measure to his unlimited trust in Hsü. Similarly, Ts'ao K'un was misled by his brothers and close personal advisers into thinking that there was nothing wrong with buying the presidency, even though none of his important official subordinates was ever actively involved in the movement.

Therefore, when factions had been formed on the basis of particularistic affective ties, their integration was subject to two different forces that often worked in opposite directions. One was the traditional ethical standards which stipulated that a subordinate should never betray his superior, nor a student his teacher, and so forth. The other was the cultural inhibition on vertical communication between the leader and the led. This inhibition was strengthened by the personal nature of Chinese armies which gave militarists an additional motive for blocking direct vertical communication between their faction leader and their own followers. Consequently, although the military factions were often able to present an impressive show of strength in peacetime, they could seldom stand the test of trying times. When no vital issues were involved, all the militarists were eager to hide their differences and make everything look all right. The real strength of the faction, however, was much more limited. The estimates of military strength publicized by a faction before a major conflict were often much larger than the actual fighting force that it mobilized.* The low degree of integration achieved by a faction as a result of its emphasis on personalized relationships and its inhibition on vertical and horizontal communications gave it a low tolerance for major stress. Nothing exposed this low tolerance more succinctly than a change of leadership. The removal of a faction's leader, caused by death, sickness, or defeat, etc., usually precipitated a major crisis over who should possess authority and upon

what basis, especially if the faction had no legitimized and institutionalized system of leadership succession, which was frequently the case. For instance, when Feng Kuo-chang died, the difficulty of choosing a new leader was so apparent that many minor units in the Chihli faction at once contemplated desertion to Tuan's camp, believing that Chihli would fall apart.* To be sure, Ts'ao K'un had a respectable military machine, but he was not the only senior member in Chihli. On the same seniority scale with Ts'ao stood other Chihli militarists like Wang Chan-yüan, Li Shun, Ch'en Kuang-yüan, and Tien Chung-yü.¹⁸ And many considered Li Shun to be superior to Ts'ao in ability.¹⁹ Alignment remained personality-oriented rather than institution-oriented; without institutionalization to give the leaders some impersonal basis of legitimacy, alignments had to change with each change in top personnel. The confusion was further compounded by the lack of horizontal communication. When members of a faction did not interact, they could not create an *esprit de corps*; without an *esprit de corps*, the members tended to split apart when their only common link, the leader, was removed.

In analyzing the organizational characteristics of China's military factions, many commentators have tended to liken them to families.²⁰ If we look at the political factions at close range, however, we find that the interpersonal relationships weaving their members into an organizational context were far from being parallels to relationships among family members. Furthermore, even when we are able to find seeming counterparts between family roles and political-military factions, we must not assume that they performed the same functions in both cases. Therefore, the crucial test of the validity of the family analogy does not lie with finding categories or analytical terms to apply to both cases, but with demonstrating that these categories and terms convey the same meaning and that our understanding of military factions will be enhanced by our knowledge about the family in Chinese society. It is against this test that the limitation of the family analogy is revealed.

* For example, prior to the first Chihli-Fengtien war of 1922, the Chihli faction was supposed to comprise 370,000 troops, but it actually succeeded in mobilizing only 130,000. *Nu li chou pao*, no. 1, 1922, p. 2; *Tung fang ts'a chih* (henceforth referred to as TFTC), 19, no. 9: 120ff.

* The most notable defector during the transition period was Liu Hsin, the commander of Feng Kuo-chang's personal guard division (the 16th Division) and one of his most trusted lieutenants. *NCH*, Jan. 31, 1920.

The term *tai-yüan-lao* (elders, senior members, usually referring to elders in a clan organization), for instance, has been used to describe certain militarists. In a military faction, one can indeed generally identify a group of people as seniors by virtue of their age as well as of their length of service in the Peiyang Army. Seniority derived from these sources undoubtedly bestowed prestige upon them, but power was not necessarily a concomitant component of their seniority. While socially they were accorded appropriate respect, politically their voice carried little or no authority if they commanded no troops. In the political game, it was clearly demonstrated that "power comes from the barrel of a gun," and not from seniority. This was a far cry from the role of *tai-yüan-lao* in the clan, which combined prestige and power.²¹ In fact, a junior commander could reject or repudiate a senior's advice with impunity. While in the clan it would have been unthinkable for a junior member to unseat a senior and take over his position, this was done time and again in the military. Therefore, instead of constituting the decision-making power of the faction, the so-called *tai-yüan-lao* were usually retired militarists who were occasionally drafted to perform diplomatic chores.

Similar problems exist in the use of the term *ti-hsi*, or branch, another term often used to describe the military faction. In the clan, the *ti-hsi* are well defined by the distance of blood relationships; the ties are ascriptive and predetermined. In the military faction, however, most ties were purely incidental or deliberately contractual; they were also multiple in number, variegated or even conflictive in nature, and generally not well defined. As we demonstrated in the discussion of the evolution of the factions, for example, there was no a priori reason why T's'ao and Wu must side with Feng Kuo-chang; yet common parlance often includes them in Feng's *ti-hsi*. The basis for doing so often remains ambiguous.²² I suspect that the classification is based on a single dimension of interpersonal relationships, i.e. the institutional superior-subordinate relationship. When this relationship is taken out of context and treated as an isolated factor, it provides a very tenuous basis for deciding whether a militarist was a *ti-hsi* or should be a member of this or that faction. In actuality, as we have shown, the interpersonal relationships between militarists were diverse and often competitive.

It should also be pointed out that the inadequacy of the family analogy lies precisely in the fact that the emergence of the military factions was triggered by the breakdown of the "big family" concept that Yuan had fostered within the Peiyang Army. After Yuan's death, many militarists were genuinely concerned about preserving the cohesion of the Peiyang "family," and some of them, like Tuan, actually attempted to assume the father image. Yet it was Tuan's aggressive assertion that alarmed the Peiyang militarists and exacerbated internal division. Realizing that the once cohesive Peiyang "family" could not be reconstructed or restored, they joined different factions for different reasons. In the process of faction building, the leaders mobilized all resources at their disposal to attract adherents.

It seems, therefore, that the true organizational characteristics of the military factions can be better understood by analyzing the full range of complex interpersonal relationships among the key members of a given faction than by relying on a strained analogy with the Chinese family. From the average militarist's point of view, to decide to join a particular faction represented a reaction against and a disillusionment with the family image. Some residual familism might have influenced his choice, but other factors also entered his calculations. Those who had strong ties with other militarists that could not be evaded had to decide, either consciously or unconsciously, which tie was the most valuable one to uphold.

A ranking of these ties with mathematical precision is obviously beyond our ability, and was probably never even attempted by the militarists themselves. But given our understanding of how these ties had operated in traditional political systems, it is at least possible to achieve a crude and suggestive ranking that would apply under normal circumstances. With the exception of the father-son and brotherhood relationships, the relative strength of the ties is contingent upon many factors, some of which were mentioned in our discussion of the institutional superior-subordinate ties. It is thus difficult to assign a concrete value to each of these ties or even to assign each of them a definite place on a continuum. But some ranking is inevitable if we are to discuss them intelligently. As a compromise, I have first ranked twelve relationships on a continuum and then divided them into three broad ranges according

to the strength of their integrative or cohesive value to the organization of the military factions. Ties grouped into the same range are more likely to possess cohesive values that are more difficult to differentiate from each other. In other words, the probability of error among ties within the same range is higher than across the ranges. Thus, for instance, to decide whether a teacher-student tie was more or less integrative than a patron-protégé tie would be subject to greater error than to say that either of them was more integrative than a colleague tie or schoolmate tie. Therefore, it is advisable to look at both the range and the rank order as complementary to each other rather than to rely on either of them alone. The ties are divided into the following rank and range order, from strongest to weakest:

- Range I 1. Father-son
- 2. Brothers
- Range II 3. Teacher-student (including cases where instruction was actually carried out and cases where one accepted another as a student without ever having given instruction)
- 4. Patron-protégé
- 5. Clansmen and kinsmen
- 6. In-laws
- 7. Sworn brothers (or membership in a secret society that implied sworn brotherhood)
- Range III 8. Direct institutional superior-subordinate relationship
- 9. Same county or district of origin
- 10. Colleagues
- 11. Same province of origin
- 12. Schoolmate (classmate would rank slightly higher)

Because of the limitation of space and the lack of comprehensive information on all the militarists of the 1916–28 period, we can only offer analyses of the three most powerful factions—Anhwei, Chihli, and Fengtien—along the lines of reasoning suggested above. These analyses do not pretend to be definitive. They merely purport to suggest a fresh way of looking at the organizational characteristics of these politico-military groups. Our charts of the factions are constructed on the assumption that the basic communication pattern within a military faction resembles the star-shaped sociometric diagram described earlier, and that the network of interpersonal relationships can be systematically laid out to depict the organizational characteristics of the factions. See Figures 2–4.

A number of interesting points emerge from the sociometric

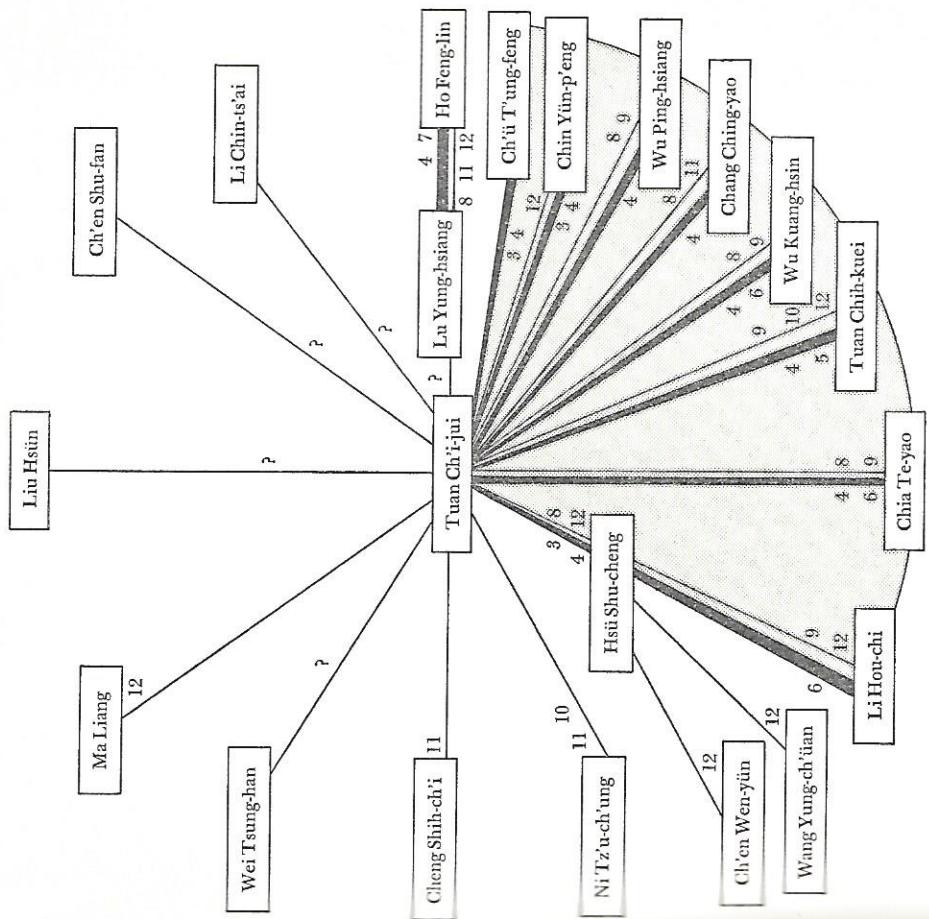


Fig. 2. Sociometric diagram of the Anhwei faction. Bold lines indicate ties #1–7 (Ranges I and II); thin lines indicate ties #8–12 (Range III).

charts. The militarists included were all important persons who had been identified with these factions. Almost all of them had held the positions of either division commanders, defense commissioners of strategic areas, or provincial military governors or their equivalents before 1922. A cursory look will immediately reveal that, in terms of sheer numbers, Chihli was the largest faction, followed by Anhwei and then Fengtien. On this basis alone, we might say that Chihli had the most complicated web of inter-

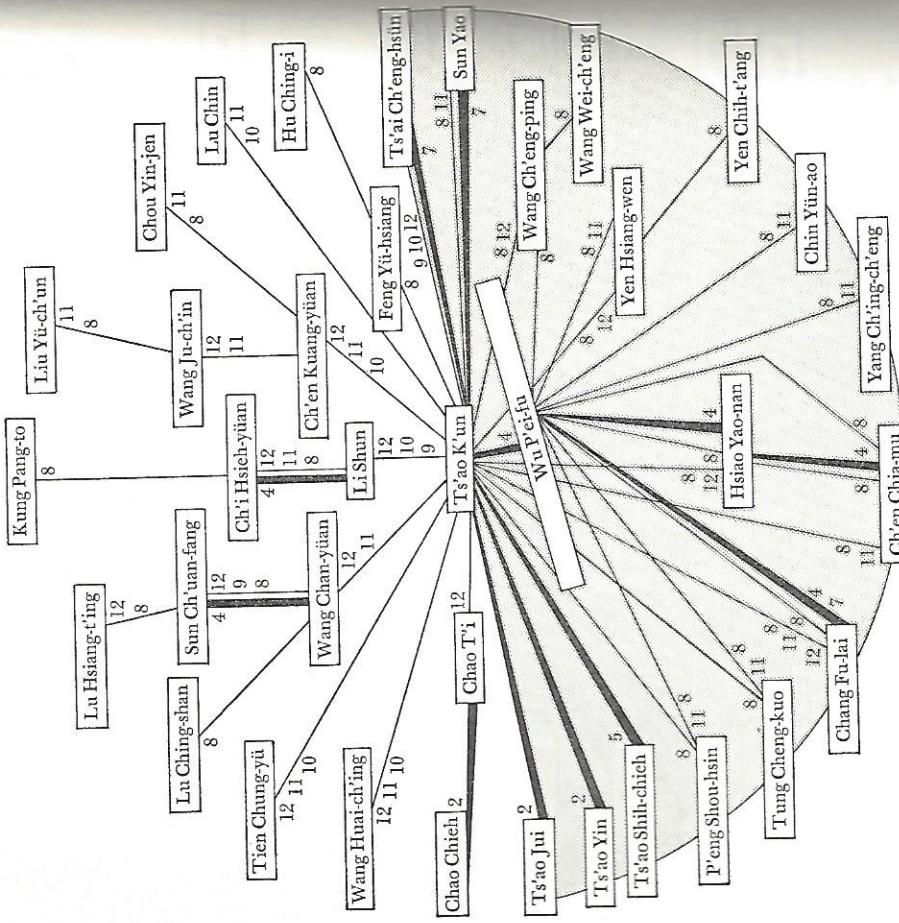


Fig. 3. Sociometric diagram of the Chihli faction. Bold lines indicate ties #₁₋₇ (Ranges I and II); thin lines indicate ties #₈₋₁₂ (Range III).

personal ties, and Fengtien the simplest. While this is certainly true, however, we cannot deduce that therefore Chihli was the least integrative faction. For multiplicity of number and heterogeneity of ties were not necessarily the same thing.

A closer look at the factions shows that although Chihli's Ts'ao K'un had more subordinates, there was usually more than one tie connecting Ts'ao with any subordinate. Even when these ties were

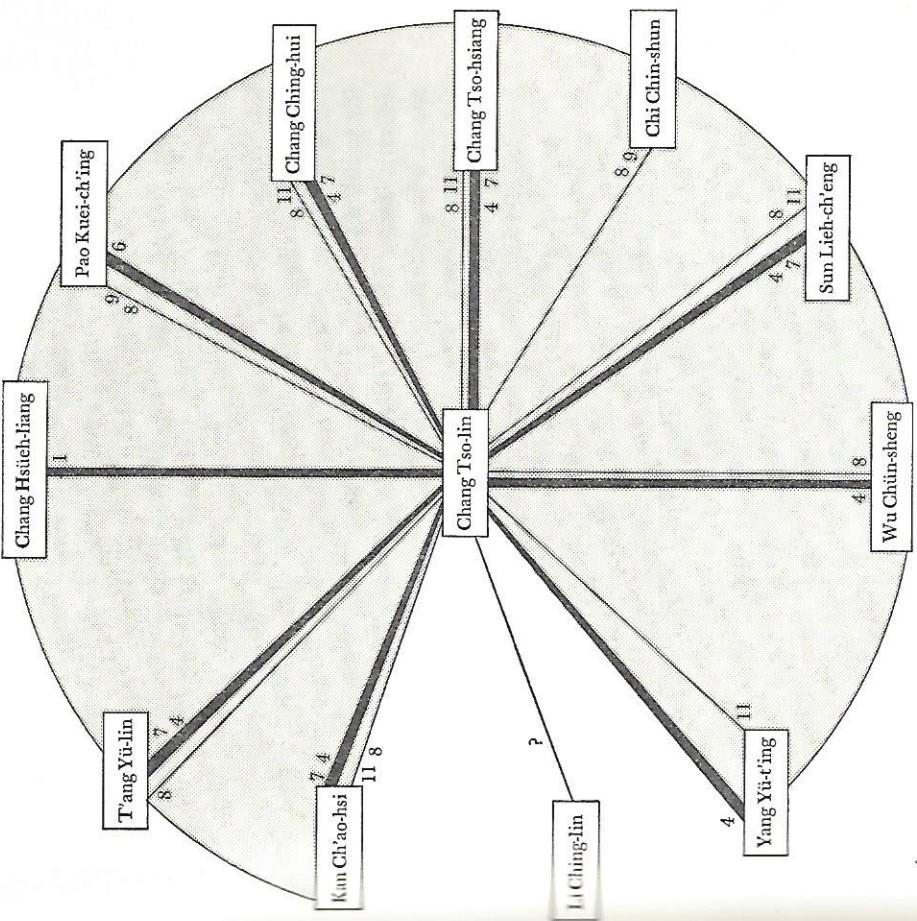


Fig. 4. Sociometric diagram of the Fengtien faction. Bold lines indicate ties #₁₋₇ (Ranges I and II); thin lines indicate ties #₈₋₁₂ (Range III). In low-range, their multiplicity tended to reinforce each other and made them collectively stronger than any single one of them. In contrast, Anhwei's Tuan Ch'i-ju had fewer direct subordinates, which seemingly gave him an advantage in control. Actually, we find that Tuan had no known tie (to the best of my knowledge) with five subordinates; with two others he had only one identifiable tie. If our information is correct, then Tuan had no, or very

weak, ties with seven of his fourteen direct subordinates. Ts'ao K'un had at least one tie with all of his fourteen (this number is coincidental, not pegged) direct subordinates, and there were usually three ties. On this basis we can suggest that Chihli was more organizationally viable than Anhwei.

If we go a step further and look at the value of these ties and how they were distributed, the result is equally interesting. We find that overlapping ties constituted a significant pattern in Chihli, but not in Anhwei. The cause of this difference can be traced to the careers of Tuan and Ts'ao. The premiership and the ministry of army had given Tuan strategically favorable positions for gaining political allies, but they simultaneously had made it difficult for him to penetrate the organizational shell of his allies to reach lower-echelon commanders. On the other hand, Ts'ao was the commander of the 3d Division from 1906 until 1917-18, when he relinquished the division to the command of Wu P'ei-fu, who had led the division's 3d Artillery Brigade since 1911. Thus Ts'ao was in command for about twelve years, during which many of the militarists included in our chart had already become commanders of regiments or brigades—that is, they possessed positions high enough to have close face-to-face relationships with Ts'ao, which were further deepened as years went by. Thus, although it was Wu who made the 3d Division famous and strong, the members of the 3d Division were most likely to embrace Ts'ao as their leader, even without Wu's mediation. In fact, Wu was more loyal to Ts'ao than anybody else. Hence, the fact that Ts'ao as the leader of Chihli was able to establish meaningful ties with the lower-echelon commanders of the 3d Division made this segment more integrated into the faction than others.

These cases provide us with a way of gauging the organizational strength of a faction. We can use a shaded area to indicate where a high concentration of clusters of ties or highly integrative ties existed between a leader and his followers. If the shaded area included a few persons, then the internal organization of the faction was weak; if the shaded area includes many persons, then the internal organization of the faction was strong. The shaded area was where the organizational strength of the faction lay.

If we pursue the analysis still further to see how these differences

accounted for the overall strength and weakness of factions, we must bring in a new variable. We must try to correlate the distribution of military power and organizational strength (or integrative ties) within the same faction.

First let us look at Anhwei. There we find that the strongest military powers were connected with the faction's leader by the weakest links. Of the five division commanders—Ch'ü T'ung-feng, Ch'en Wen-yün, Wei Tsung-han, Ma Liang, Liu Hsin—only Ch'ü was closely related to Tuan. Of the five military governors—Li Houchi, Ni Tz'u-ch'ung, Cheng Shih-ch'i, Chang Ching-yao, and Lu Yung-hsiang—only Li and Chang were closely tied to Tuan. Chang, however, lost his military following in 1919. Ni, who had been at times quite vocal in his support of Tuan, was relatively weak in his own control over Anhwei province. Consequently, we see a separation of military strength from organizational strength: those who were most loyal to Tuan in terms of close personal ties did not have military power, and those in command of military power did not have close personal ties with Tuan.*

The Chihli faction presents a different picture. Although Chihli was composed of a larger number of units, the 3d Division constituted the backbone of its fighting machine. The Chihli divisions in Kiangsu, Kiangsi, and Hupeh under Li Shun, Ch'en Kuang-yüan, and Wang Chan-yüan had to spend most of their time and energy dealing with local military elements. Each of these three provinces had one or at most two Chihli divisions; they were widely dispersed and grew rather slowly. The 3d Division, on the other hand, expanded rapidly. Many of its brigade and regiment commanders were promoted to division commanders, and some of them, like

* Some may argue that there was nothing unusual about this anomaly, because Anhwei was basically a civilian faction with military allies. The Anhwei faction's link with the Anfu Club lends some support to this view. But we must not forget that Anhwei was never averse to using force whenever it believed force would achieve its political objectives. The Anhwei faction not only tried to acquire military allies; it also tried to create its own military force. In a way, it was Tuan's desertion of civilian political means and adoption of the policy of force (as in the Hunan campaign) that hastened the full development of militarism in Chinese politics. Therefore, to the extent that Anhwei regarded force as the final arbiter in the political process, it was no different from other military factions of its time. The only difference was that it was weaker than most other factions.

Chang Fu-lai and Hsiao Yao-nan, even reached a military governorship. There we see a high correlation between the organizational and military strength of the faction.

Our discussion of the military and organizational strength of the factions provides a good context for examining the accuracy of the geographical connotation of the factional labels. The charts suggest that the factional labels did not reflect the geographical origins of their membership or their military power with equal accuracy. There were twenty important members in Anhwei, of whom only eight came from the province of Anhwei. Of the 36 members of Chihli,²¹ 21 came from Chihli province. Fengtien had twelve members, of whom nine came from Fengtien and two others went to Fengtien province.

Again, if we use military power as a criterion, we find that the Anhwei faction's military power was largely in the hands of militarists who did not come from Anhwei province. Even in the Chihli faction, we are somewhat surprised to discover that of the twelve militarists associated with the most powerful 3d Division who later went on to higher posts, only five came from Chihli; five came from Shantung and one each from Hupch and Fengtien. Only in the Fengtien faction was there a high correlation between military power and geographical origin.

These facts compel us to review the common conception of the labels these factions bore. If they were used in the sense that people from a particular province constituted the numerical majority of the membership of the faction bearing that province's name, they were misleading. They were also misleading if used to suggest that people from that province held dominant positions. In the case of Chihli, it would be more accurate to call it a "Chihli-Shantung" faction. However, if the labels were used merely to suggest that the leaders of these factions came from these provinces, then they were quite correct. This may not be as trivial a distinction as it appears. Once we realize these facts, we are made more aware of the personal character of Chinese factional politics. The identity of the rank and file was subsumed under the identity of the leader. It was the leader, rather than political ideals or institutions, who provided the rallying point for political loyalty. The use of "Anhwei" or "Chihli" as the name of the faction, even though it

clearly did not reflect the faction's membership or power, serves to focus our attention on the importance of the leader. This largely coincides with our sociometric analyses, for the leader was very much the same as the faction in terms of identification although not in terms of control. Without the leader, the faction would look quite different.

We must also reappraise the extent to which regional sentiments functioned in Chinese politics in the early Republican period. It is interesting to note that northerners in general were more able to work together within the same faction regardless of their provincial origins. Southerners were more often disinclined to work with each other when provincial differences existed. In this respect alone, both Chihli and Anhwei, as composite factions instead of factions with a single provincial base, were more able to mobilize resources and play a prominent role in the military politics of the early Republican period. So long as both northerners and southerners relied on the same traditional organizational techniques and personal ties, northerners held an edge over the southerners. If a military power was to launch an attack against the north from the south, it must offer new organizing principles and devise new organizational ties to transcend narrow geographical attachments. This was partly what took place during the KMT's northern expedition in 1927-28.

Of the three factions, there is very little doubt that Fengtien had the strongest organization. Chang Tso-lin had strong ties with almost all of his subordinates. Most men came from Fengtien and had known and worked under Chang personally for a long time; some were his sworn brothers, others protégés. The available evidence indicates that Chang was probably the shrewdest manipulator of human relationships among the three factional leaders. He demonstrated that he could be ruthless and magnanimous at the same time. Chang was generally able to exert a very strong psychological influence upon the men working directly under him, and he had a way of keeping them loyal to him. In sharp contrast to the rather lopsided and unbalanced picture that Anhwei and Chihli presented, Fengtien's internal organization very much resembled a wheel. Chang was the hub, connected to each of his lieutenants by a strong spoke of personal ties. The only weak spoke

was between Chang and Li Ching-lin. Looking at this chart analytically, we would predict that the most plausible source of strain in this system would come from Li Ching-lin. History shows the truth of this prediction. Judged in terms of recruitment patterns and recruitment methods alone, we may say that Fengtien was the strongest faction with a geographical base.

CHAPTER 4

Military Capabilities: Recruitment

SINCE the military was the dominant political force of the 1916-28 period, an understanding of the composition and structure of the military establishment, the methods of recruitment, the manner of training, the types of weapons, and the prevailing tactical and strategic concepts should constitute a major part of our study. Unfortunately, very little reliable or systematic information on any of these subjects is available. Thus, in this and the following two chapters, it is necessary to treat these subjects in a highly tentative and generalized manner. I make no claim that this treatment is comprehensive; rather, I have tried to illuminate some of the central problems by piecing together whatever data are available.

All the Chinese militarists possessed standing armies and thus were faced with the necessity of recruiting soldiers. The total number of recruits needed at any given time, however, is difficult to estimate. Although there was a standard table of organization for all military units (which would stipulate the number of men in a division, for example),* it was seldom followed. Nor can we deduce a rough estimate of an army's total strength from the number of its weapons, because many armies were notoriously underarmed. While these problems should not discourage us from trying to reconstruct the total size of the military establishment, they do compel us to accept the possibility of a large margin of error, no matter how credible the sources of information might be.

* As the *China Year Book* once observed (1926-27, p. 1044), "In theory the division should number 12,512 officers and men. In practice, it is customary to credit a division with 10,000 all told, and this often proves to be an overestimation. On the other hand, there are divisions in which the number of men enrolled greatly exceeds the theoretical figures."