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# Predicated on the People: Legitimating Mass Politics and Parties in Early Republican China

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ABSTRACT

Chinese political culture during the May Fourth period featured hundreds of small societies and associations, as well as several parliamentary factions, but by the mid-1920s politics were conducted mainly by large political parties that courted mass support. This article examines what prompted this change. Whereas many studies have focused on the conflict between the Nationalist and Communist Parties, this article explores how the very form of mass political parties emerged and argues that the turn to mass politics involved two complementary processes in the way in which politics were conceived. In one, intellectuals reflecting on politics and on the social order legitimized and promoted the involvement of the masses in politics. In the second, they pointed to politics—specifically to political institutions and most notably to political parties—as a legitimate arena for action. This was innovative because, at the time, politics and politicians were deemed irreparably corrupt. Intellectuals therefore considered various forms of social and political organization that might solve China's problems, and turned from organizing in small societies to advocating larger organizations that would recruit and mobilize the masses. These processes laid the foundations for a new political culture characterized by mass mobilization guided by political parties.

KEYWORDS: China, politics, intellectuals, mass politics, Nationalist Party, Communist Party, May Fourth Movement, Sun Yat-sen, Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, Mao Zedong



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## INTRODUCTION

Chinese politics during the 1920s were marked by the emergence of two political parties, the Nationalist Party (Guomindang, or GMD) and the Chinese Communist Party (Gongchandang, or CCP). Initially uneasy allies, then bitter enemies, the parties and their rivalry have dominated the historiography of republican-era politics. What most narratives take for granted, however, is that mass political parties emerged as the dominant political form in the late 1920s. If we pause to consider the continuing dominance of the CCP in mainland China, on the one hand, and of the GMD in Taiwan, on the other, it seems that in the long run the most significant political change in 1920s China may not have been the emergence of Chinese Communism, but rather the adoption of a form of politics that has endured until today and is shared by much of the rest of the world. This article examines the conceptual transformations that led to the emergence of mass party politics in early twentieth-century China.

One might argue that mass involvement in politics in the form of rebellions and popular uprisings had long been a feature of Chinese politics, yet the theory of the mandate of heaven—according to which dynastic rule could exist only with heaven's consent—accommodated these rebellions without undermining the idea of a monarchy. Thus, rebellions, both successful and failed, were incorporated into the existing view of politics without upsetting its conceptual foundations. However, by the late Qing the gradual weakening of state power and imperial authority and the introduction of elections—albeit by a limited constituency—to provincial assemblies came together with shifting intellectual currents and introduced judgment at the hand of one's peers (Hill 2013). In addition, the last decade of the Qing saw the emergence of widespread popular movements aimed at asserting national rights and identity, such as the Anti-Russian Movement of 1901–1902, the Anti-American consumer boycott of 1905–1906, and the Rights Recovery Movements of 1905–1911 (Wang 2001; Esherick 1998). These movements provided important precedents for the organization and mobilization of swathes of the population in nonviolent action aimed at voicing discontent and changing policy.

Although elections had been introduced by the last years of the Qing, these were for individual candidates; indeed, political parties were forbidden in the provincial elections of 1909 (Hill 2013, 225). Political parties

appeared in China shortly after the 1911 revolution, but ceased to function as significant organizations in formal politics after parliament was dispersed in 1913. The subsequent New Culture Movement and May Fourth Movement (1915–1923) developed independently of political parties (as opposed to later movements, such as the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925), yet they prepared the ground for a new generation of political parties.

Earlier studies have touched on this topic while trying to fathom the rise of Communism, or while inquiring into possibilities of democracy in China. The Cold War–era fascination with Communism led to the study of political party formation mainly as a way to contend with organizational and ideological questions (e.g., Yu 1966; Liew 1971; Wilbur 1983; Van de Ven 1991). Following the post-Mao reforms and the popular reform movement of spring 1989, along with the collapse of Communism in Europe, scholars examined whether late Qing and early republican China had a public sphere and civil society akin to those that had developed in Europe. Some scholars emphasized institutional structures and mechanisms of the emerging republic (Nathan 1976; Chang 1978; Chang 1984; and, recently, Hill 2013). A related development was the turn of some historians to study the construction of a modern nation-state (Rankin 1986; Judge 1996; Kuhn 2002), and, in the past two decades, increasing attention has been paid to the transformation of ideas and attitudes regarding politics, or what might be broadly termed "political culture" (Zarrow 2002, 2012; Judge 1996; Fogel and Zarrow 1997; Harrison 2000; Strand 2011; Li 2013).

This article complements previous studies by asking how politics changed from an affair of limited elites in provincial assemblies in the last years of the Qing and after the founding of the republic to a subject of widespread interest conducted via small societies and associations around the time of May Fourth, and, finally, to one founded on political parties that courted mass support by the time of the Northern Expedition (1926–1928). Briefly put, how and why did political parties become the main vehicle for conducting politics during the 1920s? While many factors—such as massive urbanization and industrial development—contributed to this transformation, this article focuses on changes in the way in which politics were conceived.

I aim to show how the concept of politics was transformed and regained legitimacy and respectability as parties that aspired to represent and mobilize the masses were formed. Although these parties were far from democratic,

they derived their legitimacy from notions of popular representation and national sovereignty. In this regard, I follow the line of questioning advanced by the late historian Philip Kuhn, who pointed to what he called a "constitutional agenda" that linked the imperial state to the modern era, an agenda about "the legitimate ordering of public life," which consisted of questions of political participation and competition (Kuhn 2002, 2). Whereas Kuhn focused on the nineteenth century and touched on the communist regime, I focus here on the key transitional period of the early republic. In these years, possibilities of political participation were raised anew and led to the emergence of a new vessel for such participation in the form of mass-based political parties.

I argue that two distinct processes enabled the emergence of mass politics: in one, intellectual elites increasingly legitimized the involvement of the masses in politics. In the second, they pointed to politics—to political institutions and to political parties—as a legitimate arena for action. These two processes changed political culture and laid the foundations for mass mobilization and political parties as we know them. Intellectuals mediated between the masses and the political parties. It was intellectuals who turned the attention of the educated public and then of politicians to the masses, and they who pointed the public toward political parties as arenas for action directed at social change. Intellectuals thus helped shape a politics that did not merely require the passive consent of the masses but rather assigned them an active role.

## PARTIES AND FACTIONS

Present-day readers might see the term "politics" as obviously entailing political parties; however, we must remember that the latter are historical creations. In seventeenth-century Britain and eighteenth-century France, parties began as small clique-like associations that referred to limited electorates composed of socioeconomic elites. It was the rise of an industrial labor force that expanded electorates and saw the formation of parties designed to represent the interests of the working class (Caramani 2003; Eley 2002, 113–114; Lipset 1970). Mass political parties gradually emerged in Western European and American politics toward the end of the nineteenth century (Williams 1976, 158–163; Le Bon 1995).

In China, parties or factions (*dang*) were traditionally viewed negatively, as divisive cliques that disrupted the harmony of social order and effective governance; carried to an extreme, they even had the potential to pose a threat to the regime. This idea was expressed in early maxims such as Confucius's saying "the superior man . . .comes together with other gentlemen without forming cliques" (Kuhn 2002, 10–14; Wakeman 1972, 41–43). Carrying this logic to an extreme, Li Si, the harsh legalist prime minister of the Qin dynasty, advised his emperor to burn books and execute scholars in order to ensure that partisan factions would not form (Pines 2009, 181–182). In late imperial China, members of the educated elite who had passed the imperial examinations were allowed to submit memorials with policy suggestions, and prudent rulers solicited the views of trusted officials and even attempted to take the pulse of the people's mood through them. However, there was no official mechanism to allow for debate or for participation as an integral, institutionalized part of the political process (Kuhn 2002, 17). Moreover, while scholar-officials could have their individual opinions and advise the emperor on them, coordinating positions and organizing to advocate particular policies were forbidden. Among the educated elites, factions did often coalesce, but these were never officially sanctioned; politics could be legitimately conducted only through the official mechanisms of the state, but these were limited and had no channels for participation by the populace. Many literati saw factional strife as an important factor contributing to the downfall of the preceding Ming dynasty, and the Qing emperors Yongzheng and Qianlong were especially wary of factionalism (Kuhn 2002, 10–14).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, several factors came together to change the way factions and parties were conceived. Factions reemerged within the imperial bureaucracy (Kuhn 2002; Polachek 1992), and scholar-officials like Wei Yuan and Feng Guifen believed that structural changes were needed in government and suggested that including wider circles of the elite in policy making would enhance the power of the state and its ability to confront crises. The mid-century uprisings were finally put down only by delegating increasing military, and then civilian, authority to local elites. Consequently, by the late nineteenth century, elites began calling for a constitution that would limit monarchical power and institutionalize wider participation (Esherick 1998, 91–98). This process was part of a wave of constitutional revolutions occurring in places such as Portugal, Iran, the

Ottoman Empire, and Japan. Indeed, Chinese reformists and revolutionaries often referred to political movements abroad (Sun 1994, 51–52; Zarrow 2012, 292–293). These revolutions were linked with the enfranchisement of workers and peasants and the growing role of mass political parties in Europe. There, such developments were further solidified in the wake of the Great War, when European states employed nationalism to mobilize their respective societies, hence involving them irrevocably in politics (Eley 2002, 113; Horne 1997; Caramani 2003).

After defeat by Japan in the war of 1895, the Qing government's authority and legitimacy were increasingly questioned. A prominent example was the "ten-thousand-word memorial," which called for extensive reforms in government, submitted to the emperor by approximately 1,200 candidates for the advanced *jinshi* degree led by reformist scholar Kang Youwei (Spence 1983, 34–44; Kuhn 2002, 122–123). This was a significant event because the signatories came from the same social stratum that constituted the backbone of the imperial regime. Subsequently, a wave of new attempts to expand public participation in politics occurred. In this regard, we should distinguish between two interrelated phenomena—first, the formation of new institutions, both official and non-official; and second, the emergence of new ideas.

### *The Formation of New Institutions*

*Non-official institutions.* One way in which educated elites reacted to defeat at the hand of Japan and their attendant loss of faith in the Qing government was by forming dozens of study societies and academies across China. These were places where members of the intelligentsia got together to debate public and state affairs, including how to limit the power of imperial government and, in some cases, how to overthrow it. After the failure of the 1898 reforms and the retrenchment of conservative forces, such associations were outlawed, but by 1904 they resurged in clandestine fashion (Sang 1995; Wakeman 1972; Kuhn 2002).

*New official institutions.* The empire's defeat by a coalition of foreign forces following the Boxer Uprising led to the Qing's adoption of wide-reaching reforms termed the "new policies" (*xin zheng*). Among other things, these reforms mandated the establishment of new institutions such as chambers of commerce, a process that encouraged the formation of various civic self-government associations (Sang 1995; Ma 1995; Reynolds 1993).



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Such institutions empowered their members and emboldened them to seek yet more rights of participation. Subsequently, a new wave of non-official study societies was formed. Both these official and non-official institutions mobilized the populace.

Most significant among the new institutions were the provincial assemblies, founded in large measure due to popular pressure on the Qing. Edicts ordering the gathering of assemblies were issued in 1907, and by the end of 1909 all provinces had assemblies (Murata 1997; Esherick 1998, 88–98). The new assemblies possessed limited authority and were intended to serve mainly as advisory bodies. Nonetheless, they provided an officially sanctioned, formal institution for meeting and debating. Furthermore, elections to the assemblies introduced the innovation of selection by one's peers, and thereby constituted an important stage in introducing a political culture of public debate and deliberation (Hill 2013).

### *The Emergence of New Ideas*

Chinese political theorists often took the welfare of the population to be the basis of political legitimacy—*minben*—the people as root. However, this notion viewed the people as passive rather than as an active force in shaping the polity (Zarrow 1997, 31; Zarrow 2002; Sabattini 2012). Thus, the base for political authority was not the people's support but, at best, their acquiescence. At the turn of the twentieth century, however, new ideas about statehood and governance seeped into China and compounded suggestions advanced by thinkers such as Wei Yuan, Feng Guifen, and Kang Youwei, thus prompting elites to reconsider the relationship between state and society, monarch and people. The people were increasingly viewed not as objects of imperial authority, but rather as forming the rationale for state power. New concepts of this kind were clearly expressed in the "Three Principles of the People" (*sanmin zhuyi*)—nationalism, rule of the people, and livelihood of the people—the revolutionary doctrine of Sun Yat-sen (figure 1) and the Revolutionary Alliance (Tong menghui). These institutional and conceptual changes all undermined the political legitimacy of the reigning Qing dynasty, and of the imperial regime itself; they thus hastened its final collapse in late 1911.

However, when the Qing abdicated the throne, there was still no consensus about a new basis for regime legitimacy. This was made evident when



FIGURE 1. Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925). *Source*: Wikimedia Commons.

President Yuan Shikai had the head of the GMD, which had won the elections, assassinated, and then disbanded parliament and attempted to revive imperial rule, crowning himself emperor. Following Yuan's death, General Zhang Xun tried to restore the Qing dynasty in 1917 (Young 1983). A nominal republic was soon restored, but it disintegrated into fiefdoms ruled by warlords, each of whom held a different vision of state and society (Sheridan 1983), while two parliaments—one based in Beijing, the other in Guangzhou—competed for legitimacy. China's first attempt at republican politics had ground to a halt, rendering political parties irrelevant.

## PARTIES IN A NEW REPUBLIC

A republican form of government derives its moral authority and legitimacy from the electorate, but who constitutes the electorate? By the 1890s, various reformers and revolutionaries were already invoking "the people" as the basis for their legitimacy. For example, the Revive China Society (Xingzhonghui), a forerunner of the Guomindang, mentioned China's "population of

400 million" as part of its rationale (Shieh 1970, 1–7). Similarly, when Liang Qichao ventured into journalism in 1902m he named his journal *Renewing the People* (Xinmin congbao), and, as mentioned, Sun Yat-sen and other nationalists rallied around the "Three Principles of the People."

The ruling Qing grudgingly granted the populace the possibility of participation in the form of elections to the provincial assemblies. The right to vote was initially determined by traditional markers of status and wealth. In the provincial elections of 1908–1909, conducted under the imperial regime, 0.45 percent of the population registered to vote. In the 1912 election under the new republic, suffrage was expanded, but it was still limited to men over twenty-one years of age who owned minimum levels of property or possessed at least elementary-level education. The new electorate was significantly larger than in the late Qing provincial elections, but it still amounted to only around 10.5 percent of the population (Chang 1978, 294–296).[1]

Following the founding of the republic, a plethora of organizations and parties—some three hundred—were declared (Liu and Liu 1997, 46; Young 1983, 223); however, within a short time, most of these had disintegrated or merged under new names. It was at this time that many of these adopted the term "party" (*dang*) to designate themselves, perhaps because the term implied Western, modern political practices. Parties ranged from the United Republican Party (Tongyi gonghe dang) and Republican United Party (Gonghe tongyi dang) to the Nationalist Reform Society (Guominxin zhengshe), but most of these parties could be grouped into one of two camps: revolutionary or constitutionalist (Liew 1971, 158–160; Nathan 1976, 107n34). Moreover, most of these parties were loosely organized around power interests, and therefore had limited constituencies. In the words of Zhang Pengyuan, the preeminent scholar of these elections, "Although it is customary to call the groups parties, they were not parties in the modern sense of the word" (Chang 1978, 301; Zhang 2007, 92). Rather, they were essentially alliances of elite factions maneuvering to benefit shared interests or gain private profit. In addition, the right to vote was limited, and there is no evidence that these parties attempted to appeal to mass constituencies or to expand the voting franchise (Hill 2013, 224). Their operations focused instead on recruiting votes, often expanding their appeal by resorting to illegitimate means, such as vote buying.[2]

After Yuan Shikai dispersed parliament and provincial assemblies, parties disappeared from official politics until after his death (Young 1983, 242). As a revolutionary exile in Japan, Sun Yat-sen transformed the Nationalist Party—the strongest party until Spring 1913—into the Chinese Revolutionary Party (Zonghua gemingdang). In this form, as a reduced, illicit organization, Sun demanded a personal loyalty oath, claiming that this was necessary in order to make the party a more disciplined organization that would act in accord with its leadership's intentions (Yu 166, 177–132). Indeed, the logic here was much in accord with the principles of centralized Leninist party organization, which Sun would adopt the following decade.

When Yuan Shikai died in June 1916, power struggles renewed with vigor. Although military backing was necessary for any measure of real power, formal positions in the state mechanisms remained an important asset that granted legitimacy, access to funds, and potentially standing vis-à-vis foreign governments (Nathan 1983, 263–268). For this reason, for all of their military power, warlords strove to control the parliament and assemblies. Therefore, the parliament elected in 1918 was composed of politicians who belonged to clubs—formal organizations that represented unofficial cliques and factions, such as the Research Clique, the Communications Clique, and the Anfu Clique.[3] Even when these clubs elaborated various organs and procedures that implied orderly decision making, they were run in fact by small informal groups of power holders (Nathan 1976, 108–109).

The political landscape on the eve of the May Fourth Movement was therefore composed of factions or cliques in parliament that had limited organization outside of parliament. The Revolutionary Party had relatively developed party organs, yet the organization was weak and dispersed, and it wielded little authority (Yu 1966, 147; Bergere 1998, 276). Sun Yat-sen attempted to reorganize the party in 1919 by changing its formal structure and renaming it as the Guomindang. Nonetheless, as an organization the party remained weak and ineffective; in the words of one historian, it was "dormant" (Yu 1966, 159).

By 1918, institutions of government and representation had been formed, but they were not very effective, nor did they enjoy much support or legitimacy, even among the politically aware public.

The first problem was that there was no consensus about the legitimacy and authority of the current institutions. Within the space of two and a half years, two attempts were made to restore the monarchy—one by Yuan Shikai and one by Zhang Xun. In the wake of Zhang's ejection, the Beijing government declared elections for a new parliament; however, Sun Yatsen and five warlords commanding southwest provinces (roughly a quarter of the country) declared the elections of 1918 unconstitutional and therefore illegitimate. Consequently, they formed an alternative military government and rump parliament in Guangzhou (Nathan 1976, 92).

Another problem was the experience of political participation. The elections carried out thus far—first provincial assembly elections and then national elections in 1912–1913 and in 1918—had a dual effect. On the one hand, as historian Joshua Hill (2013) has demonstrated, the elections introduced notions of political participation and rituals of citizenship. On the other hand, the processes were replete with all manner of fraudulent practices—from intimidation to vote buying—that made these concepts suspect almost as soon as they appeared. The proliferating press was of major importance in informing the public of the processes, as well as of the attendant abuses. The 1918 elections, declared illegitimate by key figures and plagued by no less corruption than the earlier elections, deepened the suspicion and distrust in politicians, officials, and state institutions (Hill 2013; Nathan 1976, 95–99). Thus, putative standards were raised, even as abuses of power and behavior of politicians lowered expectations.

In light of the political chaos and corrupt practices, educated elites expressed profound distrust in government institutions and officialdom. For example, the Society for the Promotion of Virtue (Jinde hui), which Chancellor Cai Yuanpei founded at Beijing University in June 1918, around the time of the elections, required its members to undertake "eight abstentions" (*ba bu*), arranged hierarchically. The first tier of abstentions comprised reprehensible behaviors, including gambling, concubinage, and the visiting of prostitutes. The second tier included abstinence from taking a government position. This stipulation might seem at odds with Cai's position as chancellor of the state university, but Cai and others opposed learning motivated by a desire for power and profit rather than for intellectual and moral improve-



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ment (Schwarcz 1986, 49; Lanza 2010, 114–115). Although the society did allow service in cultural or educational institutions, such as Cai's position, it is rather extraordinary to think of the chancellor of the state's flagship university declaring that public office should be avoided.

The skepticism toward politics and political institutions naturally included political parties. In December 1919, a new manifesto of the popular radical journal *New Youth* (Xin Qingnian) straightforwardly recommended to its readers that "relations with any faction or political party of the past or present be completely severed" ("Benzhi" 1919, 3). Elsewhere in the same issue, editor Chen Duxiu urged "severing ties with military men, officials, and politicians," whom he dubbed the "three scourges of China." However, political institutions were acknowledged as potentially beneficial. The very title of Chen's essay—"Realizing the Basis for Rule by the People" (Shixing minzhi de jichu)—expressed his interest in developing an alternative political regime. Indeed, in the article, Chen argued for direct self-rule by the people (Chen 1919, 20). In the same vein, the authors of the collective manifesto that opened the issue admitted: "As for political parties, we also concede that they are a method that one should have if engaging in politics." The manifesto expressed a measure of skepticism regarding the power of institutional politics to change society, noting, "We don't have blind faith [*mixin*] in political parties' ability to do everything." Yet the manifesto also saw these political parties as an "important and useful tool for developing a new society" ("Benzhi" 1919, 3). The members of the New Youth Society, including Chen Duxiu, then, did not eschew the realm of politics; rather, they rejected the political institutions of the day. Political parties in this view were a flawed, yet useful, tool—a necessary evil.

This negative view of institutionalized politics was not based on general principle, but was a reaction to politics as they were practiced at the moment in China. This was made evident in the positive views some held of European politics, which seemed to some less corrupt, and even as worthy of emulation. Between 1917 and 1919, Li Dazhao, for example, discussed European socialist parties favorably (e.g., Li 2006, 2:123–139, 2:258–263), but took care to differentiate between those and politics as practiced in China. In January 1919, for instance, he stated that at the moment Chinese politics lacked any clear leader, let alone one deserving respect (Li 2006, 2:275).

At the same time, the prolonged war in Europe and the widespread

destruction it had caused led intellectuals such as Yan Fu and Liang Qichao to question the superiority of its civilization. After the war, American president Woodrow Wilson's proclamations of a new diplomacy and the gathering of the conference had sowed widespread hopes that imperialism would be curbed and the national sentiments of different peoples recognized. It was the dashing of these hopes that caused the eruption of the May Fourth Movement in the summer of 1919 (Manela 2007). This movement protested the decision at the Paris Peace Conference to reject China's demands; however, protesters also denounced the complicity of the Chinese government with imperialist domination, further eroding the status of politicians. Students at Beijing University, for example, declared their disappointment in Wilson but also their lack of faith in the political parties and the militarists ruling China: "When we read Wilson's declarations, we once believed that he could uphold the truth. When we read the statutes of political parties, we once believed they could make the country rich and the people prosper" (quoted in Lanza 2010, 131–132).

For some, the corollary of this perceived corruption was an abandonment of politicians. Describing possible attitudes toward politics, journalist Yang Xianjiang, for example, wrote, "Everyone knows that at present our country's politics are thoroughly broken, naturally it is not good to 'flow with the filth'; however, undertaking revolution is of course commendable" (Yang 1921, 20).

Sun Yat-sen himself, understandably given the setbacks he had suffered since his brief tenure as interim president in 1912, expressed skepticism about parties, politicians, and the electoral process, declaring in early 1923 that "political activity is unreliable" (Fitzgerald 1996, 185) and that "so-called elections have become a shortcut for wicked gentry and local strongmen who seek to become officials. No wonder that corruption is so commonplace in those elections!" (Sun 1994, 262). According to Sun, the revolution of 1911 resulted in "the masquerading of the old corruption as a new order." Sun repudiated not the idea of people's sovereignty, but rather the way it was implemented. Sun wished to restore credibility to politics, beginning at the local level and then extending out locally and nationally: "Only when people feel confident in self-rule at the county level will they feel qualified to go further and take part in national affairs." The remedy Sun proposed was support

for the Nationalist Party, which would introduce a different kind of politics (Fitzgerald 1996, 185).

## THE RESURGENCE OF SMALL SOCIETIES

One reaction to the loss of faith in parties and political institutions was the appearance all across China of small cultural-political associations. These organizations were reminiscent of the small organizations that appeared in the late Qing after 1895 and again after 1904. Yet the political environment, and with it the significance of these organizations, had changed: whereas the late Qing organizations undermined the authority of the empire, the organizations of the 1910s reacted to the empire's demise, and to the failure of an effective alternative political authority to emerge; they were no longer delegitimizing an existing central authority but reacting to its absence, imagining alternatives to the current politics. The prevailing chaos of the moment, along with the transformations engendered by the war in Europe and revolution in Russia, enabled association members to imagine in far more palpable terms than their predecessors the demise of the current regime and the construction of alternative arrangements.

Since legitimate political parties had for all practical purposes ceased to exist, these associations provided an outlet for the political sentiments of educated youth. By 1919 these small associations constituted a widespread form of organization, expressing and shaping currents of opinion and sentiments of the educated public. Members met to discuss current events and explore new ideas, and by means of these activities defined their own identities as members of the new, urban intelligentsia. Most possessed secondary school or higher education, and many came from former gentry families. Many of the small societies typical of the period were based on university campuses and constituted an important part of university life. For example, at Beijing University, the well-known New Tide Society and Citizen Society were founded alongside societies dealing with non-political subjects, such as the Painting Society and Music Research Society; at China University (Zhonghua daxue) in Wuhan, societies like the Mutual Aid Society were active. In some cases, students organized outside of campus to continue on-campus discussions and activities in groups such as the Zhejiang New Tide

Society in Hangzhou, the Benefit the Masses Book Society in Wuhan, the New People Society in Changsha (of which Mao Zedong was a member), and the Mutual Aid Work Study Corps in Beijing (Chow 1967; Schwarcz 1986; Yeh 1996, Dirlik 1989; Weston 2004; Zhang Yunhou 1979; Rahav 2015).

## FROM ASSOCIATIONS TO THE MASSES

The protests of May 4, 1919, and the subsequent summer prompted three major changes in these associations. First, a new wave of organizations and publications sprang up across China. Regardless of their different views on the issues of the day, the vast majority of these societies attempted to produce publications of one kind or another, even if not on a regular basis. Chow Tse-tsung, the preeminent chronicler of the May Fourth Movement, estimates that "in all, probably over 700 new periodicals were founded in China between 1915 and 1923," the majority of which appeared after May 1919 (Chow 1963, 1). Furthermore, some of these societies and organizations established umbrella organizations to coordinate between them, such as the Beijing Student Union and Student Union of the Republic of China, or the Federation of All Organizations of China (Chow 1967, 120–125, 171–196).

Second, many of the new organizations launched after May 4, 1919, were more political than previous organizations. They explicitly commented on problems of a political nature and openly debated ways in which to change various facets of society, including challenging the current political order. Many did so by trying to mobilize larger sections of the population. The protests of the summer of 1919 were initiated by students, but in many cases they were joined by merchants, urban petty bourgeoisie, and workers (Chow 1967, 145–170; Chen 1971). Activists organized protests, printed and distributed handbills, and lectured on the streets in an attempt to mobilize the people in protest against the government.

Even before the events of May 4, there were some attempts at spreading awareness and mobilizing the public. For example, in the spring of 1919, students in Beijing founded a Commoners Education Corps (Zhang Yunhou 1979, 2:127–166). However, after the summer of 1919, there was an even stronger push to mobilize the masses. For example, the manifesto of the Beijing Commoner's Education Society (Pingmin jiaoyu she) stated that

"for eight years our Republic of China has hung up the sign of commoners' politics [pingmin zhengzhi], but it is still not possible to employ the tool of commoners' politics." The society therefore sought as its goal to enable "each person to know what is true happiness, and at the same time understand the ways to seek happiness." For this reason, members advocated a concept of politics that transcended the limits of the university:

> The aim of commoners' politics is that each and every person will all obtain happiness. The aim of commoners' education is that each and every person will know how to obtain true happiness, and realize the ways to seek it. Therefore, the commoners' education that we wish to discuss is not limited to the scope of the campus; all kinds of affairs are materials for education, all can be raised [for discussion], all can be criticized. ("Fakanci" 1979, 6)

The very concept of "commoners' politics" indicated an ideal of mass participation that members of the society interpreted in a radical way.

Similarly, the renewed manifesto of December 1919 mentioned above deplored the world wrought by the prevailing powers of the time, which was based on militarism and money and represented the interests of the few. Instead, the manifesto's authors proclaimed, "What we advocate is a mass movement [*minzhong yundong*] of social reform; ties with all parties and factions past and present should be absolutely severed" ("Benzhi" 1919, 3). The Young China Association proclaimed in both English and Chinese on the covers of its flagship publication *Young China* (Shaonian zhongguo), launched in July 1919: "Our Association dedicates itself to Social Services under the guidance of the Scientific Spirit, in order to realize our ideal of creating a Young China."

Thus, following the summer of 1919, discussions of mass movements (*qunzhong yundong*) appeared increasingly in the periodical press, often in the titles of publications.[4] For example, in November of that year one new publication called itself *New Masses* (Xin qun), and another was titled *Words of the Masses* (Qun yan). Still other new publications adopted titles such as *People's Mind* (Min xin), *Popular Journal* (Tongsu congkan), *The People* (Min kan), *The Plain People* (Ping min), and *Awakening the Peasants* (Xing nong). These periodicals may not have used terms for "mass" (such as *minzhong*, or



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*qunzhong*) in their titles, but they nonetheless indicated a heightened awareness of the population at large (Chow 1963). Although these publications were initiated by educated youths, their titles indicate a new understanding of social divisions and an aspiration to reach out to lower social strata as part of national reconstruction.

Third, in the wake of May 1919, activists increasingly attempted to act on their ideals by experimenting with new forms of political and social organization. New organizations not only brought together like-minded youth, but some even undertook political and social experiments of various sorts, such as a movement of communal living called "the new village movement" that sprang up across China beginning in October 1919 (Chow 1967, 190–191; Rahav 2007). Other social-political experiments involved attempts at appealing to wider audiences. Some experimented with distributing books and magazines, in an effort not to make profit but to disseminate ideas as widely as possible. For example, in the fall of 1919, Hangzhou students opened a bookstore called the New Life Book Society (Xinsheng xueshe) (Yeh 1996, 158). In December of that year, Wuhan activists founded the Benefit the Masses Book Society (Liqun shushe). These various enterprises were often connected with one another via social networks and business relations. For example, the Benefit the Masses Books Society inspired and aided the Culture Bookstore (Wenhua shushe) in Changsha, founded in July 1920 by local activists, one of whom was Mao Zedong. Similarly, publications often included lists of distributors, many of them simply personal names, which disclose much information about the social and ideological networks of May Fourth activists. Social, cultural, and political activities undertaken by May Fourth youth also made many of them aware of their own limited social position, prompting them to reach out and try to mobilize wider audiences by changing their consciousness (Schwarcz 1986, 128–129; Rahav 2007).

Taken together, these changes all signaled a conscious effort to expand political discussion to include more of the population than ever before. Whereas institutional politics remained restricted to a limited constituency of affluent upper-class males, educated youths—many of whom could take part in the restricted form of elite politics—now deliberately undertook reaching out to wider audiences and members of other classes. The various unofficial societies of the May Fourth period involved significant numbers of

new people in politics. In contrast to much of the dynamics of parliamentary factions, this was not simply a matter of rearranging existing organizations; rather, the new organizations involved social strata that had hitherto for the most part remained outside politics. May Fourth thus signaled a new level of participation in political processes by the masses, through discussions and demonstrations, led in many cases by small, local societies. These might be seen as constituting a "May Fourth mode of politics"—a mode of politics construed around small, local societies whose main forms of activity consisted of meetings, discussions, correspondence, and small-circulation publications. Earlier movements such as the Anti-American boycott movement (Wang 2001), shared characteristics such as geographical spread and an infrastructure of small, local societies. However, the May Fourth societies often had broader aims and thus, when invoking the masses, explicitly evoked structural change in Chinese political culture (as opposed to protest against a specific policy).

Around 1925, however, this mode of political activity would be replaced by the emergence of mass party politics, most prominently in the form of the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party. This shift was able to occur because May Fourth legitimized new forms of engagement and involvement in politics by means of discussion. This mode of politics did not yet lead to political parties, let alone strongly centralized parties in the style of Lenin's Bolshevik party; however, it created the space in which such parties, even in an embryonic stage, could seek to expand their membership and appeal to the masses. Whereas the associations that marked May Fourth politics were occupied with investigating ideas and understanding them, the political parties that succeeded them were instruments for acquiring formal power; they were instruments for taking over state mechanisms in order to shape society.

Although scholarship has emphasized the attraction of China's educated youths at this time to Marxism, we should note that aversion to political parties, and then acceptance of them as a tool, was not tantamount to embracing Bolshevism. Rather, it indicated a disappointment in existing political institutions. Some would confront this situation by attempting to create alternative models of social organization, and therefore of politics; others would opt for a pragmatic approach, choosing the best of available options; others still would swear off politics altogether.

## NEW FORMS

The increased politicization of the public at large and educated youth in particular led activists to consider possible forms of social and political organization. Especially following May Fourth, activists evinced a preoccupation with questions of political form, often deliberating comparing between various kinds of "small groups" (*xiaozu*) and bigger forms of organization. Although educated youths often gathered in small, cell-like organizations, the growing awareness of the masses prodded some intellectuals to consider organizational forms that would be conducive to mobilizing large swathes of the population. However, efforts at reaching out also confronted these activists with their own class identity as members of the educated elite, more often than not of relatively privileged backgrounds. We now turn to examine these considerations of political form.

Following the demonstrations of summer 1919, in late July and early August of that year, Mao Zedong published in the newly founded *Xiang River Review* (Xiangjiang pinglun), which he now edited, a series of articles titled "Great Union of the Popular Masses" (Minzhong de da lianhe). Three things are made clear in these articles. First, Mao expresses his distrust of the current power holders—"the union of the oppressors, the aristocrats, and the capitalists"—who "exploit the collective assets of the majority of ordinary people" (Mao 1992, 379). In Mao's depiction, the current power holders are clearly distinct from the common people—peasants, workers, students, women, schoolteachers, and rickshaw pullers, as well as Mao himself and his readers. Second, Mao aspires to a better future of "reform"; although he does not really specify what this reform should consist of, he implies that it is democratic (Mao 1992, 383–385). Third, looking at what he sees as successful attempts at social change in other countries (interestingly, in this article Mao draws no positive examples from China's historical experience), Mao concludes that the way to successful social-political change lies in great unions (*da lianhe*) that bring many people together. In other words, Mao clearly sees mass mobilization as key to social and political change, and he is thinking of ways of cultivating mass participation in politics and harnessing its force. The mode he sees for achieving the reform he seeks is by having the various organizations that currently exist in society—professional associations, guilds, study societies—come together. Mao seems to be indicating that the

way forward is to transcend the small societies, the very form of organization that brought him to this place.

Such sentiments were not limited to future members of the Communist Party. The relation of size to form also occupied Liao Zhongkai, a longtime associate of Sun Yat-sen, who reflected on differences in the character of regime between small and large states, and the outlooks such states might generate (Liao 1963b). As early as July 1919, Liao Zhongkai wrote extensively about the importance of the people's sovereignty for a democracy and for a republic. Since, in Liao's view, this was not the case in China, he believed that "turning the power of the people's masses [*minzhong de li*] into a concrete people's sovereignty [*minquan*] . . . is our most important aim" (Liao 1963c, 7). Like Mao, Liao promoted popular sovereignty.

In "Realizing the Basis for Rule by the People" (mentioned above), published in December 1919, Chen Duxiu brought together the "big group" and the "small group" in a unique way. Whereas Mao's earlier article contrasted "big" to "small," Chen saw them as complementary. Citing a lecture by John Dewey about democracy in general and the experience of American democracy in particular, Chen argued that small groups were a precondition for the rise of democracy. In the article, Chen elaborated on the virtues of organizing in small groups (Chen subtitled the article "Two Kinds of Small Groups"). Chen thought that small groups were especially useful for promoting democracy in an environment like that of China. Small groups, Chen argued, would both prevent abuses of power and educate the participants about decision making, self-rule, and power.[5]

Small groups were already a common form of organization: associations of various kinds had flourished in increasing numbers since the late nineteenth century, and the May Fourth events had caused a surge in the number of associations throughout the country (Sang 1995; Belsky 2005). Now Chen provided a theoretical argument for their necessity. Although Chen seemed to explicitly discuss only two kinds of groups—professional associations (*tongye lianhe*) and local self-government organizations (*difang zizhi tuanti*)—the arguments he enlisted in their favor certainly held true for other small cultural-political societies of the period.[6]

Recognition of the power of the masses was even more explicit in an article by Wuhan educator and journalist Yun Daiying (1893–1931) titled "The Value of Revolution" (Geming de jiazhi) (Yun 1920). Published on

the ninth anniversary of the 1911 revolution, the article stopped short of declaring that revolution's achievements an utter failure, yet it was critical of China's current situation and of the political "craftsmen" (*bashi*) who were in power. Yun here expressed his belief that because the revolution of 1911 did not realize its potential, another revolution would eventually come. In a stark definition, Yun declared that "revolution is simply an eruption of the masses' emotions" (*qunzhong de ganqing*). These emotions were, however, difficult to control. More skeptical than Mao of such an eruption, and hoping to avoid bloodshed, Yun called on his readers to prepare for the coming of a revolution, for Yun wished to see people like him and his audience guide the revolution, in order to make it not only destructive but constructive as well. It is perhaps for this reason that Yun does not yet advocate large-scale organizations. Yun thus displayed an awareness of his own position as distinct from that of the masses, as well as a recognition of mass power, on the one hand, and a hesitancy about its effects, on the other.

Similar thoughts about the power of larger organizations and the advantages offered by small organizations are also evident in the diary of Yu Xiusong—a founding member of the CCP who was working at this time in the Housheng Steel Works. In order to change the "old views" (*jiu sixiang*) of the workers around him, Yu wanted to establish a club for workers (*gongren julebu*) that could then serve as a platform for "organizing all sorts of groups and realizing our workers' movement" (*zuzhi gezhong de tuanti lai shixian women di laodong yundong*) (Yu 1992, 281–282). At the same time, Yu acknowledged the benefits of the small group. Seeking solace, Yu noted the advice given by his friend Shen Zhongjiu that there was nothing like the support of a small group to expel one's own gloominess (Yu 1992, 291).

Such awareness of intellectuals as distinct from the masses, along with a desire to recruit the masses to political activity, was addressed directly in a pamphlet titled "Communism and the Intellectual Class" (Gongchan zhuyi yu zhishi jieji), published in Wuhan in the summer of 1921 by an author named Tian Cheng.[7] While the author called on intellectuals to cultivate a sense of that they are inseparable from the working class, implicit in the call was the perception that intellectuals are in fact different from the working class. Tian called on intellectuals (his presumed readers) to go, as he put it, to the fields and factories in order to organize the workers (Tian 1921).



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These views were entirely in line with the principles developed by Lenin in the course of the revolutionary struggle in Russia (e.g., Lenin 1969).

Discussions such as these went beyond pointing to the masses as an element that had to be accounted for; rather, they defined the masses as a decisive force shaping a new polity. At the same time, they pointed to a difference between the masses and those who would guide them, between those who had woken and those who were to be awakened. Indeed, this was an elitist view, and it appealed to the traditional elite position of scholars, the pride of the new generation of intellectuals in their Western education, and the Leninist view of revolutionary specialists as leading the revolution (e.g., Lenin 1969). This discourse reinforced the tension between the intellectual drive to differentiate elites and the desire to recruit and mobilize as many supporters as possible.

It is not surprising that both Mao and Yun joined the Communist Party, with Mao becoming one of its earliest members in late 1920 or early 1921 (Mao famously attended the first party congress in July 1921 in Shanghai), and Yun joining the party in late 1921 or early 1922. As members of the fledgling party, and supported by a growing body of Marxist-Leninist writings, Mao, Yun, and their comrades further developed their conviction that the masses were key to political development. For example, writing to his comrades in the influential Young China Association (Shaonian zhongguo xuehui) in the summer of 1922, Yun argued that uniting the masses and relying on them was the only weapon for reform, since "once the masses unite there is no one in the world that can confront their power" (Yun 1984, 331). Echoing these views, in early 1923 one activist from Jiangxi expressed skepticism regarding institutional politics but then added that, nonetheless, if the vast majority of common people had the ability to participate in politics, then politics would have hope. To achieve this goal, he supported the idea that intellectuals should go among the people in order to bring them into politics—even, if need be, into the existing political parties (Zhang 1979, 273).

What organizational form might involve the masses in politics? Chinese intellectuals were not sure how to bring this about but proposed various possibilities. In an article titled "On Solidarity" (Tuanjie lun), Kang Baiqing argued that grouping was natural and implored China's workers and intellectuals to organize properly in order to resist the invasive forces of capital-

ism (Kang 1922). Drawing on examples from Germany, Russia, Australia, and the United States, Kang argued that China's workers should organize in various forms, from small to large—from separate trade unions, through general industrial unions or syndicates, to parties, and finally even an international organization such as the Socialist International.

Some activists, like Wang Guangqi, co-founder of the Young China Association, remained entirely skeptical of parties and attempts to enter institutional politics. In 1919–1920 Wang had advocated adopting "New Villages" as a form of organization that might solve many of China's problems (Chow 1967, 190–191; Rahav 2015, 84–85); later he promoted the organizations conceived by the French utopian socialist Charles Fourier (1772–1837) (Wang 1922). When political parties were emerging as viable in 1924, Wang compared the Nationalist Party to Yuan Shikai and the Progressive Party (*jinbudang*), saying that in his eyes "they are all jackals of the same lair" (*yiqiuzhihe*) (Wang 1924, 6).

Nonetheless, by 1923, people like Tian, Yun, and Mao had espoused faith in political organizations and were seeking to bring the people not only into politics as such but into a specific political organization, namely the nascent Chinese Communist Party. This organizational platform bridged the gap that had formed after the dissolution of parliament between the people, who should be sovereign, and the political parties that claimed to represent them.

The Nationalist Party's Manifesto on the Reorganization of the Party in November 1923 expressed this newfound faith in the ability of political organizations to extricate China from its predicaments. The Nationalist Party now distanced itself from "so-called political parties in this country" that were "fickle and wavering" and placed the blame for China's troubles on "rapacious warlords and corrupt politicians," "greedy parliamentarians," and party members. The suggested remedy was not to abolish party politics in general or the Nationalist Party in particular, but rather to establish "a political organization that is well-principled, capable of giving guidance and waging struggle" (Shieh 1970, 73–74). Elaborating on the meaning of such a political organization, party leader Sun Yat-sen stated that whereas the party had heretofore relied "exclusively on military force," it now sought to rely on "the mind and strength of the people" and to recruit the support that he admitted it had lacked (Sun 1930, 314). Sun was declaring a shift in his own concept of what a political party meant, and consequently a shift in his

understanding of its necessary organizational form. The party was to serve as a channel for the power of the people. The nationalists were now as eager for mass support as were the communists.

By the end of 1923, even some associates of Wang Guangqi, who shunned explicit political activity, and members of his non-political Young China Association, joined the fray and founded the Chinese Youth Party (Qingniandang), although they remained active in the Young China Association as well (Till 2016; Fung 1991, 262–263).

The political landscape that emerged by early 1924 included the Communist Party and the revamped Guomindang. These parties stemmed from two sources: the earlier Guomindang, in its various guises and permutations, and the small associations that blossomed in the wake of the May Fourth Movement. To the extent that the new GMD and CCP were connected to the political parties that preceded them, they expressed alienation and mistrust in the latter. Moreover, the GMD and CCP did not aim to enter parliament or compete against the representatives in it, but rather meant to replace parliament and its members with entirely new state institutions that would be achieved by revolution. Both parties aimed to create a party-state, thus presaging the regimes that eventually emerged in 1928 after the Northern Expedition and after 1949 on both sides of the Taiwan straits.

The new political parties did not aim to enter the existing political institutions and take them over, as the nationalists had tried earlier. Since the institutions were perceived as corrupt, Sun Yat-sen on the one hand and the communists on the other rather attempted to abandon the current parliament and parties and replace them with an entirely new state mechanism. Indeed, Sun Yat-sen differentiated increasingly between political activity, which he derided, and party activity, which he upheld (Fitzgerald 1996, 185). Advised and guided by the Comintern, both the GMD and CCP then became revolutionary parties advocating a complete overhaul of the current system.

In this regard, it is important to distinguish between liberal politics and single-party politics. Parliament and the provincial assemblies were based on a liberal concept of politics: they were composed of members who advocated different views. Elections and politicians might have been corrupt, but structurally parliament and a multiplicity of parties left room for diverse views. Under the guidance of the Comintern, however, both the GMD and CCP

adopted Bolshevik views advocating single-party dominance. Lenin's theories, which served as the basis for the revolutionary doctrine of the Comintern, made it clear that only a single view of politics could be correct, and that this view would be determined by a central leadership, which would then exercise absolute control over the party (e.g., Lenin 1975, 553; Lenin 1969, 40–41). In this view, the party is not an organization designed to represent interests, but rather "an organization of revolutionaries" (Lenin 1969, 103). Even before accepting Comintern advice, Sun Yat-sen had adopted a similar outlook, as he attempted to achieve centralized control by means of loyalty oaths beginning in 1914, and stipulated a period of political tutelage (Bergere 1998, 256–259). As historian John Fitzgerald has shown, in debates about the new form of the Nationalist Party in 1924, Sun Yat-sen and Mao Xedong advocated unity and discipline in order to achieve revolutionary ends rather than a liberal concept of multiple views (Fitzgerald 1996, 185–190).

The new parties were also set apart from the earlier parties by a changing of the guard. The CCP was almost entirely composed of young men born in the 1890s, many of whom had been active in May Fourth societies. The GMD, too, was increasingly helmed by a new generation, many of whose members had been active in May Fourth societies. Apart from founding father Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), the leadership of the party was increasingly shaped by men born in the 1880s and 1890s.8

By early 1927, while taking part in the united front of the Nationalist and Communist Parties, Mao Zedong reported on a peasant uprising in his native Hunan and ecstatically expounded on the power of the masses. Mao warned his readers that they would have no choice but to contend with the colossal force of the masses of China's peasants:

> All revolutionary parties [*dangpai*] and all revolutionary comrades will stand before them to be tested, to be accepted or rejected as they decide. To stand behind them, gesticulating and criticizing them? Or to stand opposite them and oppose them? Every Chinese is free to choose among the three, but by the force of circumstances, you are fated to make the choice quickly. (Mao 1994, 430)

As Mao saw it, the force now propelling historical change was that of the masses. The parties, in Mao's vision, could align themselves with that force and give it shape.

Faith in the masses was not restricted to one party or another. Despite the armed conflict that had erupted between the two parties, in 1928, Nationalist Party member Shen Dingyi resigned his post as official and attempted to mobilize the masses, to help them overcome their exclusion from political affairs and involve them in self-government, harness them to support the party, and involve them in national politics (Schoppa 1995, 213–215). The force of the masses had entered politics, chaperoned by activists and the new political parties.

## CONCLUSION

The collapse of the imperial regime was accompanied by a crisis of political legitimacy. Although as a republic the political system invoked the people as the source of its legitimacy, politics remained an elite affair and the parties of the early republic remained relatively small organizations. The death of Yuan Shikai led to a chaotic power vacuum, yet this vacuum formed a space in which intellectual elites could explore various ideas about social organization and political legitimacy. After May 1919, intellectuals increasingly turned their attention to the masses and strove to involve members of all social strata—including workers, peasants, women, and students—in politics. Intellectuals legitimated the involvement of the masses in politics. As they worked to expand the reach of political discourse, intellectuals brokered an idea of the people not merely as the beneficiaries or victims of government—nor as simply supplying moral legitimacy, as in earlier *minben* theories—but as the actual sovereign. They thus created a theoretical justification for the people to take active part in shaping the polity and created new institutional structures that provided vehicles for popular participation—political parties.

May Fourth, therefore, signaled a reentry of the people into politics and laid the ground for parties to reemerge as viable agents of social transformation. The grassroots nature of the movement prepared the ground for conducting politics by means of parties that sought not only to speak for the masses but to mobilize them as well.

In August 1919, conservative scholar Gu Hongming expressed his reservations about the new political trends among educated youth: "Imagine only what a fine state of things we would have, if here in Peking, the coo-



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lies, mafoos, chauffeurs, barbers, shop boys, hawkers, huxters, loafers and vagabonds, hoc genus omne, all became literate and wanted to take part in politics as well as the University students" (Ku 1919, 433). A decade later, even conservatives could not hark back to such an exclusionary concept of politics. Commoners and the parties that aspired to recruit their support had entered politics. Even elitist agendas would now have to accommodate the masses.

Between 1919 and 1927, two processes that transformed politics took place. In the first, following May Fourth, the parties after 1920 (in the case of the Communist Party) or 1923 (in the case of the Nationalist Party) changed their view of the masses from a passive audience to be acted on into a potential resource. In the second, the nature of parties themselves changed. The parties of 1918 originated largely for exercising power in parliament and through it. The various associations of May Fourth (both before and after 1919) aimed not to acquire power but to transform society. They involved a new generation of activists, who discussed ideas about changing society and how to promote them. In most cases, the scope of their activities was small and, in many cases, amounted to efforts at education and appealing to a wider public. They thereby involved wider circles of the populace in thinking about society and made them active members of the nation—citizens.

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## NOTES

1. This was by no means unique to China. For example, universal male suffrage was introduced only in Belgium in 1893, in Norway in 1900, and in the United Kingdom in 1918 (Caramani [2003, 424] and passim).
2. Some activists called for expanding the electorate as early as in the 1909 elections. The newspaper *Shibao* criticized campaigners who "struggle for the right to be elected" without "struggling for the voting rights [of others]" (quoted in Hill 2013, 221).

3. According to Andrew Nathan, after 1914 the word *dang* was viewed again as having mostly negative connotations and hence was dropped (Nathan 1976, 107n34).
4. Terms to translate new concepts of "masses" were derived from classical texts such as the *Xunzi* or *Yijing* (Li 2013).
5. Chen's remarks are reminiscent of de Tocqueville's observations on associations as a foundation of American democracy, see "On the Use That the Americans Make of Association in Civil Life" and "Relations Between Civil Associations and Political Associations" in de Tocqueville (2000, 489–492, 496–500 , respectively).
6. For other perspectives on Chen's article, see Chow (1967, 230–232) and Culp (2007, 99).
7. Chinese scholars have speculated that Tian Cheng might be a pseudonym of Chen Duxiu. I am grateful to Professor Tian Ziyu for a copy of the original pamphlet.
8. For example, Hu Hanmin (1879–1936), Wang Jingwei (1883–1944), Liao Zhongkai (1877–1925), Chiang Kaishek (1887–1975), and Dai Jitao (1891–1949).

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