

## Anarchism and Traditionalism: Liu Shih-p'ei

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Liu Shih-p'ei (1884-1919), the noted classical scholar, embraced anarchism during the decade before the revolution of 1911. Although his constancy in this creed was neither doctrinally thorough, nor prolonged, his case nevertheless tells much about the Chinese man of learning caught up in revolutionary thought and activities. A look at his conceptions of anarchism will help illustrate that always fruitful study of the interaction of modern ideas and traditional beliefs. It may also cast further light on the properties and qualities of anarchist thought itself.

Anarchism, more so than any other modern political doctrine, defies precise definition. It is too much of an historical and cultural phenomenon, appearing and subsiding from time to time, but never completely dead. For a political doctrine its goals and visions are certainly extravagant, its forms and personalities varied, and its premises and claims paradoxical and contradictory. It has been well stated that "anarchists are theorists and terrorists, moralists and deviants, and above all, political and anti-political."<sup>1</sup> To this we may add that anarchism is both individualist and egalitarian, elaborate and simplistic, progressive and primitive, destructive and constructive. It has had eloquent but diverse voices speak in its behalf: the reasoned idealism of Godwin, the extreme individualism of Stirner, the mutualism of Proudhon, the scientific anarcho-syndicalism of Kropotkin, the constructive imagination of Tucker, the feminism of Goldman, the revolutionary zeal of Bakunin, the religious pacifism of Tolstoy and the poetry of Shelley.

Aside from the internal inconsistencies of anarchism, it borrowed features from other isms current with its birth in the nineteenth century. From nihilism it appropriated the "propaganda of action" and early socialism its utopian qualities. Therefore, it is not uncommon that anarchism is often times mistakenly identified with the isms with which it shared a common heritage: the revolutionary outlook of nineteenth-century European society. As a political doctrine, then, anarchism appears an inherent impossibility.

As a social philosophy of protest, however, anarchism is rich in content and imagination. It exists most evocatively as a range of libertarian attitudes. Herein may lie the common essence that unites all anarchist elements: a basic ethical naturalism that views man and society as natural entities in a natural relationship. The history of mankind has distorted this ethical and natural relationship. The social, legal, economic and political rules by which "civilized" men live and regulate their lives have grown elaborate, cynical and thus corruptive of the purer and loftier instincts of natural man. Thus, far from being a philosophy of destruction, feared and often confused with nihilism,

1 Irving L. Horowitz, *The Anarchists* (New York, 1964), p. 15.

anarchism exhorts a regenerative philosophy, reminding man of his simpler and nobler virtues. It harbors a strong faith in the moral powers of natural man to be in free and mutual association with each other. It is a philosophy of the nobility of ethics rather than, as commonly assumed, a democratic system of thought. "Democracy advocates the sovereignty of the people. Anarchism advocates the sovereignty of the person."<sup>1</sup> In the free and natural bonds of the natural man anarchism places its hope for a better society. It is in this sense of ethical naturalism that man could recapture his "garden of nature", and restore simpler and higher morals that all branches of anarchism are intelligible to each other. In this sense, too, the Chinese anarchists spoke and acted against what they considered to be the strictures of their political, social and economic lives. Whether they followed any Western school of anarchist thought consistently or thoroughly is of course important; but it is more significant that they spoke out, sometimes erroneously, at all. One of those who spoke out was Liu Shih-p'ei.

### *The Traditionalist Contemplates Nationalism and Revolution*

Liu Shih-p'ei's period of actively voicing political and social views began in 1903 and ended in 1908, a short five years. In this brief span he moved from a classics-rooted view of anti-Manchu revolutionary thought to an anarchism fed both by tradition and by western socialist views then current in Japan. The narrative of his intellectual transitions and predispositions shall follow a chronological order of the highlights of his life.

Born in 1884 in the I-cheng district of Kiangsu province, Liu was a fourth-generation member of an illustrious family of classical learning in the *ku-wen* tradition.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps because the time was still close to Kang Yu-wei's reform based on the *chin-wen* interpretation of the classics, Liu did not entirely neglect the *kung-yang* tradition of the classic of *Ch'un-ch'iu*.<sup>3</sup> This capacity to entertain and contain contradictions was not alien to Liu's nature and temperament. His biographers all called him precocious, and his uncle later was to recall his unbridled disposition and unstable brilliance, his voluminous writings but an undisciplined calligraphy, a sure sign in the Chinese scheme of things of instability.<sup>4</sup> In 1903, young Liu set out for Shanghai, having succeeded in the first two examinations in 1901 and 1902 but failed the metropolitan in 1903.

Shanghai in 1903 provided not only a haven from the Manchus but also the opportunity to meet a galaxy of notables engaged in early revolutionary thought and publications. Chang Ping-lin, the *ku-wen* master as well as revolutionary, delighted in Liu's scholarship and friendship.<sup>5</sup> Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei, who was to write a brief biography of Liu later, was instrumental in getting young Liu into the activities and thinking of the Ai-kuo hshueh-she (Patriotic Society). Both Ts'ai and Chang were also active in the *Su-pao*, a journal highly critical of the Manchu government. In addition, Liu

- 1 George Woodcock, *Anarchism* (Great Britain, Penguin ed., 1963; New York, 1962), p.30.
- 2 For brief accounts of Liu's life see Howard Boorman, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol.2 (New York, 1968), pp.411-13; and other notices in *Liu Shen-shu hsien-sheng i-shu*, vol.1 (Taipei, 1965), pp.19-40. Hereafter this collection of Liu's writings will be abbreviated as *I-shu*.
- 3 Noted by Ch'ien Hsuan-t'ung, "Preface" in *I-shu*, vol.1, pp.35-36. For a provocative discussion of *ku-wen* and *chin-wen* roles in modern reformist and revolutionary thought, see Joseph R. Levenson, *Modern China and Its Confucian Past* (Anchor Books edition, 1964), pp.106-26.
- 4 Liu Fu-tseng, "Wang-chih Shih-p'ei mu-chih-ming," *I-shu*, vol.1, p.21.
- 5 See Chang Ping-lin's letters to Liu in *I-shu*, vol.1, p.25.

Shih-p'ei met Chang Chi at about this time. In June 1903, Chang Chi along with Chang Shih-chao and Ch'en Tu-hsiu, edited the *Kuo-min jih-jih pao*, a publication that succeeded the *Su-pao* after its tumultuous suspension. Chang Chi had returned from Japan earlier in the year with Tsou Jung, the author of the influential *Ko-ming chün* (The Revolutionary Army). There in Shanghai he swore brotherhood with Chang Ping-lin, Chang Shih-chao and Tsou Jung. It could have been also Chang Chi that Liu got involved in an attempt on the life of Wang Ch'un-chih, a former governor of Kwangsi province noted for his pro-Russian views, by lending Liu a pistol for the deed to be done by Wan Fu-hua.<sup>1</sup> In this environment of active men, patriotic societies and schools and defiant revolutionary publications, then, Liu first seriously entertained ideas and activities other than those of a classical scholar.

In 1903 he also managed to return to I-cheng and married Ho Pan, also a forward looking person who was to be a mainstay in the publication of *T'ien-i* in Tokyo four years later. Liu brought her back to Shanghai, where she enrolled in the Ai-kuo nü-hsiao, founded by Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei on the notion that women made good assassins and thus ought to be taught the lessons of the French Revolution and Russian anarchism.<sup>2</sup> Liu himself changed his name to Kuang-han (meaning to revive the Han people).

Accompanying these acts signifying a revolutionary defiance against the Manchus, Liu's thoughts on such matters were put forth in two major works of the period. Both exemplify the traditionalist derivations of his thought. The first was the *Jang-shu*, a work setting forth the distinction between "hua" (Chinese or China proper) and "i" (barbarians or interlopers in China), and also illustrating the con-mixture of his *ku-wen* and *chin-wen* predilections. The second is *Chung-kuo min-yueh ching-i* (The Essential Meaning of the Social Contract in China). Ch'ien Hsuan-t'ung sees these two works as the successors to Huang Tsung-hsi's *Ming-i tai-fang lu* and Wang Fu-chih's *Huang Shu*, both late-Ming works on the nationalistic theme.<sup>3</sup>

The *Jang-shu* first follows the *ku-wen* style of nationalistic distinction between "hua" and "i", with the intent to reject or throw out the barbarians, hence the term *jang*.<sup>4</sup> The work proceeds with the *chin-wen* explanation of the difference between the terms "barbarian" and "Chung-kuo" as being one of the degree of civilization.<sup>5</sup> The orderliness of the harmony will come only when the civilized holds sway over the uncivilized. It cannot be the other way around. Thus Liu argues for the retrieval of land that had belonged to the civilized (the Han) from the barbarians, who were the Manchus. The "anti-barbarianism" then of Liu Shih-p'ei is derived from the classical position of both the *ku-wen* and *chin-wen* tradition of the classic, *Ch'un-ch'iu*.

The *Chung-kuo min-yueh ching-i* was Liu's political treatise of this period of 1903-04. Rousseau had become popular through the teachings and writings of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao around the

1 Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei noted this episode in "Liu chün Shen-shu shih-lueh," *I-shu*, vol.1, p.23.

2 Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei, "Wo tsai chiao-yü-chia ti ching-yen," *Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei hsien-sheng i-wen lei-ch'ao*, ed. Sun Te-chung (Taipei, 1961), pp.153-54.

3 Ch'ien Hsuan-t'ung, "Preface", *cited*, p.34.

4 "Preface to *Jang-shu*" in *I-shu*, vol.2, p.751.

5 *Jang-shu*, "I-i" chapter, in *I-shu*, vol.2, pp.753-54.

turn of the century. Liang had taught the theories of Montesquieu, Rousseau, Darwin and Spencer at the Kao-teng ta-t'ung hsueh-hsiao, a school established in 1899 in Tokyo for Chinese students. His *Ch'ing-i pao* and *Hsin-min ts'ung-pao* had also flooded the consciousness of the reform-minded Chinese with the new social theories. Moreover, the first progressive journals such as the *K'ai-chih lu* (1900) and *I-shu hui-pien* (1900), publications of Chinese students in Japan, serially carried translations of the *Social Contract* of Rousseau. While acknowledging the fact that the idea of social contract was of recent import into China and that stubborn scholars attacked it as being "heretical" because the ancient sages did not mention it, Liu Shih-p'ei professes in this work "to seek the idea of social contract in the Chinese classics, and to weigh its significance against the theories of Rousseau."<sup>1</sup> Liu (Lin Hsieh was his co-author) starts with the *I-ching* and other classics and philosophies, works through the Han and T'ang-Sung scholars, and includes the Ming-Ch'ing thinkers to establish the existence in the Chinese past of a theory of popular rights. While the argumentation for the existence of people's rights based on contract was at best tenuous, Liu's labor did produce a descriptive accounting of the variations of the Mencian theme of *min-pen*, the idea that people were the root of the country and that their wishes would hold the ambitions of indiscrete rulers in check. In any event, Liu intended by this work to refute monarchical rights. Again, then, we witness this traditionalist approach to the question of political roles and rights in modern philosophies.

At this time Liu's intellectual exercises with questions of nationalism and political rights coincided with the introduction of the ideas of socialism and anarchism to the Chinese, whether in the treaty ports or overseas. Japan provided the first source of such ideas. The first translation from the Japanese was done by Chao Pi-chen and was entitled *Chin-shih she-hui chu-i* (Modern Socialism), appearing in 1903.<sup>2</sup> Chang Chi evidently had translated (from what we do not yet know) a work entitled *Wu-cheng-fu chu-i* (Anarchism).<sup>3</sup> At about the same time activities of the Russian Anarchist Party were made known in China through such monthlies as the *Kiang-su* and *Che-chiang ch'ao*, publications of Chinese students in Japan. In China proper, the *Su-pao* had also run several articles on the subject of anarchism. It might be pointed out here that the Chinese writers of the period had made no successful distinction between anarchism and nihilism.<sup>4</sup>

Liu Shih-p'ei in 1903-04 had not quite fully been won over to anarchism as thought. He was, however, much attracted to the propagandistic value of terroristic action common to both anarchism and nihilism. As editor of the *Tocsin Daily*, with Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei and Wang Yun-chung, Liu published an editorial saying that China would be destroyed if socialism were adopted.<sup>5</sup> The doing away with the state and government was still beyond the grasp of this generation of revolutionaries. As far as generally socialistic ideas were concerned, Liu saw its merits only in the

1 "Preface to *Chung-kuo min-yueh ching-i*," *I-shu*, vol.1, p.675.

2 See entries of translated titles by Chang Ching-lu, *Chung-kuo chin-tai ch'u-pan shih-liao*, vol.1 (Peking, 1957), p.174.

3 *Ibid.* Also mentioned by Feng Tzu-yu, *Ko-ming i-shih*, vol.3 (Taipei, 1965), p.153.

4 See mention of translations from works on nihilism by Onogawa Hidemi, "Liu Shih-p'ei and Anarchism," *Acta Asiatica*, XII (1967), p.79.

5 Noted by Feng Tzu-yu, "Min-sheng chu-i yü *Chung-kuo cheng-chih ko-ming chih ch'ien-t'u*," *Ko-ming i-shih*, vol.4, pp.115-16.

context of "social contract", an idea which he held in this period and for which he sought traditional sanction. Speaking on the "p'ing-chün" (egalitarianism or equilibrium) theory of Kung Tzu-chen (1792-1841), Liu praised Kung's intention of equalizing the state of the rich and the poor as being in accord with the idea of "contract."<sup>1</sup> He also made prominent mention of Hsü Hsing's theory of "p'ing-keng" (Cooperative farming), but only to say that it was subversive of the contract theory of state. Far more concerned with the government as the axis around which the state turned, Liu complained that Hsü Hsing's argument for cooperative farming and the abolition of the state treasury was too much akin to anarchism of the West.<sup>2</sup>

While Liu and others eschewed anarcho-socialism as denying the state and government and favored a general notion of socialism as nurturing egalitarian impulses, they seemed to have appreciated substantially anarchist methods. Even the reformers subscribed to this view. Liang Ch'i-ch'ao stated, "I have a high regard for the methods of the anarchists, but I do not approve of their ideas."<sup>3</sup> The act of assassination appealed to many, including the great reformer K'ang Yu-wei himself. Liu Shih-p'ei credited the Han historian Su-ma Ch'ien's chapters on the lives of knights-errant and assassins with having upheld the rights of such social personages along side monarchical rights. He even drew the parallel that "the deeds of the assassins resembled those of western anarchists."<sup>4</sup> Obviously, then, Liu saw in such acts the personal and direct rendition of justice in face of tyranny. In 1904 he even wrote an essay in praise of extremist action entitled "On the merits of Extremism" and signed it "Chi-lieh-p'ai ti-i jen" (First among the Extremists). The virtues of the radical extremists, according to Liu, were that they did not hesitate, were resolute in destruction, and were always eager to help the populace.<sup>5</sup> Eventually this attraction to the personal notion of direct justice was to be enjoined with an enlarged notion of humanity to form anarchism for Liu Shih-p'ei.

#### *The Traditionalist Entertains Anarchism*

In early 1907 Liu arrived in Tokyo with his wife Ho Chen (she had changed her given name) and a relative, Wang Kung-ch'uan.<sup>6</sup> He immediately got involved with the *Min-pao* circle around Chang Ping-lin, writing in the *T'ien-t'ao* (Heaven's Punishment) edition of April 1907 that was designed as a revolutionary indictment of the Manchus as the enemies of the Han people. Liu's contribution, "P'u-kao Han-jen" (A Call to the Han People), argued that the Manchus were ethnically distinct from the Han race and hence their political domination of the Chinese could be

1 *Chung-kuo min-yueh ching-i*, "Kung Tzu-chen" chapter, in *I-shu*, vol.1, p.712.

2 *Chung-kuo min-yueh ching-i*, "Hsü Hsing" chapter, *Ibid.*, pp.688-89.

3 Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, "Lun E-lo-ssu hsiu-wu tang," *Hsin-min ts'ung-pao*, nos.40-41 combined (November 2, 1903).

4 *Chung-kuo min-yueh ching-i*, "Su-ma Ch'ien" chapter, in *I-shu*, vol.1, p.692.

5 Originally written for the *Pai-hua pao*, no.6 (March 1, 1904), this article is available in *Hsin-hai ko-ming ch'ien-shih-nien chien shih-lun hsüan-chi* (Hereafter cited as *HKSLHC*), vol.1, book 2 (Hongkong, 1962), pp.887-90.

6. Accounts vary as to whether Wang was a brother-in-law through marriage or just a relative. Feng Tzu-yu, in two accounts on Liu, once called him a brother-in-law, then named him as a close friend. See Feng, "Chi Liu Kuang-han pien-chieh shih-mo," and "Liu Kuang-han shih-lueh pu-shu," *Ko-ming i-shih*, vol.2 and 3, pp.231-33 and 190-92 respectively. According to Feng, Wang and Ho Chen lived together in Tokyo, openly exhibiting anarchist virtues of free love and equality of the sexes.

considered tyranny. He was to couple this racial revolution with anarchist justification later. But first a few events marked his passage to anarchism.

The Lius had been friends with Chang Ping-lin, who now had escaped to Tokyo for political haven from the Manchus and who was one of the stalwarts of the Tung-meng hui. At first the Lius stayed with him at the *Min-pao* headquarters, but then friction developed between Liu and Chang more likely from personal reasons than from political beliefs.<sup>1</sup> At about the same time, Liu husband and wife seemed to have developed ill feelings toward the Tung-meng hui, which was then undergoing a split during which Sun Yat-sen had to leave Japan. First Liu tried to introduce two Japanese friends, Kita Ikki and Wada Saburō, into the membership of the Tung-meng hui. His efforts were foiled by the executive secretary Liu K'uei-i, who had earlier resisted efforts by Chang Ping-lin to unseat Sun Yat-sen as chairman of the party in favor of Huang Hsing. Ho Chen, Liu's attractive and capable wife, also showed disfavor toward Sun's cause. When the *Osaka Heimin Shimbun* of August 1, 1907 carried the famous assassination by Hsü Hsi-lin of the Manchu official En-ming and explained Hsü's act as a revenge on Sun Yat-sen's behalf, Ho Chen answered in the September 5 issue of this publication. Indignantly she corrected the paper by saying, "In our country there are many revolutionary parties. Those who practice racial revolution are also not one but many. Those who practice assassination and those who are truly imbued with the revolutionary ambition all did not join Sun's party. Thus Hsü Hsi-lin actually looked down upon Sun Wen; how then could he act in Sun Wen's interest?"<sup>2</sup>

By the time Ho Chen was voicing this sort of attack on Sun and the nationalist revolutionaries, Liu had already taken up anarchism. It was Chang Chi, also a friend from Shanghai days, who introduced Liu to the Japanese socialist and anarchist circles, among whom were notably Kita Ikki, Kōtoku Shūsui and Wada Saburō. Moreover, in early June, Liu and wife commenced the anarchist publication *T'ien-i*, a bi-weekly that carried a definite spirit and dash of Ho Chen, and almost every issue dealt somehow with the question of feminine rights and roles in revolutions. Liu Shih-p'ei was to add to his anarchist activities with the publication of *Heng-pao* (English title was *Equity, The Chinese Anarchist News*), with its editorial and publication offices in Macao and its distribution agency in Tokyo.

In addition to the activities above, in June, 1907, Liu along with the help of Chang Chi founded the She-hui chu-i chiang-hsi-hui (Society for the Discussion of Socialism). This body held its first meeting on August 31 and maintained personal and philosophical contact with the Kinyō-kai of Kōtoku Shūsui. Japanese anarchists often made speeches here which were faithfully reported by the *T'ien-i*.

These activities and associations forged in Liu an appreciation of anarchism. Ho Chen's sudden crusading regard for feminine rights and equality with men certainly had an impact on Liu that only a bright and forceful wife could accomplish. Thus we find that Liu's conception of anarchism followed the egalitarian strain of anarchism much more than the individualist theme. Concern with egalitarian rights and mutuality of association helped Liu veer away from the

1 Feng Tzu-yu seems to blame the affair on Ho Chen's unrestrained ways. See articles mentioned in note 22.

2 *Osaka Heimin Shimbun*, no.5 (Aug. 1, 1907) and no.7 (Sept. 5, 1907), p.14 and p.15 respectively. This publication is no.5 of the Collected Materials of Meiji Socialist History (Tokyo, 1962).

hitherto narrow racial revolutionary outlook common among the Tung-meng hui figures. It also led him to question not just tyranny but power and authority themselves.

In the early issues we encounter Liu's concern with and transformation to egalitarian anarchism. In "Jen-lei chün-li shuo" (On the equality of human rights),<sup>1</sup> he pointed out that the most dangerous human beings were those who could not be independent, thus further losing the rights of equality. Such equality, according to Liu, must not be of the Communist variety whereby all have to work, even though the work itself might be full of inequalities that would tax the abilities of man. His anarchist vision, then, sees first the destruction of conventional society and national boundaries. Then it envisages a grouping of human beings by villages of one thousand population. Each village will provide homes for the aged over fifty and the young under five. The young from six to ten will be tutored by the old in letters common to all mankind. From the age of eleven to twenty, youths will learn from the elders practical affairs, spending half a day in general science (intellectual knowledge) and half a day in mechanical learning (knowledge for practical use). Those over twenty can go out to work, with work now differentiated according to age. When such persons reach fifty, they shall go into rest institutions. This way, Liu thought, a balance could be achieved between rights and duties, privilege and service. Everyone would have experienced learning, manufacture, agriculture, civil service, teaching and other occupational demands and needs. He further argued in this article that such a solution for social order would be according to human rights and abilities, close to human nature, reasonably humanitarian, and curative of the strifes and vyings of the world.

This theory of the equality of human rights and abilities seems to have partially been benefited by Hsü Hsing's theory of "p'ing-ken" mentioned earlier. Liu now agreed with Hsü on cooperative farming and the doing away with the state. But he still pointed out that Hsü tended to favor an occupational delineation of social groupings (farmers trading millet for manufactured goods). His own contribution was to have provided for a sharing of rights and abilities according to age. Ho Chen, in a note to this article, said that this theory of equality of rights and abilities would agree entirely with the equality of man and woman.<sup>2</sup>

Liu's views on equality were to be further expounded in "The Egalitarianism of Anarchism."<sup>3</sup> Of the rights of equality, freedom, and independence, Liu by far favored the right of equality, as it is inclusive of the happiness of all mankind. Rights of independence and freedom, if pushed to logical limits, favored the individual and not the whole of humanity. In this lengthy essay, Liu made use of numerous historical precedents from both China and the West. He also contrasted the merits of socialism and anarchism. Socialism was found to be less desirable, for it still condoned the state, and furthermore, in eliminating private exploitation and slavery, it merely turned the multitude into slaves of the state. Also citing Confucius, Kant and Kropotkin, Liu defended egalitarian mutualism against the individual interpretation of anarchism. Thus he said, "What we believe in is to restore to man his natural right of equality, annihilate man-made

1 "li" is here translated as the suffix to both *ch'uan-li* and *neng-li*.

2 The article appears in *T'ien-i*, no.3 (July 10, 1907), Documentary Collection on Early Chinese Socialism, no.2 (Tokyo, 1966), pp.24-36.

3 "Wu-cheng-fu-chu-i chih p'ing-teng kuan" was originally published in nos.4, 5, and 7 of *T'ien-i*, but is available in whole in *HKSLHC*, vol.2, book 2, pp.918-32.

inequality, overthrow all agencies of control, destroy all class and specialized societies, in order to unite all peoples of the world into a whole, and to seek full happiness for mankind."<sup>1</sup> In order that the above may come true, Liu advocated four approaches: Abolish nation-states and government, eliminate national and racial boundaries, practice the theory of equal human rights and abilities by allowing people of whatever sex and age engage in work that is regularly alternated; and to practice the absolute equality of the sexes.<sup>2</sup>

At the writing of these articles, Liu also linked the attack on the Manchus with the attack on power and authority. He had gone beyond the narrow chauvinistic revolutionary outlook. "On the Pros and Cons of the Racial Revolutions and the Anarchist Revolution", written in September, 1907,<sup>3</sup> is a more sophisticated explanation of the antagonism between the Manchus and the Chinese. Liu did not discount racial revolution, which he now considered to be only part of the larger revolution against authority. To him the alien conqueror introduced the element of authoritarian control to a China long accustomed to the spirit of laissez-faire in government.<sup>4</sup> Thus to get rid of the Manchus was necessary, but the desire must not be rooted in racial antagonism. Moreover the larger vision of revolution encompassed a harmony of the races. It should not contemplate the establishment of another government after the Manchus were overthrown.

Indeed this question of the national (interpreted by most revolutionaries as one of getting rid of the Manchus because they were foreign) revolution or a larger revolution was a topic of heated debate. The narrow nationalists often wanted to embarrass the anarchist revolutionaries. Liu Shih-p'ei and his *T'ien-i* faced the question and answered it. So did the *New Century* group in Paris under Li Shih-tseng and Wu Chih-hui. Their answers to all the nationalistic charges followed the rationale of the anarchist creed: a bursting forth of the power of the masses, breaking the bondages imposed by political authority, alien or native.<sup>5</sup> Anti-imperialism also figured in the argument. Chang Chi, at the fourth meeting of the Society for the Discussion of Socialism, insisted on the difference between rejection of imperialist powers and narrow chauvinism. In the end, the anarchists had to reject all authority. The nationalists would have been satisfied at driving out the devils. Throughout the arguments, Liu Shih-p'ei made it clear that he did not trust the results of revolutions handled only by two elements of society, the students and the secret societies. He seemed to have feared that their narrow chauvinistic outlook would lead to a concentration of power in the hands of a few after the revolution. He then pressed for the spreading of revolutionary anarchism to the farmers and laborers as well.<sup>6</sup> While the essentially agrarian population of

1 *Ibid.*, p.931.

2 *Ibid.*

3 "Lun tsung-tsu ko-ming yü wu-cheng-fu ko-ming chih te-shih," originally in *T'ien-i*, nos.6 and 7, but carried in full in *HKSLHC*, vol.2, book 2, pp.947-59.

4 *Ibid.*, p.947.

5 See interesting answers by the *New Century* group of anarchists in Paris, in *Hsin shih-chi*, no.3 (July 6, 1907) and no.8 (Aug. 10, 1907), pp.1-2 and 2-3 respectively. Liu Shih-p'ei himself had participated in this argument on race, nationalities and revolution earlier in "Pien Man-jen fei Chung-kuo chih ch'en-min," *Min-pao*, nos.14, 15, 18 (June 8, July 5, Dec. 25, 1907), v.p.

6 *HKSLHC*, vol.2, book 2, p.952.



China gave him cause for including the farmers, the example of Western socialism through workers' unions also aided him in this call.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that Liu Shih-p'ei's socialist ideas and the idea of anarchism were inspired by examples from the West. He believed in Esperanto as a unifying force of the dissident voices and thoughts of the world, comparable with anarcho-socialism in solving the inequities of property in the world.<sup>2</sup> Liu occasionally translated excerpts from the works of Kropotkin,<sup>3</sup> and enthusiastically introduced the works and spirit of Tolstoy.<sup>4</sup> He also wrote the preface to the Chinese translation of the *Communist Manifesto*.<sup>5</sup> Reading through these efforts makes one quickly aware that Liu had at hand only scattered materials from the West (perhaps because of the state of available translations into Japanese at the time). But, perhaps more seriously, Liu seemed to have had only a slight understanding of these works and their implications. The most western of the *T'ien-i* essays were reprinted from the *New Century* of Paris. Thus, while the inspiration came from the West via Japan, Liu chose to understand the phenomena of anarchism and socialism in the Chinese tradition. In this sense Liu still belonged to the late-Ch'ing propensity to seek past sanctions for modern beliefs.<sup>6</sup>

It is not without significance that most of Liu Shih-p'ei's serious writings on the subject dealt with the traditional Chinese roots of anarchism and socialism. Starting from a historical understanding of the China after the ages of the sage kings, Liu maintained that Chinese political society, though called a despotism, was actually not too different from anarchism. For this view he gave the reason that Chinese politics was rooted in scholarship and that such scholarship originated from Confucianism and Taoism, both of which taught a philosophy of letting alone. Confucianism, to him, relied not on law but on persuasion of virtue, while Taoism had always provided natural freedom. Thus, he contended, Chinese society for several thousand years had actually leaned toward the permissive rather than the coercive, often taking lightly the trappings of man-made rule (*jen-chih*). For support of this view, he cited Tolstoy as saying, "The Chinese are a people who can escape man-made authority. No other country or people can compare with the Chinese in their road to freedom." Then, Liu himself stated, "Thus it is the easiest to practice anarchism in China, and of all the countries China would be the first to have anarchism. The reason is that the Chinese people have all along entertained the thought of doing away with man-made rule. Thus we find among historical records frequent mention of notions of doing away with armies, laws and propertied wealth."<sup>7</sup>

Liu Shih-p'ei, in discussing the socialism of the Western Han,<sup>8</sup> praised the role of the newly ascendant Confucian literati in their efforts against wealth, and their encouragement of agriculture

1 "Ou-chou she-hui chu-i yü wu-cheng-fu chu-i i-t'ung k'ao," *T'ien-i*, no.6 (Sept. 1, 1907), p.24.

2 "Preface to Translation of Esperanto Grammar," *T'ien-i*, nos.16-19 combined (Spring, 1908), p.655.

3 *T'ien-i*, nos.11-12 combined (Nov. 30, 1907), pp.383-84.

4 *Ibid.*, pp.416-17.

5 "Kung-ch'an tang hsüan-yen hsü," *T'ien-i*, nos.16-19 combined (Spring, 1908), pp.509-29.

6 See article by Wang Erh-min, "Ch'ing-chi wei-hsin jen-wu ti t'o-ku kai-chih lun," *Ta-lu tsa-chih*, vol.21, no.6 (Sept., 1960), pp.14-19.

7 Both quotations are from "Lun tsung-tsu ko-ming yü wu-cheng-fu ko-ming chih te-shih," cited, p.949.

8 "Hsi-Han she-hui chu-i hshueh fa-ta k'ao," *T'ien-i*, no.5 (Aug. 10, 1907), pp.91-94.

and not of commerce. Even though this policy would not have been enough to equalize wealth, at least, Liu thought, it was salutary in reducing the profit motive. He then blamed the policies of Han Wu-ti and Wang Mang for hiding their own despotic motives in their programs of land equalization and nationalization. With an eye to the present, and obviously meaning to criticize Sun Yat-sen's T'ung-men Hui platform of land reform, Liu said, "Judging from the deeds of Han Wu and Wang Mang, those who nowadays want to set up government and yet use equalization of land rights to fool the people, are no more than the likes of Han Wu and Wang Mang."<sup>1</sup>

Of all the personages of the Chinese past, Liu especially saluted Pao Ching-yen of the Western Tsin for having been an anarchist thinker and philosopher. Pao's "wu-chün lun" (Theory of Non-monarch) Liu took to be central in overturning what he called *jen-chih*, rule by man or man-made rule. Liu commented, "Chinese politics had flowed from the monarch. Eliminating the monarch, then, is actually the same as saying we should abolish man-made rule, quite similar to the anarchist stand. As for his [Pao's] suggestions for replacing statutes with morality, disarmament and the reduction of propertied wealth, they are pure and lofty thoughts... Thus his position is for the equality and full freedom of the people, and is far more explicit than Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu."<sup>2</sup>

One further turnabout in Liu's assessment of the past indicates his attempt to argue in favor of anarchism while using his knowledge of the past. In an article of June, 1907 entitled, "Ch'ing-ju te-shih lun" (On the Merits and Demerits of the Ch'ing Scholars), Liu said, "Between the Ming and the Ch'ing, such scholars as Ku [Yen-wu], Huang [Tsong-shi], Wang [Fu-chih] and Yen [Yuan] all held plans for securing peace. They were self-cultivated, practical and pragmatic in deed and word, and they knew the ills and cures of the people's livelihood like they knew the palms of their hands."<sup>3</sup> Four months later, writing the "Fei liu-tzu lun" (A Refutation of the Six Scholars),<sup>4</sup> Liu said of the same men that they were guilty of the *ching-shih chih-yung* tendency in Chinese life, namely the tendency to put knowledgeable men in running practical life. To Liu, they all the more confused alternatives and stultified customs. The point of this article was that without fundamentally different solutions to social plight, such as rooting out man-made rule, people would not achieve total happiness. Thus such scholars and their schools should be "weighed as to whether they are concerned with man-made rule or not. If their teachings support man-made rule, they cannot benefit the majority of people even if their plans and intentions were good. Their harm, on the other hand, is actually worse than religion."<sup>5</sup>

Liu's concern for people's livelihood and happiness, as it was nurtured by experiences from the past, took on a noticeable agrarianism. He still possessed the physiocratic impulse in seeking the greatest happiness for the largest humanity from land and its resources. In early 1908 he wrote an introduction to the "Ch'ü-t'ien k'ao" (Planned Fields) of Mei Yü, a scholar of the T'ung-chih period. This theory argued for the apportioning of fields according to the fertility of land and the

1 *Ibid.*, p.94.

2 "Pao-sheng hsueh-shu fa-wei," *T'ien-i*, nos.8-10 combined (Oct. 30, 1907), p.50.

3 "Ch'ing-ju te-shih lun," *Min-pao*, no.14 (June 8, 1907), p.24.

4 "Fei liu-tzu lun," *T'ien-i*, nos.8-10 combined (Oct. 30, 1907), pp.219-228. Two more scholars were added for scornful treatment: Chiang Yung and Tai Chen.

5 *Ibid.*, p.228.

regional sizes of population. It even suggested land reclamation, of areas hitherto inhospitable to farming, as well as filling oceans and lakes. Liu believed that this program must be introduced in China immediately, and will eventually serve as the model for the world.<sup>1</sup> He saw in agricultural activities a simple honesty as versus the intricate scheming of commerce. In this agrarianism lies then the difference between Liu's anarchism and the anarchism articulated in the industrial age of the modern West. The unity of the two, however, lies in the notion of ethical naturalism that finds worth in a simplification of the encrusted lives of mankind.

Liu was to engage in one further anarchist venture before he went back to China with his wife and relative, Wang Kung-ch'uan in late 1908. He published the *Heng-pao*, a news sheet appearing thrice monthly and carrying the English title of *Equity, The Chinese Anarchist News*. The *Heng-pao* was still a full-blown expression of Liu's conception of egalitarian and agrarian anarchism. The most noticeable theoretic work in it was Liu's "Heng-shu" (Essay on Equity), in which he argued for a national scholarship that would be responsive to anarchist visions of a changing society, and a Chinese language that could serve mankind by being rendered into Esperanto phonetics. The reason was that Chinese was ideographic and particularly descriptive of ancient communal societies for all to learn the origins of anarchist egalitarianism. In this long article, Liu also persisted with his conception of planned farming to bring about equitable livelihood by a division of labor according to age.<sup>2</sup> The *Heng-pao* carried a motto of four parts: Overthrow man-made rule and establish anarcho-communism, advocate anti-militarism and the general strike, record the sufferings of the people, and to maintain communication with and between world labor organizations and democratic parties engaged in direct action.<sup>3</sup>

In the winter of 1908, Liu turned to the Manchu government and along with his wife served the reformist Manchu official Tuan-fang. This about-face remains a puzzle. The only reason still current is that the Manchu government through such reforming officials as Tuan-fang was trying to bribe the revolutionary lights into service, and that the relative Wang Kung-ch'uan succumbed, worked on Liu's wife's cupidity and influenced Liu's decision.<sup>4</sup> Liu's life after this turn-about is a sad tale of escaping notice; numerous inconsequential jobs; continuation of his research into the classics but the writings were neither political nor profound, though still carrying flashes of brilliance; getting involved as one of the main figures in Yuan Shih-k'ai's attempt at monarchy; pathetically being forgiven by Chang Ping-lin and Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei with the latter succeeding in getting Liu onto the faculty at the Peking University. But then Liu died shortly after that, in his thirty-sixth year.

#### *Conclusion: The Anarchism and Traditionalism of Liu Shih-p'ei*

It has been suggested that, when Liu turned back upon his anarchist beliefs in late 1908, he did so because of his traditional scholarship and orthodox beliefs which in the end could not

- 1 "Ch'ü-t'ien k'ao hsü," *T'ien-i*, nos.16-19 combined (Spring, 1908), pp.627-36. See also Liu's "Heng-shu" in *Heng-pao*, no.10 (August 8, 1908).
- 2 A further installment to the "Heng-shu" was to appear later on the subject of an improved eugenics. No issue further than no.10 of the *Heng-pao*, however, has been found or noted. There is now no evidence of whether "Heng-shu" had ever been completed.
- 3 See fly-leaf of *Heng-pao*, no.6 (June 18, 1908).
- 4 See Feng's articles mentioned in note 22 for a narration of Liu's transformation to the Manchu fold.

stand up with modern radical beliefs.<sup>1</sup> This is far too simple a view of not just Liu, but of anarchism and traditionalism as well. It is simple because of the easy dialectic of seeing traditionalism and modern radical philosophies as mutually exclusive theses, and viewing a man's action as a vacillation between the two.

Anarchism, of all modern social and political doctrines, is hospitable to tradition. In fact, anarchists are known for their concern with the genealogy of their beliefs, even though theoretically they might reject tradition.<sup>2</sup> The paradox arises from the cherished belief that anarchism's roots lie deep in the natural human condition, and the thought that accumulative authoritarian institutions have led man astray. In this sense anarchism is not entirely of the present. It has *always* existed, so anarchists themselves claim. Here one is particularly reminded of Peter Kropotkin's "ancestral" concern for the origin of his beliefs. Instead of individual thinkers of the past, the real progenitor of the anarchist creed Kropotkin found in the "people", in whom were to be found the vitality and creative force of the anarchism. History to him had always witnessed two currents of thought and action. One, the "mutual aid" strain, was a product of the creative genius of the folk and could be seen in tribal ways, village communities, medieval guilds, and in numerous other non-legislated institutions. The other, the authoritarian current, could be seen in the works of the priests, legislators, and codifiers of social behavior. Kropotkin saw anarchism in the creative potential of the nameless masses. Among other anarchist writings however, famous names from the past had been enlisted to people the family tree: Zeno, Lao-tzu, Fenelon, Diderot and others.

Liu Shih-p'ei's anarchism, too, shows a deep concern with the people, *min*. They provided him with an historical argument from tradition that criticized authoritarian structures throughout the ages. His was an ethical naturalism rooted in the belief that in the timeless and nameless people there was honest, simple and fair mutual dealings. *T'ien-i* carried in its issues a miscellaneous section devoted to Liu's collection of idiomatic sayings of plain people. He noted their geographic origins, obviously to give readers a sense of the spread of such sayings in China that dealt with the tensions between the folk and the unpopular. These sayings were offered to illustrate anarchist wisdom, uttered by numerous nameless authors over the ages. Sayings such as "When the functionary comes to the village, the villagers encounter a king", or "We are not afraid of officials, only of officiating", and "One starves to death following Buddhist laws, and one is beaten to death when following the laws of kings"<sup>3</sup> do indeed speak evocatively of the human and social conditions.

It may have been this concern with the mutualism of the people that enticed Liu into favoring equality over the other favorite anarchist virtues of freedom and individualism. He is perhaps the essential weakness of Liu's anarchism. He was far too attracted to the roots of the phenomenon and not the full flowering and foliage of the doctrine in its modern climate. As for Liu's own present and its unwelcome posture, he held no convinced views of liberty or independence, other than paying lip service to them. Both independence and liberty appeared to be only acts to him, won easily by the anarchist method of assassination.

1 Robert A. Scalapino and George T. Yu, *The Chinese Anarchist Movement* (Berkeley, 1961), p.33.

2 George Woodcock, *cited*, pp.35-55.

3 See for example *T'ien-i*, nos.11-12 combined (Nov. 30, 1907), pp.413-16.

Liu Shih-p'ei, therefore, exhibited love for the people and the equilibrium among them, but he showed no burning conviction exemplary of the modern anarchists. He bordered on the academic and scholarly in his brief encounter with anarchism. The important matter for the present is that Liu, a classical scholar, was stirred by his times, and in response embraced the most extreme form of modern social and political philosophy. In doing so, Liu proved (along with others) that there was an hitherto not fully appreciated intellectual and philosophical dimension to the revolutionary activities of China during the first decade of this century. His "betrayal"<sup>1</sup> of the anarchist stance in life could also well illustrate the bewildering alternatives and pressures abounding in a civilization caught up in the throes of revolutionary change. Between moral vision and social solution, between revolutionary ideal and revolutionary deed, and between critical destruction and fruitful construction, the individual anarchist man must sometime become aware of the ultimate impossibility of his doctrine. There were no better social dreamers and critics than the anarchists, but there were hardier builders of other schools. Perhaps it was because of these tensions that Liu Shih-p'ei turned to lesser goals.

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1 Liu's former anarchist friend in Tokyo, Kita Ikki, for example, turned into a celebrated reactionary in modern Japan.

## 無治主義與傳統思想—劉師培

(摘要)

以經學立名之劉師培（1884—1919），曾於民國成立前鼓吹無治主義，其思想歷程雖短暫，但亦可表示「經世致用」之思想在近代革命潮流中所起之作用與感觸。故劉氏與無治主義之一段思想因緣，除現示近代中國新舊思想交接之方面外，亦有使吾等對於無治主義之本質作更深探討之需要。

劉氏闡揚其政治社會觀之時期甚短暫，由1903至1908年。其間又可分為兩期：前期由1903至1906年末，乃劉氏熱心於民族主義與反滿行動之時期，其代表作為攘書及中國民約精義，兩書均追溯傳統思想中之「華」、「夷」、「平均」、「民本」等觀念，目的無非求證今於古，故亦頗見託古之姿態。劉氏第二期之思想始於1907年，是年劉氏夫婦抵日本東京，結交同盟會人士與日本社會主義者。其後因人事波動與新思想之刺激，劉氏與其妻何震脫離民報範圍，自樹無治主義為標榜，並創刊天義報與衡報。天義時轉載巴黎新世紀之言論，但亦有其獨立之意見；該報之主動力似為何震，故婦權極受重視。劉氏則盡力推崇無治主義之平等、平均觀，而對於個人與自由主義未多措意。1908年底劉氏忽投靠於端方幕下，以東京為基地之中國無政府主義運動亦從而結束。

劉師培之背離無治主義，其「罪」似不應加於其原有之傳統思想。過去作如是解釋者雖不一其人，惟不够深切得當。新舊思想並非絕對不能調和。無治主義於繁殊之近代政治學說中乃最富有「傳統」傾向之思想。在理論上，無治主義雖極度褒貶傳統之政治、經濟、社會與風俗，但同時亦讚美「民」之傳統性及其於人類自然史中之地位。無治主義所批評者為矯飾之社會，而非民間素有之互助良習；無治主義者祈望民間互助之傳統充分實現，亦即目前之政體與社規完全崩潰。

無治主義之思想時出時沒，亦即人類理想之時出時沒，劉氏之鼓吹與背離無治思想殆亦循此律。無治主義理想之推動力往往屬望於舊強權之破壞，而其理想則常消失於新權力之形成。蓋無治主義因其非有治主義，故建立新政權之工作須付之他人，另求他說。至善之理想亦因此而有其反面——失望。劉師培個人思想之變化又豈可逃出此無治主義本身之歷程！

