



**Review: [Untitled]**

Reviewed Work(s):

*Die Komintern und die Chinesische Revolution: Die Einheitsfront der KP Chinas und der Kuomintang 1924-1927.* by Kuo Heng-yu

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Viewed as an introduction to the collection, this comprehensive and highly readable account certainly fills the need for a single source of information on an important collection in the enormous Library of Congress. For example, the reader learns that the Chinese collection began with the receipt of ten titles in 947 volumes from the Ch'ing government as a result of the first exchange of publications between the United States and China in 1869; that the earliest specimen of Chinese printing in the collection is a small Buddhist invocation sutra printed in A.D. 975; that the collection has 41 original volumes of the great Ming encyclopedia, *Yung-lo ta tien*, compiled from 1403 to 1409 by order of Emperor Yung-lo, and that these 41 volumes constitute some ten percent of its volumes today; and that the collection contains the largest collection of Chinese rare works outside China.

Specialists in the Chinese library field will, however, find relatively little unfamiliar material. One learns with sadness that the purchase of Chinese rare books has been practically eliminated since 1950 because of the library's policy of placing major emphasis on acquiring so-called "current" publications. Otherwise, given the resources of the library, a lot of rare Chinese books could have been acquired during the Cultural Revolution. Although not much except *Chairman Mao's Quotations* was being published in China itself, a remarkable number of old Chinese works were available in Hong Kong and Tokyo.

The author touches only briefly on the library's policy of issuing blanket orders to Hong Kong and Taipei dealers, who seem to ship only what they choose to sell to the collection, with the selection being done in Hong Kong and Taipei by the dealers' own less than fully qualified personnel.

Finally, it should be noted that the book is poorly printed, especially for a slender volume costing eighteen dollars. For example, page 58 in this reviewer's copy is so blurred as to be barely legible.

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**Die Komintern und die Chinesische Revolution: Die Einheitsfront der KP Chinas und der Kuomintang 1924–1927.** By KUO HENG-YÜ. Paderborn, Germany: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1979. 336 pp. Bibliography, Index. DM 28 (paper).

This is a thorough, well-organized history of Comintern theory and practice during the period of the first KMT-CCP united front. Using published Comintern materials and an impressive array of Chinese periodical and memoir sources, Dr. Kuo has given us the first new treatment of Comintern policy in twenty years and the most exhaustive to date. It is disappointing, then, that little new light is shed. The chronology of events, the struggles of internal Soviet politics, and the debacle of 1927 are related at length, without supplanting or surpassing the works of Conrad Brandt and others in any crucial aspect. One regrets that the few new sources that have become available in the past two decades, particularly those of Soviet authors with access to Soviet and Comintern archives, are not used by Kuo, who employs no Russian-language materials. That such recent Soviet work offers a fruitful avenue for contemporary research has been shown by Dieter Heinzig's recent *Sowjetische Militärberater bei der Kuomintang, 1923–1927* (Baden-Baden: 1978).

What is distinctive about Kuo's book is its interpretive framework. Like others before him, he traces the roots of the Comintern "failure" in China. But he does not perceive the failure as simply the result of Stalin's battle with his opposition, or of the inability of Moscow to gauge and control events in China, but as inherent in the erroneous line taken by the Comintern in forging the united front in the first place.

Comintern leaders, it appears, were poor Marxist-Leninists. Kuo notes that Marx had argued (1850) against the proletariat entering into any "union" with the bourgeoisie. Although Lenin revised Marx by urging in 1922 that British communists join the Labor party, this concept was not—contrary to Stalin's later arguments—transferable to China. There, "objective conditions" for alliance were absent (p. 279): The fledgling CCP, with the dual task of aiding the bourgeois national revolution and preparing to fight it, could not be compared with the British party. More importantly, in forging the "artificially premature" alliance (p. 279) between the CCP and KMT, the Comintern ignored Lenin's precondition for united fronts: Communists must not sacrifice their freedom to educate and organize the masses. Kuo argues that the united front in the form of a "bloc within" so restricted CCP autonomy that the "bourgeoisie" could exploit the Northern Expedition for its own purposes.

In basing his critique of the Comintern on the words of Marx and Lenin, Kuo treats these words as dogma—strategies that should have been followed by the "General Staff of the World Revolution." In criticizing both Stalin and the opposition, Kuo is perhaps more Leninist than Lenin, whose "Theses on the National and Colonial Question" urged temporary "agreements or even alliances" between communists and national movements in developing countries, without, however, ever specifying the form these should take.

Kuo does not present a convincing case of what might have happened had the correct line been followed. Instead, the specter of impending disaster looms heavily throughout the book as the actors pursue erroneous policies. Thus, the years 1925–1926, the high point of CCP success within the united front, are treated under the heading "Preparation for the Breaking of the United Front." While few would deny the setback suffered by the CCP in the coup of March 1926, the fact that the CCP continued to dominate (and expand) the mass organizations most important to it leads one to believe that the question of communist independence in the united front is considerably more complex than the author indicates.

Central to his argument—in reference, again, to Marx and Lenin—is the assertion that the Kuomintang was the party of the bourgeoisie (p. 282) and not a "bloc of classes" with which the CCP, "truly the party of the proletariat" (p. 280), might combine. (Accordingly, Chiang Kai-shek is the "embodiment of the Chinese bourgeoisie," p. 280.) Here Kuo's analysis of the revolution within a narrowly defined Marxian framework does his narrative a considerable disservice. Fortunately, he stops at 1927 before investigating how the "party of the bourgeoisie" dealt with Shanghai capitalists in the following years. As for the bourgeois Chiang, Soviet advisers and CCP leaders knew better in 1926: "We consider Chiang Kai-shek a peculiar person, with peculiar characteristics, the most prominent being his lust for glory and [his] craving to be the hero of China" (C. Martin Wilbur, Julie L. Y. How, eds., *Documents on Communism, Nationalism and Soviet Advisers in China 1917–1924* [New York: 1956], p. 251).

Kuo's work has advanced our knowledge of the details of Comintern policy toward China, but it has not significantly enhanced our understanding of the

revolutionary process in the China of the 1920s. As in the Comintern itself, there is here little appreciation for the complex forces and personalities (as opposed to abstract class formulations) with which Soviet policy ultimately had to deal. Kuo's categories of analysis are, in the end, those of his Comintern sources. These have served the author, as earlier his subjects, poorly.

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**The Future of Taiwan: A Difference of Opinion.** Edited by VICTOR HAO LI. White Plains, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1980. 187 pp. 14 Appendixes. \$17.50.

**Growth with Equity: The Taiwan Case.** By JOHN C. H. FEI, GUSTAV RANIS, and SHIRLEY W. Y. KUO, with the assistance of YU-YUAN BIAN and JULIA CHANG COLLINS. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979. 422 pp. Figures, Tables, Index. \$14.95 (cloth); \$5.95 (paper).

These two volumes are significant contributions to the growing body of literature devoted to what one Asian scholar has identified as the most complex and difficult foreign policy problem that the United States faces in the foreseeable future. For over a quarter-century, the United States has been involved in efforts to resolve what has been called the "Taiwan issue." Ever since the Korean conflict prompted the United States and the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan to weave themselves into a tangle of bilateral treaty arrangements, six administrations have insisted that Washington would never "betray" or "abandon" its ally in Taipei. The Carter administration, with no less insistence than its predecessors, reiterated the same commitment. In "de-recognizing" the Republic of China, President Carter denied that the United States had abandoned the "people of Taiwan." In his press release of December 15, 1978, which announced the "normalization" of relations with the People's Republic of China, the President affirmed that the United States continued to "have an interest in the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue" and that our country would do nothing that might "jeopardize the well-being of the people of Taiwan." In effect, the relations between the United States and Taiwan after derecognition remain as intimate and convoluted as before.

The affirmations made by President Carter after the change in diplomatic relations could not reveal the complex of problems that remained. In an earlier work, *De-Recognizing Taiwan: The Legal Problems* (New York: Carnegie Endowment, 1977), Victor Hao Li canvassed some of the major legal issues involved in the withdrawal of recognition from the Republic of China. In his new volume, *The Future of Taiwan*, the entire array of problems is probed through an exchange of opinions by fifteen Chinese-American scholars. The exchange of opinions is just that. There is little pretense of sustained argument or careful documentation. Protagonists of one or another persuasion make claims for which there hardly could be supporting evidence. For example, in one place (pp. 38f.), an advocate of Taiwan independence speaks of a majority of "90 percent" of the Taiwanese favoring sovereign independence for the island. There are a few surveys and a few nonprobability samples of political opinion among the citizens of Taiwan, but none of them remotely supports such a claim. Elsewhere (p. 49), there is the hyperbolic insistence that under its present govern-