

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PUTTING EMPIRE IN ITS PLACE:

URBAN ELITES AND THE QING IMPERIAL STATE IN JINAN, SHANDONG, 1639–1926

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JUNE 2020

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	ii
List of Figures	iii
List of Tables	iv
Acknowledgments.....	v
Abstract	xii
Introduction.....	1
Part I Place-Making and the Translocal State in the High Qing	69
Chapter 1	
A City of Springs: Local Geography and Imperial Presence in High Qing Jinan.....	84
Chapter 2	
Streams of Learning: Educational Institutions, Elite Families, and Literary Networks.....	158
Part II Place-Making and Imperial Crisis.....	217
Chapter 3	
The Eye of the Storm: Jinan during the Wars against the Taiping and Nian, 1853–68	233
Chapter 4	
Amid the Floods: Environmental and Humanitarian Crises and Responses, 1855–95.....	292
Chapter 5	
Foreign Currents: The Jinan Missionary Case and New Frontiers of Empire, 1881–91	383
Part III Jinan’s Place in the Late Qing Reforms and 1911 Revolution	433
Chapter 6	
Changing Course: Commercial and Educational Reforms in Late Qing Jinan	446
Chapter 7	
A Sinking Ship: Self-Government, Constitutionalism, and the Fall of the Qing	521
Conclusion	587
Epilogue	
Withered Leaves: Local History and the Shadows of Empire.....	596
Bibliography	619

List of Figures

Figure 0.1: Map of Jinan and major cities in late imperial China.....	14
Figure 0.2: Map of Jinan Prefecture	15
Figure 1.1: Zhao Mengfu, “Autumn Scenery of the Que and Hua Mountains”	98
Figure 1.2: Map of Jinan Prefecture, 1533 <i>Shandong tongzhi</i>	121
Figure 1.3: Map of Jinan City, 1533 <i>Shandong tongzhi</i>	122
Figure 1.4: Map of Jinan City, 1778 <i>Licheng xian zhi</i>	123
Figure 1.5: Map of Licheng County, 1840 <i>Jinan fu zhi</i>	124
Figure 1.6: Map of Jinan, 1840 <i>Jinan fu zhi</i>	124
Figure 1.7: Selection from scroll three of Wang Hui's scroll paintings of the 1689 Kangxi southern tour	146
Figure 2.1: Partial family tree of the Zhu family	207
Figure 3.1: Map of the Taiping northern invasion.....	234
Figure 3.2: Map of Jinan Prefecture	248
Figure 4.1: Map of major rivers before 1855.....	299
Figure 4.2: Map of Yellow River and Xiaoqing River after 1895.....	302
Figure 7.1: Map of home places of provincial assembly permanent representatives	551

List of Tables

Table 1.1: Iconic texts on Baotu Spring.....	100
Table 4.1: Home provinces of expectant officials	337
Table 6.1: Origins of instructors at colleges in Jinan.....	502
Table 6.2: Funding for elementary and secondary schools in Jinan	509

Acknowledgments

Although about a single place, this dissertation is a product of participating in and benefiting from many different communities over the years. I first began thinking about Jinan while I was an undergraduate at Johns Hopkins University. Not only on account of it being the context where I stumbled onto such an interesting place that would prove to be so consequential to me but for making original research an integral part of the undergraduate curriculum and so setting me off on this path of discovery, I am deeply grateful to the Department of History. I owe a particular debt to William Rowe, who not only supervised and encouraged these early research forays but through teaching that was equally erudite and charismatic inducted me into the study of Chinese history. I am also appreciative to Tobie Meyer-Fong, Zhang Ting, Ren Ke, and Emily Mokros for continuing to breathe new life into my connection to Hopkins, providing encouragement and support as I have moved along.

No less, I am grateful to Bill for kindly suggesting that pursuing graduate study somewhere else besides Hopkins might be of benefit to broadening my horizons. The journey towards graduate school first took me to the Inter-University Program for Chinese Language Studies in Beijing for additional language study. There, the superhuman patience and good humor of the teachers prepared me for the never-ending challenge of grappling with the Chinese language in its various forms.

Returning from Beijing, my wife and I promptly drove cross-country so I could take up graduate studies UC Irvine. Even before classes began (or I arrived on campus, even) I was plunged into a deep web of collegiality thanks to then-current students Nicole Barnes, Maura Cunningham, Christopher Heselton, Miri Kim, Shi Xia, and Wang Chen-cheng, who, along with Jennifer Munger have continued to encourage me both during my time at Irvine and beyond. I

am deeply grateful for the friendships forged with members of my cohort over those years, especially Matthew Combs, Laurie Dickmeyer, Thomas Worger, and Wu Yidi, who have taught me so much about what it means to be colleagues and also friends. I am hardly less indebted to the instructors at Irvine, particularly Ann Walthall, who supervised the research paper that was my first step toward the dissertation project, and Guo Qitao, who provided my first formal instruction on reading Qing documents. The weekly trek to UCSD to participate in Joseph Esherick's 1943 seminar, where I learned so much about doing research—and doing it together—was one of the highlights of my time as a graduate student. I owe special thanks to Jeff Wasserstrom: for encouraging us to strike out to meet new people in the field (and always helping us to do so), for modeling capacious and interdisciplinary thinking, and for continuing to serve as a mentor and committee member even after I moved to Chicago.

As hard as it was to leave Irvine, it is impossible to imagine how different my path through graduate school and, in the end, this dissertation would have been without the relationships forged and support received at the University of Chicago. The number of people here who have made this project what it is and, along the way, me who I am simply defies name-by-name enumeration. I hope, then, that those who do not appear here by name will locate themselves in the clusters of community I mention below.

Of course, the dissertation owes a unique debt to the remaining members of my committee. James Hevia jumped into the project early in my time at Chicago and has been a source of encouragement for exploring both empirical minutiae and broad theoretical implications in equal depth since. James Sparrow's course on the U.S. state was simply eye-opening, and his presence on the committee has continued to force me to consistently confront

my assumptions about aspects of Chinese history I take for granted in stimulating and productive ways.

As for Ken Pomeranz, what can I say? Every single page of this dissertation is a testament to his relentless generosity. His curiosity and confidence in me have been constant companions throughout the writing process. I could not have finished if they had not come with me the whole way. Given his considerable intellectual abilities, I will always wonder and feel some guilt about what Ken might have done with the time and energy he poured into this project. That he nevertheless gave so much of himself to it so readily—at the same time that he was doing the same for others—means more to me than I can possibly express.

My time at Chicago has been all the richer for the many colleagues who have worked together to build community and solidarity within and beyond our department. Again, the members of my cohort have played an especially important role in this experience. I am especially grateful to colleagues who have contributed to our History Graduate Students Association, particularly those who served with me as officers during the 2017–18 year: Nicole Beckmann-Tessel, Lisa Scott, Nicholas Foster, and Savitri Kunze. Colleagues on the division's Deans Advisory Council have taught me a great deal about the intricacy of academic affairs; I am especially grateful to Deputy Dean Mark Bradley, Dean of Students Patrick Hall, fellow representatives from the Department of History Lisa Scott and Emily Masghati, as well as Evgenia Olimpieva, with whom I co-chaired a series of illuminating meetings on mentoring and advising practices. Likewise, I am materially and emotionally indebted to students who have organized on behalf of Graduate Students United, upholding the value of our labor to the university. I am deeply fortunate that my time at Chicago overlapped with the Making History Work initiative, administered by Lindsey Martin, which helped me think more broadly and

critically about history as a profession and the training aspiring historians receive. Similarly, I have benefited immensely from the considerable efforts our faculty, especially Emily Osborn, Kathleen Belew, and Alice Goff, have expended on preparing us for successful careers as historians.

The East Asia: Transregional Histories workshop has been an invaluable component of my experience at Chicago. I owe a considerable debt to the (by the time I arrived) advanced students who coordinated and participated in it, especially Guo-Quan Seng and Tadashi Ishikawa, who were the coordinators during my first year, as well as Jaewoong Jeon, Stacie Kent, Haeyoung Kim, Covell Meyskens, Cameron Penwell, and Jake Werner. Faculty advisers Susan Burns, Jacob Eyferth, and Johanna Ransmeier have helped make the workshop a continued success, providing not only invaluable assistance when I coordinated it during the 2014–15 year but also repeated and insightful feedback on drafts of parts of the dissertation which I presented there. Likewise, I am immensely grateful to the student coordinators who have maintained the workshop as a space for vibrant intellectual exchange and mutual support: Benjamin Miller, Jessa Dahl, Erin Newton, Robert Burgos, Spencer Stewart, Carl Kubler, Alex Jania, and Yasser Nasser. Jessa and Erin in particular have done inestimably valuable work in building and maintaining a sense of community among us. This “us” is always growing, but it includes (in addition to the names above): Jun Hee Lee, Alíz Horváth, Thomas Gimbel, Evan Randall, Niu Yanjie, Wang Chao, Matthew Lowenstein, Stephanie Painter, Tian Yuan, Li Yujie, Kyle Pan, Sandra Park, Eilin Perez, Alex Haskins, Lina Mistrion, Ian Cipperly, Sheng Jiakai, Shi Yuanxie, Gao Xiaoyu, Xavier Ante, and Niuniu Teo.

My experiences as a scholar of East Asia have likewise benefited from the contributions of faculty and students in the East Asian Languages and Civilizations and Art History

departments and associated workshops. The rich East Asia collection at Regenstein Library under the careful curation of Benjamin Wu and Yuan Zhou has provided endless material for my research. The Center for East Asian Studies has provided substantial social and material support, including funding for preliminary archival research in China in 2014 and travel to present my research at various conferences over the years, as well as administering the Foreign Language and Area Studies program through which I received funding to study Japanese in 2015–16.

The support of the Center and UChicagoGRAD also helped me obtain crucial funding from the Fulbright Commission for a year of archival research in Jinan and Beijing in 2016–17. Professor Liu Jiafeng at Shandong University (to whom Guy Alitto introduced me) graciously agreed to host me during this period and even helped me organize an enriching conference on the history of Chinese cities during my stay. The research for the dissertation would have been impossible without the gracious support of the staff at Shandong University, Shandong Provincial Library, Jinan Municipal Library, Shandong Provincial Archives, and the First Historical Archives in Beijing. In addition to Prof. Liu, I am grateful to Du Zexun and Li Zhenju as well as Guo Dasong at Shandong Normal University for providing advice on my research.

The Center for International Social Science Research provided a one-year completion fellowship that has allowed me to bring the dissertation to a close. During this last year, I have also benefited from exchanges with colleagues through the Mansueto Institute's Urban Doctoral Fellows Program and the Newberry Library Urban History Dissertation Group, coordinated by Nicholas Kryczka.

Colleagues who have contributed to the project by giving formal comments at conferences and workshops and are not already mentioned above include Kwangmin Kim, Qiao Zhijian, Evelyn Atkinson, Hu Xiangyu, and Cecily McCaffrey. I am likewise grateful to those

who have participated as audience members or panelists in the various workshops and conferences where I have presented portions of the dissertation. All of these have played a role in helping take the project (and me) beyond the communities where it was conceived and so have given it a kind of translocal life it would not have enjoyed otherwise. Likewise, comments from reviewers and editors at *The Pacific Historical Review* made a particular contribution to chapter 5 of the dissertation.

In this context, I should also mention my gratitude to readers of Breaking ABD. Not only has it been encouraging that people have found some value in my musings on graduate student life, but the blog was also my first real experience with people “meeting” me through my writing rather than in-person, and so, unexpectedly, it has become an important part of the professionalization process for me.

The students I have had the privilege of teaching at the University of California, Irvine, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois at Chicago have also contributed if not directly to the dissertation then at least to my ability to write something that might be of value to people with interests broader than my own. I am especially grateful to the students in my “Approaches to World History” class, which I taught as a Von Holst Prize Lectureship at the University of Chicago in Spring 2019, who endured (and seem, strangely, to have enjoyed at times) my most ambitious pedagogical experimentation to date.

I could not have taught that course without Emily Webster, who watched my daughter every Tuesday afternoon, and my mother-in-law, who took her every Thursday. As much help as I have received from all the professional communities mentioned above, the dissertation would not have been possible without the support of a wider circle of family, friends, and, not infrequently, colleagues acting more like family than anyone has any right to expect. My parents

deserve special mention not only for the obvious reasons but also for being so exceptionally inclined to encourage me to pursue my interests and to let the details work themselves out over time. Our friends in Hyde Park have filled this long sojourn with warmth, support, and a sense of belonging.

No one has done more to support me in writing this dissertation than my wife, Julie. I can never repay her for the miles she has traveled, the boxes she has moved, the years this has taken. I would be undone without her. Any accomplishment of mine is no less hers.

Of all the people I have mentioned here, our daughter Ellie was just about the last to join the journey. In bare, pragmatic terms she has certainly contributed the least. And yet, I cannot imagine finishing this project without the life she has brought, without the hope that somehow this project of discovery would help me open up the world for her, and without the dreams of the places she will make her home.

Abstract

The focus of this dissertation is the history of Jinan, the capital of Shandong Province, and the relationship between its elite class and the Qing (1644–1912) state. Jinan was much less commercially prosperous than the better-studied cities of central and southern China. Nevertheless, connections to other places were an important part of how Jinan's elite identified with their city and reproduced their social status. Because of Jinan's administrative importance, many of these connections were related to the operation of the Qing government. I frame the relationship between the state and local communities in terms of state-building and place-making, emphasizing that both processes are always ongoing and that they are mutually constitutive, not autonomous of each other. Although the mutual dependence of this relationship is especially apparent in Jinan, this framework helps explain similar patterns of what scholars have thought of as state-society interactions elsewhere. By engaging with scholarship on the U.S. state, I show that this pattern of state-building was not unique to China and suggest new possibilities for comparative analysis of state-building around the world.

The dissertation spans three periods of Jinan's history: the early and high Qing, the second half of the nineteenth century, and the early twentieth century. The over-arching chronological narrative is that the robust state-building of the first half of the Qing Dynasty was accompanied by and proceeded through intensive place-making and that this pattern persisted through the crises of the nineteenth century and continued to animate the late Qing reforms and the opposition of Jinan's elite to the 1911 Revolution that overthrew the Qing. I analyze how Qing state-building incorporated a plurality of place-making projects through the lens of spatial politics. I argue that Qing spatial politics reflected many imperial characteristics but that it also contained nationalizing elements and so is best understood as a hybrid political formation. This

idea of imperial-national hybridity helps explain the existence of a form of nationalism in early modern China, the growth of nationalism within the imperial state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the persistence of imperial aspects of spatial politics beyond the fall of the Qing Dynasty.

Each chapter examines a specific aspect of the relationship between state-building and place-making, and together they show how these processes unfolded through activities that span the division between political, social, and cultural history. Chapter 1 discusses literary production about Baotu Spring—Jinan’s most famous scenic site—arguing that it was a focal point for discourse situating Jinan’s place in translocal networks, making it an especially appropriate object of imperial patronage during the Kangxi and Qianlong tours, which both made Baotu Spring a reservoir of imperial symbolism and stimulated local literati to compile other writings about it. In chapter 2, I argue that local academies demonstrated the composite nature of the Qing state since their operation depended on the contributions of the court, local officials, and members of the elite. Through the history of a prominent local family who had close connections to Jinan’s most important academy, I show how academies also reflected the complementarity of state-building and place-making.

Chapter 3 focuses on how the Taiping northern invasion in 1853–5 and repeated attacks by Nian rebels in the 1850s and 1860s threatened Jinan and how the participation of Jinan’s elite in the war effort both in Jinan and around the empire maintained the connection between place-making and state-building. Chapter 4 examines how Jinan’s elite managers participated in hydraulic and philanthropic projects in the wake of the Yellow River’s change of course in 1855. It shows how Jinan continued to occupy a privileged position within imperial spatial politics even as some elements of Qing political economy began to appear more national in character.

Chapter 5 likewise shows how Jinan's elite benefited from their cooperation with the government in asserting their place-making prerogatives in the face of efforts by American missionaries to purchase property in the city, demonstrating the unique challenges foreign imperialism posed to existing patterns of state-building and place-making and how these practices adapted to meet new challenges.

Chapter 6 examines how Jinan's elite participated in the early twentieth-century reforms undertaken by the Qing government, particularly commercial reforms—like the opening of a commercial settlement outside the city to accommodate foreign merchants and the establishment of a chamber of commerce—and educational reforms. The reforms perpetuated imperial elements of state-building and did not alienate Jinan's elite from the state, as scholars have argued occurred elsewhere. However, changes to the educational system, in which Jinan's elite played a limited role, opened up avenues for revolutionary activists to gain a foothold in the city. Chapter 7 looks at the implementation of self-government reforms, the opening of Shandong's provincial assembly, and the course of the 1911 Revolution in Jinan and Shandong more broadly. For Jinan's elite, new opportunities to participate in local and provincial politics offered innovative ways to manage the relationship between state-building and place-making. Unlike elites in other parts of the empire, participation in these reforms did not ultimately lead Jinan's elite to throw their support behind the 1911 Revolution. However, they found themselves beholden to political forces beyond their control, demonstrating that the weaknesses of the Qing state were also the weaknesses of the local elite. The vulnerability of Jinan's elite in the absence of central control presaged Jinan's tumultuous political history during the Republican period. The epilogue examines how the Qing state continued to be a valuable point of reference in writing about local history through the lens of a gazetteer published by Qing loyalists in 1926.

Introduction

By way of a preamble, therefore, what I want to say is: be careful, all sentences that have the state as subject are theological sentences—which does not mean that they are false, inasmuch as the state is a theological entity, that is, an entity that exists by way of belief.
—Pierre Bourdieu, *On the State*¹

When did the Qing Empire end, and when did the Chinese nation begin? The easy reply is 1912 because it answers both questions and conforms to conventional wisdom. That year marks the abdication of the last Qing emperor (the barely six-years-old Puyi) in response to the demands made by the leaders of the revolution that had broken out in October 1911 for a republican form of government. Convenience notwithstanding, there are many reasons to doubt the adequacy of a single date to answer such a complex question.² Bourdieu’s warning offers one way to frame this ambivalence: any statement about when the empire ended and the nation began—or even what this transformation meant—makes a claim about belief and so demands grounding in a history that is attuned to both institutional and subjective factors.³

Taking seriously Bourdieu’s premise, this dissertation examines both of these aspects of the Qing imperial state. The title “Putting Empire in its Place” carries two meanings. First, it identifies local communities as the indispensable condition of the state’s operation. Second, it underscores how these communities are themselves shaped by their relationship with the state. Both meanings convey that the state-place relationship comprises two entities that are never in stasis but always in a process of becoming. I refer to these processes, respectively, as *state-building* and *place-making*. Centering *place* as a concept and places as inter-connected social and cultural entities in our understanding of the imperial state offers a new way to approach the

¹ Bourdieu, *On the State*, 10.

² For an extended discussion of the chronological significance of the Qing, see Struve, *The Qing Formation*.

³ Bourdieu’s language of belief resonates with Anderson’s famous definition of the nation as an “imagined” community. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

problem of the empire-nation transformation in Chinese and world history. It shows how the Qing state, despite its genuinely imperial character, also produced nationalizing effects via the connections it generated between its constituent local communities. These connections, which I refer to as *translocal*, existed through material exchange but also, as Bourdieu suggests, “by way of belief.”

I develop this argument through the history of a specific place: Jinan, the capital of Shandong Province in eastern China. Even less than today, Jinan was not a major commercial center during the Qing, nor was it a “global” city by the usual standards of dense transnational connections. However, its status as the administrative seat of a strategically vital province with a nineteenth-century population of around thirty million people—approximately the same size as metropolitan France at that time—made it an especially important place. The diversity and scale of the translocal circulations for which Jinan served as a hub by virtue of its place in the Qing system of territorial administration belie its reputation as a modest and merely provincial city. Jinan’s limited commercial opportunities made its interconnectedness via administrative functions all the more integral to various forms of place-making that unfolded there, especially among the city’s elite class. However, the elite did not merely leech off a beneficent state. Rather, they were also constructive participants in Qing state-building, even in the dynasty’s final, fragile years, which challenges the conventional wisdom that growing elite power undermined the control of the Qing state in the post-Taiping period (1864–1912).

This local narrative of the constructive relationship between state-building and place-making opens up several broader challenges to our understanding of Chinese history. First, it bears ramifications for our understanding of the regional history of Chinese cities. Given its exceptional administrative importance, it would be unwise to take Jinan as representative of all

cities in late imperial and modern China. However, its history is valuable for advancing our understanding of urban experiences in two ways. Most obviously, it offers a corrective to the field's over-attention to even more exceptional cases, like Beijing and coastal or riverine cities that were major commercial centers (e.g. Shanghai). Moreover, it suggests that we have much to gain from more closely examining cities in inland North China, which have received relatively little attention. Surprisingly, core themes of the dissertation, particularly the centrality of translocal connections to urban life, resonate with studies of cities that were more commercially important than Jinan. What was different about Jinan was that administrative functions were primarily responsible for generating these connections. Further research on cities in North China whose political and economic status resembled Jinan's, like Kaifeng, Taiyuan, and Baoding, are needed to determine if Jinan's experiences are representative of similar cases. Although this class of cities—provincial capitals in North China—is naturally small (half a dozen or even fewer, depending on how narrowly or broadly one understands 'North China'), the fact that the proportion of administrative centers to the total number of cities in North China was appreciably higher than in the south suggests that these cities' histories may shed light on urban development in the region more broadly.⁴

Second, the entanglement of administrative functions, translocal connections, and place-making that we see in Jinan poses a broader challenge to the framework we use to understand state-society relations in late imperial and modern China. One of this dissertation's core arguments is that the field's theoretical assumption of a dichotomy of state and local society is

⁴ For example, Xi'an (the capital of Shaanxi Province) was also in the northern half of the empire but was more tightly implicated in the political economy of the empire's western border regions. We would expect its history to have been quite different from Jinan, then, but the broad pattern of administrative (particularly military) institutions generating translocal connections with wide-ranging effects for local people likely obtained there as well. Skinner, "Regional Urbanization," 246–47.

fundamentally inadequate for understanding China's history on its own and in comparative terms. I use Jinan's history, where this inadequacy is especially evident, to elaborate an alternative view of the state. Drawing on recent scholarship on the U.S. state, I argue that the state is best understood as an effect of social action and the product of public politics and is not fundamentally defined by or limited to formal administrative organs. This perspective offers a solution to the long-recognized theoretical problem that the line between state and society in Chinese history has been murky and permeable. Instead of concluding that this reflects *sui generis* qualities of Chinese historical experience, I point to underlying commonalities with other historical cases, namely the U.S., that we have assumed exhibited a fundamentally different pattern of state-society relations. This argument opens new possibilities for studying the theory and history of the state in comparative perspective.

Finally, writing the history of the state with reference to place and translocal connections offers a promising avenue for evaluating continuities and ruptures in China's history of empire and nation. Just as the spatial logic of Qing imperial governance produced counterintuitive nationalizing effects, post-imperial and putatively national systems of government have perpetuated imperial patterns. We can best grasp this persistent hybridity of political forms in China—and elsewhere—by understanding the state not as a monolithic entity or even a self-contained, albeit multi-faceted, administrative system but as an agglomeration of diverse local experiences. This is true even of nation-states, whose explicit claims to shared history, culture, rights, and interests seem destined to clash with the inherent local-ness of the state. As Bourdieu suggests, nation-states nevertheless survive and even thrive through theological speech-acts by which they fashion themselves as the subjects of history.⁵ Although the ideological

⁵ On the nation as the subject of history, see, among others, Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 187–206; Duara, *Rescuing History*.

underpinnings of the modern Chinese state are fundamentally different from the imperial dynasties that preceded it, the phenomenon of imperial-national hybridity is hardly new. While place-making within the spatial logic of nation-states can be difficult to accommodate, it is no less indispensable than in imperial states since it is only through the construction of places that the material processes and mythologies that animate the state can operate.

In most accounts, the history of the Qing ends in 1912 with its critical failure to manage the particular relationship between place-making and state-building on which it depended. For my purposes, though, Jinan's Qing history extends beyond this conventional expiration date both because the dynastic state persisted as an object of belief and element of place-making for the subjects whose history I trace and because their seemingly anachronistic attachments underscore deep and prevalent continuities in the story of empire and nation in Chinese and world history.

Thinking with Place-Making and Translocality

Ironically, the idea of the “local” is so deeply embedded in the history and historiography of China that the language of “place” can sound strange and unfamiliar. However, the concepts of place and place-making offer useful correctives to the limitations and biases implicit in existing approaches to the local in China studies. Two approaches to delineating localities predominate in the study of late imperial China. One identifies localities with administrative units, usually at the county (*zhou* or *xian*) and prefecture (*fu*) level. The other major approach derives from G. William Skinner's research on the hierarchy of regional marketing systems, which is based on central place theory. Skinner argues that marketing systems reflected the “‘natural’ structure of Chinese society” in large part because they corresponded to physiographic features that set the limits of premodern transportation. This makes them a more effective unit of

analysis for social historians than administrative divisions, which took into account marketing systems but also reflected the strategic priorities of the government and inherited bureaucratic structures that could be slow to adapt to changing socio-economic conditions.⁶ Consequently, many historians have framed their work in terms of sub-regional marketing networks and their place as cores or peripheries in “physiographic macroregions” or have at least used this framework to complicate the administrative definition of localities.⁷

Both approaches to defining locality possess merits and limitations. Focusing on administrative units privileges the perspective of the government and its vested interest in projecting a mythology of rational order, at the expense of the economic and social activities to which Skinner’s framework is attuned. Nevertheless, political divisions were not entirely divorced from socio-economic conditions and played an undeniable role in shaping how people thought about places. For example, since local gazetteers were compiled according to administrative unit, they brought the writing and reading of local history into alignment with government-promulgated territorial divisions. Moreover, casting economic behavior as “natural” vis-a-vis its correspondence to physiographic features and social behavior underplays how political systems can shape economic and social activity and even alter the effects of physiographic constraints. A case in point was the Grand Canal, an artificial north-south waterway that linked the economically prosperous Lower Yangzi macroregion with not only the capital of Beijing but other cities in North China, thus creating a distinct interregional urban system that confounds Skinner’s scheme of physiographic macroregions.⁸

⁶ Skinner, “Cities and the Hierarchy of Local Systems,” 275ff; Skinner, *Marketing and Social Structure*. Cartier’s critical genealogy of the Skinner’s macroregional framework sheds light on its limitations and alternative possibilities, some of which are reflected in the methodology I describe below. Cartier, “Origins and Evolution.”

⁷ For a particularly elaborate example of this approach, see Schoppa, *Chinese Elites*.

⁸ See, for instance, Sun, “A Jiangnan Identity in North China.”

These ways of thinking about locality rely on functional analysis of political and economic systems. In contrast, I use place as a heuristic device to describe the historical production of Jinan as a social and cultural reality through a variety of processes, including but not limited to those accounted for by the administrative and economic structures described above.⁹ As a heuristic device, ‘place’ can correspond to a variety of ways that historical sources talk about geographic locations, including administrative designations (*shengcheng*, *fucheng*, etc.), commonly accepted toponyms (like *lixia* was for Jinan), or less clearly defined terms like *difang* (place) or *guxiang* (ancestral home).

Through place-making, the lived experiences and representational forms, including both centers and boundaries, of segments of space are made and re-made over time.¹⁰ Since place-making is a historical process that entails places changing over time, Doreen Massey refers to places as “spatio-temporal events.” She writes, “‘Here’ is where spatial narratives meet up or form configurations, conjunctures of trajectories which have their own temporalities...where the successions of meetings, the accumulation of weavings and encounters build up a history.”¹¹ Massey refers to this quality of place as a spatio-temporal meeting point as “throwntogetherness.”¹² Other scholars have used the word ‘bundling’ to describe how place-making results from accumulated interactions between human actions and ideas that are both conscious and sub-conscious and non-human agents and artifacts.¹³ Physical topography exerts a relatively consistent effect on place-making, but this too is time-sensitive, as exploitation of and

⁹ This approach to place as a heuristic device that nevertheless corresponds in some ways to Chinese concepts like “ancestral home” (*guxiang*) parallels Oakes and Schein, “Translocal China.” My approach also roughly corresponds to what Kären Wigen describes as a synthesis of “formalist” and “functional” approaches to regional space and reflects her call to think of regional space as a “process.” Wigen, “Culture, Power, and Place,” 1184–87, 1198.

¹⁰ Lefebvre is often credited with drawing attention to the social construction of space. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. See also Summers, *Real Spaces*, 117–22.

¹¹ Massey, *For Space*, 130, 139. See also Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 168.

¹² Massey, *For Space*, 140.

¹³ Pierce, Martin, and Murphy, “Relational Place-Making,” 59.

ideas about physical features and even (as we see in chapter 4) the features themselves change over time.¹⁴ The fact that places are not sudden creations but products of long-running processes or mythologies that mobilize the past to construct a particular understanding of the present ‘here’ lends them a considerable degree of durability. At the same time, the time-sensitivity of places means that they are fundamentally ephemeral and that their construction is always open to contestation.¹⁵

Place-making occurs through the bundling of not only different types of activities—political, economic, representational, etc.—but also elements that come from different places.¹⁶ To describe the surprisingly diverse spatial referents of place-making in Jinan, I use the term ‘translocality.’ Translocality refers to processes that transcend individual places but are not necessarily globe-spanning or transnational in scale. (Although, such processes also can and should be discussed as translocal.) Describing a process as translocal does not imply that it is non-local. Rather, translocal dynamics are often constitutive of individual places.¹⁷ As Bruno Latour writes, “There exists no place that can be said to be ‘non-local’. If something is to be ‘delocalized’, it means that it is being sent from one place to some other place, not from one place to no place.”¹⁸ Movement makes places possible, and the relationships between places we think of as centers and other places must be iteratively reconstituted and never exist apart from ongoing circulations.¹⁹ It is in connection to movement through space—either as a result of it or as a reaction against it—that practices of centering and boundary-marking, which often figure

¹⁴ Raffles, “‘Local Theory,’” 331–45; Massey, *For Space*, 138–39.

¹⁵ Pierce, Martin, and Murphy, “Relational Place-Making,” 58–60; Escobar, “Culture Sits in Places,” 140.

¹⁶ The combination of diverse social activities and translocal influences makes place-making a particularly valuable lens through which to study urban history, but rural communities are places no less than cities. Knapp, “Village Landscapes,” 4.

¹⁷ Freitag and Oppen, “Introduction”; Oakes and Schein, “Translocal China,” 18–20.

¹⁸ Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 179. See also Feuchtwang, “Theorising Place,” 3.

¹⁹ Latour, 191–95; Escobar, “Culture Sits in Places,” 143, 149; Massey, “Preface,” xiii–xiv.

prominently in understandings of place, become elements of place-making.²⁰

This approach to the relationship between translocality and place-making is primarily concerned with how places and their relationships to each other are effects of diverse processes. Consequently, it offers a perspective on locality and translocality that is somewhat different from the administrative and Skinnerian approaches discussed above. For example, in his study of sojourning Huizhou merchants, Du Yongtao uses “local” primarily in terms of the administrative divisions of county and prefecture. For his purposes, translocality refers to the act of Huizhou merchants stepping out of their registered home place (Huizhou) and into communities that were, to them, non-local. He explains, “The word ‘local’ denotes the specific locations of their activities and their roots in the place of origin; the prefix ‘trans’ denotes their need and ability to go beyond the local.”²¹ Because I treat place as a heuristic device, the local-ness of place-making agents is not defined by a putative place of origin (e.g. a registered home county) but is produced through social activity.²² Although Huizhou merchants were definitionally non-local vis-a-vis their guest communities in an administrative sense and not infrequently perceived as outsiders, they were nevertheless constitutive agents of place-making. As this implies, unlike Du, I do not use translocality to mean going “beyond the local.”²³ Instead, following Latour’s contention, I treat all social activity as happening in places and translocal processes as those which involve multiple places.

²⁰ See, for example, Feuchtwang, “Theorising Place,” 4–5, 10–12.

²¹ Du, *The Order of Places*, 5.

²² I say ‘putative’ because all particular claims of origins are based on epistemological constructs that are inevitably political. Bloch, *The Historian’s Craft*, 29–35.

²³ I also disagree with how Du modulates the meaning of ‘translocal’ to exclude population movements like mass deportations, refugee resettlement, and “drifting.” His stated reason for this is that these activities did not entail the same kind of agency and intentional engagement in both guest and home communities that characterized sojourning merchants. I think the empirical basis of these distinctions is shaky and that narrowing the definition of a term like ‘translocal’ that is used in other fields to refer to a broad range of activities to a very specific type of behavior within the context of Chinese history is counterproductive. Du, *The Order of Places*, 17–20.

Hierarchical metaphors, like the bureaucracy or Skinner's marketing systems, can be useful for describing specific types of translocal processes. Jinan's status as a provincial capital—and thus a place at the apex of a very important spatial hierarchy—was of immense consequence to its history. Bearing hierarchical metaphors in mind is essential because historical actors negotiated place-making at different scales, like city and province, that they understood in terms of these “vertical” schema.²⁴ However, there are several dangers to over-relying on hierarchical metaphors. First, they can naturalize the spatial relations that hierarchical systems produce and thus mask the types of “horizontal” processes that are necessary to sustain them. Although Jinan's status as a provincial capital was, on paper, a simple institutional fact, the place-making effects of this status were (re)produced through a wide variety of iterative translocal processes.²⁵ Second, hierarchical metaphors can convey a false sense of commensurability between one place and others at the same level of a given hierarchy. Like over one hundred other towns and cities in Shandong, Jinan was a county seat, but it was nevertheless different from all the others because it was also the provincial capital. Likewise, the proximity of nearby counties to Jinan made them county seats in a way that was different from those that were farther away. Finally, as I discuss below, Jinan occupied very different places in administrative and commercial hierarchies. Consequently, we cannot classify it as a “core” or “central” place without considerable qualification.²⁶

However, we do need to remain attuned to how place-making is necessarily political. This is true whether we are taking about an individual place, connections between places, or

²⁴ For a discussion of how translocality encompasses both “vertical” and “horizontal” spatial relationships and place as a “scale-transcending idea,” see Oakes and Schein, “Translocal China,” 10, 18.

²⁵ Even translocal place-making that is imaginative in nature proceeds through bodies that occupy specific points in “horizontal” space. Escobar, “Culture Sits in Places,” 143.

²⁶ Rozman offers a hierarchical schema for classifying cities according to both economic and administrative importance that deals with some but not all of these problems. Rozman, *Urban Networks*, 13–14.

relationships between different translocal scales (e.g. province and nation.) Below, I explain how I use the framework of spatial politics to encompass the power relations embedded in these diverse translocal processes and the variety of activities (“political,” cultural, economic, etc.) involved in place-making in Jinan.

Jinan as a Place

Jinan’s political importance as a provincial capital necessarily meant that its relationship with the state would significantly affect place-making there. The discrepancy between the city’s political centrality and commercial peripherality made the effects of political processes on local life all the more apparent. Nevertheless, neither place-making nor state-building in Jinan can be explained in terms of bureaucratic institutions alone. Instead, we need to think of place and—as I will argue more fully below—the state as products of a complex web of processes and actors. This section lays out the general backdrop against which the more specific developments addressed in each chapter unfolded, focusing on Jinan’s geographic location and relationship to the Qing political system, its secondary commercial status, and its own social and spatial constitution.

Political Geography

During the Qing Dynasty Jinan served concurrently as a county, prefecture, and provincial capital—statuses and, with them, names it had acquired over preceding centuries. Prior to the Song Dynasty, the city had a long history as an administrative center, although it had been rebuilt in slightly different locations. In the Northern Song (960–1127), by which time it roughly occupied its modern location, Jinan was called Qizhou, after the prefecture of which it was the seat. Later, the prefecture’s name changed to Jinan, and so it became common to call the

city ‘Jinanfu’ (Jinan Prefecture Seat). Concurrently, Jinan served as the seat of Licheng County, the capital of this prefecture. Licheng (Li City) and Lixia (at the base of Li) have served as alternative names for Jinan itself and are both references to Li Mountain, immediately south of the city. Today, this mountain is more commonly known as Thousand Buddha Mountain (*Qianfo shan*), but *li*-related toponyms are still common, with Licheng and Lixia both being names of districts in today’s Jinan municipality. Jinan gained even greater administrative importance when it was made the provincial capital of Shandong in the early Ming. It continued to serve this function through the Qing and still does today. Consequently, sources sometimes refer to it simply as the provincial capital (*shengcheng*, *shenghui*, or even *sheng*). Unlike many provincial capitals, which were split between the jurisdiction of two counties, the city of Jinan continued to be administered exclusively by Licheng.²⁷ Like other cities, there was no formal administrative distinction between Jinan city and its immediate hinterland until the late Qing reforms (see chapters 6 and 7), although sub-county forms of governance like the *baojia* system of household registration introduced a degree of functional differentiation between rural and urban areas.²⁸

Jinan’s administrative functions embedded it in a complex set of physical and human geographies. These geographies shaped the constitution of its population, architecture, and economic life and created a series of connections to other places, both within and beyond Jinan Prefecture and Shandong Province. A central contention of this dissertation is that Jinan’s *local* society and culture were co-products of these *translocal* connections. The specific dynamics of

²⁷ Cities with this arrangement tended to be wealthy and have strong elite classes. Dividing the city and its hinterland into two (or in Suzhou’s case, three) parts, weakened the power of the local elite vis-a-vis the county magistrate(s). That such an arrangement was deemed unnecessary in Jinan/Licheng likely reflects the economic weakness of its local elite and the topographical constraints on the size of its immediate hinterland, discussed in more detail below. Skinner, “Cities and the Hierarchy of Local Systems,” 343–44.

²⁸ On the operation of *baojia* in an urban context (Chongqing), see Dykstra, “Complicated Matters,” 73–123. While I do not address *baojia* specifically in this dissertation, the formation of militia discussed in chapter 3 reflects how collective responsibility units effectively created sub-county distinctions between the walled city, the suburb, and the countryside.

Qing political geography changed in important ways over the course of the Qing, but the basic contours of administrative divisions and strategic priorities remained more or less consistent throughout this period.

Two main features dominated the physical geography of Licheng County and Jinan Prefecture. The first was the Tai Mountains, which ran along the southern edge of the county and prefecture. The second, up to 1855, was the Daqing River, which cut across the northern portion of Licheng County. Jinan city was a couple miles south of the river, but the satellite port of Luokou connected the city to the river via smaller waterways. Jinan Prefecture extended east and west along the Daqing and north into the plains on the other side. When the Yellow River changed course in 1855, it overtook the bed of the Daqing River. (Jinan's place in this hydraulic system before and after 1855 are discussed in more detail in chapters 1 and 4.)

Jinan thus occupied a strategic position at the center of Shandong Province. It sat along the province's main east-west waterway (the Daqing, then Yellow River) and the over-land postal route connecting Beijing in the north to the provinces in the south. Dezhou, in the northwestern portion of the prefecture, abutted neighboring Zhili Province, and sat astride the Grand Canal, which ran through the western portion of Shandong and was the main waterway linking Beijing to the Yangzi River. Although Jinan itself was distant from the coast and, to a lesser degree, the Grand Canal, it provided a platform from which provincial officials could oversee affairs in these disparate but both strategically sensitive portions of the province. Jinan's importance as an in-between place is reflected by the fact that unlike most other provincial capitals, especially in North China, it did not house a Manchu banner garrison. Instead, the primary garrison in Shandong was located to the west at Dezhou and another was established at

Qingzhou, about 80 miles due east of Jinan (and closer to the coast), in 1729.²⁹

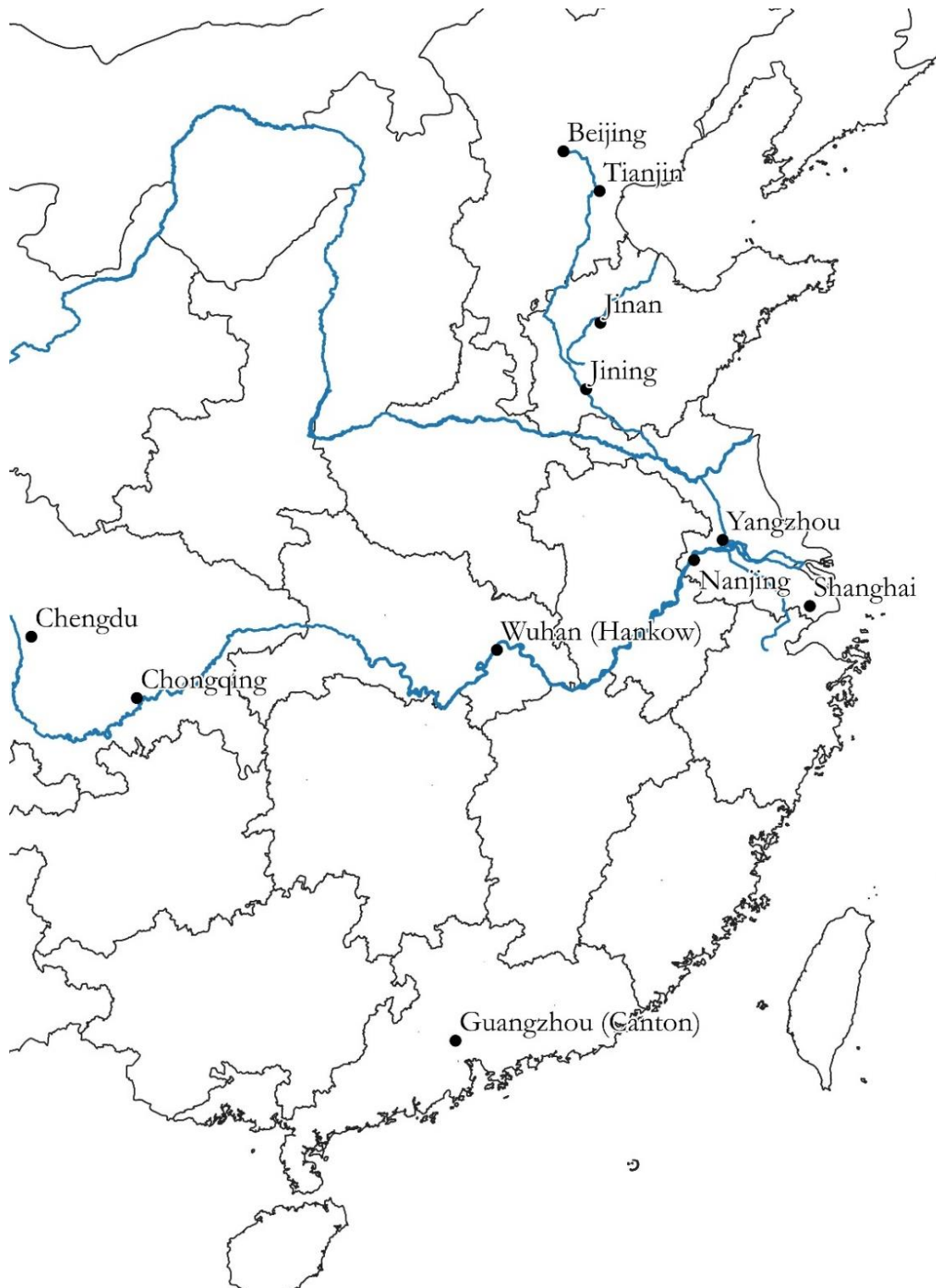


Figure 0.1: Map of Jinan and major cities in late imperial China. (GIS data from CHGIS.)

²⁹ Elliott, *The Manchu Way*, 95–98.



Figure 0.2: Map of Jinan Prefecture. (GIS data from CHGIS and Natural Earth.)

An array of translocal networks traversed this more or less static geography. Jinan's status as a provincial capital made it a meeting point of intra- and inter-provincial circuits. Examples of the former included men traveling there to sit for the civil service examinations (discussed in chapter 2) and the gathering of taxes collected throughout the province in the provincial treasury. The inter-provincial circuit that is at the forefront of this dissertation is the system through which officials received appointments in the territorial administration. Because the Qing rule of avoidance forbade officials from serving in their home provinces, the men who served in administrative posts in Jinan and throughout Shandong necessarily came from other provinces. Jinan's status as a concurrent province, prefecture, and county capital meant that these "non-local" officials were especially numerous and powerful. Moreover, Jinan served as a kind of guest house for officials assigned to other parts of the province who would temporarily pass

through the city on their way to and from posts and for men awaiting official appointments. At least in some cases, these men brought family members and servants with them, and Jinan offered employment to men qualified to work as secretaries in government offices (posts not subject to the rule of avoidance) or as teachers to children of officials or the local elite. Each dissertation chapter presents a different perspective on how these intra- and inter-provincial networks shaped Jinan's history and how these networks themselves changed over time.

Local and Regional Economies

Compared to its place in the administrative system, where its status as a provincial capital put it in a tier of importance directly below Beijing, Jinan's economic standing was far less remarkable. However, the combination of the city's administrative functions, its consequent size, and its location in the intra-regional economic system meant that its commercial significance was more than negligible. The main constraints on the city's economic importance were the limited productivity of its hinterland and its peripheral place in larger trading systems.

Jinan served as a center of trade for a region extending into the plains north of the city and into the mountains to the south. Like other parts of North China, the high population density in the plains north and west of Jinan and the land's relatively low per capita yield, meant that its agricultural surplus lagged well behind economic cores like the Yangzi and Pearl river deltas. However, some families in the area around Jinan did manage to amass landholdings large enough to be worked by tenants and/or hired laborers, including the well-studied Meng family in neighboring Zhangqiu County.³⁰ However, the lack of concentrated agricultural production in the area around Jinan and, indeed, most of Shandong, which was exacerbated by recurrent and sometimes severe natural disasters, generally worked against wealth derived from agriculture in

³⁰ Jing Su and Luo Lun, *Landlord and Labor*, 132–37.

concentrating in major urban centers. The one major exception to this was Jining, in western Shandong, which also benefited commercially from its position on the Grand Canal. Besides grain, the marketing area around Jinan produced a variety of non-foodstuff commodities. Cash-cropping of agricultural products, especially cotton, grew from the late Ming into the early Qing. Mining in the mountains south and east of the city fueled a vibrant coal trade in Jinan, Boshan County, and the market town of Zhoucun in Zichuan County. This area also produced a range of handicrafts, including silk and cotton cloth, although Jinan itself was more a consumer than producer of such goods.³¹

However, Jinan's centrality to this local trading system did not translate to interregional economic importance comparable to its administrative status. One reason for this was simply the fact that the area around Jinan generally did not produce goods unique to the region that could not be obtained even closer to major population centers. Moreover, interregional patterns of trade pulled different parts of the province away from Jinan. Unlike the provinces of Zhili to the north or Jiangsu to the south, Shandong did not possess a definitive commercial core that was an endpoint of interregional trade. As Joseph Esherick notes in his study of the Boxer Uprising, Shandong fit uneasily into the scheme of physiographic macroregions put forward by Skinner. The main reason for this is that the Grand Canal, which ran through the western half of the province, primarily facilitated trade between metropolises on either side of Shandong—Beijing and Tianjin to the north and the cities of the Lower Yangzi to the south. Esherick argues that this effectively split the western half of Shandong between the North China and Lower Yangzi macroregions.³² Sun Jinghao builds on this economic observation to argue that Jining—the city in Shandong that most benefited from the Grand Canal—was more of a social and cultural

³¹ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 22–23; Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:93–106.

³² Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, 5–6.

extension of the Lower Yangzi than a North China city.³³ Ironically, then, the part of the province that was most propitiously located for trade purposes was positioned in such a way that it was more an economic periphery of even more prosperous cities than a core in its own right. Even then, Jinan was located far enough to the east of the Grand Canal to be on the outskirts of this trading network. Likewise, it was on the edges of the marketing system centered on the Shandong peninsula, which Esherick describes as the economic core of Shandong and which was dominated by coastal cities and inland trade centers like Weixian.³⁴

In theory, Jinan occupied an advantageous position between these two trading networks. Although the Grand Canal overshadowed the north-south overland route that linked Jinan to Beijing and the Lower Yangzi, Jinan lay directly on the Daqing River, the main east-west route from the Grand Canal to the peninsula. However, the flow of goods between these systems was, again, not rich enough for Jinan to become a major economic center in its own right. It was only in the twentieth century, when the Grand Canal declined and Jinan became the meeting point of the north-south railroad connecting Beijing and Shanghai and a line to the German colonial enclave of Qingdao, that the city became a major commercial hub and industrial center.³⁵ Chapter 6 discusses the beginnings of this transformation.

By far, the greatest commercial benefits Jinan derived from its position on the Daqing River and in-between the Grand Canal and the coast came through the government-controlled salt trade. The Shandong salt administration, which also included some counties in neighboring provinces, was split into eastern and western halves at Jinan. All salt sold in the western half of the province was supposed to travel from production areas on the coast through Jinan's port on

³³ Sun, "City, State, and the Grand Canal."

³⁴ Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, 3–7; Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 26–27.

³⁵ Although, by then, the northern part of the Shandong peninsula was growing more attached through trade and migration to Manchuria. Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 37–38.

the Daqing River, Luokou, for inspection. For this reason, the Daqing River was also known as the “salt river” (*yan he*). This made Jinan an important regional center of the salt trade and a base of operations for the wealthy extra-provincial merchants who dominated it.³⁶ These merchants, along with the salt administration itself, were an important source of funding for local projects, as chapters 1 and 2 discuss. In other circumstances, this role as a key node in the salt trade would have made Jinan a great commercial center, but Shandong’s salt business was far less lucrative than its peers to the north and south, the Changlu and Lianghuai administrations.³⁷ Moreover, when the Yellow River flooded the bed of the Daqing River in the mid-nineteenth century, it disrupted both the production and transport of salt along this route, as chapter 4 discusses.³⁸

Besides the salt trade and an annual fair for medicinal products that drew merchants from across North China, Jinan’s role in interregional trade was limited. One measure of this is the number of native-place lodges (*huiguan*) for sojourning merchants from other provinces present in Jinan. The oldest and largest such lodge was founded in 1774 for merchants from Shaanxi and Shanxi. The fact that a single lodge served people from both provinces, which were well-known for their sojourning merchants, and was founded so late in the prosperous eighteenth century is indicative of the relatively small size of the extra-provincial merchant community. Additional lodges did sprout up over the next few decades, including several that served merchants in specific trades, like the Yunji Lodge for cloth merchants in 1813 and the Fude Lodge for bankers in 1817. This growth notwithstanding, Guo Dadsong and Wang Shouzhong conclude, “The growing number of extra-provincial merchants demonstrates the developed status of commerce

³⁶ A similar pattern of extra-provincial merchants dominating the salt trade prevailed in Guangzhou. Miles, *The Sea of Learning*, 32.

³⁷ See, for instance, Kwan, *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin*; Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture*.

³⁸ Ji Lizhen, *Ming Qing Shandong yanye*; Jilun, Song Xiang, and Jia Ying, *Shandong yanfa zhi*.

in Jinan, but it was still far from being equal to its political and cultural status.”³⁹

Physical and Social Aspects of Jinan's Urban Space

Place-making in Jinan was the effect of bundling the city's divergent status in administrative and commercial translocal hierarchies in urban space and society. Various portions of the city's physical space and segments of the population participated in this bundling in diverse ways. Although we can observe certain functional divisions in urban space, the movement of people and objects across these divisions was itself constitutive of place-making in Jinan. The divisions between human-made and natural, official and popular, rich and poor were less definitive of place than how various groups of people negotiated them physically and socially.

By the Qing period, many of the “natural” features that shaped urban space bore the marks of direct or indirect human intervention but still resisted absolute control, making it difficult to distinguish between what Cronon calls first and second nature.⁴⁰ The city's most intractable natural feature was the mountains to the south, which, even today, check unbridled urban expansion in that direction. As popular sites for leisure, religious practice, and second residences, the mountains operated as a kind of extension of urban space. Jinan's water was more pliable but also more deeply interwoven with urban space. Qing poet Liu Fenggao famously described the interplay between mountains and water in Jinan's scenery in a well-known couplet:

Lotus flowers on all four sides, willow trees on three;
The whole city is filled with mountain scenery; half the city is a lake.

四面荷花三面柳，一城山色半城湖。⁴¹

The lake to which Liu refers is Daming Lake, located in the northern portion of the walled city.

³⁹ Wang Shouzhong and Guo Dasong, *Jindai Shandong chengshi*, 69–70.

⁴⁰ Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 56.

⁴¹ Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:643.

Like the moat surrounding the wall, Daming Lake is fed by the drainage of Jinan's many karst springs that lend it the nickname "city of springs" (*quancheng*). Heavy rainfall could swell the subterranean aquifer that fed Jinan's springs and cause flooding. (Over-utilization of sub-surface water in recent years has made weak or non-existent flow a more common problem.) Dredging out the lake and constructing a moat to channel the spring water—accomplished in the centuries before the Qing—helped prevent flooding in the city itself. However, the area north of the city, where the spring water drained off toward the Daqing River, remained marshy and less urbanized than other areas immediately outside the walled city throughout the Qing.

Unlike mountains and waterways, the final physical feature that most dominated Jinan's urban space—its wall—was decisively human-made and maintained. The wall, first built in the Ming, served practical defensive purposes but also marked Jinan as a major administrative seat in both physical space and maps. Liu was exaggerating the size of Daming Lake, but it was large enough to significantly shift the spatial center of the walled city and its eastern and western gates to the south. Because of the lake and the marshes to the north, there was no real north gate to speak of. Instead, the city's main thoroughfare ran east-west through the southern portion of the city. The wall provided a kind of container for the many government offices that filled Jinan. These included a large compound for the governor, separate offices for other provincial officials, offices for the Jinan Prefect and Licheng Magistrate, the provincial examination hall, and a number of others. However, with the walled area of the city comprising only three km², Daming Lake and the many government offices left little "free" room in the walled city for commercial and social activity, besides the lake itself, which was a popular leisure site. Consequently, much urban life spilled out into the unwalled "suburbs" to the west, south, and east. The southwest suburb was especially important, as chapter 1 discusses, since it was the location of both Jinan's

most famous spring, Baotu, and its largest market. The Luo River, a stream fed by the area's springs, connected this suburb to Luokou, Jinan's satellite port on the Daqing River.⁴²

Within this space, various segments of Jinan's population participated in place-making. By the last quarter of the prosperous eighteenth century, Jinan's population had reached 50,000 people, including the suburbs. By 1850, its population had more than doubled, and by the end of the Qing it totaled around 250,000.⁴³ Jinan's administrative importance accounted for a significant portion of its population, especially its most powerful residents. As discussed above, extra-provincial officials and their families were the most prominent example of this. Because officials were supposed to return to their home places or move on to their next assignment after their tenure in office expired, individual officials had a short time to create an impression on the city. As a class of people, though, they were a consistent and influential presence in many ways, as the individual chapters show. Beneath regular officials was a class of men, including secretaries and expectant officials, who supported the administrative functions of the city. Not only was this group much larger than the centrally-appointed bureaucrats who employed them personally or officially, but the open-ended nature of their career prospects made it more likely that they would become permanent residents of the city, since the consistent circulation of officials meant there would always be a market for expertise in local affairs and the city's status as an educational center created a consistent demand for teaching.⁴⁴

Besides civil officials, military men were also an important presence in the city. The effect of the military on Jinan's urban life would have been far more noticeable if the city had housed a banner garrison, which would have entailed marking off part of the city for the

⁴² Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:5–6.

⁴³ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 228–30.

⁴⁴ Miles observes that it was similarly common for officials' secretaries to make Guangzhou (also a provincial capital) their permanent residence. Miles, *The Sea of Learning*, 29–30.

residence of Manchu soldiers and their families. However, Jinan was the location of a garrison for the Green Standard Army, which was staffed by Han Chinese and totaled between one and two thousand men.⁴⁵ Like officials, soldiers' families sometimes moved with them there for military service, but they were allowed to stay after leaving the army. Even though military service, especially for Han men, was far less prestigious than civil appointments, a military career did offer routes for social advancement, and families with military backgrounds could transition to competing for civil service degrees and civil appointments.⁴⁶ For example, the father of famous Jinan poet Wang Ping had been in the military and moved from Zhejiang to Jinan after retiring because that was the home of his wife's family.⁴⁷ Another example of the paths between military and civil achievement is the family of Jinan native Mie Chungui, who won distinction while fighting in the campaign against Zheng Chenggong in the southeast in the early Qing. His oldest son had a career in the civil administration, while his younger son served in the military first in Shandong and then in Sichuan.⁴⁸

The activities of officials, petty functionaries, teachers, military men, and the large number of merchants, craftsmen, and entertainers whose livelihoods depended on catering to them naturally centered on the walled city and the immediate suburbs. They were joined by the upper crust of Jinan's elite, whose status depended on their connections to officialdom in addition to income derived from landholding and family businesses. Although they were similar to their peers elsewhere in this respect, like elites in other parts of North China, limited local economic opportunities made their official connections particularly important.⁴⁹ However, the

⁴⁵ Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:187–88.

⁴⁶ Although focused on the Ming, Szonyi offers a rich portrait of how diverse social strategies grew up around military service. Szonyi, *The Art of Being Governed*.

⁴⁷ Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:539.

⁴⁸ Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, *JNFZ (Daoguang)*, 53:10a–11a.

⁴⁹ For an overview of regional differences in elite social strategies, see Esherick and Rankin, "Introduction," 17–24.

literati who lived in Jinan did not constitute a true provincial elite. Educated men from around the province had to travel there to take the exams and (more so for those who lived within the prefecture) socialize, but Jinan was not attractive enough to draw wealthy men from other places in the province, like Jining, into the city as permanent residents.⁵⁰ Anecdotal evidence from gazetteer biographies suggests that people moving from elsewhere in Shandong to Jinan usually came from smaller county or prefecture seats, not larger trading centers like Jining or Weixian. This was the case with the Zhu family, who moved to Jinan from Gaotang and dominated Jinan's social scene in the early Qing and are discussed in chapter 2. Others, including merchants from Shanxi and Zhejiang, moved from farther away to engage in specific trades (often salt) and eventually made their homes in the city. Since the salt trade was controlled by the government, powerful salt merchant families were also characterized by their ties to officials. It was not uncommon for merchants to translate commercial wealth into literati status and come to identify closely with the city.

Beyond this upper stratum of local/translocal elite, there was a much broader class of common people and gentry whose social status did not rely so directly on what happened in the walled city. The overwhelming majority of the city was Han Chinese, but there was a significant Muslim community that grew to ten thousand or more by the end of the dynasty and was concentrated in the southwest suburb.⁵¹ Farmers, craftsmen, and traders living in the suburbs and the countryside of Licheng County faced the challenges of crop failures, natural disasters, and even banditry that characterized other areas of rural China. However, their proximity to Jinan and the city's status as a political center shaped not only their everyday activities, like marketing,

⁵⁰ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 29.

⁵¹ Armstrong estimates its size at 15,000 in the late nineteenth century, which seems like an upper limit. Armstrong, *Shantung*, 52; Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:350–52.

but also responses to the extraordinary crises of the mid-late nineteenth century that are at the center of chapters 3, 4, and 5. Their relationships with the powerful officials in Jinan were mediated through the urban elite, who played a central, albeit hardly infallible, role in organizing local defenses, arranging for disaster relief, and negotiating the activities of foreigners in the city, suburbs, and countryside. Although some areas close to the walled city had long been urbanized, the last half of the dissertation discusses the increasingly rapid urbanization of the area around Jinan starting in the mid-nineteenth century through the construction of an outer set of stone walls, repeated influxes of refugees, and the establishment of a commercial settlement to attract and contain foreign merchants outside the old city. Even for people living outside the city walls, then, place-making was shaped by Jinan's relationship to the state. Consequently, we cannot understand place-making in Jinan without relating it to state-building.

Imperial State-Building

The deep connection between place-making in Jinan and translocal networks intertwined with the Qing political system raises the question of how we should understand the relationship between place-making and the state. This is the core question of this dissertation. In this section, I first review existing understandings of the relationship between state and locality in Chinese history and argue that the Weberian framework of state and society in which they are grounded is inadequate for explaining the history of China or placing it in a comparative context. The crux of this framework's inadequacy lies in its assumption that state and society are mutually autonomous spheres of behavior. This assumption leaves us ill-equipped to understand how the mutually constitutive relationship between place-making and state-building I describe in Jinan, which—despite the city's particularities—generally replicates other scholars' empirical findings,

represented a normal state of affairs. I then introduce an alternative approach to the state that is based on scholarship on U.S. history but is well-adapted to explaining features of China's social and political history. Building on this approach, I argue that the relationship between place-making and the state that prevailed in the Qing generally reflected what we would expect from the spatial politics of an imperial state. However, Qing state-building, particularly the translocal processes on which it depended and which were so evident in Jinan, also exhibited nationalizing tendencies. On this basis I argue that the Qing was a hybrid political formation. Imperial-national hybridity provides a framework for reconciling the deep roots of Chinese nationalism with the durable legacies of imperial rule.

State and Local Society in Chinese History

Scholarship on state and society in Chinese history is characterized by a tension between basic theoretical commitments and decades of empirical findings. The theoretical commitment in question is a view of state and society that assumes that they are distinct and capable of autonomous action, even competition. This commitment derives from a Weberian theory of state and society that emphasizes the state's claim to a "monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" (and/or other powers) and thus frames the state as an agent that strives to consolidate power within discrete institutions.⁵² This framework casts society as an object of state domination and a potential threat to the monopolies it claims. On the surface, this theory of state and society aptly describes the late imperial political system, which we can think of as comprising three layers: the central state, representatives of the state (officials) dispatched to localities throughout the empire, and local society itself. Especially because of the rule of avoidance's stricture against officials serving in their home communities, the local is generally

⁵² Weber, *From Max Weber*, 78–83.

treated as belonging to the realm of society and thus helps mark the boundary between state and society.

However, a significant body of research on Chinese social and political history calls into question the applicability of this framework to China. Scholars have long recognized that in late imperial China the relationship between state and society entailed a high degree of functional interdependence.⁵³ Appointing officials to places outside their home regions was beneficial from the perspective of the court because it hindered them from colluding with local interests and establishing autonomous bases of power.⁵⁴ However, this arrangement, together with the small size of the Qing territorial bureaucracy, meant that effective governance depended on an alliance between officials and a “local elite” (or “gentry”). The elite performed essential functions on behalf of the state, such as ensuring that taxes were collected and helping local officials dispense justice. Local elites benefited from their relationship with the imperial government in a variety of ways, which helped maintain this mutual alliance. The state lent legal, symbolic, and coercive support for the maintenance of the socio-economic order. Success in the imperial examinations brought considerable prestige and tangible benefits, like tax reductions.⁵⁵ The examination system and the government in general produced a variety of opportunities for more or less licit forms of employment, including as secretaries for officials and teachers in government or private schools (legal and respectable), clerks and runners (a mix of *de jure* and *de facto* legality with varying degrees of respectability), and litigation masters (definitely illegal, of dubious respectability).⁵⁶ Engaging with the state could also be incredibly profitable for merchants,

⁵³ For a summary of this view, see Esherick and Rankin, “Introduction,” 3.

⁵⁴ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 10.

⁵⁵ For further discussion of the examination system see chapter 2 and Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China*.

⁵⁶ Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 16; Macauley, *Social Power and Legal Culture*; Reed, *Talons and Teeth*.

especially those who produced for and participated in the government's salt monopoly.⁵⁷ In reality, many successful elite families pursued exam success alongside wealth from both agriculture and commercial enterprises. Officials (including the emperor, in extraordinary cases) sanctioned and lent legitimacy to the activities of local elites in a variety of ways, such as bestowing placards on local temples.

However, there is also a vibrant thread of scholarship that emphasizes that this functional interdependence was not absolute: in fact, Chinese society was not completely subsumed by the state. This scholarship has helped the field break out of Weber's characterization of China as lacking in comparison with the West, but it has ironically provided a kind of false hope that Weber's larger theory of state and society applies to China as well. The tendency to emphasize that local elites operated with appreciable autonomy from the state is characteristic of scholarship that grew out of the "China-centered" turn from the 1970s on.⁵⁸ As mentioned above, local officials could not comprehensively police the entirety of the jurisdictions under their charge and so relied on the assistance of local elites.⁵⁹ By the same token, though, this arrangement gave local elites a considerable degree of practical power over the officials who putatively represented the authority of the state.⁶⁰ As a result, local elites could actually become obstacles to the imposition of the central government's prerogatives at the local level.⁶¹ More broadly, rather than relying exclusively on their relationship to the state to attain and maintain their status within local communities, local elites constructed identities and strategies for social advancement around a wide range of institutions, including lineage, place of residence, native

⁵⁷ Kwan, *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin*; Zelin, *The Merchants of Zigong*.

⁵⁸ For a synopsis of "China-centered" scholarship, see Cohen, *Discovering History in China*.

⁵⁹ Huang, "Centralized Minimalism," 9–21.

⁶⁰ Esherick and Rankin, "Introduction," 17–24.

⁶¹ A classic example of the problems that could arise is Paul Cohen's thesis that officials confronted with the competing demands of missionaries and local gentry were forced into a condition of "paralysis." Cohen, *China and Christianity*, 80–104. See also Rowe, "Water Control"; Wong, *China Transformed*, 127–52.

place, and religious communities that were, strictly speaking, not part of the government.⁶² Local communities, then, were not simply objects of state control, but generators of social power. Attachments to one's native place or place of residence and a concerted strategy of advancing the interests of oneself and one's family within a local sphere of action—patterns of behavior that scholars have referred to as 'localism'—did not necessarily contradict state prerogatives (especially the interest in discouraging translocal political mobilization), but they did create the potential for the elite to operate as more effective barriers to state penetration.⁶³

The tendency to see localism's relationship to the state as ambivalent, at best, is reflected in scholarship's association of growing localism with state weakness. We can observe this tendency in works on local elites in the Song (960–1279) and Ming (1368–1644) dynasties, as well as the Qing.⁶⁴ In this literature, localism is often depicted as a reactive reorientation of elite identities towards local (home) communities and away from the political center. This resulted from elites experiencing declining opportunities for metropolitan political service and/or a diminishing desire to engage in the bureaucracy. Especially during periods of decaying state power, locality provided a kind of bunker where elites constructed organizations and institutions to reproduce their social position and maintain social order. Peter Bol argues that these periods of localism were by no means entirely negative in nature, since they provided the context for the construction of positive local identities.⁶⁵ These identities and interests were not necessarily anti-state, but through them elites achieved a certain degree of independence from the bureaucracy, in contrast to earlier periods of political centralization.⁶⁶

⁶² Esherick and Rankin, "Introduction," 5–8.

⁶³ For an example of this general use of 'localism,' see Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 17.

⁶⁴ Hartwell, "Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations," 405–25; Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen*; Brook, *Praying for Power*; Schneewind, *Community Schools*, 138–62.

⁶⁵ Bol, "The 'Localist Turn.'"

⁶⁶ Dean further discusses locality as a space for opposition to capital. Dean, "Ritual and Space."

Scholarship on the Qing has developed this association between localism and state weakness in two ways.⁶⁷ First, there is wide recognition that the Qing witnessed the culmination of a secular trend toward a greater capacity for social actors to mobilize power within local arenas. In effect, localist tendencies were already immanent in state-society relations in the eighteenth century, even before the Qing state began to seriously decay.⁶⁸ Philip Kuhn writes, “By the eighteenth century, it was evident that that there existed a serious disparity between the ambitions and the capacities of the state: society had outgrown the political system that sought to govern it.”⁶⁹ This disparity was most evident in places—especially economically prosperous ones—where the elite could sustainably mobilize resources outside of the purview of a government that, in terms of the size of the administration and level of taxation, was not growing to match demographic and economic growth.⁷⁰ Works by William Rowe on Hankou (part of contemporary Wuhan) and Bryna Goodman on Shanghai demonstrate how scholarly understandings of locality, despite disagreements about what ‘local’ means (i.e. place of residence vs. native place), have focused on institutions and activities that thrived beneath the surface of a government that was thin relative to the society it overlaid.⁷¹ This thinness foreboded future problems for the state, but so long as it was able to exercise its prerogatives around, through, or upon the elite—such as by forbidding specific forms of extra-bureaucratic mobilization, like political cliques—then localism did not immediately compromise state strength.⁷²

The second way that scholars of the Qing have contributed to our understanding of

⁶⁷ Rankin and Esherick, “Concluding Remarks,” 342.

⁶⁸ Rankin and Esherick, 337; Rankin, “Some Observations.”

⁶⁹ Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 21.

⁷⁰ Rowe, *Hankow: Commerce and Society*; Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 34–91.

⁷¹ Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community*; Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation*. See also Belsky, *Localities at the Center*; Du, *The Order of Places*.

⁷² Wakeman, “Boundaries of the Public Sphere,” 173–77.

localism speaks even more directly to its correspondence with the decline of central power. Scholarship on the nineteenth century sees the Taiping War but also other internal and external conflicts and crises as bringing to fruition the secular trend toward growing social power observable in the eighteenth century and inaugurating a new and transformative period of localism. Two studies that have been particularly influential in their association of rising localism in the late Qing with the weakness of the dynastic state are Philip Kuhn's *Rebellion and Its Enemies: Militarization and Social Structure, 1796–1864* and Mary Rankin's *Elite Activism and Political Transformation in China: Zhejiang Province, 1865–1911*. Kuhn's book is the classic study of the formation of the local militias and provincial armies that were largely responsible for defeating the Taiping Rebellion (1850–64). As with Bol, Kuhn argues that local militia organizers shared interests with the state (i.e. defeating the rebels and maintaining the social status quo), but it was the collapse of official military power in the face of the rebellion that made local militarization necessary and conceivable. Local militarization furnished local elites new access to state-legitimated political power, which Kuhn argues, continued into the early Republic.⁷³ Rankin advances this argument, saying, "The Taiping Rebellion marked a decisive shift in the balance between the state and elite society, in part because it brought about widespread militarization...Lines between local and national concerns began to blur, and assertive elites began to engage in new kinds of competition with official representatives of the state."⁷⁴ Again, Rankin acknowledges that the social elite and the state shared common interests. However, the combination of growing elite activism at the local level and an increasing sense among the elite that local activism possessed national significance generated competition and even outright conflict. The crises of the nineteenth century loosened central control enough to

⁷³ Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies*.

⁷⁴ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 4.

allow local society to fill the vacuum left by the state and eventually turn against it.

Taken as a whole, this scholarship offers a compelling narrative of China's correspondence or at least eventual accession to a form of state-society relations familiar to the Weberian theory that scholars take for granted. However, when we make this narrative explicit, its limitations soon emerge. This problem was made clear by a vigorous debate in the 1990s about whether the late imperial or modern period saw the emergence of a "public sphere" or "civil society" where sustained political mobilization outside the state was feasible. Rowe, Rankin, and David Strand, whose book on Beijing had made a similar argument for the presence of an urban public sphere in the Republican period, contended that China exhibited characteristics of the public sphere that Habermas argued emerged in early modern Europe.⁷⁵ This argument held out the possibility that Chinese history was not so fundamentally different from European history as scholarship following Weber had supposed and that endogenous developments even more than exogenous influences were responsible for China's political modernization.

However, there were critical weaknesses to this argument. Frederic Wakeman pointed out that Rowe had underplayed the involvement of the state in Hankou's social and commercial development and had failed to demonstrate that a tangible medium for expressing and forming public opinion, like newspapers, had successfully emerged in Hankou or other cities, as had been the case in early modern Europe (until late in the nineteenth century). Similarly, Wakeman noted that the local actors studied by Rankin depended on *lijin*—government-authorized commercial taxes—to fund their managerial activities. Moreover, while he admitted that Rankin had shown that local activism increased in the post-Taiping period, he argued that the emergent discourse

⁷⁵ Rowe, "The Problem of 'Civil Society'"; Rankin, "Some Observations"; Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing*; Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*.

around *gong* (公, “public”) represented not the development of a qualitatively different social phenomenon but an elaboration of trends in the statecraft intellectual school from the first half of the nineteenth century.⁷⁶ To their credit, Rankin and Rowe acknowledged the incomplete autonomy of what they saw as a Chinese public sphere from the state but not in a way that convincingly reconciled Chinese history with their (and their readers’) understanding of European history.⁷⁷ Judith Farquhar and James Hevia argued that while the theory of the public sphere promised a way out of orientalist assumptions about Chinese difference, it did so by asserting the universality of a monolinear model of modern development based on European experience.⁷⁸ Perhaps the most glaring omission from the debate itself was critical reflection on how effectively Habermas’s approach to civil society and the public sphere described *European* history, over which there has been considerable debate, as Prasenjit Duara later noted, and which is a question that is central my theoretical intervention.⁷⁹

In subsequent years, the field has shied away from definitive statements about the autonomy of state and society in China. This is by no means an altogether negative development. It reflects a pluralistic approach to political modernization that acknowledges that the developments of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were constitutive of China’s modern experience but eschews the notion that political modernity would necessarily look the same in different parts of the world. Our approach to modernity in general is still attuned to

⁷⁶ Wakeman, “The Civil Society and Public Sphere Debate.” Kuhn has also argued that the developments of the eighteenth century contributed to members of the elite believing that a stronger state was needed to protect their status, which does not necessarily contradict the narrative of the state weakening relative to society over the eighteenth century but does cut against how Rankin and Rowe interpret the implications of this shifting balance. Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 47.

⁷⁷ Rowe, “The Public Sphere,” 312–13, 323; Rowe, “The Problem of ‘Civil Society,’” 147–48; Rankin, “Some Observations,” 160, 178.

⁷⁸ Farquhar and Hevia, “Culture and Postwar American Historiography,” 499–500.

⁷⁹ Duara, *Rescuing History*, 148–52. On the contingent and aspirational character of civil society in European history, see Taylor, “Modes of Civil Society.”

commonalities, but is invested in tracing shared experiences to concrete transnational or intercultural exchanges and explaining how modernity resulted not in an ultimate convergence but various hybrid experiences.⁸⁰ Leaving behind the particular mode of placing Chinese history in a global perspective embodied in the civil society/public sphere debate has hardly resulted in cordoning off China from the rest of the world. Both transnational narratives and more effective approaches to comparative history have taken center stage in the period since.⁸¹

This tactical retreat of sorts has created space for scholars to (re)appreciate the deep entanglement between state and society in Chinese history without reverting to an “oriental despotism”-like assumption that the Chinese state was so powerful that it left no room for society at all.⁸² Research across the late imperial period that we might expect to reveal a localist withdrawal of society from the state has instead demonstrated that local societies continued to rely on and develop through attachments to the state.⁸³ Brook and Frolic write, “We find...that greater attention must be paid to the state, and that the elements of civil society that may be discerned in China are the result as much of accommodations with the state as of resistance to it.”⁸⁴ A pattern of intense interaction between state and society that required negotiation and ultimately reshaped both is especially noticeable in studies of law and religion.⁸⁵

As productive as this vast swath of scholarship has been, it has left the field with two

⁸⁰ See, for instance, Liu, *Translingual Practice*.

⁸¹ Wong, *China Transformed*; Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*.

⁸² For a nuanced comparison of the history of state-building in China and Europe that, with some qualification, rejects the argument that the emergence of a public sphere characterized early modern China, see Wong, *China Transformed*, 73–126.

⁸³ Lee, *Negotiated Power*; Szonyi, *The Art of Being Governed*; Schneewind, *Shrines to Living Men*; Reed, “Gentry Activism”; Kwan, *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin*. For explicit critiques of the limitations of the state-society framework, see Szonyi, 7; Schneewind, 290–91; Huang, “Rethinking ‘the Third Sphere.’”

⁸⁴ Brook and Frolic, “The Ambiguous Challenge,” 7.

⁸⁵ Elvin, “Female Virtue”; Watson, “Standardizing the Gods”; Szonyi, “The Illusion”; Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society*; Sangren, *Chinese Sociologies*, 45–68; Szonyi, *Practicing Kinship*; Theiss, *Disgraceful Matters*; Faure, *Emperor and Ancestor*; Wang Mingming, *Empire and Local Worlds*; Kuo, *Intolerable Cruelty*.

significant problems. The first is that we continue to utilize the Weberian model of state and society despite a de facto consensus that it does not describe Chinese history particularly well in practice.⁸⁶ The civil society/public sphere debate, which hinged on the question of late imperial society's autonomy from the state, ought to have prompted a deeper evaluation of the theory that informed it. Instead, the debate helped consolidate the field's commitment to the language and theoretical assumptions of the state-society paradigm. Creative ways of framing the relationship between state and society, like Duara's "cultural nexus of power," did emerge from this generation of scholarship, but they have found little purchase among subsequent scholars.⁸⁷ This is because they still embody the Weberian assumption of mutual autonomy between state and society. This problem is especially apparent in Huang's formulation of a third realm *between* state and society.⁸⁸ This language of state and society still permeates scholarship on the relationship between local communities and the state, even though we have long rejected the mutual autonomy of state and society in China in practice.

The larger problem with this theoretical *cul de sac* is that it constrains how we think about China's history in comparative perspective. So long as we operate under the theoretical assumption that state and society are mutually autonomous, we will keep reaching the conclusion that China's history departs from what Weberian theory leads us to expect and is, by extension, fundamentally different from societies that Weberian theory ostensibly describes. This affects our understanding of both China's early modern past and its modern condition.⁸⁹ In fact, scholars working in other fields have encountered similar problems with Weberian ideas about state and

⁸⁶ Perry's critique of the state-society paradigm bears mention, although her main point of criticism—that it imposes a false unity on "state" and "social" actors that need to be disaggregated—is somewhat different, albeit complementary, to the critique I am developing here. Perry, "Trends in the Study of Chinese Politics," 707–10.

⁸⁷ Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State*.

⁸⁸ Huang, "'Public Sphere'/'Civil Society' in China?"

⁸⁹ On divergent patterns of state-society relations in China and the West in the early modern and modern periods, see Wong, *China Transformed*; Huang, "Rethinking 'the Third Sphere.'"

society and are developing theoretical alternatives. Engaging with this re-formulation of social scientific theory will not erase the unique elements of Chinese history but will allow us to speak more specifically about what elements of it are distinctive or shared with other places without falling back on a sense of fundamental difference that is, in fact, a product of a theoretical framework that is generally inadequate.

A New Approach to the State

As described above, the Weberian definition of the state hinges on a clear delineation between actors or at least actions that belong to the state and those that do not. A bureaucracy whose scope of authority is limited or whose monopoly of such functions is incomplete appears weak by this definition. With its reliance on extra-bureaucratic local actors, the Qing state, even at the height of its power and especially during its period of decline, seems to fit the model of a weak state.

In this category of “weak” state, the Qing finds a strange bedfellow in the American state. Both academics and non-academics alike have generally held that the vibrant civil society at the core of American democracy is necessarily opposed to the existence of a powerful state along the lines of the Weberian model. This ignores, though, the broad range of public functions effectively undertaken by non-governmental participants in American civil society. If the U.S. state were as weak as Americans like to think it is, it is hard to imagine how so many public benefits could accrue to its citizens. Recent scholarship by William Novak, Stephen Sawyer, and James Sparrow, among others, has thus begun to question the overly rigid conceptualization of state and civil society as sharply opposed realms of public activity and the Weberian paradigm of the state on which this conceptualization is based.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Novak, Sawyer, and Sparrow, “Beyond Stateless Democracy”; Novak, “Beyond Max Weber”; King and Lieberman, “Ironies of State Building,” 547–49. For an even broader range of scholars reconsidering the character

In place of the Weberian model of the state, which Weber based on the Prussian bureaucracy, they argue that it is more productive to see the state as a consequence of social action, not its diametric opposite.⁹¹ Rather than two distinct entities that inevitably interact with, impinge on, and interpenetrate each other, they propose understanding the state as an assemblage of activities and power relationships that exists within society and helps shape it.⁹² This scholarship draws on the work of John Dewey, especially his formulation of the relationship between the public and the state. In contrast to Habermas's understanding of the bourgeois public sphere as an entity that formed in opposition to the state, Dewey conceived of the state as the organized form of a public.⁹³ Dewey considered government to be an essential feature of the state, but he gave primary importance to the public as that which is articulated in the state and acts through government officials. In Dewey's thought, then, the state exists as a consequence of public association, not as an autonomous entity acting from outside society. It should be studied, then, as a product of diverse factors that is always in the process of being re-made.⁹⁴

I refer to the process of publics cohering and exercising power through the state as state-building. Since my approach to the state is non-Weberian, my use of this term is necessarily different from scholars who refer to state-building primarily as a process of institutional development, even though institutions play an important role in this dissertation.⁹⁵ Heeding

of the state, mostly in the context of U.S. history but also beyond, see Morgan and Orloff, *The Many Hands of the State*.

⁹¹ Novak, "Beyond Max Weber," 56–62.

⁹² Novak, Sawyer, and Sparrow, "Beyond Stateless Democracy," 30–33. On how the state produces the social order, see also Bourdieu, *On the State*, 183–84.

⁹³ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*; Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere," 57.

⁹⁴ Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*, 45–46, 56, 61–80. Although not referencing Dewey, scholars working on modern Japan have produced arguments about the state that are similar in terms of seeing it as simultaneously a product of social forces and an element structuring social life. Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*; Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 8–9; Aso, *Public Properties*, 10–12.

⁹⁵ A classic example of this is Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*. Recent examples in the field of Chinese history are He, *Paths*; Halsey, *Quest for Power*.

Bourdieu's warning, conveyed in the epigraph, that statements in which the state is the subject are "theological" in nature, I refrain from positing the state as the agent of its own construction. However, I also take seriously Bourdieu's contention that the state, like a theological entity, "exists by way of belief." Accordingly, for my purposes, state-building, like place-making, encompasses both institutional and imaginative activity.⁹⁶ Through attending to the imaginative and representational construction of the state, it becomes possible to reconcile the apparent institutional weakness of some states, including the Qing and the U.S., with their durability.

My contribution to this theoretical scholarship on the state is twofold. First, I argue that, like all social relationships, publics and, through them, states necessarily come into being in places. A national or imperial public is not a dis-placed political entity but a translocal one.⁹⁷ Throughout the dissertation, I show that the relationship between state-building and translocal place-making is not merely coincidental but mutually constructive.⁹⁸ I use the term spatial politics to describe how the exercise of power within and between local communities contributes to both place-making and state-building.⁹⁹ Spatial politics offers a framework for analyzing how the state as a whole and in its various aspects both coheres and is differentiated across the territory it comprises.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Morgan and Orloff discuss how the cultural turn has reinvigorated discussions of state legitimacy. Morgan and Orloff, "Introduction," 3–4, 13–15.

⁹⁷ Dewey argues that for a public to cohere, it must be "localized" but not overly so. The idea of a "circulatory state," which depends on managing mobility in order to maintain territorial control, also encapsulates this idea. Szonyi discusses how processes of "deterritorialization" at the hand of the government (specifically in Ming military institutions) "spawned a reterritorializing response," which I would call place-making. Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*, 61–63; Denning, "'Life Is Movement, Movement Is Life!'" ; Szonyi, *The Art of Being Governed*, 111.

⁹⁸ For similar arguments about state-building as productive of places and specific places (or "boundaries") as sites where the power of the state is generated, see Lu, *The Politics of Locality*, 10; Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 209–43; Pierce, Martin, and Murphy, "Relational Place-Making," 55; Beaven, *Visions of Empire*, 5; Sparrow, Novak, and Sawyer, "Introduction," 6; Schlesinger, *A World Trimmed with Fur*.

⁹⁹ McDonald uses "spatial politics" in a consonant but somewhat more specific way. McDonald, *Placing Empire*, 1.

¹⁰⁰ On the importance of disaggregating the state as a whole and its various aspects, see Perry, "Trends in the Study of Chinese Politics," 707–10; Morgan and Orloff, "Introduction," 11. Bourdieu posits a continuum of degrees of access to resources provided by the state as an alternative to the state-civil society dichotomy, and this is one aspect of my approach to spatial politics. Bourdieu, *On the State*, 36.

Spatial politics is a well-established concern in scholarship on the state in late imperial China (even if the term itself is not used), but seeing the state as a product of translocal social processes fundamentally changes our understanding of late imperial spatial politics. If we reduce the spatial politics of the state to the territorial bureaucracy, then we will see its interests primarily in terms of maintaining the administration of discrete jurisdictions. In this view, translocality is useful to the state insofar as localities are nested within higher-level administrative units (counties belong to prefectures, which belong to provinces), but translocal processes that cut across the administrative order threaten the political center's monopoly over setting the spatial terms for social behavior and cultural imagination.¹⁰¹ One way to interpret these interruptions of the administrative spatial order is that they represent activity outside the state, which is the implication scholars usually draw from Skinner's research on marketing hierarchies. A more conflictual approach, taken, for example, by Du Yongtao, is that translocal interactions actively undermined the state's interest in maintaining stable place-identification linked to the territorial administration. This was reflected, for instance, in the use of home-place registration to set quotas for taxation and civil service examination degrees and enforce regulations like the rule of avoidance.¹⁰² Both views, however, neglect the reality that the operation of state power depended on translocal processes that moved both up-and-down and across the administrative hierarchy of localities. For instance, while the rule of avoidance depended, to some extent, on fixed home-place registration, the purpose of the policy was to move elite men away from their home places to serve elsewhere in the empire, thereby creating a translocal circulation of scholar-officials. Likewise, while sojourning merchants posed challenges to the systems for registering to pay taxes and take the exams, their economic

¹⁰¹ Oakes and Schein, "Translocal China," 2–9.

¹⁰² Du, *The Order of Places*, 26.

activities, especially their participation in the salt trade, were tremendous assets to the state.¹⁰³

My second contribution to this theoretical scholarship on the state is to demonstrate its utility for understanding a political context that, at first glance, looks very different from the U.S. The fact that Novak et al. label this approach to the state “democratic” implies that it is not well-suited to the study of an imperial autocracy. However, these scholars note that they use ‘democratic’ as a descriptor primarily to emphasize (1) the porosity of the relationship between state and society, contrary to the image projected by a bureaucratic approach to the state, and (2) the construction of the state through popular participation. They argue that this approach is by no means relevant only to electoral democracies.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, this recognition that even putatively autocratic states are built on popular participation echoes the original meaning of the Chinese concept of *minzhu* (rule by the people), which is now used to translate ‘democracy.’ Likewise, Dewey’s approach to the public as the integral element of the state resembles the Chinese concept of *gong*—a space for participating *in* statecraft more than mobilizing *outside* the state—much better than Habermas’s public sphere, which suggests a separation from the state.¹⁰⁵ To be sure, there were crucial differences between the U.S. and Qing states, which were especially noticeable in the emphasis (albeit hardly unqualified) on personal rights in the former.¹⁰⁶ However, we should not let such differences occlude broader factors that lent themselves to state-building processes that shared compelling similarities. In particular, both states governed large, diverse territories despite limited resource extraction and bureaucratic infrastructure. Under these conditions, it is hardly surprising that both would encounter severe challenges—the

¹⁰³ On how translocal movement through the examination system and commercial networks abetted imperial state-building, see Miles, *Upriver Journeys*, 69–155.

¹⁰⁴ Novak, Sawyer, and Sparrow, “Beyond Stateless Democracy,” 25–26. See also Morgan and Orloff, “Introduction,” 15–17.

¹⁰⁵ Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate*, 2:60–73; Min Tu-ki, *National Polity and Local Power*, 89–136; Wakeman, “Boundaries of the Public Sphere.”

¹⁰⁶ For an extended discussion of the democratic tradition in modern China, see Nathan, *Chinese Democracy*.

civil wars both experienced in the mid-nineteenth come to mind—and would at various points in their history look to surmount them not only through familiar forms of institutional state-building but also by enlisting the participation of diverse sets of actors beyond the government.

Admittedly, adapting a theory developed in a Western context to China carries risks, as the public sphere/civil society debate showed. Nevertheless, there are good reasons to think that the approach to state-building I am adopting is more productive than problematic. First, the bent of this theory of the state is towards a more capacious approach to the variety of activities that constitute state-building. This makes it more rather than less sensitive to the uniqueness of specific historical contexts. Second, this theory does not impose the kind of teleological expectations for what state and society should look like that have proved so problematic in scholarship employing the Weberian model of the state. Finally, on a pragmatic note, because this theoretical literature is still developing, now seems like an especially opportune time to engage with and help shape it so that it reflects what we know about Chinese history. Shying away from these kinds of opportunities will result in the field of China studies either living without theoretical tools that are relevant to our colleagues in other areas or being forced to rely on frameworks that were designed without China in mind. As much as my use of this theory of the state borrows from scholarship on U.S. history, I am also contributing to it the perspective of Chinese history. In this way, I am making the case for it as a framework for studying not only individual cases but also comparative and transnational developments. Chapter five, which examines American missionaries' troubled attempts to purchase property in Jinan in the 1880s, shows how this approach to the state can bring together local social history and international relations.

The Imperial Characteristics of Qing Rule

Although formulated primarily in reference to modern nation-states, the approach to the state described above is well-suited to describing the operation of imperial states, including in late imperial China.¹⁰⁷ In particular, the idea that functions performed by people acting outside formal governmental institutions are essential to the operation of the state mirrors the realities of late imperial governance. This does not mean, though, that Qing imperial rule was essentially the same as the forms of governance exercised by nation-states. As ideal forms, imperial and nation-states incorporate their constitutive territories and people groups in different ways. However, Qing state-building was not entirely imperial in character. In fact, certain elements of Qing spatial politics had nationalizing effects, meaning that we need to think of it as a hybrid political formation.

With the emergence of what has been called “new Qing history” in the last few decades, scholars of China have given considerable attention to what we mean when we call China “imperial” and have used theories of empire as a lens for trans-Eurasian historical comparison.¹⁰⁸ However, scholarship on Qing empire has focused primarily on its administration of diverse ethnic groups and frontier regions. These areas are where we would expect the imperial qualities of Qing rule to be most obvious and most distinctive in comparison to its predecessor the Ming.¹⁰⁹ However, Qing rule of the more ethnically homogeneous area of China proper also exhibited imperial characteristics, which come to the fore when we analyze Qing state-building from the perspective of spatial politics. My argument that Qing spatial politics was imperial in

¹⁰⁷ Some of these resonances are apparent in discussions of U.S. empire. See, for example, Kramer, “Power and Connection.”

¹⁰⁸ Representative works of “new Qing history” (broadly conceived) that contain significant comparative elements include Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*; Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*; Perdue, *China Marches West*. For a general overview, see Waley-Cohen, “The New Qing History.”

¹⁰⁹ Although, there were certainly continuities between Ming and Qing empire-building, at least in some frontier regions. See, for instance, Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist*.

nature builds on existing scholarship of Qing empire, but it does not imply that imperial state-building functioned identically across the entirety of the empire or, for that matter, the duration of the dynasty.¹¹⁰

Empires have existed in many forms across various time periods of human history, but it is nevertheless possible to identify shared characteristics that at least distinguish them from nation-states. Hilde De Weerdts's working definition of empire is a useful starting point:

‘Empire’ here stands for a type of political formation, relatively large in size, in which a political core (the emperor, the court, and the central bureaucracy) exerts control over vast territories and diverse populations through the mediation of elite brokers who assist the core in the extraction of resources in the form of revenue, corvée labor, and military service. Elite brokers engage in unequal relations with the core and tend to be segmented. Distinctions are maintained between political, economic, and religious elites in the provinces and in frontier zones, and different compacts bind different elites to the core so that their authority is negotiated via the center. Empires thrive on relationships of inequality and difference and, in that sense, they are theoretically distinct from nation-states.¹¹¹

From this definition we can extract four characteristics of imperial states: (1) large in size; (2) controlled centrally by an emperor, court, and bureaucracy; (3) local control mediated by elite brokers; and (4) segmentation and often inequality of elite groups.¹¹² Karen Barkey and Pamela Crossley compare the segmented character of imperial formations to a rimless wheel, where the spokes (individual constituencies) are bound to the hub (emperor and court) but not each other.¹¹³ Although, as suggested above, all political formations can be said to continually be in a state of becoming, the heterogeneity and flexibility of imperial states makes this constant process

¹¹⁰ The variation of imperial ideology across time is a core theme in Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*.

¹¹¹ De Weerdts, *Information, Territory, and Networks*, 4.

¹¹² For similar or compatible definitions of ‘empire,’ see Calhoun, Cooper, and Moore, “Introduction,” 3; Stoler and McGranahan, “Refiguring Imperial Terrains,” 25–27, 34–35, 42–46; Chang, *A Court on Horseback*; Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 9; Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*, 2; Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, 8; Kramer, “Power and Connection,” 1349; Perdue, “Ecologies of Empire,” 403–5; Bourdieu, *On the State*, 187–89.

¹¹³ Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 12; Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 1.

of maintenance and renewal particularly apparent.¹¹⁴

As De Weerd's definition suggests, nation-states operate under a logic that is distinct from empires, even if they are not absolute opposites. Nation-states can, of course, be large in size, but they can also be quite small. The key is that their constituents understand the state's territory to be spatially homogeneous and its borders clearly defined. Empires, on the other hand, rule through internal differentiation, and their borders are often amorphous or at least porous. Nation-states may also have a monarch as a figurehead, but loyalty to the monarch is associated with loyalty to the state only insofar as the monarch embodies or is part of the idea of the nation. This makes the monarch of a nation-state a kind of subordinate figure, unlike in an imperial state, where, setting aside transcendental commitments, the monarch and dynasty are, ideally, the sole object of loyalty.¹¹⁵

The role of elite brokers and the relationships between individual communities and the state in empires and nations are somewhat thornier and must be addressed at two levels. The first is that of identity and inclusion. Unlike an empire, all citizens of a nation-state in theory possess an equal claim to belong to the national community. Of course, discrimination on the basis of class, race, gender, etc. historically have stretched this "in theory" so far as to render this characteristic of nation-states seemingly meaningless in practice. Nevertheless, even in such cases, the ideal of the nation-state as a community of co-equal citizens offers itself as an ideological tool for participants in justice-seeking movements in a way that it does not in

¹¹⁴ Stoler, "Imperial Formations and the Opacities of Rule," 54; Stoler and McGranahan, "Refiguring Imperial Terrains," 23–25.

¹¹⁵ One way to explain the particular place of the monarch in imperial states, including in China, is Weber's concept of "patrimonialism." See Eisenberg, "Weberian Patrimonialism"; Chang, *A Court on Horseback*. Crossley explores the composite nature of Qing rulership. Crossley, "The Rulerships of China." On the role of the monarchy in nation-building in modern Japan, see Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate*, 2:119–39; Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*.

imperial states.¹¹⁶ (Indeed, the nationalist tendencies of such movements have been a persistent thorn in the side of imperial states.) However, this shared sense of a right to belong is neither spontaneously generated nor genetic in origin; instead, it must be inculcated by various means, such as print culture.¹¹⁷ Therefore, even in nation-states, there are copious opportunities for diverse elites to mediate national identity. However, the ideological power of these elites over specific, bounded communities is neither legitimated nor materially assured by the throne as it is in an empire.

The second level is that of practical governance. In Weber's ideal modern state, there is no elite brokerage but administration by a rationalized bureaucracy.¹¹⁸ However, the scholarship on the U.S. state discussed above demonstrates that, in fact, the governance of even modern nation-states can depend on forms of brokerage (or informal governance) and can, as the U.S. in particular shows, accommodate considerable local autonomy and initiative. As in the case of identity formation, though, the legitimacy of the brokerage responsibilities undertaken by national elites derives not from a patronage relationship with the ruler or court but from their perceived relationship to the national community; although, of course, the patronage of the government may help establish the legitimacy of individuals or groups to act locally on behalf of the nation, such as by dispensing rewards for wartime service.¹¹⁹ Likewise, unlike imperial states, which thrive on the segmentation and inequality of relationships between elite groups, in nation-states the idea of a national community produces a certain momentum towards uniting not only groups of elite brokers but also all average citizens through shared language, culture, and

¹¹⁶ On this problem, see King and Lieberman, "The Civil Rights State."

¹¹⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 37–46. The constructed nature of national belonging is generally masked by what Duara calls a "regime of authenticity" that naturalizes national identity. Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 25–33; Calhoun, Cooper, and Moore, "Introduction," 15.

¹¹⁸ Weber, *From Max Weber*, 196–264.

¹¹⁹ See, for instance, Capozzola, *Uncle Sam*; Sparrow, *Warfare State*.

perceived national identity and interests.

The methods the Qing Dynasty used to govern its territory and the people who inhabited it corresponded in many ways to the characteristics of empire described above. However, its adaptation to practical considerations also differentiated it from this ideal type. Here I will explain these correspondences and departures in general terms, while in the body of the dissertation I will examine in more detail their local manifestations and effects. By saying that the Qing departed from the ideal type of empire I have employed as a heuristic device, by no means do I intend to imply that it was a-normative, broken, or any more *sui generis* than other exceptionally large and complex political entities.

It is helpful to describe the Qing as an empire first of all because it was both large (even larger than today's People's Republic of China) and diverse in terms of its human and ecological constituents. Even its Chinese domain—putatively a single component of the polity—possessed incredible diversity in terms of spoken languages, religious and other cultural practices, subsistence economies, etc. Moreover, the dynasty's borders and the allegiances of the people who inhabited its frontier regions were often fungible. Such fungibility proved beneficial to the Qing, allowing it to claim authority over far-flung regions while exerting various degrees of control, but it also generated a series of bloody conflicts with frontier peoples and neighboring states.¹²⁰ As in other early modern empires, Qing officials and elites participated in a process of producing knowledge about colonial subjects and territories that balanced naturalizing Qing rule and representing these societies as “other.”¹²¹

Meanwhile, Qing emperors filled the roles we would expect from the dynastic heads of

¹²⁰ Perdue, *China Marches West*; Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate*; Giersch, *Asian Borderlands*; Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist*.

¹²¹ Millward, ““Coming onto the Map””; Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise*; Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography*.

an imperial state. The emperor executed ritual and political functions for each of the empire's constituent communities and bound together these diverse roles into a single, authoritative person.¹²² The emperor ruled through forms that were both patrimonial—since his power was seen and exercised as personal, based on the model of the patriarchal family—and bureaucratic. The officials he employed at court and around the empire straddled the line between household dependents and cogs in an independent machinery.¹²³ The early Qing emperors in particular proved adept at reforming bureaucratic institutions so as to assert their personal prerogative to rule as well as reign.¹²⁴

This blending of patrimonial and bureaucratic governance characterized Qing territorial administration as well.¹²⁵ As we would expect from an empire, practices of local governance were flexible. Especially in frontier areas, what the Qing called the “outer territories” (*waidi*), local elites were granted considerable and—from the perspective of the bureaucratic system that governed the empire's Chinese or “inner territories” (*neidi*)—exceptional autonomy.¹²⁶ As Crossley argues at length, the Qing did not simply work with pre-existing ethnic groups but actively constructed and managed them as imperial “constituencies.”¹²⁷ As with other empires, though, the sense of difference reflected in this administrative flexibility was not absolute. Crossley argues that Qing attitudes toward the pliability of ethnic distinctions varied across time, from a more “transformationalist” stance in the Yongzheng reign to a more “essentialist” one in

¹²² Crossley, “The Rulerships of China.”

¹²³ Chang, *A Court on Horseback*, 12–14.

¹²⁴ Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers*. Wensheng Wang has argued that reforms in the Jiaqing reign in the early nineteenth century that curtailed the power of the inner court, which was most responsive to the emperor's personal initiative, was not a reflection of imperial weakness but a conscious strategy to reform institutions that had grown corrupt under the Qianlong Emperor. Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 165–208.

¹²⁵ The ideal relationship between these modes of administration was the subject of long-running debate in Chinese political thought. Min Tu-ki, *National Polity and Local Power*, 89–136.

¹²⁶ Mosca further argues that Qing frontier policies and information-gathering practices were highly fragmented by frontier region. Mosca, *From Frontier Policy to Foreign Policy*, 2–3, 25–198.

¹²⁷ Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 2–6, 43–50, 281–336.

the Qianlong reign.¹²⁸ Moreover, the court converted a growing number of frontier regions—often with the help of Chinese elites—to the form of bureaucratic administration employed in the inner territories through a process called *gaitu guiliu*.¹²⁹

In the Chinese domains themselves, the territorial bureaucracy was elaborate and clearly organized.¹³⁰ However, its small size—measured in terms of personnel and the material resources allocated to it—compared to the size of population and territory it controlled nevertheless necessitated dependence on local elites. Philip Huang refers to this strategy as “centralized minimalism” and argues that this seemingly paradoxical combination of centralization and minimalism helped maintain the unity of the empire without interposing so many layers of bureaucracy between rulers and officials that the patrimonial character of the state was compromised.¹³¹ Following precedents established in previous dynasties, Qing elites recognized the emperor as the Son of Heaven, who ruled on condition of fulfilling heaven’s (and their own) expectations for morally and ritually proper behavior. Likewise, the elite owed moral and ritual service to the emperor. They performed this service by helping the dynasty secure resources in the form of taxes and the submission of the local population through operating as moral exemplars, mediating disputes, and instructing local people on the moral dicta promoted by the court.¹³² The court reciprocated by offering prestige through special awards and the civil service examination system, material incentives through opportunities for employment and tax deductions, and protection from both internal and external threats.¹³³

¹²⁸ Crossley, 9, 28–29, 246–80.

¹²⁹ Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist*; Miles, *Upriver Journeys*.

¹³⁰ Schneewind’s discussion of a “minor mandate” that legitimated the administration of local officials suggests that we might also see the territorial administration as a kind of patrimonial system, rather than just the bureaucratic side of a patrimonial bureaucracy. Schneewind, *Shrines to Living Men*, 271–86.

¹³¹ Huang, “Centralized Minimalism,” 9–22.

¹³² Weber referred to such practices in patrimonial regimes as “liturgical responsibilities.” Eisenberg, “Weberian Patrimonialism,” 83–90.

¹³³ For a fuller explanation of how this relationship between the elite and the state constituted a “constitutional

Across the space of the Qing Empire, communities of elites were segmented in a variety of ways that restricted their relationships with each other and generated or codified inequalities between them. Ethnicity was a primary mode of segmentation, since the ruling household was Manchu, and Manchu nobles and banners enjoyed special status and privileges.¹³⁴ Moreover, the Qing applied different legal standards to various ethnic groups living in different portions of the empire and sometimes even those who lived in the same areas. The Chinese domains were populated largely by people whom we today call “Han Chinese” and, at first glance, appear to have been much more homogeneous in terms of how they were governed.¹³⁵ However, even within the relatively rationalized territorial administration of the Chinese domains, which were divided into provinces (*sheng*) and subordinate jurisdictions, there was considerable segmentation and administrative unevenness. Because these territorial units were so large—generally the size of whole European countries—there was considerable inter- and intra-provincial differentiation. The types of elite communities present in different parts of provinces and their participation in imperial governance could vary widely.¹³⁶ Likewise, patterns of extracting and investing resources and appointing officials varied both within and between provinces. To maintain the livelihood of its people and the security of the empire, the Qing consistently redistributed resources from wealthy regions to poorer and more strategically or ecologically vulnerable ones.¹³⁷ The Qing administrative toolkit offered various mechanisms for adapting governance strategies to local conditions, including the system of governors, which

agenda,” see Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 14–24.

¹³⁴ Elliott, *The Manchu Way*.

¹³⁵ On the historical construction of Han identity, see Mullaney et al., *Critical Han Studies*.

¹³⁶ See, for instance, Schoppa, *Chinese Elites*; Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*.

¹³⁷ On how the Qing government’s priorities varied by province and region—which was especially noticeable in the cases of Sichuan and North China—and how these interests shaped patterns of official appointment see Skinner, “Regional Urbanization”; Wong, *China Transformed*, 73–104; Dai, *The Sichuan Frontier*; Guy, *Qing Governors*, 184–85.

gave regional officials considerable, albeit hardly absolute, administrative freedom, and a system of “post designations” designed to ensure that experienced officials were appointed to the most exacting positions (and that governors had much greater input into these assignments).¹³⁸ I refer to the characteristically imperial ways in which Qing rule varied across space that cannot be reduced to ethnic differences, as manifestations of *spatial differentiation*.

The effect of imperial practices of ethnic and spatial differentiation was that the public that constituted the Qing state was a composite of many different elites. Even nation-states may incorporate a plurality of publics.¹³⁹ However, Qing rule hinged on not only incorporating a multiplicity of elite publics through their relationship with the court and throne but on restricting their capacity for collective political action across ethnic and spatial divisions.¹⁴⁰ In this sense, the Qing state was characteristically imperial.

The Hybrid Form of Qing Spatial Politics

However, other aspects of Qing rule did not correspond so clearly to imperial *logic*, even though from the perspective of the Qing and, in some cases, previous dynasties, they were integral to imperial *practice*. Qing spatial politics was generally imperial in form but exhibited certain nationalizing tendencies. That is, there were not only sequential continuities between the imperial state-building of the Qing and the national state-building of post-Qing regimes, but in the Qing itself we can observe nation-like processes that were similar to and contiguous with but also distinct from the modern nationalism of the nineteenth century and later.¹⁴¹ As Krishan

¹³⁸ Antony and Leonard, “Dragons, Tigers, and Dogs,” 1–7, 16–19; Guy, *Qing Governors*; Koss, “Political Geography of Empire.” On this kind of spatial differentiation as characteristic of imperial rule, see Koss, 180.

¹³⁹ Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere,” 65–70.

¹⁴⁰ On the plurality of local “public spheres” prior to the nineteenth century, see Rankin, “Some Observations.”

¹⁴¹ For example, the position the Qing assumed in the international system in the nineteenth century and growing domestic awareness of the threat this posed to the nation was a constitutive element of Chinese modern nationalism. On continuities between the imperial qualities of Qing state-building and post-Qing state-building, see, among others, Wong, *China Transformed*, 179–206; Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 1, 337–61; Perdue, “Empire and Nation”; Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 2, 8; Mosca, *From Frontier Policy to Foreign Policy*, 271–

Kumar argues, we should not collapse the distinction between empires and nations, but understanding how these types of political formations can resemble and even blend into each other is helpful for breaking down the problematic association of empires with pre-modernity and nations with modernity and illuminating how imperial formations remain active forces in the modern world rather than giving way ineluctably to the rise of nations.¹⁴²

We can observe the nationalizing effects of Qing state-building through several bundles of processes. First, although the redistributive practices of Qing political economy were unequal and hence suggestive of an imperial system, they helped produce a sense of a shared political community. Some effects of Qing redistributive political economy were subtle and unlikely to be noticed by the common people, like the fact that local administration in stable, wealthy core regions tended to be smaller in order to subsidize a larger number of administrators where the court deemed tighter governance more desirable. Other manifestations were highly noticeable, even ostentatious, like the elaborate administration needed to transfer grain from the southern portion of the empire to Beijing and to ensure the operability of the main conduit for its transport, the Grand Canal. This commitment in turn required massive and visible investments in hydraulic projects in areas along the canal, especially where it intersected the Yellow River.¹⁴³ Systems like this made it clear that the empire was not merely a collection of atomized communities or even provinces but an organic whole. This sense of political wholeness did not originate with the Qing, but, especially in the nineteenth century, even private subjects began to

311; Dykstra, "Complicated Matters," 14–19; Schlesinger, *A World Trimmed with Fur*, 173–77. On how scholarship on European states has come to see empire-building as foundational to modern state-building, see Adams and Pincus, "Imperial States," 335–37.

¹⁴² Kumar, "Nation-States as Empires, Empires as Nation-States." The simultaneity of empire- and nation-building is especially important in the context of modern Japan. See, for example, Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan*; Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 83–111; Aso, *Public Properties*; McDonald, *Placing Empire*.

¹⁴³ Hu, "The Yellow River Administration"; Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*.

actualize it in increasingly ambitious ways, like interregional charity projects.¹⁴⁴

Second, the Qing territorial administration circulated educated and politically minded men around the empire, increasing awareness among the elite of the characteristics of diverse communities and their relationship to the state as a whole. The Qing inherited a long-running tension in theories of imperial governance between a preference for depending on local communities to govern themselves and a fear of too much local autonomy. Like previous dynasties, the Qing balanced these concerns by pairing their administrative dependence on local elites with a territorial bureaucracy that operated under the “rule of avoidance.”¹⁴⁵ This principle imposed a degree of distance between local interest and territorial administration by forbidding officials from serving in their home provinces or from settling in areas where they had been posted. Moreover, the Qing frequently rotated officials—it was rare for someone to serve in a single post for more than a few years—in order to prevent them from converting their jurisdictions into personal fiefdoms. The territorial administration thus operated as a massive circulatory system that constantly moved both material resources and personnel from one place to another. In theory, the court was still the hub of this system, mediating and directing movement between places. However, the bureaucracy also created connections between local communities that an ideal-type-imperial state would ostensibly preclude. When central control over official appointments and the fiscal system slackened, like during the Taiping War in the mid-nineteenth century, the rimless wheel of empire began to look more like a spoke-less wheel.

Third, the system for credentialing and recruiting officials deepened this pattern of

¹⁴⁴ The development of elite attachment to an “imperial mission” in the Song Dynasty arguably marked a key turning point in the development of national identity. De Weerd, *Information, Territory, and Networks*, 16–18. On interregional charity in the nineteenth century, see the discussion in chapter 4, which engages with, among others, Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 136–69.

¹⁴⁵ Fincher, “Political Provincialism,” 221.

governance through circulation and extended it to a considerably larger portion of the elite class, inculcating in them a sense of belonging to the political community.¹⁴⁶ As in the Ming, the civil service examination system, which I discuss in more detail in chapter 2, embodied the reciprocal relationship between the elite and the dynasty. Through this system, the elite received the court's legitimation of their scholastic attainment, practical privileges that were awarded to degree-holders, and opportunities for official service, which brought prestige and, at least sometimes, chances for material advancement. The dynasty gained access to a pool of literate men available to be appointed to official posts who, crucially, would be accepted in local communities as legitimate representatives of the state on the basis of both the court's directive and their own achievement in the exams. This system depended on a degree of ideological coherence, since elites across the empire needed to be tested on the same set of materials and the most promising candidates would compete against each other for the highest honors in the metropolitan exam in Beijing. This system induced the circulation of people—examiners, instructors, exam-takers—and texts around the empire, creating a kind of national intellectual marketplace. To prevent the wealthy and culturally dominant Jiangnan region, centered on the Yangzi Delta, from monopolizing the highest degrees, the court instituted a quota system that ensured representation from other regions. On the one hand, this reflected an imperial strategy of spatially differential treatment. On the other, it reflected the court's concern for creating an inclusive, national pool of degree-winners and erstwhile officials.¹⁴⁷

The translocal circulation of elites and officials through the examination and bureaucratic systems counteracted the segmenting effects of imperial rule through local elites. In the case of colonial Latin America, Benedict Anderson argues that closed circuits of professional mobility

¹⁴⁶ Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 18–21.

¹⁴⁷ Elman, *A Cultural History*, 125–72, 259.

created a kind of “cramped pilgrimage” that helped generate sub-imperial national identities among provincial elites.¹⁴⁸ To some extent, Qing provincial administration created cramped pilgrimages, since, for example, a minuscule fraction of literate men made it past the provincial level of the exams. However, for the most successful there was a release valve since success at the province level allowed one to participate in the metropolitan exams and become eligible for a posting in the bureaucracy outside one’s home province. Although this release valve was small vis-a-vis the size of the whole population—or even the elite—its effect was significant because all officials had to pass through it. There were additional limits on the professional and spatial mobility of civil servants, especially Han men, whom the dynasty was hesitant to trust in sensitive frontier posts or allow to dominate positions in the central government. However, the combination of the rule of avoidance and the large sizes of provinces made the civil bureaucracy remarkably cosmopolitan. By the end of the dynasty, Han officials and even merchants were becoming more involved in frontier affairs and often became leading advocates of consolidating Qing control over frontier regions.¹⁴⁹

Finally, systems of circulation outside the government that were allowed or even encouraged by it further produced a tendency toward a more national political formation.¹⁵⁰ Zhu Yuanzhang, the founder of the Ming Dynasty, had tried to implement a rigid system of population registration that, ideally, fixed people to both the home places and occupations of their forebears. Had this system succeeded, it would have created the administrative superstructure for ensuring a rimless spokes-type relationship between local communities and the

¹⁴⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 53–60.

¹⁴⁹ Zuo Zongtang’s advocacy of re-establishing control over Xinjiang is the most famous example but there were others. See, for instance, Relyea, “Conceiving the ‘West.’”

¹⁵⁰ Elvin argues that the migration of free peasants who colonized newly conquered areas was a force for political integration even in early Chinese history and that the greater economic integration of the Song likewise worked against political fragmentation. Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past*, 24, 69.

government. Instead, this system crashed against the realities of an increasingly commercialized and mobile society.¹⁵¹ In turn, the Qing adopted a more (and increasingly) laissez-faire attitude toward occupational mobility, physical relocation, and the alienability of land. The Qing not only allowed internal migration and trade, but in some cases actively encouraged it, particularly to help repopulate areas like Sichuan that had been devastated in the turmoil of the seventeenth century.¹⁵² The Qing did maintain a system of home-place registration, which determined, for instance, where one could sit for the exams and serve as an official. Even there, though, the government was willing to bend the rules in the service of certain prerogatives, like encouraging exam-takers to move from the highly competitive Pearl River Delta to frontier areas in Guangxi where they could form the backbone of an elite class that would help the Qing establish local control.¹⁵³ Likewise, the Qing not only created conditions for long-distance trade, such as by maintaining the Grand Canal, but also actively channeled it, like when it rewarded merchants who transported grain to the northwest with highly prized places in the government-managed salt trade.¹⁵⁴

As a result, despite its many imperial characteristics, we must understand the Qing state as a hybrid political formation that included elements that lent themselves more to national than imperial state-building. The need and capacity for large-scale and long-distance circulations of people, material objects, and information, which form the basis of modern nation-states, were indispensable components of Qing rule.¹⁵⁵ The hybridity of Qing spatial politics made it vibrant

¹⁵¹ Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure*.

¹⁵² Dai, *The Sichuan Frontier*, 68–76.

¹⁵³ Miles, *Upriver Journeys*, 69–107.

¹⁵⁴ Millward, *Beyond the Pass*. Wong argues that the late imperial state remained unified because it “absorbed commercial expansion” without allowing regional merchant classes to become political actors in their own right. Wong, “China’s Agrarian Empire,” 191.

¹⁵⁵ This understanding of nationalism as a possibility that is not necessarily specific to the modern condition resembles Tackett’s approach to what he sees as emergent national identity in the Northern Song. One advantage of thinking of political formations in terms of imperial-national hybridity is that it provides a mechanism for explaining

and precarious. Perpetuating the rule of the imperial house hinged on subordinating the nationalizing elements of the state to the imperial logic of dynastic rule or making the ruling house integral to a national imaginary. The Qing accomplished the first with remarkable success for the majority of its existence and launched an ambitious project to achieve the second in its final years. As chapters 6 and 7 discuss, the Qing Dynasty's attempt to make itself the focal point of a nation-state ultimately failed, although Jinan's history shows that this failure was not a foregone conclusion, and the Qing did lay the basis for ambitious and remarkably successful nation-building efforts in the following decades.¹⁵⁶

Jinan in the Historiography of Modern Chinese Cities

The chronological and spatial framework of this dissertation contributes to existing scholarship on the history of Chinese cities in three ways. First, because Jinan was a place of considerable importance within a region—Shandong—that was central to defining events in the history of late imperial and modern China, studying its history better helps us understand these developments themselves. Second, it demonstrates the need to pay more attention to cities where administrative functions were relatively more important than commercial ones, especially in North China. Parsing the similarities and differences we can observe between Jinan and the commercial centers that have been more popular objects of study helps us better appreciate the extent to which existing studies are representative of a broader range of urban experiences. Finally, by focusing on the late imperial period rather than modernization per se, I highlight continuities between early modern and modern developments and thus demonstrate the

how state-building produced nationalizing effects in some areas but not others, which is one of the limitations of Tackett's argument. Tackett, *The Origins of the Chinese Nation*, 8–9, 279–82; De Weerd, “De Weerd on Tackett.”

¹⁵⁶ Zhao, “Reinventing China”; Esherick, “How the Qing Became China”; Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*.

significance of early and mid-nineteenth century experiences to the modern history of even cities that were late modernizers.

Even if we look only at major events, Shandong undoubtedly occupied an important place in the history of the Qing imperial state. It was an early testing ground for the Manchu conquerors to win the loyalty of Chinese elites after their full-scale invasion of China proper in 1644. In 1855 the Yellow River broke through the dikes holding it to its southern course through Henan and Jiangsu and cut northward through the heart of Shandong. Shandong was one of the provinces most affected by the “scramble for concessions” following Qing defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, with the British and Germans both acquiring colonial enclaves on the coast. The origins of the Boxer Uprising—one of the best-known events in Chinese history and well-studied in its own right—lay in Shandong.

Given the importance of Shandong to Qing history, it might be surprising that scholars have paid so little attention to the history of its provincial capital, particularly in the early modern period. The only English-language monograph on Jinan is David Buck’s 1978 *Urban Change in China: Politics and Development in Tsinan, Shantung, 1890–1949*.¹⁵⁷ The early parts of Buck’s book discuss Jinan’s history in the nineteenth century, but its primary focus is the twentieth century. There is, of course, much more written in Chinese about Jinan and cities in Shandong more generally, but books devoted to Jinan, most notably the six-volume *Jinan tongshi* (*A Comprehensive History of Jinan*), focus more on providing rich detail about the place than on critically analyzing how its history relates to received narratives about Chinese history, let alone the theoretical frameworks for understanding it. For example, *Jinan tongshi* is organized around a standard national chronology, meaning that there are separate volumes on the

¹⁵⁷ Buck, *Urban Change in China*.

Ming and Qing (up to the First Opium War) dynasties, “early” modern (*jindai*) history (First Opium War to 1919/1921), modern (*xiandai*) history (1919/1921 to 1949), and contemporary (*dangdai*) history (1949 to present).¹⁵⁸ Major dividing events, like the Opium War, the 1919 May Fourth Movement, and the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921 are chosen for their national, not local significance. Likewise, the topics covered in each volume, including major events, lists of literary works, biographies, etc., follow a prescribed formula that would have been familiar to late imperial gazetteer compilers, and there is little effort to weave these details into a larger, locally oriented historical narrative. Such a compendium is of great value, but it requires careful and skeptical reading to discern where national narratives are being unduly projected onto local developments.¹⁵⁹

Jinan is hardly the only city in North China, including important ones like provincial capitals, that have received little attention in English scholarship. This inattention is symptomatic of a bias towards cities in southern China. Besides Beijing and Tianjin, it is cities south of the Huai River that have captured the attention of scholars of late imperial China. Some of these cities, like Nanjing, are notable for their political importance.¹⁶⁰ However, great commercial centers own a special place in the historiography of late imperial cities. G. William Skinner’s research on marketing systems and physiographic macroregions provided urban historians with a framework for exploring the economic significance of Chinese cities and elucidating the relationship between urban commercial, social, and political activities.¹⁶¹ William Rowe’s books

¹⁵⁸ 1919 (the nationalistic May Fourth Movement) and 1921 (the founding of the Chinese Communist Party) are closely linked in official historiography.

¹⁵⁹ Throughout the dissertation, I most frequently cite volumes 4 and 5 of this collection. Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*; Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*.

¹⁶⁰ Yangzhou is another example of a politically important city that has received attention, but it was also marked by the tremendous commercial wealth of its salt merchants. Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*; Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture*.

¹⁶¹ Skinner, *The City in Late Imperial China*.

on Hankou demonstrated the utility of Skinner's framework to urban social history while also arguing for the existence of trading systems that transcended Skinner's macro-regional marketing systems.¹⁶² This line of inquiry was especially promising for research into southern China both because it had been China's economic center of gravity since around the turn of the second millennium CE and because the region was blessed with a plethora of trade-facilitating, easily navigable waterways.¹⁶³ The variety of social institutions supported by the region's commercial wealth and its vibrant literary culture have bequeathed a rich source base to historians. Similar factors, especially the fortuitous preservation of its county archives, have made Chongqing a favorite site of research for Qing historians.¹⁶⁴

No city embodies these characteristics more fully or has received nearly as much scholarly attention as Shanghai. Shanghai's status as both a Chinese metropolis and a foreign colonial enclave has both multiplied the sources available for researching its history and allowed scholars to study it from a variety of angles. Studies of Shanghai speak both to the city's local institutions, its relationship to its hinterland and other regions of China, its importance to national politics and social movements, and its role as a point of connection between China and the world.¹⁶⁵ There is surely more compelling research to come from this fount. However, the problem we face is that the very factors that make Shanghai and other well-known metropolises such interesting objects of study—their rapid pace of change, their size and importance, and their integration into global networks—also make them highly anomalous lenses through which to interpret the urban history of late imperial and modern China.

¹⁶² Rowe, *Hankow: Commerce and Society*; Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community*.

¹⁶³ Hartwell, "Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations."

¹⁶⁴ Recent scholarship includes Javers, "Conflict, Community, and Crime"; Dykstra, "Complicated Matters."

¹⁶⁵ See, among others, Wasserstrom, *Student Protests*; Perry, *Shanghai on Strike*; Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation*; Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*; Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor*.

Jinan is useful as a case study not because it represents some ideal form of “the Chinese city” but because it exhibits characteristics that both differentiate it from cities that have received more attention and that other less-studied cities, especially in North China, certainly shared. There have been a large number of valuable studies on rural North China.¹⁶⁶ However, outside Beijing and Tianjin—the former highly distinctive by virtue of its status as imperial and then national capital, the latter by virtue of being, in Ruth Rogaski’s words a “hypercolony”—North China’s urban history, especially in the late imperial period has been neglected.¹⁶⁷ Sun Jinghao’s dissertation on Jining in western Shandong is the kind of exception that proves the rule: he argues that the city’s position on the Grand Canal and exceptional role as a middle ground between Jiangnan and Beijing made it more of an extended economic and cultural periphery of the Lower Yangzi than part of North China.¹⁶⁸ This study of Jinan, then, is a point of entry into the study of late imperial cities that were not centers of interregional trade and where the role of the territorial administration in forging translocal connections and place-making was more significant than in the cities that have been most-studied. It provides a basis for further research on the cities that were most like Jinan—Taiyuan, Baoding, Kaifeng, etc.—but also the regional social and cultural effects of a greater proportion of cities in North China operating as administrative centers.

Highlighting the administrative functions of late imperial cities and cases where these functions were particularly prominent necessarily confronts us with the long shadow that Weber’s characterization of Chinese cities as primarily administrative centers possessing limited

¹⁶⁶ See, among others, Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion in China*; Perry, *Rebels and Revolutionaries*; Naquin, *Shantung Rebellion*; Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*; Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State*; Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*; Thaxton, *Salt of the Earth*.

¹⁶⁷ Li, Dray-Novoy, and Kong Haili, *Beijing*, 3; Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*, 10–11.

¹⁶⁸ Sun, “City, State, and the Grand Canal.”

commercial importance or political autonomy has cast on the field.¹⁶⁹ This view of Chinese cities held considerable sway until it was challenged by Rowe and others building on Skinner's research on the place of cities in marketing systems. Even Elvin (1973), who sees urbanization and commercialization as closely linked phenomena in the early first millennium CE, essentially recapitulates Weber's understanding in stipulating, "Yet Chinese cities did not play the same historic role as their much smaller counterparts in medieval Europe. They were not centres of political or personal freedom, nor did they possess distinctive legal institutions."¹⁷⁰ As discussed above, the public sphere/civil society debate demonstrated that this post-Weberian generation of scholarship placed too much emphasis on the issue of political autonomy, which, even in the highly commercialized contexts where it was most likely to be found, was difficult to discern in late imperial cities. The solution, even when studying the administrative centers in North China that probably most resembled Weber's characterization of Chinese cities, is not to revert to a Weberian view of Chinese cities. Instead, we need to de-center the question of political autonomy (through moving beyond a Weberian approach to state and society). This will allow us to observe broader similarities between administrative centers in North China and commercial centers in the south (and various cities in-between them), including the vital role of translocal processes in urban place-making and the political activism of urban elites. Doing so does not erase important differences between them, particularly the relative importance of the territorial administration in stimulating and sustaining translocal connections in the north, but allows us to examine these differences on theoretical terrain that is less fraught in terms of generating a sense of absolute differences between "Chinese" and "Western" (or "Northern" and "Southern") cities.

The second tendency in urban historiography that this dissertation cuts against is the

¹⁶⁹ Weber, *The Religion of China*, 13–20.

¹⁷⁰ Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past*, 177.

focus on urban modernization. This scholarship includes valuable Chinese works that address urban history in North China through the lens of regional modernization.¹⁷¹ English-language scholarship on urban modernity tends to focus on specific cases, and again, studies of Shanghai and Beijing dominate, but there are also works on smaller—but still quite large—cities like Chengdu, Tianjin, and Suzhou.¹⁷² Buck's book on Jinan falls into this category as well. Some elements of his study do not hold up especially well in light of recent scholarship, including defining “development” according to Western experience and measuring Jinan's success and failure against it.¹⁷³ However, Buck's close attention to the influence of Chinese rather than foreign actors—one of his main motivations for focusing on Jinan—and careful research make this a valuable study that probably deserves more attention in the context of studies of urban modernity than it receives.¹⁷⁴ At the very least, writing a general history of Jinan's modernization would risk reproducing many (although certainly not all) of his empirical findings and general conclusions.

Instead, the focus of this dissertation is on the late imperial period, particularly the Qing Dynasty. This chronological perspective both maximizes the value of Jinan as a case study—since it is in the late imperial period that its history was most different from the types of urban cases with which we are most familiar—and demonstrates the value of studying early modern urban history on its own terms. In his study of Nanjing during the Qing, Chuck Wooldridge argues that a preoccupation with the modern implications of late imperial urban history has produced at times an overly teleological approach to nineteenth-century history in particular.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Wang Shouzhong and Guo Dasong, *Jindai Shandong chengshi*; Chang Yu-fa, *Zhongguo xiandaihua de quyuan yanjiu*.

¹⁷² Stapleton, *Civilizing Chengdu*; Wang Di, *Street Culture in Chengdu*; Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*; Carroll, *Between Heaven and Modernity*.

¹⁷³ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 5.

¹⁷⁴ Buck, 11–12.

¹⁷⁵ Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*, 10–12.

This tendency toward a modern teleology is especially problematic in the case of inland North China, where urban modernization, by conventional accounts, began relatively late. Framing urban history around modernity, then, leaves an even broader *terra incognita* of early modern urban history in this region. Pushing back into this time and region gives us a better appreciation of the diverse experiences that shaped urban modernity across China. Moreover, focusing on the Qing helps us break through the narrative that the end of empire and the origins of nationalism are modern stories. Instead, we see how place-making and state-building were already producing a hybrid empire-nation in the high Qing and continued to do so in the early twentieth century. The possibility of hybridity should attune us to how early modern patterns of empire could persist alongside and even through national prerogatives and practices in the twentieth century. The history of the Qing Empire is not simply a precursor to the modern history of empire-nation hybridity but a constitutive element of it.

The final chapters of this project offer two observations about the relationship between early modern history and urban modernization in Jinan that are at least broadly relevant to other major administrative centers in North China. First, as the early chapters of the dissertation show, the relative economic weakness of Jinan did not mean that it was spatially isolated. In fact, translocal networks, especially those associated with the bureaucracy, were important ingredients of both local state-building and place-making. The late nineteenth century witnessed the realignment of not only commercial networks—of which Shanghai was a particular beneficiary—but also political networks. We often associate this with the rise of powerful regional officials, like Li Hongzhang and Yuan Shikai, who actively endorsed a wide range of modernizing projects. Shifting commercial networks eventually played an important role in shaping Jinan's twentieth-century history, with its new status as a railroad hub and center of

industry leading to the emergence of an urban bourgeoisie. Up through the end of the Qing, though, the effects of shifting political networks were far more evident. As David Buck traces into the Republican period, the result of late Qing political restructuring was not greater political autonomy for Jinan, but a new kind of subordination to the regional powers who now dominated Chinese politics. Rather than stimulating local economic development either through salutary intervention or neglect, the political situation in early twentieth-century China turned out to be a negative check in Jinan, Buck finds.¹⁷⁶ Integration into political networks was likely an important factor shaping social life in other inland cities. Both the local manifestations of political changes around the end of the Qing Dynasty in cities like Taiyuan and Xi'an and whether these changes affected their development in ways similar to Jinan deserve more attention.

Second, for places like Jinan which were located deep within "China proper," growing foreign communities starting in the late nineteenth century seemed to mark a sharp break from the past. Given the history of the Boxer Uprising and Shandong's status as a battleground for English, German, and Japanese colonial interests, we might expect resistance to foreign imperialism to have been an especially potent mobilizing force for nationalist revolutionaries in late Qing Jinan. In reality, the anti-Qing revolutionary movement floundered in Jinan. This reflected political divisions in the province, where members of the elite from the peninsula tended to favor more radical political reforms, which may have been a product of their encounter with imperialist powers. However, people from Jinan and other parts of Shandong had also dealt with the challenges of foreign imperialism in the years leading up to the 1911 Revolution and displayed nationalist sensibilities. In Jinan, their solution was not to abandon the imperial

¹⁷⁶ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 72–215.

mechanisms of Qing rule but to deploy them in new ways that reaffirmed the long-standing participation of the city's elite in place-making and state-building. Jinan shows that alternatives to violent anti-foreignism and disillusionment with the Qing were available to members of the elite, even in the early twentieth century. The continuity with early modern practices that these alternatives entailed belies the seemingly drastic and modern interruption of foreign imperialism into the relationship between Jinan and the Qing state.

Chapter Outline: Place-Making and State-Building across Time

This dissertation examines the history of state-building and place-making in Jinan during the Qing Dynasty across three time periods, with two or three chapters dedicated to each. Within each section, the chapters are arranged thematically and focus on a mix of cultural and institutional aspects of place-making and state-building. Each section includes a historical and historiographic introduction that explains in more detail the background of each period and my intervention in existing understandings of it. The overarching argument that state-building and place-making were constitutive of each other and evidenced a hybrid political formation is developed across these periods in two ways. First, I show that the state-building with which we usually associate the high Qing was also conducive to and actively implicated in robust place-making. Second, while scholars associate localism in the late Qing with state weakness, I argue that place-making continued to be an integral component of state-building in Jinan.

The first section comprises chapters 1 and 2 and focuses on the early and high Qing, roughly the late seventeenth to early nineteenth century. Both chapters demonstrate how Jinan's position in translocal networks, particularly those related to the territorial administration, helped interweave state-building and place-making in the city. Chapter 1 is a literary history of Baotu

Spring, Jinan's most famous scenic site. It demonstrates that people from outside Jinan played an indispensable role in crafting a canon of literature about the site and that this literature marked the spring not as a confined or isolated space but as a point of connection to other places. The Kangxi and Qianlong emperors contributed to this literary tradition through making Baotu Spring an object of and receptacle for their own literary products, imbuing it with a new degree of imperial significance. Chapter 2 focuses on a specific kind of institution—the academy—which embodied Jinan's status as a meeting point for the best scholars from Shandong Province and teachers and examiners from across the empire. Through a combination of initiatives originating from the court and local officials and participation by local people, academies served the Qing state's interest in maintaining a system that recruited men into official service and legitimated their status within their home communities. Through the history of a prominent family, I trace how academies and literary relationships fostered by Jinan's status as a hub of scholarly exchange played an integral role in elite place-making.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 make up part II, which examines how a series of crises in the mid-nineteenth century affected the relationship between state-building and place-making in Jinan. The three types of crises discussed are warfare against the Taiping and Nian rebellions, ecological and humanitarian disasters in the wake of the Yellow River's change in course in 1855, and the intrusion of foreign actors who enjoyed a wide range of privileges by virtue of successive "unequal treaties" signed between the Qing and foreign countries, starting with the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842. These chapters contribute to an ongoing reassessment of the effectiveness of Qing state-building in this period. As discussed above, the established narrative is that this period saw both the culmination of a secular trend toward society outgrowing the capacities of the government and a new wave of localist elite activism in response to these crises.

My treatment of this period reflects a more recent tendency to emphasize the effectiveness of state-building, especially given the exceptional circumstances under which the Qing was operating. These chapters show how Jinan's elite participated in local public projects like militia organization and water conservancy, as did their peers elsewhere in the empire. However, Jinan's elite were especially dependent on the political influence of powerful officials posted there and the resources that could be mobilized through the provincial government. Consequently, rather than exhibiting social autonomy from the state, Jinan shows how place-making and state-building continued to be mutually constitutive even in a period of deep crisis. Moreover, despite the localist concerns of Jinan's elite, a variety of factors continued to tie them and their city into translocal political networks, thus integrating them into a national politics of crisis and reconstruction.

Part III consists of chapters 6 and 7, which both focus on the period between the inauguration of a sweeping reform program in 1901 and the 1911 Revolution, followed by the abdication of the final Qing emperor in 1912. These chapters show how Jinan's elite continued to participate in and benefit from a relationship between place-making and state-building that reflected imperial and national hybridity in a period that has been seen as one of abrupt transformation. This continuity helps explain their continued support for the Qing, unlike reformist elites elsewhere in the province and empire who cast in their lot with the revolution. At the same time, these chapters show how specific elements of the reforms created pockets of power for revolutionaries, revolution-sympathetic reformers, and regional officials that made Jinan a political battleground on which the city's elite exercised limited power.

The conclusion briefly follows Jinan's place in the spatial politics of the Chinese state into the warlord and Republican period (1912–49). As David Buck shows, the political

instability of this period negatively affected Jinan's development, which provides a different angle for appreciating the beneficial position the city had occupied in Qing spatial politics. The epilogue uses the compilation of the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer*, published in 1926, to discuss how Qing loyalism could shape place-making through the writing of local history even after the dynasty fell. On the one hand, this gazetteer shows how the Qing state operated as a reference point for the formation of local identity. On the other hand, it reminds us that the putative end of imperial rule in 1912 was not so definitive as a timeline of Chinese history would make it seem. In fact, forms of imperial state-building persisted through local activity and belief. They did not necessarily contradict the more nationalist state-building that was taking hold in the twentieth century but melded into it. This process of melding and China's long history of political hybridity help us understand why today's Chinese state still exhibits aspects of both national and imperial politics.

Part I
Place-Making and the Translocal State in the High Qing

Chapters 1 and 2 address the phenomenon of place-making in Jinan from the Qing conquest in the mid-seventeenth century up to the early nineteenth century. In broad terms, this was a period of robust and successful state-building. Although the Qing rulers faced no shortage of challenges, in ruling China proper they proved adept at synthesizing Manchu and Han practices and institutions and using this synthesis as a basis for not only consolidating control over China proper but extending their dominion into the southwest and northwest. By the late eighteenth century, however, a series of crises began to expose and exacerbate the fragility of this system, ushering in a new period of statecraft, which is the topic of parts II and III. Although these chapters focus on a discrete time period, they engage with scholarship that addresses the theme of localism in later imperial Chinese history (Song through Qing dynasties) more broadly. In this introductory essay, I summarize major themes in this scholarship, elaborate my understanding of what localism means, explain how the following two chapters relate to it, and describe in general terms how these chapters contribute to our understanding of the relationship between localism and the late imperial state.

Scholarship defining and tracking the historical development of localism, is chronologically and thematically capacious, including works on topics like (but not limited to) religion, lineages, and education, and chronologically broad, stretching across at least the entirety of the second millennium CE. This breadth not only makes it difficult to survey its entirety but also means that relevant studies are often in more explicit dialogue with more specialized fields than the full breadth of this unwieldy but important swath of scholarship. Nevertheless, this field of research is held together by shared attention to historical developments dating to the period between the late Tang (618–904) and Southern Song (1127–1279). Scholars agree that this

period witnessed a fundamental change in the structure of China's elite class and its relationship to the state, although the timing, dynamics, and implications of this transformation still provide fodder for scholarly debate.¹ In short, the upper crust of society in the early Tang consisted of a kind of aristocratic class whose status depended on a combination of hereditary privileges, intermarriage among great families, and access to political power in the capital. By the Southern Song, this class had been replaced by a larger and less secure elite who still competed for official positions via the civil service examinations but, lacking hereditary privileges and guaranteed access to official posts, increasingly depended on land ownership, commercial ventures, and other activities in their home counties and prefectures around the empire to reproduce their social status. This social and political transformation was closely linked to the efflorescence of *daoxue* (often translated as Neo-Confucianism), which provided an intellectual justification and moral compass for the local activism of this new gentry class. It also served as the basis for a shared identity as scholars (*shi*), which transcended the particularities of elites' local contexts, although it was especially strong among the elite of the region south of the Huai River (Jiangnan), which became China's demographic, economic, and cultural center of gravity over this period.²

This attachment to local arenas for the purpose of social reproduction provides the broadest definition of localism. Although the character of the gentry class varied across time and space, in its general form this relationship between the elite, the state, and local communities persisted through the end of the imperial period and was a constitutive element of successive dynastic empires.³ In this sense, localism is a basic feature of the social and political history of

¹ See, for instance, Tackett, *The Destruction*.

² For an authoritative statement of this narrative, see Hartwell, "Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations." On the relationship between *shi* identity and *daoxue*, see, among others Bol, *This Culture of Ours*. For elaboration on Hartwell's thesis of localist elite behavior in the Song based on a local case study, see Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen*.

³ On the diversity of the local elite in late imperial China, see Esherick and Rankin, *Chinese Local Elites*.

late imperial China. Localism can also refer to the cultural corollary of this bundle of social strategies, namely identification with one's native place, often expressed and produced through physical construction at meaningful local sites and writing about local history and geography. Generally speaking, chapter 1 focuses on this latter, more cultural aspect of localism, tracing traditions of writing about Baotu Spring, Jinan's most famous scenic site, from the Song to early Qing, whereas chapter 2 examines the socio-political aspect of localism in Jinan through a study of the relationship between academic institutions and an elite family. This distinction between types of localism blurs, however, at the point at which both chapters deal with the social and political processes through which literature was produced and canonized, namely, the long history of well-known literati coming to Jinan in official capacities, the imperial tours of the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors, and the formation of literary associations in and around educational institutions. I use the term 'place-making' to convey both senses of localism, to emphasize that the "locales" that were the focus of localist activities were always in the process of being made (and not monolithic entities), and to avoid implying a necessary opposition between localism and translocal processes.

This general framework of localism leaves copious room for more specific questions about its history. The following chapters intervene in four areas of this scholarship. These are: (1) the chronology of "localist turns" and their relationship to the state; (2) the standards to which members of the elite appealed in demonstrating the virtues of their native places; (3) the relationship between localism and translocal networks; and (4) how the Qing conquest affected localism. In general terms, I argue that forms of place-making associated with what scholars have called localism were bound up with the translocal construction of the Qing state during the period under consideration. The high Qing state fostered place-making in Jinan and benefited

from it constitutionally. It is in view of the incongruity of this history with the mutual autonomy of state and society assumed by the state-society paradigm that I argue that we need a theory of the state that is robust enough to countenance the trajectory of Chinese history and does not force us to see it as aberrational in comparison to Euro-American history.

Although localism in the general form described above was a structural feature of late imperial China, forms and degrees of localism varied alongside both secular and cyclical social, political, and cultural changes. Peter Bol has termed periods of greater localism (i.e. greater elite participation in and identification with their home places) “localist turns.” In his study of Jinhua in Zhejiang Province Bol identifies two such turns in the Southern Song and the late Ming (approximately 1480–1580). Given the persistence of localism across this period, Bol understandably interprets the early Ming (approximately 1368–1480) as a period of interruption where state activism attenuated the centripetal force of localism drawing elite away from the political center. In this period, Bol argues, the Ming government more effectively controlled and co-opted the elite by drawing them into state-sponsored institutions that supplanted locally organized initiatives and attacking localist claims to intellectual authority.⁴ Essentially, the early Ming reversed some of the dynamics that had given rise to the gentry as a local elite in the Southern Song by increasing the local assertiveness of the government and offering more opportunities for members of the elite to obtain bureaucratic appointments.

The pattern Bol suggests is attractive in theory: localism was inversely correlated to state strength, at least at the local level, because it thrived on the absence of government intervention that could directly attack localist projects or undermine them by drawing off the energy of the elite. Armed with the financial resources provided by economic growth in both the Southern

⁴ Bol, “The ‘Localist Turn,’” 12–15.

Song and the late Ming, local elites took advantage of the space created by declining state activism to pursue more localist activities.⁵ Timothy Brook paints a consonant picture in his study of elite patronage of Buddhist monasteries in the late Ming. Brook argues that investment in monasteries reflected “a characteristic orientation of late-Ming gentry society toward autonomy,” since monasteries operated outside the Ming government.⁶ In arguing that religious patronage constituted a public forum for elite activity outside the control of the state and using this finding to critique historical “caricatures” based on the premise that “non-Western cultures lacked the dynamic interaction of state and society that appeared to uniquely characterize the modern transformation of Europe,” Brook is arguing in the same vein as Rowe, Rankin, and others who have suggested that ideas like the “public sphere” can describe socio-political developments in China as well as Europe.⁷ (I discuss these arguments in detail in the introduction.)

Brook sidesteps some of the vulnerabilities of arguments for the existence of a Habermasian public sphere in late imperial China by arguing that the “public realm” being occupied by the local elite “was still under construction” and was supplanted by a new form of state-gentry alliance in the Qing, at least until localism returned as a dominant tendency in the late nineteenth century.⁸ Both he and Bol recognize that the autonomy from the state implied by localism was by no means absolute. Bol notes, furthermore, “A localist turn need not be anti-state per se, it can be justified by those with national concerns on the grounds that greater decentralization, more private wealth, and increased elite autonomy is better for everyone,

⁵ Bol, 7, 15–18.

⁶ Brook, *Praying for Power*, 11.

⁷ Brook, 11, 25–27.

⁸ Brook, 29, 329–30.

including the dynasty.”⁹ In her study of community schools in the Ming, Sarah Schneewind extends this observation, arguing that local participation in government institutions, including their use as a field for pursuing private interests, enhanced the power of the Ming state.¹⁰

Frederic Wakeman’s study of loyalist resistance to the Qing conquest in Jiangyin in Jiangsu adds another layer of qualification to the assumption that localist turns accompanied declines in state power. He demonstrates that the self-destructive defiance of Jiangyin’s elite to Qing armies, which has been viewed as a kind of localist display of loyalist virtues, was actually a product of the weakness of localist political consciousness. In fact, the city’s elite stumbled towards moralizing self-sacrifice, helped along by officials who were not natives of the city. Wakeman argues that this reflects an inherent tension in late imperial localism: that it did not necessarily sanction the formation of private associations, which undercut the development of a robust local political identity.¹¹ As in his critical response to the pro-public sphere arguments of Rowe and others, we can see a tension between Wakeman’s pessimism about the political efficacy of late Ming localism and Brook’s robust assertion of the tendency of elite society toward autonomy from the state. Rather than litigating these particular disagreements, I want to highlight two common points that emerge from this scholarship. First, all scholars acknowledge that localist autonomy from the state was never absolute, a finding my research absolutely supports. A second commonality, though, is associating localism with political autonomy from the state; Wakeman considers himself to be demonstrating the limitations of late Ming localism, not the inherent character of localism itself. However, this stance runs against Schneewind’s finding that local actors “colonized” institutions like schools, rather than operating independently

⁹ Bol, “The ‘Localist Turn,’” 4.

¹⁰ Schneewind, *Community Schools*.

¹¹ Wakeman, “Localism and Loyalism.”

of them and similar arguments in the work of David Faure and Michael Szonyi, who show that local government institutions and lineage associations shaped each other.¹² Szonyi has furthered this argument in his recent book on Ming military institutions, which argues that adaptation to forms of governance was an integral element of local social strategies.¹³ Similarly, Sukhee Lee has argued that localism in Southern Song Ningbo—a time of supposed state withdrawal and a place where there were ample opportunities to amass wealth and status through commerce (outside the state)—was in fact characterized by considerable engagement with the state and denser translocal connections than posited by Hymes.¹⁴

On the one hand, chapters 1 and 2 add further empirical qualification to the idea that localism is associated with autonomy from the state by showing that the early Qing—a period of robust state-building—was also one of localism. On the other hand, these chapters contribute to my larger argument that in light of these many empirical qualifications we need a more robust theory of the relationship between localism (or place-making) and the state that anticipates their deep entanglement rather than presupposing their autonomy. This association of ‘localism’ with anti-statism is one reason why I am choosing instead to speak in terms of ‘place-making,’ which is more suggestive of the co-constructive relationship between place and state I lay out in the following chapters.

The second question I address is how localism can take different forms, especially in the realm of culture and self-identification. Bol notes that, by itself, localism can refer to two different ways of asserting the merits of one’s home place. On the one hand, one could point to the local population’s conformity to widely accepted standards, such as orthodox funeral

¹² Schneewind, *Community Schools*, 5; Szonyi, *Practicing Kinship*, 200–201; Faure, *Emperor and Ancestor*, 4–14; Szonyi, *The Art of Being Governed*.

¹³ Szonyi, *The Art of Being Governed*.

¹⁴ Lee, *Negotiated Power*; Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen*.

practices. On the other hand, one could trumpet the unique qualities of local culture, such as distinctive types of food. Bol argues that the former type of localism—“funerary localism”—was more prevalent in the Song Dynasty, whereas the balance swung toward the latter form in the Ming: while Song localism emphasized uniformity across regions, Ming localism valued uniqueness.¹⁵ Evidence of both forms of localism can be found in early and high Qing Jinan, and I hesitate to conclude that one form predominated at particular points in time. (Similarly, Wakeman argues that the localist pride of Jiangnan loyalists was grounded in exceptionally exemplifying Confucian virtues that they believed to be universal, not locally particular.¹⁶) For example, Jinan’s springs were a distinctive attribute of the city, and even if other places possessed sites like them, writers could still claim that the number as well as aesthetic and spiritual qualities of Jinan’s springs made them unique. However, as chapter 1 shows, writers from the Song through Qing recognized that these springs drew their water and their special qualities from other places, like Mount Tai. Thus, even while acknowledging the distinctiveness of Jinan, they reinforced a kind of spatial orthodoxy. Likewise, in the Kangxi and Qianlong tours I observe evidence of Bol’s claim that the Qing emperors embraced local and regional variety, but they also used their progresses to bind the empire’s diverse localities to their persons.¹⁷

This leads to the third question about localism that these chapters discuss, namely the relationship between localism and translocal dynamics. It has long been apparent that putatively local elites depended on their connections to translocal economic and bureaucratic structures for the resources needed to pursue localist strategies.¹⁸ However, both the study by Lee cited above and a recent book by Hilde De Weerdts argue that translocal connections remained important

¹⁵ Bol, “The ‘Localist Turn,’” 44–45.

¹⁶ Wakeman, “Localism and Loyalism.”

¹⁷ Bol, “The ‘Localist Turn,’” 45.

¹⁸ Rankin and Esherick, “Concluding Remarks,” 314–15.

even during Southern Song, which was supposedly a period of aggressive elite localization. De Weerdts argues that the Southern Song witnessed a transformation in literati communication networks that allowed members of the increasingly localized elite class to receive information about affairs at court and on the frontiers from within their home communities. This development in information flows both buttressed the integrity of the empire and “accommodated long-term absence from metropolitan areas.”¹⁹ In other words, De Weerdts is arguing that *expanded* translocal communication was an enabling factor in the localization of the elite. Similarly, in his book on academies in early nineteenth-century Guangzhou, Miles argues that the beginnings of this last late imperial localist turn also was associated with continued attachments to metropolitan politics and interregional influences on local culture.²⁰ Chapters 1 and 2 expand on these claims and argue that translocal communication and movement were integral elements of place-making in high Qing Jinan.

As Bol notes at the very end of his article on localist turns, translocal communities have been an important part of discussions about urban society and politics in the Qing. In his pair of books on Hankou, William Rowe argues that the sojourning merchant communities residing there transcended, albeit by no means abandoned, their particular native-place ties to form a political consciousness centered on Hankou.²¹ Rowe thus contradicts Weber’s argument that traditional Chinese cities lacked cultural and political autonomy.²² Bryna Goodman paints a somewhat different picture in her study of Shanghai, arguing that both culturally and institutionally native-place ties were more important in shaping local political contestation than

¹⁹ De Weerdts, *Information, Territory, and Networks*, 10.

²⁰ Miles, *The Sea of Learning*, 282–86.

²¹ Rowe, *Hankow: Commerce and Society*; Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community*. Similarly, Michael Szonyi argues that the deterritorializing nature of the Ming military system, which moved families from their home counties to garrisons “spawned a reterritorializing response.” Szonyi, *The Art of Being Governed*, 11.

²² Weber, *The Religion of China*, 13–20.

Rowe gives them credit for. This is not to say that these ties prevented investing in the host community: on the contrary, Goodman argues that they were a key element in both local Shanghai politics and the formation of nationalist sentiments.²³ Du Yongtao's study of Huizhou merchants in the Ming and Qing and Steven Miles's recent book on the translocal practices of elite men from the Pearl River delta in western Guangdong and Guangxi reinforce Rowe's and Goodman's common argument that place-based associations were additive by showing how sojourners' "public participation" stretched across their host and native communities.²⁴

Rowe, Goodman, and Du share a focus on communities built around commercial activity and an expectation that these communities would operate outside the state. Rowe argues that mercantile associations formed the core of a nascent Habermasian public sphere, while Du argues that translocal practices undermined state attempts to exert order over space by rendering individual places discrete from each other.²⁵ Reflecting the outcome of the public sphere/civil society exchange, Goodman adopts a more nuanced view, saying, "The relationship between [early twentieth century native place organizations] and the state is best understood as expressing not autonomy but shifting areas of partial autonomy, interpenetration and negotiation. This combination suggests a conception of power different from Habermas's 'public sphere' idea."²⁶ However, rather the underlying Weberian premises that have led to prioritizing the question of state-society autonomy, Goodman concludes that Shanghai's history demonstrates the need to conceptualize Chinese modern history apart from Eurocentric models.²⁷ Breaking our reliance on Eurocentric theory is important, but we should not abandon the work of developing theoretical

²³ Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation*.

²⁴ Du, *The Order of Places*; Miles, *Upriver Journeys*. See also Faure and Siu, "The Original Translocal Society," 40–42.

²⁵ Du, *The Order of Places*, 26.

²⁶ Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation*, 304.

²⁷ Goodman, 307.

frameworks that are flexible enough to account for diverse local and national histories, which is the aim of the theory of place-making and state-building I am developing here.

Consequently, rather than focusing on translocal social phenomena as challenging or standing apart from the state, I am expanding our understanding of how translocality was a feature of late imperial state-building. This argument operates at several levels. First, it refers to translocal practices that were integral parts of Qing administrative institutions, like the examination system. Second, it builds on work by Miles, Richard Belsky, and Maura Dykstra to argue that translocal practices that grew up around these facets of the administration but were not internal to the government itself were nevertheless constitutive of state power.²⁸ Finally, I argue that beyond their institutional effects, translocal practices helped produce identification with the state as a whole, rather than just one's home place.²⁹ As Goodman shows in Shanghai, the urban identity that emerged from translocal practices did not necessarily conform to the logic of imperial spatial politics but did lend itself to a kind of national identity, a trend discussed in more detail in later chapters. My approach to translocal identity formation, then, reflects the effort of Oakes and Schein (speaking more explicitly but not exclusively about contemporary China) to "delink translocality with any necessary spatial politics of resistance to power."³⁰ Unlike Goodman, though, I find that the formation of translocal identities went hand-in-hand with the construction of local identity. Unlike Rowe, I see (trans)local urban community as a constitutive element of the state, not a force outside or in opposition to it. Rather than opposing local, translocal, and state institutions and identities, I find that in Jinan the three were formed together.

The final question these chapters address regarding localism is how it was affected by the

²⁸ Belsky, *Localities at the Center*; Dykstra, "Complicated Matters," 73–171; Miles, *Upriver Journeys*, 29–107.

²⁹ On this theme, see also Belsky, *Localities at the Center*; Miles, *The Sea of Learning*.

³⁰ Oakes and Schein, "Translocal China," 3.

Ming-Qing transition. This is, first of all, a question about how the Qing conquest affected Jinan and its people. To the extent that chapters 1 and 2 touch on the years immediately surrounding 1644, they generally confirm previous findings that elites in North China—and Shandong, in particular—submitted quickly to Qing rule.³¹ Although Qing troops had raided North China only a few years prior, even sacking Jinan in 1639, when they returned in 1644 they brought hope of restoring order in the wake of the rebellion led by Li Zicheng that had toppled the Ming court in Beijing and widespread brigandage. The localized considerations that led Jinan's elite toward submission rather than resistance was hardly exceptional. Hilary Beattie argues, for instance, that collaboration with the Qing proved rewarding for members of the elite in Anhui.³² In addition to Wakeman's argument that it was incapacity to effectively assert local interests that led to resistance in Jiangyin, Jerry Dennerline argues that Ming loyalism in Jiading (also in Jiangnan) was led by men who were more engaged with translocal, albeit intra-regional, literati networks that valorized uncompromising Confucian virtue (i.e. loyalty) than interested in preserving their home communities.³³ Although subtle expressions of Ming loyalism persisted, many of Jiangnan's elite, especially those whose wealth was tied to land ownership in local communities, found it beneficial to participate in re-forging what Dennerline calls the "gentry-bureaucratic alliance," which both preserved their social status and aided the consolidation of Qing rule through the restoration of essential functions like tax collection.³⁴ In this sense, it is hardly surprising that localist considerations would be an element of Jinan's elite coming to terms with their new rulers in the early years of the dynasty.

³¹ I Songgyū, "Shantung in the Shun-Chih Reign (One)"; I Songgyū, "Shantung in the Shun-Chih Reign (Two)"; Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise*, 1:415-447.

³² Beattie, "The Alternative to Resistance."

³³ Dennerline, *The Chia-Ting Loyalists*.

³⁴ Dennerline, "Fiscal Reform and Local Control."

The larger question, though, is how patterns of localism changed between the late Ming and early Qing. Here we see multiple suggestions that the reassertion of central authority in the Qing reshaped how localism functioned. The weakening of translocal literati factions, which had been complicit in the political turmoil of the last decades of Ming rule, suited the interests of both the Qing and the local elite, since, as Dennerline and Wakeman show, literati activism driven by Confucian fundamentalism had neither saved the Ming nor sheltered local communities from the conquest.³⁵ Beattie argues that elite families shifted from depending on “factional allegiances” to relying more on “vertical” patronage relationships with officials, which facilitated the “direct exercise of central power.”³⁶ Philip Kuhn argues that skepticism about political factions operating beyond the local level and faith that only an emperor could ensure that government operated in the public interest persisted into the late nineteenth century.³⁷

However, the assertion of imperial control in the early Qing looked very different from the early Ming. Whereas the Ming had sought to implement a rigid system of social and economic control below the county level, the Qing approach to local governance allowed the local elite greater freedom from government institutions. One example of this is the fate of community schools. In the early Ming, these schools were supposed to link local communities to the court and inculcate ideological orthodoxy. In practice, Schneewind shows, their implementation was uneven and depended on the initiative of local officials and the elite. Rather than reasserting control over these institutions, the Qing allowed their devolution into a kind of “communal organization” to continue.³⁸ As chapter 2 discusses, though, current scholarship

³⁵ Dardess, *Blood and History*.

³⁶ Lineage organizations could also be translocal and, as chapter 2 shows, could be channels for exercising considerable political power. However, as instruments for advancing family interests that were considered legitimate by the court, they were less threatening than voluntary participation in political factions that challenged, rather than confirmed, the court’s ultimate authority over public affairs. Beattie, “The Alternative to Resistance,” 266.

³⁷ Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 54–79.

³⁸ Schneewind, *Community Schools*, 161–62.

argues that the history of academies—more advanced educational institutions that had served as spaces for factional organization in the Ming—exhibited an opposite tendency. Initially, this narrative says, the Qing suppressed academies, extended limited patronage in the late seventeenth century, and then undertook central control in the eighteenth century. We can thus summarize existing understandings of the effects of early Qing governance on localism in two points. First, in keeping with the hub-and-spoke model of empire discussed in the introduction, the Qing generally restricted potentially problematic translocal associations among literati, while allowing translocal commercial institutions to grow.³⁹ Second, the dynasty allowed and actively solicited the participation of local elites in aspects of governance that did not conflict with the prerogatives of the court and could be legitimated by Neo-Confucian orthodoxy. The result was a re-forged alliance between the elite and the court that, Timothy Brook argues, reversed the late Ming development of a sphere of gentry activity autonomous from the state and shifted the object of elite patronage away from Buddhist monasteries toward local schools and infrastructure projects, which were more in keeping in Neo-Confucian norms.⁴⁰

These chapters respond to this narrative in two ways. First, they affirm the constructive relationship between elite place-making (localism) and the early Qing state but without assuming that this represented a departure from the autonomy of late Ming elite society from the state. Second, they emphasize the role of translocal circulations in both early Qing place-making and state-building. Together, they argue that the strength of the Qing state depended on its capacity not to attenuate translocal ties but to effectively conduct them and bind them to specific dynastic

³⁹ Du Yongtao views translocal commercial practices as an affront to spatial orthodoxy (i.e. the schema of the territorial administration). I believe this shows the need to consider the spatial order of the Qing state as consisting of multiple layers of translocal arrangements, of which the system of counties and prefectures was a highly visible and important aspect but not the sole element.

⁴⁰ Brook, *Praying for Power*, 328–29.

prerogatives. Although the effects of translocal state-building processes did not give rise to dangerous factions, neither did their effects reside entirely within the bureaucracy; instead, they ramified throughout other aspects of place-making. Chapter 1 shows how the early Qing saw the continuance of a long-running pattern of people who were not natives of Jinan playing a central role in producing literature about Baotu Spring. The most significant departure in the literary and physical history of this site in the Qing was that it came to be directly associated with the emperors. Similarly, chapter 2 examines the history of academies in Jinan, showing how they were revitalized surprisingly early in the dynasty by local officials and continued to grow through a mix of imperial patronage and local initiatives. Although the most prominent such institution in Jinan, Luoyuan Academy, was by no means a hub for factional organization, its role as a node in translocal literary networks made it a valuable resource for Jinan's elite, which I illustrate through a history of one of Jinan's most powerful elite families.

Chapter 1

A City of Springs: Local Geography and Imperial Presence in High Qing Jinan

“The foremost spring in all-under-heaven.”

—The Qianlong Emperor, 1748

Baotu Spring is located outside the southwest corner of Jinan’s old walled area, only a stone’s throw from the city’s western gate. It is one of many artesian karst springs that lend Jinan the nickname “city of springs” (*quancheng*). Baotu’s distinctive feature is its three spouts, a product of the shape of the limestone rock through which its water is propelled upward. The spring water pools and runs off to the north, joining with the discharge of other springs in the vicinity. In the Qing, the area around the spring (now a twenty-six-acre park) was a bustling commercial and entertainment district, a status it enjoyed not only on account of the spring itself but also its proximity to the city’s west gate and the Luo River, which provided water transport to the area’s main commercial waterway, the Daqing River to the north. By the middle of the eighteenth century, over four thousand people lived in this neighborhood.¹ Pavilions, bridges, tea houses, and temples combined to create an ideal space for visitors and natives alike to both take in the sights and compose poetry immortalizing the beauty of Baotu and its companion springs.

In terms of natural beauty and literary production, Jinan—and essentially all of North China—has been overshadowed by central and southern China. This has been the case since a series of upheavals during the Tang and Song dynasties shifted China’s demographic and cultural center of gravity to the south.² These undoubtedly important areas, particularly the Lower Yangzi, have received the majority of attention from historians studying cultural production in late imperial China. Through an examination of physical construction and literary production focused on Baotu Spring from the Northern Song (960–1126) to the Qing, this

¹ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 270, 273.

² Hartwell, “Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations.”

chapter demonstrates that Jinan also had a long and thriving tradition of cultural production. I trace this tradition through the composition of texts about Baotu Spring and their inclusion in local gazetteers up through *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, compiled by Jinan native Ren Hongyuan in the first half of the eighteenth century.

In addition to *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, I carry this discussion of literary production into the Qing through analyzing how the Kangxi (r. 1661–1722) and Qianlong (r. 1735–96) emperors engaged with Jinan’s landscape, particularly Baotu Spring, on their famous tours to the south. As with cultural production more generally, the south has received more attention in works on the tours like Michael Chang’s *A Court on Horseback: Imperial Touring and the Construction of Qing Rule, 1680–1785* and books by Tobie Meyer-Fong and Chuck Wooldridge on Yangzhou and Nanjing, in which the tours play a significant role.³ Brian Dott’s *Identity Reflections: Pilgrimages to Mount Tai in Late Imperial China* incorporates a discussion of imperial visits to Mount Tai, however his singular focus on this site could suggest that it was an exception that proved the rule that the cultural significance of the tours in North China was limited.⁴

In fact, even in Jinan—a secondary destination at best—the tours left a rich literary and physical legacy that became an important touchstone in subsequent local writings. Among these was *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, which Ren compiled in the period between the two emperors’ tours. The tours’ contribution to local discourse—both in terms of the practice of touring and the content of associated texts—continued the longstanding pattern of the mutual formation of state and place. However, through the physical visitation of the emperors and the bestowal of objects directly associated with them, the tours introduced the direct imprimatur of imperial presence to this tradition. In this way, during the Qing, Baotu Spring came to embody even more explicitly

³ Chang, *A Court on Horseback*; Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture*; Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*.

⁴ Dott, *Identity Reflections*.

the relationship between place and the imperial state by becoming a local reservoir of imperial presence.

Through the history of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* and the imperial tours, this chapter makes parallel arguments about the production and content of literary discourse about Baotu Spring. First, it demonstrates that imperial officials—and even emperors—who were not natives of Jinan played a prominent role in the creation of prose and poetic texts about Baotu Spring. Consequently, it shows how place-making literary production was an effect of the translocal circuits through which successive dynastic states generated power locally. Second, through a discussion of major themes within this corpus of texts, I argue that writings about Baotu Spring used it to integrate Jinan into the topography immediately surrounding the city, the geography of Shandong, and the entirety of the realm, or all-under-heaven (*tianxia*). The attachment of imperial presence to Baotu Spring deepened this association, despite the site's location outside the walled city and distance from the city's putative physical and political center. As a result, literary production about Baotu Spring reflected how translocal movements and connections that were unavoidably related to the imperial state were integral elements of place-making and how through place-making the state came to be distributed across space.

This chapter advances the larger argument of the dissertation by challenging empirically and theoretically two narratives about the relationship between place and state in late imperial history. The first is the chronological association of “localist turns,” especially in literary production, with dynastic decline. Scholars have argued that late in the Song, Ming (1368–1644), and Qing dynasties the elite responded to political crises and limited opportunities to attain status within the bureaucratic system by increasingly adopting strategies that focused their efforts towards social reproduction in their home places. Peter Bol argues that these cyclical “localist

turns” entailed shifts in not only political and social activities but also literary production and self-identification.⁵ As Bol’s argument anticipates, the late Ming was an important period for Jinan culturally, witnessing, among other things, the compilation of Licheng’s first county gazetteers.⁶ However, I argue that this period of literary place-making extended beyond the tumult of the last years of the Ming and into the eighteenth century. Moreover, my emphasis on the importance of translocal connections to local literary production echoes Hilde De Weerdts’ recent critique of Bol’s thesis based on her study of the circulation, not just production, of texts in the Southern Song. She argues that increased textual circulation allowed literati to receive more information about other places and the empire’s affairs from their hometowns. While in some ways the sphere of elite social activity became more parochial, the geographic scope of their communication networks and political imagination became broader than ever.⁷

To some extent, this characterization of the early Qing as a period of translocal place-making and state-building echoes Tobie Meyer-Fong’s discussion of place, writing, and physical construction in seventeenth-century Yangzhou.⁸ Meyer-Fong shows how the desolation of the Ming-Qing conquest provided fertile ground for developing and expressing ideas about place. However, literary production about Baotu Spring was less focused on remembering and rebuilding what was lost in the destruction of the Qing conquest per se than Meyer-Fong finds in Yangzhou. Moreover, Meyer-Fong contrasts the recovery of the seventeenth century with the growing sway of imperial monumentalism emanating from Beijing in the eighteenth century and analyzes some of these social and cultural changes through differences between the Kangxi and

⁵ Bol, “The Rise of Local History”; Bol, “The ‘Localist Turn.’”

⁶ Bol, “The ‘Localist Turn.’”

⁷ De Weerdts, *Information, Territory, and Networks*.

⁸ Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture*.

Qianlong tours.⁹ In effect, Meyer-Fong distinguishes between the more bottom-up rebuilding of the early Qing and the increasing influence of the imperial state in the eighteenth century. I do not find such a stark distinction between cultural production in Jinan in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though. Instead, from the mid-seventeenth through mid-eighteenth century we see how trends from the late Ming interacted with new political practices, producing physical structures and a sense of place that wove this city of springs and the Qing empire together. These divergent experiences underscore how the production of imperial culture was filtered through local contexts and the spatial differentiation that Qing governance of China proper produced, even when it entailed similar kinds of activities (literary production and physical construction) that encompassed the same social classes (e.g. literati).¹⁰

The second narrative this chapter challenges relates to the spatial organization of late imperial cities. Scholars have generally followed Skinner's hypothesis that late imperial cities generally possessed two kinds of centers or nuclei: one for gentry and officials and one for merchants.¹¹ Skinner observes that commercial centers often emerged in sections of the city that were not physically central but were accessible by various transport routes. Meanwhile, cosmological considerations made the physical centers of cities an attractive location for major government buildings.¹² In special cases, like the imperial capital of Beijing, the exclusionary symbolic and practical functions of the center were so strong that they displaced the local elite.¹³

⁹ Meyer-Fong, 165–96.

¹⁰ On the differentiated (or “multilateral”) construction of imperial culture in urban Britain, see Beaven, *Visions of Empire*, 5.

¹¹ Skinner, “Introduction: Urban Social Structure,” 533–36; Xu Yinong, *The Chinese City*, 75–77; Belsky, *Localities at the Center*, 74–97. Christian de Pee deploys this duality of “imperial” and “cultural,” but acknowledges that despite competing with each other, these two kinds of spaces were mutually dependent. de Pee, “Purchase on Power.”

¹² Wright, “The Cosmology of the Chinese City”; Wheatley, *The Pivot of the Four Quarters*. For general discussion on the importance of central spaces to places, see Summers, *Real Spaces*, 130–36.

¹³ Zhu, *Chinese Spatial Strategies*, 66.

In more ordinary cases, though, John Watt argues that the official's office, or *yamen*, served as a social center for the city's elite.¹⁴

Given its location outside one of Jinan's main gates and proximity to water transport, it is unsurprising that Baotu Spring became a center for commercial activity. However, starting at least from the Northern Song, it also served official functions. This reflected Baotu Spring's practical and aesthetic qualities as well as discourse integrating Jinan into the surrounding region through this site. The visits of the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors built on these traditions but they also dramatically deepened the spring's association with imperial authority despite its spatial peripherality. The imperial symbolic import of Baotu Spring reflected Jinan's role as a conduit of the translocal networks that sustained Qing hybrid spatial politics.

The two groups of works discussed above share the assumption of state and society as functionally distinct spheres of behavior. Beyond this chapter's empirical contributions to these discussions, it furthers this dissertation's goal of challenging this theoretical orientation. Through showing how localist literary production extended into the high Qing, this chapter shows how place-making and state-building could enhance each other. Moreover, the use of Baotu Spring to convey imperial presence demonstrates the distribution of the state across space and through society.

The Literary History of Baotu Spring and Ren Hongyuan's *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*

Between 1713 and 1738, Jinan native Ren Hongyuan compiled *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* (*Baotu quan zhi*). The length of time it took him to complete this work testifies to the abundance of literature, especially poems, that had been written about this site in the previous six-and-a-half

¹⁴ Watt, "The Yamen and Urban Administration," 363.

centuries. As primarily a compilation of existing sources, *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* reflected the history of both individual writings about Baotu Spring and of more general local records, i.e. gazetteers. This section first traces each of these histories individually and then brings them together in an analysis of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*. Ren's compilation greatly expanded upon the writings about Baotu Spring available to Qing readers in local gazetteers. In this sense, his relative lack of selectivity makes it more difficult to identify texts that he deemed canonical. However, analyzing Ren's selection of writings in comparison to county gazetteers from 1640 and 1778 allows us to identify texts that were particularly iconic in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The production of this informal corpus depended on the writing and compilation of local people like Ren, but people who were not natives of Jinan or even Shandong played an out-sized role in producing texts that were particularly well-known and influential. This analysis underlies the next section's discussion of the content of this discourse. One of the themes that stretches across both sections is the importance of translocality to discourse about Baotu Spring. The fact that some of Baotu Spring's most important admirers came to Jinan as officials draws our attention to how the production of local culture had been bound up in the operation of political institutions long before two of the greatest emperors in Chinese history graced Jinan with their presence.

Jinan's Gazetteers in Historical Context

Scholars commonly treat the emergence of the genre of the local gazetteer (*difang zhi*) as a byproduct of political and social changes during the Tang (618–907) and Song dynasties. During this period the elite class expanded and its members shifted their focus away from the capital and towards their home localities in the provinces, which became the bases of their social

power.¹⁵ Consequently, they became increasingly invested in exercising their identity as literati (*shi*) through writing about their home places.¹⁶ Like the antecedent genre of the map guide (*tujing*), gazetteers provided useful information to both territorial administrators and the central government, but they were increasingly products of local initiative and served interests beyond those of the government.¹⁷ For instance, Joseph Dennis has shown how the elite in Xinchang, Zhejiang used gazetteers to construct a kind of “public genealogy” that consolidated the status of their families.¹⁸

One of the most important early sources related to Jinan’s geography is Yu Qin’s *Qi sheng* (*A History of Qi*). Yu (1284–1333) was a native of Yidu, Shandong and served as an official both there and elsewhere. His personal knowledge and position as an official allowed him to compile *Qi sheng*, which is the oldest extant complete local gazetteer from Shandong.¹⁹ As suggested by the title, *Qi sheng* is not focused exclusively on Jinan but the larger administrative region of which it was the capital at the time. Nor is it by any stretch the oldest text examined in this chapter. However, it is integral to this study as both the earliest local compendium that contains texts from the Southern Song and Jin and a point of reference for subsequent gazetteer compilers. Xincheng native Wang Xiangchun (1578–1632) eulogized Yu:

In the old days Yu Qin commented upon the mountains and rivers,
And frankly said there were none in all under heaven like Jinan’s.

于钦昔日评山水，直道济南天下无。²⁰

The second line is, in fact, almost an exact quotation from one of Yu’s few surviving poems,

¹⁵ Hartwell, “Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations”; Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen*.

¹⁶ Bol, “The Rise of Local History,” 41.

¹⁷ Bol, 44–54.

¹⁸ Dennis, *Writing, Publishing, and Reading*, 65ff. Dennis complements Guo Qitao’s research on inter-lineage competition through literary projects. Guo Qitao, “Genealogical Pedigree.”

¹⁹ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 494.

²⁰ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, 494.

titled “Li Mountain”:

In all-under-heaven there are none like Jinan’s mountains and rivers;
The clouds clear and the sun dawns, opening up a vista.
The chain of mountains is Mount Tai’s tail, eastward-running to the sea,
The mountains Que and Hua like falling stars cast verdant light onto the lake.

济南山水天下无，晴云晓日开画图。
群山尾岱东走海，鹊华落星青照湖。²¹

As we will see, the combination of Yu’s appreciation for the broader geographic context of Jinan’s scenery and the fact that he was not a native of Jinan himself was a through-line among admirers of Jinan’s famous sites.

The earliest gazetteer for Shandong Province (*tongzhi*) dates to 1533, but it was not until the middle of the seventeenth century and the very last years of the Ming that county gazetteers for Jinan began to appear. The first of these was *Li sheng* (*A History of Li*), compiled by Liu Chi and printed in 1633. When Qing armies attacked Jinan in 1639, Liu helped organize defenses and was killed when the city fell. The next year, Magistrate Song Zufa set out to compile a county gazetteer that would improve upon Liu’s work. Predictably, he found it difficult to gather the necessary materials in the wake of the previous year’s destruction. He turned, then, to another local literatus, Ye Chengzong, for help. Ye had won a *juren* degree in 1627, but, unlike Liu, he had been unable to secure an official appointment, instead dedicating himself to further studies. Over the space of only a few months Ye revised, reorganized, and supplemented the materials in *Li sheng*, producing the first (in title) *Licheng County Gazetteer*.²² Unlike Liu, Ye survived the Ming-Qing transition and went on to win a *jinshi* degree in the second year of Qing rule. He was appointed to a post as a magistrate in Jiangxi, where he died in 1648, killing himself when the county under his charge fell to rebel forces.

²¹ Yu Qin, *Qi sheng*, 1:37a.

²² Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 513–14; Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:626.

Liu's and Ye's violent deaths emphatically underscore the trans-dynastic nature of the emergence of county-level gazetteers in Jinan. Gazetteer production in Jinan picked up extremely late in the Ming and continued into the early Qing, with the publication of Jinan's first prefectural gazetteer in 1692. New provincial gazetteers were compiled in 1678 and 1736 and were followed by a new county gazetteer in 1778 and a new prefectural gazetteer in 1840. As we will see in chapter 2, this chronology characterized the development of academies (*shuyuan*) in Jinan as well. Thus, rather than dividing the chronology of cultural production in Jinan between the late Ming—characterized by growing localism and a decline in centralized power—and the early Qing—characterized by the consolidation of state power—it makes more sense to see the period of the mid-seventeenth century to mid-eighteenth century as a single period marked by the efflorescence of gazetteer production in Jinan in which Qing writers built on what their predecessors had accomplished in the last years of the Ming. Admittedly, we could split this period into three generations: literati who were adults during the Ming-Qing transition (Liu and Ye), those who were born in the late Ming or early Qing (Wang Ping, Wang Shizhen, and Tian Wen—discussed below), and those who were the students of the former and lived into the mid-eighteenth century (Ren Hongyuan). However, literary production across all three generations exhibited a mix of localist initiative and translocal (including bureaucratic) connections.

The History of Baotu Spring as a Literary Object

“In terms of poetry and literature, writers like Li and Du of the Tang, Zeng and Su of the Song, Yuan and Zhao of the Yuan, Bian and Li of the Ming, or Wang and Tian of the current dynasty are enough to add luster to the mountains and rivers.”²³ As this passage from the 1778 *Licheng County Gazetteer* attests, there was a long and illustrious history of writing about

²³ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, fanli:3b–4a.

Jinan's famous sites. This general account, however, does not quite do justice to the history of writings about Baotu Spring in particular. Twice in his preface to *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, Ren Hongyuan traces this history specifically back to the Northern Song, leaving off this passage's reference to the Tang and Li Bai and Du Fu, two of China's most famous poets.²⁴ This chronology was not coincidental. It is the Northern Song to which we must return to begin tracing the literary corpus about Baotu Spring that would be compiled in subsequent gazetteers. In the course of only a few decades in the late eleventh century, some of the most eminent statesmen and writers of the period, who were forced out of metropolitan positions because of their opposition to Wang Anshi's reforms, took up territorial posts in Jinan.²⁵ They left physical and literary marks that remained touchstones in local discourse through the early Qing and initiated a pattern of imperial officials shaping discourse about Baotu Spring.

The most influential of these figures was Zeng Gong (1019–83). Zeng came to Jinan as the Prefect of Qizhou in 1071. While he served there less than two years, his accomplishments were prodigious and included restraining local despots and resuscitating educational institutions. After his departure, the people built a shrine in his honor on Li Mountain. Zeng's most enduring contributions were the construction projects he initiated and the literary record he left along the way. He organized the construction of a sluice gate that regulated the flow of water between the streams created by the springs to the west of the city and the northern edge of Daming Lake and

²⁴ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 1–2.

²⁵ I do not believe that it was entirely coincidental that it was figures opposed to Wang Anshi's reforms who were engaged in these infrastructural projects. This is particularly apparent from Su Zhe's "A Record of Luoyuan Bridge." Su repeatedly remarks that although the labor (*yi*) required to complete the project was relatively small, the benefit for the community was great. Moreover, he notes that current policies (i.e. Wang Anshi's reforms) made it difficult to give such aid to the people because the new policies required officials to hire laborers instead of relying on *corvée*. Efficiently managing these projects was a way for officials in disfavor to demonstrate the merits of the old system, which they could argue enabled officials to undertake projects to benefit local people. I am unsure if this succession of Wang Anshi opponents coming to Jinan in particular was coincidental. Nor do I know if there was a parallel circulation of Wang Anshi's supporters through the city in periods when he was out of favor or, if so, why their activities there were far less memorable. Li Hequn, *Zhongguo gudai qiaoliang wenxian*, 109.

recorded his achievements in his “Record of the Qizhou North Sluice Gate” (*Qizhou beishuimen ji*). Additionally, he dredged out Daming Lake and the water channels north of the city to facilitate drainage and built a series of bridges and pavilions around the lake. This greatly enhanced the beauty of the area and created spaces in which writers could gather and muse on Jinan’s scenery.²⁶

Zeng also constructed two halls (*tang*) outside the west gate of the city, next to Baotu Spring. He named the northern hall, which faced Li Mountain, Lishan and the southern one, which directly faced Baotu Spring, Luoyuan. This latter name derived from Baotu Spring’s status as the putative origin of the Luo River. His “Record of Qizhou’s Two Halls” (*Qizhou ertang ji*), which explains why he constructed these halls and his naming of them, is an important geographical text in its own right, and I will discuss it in some detail in the next section. This is also the earliest extant text to use the name *baotu* to refer to Baotu Spring.²⁷ Zeng explained his interest local geography, saying, “Arranging accommodations for receiving envoys [the purpose of these halls] and distinguishing a place’s mountains and rivers are both the work of a prefect. Thus, I have become knowledgeable of them and have ordered the people of this area to continue investigations.”²⁸

In 1073, the same year that Zeng left Jinan, Su Zhe (1039–1112) arrived as the Chief of the Prefectural Staff (*zhangshuji*). Su, like his older brother Su Shi (1037–1101) and Zeng, is remembered as one of the eight great literary masters of the Tang and Song Dynasties. Having heard of Jinan’s beautiful scenery, he requested and received an appointment to the city.²⁹ Although his three-year stay in Jinan was longer than Zeng’s, Su’s infrastructural and literary

²⁶ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 481.

²⁷ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 18–19.

²⁸ Ren Hongyuan, 204.

²⁹ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui wenhua tonglan: mingshi lin quan*, 14.

accomplishments were not quite as transformative. He commemorated the construction of a stone bridge named Luoyuan outside the west gate of the city in “A Record of Luoyuan Bridge” (*Luoyuan qiao ji*) and wrote a number of poems about Jinan’s scenery, especially Daming Lake. Su Shi also passed through Jinan in 1077, staying with the Qizhou Prefect, Li Chang. He left behind an inscription for Kanquan Pavilion (rebuilt as Guanlan Pavilion in the Ming), next to Baotu Spring.³⁰ After another purge of Wang Anshi’s opponents from the capital, Chao Buzhi (1053–1110), a disciple of Su Shi and native of Juye, Shandong was appointed Qizhou Prefect in 1094. Chao both renovated and eulogized the construction completed by Zeng twenty years prior.³¹

Zeng Gong’s commission to local people to continue investigations of Jinan’s geography was taken up by another disciple of Su Shi, Li Gefei (ca. 1048–1108). Li, a native of nearby Zhangqiu, earned his *jinshi* in 1076 (after which he met Su Shi in the capital) and experienced a similar fluctuation in fortunes as Zeng and the Su’s, as Wang Anshi fell in and out of favor. Li’s most famous literary product was his “Famous Gardens of Luoyang” (*Luoyang yuan ji*). However, he also wrote “A Record of Lixia’s Waters” (*Lixia shui ji*). The Song scholar Zhang Bangji referred to this work (and Zeng Gong’s poems) in his own description of Jinan’s springs in *Mozhuang man lu*, calling it a “very detailed account.”³²

Unfortunately, Li Gefei’s essay did not survive. Instead, the oldest putatively comprehensive record of Jinan’s springs is the “Famous Springs Stele” (*mingquan bei*). The author of this stele, which was erected during the Jin Dynasty (1115–1234), is unknown. The style is plain, simply recording the names of seventy-two springs and their locations relative to

³⁰ Ren Baozhen and Li Xiaoli, *Baotu liuchang: shihua, shihua, shuhua*, 4:11–13.

³¹ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui wenhua tonglan: mingshi lin quan*, 20–22.

³² Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 485.

each other. Seventy-two was not a precise number, but a commonly used signifier of a great multitude.³³ Later authors would compare the simplicity of this stele, which had survived, unfavorably to the style of Li Gefei's writing, which had not.

Despite not setting a mark for literary quality or even establishing an unimpeachably authoritative list of Jinan's springs, this stele did initiate the tradition of writing about Jinan's "seventy-two springs," which continues even today. Subsequent enumerations in the Ming and Qing were more poetic in style. The first and most influential of these was Yan Bi's early fifteenth-century "Poems on Seventy-Two Springs." Instead of merely listing the springs, Yan wrote heptasyllabic quatrains (*qi jueju*) for all seventy-two that he identified. While his list of springs differed somewhat from the Jin stele, he still put Baotu Spring at the head of the series. The last line of Yan's poem about Baotu Spring calls it the first, number one, or foremost spring (*diyi quan*). It is the first recorded piece of literature to do so.³⁴ As we will see, this phrase's connection to Baotu Spring would come to have special significance in the Qing.³⁵

Of all the texts written about Baotu Spring, arguably none has been more influential than one by Zhao Mengfu (1254–1322). Zhao was a famous painter and calligrapher from Huzhou in modern Zhejiang who grew up in the last years of the Southern Song. In 1292 he came to Jinan as the Vice Prefect of the Jinan Route, staying for about three years. His most famous product from this period was a scroll painting titled *Que Hua qiuse tu* ("Autumn Scenery of the Que and Hua Mountains"). This painting was a gift for his friend Zhou Mi, who had spent his life in Jiangnan, unable to visit his ancestral home in Jinan.³⁶ Zhao's "Baotu Spring," a heptasyllabic regulated verse (*qiyan lüshi*), is especially important because of the large number of subsequent

³³ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, 28.

³⁴ Ren Baozhen and Li Xiaoli, *Baotu liuchang: shihua, shihua, shuhua*, 4:85.

³⁵ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 71.

³⁶ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui wenhua tonglan: mingshi lin quan*, 29.

poets who wrote poems matching its rhyme scheme, including 77 of the 165 other poems included in the literary selections section of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*.



Figure 1.1: Zhao Mengfu, “Autumn Scenery of the Que and Hua Mountains” (Public Domain, Wikimedia Commons)

Matching Zhao’s rhymes did not require slavish adherence to his poem’s themes, but it was practically inevitable that they would be influential. Matching poems usually utilized five line-ending characters: both characters from the first couplet, and the final character of each subsequent one. The entirety of Zhao’s poem reads:

Could the origin of the Luo be nowhere under all of heaven?³⁷
 It is a pot of white jade bubbling up from the level land.
 Long have we feared that the vitality of the cavernous ravine is leaking away,
 But even in years of drought one does not fret the eastern sea drying up.

Clouds and mist moisten Hua Mountain with their steam,
 And billowing sounds shake Daming Lake.
 Coming often to the spring, I cleanse myself;
 Filling my heart with ice and snow, my feelings rise up pristine.

灤水發源天下無，平地湧出白玉壺。
 穀虛久恐元氣洩，歲旱不愁東海枯。

雲霧潤蒸華不注，波濤聲震大明湖。

³⁷ The ambiguous semantics of this sentence make it difficult to translate, and poems that utilized Zhao’s scheme seem to have played upon different possibilities. My decision to translate it as a question is informed by the second line in this couplet and Huang Liangzuo’s commentary on how the two lines together speak to the sudden emergence of Baotu Spring, as if out of nowhere, with the second line answering the question posed by the first. However, other instances of basically the same semantic structure are best translated as declarative statements and clearly imply a comparison to everywhere else under heaven. This is, in fact, how I have translated the very similar phrasing in Yu Qin’s poem “Li Mountain” above. This would suggest alternative possibilities for this first line, including “The origin of the Luo is nowhere *else* under heaven,” or “The origin of the Luo is *like* nowhere *else* under heaven.” Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, 28.

時來泉上濯塵土，冰雪滿懷清興孤。³⁸

The rhyming characters in order are *wu* (negative particle), *hu* (pot), *ku* (dry), *hu* (lake), and *gu* (alone). The use of *hu* (lake) in later poems provides a good example of how Zhao's composition casts a shadow over other poems that match it. In Zhao's poem, *hu* refers specifically to Daming Lake (*Daming hu*) and happens to rhyme with *Huafuzhu* in the previous line, another name for Hua Mountain. Some poems maintain this direct connection to Daming Lake. However, Zhao's specific use of the word and the fact that authors were necessarily aware of how he had used it colors our interpretation of even more generic uses. Moreover, while only a couple of poets went out of their way to end the preceding line with *Huafuzhu*, we know that Zhao's poetic connection between Hua Mountain and Daming Lake—reinforced by the rhyming consonance of *Huafuzhu* and *Daming hu*—was in the minds of even the writers who didn't.

Examining the list of poems about Baotu Spring that appear in the Chongzhen and Qianlong editions of the *Licheng County Gazetteer* and *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* in table 1.1, one is struck both by the presence of illustrious non-locals and the absence of some of Jinan's most famous literary figures. To be sure, this list does include Jinan natives Zhang Yanghao and Guang Lu. However, it excludes some even more illustrious litterateurs who seem to have had relatively obvious connections to Baotu Spring. As I discuss below, these local people were present in discourse on Baotu Spring in various ways, but their absence from the canon of texts central to the spring further highlights how compilers prioritized texts composed by famous sojourners to those of Jinan natives.³⁹

³⁸ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 68–69.

³⁹ I have not found a source that allows me to state definitively whether gazetteers' prioritization of non-locals' writings about local sites was in any way peculiar to Jinan. There is no small amount of literature that includes discussions of gazetteers in reference to specific contexts. I need to spend more time in this literature to see if other authors have commented upon this. The problem is that studies of gazetteers across localities are probably rarer than should be the case, given their importance as a source base for late imperial history. (e.g. Joseph Denis's book on

Name	Dates	Relationship to Jinan	Native Place (Modern Name)	Title of Text
Zeng Gong	1019–83	Qizhou Prefect	Nanfeng, Jiangxi	“Baotu Spring”
—	—	—	—	“Record of Qizhou’s Two Halls”
Zhao Mengfu	1254–1322	Vice Prefect of Jinan Route	Huzhou, Zhejiang	“Baotu Spring”
Zhang Yanghao	1270–1329	native	Zhangqiu, Shandong	“Baotu Spring”
—	—	—	—	“Baotu Spring”
Ye Mian	1416–? (1445 <i>jinshi</i>)	Shandong Administration Vice Commissioner	Shangyu, Zhejiang	“Drinking Baotu Spring”
Wang Shouren (Yangming)	1472–1529	Shandong Examination Supervisor	Yuyao, Zhejiang	“Baotu Spring” (Matching Zhao Songxue’s Rhyme)
Wang Tingxiang	1474–1544	Shandong Assistant Education Commissioner	Lankao, Henan	“Drinking Baotu Spring”
Hu Zuanzong	1480–1560	Governor of Shandong	Tianshui, Gansu	“Ode to Baotu Spring”
Guang Lu	(1573 <i>juren</i>)	native	Jinan, Shandong	“Baotu Spring’s Baixue Tower”

Table 1.1: Iconic texts on Baotu Spring. This table includes texts that appear in the 1640 Licheng County Gazetteer, Baotu Spring Gazetteer, and the 1778 Licheng County Gazetteer. ‘—’ indicates information is the same as the previous row. (Two texts by Zeng Gong and Zhang Yanghao appear in all three compilations.)

gazetteers focuses on Xinchang County in Zhejiang.) Another difficulty is that gazetteers could accomplish several different things that might have been mutually exclusive were they not so large and multifaceted. On the one hand, they were vehicles for members of the local elite to assert their status through recording behavior proper to the late imperial elite (exam success, charitable activities, official service, literary production, etc.). On the other hand, they could also raise the profile of a given place by touting its relationship to famous people. I would, however, expect the latter to be the more pressing impulse in selecting poems about scenic spots like Baotu Spring. Other sections of the gazetteer, like biographies and records of published works, may have been more suited toward accomplishing the complementary goal of asserting the literary merits of a locality’s people. Here it is highly consequential that compilers of the Qianlong *Licheng County Gazetteer* decided that, unlike some other gazetteers, the literary selections (*yiwen*) section would not contain a great number of poems from the works listed. (They did, however, include prefaces.) Had they chosen otherwise, a greater number of poems about Baotu Spring written by Jinan authors would probably have appeared in the gazetteer. This does not change the fact that the writings about Baotu Spring that were included were disproportionately written by outsiders is notable, but it may make it less remarkable. Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, fanli 3a–3b; Will, *Chinese Local Gazetteers*, 22.

Those absent from table 1.1 include three of the most famous poets attached to Jinan. The first of these is Li Qingzhao (1084–1155), the daughter of the aforementioned Li Gefe and one of China’s most famous poets (male or female). In fact, Li’s absence is not terribly surprising, since her personal connection to Jinan was almost certainly limited and only a relatively small number of her poetic compositions are extant. None of these indisputably references Jinan or any of its sites. There is a legend that she resided near Baotu Spring, but this did not emerge until the early Qing. However, the origin of this story is of some interest: it appears in poems written by Ren Hongyuan and his contemporary Tian Wen.⁴⁰ Consequently, if any text were to go out of its way to reference Li’s connection to Jinan, we would expect it to be Ren’s *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, but it does not do so.

Jinan’s most famous poet of the late imperial period was Li Panlong (1514–70). If Li wrote any poems about Baotu Spring, they do not play a prominent role in his literary collections and none appears in either of the county gazetteers or *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*.⁴¹ However, poems about Baotu Spring are rife with allusions to him. During Li’s life, he constructed a residence named Baixue Tower, first near Bao Mountain in the country northeast of Jinan and then on an island in Daming Lake. After Li’s death, the official Ye Mengxiong constructed a third Baixue Tower next to Baotu Spring. This structure became both a center for academic endeavors (see chapter 2) and a site for commemorating Li’s literary legacy, including in poems about the spring.

Finally, by the time Ren had completed *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, a number of poets from Jinan and the surrounding area had already gained repute during the Qing. The most famous of

⁴⁰ Ren Baozhen and Li Xiaoli, *Baotu liuchang: shihua, shihua, shuhua*, 4:20.

⁴¹ I base this on not finding any writings about Baotu Spring in the following collections of Li’s writings: Li Panlong, *Cangming ji*; Li Panlong, *Li Panlong shi xuan*; Li Panlong, *Li Panlong shiwen xuan*.

these who was a native of Jinan was Wang Ping. He was a close friend of the more famous scholar-official Wang Shizhen from Xincheng and Tian Wen from Dezhou.⁴² For obvious reasons, their poems would not appear in the Ming county gazetteer. However, only one poem by these individuals—Tian Wen’s “Ode to Baotu Spring” (*Baotu quan ge*)—appears in both *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* and the Qianlong county gazetteer. This is somewhat deceptive, though. *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* includes two poems each by Wang Ping, Wang Shizhen, and Tian Wen, which is true of only a small number of authors. Neither of Wang Shizhen’s poems is included in the Qianlong county gazetteer, but, among others written by him, “Visiting Baotu Spring on an Autumn Day” (*Qiuri you Baotu quan*) and “E-Ying Shrine” (*E-Ying ci shi*) are. Similarly, while the county gazetteer includes a number of poems by Wang Ping, none is about Baotu Spring per se, and two different poems consequently appear in *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*.

Local writers obviously made important contributions to writings about Jinan. Wang, Wang, and Tian show that writing about Jinan’s sites, including Baotu Spring, was popular among local writers in the early Qing, of which Ren’s compilation of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* is also evidence. Ren’s familiarity with the writings of Wang Ping and others may, in fact, have been an inspiration for his attention to historical writings about Baotu Spring. This does not, however, de-center the importance of prominent non-natives to the formation of a coherent corpus of texts about Baotu Spring, both through inspiring subsequent writers and being commemorated for their works. In fact, the relatively smaller volume of writings about Baotu Spring produced by prominent individuals like Zeng Gong and Zhao Mengfu may have facilitated deeming particular texts worthy of canonization. This was in contrast to the prolific contributions of local authors in the early Qing whose works were yet to undergo a process of

⁴² On Wang Shizhen’s literary influence in Yangzhou (where he was particularly influential in the post-conquest reconstruction) and Guangzhou, see Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture*, 25–74; Miles, *The Sea of Learning*, 26.

winnowing and integration into a set of canonical texts about Baotu Spring. This body of texts about Baotu Spring was thus the product of the passing of time, the movement of individuals across space, and their interactions with each other and Jinan's scenery.

Ren Hongyuan's Baotu Spring Gazetteer

Like gazetteers in general, the genre of topographical gazetteers emerged during the Southern Song. Such gazetteers focused on particular geographic features rather than administrative units at the county level or above. They did not become common, however, until the sixteenth century.⁴³ Timothy Brook associates these texts, like the gazetteer genre as a whole, with the localization of the elite in the late Ming. He does note, though, that Qing topographical gazetteers exhibited considerable continuity with those produced in the Ming and that there was a spike in production in the late seventeenth century and to a lesser extent in the middle of the eighteenth century.⁴⁴ Neither of these periods corresponds to rising localism, at least as it is viewed in existing scholarship. They do, however, coincide with Ren Hongyuan's compilation of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*. As I have shown, this text rode the crest of literary production in and about Jinan that started in the late Ming and continued into the Qing. *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* thus reflected both transregional and local trends. This duality is reflected in both its production and its content.

Ren Hongyuan was born in 1677, meaning he was only a child when the Kangxi Emperor first visited Jinan in 1684. Ren's family were salt merchants who originally came from Hedong in Shanxi. His father, Sizhang, had been a licentiate (*xiucai*) in the local school for the children of merchants (*yunxue*). Like his father, Hongyuan was a student but never made it past the lowest level of the exams. He did, however, travel widely, study poetry, and build friendships with other

⁴³ Brook, *Geographical Sources of Ming-Qing History*, 32–33.

⁴⁴ Brook, 33.

literati. One of his poems, “The Jade Color of Spring Grass” (*chuncao bise*), so impressed Wang Shizhen that he not only gave Ren the nickname “Spring Grass Licentiate” (*chuncao xiucai*) but even said he could be the equal of Wang Ping.⁴⁵

Ren set down the principles for compilation (*fanli*) for *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* in 1713. Ren himself was by no means old, but this was two years after the death of Wang Shizhen and nine after the death of Tian Wen. Wang Ping would pass in 1720 and Pu Songling—the famous author and native of Jinan Prefecture—in 1715. Ren thus began this project towards the end of an early Qing golden age of literary production centered on Jinan. The Kangxi Emperor’s tours had added further luster to the city and its famous sites. Ren’s preface reflects a desire to preserve Baotu Spring and the writings of its famous visitors from being forgotten and to do so in the form of a book, which, unlike physical structures like steles, would not be subject to the depredations of the elements or affected by new construction.⁴⁶ The postface, written by Ren’s nephew Ren Jiuling, says that his uncle decided to undertake this project after reading a treatise on a faraway place and commenting, “As for Baotu Spring, it is a scenic spot in my home place. Why should we not cherish the writings left by travelers in the same way?”⁴⁷

Despite the sense of urgency conveyed in Ren’s preface, the project stretched out over almost thirty years, not being published until 1742. Ren indicates in his preface that he had, in fact, completed the work much earlier but did not dare to publish it, hoping that someone else more esteemed would finish it for him.⁴⁸ Ren did not undertake the project alone. In addition to

⁴⁵ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 22:30b–31a; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 41:5a; Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 251.

⁴⁶ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, xuyan, 1.

⁴⁷ The postface identifies this text as “Yi wu kao” (夷語考) by Wang Shangshu (王尚書). I have been unable to locate a text under this exact title. The *shangshu* in the author name was used to indicate someone who had served as a minister of one of the boards. My best guess is that this refers to a section of Wang Shiqi’s *Sanyun chou zu kao* that describes Mongolian language and that 語 (meaning language) was miswritten as 浯. Ren Hongyuan, 251.

⁴⁸ Ren Hongyuan, xuyan, 1–2; Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 530.

his son and nephews, who helped proofread and prepare the book for printing, he lists thirteen investigators (*caifang*) who helped gather materials.

The range of information and materials they gathered was impressive. Ren based the organization of the gazetteer on the existing *Licheng County Gazetteer* from the late Ming and other topographical gazetteers. It is split into two volumes (*juan*). The first volume contains twelve sub-headings, starting with the imperial tours. In the drawings (*tujing*) section, Ren included the drawing of the area around Baotu Spring from the “Eight Views of Lixia” in the county gazetteer, but he also commissioned two additional drawings so that readers could observe how the area had changed. One of these is dated 1714 and the other 1739, corresponding to two distinct phases of the compilation process: shortly after Ren had begun the project and as he sought to bring it to completion. This volume also includes sections on the origin (*yuanliu*) and location (*jizhi*) of the spring, physical construction—split between extant (*jianzhi*) and non-extant (*guji*) structures—changes in its name and the administration under which it fell (*yange*), disasters (*zaiyi*), regular biographies (*renwu*) and traces of immortals (*xianji*), and strange stories (*youguai*) and legends (*chuanwen*). Most of these sections are very short. The exception is the biographical section; the biographies—mostly of authors whose writings appear in the literary selections—are not very detailed but number around two hundred.

The main portion of the text is in the second *juan*. This contains literature (*yiwen*)—by far the largest section—inscriptions (*jinshi*), and hanging boards and couplets (*elian*). Most of the literary selections are *shi* poems, many of which, as noted above, borrow the rhyme scheme of Zhao Mengfu’s famous poem. Ren and his helpers likely spent a considerable portion of their time on the project collecting these texts.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Unfortunately, unlike other gazetteers, *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* does not name the sources of its selections, making it impossible to trace exactly from where Ren et al. were drawing these poems.

In the next section I will discuss in more detail the content of the poems appearing in *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* and other compilations. First, though, it is worthwhile to return to the content presented in table 1.1, which shows the considerable presence of non-natives among literary compositions included in the late Ming and Qianlong-era versions of the county gazetteer and *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*. Of 170 authors with texts included in the literary selections section of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, I have been able to identify home places for 139 of them. As we would expect, a significant portion of the authors came from Licheng County and elsewhere in Shandong—26 and 24 respectively. However, their combined share of authors was only 36% of the total. The largest remaining shares belonged to Shanxi and Fujian (12% each), Jiangsu (11%), Zhejiang (10%), and Henan (6%).⁵⁰ Moreover, the relatively high proportion of authors from Shandong included in *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* actually highlights what I have presented in table 1.1, where Shandong authors are underrepresented. It was not for lack of writings by local people that compilers turned to these texts.

The composition and contents of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* demonstrate two aspects of the history of local writing about Jinan and Baotu Spring. On the one hand, it was a *local* project—both in the sense that it was produced by Jinan natives and in the sense that it aimed to preserve and elevate Jinan and its famous spring. On the other hand, *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* bore the marks of translocal interactions. While Ren speaks of “our Jinan,” his family’s assimilation to Jinan was relatively recent, judging by the fact that his father had studied in the *yunxue*, not the regular county school for registered residents. Wang Shizhen—a native of the prefecture but not Jinan itself—played an important role in advancing Ren’s literary reputation. The idea for compiling *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* may have been born from Ren’s travels to other places, or at

⁵⁰ For the purpose of compiling these statistics, I have assigned authors whose home places are listed as Jiangnan to the provincial unit (Jiangsu or Anhui) to which their home county would later belong.

least (more certainly) his reading about them. Finally, the selections of poems and essays demonstrates Ren's recognition of the literary contributions of people from across the empire. An examination of the content of discourse about Baotu Spring further demonstrates the role of translocality in this place-making process. This will then position us to analyze both the place of Jinan in the Kangxi and Qianlong tours and the place of the tours in the history of writing about Baotu Spring, including in *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*.

Spatial Themes in Writings about Baotu Spring

The previous section explained how the form of geographic discourse about Baotu Spring developed from the Northern Song into the Qing. In this section, I turn to the content of this discourse. I organize this discussion through four topics that recur in writings about Baotu Spring and Jinan's famous sites. These are the mythological significance of Jinan's geography, the origins of Jinan's spring water, connections, particularly sensory, between Jinan's major sites, and the place of Jinan in "all-under-heaven." This analysis supports three related arguments about geographic discourse concerning Jinan. First, Baotu Spring and other sites outside the walled city served as points for orienting understandings of Jinan's urban space. Geographic writings defined the space that constituted Jinan not through referencing a spatial center but by dispersing meaning to spatially peripheral sites. Moreover, these sites, although at the margins of the city, did not serve to mark its boundaries. Rather, they were conduits for integrating Jinan into larger physical and imaginative translocal geographies. Finally, as seen in the previous section, this geographic discourse was the product of both Jinan natives and sojourners, including officials. In other words, the translocal process through which the literary corpus related to Baotu Spring was produced mirrored the content of that discourse.

Spatial Mythologies

As discussed in the previous section, Zeng Gong's "Record of Qizhou's Two Halls" was a major touchstone for geographic writing about Jinan and Baotu Spring in particular. Much of this essay focuses on explaining the significance of the names he chose for these halls: Lishan (Li Mountain) and Luoyuan (Origin of the Luo). Zeng claims that he chose these names based on his "investigation of the [surrounding] mountains and rivers" (*yin kao qi shanchuan, er ming zhi*).⁵¹ This investigation entailed not only becoming familiar with Jinan's topography but, even more importantly, establishing the mytho-historical significance of this topography through an investigation of classical texts.

Zeng Gong's essay centers on one main point of contention surrounding the identity of Li Mountain. The *Shiji* (*Records of the Grand Historian*) claims that the mythical sage emperor Shun "tilled Li Mountain, fished in Lei Pond, made pottery on the bank of the river, produced utensils at Shouqiu, and took advantage [of trading] in Fuxia."⁵² However, there were other mountains with the same name that had their own claim to being the one near which Shun had tilled. The *Shangshu* claimed that Leishou Mountain in Hedong (modern Shanxi), which was also called Li Mountain, was the place where Shun had tended his fields. Since, after marrying the two daughters of Yao, Shun purportedly lived at Weirui in modern Yongji County in Shanxi, there was some evidence for this competing claim.⁵³

To make the case for Jinan's Li Mountain, Zeng relied heavily on the text of the *Shiji* itself. As quoted above, the passage that mentions Li Mountain also refers to a series of other places: Lei Pond, the banks of the river, Shouqiu, and Fuxia. Zeng cited commentaries by Zheng

⁵¹ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 203.

⁵² Ren Hongyuan, 203.

⁵³ Ren Hongyuan, 203.

Xuan, Huangfu Mi, and Er Jiasuo to demonstrate that these places were all in the area that would become the kingdoms of Lu and Wei in modern Shandong and were clearly connected to each other: Lei Pond in Jiyin, Fuxia within the kingdom of Wei, Shouqiu north of the eastern pass to the Kingdom of Lu, and the banks of the river referring to Taoqiuting, southwest of Dingtao, on the south side of the Ji River. It would not make sense for Li Mountain alone to be far to the west. This all accorded with Mencius' claim that "Shun was an eastern barbarian." Zeng based his argument, then, on Jinan's proximity to other sites in the text, not anything particular about the city itself.⁵⁴

Paralleling Li Mountain's association with Shun and the presence of his shrine on top of the mountain, there was a shrine dedicated to his two wives, Ehuang and Nü Ying, on the north bank of Baotu Spring. According to legend, Ehuang and Nü Ying killed themselves upon hearing of Shun's death on a southern tour. Afterward they were venerated as goddesses of both the Xiang River and the Luo River, the latter because of Shun's putative connection to Jinan and Li Mountain.⁵⁵ However mythological this connection was, it was certainly very old. The *Shuijing zhu* (*Commentary on the Water Classic*), written in the Northern Wei (386–534), attests to the association between the two goddesses and the Luo River, saying that the Luo was popularly called the Ejiang River because of the presence of this shrine next to its source, Baotu Spring. The text continues to note that Jinan faces south toward Li Mountain, where Shun was said to have tilled.⁵⁶

Between the writing of the *Shuijing zhu* and Zeng Gong's construction of Luoyuan and Lishan halls, this shrine was refashioned as a shrine to the immortal Lü Dongbin and

⁵⁴ Ren Hongyuan, 203.

⁵⁵ Dai Yongxia, *Baotu quan shihua*, 21.

⁵⁶ Li Daoyuan, *Shuijing zhu*, juan 8.

subsequently fell into disrepair. There were several waves of reconstruction over the course of the Ming and Qing, but none of these seem to have entailed offerings to Ehuang and Nüying specifically. Today, the hall behind the existing Luoyuan Hall (constructed in the Ming) is called E-Ying Shrine; to the north of it is a hall that contains images of the three sage emperors, Yao, Shun, and Yu.⁵⁷ Despite this discontinuous history of physical structures and religious rituals, Baotu Spring continued to be associated with Ehuang and Nü Ying. For instance, the Qing poet Wang Shizhen wrote a poem titled “E-Ying Shrine,” commemorating the prior existence of this structure. Wang’s poem provides a good example of how place-specific mythologies could be woven into imaginative ruminations that stretched across space and time.

Given Zeng’s close attention to Shun’s association with Li Mountain and his obvious concern for linking the mountain with Baotu Spring, one would expect him to use mythological allusion to draw an explicit parallel between the sites and the names of these halls, but he does not. Zeng was certainly aware that this was a possibility. His poem “Baotu Spring” closes with the lines:

Among the layered walls in Qilu, it is the capital city,
Also holding Ehuang and Nüying, it astonishes the people.

層城齊魯封疆會，況托娥英詫世人。⁵⁸

Zeng’s attention to Ehuang and Nü Ying in this poem also suggests that their absence from his “Record” was likely not the product of an intentional erasure of this association.

Whatever the reason, the corpus of subsequent writings about Baotu Spring also reflects this general inattention to these mythological characters, even though they were by no means a taboo subject. Instead, it seems more appropriate to understand the connection between Shun and

⁵⁷ Dai Yongxia, *Baotu quan shihua*, 21–23.

⁵⁸ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 63–64.

his wives as one among several layers of subtext that linked Baotu Spring and Li Mountain. On one hand, it could operate in parallel as an alternative inspiration to writers contemplating the sites (perhaps even Zeng Gong). On the other hand, it intersected themes, such as the relationship between masculine and feminine and the flow of vital *qi* that were more often explicitly explored in literature about Baotu Spring.

Mysterious and Manifest: The Origins of Baotu Spring

The physical and spiritual origins of Baotu Spring were, as much as any other, the theme most ruminated upon by literati. We can trace this back to Zeng Gong's "Record" and his decision not to follow through with tracing the mythological significance of Baotu Spring as he had with Li Mountain. Instead, when turning to explain the significance of the name *luoyuan*, his essay shifts from the mythological import of Baotu Spring to the question of its physical origins.

Based on existing pictorial representations and popular sayings, Zeng concludes in his essay that the origin of Baotu Spring is the waters that run off from Mt. Tai and the other mountains southeast of Jinan. Zeng traces the flow of these waters through Black Water Cove, then Cedar Cliff Cove, and then over Thirsty Horse Cliff, about fifty *li* west of the city. From there, he says, the spring water "secretly flows through the earth" until it bursts out in Baotu Spring. To support this account, Zeng quotes a popular saying, "Whenever you discard a husk in Black Water Cove, you will see it here."⁵⁹

Zeng says only a little about Baotu Spring itself: "Baotu Spring is warm in the winter, and the vegetable sprouts next to it continue to thrive through the winter, and so it is also called a hot spring." He notes that there are a number of other such springs around Jinan, all with the same color and taste, which he takes as a sign of their common origin. Together, the water from

⁵⁹ Ren Hongyuan, 203–4.

the springs flows northward through the Luo River until they reach the Qing River, a major transportation route.⁶⁰

Although he neglects the association of Ehuang and Nü Ying with the Luo River and Baotu Spring, Zeng does mention a couple early textual references to the site. The first comes from *Chunqiu* (*Spring and Autumn Annals*), which records a meeting between Duke Huan of Lu and the Marquis of Qi at the Luo. Du Yu's explanation of the text (*Chunqiu fanli*) notes that the Luo flows into the Ji River. Zeng explains that since the time of Wang Meng it had not been possible for the Luo to connect with the Ji itself, which had shifted to the north, and so the channel into which it flowed had for a long time already been the Qing River.⁶¹ Despite their differences, Zeng's accounts of Li Mountain and Baotu Spring both emphasize the geographical context of these sites. Baotu Spring's historical significance as a meeting point between two powerful rulers from the Spring and Autumn period and the facility of transportation via the Qing and Luo rivers made it an especially appropriate site for welcoming visiting officials.

As one might expect, poetry about Baotu Spring pays considerably more attention to the appearance of the spring and the scenery around it. However, the origin of the spring and its relationship to a translocal geography continue to be thematic obsessions. Some of these follow the same path as Zeng's essay. Zeng's own poem on Baotu Spring opens with a reference to the spring's origin in the mountains to the south:

A distant branch, divided from Jade River
The clear river is sprinkled through with dust from Li Mountain.

一派遙從玉水分，晴川都灑歷山塵。⁶²

Even more than his essay, these lines highlight the connection between Baotu Spring and both

⁶⁰ Ren Hongyuan, 204.

⁶¹ Ren Hongyuan, 204.

⁶² Ren Hongyuan, 63–64.

Mt. Tai and Li Mountain. According to the *Shuijing*, the Jade River of the first line originates on Mt. Tai; Zeng is saying that the spring water and Jade River are two streams from the same source. Through its underground course, though, the mysteriously pristine water has been filled with the dust of Li Mountain. Yan Bi's poem on Baotu Spring also alludes to Zeng's geography:

Before Thirsty Horse Cliff the water swells the river;
The river's heart bursts through the spring like the pearly spheres of a flower's pistil.

渴馬崖前水滿川，江心泉迸蕊珠圓。⁶³

Not only does the first line refer, like Zeng's essay, to Thirsty Horse Cliff, but it also speaks of Baotu Spring as a river. This both explains the apparent violence of the spring bursting forth through the ground and emphasizes the role of this site as one of transmission rather than origination. It is an "origin" only in regard to the Luo River as a distinct body of water.

Besides the mountains south of Jinan, authors also claimed Baotu Spring's source was Wangceng Mountain in Shanxi Province, the putative source of the Ji River. The Ming authors Peng Dayi and Yu Qiao both claimed that Wangceng was the origin of Baotu Spring. Ren Hongyuan acknowledges this apparent contradiction in an early section of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, juxtaposing these explanations with Zeng Gong's assertion that the spring's water originated north of Mt. Tai. Ren attempts to reconcile the two by affirming that at times of weakness the Ji River could flow underground and feed Baotu and other springs while the springs were also fed by water coming from the mountains to the south. He writes, "Wangceng is the origin of the Ji, and the north of Mount Tai is the origin of Baotu. Baotu is a special branch of the Ji River, and the Ji River is thus the origin of Baotu."⁶⁴

Zeng Gong's inattention to Wangceng is interesting in the context of his essay since the

⁶³ Ren Hongyuan, 71.

⁶⁴ Ren Hongyuan, 6–7.

section of it that deals with Li Mountain explicitly refutes the rival claim of a Li Mountain in Shanxi to being the one that Shun tilled. When it comes to Baotu Spring, though, he displays no cognizance of the idea that it originates to the west instead of the south. This may have been a strategic choice. The first part of his essay establishes a series of geographic links between Jinan (through Li Mountain) and the rest of the Qilu region. Here he deals with an interpretation that would disrupt this geographic unity; perhaps doing so in the second half of the essay as well would have undermined his argument more than bolstering it. This highlights the geographic particularity underlying Zeng's essay and how an analysis of these sites could be deployed to give a sense of intra-regional integration.

However, this was by no means the dominant interest of literati writing about Baotu Spring. Instead, like Ren Hongyuan, they tended toward imaginative capaciousness. We see this through numerous references to Wangceng in poems about Baotu Spring, including twenty-nine times in the literary selections (*yiwen zhi*) section of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*. One of these poems is Hu Zuanzong's "An Ode to Baotu Spring":

Flowing from Wangceng it comes, a spring at the foot of the mountain.
Clear ripples and talking over wine—feelings flow easily.
The snowy waves held by the clouds keep flowing up out on the ground;
The river bubbles like three stars, a reflection of the heavens.

Surging, surging in waves and billows, as though born from the bottom of the sea.
Growing, growing like stem and pistil, scattered to the edges of the city's walls.
A slice of autumn sunshine, rising to the expanse,
I most like to ride a raft, floating with the Big Dipper ahead.

王屋流來山下泉，清波聊酌思泠然，
雲含雪浪頻翻地，河湧三星倒映天。

滾滾波濤生海底，芄芄蕊萼散城邊，
秋光一片凌霄漢，最好乘槎泛斗前。⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Ren Hongyuan, 71–72.

We can see some striking similarities between Hu's poem and others that identify an altogether different origin for Baotu Spring, such as that by Yan Bi, quoted above. Both, for instance, attribute a river-like violence to the flow of the spring even while comparing its appearance to the reproductive organs of a flower. For Hu, this free-flowing quality mirrors alcohol-lubricated conversation among friends.

Hu adds further analogical layers, though. By comparing Baotu Spring to celestial bodies, he transcends the flat plane of the earth's terrain and orients the reader's imagination to a vertical axis along which Baotu Spring is projected down to earth. He furthers this orientation in the fifth line by describing the spring as water shooting from the sea floor. This imagery of Baotu Spring coming up from the depths of the ocean, which is a popular motif, is also related to a horizontal mapping of the spring's topography. Zhao Mengfu alludes to the spring's origin being in the eastern sea:

Could the origin of the Luo be nowhere under all of heaven?
It is a pot of white jade bubbling up from the level land.
Long have we feared that the vitality of the cavernous ravine is leaking away,
But even in years of drought one does not fret the eastern sea drying up.

灤水發源天下無，平地湧出白玉壺。
穀虛久恐元氣洩，歲旱不愁東海枯。⁶⁶

Unlike Hu's poem, which uses the motif of the sea to describe the physical appearance of Baotu Spring, Zhao is associating the sea with the mysterious origin of the spring's vital *qi*. He plays the manifest bounty of the sea against the unobservable channels that feed Baotu Spring with water and energy and the wonder that these do not cease to flow.

Zhao's use of the character *hu* as a rhyming element would set up the many authors who used his rhyme scheme to make similar associations. A popular use of this character was to

⁶⁶ Ren Hongyuan, 65–66.

incorporate it into the compound *penghu*, the name of a fabled mountain island in the eastern sea off the coast of Shandong and home to Daoist immortals. One example is Wang Yangming's poem "Baotu Spring, Matching Zhao Songxue's Rhyme":

The origin of the Luo arises suddenly, rooted in nothingness.
Beneath lies the sea turtle's cave, connected to Penghu.
Fully happy the earth's spirit can be so fantastic,
But worries that the earth veins may yet dry up.

灤源特起根虛無，下有鰲窟連蓬壺。
絕喜坤靈能爾幻，卻愁地脈還時枯。⁶⁷

Here again we see wonder and worry about the continued flow of *qi* woven together with associating Baotu Spring with a source deep below the ground and a mystical connection to the sea to the east. However mystical, though, these spatial referents also corresponded to the topography of Shandong, which was bound to the east by the sea, along which lay Penglai County, named after the mystical island. In other words, these poems situated Baotu Spring in a translocal web that blended fantastical and physical geographies.

Identifying the origin of Baotu Spring with the sea created a self-referential geographical circle because its water also flowed into the sea. Since this segment of the water's course was entirely above ground and thus open to direct observation, there was no disagreement about this. Zeng Gong relates Baotu Spring to Shandong's riverine transportation, saying, "Where it flows to the north it is called the Luo River. It reaches the Qing River and from there into the sea. Boats traversing the Ji all go out from here."⁶⁸ Su Zhe's essay on the construction of Luoyuan Bridge underscores this importance, saying, "Whoever goes from the capital to the sea will cross through on [the Luo River]."⁶⁹ This description recalls the opening sentence of Zeng's essay: "Qi

⁶⁷ Ren Hongyuan, 68–69.

⁶⁸ Ren Hongyuan, 204.

⁶⁹ Li Hequn, *Zhongguo gudai qiaoliang wenxian*, 109.

is located on the Luo River, and originally it had no structure to welcome envoys.”⁷⁰ Even into the Qing, the port village at the juncture of the Luo and (by that time) Daqing Rivers, called Luokou, would continue to be a major transit point, particularly for the salt trade, as will be discussed in the next section. At first glance, though, describing Jinan’s location primarily with reference to the Luo River—a minor watercourse—is strange. However, in the context of Zeng’s geographic exposition and his intention for constructing these halls—to enhance the city’s capacity to serve as a point of transit for officials—it is entirely appropriate.

Each of the various allusions to the spring’s origins—Mt. Tai and other mountains to the south, Wangceng Mountain, and the sea—spoke to both the spring water itself and the mystical power (*qi*) with which it was imbued. I have argued that Zeng Gong’s references to Shun’s travels, the origin of Baotu’s water in the mountains to the south, as well as its flow toward the sea integrated places in modern Shandong into a cohesive spatial narrative ostensibly based on topographical investigation. Writing that Baotu Spring came from the sea was clearly more of a literary device, used to describe the physical appearance of the spring and its mystical power through relating it to the immortals’ island abode. References to Wangceng Mountain and the Ji River, on the other hand, allowed for a complex range of geographical and temporal associations to intermingle. These ruminations all demonstrate how translocal associations were a central part of geographic imaginaries in which Baotu Spring was embedded. In fact, the diverse permutations of this mental landscape underscore the importance of understanding its translocality.

Spatial Linkages through Sights and Sounds

In addition to placing Baotu Spring in translocal geographies, geographic discourse also

⁷⁰ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 202.

integrated it into Jinan's space, linking it to the city's other major sites, especially Li Mountain and Daming Lake. This integration of Jinan's sites transgressed the conventional framework of urban centers and the dichotomy of official (including literati) and merchant. To be sure, the physical center of the city did serve as a central space for the activities of bureaucrats and literati. After all, it was filled with important government offices, academies, the exam hall, and Daming Lake (itself an important space for socializing). Likewise, the area around Baotu Spring was a center of significant mercantile activity. But, as we have seen, it was also a point of significant attention for literati and officials alike and, as the next section discusses, it would become an important site of imperial patronage. Moreover, through descriptions of tangible linkages, geographic discourse integrated Jinan's sites and utilized sites outside the city walls to orient spatial understandings of Jinan.

One aspect of this connection was the water that flowed from Baotu Spring itself. We have already seen how Zeng Gong used this water—coming from Mt. Tai—to link Baotu Spring to Li Mountain and Jade River. The outflow of Jinan's springs was a great aesthetic and material asset for the city. However, as Zeng himself was very aware, it could be very problematic. As discussed in the previous section, one of Zeng's most lauded accomplishments in Jinan was the construction of a sluice gate to more effectively regulate the flow of water from the streams draining the springs outside the city and Daming Lake inside the walls. Zeng's construction projects allowed later writers to celebrate the beauty of this hydraulic system without having to worry about the constant threat of floods.

The second stanza of Zhao Mengfu's poem deploys multi-sensory language to describe how through partaking in Baotu Spring one can experience other sites in the city:

Clouds and mist moisten Hua Mountain with their steam,
And billowing sounds shake Daming Lake.

Coming often to the spring, I cleanse myself;
Filling my heart with ice and snow, my feelings rise up pristine.

雲霧潤蒸華不注，波濤聲震大明湖。
時來泉上濯塵土，冰雪滿懷清興孤。⁷¹

The first two lines of the poem obviously refer to sites spatially removed from Baotu Spring: Hua Mountain past the northeast corner of the walled city and Daming Lake inside the walls. These lines exaggeratedly suggest Baotu's effect on these sites, despite their distance: the steam produced from its warm water meeting the cold winter air moistens even distant Hua Mountain while Daming Lake is shaken by the force of the spring. On closer examination, though, these tactile descriptions give way to other sensory associations. It is not the water itself that shakes Daming Lake, but rather the sound of water gushing out of the spring that one hears from the banks of Baotu. Likewise, while someone standing on Hua Mountain is unlikely to feel steam all the way from Baotu Spring, someone standing next to the spring and gazing at the mountain in the distance may well find their vision filtered by the steam. The spring affects not just these other sites but the individual's senses of feeling, hearing, and seeing as well. The last two lines indicate that this multi-sensory experience and description serve a deeper purpose. By immersing his senses in this scene, the speaker can shrug off the cares that weigh him down. Like the warm water meeting the frigid air, the speaker's inner self exposed to this scenery emerges without blemish.

Gazetteer maps of Jinan provide further evidence of how these sites outside the city walls could shape the experience of urban space. As we have seen, the toponym *luoyuan* was utilized by both Zeng Gong and Su Zhe to name structures located outside the city. By the time the 1533 provincial gazetteer was published, the western gate of Jinan had also come to be called *luoyuan*.

⁷¹ Ren Hongyuan, 68–69.

Because the gazetteer notes that the name of the southern gate had recently been changed but makes no such note for the Luoyuan Gate to the west, we can infer that the name of the west gate had already been established for some time. The renaming of the south gate is in itself interesting, though, since its name was changed from Shuntian Gate (“Shun’s Field Gate”) to Lishan Gate (“Li Mountain Gate”).⁷² This change in name reflects the logic in Zeng Gong’s naming of Lishan Hall and suggests that the name of Li Mountain as a site was itself prominent enough to displace the more literal allusion to Shun’s mythological tilling of land to the south of Jinan. If the west gate was already named *luoyuan*, then the possibility for parallel names may have provided an incentive for changing the name of the south gate. Regardless of the motivation, once the names *luoyuan* and *lishan* became attached to city gates, they became unequivocally part of the structure of the city itself.

That did not mean, though, that the sites to which they referred were now automatically considered part of the cartographic city. Both Baotu Spring and Li Mountain appear with some consistency in maps of larger jurisdictions. Li Mountain, though, never appears on maps of the city. Its presence is still felt, though, as maps of the city are consistently oriented from the south and above, as though an observer were standing on Li Mountain and looking down at the city. Thus, even when depictions of Jinan follow the standard convention of identifying a bureaucratic seat as defined by its walls, these sites outside the walls press against borders of this neat bureaucratic vision by appearing at the margins of maps, lending their names to features that were inside and had to be included, and shaping the overall perspective of the city.

As we would expect, figures 1.2 and 1.3 depict only geographic and administrative features. The clumsy rendering of the southeast and southwest corners results from the author’s

⁷² Lu Yi, *SDTZ (Jiajing)*, 12:1a–1b.

depiction of the city from the south, the location of Li Mountain. The Qianlong *Licheng County Gazetteer* (figure 1.4) produces a very different aesthetic effect. Here the artist has paid attention to integrating the city into its natural surroundings. He has included more details outside the city walls, including Baotu Spring, which is labeled *luoyuan*. Li Mountain is still out of the picture, but the perspective is essentially the same as in the 1533 map: from above and the south. Unlike the previous map, the city gates are labeled: Luoyuan Gate in the west and Lishan Gate in the south. The southwest corner of the wall cuts in, leaving more space outside the (south)west gate to accommodate a greater degree of detail, including Baotu Spring. Additionally, the infrastructure of the west gate is enlarged, especially compared to the north and east gates. Figures 1.5 and 1.6, from the Daoguang *Jinan Prefecture Gazetteer* combine features of the previous maps, with figure 1.6 even depicting Baixue Tower.



Figure 1.2: Map of Jinan Prefecture, 1533 Shandong tongzhi. Baotu Spring and Li Mountain are circled.
(Airusheng Zhongguo fangzhi ku)

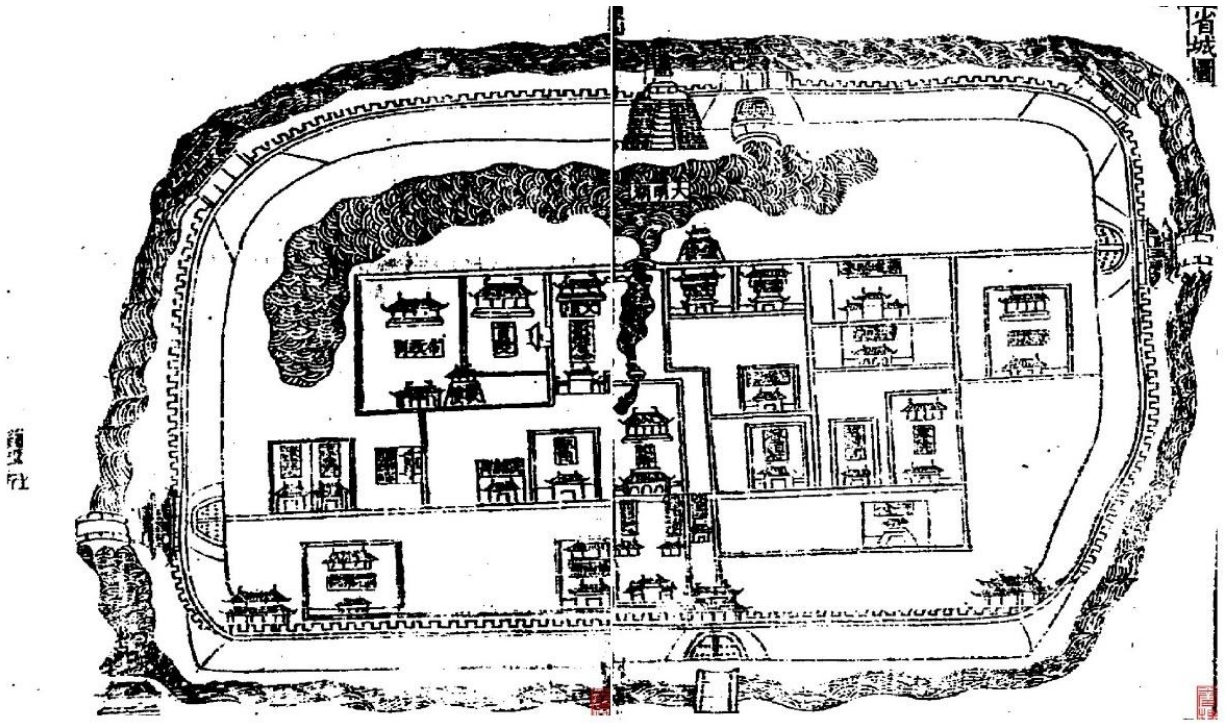


Figure 1.3: Map of Jinan City, 1533 Shandong tongzhi (*Airusheng Zhongguo fangzhi ku*)

To some extent, these maps depict Jinan as a model imperial city. The 1533 prefectural map (figure 1.2) exemplifies this through depicting Jinan as the largest among many squares that together suggest an orderly downward diffusion of imperial authority. Although Jinan is the only center of imperial power depicted on the 1840 county map, its individual character is effaced by the hollowing out of its center. These aesthetics lend themselves to a schematic understanding of both Jinan's place in a translocal hierarchy and the configuration of official buildings within the city.⁷³ Here the definition of centers and boundaries is abundantly clear. However, the spatial orientation of these maps is not defined exclusively in reference to the city's physical and political center, the governor's *yamen*. Rather, Jinan's peripheral geography plays a persistent role in its depiction and imagination. Although Li Mountain is too far away to be included in maps of the city, we have seen that these maps are consistently oriented as though one were

⁷³ For examples, see Skinner, "Cities and the Hierarchy of Local Systems"; Zhu Jianfei, *Chinese Spatial Strategies*.

looking out on the city from a mountain to the south. Baotu Spring has less of a shaping role on the overall spatial constitution of the city, with the exception of the 1778 county gazetteer. It was, however, the referent of a toponym—*luoyuan*—that did become a permanent feature of the walled area of the city through the naming of the western gate. Additionally, the use of *luoyuan* as a naming device established spatial associations between the center of the city and the area around Baotu Spring. We see this through Luoyuan Academy, which is a major focus of chapter 2. Taken together with discourse linking Baotu Spring with sites both outside and inside the walled city, this suggests that Jinan's spatial boundaries were not isomorphic with its walls. Just as it served as a point through which to associate Jinan with regional and transregional geographies, Baotu Spring integrated the city's major sites. It thus performed the function of a site we would expect to be spatially central, even though it was physically marginal.



Figure 1.4: Map of Jinan City, 1778 Licheng xian zhi. Baotu Spring circled. (Airusheng Zhongguo fangzhi ku)

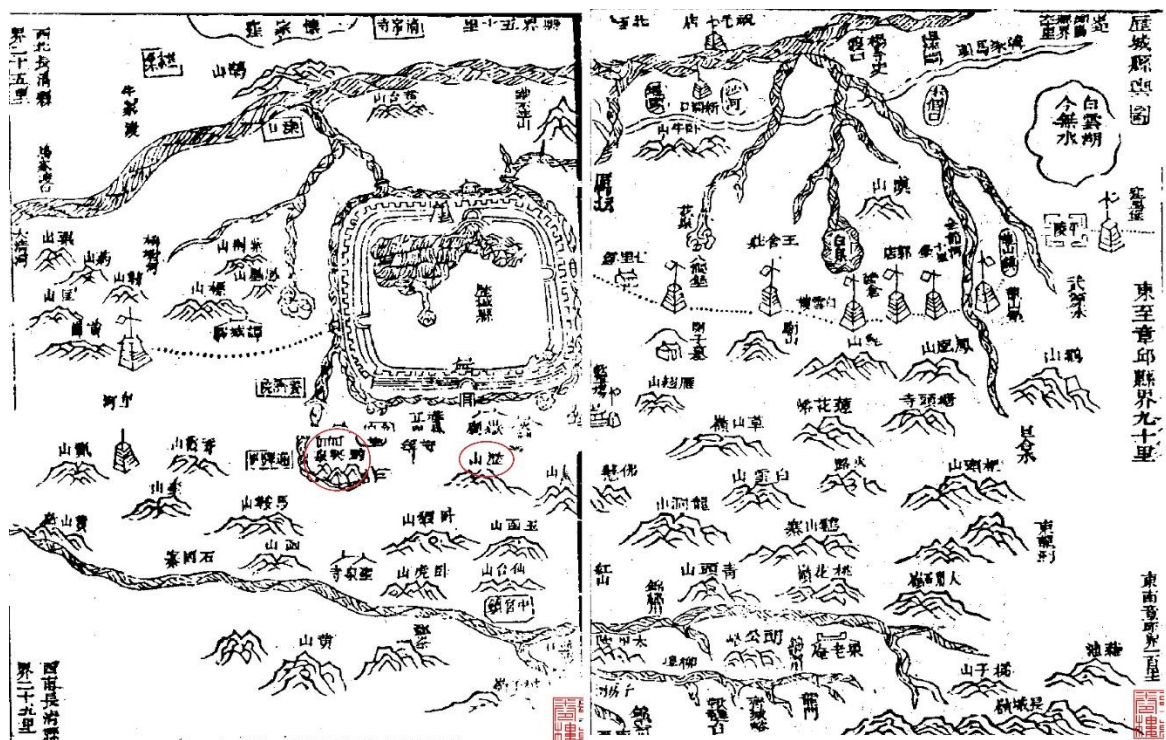


Figure 1.5: Map of Licheng County, 1840 Jinan fu zhi. Baotu Spring and Li Mountain circled. (Airusheng Zhongguo fangzhi ku)



Figure 1.6: Map of Jinan, 1840 Jinan fu zhi. Baotu Spring, Luoyuan Gate, and Luoyuan Academy circled. (Airusheng Zhongguo fangzhi ku)

The Greatest Spring in Jinan and Beyond

Even for readers who have not had the pleasure of personally visiting Baotu Spring, the foregoing discussion ought to provide some sense of this site's beauty, at least as it was imagined by literati. Writers waxed effusive about Baotu Spring's special qualities, claiming it held a unique place in not only Jinan but also "all-under-heaven" (*tianxia*). Such claims were inherently political. They referenced an imagination of power radiating from the imperial center to other localities. The ability to make aesthetic claims about the realm as a whole also implied epistemological mastery of it. Officials, whose careers required iteration throughout the empire, were well-positioned to make such claims.

As we have seen, the earliest listing of Jinan's springs was the Jin stele, which placed Baotu at the top. Yan Bi famously continued this convention, saying, "Baotu alone is called the foremost spring" (*Baotu du cheng diyi quan*, 趵突獨稱第一泉).⁷⁴ Later writers would also refer to Baotu as foremost (*diyi*) among Jinan's springs.⁷⁵ An alternative was to simply call it "superlative" (*zui*), or add a character meaning most wonderful (*sheng*) or famous (*zhu*).⁷⁶ (Huang Liangzuo also includes Zhenzhu Spring together with Baotu Spring when calling them the most famous of Jinan's seventy-two springs.) Others declared that Baotu was the springs' "crown," (*guan*), that there was "none like this," (*si ci wu*), and that its name "is said to stand alone" (*cheng du bu*).⁷⁷

These descriptors bled into larger claims about Baotu Spring's place in the world. Echoing Zhao Mengfu's rumination on the unique spiritual power of the spring, Zhang Yanghao writes,

⁷⁴ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 71.

⁷⁵ Ren Hongyuan, 152, 198.

⁷⁶ Ren Hongyuan, 214, 229.

⁷⁷ Ren Hongyuan, 210, 118, 183.

In all-under-heaven there is not such a spectacle.
Every time I pass, the gloominess in my heart is cleared.
Boundless is this area;
Encompassing all things, this goodness is not trivial.

奇觀天下無，每過煩襟清。
茫茫彼區域，載物良不輕。⁷⁸

Zheng Fengxiang also uses the character *qi*, which means strange or wonderful, to describe Baotu Spring:

Jinan's famous springs number seventy-two,
But only Baotu is peculiarly wonderful among all-under-heaven.

濟南名泉七十二，惟有趵突天下奇。⁷⁹

Despite the linguistic consonance of these claims that Baotu Spring was special within both Jinan and all-under-heaven, they implied somewhat different things about the speakers. To say that Baotu was the greatest of Jinan's seventy-two springs implied a thorough knowledge of Jinan's local topography, informed by both personal investigation and previous descriptions or enumerations of Jinan's many springs. The claim that Baotu Spring was unique in "all-under-heaven" implied a more universalistic perspective, though. It suggested a capacious understanding of the world that aligned with both the framework of imperial ideology and the practice of compulsory iteration by imperial officials. As quoted above, Zeng Gong's conclusion to his "Record" suggests the responsibility of local officials to become knowledgeable about local geography, record it, arrange it, and stimulate further investigation into it.

The prefaces to Yan Bi's series of seventy-two poems about Jinan's springs further explicate the relationship between imperial officials, local geography, and all-under-heaven. Yan coupled his poems with two prefaces (one written by himself) and a postface that reflected on the

⁷⁸ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 8:27b. *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* also includes this poem but not this quatrain.

⁷⁹ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 181.

relationship between local scenery and the status of himself and his colleagues as officials. Yan, who was from Jiangxi, came to Jinan in 1404 as the Shandong Assistant Surveillance Commissioner (*anchasi qianshi*). In the preface to the poems, Yan recounts his discovery of Jinan's scenery:

In the second year of the Yongle reign, I came to Jinan as the *xianjie*. On a rest day, with some officials and gentlemen I went up and gazed into the distance. I concentrated my eyes and took in the mountain scenes. I cleared my ears to listen to the flow of the springs. [The mountains] were beautifully woven together, embroidered and inlaid; [the spring water] was a deep green, in pools [thick and lustrous] like oil. Truly it was one of the impressive sights of the central plains (*zhongzhou*). Ah, the creation of heaven and the foundation of earth—how could human power accomplish this?⁸⁰

The other preface-writer was Wang Jing, a native of Henan who was serving as a salt official (*cuosi*) in Jinan. Before coming to Jinan, he had heard of the city's scenery. When he had the opportunity to visit some of Jinan's springs with a couple other gentlemen (*junzi*), he was not disappointed, describing them as “linked together like beaded pearls or clean like a river of jade.”⁸¹ He bemoaned his own inability to capture the beauty of these places in his own writing. Fortunately, the Prefect of Jinan, Yang Huan, showed him Yan's poems. Yang wrote the other preface.

In addition to being what brought these men to Jinan and into relationship with each other, official service informed their writing about local scenery. Unsurprisingly, they framed their enjoyment of Jinan's waters and mountains in moral terms. Yan Bi opened his preface by reciting the neo-Confucian cosmological explanation for the existence of mountains and waterways:

From the existence of this heaven and earth comes the existence of these mountains and waterways. Mountains are the physique of the earth, and waters are its veins and arteries. They are all cultivated through the soaring movements of vital *qi*. They are gathered

⁸⁰ Ren Hongyuan, 205.

⁸¹ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 729.

through acquiescence and dispersed in radiant beauty.⁸²

Both Yan and Yang quoted Confucius' references to water: flowing water as an analogue for passing time and the delight of the humane person in mountains and the knowledgeable person in waterways.⁸³

Moreover, both Yan and Yang employed the precedent of the Tang literatus Liu Zongyuan (773–819) to explain their devotion to observing and recording local scenery. In the course of his career, Liu was exiled to the then-peripheral provinces of Hunan and Guangxi. Yan Bi wrote:

In former times, Liu Zongyuan once recorded the mountains and waters of Liu [in Guangxi] and Yong [in Hunan] and was bewildered that the creators did not make such things in the central plains. Rather, by arranging them there, they made it so that over countless years their skill would be appreciated not even once. For the spirits, this was indeed labor without any use.⁸⁴

Yan noted that fortuitously Jinan's scenery lay within the central plains. Nevertheless, centuries had passed without this beauty receiving the attention it deserved. "For the spirits, this too was labor without any use," he mused.⁸⁵ Similarly, Yang noted the fame of Jinan's scenery while bemoaning its under-appreciation, saying, "I have heard that Jinan has many fine mountains and rivers, as if it were the goblet of Mt. Tai. All under heaven know of it. But the resplendence of the seventy-two springs—some have heard of it, but in general they do not know its details."⁸⁶ In order to transmit Yan's worthy reflection on the beauty of Jinan's springs, Yang asked to prepare printing blocks of his poems. At the end of his preface, Yan explained that he wrote out these poems so that they could be included in the local gazetteer (which they were, eventually, in *Li*

⁸² Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 205.

⁸³ Ren Hongyuan, 205. Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 729.

⁸⁴ Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 205.

⁸⁵ Ren Hongyuan, 205.

⁸⁶ Jinan shi shizhi bangongshi, *Jinan quanshui zhi*, 729.

sheng).

By comparing Jinan to regions beyond the central plain, Yan and his collaborators were making a statement about their understanding of place and its relationship to empire. First, specific places were imbued with cosmological significance and purpose that, to be fully realized, required the appreciation of people from elsewhere. Second, while a place might be known through personal experience or hearsay, literary composition, specifically poetry, was the appropriate medium for capturing and transmitting local beauty for the purposes of enjoyment and moral improvement. Third, and implicitly, it fell within the purview of officials to undertake these tasks. Modern readers may well recoil at their appropriation of local topography and disregard for indigenous voices. By the Qing, however, Yan Bi's individual poems and the practice of adding literary flourish to the listing of Jinan's seventy-two springs had become a repertoire tapped by both officials and Jinan's native elite in the process of elaborating discourse on local geography.

For Yan and his collaborators, it is impossible to separate their claims about the cosmological import of Jinan's scenery from their status as translocal literati (*shi*). Their attachment of the moral and literary facets of this identity to a specific landscape reflects how Peter Bol describes the localist engagement of literati with their home places.⁸⁷ However, their status as non-natives was central to their progression from awareness to experience and then deeper appreciation of Jinan's sites. Moreover, their privileged political and cultural status afforded them epistemological privilege, including both the capacity to make judgments about Jinan's geography and to propagate these judgments in published form. Their intended audience was itself translocal and imperial, since gazetteers constituted a repertoire of information that

⁸⁷ Bol, "The Rise of Local History."

could be called upon by the central government, officials who took up posts there, and non-official travelers. However, especially when read together with Zeng's essay, we also see that these writings had the effect of educating native people about their home place. In this sense, they served as a form of imperial pedagogy that affirmed the value of locally distinctive sites within an imperial spatial schema. Officials were not the only ones who could engage in this pedagogy, but Yan and his colleagues were one among many examples of how the bureaucracy facilitated writing about place, which runs counter to the argument that it was the literati class's physical attachment to their home places that was conducive to local writing.

Despite the distinctive implications of imperial officials writing about place, we cannot observe a clear recognition of this distinction in sources like *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*. Instead, we see the writings of native people and sojourners combined into a single source that focuses on Baotu Spring itself. This makes it difficult to trace exactly the lines of influence between writers who were native to Jinan and those brought there by imperial prerogatives. Yan Bi's series of poems, which helped popularize a pre-existing genre, is an example of this mutual construction. Consequently, just as Baotu Spring served as a point through which a range of features and places were integrated, so both the physical site and literature about it demonstrated how place and empire were mutual effects of the same set of behaviors.

Imperial Touring and Presence at Baotu Spring in the High Qing

Placing Jinan in the Kangxi and Qianlong Tours

In the previous sections, I have argued that the regularity of the circulation of officials through the bureaucratic system helped form a corpus of texts about Baotu Spring. Imperial visits to Jinan, on the other hand, were historically irregular. In *A Court on Horseback*, Michael

Chang traces the complex precedents and motivations for and objections to the tours undertaken by the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The most ancient precedent for imperial touring came from the record of the tours of the mythological emperor Shun. However, after the Tang Dynasty, touring was most popular among northern, non-Han regimes and was particularly associated with martial values. The Kangxi and Qianlong emperors claimed touring as a part of their Jurchen heritage. For them, touring became a vehicle for visibly manifesting ethnic distinctiveness and martial prowess. However, they also sought to allay the misgivings of Han officials about this practice by referencing values proper to a Confucian ruler, such as filiality to the royal Aisin Gioro clan. Chang concludes, “The Kangxi and Qianlong emperors took full advantage of this inherent multivalence. Both initiated revivals of imperial touring in order to strike a balance between accommodating the political culture of classically educated Han elites on one hand and maintaining a clear sense of ethno-dynastic (patrimonial) dominance on the other.”⁸⁸

Since Jinan was located well to the east of the Grand Canal, it was not a convenient stopping point on the north-south portion of the tour routes. However, because Mount Tai was also east of the Grand Canal, traveling through Jinan on the way south to Mount Tai or back north to the canal was sensible. The Kangxi Emperor’s first tour towards the south was in 1684 when he visited Mount Tai. This was also his first visit to Jinan. The emperor used this “eastern tour,” modeled on Shun’s series of tours to the sacred peaks, to initiate the revival of touring as an imperial practice.⁸⁹ He would undertake five more tours, stopping in Jinan in 1689 on a southern tour and 1703, when he also ascended Mount Tai. Wang Hui’s scroll paintings of the

⁸⁸ For a much fuller explanation of the precedents and justifications for touring in the Qing, see chapters 1 and 2 of Chang. Chang, *A Court on Horseback*, 71.

⁸⁹ Chang, *A Court on Horseback*.

Kangxi Emperor's 1689 tour depict this movement through space. The third scroll in the series shows the emperor's procession passing through Jinan and southward to Mount Tai where preparations are being made to receive him. Citing his grandfather's example, the Qianlong Emperor used a trip to Mount Tai in 1748 to pave the way for subsequent tours.⁹⁰ While the Qianlong Emperor is famous for his many tours—he went on eleven—this first tour was the only time he ever stopped in Jinan. However, he stayed much longer in the city than the Kangxi Emperor, arriving on April 1, 1748 and leaving on April 4.⁹¹ Also unlike his grandfather, the Qianlong Emperor stopped in Jinan on his way back to the capital rather than on his way to the south.

Jinan itself was a secondary destination at best, evidenced by how infrequently the emperors stopped there and the fact that the Kangxi Emperor spent less than a day in Jinan on each of his visits. Nor did visiting Jinan clearly correspond to some of the major motivations for the tours. Unlike Qufu, the ancestral home of Confucius, or Mount Tai, it was not a site of great importance to Confucian or Daoist traditions. It was not close to the Grand Canal, the Yellow River (at that time), or the Huai River, so it was not necessary to go there to inspect important hydraulic projects. In terms of scenic beauty, it was Jiangnan, not Jinan, to which the Qianlong Emperor referred when he used his mother's desire to sightsee to justify his tours.

Despite, or perhaps because of, this relative unimportance, Jinan was an eclectic embodiment of the tours' multivalence. On his arrival in Jinan, the Qianlong Emperor ordered that preparations be made for him to visit and make offerings at Shun's shrine in the city, which

⁹⁰ Chang, 80–88.

⁹¹ The court diaries provide a general chronology of the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors' visits to Jinan. Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, *Kangxi qiju zhu*, 2:1238, 3:1826; Guoli gugong bowuyuan, *Qingdai qiju zhuce: Kangxi chao*, 16:T09858–62; Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, *Qianlong di qiju zhu*, 7:48–52.

the Kangxi Emperor had not done.⁹² Doing so demonstrated his attention to Confucian traditions of rulership and reminded skeptical officials of this arch-precedent for imperial touring. Although the city's scenery and literary accomplishments could not compare to Jiangnan's, sightseeing and literary production were important parts of both emperors' visits. In a poem describing his arrival in Jinan, the Qianlong Emperor expressed hope for a respite after his exhausting journey to Mount Tai and Qufu:

From paying visit to the sages and making offerings at the sacred peak, we now return;
Along the way we come to Lixia.
Having toured over one thousand *li*,
Here we can have a little leisure.

謁聖祀嶽迴，便道至歷下。
周巡千里餘，于焉少休暇。⁹³

As the provincial capital, Jinan was a particularly good platform for exhibiting imperial oversight over civil and military officials, one of the primary goals of the tours.⁹⁴ Like elsewhere, an important component of the tours in Jinan was seeing and being seen by the people. Through their physical presence, the emperors expressed their care for the people in two ways that, while generalizable, demonstrated attention to local, even personal circumstances.

First, the emperors cast themselves as patrons of the literati class. They did so both through conducting special examinations and doling out gifts and rewards to local people for their literary achievements. One of the recipients of these gifts was a boy of five *sui* named Zhang Yongqing.⁹⁵ When the Qianlong Emperor was approaching Jinan in 1748, Yongqing's

⁹² Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, *Qianlong di qiju zhu*, 7:48.

⁹³ Hongli, *Qing Gaozong (Qianlong) yuzhi shiwen quanji*, 2:220.

⁹⁴ Although Jinan was not a banner garrison, a poem by the Qianlong Emperor about reviewing troops in Jinan refers to the soldiers of "Qi and Qing," indicating that banner troops from Qingzhou may have traveled there for review. Both emperors also passed through Dezhou, Shandong's other banner garrison, which lay along the Grand Canal. Hongli, 2:221.

⁹⁵ Five *sui* is approximately four years old.

grandfather brought him to the county border to kneel before the emperor. Because Yongqing could recite the emperor's poetry collection *Leshan tang shiji*, the emperor ordered him into his traveling quarters, encouraged him in his studies and gave him some money.⁹⁶ Nine years later, the emperor was again passing by Jinan, and Yongqing's grandfather again brought him to greet the imperial procession. The emperor remembered him and asked why, at fourteen *sui*, he had not yet entered the county school.⁹⁷

Second, the tours gave the emperors the opportunity to observe the conditions of the common people. On his first tour in 1684, the Kangxi Emperor composed a poem titled, "Touring Shandong, the Common People Grasp my Horse and Gaze with Reverence. I Order Those Who Warn Them Away Not To, So that I Can Observe Their Hardship":

Coming east our aim is to emphasize the people's livelihood,
We do not come under the pretext of sacrificing at Mount Tai to seek immortality.
Within their villages they maintain the customs of the state of Qi with dignity,
Cultivating fields they think back on the plowing of Li Mountain.

For a moment the mounted soldiers and ceremonial blades drop their guard,
Allowing the children in the villages and the elders in the fields to welcome us.
We dare to travel and speak closely with them, diligently inquiring and inspecting,
Only hoping that through our governance we will win the people's sentiment.

東來端爲重民生，不事汾陰泰畤名。
井里儼存齊國俗，田疇還憶歷山耕。

暫寬羽騎鉤陳衛，一任村童野老迎。
敢道邇言勤訪察，止期治理得輿情。⁹⁸

Although mobilizing resources to welcome the tours could be burdensome, the emperors issued orders to limit these expenses and forgave the taxes of areas through which they passed. This was of special concern for Shandong, large areas of which were prone to droughts and flooding.

⁹⁶ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 43:10b; Hongli, *Qing Gaozong (Qianlong) yuzhi shiwen quanji*, 2:224.

⁹⁷ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, juanshou:20a.

⁹⁸ Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, *JNFZ (Daoguang)*, juanshou:1a.

The year before the Kangxi Emperor's 1703 tour, the province had experienced especially severe flooding, including around Jinan. The emperor's tour allowed him to observe the recovery, which was followed by a bountiful harvest. He wrote an ode (*ge*) to commemorate his satisfaction with this turn of good fortune.⁹⁹ As he was preparing for a tour the next year, he also issued an edict to the governor of Shandong telling him to instruct the people that they did not need to greet his procession by the side of the road as they had in the past. The previous year's tour had coincided with the agricultural slack season; he was concerned, though, that if he visited during the harvest it might distract the people from their work.¹⁰⁰ The Qianlong Emperor wrote that his hopes for finding leisure in Jinan were dashed by the need to attend to government matters, especially given the natural disasters that had affected Shandong in recent years. "Settling the people is what is important," he concluded.¹⁰¹

Imperial pronouncements, stilted poetry, and even gazetteer biographies leave ample room to question how local people actually reacted to the imperial tours. There are indications, though, that they did appreciate the paternalistic intimacy inculcated through the tours as something more than show. The most remarkable account of the tours in Jinan that I have found comes from a history of the Sun family, whose most famous member, Sun Guangsi, had been the Minister of War early in the Kangxi reign. The family history (*jiasheng*) contains a record written by Guangsi's third son, Shuxun, about going to welcome the Kangxi Emperor's procession as it approached Jinan in 1703. The emperor struck up a conversation with Shuxun, noting how much he looked like his (now-deceased) father, asking about the rest of his family members and other elite families in Jinan, and inquiring into the state of the family's finances

⁹⁹ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, juanshou:2b–3b.

¹⁰⁰ Hu Delin, juanshou:3b–4a.

¹⁰¹ Hongli, *Qing Gaozong (Qianlong) yuzhi shiwen quanji*, 2:220.

and Shuxun's literary skill.¹⁰² This account establishes a sense of formality through the use of honorific forms, but the language itself is vernacular. Thus, while it exhibits appropriate deference to the emperor, it represents him as entirely human and capable of conversing and sympathizing with his subjects, precisely the image the tours were supposed to convey.

Stopping in Jinan was, however, not necessary. In fact, after 1748 none of the tours stopped there. This is because on the Qianlong Emperor's first tour, his wife, the empress Xiaoxian Chun, contracted a disease (possibly malaria) in Jinan and died near Dezhou while on the way back to Beijing.¹⁰³ Consequently, the emperor decided not to stop in Jinan on subsequent tours. Instead, when taking a route passing by Jinan, the procession would stop in nearby Changqing County. We know that the emperor's decision not to enter Jinan was intentional from the poems he wrote each time he passed the city. These poems expressed his continued grief over his departed wife and his unwillingness to enter Jinan for fear of letting that grief overtake him. Not stopping in Jinan shifted tour-related literary production to other places, particularly Changqing and Dezhou, which was already an important stop since it was both a point for embarking or disembarking from the canal and the home of a banner garrison, which Jinan was not. The compilers of the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* published in the Republican period bemoaned the fact that the shift away from Jinan removed the impetus to produce and preserve local documents which the previous tours had provided.¹⁰⁴ No longer even a secondary attraction, Jinan became simply a point of transit, to be passed as quickly as possible.

As we have seen, though, Jinan's role as site of transit and the imagination of it as such were by no means new. No site embodied this more fully than Baotu Spring. It is unsurprising,

¹⁰² *Sun shi jiasheng*, juanshou:1a–4a.

¹⁰³ On the empress's death and the political fallout, see Kutcher, "The Death of the Xiaoxian Empress." Chang, *A Court on Horseback*, 381–87.

¹⁰⁴ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, fanli:1b.

then, that it became central to the representation of imperial presence in the city.

Inscribing Imperial Presence

The Kangxi and Qianlong emperors both visited a variety of Jinan's most famous sites. Given his longer stay in the city and literary proclivities, the Qianlong Emperor predictably visited more sites and wrote more poems to commemorate his single visit than his grandfather had over his stops in the city. However, for both emperors, Baotu and Zhenzhu springs were of particular importance. Since the Kangxi Emperor entered Jinan through the west gate, he passed by Baotu Spring on his way into the city, stopping to hold an audience with Shandong's governor there.¹⁰⁵ On his visit in 1703, he went first to the governor's compound and then visited Baotu Spring after exiting the south gate.¹⁰⁶ Zhenzhu Spring, on the other hand, lay at the center of the city, inside the governor's compound, which is where the Qianlong Emperor stayed. Both also visited Daming Lake, but only the Qianlong Emperor composed poems about specific structures around the lake, like Lixia Pavilion and Huibo Tower. He also visited Li Mountain and Shun's temple in the city, neither of which the Kangxi Emperor had. Both wrote poems about the landscape north of the city, dominated by the Que and Hua mountains, but neither visited these sites.

The Kangxi Emperor's patronage of Baotu Spring was most evident in his bestowal of imperial calligraphy. On his first trip, in addition to writing his poem "Baotu Spring," the emperor wrote the characters *ji tuan* (激湍), meaning "a fierce rush," describing the appearance of the spring. These characters were inscribed on a stele placed in a pavilion in front of the shrine

¹⁰⁵ The only details that the Qianlong court diary includes about the emperor's first day in Jinan is that he visited Baotu Spring, proceeded to the traveling palace, attended to the Empress Dowager, and dined. This suggests he may have followed the same path into the city, first visiting Baotu Spring, as his grandfather. *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, Qianlong di qiju zhu*, 7:48.

¹⁰⁶ Guoli gugong bowuyuan, *Qingdai qiju zhuce: Kangxi chao*, 16:T09861; Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:111.

to Lü Dongbin (*Lüxian ge*) next to Baotu Spring.¹⁰⁷ He again decided to grace Baotu Spring in 1703. This time, he left three inscribed boards: *run wu* (潤物, “it moistens all things”) and *yuan qing liu jie* (源清流潔, “the origin is pure and the flow is clean”) for the pavilion facing Baotu and *xue zong zhu si* (學宗洙泗, “the master of Zhu and Si,” i.e. Confucius) on Baixue Academy, which was housed in Baixue Tower, next to the spring.¹⁰⁸

In terms of inscriptions, the Qianlong Emperor was less prolific than his grandfather. He bestowed only one inscription on Baotu Spring, but it is the most famous: *tianxia diyi quan* (天下第一泉, “the foremost spring in all-under-heaven”). Even more than Yan Bi’s first usage of *diyi quan* to describe Baotu, this inscription implied a thorough knowledge of the realm. In this case, that knowledge was attached to the emperor and derived from an investigation he had undertaken earlier that year to determine which of the realm’s most famous springs was the most pure. On the basis of this investigation, which entailed weighing water from several springs (on the assumption that the lightest would be the one that contained the fewest impurities), the emperor had declared Yu Spring outside Beijing to be *tianxia diyi quan*. This spring provided water to the court, and the emperor carried it with him on his tour. There is a story that when he tasted the water from Baotu, which had somehow not been among the springs previously tested, he replaced the water from Yu Spring with it.¹⁰⁹

Inscriptions from the tours were only a small portion of the imperial calligraphy displayed around Baotu Spring. Over the years, the Kangxi Emperor bestowed dozens of

¹⁰⁷ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, juanshou:12a–12b.

¹⁰⁸ The Kangxi diary says that the emperor ordered the board inscribed *run wu* displayed at Zhenzhu Spring. However, multiple sources locate it at Baotu Spring. Guoli gugong bowuyuan, *Qingdai qiju zhuce: Kangxi chao*, 16:T09861; Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, *JNFZ (Daoguang)*, juanshou:60a; Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, 1, 247; Ji-lun, Song Xiang, and Jia Ying, *Shandong yanfa zhi*, 21:16b.

¹⁰⁹ Wang Peixun, *Xiang yuan yijiu lu*, 199; Dai Yongxia, *Baotu quan shihua*, 17–19.

inscriptions on officials serving in Shandong that were preserved in pavilions next to the spring. Most of these inscriptions were short phrases or poems extolling officials for their service, although some were also didactic. They represented the emperor as a ruler who was both benevolent—through his supervision and rewarding of capable officials—and erudite—through his choice of phrases and poems and imitation of calligraphy masters like Dong Qichang. Some such inscriptions were placed inside the governor's compound, but many more were held at Baotu Spring. In all, there were four pavilions there containing the Kangxi Emperor's calligraphy.

Brian Dott argues that the practice of leaving such inscriptions was related to practices of connoisseurship in art collecting: the inscription (of a sufficiently worthy person) elevated the value of a site or painting and demonstrated ownership of it. Simultaneously, the beauty and qualities of the object collected validated the sensibility and character of the collector.¹¹⁰ At Baotu Spring, these inscriptions rendered the emperor's virtue and erudition visible to both officials and the common people. Baotu Spring was much better suited for this task than Zhenzhu Spring, which lay within the governor's compound. Rather than consolidating the manifestation of the emperor in the administrative center of the city, displaying imperial calligraphy at Baotu Spring distributed imperial presence to the margins of urban space. The spatial center of the city retained its association with the imperial bureaucracy. Baotu Spring, though, became a reservoir of imperial presence that stood distinct from the bureaucratic center. This was a reminder that the emperor was not just at the center of the bureaucracy; he was its source, its benefactor, and its discipliner. Though he was far away, it was through him that places across the empire were incorporated. The imperial tours literally embodied this idea through the

¹¹⁰ Dott, *Identity Reflections*, 185–90.

emperor's passing through space; the steles at Baotu Spring—both a source and a point of transit—were its permanent instantiation.

The contents of the inscriptions the Kangxi Emperor left at Baotu Spring demonstrate how he identified himself with the spring. The phrases *run wu* and *yuan qing liu jie* carry obvious Confucian overtones, expressing both the universal beneficence and moral direction of the ruler. “Moistens all things” mirrored the literary motif of Baotu Spring’s water flowing all the way to the sea. “The origin is pure and the flow is clean” embodied the marvel felt by the emperor’s many precursors who wondered at the purity of Baotu Spring and directed it towards the author, or at least his calligraphy which was so ubiquitous that it could be said to “moisten all things” and so “clean” that it must come from a “pure origin.” It also played on the character *qing*, meaning pure, which was also the dynasty’s title. There is also play in the opposition of origin and flow. As we have seen, literature figured Baotu Spring as both a point of origin (as of the Luo River) and as a body of water that originated elsewhere. The inscriptions reminded readers that the purity of the locally visible origin derived from a higher (or deeper) feature. We can see a similar play in the text of an inscribed board that the Kangxi Emperor left in 1684 at Mount Tai, near the place where Confucius was said to have exclaimed that the view from the mountain made him feel that all-under-heaven was small. The plaque reads “Illumines all Heaven and Earth.” Dott notes that the text likely refers to Mount Tai itself but, given its location, could also be read as a reference to Confucius. Like the inscription at Baotu Spring, though, Dott suggests that its true subject was the emperor himself, especially since the imperial diary for that date records that ““placards bearing the imperial ink illuminate this famous mountain.””¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Dott, 173–74.

In support of this multivalent interpretation, Dott cites another text that is also relevant to Baotu Spring. This is an essay the emperor wrote arguing that the mountain veins imbuing Mount Tai with its sacred power actually originated in Changbai Mountain, the mythical place of origin of the imperial Aisin Gioro clan.¹¹² Six hundred years prior, of course, Zeng Gong had argued that it was water (and implicitly *qi*) from the mountains north of Mount Tai that fed Baotu Spring. In the centuries since, authors had maintained this reference alongside the seemingly incongruent claim that Baotu Spring drew its efficacy from its origin in Wangceng Mountain. As inventive as the Kangxi Emperor's claims were, then, his assertion of a spatial metaphor that linked Mount Tai — and perhaps Baotu Spring, by extension — to Manchuria were very much consonant with a literary tradition of promiscuous translocality. What was new was that the emperor now occupied a visible place at Baotu Spring and so integrated himself into this translocal geography.

Maintaining Imperial Presence

Displaying these steles at Baotu Spring had the benefit of making them publicly visible to both officials and commoners, but it also made maintaining the steles, pavilions, and surrounding area a priority. In 1736, the first year of the Qianlong reign, Salt Supervisor San-bao memorialized the throne regarding the current state of the imperial calligraphy pavilions. He described both the calligraphy and surrounding scenery in glowing terms, saying that viewing it had filled him with “deep veneration.” However, he had noticed that opposite the pavilion with the *ji tuan* inscription there was now a composition pavilion constructed by Wang Shijun, a native of Guizhou who had been a high-ranking official in the Yellow River Conservancy Administration. This pavilion contained a board inscribed with Wang's calligraphy and had

¹¹² Dott, 160–64, 174.

sixteen pillars and high eaves; the characters on the board were several times larger than the emperor's own calligraphy. Indignant, San-bao wrote, "The arrogance is manifest, and it is very presumptuous. I must ask permission to urgently tear it down."

San-bao's memorial was not purely destructive in bent, though. He continued, "As for Baotu Spring, it is near to the provincial capital, and all the people (*wanmin*) gaze with veneration on the calligraphy of the Kangxi Emperor. The stele pavilion was built many years ago, and it should be renovated in order to clean up the view (*yi su guanzhan*)."

San-bao asked permission to draw on a fund within the salt treasury that was retained for local public expenses (*difang gongshi*) to support the repairs. He further asked the emperor to dispatch an official from the Imperial Household Department familiar with construction to oversee the renovations. The emperor replied that sending someone from the capital was unnecessary and tasked San-bao with supervising the work he had proposed. When the project was finished the next year, the Salt Distribution Commissioner Yang Hongjun memorialized asking permission to use funds from the salt treasury to permanently hire men to maintain the area around Baotu Spring.¹¹³

This incident shows how physical representations of imperial presence were powerful but precarious. Chuck Wooldridge describes how in Nanjing the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors "sought through their ostentatious occupation of the city to disarm a particular discourse of opposition to the Qing dynasty and to limit the capacity of local elites to propose alternative readings of the cityscape."¹¹⁴ The space of Nanjing was especially fraught because of the city's close association with past dynasties, which could provide fuel for subversive nostalgia.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Ji-lun, Song Xiang, and Jia Ying, *Shandong yanfa zhi*, 21:16a–17b.

¹¹⁴ Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*, 29.

¹¹⁵ Similarly, Meyer-Fong argues that the tours helped re-orient Yangzhou's local style away from association with Nanjing and the Ming and towards Beijing and the spectacles associated with the Qing. Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture*, 165–68.

Likewise, the irregularity and ultimately cessation of the tours ensured that there would be room for other people to intervene in the landscape, as Wang Shijun did in Jinan.¹¹⁶ Jinan was not as problematic, since, unlike Nanjing, no emperor had written himself into the landscape like the Kangxi Emperor had. Nevertheless, in San-bao's memorial we see how physical construction both represented imperial presence and rendered it vulnerable to decay and diminution by other more ostentatious structures. This challenge to imperial supremacy was not local in origin, at least in the sense that it did not originate from the natives of Jinan. Rather, Wang Shijun's pavilion was a continuation of the practice of non-native officials shaping the physical and textual space of Baotu Spring. Baotu Spring's transformation into a reservoir of imperial presence necessitated subordinating this type of translocal effect to the creative intervention of the emperor himself. This did express imperial dominion over this place, but it could not do so without altering the patterns through which place had been made through translocal interactions. Place was not a static object of imperial domination. Rather, place-making was a means through which this domination was achieved.

It is not coincidental that San-bao and the salt administration were instrumental in this construction of imperial authority through place-making. The Qianlong Emperor in particular used his tours to cultivate relationships with the wealthy salt merchants of the Lianghuai salt administration, who both paid taxes and made "contributions" to fund special projects, like imperial conquests. Unlike taxes, which passed through the Board of Revenue, special contributions (or levies) were "brokered through the Imperial Household Department."¹¹⁷ Jinan was an important center for the salt trade in Shandong, but this trade was far less lucrative than that of Changlu (based in Tianjin) and Lianghuai (based in Yangzhou). Even before the salt

¹¹⁶ Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*, 52–53.

¹¹⁷ Chang, *A Court on Horseback*, 224.

administration took on the maintenance of the area around Baotu Spring, the spring's status as the putative origin of the Luo was of some significance. This waterway linked Jinan to its satellite port, Luokou, on the the Daqing River. All salt being sold in the western half of the province was supposed to be shipped from the coast via the Daqing River through the inspection station at Luokou. The Jiaqing edition of the *Shandong Salt Administration Gazetteer* (*Shandong yanfa zhi*) notes this connection in its description of a map showing the area around Baotu Spring.¹¹⁸ The Yongzheng edition does not include this information, though, suggesting that Baotu Spring was deemed important to the salt administration only after it became responsible for maintaining the area around the spring in the early Qianlong reign. Tobie Meyer-Fong identifies a similar link between imperial patronage, the salt trade, and a local cultural center in the Tianning Temple in Yangzhou, although in that case the Lianghuai administration had already established an office of its own there before or around the time of the Kangxi Emperor's first tour.¹¹⁹ The history of Tianning Temple also echoes San-bao's request to involve the Imperial Household Department in the renovation of the area around Baotu Spring. Under the Qianlong Emperor, the Imperial Household Department managed construction projects at Tianning Temple that, Meyer-Fong argues, helped make it "the proximate point from which imperial taste emanated to reshape the local landscape."¹²⁰

Writing Imperial Presence

Besides being events themselves and leaving physical marks on the landscape, the tours also became an instigator for and element in subsequent textual production related to Baotu Spring. This started from the emperors themselves, who each wrote poems to commemorate their

¹¹⁸ Ji-lun, Song Xiang, and Jia Ying, *Shandong yanfa zhi*, 22:14b.

¹¹⁹ Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture*, 171–87.

¹²⁰ Meyer-Fong, 188.

visits to Jinan and its sites. Their poems referenced existing literary discourse on the spring but also set the emperors apart from it. Despite this ambivalence, literary production about Baotu Spring surrounding and following the tours demonstrates how place-making and the consolidation of imperial power were mutually constructive.

The Kangxi Emperor's poem "Baotu Spring," written on his first tour in 1684, reflects themes from previous writings about the spring and the dual purpose of the tours to express the emperor's refined elegance and military prowess. This poem reads:

An acre and a half in area, this wind-swept pond is secluded.
Between the pavilions the feathered banners camp.
Pure white silk gauze floats on crying waves,
Bursting forth, the water splashes pearls.

A drawing ladle, a rolling boil in the pot,
Slowly splashing on the platform, darkening our clothes with water.
As though fallen from the Milky Way,
Spraying out in a showering spring it flies.

十畝風潭曲，亭間駐羽旂。
鳴濤飄素練，迸水濺珠璣。

汲杓旋烹鼎，侵堦暗濕衣。
似從銀漢落，噴作瀑泉飛。¹²¹

The metaphors of silk, pearls, a boiling pot, and a star fallen from the sky to describe the spring's appearance were all familiar tropes. The image of soldiers camped among the pavilions markedly diverged from the poetry about Baotu Spring discussed above, though. The use of the word *qi*, which referred to both physical banners and the military-social units that lent the Qing banner system its name, could hardly have been accidental. Together with the first line, which paints an exaggerated image of seclusion outside the city wall, this line reflects the martial tenor of the tours. It shows how the emperor appropriated Baotu Spring as a physical platform for displaying

¹²¹ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, juanshou:1a.

his Manchu martial prowess to his officials, who had exited the safety of the city walls to receive him.¹²²

Brian Dott observes a similar mixing of literary (*wen*) and martial (*wu*) qualities in the scroll painting that depicts the Kangxi Emperor's tour to Mount Tai in 1689. The third scroll depicts the emperor's procession from Jinan to Mount Tai. The emperor himself stands atop the southern section of Jinan's wall looking out towards Mount Tai as his entourage streams through the city towards the mountain, where officials are preparing for his arrival. Dott notes that the emperor is depicted as sitting on top of a horse, a standard trope in the tours' representation of the martial qualities of the Qing rulers. However, he is also depicted underneath an umbrella, which is a representation more appropriate to the "son of heaven."¹²³



Figure 1.7: Selection from scroll three of Wang Hui's scroll paintings of the 1689 Kangxi southern tour (Public Domain, <https://www.metmuseum.org>)

¹²² On the martialization of political culture and landscapes during the eighteenth century, see Waley-Cohen, "Changing Spaces of Empire," 330–39; Bonk, "Loyal Souls."

¹²³ Dott, *Identity Reflections*, 167.

The orientation of the painting's representation of Jinan also echoes that of the gazetteer maps discussed in the previous section. Like those maps, the painting depicts Jinan as if one were looking down at the city from the mountains to the south. Here, of course, that orientation is integral to the painting, as it shows the southward procession of the emperor to Mount Tai. Dott notes that the common people depicted in the painting hailing the emperor are, like the painting itself, facing north, which was a customary depiction. Only the emperor, by virtue of his imperial prerogative, faces south.¹²⁴ As discussed above, the naming of Jinan's western and southern gates—the ones through which the emperor passed on his way into and out of Jinan—referenced Baotu Spring and Li Mountain, showing how these sites both oriented Jinan and integrated it into a translocal geography. In this painting, though, the emperor usurps that function through his mounting of the southern portion of the wall and the juxtaposition of his south-facing gaze with the overall orientation of the painting. It is the body of the emperor himself that integrates the empire and the city as he passes through and occupies space. His physical act of climbing the wall and the subsequent imperial depiction of it adds a new coloring to subsequent maps of Jinan, even though they were following a pattern that was already in use.

Despite these allusions to existing representational patterns, the Kangxi Emperor's direct engagement with individuals from Jinan or who had written about Jinan was limited. The poetic steles that the Kangxi Emperor bestowed on officials and were displayed at Baotu Spring predominantly cited writings by masters of the Tang Dynasty with calligraphy in imitation of later scholars. Neither the poets nor the poems were necessarily related to Jinan.

The one glaring exception was Zhao Mengfu. In 1693–4, the Kangxi Emperor wrote two inscriptions and bestowed them on the Shandong Governor Sang-ge. The first was an extract

¹²⁴ Dott, 170.

from the Daoist meditative text, the *Yellow Court Classic* (*Huangting jing*). This stele was installed inside the governor's compound. The other was Zhao Mengfu's famous poem on Baotu Spring, written in calligraphy imitating Zhao's; this stele was placed in a pavilion next to the spring. The 1841 *Jinan Prefecture Gazetteer* explains that both inscriptions were placed in scenic areas near the old studio of Zhou Mi's family.¹²⁵ Zhao Mengfu's poem was particularly appropriate since it was on Zhou Mi's behalf that he had painted his famous "Autumn Scenery of the Que and Hua Mountains." By adopting the persona of Zhao Mengfu, the emperor represented himself as the creator of famous and influential local art on behalf of Jinan's people. Assuming he was familiar with the practice of writing poems about Baotu Spring to match Zhao's rhyme scheme, it is also telling that the emperor refrained from doing so. Rather than patronizing an established local practice through participating in it, the emperor positioned himself as its progenitor.¹²⁶

Because the Qianlong Emperor was an avid poet and sightseer, the question of how to engage with the existing literary tradition was particularly important for him. Michael Chang argues that in Jiangnan adopting the rhyme schemes of Su Shi in his poetry enabled the emperor to "demonstrate both familiarity with and appreciation for the work of a well-known and respected literary figure" and distance himself from the enjoyment of sightseeing, which many officials considered an improper motivation for touring.¹²⁷ While in Jinan, the Qianlong Emperor also adopted a special literary voice, but in this case it was not that of a famous local poet but his grandfather's. His first poem about Batou Spring employed the rhyme scheme of the Kangxi

¹²⁵ Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, *JNFZ (Daoguang)*, juanshou:54a.

¹²⁶ Although the Qianlong Emperor did not cite Zhao Mengfu in his poetry, he was very aware and appreciative of his artistry. While in Jinan, the emperor had Zhao Mengfu's "Autumn Scenery of the Que and Hua Mountains" sent by post so that he could compare it to the landscape it purported to depict. He wrote one poem about the painting while in Jinan and another a year later. Hongli, *Qing Gaozong (Qianlong) yuzhi shiwen quanji*, 2:225, 341.

¹²⁷ Chang, *A Court on Horseback*, 343.

Emperor's 1684 poem. It reads:

At the lofty steles I gaze on the sagely elegance;
At the ancient temple, the spring banners camp.
Arriving at this scene on Qingming Day,¹²⁸
We wash our robes with large and small pearls alike.

The waves' heart turns over like snow boiling;
Stone teeth ripple with deep green moss.
Facing this, my cares and worries are cleansed,
Replenished, leisurely I rise in flight.

穹碑瞻聖藻，古寺駐春旂。
即景清明日，湔褻大小璣。

波心翻雪練，石齒漾苔衣。
對此蠲塵慮，從添逸興飛。¹²⁹

Like his grandfather, he deployed familiar tropes in describing the appearance of Baotu Spring. The last two lines depart from physical description, but their evocation of the spiritual efficacy of the spring is still highly conventional, echoing, for instance, the end of Zhao Mengfu's poem. Because *qi* is a rhyming character, this poem also conveys the martial tone of the Kangxi poem. The most significant departure is perhaps the first line: whereas the Kangxi Emperor emphasized the arrangement of his army's banners outside the walls of the city, the Qianlong Emperor set this martial display in the physical context of the steles left by his grandfather.

The Qianlong Emperor deepened this citation of his predecessor by having this poem inscribed on the back side of the stele on which the Kangxi poem was inscribed. He wrote another, longer poem about Baotu Spring using his own rhyme scheme and had it inscribed on the back of the stele that bore the Kangxi Emperor's calligraphy of *ji tuan*. The final three stanzas of this poem, "Again Inscribing Baotu Spring" (*Zai ti Baotu quan*), both position the

¹²⁸ Qingming Festival is on the first day of the fifth solar term of the lunisolar calendar. It coincided with the Qianlong Emperor's 1748 visit to Jinan.

¹²⁹ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, juanshou:4b–5a.

Qianlong Emperor among those who had previously praised the spring, including his grandfather, and indicates how he intended this citation to justify his tour:

Vermilion railings surround and join the lofty towers;
Those receiving sacrifices are the immortals He, Zhong, and Lü.
Along the bending corridors that zig and zag, the walls are inscribed with characters;
Raising an ode, who can decipher the authors' names?

I pass over the bridge to the calligraphy room with three upright pillars;
The inkstone is pure and the basin fragrant, so I roll out a sheet of paper.
Many have already eulogized this famous spring,
Floating here can truly be called incomparably good.

I once heard the ancients said this land was efficacious;
Stingy with my grace, I was afraid it was not right to enjoy precious things.
Imitating the call of the heavenly dragon, I awaken from oblivious repose;
This evening I am sprinkled through by one of paradise's streams.

朱欄匝匝接穹樓，祀者何仙鍾呂子。
曲廊蜿蜒壁勒字，題詠誰能分姓氏。

過橋書室恰三楹，研淨甌香鋪左紙。
毡詠名泉亦已多，汎茲實可稱觀止。

曾聞地靈古所云，屯膏珍享恐非理。
擬喚天龍醒癡眠，今宵一灑功德水。¹³⁰

The final stanza combines the poem's two major themes. The first is the physical beauty and spiritual efficacy of Baotu Spring. The second is the precedent that existed for enjoying and writing about this site. Although many authors had done so and Daoist immortals were venerated there, the most important precedent was the Kangxi Emperor. The Qianlong Emperor places himself in the pavilion containing his forebear's calligraphy as he sets about leaving his mark on the landscape. More strikingly, in the next-to-last line, he claims that his trip to Jinan is inspired by the call of the dragon (the former emperor), which beckons him to enjoy and bestow his grace upon the celebrated scenic spots of his realm. The Qianlong Emperor continued to refer to his

¹³⁰ Hu Delin, juanshou:5b-6a.

grandfather's writing about Jinan even after he stopped visiting the city: the poems he wrote each time he passed Jinan used the rhyme scheme the Kangxi Emperor wrote when he passed through the city in 1689.

The Qianlong Emperor's motivation for relying so heavily on his grandfather's precedent was probably similar to his reasons for using Su Shi's rhyme schemes in Jiangnan. This was a mechanism for simultaneously demonstrating his literary aptitude and defending the practice of touring. This latter motivation was especially important when he initiated his tours in 1748, which might explain why the Kangxi Emperor figures so prominently in the poems he wrote about Baotu Spring that year.¹³¹ Baotu Spring's close association with the Kangxi tours explains why imperial references continued to accumulate there through the Qianlong visit.

Neither emperor, then, integrated himself fully into the Baotu Spring literary corpus either as a producer or consumer of poetry. The Qianlong Emperor's persistent and basically exclusive citation of his grandfather departed from the appreciation he showed for the Jiangnan literary tradition through his references to Su Shi. This self-referencing is reflected in how imperial writings were compiled in local gazetteers. In addition to collections of imperial writings (*yuzhi shiwen quanji*), imperial poems and inscriptions were collected in the opening sections of Jinan's local gazetteers. This set them apart from the poems written by literati, which were included in the geographical descriptions of Jinan's sites, as in the *Licheng County Gazetteer*, or the section on literary selections, as in *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*. Ren Hongyuan dedicated the first section of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* to the Kangxi Emperor's tours, mirroring the priority that imperial writings received in the opening section of the Qianlong *Licheng County Gazetteer* and the Daoguang *Jinan Prefecture Gazetteer*. He did include imperial

¹³¹ On the Qianlong Emperor's justifications for his tours, including appealing to the precedent of the Kangxi Emperor, see Chang, *A Court on Horseback*, 87–101.

calligraphy in his sections on stone and metal inscriptions (*jinshi*) and inscribed couplets on wooden boards (*elian*) but left imperial poems out of the sections on poetry.

On the surface, this suggests that the emperors' physical interventions at Baotu Spring were far more influential locally than their literary contributions. This brings us back to the compilation of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*. As I noted above, Ren Hongyuan traced the literary genealogy of his work back to Zeng Gong in the Song Dynasty. The end of this genealogy, though, was the Qing: "Arriving at the three visits of the Kangxi Emperor of our current dynasty and his repeated commentary on its merits, up to today the heavenly writings hang high, reflecting resplendently on the water's banks; this is beyond what the mountains and rivers of all-under-heaven could dare hope for."¹³² One way to read this is as a local re-appropriation of imperial favor to trumpet the merits of this spring. However, Ren continues, "Although records carved on steles can be passed through generations, the elements will take their toll, and after a long time they will be lost. Those who preserve these gems have special knowledge of them; if many years go by, the objects will be replaced and the area changed; it will be much better if in the end there are books [about them]."¹³³ Ren's juxtaposition of imperial favor, which one might think would establish a lasting legacy, with concerns for the decaying of stone steles appears incongruous. It does, however, reflect the fluctuating physical environment around the spring. In fact, Ren references San-bao's renovation of the pavilions later in the preface:

Upon the year that the emperor ascended the throne, he issued an edict ordering the repair of ancient sites in all-under-heaven and specially granted the salt commissioner San-bao's request to rebuild the pavilions at the spring and to make their appearance more splendid. If there were no one to record this, thus causing this mysterious spring to disappear, then that would not only be a matter of great regret for my town, but then we would be unable to commend the profundity of the grand minds of the successive sages inclined to ancient things and the favor they have shown to this spring. Would not the guilt of this be greater [than the presumption of resuming the compilation]? Thus, I

¹³² Ren Hongyuan, *Baotu quan zhi jiaozhu*, xuyan 1.

¹³³ Ren Hongyuan, xuyan 1.

opened my various old collections and added more meticulous investigation.¹³⁴

Here Ren links his completion of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* directly to the beginning of the Qianlong Emperor's reign and San-bao's renovation of the pavilions containing the Kangxi steles. The timeline of the compilation of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* supports this connection: by the beginning of the Qianlong reign in 1736, the project had been underway for more than twenty years and likely in abeyance for a good portion of that. There is little reason to doubt Ren's suggestion that the events of the early Qianlong reign provided the impetus to complete and publish the work. This would also explain Ren's inclusion of three separate maps of the area around the spring: one from the late Ming, one post-Kangxi tours, and one post-Qianlong renovations.

This does leave us with some ambiguity about how Ren perceived this impetus, though. On the one hand, San-bao's memorial shows that there were legitimate reasons to be concerned that even the legacy of an emperor could be lost or at least debased by time and subsequent construction. And Ren does speak positively about the effects of San-bao's construction, saying, "[It] made the scene look completely new and is truly the splendor of an age that will resound for eternity."¹³⁵ On the other hand, Ren knew that the preservation of imperial structures could disrupt the existing landscape. The last essay included in *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* was written by Song Yunxin, who had helped Ren compile the gazetteer. It is titled, "Written with Ren Luomei [Hongyuan]," and focuses on Baixue Tower and its attachment to Li Panlong. The essay explains that in the course of renovating the imperial pavilions, the entrance to the tower had been blocked up and it was falling into disrepair. Song and Ren had worked to fix this problem and preserve Li's memory, exploiting Ren's longstanding relationship with one of the

¹³⁴ Ren Hongyuan, xuyan 2.

¹³⁵ Ren Hongyuan, 15.

salt officials. The end of the essay applauds both the impending completion of both this project, which it called “a great fortune for our town and dynasty (*xiang guo zhi daxing*),” and the records of local geography in *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* and the *Shandong Salt Administration Gazetteer*.¹³⁶

This side of the imperial tours and the compilation of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* takes us to what might be a more familiar understanding of the relationship between empire and place: local actors rushing to preserve their home places from the disruptions wrought by “the state.” However, as I have argued throughout this chapter, place-making at Baotu Spring had been bound up in the operation of the bureaucracy for centuries. The place to be protected did not exist independently of the state. As had their forebears, Song Yunxin and Ren Hongyuan turned to officials to repair the physical legacy of their native place’s literary history. Ren’s use of his relationship with a salt official reminds us of his family’s background as salt merchants and points to how, in his case at least, a longer trajectory of translocal interactions were interwoven with engagement with the government to lead to his own textual and physical place-making. In his study of folk religion, Steven Sangren argues that history legitimized both local culture and assertions of imperial power.¹³⁷ As the tours and their legacy reflect, particular appeals to history had to engage in ongoing negotiation. However, place and the state did not enter this negotiation as predefined objects. Rather, they came into being through the actions performed upon specific landscapes and across translocal networks such as those described in this chapter.

Conclusion: Empire and Place in Inter-Regional Perspective

We can observe some similarities between the course of the Kangxi and Qianlong tours

¹³⁶ Ren Hongyuan, 231–32.

¹³⁷ Sangren, *Chinese Sociologies*, 45–68.

in Jinan and Jiangnan. We associate beautiful scenery and literary achievement with Jiangnan particularly, but both of these were also crucial elements of place-making in Jinan. It is also notable that both the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors considered it worthwhile to visit and exhibit their literary proficiency in Jinan, which was neither at the literary core of the empire nor a site of over-arching cultural significance, like Mount Tai or Confucius' ancestral home at Qufu. Additionally, the importance of the salt administration in preserving the legacy of the tours echoes the experiences of Jiangnan. The Qianlong Emperor's decision not to visit Jinan after his first tour does not change the fact that his engagement with the city and its sites was significantly more intensive than his grandfather's.

There were also major differences, though. One was scale. Even if the Qianlong Emperor had continued visiting Jinan, it almost certainly would never have received a large share of his tours' attention. This limited scale of engagement may have curtailed the qualitative effects of the tours. As we have seen in *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, the tours became touchstones for expressing attachment to one's home place and its relationship to the dynasty. However, I have not been able to discern a process of Jinan specifically becoming a metonym for "North China" writ large. Nor was its local style fundamentally re-shaped by tastes prevalent in the capital, at least through the tours. In this way, Jinan differed from Yangzhou, which Meyer-Fong argues experienced both processes in turn.¹³⁸ Nor did Jinan experience a reaction against imperial monumentalism, as Chuck Wooldridge observes in the case of Nanjing.¹³⁹ This is despite the fact that Jinan shared characteristics with both cities: like Yangzhou it was a center for the salt trade, and like Nanjing it was an important administrative center. Again, though, both similarities spanned major differences in scale since Shandong's salt trade was so much smaller than

¹³⁸ Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture*, 175–78, 181–88.

¹³⁹ Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*, 52–53.

Lianghuai's and since Jinan's status and size were dwarfed by Nanjing.

These differences point to how unique the experiences of each of these cities was, despite the tours reshaping the landscape of each. This reflects the difference-generating nature of imperial state-building.¹⁴⁰ Scholars tend to emphasize ethnic differentiation as a key component of imperial rule, and this fits well with the approach of “new Qing history.” But it also applies to the spatial emphasis in this chapter. Jinan's experiences show how imperial state-building generated heterogeneous place-making processes.

We must return, though, to the motif that Baotu Spring was not an unattached or singular site. Rather, authors persistently identified it as a point of linkage in a translocal geographic web. Among them was the Qianlong Emperor, who wrote:

Puffs of pearls and crumbs of jade: each turns over in the swelling water;
Giving birth to Lu and raising Qi: the spouts stand together like the three legs of a vessel.
Flowing as a rounded pond of only several mu,
Reaching the river by way of the Luo starts from here.

噴珠屑玉各瀾翻，孕魯育齊相鼎峙。
滙為圓池才數畝，於灤達江從此始。¹⁴¹

Many of these authors came to Jinan through the bureaucracy, which circulated members of the elite through the empire. More spectacularly, the imperial tours entailed a conscious procession of the emperor's body and distribution of his presence through space. The Qing imperial state did not exist solely through differentiating localities and linking them individually to the center through nested hierarchies. Rather, as the history of Baotu Spring shows, translocal links across space were constitutive of both imperial place-making and state-building. Examining the history of the relationship between place and empire in the Qing necessitates looking beyond local-center relations to the panoply of networks and the space in-between them that constituted the

¹⁴⁰ Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History*, 8; Barkey, *Empire of Difference*.

¹⁴¹ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, juanshou:5b.

state. Linkage by no means implies homogeneity, equality, or flatness, though. As the Qianlong Emperor's poems expressing his incapacity for bringing himself to enter Jinan after 1748 show, practices of linking could be consciously and even poignantly exclusionary.

This chapter has traced the relationship between place-making and state-building through a cultural and political history of writings about Baotu Spring. Chapter 2 broadens this discussion of governmental practices and networks outside the bureaucracy through a study of the interaction between an elite family, literary networks, and educational institutions. This will expand this chapter's discussion of the social production of literary texts into an analysis of how through state-building place was constructed as both a cultural object and social sphere that straddled the conventional line between state and society.

Chapter 2

Streams of Learning: Educational Institutions, Elite Families, and Literary Networks

The discursive elements of place-making discussed in chapter 1 were embedded in institutions that mobilized local people and resources and linked Jinan to the Qing state. This chapter focuses on two such institutions—academies and family—and explains how they were related to each other and implicated in place-making and state-building during the high Qing. As in chapter 1, translocality is an important consideration because these institutions facilitated engagement between Jinan’s elite and other places in the empire both by bringing a wide range of actors to Jinan and by serving as a conduit for members of the elite to engage with the empire beyond their home place through the examination system and civil service.

Two “characters” take center stage in this chapter. The first is Luoyuan Academy, founded in 1733 and located inside the walled city. Despite its distance from Baotu Spring, to which its name alluded, this academy’s place-making role mirrored that of “the foremost spring in all-under-heaven”: it integrated Jinan into translocal currents and was used to advance imperial and localist projects. In some ways, the history of this academy resembles that of Xuehai tang (Sea of Learning Hall), an academy founded by the renowned scholar-official Ruan Yuan in early nineteenth-century Guangzhou that has been studied by Steven Miles. Like Miles, I examine how Luoyuan Academy fit into “the local social and cultural landscape and what might be called the cultural politics of place.”¹ As in Guangzhou, I find both that people from Jinan mobilized the resources made available by institutions like Luoyuan Academy to serve localized interests and that literati from Jiangnan, like lecturers at Luoyuan Academy, used local institutions to advance the interests of the empire and the reputation of their home region as the empire’s cultural core.

¹ Miles, *The Sea of Learning*, 3.

Such similarities should be surprising since Guangzhou and Jinan were very different places. Located in the Pearl River Delta, Guangzhou was the core of one of the most agriculturally productive regions in the Qing Empire. As the introduction explains, Jinan's economic centrality was secondary, even within its own province. Guangzhou was a coastal city that until the mid-nineteenth century monopolized legal overseas trade. Jinan was landlocked and had little direct contact with overseas countries and does not enjoy a reputation as a very cosmopolitan place. Both, however, were provincial capitals, which linked them into common transregional scholastic currents that flowed through the channels of the Qing administrative system. In other words, common positions vis-a-vis state-building created similar patterns of place-making.

One of Jinan's most prominent families during the high Qing, the Zhu's, is the second focus of this chapter. Aided by a peculiar set of circumstances that saw one of the family members enrolled in the Qing banner system and later rewarded by the Kangxi Emperor after his unjust execution, the Zhu's quickly accumulated an astounding amount of political power and prestige in the early Qing. Maintaining their status through the same channels of official service would prove impossible in the long run, though. Members of the family used their reputation, talent, and access to translocal literary networks to perpetuate the family's status over the eighteenth century. The biographies of several family members who studied at Luoyuan Academy show how it simultaneously served imperial prerogatives and the localist strategies of Jinan's elite.

Elite families in North China, like the Zhu's, have received far less attention than their counterparts in the Lower Yangzi and China's southeast coast.² We can trace the lack of

² I am using "southeast coast" to refer generally to both Skinner's Southeast Coast and Lingnan physiographic macroregions.

historical and historiographical prominence of North China lineages to several factors. One is that lineage formation in southern China was a product of historical processes of migration, settlement, and inter-ethnic conflict and negotiation that was specific to that region.³ The combination of agricultural productivity, mercantile activities, and commitment to Neo-Confucian learning and practice among elite families in the Lower Yangzi likewise motivated and supported lineage organization.⁴ We would naturally expect lineage organization in North China, without as much wealth or such a consolidated elite class, to lag behind the south.⁵ Nevertheless, this region did produce powerful and durable families among the elite, like the Zhu's, and even the sub-elite.⁶

The intertwined histories of Luoyuan Academy and the Zhu family both confirm and challenge expectations for these kinds of institutions in North China. Both depended on opportunities provided by the bureaucracy, and each had ties to the salt trade, reflecting the limited availability of opportunities to build wealth in Jinan. Over time, the inability of the Zhu's to accumulate increasing amounts of wealth to support their sprawling family seems to have taken its toll. Ironically, financial pressures and the early deaths of husbands may have forced the women of the Zhu family into playing an especially important role in perpetuating the family's status through educating their sons and forging marriage relations, despite the fact that we do not have evidence of them participating in literary associations with other women as we do in some cases in Jiangnan.⁷ However, far from rendering either Luoyuan Academy or the Zhu family more parochial than their counterparts in the south, these limitations and dependence on

³ Szonyi, *Practicing Kinship*.

⁴ Beattie, "The Alternative to Resistance"; Ebrey and Watson, *Kinship Organization*; Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism*; Du, *The Order of Places*, 28–57.

⁵ Rankin and Esherick, "Concluding Remarks," 319.

⁶ Zhu Yafei, *Ming Qing Shandong shihuan jiazou*; Naquin, "Connections between Rebellions."

⁷ Mann, *The Talented Women*.

government institutions actually increased their integration into translocal networks. The Zhu family, whose residence in Jinan dated only to the early Qing, resembled the newer elite families of Guangzhou, who Miles argues gravitated towards Xuehai tang as a vehicle for establishing themselves in the community, even as the academy itself was a product of transregional initiatives.⁸

At least on the surface, the histories of Luoyuan Academy and the Zhu family fit into a well-established *longue durée* narrative of the development and diffusion of social institutions during the late imperial period. Like lineage organizations, academies became especially popular and powerful in the Lower Yangzi and southeast coast regions starting in the Southern Song (1127–1279). Both lineages and academies became intertwined with the development of literati identity and, along with other practices and institutions, constituted a repertoire of strategies that the emergent class of local gentry used to reproduce their social status within their home communities and with some degree of independence from government service.⁹ Such institutions provided the basis for the growth of what Timothy Brook has described as a “gentry society” characterized by a tendency toward autonomy from the state in the late Ming (1368–1644) and what William Rowe and Mary Rankin have identified as a “public sphere” by the late Qing.¹⁰

Over the course of the late imperial period, these practices and institutions gradually spread across the empire. North China, which had once been the core of Chinese civilization, thus became a kind of cultural hinterland, gradually and incompletely colonized by practices and institutions developed by southern literati. Southern cultural dominance was even expressed in

⁸ Miles, *The Sea of Learning*, 107–11.

⁹ Brook, “Family Continuity and Cultural Hegemony”; Rowe, “Success Stories.”

¹⁰ Although, the particularity of family institutions has meant that (following Weber) they are not usually understood as themselves constitutive of civil society. Brook, *Praying for Power*; Rankin, “Some Observations”; Rowe, “The Problem of ‘Civil Society.’”

highly formal terms, such as the loose regional quota for metropolitan (*jinsshi*) examination degrees. In the Qing Dynasty, this quota, which prevented southern literati from further dominating the upper reaches of the bureaucracy, stipulated that 55% of *jinsshi* would come from the south, 10% from the central regions, and 35% from the north.¹¹ A sense of northern backwardness also filtered into contemporaneous cultural discourse as well as modern scholarship. Remember, for instance, Yan Bi and Yang Huan's bewilderment at the lack of adequate appreciation for Jinan's splendid scenery in chapter 1. Benjamin Elman casually reproduces geographic stereotypes in describing examination candidates from around the empire as "a hodgepodge of high and low, young sons of the famous and old men on their last try, savvy urban southerners and country bumpkins from northern small towns and villages."¹²

This chapter disrupts this narrative in two ways. First, while contributing to our understanding of the long-term development and spread of institutions associated with gentry culture, like academies, from the Tang to Qing, it shows how the early years of the Qing complicate the narrative of northern backwardness. Although North China had lagged behind the south in academy construction for centuries, Jinan was at the forefront of the restoration of academies in the early Qing. This development unfolded through translocal circuits, as local officials, Jinan's elite, and the court all played a role in working out the role of academies in Qing state-building. Because the political role of academies had become so fraught in the late Ming, leading early Qing emperors to regard them with suspicion, it was hardly a foregone conclusion that they would become an integral part of Qing statecraft. The history of academies in Jinan was thus part of a larger process of negotiating the Qing political order. Along the way, Jinan's elite, like the Zhu's, gained access to institutions that they could utilize in support of their

¹¹ Elman, *A Cultural History*, 259.

¹² Elman, xxxii.

local interests, even though Luoyuan and other academies were by no means independent from the state.

My second intervention, then, is to argue that searching specifically for elite organization autonomous from the state as an outgrowth of these late imperial developments is not especially productive. At the very least, it privileges attention to areas that at least appear capable of having produced the wealth necessary to support institutions like lineages and academies without government intervention while relegating the larger portion of late imperial China, Jinan included, to secondary historical importance. Even more problematically, it leads to writing the history of state-society relations in China, at least implicitly, through a comparative lens that is not only Eurocentric but also idealized and empirically dubious. If we reject the notion that the mutual autonomy of state and society is a natural or ideal state of affairs, then we can begin to see new possibilities for comparing and not just contrasting the history of China to other places. To be sure, not all collective social activity in late imperial China was characterized by a cooperative relationship with the imperial state. Numerous “peasant uprisings” are but one example of social mobilization against, or at least outside, the state. However, academies, local militias, and charitable organizations (the latter two being the subjects of chapters 3 and 4) that advanced the public interest are best understood as being deeply invested in the state, not standing apart from it.

This chapter shows, then, how in Jinan the eighteenth century was a period where robust place-making was an integral element of Qing state-building and the translocal connections it engendered. Place-making in this chapter takes several forms. First, it refers to the establishment of institutions, like academies, that became fixtures in the local social, cultural, and political landscape. Second, it refers to strategies employed by specific groups—a family, in this case—to

utilize and re-shape the local landscape in their interests. State-building ran through both these aspects of place-making because institutions like academies were designed to advance state interests, because their utilization by members of the elite was essential to their functioning, and because the reproduction of this elite class served the interests of the state.

Educational Institutions in High Qing Jinan

Examinations and Provincial Administration

The aspects of state-building I examine in this chapter all relate to the system of educating, credentialing, and recruiting potential officials implemented by the Qing Dynasty. In general terms, the Qing inherited this system from the Ming, but there were also important departures, especially in the role of educational institutions. The core of this system and by far the best-known aspect of education in imperial China was the civil service examination system. Through this system, young men competed to demonstrate their mastery of canonical texts and earn the privilege of holding official posts, for which examination success was, in most cases, a necessary condition. The examination system hinged on two kinds of mobility: spatial and social. The spatial mobility inherent in this system supports my larger argument that the Qing state was a translocal construct. Understanding the relationship between the examination system and social mobility is also important for analyzing how this government institution became an element of elite place-making. Because Jinan was a provincial capital, the city's physical space mediated both types of mobility.

For people taking the exams, social mobility was a primary motivation. Although many exam-takers, especially those who were successful, already came from families with at least considerable economic or cultural capital, if not well-established exam success per se, the

competitive nature of this system meant that candidates could not rest on the laurels of their forebears. As Ho Ping-ti argues, in the late imperial period only a very limited number of families were able to consistently win the highest degree, the *jinshi*, awarded to those who placed in the top rung of candidates in the triennial examinations held in the capital. Those who succeeded in provincial examinations and received *juren* degrees could also hold lower level official posts, but there was no guarantee of appointment. As the number of degree-holders relative to the number of posts available grew over the late imperial period, even a *jinshi* degree became a far less sure avenue to an official career. The result of this was a consistent downward pressure on elite families who aspired to official service.¹³

Conversely, this downward mobility created opportunities for new entrants to the class of men—women were systematically excluded—who succeeded in the exams and received official appointments. However, the playing field for this competition was hardly level. Literacy in classical Chinese was a *sine qua non* for participating in the exams, and the requisite mastery of both the classical canon and accepted forms of literary composition limited the possibilities for genuine rags-to-riches stories of exam success. On this basis, Benjamin Elman describes the exams as a socially exclusionary institution.¹⁴ The contingency of exam success on cultural attainment did not, however, exclude men from merchant backgrounds. Since the Ming Dynasty sons of merchants had been allowed to sit for the exams, and opportunities to purchase “studentships” in official schools, titles, and low-level degrees offered a variety of mechanisms for converting economic capital into social and political capital. Ho goes so far as to argue that “money, after 1850 at the latest, had overshadowed higher academic degrees as a determinant of

¹³ Ho Ping-ti, *The Ladder of Success*, 126–67.

¹⁴ Elman, *A Cultural History*, xxix–xxxi, 239–94; Elman, *Civil Examinations*, 47–53.

higher statuses.”¹⁵ On the one hand, the eligibility of merchant families’ sons for the exams reflected the fluidity of the class system in late imperial China. On the other hand, it meant that the pool of exam-takers was populated by a large number of men whose family backgrounds imparted to them varying degrees of educational or economic advantage, making it even more difficult for less privileged commoners to break directly into the ranks of officialdom.

Whether we see social mobility as a primary effect of the exams (Ho) or not (Elman), the more immediate purpose of the exams from the perspective of the dynasty was to recruit members of the elite into government service. Ho and Elman agree that the system was successful in this regard on multiple levels. The fact that the exams entailed rigorous competition created a sense that official status depended on merit, not pedigree.¹⁶ Rather than watering down the ideological basis of the examination system, not limiting the pool of exam-takers to a thin upper crust of the elite ensured widespread familiarity with imperially sanctioned orthodoxy among those who aspired to upward mobility.¹⁷ Because exam quotas and the number of official positions did not match population growth, the system of credentialing and appointment became increasingly competitive. The lowest level was competitive enough—by Benjamin Elman’s estimate, of the approximately 2,000,000 men who sat for licensing and qualifying exams at any given time in the Qing, only about 30,000 achieved licentiate status—but this first hurdle was actually less competitive in the Qing than it had been in the Ming. However, between 1644 and 1850 the likelihood of a candidate who sat for the provincial exams (*xiangshi*) passing was around 1.5%. Even then, only a much smaller number of these highly qualified individuals would win the highest level (*jinshi*) degree (~3.5%) or receive official appointment with just a

¹⁵ Ho Ping-ti, *The Ladder of Success*, 256.

¹⁶ Ho Ping-ti, 17.

¹⁷ Ho Ping-ti, 86–91; Elman, *A Cultural History*, xxix–xxxi, 239–94.

juren. The result, Elman argues, was a growing gap between men who held *jinsshi* degrees and those who held *juren* degrees, which still conveyed considerable social status but by no means guaranteed official appointment.¹⁸ The potential dangers of such a large underclass of licentiates and a kind of national elite of *juren* who were not occupied by official service did not escape the court's attention.¹⁹ However, both the underclass of licentiates and the growing national elite composed of *juren* without official appointments also filled a wide range of essential functions as educators, clerks, and, especially in the nineteenth century, staff members for powerful officials.

Spatial mobility was an essential feature of this system of political recruitment and social mobility. Candidates traveled from their hometowns to local administrative centers, provincial capitals, and then Beijing as they advanced through the system. Those who achieved the ultimate goal of an official appointment would be subject to the rule of avoidance and thus be forced to travel even farther afield to take up their posts. Like the magistrates and prefects who oversaw the entrance-level examinations, the examiners who supervised the provincial examinations were also subject to the rule of avoidance, creating even more opportunities for interactions with extra-provincials, even for those who failed the exams. Specific experiences of this mobility varied widely, though. Traveling to the provincial capital to sit for the triennial provincial examinations was a very different experience for someone from Licheng or one of its neighboring counties, who barely had to travel at all, and someone who came from a county on Shandong's eastern coast. Likewise, the journeys to Beijing for the metropolitan exams were very different if one was coming from Jinan or Guangzhou, despite both being provincial capitals. One's personal social connections and financial means further individualized

¹⁸ Elman, *A Cultural History*, 142–63. On *juren* as a distinct political constituency, see Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 14–21.

¹⁹ Elman, *Civil Examinations*, 106–7.

experiences of traveling for the exams, which, beyond the anxiety that gripped many candidates, could offer chances for socializing and showmanship or give rise to feelings of loneliness and alienation.

This mobility was deeply iterative, encompassing millions of men traversing circuits linking administrative centers to myriad towns and villages across the empire over hundreds of years. Most candidates experienced the repetitive nature of this mobility themselves since only rare talents successfully clambered to the top of the “ladder” on the first try. Far more common were those who toiled at its lower rungs, repeatedly tracing paths across their home counties, prefectures, and provinces. The more central a location’s place in the educational hierarchy, the more significant the effects of this mobility on local social life and governance. The examination hall itself was the spatial object of these peregrinations, but exam-takers crafted and occupied a range of other spaces and institutions, ranging from temples to native-place lodges to entertainment quarters.²⁰ For example, Richard Belsky shows how native-place lodges in Beijing—the administrative hub *par excellence*—performed essential functions vis-a-vis both Beijing, in terms of providing important services for scholar-officials and maintaining order among them, and provincial constituencies by serving as a link between home communities and political developments in the capital.²¹

As a provincial capital, Jinan was, like Beijing, a gathering point for exam-takers, albeit on a much smaller scale. The triennial provincial examinations joined the province’s scholars in a common experience in Jinan. Jinan’s examination hall was on the south side of Daming Lake, east of the administrative commissioner’s compound, and the lake provided a natural setting for

²⁰ For more detail on the socio-political space of the examination hall and the relationship between the emotional experience of exam-taking and religious practice, see Elman, *A Cultural History*, 173–238, 295–370.

²¹ Belsky, *Localities at the Center*.

socializing and entertainment. By the late Qing, more than 10,000 students sat for each examination, and many servants and vendors must have joined them in swelling the city's population. The growth in the number of examinees over time required repeated expansions of the exam hall, some of which were undertaken by reclaiming land from the lake.²²

Bureaucratic oversight of exams and the education that prepared students for them extended well beyond Jinan and created opportunities for circulation and exchange that were more frequent than the exams themselves. The Ming Dynasty had greatly expanded the system of schools first established in the Song, so that in each county instructors (*jiaoyu*) and assistant instructors (*xundao*) supervised the local Confucian school. Although these officials and schools theoretically provided instruction, their primary role became dispensing stipends to qualified students who had already obtained the requisite literacy in classical Chinese and mostly prepared for the exams on their own.²³ Unlike territorial posts at the rank of magistrate and above, these positions were not subject to the rule of avoidance and were often filled by men who had obtained *juren* status from the same province. The provincial examination system, then, had two sides. On the one hand, it brought together thousands of men in Jinan, the provincial capital, on a triennial basis. On the other hand, it also served to distribute some of those men who were successful degree candidates back across the province as low-level functionaries.

At the apex of the provincial educational bureaucracy sat the governor and education commissioner (*xuezheng*), who, unlike lower level education officials, were subject to the rule of avoidance. The primary duty of the governor vis-a-vis education was to supervise the triennial examinations. Meanwhile, the education commissioner traveled across the province inspecting local schools and administering prefecture-level examinations, through which he selected

²² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 13:23b–24a.

²³ Elman, *A Cultural History*, 127–28.

candidates for the provincial exam. In Shandong, his duties also entailed overseeing the performance of rites at Confucius' ancestral home in Qufu. Because these responsibilities required him to travel throughout the province, the education commissioner doubled as a kind of censor who reported directly to the court about local conditions, such as weather and grain prices. The Jiaqing Emperor also used education commissioners to report on other provincial officials in order to help grapple with the deeply entrenched corruption he had inherited from his father's administration.²⁴ However, the combination of education commissioners' travels throughout the province, important functions in the provincial capital, and three-year tenure also gave them plenty of opportunities to engage in graft themselves.²⁵

The itinerant nature of this position also made the education commissioner a good candidate to undertake province-wide literary projects, both through his travels and from his base in Jinan. These officials facilitated academic connections within the province and had the opportunity to introduce, based on their own backgrounds, ideas from other places. The most famous example of this was the renowned scholar-official Ruan Yuan, who was the education commissioner of Shandong in 1793–5. While in Shandong, Ruan produced a curriculum for Shandong's students that introduced them to both the Han school of learning and Tang and Song texts.²⁶ His first compilation of poetry and essays, *Xiaocanglang bitan*, also dates from this period and is named after the studio he occupied on the bank of Daming Lake. This collection contains a number of poems Ruan wrote about the scenery in Jinan and other places in the province.

Ruan also used his position to initiate a compilation of inscriptions from across Shandong

²⁴ Chen Jinling, "Cong Jiaqing chao xuezheng mizou."

²⁵ Elman, *A Cultural History*, 200.

²⁶ Wei, *Ruan Yuan*, 60.

Province, in cooperation with the governor, Bi Yuan. Ruan participated in this work, published as *A Record of Inscriptions in Shandong (Shanzuo jinshi zhi)*, himself and recruited inscription experts from other provinces to come to Shandong to help with it.²⁷ He also relied on Shandong natives to gather inscriptions for the project. The outcome was both a major work of local literature and greater local expertise in the art of collecting and compiling inscriptions. The examinations thus contributed to place-making and state-building in Jinan by providing a primary mechanism by which its people attained or maintained social status and by moving large numbers of people from across the province and smaller numbers of powerful people (education commissioners and examiners) from elsewhere in the empire through the city. As demonstrated by the case of Ruan Yuan in Shandong and Guangzhou, as Steven Miles discusses, the social and cultural effects of these processes spilled beyond the narrower intentions of the institutions that channeled them. Likewise, even when these cultural effects were localist in nature, they reflected the embeddedness of places like Jinan and Guangzhou in common translocal circuits linking them not only to the cultural core of Jiangnan but also to each other.²⁸

Jinan's Academies in the Late Ming and Early Qing

As Elman, in the case of the examination system, and Schneewind, in the case of community schools, have shown, the late imperial credentialing system served as a conduit for exerting imperial authority over the elite class, but it also entailed considerable negotiation and demonstrated the limits of the court's power. Candidates reacted against the competitiveness and perceived unfairness of the exams by cheating or protesting against what they saw as corrupt

²⁷ Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:167.

²⁸ Miles argues that the localist bent of Xuehai tang was a continuation of Ruan Yuan's activities in Shandong, which suggests that we should further investigate how "peripheral" regions were not passive recipients of core (Jiangnan) cultural practices but active participants in the formation of Jiangnan identity. Miles, *The Sea of Learning*, 17.

behavior. Subversive acts like these underscored the dependence of the system on voluntary cooperation and the difficulty of exercising coercive surveillance over exam-takers and licentiates.²⁹ Moreover, Elman argues that the exams became a “cultural arena” that required the court and literati to cooperate in deciding things like the content of the exams.³⁰ Likewise, the community schools established early in the Ming became avenues for local officials and the elite not so much to resist the interests of the state but to exert their own initiative and assert their own interests.³¹

The way in which this putatively “state” institution depended on members of “society” to be effective and, in turn, influenced a broad range of social behaviors again underscores my critique of the state-society paradigm. In the remainder of this section, I use the history of Jinan’s academies—a type of institution closely related to the examination system to—elaborate this critique. Like the examination and school system, from some angles academies look like government institutions, sometimes with ties directly to the imperial court. They furthered the goal of shaping the thinking and training of men who would serve the state as officials in the bureaucracy and as subjects in their home places. Even more than the exams, which were occasional events, academies could institutionalize the education standards the government promoted through regular education and at a higher level of intellectual attainment than local schools could provide. Like the exams, provincial level academies drew together students from across the province and thus deepened opportunities for intellectual exchange.

However, the diverse forms and functions of academies belie any attempt to label them simply “state institutions.” Although there were early precedents for academies, we can trace the

²⁹ Elman, *A Cultural History*, 173–238.

³⁰ Elman, Xiii–xiv, 66–124.

³¹ Schneewind, *Community Schools*.

late imperial history of these institutions to the Southern Song, which witnessed an efflorescence of “private” academies that advanced Neo-Confucian studies. As suggested by their Chinese name—*shuyuan*, literally “institution for books”—some academies served primarily as libraries, but many incorporated some form of instruction or at least structured literary discourse. Some such institutions operated genuinely privately, as schools for elite families to educate their own children. Others were private vis-a-vis the government but public in the sense that they provided services to local or translocal communities beyond the family unit. Others, however, were founded by officials and received some official support but were, together with their endowments (often in the form of land), managed by the elite. Even in the case of academies that were relatively private, John Meskill notes that “they did not emphasize their independence as a necessary virtue.” In fact, when academies were described as independent it was usually as a way to criticize them and convince the court to repress them, which happened several times during the Ming.³² The academies that were closed during these repressions fell victim to fears in the court about how they could be used as mechanisms for literati self-organization. However, the court itself was not solely responsible for these closures. In fact, it was literati in competing factions who turned the instruments of government against their political foes.

The issue of academies’ “privateness” should be understood in the context of the broader institutional history of the Ming. Compared to the statism of the early Ming, the middle and later portions of the dynasty generally saw a relaxing of government control over social life. Brook sketches this narrative through the lens of growing elite patronization of Buddhist monasteries, which he argues represented a tendency toward literati self-organization autonomous from the state.³³ Schneewind likewise argues that the initiative for establishing and maintaining

³² Meskill, “Academies and Politics,” 149.

³³ Brook, *Praying for Power*. For a more general explication of this narrative, see Brook, *The Confusions of*

community schools generally shifted from the court to local communities over the course of the Ming. However, she adds nuance to this narrative by arguing that local participation was an essential part of these institutions across the Ming and concludes that “[the Ming state’s] strength lay in its ability, often against the will of the center, to serve as a field—not the only field, not a level field, but a wide one—for social cooperation and competition.”³⁴ Schneewind’s depiction of the state as a field for cooperation and competition seems to fit the ambiguity of academies’ status vis-a-vis the government described above. It also accords with my understanding of the state as both a product and element of social action rather than a set of institutions independent from society. This is not to say that aspects of elite life, like the patronization of monasteries or connoisseurship or consumption, could not operate with some distance from the state.³⁵ We should be wary, though, about attaching too much significance to the appearance of social autonomy from the state, both because it could co-exist with other forms of state-interested social activity and because there could be sub-surface ties to the state that belie claims of autonomy.

Although academies’ ambiguous position vis-a-vis the state resembled that of community schools, the historical development of academies, especially in North China, was distinct. When academies first became popular in the Southern Song, Shandong and the rest of North China were under Jurchen rule and emerged from this period as a kind of cultural backwater, at least in the eyes of southern literati.³⁶ After the empire was reunified under the Yuan (1279–1368)—when Jinan’s first academy was founded—and Ming, academies did spread to the north.

Pleasure.

³⁴ Schneewind, *Community Schools*, 5. Schneewind expands on the importance of popular participation to Ming governance in Schneewind, *Shrines to Living Men*.

³⁵ Clunas, *Superfluous Things*.

³⁶ Li Wei, *Shandong shuyuan*, 8–13.

However, their rate of growth still lagged behind the south. During the Ming, at least 87 new academies were established in Shandong, and 9 were reconstructed. Although this was not terribly far off the Ming average of at least 103 new or renovated academies per province, it shows that in terms of raw numbers, Shandong was not catching up in academy construction.³⁷

As academies spread across the empire, an increasing number were founded by officials. These may, in fact, have comprised the majority of new academies in the Ming.³⁸ The circulation of officials made it more likely that academies would develop in areas of the empire where they were less likely to appear on their own, especially in frontier provinces. Jinan was by no means a frontier, but officials played a consistently important role in establishing academies there during the Ming and Qing because of the city's status as a bureaucratic hub. Another effect of officials' interventions was to allay the hesitance and even outright hostility of the early Ming government towards academies. Greater official involvement in academies also increased their utility as institutional channels leading to exam success and official service. Scholars like Deng Hongbo generally depict this trend toward the bureaucratization of academies as draining their intellectual vitality.³⁹ As Miles shows, though, academies founded by officials could play an active role in local society and culture beyond providing a boilerplate education needed for exam success.

Jinan's most famous Ming academy was named Lishan and was founded by Salt-Control Censor Bi Maokang in 1614 next to Baotu Spring. This location and name obviously evoked Zeng Gong's construction of Luoyuan and Lishan halls there to receive officials in the Northern Song described in chapter 1. As Bi noted in his record of the academy's construction, its location

³⁷ Deng Hongbo, *Zhongguo shuyuan shi*, 261–68.

³⁸ Deng Hongbo, 270–71.

³⁹ Deng Hongbo, 277–78, 282.

next to Baixue Tower also connected it to the legacy of famous Jinan poet Li Panlong. Bi donated 500 taels to support the construction and then additional money to purchase 100 *mu* of land, whose proceeds covered the academy's expenses, including stipends for the approximately one hundred scholars who studied there.⁴⁰ These scholars came from across the province and were supervised by two instructors (*guangwen*), who gave lessons each day and administered exams on a monthly basis, a common practice in late imperial academies.⁴¹ Lishan Academy did not remain in operation long, however, and was shut down and converted to a courier station in the Tianqi reign (1620–7), probably as part of a broader closure of academies in this period that targeted those engaged in political activity but swept up even those that were not.⁴² Gazetteer records allude to this only vaguely, with the 1778 *Licheng County Gazetteer* saying, “The scholars did not dare to pass by and ask questions.”⁴³

This academy remained in abeyance into the early Qing. Around 1653, Right Provincial Administrative Commissioner Zhang Jinyan undertook the renovation of Baixue Tower to honor Li Panlong and sought to revitalize the academy that had been housed next to it. The clearest description of the reconstruction of this academy comes from an anonymous essay titled “A Call for Contributions to Construct Baixue Tower” that has been preserved in the digital edition of the late Ming *Licheng County Gazetteer* in the Airusheng database.⁴⁴ The author (likely Zhang) begins with a rumination on the illustrious literary reputation of the state of Qi and the fame Li Panlong had brought to this region. Remembering the delight he took in reading Li's poetry as a child, the author laments that the original Baixue Tower Li had constructed at Bao Mountain has

⁴⁰ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 12:16b.

⁴¹ Ye Chengzong, *LCXZ (Chongzhen)*, p.13:36a–38a.

⁴² Meskill, “Academies and Politics,” 172–74.

⁴³ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 12:16b.

⁴⁴ Both the content of the essay, which describes events from the early Qing, and discontinuous page numbers in the gazetteer suggest that this and other writings were inserted later. It does not appear in the digitized version of this gazetteer held by Harvard.

been lost, as has the second one that was built on Daming Lake. The only physical testimony to Li's legacy is the tower built at Baotu Spring by Ye Mengxiong in the late Ming, but this too has fallen into disrepair. Likewise, he writes, "Jinan's famous scholars have also been so few, distressed that in recent years their scholarly honors have been lacking in vitality."⁴⁵ The author's solution to this intellectual depression is to suggest reconstructing Baixue Tower as a memorial to Li and resuming the activities of Lishan Academy that had been founded by Bi Maokang. The essay makes a point of saying that the initial expenses for construction and printing blocks for the academy have been covered through contributions and have not necessitated bothering the local people. It closes by calling for further donations from officials in Jinan to support the academy. Zhang renamed this institution Baixue Academy, in honor of Li, but later gazetteers note that the name Lishan continued to be used.⁴⁶

The conditions of the early Qing make it remarkable that Zhang Jinyan was allowed to revive the academy at this time. In 1652 the court issued a series of restrictions on academies that essentially replicated those that had been adopted during the late Ming. In contrast to community schools, which Schneewind argues the Qing saw as relatively harmless and allowed to devolve into the hands of the local elite, tight restrictions on academies persisted across the dynastic divide.⁴⁷ Deng Hongbo claims that the court did not start allowing the reconstruction of academies until 1657, and only then did a tenuous and gradual recovery of academies across the empire commence.⁴⁸ Together with Zhang's personal initiative, Jinan's location in North China, over which the Qing consolidated control more easily than Jiangnan, may have put it on the front edge of academy reconstruction.

⁴⁵ Ye Chengzong, *LCXZ (CZ)*, 642–43. (Airusheng edition.)

⁴⁶ Du Zhao, *SDTZ (Yongzheng-Qianlong)*, 14:7b; Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, *JNFZ (Daoguang)*, 17:51b.

⁴⁷ Schneewind, *Community Schools*, 162.

⁴⁸ Deng Hongbo, *Zhongguo shuyuan shi*, 429–31.

Given the fate of Zhang Jinyan and the academy's association with a well-known Ming poet, it is even more remarkable that it survived this period. In 1644, Zhang had held the unenviable position of Minister of War for the Ming. Escaping from Beijing, he threw in his lot with the Qing only after they had conquered Jiangnan, meaning that he was not immediately eligible for official service. His posting to Shandong was the beginning of his return to a career in government. Unfortunately for Zhang, though, his service to the Qing would be cut short by the Shunzhi Emperor's turn to "new men" who had not served the Ming (and been part of the factionalism and favoritism thereof) and an unfortunate literary indiscretion that opened the door to his impeachment. In the foreword to a book of poetry by Shandong native and fellow Ming holdover Liu Zhengzong, Zhang used the phrase *jiang ming zhi cai*, which, while taken from the *Book of Songs* and simply meaning, "efficacious and enlightening," could also be translated, "talent that helps the Ming." Consequently, Zhang was permanently exiled to Ningguta in Manchuria where he continued his literary pursuits in the company of other exiled Han officials.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, Baixue Academy persisted and grew into the Kangxi period, when the court's attitude toward academies softened. Again, provincial officials played an important role in developing the academy. In 1686, Governor Zhang Peng and Administrative Commissioner Huang Tianyu renovated Baixue Tower and added more rooms for scholars.⁵⁰ Wang Ping and two other literati composed poems to commemorate this renovation. In 1688 the Administrative Commissioner Wei Jiqi further expanded the premises, as did the Education Commissioner Xu Jiong in 1702.⁵¹ The next year, when the Kangxi Emperor visited Jinan for the third time, Xu

⁴⁹ Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise*, 2:996–1000.

⁵⁰ Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, *JNFZ (Daoguang)*, 17:51b.

⁵¹ Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, 17:51b. Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 12:17b.

requested and received an imperial inscription for the academy. Although he did not directly order the construction or repair of academies like Baixue, the Kangxi Emperor's patronage of them demonstrated the dynasty's commitment to *lixue* orthodoxy and its growing openness towards these institutions, prompting further local initiatives.⁵²

Like academies in the Ming, Baixue Academy's history demonstrates the ambiguity of what it meant to be a state institution. It was founded (twice) and expanded by local officials and eventually won imperial patronage, but support from the court was by no means a foregone conclusion. In fact, Lishan Academy's closure in the late Ming might have had as much to do with the government as its establishment. Likewise, Baixue Academy was fortunate to avoid the fate of its founder, Zhang Jinyan, whose questionable loyalties landed him on the wrong side of the great wall. This institution's history thus provides a small example of the complex terrain of local officials, the imperial court, Manchus, and Han literati that comprised the Qing state.

Place was an indispensable feature of that terrain. Texts about academy construction downplay the role of members of the urban or provincial elite, but they were obviously essential to the functioning of these institutions, although we have to dig deeper into the biographical sections of gazetteers to find this information, as I do in the next section. At the very least, natives of Jinan and Shandong populated Lishan/Baixue Academy as students and possibly as instructors and directors. Moreover, both Bi Maokang and Zhang Jinyan, in the absence of imperial direction, framed their institutional interventions in terms of a sense of place. Although their personal experiences with Li Panlong mattered, they were also engaging with existing physical and literary commemorations of him in Jinan, some of which, like Baixue Tower by Baotu Spring, were products of early official initiatives. Both held out Li Panlong as a symbol of

⁵² Deng Hongbo, *Zhongguo shuyuan shi*, 433–34.

the literary merit the men of Jinan and all Shandong could hope to achieve. This illustrates how place was not a blank slate on which to simply enact preexisting state policies. Rather it was the environment through which these policies and interests emerged and was, consequently, both an ingredient and a product of state-building. This general phenomenon was by no means distinct to Jinan, but, as I have suggested, both the long-term history of academy development and the narrower history of the Ming-Qing transition meant that the place-making and state-building relationship in North China looked different from the Lower Yangzi. Both regions underwent reconstruction coupled with the formation of a new kind of ethno-dynastic state in the early Qing. As far as academies were concerned, though, the question for the Lower Yangzi was returning to and negotiating its long-established privileged cultural status that made it both a great resource and potential threat to the court. Meanwhile, North China was engaged in a long process of cultural colonization by the south and political domination by the capital.

We can see parallels to this mix of venerated local figures, interventionist officials, and imperial patronage in how the court adjudicated and tried to mold the orthodoxy of regional religious cults. Like academic institutions, imperial patronage of these cults demonstrated the mutual relationship between state power and local prestige. Local officials and members of the elite likewise played an important role in mediating this relationship.⁵³ In fact, as Baixue Academy's history shows, the line between academic and religious institutions could be blurry.⁵⁴ Gazetteers record no further investment in the academy after 1703. Nevertheless, Baixue Tower remained a landmark associated with Li Panlong and, as we saw in chapter 1, the early Qianlong renovation of pavilions housing the calligraphy of the Kangxi Emperor prompted the renovation

⁵³ Watson, "Standardizing the Gods"; Duara, "Superscribing Symbols"; Szonyi, "The Illusion"; Guo Qitao, *Exorcism and Money*.

⁵⁴ See also Miles, "Celebrating the Yu Fan Shrine."

of this structure as well. Around the turn of the nineteenth century, a magistrate converted Baixue Tower to a shrine honoring Li and Daoist immortal Zhang Guo. Several years later, the Judicial Commissioner Jin Guangti acceded to the request of local scholars to move Zhang's image to the top of the tower and devote the main room to Li. In 1821, Administrative Commissioner Cheng Zuluo restored the academic functions associated with Baixue Tower by founding a charitable school there.⁵⁵ By that time, the former glory of Lishan/Baixue Academy was distant, albeit by no means forgotten, and for almost a century it had been eclipsed by a new provincial academy, named Luoyuan, that dominated Jinan's academic landscape for most of the Qing.

Luoyuan Academy and High Qing Educational Politics

As the Kangxi Emperor's approval of Baixue Academy indicated, by the eighteenth century the Qing court was growing increasingly accepting of academies. In 1733, the Yongzheng Emperor issued an edict ordering the construction of academies in all provincial capitals, thereby signaling the court's shift from tacit support to systematic encouragement. Deng Hongbo interprets the Yongzheng edict as decisive in inaugurating a truly empire-wide hierarchy of local academies, with provincial academies serving as a link between lower-level institutions and the *Guozijian* (Imperial College) in Beijing. Imperial patronage and greater control of academies both decisively oriented them toward the ends of the court (preparing talent for official service) and afforded more control over the appointment of lecturers and the regulations of academies, which were to be based on those of Zhu Xi's famous White Deer Grotto Academy.⁵⁶ This picture corresponds to the image of the Yongzheng reign as a period of

⁵⁵ A charitable school (*yixue*), would have been much less prestigious than an academy like Baixue had been, probably serving only poorer students from the immediate surrounding area. Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, *JNFZ (Daoguang)*, 17:51b.

⁵⁶ Deng Hongbo, *Zhongguo shuyuan shi*, 437–38.

institutional innovation and consolidation.⁵⁷ We should not, however, take this for granted. For example, Liu Jingchun shows that in Taiyuan, Xi'an, and Lanzhou, no new academies were built between the time of this edict and the early nineteenth century.⁵⁸ Positive local responses to this directive—which are the standard by which its effectiveness should be measured—were thus by no means a foregone conclusion. As in the Ming and early Qing, the initiative of the elite and local officials was an integral component of state-building.

Shandong Governor Yue Jun did respond proactively to this edict and founded Luoyuan Academy that same year. He converted a military office that had been abandoned since the Ming for this purpose. Gazetteer entries for Luoyuan Academy up through the 1841 *Jinan Prefecture Gazetteer* treat it as an independent institution from Lishan/Baixue Academy. However, the 1926 *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* contains a record of renovations completed in 1841 that claims that Yue Jun had not founded Luoyuan *de novo* but rather had moved Baixue Academy to a new location and changed the name as an allusion to its former place next to Baotu Spring.⁵⁹ Since this version of Luoyuan's history contradicts even contemporaneous gazetteer entries, I discount it. This revisionist account testifies both to the decline of Baixue Academy over time, which rendered its history available for re-appropriation, and to the luster of its legacy.

Like Lishan and Baixue Academy before it, the impetus for founding Luoyuan seems to have come from the government, but there were also differences in its administration and funding. First, per the Yongzheng Emperor's edict, responsibility for supervising the academy fell to Shandong's governor. This established it as a truly province-level institution, unlike the county and prefecture schools and exams that the education commissioner and instructors

⁵⁷ See, for example, Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers*.

⁵⁸ Liu Jingchun, "Qingdai Xi'an, Lanzhou he Taiyuan de shuyuan," 96–98.

⁵⁹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:11a.

oversaw. Like other academies, though, Luoyuan also had a chief lecturer (*jiangxi* or *shanzhang*), who was often an esteemed scholar not from Shandong Province. Some lecturers gained employment through relationships with officials in Jinan, while others had actually served as officials in Shandong themselves. A list of thirty-four men who worked as chief lecturer at Luoyuan, compiled by Lu Xingmin, gives us some sense of who these men were. Of the twelve men on Lu's list who worked at Luoyuan in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, all but two had *jinshi* degrees and all were Han men. Only three of these twelve were from Shandong and none were from Jinan. Seven were from Zhejiang and two were from Jiangsu, which reflects the literary dominance of the Lower Yangzi during this period. This pattern held until the second half of the nineteenth century, when sixteen out of twenty-two lecturers came from Shandong.⁶⁰ This shift likely reflected both the turmoil caused by the Taiping Civil War in the Lower Yangzi and the increased opportunities this created for men from North China to win metropolitan degrees in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. (I discuss this in more detail in chapter 3.) This regional shift in education-related appointments was not limited to lecturers at Luoyuan Academy. Prior to 1850, 59% (50 of 85) of men appointed to be Shandong's education commissioner came from Zhejiang, Jiangsu, or Anhui. After 1850, these provinces' share fell to 29% (8 of 28), at the expense of provinces like Hunan.

Even during the eighteenth century, though, Shandong people exerted some supervision over the academy. In addition to the chief lecturer, a supervisor (*jianli*) was chosen from among the pool of expectant education officials, who were Shandong natives. Although existing sources do not specify the responsibilities of these individuals, it is safe to assume that whereas the chief lecturers took charge of instruction and administering examinations, the supervisors handled

⁶⁰ Lu Xingmin, "Qingdai Shandong shuyuan santi," 12–17.

more mundane affairs.

Another feature that distinguished Luoyuan from Jinan's other academies was that the court supplied it with an endowment of 1,000 taels. Soon, though, this initial endowment was supplemented by funds from other sources. In 1741, Governor Zhu Dingyuan reported that in the eight years since the academy's founding, contributions (*juan*) had added a further 4,060 taels to its endowment; 1,000 more taels were added over the course of the Qianlong reign. These funds could have come from local people or officials or a mix of both. Officials deposited money from the endowment with merchants from Licheng and elsewhere to earn interest, which provided for the basic operating expenses of the academy, including stipends for the scholars. By the end of the eighteenth century, the endowment's annual income was 1,550 taels, which was deposited in the treasury of the Ji-Dong-Tai-Wu-Lin Circuit Intendant. However, the endowment did not produce enough money to cover major reconstruction projects, meaning that the academy underwent only modest physical additions during this period. In 1748 Governor Zhun-tai inscribed the academy's regulations on wooden plaques and hung them on the walls, and in 1761 the academy chief lecturer Sang Tiaoyuan constructed a shrine to Zhu Xi and set up separate steles for three other individuals.⁶¹

By the turn of the nineteenth century, then, Luoyuan was both in need of repairs and a larger endowment to support its students. After arriving in Jinan in 1803, Governor Tie-bao undertook a series of reforms to educational institutions in Jinan. He began by raising an additional 6,000 taels for the endowment and deposited this sum with salt merchants. This raised Luoyuan's annual income to more than 2,400 taels, which grew to over 2,800 by 1838. Tie-bao also carried out physical renovations to Luoyuan's premises and re-promulgated the regulations

⁶¹ Wang Zengfang and Cheng Guan, *JNFZ (Daoguang)*, 17:52a–52b.

Governor Zhun-tai had set out for the academy's scholars in the early Qianlong reign and had them carved on stone slabs. Tie-bao also noted that while Luoyuan served students from across the province, Jinan lacked an academy specifically for students from its own prefecture. Tie-bao and Prefect Zhang Pengsheng thus set about establishing a new institution called Jinan Academy, which they based in a section of the administrative commissioner's *yamen* that they separated from the rest of the compound. Unlike Luoyuan, there was no endowment from the court, but there were still diverse sources of funding. Zhang donated some of his salary to pay for furnishings and raised funds, possibly from private donors, to provide for student stipends. Concerned that this would be insufficient to pay teachers' salaries, Zhang distributed 4,000 taels from funds designated for public expenses (*gongtang*) and raised a further 2,000 taels through contributions from officials in Jinan Prefecture, which he loaned to merchants to earn interest.⁶²

In 1841 Governor Tuo-hun-bu undertook extensive renovations of Luoyuan and wrote a detailed record of the work completed and the rationale for it. He noted that since the early Daoguang reign, officials had frequently requested approval for increasing funding for academies and cited an 1834 edict that ordered officials to pay special attention to constructing and maintaining academies.⁶³ Tuo-hun-bu recounted his own attention to educational institutions in his previous posts in Hunan, Fujian, and elsewhere, noted the renovation of Zhili's provincial academy the previous year, and asserted the responsibility of officials to participate in reconstruction (*shanhou*) activities, which might have been a reference to the First Opium War, which ended the next year. Tuo-hun-bu, Administrative Commissioner Yang Qingchen, and

⁶² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:17b–19b.

⁶³ There were a series of edicts in the Jiaqing and Daoguang reigns that referred to academy construction. The only one I have found from this year is in *QSL (Daoguang)*, 251:789a–789b. Tuo-hun-bu also uses language on hiring qualified academy instructors that comes from two Jiaqing-era edicts. *QSL (Jiaqing)*, 336:430b–431b, 359:736a–736b.

Circuit Intendant Bao-qing visited members of the gentry to gather donations. More than forty individuals contributed a total of 14,000 taels, 10,000 of which was deposited with pawnbrokers to earn interest while the rest was used for renovations and stipend payments to scholars.

Unfortunately, Tuo-hun-bu's record does not specify the exact origin of these donations, but given the number of people who contributed, I doubt that it was limited just to natives of Jinan.⁶⁴

The history of Luoyuan Academy, as well as Jinan Academy, thus exhibits the multifarious nature of the Qing state. Luoyuan's founding in 1733 and renovation over a century later reflected directives from the imperial court, which had also provided the academy's initial endowment. However, as in the late Ming and early Qing, local officials were more directly responsible for ensuring the success of the academy. Officials not only carried out imperial directives (or not) but also greatly expanded Luoyuan's endowment, initiated renovations even apart from the court's direction, and exercised control over personnel decisions. Official direction was especially important at Jinan Academy, even though its smaller size might lead us to expect that the role of the local elite would be stronger there. Luoyuan's supervisory positions were staffed by men who possessed some degree of literary attainment but were on the fringes of the Qing bureaucracy, and the supervisor post was filled by a native of Shandong. Even in its early years, the portion of Luoyuan's endowment that came from the court was quite small. Most of its funding came from interest on funds that were donated by officials or members of the elite. However, especially in the early nineteenth century, the court repeatedly ordered officials to pay greater attention to academies. Consequently, we should understand Luoyuan—throughout its history—as both an effect and instrument of imperial statecraft that depended on an array of actors and resources within and beyond the bureaucracy.

⁶⁴ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:11b–12a.

Local Culture and Imperial Rule

It was Tuo-hun-bu's record of his renovations to Luoyuan Academy that introduced the idea that it was a direct descendant of Lishan/Baixue Academy. This re-writing of Luoyuan's history was probably not accidental or due to lack of historical records since the *Jinan Prefecture Gazetteer*, published around the same time as Tuo-hun-bu wrote this record, makes no mention of this connection. Both the name *luoyuan* and Tuo-hun-bu's linking of it to Baixue Academy, which had its own association with Li Panlong, demonstrates that this institution served as an instrument of imperial rule but was represented as part of the physical landscape and literary heritage of the city. Of course, as we saw in chapter 1, this landscape itself, especially Baotu Spring, was being imbued with new layers of imperial meaning over roughly the same period. Luoyuan Academy was one part of this broader relationship between imperial place-making and state-building.

Luoyuan and other academies served two distinct but related functions. The first was training or educating (*yu*) talent (*cai*) for the bureaucracy by preparing promising students for the imperial exams. The beginning of the Yongzheng Emperor's 1733 edict stated:

Besides the education commissioners in each province, the superior local officials [i.e. governors] all are to establish academies and gather scholars for lessons and study. Since my ascension, I have often considered how to educate human talent (*jiaoyu rencai*). But whenever I have heard about the establishment of academies, there are few that are truly beneficial and many that possess superficial vanity. Therefore, I have not ordered each province to carry them out, from my desire to bide time and then issue an edict. Recently, I have seen that the superior officials of the provinces have gradually come to esteem substantial policies and not act out of a consideration for fame. And those who study and sit for the exams are also rather able to set aside the habit of superficial clamor and rushing to compete against each other.⁶⁵

The Yongzheng Emperor had, in fact, previously considered establishing academies in each province, following a recommendation by Jiangxi Governor Pei Shuaidu in 1726. Using exactly

⁶⁵ Chen Gujia and Deng Hongbo, *Zhongguo shuyuan shi ziliao*, 2:854.

the same words as his 1733 edict—“Since my ascension, I have often considered how to educate human talent”—the emperor had signaled his sympathy for Pei’s intentions but raised the same concerns about practical efficacy toward which he gestured in his 1733 edict.⁶⁶ It is unclear what led to the emperor’s change of heart, but his 1733 edict expresses confidence in governors’ ability to supervise these academies, as they did the provincial exams, and faith in exam-takers to utilize the academies for their intended function of practical exam preparation, rather than an avenue for pursuing literary fame.

As a conduit for students on track for official careers, the academy was a microcosm of Jinan’s role as a gathering place for exam-takers. Luoyuan also reflected the transmissive function of the exams: successful candidates moved on from Jinan to take the metropolitan exams in Beijing and from there could serve as officials across the empire (outside Shandong) or could return to the province as educational officials outside their home places. Likewise, the supervision and instruction given by the governor and head lecturer made the academy a vehicle for propagating academic trends and styles popular in other parts of the empire.

Thus, despite the Yongzheng Emperor’s concern that academies like Luoyuan focus on practical exam preparation, these institutions’ role as a site of imperial intellectual transmission extended beyond the exam system itself. This broader function of academies fell within the scope of the second aspect of their mandate, which was to contribute to the cultural transformation (*hua*, 化) of the areas where they were located. The end of the 1733 edict stated, “The regional officials and others (*fengjiang dachen deng*) have the responsibility to transform and guide (*huadao*) scholars, and each should conscientiously carry this out, expelling what is superficial and raising up what is substantial, in order to extend the state’s transformative effect

⁶⁶ QSL (*Yongzheng*), 43:631a–632a.

of training an abundance of scholars (*yi guang guojia jing'e yupu zhi hua*).⁶⁷ Likewise, Tuo-hun-bu argued, “The root of transforming the people and perfecting their customs (*huamin chengsu*) depends on supporting [academies and schools].”⁶⁸

Both on the frontiers and in the Chinese heartland, local schools (*xuexiao*) were the front lines of this cultural mission, but emperors and officials alike imagined a cooperative relationship between these lower-level schools and academies. Tuo-hun-bu described this relationship as “mutually supportive” (*xiang wei*).⁶⁹ An 1822 edict from the Daoguang Emperor similarly described schools and academies as “mutually beneficial” (*xiang fu*). This edict closed by ordering, “If there are academy facilities that are collapsing and should be repaired, then renovate them. Cause each scholar to have a place to gather to study so that they will enjoy practical results in support of my utmost intention to invigorate their education and transformation (*jiaohua*).”⁷⁰ As physical structures, academies were another symbol of imperial power and beneficence that required maintenance and repair. However, local scholars themselves were the primary objects of transformation: by preparing men for the imperial exams academies served the examination system’s dual purpose of recruiting men into official service and propagating imperially sanctioned ideology. However, this “civilizing,” as William Rowe translates *hua*, extended beyond elite men. Rowe writes, “... for [the famous scholar-official] Chen Hongmou and others like him one’s own achievement of *hua* was a task that demanded strenuous and unflagging moral effort (*gong fu*). But, far more routinely, *hua* was something to which elite adult males subjected others less enlightened than themselves: generational or social

⁶⁷ Chen Gujia and Deng Hongbo, *Zhongguo shuyuan shi ziliao*, 2:854.

⁶⁸ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:11b.

⁶⁹ Mao Chenglin, 15:11b.

⁷⁰ *QSL (Daoguang)*, 30:532b–533a.

inferiors, women, and persons and groups on the margins of Han culture.”⁷¹ Academies like Luoyuan served this broader civilizing mission through facilitating the reproduction of a class of elite men who would carry it on in their home communities, even if they never earned positions as officials. Luoyuan did this directly through education in Neo-Confucian orthodoxy and more generally by providing material and symbolic incentives for families to invest in providing their sons with the education needed to pass the exams and their daughters with the level of education that would make them attractive marriage partners. Studying at Luoyuan Academy was both a steppingstone toward exam success and an incentive in itself, since it provided financial support and an intellectually and socially rewarding experience for its students.

The broader intellectual contributions of Luoyuan spilled beyond the realm of exam preparation, as the Yongzheng Emperor had feared. However, the academy’s role in producing local and provincial literary networks and culture still served the dynasty’s more general civilizing goal. The best evidence of the type of education the academy offered comes from a work titled *Luoyuan Questions and Answers* (*Luoyuan wenda*), compiled by Shen Kepei when he was head lecturer at Luoyuan from 1786 to 1791. This instructional guide consists of a series of questions and answers, organized into twelve volumes (*juan*). The majority of the book deals with the knowledge of classical texts required for success on the exams and largely follows the standard Cheng-Zhu interpretation of Confucian texts.⁷²

The discourse of astronomy (*tianwen*) and waterways (*shuidao*) in the tenth *juan*, however, veers into a discussion of Shandong’s geography. The section on waterways deals with practical issues, like flood control, that fell under the purview of statecraft studies (*jingshi*).⁷³

⁷¹ Rowe, *Saving the World*, 406.

⁷² Lu Xingmin, “Qingdai Shandong shuyuan santi,” 46–49.

⁷³ Lu Xingmin, 49–51.

The first question-answer discusses the relationship between Baotu Spring, Daming Lake, and the Luo River and how to reconcile references to them in the *Commentary on the Water Classic* with changes to local topography. The next question-answer deals with the large number of rivers in Shandong whose names contain the character *qing* (pure), which Shen explains comes from their common source in the underground flow of the Ji River, which he and, as we saw in chapter 1, many others identified as the source of Baotu Spring. Subsequent sections deal with the historical geography of the Grand Canal and effective flood control measures.⁷⁴ This section offers generalizable insights into the relationship between textual criticism, topographical investigation, and hydraulic management, but it also shows how the academy became a place for discussing and disseminating understanding of Shandong's specific geography. This knowledge would be useful to students who became officials but was arguably more directly relevant to their activities within their home communities, which would include writing about local history and geography and managing hydraulic projects.

Luoyuan's role as a library also reflected its multivalent effect on literary pursuits. The 1841 *Jinan Prefecture Gazetteer* contains a catalog of one hundred books held by the academy. The large number of classic philosophical and historical works contained therein reflects Timothy Brook's argument that school libraries, which became popular during the Ming, served primarily to channel intellectual pursuits according to the court's priorities and Luoyuan's role as an institution primarily designed to prepare students for the exams.⁷⁵ However, studying at the academy was also a way to gain exposure to the wider literary world of the Qing Empire. Famed bibliophile and Jinan native Zhou Yongnian (1730–91) studied and began building his book collection at Luoyuan as a young scholar. Chief lecturer Shen Qiyuan wrote a postface for his

⁷⁴ Shen Kepei, *Luoyuan wenda*, 613–23.

⁷⁵ Brook, "Edifying Knowledge."

first book catalog. Zhou went on to contribute to local literary projects, like the 1778 *Licheng County Gazetteer* and *An Investigation into the Inscriptions of Licheng*, and in 1775 was chosen to work on the court-sponsored compilation of literature for *The Complete Library in Four Sections* (*Siku quanshu*). Zhou is also known for establishing a lending library (*jieshu yuan*) in Jinan.⁷⁶

Luoyuan was by no means the sole intellectual influence on Zhou and other scholars. Zhou was also active in Beijing, and the funding for his book-collecting came from the wealth his family, who traced their roots back to Ningbo, had earned as salt merchants.⁷⁷ Rather, like the spring after which it was named, it was one among a great number of points of gathering and transit. The intellectual streams “originating” from there flowed out both across the empire and back to the home places of the men who studied there. These streams brought people, ideas, and information that contributed to place-making in high Qing Jinan.

Family, Bureaucracy, and Literary Networks

On his 1703 tour, when the Kangxi Emperor met Sun Shuxun—local literatus and son of a former minister of war—he asked him about the status of Jinan’s other families who had produced officials. Sun could think of only one other family with a status similar to his own: the Zhu’s, who lived on the south side of the city, inside the wall.⁷⁸ The Zhu’s owed their prominence not to their long residence in Jinan, having moved there only in the early years of the Qing. However, through the tumultuous early decades of the dynasty, the Zhu family quickly established themselves as the type of family that not only local people but even the emperor

⁷⁶ Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:550–55; Jinan shehui kexueyuan, *Jinan mingshi*, 421–32.

⁷⁷ Zhou had also studied in Jinan’s school for children from merchant families (*yunxue*). Ji-lun, Song Xiang, and Jia Ying, *Shandong yanfa zhi*, 457.

⁷⁸ *Sun shi jia sheng*, juanshou:3a.

himself would know. In the decades after the emperor's visit, their profile as a family of successful officials dimmed, but they remained important local figures, thanks in large part to their participation in the translocal academic and literary networks that ran through Jinan. One part of the family's literary heritage was the close connection between several of its members and Luoyuan Academy. Their family history demonstrates how the translocal connections that integrated Jinan and the Qing state also served as a resource for the social reproduction of a family unit.

The Remarkable Beginnings of a Great Family

Our most detailed source of information about the early history of the Zhu family is a biography of patriarch Zhu Meixian written by family friend Wang Yuanxi two years after the former's death. By this time, the family's reputation had been well-established, but both their status and the Qing conquest were still recent accomplishments, meaning that certain details and silences in this account merit a degree of skepticism. Nevertheless, there is little reason to doubt the general narrative arc of this family history and, in fact, some of the most remarkable aspects of it are entirely verifiable.

Zhu Meixian was born into a family of modest means in Gaotang, between Jinan and the Grand Canal. He showed early signs of scholastic aptitude, but his family, who owned only a few *mu* of briny marsh land, was too poor to support his studies. Reluctantly, he abandoned his studies and turned to trade. Despite starting with almost nothing, Wang claims that cleverness and thriftiness allowed Meixian to gradually grow his business transshipping goods. Wang does not explain the nature of Meixian's business, saying only that he plied his trade in the counties of southwestern Shandong and northern Jiangsu, astride the Grand Canal. Based on references to the Zhu family in the *Yongzheng Shandong Salt Administration Gazetteer (Shandong yanfa zhi)*,

it is likely that at least part of the family business involved salt.⁷⁹ Eventually, Meixian expanded his trade up into Zhili with the help of his brothers and a network of employees. The profit from this business allowed Meixian to care for his parents, provide for ritual expenses for his family members, and educate his children—all the signs of a nascent orthodox lineage unit.⁸⁰

However, the last years of the Ming Dynasty brought a series of traumatic events that would dramatically reshape the course of the Zhu family's history. First, the Qing army that sacked Jinan in 1639 forced the Zhu's to flee from their home in Gaotang. Meixian's concubine, Zhang *shi* stayed behind to watch the family home. She tried to disguise herself and hide among the poorer women, but her jewelry gave her away to the soldiers, who killed her.⁸¹ Amid the chaos, Qing forces also captured Meixian's twelve *sui*-old third son, Changzuo (1628–67), and took him back to Manchuria with them. After the attack, Meixian returned home, but his health declined. His problems were compounded first by an unspecified crisis in the family business in Beijing, which required him to travel there, and then his oldest son Guangzuo running afoul of officials and being framed for a crime. Although Meixian managed to extricate his family from these immediate crises, these personal disasters, combined, no doubt, with the turmoil of the period, left his business bankrupt. Meixian liquidated his property and moved his family first to Wucheng and then Pingyuan in northern Shandong.⁸²

With the fall of the capital in 1644, Meixian decided to take his family south to escape the Manchu invaders. In his biography, Wang finds it necessary to explain Zhu's decision to flee Shandong at length. First, he records Meixian's own resolute words to fellow townspeople who

⁷⁹ The biographical section of this source references several members of the Zhu family, including Hongzuo and Xiang, and notes their merchant status, but does not list any of them in the list of current merchants. Mang-gu-li, *Shandong yanfa zhi*.

⁸⁰ Liu You, *GTZZ (Kangxi)*, 11:12b–15a.

⁸¹ Liu You, 9:10b.

⁸² Liu You, 11:15b–16a.

warned him of the dangers of travel: “My sons have grand ambitions, so hunger and cold are not worth worrying about. I will take several people from my old home place with me, all of whom are shrewd and can understand hardship.” Together, he asserted, they could rebuild the family business. Wang offers his own commentary on this decision, crediting it to an inscrutable resolve on the part of Meixian. He emphasizes that Meixian was not fleeing south with large amounts of family property in tow—since so much of it had already been lost—but to rebuild a life for his family. Moreover, as he moved from Nanjing to Songjiang, Wang claims that Meixian “never stopped shedding tears for the country” (*buzhi xinting zhi qi*).⁸³ The sensitivity of Meixian’s course of action, which could be interpreted as disloyalty to both his home province and, retroactively, the Qing Dynasty, is further suggested by the 1778 *Licheng County Gazetteer* completely omitting any reference to the family’s southern sojourn. Instead, the short entry on Meixian there, included in the biography of his son Hongzuo, claims (falsely) that the family first moved to Jinan from Gaotang in the Ming.⁸⁴ It may be that the brevity of Meixian’s biographical information in the *Licheng County Gazetteer* made such an omission more feasible than in writings targeted toward a local Gaotang audience, who would have been more familiar with the Zhu family’s history. This could explain why a sympathetic biographer like Wang chose to address this period of the family’s history head-on, rather than eliding it.

The quick Qing consolidation of control over North China dramatically reversed the family’s fortunes and cut short their stay in the Lower Yangzi. In 1644 Guangzuo became the first to return to North China, and the next year Shengzuo took his father and the rest of the family back too. Against all odds, their return northward coincided with their lost brother, Changzuo, coming south with the Qing forces. After his abduction, Changzuo had been enrolled

⁸³ Liu You, 11:16a–16b.

⁸⁴ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 38:5a.

in the Han bordered white banner and was now a government official. Changzuo met the rest of his family members by the Yan mountains in Zhili, in an experience Wang Yuanxi describes as like “meeting again after being separated by death.”⁸⁵

After 1644, Changzuo served as a Vice Director of the Court of the Imperial Clan (*zongren fu qixin lang*) and in 1661 was appointed governor of Zhejiang, a province that was both of great fiscal importance and strategically sensitive because it lay along the coast. In 1663, he was promoted to governor-general of Zhili, Shandong, and Henan, an extraordinarily powerful position that gave Zhu power over both the region around Beijing and his home province, which was a major transgression of the rule of avoidance at least in spirit, if not in technicality, since Changzuo was now a bannerman, not a registered resident of the province.⁸⁶ Zhu Changzuo’s career and life fell victim to the factional politics of the Oboi regency (1661–9) early in the Kangxi reign. With the early death of the Shunzi Emperor (r. 1644–61), rule fell to a regency council composed of the Manchu nobles Oboi, Ebilun, Soni, and Suksaha, who controlled government affairs in the name of the young Kangxi Emperor. By the mid-1660s, Oboi began arrogating greater power to himself and attempting to undermine the position of the other regents. One aspect of this factional struggle was a plan Oboi implemented to reapportion the land grants that had been made to banner troops in the area around the capital. After the Qing conquest, the regent Dorgon (1612–50) had claimed the most favorable lands for his own men from the plain white banner. Oboi’s bordered yellow banner mostly received land south of Beijing, which was both of poorer quality and less strategically significant than the land that Dorgon’s troops occupied between Beijing and the coastal mountain passes leading to

⁸⁵ Liu You, *GTZZ (Kangxi)*, 11:16b–17a.

⁸⁶ Such irregularities were more common in the early years of the Qing. For a similar case in Zhejiang, see Guy, *Qing Governors*, 263.

Manchuria. In 1666, Oboi moved to reverse this position, writing a memorial recommending that the plain white and bordered yellow banners swap land grants and that his bordered yellow banner be granted additional plots of land, at the expense of Han farmers. Oboi was able to manipulate the commission appointed by the Qing Council of Princes and High Officials to issue a report favorable to him, but Sunahai, the Manchu official dispatched to carry out the reallocation, opposed the plan and drug his feet.

Meanwhile, the civil officials involved—Zhu Changzuo as governor-general and Wang Denglian as governor (both Han)—also raised protests. Zhu memorialized that additional land enclosures would burden Han farmers and were unlikely to quell quarrels among bannermen about whose land was best. Zhu's opposition was also likely motivated by his relationship with his patron Suksaha, whose bordered yellow banner Oboi's scheme targeted. On December 12, 1666 Oboi ordered the arrest and trial of Sunahai, Zhu, and Wang. The next month, the Board of Punishments recommended flogging and confiscation of property for all three, but Oboi was unsatisfied, ordered their execution by strangling, and then implemented the transfer of land.⁸⁷

Just as Oboi's power proved to be short-lived—he died in 1669 after being imprisoned by the Kangxi Emperor—the death of Zhu Changzuo proved to be only a temporary setback for the Zhu family. While Changzuo's older brothers presumably took over the family business, their younger brother (Meixian's fourth son) Hongzuo (1630–1700) took and passed the 1648 Shandong provincial exam, which opened the door to a position as a magistrate in Jiangsu. When the Kangxi Emperor assumed personal control of government, he rehabilitated Changzuo, granting him posthumous honors and gave his son, Fu, a place in the Imperial College. Hongzuo also saw his fortunes improve, being promoted to a post in the Board of Punishments Office in

⁸⁷ Oxnam, "Policies and Factionalism," 226–34.

Guangdong in 1675, then ministry posts in Beijing and censorial positions in Tianjin. Hongzuo also participated in the compilation of the *Comprehensive Gazetteer of the Great Qing* (*Daqing yitong zhi*). In 1687 he was promoted to governor of Guangdong, then in 1692 governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang.⁸⁸ Given the success of these two brothers, it is no wonder that Sun Shuxun thought of the Zhu family as the apex of Jinan's elite.

Although the Zhu's moved to Jinan after the Qing conquest, they maintained close ties to Gaotang, and they worked to translate their family status, based first on commercial wealth and then an unlikely windfall of official power, into local prominence. Hongzuo cultivated a close friendship with Liu You, who served as magistrate of Gaotang in the 1670s.⁸⁹ The 1673 *Gaotang Department Gazetteer*, whose compilation Liu oversaw, reflects this friendship and the rising prominence of the Zhu family. It records the induction of Meixian into the Shrine of Local Worthies (*xiangxian ci*) and of Changzuo into the Shrine of Famous Officials (*minghuan ci*), due to his tenure as governor-general of a region that included Shandong. Changzuo had also donated to a local temple and the department school. The gazetteer further includes the memorial Changzuo wrote in opposition to further land enclosures in Zhili.⁹⁰ Even as the Zhu's became early supporters of the Qing, they simultaneously buttressed home place ties that had been frayed by the turmoil of the Ming-Qing transition and may never have been that strong to begin with, given the family's peripatetic history.

Maintaining the cohesiveness of the family was an important part of the Zhu family's strategy of advancing its fortunes by both participating in Qing rule and building its local prestige. Obviously, the legacy of Changzuo became an important asset to them and was

⁸⁸ Zhu Yafei, *JNTS: Ming Qing juan*, 4:571–72.

⁸⁹ Liu Rui, "Qingdai Gaotang Zhu shi," 31.

⁹⁰ Liu You, *GTZZ (Kangxi)*, 2:3a, 4b–5a, 10:58a–60b, 11:33a–39a.

augmented by the professional success of Hongzuo. Presumably to consolidate the family's imperial and local status, Hongzuo produced a *Zhu Family Genealogy* (*Zhu shi zupu*) late in the seventeenth century. Unfortunately, this source has not survived, limiting what we know about how the family understood their relationship to the portion of the family now registered in the banner system and their dual native places of Gaotang and Jinan. However, a later collection of examination books (*zhujian*) from eleven members of the Zhu family held at the Shandong Provincial Library provides extensive, albeit still incomplete, genealogical information about more than 600 (mostly male) members of the family.⁹¹ These records contain numerous entries for Zhu's who are listed as registered in the bordered white banner and must have been descendants of Zhu Changzuo. Their presence in these records and the fact that their names have the same generational shared given-name characters as non-banner members of the family shows at least some degree of familial contact and lineage coordination.

Like typical elite families, the Zhu's continued to pursue examination degrees and official positions. We can identify three phases in the family's history of exam-taking and official service. The first phase corresponds to the period described above, where, almost from nothing, members of the family catapulted to some of the most powerful positions in the territorial bureaucracy. The second phase, starting from the generation after Hongzuo and Changzuo, saw surprisingly little exam success, with no members of the family winning provincial degrees between 1677 and 1723. However, Hongzuo's sons in particular were able to use hereditary *yin* privileges to purchase both low-level degrees and official positions, which through promotions could translate to successful careers. In the third phrase, the family's examination success, at least at the provincial level, became more respectable, and between 1648

⁹¹ *Licheng Zhu shi li ke zhujian heding*.

and 1891, the Zhu family produced a total of sixteen *juren* degree winners. Their record on the metropolitan *jinshi* exams, which became a *de facto* necessary qualification for high official posts, was impressive in terms of the percentages discussed above (only 3.5% of *juren* winning the *jinshi*) but still limited. The family produced three *jinshi*: Zhu Cai in 1673, Zhu You in 1772, and Zhu Tong in 1780. Moreover, the time between You and Tong's *juren* and *jinshi* degrees was quite long: thirteen and eighteen years, respectively. This left them very little time to leave a mark through an official career, and they each rose only to the position of prefect.⁹² These posts no doubt provided social and financial capital, but they were a far cry from the positions held by members of the family early in the dynasty and provided limited routes for advancement. Consequently, the family's local activities and connections played an increasingly important role in their social reproduction.

Cultivating Literary Networks

Over the course of the first half of the Qing, the Zhu family produced some of the greatest—or at least best-known—literary talents in Jinan. The *Qing Dynasty Poems of Lixia* (*Guochao Lixia shichao*) compiled in the late nineteenth century by Jinan native Wang Zhonglin gives some measure of the family's literary fame. Of the 185 men whose poems appear in this collection, 25 (13.51%) were members of the Zhu family.⁹³ By this way of counting, the most prolific of the Zhu poets was Zhu Xiang (1670–1707), with 26 poems included in this collection. Xiang, the oldest son of Hongzuo, illustrates how the Zhu family adapted to the vagaries of obtaining official positions and established themselves as fixtures in the translocal literary circuits that ran through Jinan and facilitated both state-building and place-making.

⁹² For lists of degrees won and official positions held by members of the Zhu family, see Liu Rui, "Qingdai Gaotang Zhu shi," 17–19, 39–41.

⁹³ This figure includes only men with the Zhu surname whom I can trace to the Zhu family with absolute certainty. It does not include several others with the Zhu surname who do not appear to have been members of the family.

Setting aside the descendants of Changzuo, Hongzuo's line became the most distinguished of Zhu Meixian's descendants. This was, to a degree, a numbers game: Hongzuo had five sons, while his other brothers had only one or two. Thus, while his brothers' descendants continued to share in and contribute to the family fame and fortune, Hongzuo's occupied a central place in the history of this burgeoning clan. Given the high posts held by Hongzuo, it is not surprising that several of his sons had promising official careers. They were exceptional, especially for the time, though, in obtaining official posts through purchase and without passing even the provincial examinations. After purchasing a low-level tribute student degree (*liegong*), Hongzuo's second son Jiang began his career in a secretarial position in the Guizhou office of the Board of Punishments and then worked his way up through the administration to positions as the judicial commissioner and administrative commissioner of Guangdong, before dying in 1731. The success of Hongzuo's third son, Gang, was even more impressive. He purchased a secretarial post in the Board of War and then won promotions to provincial appointments, including governor of Yunnan and then Fujian. Xiang's other two brothers had more modest careers, with Zuan serving as a magistrate and the youngest, Jin, as an assistant instructor in Yangzhou.⁹⁴

Unlike his brothers, Xiang had no official career to speak of. He too failed to pass the provincial exam, but unlike his brothers purchased only an expectant post. This meant that while his brothers went off to pursue their careers, he remained at home to take care of their parents and manage family affairs, but this may not have been entirely by design since he certainly received a first-rate education. His gazetteer biography claims that he was well-versed in texts

⁹⁴ Liu Rui, "Qingdai Gaotang Zhu shi," 15. Given the status of Yangzhou as a major commercial and cultural center, this position may have been more socially and financially lucrative than the low rank suggests.

ranging from the classics and history to astrology and divination.⁹⁵ Like his brothers, Xiang was tutored by Wang Shizhen (1634–1711), whose niece his father had married, and also studied with the famous poet Zhu Yizun (1629–1709) from Shaoxing in Zhejiang.⁹⁶ Wang was the scion of a literati lineage from Xincheng, one of three brothers who earned *jinshi* degrees in the early Qing, and a famous poet in his own right. Xiang also spent time with his father in Beijing, which may have been intended as preparation for an official career. His biography indicates, though, that he eschewed opportunities to forge relationships that could have advanced his prospects: “He never visited the homes of wealthy people. Those he interacted with were all of pure reputation and cultured, and so his poems took on the quality of a humble scholar.”⁹⁷

Xiang, then, became responsible for making a place for his family in Jinan, to which they were still relative newcomers. Arranging for his father’s funeral and caring for his mother until her death helped establish the family’s moral reputation. Meanwhile, he, like his father, enlisted a literatus from Jinan Prefecture but outside the county —Zhang Yuan from Zichuan—to educate the family’s sons.⁹⁸ Xiang’s own literary reputation facilitated the formation of these connections and provided a literary legacy for subsequent members of the family. As with Wang Ping (discussed in chapter 1), residence in Jinan offered valuable opportunities for forging these relationships, even for individuals who were not in the upper crust of Shandong’s literati class. Xiang also constructed a residence at Mingshui in Zhangqiu County, east of Jinan that he called Oak Village (*xiang cun*). This became a lively gathering spot for scholars from all over but especially, I suspect, for those from the counties in the eastern portion of Jinan Prefecture who

⁹⁵ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 40:23a.

⁹⁶ Liu Rui, “Qingdai Gaotang Zhu shi,” 42.

⁹⁷ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 40:23a.

⁹⁸ Xiang’s biography says that he hired Zhang to teach his *zidi*, literally “sons and younger brothers.” Given Zhang’s connection to Zhu’s nephew Lingzhao, I take this to mean that Xiang saw to the education of members of his family beyond his own sons.

would have passed through Zhangqiu on their way to the capital.

One such man was Pu Songling (1640–1715), who, like Zhang Yuan, came from Zichuan. Pu's family background as the son of small-scale landowners and merchants was far less distinguished than Zhu Xiang's, or even other literati from his hometown, like Tang Menglai. However, Pu and Zhu shared a similar fate vis-a-vis the examination system: both were unable to pass the provincial exam (and Zhu had not purchased a path leading to official appointment) and so found themselves rooted in the literary world of Jinan. Both men also shared a fondness for stories with strange, often supernatural twists. Zhu composed a collection of such stories, called *Er lu* (*Record of Hearsay*) that has not survived. Pu, of course, also composed a collection of such stories, *Liaozhai zhiyi* (*Strange Tales from Liaozhai*), which has become one of the most famous pieces of prose work from the late imperial period and is unrivaled in a genre that, while entertaining, did not confer the same kind of social status as others.

The exact chronology of Zhu and Pu's relationship remains unclear, but they began to converse with each other in the late 1690s. Yuan Shishuo suggests that either Shi Weiyu, who was a friend of Zhu's and came to know Pu after he was appointed Zichuan magistrate in 1694, or Tang Menglai, also from Zichuan and an acquaintance of Zhu Hongzuo, introduced Zhu to *Liaozhai*. By 1695, Zhu Xiang had read several volumes of *Liaozhai* and likely met Pu for the first time in 1696 when the latter traveled to Jinan for the provincial exam. Poems and a few surviving letters indicate that they met at least several other times over the last decade of Zhu's life.⁹⁹

Zhu contributed to the history of *Liaozhai* in two concrete ways. *Liaozhai* cites Zhu's

⁹⁹ Yuan Shishuo, "Pu Songling yu Zhu Xiang," 214–20.

own collection of stories, *Er lu*, in several places, and two stories from *Liaozhai* trace back to Zhu Hongzuo's tenure as governor of Guangdong, with Xiang as the presumed intermediary for these tales. Even more importantly, Xiang repeatedly asked Pu to send him additional stories so that he could read and copy them. In 1706, Xiang asked Pu to bring his copy of *Liaozhai* to Jinan with him so that he could check for errors in his copy. Zhu's copy of *Liaozhai* was subsequently lost, but his sons retraced their father's steps and, with the permission of Pu's grandson, Pu Lide, in 1723 produced one of the earliest and most complete manuscript editions of *Liaozhai*, which has survived through a copy made by Zhu family friend Zhang Xijie.¹⁰⁰

Pu Lide's postface to the 1723 edition paints the relationship between Zhu and Pu in glowing terms, describing Zhu Xiang as an enlightened admirer of his grandfather's work. Judith Zeitlin notes that we should take this praise with a grain of salt, both because Pu could have been projecting his admiration of *Liaozhai* onto Zhu Xiang and because part of his intent in writing this piece was to enlist the help of Zhu's sons in publishing his grandfather's *magnum opus*.¹⁰¹ The thirty year age difference between the two and Zhu's privileged family status and social connections also made their relationship unlikely. However, both lived on the outside looking in at the patterns of exam success and official service that affirmed elite status in these times, and this may well have proved a strong affective bond. In a poem he wrote when Pu visited him in Zhangqiu in 1703, Zhu Xiang says:

The feeling among old friends is deep, and we move like a flock of geese;
The autumn wind rustles and again I meet this gentleman.
Reciting poems beneath a fence, we are crazy as in the past,
Writing books within the mountains, we grow more diligent with age.
How empty is a false reputation among others?
Now the master and I let loose, one after the other.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Barr, "The Textual Transmission," 521–24.

¹⁰¹ Zeitlin, *Historian of the Strange*, 228–29.

¹⁰² Another translation, entirely appropriate given the context, is "Before our eyes, the others take official posts one by one."

Among the fragrant springs and jade peaks is where you break your journey
Together we open a jar of wine and sit together for the evening.

旧雨情深动雁群, 西风萧瑟又逢君。
诗吟篱下狂犹昔, 书著山中老更勤。
身外浮名空落落, 眼前余子任纷纷。
泉香峰翠勾留处, 且共开樽坐夜分。¹⁰³

This poem suggests how through artistic expression Zhu and Pu may have found common cause in validating their distance from the life of an official—whether quasi-voluntary, as in the case of Zhu, or involuntary, as in the case of Pu.

Zhu Xiang's failure to attain or disinterest toward official position notwithstanding, he by no means represented a severing of the Zhu family's fortunes from the Qing state. Although he did not benefit so much from his family's political privileges, staying in Jinan to manage family affairs facilitated his brothers' participation in the civil bureaucracy. His residence in Jinan also allowed him to build relationships with powerful men like Wang Shizhen, whose friendship, in crude pragmatic terms, was more beneficial than Pu Songling's because of their credentials and connections with other powerful people who could advance the careers of the members of the Zhu family who did serve in government and were especially dependent on promotions since they had not passed even the provincial level of the examinations. Even Zhu's relationship with Pu Songling flowed with the tides of official patterns. While the poem above paints an image of two carefree literati, brought in-step with each other by being out of touch with the world, the opening couplet gently alludes to the seasonal migrations that structure the lives of even free-thinking geese. Indeed, this meeting between Zhu and Pu took place as Pu returned home to Zichuan after another failed attempt at the provincial examination.

¹⁰³ Quoted in Zhang Deyin, "Zhu Xiang yu Pu Songling," 215.

The Zhu Family and Luoyuan Academy

As attention-grabbing for modern readers as the connection between the Zhu family and Pu Songling is, befriending men who shared a fascination with stories about strange happenings was an unlikely route to family prosperity in the high Qing. In ensuing decades, the Zhu family pursued more conventional avenues of obtaining wealth and pursuing official careers. No longer able to rely on *yin* privilege to purchase official posts, by the 1720s the men of the Zhu family were forced to depend on the standard route of exam-taking, where they met with some success, albeit hardly enough to reproduce the family's stature from the early Qing. Participation in literary networks aided these pursuits by securing relationships with men who could advance the careers of family members or tutor their children and provided a kind of security blanket since exam degrees and official posts were by no means guaranteed for every member of even a prominent family like the Zhu's. For people like this, who desired exam success but also needed to build dense social networks as an insurance policy, Luoyuan Academy proved a valuable resource. As the Zhu's simultaneously became more consistent exam performers, at least at the provincial level, and lost the immediate benefits of the spectacular careers of Changzuo and Hongzuo over the course of the eighteenth century, they found in Luoyuan Academy an avenue for exploiting and perpetuating their family's political and literary legacy.

The golden era of the Zhu family's relationship with Luoyuan Academy spanned the tenure of lecturers Song Bi, Sang Tiaoyuan, and Fu Yulu. The biography of Zhu Tong, a grandson of Zhu Xiang, claims that while Song and Sang were lecturers of Luoyuan, they promoted the studies of "eight horses and eight heroes," a group that included three members of the Zhu family, of which Tong was the greatest. It is hard to say definitively who the other two Zhu's are: given the size and stature of the family and the fact that they claimed three out of

sixteen places in a listing of the academy's best students in a relatively short span of time, it is likely that more than three of them studied at Luoyuan at some point in time. Existing sources do, however, allow us to trace three specific members of the family to Luoyuan. The histories of Zhu Tong and his cousins Zhu You and Zhu Zengchuan show how this imperial institution served the local interests of the Zhu family at large by connecting them into translocal literary networks.



Figure 2.1: Partial family tree of the Zhu family

Tong, You, and Zengchuan came from disparate branches of the Zhu family tree, and their immediate family backgrounds conferred diverse advantages. Tong, born in 1733, was the oldest son of Xiang's youngest son, Chongxi. Chongxi held a low-level (*gongsheng*) degree and studied in the school for merchants but appears to have been otherwise unremarkable. Tong, however, caught the attention of his family members and local officials. His elder cousin, Zhu

Qi, himself an acclaimed poet and *juren* winner (1747), claimed that Tong was “the top person in this generation of my family.”¹⁰⁴ Tong justified this praise, earning his *juren* degree in 1762 and his *jinshi* in 1780, making him one of only three members of the Zhu family to do so.

Meanwhile, You traced his ancestry to the youngest of Meixian’s sons, Pizuo, a line that, in terms of exam success and official service, was far less distinguished than Hongzuo’s. Pizuo died young and without an heir, leaving his twenty-four *sui*-old wife Liu *shi* in straitened circumstances. Under great duress and physical threats, Liu resisted pressure from “some rascals” in the family to re-marry and was eventually allowed to adopt a son, named Wei, to carry on Pizuo’s line. For reasons not elaborated upon in her biography she refused a gift of 1,000 taels from her brother-in-law Changzuo.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, Wei earned an education and received a low-ranking educational post but refused it in order to take care of his widowed mother. He helped build the family reputation in Jinan by organizing soup kitchens in the south suburb (the one closest to the family residence) during a severe famine in 1704.¹⁰⁶ You’s father, Lingzhao, advanced the family’s official status only a little, purchasing a *jiansheng* degree and a post as an assistant magistrate. He was, however, an acclaimed poet and artist and formed a group called the Willow Village Society (*liuzhuang she*) with Zhang Yuan from Zichuan, the famous poet Gao Fenghan (1683–1749) from Jiaozhou, and Fang Qiying, a native of Zhejiang who moved to Jinan and became a well-known poet. His gazetteer biography, for which You provided material, paints him as an eccentric who eschewed relationships with those outside his literary circle and paid little attention to family finances. At one point he traveled south to Fujian with a purse of 1,000 taels but spent it all within a month. His biography walks a fine line

¹⁰⁴ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 39:12b.

¹⁰⁵ Hu Delin, 48:16b–17b.

¹⁰⁶ Hu Delin, 43:6b.

between admiration for his free-spirited approach to life and unconcern for personal prestige and an unavoidably condemnatory reporting of the effects of his lifestyle on his family. It concludes by saying, “his household progressively declined, but his will and spirit were unconstrained.” Lingzhao died at the age of only forty-one *sui*.¹⁰⁷

Zengchuan, who was technically a generation younger than Tong and You, descended from Meixian’s oldest son, Guangzuo. More than the other two, his direct ancestors had carved out successful, albeit modest official careers. His great-grandfather Cai had won his *jinshi* in 1673 and then served as a secretary in the Grand Secretariat and then the Jiangnan office of the Board of Punishments and then as a prefect.¹⁰⁸ Zengchuan’s grandfather, Huaipu, did not have an official career but earned repute as a poet and became acquaintances with Shandong governor Li Shude.¹⁰⁹ Zengchuan’s adopted father Yan worked as a territorial official, rising as high as prefect. From the perspective of the entire Zhu family, this branch reflected the tendency toward less distinguished posts over time, but, considering that their ancestor Guangzuo had held only a low-ranking purchased post himself, it would be unfair to say that the fortunes of this part of the family line were declining precipitously.

The success of the Zhu’s as an extended family unit is demonstrated by the fact that Tong, You, and Zengchuan benefited from family connections while studying at Luoyuan Academy, even though they came from disparate branches of the lineage. Tong received a stipend from the county school, and it was perhaps from there that he caught the attention of Sang Tiaoyuan at Luoyuan. One sign of Sang’s favor for Tong is that he agreed to write a tomb inscription (*mubiao*) for Tong’s grandfather, Zhu Xiang. I read Tong’s entreaty as an effort to

¹⁰⁷ Hu Delin, 40:23b–24a.

¹⁰⁸ Hu Delin, 38:8a–8b.

¹⁰⁹ Hu Delin, 40:23b.

use the reputation of his grandfather to raise his own prominence with Sang and other people in his circle. Simultaneously, Sang's patronage raised the profile of the Zhu family generally by confirming Xiang's status as not only a celebrated local poet but also as a literatus whose writing and care for his family were appreciated by well-known and powerful literati from Jiangnan.¹¹⁰

You's immediate family background was very difficult. His father, Lingzhao, had traveled and spent the family money lavishly, then died, leaving You and two brothers as orphans. His older brother died at a young age, and his younger brother suffered from some kind of mental illness (*xinji*). His mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother (the Liu *shi* married to Zhu Pizuo) lived together as widows, barely scraping by. Although this aspect of You's story suggests his family received little aid from the Zhu clan, he did receive an education in a private school, where his talent was recognized and which served as a stepping stone to the county school and then Luoyuan, where he studied for one year under Song Bi.¹¹¹ Lingzhao had apparently done little to benefit his family materially, but his literary legacy was a valuable resource. Lingzhao occupied first place in an anthology titled *Poems of Licheng's Three Masters* that Sang Tiaoyuan compiled with Judicial Commissioner Shen Tingfang, who was also from Zhejiang. Sang described Lingzhao's talent as "free and easy, like a divine colt leaping out of water, unable to be reined in."¹¹² Like Sang's composition of an epitaph for Zhu Xiang, this compilation project brought him enjoyment and prestige as a curator of local culture. It also advanced the literary reputation of Zhejiang, especially through Sang's inclusion of Lingzhao's friend, Fang Qiying, who, Sang noted, originally came from there. It is hard to imagine that You did not aid in this compilation or that it did not raise his profile in the eyes of Sang, although the

¹¹⁰ Sang Tiaoyuan, *Taofu ji*, 194.

¹¹¹ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 39:12a–12b.

¹¹² Sang Tiaoyuan, *Licheng sanzi shi*, xu:1b.

preface makes no mention of him.

Both Tong and You translated their climb through local schools, Luoyuan Academy, and patronage networks into examination success. Tong won his *jinshi* degree in 1780, eighteen years after his *juren* in 1762. He was selected to serve as a magistrate, but the only positions he ever filled were educational posts, including as temporary Director of Schools in Caozhou, where he died in office.¹¹³ You, who was able to advance through the exams more quickly, had a much more accomplished official career. After winning his *juren* in 1759, he was appointed a director of studies in the Imperial College in 1770, three years after his mother had died. Two years later he won his *jinshi* degree and was then selected as a compiler in the Hanlin Academy. He then served as an examiner for provincial exams in Shuntian and Shanxi and then the metropolitan exams. In 1790 he was selected as a prefect but died of illness before arriving in the post.¹¹⁴

Ironically—given that his line of the family was most on the official track of these three—Zengchuan had the least successful official career. He did win a *juren* degree in 1758 but repeatedly failed the metropolitan examination. Fu Yulu and Sang were great admirers of his poetic talent, though: they said that none of his contemporaries were his equal, and Sang compared him to the famous Tang poet Li He.¹¹⁵ Through his relationship with Sang, Zengchuan met scholars from both elsewhere in Shandong and Jiangnan.¹¹⁶ Zengchuan's biography in the 1778 *Licheng County Gazetteer* paints him in a remarkably negative light as an angry and eccentric alcoholic, who could not last a day without a drink, lest he fall ill, and who, after drinking, would compose poetry and berate those in his vicinity with equal ferocity. Even on his

¹¹³ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 39:12b–13a.

¹¹⁴ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 39:12b.

¹¹⁵ Hu Delin, 40:24a; Sang Tiaoyuan, *Taofu ji*, 714.

¹¹⁶ Ruan Yuan, *Liangzhe youxuan lu*, 36:1a–1b.

deathbed at forty-four *sui*-old, he kept composing poems orally but burned the copies transcribed by his family members.¹¹⁷

Zengchuan's younger cousin, Zengzhe (a great-grandson of Xiang), remembered him more fondly, though. Zengchuan's failure to pass the metropolitan exam was not due to a lack of ambition or effort, Zengzhe claimed. Zengchuan practiced writing exam essays with Zhang Yingwei, a native of Haifeng and a fellow student of Sang, and Zhang Zhuo from Qingcheng. While not denying his fondness for drink, Zengzhe says that Zengchuan was kind to his family members, field workers, and servants alike, stopping to recite poetry to them or ask how they were doing. Zengchuan did burn his deathbed poems, but many more survived, contrary to the impression given by the gazetteer. Fellow Jinan native Mao Shixun helped Zengzhe's cousin, Zengyi, finish compiling these poems. In his preface to this collection, Yi Tinglan went so far as to say that Zengchuan honored not only the Zhu family literary heritage but that of Jinan as a whole.¹¹⁸ Zengchuan's poems were later included in an anthology titled *Collected Poems of Eight Masters of Lixia*, alongside, among others, Yi Tinglan and famed bibliographer Ma Guohan.¹¹⁹

As these stories show, Luoyuan Academy could serve as a steppingstone up the ladder of exam success and official service, as it was intended. However, studying and socializing there also had significant ramifications for people within their local communities, even if they never moved farther up that ladder. One aspect of this was helping them accrue social capital with respected literati from other parts of the empire. The biographies of Tong, You, and Zengchuan thus show how they used the academy to advance their family's interests through activities that

¹¹⁷ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 40:24a.

¹¹⁸ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 29:24a–25b.

¹¹⁹ Mao Chenglin, 30:18b–19a.

combined state-building and place-making.

In conclusion, I want to discuss gazetteer compilation as another example of how the Zhu family's participation in social networks running through Luoyuan Academy related to state-building and place-making. Reading through the 1778 *Licheng County Gazetteer*, it is hard to miss the prominence of the Zhu family. The importance of the Zhu's meant it was natural for the gazetteer to pay special attention to their biographies and writings, but, as Guo Qitao and Joseph Dennis have shown, gazetteers were not neutral reflections of family status but a means of manufacturing it.¹²⁰ Gazetteers could serve as "public genealogies" for individual families, relate local history to family developments, and serve as a venue for negotiating the relative status of elite families by acts as simple as setting the order in which family genealogies were listed. Indeed, two familiar members of the Zhu family—Tong and Zengchuan—appear among the list of compilers. Their role as researchers (*caifang*) was relatively modest, and of the other twenty men listed as researchers, only one other held a *juren* degree at the time. However, we can still trace their influence on the compilation process through citations of them in biographical entries. Tong is listed as a source for the biographies of fifteen men, three women, and a list of twenty other women. Among these are four members of the Zhu family: You's great-grandmother Liu (wife of Zhu Pizuo), You's grandfather Wei, his own grandfather Zhu Xiang, and his cousin Zhu Zhaolü's wife Wang.¹²¹ Zengchuan, who I suspect died well before the completion of the project, appears only four times in citations.

The list of other contributors suggests deeper parallels between the compilation work and the Zhu family's relationships with Luoyuan Academy. Shen Tingfang, who had helped Sang Tiaoyuan compile *Poems of Licheng's Three Masters*, worked as an editor (*caiding*) for the

¹²⁰ Guo Qitao, "Genealogical Pedigree"; Dennis, *Writing, Publishing, and Reading*, 64–115.

¹²¹ Hu Delin, *LCXZ (Qianlong)*, 40:23a, 43:6b, 48:16b–17a, 29b.

gazetteer and is the first contributor listed. One of the four compilers (*zuanji*) was Luoyuan graduate and bibliophile Zhou Yongnian, who was also a close friend of Zhu Tong. Another was Sheng Bai'er, who had served as magistrate of Zichuan and later worked as chief lecturer of Luoyuan. Sheng was friends with Tong and possibly Zengchuan too.¹²² Given these connections, it is unsurprising that Zengchuan and Tong contributed to the gazetteer or that their family was so well represented in it, thus establishing their prestige among readers, including both locals and officials, who, like the Kangxi Emperor, would naturally wonder about the identities of Jinan's great families.

Conclusion

The fortunes of both Luoyuan Academy and the Zhu family fluctuated over the nineteenth century. Even after Tuo-hun-bu's renovations, Luoyuan underwent cycles of decline and repair, but it remained an important educational institution into the early twentieth century. The Zhu family by no means slipped out of the memory of Jinan's elite, as indicated by their prominence in *Qing Dynasty Poems of Lixia*. However, the vast majority of these poems were written by members of the family who had lived in the eighteenth century or before. Likewise, the county gazetteer completed in 1926 contains writings and biographies of members of these earlier generations but pays far less attention to subsequent ones.

In other words, while the generations of the Zhu family discussed above succeeded in implanting themselves into the social and literary landscape of Jinan, reproducing this success over the long term proved difficult. This no doubt owed much to the increasingly competitive nature of the exams and the system of official appointments. Moreover, the Zhu's likely faced a

¹²² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 22:31a–31b, 39:12b–13a.

combination of serious obstacles in maintaining and growing the family's wealth by the mid-nineteenth century. First, the family was apparently not immune to its own financial mismanagement, as in the case of Zhu Lingzhao, who squandered a large sum of money on his travels. While his son, Zhu You, took advantage of and built on his father's literary reputation, it is entirely possible that this did not enable him to recoup the family's financial losses.

Even if the family invested shrewdly in commercial enterprises like the salt trade, they might have run into problems. By the 1820s, Shandong's salt merchants found themselves saddled with debts to the provincial government that they had been forced to take on and whose interest funded institutions like Luoyuan Academy. The government offered relief in the form of raising salt prices, but it continued to loan out money. The bottom fell out of salt trade after 1855 when the Yellow River's flooding of the Daqing River bed disrupted the main conduit for transporting salt from the coast, as chapter 4 describes.¹²³ The increasing price of silver and violence in both Jiangnan and North China from the 1850s on further undermined intra- and inter-regional trade. Although, as chapter 3 shows, Jinan fared better than other areas in this period, it would be unsurprising if the family suffered losses to wealth tied up in land as well.

As we will see, though, the crises of the mid-nineteenth century also provided opportunities to members of Jinan's elite, and the post-war reconstruction would lead to a revitalization of institutions like Luoyuan Academy. Why the Zhu's were apparently unable to take advantage of these opportunities is impossible to say. However, the relationship between place-making and state-building that their history illustrates positions us to understand the changes that were to come. First, this chapter has built on chapter 1 to show how the social effects of place-making could be complementary to state-building, a trend that would continue

¹²³ Ji Lizhen, *Ming Qing Shandong yanye*, 232–42.

into the late nineteenth century. Second, it shows how elite localist strategies were intertwined with translocal connections. The mid-nineteenth century crises would create new opportunities for translocal affinities but would also disrupt and realign existing networks in ways that would profoundly challenge the relationship between Jinan and the Qing state.

Part II

Place-Making and Imperial Crisis

Even as Tie-bao was revitalizing Jinan's academies and Tuo-hun-bu was writing his revisionist history of Luoyuan Academy, the fortunes of the Qing and, with it, Jinan were changing rapidly. In the eighteenth century, the Qing had enjoyed tremendous economic prosperity accompanied by a surging population, fueled by, among other things, the propagation of agricultural best-practices and New World crops that allowed Chinese farmers to inhabit and exploit previously inhospitable eco-zones, particularly highlands.¹ This era was not nearly as peaceful as it is sometimes depicted, but the various wars the Qing fought were largely focused on its frontiers. With its Chinese domains relatively unthreatened by major rebellions or foreign invasions, the imperial government was able to use surplus revenues to invest in the subsistence-security of its people and imperial expansion.²

By the end of the eighteenth century, though, both the strains of territorial and demographic growth and new challenges were beginning to show. Rather than adjusting taxation and the size of the government to match the empire's growing and highly mobile population, the Qing government had kept land tax quotas and the size of the statutory bureaucracy fixed in place. The government did grow through the expansion of extra-statutory functionaries, but this came at the cost of decreasing central control over the lower reaches of the bureaucracy.³ The court's anxieties about the reliability of information provided by local officials, even in the still-prosperous 1760s, are dramatically conveyed in Philip Kuhn's classic history of a queue-clipping

¹ For a general overview of social change in this period, see Naquin and Rawski, *Chinese Society*, 97–137.

² Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine*, 290–92. On frontier wars in the high Qing, see, among others, Perdue, *China Marches West*; Giersch, *Asian Borderlands*; Dai, *The Sichuan Frontier*.

³ On the growth and self-regulation of local informal bureaucracies, see Reed, *Talons and Teeth*; Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 21–22; Dykstra, "Complicated Matters," 172–224.

scare that swept through the core of the empire.⁴

In the nineteenth century, the Qing state faced a great mix of challenges. Some emerged more or less directly from these structural problems and could have been mitigated by handling them differently; others did emerge from or were at least exacerbated by them but were more difficult to address; and still others were far more difficult to adequately anticipate, let alone address, in advance.⁵ In the first category was a series of uprisings in the highlands of central and southwest China led by indigenous people, who were motivated by grievances against Han Chinese settlers, and White Lotus sectarians.⁶ These conflicts exposed the limits of the government's capacity to manage migrant populations in highland areas, who lacked the kind of elite mediators on which the Qing preferred to rely, and their relationships with indigenous people. Once they broke out, these wars also exposed the limited capacity of the government to project military power into its internal frontiers.⁷ The accumulated costs of suppressing these rebellions drained the surpluses that had accumulated in the Qing treasury and forebode serious fiscal problems in the event of extended military conflicts in the future. Several such conflicts broke out in the mid-nineteenth century. Chief among them was the war against the Taiping—a sectarian *cum* political movement *cum* fully-fledged state that sought to overthrow the Qing—which caused the deaths of millions of people and devastated the Yangzi Valley, the fiscal core of the Qing empire.

Meanwhile, the demographic and economic prosperity of the empire as a whole rested on an increasingly precarious environmental foundation. Population growth increasingly taxed areas

⁴ Kuhn, *Soulstealers*.

⁵ For a general overview of the challenges facing the Qing state in this period, see Kuhn and Mann, “Dynastic Decline.”

⁶ Sutton, “Ethnic Revolt”; Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 37–80.

⁷ Hung argues that declining administrative capacity and fluctuating legitimacy were also reflected in patterns of protest in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Hung, *Protest*.

long-subject to intensive agriculture, and the expansion of farming and concomitant deforestation into highland areas exacerbated soil erosion and flooding.⁸ This situation was especially pronounced (and most pertinent to Jinan) in North China, whose agricultural and commercial viability depended on consistent rainfall and government investment in a complex environmental infrastructure on the Grand Canal and Yellow River.⁹ Maintaining this infrastructure—including the intricate dikes that kept the Yellow River on its southern course—was environmentally unsustainable but simply abandoning it was socially and politically unfeasible. Environmental challenges were always a matter of when, not if, at least without new technologies that could substantially increase human ability to perpetuate their exploitation of this environment or the capacity to drastically alter these patterns of exploitation.¹⁰ Societies on the other end of Eurasia faced somewhat similar environmental pressures, but the “ecological windfall” of the Americas, which they exploited through colonial violence, and greatly expanded use of fossil fuels helped them defer repaying the environmental debts they accrued during the early modern period.¹¹ This environmental precarity, which was anthropogenic in nature but a product of such long-developing structural issues that reversing it was a tremendous challenge, was further exacerbated by climate changes and shifts in weather patterns that were beyond human control.¹²

In retrospect, the inability of the Qing court to anticipate the maritime threat that would come from imperialist powers in the nineteenth century appears to have been a colossal failure, particularly in light of the British colonization of India in the eighteenth century. However, the

⁸ Marks, *China*, 169–222.

⁹ Li, *Fighting Famine*, 74–110.

¹⁰ As recent decades have shown, modern technology has not solved the problem of humans’ relationship with the Yellow River but has merely deferred and re-shaped the types of challenges this relationship poses. Pietz, *The Yellow River*, 258–321.

¹¹ Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*. Although she does not use the words ‘environmental debts,’ Lilian Li’s approach to seeing China’s environmental problems in the nineteenth century as an outcome of, not simply departure from, the prosperity of the eighteenth century lies behind this framing. Li, *Fighting Famine*, 9–10.

¹² Li, “‘The Daoguang Depression.’”

greatest strategic threat facing the Qing up through 1757 was the rise of a Zunghar state in Inner Asia, and the military and diplomatic strategies that the Qing used to deal with this threat were ill-suited to anticipating the challenge posed by maritime imperialism.¹³ This was beyond the court's control. With the benefit of hindsight, the Qing's negative responses to foreign entreaties to expand opportunities for trade and diplomacy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries have been taken as evidence of the dynasty's stubborn conservatism.¹⁴ However, when we consider that the Qing system of managing foreign powers had worked quite well for it up to that point, that the most commercially competitive import the British and others could offer (besides silver)—even decades after the famous Macartney mission of 1792—was opium, and that the Qing successfully resisted maritime incursions in the early nineteenth century, their reticence to radically alter their military and diplomatic modes of dealing with foreign countries is somewhat more understandable.¹⁵ Nevertheless, shifting toward a more passive strategic approach after defeating the Zunghars and failing to systematize information-gathering about the growing number of European traders (and their activities elsewhere in Asia) certainly put the Qing at a disadvantage as these merchants and the governments who backed them became increasingly aggressive in their efforts to gain access to the empire's markets.¹⁶

If anything, the wide-ranging effects of foreign imperialism justified Qing reticence to welcome foreign traders with open arms. Imperialist powers used their growing capacity to project military power over the oceans, along China's coast, and even into its inland waterways not only to win piecemeal concessions from the Qing but to systematically draw it into and

¹³ Perdue, *China Marches West*, 551–58.

¹⁴ Summaries of these views and critiques of them can be found in Hevia, *Cherishing Men*.

¹⁵ Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*, 235–46.

¹⁶ Mosca, *From Frontier Policy to Foreign Policy*.

subordinate it within an international system that they dominated.¹⁷ Repeated wars against overseas powers damaged local communities and the Qing state as a whole. The effects of increased foreign trade were too complex to say that it hurt the Qing in every way, but there were undeniably negative consequences, such as the reversal of a long pattern of surplus silver imports that had facilitated early modern commercialization.¹⁸ The threat of further imperialist encroachment and even of the dissolution of the Qing state was a shadow that hung over the last decades of the dynasty, shaping a wide range of decisions about how to ensure the survival of the state and informing new thinking about the nature of that state.

Each chapter in this section focuses on a specific kind of challenge that the Qing state and Jinan faced in the late nineteenth century. Chapter 3 discusses the successes and limitations of the organization of military defenses in Jinan in the midst of wars against the Taiping and Nian in the 1850s and 1860s. Chapter 4 turns back to examine the environmental and social effects of the northward shift of the Yellow River in 1855. Chapter 5 uses a long-running series of property disputes involving American missionaries in the 1880s as a lens into how Jinan's officials and elite experienced and responded to foreign imperialism, whose effects on China as a whole had been unfolding over the previous half-century but became much more directly evident in Jinan only later in the century.

These chapters contribute to ongoing discussions about both the efficacy of Qing state-building in this period and the place of North China in this history. The established narrative is that the power of the Qing state generally declined in the face of these challenges over the course of the nineteenth century and that efforts to prop the dynasty up, while not altogether

¹⁷ Hevia, *English Lessons*.

¹⁸ For a recent review of competing views on the effects of foreign trade on the Qing economy, see Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 53–54.

unsuccessful, generated their own problems that laid the groundwork for the dynasty's eventual fall. The environmental degradation and social dislocation that North China experienced in this period have served as illustrations of both the steep challenges facing the Qing state and its inability to handle them. However, recent scholarship has offered a more optimistic appraisal of the effectiveness of late Qing state-building. The following chapters build on this revisionist account in two main ways. First, they trace the persistence of the complementary relationship between state-building and place-making described in part I into the late nineteenth century and thereby provide a new framework for understanding how the growing political activism of the elite class contributed to state-building without necessarily undermining it. Second, they show that the effects of challenges faced by the Qing state varied considerably across even parts of North China that were physically close to each other (e.g. Jinan and its hinterland) and thus argue that we need a narrative of regional state-building in this period that is more nuanced than the one presented even in revisionist scholarship of late Qing state-building.

Scholarship on the Qing state-building in the late nineteenth century has addressed the effectiveness of government institutions and the distribution of power both within the government and through what scholars have called state-society relations. Wang and Dodgen each critique long-held views that governance in the early nineteenth century under the Jiaqing (r. 1796–1820) and Daoguang (r. 1820–1850) emperors was passive and rife with corruption, although both acknowledge the steep challenges the Qing was facing even before the First Opium War and the Taiping War. Wang argues that in the face of “all-encompassing contentious crises,” the Jiaqing court sensibly adopted a policy of “consolidation” after the “aggressive overextensions” of the late eighteenth century.¹⁹ Dodgen argues that after significant setbacks in

¹⁹ Wang, *White Lotus Rebels*.

the first decades of the nineteenth century, the oft-maligned Yellow River Administration, which I discuss in more detail in chapter 4, functioned remarkably effectively from the 1820s to 1840s, that its eventual shortcomings were the product not of typical end-of-dynasty corruption but a hydraulic crisis that predated even the foundation of the Qing, and that the fear of corruption and the political deployment of anti-corruption discourse was just as damaging to the administration as corruption itself.²⁰

These reassessments of Qing governing capacity heading into the maelstrom of the mid-nineteenth century challenge the interpretation of the late Qing crisis as an inevitable product of dynastic decline, but they do not necessarily overturn long-held views about the immediate and long-term damage caused by the war against the Taiping. One such narrative focuses on the gradual arrogation of greater military and fiscal authority by the regional officials on whom the court depended to prosecute the wars against the Taiping and Nian and to undertake reconstruction projects after the war. Chief among these were Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang, the latter of whom is especially relevant to Jinan's history owing to his long tenure as Governor-General of Zhili and Superintendent of Northern Ports (*Beiyang dachen*). The power base of these men ostensibly depended on the armies they had raised to fight the Taiping, their control over new forms of taxation, particularly commercial transit taxes (*lijin*), and the array of government offices and enterprises they managed with limited interference from the court and, in some cases, outside the territorial jurisdictions of the administrative posts they held. The supposed result was a precipitous devolution of power from the central government to regional officials.²¹ Naturally, historians have tended to draw a clear connection between these dual

²⁰ Dodgen, *Controlling the Dragon*.

²¹ For general reviews of this literature, see Rowe, *China's Last Empire*, 204–9; Kaske, “Fund-Raising Wars,” 73–80; Dykstra, “Complicated Matters,” 172–74.

devolutionary processes, the fall of the Qing, and the emergence of regional warlords in the early twentieth century.²²

However, recent scholarship has challenged the empirical basis and interpretive bent of this narrative. Elisabeth Kaske, He Wenkai, and Stephen Halsey have argued that the court wielded considerably more control over even the most powerful regional officials than we have assumed, particularly in fiscal affairs, including control of *lijin* revenues.²³ Halsey further develops this revisionist perspective into an argument that late Qing state-building was both innovative and remarkably successful in setting in motion a project of political development that post-Qing regimes continued. This argument hinges on not only identifying the institutional mechanisms by which the central government retained control over regional officials but also underlining the general correspondence between the goals of regional state-building efforts and the interests of the state as a whole. Halsey also highlights the considerable innovation that took place within the central government.²⁴ Similarly, Maura Dykstra interprets the proliferation of administrative institutions at the local level in the late nineteenth century not as a devolution of power from the central to local levels but as both an innovative response to reining in the growth of the local extra-statutory bureaucracy and a potential avenue for the central government to impose more uniform control over an expanded local administration.²⁵

The following chapters provide support for these revisionist arguments about the effectiveness of and distribution of power within the Qing government. Chapter 3 does illustrate

²² For example, Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 267.

²³ He Wenkai does argue, though, that the *persistence* of an already decentralized fiscal system was a shortcoming of late Qing state-building. Kaske, “Fund-Raising Wars”; He, *Paths*, 153–79; Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 81–112. These interpretations reflect Liu Kwang-ching’s observations some years ago in Liu, “The Ch’ing Restoration,” 480–84. Although focused on a later period and discussed at greater length in part III, MacKinnon’s work on Yuan Shikai also makes a similar argument. MacKinnon, *Power and Politics*.

²⁴ Halsey, *Quest for Power*. For more condensed interpretations of this period that resonate with and predate Halsey’s, see Wong, *China Transformed*, 154–57; Perdue, “Ecologies of Empire,” 411–15.

²⁵ Dykstra, “Complicated Matters,” 183–224.

how military power in Shandong was fractured in various ways that undermined the Qing war effort but did not lead to a straightforward devolution of power from the central government to regional officials. Chapter 4 examines an area—river control—where the authority and responsibility of provincial officials certainly grew in the late nineteenth century but not in a way that promoted regional autonomy. Similarly, chapter 5 shows provincial officials exercising considerable but by no means absolute discretion in foreign affairs in ways that effectively accommodated local and imperial prerogatives while stymying foreign interests. Part III will address the new kinds of problems emerging from the complex relationship between the central government, regional powerholders, provincial officials, and Jinan's elite in the early twentieth century.

However, these chapters more directly address two areas of scholarship that are distinct from questions about the distribution of power within the Qing government but also bear on how we understand the effectiveness and larger significance of late Qing state-building. The first area in which these chapters intervene is a long-running discourse on how the crises of the mid-nineteenth century affected the relationship between state and society (as scholars have generally approached the problem). In conjunction with the narrative of the growth in power of regional officials at the expense of the central state, a popular line of argument has been that the late nineteenth century saw expanding opportunities and capacities for local elites to exert influence in public affairs. Local elites' accrual of power generally wielded by the state was most immediately noticeable in the realm of military affairs, where, in the course of the Taiping War, the Qing government came to rely extensively on militias and even full armies raised by men who were acting beyond normal official capacities and neither subject to the rule of avoidance nor limited to activity in their home communities. The *lijin* taxes used to fund these armies were,

at least initially, controlled by the elite themselves.²⁶ The military power of elites in the Yangzi Valley—the chief battleground in the war against the Taiping—did not necessarily persist into subsequent decades, but the mode of elite activism represented by militia organization spread into other spheres, like charitable endeavors, during and beyond the reconstruction period.²⁷

The conventional interpretation of growing elite activism is that it represented a shift in the balance of power between state and society. Mary Rankin and William Rowe have been among the most forceful advocates for the idea that a “public sphere” of elite activism emerged in the post-Taiping period.²⁸ (See the introduction for a fuller discussion of the public sphere/civil society debate.) Rankin argues that the emergence of “an autonomous public sector” did not necessarily entail a “devolution” of power away from the state.²⁹ However, she also describes elite public management as an “indirect functional challenge [to the state] as members of the elite increasingly took over local responsibilities from officials.”³⁰ Similarly, she writes, “During the post-Taiping period, we see in the Lower Yangtze the faint beginnings of competition between bureaucratic and social activism that became better articulated under different circumstances in decades to come.”³¹ The key development that turned the “indirect functional challenge” the public sphere posed to the Qing state and the “faint beginnings” of competition between bureaucrats and social actors into an acute crisis was, according to Rankin, the series of reforms the court launched in 1901 that, among other things, aimed to dramatically increase the government’s administrative and fiscal reach into local society. Public sphere elites, who doubted the ability of the central government to advance the interests of their home

²⁶ Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies*.

²⁷ Polachek, “Gentry Hegemony”; Rankin, *Elite Activism*; McCord, “Militia and Local Militarization”; Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community*.

²⁸ Rankin, *Elite Activism*; Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community*.

²⁹ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 3–4, 21, 92.

³⁰ Rankin, 127.

³¹ Rankin, 135.

communities but also the nation as a whole, demanded even greater power in national affairs than the court was willing to grant. This conflict led elites to abandon the dynasty as the 1911 Revolution unfolded.³²

The following chapters both extend Rankin's observations on the growth of elite activism in the second half of the nineteenth century and critique her interpretation of their significance. On the one hand, I find signs of elite activism in late nineteenth-century Jinan that are similar to what Rankin and other scholars have observed in the post-Taiping period. A key difference, though, lies in the emphasis Rankin and Rowe both place on commercial wealth and the autonomy of elite activism from the state. Rankin writes, "Commercial growth indirectly shaped autonomous activities in the core areas by creating geographical and social linkages, enhancing elite independence, and strengthening leadership capacities."³³ Jinan's elite class (like elites across North China) was far less wealthy than the Lower Yangzi elites studied by Rankin and the mercantile community in Hankow studied by Rowe. Instead, as described in part I, Jinan's elite continued to rely on resources supplied by the government and cooperation with officials.

One way to explain this discrepancy would be to conclude that there were multiple forms of elite activism: one characterized by elite autonomy from the state fueled by commercial wealth and thus most common in the commercially prosperous southern portion of the empire and one characterized by elite cooperation with the state and more common in the north.³⁴ I reject this approach on both empirical and theoretical grounds. As other scholars have noted, even in Rankin's and Rowe's own accounts and in cases we would expect to be similar, elite activism was, in fact, characterized by a variety of connections to the state and was thus not as

³² Rankin, 202–98.

³³ Rankin, 75.

³⁴ Li, *Fighting Famine*, 7, 194.

extra-bureaucratic as it would need to be to justify attaching the “public sphere” label to it, at least in the sense that this sphere of elite activism was autonomous from the state.³⁵ As a result, while the dependence of Jinan’s elite activists on resources mobilized through government institutions and their cooperation with officials may have been greater *in degree* than in other parts of the empire, it did not represent a qualitatively different pattern of elite activism, even in comparison to areas that were more highly commercialized.

The deeper problem is that Rankin’s and Rowe’s interpretation of the significance of the growth of elite activism hinges on the *autonomy* of this emergent public sphere from the state, which produced an immediate “indirect” challenge to the state that became much more direct in the wake of the late Qing reforms. My analysis of elite activism in late Qing Jinan de-centers the question of society’s autonomy from the state. Instead, I work from the premise that both local and translocal elite activism could produce place-making effects that were simultaneously constitutive of state-building and that state-building could be an essential element of place-making. Thinking about the state as an effect of public action, not merely a set of institutions, immediately re-casts the relationship between extra-bureaucratic activism and the state. Rather than a growing sphere of “non-state” activity that posed a natural challenge to “the state” (even if only indirect), we can appreciate this activism as a form of state-building that effectively mobilized resources in the public interest, albeit outside the government. This framework allows us to take into account the intentions and practical effects of elite activism—which were very much oriented toward the interests of the state (again, broadly conceived)—and to side-step the theoretical problems that emerge from the inescapable fact that extra-bureaucratic activism was

³⁵ Bernhardt, *Rents, Taxes, and Peasant Resistance*; Wakeman, “The Civil Society and Public Sphere Debate,” 121–27, 130–31; Reed, “Gentry Activism”; Kwan, *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin*, 89–103; Dykstra, “Complicated Matters,” 172–224; Heselton, “Reconstructing Order,” 69–70, 92, 96–97, 145–46, 158–61.

not completely divorced from government institutions. This perspective offers a new way to reconcile narratives of the late nineteenth century as a period of growing elite activism and robust state-building because it does not require us to see these dynamics as naturally at odds with each other.

This approach has two additional effects. First, because it is building on an understanding of the public as formative of the state that has currency among scholars working in the context of the U.S., it does not require us to conclude that the continued intertwining of elite activism and state-building in the post-Taiping period was reflective of qualities of Chinese history that necessarily differentiate it from “the West.” Second, because it does not assume that public activism and state-building are naturally oppositional forces, it alters how we think about the link between growing elite power in the nineteenth century and the fall of the Qing Dynasty in the early twentieth century. Instead of assuming that elite activism *challenged* the state, it calls into question how elite activism did or did not *change* the state, including its spatial politics, and how effectively the Qing government could accommodate these changes, which is the primary question addressed in part III.

Assessing how the Qing state was changing over the course of the late nineteenth century requires a more nuanced appraisal of the regional effects of Qing state-building in the post-Taiping period, particularly in North China. This is the second area of scholarship related to but distinct from revisionist literature that focuses on dynamics within the Qing government in which these chapters intervene. Existing scholarship on North China paints a picture of a precipitous decline in state power over the late nineteenth century, which undercuts or at least severely qualifies claims about the effectiveness of late Qing state-building. Building on Pomeranz, Halsey acknowledges that the Qing state’s relatively effective response to foreign

imperialism entailed the central government prioritizing spending on coastal areas over investing in revenue-deficit peripheral regions that had historically been recipients of surpluses raised in other provinces.³⁶ Not only did local communities suffer from this shuffling of priorities, but the problems caused by the government's limited capacity to intervene in subsistence crises and communal conflict had serious ramifications for the state as a whole—most starkly exemplified by the Boxer Uprising—both during and beyond the Qing.³⁷ We are hard-pressed to say that a state-building program that fundamentally abandoned historical prerogatives in North China—with calamitous humanitarian and political effects—was successful.

By focusing on Jinan and its relatively successful experiences of state-building, these chapters offer a more nuanced perspective on the history of late Qing North China and its implications for the empire as a whole. We cannot explain the effectiveness of state-building in Jinan by reference to the same factors that dictated concentrating sparse resources in Beijing and areas closer to the coast (Tianjin), particularly the rapid appearance of threats from imperialist powers an argument that chapter 4 makes and chapter 5 advances by showing the weakness of foreign interests in Jinan even into the 1890s. On the other hand, Jinan's experiences were very different from not only rural areas (even in close proximity to the city) but also some of the other cities in Shandong, such as Jining. The result of these chapters, then, is a complex picture of the spatial effects of state-building in late Qing North China that cannot be explained by a single factor, like the difference between rural and urban areas or distance from the coast. Instead, a range of contextual factors produced divergent experiences of state-building in this region. We need further scholarship on other urban centers in North China, especially provincial capitals like

³⁶ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*; Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 101.

³⁷ Perry, *Rebels and Revolutionaries*; Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*; Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State*; Cohen, *History in Three Keys*; Thaxton, *Salt of the Earth*; Li, *Fighting Famine*; Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*.

Jinan, to better understand the complexity of this dynamic.³⁸

Because of this complexity, it will probably never be possible to reach a satisfactory, or at least simple, consensus on the efficacy of late Qing state-building. Much depends on the metric we use for “success.” For example, if we compare the effects of Qing state-building to the history of Japan after the Meiji Restoration in 1868 (as many scholars have done), then it is easy to reach the conclusion that Qing state-building was a dismal failure.³⁹ If, however, we compare the Qing to the experiences of other parts of the world that were colonized, like the Indian sub-continent or the Ottoman Empire, then the capacity of the Qing state to maintain its territorial integrity is actually quite impressive. Halsey takes this stance in offering a revisionist and unconventionally optimistic reappraisal of late-Qing state-building. He further argues that we should take into account the accomplishments of successor regimes who built on the reforms initiated by the Qing when evaluating the latter’s effectiveness.⁴⁰ This argument, though, elides the significance of the fall of the Qing Dynasty itself, which was of some consequence not only to its Manchu rulers but also to a wide range of loyal subjects, especially the empire’s non-Han constituencies but also a number of Han Chinese, including in Jinan, as the epilogue discusses. To these people, the question of state effectiveness was intimately bound up with the survival of the ruling regime, no less than it is in today’s China. By the same token, we should not use the successes of Qing state-building during this period to gloss over what even its most loyal adherents saw as serious shortcomings.

Thus, while these chapters do assess the effectiveness and shortcomings of various

³⁸ Esherick and Pomeranz provide especially good examples of intra-regional analysis in Shandong (and Schoppa for Zhejiang), but the questions I raise in this section can only be answered by closer examination of urban experiences in North China across provinces. Schoppa, *Chinese Elites*; Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*; Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*.

³⁹ See, for example, Feuerwerker, *China’s Early Industrialization*, 1–2.

⁴⁰ Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 24–51, 238–58.

elements of state-building, the larger picture they aim toward is not centered on the question of “success.” Instead, I argue that we should weigh the significance of late Qing state-building and place-making through the lens of spatial politics. Qing imperial state-building readily accommodated elites exercising power within their home communities, but it also depended on regulating and channeling translocal political associations in specific ways. The mid-nineteenth century occasioned a sense of national crisis and translocal responses that stretched or even transgressed established mechanisms for accommodating translocal processes in Qing spatial politics. These developments did not inherently undermine the power of the state, but they did challenge the logic of spatial politics under which it operated and could, of course, provide vehicles for mobilizing against unpopular policies.⁴¹ The Qing government needed to adapt in order to stifle or co-opt growing nationalism that was beginning to transform the state in the late nineteenth century. This is the larger backdrop against which the local narratives relayed in the following chapters unfold.

Jinan’s place in this history is, again, complex. Its elites were very much participants in the translocal processes that posed a challenge to the balance of Qing hybrid spatial politics. However, the importance of translocality to state-building and place-making in Jinan was itself nothing new. The chapters in part II underscore these continuities as a step toward explaining why in Jinan the Qing state proved capable of adapting to the political developments of the late nineteenth century and why, as part III discusses, Jinan’s elite were more loath to abandon the imperial form of the state than their peers elsewhere in the empire, despite participating in the processes that fulminated nationalist and, in some cases, anti-dynastic sentiments.

⁴¹ On the development of late Qing translocal political mobilization prior to and during the Opium War, see Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*, 17–100; Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 27–53.

Chapter 3

The Eye of the Storm: Jinan during the Wars against the Taiping and Nian, 1853–68

In early 1853, Taiping armies crowned their sweep down the Yangzi Valley by capturing Nanjing and Yangzhou. From its origins as a religious sect rooted in the highlands of Guangxi featuring an eclectic mix of Christian theology and local possession rituals, the movement had grown into an existential threat to Qing rule. The Taiping occupation of significant portions of the Lower Yangzi, including the southern terminal of the Grand Canal, cut Beijing off from its fiscal core. The capture of Nanjing, a former imperial capital, was symbolically evocative and gave the Taiping a base from which to administer conquered territories and launch further campaigns. To the north, across the Yellow River, the only thing standing between Taiping armies and Beijing were the provinces of northern China, including Shandong.

On May 8, 1853, a Taiping army led by Li Kaifeng and Lin Fengxiang set out from Yangzhou to invade the north with an order to advance at least as far as Tianjin and await reinforcements.¹ However, strong Qing defenses along the Yellow River pushed them west into Henan. There the army managed to cross and proceeded northward through Shanxi and Zhili, sacking but not holding a number of towns and county seats along the way. Unable to take Tianjin, the Taiping army set up camp in southern Zhili, awaiting support.²

Unlike the first wave, whose path took it westward, the relief force successfully crossed the Yellow River directly into Shandong, entering Shan County on March 19, 1854.³ This force, which swelled to 30,000 as it gained followers, forced the Qing to divert troops from the armies surrounding the first invasion force. Finding themselves outnumbered, the Qing generals proceeded cautiously, trying to contain this army rather than engage it frontally. This allowed the

¹ Su Shuangbi, “Lun Taiping jun beifa,” 2–9.

² Zhang Yao, *Shandong junxing jilüe*, 1:12–30.

³ Zhang Yao, 1:31–32.

Taiping to advance up the Grand Canal and capture Linqing on April 1. The capture of such a large and strategically important city shook the province and angered the court. Despite the court's displeasure, allowing the Taiping army to take Linqing proved strategically advantageous to the Qing forces, who now initiated their own siege. Before the city fell, the defending forces had torched its munitions and stores. A lack of supplies and deteriorating discipline among the troops—many of whom were not committed Taiping adherents—undermined the cohesiveness of the army, which now found itself surrounded.⁴ Through a series of sieges, breakouts, and pursuits, Qing forces managed to defeat and largely destroy splintered remnants of both armies. In April 1855, the Qing defeated the last of the Taiping forces, consisting of several hundred cavalry led by Li Kaifeng, who had broken out south to Gaotang and then Fengguan Village, about sixty miles west of Jinan.

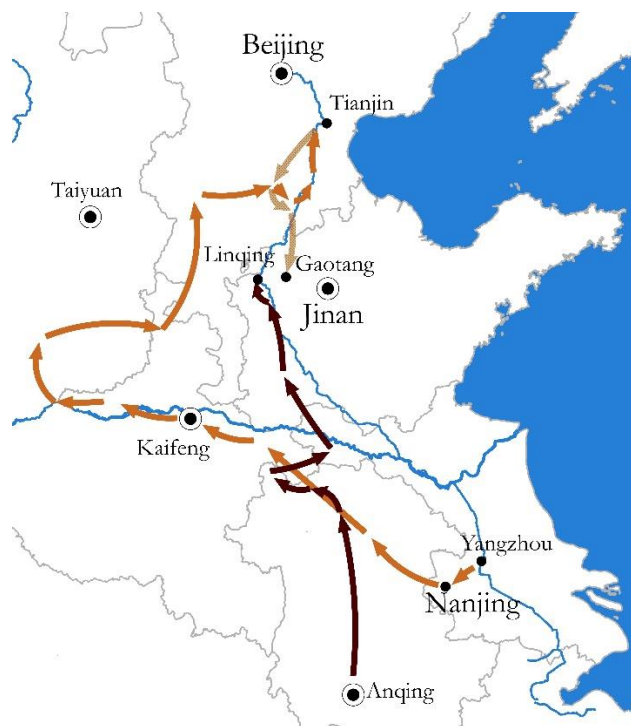


Figure 3.1: Map of the Taiping northern invasion. First force in orange, second in red. (GIS Data from CHGIS.)

⁴ Yuan Changfa, "Taiping jun zai Shandong," 123–25; Lu Jingqi and Yu Shaozhong, "Taiping tianguo beifa yuanjun."

These invasions, repeated Nian incursions in the 1850s and 1860s, and concomitant ecological crises (the topic of chapter 4) affected the entirety of Shandong. As the capital of the province, Jinan inevitably faced the effects of these catastrophes, but it fared much better than other places. This chapter traces Jinan's history in this period through three inflection points: 1853–4, 1860–1, and 1865. At each point, the dynasty found its control over Shandong sorely tested: by Taiping invasions in 1853 and 1854, by Nian attacks on the back of the Second Opium War in 1861, and by resurgent Nian forces routing the Mongol general Sengerinchen's army in 1865.

Each of these crises threatened the relationship between Jinan and the Qing state in ways anticipated by existing scholarship. However, the outcomes of this period for Jinan do not match what other scholars have found. The most obvious danger was that rebel forces would occupy the city, but this did not happen. In some rural parts of Shandong, locally raised forces on which the Qing relied to fend off the Taiping and Nian proved difficult for officials to control and rose up in rebellion themselves. Actions like this and the general limits of official control over the countryside have colored our understanding of North China as a whole in the late nineteenth century.⁵ However, Jinan's experiences were very different. The strong attachment of Jinan's elite to the Qing state distinguished them from the local strongmen throughout North China who challenged Qing state-building. The defensive efforts of the city's elite demonstrate that Qing control over North China did not completely dissolve in this period, although a gap did emerge between the effectiveness of state-building in urban centers (especially a strategically important one like Jinan) and in rural areas.

⁵ Tang Wing-hong, "Local Defense Organizations"; Cui Min, "'Jing luan shi suo yi zhi luan.'"Teng, *The Nien Army*; Chiang Siang-tseh, *The Nien Rebellion*; Perry, *Rebels and Revolutionaries*; Perry, "Tax Revolt"; Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*; Cohen, *History in Three Keys*; Bickers and Tiedemann, *The Boxers*.

Previous scholarship has also argued that even when supporting the Qing cause, shifts within imperial state-building precipitated by new forms of elite participation in combating the Taiping especially proved disadvantageous to the Qing state in the long-run. In his classic study of elite-led militias during the Taiping War, Philip Kuhn argues that the growth of elite power in this period altered the balance of power between the government and elites in favor of the latter and that this imbalance persisted through and helped bring about the end of the dynasty. After the war, Kuhn argues, elite-led military organizations were re-purposed for peacetime needs, like policing, but remained under gentry control. Consequently, the gentry gained new powers, now through formal institutions, shifting the balance of power in state-society relations away from the state.⁶ Mary Rankin's study of elite activism in Zhejiang Province provides further support for Kuhn's thesis that the military *cum* political mobilization of elites during the Taiping War initiated a series of developments that culminated in elites turning their newfound political prowess against the dynasty.⁷ This narrative proceeds more or less naturally from the state-society paradigm that this dissertation critiques, which posits state and society as autonomous forces that balance against each other.

Jinan's elite did participate in the wars against the Taiping and Nian through preparing local defenses in ways that were deeply impactful locally, both in terms of their material effects and how they were remembered in later decades. However, this did not result in the kind of devolution of power from state to society or an imbalance between the two that Kuhn or other scholars building on his work have described. On the one hand, this chapter sets out to provide an empirical explanation for why Jinan did not become more like places (e.g. Hunan) where the

⁶ Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies*, 211–23. On the relationship between the Taiping War and the devolution of state power to local elites, see also Zheng Xiaowei, “Loyalty, Anxiety, and Opportunism,” 75–76.

⁷ Rankin, *Elite Activism*.

scale of elite-led militarization was vastly greater, despite the persistent military threats that Shandong faced. The timing and nature of the military threats Jinan and Shandong faced in the nineteenth century and the characteristics of Jinan's elite class militated against more intensive elite-led militarization. In particular, the limited financial resources of Jinan's elite and their tenuous relationship to areas immediately surrounding the city, in contrast to their close ties to officialdom, worked against the emergence of a permanent, elite-led military force operating outside bureaucratic control. One corollary of this was that the civil service examinations and regular bureaucratic appointments, rather than extraordinary military service, offered the most viable route for elite men from Jinan to advance their careers in government. Their exceptional success in taking advantage of this route of professional advancement, which probably benefited from disruptions in other parts of the empire, further integrated Jinan's elite into the Qing state.

On the other hand, this chapter adds a further layer of critique to the assumption underlying scholarship on the mid-nineteenth century (and the field more broadly) that growing social power came at the expense of the state.⁸ Instead, I show how the participation of Jinan's elite in the war effort aided the Qing cause without initiating a devolution of power away from the state. I also underscore ways in which the weakness of Jinan's elite was detrimental not only to themselves but also the state as a whole. Jinan's history in this period speaks to the surprising resilience of Qing state-building—despite the many crises it faced and its undeniable shortcomings—and the continuation of a pattern of mutually constructive state-building and place-making. In so doing, I add both more empirical detail and a new theoretical bent to recent arguments that the Taiping War did not fragment Qing state-building as much as we have

⁸ Here I am building on questions raised by Wong and Kuhn. Wong, *China Transformed*, 121; Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 48, 52.

believed.⁹

Recent scholarship on the Taiping War and reconstruction efforts has drawn greater attention to the human costs of the war. In *What Remains: Coming to Terms with Civil War in 19th Century China*, Tobie Meyer-Fong writes, “For many, suffering and damage were the defining features of their wartime experience. And yet, like the loyal dead, the damage, emotional toll, and destruction of this period subsequently have been overlooked or strategically forgotten.”¹⁰ Whereas works like Kuhn’s have treated the war in terms of fixed categories of analysis, like state and society, Meyer-Fong and other scholars call attention to the uncertainties and fluid loyalties that characterized life in this period.¹¹

In this chapter I bridge these concerns with how mid-nineteenth century warfare affected both the Qing social-political order and the everyday lives of millions of people by examining how the actions of Jinan’s native elite and officials and their relationship to translocal developments affected place-making and state-building. War—especially one so destructive as the Taiping—is a strange lens through which to study processes, like place-making, that carry constructive connotations. However, both classic and recent scholarship, including works by Stephen Halsey and He Wenkai on the late Qing, have argued that war’s effect on state-building can be positive.¹² Weber, of course, famously defined the state by reference to its putative “monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.”¹³ Nevertheless, much state-building during the war itself resembled emergency maintenance and repair more than carefully planned construction. Balancing the need to widely distribute the power and authority

⁹ Kaske, “Fund-Raising Wars”; He, *Paths*, 153–79; Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 81–112.

¹⁰ Meyer-Fong, *What Remains*, 10.

¹¹ Platt, “Introduction”; Brown, “Rebels, Rent, and Tao Xu”; Zheng Xiaowei, “Loyalty, Anxiety, and Opportunism”; Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*, 88–174.

¹² Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*; Capozzola, *Uncle Sam*; Sparrow, *Warfare State*; He, *Paths*; Halsey, *Quest for Power*.

¹³ Weber, *From Max Weber*.

to conduct violence on behalf of the state with reining in the actors on whom the state depended for its survival proved a challenge throughout the wars. Likewise, although forms of place-making during war were in some ways familiar, like mobilizing resources for physical construction, the conditions and outcomes of these behaviors were different from times of peace.

Because Jinan remained behind the front lines of war but periodically came under direct threat, it offers a complex and compelling perspective on the ambiguities of wartime place-making and state-building. The city's experiences in this period were defined both by the violence that unfolded around it—sometimes quite close—but also its insulation from the worst of this violence. Despite its peculiarity, Jinan's history at all stages of these wars was bound up with events unfolding both in distant provinces and nearby villages. This chapter, then, broadens what we know about how war affected places in different ways and reiterates the importance of what we already know about war and reconstruction, especially in Jiangnan, by showing how it relates to a place with very different first-hand experiences. In many ways, war broke down the social and political order and isolated individuals and communities. However, it also created new confluences—sometimes hopeful and sometimes tragic—that reshaped place, state, and their relationship in Jinan and throughout the empire.

The Taiping Northern Invasion and Militia Organization, 1853–5

Organizing Militia in and around Jinan

To defeat the Taiping northern invasion, the Qing court depended on a mix of banner and Green Standard troops, hired soldiers (*yong*, sometimes translated literally as 'braves'), and militia (*tuan*). The distinction between the latter two forces was that *tuan* were recruited from their home place and received periodic training but were not full-time soldiers, whereas *yong*

were often employed full-time and more likely to be deployed outside their home counties or even provinces. Mobilizing *tuan* and hiring *yong* provided an avenue for the local elite to assert themselves in military affairs. In Hunan and parts of Jiangnan, grassroots militarization played an essential role in resisting the Taiping and, in the case of the Hunan (Xiang) and Huai armies, gave birth to a formal, quasi-permanent military structure outside the regular military bureaucracy. However, these quasi-regular forces did not operate completely beyond the supervision of the court or the territorial bureaucracy, especially in Shandong. Regular officials were responsible for supervising militias and could hire and train additional soldiers to supplement regular forces. In early 1853, when the court issued a series of edicts ordering the organization of local militias, it appointed forty-three militia officials (*tuanlian dachen*) to supervise these efforts in their home provinces. Of these, eleven were from Shandong, more than any other province. Tang Wing-hong interprets the court's direct involvement in the mobilization of militias in Shandong as a sign of its reluctance to let military power fall into private hands in such a strategically important province.¹⁴

Although they were operating in their home province—in contravention of the rule of avoidance—these officials were both subordinate to Shandong's governor and beholden to the court, who held the power to bestow rewards or exact punishments on these men, many of whom were in the middle of their official careers. A prolonged conflict that resulted in the development of an extensive force particularly loyal to a small group of Shandong natives may have worn down the efficacy of these checks. However, the relatively quick defeat of the Taiping in the north and the primacy of regular troops compared to the auxiliary role of militias prevented this from happening. Instead, for Jinan natives, militia organization served as a launching pad for

¹⁴ Tang Wing-hong, "Local Defense Organizations," 28.

advancement through the regular bureaucracy, not the formation of an independent military force like the Hunan Army.

On March 18, 1853, the court ordered Jinan native Mao Hongbin, who was at that time a Supervising Censor in the Office of Scrutiny for Rites, to return to his home place to help organize militia.¹⁵ From his post in the capital, Mao had watched the Taiping War unfold. He memorialized to suggest that the court should reward commanders in Hunan who maintained discipline among their troops and that the Governor-General of Liangguang should support Qing troops in Hunan.¹⁶ Arriving in Jinan on April 13, Mao, in cooperation with the local officials and in consultation with other members of the local elite, took charge of organizing militia in the vicinity of the city.¹⁷

Jinan's importance as the province's political center was undisputed. However, questions about its relative importance in the context of the overall strategic situation gave rise to sharp disagreements about how to defend the city. Facing the threat of a Taiping invasion from the south, Governor Li Hui focused on bolstering Shandong's southern border, which benefited from the natural barrier of the Yellow River. Li concentrated troops along the river in Yizhou, Caozhou, and Yanzhou prefectures and gathered all boats to the north bank of the river at two major crossing points in Cao and Shan counties so that the Taiping could not use them to cross. He also encouraged the local gentry to form militias in this strategically vital area.¹⁸ The court approved of Li's approach and encouraged him to remain in the southern portion of the province to personally oversee the preparations.¹⁹

¹⁵ *QZFZYTP*, 5:123.

¹⁶ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:4a–4b.

¹⁷ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:217.

¹⁸ *QZFZYTP*, 4:565–67.

¹⁹ *QZFZYTP*, 5:4–5.

By the time Mao Hongbin arrived in Jinan, though, the downsides of this strategy, especially for Jinan, were already becoming clear. Not only had Li Hui deployed the vast bulk of his forces away from the capital, but he had left his subordinates in charge of the weighty civil and military affairs that had to be handled from Jinan. First, Wang Maoyin—a native of Anhui and a famed expert in currency—memorialized from his post as an Investigating Censor in Shaanxi to relay worrisome reports he had heard about the state of Jinan’s defenses. He criticized the province’s administrative and judicial commissioners for failing to reassure the people, adequately supervise their subordinates, or prepare defenses. There were only 700 able-bodied men in the city’s militia, and the officials were still preparing documents to check the *baojia* registers. He even noted that they had neglected to fortify Thousand Buddha Mountain (i.e. Li Mountain), from which, he claimed, artillery could command the entire city. In addition to a potential Taiping invasion, groups of bandits attracted by the prize of the provincial treasury posed a risk. Writing that “Now the concern is not a lack of soldiers but a lack of a commander,” Wang asked the court to dispatch an official competent in military affairs to bolster Jinan’s defenses.²⁰

The officials Li Hui had left in charge and whom Wang Maoyin so roundly criticized had their own misgivings. Bypassing their superior (Governor Li), Shandong’s Administrative Commissioner, Liu Yuanhao, together with the Judicial Commissioner, Salt Transport Commissioner, and Ji-Dong-Tai-Wu-Lin Circuit Intendant, submitted a memorial directly to the throne explaining their predicament. Not counting storehouse and prison guards, Li had left them with only four or five hundred men to defend the city, they claimed. Locally recruited *yong* and *tuan* would supplement these, but the new forces they had just begun to muster were not yet

²⁰ QZFYTP, 5:470–71.

ready for combat. Militias from the surrounding area could not be deployed outside their home areas to Jinan. Gazing south across the prefectures of Yanzhou and Yizhou, they saw only an “empty plain,” devoid of natural barriers that could be defended. Were Taiping forces to break through Li’s defenses—stretched thin by his lack of troops and the length of the Yellow River—there would be nothing standing between the Taiping and Jinan, and then nothing between Jinan and Beijing. (In fact, mountains shielded the city’s immediate southern flank, but it was more vulnerable from the southwest.) Like Wang, they also worried that bandits might take advantage of Jinan’s weakness and launch a brazen attack. Unlike Wang, they thought what they needed was more troops, not a new commander. They audaciously asked the court to send an additional 10,000 troops from the capital to Shandong: 5,000 to reinforce Li Hui’s defenses on the province’s southern border and 5,000 to garrison Jinan.²¹ As they were writing the memorial, they received word that the court had ordered 4,000 troops from Shaanxi-Gansu and 3,000 from Shanxi to reinforce Li. In a separate memorial, they repeated their request for troops from the capital since it would take months for troops to arrive from the northwest.²² They left unspoken their apparent lack of faith that Li would use any of these troops to reinforce Jinan.

After his arrival, Mao Hongbin also offered his thoughts on Li Hui’s defensive strategy. He agreed with Li’s decision to prioritize the Yellow River, but he worried that the Taiping would get across by building rafts or acquiring boats from unscrupulous common people. Like Liu and the other officials in Jinan, he was worried about what would happen if the Taiping did manage to get through Li’s line, although he was less alarmist about the imminent threat this would pose to Jinan. Instead of packing the city with soldiers, Mao suggested stationing smaller numbers of troops at strategic points on land routes between the Yellow River and Jinan. This

²¹ *QZFYTP*, 5:497.

²² *QZFYTP*, 5:499.

way they could balance protecting the river, the province, Jinan, and Beijing.²³

Li Hui's response to these criticisms betrayed more than a hint of condescension. He argued that his subordinates and Mao were erroneous in prioritizing the defense of Jinan. Of course, if the Taiping did advance across the Yellow River towards Jinan, then he would do everything he could to stop them. In the meantime, though, it made far more sense to devote troops to holding the river, which was the Qing's most favorable and important defensive position in the region. Moreover, even if the Taiping did breach this line, it was less likely that they would advance directly toward Jinan rather than continue up the Grand Canal toward Beijing. He reassured the court that he would continue to supervise the preparation of defenses in Jinan, noting that occupying Thousand Buddha Mountain was not so urgent as Wang Maoyin had claimed, owing to its distance from the city and the difficulty of positioning artillery there.²⁴ Although the court reiterated its instructions that Li should attend to Jinan's defenses as well, it continued to back Li's overall strategy, which proved effective, at least in 1853. This defensive arrangement made the mobilization of militia necessary to defend Jinan itself. Neither column of the Taiping invasion tested these defenses, but by freeing up troops to hold the front lines, the militias organized by Mao and others still contributed to the Qing war effort.

Despite its importance, militia organization in Jinan and elsewhere got off to a slow start. Early in 1853, efforts to organize militia in Shandong were, in the words of Tang Wing-hong, "limited and tentative."²⁵ One of the most pressing issues throughout the province was raising funds. Even when successful, fundraising could give rise to fresh problems: in some cases local strongmen used the official sanction of organizing militias to accumulate both military and

²³ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:221–24.

²⁴ *QZFYTP*, 5:495–97, 6:315–17.

²⁵ Tang Wing-hong, "Local Defense Organizations."

financial power that they were loath to relinquish even when the court ordered the demobilization of militias in 1855. Additionally, raising funds for militias conflicted with regular tax collection, which was still an important priority for the court, especially in Shandong, since Beijing had lost access to fiscally vital regions in the south. The result was militias leading tax-resistance uprisings.²⁶ The rising price of silver relative to copper and the disruption of trade with areas in the south made raising funds without cutting tax quotas even more difficult.²⁷

In Jinan, organizing militia did not produce this kind of overt resistance, but lethargic fundraising and poor morale were serious concerns. On April 24, 1853, Mao Hongbin reported that there were plans in place for militia, “However, because it has been difficult to raise funds, there is no place that is not handicapped.”²⁸ In a later report, Mao indicated that the obstacles to militia organization were not only economic but also social in nature:

One of the difficulties is the people’s spirit not being united; another is the people’s hearts not being strong. After a long time of peace, the people do not know how to be soldiers. When there are no problems, they become luxuriant and carefree and are naturally tranquil. When there is alarm, they panic and lose their heads. Additionally, in the area of the provincial capital in all directions people are displaced and are not united in their affections.²⁹

One of the court’s primary charges to Mao and Shandong’s officials was to maintain order among civilians. In Li Hui’s absence, the court instructed Liu Yuanhao and his fellow officials that it was absolutely imperative that they “not cause the people to become frightened and flee.”³⁰

However, some alarm proved useful. In June 1853 false reports circulated that the

²⁶ Cui Min, “‘Kangliang’ yu ‘lianfei’”; Cui Min, “‘Jing luan shi suo yi zhi luan’”; Tang Wing-hong, “Local Defense Organizations,” 73–101; Perry, “Tax Revolt.”

²⁷ Cui Min, “‘Jing luan shi suo yi zhi luan,’” 37–39.

²⁸ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:217.

²⁹ Mao Hongbin, 1:229–30.

³⁰ *QSL (Xianfeng)*, 87:161a–162b.

Taiping had crossed the Yellow River into Cao County in southwest Shandong. “At that time,” according to Mao, “militia in the city had not yet been organized. There were only four to five hundred troops (*bingding*), which would not have been enough to defend the city. The people’s hearts were shocked and terrified, and a large number fled in great confusion.”³¹ However, when Mao traveled among the villages outside Jinan in the wake of this false alarm, the enthusiasm of the militia heads and the rural people encouraged him. Mao and his colleagues concluded “that in order to defend what was near, it would first be necessary to defend what was far away.”³² Their strategy for militia organization thus focused on both walled cities and rural areas, with Jinan at the center and an extended militarized area.

In autumn 1853, Mao reported that they had established a militia general bureau (*zongju*) in Jinan to serve as a center of operations. Its responsibilities included managing finances, receiving donations, and storing population records, including a list of all the men twenty *sui* or older. They established four training bureaus inside the walled city and four more in the areas outside the gates (suburbs). Each bureau hired one or more instructors to train men from that portion of the city. Participation built on the principles of the *baojia* system of mutual surveillance. The area inside the walls was organized into five militia groups (*tuan*), and the east, south, and west suburbs were split into six, eight, and thirteen *tuan*, respectively.³³ This organization continued down to units of ten households. Every five days, each group of households was supposed to send at least two men to train at their corresponding bureau. Training was held at 2 p.m., and a cannon shot at 1 p.m. was the signal for the men to assemble. If men from a ten-household unit failed to appear on three occasions, then all of the men in

³¹ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:233.

³² Mao Hongbin, 1:233.

³³ Mao did not explain the exact relationship between the *tuan* and the bureaus. Since the numbers do not match up neatly, I assume that multiple *tuan* correlated to a single bureau. *QZFYTP*, 10:42–43.

training would be punished. Each street was supposed to select upstanding residents to ensure participation. Additionally, each ten-household unit was allowed to procure (*zhibei*) one fowling gun, two short knives, and two long spears to equip its militiamen. Mobilizing the populace also entailed recording the population, both permanent and transitory, and enforcing a curfew.³⁴ Mao observed that this process was going well and that gentry and merchants were dividing up responsibilities for organizing along different roads on their own.³⁵

Mao estimated that over a hundred men trained in each of the city's four training bureaus each day.³⁶ If each day the four city bureaus trained a total of 400–500 men who were on a five-day rotation, then we can roughly extrapolate that this organization mobilized a total of 2000–3000 men residing inside the city walls. Mao claimed that the four bureaus in the suburbs trained roughly the same number of men, so the militia in the vicinity of Jinan could have numbered between 4000 and 6000.³⁷

Since Mao considered defending what was “far away” to be especially important, he paid considerable attention to organizing defenses in the villages and counties surrounding Jinan. The organization in the countryside was similar to that in the city, except that local headmen were simply ordered to clear out a place for training; they did not need to establish formal bureaus like the city and suburbs.³⁸ With mountains shielding Jinan's southern approach, the most likely corridor through which Taiping forces would attack Jinan was from the west along the Daqing River.³⁹ Mao identified a circumference of 300 *li* (~150 km) around Jinan, containing 600–700 villages, as a strategically important area. He began organizing militias there, but also planned to

³⁴ *QZFYTP*, 10:39–41.

³⁵ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:232.

³⁶ *QZFYTP*, 10:42.

³⁷ *QZFYTP*, 10:43.

³⁸ *QZFYTP*, 10:41.

³⁹ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:231.

extend this organization into more remote areas. The militia organizers first drew up regulations for militias and then, through visiting different areas, decided how to group together the villages into *tuan* and identified reliable men who could serve as militia leaders (*tuanzhang*).



Figure 3.2: Map of Jinan Prefecture. (GIS data from CHGIS.)

Mao and his colleagues continued to visit these areas, inspecting, instructing, and encouraging the militia leaders. In autumn 1853 Mao reported having formed four rural militia units. Only one of these *tuan*, based in Duandian zhuang to the south of Jinan, was based in Licheng County. Two were based in Zhongdian pu and Gucheng in Changqing County, which lay southwest of Jinan along the Daqing River. He also organized a *tuan* based in Longshan cun in Zhangqiu, east of Jinan. Together, these four *tuan* encompassed 274 villages, meaning that within four months Mao had established at least a basic defensive structure in more than one-

third of the villages he had identified as of strategic importance.⁴⁰ Philip Kuhn refers to these multi-village militia organizations as “multiplex” militia units and the central coordination Mao undertook as “extended mutliplex.”⁴¹ In response to the false report of Taiping forces crossing into Shandong, the organizers again visited Gucheng and Zhong dianpu, exhorting the militia leaders and instructing them to follow the lead of official troops. Mao reported that 20,000 people volunteered to participate in militias.⁴²

In addition to Liu Yuanhao and other local officials, Mao received help from several other natives of Licheng County who had returned home to help organize militias. Peng Yizhu was an 1836 *jinshi*, who had served as a magistrate in Jiangsu, including during the First Opium War, when he helped organize local militia to maintain public order.⁴³ Li Qing’ao, on the other hand, had just begun his official career, earning his *jinshi* in 1852 and then working in the Hanlin Academy. Mao wrote that Li possessed the skill and character to be proficient at various aspects of administration, which his subsequent career bore out.⁴⁴ Finally, Li Hongchou had earned his *juren* degree in 1835 and had been a classmate of Li Qing’ao and Jin Shouxuan, who was involved in local defense later during the Nian.⁴⁵ Li later died while serving as a prefect in Yunnan.⁴⁶ Both Peng and Li Hongchou were recommended for militia service in early 1853 by Chen Mei, an official in the Board of Punishments and a native of Wei County in Shandong.⁴⁷

Despite the growing extent of rural and urban *tuan* organization and the number of men organized through it, these forces were still highly informal and were explicitly restricted to

⁴⁰ Mao Hongbin, 1:231–32.

⁴¹ Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies*, 73–77.

⁴² Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:233.

⁴³ *QSL (Daoguang)*, 377:799a–800a.

⁴⁴ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:241.

⁴⁵ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:7a.

⁴⁶ Mao Chenglin, 40:25b.

⁴⁷ Chen Mei memorial on 1853/3/24 (XF 3/2/15), *LFZZ*, 03-4235-025.

protecting their home areas. At the same time, Mao began developing a force that would be more effective and mobile. In addition to the eight training bureaus in and around Jinan, he set up two Righteous Braves bureaus (*yiyong ju*). These bureaus provided training for men who showed some martial acuity and were willing to be deployed beyond Jinan.⁴⁸ The militia regulations explicitly cited the recruitment of hired soldiers to defeat the White Lotus Rebellion in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century as precedent for this organization. Ideally, the men recruited for further training at these bureaus would pay their own expenses, being motivated by the possibility of reward for meritorious service. However, the General Bureau could arrange to pay salaries to worthy men who lacked the means to support themselves.⁴⁹

These forces took on new significance as the events of 1854 unfolded. By the end of that summer, the first Taiping column had advanced practically to the gates of Tianjin, ensconcing itself in southern Zhili, and the second column really had crossed into Shandong and had taken Linqing, setting Jinan on edge. Chong-en, the new governor, faced the unenviable task of supporting Qing generals in the field while ensuring that no other major city suffered the same fate as Linqing. He faced this challenge with only a little over one hundred men at his immediate disposal. Even after replenishing his forces from garrisons in Qingzhou and Deping, Chong-en could ill-afford to split up his army to defend places like Jinan that were not under immediate threat. Hiring additional troops was the solution to this conundrum. Chong-en ordered his subordinates to garrison the areas outside Jinan's west and south gates with 1,100 of their own hired soldiers. Even then, he realized that this left a paltry number of soldiers to man the walls

⁴⁸ *QZFZYTP*, 10:43; Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:231.

⁴⁹ Since the text of the memorial does not specify, I believe that this referred to both soldiers and officers. However, I also suspect that many more men did require financial support than is suggested by these regulations. *QZFZYTP*, 10:41.

themselves.⁵⁰ They did make an impressive sight, though, keeping their fires lit and setting off their guns throughout the night, a practice Chong-en instructed them to stop, as it disturbed the city's already uneasy residents.⁵¹

Meanwhile, Mao Hongbin, his colleagues, and their small army were charged with defending the approaches to the city. Late in the summer of 1854 Mao reported that he had found his loosely organized militias wanting. Again, he complained, "The peace has been maintained for a long time, and the people do not know how to be soldiers. There is no one with experience, and their courage has turned wanting." Consequently, Mao and his colleagues had continued and expanded their recruitment and training of hired soldiers. At the time of the Taiping capture of Linqing, Mao had raised a force of six hundred hired soldiers, who were supported by donations. Around this time, he deployed this force outside of Jinan to deal with bandits. He then hired five hundred more.⁵² Although this force was much smaller than the total number of men enlisted by the loosely connected militia units Mao coordinated, the pay and increased training these men received, together with their deployment outside their home villages, indicated a more intensive degree of militarization. This form of organization and the deployment of braves by the local elite outside their home county paralleled the steps that led up to Zeng Guofan's organization of the Hunan Army.⁵³

As the Taiping relief force marched northward through Shandong, Mao deployed his soldiers in two encampments (*ying*) on the south bank of the Daqing River in Changqing County. Li Kaifang's occupation of Gaotang in 1854 and a mix of fears and rumors that he could

⁵⁰ *QZFZYT*, 13:326; Zhang Yao, *Shandong junxing jilüe*, 1:41.

⁵¹ *QZFZYT*, 15:31.

⁵² Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:243–45.

⁵³ Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies*, 145–47.

continue south added further urgency to defending Jinan.⁵⁴ In response, Mao established an additional encampment on the north bank of the Daqing River in Qihe County. He positioned the encampments so that, despite being separated by the river, they could support each other. In addition to providing defensive cover for Jinan, his forces patrolled the area and arrested suspicious people. They also maintained contact with over one hundred villages and their militias on the borders of Licheng, Changqing, and Qihe counties. Chong-en claimed that these militias numbered 8,000 men.⁵⁵

After the defeat of Li Kaifang's force, Governor Chong-en praised Mao Hongbin and Li Qing'ao for their effective mobilization of militia.⁵⁶ Mao's forces had not directly engaged Taiping forces, but they protected Jinan and helped maintain order in the surrounding area. In so doing, they freed up regular troops to participate in the fighting that brought about the end of the Taiping invasion.

Despite their success, Mao's efforts proved temporary. In addition to the termination of the Taiping threat, from the beginning, Mao had been hampered by limited funding. In autumn 1853 he reiterated the importance of canvassing for contributions from the local elite. Before he had arrived, Jinan's elite had proposed borrowing 6,000 taels from the provincial treasury, and Liu Yuanhao had disbursed a further 2,000 taels. Both amounts were supposed to be paid back, though. Mao had secured pledges totaling 2,000 taels from gentry from Licheng and 42,000 taels from gentry in Zhangqiu. Most of this money came from individuals from Zhangqiu with the Meng surname.⁵⁷ Mao planned to use this money, once it came in, to repay existing loans and

⁵⁴ *QZFZYTP*, 14:295.

⁵⁵ *QZFZYTP*, 14:296; Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:245.

⁵⁶ Chong-en memorial on 1855/5/30 (XF 5/4/15), *LFZZ*, 03-4268-096.

⁵⁷ According to Jing Su and Luo Lun, there was a large rentier landlord family from Zhangqiu named the Meng's. I suspect this was the same family. Jing Su and Luo Lun, *Landlord and Labor*, 132–37.

fund ongoing expenses.⁵⁸ However, in August 1854, he reported that he had received only 31,000 taels. This money allowed him to repay the 8,000 he had borrowed from the treasury, but still fell short of what had been pledged more than ten months prior. Of the remaining 23,000 taels, he used 8,000 to produce weapons and deposited the remaining 15,000 in the provincial treasury to pay for his forces' expenses.⁵⁹

Mao tried to explain why he received so little money, especially from Jinan itself, saying “Although Shandong’s capital is famous, it is poor and distressed and has never had rich gentry or large households.”⁶⁰ Recent events had exacerbated the relative poverty of Jinan and Shandong. Chong-en claimed that rising silver prices and, with the Taiping invasion, the disruption of commercial networks had negatively affected commerce throughout the province, especially salt merchants, who were among the most important members of Jinan’s merchant community.⁶¹ Not only was money in short supply, but the merchants and other members of the elite also made themselves scarce when the city was under threat, especially when Linqing fell. Although many people returned to Jinan after Qing forces recaptured Linqing, as soon as Li Kaifang captured Gaotang, they fled again. Chong-en reported:

“Out of every ten establishments, nine are empty, and the majority of merchants have closed their businesses. Because of this, the markets are deserted. Every rich establishment and wealthy family has moved away. Not only have their businesses been abandoned, but their contributions have shriveled up more and more each day.”⁶²

Jinan native Wang Zhonglin later recounted that many of Jinan’s elite had fled to the mountains south of the city, where some of them had residences, and to mountainous areas to the east in

⁵⁸ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:238–39.

⁵⁹ Mao Hongbin, 1:247–48.

⁶⁰ Mao Hongbin, 1:247.

⁶¹ *QZFYTP*, 15:343.

⁶² *QZFYTP*, 15:31.

Boshan, Liuchuan, and Zhangqiu.⁶³ For Jinan's residents, fleeing east put more distance between them and the Taiping forces and also took them away from a city that, like Linqing, the Taiping might be more likely to attack. In contrast, members of the elite in Zhangqiu, whose wealth was more tied to landholding and who could not count on official forces prioritizing defending their county as much as Jinan, had a greater incentive to invest in local defenses, even in the counties to the west that separated them from the Taiping advance.

The 15,000 taels Mao had left-over lasted about six months and were already running low by the time he began setting up encampments in Changqing. Mao then requested to borrow 8,000 taels from the provincial salt treasury to keep his forces fed and supplied. He subsequently met with Chong-en in his camp besieging Li Kaifang in Gaotang and discussed the situation with him. They agreed that the threat a Taiping breakout would pose to Jinan necessitated maintaining the encampments. So, Chong-en again ordered the provincial treasury and salt treasury to temporarily provide funding for Mao's troops with the intention that he would repay them with gentry contributions when the Taiping threat had subsided. Mao stressed the economy of his forces, claiming that the operating expenses of the three encampments amounted to 2,800 taels each month and that he and his colleagues' salaries and transportation costs were all paid through private contributions and did not draw on any government funds.⁶⁴ Recognizing the importance of Mao's garrisons, the court approved this course of action but ordered Chong-en to strictly supervise Mao and all officials in charge of defense forces to ensure that they economized as much as possible.⁶⁵

At this time, the province and empire as a whole were in dire fiscal straits. For example,

⁶³ Wang Zhonglin, *Wang Zhonglin riji*, 59:631.

⁶⁴ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:248–49.

⁶⁵ *QZFYTP*, 15:370–1.

in January 1854, Shandong Governor Zhang Liangji requested to “borrow” 100,000 taels from taxes that should have been remitted to the capital for help pay for military operations in Shandong. The throne responded that while military affairs in Shandong were understandably important and expensive, it was unfeasible to grant such allowances to every province, especially when the central treasury was running low on funds itself. Discretion was necessary. Zhang was ordered to carefully consider how much money he really needed and to diligently manage the funds already at his disposal. If he still needed to borrow money, then he would be allowed to do so, but not 100,000 taels.⁶⁶ The need to supply Qing troops fighting the Taiping forces, especially during the protracted siege at Gaotang, exacerbated the strain on provincial finances.

In mid-1854, the court recalled Liu Yuanhao, who had been appointed judicial commissioner when Chong-en was made governor, to the capital for failing to provide funds to general Sheng-bao in a timely manner and taking too much credit for defensive preparations in Jinan.⁶⁷ Jing-lin, the new administrative commissioner, subsequently reported that Liu had initially used donations from merchants to raise hired soldiers from among Jinan’s militia but had increasingly turned to rely on official funds to support these forces. Out of consideration for the prestige of commanding these forces and perhaps the opportunities for graft doing so presented, Liu ignored his subordinates’ pleas to reduce expenses and continued to add more men from the *tuan* to the rolls of hired soldiers, even after the recovery of Linqing.⁶⁸ While exorbitant and self-interested spending may have hindered Liu’s fulfillment of his fiscal responsibilities, at the same time Chong-en also reported that Shandong’s economic devastation and the extraordinary expenses associated with fighting back the Taiping invasion—totaling over

⁶⁶ *QSL (Xianfeng)*, 115:808a–808b.

⁶⁷ *QSL (Xianfeng)*, 94:303a, 318b, 99:436b, 138:431b–432a, 140:504b.

⁶⁸ *QZFYTP*, 15:420–21.

2,000,000 taels—had emptied Shandong’s treasury and made it exceptionally difficult to provide funds to Sheng-bao.⁶⁹ Meanwhile, Mao submitted a memorial accusing Sheng-bao himself of grossly mismanaging the war and wasting resources.⁷⁰

Given the court’s preference for direct control of military forces and the shortage of funds dogging the court, the provincial government, and Jinan’s elite, it is unsurprising that the defeat of the Taiping invasion led to the demobilization of Mao’s forces, even though supplying them constituted a very small portion of the province’s overall expenses. As early as October 1854, Jing-lin was attempting to correct Liu’s over-spending by reducing the number of hired soldiers around Jinan to conserve funds. In a rescript, the emperor concurred, “This is the only way it can be managed.”⁷¹ Mao’s garrisons persisted until the next year but were demobilized after the defeat of Li Kaifang’s forces. In July 1856, Chong-en reported that most militias in Shandong had been demobilized, except for those in Caozhou and Jining, which were maintained because they helped protect the Grand Canal and the southern portion of the province.⁷² The success of Qing troops in defeating the Taiping forces and the inability of Jinan’s elite to offer a sufficient financial base independent from the provincial government cut short the militarization overseen by Mao Hongbin, setting his career and Jinan’s history down a path much different from the familiar story of Zeng Guofan and the Hunan Army.

Moving into and through the Bureaucracy in Jinan, 1853–9

During the Taiping northern invasion, the Licheng Magistrate Chen Kuan made a habit of going to Baotu Spring on the first day of every month to offer sacrifices at a shrine to Daoist immortal Lü Dongbin. He also gathered contributions from officials and local people to renovate

⁶⁹ QZFZYT, 15:343–4.

⁷⁰ Mao Hongbin, *Mao Shangshu zougao*, 1:251–69.

⁷¹ QZFZYT, 15:420–1.

⁷² Tang Wing-hong, “Local Defense Organizations,” 132.

the shrine to give thanks for the divine protection Jinan had enjoyed. The work was completed in autumn of 1854. Mao Hongbin wrote a record of the repairs and the great feast that Chen held at Baotu Spring to commemorate their completion. Predictably, he mentioned Baotu Spring's connections to Mount Tai, the Ji River, and the Daqing River and the imperial tours. (See chapter 1.) He especially emphasized the benefits Jinan received from virtuous officials like Magistrate Chen. Mao hoped that this renovated shrine (and the inscription of his record of it) might redound with the splendor of Zeng Gong's two halls. This indulgent reflection on Jinan's heritage notwithstanding, Mao's record also bore the marks of the urgency of the times: he closed by noting that he would soon be traveling to Hubei to take up a new official position.⁷³

Organizing militia served as a steppingstone to particularly bright careers for Mao Hongbin and Li Qing'ao. In 1855 Mao was appointed circuit intendant of the Jin-Yi-Shi circuit in Hunan; he was later transferred to the An-Xiang-Yun-Jing circuit in the same province. These positions brought him closer to the heart of the struggle against the Taiping, and through them he cultivated a relationship with both Zeng Guofan, who had earned his *jinshi* degree the same year as Mao and whose tenure as an official in Beijing had overlapped with Mao's, and Hu Linyi, the governor of Hubei from 1855 to 1858. Hu recommended Mao for promotion, and in 1860 Mao was promoted to judicial commissioner of Anhui Province. The next year he was appointed temporary governor of Hunan, Zeng's home province. His official career peaked with a promotion to governor-general of Guangdong and Guangxi (*liangguang*) in 1863. This rapid rise up the bureaucratic ranks spoke to Mao's ability to work with Zeng Guofan, with whom he maintained correspondence, and other powerful officials and the high esteem in which the court held him, as he held some of the most sensitive posts in the realm in the later years of the

⁷³ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 21:10a–11b.

Taiping War.⁷⁴

In addition to his own contributions to the fight against the Taiping, which included defending Hunan from attacks by Taiping general Shi Dakai in 1861 and 1862, Mao also played an important role in recommending his subordinates for promotion. The best-known of these was Zuo Zongtang, of whom Mao stated, “His talent is no less than that of Zeng Guofan and Hu Linyi. If he is given the heavy responsibility of [a post] in the border areas, then he will certainly be able to protect the borders and pacify the people.” Zuo justified Mao’s praise, becoming famous for restoring Qing control of Xinjiang and championing its integration as a province. Mao also patronized Ding Baozhen, who served as the prefect of Changsha (the provincial capital), while Mao was governor of Hunan.⁷⁵ Ding went on to serve in a succession of posts in Shandong, including a decade as governor, in the 1860s and 1870s.

Li Qing’ao, Mao’s younger colleague, had only just begun his official career when he began overseeing militia around Jinan, but he rose to similar heights as Mao. After the defeat of the Taiping invasion, Li earned his first post in the territorial bureaucracy as prefect of Datong in Shanxi. He was subsequently transferred to Puzhou (present-day Yongji), a strategically important area in the mountains north of the Yellow River’s bend to the east. After more than a decade of service in these posts, Li was promoted to circuit intendant of the Hedong circuit in Shanxi in 1868 and then judicial commissioner and administrative commissioner in the same province.

Li’s biographies emphasize his important contributions in these posts, despite their unassuming stature. Li demonstrated both benevolence and strategic acumen during his career. At one point he faced a crowd of refugees being chased by rebels attempting to get across the

⁷⁴ Mao Chenglin, 40:4b–5b.

⁷⁵ Mao Chenglin, 40:5a–5b.

Yellow River. Li's subordinates recommended leaving the civilians to their fates so as not to risk the rebels capturing and using the boats deployed to rescue the refugees. Li countered that not only would the rebels kill the civilians, but they would seize the grain they were carrying. He successfully managed the evacuation, winning shouts of acclaim from the rescued people. Li's deep filial respect toward his mother was surpassed only by his loyalty to the court, whose order to cut short the customary mourning period after his mother's death he followed dutifully. In 1875, Li's career reached its pinnacle when he was promoted to governor of Henan. However, his career came to an end two years later when he was removed from his post for not responding promptly to early reports of the North China Famine (see chapter 4), a failure his biographies blame on the corrupt practices of subordinate officials.⁷⁶

The heights of power that Mao and Li reached were exceptional, but a series of factors opened the way for a larger cohort of elite men from Jinan to enter the imperial bureaucracy during the 1850s, a period when the empire itself was reeling. For the entirety of the Qing period, Licheng County earned a 5.09% share of the provincial degree winners (*juren*) from Shandong Province and a 27.85% share of the *juren* from Jinan Prefecture. However, in the three provincial exams held in 1855, 1858, and 1859, the county's share more than doubled to 11.74%; Licheng's share of *juren* from the prefecture also increased substantially to 43.55%. These increases were due largely to extraordinary success in 1858 and 1859, when the county produced a total of 22 *juren*, its most prodigious output in successive exams during the entire dynasty. The county experienced similar success in the military exams, increasing its share of the province's military *juren* from 7.46% for the entire dynasty to 12.84% for 1855, 1858, and 1859.⁷⁷ This indicates

⁷⁶ Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 169:14b–15b; Zhao Erxun, *Qingshi gao*, 121:6–10; Min Erchang, *Beizhuan ji bu*, 15:2a–4b; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:11a–12a.

⁷⁷ Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 104:4a–15a, 105:3b–10a, 109:23b–28b.

that this success was not merely a fluke rush of literary or military talent.

Over the entire period between 1853 and 1868, spanning five provincial exams, Licheng County produced forty-three *juren*. By the late nineteenth century, there were so many degree-holders across the empire that even a hard-to-obtain *juren* degree was no guarantee of an official career. Nevertheless, this cohort of literati from Jinan did quite well for themselves. Thirteen of these forty-three went on to win *jinshi* degrees in the metropolitan exam, and a total of eighteen of the forty-three were appointed to positions in either the metropolitan or territorial bureaucracy. Others went on to hold low-ranking educational posts in other parts of Shandong.

The exam success of Jinan's men likely related to the misfortune of other areas. Fighting against the Taiping and other groups made it more difficult for exam-takers in Shandong and around the empire to prepare and travel for exams.⁷⁸ For the entire Qing period, jurisdictions in southwest Shandong (the prefectures of Yanzhou and Caozhou and the departments of Jining and Linqing) accounted for 19.00% of Shandong's *juren*. This dropped to 13.91% for the exams in 1855, 1858, and 1859. Jinan, which was more sheltered, reaped the benefits, especially in the window between the winding down of militarization after 1855 and the Nian beginning to penetrate the heart of Shandong in 1860 when its share of provincial degree-winners spiked.

Militarization in the 1850s did provide an opportunity for Jinan's elite to expand their roles locally. However, strategic imperatives and the elite's limited financial resources limited the scope and duration of their activities. The result was that this period actually strengthened the circulation of men from Jinan through the exam system and into the bureaucracy. Warfare shaped their experiences in their native place and the careers of many who served inside or

⁷⁸ Xu Shuming memorial on 1853/12/31 (XF 3/12/2), *LFZZ*, 03-4525-064; Xu Shuming memorial on 1855/1/8 (XF 4/11/20), *LFZZ*, 03-4526-036; Lü Xucheng memorial on 1856/5/18 (XF 6/4/15), *LFZZ*, 03-4527-031; Zheng Dunjin memorial on 1861/8/1 (XF 11/6/25), *LFZZ*, 03-4531-118; Zhao Youchen memorial on 1866/5/3 (TZ 5/3/19), *LFZZ*, 03-5000-014.

outside Shandong during this period. It did not, however, disrupt the translocal bureaucratic networks running through Jinan.

State-building continued, then, to be an important element of place-making in Jinan. This was reflected in how the bureaucracy guided local men through translocal circuits within and beyond their home province. In some cases, like Mao Hongbin and Li Qing'ao, they returned home with considerable prestige and relationships with powerful people, which would play a role in their activities in Jinan after retirement. (See chapters 4 and 5.) Additionally, the mobilization of militia led by Mao Hongbin demonstrates how he and his colleagues understood building connections into Jinan's hinterland as an integral part of defending the city. Finally, as discussed in chapters 1 and 2, non-native local officials continued to play an important role in place-making. Magistrates and prefects helped Mao organize militias, and Liu Yuanhao took primary responsibility for the defenses of the city itself.

Shandong was by no means an easy place to hold an official position, but Jinan's distance from warfare in the 1850s shaped the experiences and interventions of local officials there in this period. Chen Kuan's repair of Lü Dongbin's shrine is one example. Another example is the reconstruction of Lixia Pavilion on Daming Lake, one of Jinan's three most famous sites, together with Baotu Spring and Li Mountain. In 1855, Chen Jingliang, a native of Fuzhou, came to Jinan as the Shandong Salt Distribution Commissioner. He noticed that Lixia Pavilion (on an island in the middle of the lake) was in need of repairs, which was all the more pressing since, like Baotu Spring, it housed an inscription written by the Qianlong Emperor on his 1748 tour. At that time, He Shaoji, a famous calligrapher and native of Daozhou in Hunan, was serving as the director of Luoyuan Academy. According to Fang Zongcheng's record of the reconstruction, Chen invited He to enjoy the scenery with him and learned that He had taken employment at the

academy partly to “escape the chaos.”⁷⁹

As they sat together, Chen explained why he thought repairing scenic spots was a worthwhile endeavor given the urgent affairs that consumed even a relatively peaceful province like Shandong.⁸⁰ “If the people’s spirits are happy, then later there will be great harmony. If we give rise to bitterness in the people’s spirits, then later they will be disagreeable.” For Chen, spending his holidays to repair this scenic area was justified because exposure to both natural scenery and ancient traces, including imperial calligraphy, gave the people (*min*) an opportunity for leisure and thus helped them not succumb to melancholy and despair of living moral lives.⁸¹

These repairs took on greater significance in the context of the crisis gripping the empire. On the one hand, Chen (in Fang’s telling) claimed that Jinan could be an encouraging banner to those living elsewhere:

If amity rises like steam, and evil tendencies are daily dispersed, then although there are people in areas that have fallen to the rebels, they will hear of this spirit and will admire the happiness of our people’s great peace (*taiping*); in the end they will not grow accustomed to fornication and treachery and thereby trample themselves in the bitterness of death.

Chen further wove his efforts into a morality tale of imperial administration:

Although at this time this pavilion has not yet collapsed, if we fear its collapse and repair it, it will be easy to achieve success. If we wait until it has already collapsed and then try to manage (*li*) it, then the work will be double and the success half. The spread of the rebels is due to this.⁸²

Even in its relative peace, Jinan remained an integral part of the empire during this period of war and reconstruction. It became a platform from which to launch a defense of the dynasty and hold

⁷⁹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 18:4a–4b.

⁸⁰ Fang’s account does not explain the source of funds for this project.

⁸¹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 18:5a.

⁸² Mao Chenglin, 18:5a.

out hope for reconstruction.⁸³ However, even in 1858 as Chen Jingliang undertook his own small reconstruction project, the war was far from over. Soon it would strike even closer to home.

Nian Invasions and the Re-Formation of Local Defenses, 1860–1

Strategic Considerations up to 1861

In 1855, the final remnants of Li Kaifang's Taiping troops in Fengguan Village were surrounded but still dangerous. With the court breathing down their necks to bring an end to this threat, the Qing commanders turned to a time-honored stratagem: they diverted water from the Daqing River to flood the town and then sent in troops to capture Li and mop up his forces.⁸⁴ Ironically, the high water level of the river that made this strategy feasible was a sign of a crisis brewing upriver. During that year's seasonal floods, the Yellow River breached the dikes at Tongwa xiang in Henan that held its course in place, spilling across the North China Plain, submerging villages, destroying crops, and killing and displacing many people. In Shandong, the river set a new channel by flowing into the bed of the Daqing River. Chapter 4 will address in greater detail the humanitarian and ecological problems that unfolded in the decades after 1855.

These crises also affected the military situation in Shandong in ways far beyond allowing the Qing to make quicker work of the Taiping remnants. Flooding immiserated local communities and forced many people to relocate temporarily or permanently. This created fertile conditions for widespread rural brigandage while simultaneously weakening the capacity of local communities to resist it. Moreover, the removal of the Yellow River as a natural barrier along the southern portion of the province rendered this area much more vulnerable to attacks from the

⁸³ Similarly, Wooldridge finds that physical reconstruction and literary production in Nanjing was bound up with state-building projects in various ways. Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*, 117–74.

⁸⁴ Zhang Yao, *Shandong junxing jilüe*, 1:60.

south.

In the early 1850s a growing coalition of rebel forces, called the Nian, were consolidating their power base in northern Anhui and extending the reach of their raiding expeditions across the North China Plain.⁸⁵ Up until 1855, the juncture of the Yellow River and the Grand Canal in southwest Shandong and northern Jiangsu had provided a natural defensive barrier that, together with troops stationed along the two waterways, had helped protect southern Shandong. In 1853, defenses along the river had pushed the first wave of the Taiping invasion west into Henan. (The relief force had managed to cross in 1854 while Qing forces were occupied with the first column.) Unlike the Taiping, whose aim was to capture Tianjin and then Beijing, the Nian's main interest was raiding to gather wealth, supplies, and additional followers. They relied heavily on cavalry that could strike and escape before Qing forces could react. Even if they had been able to make it across the Yellow River, they had to worry that the Qing might cut off their escape route back to their home bases. Consequently, they did not bother the interior of Shandong in their early years. However, the shift of the river north in 1855 effectively opened up the southern half of Shandong to their raids, beginning in 1856.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, Qing troops and local militias confined Nian incursions to the southwest corner of the province for several years.

By 1860, though, the Qing were facing yet another crisis: in the final action of the Second Opium War, a French and British force captured the Dagou forts at Tianjin that were supposed to protect the capital and advanced on Beijing. To deal with this threat, Sengerinchen (Seng-ge-lin-qin), the Mongol general charged with the suppression of rebels in Shandong, led his banner cavalry northward, where they suffered a heavy defeat at the hands of French and British guns

⁸⁵ On the origins and organization of the Nian, including the influence of Taiping forces, see Teng, *The Nien Army*, 51–99; Perry, *Rebels and Revolutionaries*, 96–140.

⁸⁶ Zhang Yao, *Shandong junxing jilüe*, 1:65–67.

outside Beijing.⁸⁷ The Xianfeng Emperor fled north to Chengde with the court while the foreign invaders burned his Summer Palace to the ground. He died before returning to the capital, resulting in a power struggle between the regency council ruling on behalf of the young Tongzhi Emperor and a faction led by the new emperor's mother, Cixi, and Prince Gong. While the British and French did not attack Shandong itself, this possibility concerned the court, and the need to counter their assault on Beijing drew Qing forces away from Shandong's southern and western borders.

Du Qiao's Short-Lived Tenure as Militia Supervisor

By 1860, then, the military threats to the Qing were multiplying, but so were the local forces that had sprouted up to support the dynasty. To facilitate greater control and coordination of these forces, in 1860 the court appointed nine officials to serve as militia supervisors (*duban tuanlian dachen*) in their home provinces. The militia supervisor for Shandong was Du Qiao, a native of Binzhou and an assistant minister of the Board of Revenue. At this time, Du was in Shandong mourning the death of his father. Soon after he was appointed, an edict instructed him that his top priority should be defending against a potential foreign invasion of Shandong.⁸⁸ Du's mandate extended across the province, though, including ongoing efforts to defend against Nian invasions.

Prior to 1860, the court had appointed men like Mao Hongbin to serve as militia officials in specific areas. In the best-case scenarios, like Jinan between 1853 and 1855, these men effectively cooperated with local officials and mediated between them and the local elite. However, in the absence of an organization like the Xiang Army—much more the exception than the norm—the circumscribed nature of militia officials' authority and the lack of a clear chain of

⁸⁷ Beeching, *The Chinese Opium Wars*, 278–311; Hevia, *English Lessons*, 31–48.

⁸⁸ *QSL (Xianfeng)*, 320:714b.

command limited the resources that individual militias could muster and the control that officials or anyone else could exercise over them. After soliciting opinions on how to improve the war effort, the court received several memorials advocating for appointing personnel to oversee militia operations within given provinces. By autumn 1860, the court had appointed nine militia supervisors in eight provinces. (Two were appointed to different parts of Jiangsu.)⁸⁹

Du made Jinan his base of operations, although inspection tours throughout the province repeatedly took him away from the city. In addition to setting up a personal office in Jinan's examination hall, Du established a General Militia Bureau (*tuanlian zongju*) in the Liu Meng Temple, with branch offices across the province. The primary function of these offices was to collect and record donations towards militias, distribute funding to local forces, and request rewards for those who donated. Du staffed the bureau with a mix of elite men from Jinan and elsewhere in Shandong, expectant officials, and several men he had worked with in Beijing.⁹⁰ Some of the Jinan men who worked in the bureau had been too young to participate in militia organization in the 1850s but had since earned degrees and were now beginning official careers. Among these was Li Qing'ao's younger cousin, Li Qingxiang.

As far as Jinan was concerned, Du's tenure bore some similarities to Mao's earlier efforts. As under Mao, the frequent tours conducted by Du and the Shandong governor left the defense of the city in the hands of the provincial administrative and judicial commissioners and members of the local elite.⁹¹ Du hired 1,100 soldiers (*yong*) to help protect Jinan but took 250 of them as a bodyguard on his tours.⁹² Meanwhile, he assigned members of Jinan's gentry to

⁸⁹ Cui Min, "Xian Tong zhi ji 'duban tuanlian dachen,'" 76–79.

⁹⁰ Du Qiao memorial on 1860/7/12 (XF 10/5/24), *LFZZ*, 03-4238-019; Du Qiao memorial on 1860/12/2 (XF 10/10/20), *LFZZ*, 03-4238-090; Du Qiao memorial on 1860/12/6 (XF 10/10/24), *LFZZ*, 03-4238-091.

⁹¹ Du Qiao memorial on 1860/8/4 (XF 10/6/18), *LFZZ*, 03-4238-031.

⁹² Du Qiao memorial on 1861/10/5 (XF 11/9/2), *LFZZ*, 03-4326-031.

organize militias in areas outside the city.

Funding was again an obstacle. Du's establishment of the General Bureau was a response to initial difficulties raising funds, which forced him to rely on loans from the already-stretched-thin provincial treasury. Du even suggested that raising funds had been easier in 1853–4: "At that time many civilian households were still well-off. Moreover, the rebels had already pressed close, so people were more enthusiastic to contribute their energy and resources."⁹³ Enthusiasm was not the only problem: after years of collecting contributions, not to mention the crises that occasioned this fundraising, there was only so much the people had left to give. That same year, censor Bian Baodi reported complaints among the people of Jinan that one of the members of the elite, Yuan Yongxi, had been disturbing the community by pressuring them to contribute to militias.⁹⁴ Eventually, Governor Tan Tingxiang vindicated Yuan, noting "While of course there was no lack of gentry and merchants who were enthusiastic in contributing, there were not a few who needed to be repeatedly enjoined." Tan reported that Yuan and his colleagues had diligently posted records of donations made to the bureau alongside its expenses, obviating the concerns of the largest donors, who naturally worried that money had been misappropriated.⁹⁵ In 1861, Du reported that Shandong people had donated 12,086 taels to the General Bureau; 1,720 taels came from natives of Jinan.⁹⁶ By way of comparison, in early 1861 Governor Wen-yu reported receiving 21,200 taels in contributions to supply the capital from Shandong's officials alone.⁹⁷

The larger problem with Du and other Militia Supervisors was that their appointments formalized the tensions that were already latent in the uneasy division of authority between

⁹³ Du Qiao memorial on 1860/9/10 (XF 10/7/25), *LFZZ*, 03-4257-052.

⁹⁴ Bian Baodi memorial in 1860–1 (XF10), *LFZZ*, 03-4238-109.

⁹⁵ Tan Tingxiang memorial on 1862/4/22 (TZ 1/3/24), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-19-0058-014.

⁹⁶ Du Qiao memorial on 1861/5/28 (XF 11/4/19), *LFZZ*, 03-4323-043.

⁹⁷ Wen-yu memorial on 1861/2/6 (XF 10/12/27), *LFZZ*, 03-4455-006.

officials and regular armies on one hand and local elites and militias on the other. Previously, militia leaders and local officials had split responsibility for military affairs within local jurisdictions, but both were subordinate to provincial officials. However, militia supervisors, whose authority the court defined in only vague terms, bore responsibility for military affairs across entire provinces and stood roughly equal to provincial officials, even governors. Moreover, provincial military concerns necessarily touched on questions of finance, administering law, and supervising subordinate officials that were core responsibilities of civil officials. Militia supervisors, then, headed a parallel provincial bureaucracy that epitomized the crisis of central authority that scholars associate with this period.

Predictably, conflicts arose, especially over funding for militias. By imposing surtaxes or gathering contributions to support militias, the supervisors siphoned funds away from already cash-strapped provincial treasuries. In Shandong, where funding was so limited that there was not much to fight over, basic attitudes towards militias were a more direct source of conflict. Since the Taiping invasion, local officials had faced tax resistance movements led by armed groups that claimed the mantle of militias. Officials were naturally reticent to deal amicably with the men who led these groups, let alone actively support them, as Du Qiao now demanded. When local officials failed to adequately support militias or even prosecuted local troublemakers who claimed militia affiliations, Du impeached them in memorials to the court.⁹⁸ This further alienated provincial officials, whose prerogatives he had usurped, and both Shandong's governor, Wen-yu, and Sengerinchen, wrote memorials criticizing his lax control of militias.⁹⁹

The court soon realized its mistake and reversed course. Du was relieved of his position in early 1861, and by the end of that year the court had recalled all of the militia supervisors.

⁹⁸ See, for example Du Qiao memorial on 1860/11/4 (XF 10/9/22), *LFZZ*, 03-4225-133.

⁹⁹ Cui Min, "Xian Tong zhi ji 'duban tuanlian dachen,'" 79–87.

Despite its brevity, Du's tenure as Militia Supervisor set the stage for Jinan's response to the Nian invasions that came in 1861. The basic institutional infrastructure he set up continued to function through that year, and he remained in Jinan during Nian attacks early in the year and thus bore some responsibility for the limited effectiveness of the province's defenses. After Du's removal, Governor Tan Tingxiang requested permission to assign responsibility for militias in northwestern and eastern Shandong to natives of the area.¹⁰⁰ This marked a return to the approach of the 1850s, when individuals like Mao Hongbin had, under the supervision of the governor, taken charge of militia organization in specific areas.

At the same time, Tan worked to consolidate provincial control of sources of revenue that could be used for various military expenses. In late 1861 he received permission to use the proceeds of a customs tax on foreign opium collected at Linqing for military expenses.¹⁰¹ Then, in early 1862, he reported that he had established a Transit Tax General Bureau in Jinan to exercise greater control over transit taxes (*lishui*) that Governor Wen-yu had begun collecting along the coast in 1859. This bureau would also oversee efforts to expand the collection of taxes on opium, to establish a station to collect transit taxes on salt and grain at Luokou (Jinan's port on the now-Yellow River), and to audit a tax on shops that Sengerinchen had instituted in Jinan, Dongchang, Jining, and Dezhou.¹⁰²

Du's removal, then, did not completely end the movement towards consolidating control and support of the various military forces operating in Shandong. However, it did represent the limit of Shandong natives exercising general control of these forces and sources of funding.

¹⁰⁰ Tan Tingxiang memorial on 1861/5/9 (XF 11/3/30), *LFZZ*, 03-4249-039.

¹⁰¹ Tan Tingxiang memorial on 1861/10/13 (XF 11/9/10), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-03-0159-021.

¹⁰² Wang Zhonglin also reports this tax on shops and says that in Jinan it was collected by the Militia General Bureau, with permission from Sengerinchen. While not explicit on this point, Tan's memorial implies his oversight of this tax. Of the four places where he lists it having been collected, Dongchang is the only place where he says it was collected by members of the local elite to pay for militia expenses. Tan Tingxiang memorial on 1862/1/21 (XF 11/12/22), *LFZZ*, 03-4400-089; Wang Zhonglin, *Wang Zhonglin riji*, 59:631.

Although some militia groups continued to operate with minimal oversight, sometimes contrary to the interests of the state, bureaucrats continued, with the help of local people, to exert control over Jinan's defenses. The durability of the Nian and the limited potential of even new commercial taxes would, in the long run, render this arrangement incapable of defeating the Nian. In the early months of 1861, though, simply surviving would prove difficult enough.

The Nian Attacks of 1861

In early 1861, Nian forces again broke through defenses along the Grand Canal into southwestern Shandong. This column continued east, raiding the area around Tai'an and then looping around the eastern edge of the Taishan mountains into Laiwu, Boshan, and Zhangqiu, capturing and looting the market town of Zhoucun in Changshan and threatening the eastern approach to Jinan. In March, another Nian column rushed into Shandong and across the Grand Canal. This force followed the southern bank of the Yellow River east toward Jinan, aiming to raid Luokou. They pushed past smaller Qing forces stationed in neighboring Changqing County and militias from Qihe and Jiyang that Yuan Yongxi had arranged to defend the area west of Jinan.¹⁰³ Noting the proximity of the rebels to Jinan's southern outskirts, the court ordered acting Governor Qing-sheng to take troops out of the city and not stick inside and thereby "bungle the opportunity." At the same time, the court was concerned that his forces would be insufficient and ordered Sengerinchen and De-leng-e, whose positions had already been bypassed, to dispatch some of their crack troops, gather militia, and support Qing-sheng's defense of Jinan.¹⁰⁴ Fortifying the strategic passes south of the city, the Qing forces drove off the Nian at Duandian, a mere six kilometers from Jinan.

The Nian's ability to rampage across Shandong and even threaten Jinan itself

¹⁰³ Zhang Yao, *Shandong junxing jilüe*, 1:122–125.

¹⁰⁴ QSL (*Xianfeng*), 343:1081b–1082a.

demonstrated the inefficacy of Du's militia organization. This outcome was anticipated in a diary kept by Jinan native Wang Zhonglin during this period. Wang was a cousin of Li Qing'ao and had worked under Mao Hongbin organizing militia in 1853–4; he eventually gained a minor position in the Board of War but fled Beijing when the city was sacked by French and British forces in 1860 and made his way back to Jinan. His experience lends credibility to his assessment of the situation in late 1860 and early 1861, although his diary's frequent complaints at not being employed by Du and others suggest that he was not an impartial observer.

Although Wang noted that Du had sent out commissioners to organize militias in the area around Jinan, he was by no means sanguine about the ability of Du or the people advising him, saying, "Du Qiao is an esteemed literary talent; he has a loyal and upright mind. But this is not the skill for dealing with this chaos."¹⁰⁵ Wang was especially concerned about the effects of a lack of coordination and social cohesion. He warned his fellow townspeople that repeating their flight from the city to undefended rural areas would play directly into the hands of the Nian, who came not to take fortified cities but raid outlying villages, even in the mountains, in search of "wealth and women." Instead, Jinan's people needed to simultaneously prepare defenses in the city and organize militias out in the countryside to fortify individual villages that could aid each other in case of attack.¹⁰⁶ Wang was consistently disappointed with the capacity of people around the province to grasp the need to coordinate their defenses. Instead, they holed up in their own fortifications, leaving smaller settlements isolated and vulnerable to Nian attacks. There were a variety of reasons for this failure. One was that many of the rural militia leaders had also led tax-resistance movements in previous years. This made them naturally reticent to collaborate too closely with officials without proper assurance that their past crimes would not catch up to

¹⁰⁵ Wang Zhonglin, *Wang Zhonglin riji*, 59:547, 630.

¹⁰⁶ Wang Zhonglin, 59:631–2.

them.¹⁰⁷ Another obstacle, as Mao Hongbin had claimed, was rural people's ignorance of basic military strategy. "Not only are they unversed in *The Art of War*, but they don't even know the strategies recorded in *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and *The Water Margin*," Wang complained.¹⁰⁸

Since Jinan was the nerve center for militia organization, it should have been possible at least to arrange defenses in the city's immediate vicinity. However, even before the Nian attack, Wang claimed that Du and his subordinates had failed to adequately prepare these defenses. He repeatedly criticized Du for spending too much time in his office, rather than going out to inspect militias in the area (as Mao Hongbin had done) and failing to develop an overall strategy.¹⁰⁹ And when Du did go out, Wang said, he took over one hundred soldiers as a bodyguard and various other companions, which placed a burden on the officials and local people who had to provide accommodations for them.¹¹⁰

Wang picked out the preparations in Jinan's west suburb for special criticism. In 1853–4, the militia in this area had been organized by Jin Baofu and had, Wang claimed, been one of the best-managed areas around the city. Now, Jin's nephew (*zi* Zhiguang) had been put in charge of militia in this area, but "he has not been able to be as conscientious as before," Wang reported in early 1861. This was not entirely Jin's fault: whereas funds for militias had come from the provincial treasury in 1853–4, now each militia unit was supposed to raise its own funds. Wang considered organization in this area especially important since many of the residents were Hui (Chinese Muslims), whose nature Wang described as "brazen" (*hanran*), meaning they could be effective fighters, if properly motivated and directed. However, many of them were poor and

¹⁰⁷ Wang Zhonglin, 60:178–9.

¹⁰⁸ Wang Zhonglin, 60:109.

¹⁰⁹ Wang Zhonglin, 60:49.

¹¹⁰ Wang Zhonglin, 60:30–31.

unsettled, meaning that they could also cause problems if the Nian attacked.¹¹¹ As Nian forces closed in on Jinan, the officials decided to close the city gates and impose martial law. However, the gates needed to be opened to allow in necessary supplies. The Hui took this opportunity to send their children, elderly, and women into the city for refuge. Without anywhere to go, they settled in the streets. When the officials and militia tried to force them out, they replied, “We are all the common people of the imperial household (*huangjia*). When you heard the rebels were coming, you closed the gates. You were protecting [yourselves] but abandoning us to the rebels.”¹¹² Only after negotiating with the Hui leaders did the officials convince them to leave. Wang used this example to reiterate the necessity of militia leaders making preparations before disaster struck and building the cohesion of local communities; besides organizing a military force, militia leaders should encourage the Hui elite to raise funds to provide for the needs of their poor people and make preparations for them to seek shelter in the city in case of a Nian attack. There had, however, been no such preparations—either for settling the Hui people of the suburbs or for storing up food and supplies in the city.¹¹³

The actions of officials and militia leaders in the aftermath of the Nian attacks in early 1861 demonstrated their awareness of the weakness of the city’s defenses but also their unwillingness or at least inability to implement the rural mobilization undertaken by Mao Hongbin in 1853–4 and called for by Wang Zhonglin. After the attacks, Du Qiao, who was still in Jinan, recommended preparing additional fortifications in areas under threat by the Nian, citing the strategy of “strengthening the walls and clearing the countryside” (*jianbi qingye*). In Jinan, this entailed constructing earthworks outside Jinan’s walled area. The court did not

¹¹¹ Wang Zhonglin, 60:76.

¹¹² Wang Zhonglin, 60:135.

¹¹³ Wang Zhonglin, 60:135–38.

disapprove of these efforts, but emphasized the importance of winning the people's hearts and eliminating bureaucratic malfeasance.¹¹⁴ When Tan Tingxiang subsequently reported on defensive preparations outside Jinan, the court again expressed concern that the fortifications would be useless without soldiers and could potentially be occupied by enemy soldiers in event of a siege. Moreover, it worried that the construction might interfere with common people's residences and tombs. Nevertheless, the court allowed Du Qiao to borrow 7,000 taels from the salt transport treasury to cover the costs.¹¹⁵

These earthworks provided considerably more protection for areas immediately outside the old city, like Baotu Spring and the Hui residents of the suburbs, but they only helped the countryside insofar as they provided a refuge for those who fled their homes. The circumference of the earthworks was 40 *li* (~20 km), meaning the new fortifications extended in an average radius of only a little more than three kilometers from the city center.¹¹⁶ Because most of the city's residents actually lived outside the gates due to the concentration of government buildings inside the walls, even this small radius provided important protection for urban residents.¹¹⁷ Tan Tingxiang set up his command post near Baotu Spring, which the court approved since it was outside the city walls but within the earthworks.¹¹⁸ The fortifications also enclosed much undeveloped space that would be occupied in the coming years, initially by refugees seeking temporary shelter.¹¹⁹

As the court had noted, to be effective the earthworks, which were only several feet high, needed to be manned and maintained. In autumn of 1861, the Nian launched another wave of

¹¹⁴ *QSL (Xianfeng)*, 346:1115a–1115b.

¹¹⁵ *QSL (Xianfeng)*, 347:1126b.

¹¹⁶ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 13:4b.

¹¹⁷ Wang Shouzhong and Guo Dasong, *Jindai Shandong chengshi*, 66.

¹¹⁸ *QSL (Tongzhi)*, 10:274a.

¹¹⁹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 13:4b; Buck, *Urban Change in China*.

attacks on Shandong, again following the Yellow River north toward Luokou. Unlike the spring attacks, detachments of Nian soldiers got within striking distance of the villages close to the city and the earthworks themselves. Members of the gentry organized militia to defend the earthworks and supervised the felling of logs to repair weak spots.¹²⁰ In some areas, militia leaders engaged in more enterprising defensive efforts: Liu Zhengji, a low-level-degree-holder who lived close to the city's south gate, led a group of several dozen men over the embankments and into the ditch in front of it to lay an ambush for the rebels; Zhu Tingzuo set up barbed obstacles outside the embankment that succeeded in deterring the Nian from attacking that section of the wall.¹²¹

These defensive measures were successful in protecting the city of Jinan. Biographies of individuals involved in the earthwork defenses explain that in 1861 and following years the Nian intermittently probed the defenses at various points instead of launching a concerted assault on the city. In some cases they declined to attack, deterred by the defenses.¹²² In other cases, the rebels repeatedly attacked but do not seem to have broken through at any point.¹²³ The relative silence of official sources on these attacks and the fact that the individuals commemorated for the defense of the earthworks in the Licheng gazetteer all survived suggest that attacks on the city itself were not particularly severe.

However, the opposite was true of the areas outside the earthworks, where many people died in the Nian attacks. The villages northeast of the city, where a pitched battle between local militia and Nian forces took place, were hit the hardest.¹²⁴ Chen Dapeng, a native of Dengjia

¹²⁰ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:10b, 23b–24b.

¹²¹ Mao Chenglin, 40:24b, 27a.

¹²² Mao Chenglin, 40:10b, 16b–17a, 27a.

¹²³ Mao Chenglin, 40:23b–24b.

¹²⁴ Mao Chenglin, 42:15b.

zhuang who had earned his juren in 1858 but failed the metropolitan exam, was nominated as the militia leader (*tuanzong*) for the villages east of the city. On September 19, 1861 he led the militia against a detachment of Nian troops at Shengfo siyuan, initially defeating them. When the Nian returned with a larger force, though, the militia was overwhelmed and Chen was killed along with many of his soldiers.¹²⁵ The theme of militias being initially successful against the Nian but then overwhelmed by larger forces is recurrent in biographies of those who died in these attacks. The losses suffered by these militias reflects not only their own weakness but also their isolation from regular Qing troops who were too slow to react, were occupied pursuing other segments of the Nian army, or were needed to defend urban centers, Jinan included.

These defeats also suggest that, for the most part, militias in the countryside did not receive much support from militia organized to defend the earthworks. If anything, it was militias from outside the city who aided the city's defense. This seems to have been the case in at least some part of the northern and eastern part of the earthworks. Realizing the need to man the fortifications to the east of the city, Wang Huo sought help from militia from the eight villages of Yangjia zhuang to the north of the city. This militia was organized by low-level-degree-holder Zhang Gongshou, who had shown martial prowess and a fondness for talking about war from his youth. Yang received a donation of one hundred fowling guns (*niaoqiao*) and other weapons from one of the organizers, another low-level-degree-holder named Chen Tingqi.¹²⁶ It seems that this sort of cooperation was more the exception than the rule, though, with militias organized around clusters of villages mostly fending for themselves and bearing the brunt of the Nian attacks. The results could be devastating for small communities and family structures. At least fourteen members from at least three generations of the Yan family were killed fighting on the

¹²⁵ Mao Chenglin, 42:12a–b.

¹²⁶ Mao Chenglin, 40:23b–24a, 44:38b.

north bank of the Juye River to the east of Jinan, including the brothers Yan Zhenlu and Yan Zhenxiang and father and son Yan Chengzhang and Yan Jingshan.¹²⁷ More than 1,200 women from Licheng County died in the 1861 attacks alone.¹²⁸ (The epilogue discusses the compilation of these records in the county gazetteer in more detail.) Many of these were no doubt victims of Nian soldiers, but the chaos caused by the attacks also presented opportunities to local criminals, like Wang Si, who raped a woman from his village with the surname Wu after she was separated from her family while fleeing from the Nian.¹²⁹

The 1861 attacks were the worst Jinan faced. Nevertheless, by the end of that year, the city was as far from being the center of a military organization that reached into surrounding counties or even its own countryside as at any time since the demobilization of Mao Hongbin's forces in 1855. Du Qiao's failure to consolidate control of the province's militias and wield them in cooperation with other officials compounded the lack of funds and poor morale that had hampered previous militia organization. Whereas in 1853–4 an elite-led provincial army was unnecessary, in 1861 it was utterly untenable: neither the provincial government nor the local elite possessed the means to fund such a force, the failed experiment with militia supervisors exposed the chain-of-command problems that would have ensued if such a force had existed, and the speed and agility of Nian attacks likely would have rendered a massed army of little use. Consequently, with the support of regular troops, Jinan's urban elite and officials focused their efforts on the now-expanded walled city and coordinated with areas outside the city only inconsistently. This attention to urban defenses continued through the 1860s and initiated a trend

¹²⁷ All of these fourteen had either a zhen (4), a cheng (9), or a jing (1) as part of their given names. The generational relation, which does not necessarily imply specific age differences, is suggested by the fact that Zhenlu and Zhenxiang were brothers, Zhenjie had sons named Chengrong and Chenghua, and Chengzhang had a son named Jingshan. Mao Chenglin, 42:12b–13a, 24b, 31a–31b.

¹²⁸ Mao Chenglin, 49:9b–24b.

¹²⁹ Zhou Zupei memorial on 1864/1/12 (TZ 2/12/4), *XKTB*, 02-01-02-3049-003.

towards Jinan serving as a haven for refugees fleeing warfare, famine, and flooding.

Honoring Loyalty, Remembering the Fallen

Compared to cities like Nanjing, Yangzhou, and Suzhou, which became both battlegrounds and graveyards over the course of the mid-century wars, Jinan fared well. Nevertheless, the value of loyalty and the cost of it weighed on the city's consciousness and landscape. On several occasions in the past, Jinan had suffered the fires of war even more directly, and Jinan housed several shrines to loyal officials who had died in these battles. One such instance was during the early Ming war between the Prince of Yan (based in Beijing) and the Jianwen Emperor (whose capital was in Nanjing), which resulted in the former's usurpation of the throne. During the course of this war, Jinan became a strategic battleground, defended by the loyalist official Tie Xuan. When Yan forces besieged the city, Tie resisted bravely and cunningly, and eventually the Yan army withdrew under threat from another loyalist army. Eventually, though, Yan triumphed and Tie was captured and tortured to death, earning a place in the Confucian pantheon of loyal martyrs, especially in Shandong. In 1792, Salt Distribution Commissioner A-lin-bao constructed a shrine to him (Tie gong ci) on the northwest bank of Daming Lake in Jinan.

In 1864, Jinan Prefect Xiao Peiyuan initiated the reconstruction of this shrine. He recounted how he first heard about Tie Xuan as a boy in Yunnan and eagerly desired to pay homage to him and gaze at his portrait, a prospect that his fellow townspeople scoffed at, since Tie's shrine was so far away. "Will you see him in a dream?" they asked. Forty years later, though, Xiaofinally came to Jinan as an official and visited Tie's shrine. He was deeply disappointed, though, both at the poor state of the shrine and the fact that it contained only a spirit tablet, not a portrait. Xiao gathered 1,500 taels from other officials and began renovations.

Meanwhile, he searched high and low for a portrait of Tie on which to base a reproduction of his likeness, but to no avail. One night as he sat on the steps of the shrine, gazing out at Daming Lake, he fell asleep and began to dream. In his dream, a strange man presented him with a beautifully bound volume containing a biography of Tie and an image of him. As his townspeople had said decades earlier, it really was in a dream that he saw Tie Xuan. After waking up, Xiao enlisted an artist to reproduce the image he had seen in his dream. Dissatisfied, he hired a sculptor and closely supervised the work, installing this bust in Tie Xuan's shrine.¹³⁰

Xiao's record—a meditation on moral clarity shining through the haze of dreams—resembles certain aspects of Chen Jingliang's account of his reconstruction of Lixia Pavilion. Both were officials who encountered Jinan's famous sites during a period of extreme crisis and used local construction to enact remedies for this crisis. Both also expressed faith that gazing on relics of past worthies—the Qianlong Emperor's calligraphy and Tie Xuan's image—could aid moral transformation. Xiao wrote:

“If we can obtain one utensil or object from one of the loyal officials, filial sons, righteous people, or humane individuals from ancient times who are revered and honored, then we must consider it dear and precious. If we are able to gaze on their portraits, especially if we can be aware of the clothes they wore and their smiling countenances, then not only will our admiration of them be buttressed, but moreover our minds will be made to possess a spirit for performing loyalty and righteousness.”¹³¹

However, in Chen's essay, places under Taiping occupation were those most in need of moral encouragement. In Xiao's, though, Jinan itself needed to rediscover the image of Tie Xuan, the picture of morality.¹³² Whereas Chen reconstructed Lixia Pavilion to showcase imperial calligraphy and provide a place for leisure, Xiao's call to venerate a man who was tortured to death for his loyalty drew attention to the violence that gripped Jinan and its environs in these

¹³⁰ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 14:16a–17b.

¹³¹ Mao Chenglin, 14:14a–17b.

¹³² On the physical construction of virtue, see Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*, 148–49.

years.

There were, of course, more contemporary loyal heroes to honor. Several years later, Jinan's second Manifesting Loyalty Shrine (Zhaozhong ci) would be completed to honor soldiers and civilians (men and women) who died in fighting against the Taiping and Nian. (The first shrine had been built following the White Lotus War.¹³³) The long list of names of those killed in the 1861 attacks contained in the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer*—published in 1926—shows that commemoration of the war dead continued over the next half-century.

Even before the construction of this shrine to local people, though, another monument to a loyal official would be built in Jinan. In 1862 and 1863, Qing troops under Sengerinchen won decisive victories against Nian forces, killing their leaders Zhang Lexing and Miao Peilin. However, the Nian were resuscitated under the leadership of Zhang Zongyu. At a battle in southwest Shandong in 1865, they surrounded and routed Sengerinchen's army and killed the Mongol general.¹³⁴ An imperial edict instructed officials in places where he had fought, including Jinan, to construct shrines in his memory to honor his service to the dynasty in North China against the Taiping, repeated smaller uprisings, the British and French, and the Nian.¹³⁵ Sengerinchen's replacements would be men of even greater renown and would, in time, take their place alongside him in the shrines that dotted Jinan.

The End of the Nian, the Beginning of an Era

Sengerinchen's defeat represented another crisis point in Qing military strategy in

¹³³ On the localization of manifesting loyalty shrines over the Qianlong and Jiaqing reigns, see Meyer-Fong, *What Remains*, 137–46; Bonk, "Loyal Souls." Wooldridge also discusses shrine construction in Nanjing as a locally meaningful project, but there the process of constructing a new shrine complex to honor the war dead was particularly complex because of the web of constituencies it involved. Wooldridge, 141–48.

¹³⁴ Teng, *The Nien Army*, 139–42.

¹³⁵ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 14:27b–30b.

Shandong. The decisive failure of efforts to coordinate militias in 1860–1 rendered depending on local forces—at least as they had been constituted—unpromising. In 1863 the court had ordered General Sheng-bao to commit suicide for his lenient and unsuccessful efforts to coax Nian leaders into submitting peacefully to Qing authority. Now the court had lost its most trusted general in the region, on whom it had staked its hopes of subduing the Nian.

Fortunately for the Qing, this setback in North China coincided with victory in the south against the Taiping. In 1864 Zeng Guofan's forces finally captured Nanjing and subsequently killed or captured most of the remaining Taiping forces. Taiping troops in North China under the command of Lai Wenguang did join forces with the Nian, strengthening them considerably.¹³⁶ Nevertheless, this victory greatly eased the pressure on the court and opened a path to finally eliminating the Nian threat.

The Qing ordered Zeng Guofan to take the Huai Army northward and turn it against the Nian. Zeng had ordered Li Hongzhang to form the Huai Army, based in Anhui, in 1862. While Zeng demobilized the Xiang Army from his home province of Hunan, he took this newer force into North China. Some troops hurried by steamship to Tianjin in response to Sengerinchen's defeat.¹³⁷ Zeng himself moved more slowly, gathering information about the Nian.¹³⁸ The Huai forces cooperated with existing and newly reformed provincial troops. As governor of Shandong, Yan Jingming had begun training troops with Western firearms after 1863. Inspired by the success of the Huai Army, Yan "specially enlisted two thousand volunteers from the Huai area."¹³⁹ Zeng's army did not entirely displace these forces, but Zeng assumed overall command of military affairs in the region. Zeng's and later Li Hongzhang's positions were bolstered by

¹³⁶ Teng, *The Nien Army*, 119.

¹³⁷ Teng, 144.

¹³⁸ Chiang Siang-tseh, *The Nien Rebellion*, 101.

¹³⁹ Chiang Siang-tseh, 112–13.

their ability to draw funds from Jiangnan to support their forces, which meant they didn't have to depend as heavily on local officials for funds and supplies, which had been a source of friction between Sengerinchen and Shandong's governors.¹⁴⁰

In the short term, Zeng Guofan's strategy for defeating the Nian perpetuated approaches to defending Jinan from the early 1860s. As before, Jinan's elites would not take on responsibility for organizing a military force that operated much beyond the city walls. Instead, the task of fighting the Nian fell primarily to Zeng's Huai Army and, secondarily, official troops led by Shandong's governors. Zeng's approach was to set up defensive lines to contain the Nian and to build up the fortifications of loyal villages and cities.¹⁴¹

In line with this latter strategy, in 1865 officials and members of Jinan's elite began converting the city's earthworks into a stone wall. The new wall was a much more formidable physical structure: it was twelve feet high, fifteen feet wide at the base, and ten feet at the apex. Governor Yan Jingming, Licheng Magistrate Tao Shaoxu, and Administrative Commissioner (and future governor) Ding Baozhen oversaw the project. Tao surveyed the area and made drawings showing the locations of tombs and farmland. He also reassured the people that the officials would not resort to forced labor to complete the construction.¹⁴² Members of the local gentry, including *juren* Jin Shouxuan, Li Qingxiang, and Yang Jingting, supervised the work.¹⁴³ Mao Hongbin, who returned to Jinan that same year, provided further guidance.¹⁴⁴ Private contributions, including a donation of 3,000 taels made by Prefect Xiao Peiyuan (patron of the shrine to Tie Xuan) toward military expenses, helped fund the construction.¹⁴⁵ However, as with

¹⁴⁰ Teng, *The Nien Army*, 143–44; Chiang Siang-tseh, *The Nien Rebellion*, 116.

¹⁴¹ Chiang Siang-tseh, *The Nien Rebellion*, 101–4.

¹⁴² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 38:4a.

¹⁴³ Mao Chenglin, 40:7a–8b, 16b–17b. 44:22a.

¹⁴⁴ Mao Chenglin, 40:5b.

¹⁴⁵ Ding Baozhen memorial on 1868/9/27 (TZ 7/8/12), *LFZZ*, 03-4916-006.

the earthworks, public funds were advanced to initially cover the costs. This time the money came from the Luokou *lijin* bureau, first proposed by Tan Tingxiang in 1861 but not opened until 1864.¹⁴⁶

Zeng's strategy of setting up a defensive barrier to keep the Nian out of Shandong should have obviated these fortifications in Jinan and elsewhere. The defenses along the Grand Canal in Shandong held, but the Nian did break through Zeng's lines on the Yellow River near Kaifeng in September, 1866. Again, this gave them nearly unfettered access to southern Shandong. Zeng requested leave and was replaced by Li Hongzhang, who he hoped would be more effective in leading the Huai forces.¹⁴⁷

The Nian again invaded Shandong in November 1866 and retreated back to Henan the next month. Despite these setbacks, Li won a considerable strategic victory by preventing this eastern portion of the Nian forces from reuniting with the western column of their army. The "eastern Nian" moved back into Shandong the next year, forcing their way across the Grand Canal near Jining. They surged eastward across the province, even occupying Tai'an. At this point, Li shifted his strategy and tried to trap the eastern Nian forces on the Shandong peninsula.¹⁴⁸

This strategy of isolating and grinding down the Nian armies would ultimately bring the war to an end. While there were obvious long-term benefits to ending the conflict, in the short term this strategy was devastating for Shandong. Li essentially turned over large portions of the province to the Nian while his forces encircled them. Now-Governor Ding Baozhen accordingly disapproved of this plan but could not overrule Li.¹⁴⁹ Although the eastern Nian broke through

¹⁴⁶ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 4:15a.

¹⁴⁷ Teng, *The Nien Army*, 150–56.

¹⁴⁸ Teng, 158–60.

¹⁴⁹ Chiang Siang-tseh, *The Nien Rebellion*, 124.

the initial enclosure, they failed to break west across the Grand Canal and were eventually defeated. Likewise, when the western Nian attacked northeast toward Tianjin, Li used the Grand Canal, the Yellow River, and the sea as natural barriers to trap them between Shandong and Zhili.¹⁵⁰

This final stage of fighting against the Nian bundled together several dynamics that reflect the legacy of this period for Jinan. Local people continued to participate in warfare but in a subsidiary and largely defensive role. Members of the gentry along the south bank of the Yellow River funded and oversaw the construction of a wall along the river in order to help keep the Nian forces at bay.¹⁵¹ Their defensive efforts underscored the very divergent experiences of war against the Nian throughout the province. Jinan's importance dictated close attention to its defense through the deployment of troops, the raising of local forces, and the construction of new physical defenses. In this case, the overall strategy sacrificed the well-being of the area north of the Yellow River. As chapter 4 discusses, this tendency to prioritize not only some parts of the empire but specific areas of Shandong continued to be an important dynamic in subsequent years.¹⁵² However, this differential treatment reverberated back into Jinan, as the city, with its newly walled suburbs, became a haven for refugees fleeing Nian attacks in 1867.¹⁵³ Finally, regional officials, particularly Li Hongzhang, wielded unprecedented power that would affect affairs in Jinan and elsewhere in Shandong for years to come. Li did not displace the authority of Shandong's governors, but his establishment of a power base in Tianjin would affect provincial developments up to and beyond the end of the Qing, as the following chapters show.

As with Sengerinchen, monuments to these powerful officials eventually sprouted up

¹⁵⁰ Teng, *The Nien Army*, 164–68.

¹⁵¹ Chiang Siang-tseh, *The Nien Rebellion*, 129–30.

¹⁵² Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*; Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 100–104.

¹⁵³ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 13:5a.

across Jinan, especially on the banks of Daming Lake.¹⁵⁴ In 1886, a group of gentry, led by now-retired Li Qing'ao, petitioned Shandong Governor Chen Shijie for permission to construct a shrine in Jinan to Ding Baozhen, who had recently passed away. After serving in several posts in Shandong, Ding had been appointed governor in 1867. He served in this post, except for a two-year leave, until 1876, when he was promoted to governor-general of Sichuan. His tenure in Shandong thus spanned the war against the Nian and almost a decade of post-war reconstruction. The petition reflected this, beginning with an account of his military exploits and supervision of the construction of Jinan's stone wall "in order to protect residents outside the [original] wall." Ding continued to accumulate accomplishments in the following years. He encouraged the cultivation of mulberry trees and hemp to occupy the many people displaced by the war and diligently attended to legal cases and supervised his subordinates. "The common people do not know the extent of his virtues," the petition explained.¹⁵⁵

Ding's efforts also benefited the province's scholars. He had expanded funding for Luoyuan and Jingxian academies and closely supervised the education there. Ding also opened a new academy, Shangzhi Hall near Baotu Spring, which focused on applied skills like astronomy, medicine, and Western studies. "The many recent learned and expert students from Shandong are all the product of this official's cultivating effort," the petition said. Although not mentioned here, Ding had also founded a modern arsenal north of Jinan at Luokou, on the Yellow River.¹⁵⁶

Ding's contributions to Shandong did not end with his tenure as governor. From Sichuan, he had donated his own funds and gathered donations from Sichuan's gentry to provide relief in response to flooding on the Yellow River. He had dispatched his own son, Ding Shouhe, to

¹⁵⁴ Although focused on shrines constructed for still-living officials, for a discussion of the practices of shrine-building in honor of local officials, see Schneewind, *Shrines to Living Men*.

¹⁵⁵ "Jingbao quanlu," *Shen bao*, 1886/7/21, 10.

¹⁵⁶ "Jingbao quanlu," *Shen bao*, 1886/7/21, 10.

accompany these funds to Shandong. When the court ordered him to transmit 160,000 taels for conservancy projects in Shandong, he did so in a timely manner. “In this way,” the petition claimed, “his public-minded and loyal management of state affairs did not distinguish between territorial divisions.”¹⁵⁷

Conclusion

This petition reflects the tension between the peculiarity of Jinan’s experiences during this period and the fact that the city’s enduring connections to other places in the empire shaped these experiences. Gathering funds, raising militias, and honoring the dead are all familiar to accounts of this period in Chinese history. These activities made Jinan a place of mobilization, militarization, and commemoration. In the past, scholars have attached the term ‘localist’ to such activities; to the extent that members of Jinan’s elite engaged in them to both protect their home community and consolidate their social status there, this term is apt. However, we must understand this localized behavior in the context of the city’s changing relationship to the areas around it and the co-constructive relationship between place-making and state-building.

In terms of Jinan’s relationship to surrounding counties and villages, I have argued that over the course of the 1850s and 1860s Jinan’s defenses increasingly focused on the city itself. We may take this as evidence for a growing rural-urban divide that would further threaten the cohesion of both the state and the elite class. However, while this narrower focus of local defense attenuated Jinan’s relationship to its hinterland in some ways, it also produced effects that reverberated back into the city. Whereas robust organization of militias in rural areas distributed personnel and material resources outward from the city, focusing on the defense of the walled

¹⁵⁷ “*Jingbao* quanlu,” *Shen bao*, 1886/7/21, 10.

area made it a magnet for an influx of refugees, who would require aid and accommodations. Moreover, the deaths of militia members and civilians in the countryside and their subsequent commemoration cast in even starker relief the contributions of those within the city who organized defenses against the Nian and lived to tell the tale.

Following David Buck's lead, in this chapter I have shown how physical construction in this period reflected and shaped the identities and interests of Jinan's elite.¹⁵⁸ For example, by sponsoring Ding Baozhen's shrine, Li Qing'ao reinforced his own prestige as a local military hero and imperial official, the latter of which had kept him away from Jinan during Ding's tenure, and reasserted his commitment to the projects Ding had supported even after leaving his post in Shandong. Despite the locally-specific effects of these shrines, they also reflected Jinan's relationship to the imperial state, both by honoring loyal officials who were not natives of the city and by having been constructed and recorded by other officials, sometimes with imperial sanction. These monuments and records of them thus embodied both local particularity and communion with other places in the empire. This participation framed the city in different ways across the years: as a haven against the violence unfolding elsewhere and as a site of loyal sacrifice in its own right.

The complementary nature of these processes of place-making and state-building reflects the social and political effects of this period in Jinan. The empowerment of the elite to undertake local defenses did not result in the weakening of the Qing state as far as Jinan was concerned. Qing officials generally retained effective control over the military forces raised from and operating in Jinan, and the service Jinan's elite rendered both locally and in appointments throughout the empire bolstered the Qing state. Despite the particularity of their city's

¹⁵⁸ Buck, "Public Monuments."

experiences, Jinan's people could identify with the turmoil that gripped other parts of the empire, the sacrifices it entailed, and the reconstruction that followed.

In analyzing how the challenges of this period affected the Qing state, we need to consider both material and subjective outcomes. I have argued that in Jinan the material efforts of the elite, limited though they were, buttressed the state while their loyalties were simultaneously strengthened. The exigencies faced by the Qing required elites throughout the empire to be both strong and loyal. A situation where only one of these conditions held would have been highly disadvantageous to the Qing state. In abstraction, an ideal state of affairs for the Qing state would have been to maximize the loyalty of the elite while minimizing the government's dependence on them for material support. Such an arrangement would have avoided the ills of localist militarization posited by Kuhn. However, realizing this ideal was precluded by the constraints of Qing political economy at the time, including the small size of its bureaucracy and military compared to its population and territory, the central government's reliance on a relatively fixed agricultural tax base rather than commercial taxes, the absence of government debt, and the fact that the Taiping War engulfed an area that was responsible for both producing and transporting a large portion of the court's revenues. The more realistic scenario—and the one that eventuated—was the court temporarily expanding its well-established reliance on the local elite to survive the acute crises of the 1850s and 1860s and buy itself time to adjust its political system in subsequent decades. To be sure, the Qing did not succeed in all these regards. A systematic overhaul of the bureaucracy was only undertaken in the early twentieth century and, at least in the short-term, caused as many problems as it solved.¹⁵⁹ The development of state financing was halting and carried out under fiscal pressures, like the need to

¹⁵⁹ See, for instance, Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State*.

repay war indemnities in the late nineteenth century, that were hardly ideal.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the expansion and assertion of central control over commercial taxes, the development of a modern army and supporting industries, and a realignment of fiscal priorities to emphasize regions with the greatest immediate military importance and highest potential for financial returns indicate that Qing political economy was open to change and lend credence to Halsey's argument that we should see this as a period of active and surprisingly successful state-building.¹⁶¹ Again, realizing these outcomes immediately in the face of the mid-century crises might have been ideal for the Qing state, but it was practically impossible for this to happen. The Qing needed time, time that it bought by enlisting the energy and resources of local elites across the empire.

We can examine this hypothesis that dependence on the local elite was more of a boon to the Qing state than a constitutional threat, contra Kuhn, through the lens of Jinan's history. Kuhn and others might argue that the reason the militarization of Jinan's elite was so beneficial to the Qing state in both the short and long term was precisely because it was limited and did not tip the balance of power away from the state to society. I have two answers to this counterargument. The first is to rebut the assertion that Jinan's elite limited capacity to contribute materially to defensive mobilization was, essentially, beneficial to the Qing state. In 1853–4, Mao Hongbin's militias did what they needed to in the face of a threat that was real but turned out to be transitory. Even then, though, Mao was forced to rely on government funds that were already stretched thin and could have been used elsewhere. The negative consequences of the relative weakness of Jinan's elite became even more apparent in the 1860s. Their efforts helped protect Jinan itself, but more funds and greater organizational capacity could have greatly benefited the surrounding area, helped keep order in the increasingly disorderly rural areas of Shandong, and

¹⁶⁰ He, *Paths*, 153–79.

¹⁶¹ Halsey, *Quest for Power*.

contributed to more rapidly defeating the Nian army. This would have saved the Qing court considerable amounts of money in terms of both expenditures and reduced tax revenues. It also would have made it less necessary to dispatch Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang to North China. It is easy to collapse the phenomena of militarization extending upward from local communities and the emergence of powerful regional officials like Zeng and Li under the rubric of the decentralization of political power. As part III discusses, though, these developments were distinct in important ways.¹⁶² Although powerful regional officials would mostly prove to be dependable allies for Jinan's elite and certainly rendered invaluable service to the dynasty, this relationship became more fraught during the course of and, much more, after the 1911 Revolution.

My second response to the possibility that the activism of Jinan's elite was beneficial to the Qing state only insofar as it was relatively weak revolves around the issue of loyalty. The efficacy of the Qing state was determined, I would argue, by not only the relative distribution of power between governmental and non-governmental actors but also the attachment of the elite to the state and their willingness to act on its behalf. The capacity of the state to mobilize a wide range of actors to extend its institutional capacities, especially during wartime, was a sign of strength, not weakness.¹⁶³ As rebellious militias in other parts of Shandong remind us, though, the benefits of such mobilization only accrued insofar as local elites identified with and subordinated themselves to the interests of the state. As we have seen in this chapter and will see in subsequent ones, both material and subjective considerations effectively attached Jinan's elite to the Qing state. To some extent this no doubt reflected their material dependence on the

¹⁶² William Rowe distinguishes these narratives about the legacies of the Taiping War and reconstruction in Rowe, *China's Last Empire*, 207–8.

¹⁶³ Capozzola and Sparrow make arguments to this effect regarding the U.S. state during World War I and II. Capozzola, *Uncle Sam*; Sparrow, *Warfare State*.

government both before and during these crises, but even officials like Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang remained loyal to the court despite wielding incredible leverage over it. There is little reason to suppose that a different balance of power between Jinan's elite and the court would have attenuated the loyalties of the city's elite.

Maintaining the loyalty of communities across the empire was, of course, a challenge, but it was one inherent to the Qing political system, not one unique to this period. The circulation of elite men through localities across the empire via the administrative system was one mechanism for ensuring a healthy association between local and dynastic loyalties. As we have seen, the translocal connections that bound Jinan and its elite to the empire continued to operate during this period in ways that were largely consonant with Qing spatial politics. As chapter 4 discusses, Qing spatial politics did begin to shift more dramatically by the late nineteenth century, but this transformation unfolded against the backdrop of surprising successes in state-building in the middle decades of the century.

Chapter 4

Amid the Floods: Environmental and Humanitarian Crises and Responses, 1855–95

As the campaign against the Taiping northern invasion was winding down in 1855, a development of even deeper significance for North China was unfolding to the west in Henan Province. On June 19 at Tongwa xiang, the Yellow River spilled over and began breaking down the dikes that held its northern bank in place. Water poured through the breach, the length of which grew to five kilometers in a single day, spreading out northward across the level terrain of the North China Plain, flooding scores of counties, and displacing thousands of people.¹ Eventually, the river settled into a new course to the north, rather than the south, of the Shandong peninsula, through the bed of what had been the Daqing River, directly north of Jinan. This chapter examines the developing relationship between the Yellow River and place-making and state-building in Jinan in the second half of the nineteenth century. The interrelated environmental, humanitarian, and economic crises associated with the Yellow River were even longer lasting and more multi-faceted than the wars discussed in chapter 3. However, the pattern of mutually constructive place-making and state-building that was maintained through the 1850s and 1860s persisted into later decades.

To express the multivalence and regularity of the crises associated with the Yellow River in North China, I utilize the concept of a “disaster regime,” introduced by Chris Courtney. Rather than treating environmental events as singular phenomena, this term provides a way to describe how they were inter-linked with anthropogenic causes, humanitarian disasters, and involved a host of non-human aspects of the environment.² The Yellow River disaster regime did not emerge *ex nihilo* after 1855. Rather, it was the product of a complex interaction between existing

¹ Pietz, *The Yellow River*, 65.

² Courtney, *The Nature of Disaster*, 9–11.

human-environment relations along its new channel, long-running developments on the Yellow River's entire course, constraints and opportunities specific to the late Qing, and shifting government priorities, among others. The agents who participated in this disaster regime include the Yellow River itself, connected waterways, weather patterns, Jinan's urban population, rural farmers, and government officials. Human agents worked to mitigate the ill-effects of the disaster regime through constructing an "environmental infrastructure," which was, again, an amalgam of the techniques and administration on the river's old course, existing capacities on the river's new course, and new initiatives.³ Components of this infrastructure included dikes to keep the river in place, channels to drain off floodwater, and systems for providing grain to regions that experienced subsistence crises as a result of floods and droughts.

The language of "disaster regime" and "environmental infrastructure" appears here for the first time in the dissertation, but it is closely related to the ideas of state-building and place-making that have been the focus of previous chapters. As the introduction and chapter 1 indicate, place is a product of the interaction between the environment and physical, social, and cultural construction. Developments in the Yellow River disaster regime and the construction of an environmental infrastructure in response to it affected both the environmental and human components of place-making. Like the elements of place-making discussed in previous chapters, the Yellow River disaster regime was inherently translocal, bringing water, silt, grain, money, and all kinds of people in, through, and out of Jinan. How to manage these circulatory processes was a crucial problem in state-building and place-making in late Qing Jinan.

The relationship between state and environment has been an object of particular attention in scholarship on late Qing North China. The capacity of dynastic states to prevent flooding and

³ Muscolino, *The Ecology of War*, 18–19.

subsistence crises had been a foundational element of political legitimacy since early imperial times. If anything, the Qing doubled down on and made new use of its moral commitment to these issues.⁴ Hydraulic management was also a paramount material concern for the Qing state and its predecessors since it was essential both to maintaining a stable and tax-paying agrarian population and ensuring the continued function of the Grand Canal, which crossed the Huai and Yellow Rivers and was, for most of the Qing, vital for supplying Beijing with grain from the south.⁵

Scholars agree that in the late nineteenth century internal wars, imperialist aggression, and the increasingly difficult challenge of maintaining the existing hydraulic infrastructure around the Yellow River combined to sharply limit the state's capacity to prevent and respond to natural and humanitarian crises in North China. They have used a variety of terms to describe this development, including "withdrawal," "devolution," and "environmental breakdown," but all correspond at least generally to the well-worn narrative that the power of the Qing state was declining precipitously and with sometimes catastrophic consequences in this period.⁶

However, this "devolution" in the north was different from the putative devolution of power away from the state in the south in two ways. First, scholars argue that not only did the state's capacity to intervene in the north's environmental infrastructure decline, but its willingness to do so waned as the strategic importance of inland North China declined with the abandonment of the Grand Canal in favor of shipping tribute grain to Beijing by sea from the south and, increasingly, Manchuria.⁷ Second, the challenges posed by the disaster regime in

⁴ Chang, "Fathoming Qianlong"; Jia Guojing, "'Zhi he ji suo yi bao cao'?"; Pietz, *The Yellow River*, 28–36.

⁵ Hu, "The Yellow River Administration," 33–63; Pietz, *The Yellow River*, 48–54.

⁶ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 154; Li, *Fighting Famine*, 250; Pietz, *The Yellow River*, 54–56; Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 10.

⁷ Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 33–39, 93–102.

North China were so severe that local elites there, whose wealth already lagged behind their peers in the south, lacked the capacity to pick up the slack when the government withdrew, a problem that was further exacerbated by the economic effects of endemic flooding and the decline of the Grand Canal as a transportation artery.⁸ Both of these differences are prominent themes in Kenneth Pomeranz's study of the long-term effects of environmental degradation in the Huang-Yun (i.e. intersection of the Yellow River and Grand Canal) region of western Shandong.⁹

Jinan does not entirely match this description of North China as a whole, though. The wars against the Taiping and Nian did expose the material weakness of Jinan's elite, which forced them to depend on government support for defensive projects, as they would for the hydraulic and humanitarian projects discussed in this chapter. However, as both chapter 3 and this one show, Jinan continued to be more strategically important than characterizations of inland North China anticipate. Pomeranz contrasts the ill-effects of declining state investment on the environment and markets in western Shandong with the attention that the eastern portion of the province, including Jinan, received because the Qing and successor governments saw protecting and developing them as vital to national sovereignty.¹⁰ In other words, Pomeranz depicts Jinan as more a coastal beneficiary of a shift to a political economy that prioritized national sovereignty than an inland victim of these policies.

Chapters 6 and 7 will provide additional support for Pomeranz's argument for the period after 1895. However, his narrative is less persuasive for explaining developments in Jinan in the preceding decades, which are the focus of this chapter. Motivations for government investment

⁸ Li, *Fighting Famine*, 7, 74–110, 167, 180–85, 194.

⁹ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*.

¹⁰ Pomeranz, 168–78; Li, *Fighting Famine*, 7, 194, 222–23.

in hydraulic and humanitarian projects in and around Jinan from the 1870s to 1890s are better explained by a reassertion of imperial prerogatives (albeit still hampered by fiscal constraints and an unprecedentedly calamitous confluence of crises) than a total shift to a sovereignty-protecting political economy. After finally alleviating the flooding on the Yellow River that had afflicted western Shandong since 1855, in the 1880s the government shifted its attention to the river's lower reaches, including around Jinan, where flooding was now much more severe. By the time flooding on the river's lower reaches was tamed (largely through constructing expensive but, in Pomeranz's analysis, cost-effective stone dikes), the fiscal constraints and political considerations of the post-1895 period, which included direct imperialist encroachment into the interior of Shandong, militated against reinvestment on the upper reaches.¹¹

This may seem like a rather narrow chronological argument. However, it is significant firstly because it demonstrates that prerogatives that had long been at the core of Qing imperial state-building—hydraulic management, food security for rural producers in inland areas, and fiscal dependence on the salt trade—were not abandoned after 1855. In fact, the growing shift toward a political economy focused on protecting national sovereignty (and thus prioritizing coastal areas where it was most under threat), especially after 1895, built on a reassertion of imperial state-building in the preceding decades. Secondly, this broader narrative helps us understand the continued attachment of Jinan's elite to the Qing state. This continuity is of special interest in light of the growing involvement of southern elites in humanitarian and, as the final section of this chapter shows, hydraulic projects in the north. Scholars have understandably argued that these movements reflected a growing national consciousness that de-centered the

¹¹ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 164–68, 182–93.

place of the imperial government in fulfilling its traditional prerogatives.¹² However, when we look at these events from the perspective of Jinan's elite, for whom collaboration with government officials persisted alongside southern connections and even intensified in this period, we find reason to doubt that they saw these developments as an abrupt and fundamental transformation in Qing spatial politics. The continued role of the imperial bureaucracy as a mediator of translocal elite relations that benefited Jinan helps explain why the city's elite continued to support it in the period discussed in chapters 6 and 7, even as they shared in the kinds of national concerns that ostensibly led elites elsewhere to turn away from the dynasty in favor of revolution.

Conditions Prior to the 1855 Flood and Its Causes

The Yellow River's 1855 change in course incorporated Jinan into the disaster regime of the Yellow River in a way that was very different from what the city had experienced in prior centuries. Because the geography of the river itself changed after 1855, the environmental infrastructure built around its old course was rendered moot precisely at a time when the court was poorly positioned to systematically re-develop it. The fundamental nature of these changes thus set the stage for a long and uneven journey towards accounting for Jinan's new, unruly northern neighbor in place-making and state-building.

Prior to the Yellow River's departure from its southern course in 1855, the river that ran directly north of Jinan was called the Daqing River. This river was much shorter than the Yellow River, originating east of the Grand Canal (inside Shandong), where it emerged from the Wen River and was fed by streams emerging from mountains and springs to the south on its way to

¹² See, for example, Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 136–69.

the sea. Despite its comparatively modest length, the Daqing was an important artery for regional trade, especially the transport of salt from coastal production areas to Jinan and then farther inland. Siltation was a problem on the upper reaches of the Daqing River, since this portion of the river was fed by fewer tributaries and its limited water supply was increasingly diverted to the Grand Canal.¹³ On account of the river's importance to both merchants and government finances, Shandong's governor received the court's approval in 1785 to undertake a project to channel additional water into the Daqing to ensure its navigability. This project, completed the next year, was funded by donations from the merchants who benefited from it, reflecting how the Qing state relied on the efforts of actors within and beyond government institutions.¹⁴ Parts of the Daqing did flood, but these incidents were neither particularly severe nor frequent. To prevent such floods, local people constructed dikes at strategic points along the river with occasional official support.¹⁵

The scale and type of considerations that shaped the environmental infrastructure on the Yellow River were very different from the Daqing. The most distinctive feature of the Yellow River is its high silt content, much of which it picks up as it passes through the loess plateaus of northwest China. Anthropogenic deforestation and consequent erosion over the last several millennia along the river's middle reaches have increased the rate of sedimentation.¹⁶ As the river proceeds towards the sea, the terrain's downward gradient becomes very subtle, slowing the river's velocity and causing it to deposit the sediment it carries in the bed of its lower reaches, other waterways it encounters, and its sea mouth. Over time, silt deposits raise the level of the

¹³ Ren Baozhen, *Xiaoqing he lidai wenhui*, 68–71; Yin Qiang, “Ming Qing Shandong Da、Xiaoqing he,” 48–49.

¹⁴ Ming-xing memorial on 1785/12/21 (QL 50/11/20), *LFZZ*, 03-1028-017; Ming-xing memorial on 1786/5/13 (QL 51/4/16), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-05-0067-002.

¹⁵ Guo-tai memorial on 1780/8/31 (QL 45/8/2), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-05-0058-018; Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi*, 56.

¹⁶ Mostern, “Sediment and State,” 131–35.

river, making flooding inevitable, absent artificial intervention. For centuries, humans have forestalled this inevitability by both dredging the river's bed and building dikes along its course to match the rising water levels. Such dike-building created an increasingly precarious condition—called the “hanging river”—where the height of the dikes was significantly greater than the surrounding land.¹⁷ In 1821, it was reported that the difference between river-level and ground-level was thirty to forty feet.¹⁸

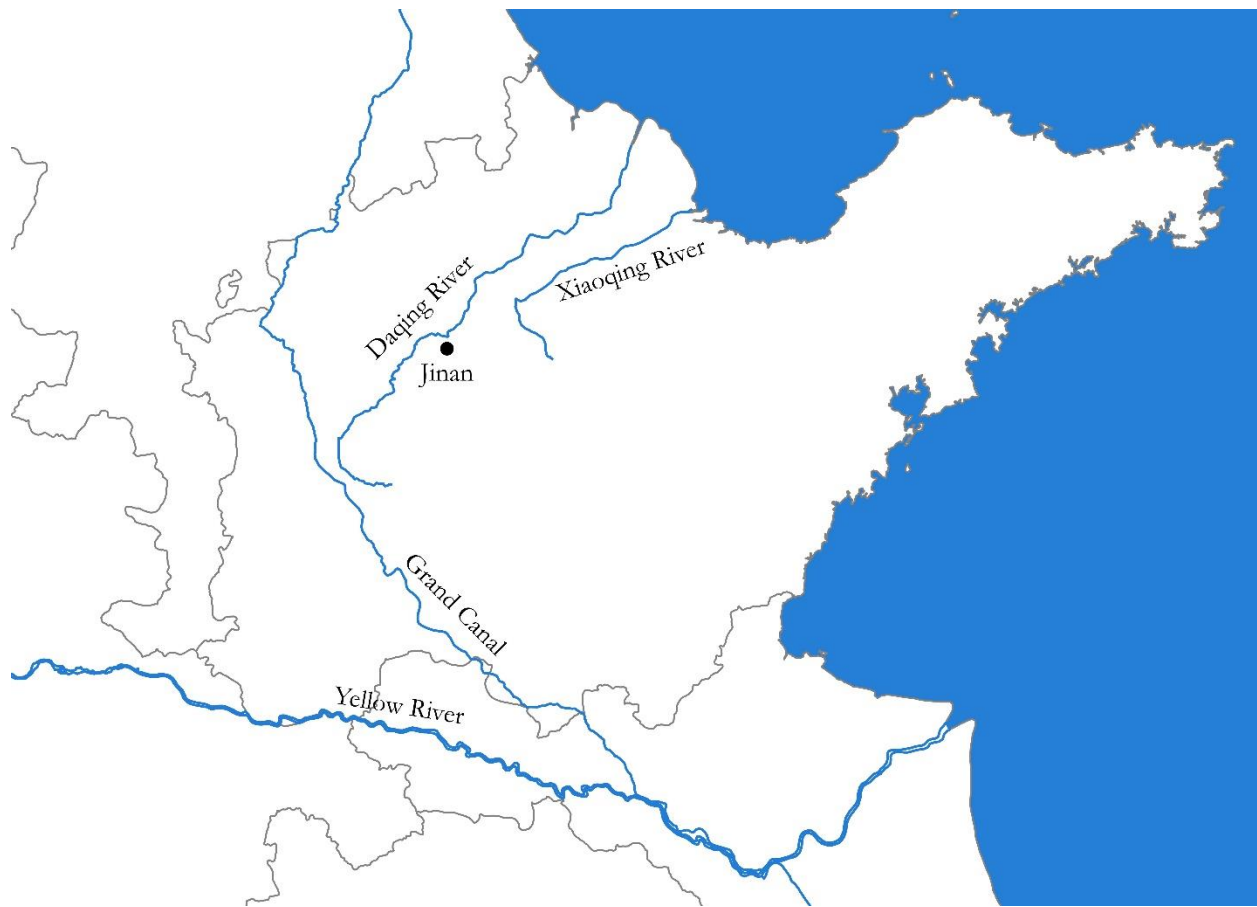


Figure 4.1: Map of major rivers before 1855. (GIS data from CHGIS.)

The challenges posed by these conditions would have been severe enough on their own, but they were not even the primary concern motivating government-administered conservancy

¹⁷ Pietz, *The Yellow River*, 12–19, 43–54; Mostern, “Sediment and State,” 138–43.

¹⁸ Hu, “The Yellow River Administration,” 216.

efforts. Instead, the court's paramount concern was with the Yellow River's intersection with the Grand Canal in northern Jiangsu. Maintaining the Grand Canal, on which the court depended for transporting grain from the Yangzi Valley to Beijing, was a vital strategic interest, and the Yellow River's silty water threatened the navigability of the canal. Geographically, there was no way to divert the west-east course of the river away from the north-south course of the canal, so successive dynasties had developed an extraordinary administrative and engineering system to manage this intractable problem. In areas around the intersection of the two rivers this system diverted other water sources to flush the muddy water of the Yellow River out of the canal's course. Meanwhile, officials were charged with maintaining dikes along the rest of the Yellow River's course to prevent, or at least delay, flooding.¹⁹

Instead of assigning responsibility for maintaining this elaborate system to regular provincial officials along the course of the Grand Canal and Yellow River, the Qing further developed a special water conservancy administration it inherited from the Ming. The development of this administration in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries helped the Qing successfully manage the complexities of the Grand Canal and give more attention to conservancy on the portion of the Yellow River west of the canal in Henan Province. This system allowed the court both to place officials at areas of greatest need and to supervise them directly without having to rely on the mediation of provincial bureaucracies or even the Board of Works, which was ostensibly responsible for water conservancy projects. By the nineteenth century, this administration was divided into three zones. The southern zone (Jiangsu) and middle or eastern zone (Henan and Shandong) both were administered under Director-Generals (*hedao zongdu*), while the northern zone (Zhili) was administered by the Governor-General of

¹⁹ On the relationship between Yellow River conservancy and maintaining the Grand Canal, see Hu, 33–63.

Zhili Province. The Director-General for Henan and Shandong (*hedong hedao zongdu*) was stationed at Jining in western Shandong. The Director-Generals each commanded a range of subordinate officials and “river battalions” (*hebiao*) stationed along the Grand Canal and Yellow River.²⁰

Even before the catastrophic dike breaks at Tongwa xiang in Lanyang, Henan in 1855, there were signs that this environmental infrastructure could not indefinitely fulfill its mandate. There has been some disagreement about the precise causes of the growing frequency and severity of floods along the river’s middle reaches, particularly the extent to which it reflected the stultification and corruption of the conservancy administration.²¹ For our purposes, though, the areas of agreement are more significant, namely that the 1855 flood was a consequence of an ecologically unsustainable system created by the court’s subordination of Yellow River conservancy to the maintenance of the Grand Canal and that this situation was exacerbated by the pressures the Qing faced in the 1850s as a result of its ongoing war against the Taiping.²² Once the Taiping had captured the southern portion of the Grand Canal, it could not fulfill its primary function, regardless of how well it was maintained. In 1851, there was a major breach at dikes in Feng County in Jiangsu that could not be repaired until 1853. That year there was another flood, and the court decided to postpone major repairs out of concern for the logistical and security difficulties posed by mobilizing a large group of able-bodied young men, whom, they worried, officials might struggle to feed and pay, right at the moment the court was battling against the Taiping northern invasion.²³

²⁰ For more specific information on the evolution of this bureaucracy, see Hu, 64–112.

²¹ Hu places considerable weight on this factor, but Dodgen makes a compelling counterargument that the nineteenth-century hydraulic administration was not uniformly inept and that effective administration alone would not have been enough to salvage the situation. Hu, 168–210; Dodgen, *Controlling the Dragon*.

²² Hu, “The Yellow River Administration,” 24, 43–44, 147–54, 214; Dodgen, *Controlling the Dragon*.

²³ Hu, “The Yellow River Administration,” 220–21.

Consequently, the crisis that eventuated when the dikes at Tongwa xiang broke in 1855 was acute but not exactly sudden. The orientation of the administrative and hydraulic system supposed to keep the Yellow River in check around its southern course and the constraints the Qing was facing at the time, which had helped precipitate this crisis, meant that the government was in no position to deal with this dramatic event pro-actively. Instead, officials and common people along the river's old and new courses came to grips with the new situation in a piece-meal fashion. Local, ad hoc initiatives would characterize the first twenty years of response and accommodation to the Yellow River's new course.

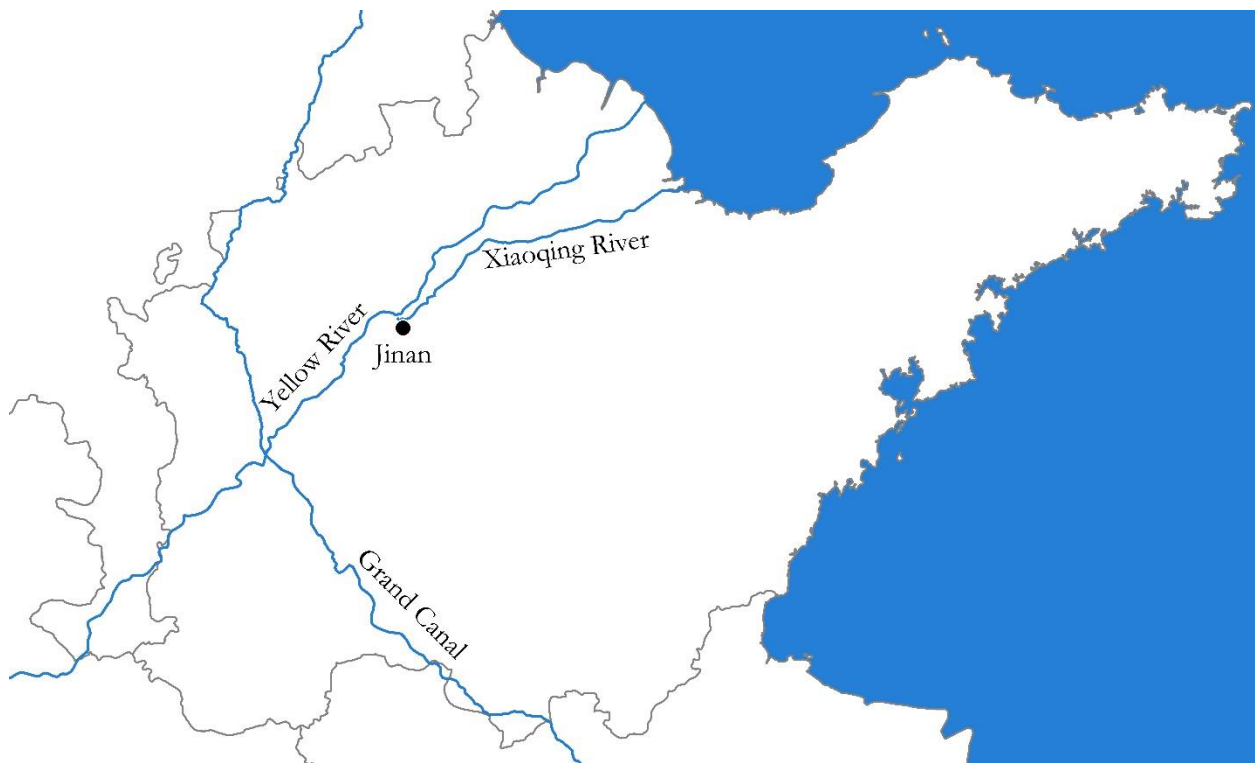


Figure 4.2: Map of Yellow River and Xiaoqing River after 1895. (GIS data from CHGIS, DIVA-GIS, and Natural Earth.)

Distributing Disaster and Deferring a Response, 1855–77

The 1855 breach both activated a complex disaster regime that included ecological, social, economic, and political components and shifted its spatial scope as the waters of the Yellow River drifted northward. Even within the new geography of the Yellow River, whose

lower reaches settled into the bed of what had been the Daqing River, the effects of place-making and state-building within this disaster regime varied across space and time. Along the length of the Yellow River's new course, the period between 1855 and the mid-1870s was characterized by human actors repeatedly improvising to adapt to the conditions created by the 1855 change in course. The ongoing wars against the Taiping and Nian made a more systematic response unfeasible. For the area around Jinan, at least, the effectiveness—at least in very bare terms—of the ad hoc response at first deferred the need for a more sustainable solution. However, by the end of this period, it was becoming clear to a variety of people, including local residents, officials, and the court, that more intensive government intervention along the river's new course and the institutional innovation it required was needed and worthwhile.

Within the spatial politics of this disaster regime, Jinan occupied a relatively privileged position. In the period this section discusses, that privilege was more a product of salutary hydraulic conditions than active intervention by the government. People in Jinan did experience flooding and participated in ad hoc conservancy measures, but the immediate effects of the flooding were far less severe than in places upriver or even surrounding counties because of underlying geographic conditions. In effect, the government's inability to address systematically the situation on the Yellow River redistributed the worst effects of flooding away from Jinan.

Like this chapter as a whole, this section carries an ambivalent message about the effectiveness of Qing state-building in this period. On the one hand, it affirms that material constraints limited state-building efforts in the mid-nineteenth century. These constraints affected both the translocal redistribution of resources that would have been necessary for the government to comprehensively intervene in the disaster regime and the mobilization of resources within local communities. We see echoes, then, of chapter 3's argument that the

compound crises of the mid-nineteenth century over-stretched the redistributive capacities of the Qing state. The biggest problem for Qing state was not that power slipped away from the state to society but that neither the government nor non-governmental local actors possessed the capacity needed to deal with the Yellow River crisis comprehensively. In a negative sense, then, this situation again demonstrates the complementarity of state-building, translocal processes, and place-making.

On the other hand, like chapter 3, this section adds spatial nuance to the narrative of general state collapse or withdrawal in the face of environmental crisis that prevails in discussions of North China in the mid-nineteenth century. Instead, the effects of the Yellow River disaster regime varied across both space and time. The spatial and chronological staggering of these effects generated a correspondingly staggered response. The ad hoc response described in this section was only the first phase in the relationship between state-building and place-making along the Yellow River's new course.

The Administrative Geography of the post-1855 Yellow River Disaster Regime

The effects of the 1855 flood were enormous and widespread. In Shandong alone, floodwaters stretched across five prefectures and more than twenty counties.²⁴ The river's shift northward also affected a wide range of waterways, including major ones like the Grand Canal and the Daqing River, but also innumerable smaller rivers and streams that drained into water courses now occupied by the Yellow River. Simply ascertaining the extent of the disaster required coordinating between the governors of Shandong and Henan, the Governor-General of Zhili, and the Director-General for Henan and Shandong. In turn, they had to solicit reports from their subordinates and dispatch commissioners to investigate conditions themselves.

²⁴ Hu, 220.

Gathering detailed information took time, but, at least east of the Grand Canal, the new course of the river and the problems it would cause quickly took shape on the landscape and in the minds of local and metropolitan officials. Within a month of the court first receiving a report about the Tongwa xiang dike breaks, water from the Yellow River was already flowing into the bed of the Daqing River. Even before, this reports from Shandong Governor Chong-en and Director-General Jiang Qiyang had indicated that this would be a likely outcome. Initially, flooding east of the canal along the Daqing River was not especially severe compared to the area west and immediately east of the canal, where the Yellow River split into several channels that inundated wide swathes of Fan, Puzhou, Shouzhang, and Dong'e counties. Chong-en reported, though, that there would soon be problems along the Daqing River, as well. Water levels in the river were surging, which posed the risk of both the river itself flooding and the full riverbed blocking the drainage of the mountain streams that normally flowed into it. Flow was usually heavy in the Daqing and its tributaries in the autumn, after the season of heavy rains, so severe flooding along the river was likely in the coming months.²⁵

The court sent mixed signals about its approach while it waited for additional information. On the one hand, the court quickly raised the problem that while repairs and humanitarian relief were essential, the ongoing war limited the amount of money that both the central and provincial governments could throw at the problem and that officials would have to raise money from local people themselves to fund emergency flood-prevention measures.²⁶ On the other hand, when, in mid-September new Director-General Li Jun suggesting delaying repairing the dikes along the old southern course and instead focusing on draining water from

²⁵ Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJ*, 53:2380–86.

²⁶ Wu Tongju, 53: 2371–2.

flooded areas, the court discouraged him from acting purely out of a consideration for cost and ordered additional investigations.²⁷ Chong-en emphasized that his jurisdiction (Shandong) was bearing the brunt of the floods and that it would be impossible to drain the floodwaters and return people to their homes and fields so long as water kept pouring through the broken dikes upriver.²⁸

Early the next year, the court received the additional information it was waiting for and, along with it, justification for deferring “fixing” the Yellow River’s course indefinitely. This report, submitted by Li and informed by investigations undertaken by officials commissioned by himself and the governors of the affected provinces, explained that the Yellow River had settled into the bed of the Daqing River and that floodwaters were receding. It was true that in its current condition, the Daqing could not sustainably accommodate the full volume of the Yellow River. In response, people living along both banks of the river had, with the supervision of county officials, begun building dikes to increase the channel’s carrying capacity. Flood prevention and relief efforts could be made to work together, as they had in Changqing (neighboring Licheng County), where officials had distributed grain from the local granaries to compensate people for their participation in dike construction. This process was admittedly uneven, especially since local people were not necessarily well-versed in building dikes. To address this, Li suggested sending officers from the conservancy administration to help direct the work.²⁹ The court assented to depending on these local initiatives and again instructed officials to raise contributions for these projects from the local elite.³⁰ The labor and material costs that

²⁷ Wu Tongju, 53:2388–90.

²⁸ Wu Tongju, 53:2390–91.

²⁹ Wu Tongju, 53:2401–03.

³⁰ Wu Tongju, 53:2403–04.

returning the river to its old course or establishing a comprehensive, centrally-controlled conservancy administration along its new one would incur were simply too much for the court to bear.³¹

In theory, the patchwork of levees that tried to keep the river in place was a provisional measure until the court was able to undertake returning the river to its southern course. However, by 1859 the court was effectively resigned to leaving the Yellow River in place. The carrying capacity of the Daqing River channel had grown through the construction of dikes and floodwaters deepening the bed. Meanwhile, the dikes along the old southern course fell into disrepair, meaning that returning the river to the south would be far more difficult and expensive than it would have been in 1855.³² The issue of returning the river to its southern course came up again in 1868 and 1873, but Zeng Guofan and then Li Hongzhang, who were, successively, the Governor-General of Zhili, weighed against this undertaking.³³ By then, the court had begun decommissioning parts of the Yellow River Administration that were no longer functional.³⁴

The result of distributing responsibility for flood prevention on the Yellow River's course to provincial and county officials and the local elite was considerable unevenness in the new hydraulic regime. The court repeatedly issued instructions to governors to oversee this work vigorously, but it was impossible for governors to assume this new responsibility without any kind of administrative infrastructure resembling the old Yellow River Administration, especially given the personal attention that their other duties, such as military affairs, demanded. Instead, responsibility devolved to county officials and the local elite. At least these actors were close to

³¹ Wu Tongju, 53:2404–06; Hu, “The Yellow River Administration,” 221–24; Dodgen, *Controlling the Dragon*, 144; Jinan shi shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi shuili zhi*, 1.

³² Hu, “The Yellow River Administration,” 225–26.

³³ Hu, 235–38.

³⁴ Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJJ*, 54:2494–95.

the problem and, more so in the case of the local elite, motivated to address it. However, they lacked the funds and the capacity to coordinate across the many jurisdictions through which the river ran.³⁵ As a result, the quality, speed, and effectiveness of conservancy projects along the Yellow River varied widely, as did levels of popular satisfaction with official support.

In the short term, this situation was most catastrophic for areas between the broken dikes in Lanyang, Henan and the Yellow River's new junction with the Grand Canal in western Shandong. In these places, the lack of an established riverbed into which the Yellow River could flow had allowed the floodwaters to fan across the North China Plain. The volatility of the river's course upstream was actually a boon to the counties downriver, since it kept the full force of the river from surging through the bed of the Daqing. In Iwo Amelung's words, "The entire area of the upper reaches in Shandong served as a gigantic retention basin which regulated the drainage in the lower reaches."³⁶

Counties to the east along the Daqing River, including Licheng, still experienced flooding, but it was less severe and more episodic in nature. In 1860, officials charged with investigating conditions on the river's new course reported that from Pingyin (east of the Grand Canal) to Lijin (where the river emptied into the sea) the flow of what was now the Yellow River was "smooth" (*shunli*). From Changqing (immediately southwest of Licheng) to Lijin, they reported, "levees and embankments have been constructed. Although they are neither tall nor thick and there are places where they are incomplete, the river's course is broad and deep. We can hope that the water will flow unimpeded and not overflow its banks." In some counties, including Qihe and Jiyang, both of which lay on the north bank of the river, directly opposite

³⁵ Wu Tongju, 54:2501–03, 2506; Hu, "The Yellow River Administration," 234–35.

³⁶ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 28.

Licheng, the bed was narrower and more likely to flood, but broadening it could help reduce this risk.³⁷ By 1867, there was a more or less complete set of dikes on both banks of the river, but their uneven quality meant that flooding was still a problem.³⁸

Jinan's Place in the Disaster Regime

Even among the comparatively fortunate counties east of the Grand Canal, Jinan occupied a relatively advantageous place along the Yellow River in the early years of its northern course. The city of Jinan and most of Licheng County were south of river, where the higher elevation checked the spread of floodwaters in that direction.³⁹ Moreover, as the report above implies, the condition of the Daqing channel in Licheng appears to have made floods less common, or at least less severe, than in even neighboring counties.⁴⁰ In any case, the city of Jinan itself escaped the severe urban flooding that had long afflicted Kaifeng—upriver in Henan—and had, as recently as 1841 submerged the city's streets, forced refugees to crowd onto the city walls, and caused so much damage that some officials proposed that Kaifeng was no longer fit to serve as a provincial capital.⁴¹

Flooding did occur around Jinan, though, and, like elsewhere, the local elite cooperated with officials to bolster the city's flood prevention measures. The area around Jinan was vulnerable both to flooding directly from the Yellow River and from waterways that drained run-

³⁷ Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJJ*, 53:2447–48.

³⁸ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:366.

³⁹ Lees, "Notes of a Journey from Tientsin to Chi-Nan Fu," 101.

⁴⁰ Without surveys containing detailed information on the geologic conditions of the river from immediately after 1855, it is impossible to say with certainty why floods in Licheng appear to have been less common than in surrounding counties. Reports that the narrowness of the riverbed in Qihe and Jiyang caused flooding suggest by implication that the channel in Licheng was wider and/or deeper and thus able to absorb more water. However, it is also possible that, at least in some places, the exact opposite conditions obtained and made flooding less likely. In the area around Luokou, Pomeranz reports, "the river was naturally contained between two limestone walls only one-third mile apart." The strength of the limestone forced the river to deepen its own channel and limited the amount of flooding around Luokou even decades later when other places in Licheng experienced frequent floods. Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 164.

⁴¹ Dodgen, "Salvaging Kaifeng"; Tsui, "Complaining about Lived Spaces."

off from the springs and mountains around the city that used to flow into the Daqing River.⁴² The most direct effect of the flooding on Jinan itself was felt at Luokou, its satellite port on what was now the Yellow River. When the river flooded in 1855, it “inundated and swept away the majority of Luokou’s farmland and residences and turned the streets to puddles.” In response, one of Luokou’s resident salt merchants, Guan Chenglin, who was active in other public projects, including organizing militias, raised contributions and organized the construction of a large dike to protect the village.⁴³ The lack of similar stories in the county gazetteer—in stark contrast to the numerous accounts of the 1861 Nian attacks described in chapter 3—further suggests that the flooding in 1855 itself was less severe in and around Jinan than elsewhere, or at least was significantly less menacing than roving Nian armies.⁴⁴

As the Yellow River settled into its new course and local people adapted to it, Jinan continued to experience episodic flooding and enacted prevention measures. Depending on the year, the villages along the river could present very different scenes, and the city of Jinan could look very different from flooded portions of the countryside not too far away. In 1861, Jinan native Wang Zhonglin (discussed in more detail in chapter 3) described the approach to the city from the north:

At Luokou I crossed the river and went on until I arrived at the base of Huangtai Mountain. The paddy fields were like a picture. Walking around the fields, I gazed into the distance at the scenery, at the city wall standing vast and hazy in the fog. From the small bridges over the streams, two or three elderly men were fishing. The villagers gathered under the shade of the drooping willows, sitting together with their cups and

⁴² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 9:25a.

⁴³ Mao Chenglin, 44:34b.

⁴⁴ Similarly, the table of floods in *Jinan tongshi*, compiled from multiple sources, does not include any for Licheng between 1855 and 1878, which is certainly a reflection of under-reporting, but does suggest that conditions in Licheng were considerably better than surrounding counties, for which there are records of floods in this period, and later years, where there were almost constant floods in Licheng. Heselton does note, though, that local gazetteers in Jiangnan tended to pay more attention to reconstruction activities like managing welfare institutions and reconstructing academies and temples than conservancy projects, meaning that local gazetteers may not possess the level of information about local hydraulic projects that we might expect them to. Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:351–56; Heselton, “Reconstructing Order,” 150.

dishes. How enviable!

When Wang left a couple days later he recorded, “In the villages along the river, the harvest has come in and the new rice is stacked up like mountains.” He noted, though, that only last year when he had passed by, there had been a major flood, and the villagers had all been hungry.⁴⁵ Just the next year, Wang Zhonglin complained that the failure of officials to control the Yellow River had resulted in “innumerable” deaths from drowning and starvation.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, flooding in the city’s suburbs, where the new walls further blocked the drainage routes of streams carrying run-off from the mountains and springs, continued into the 1870s.

There were, however, stories of successful cooperation between officials and the elite. For example, in the 1860s, Wang Xiangpu, who lived east of Jinan, received a commission from Magistrate Tao Shaoxu to build dikes to control flooding along the Juye River, one of the tributaries whose drainage was now blocked by the Yellow River. His biography in the 1926 gazetteer records that for several decades after this dike was completed there was no more flooding.⁴⁷ Likewise, Li Chunyuan, a native of the east suburbs, helped draw official attention to drainage problems there after a significant flood in 1879. According to Li’s biography, his careful description of the problem and preparations convinced Chen Jin, a native of Zhejiang and an expectant circuit intendant who was handling conservancy projects for Governor Zhou Hengqi, to make sure the streams were dredged as proposed.⁴⁸ This project’s success notwithstanding, the fact that it took a significant flood inside the city walls to get government support for this project illustrates the reactive and ad hoc nature of cooperation between officials

⁴⁵ Wang Zhonglin, *Wang Zhonglin riji*, 59:322–23.

⁴⁶ Wang Zhonglin, 60:186.

⁴⁷ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 44:33b.

⁴⁸ Mao Chenglin, 9:19a–20b, 13:5a–6b, 40:33a–33b.

and elite in the absence of a centralized administration for water conservancy along the Yellow River.

However, as the involvement of Chen Jin suggests, by the end of the 1870s a more elaborate administration for handling the Yellow River under the auspices of Shandong's governors was taking shape. Greater provincial oversight, which was part of reconstruction efforts after the defeat of the Nian, was first directed toward the more troublesome upper reaches of the Yellow River in western Shandong. Starting in 1875, the provincial government began overseeing the construction of "official dikes" (*guandi*) to supplement the levees previously built by local people.⁴⁹ In the 1880s, these efforts would extend to the lower reaches of the Yellow River, including Jinan, where flooding was becoming increasingly problematic. Greater coordination by the provincial government would also characterize responses to two other kinds of crises—humanitarian and commercial—that accompanied the ecological challenges posed by the Yellow River and in the early years after 1855 were characterized by uneven and ad hoc initiatives.

The Emergence of a Provincial Yellow River Conservancy Administration, 1878–95

Within twenty years, the situation on the lower reaches of the Yellow River had changed dramatically, as expressed in an 1896 memorial by Governor Li Bingheng:

In the twenty years after the dikes at Tongwa xiang broke and the river flowed into Shandong in 1855, there were repeatedly breaches at Houjia lin [in Yuncheng] and Jia zhuang [in Heze] on the upper reaches, but below the Daqing River there were still no major disasters. However, the riverbed has silted up over the years and grows higher by the day. After the breach at Tao yuan [in Licheng] in 1882, there has been no year without a breach, no year without multiple breaches. Although dikes have been constructed on both banks, this is still difficult to prevent. Now it has been fifteen years since the breach at Tao yuan, and the water that used to flow below ground level now

⁴⁹ Jinan shi shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi shuili zhi*, 46.

flows above it.⁵⁰

This image of deteriorating environmental conditions matches our imagination of a Qing state teetering on the brink in the face of intractable crises more than the comparatively benign hydraulic situation Jinan faced in the early years after 1855. However, this does not tell the full story of hydraulic management in late Qing Shandong. Between the onset of endemic flooding around Jinan's portion of the Yellow River in the late 1870s and Li's 1896 memorial, a fundamental shift in approach to administering conservancy projects had occurred. As conditions in the western portion of Shandong gradually improved and, correspondingly, flooding on the river's lower reaches increased, successive governors played an increasingly active role in managing conservancy efforts in the eastern portion of the province. In the process of doing so, they re-constructed the kind of administrative structure that had been absent since the river's northward shift had obviated the old Yellow River Administration.

The provincial conservancy administration demonstrated the adaptability and surprising durability of the late Qing state but also its limitations. To a greater extent than the Yellow River Administration it replaced, it mobilized members of Shandong's elite to participate in conservancy projects while offering centralized coordination that had been lacking in the years after 1855.⁵¹ This pattern of provincial coordination of elite public service also characterized

⁵⁰ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 9:10b.

⁵¹ The mobilization of the elite as managers in this administration was only one aspect of its dependence on the participation of local people, who were, as a whole, far more likely to be engaged as laborers than as managers. They were no less integral to the operation of the administration as a component of state-building and place-making and deserve their own treatment, although this is probably best accomplished in a study that does not look at a specific place, both because for any given place the majority of sources with meaningful information about individuals' participation in the conservancy administration focus on elite managers and because what participation in this hydraulic infrastructure entailed for local people probably varied greatly by place and time. On the one hand, as complaints about hydraulic projects that I mention below indicate, local people probably suffered exploitation at the hands of officials and gentry managers. On the other hand, employment in the administration surely offered meaningful opportunities for people displaced from their fields by droughts and floods to earn a livelihood, at least on a temporary basis. Although by no means an exact parallel, the construction of the Jin-Pu Railroad provides insights into how such large projects entailed coercion and corruption but also opportunities for local people to

humanitarian interventions, as the next section discusses. The creation of this administration entailed expanding the power of the province's governors, which they exercised through issuing commissions to oversee conservancy projects both to members of the province's elite and expectant officials from elsewhere assigned to Shandong, like Chen Jin. However, the greater power governors wielded over conservancy projects did not come at the expense of central supervision and direction. Rather, the competence of officials in flood prevention was an important part of the court's rubric for evaluating and appointing officials to Shandong in the late nineteenth century. Likewise, officials remained dependent on the court for funding. In fact, the court's selective priorities, together with the monumental size of the environmental conundrum the Yellow River posed, explain the persistent limitations of the conservancy administration in comparison to the more decisive success of the Xiaoqing River project discussed in the final section of this chapter.

The Onset of Endemic Flooding on the Old Daqing River and the Initial Response

In contrast to the first two decades after 1855, dike breaches in the vicinity of Jinan from 1878 through the end of the century were both frequent and violent. Li Bingheng's characterization of flooding every year and multiple floods nearly every year was not far off the mark, and the years when there were no floods, there were often droughts. There were two underlying causes for the increased occurrence of flooding in this period. First, the stabilization of the river's course in western Shandong thanks to government investment in this portion of the river meant that this area no longer served as a protective drainage basin for areas downstream.⁵² Second, the ongoing siltation of the Yellow River's bed gradually raised it above the surrounding land and the dikes constructed to keep it in place.

profit. Köll, *Railroads*, 38–49.

⁵² Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 75–82.

The immediate cause of floods in summer and autumn was usually the sudden and heavy seasonal rainfall that the North China Plain experiences. The dryness of the winter made floods then less common. However, in some years ice in the river collided with and damaged the dikes and clogged the river, causing the water level to rise.⁵³ In Licheng, floods were still more common and severe on the north bank, where the elevation was lower, but floods also affected the south bank.

We can trace the increased frequency of dike breaks around Jinan to the years between 1878 and 1882. In these five years, there were no fewer than ten breaches at various places in Licheng County, culminating in the major breach at Tao yuan on the north bank in 1882 that Li Bingheng referred to in his 1896 report. The village of Tao yuan, on the north bank of the river and very close to Licheng's western border with Qihe, was one of the places in Licheng that was most at-risk for flooding. Its flood-proneness owed to its position along a small but abrupt southward bend in the Yellow River. Not only was the elevation lower on the north side, but the water's momentum carried it in a northeast direction relative to the bed.⁵⁴ Again, Jinan's location on the south bank and position inside this bend kept it from bearing the brunt of flooding. However, other places on the south bank, like Hetao yuan ("river bend garden") in the eastern portion of the county, did experience recurrent dike breaches, due in part to the river's winding channel.

These incidents prompted local people, officials, and even the court to give more attention to flood prevention in Jinan's vicinity. In response to the 1882 flood, Governor Ren Daorong both oversaw the repair of the dikes at Tao yuan that had failed and ordered the

⁵³ Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi*, 56; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 1:5a–6b.

⁵⁴ Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJJ*, 54:2846.

construction of a 25.5-kilometer-long embankment above and below this point.⁵⁵ Official embankments like this did not replace dikes constructed by local people but were usually constructed some distance behind them and offered protection to areas farther inland if the dikes failed. The people who lived in-between the two sets of dikes and whose livelihoods depended on the land they occupied and on which the river's broadening bed steadily encroached, obviously found themselves in a precarious position. It was not uncommon for them to appropriate materials from the official embankments to strengthen their own, and in the event of floods, it was actually to their advantage to break the official dikes so that the floodwaters could drain inland.⁵⁶

Local people recognized that building dikes would not be enough to control the far-reaching effects of the floods, and, like the residents of Jinan's east suburbs, agitated for dredging the Majia, Tuhai, and Goupan rivers, which had experienced flooding and sedimentation at the hands of the Yellow River. After the Tao yuan flood, Junior Metropolitan Censor Zheng Puyuan and provincial censors Sun Jiyun and Wang Zhongxun memorialized to ask that Governor Ren be instructed to dredge a series of rivers adjoining the lower course of the Yellow River. Zheng came from Leling County, while Sun and Wang were both natives of Licheng. Both belonged to the cohort of men described in chapter 3 who gained exam success and began official careers during the late 1850s and 1860s. (Wang earned his *jinshi* in 1859 and Sun in 1865.) Wang had helped organize militia against the Nian attacks in the 1860s, and Sun's brother (also a *jinshi*), was a lecturer at Jinan Academy.⁵⁷ Both, then, were well-integrated into local networks, so it is unsurprising that they would have been apprised of the flooding around

⁵⁵ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 9:8b–9a; Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:366.

⁵⁶ Jinan shi shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi shuili zhi*, 46–47.

⁵⁷ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 9:9a–9b, 40:10b–12a, 14a–15a, 20b–22a.

Jinan, even though they were not there at the time. Their intervention proved successful, and the court ordered Governor Ren to undertake the projects they had proposed.

Dike breaks continued the next year and for a number of years after that, though, which necessitated additional attention to flood prevention measures along the Yellow River around Jinan. Early in 1883, censor Zhang Peilun memorialized the court on the challenges this new flooding posed. Zhang himself was not familiar with the river's course through Shandong, and the officials he had spoken with about his concerns, including former governor Yan Jingming, had not served in Shandong for some time. To gather additional information about the measures that needed to be taken, he recommended that the court dispatch You Baichuan, one of two Superintendents of the Government Granaries at the Capital (*cangchang shilang*), to Shandong to investigate. You was a native of Shandong (Binzhou, near the river's mouth) and "well-versed in water conservancy," so Zhang believed he would be able to gather the information needed to devise a solution to the suddenly severe flooding in areas that had been relatively untroubled until the last few years.⁵⁸ The court agreed with this suggestion and dispatched You, who, together with newly-appointed governor Chen Shijie, would begin the process of developing a more cohesive provincial administration for dealing with the now-endemic problem of flooding on the lower reaches of the Yellow River.⁵⁹

The Creation of a Shandong Conservancy Administration

Under the governorships of Chen Shijie (1883–6) and Zhang Yao (1886–91), Shandong developed an administrative infrastructure to handle more systematically, at least in theory, the now-endemic flooding on the lower reaches of the Yellow River. This administration had two

⁵⁸ Zhang Peilun memorial on 1883/1/17 (GX 8/12/9), *LFZZ*, 03-7075-062.

⁵⁹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 9:9b.

effects that reflected but also re-shaped Jinan's place in the spatial politics of Shandong. First, initial flood control efforts were decidedly disappointing, especially under Chen Shijie. These early failures necessitated heavy investment in the hydraulic infrastructure on the lower reaches of the river. The second effect, which followed from the first and was compounded by the court's continued need to limit its funding of conservancy projects, was that the lower reaches of the river, i.e. the eastern portion of Shandong, received a disproportionate amount of investment from the provincial administration. This situation, combined with the lack of investment in maintaining the Grand Canal, culminated in the western portion of the province becoming an ecological "hinterland."⁶⁰

During his time as governor of Shandong, Chen Shijie contributed to flood prevention in two main areas: systematic dike construction and the formation of an administration to perform regular and emergency maintenance on the dikes. The involvement of the provincial government in conservancy efforts during his tenure differed both in scale and spatial focus from the projects that had helped stabilize the portion of the river that flowed through western Shandong. The shift in focus to the river's lower reaches was natural since that was the area that was now experiencing the most severe flooding. The escalation in scale reflects—contrary to depictions of a decisive withdrawal of government support after 1855—a reinvestment of the government in water conservancy.

Through their survey of the lower reaches of the Yellow River, Chen and You Baichuan identified a number of breaches and weak points in existing dikes built by local people and were able to repair them.⁶¹ Eventually, they decided to extend the official embankments ordered built

⁶⁰ See below for further discussion of Pomeranz's argument. Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*.

⁶¹ Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 11:30b; Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:366.

by Ren Daorong to cover a much longer stretch of the river. This “long embankment,” completed in 1884, ran along both banks of the river: from Changqing to Lijin (165 km) on the south bank and from Dong’e to Lijin (249 km) on the north bank.⁶² Chen also continued the work Ren Daorong had begun on Yellow River tributaries, dredging out a portion of a dormant waterway, the Xiaoqing River (discussed more below), and diverting the flow of the Juye and Luo rivers into it.⁶³

This project occasioned a complex series of debates about how to adapt hydraulic best-practices to the physical and social terrain of central and eastern Shandong. The two key issues in these debates were regulating the amount of water flowing through the Yellow River’s lower reaches by draining a portion off into other waterways and the distance from the river at which protective dikes should be constructed. The court’s unwillingness to support the first approach, out of fear that diverting a portion of the Yellow River northward into other waterways would spread the problem of flooding into northern Shandong and southern Zhili, made the second—dike construction—a key point of contention.⁶⁴ Were this challenge purely hydraulic in nature, then officials could have simply calculated the ideal breadth of the channel—wide enough to accommodate the river’s flow and narrow enough that the velocity would be sufficient to scour sediment from the bed—and focused their attention on building dikes at that point.⁶⁵ However, the presence of villages, farmlands, graves, and even several county seats in close proximity to the river also had to be taken into consideration. The urgent nature of implementing flood control measures and limits on the amount of money the court could provide to fund them placed

⁶² Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:366–67.

⁶³ Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi*, 2–3, 83.

⁶⁴ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 84–98.

⁶⁵ Pietz, *The Yellow River*, 44–45.

additional constraints on planning.⁶⁶

Unsurprisingly, this situation was not conducive to effective hydraulic engineering. After 1884, there were two sets of dikes along more or less the entire length of the river's lower reaches: the government-constructed and maintained long embankment (2.5–4 km from the river) and the more piece-meal dikes built by local people (1–1.5 km from the river).⁶⁷ The people's dikes (*minnian*) were neither far enough from the river nor strong enough to contain it when it flooded, and so the construction of the long embankment itself did nothing to protect people living along the river. In theory, the long embankment prevented floodwaters from spreading further inland, but when the people's dikes failed, the local people had every incentive to—and did—intentionally break the embankment to drain the floodwater trapped between the two sets of dikes. In anticipation of this problem, Chen had proposed investing in strengthening the people's dikes. Before this work could be undertaken, though, severe floods broke through the people's dikes at various places along the river, including in Licheng, and also damaged the long embankment. The court responded incredulously, “The newly-constructed long embankment along the Yellow River in Shandong has just been completed. How could the people's dikes again be breached?”⁶⁸ Major flooding again in 1886 that affected thirty-four counties in Shandong led to Chen Shijie's demotion and then dismissal from office.⁶⁹ His successor, Zhang Yao, inherited a pre-existing commitment to the long embankment and an urgent need to invest in strengthening the people's dikes closer to the river, which were in a much better position to actually prevent flooding.

⁶⁶ For a detailed discussion of debates about dike construction under Chen Shijie and the failure of this project, see Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 98–112.

⁶⁷ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:367.

⁶⁸ *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan*, *Guangxu Xuanton liangchao shangyudang*, 10:189.

⁶⁹ Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi*, 3.

Zhang Yao also inherited a rudimentary provincial administration for managing this hydraulic infrastructure. The roots of this administration went back to the early 1870s when the provincial government under Governor Ding Baozhen had first undertaken major conservancy work on the portion of the Yellow River between the Grand Canal and the old Daqing River. Ding had made supervision of conservancy efforts in this portion of the province the responsibility of the circuit intendant for this area, had assigned two battalions of hired soldiers (first raised during the war against the Nian) to maintain the dikes along with the help of local people, and had designated funds from the provincial and circuit intendant's treasuries to fund maintenance. These conservancy efforts were largely successful in preventing flooding on the upper reaches—one sign of which was the growing frequency of floods on the lower reaches. In 1880, amid the Ili Crisis, the court ordered the battalions stationed on this portion of the river to be moved to eastern Shandong in an effort to bolster coastal defenses, and the dikes on this portion of the river reverted to the control of local people, although the provincial government still provided subsidies to help maintain them.⁷⁰

Greater investment in the hydraulic infrastructure along the lower reaches under Chen Shijie required the development of a similar system in the eastern half of the province. In 1884, Chen established a Water Conservancy General Bureau in Jinan to manage repairs to the long embankment. Chen eventually decided to establish under the General Bureau two branch offices—one each for the upper and lower reaches—which were headed by the Yan-Yi-Cao-Ji and Ji-Dong-Tai-Wu-Lin circuit intendants respectively.⁷¹ Chen also increased the manpower at the disposal of the General Bureau's administrators. He assigned ten battalions (a total of 5,000

⁷⁰ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 173–77.

⁷¹ Wang Bingjun and Xie Chenfu, *Zhi Huang quyi*, 2b; Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 177–79.

men) to guard the dikes. 300 men in each 500-man battalion were permanently employed, while the remaining 200 were hired seasonally from among the local people. Under Chen, the river battalions (*heyings*) were not assigned to specific portions of the river but served as a kind of floating labor force that could be dispatched to wherever they were needed at the moment.⁷² However, he did establish guard posts at regular intervals along the dikes.⁷³

After assuming the governorship, Zhang Yao set about salvaging the physical infrastructure constructed under Chen and continuing the expansion of the conservancy administration. Zhang spent much of his time—300 days in his first year in office—personally inspecting conditions up and down the river.⁷⁴ The early portion of his tenure benefited from flooding upriver in Henan, which caused the water level in Shandong's portion of the Yellow River to drop steeply. This made it easier to dredge the bed and bought time to repair the dikes.⁷⁵ In 1889 Zhang ordered that willow trees be planted on both banks of the river to help prevent erosion.⁷⁶ The next year he borrowed 400,000 taels from the Deutsche Asiatische Bank to fund the purchase of modern dredging boats.⁷⁷ In addition to strengthening the dikes, Zhang and his successor Fu Run began resettling people who lived in-between the two sets of dikes to places outside the new official embankments. Although this project was costly in monetary and human terms, it was hoped that it would lessen the human damage caused by floods that broke through the people's dikes, thereby reduce the costs for distributing relief to people affected by floods, remove the problem of people living inside the dikes breaking official dikes in the case of floods,

⁷² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 9:11a; Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:365; Hu, "The Yellow River Administration."

⁷³ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 178–81.

⁷⁴ Jinan shi shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi shuili zhi*, 3.

⁷⁵ Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 11:32b.

⁷⁶ Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi*, 4.

⁷⁷ Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 11:31a; Jinan shi shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi shuili zhi*, 3.

and also eliminate the expense of having to maintain two sets of dikes, one of which (the people's dikes) was not built with an eye toward systematically managing the river and was thus particularly prone to damage. For a variety of reasons, these relocations were not as thorough as they needed to be to accomplish all these goals; however, on the south bank at least, they were complete enough to allow the government to essentially abandon the people's dikes and put all of its energy into maintaining the official embankment.⁷⁸

Nevertheless, flooding on the lower reaches continued through the 1890s and did not begin to show substantial signs of improvement until the first decade of the twentieth century. As the next section discusses, this did not reflect inattention on the part of the central government so much as the piece-meal manner of investing in the hydraulic infrastructure that followed the failure of systematic dike construction under Chen Shijie. This pattern was not conducive to addressing the underlying causes of endemic flooding. In fact, Li Hongzhang—specially appointed by the court to develop a plan for the Yellow River in 1898—and Zhou Fu—Li's assistant and later governor of Shandong (1902–4)—did submit systematic plans that the court approved in theory but failed to fund completely under the redoubled fiscal pressures of the post-1900 period. (See part III for more discussion of state-building after 1900 and the Boxer crisis.) The accumulation of investment in strengthening the dikes along the lower reaches did curb the incidence of major floods. Even more, the introduction of stone dikes—first proposed by Zhou but not implemented until 1908 amid concerns about how flooding and the construction of a railroad bridge spanning the Yellow River at Luokou might complicate each other—made flooding on the lower portion of the river a far less frequent occurrence in later decades.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 112–19.

⁷⁹ Amelung, 129–45.

Although Zhang Yao's interventions in flood prevention measures were of limited effect, he did initiate adaptations to the administration of the hydraulic infrastructure that continued to structure flood prevention efforts well into the twentieth century. The inflection point for these reforms was 1891, when the entire length of the Yellow River in Shandong, including the portion west of the Grand Canal, came under the control of the General Bureau.⁸⁰ Correspondingly, Zhang added a third local branch office under the General Bureau, so that, for the purposes of Shandong, the river was now divided into three sections (*san you*): upper, middle, and lower. Instead of making supervision of each section a concurrent responsibility for a circuit intendant already stationed in the area, Zhang put a series of expectant officials in charge of each section, with a circuit-intendant-ranked official operating as the director for each.⁸¹ Appointing administrators specifically responsible for conservancy, rather than relying on ad hoc commissioners or officials with other responsibilities, formalized the administration, provided a mechanism for delegating conservancy work to technically adept officials who could accumulate experience without being subject to the short tenures and frequent rotations that characterized service as a county magistrate, and consolidated the control of the provincial government over conservancy work. Zhang also expanded the number of battalions assigned to conservancy work to eighteen, although they were responsible for a significantly longer portion of the river than the smaller number of battalions employed by Chen Shijie. Adaptations to this structure continued into the early twentieth century, especially under the governorship of Zhou Fu. Zhou assigned the battalions to specific areas of the river and successfully proposed adding conservancy work to the rubric under which magistrates serving in counties along the river would be evaluated,

⁸⁰ Amelung, 181.

⁸¹ For a full list of these positions and their responsibilities, see Hu, "The Yellow River Administration," 242–44.

which effectively forced them to cooperate more closely with the heretofore distinct conservancy administration.⁸²

As Pomeranz argues, this hydraulic infrastructure disproportionately benefited eastern Shandong (i.e. the lower reaches of the Yellow River) over the western portion of the province. The prioritizing of the lower reaches was already evident in Chen Shijie's decision to allocate annually 320,000 taels for the maintenance of the lower reaches and only 80,000 taels for the upper reaches.⁸³ Even when the administration was expanded to cover the entire length of the river in the province, there was still obviously a heavier emphasis placed on the eastern portion. By 1911, after river battalions had been assigned to specific portions of the river, only three battalions were stationed west of Changqing (the county immediately southwest of Licheng). These were in Heze, Shouzhong, and Puzhou, and their quotas of permanent soldier-laborers (*yongfu*) had been cut to 260, 120, and 130, respectively. The average length of the portion of the river these battalions oversaw was 154 *li*. The remaining fifteen battalions were assigned to the portion of the river from Changqing to the mouth. Most of these battalions were assigned the full quota of 300 soldier-laborers, and the average length of the dikes for which they were responsible was only 60.1 *li*. Two battalions were based in Licheng alone, one on each side of the river.⁸⁴

This uneven investment, which continued into the Republican period, created an increasingly worsening situation on the river's upper reaches. Zhou Fu proposed building stone dikes along the entire length of the river, which would have saved the central government money

⁸² Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 181–83; Wang Bingjun and Xie Chenfu, *Zhi Huang quyī*, 2b; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 9:12a.

⁸³ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 178.

⁸⁴ Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 120:2b–9b.

on repairs, tax remittances, and aid in the medium-long term.⁸⁵ The court balked at this investment, though, in the face of the many projects that were vying for the limited fiscal resources at its disposal. Instead, stone dikes were built only on the lower reaches, where the transport cost for stone was also lower. Stone dikes helped increase the river's flow rate, deepen its channel, and decrease its rate of siltation and thereby alleviated flooding on this portion of the river.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, stalk-faced dikes continued to be used in the western portion of the province. These dikes were less effective than stone and required more frequent maintenance. The constant demand for millet and sorghum stalks to repair dikes outstripped the ability of the surrounding area to supply them, which also affected the price of fuel, for which the stalks were also used.⁸⁷ The deterioration of central government support for conservancy in the Republican period required individual counties to shoulder more costs on their own and further exacerbated this situation.⁸⁸

Pomeranz argues that these disparate levels of investment and divergent environmental and economic outcomes reflected the mercantilist priorities of the state, which dictated investment in coastal areas that were most vulnerable to foreign intrusion.⁸⁹ This argument is particularly effective for explaining the hinterland-ization of western Shandong over the long term, and, as chapter 6 shows, the logic of government investment in Jinan in the last years of the Qing. However, there are two aspects of Jinan's history that it does not explain especially well. First, the threat of imperialist encroachment appears to have had little effect on the initial establishment of the provincial conservancy administration in the 1880s and its disproportionate

⁸⁵ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 164–65, 193–94.

⁸⁶ Pomeranz, 185–86, 206.

⁸⁷ Pomeranz, 124–35, 182–88.

⁸⁸ Pomeranz, 159–60; Wang Bingjun and Xie Chenfu, *Zhi Huang quyì*, 2a-4b.

⁸⁹ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 209–11.

investment in the eastern portion of the province. Instead, the structure of the administration most directly reflected both the increased rate of flooding on the lower reaches and the (interconnected) momentary abatement of flooding on the upper reaches, which until 1891 still benefited from residual elements of the old Yellow River Administration.

In terms of western Shandong, which is Pomeranz's primary focus, these findings primarily provide additional context, drawing attention to the fact that western Shandong experienced a modest environmental recovery before the onset of a much longer and more severe decline. They more substantially re-cast Pomeranz's narrative about the nature of the government's reinvestment in flood prevention in at least parts of North China in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Looking forward from the 1890s, Pomeranz paints this reinvestment as emblematic of (and shaped by) a mercantilist political economy developed to defend national sovereignty in the face of foreign aggression. However, the origin of systematic reinvestment in conservancy projects in the 1880s looks much more like a re-articulation of imperial commitments to flood control, albeit using different (provincial) administrative mechanisms.

This story of imperial reconstruction bridges the gap between the government's withdrawal from flood prevention after 1855 and its later reinvestment under a different logic. The twentieth-century developments that Pomeranz observes were indeed products of a political economy focused on protecting national sovereignty. However, this logic did not emerge from the ruins of imperial state-building. Rather, it was built on the already-reconstructed foundation of an imperial political economy focused on maintaining a stable agrarian base and ensuring the viability of strategic transportation routes through an administrative system based on a differentiated spatial politics. It was developments after the 1880s, like the growing imperialist threat, even tighter fiscal constraints, and the deterioration of conservancy infrastructure in

western Shandong, that forced the Qing government to hew more exclusively the logic that Pomeranz describes when deciding where and how to invest limited fiscal resources.

From this follows the second aspect of Jinan's relationship to conservancy-as-state-building in the late-nineteenth century that bears further discussion. As the foregoing discussion suggests, the implementation of flood control measures was not a simple matter of the state acting upon or doling out resources to society. Even if we look only at the government itself, the composite nature of the state stands out, especially in terms of the relationship between the court, the provincial government, and the conservancy administration. Moreover, "society" was not a passive recipient or victim of government policies. Rather, the capacities of local communities were integral to state-building—and place-making—conservancy projects. The next two sections, then, explain *how* and through *whom* the different parts of the conservancy administration enabled Jinan to derive particular benefits from its place in imperial spatial politics.

Funding and the Question of Central Control

On the surface, the development of a provincial conservancy administration appears to reflect what other scholars have described as a devolution of power and responsibility from the central government to provincial officials and (to a lesser extent in this case) the local elite. The reality, though, was significantly more complicated. The 1880s did see the formalization of the responsibility of the provincial government—as opposed to the Yellow River Administration—for conservancy. However, this accretion of responsibility and power was more than matched by the burden it entailed. The provincial government remained dependent on the court for funding major projects and accountable to it for their outcomes. The reinvestment of the government decreased the relative autonomy local people had exercised in ad hoc conservancy efforts after

1855. However, this loss of autonomy was hardly calamitous on two counts. First, shouldering the burden of conservancy with very limited government support had never been an advantageous form of autonomy for local people. Second, local people exercised leadership both within the projects undertaken by the provincial government and, in a sense, over them through reporting their concerns to the court through the censorate. Thus, rather than an internal fracturing of the state or a break between state and society, the 1880s administration was reflective of the operation and interests of a composite state comprising the court, provincial government, and non-governmental actors. However, it was precisely the fact that Yellow River conservancy in Shandong was only one part of a greater whole that hindered the implementation of more comprehensive conservancy projects after the failure of Chen Shijie's long embankment in the 1880s.

Even before Chen arrived in office, the court took a keen interest in the growing problem of floods in Shandong. As the dispatch of You Baichuan—a native of Shandong—as a special commissioner suggests, the court was not content to rely exclusively on reports from the provincial governors. Another alternative source of information was the censorate, from which the suggestion to appoint You originated. The court continued to receive reports about conservancy efforts through the censorate under Chen Shijie's tenure. These reports included complaints about Chen's methods for taming the Yellow River and reports of the use of forced labor in some counties that transmitted complaints from local people in Shandong.⁹⁰

It was only natural that the court would want to be informed about potential problems with flood control efforts since it was deeply invested in them both politically and financially.

⁹⁰ Amelung discusses the debates that conservancy in the 1880s occasioned at court in length. Kong Xiangui memorial in 1883–4 (GX 9), *LFZZ*, 03-7075-123; Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, *Guangxu Xuanton liangchao shangyudang*, 10:47; Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 84–112.

The cost of completing Chen's long embankment was 1.42 million taels, which, because it was not a budgeted expense, was essentially deducted from tax surpluses that would have been forwarded to the court. Because Shandong did not have enough additional funds in its own coffers to cover the costs, it had to rely on funds transferred from other provinces. In addition to this sum, Chen was granted permission to withhold 683,000 taels from taxes Shandong was supposed to remit to Beijing in order to provide subsidies to local communities to repair the people's dikes.⁹¹

The failure of the long embankment, despite the considerable amount of money the central government invested in it, set a dour precedent for future efforts. Immediately after floods in 1885, Chen himself requested an additional 700,000–800,000 taels to construct traverse dikes to control flooding within the area between the people's dikes and the new long embankment. The Board of Works opposed this proposal because it effectively reneged on Chen's prior commitment to limiting flooding by strengthening the people's dikes themselves and because people living in the flooded area would likely puncture these dikes to drain floodwater just like they did the long embankment.⁹² In fiscal terms, the court gave Zhang Yao a relatively free rein, but the projects he proposed were generally focused on salvaging investments already made in the long embankment and the people's dikes. Relocating people living between the two sets of dikes was something of an exception, but Zhang was able to use money donated for relief to defray these costs.⁹³

Even then, Zhang ran into the upper limits of the court's allowance when proposing to increase the amount of money budgeted for the maintenance of the hydraulic infrastructure. In

⁹¹ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 104–6.

⁹² Amelung, 109–10.

⁹³ Amelung, 111–14.

1890, maintenance costs had reached 880,000 taels—well above the 400,000-tael budget established by Chen. The central government provided about three-fourths of this sum, with the remainder being covered by various sources of funds within the province. When the provincial conservancy administration was expanded the next year (1891), Zhang twice proposed increasing the amount of money earmarked for maintenance (and thus not requiring special approval) to 800,000 taels. The Board of Works initially refused, but when Zhang re-submitted his petition, it agreed to add 200,000 taels to the maintenance budget on a temporary basis. Despite the Board's stipulation that this was a temporary measure, 600,000 taels became the new regular budget for maintaining the dikes. The provincial government did supplement this budget with its own discretionary funds from the provincial treasury and the Linqing customs bureau, but the amounts from these sources—usually around 50,000 taels—fell far short of the investment provided by the central government.⁹⁴

By 1891, then, the court was certainly interested in curtailing its investment in managing the Yellow River, but it had by no means sounded a decisive retreat. In fact, as numbers cited by Pomeranz indicate, average annual expenses from 1894 to 1900 (992,000 taels) exceeded the 600,000-tael budget by a large margin, whereas between 1900 and 1906 they fell to 670,000 taels per year.⁹⁵ Up to around 1900, the fiscal concerns of the court were not so different from in the 1880s: the court's ability to fund hydraulic projects was by no means unlimited but far exceeded its capacity in the 1860s and early 1870s. The expensive (albeit not extravagantly so) measures of the 1880s and then repeated efforts to salvage them introduced the problem of sunk costs into policy debates already constrained by fiscal limitations and the sheer complexity of the problem.

⁹⁴ Amelung, 189–90.

⁹⁵ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 159–60.

By the late 1890s, these sunk costs had reached a point—between 6 and 7 million taels spent between 1886 and 1895—that the court was open to the comprehensive plans drafted by Li Hongzhang and Zhou Fu that, while expensive in the short term (5.6 million taels for the latter) would save money in the long-run.⁹⁶ Of course, there is no guarantee that these plans would have been carried out fully in an alternate universe without the Boxer Uprising, the heavy indemnities imposed on the Qing government as a result of it, and the ambitious and expensive scheme of modernization launched in Shandong and elsewhere in response. However, as Amelung argues, it is beyond doubt that this chain of events proved far more decisive in reducing government investment in hydraulic infrastructure in Shandong than any development in the prior two decades. The fact that no one could absolutely guarantee that new investment would totally eliminate flooding on the Yellow River deepened the constraints these developments imposed on hydraulic expenditures.⁹⁷

In sum, then, the central government's attention to and investment in hydraulic infrastructure in Shandong, especially around Jinan, and its myriad entanglements with place-making continued to be a feature of Qing state-building until very late in the nineteenth century. The decisive curtailment of government investment in the early-twentieth century was so harmful precisely because renewed conservancy efforts since the 1870s (upper reaches) and 1880s (lower reaches) had depended on the support of the central government. Jinan enjoyed the benefits of substantial government investment in the 1880s and 1890s because at that point government intervention was most needed on the lower reaches. Jinan continued to reap these benefits into the early twentieth century on account of the infrastructure already put in place and

⁹⁶ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 142.

⁹⁷ Amelung, 141ff.

the city's double importance to maintaining existing imperial prerogatives and protecting national sovereignty.

Human Agents of Place-Making and State-Building in the Provincial Administration

The question of how developing a new environmental infrastructure affected state-building and place-making in Jinan and other places on the Yellow River is inseparable from the question of what kinds of human actors were involved. It is particularly important to specify who exercised leadership within the provincial conservancy administration, beyond the general categories of “officials” and “elites.” Primary and secondary sources amply attest to the fact that “expectant officials” played a central role in the new conservancy administration. However, who exactly these people were, how they were related to the bureaucracy and local communities, and, most importantly, the meaning of their involvement for state-building and place-making requires some disentangling. What we find is that leadership of the conservancy administration was held by two groups of people, besides the provincial officials and circuit intendants who formed its upper core of leadership. The first and, at least on paper, numerically superior group, comprised men from other provinces serving as expectant officials in Shandong. The second group consisted of members of the local elite, not a few of whom held official titles like the expectant officials, who continued to function as at least indispensable auxiliaries to the administration. The involvement of these two groups in the conservancy administration further demonstrates the composite nature of the Qing state and will, as we see, suggest the particularly advantageous position that Jinan's elite occupied within it.

Expectant officials (hereafter ‘expectants’), who formed the primary bridge between the provincial officials who oversaw the conservancy administration and local hydraulic projects, were men who had received an official rank—usually by purchasing it—but had not yet been

assigned to an actual post. Instead, they were dispatched to a specific province to await assignment. The number of expectants increased significantly in the early nineteenth century and then dramatically during and after the Taiping War when not only the court but also provinces increasingly relied on office-selling to provide much-needed funds. Through a process of meritorious service, recommendation of their superiors, and promotion that could be hastened by purchasing additional perquisites, men who started out as expectant officials could, in time, obtain high-ranking posts, although those who succeeded in doing so were certainly the exception (as were those who managed to do so through the “regular” channel of competing for examination degrees). A far larger number did their best to recoup their investment (in terms of financial or at least social capital) while they worked through low-ranking or extra-statutory posts, of which Shandong’s hydraulic administration was a prime example.⁹⁸

Expectants occupied important roles in early provincial conservancy projects in the 1870s, but their importance became more obvious with the expansion of the administration in the 1880s.⁹⁹ Memorials submitted by Chen Shijie requesting commendations for men who participated in conservancy projects make this clear. One such memorial that is of particular value comes from June 1886.¹⁰⁰ What makes this memorial distinctive is that it not only references the service of a large number of people—279 in total—but also categorizes them by the counties in which they performed the work for which they were being commended. Although this source is no substitute for an institutional flow-chart or a fine-grained description of the administration’s operation, it is very useful for understanding both who assumed leadership

⁹⁸ Leung, “Crisis Management and Institutional Reform,” 62–70; Kaske, “Fund-Raising Wars”; Dykstra, “Complicated Matters,” 192, 210.

⁹⁹ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 174, 201.

¹⁰⁰ Chen Shijie memorial on 1886/6/21 (GX 12/5/20), *LFZZ*, 03-7077-030.

positions in the administration during the 1880s and where.¹⁰¹ The problem with this memorial, like many other sources that reference expectants, is that it does not provide information on the home places of these men, making it impossible, at first glance, to tell whether they were expectants assigned to Shandong and waiting for posts there or people from Shandong who were or had been expectants in other provinces. To deal with this problem, I have checked the names of men included in the memorial against a list of expectants in Shandong held in the Jinan Municipal Library, which includes information on registered home places, and local gazetteers in the Airusheng database.¹⁰²

This memorial provides several layers of information. First, it confirms the importance of expectants to conservancy projects. Of the 279 people listed, 165 (59%) are identified as civil expectants. In comparison, the memorial lists only 22 civil officials currently holding posts (e.g. county magistrates). The remainder are a mix of military officials (including expectants), degree-holders, and others. Second, I have been able to determine that a significant majority of these expectants were, in fact, people from other provinces assigned to Shandong. Using the process described above, I have determined likely home places for 80 of the 165 expectants listed in this memorial. A full break-down of the home provinces of these men appears in the table below. Of greatest interest is the fact that 26 of them were from Shandong, meaning the majority came from other provinces. This indicates, on the one hand, that Chen Shijie's administration

¹⁰¹ On the lack of sources on the regular operation of the administration, see Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 210.

¹⁰² As the limited number of people recommended for commendation that I have been able to identify in these sources suggests, the process is hardly fool proof. One problem is that this list of expectant officials appears not to have been comprehensive and includes many more officials from later in the Guangxu reign than earlier. For a wide variety of reasons, local gazetteers are not guaranteed to include the names of all expectant officials or local people who participated in conservancy projects. Also, there are some names that are so common as to make a reasonable positive identification unfeasible without extensive research. In all cases, I have limited these positive identifications to cases where I have been able to match names exactly and where the corroborating source indicates with reasonable likelihood that the person in question was alive and active in Shandong at the time that these projects were undertaken. Shen Baoying, *Shandong tongsheng houbu*.

depended to a large degree on expectants assigned to Shandong to oversee specific sections of the conservancy work. On the other hand, though, Shandong people were by no means absent from the administration, especially if we take into account the fact that a number of the people who were listed as degree-holders or without any degree or rank (often students), were likely natives of the province. Not only did conservancy work depend on these local people, but the system of commendation connected them to the court, lending imperial sanction to their efforts.

Because this document also provides information about where the people recommended for rewards undertook work, we can also say something more about the leadership of conservancy projects in the vicinity of Jinan. As we would expect, we find natives of Jinan in sections on Licheng and the General Bureau. Among these are the two sons of militia organizer Mao Hongbin. The elder, Mao Qingdeng is one of two people from Licheng listed in the section on work in Licheng. The younger, Mao Chenglin, is listed in the section on service in the General Bureau. The number of Licheng men listed as serving in their home county is actually surprisingly small: only Mao Qingdeng and one other out of 16 for whom I have been able to identify home places. The presence of Jinan men in the General Bureau was more remarkable: of the 8 (out of 13) expectants for whom I have identified home places, four were from Shandong and all of these were from Licheng. In addition to Mao Chenglin, these men were Wu Mengling, Liu Zhengji, and Wu Jilin.

The conclusion that this suggests—that people from Jinan exercised an especially important role in the administration as a whole beyond work done in Licheng County—finds further support from the fact that it is not uncommon to find natives of Shandong commended for work performed outside their home counties. This is true of Licheng, where in addition to the two Licheng men, I have been able to identify three expectants from other counties in Shandong.

Likewise, people from Licheng served in other counties: Zhang Rubi and Lu Weixin in Huimin, Sun Jiance in Binzhou, Chen Ruheng in Qidong, and Li Zhongjun in Changqing. Only one of these counties—Changqing—directly bordered Licheng.

Province	No. Expectant Officials
Anhui	3
Henan	8
Hubei	2
Hunan	3
Jiangsu	7
Jiangxi	2
Shandong	26
Shanxi	2
Zhejiang	5
Zhili	18
Other	4

Table 4.1: Home provinces of expectant officials commended for service in the conservancy administration.

Although these men clearly possessed some competency in hydraulic work, they were also part of a broader web of public activism. Chen Ruheng, Mao Chenglin, Liu Zhengji, and Sun Jiance were all involved in the institution at the center of the following section on humanitarian relief, the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence. The political activism and stature of these men was also related to the experiences of war in the 1850s and 1860s described in chapter 3. This was most obviously the case for the sons of Mao Hongbin, whose father had been both the leader of local militias during the Taiping northern invasion and become a powerful official.

Beyond them, the biographies of Liu Zhengji, Wu Mengling, and Zhang Rubi also mention experience fighting against the Taiping and Nian.¹⁰³ Their participation in the conservancy administration reflects how the events of the 1850s and 1860s, rather than initiating a devolution of power away from the state to society, had served to mobilize members of the elite to participate in projects that were constitutive of both state-building and place-making.

The state-building and place-making effected by the new conservancy administration thus comprised three layers of human participation. First, there were extra-provincial expectant officials, whose presence in Shandong itself reflected the intensified translocal circulation through the bureaucracy created by the increased sale of office in the late nineteenth century and who provided a new kind of institutional flexibility for linking the provincial government to local communities.¹⁰⁴ Their role in the hydraulic administration, if anything, increased after the 1891 reforms, which created a number of posts reserved for expectants of specific ranks. Second, there was a localist element to the conservancy administration, where people continued to participate in and manage efforts to protect their home counties. Finally, there was an intra-provincial but translocal dynamic, where people from Shandong participated in conservancy projects up and down the Yellow River.

We should not assume that the relationship between these groups was without conflict, or that the administration ran as a smoothly oiled machine. As chapter 6 discusses, expectants played an increasingly important role in provincial administration generally into the early twentieth century, and the personal fortunes some of them made in the process drew criticisms from at least some members of Shandong's elite. Likewise, the conservancy administration faced

¹⁰³ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:12b, 24a, 25a.

¹⁰⁴ Kaske makes a similar argument about the effect of office-selling but from a fiscal perspective. Kaske, "Fund-Raising Wars," 109–38.

many accusations of corruption and mismanagement. Pomeranz argues that the influence of expectants in the hydraulic administration was especially baleful in western Shandong, where the thinness of the conservancy administration and the subordination of even local magistrates (after 1904) to expectants serving in the conservancy administration meant that there were practically no checks on the latter's power.¹⁰⁵ Amelung agrees with Pomeranz that the system for procuring construction materials was particularly ripe for self-enrichment, although he notes that local people (e.g. those responsible for delivering bulk shipments from local communities to the administration) as well as officials were in a position to profit from corrupt practices.¹⁰⁶ More broadly, Amelung argues that while there was undoubtedly a considerable degree of what we would call corruption in the administration, it is simply impossible to quantify how much. Even when accusations from people outside the administration (like censors) resulted in investigations, they rarely turned up concrete evidence that resulted in impeachments of local officials. In any given case, a non-indictment could reflect the baselessness of the allegations or different layers of the administration working together to cover up abuses. Given that provincial officials were often tasked with investigating charges of malfeasance and had little incentive to turn up problems within their own administration (and among officials whom they had often personally appointed or recommended), the latter scenario was structurally likely. Such a situation certainly reflected weaknesses of the Qing administration—particularly the lack of effective watchdog institutions—but Amelung argues that it is difficult to say whether Shandong's conservancy administration performed less effectively in this regard than other parts of the Qing government.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 196–99.

¹⁰⁶ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 236–40.

¹⁰⁷ Amelung, 227ff.

The irregular character of the conservancy administration and its dependence on extra-provincial expectants did nothing to mitigate concerns about corruption, but we need to weigh the downsides of this system (both perceived and actual) against its benefits. Historically, the late imperial administration had depended on the regular circulation of territorial officials to maintain a distance between their personal concerns and the entrenched interests of the local communities where they served. However, this practice also served to undermine the accrual of technical expertise within specific sections of the territorial administration. It was not uncommon for expectants serving as commissioners in the conservancy administration or in a succession of regular territorial posts to stay in Shandong for long periods—even decades—without being moved elsewhere. This system, then, allowed for the ongoing employment of experienced and technically proficient men. One sign that this system was effective in this regard was that men from Shandong were sent to Henan to help repair dike breaks upriver in 1887, which was a reversal from the early years of the Yellow River's new course, when officials from the Yellow River Administration had been dispatched to Shandong to make up for the provincial administration's lack of hydraulic expertise.¹⁰⁸ The economic precarity of expectants did incentivize deleterious practices, like bribing superior officials to gain appointments and profit-taking once in office.¹⁰⁹ However, governors' regular recommendation of expectant officials for promotions (as rewards for meritorious service) and expectants' particular dependence on such promotions as a means of career advancement, created considerable incentive for performing their jobs well. Of course, governors still had the option of appointing and promoting men based on personal connections and interests but doing so carried the risk of becoming personally liable

¹⁰⁸ Amelung, 194–97.

¹⁰⁹ Leung, "Crisis Management and Institutional Reform," 71–74.

for the poor performance or corrupt practices of subordinates.¹¹⁰

We can find a complex portrayal of this phenomenon in the well-known novel *The Travels of Lao Can* (*Lao Can youji*), written by Liu E. Liu was a native of Zhejiang, who, although not an expectant himself, was employed as an expert in hydraulic engineering by Zhang Yao.¹¹¹ On the one hand, the titular antagonist—an itinerant doctor who eschews an official career despite his renown and obvious skill in handling government affairs—provides a vehicle for criticizing the self-interested careerism of expectants and other officials in the Shandong administration. On the other hand, the novel carries an optimistic message about the benefits that could be reaped from good governance implemented by ethical and technically adept men like Lao Can and, ostensibly, Liu himself, even when they were not local people.¹¹²

In addition to weighing the benefits and drawbacks of the personnel system employed by the conservancy administration within the framework of practices available to the late Qing government, we should also consider the particular place of Jinan and its elite within this structure. If, as Pomeranz argues, the loose administrative oversight on the upper reaches of the river generated corruption there, then the lower reaches, where the administration was denser, and especially Jinan, which was the base for the provincial governor, should have benefited from the provincial administration's closer supervision of subordinate officials. Moreover, the influence of local men within the conservancy administration and their personal relationships with provincial officials placed a further check on the abuses of extra-provincial officials, at least at the expense of the elite class. Of course, this does not rule out the possibility that members of

¹¹⁰ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 197–203.

¹¹¹ For a more detailed discussion of Liu E's experiences in the Shandong conservancy administration, see Amelung, 206–11.

¹¹² The climax of the novel—Lao Can solving a complex murder case—is just one such example. Liu Tie-yün, *The Travels of Lao Ts'an*, 162–231.

Jinan's elite joined in self-enriching practices, but, hardly less than the officials, they had an active interest in preventing malfeasance from provoking violent opposition among the local people or critically undermining the effectiveness of the conservancy administration, which, from the 1880s, was particularly focused on protecting the area around their home city.

In any case, it is very certain that growing investment in conservancy projects around Jinan from the 1880s did not entail a straightforward devolution of responsibility from "the state" to "local society." Instead, a composite group of people, who occupied diverse positions vis-a-vis both Jinan and the Qing bureaucracy together participated in state-building and place-making through the construction of a new environmental infrastructure. Jinan's status as both a focus of investment, a point of contact between powerful officials and local people, and a central node in the circulation of even low-ranking officials (like expectants) linked the activities of its elite advantageously to the translocal operation of the imperial state.

Humanitarian Relief in Late Qing Jinan and the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence

State-building and place-making in the post-1855 North China disaster regime required developing a humanitarian infrastructure as well as an environmental one. Flood hazards caused immediate damage to human bodies, habitations, and the crops on which the livelihood of local people depended. The secondary human effects of Yellow River flooding were no less significant and included mass dislocation, famine, and disease. These effects were greatly compounded by disasters not directly caused by the Yellow River, such as warfare in the 1850s and 1860s (as discussed in chapter 3) and severe droughts, which in 1876–9 produced one of the worst famines in world history across the North China Plain.

The humanitarian component of the disaster regime further demonstrated the state's

limited capacity to perform symbolically and materially essential functions. Not only did the Qing government struggle to prevent large-scale migration in the face of subsistence crises, but its failure to ensure adequate food supplies to entire regions produced catastrophic secondary crises, particularly the North China Famine, which resulted in the deaths of between nine and thirteen million people.¹¹³ Existing scholarship tends to emphasize how efforts by other actors to compensate for the state's weakness in the realm of humanitarian relief further undermined the prerogatives of the Qing state. Relief provided directly by elites from southern provinces reflected a national outlook that de-centered the court as a source of humane governance, while intervention by foreign actors demonstrated the weakness of the empire on the international stage and compromised its efforts to limit imperialist encroachment.¹¹⁴

However, like river conservancy, the realm of humanitarian relief continued to be an arena of active state-building in late Qing Jinan. Through the implementation of conventional relief measures and the development of a more elaborate humanitarian infrastructure, embodied by the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence (*Guangren shanju*), government initiatives and the activism of the local elite continued to be intertwined. The activities of other actors contributed to this infrastructure but, from the perspective of Jinan's elite, they neither displaced the imperial government as a mediator of translocal relations in the Qing state nor signaled an inexorable degeneration of state power.

The Human Effects of Flooding and Imperial Interests in Humanitarian Intervention

Like conservancy efforts, the government's concern in addressing the human effects of the North China disaster regime were both moral and material in nature. Demonstrating concern

¹¹³ Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 1, 26.

¹¹⁴ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 136–69; Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 185–210.

for people affected by flooding rhetorically and alleviating their suffering materially fulfilled the emperor's paternalistic duty to govern local communities with humaneness (*ren*). Failing to do so compounded the negative effects of "natural" disasters themselves on the dynasty's legitimacy.¹¹⁵

Responding to the needs of human populations affected by the disaster regime also bore on the state's material interest in maintaining a stable agrarian base. Sustaining the agricultural productivity of North China's cultivators was necessary if the government was to collect taxes from them. Moreover, if the people could not live on the land, then they would have no choice but to migrate elsewhere. Contrary to the early Ming government, which tried to minimize voluntary migration, the Qing was theoretically open to it, so long as cultivable land was available in the places that were the targets of migration. By the late nineteenth century, though, the population density of the empire, especially North China, had reached the point where people moving from one place to another would only exacerbate competition for land in the receiving community while leaving fallow land in their home places that, in theory, would become productive again once the floodwaters receded or the rain returned. By and large, then, the government's preference was for people to stay in or at least near their home communities in the hope that they would be able to return to their land in due course.¹¹⁶ Even in the immediate wake of the 1855 floods, the court still found time in its urgent instructions to officials to express its "overall hope that the people who have been afflicted by floods will not be forced to wander about lost and homeless (*liuli shisuo*)."¹¹⁷

The major exception to the government's preference against migration in the nineteenth

¹¹⁵ Li, *Fighting Famine*, 1–3, 5–6; Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 90–92; Fuller, *Famine Relief*, 4–5.

¹¹⁶ Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine*, 48–49.

¹¹⁷ Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJJ*, 53:2377.

century was Manchuria. Previously the Qing had limited Chinese migration to its Manchu rulers' ancestral homeland, but the court began to allow and even encourage it in the late nineteenth century in order to forestall Russian encroachment and convert it to a new breadbasket to supply the capital and North China more broadly. Because of the proximity of Shandong's northern coast to Manchuria (just across the Bohai Gulf), many Shandong people re-settled there permanently or went there to work on a seasonal basis.¹¹⁸ Migration to Manchuria alleviated some of the pressure on land and the effects of environmental crises on agricultural productivity in North China but hardly all of it, especially since the government was slow to actively encourage migration to Manchuria.

The destruction flooding wrought on local communities, which worked against the government's interest in keeping people in place, or at least maintaining the agricultural productivity of these areas, was severe and complex. The number of people who died of drowning was probably relatively small given the vast areas and number of people—hundreds of thousands or even millions at a time—who could be affected by individual floods. Nevertheless, the casualty totals for individual floods could reach into the hundreds or even thousands.¹¹⁹ Many more people were displaced by floods, which washed away their homes (often made of rammed earth), and had to seek physical shelter at higher elevations or beyond the reach of the floodwaters.¹²⁰ The effects of flooding on farmers' crops and thus their livelihoods, depended a great deal on when floods occurred in the planting season. Floods during the summer rainy season, when they were most common, would destroy that year's soy bean crop but could still allow farmers to harvest the sorghum (*gaoliang*) planted in April that was relatively flood-

¹¹⁸ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 37–38, 155–56; Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 37–40.

¹¹⁹ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 33–34.

¹²⁰ Amelung, 33–36.

resistant as well as the winter wheat that would not be planted until the autumn. Winter floods would destroy the winter wheat, which was the main crop on which farmers' livelihood depended. Albeit less common, autumn floods were the most destructive because they would prevent both harvesting the sorghum and planting the winter wheat, meaning that the majority of the year's food-stuff production would be lost.¹²¹ Of course, repeated floods that would have been, on their own survivable, could reproduce the calamitous effects of autumn floods.

As bad as flooding was, it was only one and not even the greatest culprit of famine conditions in late nineteenth-century North China. Drought, which the area around Jinan suffered on average once every four years, could affect multiple crops and even multiple years' worth of crops, as occurred with the El Niño-induced North China Famine.¹²² Hail storms and locusts also destroyed crops, although not on the same scale as floods and droughts.¹²³ Farmers returning to their fields after floods had to remove sediment deposited by the floodwaters and, in the long term, the soil of North China suffered from persistent water-logging and growing salinity that reduced its productivity.¹²⁴

The government and local communities possessed several tools to alleviate the suffering of people caught up in this disaster regime and, ideally, help them remain in their home communities.¹²⁵ The baseline response was to defer tax obligations or exempt affected communities from them altogether through reports and petitions presented by local and provincial officials. (In fact, deferrals not infrequently became exemptions.) This response at

¹²¹ Amelung, 46–49.

¹²² Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 39–41; Pietz, *The Yellow River*, 74–75; Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:356.

¹²³ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:358–59.

¹²⁴ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 50.

¹²⁵ On Qing methods of famine relief generally, see Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine*, 79–265; Li, *Fighting Famine*, 221–49.

least removed the incentive for people to leave unproductive land that was nevertheless subject to tax obligations.¹²⁶ However, not having to pay taxes was obviously small comfort to people who had suffered critical crop failures and were unable to produce or purchase enough food for themselves. The government thus distributed direct aid in the form of grain, cash, and clothing to people affected by crop failures and encouraged private subjects with the requisite means to do so themselves. One way of distributing relief to able-bodied but (at least temporarily) unemployed males that was especially popular with officials in the late-nineteenth century was to provide relief in exchange for labor on public works projects (*yigong daizhen*). It was especially beneficial for everyone if people stayed in or near their home communities, where dike breaches had occurred, to do so.¹²⁷ In the first half of the dynasty, the Qing government had built up and maintained a system of local granaries to ensure a supply of food during shortages and spikes in prices that could have even farther-reaching effects than floods or droughts. Court-mandated granaries, including in Jinan, were complemented by locally established ones funded by donations from both local people and officials.¹²⁸ Local communities, including Jinan also operated charitable institutions to care for the poor, orphans, and the blind. The scale of these institutions, which could accommodate a few hundred people at any given time, was not inconsiderable but still quite small compared to the demand created by late nineteenth-century subsistence crises.¹²⁹

Consequently, the government and local communities were not completely without means to mitigate the human effects of the disaster regime.¹³⁰ However, these mechanisms could

¹²⁶ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 20–21.

¹²⁷ See, for example Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJJ*, 53:2410; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 38:6a.

¹²⁸ Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine*, 176–225; Will and Wong, *Nourish the People*; Li, *Fighting Famine*, 166–95.

¹²⁹ Wang Zhenna, “Jindai Jinan cishan,” 29–43.

¹³⁰ Fuller argues that existing scholarship underplays the scale and significance of localized relief efforts in even rural communities. Fuller, “Decentring.”

not prevent large numbers of people from fleeing their homes. Scholars have argued that while remarkably robust into at least the eighteenth century, the granary system was already falling into decay before 1855.¹³¹ Even if the system had been in its best condition by that time, it is hard to imagine that it could have withstood the decades of warfare and repeated ecological crises across such a large portion of the empire that unfolded after 1855. Instead, people went to where they were most likely to receive aid, and aid distributed by people from outside the community had, to some extent, to flow to where they were, even if the ultimate goal was to return them to their homes.

Jinan would have become an important center for distributing relief purely on account of the repeated flooding that affected counties in its immediate vicinity in the 1880s and 1890s. However, as the provincial capital and thus home to the best-stocked granaries and the officials with the greatest power to mobilize resources for relief efforts (at least within Shandong), it attracted refugees from well beyond its immediate hinterland.¹³² Accounts of the numbers of refugees who converged on Jinan are sporadic, likely prone to exaggeration, and do not differentiate between temporary and permanent migrants. Nevertheless, they give a strong sense of the scale of the challenge that Jinan and other large cities faced in providing for people fleeing flood and famine. A report after flooding in 1883 claimed that 100,000 people had converged on Jinan.¹³³ Similarly, in 1889, Zhang Yao reported that porridge kitchens (*zhouchang*) outside Jinan's gates were feeding 70,000-80,000 people each day.¹³⁴ Even if these figures were inflated and reflect the upper limit of the number of refugees (since they were reported in the aftermath

¹³¹ Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine*, 188–99, 275–82; Will and Wong, *Nourish the People*, 21ff; Li, *Fighting Famine*, 177–79.

¹³² Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 41–42.

¹³³ Chen Shijie memorial on 1884/1/14 (GX 9/12/17), *LFZZ*, 03-5592-120.

¹³⁴ Zhang Yao memorial on 1889/4/11 (GX 15/3/12), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-02-0089-002.

of severe floods), they suggest that at any given time refugees could constitute a significant portion of Jinan's urban population as a whole, which was probably around 200,000–250,000 in the late nineteenth century.¹³⁵

Consequently, the effects of the North China disaster regime on state-building and place-making in Jinan were, to a large extent, bound up with the problem of how to respond to a humanitarian crisis that presented itself in rural areas close to the city but also at the city's own gates in the form of refugees. Likewise, the response of officials and Jinan's elite was not merely local in nature but drew on resources, personnel, and ideas from across the empire.

The Application of Relief Measures in and around Jinan after 1855

The severity and complexity of the disaster regime made it impossible for any single form of intervention, like the granary system, to produce the desired humanitarian effects. Instead, a great variety of methods and strategies were employed by an equally diverse group of actors to respond to humanitarian crises in and around Jinan in the years after 1855. The inability of the government's preferred modes of humanitarian intervention to achieve its ideal goal of keeping people in their home communities certainly speaks to the weakness of the Qing state, at least in the face of a calamitous accumulation of crises. However, the Qing state was not altogether helpless. Through tax remissions and direct aid, the central government invested huge sums of money in humanitarian relief in Shandong, which was supplemented by the efforts of interregional actors, particularly merchants and literati from the south, and international ones, especially missionaries. However, like flood prevention efforts on the Yellow River, many of the

¹³⁵ The lack of official statistics between 1837 and 1914 makes it difficult not only to estimate Jinan's total population but also to know how refugees/temporary residents figured into estimates that could range much higher but are not very reliable. Published police registers for 1914 put Jinan's population at 245,990. In general, this seems like a reasonable upper limit for previous decades' population that reflects growth due to refugee resettlement but perhaps not periodic spikes during especially bad floods or droughts that might have temporarily pushed the city's population even higher in the 1880s and 1890s. Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 34–35, 229–30.

humanitarian projects after 1855 were essentially ad hoc in nature, which helped keep the ideal outcome of limiting migration out of reach. Moreover, while the composite nature of the humanitarian response was not itself out-of-keeping with patterns of late imperial governance, the de-centering of the court as provider, or at least mediator of aid attenuated the already-hybrid imperial nature of Qing state-building.

Even in the immediate aftermath of the 1855 flood, the central government and local administrations were in a poor position to launch a comprehensive humanitarian response. The court's ability to fund relief was limited, again, by the ongoing war in the south.¹³⁶ Meanwhile, granaries in Jinan and elsewhere in Shandong were already operating below their designated quotas.¹³⁷ This situation did not abate in the following years and decades. In 1868, Li Hongzhang argued that the ongoing need to raise funds for military expenses had limited the ability of Shandong's government to raise funds to relieve the suffering of its people.¹³⁸ Although the war against the Nian ended that year, the North China Famine devastated Shandong and neighboring provinces less than a decade later while, as the previous section discussed, flooding on the Yellow River, particularly the portion near Jinan, only grew worse with time. In 1889 Zhang Yao reported on the effects of successive crises on Shandong:

“For more than ten years, locales in Shandong have suffered under disasters caused by the Yellow River. [The river] has invaded the people's lands, either flooding them or burying them in silt, leaving the people unable to plow them. Their livelihood grows more distressed by the day. At first they had surplus resources at their disposal to help get by, or clothes they could pawn, or property they could sell...But the resources of the villages that have been flooded in the past have all been exhausted. This is one reason their suffering is even worse than before.”¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJJ*, 53:2382–83, 2386.

¹³⁷ Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 84:1a–3b; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:16a.

¹³⁸ Li Hongzhang memorial on 1868/9/22 (TZ 7/8/7), *LFZZ*, 03-4678-104.

¹³⁹ Zhang Yao memorial on 1889/4/11 (GX 15/3/12), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-02-0089-002.

The humanitarian crisis of the late nineteenth century was not simply an effect of one or two major events, but an accumulation of personal, local, and translocal tragedies.

Despite its fiscal constraints, the central government did pour money into relieving this crisis, especially as flooding around Jinan became more severe starting in the 1880s.¹⁴⁰ During this period, the court regularly declared tax deferrals and remissions and disbursements of direct aid for Shandong. For the decade between 1883 and 1892, Amelung calculates that the court authorized the expenditure of 5.4 million taels worth of aid in Shandong (provided in cash and grain equivalents). This figure does not include the considerable amount of aid that was distributed through wages for working on hydraulic projects and credited as a conservancy expense.¹⁴¹ Regular distribution of aid continued and even grew in the 1890s. Despite its recent defeat in the Sino-Japanese War, the court mobilized at least 1,000,000 taels for relief in Shandong between 1898 and 1899 alone.¹⁴² Because of the sums involved, the size of the area that was supposed to receive aid, and the movements of refugees, it is exceedingly difficult to pinpoint how much of this aid was distributed in Jinan versus elsewhere or to people from the immediate area versus refugee migrants.

Another complicating factor that reflects the size of the humanitarian project is the diverse sources of funds expended on aid, both governmental and non-governmental. For example, in 1883, the court authorized Shandong to retain 160,000 taels of “provisions to the capital” (*jing xiang*) and 50,000 *dan* of tribute grain and ordered the Board of Revenue to disburse 40,000 taels to provide relief in the counties of Licheng, Qidong, and Lijin.¹⁴³ In the midst of severe flooding in 1888 and 1889, Zhang Yao was allowed to retain 50,000 taels from

¹⁴⁰ Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 328–39.

¹⁴¹ Amelung, 340–41.

¹⁴² Amelung, 348–49.

¹⁴³ Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 85:28a–28b.

salt taxes and 100,000 *dan* of tribute grain, disburse 50,000 taels from the provincial treasury, and further received 100,000 taels from the Board of Revenue and another 100,000 taels from the palace's own treasury.¹⁴⁴ The provincial government not only used these funds for purchasing and transporting grain but also purchasing cotton clothing, which was essential for helping people who had lost or pawned their clothes survive the winter.¹⁴⁵

Funds for relief efforts also came from individual contributors. Provincial governments, including outside North China, arranged many of these contributions through bureaus that collected funds, remitted them to affected provinces, and recorded the names of donors so that they could be reported to the court and recommended for commendation (i.e. promotions or office titles). These bureaus originated in the 1870s during the North China Famine but continued to operate in the 1880s.¹⁴⁶ In 1885, Chen Shijie reported that Shandong had received 645,800 taels from such contributions over the prior two years. Many of the donors were officials, and so their contributions were recorded under the province where they were serving, not their home provinces. The sources for the donations Chen reported were contribution bureaus in Shanxi, Henan, Hunan, Hubei, Sichuan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Fujian, Zhejiang, and Anhui provinces as well as Qingjiang/Huaicheng (Qinghuai) and Yangzhou.¹⁴⁷ Other extra-provincial donations were reported to the court on an ad hoc basis, like a 4,500-tael contribution made by Ding Shouhe, the son of former governor Ding Baozhen.¹⁴⁸

Of course, both registered and temporary residents of Shandong and officials serving there also made contributions to relief efforts through official channels. Shandong collected

¹⁴⁴ Zhang Yao memorial on 1889/4/11 (GX 15/3/12), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-02-0089-002; Zhang Yao memorial on 1889/5/28 (GX 15/4/29), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-01-0968-020.

¹⁴⁵ See, for example, Chen Shijie memorial on 1884/12/7 (GX 10/10/20), *LFZZ*, 03-5593-012.

¹⁴⁶ Li, *Fighting Famine*, 276.

¹⁴⁷ Chen Shijie memorials on 1885/8/12 (GX 11/7/3), *LFZZ*, 03-5593-074, 03-5593-075.

¹⁴⁸ Chen Shijie memorial on 1885/2/11 (GX 10/12/27), *LFZZ*, 03-5593-036.

relief contributions through a Relief and Assistance Bureau (*Zhenfu ju*) that was administered by a mix of officials and gentry.¹⁴⁹ The amounts local people contributed could be quite substantial, even if they could not match the scale of contributions raised from across the empire. In one memorial from 1885, Chen Shijie reported receiving donations totaling a little more than 7,500 taels and 5,000 articles of cotton clothing from ten individuals.¹⁵⁰

This kind of quantifiable contribution only tells part of the story of the great variety of ways local people participated in humanitarian relief, though. Records of more ad hoc actions can be found in local gazetteers. During one flood, Licheng native Deng Yanling procured boats to rescue people from drowning.¹⁵¹ Zhang Guanying donated medicine to poor people in mountain villages around Jinan in an effort to check the spread of disease, which often accompanied famine, malnutrition, and mass migration.¹⁵² In 1889 a merchant named Zhang Dajian who was doing business in Qihe sent two boats filled with grain to Jinan to help provide relief, putatively without any compensation.¹⁵³

However, Jinan's elite did not simply contribute financially to government initiatives or undertake private, ad hoc efforts. In fact, they were integral participants in the public project of distributing aid in Jinan and the surrounding area. Participation of people familiar with local conditions was necessary for distributing relief effectively in affected counties. As with conservancy projects, the most obvious participants were members of the community themselves, but people from elsewhere, including Jinan, also participated in distributing relief outside their home counties. For example, Li Qingxiang, the younger cousin of Li Qing'ao (see

¹⁴⁹ Chen Shijie memorial on 1885/8/12 (GX 11/7/3), *LFZZ*, 03-5593-076.

¹⁵⁰ Chen Shijie memorial on 1885/2/11 (GX 10/12/27), *LFZZ*, 03-5540-010.

¹⁵¹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 44:36a.

¹⁵² Mao Chenglin, 44:36b–37b.

¹⁵³ Mao Chenglin, 44:35b.

chapter 3), helped oversee the distribution of relief in Wuding Prefecture in northern Shandong.¹⁵⁴ Accommodating and keeping order among refugees who fled their home places and came to Jinan likewise required officials to collaborate with the elite. Faced with a surge of refugees in 1884, Chen Shijie reported that he had dispatched officials and personnel, including local gentry, to settle refugees in temples in Jinan's suburbs (the area enclosed by walls built in the 1860s), build earthen shelters ("several thousand rooms"), and "keep watch over them and quell them as need-be (*suishi tanya*)."¹⁵⁵ Chen Ruheng, one of Jinan's most prominent philanthropists, who worked on conservancy and humanitarian projects under both Chen Shijie and Zhang Yao, funded the construction of 800 structures in elevated places in the countryside, in addition to procuring boats to rescue people and distribute relief.¹⁵⁶

Chen Ruheng and other members of Jinan's elite also participated in administering the two and sometimes three grain porridge centers outside the city gates that were one of the primary means for distributing aid to refugees who came to the city. These porridge centers were operational as early as the 1870s, during the North China Famine, when then-magistrate Hong Yongzhou encouraged his superiors to set them up, and they continued to operate, albeit perhaps not continuously, in the following decades.¹⁵⁷ Porridge centers were not a new feature of the state's humanitarian infrastructure. However, they took on greater importance, especially in larger cities like Jinan and Beijing, as the government struggled to distribute aid to people within rural communities and thus prevent them from moving to urban centers in search of subsistence.¹⁵⁸ The centers primarily distributed food during the winter and spring (from the

¹⁵⁴ Mao Chenglin, 40:17a.

¹⁵⁵ Chen Shijie memorial on 1884/1/14 (GX 9/12/17), *LFZZ*, 03-5592-120.

¹⁵⁶ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:35a–35b.

¹⁵⁷ Mao Chenglin, 38:5a.

¹⁵⁸ Will, *Bureaucracy and Famine*, 313–14; Li, *Fighting Famine*, 266.

eleventh to fifth month of the Chinese calendar), which was when people who had lost the sorghum and winter wheat harvests were most likely to be in need of subsistence aid and, of course, winter clothes.¹⁵⁹ As noted above, they reportedly served tens of thousands of people each day. The centers relied at least partly on donations from the local elite, but in 1888, Zhang Yao reported disbursing money from the provincial treasury to support them.¹⁶⁰ As discussed in the larger context of the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence, below, these centers are best understood as a joint operation of officials and local people, which, despite the extraordinary pressures of the time, was not an unusual pattern of local state-building.

These forms of relief—if not the scale at which they were implemented in the late nineteenth century—had robust historical precedents. In contrast, the emergence of interregional and even international relief efforts was unprecedented. During the North China Famine, elites in the Lower Yangzi turned their “managerial” energies and capacities from the reconstruction activities that had preoccupied them since the conclusion of the Taiping War toward mobilizing resources to support the starving people of North China. In addition to making donations through the contribution bureaus operated by the government, southern elites set up their own relief operations to provide money, grain, and clothing directly to people in North China. After the North China Famine, the focus of these activities shifted to Zhili and then, from the early 1880s through the 1890s, Shandong, where flooding on the Yellow River provided fertile ground for philanthropic endeavors.¹⁶¹ The amount of aid southern philanthropic associations distributed in Shandong was not as great as that provided by the government, but it was still very substantial. Between August 1883 and February 1888, southern philanthropists reported distributed 836,000

¹⁵⁹ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:364.

¹⁶⁰ Zhang Yao memorial on 1888/8/21 (GX 14/7/14), *LFZZ*, 03-5595-022; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:16a–16b.

¹⁶¹ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 147.

taels of silver and 124,100 items of cotton clothing. This amount grew in the next few years to 1,837,504 taels and 259,548 items of cotton clothing between February 1888 and May 1892 before declining over the course of the late 1890s and early 1900s.¹⁶² Distributing aid also became a core element of Catholic and Protestant missions in rural North China, but the actual amounts distributed by foreign groups trailed far behind both governmental and non-governmental Chinese relief efforts.¹⁶³ Both Chinese and foreign relief organizations used the modern press as a vehicle for encouraging donations and reporting on their effects. The institutional center of relief efforts was Shanghai, which was also the base of both the English-language *North China Herald* and the Chinese-language *Shen bao*.¹⁶⁴

Chinese and foreign relief efforts shared the common goal of alleviating the suffering of people in the North, but the political implications were different for each group. Foreign discourse on the North China Famine in particular framed it in terms of China's deep-seated weakness and the urgency of embracing Christianity and Western civilization more broadly. Chinese philanthropists also saw the famine as a sign of their country's weakness and used it to encourage reforms, but their end goal was for the Chinese nation to become strong enough that it could compete with foreign powers, not for it to convert to foreign ways. Edgerton-Tarpley argues that the acute sense of crisis occasioned by the famine and the desire not to be out-competed by foreign actors pushed southern elites not only to step beyond their local or even regional communities—the proper sphere of non-governmental activism in Qing spatial politics—but also to appeal to people across all social classes to contribute to relief efforts.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Amelung, *Der Gelbe Fluss*, 345–46.

¹⁶³ Amelung, 350–51.

¹⁶⁴ For general accounts of southern and international relief efforts in North China, including the role of the press, see Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 142–47; Li, *Fighting Famine*, 276–77; Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 131–55, 189–210.

¹⁶⁵ Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 201–7.

Rankin argues that philanthropic activism paved the way for even more radical political mobilization in response to subsequent foreign threats like the Sino-French War of 1884–5.¹⁶⁶ As we have seen in previous chapters, translocal mobility was an integral component of imperial spatial politics. However, both the national imagination and direct mobilization in the interest of the state that was not mediated by reference to the emperor or the bureaucratic system diverged from even the hybrid form of Qing spatial politics.¹⁶⁷

However, the apparent capaciousness of narratives of interregional and international relief belies their narrowness vis-a-vis actors within North China. As Fuller argues, the tendency to emphasize relief measures originating from outside North China risks painting people living in this region as “passive recipients” of aid.¹⁶⁸ Of course, it is possible that just such an image was an integral element of the national imaginary being forged through interregional relief efforts. However, it is not an accurate depiction of the stance of Jinan’s elite, who are at the focus of the present study, or the common people who fought for their own survival. As the next section discusses, Jinan’s elite were deeply involved in translocal even interregional networks but not in a way that divorced them from the familiar form of imperial spatial politics. We must consider this narrative—of nationalist sentiments growing within but not necessarily displacing patterns of imperial state-building—as part of the legacy of late nineteenth-century humanitarian relief as well.

The Bureau for Spreading Benevolence

As the section above describes, a great variety of institutional and ad hoc responses to the humanitarian component of the North China disaster regime emerged in late nineteenth-century

¹⁶⁶ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 147ff.

¹⁶⁷ Rankin argues that prior to the post-Taiping period, the confinement of late imperial “public spheres” to local arenas had been one of their defining qualities. Rankin, “Some Observations,” 162–65.

¹⁶⁸ Fuller, *Famine Relief*, 7.

Jinan. The institutional pinnacle of these efforts was the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence, which bound together formally and informally various philanthropic endeavors and consolidated the political influence of its local leaders. The Bureau's nature as an "official-supervised, gentry-managed" institution underscores how late Qing state-building and place-making in Jinan continued to be characterized more by cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors than a devolution of power from state to society or competition between the two. The Bureau's integration of elite place-making into well-established patterns of imperial state-building belies narratives focused on southern literati and foreign missionaries that emphasize the subversive aspects of national and international humanitarian intervention.

The Bureau for Spreading Benevolence, whose main office was located on the western portion of Jinan's main street (*yuan xi dajie*), was founded in 1885.¹⁶⁹ Unfortunately, no records from the Bureau seem to have survived, which makes it impossible to gauge precisely the balance of official and elite management and funding. Extant accounts do attest to the fact that a significant portion of the bureau's funding came from elite contributions, but it also received financial support from the provincial government. The latter came in the form of a surtax imposed on salt merchants.¹⁷⁰ Jinan's Prefect was the titular supervisor of the Bureau, but its affairs were also (and probably more intensively) managed by a board of gentry directors. Without archival documents, it is impossible to reconstruct the exact composition of this board or how it changed over time, although individual gazetteer biographies do provide a general picture of who these directors were, as I detail below. A later source (discussed in more detail in chapter 7) relays the surprising fact that over time the Bureau's management increasingly came

¹⁶⁹ The most thorough secondary account of the Bureau I have found is in Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:79. Buck also discusses its place in Jinan's society and politics in the late Qing. Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 30–31.

¹⁷⁰ "Wendu," *SDGB*, XT 2/9/14, 8.

under the purview of officials (likely expectants), which may indicate that official supervision had been more-than-nominal all along.¹⁷¹

The Bureau's activities evinced concern for urban poverty generally but also the specific challenges of rural-to-urban migration within the North China disaster regime. The short description of the Bureau in the Licheng gazetteer places its activities into three categories: "distributing medicine, setting up charitable schools, and establishing halls for chaste women [i.e. widows or unmarried young women] and children (*quanjie yuying liang tang*)."¹⁷² Distributing medicine, including inoculations against smallpox, demonstrated concern for the spread of disease, which was a major problem in tightly-packed refugee settlements, even into the twentieth century.¹⁷³ Establishing charitable schools (*yishu*) did not respond directly to the challenges faced by refugees per se, but the operation of ten such schools by the Bureau, rather than a token one or two, demonstrates a clear sense that Jinan's existing capacity for providing a basic education to children who came from families without the means to provide it for themselves was lacking.¹⁷⁴

The Bureau's concern for orphans and, even more, unmarried women and widows more directly reflects concerns that animated elite philanthropy in the late nineteenth century, including a very similar institution in Tianjin.¹⁷⁵ This almost-identically named institution—the Hall for Spreading Benevolence—was founded in 1878 in response to a fire in a Tianjin refugee camp that killed over 1,000 people and growing foreign commentary on the prevalence of the

¹⁷¹ "Wendu," *SDGB*, XT 2/9/14, 9.

¹⁷² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 1:5b–6a.

¹⁷³ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:79; Courtney, *The Nature of Disaster*, 76–82.

¹⁷⁴ Angela Ki Che Leung notes that homes for widows often had charitable schools attached to them, and so it is possible that the missions of these two kinds of institutions was more intertwined than it is possible to tell based on existing sources. Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:24b; Leung, "To Chasten Society," 13–14.

¹⁷⁵ On the growth of elite anxiety about the chastity of young widows amid the disorder of the nineteenth century generally, see Leung, "To Chasten Society."

trafficking of young women.¹⁷⁶ The Hall for Spreading Benevolence was a *cause célèbre* among Tianjin's officials and merchants who came from the Lower Yangzi and was supposed to embody "both the wealth and the Confucian virtue of the South."¹⁷⁷ Like Jinan's Bureau, Tianjin's Hall depended on the financial and political support of the local government. However, it also invested in and operated a diverse portfolio of landed estates and commercial enterprises—many funded by and otherwise associated with southern philanthropists like Sheng Xuanhuai—that became increasingly important as government support declined in the early twentieth century.¹⁷⁸ The Hall's custodianship of young men and, even more, women took highly paternalistic forms: teaching southern farming methods, enforcing strict gender segregation, not allowing women to leave the Hall's premises without an escort, and arranging marriages for orphaned/abandoned girls when they came of age.¹⁷⁹

Key local figures in the establishment of Jinan's Bureau for Spreading Benevolence would have been well-aware of the Tianjin institution, although it is unclear how directly they modeled the former off the latter. Even if Jinan's Bureau was similarly influenced by "southern" philanthropic commitments, it was distinguished by the leadership exercised by its own elite class. Foremost among these figures was the aforementioned Chen Ruheng, who was a chief architect of the Bureau and its primary elite funder. Chen's father, Chen Qin had earned his *juren* in 1852 and was assigned to work on diplomatic affairs first in the Foreign Affairs Office (*Zongli yamen*) and then the customs administration. In 1870 he was sent to Tianjin to help handle negotiations in the wake of one of the most brutal anti-foreign incidents (the "Tianjin Massacre")

¹⁷⁶ On the trafficking of women in the context of humanitarian crises and broader patterns of social and family relations, see Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 189–210; Ransmeier, *Sold People*.

¹⁷⁷ Rogaski, "Beyond Benevolence," 68.

¹⁷⁸ Shue, "The Quality of Mercy," 421–24, 432–34.

¹⁷⁹ For histories of the Hall and its mode of philanthropy, see Rogaski, "Beyond Benevolence"; Shue, "The Quality of Mercy"; Li, *Fighting Famine*, 279–80.

prior to the Boxers. He performed so well that Zeng Guofan recommended that he be made Tianjin's circuit intendant. Later, Li Hongzhang recommended him for the post of Tianjin Customs Intendant. These posts brought the Chen family into close contact with the most powerful officials in China at the time and, in all likelihood, helped them amass some of the considerable wealth that Ruheng expended on philanthropic activities.¹⁸⁰

Unlike his father, Chen Ruheng never served in an official position but instead devoted his energies to a wide range of humanitarian endeavors. These activities included supervising construction of the long embankment and repairs to it and people's dikes in counties outside Licheng, organizing boats to rescue people from drowning during floods, paying to construct shelters for refugees, and managing Jinan's porridge centers, all of which, his biography says, he did without receiving a government stipend.¹⁸¹ Ruheng also donated 2,000 taels to Luoyuan Academy to help expand stipends for its students.¹⁸² Governor Zhang Yao credited his unstinting work through the muggy summer months with his untimely death from illness in 1889.¹⁸³

Biographies of other men involved in the Bureau further demonstrate that it was not just a charitable institution but the institutional core of a broader nexus of local political activism. Leaders of the Bureau and its subordinate institutions included former militia organizers Liu Zhengji and Wu Mengling, as well as Mao Hongbin's son Mao Chenglin.¹⁸⁴ Like Chen Ruheng, other leaders, including Wu and Sun Jiance, also participated in conservancy projects in and beyond Licheng County as well as aspects of humanitarian relief, like the porridge centers and the Bureau for Reduced-Price Grain Sales (*pingtiao ju*) that were closely related to the mission

¹⁸⁰ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:15a–16a.

¹⁸¹ Mao Chenglin, 40:35a–36b.

¹⁸² Ding Baozhen memorial on 1875/5/17 (GX 1/4/13), *LFZZ*, 03-6592-048

¹⁸³ Zhang Yao memorial on 1889/12/29 (GX 15/12/8), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-15-0096-017.

¹⁸⁴ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:12b, 24a–24b; Wang Zhaoyong, *Beizhuan ji sanbian*, 1271; Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 30.

of the Bureau for Extending Benevolence even if not under its auspices. Sun also served as the supervisor of Luoyuan Academy, to which Chen had donated, and Wu had helped Ding Baozhen found Shangzhi Academy during the latter's tenure as governor.¹⁸⁵ As chapter 2 discusses, the importance of government-supported academies to the social activities of Jinan's elite was not especially new, however the profusion of similar institutions that depended on official-elite collaboration drew them into a denser, or at least more visible, sphere of public activism in the late nineteenth century. Chapter 5 discusses the operation of this cultural-political nexus through the lens of a long-running set of property disputes between people in Jinan and American missionaries, in which Luoyuan Academy, the Bureau, Chen Ruheng, and even Li Qing'ao played central roles.¹⁸⁶

The Bureau's embeddedness in a range of activities that were integral to "spreading" the efficacy of good government echoes the findings of previous scholars. Prasenjit Duara refers to a "cultural nexus of power," through which, he argues, the state extended its influence into rural North China (where formal administrative organs were very limited) via a web of institutions and brokers that the state saw as reliable and local people viewed as legitimate authorities.¹⁸⁷ Similarly, Mary Rankin finds considerable overlap between elite management of philanthropic activities and local academies in Zhejiang, a setting much more urbanized and commercialized than both the villages Duara examines and Jinan and its environs.¹⁸⁸ Man Bun Kwan also

¹⁸⁵ Wu's biography refers to this academy as *jinquan*, which was an alternate name applied to the academy owing to its location next to Jinxian Spring. Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:20b, 40:34a–34b.

¹⁸⁶ Particularly in light of the involvement of the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence in this property dispute and the significant overlap between its operations and the charitable activities of missionaries in Jinan (especially in medicine and education), it is entirely plausible that Jinan's elite saw the Bureau as a vehicle for competing with foreign philanthropy. However, there is no direct evidence for this, as there is in other cases. Rogaski, "Beyond Benevolence," 64–65; Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron*, 202–3.

¹⁸⁷ Duara explains this concept at length in chapter 1 of *Culture, Power, and the State* but uses and elaborates on it throughout the book. Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State*, 15–41.

¹⁸⁸ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 98–99.

observes continuity between Tianjin salt merchants' participation in militia organization in the mid-nineteenth century and their charitable activities in subsequent decades.¹⁸⁹

Despite the presence of a “nexus” or “sphere” of public activism across a wide range of cases—rural and urban, more and less commercialized—we still face the problem of how to theorize this phenomenon and understand its implications for late Qing state-building. Duara and Rankin both operate from squarely within the state-society paradigm. Duara treats the cultural nexus of power as something that is rooted in local society and basically distinct from the state, although it is a tool which the state could use to penetrate society.¹⁹⁰ Rankin does acknowledge that elite managerial activities did not operate with complete autonomy from the state, such as when elite-managed bureaus depended on government-sanctioned *lijin* taxes, but she emphasizes that the scope and intensity of elite activism was growing and that a distinct class of elite managers was emerging.¹⁹¹ Elite managerial activities largely complemented state prerogatives, but, she concludes, “During the post-Taiping period, we see in the Lower Yangtze the faint beginnings of competition between bureaucratic and social activism that became better articulated under different circumstances in decades to come.”¹⁹² Rankin’s dependence on the events of the early twentieth century (leading up to the 1911 Revolution) to fit the growth of elite activism in the post-Taiping period into a narrative of growing elite activism producing state-society tensions weakens her interpretation of the mid-nineteenth century on its own terms, as does her effort to accommodate this development to a theory of the public sphere as a space autonomous from the state and a force for resisting it. Kwan backs away from both the teleological and theoretical assumptions of this argument, instead using ‘public sphere’ and ‘civil

¹⁸⁹ Kwan, *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin*, 89–103.

¹⁹⁰ Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State*, 5–6.

¹⁹¹ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 99–103, 107.

¹⁹² Rankin, 135.

society’ as “points of reference rather than a universal model.”¹⁹³ Kwan’s approach is advantageous insofar as it creates room to appreciate the ambiguities of historical state-society interactions without expecting them to conform to a trajectory of political development based on a particular understanding of European history. However, it still leaves open the question of whether the state-society paradigm that informs this approach is itself an adequate framework for explaining Chinese (or Western) history and to what extent the pervasiveness of state-society negotiation marks the history of China (or various parts of it) as distinctive.

The primary problem with thinking of the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence, the nexus of elite activism in Jinan of which it was a core element, and similar phenomena in other parts of the Qing empire around this time in terms of state-society negotiation is that doing so necessarily presupposes the autonomy of society from the state. It is apparent, though, that both the function and formation of these institutions hinged on a high degree of cooperation between actors inside and outside the government.¹⁹⁴ As a result, we are better served by thinking of the Bureau and its elite managers as participants in state-building through place-making, rather than social agents more-or-less autonomous from the state. This approach accounts for the cooperative relationship between the Bureau and the government that was manifested in the types of services it provided, how it mobilized resources to achieve these goals, and the hybrid management of its affairs. Interpreting the Bureau as an element of local state-building better explains a trajectory of growing elite activism that did not necessarily correlate to growing conflict between “state” and “society” while still allowing for potentially transformative tensions within the state-building process. Likewise, thinking of this nexus as a form of state-building does not preclude

¹⁹³ Kwan, *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin*, 6.

¹⁹⁴ As Heselton shows, this was true in the Lower Yangzi, not just North China. Heselton, “Reconstructing Order,” 69–70, 92, 96–97, 145–46, 158–61.

concluding that this period saw the emergence of a new kind of managerial class, which Rankin argues occurred in Zhejiang and, on the evidence presented above, seems to have happened in Jinan as well. Instead, it prompts us to think about how state-building re-shaped place-making processes (i.e. the constitution of local society) and better accounts for the degrees to which the symbolic and material resources available to these elite men derived from their participation in other forms of state-building, either in Jinan (e.g. militia organization) or elsewhere (e.g. official service).

The Bureau and the nexus of elite activism in Jinan reflected how place-making and state-building operated through institution-building, resource-management, and various forms of constructing meaning. Unfortunately, we lack the sources necessary to draw firm conclusions about how cultural forms of place-making and state-building were related to the Bureau's activity. In the absence of concrete evidence, religious practices in particular seem to have played a less integral role in the Bureau and Jinan's sphere of elite activism than Duara's description of the cultural nexus in particular would lead us to anticipate.¹⁹⁵ However, the nexus in which the Bureau was embedded was by no means devoid of cultural import. Luoyuan and other academies were "cultural" institutions, and, as chapters 1 and 2 argue, they were embedded in a deeper discourse about local space and identity. Chapter 5 argues that a sense of guardianship over local space helped animate opposition to missionaries' attempts to purchase and build on property. Furthermore, as chapter 3 and the epilogue discuss, the social activities of elite men in the mid- and late nineteenth century were intertwined with place-making discourse that articulated the relationship between Jinan, the Qing state, and the violence people in and

¹⁹⁵ Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State*, 118–57. Scholarship on the place of religion in post-Taiping reconstruction suggests that the role of religious institutions and practices was not necessarily less important in cities than rural communities. Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*, 141–49; Alexander, "Virtues of the Vernacular"; Heselton, "Reconstructing Order," 162–260.

around Jinan suffered during this period.

These questions about how the distribution of material forms of relief related to political culture take on added significance when we think about the translocal dynamics at work in the Bureau. In the case of the Tianjin Hall for Spreading Benevolence, the core function of cultural commitments, specifically southern moral superiority, stands out much more explicitly than in the limited documentation on Jinan's Bureau. Even in the limited information available about the Bureau, it is possible to see the motivating role of Confucian commitment to humane (*ren*) governance generally, and the more specific commitment to widow chastity that animated social activism in the post-Taiping period. (The epilogue provides further evidence for the significance of these ideals in Jinan, including among people involved in the Bureau.) Unfortunately, the sources we have do not allow us to answer the intriguing question of how (or whether) the local leaders of the Bureau dealt with the sense of regional (southern) superiority that animated the leaders of the Hall in Tianjin. Did they accept this discourse and see the Bureau as a vehicle for modeling the superior virtues of the south? Did they couch their philanthropy in a kind of northern exceptionalism derived from the region's (particularly Shandong's) close connection to Confucian sages? Or, did they work out a synthesis of the two? Did the upsurge in charitable activities directed towards people in the surrounding countryside or coming as refugees to Jinan lead the urban elite to think about the relationship between themselves and rural people in a way similar to the paternalistic outlook of southerners toward the north? Did urban philanthropy reinforce the tangible divisions between city (along with its newly walled suburbs) and countryside that emerged during the war against the Nian (discussed in chapter 3), or did it reforge ties that warfare had attenuated?

The fact that such questions need to be asked, even if we cannot answer them, should

nevertheless shape our understanding of the significance of the Bureau. Existing scholarship treats the topic of humanitarian relief primarily through the lens of the relationship between the imperial government, southern elites, and foreign actors. The Bureau reminds us, though, that local actors in North China also played an active role in humanitarian endeavors and that their participation was meaningful in terms of both state-building and place-making. The close connections between the Bureau, the elite men who led it, other similar institutions in Jinan, and the local/provincial government demonstrates that imperial patterns of collaboration between Jinan's elite and officials did not simply disappear with a greater influx of direct southern and foreign aid. These experiences from the late nineteenth century help explain why, as chapters 6 and 7 describe, loyalty to the Qing Dynasty among Jinan's elite persisted through their active engagement in local politics, agitation for political reforms, and growing sense of national belonging.

A Surprising Success: The Xiaoqing River

In addition to the humanitarian crises that the Yellow River's change in course, combined with recurrent droughts, occasioned, the North China disaster regime also entailed significant commercial repercussions. Existing discussions of this topic forefront the decline of the Grand Canal and the court's concomitant abandonment of the empire's long-standing dependence on it for shipping grain from the south to the capital. The Grand Canal, though, was not the only commercial artery affected by the Yellow River. The Yellow River's usurpation of the channel of the Daqing River severely disrupted commercial transport on what had been the main commercial waterway serving Jinan and other places between the Grand Canal and the sea. The Daqing River was especially important to the regional (political) economy because salt produced

on the coast and marketed in the western half of the province was transported down it through Jinan. Through formal revenues and extraordinary exactions, the salt administration provided an important and flexible stream of revenue which could be tapped for, among other things, conservancy projects that were necessary for its operation and produced broader benefits for the surrounding area. However, as we have seen, the Yellow River posed too heavy a burden for people in Shandong to shoulder on their own, and its disruption of the salt trade limited the ability of the Shandong salt administration to intervene.

Rather than withdrawing from this seemingly intractable situation, the court judiciously invested in an alternative water route—the Xiaoqing River—that sustained the salt trade and other merchants who had depended on the now-unreliable Daqing/Yellow River. This project is significant for three reasons. First, it was much more effective than failed and cost-ineffective conservancy efforts on the Yellow River and so demonstrates that late Qing hydraulic management was not as much a failure as the persistent problems on the Yellow River would lead us to believe. Second, this investment reflected the long-standing importance of the salt trade to imperial economy, which the fiscal pressures of the late nineteenth century by no means displaced. Viewing the benefits that this project brought to the eastern half of the province primarily in terms of the government's growing emphasis on investing in coastal areas in order to protect national sovereignty, which Pomeranz credits with the long-term decline of the Grand Canal, obscures this underlying continuity. Again, though, if we follow the history of the Xiaoqing River into the twentieth century, then we see that later on it did come to assume importance within the framework Pomeranz describes. Finally, the project demonstrates again how place-making in Jinan continued to benefit from the spatial politics of imperial state-building even in the late nineteenth century.

The Navigability of the Xiaoqing and Daqing/Yellow Rivers and the Salt Trade

Although a relatively minor waterway, the Xiaoqing River had a long and complicated history even before it was essentially reconstructed as a canal in the late nineteenth century. The Xiaoqing's origins lay in the twelfth century, with Liu Yu, who had defected from the Song Dynasty and was rewarded by the Jurchen Jin Dynasty with rulership of Shandong. In 1048 the Yellow River had shifted from a southern course to a northern one and had both merged with the Ji River and shifted its course northward (away from Jinan) while the Ji's old course silted up. To reestablish a waterway between Jinan and salt-producing centers on the coast, Liu Yu constructed a dam that channeled the Luo and other streams into the old bed of the Ji River and dredged out its lower reaches.¹⁹⁶

Once the Yellow River shifted back to the south of Shandong in the mid-fourteenth century, the Xiaoqing lost its importance as a commercial waterway to the Daqing River, whose origins were farther to the west and which ran north of and roughly parallel to the Xiaoqing on its way to the coast. Around the turn of the sixteenth century, the dam diverting the Luo River into the Xiaoqing River broke and from then on the waterways draining Jinan's mountain streams and springs were allowed to flow into the Daqing rather than the Xiaoqing. The Xiaoqing continued to flow, but only from Zhangqiu to the east. Its limited supply of water resulted in sedimentation, and floods during the rainy season were a recurrent problem. Repeated efforts in the eighteenth century to prevent flooding by dredging out and splitting the Xiaoqing's channel failed to provide a comprehensive solution because they did not address the underlying issue of low regular water supply.¹⁹⁷ While the area along the Daqing River, including Luokou,

¹⁹⁶ Lu Yanjie, *Xiaoqing he hangyun*, 24–27.

¹⁹⁷ Lu Yanjie, 45–49; Yuan Changji, “Lun Xiaoqing he,” 80–82, 84–86.

Jinan's port on it, prospered from the trade in salt and other goods, the Xiaoqing River basin became a kind of mini-ecological hinterland that was effectively irrelevant to Jinan itself.

The Yellow River's change in course affected the Xiaoqing in two ways. First, it exacerbated flooding on the Xiaoqing and other waterways that drained runoff from springs and mountains to the south by reducing the carrying capacity of the Daqing channel. In some cases, the construction of dikes along the Yellow River obstructed drainage altogether.¹⁹⁸ When the Yellow River overflowed the Daqing's banks, its silt-laden floodwaters temporarily spilled into the channel of the Xiaoqing, depositing even more sediment into it. These dynamics led to the efforts discussed above to dredge out the Xiaoqing and other waterways in the late 1870s and early 1880s. In 1883 Chen Shijie undertook a large project to dredge the Xiaoqing channel, divert smaller rivers, including the Luo into it, and, as before, split its channel into several parts further downstream. The majority of the funding for this project came from a court-ordered transfer of 120,000 taels from Sichuan.¹⁹⁹ The petition Jinan's elite submitted requesting the construction of a shrine to Ding Baozhen, who was the governor-general of Sichuan when this order was issued, mentions his timely compliance with this order.²⁰⁰ Insofar as the newly-dredged Xiaoqing provided drainage for floodwaters from the Yellow River, this project was a success.²⁰¹ However, treating the Xiaoqing as a flood channel for the Yellow River did nothing to solve the problem of the sedimentation of the Xiaoqing itself or to enhance its navigability.

The second way the Yellow River's change in course affected the Xiaoqing River was by undercutting the commercial importance of the Daqing River. The necessity of an alternative

¹⁹⁸ Ren Baozhen, *Xiaoqing he lidai wenhui*, 117, 121; Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 125:12a-12b.

¹⁹⁹ Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, *Guangxu Xuantonq liangchao shangyudang*, 208–9.

²⁰⁰ “*Jingbao* quanlu,” *Shen bao*, 1886/7/21, 10.

²⁰¹ Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi Licheng qu shuili zhi*, 2–4, 83; Yuan Changji, “Lun Xiaoqing he,” 82–83.

east-west waterway linking Jinan to the coast eventually led to major investment on the Xiaoqing. It was by no means immediately obvious, though, that the Yellow River would be an unsatisfactory commercial channel once it was established on its northern course. In 1860, Grand Council member Shen Zhaolin proposed that instead of maintaining the northern portion of the Grand Canal, the court could ship tribute grain up the southern portion of the canal to its new juncture with the Yellow River and from there to the sea and up to Tianjin. The court was sympathetic enough to order provincial officials to report on the plan's feasibility, but the response was decidedly negative. At this time, the portion of the river around the Grand Canal had not yet settled into a stable channel, and local people, whom Shen suggested could fund needed conservancy projects, were unable to shoulder the burden. The proposal thus floundered on the court's inability to invest its own funds at this time.²⁰²

Nevertheless, significant portions of the Yellow River's lower course remained navigable through the 1860s and 1870s, although there were some disruptions. When the water level surged, even passing across the river from Jinan to Qihe by bridge could be treacherous, but at other times it posed no difficulty.²⁰³ Foreigners investigated the river's navigability with characteristic eagerness and over-exaggeration of the commercial possibilities it presented, if only the Qing government would allow unimpeded inland trade. Even they had to admit, though, that some portions of the river, at least upstream from what had been the Daqing River, were not reliably navigable. Another problem was the growing sandbar at the river's mouth, which was formed from sediment deposited when the silt-laden river met the contrary currents of the sea. This obstacle was not insurmountable, though. By dredging the bar, Ding Baozhen was

²⁰² Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJJ*, 53:2432–39, 2445–48, 2450–52.

²⁰³ Wang Zhonglin, *Wang Zhonglin riji*, 59:423–24, 430, 556, 584.

reportedly able to ship machinery for the Luokou Arsenal directly upriver from the sea to Jinan. With regular dredging and the use of lightweight vessels, it was theoretically possible to open up the river to steamship traffic. Even without dredging the bar, goods could still pass from the sea into the river channel but had to be transferred to smaller boats that drew less water.²⁰⁴

Again, though, more persistent and severe flooding on the Yellow River's lower reaches from the late 1870s undermined its reliability as a transportation artery. Flooding and disruptions to transportation were especially calamitous for the salt merchants who relied on this route to transport salt from the coast to Jinan. Floods repeatedly damaged the Yongbu salt yard at the mouth of the Yellow River in Lijin, which produced about eighty percent of the salt distributed through the Shandong salt administration.²⁰⁵ With the tributaries that used to feed the Daqing River increasingly diverted into other waterways, the navigability of the Yellow River depended on a steady supply of silt-laden water from upstream. When dikes broke, the water level downstream dropped, which reduced the risk of flooding but also made the river effectively unnavigable.²⁰⁶ While the 1886 flooding in Zhengzhou gave new governor Zhang Yao time to dredge the bed and strengthen dikes, he also reported that salt barges were becoming stuck in the river because of the lower water level.²⁰⁷ These disruptions staunched the flow of boat traffic through Luokou. In *Laocan youji*—set in the late nineteenth century—the narrator reports, “Ever since the Yellow River took the bed of the Daqing River, although there is still some coming and going of cargo boats, the traffic is not more than ten or twenty percent of what it was formerly, a big difference.” Nevertheless, the novel relays without comment the main character's journey by

²⁰⁴ “Editorial Selections: The Yellow River,” *NCH*, 1867/11/11, 1867, 383; Jona. Lees, “Notes of Journey from Tientsin to Chi-Nan fu,” *NCH*, 1868/10/1, 102; [No title], *NCH*, 1878/7/13, 25–26; Williamson, “Notes on North China,” 49–50; Elias, Jr., “Report of an Exploration.”

²⁰⁵ Yin Qiang, “Ming Qing Shandong Da、Xiaoqing he,” 71.

²⁰⁶ Wu Tongju, *ZXXSJJ*, 54:2843.

²⁰⁷ Zhang Yao memorial (undated), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-35-0540-052.

boat up the river from Jinan to Caozhou, a reminder that transportation on the Yellow River, even upstream from Jinan, continued, at least intermittently.²⁰⁸

The growing unreliability of the Yellow River as a transport artery for salt was a major blow both to merchants and the government, though. As noted in chapter 2, even before 1855 Shandong's salt merchants were struggling under the burden of previously accrued debts. In the eighteenth century, when its own finances were in much better shape, the Qing government had depended on contributions from salt merchants to undertake maintenance on the Daqing River. Now the merchants were unable to bear the even heavier burden of making the Yellow River reliably navigable, which was essential to their business, not to mention making up for revenue shortfalls in other areas through special exactions. When the court suggested raising contributions from salt merchants to help fund Yellow River conservancy in 1888, Zhang Yao protested that the merchants had already been subjected to a series of levies that they were unable to pay given the disruptions to salt transport on the Yellow River.²⁰⁹ Ensuring the navigability of the Yellow River was difficult enough, but the inability of either the central government or salt merchants to make the needed investments made the task of restoring stability to the Shandong salt trade almost impossible.

Restoring the Xiaoqing River

This situation, where a hydraulic infrastructure that was once fiscally vital to the imperial state became fiscally and technically unsustainable, resembled that on the Grand Canal. In this case, though, the result was not abandoning a long-standing imperial commitment but a surprisingly successful intervention that both bolstered the foundation of imperial political

²⁰⁸ Translation adapted from Liu Tie-yün, *The Travels of Lao Ts'an*, 44.

²⁰⁹ Zhang Yao memorial on (GX 14/6/13), ZPZZ, 04-01-35-0697-076.

economy and produced long-term benefits. By the twentieth century, this solution—investing in the Xiaoqing River—came to be seen as vital both to maintaining the salt trade and protecting national sovereignty.

The project of restoring the Xiaoqing River began in 1891, at the very end of Zhang Yao's tenure. To a large extent, it was the brainchild of Sheng Xuanhuai, who was, at the time, serving as the circuit intendant for Shandong's easternmost three prefectures (Dengzhou, Laizhou, and Qingzhou). Sheng, a native of Jiangsu, was the bureaucratic capitalist *par excellence* of the late Qing. Having joined Li Hongzhang's entourage in 1870 as a secretary for the Huai Army, he participated in a wide variety of government-backed enterprises, including the China Merchants' Steamship Navigation Company and the Imperial Telegraph Administration, as an administrator, investor, and beneficiary. His service and connections won him a series of administrative posts first in Zhili and then as Deng-Lai-Qing circuit intendant in Shandong in 1886, but throughout this time he remained involved in the enterprises and interregional ties that sustained his personal wealth, career ambitions, and the power base of Li Hongzhang.²¹⁰ He was also heavily involved in charitable projects during the time he spent in Zhili, which coincided with the North China Famine and the foundation of the Hall for Spreading Benevolence.

As circuit intendant, Sheng fielded frequent requests for aid and tax remissions from counties along the Xiaoqing River. After visiting the area, he came to understand that a comprehensive conservancy project would be necessary to solve the problem of chronic flooding.²¹¹ Through Zhang Yao, Sheng proposed an ambitious project of re-dredging and widening essentially the entire length of the river and restoring most of it to a single channel that

²¹⁰ Feuerwerker, *China's Early Industrialization*, 60–64. For further discussion on how the construction of transportation infrastructure was a successful element of late Qing state-building, see Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 184–212.

²¹¹ Ren Baozhen, *Xiaoqing he lidai wenhui*, 117.

could be navigable all the way from Licheng to the sea. Zhang Yao argued that this project would be fiscally and commercially worthwhile because it would solve the underlying problems with flooding that repeatedly led to requests for aid and thus drained the treasury slowly over time and because it would allow foodstuffs and other goods to pass from the sea all the way to Jinan by a single water route.²¹² This focus on navigability set this project apart from both the work undertaken by Chen Shijie in the 1880s and even earlier conservancy efforts, where flood prevention had been the primary concern.

The primary accomplishment of this project was digging out a broad main channel for the Xiaoqing along almost the entirety of its original course. (Smaller branch channels to drain floodwater were maintained in the downstream portion.) Work on the lower reaches (east of Jinjia qiao in Boxing County) began in 1891. In addition to dredging and widening the channel, the laborers constructed a cart path on both banks and used the earth they dug out to strengthen the dikes along the river. This work bore almost immediate benefits: heavy rains that summer flooded the upriver portions of the Xiaoqing where work had not yet begun, while the counties downstream enjoyed an unusually bountiful harvest.²¹³

The next year, new governor Fu Run ordered Sheng to continue the work upstream. Once completed in 1893, the terminus for the new Xiaoqing River was Huangtai qiao, northeast of Jinan. Originally, a small village, Huangtai qiao quickly became a gathering point for merchants and, along with Luokou, Jinan's second major satellite port.²¹⁴ By all accounts, the restored Xiaoqing River provided an adequate drainage channel for the smaller waterways that had caused flooding on the river's course for hundreds of years. The project was successful enough

²¹² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 9:26a–26b.

²¹³ Mao Chenglin, 9:26a–27a; Lu Yanjie, *Xiaoqing he hangyun*, 105–6.

²¹⁴ Lu Yanjie, *Xiaoqing he hangyun*, 76–77; Yin Qiang, “Ming Qing Shandong Da、Xiaoqing he,” 62–63.

that not only was salt shipped up the Xiaoqing River, but in 1895, after the Yongbu salt yard was again flooded by the Yellow River, production was shifted south to Yangjiao gou at the mouth of the Xiaoqing River, and salt yards there began to provide salt for the western half of the province.²¹⁵

Again, this project was a continuation of efforts begun in the 1880s to respond to endemic flooding on the lower reaches of the Yellow River, so it was not a singular enterprise. Its rapid success was, however, remarkable. The means used to fund it were also extraordinary, as they had to be, since the court and the provincial government were already throwing as much money as they could at the Yellow River in an attempt to keep recurrent flooding from becoming an even worse catastrophe.

To pay for the project, whose primary costs were labor, Sheng adopted the familiar mode of paying out relief as wages. More unusually, to ensure adequate funds he raised charitable contributions through interregional networks. To do so, he relied on Yan Zuolin, a native of Jiangsu who had already been gathering funds for and distributing relief in Shandong for a number of years. The exact source of this money is unclear, but an account of the work written by Qin Kuiliang, a *juren* from Le'an, one of the counties on the Xiaoqing River, says that the majority came from Shanghai gentry-merchant elites (*shenshang*) but that officials from Shandong asked their colleagues throughout the empire to also contribute. Since Qin was a local person—not a southern merchant or literatus trying to claim the credit for himself or fellow southerners—there is little reason to doubt his account.²¹⁶ As we would expect, local people did participate in the project both as laborers and gentry managers, who, by Sheng's own account

²¹⁵ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 4:17a; Lu Yanjie, *Xiaoqing he hangyun*, 105.

²¹⁶ Ren Baozhen, *Xiaoqing he lidai wenhui*, 121.

numbered over 10,000 and 100, respectively.²¹⁷ The total amount raised and the cost of the project are likewise difficult to ascertain precisely, but multiple sources report that around 700,000 taels were raised, a sum which, as we have seen (e.g. in chapter 3), was well beyond the means of Shandong's own elite.²¹⁸

Like the better-known charitable projects funded by the southern elite, the restoration of the Xiaoqing River reflected how the Qing state's long-standing dependence on private initiatives was taking on new dimensions in the nineteenth century. Sheng's dependence on privately raised funds did highlight the limited capacity of the central and provincial governments to invest in this project. The fact that records by Sheng and Cheng Xiangqian, another member of the local elite, reiterate that no funds from the treasury (*quotang*) were used suggests that they were keenly aware of this dynamic.²¹⁹ Viewed through this lens, the success of work on the Xiaoqing River seems to be the exception that proves the rule of state withdrawal from ecological management in North China.

However, the effects of this project defy such a simple characterization. At its root, restoring the Xiaoqing River entailed transferring wealth from the south to maintain the state's interest in the fragile environment of North China, which is precisely the pattern of interregional governance that the Qing state was supposedly abandoning at this time. The most immediate benefits of this project from the perspective of the state—relieving its responsibility to provide aid for flood-stricken communities and stabilizing the salt trade—were exactly the priorities that

²¹⁷ These numbers are more likely to be exaggerations but are not unrealistic given that the work extended across hundreds of miles over two to three years. Ren Baozhen, 118.

²¹⁸ The only reason to doubt this number is that the costs listed in the provincial gazetteer add up to only around a bit more than 450,000 taels. However, since both official documents and Sheng's own account mention 700,000 taels as the cost, it is a reasonably reliable figure and may reflect additional work done after the formal completion of the project. Li Bingheng memorial on 1895/9/4 (GX 21/7/16), ZPZZ, 04-01-01-1008-050; Ren Baozhen, 118; Sun Baotian, *SDTZ (Minguo)*, 125:14a–14b.

²¹⁹ Ren Baozhen, *Xiaoqing he lidai wenhui*, 118–20.

successive dynasties had long pursued. When we think about the state as an *effect* of governance, rather than a discrete *agent*, we see how the Xiaoqing restoration embodied the durability and flexibility of the imperial state.

While the Xiaoqing restoration does not reflect the weakening of the Qing state per se, it does provide a glimpse of how the ways it exercised power across space were changing. Sheng Xuanhuai's mobilization of private contributions for the Xiaoqing project, like humanitarian endeavors, embodied mobilization on behalf of the state that was not channeled through the dynasty so completely as a purely imperial state-building logic would dictate. Instead, we see a discourse of sacrifice—largely unmediated by the court and unimpeded by internal boundaries—on behalf of the nation, as in southern contributions to humanitarian endeavors. However, the court was not entirely out of the picture. Several years after the project was completed, officials were still working through how to issue commendations to those who had contributed to the work and even claiming that it was fundamentally similar to prior work funded by the government.²²⁰ Even though the court was not the primary mobilizer of these resources, it maintained authority as the arbiter of their value to the state.

Of course, focusing solely on the relationship between southern donors and the Qing court ignores the place of Jinan in this project. Jinan obviously did not experience the Xiaoqing restoration as a devolution of power away from the state to its own local elite. Nevertheless, the reestablishment of a transportation link to the coast and flood prevention along the Xiaoqing served the interests of its people as much as anyone else. The fact that flooding on the Xiaoqing that affected the area in Jinan's immediate vicinity was addressed so quickly—in comparison to the chronic suffering of counties downstream in prior centuries—further demonstrates its

²²⁰ Li Bingheng memorial on 1895/9/4 (GX 21/7/16), ZPZZ, 04-01-01-1008-050; Li Bingheng memorial on 1896/10/20 (GX 22/9/14), ZPZZ, 04-01-12-0576-007.

privileged position in Qing political economy. The concerns that motivated southern literati and merchants to contribute to this project and the system through which they did so may have been unprecedentedly nationalist in the sense that they were motivated by a sense of concern for their countrymen from distant provinces as much or more than their loyalty to the dynasty. The subtlety of this difference in the late nineteenth century reflects how, despite its imperial form, the Qing state produced nationalizing effects. In 1911, of course, the distinction between nationalist concern and dynastic loyalty would become much more explicit.

The subtlety of the distinction between established patterns of imperial state-building and a more nationalist politics—and thus the underlying hybridity of the Qing state—becomes even clearer when we consider the effects of inter-provincial state-building from the perspective of Jinan's elite. Both inter-regional aid and the reconstruction of the Xiaoqing canal continued a long-standing pattern of redistributing resources from the southern portion of the empire to the north, albeit by different means.²²¹ Had the court simply ceased to invest in maintaining this spatial politics, then perhaps it is plausible that people could have come to see the dynasty as irrelevant. As we have seen in the cases of conservancy on the Yellow River and humanitarian relief, though, Jinan was not only still receiving benefits from its place in the imperial system but was becoming an object of investment in ways that opened up new channels for its elite to integrate place-making and imperial state-building.

Conclusion

In the years after the completion of its restoration in 1893, the Xiaoqing River became much more explicitly entangled in the kind of sovereignty-protecting political economy that

²²¹ Li, *Fighting Famine*, 279.

Pomeranz credits with the hinterland-ization of western Shandong. As effective as the 1891–3 work was, the new Xiaoqing River required additional dredging within the next decade on account of floodwaters from the Yellow River depositing unwanted sediment in its bed. Additionally, in 1904 a sluice gate was built west of Jinan at the juncture of the Yufu River and the Yellow River that could direct portions of the former into the Xiaoqing River, whose channel was now extended further upstream. The sluice gate both helped control flooding on both rivers and improved the water supply for the Xiaoqing.²²² Between 1905 and 1906, the government constructed short railway lines between the port at Huangtai qiao and both the Jiao-Ji Railroad line, which linked Jinan to the German colonial enclave at Qingdao, and Luokou, which was still the main point for processing salt.²²³

These further developments reflected an extension of the concerns that had motivated restoring the Xiaoqing River in the first place. However, they were also a much more explicit response to the threat that foreign imperialism posed to national sovereignty, which, as Pomeranz argues, motivated the government to continue to shift investment away from western Shandong in the early twentieth century. Shandong governors Yuan Shikai and Zhou Fu still believed that maintaining the Xiaoqing River was important for preventing floods and protecting revenues from the salt administration. However, they also thought that the commercial viability of the river needed to be ensured so that it could be a Qing-controlled alternative to the German-controlled Jiao-Ji Railroad. To that end, they advocated for both investing in the river's maintenance and organizing a Chinese steamship company whose profitability would be supported by the right to transport salt on the river.²²⁴ When proposing additional investment in

²²² Lu Yanjie, *Xiaoqing he hangyun*, 52–53; Yuan Changji, “Lun Xiaoqing he,” 83; Jinan shi shuili zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jinan shi shuili zhi*, 68–69.

²²³ Lu Yanjie, *Xiaoqing he hangyun*, 76–77.

²²⁴ Zhou Fu memorial on 1902/7/2 (GX 28/5/27), ZPZZ, 04-01-05-0197-016; “Yantai shangren chengban Xiaoqing

the Xiaoqing River, Zhou Fu argued that if the Qing government did not fund maintenance, then foreigners, who were interested in opening up the river for steamship navigation, would likely to do so themselves. “And if funds for repairing the river come from other countries, then it will be difficult to make distinctions in discussions [with them], and I truly fear that abuses will increase,” Zhou warned.²²⁵ Part III discusses the context for these concerns, particularly the German seizure of Qingdao and the construction of the Jiao-Ji Railroad, as well as the responses of Jinan’s elite and the Qing government to these developments in greater depth.

Reviewing the 1890s restoration of the Xiaoqing River in the context of conservancy and humanitarian interventions in the late-nineteenth century, though, it is remarkable how distinct the concerns of that period were from those of the early twentieth century. Even Sheng Xuanhuai, who was very much invested in building China’s commercial capacity to compete against foreign interests, did not frame the Xiaoqing restoration in those terms in his record of the project. Likewise, investment in conservancy on the lower reaches of the Yellow River in the 1880s is much more readily traced to conditions on the river at that time than concerns about foreign encroachment, which dominated state-building after 1895 and, even more, after 1901.

In the late nineteenth century, the capacity of the Qing government to intervene in ecological management and humanitarian relief was certainly less robust than the ideals it had established in the first half of the dynasty. The narrative of state withdrawal is thus not without considerable basis. However, the response of the Qing state as a whole—not just the court or the provincial government—to its limited capacity to respond to unprecedented challenges deserves more nuanced attention. Rather than decisively abandoning imperial prerogatives and suddenly shifting to a radically new political economy, the Qing state effected a tactical retreat and in so

he lunchuan bing,” *JNHB*, ce 7: Dongzheng jiyao, qi 6, 18b–23a.

²²⁵ Zhou Fu memorial in 1902–3 (GX 28), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-05-0197-029.

doing created a bridge between its hybrid imperial spatial politics and future political development. Chapters 5 and 6 explore this process of bridging in explicit reference to responses to foreign interests in Jinan itself, while chapter 7 confronts the limited success of this project in a national context but its surprising resilience in Jinan.

Chapter 5

Foreign Currents: The Jinan Missionary Case and New Frontiers of Empire, 1881–91

“I have given up reading two things, one the Irish troubles, and the other the Chi-nan-fu riots.” So the *North China Herald* reported the exasperation of “a certain lady” with a long series of property disputes involving American Presbyterian missionaries in Jinan during the 1880s.¹ The most famous anti-missionary and anti-Christian cases in the late Qing, especially the Tianjin Massacre and the Boxer Uprising, are known for the considerable violence they entailed. We might expect the same from a case that drew as much attention as Jinan’s.

However, it is just as likely that this lady’s frustration with news from Jinan stemmed from boredom arising from the tedium of the case. Over the decade-long case, there were bursts of violent action, with more threatened to come, but no outcome remotely resembling more infamous incidents. Most of the case was spent in stalled negotiations, as American missionaries and diplomats, Qing officials, and Jinan’s elite struggled to reach a consensus about where the missionaries could buy and build on property in and around the city. In the end, they did reach a relatively stable compromise, which represented a significant victory for the missionaries but also preserved the elite’s privileged custodial role over the city’s space and people.² The need for such careful negotiation with even a small band of missionaries demonstrated the vulnerability of the Qing state to foreign imperialism at this time. However, the outcome demonstrated how officials and the elite together participated in acts of place-making that preserved essential components of Qing state-building.

This chapter’s study of this process of negotiation and compromise draws on several trends in scholarship on missionary cases. Since Paul Cohen’s well-regarded study of

¹ “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1888/2/10, 157.

² My interpretation of this case offers more nuance than Philip West, who interprets it more straightforwardly as a case of “gentry loss.” West, “The Tsinan Property Disputes.”

antiforeignism in nineteenth-century China, scholars have shown an increasing tendency to explain missionary cases with reference to the politics of local communities rather than inevitable cultural conflict.³ Barend ter Haar has shown how even wild stories and rumors about foreign missionaries should be understood in the context of long-running traditions that were by no means predominantly associated with anti-foreignism.⁴ Joseph Esherick, R.G. Tiedemann, and Cohen have usefully applied this approach to study missionary cases in Shandong, mostly in rural areas.⁵ The most consequential of these cases—the Juye Incident—set in motion the Boxer Uprising, which engulfed North China in 1899–1901. (See introduction to part III.) All find that specific conditions in rural Shandong played into the emergence and phenomenal growth of the Boxers, including a paucity of degree-holding gentry in areas where the Boxers took root. However, Tiedemann also notes that opposition to missionaries in administrative centers, which often revolved around property acquisition, was often severe precisely because of the concentration of well-organized gentry there.⁶ Therefore, this chapter explores how the strength of Jinan’s elite, which was in part a product of the patterns of cooperation they inculcated with powerful officials described in chapters 3 and 4, both obstructed the missionaries and guided the case toward a resolution that was more peaceful and resilient than might otherwise have been possible—an outcome that was equally beneficial to Jinan and the Qing state.

At the same time, this chapter is sensitive to scholars’ growing inclination to place the history of missions, Christianity, and anti-Christian movements, especially the Boxers, in a global context.⁷ To account for this relationship between local conditions and not only translocal

³ Cohen, *China and Christianity*; Wyman, “The Ambiguities of Chinese Antiforeignism.”

⁴ ter Haar, *Telling Stories*, 154–201.

⁵ Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*; Tiedemann, “The Church Militant.”

⁶ Tiedemann, “Protestant ‘Missionary Cases,’” 156.

⁷ Bickers and Tiedemann, *The Boxers*; Preston, *The Boxer Rebellion*; Harrison, *The Missionary’s Curse*; Silbey, *The Boxer Rebellion*.; Jeffrey Wasserstrom, forthcoming.

but international dynamics, I utilize Richard White's idea of a "middle ground" to describe the inter-imperial negotiation that characterized the Jinan case. White describes the middle ground as "the place in between," where white settlers could not simply dispense with Native Americans or unilaterally impose upon them conditions for accommodation, at least for a time. It was both a meeting place of empires and other forms of community and a place where imperial power faded, where the compromises reached did not necessarily reflect fundamental agreement but "creative misunderstandings."⁸ In Jinan, American power was limited by the city's distance from diplomatic representatives and the limited resources of the American missionaries. Qing power was circumscribed by the special privileges enjoyed by even individual American citizens and, in theory, Qing subjects who associated with them. Both sets of actors struggled to understand, much less appreciate, what was important to the other.

White's framework for exploring processes of negotiation and accommodation has helped shape a growing body of scholarship interested in boundaries and peripheries. On the surface, though, it seems less useful for a place like Jinan, which was, from the Qing perspective, very much an imperial core, especially by comparison to other areas in Shandong, not to mention the far-flung frontiers of the Qing empire. Jinan's status as an imperial center was by no means incidental to this missionary case. On the one hand, it shaped the interests of Jinan's elite, who were concerned with protecting both their city and the Qing state. On the other, it affected the mechanisms through which the case was negotiated. The presence of provincial officials in the city, with whom Jinan's elite enjoyed close and productive relationships, confronted the missionaries with bargaining partners who could not be easily intimidated. However, these conditions also benefited the missionaries in peculiar ways. The elite's commitment to

⁸ White, *The Middle Ground*, xxv–xxxi; White, "Creative Misunderstandings."

maintaining order might have prevented more severe violence from befalling the missionaries. Additionally, the close relationships between officials and elite made it easier for the two groups to discuss how to settle the case such that, when it became necessary to yield to the missionaries, the conditions were at least minimally satisfactory to the elite. While reaching these compromises was tortuous, the ensuing agreements proved durable.

Therefore, this case shows how Jinan came to combine the qualities of two very different ideal types of place: a middle ground and an imperial core. Jinan became this type of place through a range of Qing and American actors pursuing goals that were both place-specific and oriented towards their respective states. American actors did not want to bring Jinan under the exclusive sovereignty of the U.S. state, but they did strive to maximize the benefits that American citizens could enjoy there by virtue of the relationship and treaties between the Qing and the U.S. For Qing actors, state-building in this middle ground was to a large extent a rearguard action aimed at preserving imperial prerogatives threatened, or at least undermined, by foreign power. However, state-maintenance *cum* building also entailed adapting and applying strategies that were familiar to Jinan or other parts of the empire in the new context of Jinan as a middle ground and to a different set of actors. The missionary case itself does not show how these practices could bend towards the more progressive or modernizing ends we often associate with “state-building.” In chapter 6, though, we will see how in the first decade of the twentieth century the commitment of Jinan’s officials and elite to upholding local-imperial prerogatives in the context of foreign imperialism both echoed that of the Qing actors in the missionary case and led to innovative efforts to remake both Jinan and Qing statecraft. In other words, the missionary case demonstrates not the full effects of late Qing state-building but rather the realignment of local strategies in response to foreign imperialism, which created a framework for subsequent

adaptations.

The forms of place-making this chapter discusses entailed the management of both space and people. Jinan's elite and the missionaries each acted out of senses of the practical and symbolic importance of Jinan's space, although these sensibilities overlapped only incompletely. Reaching compromise required managing their spatial priorities and, especially in the case of the missionaries, clarifying what those priorities were. For the missionaries, establishing relationships with people in Jinan was both an end of their mission work, since they hoped to convert them, but also a means, since they relied on Chinese actors to help them secure property on which to build chapels, schools, and hospitals. These relationships between foreign missionaries and Qing subjects raised sensitive questions about political loyalty and social cohesion for officials and the elite. These concerns were exacerbated by anxieties about social security, especially in the wake of the natural and man-made disasters described in chapters 3 and 4. As the missionaries constructed a religious community in Jinan, the city's elite policed the boundaries of their community as they understood it.

This chapter contributes to the larger argument of this dissertation in two ways. First, its discussion of the place-making activities of both American and Chinese actors again demonstrates how closely connected place-making and state-building were. By emphasizing the connection between missionaries and the state, this chapter eschews labeling missionary work as a kind of "cultural" imperialism, which suggests a distance from the state and "formal" aspects of imperialism.⁹ Previous critiques of using cultural imperialism to describe missionary activities in China have questioned whether missionaries imposed a unitary culture unilaterally on Chinese

⁹ This critique is building on Kramer, "Power and Connection," 1373–75.

society.¹⁰ Scholarship on global missions has also highlighted the agency of indigenous people in refashioning Christian beliefs.¹¹ Through an emphasis on place-making, this chapter further demonstrates the localized nature of the concerns that shaped the missionary enterprise and led to tensions between the Jinan missionaries, their colleagues, and representatives of the U.S. government. However, these critiques of cultural imperialism still incorporate a distinction between state and non-state actors based on structural or institutional considerations. Focusing on the localized concerns of missionaries seems to push them even further from the structures of “formal” imperialism. Far more useful, though, is Paul Kramer’s suggestion that scholars deploy ‘empire’ as a description of actions and effects, rather than political units or structures, which echoes the approach to the state I adopt in this dissertation.¹² In addition to familiar patterns of Jinan’s elite interweaving local and imperial interests, this chapter demonstrates how the place-making of American missionaries, which sometimes entailed internal disagreement and tensions, extended the scope of the American state into Jinan. It was through their actions that the political space of the middle ground came into being.

Second, this chapter moves the narrative from chapters 3 and 4 both forward in time and towards the question of how imperialism affected the relationship between the Qing state and Jinan. Unlike other challenges, which could at least be kept at arm’s length, the missionaries embedded themselves within the city and proved impossible to eject. The power they could project and the problems they could cause despite their small numbers and seeming isolation reflected the unprecedented challenges posed by foreign imperialism throughout the empire during this period. However, like the challenges of the mid-century, Jinan’s elite proved adept at

¹⁰ Dunch, “Beyond Cultural Imperialism”; Shemo, “Directions”; Porter, “Cultural Imperialism”; Zhang Xiantao, *The Origins of the Modern Chinese Press*, 127–43; Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation*, 5–7.

¹¹ Case, *An Unpredictable Gospel*; Andrews, *Native Apostles*.

¹² Kramer, “Power and Connection,” 1349–50.

navigating the threat of foreign imperialism, simultaneously securing their own power and extending the power of the Qing state by taking responsibility for managing the city's engagement with foreign actors.

The Making of a Middle Ground

To understand how this missionary case unfolded in Jinan, we must appreciate the city's nature as both an imperial core and periphery. As we have seen in previous chapters, Jinan's central place in imperial circuits had long affected how local people engaged in place-making and incorporated other actors, particularly bureaucrats, into place-making through translocal processes. By contrast, up to the 1880s the city's position in inland North China had kept it largely beyond the direct reach of foreign actors who were participants in other imperial regimes. When missionaries began arriving in the city in the second half of the nineteenth century, they came with limited resources and knowledge. Jinan's distance from colonial enclaves on the coast, not to mention the home board, forced the missionaries to rely on themselves and the willingness of local people to collaborate with them. Nevertheless, these foreigners were far from helpless. By drawing on diplomatic power backed by military force, they extended the territorial reach of their home state and could bring considerable pressure to bear on their host city. In the end, neither missionaries, nor officials, nor gentry could unilaterally impose their will on the other. This made Jinan, in White's terms, an imperial "middle ground."¹³

The missionaries enjoyed a series of legal privileges that implicated them in the American imperial state, despite their position outside formal government. First, Article VI of the Additional Articles to the Treaty of Tianjin (1858) granted American citizens the same rights

¹³ White, *The Middle Ground*, xxvi–xxvii, 50–93.

as their British and French counterparts to travel in the interior.¹⁴ As they traveled, Americans carried with them extraterritorial protections that subjected them to punishment by the laws of their own country, not Qing law. As Teemu Ruskola says, “when Americans entered China, American law traveled with them, effectively attaching to their very bodies.”¹⁵ On the one hand, this law-invested movement defined the geographic boundaries of the American “citizenship regime” in China.¹⁶ On the other hand, it reshaped the application of Qing law across space, even though it did not remove territory from Qing jurisdiction, as territorial concessions did. The application of different types of law to different groups of people was more reflective of Qing commitment to legal pluralism than contradictory to it, as Pär Cassel has argued.¹⁷ However, pluralistic legal practices in the Qing assumed the confinement of legally distinct constituencies to discrete areas. Cassel notes, then, that the Qing strongly but unsuccessfully opposed the extension of extraterritorial privileges to missionaries residing outside the treaty ports, like the Americans in Jinan.¹⁸ Consequently, the missionaries’ entrance into Jinan both extended the territorial reach of the American state and deformed the legal practices of the Qing state by introducing actors who were not subject to the adjudication of local officials.¹⁹ In addition, local officials bore responsibility for protecting the rights of American missionaries, including to travel and preach outside the treaty ports. Therefore, treaty privileges both removed missionaries from underneath the authority of local officials and simultaneously enlisted officials—and by extension the elite with whom they collaborated to deal with local matters—into securing the

¹⁴ Inspector General of Customs, *Treaties, Conventions, Etc.*, 1:215, 528, 607.

¹⁵ Ruskola, *Legal Orientalism*, 111.

¹⁶ Scully, *Bargaining with the State*, 3–5.

¹⁷ Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment*.

¹⁸ Cassel, 62.

¹⁹ On the extension and stretching of law in imperial contexts, see Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*, 2–8.

prerogatives of the American state.²⁰

However, the treaties did not grant the missionaries an absolute right to purchase property outside the treaty ports. Itinerant preacher Jasper McIlvaine became the first Presbyterian missionary to visit Jinan in 1871. He preached in the city consistently and sought property to establish a permanent presence. He failed due to both a lack of funds and difficulty finding a willing seller.²¹ McIlvaine circumvented the first problem in 1880 by donating 5,000 Mexican dollars (~\$2000 U.S.) of his own money to purchase a place for a permanent street chapel and dispensary.²² He arranged for a Chinese convert, Liu Yuting, to purchase land owned by Jiao Tongxing on the western side of the city's main thoroughfare, near both Luoyuan Academy and the examination hall. McIlvaine used Liu as an agent because he recognized that the neighbors would be unwilling to approve of foreigners purchasing the property themselves. Liu then wrote out a separate deed to the Presbyterian Church.²³ Since this deed was neither ratified by the neighbors, among whom the missionaries later claimed there was a single holdout, nor registered with the officials, the missionaries recognized that it did not technically establish their legal claim to the land. However, since Liu did own the land legally and acknowledged his role as a trustee on behalf of the church, in the missionaries' eyes there was no legal basis for challenging the transaction.²⁴ This strategy of using church members as middlemen was common, including among Presbyterians in Shandong, but it vexed local officials because it complicated legal

²⁰ Scully, *Bargaining with the State*, 9–10.

²¹ Murray, "Tsinanfu Station," 29–31.

²² "Summary of News: Reuters's Telegrams," *NCH*, January 18, 1881, 105.

²³ McIlvaine claimed that the neighbors knew that Liu was acting on behalf of foreigners. It is questionable, though, why the neighbors would allow the land to be sold to Liu as a known agent of the missionaries but not to the missionaries themselves. My best guess is that this offered them some degree of plausible deniability in case others without a legal say in the transaction later opposed it, as they did. McIlvaine to Ellinwood, January 22, 1881, p. 1–2 in *PBFM*, Roll 203.

²⁴ Murray and Hunter to Angell, July 20, 1881, *FRUS 1881*, 288.

matters and did nothing to dispel the people's sense that the missionaries and Qing subjects associated with them had something to hide.²⁵

Opposition from the elite did not emerge until the summer of the next year. McIlvaine died unexpectedly of pneumonia in February 1881, but his colleagues Stephen Hunter and John Murray nevertheless arranged the final transfer of deeds and occupied the property in May and then began renovating the property. However, on July 13 (before the renovations were completed), a group of approximately thirty scholars from Luoyuan Academy gathered a crowd of 300–400 people at the examination hall and led them in ransacking the premises and assaulting the workmen.²⁶ The academy and the examination hall were the immediate staging ground for this action, but organization against the missionaries may have been broader. The gazetteer biography of Liu Zhengji, a member of the gentry from the south suburb (and a former militia leader and, later, leader in the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence), says that he had mobilized his peers to oppose an earlier attempt by the missionaries to purchase property and then did so again when they tried to buy next to Luoyuan Academy.²⁷ To calm the crowd, the officials posted a notice sealing the property and took custody of Liu and Jiao, beating and holding them in the prefect's compound. The next few days were filled with tension, as threats against the missionaries circulated on the streets. The circuit intendant issued proclamations declaring official protection for the missionaries, who at one point took refuge in his compound. No one attacked the missionaries themselves, though.

There is no indication that the officials were responsible for this assault on the missionaries' property, but it was difficult for them to manage the situation. The circuit intendant

²⁵ Hyatt, *Our Ordered Lives Confess*, 146–57.

²⁶ Murray and Hunter to Angell, July 20, 1881, *FRUS 1881*, 287–89; “Shu Jinan minjiao anhou,” *Shen bao*, 1881/8/21; “Outports: Tientsin,” *NCH*, 1881/8/5, 143; Murray, “Tsinanfu Station,” 32.

²⁷ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:24b.

had gone to the academy the day of the incident to try to dissuade the scholars from going through with the action against the missionaries.²⁸ However, the officials and missionaries faced a formidable joining of forces of scholars and, apparently, common people. Even more problematic, now-retired Li Qing'ao, the former militia organizer and governor of Henan (see chapter 3), threw his weight behind the opposition to the missionaries. Personal ties may have drawn Li into the case. His younger cousin, Li Qingxiang, who had also participated in local defense efforts in the 1860s and had been an adviser to Kuang Yuan when he was the head lecturer at Luoyuan, could conceivably have been the channel through which Li became involved.²⁹ Later foreign reports identified Li as a "noted foreign-hater," and traced his dislike for the missionaries back to an embarrassment suffered at the hands of a Catholic missionary while an official.³⁰ In any case, Li's prestige and local popularity put the officials and the missionaries in a difficult position.

This early phase of the conflict demonstrated the inability of the missionaries and their antagonists to impose their will on each other. The threat of popular violence and the political clout of the opposition prevented the officials from letting the missionaries have their way. Meanwhile, the missionaries had recourse to both treaty protections and diplomats in Beijing, to whom they quickly appealed for help. However, the diplomats had to work through the Zongli yamen (Office of Foreign Affairs), which itself lacked the authority and power to dictate terms to provincial officials, who were necessarily involved by virtue of the case taking place in Jinan.³¹ The distance between Jinan and Beijing put the missionaries at a disadvantage, forcing them to

²⁸ Murray and Hunter to Angell, July 20, 1881, *FRUS 1881*, 288.

²⁹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:16b–17b.

³⁰ "Outports: Chi-Nan Fu," *NCH*, 1888/2/10, 157; "Outports: Chi-Nan Fu," *NCH*, 1888/2/24, 208; West, "The Tsinan Property Disputes," 126.

³¹ Horowitz, "Central Power," 61–132.

pursue parallel negotiations with the local officials, who maintained a dialogue with the elite, led by Li Qing'ao. Moreover, the case lacked the urgency it might have possessed had one or more missionaries been physically harmed.

Paul Cohen famously describes the result of this scenario as “official paralysis.” Competing pressures from the local elite and missionaries, who leveraged diplomatic and even military power, produced a lose-lose situation for the officials, who often reverted to inaction.³² However, this term does not do justice to the actions the officials took toward resolving this case. The officials first posted notices ordering that the missionaries not be harmed. Then they convinced the missionaries to give up the property next to the academy and agreed to help them identify another property in exchange. The officials subsequently offered several properties to the missionaries, including ones that could only have been offered with the consent of some portion of the city's residents, such as the Qingzhou Guild Hall (*gongsuo*). This suggests that the officials made some progress in moving the elite towards compromise through discussion with them, which also reflected the strength of the relationship between the elite and officials in Jinan. A more antagonistic relationship may have pushed the officials further towards inaction. Despite missionaries' and diplomats' frequent complaints about the elite's role in these incidents, in Jinan elite-official relationships may have actually made a compromise, while difficult to attain, feasible and durable in the long run.

Nevertheless, the case proved difficult to resolve. First, the missionaries were not impressed by the properties the officials offered because they were too small, too damp, or not located in an ideal spot in the city. The missionaries grew even more frustrated when they heard that the gentry had pressured people selling property on the west end of the main street to take

³² Cohen, *China and Christianity*, 93–104.

their properties off the market to keep them out of their hands. Additionally, the officials dealing with the case were repeatedly reassigned, making it difficult to build momentum in negotiations, especially since not all officials were conciliatory toward the missionaries.³³ Finally, the U.S. Legation in Beijing proved unable to exert enough pressure on the Zongli yamen to drive through a conclusion to the case. The limits of foreigners' rights to purchase property outside the treaty ports was a significant limitation. As Minister James Angell wrote to the missionaries, "I think we have, strictly speaking, no *treaty right* to *demand* a site as our own anywhere in Chinnan-fu" (emphasis in original). Instead, he told the missionaries that they would have to depend on protesting the "discontinuance" of the "indulgence" of purchasing property outside the treaty ports that officials in other parts of China had granted foreigners.³⁴ In 1882, the legation sent James Zuck, the consul at Tianjin, to Jinan to add diplomatic muscle to the negotiations, but this trip proved "entirely fruitless."³⁵

Several developments pushed the case along towards compromise, though. First, in November 1882, the missionaries rejected a proposed exchange involving a property across from the prefect's compound, near the Qingzhou Guild Hall, which they had also previously refused. However, they indicated that they were willing to give up their demand for property on the west end of the city's main street if that would lead to a conclusion of the case.³⁶ John Young, the new U.S. Minister, suggested that the missionaries could ask for cash to make up the difference in value between their original property and one proposed in exchange.³⁷ However, the missionaries

³³ For example, see the case of Zhang Yinghuan in No. 73, Mr. Holcombe to Mr. Frelinghuysen, March 8, 1882 in vol. 72 (Roll 73) of *Despatches*.

³⁴ Angell to Murray and Hunter, July 30, 1881, *FRUS 1881*, 290.

³⁵ Acting Minister Holcombe to Prince Gong, May 20, 1882, enclosure 1 in No. 114, Mr. Holcombe to Mr. Frelinghuysen, May 25, 1882, p. 8 in vol. 60 (Roll 61) of *Despatches*.

³⁶ John Murray to Minister Young, November 6, 1882, enclosure 2 in No. 60, Mr. Young to Mr. Frelinghuysen, November 24, 1882, p. 17–21 in vol. 62 (Roll 63) of *Despatches*.

³⁷ Minister Young to John Murray, November 18, 1882, enclosure 3 in No. 60, Mr. Young to Mr. Frelinghuysen,

still found the property under consideration unsatisfactory, even with the officials offering one thousand taels to sweeten the deal.³⁸ So, the case remained stalled into the summer of 1883.

The final push for resolution came from Young's reluctant decision to send Chester Holcombe, the Secretary to the Legation and a former missionary, to Jinan.³⁹ On his 1882 visit, Consul Zuck had the misfortune of being pelted with rocks and dirt by a crowd outside Dezhou. Initially, this indignity only compounded the futility of his trip. However, in 1883, Chinese officials, under instructions from Li Hongzhang, made a point of treating Holcombe royally, even parading him into Jinan in the governor's own sedan chair. Although the property rejected in late 1882 was still on the table, Governor Chen Shijie acceded without argument to the missionaries' demand for three thousand taels (about \$4300) to make up for the discrepancy in value. Both he and Holcombe recognized that this was considerably more than should have been necessary, not to mention three times the initial offer.⁴⁰ The missionaries placed this money—which equaled almost the entire value of McIlvaine's initial donation—in a special "McIlvaine Memorial Fund" to be used at the discretion of the station (i.e. not the home board).

Soon after, the missionaries began trying to use this money to expand their mission in the city. In April 1887, they secured a three-year lease on a small courtyard in the east suburb, to which they relocated their boys' school. The gentry again opposed this transaction: on one occasion, a "mob" entered the premises and local leaders pressured the owner to promptly redeem the property, as the contract allowed. However, Governor Zhang Yao, whose favor one of the newer missionaries, Gilbert Reid, had courted since his arrival in 1886, intervened on

November 24, 1882, p. 24–25 in vol. 62 (Roll 63) of *Despatches*.

³⁸ Reid, "An Experience of Missionary Troubles," 277.

³⁹ No. 285, Mr. Young to Mr. Frelinghuysen, November 14, 1883, p. 2–4 in vol. 67 (Roll 68) of *Despatches*.

⁴⁰ Mr. Holcombe to Mr. Young, February 12, 1884, enclosure 1 in No. 413, Mr. Young to Mr. Frelinghuysen, April 1, 1884, p. 14–15 in vol. 70 (Roll 71) of *Despatches*. Also see *FRUS 1884*, 92–94.

behalf of the missionaries and ordered the gentry to let them and their school be.⁴¹

Hoping to use the McIlvaine money to establish a hospital, the missionaries secured a perpetual lease on property in the southeast suburb in August 1887 but ran into stiffer opposition. Again the gentry raised objections and officials arrested the landlord, Liu Mengkui, and middleman, Chen Wanping, and refused to stamp the deed to the property.⁴² Li Qing'ao again became involved in the case, and the gentry presented two petitions citing the legal status of the land and questioning whether the treaties allowed the missionaries to purchase it. Around this time, Reid noted, the attitude of Governor Zhang toward the missionaries began to change.⁴³ Philip West argues that Li's pressure caused Zhang to turn a cold shoulder to the missionaries, both because of Li's local status and because Li had promoted Zhang while governor in Henan.⁴⁴

The case also drew in Chen Ruheng—the wealthy philanthropist who, as chapter 4 discusses, had donated to Luoyuan Academy, participated in hydraulic projects, and, together with Governor Chen Shijie, founded the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence.⁴⁵ The clearest evidence of how the relationships between different Chinese actors in Jinan shaped the dynamics of the case comes from reports in the *North China Daily Herald* in 1887 and early 1888. As accounts of conditions in a local setting largely unfamiliar to foreigners, written by an anonymous correspondent (who claimed not to be an American missionary but must have been acquainted with them and certainly sympathized with them), and published in an English-language newspaper serving the foreign community, this source warrants skepticism regarding

⁴¹ Reid, *Glances at China*, 141–51.

⁴² Robert Coltman to Dr. Ellinwood, November 27, 1887, p. 1 in Roll 206 of *PBFM*; Minister Denby to Prince Gong, December 21, 1887, enclosure 1 in No. 529, Mr. Denby to Mr. Bayard, December 20, 1887, p. 15–17 in vol. 82 (Roll 83) of *Despatches*. See also *FRUS 1888*, 240–41.

⁴³ Reid, “An Experience of Missionary Troubles,” 279.

⁴⁴ West, “The Tsinan Property Disputes,” 126–28.

⁴⁵ West, 127; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:35a–36b.

its bias and factual basis.⁴⁶ However, the internal consistency of these reports and their correspondence to what we know about the elite structure in Jinan suggests they are largely reliable. As in the first phase of the case, these reports describe Li as unequivocally opposed to the missionaries.⁴⁷ Chen Ruheng is described more favorably as “in heart friendly to foreigners.” In response to the opposition to the missionaries’ school in the east suburb, Chen “acted the part of mediator and so helped the officials to decide somewhat justly though rather dilatorily.”⁴⁸ On his death in 1889, the *North China Herald*’s correspondent wrote, “Of all the prominent men in the city he is the only one who in the past has dared at times to show a certain friendliness to any of the foreigners. He has been a man of generous character... The city could well have spared others instead of him.”⁴⁹ However, the role of the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence is more ambiguous: in a separate case that spring, a Chinese Christian affiliated with English Baptists in Jinan had been forced to give up property he had purchased out of fears that he was acting on behalf of the missionaries. Then, the original landlord was pressured to turn the deed over to “a Public Club composed of all the prominent families of the city,” which was almost certainly the Bureau.⁵⁰ David Buck claims that the missionaries identified the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence as a source of major opposition.⁵¹

All this suggests that the upper stratum of Jinan’s elite did not necessarily share a common or uncomplicated view of the case. Moreover, even if they had, they were not the only

⁴⁶ “Outports: Chinan Fu,” *NCH*, 1891/12/31, 898.

⁴⁷ “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1887/7/1, 10; “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1887/11/30, 392; “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1888/2/10, 157; “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1888/2/24, 208; “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1888/6/15, 774.

⁴⁸ “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1888/2/10, 157.

⁴⁹ “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1889/6/22, 767.

⁵⁰ “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1888/2/10, 157. On Chen’s role in the case, see also, “Outports: Chi-Nan Fu,” *NCH*, 1889/6/22, 767.

⁵¹ Unfortunately, I have not been able to identify Buck’s source for this. Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 31.

local actors in play. The *North China Herald* attributed the 1887 opposition to the missionaries' school in the east suburb to a local headman who wanted to tear down the school. It was the gentry—"only one man," who might have been Li, since Chen was traveling for relief work around this time—who delayed this action, only somewhat successfully, to allow time to confer with the officials. The correspondent explained that Jinan's elite were divided by both section of the city and suburbs and by their relative class, with the upper crust of Jinan's elite consisting of five or six families with Li and Chen as the heads. This description of the lower level of the gentry in various parts of the city generally acting autonomously but with a capacity for organizing under the leadership of the upper gentry accords with the situation described in chapters 3 and 4. Consequently, the upper gentry mediated between the lower gentry ("riotous headmen") and the officials, while the officials mediated between the missionaries and the gentry. The correspondent noted, though, that "Now and then the gentry obtains a secret conference with the foreigner, seeking for pity and help."⁵²

While the upper gentry played a mediating and even mollifying role in the summer of 1887, Li in particular began exerting more pressure on the officials against the missionaries. This may have been a response to pressure from below, though. After the missionaries had agreed to the lease on property in the southeast suburb, the *North China Herald* reported that the "leading men composing the gentry" had agreed not to interfere. However, placards began appearing criticizing both the officials and the gentry for not halting the missionaries. The *North China Herald* claims that "the smaller gentry—among whom was a native doctor" pressured more powerful members of the elite, presumably Li in particular, to become involved.⁵³ Unfortunately,

⁵² "Outports: Chi-Nan Fu," *NCH*, 1887/7/1, 10.

⁵³ "Outports: Chi-Nan Fu," *NCH*, 1888/2/10, 157.

no sources speak directly to the relationship between Li and Chen. They may have held genuinely contradictory attitudes towards the missionaries, but they also shared a role as mediators between the “suburban” gentry and the officials. Their desire to prevent members of the lower gentry from growing dissatisfied with their leadership and action directly against the missionaries gave them reason to exert pressure on the officials to meet the lower gentry’s demands, apart from their personal feelings, for good or ill, towards foreigners.

Finding the officials now unsupportive, the missionaries took matters into their own hands. After giving the officials thirty days to offer a property in exchange but receiving no reply, Reid went to the property on the evening of November 28 to occupy a single room. Reid claimed to have made an agreement to this effect with the owner, who was still in prison, but he did not notify the circuit intendant of his intentions. According to Reid, after he had been there for about an hour, a crowd gathered, ejected him from the building, beat him, and left him in the street in a semi-conscious state for more than an hour until a constable came and took him to an inn for the night since the city gates were already closed. He returned to his residence the next morning and spent the entire day, which was, coincidentally, his thirtieth birthday, in bed. The Chinese officials denied Reid’s version of events, saying he had been injured when, as he tried to force his way into the building, the women and children inside pushed him out and he fell down, knocking his head and scraping his hands and arms. Governor Zhang speculated that the crowd Reid referred to consisted merely of curious onlookers attracted by the scene.⁵⁴ The missionaries again turned to Beijing for help, but, again, Minister Denby found his leverage limited by the fact that no egregious or undisputed harm had befallen Reid, who recovered fully from his injuries.

⁵⁴ Huang Jiamo, *Zhong Mei guanxi shiliao: Guangxu chao*, 2:1267.

The case took a strange turn in 1888. That year, Dr. Robert Coltman purchased property in the country, about one mile west of the city suburbs. However, the gentry also opposed this purchase, and so Coltman took responsibility for negotiating the case generally. While he was administering the affair in winter and spring of 1889, the local officials, the Zongli yamen, and Minister Denby all came to believe that the missionaries would be willing to let the property in the southeast suburb go if they would be allowed to have the land Coltman purchased in the country. Under this assumption, Governor Zhang Yao secured the gentry's consent to let the missionaries have this property and thereby close the case. This probably entailed Li and Chen, who had a more comprehensive perspective on the case, exerting pressure on the people directly concerned, who, as we will see, had indisputably valid reasons for opposing this transaction. However, Coltman had contravened the consensus of the Jinan station, whose other members still preferred basing their hospital in the suburbs and ultimately found the west country property unsuitable to their needs. This tension led to Coltman transferring to the Dengzhou station and that station's doctor, James Neal, coming to Jinan to replace him.

The missionaries, with Gilbert Reid back at the helm, thus continued to search for property, much to the vexation of the officials and diplomats, who thought they had put the matter to bed. In February 1891, Reid negotiated a lease on property in the east suburb and agreed to take back the money the missionaries had paid for the southeast suburb property and hand over its deeds, which had remained in their possession since 1887. However, with the case on the verge of resolution, the gentry again raised concerns that the missionaries' plans for construction on the new property might disrupt the area's *fengshui*.⁵⁵ With the officials unmotivated to help the missionaries after the debacle over the country property, a deadlock

⁵⁵ Reid, "An Experience of Missionary Troubles," 283.

again loomed.

However, later in 1891 the officials adopted a more accommodating approach to the missionaries, pushed the gentry to withdraw their objections, and brought the case to a close. Like 1884, the officials' conciliatory attitude related to outside events. In 1884 it had been the mistreatment of Consul Zuck; in 1891 it was the outbreak of a series of anti-foreign riots along the Yangzi River in the summer of that year. After these incidents, the court had instructed local officials to quickly resolve all outstanding missionary cases.⁵⁶ At a meeting at the end of October, two of the leading gentry consented to the missionaries' occupation of the property they had secured in the east suburb, so long as they agreed not to dig any ditches or construct any tall foreign style building that would interfere with the *fengshui*.

In both phases of the case (1881–4 and 1887–91), neither the missionaries nor their antagonists won complete victories. The missionaries experienced considerable inconvenience and never gained an unfettered right to purchase and build on property at will. They did, however, establish themselves securely in Jinan, increasing the number of people and functions their station served. This case did exhibit signs of the violent conflict that we often associate with the experiences of missionaries in China, especially outside the treaty ports. It culminated, however, in a compromise that seems to have been remarkably durable. The nature of this compromise, which represented an absolute triumph for neither American nor Chinese actors, who continued to operate under different understandings of what principles should govern the management of the city's space and its people, demonstrates how Jinan had become a kind of middle ground.

Throughout this case, Chinese and American actors wove each other and their respective

⁵⁶ Paul Bergen to Dr. Ellinwood, November 2, 1891, p. 4 in Roll 208 of *PBFM*; Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, 93–94.

governments into a complex, inter-imperial web of relationships. Jinan's elite turned to local officials to press their claims against the missionaries. In the case of Li Qing'ao and Chen Ruheng, they relied on their personal relationships to do so. However, Qing officials also served the interests of the missionaries, and, through them, the American state by ensuring their physical protection and upholding their treaty rights. Likewise, the missionaries turned frequently and with little hesitation to their diplomatic representatives for help. Jinan's elite enjoyed the advantage of proximity to provincial officials while the missionaries suffered from their distance from their government's representatives. However, diplomats in Beijing were able to press the missionaries' case within the larger context of relations between the two countries. This bore fruit, for example, in the wake of the 1891 riots, which had nothing to do with Jinan but nevertheless affected proceedings there. The mediating role played by the Zongli yamen and the limitations of its authority did, however, moderate the effect of diplomatic pressure on provincial officials. As Qing officials served the interests of the American state, American diplomats also offered some benefits to the Qing. In contrast to the missionaries' inclination to avoid public scrutiny of their transactions, diplomats encouraged the missionaries to conduct their business in full view of the officials. Moreover, they checked the missionaries' aggressive (mis)interpretations of their treaty rights.

This last dynamic became especially evident while Gilbert Reid was handling the case. Prior to this, the missionaries had generally accepted the legation's opinion that their right to purchase property in Jinan depended on the forbearance of local officials.⁵⁷ Reid, however, insisted that the treaties did explicitly grant this right and that American officials were neglecting their responsibilities to their fellow citizens by not pressing their claims. He went so far as to

⁵⁷ Murray to Ellinwood, January 25, 1883, p. 7–8 in Roll 204 of *PBFM*.

write an article in Chinese for *Wanguo gongbao* and English for *The Chinese Recorder* explaining his reasoning. Reid's argument rested on an infamous clause surreptitiously inserted into the Chinese translation of the 1860 treaty between France and China that explicitly allowed missionaries to purchase property and build churches in the interior. However, since the French translation was authoritative, even foreigners recognized that this clause was void.⁵⁸ Additionally, Reid pointed to a clause in the 1858 British treaty that allowed foreigners to purchase property in the treaty ports and "other places." However, diplomats generally regarded this as a reference to areas within or near treaty port cities but outside the port area itself, not the entire interior of China. Again, Reid claimed the indulgence of officials as support for his argument, but in Jinan, of course, such indulgence had not been forthcoming.⁵⁹

This disagreement between Reid and American diplomats demonstrates how the limits of state power were not defined solely by government officials. Reid clearly saw himself as acting in the interests of his fellow citizens and the state more broadly. Writing to the State Department about his frustrations with Denby, he claimed that the German minister had informed him of an agreement he had reached with the Qing to support property purchases in the interior. He concluded, "The Chinese Government is inclined to give toleration to Christianity and to missionaries, and it is to be hoped that nothing shall be done by the American Government to injure the efforts of missionaries merely because they are Americans."⁶⁰ Whereas Reid prioritized maximizing the benefits enjoyed by individual citizens, Denby paid more attention to maintaining a generally productive relationship between the two countries. Accordingly, he wrote of Reid, "It is just such litigious and annoying gentlemen as he who embarrass diplomatic

⁵⁸ Richards, "The Rights of Foreigners," 192–93.

⁵⁹ Li Jiabai, "Jiaotang zuzhi fangdi anli"; Reid, "Chinese Law." West, "The Tsinan Property Disputes," 130.

⁶⁰ Reid to Bayard, May 24, 1888, *FRUS 1888*, 325.

work.”⁶¹ “Annoying” as Reid was, he and his colleagues were, as Denby tacitly admitted, agents of “diplomatic work.” The missionaries both initiated the extension of American state power into Jinan through their residence and activities there and directly negotiated this process through their interactions with local officials. Early in the case, the *North China Herald* noted the limited legal basis for foreigners purchasing property and the potential benefits of missionaries’ trail-blazing: “We therefore consider ourselves justified in hoping that the facilities granted to missionaries in the interior of China may lead to an extension of the privilege to members of other professions.”⁶²

The missionaries’ position vis-a-vis American diplomats bore some resemblance to how Jinan’s elite related to the officials posted there. Their relationship was deeply cooperative, continuing the dynamics described in chapters 3 and 4. Both groups sought the benefit of Jinan and the dynasty, although, like the American missionaries and diplomats, they approached doing so from different perspectives. Consequently, we can see signs of tension between the officials who tried to bring the case to a close and the elite, who insisted on particular conditions.

This case thus shows how place-making and state-building in Jinan operated through negotiation and contestation on two levels. First, Jinan was a middle ground between two imperial projects that, though distinct, utilized each other’s subjects and their relationships to other actors to maintain order and avoid problems that could reverberate throughout their relationship. Second, Jinan continued to be a point from which actors within and outside formal government institutions negotiated the boundary conditions of these two states. As Sparrow, Novak, and Sawyer argue, these limits both render the state visible—the realms of diplomatic

⁶¹ No. 693, Denby to Bayard, September 2, 1888, p. 2 in vol. 83 (Roll 84) of *Despatches*.

⁶² *NCH*, 1882/4/12, 381.

correspondence produced by this case testify to that—and “generate its power.”⁶³ In the case of the Americans, these boundary conditions were negotiated through the missionaries extending the scope of their privileges into the interior and beyond what the text of the treaties explicitly allowed. The type of power generated for the Qing state through the relationship between the gentry and officials was not entirely new and built on previous and parallel exercises of state power in response to the crises described in chapters 3 and 4. However, this power operated in a new spatial context—the making of Jinan as an imperial middle ground—and with regard to managing the particular problems posed by foreign missionaries. These problems were not entirely unprecedented from the perspective of the Qing, who had long dealt with subjects of diverse ethnicities and religions and, more recently, citizens of Euro-American countries in other places. However, just as the missionaries were stretching their privileges into unfamiliar territory, the Qing government was forced to extend the geographic scope of its dealings with foreigners into Jinan. The effects of the conjoint action of officials and elite were admittedly less impressive than the construction of shipyards and arsenals and the training of modern armies. As far as Jinan was concerned, though, this form of state-building was just as, if not more effective, since it prevented the occurrence of an incident that might have severely undermined Qing interests and provided a basis for even more thoroughgoing engagement with foreign actors later on. There was only so much that the Qing could gain in negotiating Jinan’s middle ground from 1881 to 1891, but there was much more that the dynasty could have lost, as the Boxers would show less than a decade later.

The possibility for conflict within imperial states between both missionaries and diplomats and gentry and officials did threaten state power in some ways. However, these

⁶³ Sparrow, Novak, and Sawyer, *Boundaries of the State*, 6.

negotiations both between and within Qing and American states worked towards consolidating and clarifying state power. The next two sections examine two arenas—space and people—in which this power operated and which were subject to contestation throughout this case.

Managing Space and Imperial Place-Making

In the late nineteenth century, *fengshui* often became a rationale for opposing foreigners' efforts to buy and build on property.⁶⁴ To missionaries, *fengshui* was a heathen superstition and a practical nuisance. However, *fengshui* and concerns about urban space were much more than tools for inconveniencing foreigners. As chapter 1 demonstrates, the use and marking of space within and beyond Jinan's original walls was thick with meaning. Moreover, as both chapters 3 and 4 show, Jinan's urban space was undergoing considerable changes in this period, both in terms of physical construction and human habitations. In other words, we must understand this incident as one facet of a larger and dynamic tapestry of spatial discourse and practice.

The missionaries possessed only a superficial understanding of this tapestry as Jinan's elite and officials saw it. However, space was a fundamental concern for them too since they desired to control and utilize urban space for particular purposes. The case challenged them to define what space it was desirable to occupy and how it should be used. For all actors involved, then, the management of space was not so much a hindrance to settling the case but the reason for negotiation in the first place. Consequently, spatial concerns drove the articulation of state power both through the smaller contests that comprised this case and the compromises that marked its settlement. This section examines the spatial considerations in play at three specific

⁶⁴ Bruun, *Fengshui in China*, 35; Tiedemann, "Protestant 'Missionary Cases,'" 155–56. A closely related concern was the potential violation of burial grounds. See for example, Goodman, "The Locality as Microcosm of the Nation?"

points of the Jinan missionary case, showing how spatial management informed place-making and state-building.

Fengshui and Urban Space: Luoyuan Academy and Sanhuang Temple

Both a desire for permanent property and a preference for a particular location in the city led to Jasper McIlvaine arranging the purchase of the property next to Luoyuan Academy. At this time, the station's main work consisted of McIlvaine's preaching and new arrival Stephen Hunter's medical work (mostly dispensing medicine), which he could no longer operate from his residence because of the growing number of patients. Preaching and the hope that curious passers-by would stop in to listen made a place on a busy thoroughfare desirable. Hunter described the location McIlvaine secured as "the finest position in the whole city."⁶⁵ McIlvaine's untimely death lent the property and the chapel it was supposed to become greater affective significance. Hunter wrote to the Board, "Brother Murray and I feel that this chapel and its work is the dying gift of our dear brother, and it is a legacy we cannot disregard."⁶⁶ Murray referred to Jinan as a "stronghold" that needed reinforcements in the wake of McIlvaine's death.⁶⁷

Whether or not the missionaries initially appreciated the property's proximity to the academy and examination hall per se, they certainly did so after opposition arose. The *North China Herald* congratulated the missionaries on their "courage" but questioned the "prudence or unwisdom of building a chapel and mission-house adjoining the Examination Hall of literates." The paper speculated that similar protests would ensue in England if a "joss-house" were built next to Trinity College, Cambridge.⁶⁸ Hunter likewise noted that in China, as in America, "public

⁶⁵ Hunter to Ellinwood, December 6, 1880, p. 11 in Roll 203 of *PBFM*.

⁶⁶ Hunter to Ellinwood, February 5, 1881, p. 5 in Roll 203 of *PBFM*.

⁶⁷ Murray to Ellinwood, February 4, 1881, p. 4 in Roll 203 of *PBFM*.

⁶⁸ "Outports: Tientsin," *NCH*, 1881/8/12, 163.

sentiment over-rules the law.” He expressed concern that relying on diplomatic intervention to achieve a site so fraught with political meaning could damage the reputation and long-term prospects of the mission.⁶⁹

The location of the missionaries’ planned chapel concerned Chinese actors in complex ways that are not possible to completely reconstruct given the lack of sources written by local people about the case. Again, general antipathy towards the missionaries and the desire to deny them a location anywhere in the city may have played a part in their opposition, but that does not explain how the elite, officials, and missionaries eventually reached a settlement for the missionaries to occupy property elsewhere. The proximity to the academy and examination hall certainly mattered, at least insofar as they became the staging ground for the initial protest. One of the objections the officials cited was the legal status of the land, but there is no indication that this was connected in any way to the academy. It could also be that people associated with the academy had their eyes on this property in case the academy had the chance to expand in the future. They could understandably have been worried that with the property in the hands of foreign missionaries, procuring it later would prove difficult, if not impossible. The biography of Liu Zhengji mentioned above says that he first organized opposition to the missionaries when they tried to buy the land of a famous *fengshui* expert (*kanyu jia*).⁷⁰ This expert could have then supported or generated claims about how the missionaries might disrupt the *fengshui* around Luoyuan Academy, but no other source mentions him, and even Liu’s biography does not connect him to the academy. Likewise, it is unfortunately impossible to confirm or refute any of these other possibilities.

⁶⁹ Hunter to Ellinwood, undated, p. 1–4 in Roll 203 of *PBFM*.

⁷⁰ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:24b.

However, there are several elements of the case that together suggest that the elite's motivations were more specific than general antipathy towards the missionaries or a desire to deny them any prominent position in the city. First, very early in the case, someone—presumably members of the elite—claimed that the missionaries' construction would adversely affect the *fengshui* of the area. This objection was relayed both to the missionaries and to American diplomats in Beijing through the Zongli yamen.⁷¹ Second, the missionaries later claimed that they had seen property on the west side of the main street between Luoyuan Academy and the gate posted for sale. After they pointed this out to officials, though, the advertisements were removed.⁷² Instead, the officials offered them property for exchange on the east side of the city. Third, as the case dragged on, the missionaries were offered property that conveyed considerable prestige: first the Qingzhou Guild Hall and then, in the end, a property opposite the prefect's office.

Together, these pieces of evidence suggest that the city's elite were particularly keen on denying the missionaries property on the west side of the city's main east-west thoroughfare, which connected Luoyuan Academy directly to the west gate. Just outside the gate, of course, lay Baotu Spring, after which Luoyuan Academy was named. (See chapters 1 and 2.) The combination of Baotu Spring's association with spiritual and imperial power and the centrality of Luoyuan Academy and the examination hall to the academic success of the city's and province's students imbued this space with particular meaning and may have informed opposition to the missionaries. Objections based on *fengshui* spoke to how construction, especially overseen by

⁷¹ Murray and Hunter to Angell, August 6, 1881, enclosure 4 in No. 199, Angell to Blaine, August 18, 1881 in *FRUS 1881*, 291; Prince Gong to Angell, September 26, 1881, enclosure 1 in No. 16, Holcombe to Blaine, November 17, 1881, p. 8–9 in vol. 58 (Roll 59) of *Despatches*.

⁷² Murray and Hunter to Angell, August 6, 1881, *FRUS 1881*, 292; Holcombe to Prince Gong, November 11, 1881, enclosure 4 in No. 16, Holcombe to Blaine, November 17, 1881, p. 18–19 in vol. 58 (Roll 59) of *Despatches*.

foreigners, might affect specific structures but also their relationship to other sites within the city.⁷³ *Fengshui* remained a concern even in the settlement of this phase of the case: the missionaries were allowed to construct buildings in a foreign style but they could not have multiple stories, towers, or spires.⁷⁴

The gentry again raised *fengshui* as an objection to the missionaries' purchase of the southeast suburb property in 1887. Unlike in the 1881 case, the missionaries had this time succeeded in winning the consent of the property's immediate neighbors. Thus, the Zongli yamen was skeptical when the local headmen and the city's elite, led by Li Qing'ao, claimed that the missionaries' occupation of this property would obstruct the thoroughfare leading to the people's houses, noting that this objection was raised only after the sale had been finalized and the neighbors' consent secured.⁷⁵ Predictably, in his reply to the Zongli yamen, Governor Zhang focused on other objections, saying that the basis of the lawsuit brought by Li Wangui and others against the owner Liu Mengkui was because of fraudulent deeds and because it would "obstruct the *fengmai* [i.e. *fengshui*] (*you ai fengmai*)."⁷⁶

Of these objections, the assertion that the missionaries' purchase of and/or construction on this property would disrupt the *fengshui* of the area carried the most weight with local officials and the Zongli yamen. The variety of objections offered may indicate that the gentry were simply casting around for excuses to deny the missionaries this property. Even if this is so, it is telling that the "excuse" that was most meaningful to the local officials was that concerning *fengshui*. Without commenting on the claims that Liu's deed to the property was fraudulent or

⁷³ For an example of how the language of *fengshui* could be deployed in arguments about the disposition of urban space, see Xu Yinong, *The Chinese City*, 228–34.

⁷⁴ Holcombe to Murray, Hunter, and Bergen, January 22, 1884, enclosure 8 in No. 413, Young to Frelinghuysen, April 1, 1884, p. 53–55 in vol. 70 (Roll 71) of *Despatches*.

⁷⁵ Huang Jiamo, *Zhong Mei guanxi shiliao: Guangxu chao*, 2:1253.

⁷⁶ Huang Jiamo, 2:1266.

that there could be a disruption to the thoroughfare, Zhang told the Zongli yamen that the officials had visited the property and determined that the front and rear structures adjoined the property of the temple next door and that the possible obstruction of the *fengshui* was a real issue.⁷⁷ Thereafter, the Zongli yamen referred only to the gentry's claim that the missionaries would interfere with the *fengshui* in its communication with Minister Denby.⁷⁸

There are two distinct, but not truly divergent, potential interpretations of these objections over *fengshui*. First, it is possible that the concerns expressed by the gentry were fabricated simply to obstruct the missionaries' purchase of property. Earlier that year the gentry had failed to prevent the missionaries' use of the east suburb property and had not shown any willingness to offer properties as candidates for an exchange, as they had in 1881. Additionally, the fact that the elite initially advanced several other objections that seem to have been baseless, or were at least quickly abandoned, might indicate that *fengshui* was simply the most useful rationale for denying the validity of the transaction. Accusations that the owner's deed was fraudulent could be easily disproved, and concerns over the impact on the neighboring residences could be dismissed so long as the neighbors themselves were willing to accept the deal. *Fengshui*, however, provided an avenue for the community as a whole, especially its gentry guardians, to express interest in this plot of land. Both Governor Zhang and the Zongli yamen accepted the underlying principle that the *fengshui* of the city was something with which the gentry could legitimately concern themselves, thereby recognizing the elite's prerogative to manage the space of the city in general.

On the other hand, we should not dismiss the possibility that the *fengshui* of this area was genuinely a concern. Zhang reported that the property was on Sanhuang miao (Three Emperors

⁷⁷ Huang Jiamo, 2:1267.

⁷⁸ Zongli Yamen to Minister Denby, April 6, 1888, *FRUS 1888*, 294.

Temple) Street.⁷⁹ If it really did about a temple, then this might well have been the Sanhuang Temple, which was located at the southeast corner of the old city wall. The temple itself was a scenic spot and was also close to one of Jinan's most famous springs, Black Tiger Spring. This temple dated to the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368), when the court had ordered localities to construct temples to the Three Emperors to venerate their putative contributions to medical practices.⁸⁰ In subsequent centuries, the court's patronage of these temples declined, but local veneration of the Three Emperors continued, often mixed with popular worship of the Medicine King (*yaowang*), although in Jinan there were separate temples for each.⁸¹ Consequently, the missionaries' stated intention of building a hospital there was probably especially impolitic, beyond its potential effects on the scenery. This may also explain why a doctor helped lead opposition to the missionaries.⁸²

By enforcing these spatial prerogatives, Jinan's elite were acting in the interests of their home city and the state. Chapter 1 shows that the construction and maintenance of Jinan's landscape was closely related to state power. Likewise, both Luoyuan Academy and Sanhuang Temple were, to varying degrees, associated with the imperial government's patronage of scholars and doctors. Localized concerns, such as fears that disruption of the *fengshui* could affect students' exam prospects, may have driven Jinan's elite to take action against the missionaries. However, like the missionaries' purchase of property, which was motivated by a particular religious mission and attached to the interests of the American state, the elite's concerns were interwoven with both place-making and state-building. Neither the local officials

⁷⁹ Huang Jiamo, *Zhong Mei guanxi shiliao: Guangxu chao*, 2:1266.

⁸⁰ Chao Yüan-ling, *Medicine and Society*, 61–65; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 12a–13b.

⁸¹ Chao Yüan-ling, *Medicine and Society*, 65–74.

⁸² Since the aforementioned Liu Zhengji was, among other things, a medical practitioner, it is tempting to wonder if he was this doctor, but there is no source that speaks to this. "Outports: Chi-Nan Fu," *NCH*, 1888/2/10, 157.

nor the Zongli yamen denied the prerogative of the gentry to identify the missionaries' purchase of these pieces of property as deleterious to the city's *fengshui* and, therefore, to protest their sale to the missionaries. Consequently, the elite managed to exert power on both Qing officials and American actors on behalf of the public interest. In both the 1884 and 1891 settlements the missionaries agreed that they would refrain from building ostentatious structures such as spires or towers that could affect the *fengshui*. Although Jinan's elite gave some ground to American empire, the case actually upheld their role as protectors of both city and state.

Compromise and Perseverance: The West Country Property

Although the second phase of the case proved just as, and maybe more, combative than the first, it displayed even more fully than the first the selectivity of the elite's spatial concerns and their willingness to compromise. When the Zongli yamen heard about the opposition to Dr. Coltman's purchase of property in the west country in 1888, it wrote to Zhang Yao inquiring about what had happened. Noting that this property was in a secluded area and thus unlikely to abut temples or academies the Zongli yamen pointed out that there should be no problems with the *fengshui* or interfering with neighbors' houses.⁸³ It turned out, though, that the missionaries had been swindled by someone selling off part of their family land and that the family had a very legitimate claim for the return of their collective property. However, Governor Zhang convinced the family and the gentry to give up this land, ostensibly as a step toward resolving the southeast property case. This prospective resolution demonstrates that the gentry and officials prioritized upholding an illegal transaction, which had inconvenienced and probably embarrassed the family, over allowing the missionaries to occupy the property in the southeast suburb.

In an article on the 1887–91 phase of the case, Philip West attributes this remarkable

⁸³ Huang Jiamo, *Zhong Mei guanxi shiliao: Guangxu chao*, 2:1331.

concession to how the gentry and officials viewed the city generally, but his explanation is not entirely convincing. He argues that while the city itself was under the tight control of the gentry and officials and the population density of the country was low enough to preclude the possibility of the missionaries seriously disturbing things there, the suburbs represented an unhappy medium, where population density was high and the area was “outside the circle of sure control.”⁸⁴ West has a point about the suburbs, insofar as we have seen that the missionaries’ attempts to purchase property there elicited opposition from the lower gentry, for whom the upper crust of Jinan’s elite then had to serve as mediators. However, he gives no consideration to the 1881 opposition to the purchase of property next to Luoyuan Academy, which was both inside the city walls and very much within the gentry’s zone of control—enough so for them to organize active resistance to the missionaries. Moreover, it does not explain why the gentry or officials never themselves suggested the idea of the missionaries taking property in the country instead of the suburbs or city, especially since the country housed an apparently much less bothersome Catholic mission. This remained true up to the end of the case, when the missionaries gave up their property in one part of the suburbs (the southeast) in exchange for one in a different part (the east), without being pressured to take one in the country instead. Thus, the case of the country property, together with the final settlement of the case, reflects the particular importance the elite attached to the land abutting Sanhuang Temple. This concern was so significant that it outweighed their concern for what the missionaries might do in the country, which, as West notes, appears to have been negligible, and the very real claim of a family who had been defrauded of its collective property.

The case of the country property also demonstrates how the missionaries’ own spatial

⁸⁴ West, “The Tsinan Property Disputes,” 131.

concerns and sense of place developed over time and were subjects of disagreement. Up to 1888, the missionaries had concentrated their residences and other properties and ministries in the city and suburbs. There were practical reasons for this, including greater foot traffic bringing people into their street chapel. Naturally, they preferred their residences to be within easy access of their places of work. However, they also saw the city itself as symbolically important. Not only was it a provincial capital but the capital of the province that was the home of China's great sages, Confucius and Mencius. Blending practical and symbolic concerns, they held out hope for converting one of the powerful officials who served there, although they recognized doing so was highly unlikely.⁸⁵

However, not everyone in the Jinan station or the Shandong mission shared this preference for property close to the city. Dr. Robert Coltman, who took charge of property matters during Reid's absence in late 1887, believed strongly that the station should shift its center of gravity to the country. Coltman emphasized the health benefits of doing so, saying that a hospital in the country would benefit from the "pure air." He also blamed the missionaries' residence in the more crowded suburbs for their suffering, in the space of a single year, cases of smallpox, diphtheria, typhus, malaria, dysentery, and ulcers.⁸⁶ Property in the country would also have afforded greater room, which would have particularly benefited the station's women, who had fewer opportunities to travel about the city and beyond than their male counterparts.⁸⁷ Moreover, Coltman argued that a single missionary and a "native helper" could maintain the street chapel from a base outside the city, which would also give the missionaries more access to

⁸⁵ Chalfant to Ellinwood, July 28, 1887, p. 4 in Roll 206 of *PBFM*.

⁸⁶ Coltman to Ellinwood, January 11, [1890], p. 3–4 in Roll 206 of *PBFM*.

⁸⁷ Chalfant to Ellinwood, July 28, 1887, p. 5 in Roll 206 of *PBFM*.

the villages in the countryside.⁸⁸ Coltman took advantage of his administration of the property affairs to attempt to both bring them to a conclusion and to realize his dream of a hospital and residences in the country.

Unfortunately for Coltman, his dream was spoiled on two fronts. First, of course, his purchase of the property in the country ran into legal troubles. Then, after those had been worked out, his colleagues in the station rejected the site as unsuitable. According to Coltman, they neglected to inspect the property until after it had been purchased and construction on it begun. When they did, Paul Bergen later wrote, they discovered that it was low-lying, suffered from poor drainage, and lay along a path that was impassible during part of the rainy season. It would take more than an hour to reach the dispensary and chapel in the city center from there.⁸⁹ Coltman, who resigned from the Jinan station in disappointment and was then transferred to Dengzhou, wrote, “I feel very much cut up over this affair as I had hoped to have done a great work here, but at this termination of my hopes of a residence and hospital outside I felt I could no longer live here.”⁹⁰

Out of concern for the missionaries’ health and their extraordinary difficulties obtaining property, the Board and the Shandong mission supported Coltman. However, his colleagues in Jinan persisted against the pressure of their fellow missionaries, the gentry, local officials, and even American diplomats, who were surprised that the case had dragged on in spite of reaching what they had believed was a final compromise. Bucking the missionaries’ usual habit of retiring to the coast during the perilously hot and humid summer to keep working on the case in Jinan, Reid wrote, “I, too, believe in the country work, and am trying to do my share, but I also believe

⁸⁸ Coltman to Ellinwood, January 11, [1890], p. 4 in Roll 206 of *PBFM*.

⁸⁹ Bergen to Ellinwood, January 1, 1891, p. 3 in Roll 206 of *PBFM*.

⁹⁰ Coltman to Ellinwood, January 11, [1890], p. 3 in Roll 207 of *PBFM*.

in city work, if the city is a real important and commanding centre...I claim Chi-nan fu ought to be fully equipped, and heartily supported. If others pooh-pooh it, then I will defend it, and that, too, in the last trying days of summer. Let not the country say to the city, I have no need of thee.”⁹¹ Bergen argued that the city offered greater prestige and convenience and noted that the station’s new doctor, James Neal, also preferred to build their hospital in the suburb. He also observed, “It must be remembered, too, that in no other city of North China has the property question assumed such importance as here. Officials all over the province know of it intimately and are awaiting with interest to see if the Minister and missionaries will yield to their demands.”⁹²

The Jinan missionaries’ arguments did win some sympathy from their compatriots. Even more importantly, though, the missionaries pressed their case from a position of financial independence. Missionaries’ property purchases generally relied on funding from the home board, which was not always forthcoming. However, the funds that Reid had used to purchase the southeast suburb property came from the remainder of the money Jasper McIlvaine had donated to the station and remained under its control. Accordingly, the missionaries dubbed their new enterprise the McIlvaine Memorial Hospital, which honored both McIlvaine’s commitment to the city and the generosity that had enabled his successors to persevere there.

Like Jinan’s elite, the missionaries’ understanding of urban space was informed by a mix of symbolic and pragmatic concerns, which were probably about as obscure to the local elite as *fengshui* was to the missionaries. This case led to divisions among the missionaries by bringing to the surface underlying tensions in how they viewed the relationship between their utilization

⁹¹ Emphasis in original. This last sentence is an allusion to I Corinthians 12:21. Reid to Ellinwood, March 3, 1890, p. 3–4 in Roll 207 of *PBFM*.

⁹² Bergen to Ellinwood, January 1, 1891, p. 4 in Roll 207 of *PBFM*.

of space and Jinan's identity as a place. Because of the availability of fine-grained sources (their letters), we can observe how individual mission activities constituted a larger place-making process. Even more than Jinan's elite, on whose internal disagreements existing sources shed little light, we can see how personal views and pragmatic needs shaped this discourse and behavior. Nevertheless, in neither the case of the gentry nor the missionaries did these localized and even personal concerns stand apart from the state. Rather, each group drew other sources of public power—officials and diplomats—into place-making. Likewise, their place-making activities—managing urban space and acquiring and utilizing property—extended and marked out the boundaries of state power.

Policing Communal Boundaries

Whenever opposition arose to the missionaries' purchase of property, the sellers, middlemen, and any Chinese converts involved in the transaction almost always found themselves imprisoned by the authorities and accused of some form of malfeasance. Often, the gentry and officials accused them of violating legal or social norms, with varying degrees of severity. There were deeper concerns, though. By associating with the missionaries and facilitating the spread of their influence, these individuals placed themselves on the margins of local society and the imperial state. Some officials went so far as to question their loyalty to the dynasty. For these reasons, the gentry and officials both policed these individuals and their participation in Jinan's middle ground.

Naturally, the missionaries tended to see these people more favorably and understood their suffering in terms of religious persecution, whether they were converts or not. Article XXIX of the U.S. Treaty of Tianjin explicitly prohibited religious persecution against both

American citizens and Chinese converts.⁹³ Foreign missionaries often stretched these protections such that any association with missionaries afforded considerable legal cover, an effect Eileen Scully refers to as a “Midas touch.”⁹⁴ However, unscrupulous activities by their agents also negatively affected the missionaries. Consequently, the Presbyterian missionaries also served as policemen of sorts. Just as they negotiated Americans’ ability to purchase property in Jinan, they essentially decided whether and how hard to try to extend the protection of the American government to Qing subjects. While Jinan’s elite gave some ground on the issue of missionaries purchasing and building on property in the city, they and the officials proved remarkably successful in preserving the Qing state’s sovereignty over its own subjects.

Over the course of the Jinan case, there were several instances when people dealing with the missionaries broke the law and, in the process, created a serious nuisance for the local officials. The best-documented and most irksome of these cases related to the country property Coltman purchased in 1888. According to reports produced by the local officials, this plot of 27 *mu* (approximately four and a half acres) actually belonged to the Tan clan and even housed the grave of a family member. One of the clan members, named Tan Tongqing, arranged to sell the land through a middleman, Zhao Bingcheng. Zhao then purchased the property himself and sold it on to someone named Zhao Jintang, who was using the alias Zhao Gui. Zhao Jintang then sold the property on to Coltman. At this point, Tan Jinying, who, like Tongqing, held a low-level degree, enlisted the help of a former member of the Grand Secretariat, Liu Du, to bring a lawsuit against Zhao Bingcheng and Tan Tongqing, accusing them of undertaking the private sale of the land, i.e. without the approval of the Tan family. It was this lawsuit that held up the occupation

⁹³ Inspector General of Customs, *Treaties, Conventions, Etc.*, 1:522.

⁹⁴ Scully, *Bargaining with the State*, 5.

of the property through early 1889. Although Tan Tongqing and Zhao Bingcheng both confessed, the officials claimed it was impossible to tie up the case because Zhao Jintang had fled “without a trace.” Governor Zhang Yao reported that Tan Tongqing claimed that Zhao Bingcheng had deceived him into making the deal. Acknowledging this, and thus placing the blame more squarely on Zhao may have reflected deference to the Tan’s, a family of degree-holders, who, based on Liu Du’s involvement in the case, were connected to important people. As discussed above, the officials still had to deal with the missionaries’ claim to the property. Governor Zhang handled this by calling together the Tan family and other members of the gentry and convincing them to let the missionaries have the property for the price they had already paid.⁹⁵

Actions that were not indisputably illegal but still of dubious legality also aroused the suspicion and opposition of the gentry. One of the objections to the original 1881 transaction, in which the convert Liu Yuting purchased property next to Luoyuan Academy on behalf of the missionaries, was that the property Liu had purchased belonged to a class of property called *weiliang di*. In theory, this was land whose ownership was controlled and whose proceeds supported the boatmen who worked on the Grand Canal. Like other types of technically inalienable, “public” land, the government struggled to keep it off the market and eventually recognized the property rights of subsequent owners in exchange for fees that were used to support the boatmen.⁹⁶ It is likely that this property had already been the subject of illicit private transactions, as evidenced by the fact that the unstamped deeds the missionaries received documented its ownership for the past eighty years.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Huang Jiamo, *Zhong Mei guanxi shiliao: Guangxu chao*, 2:1343–44, 1407–8.

⁹⁶ Li Julan, “Lüelun Ming Qing shiqi de weisuo caoyun,” 98–99.

⁹⁷ Murray to Ellinwood, May 23, 1881, p. 3 in Roll 203 of *PBFM*; Murray and Hunter to Angell, July 20, 1881, *FRUS 1881*, 288.

It is impossible to know if Liu was willfully transgressing the law or understood the full implications of the transaction. For their part, the missionaries only dimly understood the issues at stake: they knew that there was a good deal of land like this in Shandong and assumed that since the deed had not been previously stamped, theirs should not have to be either. Unlike Tan Tongqing and Zhao Bingcheng, who were clearly engaged in fraud in pursuit of personal profit, it seems unlikely that Liu set out to defraud the missionaries. McIlvaine had selected and negotiated the purchase of the property, and there is no indication that Liu played any part in these negotiations. He seems to have been purely a middleman, although he may have undertaken this role with an eye towards his own gain.

Nevertheless, the potential illegality of the transaction provided plausible justification for his imprisonment. The Zongli yamen could not tell the U.S. legation that the local officials had imprisoned Liu merely to assuage the gentry's ill will towards the missionaries. Doing so would have admitted a blatant violation of the treaties. Instead, the accusations against Liu gave the officials cover to imprison him and the owner. This allowed the Zongli yamen to report to the legation matter-of-factly and within the bounds of the treaties that "The local authorities, fearing lest a disturbance might arise caused Liu Yü Ting and Chiao Tung hsing to be arrested, punished more or less severely, and imprisoned, in order to conciliate popular feeling."⁹⁸ The Zongli yamen's reference to "popular feeling" highlights the role of the elite in policing these ostensibly illegal actions. In the case of both Tan Tongqing and Liu Yuting, they were the ones who pressed the case with officials. In so doing, they were exercising their prerogative both to protect their local community and to serve the interests of the state.

Unfortunately, we do not have sources written by Jinan's elite that speak to their views of

⁹⁸ Prince Gong to Angell, September 26, 1881, enclosure 1 in No. 74, Holcombe to Blaine, November 17, 1881, p. 9 in vol. 58 (Roll 59) of *Despatches*.

Chinese converts. However, two memorials by provincial officials shed more light on how officials, and likely the elite (their social peers), understood the challenges posed by converts and other agents of missionaries. In an 1882 memorial commenting on this case, Shandong Education Commissioner Zhang Baixi noted that foreign countries often used such seemingly minor incidents as the Jinan case as pretexts for open conflict with the Qing and stated that failure to settle such disputes was enough to “bankrupt the country’s prestige” and “lose the people’s hearts.”⁹⁹ Zhang explained the violent reaction of Jinan’s people to the missionaries’ attempt to purchase property as a righteous, albeit ignorant response that reflected their not having observed the court’s “intention of soothing the foreigners (*rou yuan zhi yi*).” He ascribed their indignation to the fact that they did not “take giving up Chinese land (*zhongguo zhi tudi*) lightly.”¹⁰⁰ Treating such loyal and upright subjects as criminals would only alienate the people.

The root cause of the problem, Zhang opined, was generally missionaries “conspiring to entice Chinese scoundrels (*feiren*) to illegally buy property among the people.”¹⁰¹ His solution was not to forbid the foreigners from buying property but to make it illegal for converts to serve as middlemen in such transactions. Qing subjects who disobeyed should be punished severely and the property in question should “revert to China (*renggui zhongguo*),” which would presumably alleviate loyal subjects’ concerns about violations of China’s sovereignty.¹⁰² Further, Zhang suggested requiring pastors to submit lists of their converts in order to mitigate the problem of “Chinese evildoers” passing themselves off as converts to avoid persecution for crimes.

⁹⁹ Zhu Jinfu, *Qingmo jiao'an*, 2:360.

¹⁰⁰ Zhu Jinfu, 2:361.

¹⁰¹ Zhu Jinfu, 2:361.

¹⁰² Zhu Jinfu, 2:361.

Zhang by no means absolved missionaries of their role in instigating these problems. However, recognizing local officials' limited ability to control the foreigners, he shifted attention to the problem of Chinese "scoundrels," whom he explicitly contrasted to the loyal Qing subjects who opposed them. The throne sympathized with Zhang's position, responding in a rescript, "We cannot prohibit the propagation of religion, but we can prohibit Chinese converts from committing crimes. This is an accommodating approach." The rescript also agreed with Zhang's idea of asking pastors for names of converts, only worrying that this might not be sufficient.¹⁰³

Ironically, then, Zhang identified missionaries as solutions to the problems they created for local communities and Qing foreign relations. The role he envisioned for them was strikingly traditional, resembling the responsibilities that the local elite bore for supervising members of their communities, such as through the *baojia* system of registration and mutual responsibility. Essentially, Zhang hoped to enlist missionaries into Qing state-building through the place-making formation of a religious community. The Qing had previously employed non-literati elites in this role, most notably religious leaders among Muslim communities.¹⁰⁴ However, communities of missionaries and converts combined the problems posed by two distinct kinds of Muslim communities. On the one hand, like Chinese Muslims, Christians were increasingly distributed across the "inner territory" of the Qing state, as opposed to the western or coastal border regions, making it impossible to carve out territorially delimited administrative exceptions. On the other hand, despite their position in the interior, the missionaries identified and maintained close contact with foreign governments that robustly protected their interests, which was not a problem in the case of Chinese Muslims, but more of a concern with Muslim

¹⁰³ Zhu Jinfu, 2:362.

¹⁰⁴ Lipman, "A Fierce and Brutal People," 88–92, 103–4.

Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

These connections and the Qing government's relatively weak position vis-a-vis the U.S. explains the failure of efforts to induce Christian missionaries to cooperate in aspects of local governance that they did not see as integral to their religious mission. They were very willing, however, to undertake other conventional responsibilities, like providing famine relief, education, and medical services. Gilbert Reid even offered Zhang Yao advice on dealing with the Yellow River. Meanwhile, the missionaries were much more successful at pressing local officials and through them the local gentry to bear responsibility for upholding their rights as American citizens by virtue of the treaties. In so doing, they essentially drew Jinan's elite into mediating between local people and Qing officials when dealing with foreigners, which was a particularly sensitive responsibility.

A memorial by Governor Zhang Yao in 1888 about missionary cases in Jinan and elsewhere echoed Zhang Baixi's concern with Qing subjects who claimed affiliation with foreign missionaries. Zhang Yao went even further in asserting that the teachings of the Christians were not themselves to blame for these disturbances. Rather, he argued that the ignorance of local people and their firm belief in their own teachings made negative reactions to strange foreign doctrines essentially unavoidable.¹⁰⁵ He went on to write, "Now the teaching [the missionaries are preaching] is a foreign teaching, but the people are still Chinese people. However, once a Chinese rascal (*wulai*) pretends (*chong*) to be a convert, his disposition suddenly changes, and he views those outside [the Christian] teaching (*jiaowai zhi ren*) as if he were not of our kind (*zulei*)."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Wang Minglun, *Fan yangjiao shuwen jietie xuan*, 313.

¹⁰⁶ Wang Minglun, 313.

Both memorials show an inclination to rationalize the actions of Qing subjects associated with missionaries by depicting them as already living on the fringes of society. The use of words like scoundrel (*feiren*) and rascal (*wulai*) bring to mind pervasive fears of young men without economic means or social connections who might turn to nefarious means to make a living or achieve sexual or spiritual fulfillment.¹⁰⁷ In the case of Tan Tongqing, who came from a respectable family and was a degree-holder himself, the far less reputable Zhao Bingcheng took the blame for inciting Tan. The upheavals described in chapters 3 and 4 only exacerbated these anxieties. In this sense, the missionaries were both potential victims and accomplices, witting or not. Either possibility demanded inducing the missionaries to be careful in their dealings with Qing subjects.

Both Zhang Baixi and Zhang Yao also gestured towards concerns beyond the local arena. Zhang Baixi spoke of anxieties that land purchased by missionaries ceased to be Chinese land. People collaborating with the missionaries were thus literally selling out their country to foreigners, marking them as not only locally disruptive but potentially treasonous. Zhang Yao likewise called into question the cultural loyalties of supposed converts. The final phrase of the quotation above was an allusion to a famous phrase from the *Zuozhuan*: “Those not of the same kith and kin, their hearts and minds must be different.”¹⁰⁸ Zhang was turning the logic of this aphorism on its head: rather than different familial or ethnic allegiances suggesting divergent inner qualities, he observed that an internal change in how these people viewed the world made it as if they were not of the same people group. Conversely, there now existed a relationship of mutual affection and protection between them and the missionaries: “[Because] of the

¹⁰⁷ Kuhn, *Soulstealers*; Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society*, 96–101; ter Haar, *Telling Stories*.

¹⁰⁸ Durrant, Li Wai-yee, and Schaberg, *Zuo Tradition*, 747.

missionaries' feelings for them, when there is an incident, [the missionaries] protect and uphold them. Thus, the missionaries' lawsuits against common people are all caused by converts (*jiaomin*). The common people's hate of the missionaries is entirely a calamity wrought by the converts."¹⁰⁹ As Zhang Baixi noted, such lawsuits had the potential to undermine the interests of the Qing state in its dealing with foreign countries.

The property disputes thus presented local officials and the elite with two groups of individuals on the fringes of society. In their eyes, the types of people who might conspire with the missionaries or convert were a familiar problem. However, their dealings with missionaries exacerbated existing social anxieties because their attachment to foreigners granted them special legal protections and because conversion to a foreign religion took them even further from commitment to the mores that underwrote social relations and political loyalty. Facing this tension in the nexus of local community and the imperial state, there were two approaches available to gentry and officials. One, as Zhang Baixi proposed, was to depend on the missionaries to control the people associated with them. On the one hand, this was a kind of negative response to the reality that it was impossible to prevent missionaries from preaching and making converts. On the other, it was remarkably optimistic, essentially placing missionaries in the position usually occupied by the literati or other types of community leaders: a literate elite enjoying legal privileges with the expectation of maintaining order among a group of people over whom they exercised leadership. There were downsides to this approach, though. First, it required convincing the missionaries to play a role where they upheld the interests of both their home state and the Qing state. In fact, the missionaries gave no hint of seeing their supervision of their religious community as compatible with service to the Qing state. Second, even if this

¹⁰⁹ Wang Minglun, *Fan yangjiao shuwen jietie xuan*, 313.

approach had been successful, it would have only solidified the missionaries as a counter-force to the indigenous elite. This further usurpation of roles traditionally reserved for the elite would probably have only deepened resentment over time.¹¹⁰

The other possibility was to continue to assert conventional prerogatives over Chinese actors in the case despite their connections to missionaries. This, in fact, was more common and generally successful. In their appeals to the legation, the missionaries often raised the plight of the people who had tried to help them purchase property, but to little or no avail. They did eventually win the release of Liu Yuting, the agent in the 1881 transaction, so that he could attend to the burial of his mother, who had died while he was in prison. Later, they reported that he had been forced to leave the province.¹¹¹ The landlord in the 1887 case was not even this fortunate: the missionaries reported that he died in 1890, only several days after finally having been released from three years in custody.¹¹²

The Jinan case thus demonstrates the missionaries' limited capacity to extend the protection of the American state to Qing subjects. One problem was that protecting associates was only one among several priorities for the missionaries. Also, the fact that in some cases people engaged in these transactions acted illegally mitigated the missionaries' claims that they were being persecuted on the basis of personal belief or religious affiliation. In the end, the physical control officials exercised over the bodies of these people proved decisive; the missionaries simply had no means at their disposal to compel the officials to release them. Jinan's position as an imperial middle ground did not allow the missionaries to exercise their

¹¹⁰ Cohen, *China and Christianity*, 84.

¹¹¹ Prince Gong to Angell, September 26, 1881, Enclosure 1 in No. 16, Holcombe to Blaine, November 17, 1881, p. 12 in vol. 58 (Roll 59) of *Despatches*; Holcombe to Prince Gong, June 28, 1882, enclosure 2 in No. 136, Holcombe to Frelinghuysen, June 29, 1882, p. 26 in vol. 60 (Roll 61) of *Despatches*.

¹¹² It was much more convenient for the officials for a prisoner to die after release than while still in custody. Denby to Zongli yamen, August 11, 1890, *FRUS 1890*, 195.

“Midas touch” at will or Chinese agents to negotiate the fissures between Qing and American power with impunity. Rather, even as foreign encroachment attenuated Qing sovereignty in Jinan, gentry and officials together asserted their prerogative to police the boundaries of the local community and thereby secure the interests of the state.

Conclusion

Neither Zhang Yao, Chen Ruheng, nor Li Qing’ao lived to see the final conclusion of the Jinan missionary case or the opening of the McIlvaine Memorial Hospital. Their deaths feel symbolic, as though they signaled the end of an era in which Jinan’s elite had navigated successive, unrelenting crises. However, the threat of foreign imperialism, especially in Shandong, only grew in the coming years as did the scale of the challenges the Qing state was facing. Although they extended the post-war reconstruction into the Guangxu reign, perhaps this only makes their opposition to the missionaries look even more like a conservative “last stand,” as Mary Wright famously describes the Tongzhi Restoration.¹¹³

From this perspective, this chapter’s argument that this missionary case also shows how elite place-making entailed state-building appears incongruous. Rather, one might argue that Jinan’s elite were doing no more than holding out as long as possible, continuing long-established practices in an increasingly hostile climate, and perpetuating local Qing rule in vain. I conclude this chapter, then, with three arguments to the contrary.

First, the participation of Jinan’s elite in Qing governance through the negotiation of this missionary case was one part of a dynamic bundle of local state-building activities that stretched across the late nineteenth century. In the long scope of late imperial history, it is not terribly

¹¹³ Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism*.

surprising that the elite assumed the role they did in this case. However, the story of how people like Li Qing'ao and Chen Ruheng stepped into this role is inseparable from the more recent and contemporaneous events described in chapters 3 and 4. Li's local prestige and close relationships with officials reflected how the crises and opportunities Jinan's elite had faced in the 1850s and 1860s had shaped the city's relationship to the state. Likewise, Chen Ruheng's involvement in the missionary case proceeded alongside his leadership in local charitable endeavors that responded to some of the same challenges that missionaries saw as opportunities to prove their virtues and establish themselves in the community. It was natural for the Qing state to depend on people like Li and Chen in dealing with the missionaries. However, this responsibility was distinct from the activities described in chapters 3 and 4 because it related to the threat of foreign imperialism. Consequently, the role of the elite was both to build and restrain local consensus about the missionaries, which was a different challenge than that posed by rebels and flooding. While the absence of a major disaster makes for unspectacular evidence of state-building, the Boxer Uprising, originating in a part of Shandong without a dependable elite like that in Jinan, demonstrated retroactively the relative success of Jinan's elite in negotiating the fraught terrain of nineteenth-century international relations. They certainly would have preferred Jinan for themselves, but their participation in the construction of a middle ground bolstered the fortunes of the Qing state.

Second, while the eventual fall of the Qing looms over any claims of successful state-building in the late nineteenth century, other frameworks are more salutary. Stephen Halsey points to the ability of the Qing to largely maintain its territorial integrity, especially along the treaty port-dotted coast, as an exceptional accomplishment for its time.¹¹⁴ Given their

¹¹⁴ Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 46–48. See also Esherick, “How the Qing Became China.”

concessions to the missionaries, it is understandable that Philip West would identify the gentry as the losers of this case.¹¹⁵ As this chapter has shown, though, the missionaries' victory was by no means unconditional. Beyond their short-term and circumscribed success, we can interpret Jinan's elite as a small subset of the agents whose actions resulted in the preservation of much of the Qing empire as a territorial unit.

Admittedly, there are two potential downsides of this interpretation. First, there is nothing new in saying that Chinese nationalists came to see the territory of the Qing state as coterminous with that of the nation and have proved remarkably effective in legitimizing and achieving those claims. Jinan's elite were such relatively minor actors in the grand scope of things that attaching them to this narrative does little to immediately change our understanding of it. Second, this *longue durée* framework does injustice to the perspective of the historical actors themselves, to whom the difference between the Qing and the Republic was of monumental consequence. This is also a weakness of Halsey's attempt to argue for the success of Qing state-building based on its twentieth-century legacy.

I will provisionally defer these problems by offering a third argument for interpreting the participation of Jinan's elite in this missionary case as an aspect of state-building. As fitting a conclusion to the story of Qing state-building in Jinan as the deaths of Chen and Li would have been, Qing state-building in Jinan persisted well past their deaths. Likewise, the events that followed the conclusion of this case—the Qing defeat to Japan in 1895, the establishment of German colonial interests in Shandong, and the Boxer Uprising and subsequent invasion of the Eight-Nation Alliance—by no means obviated the middle ground fashioned through the Jinan missionary case. Rather, during the reforms of the early twentieth century, Jinan's elite and

¹¹⁵ West, "The Tsinan Property Disputes."

officials perpetuated and even formalized the principles of this middle ground as they simultaneously confronted the threat of foreign imperialism and crises in urban governance. In this light, we should understand the Jinan missionary case not as the last gasp of conservative governance but the beginning of a process of adapting Jinan's relationship to the imperial state to the needs of responding to foreign imperialism, which would continue into the twentieth century and motivate even more ambitious state-building and place-making projects.

As we will see, Jinan's elite and officials proved surprisingly successful at welding together undertaking urban modernization, upholding traditional prerogatives, warding off foreign imperialism, and maintaining loyalty to the Qing. Nevertheless, a series of inter- and intra-provincial developments, threatened Jinan's attachment to the Qing and ultimately brought about the fall of the dynasty. The remaining chapters examine how this came about, consider the significance of intertwined imperial place-making and state-building in the context of growing nationalism, and argue that the local history of the Qing empire extended well beyond the conventional dating of 1911.

Part III
Jinan's Place in the Late Qing Reforms and 1911 Revolution

The threat of foreign imperialism and the urgency of combating it only grew in the years after the settlement of the Jinan missionary case. Qing defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5—fought largely off the coast of Shandong—demonstrated its military weakness and initiated a “scramble for concessions” that threatened to tear apart the empire. In the Treaty of Shimonoseki that ended the war, the Qing relinquished its claim of suzerainty over Korea, ceded Taiwan to Japan, and greatly expanded the rights of Japan—and, through most-favored-nation clauses, other powers—to establish economic interests in the interior. In 1897 Germany used the murder of two German missionaries in Juye in western Shandong as pretext to occupy the port of Qingdao on Jiaozhou Bay (Jiao’ao) on the Shandong peninsula. Handcuffed by the threat of an all-out war it could not afford, the Qing court settled the matter by granting the Germans a 99-year lease on Qingdao, free passage for German troops within a 50-kilometer radius of the leasehold, say in administrative decisions within that radius, and rights to construct three railway lines in Shandong and to establish mining operations within 30 *li* (15 km) of these lines, one of which would link Qingdao and Jinan.¹

German aggression did nothing to quell the tensions that were simmering across the interior of Shandong, where missionaries and converts increasingly clashed with members of their villages and others over issues like shared property, contributions to community festivals, and personal lawsuits, in which missionaries often intervened on the side of Christians. The Juye Incident gave an even freer hand to the Christians, as local officials were afraid to offend them and give the Germans another pretext for intervention. As a result, local communities in western Shandong increasingly mobilized themselves to resist the Christians. Although the provincial

¹ Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism*, 1–42; Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*, 123–35.

government was able to contain groups calling themselves “boxers” (*quan*) in southwestern Shandong through pressuring and co-opting their leadership, it could not replicate this success in the northwestern portion of the province, where gentry control was much weaker than the southwest or, as we saw in chapter 5, Jinan. Training grounds where young men practiced martial arts and invulnerability rituals spread across the plains in a loosely organized movement held together by its loyalty to the Qing and resolve to resist Christian influence in local communities. A severe drought in 1899, an official response hampered by a desire to alienate neither the Boxers nor the foreigners, and further conflicts between the two groups provided ideal conditions for the Boxers to spread across the border into Zhili. They attracted more followers and grew increasingly brazen in their assaults on Chinese Christians and foreigners along the way.

From there, the history of the Boxer Uprising and the effects of the Boxers in Shandong, especially Jinan, diverged considerably. In 1900, Boxer forces marched on Beijing and Tianjin and laid siege to foreign communities there. The court rebuffed foreign pressure to aggressively suppress them, issued a declaration of war after foreign forces attacked the Dagou forts outside Tianjin, and deployed the increasingly undisciplined Boxer forces alongside imperial troops against foreign forces holed up in Tianjin and Beijing. An expeditionary force consisting of troops from eight nations relieved the sieges in 1901 and launched a series of punitive campaigns in Beijing and across the countryside. Shandong was spared the worst of the foreign forces’ depredations because Yuan Shikai, appointed governor in 1899, had resisted the court’s pro-Boxer turn and adopted a policy of suppression through issuing proclamations and dispatching troops to restore order. He could not provide absolute protection for foreign property—even some of the missionaries’ property in the vicinity of Jinan was destroyed—but he did ensure safe

passage for foreigners from the interior to the coast.²

The Boxer Protocols that ended the crisis required the Qing to pay an onerous set of reparations, which would be borne by taxpayers throughout the empire, including Shandong, and to reorganize the Zongli yamen. In the coming years, the Qing launched a dizzying array of further reforms designed to empower the state to compete on a modern playing field. These reforms, Jinan's place in them, and their relationship to the 1911 Revolution that toppled the Qing are the subject of the following two chapters. Three questions take center stage: (1) How did the participation of Jinan's elite in the reforms relate to the patterns of political activism described in part II? (2) How did the process of the reforms and the elite's participation in them shape reactions to the 1911 Revolution? (3) How did reform and revolution re-shape the hybrid spatial politics of the Qing state?

Existing scholarship posits broad continuities between the growth of elite activism in the post-Taiping period and even more direct elite participation in political affairs in the last decade of the Qing. Over the last few decades of Qing rule, elites increasingly exercised power through formal, government-sanctioned institutions, beyond the local level, and out of a sense of both national crisis and distrust in the capacity of the central government to resolve this crisis.³ Several developments in the early twentieth century imbued this long-term trend with revolutionary potential. Rankin particularly emphasizes an underlying tension between the reforms' goal of mobilizing (already self-mobilized) elites to participate in state-building and the

² For more detailed accounts of the Boxer Uprising, on which the above paragraphs draw, see Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising*; Cohen, *History in Three Keys*; Bickers and Tiedemann, *The Boxers*. On the retributive campaigns and foreign and Chinese commemoration of the Boxers, see Hevia, *English Lessons*, 195–345.

³ This narrative, anticipated by Kuhn, is elaborated in perhaps its fullest form across the period between 1850 and 1911 by Rankin. Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies*; Rankin, *Elite Activism*.

impulse toward central control that abrogated the autonomy of elite reformers.⁴

As discussed in part II, Jinan's elite had participated in various aspects of public activism in the late nineteenth century. It is unsurprising, then, that chapters 6 and 7 find them likewise engaged in a variety of reformist activities. However, as in the nineteenth century, the political activism of Jinan's elite was characterized by a high degree of cooperation with government officials, a phenomenon MacKinnon has observed in neighboring Zhili Province during the reform period.⁵ Reviewing MacKinnon's argument, Rankin argues that different patterns of competition and cooperation between elites and the state reflected primarily regional differences. In the north, she argues, "Qing power had not been so compromised by elite activism [as in Zhejiang]." ⁶ She adds that close connections between the merchant and elite classes in Zhili reduced the likelihood that they would compete with each other for power. In contrast to Zhili, Rankin's central argument is that "the most significant politicization at the end of the Qing arose in the most commercially developed parts of China and was based on the protracted growth of elite social organization."⁷ Similarly, Schoppa argues, "Less commercialized areas tended to see neither the growing awareness of national issues nor the changes and shifts among elites and elite roles."⁸

However, I find this regional explanation unconvincing for several reasons. First, as discussed in part II, cooperation with government institutions was not a unique feature of Jinan or North China and has been observed by scholars working in other even more commercialized contexts. Second (and conversely), elite-government relations in parts of North China could be

⁴ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 27, 170–298. Although Wong is skeptical of Rankin's argument about an emergent public sphere in the immediate post-Taiping period, he echoes her diagnosis of a growing antagonism between state and society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Wong, *China Transformed*, 121–23.

⁵ MacKinnon, *Power and Politics*, 137–79.

⁶ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 245.

⁷ Rankin, 299.

⁸ Schoppa, *Chinese Elites*, 5.

characterized by considerable animosity. As chapter 7 discusses, reactions to the late Qing reforms and relationships to government bodies varied considerably even within Shandong—and in a hemispheric (east vs. west) manner that Schoppa's inner/outer core/periphery scheme does not effectively explain.⁹ Meanwhile, Kwan argues that public activism among Tianjin's salt merchants exhibited considerable cooperation with the government but that this cooperative pattern broke down in the years leading up to the 1911 Revolution.¹⁰ Finally, as I have argued at length, I believe that focusing on the question of elite autonomy from the state obscures how seemingly autonomous elite mobilization and cooperation between elites and government institutions can both lend themselves to effective state-building. Jinan's history shows how elite activism could continue to extend the power of the state, even through the sometimes-contentious processes of negotiation set in motion by the reforms and amid the fires of revolution.

These problems with tracing a clear line from the growth of elite activism in the post-Taiping period to the outbreak of the 1911 Revolution—in Jinan and elsewhere—mean that we have to look more closely at developments that were specific to the reform period. For decades, scholars have recognized that rather than offering a pure alternative to revolution, the process of reform created conditions which eventually led China's urban elite to support the overthrow of the Qing. Joseph Esherick's *Reform and Revolution in China*—one of the works most responsible for establishing this narrative—identifies several ways in which reformism sowed the seeds of revolution. Some aspects of the reforms, especially efforts to constrain foreign imperialism, failed to meet the elite's expectations or, like the decision to nationalize railroads in 1911, actively disappointed them, leading them to seek a political alternative. Others, including

⁹ Schoppa, 13–26.

¹⁰ Kwan, *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin*, 89–152.

the new schools, were more successful but set up a struggle for control of local institutions between the elite and the government.¹¹ However, the reforms also activated arenas of political contestation that neither reformist elites nor officials necessarily controlled. Common people bore the largest part of the burden for implementing the reforms, often in the form of new taxes, but they were less likely to reap immediate benefits and saw some aspects of the reforms as a surrender to Western ways rather than a form of resistance to foreign power.¹² Meanwhile, students in modern schools and military officers proved to be a sympathetic audience for revolutionaries preaching that overthrowing the Qing was necessary to save the nation. An alliance of social groups engaged in violent opposition to the government—particularly the mutiny of soldiers in Wuchang, Hubei that began on October 10, 1911—forced many reformist elites to choose between loyalty to the dynasty and participating in the revolution in order to steer it towards an outcome that would be least destructive to their social interests. Esherick concludes, “In all of these instances, the painful process of reform proved not an alternative, but a contribution, to the dynamics of revolutionary change.”¹³ Recent scholarship has added more nuanced and, in some cases, sympathetic appraisals of the reforms.¹⁴ However, as Esherick summarizes the mood at conferences celebrating the centenary of the 1911 Revolution, “The question was not how the revolution succeeded in overthrowing the Qing and establishing the republic; the question was how the Qing fell.”¹⁵

These chapters turn this question on its head since, after all, the Qing did not fall in Jinan. As chapter 7 details, in the wake of the Wuchang Uprising and the brewing civil war between

¹¹ Borthwick, *Education and Social Change*, 100–103; Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 74–79. More generally, see Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 248–98.

¹² Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, 106–43.

¹³ Esherick, 9.

¹⁴ Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 238–57. An early example of the nuanced approach to the accomplishments of the late Qing reforms is Gasster, “Reform and Revolution.”

¹⁵ Esherick, “Introduction,” 6–10.

loyalist armies from the north led by Yuan Shikai and the southern revolutionary army, revolutionaries did seize power in Shandong, but only briefly and superficially. One of the reasons the revolutionary movement in Shandong failed was the limited support it received from members of the provincial elite. Among the revolution's most strident opponents were the most politically powerful members of Jinan's elite.

One potential explanation for the animosity of Jinan's elite toward the revolution is that their degree of participation in and attitude toward the late Qing reforms was significantly different from that of elites elsewhere in the empire. There were differences, to be sure, but also important similarities, including their ongoing participation in local political affairs and increasing involvement in national politics. Likewise, as I have demonstrated in chapter 5 and do in chapter 6 as well, over the course of the late Qing Jinan's elite grew more vocal in opposition to imperialist encroachment, which they understood as a threat to both Qing sovereignty and local interests. As chapter 7 shows, they vigorously advocated for and participated in the implementation of self-government institutions and constitutional government in order to strengthen the Qing state and improve local administration. By most accounts, then, many of the ingredients for revolution were there.

Interpreting the causes and effects of the revolution in terms of growing conflict between state and society (writ large) as a result of growing elite involvement in political affairs does not help us understand why reform did not lead to revolution in Jinan, reconcile this fact with why it did elsewhere, or explain the broader significance of the revolution in coming years. Instead, we need to think about the history of this period through the lens of what I have called spatial politics: how power is exercised locally through the movement of people and objects from one place to another. To a degree, the argument I am advancing here is very simple: the spatial

politics of the late Qing continued to advantage Jinan's elite, and it was thus entirely reasonable for them to continue to support the dynasty. New threats to local interests—especially foreign imperialism—continued to emerge in the last decade of Qing rule, and these required the Qing state to mobilize and expend an unprecedented amount of resources in innovative ways. However, Jinan occupied a favorable position in this mobilizational endeavor on several accounts. First, it was the provincial capital. The provincial government prioritized Jinan in the implementation of reforms like schools and self-government institutions because it was easiest to manage them there and to use Jinan as a model for similar reforms elsewhere in the province. Access to these institutions and the officials who operated them enhanced the power of Jinan's elite in local and provincial affairs. Second, the ratio between the resources Jinan's elite could mobilize for these reforms and those expended by the provincial government in the city was low, even compared to administrative centers with wealthier elites, like Wuhan. Third, Jinan occupied a Goldilocks-like position within the political economy of early twentieth-century Shandong. It was close enough to the coast (and even closer, so to speak, once railroads were constructed) that, unlike western Shandong, the Qing had to expend considerable resources there to keep the foreign threat at bay. Meanwhile, unlike the eastern part of the province, where the Germans established a foothold at Qingdao and the English at Weihaiwei, it still did not bear the brunt of intensified imperialist encroachment.

My discussion of commercial and educational reforms, as well as the implementation of self-government, bears out these points. Jinan's elite were able to benefit from the implementation of Jinan's new commercial settlement without having to foot a large portion of the bill and exercised considerable influence in—albeit hardly autonomous control over—other local and provincial commercial institutions. Jinan's elite were less equipped to participate in

educational reforms, but again the investment of the provincial government in new schools kept the financial burden from falling squarely on local people, and government initiatives brought qualified men from other parts of the province to Jinan to fill positions as teachers and administrators. The formation of the provincial assembly provided a platform for Jinan's elite to push forward political reforms, but, even more than their peers from elsewhere in the province, they did so from a position of benefiting more from cooperation with the provincial government than autonomy from it. For them, new avenues for self-government were entirely compatible with continued government-by-officials. While they and their colleagues shared a strong identification with their home province and saw its fate as deeply bound up with that of the nation, divergent local experiences pushed the political ramifications of this identity in different directions—some towards loyalism, others toward revolution.

Despite the salutary effects of the reforms on Jinan, they also entailed shifts in the spatial politics that shaped Qing governance. These shifts both undermined the viability of the Qing state and hinted at the more contentious relationship between place-making and state-building that would prevail in Jinan in the years after the dynasty fell, as I detail in the conclusion. The imperial nature of Qing state-building—hybrid though it was—depended on the court's capacity to coordinate politics among the provinces. As discussed in part II, recent scholarship has argued that the rise of powerful regional officials in the post-Taiping period did not decisively displace the court from this position of central power. Likewise, scholars have long questioned the narrative that Yuan Shikai—the most powerful such official in the early twentieth century—and his “Beiyang clique” represented the culmination of this development and a stepping stone to the political fragmentation of the post-Qing “warlord” period. Yuan was certainly a powerful official, but much of his power depended on his connections to the capital. Moreover, his control

over the Beiyang Army, especially its low-ranking officers, was not neither complete enough nor as personal in nature as it would have needed to be to justifying seeing it as a political cabal that he could steer according to his whims.¹⁶ He certainly became a crucial powerbroker as the 1911 Revolution unfolded, mediating between the court and the revolutionaries, but the outcome—his selection as president of a new Republic—reflected not so much his personal political ambitions as the reality that this kind of compromise was the only alternative to a bloody civil war that would have proved destructive to the nation and the Manchu imperial house alike.¹⁷

Although Yuan was not a puppet-master at the national level, at times in 1911–2 he seemed to be playing one in Shandong. In particular, the control he exercised over the Beiyang Army there gave him the upper hand over the revolutionaries, civilian officials, and the provincial elite. One way that Yuan exercised power across and within provinces was through the growing administrative power of men who held titles as expectant officials (expectants). As chapter 4 discusses, this trend pre-dated Yuan's rise to power by a few decades, and, well before then, local administrations had come to rely on petty bureaucrats (clerks and runners) who were not centrally appointed or even on the statutory payrolls of government offices.¹⁸ Blame for government corruption (both rightly and wrongly) often fell on such personnel, and the discrepancy between local administrative practices and statutes promulgated by the court reflected the limited capacity of the central government to intervene in local governance. The growing power of expectants—facilitated by both the government's unprecedented resort to office-selling in the late Qing and the rapid proliferation of new institutions in the reform period in which expectants could be employed—perpetuated these administrative traditions and

¹⁶ Young, *The Presidency*; MacKinnon, *Power and Politics*.

¹⁷ For a summary of recent reappraisals of Yuan's role in the revolution, see Shan, *Yuan Shikai*, 144–64.

¹⁸ Reed, *Talons and Teeth*.

problems but also added new dimensions.¹⁹ The fact that expectants could be employed in a given province indefinitely or be dispatched to another province at the request of provincial officials made them a valuable tool for entrenching the interests of the emerging Beiyang clique (led by Yuan Shikai) within the administration of Shandong without the court playing the mediating role that was essential to the imperial coherence of the bureaucracy. Although the interests of expectants and Beiyang officials more generally did not necessarily contradict those of Jinan's elite, they were distinct and potentially contending political groups. Chapter 7 shows how the alliance between Jinan's elite and the Beiyang establishment became increasingly uneasy over the course of 1911 and 1912. This shift prefigured the even more contentious landscape of provincial politics that emerged in the absence of a strong central government in the Republican period, which the conclusion discusses.

The revolutionary movement also benefited from changing patterns of translocal circulation within late Qing state-building. As chapter 2 discusses, circulation had long been an important element of the system of academic credentialing and official recruitment. In the late Qing, though, the paths traced by students and instructors increasingly brought them into contact with revolutionary organizations, which gave these organizations opportunities to undermine the Qing state from within. The inability of the Qing government to develop successful mechanisms for supervising students abroad in Japan or even gathered in provincial colleges abetted the revolutionary cause.

In other words, the ways in which power was exercised through governing institutions was changing, but we are hard-pressed to say that the balance of power between the court, regional officials, and local elites was changing in a way that definitively benefited one over the

¹⁹ Leung, "Crisis Management and Institutional Reform"; Kaske, "Fund-Raising Wars"; Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 126–31.

others. Li Xizhu explains this paradox as “weak center, weak regions.”²⁰ This kind of framing is useful because it moves us past the central-local, state-society binaries that often infuse discussions of state-building and occlude how effective state-building depends on robust place-making. In 1911, both Jinan’s elite and provincial officials (i.e. Governor Sun Baoqi) faced political forces that were neither under their own control nor effectively mediated by the court. The crucial question in the revolution in Shandong became who would control the military, and this was primarily a contest between Yuan Shikai (through his lieutenants) and the revolutionaries.

The support Jinan’s elite lent to Yuan Shikai was not exceptional. Even elites who joined the revolution supported Yuan since they saw him as the protector of the same social interests whose preservation had driven them to abandon the Qing in the first place.²¹ The fact that Jinan’s elite sided with Yuan over the revolutionaries reflects both how they understood their particular circumstances as the revolution unfolded but also the beneficial relationship between state-building and place-making they had observed through the reform period. The similarities between Jinan’s loyalist elite and elites elsewhere who joined the revolution serves as a reminder that the fall of the Qing was a contingent outcome produced by a complex set of factors.

These similarities also suggest broader lessons about the legacy of the revolution for post-Qing spatial politics. Although Jinan’s loyalist elite found themselves on the “wrong side of history,” the events of later decades would amply demonstrate that they were at least correct in believing that dispensing with Manchu rule or even the imperial system altogether was insufficient for achieving the broader goals shared by political reformists. The emergence of regional military forces that were controlled by neither the central government, nor independent

²⁰ Li Xizhu, “Provincial Officials.”

²¹ Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, chapter 7.

provincial civil officials, nor the local elite re-shaped the political landscape of early twentieth-century China. The putatively national government that replaced the empire was not able to perform the functions that the Qing government had—rather successfully in the view of Jinan’s elite—in managing the relationship between state-building and place-making. Rather than a last-ditch attempt to retain the old, we might do better to see the loyalism of Jinan’s elite as a harbinger of the reality that the nation-state that emerged fitfully after 1912 would only be able to find its footing in places like Jinan through building on and restoring aspects of imperial state-building, which the revolution had ostensibly jettisoned.

Chapter 6

Changing Course: Commercial and Educational Reforms in Late Qing Jinan

After the Boxer Uprising, the Qing court launched a series of ambitious and, at least in theory, systematic reforms that scholars now recognize as an impactful step toward the transformation of state-building in China. These reforms expressed and helped stimulate a sense of national belonging among the elite class. However, emergent nationalism entailed a complex and by no means fixed set of commitments. Resistance to foreign imperialism was a common goal among nationalist politicians and thinkers, as was the formation of a strong, centralized state. For some, nationalism meant anti-Manchuism, whereas for others the security of the Manchu Qing Dynasty was itself a nationalist prerogative. After 1912, even some of those who had opposed Manchu rule quickly pivoted to thinking of Manchu people and the territory of Manchuria as inalienable parts of China.¹ This chapter examines the local specificity of nationalist reforms and their relationship to both the interests of the elite and historical patterns of Qing state-building in Jinan through the lens of new commercial and educational institutions.

Both commercial and educational reforms were linchpins of late Qing state-building. Commercial reforms aimed both to strengthen the capacity of China's merchants so that they could compete with foreign counterparts and to construct a more robust commercial tax base upon which the increasingly extractive Qing fiscal state could draw. Likewise, educational reforms were essential for both increasing the general level of education among the people and ensuring that the government could hire men with the diverse range of skills and knowledge it needed to push forward state-building in other areas.

As previous chapters have discussed, neither commerce (chapter 4) nor education (chapter 2) was an entirely new area of concern for the Qing state. However, twentieth-century

¹ Wright, "Introduction," 3–23; Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*, 17–47.

reforms seemed to effect dramatic changes in these aspects of state-building and, as a result, place-making. For example, the opening of a new commercial settlement in Jinan to attract foreign merchants seemed to mark an about-face from the exclusionary stance taken by the city's elite during the Jinan missionary case only a decade or two prior (chapter 5). Likewise, the conversion of Luoyuan Academy, Jinan's most prestigious educational institution for most of the Qing (chapter 2) into a modern college symbolized the de-centering of classical education as a primary marker of social status. Jinan had fewer precedents for such institutional renovation than Shanghai and other treaty ports, making these transformations seem all the more abrupt.

However, we should not let the abruptness of change in early twentieth-century Jinan obscure deeper continuities as well as subtler but nevertheless consequential effects of the reforms. The opening of Jinan's commercial settlement and the founding of a chamber of commerce and other institutions were a direct response to a very new set of commercial and political challenges and opportunities presented by the construction of railroad lines linking Jinan first to Qingdao and then later to Beijing and Shanghai. However, the opening of the commercial settlement also addressed the longstanding problem of how to effectively integrate and regulate foreigners within Jinan's urban space, which had animated the missionary case in the 1880s that was the focus of chapter 5. The establishment of the settlement and other commercial institutions reflected familiar patterns of cooperation between provincial officials and the city's elite, showing how in the realm of protecting Qing sovereignty local and imperial prerogatives continued to intersect. Likewise, the plethora of new schools opened in Jinan, starting in 1901 under Yuan Shikai, signaled a dramatic shift in the institutional form and intellectual content of government-supervised education and credentialing. However, Jinan's status as a beneficiary of government funding for educational institutions was an important continuity that shaped the

reactions of its elite to these reforms. Likewise, translocal mobility continued to be a consequential component of the education and credentialing system in general and Jinan's place in it. To understand how the new schools became hotbeds of revolutionary activism, we need to examine more subtle shifts in the translocal networks on which these institutions depended and the failure of the Qing government to channel them according to its interests.

In general terms, this chapter strikes a balance between the now-conventional wisdom that the late Qing reforms created the preconditions for the 1911 Revolution and the fact that, despite their city's deep involvement in these reforms, at least the upper crust of Jinan's elite did not support the revolution, as chapter 7 discusses, and even maintained an unusual degree of loyalty to the Qing for some time after its fall, which is the topic of the epilogue. The reason for this discrepancy was by no means that Jinan's elite were absent from the reform process or unmotivated by nationalist concerns. However, Jinan's status as an investment priority for the Qing government lessened the burden of these institutions on local people and helped maintain a cooperative relationship between the city's elite and government officials, although, as we have seen in previous chapters, the limited resources the elite themselves could mobilize was a hindrance to state-building and place-making alike.²

Even given its limitations, this arrangement was most salutary in the realm of commercial reforms, where government officials and Jinan's elite shared an interest in protecting Qing sovereignty. As Rankin anticipates for North China broadly, in Jinan a tight nexus of government officials, members of Jinan's elite with administrative experience, and powerful merchants constituted the leadership of new commercial institutions.³ The limited resources at the disposal

² On popular resistance to the reforms on account of the financial burdens they imposed while offering little in the way of new benefits, see Wright, "Introduction," 29–30; Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, 106–43; Prazniak, "Tax Protest."

³ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 245.

of Jinan's elite posed challenges to the development of the commercial settlement and elite-led efforts to "recover" railroad and mining rights obtained by the Germans. By drawing on resources from elsewhere, particularly the Jiaozhou Customs, the provincial government largely succeeded in using the commercial settlement to assert the inviolability of Qing sovereignty in Jinan while accommodating foreign commercial interests. As chapter 7 discusses in more detail, the failure of the rights recovery movement in Shandong due to a lack of funds would put more pressure on the provincial government to restrict foreign interests in the interior. However, the fact that Jinan's elite did not have a financial stake in the railroads also meant that they were unaffected by the nationalization of railroads in 1911, which contributed to disillusionment with the government in other provinces.

The situation in education was somewhat more complicated. By and large, Jinan's own elite were far less involved in the operation of new schools than the administrators and teachers from other places who flocked there to participate in the reforms. At the same time, because Jinan was a provincial capital, funding for even county-level schools in Jinan came (compared to other places) disproportionately from the provincial government, not taxes levied directly on local people.⁴ As a result, the funding and control of schools did not produce the conflict between Jinan's elite and the government that it did elsewhere.⁵ However, the power of the Qing state and the dominance of the local elite was compromised to a much greater degree in the new schools than in commercial institutions. In fact, the new schools in Jinan became hotbeds of revolutionary activity, owing in large part to the failure of the government to regulate adaptations to the translocal circuits on which the education and credentialing system had long relied.

In sum, state-building and place-making in Jinan changed in consequential ways in the

⁴ A similar pattern prevailed in other provincial capitals. Borthwick, *Education and Social Change*, 88–89.

⁵ Borthwick, 93–103; Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 59–88.

first decade of the twentieth century, reflecting a growing concern for national sovereignty and strength. Jinan's elite were active participants in at least some aspects of these changes.

However, continuities with existing patterns of imperial state-building meant that revolution was by no means inevitable from the perspective of Jinan's elite.

Commercial Reform and Development in Early Twentieth-Century Jinan

Railroads, Political Economy, and the Basis of Jinan's Economic Transformation

The Daqing River and then the Xiaoqing Canal had long afforded Jinan a privileged position on regional east-west trade routes. However, Jinan had never been an especially important point for north-south trade, which ran through the Grand Canal and, increasingly in the nineteenth century, along the coast. The shape of these trade networks and the political economy of North China changed dramatically in the early twentieth century. The limited capacity of the Qing to control flooding on the Yellow River, described in chapter 4, was one element of this transformation. Whereas the restoration of the Xiaoqing Canal had mitigated the disruption the Yellow River caused to east-west trade originally passing through the Daqing River, the Yellow River's damage to the Grand Canal, which was already rendering it episodically impassable in the mid-nineteenth century, proved permanent. As Kenneth Pomeranz describes, the deterioration of the Grand Canal as a commercial artery and object of special governmental concern helped precipitate the long-term economic decline of western Shandong. Once a vital area in Qing political economy, this region became a peripheral concern in the face of the foreign threats and developmental possibilities presenting themselves on the coast.⁶ Railroad construction was a corollary ingredient of this shift in Qing political economy. Railroads both

⁶ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*. On the spatial realignment of Qing political economy, see also Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 100–105.

intensified connections between some inland areas and the coast and created new possibilities for trade across inland regions by greatly reducing transport costs for areas poorly served by water transport but well-served by railroads. Unlike the portion of Shandong studied by Pomeranz, Jinan became a focal point of railway construction, compounding its importance to Qing political economy and making it a long-term economic “winner.”

The first railroad to be built in Jinan, the Jiao-Ji line, linked it to the German colonial enclave of Qingdao on Jiaozhou Bay on the southeastern coast of Shandong. The Germans gained the right to build this railroad in the 1898 treaty that granted them the lease on Qingdao and other concessions in Shandong. According to the treaty, the construction was supposed to be undertaken by a company with joint Chinese and German management and investment, but the syndicate formed to handle the construction, the Schantung Eisenbahn Gesellschaft (SEG), was eager to sideline the Chinese government as much as possible, and Chinese investment and oversight did not materialize until later.⁷ Starting from Qingdao, SEG quickly began surveying the route and purchasing land but just as quickly ran into opposition from local people, especially in Gaomi (between Qingdao and Weixian), over land purchases and the potential ecological impacts of the railroad. The Germans responded to this opposition by repeatedly dispatching troops into the fifty-kilometer radius around Qingdao (and, briefly, beyond during the Boxer Uprising), killing 200–400 local people in one especially violent expedition.⁸ Despite these violent interruptions, the line was completed in 1904.

Plans for a second line between Nanjing (and from there to Shanghai) and Tianjin (and from there to Beijing) that would run through Jinan significantly raised the political and economic stakes for railway construction. This railroad, called the Jin-Pu line once its southern

⁷ Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism*, 40–41, 104–5.

⁸ Schrecker, 107–23, 130–31.

terminal was set at Pukou, originated with Germany and the United Kingdom winning a joint concession to build a railroad line from Tianjin to the north bank of the Yangzi River in 1898. A syndicate of foreign companies signed an agreement to construct the railroad in 1899 that divided responsibility between the Germans in Shandong and Zhili and the British in Jiangsu. However, protracted negotiations and the Boxer crisis stalled construction. After 1910, though, construction went quickly, and the line was completed in 1912.⁹ In the long run, these two railroads would fundamentally reshape Jinan's economic position, making it a major hub for trade within Shandong Province and between Shanghai and Beijing. The combination of the railroads and the Xiaoqing Canal linked Jinan to an unprecedentedly large—by the standards of its history—hinterland producing raw goods, especially cotton, that eventually drove the development of the city's manufacturing sector. For the purposes of this chapter, though, the full effects of the completed Jin-Pu railroad, which were felt only in the years after the fall of the Qing, are of peripheral concern. Nevertheless, both the eventuality of this line and the practical preparations for it, such as surveying and purchasing land, were very much interrelated with the developments I describe here.

German railroad construction rights, and the mining privileges that were attached to them, were a target of anti-imperialist activism among Shandong's elite throughout this period. One manifestation of this was an abortive campaign among the province's elite to raise their own funds to build the Jin-Pu railroad. The leader of this movement was Wang Maokun, a native of Jinan, who, having served as the magistrate of Shanghai from 1900 to 1906, possessed copious experience dealing with foreign affairs. His tenure there had coincided with the Boxer crisis, the Russo-Japanese War, and boycotts against U.S. and Japanese goods, all of which raised anxiety

⁹ Köll, *Railroads*, 19–52.

among the city's Chinese and foreign residents. Wang dealt with these challenges circumspectly and without giving rise to a serious incident. He was so appreciated that the city's elite erected a pavilion honoring him outside the magistrate's yamen and placed a stele bearing his image inside the yamen on his departure.¹⁰ Back in Shandong, though, Wang proved unable to raise sufficient money for the railroad, and instead the Qing government had to fund the project with a bond issued through the London financial market. While most of the debt was financed by foreign bond-purchasers, both provincial governments and Chinese individuals also purchased a limited number of bonds.¹¹ The Shandong Provincial government itself advanced 1,000,000 taels to purchase bonds and then encouraged people in Shandong to purchase a share of the debt.¹² Despite his failure in this endeavor, Wang by no means shrank away from public life or the railroad project. Rather, he served as a commissioner arranging land purchases for a portion of the railway line, a process that Elisabeth Köll argues went much more smoothly than the earlier and often contentious process of purchasing land for the Jiao-Ji Railroad.¹³

The failure of Shandong's elite to fund railroad construction proved consequential in the coming years. Like their peers elsewhere, the provincial elite participated in movements to pressure the government to "recover" the railroad rights ceded to foreign countries. However, their limited financial stake in Shandong's railroads meant that official efforts to fund railroads and the court's fateful decision to nationalize local railroads in 1911 proved to be a less acute source of conflict between elites and the government than in other provinces, especially Sichuan and Zhejiang.¹⁴ Consequently, one of the major grievances that drove elites elsewhere to side

¹⁰ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:42a–42b.

¹¹ Köll, *Railroads*, 29–31; Buck, "The Provincial Elite in Shantung," 431.

¹² "Dongsheng quan gou Jin-Pu tielu zhaipiao zhi yiban," *SDZZ*, GX 34/9/30, 18a–18b.

¹³ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:42b–43a; Köll, *Railroads*, 38–44.

¹⁴ As chapter 7 discusses, Shandong's elite were nevertheless still sensitive to the government's dependence on foreign loans, as were elites in Hunan and Hubei, where, like Shandong, the nationalization of railroads itself did not

with the revolutionaries had less purchase in Shandong, even among people like Wang who were interested in railroad construction.

Opening Jinan to Foreign Trade: The Establishment of the Commercial Settlement

Beyond work on the Jin-Pu railroad itself, provincial officials and Jinan's elite responded proactively to the opportunity and threat of railroad construction. In October 1903, the court responded favorably to a suggestion by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that it might be advisable to open ports for trade in inland cities on the dynasty's own terms, rather than waiting for them to become the subject of diplomatic pressure. The next spring, now-Zhili Governor-General Yuan Shikai and Shandong Governor Zhou Fu jointly proposed opening such ports in Jinan, Zhoucun, and Weixian (which were already important commercial areas through which the Jiao-Ji railroad would also pass), citing this advice and the precedent of existing commercial settlements in Qinhuangdao in Zhili, Sandu'ao in Fujian, and Yuezhou in Hunan.¹⁵ Yuan and Zhou noted that in addition to its position on the Yellow River and Xiaoqing River, Jinan would soon be the terminal of the Jiao-Ji railroad and would eventually be a stop in the railroad linking Shanghai and Beijing. This would make it an important center of trade. Opening a commercial settlement (*shangbu*) in Jinan would "expand sources of profit (*kuo liyuan*)," and "both Chinese and foreign actors would benefit (*zhong wai xian shou liyi*)."¹⁶ With this proposal, Yuan preempted foreign, particularly German, demands to set the conditions for trade in the interior of Shandong, whose complex and important foreign affairs, he repeatedly argued, set it apart from other provinces.¹⁷ Although not part of its initial justification, the administrative innovation that

produce the kind of economic grievance it did in Sichuan. Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, 80–91; Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 263–98; Kaske, "Taxation, Trust, and Government Debt."

¹⁵ On the general history of "self-opened commercial settlements" (*zikai shangbu*) in the late Qing, see Zhang Jian, "Wan Qing zikai shangbu shulun."

¹⁶ Ye Zhiru, "Qingmo Jinan Weixian ji Zhoucun," 27.

¹⁷ Ye Zhiru, 30, 33. As early as 1902, rumors circulated between Hong Kong and Shanghai that the Germans would ask for Jinan to be opened to foreign trade. "Jinan jinshi," *Shen bao*, 1902/3/6, 2. On Yuan's general approach of

the commercial settlement required to meet the needs of a greater number of foreign residents would prove useful as a model for urban government in the rest of Jinan.¹⁸

To be successful, Jinan's commercial settlement needed to balance attracting and controlling foreign merchants. Although it was easy to anticipate that Jinan's economic importance would grow dramatically in the coming years, it was not yet a major commercial center. Its position inland set it apart from ports opened to foreign trade on the coast and along the Yangzi River, like Hangzhou and Suzhou. In order to create favorable conditions for Chinese and foreign merchants alike, the settlement's regulations thus stipulated that customs taxes would not immediately be collected.¹⁹ In fact, the commercial settlement never housed an office of the Imperial Maritime Customs, but it eventually began charging transit taxes (*lijin*) on goods traded through there. While foreign merchants and diplomats generally despised *lijin*, in Jinan foreign merchants enjoyed a 50% discount on this rate, giving them an advantage over their Chinese competitors. This made trading through Jinan advantageous enough that it both attracted foreign merchants and forestalled foreign governments from demanding more favorable concessions.²⁰

This latter point was especially important because metropolitan and territorial officials alike repeatedly emphasized that, unlike concessions in the treaty ports, Jinan's commercial settlement remained entirely under Qing sovereignty. As chapter 5 discussed, a series of property disputes in the 1880s had established a *de facto* right for foreigners to reside in Jinan, but the process of selecting and purchasing land was effectively subject to the supervision of local officials and, through them, consultation with members of the elite. Chinese actors' interest in

pairing containment and accommodation, see Shan, *Yuan Shikai*, 93–97.

¹⁸ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 51.

¹⁹ Yuan Shikai memorial on 1905/2/25 (GX 31/1/22), LFZZ, 03-7132-002.

²⁰ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 52–53.

restricting the space occupied by foreign actors did not simply disappear, even after the debacle of the Boxers. In fact, the context of growing imperialist pressure made asserting control over foreign bodies and economic activities even more pressing. In endorsing Yuan and Zhou's plan to open the settlement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that they needed to deal with the complex task of establishing regulations to govern not only trade, but also the operation of telegraph services, which it deemed vital to Qing sovereignty.²¹

The most basic question, though, was how to handle the land on which the commercial settlement would be located. In theory, a foreigner purchasing land did not remove it from Qing control, but as chapter 5 discussed, the fact that foreigners enjoyed special legal privileges by virtue of the treaties effectively deformed Qing legal sovereignty over any land they occupied and, even more, owned. The Jinan missionary case had further shown that anxieties over foreign encroachment, lack of clarity about treaty stipulations, and localized prerogatives created a combustible situation that challenged the delicate balance between local officials, the elite, and even a small number of foreigners. The Boxer Uprising drove home the lesson that carefully managing such situations was essential to protecting the state's interests. Consequently, neither relying on private land transactions nor ceding land to foreign governments was a desirable strategy. Instead, the provincial government undertook the role of both landlord and administrator of the commercial settlement. Yuan, Zhou, and Hu Tinggan (Zhou's successor) established a Commercial Settlement General Bureau (*shangbu zongju*), overseen by the Ji-Dong-Tai-Wu-Lin Circuit Intendant and managed by an expectant official appointed by the circuit intendant as director. The General Bureau was charged with procuring and developing a rectangular tract of land of over 4,000 *mu* (a little over one square mile) in the country west of

²¹ Ye Zhiru, "Qingmo Jinan Weixian ji Zhoucun," 28.

the city. The district's eastern boundary, which ran 2 *li* north-south, abutted the suburbs around Jinan's outer western wall; its northern boundary ran 5 *li* along the Jiao-Ji railroad; and on the south the settlement was bounded by the highway to Changqing. This strategy of the Qing government purchasing property and leasing it to landlords had previously been used in Suzhou and Hangzhou, which were opened as treaty ports after the Sino-Japanese War, and the Germans used a similar scheme in Qingdao. The key difference in Jinan, of course, was that the Qing government was opening the settlement under no legal compulsion nor, it hoped, with any foreign interference.²²

The location of the commercial settlement in the area west of the city's outer walls made sense for several reasons. First, the west suburbs had become Jinan's largest commercial center, thanks in part to the Luo River providing water access to Luokou on the Daqing and later Yellow River. Luokou itself was only about ten *li* from the terminus of the Xiaoqing Canal at Huangtai Bridge, and the construction of a short rail line in 1906 facilitated transport between these two ports. The terminus of the Jiao-Ji Railroad was also located in this part of the city, and so Jinan's first railway station was on the northern edge of the settlement. The importance of this area to railway transport would only grow with the completion of the Jin-Pu Railroad, which also curved along the settlement's northern boundary. However, since it was outside the walls and relatively distant from the markets outside the west gate of the old city, this area was not yet heavily urbanized. This made it much easier to develop the area without disrupting an already congested area and arousing the opposition of the local people.

²² For a contemporaneous foreign comparison of the Jinan settlement's regulations to those of Hangzhou and Suzhou, see Rockhill to Secretary of State, January 17, 1906, *FRUS 1906*, 292–93. On the Suzhou settlement, see Carroll, *Between Heaven and Modernity*, 29–39. Governor Zhou Fu had visited Qingdao and was keenly interested in German administration there. Based on this and similarities between German practices in Qingdao and Jinan's commercial settlement, Xue Ruiling (private communication) surmises that the former may have been an inspiration for the latter, but I have yet to find a source confirming this very plausible hypothesis. On the land tenure system in Qingdao, see Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism*, 65–73.

To help avoid conflicts over property transactions between foreigners and local people, the General Bureau was supposed to purchase the entirety of the land this area comprised, with the cooperation of the local gentry. According to the settlement's regulations for purchasing land, the price for all land was set at 100 copper cash (*jingqian*) per *mu*, with an additional 40 cash for land that consisted of vegetable gardens (*caiyuan di*). However, the process of purchasing land must have entailed more negotiation than the regulations suggest, because in an exchange with the British consul at Jinan, Yang Shixiang acknowledged that some land had cost up to 320 cash, although this was still very low.²³ The owner of each plot of land housing graves was to receive 5 taels to cover the costs of relocation and an additional 2 taels for each grave beyond the first. (This was noticeably less generous than the 8-tael per grave rate on the route of the Jin-Pu Railroad.)²⁴ Clans with more graves on a single plot than could be feasibly moved could request permission for the graves to be left in place and cordoned off. Rather than purchasing the land all at once, the General Bureau sent out commissioners to survey the land and distribute certificates to the owners indicating the amount of money to which they would be entitled when the bureau needed to purchase it. In theory, this allowed the bureau to acquire the land as it could afford and develop it while preventing productive land from lying fallow, speculators from forcing the bureau to pay exorbitant prices, and yamen runners from using the property transactions as opportunities for graft, since the price of land was fixed and public knowledge.²⁵

As the General Bureau acquired the land in the settlement, it leased it out to interested Chinese and foreign merchants at one of four rates, ranging from 10 to 36 silver dollars per *mu*

²³ FO 228/2615/6, p. 8, TNA.

²⁴ Köll, *Railroads*, 40.

²⁵ Jinan shi fangchan guanliju bianzhi bangongshi, *Jinan shi fangdichan zhi ziliao*, 3:219–21.

per year. These rates—stipulated in the Regulations for Renting and Building on Land in the Jinan Commercial Settlement—were lowest along the northern edge of the district and highest along the southern edge. Tenants also had to pay a tax of 2 silver dollars annually on each *mu*. Potential tenants submitted their applications to the General Bureau's Engineering Office (*gongcheng chu*), which reviewed and forwarded them to the General Bureau for final approval. Foreign merchants needed their nearest consul to countersign their leases and submit them to the bureau while archiving a copy in the consulate. Tenants were allowed to transfer their leases, but this required the permission of the Engineering Office and, in the case of foreigners, their consulate. Foreign consuls were also responsible for maintaining a record of agents to represent foreign tenants in case they were incapacitated or forced to leave the country unexpectedly.²⁶ Assuming the property was developed properly, leases lasted for thirty years and could be extended thereafter, although the rent could be raised. The government retained the right to purchase any property constructed on settlement land after a period of sixty years.²⁷

Responsibility for developing the settlement was split between the General Bureau, individual tenants, and the community that would emerge there. Yuan Shikai, Zhou Fu, and later officials were keenly aware that the government had to provide certain public facilities, like the district's own road grid, horse roads around the city, and grocery markets in the settlement, to attract and appease foreign interests. Telegraph, electric, and water services would also be essential to the settlement's operation, but they saw keeping these in Chinese hands as vital to protecting Qing sovereignty.²⁸ However, responsibility for constructing shops, warehouses, and offices fell on individual tenants. There were several checks in place to ensure that tenants,

²⁶ *Jinan shangbu zujian zhangcheng*, 1b–2b. These regulations are reprinted in Jinan shi fangchan guanliju bianzhi bangongshi, *Jinan shi fangdichan zhi ziliao*, 3:212–19.

²⁷ *Jinan shangbu zujian zhangcheng*, 3a–3b.

²⁸ Yuan Shikai memorial on 1905/2/25 (GX 31/1/22), LFZZ, 03-7132-002; *Jinan shangbu zujian zhangcheng*, 6b.

whether Chinese or foreign, utilized leased property in desirable ways. First, tenants were required to rent a minimum of 2 (and a maximum of 10) *mu* of land and were not allowed to sub-lease portions of their parcels.²⁹ This effectively excluded small shop-owners, who were not the district's target constituency. Second, the regulations gave tenants a period of three years in which to build on their property. If they failed to do so, they would be considered "people lacking financial means" (*wu caili zhi ren*), and the lease would be canceled. The regulations also anticipated settlement residents donating toward public projects like parks. Such projects were supposed to be handled by a combination of the circuit intendant supervising the settlement, the General Bureau, the consuls of each country, and one foreign and one Chinese director.³⁰

A series of other regulations further elaborated how Yuan Shikai and others envisioned the commercial settlement as not just a defensive mechanism against foreign encroachment but a model, experimental urban space that offered a vision of Jinan's future. In this sense, it was a kind of forebear of more recent efforts, like Special Economic Zones, to stimulate economic growth, manage foreign relations, and promote modernization through local administrative innovation. Besides the leasing of land, the Engineering Office was also responsible for supervising construction projects within the settlement. Although the rental and construction regulations gave considerable leeway to tenants to develop the property as they saw best, they imposed a series of restrictions on the construction process. Before beginning construction, tenants were supposed to file blueprints with the Engineering Office for approval and had to submit to inspection once construction was under way. The regulations prohibited the construction of thatched roofs or the use of building materials that posed fire hazards. Tenants

²⁹ *Jinan shangbu zujian zhangcheng*, 2a–2b.

³⁰ *Jinan shangbu zujian zhangcheng*, 5b.

needed the permission of the Engineering Office to use gunpowder in construction and were not allowed to store large amounts of kerosene within their structures. The regulations also mandated that tenants constructing new buildings or renovating old ones had to dig drainage channels to remove sewage and waste water.³¹ The sanitary conditions of the settlement fell under the purview of the Hygiene Office, which published its own regulations in 1911.³² This office's purpose was to "protect the health and peace of the settlement's residents, to clean away filth, and prevent disease." To this end, the Hygiene Office employed men to remove sewage and other waste from roadside ditches, clean the public toilets, and collect trash from individual establishments each morning and evening. The office also ensured that tenants, especially restaurants, bars, and brothels, kept the area around their property clean and that the food sold in the settlement's grocery markets was fresh.³³

Failure to comply with the rules set forth by the Engineering Office or the Hygiene Bureau could lead to a confrontation with officers from the settlement's Police Bureau (*xunjing ju*). This bureau, which reported to the Settlement General Bureau, had a broad mandate to protect the settlement from behavior contravening the Qing code and the settlement's regulations, ranging from violent conduct to letting dogs wander around without collars. Responsibility for handling cases originating in the settlement fell first to a Judicial Office (*shenpan gongsuo*) set up under the Police Bureau and managed by a commissioner (*weiyuan*) appointed by the settlement director. The settlement's police regulations gave him exclusive authority to adjudicate minor cases involving Qing subjects and foreigners not subject to extraterritoriality. He was also supposed to deal with foreigners with extraterritorial protections

³¹ *Jinan shangbu zujian zhangcheng*, 3b–5a.

³² On the place of hygiene in urban transformation in early twentieth-century China, see Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity*, 165–224.

³³ "Wendu," *SDGB*, XT 3/6/7, 11–15.

but had to do so in consultation with their respective consuls, in keeping with the principle of consular jurisdiction. When foreigners made complaints against Qing subjects, their consuls could observe the proceedings, but the settlement's policing regulations were adamant that "however such cases are decided, the official responsible for adjudication should be the one to dispense justice (*jun you chengshenguan zuozhu*).” According to the regulations, lawsuits involving debt (*qianzhai sisong*) and major criminal cases (*zhongdao anjian*) should be referred to the Licheng County magistrate. If the accused was a Qing subject, the local officials would handle the case themselves, but if it was a foreigner, then they would turn the case over to the respective consul. Deputies of the district police and local officials could, as necessary, cross back and forth between the settlement and the rest of the county to apprehend suspects, although they were instructed to seek the cooperation of the other party when doing so. The Judicial Office was supposed to publish monthly reports of the cases it handled, and the Licheng Magistrate was supposed to report back to the Judicial Office about cases referred to him.³⁴

In sum, the commercial settlement's purpose of serving as a space for accommodating foreign interests while simultaneously checking them and protecting Qing sovereignty necessitated a complex institutional arrangement. To some extent, the settlement did resemble treaty ports, since it was governed by an exceptional set of regulations. However, these regulations were set and enforced by Qing officials. The settlement did not operate with complete autonomy from Licheng County, whose magistrate still held jurisdiction over major cases originating there. Although the General Bureau was not under the magistrate's control, it operated under the Ji-Dong-Tai-Wu-Lin Circuit Intendant, who was supervised by the Shandong Governor.

³⁴ *Jinan shangbu xunjing zhangcheng*.

Even where the district had to recognize foreigners' special privileges, it did so in a way that preserved Qing sovereignty through principles of legal pluralism that were familiar to the empire. In this way, it sought to avoid the problems that had led to the series of property disputes with the Presbyterian missionaries discussed in chapter 5. The settlement officially established the right of foreigners to live in Jinan but explicitly restricted where they could live and how they could acquire property. The location of the settlement west of the city was favorable to foreigners, owing to its proximity to the railroad terminus, but also to local people. In 1888 when the missionaries had tried purchasing land for a hospital in the west country—perhaps not far from or even within what became the commercial settlement—they met opposition, but apparently only because the seller was acting without the approval of his family, who owned the property corporately. Once this was recognized, the elite and officials negotiated with the family to let the missionaries take possession of the property in exchange for them dropping their claims to land elsewhere in the city. The strategy of allowing foreigners to occupy peripheral spaces in the city—as the Catholics did at Hongjia lou east of Jinan—while denying them access to land closer to the city center or around spaces deemed sensitive by the local people was thus already visible well before the opening of the commercial settlement. Having the General Bureau operate as a landlord and handle moving graves also removed the problem of unscrupulous middlemen causing problems with the foreigners.³⁵ The Engineering Office also restricted what foreigners could build on their property, although, with the settlement located well outside the city, concerns for health and safety were far more important than *fengshui*.

Efforts to protect Qing sovereignty notwithstanding, the presence of consuls in Jinan enhanced the ability of foreign governments to project power into and collect intelligence from

³⁵ Middlemen complicated dealings with not only missionaries but also railway companies. Köll, *Railroads*, 40.

Jinan.³⁶ As chapter 5 discussed, the missionaries' distance from diplomatic representation weakened their negotiating position. The presence of diplomats in Jinan remedied that problem. However, the commercial settlement regulations pro-actively limited consuls' rights to participate in legal proceedings and clarified their responsibility for supervising their respective citizens and participating in decisions about public construction in the settlement. By, ideally, confining foreigners to the settlement, where they were subject to the jurisdiction of their consuls, the local government effectively redressed the Qing's earlier, ineffectual assertion that extraterritoriality should apply only to foreigners in the treaty ports.³⁷ Consuls served as imperial administrators on whom both their home governments and the Qing depended for controlling the foreign population, or, as Scully puts it, "colonizing the colonizers."³⁸ As Charles Denby's strained relationship with Gilbert Reid illustrates, this responsibility could be nearly as thankless for diplomats as it was for the Qing officials who had to deal directly with foreigners in the absence of resident consuls.

Funding the Commercial Settlement

As chapters 3 and 4 have discussed, the financial limitations of Jinan's elite, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, necessitated their dependence on official funds for public projects, even quintessential forms of local activism, like militia mobilization and charitable projects. At the same time, the fiscal constraints the Qing court and provincial officials faced forced them to make hard decisions about which projects to back, like the Xiaoqing Canal, and which to de-prioritize, like the Yellow River. After 1901, the twin demands of repaying the Boxer indemnity and funding reform projects exacerbated these fiscal pressures. The decision

³⁶ On British intelligence gathering in North China, see Hevia, *The Imperial Security State*, 127–51. On the role of diplomats specifically, see 127–29.

³⁷ Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment*, 62.

³⁸ Scully, *Bargaining with the State*, 81–101.

not to collect customs in the settlement and *lijin* at only half the rate demonstrated a willingness to prioritize its growth and to wait to harvest new sources of revenue from it. However, this made it even more pressing to identify an alternative source of funds to cover both the settlement's regular expenses and its start-up costs, which Yuan estimated would total 700,000–800,000 taels once the government purchased all the land within the settlement and constructed all necessary public buildings.³⁹

Yuan turned to the receipts of the Imperial Maritime Customs house in the Jiaozhou leasehold (henceforth Jiaozhou customs) to defray the costs.⁴⁰ In late February, 1905 he requested permission to draw on half of the 383,000 taels the customs had collected the previous year and suggested that this money could later be repaid from revenue collected by the settlement. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported Yuan's request, but the Ministry of Finance objected on three grounds: it noted that similar projects in Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Changsha had cost only 100,000–300,000 taels, argued that Jinan's own customs receipts should cover these costs, and, finally, asserted that the costs of a commercial project like this one should be kept distinct from "foreign affairs" (*yangwu*) expenses. Under pressure from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance relented on the latter two points since Jinan was not yet collecting customs taxes of its own and because, Yuan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs argued, this project was intimately related to foreign affairs. The Ministry of Finance encouraged frugality and reiterated that this money should be repaid if the settlement ever began collecting customs itself. It also stipulated that provincial officials would not be allowed to draw on the Jiaozhou customs to fund the settlement's regular operating expenses.⁴¹

³⁹ Ye Zhiru, "Qingmo Jinan Weixian ji Zhoucun," 32.

⁴⁰ On the establishment of an IMC house in the German leasehold, see Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism*, 73–78, 203–8.

⁴¹ Ye Zhiru, "Qingmo Jinan Weixian ji Zhoucun," 30–35.

The 191,500 taels disbursed from the Jiaozhou customs did support considerable progress toward establishing the settlement. It funded the purchase of one-third of the settlements's land, one-fifth of the grave-moving compensations, the purchase of land on which the Germans had constructed a consulate (and which they had purchased before the establishment of the settlement), and the completion of a horse road. It also seems that it was used to cover some "regular" expenses, in contravention of the Ministry of Finance's instruction. Nevertheless, this funding covered only a fraction of the settlement's costs. The Ministry of Finance thus approved requests for an additional 100,000 taels in 1907 and again in 1908, bringing the total contribution of the Jiaozhou Customs to a little under 400,000 taels, or about half of Yuan's initial estimate.⁴² In 1905, Governor Yang Shixiang received permission from the Ministry of Finance to borrow 300,000 taels that Shandong was supposed to remit to Beijing to cover costs for the settlement. The Board approved this request, again on the condition that the funds be repaid from the future receipts of Jinan's own customs.⁴³

Even this was not the full story of the settlement's reliance on funds from the Jiaozhou customs, though. To make up the remainder of the needed funds, provincial officials had to turn to other sources of revenue. Some came from the rent the General Bureau received on the land it leased out to the settlement's occupants. The early receipts were naturally small, though, totaling only 1,887 taels from Guangxu 31 through Guangxu 33 (roughly 1905–7).⁴⁴ The government also levied a surtax on merchants, but given the size of Jinan's merchant community and the government's well-documented dependence on other sources of funds, the amount collected was likely small.⁴⁵ A more substantial source of funds early on was the provincial Fundraising

⁴² Ye Zhiru, 38–39, 41–42; Yang Shixiang memorial on 1908/12/19 (GX 34/11/26), ZPZZ, 04-01-35-1083-039.

⁴³ "Dongfu qingkuan kaibu Jinan," *Shen bao*, 1905/4/10, 3.

⁴⁴ Ye Zhiru, "Qingmo Jinan Weixian ji Zhoucun," 41.

⁴⁵ Zhang Jianzhi claims this tax was collected but provides no information on how much revenue it produced or how

Bureau, which contributed 30,000 taels before any money was received from the Jiaozhou customs. According to a 1910 accounting by Governor Sun Baoqi, though, once the initial disbursement from the Jiaozhou customs was received, part of it was used to repay the Fundraising Bureau for its contribution.⁴⁶ Similarly, over the course of 1905–6, Governor Zhou Fu issued ten-year bonds to gentry and merchants through the Bureau of Agricultural, Industrial, and Commercial Affairs to the tune of 152,000 taels, with a 6% interest rate. By 1910, the provincial government had already repaid 70,224 taels but, including interest, anticipated needing to repay an additional 132,376 taels, which would be difficult, given the province's fiscal limitations. Sun proposed that a loan from the Jiaozhou customs could both ease this pressure and, by repaying the loan early, save on interest payments. The Ministry of Finance was unhappy that Zhou had issued this bond without the permission of the central government, but it nevertheless agreed to Sun's suggestion and ordered that the Jiaozhou customs disburse an additional 100,000 taels to aid this important project.⁴⁷

In short, income from the Jiaozhou customs essentially underwrote the establishment of Jinan's commercial settlement. This arrangement reveals the complexity of the fiscal relationship between the Qing court, provincial officials, and local elites at this time. On the one hand, we see support for Halsey's argument that the late Qing fiscal system accommodated both considerable control by the central government, which received a steady stream of income from the customs service, and enough flexibility to fund local projects that were strategically essential.⁴⁸ Yuan and subsequent officials repeatedly justified the value of the commercial settlement in terms of how it advanced the interests of the empire as a whole, not just a specific locale. Although officials

it was used. Zhang Jianzhi, "Jinan kaibu," 25.

⁴⁶ Ye Zhiru, "Qingmo Jinan Weixian ji Zhoucun," 41.

⁴⁷ Ye Zhiru, 41.

⁴⁸ Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 78, 86–106.

repeatedly drew on the Jiaozhou customs to fund this project, they repeatedly had to negotiate for it, and the Ministry of Finance forced them to abide by its rule that 40 percent of the customs revenue had to be forwarded to Beijing.⁴⁹

On the other hand, provincial officials exercised considerable leverage, especially when they were backed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Beiyang officials. The Ministry of Finance never succeeded in forcing Shandong's officials to lower the costs of opening the commercial settlement. Nevertheless, they continued to dole out money from the customs revenue. A significant portion of the money for the settlement—300,000 taels—came from money that was supposed to be forwarded to Beijing. By using customs money to repay loans from the Fundraising Bureau and Shandong's elite, Shandong's governors essentially replenished funds over which they exercised more discretion. However, this arrangement did not necessarily harm the Qing state, at least so long as the projects regional officials undertook served its interests and the court maintained at least some capacity for reining in its officials, such as by reassigning or cashiering them.

The establishment and funding of the commercial settlement also demonstrates the relationship between state-building and place-making in late Qing Jinan. The establishment of this institution to protect Qing sovereignty required a new demarcation in local space, the relocation of local people, and the introduction of new actors into the city. This process was disruptive, but it was also beneficial to Jinan and its elites in a variety of ways. The settlement addressed the long-running problem of how to accommodate foreigners in Jinan in a way that seems to have minimized conflict. It also offered considerable opportunities for future economic development. Importantly, it did so without imposing a major financial burden on Jinan's own

⁴⁹ "Duzhibu zou chouba Shandong Jinan dengchu kaibu jingfei zhe," *Dongfang zazhi* 4, no. 7 (1907): 79.

people, instead making Jinan a net recipient of funds collected elsewhere. Eventually, local people, especially the settlement's residents, would have to bear more of its regular expenses through rent and various taxes. Again, though, tax collection was delayed because of the state's interest in the settlement's development. When then-Zhili Governor-General Yang Shixiang and Shandong Governor Yuan Shuxun proposed instituting a tax on goods transported by train to help cover the settlement's costs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs refused, citing the by-then oft-repeated claim that the political stakes of the settlement were so high that fiscal sacrifice—i.e. finding the money elsewhere—was necessary.⁵⁰ This does not mean that Jinan's elite were passive bystanders in this project, though. Instead, as we have seen before, the success of not only the settlement but also the broader reform program in which it was embedded hinged on cooperation between Jinan's elite and officials.

Other Commercial Institutions

The goal of early twentieth century-reforms like the commercial settlement was not merely to restrain foreign political interests, but also to create conditions under which Chinese businesses could compete with their foreign counterparts. Shandong natives and provincial officials were deeply concerned with increasing the productive capacity and economic prowess of the province's farmers and merchants. They repeatedly raised warnings that Shandong's people were "simple" (*pushi*) and that understanding of best commercial and agricultural practices was limited.⁵¹ A frequent complaint was that common practices (literally, the atmosphere, *fengqi*) had not been "opened" (*kai*) or were opening only gradually.⁵² Under these conditions, opening Jinan to global trade, while necessary, was not an unmitigated good, and

⁵⁰ Xu Huadong, "Jinan kaibu," 9.

⁵¹ "Shandong zazhi zhi yuanqi," *SDZZ*, GX 33/12, 4; "Shimian zazhi," *JNHB*, ce 7: Haidai congtao, qi 11, 18b.

⁵² For example: "Nonggongshangju shang fushi bing," *JNHB*, ce 8: Dongzheng jiyao, qi 7, 23b–24a; "Zai xuexian guanfeng gaoshi," *JNHB*, ce 8: Dongzheng jiyao, qi 43, 125a.

thus vigorous self-strengthening was an indispensable corollary to opening.

To this end, provincial officials oversaw the establishment of several other commercial institutions that complemented the commercial settlement. The first of these was the Shandong Bureau of Commercial Affairs (*Shandong shangwu zongju*), founded in 1901 by Yuan Shikai and later renamed the Bureau of Agricultural, Industrial, and Commercial Affairs (*Nonggongshangwu ju*, hereafter BAIC). At least one of this bureau's assistants was a native of Shandong, and it was served by an advisory board consisting of two representatives from each of the twenty-four recognized occupational associations (*hangye*) operational in Jinan.⁵³ Unlike the provincial assembly discussed in chapter 7, which drew representatives from each prefecture in Shandong and was thus a clearer reflection of the administrative hierarchy in Shandong, BAIC's advisory board was only as provincial in scope as the mercantile community based in Jinan was. This may account for the particularly important role that people from Jinan played in this and similar institutions. Despite elite participation, this bureau was essentially a government office with formalized channels for input from the local commercial community.

Somewhat different was the Jinan Chamber of Commerce, which operated more under the pattern of "official supervision with gentry management." The first instantiation of the chamber was the Jinan shanghai gongsuo, founded in 1902. After the court's promulgation of regulations for chambers of commerce in 1904, the chamber changed its name to the Shandong Jinan shangwu zonghui. As this name suggests, it operated simultaneously as a local institution, representing the interests of merchants in Jinan, and a provincial one, sitting at the top of a hierarchy of chambers of commerce distributed across the province. Unlike BAIC, the chamber of commerce was headed by Shandong natives, under whom, again, served an advisory board

⁵³ Wang Yin, "Jindai Jinan shanghai," 9–10, 12.

elected by the occupational associations. However, the Industrial Intendant (*quanyue dao*) still exercised supervision over the chamber and considerable influence over its operations through the end of the Qing.⁵⁴ By 1912, 580 establishments had joined the chamber of commerce for the walled city and suburbs. (A separate chamber of commerce for the commercial settlement was established in 1911, with the two merging in 1931.)⁵⁵

The commercial settlement and BAIC helped create the infrastructural conditions for the economic transformation envisioned by officials and Shandong people: railroads, horse roads, foreigner-friendly facilities, hygiene regulations, etc.⁵⁶ As we have seen, to do so they mobilized funds not only from local people through selling bonds and levying new fees but also from the Jiaozhou customs. In contrast, the chamber of commerce's funds were generally limited to the wealth of its constituent members. Unlike institutions with government financial backing, physical infrastructure was not the focus of its investment. Instead, its primary function was to mobilize its members to disseminate knowledge of best commercial practices (something BAIC also did), to advocate for the mercantile community's interests (partly by mediating between officials and merchants), and to self-regulate business affairs.⁵⁷ In addition to holding regular meetings, the chamber pursued the first goal through operating a local "commercial school" (*shangwu xuetang*) for the sons of merchants and publishing a periodical devoted to commercial affairs.⁵⁸ Regarding the importance of these activities, Industrial Intendant Xiao Yingchun reported, "Thus commercial know-how can be opened up (*kai*) more each day, and [our ability to engage in] commercial competition (*shangzhan*) can become more fierce each day; this is truly

⁵⁴ Wang Yin, 10–12, 18–19; Cui Hengzhan and Dang Mingde, "Jinan shanghui," 5.

⁵⁵ Wang Yin, "Jindai Jinan shanghui," 14.

⁵⁶ Nie Jiahua, "Kaibu yu Jinan," 109–10.

⁵⁷ Ding Jinjun, "Wan Qing Shandong difang shanghui shiliao," 46–47; Wang Yin, "Jindai Jinan shanghui," 21–31.

⁵⁸ "Shanghui she xue," *JNHB*, ce 7: Haidai congtao, qi 10, 17b; "Baojie ri tuo," *JNHB*, ce 7: Haidai congtao, qi 31, 38b; "Shanghui gongsuo weiyuan shangdong deng shang fushi niban shanghui ribao bing," *JNHB*, ce 8: Dongzheng jiyao, qi 34, 98a–98b.

the beginning of the way to wealth and power.”⁵⁹ The chamber of commerce also coordinated with chambers in other provinces to boycott U.S. imports in protest of U.S. immigration policies and pressed the Qing government to renegotiate the treaty with Germany governing the Jin-Pu Railroad to ensure as much Chinese control as possible.⁶⁰

Leadership

There was considerable overlap between the leadership of the commercial settlement, BAIC, and the chamber of commerce. At the level of general oversight, Shandong’s governors and Zhili’s governors-general actively supervised the commercial settlement and secured funding for it. The importance of this project and its connection to foreign relations kept it in the eye of the most powerful officials in Jinan and Tianjin, starting with Yuan Shikai. In turn, these officials delegated direct oversight of them to trusted subordinates.

By regulation, the Ji-Dong-Tai-Wu-Lin Circuit Intendant served concurrently as the superintendent of the Settlement General Bureau. However, since this was an entirely new responsibility that required attention to the settlements in Zhoucun and Weixian as well as Jinan, it necessitated a more elaborate administrative structure. Consequently, Shandong’s Governor, in consultation with the Zhili Governor-General, appointed commissioners to serve as managers of each of the three settlement bureaus. The employment of such commissioners, who possessed necessary practical experience but not necessarily the official rank that important posts usually required, was, as we saw in chapter 4, not uncommon in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The managers of the commercial settlement were largely drawn from among the large pool of expectant officials in Shandong and Zhili. The first of these was Cai Huilang, a

⁵⁹ Ding Jinjun, “Wan Qing Shandong difang shanghui shiliao,” 45.

⁶⁰ “Huilu dizhi Mei jin Huagong ge handian,” *Shen bao*, 1905/7/17, 2; Wang Yin, “Jindai Jinan shanghui,” 33.

probationary circuit intendant in Zhili, whom Yuan Shikai sent to help manage foreign affairs in Jinan in 1905. Cai was soon followed by He Yansheng, who had previously served as the Ji-Dong-Tai-Wu-Lin Circuit Intendant, a post he relinquished so he could observe the customary mourning period after one of his parents died.⁶¹ He wound up serving as the director of the Zhoucun and Weixian commercial settlements, where he was replaced in 1907 by Xu Fuchen, who had previously served as a customs intendant in Yantai.⁶² Meanwhile, the directorship of Jinan's commercial settlement fell to expectant circuit intendant Zhu Zhongqi. Zhu, a native of Shaoxing in Zhejiang, first came to Shandong in 1888, having purchased a *jiansheng* degree and then a rank as a vice prefect. Between 1891 and 1900 he served temporarily as magistrate of no fewer than seven counties in Shandong, including Licheng, winning repeated praise from Governor Li Bingheng.⁶³ In 1902 he was appointed director of the Shandong Fundraising Bureau and also served as the director of BAIC and later as the commissioner for foreign affairs negotiations in Shandong. At some point in this period, he assumed the role of director of the Commercial Settlement General Bureau, which he filled until he was reassigned to Fengtian in 1911. Zhu thus held considerable power over Shandong's financial affairs and commercial development. Although Zhu, along with other Shandong officials, faced repeated accusations of malfeasance, he seems to have remained in the good graces of Yuan Shikai and Shandong's subsequent governors, who continued to employ him in a variety of roles.⁶⁴

Consequently, the settlement's administration comprised several layers of authority between the court and Jinan's elite, with subordinate officials with close ties to the provincial

⁶¹ Yuan Shikai memorial on 1905/10/13 (GX 31/9/15), *LFZZ*, 03-5446-084.

⁶² Yuan Shikai memorial on 1907/8/24 (GX 33/7/16), *ZPZZ*, 04-01-13-0418-042.

⁶³ "Benguan jiefeng dianyin," *Shen bao*, 1896/10/16, 1; "Yuzhi gonglu," *Shen bao*, 1897/11/9, 1; Zhang Shumei, *Xuxiu Qingping xian zhi*, 31a–31b.

⁶⁴ See, for example, Yuan's defense of him against a series of allegations in "Zhili zongdu Yuan zou," *Shen bao*, 1904/3/3–4, 12, 11.

governments of Shandong and Zhili exercising considerable power. This is not to say that Jinan's elite had no role to play in the establishment and administration of the settlement, though. The very first sentence of the regulations on purchasing property for the commercial settlement states that they were drawn up in consultation with the local elite.⁶⁵ As mentioned above, Zhou Fu sold bonds to the people of Shandong to supplement funding from the Jiaozhou customs, to which Sun Baoqi reported they had responded enthusiastically.⁶⁶ When Yang Shixiang needed additional money to cover the costs of opening the commercial settlements at Zhoucun and Weixian, he dispatched Mao Chenglin—son of militia organizer and later powerful official Mao Hongbin (discussed in chapter 3)—to raise funds from the merchants and gentry in neighboring Zhangqiu and elsewhere. Within a month Mao collected over 100,000 taels.⁶⁷

A similar pattern of low-ranking officials wielding considerable power while the local elite provided complementary leadership obtained in BAIC. The first director of BAIC was Yuan's Columbia-educated lieutenant Tang Shaoyi. After Tang moved to Tianjin with Yuan in 1901, he was succeeded by Zhu Zhongqi, who was later succeeded by probationary circuit intendant Xiao Yingchun. Xiao came from a family of salt merchants in Yunnan, held a *juren* degree, and had purchased the rank of circuit intendant, which took him to Shandong. In 1907 the new post of Industrial Intendant was created and given simultaneous responsibility for overseeing BAIC. Xiao was promoted to this post and thus maintained the directorship of BAIC. Two assistants served under Xiao, one of whom was Meng Jisheng (also known as Luochuan, 1851–1939). Unlike Tang, Zhu, and Xiao, Meng was a native of Shandong. His family hailed from Zhangqiu, and he himself was a long-time resident of Jinan. For several decades, Meng had

⁶⁵ Jinan shi fangchan guanliju bianzhi bangongshi, *Jinan shi fangdichan zhi ziliao*, 3:219–20.

⁶⁶ Ye Zhiru, "Qingmo Jinan Weixian ji Zhoucun," 42.

⁶⁷ "Shandong zikai shangbu zhi banfa," *Shen bao*, 1905/5/28, 3.

been the dominant figure in his family's sprawling commercial interests in Zhangqiu, Jinan, Beijing, Tianjin, and Yantai. The basis of the family business was the cloth trade, but Meng had branched into banking, using the financial services he provided to officials in Jinan and his directorship of corporately held family businesses to expand his own family branch's portfolio.⁶⁸ Although not a literatus, he was awarded official rank as an expectant circuit intendant for his contributions to charitable projects. Besides BAIC's executive leadership, each of Shandong's twenty-four occupational associations (*hangye*) elected two members to an advisory board that provided local input to the bureau.⁶⁹

The leadership composition of the chamber of commerce was similar, but natives of Shandong, especially Jinan, were naturally more influential. As the Industrial Intendant, Xiao Yingchun served as the chamber's official supervisor and wielded considerable power up through 1911.⁷⁰ In the chamber's early years, Jinan native Tan Kuihan was commissioned to help manage its affairs.⁷¹ Tan was the grandson of Tan Jinzhao, who had organized militia during the Taiping northern invasion and then served in a succession of posts in the Zongli yamen, the Board of War, and the Bureau of Military Appointments. Tan's father, Youqing, had served as an official in Sichuan, and he himself had purchased a *jiansheng* degree and a nominal official post as a prefectural registrar in Hubei.⁷² While Tan's own credentials were thus somewhat modest, he came from a family of considerable local prominence that was well-familiar with imperial service.

In accordance with its regulations, in 1908 the chamber of commerce held an election to

⁶⁸ For an extended discussion of the Meng family businesses, see Shi lianghui wenshi zu, "Jinan bainian laohao."

⁶⁹ Wang Yin, "Jindai Jinan shanghui," 12.

⁷⁰ Wang Yin, 19.

⁷¹ Ding Jinjun, "Wan Qing Shandong difang shanghui shiliao," 45.

⁷² Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 35:21a, 27b–28a, 40:13a–14a.

formally fill the post of director, and Wang Maokun was victorious. Wang's experience bridging merchant and official circles while serving in Shanghai and his interest in railroad construction after his return to Shandong no doubt helped secure the wide support he enjoyed from the chamber's members.⁷³ Wang's contributions to the establishment of a native place lodge for merchants and gentry in Shanghai while serving as magistrate there also likely contributed to his reputation as someone invested in advancing the interests of his home city and province.⁷⁴ One of the two assistants under Wang was Meng Jisheng, who concurrently worked as an assistant in BAIC and the Shandong Production Association, which Wang co-directed.⁷⁵

The rapid proliferation of new institutions in Jinan in the reform era was, to a surprising extent, associated with tight and overlapping rings of authority. Whereas Kent Guy argues that in the early and mid-Qing the court had maintained control over Shandong's governors by appointing men with close ties to the throne, now those ties ran increasingly through Tianjin and the coterie of Beiyang officials headed by Yuan Shikai.⁷⁶ Yuan himself was closely connected to the Empress Dowager and Prince Qing and used these connections to advance his agenda in the capital, while he cultivated a power base in North China through the institutions and political networks he established there.⁷⁷ The expectant officials Yuan dispatched to help manage commercial and foreign affairs in the province were one extension of this network. Given the power and renown of the Beiyang officials who exercised influence over Jinan in these years, it is unsurprising that scholars have paid little heed to the significance of Jinan's own elite. When

⁷³ "Shanghui gongju zongli," *Shen bao*, 1908/3/17, 12.

⁷⁴ "Chengli yizhounian Shandong tongxianghui gaikuang," *Shen bao*, 1944/9/28, 4.

⁷⁵ The other BAIC assistant was a man named Li Shike, about whom I have been unable to gather additional information. "Dongsheng chupin xiehui wuchan zhi jiyi," *Shen bao*, 1909/12/2, 12; Wang Yin, "Jindai Jinan shanghui," 12.

⁷⁶ Guy, *Qing Governors*, 190–96.

⁷⁷ See, for instance, Thompson's discussion of the partisan metropolitan politicking surrounding the implementation of constitutional governance. Thompson, *China's Local Councils*, 37–52, 71–88.

we take stock of their activities, though, we find there too a consolidation of responsibilities in relatively few hands, especially Wang Maokun and Meng Jisheng, along with the reappearance of familiar actors, like Mao Chenglin. The limited financial capacity of Jinan's elite certainly constrained their contributions to the Qing state, but they were by no means alienated from it. They certainly benefited considerably from the settlement being funded by the receipts of the Jiaozhou customs instead of their own purses. Likewise, their failure to raise sufficient funds to retake control of railroad financing in the province proved beneficial in the sense that they were not financially exposed to the economic and political hazards that could befall such operations. Although much was changing in the political economy of the late Qing, Jinan and its elites continued to benefit from calculations made from Beijing, as they had in the mid-nineteenth century, as chapters 3 and 4 show.

As important as Beiyang officials and Jinan's elite are to the narrative of this chapter, the success of the commercial settlement did not rest on their shoulders alone. The settlement needed both Chinese and foreign merchants to develop the land they leased and turn Jinan into the hub of trade Yuan and Zhou had hoped it would become. Moreover, foreign governments, particularly Germany, had to be satisfied with the open door offered in Jinan, and the settlement depended on foreign consuls to participate in supervising foreign citizens and business. In this sense, as much as the settlement was a response to the early twentieth-century demand to "modernize," it also reflected the composite imperial processes that had long characterized Qing rule, now applied in unprecedentedly visible ways in Jinan.

The Successes and Limits of the Commercial Settlement

Given the complex array of variables on which the success of the commercial settlement depended, it is unsurprising that its implementation encountered obstacles. However, the

settlement's initial shortcomings had more to do with constraints over which the Qing had essentially no control than with fundamental flaws in the conception or implementation of this institution. The settlement did bring to the fore tensions between the provincial government and both the local elite and foreign actors, but it also offered a route for resolving these tensions that could have borne greater fruit for dynasty and city alike had the former survived past 1912.

As Yuan and Zhou initially anticipated, the most basic problem the settlement faced was attracting merchants, who were needed both to carry on trade and develop the land they leased in the settlement. The settlement's regulations clearly indicated a preference for private development—entirely natural given the fiscal limitations of the provincial government—but the modest size of Jinan's foreign-related trade and community of foreign merchants coupled with the fact that the settlement was opened some years before the completion of the Jin-Pu railroad meant that this was slow to materialize. In April, 1907, over a year after the settlement officially opened, *The North China Herald* reported, "Little seems to be doing in the way of building in the foreign Settlement, except those that are being erected by the government for police purposes and for renting to business firms."⁷⁸ By 1908, the settlement was beginning to take on its intended appearance, with new buildings for the German consulate and the Jinan branch of the Deutsch-Asiatische Bank.⁷⁹ Growing interest in the settlement boded well for its future, but the fact that it was German firms that were taking advantage of the settlement did contradict the purpose of the settlement, which was to create an open—or at least cracked—door in Jinan for all countries in order to prevent a German monopoly of commercial interests in the province.

It was entirely predictable that German firms would outnumber their foreign counterparts in the settlement's early years, though. Jinan's status as the terminal of the Jiao-Ji was most

⁷⁸ "Chinanfu, SHT," *NCH*, 1907/4/5, 48.

⁷⁹ "Outports, Etc.: Tsinan," *NCH*, 1908/11/14, 378.

advantageous to German firms operating out of Qingdao. Moreover, many of the first German firms to establish themselves in the settlement came not because of independent commercial ventures but because of contracts with the provincial government, to which they had exclusive right by virtue of the Jiaozhou Convention. The business of these firms included supplying guns for the New Army division stationed in Jinan, installing electric lights, and manufacturing cement for the railway bridge that would span the Yellow River. Even, then, prospects were limited, as the British consul noted in a 1911 report on affairs in the settlement:

Tsinan is not a commercial city but an administrative centre, and even the advent of the railways will only make it a place of transit. The manager of the German Bank told me last year that there was not enough business to pay the interest on his \$100,000 bank building. If that is the state of trade with the Shantung Railway in operation for several years, the advent of the Tientsin-Pukow Railway, towards which the German traders look hopefully for an increase of trade, will not have much effect.

With the footing of even German merchants insecure, convincing merchants from other countries to come to the settlement was a tall task.⁸⁰

This challenge forced the provincial government to consider additional ways to induce foreign merchants, especially those with limited capital, to set up shop in the settlement or Jinan at all. In late 1908, Zhu Zhongqi reported, “Those whose capital is limited can find no place to rent in the commercial settlement and so live wherever in the city.”⁸¹ Zhu thus asked for additional funds not only to undertake already proposed public projects but also to construct markets and warehouses for use by merchants who could not afford to construct them themselves. The provincial government appears to have adopted an even more conciliatory approach to Japanese merchants, whom it actively courted through the Japanese consulate in Yantai. The British consular report from 1911 cited above explains that someone in the

⁸⁰ FO 228/2615/27, p. 3–4, 7–8. TNA.

⁸¹ Yang Shixiang memorial on 1908/12/19 (GX 34/11/26), ZPZZ, 04-01-35-1083-039, 3.

provincial government had “invited” Japanese merchants “as a counterpoise” to the Germans and allowed them to live inside the walled city. Most of these early Japanese businesses were small—“druggists, watchmakers, and so forth”—and depended on ready access to customers, which made the city a far more attractive place to conduct business than the settlement, which was still developing and dominated by Germans. By 1911, though, the Japanese government had reserved land in the settlement for a consulate, and the Mutsui Bussan Co. and the Yokohama Specie Bank had also claimed lots.⁸²

Dealing with the British proved far more difficult, and through 1911 the British government refused to sanction its consul in Jinan counter-signing land leases in the settlement or reserving space for a consulate there. Initially, their reluctance stemmed from series of objections to the content of the regulations under which the settlement operated and the fact that these regulations were unilaterally promulgated by the Qing government, rather than a product of diplomatic negotiation. A major sticking point was the fact that the regulations neither specified rates for customs or *lijin* taxes nor established a system whereby the settlement’s occupants could levy taxes on themselves through a representative body. While the Qing authorities intended not immediately imposing taxes on the settlement’s merchants as a favor, the British argued that it would leave merchants who dared to move into the settlement under a cloud of uncertainty and subject to the whim of officials who could impose taxes as they pleased. Other objections centered on the rents, which the British thought might be too high, the procedures for handling tenants in arrears on rent or taxes, and the provision that the government could buy back tenants’ property after sixty years.⁸³ Initial negotiations with Governor Yang Shixiang and his subordinates gave the British reason to be optimistic that the Qing might adapt the

⁸² FO 228/2615/27, p. 4–5. TNA.

⁸³ FO 228/2615/5. TNA.

regulations to allay their concerns.⁸⁴ However, after consultation between Yang and Yuan Shikai, word came down through the General Bureau that there would be no revisions and that the British objections were due to “misapprehension,” which the British Minister found “rather impertinent.”⁸⁵

A more fundamental issue was the relationship between the regulations, local authorities, and British diplomats. When forwarding the settlement’s regulations to the British Legation in Beijing, Consul William Clennell noted, “It is of course true that the Settlements [i.e. Jinan, Weixian, and Zhoucun], being opened spontaneously by China, stand on a different footing from Treaty Ports, and if we deem the Regulations unwise in any respect, we are not in a position to dictate or insist on alterations.” However, tenants had to agree to abide by the settlement’s regulations when they submitted an application for a lease. The act of leasing land for a consulate, then, would require an agent of the British government to acquiesce to the terms under which the settlement was operating. This included the great variety of responsibilities which the regulations delegated to foreign consuls, which Clennell listed in detail. The fact that the regulations would effectively make him a collaborator of the Qing government made it even more imperative to receive his own government’s permission before proceeding. He explained:

I am not prepared to say that any duty is assigned to Consuls in these Regulations that it would be improper for a Consul to undertake, but the contingency of a Consul failing to cooperate with the Chinese Authorities in the various ways suggested, does not seem to have been provided against. If I, as a British Consul, am to be under an obligation to do a number of official acts, I naturally look to His Majesty’s Legation or His Majesty’s Secretary of State for my instructions, and not to the Taotai of Chi-tung-t’ai-wu-lin Circuit. However completely therefore the powers of Government may be reserved to China in these Settlements, it seems to me that the approval of the Powers, whose Consuls are expected to assist in a number of ways in carrying out the Regulations, is in fact required to give them binding force.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ FO 228/2615/6, p. 10. TNA.

⁸⁵ FO 228/2615/11. TNA.

⁸⁶ FO 228/2615/4, p. 1–2. TNA

This conundrum of leasing land in the settlement constituting a diplomatic speech act was most pronounced in the case of establishing a consulate, where the British government was the tenant. However, requiring consuls to counter-sign the leases—and the settlement regulations, which were attached to them—of any national of their respective countries meant that this problem would present itself any time a British actor wanted to lease settlement land.

With the Qing officials unwilling to revise the regulations, the British declined to reserve land for a consulate and deferred the question of British subjects leasing land in the settlement. This first became an issue in March 1907 when the Asiatic Petroleum Company, a British concern, reached an agreement with the General Bureau to lease land for a kerosene tank. Under instructions from Beijing, Clennell refused to counter-sign the lease unless the Settlement Bureau would allow the insertion of a stipulation to the effect “that the Company remains under the jurisdiction of the British authorities and that the Regulations issued by the General Settlement Board [Bureau] do not circumscribe the rights enjoyed under the Treaty by British Merchants at other ports.”⁸⁷ When the bureau refused, the company arranged for its German agent, Arnhold Karberg & Co., to sign the lease under their name and the signature of the German consul. Clennell reported:

Naturally the Chinese say that this result is our fault:— they have made a spontaneous offer to open Chinanfu to international trade on certain terms:—if we do not like the terms, they cannot do without the British merchant. In any case they have no intention of altering the Regulations, and I do not see at present what leverage we possess to induce them to do so... This fact seems to me to reduce Chinanfu to a place where British interests are anything but promising.⁸⁸

Although Clennell focused on how this impasse negatively affected the British government and its merchants, it also undermined the Qing government’s intent to use British interests to check

⁸⁷ FO 228/2615/17, p. 2. TNA

⁸⁸ FO 228/2615/20, p. 1–3. TNA.

German power.

Two years later, a new British consul, Bertram Giles (son of the famous diplomat and sinologist Herbert Giles), revisited the issue after the local officials suggestively asked when he planned to take up residence in the settlement. The obvious question was why, unlike the British, the Germans had apparently acceded to the regulations. According to Giles, the Germans had agreed to compromise on minor points, like rent, had signed a version of the regulations that omitted some objectionable stipulations, and—in their own view, at least—had subscribed to the bulk of the regulations on a purely provisional basis, withholding the right to rescind their agreement pending future changes, like the imposition of taxes, in which they expected to have some say. Outwardly, they had accepted the officials' authority to require foreigners to reside in the settlement, but no one had forced the small number of Germans living in the city to move and the German consul had no plans to cooperate if the Qing officials tried. In view of the current German dominance and the impending establishment of a Japanese consulate in the settlement, Giles suggested that the British government adopt the German strategy so that British merchants would have an opportunity to compete for a share of Jinan's trade. The legation endorsed this opinion, but no one acted on it.⁸⁹

This left the settlement and the men who administered it in a strange position. On the one hand, they had successfully induced the Germans and the Japanese to accept the majority of the terms under which foreign trade in Jinan was to be conducted through the settlement. The British remained unbowed, but at least they perceived their churlish attitude to have consequences. On the other hand, the pace of foreign development in the settlement remained slow. In these early years, it was mostly Chinese entrepreneurs who took advantage of the opportunities the

⁸⁹ FO 228/2615/23. TNA.

settlement offered to cater to passengers on first the Jiao-Ji and then the Jin-Pu line. In 1911 there were 26 foreign-owned, foreign-style buildings in the settlement. Meanwhile, there were 34 Chinese-owned inns and hotels, 106 brothels, and hundreds of other various establishments.⁹⁰ Moreover, some foreign firms remained in the city, either through benign neglect (the Germans) or explicit invitation (the Japanese).

Both officials and members of the elite sought to remedy the problem of foreign holdouts in the city, which undermined their intention of using the settlement to check foreign encroachment. Along with his request for funds to construct warehouses in the settlement for merchants who lacked the capital to do so themselves, Zhu Zhongqi also advocated gathering foreign diplomats to reiterate to them the settlement's regulations. The previous year (1908), Hanlin compilers Fan Zhijie (a native of Jinan) and Yang Yusi (a native of Jining) had submitted a petition to the censorate asking it to memorialize on the issue of foreigners conducting commerce in the interior freely, in violation of the treaties and Qing sovereignty (*zhuquan*). Among their complaints was that German, Japanese, and other foreign nationals had set up no fewer than ten shops in Jinan outside the commercial settlement, which they claimed violated the treaties.⁹¹ In the same issue that it reprinted Zhu's request for more funds, *Shandong Magazine*—a publication of the Shandong native-place association in Beijing—published an editorial calling for strict bans on foreigners living and conducting business outside spaces designated for these purposes and punishment for Chinese agents who aided them in doing so. Moreover, the editorial advocated for a more rapid implementation of local self-government so that Shandong's elite could have more of a hand in protecting their province against foreign imperialism, a topic

⁹⁰ FO 228/2615/27, p. 7. TNA.

⁹¹ "Shandong shenshi qing Duchayuan daizou weichi zhuquan," *Shen bao*, 1908/5/14, 4.

chapter 7 discusses at greater length.⁹²

Governor Sun Baoqi did, in fact, press the issue of residence outside the settlement with foreign diplomats, albeit with mixed success. The German businesses moved, with apparently little resistance. The Japanese clung to their earlier arrangement with Yang Shixiang, under which a small number of shopkeepers had built successful businesses in the city that they feared would not survive being transplanted to the settlement. Nevertheless, the Japanese did plan to build a consulate in the settlement, and admitted that new firms needed to establish themselves there, which they did.⁹³ Again, the British proved recalcitrant, and their consul refused to order the Asiatic Petroleum Company to move its office from the city to the settlement. Instead, the company complied of its own accord. Meanwhile, British diplomats renewed their protests against the settlement's terms, now insisting that confining foreign commerce to the settlement violated the "principle" of allowing trade in all parts of cities that had been opened by either treaty or Qing initiative. Given the consul's report that the Germans dominated foreign trade in Jinan and that the situation was unlikely to improve anyway, the Foreign Office found no reason to deviate from this line.⁹⁴

The commercial settlement also failed to dislodge the missionaries from their various perches around the city. In fact, the land holdings of the American Presbyterians and English Baptists actually grew during this period with their acquisition of a plot in the south suburbs for their Union Medical College, which they opened in 1911. This institution was one part of the consolidated Presbyterian and Methodist higher educational mission that was later moved *in toto* to Jinan and renamed Cheeloo (Qilu) University in 1915. However, the continued presence and

⁹² Xuntian, "Lun Shandong jinshi qize," *SDZZ*, XT 1/2/30, 2a–5b.

⁹³ Ye Zhiru, "Qingmo Jinan Weixian ji Zhoucun," 40.

⁹⁴ FO 228/2615/28. TNA.

expansion of missionary work in Jinan outside the commercial settlement does not seem to have raised the ire of the city's elite—at least publicly—in the same way that stray commercial establishments did.

There are several possible explanations for this. First, with the expansion of German commercial interests in Shandong, economic imperialism became the chief target for anti-foreign agitation. It was toward this threat that the commercial settlement was primarily directed, and so it is plausible that officials and the elite did not see it primarily as a means to exert control over missionaries specifically. Schrecker credits the lack of missionary cases after the Boxer Uprising to a growing willingness among the elite to ignore missionaries so long as they were not used as footholds for expanding the interests of foreign powers.⁹⁵ As Jinan's elite already realized in the 1880s and the Boxer crisis confirmed many times over, stirring up violent opposition to missionaries generally proved counterproductive since it invited diplomatic and even military intervention. The fact that it was American and English missionaries who had such a strong presence in Jinan—and not Germans—may also have helped.

Second, although Shandong was the origin point for the Boxers, the aftermath of the uprising there likely left a less bitter taste than elsewhere. Because of Yuan Shikai's effective suppression of the Boxers, the province was spared the retribution campaigns by foreign troops that ravaged other parts of North China. The Catholics did use their indemnity to construct Sacred Heart Cathedral, which was completed in 1905, replete with towering spires. However, this cathedral was located at their mission in the country at Hongjia lou, well away from the city and, consequently, probably far less galling to its inhabitants. Finally, even more than the 1880s, provincial officials actively offered their patronage to missionary institutions and incorporated

⁹⁵ Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism*, 153.

them into reform projects. Governor Yang Shixiang, who was a tenacious defender of Qing sovereignty in Shandong, donated money to both the museum operated by the English missionaries and the American Presbyterians' McIlvaine Memorial Hospital.⁹⁶ Yuan Shikai also recruited Presbyterian missionary Watson Hayes from Dengzhou to direct academic affairs at the new provincial college he founded in 1901. Relationships like these were not entirely without friction and even then benefited from the determination of Shandong's governors' not to hire German advisers. However, they also signaled that missionaries, who now seemed comparatively less threatening, could play a positive role in the reforms and thereby bolster Qing sovereignty in Shandong.⁹⁷

Likewise, we should judge the limited success of the commercial settlement in this regard against the larger backdrop of the tremendous progress the Qing made in these years toward reverting what seemed like an inevitable erosion of its sovereignty in Shandong. To some extent, this owed to the diligent efforts of Yuan Shikai and the officials who followed him in both limiting German privileges to the letter of the law and strategically contravening measures that were difficult to enforce.⁹⁸ The commercial settlement is a good example of the former. It grew from an admission that foreign merchants had the right to conduct trade in the interior but took advantage of the fact that they had to accept reasonable restrictions on purchasing and leasing property and joint oversight of their activities by local officials and their own consuls.

These policies also benefited from the growing hesitancy of the German Foreign Office to aggressively push its interests in Shandong. Prior to 1900, Germany had allayed other powers' concerns about its aggressive designs on Shandong by casting itself as a make-weight in the

⁹⁶ "Tsinan, Sht.," *NCH*, 1906/11/9, 340.

⁹⁷ Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism*, 201–3.

⁹⁸ Schrecker, 172–203.

British-Russian rivalry and its Shandong sphere of influence as a buffer between the British-dominated Yangzi Valley and the Russian sphere in Manchuria. However, the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902 and then Japan's decisive defeat of Russia in 1905 swept the legs out from under this strategy and, together with vociferous criticism of its actions in the British press, left the German Foreign Office feeling increasingly isolated diplomatically. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Foreign Office also wrested greater control over German affairs in Shandong from the more assertive navy, which administered Qingdao, and German domestic politics soured on aggressive colonialist initiatives.⁹⁹ As a result, at the same time that the Qing was growing more effective in resisting German encroachments, the Germans themselves were shrinking back. To the pleasant surprise of both the Qing court, which monitored German attitudes from its embassy in Berlin, and the foreign community in China, the Germans acceded to the establishment of the commercial settlement and the unilateral Qing declaration of an open door policy toward foreign commerce in Shandong.¹⁰⁰ The result of these developments, Schrecker argues, was that between 1900 and 1907 Shandong "ceased to be a German sphere of influence."¹⁰¹

We must attach two qualifiers to this conclusion, though. First, we should not assume that Shandong's elite saw these victories as secure or complete. The ongoing construction of the Jin-Pu Railroad alone made foreign activity in Shandong a given and raised the specter of greater foreign influence in the future. Also, of course, the Germans did not surrender their lease of Qingdao. As the petitions cited above demonstrate, the threat of foreign imperialism by no means disappeared as a concern for the people of Shandong after 1907. Even when the German mining

⁹⁹ Schrecker, 140–49.

¹⁰⁰ Schrecker, 154–58.

¹⁰¹ Schrecker, 140.

syndicate abandoned its mining privileges in exchange for a payment of 340,000 marks by the Qing government, Shandong's elite protested that such a payment should not be necessary in the first place.¹⁰² Second, although the Germans pulled back from Shandong, they were soon replaced by the Japanese, who were even more aggressive in projecting power into the interior of the province, including by stationing troops in Jinan. Early signs of Japanese interest appeared before the 1911 Revolution, but Japan did not become the dominant colonialist power in Shandong until the period after 1914, when it seized German holdings and secured new privileges. It would be unfair to say that the initial intent of the commercial settlement failed in light of these later events, though. First, the open-door policy was never likely to forestall militaristic expansionism that enjoyed the relatively free hand Japan did in the context of the First World War. Second, the expansion of Japanese power in Shandong in the 1910s and 1920s was abetted by the fractured political environment that obtained after the fall of the Qing. If anything, events after 1914 suggest that we should, as Stephen Halsey suggests, give the dynasty greater credit for their ability to combat foreign imperialism, even in its final years.¹⁰³

As indicated by the discussion of BAIC and the chamber of commerce, the opening of the commercial settlement also paralleled broader reforms and transformations that scholars often associate with Jinan's urban modernization. David Buck argues that the system whereby the Chinese government controlled the commercial settlement, as opposed to foreigners administering it as in the treaty ports, made it more impactful as a model for the rest of the city.¹⁰⁴ Echoing other scholars, *A Comprehensive History of Jinan* claims, "The opening of the commercial settlement in Jinan exerted a tremendous and far-reaching influence on the city's

¹⁰² Schrecker, 199.

¹⁰³ Halsey, *Quest for Power*, 46–48.

¹⁰⁴ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 52.

economic transformation. Simultaneously, it also catalyzed a shift from the city performing a single set of functions [i.e. administrative] toward a pluralization of functions, and with this the social life and other aspects of the city experienced many changes, and so the project of ‘modernizing’ Jinan began to take off.”¹⁰⁵ Without diminishing the effects of the commercial settlement or the dramatic changes that Jinan underwent in the coming years, this perspective merits two correctives. First, the commercial settlement by no means brought about these changes by itself. On the one hand, it was the opening of the Jiao-Ji and Jin-Pu railroads that provided the basic preconditions for Jinan’s economic ascendance. Establishing the commercial settlement was more a strategy for guiding changes that seemed inevitable in a favorable direction than a concerted effort to bring them to pass. On the other hand, the importance of the commercial settlement to other aspects of urban development varied widely. Some, like the chamber of commerce, were closely related to its purpose, but probably would have been undertaken around the same time even without it. Others, like the construction of parks, train stations, and foreign-style hotels and entertainment facilities, together with regulations for maintaining public hygiene, naturally took root first in the settlement and later shaped redevelopment in other parts of the city. Other reforms, like the new schools discussed in the next section, were only tangentially related to the commercial settlement and actually predated it.

Second—and especially important for this chapter’s chronological focus on the last years of the Qing—many of these changes unfolded gradually. The industrial and commercial possibilities created by the construction of the railroads and the commercial settlement presaged further economic development and concomitant social changes. However, through the end of the Qing, men like Wang Maokun and Meng Jisheng who straddled the divide between official,

¹⁰⁵ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:134–35.

literati, and merchant classes, continued to dominate local politics. Modern corporations, starting with the Jinan Electric Light Company in 1905, began emerging in this period, but many of them depended on capital provided by the government and were in fact owned and operated by men who were officials or who held official rank.¹⁰⁶ Greater economic opportunities would facilitate the rise of a class of businessmen and capitalists who were not so closely tied to the government, but this is a story more about the after-effects of the Qing collapse in 1911–2 than its causes.¹⁰⁷

However, Jinan's elite were not stuck in the past. They actively participated in the commercial reforms of the 1900s, at least as much as their financial means allowed. In their belief that developing the economy, resisting foreign imperialism, and protecting Qing sovereignty were bound together they were remarkably similar to their peers in Shandong and other provinces, including those who eventually turned against the Qing. Neither we nor Jinan's elite should be trusted as prognosticators of what would have happened had the Qing Dynasty continued to rule past 1912. However, the fact that they were evidently more optimistic about the Qing's prospects justifiably draws our attention to the reasons for this optimism. The success of reforms geared towards preserving Qing sovereignty and stimulating commercial development in Jinan was by no means unqualified by 1911. Nevertheless, the commercial settlement's initial, albeit limited, success in circumscribing foreign ambitions, offered hope for further gains. The pressure members of the elite and, after its establishment in 1909, the provincial assembly exerted on officials to take a firmer line with foreign governments can be read as a sign of tension between local leaders and the state. These protests did not pit local interests against the state, though. Rather, local, provincial, and imperial interests remained intertwined in the minds of Jinan's elite, evidently through 1911. This makes sense when we consider the promise of the

¹⁰⁶ Xu Huadong, "Jinan kaibu," 11–14; Nie Jiahua, "Kaibu yu Jinan," 111–15.

¹⁰⁷ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 78–82; Buck, "The Provincial Elite in Shantung."

commercial settlement as a tool for safeguarding local/Qing interests and—along with other institutions—stimulating economic development. Official leadership was important to all these efforts, but they also entailed elite participation and thus served as effective arenas for coordinating local and imperial concerns. The fact that Jinan’s elite bore relatively little of the cost themselves and that their experience of imperialist encroachment was much less immediate than in the eastern half of the province, further explains why the reforms would inspire more confidence in Jinan’s elite than among their peers elsewhere in the empire and Shandong.

Educational Institutions and the Revolutionary Foothold

Well before the founding of the commercial settlement, educational reforms were already underway in Jinan. In fact, thanks to Yuan Shikai, Shandong was at the vanguard of these reforms. After the court accepted Yuan’s proposal for a new educational system in 1901—inspired by Zhang Zhidong’s *Exhortation to Study* (*Quan xue*)—and ordered that other provinces follow suit, Yuan immediately began implementing these new measures.¹⁰⁸ Even the initial reforms advanced by the court were significant: converting academies (*shuyuan*) to modern schools and colleges (*xuetang*), emphasizing subjects like mathematics, science, and geography, and hiring personnel, even foreigners, with the necessary qualifications to teach these subjects, not just men who were classically trained. The scope of the reforms broadened in subsequent years with the establishment of new bodies to oversee educational institutions in the capital, provinces, and individual counties and the abolition of the civil service examinations in 1905. This last reform ensured that changes in educational institutions would affect methods of class reproduction and political legitimization since it removed the primary mechanism by which the

¹⁰⁸ Buck, “Educational Modernization,” 173–75.

empire had recruited men to official service and authenticated their privileged standing within their home communities.

There was only limited precedent for these reforms in Jinan. In 1869 Governor Ding Baozhen had opened Shangzhi Academy, which offered education in subjects like astronomy, geography, and math.¹⁰⁹ Education was one element of the missionaries' work, but in Shandong the main focus of their considerable efforts in higher education was Dengzhou, with institutions in Jinan providing only elementary and secondary education. If anything, longstanding institutions had undergone a revival in the late nineteenth century, starting with the leadership of Ding Baozhen. In 1896 Governor Li Bingheng oversaw renovations to both Luoyuan Academy and the Jinan prefectural school.¹¹⁰ Unlike other places, where the elite broke the first ground in establishing modern-style schools, in Jinan the initiative came largely from officials like Yuan.¹¹¹

Official direction proved effective, though. By 1909, Jinan alone had six colleges (*gaodeng xuetang*), seven secondary schools (*zhongxuetang*), and thirty primary schools (*xiaoxuetang*).¹¹² These institutions occupied a mix of newly constructed campuses, converted academies, and temples. Thousands of students studied in them and received instruction from teachers not only from across the empire but also foreign countries, including the U.S., Britain, and Japan. Hundreds of thousands of taels of government funding supported them annually.

In this section, I focus less on the shifting intellectual currents in which these schools were necessarily implicated. Instead, my primary focus is in using these institutions to understand how the spatial patterns of education, credentialing, and intellectual exchange

¹⁰⁹ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:60.

¹¹⁰ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:7a–11a.

¹¹¹ Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 33–43.

¹¹² These numbers come from Gao Bin, “Jiefang qian bange shiji de Jinan jiaoyu,” 1. Other sources offer slightly different estimates of the number of primary and secondary schools in Jinan, which necessarily fluctuated as new ones opened and closed.

discussed in chapter 2 changed in this period, what role Jinan's elite played in the reforms, and how the revolutionary movement used the new schools to gain an institutional foothold in Jinan. There were important continuities. For example, the schools generally recruited their students from other places in Shandong, as had academies, creating an intra-provincial circulation among men who aspired to the upper levels of government credentialing that was set off from similar patterns of circulation in other provinces. However, there were also major differences. Some of the most obvious were the greater emphasis on technical subjects and learning about foreign countries and the admission of women to some public schools (although co-education was still in the future).

One difference that was subtle but significant, especially from the perspective of the spatial politics of the education system, was the recruitment of teachers and the pathways of students after graduation. Instead of tying Jinan to other centers of classical education, which were themselves conduits to official service (via the capital), as the academies had, teachers at the new schools held an eclectic mix of classical and modern credentials, including experience studying abroad. The growth of academic currents running through Japan in particular also drew in a sizable number of graduates from institutions in Jinan who, while abroad, forged connections with the Tongmeng hui (Revolutionary Alliance). As in new commercial institutions, expectant officials played a leading role as teachers and administrators in the new schools. However, the upper crust of Jinan's elite exerted significantly less influence over the schools than they did commercial institutions. Instead, the schools relied heavily on official oversight and funding, no less it seems than academies had for most of the Qing. On the one hand, this meant that schools did not become the source of tension between officials and the reformist elite that they did elsewhere. On the other hand, it created more space for members of

the Revolutionary Alliance to use their place in government-founded schools and ones they established themselves to build support for their cause.

Provincial Institutions

The most prominent set of schools that sprouted up in Jinan in the early twentieth century were provincial colleges (*gaodeng xuetang*). Yuan Shikai founded the first of these, Imperial Shandong University (*Shandong daxue*, ISU) in 1901 in direct response to the court's order to implement the educational reforms he had proposed. This new institution replaced Luoyuan Academy, absorbing its endowment and temporarily occupying its premises inside the old city until a new and much roomier forty-*mu* campus was constructed at Ganshiqiao southwest of the old city in 1904.¹¹³ At the same time, the school's name changed to Shandong *gaodeng xuetang*, in line with new directives from the court. The late Qing iteration of this institution, one of the precursors of today's Shandong University, continued operation until 1914, when its students and staff were dispersed to the specialized schools operating in Jinan.¹¹⁴

Two such institutions were Shandong Normal College (*Shandong shifan xuetang*, SNC) and Shandong College of Law and Government (*Shandong fazheng xuetang*, SCLG). Formal pedagogical training in Shandong began with a normal school attached to ISU in 1902. The next year this school was split off as SNC and in 1904 it moved into the old premises of Luoyuan Academy that had been vacated when ISU moved to its new campus.¹¹⁵ Another normal school with a shorter course of study was founded in 1907 but closed in 1910 after the Board of Education deemed its two-year main course too short to be effective.¹¹⁶ SCLG, which was

¹¹³ Surprisingly, I have not found specific reactions—either negative or positive—to the conversion of Luoyuan Academy in available sources.

¹¹⁴ Cao Liqian, *Wan Qing Shandong xinshi xuetang*, 30–31.

¹¹⁵ In 1909 SNC changed its name to *Shandong youji shifan xuetang*. Li Qingsheng, “Quanguo zuizao de shengban guanli gaodeng xuexiao,” 18; Ding Tao, “Lishi youjiu de Jinan shifan,” 165–66.

¹¹⁶ Zhang Hongsheng, “Wan Qing Shandong gaodeng jiaoyu gailan,” 83–84.

converted from a pre-existing Office for Examining Officials (*keliguan*) and based on the model of the Beiyang College of Law and Government, was founded by Governor Yang Shixiang in 1906 specifically to prepare students for careers as officials.¹¹⁷ In various forms, these professional schools, along with others, like an agricultural college and police academy, continued to function into the Republican period.

Despite having different focuses, these colleges shared a number of similarities. In terms of their purpose, David Buck writes, “The [Jinan] schools were intended to serve both as models and as resource centers to provide the personnel and expertise for establishing similar operations at lower levels in the administrative hierarchy.”¹¹⁸ Early in the reform process, even schools that offered a general education, like ISU, were intended primarily to train future officials. After 1905, as support for constitutionalism grew, the idea that schools should provide a basic education for all citizens gained greater currency.¹¹⁹ However, the training of educators at SNC and officials, especially judges, at SCLG ensured that Jinan remained the province’s main factory for producing the personnel needed to staff the new institutions like schools and judicial organs that were supposed to fill the province. Inculcating loyalty to the emperor remained paramount, although this was increasingly blended with a focus on the nation as an object itself deserving of devotion and needing saving.¹²⁰ One example of efforts to balance rootedness in the past with modernization projects and imperial dominance with national identity was the institution of a state cult of Confucius, who was venerated in monthly rituals at ISU. The invention of a national cult of Confucius continued the dynasty’s long-running patronage of

¹¹⁷ Yang Shixiang memorial on 1906/11/1 (GX 32/9/15), ZPZZ, 04-01-38-0194-034. For a general account of this type of institution, see Xu Baoan, “Qingmo difang guanyuan xuetang”; Ye Longyan, “Qingmo minchu zhi fazheng xuetang.”

¹¹⁸ Buck, “Educational Modernization,” 175.

¹¹⁹ Buck, 177–78; Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 50–51.

¹²⁰ Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 51–52.

Confucian discourse and institutions, including of the Kong clan at Qufu, but it now directly involved Qing subjects across the empire, thereby nationalizing these practices and de-centering the role of the emperor as a mediator between the people and the sage.¹²¹ In contrast, in Meiji Japan it was the emperor himself who became the object of veneration in classrooms across the nation through the medium of the photograph.¹²²

The curriculum of the new schools struck an uneasy balance. Despite their commitment to modern education, neither the court nor members of the elite, even those strongly committed to reforms, wanted to eliminate classical education entirely.¹²³ In fact, both Zhang Zhidong and Yuan Shikai initially hoped that the new schools could continue preparing students for the civil service exams and only later realized that the incentive of examination degrees would draw students toward classical learning and away from the modern studies they wanted to promote.¹²⁴ Even at ISU, courses on the classics and literature were paired with foreign language study, chemistry, and mathematics.¹²⁵ This was true of SNC also, since teachers working in primary and secondary schools, as their graduates were expected to do, needed to be prepared to teach both kinds of subjects. SCLG's curriculum was more tailored to the needs of its students and naturally focused on subjects related to law and politics, which included the Qing code. However, western theories of the state, international relations, etc., played a central role in the curriculum, although lectures tended to revolve more around theoretical issues than practical ones.¹²⁶

The provincial colleges also shared similar patterns of administration and funding. In

¹²¹ Kuo Ya-pei, "Redeploying Confucius," 65–84.

¹²² Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*, 195–220.

¹²³ Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 55–57.

¹²⁴ Buck, "Educational Modernization," 175.

¹²⁵ Cao Liqian, *Wan Qing Shandong xinshi xuetaang*, 40–41.

¹²⁶ See *Shandong fazheng xuetaang zixiuke jiangyi*.

1904 the old *xuezheng* (Education Commissioner) post was re-titled *tixueshi*, and the next year the court established a Ministry of Education. As we saw in chapter 2, governors and other local officials already exerted considerable influence over educational institutions like Luoyuan Academy, and this did not change under the new reforms, especially in Shandong where Yuan Shikai set a precedent for the active involvement of governors in educational affairs. The Education Commissioner was nominated by and reported to the Ministry of Education, but he served under the governor, unlike the old *xuezheng*, whose rank had actually been equal to that of a governor.¹²⁷ Provincial officials appointed trusted subordinates to supervise the schools and sometimes held at least titular administrative posts. For example, Shandong's Administrative Commissioner, Judicial Commissioner, and Education Commissioner were all listed as "directors" (*zongli*) of SCLG.¹²⁸ The first director of ISU was Tang Shaoyi, and, when he left Jinan alongside Yuan, he was replaced by incoming Governor Zhou Fu's son, Zhou Xuexi. Meanwhile, as with the commercial institutions, a set of expectant officials exercised great control over the colleges as administrators and advisers to provincial officials.

As with the commercial institutions, it is easy to identify a relatively small set of these officials who were especially influential. One such individual was expectant circuit intendant Chen Endao. In 1902, Zhou Fu requested that Chen be transferred from Zhili to help with affairs at ISU, where he assumed duties as both the Supervisor and Dean of Western Studies. A native of Fuzhou, Chen had graduated from the Fujian Naval Academy and had participated in observations of foreign naval operations and diplomatic negotiations. He remained at ISU until 1905, winning praise from Zhou Fu for his management of the school.¹²⁹ Another such official

¹²⁷ Buck, "Educational Modernization," 179.

¹²⁸ Shandong guowen baoguan, *Shandong fazheng xuetao timinglu*, 1a.

¹²⁹ Zhou Fu memorial in 1875–1907 (GX), ZPZZ, 04-01-13-0433-002.

was Fang Yannian, who, like Zhou Fu, was a native of Anhui. Unlike Chen, Yan had a classical education, having earned his *jinshi* degree, but he also studied at the Imperial University in Beijing and twice traveled to Japan to inspect educational and political institutions there before being assigned to Shandong as an expectant circuit intendant in 1904. Fang served as the first Supervisor of SNC, as Supervisor of SCLG from its founding in 1906 to 1909, and as temporary Education Commissioner. He also led Shandong students and officials on inspection tours of Japan.¹³⁰

As Buck points out, one of the reasons these officials were so powerful was their access to the provincial funds that sustained these institutions.¹³¹ One of the chief problems with the late Qing reforms was that their cost necessitated levying numerous and often onerous taxes on the people. Modern schools were one of the primary culprits. This was especially problematic in a poorer province like Shandong, where commercial taxes both brought in considerably less revenue than elsewhere and posed a substantial burden to merchants. However, because the provincial treasury bore the costs of the colleges, Jinan enjoyed the benefits of the reforms without suffering a disproportional share of the financial burden, which was considerable. ISU's budget rose from 60,000 taels per year to over 90,000 by 1910. In 1910, the combined budgets of SNC and SCLG totaled another 100,000 taels. The majority of the money for these and other institutions came from the provincial treasury (*fanku*), which contributed over 300,000 taels in 1910, but the Fundraising Bureau also provided over 100,000 taels, with smaller amounts coming from other sources.¹³² Although sluggish tax collection raised concerns that there might

¹³⁰ Yang Shixiang memorial on 1906/11/1 (GX 32/9/15), ZPZZ, 04-01-38-0194-034, 4–5; Memorial in 1907–8 (GX 33), ZPZZ, 04-01-38-0195-064; Buck, “Educational Modernization,” 185; Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:125.

¹³¹ Buck, “Educational Modernization,” 185.

¹³² For example, contributions from across the province were collected for a college for students not registered in Shandong. “Shandong sheng jiaoyu jingfei fenbiao,” *SDGB*, XT 2/8/1, 15, biaoce; Cao Liqian, *Wan Qing Shandong xinshi xuetang*, 28, 43.

not be revenue to cover the colleges' expenses, a 1910 table of education expenses indicates that the province was keeping up with the expanding budgets for provincial colleges at the time.¹³³ However, the province projected a calamitous annual shortfall of over one million taels for its higher education budget within the next decade without additional sources of revenue.

An even more immediate problem was how to recruit qualified teachers and students for these colleges. Establishing an entirely new education system posed a chicken-and-egg problem to the dynasty: if it had a large number of teachers, then it could quickly train the personnel it needed to work as teachers. However, to undertake this training, it needed a pool of teachers who were themselves already trained. The Qing government used several strategies to address this problem. First, as SNC demonstrates, it moved quickly to establish institutions that could train additional instructors. Shandong also sent officials and students to study at normal schools in Beijing and Baoding and also abroad to Japan.¹³⁴ Another obvious solution was to rely on foreign teachers and the relatively small number of Qing subjects already trained abroad or in missionary schools. Yuan Shikai embraced this approach at ISU, recruiting Presbyterian missionary Watson M. Hayes to serve as the first Dean of Western Studies and to bring several graduates of the Presbyterians' Tengchow (Dengzhou) College to teach there. Hayes quickly proved problematic, though, as he objected vociferously and publicly to the requirement that all students, including Christians, participate in the monthly rituals venerating Confucius.¹³⁵ Failure to resolve this issue led to Hayes and six other teachers in the foreign department tendering their resignations in spring 1902, after the school had been open for only a few months.¹³⁶ The

¹³³ "Xuewuchu choukuanju huiyi jintie gezhou xian xuetang jingfei xiangwen," *JNHB*, ce 7: Dongzheng jiyao, qi 26, 75a–76b.

¹³⁴ Cao Liqian, *Wan Qing Shandong xinshi xuetang*, 17–18.

¹³⁵ W.M. Hayes, "Intolerance in Chinese Schools," *NCH*, 1903/4/16, 737–39; W.M. Hayes, "Foreign Instructors and Intolerance," *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, 1903/5/1, 230–35.

¹³⁶ "The Chinanfu College," *NCH*, 1902/5/7, 887.

provincial colleges did continue to employ a small number of foreign teachers, even graduates of Tengchow College, although after 1905 the Qing tried to curtail their number and to limit the scope of their teaching to language and technical subjects.¹³⁷ The combination of ISU's falling out with the Presbyterians, provincial officials' ongoing distrust of the Germans, and the proximity of Japan meant that, like elsewhere, Japanese teachers, institutions, and ideas were the primary models and influences in Shandong.¹³⁸

However, in numerical terms, both foreign teachers and natives of Shandong were the minority among teachers at the provincial colleges. Instead, the majority were Chinese who came from other provinces. The table below summarizes the home place registration of 85 instructors for whom this information is available and who worked at one (or more) of five provincial colleges in Jinan: ISU, SNC, SCLG, Shandong College of Agriculture and Forestry, and Shandong College for Extra-Provincial Students.¹³⁹ Although Shandong was the single largest source for teachers at these institutions, Shandong natives constituted less than a third of these institutions' faculty. Only 3 of the 24 Shandong natives in this data set were natives of Jinan Prefecture, and none was from Licheng County. (The shares of Shandong's land-locked prefectures to the south and west of Jinan were similarly small: 2 from Dongchang and 1 each from Yanzhou, Caozhou, and Tai'an.) In other words, much as academies had in the high Qing, the new provincial colleges continued to serve as conduits for circulating expertise through Jinan and around the empire. They could serve local interests, but they were not dominated by the autonomous power of local people.

¹³⁷ Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 81.

¹³⁸ Bastid, 44–49.

¹³⁹ This data comes from the following sources: “Benbu shixueguan diaocha Shandong xuewu weiyuan baogao shu,” *Xuebu guanbao*, no. 54 (1908): 744a–763a; “Benbu shixueguan diaocha Shandong xuewu weiyuan baogao shu,” *Xuebu guanbao*, no. 55 (1908): 764a–782a; “Shandong gaodeng xuetang banshi geyuan zhiming”; Shandong guowen baoguan, *Shandong fazheng xuetang timinglu*.

Province or Country	Number of Teachers
Shandong	24
Fujian	12
Japan	9
Jiangsu	8
Zhili	6
Hubei	5
Zhejiang	4
Guangdong	3
Anhui	3
United Kingdom	3
Sichuan and Henan	2 each
Shanxi, Guangxi, Banner, and U.S.	1 each

Table 6.1: Origins of instructors at colleges in Jinan.

There are two reasons extra-provincials were so numerous among the colleges' faculty. First, again, expectant officials from other provinces assigned to Shandong constituted a pool of personnel available to work as instructors for both classical and modern subjects. In the above data set, there are 48 individuals who were neither natives of Shandong nor foreign citizens. Through information included in records of their employment and by cross-checking names with an incomplete list of expectant officials assigned to Shandong, I have been able to determine that at least 14 of them were expectant officials serving in Shandong, and 15 others are listed as holding posts as expectant officials, but I cannot say definitively that these assignments brought them to Shandong. The second reason that the provincial colleges employed so many people from other provinces is because they needed instructors trained in modern schools, regardless of their home province. 19 of the 48 extra-provincial teachers had received at least some education from modern schools in China or abroad. This included 10 of the 12 instructors from Fujian, who had studied in France, Japan, and naval schools in Tianjin, Weihaiwei, Nanjing, and Fuzhou. (The most common subjects they taught were mathematics and foreign languages.) This second factor also likely explains to some extent the geographic origins of teachers who were from Shandong. 11 of the 24 had studied in modern schools, and all but one of these came from the

portion of the province east of Jinan, and most from areas close to the coast. They included five graduates of Tengchow College and four who had graduated from schools in Japan.

On the level of administrators and instructors, then, the provincial colleges did not exhibit a tendency toward the localization of education and credentialing. Even during the reform period, the local operation of the Qing state in Jinan continued to depend on the circulation of personnel from a great variety of places. What changed was not the fact of circulation but some of the imperatives that shaped it. These included greater use of expectant officials, emphasis on training in modern schools as opposed to classical learning, and, consequentially, increasingly drawing men from parts of the country and province where this training was most common.

We can observe a similar balance between continuity and change in the selection of students to attend these institutions. Whereas the examination system operated principally as a mechanism for credentialing and the academies as a support for this system (although, as chapter 2 shows, they did more too), the primary function of the colleges was to disseminate knowledge to their students, rather than depending on them to acquire this knowledge largely through private study. This posed two challenges. First, in the absence of an existing structure of primary and secondary education, the government had to work out a way to begin recruiting qualified students to the new colleges. Second, the central government needed to monitor the process of credentialing, over which provincial and even overseas institutions now exercised considerable power by virtue of their ability to grant degrees, which, in their terminal form, ought to be of far more value than the old *juren* degrees in terms of securing government appointments.

The solution to the first problem was highly imperfect but sensible given the circumstances and existing precedent. In lieu of any significant body of men possessing the credentials that ought to qualify them for entrance into provincial colleges, provincial officials

recruited students from the ranks of the lower gentry through a series of exams. These exams resembled the old system of exams in that they primarily tested knowledge of the classics and therefore made proficiency in literary Chinese the *sine qua non* of advancement through the system of official education and credentialing.¹⁴⁰ Like the old examination system, most of the students, unlike the teachers, still came from Shandong, with two exceptions. First, in its early years ISU also admitted young men registered in other provinces, who were usually the sons of merchants and officials. In 1905 a separate College for Extra-Provincial Students was established in the old Zhidao Academy on the banks of Daming Lake to fill this need.¹⁴¹ Second, because the primary mandate of SCLG was to provide additional training to expectant officials, most of its students were necessarily not natives of Shandong. However, Shandong people could still study there in one of two ways. First, they could sit for an entrance examination to be allowed to study at the school and graduate with the other students.¹⁴² Second, they could pay to receive written versions of the lectures by post and then submit reflections and questions to the college's teachers for feedback.¹⁴³

However, the old practice of examining lower gentry from around the province largely on the basis of their fluency in classical texts and literary Chinese was poorly suited to evaluating students' potential to excel in studies of other subjects in which they had little or no background. The colleges tried to address the problem of lower-level schools not yet being in place to credential potential college entrants by offering an array of courses of study so that students could graduate from a preparatory program into a more advanced one at the same school. For example, when it first opened, ISU offered two one-year courses that provided the equivalent of

¹⁴⁰ Cao Liqian, *Wan Qing Shandong xinshi xuetang*, 27, 36.

¹⁴¹ Cao Liqian, 37.

¹⁴² *Shandong fazheng xuetang zhangcheng*, 10a.

¹⁴³ See *Shandong fazheng xuetang zixiuke jiangyi*.

primary (*xiaoxue*) and secondary (*zhongxue*) courses of study. After graduating from the latter, students could continue into the regular four-year course of college study. With the gradual establishment of lower-level schools, ISU eliminated the elementary course in 1906 and the secondary course in 1908.¹⁴⁴ However, because the number of secondary graduates in the province was still small, Governor Sun Baoqi received permission to open an attached secondary school in 1910.¹⁴⁵

Despite these measures, the quality of college graduates was a persistent concern, exposing the limits of the Ministry of Education's control over what was happening in provincial colleges. In 1908, the Ministry of Education ordered 42 members of that year's graduating class from ISU to undertake remedial study based on their grades on the graduation exam. In 1910, the board discovered irregularities in the exam booklets of ISU's graduates that suggested cheating. It ordered Governor Sun to send these students to the capital for further examination, and, sure enough, none of the 14 passed the exams the board administered.¹⁴⁶ Embarrassingly, most of them scored under twenty percent in English. The board ordered them back to the college for two years of remedial study and, out of concern that this reflected broader problems at the school, ordered the Education Commissioner to extend the length of study for students in other classes as necessary.¹⁴⁷ These incidents were part of a broader challenge facing the court as it sought to maintain control over the credentialing process that led to government careers at the same time that it was trying to proactively redefine the qualifications for official service. The result—contrary to most narratives of what happened when the civil service examinations were

¹⁴⁴ Zhang Hongsheng, "Wan Qing Shandong gaodeng jiaoyu gailan," 75–76.

¹⁴⁵ "Zi Lu fu gaodeng xuetang tianshe zhongxue zhun zhao ban bing chi jiashe zhongxue buxike guibing jiaoshou wen."

¹⁴⁶ "Fuhe Shandong gaodeng xuetang zhengke biye shijuan keyi," *Xuebu guanbao*, no. 77 (1909): 1a; Zhang Hongsheng, "Wan Qing Shandong gaodeng jiaoyu gailan," 77.

¹⁴⁷ "Zou fushi Shandong gaodeng xuetang biyesheng chengdu guodi," *Xuebu guanbao*, no. 93 (1909): 3a–3b.

abolished—was the implementation of a new and fragmented series of exams administered by the Ministry of Education and individual boards to ensure the quality of graduates of colleges in China and overseas and to screen would-be office-holders for the skills their posts would require.¹⁴⁸

Primary and Secondary Education and Local Control

Although the degree to which provincial colleges were administered by people outside the province is remarkable, it is by no means beyond the realm of expectation. Nor is it surprising that the colleges depended on the provincial government for funding. We would expect, though, that prefecture, county, and sub-county schools would have depended much more on local personnel and funding. Following a 1904 proposal by Zhang Baixi, Zhang Zhidong, and Rong-qing, schools below the college level were split into four levels. Secondary schools (*zhongxue tang*) operated at the prefecture level and were the main pathway for students to enter provincial colleges. Each county was supposed to have an upper-level primary school (*gaodeng xiaoxue tang*), which received support from the local government and, ideally, educated students between 12 and 15 *sui*. Lower-level primary schools (*chudeng xiaoxue tang*), operated at the sub-county level, educated students between 6 and 11 *sui*, and were overseen and funded by county Education Promotion Offices (*quanxue suo*) made up of local people with a director (*zongdong*) chosen by the county magistrate. Because these bodies were responsible for raising funds for the schools, often through the imposition of new taxes, they were closely related to both the fiscal and educational aspects of local governance initiatives. Officials and the Education Promotion Offices also encouraged local people to open elementary (*mengyang xuetao*) and basic literacy schools.¹⁴⁹ Officials and the local elite also cooperated to open

¹⁴⁸ Strauss, “Creating ‘Virtuous and Talented’ Officials,” 843–48.

¹⁴⁹ Buck, “Educational Modernization,” 175–83.

schools for women, at least two of which operated in Jinan.¹⁵⁰

The organ that linked the provincial government and local Education Promotion Offices was the Office of Education Affairs (*xuewu gongsuo*). This office, founded in 1906 as a successor to a similarly named bureau, the *xuewu chu*, opened in 1904, operated under the direction of the Education Commissioner and supervised schools across the province. Four Shandong natives served as gentry consultants (*yishen*) and another was appointed head consultant (*yizhang*). One of these consultants, Xu Jinming, was a native of Licheng. About one-third of the remaining thirty-or-so members of the office were natives of Shandong while the other two-thirds were expectant officials from elsewhere. These personnel were organized into six departments (*ke*), each charged with reporting on specific issues, like general education, practical education, and textbooks.¹⁵¹ On paper, this organ represented a crucial meeting point between what scholars usually term state and society, or at least between governance-by-officials and local self-governance (*difang zizhi*). At over 40,000 taels per year, it had a generous budget at its disposal, but with so many personnel, stipends probably ate up a large portion of it.¹⁵² Without speculating on the power this body exercised over schools in other parts of the province, in Jinan, at least, evidence suggests that it was only one among several forces shaping the development of schools at the prefecture level and below. Rather than an instrument through which the local elite exercised control over the new schools, it rather appears representative of a broader pattern of these schools depending on a variety of government bodies, including the provincial government itself, and an array of actors from other parts of Shandong and beyond.

Jinan's size and status as a model for the rest of the province led to it housing a

¹⁵⁰ Cao Liqian, *Wan Qing Shandong xinshi xuetang*, 16.

¹⁵¹ "Shandong xuewu gongsuo yuanshen xianming lüli qingce," *Xuebu guanbao*, no. 56 (1908): 804b–808b; Zhang Hongsheng, "Wan Qing, Minguo Shandong jiaoyu," 51.

¹⁵² "Shandong sheng jiaoyu jingfei fenbiao," *SDGB*, XT 2/8/1, biaoce.

precociously large number of secondary and primary schools. Like the provincial colleges, some of these were opened in converted academies: Jinan Prefecture Official Secondary School (*Jinan fu guanli zhongxuetang*) was opened in the premises of Jinan Academy, and Licheng County Official Upper-Level Primary School (*Licheng xian guanli goadeng xiaoxuetang*) was opened in Jingxian Academy. Others operated out of temples, rented rooms, or old charitable schools.¹⁵³

A 1908 report published in the Board of Education's official periodical, *Xuebu guanbao*, provides detailed information about the personnel and finances of thirteen of these schools.¹⁵⁴ As we would expect, compared to the provincial colleges, a far greater percentage of these schools' administrators and instructors were natives of Shandong. They were hardly all natives of Jinan, though. 53 of the 92 came from Shandong, and of these 26 were from Jinan Prefecture, with 14 from Licheng County itself. There are several reasons that so many people not from Jinan itself were employed even in lower-level schools. One is simply Jinan's continued status as a hub for educated people. As with the provincial colleges, some of the extra-provincials who taught at these schools held posts as expectant officials and thus came to Jinan primarily for official assignment, not other employment opportunities. On a similar note, two of these schools were specifically established for children who were registered residents of Henan and the banners in Fengtian and Zhili. (There was another school for people from Shaanxi and Shanxi, but detailed information about it is not included in the report.) These schools employed an especially large portion of extra-provincials, although not exclusively natives of their designated province. For example, the school for children of bannermen did not employ any bannermen, but five of its seven employees were from Zhili, one was from Shuntian (Beijing), and the other was a native of

¹⁵³ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:26a.

¹⁵⁴ This report can be found in two parts and is the basis for the statistics below. "Benbu shixueguan diaocha Shandong xuewu weiyuan baogao shu," *Xuebu guanbao*, no. 54 (1908): 744a–763a; "Benbu shixueguan diaocha Shandong xuewu weiyuan baogao shu," *Xuebu guanbao*, no. 55 (1908): 764a–782a.

Deping in Jinan Prefecture.

Type of Income	# of Schools	Approximate Total Amount per Year
Government		
Fundraising Bureau	3	3000 taels, 1200 copper cash (<i>qianwen</i>)
Provincial Treasury	3	1120 taels
Education Affairs Office	3	980 taels
Luokou Soybean Tax	1	1400 taels
Remittances from subordinate counties	1	1200 taels
Prefecture exam budget	1	821 taels
Training Bureau	1	600 taels
Shandong Official Newspaper Bureau	1	600 taels
Unspecified allotment (<i>jintie</i>)	1	500 taels
Other provincial government funds	1	448 taels
Salt Transport Treasury	1	400 taels
Indemnities (<i>peikuan</i>)	1	350 taels
Provincial Administrative Commissioner	1	300 taels
Other		
Student fees	5	2196 taels, 2500 dollars, 6886 copper cash
Donations	5	2586 taels, 42 dollars, 679 copper cash
Donations from fellow extra-provincials for schools for extra-provincial students	2	9020 taels
Institutional estates	2	120 taels, 500 copper cash strings

Table 6.2: Funding for elementary and secondary schools in Jinan

The fourteen personnel from Licheng employed by these schools admittedly constitute a small sample size, but their backgrounds suggest that people from Jinan lacked the education and qualifications necessary to teach the full range of classical and modern subjects the schools were supposed to offer. Of the fourteen, only five are listed as having studied at a modern school. Entries for eight of the eleven Licheng natives who were instructors include information about

what courses they taught. Five taught classical subjects while the remaining three taught a mix of physical education and military drill. In contrast, the vast majority of other instructors from Shandong—33 of 39—had studied at modern institutions, ranging from missionary schools, normal colleges in Shandong and elsewhere, and colleges in Japan. They were thus much more qualified to teach the classes on arithmetic, science, and foreign language that were supposed to set the new schools apart from the academies that preceded them. People from Jinan continued to benefit from opportunities to provide classical education in formal schools like these and through private arrangements. However, the new schools—even lower-level ones—generated a considerable demand for new kinds of expertise that people from Jinan could not yet meet and which thus benefited people from elsewhere in the province and beyond.

Buck argues that another factor drawing erstwhile educators to Jinan was the availability of public funds for opening new schools. In theory, local communities were supposed to bear primary fiscal responsibility for primary and secondary schools as well as any other educational ventures. The new taxes levied at the local level that this arrangement necessitated were one source of popular resistance to educational modernization.¹⁵⁵ As had been the case with the academies, though, in various ways the provincial government subsidized Jinan's new schools, Buck argues.¹⁵⁶ The 1908 report cited above bears this out and indicates that government support for local-level schools came in a great variety of forms, as reflected in table 6.2. Not included in the table are more subtle forms of subvention, such as instructors at larger government schools volunteering their time at smaller ones. The contrast between the amount of donations from local people for schools that served permanent residents of Jinan and from people

¹⁵⁵ Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 74.

¹⁵⁶ This pattern of support persisted well into the Republican period. Buck, "Educational Modernization," 185, 189, 195.

from other provinces for schools that educated extra-provincial students, for which less government funding was available, further underscores the degree to which local schools depended on government investment.

This report probably exhibits a selection bias towards schools that were larger and had more official connections. It certainly excludes some, albeit not all, elementary and primary schools that were products of individual initiative. Even so, taken together with the evidence presented above about personnel, it demonstrates that while Jinan's elite were more active in managing lower-level schools, the rapid growth of these schools in Jinan owed less to their organizational capacity as a local elite than to the participation of people from elsewhere and the support of the provincial government. Unlike the commercial reforms, there is little evidence of powerful local men, like Wang Maokun, taking charge of educational initiatives in Jinan.¹⁵⁷ Where Jinan people and other non-officials were involved, the efforts seem to have been either fragmented or supported by an institution like the Education Affairs Office that was tightly linked to the provincial government. As with the commercial reforms, this "weakness" of Jinan's elite was a mixed blessing for them and the provincial government. On the one hand, they footed proportionally less of the bill for the new schools than their peers elsewhere and they (and their sons and daughters) likely benefited from the education schools founded and funded by others provided. This may account for the lack of opposition to these schools in Jinan, even when they displaced or transformed well-established local institutions. The provincial government could ill-afford additional expenses, but its fiscal leverage over the schools in Jinan allowed it to ensure that they embodied its ideals, at least in theory.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ As Bastid's study of Zhang Jian shows, there is no reason to suspect that involvement in commercial enterprises and reforms would have precluded participation in educational efforts. Bastid, *Educational Reform*.

¹⁵⁸ Buck notes that even in the Republican period schools with provincial funding tended to accord with the model of a modern school while those without resembled traditional private schools. Buck, "Educational Modernization,"

The Spatial Politics and Revolutionary Potential of the New Schools

As in other aspects of the spatial politics of imperial governance, Jinan mediated two sets of translocal movements by virtue of its position as a provincial capital. The first consisted of movements between Jinan and other places in the province. Although the institutions that facilitated this mobility changed considerably in this period, the basic patterns of movement remained similar: students moved “up” the hierarchy of administrative centers towards Jinan as they approached the highest levels of credentialing, which was how education—once undertaken largely privately but now increasingly in government-supervised schools—was made legible to the government. To the second set belonged movements between Jinan and other parts of the empire, often mediated by the court through the process of awarding *jinshi* degrees and making official appointments. Jinan continued to serve as a point of transit and exchange for teachers from elsewhere and for the students from Shandong who gathered there. Some of these entered into inter-provincial circuits while others remained in sub-provincial ones, such as those who went to work in primary and middle schools after graduating from colleges in Jinan.

However, several adaptations to these patterns of translocal mobility undermined the logic of Qing spatial politics. First, the academies like Luoyuan had made Jinan a permanent gathering point for only a small number of Shandong men seeking province-level credentials. The new colleges replaced the system of triennial examinations and the rhythmic back-and-forth movement they required with nearly year-round mandatory residence for the hundreds (and more if we include the primary and middle schools discussed below) of men studying there. Across the empire, provincial exams were lively events rife with disruptive and subversive potential.¹⁵⁹

Amid the property case discussed in chapter 5, Presbyterian missionaries noted, with annoyance,

192.

¹⁵⁹ On student activism in the Republican period, see Wasserstrom, *Student Protests*.

that governors tended to delay negotiations around the time of the exams so as not to risk stirring up the candidates. Although there were fewer college students than there had been examination candidates, who numbered around 10,000 by the second half of the nineteenth century, they now required constant supervision and discipline.¹⁶⁰ The same was true, at a smaller scale, for lower-level schools. Given the size and number of schools in Jinan and the local elite's limited role in their administration, the provincial government could not depend on them as an instrument of local control, even less than it could in commercial affairs. Instead, the government itself had to take on a large portion of the growing burden of supervising the students, teachers, and even administrators from a wide range of places who congregated in Jinan to engage in teaching and learning.

Second, education and credentialing processes now fostered movements outside the province in new ways. For centuries, the metropolitan *jinshi* degree had constituted the highest level of academic credential. Now, though, the pressing demand for new kinds of expertise, which the capital was not yet in a position to provide or certify, forced schools in Jinan and elsewhere to turn to graduates of institutions not only in other provinces but also other countries. Citizens of other countries constituted a small but, judging by their salaries, valued contingent of teachers, mostly at the college level. A larger portion had studied in other countries, especially Japan. 18 of 92 men in the set of administrators and teachers at middle schools and primary schools in Jinan discussed above had studied abroad, and 15 of the 86 college teachers had as well.¹⁶¹ Some of these were likely part of a group of 55 students whom Zhou Fu sent to study in Japan under the supervision of Fang Yannian in 1903 in order to learn about modern education

¹⁶⁰ On the expansion of Jinan's examination halls, see Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 13:23b.

¹⁶¹ This number may have been even have been higher, at least at certain times. One source claims that of 23 instructors at SNC, 11 had studied in Japan. Ding Tao, "Lishi youjiu de Jinan shifan," 166–67.

methods. Shandong's colleges continued sending students abroad or to institutions in other provinces to obtain technical skills in the coming years. Up to 1913, ISU sent 76 of its graduates to study in specialized schools, like the Beijing Railway Technical Institute, and 74 abroad, mostly to Japan.¹⁶² A 1906 report states that 240 students from Shandong were studying at 13 institutions in Japan at that time, with the largest portion (88) studying at the Kobun Institute, a preparatory school for Chinese study-abroad students, and the next largest (39) at the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department and (28) at Hosei University (specializing in law and politics).¹⁶³

As we have seen, mobility itself was as constitutive of Qing rule as it was subversive. Also, the number of students going abroad from Shandong at this time was relatively small in absolute and comparative terms. (At 3.5%, Shandong's share of the 6,883 students studying in Japan in 1906 was disproportionately small compared to the size of its population.) Nevertheless, the Qing government struggled to manage these new patterns of movement among young men seeking education and credentials. Meanwhile, the Revolutionary Alliance took great advantage of the number of Chinese students in Japan to expand its base across the empire, and Shandong was no exception. For example, at least 53 study-abroad students just from SNC joined the Revolutionary Alliance while studying in Japan.¹⁶⁴ After they returned from Japan, newly minted revolutionaries carried on activities in Jinan and around the province. For instance, ISU graduate Xu Jingxin joined while studying in Japan and then returned to ISU for further study and to continue mobilizing his fellow students there.¹⁶⁵ Since a larger number of students now lived in residence at the schools, they were an obvious target for recruitment. In addition to spreading

¹⁶² Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:122; Zhang Hongsheng, "Wan Qing Shandong gaodeng jiaoyu gailan," 77.

¹⁶³ "Gesheng liuxue Riben xuesheng renshu biao," *Xuebu guanbao*, no. 8 (1906): 40bff.

¹⁶⁴ Ding Tao, "Lishi youjiu de Jinan shifan," 166.

¹⁶⁵ Li Qingsheng, "Quanguo zuizao de shengban guanli gaodeng xuexiao," 24.

revolutionary ideas, some of which, like constitutionalism and nationalism, were closely related to parts of the new curriculum, students also began engaging in protests against what they perceived as unfair or corrupt practices.¹⁶⁶ For example, in 1907 students in ISU went on strike from classes in order to protest not being granted certificates that were reserved for students with *juren* degrees.¹⁶⁷

Both local people and officials noted the problem of unruly students abroad and now back in Jinan. In 1907 Jinan native Shen Qian, a censor in Shanxi, memorialized about problems with the new schools, including the failure of teachers and administrators to properly supervise students, the ease with which students were “confused by unorthodox theories (*huo yu xieshuo*),” and the disturbingly common practice of students changing their clothes and cutting their hair while studying abroad. Shen suggested more promotion of classical learning, closer supervision of the impressionable young men gathered together in the schools, and the strict prohibition of books not approved by the Ministry of Education. The gazetteer compilers commented, “Those who were knowledgeable thought this hit home on the evils of the day.”¹⁶⁸ Officials did try to stamp out subversive thought, with the governor even reading exam booklets to root out the improper use of dangerous ideas like popular sovereignty (*minquan*), but there were necessarily limits to how far they could go, especially when some of the teachers themselves sympathized with the revolutionary movement.¹⁶⁹

Primary and secondary schools were even more of a problem because they were more numerous and less strictly supervised. According to Buck:

It appears that the T’ung-meng Hui in Shantung was working on a general plan to

¹⁶⁶ On revolutionary agitation among students, see Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, 34–65; Dai Angang, “The Reform Predicament,” 26–32.

¹⁶⁷ Li Qingsheng, “Quanguo zuizao de shengban guanli gaodeng xuexiao,” 24–25.

¹⁶⁸ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:38a–40b.

¹⁶⁹ “Xuetang zazhi,” *JNHB*, ce 7: Haidai congtao, qi 1, 1b.

establish revolutionary schools in the prefectural seats in Shantung. The Ch'ing officials were able to shut down T'ung-meng Hui schools, but they could not make a concerted drive against all of its members connected with education. Many supporters remained on the teaching staffs of the secondary schools, where they had relative freedom in spreading revolutionary ideas. In some places the military drills, sanctioned by the national educational program's use of the concept of militaristic citizenship, were used to prepare students to overthrow the dynasty. Even in Tsinan it was possible for teachers to teach the ideas of the T'ung-meng Hui openly in the schools.¹⁷⁰

The Revolutionary Alliance did succeed in setting up its own middle school in Jinan, named Shanzuo gongxue. The main force behind this school was Liu Guansan, a native of Gaomi who became involved in political activities after he began studying at SNC in 1902. Because of this, he was expelled by Fang Yannian, the school's supervisor at the time. In 1906, Liu joined the Yantai branch of the Revolutionary Alliance, which had been founded by students who had returned from Japan, including Xu Jingxin.¹⁷¹ Money for the school came from tuition, which was twenty taels per year, and donations, including 1,000 taels given by the father of one of the revolutionaries, a merchant from Anqiu.¹⁷² Because Liu was already known to Fang Yannian, who remained a powerful figure in Shandong's educational affairs, they opened up the school under the names of two of his colleagues and even secured special funding from Governor Yang Shixiang to the tune of 500 taels per year. (One source claims that Yang granted these funds in order to gain leverage over the school and to be able to keep tabs on its affairs.¹⁷³) The school's opening of a course of study in law and politics and its revolutionary activities, which included printing and disseminating revolutionary literature, brought further scrutiny from Fang (now the Education Commissioner). Liu left the school to open a new one in Qingdao, to the acclaim of *Shandong Magazine*, which lamented that such a commendable effort to strengthen the country

¹⁷⁰ Buck, "Educational Modernization," 184.

¹⁷¹ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:161.

¹⁷² Zhang Hongsheng, "Qingmo Shandong tongmenghui," 8.

¹⁷³ Zhang Hongsheng, 8–9.

on the part of Shandong's people had been snuffed out by an official (Fang) it deemed corrupt.¹⁷⁴ Shortly after Liu's departure, the government essentially took control over the school, and it closed early in 1907, but not before it had served as a vehicle for recruiting many of its students into the Revolutionary Alliance.

Shanzuo gongxue is illustrative of several narratives in this chapter. First, it was a product of new kinds of translocal networks that were encouraged by the late Qing reforms but over which the Qing government struggled to exercise firm control. Second, despite *Shandong Magazine's* accurate portrayal of it as a project of Shandong people, its founders and administrators were not from Jinan, although a number of its students may have been. Instead, the government's decision to make Jinan a model and resource-center for educational reforms also made it an attractive candidate for revolutionary mobilization, even though the schools and publications the Revolutionary Alliance established in the eastern part of the province proved more durable and less risky. Of course, using government institutions and even funding as scaffolding for social and political projects was hardly a new phenomenon, as the preceding chapters have shown. In this case, though, the goal of a new revolutionary elite was to un-make the Qing state, not participate in its reproduction. In Jinan, they were especially successful in the arena of education, in which the city's own elite seem to have been relatively passive. It is impossible to say if more involvement from powerful figures like Wang Maokun would have stifled revolutionary activities in this area, although it is noteworthy that in other parts of the country educational reforms were dominated by moderate reformers without intrusion from the revolutionaries.¹⁷⁵ In the grand scheme of the revolution, it likely would not have mattered, but this does illustrate how much of a separation between localist reformism and revolutionary

¹⁷⁴ Yang Yusi, "Lun moubao jizai hui fu Shanzuo gongxue," *SDZZ*, GX 34/3/15, 1–2.

¹⁷⁵ Bastid, *Educational Reform*, 91.

mobilization there was in Jinan and, as the course of the revolution shows, that the former did not necessarily lend support to the latter.

The final narrative this case illustrates is the dominant theme of chapter 7, namely how the late Qing reforms turned Jinan into an arena for competition between loyalist and revolutionary forces. The revolution did not spring up from within Jinan but was brought there by forces beyond the control of the city's people. Likewise, the outcome of the revolution was not a product of local developments but a resolution determined largely by outside forces that would leave loyalists and revolutionaries alike greatly disappointed.

Conclusion

Revolutionaries' mobilization through the new school system is one example of how the late Qing reforms contributed to the formation of political arenas populated by a complex array of actors. Chapter 7 will examine how one of the most important of these arenas—the Provincial Assembly—operated before and in the immediate aftermath of the 1911 Revolution. As we will see, the behavior of no single group of actors can explain the winding course the revolution took in Shandong. Chapter 7 will introduce several new groups, like representatives from other parts of Shandong and military officers, who helped steer the province towards and away from revolution by turns.

Although a full evaluation of the role Jinan's elite played in this process will have to wait, this chapter has indicated several aspects of their relationship to the Qing state that would bear on their reactions to the events of 1911–2. First, they were active participants at least in some aspects of the reforms and, as chapter 7 will argue more fully, were motivated by the same kinds of nationalist concerns that animated reformist elites across the empire. Viewed solely

through this lens, the apparent absence of men like Wang Maokun from educational reforms is surprising. One way to interpret this problem is that this group of elite men embodied in itself tensions that in other contexts can be mapped onto differences or even conflict between specific sub-groups of the elite (e.g. conservative gentry vs. urban reformers).¹⁷⁶ In some ways, Wang and others were more like urban reformers, while in others they resembled the conservatives whose power was supposed to have been eclipsed or at least relegated to rural arenas over the course of the reforms.

The hybrid character of Jinan's elite may help explain (or be explained by) a second characteristic of their political activism: a high degree of continuity in terms of cooperating with the government in state-building and place-making. The forms and venues of public activism in which Jinan's elite engaged certainly changed after 1900, but their experiences in the mid- and late nineteenth century offered considerable precedent for the managerial activism they displayed in, for instance, the chamber of commerce. Like the conservancy and humanitarian efforts discussed in chapter 4, these activities were characterized by a high degree of cooperation with the provincial government, including expectant officials. The opening of the commercial settlement may have represented a retreat from the more overt anti-foreignism of the 1880s, but it would be a stretch to say that Jinan's elite in the 1900s were any less committed to combating foreign threats to their own prerogatives and Qing rule than they had been a decade or two before.

The hybridity of Jinan's elite and continuity with earlier patterns of state-building reflects the city's complex place in Qing spatial politics more broadly. In some ways, Jinan's status as a provincial capital and a mediator of the translocal circuits on which imperial rule depended

¹⁷⁶ Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, 66–105.

continued to shape its relationship to the Qing state. In this sense, the degree to which Jinan was an object of investment in the arena of education was different, but its function within the spatial politics of the credentialing regime was similar in form to earlier years. Somewhat similarly, Jinan's economic development continued to benefit from government investment more than other areas of the province as we saw, for instance, with the renovation of the Xiaoqing River in chapter 4. In the early twentieth century, though, decisions about investment were increasingly and much more explicitly driven by the types of concerns for national sovereignty that Pomeranz argues led to the government's neglect of the western portion of the province.¹⁷⁷ In this sense, the crisis and mode of responding to it that Jinan and its elite were being drawn into was even more national in character than in previous decades. At the same time, Jinan's place in a national state-building project was very much filtered through the *regional* politics of Yuan Shikai's Beiyang establishment.

Together, these two trends—nationalization and regionalization—posed threats to the structural logic of the Qing state even as they were essential to the state-building projects of the post-Boxer period. Jinan's history during the reforms suggests, though, that managing these challenges and adapting the already-hybrid imperial structure to the needs of modern times was not altogether unimaginable. The problem, of course, was that Jinan was only one bundle of thread in the complex tapestry of Shandong Province and the Qing state as a whole.

¹⁷⁷ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*, 168–78.

Chapter 7

A Sinking Ship: Self-Government, Constitutionalism, and the Fall of the Qing

The late Qing novel *Lao Can youji*, authored by Liu E (discussed in chapter 4), opens with the titular protagonist taking a trip to the eastern coast of Shandong. While waiting to watch the sunrise from a pavilion by the beach, Lao Can falls asleep and dreams of a large, battered ship floundering off the coast. The crew looking after the sails are diligent, but each minds his own sail without attention to the others. Most of the remaining sailors busy themselves by taking anything of value from the passengers. One man on board, whom Lao Can and his friends at first see as a “hero,” exhorts the passengers to resist, offering to help them seize control of the ship if only they will chip in some money. Some passengers do launch an insurrection, but—lacking any organization—the sailors kill them all, while the “hero” refuses to put his own life on the line. Meanwhile, an “old and experienced man” warns the passengers, “Good people! On no account act in this wild way! If you do this, the ship will sink while you are still struggling. I’m certain no good will come of it.” Lao Can and his friends sail out to the ship in a boat, carrying a compass and sextant that they are sure will save it. When they arrive, though, some of the sailors accuse them of being “foreign devils” and, with the help of everybody else on the ship, drive them off and sink their boat.¹

Liu’s metaphor comparing the Qing state to a sinking ship is hardly subtle, but it effectively conveys the angst that filled political activism in early twentieth-century China. This passage in particular is remarkable for its condemnation of what the author sees as the anti-foreignism of the Boxers and the opportunistic self-aggrandizing of the revolutionary movement.² It thus expresses the urgent need for fundamental change but deep uneasiness about

¹ Liu Tie-yün, *The Travels of Lao Ts’an*, 3–11.

² See also Liu Tie-yün, 123–27.

the most radical methods for achieving it, a feeling familiar to Jinan's elite and other prominent figures, like Liang Qichao, as the events leading up to the 1911 Revolution and the fall of the Qing unfolded.³

The commercial and educational reforms discussed in chapter 6 were only one part of a much broader program of reshaping the political organization of the Qing state itself. With other countries, especially Japan, as a model, people across the empire began agitating for and enacting reforms that broadly redefined the relationship between individual subjects, local communities, provincial governments, the court, and the state as a whole. Adopting a constitution was the centerpiece of this process of redefinition and served as a kind of container for a wide range of related reforms, including establishing institutions for local people to manage and oversee aspects of local administration.⁴ Thus, while the idea of constitutionalism most immediately conjures up an image of a *national* reform, key elements of this program were inherently local.

This chapter examines the course of these reforms in Jinan and their relationship to the 1911 Revolution as it unfolded there. The first section looks at two closely related institutions: local councils and the provincial assembly. As administrative bodies, local councils were a more explicit manifestation of "local self-government" (*difang zizhi*), whereas the provincial assemblies were consultative in nature. However, both institutions reflected the ideal of formalizing the participation of local people (at least male elites) in state-building.⁵ I build on Roger Thompson's observation that there was a great variety of opinion about what the

³ Gasster, "Reform and Revolution," 68–80.

⁴ For general histories of the constitutional movement and its relationship to the movement for local self-government, see Chang, "The Constitutionals"; Chuzo Ichiko, "Political and Institutional Reform," 388–402; Thompson, *China's Local Councils*.

⁵ Chuzo Ichiko, "Political and Institutional Reform," 402; Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 204.

implementation of local councils could and should entail and, more broadly, what these new institutions meant for Qing state-building.⁶ Rather than a local challenge to the power of the state or a radically new form of state-building, the councils represented an approach to state-building through place-making that was an adaptation of, not radical departure from the already-hybrid form of state-building we have observed in late Qing Jinan in preceding chapters. The compatibility of local councils with both established patterns of state-building and an ambitious reform program meant that conservative reformist elites—including powerful figures in Jinan, like Wang Maokun (discussed in chapter 6)—could see them as a way to accommodate both state-building and place-making prerogatives through negotiating the distribution of power within the state.

The establishment of provincial assemblies was more challenging to Qing state-building both in practice and in theory. Even more than local councils, the assemblies represented a shift toward embracing the kind of translocal political mobilization that imperial state-building theoretically eschewed and the Qing government had generally opposed. Coordination between provincial assemblies to push to the court to promulgate a constitution and convene a national parliament more rapidly than the schedule it had announced deepened the nationalizing effect of these institutions. Existing scholarship acknowledges that in theory establishing provincial assemblies could have strengthened the overall power of the Qing state, but there is agreement that, in practice, they helped pave the way for the dynasty's fall and, in fact, in a number of provinces they became ground-zero for the defection of constitutionalist elites to the revolutionary cause. Most directly, these mutinies were a response to the Qing government's own actions: its failure to satisfactorily meet the constitutionalists' demands, the appointment of

⁶ For a summary of the diverse domestic and international influences on the implementation of local self-government, see Thompson, *China's Local Councils*, 4–17.

a “responsible cabinet” in 1911 that was stacked with Manchu nobles, and the nationalization of railroads that same year.⁷

Place-making is still a core concern of this chapter, but, even more than in previous ones, here we see place-making through the lens of explicit and wide-ranging discourse on state-building. For the actors involved, implementing self-government reforms and responding to the 1911 Revolution certainly entailed considering what kind of place they wanted Jinan to be. However, because of the provincial and national scale of the changes discussed in this chapter, we see these considerations refracted through the broader question of what kind of state the Qing should be or whether the Qing should continue as a state at all.

Scholars have generalized the specific developments that led constitutionalists in provincial assemblies to desert the Qing in favor of the revolution in various ways but largely converge on a narrative of state-building gone awry. For example, Rankin observes a tension between the centralizing impulse of the reforms (through extending the state deeper into local society) and their reliance on mobilizing elites who were not necessarily in lock-step with the priorities of the central government.⁸ Similarly, Fincher argues that the provincial assemblies offered a new mechanism for enhancing the legitimacy of the dynastic state, which it could use to enact further reforms. However, delegating the power to produce legitimacy to the assemblies necessarily entailed the possibility that they would redirect the legitimacy they produced away from the dynasty (toward a new national government), which they did.⁹ Like Fincher, Young depicts the significance of the assemblies in terms of “provincialism,” arguing that this was a further development of pre-existing localism that was more deeply interwoven with nationalist

⁷ Chang, “The Constitutionalists,” 168–81; Esherick, “Introduction,” 5–6; Zhou Jiming and Hu Xi, “Conflict and Competition,” 71–77.

⁸ Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 202–98.

⁹ Fincher, “Political Provincialism.”

concerns. The combination of provincialist and nationalist sentiments motivated elites to critique and eventually abandon the central government.¹⁰

All of these analyses are of some use for understanding how the 1911 Revolution unfolded in Shandong, especially insofar as they recognize that the assemblies and the reforms generally did not inherently destabilize the state through mobilizing the elite. However, the nature of events in Shandong requires considerable qualification of the narrative described above. In the wake of the Wuchang Uprising in October 1911, the Revolutionary Alliance was able to use the support of a minority of the assembly, students, and—most importantly—military officers to overcome the alliance between the majority of the Assembly and Governor Sun Baoqi and, as in other provinces, declare Shandong's independence from the Qing. However, Sun, his allies in the assembly, and the military (now more tightly under the control of Yuan Shikai) quickly returned Shandong to Qing control. The inability of the Revolutionary Alliance to consolidate power in Shandong echoes previous scholarship's characterization of the movement as weak and dependent on alliances with other groups.¹¹ More importantly, though, the failure of the revolution in Shandong speaks to the aversion of Shandong's reformist elite to revolution.

In explaining this aversion, this chapter advances the argument made in previous chapters that late Qing state-building in Jinan was remarkably durable. By giving attention to a case where reform did not lead to revolution, it confirms that elite disillusionment and desertion were contingent, not necessary outcomes of the reforms. As chapter 6 and the opening section of this chapter show, Jinan's elite and the more conservative members of the assembly were genuinely invested in the reforms and the constitutional movement, a commitment that generated tension between them and both the court and provincial government. Nevertheless, the combination of

¹⁰ Young, *The Presidency*, 19–20.

¹¹ Wright, "Introduction," 52–53.

their faith in their ability to work with and through existing government structures, the lack of a unifying grievance at the provincial level (like railroad nationalization provided in other contexts), and their fear of becoming a battleground in a north-south civil war between loyalists and revolutionaries prevented the Revolutionary Alliance and its closest allies from decisively seizing control of the Provincial Assembly. The Revolutionary Alliance's main advantages were in arenas not controlled by the local elite: schools and (temporarily) the military. Once Yuan Shikai consolidated the loyalty of military forces in Jinan, the power of the Revolutionary Alliance collapsed.

Yuan's ability to wield power over the military in Shandong was itself a contingent development, but it was nevertheless consequential both to the fall of the Qing and Jinan's experiences in the early Republic. I do not dispute here MacKinnon's argument that Yuan's power in the late Qing derived, to a large extent, from his connections in Beijing, not his mastery of a regional political network that operated with autonomy from the court.¹² Recent scholarship has further argued that Yuan used the power at his disposal to advance the interests of the court (and the nation), not as a cynical ploy to advance his own standing while playing the court and revolutionaries against each other.¹³ In fact, it was the difficulty he faced mobilizing troops in the north, including Shandong, that pushed him toward negotiating with the revolutionaries.¹⁴ However, by early 1912, it was nevertheless the case that military commanders who were loyal to Yuan—not civil officials independent from him and not the local or provincial elite—wielded real political power in Shandong. As the conclusion to the dissertation details, after the fall of the

¹² MacKinnon, *Power and Politics*, 215–16.

¹³ Shan, *Yuan Shikai*, 144–64.

¹⁴ Zhang Huateng, "The Qing's Three Armies." MacKinnon's argument that personal loyalty to Yuan in the Beiyang Army, especially among junior officers, was limited provides background support for Zhang's argument. MacKinnon, *Power and Politics*, 117–35.

Qing, military governance became the norm in Jinan, creating a far more tumultuous relationship between the provincial government and the local elite. The result was a fractured state and a deeply fraught relationship between state-building and place-making.

Local Self-Government and the Provincial Assembly

This section describes the theory behind and implementation of a series of reforms related to “local self-government” in the late Qing. The chief outcome of these reforms was the establishment of local councils at the county and sub-county level and provincial assemblies, whose function was more strictly consultative in nature than the local councils. Self-government afforded an unprecedented degree of legitimacy and formality to local communities’ management of certain aspects of their own affairs. Although the assemblies and councils did not obviate the existing territorial bureaucracy, which was still staffed by men subject to the rule of avoidance, they seemed to represent a step toward local autonomy and away from the centralized governance that had been at the core of late imperial administration and had, with considerable difficulty, been reasserted in the post-Taiping era. However, as articulated and, to some extent, implemented, self-government was also one component of a shift toward a more national form of government. On the one hand, the institutional nucleation that self-government entailed demanded the cultivation of a national consciousness among the empire’s erstwhile citizens. On the other hand, provincial assemblies provided a new and legitimate venue for engaging in translocal political activism. In the last years of the Qing, movements demanding the timely promulgation of a constitution and the convening of a national assembly expanded the assemblies’ scope of activity from provincial to national concerns

This section makes a dual argument about how the theory and practice of self-

government in Shandong related to place-making and state-building in Jinan. First, I argue that, contrary to appearances, the state-local society framework does not capture the distinction between official- and self-government that these reforms generated. Local self-government represented a means for mobilizing society to participate in more robust state-building through place-making, not a retreat of the state from local communities. Second, Jinan's status as provincial capital—and hence a model for the implementation of local councils elsewhere in the province and the headquarters of the new provincial assembly—and the existing connections of the city's elite to the provincial government put its elite at the forefront of the implementation of self-government. Unfortunately, we do not have at our disposal sources that shed light directly on their attitudes toward these reforms. Instead, I turn to a series of articles in *Shandong Magazine* (*Shandong zazhi*) published by Shandong natives in Beijing to examine the provincial political milieu in which they operated. This publication may well represent a more progressive stance than that of Wang and other leading members of Jinan's elite. However, even there self-government appears as a mechanism for strengthening the state rather than a means for empowering society against it, which, as I argue below, appears to have been a kind of reformist consensus that characterized members of both of the factions in the provincial assembly.

Constitutionalism and Self-Government in Theory

In 1906 the Qing court announced its intention to implement a constitutional form of government. The impetus for this transformation came from both Qing setbacks, like the invasion of the Eight-Nation Alliance that concluded the Boxer Uprising, as well as the apparent success of political reforms in Japan, epitomized by its victory in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905.¹⁵ This transformation required considerable preparation on the part of the central

¹⁵ Thompson, *China's Local Councils*, 17.

government, but it also entailed no-less-significant work in the provinces. In addition to the sorts of commercial and educational initiatives that were the subject of chapter 6, provincial and local (prefecture and county) officials received instructions to establish a series of institutions that would formally incorporate local people into the governance of their home places. At the county and sub-county level, local self-government councils (*zizhihui*) would take responsibility for administering key elements of the late Qing reforms, including commercial governance and schools. Meanwhile, provincial assemblies were supposed to operate as consultative bodies with responsibility for informing and supervising provincial governance. The implementation of self-government did not imply an abandonment of official-government, i.e. administration by extra-provincial administrators authorized by the court. Instead, these new institutions were supposed to complement and extend the efficacy of existing modes of governance.

Self-government was wedded to constitutional rule in two ways. First, both worked toward the common goal of increasing the capacity of the state to preserve its sovereignty against the pressures of foreign imperialism. Second, reformers influenced by political practice and theory in Japan, including Yuan Shikai, saw self-government as a means for training the people—starting with the elite—to exercise the public-mindedness that was required of citizens of the nation-state. Local councils inculcated practices of citizenship through formalizing the involvement of the elite in local governance, including areas, like taxation, that were, under law (if not exactly in practice), the exclusive purview of officials. The provincial assemblies operated as consultative bodies, so their administrative functions were more limited. However, they provided a forum for articulating local concerns in provincial terms and for linking provincial elites to national political developments.¹⁶

¹⁶ Thompson, 16, 20, 37–52, 140–43; Lee, “Local Self-Government,” 34.

At the same time, local self-government also resonated with long-running discourses and practices of local administration that were distinctly imperial in character. When Governor Zhao Erxun experimented with local self-government in Shanxi, he drew inspiration from statecraft thinkers, especially Feng Guifen, who had long grappled with the problem of how to manage the relationship between centrally appointed officials and community leaders, particularly in rural areas. Zhao's goal was less to create a new kind of citizen than to identify, legitimize, co-opt, and control existing local leaders.¹⁷ Likewise, even the idea of using self-government to train national citizens drew on the well-established *lixue* discourse of moral self-cultivation and its connection to participating in local affairs.¹⁸ As implemented in the late Qing, local self-government was not a mechanism for incorporating the common people into political decision-making, although, in conjunction with other aspects of the reforms, it did impose new tax burdens on them. In this sense, self-government reaffirmed and formalized the imperial logic of local elites mediating central rule more than it heralded the ascendance of a national logic of universal rights and political participation.

It is tempting to associate this dual nature of self-government—as a step toward a nation-state and a continuation of imperial practices—with the binary choice between revolution and loyalism that presented itself in 1911. However, just as the Qing state embodied imperial characteristics while producing nationalizing effects, it was theoretically possible for multiple interpretations of self-government to co-exist, be negotiated, and together produce a hybrid form of political community. The political conflicts that implementing constitutional rule and self-government provoked were shaped by factors beyond ideas about self-government itself. These

¹⁷ Thompson, *China's Local Councils*, 23–36. On continuities between *fengjian* discourse and self-government, see also Min Tu-ki, *National Polity and Local Power*, 122–80.

¹⁸ Lee, “Local Self-Government,” 31–43.

factors, which interacted with each other in complex ways, included social background, geographic origin, and power within the institutional landscape of the late Qing.¹⁹ In Shandong, these conflicts reflected different approaches to and interests in reforming the state and negotiating the relationship between imperial and national modes of governance. However, we should not let these conflicts obscure the shared position that implementing self-government would strengthen the Qing state.²⁰

We can find signs of the hybrid and contested nature of self-government in *Shandong Magazine*, published by the Shandong native place association in Beijing, which advocated forcefully for the expansion of self-government. The constituency of the magazine and this association included a mix of merchants, officials, and degree-holders, but it tended to champion progressive causes and openly criticized the corruption of officials, government institutions, and even members of the local gentry in Shandong. In 1908, *Shandong Magazine* published a series of editorials on local self-government titled, “On the Inadequacy of Official-Government for Shandong and Urgently Implementing Self-Government through Public Effort.” The editorials reflected the magazine’s critical stance toward official practices and its openness to ideas and practices adapted from other countries. As such, it is a useful lens into how more politically progressive members of Shandong’s elite thought about self-government. Rather than suggesting an irresolvable conflict between progressive and conservative sectors of the elite, these editorials

¹⁹ Thompson discusses various aspects of these conflicts. Thompson, *China’s Local Councils*.

²⁰ Rankin’s discussion of elite activists Jing Yuanshan and Sun Yirang in Zhejiang similarly makes the point that they viewed expansion of local self-government as a means of strengthening the state, even though the process of doing so produced tensions between officials and elite. Fincher’s approach to the “polity” encompassing both the “official government apparatus but also the informal structure of the Chinese sociopolitical matrix” is an alternative way of approaching the relationship between the composite state-building process I am describing here. King and Lieberman likewise see federalism in the U.S. (which affords considerably greater local autonomy than that allowed under late Qing self-government reforms) not as a reflection of a weak central government but a vehicle for state-building. Rankin, *Elite Activism*, 183–88; Fincher, “Political Provincialism,” 185; King and Lieberman, “Ironies of State Building,” 556–58, 562–65.

indicate how members of the elite from diverse social backgrounds could agree in principle on the need for self-government to strengthen the Qing state and benefit local communities.

On face, the issue of self-government suggested a binary between self- and official-government. However, the core of self-government discourse was its emphasis on the public interest, which bound the two modes of administration to the state. The definition of self-government in these editorials encapsulated the mutual and complex understanding of the relationship between self-government, public interest, and the state: “What we call self-government is the condition of public groups (*gonggong tuanti*) under the supervision of the state (*guojia*) managing the public affairs whose aim is its/their survival.”²¹ The crux of this definition is the concept of the public (*gonggong*), which clarifies the nature of self-government groups and the affairs they administer. Despite their local nature, these groups are supposed to act for the public, not particularistic (private) interests. Moreover, their operation rightfully falls under the supervision of higher-level authorities. The stipulation that the public affairs which self-government groups should handle should be in the interest of “survival” (*shengcun*) is productively vague: it is unclear if the possessive pronoun (*qi*) refers to the state, the most immediate antecedent, or the self-government groups. The fact that both meanings are entirely comprehensible—self-government should advance the survival of local groups and the state as a whole—reflects the reality that local units and the state are not entities autonomous from each other but two aspects of a whole. Public-mindedness both infuses local and national political consciousness and provides a link between them that is constitutive of the state.

²¹ The word *guojia* is tricky to translate even in contemporary Chinese, where it can mean ‘country,’ ‘nation,’ or ‘state.’ The fluidity of early twentieth-century discourse makes the task even more challenging. I tend to translate *guojia* as ‘state’ when it appears to be used in primarily an institutional sense (even if this is not exactly consonant with my own idea of the state) and as ‘nation’ when it refers to a shared identity. I use ‘nation-state’ to denote a blending of these two meanings. See below for further discussion. Xuntian, “Shandong guanzhi buzhu shi ji zhi gongtu zizhi lun,” *SDZZ*, GX 34/4/30, 6.

For the editorialist, then, the key to implementing self-government was inculcating public mindedness while adjusting the institutional relationship between different aspects of the state. The first article in the series focuses on problems with official-government, especially the power and prevalence of expectant officials in Shandong's administration. Not only did expectant officials, especially circuit intendants, use their position in new government institutions to draw lucrative salaries for themselves and their cronies—sometimes for doing very little or no actual work—but they used their income to establish officially-backed businesses that competed with local merchants. As evidence of the largesse they enjoyed at the expense of Shandong's people, the author pointed to the boats they sailed on Daming Lake and a row of houses they had built for themselves outside Jinan's west gate that the local people had taken to calling "New [Expectant] Circuit Intendant Road" (*daotai xin jie*). These specific abuses were manifestations of the larger problem that officials who came from other provinces did not truly understand and sympathize with the places where they were posted.²²

However, criticisms of the lack of public-mindedness among officials touched on a broader crisis of political consciousness that characterized local people too.²³ In a letter responding to these editorials, Yang Yusi—later the president of the Provincial Assembly and a relatively conservative reformist—echoed the journal's lament that officials from other provinces did not treat the people of Shandong as their own. He noted, though, that this owed to a lack of concern for the nation as a whole and that this problem was not unique to Shandong.²⁴ Similarly, the *Shandong Magazine* editorials claimed that Shandong's people would need to cultivate the requisite political consciousness in order to successfully implement self-government. This had to

²² Xuntian, "Shandong guanzhi buzhi shi ji zhi gongtu zizhi lun," *SDZZ*, GX 34/3/15, 1–10.

²³ This sense of lack of public-mindedness among local elites predated the early twentieth century. Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 54–79.

²⁴ Yang Yusi, "Du Xuntian Shandong guanzhi buzhi shi ji zhi gongtu zizhi lun shu hou," *SDZZ*, GX 34/4/15, 1–2.

begin with a sense of responsibility for one's own affairs, which the author called "personal self-government" (*geren zizhi*). From there, local people could cultivate public mindedness that would inform and motivate participation in local affairs and thereby reverse their reliance on officials who did not have the same attachment to the communities they governed. The end goal was not a loose, empire-like agglomeration of local communities disconnected from each other. Rather, it was local people recognizing that their fates as citizens living in local communities was bound up with that of the nation-state (*guojia*). The mutuality of this relationship was material as well as spiritual, since local councils would need financial support from the government to be successful.²⁵ The author held up Japan as an exemplary model of the relationship between local public-mindedness, national citizenship, and state strength, and claimed that Japan's people had prevailed in the Russo-Japanese War by virtue of their "status as local citizens" (*difang gongmin zhi zige*).²⁶

The editorialist understood that achieving effective self-government was a process. In fact, he argued that Shandong and China as a whole were participating in a global trajectory of gradually increasing local self-government that was progressively re-shaping the relationship between central governments, intermediary officials, and local communities:

In the past, the local organs of each country have not been well developed, and thus it has been necessary to receive directions and orders from the central government. Now, though, local organs are achieving perfection, and thus the division of authority (*fenquan*) must be given serious thought. Take for example our country's provinces, for which governors-general have been established. This is not the case, though, with Tibet and Mongolia. If, hereafter, they are converted to provinces and governors-general are established, their authority [vis-a-vis local communities] must be greater than in other provinces. Now look at Shandong since the establishment of governors-general: in truth, their authority cannot match that of military commanders of former times. This is because local organs are daily being perfected and their power must grow daily. As their power grows daily, then this will no doubt result in division of authority.²⁷

²⁵ Xuntian, "Shandong guanzhi buzhu shi ji zhi gongtu zizhi lun," *SDZZ*, GX 34/4/30, 3–5.

²⁶ Xuntian, "Shandong guanzhi buzhu shi ji zhi gongtu zizhi lun," *SDZZ*, GX 34/4/15, 6.

²⁷ Xuntian, "Shandong guanzhi buzhu shi ji zhi gongtu zizhi lun," *SDZZ*, GX 34/4/15, 6.

This passage does not suggest a progressive diminishing of state power in general (which would be a remarkable argument for a text from this period) but a pattern of increasingly distributing state power to local organs. Although painting “the division of authority” as an evolutionary, at least somewhat natural process, the editorialist does not pretend that it will be easy. Instead, he confronts readers with the fact that “Our Shandong is, by nature, rich in conservatism (*fu yu baoshouxing*), and public-mindedness (*gonggong xin*) is inevitably weak.”²⁸ With public-mindedness so weak, it was easy to submit passively to the whims of officials and look out merely for the interests of oneself and one’s family. This condition made it unfeasible to immediately enact a high degree of self-government, but it added urgency to the need to experiment practically with local self-government while a more durable constitutional basis was worked out at the national level.²⁹ While we often associate state-building with centralization, these editorials reflect how people saw distribution and negotiation as essential even natural elements of the political reforms. At the same time, they express a keen understanding that distributing power to self-government institutions without causing local communities to become detached from the state required inculcating a sense of public mindedness. Forging this new understanding of the public hinged on a combination of local activism and close supervision by officials.³⁰

The series of editorials ended with a note of warning that juxtaposed Shandong’s

²⁸ Xuntian, “Shandong guanzhi buzhu shi ji zhi gongtu zizhi lun,” *SDZZ*, GX 34/4/15, 7.

²⁹ The theme of the historical evolution of the political consciousness of Shandong’s people is further addressed in a subsequent editorial. Xuntian, “Shandong ren zhi zhengzhi yu,” *SDZZ*, GX 34/7/15, 1–8.

³⁰ Kuhn describes how in Liang Qichao’s thought national consciousness was naturally built on local unity and cooperation in a way that echoed the kind of microcosm-macrocosm relationship that was characteristic of Neo-Confucian thought as expressed in *The Great Learning*. As Lee’s discussion of Liang’s views on local self-government show, though, the naturalness of this relationship between local and national public-mindedness did not obviate the need for active cultivation of these virtues, which was also a characteristic feature of Neo-Confucian thought. Lee, “Local Self-Government,” 31–43; Kuhn, *Origins of the Modern Chinese State*, 125–30.

enlightened past to what would be—absent political renovation—a bleak future: “I fear that although we had Confucius to govern Lu and Guanxi to govern Qi, Shandong will not see the dawn of a new era and will in perpetuity be devoured by unworthy officials and despotic gentry.”³¹ Things were certainly changing, though. Over 1908 and 1909 the pages of *Shandong Magazine* continued to be filled with discussions of local self-government. Besides encouraging people in Shandong to be engaged in the implementation of local self-government, the magazine announced the formation of a Shandong Local Self-Government Study Society in Beijing. The journal also covered preparations for opening the provincial assembly in considerable detail. It was in the assembly that discourse about self-government would become politically actualized, first through the assembly’s participation in provincial governance and then through its response to the 1911 Revolution.

Constitutionalism and Self-Government in Late Qing Shandong

Despite precedents like the discourse in *Shandong Magazine*, Shandong did not begin implementing self-government until 1909. This was relatively late by the standard of other provinces, where official and semi-official efforts had begun several years earlier. After announcing its intention to implement constitutional rule in 1906, the court ordered provincial officials to establish self-government bureaus on the model of Tianjin’s. The delay between this order and the promulgation of self-government regulations in 1909, combined with the desire of many elites to accelerate the political reforms, created considerable unevenness in the status of self-government institutions across various provinces.³² Despite the late institutional beginnings of self-government in Shandong, the reformist activities of Jinan’s elite discussed in chapter 6 and the agitation for self-government reforms in *Shandong Magazine* show that the province’s

³¹ Xuntian, “Shandong guanzhi buzhu shi ji zhi gongtu zizhi lun,” *SDZZ*, GX 34/6/15, 10.

³² Thompson, *China’s Local Councils*, 52–70.

elite were keenly interested in these developments.

However, the tardiness of self-government implementation in Shandong did have two important effects. First, there was a high degree of official direction of self-government reforms. This was especially true for Jinan/Licheng County, which, as in the case of commercial institutions and schools, served as a model for other parts of the province to follow and so received special official attention. Second, self-government followed on the heels of the establishment of Shandong's provincial assembly, which held its first session in autumn 1909, several months before the first county councils opened and even before self-government training institutes were established in all the prefectures. In Shandong, advocating for and managing local self-government was one of the chief priorities of the provincial assembly. This differentiated Shandong from other provinces where, Thompson argues, a bifurcation between the concerns and constituencies of the provincial assemblies and local councils emerged.³³ Because the provincial assembly preceded local councils in Shandong and became such a central venue for discussing the principles and practice of self-government, I will first describe the process of preparing for the assembly and then describe county and sub-county self-government.

Establishing the Provincial Assembly

In late 1908 the court issued orders for each province to establish an assembly by the end of the next year. This mandate to establish an unprecedented institution in such a short period of time using an entirely new electoral system forced provincial officials to turn to members of the elite for help. The presence of Jinan's elite in Shandong's provincial capital—the epicenter of these reforms—may have granted them an unusual degree of influence over their implementation. After receiving the edict on forming a provincial assembly, Shandong Governor

³³ Thompson, 137–61.

Yuan Shuxun called together members of the elite in Jinan to discuss preparations. Wang Maokun was among these, as was fellow Jinan native Wu Shumei (1845–1912). Wu was an 1876 *jinshi*, who had spent about twenty years in the Hanlin Academy, Imperial Study, and Board of Finance. From 1898 to 1901 (i.e. in the wake of the Hundred Days’ Reforms), he served as education commissioner in Hunan, where he was sent to curtail the increasingly unorthodox political discourse among students.³⁴ He retired back to Jinan shortly after his tenure in this post expired.³⁵ Other people whom Governor Yuan consulted who were not natives of Jinan included Ma Yinrong, a member of the Education Affairs Office, Song Shusheng, a vice-supervisor and dean at Imperial Shandong University, and Wang Xifan, a *jinshi* and former education commissioner in Fujian. Yuan also recalled Licheng native Huang Chenglin, who had studied law and government and was currently out of the province.³⁶

With the help of these men, Yuan Shuxun established a Provincial Assembly Preparation Office (*ziyiju choubanchu*) in Jinan. This office employed men familiar with law and government as instructors and solicited students from Shandong’s counties to receive instruction there. Graduates then returned to their home places to inform their peers about the regulations for electing representatives to the provincial assembly and compile voter rolls. Some of the same men who helped Yuan open this office also petitioned to be allowed to establish a Provincial Assembly Institute (*ziyiju yanjiusuo*) to prepare the provincial elite to participate in political affairs. Their petition stated, “We gentry are humbly concerned that Shandong’s scholars and people are simple, that our customs have just opened (*fengqi chu kai*), that education is not widespread, that knowledge is still limited, and that [the people of the] remote countryside are

³⁴ On the unsettled situation in Hunan after the failure of the 1898 reforms, see Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, 11–33.

³⁵ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 40:31a–32a.

³⁶ “Shandong,” *Shen bao*, 1908/10/31, 18.

content with old ideas (*jiushuo*), and that they are unaccustomed to being familiar with political affairs.” Establishing an elite-managed office to discuss the process of forming the assembly and undertake appropriate investigations would, they argued, complement the work being undertaken by the governor. Among the signatories were Wang Maokun, Mao Chenglin, and Meng Jisheng.³⁷

To be eligible to vote for representatives to the assembly, individuals had to be registered residents of the province, male, and twenty-five *sui* or older. They also had to meet one of the following conditions: (1) possess experience in local education or other public affairs; (2) have graduated from a *zhongxue tang* or equivalent institution; (3) hold at least a low-level civil service examination degree; (4) have held a grade 7 civil or grade 5 military post and not been removed from office; (5) be able to demonstrate ownership of 5,000 *yuan* worth of property in Shandong. People who were not registered residents of Shandong but had lived there for ten years and owned 10,000-*yuan* worth of property could also participate, but soldiers, monks, and students were ineligible to vote. Candidates needed to fulfill the voter eligibility requirements, but they also needed to be at least 30 *sui* and could be disqualified on the basis of personal character.³⁸

Predictably, local preparations encountered an array of challenges. Yuan Shuxun explained, “Because Shandong’s customs have not been entirely opened (*fengqi wei jin kaitong*) and the legal system of elections has long been abandoned, it is no wonder that [people] stare at each other in astonishment.”³⁹ Some personnel were more careful in compiling voter rolls than

³⁷ “Guanzhang sheli,” *Shen bao*, 1909/1/10, 18.

³⁸ Chang Yu-fa, “Qingmo Minchu de Shandong difang zizhi,” 159–60; Min Tu-ki, *National Polity and Local Power*, 160–63.

³⁹ “Shandong xunfu Yuan Shuxun zou zunzhao chenlie choubei diyinian qi chengji zhe,” *Zhengzhi guanbao*, XT 1/2/18.

others. In some cases, potential voters interpreted the wealth conditions for eligibility as a new kind of tax and so tried to get themselves off the rolls.⁴⁰ The sudden implementation of the elections left little time for people to grasp their importance or develop slates of candidates. This made it possible for some representatives to win election with a small number of votes from their home counties.⁴¹

The elections proceeded in two stages, first at the county and then at the prefecture (*fu* and *zhilizhou*) level. The 100 seats in the assembly were divided among the prefectures based on their number of eligible voters (not total population). Since there were 119,321 eligible voters in Shandong—a very small percentage of the province’s approximately 30 million residents—there was about one seat for every 1,193 voters. Jinan Prefecture had 17,309 voters and so was awarded a total of fifteen seats.⁴² To fill these seats, each county first elected a pool of electors equal to ten times what its allotted number of representatives would be if allotment were based on counties. (i.e. The number of electors each county selected was roughly equal to its total number of eligible voters divided by 119.3.) These electors then met in prefecture seats to vote on the prefecture’s representatives to the assembly. Because final elections took place at the prefecture level, there was no guarantee that each individual county would be represented in the assembly, while some counties had multiple representatives. In Shandong, both stages of the election took place before or during June 1909.⁴³

The Licheng County elections demonstrate how complicated this process could be. Licheng had 1,556 eligible voters and so was supposed to select thirteen electors to send to the

⁴⁰ Chang Yu-fa, “Qingmo Minchu de Shandong difang zizhi,” 161.

⁴¹ Zhang Gongzhi, “Wo chongren Shandongsheng ziyiju yiyuan de huiyi,” 2.

⁴² In initial calculations, the number of eligible voters was divided by 1,193 to determine each prefecture’s allotment. Then the prefectures with the largest remainders, of which Jinan was one, were allotted an additional seat.

⁴³ Zhang Gongzhi, “Wo chongren Shandongsheng ziyiju yiyuan de huiyi,” 160–62.

prefecture, even though only 1,046 voters participated.⁴⁴ In the first round of voting, those who won 41 votes or more were selected as electors.⁴⁵ However, only four candidates reached this threshold, with the top vote-winner receiving 116 votes. This necessitated a run-off a few days later to fill the remaining nine elector spots. Given his stature and the fact that the other candidates appear to have largely been low-level-degree holders, it is surprising that Wang Maokun was selected as an elector only in this run-off.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, in the prefectural election, he was chosen as Licheng County's sole representative to the provincial assembly.

Despite these complications, elections were completed in time for the assembly to open its first session in autumn 1909, as planned. A month-and-a-half before the first session, the 103 representatives—including two from the Qingzhou banner garrison and one from the Dezhou garrison—convened in Jinan to hear lectures on the assembly regulations and procedures and to elect officers and twenty “permanent” members who remained in Jinan even when the assembly was out of session. The assembly also selected six alternates. The first session opened on October 14.

Forming Local Councils

Even before the provincial assembly opened, the Provincial Assembly Preparation Office established a distinct Local Self-Government Preparation Office (*difang zizhi choubanchu*) in Jinan. In early 1909, this office in turn opened a Self-Government Institute (*zizhi yanjiusuo*). The governor's office ordered all magistrates to send two men from their respective counties to study procedures for self-government at the institute. It also opened branch offices in each prefecture. Jinan's institute opened in June as an attachment to the provincial institute, while those in other

⁴⁴ Chang Yu-fa, “Qingmo Minchu de Shandong difang zizhi,” 161.

⁴⁵ 41 was the magic number because if 13 candidates received 41 votes each, the sum of their votes would exceed half of the number of participating voters.

⁴⁶ “Gesheng chouban ziyiju,” *Shen bao*, 1909/6/1, 18; “Gesheng chouban ziyiju,” *Shen bao*, 1909/6/17, 18.

prefectures did not open until early in 1910.⁴⁷

According to directions from the court, sub-provincial self-government consisted of two levels: county and sub-county. The county (*zhou* and *xian*) organs consisted of two advisory bodies: a deliberative council (*yishihui*) with 20–60 representatives that met annually and an executive board (*canshihui*) that was elected from the deliberative council, was headed by the magistrate, and met on a monthly basis.⁴⁸ Sub-county self-government was more complicated because it required dividing counties into different types of sub-units based on population, administrative function, and level of commerce. The three categories were *cheng* (administrative cities), *zhen* (city-sized market towns), and *xiang* (rural townships). The exact form self-government in each sub-county unit took depended on its categorization. *Cheng* and *zhen* councils consisted of a Deliberative Council (*yishihui*), whose number of members was tied to the jurisdiction's population, was directly elected, and was responsible for electing a smaller Board of Directors (*dongshihui*), headed by a General Director (*zongdong*). The township councils consisted of only a Deliberative Council, a Director, and an Assistant Director.⁴⁹ The scope of local councils' responsibilities included schools, public health, roads, commercial and agricultural affairs, and charitable projects, which they were supposed to fund through a mix of taxes and voluntary contributions.⁵⁰

The court initially intended to establish sub-county councils first to provide a foundation for forming county councils. Shandong was one of several provinces, though, where the governors and subordinate officials found it easier to form county councils first and then move on to the sub-county organs. The court explicitly allowed deviations from the initial plan in

⁴⁷ Chang Yu-fa, "Qingmo Minchu de Shandong difang zizhi," 172–73.

⁴⁸ Chang Yu-fa, 179.

⁴⁹ Chang Yu-fa, 176.

⁵⁰ Chang Yu-fa, 176–77.

1910.⁵¹ Shandong eventually settled on organizing sub-county councils in urban centers (*cheng* and *zhen*), then county councils, then sub-county councils in rural townships. Urban councils were established in all counties by the end of 1910, and over seventy jurisdictions had established county councils by the middle of 1911.⁵²

Because Licheng County was the capital of the province and supposed to serve as a model for other counties, its county and sub-county councils opened more quickly than elsewhere, and the entire structure for Licheng was in place by early 1911.⁵³ As an administrative seat, Licheng's urban sub-county unit (i.e. the city of Jinan) was categorized as a *cheng*. The remainder of the county was split into fourteen rural townships (*xiang*). Categorizing the commercial settlement proved vexing. It was initially included with the urban district, but the next year Sun Baoqi reported that they had decided to make it a separate *xiang* due to its special conditions: the mingling of Chinese and foreign residents, the land all being owned by the local government, and the small number of eligible voters and council members.⁵⁴

Neither Licheng's local councils nor their counterparts in other counties operated for too long prior to the 1911 Revolution, and their political significance would prove to be far less significant, at least in the short term, than the provincial assembly. However, with Wang Maokun as the General Director of the urban district, the local council for Jinan was active in ways that reflected the pre-existing engagement of Jinan's elite in public affairs. In 1910 Wang transmitted a petition from the Deliberative Council to Governor Sun Baoqi regarding the status of the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence. Wang recounted that this charitable institution (discussed in chapter 4) had originally operated under gentry management and with official financial support.

⁵¹ Thompson, *China's Local Councils*, 112–14.

⁵² Sun Baoqi memorial on 1911/10/18 (XT 3/8/27), *LFZZ*, 03-7476-037.

⁵³ For a detailed timeline, see “Wendu,” *SDGB*, XT 2/2/17, 3–7.

⁵⁴ Sun Baoqi memorial on 1911/10/18 (XT 3/8/27), *LFZZ*, 03-7476-037.

However, in subsequent years there had not been enough members of the local elite available to manage its affairs and so the provincial government had commissioned officials to oversee its affairs. Now, the court's self-government regulations placed charitable activities under the purview of local councils. Wang thus asked that control of the bureau revert to the urban district council, to which Sun Baoqi agreed.⁵⁵

This episode reflects the ambiguous relationship between self-government—construed broadly—and local autonomy or state power in late Qing Jinan. We do see the city council expanding the scope of its responsibilities and financial means, especially if control of the bureau was accompanied by control over the endowment funded by the provincial government. However, the bureau itself was a product of a longer history of cooperation between various layers of government and the local elite. Moreover, the bureau's history did not exhibit a straightforward trajectory of growing local control since the mid-nineteenth century, since officials had actually assumed more responsibility for managing this institution in the years after its founding. This ambiguity deepens if we extend the history of the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence beyond the fall of the Qing: in 1914 the provincial government ordered the bureau to reorganize under its authority and changed its name to the Provincial Capital Charitable Affairs Office.⁵⁶ Rather than thinking of this institution as an object of competition between state and society, we are better served seeing it as an instrument of public activism that was itself constitutive of the state. Rather than redrawing the boundaries between state and society, the institutional change that surrounded it reflected how the distribution of resources and benefits within the Qing state shifted at various points in time.⁵⁷ As we see below, these shifts could be

⁵⁵ “Wendu,” *SDGB*, XT 2/9/14, 8–10.

⁵⁶ Ye Chunchi, *Jinan zhinan*, 45.

⁵⁷ Without additional sources on how Jinan's elite viewed the administration of the Bureau, this argument must remain somewhat speculative. However, it does correspond to how Will treats changes in the degree to which the

constructive of the state, even when contentious, but they could also veer into politics oppositional to the imperial state itself.

The Politics of Self-Government in the Provincial Assembly

As local councils were established over the course of 1910–1, the provincial assembly emerged as the primary arena for negotiating the redistribution of power within the Qing state. As in *Shandong Magazine*, the primary boundary whose negotiation self-government reforms brought to the fore was between official (*guan*, i.e. officials not native to the province) and local (*difang* or *bendi*). However, as we see in communications between the provincial assembly and the governor's office, this process of negotiation and redistribution was constitutive of a new vision for the Qing state, not an effort to carve out space between local society and the state.⁵⁸

The emergence of political factions within the assembly was an important product of this process of negotiation. The formation of factions reflected geographic divisions within the province—primarily east versus west—but, even more, differences in social and political background among the representatives. Representatives with the highest levels of attainment in the examination system and closest relationships with officials became the leaders of a faction focused on the western portion of the province that proved sympathetic to the standpoint of officials, degree-holding elites, and, especially in 1911, the Qing Dynasty itself. Representatives

elite or the government assumed responsibility for managing subsistence crises across different parts of the Qing. Will, “L'état, la Sphère Publique et la Redistribution des Subsistances,” 273. See also Wong, *China Transformed*, 114.

⁵⁸ I draw this language of boundaries internal to the state from Mitchell, who argues that the boundary between state and society is often actually internal to the state itself. As described above, I do not think that the concepts of state and society map onto the distinction between *guojia* and *difang* that were central to discourse on local self-government particularly well. However, the consonance between the construction of the state-society boundary Mitchell describes and the boundary-making process implicated in state-building that I describe here suggests that these phenomena deserve to be treated as comparable if not identical processes. Mitchell, “The Limits of the State.” See also Sparrow, Novak, and Sawyer, *Boundaries of the State*; Morgan and Orloff, “Introduction,” 9–10.

who had studied in Japan and who came largely from the eastern portion of the province tended to be more critical of the social and political establishment and, because of their minority status in the assembly and shared experiences in Japan, became attractive allies for the revolutionaries.

However, this section builds on the previous one to show that putatively conservative members of the assembly, including from Jinan, were invested in self-government reforms in ways that did produce conflict with the provincial government. In other words, even the conservative majority in the assembly, including Wang Maokun, consisted of committed constitutionalists, and we should not take for granted that they would continue to support the Qing rather than shift their allegiance to the revolutionaries, as their peers in other provinces did. The persistent loyalism of this faction in 1911–2 demonstrates that revolution was not an inevitable byproduct of reform.

Political Factions in the Provincial Assembly

Very soon after the assembly opened, two factions emerged. One faction was centered on the eastern portion of the province while the other was focused on the west. These factions shaped the operation of the assembly and, more importantly, the course of events during the 1911 Revolution. Scholarship on provincial politics and the 1911 Revolution in Shandong suggests that these factions reflected significant ideological differences. The majority western faction tended to be more conservative, while the minority eastern faction was more progressive. The combination of the eastern faction's progressiveness and minority status made it particularly willing to align with the revolutionaries in 1911.⁵⁹ This picture is not entirely wrong, but it is not especially helpful for understanding how members of Jinan's elite—particularly Wang Maokun, who served as a representative in the assembly—figured into provincial politics. The main

⁵⁹ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 20–21; Lin Jiling and Dong Jianxia, “Difang zizhi,” 57.

problem is that splitting the province into a progressive east and conservative west underplays the commitment of political figures from the west to constitutionalism and self-government. The provincial assembly was characterized less by stark ideological contradictions than by differences in political strategies that, in part, reflected the different social backgrounds of the factions' leaders.

The vast majority of the assembly consisted of men holding low-level degrees with *juren*, *jinshi*, and graduates of foreign schools in the minority. 67 of the representatives held various low-level degrees, 19 were *juren*, and only 5 were *jinshi*. In addition to these, there were a few members who held no degree, such as wealthy merchants, some who had studied in modern schools in China or Japan, and some for whom no such information is available.⁶⁰ We cannot assume that *jinshi* status automatically conveyed a position of leadership in the assembly, but it is not surprising that that is how things worked out.⁶¹ After all, men who were *jinshi* were more likely to be experienced in local and national political affairs, be able to build good rapport with even high-ranking officials like the governor, and to command the respect of at least some portion of the lower-level degree holders. The five *jinshi* were Yu Puyuan (Wei County), Wang Jingxi (Fei County), Qu Zhuoxin (Ninghai), Wang Maokun (Licheng), and Yang Yusi (Jining). Prior to the assembly's first session, Yang was elected assembly president, and Yu and Wang were elected vice-presidents. Wang, as we have seen, was involved in preparing for the assembly, but I have not found any information about his work as a representative in the assembly itself. These four were leading figures in what became the western faction.⁶²

⁶⁰ Information on the backgrounds of representatives comes from Chang Yu-fa, "Qingmo Minchu de Shandong difang zizhi," 163–67.

⁶¹ Even after the revolution, top leadership posts in the provincial assembly continued to be filled by men who belonged to what had been the "upper gentry." Buck, "The Provincial Elite in Shantung," 431.

⁶² The power of degree-holders in the assembly generally accords with Min's findings, but the conservative inclinations of the 62 Party leaders may have been stronger than Min anticipates in his general treatment of leadership in the assemblies. Min Tu-ki, *National Polity and Local Power*, 164–66.

Among this group of *jinshi*, Qu Zhuoxin was exceptional in two ways. First, he was the only one of the five who came from the peninsula of Shandong. Second, in addition to his *jinshi* degree, he was also a graduate of Waseda University. This placed him in a group of seven representatives who had studied in Japan. Five of these, including Qu, came from the peninsula or the eastern portion of the province. Three emerged as close political allies of Qu and leaders in the eastern faction: Ding Shifeng (Huang xian), Wang Zhixun (Shouguang), and Zhou Shubiao (Anqiu).

Although the leaders of the western and eastern factions were split geographically, social background and educational experience were probably more directly responsible for shaping their political inclinations than a crude east-west split in the province. For example, Anqiu and Wei xian were neighboring counties, with Anqiu administered by Qingzhou Prefecture to the west and Wei xian by Laizhou to the east. Nevertheless, Yu Puyuan, a native of Wei xian, was a leader in the western faction, while Zhou Shubiao, a native of Anqiu, helped lead the east. Peng Zhanyuan, one of the students returned from Japan, came from Puzhou in the far western portion of Shandong. One source does mention him as a leader of the western party, but he was also a member of the Revolutionary Alliance. Peng was probably an extreme case, since there were few, if any, other Revolutionary Alliance members in the assembly, let alone the western faction. However, he demonstrates how these factions did not exactly reflect geographic and political divisions. We should return, then, to the fact that the *jinshi* in the assembly—who had the greatest advantage in terms of relationships with officials—largely came from the western half of the province, while returned students—who were less likely to have official connections but more likely to have contact with the Revolutionary Alliance—came from the east.

This is not to say that geography was not important. As chapter 6 argues, men in the

eastern portion of the province were probably more likely to study abroad in Japan, which may account for how this educational division manifested in a geographic split. Moreover, geographic differences likely shaped the political outlooks of representatives since German power was an even more imminent threat for those from the eastern portion of the province. However, this by no means precluded representatives from the west from holding progressive views regarding constitutionalism, self-government, and methods for resisting foreign imperialism. Wang Maokun, who had served as a magistrate in Shanghai, had tried to organize a movement to recover rights to the Jin-Pu Railroad, and had helped establish the commercial settlement was certainly not aloof from the threat of foreign imperialism or innovative ways to combat it. As I demonstrate below, regardless of the divisions between the eastern and western factions, there must have been relatively broad ideological agreement on these issues. As a result, we should not conflate geographic origin and ideological positions.

The electoral structure of the assembly also made geography relevant to the formation of political factions. Because prefectural pools of electors chose representatives to the assemblies, the prefecture became a much more meaningful unit of political organization than it might have been otherwise. The distribution of eligible voters and hence representatives by prefecture generally favored the western portion of the province. Shandong's four easternmost prefectures (Dengzhou, Laizhou, Jiaozhou, and Qingzhou) were allocated a total of only 28 seats (30 if the 2 representatives from the Qingzhou garrison are counted). Even then, as we saw in the case of Yu Puyuan, an eastern-oriented faction could not count on all of these votes. Meanwhile, the two central prefectures of Jinan (15—the most in the province—and 16 if we include the Dezhou garrison) and Tai'an (12) controlled almost as many seats on their own and swung to the west. The westernmost prefectures had even fewer representatives than the east—26 distributed

between Dongcheng, Caozhou, Yanzhou, Jining, and Linqing. However, just allying with Jinan and Tai'an—not to mention getting support from some representatives from prefectures to the east—already gave them a majority in the assembly.

Competition between the eastern and western portions of the province emerged quickly. Together with Ding Shifeng, one of the other representatives who had studied in Japan and came from the peninsula, Qu Zhuoxin tried to whip up the votes necessary to put men from the eastern portion of the province into the assembly's leadership positions. However, the *jinshi* from the west had the votes they needed to claim the leadership positions for themselves. They built a western-based alliance that came to be known as the "62 Party," owing to the number of representatives whose votes it controlled. This majority allowed them to control the passage of proposals, the election of representatives to the national Political Consultative Council that would convene in 1910, and the selection of the twenty "permanent" assembly representatives who would stay in Jinan to handle affairs even when the assembly was out of session. Meanwhile, the eastern faction formed into what was called the Qingliu (Pure Stream) Party.⁶³

Without more information about the inner workings of the assembly, it is impossible to gauge how exactly the 62 Party formed and utilized its majority, but it appears to have used it to full effect. As noted above, geographic associations and party affiliations were not completely linked, so without a list of party affiliations it is impossible to decisively place all representatives in one party or another. Moreover, party affiliations could be fluid. Chen Mingguan, one of the six men selected to represent the assembly in the Political Consultative Council, deserted the 62 Party and published a critical exposé in one of Jinan's small unofficial papers.⁶⁴ However,

⁶³ Zhang Gongzhi, "Wo chongren Shandongsheng ziyiju yiyuan de huiyi," 2–4; Ding Weifen, "Shandong gemingdang shigao," 392.

⁶⁴ Zhang Gongzhi, "Wo chongren Shandongsheng ziyiju yiyuan de huiyi," 4.

together with the 62 Party's monopolization of the assembly's leadership positions, the constitution of the assembly's permanent members indicates that the 62 Party was not shy about using its power. The map below charts the home places of eighteen known permanent members chosen during the first session against general party affiliations by prefecture.⁶⁵ As it shows, no permanent representatives came from the prefectures of Qingzhou and Yizhou, which lay in-between the 62 and Qingliu power bases. Only one permanent member came from a prefecture likely to be associated with the Qingliu Party. That representative—Sun Picheng, a native of Zhaoyuan—may himself have been a member or the 62 Party, or was at least sympathetic to them, as demonstrated by his role in the assembly's response to the 1910 Qu Shiwen Uprising in Laiyang County on the Shandong peninsula.

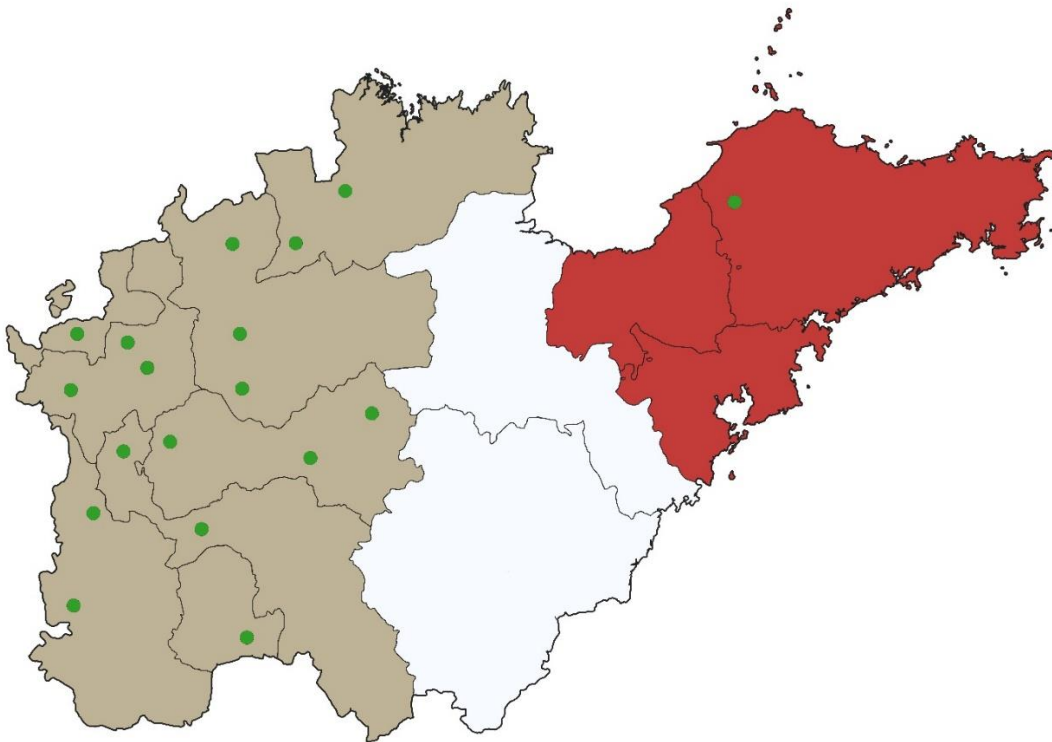


Figure 7.1: Map of home places of provincial assembly permanent representatives. Western prefectures (likely 62 Party affiliation) in brown, eastern (likely Qingliu) in red, and central (unclear) in white. (GIS data from CHGIS.)

⁶⁵ Lin Jiling and Dong Jianxia, "Difang zizhi," 55.

The Qu Shiwen Uprising brought to a head tensions between the 62 and Qingliu parties and set the stage for their responses to the 1911 Revolution. This uprising began in the spring of 1910 and intensified over the summer while the assembly was out of session. It was rooted in conflicts between rural leaders and the urban-based county elite, who used their connections to officials to monopolize access to money-making opportunities like tax-farming. The imposition of new taxes to fund reform programs instigated rural leaders to launch a tax-resistance movement that eventually drew in tens of thousands of farmers who laid siege to the county seat. In July, official troops broke the siege, killing hundreds of commoners in the process and destroyed scores of villages as they tried to arrest the ringleaders.⁶⁶

As the crisis unfolded, members of Laiyang's county elite lobbied for the support of the assembly in Jinan, and Sun Mengqi, a representative from Laiyang, expressed support for sending in troops to quell the uprising. With the assembly out of session, the permanent members backed Governor Sun Baoqi's strategy of violent suppression.⁶⁷ While destructive to rural communities, this approach limited the damage suffered by the urban elite, who found sympathy in the assembly, whose majority was led by men with strong official connections, including to Sun Baoqi. However, in the aftermath of the suppression, opponents of Sun's approach and the assembly's stance came forward, primarily from the merchant community. Laiyang's merchants, who had remained neutral in the conflict itself, worked with the Shandong native place association in Beijing (the institution that published *Shandong Magazine*) to push the court to investigate both the wanton violence of Sun's response and the underlying corruption in which both local officials and the county elite were implicated. However, when the native place association asked Jinan native and Censor Zhang Yinglin to memorialize on their behalf, he

⁶⁶ Prazniak, "Tax Protest," 43–64.

⁶⁷ Prazniak, 58–60.

refused.⁶⁸

Sun Baoqi asked the assembly to comment on the affair, and so it dispatched two representatives to investigate and report. One representative was Wang Zhixun, one of the leaders of the Qingliu Party. His report echoed the position of the Laiyang merchants and the native place association, laying the blame for the incident at the feet of corrupt officials and the urban elite and criticizing Sun for his response. The other representative was Sun Picheng, who came from the neighboring county of Zhaoyuan. Sun's local affections lay not with the merchants and rural leaders but with the county elite. His report blamed Qu Shiwen for leading a violent tax-resistance movement and vindicated the decision to suppress it with military force. When the 62 Party, led by Yang Yusi, sided with Sun's report, several members of the Qingliu Party resigned in protest. Their resignations sowed bitterness between the two parties and left the 62 Party with an even firmer numerical majority in the assembly.⁶⁹

In addition to intensifying political rivalries in the assembly, this case manifested the kinds of existing divisions that shaped the assembly's actions. The Laiyang case itself demonstrated how the late Qing reforms, including aspects of self-government, exacerbated divisions between rural leaders and the urban elite, as Thompson argues. However, contrary to Thompson's characterization, the response to the case in the assembly shows a strong linkage between provincial and local politics.⁷⁰ Class more than geography per se, shaped the lines of conflict that emerged in the assembly. The western-based 62 Party, as well as Sun Pichen, sided with the segment of Laiyang's local elite (urban reformers) that most resembled them. Meanwhile, members of the Qingliu Party sided with merchants and rural leaders or, perhaps

⁶⁸ Prazniak, 64–65.

⁶⁹ Zhang Gongzhi, "Wo chongren Shandongsheng ziyiju yiyuan de huiyi," 4–7.

⁷⁰ Thompson, *China's Local Councils*, 137–45.

more significantly, *against* the alliance of urban elite and officials both in Laiyang and in the assembly. Their critical stance toward an alliance of officials and (what they saw as) corrupt gentry, reflected the arguments in favor of self-government in *Shandong Magazine*. However, their sheer lack of numbers prevented them from assuming a leading role in provincial politics, leaving the assembly in the hands of the 62 Party. This dynamic made members of the Qingliu Party receptive to the overtures of the Revolutionary Alliance, whose Shandong members also came mostly from the eastern half of the province and had studied in Japan.

The Politics of Self-Government in the 62 Party-Controlled Provincial Assembly

Despite these social and political differences, the 62 Party was not the ideological antipode to the Qingliu Party that it appears to be at first glance. In fact, members of both parties had cooperated to spur constitutional reforms. In 1909, the assembly sent Zhou Shubiao, one of the Qingliu members who resigned in 1910, and Zhu Cheng'en, a likely member of the 62 Party, to a national meeting in Shanghai that culminated in a petition for the Qing to accelerate constitutional reforms. In the first half of 1910 the assembly gathered signatures for a petition to convene a national parliament and sent Vice President Yu Puyuan and Qingliu leader Ding Shifeng to the capital to represent Shandong. These efforts continued into late 1910 when the assembly adopted a petition again urging the court to convene a national parliament. Signatories included the assembly officers from the 62 Party but also Wang Maokun as Director of the Shandong Chamber of Commerce and Meng Jisheng, as Assistant Director.⁷¹ Even under the 62 Party's control, then, the assembly continued to adopt politically progressive, albeit not necessarily radical, positions.⁷² Their coordination with other provinces also actualized fears that

⁷¹ Lin Jiling and Dong Jianxia, "Difang zizhi," 55–56.

⁷² On the involvement of reformist elites in the petition movement, see Chang, "The Constitutionalists," 160–65; Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, 95–97.

these provincial bodies would become vehicles of interprovincial political mobilization that might undermine the imperial system.⁷³ The assembly's activity during the (autumn) 1910 session—when the 62 Party was in even firmer control in the wake of the Laiyang Uprising—sheds further light on how its commitment to constitutionalism translated into advocacy for local self-government.

This section draws on a published set of proposals (*yi'an*) from the assembly's 1910 session to demonstrate the assembly's activist stance toward implementing local self-government. The assembly itself was not technically a self-government body but a consultative organ to aid in provincial affairs.⁷⁴ However, because local councils were still in the initial stages of being established, the provincial assembly took it upon itself to advocate for policies that would strengthen self-government. The similarity between discourse in *Shandong Magazine*, which had taken a stance opposite to the 62 Party in response to the Laiyang Uprising, and the political actions of the assembly while under the control of the 62 Party indicates that the ideological differences between it and the Qingliu Party were smaller than they appear at first. Both parties shared a commitment to advancing constitutionalism and self-government. The leadership of the 62 Party benefited from close relationships with officials, and this shaped their approach to political reform and the extraordinary events of 1911. It did not, however, stop them from candidly criticizing official practices. Instead, their communications with the provincial government reflect a process of negotiating the internal boundaries of the state through a mix of contention and cooperation.⁷⁵

During the 1910 session, the assembly directly confronted Governor Sun Baoqi over his

⁷³ Min Tu-ki, *National Polity and Local Power*, 147.

⁷⁴ On the specific powers of provincial assemblies, see Min Tu-ki, 168–69.

⁷⁵ This complex dynamic of competition and cooperation between assemblies and governors manifested in other provinces as well. Fincher, “Political Provincialism,” 202–5; Min Tu-ki, *National Polity and Local Power*, 171–76.

failure to respond to some of their proposals from the previous session and to robustly implement those to which he expressed assent. The assembly began this proposal by succinctly describing how they understood the purpose of their body:

We understand that the reason that the provincial assembly was originally founded was to complement the inadequacies of official-government. Thus, we have established an organ for expressing opinions on public affairs (*yanlun jiguan*). [This organ] elects gentry of this province who are familiar with local conditions and the strengths and weaknesses of the people and organizes them. This is why we have proposals.

The assembly acknowledged that the central government had wisely continued to vest ultimate authority for provincial administration in the governor, lest the political inexperience of representatives in the assembly flounder on the challenges of practical governance. However, it observed that this created a tension between the people (*min*), who “urgently take up the power to supervise officials” and the officials, who “absolutely guard the powers intrinsic to their office.” Again referring to the regulations on provincial assemblies promulgated by the central government, the assembly argued that the potential for conflict between officials and people made it imperative for the governor to uphold his responsibilities to implement proposals with which he agreed and to publicly respond to all proposals, whether he could implement them or not. Governor Sun did not dispute the basic principles behind the assembly’s complaint, but he argued that in cases where the assembly’s proposals over-stepped its authority, the central government’s regulations merely required him to indicate this to them, not to issue a formal, detailed response. Additionally, he noted that it was not universally necessary or practical to respond to all proposals through public proclamation (although this was appropriate for those that directly affected the welfare of the people) nor to implement or even respond to all proposals during the assembly’s current session because complex issues might take more time to iron out.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ ZYJYF, 435–37.

Although this exchange was one of the more confrontational recorded in the collection of proposals, it reflects how the provincial assembly engaged the governor's office in boundary negotiation that was productive of state-building. Both sides accepted that the relationship between official- and self-government should be complementary and serve the interests of the state. Moreover, both appealed to regulations established by the central government for legal justification of the powers they asserted. Finally, both the governor and the assembly expressed concern for making the operation of government transparent to the wider public. The assembly wanted the governor to publicize his responses through public proclamations, not just the official gazette, and to do so in a timely manner. Meanwhile, Governor Sun encouraged the assembly to clearly indicate which members drafted and sponsored proposals and to publish records of its proceedings.⁷⁷ Despite generating or at least bringing into the open tensions between Shandong natives and officials like Sun Baoqi, the establishment of the provincial assembly set in motion a process of clarifying the rights of constitutive elements of the state and thereby enhancing the effectiveness of provincial administration.

Discussions of fiscal policy and official corruption provide further evidence of the tensions between official- and self-government that arose through boundary negotiation but likewise demonstrate that conflict between state and society was not the inevitable outcome of this process. The assembly recognized the necessity of generating new sources of revenue for new administrative institutions, but it consistently advocated for placing as much control over revenue collection as possible into the hands of local councils. For example, one issue on which Governor Sun requested comment was how to effectively manage the collection of supplementary fees (*fujian*) without provoking popular opposition. In its response to this request

⁷⁷ ZYJYF, 437.

and other proposals, the assembly argued that sub-county local councils were the best agents for handling the collection of these fees and for checking corruption by officials, *yamen* underlings, and local gentry.⁷⁸ They also argued that, in light of the elimination of one of the customary county education posts, local councils should be given control over land that had previously provided stipends to educational officials and be charged with supervising local police bureaus and reporting abuses to local officials.⁷⁹ Another proposal suggested that the gentry directors (*shendong*) of self-government units should take charge of vetting and supervising *yamen* runners.⁸⁰

Despite their focus on the ills of official-government, the aim of these proposals was not simply to take power out of the hands of officials and turn it over to local people. True, officials themselves were perpetrators of self-enrichment and extortion. However, so too were “evil gentry” (*lieshen*), petty functionaries, and even education officials, who had used school land originally intended to provide stipends to poor students to supplement their own salaries. All of these were presumably natives of the province and, in many cases, local communities. In one of its proposals, the assembly forwarded a petition from a native of Shandong currently residing outside the province that claimed, “The customs of Shandong are not open (*fengqi bu kai*), and we are accustomed to all kinds of personnel, directors, and community heads who manage public affairs not being vigorous in their work. Moreover, there are crafty and evil people in the confusion who cause harm without benefit to local affairs.”⁸¹ This complaint reflected the concerns of *Shandong Magazine* that the public-mindedness of Shandong’s people was lacking. Therefore, self-government was as much about building the moral and political capacities of

⁷⁸ *ZYJYF*, 433–34, 437–41, 444.

⁷⁹ *ZYJYF*, 469, 481.

⁸⁰ *ZYJYF*, 522.

⁸¹ *ZYJYF*, 444.

local people as it was rooting out official malfeasance. Empowering local councils was a necessary step toward improving governance. It was not, at its core, an attempt to circumscribe the power of the state.

However, the fact that self-government was implemented alongside, not in place of official-government made boundary-negotiation necessary. In some cases, Governor Sun could accede to the assembly's proposals with little issue. For example, he agreed that school lands should revert to the control of local councils but suggested that they be placed under the control of the county Education Promotion Office (itself subordinate to the county council) so that the proceeds could benefit schools in the entire county, not just the self-government unit where the lands happened to be located. The assembly agreed to this suggestion.⁸² However, other cases were more complicated. For example, the assembly proposed putting local councils in control of collecting land and commercial transit taxes and imposing (and spending) the surcharges customarily added by tax brokers and *yamen* functionaries. Governor Sun objected on several grounds. First, he questioned why, if these surcharges were a form of corruption when levied by brokers and functionaries, they would cease to be so when collected by local councils. Second, while admitting that in Europe and the U.S. self-government institutions did function as tax brokers, he argued, "Self-government in our country is only just sprouting up. If [local councils] undertake this kind of responsibility, then it could create obstructions further down the road."⁸³ Finally, he cited central government regulations stipulating that the tax surcharges under discussion were in fact a source of revenue that was supposed to remain in the hands of officials, not be taken over by local councils.⁸⁴ The assembly had to settle, then, for local councils

⁸² ZYJYF, 469–70.

⁸³ ZYJYF, 437–39.

⁸⁴ ZYJYF, 440–42.

reporting abuses in tax collection to the provincial assembly, which could request the governor to launch an investigation of specific localities.

One effect of the assembly's assertiveness was to establish its power vis-a-vis the provincial government and local assemblies. However, the assembly also displayed an awareness that limiting its power could be in the best interests of the state and local communities. One manifestation of this was a series of communications about the imposition of local taxes to fund policing. Governor Sun had requested that the assembly comment on his plan to impose taxes on property (*fang*) and carts (*che*) in Licheng County to pay for the police bureau established in Jinan in 1902, which had been funded by the provincial treasury up to that point.⁸⁵ In its initial response the assembly declined to comment since both the proposed taxes and the responsibilities of the police bureau were limited to Licheng County. As a result, the assembly concluded that the matter should be referred to the Licheng County Council, saying, "Out of concern for the limits of our authority (*quanxian youguan*), it is inconvenient for us to comment." "Moreover," the assembly added, "policing is related to local administration. Currently, national (*guojia*) and local (*difang*) expenses have not been delimited. This proposal...should be submitted again after [the scope of] local expenses has been determined."⁸⁶ (The assembly refers here to 'national' rather than 'provincial' expenses because, under the political reforms, provincial budgets were reviewed and approved by the central government, unlike the budgets of local councils.)

Governor Sun's response to the assembly's demurral re-framed what the assembly saw as a purely local (county) issue in terms of its significance to the province as a whole, thereby justifying the assembly's intervention. Sun argued:

⁸⁵ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, 15:27a.

⁸⁶ *ZYJYF*, 476.

The provincial capital is the leader of each locality. The provincial capital's policing is truly a model (*biaoshuai*) for the whole province. We hope that we will be able to spread this method of raising funds locally to each jurisdiction, but we have no choice but to start with the provincial capital. This kind of levy can be expanded gradually in the future, which will mean extending it from the provincial capital to each prefecture, department, and county. Although the levies start in the capital, this affair truly relates to the whole province.⁸⁷

Moreover, Sun argued that the Ministry of Finance had, in fact, classified policing as an expense to be borne by provincial governments (and thus subject to review by the central government), not local councils. Therefore, the potential for these levies to be extended across the province in order to fund a service that was supposed to be managed by the provincial government justified, even necessitated the comment of the provincial assembly.

Despite the governor's insistence, the assembly again hesitated to assert its prerogative. Contrary to the Ministry of Finance's policies, the assembly reiterated its position that policing was a fundamentally local issue that should be funded locally. It expressed concern that "if this distinction is not clearly made, then it may create confusion in the legal system with regard to future budgeting."⁸⁸ To justify these fears—which it framed in terms of outcomes for the state—the assembly noted that in Beijing, Tianjin, and Baoding such levies had been imposed at the municipal not provincial level. However, the assembly also raised more local concerns that reflected Jinan's privileged relationship to the province. Whereas the governor's proposal would have made Jinan bear the cost of being the "leader" or "model" of the province, the assembly argued that it would be best to wait to impose these new taxes, effectively allowing the provincial treasury to bear the burden of services that Jinan alone enjoyed. The assembly justified this stance by arguing that Jinan's commercial sector was suffering from the influx of foreign goods and that business in the commercial settlement had not grown to a level sufficient

⁸⁷ ZYJYF, 476.

⁸⁸ ZYJYF, 476.

to offset these losses. Moreover, recent spikes in the price of fuel and grain in Jinan caused the assembly to worry that new taxes could instigate a disturbance like the violent protests that had recently unfolded in Laiyang. Delaying the imposition of the proposed taxes until the minds of people in Jinan and around the province had settled would “be of benefit to politics and the people’s sentiments alike.”⁸⁹ This approach allowed the assembly to safeguard local interests while protesting what it saw as an attempt by the Sun to co-opt the assembly into an over-extension of the power of the provincial government at the expense of local councils.

However, in other cases, the assembly actively solicited the intervention of the provincial government and local officials. As we have seen, one of the major concerns in provincial politics was checking foreign encroachment. One issue that the assembly took up was the familiar problem of missionaries purchasing land, this time around Mt. Tai. In a recent case, local officials and missionaries had already agreed in principle for the missionaries to vacate the property. However, since the compensation the missionaries should receive for the structures they had built there had not been agreed upon, the case remained unresolved. The assembly worried that the construction of the Jin-Pu Railroad would attract more foreigners to the area and that they might take advantage of existing allowances to establish mining interests in the area. They coupled these material concerns with claims about the symbolic importance of Mt. Tai to the province and the whole nation, saying, “Mt. Tai is a most important area in our country. It is a place where throughout history emperors have toured and where ancient traces and beautiful scenery defy estimation. Those who guard the land (*shoutu zhe*) should naturally protect it with care. How can we let foreigners occupy it without permission and thereby lose the sovereignty of the state’s territory?”⁹⁰

⁸⁹ ZYJYF, 476.

⁹⁰ ZYJYF, 491.

The assembly solicited the help of Governor Sun and, through him, his subordinates to resolve this issue. It proposed that Sun should instruct local officials to negotiate a fair price with the missionaries, purchase the land on behalf of the local government, and then lease it back to the missionaries for a limited period of time to recoup the purchase price. The assembly realized, though, that finding the money to re-purchase the property would be a challenge and so suggested that the provincial government should step in:

This mountain is a famous area in the whole province and is not an object of the single county of Tai'an. We estimate that the cost of recovering the land will be about four or five thousand taels. At this time when the people are poor and funds exhausted, it would absolutely be difficult for the single county of Tai'an to gather [the funds]. It would be better for the whole province to advance the funds, so many hands will make light work. We propose disbursing official funds in the hope of quickly concluding the matter. After the funds are used, then they can be repaid annually from the rent on this property.⁹¹

The assembly's response to the situation in Tai'an was thus the opposite of its approach to funding for policing. Instead of devolving a provincial issue to local councils, it took a matter that was, strictly speaking, of local concern and scaled it up to the provincial level.

These cases demonstrate that the assembly, even under the control of the 62 Party, was genuinely concerned for advancing self-government. However, it was not fundamentally interested in limiting the power of the state. Instead, these communications show a bent toward negotiating and clarifying the boundaries of power between different governing bodies that all worked in the interest of the state. The assembly's position in this process of negotiation was flexible in a way that reflected both the existing hybridity of Qing imperial state-building and a growing concern for national identity and sovereignty. Because policing was intimately related to the affairs of local communities, the assembly argued that local councils should oversee it. Managing foreign affairs and protecting Qing sovereignty against imperialist encroachment—

⁹¹ ZYJYF, 491.

especially when a site of national significance was involved—justified the intervention of the provincial government, though. In both cases, the assembly demonstrated its willingness to confront and even criticize the shortcomings of official-government. It was not simply a tool of entrenched interests but a mechanism for forging a new kind of political order. The next year, however, developments beyond Shandong would intervene to re-shape the possibilities for forging this new order.

Botched Revolution, Failed Loyalism

On November 13, 1911—a little over a month after the uprising in Wuchang that set in motion the 1911 Revolution—Shandong declared independence from the Qing Dynasty. Less than two weeks later, on November 24, the province rescinded this declaration. This section builds on existing accounts of the revolution in Shandong that explain this oscillation with reference to the split in the provincial assembly between the 62 and Qingliu parties and a contest between Yuan Shikai and the revolutionaries for the loyalty of the 5th Division of the New (or Beiyang) Army stationed in Jinan. However, in light of the findings in the previous section, I treat these divergent actions less as a reflection of deep-seated ideological differences than different tactical reactions to the events of 1911 informed by a surprisingly common set of interests. Members of both parties prioritized maintaining local order, avoiding civil war, and ensuring the survival of a sovereign state. The revolutionaries' propagation of rumors about the actions of the Qing court and temporary success winning the loyalty of the commanders of the 5th Division convinced members of the Qingliu Party to view the Qing as a lost cause, or at least to provisionally side with the revolutionaries. However, the revolutionaries' tenuous hold over the military and the assembly, which led them to force Sun Baoqi to stay in power, proved to be

their downfall. Sun and loyalists from the 62 Party, including powerful people from Jinan, such as Wang Maokun, worked to restore Qing control in Jinan.

Supporters and opponents of the revolution both acted out of localist considerations. As the previous section showed, before 1911 the people who would land in these camps had already exhibited sharply conflicting opinions about how to scale local concerns up to the provincial and national level, despite general agreement about the need to advance constitutional and self-government reforms. The outbreak of the revolution catalyzed these differences within a context that was exceptionally urgent and uncertain. In other provinces, the acuity of specific grievances, especially railroad nationalization, and threats of disorder helped localist concerns coalesce into opposition to the Qing that was expressed provincially.⁹² Shandong, however, lacked such a unifying grievance and the political unity among provincial elites that in other cases made provincial declarations of independence an attractive strategy for elites to detach themselves from the Qing and form a new national government.⁹³ Moreover, the threats of being caught up in the crossfire of the brewing civil war or having the guns of the 5th Division turned against the people of Shandong by whichever political faction controlled them were more pressing than popular protests.⁹⁴ Wedding localism and loyalism remained a viable possibility for elites in Shandong, especially Jinan's political leaders, who generally benefited from the gradual adjustments the Qing reforms were making to imperial spatial politics. However, the revolutionary movement suddenly made abolishing the dynasty or forcing drastic change on it a

⁹² And even then, there was sometimes (e.g. Zhejiang) an impulse toward moderation, even conservatism, in order to build a revolutionary coalition that was as broad as possible. Schoppa, *Chinese Elites*, 147.

⁹³ Fincher, "Political Provincialism," 192–93; Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, 99–105; Schoppa, *Chinese Elites*, 145–49; Kwan, *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin*, 137–52.

⁹⁴ This concern for security-maintenance (as well general acceptance of Yuan Shikai) was a point of similarity between elites in Shandong and those who joined the revolution in Hunan and Hubei. However, the general lack of popular discontent in and around Jinan and, as I discuss below, Shandong's geographic location provided the basis for strong arguments against seceding from the Qing. Esherick, *Reform and Revolution*, chapters 6–7.

realistic and attractive possibility for those who found themselves disadvantaged by the distribution of power between the provincial administration, local officials, the assembly, and local councils.

By the early months of 1912, signs that neither the revolutionaries nor the loyalists would be successful were emerging. The end of hostilities between north and south, the abdication of the Qing imperial house, and the formation of a national government did largely achieve both sides' goal of preventing civil war from consuming Shandong. However, this resolution of the revolution, which left Yuan Shikai with considerable power nationally and in Jinan, undermined the parties' shared commitment to advancing state-building through local self-government. It would take decades before place-making in Jinan would be reintegrated into a spatial politics as encompassing, stable, and salutary as the Qing had offered.

The 1911 Revolution in Shandong up to the Declaration of Independence

Various aspects of the late Qing reforms set the stage for Shandong's participation in the 1911 Revolution. The provincial assembly provided an arena for political disputation and pre-existing fault lines that the revolutionaries were able to take advantage of. Likewise, without the efforts of the Alliance, it is unlikely that Shandong's elite would have reached the decision to desert the Qing and band with the revolution on their own. Neither, however, was a sufficient cause for explaining the course that the revolution in Jinan took up through the declaration of independence. Instead, the declaration was a result of the elite's responses to events unfolding around them, particularly the threat of revolutionary armies invading the north and pressure exerted by the 5th Division of the Beiyang Army in Jinan. Even then, the declaration was more of a tactical retreat than a complete surrender on the part of loyalists among Jinan's elite and Governor Sun Baoqi. This course of events demonstrates the local vitality of the Qing state in

Jinan, even as events elsewhere unwound the ties that bound the empire together.

At the time of the Wuchang Uprising, revolutionaries in Jinan faced a series of steep challenges in winning control of the city. Governor Sun Baoqi was reformist but firmly loyal to the Qing and personally connected through marriage to Yuan Shikai and Zaizhen (Prince Qing), Yuan's ally at court.⁹⁵ The 62 Party's majority in the Provincial Assembly and their affinity for Sun's mix of reformist and loyalist inclinations likewise made turning the assembly and the provincial government decisively against each other unlikely. Unless a critical mass of the 5th Division could be won over, an armed uprising would be doomed to fail.⁹⁶

However, the revolutionaries did enjoy some advantages. They had successfully ensconced their leaders in the provincial colleges and grown their network of supporters to include a large number—unfortunately a precise estimate is impossible—of students there.⁹⁷ By the time of the Wuchang Uprising, they had also begun organizing among the lower ranks of officers in the 5th Division, particularly those who had studied in Japan.⁹⁸ Just as important, the revolutionaries could exploit divisions within the provincial elite and play on their shared fear of being caught amid the brewing civil war between the loyalist armies commanded by Yuan in the north and the revolutionary army in the south. As in 1853 after the Taiping capture of Nanjing (chapter 3), Jinan's position between north and south made the elite anxious to avoid a conflict that could engulf their city.

The leader of the Revolutionary Alliance in Jinan was Ding Weifen, a native of Rizhao, in far eastern Shandong, who had joined the party while studying abroad in Japan. In early 1911

⁹⁵ Sun was also the son-in-law of former Shandong Governor Zhang Yao. Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:163.

⁹⁶ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 81–82.

⁹⁷ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, 80–81; Zhongguo shixuehui Jinan fenhui, *Shandong jindaishi ziliao*, 2:80–81.

⁹⁸ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:164. On the weakness of either the court's or Yuan Shikai's hold over particularly the junior officers of the Beiyang Army, see Young, *The Presidency*, 55–64; MacKinnon, *Power and Politics*, 131–35; Fung, *The Military Dimension*, 185–87.

Ding attended a meeting of representatives from different provincial branches of the Revolutionary Alliance in Beijing and then returned to Jinan to teach at Shandong College of Law and Government, along with other members of the Alliance.⁹⁹ Ding later wrote a history of revolutionary activities in Shandong that provides an inside—albeit hardly unbiased—view of events in 1911. Besides gaining the support of the army, Ding saw taking control of the provincial assembly as an essential step toward establishing the Alliance’s power in Jinan. There were revolutionary sympathizers, even Alliance members, in the 62 Party, including its putative leader, Peng Zhanyuan. However, Ding saw the Qingliu Party as more likely collaborators and so focused his attention on its leaders, such as Ding Shifeng.¹⁰⁰

The factors that created the split between the 62 and Qingliu parties made members of the latter a more likely partner for the revolutionaries. Both Qingliu and Alliance members generally hailed from the eastern portion of Shandong. Leaders of the Qingliu Party and the Revolutionary Alliance had both studied abroad in Japan. While studying abroad in Japan, Ding Shifeng had become friends with one of the revolutionary leaders, Xu Jingxin.¹⁰¹ The minority status of the Qingliu Party within the assembly, and the growing political animosity between the two parties after the Laiyang Uprising in 1910 likewise made its members receptive to the revolutionaries’ overtures.¹⁰²

However, even after the outbreak of the revolution, the Revolutionary Alliance failed to completely co-opt the Qingliu Party. Instead, members from both parties opened up a channel for negotiation among themselves and with Sun Baoqi about how to respond to the spreading revolution. As part of this effort, a combination of literati, merchants, and members of the

⁹⁹ Zhang Jianzhi, “Shandong duli qianhou,” 2–3.

¹⁰⁰ Ding Weifen, “Shandong gemingdang shigao,” 392–93.

¹⁰¹ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 79.

¹⁰² Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:164.

Education Association recalled Xia Jiquan (also known as Puzhai) to Shandong to serve as a mediator. Xia was a native of Yuncheng, in southwestern Shandong, and was currently serving as an expectant official in the Ministry of Personnel in Beijing. His awareness of what was happening in Beijing and the respect he enjoyed among different sectors of the provincial elite made him an acceptable mediator to all sides, although Xia later described himself as decidedly sympathetic to the revolution.¹⁰³

In the first week of November, Xia helped broker an agreement within the assembly that slowed the momentum the revolutionaries were building for declaring independence. Xia arrived in Jinan on November 2 and the next day reported on the domestic and international situation at a public meeting held at Shandong Normal College. That same day, the revolutionaries received instructions from the revolutionary government telling them to instigate an uprising, and on November 5 they met at Shandong College of Law and Government to draft articles of independence.¹⁰⁴ However, the other parties rejected this proposal. Instead, Xia and Ding Shifeng drafted a series of eight demands, presented them to Sun Baoqi on behalf of the assembly, and demanded that Sun forward them to the court, stipulating that they expected a response within three days. This compromise reflected the complex balance of power within the assembly.

The demands addressed three specific problems. First, in response to a rumor that the Qing court was planning to borrow a large sum of money from the German government to fight the revolutionary army in the south and would put up the entirety of Shandong as collateral, they demanded that the Qing court not borrow foreign funds to cover military expenses in a war against its own people. Second, the next two demands aimed to head off a civil war altogether,

¹⁰³ Zhang Jianzhi, “Shandong duli qianhou,” 4; Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 89–91.

¹⁰⁴ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:165–166; Zhang Jianzhi, “Shandong duli qianhou,” 4–6.

asking the court to immediately cease hostilities with the revolutionary army, to enter into negotiations, and to commit to keeping the 5th Division in Shandong rather than dispatching it to fight in the south. Finally, the remaining five demands sought to advance the cause of constitutionalism and self-government on several fronts: (1) Shandong should cease remitting funds designated for military expenses and instead retain them for military training and charitable relief within the province; (2) the court should promulgate a constitution establishing a federal form of government; (3) Shandong should be allowed to appoint its own officials and set its own taxes; (4) Shandong should be allowed to draft its own constitution, using the assembly regulations as a provisional version; and (5) the court should allow Shandong to raise an army to protect its own territory.¹⁰⁵ These demands were certainly confrontational, but they were neither out of character with the actions of the assembly in the preceding years nor as dramatic as the act of declaring independence that the revolutionaries were pushing.

As the court deliberated, the revolutionaries and their allies did win a victory by successfully dissolving the provincial assembly and replacing it with a Shandong United Assembly (*lianhe hui*). To the benefit of the revolutionaries, this new body included a broader range of representatives, including students, and was supposed to operate with more independence from court-appointed provincial officials than the assembly had. Even then, though, the revolutionaries failed to control it entirely. While they initially proposed making Xu Jingxin the president, he did not receive the support he needed from more moderate members to overcome the objections of those who opposed the revolution.¹⁰⁶ The reactions of leaders of the 62 Party and other loyalists were mixed. Xia Jiquan himself assumed the position of president (*huizhang*) and nominated Yu Puyuan—former vice-president of the assembly—and Jinan native

¹⁰⁵ Zhang Jianzhi, “Shandong duli qianhou,” 6–7.

¹⁰⁶ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 87.

Fan Zhijie as vice-presidents. Since these men were associated with the 62 Party, the nominations were a concession to those who were hesitant about declaring independence and consolidated Xia's position as an arbiter between the two parties.¹⁰⁷ However, they both refused this post, and Yang Yusi, the former president of the assembly, and Wang Jingxi, former vice-president, likewise refused to participate in the new body.¹⁰⁸ Sun Baoqi, however, legitimated the new assembly by appointing Xia Jiquan Police intendant (*xunjing dao*) and delegating authority for maintaining public order to the assembly. As a result, power within the province remained split between loyalists and revolutionary sympathizers. On the surface, the refusal of the 62 Party to participate in the United Assembly gave more power to leaders like Ding Shifeng, but the loyalists continued to work behind the scenes to support the Qing cause. Meanwhile, Sun and Xia kept close tabs on the United Assembly and maintained control of the police and, for the moment, the army.

The situation changed considerably on November 8. First, Shandong received the court's reply to the Eight Demands. Although the court did not explicitly refuse any of the demands, its perfunctory response mostly referred to previous orders, like calling a cease fire, and deferred core issues like the establishment of a new constitution and form of government until after the crisis had passed. Accepting this response would essentially revert Shandong to the *status quo ante* of anxiously sitting by while the Qing and revolutionaries negotiated a settlement, hoping that civil war did not engulf Shandong, and waiting on the central government to initiate more far-reaching reforms. Dissatisfaction with the court's response pushed members of the United Assembly who had previously balked at declaring independence towards secession and

¹⁰⁷ Zhang Jianzhi, "Shandong duli qianhou," 8.

¹⁰⁸ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:168; Ding Weifen, "Shandong gemingdang shigao," 393–94.

energized the revolutionaries.¹⁰⁹

Second, Zhang Yongcheng, the commander of the 5th Division stepped down from his post on that day. Zhang was among the high-ranking officers on whose loyalty Sun Baoqi had counted as the crisis mounted. His resignation—prompted by fear of the revolutionaries—opened the door for the lower-ranking officers, among whom the revolutionaries had won support, to seize control. Jia Binqing, who was sympathetic to the revolution and the junior officers’ preferred choice, took command of the 5th Division, meaning Sun could no longer absolutely count on the military to support the loyalist cause.¹¹⁰

These developments left the Revolutionary Alliance with a clear advantage in the assembly and the army. They pressed this advantage at a large meeting on November 13 and demanded that Sun Baoqi issue a declaration of independence and take the lead of an independent government, with Jia Binqing as his second-in-command. Sun vehemently resisted these demands, and his arguments against declaring independence shed light on at least how he perceived the mindset of moderates in the United Assembly. Sun warned that Shandong was poorly positioned to strike out on its own since its military forces were weak and its treasury empty. Although the court’s finances were hardly in better shape, it could draw on foreign loans, which Shandong would lose access to if it cut ties to the court. Moreover, if Shandong declared independence, then the Germans would likely intervene, and the province lacked the strength to resist them on its own. Moreover, he argued that if Shandong declared independence, Beijing would surely send an army to reassert control (even in the revolutionaries did not invade the north). Sun claimed, “If Shandong becomes a battleground, then the lives and property of the whole province’s people will be in danger day and night. Although the strength of the Beijing

¹⁰⁹ Zhang Jianzhi, “Shandong duli qianhou,” 8.

¹¹⁰ Zhang Jianzhi, 9.

government's army has been insufficient for attacking Hankou [across the Yangzi River from Wuchang], it will be more than enough to strike Shandong.”¹¹¹ Sun thus played on the assembly members' fears that declaring independence would leave Shandong politically isolated and turn it into a battleground between the north and south. Instead, he advised waiting to see what steps the court might take to allay the situation, like announcing the adoption of a republican government, which Sun repeatedly advised in his communications with the court and Yuan Shikai.¹¹²

However, Huang Zhikun, the highest-ranking officer of the 5th Division present at the meeting, trumped Sun's arguments. He argued that with the spread of the revolution, the strength of the southern revolutionary forces now exceeded that of the north. As it strengthened its hold on the Yangzi Valley, the south would certainly look to invade the north, and the most likely route would be via the Jin-Pu Railroad, which would, of course, lead them straight into the heart of Shandong.¹¹³ The only way for Shandong to avoid being seen as an enemy would be to declare firmly for the revolution and sever ties with the Qing. If it did so and joined the growing revolutionary coalition, then the foreign powers would be unable to intervene and carve up China as Sun had warned.¹¹⁴ Sun's and Huang's arguments both centered on how the developing civil war would affect Shandong and spoke to the pragmatic concerns of assembly members who were not as committed to the radical goals of the revolution as Revolutionary Alliance members were.

What Huang had that Sun didn't was force of arms. When Sun still refused to cooperate and assume the post of president, Huang and other soldiers in the meeting drew their weapons

¹¹¹ Zhongguo shixuehui Jinan fenhui, *Shandong jindaishi ziliao*, 2:88–90.

¹¹² “Sun Baoqi diandang zhong youguan Xinhai geming,” 26, 29, 33.

¹¹³ Huang noted that the railroad line from Hankou to Beijing and the sea—both of which would bypass Shandong—were also possible attack routes, but since the former was well-defended by Qing armies and the latter was the longest of the three, the Jin-Pu Railroad, which had opened to traffic from the south the previous year, was the most likely route.

¹¹⁴ Zhongguo shixuehui Jinan fenhui, *Shandong jindaishi ziliao*, 2:90.

and pointed them at Sun. Faced with the real possibility of blood being spilled on the meeting room floor, Xia Jiquan intervened and persuaded Sun to accept the army's demands in order to keep the peace.¹¹⁵ Under this pressure, Sun relented and accepted the declaration of independence and his new title as president, which granted him almost total power over administrative and fiscal affairs in the province. In the next two weeks, though, it became clear that the revolutionaries' control of the army was far more tenuous than it appeared at the November 13 meeting. Sun used his powers as president to help reverse the declaration of independence and swing moderate politicians back away from the revolution.

After Independence, 1911–2

The declaration of independence was the height of the revolutionaries' power in Jinan. Soon the vulnerability of their position was exposed, but this did not mean that the loyalist elite or even Sun himself necessarily regained the upper hand. Instead, as the declaration of independence itself presaged, power in provincial politics lay with the military and those who controlled it. By 1912, Yuan Shikai and his lieutenants were the primary power brokers in the province.

In Chinese scholarship and pro-revolutionary primary sources, Sun Baoqi and staunchly loyalist elites bear much of the blame for the short-lived nature of Shandong's independence.¹¹⁶ Likewise, David Buck describes the revolutionaries' decision to keep Sun as governor as a "fatal error."¹¹⁷ In Jiangsu, Guangxi, and Anhui, the revolutionaries were successful in convincing governors to join their cause and declare independence, so working with Sun rather than deposing him was not an exceptional strategy.¹¹⁸ However, Sun's staunch resistance to the

¹¹⁵ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 99–100.

¹¹⁶ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, 130–43; Zhang Jianzhi, "Shandong duli qianhou," 13–15.

¹¹⁷ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 75.

¹¹⁸ Li Xizhu, "Provincial Officials."

revolution and close ties to Yuan Shikai should have clued in the revolutionaries that he was not a trustworthy ally. Ding Weifen's account of the revolution unfortunately does not provide insight into the revolutionaries' frame of mind at the time, besides noting that, as later developments made apparent, Sun was still loyal to the Qing.¹¹⁹

As detrimental to the revolutionary cause as keeping Sun in place proved to be, it was more a reflection of the relatively weak position of the revolutionaries in Shandong than a cause of it. As the rejection of Xu Jingxin as president of the United Assembly showed, the revolutionaries' influence even in this new body was hardly absolute. In effect, considerable power lay with the amorphous group of constitutionalists whose support both Sun and Huang had sought through pragmatic, security-based appeals. Even when sources acknowledge their power, there is little concrete analysis of why they acted the way they did or their relationship to stauncher loyalists, like the leaders of the 62 Party, and to the revolutionaries.¹²⁰ As I have argued in the previous section, the ideological divisions within the provincial assembly were probably smaller than the Manichean picture of progressive revolutionaries versus feudal gentry that prevails suggests. This helps us better appreciate why the majority of representatives in the provincial assembly and then the United Assembly would have been receptive to arguments that framed the choice of declaring independence in pragmatic terms.

This dynamic also may explain why Sun remained in power, despite obvious red flags from the revolutionaries' perspective. Although the dissolution of the provincial assembly and the court's response to the Eight Demands had moved the provincial elite towards the revolutionary position, the Revolutionary Alliance still depended on the support of more moderate elements from the Qingliu Party and the remnants of the 62 Party. Even with less

¹¹⁹ Ding Weifen, "Shandong gemingdang shigao," 396–97.

¹²⁰ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 143.

radical politicians, like Yang Yusi and Wang Maokun sidelined, their opposition to deserting the dynasty likely still pulled weight among members of the new assembly. Sun's willingness to take responsibility for breaking ties with the Qing government and his close relationship with Yuan Shikai, likely allayed the fears of the moderates. Likewise, while Ding Weifen pointed to Sun's ongoing communication with the court and other loyalist governors in the north as a sign of his disloyalty, Sun's efforts to achieve a national consensus mitigated anxieties that Shandong would stand alone against the Qing or become a battlefield in a war between north and south.¹²¹

Even with Sun still in power, the revolutionaries might have kept developments moving in their preferred direction if they had maintained control of the army. In fact, they quickly lost their grip on the 5th Division. First, on account of Jia Binqing now being Lieutenant Governor, Sun forced him to resign his post as commander of the 5th Division. Meanwhile, Yuan ordered two of his lieutenants, Zhang Guangjian and Wu Bingxiang, both of whom were expectant officials and natives of Anhui, to build support among the troops for canceling independence. Their efforts were aided by Yuan forming his new cabinet on November 16 (three days after Shandong's independence), which signaled his firm commitment to the Qing cause.¹²² Zhang and Wu succeeded, and on November 23, the officers of the 5th Division sent a letter to Sun and the assembly demanding that they withdraw the declaration of independence. That evening, the army also made plans to arrest the revolutionary leaders. The Revolutionary Alliance leaders escaped when word got out, but these actions both undercut their position in Jinan and fractured their alliance with the moderates and assembly leaders Ding Shifeng and Xia Jiquan. While the revolutionaries fled back to their hometowns in Shandong, where uprisings of various sizes were underway, or south to regroup with their colleagues, Ding and Xia went to Beijing to open

¹²¹ Ding Weifen, "Shandong gemingdang shigao," 397.

¹²² Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 134, 138.

negotiations with Yuan.¹²³

Meanwhile, Yuan Shikai consolidated his control of civilian government. On November 16, most of the provincial officials and Jinan's prefect had resigned, leaving Sun free to appoint loyal subordinates. On November 24, Sun held a meeting of loyalist leaders at the Shanxi Native Place Lodge to discuss forming yet another new provincial assembly. Among the attendees at this meeting were Wang Maokun, Meng Jisheng, and Tan Kuihan, i.e. the local men who wielded the most power in Jinan's commercial institutions. (See chapter 6.) The 5th Division set guards outside the lodge to offer protection and signal its support for this re-organization. This gathering decided to comply with the army's demand to rescind the declaration of independence and dissolved both the independent provincial government and the United Assembly. With Shandong back in the Qing fold, Zhang Guangjian was promoted to administrative commissioner, and Wu Bingxiang took the post of police intendant.¹²⁴ In December, the court finally accepted Sun's repeated requests to be allowed to resign, which allowed him to extricate himself from what had become a fraught political position and seek treatment for health issues—but also safe haven—in a foreign hospital. Zhang Guangjian was promoted to governor in January 1912, confirming Yuan's power in the province.

As these events unfolded, support for Sun Baoqi remained high among a range of Shandong's elite. On November 28, Wu Shumei, Wang Maokun, Meng Jisheng, and Mao Chenglin submitted a petition to Yuan Shikai on behalf of Shandong's elite praising Sun's handling of events and asking that he be allowed to stay in his post so as not to disrupt the still-tense situation.¹²⁵ The Shandong native place association in Beijing submitted a similar petition

¹²³ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:175–77.

¹²⁴ Dang Mingde, 5:176–79; Zhang Jianzhi, “Shandong duli qianhou,” 14.

¹²⁵ Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan and Haixia liang'an chubanshe, *Qinggong Xinhai*, 69:369–370.

the next day, suggesting that a relatively wide range of actors agreed with this positive assessment of his performance, given the unusual circumstances he and they had faced.¹²⁶ When Sun did eventually leave Jinan, the *North China Herald* reported that “everybody seems to feel that Governor Sun did all that he could to keep order during these troublous times, and that the course he pursued was the only one open to him under the circumstances.”¹²⁷ Sun’s success in preventing violence from breaking out in Jinan or letting the province become a battleground in the civil war likely won him the appreciation even of actors who had spurned his arguments against declaring independence.

The elites’ anxieties about Sun leaving proved well-founded. Zhang Guangjian and Wu Bingxiang strictly repressed all sorts of political activities. They posted guards outside the provincial colleges, shut down critical publications, and refused to allow the Provincial Assembly to re-open.¹²⁸ The conditions of the truce negotiated by Yuan Shikai and the revolutionaries in early December forbade Qing officials from arresting individuals solely on the basis of their membership in the Revolutionary Alliance. However, Zhang and Wu continued to arrest revolutionary operatives, referring to them as “local bandits,” which risked disrupting the peace between north and south. In the most infamous such incident, on December 10 Zhang ordered the arrest of several revolutionaries and their associates who were in the commercial settlement plotting to sabotage a shipment of munitions to Qing forces in the south via the Jin-Pu Railroad and, if possible, assassinate Qing official Zhang Xun. One of the revolutionaries died in the arrest attempt and others were tortured while in custody. Several remained in prison until after the emperor’s abdication and Yuan Shikai’s accession to the presidency.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Zhongguo diyi lishi dang’anguan and Haixia liang’an chuban jiaoliu zhongxin, 70:43-48.

¹²⁷ “Departure of Governor Sun Pao-chi: A Great Official,” *NCH*, 1912/1/13, 103.

¹²⁸ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 144–50.

¹²⁹ Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, 151–58.

A fragmentary source record and the highly politicized nature of the events make it difficult to gauge how exactly Jinan's political leaders reacted to Zhang and Wu's administration in Shandong. The revolutionaries accused Shandong people in Beijing, including Jinan native Zhang Yinglin, of encouraging their draconian policies in order to reassert government control.¹³⁰ Likewise, after Wang Maokun's death in June, 1912, *Shen bao* accused him of being a "running dog" for Zhang and Wu.¹³¹ Despite these recriminations, Jinan's elite by no means offered unconditional support to Yuan's henchmen. Mao Chenglin was one of a group of people, including revolutionary Wang Na, who petitioned for the release of the men arrested in the commercial settlement.¹³² In Beijing, Zhang Yinglin and Lü Haihuan (Wang Maokun's close associate) helped forward a petition protesting against the arrests and asking Yuan Shikai to ensure that provincial officials keep tight reins on the soldiers and police to keep them from disturbing the peace.¹³³ In a separate case, Wang Maokun and others donated money to help transport a revolutionary who had been arrested in Jinan back to his hometown in the south.¹³⁴

These conflicting representations suggest a more nuanced picture of how Jinan's elite responded to Yuan's tightening control. On the one hand, they found common cause with Yuan and his lieutenants against the revolutionaries. On the other hand, they found fault with Zhang Guangjian and Wu Bingxiang's failure to replicate Sun Baoqi's efforts to prioritize keeping peace and order in the city and the province. Keeping the assembly temporarily closed did prevent it from becoming a base for revolutionary activity, but it also undermined the say of local people in provincial politics, which members of the 62 Party had sought to expand.¹³⁵ The

¹³⁰ Zhongguo shixuehui Jinan fenhui, *Shandong jindaishi ziliao*, 2:101.

¹³¹ "Jinan si yi quanshen," *Shen bao*, 1912/6/14, 6.

¹³² Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 153.

¹³³ Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan and Haixia liang'an chubansha jiaoliu zhongxin, *Qingong Xinhai*, 73:88–92.

¹³⁴ "Xinhai geming qijian Zhang Guangjian dianhan xuanji (xu)," 79.

¹³⁵ Zhang Hanzhang, the former secretary of the Provincial Assembly, and a member of the 62 Party confronted Wu Bingxiang over his closure of the assembly. Li Hongsheng, Liu Dake, and Zhang Dengde, *Qilu fenghuo*, 144–45.

noticeable dominance of men from Anhui in the top posts of provincial administration only added more fodder to these concerns. While the Wuchang Uprising intensified existing divisions among the provincial elite, the concerns shared by a broad spectrum of Shandong's political elite after independence was canceled may have helped bring them back together.

There is no evidence that Jinan's elite actively opposed Yuan Shikai himself, but there was also not much of an alternative by the time he assumed the presidency upon the abdication of the imperial household on February 12, 1912. Members of the provincial elite, including the familiar cast of characters from Jinan and the Provincial Assembly, joined Zhang Guangjian in offering congratulations and support to Yuan Shikai on his accession to the presidency.¹³⁶ Meng Jisheng, Wang Maokun, Mao Chenglin, and Wang Xifan wrote their own congratulatory message to Yuan, expressing that he was the only person capable of managing the extraordinary situation that confronted the country. However, they also found room to praise the virtues of the last Qing ruler, saying, "The Emperor of the Great Qing has been on the throne only a few years and is but a child. Now, in order to protect the peace of the realm, he has generously abdicated. This is truly something rarely attained among the emperors of China since the three dynasties." In closing, they asked Yuan to exert himself in his duties, enact policies that would bring tranquil governance back to the realm, but also respect the conditions for the favorable treatment of the imperial household that were negotiated as part of the abdication.¹³⁷

This message reflected the mixed outcome of the 1911 Revolution for Jinan's reformist, loyalist elites. On the one hand, they largely achieved their most immediate goal: preventing their city from becoming engulfed in bloodshed. On the other hand, temporary stability came at the expense of the Qing Dynasty, and the means by which it was achieved heralded an uncertain

¹³⁶ Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan and Haixia liang'an chuban jiaoliu zhongxin, *Qinggong Xinhai*, 77:318–327.

¹³⁷ "Jinan shenshi Meng Jisheng zhi Yuan quanquan dian," *Linshi gongbao*, XT 3/12/29.

political future. The uncomfortable position of Jinan's elite between the revolutionaries and Yuan's regime presaged their vulnerability to political maneuvering that was beyond their control and lacked the mediation of inter-provincial politics that the court had provided as well as the commitment the dynasty had shown to advancing self-government.

Conclusion

Sun Baoqi's departure and Yuan Shikai's consolidation of power in Shandong ushered in a new era of provincial and national politics that departed from the patterns of imperial rule that have been the subject of preceding chapters. I discuss this transition in more detail in the conclusion. More narrowly, 1912 marked the end of a particular chapter of political experimentation undertaken by the Qing in response to the flurry of crises it faced at the turn of the twentieth century. What does the state of Jinan in 1911–2 tell us about the outcome of this experiment?

First, the Qing had made considerable strides in enforcing its own terms on foreign powers, but the specter of national dismemberment at the hands of imperialists still hung over political actors in Jinan and throughout Shandong. The commercial settlement discussed in chapter 6 represented a far more robust approach to protecting Qing sovereignty than the ad hoc arrangements that resulted from the Jinan missionary case. Moreover, it created a spatial and institutional framework for incorporating foreign actors into a proactive project of economic modernization that also encompassed Chinese-directed efforts to advance commerce and industry, like the chamber of commerce. This aspect of the late Qing reforms refined existing patterns of *imperial* governance through official-elite collaboration to devise more effective methods for combating imperialist intrusion locally. However, anti-imperialism also produced a

nationalizing effect, since members of the elite interpreted their efforts as a local manifestation of a larger war to protect China's sovereignty. This sense of national crisis bore some similarity to elites' experiences during the Taiping War, but, especially for Shandong, the imperialist threat was more immediate and even harder to terminate than a civil war. These anxieties catalyzed the political mobilization of the province's elite, which benefited the Qing state only insofar as the elite identified the interests of the dynasty with those of the nation. In Shandong, especially in Jinan, the Qing was relatively successful in maintaining this association and benefited from the dynastic loyalism it produced, but the effect of rumors about the court's reliance on foreign loans to put down the revolution demonstrates the limits of its success.

Second, the reforms affirmed core aspects of Jinan's place in imperial spatial politics. Bodies like the Chamber of Commerce offered new institutional avenues for members of Jinan's elite to exert leadership within their community, but they did so in cooperation with powerful provincial officials and their subordinates, especially expectant officials. After 1908, the provincial assembly and local councils offered additional routes for formalizing and expanding elite power but as part of a project of state-building and as a complement to official-government. Although Jinan's elite were not especially prominent in the leadership of the new schools, these institutions intensified the translocal circulation of people through the system of education and credentialing used for recruiting new officials. Throughout the reforms, Jinan's status as a provincial capital made it an object of special investment by the provincial government, lessening the burden that would have otherwise fallen on its own elite, and helped local leaders insert themselves into provincial developments.

In these senses, the reforms represented more an energetic adaptation of imperial rule than a sharp departure from precedent. However, they also exposed and exacerbated problems

with the distribution of political power within and beyond individual provinces. In the realm of education, the need for new kinds of expertise forced provincial colleges to employ men who had studied abroad in Japan. While there, some of these men developed new political identities as members of a revolutionary movement that sought both to overthrow the Qing specifically and institute a more aggressively nationalist form of government. In the students who flocked to the schools they founded and in the provincial colleges, these men found a ready audience and opportunities to expand their political power. Meanwhile, an alliance of degree-holding elites based in the western half of the province with close connections to provincial officials dominated the Provincial Assembly. The reforms did not create the social and political differences between these two groups, but they put them on display and, in the Assembly, created a new kind of arena, where local concerns, like the Laiyang Uprising, ramified across the province as a whole.

Qing governance had not precluded political organization at the province-level per se, but permanent institutions like the colleges and the assembly generated new opportunities for mobilization and contestation. Likewise, the assemblies encouraged a new kind of inter-provincial politics that bore heavily on the actions of Shandong's elite in 1911. In one sense, this politics was fundamentally national in scope: the assemblies banded together to advocate for implementing a national constitution and convening a national assembly. However, provincial self-interest also took center stage, both in provinces that decided firmly for the revolution and in Shandong, where the elite watched nervously as their province became the lone loyalist buffer between the revolutionary south and Beijing.

In a general sense, then, even the history of Shandong—one of the provinces where the revolution was least successful—broadly affirms the scholarly consensus that the late Qing reforms affected the relationship between elite communities and the state in ways that

precipitated the dynasty's collapse. However, the history of the revolution in Jinan suggests two qualifications to this view. First, the effects of the reforms were not so drastic that place-making became necessarily inimical to state-building. At both the local and provincial level—as we see in the activities of the provincial assembly—place-making could continue to support the operation of the Qing state and was an indispensable aspect of negotiating the new kind of political order the Qing was trying to forge to ensure its own survival. At the same time, participating in reformist state-building continued to be an advantageous element of place-making, at least in the eyes of many of the men in the assembly. Neither localism nor provincialism was itself the dynasty's downfall. Second, the impression that the changes in elites' relationship to the state contributed to the revolution is most accurate if we understand relationships between different groups of elites as constitutive of the state. Jinan reminds us that the elite as a whole did not desert the Qing.¹³⁸ Around the empire, the revolution exposed political tensions between elite classes with different geographic, social, and occupational backgrounds. The dynasty's failure to hold together these disparate groups proved fatal precisely because translocal elite relations were a core element of the state. Successor regimes struggled to reverse the Qing's shortcomings, particularly amid the rapid social and economic changes of the early twentieth century, which made establishing a fixed political constituency a grave challenge. The Communists addressed this problem in innovative and unprecedentedly nationalizing ways, not least of which was a sweeping project of social engineering. Nevertheless, the heterogeneity of relationships between local communities and the state that characterized the Qing state

¹³⁸ Even in provinces that did join the revolution, the degree of participation varied widely. In Sichuan, the rural element of the revolution was significantly higher than elsewhere, where it was more of an urban phenomenon. This owed to the provincial nature of the grievances that fueled elite discontent with the dynasty. In Zhejiang, though, revolutionary organization was effectively limited to core regions. Kaske, "Taxation, Trust, and Government Debt"; Schoppa, *Chinese Elites*, 149–57.

persists in various forms today.

By no means did the Qing state survive unscathed in local time capsules, though. Just as place-making had been an integral element of producing the Qing state, destructive and re-constructive place-making helped un-make it after 1911. On July 22, 1913 a group of merchants in Shanghai suddenly decided to tear down the pavilion commemorating Wang Maokun that had been erected outside the magistrate's office on his departure from the city in 1906. They declared that "there is no use leaving it and it would be better to remove it." Under normal circumstances, Wang's contributions to the city would have remained relevant to a sense of place for decades, even centuries. But now the Great Qing was the "former Qing" (*qian Qing*), and Wang's local service was bound up with his status as a Qing official.¹³⁹ The fall of the Qing recast senses of place and prompted a re-working of the physical landscape. Attempting to erase local and personal traces of the state was one response. In fact, the destruction of this pavilion did not completely erase Wang from Shanghai since the commemorative stele originally housed in the pavilion was moved inside the magistrate's office—out of public sight but not out of existence. Then, in 1915, when the magistrate's office moved, the Shanghai Office for Managing Public Funds and Property asked the magistrate's permission to preserve this "artifact of the former Qing (*qian Qing jiuji*) so that "it may be bequeathed to posterity and not decay."¹⁴⁰

These approaches to negotiating political transformation through place-making—destruction, reconstruction, and selective preservation—all asserted the past-ness of the Qing and so participated in its dismantling. In the epilogue, I use the compilation of Jinan's final Qing gazetteer, initiated with Wang's help while he and the Qing both lived and completed by fellow

¹³⁹ "Daohui Wang Yaoting jinian ting," *Shen bao*, 1913/7/23, 7.

¹⁴⁰ "Baocun Wang Yaoting qusi bei," *Shen bao*, 1915/10/15, 10.

loyalists in the 1920s, to explore a different form of engagement with the imperial state in the post-Qing period. Through writing local history, Jinan's loyalists perpetuated the project of embodying the state through place-making even when, by most accounts, this state had ceased to exist.

Conclusion

The political system ushered in by the revolution was both less imperial and less national than the Qing state had been. One way to read the political history of twentieth-century China is as a long effort to leave its imperial legacy firmly in the past while striving toward a national future. The copious literature on nationalism in modern China that has sprung up, especially in recent years, testifies adequately to the power of nationalist ideology in twentieth-century China, particularly how it re-shaped individual subjectivities and their relationship to the state.¹ There is broad agreement that the imperial system itself quickly became a relic of the past, a fact attested to by the utter failure of Yuan Shikai's attempt to re-establish a monarchical system in 1915. Esherick writes, "Even his own generals rose in defense of the new republic; the empire was gone forever. Legitimacy now came from the people, and however imperfect the institutions of republican rule, China's modern rulers have always claimed to be acting on behalf of the people and appealed to the ideals of democracy."²

However, the question of to what degree China has moved beyond its imperial past is more complicated, especially when we consider the territorial and ethnic composition of today's People's Republic. As nationalist thinking gained ascendance, debates about the scope of the nation showed signs of different impulses that had already manifested themselves in the hybrid state-building of the Qing Empire. Liang Qichao's argument that the Chinese nation should encompass all constituencies ruled by the Qing reflected the (nationalistic) optimism about the capacity of the state to transform its people that characterized the Yongzheng reign, while Zhang Binglin's rejection of this logic (albeit not the anti-Manchuism that informed it) resembled the

¹ See, for instance, Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*; Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen*; Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State*.

² Esherick, "Introduction," 1. See also Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate*, 2:119–39; Zarrow, *After Empire*, 2–8ff.

more differentiating and essentializing (imperial) ideology of the Qianlong reign.³ Concerns about how splitting up the empire, as Zhang preferred, would undermine national security played a major role in Liang's vision of a "Greater China" becoming the consensus definition for who and where should constitute the Chinese nation.⁴ The resulting political formation did inherit "imperial claims to territory and collective self-definition," but these did not map neatly onto the "the assumption of national unity that claimed to derive from a linear, modernizing march of history."⁵ Attitudes and policies towards what are now deemed "ethnic minorities" have unsurprisingly continued to exhibit hybridity, then. On the one hand, a discourse of national unity forged through the assimilation of diverse groups has been a persistent feature of nationalist discourse. On the other hand, ethnic differences have been fixed in place and carefully constructed through scientific protocols, making non-Han groups permanent objects of a (nationalizing) civilizing mission.⁶

This dissertation's argument that the Qing state itself was a hybrid formation that mixed imperial and national elements can help us work through this tension between the apparent finality of the empire's fall and the comingling of imperial and national patterns of state-building even into contemporary times. The elimination of putatively essential components of the imperial state—such as rule by an emperor/imperial court—did not necessarily make successor states any more "purely" national than the Qing had been "purely" imperial. As the quote from Esherick above suggests, some of the most dramatic changes that occurred in China's political landscape were in terms of the way people articulated their relationship to the state and the

³ Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, 348–56.

⁴ Esherick, "How the Qing Became China," 247.

⁵ Perdue, "Empire and Nation," 303. On how the Qing generated a sense of collective identity relevant to nationalist state-building, see also Zhao, "Reinventing China."

⁶ Fiskesjö, "Rescuing the Empire"; Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*; Mullaney, *Coming to Terms*.

shared mythologies they came to believe in. The fact that collective belief makes today's Chinese state a nation does not make its nation-hood any less real, insofar as, using Bourdieu's words, "the state is a theological entity, that is, an entity that exists by way of belief."⁷ However, we should still inquire about what kinds of material practices operate behind the curtain of the theology of nationalism and not take for granted that political theology and practice are perfect mirrors of each other. China is, by no means, unique in this regard. The U.S. has perhaps been more successful than any other country in convincing itself that by being a nation—and a certain kind of one (e.g. one that upholds a broad range of "inalienable rights")—it has immunized itself from committing what it sees as the sins of empire. Of course, the *effects* of U.S. state-building both on its frontiers and at its territorial core tell a very different story.⁸

As I have argued, critically interrogating the beliefs and practices that constitute state-building and the relationship between them requires attention to places and the translocal processes that link and make them. This is true for both borderland areas characterized by ethnic diversity and core regions whose population is putatively ethnically homogeneous. Such an approach is important to the study of imperial states because, while they depend on spatial differentiation, they also generate or at least accommodate translocal connections that belie their putatively imperial character. As we have seen, place-making in Jinan was interwoven with this tension between differentiation and translocality and in many ways shaped by the city's role as a mediator between these two aspects of Qing state-building. However, attention to places is no less important for the study of nation-states, precisely because their mythology of spatial (and ethnic) homogeneity can obscure the spatial differentiation they create.

⁷ Bourdieu, *On the State*, 10.

⁸ Literature on U.S. empire is too copious to cite exhaustively. For an excellent review, which makes the case for thinking of empire in terms of the effects of state-building, see Kramer, "Power and Connection."

To fully draw out this dynamic from the perspective of Jinan, we would need to examine its history over the entirety of the period from 1912 up to the present, which is too far beyond the scope of this study to be manageable. However, since David Buck's book on Jinan focuses mainly on the Republican Period and bears on these questions, it deserves a final look. The political fragmentation of this period makes it an especially useful object of attention, since it forces us to confront the fact that the unified governance of even the territory we think of as more naturally belonging to the Chinese nation was not inevitable.

Jinan continued to be the political center of Shandong after 1912, which brought some ongoing benefits, like disproportionate investment by the provincial government.⁹ Nevertheless, the lack of a strong central government and the growing influence of military figures over civilian administration adversely affected the city's political climate and economic development, which is the primary argument of Buck's book. During the late Qing, Jinan's elite—and the majority of the Provincial Assembly to which they belonged—had found ways to work constructively with the provincial government and had rallied around Sun Baoqi during the revolution. Over the course of the 1910s, though, this alliance between the provincial elite and the provincial government frayed considerably. Jinan's leading political figures—still a mix of literati and commercial elites—remained opposed to the revolutionary movement led by Sun Yat-sen, which first participated in the national government and then launched a “second revolution” as Yuan consolidated his own power and suppressed political dissent. However, Jinan's elite also opposed aspects of Yuan's autocratic platform, which included dissolving the National Parliament in 1914 and then closing down all self-government bodies across the provinces.¹⁰

⁹ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 147–48.

¹⁰ Buck, 78–91.

From Yuan's death in 1916 to 1928, Jinan became a satellite of political struggles within the Beiyang Clique that centered on Beijing. Buck describes the general pattern of politics in this period:

All the various officials who held power in [Jinan] during this era followed a similar strategy. When appointed by a government in [Beijing] to high office at [Jinan], they worked to serve the interests of that administration. Once the power situation in [Beijing] shifted and a new cabinet was formed, the [Jinan] appointee, hoping to continue in office, would start favoring increased provincial autonomy, a view that always attracted support from within the province. He would succeed for a short term but would ultimately be replaced by another figure aligned with a new power coalition in [Beijing].¹¹

Jinan's elite class (increasingly composed of businessmen rather than literati like Wang Maokun) lacked the government support their predecessors had enjoyed for both furthering Jinan's economic development and resisting the extension of foreign—now mostly Japanese—interests.¹² However, more radically nationalist groups—including the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party—failed to gain a significant following in the city owing to the “strength of the combination of foreign, warlord, and local opposition.”¹³ After 1925, local conditions deteriorated under the administration of Military Governor Zhang Zongchang, who declared martial law, imposed a series of new taxes, shut schools, closed down the Jiao-Ji Railroad so that it could be used exclusively by his troops, and printed large amounts of paper money. Zhang's depredations were motivated by the need to fund his armies amid the warfare that plagued North China in these years, which, along with severe droughts, further afflicted the local people.¹⁴

Starting in 1928, Jinan became increasingly embroiled in the brewing conflict between the Guomindang, led by Chiang Kai-shek, and Japan, which would break out into full-scale war

¹¹ Buck, 99. Schoppa describes a similar pattern in Zhejiang. Schoppa, *Chinese Elites*, 9–12.

¹² Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 98–119, 124–25.

¹³ Buck, 120.

¹⁴ Buck, 125–29.

in 1937. In May 1928, Chiang's troops, which were on a "Northern Expedition" to unite the northern half of the country under Guomindang rule, approached Jinan from the south. To prevent Chiang from laying undisputed claim to Shandong, Japan rushed troops from Qingdao into Jinan.¹⁵ After limited skirmishes starting on May 3, Chiang and the Japanese reached an agreement for Chiang to withdraw. However, Chiang left a small number of troops in Jinan's old walled city, and, when they refused to surrender, the Japanese forces began shelling the city, killing around 3,000 people in what has come to be known as the Jinan Incident.¹⁶ In 1929 the Japanese withdrew, leaving Chiang and northern warlord Feng Yuxiang to argue over control of Shandong. The defection of two of Feng's generals to the Guomindang gave Chiang the upper hand, and he rewarded one of these generals, Han Fuqu, with the governorship of Shandong. Han's administration was far less ruinous than Zhang Zongchang's had been, which created a better environment for economic development. However, the worldwide depression and Jinan's commercial elite's continued lack of political clout made it difficult for them to increase the city's rate of industrialization and compete with Japanese interests in the banking sector and Qingdao factories in textile manufacturing.¹⁷ Jinan was not a major battleground during the war with Japan—Japanese armies occupied it with little resistance in late 1937—but the war further hindered the city's development and, again, undermined the political influence of the city's elite, who now found themselves governed temporarily by the imperialist power they had warded off for decades.¹⁸

Buck's assessment of Jinan's economic development and its relationship to national

¹⁵ Japan had seized Qingdao after declaring war on Germany 1914. The Treaty of Versailles granted Japanese claims to German interests in Shandong, setting off a series of nationwide protests in China known as the May Fourth Movement (for the day in 1919 on which they began).

¹⁶ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 157–64.

¹⁷ Buck, 173–81.

¹⁸ Buck, 188–201.

political development in the years after 1911 is decidedly pessimistic. We should not let this obscure the degree of change that did occur in almost all aspects of modern life, including industrial production, which, while by no means absent from Buck's book entirely, tends to receive more optimistic appraisals in Chinese scholarship.¹⁹ One reason for Buck's more pessimistic outlook is his explicit decision to compare Jinan's history against the model of the "Western urban-industrial experience," which carries a problematic teleological bent. Buck acknowledges this problem but argues that this form of comparison is appropriate since the Western model was an aspiration for Chinese reformers themselves.²⁰

We do not have to accept Buck's mode of comparison to find value in his conclusions, though. However we assess Jinan's economic development during the Republican period, the relationship between state-building and place-making obviously became far more fraught after the fall of the Qing than it had been for the city's elite in prior centuries. State-building had more directly and consistently benefited Jinan than most areas, during both the high Qing and the late Qing. The rapid collapse of cohesive national state-building after 1912 cast the benefits Jinan had enjoyed into a stark relief but also harmed even areas that had become a secondary concern by the late Qing, like western Shandong.²¹ To some extent, these harms accrued due to the continuing abandonment of specific imperial prerogatives. However, they also reflected the reality that the post-Qing state was—in operation, if not in discourse—less national than its predecessor had been.

The fragmentation and hardships of the Republican era demonstrated, then, the need for a national government, the establishment of which was the common political goal of both the

¹⁹ See for instance, Nie Jiahua, "Kaibu yu Jinan."

²⁰ Buck, *Urban Change in China*, 3–11.

²¹ Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland*.

Guomindang and Communist Party. However, we should not lose sight of the continuity between the nationalizing aspects of Qing state-building and the construction of a more explicitly nationalistic political system after 1949. Nor should we assume that imperial patterns of state-building became fundamentally obsolete in the early decades of the twentieth century. The most popular place to look for imperial-national continuities is in the autocratic form of leadership that persists in China today, but autocracy itself is neither inherently constitutive of imperial states nor incompatible with nation-states. For example, the mass mobilization that was the hallmark of Maoist autocracy would have been both technically unfeasible and likely deeply alarming to even activist Qing emperors and the elites on whom they depended to mediate their rule and whom Mao despised.²²

Instead, the most productive place to look for continuities between imperial and national state-building, particularly in “China proper,” is in the interaction between place-making and translocal processes. Again, vast social and technological changes, like the construction of a dense railway system, have generated a degree of national integration that cuts against the spatial differentiation that is characteristic of imperial spatial politics. Nevertheless, the considerable inequalities in economic development and political privilege that exist even within what the Qing called their inner domains suggest that, nationalist mythology notwithstanding, empire-like spatial differentiation persists in effect. Such patterns of differentiation—in China, the U.S., and around the world—are not mere vestiges of a pre- or early modern “age of empires” but the

²² Levenson’s argument that by the late Qing a fundamental change in the nature of the monarchy was essentially inevitable possesses merit and should caution us against over-zealously drawing continuities between Qing and post-Qing rule based on superficial similarities. However, this is where my approach to imperial and national state-building as hybrid constructs departs from Levenson’s more dualistic understanding of culturalism and nationalism. These terms are one way to frame differences between imperial and national state-building, but they do not encompass the full range of factors that state-building entails in the sense in which I use it. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate*, vol. 2. On the need to recognize both imperial-national continuities and how imperial processes are modulated through nation-building, see Stoler and McGranahan, “Refiguring Imperial Terrains,” 38–45.

defining features of a modern, putatively nationalistic modern world. After 1912, the precise form of the Qing Empire became politically unfeasible, but nationalism emerged as the common-sense alternative only in the sense that it embodied the kind of hybridity that had characterized Qing state-building. As a means of reiterating that, in its pure form, nationalism held no monopoly on imagining the re-attachment of places to the state even after the fall of the Qing, the epilogue examines how Qing loyalism shaped the writing of local history through the 1926 *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* (*Xuxiu Licheng xian zhi*).

Epilogue

Withered Leaves: Local History and the Shadows of Empire

Like almost any local history set in the late imperial period, this project has benefited immensely from the availability of a wide range of local gazetteers (*difang zhi*). Gazetteers provide a wealth of information and observations about local communities, ranging from numbers of registered households, tax obligations, cultural practices, local literary works, and biographies of prominent local people. Since the origin of the genre in first millennium, gazetteers have reflected both the concerns of the imperial government and the aspirations of local elites, who sought to enhance the reputation of their home communities and to raise their own profile within them, as Ren Hongyuan did when compiling *Baotu Spring Gazetteer* (chapter 1).¹ For this reason, gazetteers must be read not simply as objective encyclopedias of facts about local communities but as one of the most important tools for place-making in late imperial China.²

Here we turn a critical eye to a source that appears frequently in the notes of preceding chapters: the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer*. This text, published in 1926, is of great value on account of both its thoroughness and its compilers' detailed knowledge of affairs in late Qing Jinan. However, it is also a rather idiosyncratic source. I am embarrassed to admit that I did not immediately recognize this quality of the text, although it did not take long to discover. Naturally, we are used to histories written after 1912 treating the Qing Dynasty as a relic of the past—a *jiuji*, as the commemorative stele honoring Wang Maokun in Shanghai was called in 1915. As I discuss below, the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* is by no means aloof to the past-ness of the Qing, but large portions of it are written as though the Qing were still the ruling

¹ De Weerd, "Regional Descriptions."

² For examples of the critical reading of gazetteers, see Guo Qitao, "Genealogical Pedigree"; Dennis, *Writing, Publishing, and Reading*.

dynasty. It presents itself, then, as a normal Qing gazetteer, even though it was published well over a decade after the dynasty had fallen. Reading it only in bits and pieces obscures this aspect of the text and, I will argue, the peculiar (and yet all-too familiar) form of place-making and state-building in which it is engaged.

The peculiarity of this text is heightened by the lack of attention which Qing loyalism receives in treatments of modern Chinese history. We are accustomed to thinking that if not the Qing itself, then at least some of its more “traditional” components—the queue, the austere rituals, etc.—were more or less inevitable casualties of the aspiration to modernity that people in China shared with so many others around the world. However, there were more than a few people—mostly former officials—who, like other historical figures who had lived through dynastic transitions, refused to commit themselves to the new regime out of a sense of loyalty and dedication to the dynasty they had served. However, the situation that Qing loyalists faced after the abdication of the emperor was considerably more complicated, albeit not necessarily worse in terms of personal comfort and safety, than that encountered by the loyalists of previous dynasties. For one thing, the emperor had survived the revolution and was allowed to retain many of his former privileges and even his residence in the Forbidden City. Also, the revolution had not resulted in the foundation of a new dynasty but the creation of an entirely new political system. As a result, the choice to take up the mantle of a loyalist (*yimin*) was bound up in one’s attitude to the form of government itself.³

As Lin Chih-hung details in his extensive treatment of the subject, Qing loyalism took many different forms. One outlet for loyalist sentiments was writing history, both of the empire (exemplified by the *Draft History of the Qing Dynasty*) and of local communities.⁴ The *Revised*

³ Lin Chih-hung, *Minguo nai diguo ye*, 27–30.

⁴ Lin Chih-hung, 132–75.

Licheng County Gazetteer is thus by no means a *sui generis* text. Moreover, some of the specific features of it that I will discuss, such as the detailed attention it gives to the events of the mid-nineteenth century, were not inherently unique to loyalist gazetteers.

Nevertheless, it would be far too much of a stretch to say that it is representative of gazetteers of this era or the influence of Qing loyalism in Republican writings more generally. It was very much a marginal text. I do think that the loyalism of the compilers, whose backgrounds I discuss in more detail below, reflected the durability of the attachment of the city's elite to the Qing, even up through—and beyond—the 1911 Revolution. It may very well be that the tumultuous political situation in Jinan described in the conclusion, which, with the arrival of Zhang Zongchang, was only worsening as the gazetteer was completed and went to press, may have generated unusually strong feelings of nostalgia for the Qing. Even then, by 1926 the last traces of Qing loyalism were dying out along with the loyalists themselves. So, the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* is not a doorway to a social or political movement of major consequence, although its history does shed light on loyalist networks that are larger than we might expect.

Instead, this text is useful to historians less as a marker of a particular social reality than as a signpost to the possibilities latent within any political community. The possibility this text conveys, which we could trace through myriad diverse stories of place-making, is that the inherent local-ness of the state necessarily imbues it with a degree of heterogeneity that the subjects of nation-states in particular can be loath to openly acknowledge. Place-making generates diversity within states, sometimes in ways that are overtly threatening to the cohesiveness of the state, sometimes in ways that, like the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer*,

seem benign but irrelevant to the linear narratives that underlie modern state-building.⁵ Much of this dissertation has focused on forms of place-making that were closely and often explicitly related by their agents to state-building. In a sense, this text is no different, except, of course, that the state-building project in which it was engaged was supposed to have already reached a conclusion. It reminds us, then, that both place-making and state-building are iterative processes whose courses are not dictated by a single agent (e.g. “the state”). The power and durability of all kinds of states derive not from the capacity to monopolize certain functions, but from the participation of diverse sets of actors. Not everything is the state because some actors work in explicit (and often successful) opposition to the conceptualization and organizational form of the public that other actors are constructing. However, it is by no means uncommon for deceased or unwitting actors (and places) to become agents of state-building.⁶ While the compilers of the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* were explicitly engaged in a project of perpetuating an imperial state, the place-making in which they participated has now been folded into a transformed—albeit not entirely different—state-building project.

The Loyal Compilers of the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer*

The genre of local gazetteers is most commonly associated with the late imperial period, but they have continued in various forms into the twentieth century. Scholars have argued that in fact the Republican era was a dynamic period in the development of this genre. Even gazetteers that were traditional in form displayed new techniques, such as for map-making, and the ideological influences of scientism and Marxism motivated some compilers to focus on more

⁵ On the linearity of nationalist history, see Duara, *Rescuing History*, 17–50.

⁶ On the construction of the “local” as the embodiment of a timeless past that lends authenticity to nation-building projects, see Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 209–43.

systematically gathering data about local social conditions. Gazetteer compilation continued to be supported by the government, and in 1916 the ministries of Education and Internal Affairs issued a joint directive instructing localities to compile updated gazetteers. The Guomindang national government continued to urge local officials to submit updated gazetteers even during the war against Japan.⁷ In Shandong, these efforts resulted in the production of four different province-level gazetteers and 98 county (*zhou* and *xian*) gazetteers between 1911 and 1949.⁸ The *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer*, though, received little government support after 1911 and displayed a surprising, even anachronistic degree of continuity with the form of imperial-era gazetteers. To understand this oddity and the gazetteer's even stranger commitment to Qing loyalism, we have to return to the origins of its compilation in the late Qing.

By the late nineteenth century, both the Shandong Province and Licheng County gazetteers were well out-of-date. In theory, a new gazetteer was supposed to be published once every sixty years or so, but neither the county nor province gazetteers had been updated since the eighteenth century. Governor Zhang Yao broached the idea of compiling a new provincial gazetteer during his tenure (1886–91), but little headway was made until a compilation office was formally opened in Jinan in 1907. This office and the compilation of the provincial gazetteer became the launching point for the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer*.

Three Jinan natives who were involved in the provincial gazetteer project (and have appeared in previous chapters) were primarily responsible for initiating work on the county gazetteer. The first was Wang Maokun, who, as discussed in chapters six and seven, was the leading political figure among Jinan's elite at this time, serving as the first head of the Shandong Chamber of Commerce and a representative to the Provincial Assembly. Wang was the

⁷ Ba Zhaoxiang, *Fangzhi xue xinlun*, 168–93; Qu Guangzhen, “Minguo Shandong fangzhi,” 28–39.

⁸ Qu Guangzhen, “Minguo Shandong fangzhi,” 8.

supervisor (*tidiao*) of the provincial gazetteer office and donated the 50-tael monthly transportation stipend he received for this post to fund opening a county gazetteer compilation office within the provincial one to ensure that information specific to Jinan was not lost in the shuffle of the much larger provincial compilation.⁹ The second Jinan native involved in this project was Wu Shumei, a chief proofreader (*zongjiao*) for the provincial gazetteer, a former minister in the Board of Revenue, and also a leading political figure in Jinan. The final early contributor—and, in the long run, the most crucial to the project—was Mao Chenglin.

Mao's personal and family history was an encapsulation of Jinan's history over the last half-century of Qing rule. His father was Mao Hongbin, the leading militia organizer in Jinan during the Taiping northern invasion. Chenglin's own official career was far less impressive than that of his father and the slightly older cohort of Jinan men who enjoyed exceptional success in the civil service examinations in the 1850s and 1860s (chapter 3). He earned his *juren* degree in 1888 and obtained an official title as an expectant circuit intendant, but he appears to have spent at least the majority of his life in Jinan. There he participated in conservancy projects and served on the board of directors of the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence (chapter 4). He remained active in local politics through the end of the Qing: his name appears on petitions regarding opening a preparatory office ahead of the establishment of the Provincial Assembly, requesting that Sun Baoqi be retained as governor after Shandong's abortive independence in 1911, and supporting Yuan Shikai's selection as president of the new republic.¹⁰ Among Mao's associates was Zhang Xuehua, who was the prefect of Jinan when work on the county gazetteer began and whom Mao had befriended while both were sitting for the metropolitan exams. Zhang donated

⁹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, ba:1a.

¹⁰ "Guanzhang sheli," *Shen bao*, 1909/1/10, 18; *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan* and *Haixia liang'an chuban jiaoliu zhongxin*, *Qinggong Xinhai*, 69:371, 77:326.

money to the project and later wrote an epitaph for Mao after his death.¹¹ Mao also worked with Sun Baotian, the chief compiler of the provincial gazetteer, at the School for Preserving Antiquities (*cungu xuetang*) in Jinan, where Mao was a supervisor and Sun was the Head of Academic Affairs.¹²

The 1911 Revolution significantly disrupted work on both the provincial and county gazetteers and cut off the official support on which both projects had depended. By 1912, the provincial gazetteer was largely completed, but owing to the death of Sun Baotian and the revolution, the project was shelved until 1915 and was only formally published in 1919. By this time, several of the men who had contributed to both the provincial and county gazetteers had also died, including Wu Shumei and Wang Maokun. However, after helping bring the provincial gazetteer to completion, Mao Chenglin discussed revisiting the county gazetteer with Jinan native Zhang Yinglin, an 1864 *jinshi* and distinguished examination and metropolitan official who had retired back to Jinan after the fall of the Qing. Zhang and Mao gathered together some other local men to finish the compilation and raised funds to support the project. However, inconsistent funding and the loss of other compilers—some to old age—hampered the project, and the gazetteer was only completed in 1925 and published in 1926.¹³ The gazetteer includes prefaces written by two Republican-era officials, one of whom (Magistrate Jin Gong) claims to have been very supportive of the work. However, judging by the list of donors, at the front of the gazetteer, private donors provided for much of the project's expenses (e.g. stipends for compilers and printing). This list includes donations totaling \$4,681, only \$474 of which came from people clearly indicated as officials. In contrast, \$2,300 came from the five largest private donors.

¹¹ Dang Mingde, *JNTS: jindai juan*, 5:525; Wang Zhaoyong, *Beizhuan ji sanbian*, 39:1269–72; Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, ba:1a–1b.

¹² Pan Huanyou, “Sun Baotian,” 29–30.

¹³ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, ba:1b–3a.

The public nature of this project despite the lack of government support—which was a sharp departure from the public projects described in previous chapters—reflects the relationship between the gazetteer’s compilers and the Republican state. After the 1911 Revolution, both Mao and Zhang established themselves as Qing loyalists. Zhang retired from government service, and Mao (and likely Zhang as well) kept his queue as a sign of loyalty to the Qing.¹⁴ Neither withdrew entirely from public life, though. Mao appears as a signatory on a 1922 petition asking warlord Zhang Zuolin to keep his armies in Shandong disciplined during the Second Feng-Zhi War. Zhang wrote the opening essay of a collection of writings in honor of fellow loyalist Liu Tang’s eightieth birthday. (Liu, a native of Henan, had been serving in Shandong at the time of the 1911 Revolution and, like Zhang, resigned his position but decided to retire in Jinan.) Mao also contributed two poems to this collection.¹⁵ In 1925, Zhang was awarded the title Imperial Tutor (*taizi taibao*) by the vestigial Qing court, which had relocated to Tianjin after warlord Feng Yuxiang ousted it from the Forbidden City in Beijing in 1924. After Zhang’s death, he too was the subject of a commemorative collection of writings that included inscriptions from a wide range of people like old associate Lü Haihuan, the well-known loyalist and compiler of the *Draft History of the Qing Dynasty* Zhao Erxun, Mao Chenglin’s son, the sons of Li Qingxiang, the aforementioned Liu Tang, former Licheng Magistrate Jin Gong, and other former officials.¹⁶

The activities and associations of Qing loyalists, let alone the public significance of these activities, receive little attention in scholarship on modern China. Lin Chih-hung’s treatment of the subject demonstrates, though, that Mao and Zhang were by no means alone and reiterates the

¹⁴ Wang Zhimin, *Shandong zhongyao lishi renwu*, 5:2, 4.

¹⁵ Zhang Yinglin, *Fugou Liu Chunzhai xiansheng bashi shouyan*.

¹⁶ Zhang Yuanjun, *Zhang gong taibao (Yinglin) shuairong lu*.

importance of social connections (rather than pure hermeticism) to the construction of loyalist identity.¹⁷ Literary projects became an especially important vehicle for expressing Qing loyalism. The most famous example was the *Draft History of the Qing Dynasty*, which Yuan Shikai first commissioned in 1914. However, the unsettled political situation, the antipathy of Zhao Erxun to republican government, the unwillingness of some Qing loyalists to participate, and the desire of the Guomindang and then Communist governments to write their own histories that established them as legitimate successors to the Qing kept it from ever becoming the orthodox history it aspired to be, and its circulation was even banned by the Guomindang government in 1930.¹⁸ Loyalist-written gazetteers, like the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer*, were less controversial but also ran into problems. Some loyalists saw participation in Republican-sponsored literary projects as a betrayal to the Qing, especially after Yuan Shikai declared himself emperor. Others struggled to deal with the loss of not only the Qing but also some of the administrative units (and thus topics of gazetteers) that had existed under it due to adjustments in the territorial bureaucracy. Others, like Mao and Zhang, pushed on.¹⁹

The fact that Mao and Zhang received so little support from the local government may have actually protected them from interference in their project of writing a final Qing history of Licheng. However, the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* was far more than a collection of personal reminiscences. No less than Ren Hongyuan's compilation of *Baotu Spring Gazetteer*, the organization of militias under Mao Hongbin and Li Qing'ao, or the participation of elites in conservancy projects, it was a public act of both place-making and state-building, which becomes abundantly clear when we examine its contents.

¹⁷ Lin Chih-hung, *Minguo nai diguo ye*, 27–28.

¹⁸ Lin Chih-hung, 135ff; Chen Hsi-yuan, "Last Chapter Unfinished."

¹⁹ Lin Chih-hung, *Minguo nai diguo ye*, 167–71.

The Depredations of Time

The prefaces of *Revised Licheng Licheng County Gazetteer* frame the compilers' conception of the relationship between Jinan and a dynasty that had fallen more than a decade prior. The gazetteer contains five prefaces: one each by Mao Chenglin and Zhang Yinglin, one by former magistrate Jin Gong, one by Teng Hongjia, who was magistrate at the time of the gazetteer's completion, and Mao's son, Zhen'e, who was the head of the Political Affairs Department of the Shandong Governor's Office. Its anachronism notwithstanding, the gazetteer thus contained prefaces from the two groups of people—local elite compilers and government officials (with Mao Zhen'e in both roles)—that we would expect from a late imperial gazetteer.

Likewise, the prefaces contain many standard tropes, like ruminations on Jinan's natural features and its people's character. Teng's preface begins:

Qilu [i.e. Shandong] is a land that has long maintained the rites. The city of Li [i.e. Jinan] is the provincial capital. There is a poem that says, 'From the precipice of Mt. Tai one can see the entirety of the land of Lu [i.e. western Shandong].' Licheng is to the north of Mt. Tai and is also in the Yellow River Basin. There is also the beauty of the Que and Hua mountains seen from Daming Lake. Throughout history there has been no lack of people who have concentrated their spirit to produce elegance, be they literary writers, or very famous talents, or officials extolling the filiality, righteousness, and chastity of others.²⁰

Such platitudes—replete with references to virtues like filiality and chastity—were entirely in keeping with the conventions of imperial-era gazetteers. However, the dominant tone of the prefaces is more somber. They convey a deep sense of pessimism about not only contemporary Jinan and its political context but even the very project of writing its history. There is no sense of a new beginning, only a rearguard action to salvage some sense of place from the depredations of political change, cultural transformation, and physical decay.

²⁰ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, Teng xu:1a.

One prominent theme is how a lack of sources made it difficult to compile the gazetteer. Jin Gong's preface begins by reflecting on the great amount of time he and others spent scrounging for archival materials and manuscripts. He then contrasts the prominence of Jinan with the sorry state of its records: "Licheng is the capital of Qilu and is an area of flourishing culture. The breadth of its area is second to none in the province. How can it not be a matter for regret that now there are somehow no records or books that can be consulted?"²¹ Mao Chenglin and Mao Zhen'e both compared the process of compiling the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* to the previous county gazetteer, published in 1778 under magistrate Hu Delin. Back in the glory days of the high Qing there was a commitment to and time for classical study and research, documents were well-preserved, and elders were readily available to verify records. With this no longer the case, it was impossible to compare the difficulty of compiling the two gazetteers. The prospect that conditions could deteriorate further added extra incentive to compiling the county gazetteer now, before these final traces were lost.²² The fact that the compilation dragged on and the gazetteer went to press only after the deaths of its two elderly editors further underscored the fragility and urgency of the project.²³

Behind these laments over the physical ravages of time lay a deep pessimism about how much Jinan had changed in the period through which the gazetteer was compiled ("a time full of turmoil and change," in Mao Chenglin's words) and about what was lost in the midst of this change.²⁴ Zhang in particular lamented the decline of contemporary morals and interest in classical learning: "Today, old learning has been abandoned, and public morals decay day-by-

²¹ Mao Chenglin, Jin xu:1a.

²² Mao Chenglin, Mao Zhen'e xu:1a–b, Mao Chenglin xu:1b.

²³ Mao Chenglin, Mao Zhen'e xu:1b.

²⁴ Mao Chenglin, Mao Chenglin xu:1b.

day. Morality is abandoned in favor of utility, and no one knows to guard the rites.”²⁵ Zhang argues, though, that there is nevertheless value in celebrating virtue in an age of chaos, since moral truth does not fluctuate with social whims and histories with moral value can be used to correct odious tendencies.

Nevertheless, the gazetteer as a whole conveys little hope for renovating public morals. Unlike most gazetteers, there is no separate section in the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* dedicated to local customs. The principles of compilation (*fanli*) explain this omission by contrasting the previous era, when customs had (supposedly) remained unchanged for long stretches of time to the modern period: “Now, since the opening of modern schools, customs and teachings have gradually been Europeanized, and old ways are suddenly seen as unique.”²⁶ Contrary to the preservationist impulse displayed in the prefaces, the compilers effectively admitted that they were not up to the task of protecting the virtues that had made Jinan the kind of place it was to them.

Attachment to the Qing

Of course, there is nothing unique about old men complaining about the decay of morals and pining for a more refined and virtuous age. To this extent, the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* is only one (not especially extraordinary) example of the cultural conservatism that has persisted alongside modernizing iconoclasm in China and other parts of the world.²⁷ However, the specific attachment to the Qing Dynasty itself evinced in the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* imbues it with a political bent that distinguishes it from the dominant stream of

²⁵ Mao Chenglin, Zhang xu:1b.

²⁶ Mao Chenglin, fanli:2a.

²⁷ On conservative outlooks in twentieth-century China, see, for example, Alitto, *The Last Confucian*; Harrison, *The Man Awakened from Dreams*.

conservatism in modern China that has, at least until recent years, embraced political change while seeking to preserve traditional culture.²⁸ The form and style of this book, as well as aspects of its content (the focus of the following section) make clear that it was a product of Qing-specific loyalism, not just general traditionalism.

One of the compilers' politically significant choices was limiting the chronological scope of the text to the period before 1912. This decision was not anti-modernist per se, since the gazetteer does talk about important modern developments, like the opening of the commercial settlement, in which one of the original compilers, Wang Maokun, had participated. Unfortunately, the principles of compilation (hereafter *fanli*) do not explain this choice explicitly. Lin Chih-hung has, however, identified this as a common feature among gazetteers compiled by Qing loyalists. Ending the narrative with 1911 enabled them to side-step the politically and (for loyalists) morally sensitive issue of the Republican state's legitimacy.²⁹ A side-effect of this choice was that the compilers did not describe their own political choices in the aftermath of the 1911 Revolution in any detail, making it impossible to judge whether they lived up to their own loyalist standards. This, in turn, makes it impossible to gauge their attitude toward Yuan Shikai's early Republican government, which some people who would later have reputations as loyalists, like Zhao Erxun, initially supported.³⁰ Instead, the gazetteer's commentary on the 1911 Revolution is limited to the biographies of Wang Maokun and Wu Shumei who died in its immediate aftermath.

The way in which the compilers contextualized *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* with reference to previous county gazetteers further conveys the sense that the local history they were

²⁸ Schwartz, "Notes on Conservatism," 16; Furth, "Culture and Politics."

²⁹ Lin Chih-hung, *Minguo nai diguo ye*, 70–71.

³⁰ Chen Hsi-yuan, "Last Chapter Unfinished," 183–84.

writing was attached to the Qing specifically. The primary point of reference for the preface-writers was naturally Hu Delin's 1778 gazetteer, which Mao Zhen'e's preface in particular praises as a paragon of classical scholarship.³¹ Prefaces and the *fanli* also reference the first *Licheng County Gazetteer*, compiled by Ye Chengzong in 1640, but they emphasize that it was edited and updated in the Kangxi reign, making it a product of the Qing.³² In other words, rather than playing up the long history of Jinan's gazetteers stretching back to the Ming (or conceivably the Yuan, if they had included Yu Qin's *Qi sheng*), the compilers framed the history of Licheng County's gazetteers as coterminous with the Qing Dynasty. Mao Zhen'e wrote:

Li has been a city for a long time, but its gazetteer really only came into being from Mr. Ye in the Qing. From this beginning, Mr. Hu followed and provided a continuation. And now, Mr. Mao [Chenglin] has brought it to completion at its end. For those who read this later, it will be like a complete book of this period.³³

Thus, as much as the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* was a history of a specific place, it was also a history of a specific time.

The compilers further emphasized the connection between the gazetteer and the Qing dynasty through their use of a variety of honorific forms in the text. The most striking of these is that, unlike previous dynasties (Song, Yuan, Ming, etc.), they referred to the Qing not by its name but simply as "the dynastic state" (*guochao*), as if it were still in power. In this way, they treated the gazetteer as synchronous with the Qing and, as a result, anachronistic vis-a-vis the time in which they were writing (i.e. the Republic). The text also displays deference to imperial authority through including breaks before certain terms. For example, the temple names (*miaohao*) of Qing emperors are elevated two spaces above the rest of the text. Other characters related to the ruler, imperial edicts, memorials, etc. are not elevated but are preceded by a space,

³¹ Mao Chenglin, *XXLCXZ*, Mao Zhen'e xu:1b.

³² Mao Chenglin, Mao Chenglin xu:1a, fanli:1a.

³³ Mao Chenglin, Mao Zhen'e xu:1b–2a.

regardless of whether they indicate reverence or obeisance. (In the 1778 gazetteer all such honorifics were elevated above the text, but the format used by the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* is consistent with other Qing-era gazetteers.)

Though the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* was in many ways a traditional text, its traditional qualities cannot be separated from its compilers' intentions to make it specifically a Qing text. Supposedly, the dynasty had ceased to exist in 1912, even though the court continued to fulfill certain ritual functions, such as the bestowal of rewards on loyalists like Zhang Yinglin. However, the act of being a Qing subject retained meaning and shaped how the compilers of this gazetteer wrote local history. Even lacking the institutional core that we think of as essential to the state, the Qing—as an object of belief—informed the imaginative place-making that writing local history in the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* entailed. Likewise, then, place-making perpetuated the force of state-building well beyond what we usually assume to be the dynasty's date of expiry.

Commemorating Heroes

One of the most valuable caches of information within the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* is its descriptions of how the wars against the Taiping and Nian affected Jinan and its people. Attention to these events is unsurprising on several counts: their national significance, their impact on Jinan, and the personal involvement of Mao Chenglin's father in them. However, the type and degree of attention to both warfare in the 1850s and 1860s itself and its aftermath is still remarkable, especially for a source published in 1926. Setting aside the narrative detail contained, for example, in biographies of prominent men that informs a significant portion of chapter 3, I now turn to the role of the history of the mid-nineteenth century in the gazetteer as a

whole, specifically the sections on loyal martyrs (*zhonglie*, *juan* 42) and exemplary women (*lienü*, *juan* 48–50). These sections show how the gazetteer was not simply a set of haphazardly collected reminiscences of a few people or a regurgitation of traditional forms but a product of a painstaking compilation process that intentionally bound together local history and the Qing state.

The preface to the section on loyal martyrs is entirely unremarkable for a Qing gazetteer, reiterating the expressions of loyalty to the dynasty that appear throughout the text and underscoring the centrality of warfare in the 1850s and 1860s to the content of this section. Although the preface does mention the mobilization of militias in response to the Taiping northern invasion in 1853–4, which Mao Chenglin's father led, it pays far more attention to attacks by Nian forces in the late 1850s and 1860s, which killed a great many people around Jinan. The preface closes:

Alas! The spirit of blood spilt in the name of a just cause will not die out for a thousand years and will be manifested in the annals of history day and night for a hundred generations. From the perspective of today, how can we recompense (*bao*) the actions of scholars nourished by the dynasty? By continuing the biographies of the country's martyrs.³⁴

This sort of proclamation is precisely what we would expect from nineteenth-century gazetteer-writers. However, in the context of the 1920s, it takes on several new meanings. First, heralding the virtues of those who died serving the dynasty strikes an odd juxtaposition to the production of *national* heroes, including revolutionaries who had died fighting the Qing, which was well underway by this point. Second, when we read this passage alongside the lamentations in the prefaces that Jinan's Qing history was in danger of being forgotten, we can better appreciate the earnestness of the compilers in declaring that *because of their work* these memories would live

³⁴ Mao Chenglin, 42:1b.

on. Finally, the compilers subtly signaled that their writing of history fulfilled both the dynasty's duty to these martyrs, who deserved to be honored by the state they served, and the compilers' own duty as loyalists to a dynasty for which, unlike these martyrs, they had not died but which they could still serve with the remainder of their lives.

The vast majority of this thirty-eight-leaf *juan* centers on the Nian attacks of 1861. The first seven leaves contain the preface and biographies of loyal martyrs from the Tang Dynasty up through the early Qing. The next four leaves or so contain biographies of individuals who died fighting in the mid-nineteenth century wars, especially against the Taiping, but the vast majority of these did not perish in the vicinity of Jinan itself (i.e. they were soldiers serving in other parts of the empire). The remaining twenty-seven leaves focus exclusively on people who died in the 1860s, mostly at the hands of the Nian. Only six leaves contain biographies with a substantial amount of detail. The remaining twenty-one leaves consist entirely of a list of names of individuals who were killed by the Nian in 1861. By my count this list totals 2,757 names.

This meticulous attention to people who died in the mid-nineteenth century is paralleled in the gazetteer's treatment of exemplary women, to which three *juan* are dedicated. Like the section on loyal martyrs, the preface that begins *juan* 48 indicates a special focus on the mid-nineteenth century and bemoans the impossibility of verifying the details of the many women who died during this period. *Juan* 48 comprises all biographies of all kinds of exemplary women that contain substantial detail. *Juan* 49 begins with a list of chaste widows, going up to the middle of the nineteenth century. This list is then interrupted by a separate list of about 1,200 women who died in the 1861 Nian attacks, which takes up the majority of this *juan* and is essentially a mirror of the list of men contained in *juan* 42. The list of chaste women then resumes in *juan* 50. The gazetteer itself makes no comment on this chronology, and *juan* 50

includes dates that imperial honors were bestowed for only about one-fourth of the 1,600 women it lists. However, of those with dates, only fifteen received imperial honors before 1860. In effect, then, the list of women killed during the 1861 Nian attacks serves to separate women who were honored as chaste widows before and after this date.

The *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* was only one piece of a much larger project of “coming to terms” with the effects of the Taiping and Nian wars, a topic that has received considerable attention in recent years. Understandably, much of this scholarship has focused on the Yangzi River Valley (the epicenter of the Taiping War) and the immediate post-Taiping period.³⁵ However, both the commemoration of men and women who died in the war and the celebration of widow chastity, which is often treated as a particularly “southern” virtue, was not limited to the south or even the nineteenth century.³⁶ The close attention the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* pays to the events of the mid-nineteenth century is not even unique among Republican-era gazetteers in Shandong, although the parts of the period that receive the most attention naturally vary by place.³⁷ For example, the *Revised Linqing County Gazetteer*, published in 1934, naturally forefronts the destruction caused when the Taiping occupied the city in 1854 and includes a separate list of the names of women killed in that year.³⁸ The broader phenomenon of post-war commemoration in North China, its relationship to similar, more-studied projects in the south, and its continuation into the Republican period deserves a separate and detailed treatment. For now, though, we will focus on the function of these sections within the loyalist framework of the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* itself and their relationship to

³⁵ Meyer-Fong, *What Remains*; Wooldridge, *City of Virtues*; Alexander, “Virtues of the Vernacular”; Heselton, “Reconstructing Order,” 162–260; Wooldridge, “Writing the Taiping War.”

³⁶ See chapter 4’s discussion of southern philanthropy in North China. On the commemoration of exemplary women in Shandong gazetteers, particularly in the late nineteenth century, see Gao Haixia, “Jindai Shandong difangzhi,” 87–89.

³⁷ See, for example, *juan 16* of Luan Zhongyao, *Zouping xian zhi (Minguo)*.

³⁸ Zhang Ziqing, *Linqing xian zhi (Minguo)*, 15:159b.

Jinan's particular historical context.

The arrangement of the section on exemplary women in particular suggests a high degree of continuity between the gazetteer and the social activities of Jinan's elite in the late nineteenth century. As chapter 4 discusses, caring for refugees, widowed women, and orphaned children was a particular focus of the Bureau for Spreading Benevolence, the most prominent philanthropic institution in Jinan in the 1880s and 1890s, of which Mao Chenglin was a gentry director. In the post-Taiping era, elites across the empire took on increasing responsibility for organizing and submitting petitions for commendation for loyal martyrs and chaste widows, even when they were refugees who originated from other places.³⁹ Organizing and submitting petitions on behalf of widowed women was a natural complement to providing for their material needs through institutions like the Bureau. Both activities likewise raised the status of male elites themselves by demonstrating their service to the dynasty, which was itself a mirror of the sacrifices made by loyal martyrs. In this sense, the gazetteer's dual service to the dynasty and loyal martyrs was very much a continuation of a specific pattern of place-making and state-building that became especially important in the post-Taiping period.

The continuation of this pattern into the 1920s requires closer consideration, though. Echoing scholarship on post-Taiping local activism, Theiss argues that the elite's assumption of great responsibility for honoring chaste widows represented a devolution of power away from the state that was ironic in the sense that even as the cultural norms the state promoted were becoming more popular than ever, its institutional control over them was declining.⁴⁰ However, the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer's* compilers' continued commemoration of loyal martyrs and chaste widows even after the Qing state fell highlights how distributing power to the elite

³⁹ Theiss, *Disgraceful Matters*, 215–17.

⁴⁰ Theiss, 217.

served not to obviate the state but to extend and perpetuate it.

The compilers did not begin assembling lists of chaste widows from scratch after they resumed work on the gazetteer in 1919, but it also does not appear that they were simply printing an already-completed document. Less than one-fifth of the way through the list of (mostly) post-1860 chaste widows in *juan* 50, there is a note that says that the above information is based on an early draft of the county gazetteer, which suggests that the vast majority of the list was compiled relatively late in the process, or at least after 1911. This may explain why so few of the entries in this portion of the list contain details about imperial rewards received. The list also contains a number of notations in which the compilers cast doubts on the accuracy of certain entries based on records in the provincial gazetteer or similar but slightly different names (of either women or their husbands) appearing at other places in the gazetteer's own list. On the one hand, these notes show the amount of care and energy they put into compiling information that many readers would find obscure and not especially useful. On the other hand, the compilers' inability to verify all the entries reflects the challenges of the compilation process, which the prefaces bemoan. Together, the thoroughness and shortcomings of the compilation alike make the loyal service of the compilers to the Qing stand out against the inhospitable circumstances that worked against them.

Conclusion

No less than this dissertation, the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* makes Jinan as a multi-layered place. It was a place of virtuous people and propitious geography admired by great scholars and emperors alike. It was a fortress that was battered but not broken, expanded to serve as a refuge for people fleeing war, drought, and flood. It was a battleground for the sovereignty

and survival of the dynasty. It was place to retreat to when the dynasty fell.

Even taken together, these layers are not a full picture of the city and its history. Many more stories would need to be told, and even then the place as we would know it would be a sliver of the diverse and complex experiences “Jinan” did and, in our representation of its past, could encompass. Because places are always in the process of being made, we can only paint them as one would a moving subject. As the compilers of the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* felt so acutely, this makes any given version of a place as fragile as time. Retrospection is certainly an advantage in writing local history since at least the past is fixed in place for us. Then again, historical places are no less “spatio-temporal events” for us than the people who lived in and made them, since our own movement through time and space affects how we see them.⁴¹

If places are elusive like this, then so too are states. Of course, this does not mean that we should stop trying to understand them, but we should do so with more theoretical humility than is allowed by a paradigm that hinges on deciding where the state ends and society begins. Like the Qing, all states have boundaries—spatial, temporal, and conceptual—but it is unwise to assume that what lies on the other side of those boundaries is definitively not the state.⁴² The *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* is just one example: a privately undertaken public project in the service of a state that ceased to exist. Rather than making the *prima facie* declaration that such artifacts are not of the state, we should let their effects play out in time and observe how they do or do not contribute to specific state-building projects. After all, although the Jinan of the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* no longer exists in the way its authors made it—certainly not as part of a Qing Empire—this text still participates in the making of Jinan for everyone who reads it, whether they do so with an attitude of credulity, criticism, or condescension. And so it

⁴¹ Massey, *For Space*, 130.

⁴² On boundaries as productive sites of state-building, see Sparrow, Novak, and Sawyer, “Introduction,” 6.

contributes even to a form of place-making that is attached to a state-building project that its compilers rejected.

In 1928—two years after the publication of the *Revised Licheng County Gazetteer* and three years after the deaths of its compilers—a new county gazetteer of sorts appeared. Compiled by Sun Baosheng, *A Record of Investigation of Licheng County* (*Licheng xian xiangtu diaocha lu*) is far more representative of Republican-era local histories than its predecessor and includes sections on contemporary government offices, industry, commerce, etc. Sun was by no means unaware of Mao Chenglin and Zhang Yinglin's project, and, in fact, drew a kind of inspiration from it, as he explains in the preface:

In autumn 1919, my fellow townsperson Zhang Wenzhen proposed establishing a bureau for revising the local history. The magistrate allowed it, and it was completed in the winter of 1926. I obtained a copy in advance and first examined its principles of compilation. What it recorded only went up through 1911. The institutions, literary products, and social conditions of these fifteen years of the Republic were all left lacking. My classmates were indignant that this book would treat the ancient in detail and gloss over the contemporary, that it would emphasize poems and essays and abandon facts. Since there were so many volumes, the price was high, and it was not something a common person could buy and read. They urged me to investigate Licheng during the Republic and to send a simplified local record to the typesetter, in order to make up for the shortcomings of the revised county gazetteer.⁴³

The local record Sun wrote (after he was prodded by a directive from the provincial government) is no less deserving of attention than the gazetteer compiled by Mao and Zhang that his peers found wanting but I have found invaluable. The two works are obviously bound together in terms of space and time. However, they make Jinan, the place they purport to describe, in very different ways, which has everything to do with the contrasting demands of the state-building projects in which they were entangled. Since it is Qing state-building that is at the core of this

⁴³ Sun Baosheng, *Licheng xian xiangtu diaocha lu*, 1–2.

project, I will leave to other books Jinan's history after 1926—a period in which the Qing state became something else, even though the empire and the places it had made—and had made it—by no means disappeared.

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Abbreviations Used in Notes

<i>Despatches</i>	United States. Embassy (China), <i>Despatches from United States Ministers to China, 1843–1906 [Microfilm Collection]</i>
<i>FRUS [Year]</i>	United States Department of State, <i>Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
<i>GTZZ</i>	<i>Gaotang zhou zhi</i>
<i>JNFZ</i>	<i>Jinan fu zhi</i>
<i>JNHB</i>	<i>Jinan huibao</i>
<i>JNTS</i>	<i>Jinan tongshi</i>
<i>LCXZ</i>	<i>Licheng xian zhi</i>
<i>LFZZ</i>	<i>Lufu zouzhe</i>
<i>NCH</i>	<i>North China Herald</i>
<i>PBFM</i>	Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Board of Foreign Missions, <i>Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Correspondence and Reports, 1833–1911 [Microfilm Collection]</i>
<i>QSL</i>	<i>Qing shilu</i> (Bibliographic entries appear under the temple name of the respective emperors.)
<i>QZFZYTP</i>	Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan, ed., <i>Qing zhengfu zhenya Taiping tianguo dang'an shiliao</i>
<i>SDGB</i>	<i>Shandong guanbao</i>
<i>SDTZ</i>	<i>Shandong tongzhi</i>
<i>SDZZ</i>	<i>Shandong zazhi</i>
<i>TNA</i>	The National Archives (UK)
<i>XKTB</i>	<i>Xingke tiben</i>
<i>XXLCXZ</i>	<i>Xuxiu Licheng xian zhi</i>

<i>ZPZZ</i>	<i>Zhupi zouzhe</i>
<i>ZXXSJJ</i>	<i>Zaixu xingshui jinjian</i>
<i>ZYJYF</i>	<i>Xuantong ernian Shandong ziyiju yifu ji zixing tiyi ge'an bajuan</i>

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