

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

CHINA'S DESTINY AND THE IDEOLOGICAL BATTLE FOR CHINA

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BY

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to Sasa and Yongzhi

If China's Destiny and Chinese Economic Theory were merely academic exercises in writing Chinese history, they would be no more of a menace than thousands of Ph. D. theses, now gathering dust in the libraries of the world.

Philip Jaffe, "Commentary on China's Destiny and Chinese Economic Theory"

There is nothing sinister in China's Destiny, but it must be admitted that it is dull.

Emily Hahn, Chiang Kai-shek

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Chapter I

What is China's Destiny?

1. Introduction

In late 1942, as China was threatened by Japanese encroachment and beset by internal economic and political problems, Chiang Kai-shek, director-general (Tsung-ts'ai) of the Kuomintang (hereafter, KMT), busily compiled his magnum opus, China's Destiny. Published on 10 March 1943, to mark the anniversary of Sun Yat-sen's death, this book soon became known to KMT ideologues as the "best textbook for political education," after Dr. Sun's Three Principles of the People.¹ Its detractors simply labeled it the "Chinese Mein Kampf." China's Destiny is indeed a somewhat dull, long-winded version of modern Chinese history, with overtones of nostalgia for the era in which Confucian ethics were still intact. To a modern reader, it does not seem shocking in the least. How is it that such a book became so controversial?

One answer can be found in the epigraph by Philip Jaffe. If China's Destiny were just an academic exercise, it soon would have been neglected on the shelves of libraries and bookstores.

¹Wang Ching-ch'ing, "Educational Value of China's Destiny," Chungking Central Daily News, 25 April 1943, trans. in George Atcheson, Jr., dispatch no. 1220 to Secretary of State, 31 May 1943, U.S. Department of State, no. 893.44 Chiang Kai-shek/109, enclosure no. 6, 1. See also Lo Kang, "A Review of China's Destiny," Chungking Central Daily News, 27 April 1943, trans. in Atcheson no. 1220, enclosure no. 4, 1. Lo calls China's Destiny an "epochal work."

It was more than just a scholarly work, however; China's Destiny was an attempt to influence the thought of China's citizens, especially the youth.² China's students had long opposed government policies, from the May Fourth Movement in 1919 to demands for a united front and constitutional government in the 1940s. KMT leaders instituted many programs, such as the San Min Chu Yi Youth Corps, to persuade students to adhere to "orthodox" party doctrines. China's Destiny played an important role in this indoctrination program, as a political bible to be digested and absorbed. Students, army officers, civil servants, and members of the Youth Corps all were required to read and pass examinations on the book.³

To encourage people to read the book, the KMT sold China's Destiny at a special discount. The Cheng Chung Book Company (managed by Ch'en Li-fu, Minister of Education, and his brother, Ch'en Kuo-fu, a member of the KMT Central Executive Committee), publisher of China's Destiny, usually priced books the same

²Philip Jaffe, "Commentary on China's Destiny and Chinese Economic Theory," in China's Destiny, trans. Jaffe (New York: Roy Publishers, 1947), 295-297.

³Jaffe, "The Secret of China's Destiny," in China's Destiny, 20. The importance of the book to the Generalissimo also is evident from comparison with a classical Chinese translation of the Bible commissioned by Chiang. Dr. Quo Tai-chi, former Chinese ambassador to England, told American ambassador to China, Clarence E. Gauss, that while twenty to thirty persons had been hired under Wang Chung-hui to translate China's Destiny, John C. H. Wu (Wu Chin-hsiung) had to work on his Chinese translation of the Bible alone. Charles E. Gauss, dispatch no. 1695 to Secretary of State, 18 October 1943, U.S. Department of State, no. 711.93/540, enclosure no. 1, 3.

length as China's Destiny at twenty Chinese dollars. China's Destiny, while printed on better quality paper, was priced at only five dollars.⁴ The KMT hoped to stimulate sales of Chiang's work by making it affordable to even the most poverty-stricken students.

2. China's Destiny as a Secret Document

China's position as one of the Big Four in World War II naturally aroused much interest in China among the Allies. Therefore, the publication of a book by Chiang Kai-shek could hardly go without notice and criticism. Yet, much of the book's contents remained a secret to Western observers. Newspaper correspondents in China were not allowed to quote from the book in dispatches, and while excerpts were translated in the West China Missionary News and a summary released by the Chinese Ministry of Information, no English translation was forthcoming until 1947, four years after its publication date. Perhaps this explains the vague and exaggerated quality of Western statements on the book. In many cases, Western writers based their commentaries on informants (whose objectivity was questionable) and rumors from State Department and War Department

⁴Atcheson to Secretary of State, 31 May 1943, in U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of The United States, China 1943 (hereafter, USFR 1943) (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1957), 247.

officials who had access to a translation by 31 May 1943.⁵

As late as January 1946, before either the Jaffe translation or the authorized translation by Wang Chung-hui were released in the United States, six congressmen asked to see the State Department's translation of China's Destiny, but were flatly refused on the grounds that Chiang's book was a top-secret document which could not be released to the public.⁶ It was strange that a book which had already been published (albeit in Chinese) in San Francisco by an enterprising Chinese immigrant would be considered a top-secret document. Why did Chiang Kai-shek's statement on China's place in the postwar world remain a closed book to most Western readers?

First, the Kuomintang held that China's Destiny was primarily for domestic consumption, not for China's allies to scrutinize. Even in his introduction to the authorized translation by Wang Chung-hui, Lin Yu-t'ang stressed that Chiang's book was meant for Chinese readers. China's Destiny, Lin reminded Western readers, was an elaboration of Chiang's speech on 11 January 1943, entitled "New Treaties: New Responsibilities." It described to China's citizens the responsibilities China faced after the abrogation of the unequal

⁵Ibid., 244. Atcheson wrote that on request of the State Department, a translation was enclosed with his dispatch. The translation was given to Atcheson by the British Embassy, which requested that the source remain confidential. This is the first reference in the State Department files to an English translation.

⁶Jaffe, "Secret," 18.

treaties, "growing out of her great heritage and her new status as an independent nation."⁷

In addition, the State Department may have wanted to avoid dissemination of China's Destiny in light of the book's anti-liberal tone. Perhaps they wished to protect the American public from a "mental Pearl Harbor," when the truth about Chiang Kai-shek's anti-democratic beliefs was revealed.⁸ The State Department also may have wanted to avoid any embarrassing comparisons between imperialist penetration into China in the nineteenth century, which was strongly indicted in Chiang's book, and U. S. policy in China during the 1940s.⁹

Finally, the KMT may have feared Chiang's devotion to Confucianism would be misunderstood by Westerners. Lin Yu-t'ang's Between Tears and Laughter, like China's Destiny, emphasized Confucian ethics and criticized Western philosophy, on the grounds that it would ruin China's traditional culture. The

⁷Lin Yu-t'ang "Introduction to China's Destiny," in China's Destiny, authorized trans. Wang Chung-hui (New York: MacMillan, 1947), vii-viii. A well-known Chinese writer in the 1930s and 1940s, Lin was the author of My Country and My People, among other works.

⁸Lt. Alida C. Moyer, "Political Situation in China," in U.S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary, The Amerasia Papers: A Clue to the Catastrophe of China (hereafter, Amerasia), ed. Anthony Kubek (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), 427. Lt. Moyer noted that her informant, Agnes Smedley, a journalist of left-wing persuasion, believed Americans were headed for a "mental Pearl Harbor" when they found out the truth about Chiang's undemocratic ideas and policies.

⁹Jaffe, "Secret," 19.

poor reception of Lin's book may have caused KMT officials to worry that China's Destiny would attract many critics.¹⁰ While criticism of Lin's book could be confined to literary circles, criticism of Chiang's work might unfavorably affect China's relationship with the Allies. Thus, anxiety over Western reactions to China's Destiny was reasonable.

Of these reasons why China's Destiny should be withheld from the West, the claim that it was for domestic consumption and the fear of widespread criticism seem most plausible. In fact, the original edition of China's Destiny was withdrawn from circulation after the sale of 500,000 copies, in deference to the adverse reaction of foreign officials.¹¹ Afterwards, a revised edition was released which omitted the most strongly-worded condemnations of imperialism and toned down Chiang's demands for the return of Hong Kong, Kowloon, Tibet, and Outer Mongolia. The Kuomintang authorities, however, still held that the book was only for Chinese readers.¹²

3. Who wrote China's Destiny?

If controversy over the failure of the Kuomintang and the State Department to release a translation of China's Destiny and

¹⁰Ibid., 22.

¹¹Edgar Snow, People on Our Side (New York: Random House, 1944), 280.

¹²John S. Service, "Digest of China's Destiny: Revised Edition," in Maj. V. F. Meisling, "Report on China--Political, enclosing a digest by John S. Service of Chiang Kai-shek's book China's Destiny," in Amerasia, 410.

confusion over the difference between the original and revised editions were not enough, there was an additional problem: the question of authorship. Solomon Adler, then serving in China as a U. S. Department of the Treasury representative, claimed that the author of China's Destiny was none other than T'ao Hsi-sheng, a Japanese-educated, "crackbrained dilettante and plagiarist" antipathetic to Western thought.¹³ Philip Jaffe, editor of the journal Amerasia, also intimated that the book was written by T'ao, a former professor at Peiping University.¹⁴ Agnes Smedley believed that China's Destiny was written for Chiang by "a lieutenant in the army of Wang Ching-wei." Ch'en Po-ta's critique, which she passed on to the State Department, clarified her statement. Ch'en asked sarcastically, was the KMT so lacking in learned men that T'ao Hsi-sheng, "infamous for his association with the Nanking traitors, his constant advocacy of fascism and opposition to the U. N., and his still-continuing ideological links with Wang Ching-wei," would be asked to write for Chiang Kai-shek, symbol of resistance to Japan?¹⁵

As for T'ao, he claimed that Chiang had originally entrusted editorship to Ch'en Pu-lei, a member of the KMT Central

¹³Solomon Adler, "Discussion on Chinese Economic Theory" in Service, memorandum to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, on Chinese Economic Theory, in Amerasia, 597.

¹⁴Jaffe, "Secret," 20-21.

¹⁵Ch'en Po-ta, "Critique of China's Destiny," in Moyer, 428.

Executive Committee from Chiang's native province of Chekiang. When Ch'en became ill, T'ao accepted responsibility, as he was Ch'en's secretary. T'ao insisted that his job was merely to edit Chiang's mistakes. Chiang himself wrote all of the material.¹⁶ Maurice Votaw, an American member of the Chinese Ministry of Information's International Department, supported T'ao's claim. According to Votaw, the book was repetitious, as were all of the Generalissimo's writings and speeches. Hence, he suspected that Chiang wrote China's Destiny.¹⁷

T'ao's involvement in the writing of China's Destiny lay somewhere between these two opposing interpretations. T'ao probably did not write the work, but he may have contributed more than just correcting Chiang's errors. The information of Jaffe and Adler is questionable on three counts:¹⁸ First, T'ao was not educated in Japan (although he did serve as an assistant to Wang Ching-wei, head of the Japanese puppet government in Nanking, before returning to Chungking as a hero). Second, it is misleading to caricature him as hostile to Western philosophical concepts because T'ao used Marxist dialectic-materialism to analyze Chinese history. Third, T'ao's own explanations of

¹⁶ Arif Dirlik, "T'ao Hsi-sheng: The Social Limits of Change," in The Limits of Change: Essays on Conservative Alternatives in Republican China, ed. Charlotte Furth (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 404.

¹⁷ Atcheson, memorandum of conversation with Maurice Votaw, 30 May 1943, in Atcheson no. 1220 to Secretary of State, enclosure no. 7, 1.

¹⁸ Dirlik, 403-404.

China's decline, and views of Chinese traditional culture, differed from those given in China's Destiny. While China's Destiny expressed nostalgia for China's past, T'ao criticized traditionalists. "Once the feudalists open their mouths," he wrote, "one is reminded of the Three Dynasties, Han, and T'ang"¹⁹ T'ao stressed the particular historical and social needs of the moment. In the journal Wen-hua Chien-she and the "Manifesto of the Ten Professors" (1935), he constantly called upon China to "compromise between modern needs and past traditions," in order to meet the new demands upon Chinese society. A wholesale abandonment of Chinese culture was impossible, because traditional society set limits on such change; however, tradition alone could not be expected to make China a modern nation.

While T'ao's ideas did differ from some of those expressed in China's Destiny, a careful reading of the work shows the influence of some of his ideas. For example, Chiang's criticism of liberals, as merely following the Americans, and communists, as mindlessly imitating the Soviet model, seemed to echo a statement by T'ao in Wen-hua Chien-she: "The capitalists always have in their hearts something like the U.S.A. Among the socialists, there are some who openly defend the Soviet Union. They all forget the China of the present."²⁰

¹⁹ T'ao Hsi-sheng, "Wei-shemma fou-jen hsien-tai te Chung-kuo" (Why Neglect Present-day China?), Wen-hua Chien-she Yueh-k'an (April 1935): 101-103; cited in Dirlik, 325.

²⁰ Dirlik, 325-326 and 330-331.

T'ao Hsi-sheng may not have written China's Destiny, but as an editor, he may have influenced the formulation of many of Chiang's ideas in print. Both sides of the authorship controversy are withholding some of the truth. Chiang would have never published China's Destiny under his name if it did not reflect his own views, and, doubtless, T'ao had more power as an editor than he is willing to acknowledge. Perhaps the best way of resolving this question is to cite Quo Tai-chi's statement that in spite of T'ao's contribution to the work, it still represented the ideas of Chiang Kai-shek.²¹

²¹Gauss, memorandum of conversation with Quo Tai-chi, 2-3. Quo remarked that he had an indirect responsibility for the book, because T'ao was one of his former students. Quo added, however, that the book could not have been entirely T'ao's work. He knew that Chiang spent many hours writing, proofreading, and polishing China's Destiny.

Chapter II

Demands for Unity: The Context of China's Destiny

While reactions to China's Destiny were shaped in part by its use in political education courses and controversy over the authorship of the book, these alone cannot account for the diverse reactions following its publication. To gain a full understanding of the impact of China's Destiny on the ideological struggle in China during World War II, it is necessary to understand the demands placed upon the National Government by the Kuomintang, the Chinese Communist Party (hereafter, CCP), and the liberals.

To meet the challenge of the War of Resistance and resolve the economic crisis, each group in China had its own platform. These varying platforms had one major aim: national unity. Sun Yat-sen's "People's Principles," which can be considered a "constitution" of Republican China, called for "national independence" and an extension of traditional familial loyalty to the nation-state. Unity, its meaning and how it could be achieved, was a problem with which all groups in China grappled during China's efforts to become a nation. To understand the

standpoint of China's Destiny on this important problem, first I shall consider the different definitions of and schemes for achieving national unity proposed by the KMT, the students and liberals, the CCP, and China's allies.

The Kuomintang Method

The KMT felt that unity required unification under one party and the development of uniform thinking and orderly habits. While the Northern Expedition had removed the warlord threat, KMT thinkers maintained that national unification required a "national consciousness," developed through education in Sun's Three Principles of the People, political tutelage, and the thought of China's ancient sages.²² Ch'en Li-fu, for example, claimed that Sun Yat-sen could only be understood by absorbing the ideas of Confucius. Although the specific plans of Confucius and Sun were different, "the value of the two is eternally the same."²³ Others, such as T'ao Hsi-sheng, believed that China's tradition was a source of common identity for the Chinese people, which could not be forgotten in the quest for national unity.²⁴

²²For an excellent discussion of the KMT plan to achieve national unity through mass education in programs such as the New Life Movement, see Dison Hsueh-feng Poe, "Political Reconstruction, 1927-1937," in The Strenuous Decade: China's Nation-Building Efforts, 1927-1937, ed. Paul K. T. Sih (New York: St. John's University Press, 1970) 33-79 and Lloyd E. Eastman, "The Kuomintang in the 1930s," in Furth, 202.

²³Ch'en Li-fu, "K'ung-tzu yu Sun Chung-shan Hsien-sheng" (Confucius and Mr. Sun Yat-sen), cited in Eastman, 196-197.

²⁴Benjamin Schwartz, "Notes on Conservatism in General and in China in Particular," in Furth, 19.

Hence, the KMT method for achieving unity involved the restoration of traditional morality.

The Liberal Plan

Liberals proposed a different method. An editor of Ta Kung Pao stated that unity was China's most pressing need. While the CCP and the KMT both claimed to be working toward this goal, neither delivered on its promises. Chiang, who had brought China closer to victory than at any time in her recent history, should end one-party rule and create a representative, fully-empowered national assembly to achieve national unity.²⁵

To other Chinese liberals during the late 1930s and early 1940s, unity was necessary to combat Japan and develop into a healthy nation. Liberals proposed unity not on the basis of political education, military training, and immersion in traditional ethical concepts, but on the basis of a democratic political system. Military unification under a one-party system, they feared, would not lead to unity but to civil war.²⁶ Recourse to China's traditional system of thought was also disparaged by liberals. As a method for unifying China, Confucianism had already failed. They complained that certain elements in the national government were "too Chinese" to carry out reforms.²⁷ On

²⁵Freda Utley, Last Chance in China (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1947), 303.

²⁶John S. Service, "Kuomintang-Communist Situation," in USFR 1943, 196-197.

²⁷Utley, 306.

the other hand, greater individual freedom and the end of one-party rule strengthened confidence in the government, national unity, and, finally, China's place among the nations of the world.²⁸ Liberal demands for unity were therefore couched in demands for democratization.

The Chinese Communist View

The CCP also stressed the need for unity, but remained very skeptical of the Kuomintang's ability to achieve it. In the article, "Unite all anti-Japanese Forces and Combat the Anti-Communist Die-Hards," Mao clarified the CCP position in one of the earthy metaphors for which he was well known. The capitulators who wanted to unify China into surrender and the die-hards who wanted to unify China into autocratic rule were merely attempting to "sell the dogmeat of their one-party dictatorship under the label of the sheep's head of unification; it is a plot of brazen-faced braggarts who have lost to all sense of shame."²⁹ To Mao, the first step in national unity was not political tutelage or a democratic political system. Instead, he proposed that all Chinese should cooperate in the War of

²⁸J. K. Penfield, 2nd Secretary at Chengtu, to Secretary of State, 18 June 1944, "Interview with Li Hwang, Leader of Young China Party," in Amerasia, 564. See also Democratic League Manifesto of 1941 in Leland Stowe, They Shall Not Sleep (New York: Knopf, 1944), 42, as well as the discussion on the relationship between nationalism and liberalism in Chinese political thought in Schwartz, 3-21.

²⁹Mao Tse-tung, "Unite all Anti-Japanese Forces and Combat the Anti-Communist Die-Hards," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, vol. 2 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), 392-393.

Resistance. This experience of working together to solve China's problems would be a model for democracy in postwar China.³⁰

These programs for attaining national unity form the context in which China's Destiny can be appraised. To be successful, Chiang's book needed to lessen, rather than broaden, the scope of ideological dispute in China. Chiang needed to facilitate compromise and cooperation. The impact of China's Destiny must be judged according to these standards: Did it further compromise or contention? Did it inspire or demoralize? Did it address the perceived needs of China in 1943? With these standards in mind, let us now turn to the contents of Chiang's book as well as the reactions it provoked.

³⁰Mao Tse-tung, "On New Democracy," in Selected Works, vol. 2, 350-351.

Chapter III

China's Destiny and the Unequal Treaties

Since Mr. Chiang's book concerns China's destiny and questions of life or death, existence or destruction, for 450 million Chinese people, not only all communists, but indeed every patriotic citizen of China should give it his full attention and by no means neglect it.

Ch'en Po-ta, "Critique of China's Destiny"

China's Destiny spanned the breadth of modern Chinese history to explain the problem of disunity and weakness in the face of imperialist aggression. China's weakness, claimed Chiang, was not due to the inadequacy of the traditional ethical system, based upon Confucius, to meet the needs of China as a developing nation. China's five-thousand-year history was due to those virtues, which were a manifestation of her superior culture.³¹ "The weakening of China's international position and the deterioration of the people's morale during the last hundred years," he explained, "have been due chiefly to the unequal treaties."³²

Therefore, understanding China's problems required observation of the effects of the unequal treaties. Making China

³¹Chiang, China's Destiny, trans. Wang Chung-hui (hereafter, CD), 13.

³²Ibid., 17.

a united, democratic nation able to withstand Japanese aggression required reversing the effects of the unequal treaties, a process Chiang called "national reconstruction." The unequal treaties affected the moral, psychological, social, political, and economic life of China. Thus, national reconstruction needed to be implemented in all of these spheres to be effective.

The most fundamental and life-threatening effect of the unequal treaties was the assault on the national spirit and morality of Chinese citizens. For five-thousand years, the Chinese were a diligent, frugal race noted for their simplicity. This pure way of life, unfortunately, crumbled under the influence of the unequal treaties. In the concessions, Chiang lamented, opium smoking, gambling, prostitution, and robbery became rampant. While the Chinese from ancient times realized that the true meaning of life was to work for the good of society, to put the people and the nation before all things, to be sincere and not deceitful, the unequal treaties caused the Chinese to become degenerate and take self-interest as the standard of right and wrong.³³

Degenerate individualism also extended into the psychological sphere. Emulation of China's cultural heroes and following the example of the sages came to be considered worthless. Instead, people began to admire foreign things and despise their own heritage. Consequently, a national inferiority

³³Ibid., 75 and 70-72.

complex enveloped the minds of Chinese citizens. "People became obsessed with everything foreign," wrote Chiang. "Foreign personages and things were praised to the skies while the history of the fatherland was cast aside like a pair of worn-out slippers."³⁴

In addition, this feeling of national inferiority allowed the imperialists to continue to humiliate the Chinese, for the Chinese became too lacking in national spirit to stand up for themselves.

The unequal treaties took a social toll, as well. Under the ill influence of the foreign concessions, China's Destiny explained, the principles governing social life disintegrated, to be replaced with the mere struggle for profit. Since people had lost all sense of righteousness, integrity, and propriety, the aged were not given care nor the poor given relief. The **pao-chia** system,³⁵ which flourished in traditional China, allowed villagers to cooperate in agricultural production, self-defense, public works, and education, making traditional China the most democratic of all countries. Imperialism ruined this spirit of cooperation and autonomy. Self-government, idealized in the ancient **pao-chia** system, was transformed into selfishness, and

³⁴Ibid., 72-73.

³⁵This was a system in which ten families were organized into a **pao** and ten **pao** into a **chia**. Members of **pao-chia** units were mutually responsible for the activities of everyone within their unit. **Pao-chia** units served as a basis for military conscription, corvee labor, and social control.

the foundation of rural education and reform crumbled.³⁶ China's Destiny traced the pernicious effects of the unequal treaties from moral decline to destruction of the cohesive and well-balanced social units of traditional China.

Disintegration of the social order caused China to become fragmented and lose its traditional sense of unity, which extended from the family to the **pao, chia**, and, finally, the province and nation. Therefore, the moral disorder caused by the unequal treaties affected not only the social order but also the political one.

In addition, the unequal treaties had a more direct influence on the political sphere. Imperialist agents, who supported one warlord faction against another for political expediency, "constituted one of the chief causes for the confused warfare amongst the warlords during the early years of the Republic," wrote Chiang. The system of extraterritoriality provided havens and suppliers for the warlords. Worse, wrote Chiang, since national police or troops had no jurisdiction inside the concessions, how could Chinese law be enforced? In this position of powerlessness, how could political life be normal, Chiang asked.³⁷

Having shown how the unequal treaties disrupted life in China, China's Destiny specified four major ways the unequal

³⁶CD, 68-70.

³⁷Ibid., 59.

treaties damaged China's economy. First, moral disintegration elevated self-interest above work for mutual benefit in the countryside. Second, foreign goods followed the gunboats into China's interior. Native handicraft industries, unprepared for the onslaught of mass-produced Western goods, floundered. Third, as the economic power of the treaty ports grew, causing "the aged and weak to die in ditches and caves, the strong and capable to scatter over the country," economic development became lopsided. Capital was sucked into the treaty ports, to the detriment of rural areas. Finally, speculation and other unproductive economic activity flourished in the treaty ports, further hurting the people's livelihood.³⁸ The harm caused by the unequal treaties, China's Destiny concluded, ran full circle; there was no aspect of life in China immune to their ill effects.

In addition, China's Destiny claimed the Pacific war was directly caused by the position of weakness into which China fell as a result of the treaties. After the treaty of Shimonoseki, wrote Chiang, China's national rights were signed away, exposing the weakness which was the "cumulative effect" of imperialism. This was the cause of Japan's contempt for China and her ambition to control all of Asia, Chiang explained.³⁹

Unfortunately, the Chinese failed to see that the unequal treaties concluded by the Manchu government were even more

³⁸Ibid., 66-67.

³⁹Ibid., 28.

dangerous than Japanese aggression, because the treaties were more subtle. In fact, the unequal treaties led to the issuing of Japan's Twenty-one Demands in 1915. The aim of the Twenty-one Demands, Chiang claimed, was not to impose any new exploitation upon China, but merely to give the Japanese a monopoly of the special privileges enjoyed by all the imperialist powers. The Demands were the "sum total" of the unequal treaties, aimed at changing China from a hypocolony of many nations to a full colony of Japan.⁴⁰

Chiang's indictment of imperialism in China's Destiny was certain to provoke responses in the volatile atmosphere of 1943. Westerners were not pleased with reminders of their recent imperialist past, especially since the war was being fought ostensibly to make the world safe for democracy. Some Western readers of the book thought that Chiang's anti-imperialist diatribe was the most vivid and accurate aspect of the book.⁴¹ However, Jaffe reminded readers of his translation of China's Destiny, Chiang was only telling half the story. In fact, it was the corruption and impotence of the Manchu government which had made it so simple for the imperialists to exploit China. As Dr.

⁴⁰Ibid., 55. This claim is in the first version. In the revised version, it was changed to the more palatable statement that the unequal treaties also impaired China's integrity. In both cases, Chiang based his assertion on Sun's statement that political exploitation was easy to perceive, hence less dangerous to a nation than economic exploitation, which was more subtle.

⁴¹Lucien Bianco, Origins of the Chinese Revolution, 1915-1949, trans. Muriel Bell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1971), 129; Utley, 338; and Jaffe, "Commentary," 306-307.

Sun wrote, "the former weakness and decline of China was due to the harsh oppressions of absolutism." The *tsung-tsai*, in his eagerness to quote as much of Sun's work as possible, left out that argument.⁴²

Jaffe seems to have been inattentive while translating Chiang's work. A thorough reading reveals the story of China's inability to resist the unequal treaties, due to "political corruption and, especially to the decline of arts and sciences and of social life during the Manchu dynasty."⁴³ China's Destiny outlined the pressure placed on nationalist Chinese scholars under the absolutist rule of the Manchus. To avoid persecution, the pursuit of practical and scientific knowledge was set aside in favor of the practice of eight-legged essays and commentaries on arcane elements of Confucian dogma. Manchu officials took bribes, scholars devoted themselves to superficialities divorced from reality, and the divide-and-rule policy of the Manchus caused the nation to become disunited. It was then that the state of national defense became completely ineffective, and the imperialists could force China to submit.

But Chiang also engaged in a strange twist of logic here. While the Manchu government was the ultimate cause of China's woes, he claimed that the organization and laws of the Ch'ing code were superior to those of the Sung, Ming, and Yuan. If only

⁴²Jaffe, "Commentary," 306-307.

⁴³CD, 17.

the Manchus had treated China's five races as one nation, China's humiliations would have never occurred.⁴⁴

Chiang also praised Tseng Kuo-fan, a nineteenth-century military leader, widely considered a traitor for destroying the Taiping revolutionary movement. In praise of Tseng, Chiang argued that "men like Tseng Kuo-fan, Hu Lin-yi, Tso Tsung-tang and Li Hung-chang also considered it their duty to improve the social tone of their age." Guided by Tseng's tenets of sincerity, reverence, benevolence, and hard work, "the success of the Hunan troops and Hwai braves...was not a matter of mere accident."⁴⁵

By upholding the legal code and ethical system of the Ch'ing, while condemning its application as corrupt, inefficient, and despotic, the interpretation of modern Chinese history in China's Destiny displays Chiang's "restorationist" standpoint. National reconstruction meant reinvigorating the ethical tradition of the past. Rather than drawing from the peasant millenarianism of the Taipings (as the CCP was doing), Chiang found inspiration in heroes (like Tseng) who preserved social order.

The CCP criticized the logical structure of China's Destiny's interpretation of modern Chinese history and Chiang's choice of idols. Ch'en Po-ta noted that Chiang seemed to be

⁴⁴Ibid., 21-24.

⁴⁵Ibid., 190.

reversing cause and effect by claiming China's weakness was largely due to the unequal treaties. If Chiang was correct, then China under the Manchus was a prosperous and strong nation; how could so many humiliations be imposed upon her?

Ch'en obviously read China's Destiny more carefully than Jaffe. Chiang admitted that the unequal treaties could be traced to the corruption and impotence of the Manchu government, Ch'en remarked, and, in this respect, Chiang was correct. Unfortunately, Chiang's logic was circular: China's weakness was due to the unequal treaties, and China's weakness caused the unequal treaties. Was not China's Destiny self-contradictory, asked Ch'en. There must be a cause, somewhere, for China's inability to resist imperialism.

Ch'en found the cause of China's disunity and weakness in the personality China's Destiny had singled out as the model for China's citizens to follow. "The reason...China was overwhelmed by national humiliations," he asserted, "was precisely the success of the Hunan troops and the Anhwei militia under Tseng Kuo-fan and Li Hung-chang." The Taiping revolutionaries never signed any unequal treaties nor would they have. If the Taiping revolution had been successful, "the imperialists would never have been able to bestow so many national humiliations upon us. This is why we say the success of the Hunan and Anhwei troops was the failure of the people and the victory of imperialism." While Tseng spoke interminably of benevolence, righteousness, and morality, his were the empty words of a false gentleman. Tseng

was a double slave to the Manchus and to the imperialists. The Taiping leaders, for their part, were driven by nationalism and were "real Chinese heroes." Who should China follow? Ch'en concluded that the CCP inherited the traditions of Hung Hsiu-ch'uan (the Taiping leader) and Sun Yat-sen, while the reactionaries were heirs of the decaying tradition of the traitor, Tseng Kuo-fan.

Ch'en found yet another error in China's Destiny's interpretation of nineteenth-century China. Chiang claimed that after the Manchus consolidated their power, the "national conscience" of the Chinese disappeared. In fact, maintained Ch'en, national conscience died out only among the upper circle of officials, men like Tseng Kuo-fan who sold out to the Manchus and to imperialism. Ch'en quoted Sun Yat-sen: "When the scholars and officials were indulging themselves in titles, incomes and ranks, the so-called low-born society organized themselves into the Hung society preserving in it the thought of opposing the Ch'ing dynasty and restoring the Ming."⁴⁶ Therefore, Ch'en concluded, Chiang's claim that the Chinese people needed to be trained in national conscience was invalid.

China's Destiny argued that the unequal treaties exacerbated the latent tendency to superficiality, corruption, and moral decadence in modern China. While the reason for China's weakness and disunity ultimately lay in the corruption and absolutism of

⁴⁶Ch'en, 433-435 and 442.

the Manchus, the unequal treaties were the major factor in China's decline. The Ch'ing code was well developed, social life well organized, and there were models for proper moral behavior, such as Tseng Kuo-fan. Those praiseworthy aspects of the Ch'ing would have continued, if it was not for the onslaught of imperialism. The unequal treaties encouraged withdrawal on the part of scholars, corruption among officials, and hedonism among the common people, at the expense of China's moral, psychological, social, political, and economic life. As we have seen, this idea received mixed reviews from Westerners and from Chiang's major source of opposition, the CCP. Chiang's indictment of imperialism, however, constituted Chiang's analysis of the past. As the title of his work suggested, China's Destiny looked to China's future, for it also proposed a system of national reconstruction.

Chapter IV

Common Blood, Common Destiny

China's history of five thousand years is but a record of the common destiny shared by the different racial stocks of the Chunghua nation.

Chiang, China's Destiny

In his analysis of the faults of Manchu administration, Chiang argued that while the legal codes and political organization of the Ch'ing were excellent, the Manchus failed to see China's five races as one nation. Consequently, China fell into a morass of academic superficiality and political disunity. In order to correct this problem, Chiang believed, everyone must "make friends with the ancients" and find a source of strength in China's brilliant history. In this vein, China's Destiny cited ancient historical records to assert that the many ethnic groups in China were but one race.

During the 5000 years of recorded Chinese history, explained China's Destiny, the "various stocks" of people who lived along the Yellow, Hwai, Yangtze, Amur, and Pearl River valleys were culturally assimilated on the basis of mutual assistance, rather than military conquest.⁴⁷ Later, these different groups became interested in tracing their genealogies to discover their most ancient ancestors. In this process, the various ethnic groups

⁴⁷CD, 3-5.

realized that more than cultural ties bound them together. Thus, several ancient historical documents recorded that all the different groups in China were descended from the Yellow Emperor:

The various stocks in China constitute not only one nation, but also one race. This is why the entire Chunghua nation, so solid in its makeup, is destined to live gloriously or perish ignominiously as a whole.⁴⁸

Since the different races of China shared a common destiny based upon blood and innate virtues, they formed one nation--a large extended family--which could not be violated or separated.

Similarly, the territory of China was defined by natural borders based upon "economic organization, the requirements of national defense, and common destiny shared by the various stocks."⁴⁹ The sum of the different cultures within Chinese territory constituted Chinese national culture, Chiang claimed. If any of China's territory (which included the Ryukyu islands, Taiwan, Manchuria, Inner and Outer Mongolia, Sinkiang, and Tibet) were excised, all of China would be endangered. Therefore, Chiang concluded, the Soviet Union should return Outer Mongolia and Sinkiang, and the British should stay out of Tibet and return Hong Kong and Kowloon.⁵⁰

Stressing racial and cultural ties may be an efficient way of promoting unity and cooperation in nation-building. We cannot fault Chiang for using a mythical common ancestor to bring

⁴⁸Ibid., 12.

⁴⁹Ibid., 8-10.

⁵⁰Ibid., 57 and 143-144.

China's ethnic groups together. Furthermore, Chiang's statement that the Chinese nation grew by a process of assimilation of various groups was consistent with this aim. Rather than stressing the many wars fought between Han Chinese and the groups along China's northern and western frontiers, he reminded readers how, throughout Chinese history, a common culture developed by assimilation and exchange.

Unfortunately, this method was one that could arouse only extreme concern during World War II. The Axis used similar theories of national destiny based upon racial ties to rationalize their desires for expansion. The Japanese, for example, called on all Asians to fulfill what they considered the common cause of the war: Asia for Asians, under the guidance of Japan.⁵¹

The similarity of Chiang's statement to Japanese demands led to much criticism in China and the West. Ch'en Po-ta responded that it was shocking that Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of China during the War of Resistance, should use a "shallow idea of the German, Italian, and Japanese fascists" as the basis of his history of the Chinese nation. Distorting history was a trick of the fascists, and to teach people in this way was to fool them. The big landlords and capitalists fabricated such theories as Pan-Sinism (*Tai Han Tsu Chu-yi*) to depress the minorities within China, but that should not be the government's stance. For the

⁵¹"China Urged to Smash Imperialism of Enemy," Japan Times, 9 Jan. 1943, 2.

sake of the War of Resistance, this type of theory should be discarded.⁵²

Solomon Adler, a Western commentator on China's Destiny and Chinese Economic Theory, chided Chiang for use of "pseudo-ethnographic" theories to enforce political unity. Not only did they require the falsification of Chinese history, but they were also irrelevant to China's current problems.⁵³ An American diplomat, George Atcheson, Jr., noted that foreigners in China criticized the book as a misinterpretation of history for political purposes. It would be beneficial if China's Destiny were translated, so the Generalissimo could be seen in his true light.⁵⁴ John Service was blunter in his criticism of Chiang. He called Chiang's references to classical sources and the Yellow Emperor "fantastic." Service was surprised that even in the face of much criticism, the second edition of China's Destiny--due to its use of "scientifically untenable racialism" and claim that foreign aggression was the cause of all China's problems--remained the Generalissimo's "Mein Kampf."⁵⁵

Critics of China's Destiny also were concerned with what they regarded as a jingoistic tone in relation to China's minority groups. Chiang claimed that China was inhabited by only

⁵²Ch'en, 429-432.

⁵³Adler, 598.

⁵⁴Atcheson to Secretary of State, 31 May 1943, 247.

⁵⁵Service, "Digest," 410.

one nationality, and that all of them should be ruled by one national government. That might have been a positive method to reduce the centrifugal forces which made China "a loose sheet of sand," but it did not allow compromise with the demands of minority groups for local autonomy.

Ch'en Po-ta reminded Chiang that Sun Yat-sen declared the "right of self-determination of the various nations within China."⁵⁶ Therefore, the assertion in China's Destiny that China was inhabited by only one race could not be accepted. To deny the multinational aspect of China was to "deny Sun and his Principles." If the nationalities within China were described as one nation, then the struggle of Sun's Tung Meng Hui against the Manchus could not be considered a national struggle, but an internal one. Sun would have to be considered a fool, and the traitors of Chinese history, honored.⁵⁷ The minority groups should be placed on an equal footing, to better prosecute the War of Resistance. "If we resist the invaders on one hand, and oppress the national minorities on the other," Ch'en argued, "we are leaving a loophole for the enemy to utilize."⁵⁸

For China's minority groups, such as the Mongols, who aspired to a destiny of their own, the Pan-Sinism of China's

⁵⁶Ch'en, 430.

⁵⁷Ibid, 429-431. Philip Jaffe also criticizes China's Destiny for this reason. See Jaffe, "Commentary," 307.

⁵⁸Ch'en, 432.

Destiny produced outrage and distrust.⁵⁹ While minority groups hoped for autonomy within a national federation, including the right of secession, China's Destiny demonstrated the KMT's resolve to erase ethnic differences, both culturally and politically.⁶⁰ Thus, the result of Chiang's reference to classical history to support his theory of "common national destiny" backfired.⁶¹ Rather than placate the demands of minority groups for greater freedom, Chiang's book removed all hope for compromise.

Chiang's analysis of foreign involvement with minority groups also caused tensions in the relations between China and the Allies. China's Destiny criticized British plans to dominate Tibet through control of the Dalai Lama, and asked that in the new spirit of equality between China and the United Kingdom, Britain set aside her wish to control Tibet and return Hong Kong. The question of the Sino-Soviet frontier, it added, should be settled, meaning that the Soviets should stay out of Mongolia and

⁵⁹Snow, 281.

⁶⁰John S. Service, "Communist Views in Regard to Mongolia," report no. 14 from Yen-an, in Amerasia, 1410-1411; see also Idem, summary of conversation with M. Konstantinoff, Soviet Embassy representative in Lanchow, 5 August 1943, in USFR 1943, 306-308, for discussion concerning Tibet and Sinkiang.

⁶¹The War of Resistance also may have been hampered by poor relations between the national government and China's minority groups. In Suiyuan and Chahar, the predominantly Mongol population was "suspicious of all Chinese approaches," including guerrilla activity against the Japanese. China's Destiny only served to confirm those suspicions. See Raymond P. Ludden, "Communist Plans for Expansion," 16 February 1945, in Amerasia, 1342-1345.

Sinkiang.⁶²

The Soviets responded that due to the proximity of Outer Mongolia and Sinkiang to their own borders, the people in those areas could not avoid close ties with the Soviet Union.⁶³ The British, meanwhile, argued for the autonomy of Tibet under the nominal suzerainty of China, on the grounds that Tibet had maintained *de facto* independence since 1911. The autonomy of Tibet also was of "importance to the security of India and to the tranquility of India's north east frontier."⁶⁴

In the style of their imperialist past, His Majesty's Government also took a more militant tone (striking a note which also seems prophetic in light of the Tibetan problem in contemporary China):

If the Chinese government contemplate the withdrawal of Tibetan autonomy, His Majesty's Government and the Government of India must ask themselves whether in the changed circumstances of today it would be right for them to continue to recognize even a theoretical status of subservience for a people who desire to be free and have, in fact, maintained their freedom for more than thirty years.⁶⁵

Some American observers feared that Chiang's idea of national destiny would have an adverse affect on Sino-American relations. If the trend expressed in China's Destiny continued, wrote Joseph Ballantine, then Chief of the Division of Far

⁶²CD, 57 and 143-144.

⁶³Service, summary of conversation with Konstantinoff, 308.

⁶⁴British embassy to the U.S. Department of State, "Status of Tibet," 22 July 1943, in USFR 1943, 634-636.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 636.

Eastern Affairs, "mutually frank relations would be made difficult by narrow-gauge Chinese nationalistic aspirations which include a desire to occupy a role of leadership throughout the Far East and India."⁶⁶ John S. Service went a step further and questioned American support to the Chiang regime, which in books like China's Destiny mesmerized itself with the theory of national destiny. Under its spell, the Chiang regime machinated to consolidate minority groups, recover "lost territories" (such as the Ryukyu Islands, Hong Kong, and Kowloon), and protect the rights and national ties of Chinese immigrants in other parts of Asia and in America.⁶⁷

Chiang's effort in China's Destiny to build unity among the various ethnic groups in China on the basis of racial ties thus fragmented relations between the government and minorities, challenged the economic and political ambitions of the Soviets and British along China's frontier, and perturbed American observers. If fostering unity within China and cooperation with China's allies were goals that all of the various political groups within China agreed upon, then this portion of China's Destiny was a tragedy.

Chiang's system of national reconstruction, however, entailed much more than unity based upon the theory of common

⁶⁶Joseph W. Ballantine to Secretary of State, 2 September 1943, in USFR 1943, 323.

⁶⁷John S. Service, "The Need for Greater Realism in Our Relations with Chiang Kai-shek," in George Atcheson, Jr. to Secretary of State, 22 November 1944, USFR 1944, 709-710.

national destiny. This theory only undergirded Chiang's proposals, making national reconstruction an imperative. To Chiang, China had to engage in national reconstruction because the destiny of China's citizens--Han, Man, Mongol, Tibetan, or Hui--depended on the destiny of the Chinese Republic. If the unequal treaties damaged life in the moral, psychological, social, political, and economic spheres, China's Destiny proposed an outline of national reconstruction for all of them.

Chapter V

Moral and Psychological Reconstruction

That Confucian ideas persist in the minds of Chinese politicians today should not surprise us. Confucianism began as a means of bringing social order out of the chaos of a period of warring states....Unifiers of China have been irresistibly attracted to it for reasons that are not hard to see.

Fairbank, The United States and China,
fourth edition

1. The Concept

Just as the effects of the unequal treaties in the social, political, and economic spheres sprang from damage in the moral sphere, moral and psychological reconstruction were paramount in the process of national reconstruction, according to China's Destiny. Social reconstruction was necessary in order to have sound political reconstruction. To ensure the success of social reconstruction, the people's attitudes and habits must first be reformed. Therefore, psychological and moral reconstruction were the basis of all other reconstruction work.⁶⁸

Moral reconstruction entailed reviving and extending China's traditional moral system, reinvigorating the idea of sacrifice for the nation and people, and developing the "national character" of China. Psychological reconstruction dealt with the chimera of Westernization. Western techniques should be learned

⁶⁸CD, 152-153.

to invigorate China's scientific ability, but not in the spirit of imitating the West. In the area of moral and psychological reconstruction, Chiang's view of traditional Chinese culture was most evident.

In a chapter appended to the second edition of China's Destiny, Chiang claimed that, "When a man is insulted by another, it must be because he has behaved in such a way as to make others lose their respect for him." The unequal treaties must ultimately be blamed on the inadequate virtue of the people. Now that the unequal treaties had been abolished, Chiang admonished, dignity and the spirit of the ancient sages must be revived, so that China could become strong and "share in the responsibility of reconstructing the world and safeguarding peace in hearty cooperation with friendly nations."⁶⁹

China's Destiny did not lean completely on the spirit of China's ancient sages, however. Although Confucianism formed a "sublime system in itself," which was "equal, if not superior" to all other schools of philosophy, the Chinese had, in their past, willingly absorbed Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity into their culture. Since the Chinese ability to assimilate other people's arts and sciences to enrich their own culture was the reason for China's greatness, there was no reason why Western science could not be similarly absorbed. Chiang believed that psychological reconstruction required that Western science be modified to fit

⁶⁹Ibid., 84-85.

the context of China's tradition and not merely added on to its structure. Science could only flourish in China if it became a living part of Chinese culture.

Unfortunately, people began to adopt an attitude of idolization and self-abasement when approaching Western science. In particular, Chiang explained, the May Fourth Movement, which aimed at learning Western culture so that China would not become a slave to the West, unwittingly did the opposite by slavishly copying any Western ideology or philosophy that appeared on the Chinese intellectual scene. The May Fourth intellectuals forgot that Chinese culture had certain "immutable elements" and began to regard everything Western as good and everything Chinese as bad.⁷⁰ In this respect, China's Destiny declared:

The dispute between so-called liberalism and communism was nothing more than a dispute concerning Anglo-American and Soviet ideologies. All these theories and political doctrines not only could not meet the needs of China's national life, but they were also inconsistent with the inherent spirit of Chinese culture: for any of one of us to advocate these theories and doctrines indiscriminately is to forget completely that he is a Chinese.⁷¹

Psychological reconstruction sought to root out the tendency to be proud before one's own countrymen and humble before the foreigners. The habit of imitation must be discarded, and independent thinking cultivated. Independent thinking, Chiang

⁷⁰Ibid., 78-81

⁷¹Ibid., 83. The second version adds the disclaimer that the ideologies were not really Soviet or American ideologies, but liberalism and communism in imitated and distorted form.

maintained, required the "development of our traditional national spirit and the acquisition of true scientific knowledge." To accomplish this, he suggested that science be placed in the framework of wisdom, benevolence, courage, sincerity, dignity, earnestness, and orderliness, which together formed the "quintessence of our national character" and the "motive power of national reconstruction." It was only within the context of China's national character that science could transcend the habit of dependence and truly allow the Chinese people to create, think, and act independently to reconstruct China.

Hence, rooting out the national inferiority complex rested upon the foundation of moral reconstruction. Wisdom, benevolence, courage, and sincerity are central virtues of Confucianism. Chiang explained:

To cultivate the qualities essential to China's salvation means that we must revive and extend the traditional ethical principles of our nation. The most important task is to develop our people's sense of propriety, righteousness, integrity, and honor. These qualities are manifestations of our Four Cardinal Principles and Eight Virtues, **Chung** [loyalty] and **Hsiao** [filial piety] being the basis of all.⁷²

When China's Destiny spoke of extending the traditional ethical system, it meant to increase the limits of **Chung** and **Hsiao** beyond the family to the state. Chiang believed moral reconstruction also required teaching the citizens of China the ideal of sacrifice for the nation. In keeping with this claim, China's Destiny suggested that every young man should aspire to

⁷²Ibid., 154 and 156-157.

be a soldier or an airman in order to "restore the five-thousand-year-old innate noble spirit of our people as a foundation for our new and modern national ethics." This modern ethical system, Chiang added, could be expressed in one phrase--The nation above everything else.⁷³ China's Destiny did not see traditional morality as an end in itself, but as instrumental to the work of reconstruction and national unity, or, as a cynic would claim, a means to social control.

In the final chapter of his work, "China's Destiny and the Future of the World," Chiang continued to question the validity of Western economic and social concepts. The result of Western philosophy, claimed Chiang, was violent class struggle and international war. Those evils were not due to the development of science in the West; on the contrary, service to humanity was the original motive of the scientific revolution. Science had been abused only because the West was morally retarded and failed to appreciate China's profound and lasting ideals.⁷⁴ To avoid enslavement to material production and constant warfare, Chiang suggested that the West learn from China's ancient virtues.

Chiang's assertion that Confucian ethics were superior to Western philosophy was part of a centuries-old debate over modernization between restorationists and revolutionaries. The truth of arguments for or against Confucianism, however, is less

⁷³Ibid., 157-158.

⁷⁴Ibid., 229-230.

important, in understanding the impact of China's Destiny, than Fairbank's statement that unifiers of China, from Han Wu Ti to Deng Shaoping, have always been irresistibly drawn to Confucianism. While Chiang was no exception, we must not forget that his stress on Confucian ethics in China's Destiny immediately drew a plethora of critics who accused him of being "feudal," "reactionary," and "anti-foreign." In the charged atmosphere of 1943, it could not be otherwise.

2. The Criticisms

To Americans who were pre-occupied with the war in China, China's Destiny's outline of moral and psychological reconstruction came as a shock and a disappointment. While Chiang Kai-shek was right to claim that Western science could not help China develop into a modern nation until it ceased to be "Western science" and became "Chinese science," no one likes to be told that his system of ethics is inferior. When measures to improve China's morals emerged from the pages of China's Destiny and were implemented, playing cards, one of the "sole amusements" of Americans living in Chungking, was proscribed.⁷⁵ That was only a small annoyance; however, the round criticism of Western political and economic theories as unsuitable for China was much more distressing.

When John S. Service advocated cutting off support to Chiang Kai-shek in 1944, he claimed that the U.S. need not support

⁷⁵New York Times, 8 March 1943, sec. 3, p. 5.

Chiang in the belief that he represented American interests. Chiang had lost the support of most American-educated liberals and intellectuals, Service maintained, and KMT ideology, as seen in China's Destiny and Chinese Economic Theory, was "fundamentally anti-foreign and anti-democratic, both politically and economically."⁷⁶ On a similar note, Solomon Adler and Philip Jaffe asserted that China's Destiny played into the hands of the "C C" Clique, which Adler and Jaffe believed was the main protagonists in a propaganda campaign to assert the superiority of "Chineseness" over everything Western.⁷⁷ Chiang might claim that China's thought was superior on the basis of moral grounds, Jaffe responded, but there was "no basis for his conclusion," because the validity of economic or political theories could not be judged solely in terms of morality.⁷⁸

Adler and Jaffe also summoned the memory of Sun Yat-sen in an attempt to rebut Chiang's stress on Confucianism. Adler claimed that Sun drew mostly from Western liberal thinkers, whom the Generalissimo and his cohorts disparaged. That Sun was influenced by the West, Adler explained, was the "most eloquent refutation of the current Kuomintang thesis of the autonomy of

⁷⁶Service, "The Need for Greater Realism," 710.

⁷⁷Adler, "Discussion," 602 and Jaffe, "Commentary," 311. The "C C" Clique was a group that followed Ch'en Li-fu and Ch'en Kuo-fu, hence the name. "C C" Clique politicians were influential in the Ministries of Education and Information and had a conservative standpoint towards traditional Chinese culture.

⁷⁸Jaffe, "Commentary," 309.

Chinese culture from and its superiority over Western culture."⁷⁹ Jaffe noted that China's Destiny quoted Sun out of context and portrayed Sun, inappropriately, as a proponent of Confucianism. Sun tried to produce a new philosophy, argued Jaffe, because the old philosophy supported a regime which he wished to topple.⁸⁰

Just as the United States Constitution can be reinterpreted to suit the ideological needs of the moment, Sun's Three Principles also can be reshaped to support China's Destiny. Sun did pay extensive homage to Confucian thought while elaborating his Three Principles of the People. Moreover, Sun also demanded that China have democracy on its own cultural terms. Chiang may have erroneously portrayed Sun as a Confucian, but Adler and Jaffe depicted him as a liberal democrat. If Chiang used Sun out of context to fit his own theories, Jaffe and Adler's criticisms did, too. On this note, Freda Utley wrote that if China's Destiny were read with an open mind and a little knowledge of Sun's teachings, anyone would see that the Generalissimo was merely expounding Dr. Sun's thought. Sun believed that China could learn Western techniques, but still maintain her traditional ethical system, and that Chinese concepts of human relationships were more valid than Western notions of class-war or pragmatism.⁸¹ While some Americans criticized Chiang for being

⁷⁹Adler, "Discussion," 604.

⁸⁰Jaffe, "Commentary," 327.

⁸¹Utley, 339.

"feudal" or "fascist," Utley wrote, Chiang was merely following Sun. If it was "feudal" to inspire devotion for one's culture or "fascist" to promote pride in one's nation, then Sun would have to be considered "feudal" and all patriotism would have to be called "fascist," Utley declared. Chiang may have been following the thought of Dr. Sun in China's Destiny, but one must ask which Sun he followed. There were many groups in China who claimed to be following one version or another of Dr. Sun's Principles.

One such group was the CCP. Communist readers of China's Destiny responded unfavorably to Chiang's praise of the traditional ethical system and to Chiang's insistence that "virtues" constituted a motive force in national reconstruction. Ch'en Po-ta asked, for example, if China's old ethical system were so ideal, why did China not resist the imperialists but instead became bound by the unequal treaties? If **Chung** and **Hsiao** were so vital to national reconstruction, why did the Japanese promote the "original virtues of the Orient?" Not in order to make China a strong nation; indeed, it was because they wanted to strangle the self-consciousness of the Chinese people through the use of such concepts. Furthermore, it was the opinion of landlords that "virtues" could be the decisive factor in determining the destiny of the nation, Ch'en argued. He declared that the correct view was that China's victory in the war and success in postwar reconstruction lay in strengthening and

mobilizing the masses.⁸²

The CCP agreed with Kuomintang leaders that China must modernize by synthesizing Western techniques with Chinese culture. Mao Tse-tung claimed, for example, that China's traditional culture had a democratic essence that merely needed to be sifted out of the feudal dross surrounding it to become a force for modernization. However, the CCP found inspiration in the egalitarian, anti-Establishment peasant religious movements such as the Taiping, not in the example of China's sages. The old system of ethics, based upon submission and "eating bitterness," in service to the feudal order of landlords and bureaucrats, must be swept away to construct a "new democratic culture" in service to a modern, democratic nation.⁸³ As Ch'en Pai-ta noted, China's old system of ethics was merely a system for deceiving the people.⁸⁴

China's Destiny took its stand clearly on the side of those who crushed peasant rebellions and restored order. Unifiers of China might find Chung and Hsiao irresistible, but Chiang's uncompromising stress on these concepts made it impossible for him and the CCP to put aside their differences. While China's Destiny stressed Sun's insistence that China's traditional ethical system could be used as a force for reconstruction, the

⁸²Ch'en, 435-437 and 432.

⁸³Mao Tse-tung, "On New Democracy," 380-381 and 369.

⁸⁴Ch'en, 435.

Chinese Communists based their ideology on a phrase from Sun's last testament, "mobilize the people." Unfortunately, they both failed to see that Sun's Three Principles embodied both of these concepts.

In addition, the CCP did not appreciate China's Destiny's caricature of their movement as merely playing into the hands of the Soviet Union. To clear the record, Ch'en Po-ta stressed that the CCP did not imitate Russia. Chinese Communists, he claimed, believe in Marxism-Leninism but never relied on a foreign country for supplies nor depended on foreigners to fight their battles.

While China's Destiny indicted communists and liberals for being "proud before one's countrymen but submissive before foreigners," Ch'en countered that "one should sometimes look in the mirror." A "certain gentleman" went to the USSR at the time of the October Revolution, Ch'en related, declared that "China's revolution must be led by the Third International," and sent his son to the Soviet Union to study. Later, he went to Japan and interviewed Mitsuru Toyama, leader of the Japanese secret service, and claimed that China and Japan should unite. Then he converted to a foreign religion, Christianity. When Hitler came to power in Germany, he sent another son to study fascism and invited Nazi advisors to China. Now he relied upon the foreign powers to fight the War of Resistance for him. Could not one say that this man was "proud before his countrymen but submissive

before the foreigners," asked Ch'en.⁸⁵ If China's Destiny must criticize those who use Western political or economic theories, then it should also be a work of self-criticism.

China's liberals, mostly within the academic scene, also disliked Chiang's criticism of liberals as mindlessly following the example of America or England. In addition, they questioned the utility of criticizing the political philosophies of China's allies in World War II and were concerned with Chiang's tirade against the May Fourth Movement, which they saw as a watershed in the modernization of China.

Sun Fo, the son of Dr. Sun and the self-styled leader of a liberal wing within the Kuomintang, complained that China's Destiny criticized communism and liberalism, the philosophies of China's allies, yet Chiang failed to criticize Nazism and Fascism, the philosophies of China's enemies. What would the Allies think?⁸⁶ In fact, Chiang did criticize fascism.⁸⁷ However, given the general tone of his book, which went out of its way to

⁸⁵Ch'en, 440-441. In typical Chinese fashion, Ch'en saved face for the Generalissimo by never mentioning that "this certain Chinese gentleman" was none other than Chiang.

⁸⁶Atcheson to Secretary of State, 31 May 1943, 246. Compare Sun's statement with a similar one by Ch'en: "It is rather peculiar that Mr. Chiang should openly oppose the liberal principles of Europe and America and the communistic principles of Russia....Can we help being afraid that as soon as they see Mr. Chiang's book, Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo, Wang Ching-wei and others will think that Mr. Chiang is singing in unison with them?" Ch'en, 440.

⁸⁷CD, 194.

criticize communism and liberalism, while mentioning the evils of fascism only in passing, it is not surprising that one could get this impression. Chiang's stress on order and the predominant position of the Kuomintang also lent credence to charges that China's Destiny was an expression of feudalism and fascism hostile to liberal concepts.

Intellectuals who had gained inspiration from the new culture movement spawned by the May Fourth Movement found China's Destiny unpleasant. Wen I-to, a professor at Southwest Associated University, explained:

A big turning point in my life was the publication of China's Destiny. I was startled by its Boxer Spirit. Was this the thought of our illustrious leader? The May Fourth movement had made too deep an impression on me. I couldn't possibly accept China's Destiny's open declaration of war on May Fourth.⁸⁸

China's Destiny displayed Chiang's antipathy for the May Fourth Movement. The CCP, however, saw May Fourth as a positive step in the reformation of China's culture. The May Fourth movement, opposed to the classical language of the ancient literature, the traditional family structure, and Confucianism, provided the culture of the united front, which Mao saw as a model for China's "new democratic republic."⁸⁹ If China's Destiny caused liberals to see Chiang and those around him as superstitious Boxers who placed their hopes in a decaying

⁸⁸Wen I-to in Lian-ta Pa-nian, 6 (trans. from notes of John Israel, Professor of History, University of Virginia).

⁸⁹Mao, "On New Democracy," 375.

imperial system, the CCP began to take on the light of progressive revolutionaries. China's Destiny may have caused China's liberal intellectuals to lose all hope that their goals, crystallized in the May Fourth movement, which grew in the wake of increased Japanese aggression and China's frustrated hopes to regain her territory, could ever be accomplished under the Chiang regime.

Of course, there were others who agreed with Chiang's scheme of moral and psychological reconstruction. Those associated with the "C C" clique and editors of Kuomintang newspapers were especially pleased with China's Destiny. Even Lin Yu-t'ang claimed, "No one can doubt the justness of his analysis and criticism, the importance of his emphasis on certain aspects of China's past philosophy, or the sincerity of his fervent appeal."⁹⁰ A biographer of Chiang Kai-shek, H. H. Chang, also felt that Chiang was correct to demand that China develop modern technology by assimilating it into her own culture.⁹¹

Still, the reactions of Lin and Chang are both *ex post facto*. KMT praise for the book began soon after China's Destiny hit the newsstands.⁹² One review of China's Destiny, printed in

⁹⁰Lin Yu-t'ang, "Introduction to China's Destiny," x.

⁹¹H. H. Chang, Chiang Kai-shek (New York: Doubleday, 1944), 299.

⁹²See Lo Kang, 2-5; T'ao Hsi-sheng, "A Study of China's Destiny," editorial in Chungking Central Weekly, vol. 5, no. 33, 1 April 1943, in Atcheson, no. 1220 to Secretary of State, enclosure no. 5, 1-2; and Wang Ching-ch'ing, 1.

the Central Daily News soon after the publication date, praised the book for highlighting the shortcomings of liberalism and communism. Western nations may not understand this fully, the article asserted, but it is "impossible for us to abandon our thoughts to follow them"--China could not follow liberalism or individualism, it must follow the Three Principles of the People.⁹³ However, the author of another favorable review had vested interests in the success of the book--"A Study of China's Destiny," which described Chiang's work as a profound work of philosophy and literature, was written by T'ao Hsi-sheng himself.⁹⁴

The "C C" clique, which controlled the educational system, also must have been content with Chiang's call for moral and psychological reconstruction. The book more than met their demands to preserve traditional morality while engaging in modernization. Indeed, the instant adoption of China's Destiny as a textbook clearly demonstrated the Clique's desire to propagate Chiang's ideas.⁹⁵ However, this type of support was

⁹³Lo, 4.

⁹⁴T'ao, "A Study," 2. Ch'en Pai-ta responded that it was truly odd Tao was needed to endorse the Generalissimo's magnum opus. Ch'en, "Critique," 428.

⁹⁵Hence, Wang Ching-ch'ing wrote: "From this book all youths may get most accurate instructions. If they follow them honestly, plainly and without deceit, they will surely succeed in morality, in learning, and in undertakings, and will rise continually. It is most fortunate for a youth to get such careful instructions from this great leader, and this is a sign of the bright future of the country." Wang Ching-ch'ing, 1.

unproductive. It increased American concerns that the KMT was launching a propaganda campaign against foreign thought and served to increase discontent among those who demanded an end to party interference in education.

Chapter VI

Social and Political Reconstruction

To put it simply, where there is selflessness, there is sincerity. The aim of our National Revolution is precisely this: to eradicate selfish individualism, to rescue the people from their sufferings and the state from its perils,--in a word, to serve others.

Chiang, China's Destiny

Social and political reconstruction were superstructures which were built upon Chiang's program of moral and psychological reconstruction. The latter involved training in traditional virtues and public spirit; the former meant to utilize the energy produced by those virtues in local self-government and political tutelage. Moral and psychological reconstruction stressed **Chung** and **Hsiao**, public spirit, and sacrifice for the nation. It was only when those ideals became completely fused with the daily life of all citizens that true democracy could take root, for democracy in the KMT vein demanded that citizens place the interests of the collective first and personal interests, second. Otherwise, society would be a fractured mass of hedonistic individuals creating social strife. This collective, rather than liberal, form of democracy found its basis in both the Confucian tradition and Sun Yat-sen's statement that democracy implied freedom for the nation. **Min-ch'uan** was political power for the people, and not for persons.

Chiang's view of social reconstruction manifested itself in the New Life Movement (hereafter, NLM), the **pao-chia** system, development of self-sufficiency at the local level, and the **San Min Chu Yi** Youth Corps.

According to China's Destiny, "The New Life Movement is the basic movement in social reconstruction, having the modernization of the Chinese people as its object." The assumption behind this movement was that development of civic virtues, military order, and discipline must find expression in the daily lives of the people. By developing virtues and discipline in daily life, the people would become public-spirited and, through unified action, take initiative in local self-government and community improvements. The NLM, with its stress on public spirit, morality, order, and harmony, formed a bridge between the work done in moral and psychological reconstruction and the process of social reconstruction.

Local self-government, according to China's Destiny, should take the character of the **pao-chia** system handed down from antiquity. In praise of the **pao-chia** system, Chiang noted that since time immemorial, the Chinese had organized themselves in family, clan, **pao**, **chia**, and rural communities, giving Chinese rural life an essentially democratic character even in the days of the monarchy. Unfortunately, he lamented, the system was left to decay under the Manchus, and modern scholars had forgotten that rural organization was really the basis of social reconstruction. This tight village organization, Chiang hoped,

would allow rural communities to take the initiative to provide schools, clubs, hospitals, and other collective enterprises which were "essentials of spiritual life."⁹⁶

Another important organization was the **San Min Chu Yi** Youth Corps. The Corps was essential to social reconstruction, China's Destiny admonished, because the youth did not understand the meaning of discipline, were irresponsible in conduct, and unrealistic in thinking. Their thinking must be "scientifically trained" and behavior "strictly disciplined," Chiang declared.⁹⁷

Social reconstruction under the New Life Movement, **pao-chia** organizations, and **San Min Chu Yi** Youth Corps would take China's population, derided as a "loose sheet of sand," and turn it into a orderly, public-spirited, well-disciplined group of citizens.

In the area of political reconstruction, China's Destiny maintained that the Republic of China was not on the road to individualistic, liberal democracy, such as that practiced in the United States or England, but a democracy based upon collective interests. Thus, Chiang highlighted the need for political tutelage and independence for the nation. While Anglo-American democracy was based upon individualism and the concept of class for historical reasons, the problem of China was not lack of liberty but lack of unity. Hence, Chinese democracy must have a

⁹⁶CD, 158-160.

⁹⁷Ibid., 213-214.

different face. Without the period of political tutelage, in which the foundation for constitutional government would be laid, Chiang feared that the future constitution would be a "dead letter" or "a scrap of paper."⁹⁸ Many differences of opinion existed on the method to unify China, Chiang added, but the arguments against political tutelage were merely the counterrevolutionary schemes of feudal warlords. Since the problem of China was disunity, in carrying out political reconstruction, China must proceed from the Principle of Nationalism to the Principles of Democracy and the People's Livelihood. China should develop into a "strong national-defense unit" and avoid individualistic liberalism, which would again leave her a loose heap of sand.⁹⁹

In China's Destiny, political tutelage--education for participation in a constitutional democracy--was defined as training to respect the rule of law, recognize one's obligations to the state, and subordinate individual wants and needs to the interests of the nation. This conception of democracy differed greatly from the American model, and from the models proposed by liberals and the CCP. It was not surprising, therefore, that the view of social and political reconstruction in China's Destiny stirred considerable debate.

⁹⁸Ibid., 161 and 113.

⁹⁹Ibid., 146.

The **pao-chia** system, in the realm of social reconstruction, and tutelage, in the political sphere, attracted criticism. Since the **pao-chia** system was being used by the Japanese as a form of social control in Occupied China, American observers and Chinese critics of the KMT greeted it unfavorably. John S. Service complained that the Generalissimo continued to ignore the drive for democratic reform. China's Destiny showed that Chiang and other KMT leaders had no understanding of democracy, Service claimed, for the only preparation for a constitutional government undertaken by the KMT was the **pao-chia** system utilized by the Japanese to stifle opposition.¹⁰⁰ As for the CCP, Ch'en Po-ta sarcastically commented, "How gorgeous! We have stepped into a paradise here!" If the **pao-chia** system were so ideal, he asked, why would the Japanese be so quick to enforce it?¹⁰¹ Accordingly, however much Chiang hoped to resurrect the **pao-chia** system as a means for local self-sufficiency in education and welfare, he could not avoid the taint of despotism when creating **pao-chia** units. The misuse of **pao-chia** units for repression was all too possible.

The political counterpart to the **pao-chia** system did not fare much better. Freda Utley demanded that "any unprejudiced historian has to accept the correctness of Chiang Kai-shek's dictum" that political tutelage must be followed if the

¹⁰⁰John S. Service, "Kuomintang and American Policy," memorandum to Dept. of State, 24 June 1944, in Amerasia, 578.

¹⁰¹Ch'en, 437.

constitution was ever to be more than a piece of paper.¹⁰² Unprejudiced historians, however, cannot deny that Chiang's dictum, praised so highly by Utley, was the wrong statement to make in the midst of liberal demands upon the KMT regime. The liberals claimed that China's citizens were ready for constitutional government. For the sake of unity, democratic reform, which would allow Chinese of all ideological complexions to participate, must occur.

China's Destiny caused liberals to become more frustrated with Chiang's unwillingness to give Chinese citizens real political power. Chang Lan, the president of the Democratic Federation, complained that political tutelage had become an excuse for not implementing a constitution. The KMT failed to train people to apply democracy, he concluded, due to the aggrandizement of Chiang's position.¹⁰³

If China's Destiny did little to meet the demands of liberals and the CCP for democratic reform, it did less to dispel fears that the KMT wanted to institute a one-party dictatorship. The book removed all doubt that, in Chiang's mind, only one political party was acceptable in the Republic of China. The KMT, China's Destiny claimed, "has remained as firm as the Tai

¹⁰²Utley, 309.

¹⁰³Chang Lan, "China Needs True Democracy," translation of pamphlet published in September 1943, in Gauss to Secretary of State, 21 February 1944, USFR 1944, 348.

Mountain and as steady as the Pole Star."¹⁰⁴ Hence, all adults should join the KMT and all youths, the **San Min Chu Yi** Youth Corps. Otherwise, China's Destiny warned, distrust, hypocrisy, and lawlessness would prevail as they did under the warlords.¹⁰⁵ Chiang further reminded intellectuals that without the KMT there would have been no revolution, no Three Principles of the People, and no War of Resistance. Therefore, any party that disassociated itself from the KMT could not "possibly be of any assistance to the cause of the war of resistance or the task of national revival." In short, China's Destiny declared, without the KMT there could be no Republic of China.¹⁰⁶

The one-party stand expressed in China's Destiny either confirmed suspicions or shocked the reader, depending on one's view of the Kuomintang government. While many Americans had thought of Chiang as above partisan politics and the government as more than a KMT organ, China's Destiny clearly spelled out that the Generalissimo believed the KMT should be the only party allowed to participate in the political process.¹⁰⁷

Once again, critics called upon the memory of Dr. Sun to chide Chiang.¹⁰⁸ Jaffe asserted that for Sun Yat-sen, who chose

¹⁰⁴CD, 100.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 214-216.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 128.

¹⁰⁷Snow, 281.

¹⁰⁸Jaffe, "Commentary," 331-332; and Ch'en, 454.

to express his dream in the words of Lincoln--government for the people, of the people, and by the people--China's destiny rested with the people of China, not with a political party. Sun's Three Principles were not party principles, but People's Principles belonging not to a political elite but to the masses of China. Likewise, the CCP critic, Ch'en Po-ta, argued that China's Destiny turned Sun upside down. Rather than raising the masses of the people, it suppressed them under the weight of distorted history and misinterpretations of Sun's thought. "The thought of 'I am the state' of the French tyrant Louis XIV is completely revived here," Ch'en added.¹⁰⁹ Chang Lan also disparaged the strong encouragement to join the KMT and the one-party standpoint of China's Destiny, calling them "fundamentally opposed to democracy and government by the people."¹¹⁰

In the past, Chiang had been viewed by many within China and in the West as a strong leader and unifying force. However, his failure to compromise on the position of the Kuomintang in a democratic China greatly damaged his prestige. The CCP proposed a united front in which political parties representing each social class in China could cooperate in the War of Resistance and the work of national reconstruction. The liberals also asked the KMT to abolish one-party dictatorship in order to put an end to civil disputes and build unity. China's Destiny removed all

¹⁰⁹Ch'en, 449.

¹¹⁰Chang Lan, "China Needs True Democracy," 348.

hope that either of these demands could be fulfilled under Chiang's leadership. As George Atcheson, Jr. commented, Chiang's stress on the primary position of the KMT and criticism of Western political thought "should serve to convince all Chinese of liberal tendencies that there is little hope for them from the Kuomintang."¹¹¹ While he was needed as a military strongman during the Northern Expedition, as a consensus builder during the War of Resistance, Chiang had lost his utility.

¹¹¹Atcheson to Secretary of State, 31 May 1943, 248.

Chapter VII

Economic Reconstruction

Why do we have to reform the old China? Is it not because the regime in old China was too dark, too cruel, too backward and too hypocritical? Is it not because the economic system of China mercilessly squeezes the broad masses... .

Ch'en Po-ta, "Critique of China's Destiny"

When China's Destiny addressed economic reconstruction, its basic theme was development of heavy industry. National defense placed the greatest demands on China's economy. Hence, Chiang maintained, industrial development must be the basis of economic reconstruction.¹¹² In a speech given to the San Min Chu Yi Youth Corps soon after the publication of his book, Chiang further clarified this statement. Labor was the first essential of life, he claimed. National reconstruction was the work of first importance, industry was the work that should take precedence, and national defense was the first essential of nation-building.¹¹³

In China's Destiny, Chiang enumerated the number of factories, automobiles, and engineers, as well as miles of railways and roads, that were needed to modernize China, a ten-

¹¹²CD, 163.

¹¹³Chiang Kai-shek, summary of speech to Youth Corps, in John C. Vincent to Secretary of State, 28 April 1943, USFR 1943, 227.

year plan which he based on the writings of Sun. Buried amidst all of these listings, there was a single reference to land reform. "We should particularly emphasize the preparations to be made for carrying out our fundamental policy of equalization of land ownership and control of capital," he wrote.¹¹⁴ Chiang gave no indication, however, what those preparations might be or when they might be carried out. His plan for economic reconstruction emphasized industrialization and almost ignored the problem of land ownership, which influenced over 80% of China's population.

Chiang's plan to modernize China was very unimaginative. Lin Yu-t'ang obviously had more tolerance than most readers, for he not only read Chiang's lists but also stated unequivocally that the ten-year plan was "'realistic' rather than otherwise."¹¹⁵ Lin may have been responding to a criticism levelled at Chiang by William R. Langdon, then U.S. Consul General in Kunming, that if the plans in China's Destiny were typical of KMT economic planning, then a pessimistic view must be taken. Chiang's book certainly indicated the scale, but offered no guidelines for development. Thus, Langdon noted, "Planning is haphazard, confused, and ambitious, but entirely unrealistic."¹¹⁶ Other critics reacted strongly to Chiang's refusal to address land reform. In a speech on the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC)

¹¹⁴CD, 163.

¹¹⁵Lin, x.

¹¹⁶William R. Langdon to Secretary of State, 1 August 1944, USFR 1944, 494.

during the summer of 1944, James G. Endicott, a Canadian missionary to China, argued that China's Destiny "made it clear that Chiang would not countenance agrarian reform." Endicott, who originally believed that Chiang was reform-minded, thought the views expressed in Chiang's book sounded more like the diatribe of "feudal reactionaries" than the ideas of Chiang Kai-shek.¹¹⁷

The CCP also questioned Chiang's focus on industrial development rather than agrarian reform. While the CCP agreed that China needed to industrialize, they differed in emphasis. Chiang wanted to industrialize in order to develop a basis for national defense. The CCP, on the other hand, believed that light industry and communications should be developed to increase the standard of living. In China's Destiny, national defense was primary, but to the CCP, it was secondary. Most importantly, CCP leaders reminded Chiang that China had primarily an agricultural economy. Agricultural resources and problems could not be neglected.¹¹⁸

In general, Chiang's views of economic reconstruction did not address the one problem readers within and without China

¹¹⁷James Endicott, "Warning Signals in China," cited in Stephen Endicott, James G. Endicott: Rebel out of China (Toronto: Univ. Toronto Press, 1980), 164.

¹¹⁸John S. Service, report no. 34 from Yen-an, "The Orientation of the Chinese Communists toward the Soviet Union and the United States," to Commanding General, U.S. Armed Forces, China-Burma-India theater, 28 September 1944, in Amerasia, 944-945; and Ch'en, 432.

found most crucial--land reform. However, this was not surprising given his focus on morality and psychological factors as the substructure of national reconstruction.¹¹⁹ Chiang had little understanding of human motivation. He failed to see that robbery, banditry, and communist insurgency were the result of poverty, but blamed those problems on lax morality.¹²⁰ Chiang's idealism--his assertion that national reconstruction must have moral, rather than economic, reform as its basis--blinded him to the urgent need for a solution to the rural land problem. Even if Chiang's ten-year plan was "realistic," it could not compensate for this deficiency in China's Destiny.

¹¹⁹Nor was it surprising considering that one of his main bases of support was the landed gentry. After retreating to Taiwan, the KMT successfully carried out land equalization there. Perhaps Chiang, in spite of his failure on the mainland, learned from his mistakes.

¹²⁰Eastman, 205-206.

Chapter VIII

Problems of National Reconstruction

China's Destiny also described the obstacles to national reconstruction and attempted to persuade the opposition, most notably the CCP, to cooperate with the Kuomintang. Unfortunately, Chiang did not argue tactfully. Rather than serving as a friendly gesture, China's Destiny seemed to be a didactic diatribe against all opponents of the KMT.

Chiang claimed that the intellectuals had forgotten the needs of China. They were still "incapable of faithful action."¹²¹ Advocates of Westernization blindly adored foreign things, while apologists of the classics were complacent, as well as oblivious to the outside world. Worse, many intellectuals "invoked the doctrines current in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to undermine our traditional conception of government by law."¹²² These intellectuals, Chiang complained, mistook the idea of Natural Rights as valid and decided that the Chinese Revolution was a struggle for liberty. However, Rousseau was without foundation, Chiang argued. As Sun himself wrote, "As we study the evolution of history, we see that the rights of man

¹²¹CD, 199-200.

¹²²Ibid., 207. The second version softened the tone: "There have been those who took doctrines current in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a theoretical basis for the Chinese Revolution."

are not created by Heaven but are the product of the conditions of the times and the movement of events."¹²³ While the Europeans, deprived of freedom by historical conditions, had to fight for liberty, the problem in China was not one of individual liberty but of national freedom. Hence, Chiang admonished, excessive personal liberty must not be tolerated, because China must develop a strong national defense unit. Intellectuals who believed that Western liberal theory of democracy could be applied to China had failed to see clearly the nature of the Chinese Revolution. To correct this problem, China's Destiny recommended:

our people should feel thoroughly penitent and encourage one another to look upon the upholding of law as a virtue and the shouldering of responsibility as an honor. We must refrain from seeking private benefit at the expense of the welfare of the state.¹²⁴

Needless to say, Chiang's criticism of liberal thought did not persuade the CCP or the liberals to view Chiang as a champion of democracy. Chiang may have been correct to insist that personal freedom must be sacrificed for the sake of national defense in the War of Resistance, but to make that demand in reference to postwar China was discouraging. For China's Destiny to claim the Chinese people need not struggle for freedom, Ch'en Po-ta countered, was "contrary to the hope of the Chinese people at the present hour and the aim of the Allies in the anti-fascist

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid., 208 and 211.

war." Ch'en added that if Chiang refused to take inalienable, individual human rights as the basis of the democratic system in China, it meant he intended to proclaim a "new absolutist" and "compradore-feudalist fascism of the Chinese pattern."¹²⁵

By far the biggest impediment to national reconstruction, Chiang maintained, was not the liberal philosophy favored by intellectuals, but the CCP. Chiang blamed the CCP for breaking up the united front, initiating civil war, colluding with Wang Ching-wei, and following a new form of "warlordism" and feudalism.

China's Destiny claimed that the KMT-CCP split was the Communist Party's fault. The CCP, colluding with Wang, sowed "seeds of dissension" in KMT ranks. Chiang asked, was it Wang who utilized the Communists, the CCP who exploited Wang, or did they manipulate each other? Not content with damaging national unity, the CCP also "appealed to the youth to forsake our traditional virtues and even to regard propriety, righteousness, integrity, and honor as out of fashion," obstructing moral reconstruction.¹²⁶ The CCP also damaged social and economic reconstruction. Communists, preaching "agrarian revolution," wrote Chiang, "ravaged our peaceful rural communities....They only preached hatred and instilled the idea of class-war into

¹²⁵Ch'en, 453. The phrase, "compradore-feudalist fascism of the Chinese pattern," is repeated to describe Chiang (without acknowledgement!) in Service's digest of the second edition, Jaffe's and Adler's commentaries, and in some secondary sources.

¹²⁶CD, 104-106.

society and the youth of the nation."¹²⁷ Since the CCP conspired with Wang Ching-wei and thwarted national reconstruction, the expulsion of CCP members from the KMT was inevitable. Reflecting on the CCP-KMT split in 1927, Chiang lamented that the lesson taught by that period was "too painful, the injury done to our country too great, and the sacrifice of our people too terrible to be forgotten."¹²⁸

The CCP naturally could not let this criticism go unanswered. The split in 1927, which led to civil war, was indeed a painful time, especially for the Communist Party. Ch'en Po-ta believed that Chiang was being much too humble in China's Destiny; Was not the Nanking-Wuhan split really due to the party purge which Chiang himself initiated on 12 April 1927? Concerning collaboration with Wang Ching-wei, did not Chiang collaborate with Wang in the early 1930s, even after Wang had suggested "negotiation while preparing for defense" and a "good neighbor policy with Japan?" Ch'en sarcastically paraphrased China's Destiny: We cannot make clear today whether Wang used Chiang, Chiang used Wang, or if Wang and Chiang exploited each other. In response to Chiang's comment that the period of the KMT-CCP split was too painful to be forgotten, Ch'en replied:

Indeed, we communists and all the Chinese people with justice and enthusiasm would let those things be forgotten if they were not mentioned. But once they are mentioned, our hearts cannot help being filled with boiling anger because the Chinese Communists have shed their blood! It is

¹²⁷ Ibid., 114.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 107.

the blood of innumerable revolutionaries and able young men and toiling workers and peasants! It is the blood of the elite of this nation! Since the beginning of the 'purge' too many people have died under the sword of the Kuomintang! Too many! Too many!¹²⁹

The party purge of 1927, the civil war, and the Long March still held too many emotions for the CCP. When trying to build unity, it is not good to tear open old wounds, yet China's Destiny did just that. Perhaps that is why Mao Tse-tung commented that when Chiang implied the CCP was in league with Wang Ching-wei, rebelled against the government, and sabotaged resistance, it showed that Chiang and other KMT leaders were hungry for civil war.¹³⁰

China's Destiny also conveyed Chiang's hope that people would stop spending their energies opposing the KMT, for the KMT was entrusted with the destiny of China. Since it would be regrettable if anyone failed to contribute to national reconstruction, Chiang intimated, "I cannot refrain from calling once more upon all our people to work for our common cause."¹³¹

In the same breath, however, China's Destiny made it equally clear that discontent with the KMT was a problem which would not be tolerated by the government. It was deplorable, Chiang remonstrated, that people became confused in their thinking and criticized the Kuomintang as unable to bring about needed

¹²⁹Ch'en, 445-446.

¹³⁰Mao Tse-tung, "On Chiang Kai-shek's Speech on the Double Tenth Festival," in Selected Works, vol. 3, 181.

¹³¹CD, 226-227.

reforms. In fact, those same people used "democracy" to cover their "feudalistic domination of certain regions" and "branded the great tasks of unifying the country as an attempt to set up 'absolutism' and 'dictatorship'."¹³² In this sense, the CCP were "new feudalist" or "new warlord-like" elements obstructing national unification and development.

Chiang admitted that there were disputes in domestic politics, and mentioned that the national government was willing to hold a "magnanimous spirit and seek a solution by rational means." China's Destiny added, however, that if the "new warlord-like" and "new feudal" ways of some of these disputants were not put down, tolerance would be to no avail, and no rational solution could be found.¹³³ Chiang doggedly insisted, "join me or else."

Mao and Ch'en questioned these views of Chiang.¹³⁴ Mao reminded Chiang that a condition for placing the 8th Route Army under the national government's command was KMT recognition of the Shen-Kan-Ning Border Region. China's Destiny railed against the CCP as "new feudalists." In response to this portrayal, Mao inquired, should not the KMT first fulfill their obligation to recognize the border region before dishing out such criticism?

Ch'en added that the "new feudalism" and "new warlordism"

¹³²Ibid., 117-118.

¹³³Ibid., 224.

¹³⁴Mao, "A Comment on the Kuomintang CEC and PPC Sessions," in Selected Works, vol. 3, 148; Chen, 449-451.

did not hurt China. In fact, China would be a stronger nation if it were full of "new warlords!" The so-called "new warlords," he explained, were fighting the enemy behind enemy lines without support from the government. Was not self-sufficiency one of the goals of social reconstruction as outlined by Chiang in China's Destiny? In the land of "new feudalism," Ch'en continued, democracy flourished, and the soldiers, civilians, officials, and people were all "united as members in one family." Finally, declared Ch'en, "new feudalism" would execute the will of Sun. At any rate, it was much better than the "cruel and heartless oppression and exploitation, the oligarchic despotic policy one hundred times worse than those of Emperor Chin I," the "old feudalism" behind Chinese lines.

Ch'en also wondered how the national government could consider searching out and attacking CCP members, destroying villages undergoing agrarian reform, proscribing basic human rights, or depriving peasants of livelihood by allowing high rents and usury. Chiang is a certainly lenient man, Ch'en concluded, but only to the landlords, the secret service agents, corrupt officials, T'ao Hsi-sheng, and other traitors who destroyed the enthusiasm and self-respect of the nation.¹³⁵

As for Mao, he reasoned that when China's Destiny portrayed the CCP as "new warlords," it showed that the KMT was preparing for civil war. Indeed, the book expressed so much hatred for the

¹³⁵Ch'en, 449-450.

CCP that there was little left for the Japanese imperialists.¹³⁶

The CCP critics went a step beyond merely criticizing anti-communist propaganda in China's Destiny; they reversed it to savage Chiang and the Kuomintang. In response to China's Destiny and other strong KMT propaganda which labeled the CCP "traitor armies," the CCP launched a propaganda campaign of its own in Ch'en Po-ta's critique and many critical articles in the Yen-an press. At the outset of this new propaganda war between the CCP and KMT, C. E. Gauss, U.S. ambassador to China in 1943, remarked: "A lessening of tension between the Kuomintang and Communist parties is scarcely to be expected if the propaganda campaigns continue with the resultant growing bitterness between the two."¹³⁷ Consequently, rather than facilitate cooperation, China's Destiny increased the intensity of propaganda and counterpropaganda campaigns in Chungking and Yen-an.

¹³⁶Mao, "A Comment," 141-142.

¹³⁷C. E. Gauss to Secretary of State, 6 October 1943, USFR 1943, 348.

Chapter IX

Appraisal of China's Destiny

It was entirely in keeping with this ancient pattern that Chiang Kai-shek, a prisoner of the past, should seek to progress from the status of Hero to that of Sage, a transformation symbolized in 1943 when he became head of National Central University at Chungking and published China's Destiny as a textbook.

Fairbank, The United States and China

China's Destiny's plan for national reconstruction found few admirers, perhaps due more to its didactic and aggressive tone than its actual contents. Chiang did discuss democracy and land reform in China's Destiny, but he also demanded that political tutelage, restoration of traditional morality, and development of heavy industry take precedence. Moreover, his constant attacks on opposition groups did little to instill confidence in his ability to make China a unified nation.

In spite of these problems, there were some who tried to promote the ideas in Chiang's book, or at least apologize for them. A Central Daily News article written to mark the publication of China's Destiny noted that "although we have often received directions from the Generalissimo's speeches, his books or proclamations, yet the projection of a whole policy is hard to find. In the future, we shall have a source to which we may turn."¹³⁸ Chiang's book did integrate his various ideas into a

¹³⁸T'ao, "A Study," 1.

coherent policy, even if many would disagree with it. In this respect, China's Destiny became the second-best textbook for political education, as the book was described by the KMT, or, as the communists believed, "the best possible source of propaganda for their cause."¹³⁹ In short, the exposition of Chiang's thought in a single work was useful to both sides of the ideological dispute.

The book also provided grist for the Japanese propaganda mills. China's Destiny did not "win sincere and repeated praise from the Japanese imperialists," as Mao claimed after Chiang's Double-Ten Day speech in 1943.¹⁴⁰ On the other hand, they rejoiced in the domestic squabbles between the KMT and CCP. A Japan Times article on 15 March 1943 heralded "The Fate of China"[sic.] as a sign of Chiang's ideological bankruptcy and decline in influence.¹⁴¹ The article explained that Chiang defended his dictatorial powers under the premise that this was necessary preparation for constitutional government; now he had written a book to further fool the people. Criticism of the book showed that the Chinese people had undergone an "Asiatic awakening" and would not tolerate the "Chiangsters" much longer. Obviously, China's Destiny may have been good propaganda material for the Japanese puppet government as well.

¹³⁹Atcheson, summary of KMT and CCP reactions to China's Destiny, in no. 1220, 3.

¹⁴⁰Mao Tse-tung, "On Chiang Kai-shek's Speech," 190.

¹⁴¹"Press Comments," Japan Times, 15 March 1943, 2.

The compilation of Chiang's thought was also useful for more moderate opposition to the Chiang regime. As China's Destiny served as an outline of the policies Chiang intended to follow, it could become a rallying point for Chinese liberals, who lacked organization.¹⁴² In sum, China's Destiny could serve as the best source of propaganda for the KMT, CCP, Japanese puppet government, and liberals.

That China's Destiny served as an integration of the Generalissimo's thought may explain the volume of response to the book; however, it does not explain the nature of these responses. While many would reject reactions to the work, due to the bias of its critics, criticisms of China's Destiny cannot be examined solely on this basis. Often, the impact of a work is not due to what it actually said, but to how people perceived it. Thus, commentary on the book, even if biased, greatly shaped its impact. China's Destiny was not just a book on Chinese history, but an attempt to capture the imagination of China's citizens, especially the youth. Thus, when we appraise China's Destiny, we cannot just ask whether what Chiang wrote was true, but also must judge the effectiveness of the work as propaganda. Did it have its intended effect? If not, we must then ask, Why did China's Destiny fail? These questions can be answered only by looking at reactions to the work, regardless of their bias, and by placing those reactions into the context of demands made on Chiang's

¹⁴²Atcheson, no. 1220, 5.

leadership by the KMT, CCP, and other groups.

Lin Yu-t'ang reminded American readers that the book contained more than just words; it recorded Chiang's "consistent devotion to one single goal and purpose"--unifying China and making her into a modern, democratic nation. Furthermore, he added, the book must be read in light of this struggle, as the millions of China were moving together towards the same goal, watching "with hope and confidence a great leader guiding the ship of state through perilous seas into the safe haven. They refuse to listen to the sirens."¹⁴³

The program of national reconstruction in China's Destiny can (and should) be read in light of this struggle for unity. However, it remained ineffective, in spite of Chiang's sincerity and singleness of purpose. As an American State Department official remarked, "there is something to be said in favor of the emphasis placed in these books [China's Destiny and Chinese Economic Theory] on patriotism and the need of developing a cohesive nationalism."¹⁴⁴ However, as another U.S. diplomat observed:

when one realizes the past consistent failure of the Chungking government to carry out its pledges to the people, the obstinate determination of reactionary KMT elements to preserve their power and opportunities for profit, and the uncompromising attitude toward the Chinese Communists...the

¹⁴³Lin, "Introduction," x-xi.

¹⁴⁴Ballantine, memorandum to Secretary of State, 2 September 1943, in USFR 1943, 323-324.

unfortunate significance of the book becomes evident.¹⁴⁵

CCP critics disdained the book as a diatribe against their cause and worried that it was ideological preparation for civil war. The CCP had demanded an end to friction between the KMT and the CCP, a united front for the prosecution of the War of Resistance, and recognition of the CCP as a legal opposition party. Nevertheless, Chiang's book demanded that all Chinese citizens join the Kuomintang; otherwise, Chiang remonstrated, no rational solution could be found. If the CCP were "new warlords" and "new feudalists," if they had sided with the Wang Ching-wei gang of traitors in the past, the KMT could justify a punitive expedition to end CCP opposition to KMT policies once and for all. Noting that it had generated rumors of imminent civil war, Ch'en Po-ta asked, if this book truly were a tool of civil war, how would Chiang be able to face his countrymen?¹⁴⁶

Liberals and students, who demanded freedom of speech, writing, and thought as the foundation of national unity, were offended by the lack of imagination expressed in Chiang's outline for national reconstruction. His attack on the May Fourth Movement, a sacred cow to liberals, led them to describe him as an "ignorant, vain man of limited ability and vision."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵Augustus Chase, memorandum on China's Destiny, 9 August 1943, in USFR 1943, 312.

¹⁴⁶Ch'en, 451-452.

¹⁴⁷William R. Langdon, dispatch to Secretary of State, 1 August 1944, in USFR 1944, 494.

Students especially disdained political education classes in which they were forced to read China's Destiny, "an evil book full of lies and absurdities."¹⁴⁸ The similarity between attacks made by Chiang and Wang Ching-wei on the Western liberal tradition and communism led these students to declare that Wang and Chiang were essentially the same, the only difference being that Wang had openly sold out to Japanese imperialism, while Chiang pretended to be a patriot. Said one liberal of China's Destiny, "the book shows that the Generalissimo is really a fascist at heart."¹⁴⁹ Clearly, the plan of national reconstruction in China's Destiny did not serve to unify China under the KMT banner, but sharpened the disunity.

Another common reaction to Chiang's work was that the Generalissimo was trying to become a sage.¹⁵⁰ China's Destiny was his attempt to become immortal, a great philosopher and teacher, as well as a military hero. Unfortunately, his debut was ill-timed. In 1943, the most important factor in China's destiny was not the morality of China's citizens, but the War of Resistance. To prosecute the war effectively, Chiang needed to

¹⁴⁸Translation of a letter to Vice President Wallace from students of Fudan University, Gauss dispatch to Secretary of State, 11 July 1944, USFR 1944, 472.

¹⁴⁹Atcheson, no. 1220, 4.

¹⁵⁰See, for example, Adler, 603; Atcheson to Secretary of State, 31 May 1943, 246; Atcheson dispatch no. 1241 to Secretary of State, 8 June 1943, USFR 1943, 252; Gauss, conversation with Quo Tai-chi, enclosure no. 1, 2; and Annalee Jacoby and Theodore H. White, Thunder out of China (New York: William Sloane, 1946), 126.

compromise with different groups in China, especially the CCP, to maintain the united front and secure China's unity for postwar reconstruction. In China's Destiny, however, he condescended to opposition groups, condemned them as immoral, and preached to them about the correct interpretation of Sun's Three Principles. In 1943, China needed a statesman. Instead, Chiang Kai-shek aspired to the position of sage. His misguided aspiration was the tragedy of China's Destiny.

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