

Chinese Strategic Culture, *Shih* and *Li*: A Comparison of the Kuomintang and Chinese Communist Party from 1923- 1927

A Monograph

by

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Abstract

Chinese Strategic Philosophy, *Shih* and *Li*: A Comparison of the Kuomintang and Chinese Communist Party from 1923-1927, Major Stewart Wittel, USMC, 50 pages

The purpose of this monograph is to provide the military planner with an understanding of the Chinese strategic ideas of *Shih* and *Li*, since China will continue the use force and non-force methods to support its domestic stability, political aim, and international legitimacy. China's continued growth represents one of the greatest security challenges facing the United States. China has adopted a strategy called "at odds, but not at war." This strategy allows China to develop its capabilities through modernization, while maintaining the option of confronting the United States directly. For military planners the study of Chinese military strategy is important for two reasons: first, through an appreciation of the China's strategic template, be able to predict and counter their strategies; and second, to learn new ways to understand and apply strategy themselves. Familiarity with the strategic ideas of *Shih* and *Li*, which apply to political, economic, geopolitical, and the military become an important component of this study.

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Acronyms

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
ECCI	Communist International Executive Committee
KMT	Kuomintang
NRA	National Revolutionary Army

Introduction

Nothing in the world is more flexible and yielding than water. Yet, when it attacks the firm and the strong, none can withstand it, because they have no way to change it. So the flexible overcomes the adamant, the yielding overcomes the forceful. Everyone knows this, but no one can do it.

– Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*

China's continued growth represents one of the greatest security challenges facing the United States. China ranks as one of the most important countries in the international system, due to its territorial size, resources, and population. Throughout the modern era, China was a relatively weak power, but since 1978 China's impact on international politics is increasing.¹ With regards to China, the US National Military Strategy, released in June 2015 states:

We support China's rise and encourage it to become a partner for greater international security. However, China's actions are adding tension to the Asia-Pacific region. For example, its claims to nearly the entire South China Sea are inconsistent with international law. The international community continues to call on China to settle such issues cooperatively and without coercion. China has responded with aggressive land reclamation efforts that will allow it to position military forces astride vital international sea-lanes.²

By many accounts, China does not want war, at least not in the next 30 years. This is due to China's modernization mission, which requires a war-free environment. To support this, many high-ranking Chinese officials call for China to continue their *Tao Guang Yang Hui* strategy, which is about avoiding confrontation while still achieving goals. However, the Chinese also understand that conflict with the United States might be inevitable. To address this China adopted a formula called "at odds, but not at war." This strategy allows China to develop its capabilities,

¹ Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis. *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2000), accessed February 29, 2016, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1121.html, 1.

² The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2015), accessed December 2, 2015, https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015_national_security_strategy.pdf.

through modernization, while maintaining the option of confronting the United States if necessary, short of going to war. Some believe this strategy is in line with Sun Tzu's teaching about subjugating the enemy without fighting.³

Understanding the enemy is not a historical United States' strength. Americans generally do not appreciate other societies and cultures, much less understand them well enough to effectively plan.⁴ This is due to Americans unique historical experience. Historically, the United States' breaks down foreign cultures and assimilated immigrants into the greater American identity. For military strategists and operational planners to develop options that protect and advance U.S. interests, they must improve their competency in cultural savvy. Dr. Snider states that:⁵

Cross-cultural savvy implies that an officer can see perspectives outside his or her own boundaries. It does not imply, however, that the officer abandons the Army or American culture in pursuit of a relativistic worldview. Instead, the future strategic leader is grounded in national and Army values, but is also able to anticipate, understand, and empathize with the values, assumptions, and norms of other groups, organizations, and nations.⁶

Timothy Thomas also seems to support Snider's idea in his article *China's Concept of Military Strategy* stating,

The most relevant recommendation for US analysts is the imperative to study Chinese military strategy for two reasons: first, through an appreciation of the PLA's strategic template, to be able to predict and counter their strategies; and second, to learn new ways to understand and apply strategy themselves. Strategy is an ever-evolving concept and should be studied closely for new approaches. Analysts should become familiar with the

³ David Lai, *"Learning from the Stones: a Go Approach to Mastering China's Strategic Concept, Shi"* (Strategic Studies Institute, 2004), 173-174.

⁴ Andrew Stewart, *Friction in US Foreign Policy: Cultural Difficulties with the World* (Army War College Carlisle Barracks, 2006), accessed December 14, 2015, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2006/ssi_stewart.pdf.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Don Snider, *The Future of the Army Profession* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2005), 615.

objective-subjective, stratagem, strategic advantage, and *shih* criteria that can be applied to political, economic, geopolitical, and military fields of study.⁷

Linebarger wrote, “Social change is a consequence of maladjustment.”⁸ The period between 1923 and 1927 represents one of the most important in Chinese history. This time saw a remarkable amount of human energy and resources directed towards both patriotic and revolutionary goals. The Confucian system, the old Chinese system, was in a century long decline. This system, based on feudal organization, rested on virtues that were in stark contrast to the new virtues of the period. The loyalties the old system had set up became increasingly difficult to maintain as rising states began acting more like states acted in the West. This change disrupted the organization of society over areas of eastern Asia, which the Chinese of that time regarded as the civilized world. Not only did the newer, political organization of society begin to make themselves distinct from the family, feudal, and religious organization, they began to resemble Western nations.⁹ Throughout Chinese history there have been rebellions, some of which resulted in the overthrow of a dynasty but none were revolutions, since they never attempted to change the political and social systems.¹⁰

Beginning in the 1800s the Qing Empire was buffeted by a wave of political, economic, and military crises, first from within and then from without.¹¹ The Boxer Rebellion in the summer

⁷ Timothy Thomas, *China's Concept of Military Strategy*, accessed February 15, 2016, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/Parameters/Issues/Winter_2014-15/7_ThomasTimothy_ChinasConceptofMilitaryStrategy.pdf.

⁸ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen. an Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins press, 1937), 22.

⁹ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen. an Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins press, 1937), 25-26.

¹⁰ Chester C. Tan, *Chinese Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971), 116.

¹¹ Gang Zhao, *Reinventing China: Imperial Qing Ideology and the Rise of Modern Chinese National Identity in the Early Twentieth Century*, *Modern China* 32 (1). Sage Publications, Inc: 3–30, accessed December 2, 2015 <http://www.jstor.org.lumen.cgsccarl.com/stable/20062627>, 15.

of 1900 is one of the best-known events of Chinese nineteenth century history that fueled the Qing decline. This period marked the end of European interference in Chinese affairs due to the large Japanese contingent in the allied force. After this event, Japan replaced the Europeans as the dominant power.¹² Summing up 1900, Mary Wright wrote that. “Rarely in history has a single year marked as dramatic a watershed as did 1900 in China. The weakness laid bare by the Allied pillage of Peking in the wake of the Boxer Rebellion finally forced on China a polar choice: national extinction or a wholesale transformation not only of the state but of civilization.”¹³

The process of reform began in April 1901 with the establishment of the Bureau of Government Affairs tasked with developing a reform program. In conjunction with the reform program, an edict in 1903 encouraged industry and commerce. This allowed a commercial bourgeois class to grow, which had previously suffered under Confucian ideology.¹⁴

The Russo-Japan War of 1904 drove further change in Chinese society. Although China took a position of neutrality during the conflict the majority of the fighting took place on Chinese territory. Following Japan’s victory during the Russo-Japanese War, the belief that China should adopt a constitution increased. For the Qing, a constitutional monarchy was preferable to a revolution. In December 1905, the court sent missions to various countries to examine forms of government. The finding of these missions was that the Japanese model was the most favorable for China. By August of 1908, the imperial court accepted a draft constitution. The first elections in Chinese history followed in 1909.¹⁵

¹² John K. Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2006), 1.

¹³ Mary Wright, *China in Revolution* (Cambridge: Yale University Press, 1971), 1.

¹⁴ Colin Mackerras, *China in Transformation: 1900-1949*, 2 ed. (Harlow: Routledge, 2008), 24.

¹⁵ Colin Mackerras, *China in Transformation: 1900-1949*, 2 ed. (Harlow: Routledge, 2008), 26-27.

Between 1906 and 1911 revolutionary activities to overthrow the Qing reached a quickened pace. This culminated on 9 October 1911 when the Qing government sent troops to Sichuan from Hubei to suppress disorder. After a bomb was accidentally detonated, the Qing police reacted by arresting many revolutionaries. Two battalions of the New Army, which had gone over to the revolution, decided to seize the government munitions depot in Wuchang and subsequently took control of the city on 10 October. The Wuchang uprising sparked a countrywide revolutionary movement in China. By 1 January 1912, the Republic of China formed in Nanjing. Unfortunately, the success of the 1911 revolutions was short lived. Yuan Shikai seized power and attempted to set himself up as emperor in 1915. After Yuan died in June 1916, the country descended in to turmoil ushering in an era of Warlord rule from 1916-1927.¹⁶ This era was characterized as a period where individuals, with large personal armies, controlled or sought to control territories, acting independent of any central controlling authority. This competition for power generated hundreds of armed conflicts, large and small, as each warlord tried to unify China under his own rule. Ideology only furthered the conflicts as many warlords held differing beliefs ranging from ultra conservative to progressively modern. This situation created a miserable condition for the average Chinese citizen, as the warlords wrestled for control of China.¹⁷

In 1923, the Kuomintang (KMT) and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) formed the First United Front with the goal of ending the warlord era and unifying China. In 1926, the Unified Front began the Northern Expedition to fulfill Dr. Sun Yat-sen's dream of a unified China under a Nationalist government.¹⁸ Dr. Sun believed the Northern Expedition was necessary to achieve the

¹⁶ Colin Mackerras, *China in Transformation: 1900-1949*, 2 ed. (Harlow: Routledge, 2008), 32-33.

¹⁷ Ibid., 36-39

¹⁸ Peter Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution, 1895-1949* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 235, accessed December 12, 2015, <https://rendy2653.files.wordpress.com/2013/11/137795373-zarrow.pdf>.

Nationalist goals. Based in this, the KMT declared, “the objective of the war is not only the overthrow of the militarists but also, and more particularly, the overthrow of the imperialism upon which the existence of the militarists depend. This must be done so that the root of the counterrevolution may be forever eliminated and China may rid herself of her semi-colonial status and become a free and independent nation.”¹⁹ To many Chinese, the victory and subsequent KMT rule, marked the beginning of a new era. One where China would again be unified and strong with economic plenty for all, no longer feeling the shame of being Chinese.²⁰

The purpose of this monograph is to provide the military planner with an understanding of the Chinese strategic ideas of *Shih* and *Li*. This is significant since China will continue the use force and non-force methods to support its domestic stability, political aims, and advance international legitimacy, allowing modernization through economic growth.²¹ The question this monograph looks to answer is: Can a comparison and contrast of the doctrine and actions of the KMT and CCP, between 1923-1927, provide an understanding of the Chinese strategy concepts of *Shih* and *Li*. This monograph proposes that the KMT strategy showed characteristics consistent with *Li* strategy and the CCP showed characteristics consistent *Shih* strategy.

This monograph relies primarily on secondary sources for theory, doctrine, and action during the period covered. Although these sources provide a sufficient depth on the subject, most are reliant on translations from primary Chinese sources. Helmut Callis wrote, “No civilization can drop its past. The past is the prologue to the present. For regardless of China's character in its modern form, it will stand on ancient foundations, on the profuse remnants of an old culture

¹⁹ Martin Wilbur and Julie Lien-ying How, *Missionaries of Revolution: Soviet Advisers and Nationalist China, 1920-1927* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 116.

²⁰ Lloyd E. Eastman et al., *The Nationalist Era in China, 1927-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1.

²¹ William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 231.

which will linger on in memory and action, undeniable and inescapable for reformers from right or left.”²² Although the majority of literature on Chinese strategic culture is heavily influenced by two publications, the *I Ching* and Sun Tzu’s *Art of War* this does not limit the number of authors writing on the subject.²³ Lin Wu, a third century Zhao general wrote, “What is valued in military affairs is strategic advantage (*Shih*).” Instead of using military force *Li*, to subjugate another or to defeat an enemy’s army, *Shih* attempts to convince an opponent to yield without battle. *Shih* prefers to threaten, manipulate, or deter, vice using weapons and strength, *Li* prefers to destroy an enemy.²⁴

In China’s strategic and philosophical mind, the need for moderation and harmony is paramount. Mott in *Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* writes Chinese culture developed its own order and attitudes toward warfare over a three-thousand-year period, thus the historical Chinese approach to warfare differs sharply from Western cultures. Chinese strategic behavior stresses culture as an explanation for the use of force. Leaders need to operate in accordance with Tao, the universal principle of all things or the one way, to avoid the chaos, destruction, and death war creates. Beyond its philosophical meanings, Tao expresses the idea of a path not only in a physical sense but also in a moral-ethical notion of right. Within Tao, moral fulfillment emerges from a proper relation with other individuals. In Taoist idea *wu-wei*, non-action does not mean doing nothing but rather implies that one refrains from activity contrary to

²² Helmut G. Callis, *China: Confucian and Communist (A Holt-Dryden Book)*, LCC ed. (New York: Henry Holt, 1959), 38.

²³ Li Bingyan, “Emphasis on Strategy: Demonstrating the Culture of Eastern Military Studies” *China Military Science*, No. 5 (2002), 80-85.

²⁴ William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 15.

Tao or harmony. This idea recognizes that only when in harmony with all things can one achieve their aims.²⁵

Mott defines two broad cultural ideas encompassed in historical Chinese political and strategic thought: *Shih* and *Li*. When put into action the two strategies focus on the means used to achieve goals. The *Shih*-strategy seeks to expand the national interest and deepen harmony between ruler, people, and army. The strategy rests on the premise that power arises from and lives among the people. In the military context, *Shih* refers to power or influence residing within the army, the general, the people, and the ruler. The essence of military operational art for the *Shih*-strategist is deception. This causes the enemy to change and frustrates his intent rather than requiring defeat of forces. The *Shih*-strategist creates strong national *Shih* by continuous weakening the enemy's *Shih* to a point where fighting is not required to gain victory. This approach avoids the costs and risks of battle. If the *Shih*-strategic leader does engage in a battle he does not need combat superiority and can afford to lose some battles, since the ultimate goal is the national interest, great *Shih*, encompasses all intermediate actions, including *Li* actions. It is important to note that the Chinese use *Shih* in political theory, military strategy, the Wei-Chi game, and daily life to express a special form of power or influence.²⁶

Mott explains that a *Li*-strategy relies on force. It uses partial or local victories, small *Li*'s to build upon to achieve the strategic objective, great *Li*, and the in national interest, the grand *Li*. Employing a direct strategy requires the seizure of provinces in sequence until all are under control. The *Li*-strategic general needs combat superiority to fight and win battles. For the *Li*-strategic leader to assure success he needs to preserve his base of power, the people, through a

²⁵ William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 6-7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 15-16.

large powerful army.²⁷

Within Mott's description of *Shih* and *Li* strategy he identifies twelve indicators to characterize actions when determining which strategy a leader employed. Of the twelve characteristics four stand out as primary indicators. These primary indicators are: Initiation, Approach, Strategy, and Deception.²⁸

Initiation

The *Shih*-strategist bases his decision to initiate war on the strength of his national *Shih* and executes his wartime action through *Shih* rather than material resources. The *Shih*-strategist analyses and plans for war focused on the national interest or an ultimate objective and terminates for *Shih* and Tao. *Li*-strategy decides to go to war based on *Li* and execute the war through *Li* (force) and material resources. *Li* strategy relies on threat analysis, relative force structure, and concentration of force to achieve decisive victory terminating for *Li*.²⁹

Approach

There are two broad approaches within Chinese strategic thought used to achieve the final goal, direct and indirect. A *Li*-strategy uses the direct approach, accumulating local victories, small *Lis*, along a direct path to the strategic objective, great *Li*, in the national interest, grand *Li*. To defeat the enemy, the *Li*-general seizes provinces or defeats armies in sequence until all are under control. The *Li*-strategies needs to fight and win every battle through combat superiority and preserve his power base, people, through large powerful armies.

The *Shih*-strategist uses the indirect approach focusing on strong national *Shih* through Tao, to continuously weaken the enemy. By doing so, the *Shih*-strategist attempts to defeat his

²⁷ William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 17.

²⁸ Ibid., 32-41.

²⁹ Ibid., 36-37.

enemy without fighting, avoiding the risks and costs of battle. For the *Shih*-strategist, the essence of military art is deception.³⁰

Strategy

For the *Shih* strategist the domestic population is the object of *Tao*, from which the ruler builds his *Shih* when going to war. The enemy is the object of deception with the goal to change his intent. The *Shih*-strategist fights a war to defeat his enemy's intent through superior *Shih*. For the *Li*-strategist, the people are an asset, used to build an army. The *Li*-strategist believes winning battles through superior military force ultimately brings victory and achieves the national interest, the Grand *Li*.³¹

Deception

A *Shih*-strategy attempts to manipulate the enemy by distracting him from his strategic goals, change or frustrate his intent, or create and exploit weakness. The *Shih*-strategist looks to manipulate the enemy by enticing him with *Li* to keep him the move and control the battlefield. The *Shih* strategist gains and maintains operational and strategic initiative by sapping the enemy commander of his confidence and breaking his army's spirit. This is achieved through distortion, deception, and falsification, using all means available to him including maneuver, fires, intelligence, propaganda, diplomacy, and media coverage.

A force based *Li* strategy looks for enemy vulnerabilities that allow one to attack his centers of gravity by destructing with superior forces. A *Li*-strategist relies primarily on combat power and are skeptical about manipulating the enemy. The *Li*-strategist will only use enticement and deception in exceptional situations or as a last means to avoid defeat. For the *Li*-strategist,

³⁰ William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 32-33.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 36.

deception serves only to frustrate the enemy's intent and by time, not to manipulate the enemy's intent.³²

The authors of a February 2000 RAND Corporation study also acknowledge that the two historical Chinese strategic ideas exist. In the study, the authors present a case supporting the historical concepts of force (*Li*) and non-force (*Shih*) pointing to elements of Chinese history, classical military writing, and Confucian traditions. As it relates to *Shih* strategy, the study analyzed Confucian tradition, which states that the moral force of the ruler is more important than his military. This proposes that the strength of the state and ability to defend itself is more a function of the ruler's relationship to the people and virtue than force. In addition, the authors assert that, although not directly a part of Confucian tradition, the writings of Sun Tzu support achieving victory through nonviolent methods, avoiding force and combat. The famous statement, "to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill" sums up this concept.³³ This quote expresses the preference for manipulation of the enemy's intent to undermine the enemy's own *Shih*. Finally, the study argues that China has typically used diplomatic measures, such as divide and rule strategies, to deal with threats. To support this the study uses the work of Ralph Sawyer, who believed traditional Chinese disdain for military action drove diplomatic measures to resolve national security problems.³⁴

To support the idea of *Li* as a historical strategic concept, the study returns to Confucian thought. While preferring nonviolence, Confucian rhetoric contends that those refusing to submit

³² William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 40-41.

³³ Mark Burles and Abram N. Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2000), accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/conf_proceedings/CF160/CF160.ch6.pdf.

³⁴ Ibid.

to a ruler are immoral. If the ruler finds himself in a situation where the opponent is unwilling to submit, then force remains the only option. The writing of Sun Tzu also seems to support the need for force. Although, the previous quote supports the uses of nonviolence, the majority of his work focused on actual combat. This supports that Sun Tzu himself understood that not all conflicts allow resolution through manipulation of *Shih*, thus requiring force to achieve the ruler's goals.³⁵ Chinese historical evidence also supports the concept of the use *Li* when *Shih* strategy fails, pointing to the Chinese response to a Mongolian threat that placed greater emphasis on offensive and counteroffensive military action as opposed to a more defensive posture. The conclusion of the study is that sufficient evidence exists to support the idea of distinct Chinese strategic cultures and that Chinese rulers employed both strategies.³⁶

For the modern military practitioner, a corollary to the Chinese ideas exists in Joint Publication 5-0, Operations Planning. JP 5-0 describes the *approach* as the manner in which a commander contends with a Center of Gravity (COG). A direct approach attacks the enemy's COG or principal strength by applying combat power directly against it. An indirect approach attacks the enemy's COG by applying combat power against a series of decisive points that lead to the defeat of the COG while avoiding enemy strength. At the strategic level, indirect methods include depriving the adversary of allies or friends, enplacing sanctions, weakening the national will to fight by undermining the public support for war, and breaking up cohesion of adversary alliances or coalitions. At the operational level, the most common indirect method is a series of attacks against selected aspects of the adversary's combat power. JP 5-0 states that when developing an operational approach, the commander should consider the direct or indirect nature

³⁵ Mark Burles and Abram N. Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2000), accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/conf_proceedings/CF160/CF160.ch6.pdf.

³⁶ Ibid.

of interactions with relevant actors and operational variables in the operational environment. As the commander considers various approaches, they should evaluate the types of defeat and/or stability mechanisms that lead to conditions defined in the desired end state.³⁷ Although JP 5-0 is primarily focused on combat power, *Li*, its description of indirect methods at the strategic level shares many similarities with *Shih*.

In addition to JP 5-0, Joseph Nye in *The Future of Power* describes similar concepts to *Shih* and *Li* as Soft Power, Hard Power, and Smart Power. Nye writes, though the concept of soft power is recent, the behavior it denotes is as old as human history. It is implicit in Lao-tzu's comment that a leader is best not when people obey his commands, but when they barely know he exists. The soft power of a country rests heavily on its resource, culture, political values, and foreign or domestic policies. With soft power, what the target thinks is as important as what the agent focuses on. Soft power, although not exactly same, is similar to the idea of *Shih*.

Hard power refers to tangible things such as force and money with the ability to command, coerce, threaten, or pay.³⁸ A *Li* strategy looks to primarily employ hard power. Finally, smart power is the combination of the hard power of coercion and payment with the soft power of persuasion and attraction.³⁹ Nye states, power is not good or bad per se. It is like calories in a diet; more is not always better. Smart power is not about maximizing power; it is about finding ways to combine resources into successful strategy. It means setting priorities that will structure trade-offs, which requires an understanding of the relationship between tangible possession goals and general structural goals.⁴⁰ The idea of smart power is consistent with a *Shih* strategy.

³⁷ Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *The Operations Process* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), accessed December 15, 2015, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp5_0.pdf.

³⁸ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *The Future of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 21.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, xiii.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 207-211.

The methodology used is a historical chronological comparison of the KMT and CCP and contrasts their doctrine and actions between 1923-1927, providing an understanding of the Chinese strategy concepts of *Shih* and *Li*. The hypothesis is that the KMT strategy showed characteristics consistent with *Li* strategy and the CCP showed characteristics consistent *Shih* strategy. These two actors in this period demonstrate the Chinese strategic concepts of *Shih* and *Li*. The lenses used to compare and contrast the KMT and CCP are the four primary indicators of *Shih* and *Li* strategy, presented by Mott: Initiation, Approach, Strategy (based on Intent or Force), and Deception.

This monograph is organized in four sections. The first section provides the political foundations of the KMT and CCP during the national revolution movement. Although both the KMT and CCP's political foundations differ significantly, they did work together as the First United Front. The second and third sections contain case studies, which explores the doctrine and actions of each part between 1923-1927. The final section, the conclusion, demonstrates that each party's strategy was consistent with the concept of either *Shih* or *Li*. Additionally, the conclusion provides an increased understanding of Chinese strategic thought, as proposed in the research question. Finally, this section identifies finding beyond the analysis, which increases the military planner's understand and cultural awareness, allowing for more effective planning.

Section One: Political Foundations

Kuomintang

At the center of revolutionary change in China was Dr. Sun Yat-Sen. Dr. Sun's revolutionary ideas went beyond mere dynastic change, they advocated for a change in both Chinese political and social systems. His ideas presented both a theory and plans for revolution and reconstruction.⁴¹ Beginning during his time in exile, following a failed anti-Manchu insurrection in 1895, Dr. Sun created his theory on the development of a modern China. It was from the failed insurrection that Dr. Sun learned that revolution, with the goal of a rebuilding of a nation state, must first take place in the mind of the people in order to be successful.⁴² This failure provided the foundation for Sun theories on a nationalist revolution.⁴³ In Dr. Sun's writings, he expressed a program of change to take China out of a state unrest and turmoil.⁴⁴ Between 1918 and 1920, Dr. Sun's work on the topic appeared mostly in the form of articles published in the KMT's new party magazine, *Reconstruction*. A compilation of his articles formed the basis for the *Chien Kuo Fang Lo (The Plan for National Reconstruction)*.⁴⁵

The Plan for National Reconstruction is a three-volume collection. The first item in the trilogy is the *Sun Wên Hsüeh Shê (The Philosophy of Sun Wên)*. This volume is a series of essays on the Chinese way of thought. The second volume, the *Min Ch'üan Ts'u Pu (The Primer of Democracy)* is a text on parliamentary law. The third volume, the *Shih Yeh Chi Hua (The*

⁴¹ Chester C. Tan, *Chinese Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), 116.

⁴² C. Martin Wilbur, *The Nationalist Revolution in China, 1923-1928* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 1.

⁴³ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen. an Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins press, 1937), 2.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 23.

⁴⁵ Marie-Claire Bergère, *Sun Yat-Sen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 280.

International Development of China) addresses China's economy. The more familiar titles of these volumes are: "The Plan of Psychological Reconstruction," "The Plan of Social Reconstruction" and "The Plan of Material Reconstruction."⁴⁶

The first part of *The Plan for National Reconstruction*, the Plan of Psychological Reconstruction addresses the problem of revolutionaries moving from thought to action. Sun's philosophy of revolution is encompassed in the famous adage, "Understanding is difficult, action easy."⁴⁷ The second part of *The Plan for National Reconstruction*, is The Plan of Social Reconstruction. Here Sun discussed certain educational problems, which he deemed too urgent to postpone until the establishment of a system of universal education. Additionally, he addressed methods of public discussion, especially the organization of public assemblies and the conduct of debate. Sun believed it was essential that the revolutionary be familiar with the best procedures and rhetoric for the management of meetings of all kinds.⁴⁸ In the third part of *The Plan for National Reconstruction*, The Plan of Material Reconstruction, Sun outlined a grand design for the development of China's natural resources and the improvement of communications. Sun's belief on education was that the education of the masses is not the duty of the revolutionary leaders, but of others, who had supported the revolution. Additionally, he believed it impossible to give thorough education to the masses until the material and spiritual reconstruction of China had occurred.

Sun intended to publish a fourth volume, on political reconstruction, but a revolt in 1922 saw his unpublished manuscripts destroyed in a fire in his library.⁴⁹ Following the reorganization

⁴⁶ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen. an Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins press, 1937), 4-5.

⁴⁷ Arthur Norman Holcombe, *The Chinese Revolution: A Phase in the Regeneration of a World Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 129.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 132.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 124.

of the KMT in 1924 and at the urging of Russian advisers in Canton, Sun took his ideas on political reconstruction and presented them in a series of popular lectures. This provided the foundation for the *San Min Chu I* or “*The Three Principles of the People*,” which achieved significant popularity among the Chinese Revolutionists. Holcombe compared the book’s popularity “to that of Rousseau’s *Social Contract* during the French Revolution or Marx’s *Capital* during the Russian.”⁵⁰ Sun wrote “the *San Min Doctrine* is a doctrine for the salvation of the nation in this sense by promoting the recognition of China as the equal of other nations; by producing political equilibrium and economic justice in the country, it will fit China for perpetual existence in the world.”

In the *San Min Chu I*, Sun outlines three principles, Nationalism, Democracy, and Livelihood, which Sun believed would allow China to return to its place of greatness in the world. The *Three Principles* was a theory of national revolution based on the French and American revolutions philosophical principles and revolutionary theories. At its foundation Sun states “it stems from love of all humanity.”⁵¹ Sun believed the China was oppressed by western powers and Japan ethnically, politically, and economically.⁵²

For Sun, nationalism was the fundamental base and the first principle on which his other principles rested. Sun felt nationalist ideology was a necessity for China’s regeneration. Sun wrote the restoration of China’s original greatness requires the revival the nationalist spirit. To achieve this Sun proposed two steps. First, every Chinese must know and realize that as a people and a nation, they are in an extremely critical position in the struggle for existence. The second

⁵⁰ Arthur Norman Holcombe, *The Chinese Revolution: A Phase in the Regeneration of a World Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 125.

⁵¹ Roland Felber and A.M. Grigoriev, eds., *The Chinese Revolution in the 1920s: Between Triumph and Disaster*, Reprint ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 44.

⁵² Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen: An Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1937), 62-63.

step is to form a great, powerful, and indivisible nationality-group.⁵³ This theory also proposed three ideological methods for regeneration. These were: the return to ancient Chinese morality, return to ancient Chinese learning, and the adoption of western science.⁵⁴

In Sun's second Principle of the People, he addressed the basic tenets of democracy. Sun believed Lincoln's "government of the people, by the people and for the people" embodied his own democratic goal.⁵⁵ To support his thoughts on democracy Sun looked to the west's struggle for liberty realized through revolutionary movement.⁵⁶ Sun defined four periods of struggle. The first period was the struggle of men with animals; the second period by the struggle between men and nature. During the third period men fought with men, nations fought with nations, and one nationality fought with another nationality. Sun believed China was in the fourth period, a period characterized by the struggle between good men and bad men and in this period, the right of the people is the supreme object.⁵⁷ Although democracy is the second idea in Sun's theory, it holds great importance since it would equip the Chinese with the means to compete on the modern world.⁵⁸

The third part of the Principles of the People dealt with livelihood or *min sheng*. This was one of Sun's most disputed principles. The foundation of Principle of Livelihood promoted

⁵³ Sun Yat-Sen, *San Min Chu I*, accessed January 20, 2016, http://larouchejapan.com/japanese/drupal-6.14/sites/default/files/text/San-Min-Chu-I_FINAL.pdf.

⁵⁴ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Se: An Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins press, 1937), 68.

⁵⁵ Chester C. Tan, *Chinese Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), 126.

⁵⁶ Marie-Claire Bergère, *Sun Yat-Sen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 137.

⁵⁷ Sun Yat-Sen, *San Min Chu I*, accessed January 20, 2016, http://larouchejapan.com/japanese/drupal-6.14/sites/default/files/text/San-Min-Chu-I_FINAL.pdf.

⁵⁸ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen. an Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins press, 1937), 102-103.

mutual dependence and cooperation of the classes. Sun did not deny class struggle existed but believed harmonizing economic interests provided the best opportunity for all people to benefit and allow society to progress. The Principle of Livelihood contained three distinguishable parts. The first part of the Principle of Livelihood dealt with economic aspects, driven by an active Chinese race-nation. The second part addressed technological revolution. The third part talked to social revolution. The meaning of the third aspect became the focus of many western commentators. The idea of social revolution led some to believe Sun adopted a Marxist idea of class struggle. Contrary to this, Sun's idea of social change sought progress through mutual assistance based on ethical principles as opposed to class struggle.⁵⁹ Sun's theory is an adjustment of the old Chinese ideology of Tao and Confucianism adapted to the modern world.⁶⁰

Chinese Communist Party

The CCP, established in July 1921, although in agreement with the KMT's goal of a unified China, drew from a different theoretical foundation. The roots of communism in China go back to 1919 and the May Fourteenth Movement. During this movement, student led strikes in Shanghai convinced many Chinese intellectuals that the path to revolution and regeneration required an alliance with the masses. This combined with the October Revolution in Russia brought the previously unknown idea of Marxism to China.⁶¹

The inauguration ceremony of the CCP was its first national congress. The resolutions and declaration that came out of this congress set the main goals of the CCP as social revolution

⁵⁹ Chester C. Tan, *Chinese Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), 134-135.

⁶⁰ Paul Myron Anthony Linebarger, *The Political Doctrines of Sun Yat-Sen. an Exposition of the San Min Chu I* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1937), 142.

⁶¹ Franz Schurmann and Orville Schell, *Republican China: Nationalism, War, and the Rise of Communism 1911-1949 (China Reader, Vol 2)* (New York: Random House, 1980), 87.

and the development of a workers' movement. Based on this, the CCP adopted Bolshevik principles and party organization.⁶² The November 1920 *Manifesto of the CCP* confirmed the CCP's communist foundations proclaiming the adoption of communist ideals, communist goals, and class struggle.⁶³

The *Communist Manifesto* defined the theoretical underpinnings of the CCP. Two main ideas formed the *Manifest* foundation, the primacy of economics and class struggle.⁶⁴ On the first idea, the *Manifest* described how the bourgeois class made the working class a slave to capitalism, using them for material gains. Marxist theory contended that a time comes when "society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society."⁶⁵ On the second idea, the *Manifesto* stated, "the immediate aim of the Communist was the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat."⁶⁶ The two ideas of economics and class struggle were inseparable according to Marxist theory.⁶⁷ Based on a desire for national identity, rejection of the longstanding tradition of authoritarianism and capitalist values, CCP founders accepted Marxism as their theory justifying

⁶² *China's Struggle with Red Peril* (unknown: World Anti-Communist League, China Chapter, 1978), 40-41.

⁶³ Tony Saich and Benjamin Yang, *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party: Documents and Analysis* (Armonk: Routledge, 1995), 11.

⁶⁴ James P. Harrison, *The Communists and Chinese Peasant Rebellions* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 16.

⁶⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, New ed. (New York: International Publishers Co, 2014), 30.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 33.

⁶⁷ James P. Harrison, *The Communists and Chinese Peasant Rebellions* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 17.

change.⁶⁸ Drawing from the *Manifesto*, the CCP set out to create a proletariat revolution to establish a communist state by defeating the capitalists within and outside of China.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ James P. Harrison, *The Communists and Chinese Peasant Rebellions* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 30.

⁶⁹ Tony Saich and Benjamin Yang, *The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party: Documents and Analysis* (Armonk: Routledge, 1995), 13.

Section Two: Kuomintang

Dr. Sun's *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction* formed the basis for the KMT's doctrine. Previously revolutionary leaders attempted reform using a policy beginning in Peking at the central government and working down to the local governments. Sun's method proposed a plan beginning at the bottom and working up. The *Fundamentals* provide a guide for the process of reconstruction.⁷⁰ Within the *Fundamentals* are of twenty-five separate steps along a three phased path. The process starts with a period of military government, moved through a period of political tutelage, and finally transitioned into a period of constitutional government.⁷¹

In the *Fundamentals*, Sun describes the first phase as a period of deconstruction. In this phase, the primary method for unification was the revolutionary army, with the purpose of overthrowing the warlord forces dividing China. In addition, during this period, martial law was to be enforced. The second phase was the transition period. During this phase, a provisional constitution was to be promulgated and local self-government promoted to encourage the exercise of political rights by the people. The third phase in the *Fundamentals* was the completion of the reconstruction. During this period a constitutional government was to be introduced and the self-governing body of districts enabled the people to directly exercise their political rights.⁷² The *Fundamentals* also contains detail concerning the ways and means to transition from one stage to

⁷⁰ Arthur Norman Holcombe, *The Chinese Revolution: A Phase in the Regeneration of a World Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 151.

⁷¹ Robert E Bedeski, "The Tutelary State and National Revolution in Kuomintang Ideology, 1928-31", *The China Quarterly*, no. 46. (Cambridge University Press), accessed December 21, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org.lumen.cgsccarl.com/stable/652266>.

⁷² Sun Yat-sen, *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction* (Taipei: China Cultural Service 1953).

the next. Through the whole process, Sun required all to remain mindful of the *Three Principles of the People*, which provided direction to the revolution.⁷³

In an effort to unify China, Sun had previously made two failed attempts. However, Sun believed that once a Northern Expedition did succeed the implementation *Three Principles of the People* would occur.⁷⁴ In 1923, the problem preventing Sun's goal of unification was revenue and the military. In order to create a dynamic revolution Sun needed control over sources of revenue. Additionally he needed a reliable military to protect his southern base in Canton allowing for further military growth.⁷⁵ During this time, there were internal and external issues with the military, but he was able to defend his base through supporters. The larger issue for Sun was the lack of financial resources. He attempted to obtain a loan from the British government, but his military position prevented this. In order to generate money from his support base through taxes, Sun organized a three level government with appointees under his control. This three level government consisted of a generalissimo headquarters, a provincial government, and the Canton municipal government.

Beginning as early as 1922, Sun began corresponding with Soviet diplomats and leaders. Sun decided to turn to Soviet Russia after failing to gain support from western powers for his revolution. In particular, Sun desired help building his party structure and military. By May 1923, the Soviets agreed to back Sun. Soviets, proposed the KMT create a broad political national movement using system propaganda in order to involve the masses in the struggle for Chinese democracy against the warlords. On 6 October 1923, Russia sent Michael Borodin, as an advisor

⁷³ Arthur Norman Holcombe, *The Chinese Revolution: A Phase in the Regeneration of a World Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 152.

⁷⁴ Sun Yat-sen, *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction* (Taipei: China Cultural Service 1953).

⁷⁵ C. Martin Wilbur, *The Nationalist Revolution in China, 1923-1928* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 2.

to Sun to assist with the task of developing a plan to reorganize the KMT.⁷⁶ To garner additional support beyond that currently received from Russia, Sun sent a delegation to Moscow between 2 September and 28 November 1923. At the head of the delegation was Chiang Kai-shek. The purpose of this delegation was to gain military support for a plan to march north from Canton and crush the warlords. Although Moscow did not support this plan, recommending the KMT only focus 20 percent of its effort to the military, it did provide some support by allowing KMT personnel to travel to the USSR for training.⁷⁷

In the winter of 1923-1924 most of the KMT troops were poorly trained, badly equipped, and lacked competent officers. If the KMT was to launch any campaign north, with hope of success, military reforms needed to occur. The reforms required included centralization of revenue collection arms procurement, pay of military units, standardized military training, and indoctrination in revolutionary ideology.⁷⁸ In May 1924, the idea of a military academy, in reforms proposed by Sun, was approved by the First National Congress of the KMT. Moscow provided additional support to this reform effort by funding the Whampoa Military Academy in Canton, which utilized Soviet military advisers and instructors.⁷⁹ Sun selected Chiang as its founding director. This new-style military academy produced an elite officer corps that contributed to the growth and modernization of the revolutionary army. In addition to advisor support, Moscow did eventually send military supplies to the KMT in Canton, beginning in

⁷⁶ C. Martin Wilbur, *The Nationalist Revolution in China, 1923-1928* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 4-5.

⁷⁷ Roland Felber and A.M. Grigoriev, eds., *The Chinese Revolution in the 1920s: Between Triumph and Disaster*, Reprint ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 67.

⁷⁸ C. Martin Wilbur, *The Nationalist Revolution in China, 1923-1928* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 13.

⁷⁹ Roland Felber and A.M. Grigoriev, eds., *The Chinese Revolution in the 1920s: Between Triumph and Disaster*, Reprint ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 67-68.

March 1925.⁸⁰ During the same time the KMT promoted other programs in Canton, such as road construction, sanitation, flood control, and social reform, but with a limited budget. The needs of the expanding army took priority during this time.⁸¹

As the nationalist army grew, conflict did arise. The first was with the CCP. By June 1924, KMT leaders learned of efforts to infiltrate the KMT and steer the party. Sun confronted his Russian advisors with evidence showing the CCP attempt to manipulate senior KMT officials for their own revolutionary purposes. The advisors made it clear that Russian assistance depended on the KMT continuing to work with the CCP. An additional conflict arose over taxation. The heavy tax policy of Sun's government, required to feed its ever-growing army, led local merchant leaders to form their own militia force to counter the revolutionary army. In August 1924, when the merchants received a large arms shipment, Sun ordered Chiang and his Whampoa cadets to confiscate it. After two months of bargaining and a small military clash, Sun ordered all forces available to suppress the Merchants' Corps. In this action, fire and looting destroyed much of Canton's commercial quarter. The event tarnished Sun's reputation in the Canton commercial industry.⁸²

In November 1924, Sun went to Peking at the request of the Peking government. During the trip, he advocated for the goal of national reunification. Unfortunately, Sun died in Peking in March 1925. After Sun's death and with the threat of encirclement by the warlord armies, the KMT decided the only way to complete Sun's goal of a national revolution and unified China was

⁸⁰ Gilbert Rozman, *The Modernization of China* (New York: Free Press, 1982), 280-281.

⁸¹ Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 15.

⁸² C. Martin Wilbur, *The Nationalist Revolution in China, 1923-1928* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 19-20.

through a military campaign, a new Northern Expedition.⁸³ During this same time, Chiang continued to consolidate his position in the south, and prepared for the Northern Expedition.

On 1 July 1925, the KMT established a National government in Canton. At this point, the KMT military council recommended calling all military units the National Revolutionary Army (NRA). By the end of 1925, the NRA suppressed all remaining warlord forces in the region, effectively controlling the entire Guangxi province.⁸⁴ By early 1926, the NRA had 90,000 troops, divided into six divisions. On 27 January 1926, the KMT political council accepted a proposal advocating the use of forces for the Northern Expedition. On February 1, the council appointed Chiang Inspector-General of the KMT army tasked with the special mission of putting the NRA on a war footing. The KMT issued a manifesto denouncing the northern warlords on February 26, calling them enemies of the country and agents of imperialists.⁸⁵

On 5 June 1926, the KMT Executive Committee named Chiang the commander in chief of the NRA and the Northern Expedition. The following month he assumed the office of Supreme Commander. After his appointment, Chiang became even more determined to launch the Northern Expedition as soon as possible. Chiang believed that by achieving a series of early victories, the Chinese political, intellectual, and business worlds would unite behind him.⁸⁶ On 1 July 1926, Chiang read out the mobilization order for the Northern Expedition, declaring, “To protect the welfare of the people we must implement the *Three People’s Principles* and complete

⁸³ *China's Struggle with Red Peril* (unknown: World Anti-Communist League, China Chapter, 1978), 60.

⁸⁴ Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-Shek and the Struggle for Modern China*, 2 ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2011), 50.

⁸⁵ Hollington Tong, *Chiang Kai-Shek* (London: Hurst, 1938), 88-89.

⁸⁶ Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-Shek and the Struggle for Modern China*, 2 ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2011), 57.

the National Revolution.”⁸⁷ Chiang believed the military, operated under the *Three Principles*, could overthrow both the warlords and the imperialists, who had supported them.⁸⁸ Chiang’s strategy for the NRA was to take Hunan first, followed by the capture of Wuhan cities, three hundred miles north on the Yangtze, next forces would link up with the Christian leftist warlord Feng Yuxiang, and then advance on Peking.⁸⁹

A comparison of military strength before the Expedition showed Chiang had eight army corps under his command totaling 100,000 troops. The main warlords of the central and northern provinces had 750,000 troops between them. Report by Russian observers stated that some NRA units had no weapons and others carried matchlock rifles.⁹⁰ All of Chiang’s junior officers came from the Whampoa Academy and were firm believers in the *Three Principles*. Hallett Abend described the NRA as “unimpressive, straw-sandaled, mostly little men...clad in in ill-fitting cotton uniforms of dirty grey or dusty yellow...the disorganization seem complete, and the expedition appeared to be a hopeless folly.”⁹¹ In contrast to observations, the NRA saw its morale as high after previous success during the short Eastern Expedition. This was in part due to Russian advisors, who taught the NRA tactics such as flanking offensive maneuvers and envelopments.⁹²

⁸⁷ Jonathan Fenby, *Chiang Kai Shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2005), 114.

⁸⁸ Hollington Tong, *Chiang Kai-Shek* (London: Hurst, 1938), 100.

⁸⁹ Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-Shek and the Struggle for Modern China*, 2 ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2011), 58.

⁹⁰ Jonathan Fenby, *Chiang Kai Shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2005), 115.

⁹¹ Hallett Abend, *My Life in China 1926-1941* (New York: Addison Press, 2007), 33.

⁹² Jonathan Fenby, *Chiang Kai Shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2005), 115.

The NRA received significant support from the people in the districts they traveled through due to their disciplined behavior.⁹³ Their discipline was mostly due to two factors. The first related to internal control. Within the NRA, if a company of soldiers went out to fight, and retreated, the head of the company was shot. This also applied to battalions, regiments, divisions, and army corps. In the event of a general retreat, if the commander of the army corps personally stood his ground and was killed, all the division commanders under him were sentenced to death. Chiang personally devised this system and it was strictly enforced, no one could escape punishment if there was a retreat. The second factor was the political department attached to each Army. The mission of the department was to give the military and the people training in the *Three Principles*. The result of this training, if successful, was increased cooperation between the troops and the people.⁹⁴

On 1 July, the NRA marched in to Jiangxi.⁹⁵ Chiang's initial plan called for a push north on two fronts. This push would focus on Hunan and Jiangxi province to the east. However, a Russian advisor persuade Chiang to avoid splitting his forces and concentrate them on the Yangtze city of Wuhan, 600 miles to the north. This set the pattern, which Chiang would operate for the next two decades. Through this strategy, confrontation with the major warlords occurred sequentially. One by one, Chiang and the NRA exploited the warlords' mutual suspicions of each other.⁹⁶

On the way to Wuhan, the NRA moved through the province of Hunan. In order to prevent the appearance of a Cantonese invasion, Chiang approach T'ang Sheng-chih, a Hunan

⁹³ Hollington Tong, *Chiang Kai-Shek* (London: Hurst, 1938), 100-101.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁹⁵ Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-Shek and the Struggle for Modern China*, 2 ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2011), 59.

⁹⁶ Jonathan Fenby, *Chiang Kai Shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2005), 117.

commander, before the beginning of the expedition. Chiang pleaded with T'ang that they should reunite under the new national movement, which would strengthen China against her enemies. Chiang believed winning over the provincial governor and others could avoid a bloody struggle for the mountain passes guarding the Yangtze basin. In February 24, 1926, Tang did accept Canton's offer of an alliance. By 2 June, T'ang accepted an appointment as the commander of the NRA Eighth Army.⁹⁷ This alliance ensured the Nationalist smooth movement through southern Hunan on the way to the provincial capital of Changsha. By the end of July, Chiang converted six generals from opposing camps to the Nationalist Army, as he had done with T'ang. Troops of two generals from the Guizhou province became the NRA Ninth and Tenth Armies.⁹⁸

On August 15, Chiang ordered a general attack on the Mi-Lo River line near Changsha, with the goal of securing Hunan. This victory allowed the NRA to continue its march on the Heipei.⁹⁹ By the end of August, Chiang's strategy had paid off. Although still threatened by hostile forces in Kiangsi, the NRA defeated a major warlord in Hunan. The NRA victory was not lost on the warlords of the surrounding provinces.¹⁰⁰ The Nationalists next advanced into northern Hunan beginning 18 August. The opposition there held out for only two days before withdrawing. On 26 August, Chiang ordered his forces to advance across Heipei province towards the biggest urban area in central China. By 2 September, the NRA reached the lake south of Wuchang, the Wuhan provincial capital. The NRA marched on Wuchang after an address by Chiang. After

⁹⁷ Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 68-72.

⁹⁸ Jonathan Fenby, *Chiang Kai Shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2005), 118.

⁹⁹ Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 76.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

achieving victory in Wuhan, political figures from Canton moved up to make Wuhan their new capital.

At the start of 1927, the Nationalist flag flew from Hainan Island, on the south coast of China, to the Yangtze basin. After the fall of Hunan, Hubei, Guizhou and Guangxi, Chiang added a seventh province to the Nationalist holdings by defeating an attack from coastal Fujian.¹⁰¹ Chiang set his sights next on Nanking, because it gave the Nationalists government a new capital in the Nanking province, and Shanghai because it provided direct access to large financial resources, and potential foreign recognition for the revolution.¹⁰²

NRA troops entered Nanking on the night of 23 March. On the morning of the 24 March, NRA soldiers looted the British, American and Japanese consulates killing five foreign nationals. These actions later became known as the Nanking Incident. This event was unique during the Northern Expedition, as it was the first time that foreigners were killed and wide spread property loss occurred. The event also created a significant unrest in the foreign settlements in Shanghai.¹⁰³ As the NRA marched for Shanghai, CCP and KMT unions in the city began joint strikes to support the revolution. As the result of the strikes turning violent two hundred workers died. Many westerners observing the situation believed Chiang lacked the will or power to control the city. Chiang reach Shanghai on 28 March and took control of the city using the NRA to put an end to the strikes.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Jonathan Fenby, *Chiang Kai Shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2005), 119-123.

¹⁰² Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-Shek and the Struggle for Modern China*, 2 ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2011), 64.

¹⁰³ Denis Twitchett & John K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 12: Republican China 1912-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 618.

¹⁰⁴ Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-Shek and the Struggle for Modern China*, 2 ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2011), 64-65.

As March 1927 ended, the split within the KMT, between Communists and Chiang's supporters solidified. This was in part due to the CCP using its labor organization to undermine Chiang's regime. This situation became an increasing concern for Chiang as it threatened to halt the Northern Expedition creating the possibility the danger of warlord resurgence. On April 12, 1927, Chiang and the NRA moved to solve the CCP problem.¹⁰⁵ The purge that began in Shanghai that day started the Chinese Civil war, which would last twenty-two years.¹⁰⁶

Analysis

Initiation

Sun's *Fundamental of National Reconstruction* was the foundation and justification for the KMT's actions. If viewed as a whole, the three phases were more in keeping with the concept of *Shih*, since the *Fundamentals* advocated for national unity and harmony between the classes. An issue occurred when looking at the phased nature of the approach. In particular, Sun's first phase of reconstruction focused solely on military conquest and martial law. It required destruction before any reconstruction. In actual conduct, during the reviewed time, the KMT applied significant effort to generate taxes and to the building of the NRA. The KMT also paid little attention to developing national will before initiating military action. It was only after unification, through the military and martial law, that Sun's plan began to address the development of national will in the tutelage phase. Next, Chiang's decision to begin the Northern Expedition on the desire to crush the warlords showed a preference for force as the primary method to achieving the revolutionary goals. Finally, Chiang attempted to further build his forces by absorbing other armies instead of cultivating national will as a resource. Based on the

¹⁰⁵ Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 124.

¹⁰⁶ Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-Shek and the Struggle for Modern China*, 2 ed. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2011), 68.

requirements for materiel resources, money, and forces as a requirement to initiate the Northern Expedition the KMT actions aligned most closely with the characteristics of *Li*.¹⁰⁷

Approach

The approach taken by Chiang and the KMT was a direct one. Chiang confirmed this in his professed strategy. Chiang advocated for defeat of the warlords in sequence, seizing provinces along a path from south to north. Chiang's NRA moved along a planned path, conquering until all provinces were under the Kuomintang's control by the time they reached Shanghai. Supported by an outward appearance of combat superiority, Chiang's army won victories and became larger and more powerful with each province they took. Additionally, the KMT continued to build coercive strength by absorbing the warlord armies that came to the revolution's side. This follows the characteristics of *Li* strategy, which favors a direct approach, using victories building along a path to the strategic objective.¹⁰⁸

Strategy

From its doctrinal foundation to its execution, the KMT prioritized force. Sun's *Fundamentals* promote force as the first required step, which required destruction before reconstruction. Sun and the KMT's focused on the development, growth and support of the revolutionary army, under a single chain of command in order to build and concentrate coercive combat power. Chiang's dealings with his own army also showed a preference for force by threatening death for retreating troops in combat. Finally, through the NRA Chiang looked to confront his enemy with destructive force. This confrontation left one outcome in Chiang's mind,

¹⁰⁷ William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 36-37.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 32-33.

win or lose. The revolution's final goal, unification under one government, did not accept any warlords remaining in control of provinces or armies. The use of force, combat superiority, strict Confucian hierarchy, and victory, again were consistent with the characteristics of *Li*.¹⁰⁹

Deception

No sources point to the KMT, Chiang or the NRA developing or implementation a deception plan. Instead, Chiang preferred coercion, the threat of force or actual force to achieve the revolutionary goals, leaving deception to other elements such as the CCP as an ancillary operation. The NRA's preference to use Russian tactics of flank attacks and envelopments to achieve victory confirms to operational focus on maneuver vice deception. This is in keeping with *Li* strategic characteristics, which only promotes the use of enticement and deception in exceptional situations or as a last means to avoid defeat.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 36.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

Section Three: Chinese Communist Party

The CCP based its doctrine on a Leninist view and approach to revolutionary change. This approach saw revolution being conducted over three stages. Lenin in writing about the stages said, “The first stage of revolution is the restriction of absolutism, which satisfies the bourgeoisie; the second is the attainment of the republic, which satisfies the “people,” the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie at large; the third is the socialist revolution, which alone can satisfy the proletariat.”¹¹¹

Lenin also believed “the proletariat must carry to completion the democratic revolution, by allying to itself with the mass of the peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyze the instability of the bourgeoisie.”¹¹² Stalin, writing on the strategic rules of Leninism noted the importance of recognizing the following:

- 1) The compromising parties are the most dangerous social support of the enemies of the revolution in the period of the approaching revolutionary outbreak.
- 2) It is impossible to overthrow the enemy, bourgeois, unless the parties are isolated.
- 3) The main weapon in the period of preparation for the revolution must therefore be directed towards isolating these parties and winning the broad masses of working people away from them.¹¹³

The idea of dividing and isolating the enemy parties and using mass movements to support a social revolution became the CCP approach.

The Communist International Executive Committee (ECCI) further reinforced the CCP’s approach, when it approved this tactic as the method appropriate for the infant CCP to gain access

¹¹¹ *Lenin Collected Works (January-July 1905, Volume 8)*, 3rd ed. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), 465.

¹¹² *On the Roots of Revisionism: A Political Analysis of the International Communist Movement and the CPUSA 1919-1945* (Bay Area Study Group, Encyclopedia of Anti-Revisionism Online, 1979), accessed March 12, 2015, <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/1946-1956/roots-revisionism/chapter-7.pdf>.

¹¹³ Ibid.

to the proletariat in southern China, and more importantly, it provided an opportunity to radicalize the KMT and steer it toward Russia, which planned to direct the socialist revolution.¹¹⁴

Unfortunately, the CCP lacked sufficient power to lead the republican stage of the revolution to remove the warlords. To compensate for this the CCP supported the KMT as the primary force for the national revolution, as it had the common goal of unifying China. Although it aligned with the KMT, the CCP did not see the KMT as a party to carry the social revolution forward beyond the republican stage due to the KMT suffering from two major weaknesses. First, the KMT relied on foreign money, which destroyed the spirit of national independence. Second, it concentrated all its efforts on military action, neglecting propaganda work.¹¹⁵ Although collaborating with the KMT, the CCP remained firm on maintaining its own distinct party. The tactic the CCP develop, during this period, was one of cooperation combined with opposition. This allowed the CCP to support the KMT's national revolution, while simultaneously spreading propaganda among the worker class, to awaken and organize the proletariat movement, with the goal of gaining leadership over the movements.¹¹⁶ Additionally, CCP believed once inside the KMT's political structure, CCP members could begin work to divide the Kuomintang, spreading propaganda to accelerate the development of class-consciousness, furthering the social revolutionary movement. A CCP delegate to the Forth Congress of the Communist International sums up the CCP's approach in 1922, stating:

If we do not join this party, the Kuomintang, we shall remain isolated and we shall preach a communism which consists of a great and noble ideal, but one which the masses do not follow. The masses certainly would follow the bourgeois party, and this party would use the masses for its purposes. If we join the party, we shall be able to show the masses that we too are for a revolutionary democracy, but that for us revolutionary democracy is only a means to an end. Furthermore, we shall be able to point out that

¹¹⁴ C. Martin Wilbur, *The Nationalist Revolution in China, 1923-1928* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 6.

¹¹⁵ Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 78.

¹¹⁶ Harold D. Lasswell, *World Revolutionary Elites: Studies in Coercive Ideological Movements* (Westport: Praeger, 1980), 327.

although we are for this distant goal, we nevertheless do not forget the daily needs of the masses. We shall be able to gather the masses around us and split the Kuomintang party.¹¹⁷

Early in 1924, the CCP began to stir the masses toward a socialist movement. At the urging of his Russian advisors, Sun and the KMT set up bureaus for labor, farmers, youth, and women. The first two bureaus soon fell under the control of CCP members. One of the first attempts by CCP to establish control of a union occurred when Liao Chung-k'ai, the head of the Labor Bureau, attempted to bring all the labor unions of Canton under his office. This attempt failed since many of the union were well establish and suspicious of communist infiltrating the unions and attempting to control the workers. The CCP plan to bring unions under their control was due to the belief that the workers in these unions were critical to the success of a revolution.¹¹⁸

Prior to 1923, the CCP paid little attention to peasant movements, but in May 1923 the ECCI directed the CCP to begin moving the peasant mass toward the national struggle. At the same time the Chinese Socialist Youth Corps achieved some success organizing tenant farmers in eastern Canton. The Youth Corps also assisted in the creation of a large riot in the summer of 1924. After escaping arrest during the strike, the Youth Corps leader establish himself as leading figure in the KMT's Farmers Bureau. In July 1924 the Farmers Bureau set up the Farmers' Movement Training Institute tasking its students to investigate rural conditions, spreading propaganda, and setting up farmers' associations. Of note, Mao Tse-tung directed the Institute from May to October 1926. The CCP goal for the Institute was to create effective control over

¹¹⁷ Harold D. Lasswell, *World Revolutionary Elites: Studies in Coercive Ideological Movements* (Westport: Praeger, 1980), 327.

¹¹⁸ Denis Twitchett & John K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 12: Republican China 1912-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 541.

peasant movements through its graduates. By May 1925, a CCP report boasted that 99 percent of the special deputies educated at the Institute supported the communist cause.¹¹⁹

By June 1924, the Kuomintang began to learn of the Communist Party's infiltration tactics and efforts to influence the KMT's position. This generated significant anti-communist sentiment. The largest complaint by the KMT was that the CCP assured them that the communists were not creating a party within the KMT. Unease about the situation began to grow amongst the CCP Committee, with many advocating for a break with the Kuomintang. At the insistence of their Soviet advisors, the CCP continued to cooperate in order to take advantage of the previous arrangement.

In November 1924, when Sun departed for Peking, the communists increased their efforts to generate dissension in the KMT military academies with the goal of seizing control. Following a reorganization of the KMT into the National Government of China in June 1925, the communists increased their effort to create dissent among the KMT right wing. Additionally, the communists attempted to undermine Chiang's proposed Northern Expedition by spreading printed propaganda portraying Chiang as the new warlord of Canton. Unfortunately, for the CCP, their efforts to take control of the KMT failed prior to the beginning of Northern Expedition.¹²⁰

In conjunction with their efforts to undermine the leadership of the KMT, communist members received direction to penetrate all levels of the KMT. The slogan for the effort stated, "a good communist is a good member of the KMT nucleus."¹²¹ Penetrating the army was of particular interest for the CCP. The communists looked to use their positions in the army to

¹¹⁹ Denis Twitchett & John K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 12: Republican China 1912-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 542-544.

¹²⁰ Chiang Chung-cheng, *Soviet Russia in China: A Summing-Up at Seventy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965), 23-30.

¹²¹ Denis Twitchett & John K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 12: Republican China 1912-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 562.

indoctrinate troops in communist ideology. In addition to the army, the CCP also penetrated club and social organizations, such as the League of Military Youth. The ultimate goal of this effort was to politicalize the NRA towards the CCP, but not to control it. Although the intent for this effort was to operate in secret, it was difficult for CCP to completely conceal its propaganda from the KMT leadership.¹²² Penetration of the military became difficult for the CCP after March 1926, following a failed coup by some CCP members. In response Chiang removed all CCP members from leadership positions in the military causing a backlash against the CCP by the KMT. Given this difficulty, the CCP decided to concentrate its energy on mass movements. This effort was in part to keep the military in check, but also support their long-term goal of social revolution.¹²³

On 12 July 1926, a report from the CCP executive committee still saw the Northern Expedition as a defensive operation.¹²⁴ The CCP and their Soviet advisors believed their current situation in Canton was too weak, and saw an offensive operation as having little chance at success.¹²⁵ When the Northern Expedition launched, later in July, the CCP had no other option than to support the expedition. In November 1926, the ECCI created a plan for the CCP to carry out during the expedition. This plan included three main points. First, the Chinese communist needed to remain part of the KMT, working to develop the CCP into an independent and open party. Second, CCP members should work to occupy the leadership position of the national revolution in order to train and organize the masses in preparation for the next phase of the

¹²² Denis Twitchett & John K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 12: Republican China 1912-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 562-563.

¹²³ Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 171-172.

¹²⁴ *China's Struggle with Red Peril* (unknown: World Anti-Communist League, China Chapter, 1978), 62.

¹²⁵ Arthur Norman Holcombe, *The Chinese Revolution: A Phase in the Regeneration of a World Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 201.

revolution. Finally, CCP members were to utilize all tactics available to them to create conflict within the KMT factions and develop a close cooperation with KMT leftists. In addition to these steps, Stalin, also in attendance at the ECCI, directed the CCP to pay particular attention to the military, working to strengthen communist political work within units participating in the Northern Expedition. Additionally, Stalin directed CCP members to study military affairs to enabling them to take positions of leadership in the military in the future.¹²⁶

The first attempt by the CCP to use a mass movement to support the Northern Expedition occurred in the Hunan province. CCP member in the Political Department over a two-month period prior to KMT forces entering the area, the CCP coordinated with the underground leadership of the Union of Labor Associations for a general strike to harass the enemy forces near the city of Changsha. Although the effectiveness of the strikes are disputed, since the strikes were quickly suppressed by enemy troops in the city, it showed the CCP's ability to coordinate mass movements in support of the approaching military.¹²⁷

The next instance of the CCP organizing mass support for the Northern Expedition occurred near the Mi-Lo line. During this battle, the peasant's association provided intelligence on enemy defensive position, transported supplies, guided NRA units across the Mi-Lo River, and coordinated propaganda with the KMT Political Department. Using the information from the peasant's association NRA forces mounted a successful attack on the rear of the enemy. Finally, once the enemy retreated from the area, locals further undermined the enemy will to resist by firing on retreating units, allowing NRA forces capture a large number of enemy troops.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ *China's Struggle with Red Peril* (unknown: World Anti-Communist League, China Chapter, 1978), 62-63.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 195-196.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 196-197.

The last example of the CCP using mass movements during this period was the Shanghai protests. Prior to NRA forces arrival in Shanghai, the CCP helped coordinated with labor unions to conduct a general strike in the city. Although the reported size of the strike ranged from 160,000 to 800,000, the strikes did in fact shut down railroads, streetcar, telephone systems and electricity. These efforts supported the revolutionary forces and helped defeat the last stand of enemy forces in the city. On 22 March 1927, NRA troops took Shanghai.¹²⁹

Finally, the overall effect of the work by the CCP contributed to the KMT's rapid military success during the Northern Expedition. CCP members worked behind enemy lines supporting the expedition by winning over local populations and undermining enemy forces. In addition, after the NRA took major cities, the CCP moved in behind them forming or reviving labor unions to provide future support for the CCP desired social revolution.¹³⁰

Analysis

Initiation

Two items stand out from the case study related to initiation. The first is justification. The CCP and the KMT did share a common justification for initiating the revolution based on Dr. Sun's nationalist principles, but there were fundamental differences in the methods for achieving unity. The CCP's preferred method was to awaken the power of the masses by educating them in communist theory. The CCP believed education for the masses in the communist idea of class struggle would allow the masses to see that the bourgeois class was exploiting them. Marxist theory stated this would ignite a backlash and drive a national movement toward social justice and a classless society. This idea of initiating a movement on the will of the people and national

¹²⁹ Donald A. Jordan, *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 208-213.

¹³⁰ Denis Twitchett & John K. Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China Volume 12: Republican China 1912-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 589.

strength, not material resources is characteristic of *Shih*. The second item was the initiation of the Northern Expedition, which the CCP resisted. Although there was a significant national spirit for the defeat of the warlords and reunification, the CCP did not control this wave of enthusiasm nor was it focused on class struggle

Finally, the CCP did not support the initiation of the Northern Expedition since its purpose did not support the communist idea of national interest. Instead, the CCP believed it was in the interest of Chiang and the bourgeois class. Furthermore, the expedition risked KMT gaining control of the revolution's future direction, not the CCP. Again, this is consistent with *Shih* focusing on the national interest and ultimate objective.

Approach

Based on the doctrine and actions taken by the CCP their approach was consistent with an indirect method. Two points from the case study stand out, which support this analysis. First, the CCP doctrine, based on Leninism, clearly stated the method for achieving a social revolution was to isolate the competing parties and win the support of the masses. Although this stage of the revolution did seem to indicate some form of a sequenced path, the period reviewed only encompassed the second stage, winning the support of the masses. The CCP conducted its work at multiple levels in many organizations, to include peasant associations and unions. The key for the CCP was cumulative success, allowing mass support to build over wide areas and diverse groups. These actions were consistent with a *Shih* approach, which looks to build national will to weaken the enemy while avoiding open fighting. The CCP's efforts did in fact weaken warlord forces, allowing the NRA a number of successes with minimal fighting,

The second point to supporting an indirect approach was the CCP interactions with the KMT. The CCP in its inferior position looked to use its support for the national revolution as point of entry to a more powerful organization. The CCP tactic to gain entry into the KMT, and then use this to divide the party, showed the CCP did not want direct confrontation with the KMT

via forceful means. This point was also consistent with a *Shih* approach, designed to weaken the enemy. In this situation, the enemy was not the warlords, but the KMT. Taken in this light, the CCP approach focused on two enemies, the KMT and the warlords, simultaneously instead of sequentially.

Strategy

The CCP's doctrine and actions showed the CCP focused on the masses. This focus was consistent with a *Shih* strategy, where the domestic population was the object. The CCP's work with unions and peasant groups showed its desire to gain support from a population that represented the majority of Chinese society. Additionally, the Leninist belief that only the masses can carry a social revolution resonates with the *Shih* concept of using the object of focus, the masses, to build *Shih* before going to war.

The CCP efforts to change the KMT from within by placing CCP members in leadership positions, allowing increased influence, was also characteristic of a *Shih* strategy, attempting to change the enemy's intent. Although manipulation of the KMT's political structure was a CCP goal, and consistent with *Shih* strategy, it was difficult for the CCP to achieve significant success due to the KMT organizational structure.

Deception

The CCP primarily focused its use of deception on the KMT. This was apparent in their doctrine, promoting use of the KMT as a vehicle to achieve the national revolution, while simultaneously manipulating the different wings in the KMT to weaken and change its intent. Additionally, the CCP attempts to infiltrate the NRA through its political departments, clubs, and social organizations, concealing their true intent, combined with propaganda, showed *Shih* characteristics, promoting distortion, deception, and falsification.

Conclusion

The KMT's preference for overwhelming military force and material strength as a necessary requirement for carrying out the national revolutionary war was characteristic of a *Li* based strategy. The KMT doctrine required military action and martial law as the first step and prerequisite before moving to any subsequent step toward the nationalist goals. The KMT placed great emphasis on developing and growing the NRA, which required internal and external, financial, material, advisor support, prior to initiating war. Finally, the KMT used its military as the main driving force behind the national revolution, taking a sequential path to defeating the warlords.

In contrast, the CCP focus on developing the national will of the people, while manipulating and deceiving its opponents, was characteristic of a *Shih* based strategy. For the CCP, Marxist philosophy defined the national interest as freedom from capitalist oppression and class struggle. The drive to achieve the national interest did not necessarily require military force, but it did not avoid violence when required either. Instead, the CCP looked to exploit the momentum generated from the peoples' dissatisfaction with capitalist exploitation, and channel it toward the ultimate national goal of a socialist revolution.

Mott wrote, "Although Mao and Chiang both sought to rebuild a self-respecting, independent China within their shared strategic culture, their contrasting strategies epitomized the poles of *Shih* theory, *Shih* and *Li*."¹³¹ To support his idea, Mott compared both parties over the Chinese Civil War (1927 to 1949), but not the revolutionary period (1923-1927). In Mott's view, the KMT's strategy showed characteristics consistent with concept of *Li* strategy, and the CCP showed characteristics consistent with the concept of *Shih* strategy.

The significant difference between the KMT and CCP was primarily their opposing political foundations and doctrine, not conscious choices by party leaders to conduct specific

¹³¹ William H. Mott IV and Jae Chang Kim, *The Philosophy of Chinese Military Culture: Shih vs. Li* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 73.

strategy based on a preference for a given cultural approach. Further, the success of the KMT during the revolution, using a *Li* strategy, did not necessarily imply that this strategy was superior or inferior to a *Shih* strategy. The effectiveness of the KMT's *Li* strategy was more the result of external conditions favorable to that specific method. The CCP's ultimate victory in the Chinese Civil War shows a *Shih* strategy was as effective, if not more effective, when applied over extended time as conditions changed.

Additionally, beyond the increased understanding of *Shih* and *Li* there are two supplementary items of interest to draw from the case studies. The first is that western ideas significantly influenced both party's beginnings and their political foundations. Sun used historical examples from the French and American revolutions as the starting point of analysis when creating his *Three Principles*. It was Sun's hope that China could skip over the mistakes of western democratic revolutions, propelling China to the forefront of the modern age. In contrast, the CCP founded its political philosophy on Marxism-Leninism, a theory generated from a European study of capitalism and class struggle. This theory did not address predominately agrarian societies as was the case in China.

The second item is the effect of access to positions of power and means on party strategy. Each party's position in government defined its ability to influence decisions and access means. This situation modified each party's choice of strategy as much if not more than their doctrine. The KMT controlled the top levels of government and the military during the entirety of the period. The CCP, in contrast, held a relatively weak position within the KMT. At no point during the period reviewed, did the CCP ever reach a position to have access to, or control of, coercive force to employ towards its goals, even if it desired to use force. This left the CCP with the attempt to influence mass movements and manipulation as its only available means to achieve power. This situation raises the question, if the CCP had managed to take control of NRA, would it have continued with mass movement or would it have switch to a *Li* strategy? Mao's quote, "blade against blade, rifle against rifle, because class enemies were not going to submit

voluntarily” indicates what might have happened, had this occurred.¹³²

In the process of investigating classical Chinese strategic thought, a number of complementary works on the subject raised questions in regards to modern Chinese strategic preferences. These works propose a modified approach to understanding of Chinese strategic thought. Alistair Iain Johnston provides an important addition to the subject, finding the existence of two different strands of Chinese strategic culture: one based on realpolitik, and the other based Confucianism. Johnson’s idea of realpolitik correlates with the concept of zero-sum conflict and the efficacy of force.¹³³ Additionally, Johnson believes the two strands interact in a dialectic fashion to produce a distinctive “Chinese Cult of Defense.”¹³⁴

Johnson contends that China’s behavior after 1949 shows Mao’s variation of a realpolitik strategic culture. He points to four observations to support this claim. First, China is prone to using force in foreign policy crises. Second, these crises were all located along territorial borders, which China sees as high value conflicts due to historical sensitivity to threats to territorial integrity. Third, evidence points to China using violence in 62.5% of crises. Finally, China has shown sensitivity to changing relative capabilities, and shifted to the use of violence when conditions favored it. In contrast Johnson also points out that one cannot rule out traditional Chinese strategy due to a deep-rooted historical precedence, based on historical examples of China dealing with strategic issues using a traditional approach.¹³⁵

This view of two diametrically opposed strategies may seem to be consistent with Mott’s

¹³² Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 236.

¹³³ Alastair Iain Johnston, “Thinking about Strategic Culture”, *International Security* 19 (4). (The MIT Press), accessed April 19, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539119?seq=6#page_scan_tab_contents

¹³⁴ Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 251-255.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 256-257.

description of Chinese strategic culture, but an inconsistency occurs when analyzing the underlining motivation supporting the use of force. This suggests modern Chinese strategic culture is far more complex requiring additional research into China's strategic preferences, beyond a study of traditional Chinese strategic culture. Further research into foundations of Chinese strategic culture may offer insight into how a foreign policy crisis might cause China to change its preferences. Additionally, further research could provide increased understanding of modern China's, seemingly inconsistent, political, economic, and military actions.

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