Comments from Authors Reviewed

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I am very glad to have the chance to read Joe Esherick's "1911: A Review." This wide-ranging article has done a summary tallying of English language contributions of the last fifteen years; whatever the personal prejudices of the reviewer, the article is a most welcome effort. I believe that all scholars interested in the 1911 Revolution should read this review article, as should beginning students in modern Chinese history.

I myself am most interested in the question of the role of the gentry class in the Revolution. Philip Kuhn has distinguished three levels of gentry: "national, provincial, and local." As a matter of fact, the motto of the gentry was precisely "official when advancing; gentry when retiring." Once an official, one could become nationally known, and exert great influence. Once renowned, one could retire from active service and yet still retain influential power. Zhang Jian is a good example. Kuhn's view is a correct one.

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Here I would like to take a different approach and look at the gentry class from the point of view of their transformation. The gentry played a pivotal role in the 1911 Revolution. Analyzed more closely, their attitudes show several different patterns: some were opposed to revolution, some for, and some half-for and half-against. Why were there three different types? Because they each reacted differently to China's situation in 1911. Alex Inkeles says that the social environment determines the personality, and the personality determines action (1968: 17). This was the case with the gentry of China at that time. The personality of each one differed according to his knowledge, and the degree of knowledge of each one differed.

The last ten years of the Qing was a time of rapid change for China. After the defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, the gentry class felt that the nation was in danger, and began to seek change. Change began on the personal level. Some degree-holders went beyond the realm of traditional learning and sought Western learning: some went to study abroad; others entered domestic new-style schools. This trend became even more conspicuous after the abolition of the examination system in 1905. In studying the elite of the early Republican national assembly, I discovered that assemblypersons who held only traditional degrees totalled only 20%, while those who combined a traditional degree with a new-style education totalled 80% (51.5% studied abroad; 28.5% in domestic new-style schools; Chang, 1975). Most of these people were involved in and directed the course of the 1911 Revolution. They can also be divided into three categories: traditional, new, half-new and half-old. After the Wuchang uprising, the provinces reacted differently: where the traditional forces were strong, the Revolution was suppressed; where the new forces were strong, the Revolution was propelled forward; those provinces with a mixture of the old and the new changed in some respects and not in others. This is why different provinces reacted differently to the Revolution.

Why have I stressed the personality factor? The gentry "made the world their own responsibility"—that was the traditional

Confucian motto. They rose to seek change, in response to a time of crisis. Once the Revolution occurred, how could they just sit and watch?

Some scholars tend to place economics above all else in discussing personalities. In actuality, the reformist and revolutionary changes in late Qing were by and large limited to political aspects; social and economic problems were not yet emphasized. The gentry thought of political reform as their ordained task. Their willing participation of course rendered them pivotal in the 1911 Revolution.

At this point I would like to take up the question of how much change was brought by the 1911 Revolution. Ichiko calls it a "dynastic revolution." Mary Wright, on the other hand, pointed to many changes in the decade after 1900. I believe that Ichiko is referring to the results of the single event of the Wuchang Revolution on October 10, while Mary Wright was looking at a longer span in time. They each have their point of view. From the perspective of "modernization," this Revolution seems to have had only very limited influence, because it was much too brief—from Wuchang to the abdication of the Qing Emperor was only a matter of a hundred-odd days. At that time, many people, including the revolutionary party, thought that the Revolution had succeeded once the traditional imperial system had been overthrown. Thus they paid little attention to social and economic problems: the party constitution of the Guomindang [Kuomintang], rebuilt from the Tongmenghui, did not even contain Sun Yat-sen's principle of people's livelihood. Revolutionary enthusiasm soon withered, and individualistic battles for power and privilege once more prevailed.

Why did the French have one revolution after another? Because their problems had not been solved. China had the accumulated problems of 2000 years; revolution of course still had to occur. Revolution is for the sake of modernization; only modernization can erase the need for revolution. But modernization cannot be realized in a day.

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I welcome the opportunity to comment briefly on Joseph Esherick's hard-hitting review of several English-language works on the revolutionary decade 1900 through 1911. Some of Esherick's analyses (such as those of the Sun orthodoxy and of the Wright-Ichiko debate) are quite penetrating. Some of his comparisons (such as of Rankin with Lust and of Bergère with Rhoads) are very stimulating. I share Esherick's misgivings regarding liberal historiography and modernization theory. I agree with him that truth is elusive and that historiography is a dialectical process in which one theory may provoke others which can move the whole field forward.

Nonetheless I do have a number of reservations about the general tone and content of the review. The article should contribute a great deal to the "intensity" of the debate about the period, but the assertion that "few topics . . . could not be done again" and the repeated use of such terms as "outrageous," "preposterous," and "absurd" to characterize others' conclusions will not, I fear, do very much to raise the "quality" of the debate. Nor will it encourage imaginative thinking in the field. Given the limits of time, it was perhaps inevitable that Esherick should have oversimplified a number of issues and arguments (such as trying to organize all subsequent studies in terms of the Wright-Ichiko debate) and devoted so little of the

essay to his own insights (such as on the key role of the urban elite). But it was not inevitable that he should so often have merely echoed the judgments of earlier scholars (such as in seeing a split between local and national elites or the occasional unity of class and national interests). Esherick's conclusions too often border on truisms ("the fantastic complexity of nationalism," "political progress and social regression") when they do not involve contradictions with points made earlier in the review (criticizing Schiffrin for not choosing one view of Sun and then arguing in general against choosing "one horn of the dilemma").

Several of these points bear on Esherick's treatment of *Hsi-liang [Xi-liang] and the Chinese National Revolution.* Given more space, Esherick would presumably have been able to provide a more balanced review of the "principal thesis" of that work. Far from "insist[ing] throughout" on "portraying Hsi-liang [Xi-liang] as a 'radical,' " the book actually is at pains to show how, after 25 years of a gradual rise to power in the Qing administration, Xi-liang moved through four phases, one characterized by "resistance," another by "expansion," a third by "radicalism," and a fourth by a complex combination of all three approaches. One must take serious account of all four phases in many realms of policy and politics to understand how this classically educated Mongol Banner official and supporter of the Empress Dowager responded to the temper of his times and the people under his rule to evolve toward certain radical positions on some of the issues facing the dynasty after 1907. It is the dynamics of the career, the relationships among the three approaches, and the implications of all of this for our understanding of the larger "national revolution" which is the main "thesis" of the study.

Since most readers will have no trouble seeing Xi-liang as a "patriot" and, at times, as a "populist" (in his concern for the "people's minds"), let us focus on whether it involves a "gross debasement of language," as Esherick charges, to refer to Xi-liang as a "radical." It is incumbent on any scholar who uses a term (as on any who challenges such use) to define it properly

and to indicate the general range of its acceptable usage. The *Hsi-liang* attempted to do that Esherick, however, does not define radicalism and merely implies that Xi-liang could never have indulged in it because he was a "rather common late Qing reformer who supported the dynasty to the end." I am not so sure that Xi-liang really was all that "common"; neither the Empress Dowager nor the Peking compilers of Xi-liang's memorials thought so. But even if he was "common," did that necessarily mean that he could not be radical? Other scholars have shown how all strata of Chinese society, including certain members of the elite, adopted radical positions during this period. Indeed, it was the very pervasiveness of the radical spirit which made possible the larger national revolution with its drives for national sovereignty, political participation, and social equity. Xi-liang's support for the dynasty in 1911 (like his suppression of rebellion in 1908) surely raises important questions about the nature and consistency of his radicalism. It should not, I think, close our minds to the possibility that he may have adopted radical positions on other issues at other times and places. As Esherick notes, we need "precision" as well as "intensity" in this debate. To be precise: Xi-liang had taken radical positions in Yunnan in 1907-1908 (as, for example, in suppressing opium in three years) and in Fengtien in 1910 (as in joining the movement for an early parliament). He supported the throne against Yuan Shi-kai and the anti-Manchus in 1911 out of concern for resisting militarization and maintaining a multiethnic empire. After 1911, it was not Xi-liang's loyalty to the emperor so much as his complete withdrawal from public service (despite the strong Confucian basis in favor of service) and his reason for withdrawal (the *fundamental* Confucian ground of the illegitimacy of the existing government) which constituted a *certain kind* of radicalism in *that period.*

This brings us to the basic issue of how one should define radicalism in the Chinese context. I agree with Esherick that one cannot simply take commitment to "modernization" (undefined or defined), let alone "Westernization," as the ultimate index of Chinese radicalism. Esherick would doubtless

agree with me that one form of radicalism includes a willingness to involve the "people" in the political process to work for social "equity." We might also agree that there can be radical change from above as well as from below and that radicalism is characterized by reasonable impatience as often as by irrational romanticism. Where I would part company with Esherick, and probably with most other students of *this* period of Chinese history, is in trying to go beyond the obvious political and social characteristics of radicalism in that period to see it in a broader historical and cultural context. It is important to recall that radicalism in the West has involved both the idea of changing the fundamentals on which a society is based and the rather different idea of changing contemporary society in line with fundamental norms, often inherited from the past. While both ideas also appear in the Chinese context, it has seemed to me that the Chinese have tended historically toward the second conception. Given China's long and highly continuous history and the striking parallels between certain aspects of, say, the Qing and the People's Republic, the burden of proof would seem to lie with scholars who would argue for a basic shift in the Chinese conception of radicalism in recent times. Related to this, there would appear to be many ideas (such as the basic goodness and educability of man, the social as well as political responsibilities of government, and the legitimacy of rebellion as well as of reform) which were dominant strains of "traditional" Chinese thought and which are actually quite "modern" in the global context. In the West, it seems to me, such ideas are usually considered to be part of the intellectual foundation of "radicalism."

More specifically, by the very organization of the book, I was suggesting that it may be instructive to see radicalism not only in conjunction with "reaction" and "moderation" but also in relation to what I have called "resistance" and "expansion." The overriding minimal requirement for China's survival in recent times has been to resist Western encroachment (both intellectual and military), one important Chinese tendency has been to adopt Western notions of expansion (both economic

and territorial), but the most significant Chinese effort has been to make radical changes (in both domestic and international orders) based on fundamental Chinese ideals and values. It may be slightly idiosyncratic to apply "radicalism" to the international sphere, as the acceptance of differences among peoples along with the assumption of their basic equality. But that usage is based on the sources and seems justified if it advances our understanding of recurrent Chinese attitudes toward the rest of the world. Finally I must confess (because no one has noticed it) to an occasional small element of facetiousness in my use of the term "radicalism." In one sense, it should indeed *not* be "radical" to refuse office in a government which is clearly illegitimate or to acknowledge the right of every nation to raise an army. Yet one does not see either of these principles operating with any great effectiveness in contemporary American domestic politics or foreign policy. Which leads one to ask if certain standard Chinese assumptions are not considered quite radical in the context of contemporary America.

That the *Hsi-liang* raises questions about our use of terms in studying China (and in describing contemporary America) should occasion no alarm as long as it offers us new insights into the dynamics of Chinese history and into our own developing civilization. Such insights should arise in part from continued debate. Esherick mentions that I referred to a "revisionist consensus" in late Qing studies. By the use of such a term I did not mean—as Esherick implies—that no dissenting voices exist, that the consensus is correct, or, indeed, that the search for consensus is a good thing. Quite the contrary. As others have noted, the *Hsi-liang* was written in part to call into question some of the fundamental tenets of the view held by many American scholars on the Chinese national revolution, including how that "national revolution" should be defined. This is clearly not an easy task. Despite his critical acumen and wholesome skepticism, Esherick himself takes it for granted that by 1911 "the Confucian basis for imperial legitimacy was destroyed forever" (despite the debate raging over Confucius in China recently), that "constitutionalism,

republicanism and talk of 'people's rights' were unquestionably a political advance" (even though they admittedly included what I, at least, would consider a distorting Western influence), and that the rise of merchant and military groups was an important indication of the "significance of the era" (despite the highly ambivalent attitude of most Chinese toward both groups throughout history).

The way toward the truth, of course, lies not simply in further debate on 1911 but also in much more research on all periods of recent Chinese history. In this connection, I hope that Esherick's omission of his own Hubei-Hunan [Hupeh-Hunan] study from the list of forthcoming books on 1911 reflects only modesty and not a decision to delay publication of the detailed results of his research. For my part, I am in the middle of a thematic history of Henan [Honan] designed to examine developments of the 1910s in light of those of other decades, including the 1940s and the 1950s. Work so far suggests that in studying the rebellion and revolution in China, we need not assume that religiously inspired societies or power-oriented armies were the only institutions capable of organizing the "people" into effective political action. This impression relates to an important theme in Esherick's review (and especially to the work of Lust and Friedman), but much more research remains to be done before I will inflict what may turn out to be another unsettling thesis upon my fellow scholars in the China field.

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The core of the difficulty presented by the period 1895-1913 lies in determining the relationship between the two main aspects of the revolution: (1) the short-term crisis, and (2) the long-term transformation in which this crisis was embedded. We are faced with a few months of intense drama in 1911 and early

1912, during which the institutions of imperial China are dismantled with the rapidity of a set of stage props. We also confront a process of economic, intellectual, and social transformation that starts in the last years of the nineteenth century, accelerates after about 1902, continues into early 1913, goes into temporary reverse, then gathers new speed six or seven years later. In what respects was the short-term "revolution" an integral part of the long-term "revolution"? Did it help it? Or perhaps hinder it? Was the form it took, and its timing, of importance in determining the pattern, or even the nature, of the slower but more profound process? Such a question is generally anathema to "progressive" historians because they cannot bear the thought that anything in the past could have been otherwise than it was, whereas conservatives of course find it painful to think that anything might be otherwise in the future.

Even the short-term revolution breaks up into several components. It was, in part, a revolution of semimodernized army officers, of the type made familiar by Kemal and Nasser. It was, in part, the revolution of a semimodernized urban elite linked with new local and regional administrative and political structures, and with a partially modernized commerce and industry. In part, again, it was the revolution of semimodernized students cut adrift from the old institutions that had linked education with a career in the bureaucracy or local gentry administration. It was also, in part, a reaction against some of the developments associated with incipient modernization. Some gentry resented a tightening central control over what they regarded as provincial matters. Some peasants resisted new taxes levied for various improvements, occasionally even seizing on revolutionary turmoil as a chance to rid themselves of such semimodern developments as self-government offices. In every area of China, in almost every city, we find a different mix of these, and sometimes other, elements.

Wisdom begins by looking at the map, yet the geography of 1911 has been almost wholly neglected. Many of the differences

between Wright, Ichiko, and others derive from using different case-studies as the basis of conceptual models. Thus Ichiko's ideas appear grotesque in the context of Shanghai but not unreasonable in that of Sichuan [Szechuan]. A rough sketch-map of the revolution accompanies these observations, as an illustration of some of the advantages of thinking spatially. A glance at it shows that most of the centers at which the earliest uprisings occurred were in relatively un-Westernized and un-modernized areas. The revolution in the advanced southeast was the second phase. Again, it is evident that the pattern of 1911 is something new in Chinese history. The key centers were almost all cities, and separated by great distances. The advances of old-style uprisings like the White Lotus and the Taipings were like the shearing of vegetable tissue. The 1911 Revolution was more like an attack on the nerve-centers of an animal organism. It was the product of modern means of communication.

As students of the subject know, the short-term revolution was the work of a peculiar and fragile alliance: junior military officers, student revolutionaries educated in Japan, secret societies, merchants from the chambers of commerce, gentry from local self-government offices, sometimes even actors and criminals, as at Shanghai. It is not surprising that it fell apart almost at once. What is surprising is that it was ever put together. But this conjuncture, which belonged in good measure merely to what the French term "event history" (*l'histoire événementielle*), had consequences of more than negligible importance. No one who has read through chronologically arranged primary material for this period (such as newspapers, Foreign Office archives, and the like) can have failed to be struck by how fast legitimate order broke down in the countryside between 1911 and 1913. One of the problems with many local studies of the Revolution is that they stop a few years too short in time. If 1911 was the apotheosis of gentry power, 1912-1914 were in many respects its nemesis. These latter years deserve more study at the local level than they have so far received.

Here are a few of the questions that might usefully be looked into in the future, or so it seems to me.

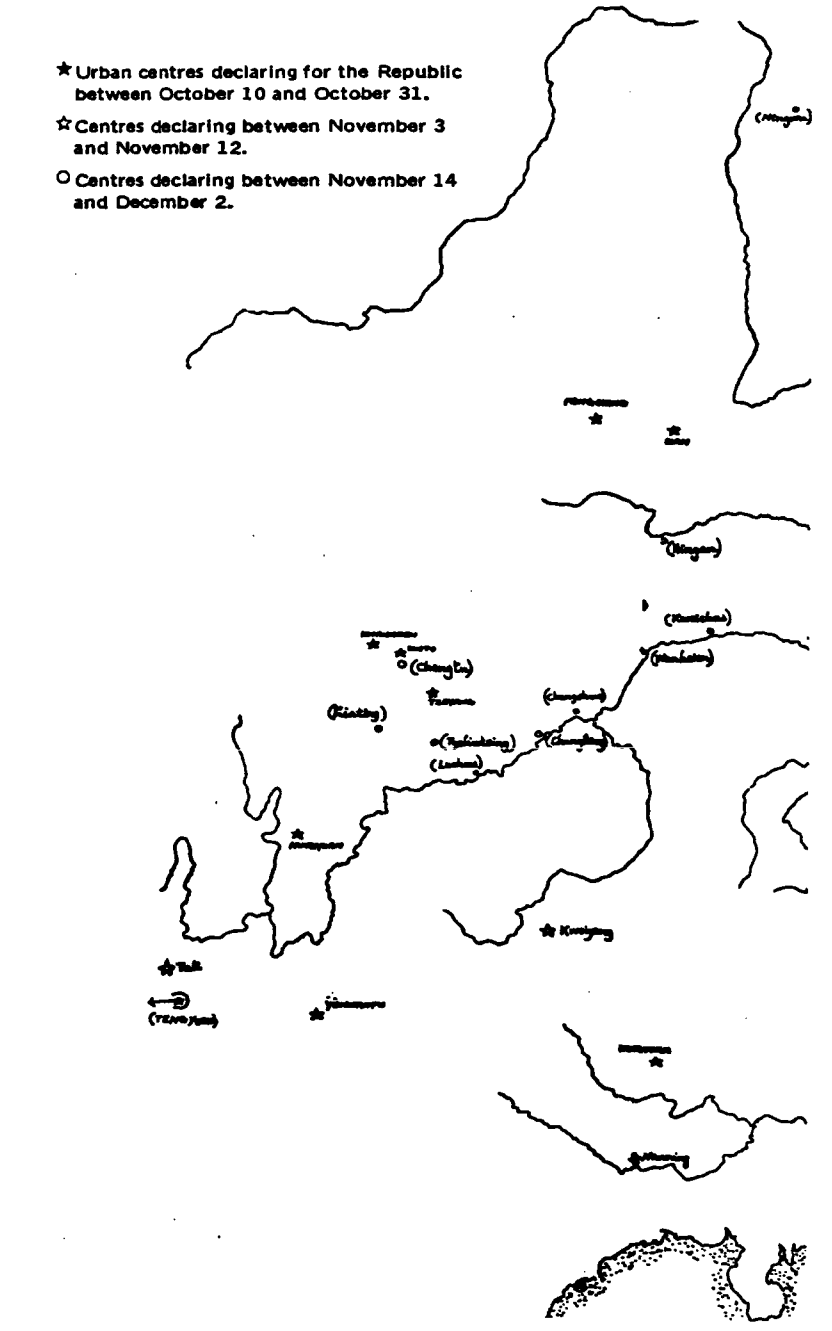

Figure 1: The Geographical Spread of the Revolution of 1911

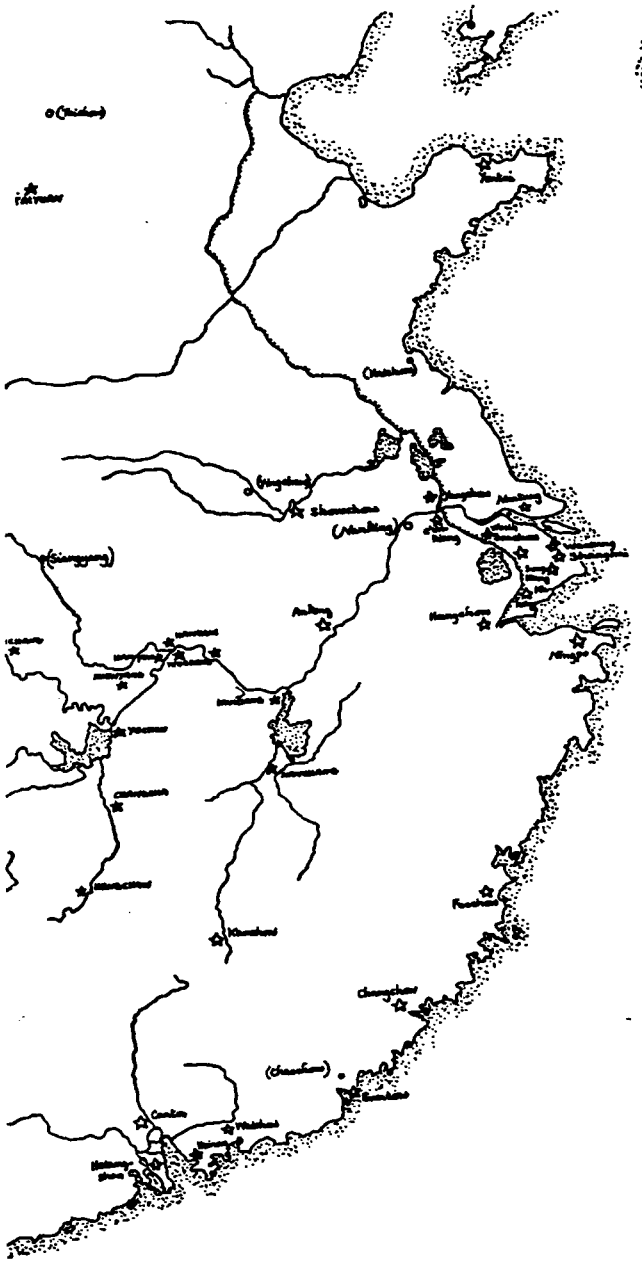

Figure 1: Continued

EDWARD FRIEDMAN
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Joseph Esherick was most kind to allot so much space and so many kind words to *Backward Toward Revolution* despite the fact that my book does not focus on the 1911 Revolution. It centers, rather, on hitherto little studied aspects of the Chinese revolutionary process, such as the phenomenological content of the tenuous and tentative move toward each other of radical intellectuals and the rural uprooted.

Esherick wrongly describes *Backward Toward Revolution* as dealing with peasants and then criticizes it for ignoring their land needs. These land needs were crucial for tillers and tenants. But I go to great pains to almost never use the word peasant. My concern is with ex-tillers and almost-tillers, less rooted people who could more easily join a mobile revolutionary army. Since revolution is an armed struggle, it seemed useful to zero in on the hitherto little studied uprooted who had largely lost their ties to land, village, and family and who became the original backbone of the rebel armies studied in *Backward Toward Revolution,* as they had been in traditional China and would be in Mao's revolution.

It is understandable that Esherick's concern for parliamentarianism related to the republican Revolution of 1911 should lead him to stress the early chapters of *Backward Toward Revolution* which detail how difficult it was in China to legitimate competitive party politics, and how easy it was to legitimate the notion of a single party.[1] But the major concern, even in the first part of the book, is, contrary to Esherick, not to criticize liberal parliamentarism, but—as *Backward Toward Revolution* states over and over again (Friedman, 1974a: 2, 97-98, 223-224 and throughout)—"this matter of the relation of organizational form to revolutionary purpose" (Friedman, 1974a: 10).

Evidence is marshalled to answer opponents of needed revolutionary change who insist there is an organizational secret to revolutionary success, that Leninist-style party organization is that secret, and that the only way to counter alleged Leninist manipulations of supposedly defenseless traditional rural people is for the counter-revolutionaries to turn to and rely on foreign intervention.[2] Flowing from this concern for the relationship of organization and revolution, *Backward Toward Revolution* studies the organizational and revolutionary strategies of the socialist Sun Yat-sen's[3] Chinese Revolutionary Party.

The CRP was constructed on paper as a powerfully directed single party to facilitate the prospects of revolutionary success. In actuality organizational matters paled before the decisive quality of real social forces and human bonds. The explicit intention of my section "Rural Revolution," however, was not, as Esherick incorrectly claims, to establish the binding religious content of the Revolution for traditional rural dwellers, but to deal with questions about revolutionary strategy and revolutionary probabilities, to continue a major theme of *Backward Toward Revolution,* "to show how rural options had to be rethought before they could serve as the basis for a radical union between rural insurgents and radical urban intellectuals and how society and consciousness were moving in the direction of such fruitful reconsiderations" (Friedman, 1974a: 4). Yet Esherick surely is to be forgiven if in his incisive essay on the failure of revolution in 1911, he slights *Backward Toward Revolution*'s concern for questions about moving on to a real revolution in China.

I find it less easy to forgive him for insisting that the evidence in my section "Rural Revolution," does not establish my claim that: "Members of village societies take up arms to restore traditional values that have been massively undermined" (Friedman, 1974a: 118). Esherick somehow forgets to mention that I rest that claim on general theory.

It isn't that I begrudge Esherick his good fun in taking bits and pieces ridiculously out of context from my portrayal of the White Wolf band's part in the Revolution. It isn't even that he is

wrong in claiming that the material on the White Wolf is insufficient to establish that the rural uprooted experienced the Revolution in traditional categories.[4] But Esherick has to know that I explicitly state that whatever else my book tries to prove, it does *not* take as its burden trying to prove that the expected occurred, that there was no sudden transvaluation of values from the rooted traditional ethos to Marxism. He stops quoting from pages 130-131 of *Backward Toward Revolution* just short of the decisive sentence: "At least the burden of evidence for such a switch should rest with those who infer that mammoth change, and not with those who assume a categorical continuity of today with yesterday" (Friedman, 1974a: 131). In short, I never tried to establish what Esherick claims I failed to establish. I relied not on "faith," as he claims, but on general theory.

If Esherick finds my notions about the traditional phenomenology of the rural dwellers "outrageous" he might have explained why. Those ideas flow from a century of social investigation and theory, from Engels' discovery of the role of religion in rural revolution (Engels, 1966; Lewy, 1974; Wolf, 1969; Friedman, forthcoming) to Hobsbawm's discovery of the psychological tendencies inherent in rural discontent which can find outlets in social banditry, new religions, or actual rebellions (Hobsbawm, 1959; Friedman, 1974b). One must add not only studies of traditional rural dwellers' notion of justice (Thaxton, 1975; Yokoyama, 1975; Kerkvliet, 1972: 691, 735; Scott, 1972, 1973, 1975) but the idea older than Marx, who embraced it, that industrialization was the enemy and destroyer of much that was humane and good in the old society, from a pride in craftsmanship to a commitment to community. We today might add other crucial matters, such as the human as part of nature, respect for the aged, and death. But it is not a matter of citing such as Marx's nineteenth-century hope that "only a Russian revolution can save the Russian village community" (Blackstock and Hoselitz, 1953: 206). By now it is simply an established general truth among most scholars of peasant rebellion that with rural rebels, one must "recognize that movements which

look back towards an idealized past may also contribute to the making of the future" (Laffey and Laffey, 1974: 396).

I would welcome Esherick's attempt to seriously debate these matters of established social theory. When all he can do, however, is label *Backward Toward Revolution*'s method of identification of China as part of this sociohistorical reality[5] "troublesome" and "outrageous," I am not persuaded by him.

Whether or not Esherick wishes to deal with the consequences of Chinese local and national history and culture for the Chinese revolution, Mao Ze-dong had to (Friedman, 1970b). Mao struggled against the roving insurgency mentality which infused many revolutionary soldiers. But I shouldn't have to detail Mao's respect for traditional forms. We all know that while foreign-facing modernizers in China destroyed village gods, Mao ordered his people not to; that while these foreign-oriented opponents ridiculed traditional medicine, Mao embraced its positive aspects. From the use of peasant forms of humiliation of opponents—capping and parading—on, Mao's view was that the cadres were to learn from the peasants. This included everything from assuring proper burial rights to people on the revolutionary side to defeating dogmatic Marxists who insisted that the traditional rebel warriors, the rootless, declassed vagrants, could not constitute a revolutionary army.

I believe it to be a unique and most humane aspect of the Chinese revolution that it embraces the first major instance of industrialization which does not declare war on traditional rural people. Mao was in deadly earnest about the mass line. Hence the revolution had to embody—among other things—the vision, demands, interests, and notions of justice of the rural people themselves. The revolution was made real in realizing their dreams (Friedman, 1970a: 296-300). The renewed force of family, celebrations, and the like[6] testifies to the power of these people to stamp their will on the lrevolution. In sum, the revolution was not simply imposed by manipulative outside organizers.

This means, as Mao endlessly iterates, that a revolution rooted in such rural people is far from consolidated. Among

other things it is the cultural content of the original revolution that makes necessary subsequent things such as cultural revolutions, attacks on the four olds,* struggles against the continued impact of patriarchy, and anti-Confucian campaigns. Not to pay attention to these matters, to be satisfied that landlords have been expropriated increases the likelihood that the revolution with its localism, familism, and traditionalism can be reversed. That these two-edged backward elements were necessarily enhanced in the first instance by revolutionary success Esherick finds discomforting. I do not think that the state of his emotions, however, can be permitted to decide the difficult questions brought on by a dialectical revolutionary process embracing these backward elements. Since Mao and Chinese politics directly confront these matters, all I ask in *Backward Toward Revolution* is that scholars not ignore them.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The "four olds" refer to old thought, old culture, old customs, and old habits.

NOTES

1. This is complicated by the felt legitimation of nationalistic anti-imperialism which meant that one should join with all Chinese that one can join with against foreign invaders. The problem, as *Backward Toward Revolution* shows, became how to combine a single party with a broad, nationalistic united front.

2. Some people may believe with Mao Ze dong that the existence of such formal Leninist structures throughout the Third World in combination with the relative infrequence of genuine rural-based revolutions is sufficient to undercut this argument *cum* pretext about an organizational secret of revolutionary success. I would agree (Friedman, 1966: 119).

3. Esherick mocks Sun Yat-sen as someone who "was many things to many people." What my evidence shows is that to himself Sun Yat-sen was quite a socialist. He had with him an advisor from the Second International, kept in close touch with the International center, endlessly proclaimed himself a socialist, took to the stump on socialism's behalf and made an attempt to take over the leadership of China's Socialist Party. Whatever he was "to many people," my evidence of Guomindang [Kuomintang] efforts to censor Sun's speeches to and wooing of that Socialist Party shows that the Guomindang knew that Sun in fact was something that is embarrassing to them, a serious socialist.

4. Nonetheless, I was surprised to discover during my research that even the meager data on the little known White Wolf band showed recruitment of the rootless, the use of familial and fraternal names, the proper burial of the rebel dead, risking much to return to an area where those dead had been unearthed in order to rebury them and revenge themselves on the defilers. In sum, there was data which accorded with well-established theoretical speculations about the religious ideational content of rural rebels. Obviously, the data on the White Wolf was insufficient in itself to establish those theories.

5. I am disappointed that a fine scholar such as Esherick must distort my account of how the missionary strategy of beginning in out-of-the-way mountain places where clan power was weak and the rootless could be won over was, just as Hobsbawm's theory suggests, similar in form to Maoist strategy (Friedman, 1974a: 158-159). The reader will, in this case, as in others, best compare the original with Esherick's presentation. The reader will find *Backward Toward Revolution* relying, contrary to Esherick, not on a "rumor" for its view of familial religion (Friedman, 1974a: 146), but on theory from Frederick Engels to Kazuhiko Sumiya who are both cited on that page. It is odd that Esherick begins by praising my integration of "the latest in western social science theory" and then never once mentions those theories.

6. Contrary to the Guomindang notion that the Communist revolution destroyed Chinese culture, many—perhaps a large minority of the—Chinese people only were able to live out their cultural ideals after revolutionary success (Friedman, 1970a). "The Chinese family [in 1974] . . . is the joint or extended family embracing three or more generations and including brothers, married or unmarried and their offspring. This kind of family structure has proved an asset to socialist construction because of its anti-individualist, communal traditions" (Sohn-Rethel, 1974: 5; see also Parish, 1975). Although this enhanced cultural inheritance actually is ambiguous for continuing the revolution (Diamond, 1975), it is essential to understand it. Here are some typical examples from Anna Louise Strong, Rewi Alley and Patricia Beadles Yu of what that revolution meant to rural Chinese: (1) "One of the first results of the land reform was that many farm hands were able to get married." (2) "[S]he was given [after liberation] a good place to live and the way to earn all the food she needed, her son had married a nice girl, and she had grandchildren now. Surely she had something to thank Chairman Mao for, she reasoned." (3) "[A] farmer . . . made us realize the profound changes that had taken place during his lifetime." "For Chinese New Year, 'we had no meat, no vegetables, no special New Year's cakes. On this day, along with other tenant farmers, we would go to the landlord's house to beg for rice.' " "Now, his family has its own pigs and chickens to kill for the New Year's celebration" (Friedman, 1974b). These sympathetic commentators and numerous others are not too discomforted to report this cultural content of the revolution. One will never fully understand China's continuing struggle with localism, sexism, and so on, unless one explores this cultural context. The other side of this important gap between the backward and the advanced is the attitude of contempt felt by outside cadres, urban dwellers and intellectuals toward the peasantry. Mao has asked and tried to insist that these condescending attitudes be undermined. If this fails, then the attitude of superiority toward so-called peasant superstition, which Esherick mentions, can easily lead to top-down rule, an abandoning of the mass line. Why rely on the ignorant? Mao's dialectical course rather is both to move against the

condescending nonpeasant while having those rural dwellers raise themselves. If people and politics dominate which only perceive the negative, superstitious flows in the backward peasantry, then the integral, democratic character of the Chinese revolution is doomed.

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The dialectic of writing on 1911 has made it first *the* revolution, then "no revolution," then "something of a revolution," and now back to "not much of a revolution" and "paltry achievements." I think it is time to negate yet another negation: 1911 was not so trifling a revolution.

My first disagreement with Esherick concerns broad historical perspective. What I miss most in his essay is any reference to where China was in the 1890s. His perspective is almost entirely from the standpoint of what came after 1913, and in the perspective of the communist revolution, 1911 looks paltry to him. Even in that respect I think he misses a good deal. What he overlooks most is the extent to which China on the eve of the first phase of revolution was in the grip of a depleted traditionalism. The changes that occurred in that phase may seem trifling in comparison with what came after, but in comparison with what happened before and what was happening as late as 1898-1900, the 1900-1913 period was enormously revolutionary. How many people in 1900 would have believed it possible that within 12 or 13 years China would change as much as it did?

In evaluating those changes we are struck most by the political, and with reason. I think that abolition of the imperial system was in itself a sufficiently important change to make 1911 more than trifling. At least as late as 1905 or even a few years after, a great many Chinese took the throne very seriously. And until her last breath the Empress Dowager demonstrated that they were wise to do so, for in the control of as ruthless and ambitious a ruler as she, the throne was no trifling instrument of power. Its abolition was a revolutionary change of the first magnitude.

The failure of republicanism by no means negates the importance of the throne's demise. One reason for this is that the political revolution (which of course included more than the overthrow of imperial rule) had social consequences. It is a mistake to separate the political and the social. (The terms "progressive" and "regressive" also create problems, but space is too short to discuss them here.) For one thing, social changes were considerable. Esherick has rightly pointed out that their extent and significance is still highly controversial, and since this is a topic on which research has only begun, it seems advisable to suggest hypotheses rather than to render judgment. It is important to consider political changes in the context of social causes and effects. New social groups such as the modern intelligentsia, "new gentry," merchants, and new military demanded political changes and helped to bring them about. At the same time, political changes helped to break down old class lines and social groups and to bring new ones into existence. Abolition of the throne was a blow against the principles of hierarchy and inherited privilege. The new political participation described by Fincher and Rhoads helped to undermine the old dominant hierarchies of the classically educated over the uneducated (and nonclassically educated), men over women, and age over youth.

A great many Chinese felt these changes little or not at all. One of the major challenges we now face is to spell out who felt them and how much. But it would be unwise to proceed on the basis of a division between political progress and social regression. There were uneven political and social changes in some parts of China affecting different people to different degrees, and there were similarly uneven continuities. (In Esherick's terms, 1911 was politically *and* socially progressive in some areas and in some ways, but politically and socially regressive in others.) The important distinction is not between the political and social but between the urban and rural, and between the Western-educated or Western-influenced and non-Western-influenced. The year 1911 began a revolution of attempted Westernization that lasted well into the communist

movement and divided China in new ways. In other words, 1911 was a major source of the "three great differences."*

The question of whether there were significant (or progressive) social changes around 1911 also involves the question of historical perspective. Some analysts minimize the changes on the grounds that the old elite merely adapted itself to the new conditions—especially the existence of assemblies, military governments, and commerce—and perhaps even strengthened itself in the process. True enough, perhaps, at least in some parts of China, especially the countryside and smaller and more remote cities; let's wait and see what more province studies like Rhoads' tell us. But let us also compare the uneven decline of the gentry after 1911 with the decline of other displaced elites in other revolutions, both in China and elsewhere. Let us compare it, for example, with the post-1949 decline of the Chinese "bourgeoisie," which certainly did not disappear; even if we do not accept fully the claim that it still threatens the victory of socialism and will continue to do so for a long time to come, it can hardly be denied that some 26 years after their major victory the Communist Party feels threatened by a continually renascent bourgeoisie. (For that matter, even "feudal" remnants cause an occasional problem.) And yet China never even fully developed capitalism or a bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie was at most 50 years old in 1949 and yet it has survived 26 years of communist revolution. Does that make the achievements of the communist revolution paltry? I think not. The gentry had existed for centuries before 1911 and were deeply rooted in more than 2000 years of imperial institutions and social thought. Was their survival for a few more decades after 1911 not to be expected?

In this perspective it seems to me that while we wait for more data on social revolution in China around 1911 and in the early Republic our working hypothesis ought to be that in 1900-1913 a vast social revolution got well under way. It was most pronounced in the larger cities that had the most contact with the West and, within those cities, chiefly among the foreign-educated, businessmen, and some workers and members of the

new professions such as journalism. In brief, we may expect to find that a major result of 1911 was to split China along the lines that have shaped so much of its twentieth-century history. This will help us see more clearly into subsequent movements such as May Fourth and The New Culture Movement which, let us remind ourselves, began only about two years after the "Second Revolution" of 1913. Esherick's point that China was both building and crumbling in the early Republic is very well taken. What needs to be added is that even if the crumbling was greater than the building, the extent of the building and its new direction and above all the extent to which it was gathering speed, in contrast to the 1890s, all suggest that more than a trifling revolution occurred around 1911.

My own book's contribution to all this may not be very great, but I don't think that what I had to say was "absurd." (I think it's time to retire terms like "absurd," "nonsense," and "wistful yearning" from scholarly discourse.) I also find it ironic to be accused of exaggerating the role of the Tongmenghui, especially since as long ago as 1962 (in a book review and an ensuing debate with the author) I challenged the idea that it was a unified organization and the mainstream of the Revolution. I also made this plain in my book. I explained why I chose to concentrate on the people I did, and above all I attempted to show that the line between "reformers" (such as Liang Qi-chao) and "revolutionaries" was largely overdrawn and in any case no sharper than the lines between different groups of revolutionaries. I tried to show that there was a radicalism at work that was more important than the lines dividing revolutionaries from reformers and different groups of revolutionaries from each other, and that this radicalism began to dominate Chinese intellectual life. Partially, this was to show that a new intelligentsia had appeared and was beginning to replace the old Confucian-educated elite. The new intellectuals helped drive conservative thinking to cover, helped the old social elite take a few more steps into oblivion, and began an intellectual revolution. Their significance lies mainly there, and it is not

lessened by the divisions within the new intelligentsia, or by the apostasy of some and the compromises of others. "Radicalism" was something very new in China, and it was not the same as modernization. Radicalism means going to the root of a matter. Liang's "new people" tried to. So did Zhang Bing-lin's "five negations"† and Liu Shi-pei's anarchism. Constitutionalism was a radical idea in China at the beginning of this century. The contrast between this kind of thinking and Confucian reform thinking of pre-1900 points to an intellectual revolution in the early 1900s. The differences among the early Chinese radicals were no greater than the differences between peaceable anarchists and terrorists, individualist anarchists and collectivists, Christian socialists and Leninists, Gandhi and Hitler; all those and many others have rightly been called radicals because they wanted thoroughgoing change, a sharp break with existing conditions. Other radicals have renounced or compromised principles without losing a claim to at least their past radicalism. Zhang Guo-tao still did what he did before 1938. Mao's compromises of principle with Chiang Kai-shek and Richard Nixon did not make us all think he was no longer a radical. Wang Jing-wei compromised with Yuan and so did Sun Yat-sen, but the Communist Party still found it possible to pin their hopes on Wang and Sun more than a decade later.

Not all the revolutionaries behaved consistently as revolutionaries, but they still created a movement that brought into politics many people who had not been active. The people I studied influenced others, including New Army soldiers and others who were instrumental in overthrowing the Qing. They also influenced later revolutionaries. Countless modern Chinese leaders, including Mao, trace the beginning of their radical thinking to Liang Qi-chao. The first newspaper Mao read was the Minli Pao that told him of the April, 1911 uprising and of Sun and the Tongmenghui. Mao's first expression of a political opinion was that Sun should be president, Kang You-wei premier and Liang Qi-chao minister of foreign affairs. One of Mao's first rebellious acts was to cut his own queue and those of some unwilling fellow students. The first military action he ever saw

was in 1911, and it was as a soldier in 1912 that he first read about socialism. All this may weigh lightly in Mao's own life and career, but I don't think it's trifling. He began to think and act as a revolutionary because of the 1911 Revolution. So did many others. The men I wrote about also acted as revolutionaries in 1911-1912 and, off and on, for some time afterwards. (Surely they acted as revolutionaries more than Sun Yat-sen ever did; if Esherick has to be shown how "ratiocinations" explain behavior, why does he think it is "sound and useful" to regard Sun as primarily a revolutionary socialist?) But their lasting significance will probably be the revolution that they began but that outran them.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This refers to the differences between city and countryside, industry and agriculture, and mental and manual labor.

†EDITOR'S NOTE: This refers to Chang's advocacy in 1907 of the abolition of governments, permanent residences and all other manifestations of organized society.

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At the beginning of my academic career in this country many years ago, I reacted rather strongly to what I then considered, and still do, as unfair criticism of my book, *Huang Hsing [Huang Xing] and the Chinese Revolution,* although the reviewer of the book did concede that I had "ably broken new ground" (Gasster, 1962: 375; Hsüeh, 1963). Now that I have lived in the United States for so long a time, I feel as ancient as an American Indian, and have also become philosophical about book reviews. I have learned that it is possible for one to review a book without having read it (carefully), and that a number of considerations, consciously or subconsciously, may enter the mind of a reviewer. In fact, book reviews often reflect more on the reviewer—his or her personality, ignorance, bias, wisdom, scholarship, maturity, or lack of it—than on the book itself.

Therefore, my first reaction to the invitation to comment on Joseph Esherick's article, "1911: A Review," was not to make any response at all. A rebuttal would be futile as far as he is concerned. As Oscar Wilde said in the name of Lord Goring, "a man who allows himself to be convinced by an argument is a thoroughly unreasonable person" (*An Ideal Husband*, Act I). However, after consulting a leading scholar whose meticulous scholarship I have always respected, I decided to write this brief rejoinder. I shall confine myself mainly to Esherick's remarks on me and my work.

My book was the first scholarly attempt in the West to use vast and heretofore unexplored Chinese primary sources and documents to write on the Revolution of 1911. It was a pioneering (or as Esherick put it, "older") work. To answer Esherick's charge that it was "a frankly filial act," I can only quote a Japanese reviewer (Nakamura Yoshi), who stated that "even a close relative of Huang Xing can look upon the 1911 Revolution with detachment as an historical event and analyze its significance" (1962: 133).

I shall refrain from debating with Esherick on Huang Xing's role as the cofounder of the Republic of China. For, as Thomas More once remarked, "I have no wish to labor the obvious" (1973: 37)—certainly not for American students in the 1970s.

Given the level of understanding of the 1911 Revolution in the West in the 1950s, I had to carefully document every statement I made in my book and explain the various events even to the point of saying the obvious. Since then the subject has become much better known (and sometimes distorted); nevertheless, Esherick appears quite determined to brush aside facts that do not conform to his preconceived "revisionist" ideas.

The level of Esherick's arguments and scholarship can be seen from the very example singled out by him to show that "every failing of Huang is swept under the rug" by me. Contrary to the impression he attempted to convey to the reader, I did not contradict "a dozen eyewitness accounts." It is true that I did not examine "a dozen" eyewitness records; I am not sure there

are that many. But I had carefully weighed five conflicting accounts before reaching a conclusion (1961: 118-119). Of the five sources I examined, three were "eyewitness accounts." If Esherick had known more about the background and political affiliations of these "eyewitnesses," he would have agreed that the "eyewitness account" I finally chose to cite at great length to support my conclusion was a more objective and reliable one.

As an historian, Esherick should appreciate the problem of the credibility of eyewitnesses—a point which has been well covered in Thomas Jerome's book, *Aspects of the Study of Roman History* (1923). Even today those of us who live only a few miles from the Watergate know how complex it is to weigh the conflicting testimonies of eyewitnesses. Furthermore, Esherick completely ignored another important reasoning of my argument, a point which involved geographical common sense and the feasibility of the alleged suggestions by Huang to abandon Wuchang in order to transport the army there to attack Nanjing [Nanking].

I was pleased to note that Esherick thinks highly of the book by Liew, *Struggle for Democracy: Sung Chiao-jen [Song Jiao-ren] and the 1911 Chinese Revolution* (1971). I likewise gave a favorable review of the book (1973: 80-81), which covers somewhat the same ground as mine, except that Liew placed Song Jiao-ren (who was a close friend and follower of Huang Xing) "at the center of history" (Esherick's phrase). I might be unfair to Liew, but I thought that his book, in addition to its own merits, reinforced some of my views on the neglected contributions of the Hunanese group in the Tongmenghui. Whether it is a "much better book" and mine is a "poorer work" as judged by Esherick is for other scholars to decide. Most of the events mentioned in Liew's book and cited by Esherick as Liew's "considerable contribution" to the "utter destruction of the myth of TMH [Tongmenghui] unity" had already been presented in my book (1961: ch. 4, especially pp. 44-47, and 50-55). I am therefore puzzled that Esherick insisted that I "totally accepted" the "myth of the TMH unity." Furthermore, if one identified the Tongmenghui with Sun

Yat-sen alone, there was little relationship between the Tongmenghui and its Central China Bureau. The link can be better established in the context of Huang Xing's role and that of his followers from Hunan and Hubei [Hupeh] provinces, as demonstrated in my book (1961: ch. 7, especially pp. 50-55, and 95-107).

With respect to the question of the Tongmenghui's leadership in the revolutionary movement, I have criticized the "revisionist" bias in my introduction to Part II of *Revolutionary Leaders of Modern China* (1971) and shall not reiterate here. I might add in passing that I translated for that book a major article by two communist historians on the class nature of Huang Xing in order to provide, as correctly pointed out by W.J.F. Jenner, "the English reader with an alternative approach" to my earlier work on Huang Xing (1973: 495). Would a scholar concerned with "a frankly filial act" present critical communist views?

Perhaps Esherick may think better of my book in the years to come when he learns more about the subject. I found no need to make any corrections for its second printing in 1968, except two typographical errors. But since his comments are so critical, I think it is only fair that the readers of *Modern China* know about some of the comments of other mature scholars. Hence, I shall give a few examples; space does not permit citing all the favorable reviews.

Hyman Kublin considered my book an "extremely valuable study" (1961). Stephen Uhally, Jr., characterized the work as "a solid piece of scholarship" (1962). C. P. Fitzgerald stated that "this timely book, bringing new material to light, will be greatly valued by students of the period" (1962-1963: 395). Marius B. Jansen conceded that it had "redressed" some of the bias of the Guomintang [Kuomintang] official history (1972: 1388). John T. Everett, Jr., remarked: "Mr. Hsüeh's work is notable for deep scholarship and precise detail" (1962: 606). In London, it was recognized by J. D. Chinnery that the book "can be relied upon for the degree of accuracy with which it unravels the tangled chronology of the period" (1964: 200). In

France, Mme. Marie-Claire Bergère stated (translated from French) that my "carefully established references make this work a first-class book companion" (1964: 603). In the socialist countries, J. Fass of Czechoslovakia praised my book as (translated from German) "one of the best studies written outside the border of China on the Revolution of 1911" (1966: 86-87).

I should like to conclude with a somewhat far-fetched analogy just to make a point. A foreign scholar, having read Dick Gregory's *No More Lies,* decided to correct the orthodox line of the myth of American history. In order to give long neglected recognition to Crispus Attucks and other Blacks, he denied that the American Revolution was under the leadership of Washington and the other Founding Fathers, or of the Continental Congress, on the grounds that there was no unity in that organization and that there were other independent "provincial" forces in the Colonies. Furthermore, he maintained that it was the Blacks who actually were responsible for the success of the revolution, because there were five thousand of them serving in the Continental Army. Can anyone say that this extreme "revisionist" view reflects sound and objective scholarship?

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My opinions on the 1911 Revolution are quite close to those expressed by Joseph Esherick in this review. Therefore, I mainly wish to make a few additional suggestions on where I think that research on the Revolution should be heading. First, however, a brief comment on Esherick's criticism of my use of the term "modern." The accusation that I fail to define the term is perfectly fair. As I recall I used it rather loosely as more or less equivalent to Western-inspired change. Although it may certainly be argued that this is a questionable definition, I think that historically the two concepts were rather interchangeable in early twentieth-century China. I do believe that the overriding (though not the only) goal of radicals (and others) of the 1911 period was to achieve a strong and wealthy nation by emulating aspects of the "modern" West. This orientation did not prevent their behavior from being governed by historically Chinese as well as Western models, nor did it preclude their drawing upon a variety of traditional intellectual strains.

Turning to the question of future research, two problems needing further study are the involvement of the rural lower classes in and the contribution of reformism to the Revolution. Like Esherick, I am not satisfied with most of the attempts so

far to describe peasant contributions to the 1911 Revolution, particularly those that refer to the populism of the revolutionaries. I find the word populism inherently inappropriate because, to me at least, it immediately conveys images of the Russian *narodniki,* whereas most radicals of the 1911 period seem neither to have been primarily interested in agrarian social problems nor prone to identify with the peasantry.

There were many examples of social unrest during the last decade of the Qing, but few were tied to the revolutionary movement. Riots, uprisings, and secret societies should be studied, but preferably in the context of the demographic crisis and the weakening of social structure that went back to the late eighteenth century and continued into the twentieth. It may well turn out that the dynamics of this process were not in phase with those that precipitated the 1911 Revolution, and that, moreover, a class analysis that ignores such factors as clan ties will not adequately explain what was happening in the countryside. Very possibly, rural unrest around 1911 will turn out to be politically important mainly for the negative effect it had on the postrevolutionary governments as it previously had had on the Qing dynasty. Private and governmental finances and energies were diverted into the preservation of order, more well-to-do families moved to the cities, militarism was fostered, and innovation discouraged. I am not saying that peasants should have been more submissive, only that their unrest had little positive political impact at the time.

Turning to the question of the relationship of reformism to the 1911 Revolution, I have a number of observations based on research on events in Zhejiang [Chekiang] and Jiangsu [Kiangsu] that might also be tested in other provinces. First, in parts of China (perhaps mainly in the most economically advanced areas) there was a vigorous, nonbureaucratic elite reform movement that deserves to be taken seriously in its own terms and as a major source of the leadership and ideology of the governments that declared independence in 1911. Motivational definitions of this movement in terms of gentry self-interest make little more sense than applying the same formula to explain all actions of other social groups.

Second, this movement was the outgrowth of a number of nineteenth-century changes within elite society that were related to such factors as the over-supply of scholars compared to available government posts; continuing commercialization of Chinese society, growth of foreign trade, and virtual fusion of merchant and gentry in some places; and the shake-up of elite families caused by the Taiping and other rebellions. Some changes involved the further growth of local and provincial elite power after the Taiping Rebellion. However, during the Tongzhi and Guangxu periods, this increase seems to me to be more related to wealth, commercial activity, and performance of civic function than it was to militarization (at least in some parts of China). This orientation often left elite leaders open to both traditional and Western concepts of institutional and economic reform. It should also be noted that these social changes did not normally involve a strong break with traditional patterns, nor did they weaken the hold of pervasive native-place and clan ties. Therefore, the concept of a bourgeoisie (outside the very carefully narrow definition used by Marie-Claire Bergère) does not seem applicable to the 1911 Revolution. Moreover, native-place ties provided a mechanism for the spread of new influences, and their existence may require modification of the distinction between provincial and local elites.

Third, expansion of traditional ideas of reform during the mid- and late nineteenth century was likewise important in shaping reformism in the provinces. Statecraft (*jingshi*) ideas focused attention on practical matters of government administration. These concerns were easily expanded and reoriented to encompass a whole new range of problems and solutions introduced from the West. At the same time, the radically moralistic *chingyi* approach to government expressed by vocal segments of the bureaucracy served to spread both awareness of a serious foreign threat and the feeling that the government was unresponsive and corrupt. By the 1890s these two intellectual currents were interacting, and they continued to influence perceptions of older reformers even though the traditional terminology was largely replaced by Western phrases soon after

1900. Various segments of local elites had their own complaints with the imperial, bureaucratic system of government, ranging from lack of channels of communication to the throne, to the abuses of yamen underlings (from which even higher degree-holders were not always immune). The feeling that they were on the outside of an insensitive government apparatus, predisposed some to accept such Western ideas as representation and the rule of law.

Fourth, provincial reformism was not static, but changed rapidly through the last Qing decade. New people, particularly returned students, joined the movement. Emphasis shifted from nonpolitical institutional modernization to constitutionalism. Clashes with the bureaucracy sharpened animosities and radicalized demands for control of government policy, both provincially and nationally. The 1911 Revolution was in many respects the product of conflicting bureaucratic and private reform programs in a situation in which notions of the proper boundaries of political power were rapidly expanding on all sides.

The radical students and revolutionary party members were, in general, the newest elements involved in the 1911 Revolution. It, therefore, makes sense to stress their position as forerunners of later twentieth century communist revolutionaries. However, if one believes that other groups were more responsible for the events of 1911, one is logically drawn backwards to look at the Revolution as a culmination of nineteenth-century trends. The type of problem we face then changes to identifying political, social, and intellectual changes within traditional society, explaining the interaction of these changes and Western influences, and explaining similarities and differences between the end of the Qing and the end of the Ming. The political progressiveness of the 1911 Revolution to which Esherick refers resulted from a combination of indigenous changes and new Western ideas and institutions. Western influences are critical in explaining why the collapse of the Qing was not just political disintegration followed by another dynastic interlude; on the other hand, their impact was felt

partly because Chinese elite society was already evolving. Trying to fit the results into a dichotomy of sincere, progressive idealism versus political power interests often imposes contradictions that were not there at the time. Answering questions such as those raised by Esherick at the end of his review will require much detailed work on the early republican period to bridge the gap between the changes of 1911 and the later social revolution.

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Esherick has done an excellent job of evaluating the current English-language literature on 1911. Except for Friedman's book, which I have not had a chance to read, I generally concur with his estimate of the various works. This extends to his comments regarding my own book.

One of his criticisms concerns my treatment of the fate of the gentry. In one place I had the gentry disappearing in the Revolution; yet in another I said they emerged from the Revolution as the dominant group in society. This embarrassing gaffe, a likely candidate for the "Our Forgetful Authors" column in the *New Yorker* magazine, arose from an imprecise differentiation of the term "gentry." What I meant to say was that the gentry, when considered as products of the examination system, disappeared with the overthrow of the dynasty and the termination of the examinations. As the landed elite, however, the gentry clearly persisted beyond the Revolution and indeed gained strength from it. The contradiction, thus, is more apparent than real.

Another criticism concerns the merchants, their relationship with the gentry, and their role in the Revolution. Esherick implies that I characterized the merchants of Canton as a highly independent group. All I said, however, was that there were *some* merchants, led by Chen Hui-pu and clustered around the

Self-Government Society, who seemed to have taken an independent stance from the gentry. They were an active group, but relatively few in number and politically weak. They played no more than a small, if crucial, role in the transfer of power from the Qing to the Tongmenghui in Canton. They didn't even dominate the postrevolutionary government, which remained firmly in the hands of the gentry, albeit the "new gentry." Having no direct stake in the new regime, the merchants could afford to be indifferent to its fate, and the fate of its reforms. Hence arose the curious anomaly noted by Esherick of the merchants sabotaging the regime's "bourgeois" reforms.

Finally, Esherick's major criticism is that I failed to identify the gentry and merchant elite of Guangdong [Kwangtung]. I acknowledge the failure, though it was not for lack of trying. One of the original reasons for my undertaking this study was the hope that by delving into the local level I might be able to put some flesh onto such an abstract concept as the "elite." Unfortunately, even after nearly a decade of compiling a file of personal names, this proved to be impossible in all but a few relatively well-known cases. The problem was simply a lack of biographical information of even the most elementary sort. Thus, only a small minority of the Provincial Assemblymen could be identified beyond their names and home districts. To my surprise and disappointment, the same was true of Tongmenghui members, despite the wealth of published materials concerning the revolutionary movement. It may be that we will have to go even lower down into Chinese society, to a more manageable unit like a *xian* or a *xiang* before we can arrive at an empirical description of the local elite. Or perhaps the biographical record is fuller in other provinces. We all await the publication of Esherick's own work on Hunan and Hubei [Hupeh].