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## "China in Disintegration: The Republican era in Chinese History, 1912-1949," and "The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928"

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necessity to relate numbers, types and sizes of ships to specific and individual national requirements. Absolute standards are, therefore, all but impossible to achieve.

After 1930, disarmament and even arms limitation became increasingly irrelevant. Even so, it was not possible and perhaps it would not even have been prudent in the first years of the decade to embark on a major building program. Public opinion in Britain would not have tolerated it. In the United States the Vinson-Trammell Act of 1934 sought only to build up the U.S. Navy to treaty strength.

Conventional economic wisdom at the time required balanced and even reduced budgets. The 1931 Invergordon Mutiny was a dramatic and unequivocal reaction in the fleet to proposed pay cuts pursuant to what was seen as fiscal necessity. Roskill chronicles this unfortunate event and describes in detail how the Admiralty in London and the fleet commanders dealt with it.

Waning enthusiasm for arms limitation and the very real treaty obligations in force, along with fiscal stringency and a largely pacific public, were influences over which the Royal Navy had no control. Nevertheless, in these difficult circumstances, it did a creditable job in preparing for the war that became all but inevitable as the decade wore on. Roskill has almost unlimited praise and boundless admiration for the First Sea Lord, Adm. Sir Ernle Chatfield, to whom he ascribes the virtues of foresight, tenacity, professional competence and skill, and superb leadership. Chatfield's tenure shows that one man can indeed make a difference.

There are frequent and sometimes lengthy quotations from a multitude of documents, papers, reports and correspondence which many American readers may find tedious. Indeed this tendency to focus narrowly adds detail and thoroughness to this study, but at the price of slighting the broad context

in which British naval policy was created and executed, and without which that naval policy cannot be understood.

Captain Roskill frequently refers to parallel events in the U.S. Navy and in doing so he provides much useful comparison. The most dramatic example is the fate of naval aviation in the Royal and U.S. Navies. Following World War I the Royal Navy's air arm was placed under the R.A.F. This arrangement proved not only inefficient and unsatisfactory (at least to the navy) but it also gave rise to extensive interservice bickering. In the nick of time on the eve of World War II the Royal Navy finally obtained full control of its fleet air arm, but not land-based VP aircraft. However, thanks to the tireless and dedicated efforts of Rear Adm. William A. Moffett, aviation had become a permanent and integral part of the U.S. Navy by the time of his death in 1933. Roskill regrets the British did not follow the American example.

This solid, scholarly account makes one point abundantly clear: Despite the mammoth problems and difficulties of the 1930's, the Royal Navy was reasonably well prepared to fight World War II, which it fought well, thanks to the intangible, but crucial, human factors of confidence bred of a long tradition and the professional competence of the officers and men.

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Sheridan, James E. *China in Disintegration: The Republican Era in Chinese History, 1912-1949*. New York: The Free Press, 1975. 338pp

Jordon, Donald A. *The Northern Expedition: China's National Revolution of 1926-1928*. Honolulu: The University Presses of Hawaii, 1976. 341pp.

Both these books attempt to explain the failure of republican government

and the success of a Communist regime in China. The authors proceed in different ways. James Sheridan takes a wide view, describing the events of 37 years of extremely eventful history in only slightly more than 300 pages. Donald Jordan, on the other hand, focuses on a brief period of the epoch and then generalizes from his investigation.

Despite their differing approaches, both authors successfully delineate the events and, in most cases the causative factors, of why the Chinese Revolution proceeded as it did. In reaching their conclusions, Sheridan and Jordan each utilize an analytical framework of national integration.

Sheridan is more explicit than Jordan in explaining this concept. Relying on the work of political scientists such as Hans Kohn and Karl Deutsch, he defines national integration as the crucial economic, social, and political processes leading to the development of an effective, centrally controlled nation-state. Sheridan avers that imperial China (Ch'ing) (1644-1911) was only weakly integrated and that the 1911 revolution marked the onslaught of a process of national disintegration which reached a high point during the warlord era of the 1920's. He further argues that the mildly reintegrative processes initiated by Chiang Kai-shek's government were greatly intensified and became successful under the post-1949 Communist regime.

Jordan agrees with Sheridan's general scheme but does not utilize it in as rigid an analytical fashion. Instead, Jordan uses the 1926-1928 Northern Expedition to illustrate the developing political process in 20th-century China.

The Northern Expedition was the campaign by the Nationalist Party—the Kuomintang (KMT)—to defeat the various warlords and to unify China. From the outset, in Canton in 1925, the KMT was a factionalized party, with the Communist-led left being opposed by an

initially amorphous right wing. The Communists were closely controlled by the Moscow-based Comintern and the KMT as a whole received extensive Russian aid and advisory assistance.

A major strength of Jordan's book is his discussion of the role played by Russia, Stalin's lack of understanding of the situation in China, and the resultant failure of Soviet policy. Stalin far more directly "lost" China in 1928 than did the United States in 1949.

Jordan also provides excellent descriptions of the military and political events of the Northern Expedition. He discusses in detail the internal politics and organization of the KMT and the Communist Party (CCP).

Both authors emphasize the importance of the disintegrative warlord system in China. The more extensive discussion of this subject is provided by James Sheridan, who is an acknowledged authority in the field. In fact, over one-third of his book is devoted to the warlord phenomenon.

Sheridan believes that the success of the Chinese Revolution depended upon unification of the widely divergent social and economic classes of that country. In his view, the urban-oriented KMT of Chiang Kai-shek not only failed to lessen class differences but actually exacerbated them. The KMT had the "right" ideology but failed to implement it. The CCP eventually was successful because it adopted a rural perspective and put into practice an ideology which lessened class differences and promoted significant socio-economic unity on a national level. It should be noted that Sheridan fails sufficiently to qualify his conclusions regarding the efficacy of the Communist regime; he does not acknowledge the disintegrative tendencies of recent years, particularly the Cultural Revolution of the 1960's and the recent unrest which followed the deaths of Chou En-lai and Mao Tse-tung.

Jordan agrees with Sheridan on the

reasons for the republican government's failure in China. However, he more strongly emphasizes the importance of the Northern Expedition, which effected the military unification of China if not the political centralization of its government.

Jordan also notes the urban orientation of the KMT as a critical weakness in an agrarian country. He and Sheridan both emphasize that while Chiang Kai-shek's policy of coopting the warlords into the KMT was successful in the short run, it sowed the seeds for continued discord and eventual failure of the republican government. Chiang was never able satisfactorily to control these disparate elements.

The reason for this failure, according to Jordan, was the Japanese invasion in 1937. Sheridan does not discount the importance of Japan's actions, but places greater emphasis on the failure of the KMT to implement successfully an ideology which would reduce the political and economic inequities within China.

Both authors mention the importance of military strength in the Chinese Revolution. The Northern Expedition—Chiang Kai-shek's major success—was to a large degree a political movement. However, in the final analysis (and contrary to the Communist historical view) it was military force rather than any rising of the proletariat which determined the outcome of this expedition and of the revolution as a whole.

The CCP's leaders, particularly Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh, learned through early failures in Kwangtung and Hunan Provinces that while political action and ideology were vital, they could not succeed without strong military means.

Sheridan and Jordan agree that the Communists won out in China because they were able to carry on a process of reintegration through relatively rapid implementation of a rural-oriented ideology of political, social, and

economic unification. *China in Disintegration* and *The Northern Expedition* are both well-written, although the latter work is the better organized of the two. Jordan also provides a series of helpful maps.

James Sheridan's work, because of its readability and inclusive coverage, is a good starting point for gaining a knowledge of 20th-century Chinese political history. Donald Jordan's book is more for the specialist in Chinese studies but provides a greater understanding of 20th-century China than its title indicates. Both these works are valuable additions to the bibliography of the Chinese Revolution.

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Smith, Myron J. *World War II at Sea: A Bibliography of Sources in English*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1976. 3v.

Myron Smith proved in his 6-volume *Bibliography of U.S. Naval History* that he is a careful and inclusive compiler and indexer. Coverage in those volumes ended with 1941, and in this new set Smith treats the years of American naval activity in the Second World War.

This set is divided into three parts: Volume I covers the Pacific Theater; volume II deals with the European Theater; and volume III includes "General Works" and a variety of specialized topics: shipbuilding, hardware, administration, personnel, medicine, and a chronology of naval events. Smith lists each item in the bibliography alphabetically by the author, provides necessary cross-references when an item includes material on more than one topic, and concludes the work with one cumulative index organized by key terms or names and another for authors. It is, perhaps, the frailty of the former index which is the least satisfactory portion of this work. On the positive side of the