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Policing Modern Shanghai

Frederic Wakeman, Jr.

We have found that along the banks of the Hu, Chinese and foreign residents mix together in great numbers. Their style of life has traditionally been frivolous and flashy. There is mutual competition for profit, owing to the convenience of communications and the crass materialism. Since this is a centre where Chinese merchants are gathered together, it is a carefree place, where gentlemen and ladies take their pleasure. If one is of the upper classes, then luxurious desires are fully realized and there are many instances of behaviour overstepping proper boundaries. If one is a worthless fellow, then when he sees something different and thinks of moving ahead, he has a disproportionate expectation. He might well wait until the seas are drained and the mountains are worn down and yet still lack the craft to carry out [his plans]. Nonetheless he walks straight into danger without hesitation and willingly engages in illegal behaviour. Furthermore, Communists take advantage of the situation and think of intimidating robbers, kidnappers and bandits to wait in secret for an opportunity to behave outrageously.¹

Introduction

During the 1920s and 1930s the metropolis of Shanghai, which had a population of about 3.6 million Chinese and foreign residents, was policed by four separate agencies: the International Settlement's Shanghai Municipal Police, Frenchtown's Concession Police, the Nationalist Garrison Command's Military Police, and the Chinese Special Municipality's Public Safety Bureau. Each of these police departments had its own jurisdiction, but none was altogether clearly differentiated. The four agencies had good reason to compete with one another, but neither the Chinese nor the foreign police could afford not to co-operate in at least some respects. Each was ostensibly devoted to defending its own municipal interests, yet all were enmeshed in complex relationships designed to forward other national and international causes. At least three of the four were charged with extirpating crime and controlling the rackets, but none was able to function effectively without forming alliances with the city's enormous underworld. Finally, each was obsessed with the difficulty of maintaining ordinary law and order in the most crime-ridden city in the world, and yet all four police departments were at the same time entangled in some form or other of extraordinary security and intelligence work.

These four different police agencies, and the higher masters that they served, converged at the juncture of China's new national political order—formed after the Northern Expedition of 1926–28—and a heterogeneous urban social complex that defied outright

1. *Shanghai tebie shi gong'anju yewu jiyao, Minguo shiliu nian ba yue zhi shiqi nian qi yue* (Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau from August 1927 to July 1928) (Shanghai: Shanghai Municipal Public Security Bureau, 1928), *jishi*, p. 48.

administrative unification. Shanghai's system of law enforcement thus apparently consisted of parallel structures locked in a complex form of mutual competition. Actually, these structures were not hermetic during the years up to the Pacific War, before yet another police structure was imposed by the Japanese and their puppets. Rather, they overlapped to the extent that their ideological and bureaucratic interests combined and to the degree that their lower-ranking personnel formed alliances and associations among themselves.

Inter-war Shanghai was one of the most intricate and complicated urban societies in the world. Like New York, it was a dual city: "A heaven above built on a hell below." But unlike most other world cities differentiated by class and status, it was also a city divided by semi-colonial occupiers, perched between east and west, caught between its own hinterland and the outside world. To an exceptional degree, therefore, world and local systems were intertwined in Shanghai, and it is little wonder that one of the governing symbols of its existence was the international trade in narcotics, of which the city was the main point of exchange and principal conduit of distribution. A cliché of the period claimed that no single vantage point of the city could ever yield a perspective of the whole, but one way of approaching an understanding of Shanghai's multifarious complexity is by examining its systems of law enforcement. If we can catch a glimpse of the ways in which these complicated clusters of devious and often corrupt political relationships developed among the international, French, military and civil police forces, then we can also begin to appreciate some of the nuances of the larger social order of Shanghai and learn to recognize the various guises of political mediation its inhabitants chose to assume.

Origins of the Shanghai Police

Throughout most of the Qing period (1644–1911), local law and order in Shanghai were maintained by military forces of the Green Standard, which was a native Chinese garrison force that functioned both as army and constabulary.² Police control was mainly exerted in an informal way through the lictors and runners attached to the local magistrate's office or yamen. These sub-officials were not given regular salaries. Rather, they subsisted off of the informal fees and bribes they collected as they went about their business.³ The line between their activities and criminal behaviour was not strictly defined. Indeed, recidivists were often "condemned" to serve a tour of duty as a police runner: "cops and robbers" were often one and the

2. Victor H. Li, "The development of the Chinese police during the late Ch'ing and early Republican years" (paper prepared for Professor Jerome Cohen's Seminar on Contemporary Chinese Law, Harvard Law School, May 1965), p. 49.

3. Victor H. Li, "The development of the Chinese police," p. 52.

same group of local ruffians. There was also a formal local control system based upon neighbourhood mutual responsibility units called *baojia*. But these rotational groupings, which were supposed to guarantee the good behaviour of their members and suffer common punishment if one among them committed a crime, functioned ineffectively by late Qing times in most parts of China.⁴

Two developments emerged during the post-bellum years after the Taiping Rebellion was suppressed in 1865. In South and Central China there appeared novel forms of local control sponsored by the local gentry in the countryside, while in at least one Yangzi Valley city a kind of local police force was established, re-employing the old "headmen" (*baozheng*) of the former *baojia* system.⁵ And in the treaty ports, where western influence was strongest, municipal self-government institutions were organized by coalitions of urban gentry, including moneylenders and merchants.⁶

Both developments may have inspired creation of the first regularly organized Chinese police forces in Shanghai proper. These constabularies were privately raised at the turn of the 20th century to protect the native city that surrounded the International Settlement and French Concession north and south. In 1905 the banker Yu Xiaqing founded a Chinese Merchants Calisthenics Association (*Huashang Ticao Hui*).⁷ Two years later its name was changed to the Merchants Corps (*Shangtuan*), and its organization was more closely modelled after the international community's Volunteer Corps, which was a form of urban militia that could be mobilized in the event of an emergency like the Boxers in order to protect foreign lives and property. More properly an actual police patrol and less a self-defence force was the River Police that was also formed in the early 1900s. This unit was funded by subscriptions from commercial houses and merchants in the southern Chinese city (*nanshi* or *nandao*), which had once been a walled town before the foreigners had razed its ramparts after the Small Sword Society uprising of 1853–55. The River Police mounted patrols along the Chinese Bund, protecting commerce and shipping there from attacks by robbers and pirates attracted by Shanghai's stupendous growth as an entrepôt.⁸

4. Frederic Wakeman, Jr., "The evolution of local control in late imperial China," in Frederic Wakeman, Jr. and Carolyn Grant (eds.), *Conflict and Control in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 1–25.

5. William T. Rowe, "Urban control in late imperial China: the *pao-chia* system in Hankow," in Joshua A. Fogel and William T. Rowe (eds.), *Perspectives on a Changing China: Essays in Honor of C. Martin Wilbur on the Occasion of His Retirement* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1979), pp. 100–101.

6. The earliest police reforms were commenced in South China, in Hunan, during the provincial reform movement of 1895–98. Daniel H. Bays, *China Enters the Twentieth Century: Chang Chih-tung and the Issues of the New Age, 1895–1909* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1978), pp. 37–38, 240.

7. Tsao Jr-lien, "On the nature of the Chinese capitalists during the Republican period" (seminar paper, Berkeley, Calif., 1984), p. 5.

8. Shanghai Shi Nianjian Wei-yuanhui (comps.), *Shanghai shi nianjian (Annual Mirror of Greater Shanghai)* (Shanghai: Shanghai shi tongzhi guan, 1935), pp. 1–13.

Both of these private defence and police forces were superseded by government policemen when the Qing dynasty began carrying out administrative reforms during the period 1901–1910.⁹ The police reforms actually began in North China under the aegis of Viceroy Yuan Shikai, the official who later usurped power from the men who had directed and led the movements collectively described by historians as the Revolution of 1911. Yuan had conceived of deploying a modern police force as a way of counterbalancing the power of local elites, and especially of the local gentry, who were arrogating judicial and taxation privileges unto themselves.¹⁰ In 1902 Yuan established a 500-man police force in the city of Baoding, southwest of Beijing. Equipped with its own training academy, the Baoding police department was soon overshadowed by the Tianjin police bureau, which was set up by Yuan after control over the city was recovered from the Allied Forces late in the autumn of 1902. The Tianjin Police then became a model for the entire province of Zhili, where local police forces were established under the control of a new Ministry of Police, founded in 1905.¹¹

In Beijing itself, police reforms were carried out in the spirit of the Meiji Restoration, and Japanese police officials were hired to come to China and establish the sort of police-box and patrol system that they had set up at home.¹² The Shanghai authorities quickly followed suit.¹³ The local *daotai* (intendant) of the Su-Song-Tai circuit extended a ward patrol system to the Chinese portions of the city and a central “police” (*jingcha*) bureau was established under his authority.¹⁴ By the time of the 1911 Revolution, when there was a regular police magistrate in charge of Shanghai police forces, the reformed police of North China, based in Tianjin and Baoding, were taken to be the model for the entire country; and it was in that same spirit of opposing efforts at gentry home rule that Yuan Shikai imposed the model upon Shanghai, strengthening the power of the

9. Victor H. Li, “The development of the Chinese police,” p. 52.

10. Stephen R. MacKinnon, “A late Qing – GMD – PRC connection: police as an arm of the modern Chinese state,” *Selected Papers in Asian Studies*, new series, Paper No. 14 (1983), p. 5.

11. Stephen MacKinnon, “Police reform in late Ch’ing Chihli,” *Ch’ing-shih wen-ti* (*Questions in Qing History*), Vol. 3, No. 4 (December 1975), pp. 82–99 *passim*.

12. Victor Li, “The development of the Chinese police,” pp. 29–30; Frank Ki Chun Yee, “Police in modern China” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1942), pp. 11–18.

13. Zhu Yisheng, “Shanghai jingcha yange shi” (“History of the evolution of the Shanghai police”) in Zhu Yisheng (ed.), *Shanghai jingcha* (*Shanghai Police*), opening issue (Shanghai: Shanghai shi jingchaju mishushi, 1946), p. 3.

14. Chen Yaofu, “Qingmo Shanghai shezhi xunjing de jingguo” (“The process of setting up police patrolmen in late Qing Shanghai”), in Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Shanghai Weiyuanhui, *Wenshi ziliao Gongzuo Weiyuanhui*, (comps.), *Wenshi ziliao xuanji* (*Shanghai*) (*Selections of Historical Materials* (*Shanghai*)), fascicle 13 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), pp. 104–106.

centrally appointed police magistrate and continuing to oppose local volunteers' forming municipal militia corps of their own making.¹⁵

Detectives

The International Settlement police or Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP) and the French Concession Police (FCP) were both part of a global colonial network of imperial control.¹⁶ The head of the SMP had frequently seen service in other parts of the British Empire such as India or Singapore, and the S.1 and S.2 departments of the Special Branch (the so-called "political police") were in close communication with the Criminal Investigation Department in Delhi and with the central police bureau in Singapore. The former frequently directed the harassment and arrest of Indian nationalists in Shanghai by the SMP.¹⁷ And the latter functioned as a kind of distant early warning system for revolutionary nationalists and other "radicals" coming out to China by steamer through the Malaccan Straits.¹⁸ The Frenchtown police chief—who was often a Corsican—usually had a colonial military background with service in North Africa or Indo-China; his office, too, maintained close contact with the headquarters of the Sûreté in Hanoi.¹⁹

Both the SMP and FCP routinely exchanged daily and weekly intelligence reports, which were sometimes also shared with the British, French and American consuls, and with the offices of the military attachés in the national capital of the time (Beiping until 1927 and Nanjing until 1937).²⁰ The leaders of both police forces also placed a high priority on keeping revolutionaries under control, especially after the agitation surrounding the May Fourth Movement

15. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau*, *zuzhi*, p. 1; Victor H. Li, "The development of the Chinese police," p. 53.

16. Blaine Gaustad, "Colonial police in Africa and India" (seminar paper, Berkeley, University of California, 1983), pp 12–13. See also Charles W. Gwynn, *Imperial Policing* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1934), p. 187.

17. See the public letter entitled "The persecution of Indian Nationalists in China (an appeal to fair-minded people," signed by the Raj Paltao (Indian Revolutionary) Party, dated Nanking (Nanjing), 3 June 1929, in *China Weekly Review*, 1 June 1929, p. 16. The communication of information from India concerning suspected Communists or Indian nationalists came through C.M.H. Halland, the military intelligence officer in the Shanghai British consulate-general. Halland often shared his reports with American military intelligence. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-2313, 11 September 1931.

18. Council for the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai (ed.), *The Municipal Gazette, Being the Official Organ of the Executive Council of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai*, Vol. 20 (1927), p. 216.

19. "Corsicans, there as everywhere, hold the principal posts. They are hard men, and mocking, with a distrust of journalists and contempt for the consular corps." Jean Fontenoy, *The Secret Shanghai* (New York: Grey-Hill Press, 1939), p. 120.

20. Intelligence officers in the British consulate in Shanghai would request the SMP to put under surveillance suspected Communists whose names had been obtained from police raids on communist organizations in Malaya. This was how the writer Zheng Zhenduo was put on the SMP's suspects list. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-3564, 26 April 1932.

of 1919; and they were willing to sacrifice a certain measure of control over the Chinese populace in their concessions, in exchange for help from their own native Chinese detectives who acted as their main source of intelligence through groups of agents and informers that they personally recruited.²¹

The SMP had the most complex structure in this regard. By the mid 1920s, in addition to Sikh patrolmen and officers, there were actually four different corps of detectives operating under the Special Branch in the International Settlement: regular detectives who were almost entirely of British extraction, Chinese detectives under their own Chinese superintendent, Japanese detectives under their superintendent, and White Russian detectives directly under Special Branch inspectors.²² Each of these groups of detectives had their own lateral communications with fellow-nationals outside the SMP, and there are suggestions in some of the police reports that this made them less than entirely trustworthy.²³

The White Russian detectives, for example, were closely associated with politically active Russian émigré groups, including former *Okhrana* agents who had served in Tsarist units or in Siberia against the Bolsheviks.²⁴ The Japanese had numerous contacts with first the consular police of the Imperial Japanese Government, and then later, after the January 1932 incident, with the Military Police of the Japanese Naval Landing Party. The Chinese detective squad, which was composed mainly of Zhejiang and Jiangsu natives who could understand the Shanghai dialect and deal with native criminals, had regular connections with fellow officers in the FCP's Chinese detective unit and in the Public Safety Bureau of the Chinese municipality.²⁵ And through these in turn they were linked to the world of Chinese gangs and syndicates (*banghui*).²⁶

Racketeers

By 1920 Shanghai's underworld consisted of an estimated 100,000 hoodlums (*liumang*). This enormous criminal population lived in part

21. John Pal, *Shanghai Saga* (London: Jarrolds, 1963), p. 19.

22. "History of police force is traced by speaker," *The Shanghai Times*, 27 February 1937, in Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-2961, 28 February 1937. In the eyes of Chinese nationalists the Sikh policemen on the Shanghai force were "symbolic of the most sinister aspect of imperialism." *The Chinese Student* (Chicago), Vol. 1, No. 6 (May 1936), Wusa issue, p. 5.

23. See the case of the police spy and secret agent Eugene Pick (alias Kojevnikov, alias Rafael Born, alias Dr Cliegel) in *China Weekly Review*, 15 June 1929, p. 100.

24. *Ibid.* p. 101.

25. The British Officers in charge of the Special Branch were worried about security leaks for this very reason. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-2381, 9 October 1935.

26. Wang Yangqing and Xu Yinghu, "Shanghai Qing Hong bang gaishu" ("A general account of Shanghai's Qing and Hong gangs"), *Shehui kexue* (*Social Sciences*), No. 5 (1982), pp. 63–65.

off of the illegal trade in opium, which had soared in value after the narcotic was banned in 1917.²⁷ Virtually all of these underworld elements belonged to small bands of gangsters called *dang* or *hui* that were ruled over by a massive criminal confederation and secret society, originally organized by Yangzi River boatmen, called the “Green Gang” (Qingbang).²⁸ Very little that was illegal – ranging from the organization of beggar gangs to the procuring of prostitutes and the management of opium parlours – went on without the Green Gang’s permission.²⁹ Criminals who tried to ignore its hegemony or who flouted its rules ended up with the Shanghai equivalent of “knee-capping”: having every visible tendon severed with a fruit knife before being left to die on the city pavement.³⁰ Businessmen who tried to operate without paying off the Gang risked being kidnapped or shot, or having their houses bombed and burned. Like the modern Mafia, the Green Gang was initially the underworld’s enforcer.³¹ And because it guaranteed access to the illicit receipts of “black society” and kept the criminal world of Shanghai in a certain state of order, the Gang was more or less tolerated by the International Settlement, French and Chinese police forces.³² Indeed, the initial foothold of the brotherhood in Shanghai was acquired by Green Gang “grain runners” (*liangchia*) who went to work for the concession police as patrolmen (*xunbu*) in the 1890.³³ Later, after the Revolution of 1911, one of the Gang’s blood-brothers who was the head of the Big Eight Mob (Da Bagu Dang), Shen Xingshan, served as superintendent of the SMP Chinese detectives, and maintained a close relationship with

27. Brian G. Martin, “Warlords and gangsters: the opium traffic in Shanghai and the creation of the Three Prosperities Company, 1913–1926” (paper delivered at the Sixth National Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia, Sydney, 11–16 May 1986), p. 5.

28. William T. Rowe, “The Qingbang and collaboration under the Japanese, 1939–1945: materials in the Wuhan Municipal Archives,” *Modern China*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (October 1982), pp. 493–94.

29. Emily Honig, “Women cotton mill workers in Shanghai, 1919–1949” (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford, 1982), p. 118; *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau, jishi*, p. 62. See, for Shanghai beggars: Mary Ninde Gamewell, *The Gateway to China: Pictures of Shanghai* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, Co., 1916), p. 55.

30. Informers were also frequently murdered and dismembered. Pal, *Shanghai Saga*, pp. 71–72.

31. Organized crime regulates illegal but persistent transactions in informal economies. Alan Smart, “The informal regulation of illegal economic activities: comparisons between the squatter property market and organized crime” (paper to be published in *The International Journal of the Sociology of Law*), p. 1. Or, in Carmine (“the Snake”) Persico’s words: “Why [pay the mafia a ‘tax’ on criminal proceeds]? Because we let you do it. We’re the government.” Howard Abadinsky, *The Criminal Elite: Professional and Organized Crime* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1983), p. 64.

32. “Tan jing zhi heimu yi” (“Inside story of the police”) in Qian Shengke (ed.), *Shanghai heimu huibian (A Classified Compendium from Behind Shanghai’s Black Screen)* (Shanghai: Haishang zhentan yanjiuhui, 1929), Vol. 2, p. 2. See also Brian G. Martin, “Tu Yueh-sheng and labour control in Shanghai: the case of the French Tramways Union, 1928–1932,” *Papers on Far Eastern History*, No. 32 (September 1985), p. 106.

33. Wang Yangqing and Xu Yinghu, “A general account of Shanghai’s Qing and Hong gangs,” p. 63.

the River Police's Anti-Smuggling Squad (Jisi Ying).³⁴ By the 1920s the head of the French Concession Chinese detective squad was also a Green Gang elder: Huang Jinrong, the "bigshot" or *wenren* who dominated all the other criminal bosses.³⁵ And many of the detectives who belonged to that squad as well as to Chinese squads on other forces like the SMP and the PSB were also members of the Green Gang or of the Jiangbei Gang of Gu Zhuxuan, who had risen to power in the rackets after coming to Shanghai and joining the police force as a young patrolman.³⁶ There were such close connections between the detectives and the gangs that special courses were given in some of the police-training programmes, instructing PSB agents – policemen and policewomen alike – how to become *banghui* members themselves. For, even though the price of proximity to the gangs was admittedly the contamination of "foul elements" (*ezhuo fenzi*), the legal livelihood of the detectives fundamentally depended upon their cultivating such contacts. Without underworld informants, Chinese detectives could not hope to make the arrests they needed in order, in turn, to earn the rewards that were such a necessary supplement to their meagre regular salaries.³⁷

Having the equivalent of Al Capone run the detective squad in the French Concession, where most of the gambling and narcotics rackets were located after the SMP began cracking down on these activities in the early 1920s, seemed merely a matter of convenience to the chief of the FCP. If a particularly brutal robbery was committed or a major theft performed, all that Captian Fiore had to do was to ask his chief of detectives, Huang Jinrong, to look into the matter.³⁸ Huang, who spent his mornings in a fancy teahouse holding court with one of his disciples at his side to receive the payments for favours and "fixes" from well-wishers and petitioners, could decide whether or not the felon should be turned over to the police while he went about the business of having his gangsters recover a portion of the stolen property.³⁹ Criminals in turn could request Huang for special favours

34. Brian G. Martin, "Warlords and gangsters," p. 5.

35. Qi Zaiyu, *Shanghai shi renzhi* (Current Biographical Gazetteer of Shanghai) (Shanghai: Zhanwang chubanshe, 1947), p. 165; Parks M. Coble, Jr., *The Shanghai Capitalists and the Nationalist Government, 1927–1937* (Cambridge, Mass. Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1980), p. 37.

36. Wang Yangqing and Xu Yinghu, "A general account of Shanghai's Qing and Hong gangs," p. 64.

37. "Inside story of the police," in Qian Shengke (ed.), *Shanghai heimu huibian*, Vol. 1, pp. 1–2.

38. Wang Yangqing and Xu Yinghu, "A general account of Shanghai's Qing and Hong gangs," p. 63.

39. Huang also carried on a version of the "Moll Cutpurse" system perfected by the colourful 18th-century criminal Jonathan Wild. In effect, Huang gave the rightful owners of stolen goods first refusal of them by letting them buy them back through his own mediation with the felons. See, for Jonathan Wild, J.J. Tobias, *Urban Crime in Victorian England* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), p. 29. "Even though the organization and activities of the Wild gang were in some respects unique, they were not altogether unusual. Crime was rapidly becoming a business, a form of entrepreneurship based upon the existence of large amounts of capital (stolen goods) and a new

vis-à-vis the police. A felon who had fallen afoul of the FCP could go to the Green Gang chief and get him to have the charges dropped. Or, if a casino owner was having trouble competing with a rival gambling house, Huang Jinrong might be asked to help arrange for a raid by the police on the competitor's gaming establishment.⁴⁰

These activities were not so different from gangster behaviour in other cities around the world. What made Shanghai special, and more like Chicago than Calcutta, was the Chinese equivalent of bootlegging during Prohibition: refining and selling narcotics during a period when the national government, with the co-operation of the League of Nations, was ostensibly trying to suppress opium addiction in China.⁴¹ The Shanghai opium trade, plus traffic in morphine and heroine, was estimated to bring in \$6,000,000 per month to whoever controlled the racket in drugs.⁴² The crusading journalist B. L. Simpson reported that

The Shanghai opium trust has its headquarters in the French concession, where its stocks are safely stored under police immunity. More than 20,000 chests of Persian, Turkish and Indian opium are stored there annually. In addition, 1,500 chests of Chinese opium are stored there monthly, bringing a total revenue of 6½ million dollars to those controlling the opium traffic. I could name the street in the French concession where the head depot of this trust is situated. There are 200 foreigners working in and around Shanghai for the opium trust, and 40 miles outside the Shanghai harbour there is a port for trans-shipment of overseas shipments in opium.

The night after this story appeared in *The Peking and Tientsin Times* a young Chinese with spectacles dressed in western-style clothes knocked on Simpson's home in Beijing. He handed him a visiting card, and as the Englishman turned towards the inner light to read the card the young Chinese drew an automatic pistol and shot Simpson dead.⁴³

market (the city) in which to invest." Michael R. Weisser, *Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Europe* (Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester Press, Ltd., 1979), p. 124.

40. Xu Zhucheng, *Du Yuesheng zhengzhuan* (*A Straightforward Biography of Du Yuesheng*) (Hangzhou: Xinhua shudian, 1982), pp. 21–23. Control of gambling is almost always crucial to a racketeer's system of control. William Foote Whyte, *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1943), p. 140.

41. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau, jishi*, p. 49. For a comparative study of crime in Calcutta and three other cities see: Ted Robert Gurr, *Rogues, Rebels, and Reformers: A Political History of Urban Crime and Conflict* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1976). There is an enthralling portrait of a Calcutta *goonda* (hired killers) member in: Dilip K. Basu and James M. Freeman, "Mallabir: life history of a Calcutta gangster" (unpub. ms., 1984).

42. There were said to be about five million addicts in the Yangtze valley alone. Tang Shaoyi, while chairman of the National Anti-Opium Association, estimated that a total of \$1 billion worth of opium was consumed annually in China; of this, perhaps \$40–100 million in drugs passed through Shanghai each year. Martin, "Warlords and gangsters," pp. 2–3. See also: Ilona Ralf Sues, *Shark Fins and Millet* (Garden City: Garden City Publishing Co., 1944), p. 7. The dollar figures are in Mexican silver dollars. See also *The China Weekly Review*, 20 July 1929, p. 323.

43. Pal, *Shanghai Saga*, pp. 41–42.

The sheer volume of the contraband trade surpassed the management capabilities of old-fashioned *wenren* like Huang Jinrong and other older Green Gang leaders. Huang was a traditional *banghui* patriarch, who did not have the imagination to conceive of a monopoly over so vast a traffic, which required too much capital investment for any single wholesale dealer to handle. Instead, he was content to impose a Green Gang levy on opium dens and smugglers, protecting selected groups of traffickers from hijackers and interlopers. But his closest disciple—the man who sat at his side in the morning audiences and packed away the “bigshot’s” fees in his boss’s suitcase—could conceive of such an arrangement.⁴⁴ It was this man—Du Yuesheng, who had started out as an apprentice in a fruit stand in the *nandao*—who deftly modernized the drug trade and created one of the world’s largest illicit cartels.⁴⁵

Du Yuesheng’s monopolization of the Shanghai narcotics trade in the 1920s was mainly a reaction to the SMP crackdown on the traffic in the International Settlement, which drove the distribution network into the French Concession where Huang Jinrong’s Green Gang dominated the Chinese rank-and-file of the police force. It was precipitated, paradoxically, by the momentary disgrace of Huang Jinrong himself, who forever lost the illusion of invulnerability when he was seized in 1924 by the warlords who controlled Shanghai and its hinterland. The occasion for this was an incident provoked by one of Huang Jinrong’s bodyguards, who roughed up the son of Lu Yongxiang, the warlord of Zhejiang, for having insulted Huang’s favourite actress during an opera performance. The warlord’s local ally in the Garrison Command, General He Fenglin, retaliated by sending military detectives to arrest Huang, who was beaten and thrown into a holding cell for several days. Huang’s humiliation not only revealed how helpless the racketeers were in the face of brute military force (a lesson Du Yuesheng never forgot *vis-à-vis* Chiang Kai-shek); it also cost him his reputation among his disciples in the Green Gang. Du Yuesheng arranged for this “teacher’s” release, of course, but he did so by utterly undercutting Huang’s hegemony over the protection racket in order to establish a much more ambitious marketing set-up of his own. Supposedly assembling the wherewithal to ransom his boss, Du brought together Shanghai’s 10 major Cantonese opium wholesalers and persuaded them to invest millions of dollars in a common fund in order to bribe the warlord’s garrison commander into helping them set up an opium monopoly for the entire city. Thereafter, any other wholesale dealers who tried to muscle in had two opponents to face: the Green Gang itself, and the military police of the Garrison Command.⁴⁶

44. Xu Zhucheng, *A Straightforward Biography of Du Yuesheng*, p. 21.

45. Pal, *Shanghai Saga*, p. 72; A.C. Scott, *Actors Are Madmen: Notebook of a Theatregoer in China* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), pp. 60–61; Martin, “Warlords and gangsters,” *passim*.

46. Xu Zhucheng, *A Straightforward Biography of Du Yuesheng*, pp. 22–25.

Huang Jinrong yielded the first line of leadership willingly, retiring from “social affairs” (*shehui shiye*) to “philanthropy” (*cishan*), and his surrender was generously rewarded. In addition to receiving an ample cut of the huge profits skimmed off of the top of the opium cartel’s receipts, he continued to command the FCP Chinese detective squad, seeing to it that higher French municipal officials, probably including Chief Etienne Fiore, received two per cent or more of the narcotics revenues in payoffs of up to \$150,000 a month.⁴⁷ In return, Du Yuesheng’s men were allowed to operate virtually at will, while Du himself – the new “bigshot” of the Green Gang – was appointed to serve on the governing board of the French Concession as a full fledged municipal council member in his own right.⁴⁸

“Cleansing the Party” (*Qing dang*) in 1927

The story of Chiang Kai-shek’s “white terror” in Shanghai, when he turned against the left wing and purged the Kuomintang of its communist members, has been told many times, and it will only be briefly discussed here. After Chiang entered the French Concession in March 1927, when Chinese syndicalists had taken over the police stations in the Chinese sections of Shanghai, he reportedly conferred with Huang Jinrong (to whom he had probably once sworn fealty as a Green Gang member himself) and Du Yuesheng (who was now an honorary member of the French police force).⁴⁹ The two racketeers agreed to provide members of the Green Gang, supported by detectives from the French police, as cadres in the purge that began in the early morning hours of 12 April 1927.⁵⁰ Armed Green Gang activists, now supposedly members of a revolutionary political club called the Chinese Mutual Progress Society (*Zhonghua Gongjin Hui*), were allowed to pass out of the French Concession and through the International Settlement into the Chinese portion of the city known as Zhabei (Chapei), where the syndicalists had established their headquarters.⁵¹ Backed up by regular military units under General Yang Hu, one of Chiang’s most trusted lieutenants, the gangsters and detectives raided left-wing centres during that morning and through

47. Jonathan Marshall, “Opium and the politics of gangsterism in Nationalist China, 1927–1945,” *Bulletin of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (July–September, 1977), p. 33. See also *China Weekly Review*, 30 October 1926, p. 249.

48. Sues, *Shark Fins and Millet*, p. 67.

49. Anonymous, *Chongdang “Si yi er” da tusha de kuaizishou: dengshang Jiang jia wangchao de zhengzhi tai* (1927 *nian*, *ji 40 sui*) (*Playing the Role of an Executioner in the Great Slaughter of 12 April: Climbing Upon the Political Platform of the Chiang Dynasty* (1927, 40 years old) (n.p., n.d.), pp. 2–3; Pal, *Shanghai Saga*, p. 19; Percy Finch, *Shanghai and Beyond* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1953), p. 185.

50. Brian G. Martin, “The Green Gang and ‘party purification’ in Shanghai: Green Gang–Kuomintang Relations, 1926–1927” (Symposium on the Nanking Decade, 1928–1937: Man, Government and Society, Taipei, 15–17 August 1983), p. 33.

51. Zhang Jungu, *Du Yuesheng zhuan, di yi ce* (*A Biography of Du Yuesheng, Volume One*), *Zhuanji wenxue congkan* 9 (Taipei, 1967); Martin, “Tu Yueh-sheng and labour control in Shanghai,” p. 104.

the days that followed, taking the prisoners that they had seized out to be shot.⁵² By late April the White Terror had spread to other coastal cities, and by May Chiang Kai-shek's control over the littoral of Jiangsu and Zhejiang was firmly established.⁵³

As a result of this *coup de main*, much has been made of the great debt that Chiang subsequently owed Du Yuesheng and the Green Gang. But although the Green Gang bosses were given military titles with the rank of major-general (*shaojiang canmou*) in May 1927, Du Yuesheng and Chiang Kai-shek's interests were far from identical.⁵⁴ In fact, Chiang and his military supporters soon found that the special purification committees that had been set up for the Green Gang to "cleanse the party" (*qing dang*) were executing more left-wing "reactionaries" than other Kuomintang leaders could tolerate killing.⁵⁵ One of the reasons, then, for establishing a new police force in the new Chinese Special Municipality of Shanghai, was to bring unrestrained White Terror under control. The other reason – the more public one – was to modernize the Chinese city itself as a way of proving to the Powers that the new Nationalist Government deserved to have the foreign settlements returned to them and extraterritoriality abolished.⁵⁶

Law and Order in the Chinese Municipality

When the new Chinese city government was installed on 7 July 1927, in Zhabei, Chiang Kai-shek attended the inauguration ceremonies and gave the key address himself. Both he and the new mayor, Huang Fu, stressed the same point: the Nationalist Government was going to realize the social construction plans of Sun Yat-sen by creating a modern municipal government to bring law and order to one of the most crime-ridden cities in the entire world.⁵⁷ The imperialist powers had shown by the very failure of their colonial administration in the International Settlement and French Concession that foreign domination, and especially extraterritoriality that

52. Fontenoy, *The Secret Shanghai*, p. 129; Finch, *Shanghai and Beyond*, p. 158.

53. Walter E. Gourlay, "'Yellow' unionism in Shanghai: a study of Kuomintang technique in labor control, 1927–1937," *Papers on China*, Vol. 7 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, Committee on International and Regional Studies, 1953), pp. 106–107.

54. For an impressive list of Du's official titles see: Shanghai Shi Nianjian Weiyuanhui (comps.), *Annual Mirror of Greater Shanghai*, p. X-25.

55. Approximately 5,000 people were killed by the "purification" squads between April and September 1927 in Shanghai alone. Martin, "The Green Gang and 'party purification' in Shanghai," pp. 44–45.

56. Shen Yi, "Shanghai shi gongwujie shi nian" ("Ten years in the Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Works"), Pt 1, *Zhuanji wenxue* (*Biographical Literature*), Vol. 70, No. 2 (August 1970), p. 17.

57. Chiang Kai-shek's speech at the founding of Shanghai on 8 July 1927, from *Shenbao*, cited in Zheng Zu'an, "Guomindang zhengfu 'da Shanghai jihua' shimo" ("The Kuomintang Government's 'plan for a greater Shanghai' from beginning to end"), in Wang Pengcheng *et al.* (comps.), *Shanghai shi yanjiu* (*Research in the History of Shanghai*) (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 1984), p. 209.

gave haven to Chinese criminals fleeing the central government's justice, only aided and abetted crime. Under foreign rule, Shanghai had become a cess-pit of corruption, filled with more prostitutes, drug addicts, and common criminals per capita than any other city in the world.⁵⁸ But now that the Nationalists had taken power, this would supposedly come to an end—at least in the Chinese portions of the city.⁵⁹ The new municipal authorities believed that within a brief period of time, they would be proving to the foreign powers in China that they could exert rational control where the Shanghai Municipal Council and the French Ratepayers Association could not prevail.⁶⁰

This was not the Nationalists' theme alone. In founding "Greater Shanghai," the warlord Sun Chuanfang had remarked that "only by proving that they could administer a town as well as the foreigners would the Chinese be able to prove their right to recover the administration of the foreign settlements."⁶¹ But the new Kuomintang Government claimed not only that enforcing law and order would justify their recovery of sovereignty; carrying out urban reform in general, through efforts in city planning, public health administration, and population registration, would also constitute proof positive that Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People could be used to modernize the country and create the New China.⁶²

The main agents of modernization in this ambitious municipal reform programme were to be the police. From the very foundation of the new special municipality, a key aspect of urban reform, both for Huang Fu and later mayors, was the formation in the first place of a modern professional police force in Shanghai, modelled both upon the best of foreign police forces in Japan, Europe and the United States, and upon the reformed police departments of North China. The initial efforts to "clean up" the Shanghai native police force, in

58. James S. Lee, *The Underworld of the East, Being Eighteen Years' Actual Experiences of the Underworlds, Drug Haunts and Jungles of India, China, and the Malay Archipelago* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., preface dated 1935), p. 238; Ernest O. Hauser, *Shanghai: City for Sale* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1940), pp. 268–69. In 1937, of the 349,744 women in the International Settlement, 25,000 were believed to be practising prostitution. *The China Critic*, 1 April 1937, p. 7.

59. *China Weekly Review*, No. 42 (17 September 1927), p. 78. The Chinese authorities asked the consular body of the Municipal Council to close down the brothels established on streets along the Settlement borders. *Ibid.* 20 August 1927, p. 316.

60. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau, jishi*, pp. 52–53. The foreign community was certainly sensitive to its own vulnerability on the prostitution issue. "One of the publicly announced reasons for maintaining the present foreign regime in Shanghai is that the place would quickly go to ruin if the Chinese were running it, but we doubt seriously if there is another city anywhere in China under Chinese control where such a spectacle of public prostitution is presented on the public streets every night in the week and every week in the year!" *The China Weekly Review*, 5 January 1929, p. 226.

61. Sun Chuanfang supposedly told the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in May 1926 that: "I am ashamed every time I cross the border from the foreign settlements into ours as I see the contrast between their good and our bad management." O.M. Green (ed.), *Shanghai of Today: A Souvenir Album of Thirty-Eight Vandyke Prints of the "Model Settlement"* (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd., 1927), p. 10.

62. Shen Yi, "Ten years in the Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Works," Pt 1, p. 17.

fact, were coloured by a general distrust of southerners in general and of the wily Shanghainese in particular. Many of the police officials appointed to the new Public Safety Bureau during 1927–28 were northerners, graduated from Baoding Military Academy, trained in Japanese police schools, and broken in by duty as military police adjutants in the north-east.⁶³ They preferred to recruit their men from provinces like Hebei and Shandong, where the farm boys were believed to be bigger, stronger and more honest than southerners.⁶⁴

Northerners were also held to be less intelligent than those clever *huatou* (slippery fellows) from Shanghai or Ningbo. But this was not necessarily a bad thing. The Shanghainese who dominated the detective squads were too smart for their own good.⁶⁵ As far as reform was concerned, a group of “sincere and honest” (*laoshi*) patrolmen from the north would be a far more reliable cadre to rely upon than local officers. They might have trouble communicating with local inhabitants speaking the Shanghai dialect, but northern patrolmen would certainly be able to man the Japanese-style police-box system, which had been at the heart of the new law enforcement system in Baoding and Tianjin. Police boxes, linked by telephone to precinct headquarters, depended upon the visible presence of a uniformed policeman to prevent crime in the making, rather than on the verbal skills of a plainclothes detective sent out to catch criminals after the felony had been committed.⁶⁶ Furthermore, linguistic incompetence was a kind of shield against the corruption that everyone knew infested the former Shanghai police forces.⁶⁷ In that regard, the policemen that these officers brought in were more like an army of occupation than a domestically recruited constabulary. Special

63. The school backgrounds of higher-ranking officers in the Shanghai PSB in 1932 included the Beijing School of Law and Administration, the Jiangsu Police Training Institute, the Baoding Police Training Institute, the Central Military Academy's Military Police School, the Beiyang Police Academy, and so forth. *Shanghai Municipality Public Safety Bureau Report of Affairs*, Vol. 5 (July 1931–June 1932), pp. 257–94.

64. In 1930, of the approximately 6,000 PSB policemen, 1,550 came from Hebei; 1,540 from Shandong; 640 from Jiangsu; 380 from Anhui; 250 from Henan; 145 from Zhejiang; and 110 from Hunan. The rest of the provinces provided less than 100 apiece. *Shanghai Municipality Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 3 (July 1929–June 1930), table after p. 56. The SMP also preferred recruits from Shandong, Hunan, and Hubei because of their superior physiques and conduct. “The Shanghai Municipal police,” Pt 2, *The North China Herald and South China and China Gazette*, 31 December 1909, p. 801.

65. The rivalry between northerners and southerners thus fitted into a familiar rivalry between patrolmen and detectives, characteristic of almost all police forces. William A. Westley, *Violence and the Police: A Sociological Study of Law, Custom and Morality* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, England: The MIT Press, 1970), p. 43.

66. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau*, *jishi*, p. 42. For the location of each of the precinct stations, see the organizational chart in *ibid. zuzhi*.

67. Shanghai—the South itself—was a corrupting force as such. Marshal Sun Chuanfang once told Qi Xieyuan that it was unwise for an army to remain too long in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, lest the luxurious life there turn them soft. George E. Sokolsky, “What stops progress in Nanking?” *North China Daily News*, 16 November 1928, pp. 14, 18.

missions were even sent off to Beiping to recruit volunteers either from among the former capital's police force or from among young men—many of them from Manchu banner families—seeking decent employment.⁶⁸

Of course, some constables were recruited locally as well. Their bad habits, however, were to be transformed by the training system set up by the new police administration.⁶⁹ Three- and six-month courses were opened using the same kinds of curricula developed in the northern training schools.⁷⁰ Although these were widely touted at the time as guaranteeing the formation of a literate, well-behaved, responsible and incorruptible police force, officials later admitted that there were not enough training sessions to fill the spaces left by the large numbers of cadets who resigned after they discovered what a dangerous, poorly paid, and low-status job a policemen's lot was.⁷¹

These new professional policemen were nonetheless expected to reform a multitude of functions under the new regime.⁷² In addition to operating fire-fighting units, the police were entrusted with the enforcement of public health regulations and the licensing of businesses.⁷³ They were also given responsibility for the inspection of buildings (a job that came under the Works Office but that depended upon policemen for enforcement), and the general policing of the public.⁷⁴ Long before the New Life movement formally started in

68. E.g., Northern policemen were brought in from Beiping in May 1932 to re-occupy Zhabei after the Japanese occupation was ended. Extract from the French police intelligence report dated 16 May 1932, in: Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-3648, 18 May 1932. See also *Chinese Affairs: Weekly Survey of Important Events*, 30 June 1932, p. 48. Recruitment of policemen in Beiping was also carried out at the urging of Dr Rudolph Muck, the Austrian police adviser to the Nationalist Government. *Ibid.* D-3433, 1 April 1932. For Dr Muck, see *Shanghai Municipality Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 5 (July 1931–June 1932), p. 257.

69. *Shanghai Municipality Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 3 (July 1929–June 1930), pp. 131–32.

70. *Ibid.* Vol. 4 (July 1930–June 1931), p. 68.

71. Policemen—whom the public often called “native dogs” (*ben quan*)—were constantly under fire, and every police officer in Shanghai carried a gun, with orders to take the safety catch off when going on duty. “Inside story of the police,” in Qian Shengke (ed.), *Shanghai heimu huibian*, Vol. 1, p. 1. See also Pal, *Shanghai Saga*, p. 13; Sanders Carney, *Foreign Devils Had Light Eyes: A Memoir of Shanghai, 1933–1939* (Ontario: Dorset Publishing, 1980), p. 16. Many PSB men were killed in the line of duty (“Shanghai, a key to peace,” *North China Daily News*, 29 August 1933); between July 1930 and June 1931, 4 officers and 61 patrolmen were murdered. *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 4 (July 1930–June 1931), table after p. 66.

72. For a list of the duties of the various sections of the Shanghai PSB, see Shanghai Shi Nianjian Weiyuanhui (comps.), *Annual Mirror of Greater Shanghai*, pp. F26–F29.

73. The police requested that public health affairs be put entirely under their jurisdiction in 1930. *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 3 (July 1929–June 1930), pp. 128–29.

74. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau*, *jishi*, p. 63; Christian Henriot, “Le gouvernement municipal de Shanghai, 1927–1937” (Ph.D. thesis, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, June 1983), p. 131. For a similar, and even longer, list of service responsibilities for a U.S. police force in a midwestern city, see Westley, *Violence and the Police: A Sociological Study of Law, Custom and Morality*, pp. 17–18.

1934, the Shanghai PSB began trying to “reform” (*gaishan*) urban mores and “rectify customs” (*zheng su*) by having people observe proper dress codes (no bare chests and underwear during the hot summer months), behave decorously in public (no loud singing in restaurants and tea houses), and curb offensive personal habits (no spitting on pavements or blowing one’s nose out into the street).⁷⁵

Two sets of responsibilities deserve special mention. One was the task of registering the urban population of the Special Chinese Municipality of Shanghai.⁷⁶ This job was taken very seriously, partly because it enabled the PSB to maintain some form of control over the large portion of the urban population that consisted of transient renters and whose names never normally showed up on ratepayers’ lists.⁷⁷ The registration records still exist in the form of aggregate data, and if the constancy with which the chief of the PSB harangued his precinct captains to gather these data district by district is any indication, the statistical information was surprisingly reliable.⁷⁸ The registration was supposed to be coupled with the neighbourhood responsibility system formally called *baojia*, but in fact this aspect of *hu cha* (household investigation) was not at first enforced.⁷⁹ (Later, during the Japanese occupation in the Second World War, *baojia* was rigidly implemented, with the puppet police actually closing off streets and starving the populace if that particular neighbourhood’s residents had committed crimes.)⁸⁰

What the police did try to enforce was an injunction against illegal dwellings like squatters’ shacks and sheds, especially along the waterfront where the “loafer” population was so huge and proved to be such a noisome nuisance to travellers disembarking from the long-distance ferries that carried passengers from the hinterland down the Yangtze.⁸¹ Arriving visitors were usually accosted at the bottom of the gang-plank by a horde of shrill *liumang* who would forcibly grab the luggage from their hands and march the hapless strangers off to a non-licensed “hotel” where the bills would be padded until the bumpkins had been systematically fleeced of all their money and could be thrown out onto the pavement to join the rest of the urban

75. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau, jishi*, pp. 19–20, 46.

76. *Ibid. jishi*, pp. 43–44.

77. *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 5, p. 55.

78. There has been very little sociological analysis using crime data from Chinese cities. One of the exceptions is Yen Ching-yueh, “Crime in relation to social change in China,” *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (1934–35), pp. 298–308.

79. *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 5, p. 55.

80. “Progress re enforcement of pao chia system in the Settlement,” Report, 7 April 1942, in Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) files, No. N-1437-1-(6), Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, p. 1; *Jingcha faling (Police Laws)* (n.p., n.d. [c. 1944, published evidently by the Wang Jingwei Ministry of Interior]), pp. 121–30.

81. Wu Te-chen [Wu Tiecheng], “Greater Shanghai places emphasis on social reconstruction, welfare; good start now well on way to success,” *The China Press Double Tenth Supplement*, Shanghai (1935), p. 49.

poor.⁸² Police chief after police chief (the turnover was very rapid, about one a year) attempted to solve this problem by offering “loafers” amnesties and by haranguing them into respectability.⁸³ But, lacking other opportunities for employment, especially after 1931, this stratum of the city’s population continued to resist police harassment and to evade registration.

The PSB’s second major task was to try to regain “police rights” or “police sovereignty” (*jing quan*) over the outer roads that the westerners had thrust out beyond the existing boundaries of the International Settlement and French Concession.⁸⁴ This process had been going on since the early 1900s.⁸⁵ Without securing the permission of the Chinese authorities, and in a fashion that the Committee of Consuls later deemed illegal, the Shanghai Municipal Council issued permits authorizing the construction of roads far into territory west of the existing settlements. Once the roads were built, the SMC claimed that this constituted territory under its jurisdiction.⁸⁶ Thereafter, the SMP patrolled the outer roads, which—like Jessfield Road or Bubbling Well Road that now runs out to Hongqiao Airport—became favoured spots for building large villas and English estates as a kind of suburban area grew up for the wealthiest of Shanghai’s foreign residents.⁸⁷

Now the new Nationalist PSB, determined to carry on the Kuomintang revolution in the best spirit of Sun Yat-sen, set out to challenge the SMC’s claims of jurisdiction over these fingers of extraterritoriality extending deep into Chinese territory.⁸⁸ Beginning in 1928 there was one confrontation after another between PSB policemen and SMP patrols.⁸⁹ Simultaneously, the PSB, in conjunction with the Works Bureau and the City Planning Office of the Special Chinese Municipality, began to force the occupants of the large homes in the new suburbs to apply for building licences any time an extension or improvement was added to the property.⁹⁰ When the

82. *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 3, p. 168.

83. See, for a brief account of each chief, Henriot, “Le gouvernement municipal de Shanghai, 1927–1937,” pp. 175–77, 375–76.

84. Shanghai Shi Nianjian Wei-yuanhui (comps.), *Annual Mirror of Greater Shanghai*, H4.

85. Xu Gongsu and Qiu Jinzhang, “Shanghai gonggong zujie zhidu” (“The system of the Shanghai International Settlement”), in *Shanghai shi ziliao congkan: Shanghai gonggong zujie shigao* (Collection of Shanghai Historical Materials: Draft History of the Shanghai International Settlement) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1980), p. 18.

86. Shanghai Shi Nianjian Wei-yuanhui (comps.), *Annual Mirror of Greater Shanghai*, p. H4.

87. Green (ed.), *Shanghai of Today: A Souvenir Album of Thirty-Eight Vandyke Prints of the “Model Settlement,”* p. 11.

88. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau, jishi*, p. 35. The Nanjing Government asked for the abolition of extraterritoriality in the spring of 1929. Hauser, *Shanghai: City for Sale*, pp. 189–91.

89. Friction seemed to reach a high point in August 1930. *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 4, *huiyi*, p. 8.

90. *Ibid.* Vol. 4, pp. 83–85.

owners disputed this interference, the Foreign Affairs Bureau of the local Kuomintang Shanghai Office would invariably become involved, elevating the issue of “national sovereignty” (*guo quan*) to the diplomatic level.⁹¹

The Chinese police force’s aggressive participation in a rights recovery movement, incidentally, gave the “imperialists” in the International Settlement a pretext to increase their own counterpart police department budgets. The SMP cost the ratepayers of the Shanghai Municipal Council about 3,000,000 taels per year (that is, just under gold \$2,000,000). Despite this heavy fiscal burden, Commissioner E. I. N. Barrett asked in March 1929 that the manpower of the SMP be substantially increased. He made no bones about the strategy behind his wish to hire more policemen. “One of the principal aims which the Shanghai municipality hopes to accomplish in operating a large Police Force is to perfect an organization which shall make it as difficult as possible for the Chinese community to regain possession of the Settlement.”⁹²

The diplomatic correspondence of the period 1927–31 is accordingly peppered with jurisdictional conflicts between the International Settlement SMP and the Chinese Special Municipality’s PSB over police sovereignty. During those years the Public Safety Bureau clearly enjoyed to the full its reputation as an anti-imperialist force pledged to recover national rights from the foreigners. Once, in fact, a state of serious emergency was created when a group of PSB men returning from a parade drill in the *nanshi* was halted by a French policeman and his Annamese assistants. Like the Sikhs, the Annamese were hated for serving as collaborators with the foreigners, and their presence may have helped provoke the Chinese policemen.⁹³ Whatever the ultimate cause, the result was a fracas in which the French officer was dragged over a bridge into Chinese territory and was badly beaten by the PSB officers. Consular intervention at the highest level helped prevent a major international incident.⁹⁴

The Shanghai PSB’s efforts to recover “police rights” represented national aspirations as much as municipal prerogatives. There was no conflict between the two perspectives in this case, but in other situations the contradiction between the Nanjing Government’s efforts to centralize its control and the municipality’s attempts to establish its own identity and privileges was quite intense. One area of

91. Report by the Shanghai consul-general, 15 September 1928, in *Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of China, 1910–1929*, roll 68, 893.00, *Political Affairs*, Vol. 70, p. 2.

92. *China Weekly Review*, 30 March 1929, p. 176.

93. “The Vietnamese policemen looked more ridiculous. There are no Orientals as puny and ill-suited to wearing a uniform as the Vietnamese.” Ch’ien Chung-shu, *Fortress Besieged*, translated by Jeanne Kelly and Nathan K. Mao (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1979), pp. 132–33.

94. The incident occurred on 23 April 1935. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-6677, 26 April 1935.

competition was in city planning, involving the resources required to build up a new port north of the old Bund and connect it to a railway spur running through Jiangwan. Another, more complicated zone of dispute involved the ultimate usage of the police of Shanghai. Was the PSB to be an agency for municipal modernization? Or was it to serve as an instrument of Nationalist administrative centralization and a tool of Kuomintang political suppression?

The Police as Instruments of Vertical Integration

Although Chiang Kai-shek had established a national capital in Nanjing by the autumn of 1927, and although his Northern Expedition had reached Beijing by the following summer, the country was only nominally unified. Even in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, the two provinces that Chiang directly controlled, his appointed officials often were unable to penetrate the entrenched defences of local elites that had managed in the course of the previous half-century to displace regular county magistrates by taking on fiscal and judicial junctions of their own. Clearly, Chiang's most pressing need, next to securing sources of government income to pay his armies, was to find or create institutional forms and personnel to link the polity, which had become severed from most parts of agrarian China, with the society beneath.⁹⁵

One instrument of centralization was the army; and, as Tien Hung-mao has shown, in the Bandit Suppression zones where Chiang's Military Affairs Commission and Anti-Bolshevik Leagues were permitted full sway, government officials were able to breach the defences of the *tuhao* (local magnates) and reach the peasantry directly.⁹⁶ In urban areas, the same sort of penetration was supposed to be effected by the police—an instrument of control that in Chiang Kai-shek's view should ultimately be in the hands of the central government. In Chiang's own experience as *xiaozhang* (school leader or president) of the Whampoa Academy, which had trained the Nationalist cadets most fiercely loyal to him, a training or education programme under the national government would be the most effective way of creating central police cadres to bring the cities of China under Nanjing's domination.⁹⁷

Consequently, a programme of national police reform was launched

95. Mary Backus Rankin, *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in China: Zhejiang Province, 1865–1911* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), pp. 307–308.

96. Hung-mao Tien, *Government and Politics in Kuomintang China, 1927–1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 60. But see, for a different interpretation: William Wei, *Counterrevolution in China: The Nationalists in Jiangxi during the Soviet Period* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985), p. 159.

97. Frank Ki Chun Yee, "Police in modern China" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1942), pp. 38–39.

beginning in 1930.⁹⁸ Foreign police advisers, mainly from Germany and Japan, were invited to come to work for the Nationalist Government and help train professional police officers.⁹⁹ At the same time, ambitious young Chinese Kuomintang members were encouraged to go abroad to study municipal law and government in order to modernize urban administration. Some of these students were sent to the United States to enrol in the programme in public administration at the University of Michigan; and of these, two men – Frank Yee (Yu Xiuhao) and Feng Yukun – made their way from Michigan to Berkeley in the early 1930s to study modern police methods under the University of California's first professor of criminology and the "father of modern police professionalization," August Vollmer.¹⁰⁰

August Vollmer and the Berkeley Police Model

Vollmer, who had served in the U.S. Army in the Philippines conducting counter-insurgency measures against the Huks, had been elected town marshal of Berkeley in 1905. Although very young for the job, Vollmer earned accolades after dramatically closing down a gambling parlour on Dwight Way despite the Chinese owner's attempt to bribe him with a lucrative but illicit property deal, and after organizing militia to police the tent cities of refugees come over from San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake. Under his guidance, the Berkeley city police force introduced a series of innovations – mostly of Vollmer's own invention – that revolutionized police procedures throughout the United States: deploying constables on bicycles to run down criminals, installing residential burglar alarms, creating a *modus operandi* file, developing advanced fingerprint sorting techniques, installing short wave radios in patrol cars, devising a polygraph "lie detector," copying the use of medical examinations in the Army to screen applicants, designing distinctive military-style uniforms, employing telephone call boxes on the policemen's "beat," and recruiting college graduates to serve as patrolmen on the Berkeley force.¹⁰¹

As the fame of Vollmer and his "V-men" spread, the Berkeley police chief was invited by citizen's committees to "professionalize" big-city police departments in Los Angeles and Detroit by cleaning up corruption, graft and mismanagement. Soon, Vollmer was invited to join Berkeley's Department of Political Science as the University of California's first professor of criminology; Berkeley criminology

98. A national commission of police experts was established in 1928 but it eventually atrophied. Frank Ki Chun Yee, "Police in modern China," pp. 30–33.

99. William C. Kirby, *Germany and Republican China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), p. 137.

100. Gene E. Carte and Elaine H. Carte, *Police Reform in the United States: the Era of August Vollmer, 1905–1932* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 3; Alfred E. Parker, *Crime Fighter: August Vollmer* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1961), pp. 1–22.

101. Parker, *Crime Fighter: August Vollmer*, pp. 1–22.

students were encouraged to join the Berkeley police force as patrolmen for practical on-the-job training; and some of Vollmer's own protégés, like Orlando Wilson, went on to become criminology professors and high-ranking police officials on their own in cities like Chicago and Philadelphia.¹⁰²

More than any other single figure, August Vollmer – a big, bluff man of German parentage who was absolutely incorruptible – stood for a form of forward-looking, purely American, managerial efficiency and “expertise” in police work.¹⁰³ Like the apostle of American efficiency, Frederick W. Taylor, he represented in his own eyes progressive social values, pragmatic rationality and professional responsibility. Through his books and lectures, Vollmer depicted police work as a scientific struggle against social pathology: the blue-coated policeman fought crime in the same way the white-smocked physician combated organic disease.¹⁰⁴ The warfare was national – even global – because modern technology gave criminals the means they needed to spread beyond the local communities that traditionally harboured them.¹⁰⁵ The widespread use of the motor car permitted crime in one jurisdiction to be followed by instant flight to another, whether from California to Nevada or from Jiangsu to Zhejiang.¹⁰⁶ Vollmer therefore not only called for the strengthening of state police forces and highway patrols; he also lobbied in favour of what eventually became the Federal Bureau of Investigation.¹⁰⁷ When Vollmer was elected president of the International Association of Police Chiefs in 1922, he called for a worldwide effort to combat crime, and within the United States proper he urged that thought be given to the creation of a national police force, empowered to act across state lines.¹⁰⁸ Vollmer did believe that a “state ministry of justice to which would be delegated the complete management and control of all police” might “seem too novel and too far removed from the established customs of police administration” in a federal system like the United States, but in due course he vigorously endorsed the recommendations of the Police Chiefs’ Committee that he chaired, which urged the Congress to endow the newly formed Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

102. *Ibid.* pp. 35–60.

103. August Vollmer and Alfred E. Parker, *Crime and the State Police* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1935), p. viii.

104. Policemen were also society's soldiers, engaged in waging a “war against crime.” *Ibid.* p. 6.

105. “We’re in a big job, Jack,” Vollmer told a friend of his. “We’re fighting a war against the enemies of society. We can’t do it without knowledge.” Parker, *Crime Fighter: August Vollmer*, p. 77.

106. The detective squad of the PSB attributed the rise in Shanghai crime rates to the appearance of the motor car, which made it possible for felons to escape at fast speeds into nearby Zhejiang. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau, jishi*, p. 55.

107. Vollmer and Parker, *Crime and the State Police*, p. 77.

108. Gene E. Carte and Elaine H. Carte, *Police Reform in the United States: the Era of August Vollmer, 1905–1932*, p. 56.

with much more authority and a much larger budget than the old Investigation Bureau had ever enjoyed.¹⁰⁹

Vollmer's model police forces, curiously enough, were national agencies constructed along colonial lines, like "the highly efficient state police organization" of the island state of Ceylon.¹¹⁰ He had high praise for the British-officered Iraqi Police; and the three police forces that he admired most in the United States and its dependencies were the Panama Canal Zone Police, the Puerto Rican Police and the Philippines Constabulary.¹¹¹ All of these were sufficiently endowed with authority to fight crime effectively, and they all kept in close touch with other police agencies around the world engaged in the global struggle against narcotics, prostitution and anarchism – which Vollmer tended to see as a kind of psychological derangement or alienation. Policemen everywhere shared a common international enemy, and as world communications advanced, law enforcement officers would have to devise their own global networks and affiliations.¹¹² Vollmer thus welcomed criminology students from abroad, and either personally acted as a police adviser to other country's police forces (such as when he attended to the Cuban dictator Machado's security services) or else sent his lieutenants abroad to act in his stead (such as when Captain A. Woods of the Berkeley Police was deputed to Nanjing to help reform the Nationalist police system).¹¹³

Vollmer's Chinese Students

Feng Yukun and Frank Yee flourished in Berkeley, not only because they enjoyed learning about the latest advances in police work and crime detection, but because they were also personally very close to their professor, Chief Vollmer.¹¹⁴ Both men served on the Berkeley police force, and after their training was completed, they returned to China determined – as Yee put it in one of his frequent letters to Vollmer – to see that "the Berkeley System and Spirit are transplanted here."¹¹⁵ On their return Feng and Yee were invited to serve as advisers to the Shanghai Public Safety Bureau, but they were more strongly attracted to positions as professors in the newly expanded

109. Vollmer and Parker, *Crime and the State Police*, pp. 8–9; Parker, *Crime Fighter: August Vollmer*, p. 123.

110. Vollmer and Parker, *Crime and the State Police*, pp. 134–35.

111. *Ibid.* p. 140.

112. Arthur Woods, "Some aspects of training for police service," *Police Journal*, No. 2 (1929), p. 365.

113. Parker, *Crime Fighter: August Vollmer*, pp. 168–70.

114. August Vollmer, Correspondence and Papers (Bancroft Library CB-403), letters from Feng Yukon, letter dated 3 December 1933.

115. August Vollmer, Correspondence, letters from Frank Yee, letter dated 25 July 1934.

Zhejiang Provincial Police Academy, located in the lovely city of Hangzhou.¹¹⁶

The Hangzhou Police Academy offered both men an excellent opportunity to put into practice the lessons they had learned at the University of California. There was one other foreign-trained “expert” in the school: a Chinese criminologist who had studied French police methods in Lyons. But his particular speciality was forensic medicine and chemistry. Consequently, police training and administration were left to the two Berkeley students, who set up classes for police cadets, introduced training for policewomen, and established a curriculum modelled on the system Vollmer used in his classes in California. Just as in Berkeley, the Hangzhou Academy criminology professors sought to strengthen ties between the police school and the local city police force. Yee reported to “Chief” Vollmer that, shortly after taking over as head of training classes, he had persuaded the director of the academy to form a close liaison with the municipal police. Soon, the Hangzhou Police were conducting American-style “beats” along the West Lake in an experiment which proved that crime rates dropped as long as the patrols were maintained.¹¹⁷

Equipment was always in short supply, of course, and Yee and Feng had to put up with some of the more “backward” tactics and techniques of other police officers and instructors who had not benefited from the latest scientific training in law enforcement. During the summer, when Yee led his cadets on “practice” training missions in the mountains at Lushan, where Chiang Kai-shek passed his holidays far from the humid heat of Nanjing, the fledgling policemen were given an opportunity to track down and arrest criminals. Some of these “rascals” were thought to be Communists, and Yee sent back to the United States for lie detectors to interrogate them, believing that this would be a more efficient way of finding out if they were lying than by questioning them with the sorts of third-degree methods Vollmer abhorred.¹¹⁸

Chiang Kai-shek had favoured Feng Yukun with a private audience when he returned from abroad after his graduation from the Berkeley programme.¹¹⁹ Later, he came to know of Frank Yee as well, and had both of the returned police students brief him about national law enforcement training programmes in the United States. These briefings must have included reports on the FBI courses for training

116. August Vollmer, Correspondence, letters from Feng Yukon, letter dated 25 March 1934.

117. August Vollmer, Correspondence, letters from Frank Yee, letters dated 30 June, 25 July, 10 September, 13 November and 18 December 1934; 22 January, 6 April and 18 June 1935; and 27 April 1936.

118. August Vollmer, Correspondence, letters from Frank Yee, letters dated 30 June 1934, and 6 April 1935.

119. This was in July 1932. Feng presented Chiang with two papers: one on the condition of police forces around the world, and the other on the state of local Chinese police departments. August Vollmer, Correspondence, letters from Feng Yukon, letter dated 2 August 1932.

local American police chiefs because not long after this the Ministry of Interior began to consider implementing a similar programme in China. If an institute for training and indoctrinating local public safety bureau chiefs could be coupled with the formation of a national police academy, then the instruments would be at hand for national political integration and administrative centralization – at least in the realm of police organization and law enforcement.¹²⁰

Beginning in 1934 Chiang Kai-shek authorized the merging of the Zhejiang Police Academy and the Jiangsu Provincial Police Academy to form a National Police Officers Academy in Nanjing. Vollmer's former students were then transferred to the central organ, which was under the direction of China's leading police expert, Li Shizhen.¹²¹ While Frank Yee was put in charge of overall training and ordered to set up a special Foreign Affairs Police, Feng Yukun was made chief of the Police Administration Department (Jing Zheng Ke) of the Ministry of Interior, which began to bring police chiefs from throughout China for retraining by the central government.¹²² Frank Yee reported to Vollmer that from 15 September 1936 on "high police officers from all parts of China will receive an intensive refresher training in the academy" in Nanjing, while other police officers would be attending a special summer training programme at Lushan where the syllabus would be Yee's writings, including translations of Vollmer's texts on American police systems.¹²³

Undermining the Shanghai Public Safety Bureau: Drugs

Two of Vollmer's three international scourges were illicit narcotics and revolutionary anarchism. Both of these assailed the Shanghai PSB in real and imaginary ways, and in the end they – and the obsessions they engendered – vitiated the bureau's ability to carry out the modernizing and nationalizing missions Huang Fu and Chiang Kai-shek had set for the Shanghai police in the first place.

The new PSB was determined in 1927 to help stamp out the traffic in drugs, and its leaders vowed to give full support to the national

120. Frank Yee, "Police in modern China," pp. 38–39. August Vollmer, Correspondence, letters from Frank Yee, letter dated 22 January 1935.

121. A 1924 graduate of the Whampoa Military Academy, Li Shizhen had completed a regular training course at the Japanese Police Academy in 1931 after service as commander of the Peace Preservation Corps of Zhejiang. *Who's Who in China* (6th edit.) (Shanghai: China Weekly Review, 1950), p. 129.

122. Zhang Weihuan, "Dai Li yu 'Juntong ju'" ("Dai Li and the Military Statistics Bureau"), in Wenshi Ziliao Yanjiu Weiyuanhui (eds.), *Zhejiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* (*Selections of Historical Materials from Zhejiang*), No. 23 (Zhejiang: Renmin chubanshe, 1982), p. 89. Yee's training materials were eventually published as a police manual. Yu Xiuhao, *Jingcha shouce* (*Police Handbook*) (Shanghai: Shanghai jingsheng shuju, 1948).

123. August Vollmer, Correspondence, letters from Frank Yee, letter dated 10 September 1936. See also the letter dated 27 October 1936, for plans to train the deans of police schools all around China.

opium suppression effort that was launched that same year.¹²⁴ Throughout 1928 the PSB co-operated with the Customs Service in seizing and destroying shipments of opium, heroin and other narcotics smuggled through Shanghai. As the countrywide campaign stepped up in 1929, the national government convened an Opium Suppression Conference that autumn in Nanjing to co-operate efforts to wipe out the traffic in narcotics within a couple of years. A few weeks later the leader of the Opium Suppression Committee received a tip from his sponsor, the “Christian warlord” Feng Yuxiang, that a major shipment of opium was going to be unloaded on the night of 21 November at the wharves along the Chinese Bund of Shanghai. The tip was passed on to the Shanghai PSB authorities, and on the night in question bureau policemen were carefully hidden away in the shadows between the wharves and the warehouses beyond. Soon a Chinese lighter pulled up alongside the docks, and crews of coolies, flanked by armed guards, began to carry chests of the drug ashore. At a signal, the PSB agents rushed out to arrest the convoy, blowing their whistles and shouting that they were policemen. To their surprise, the guards around the convoy instantly flourished badges of their own that proclaimed them detectives of the Garrison Command, and began shooting at the civilian policemen. The PSB agents shot back, but although they were able to seize the shipment of drugs, which consisted of 23,000 ounces—millions of dollars worth—of opium, the military policemen escaped unscathed.¹²⁵

As soon as news of this fracas hit the Shanghai press, it was obvious that the Chinese PSB chief and Mayor Zhang Dingfan (a member of Bai Chongxi’s Guangxi clique) were in serious difficulty.¹²⁶ The military garrison commander, Xiong Shihui, was also identified as a Guangxi man, but he was even more visibly known to be a member of Chiang Kai-shek’s personal clique; and whether or not the Generalissimo knew of the drug shipment (many thought that he did, and that “Chiang’s opium” was going to be used to finance arms purchases), he would surely want to protect his own army lieutenants.¹²⁷ Such was indeed the case. In the end, after a desultory investigation, the central government refused to support the Shanghai municipal authorities. Both the Chinese mayor of the city and the chief of the PSB felt obliged to resign at the end of December 1928, and the consensus of

124. The Shanghai Opium Suppression Bureau opened 21 August 1927 in the old coal merchants guild in *nanshi*. The director was the chief of the PSB. *Shanghai Municipal Gazette*, 16 September 1927, p. 320.

125. “Editorial,” *North China Herald*, 5 January 1929; Henriot, “Le gouvernement municipal de Shanghai, 1927–1937,” p. 348.

126. Diana Lary, *Region and Nation: The Kwangsi Clique in Chinese Politics, 1925–1937* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 138.

127. Henriot, “Le gouvernement municipal de Shanghai, 1927–1937,” p. 66. For gun-running in general, see: Anthony B. Chan, *Arming the Chinese: The Western Armaments Trade in Warlord China, 1920–1928* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1982), pp. 67–108. For Shanghai in particular, see Finch, *Shanghai and Beyond*, pp. 71–72, and Pal, *Shanghai Saga*, pp. 79–80.

public opinion at the time was that their successors would neither dare to challenge the opium syndicate because of its close connection with central government leaders, nor would they feel obliged any more to turn down the usual bribes and blandishments that had suborned members of the foreign police forces in the city. The head of the Opium Suppression Committee also resigned because he discovered that Feng Yuxiang had told him about the drug shipment only because he, Feng, had secretly been hoarding stocks of Gansu opium and wanted to drive the price of the drug up in Shanghai by forcing his rival's supply off of the market.¹²⁸

Undermining the Shanghai Public Safety Bureau: Reds

The second scourge, "radicalism," was in some ways of the PSB's own making. The new chief of public safety, Yuan Liang, was fiercely anti-communist, and under his guidance in 1929 and 1930 the Bureau devoted considerable attention to keeping the "reactionaries" – which included members of the Left-wing Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party – under tight control.¹²⁹ In addition to censoring the press and seizing radical publications in bookshops and publishing houses, the PSB routinely monitored public meetings and assemblies, and tried to keep track of student activists.¹³⁰ In 1931, however, this concern turned into an obsession. Suddenly, "reds" (*chi*) were to be found everywhere, constantly threatening public order and tranquility.¹³¹ The Chinese Nationalist authorities in Shanghai were convinced that radical leaders were gathered at hand ready to use any opportunity to stir the masses to action.¹³² These fears were focused upon the anniversaries of important revolutionary moments in history – the October Revolution, the death of Sun Yat-sen, the commemoration of the 1911 Revolution – with the month of May (the May Fourth Movement, the May 30th Movement, and so on) provoking the most hysteria. Orders would go out to precinct stations

128. Military attaché's comments on current events, 1–15 December 1928, in U.S. Military Intelligence Reports, China 1911–1941, reel 1, foot 85.

129. Zeng Kuoqing, "He Mei xieding qian Fuxingshe zai Huabei de huodong" ("The activities of the Fuxingshe in north China before the He-Umezu Agreement"), in Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, Wenshi Ziliao Yanjiu Weiyuanhui (eds.), *Wenshi ziliao xuanji (Selections of Historical Materials)*, fascicle 14 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, February 1961), pp. 138–39. Numerous societies were closed down and magazines were banned by the PSB in Shanghai in 1930. Neale Hunter, "The Chinese League of Left-Wing Writers, Shanghai, 1930–1936" (Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, August 1973), p. 111.

130. *Summary of the Affairs of the Shanghai Special Municipality Public Safety Bureau, jishi*, p. 62.

131. *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 4, p. 119, and Vol. 5, pp. 8–51.

132. Like so many concerns about threats to public order, the obsessions became a self-fulfilling prophecy when Kuomintang members kidnapped a national student delegate during the demonstrations against the government after the Manchurian Incident. The "December Eighth Affair" in Shanghai led students to demand that the kidnappers be punished and that Chen Xizeng, chief of public safety, be killed by a firing squad. Henriot, "Le gouvernement municipal de Shanghai, 1927–1937," p. 107.

and reserve units to maintain special vigilance on those days, when public parades and processions offered an occasion for “reactionaries” to incite the Shanghai mob against the authorities.¹³³

This anti-Red hysteria had two extremely important consequences. First of all, it blunted the nationalistic zeal of the PSB, which until then had been acting as a force for recovering sovereign rights from the International Settlement and Concession authorities.¹³⁴ As the once-revolutionary Kuomintang began to take on some of the same anti-communist fears that the British and French had experienced all along, the Chinese municipal authorities found that they shared far more with the foreign police than they had imagined. The SMP and the FCP were also frightened of public processions turning into occasions for riot and mayhem.¹³⁵ Sensing these common fears, the PSB began to make special requests for co-operation in controlling access to and from the Chinese-governed parts of the city on such days.¹³⁶ These requests soon became routine notifications.¹³⁷ On such-and-such a day—the chief of the PSB would write to the British Commissioner of Police—special curfews will be carried out in the Chinese portions of the city, and we would appreciate the Commissioner’s co-operation in stiffening patrols, increasing the number of riot police on hand, and keeping public assemblies under control.¹³⁸ Co-operation was almost invariably forthcoming. Gradually, too, more and more information about “radicals” passed from one police force to the other. Thus, the Chinese detective squad in the SMP soon

133. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-2880, 11 November 1931.

134. Chief Yuan Liang had related law and order to the end of extraterritoriality on the grounds that as long as the international concessions offered refuge to criminals, the Shanghai PSB could not prevent felonies from being committed. He frequently called for the recovery of sovereign rights. Translation of article in *China Times*, dated 28 January 1931, in Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-1949.

135. See, e.g., the daily intelligence report in: Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, No. D-4003, 19 September 1932.

136. The first request of this sort that I have found in the SMP archives was issued in November 1929 by the PSB in the form of a letter from Yuan Liang to the SMP commissioner of police requesting help against the Reorganizationist Clique. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-623, 2 November 1929.

137. The tone of these requests became increasingly hysterical during the year July 1930–June 1931, when there were (usually on the eve of days of commemoration) totals of 123 cases of arrests of suspected Communists and the seizure of 1,471 sets of “reactionary” materials. *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 4, pp. 77–78. See also the request from the PSB to Major Gerrard in: Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, No. D-4003, 17 September 1932.

138. Letter dated 7 March 1932 from the chief of the PSB to Captain Martin, Commissioner of Police, in Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-3312, 8 March 1932.

found itself both gaining and disclosing intelligence to Chinese colleagues in the detective division of the PSB.¹³⁹

Members of the SMP Special Branch began as well to co-operate with the PSB when it requested that certain bookshops or “reactionary” schools be raided in the International Settlement where they had theretofore enjoyed immunity from the Chinese military and police.¹⁴⁰ When reports came into the PSB from other police agencies in China that so-and-so at such-and-such an address in the foreign concessions had been implicated as a Communist by another revolutionary during interrogation, the Chinese police would send a request through the Jiangsu provincial court for an arrest warrant to be executed by Special Branch officers together with their own men.¹⁴¹ Once the suspect was arrested by the British Officers, accompanied by PSB policemen, then he or she would usually be remanded via the provincial court to the Chinese police or to the Garrison Command.¹⁴² In this fashion, case by case, the mutual hostility that had initially characterized relations between the police agents of the new Chinese municipal regime and the settlement authorities, and that had found expression in the disputes over licences and boundary rights, gave way to a sense of common purpose in the shared endeavour against international Bolshevism and Chinese Communism.¹⁴³

Another unanticipated consequence of this shift in 1931 to controlling urban radicals was the attenuation of efforts by PSB officers with outside military training to take the reins away from old Shanghai hands in the detective squads. Although the bureau tried hard to keep the Japanese police-box system in operation, relying upon northern patrolmen on the beat to prevent ordinary felonies from being perpetrated, it had to put increasing emphasis upon plainclothes ideological surveillance by the very detectives suspected of corrupt connections with racketeers and gangsters. Hebei or Shandong patrolmen, unable to understand Shanghai dialect, were unfit for assignments at rallies, during demonstrations, or around railway stations where travellers’ stray conversations could provide

139. E.g., the SMP received word from the CID of the Straits Settlement government of a mail intercept that led back to a suspected communist bookstore in the International Settlement. After enlisting the help of the Chinese postal censor, the SMP was pleased to receive, on 5 June 1930, a request from the PSB, based on information extracted from a communist agent interrogated in Jiangxi, that a warrant be issued for the arrest of people on the premises of that self-same shop. The warrant was duly issued and executed. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-7873, 18 June 1930.

140. See, e.g., surveillance of the Ming Dan Middle School. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-3922, 8 October 1932.

141. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-3922, 18 October 1932.

142. Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, Microfilms from the U.S. National Archives, D-2760, 18 September 1931.

143. Journalists estimated that about 1,500 Communists were arrested in the International Settlement between 1931 and 1937. *Finch, Shanghai and Beyond*, p. 187.

clues about the enemy's political conspiracies.¹⁴⁴ On days of special concern, like the anniversary of May 30th for instance, the PSB actually had to muster detective patrols, sending squads of two or three plainclothesmen out into the city as undercover agents or *mitanyuan* (secret detectives) to stave off riot and rebellion by keeping a watch on telephone booths and monitoring travellers' movements.¹⁴⁵ The growing burden of work on the detective squad meant assigning more and more police cadets to plainclothes work. That meant in turn recruiting greater numbers of Shanghaiense vulnerable to underworld blandishments and paying higher salaries from an already overstretched police budget, diverting resources from ordinary crime prevention and from municipal modernization.¹⁴⁶

The Public Safety Bureau and the Secret Police

These trends were visibly hastened after 1934 when the Nationalist secret police forces—their special services—began to infiltrate the Shanghai Public Safety Bureau and the Garrison Command military police.¹⁴⁷ The rise of the secret police is the topic of another study, and we can only briefly mention here their importance to Chiang Kai-shek's system of political and social control. But after 1931, when a Special Services Department (Te Wu Chu) was set up within the proto-fascist Blue Shirts (Lan Yi She) by Dai Li, Shanghai became the stage for a series of dramatic political kidnappings and assassinations directed against Chiang Kai-shek's enemies on the right and left. In order to gain a public cover for their activities, the secret agents in Dai Li's organization, which eventually was reorganized as the Military Statistics Bureau (Juntong) had to be given some sort of regular police appointment. Because his secret police reported to the Military Affairs Commission, which was chaired by General Chiang, the simplest way for Dai Li to get his men regular public security assignments was to have one of his own lieutenants placed in command of the Search and Arrest Squad of the Shanghai Garrison Command's military detectives unit. Provided with identification papers and gun permits, the secret policemen could even operate within the International Settlement and French Concession, although their military affiliation made it difficult for Dai Li's men to identify themselves in cases involving the Japanese consular police. Eventually, however, Juntong (MSB) agents infiltrated regular police units.¹⁴⁸

The French Concession Police was easiest to infiltrate because the

144. Shanghai *Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 4, p. 119.

145. *Ibid.* Vol. 3, p. 77, and Vol. 5, p. 16.

146. Costs for public security in Shanghai came to constitute more than 30% of the total municipal budget. Salaries made up the bulk of police expenses. Henriot, "Le gouvernement municipal de Shanghai, 1927–1937," p. 201.

147. Shen Zui, *Juntong neimu* (*The Inside Story of the Military Statistics (Bureau)*) (Beijing: Wenshi ziliao chubanshe, 1984), p. 49.

148. *Ibid.* pp. 51–52.

Green Gang controlled the detective squad. Secret police chief Dai Li simply asked the “bigshot” for help, and Du Yesheng obliged by providing an introduction to the chief of the Chinese detective squad, Fan Guangzhen, who happened to be one of his secret society “disciples.” Eventually, after a \$500 bribe was paid to Fan, one of Dai Li’s men was made deputy chief of the squad.¹⁴⁹ Since the French police were generally more successful than the Shanghai Municipal Police at getting military intelligence, this agent was a prime source of information on communist activities in Shanghai, and even in the Jiangxi Soviet area. Other MSB agents used Green Gang connections, also arranged through Du Yuesheng, to develop contacts within the SMP; but although Dai Li tried to buy over Chinese police in the International Settlement, he never actually gained control of the SMP detectives, mainly owing to the vigilance of British Intelligence and the Chinese superintendents in the Special Branch.¹⁵⁰ As for the Public Safety Bureau’s criminal investigation division, there already existed a “red squad” in the Special Services Group (Tewu Zu), and it was not difficult for one of Dai Li’s top secret police agents to assume command of that section in 1934.¹⁵¹

This pattern was copied in other Chinese cities, though underworld connections were less important than control of the national police apparatus by Dai Li’s secret agents. Police chiefs were recruited into the MSB through the special police training programmes run by Vollmer’s student, Frank Yee, who probably joined Juntong in 1935. Feng Yukun, the other Berkeley criminology graduate, became a Military Statistics Bureau agent in 1933 or 1934. As director of the Nanjing Government’s Police Administration Department, Feng Yukun was in a key position within the Ministry of Interior to endorse any requests that Dai Li made to get his own agents put in charge of ordinary police detective squads. By the eve of the Sino-Japanese war, Dai Li controlled, among other police agencies, the Investigative Division of the Capital Police Bureau; the Investigative Unit of the Public Safety Office of Zhejiang province; the Railway Police of the train line between Nanjing, Shanghai, Hangzhou and Ningbo; the secret investigative organization within the Anti-Opium Surveillance and Investigation Office; the detective squads and training sections of most provinces’ public safety offices; and the investigative squad of the Shanghai Songhu Garrison Command.¹⁵²

As the Nationalist secret service gradually took over key positions in Shanghai’s criminal detection units, and especially in the Public Safety Bureau, a third phase and mode of policing set in on the heels

149. Shen Zui, “Wo suo zhidao de Dai Li” (The Dai Li I knew), in Shen Zui and Weng Qiang, *Dai Li qi ren (Dai Li the Man)* (Beijing: Wenshi ziliao chubanshe, 1980), p. 10.

150. Shen Zui, “The Dai Li I knew,” p. 10.

151. The Special Services Group was created in 1930 to gather “intelligence” (*qingbao*). *Shanghai Public Safety Report of Affairs*, Vol. 3, p. 115.

152. Shen Zui, “The Dai Li I knew,” p. 7.

of the first two. That is, the era of northern patrolmen having given way to the brief hegemony of native detectives conducting political beats of their own, now—without entirely replacing the former organization altogether, of course—counter-intelligence operations took precedence over ordinary detective functions. As a result, two major changes took place in law enforcement in the Special Municipality, which affected police affairs in the concessions as well. First, the efficiency of the police as a criminal detection unit was severely hampered. Dai Li was interested in controlling spies, not capturing felons; and when one of his Shanghai detective chiefs suggested that they needed to pay more attention to catching regular criminals, the secret service chief asked him in response: “Do you think we took control over this organization just to nab petty crooks and pickpockets on behalf of others?”¹⁵³

Moreover, his secret policemen, trained with captured GPU and Cheka manuals by communist defectors in Comintern tradecraft and assassination techniques, made terrible civilian detectives.¹⁵⁴ After these military intelligence agents replaced regular criminal police who had their own networks of informants, knew underworld slang, and treated criminals on their own terms, the quality of law enforcement visibly declined. For one, these new political policemen were far too legalistic to bargain with Green Gang members over the recovery of stolen goods. Treating crime as morally reprehensible, the agents’ indignation and their routine use of punitive torture meant that criminals no longer casually confessed to their felonies, whereas they used to admit readily to their crimes in front of old-style detectives who neither physically abused nor morally condemned them. Dai Li’s military agents were also unable to appreciate the subtle distinctions of status and rank that differentiated the many different social elements of the Shanghai underworld, and as a result they were heavy-handed and clumsy when it came to discriminating criminal leaders from hoi polloi. Taken together, these defects crippled the ordinary functioning of the detective division. Crimes multiplied, at least in the public’s eyes, and when that was juxtaposed with the rash of political assassinations committed during this period, there was a discernible rise in concern over the municipal government’s inability to control the steady spate of kidnappings for ransom, armed robberies and casual homicides that plagued Shanghai.¹⁵⁵ This worked against the central government’s claims that the Nationalist regime would bring crime under control in Shanghai, thereby

153. Shen Zui, *The Inside Story of the Military Statistics (Bureau)*, p. 117.

154. Zhang Weihai, “Dai Li and the Military Statistics Bureau,” pp. 87–88.

155. According to Shanghai police records, the Kuomintang Central Committee formed a secret organization in May 1934 to assassinate Communists. The association, which was called the Shanghai Municipality Comrades Association for the Elimination of Communists, was supposed to consist of ninety sections, each containing five members. “Rules and regulations of the Shanghai Municipality Comrades Association for the elimination of Communists,” Special Branch Secret Memorandum, 29 May 1934, in Shanghai Municipal Police (International Settlement) Files, No. D-4685.

justifying the reclamation of the international settlements from the hands of the foreigners who continued to police their own concessions. This failure undoubtedly de-legitimized Chiang Kai-shek's rule in some people's eyes – both in terms of his own putative connection with the Shanghai underworld and in terms of the unfinished business of extraterritoriality, which was left to Wang Jingwei's puppet regime to “solve” after 1942.

Secondly, the swing towards political surveillance that had begun in 1931 now became ever more pronounced, and by the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 the Chinese police force in Shanghai was being viewed by many as an instrument of autocratic terror.¹⁵⁶ The PSB criminal investigation units were, in effect, moulded into “red squads” that routinely resorted to illegal arrest, to secret imprisonment (important suspects were conveyed by train to Nanjing where they disappeared into the black hole of Dai Li's ultra-secret prison system), and to private executions. Torture became automatic, and death squads flourished.¹⁵⁷

Chiang Kai-shek had hoped to use the police as an instrument of vertical integration. Desperately needing channels of command and communication to link the central government in Nanjing to both rural areas and urban centres where local elites had tended to displace regular bureaucratic institutions during the early Republican years and form new administrative instruments of their own, Chiang and his advisers intended to employ the army to rebuild connections with the countryside and the police to control and modernize the cities. But in the end, the regime's obsession with its domestic enemies and Chiang Kai-shek's readiness to turn to his Whampoa followers to create secret instruments of autocracy undid Nanjing's centralization programmes, just as the centralization efforts themselves undermined local campaigns for independent municipal reform.¹⁵⁸

In Shanghai proper, the Nationalists' policing of the city came temporarily to an end with the Japanese occupation in the autumn and early winter of 1937. Chinese Nationalist forces returned after V-J Day in 1945, with Dai Li's American-trained “Loyal and Patriotic Army” in the vanguard. The foreign concessions were no more, but the city-wide Shanghai Police Force was considerably compromised by its wartime collaboration with the puppet regime and the Japanese military police. By then, unbeknownst to Dai Li's agents, the regular police patrolmen's units already contained secret Communist Party cells. This underground organization stood ready to co-ordinate

156. Gourlay, “‘Yellow’ unionism in Shanghai,” pp. 111–12.

157. Shen Zui, *The Inside Story of the Military Statistics Bureau*, p. 58. Harold Isaacs estimated that the numbers of “direct victims” of police terror between 1927 and 1932 reached at least one million, and he claimed that between January and August 1928, 27,699 people were formally condemned to death. Isaacs, *Five Years of Kuomintang Reaction*, p. 4.

158. Maryruth Coleman, “Municipal authority and popular participation in Republican Nanjing” (paper delivered at the Association for Asian Studies meetings, San Francisco, 27 March 1983), p. 4.

mobilization activities during the civil war to come, and by the time the People's Liberation Army marched down Fuzhou Road in May of 1949, the Shanghai police were prepared to receive them, keys to the city in hand.¹⁵⁹

159. Liu Feng, "Zai wei jingchaju li de douzheng" ("The struggle in the collaborationist police force"), in Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), Shanghai Weiyuanhui, *Wenshi Ziliao Gongzuo Weiyuanhui* (comps.), *Wenshi ziliao xuanji Shanghai jiefang sanshi zhounian zhuanji* (*Selections of Historical Materials Special Collection for the 30th Anniversary of the Liberation of Shanghai*), shang (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1979), pp. 178–80, 190; Wan Ren, "Guomindang Shanghai jingchaju li de dixia gongzuo" ("Underground work in the police force of Kuomintang Shanghai"), in CPPCC, Shanghai weiyuanhui, *Wenshi ziliao gongzuo weiyuanhui* (comps.), *Shanghai wenshi ziliao xuanji* (*Selections of Historical Materials on Shanghai*), fascicle 44 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1983), pp. 19–22.