

## **Lin Hsien-Tang's Taiwanese Home Rule Movement as Inspired by the Irish Model**

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### **Abstract**

*Lin Hsien-Tang played the most significant role in leading resistance to colonialism in Taiwan during the Japanese period, 1895–1945. In 1907 Lin took the advice of a Chinese leader-in-exile named Liang Chi-Tsau to follow the Irish way of resisting English rule, and in 1911 he invited Liang to visit Taiwan. It can be assumed that Lin was thus influenced by Liang to start his political career from 1914 as a reformer rather than a revolutionary, though it is not known how exactly they conceptualized Irish Home Rule. Lin's rise and development as a politician has parallels with John Redmond, who during the same period was leading the Irish Home Rule movement. This paper uses valuable and largely-unresearched materials, such as Lin Hsien-Tang's Diary, contemporary Taiwanese and Japanese newspapers, and Japanese official records, to analyse the achievements and problems of Lin's political career in depth. Lin is then compared with Redmond, drawing on scholarly and contemporary sources. In his role as leader of the Irish nationalist MPs at Westminster, John Redmond worked towards enhancing political rights and the social position of nationalists in Ireland while maintaining a peaceful political co-existence with his opponents, just as Lin wanted to achieve equality between the Taiwanese and the Japanese. Both succeeded in keeping the flame of national consciousness alight in their people, although sabotaged and attacked by radicals of their own side and ultimately frustrated in their aims.*

### **Introduction**

In 1895 Taiwan was ceded to Japan, and the inhabitants endured unequal treatment as colonial subjects. The Japanese Empire was interested in learning from the British model of colonialism: Michael Hoare notes a report from the London *Times* from 12 June 1903 that 'Viscount Kodama, Governor of Formosa'

was planning a visit to England and to ‘the Transvaal in order to inspect the working of the British Colonial System’.<sup>1</sup> A generation later, a report in the *Times* of 29 October 1936 stated that ‘when talking to Englishmen, the Japanese refer rather proudly to Formosa as “their India”’ (quoted in Hoare 2010). However, the British Empire’s colonial subjects also offered their own lessons, which came to the attention of Japan’s new subjects; the current paper is particularly concerned with the Taiwanese leader Lin Hsien-Tang (林獻堂), who followed advice from a Chinese leader-in-exile, Liang Chi-Tsau (梁啟超), to follow the Irish way of resistance to English rule. In Irish history, this paper considers the example of John Redmond as a possible counterpart to Lin in Taiwan; Redmond led the Irish Home Rule movement from 1900 until his death in 1918, coinciding with the period during which Lin launched his political career. It is interesting to consider why and how the Irish model inspired Lin’s moderate anti-colonialism, and to consider related questions: what was the nature of Lin’s anti-colonial movement? Was it successful? And finally, what comparisons and contrasts can be made between the careers of Lin and Redmond?

Lin came from a prominent family in central Taiwan, and played a most important role in leading the anti-colonial movement throughout the period of Japanese rule, which ended in 1945. Generally speaking, he was a moderate reformer rather than a revolutionary, and he sought to achieve his goals by peaceful means. There are various source materials for Lin’s political life, the most important of which are the three volumes of the *Lin Hsien-Tang Commemorative Series* (1960, 1974) and the published correspondence between Lin Hsien-Tang and Liang Chi-Tsau (Hsu 2007). Other sources include contemporary Chinese and Japanese newspapers. A number of works published in Taiwan discuss Lin’s anti-Japanese movement, and two in particular should be noted. Chang was the first scholar to discuss Lin’s political activities systematically (1981: 64–72). However, his book contains only eight pages on Liang’s visit to Taiwan in 1911, and he made little reference to the Irish home rule problem. Huang’s 2006 biography of Lin describes Lin and Liang’s dialogue in 1907 and Liang’s visit to Taiwan in 1911, and discusses their importance, but it does not go into details (22–27). There are also some relevant articles, such as works by Tsai *et al.* (1971), Huang (1965), Chen (1996), and Chou (1989), but most give only brief mentions of the topic and there are again few references to Irish anti-colonialism. The purpose of the present paper is to fill this gap.

The paper begins with a discussion of how Lin Hsien-Tang’s approach to anti-colonialism was inspired by the Irish Home Rule movement, and shows why he adopted a peaceful approach to anti-Japanese colonialism. In particular, the paper describes how the Irish model was introduced by Liang to Lin when they met and had a dialogue in Japan in 1907. The second part describes the character of the Irish Home Rule movement, which, under the leadership of John Redmond, saw an Irish parliament written into law in 1914 after four decades of campaign and struggle. Despite this achievement, war in Europe and rebellion in Ireland ensured that this parliament, although legislated for, was never convened, and Irish nationalism took a very different course. The third part discusses the first stage of

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<sup>1</sup> Hoare adds that the plan was abandoned when Kodama became Chief of General Staff of the Manchurian Army on the outbreak of war with Russia the following year.

Lin's political movement, which included The Assimilation Association (20 December 1914 to 26 February 1915) and the subsequent Law 63 abolition movement (August 1918 to November 1920), while the fourth part deals with Lin's second stage of activism with the Taiwan Assembly establishment movement. Between 1920 and 1930 this movement aimed to establish an independent assembly in Taiwan to counter the tyranny of the governor-general. This movement declined when Japan tightened political controls after initiating its aggression against China in the 1930's. The conclusion includes a brief comparison of Lin and Redmond.

### **Lin Hsien-Tang's Idea of Anti-colonialism as Inspired by the Irish Home Rule Movement**

Lin Hsien-Tang was born in Taichung, Taiwan, in 1881. His father was an intellectual, but his mother died when he was young and he was brought up by his paternal grandmother and received home-tutoring from two prominent scholars. This helped to form his personality and intellectual perspective throughout his life.

In 1895, the Ch'ing Empire lost a war with Japan, and Taiwan was consequently ceded to Japan. This had a strong impact on Lin, and he devoted his entire life to fighting for the freedom and dignity of the Taiwanese and against the Japanese colonial power. He was known to be a moderate, leading a peaceful, non-violent political movement. There were a number of reasons he took this approach.

#### *The Difficulties of Anti-Colonial Resistance through Military Measures in Taiwan*

Lin's idea of peaceful struggle against the Japanese was formulated in relation to several factors. First, he learnt the lesson of the disorganization of the Taiwanese resistance forces during the initial stage of the armed struggle, between 1895 and 1902 (Huang 2004: 14). Despite the initially high morale of the Taiwanese resistance, its forces were immediately overwhelmed by the well-trained and well-equipped Japanese forces. The resistance lacked military discipline, modern weaponry and a competent leader to conduct a sustained armed struggle against the Japanese.

Moreover, the Japanese initiated a massive disarmament program, using the carrot and the stick to divide and destroy resistance forces and ensure stability. This was immediately successful: in 1903, the 'stick' approach obliged the Taiwanese to hand over any weapon which was deemed threatening to colonial rule (Lamley 1964), while the 'carrot' approach which followed offered locally-respected Taiwanese individuals opportunities to become local officials. Some privileges were also offered, such as monopolies on the sale of opium and salt.

Furthermore, the Lin family was not very keen on the idea of armed struggle. Although his family was wealthy and would have been able to organize an armed force, he faced difficulties in coordinating different family members into united action. Lin himself was brought up in a family regarded by Taiwanese as 'educated', 'well-cultured' and 'moderate' (Huang 2004: 15). He received a Confucian-style education which emphasized the values of civility, moderation, and politeness. These became Lin's personal characteristics, which affected his approach in dealing with the colonial rulers. Therefore, he saw himself as a

political leader who was struggling for peace, and rather than as a revolutionary engaging in armed conflict.

A final factor was the lack of international help for the armed struggle against the Japanese colonial regime. Taiwan, by the terms of the Peace Treaty of Simonoseki between China and Japan, was a ceded territory, and therefore no nation could legally assist Taiwan, not even China. After the defeat of the Taiwanese resistance forces in 1895, there were further incidents of armed resistance in Taiwan against the Japanese in 1913 and in 1915, but they were sporadic and inconsistent.

*The Influence of the Dialogue between Lin Hsien-Tang and Liang Chi-Tsau in 1907*

Although there was no international support for a potential armed struggle against the Japanese, Lin did receive moral support from a sympathizer in China, Liang Chi-Tsau. Lin met Liang in Nara, Japan, in 1907, and eagerly explained the ill-treatment of the Taiwanese by the Japanese and sought Liang's advice. Liang bluntly told Lin:

China would not and will not be able to support Taiwan in its potential liberation from the Japanese colonial rulers. In such circumstances, it will not be wise to make any drastic move which would result in unnecessary loss of life. The best option is to imitate the Irish model in fighting against the British rule. In other words, Taiwanese political activists should try to build deep relations with prominent Japanese politicians in Tokyo, who may, in turn, curb possible political oppression of political rights in Taiwan by the Japanese general-governor.

(quoted in Huang 2004: 15)

This was Liang's response and advice to Lin, which strengthened Lin's belief in non-violent struggle as the means for gaining political freedom from the Japanese. Lin cherished this precious meeting and consequently invited Liang to visit Taiwan in the future. This shows the influence of the Irish Home Rule movement on Lin.

*The Influence of Liang Chi-Tsau's Visit to Taiwan in 1911*

On 24 March 1911, Liang, accompanied by his eldest daughter and his close friend Tang Chue-Tun (湯覺頓), embarked on his first visit to Taiwan (Chang 1981: 67–68). It was a highly publicized event, and subsequently caught the attention of the Japanese colonial regime. After their arrival, Liang was greeted by huge crowds of Taiwanese intellectuals in Keelung (the main port in northern Taiwan) and in Taipei. During their visit, Liang stayed in four different places and tried hard to understand the strong anti-Japan sentiment amongst the Taiwanese people. Ironically, he concluded and conceded that, although the Japanese colonial rulers were undemocratic and autocratic, their development programs in Taiwan, such as water irrigation, education, banking system, telegrams, newspapers, and radio broadcasting, were, to his mind, worth emulating in China (Liang 1975: 167). In other words, Liang was not very keen on drastic anti-colonial measures. Lin considered Liang's words and regarded his anti-colonial activism as a peaceful

and political movement, which would not resort to the kind of armed revolution seen in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Following Liang's advice to emulate the Home Rule movement in Ireland, Lin soon afterwards began to implement his approach by seeking the help of influential politicians in the Japanese central government, and in 1914 he cooperated with Taisuno Itegaki (板垣退助) in organizing the Assimilation Association (同化會). This was followed by plans for the establishment of a Taiwanese Assembly, political parties, and cultural associations which were to consist of Taiwanese intellectuals, which will be discussed later.

### **The Irish Home Rule Movement and the achievement of Redmondism (1900–1918)**

It is perhaps significant that Liang was advocating the Irish Home Rule model in 1907. Regrettably, it is not clear from the sources how or in what context Liang described the Irish Home Rule movement to Lin or indeed what was the extent of Liang's knowledge of the Irish question. It is as likely that Liang was referring to an earlier phase in the Irish constitutional struggle as to current events in Anglo-Irish politics. Whether his information was derived from history books, newspapers, or word of mouth, it is probable that his concept of Irish history and politics constituted an idealized and somewhat simplified interpretation of the situation. For this reason, it is excusable here to present the course of modern Irish history and the Home Rule movement in broad terms rather than entering into the nuances of factionalism, regionalism, and parliamentary intrigues which dominate the modern historiography of constitutional nationalism.<sup>2</sup> If Liang had learned of Home Rule through books – either directly or indirectly – a number of important works had been published prior to 1907 that may have had some bearing on his concept of Irish Home Rule.<sup>3</sup> If this was the case, it is more likely that Liang was referring to the iconic struggle of Charles Stewart Parnell against the forces of Conservatism and unionism culminating in the failed 1886 Home Rule Bill. On the other hand, if Liang was keeping up with contemporary developments in Irish politics, 1907 was a pivotal year for John Redmond as chairman of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

#### *Background to Irish History: Contested Island*

As island nations with colonial pasts, there are similarities worth exploring in the Home Rule and independence movements in Ireland and Taiwan. While the history of British rule in Ireland has a substantially longer lineage than the Taiwanese experience of Japanese rule, in both cases these were the first overseas territory taken by the colonizer. In Ireland, numerous armed insurrections had been attempted against the rule of the English monarchy from the sixteenth century onwards. In the present context, notable uprisings occurred in 1798 and

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<sup>2</sup> For example, Callanan (1992); Bew (1987); and Wheatley (2005).

<sup>3</sup> Among the publications which may have had a bearing on Liang's impressions of Irish politics could be McCarthy (1904, 1907); O'Brien (1898), and O'Connor (1886).

1867 under the banners of the United Irishmen<sup>4</sup> and the Fenians<sup>5</sup> respectively. From the 1540s onwards, owing to the concurrence of England's Protestant reformation and the extension and consolidation of British rule in Ireland, Irish demands for political rights were inextricably linked with broader questions of land ownership and religious freedom.<sup>6</sup> One fundamental difference between Ireland and Taiwan in this respect is that, whereas Japan was reluctant to settle its people in Taiwan, Ireland experienced waves of plantation by English and Scottish settlers in the early modern period.<sup>7</sup> The success of plantation in the northeast of the province of Ulster led to sectarian and ethnic tensions that persist to the present day. In addition, the descendants of these Ulster settlers became the most vocal and credible defenders of the union with Great Britain from the 1880s onwards. During the nineteenth century, the peacefully orientated (constitutional) and the revolutionary (physical force) traditions of Irish nationalism ran simultaneously and often with an ambiguous degree of overlap and interaction.

Arguably the most significant event during Ireland's nineteenth century was the outbreak of a devastating famine beginning in 1845.<sup>8</sup> The famine had a lasting effect on the demographics and economy of the island and, in the political context, British mismanagement of the disaster added fuel to the fire of Irish nationalist sentiment for generations thereafter. Furthermore, the famine gave rise to increased tensions over land holding. The grievances of tenant farmers became an even more pressing issue in Irish life and politics than they had been prior to the famine. In this period, British governments and the newly emergent Home Rule movement began to focus on the resolution of the land question alongside the wider issue of governance (Mansergh 1975: 135–138).

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<sup>4</sup> A society based on Enlightenment principles and religious egalitarianism. Despite these lofty aims, the actual rebellion in 1798 had sectarian overtones in certain parts of the country. The arrival of a French invasion force in the west of Ireland after the main action had been suppressed gave an international dimension to this episode. Alvin Jackson has dubbed the rebellion 'a short but bloody civil war... the explosive release of pent-up economic and sectarian pressures' (Jackson 1999: 20).

<sup>5</sup> Having staged an unsuccessful rebellion in 1867, various groups committed acts of terrorism in both Ireland and Britain, including a dynamiting campaign and political assassinations in the 1880s, under the banner of 'Fenianism'. The official leadership of the Fenians, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, remained operational up to the 1916 Rising – which it planned and orchestrated – and beyond. As such, it provided a strand of continuity between the revolutionary movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (see Moody ed. 1978).

<sup>6</sup> David Thornley has referred to nationality, land, and religion at the 'three great stimuli' behind the common people's resentment of their rulers (Thornley 1964: 13).

<sup>7</sup> On Japanese reluctance to settle its own people in Taiwan, apart from colonial administrators and police, see Song (2009: 83n).

<sup>8</sup> The famine had been caused by the failure of the potato crop, in which blight was first observed in September 1845. The population of Ireland stood at 8,175,124 in the census of 1841. Ten years later, starvation and emigration contributed to a fall of 1,622,739 in the population of the island. Figures taken from Foster 1988: 606–607.

*The Origins of Irish Home Rule*

Beginning in 1870, the Home Rule movement sought to re-establish on Irish soil the parliament that had voted itself out of existence in 1800 when it passed the Act of Union with Great Britain.<sup>9</sup> Isaac Butt, the founder of the Irish Home Rule movement, was openly sympathetic towards the Fenians whose insurrection of 1867 had ended in catastrophic failure. Despite initial ambivalence, mass arrests of Fenians had swung the sympathies of a large section of the public in favour of the rebels, who took their place in the pantheon of Irish nationalism (Lyons 1971: 126–127). Butt's legal defence of the Fenians at their trials provided him with a platform from which to launch his political campaign for Home Rule (Thornley 1964: 19–20). Initially, the Home Rule movement had been moderate, gently pressing for the British Government to benevolently grant Ireland greater freedoms culminating in the restoration of a domestic legislature within a federalist framework (Jackson 1999: 12). However, oratory and reason alone were ineffectual methods for securing these aims. By the middle of the 1870s, a section of the Home Rule party began to adopt more radical, but still firmly constitutional methods.

By 1880, under the leadership of Charles Stewart Parnell, the Irish Parliamentary Party brought machine politics to Westminster. Its new aim was to grind the business of Parliament and, by extension, the entire British Empire to a halt through the application of obstructionist tactics.<sup>10</sup> By so doing, it was hoped that the presence of Irish representatives in the British House of Commons would become such a burden as to convince the Government that Home Rule was the only solution.<sup>11</sup> From the 1880s onwards, the Home Rule party dominated electoral politics in Ireland and, following franchise extension in 1884, the consistent election of roughly eighty pledge-bound and well-disciplined Home Rule MPs to Westminster became a source of exasperation and ire to successive British Governments, both Conservative and Liberal. Though never violent, Home Rule aligned itself with agrarian agitation in Ireland advocating boycott and civil disobedience. Between the 1880s and the first decade of the twentieth century, numerous nationalist MPs were imprisoned and nationalist public meetings in Ireland were subjected to police surveillance.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> On the way in which the Irish Parliament was bribed and induced to pass the Act, see Foster (1988: 284–285).

<sup>10</sup> Through long and rambling speeches, Irish MPs managed to force the House of Commons to sit for marathon sessions of several days. This eventually provoked reformative action from the Government and the liberties of individual members were consequently curtailed. On the origins of obstructionism among Home Rule MPs, beginning in July 1874, see Thornley (1964: 235–239) and Cruise O'Brien (1957: 21–23).

<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, the burden of Ireland on the business of Parliament was cited by Prime Minister Asquith as a justification for the re-establishment of an Irish parliament when he introduced the third Home Rule Bill in April 1912 (see *Hansard*, 11 April 1912, col. 1404).

<sup>12</sup> Detailed secret police reports relating to nationalist involvement in land agitation and the participation of nationalist MPs in public meetings in Ireland can be found in the files of the British Colonial Office (*The British in Ireland, CO 904, Part One: Anti-Government Organisations, 1882–1921*).

The first great opportunity for the Irish Home Rule movement came when the British Liberal Party, traditionally more moderate on the Irish question, found itself relying on the numerical support of Irish Home Rulers to form a government following the General Elections of 1885 and 1892.. In both instances, a pact was made between William Gladstone, the Liberal Prime Minister, and the leadership of the Irish Parliamentary Party.<sup>13</sup> In exchange for making possible the formation of a Liberal administration, Gladstone introduced a bill providing for the establishment of a Home Rule parliament in Ireland.

The first Home Rule Bill of 1886 proposed the establishment of a unicameral legislature – deliberately avoiding the term ‘parliament’ (Jackson 2003: 57) – and the removal of the 103 Irish representatives then sitting in the House of Commons. The new Irish legislature was to consist of two ‘orders’, one partially elected and with a property/wealth qualification, and the other fully elected and ‘wholly representative’ (Lyons 1977: 344). Importantly, although Ireland was to be relatively unrestricted in its legislative remit,<sup>14</sup> executive power was to remain in the hands of the monarch’s representative in Ireland, the Lord Lieutenant, and the assembly in Ireland was to remain strictly subordinate to Parliament at Westminster (Jackson 2003: 57–58). The Irish Parliamentary Party initially gave only a ‘guarded welcome’ to the 1886 Home Rule Bill, largely due to the clauses relating to finance, the creation of two orders within the legislature, and the restrictions on the powers that would be granted to this new body (Lyons 1977: 345). However, it quickly became clear that the Bill had little chance of being passed by the Commons, and at this point the Nationalists threw their unequivocal support behind the Bill, aware that quarrel with Gladstone over particulars was now irrelevant (Jackson 2003: 61).

In 1886, the first Home Rule Bill was sufficiently unpalatable when it entered the House of Commons that it split the Liberal Party and the Bill was promptly defeated (Lubenow 1983). Between 1890 and 1891, the Irish Parliamentary Party experienced its own schism, this time owing to the involvement of its leader, Charles Stewart Parnell, in a divorce scandal.<sup>15</sup> Despite the fragmentation of the Home Rule movement, in 1892, Irish nationalists again found themselves holding the balance of power at Westminster. A second Home Rule Bill was introduced in 1893 and, this time, it passed through the House of Commons only to be thrown out by the House of Lords which enjoyed a veto over legislation.<sup>16</sup> The second Home Rule Bill was modelled on the Bill of 1886 but it had several key modifications. Most notably, the parliament – and this time it was a parliament that was proposed – was to be bicameral, with both an upper and lower house. The other major alteration was that Irish representation at Westminster was to be retained, albeit at a reduced level and, in the initial draft of the Bill, Irish members were to be excluded from any business that pertained solely to Britain (Jackson

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<sup>13</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the conversion of the Liberal Party to the cause of Irish Home Rule, see Mansergh (1975: 133–174).

<sup>14</sup> All matters pertaining to religion as well as to police and imperial issues were to be reserved by Parliament at Westminster (Lyons 1977: 344).

<sup>15</sup> On the split, see Callanan (992).

<sup>16</sup> For a contemporary perspective on this from the then leader of the majority wing of Irish Nationalism, see McCarthy (1907: 462).



2003: 82). Finance remained problematic in the 1893 Bill and the blueprint for the financial relationship eventually settled upon in 1893 skimmed over complex structural and theoretical issues and its operability was questionable (Jalland 1983: 236–237).

#### *Home Rule under John Redmond*

By the end of the bitter and divisive decade of the 1890s, the nationalist public were growing disillusioned with their political representatives and, in a bid to maintain their relevance to the nationalist electorate and threatened with newly emergent political forces, the opposing factions of the Home Rule movement re-united in February 1900.<sup>17</sup> The Irish Parliamentary Party chose John Redmond as its chairman and leader. Redmond had led the minority faction during the 1890s and was a loyal follower of his chief, Parnell, who had died in 1891. Redmond's personality and outlook were intrinsically conciliatory. He was chosen as a compromise candidate for the chairmanship in preference to several stronger candidates who were bitterly opposed to each other (Bull 1988). Redmond fought hard to maintain the unity of the Home Rule movement in the opening years of the twentieth century. After Ireland had been brought to the brink of civil war in 1914 due to unionist fears over the implementation of Home Rule, Redmond became an enthusiastic advocate of Irish participation in the British war effort. For Redmond, if both communities in Ireland fought side by side in the trenches of the First World War, then a new 'all-Ireland' national identity could be born that would focus on shared values and put aside sectarian strife. Michael Wheatley has neatly summed up the ideology of Redmondism as 'advocating support of empire, conciliation with unionists, and the wooing of men of property to help lead the independent nation' (Wheatley 2005: 10). It should be noted that Redmond's view was never more than a 'minority taste' (79) within the umbrella of Irish nationalism. By contrast, the bulk of nationalist Ireland was steeped in a tradition of 'conservative respectability', machine politics, and the language of 'Catholicity, sense of victimhood, glorification of struggle... and antipathy to England which suffused provincial, nationalist orthodoxy' (Wheatley 2005: 266).<sup>18</sup> Through his Catholic education and his lineage as a member of the Irish Catholic gentry, Redmond inherited a gift for oratory, a strong sense of duty to his community, and a deep social conservatism.<sup>19</sup>

In 1900, the re-united Irish Parliamentary Party was faced with an unsympathetic Conservative government which was keen to dilute the Irish demand for Home Rule through ameliorative public works and legislation aimed at solving the Irish land question, which many British politicians believed to be at the core of the Irish

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<sup>17</sup> In the political vacuum, the 1890s saw the flowering of cultural nationalist movements such as the Gaelic League (an Irish language movement) and the Anglo-Irish Literary Theatre, which included such luminaries as W.B. Yeats and J.M. Synge. See Hutchinson (1987).

<sup>18</sup> A literary insight into this world can be seen in Ó Faoláin (1934).

<sup>19</sup> The influences of ancestry and education on John Redmond are explored in the opening chapters of Meleady (2008).

grievance with British rule.<sup>20</sup> Faced with this, the Irish party reverted to the tactics of harassment and attempts to obstruct the business of the Parliament which had proved so effective in the 1880s. However, the re-election of a Liberal Government by an overwhelming majority in 1906 precipitated a massive tactical re-evaluation on the part of the Irish nationalists. As noted above, it is not clear as to which phase in the history of the Irish Home Rule movement Liang Chi-Tsau was referring when he counselled Lin Hsien-Tang to follow the Irish example. However, if he was thinking of moderation and the gradual extension of rights and privileges, then it is likely that the convivial interaction of Home Rulers with Liberal governments was to the forefront of Liang's mind when he first discussed the Irish example with Lin in Nara in 1907.

As already stated, the British Liberal Party was decidedly more sympathetic to the concept of Irish Home Rule than their Conservative counterparts. However, since the death of Gladstone, a wide section of opinion within the upper echelons of the Liberal Party favoured a 'gradualist' or step-by-step approach to solving the Irish question (Lyons 1971: 260–261). In 1907, a bill that closely resembled an abortive Conservative scheme for the devolution of limited powers to Ireland – a measure that had shaken the Conservative Government in 1905<sup>21</sup> – was promulgated.<sup>22</sup> The 'Irish Council Bill' proposed the setting up of a partially elected body to administer some of Ireland's local affairs including education and agriculture. Just as in the previous Home Rule Bills, policing, finance, international diplomacy, and trade were to remain under Imperial control.<sup>23</sup> Despite initial optimism for this scheme, John Redmond and the rest of the Irish party leadership became disillusioned at the Government's unwillingness to improve upon the original proposal.<sup>24</sup> In May 1907, while the Bill was still before the House of Commons, a caucus of the official Irish nationalist organization held in Dublin voted that the Irish Parliamentary Party should not support the Bill. It was the view of the delegates, and by extension the leadership of the Irish party, that Ireland would not settle for 'half measures' (Gwynn 1932: 148). Only full Home Rule would be acceptable. Following nationalist rejection of this genuine attempt by the Liberal Government to assuage the Irish grievance, no further efforts were made to address the question of Irish Home Rule until 1912. In the interim, a Parliamentary crisis in Britain and the results of two elections during 1910 left Redmond's Irish Parliamentary Party holding the Parliamentary balance between the Conservatives and the Liberals as had been the case in 1886 and 1892.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Dubbed 'constructive unionism' or 'killing Home Rule with kindness', this outlook dominated Conservative policy towards Ireland at the turn of the last century. See Gailey (1987).

<sup>21</sup> Unionist uproar over this 'devolution scheme' of 1904–1905 resulted in the resignation of the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, George Wyndham, and caused significant embarrassment to the Government (Hepburn 1971: 472).

<sup>22</sup> For the reactions of the nationalist leadership to the devolution proposals of 1904–1905, see Lyons (1968: 274).

<sup>23</sup> On the particulars of the Bill, see Jackson (1999: 154) and Lyons (1971: 261).

<sup>24</sup> John Redmond to John Dillon, 13 May 1907 (Trinity College Dublin, Dillon Papers, MS 6747/222).

<sup>25</sup> On the parliamentary crisis of 1909–1911, Blewett (1972) remains a seminal text.

In the political turmoil of 1910, Redmond had forged a pact with the Liberals, promising support for the Government and for its programme of parliamentary reform in exchange for a new Home Rule Bill for Ireland (Callanan 1996: 470). The Bill of 1912 was modelled largely on that of 1893. It proposed a bicameral parliament with an accountable executive subordinate to Westminster, but with free reign over much domestic legislation and with predictable restrictions on issues such as religious discrimination and control of police. Financially, a scheme highly favourable to Ireland had been drawn up during 1911. However, when it was found that there was a deficit of roughly £1 million in Irish taxation, and that this would increase to £1.5 million the following year, much less ambitious financial clauses were written into the Bill. This deficit had arisen largely through new Liberal legislation on social insurance and pensions which applied equally to Britain and Ireland (Jalland 1983: 236–240).

Despite concerns over finance, the third Home Rule Bill represented the most comprehensive and far-reaching commitment to legislative autonomy for Ireland to date and it laid out a roadmap for the orderly transfer of a meaningful amount of political control from Britain to Ireland and the disestablishment of the Act of Union. When the third Home Rule Bill was put before the House of Commons in April 1912, the veto of the House of Lords had been removed. From a legal perspective, Home Rule was virtually certain by this point. However, if finance was the most objectionable aspect contained within the third Home Rule Bill, then the most conspicuous absence from its clauses was any reference to the economically and religiously distinct region of Ulster. Mindful of the futility of constitutional opposition since the removal of the House of Lords' veto, unionists on both sides of the Irish Sea now turned to extra-constitutional methods and began organizing and arming a paramilitary force to protect Ulster from being forced under the rule of a Dublin parliament. Six northeastern counties – containing approximately 802,500 mainly unionist Protestants and 407,000 mostly nationalist Catholics<sup>26</sup> – would eventually preserve their union with Great Britain, excluding themselves from the jurisdiction of the Southern Parliament which was established in 1919 and officially recognized by London in 1922.

#### *The Shift from Constitutionalism to Physical Force: Irish Nationalism, 1912–1922*

To briefly summarize the evolution of the Irish question between 1912 and 1922, the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 saw the Home Rule Bill placed on the Statute Book only to be suspended for the duration of the European conflict and pending suitable accommodation for the unionist minority in Ulster. Having been at the height of his popularity in 1914, Redmond advocated the enlistment of Irish nationalists into the British army as a sign of loyalty to the powers that had just legislated for Irish Home Rule and also for the defence of other small European nations. As public opinion in Ireland turned against the War, Redmondism began to share this fate. Having been put on hold for the duration of the War, the Irish question stagnated. In April 1916, a small and unrepresentative minority of

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<sup>26</sup> Figures (rounded to the nearest 500) are taken from 'Mr Redmond's Address to the Buckingham Palace Conference, 21 July 1914' (Parliamentary Archives, Westminster, Lloyd George Papers MS C/20/2/9).

nationalists, believing the old maxim that 'England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity' and pledged to achieving independence through physical force, staged an insurrection. With little action outside of Dublin, the rebellion was put down within a week. Public opinion was initially hostile to these unrepresentative rebels due to the fact that many nationalists were serving in the British army and because Dublin had been subjected to artillery bombardment during the hostilities. However, the public mood shifted rapidly when the British military authorities began to execute the ringleaders in early May.

This 'draconian reaction' (Foster 1988: 484), coupled with the extension of martial law to areas of Ireland that had not even seen fighting resulted in the political wing of the rebel faction witnessing a sudden and dramatic rise in popularity at the expense of Redmondism and the Home Rule movement. In the 1918 General Election, this new *status quo* was confirmed. The Home Rulers managed to hold on to only six seats. Meanwhile, the rebels' Sinn Féin party won seventy-three seats, taking over as representatives of majority Irish nationalism. Sinn Féin abstained from attendance at Westminster and set up a new administration in Dublin. Between 1919 and 1921, Southern Ireland found itself embroiled in a war of independence while in Ulster, six counties combined to form a new Northern Irish state (Buckland 1979). In the South, a truce was declared in the summer of 1921 and a treaty was drafted by December (Pakenham 1992). Although this treaty precipitated a civil war between rival nationalist factions in the South, an Irish Free State, with powers even greater than those proposed under the Home Rule Bills, was established in 1922. British control over Ireland was further eroded by successive Irish governments in the ensuing decades and Ireland severed its last political tie with Britain in 1949, exiting the Commonwealth of Nations and declaring itself a republic (Ferriter 2005: 484–485).

Through a mixture of antagonism and cooperation, nationalist involvement in Parliament ensured that the Irish question was not forgotten in British political circles. Indeed, at many points in this chronology it was, in fact, brought centre stage through the efforts of nationalist MPs.<sup>27</sup> By courting the favour of Liberal politicians and by exploiting British political crises, Home Rulers managed to extract commitments and concessions from successive Liberal governments, culminating in the placing of the third Home Rule Bill on the Statute Book in September 1914.

With a commitment to Irish self-determination enshrined in law, the principle of a domestic legislature for Ireland had been conceded. Even the Conservatives had to content themselves with working towards the salvation of Ulster. Home Rule, for nationalist Ireland was an accepted fact by all sides from 1914 onwards.<sup>28</sup> Ironically, the physical force wing of Irish nationalism, which so detested the insipidness and latent imperialism of Redmondism, would likely have faded into history as yet another failed Irish revolutionary movement had it not been for the monumental efforts of the constitutionalists since the 1870s. One Irish agitator

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<sup>27</sup> This point has been made by Eugenio Biagini. Furthermore, Biagini claims that, in British Liberalism, Irish self-determination fed into a broader debate on liberty stretching back to the Chartist movement established in 1838 (Biagini 2007: 3–5).

<sup>28</sup> On the carving up of Ulster between nationalist and unionist representatives in 1914, see Mulvagh (2007).

claimed that 'Violence is sometimes the only way to secure a hearing for moderation' (quoted in Lyons 1971: 131) but given the crucial spadework undertaken by the Home Rule movement which laid the foundations for Sinn Féin's independence movement, the opposite is equally true. Until the principle of political freedom has been extracted from the ruling regime, violence only begets repression and restrictions on liberty. Regrettably for the Taiwanese Home Rule movement, while the principle of enhanced liberties and legislative powers had been conceded in 1935, the exigencies of wider geopolitics forced a reversal of policy from Tokyo within just two years. Just as the First World War would eventually prove to be the vehicle of change for Ireland,<sup>29</sup> so too the defeat of Japan in 1945, and not the efforts of the independence movement, would force regime change in Taiwan.

### **The First Stage of Lin Hsien-Tang's Political Movement in Taiwan: The Assimilation Association (1914–1920) and the Law 63 Abolition Movement**

Lin rose to leadership of the Taiwan Assimilation Association and of the Law 63 Abolition movement in the 1910s. These two political movements were both non-violent, limiting their goals to winning equal rights and status between the Taiwanese and the Japanese.

#### *The Taiwan Assimilation Association (同化會)*

The 'Taiwan Assimilation Association' was nominally established by the Japanese human rights activist Taisuno Itegaki (板垣退助) and supported (and in fact, initiated) by Lin with the aim of unifying Taiwan and Japan as a community. In other words, the association wanted the Taiwanese to have the same political rights as the Japanese.

Itegaki had played a prominent role in the Meiji Reform period. He had been appointed as Secretary for the Senate and Minister of Civil Engineering in 1871, but resigned when his advocacy of 'Korean conquest' went unheeded. In 1874, he organized the 'Patriotic Public Party'. In 1881, he founded the Liberal Party and became its leader, and was renowned for advocating liberalism. He later formed the Constitutional Party, and, in cooperation with the Reform Party, the first political party-led cabinet in Japanese history was formed in 1898. Shigenobu Okuma (大隈重信) became Prime Minister and Itegaki himself served as Minister of Internal Affairs. After stepping down in 1900, he still maintained a substantial influence on Japanese politics due to his reputation for incorruptibility (Chang 1981: 80).

Lin kept in close contact with Liang Chi-Tsau after Liang's visit to Taiwan in 1911, and he even received books and newspapers from Liang on numerous occasions; Liang was also a journalist and thus kept Lin informed of international developments, which would have included the Irish Issues (Hsu 2007: 32–152). In May 1913, Lin informed Liang that he would soon visit him in Beijing (Hsu 2007: 153), and he did that autumn, meeting Liang and also some Chinese politicians.

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<sup>29</sup> Roy Foster has dubbed the First World War 'one of the most decisive events in modern Irish history' (1988: 471).

Lin then went to Tokyo to call on Itegaki through the introduction of Wang Shue-Tsien, a member of the Taichung Poetry Society (Chang 1981: 79–80). He complained about the distresses of the Taiwanese people and went further, inviting Itegaki to make a fact-finding trip to Taiwan. Itegaki was sympathetic with the Taiwanese people, though he was also a Pan-Asianist, advocating the idea of southward expansion. He considered that Taiwan would be a good fulcrum for promoting Sino-Japanese intimacy as Japan expanded in East Asia, and thus promised to help and accepted Lin's invitation without hesitation (Chang 1981: 79–80). We may safely assume that Lin's actions must have been encouraged by Liang, who as early as 1907 had advised Lin to follow the Irish approach of making links with the influential politicians.

On 17 February 1914, Itegaki came to Taiwan for an inspection tour. In the autumn of the same year, Lin visited Tokyo again, and was introduced by Itegaki to Sir Shigenobu Okuma, a prominent Japanese political figure. Itegaki then began to put serious thought into the possibility of political co-operation between Japan and Taiwan, and formulated the 'Taiwan Assimilation Association'. For this purpose, he came to Taiwan for the second time in November 1914, and on 20 December he officially launched the association at the Taipei Railway Hotel. Due to Itegaki's reputation and Lin's influence, many political and intellectual elites in both Taiwan and Japan became involved. It is also interesting to know that the British parliament passed the third Irish Home Rule Bill in 1914, which might have encouraged Lin and Itegaki in their actions.

However, the Association provoked immediate suspicion, leading to constant harassment and persecution at the hands of the colonial administration and the media. In particular, it was alleged that the chief member of the Association had cooperated with Mr Kuo, the Lin family secretary, and misused 50,000 Japanese Yen which had been raised through 'fundraising' in order to assist an individual named Lin Tsong-Gen (林熊徵) in acquiring a title of nobility. Therefore, the members of the Association were forced to resign *en mass* on 21 January 1915, and two days later the colonial administration revoked the Association's permit to collect membership fees. The Association was forcibly dissolved on 26 February (Yang 1988: 76–77). Consequently, the first political movement developed by Lin was unsuccessful, and the measures advised by Liang did not work.

The purpose of the 'Taiwan Assimilation Association' was to encourage the eventual 'cultural unification' of Japan and Taiwan, which in theory could help strengthen Japanese political rule in Taiwan. If so, why did the association face such extreme opposition from the colonial administration and from Japanese residents in Taiwan? There are two reasons. First, the Japanese were deeply suspicious of Taiwanese intentions. Second, the Japanese were still not willing to share their political power and economic advantages with the Taiwanese, as 'assimilation' between Japan and Taiwan would 'dilute' their privileges.

The failure of the Taiwan Assimilation Association was one reason why Lin was consequently forced to stay silent for the time being. Another reason was the bloodshed of the anti-Japanese Yu Ching-Fang Incident in 1915, which resulted in massive political oppression by the colonial regime. This was the first violent anti-Japanese incident following the end of the first period of resistance to Japanese rule.

### *The Law 63 Abolition Movement*

After the brief appearance of the Taiwan Assimilation Association, Lin switched the focus of his political activism to abolishing the so-called 'Law 63' outside Taiwan. This legislation had been imposed by the Japanese colonial regime, which claimed that Taiwan had unique characteristics in the Japanese empire. Therefore, any law within mainland Japan was 'inapplicable' to Taiwan. Instead, Law 63 was proclaimed to give the government-general special authorization to conduct executive, military, and even some legislative powers in Taiwan. Many Taiwanese saw this Law as enslaving Taiwan.

After 1910, the number of Taiwanese students in Japan increased rapidly, and included Lin's own children. Through receiving a modern education, many students learned political resistance through legal measures, as Japan had become a constitutional nation. In August 1918, Lin visited Tokyo with his private secretary Shih Chia-Pen, and had regular contact with Taiwanese students (*Lin Hsien-Tang Commemorative Series Volume 1*, 1960, 1974: 54). He invited the students to a banquet at Jinbocho in Tokyo, where he discussed how Taiwan could move forward from its political stalemate. Various political ideas were discussed, ranging from independence, through to autonomy and the abolition of Law 63. Eventually, it was decided that the best political route was the abolition of Law 63, as proposed by Shih Chia-Pen. Thus was formed the Law 63 Abolition League, headed by Lin himself (Chang 1981: 106–107). Lin then focused all his efforts on achieving this new goal.

In April 1919, Lin used his residence in Tokyo as a base for organizing the first related activities, and he travelled from Taiwan to Japan again in October. During 1919, Den Kenjirō (田健次郎) became the first civilian governor-general of Taiwan, and Lin formally visited him to express his anticipation of political reform (*Lin Hsien-Tang Commemorative Series Volume 1*, 1960, 1974: 55). In 1920, Lin visited Tokyo again to meet Japanese political leaders and to call for the abolition of Law 63.

However, Lin again changed direction suddenly, after meeting Taiwanese students in a church in central Tokyo on 28 November. From this time, he began to call for the establishment of a Taiwan Assembly (Tsai *et al.* 1971: 68–69; Chang 1981: 111–112). There are three main reasons to explain this change: first, Japan was very protective of its political status in Taiwan, and so the abolition of Law 63 was very difficult to achieve. Second, the students' association which had pursued this goal had had to be dissolved due to fundraising difficulties 1919. Finally, the political movement had to follow constant changes in Taiwanese political ideas.

### **The Second Stage of Lin Hsien-Tang's Political Movement: The Taiwan Assembly Movement (1920–1930)**

Lin's fight for equality between Taiwanese and Japanese had failed, and this led him to consider an alternative direction. Since the concept of 'national self-determination' had become a trend in global politics after the First World War, Lin's political activities developed to emphasize the uniqueness of Taiwan, aiming to establish a Taiwan Assembly as a check on the Taiwan governor. This change

was motivated by overseas students, and the main battleground shifted from Taiwan to Japan. The effort reached its climax between 1920 and 1927.

#### *The Background of the Taiwan Assembly Movement*

On 28 November 1920, members of the Enlightening Association (啟發會) and the Taiwan Youth Association (臺灣青年會) met in Tokyo to discuss the Law 63 abolition movement. There were severe disputes between the two sides. Lin Cheng-Lu (林呈祿) advocated autonomy through a special assembly in Taiwan;<sup>30</sup> Lin was convinced to terminate the Law 63 abolition movement, and instead focused on the establishment of a Taiwan Assembly (Tsai *et al.* 1971: 68–69; Chang 1981: 111–112). Subsequently, Lin became the head of the Enlightening Association in December (*Lin Hsien-Tang Commemorative Series Volume 1*, 1960, 1974: 54, 57; Chang 1981: 112), changing its aim to the setting up of an independent Taiwan Assembly (Chou 1989: 39–45).

The Taiwan Assembly movement was the result of three major factors. First, there was encouragement from US President Woodrow Wilson, who advocated the principle of national self-determination. Second, Taiwan was stimulated by the example of the Korean independence movement in 1919. Third, amendments to Law 31 in 1906 and to Law 3 in 1921 had made the Law 63 abolition movement pointless and fruitless. A more important factor was the sudden boom in Taiwanese students studying in Japan, which increased from 60 men in 1906 to more than 2000 in 1922 (Yoshino 1927: 247–248). These students became the forerunners of the political movement in Taiwan.

However, the young Taiwanese students differed over political ideas and courses of action, and so needed an older and competent leader to coordinate disputes. Lin, due to his scholarship, seniority, personality, and family wealth, was regarded as a common leader of the movement.

#### *The Leadership of the Taiwan Assembly Petition Movement*

Lin led the Taiwan Assembly petition movement in Taiwan between 1921 and 1934, petitioning the Japanese Imperial Diet fifteen times. Unfortunately, his efforts did not bear fruit beyond educating or enlightening the Taiwanese public.

In December 1920, Lin and 178 Taiwanese activists signed and filed a petition for the establishment of a Taiwan Assembly for the first time in Tokyo. This was only days before the opening of the Diet (Imperial Parliament) commenced (Chou 1989: 71). The main aims were: (1) the setting up of the Taiwan Assembly, which would have the right to approve or reject the budget of the governor and the

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<sup>30</sup> Just as Lin Hsien-Tang can be compared to John Redmond, Lin Cheng-Lu might be compared to Arthur Griffith, who advocated parliamentary abstention and the establishment of a rival parliament and administration in Ireland. Based on the example of the Hungarian nationalist, Ferenc Deák, Griffith's policy became the template for the Irish independence movement between 1919 and 1921. Griffith outlined his policy in a highly influential manifesto: *The Resurrection of Hungary: A Parallel for Ireland* (2003 [1904]). In recent historiography, Michael Laffan has branded Griffith's manifesto a 'bizarre political tract' (Laffan 1999: 3).



colonial administration; (2) that every adult resident of Taiwan, regardless of their racial and cultural background, should be entitled vote in elections. However, the petition was immediately rejected by both houses of the Diet between February and March 1921, because the colonial administration did not want to be overseen by the Taiwanese (Chou 1989: 72).

The colonial administration was very fearful of the petition movement, but its hands were tied due to the fact that petitioning did not breach the Japanese constitution. On 24 April 1921 Lin returned to Taiwan, accompanied by Tsai Pei-Huo (蔡培火). The colonial administration dispatched a secretary to Keelung harbour to oversee their arrival, and Lin afterwards received several anonymous threatening letters. Despite these threats and obstacles, mainstream Taiwanese society was encouraged by Lin's political action. Lin then travelled around Taiwan to spread his message, which made him a recognized and popular Taiwanese political leader (Chang 1981: 133). To woo Lin, the colonial administration appointed him as the first ombudsman of the colonial administration on 1 June 1921 (Chang 1981: 133).

Lin did not give up his activism, and he started a second petition at the end of 1921 and the beginning of 1922. He received 350 signatures and again travelled to Japan to gather further names. He paid visits to prominent Japanese politicians and the press, but the Diet continued to refuse to act on the petition (Chang 1981: 133–134).

In May 1922, Lin returned to Taiwan and continued his activities by making public speeches and explaining the progress of the Taiwan Assembly movement. The colonial administration again became nervous, but it was restricted by the constitution from taking drastic measures. However, from August 1922 the colonial administration started to oppress the petition movement through other channels, such as forcing Taiwanese employees to leave their posts, obstructing the financing of Lin and his members, and smearing Lin's reputation (*Lin Hsien-Tang Commemorative Series Volume 1*, 1960, 1974: 65–66). However, the belief that Taiwan should be given the right to home rule may have become widespread; the only Taiwanese magazine, *Taiwan*, advocated home rule, and an editorial in May 1922 entitled 'From Assimilation to Home Rule' noted an international trend in this direction and mentioned the Irish case specifically (M. Wu and Z.-L. Wu 1992: 45–46).

Lin filed the third petition in 1923. He even set up a Taiwan Assembly Association, although this was immediately banned by the colonial administration. The petition was again rejected by the Diet (Tsai *et al.* 1971: 124–126). This did not stop the flame of the movement in Taiwan, and so the governor-general intensified acts of suppression, such as ending Lin's post in the colonial administration on 10 March 1923. This was followed by mass arrests of Taiwanese political activists in 1924.

In 1923, the head of Taichung Prefecture plotted to destroy the Taiwan Assembly petition movement. He not only forced Lin to join the pro-Japanese Sun Worshipping Association (向陽會), but also tempted him to meet the governor, Kakichi Uchida (內田嘉吉). On 29 September, Lin met Governor Uchida with eight other Taiwanese political activists. Uchida told them that although the Taiwan Assembly petition movement was a political right protected by the Japanese imperial constitution, he advised them not to go any further. The colonial

administration even disseminated the rumour that Lin had 'promised to terminate the Assembly petition movement'. The activists in Tokyo were puzzled and agitated. It was rumoured that Lin had abandoned his political beliefs in return for 300 acres of land, which deeply damaged his reputation (Chang 1981: 142).

Furthermore, the colonial administration started large-scale arrests of several members of the movement from 16 December 1923, on the pretext they had violated the 'Public Order Law'. As a result, 99 people were detained or taken in for interrogation. The colonial administration claimed that the petition movement had been banned in February, but that a splinter group had been formed in Tokyo with the same name and the same members, and therefore violated the law. Lin immediately contacted his friend Yeh Rong-Chong (葉榮鐘) to dispatch a letter to Japan secretly, in which this mass persecution was described. In the period up to 7 January 1924, Chiang Wei-Shuim (蔣渭水) and 18 other activists were prosecuted and were sentenced from three to four months in prison (Chou 1989: 82–84). However, this trial was the first ever public trial in the history of Taiwan, and so provided good political education for the public.

Due to intensifying oppression by the colonial administration, Lin temporarily stepped down from leadership and took on a supporting role. The nominal leaders were succeeded by Chiang Wei-Shui (蔣渭水) and Tsai Pei-Huo. They submitted the fourth and fifth petitions, but again without success. The colonial administration still continued their acts of oppression, and pressed pro-Japanese Taiwanese leaders to organize a gathering called 'the Powerful Men's Meeting', attacking the petitioners. As a counter-attack, anti-Japanese activists organized 'the Weakers' Meeting', by holding public meetings in Taipei, Taichong, and Tainan. When Lin gave his public speech in Taichung (*Lin Hsien-Tang Commemorative Series Volume 1*, 1960, 1974: 73), the morale of the Taiwanese political activists had suddenly been given a big boost again.

At the same time, the political climate in Taiwan had changed favourably. Governor Uchida stepped down and was replaced by Izawa Takio (伊澤多喜男), who was friendlier to the Taiwanese. In addition, two reformist Japanese members of the Diet's Lower House visited Taiwan, delivering speeches and meeting Lin to discuss political issues (Tsai *et al.* 1971: 132–133).<sup>31</sup> Therefore, between 1925 and 1927 Lin came out to lead the Taiwan Assembly petition movement for a sixth, seventh, and eighth time. The numbers of signatures increased drastically, and Lin's political influence reached a further climax.

On 11 February 1925, Lin and three other key members of the Taiwan Assembly petition movement went to Japan and submitted the sixth petition. Lin even invited several prominent Japanese politicians from the ruling and opposition parties in Tokyo to support his political cause (*Lin Hsien-Tang Commemorative Series Volume 1*, 1960, 1974: 76). Lin then returned to Taiwan in March and was invited to several places to give public speeches, especially in Er-Lin Village (二林), where there was a dispute which had led to local farmers resenting the Japanese colonial

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<sup>31</sup>In the Diet, Daikichirou Tagawa (田川大吉郎) was deeply sympathetic to the Taiwanese and from time to time introduced the proposal of the Taiwan Assembly petition on behalf of the movement.

administration (*Lin Hsien-Tang Commemorative Series Volume 1*, 1960, 1974: 77–78).<sup>32</sup>

In February 1926, Tsai Pei-Huo, the petition movement representative, went to Japan and submitted the seventh petition (Chou 1989: 91–93). Once again, their demands were turned down. However, the key members of the movement made further efforts, by delivering more public speeches and showing films to gather public support. This time, the number of signatures reached 2,470 (Chang 1981: 155).

#### *The Weakening of the Petition Movement*

Unfortunately, after 1927 the political movement in Taiwan stagnated, and even dramatically receded. There are two factors which explain this: there was a split within the anti-Japanese groups, and the rise of the Japanese militarism resulted in stricter controls over Taiwan.

*The split and the deterioration of the anti-Japan groups:* On 15–16 May 1926, Lin held a meeting of the Taiwan Cultural Association in his home to discuss forming a political party. Lin, Tsai Pei-Huo, and Hsieh Chun-Mu (謝春木) were named as leaders of the committee to coordinate this. In August, Lin met shareholders of the *Taiwan New Daily*, a major Taiwanese newspaper, again to discuss the formation of a political party, but the meeting ended without any firm decisions due to vast differences of opinion. On 17 October 1926, the sixth annual general meeting of the Taiwan Cultural Association was held in Hsin-Chu to discuss further details, but there was again no conclusion due to differences of opinion (Chang 1981: 210). In order to put its principles into practice, Chiang Wei-Shui proposed that the Cultural Association should change its name to ‘Liberation Association’, aiming to ‘achieve the political, economic and social liberations of the Taiwanese’ while giving up the idea of ‘autonomy’ within the Japanese empire.

Unfortunately, in January 1927 the Cultural Association formally split into left and right wings. The left wing, after achieving total control of the Association, concentrated its actions on social revolution and even clandestinely sought

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<sup>32</sup> Er-Lin Village, in present-day Changhua County, had been a poor area until the establishment of sugar factories in the Japanese period. The Lin Pen-Yuan Sugar Company was set up in 1909–1911, financed by the Lin family but actually run and controlled by Japanese managers approved by the Governor-General of Taiwan. In April 1924, the sugarcane farmers requested that the company raise its purchasing prices, which had long been lower than that of other companies, and their request succeeded in December. The Taiwan Cultural Association then went further to help organize the Er-Lin Sugarcane Farmers’ Co-operative to bargain with the company for farmers’ rights, but this was not recognized by the company. Lin Hsien-Tang was at one time invited to make a speech criticizing the sugar policy, and he received enthusiastic responses. In 1925, the company tried to harvest the sugarcane by force, and consequently provoked a conflict between the police and more than 100 farmers. The police subsequently arrested more than 400 farmers and sued them. This so-called ‘Er-Lin Incident’ stimulated farmers in other areas to set up their own respective co-ops, and a General Taiwan Farmers Co-operative was established in 1926–1928 by Chi Chien (簡吉), the leading figure in Taiwan farmers’ movements, to fight for farmers’ rights. (T.Y. Chen 2005 30–36).

Taiwan's independence. The right wing retreated to form a 'Taiwan People's Party' to continue the assembly petition movement. However, this party also split between moderates and radicals, thus weakening its standing (Chang 1981: 205–208). These two political events severely tarnished Lin's image as the overall leader of the political movements in Taiwan, and forced him to undertake global travel for a year until 1928 (Chang 1981: 86–87). Without effective leadership, the political movement declined (Chang 1981: 208–209).

*Militaristic rule from the 1930s:* Japan began the invasion of China in 1931, and the colonial administration in Taiwan consequently intensified the suppression of political activities. In 1936, Japan reinstated the governorship of Taiwan as a military position. The then-governor Kobayashi started the projects of 'Japanization, Industrialization, and Southern Expansion', which extended control over the island's social and political life. The internal and external problems strangled Lin's activities. He resigned as the advisor of the Taiwan People's Party in January 1931, and on 19 February the party was dissolved by the Japanese police on the basis that it advocated class struggle. The first-ever political party in the history of Taiwan had existed for only three years and eight months. Further, the party leader, Chiang Wei-Shui, died on 8 August, which symbolized the termination of a moderate political force in Taiwan politics. Lin's role in anti-Japanese activism was becoming less and less important. A comparison with Ireland was made by A.R. Byers, Consul to the British ambassador in Tokyo, in a letter of 26 March 1933; Byers observed that 'there is no danger of Formosa becoming a second Ireland... The arm of the police in Formosa is long, sudden and ruthless' (quoted in Hoare 2010).

## Conclusion

Lin Hsien-Tang dedicated almost his entire life to the improvement of the status of Taiwanese under Japanese colonial rule. However, how to achieve his goal was a great challenge, as Taiwan was a ceded territory and legally belonged to Japan. There were two potential ways, militant or peaceful, and he chose the peaceful route.

The current paper has tried to explain why Lin chose the peaceful route. We found that in addition to his own personality and the disadvantages of using force against colonial authority, Lin was advised and convinced by a prominent Chinese politician in exile, Liang Chi-Tsau, to follow the example of the Irish Home Rule movement.

In order to understand the Irish way of resisting colonialism, John Redmond is a good comparison for Lin, and the paper has therefore discussed Redmond's leadership of the Home Rule movement up to 1918. He succeeded in passing the third Home Rule Bill in 1912, a major triumph for Irish nationalism. However, this achievement was nullified by the 1916 rebellion and, just nine months after Redmond's death, the Home Rule movement was eclipsed by physical-force republicans. As a moderate politician, Redmond, like his predecessors, worked within the confines of the British parliamentary system to achieve concessions for Ireland. Through the efforts of the Home Rulers and the benevolence of successive British governments, the land question had been solved before the outbreak of the Irish revolution. Additionally, infrastructure, old age pensions, and a

new university had been set up in Ireland since the turn of the century. Despite these gains, radicals usurped the political leadership of nationalist Ireland in the turmoil of 1914–1918 and violent methods were applied in the pursuit of similar goals to those pursued by the Home Rule movement.

Turning to Lin's political movements in Taiwan, these can be divided into two stages: first, the Assimilation Association and Law 63 abolition movements, and, second, the Taiwanese Assembly movement. We have seen that in spite of co-operation between Lin and Taisuno Itegaki, a renowned Japanese politician, the Assimilation Association movement ended in failure due to the opposition of the governor-general and of Japanese residents in Taiwan. The Law 63 Abolition movement did no better, as it was not only rejected by the colonial government, but was also rejected by the younger generation of leaders, who regarded it as a complete subjugation of Taiwan to Japan, in which Taiwan would lose all national characteristics.

The second stage of Lin's activism, the Taiwanese Assembly movement, involved a great deal of time, energy, and personal wealth. He at first led, and later supported, a lengthy and large-scale movement to petition the Japanese Diet fifteen times between 1920 and 1934, in order to establish an independent Taiwanese Assembly elected by the Taiwanese people. He succeeded in enlightening and mobilizing the Taiwanese to support his challenging movement, but it was all in vain. On the one hand, the Japanese colonial administration feared that Lin's demands would mean that it would lose its political grip on Taiwan. Further, the Imperial government gradually developed an aggressive policy in the 1930's which included unilateral suppression of dissent. On the other hand, the disruption of the Taiwanese leaders made things even worse. In 1927, the left wing rose to replace Lin in leading the anti-colonial movement, criticizing him as a collaborator with the colonial government. Lin even went abroad to avoid difficult situations from 1927 to 1928. Without a popular and honourable leader, the movement lost its momentum and came to an end in 1934.

Lin and Redmond both had similar experiences in fighting for Home Rule. First, they both adopted a moderate approach instead of opting for violence. In his role as leader of the Irish nationalist MPs at Westminster, John Redmond worked towards enhancing political rights and the social position of nationalists in Ireland while maintaining a peaceful political co-existence with his opponents, just as Lin wanted to achieve equality between the Taiwanese and the Japanese. Second, both the Taiwanese and Irish Home Rule movements faced opposition and suppression from the colonial rulers. Third, both succeeded in keeping the flame of national consciousness alight in their people. Fourth, both Lin and Redmond were sabotaged and attacked by radicals of their own side and lost the hegemony of their respective movements. Eventually, Lin and Redmond both ended their political careers in frustration and disappointment.

However, Ireland was comparatively more fortunate than Taiwan. Unlike Lin, Redmond did achieve the passage of the Third Home Rule Bill, which in theory should have established a peaceful political framework through which the Irish in different political camps could live in harmony and eventually enjoy an equal political status with Britain. Additionally, Redmond and the Irish Home Rule movement generally had great success in fundraising and garnering support from

the Irish diaspora in America and elsewhere.<sup>33</sup> This played a key role in funding the Irish Parliamentary Party. Unfortunately, the passage of the Third Home Rule Bill led to the emergence of rival paramilitary organizations in Ireland and, in 1914, the island stood on the brink of civil war. This culture of paramilitary drilling and the arming of citizen-soldiers, which had begun with the tacit approval of democratically elected politicians – including Redmond – eventually led to an ideological shift towards independence by force of arms. In the process, the Home Rule movement was destroyed and the Irish state established in 1922 was one born out of bloodshed.

Taiwan was not as fortunate as Ireland in the pursuit of autonomy. It was always strictly controlled by the Japanese colonial government from 1895–1945. Further, it went on to experience a prolonged period of authoritarian rule under the Republic of China (ROC) after Japan surrendered in 1945, which lasted until the lifting of martial law in 1987. Despite their geographical distance, it has been shown here that there are many similarities in the historical experiences of Ireland and Taiwan and there is much fertile ground for comparison.

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<sup>33</sup> Redmond fundraised throughout his entire political career. He is particularly remembered for the success of a venture to the United States in 1910 which raised \$100,000 for the beleaguered party funds (Gwynn 1932: 184).

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Yǎn-lin, hsien (county), west-central Taiwan. It is bordered by the hsien of Chang-hua (north), Nan-tâou (east), and Chia-i (south) and by the Taiwan Strait (west). Yǎn-lin slopes from the foothills of the A-li Mountains in the east to the fertile alluvial plains in the west. The Cho-shui and. Industries based in Yǎn-lin produce textiles and sugar. Coal is mined in the eastern part of the hsien, and there are reserves of crude oil and natural gas. The temple of Matsu, Goddess of the Sea, at Pei-kang, attracts multitudes of pilgrims from all over Taiwan for annual celebrations. Tou-liu is the administrative seat of the hsien and is linked by road and railway with Tâichung to the north and with Chia-i to the south. Area 498 square miles (1,291 square km). Pop. (2008 est.) 725,672. Lin Hsien-tang's Travel Writings from around the Globe, based on Lin's writing while overseas from 1927 to 1928, was posthumously published after Lin's secretary Yeh Jung-chung [zh] finished editing it in Lin's stead.[20] Lin Fang-ying, a descendant of Lin Hsien-tang's, opened the Lin Hsien Tang Residence Museum to commemorate him in May 2019.[Å "Lin Hsien-Tang's Taiwanese Home Rule Movement as Inspired by the Irish Model" (PDF). Taiwan in Comparative Perspective. 4: 65â€"68. Category:Lin Hsien-tang. From Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository. Jump to navigation Jump to search. Lin Hsien-tang. Taiwanese politician and activist. Upload media. Wikipedia. Date of birth. 22 October 1881 Changhua County. Date of death. 6 September 1956 Suginami-ku.