

AFTER EMPIRE

THE CONCEPTUAL TRANSFORMATION
OF THE CHINESE STATE,

1885-1924

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CHAPTER 7

Founding the Republic of China

THE GOVERNMENT of the Republic of China was weak, its fiscal house disordered, and its politics convoluted. Regional and local power-holders gained ever greater freedom of action. While he lived, Yuan Shikai was able to hold China together through his command of a military that remained more or less unified. Warlordism emerged after his death in 1916, and the central government in Beijing became a shadow. Sun Yat-sen organized a new Guomindang (Nationalist Party) in 1919 and, with the help of the Communist International, in 1928 it unified most of China proper under Sun's political heir, Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang proclaimed Sun the Father of the Country and made the Three People's Principles into the state's official ideology.

But this is getting ahead of the story. In February 1912, Yuan gave the Qing court a choice: abdicate or be destroyed. The true father of the Republic of China, which he treated more as a bastard child than his acknowledged offspring, Yuan went on to try to found his own dynasty. In truth, the revolution had many fathers, and not a few mothers, who were later written out of the story. Perhaps this entire parental metaphor should be abandoned. What Yuan, and equally Sun Yat-sen and other revolutionary leaders, were doing in 1912 was attempting to rule without reference to a paterfamilias role. In some ways, the political struggles of the Republic can be seen as a continuation of the reformer-revolutionary struggles of the late Qing. The reformers envisioned a measured, controlled, top-down reconstruction of the Chinese polity. Yuan Shikai can be put in this camp, and it is not surprising that Liang Qichao thought he could work with Yuan after the revolution. Chiang Kai-shek was in this sense Yuan's heir as much as he was Sun's. But the revolutionaries did not disappear with the revolution, and they continued to promote a bottom-up vision of more totalistic change. It is not surprising that Yuan assassinated Song

Jiaoren, put Zhang Binglin under house arrest, and forced the Sunists to flee into exile again.

Symbolically, the Republic of China was founded several times. Self-chosen provincial representatives met in Nanjing and proclaimed the Republic on January 1, 1912. They wrote a provisional constitution and elected a provisional president, namely Sun Yat-sen. Having been away from China for so long, Sun was in effect a safe compromise choice while negotiations with Yuan continued. As Sun insisted, the delegates adopted the solar calendar, marked at Year One of the Republic. The southern revolutionaries, Yuan's northern army, and the Qing court came to agreement in February on the "Articles of Favorable Treatment" for the imperial house. This finally cleared the way for the Qing's abdication. The Qing court's formal abdication edict was issued on February 12. By this edict sovereignty (*tongzhiquan*) was transferred to the people and a republican constitutional form of government (*gonghe lixian guoti*) established. If anyone was paying attention, the Qing's edict not only purported to establish the Republic, but rooted it in the Mandate of Heaven, as seen in the will of the people (*renxin*). It further claimed to be fulfilling the intention of the "ancient sages" who thought the empire should be held in common (*tianxia wei gong*), and not incidentally conferred authority on Yuan Shikai to take the needed practical steps. A few days later, the Nanjing delegates elected Yuan to be the new provincial president, and he was sworn in on March 10. Yuan kept the government at his power base in Beijing, and elections for a new parliament began.

October 10, 1911? January 1, 1912? February 12, 1912? March 10, 1912? When was the Republic of China founded? Did a revolutionary act create a new state *de novo*, a form of self-legitimizing violence as the people through its representatives formed a new state? Or did the Qing create the new state through its generous abdication? At any rate, China now had a constitution and a president and was soon to have national elections for a parliament. This chapter and the next focus on the attempts of elites and intellectuals to grapple with a political world that lacked imperial institutions. This chapter examines the political rituals that emerged in the wake of the revolution, while the next discusses how

ideas about democracy and autocracy played out in the initial years of the Republic.

RITUALS OF REPUBLICANISM: "DOUBLE TEN"

In the wake of the abdication, anti-Manchuism did not completely disappear, but it did dissipate. The Republic of China officially and often invoked the "harmony of the five [Chinese] races." Taking his oath of office on January 1, 1912, President Sun Yat-sen spoke of the Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui, and Tibetan as one people (*minzu*). The notion of "five races" unity was repeatedly invoked in official speeches on national holidays and in the symbolism of the new state: especially in the five-color national flag, but also in national songs. The rituals of republicanism the new state pursued were designed to convey its new definition of citizenship. Above all, commemoration of the Wuchang Uprising—the tenth day of the tenth month (of the solar calendar), or "Double Ten"—came to represent the essence of the Republic.

Let us begin with three stories of the first national day of October 10, 1912. First, the sacrifices to martyrs of the revolution in Beijing. The sacrifices were led by a representative of the president and included top officials, former Qing Manchu princes and generals, lamas from Mongolia and Tibet, foreign dignitaries, and (at the rear) Western and Chinese women.¹ Originally scheduled to take place at the old Qing's Altar of Heaven, the sacrifices had to be moved to Liulichang when the altar could not be made ready in time. The Republic Commemoration Society (Gonghe jinianhui) offered a prayer to the martyrs, announcing the success of the revolution. This prayer informed the martyrs' spirits that their blood sacrifices over ten years had finally ended the despotism of five thousand years and the Qing's rule. When the revolution began a year ago, the whole nation responded, resulting in a new form of government, or so the martyrs were informed. Now the people were important and the ruler insignificant.

Sacrifices to the martyrs of the revolution linked the living to the dead and the new state to a more or less specific revolutionary vision. With the martyrs safely dead, their memory could be invoked by any who would claim their mantle. The gravitas surrounding these sacred rituals was

meant to infuse the Republic with purpose. The rituals also fostered a new sense of national identity. The martyrs joined the Yellow Emperor and ancient heroes to become the collective ancestors of the Chinese people. Furthermore, although the new state's new rituals were not held there, it de-imperialized the Altar of Heaven by opening it to the public.

Second, in Nanjing, requests from female students to hold a lantern procession were turned down by the Bureau of Education, and a request from prostitutes to do the same was rejected by the police. The prostitutes' request had originally been approved by the local head of the Bureau of Commerce before the police stepped in.² Other groups, including soldiers, schools, and an orphanage, proceeded with their lantern processions over the nights of October 9, 10, and 11. Women, students from an art school, did participate in ceremonies honoring revolutionary martyrs by placing flowers in front of their spirit tablets in the Memorial Hall.³ The place of women in the political imaginary of the Republic was ambiguous but they had a public role.⁴

And third, one young man simply found the day represented excitement, like a temple fair. A dozen years later a certain "Mouzi" published a few of his recollections, based on his diaries, of bygone Double Tens.⁵ Thinking back to the first national day, he noted that the events in Beijing had been minimally organized and the term "Double Ten" did not yet exist. Nonetheless, young Mouzi and his brother found the Changdian marketplace bustling with commemoration activities. Inside were pictures of revolutionary martyrs next to souvenirs. There was an area set aside for speakers—a vigorous Song Jiaoren spoke of the hardships the revolutionaries had overcome and praised the great achievements of Sun Yat-sen, other revolutionary leaders, and even Yuan Shikai. Mouzi and his brother wandered about the dining hall, the sports stadium, and the martyrs' temple. They saw magicians, fund-raisers, and the theater where new and old operas were being performed. Then, walking over to Liulichang, they enjoyed the sight of people cutting the queues off passers-by.

Such rituals of republicanism linked the individual and the individual's social community (family, school, employment) to the political community. The modern state requires special rituals for two reasons: to mark the putative involvement of citizens in the political sphere, and to mark the double

claim of the nation to both an ancient past and an essential newness.⁶ State rituals include the quotidian, such as students saluting the flag or bowing to pictures of national leaders. And they include the sacred, such as remembering war dead or national martyrs or celebrating the birth of the nation. Political rituals are also designed to shore up the rulers' own sense of legitimacy and potency. Of course, they can be arenas of struggle, expressing and shaping political power.⁷ But also, while the Qing's state rituals were mostly closed and private, the Republic's were gloriously open and public.

In the first years of the Republic of China, political rituals worked to create citizens.⁸ Elites, at least, and the urban classes more generally were drawn into political rituals as participants and spectators. As Henrietta Harrison argues, the rituals also created standards of Chinese-ness (or ethnic identity) and standards of modernity, including cosmopolitan habits: short hair instead of the queue for men, handshaking and bowing instead of the kowtow, unbound feet for women. Moreover, over the first years of the Republic, political rituals that focused on the theme of commemoration linked the collective memory with the future. Commemoration defined moments designed to transcend the present by forcing a concurrent looking back and looking forward. The meanings of the national flag, the music and lyrics of the national anthem, and sacrifices to the martyrs came together on national days in the early Republic. Yet what was to be remembered and what this was to mean for the future differed remarkably from year to year. The popularity of Double Ten waned over the first few years of the Republic. This reflected disillusionment with the political failures of the Republic.

Republican rituals of state were subject to enormous debate and conflict as political forces contended. Whose republic was it? Who would decide the national day, compose the national anthem, design the national flag? Differentiated civic roles determined who had the right to appear and to speak publicly—who marched, who stood on the dais, who listened in the hall, who snacked on the streets, who banqueted with officials. As Harrison points out, one's role was based on membership in particular groups such as political bodies, schools, commercial organizations, and the military. Yet citizenship implied the subordination, at least under certain circumstances, of other identities such as family, religion, ethnicity,

or even nationality. It should not be surprising, then, that the civic rituals promoted by political elites in 1912 revolved around citizenship. Their exact meaning was open to interpretation, but participation did indicate a common identity of some sort.

The basic forms of the new civic rituals, particularly Double Ten, were determined by the National Assembly and the president, as a matter of law and executive orders. At the same time, local officials, merchants, and educators determined exactly what ritual forms to use, who would be invited to speak, and how banquets would be arranged. On the surface, civic rituals were basically the same in all of China's cities, based on a cultural repertoire that owed much to traditional festival activities—lantern processions, sacrifices to the spirits—and to cosmopolitan forms of the nation-state's expression of itself: military marches, the virtual worship of the flag, and the like. In particular, Double Ten rituals and symbols encouraged remembering; that is, they commemorated the founding events of the Republic.⁹

Exactly what was to be remembered, however, and how, was subject to much debate. The triumph of October 10 over rival dates was by no means assured. Different patriotic songs emphasized different themes of republicanism and history. And competing flags offered directly opposed views of this "precious" symbol of state. The first problem was to choose the right founding date. But before picking a date, it was necessary to agree on using the solar calendar. Some groups assumed that the anniversary would be marked according to the lunar calendar, in the tradition of popular festivals.¹⁰ As well, some observance of the lunar calendar anniversary (the 19th day of the 8th month) of the Wuchang Uprising, which fell on September 29 of the solar calendar in 1912, was apparently encouraged.¹¹ In Wuchang itself, major ceremonies were held according to the lunar anniversary under the direction of Li Yuanhong, now serving as Hubei's governor and vice-president of the Republic. Numerous localities followed suit.¹²

The decision officially to mark the national day (*guoqingri*) on October 10 (in the official solar calendar) emerged out of a debate that suddenly erupted in September. It was partly a matter of local pride. Hubei natives in Beijing proposed that the anniversary of the Wuchang Uprising

mark the origins of the Republic, arguing its equivalence to the uprising of Parisians on July 14, 1789, which became the French national day, and the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, which became the American.¹³ Their original petition called for October 10 to be the "Day of National Sacrifices [to the martyrs]" (*guojizi*) while January 1, marking the creation of the Nanjing government, and February 12, marking the proclamation of the Republic in Beijing, both be declared "Commemoration Days" (*jinianni*). They proposed that October 10 be celebrated by closing businesses, offices, and schools, hanging flags, holding military parades, making sacrifices to the martyrs, bestowing rewards and amnesties, granting alms, and hosting banquets, while the two commemoration days would also be holidays, though on a smaller scale.

By early October, the Shanghai County Assembly began to plan for commemoration of Shanghai's own revolt against the Qing on November 3 (solar).¹⁴ It held that Shanghai should participate in a national October 10 commemoration but also supplement it with a local holiday. The city government planned smaller-scale ceremonies including military music, sacrifices to the martyrs, speeches, and teas.¹⁵ Groups like the fire brigades planned lantern processions. In Guangdong, a provincial assemblyman suggested that the Huanghuagang Uprising of April 1911, which in revolutionary eyes produced "72 martyrs" in the lead-up to the Wuchang Uprising, and the later expulsion of the Qing garrison from Guangdong should both be made holidays, and similar sentiments were reported from Ningbo and Anqing.¹⁶ Hu Hanmin, now governor of Guangzhou, stressed that "the achievement of the revolution did not depend on arms but on the popular will."¹⁷

The National Assembly began discussions on September 12 in response to a telegram from Li Yuanhong asking that Beijing send representatives to participate in Wuchang's own (lunar calendar) commemoration ceremonies.¹⁸ At the same time, a Revolution Commemoration Association had been formed and was calling for the nation to remember the revolution.¹⁹ Chen Hanyuan (1876-1928), a Hunanese follower of Sun Yat-sen, insisted that since the people tended to be confused and forgetful, they needed historical and artistic objects to serve as daily reminders of the difficulties and sacrifices that had led to the creation of the new nation. Otherwise,

corruption would spread and the very foundation of the nation would be threatened. Above all, it was still necessary to encourage a revolutionary spirit. Chen saw this as key to raising the moral standards of the Chinese people and gaining the respect of foreigners.

Perhaps most influential were the views of the old anarchist revolutionary Wu Zhihui. Wu calmly dealt with the issues one by one.²⁰ First, since the Republic had decided to use the solar calendar, all commemorations of past events should follow it. Since the Wuchang Uprising fell on October 10, the holiday could be called "Double Ten" (Wu appears to have been the first to use this phrase, citing the traditional "double nine" festival as his precedent). Second, there were no other good candidates for the paramount national day. The problem with February 12, marking the abdication of the Qing and the final "national unity" of northern and southern forces, was, according to Wu, that it did not mark a true national unity since the Mongols had not yet submitted. Furthermore, the day of the loss of the Qing was not an appropriate day for celebration. Wu's arguments here seem forced. The real issue was that making February 12 the national day would be to ratify a founding myth of the Republic in Yuan Shikai's image. That is to say, since Yuan engineered the abdication of the Qing and the establishment of the Republic nationwide, February celebrations downplayed the role of the revolutionaries. Commemorating the Wuchang Uprising, on the other hand, highlighted the actions of the revolutionaries while marginalizing Yuan. In this vein, Wu acknowledged the importance of the Huanghuagang Uprising as a forerunner of Wuchang. But there could only be one national day, and there were, Wu implied, two problems with Huanghuagang. First, it was more of a defeat than a victory, and second, if one started to trace all the significant steps on the march to final victory, where would one stop? Wu correctly noted that no single event could symbolize the entire revolutionary process. France's July 14 and America's July 4 marked specific events that only later came to represent their revolutions. Second, Wu said Huanghuagang was specifically tied to the Tongmenghui, while Wuchang seemed to capture a broader range of revolutionary forces.

Wu Zhihui's conception of the national day was completely integrative. In his irrepressible optimism he thought Double Ten would overtake

the traditional holidays. Merchants would use it to pay their debts, which was traditionally done just before the lunar New Year's festival. It would combine old festivities such as song, dance, juggling, and lantern displays with "new operas" (featuring revolutionary and republican themes) and displays of new products. It would serve to enlighten the people, discourage traditional superstitions, and foster general social improvement. These goals had long been central to Wu's political vision of economic progress. Like world fairs and industrial exhibitions, Double Ten would have an educational function. Wu wanted all the people to be actively involved, not merely enjoy a few lantern processions and banquets. He called for Double Ten festivities to be carried out in each county seat. By the end of September, the cabinet drew up plans along these lines and the National Assembly approved them.

In the end, Double Ten became a three-day holiday in the major cities.²¹ Houses and storefronts were covered with decorations in five colors; colored lanterns were hung; five-color flags were flown; and ceremonial arches, again decorated in five colors or else with the memorial evergreens (ilex, pine, and cypress), were erected.²² In the mornings, groups paraded along the streets: officials, the military, police, merchants, and students (and sometimes "gentry" and members of political parties). The military (and sometimes students) performed rifle and sword drills for the public. Students or the military held sports competitions and flag exercises. There were also flag-raising and -saluting ceremonies at specified locations. Parades culminated at an assembly hall (or tent). Military music was played. There were formal speeches; opera performances, usually of "new operas"; and even films. At various points, groups sang national songs that they had rehearsed. Officials gave a little money or food to the poor and also to soldiers and police. At the sacrifices to the martyrs, officials were led by officials and military officers, who doffed their hats and bowed three times.²³ Or instead of bowing, soldiers saluted the martyrs with their rifles and swords. Offerings of incense, flowers, fruit, and wine were made to the martyrs' spirit tablets.²⁴ Prayers were read and music played. Sometimes specific groups (merchant guilds, schools, general bystanders) were allowed in as a kind of audience. Finally a banquet was set out. Sometimes different groups held separate sacrifices over the

three days. In the evening, lantern processions and assemblies were held by groups in neighborhoods or the whole city. There were displays of firecrackers and fireworks.

Double Ten festivities were inclusive. In Shanghai "workers' circles" participated.²⁵ One large company invited all its workers to a banquet, and promised them one day's vacation with two days' pay. And foreigners, too, were participants, at least insofar as they were specially invited to banquets. Each group made meticulous plans for its participation, including rehearsals for events such as performing flag drills and patriotic songs. As well, crowds participated in a less organized way. Operas, souvenir stands, and food stalls were all designed to bring in the crowds. Newspapers printed detailed schedules of activities so readers could plan what events they might care to see. And the people did pour in, as frequent journalistic accounts of huge crowds suggest. Some observers made a distinction between the public and the private. Parades, sacrifices, honors lists, official banquets, and alms belonged to the "government's sphere," while individuals participated by taking the day off, hanging flags and decorations, setting off firecrackers, and feasting with family and friends.²⁶ Everywhere factories, offices, and businesses closed; even foreign consulates closed at least on Double Ten itself. The holiday, though, was good for some businesses, especially wine shops, butchers, and flag-sellers. Souvenirs such as commemorative badges and postcards also sold well.

In the following years, Double Ten became increasingly subdued as officials sought to limit any potential for popular disturbances. The holiday disappeared in 1915 as Yuan Shikai made clear he was going to declare himself emperor. It did not really revive until 1916, after Yuan's death. In Beijing that year, the presidential review of troops was restored and the "rebels" who had opposed Yuan were specially honored.²⁷ That Li Yuanhong was now president gave the government a new stake in reviving the Wuchang myth. It spent over two million yuan on Double Ten in 1916.²⁸ Numerous towns reported a full-blown return to the earlier modes of celebration: flags, lantern processions, assemblies and lectures, and singing (in one case by prostitutes for guests of the city council).²⁹ Shanghai again saw officials and merchants cooperating to put on a big show.³⁰ Major events were planned in Hangzhou, Suzhou, and Nanjing, as well as Beijing and

Shanghai. As Henrietta Harrison observes, Double Ten became a genuinely popular holiday, at least in cities.³¹

RITUALS OF REPUBLICANISM: FLAG AND ANTHEM

One way to celebrate the nation was, of course, in song. The need for a national anthem was already felt in the late Qing, if only to play along with those of Western nations on state occasions. Like previous dynasties, the Qing had always sponsored performances of ceremonial music on ritual occasions, but there was no national anthem.³² Schools in the late Qing used various patriotic songs, but these were not standardized.³³ According to orthodox Confucian theory, the purpose of music was to educate, and the political stability of a dynasty depended directly on the health of its music. In early 1911 officials began studying European national anthems to find more suitable music for the immediate purpose. The Qing promulgated the new national anthem on—ironically enough—October 5, 1911. The lyrics of *Gong jin ou*, or “Strengthening Our Hold on the Golden Cup”—the golden cup being a ritual vessel associated with imperial rule—referred to the Mandate of Heaven and to the peace and prosperity of the empire. There was no problem with the lyrics; however, the music left traditionalists aghast. They said the composition was extremely inauspicious and they predicted the end of the dynasty.³⁴ The traditional musicians seem to have had a point.

Many patriotic songs were written over the decade following the Revolution. These show something of ideas about how the spirit appropriate to republican government should be cultivated. As early as February 1912, the Ministry of Education (of the provisional Nanjing government) issued a call for musicians to send in songs that would represent the nation's character and raise the people's spirit.³⁵ The ministry soon published an example of what it had in mind.³⁶ These lyrics described a new Asia developing, a new nation forming, the five-color flag flying, glory filling the country, and the people welcoming a civilized age of peace. While the main idea of this song seems clear enough, it seems, a bit ambiguously, also to acknowledge China's backwardness and the need to catch up with the West.³⁷

Shen Xingong (1870–1947), a prominent musician and educator with

radical leanings, wrote the lyrics for the “Song in Commemoration of the Founding of the Republic of China.”³⁸ This was a celebratory paean to the revolution. The nation (*minzu*) has come together to achieve independence and self-respect; it has sacrificed its blood to abolish over four thousand years of autocratic poisons. All the people will be like kin working together in a “democratic republic” to improve education and armaments. Shen's lyrics captured many of the main points the revolutionaries had been making for a decade, including a certain militant spirit. Other songs emphasized China's age and size, its natural resources and fertility, and its high degree of civilization. One song that achieved some popularity was a simple hymn for Double Ten:

Think! Everybody think!

What is today's excitement about?

Hang high the red lanterns,

And raise up the national flag

To blow in the wind.

For this is the anniversary of raising the flag of revolutionary righteousness
in Wuchang,

Overthrowing the autocracy

And establishing the Republic.

The people's spirits are raised,

May the Republic be forever wealthy and powerful!³⁹

And in October the Wenming Bookstore of Shanghai published a somewhat more complex song, complete with references to the glories of the Yellow Emperor and Zhou civilization, but:

For four thousand years

Autocratic government was binding,

The people were kept unfree.

From ancient times

Only heroes achieved great deeds.⁴⁰

The song implies that the revolution was accomplished by heroes but now all people can now contribute to their nation. Furthermore, China is both ancient and new, now “the Republic's five peoples sharing a boat.”

In September 1912, the Ministry of Education offered an open competition for writing a national anthem, offering 500 yuan to the winner to be selected by the National Assembly.⁴¹ In the end, some three hundred songs were received, but none was in fact chosen.⁴² In 1913 the ministry asked for submissions from specific scholars including Zhang Binglin, Yan Fu, Liang Qichao, Zhang Jian, Cai Yuanpei, and Gu Hongming. This list ran a certain political gamut. Like Zhang Binglin, Cai Yuanpei had been a revolutionary, though he studied mostly in Europe before returning to China to work as an educator in 1912. Like Liang, Zhang Jian (1853-1926) had been a prominent proponent of constitutional monarchism, having been the top *jinshe* candidate of his year but deciding to become an entrepreneur, industrialist, educator, and politician. Gu Hongming (1857-1928) was entirely different: born in Malaya and educated in Britain, Germany, and France, he worked many years for Zhang Zhidong, and proclaimed his loyalty to the Qing until his death.

Zhang Jian submitted three songs. These were perhaps more like erudite poems than songs and certainly featured classical allusions. Zhang particularly appealed to the myth of the Golden Age, using stories of ancient imperial abdications as symbols of the Republic:

[China] was civilized before modern times,
Fu Xi, the Yellow Emperor, and Shennong,
Lofty! lofty! Yao and Shun,
The empire was held in common.
The emperors were held by noble offspring
Who abdicated as the people wished.

...
Yao sought only Shun
And Shun sought only Yu;
None was compelled,
And none used evil [methods].
Confucius recorded these ancestral [stories],
And Mencius well explained:
"Respect the people and humble the ruler."⁴³

And thus democracy was finally reached and the five peoples were united.

Zhang Jian depicted the people as passive, enlightened by the sage-kings, Confucius, and Mencius. The people, in Zhang's lyrics, are virtuous, but he rooted the Republic in ancient culture rather than modern revolution.

For his part, Zhang Binglin treated the revolution as a restoration and celebrated the Wuchang Uprising.⁴⁴ His lyrics implied that the Republic represented the culmination of all of Chinese history. The barbarians have been transformed and the imperial system abolished in accordance with the popular will. All this, without any real violence: "No dust of battles raging / but still we recovered our land and our traditions." And with the old barriers between them destroyed, the five peoples would now be in harmony.

Liang Qichao's approach avoided Zhang Jian's classicism and Zhang Binglin's focus on contemporary events to speak generally of China's greatness.⁴⁵ He sang of China's great size, fertile land, large population, and long, refined history. Liang did refer to ethnicity in the common descent of the Chinese from the Yellow Emperor, and he concluded: "It has been thousands of years since the Han explorers / The time has come for heroes to emerge again."

National anthems are generally meant to be politically neutral. That is, they foster a general, shared patriotism and try not to divide people. In fact, many of these would-be anthems insisted on the harmony of the five peoples. The Yellow Emperor was less a sign of ethnicity than one of a group of culture heroes such as Fu Xi and Shennong symbolizing Chinese origins. As for Yao and Shun, they became ancestors of republicanism itself, echoing the traditional claim of the ancient Chinese origins of democracy. The Republic failed to establish a new official national anthem until Yuan Shikai finally chose "China Stands Boldly in the Cosmos" in May 1915.

China stands boldly in the cosmos,
Spreading in all directions,
The Chinese descendants from the Kunlun peaks,
The rivers vast and restless and the mountains never-ending.
The five peoples of the Republic will recover Yao's heaven,
Forever and ever.⁴⁶

The Republic's first national anthem neglected the revolution and celebrated the existence of a China beyond space and time. However, critics detected

an imperial tendency in the lyrics. Xu Shichang (1855-1939), Yuan's premier, justified the anthem on the grounds of the links between music and government that had long been recognized by the ancients.⁴⁷ However, Yuan's own minister of education, Tang Hualong (1874-1918), excoriated the lyrics.⁴⁸ Tang ridiculed the image of "standing in the cosmos" as opposed to resting on solid land. He found a contradiction between the unity of the "five peoples" and the image of Yao, a Han ancestor. Furthermore, "Yao's heaven" implied an imperial mindset. Without reference to Shun, according to Tang, the symbolism of abdication was lost. In the event, the anthem was soon made unambiguous. Once Yuan's monarchy was announced, the fifth line was changed to: "The five peoples of the empire (*diguo wuzu*) will recover Yao's heaven," with the suggestion that eternity applies not to the Republic but to the emperor Yao-Yuan. Finally, the line was changed again to: "Meritorious China makes way (*xun Hua yirang*) for constructing Yao's heaven," with an even clearer implication of the "abdication" of the Republic itself. Various versions of the song were sung by elementary school students in 1915 and 1916.⁴⁹ But not until 1920 did the Beijing government again formally adopt a new anthem.

Even more contentious were debates over the flag. As for the flags themselves, suffice it to say that the five-color flag quickly won out over several competitors.⁵⁰ One of these alternative flags was the blue sky/white sun banner strongly favored by Sun Yat-sen, dating back to the 1895 uprising. Later a red "earth" background was added to it, and it eventually became the basis for the Guomindang and Nanjing government flags, surviving on Taiwan to this day. Other flags originally favored in the Tongmenghui included ancient weapons or the character *jing*, to represent the well-field (*jingtian*) system and hence socialism. A flag of eighteen stars was used by revolutionary forces in much of the fighting over 1911 and 1912, each star representing a province. The five-color flag was used by several revolutionary militarists, most importantly Jiangsu's Cheng Dequan (1860-1930) and Shanghai's Chen Qimei (1878-1916). Cheng had been a high official under the Qing, while Chen was a revolutionary. What was the appeal of the five-color flag to such disparate men?

Perhaps one factor was the ability of its symbolism to capture the territories of the Qing empire for the Republic. Although there were vari-

ous interpretations of the five colors, by far the most prevalent was that they represented the five peoples—red for Han, yellow for Manchus, blue for Mongols, white for Hui, and black for Tibetans. Since these peoples held more or less distinct regions, the flag symbolized the Republic's territory. But could it symbolize territorial integration? The flag symbolized both difference and identity: five peoples but a single Chinese-Republican people. In spite of the claims of their supporters, the other flags seemed excessively partisan or partial. The eighteen stars offered a representation of China as a whole, based on its provinces. This was rather like the American use of stars to represent states, and struck some as tainted by federalism. Critics complained that imagining China as provinces was divisive.⁵¹ Another complaint about the eighteen-star flag was that it did not include Manchuria, Mongolia, or Xinjiang, which were not then part of the provincial administrative system.

The Provisional National Assembly, in spite of the lobbying of Sun Yat-sen, voted on January 10, 1912, to adopt the five-color flag as the national flag, while the eighteen-star flag would represent the army and Sun's sky-sun flag the navy. The National Assembly in Beijing opened the issue again in May, but Yang Tingdong among others pointed out that by now the five-color flag was recognized by most Chinese and foreigners.⁵² This was probably the key argument that carried the day, along with Yuan Shikai's desire to avoid a flag that would remind people of the revolutionary myth.

For all his political flexibility in other spheres, Sun Yat-sen never accepted the five-color flag, criticizing it through the 1910s. To the provisional National Assembly he had argued that the five-color flag was fatally flawed. Adopted from a Qing banner for naval officers, it betrayed the revolution, he said, and by linking Manchus to imperial yellow it betrayed republicanism as well. And finally, even in terms of its own symbolism, its hierarchy of colors from top to bottom betrayed the notion of the equality of the five peoples.⁵³ As well, obviously it neglected the smaller minorities.⁵⁴ For Sun, the sky-sun flag was made legitimate by its history—no other flag was used as long or in so many uprisings—and he emphasized that the sun represented a great nation rising in Asia. (Its critics said it resembled the Japanese flag, and also that Sun was suspiciously close to the Japanese.) Within a few months, Sun was offering a new explanation

of the sky-sun flag's own color symbolism. The red background symbolized the blood of martyrs and their sacrifices in the revolution, and thus represented liberty. The white sun symbolized purity and fraternal love, while the blue sky symbolized righteousness.⁵⁵ For his part, Cai Yuanpei criticized the five-color flag on the grounds that the use of these colors was not scientific (he said there should be seven colors).⁵⁶ More importantly, the flag should represent the whole nation.

Nonetheless, the five-color flag had its own revolutionary credentials, and its symbolism was more straightforwardly nationalist. The National Assembly voted to adopt it in June.⁵⁷ The resolution noted that five colors had long been accepted by the Chinese people. It also noted traditions of using five distinctions in various spheres of rank, sound, smell, and so forth. And there were Confucianism's five constant virtues: benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trust. What was not explicitly stated was any appeal that might have stemmed from remnant notions of the correlative cosmology of the "five phases" (*wuxing*), which were also associated with the dynastic cycle. With the Qing reaching the end of its reign, this seems a plausible interpretation. But the main point was that the flag was supposed to symbolize the elimination of the "boundaries" between the peoples of China.

From one point of view, the exact nature of the flag did not matter—what mattered was having a flag, any flag. A "History of the Chinese Republic Flag," published in 1912, recounted the story of one revolutionary battle.⁵⁸ The revolutionary armies were forced to retreat. The dispirited revolutionary troops left behind their flag on a battlefield. Suddenly, a 13-year-old boy rushes out to bring it back. The Qing forces concentrate their fire on the flag, and revolutionary soldiers try to hold the boy back. But he cries, "The flag is the soul of the army. How can we let the enemy have it?!" And he manages to run out for it and make his way back to the revolutionaries' lines through a hail of bullets.

A few years later a newspaper editorial commented on the profusion of national flags that appeared on Double Ten—hanging outside of offices and businesses, carried by students, attached to carts and automobiles, and worn on clothes.⁵⁹ Students, who had been prohibited from marching, nonetheless brought out their flags and paraded. There is a hint here of using the legitimacy of the flag as a cover for protest. Nonetheless, the

author's concern was the state of the people as seen in their attitudes toward the flag. The flag here becomes something more than a mere symbol but a kind of essence of the state itself:

It used to be that when the Chinese people's heads were in the imperial era, they only had room for the emperor and the great officials, and never thought of the flag. Recently we've changed our name to a "republic," and what everybody thinks about now is only the president, the premier, the soldiers, and the assemblymen, and again the national flag is superfluous. But if the Chinese would look at the advanced civilized nations, they fight not for their king nor for their president but for their flag; they protect not their king nor their president but their flag; . . . every method of conducting domestic policies and foreign affairs is based on the flag.

Naturally, Yuan's monarchical movement brought about official reconsideration of the flag in 1915. One possibility floated was a flag with two golden dragons embracing the sun against a white background with a red border. Officials favoring change argued that the five-color flag represented an egalitarianism at odds with the monarchism they were restoring. Others, however, argued that the five-color flag was already recognized domestically and internationally, and also that its symbolism of the unity of five peoples was equally applicable to the monarchy. In the end, a compromise was planned to keep the basic five-color flag but add a new symbol in the upper corner.⁶⁰

In the wake of the defeat of the monarchical movement, the five-color flag reemerged, though not untarnished. The sense of the importance of the flag was captured in an opera, *The Double Ten of the Ghosts*, produced in 1924.⁶¹ Speaking from the dead, the hero Cai E (1882–1916)—who had fought against Yuan from his redoubt in Yunnan—raises the flag for all to see and demands: "Everyone! What is this? Is this not our lovely national flag? Look how beautiful are its colors of red, yellow, blue, white, and black! But the flag has exacted a heavy price: 'Is not this red dyed by our blood? Is not this yellow our flesh? Is not this blue created by the grasses growing on our graves? Is not this white the white of our bones? And is not this black from our bullets?'" Cai says that the flag has been shamed and tarnished; the Republic has been stolen by militarists and politicians. The Double Ten

ghost suggests that the five-color flag has come to represent more than the unity of the five peoples: it stands in some sense for the ideal of the Chinese Republic itself. But this was an ideal that may have been rapidly fading.

YUAN SHIKAI AND REPUBLICAN STATE RITUAL

When Yuan Shikai was converted to republicanism in 1912, it was for all to see. He turned the 1912 Double Ten commemorations in Beijing into a display of power. The ceremony started at 6 AM at a ceremonial arch built at the Zhonghuamen ("China gate"). Beijing's public space was being reconstructed. The walls within walls within walls that sheltered the hidden empire began to come down. Military parades followed what is now Chang'an Avenue, with dignitaries seated at Tiananmen. The gates blocking this route were permanently opened by 1914; the walls of the imperial city (though not the Forbidden City within it) and the offices lining the road leading north to Tiananmen were torn down shortly afterward.⁶² The Zhonghuamen was simply the renamed Da-Qingmen (Great Qing Gate), which had previously granted entrance to the corridor leading up to the Tiananmen and the Forbidden City beyond. In 1912 the Qing's abdication edict was written at the top of its arch. Using Zhonghuamen as the starting point for Double Ten celebrations reminded the nation that the Wuchang Uprising had led to the Republic only by way of the abdication Yuan had arranged.⁶³

Yuan himself presided at Tiananmen in uniform over a military parade of some 13,000 men while martial music played.⁶⁴ Yuan was said to have appeared strong, confident, serious, and alert—the virtues of a ruler. The military review was followed by a reception for parliamentarians, civil officials, foreign ambassadors and their staffs, reporters, and living buddhas from Manchuria, Mongolia, and Tibet. Yuan awarded medals to particularly meritorious heroes such as Li Yuanhong, as well as his own generals, Duan Qirui and Feng Guozhang. Sun Yat-sen and Huang Xing, however, turned their honors down on the grounds they were only working for the people, and in a republic such honors could mark invidious distinctions.⁶⁵

In other words, it did not take long for republican inclusiveness to collapse. The electoral success of the Guomindang, organized by Song Jiaoren with Sun Yat-sen's backing, was a thorn in Yuan's side. On the verge of becoming prime minister in the new parliament, Song was assassinated

in March 1913. Yuan was moving to dominate parliament by any means necessary. The "second revolution," a short-lived uprising, broke out in the south in July 1913 in response to Yuan's repressive measures. The uprising was defeated within a matter of months, and its leaders, such as Sun Yat-sen and Cai Yuanpei, fled abroad. Facing no further opposition, Yuan was elected president in October by the remaining members of the National Assembly.

Yuan took the oath of office on October 10, 1913. At 9:30 AM Yuan arrived at the Tiananmen in a ceremonial carriage and, accompanied by a military band, entered the imperial city.⁶⁶ At 10, officers, guards, officials, and other spectators were led into the Hall of Great Harmony (Taibedian) in the Outer Court area of the Forbidden City, where the oath-taking would occur. Foreigners were led to a viewing area in the northeast corner. During this time "national music" was played and a 101-gun salute fired. Yuan then ascended the platform at the north end of the hall, facing south with officials on either side of him. When the music stopped, Yuan took the oath; the audience bowed to him once and he bowed back. Then Yuan read his declaration; the audience bowed to him three times and he bowed back three times. Finally, music was played as Yuan and the audience left.

Yuan's inauguration departed from the enthronement rituals of emperors in many ways, but in facing south he emulated the single most critical feature that had marked kingship since the most ancient times. Since the early eighteenth century, this critical moment of the ascension rituals of the Qing emperors had taken place in the Hall of Great Harmony. Once all the ceremonies were over, the foreign ambassadors, top officials, representatives of the Qing house, and Yuan Shikai himself viewed a military procession.⁶⁷ For almost four hours, six military units marched in front of the viewing stands. Yuan wore an army uniform with a long sword. His blue cap displayed a five-color five-pointed star, its sides were of gold chrysanthemum, and it featured a white plume. His uniform was of blue wool, with gold braid and gold decorative motifs. His boots were black leather. His trousers had three red stripes and his sleeve-ends were red.

Yuan's generalissimo drag was designed to symbolize something about the political structure of the young republic.⁶⁸ But equally significant was the opening of the Outer Court to the public. When the inauguration cer-

emonies were all over, ordinary citizens could obtain free tickets to visit the old imperial halls where Yuan had taken the oath of office.⁶⁹ In terms of the traditional sanctity and taboos surrounding this place, Yuan was acting to secularize rulership. But in terms of his own power, his ritual performances were part of a process of personifying the new state. Yuan's militarized body continued to dominate Double Ten in 1914. Again, in 1914 the parades were followed by Yuan's formally opening a museum to display art and relics from the old Qing palaces at Rehe and Mukden (Shenyang).⁷⁰

So far, Yuan's presidential rituals can be seen as in accord with a certain view of republican values. In assuming the right to conduct sacrifices to the spirits of revolutionary martyrs, or at least to authorize such sacrifices in the name of the government, Yuan was treating them as his ancestors. He thus appealed to common cultural norms not only by displaying a kind of extended filial piety but also taking their charismatic strength into himself. Yuan's use of military symbols also appealed to what had become a widespread value. Militarization had been a radical demand since the turn of the century. At the same time, the Qing house was deliberately reduced to museum status. The Gate of Heavenly Peace (Tiananmen), which used to mark the entrance to the imperial city, became a republican civic monument, dominating instead of protecting the old palaces.

Yuan also showed he was building a modern state in a variety of legal gestures. By mid-1914, regulations were proposed to prohibit queues for government workers, rickshaw pullers, and merchants. (Similarly, a censor's request to revive the kowtow was summarily refused.⁷¹) Government offices were closed on the solar New Year's Day, while attempts were made to curtail the traditional lunar New Year's holiday of early spring. Following international custom, Yuan held formal receptions to meet foreigners and Chinese. The military parades conducted before Yuan and invited guests—and also before officials in other cities—represented order, discipline, and the citizenship of members of a state. At the same time, mass participation in national-day festivities represented a sense of the nation as defined by solidarity and commonality.

To some extent, the museumification of the Qing was the symbolic equivalent of guillotining the king. By the Articles of Favorable Treatment, the imperial family—the boy emperor and the empress dowagers and an

uncountable number of eunuchs—remained alive and reasonably well, living in seclusion in the northern quarters of the Forbidden City. But the general public was invited to peruse both the magnificent architecture of the Outer Court and the new Institute for Exhibiting Antiquities (Guwu chenliesuo). The institute's displays, though limited to a small portion of the vast imperial art collection, came to be viewed as the core of China's "national essence."⁷² Scholars labeled many of the objects "national treasures" and took pride in them. The legal status of the imperial art works was not entirely clear, but in the popular imagination they instantly became part of the national heritage. Possession of some of the works, such as ancient bronzes, had long represented dynastic legitimacy. Their public display now spoke to the legitimacy of the Republic.

The symbolic scaffolding of Yuan's presidency was not entirely republican, however. His quarters and offices were located in the Zhongnanhai—the park-like grounds just to the west of the Forbidden City originally reserved for imperial use. The American ambassador, Paul Reinsch, recounted the presentation of his credentials to Yuan there as a kind of fairy-tale journey.⁷³ Yuan sent an ornate carriage "enameled in blue with gold decorations" and drawn by eight horses for Reinsch. He was accompanied by Yuan's cavalry escort, as well as his own American marines and the legation staff, since, after all, ceremonial forms had to be upheld by the American side as well. They arrived at the Zhongnanhai and were taken to Yuan's home, which Reinsch believed had been the palace Cixi had used to hold Guangxu prisoner. Reinsch was moved.

We alighted at the monumental gate of an enclosure that surrounds the lovely South Lake in the western part of the Imperial City. . . . The remote origin of its buildings, their exquisite forms and brilliant coloring, as contrasted with the sombreness of the lake at that season, and the stirring events of which they have been the scene, cannot fail to impress the visitor as he slowly glides across the Imperial lake in the old-fashioned boat, with its formal little cabin, curtained and upholstered, and with its lateral planks, up and down which pass the men who propel the boat with long poles.⁷⁴

Unlike many other Western visitors, Reinsch quite liked the architecture of the imperial city, which he found pleasant, spacious, and even reserved.

Conducted through various rooms into Yuan's presence, Reinsch was led through files of extremely large guardsmen, which reminded him of Frederick the Great's preference for tall men. Finally, the formal introduction of ambassador to president was made. Reinsch concluded, "This rather naïve emphasis on externals and on display is born of the old imperialism, a more significant feature of Chinese political life than it may seem. . . . The rustle of heavy silks, the play of iridescent colour, the echoes of song and lute form the theatre—all that exquisite oriental refinement still seems to linger."⁷⁵ Preferring his Orientalism neat, Reinsch did criticize the audience room where he formally met Yuan as a "pretentious modern structure erected by the Empress Dowager." He also used the ceremonies to read Yuan's character: "Republican in title he was, but an autocrat at heart. All the old glittering trappings of the empire he had preserved."⁷⁶ It is, of course, not literally true that Yuan preserved the Qing's trappings in their entirety, but it is true that the question of state rituals was carefully considered and many of the features of the past were deliberately perpetuated.

As early as the winter of 1913–1914 Yuan floated plans to revive one imperial ceremony, the worship of Heaven at the winter solstice. He also displayed interest in the summer sacrifices to Earth and the spring and autumn sacrifices to Confucius. Yuan strenuously denied that these gestures represented imperial ambitions. The case for his conducting the old imperial sacrifices was utilitarian. It held that the moral standards of the people had been declining since the revolution while the "rites and music" (*liyue*), or Confucianism, were ignored. The point was not that sacrifices mobilized spiritual powers but that Heaven and Confucius represented virtue in the popular imagination.⁷⁷ If the government neglected the worship of Heaven, the people would blame the government in the event of crop failure. "Although the president is different from the emperors, he is still in the end the leader of the state, representing the nation in modifying and performing the grand sacrifice."⁷⁸

Yuan proposed a deliberate mixture of traditional and updated rituals. There would be a bullock sacrificed, silk and wine offered, bowls, a gold incense burner, one jade cup, and so forth. The kowtow would be performed and ancient music resuscitated. The worship of Heaven would take place before dawn, as during the Qing, but the Temple and Altar of Heaven

would be festooned with electric light bulbs to illuminate the ceremony.⁷⁹ Yuan would wear neither modern clothes nor the imperial dress of the Qing, but the coats of the high dukes of the ancient Zhou dynasty.⁸⁰ There was much research for the antiquarians to do, such research itself having long been part of the ritualization of power. Yuan proclaimed that the ancient sacrifices had originated to honor Heaven as the source of all things, and that to eliminate them would be tantamount to abandoning the creation of the commonwealth (*tianxia wei gong*) and the linkage of humankind to Heaven.⁸¹ The ancient rulers understood that Tian was a barometer of the people's will and so protected the people impartially—Yuan suggested that all this was perfectly compatible with republican principles.

Yuan's greatest break with the past was his decision to allow the private sacrifices to Heaven (*shuren siji*) and to mandate local government participation. No longer would Heaven signify the unique essence of the emperor. The president would merely serve as the exemplary and "chief officiate."⁸² In February 1914 Yuan ordered that the worship of Heaven be made general (*tong*), and that citizens might conduct the appropriate rituals in their homes.⁸³ Yuan said that he would be representing the citizenry (*guomin*) while local officials represented the people of their locality (*difang renmin*). In the event, few if any private households sacrificed to Heaven, though local officials, following orders, did so. In Shanghai, special platforms were built as a temporary Altar of Heaven at the Industrial Training Depot outside the South Gate. Local education officials were in charge of the ceremony.⁸⁴ Beijing enjoined them to follow the ritual procedures established by the central government, while in the capital all government offices were expected to dispatch a representative to participate in the main ceremony.⁸⁵ A proposal to personify Heaven in the form of the Yellow Emperor was rejected on the grounds the Yellow Emperor represented the Han race while the Republic encompassed the five races.⁸⁶

It may be that the Temple and Altar of Heaven had already been desacralized by repeated secular use. Foreign troops had deliberately desecrated the precincts in the wake of the Boxer Uprising, and in the first years of his administration Yuan had complained about American soldiers playing football there. Nonetheless, the Qing architecture remained. Yuan's sacrifices occurred, then, on the winter solstice, December 23, 1914, at

the old altar. For the first time, Heaven was worshipped by the president and by local officials throughout the realm.⁸⁷

We can now put the incident described at the beginning of the Introduction to this book in historical perspective. That Yuan claimed to have fasted for three days beforehand signified his personal ritual purity, even as he proclaimed that he was merely a representative of the nation. His power was symbolized by both soldiers and his appropriation of the imperial yellow. Yuan prayed:

Heaven, Thou dost look down on us and givest us the nation. All-seeing and all-hearing, everywhere, yet how near and how close: We come before Thee on this winter solstice day when the air assumes a new life; in spirit devout, and with ceremony old, we offer to Thee jade, silk, and meat. May our prayer and our offerings rise unto Thee together with sweet incense. We sanctify ourselves, and we pray that Thou will accept our offerings.⁸⁸

The 1914 sacrifices to Heaven turned out to be a unique event in the history of the Republic. Besieged the following year by opposition to his monarchical plans, Yuan let the sacrifices fall into abeyance, and in time the grounds of the Temple of Heaven became a park and museum.

Somewhat more successful were the spring and fall sacrifices to Confucius, especially in the school system. These had been abolished by Cai Yuanpei, first minister of education, at the beginning of the Republic, but were revived under Yuan. Essentially, Yuan tried to find a middle way that gave some official recognition to Confucius—a nice symbol of continuity across the boundary of revolution—while refusing pleas to make Confucianism China's official religion. On the one hand, Yuan noted that the Chinese Republic's constitution specifically recognized religious freedom, and desperate to hold on to the vast frontier regions, he had to think of more than traditional Han culture.⁸⁹ On the other, Yuan defended Confucius from the charges he had promoted autocracy. Born in an aristocratic and despotic age, Confucius had tried to ameliorate those conditions, Yuan said; Confucianism was a protean system that had evolved with the ages. Yuan adopted some of Kang Youwei's Confucian progressivism, claiming that Confucius promoted the Emerging Peace and foresaw the Great Peace or Datong. Heaven had given birth to Confucius as the teacher of

the ages. Yuan thus thought it appropriate for schools to continue sacrifices to Confucius.

The Confucian sacrifices in the fall of 1913 in Beijing were held in the old Imperial Academy (Guozijian) with Finance Minister Liang Shiyi (1869–1933) representing the president.⁹⁰ Before the ceremonies, the offerings were viewed by Beijing's elites, including foreign reporters, educators, and diplomats. The ritual itself seems to have been conducted with considerable formality, although it was reported that some felt the ceremonies had deteriorated. The next year, Yuan personally led the sacrifices acting as chief priest, proceeding to the Wenmiao (or "Confucius Temple") in his armored car through crowds of soldiers. Four ritual kowtows were followed by offerings of wine, animals, and paper money, which were followed by another four kowtows.⁹¹

Confucius had only become so central to state ritual in the very last years of the Qing. In 1906 worship of Confucius was promoted from a middle-ranking sacrifice to a grand sacrifice.⁹² As Ya-pei Kuo has shown, this had been a long-cherished dream of Kang-style reformers who saw in Confucius a symbol of the Chinese nation, and in Confucianism the essence of Chinese culture. The Qing hoped Confucius could help hold the realm together after the abolition of the examination system. Yet while the grand sacrifices to Heaven highlighted his son the emperor's unique role in the cosmos, in sacrificing to Confucius, the emperor became just one of a mass of humanity. Unlike the traditional objects of grand sacrifice—Heaven, Earth, Land and Grain, and the imperial ancestors—Confucius had long been worshipped by gentry and literati commoners. The Qing's new promotion of Confucius was an attempt to strengthen national identity and the ties between the people and the monarchy at the expense of the emperor's transcendence.

In the event, little transcendence from either Heaven or Confucius rubbed off on Yuan. Suitably enough, the generalissimo-president also gave attention to the Wumiao (Martial Temple), the military twin of the Wenmiao. The Qing had long honored the martial hero and god Guandi at the Wumiao, but in 1914 Yuan ordered that Yue Fei be given equal status and that sacrifices to both of them should be conducted along with ceremonies for the martyrs of the Republic.⁹³ Like the revolutionary martyrs,

they might be transmuted into symbols of modern patriotism. Guandi represented virtues such as loyalty and righteousness. Yue Fei (1103–1142) had been a Han Chinese general who had resisted northern invaders who were predecessors of the Manchus. Late Qing revolutionaries had venerated Yue Fei, and Yuan may have been trying to remind people of his own Han identity without offending China's other nationalities. As he began his campaign to become emperor, there was a report that Yuan was even trying to have one of his ancestors be canonized in the *Wumiao*.⁹⁴

Yuan's "superstitions" were ridiculed by some,⁹⁵ but Yuan may have had a better grasp of popular sentiment than the revolutionaries. It was reported that revolutionaries' attempts to limit public observations of Confucianism in Guangzhou in 1912, for example, met with hostility.⁹⁶ The revolutionaries seemed to envision Double Ten as a celebration of nation and state, and to dismiss Confucius and Heaven as irredeemably tainted with monarchy and empire. In the immediate wake of the revolution, military and civil officials led a new ritualization of the new Republic in China's major cities. Bowing replaced the three kneelings and nine prostrations of the full kowtow, but the basic meaning of sacrifices to the spirits was maintained. These official rituals offered the Chinese a shared experience while carefully differentiating selected groups in a hierarchy that privileged official and male. For Yuan Shikai, the task was to link his rule to ultimate sources of authority, or at least to sources of authority that transcended his person. He was basically able to remodel symbols of state in his image. But as we will see in the next chapter, even his monarchy accepted new norms of the nation.

The dual nature of the founding of the Republic of China—starting with revolution and ending with constitutional succession through abdication—was reflected even in that modern symbol of national sovereignty, the postage stamp. The government announced in September 1912 that it was issuing two stamps: one of Sun Yat-sen against a background of rice plants, and one of Yuan Shikai against a background of wheat.⁹⁷ Nicely combining north-south ecological motifs, then, the mails reflected the Republic's tenuous political unity. The Tongmenghui restorationist mythol-

ogy, which was later promoted by the Guomindang government of the 1930s, was displaced in the first years of the Republic by a story about the peaceful resolution of the "chaos" by the capable Yuan. Still, in the first years of the Republic, Double Ten sanctioned a set of performances that moved bodies from the periphery to the center. Exemplary bodies—those of officials, soldiers, and students—were on special display. It was also an occasion for the mingling of bodies; in the excitement, public and private experiences were mixed. One example of the modern idiom of the body was the extensive use of bowing in various rituals, and handshaking on formal occasions as well. The new body of the citizen was also marked by short hair, at least for men. Campaigns to cut men's queues were fairly successful.⁹⁸ As for women, the equivalent remaking of the body was unbending their feet. And just as men were discouraged from growing their hair long, so women were prohibited from cutting their hair short.⁹⁹ Citizenship remained gendered in law and practice. Clothing of course was changing as well. Again, officials, students, and soldiers led the way in male sartorial reform—the Beijing government took care to detail the proper attire for formal occasions. Girl students' uniforms, however, were fairly close to those of boy students.

In the first years of the Republic, memory of the revolution was embodied in ritual forms sanctioned by the state. This did not just happen but came about through a combination of habit and consideration, debate and contestation. Debated rituals and ritualized debates: both reflected the complex political culture of the first years of the Republic of China. The republican state claimed a fundamentally different basis of legitimacy from the Qing or any other previous Chinese state. It sought more intimate ties with the nation and also sought to control its citizens more closely. In the late imperial era, community-wide celebrations such as the Lantern Festival and the Dragon Boat Festival offered subversive potential and moments of transgression of social boundaries, carnivalesque celebrations not unlike those of late medieval Europe.¹⁰⁰ They celebrated the complex cosmic hierarchy and ultimately reaffirmed the social order with the emperor at its apex. Double Ten, on the contrary, while involving many of the same physical actions such as parades, lanterns, and banquets, emphasized common identity. It did not promise complete equality, but its participa-

tory forms suggested that the individual was importantly a member of an appropriate segment of the citizenry: soldier, student, official, merchant, and so on. Through that group identity, emotionally weaker than familial ties but operating at a higher political level, the new state laid claim to the individual. Double Ten was a political ritual, not a cosmic ritual. Insofar as it embodied memory, it was a memory of the revolution. In 1916 in the wake of Yuan's death and the complete rout of his monarchy, the newspaper *Shengjing shibao* reminded its readers of the blood sacrifices that had been made for freedom, both in 1911 and again in 1915.¹⁰¹

But what was that revolution? What had it accomplished? Within a few years, intellectuals had become disillusioned and cynical. A newspaper article published on October 10, 1924, compared each of the thirteen years of the Republic to a disease.¹⁰² In this sense the body politic was in constant crisis. The revolt of 1913 was like an infection of the diaphragm, while Yuan's monarchy was like the brain filling with blood. The Qing restoration of 1917—a military coup that restored Puyi to the throne for two weeks—was a “fake death.” The betrayal of the nation in 1919—the Versailles Treaty, which turned the German concessions in Shandong over to Japan—was smallpox. The incessant civil wars of the 1920s represented various disorders. Such a cynicism was inherited from the beginning of Yuan Shikai's dictatorship. On October 11, 1913, *Shenbao* had commented:

If we ask our countrymen what all the fuss was about yesterday, all the clapping and yelling, they will reply, “It was to commemorate the Republic, to celebrate the president.” If we ask why commemorate and celebrate, they will reply, “We are hoping for the progress of the Republic of China.” But we've still got the same old president, the same old administration, the same old legislature, the same old judiciary, the same old citizenry, and now that it's the same old day after the fuss, the people are calm and forgetful, but it's still the same old China. Where is the progress? I thus hope that everyone from the president on down will reject all the same-olds and raise their spirits to construct a new nation on this Asian continent so we can be worthy of the true meaning of the words “Republic of China.”¹⁰³

For the writer Lu Xun (1881–1936), reflecting on the 1911 Revolution in 1925, the fundamental issue was the failure of memory and the tendency of the Chinese to forget.¹⁰⁴ What happened to all that revolutionary

vengefulness? Lu noted that the accounts of the massacres at Yangzhou and Jiading, like the writings of Ming loyalists, were published to revive forgotten hatreds. But this desire for revenge dissipated with the coming of the revolution. Lu suggested this was because of both revolutionary optimism and the desire to appear “civilized.” Lu noted that the Manchu quarters in Nanjing had been destroyed, but he denied this resulted from Han desire for revenge. Rather—or so he heard (or claimed to have heard)—most of the damage was caused by the Manchus themselves. In any case, “even if you hung the *Account of Ten Days at Yangzhou* in front of your eyes, you couldn't maintain your anger.” Lu complained that with the supposed success of the 1911 Revolution, conditions soon regressed to the point monarchism reemerged. Revenge itself, Lu neither glorified nor denigrated. Or rather he thought it both normal and dangerous. But his real point seems to have been that the anger of the Chinese people was too often misdirected and intermittent.

Yet, in spite of the understandable doubts of Republican intellectuals, the failure of monarchical movements in the wake of the Revolution shows that something had fundamentally changed. The new state was certainly not a democracy; it was not perhaps even a state in much more than form.¹⁰⁵ The imperialist powers continued to severely limit the range of action available to any Beijing government, while the revolution enabled local and regional power-holders to operate with increasing independence. Nonetheless, socially disenfranchised groups such as women, workers, students, and to some extent peasants and minorities, were claiming citizenship. Citizenship implies a status of commonality with other citizens vis-à-vis the state, and in this limited sense need not entail democratic rights (voting, office holding, and so forth) but simply entitlement to the protection of the state. Citizenship was unstable in discourse and practice, but still the marks of citizenship spread rapidly from virtually none to virtually all of the various symbols, ceremonies, festivals, rituals, and commemorations of the early Republic.