MODERN EAST ASIA IN A GLOBAL HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE – 2

EDITED BY Billy K. L. So and Madeleine Zelin

New Narratives of Urban Space in Republican Chinese Cities

Emerging Social, Legal and Governance Orders

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New Narratives of Urban Space in Republican Chinese Cities

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Edited by

Billy K. L. So, *Hong Kong University of Science and Technology*
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[1] The conference is itself an outcome of a research project (code: 450407) funded by the Research Grant Council of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region, PRC.

[2] Su Jilang 蘇基朗 (Billy K. L. So) ed., *Zhongguo jindai chengshiwenhua de dongtaifazhen: Renwen kongjian de xinshiye* 中國近代城市文化的動態發展: 人文空間的新視野 [Urban Space and Cultural Dynamics in Modern Chinese Cities] (Beijing: Zhejiang University Press, 2012); Billy K. L. So and David W. Wong, eds. "Historical Mapping and GIS: Special Issue." *Annals of GIS* 18.1 (2012).

to publish exquisite photographs from their archives in Chapter 8 of this volume. Despite all of the wonderful assistance we received, we admit that errors likely remain, for which we editors and contributors are solely responsible.

B.K.L.S. and M.Z.
October 5, 2012

CHAPTER ONE

URBAN SPACE IN REPUBLICAN CHINESE CITIES AS SEEN THROUGH CULTURAL NARRATIVES: A PROLOGUE

Billy K. L. So and Madeleine Zelin

This is a volume of cultural narratives pertaining to Republican cities. In the form of nine case studies we offer an alternative vision of Chinese cities in the early decades of the past century. Organized under the general framework of urban space these cases examine three critical dimensions of the great urban transformation in Republican China—social, legal and governance orders. Together these narratives suggest a new perception of this historical phenomenon.

Chinese cities underwent a great transformation during the last century. Inquiry into this transformation has been one of the major scholarly tasks in many fields of Chinese studies—urban studies, comparative modernization, and modern Chinese history, to name just a few. Max Weber's typological approach to the Occidental city in contrast with Oriental cities remains influential to these discourses.[1] Under this broad conceptual rubric, urban change in modern China signifies not only some significant changes in the cities themselves—such had happened in Chinese urban history before. What made this transformation unprecedented is that it had the hallmarks of Western-oriented modernity. Republican urban change hence represents the crucial emergence of modern Chinese urbanism that both learned from and contributed to global urban change.[2]

In recent decades, scholarly works on this wave of Chinese urban change in the first half of the twentieth century have become substantial

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[1] Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 1212–1265. For instance, see the Marxian critique of Chinese urban transformation from socialism to capitalism in the past few decades in Richard Walker and Daniel Buck, "The Chinese Road: Cities in the Transition to Capitalism," *New Left Review* 46 (2007): 39–46; and the revisiting of the Weberian discourse on urban typology applied to pre-modern Chinese city in Si-yen Fei, *Negotiating Urban Space: Urbanization and Late Ming Nanjing* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

[2] For a classic exposition of urbanism in the contemporary world, see Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology* 44.1 (July, 1938): 1–24.

but overwhelmingly focused on Shanghai.[3] This is understandable, as that city was not only the prime motor of economic modernization in modern China, but also a major source of exogenous cultural influence on Chinese society.[4] However, since the 1990s detailed studies of various aspects of urban change in other Chinese cities at this crucial early stage of transformation have begun to play an important role in our understanding of the Chinese city.[5] Together with more recent major works on Shanghai,[6] these studies have revealed city dwellers and urban centers across China willingly or unwillingly responding to the pace and dynamism of an urban transformation unprecedented in Chinese history.

Two recent volumes on Republican Chinese cities in particular are relevant to this process of knowledge formation.[7] Coming out of a conference titled "Beyond Shanghai," *Remaking the Chinese City*, edited by Joseph Esherick, is by far the most influential in the field of Chinese urban history of the Republican era.[8] It systematically unifies ten meticulously researched microstudies of various aspects of nine different cities, namely, Canton,

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[3] This structure of knowledge about Republican Chinese cities dominated by Shanghai studies is well captured in Joseph W. Esherick, ed., *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), pp. 1–16.

[4] Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

[5] The earlier major volume on the topic is Mark Elvin and G. William Skinner, eds., *The Chinese City between Two Worlds* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974). For monographic studies on aspects of individual cities other than Shanghai, see Søren Clausen and Stig Thøgersen, *The Making of a Chinese City: History and Historiography in Harbin* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1995); David Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing: City, People, and Politics in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Yinong Xu, *The Chinese City in Space and Time: The Development of Urban Form in Suzhou* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000); Carol G. S. Tan, *British Rule in China: Law and Justice in Weihaiwei, 1898–1930* (London: Wildy, Simmonds, and Hill Publishers, 2008); Virgil K. Y. Ho, *Understanding Canton: Rethinking Popular Culture in the Republican Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Brett Sheehan, *Trust in Troubled Times: Money, Banks, and State-Society Relations in Republican Tianjin* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Madeleine Yue Dong, *Republican Beijing: The City and Its Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); and Kristin Stapleton, *Civilizing Chengdu: Chinese Urban Reform, 1895–1937* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000); among others.

[6] For instance, Frederic Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai, 1927–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Wen-hsin Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor: Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843–1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). In Chinese scholarship, see for instance Xiong Yuezhi 熊月之, ed., *Shanghai tongshi* 上海通史 [A General History of Shanghai], 10 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1999); and, more recently, Xu Jilin, 許紀霖, Luo Gang 羅岡, et al., *Chengshi de jiyi: Shanghai wenhua de duoyuan lishi chuantong* 城市的記憶: 上海文化的多元歷史傳統 [The Memory of City: the Multicultural Historical Tradition of Shanghai Cutlure] (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2011).

[7] Esherick, *Remaking the Chinese City*.

[8] Ibid.

Tianjin, Changchun, Chengdu, Hangzhou, Beiping, Nanjing, Wuhan, and Chongqing, through a conceptual framework focusing on modernity and national identity. These studies demonstrate the transformation of these cities in the related domains of urban planning, national government, municipal government, public health, architecture, culture, and the media, as well as commerce and banking, a process largely engineered by China's new urban elites. In his introduction, Esherick differentiates these urban places into seven types of cities and alerts us to the diverse paths of urban modernization in China. More important is the diversity of agents, directions, models, and choices that were often the products of local conditions partly inherited from the past and partly evolved in response to new challenges and opportunities. Urban transformation was therefore not just an outcome determined by a universal pattern of modernity modeled on the West. We are reminded by this volume that local dynamism also accounts for the divergent paths of individual Chinese cities in this transformation process.

In a more recent volume on the Chinese city in the Republican era, Cochran, Strand and Yeh present a collection of essays dealing with different aspects of early twentieth-century Chinese cities in more general terms, with only two chapters focusing on particular cities.[9] Drawing from but also arguing against the paradigm of the spatial hierarchical urban system advanced by G. William Skinner in the 1970s, this volume provides rich material on the dimensions of Chinese cities, demonstrating that they were not static and self-confined urban phenomena. In this volume, the editors convincingly demonstrate the multiple facets of the Republican Chinese city in transformation that conflate globalization, the bundling of evolving and emerging networks, and cities as building blocks of hierarchies. In this sense, local dynamism and the drive for global convergence were interwoven, particularly in modern Chinese urban space.

The term "urban space" has been widely used in fields such as urban studies, urban space theory, urban planning, architecture, cultural studies, and so on.[10] Popular as it may be, the term itself is not often given conceptual specificity, as if this is self-evident. Common sense tells us it refers to

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[9] Sherman Cochran, David Strand, and Wen-hsin Yeh, eds., *Cities in Motion: Interior, Coast, and Diaspora in Transnational China* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 2007). The two exceptions are about Shanghai fashion (Chapter 6) and Hong Kong as a transshipment center of remains of Chinese migrants who died overseas (Chapter 9) respectively.

[10] For an example of a recent volume on China's urban space evolution in the past two decades, see Laurence J. C. Ma and Fulong Wu, eds., *Restructuring the Chinese City: Changing Society, Economy, and Space* (London: Routledge, 2005).

the space within a city. It can be physical space. The physical dimension manifests in segment(s) of a city demarcated by physical markers such as buildings, streets, or landmarks, or varied conceptual markers in urban zoning for administrative purposes, such as city planning, election, or municipal administration.[11] Urban space in a physical sense can be represented in spatial patterns, which can then be subjected to rigorous spatial analysis. Studies of urban space often go further to deal with the perception and meaning of such physical space. These apply, however, mostly in the contemporary context. In the study of historical urban space the collection of sufficient reliable and quantifiable data on social contexts is more challenging and scholars have found it easier to focus on construction of the physical and spatial patterns of the city. Some studies of urban space look into cultural domains of urban life such as the economic, political, or social space of a city, which may not carry a quantifiable physical dimension at all. For instance, in a recent study of British Asian urban space, the authors collected interview data from their Asian subjects in two British cities to examine these interviewees' perceptions of urban space in terms of segregation and integration, as well the relationship in people's minds between particular spaces and such concepts as economic opportunity.[12] The term "urban space" in this sense is more concerned with the respondents' cultural perception of urban life than with a spatial pattern with physical form, although both segregation and integration do have a sense of clustering that can be quantitatively spatialized.

The most convincing application of the conception of urban space to Chinese history in the past century comes from the volume edited by Davis, Kraus, Naughton, and Perry on the transformation of Chinese urban space in the 1980s.[13] The concept was clearly applied in the unifying framework of this volume to imply both material (physical) and social spaces. Studies of the latter constitute the bulk of the volume and cover the political and fiscal structure of urban and rural governance, rural migrants in the cities, autonomous space for non-state urban organizations, communities,

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[11] Chapter 2 cites Thomas Markus and Deborah Cameron, *The Words between the Spaces: Buildings and Language* (London: Rouledge, 2002), to bring out the "productive relationship" among texts, buildings, designers, and users and beholders of buildings as defined in texts. Urban space is shaped by buildings with texts thus created. It is also endowed with the aggregated cultural meanings of these texts.

[12] Deborah Philips, Cathy Davis, and Peter Ratcliffe, "British Asian Narratives of Urban Space," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 32.2 (April 2007): 217–234.

[13] Deborah S. Davis, Richard Kraus, Barry Naughton, and Elizabeth J. Perry, eds., *Urban Spaces in Contemporary China: The Potential for Autonomy and Community in Post-Mao China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

cultural activities, identities, as well as individuals. The main goal of the volume was to examine the potential for more autonomy that might result from the emerging transformation of Chinese cities in the 1980s, a mode of inquiry informed by the 1990s' discourse on civil society in China.[14] While this present volume applies the concept of urban space more to its social and cultural than its physical dimensions, our attention is far less focused on the issue of democratization or its absence in the Republican cities under investigation. Our concern is more modest in trying to present a multi-faceted narrative account of city life emerging amid the early process of urban modernization. This account will shed light on the issues of Chinese democracy and the changing relationship between state and society in the early twentieth century. This is not, however, a major theme for this volume.

* * *

Most of our chapters deal with cultural dimensions of urban space in early twentieth-century Chinese cities. We include a range of cities of different sizes and degrees of international exposure: Shanghai, Beijing, Wuhan, Nanchang, Guangzhou, Chongqing, and Xi'an. Physical manifestations of urban space, such as wedding halls, municipal administration buildings, and crime rates of police districts, provide the scaffolding around which some of these studies are built. But by and large, we are talking about cultural spaces and exploring the emergent meanings behind these urban phenomena.[15]

The chapters in this volume cover the social, legal, and political orders of urban space. They are organized into three parts: cultural narratives of the new urban social order, of new urban law and order, and of a new form of urban governance. New social order, legal order, and political order in Chinese cities emerged in the early decades of the past century. A new urban social space bred new outlooks on marriage, social norms, and gender, among other issues. These social changes took place in the same physical urban space where urban crime and criminology, economic or otherwise, were also being culturally redefined and negotiated. The social and legal orders are inextricably intertwined, representing important aspects of daily life in the city that every urban dweller would experience

[14] Ibid., pp. 1–15.

[15] Even in chapter 6, which makes use of evolving spatial patterns as part of the evidence to substantiate its arguments, those patterns do not constitute the inquiry of the study itself. The main concern in that chapter remains an inquiry into the emerging legal culture in Beijing.

through the increasingly accessible public media of newspapers and magazines, and later radio and the movies. The worlds of social life and legal life converged in the perceptions of urban space among city dwellers as integral parts of their common daily concerns, for curiosity, self-interest, or some other driving urges.

The political order set the governance framework for Chinese cities as they modeled themselves on global, largely Western cities. Western urban municipal governance was widely perceived at the time by the emerging Chinese urban elites as far superior to the traditional urban government model that made no distinction between urban and rural space. The new mode of urban governance, first transplanted through the treaty ports and concessions, drastically changed the urban landscape but also facilitated the establishment of administrative structures that were conducive to change in social and legal orders. Governance of Chinese cities developed beyond ordinary municipal administration as some began to acquire more political significance in the national urban hierarchy to become provincial capitals or were resuscitated as major regional cities with a political mission. These new political orders of cities evolved closely alongside new trends in the social and legal order of urban space. It may not be totally groundless to suggest that the political order and the social and legal orders were mutually reinforced in Republican Chinese cities, though solid evidence to document or measure such links remains a task for future scholarship. It is interesting also to point out that the impact of the political position of local cities would in theory be stronger under the more decentralized national political order than under the pre-reform People's Republic when central policies had a far greater impact on a city's social and legal life.[16]

These less quantifiable aspects of urban space, as expressed in their social, legal, and political orders are captured in the chapters of this volume through bundles of cultural narratives constructed by our contributors. While urban space is a concept often not fully articulated in historical writings, the term narrative carries highly complex and diverse historiographical implications. By narrative we follow Lawrence Stone's account of "the organization of material in a chronologically sequential order and the focusing of the content into a single coherent story."[17] Alex

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[16] Davis, Kraus, Naughton, and Perry, eds., *Urban Spaces in Contemporary China*, pp. 1–27 as discussed by Deborah Davis.

[17] Lawrence Stone, "The Revival of narrative: Reflections on a New Old History," *The Past and Present History* 85 (1979): 3–24, specially p. 3.

Callinicos further differentiated three kinds of claims in narrative history: a preferred way of handling materials, a preferred genre to present history to the audience, and a philosophical claim that narrative is "constitutive of historical writing *tout court*" like Hayden White.[18] In this volume we will not venture into the discourse of metahistory and focus our concern on the more basic and common connotation of narrative in historical writing as suggested by Stone.

The method of investigating urban space through historical cultural narratives can be an effective approach to the representation of urban space in cultural domains, in particular when dealing with historical urban space about which we have scanty information.[19] The chapters herein provide nine cultural narratives focused on a variety of aspects of urban space in Republican Chinese cities. They present a bundle of narratives that may look dispersed on the surface but together induce a holistic sense of new Chinese urbanism. This new city culture is embedded, as presented in our chapters, in the social, legal and governance aspects, among others, of the daily life of the city dwellers and it played an important role to redefine Chinese urban cultural space. These narratives are not necessarily set in the grand discourses of modernization, the formation of national identity, the tension between state and society, or the notion of urban globalization in modern China. Rather, they unfold stories about how different segments of urban dwellers reacted to the transformational upheavals occurring in their daily lives, resulting from the impacts of modernity, nationality, and globalism, with emerging new cultures, identities, priorities, and orientations that are enormously diverse and fluid.

These narratives also suggest that amid the great diversity of responses, most of the reactions of these urbanites can be observed as rational ones. Notwithstanding, while rational reactions continued to be conditioned by traditional institutional and cultural constraints like Confucian outlooks and value system that had previously bounded Chinese reactions to

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[18] Alex Callinicos, *Theories and Narratives: Reflections on the Philosophy of History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), pp. 46–47; Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

[19] Antonia Finnane provides excellent account of urban cultural spaces in late Imperial Yangzhou by drawing important materials in narrative forms. See her *Speaking of Yangzhou: A Chinese City, 1550–1850* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004). Another example is Judith R. Walkowitz's feminist cultural history of nineteenth-century London urban criminal imagination. She made insightful use of the popular narratives of the time to capture the city dwellers' sentiments of fear and sexual bias. See Judith R. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

transformative societal challenges for two millennia, these traditional constraints were now also undergoing a process of unsettling and turbulent transformation. They became less effective in an unprecedented degree. It created greater freedom of choice to the city dwellers on one hand, and on the other hand, a conducive institutional environment for sustaining greater diversity in reactions to exogenous impact of global urbanism.

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The first part of this volume, on social order, begins with a chapter on "civilized weddings." In chapter 2, Antonia Finnane elucidates the newly emerging form of weddings among the urban elites in Shanghai and Beijing through an analytical approach toward actor-networks that produced spatial systems that coexisted and competed with one another. The network approach works well in this narrative of wedding because the rituals, new or traditional, always created routes, and various nodes along them, linking parties and places of rituals, each embedded with different cultural meanings. The traditional system and the modern one were eventually compromised in the emergence of a mixture of both in which elements of Western and Chinese were fused with a new cultural recognition and identity. Such a phenomenon of mixing became highly prominent and widely disseminated at the time, as the abundant wedding narratives reconstructed in this chapter demonstrate. The civilized weddings of Republican Chinese cities also instilled new cultural meanings in specific wedding venues and greatly enriched their cultural heritage.

Driven by the Nationalists' nation-building efforts to reshape the public life of citizens with new ethics and etiquette befitting a modern Republic, the city of Nanchang underwent, as narrated in chapter 3, a social transformation in which the political campaign of the New Life Movement took hold. The physical environment of the city was reconfigured with new features including streets, cinemas, stadiums, and parks, modeled on modern cities of the West. However, increasingly, public urban space became a new cultural sphere where politically tailored public behaviors and politically organized mass activities dominated. The result is a paradox, as Federica Ferlanti has demonstrated, where increasing utilization of public urban space by the city's individuals actually led to the shrinking of their private appropriation of such space. The social order of urban space that emerged amid Nanchang's transformative city-building project under the Nationalists was thus a new narrative conflating a code of conduct and social behavior with politics.

Harriet Zurndorfer provides in Chapter 4 a detailed discussion of refugee relief during the Sino-Japanese War in the three major cities of

Shanghai, Wuhan, and Chongqing, all of which suffered from catastrophes of warfare. Against this backdrop, her narrative explores the role of women in the relief work and how it created new opportunities for Chinese women to transform their political and social positions over the long term. By employing a revisionist approach, Zurndorfer presents the continuity of social transformation in the urban gender relationship crossing the regimes of Nationalist and Communist, underscoring the general movement of modernization in Chinese society. She argues that war had also connected urban women's agenda with the agenda of those in the rural areas. However, the chapter ends with the caution that in spite of the wartime rise in women's activism, it could not escape the fate of being subsumed under the formidable force of nationalism right after the war. This cultural narrative of women in Chinese urban space hence does not indicate a turning point but rather marks out an extraordinary moment that would be available as a staging point for future development.

The three cultural narratives of law and order in part 2 all explore criminality in Republican cities, in particular Beijing. Chapter 5 documents cases of paper money forgery in Beijing in the late 1920s that relied on the city's links with other major cities such as Hankou and Tianjin. This very special kind of commercial crime demanded strong political backing and well organized networking by the offenders, who included forgers, soldiers/politicians, and shopkeepers/bankers in the cases examined. The human network also supplied close knowledge of price fluctuations in different localities that was critical to the success of this illicit business. Conventional wisdom tells us that these criminal networks would have been derived from common native place, religion, blood tie, territorial gang, or patronage. Brett Sheehan, however, demonstrates that none of these was the case. Instead, Sheehan discloses the multiplicity, unevenness, and potential fragility of the networks, which he captures well as forming an irregular weblike structure, both within and among cities. In this, he unfolds before the readers a narrative of money forgery in Republican Chinese urban space that suggests a cultural dimension of irregularity and contingency rather than regularity and stability as a result of the great mobility of people, in particular soldiers, across cities in a highly fragmented political landscape.

Focusing on Beijing from the 1910s to the 1930s, Michael Ng examines in Chapter 6 the institutional and spatio-temporal frameworks in which urban crime was being interpreted and managed under a newly configured criminal justice system, one of the hallmark features of the transplanted modern urban administration. Ng documents the important differentiation between "crime," defined by new legislation to be tried

in the new court system, and minor offences, which were to be handled under police contraventions. These newly introduced differentiations of unlawful behavior helped shape the data regarding criminal activities and produced patterns in it, sometimes in a distorted manner. Derived from these predefined crime data and their presentations, there emerged a sense of anxiety among experts and officials at the time about perceived rising crime rates. However, Ng shows that if the criminal records kept by the police, which are well contextualized in terms of time and space, are also taken into account, the cultural narrative of crime in Republican Beijing would emerge in a different manner. Not surprisingly, the spatial patterns of police deployment appear to have been influenced by data from the police's own records.

Jan Kiely looks into the broader urban crime discourses, largely in Shanghai and Beijing, in chapter 7. Republican writers in the police department, prison administration, judiciary, and legal academy wrote much about the upsurge of crimes and rising insecurity in the former imperial capital as it gradually transformed itself into a modern-style city. Kiely reexamines these views in the light of a new cultural narrative of crime that emerged among government officials and legal academics, which projected onto criminal activities a new set of perceptions, meanings, and possible solutions. There was an increasing desire among crime experts of the time to understand urban crimes in terms of spatial differentiation between city and the countryside and among different urban districts. This project assumed a stark dichotomy between stability and security on the one side and disorder and danger on the other. The underlining themes were poverty and corrupted morality, largely concerning young men and female prostitutes in the cities, and especially among those newly migrated to cities for a living or for better security than could be found in the bandit-infected countryside. As Kiely demonstrates, this new urban narrative of crime has probably had an impact as much on our understanding of the Republican urban space regarding law and order as on the policies of the 1920s to cope with urban crime issues. As one example, most of the crime data coming down to us were by and large collected and organized under such a narrative framework.

The last three narratives, on the new governance order of Republican cities, feature a survey of British concessions, Canton as provincial capital, and Xi'an as a regional resistance center against Japanese military ventures. In the first section of chapter 8, Robert Bickers examines British concessions in Chinese cities in a new framework to develop a narrative of the city through the rich administrative data collected by

the concession urban administration establishment. His story takes into account local problems the administration encountered that also resulted in good information in the archives. This narrative of Republican cities as seen through the windows of the concessions may enrich the discourse by situating them in the broader context of modern state building in terms of nationalism and anti-imperialism. In the second section of the chapter, Bickers makes extensive use of a set of treaty port photograph taken by G. Warren Swire to explore how the availability of new digitized sources can be applied to the narrative developed in the first section of his chapter. The British concessions in China are shown to constitute a cultural narrative of another network, echoing the fake currency network detailed in chapter 5, which interlinked treaty ports, mission societies, shipping lines, and trading firms. The spectacular movement of people, materials, services, ideas, and practices through these networks, Bickers argued, played an important role in strengthening the connection among Chinese cities and in forging the increasingly globalized Chinese urbanism.

Provincial capital cities during imperial times played an important part in the hierarchical apparatus of local administration ruling the empire. However, it is commonly accepted that the most effective direct control was exercised no higher than the level of county-capitals. At the subcounty and village level, the local social and political elites constituted a semiofficial structure that usually reinforced imperial governance. John Fitzgerald uses the case of Canton (Guangzhou) to explore how modern Republican state building undertakings shaped the new cultural narrative of this provincial capital in terms of governance order. He argues that, driven by the quest for a new state imitating modern Western states, the local government of Canton embarked on a path of building a new connection with the countryside in Guangdong Province. It sought first to redefine its relationship with the central government, which was the sovereign authority, and with the people under its provincial jurisdiction spreading across a total of ninety-four counties as their representative vis-à-vis the central government. It then sought to replace the local social and cultural elite structure that obstructed the link between the state and the governed in the rural areas. Fitzgerald's narrative of a new governance order hence takes up the changing perception of the role of a provincial city. In this case Canton became a base from which the central regime could exert its administrative clout from the provincial capital to the county capitals, and eventually to the villages.

The last of our three narratives of governance order is by Pierre-Étienne Will. Using extensive documentary as well as photographic evidence,

chapter 10 reconstructs a fairly detailed chronicle of the city of Xi'an from the turn of the twentieth century through the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War, thereby representing its transformation from a long-obsolete ancient imperial capital of the middle kingdom to an important wartime resistance center with a new sense of urban cultural identity in line with the broad movement in search of urban modernity. Xi'an's revival from obscurity was not resulted from its designation as a treaty port or concession. It continued to lie beyond the major transportation routes along which a Western-style capitalist market economy took hold and lacked the economic resources and investment opportunities that could have alleviated the long-term poverty of its people. All it relied upon were material and human resources from its hinterland of twenty or so adjacent counties. Notwithstanding this situation, Xi'an in this narrative gradually takes off, building up a small modern industrial sector, based especially on cotton mills, and nurtured a lively environment of political and intellectual discourse that engaged the city with the broader national agenda of the country. Despite wartime destruction and tightened political control by the Nationalist Government by 1940 Xi'an had, in Will's view, the signs of a modern Chinese city in its "infrastructures, activities, [and] mentality". This city's new governance order may at least partially account for its subsequent development into one of the major Chinese cities well into the Reform era toward the end of the century.

* * *

The urban landscape that emerges in this volume brings together the social, legal, and political domains of the city dweller's daily life as they were transformed with the advent of a globalized, capitalistic, and industrialized modern economy. This new modern economic sector, in particular in its treaty port cities on the coast and along the major river systems, was no doubt one of the major forces pushing transformation in all other realms of life in China.

Urban transformation is, however, never simply a matter of market development. The chapters in this volume add a new dimension to our understanding of the multilayered forces that shape urban space by turning our attention to that less quantifiable, but equally important cultural realm and by exposing the ways in which these forces created new urban narratives that themselves became shapers of urban space and our perception of it.

PART ONE

SOCIAL ORDER

CHAPTER TWO

CHANGING SPACES AND CIVILIZED WEDDINGS IN REPUBLICAN CHINA

Antonia Finnane

In an engaging study of modernization in Greek Cypriot society, anthropologist Vassos Argyrou used changes in wedding celebrations to track the journey to "modernity" undertaken in this small corner of the Mediterranean.[1] Weddings, as he commented, "are often considered 'folklorist' and rather banal" as subjects of social enquiry, but the relative discreteness of the event, together with its social complexity, makes the wedding a good vantage point from which to observe a society in the process of transformation. In Cyprus, the whole-village, potlatch-style patrilocal wedding of the early twentieth century survived the century with some modifications, but by definition this could only be so in the countryside. The growth of a market economy meant that people increasingly lived in towns rather than villages. Time, place, and social relations changed. Wedding celebrations were "transformed," argues Argyrou, "from rites of passage to rites of distinction."[2]

Distant as Cyprus is from China, as well as different in most measurable respects, there are passages in this study where the names of the two places could almost be interchanged. In the second half of the twentieth century, Greek Cypriot parents ceased to determine whom their children would marry; bridal virginity was no longer expected and ritually inspected; hotels replaced homes as venues for wedding celebrations. The fact that all these things could be said of China, too, does not mean that Cyprus and China have a special relationship: the two societies simply share with many others the experience of "modernization" or "Westernization". Argyrou treats these terms as synonyms, reminding us that from the perspective of the Cyprus, the "West" looks mostly Anglo-American.

One respect in which Greek Cypriot weddings resemble "Western" weddings more than Chinese is the use of a church for the wedding

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[1] Vassos Argyrou, *Tradition and Modernity in the Mediterranean: The Wedding as Symbolic Struggle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[2] Argyrou, *Tradition and Modernity*, 10.

celebration. In the English-speaking world, unlike in the Greek, this is a fading tradition, but it is a reminder of a factor often used to differentiate Europe and China, which is religion. In the Orthodox and Catholic traditions, marriage is a holy institution, and the wedding is a religious ceremony. The man and the woman confer the sacrament of matrimony on each other. Although Protestants early abandoned the idea of marriage as a sacrament, they maintained a view of marriage as a holy calling and one properly celebrated in a church or chapel.[3] In Cyprus, as indeed in the USA, the church wedding has survived the ravages of modernity and remains a common form of wedding celebration. As a shared ritual space, the actual church in a town, often an old building in which weddings have taken place for generations, has virtually no counterpart in urban China other than its replica, a Chinese Christian church.

Even this distinction loses it sharpness when we consider the changed position of the church in modern Cyprus. The organizing capacities of the parish church, center of the faith community, have weakened, and that little local church is no longer the most obvious place for the wedding of a given parishioner. Rather, Cypriot couples queue up at the doors of St John's Cathedral in Nicosia, hoping for a date when they might pledge their troth in the most prestigious church on the island. Couples living too far from the capital for this to be convenient look instead to churches in the next level of the Episcopal hierarchy. Choosing the church is like choosing the hotel in which the reception will be held, and a wedding at St John's Cathedral will usually be followed by a reception at the Hilton. As a backdrop for the wedding, the Cypriot bride's choice of St John's may not be dissimilar to the Beijing bride's choice of the Forbidden City as a site for her wedding photos.[4] Both brides may well be heading for the Hilton thereafter, despite being on opposite sides of the world.

"Rites of distinction" seems an appropriate term to apply to contemporary Chinese weddings. While in this as in many other respects there seems to be a growing gap between town and country, the concept of "distinction" is meaningful precisely because of that gap, which is deepened and broadened by the anxiety of townspeople to distinguish themselves from their shabby country cousins. But what of the "rites of passage"? This

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[3] See in general, John Witte, *From Sacrament to Contract: Marriage, Religion, and Law in the Western Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997).

[4] On the cult of bridal photography, see Bonnie Adrian, *Framing the Bride: Globalizing Beauty and Romance in Taiwan's Bridal Industry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). China and Taiwan have very similar practices in this respect.

term takes us back to an earlier time, when instead of equating the Hilton wedding in Nicosia with the Hilton wedding in Beijing, we are contrasting the Sacrament of Matrimony in Cyprus with the Nuptial Rites in China. It is not proposed here to pursue this contrast in detail, but since the secularization of weddings in Christian cultures points back to a time when weddings were otherwise, to the "time of God" as opposed to the "time of history",[5] the logic of the comparison begs the question of how that earlier time was constituted in China. Clearly, "rites of passage" were among the significant markers of time in earlier centuries, and of these, the Nuptial Rites were arguably the most significant, at least in the Qing dynasty.

What distinguishes the Nuptial Rites from the modern wedding in China? By what process was it modified, reformed, or simply disposed of? It may be tempting simply to point to the growth of the market economy, urbanization, and concomitant social change, as Argyrou has in the case of Cyprus. These are indeed features of twentieth-century Chinese history, although (unlike Cyprus in the 1930s) China was not starting from scratch. But more significant in China than in Cyprus was political change, which was linked to ritual life. Family rites in China were part of a larger ritual system that centered on the Emperor and ensured the smooth workings of the universe. When the last Manchu ruler formally abdicated the throne on 12 February 1912, the ritually ordered world of the Qing empire disintegrated, leaving Chinese society groping for new structures. In *The Making of the Republican Citizen*, Henrietta Harrison has argued that under the Republic, a new set of rituals replaced the old, reconfiguring communities and hierarchies of power around new organizing principles, namely nationalism and ethnicity.[6] It seems doubtful, however, that these new rituals were directly comparable to the ceremonies of old. Rather, canonical Rites were replaced by mutable conventions, and time-honoured customs gave way to invented traditions, if they survived at all. Although it may not have looked this way from the depths of rural China, the "country of rites and rituals" (*liyi zhi bang* 禮儀之邦) was gradually ceasing to be. The ritual underpinnings of space itself were removed when science replaced the Rites of Zhou as the inspiration for urban planning.[7]

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[5] Phrase borrowed from Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Time of History and the Times of the Gods," in Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, eds., *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 35–60.

[6] Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911–1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 2–3.

[7] Michael Tsin, *Nation, Governance and Modernity in China: Canton: 1900–1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press), p. 52.

Urbanization, to return to Argyrou's point, was an agent in the deritualization of Chinese life. It fostered the steady diversification of economic activities, mobility, the fragmentation of families, new life trajectories for women (including factory work for some and education and professional training for others), and the reconfiguration of social relations, manifest most obviously though not only in the public association of men and women. In early twentieth-century China, these trends were accompanied by political changes which deprived temples, in particular, of their ritual importance. Formerly hallowed places became mundane, or even ceased to matter, while new places were created—clubhouses of all sorts, hotels, universities and hospitals, all of which had assembly halls and function rooms along with whatever other rooms were needed for their various different purposes (classrooms, bedrooms, offices, and so on). These new places not only accommodated but also reshaped the ceremonies of modern life, especially weddings.

2.1. *Two Kinds of Wedding in Early Twentieth-Century China*

In local gazetteers of the late Qing (broadly, the nineteenth century), descriptions of wedding ceremonies are generally to be found in the chapter on local customs (*fengsu* 風俗). Among the entries in that chapter, the entry on weddings is generally placed first. The other major ritual of interest to compilers and commentators was the funeral, which might have an equally long entry but was not likely to outrank the wedding in importance. The description of the wedding usually includes an itemization of the six-part "Nuptial Rites," based on the *Yili* 儀禮 (Ceremonies and rites).[8] There were variations between localities and social strata in the observance of these six rites, but even simplified forms involved "asking the name" (which meant the involvement of a matchmaker); "consulting the horoscope," without which the marriage might be doomed; and "going to meet the bride" (*qinying* 親迎), which was sometimes termed

[8] See Christian de Pee, *Writing of Weddings in Middle-Period China* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007), p. 28. The six rites were *wenming* 問名 (asking the full name and date of birth of the potential bride); *nacai* 納彩 (offering gifts to the potential bride); *naji* 納吉 (consulting the horoscope); *nazheng* 納徵 (payment of dowry); *qingqi* 請期 (fixing the day of the wedding); *qinying* 親迎 (going to meet the bride).

"welcoming the [new] relative" (*yingqin* 迎親) and in any event pointed to the fact of the wedding journey.[9]

On the eve of the Republican Revolution, Jiang Wenmei 蔣文楣 (b. 1893) was wedded according to these rites. A native of Yixing, in Jiangsu province, Wenmei was one of two daughters in a well-established scholar-gentry family with moderately progressive attitudes. A few years later, her sister, Jiang Biwei 蔣碧微 (1899–1965), defied all conventions by eloping with budding artist Xu Beihong 徐悲鴻 (1895–1953) and running away with him to Japan. Wenmei's wedding, however, was similar to weddings held in earlier generations. As described in her sister's memoir:

> On the day of the wedding, the go-between and the chair bearers bring the phoenix chair to the woman's home. This is called "sending off the chair." The chair bearers should number four at least, and one should ask for young, handsome fellows. When the chair arrives at the house, the door should be shut. Only on presentation of a red envelope, prepared by the man's family for the go-between to hand over to the woman's family, will the door be opened. This is called "money to open the door." The woman's family takes the chair into the main hall, arranges incense on the family altar, then lets the go-between return to the man's home to await the auspicious hour. When that hour arrives, the go-between brings the groom in his blue official's chair, all trappings, whistles and gongs.[10]

The groom's task at this juncture was encompassed in the term *qinying*, "going in person to meet the bride," which involved accompanying the bride back to his own home. The bride's journey thus took her from her natal home to her marital home. It is to be noted that there were some standard folk practices such as "money to open the door" that were not orthodox but quite widespread, and intrinsically part of the ceremony in practice. Once within the house, the bride and groom were required to kowtow to the groom's ancestors and ancestral parents. This obeisance on the bride's part signaled her entry into the family, but actually the six orthodox rites were already complete by this stage.

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[9] On the reduction of the number of stages in Shanxi weddings in the late Qing and the Republican period, see Guo Yaping 郭亞萍, "You fan qu jian: Qingmo minchu Shanxi hunsu bianqian" 由繁趨簡: 清末民初山西婚俗變遷 [From complex to simple: Changes in Shanxi wedding practices in the late Qing and early Republic], *Shanxi daxue xuebao* 山西大學學報 (1999.4): pp. 1–3. On variations in this practice of *qinying* 親迎 in northern Jiangsu through the Qing dynasty, see Antonia Finnane, "Water, Love, and Labor: Aspects of a Gendered Environment," in Mark Elvin and Liu Ts'u-jung, eds., *Sediments of Time: Environment and Society in Chinese History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 657–690.

[10] Jiang Biwei 蔣碧微, *Jiang Biwei huiyilu* 蔣碧微回憶錄 [Memoirs of Jiang Biwei] (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 2002), p. 13.

Three years after Jiang Wenmei's marriage, Mary Ninde Gamewell (1858–1947), wife of Methodist missionary Dr Francis D. Gamewell, was invited to attend a wedding in Shanghai—not a Christian wedding, as she makes clear, but a "typical Shanghai wedding," or at least typical for a certain social echelon.[11] The wedding took place in the home of "a high official holding a responsible government position," and was accordingly splendid. The bride's dowry had been delivered with much pomp and circumstance the day before the wedding. On the wedding day itself, the groom went to the bride's home to escort the wedding procession. "*Qinying*" was thus observed. A band of Filipino musicians accompanied the groom on his mission. Gamewell notes that in the house there was a division between male and female, the men seated downstairs smoking and talking, the women upstairs, mostly in the bedroom where the dowry was on display. To this point, all seems in accordance with precedent.

Thereafter details quickly accumulate to give an impression of a ceremony rather different from Jiang Wenmei's. First, sedan chairs were nowhere in sight. The groom travelled in "a closed carriage drawn by a span of horses with coachman and footman," and the bride herself arrived in a carriage, albeit one gloriously bedecked, rather than in the time-honored "flowery" or ornate chair. Second, the couple were dressed in a style increasingly to be seen at Shanghai weddings, with the groom in a tuxedo and the bride in a wedding outfit that combined Western and Chinese elements: a gown of "old rose satin, stiff with embroidery," much jewelry, "loose-fitting cotton gloves" (a novelty in China), "delicate satin slippers" on her unbound feet. On her head was a phoenix crown, "seldom seen nowadays in Shanghai," to which was attached a white tulle wedding veil that "[fell] around the bride to her feet in billowy folds!"

Then the ceremony itself was rather novel. The bride and groom entered the large reception hall side by side, accompanied by two flower girls, the groom's little sisters, who wore "white foreign dresses, pink sashes and hair ribbons." They approached not an ancestral altar but rather a long table, behind which stood the officiating personage in "foreign clothes of the best modern cut," flanked by two men in Chinese robes. The bride and groom bowed in turn to all three. The official took up a document, from which he proceeded to read aloud, before presenting gold rings to groom and bride in turn. The groom placed the ring he held on the third

[11] Mary Ninde Gamewell, *The Gateway to China: Pictures of Shanghai* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1916), pp. 171–184.

finger of the bride's gloved left hand; she reciprocated by placing a ring on the little finger of his left hand, each bowing to the other as they did so. The ceremony concluded with bows from bride and groom to each other, to the officiating party, and to the assembled family and guests. In saluting the groom's parents, the young couple actually knelt and touched the floor with their heads, which was in accordance with old practice, but the celebrant, the witnesses flanking him, and the flower girls were all new features of the wedding ceremony, as was the mixed company which gathered in the reception hall once the bride arrived.

In a gesture that sharply differentiated this wedding from Jiang Wenmei's, "the bride attempted to slip her hand in her husband's arm" as the couple proceeded to the bed chamber after the wedding banquet. This must have been in accordance with instructions, but Gamewell observed that the groom was embarrassed and left the hard work to the bride, allowing his arm "to hang limply by his side." In accordance with "bad old ways" (*lousu* 陋俗), the wedding concluded with a period of bedroom hazing. The groom was allowed to escape downstairs to join the party, but the bride was put through her paces—"crawling, hopping, skipping, crowing"—until the carousing below had ended and the last of the guests had departed.

Also new and distinctive was the wedding music, which showed the mix of indigenous and exogenous elements that was evident in the bridal party's clothing. There was a Chinese band as well as a Filipino one, apparently a common phenomenon at the time.[12] In the course of the wedding ceremony, immediately after the exchange of rings, a small choir of little girls sang a hymn called, "Jesus Bids Us Shine". At the entrance of the bride and also after the completion of ceremonies, when the couple was ascending the stairway to the bridal chamber (*naofang* 鬧房), Mendelssohn's Wedding March was played on a piano. This was not yet a common instrument even in the homes of the well-to-do, and may have been hired for the occasion.[13]

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[12] See Joys Hoi Yan Cheung, "Chinese Music and Translated Modernity in Shanghai, 1918–1937," Ph.D. diss, in Musicology, (University of Michigan, 2008), p. 135, fn. 38. The diorama of a "traditional" wedding procession in Zhejiang Provincial Museum shows two such bands.

[13] On pianos, a topic yet to be well researched for this period, see Richard Curt Kraus, *Pianos and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 4–5.

2.2. *Defining the Civilized Wedding*

What Mary Gamewell observed and described was a "civilized" wedding ceremony, a phenomenon that had been slowly emerging over the past ten to fifteen years. Among the earliest reported instances was a ceremony held in 1905 to unite Liu Juxian 劉駒賢 of Yanshan 鹽山 (Hebei Province) and Wu Quan 吳權 of Tongcheng 桐城 (Anhui Province). The groom was on his way to Europe and the United States "but first passed through Shanghai to celebrate his marriage with the daughter of Wu Xiaofu 吳小馥."[14] The wedding took place in Zhang Garden, one of the wonders of late Qing Shanghai. A distinctively Western site in landscaping, architecture, and general inspiration, Zhang Garden could be said to epitomize the idea of civilization and was highly appropriate as a venue for a progressive wedding.[15] The fact that the groom (born in 1895) was only ten years old shows that this was an arranged marriage, but also suggests that the civilized ceremony was not simply a manifestation of alienation by radical elements in late Qing society.

Over the following decade, the civilized wedding was popularized. Xu Ke 徐珂 (1869–1928) described it in 1917, writing: "In recent times, many have ceased to observe the ritual of meeting the bride. The Guangxu—Xuantong transition [1908] [was marked by] the rise of civilized marriage, promulgated in the capital and in the port cities and even gradually coming to be practiced in the inland. [The ceremony is as follows]: The Hall of Ceremonies will have prepared a certificate bearing the names of the groom, the bride, the witness, the go-between, and the celebrant), which would be read out by the witness. The go-between (i.e. the matchmaker), the witness, and representatives of the guests, male and female, give speeches, and the celebrant pronounces admonitions [to the couple].

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[14] Liu Xinping 劉新平, *Hunyin Zhongguo* 婚姻中國 [Marital China] (Beijing: Zhongguo gongren chubanshe, 2002), p. 24. The case is mentioned in Xia Xiaohong 夏曉虹, "Wanqing nüxing: xin jiaoyu yu jiu daode: yi Du Chengshu juqu han wei anli" 晚清女性: 新教育與舊道德: 以杜成淑拒屈函為案例 [Women in the Late Qing: New Education and Old Morality—the case of Du Chengshu's correspondence], 40.3 (May 2003), p. 65, where the point is also made that student marriages were predominant among instances of civilized ceremonies.

[15] On Zhang Garden, see Yue Meng, *Shanghai and the Edges of Empires* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), pp. 153–156.

The assembled guests then sing songs [appropriate to] the civilized wedding."[16]

"Civilized" is simultaneously awkward and accurate as a translation of "wenming," (文明) the latter a late nineteenth-century neologism introduced from Japan. "Wenming" has strong currency in contemporary times, being widely used in propaganda campaigns aimed at improving civic culture (as in *wenming paidui* 文明排隊, "be civilized and queue up"). In the early twentieth century, it was used in contexts that in retrospect would suggest that "progressive" or "modern" might be better translations, especially since describing the new rite as "civilized" implies that the old rite was "uncivilized" or barbaric. Lao She, whose first novel includes an account of a "civilized wedding," took exception to the implication that traditional Chinese culture should be considered "uncivilized,"[17] but some other late Qing and early Republican critiques of the Chinese family rituals and organization, including weddings, conveyed just this view of the old rite.[18] "Civilized," taken in its full historical context, seems an appropriate term for the new.

The root and branches of the word "civilized" moreover invites consideration of the spatial location of "wenming" phenomena. From the Latin *civitas*, as Edward Soja remarks, comes "civil, civic, citizen, civilization, the city itself." He goes on: "The city, with its meeting places and public spaces, was the wellspring for thinking about democracy, equality, liberty, human rights, citizenship, cultural identity, resistance to the status quo, struggles for spatial and social justice."[19] Even if Chinese engagement with these tropes of modern thought needs to be distinguished from Western, the tropes themselves were recognizably operative in the changing urban environments of the empire-turned-republic, and manifest not least in the discourses of women, marriage and family. It was in urban environments that the "wenming," or civilized, wedding came into being. As shown by Mary Gamewell's description, the wedding engaged with the city streets:

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[16] Xu Ke 徐珂, *Qing bei lei chao* 清稗類鈔 [Gleanings from the Qing] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 1983), Vol. 5, p. 1996.

[17] William A. Lyell, "Translator's Preface," in Lao She, *Blades of Grass: The Stories of Lao She*, in William A. Lyell and Sarah Wei-ming Chen, trans. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), p. 291.

[18] See e.g. Mao Zedong, 'The Evils of Society' and Miss Zhao," in Hua R. Lan and Vanessa L. Fong, eds, *Women in Republican China: A Sourcebook* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), pp. 85–8.

[19] Edward W. Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. 80.

in particular, the modern mode of transport used in the wedding journey, together with the modern brass band, invited the participation of onlookers in the civilized rite. And as we shall see, the journey over time also came to follow a trajectory distinct from that taken by the old-fashioned sedan chair.

From around 1927 at latest, knowledge of how to conduct a civilized wedding was being disseminated through that standby of Chinese daily life, the almanac. In addition to simple, step-by-step instructions (see Table 2.1); the Shanghai almanac of that year and succeeding years included a sketch of the wedding in progress and a diagram showing the proper spatial arrangement of the wedding party and guests (Figure 2.1). From the sketch, it can be seen that the civilized wedding brought the male and female sides together on a relatively equal footing. Men and women face each other, sharing the same general space, although the space might be notionally divided. In the order of ceremony, the groom's side is showing as having precedence over the bride's, insofar as his family members enter and take their seats first. The groom (*xinlang* 新郎) is always mentioned ahead of the bride (*xinniang/xinfu* 新娘/媳婦), and it is probable that his signature preceded hers, and that his witnesses added their mark ahead of hers. Nonetheless, the presence of the two families is a startling development, and constitutes what is arguably the single most important departure from the Nuptial Rites of old. The sketch also shows an organist providing musical accompaniment to the ceremony, a figure still to be observed in the almanac of 1932, but disappearing 1933. The numbers of wedding guests depicted in the 1930s almanacs are fewer than in the late twenties, as if in support of the virtues of frugality, a value frequently trumpeted by the state in reference to weddings.[20] Changes in clothing can be observed over the same period, with hemlines rising and falling, and a white (or pale pink) wedding dress with tulle veil becoming normative.

[20] Zhang Zhiyong 張志永, "Lun 1927–1937 nianjian Guomin zhengfu gailiang chuantong hunyin zhidu" 論 1927–1937 年間國民政府改良傳統婚姻制度 [On the Nationalist Government's reform of the traditional marriage system] *Journal of Chongqing Three Gorges University* 重慶三峽學院學報 23 (2007.1), pp. 93–4.

Table 2.1. Guidelines for the conduct of a civilized wedding in a 1927 Shanghai Almanac.

(*Clothing*)

Groom and bride wear stipulated ceremonial dress.

(*Going in person to meet the bride*):

1. One ornamental sedan chair.
2. Pair of decorated lanterns (for use at the front of the sedan chair).
3. Groom and bride each wear an embroidered flower on the breast.
4. The matchmaker leads the groom to pay his respects to the bride's family:
   (a) the groom bows thrice at the ancestral shrine of the bride's family;
   (b) and bows thrice to the uncles and aunts on the distaff side.

(*Wedding rites*):

1. Music and song.
2. The go-between reads out the wedding contract.
3. Groom and bride make three ceremonial bows to each other.
4. Make three ceremonial bows to the ancestral shrine.
5. Make three ceremonial bows to the senior members of both families.
6. Make two ceremonial bows to the groom's guests.
7. Make two ceremonial bows to the bride's guests.
8. Toast and speech from a representative of the groom's guests.
9. Toast and speech from a representative of the bride's guests.
10. Groom and bride make two ceremonial bows in thanks to the groom's guests.
11. Groom and bride make two ceremonial bows in thanks to the bride's guests.
12. Music.
13. Singing.
14. Photographs.
15. Groom and bride retire to the bridal chamber.

Source: *Quanxu Minguo shixianshu* 全序民國時憲書 [*Almanac of the Republic*] (Shanghai: Dacheng shuju, 1927), n.p.

As shown in all these almanacs, the setting of a civilized wedding was imagined as a more or less public place. In the 1927 almanac, the room is depicted as decorated with international flags, the centerpiece being provided by a pair of five-stripe Republican flags. The Nationalist Party national and party flags are shown second and third from the left at rear, indicating the rather ambivalent state of the nation at this time. The flags point to the public significance of a marriage celebration, and to world civilization. In later almanacs the "the white sun on the blue sky" flag has moved to central position. Flags were commonly featured during

Figure 2.1. Guidelines for a civilized wedding as set out in the 1927 Shanghai almanac.

weddings in the Republican era, perhaps from the mid-twenties. All group weddings show them and descriptions of other weddings refer to them. During the Nanjing decade, portraits of Sun Yatsen also became common. These "emblems of the state," as Susan Glosser writes, "occupied a spatially superior position, symbolizing the precedence of state authority over the ancestors, and, by implication, over the family."[21]

[21] Susan L. Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State*, 1915–1953 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 88.

In practice, the civilized wedding was often combined with elements of the old Nuptial Rites, resulting in a visible struggle in the one wedding between different systems of meaning. Even the guidelines contained in the Shanghai almanacs included use of the flowery sedan chair, which was one of the first things that progressive young couples abandoned. In her autobiographical novel *Ten Years of Marriage*, Su Qing 蘇青 (1914–1982), a leading writer of the 1940s, describes herself as bowing to her mother's demand that she travel to her wedding in an "ornate sedan chair" (*huajiao* 花轎, *fenghuangjiao* 鳳凰轎), which may well have been in accordance with the protocols of the civilized wedding (see Table 2.1), but was actually associated with "uncivilized" (*feiwenming* 非文明) superstitions, such as: "If a girl has lost her virginity before marriage and yet uses the ornate chair, it is said that the chair spirit will visit disaster upon her, and when the chair comes to a halt, the girl will breathe her last."[22]

In this ornate chair, Su Qing was carried not to her mother-in-law's home but to the Shanghai YMCA, at 123 Boulevard de Montigny (now Xizang Road), on the edge of the French Concession. The journey was in keeping with prescriptions for the civilized wedding, which were premised on the understanding that the ceremony would involve both families at a third site. The cultural logic of the new-style wedding basically involved a shift from inside to outside, private to public, family to society, all of which supported a move away from the home as site of the wedding. This move meant a weakening of the ritual place of the home in wedding rites, but not yet its end. Su Qing married into a well-to-do family with a large house, and the guests returned to that house after the wedding ceremony and caroused to all hours. In the evening, she was subjected to "bedroom hazing", and the following day, in her "mother-in-law's home", she had to show that she could cook in her mother-in-law's kitchen. By this time she was on her own account already "married": that process had been formally completed in the ceremony at the YMCA. But her wedding retains strong traces of the old wedding journey from *niangjia* to *pojia*: we can see how the YMCA might loom large or small in the account, according to the emphasis given to events at either end of the day.

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[22] Su Qing 蘇青, *Jiehun shinian* 結縉十年 [Ten years of marriage] (Taibei: Shibao wenhua, 2001), pp. 18–19; Fu Xing, "Su Qing and her 'Ten Years Marriage': The New Woman and Modern Marriage in Shanghai," paper presented at the Chinese Studies Association of Australia Biennial Conference, Golden Dragon Museum, Bendigo, July 2005. For background material on Su Qing, see *Nicole Huang, Women, War, Domesticity: Shanghai Literature and Popular Culture of the 1940s* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 163–8.

2.3. *Remapping Wedding Routes*

At the time of Su Qing's wedding, the Shanghai YMCA was yet a new building. Designed by a team of American-trained architects led by Chinese-American Li Jinpei 李錦沛 (1900–1968), it was constructed between 1929 and 1931, at a cost of one million US dollars.[23] Its eleven stories combined an austere modern elegance with some Chinese features. It was one of a number of locations chosen by the emerging bourgeoisie of Shanghai for their weddings, or those of their children. Among other possible sites were assembly rooms or "ceremonial halls" (*litang* 禮堂) in public institutions such as universities; hotels; older-style Chinese *fanzhuang* 飯莊, which like modern hotels in China could accommodate large numbers of people at a wedding banquet; and parks and gardens, which in China meant pavilions, temples and with a bit of luck some auspicious fauna and flora: geese and goslings on the lake, and the plum flowers in blossom.

On the basis of wedding journeys undertaken by young couples in the early twentieth century, it is possible to pose two ideal types of wedding journey. At one end of the spectrum is that which was undertaken as part of a conservative, traditionalist wedding, which I here refer to as the Nuptial Rites; and at the other, that undertaken in the context of a progressive, reformist ceremony, which I refer to as the civilized wedding. In Figure 2.1, Model A shows the trajectory of the wedding journey undertaken in the course of the Nuptial Rites, beginning at the bride's home and ending at the groom's. More precisely, the journey takes the bride from her mother's home (*niangjia* 娘家) to her mother-in-law's home (*pojia* 婆家).[24] The groom might or might not make a forward and return journey to accompany the bride along this route. A family member might or might not accompany the bride.

Model B shows the trajectory of the civilized wedding journey. This journey involves many more people on the move: not only the bride and groom, but also their family members, friends, and other guests from both sides, who make their way from their different places of residence to the venue of the wedding. The bride and groom may then proceed to the mother-in-law's home, or to their own residence, or even go away on a honeymoon. Model B was characteristic of wedding journeys undertaken by educated young men and women in Chinese cities during the

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[23] *The China Monthly Review* 57 (1931), p. 516.

[24] On these terms, see Ellen Judd, "*Niangjia*: Chinese Women and Their Natal Families," *Journal of Asian Studies* 8.3 (1989): p. 527.

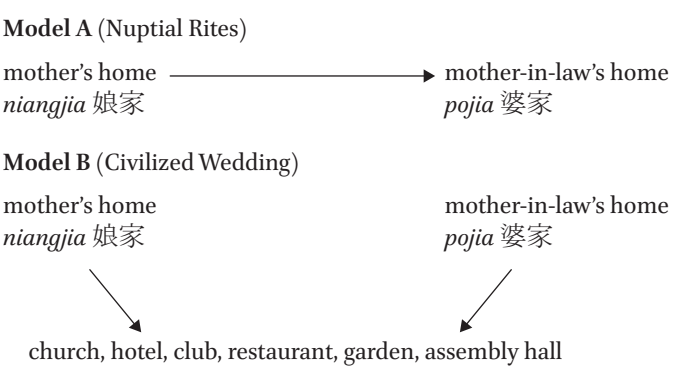

Figure 2.2. Two types of wedding journey.

Republican era. Reports from the 1910s show that a civilized wedding could in fact be conducted in the groom's home, as was the case with the "typical Shanghai wedding" witnessed by Mary Ninde Gamewell in 1914, in the bride's home, as witnessed by Diao Minqian 刁敏謙 (1888–?) in Beijing around 1916, or in a third place, such as the YMCA.[25] Over time, however, this "third place," somewhere between the two homes, was increasingly in evidence.

The model for the new-style wedding was set by Christian ceremonies. Churches, as new features in the built environment, had a pivotal role to play in rerouting the wedding journey. In 1855 an American in Shanghai described a Chinese Christian wedding for readers of the *New York Journal of Commerce*. The bride in this case was not Christian, but was reportedly happy to cooperate when she heard that that Christians were not allowed concubines. According to the account, the groom went to meet the bride and the entire nuptial procession made its way to the Episcopal chapel in Shanghai where the bride was escorted from the sedan chair to the altar for the performance of the matrimonial rite. She had to uncover her face at the altar, but once the Christian marriage was completed, she was veiled again, taken back to the sedan chair, and the whole procession continued to the groom's house, where the couple went through the steps of the standard Chinese ceremony (sharing a cup of wine, and bowing to the ancestors) before the feasting began.[26] This two-stage process anticipates in simple form the stages of Su Qing's wedding eighty years later.

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[25] Min-chien T. Z. Tyau, *China Awakened* (New York: Macmillan, 1922), p. 71.

[26] "A Wedding in China", 15 February 1855, *Western Literary Messenger*, Vol. 23–24 (1855): p. 197.

Both the changing route of the wedding journey and the form taken by the civilized wedding attests to the formative influence of Christian wedding practices on reformed rituals in China. In weighing the significance of this process of influence and change, it seems important to bear in mind that Western as well as non-Western practices were changing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Western society, Catholic and non-Catholic practices diverged. Alison Clarke's study of nineteenth-century Otago shows that most (but not all) Catholic weddings took place in a church. Anglicans also tended to marry in church, "particularly in urban contexts." Presbyterians, on the other hand, were married at home, or sometimes in the home of the pastor.[27] A broader movement towards church weddings as normative appears to have developed momentum only in the second half of the nineteenth century, in the very decades in which the earliest Protestant Christian weddings were being celebrated in China. In other parts of the non-Christian world, we can see parallels to what was happening in China. Jewish weddings, for example, were not held inside a synagogue at any time before the second half of the nineteenth century, and then only within the reform community.[28] Considered in comparative context, it can be seen that whatever the particularities of Chinese historical circumstances affecting ritual change, the changes were part of a world trend.

The points at which Christian ceremony could readily be accommodated within prevailing Chinese norms also deserve attention. The beauty and formality of a church wedding apparently suited Chinese tastes. The faux antiquity of church buildings of the Victorian era no doubt had appeal in an aesthetic climate that valued antiquity almost above all else. The transfer of the bride from her father's arm to her husband's was true to the sense of the "three obediences", which ordained that a woman should pass from her father's authority to her husband's and ultimately her son's. The musical elements, especially the processional and recessional, were compatible with Chinese practice. In the Confucian view, "music creates identity while ritual creates difference. When there is identity, there will

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[27] Alison Clarke, "'Tinged with Christian Sentiment': Popular Religion and the Otago Colonists, 1850–1900," in John Stenhouse with G. A. Wood, eds, *Christianity, Modernity and Culture: New Perspectives on New Zealand History* (Hindmarsh: ATF Press, 2005), p. 122.

[28] Kinga Frojimovics, Géza Komoróczy, Viktória Pusztai and Andrea Strbik, *Jewish Budapest: Monument, Rites, and History*, Vera Szabó, trans., (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999), p. 157.

be closeness. When there is difference, there will be respect."[29] Music helped to overcome the distance between the two families, even as the wedding ritual served to remove the bride from her natal family, and the music of the church wedding, as Gamewell's memoir shows, was used even for non-church weddings.

One of the most famous weddings of the 1930s took place in the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Jiujiang Road, an Anglican church designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and completed in 1869. According to newspaper reports, Butterfly Wu (Hu Die 胡蝶 1908–1989), perhaps the most celebrated actress of the day, had long set her heart on getting married there, and despite protests from scandalized British residents, finally had her wish in the autumn of 1935. Her father, who was there to give her away, wore Chinese jacket and gown (*changpao magua* 長袍馬褂) but the rest of the wedding party were dressed *comme il faut* for a fashionable 1930s wedding, right down to flower girls in poke bonnets, and page boys in velvet suits. The church itself was built in Neo-Gothic style, and provided a cultured, romantic ambience for what proved, for a mixture of reasons, to be the wedding of the year.[30]

This wedding was on an unusually large scale, but for the daughters of the Shanghai elite, it was the sort of wedding to which they were becoming accustomed. Girls from the McTyeire School, a school founded expressly for the education of the daughters of the Chinese "aristocracy", were usually married in a church and families no doubt rivaled each other in planning their weddings. McTyeire was a Methodist school and American in origin. It had a strong school culture that was fostered, writes Heidi Ross, through "elaborate rituals" that helped to make foreign things attractive.[31] For foreign things to be attractive was not of course unusual in Shanghai. The school and its culture were part of Shanghai life, not exterior to it. In her autobiography, Christina Ching Tsao recalled that in 1932, when Deputy-Minister for Railways Zeng Zongjian 曾宗鑒 (T. K. Tseng, 1882–?) walked his niece down the aisle of the Community Church on

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[29] Mark Edward Lewis, *The Construction of Space in Early China* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006), p. 106.

[30] *Time*, 13 January, 1936. On Butterfly Wu, see Lily Xiao Hong Lee, "Hu Die," in *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women*, Vol. 2.2, pp. 40–2.

[31] Heidi A Ross, "'Cradle of Female Talent': The McTyeire Home and School for Girls, 1892–1937," in Daniel H. Bays, *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 226

Rue Petain, "the cathedral was filled with Shanghai's most distinguished dignitaries."[32]

The church was a significant new feature in the built environment in Treaty Port China. The early Jesuit mission had resulted in the building of a few churches, but in number and geographical spread they were as nothing compared to the churches of the Treaty Port Era. In Shanghai alone there were around 200 churches at the time of the communist victory in the civil war. Along with the churches came schools, universities, hospitals, the YMCA and the YWCA, nearly all of which had associated ceremonial spaces. As opposed to churches, which were usually not accessible by non-Christians, these institutions could readily be hired for meetings and ceremonies. In terms of outward appearance and internal accommodation, they offered some of the same advantages. The architectural appeal of the YMCA in Shanghai has already been mentioned. The YMCA in Beijing, opened on 9 October 1913, was also impressive in its time, and as the largest structure on Hataman Street 哈德門大街 between Chongwenmen 崇文門 in the south and the lama temple in the north was long the premier modern building in the eastern part of the old city. Its premises included a chapel as well as a lecture hall, a bowling alley, and a gymnasium.[33] Not far to the west, at 111 Nanheyan Street 南河沿大街, was the Returned Students' Club in Beijing, often remarked on for its architectural features and general ambience. The club was established in 1916 at the site of the Pusheng Temple (普勝寺). Bertrand Russell commented on its charm.[34] Also in Beijing was the Peking Union Medical College, still standing, an institution funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and designed by Canadian architect Harry Hussey. The complex included, on a site facing the main gate, an auditorium or chapel (*litang* 禮堂) (see Figure 2.3), which was used for lectures, conventions, important meetings of all sorts, and also weddings.[35]

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[32] Christina Ching Tsao, *Shanghai Bride: Her Tumultuous Life's Journey to the West* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005), p. 84.

[33] ZhengErkang 鄭爾康, Shiliuyouhongle: huiyi wode fuqin Zheng Zhenduo 石榴又紅了: 回憶我的父親鄭振鐸 [The pomegranate ripens again: remembering my father Zheng Zhenduo], (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue, 1998), p. 30.

[34] M. A. Aldrich, *The Search for a Vanishing Beijing: A Guide to China's Capital through the Ages* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006), p. 117. Bertrand Russell, *The Problem of China* (Charleston, SC: BiblioBazaar, 2008), p. 186

[35] Jeffrey W. Cody, *Building in China: Henry K. Murphy's "Adaptive Architecture," 1914–1935* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2001), pp. 74–85; Michelle Renshaw, *Accommodating the Chinese: The American Hospital in China, 1880–1920* (London: Routledge, 2005); and Russell, *The Problem of China*, p. 186.

Figure 2.3. The Peking Union Medical College chapel, designed by Canadian architect Harry Hussey. Two of Liang Qichao's children celebrated their weddings here in the 1930s. Photo by author.

Who hired such premises for their weddings? Diao Minqian, professor of law at Tsinghua University, in his memoir *China Awakes*, described three weddings he attended between 1918 and 1920. One was held at the bride's home, another in a church, and the third in the Returned Students' Club. All of these weddings involved people very like himself. In the case of the last, the groom was "a graduate of an English university and professor at a government university," while the bride had studied in a missionary school and thereafter in Japan. The celebrant was an ex-minister of education and current chancellor of the groom's university: this sounds rather like Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868–1940), who often performed as celebrant at modern weddings. During the ceremony, the couple exchanged rings, an organist played the Mendelssohn and Lohengrin wedding marches, and the principals signed a marriage certificate that affirmed their everlasting love for each other. The company then retired to another room for light refreshments, and in due course "the happy couple drove away in an automobile for their honeymoon." All this was in sharp contrast to traditional rites, which Diao goes on to describe in terms of "formidable" (the wedding feast)

and "vulgar" (bedroom hazing).[36] The ceremony at the bride's home was also very much a "civilized wedding," though celebrated without rings or organ.

The Peking Medical Union chapel was used for the weddings of people in much the same social stratum as Diao. Among them were Liang Qichao's fourth and fifth children: Liang Siyong 梁思永 (1904–1954), who in January 1931 married his cousin Li Fuman 李福曼, and Liang Sizhuang 梁思莊 (1908–1986), who the following year married Wu Luqiang 吳魯強 (1904–1936), a close friend of Siyong's. Liang Qichao did not live to attend these ceremonies. He saw the wedding only of his eldest child, Liang Sishun 梁思順 (1893–1966), in 1915. That wedding did take place at home, but at the bride's home, not the groom's. The groom, Malayan-born Zhou Xizhe 周希哲 (d. 1938), showed great good humor in arriving at the venue in a decorated sedan chair. As consul in Ottowa, Zhou later presided over the wedding of another of the Liang siblings, Liang Sicheng 梁思成 (1901–1972), who in 1927 was married to Lin Huiyin 林徽因 (1904–1955). Of the many children of Liang Qichao, apparently not one made the journey from the bride's home to the groom's.[37]

Biographical and autobiographical materials of the Republican era provide a picture of weddings in churches and church-related institutions in urban China not dissimilar to that drawn by Argyrou when describing the choices made by upwardly mobile Cypriots. The Very Reverend A. C. S. Trivett, long time Dean at Holy Trinity, recalls that in the 1930s he "had frequent requests from Chinese couples who wished to be married in the Cathedral," to which he only occasionally and reluctantly agreed.[38] Trivett's view was that people should get married in their own churches, but he was facing a situation similar to that faced by the Bishop of St John's in Nicosia: his church had become an element in the world of social emulation. So, too, had the Moore Memorial Church, on the corner of Hankou and Yunnan Roads. This was the wedding venue desired by the Song family for the wedding of Chiang Kai-shek and Song Meiling, despite the fact that they normally attended the Allen Memorial Church, in Kunshan Road, Hongkou.[39] The original church building was not as splendid as that of the new building opened in the 1930s, but it had been refurbished with

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[36] Tyau, *China Awakened*, pp. 71–73.

[37] Wu Liming 吳荔民, *Liang Qichao he tade ernümen* 梁啟超和他的兒女們 [Liang Qichao and his children] (Taipei: Lixu wenhua shiye youxiangongsi, 2002), passim.

[38] A. C. S. Trivett, "Topside Jossman: the Indiscretions of a Dean" (June, 1966). Typescript memoir privately circulated. I thank Robert Bickers for supplying me with a copy.

[39] John Craig William Keating, *A Protestant Church in Communist China: Moore Memorial Church, Shanghai, 1949–1989* (Plymouth: Lehigh University Press, 2012), p. 38.

donated funds in the early 1900s and had become, according to Craig Keating, the most important Methodist church in Shanghai.[40] It was certainly located in a more prestigious area than the Allen Memorial Church.

2.4. *Hotels as Wedding Sites*

Although churches played a formative role in the rise of the civilized wedding, they were accessible to relatively few people. Even Chiang Kai-shek and Song Meiling were in the end denied permission to marry in a church, due to Chiang's complicated marital status. Instead, a private Christian ceremony took place in the bride's home, while the public ceremony, attended by 1300 people, was held at the Majestic Hotel.

Hotels played an important and thus far little researched role in the reconfiguration of Chinese cities in the early twentieth century. Suzhou historian Huang Yijun has counted advertisements for forty-eight different hotels in Shanghai's daily paper, *Shenbao* 申报, between 1872 and 1908.[41] Over time the advertisements expanded, like the hotels themselves. By the 1930s, the number of registered hotels in Shanghai stood at around six hundred. In this communications hub on the southeast coast, the largest hotels were second to none as landmarks. Their proliferation and scale were responses to both the demand for temporary lodgings for travelers, tourists, and refugees and the expansion of the leisure sector in the urban economy. Hou Yanxin makes the important point that hotels constituted alternative living spaces in Shanghai, where people met socially, had love affairs, ate, drank, gambled, took opium.[42] For people of means in the cities and towns of China, hotels first rivaled and then supplanted the *pojia* as the place to be wedded or to celebrate the wedding.

There existed terminological distinctions between Chinese and Western hotels, referred to as *lüguan* 旅館 and *fandian* 飯店, respectively, but the difference concerned scale more than ownership. The early Shanghai hotels were lodging houses called known as *kezhan* 客棧 (inn), which evolved into the *lüshe* 旅社 and *lüguan* (hostel, hotel) of the Republican

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Huang Yijun 黃益軍, "Cong Shenbao kan wan Qing Shanghai lüguanye de fazhan (1872–1911) 從申報看晚清上海旅館業的發展 (1872–1911)" [The development of hotels in Shanghai in the late Qing as reflected in *Shenbao*, 1872–1911], *Zhongguo tese chengzhenhua yanjiu zhongxin dianzi qikan* 中國特色城鎮化研究中心電子期刊 (Fall 2006), available at rurc.suda.edu.cn/ar.aspx?AID+480.

[42] Hou Yanxing 侯豔興, "Xiaojinku yu jingzhichang: Minguo shiqi de Shanghai lüguan 銷金窟與競技場: 民國時期的上海旅館" [Hotels in Republican-era Shanghai: Gambling dens and competition arenas], *Shehui kexue pinglun* 社會科學評論 (2007.4): 66.

era, acquiring more and better facilities over time. In 1910 the *Huizheng luguan* 彙征旅館 put out a flyer to advertise its big new ballroom, while taking the opportunity simultaneously to inform potential guests that it had "sixty to seventy rooms, each being equipped with an electric bell for summoning staff to wait on you and serve your tea: most convenient! Also electric lights, so that at nighttime it is not like night at all. Telephones are installed, for ease of communication by guests. We have everything that a hotel should have."[43] The competition for guests was fierce, and modern comforts, including flush toilets and hot running water, were aggressively advertised.

With the creation of the Great Eastern Hotel in Nanjing Road in 1917, the distinction between Chinese and Western hotels in Shanghai ceased to be meaningful. The Great Eastern was an annex to the Wing On Department Store, to which it belonged. In the 1920s it was reckoned "one of the largest and best Chinese hotels in the East."[44] Here in 1921 a banquet was held to celebrate one of Chiang Kaishek's earlier unions: his marriage to fifteen-year-old Chen Jieru 陳潔如 (1906–1971). The wedding took place at the Great Eastern on 15 December 1921 and was hosted by Chiang's friend, the antiques dealer Zhang Shijie 張世傑 (Curio Chang), who acted as witness. Whether this was a proper marriage is disputed, and the uncertain criteria for determining the status of a marriage at this time makes the question difficult to resolve,[45] but in light of doubts cast on Chen's account, it should be noted that a go-between was among the fifty or so people who attended the wedding banquet. The existence of a go-between was high on the list of criteria for determining the legitimacy of a marriage in disputed cases in the Republican era.[46]

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[43] Xianggang lishi bowuguan yu Shanghai lishi bowuguan 摩香港歷史博物館與上海歷史博物館, *Modern duhui: Hugang shehui fengmao* 摩登都會: 滬港社會風貌 [Modern metropolis: Material culture of Shanghai and Hong Kong], ex. cat. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Museum of History, 2009), p. 93, ex. 81. The hotel was located at Nanshi shilipuwai 南市十六鋪外 Road.

[44] Allister Macmillan, *Seaports of the Far East* (London: W. H. & L. Collingridge, 1926), p. 253.

[45] Jay Taylor, *The Generalissimo: Chiang Kai-shek and the Struggle for Modern China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 40; cf. Laura Tyson Li, *Madame Chiang Kai-shek: China's Eternal First Lady* (New York: Grove Press, 2007), p. 81.

[46] See the case discussed in the Beijing Municipal Archives (hereafter BJMA), J1818/018/13267.

The Great Eastern served as the venue for numerous weddings over the years.[47] Its suitability as a wedding venue lay primarily in its dining area, which, according to Allister Macmillan, was "capable of seating nearly a thousand persons."[48] In this respect, it could perhaps be regarded as the modern-cum-Westernized equivalent of the large-scale restaurant or *fanzhuang* 飯莊 that often appeared in Beijing press reports of weddings. A ballroom in a hotel was also an important feature: it was naturally grand in design and capable of holding very large numbers of people. The Majestic Hotel, where Chiang's marriage to Song Meiling was celebrated, was famous for its ballroom. In a demonstration of the impact of church weddings on hotel weddings, it was decorated for that wedding just like a church, with "wedding bells of white massed flowers" and an "altar" that was "composed of a Chinese table fronting an alcove made of green and white flowers." Behind the altar, where in a church there would have been a religious image (cross, painting, or stained glass), there hung a portrait of Sun Yatsen. Meiling was led down the aisle by her brother.[49]

The Carlton Hotel, off Nanjing Road, also had a ballroom. This hotel was the setting for the marriage of Shao Xunmei 邵洵美 (1906–1968) to Sheng Peiyu 盛佩玉 (1905–?) in 1927. The bride and groom in this case were from a rich, old, conservative family, both being grandchildren of Sheng Xuanhuai 盛宣懷 (1844–1916), a leading official in the late Qing. The bride was expected to perform traditional rites, and her wedding day began with obeisance to the ancestors in the *niangjia* and ended with bedroom hazing in the *pojia*. But between the *niangjia* and the *pojia* lay the Carlton Hotel, with its great ballroom, where a civilized wedding ceremony was conducted. For this part of the day, the bride changed from her embroidered jacket and red skirt into the wedding dress and veil that she and Shao had chosen together from a foreign bridal-wear shop somewhere in Shanghai. From the record of the wedding it is observable that the hotel ceremony had effects on the *pojia* segment of the wedding. The mixed company that returned to the Shao family home from the hotel included husbands and wives from Shao Xunmei's literary circle, that is,

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[47] See e.g. Zhang Shunian 張樹年, "Yi fuqin Zhang Yuanji xiansheng 憶父親張元濟先生" [In memory of my father, Mr. Zhang Yuanji], *Bianji xuekan* 編輯學刊 1 (1994): 92. Norwood Francis Allman, *Shanghai Lawyer* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1943), p. 188.

[48] Macmillan, *Seaports*, p. 253.

[49] *China Press*, quoted in Emily Hahn, *The Soong Sisters* (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1941), p. 123.

an important segment of the very "society" that fostered the civilized wedding and whose presence helped define it.[50]

Although hotels became standard places for first as well as subsequent weddings, it is easy to see how divorce in particular favored a rearrangement of old wedding practices. After the 1911 Revolution, divorce became a common phenomenon among educated men, to a point where it might be accounted one of the major signs of abandonment of "the Rites" in this era.[51] This was the age of "the new wife movement," as people occasionally quipped,[52] and it was also a time when relationships of all sorts, personal and commercial, were increasingly being subjected to clarification by contract. But even where divorces took place, it was often the case that living arrangements remained intact, and it was not easy to welcome a new bride to the *pojia* if the divorced wife was still living there. A wedding banquet at a hotel with some friends was a much more convenient arrangement.

To the extent that hotels were serviceable mainly as place where large numbers of people could be fed at the same time, they might be viewed simply as convenient, attractive, modern versions of the *fanzhuang*. An example of the latter was the Hall of Loyalty and Sincerity (*Zhongxintang* 忠信堂) in Chang'an Avenue West, Beijing. This Fujianese restaurant combined size with culinary excellence: chafed prawns "fresh and translucent, soft in the middle with crispy tails," according to Liang Shiqiu 梁實秋 (1903–1987).[53] Various factors may have influenced the choice of a site such as this over a hotel. Miss Chen Xirun, 陳熙潤 "a talented young lady of Beiping" and Mr Liu Jiheng 劉季涵 of the Beiping Tax Office, who celebrated their wedding there in 1930, look as they would have felt quite at home in a hotel (Figure 2.4). That they were both of Fujianese origin suggests that for them, the appeal of native place may have weighed in the restaurant's favour.[54] This was plainly not the case for well-known Sichuanese poet Zeng Xiaolu 曾小魯 (1904–1966), who wed Miss Chen

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[50] Sheng Peiyu 盛佩玉, *Shao Xunmei yu wo* 邵洵美與我 [Shao Xunmei and I] (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2004), pp. 76–80; Shao Xiaohong 邵綃紅, *Wode baba Shao Xunmei* 我的爸爸邵洵美 [My father, Shao Xunmei] (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2005), p. 48.

[51] On changes in divorce law in the early twentieth century, see Kathryn Bernhardt, "Divorce in Republican China," in Kathryn Bernhardt and Philip C. C. Huang, eds., *Civil Law in Qing and Republican China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 187–214.

[52] The reference was to the "New Life Movement," initiated in 1934 to counter the appeal of communism.

[53] Liang Shiqiu 梁實秋, *Yashe tanchi* 雅舍談吃 [Speaking of eating at high-class places] (Hong King: Jiuge chubanshe, 1985), p. 52.

[54] *Beiping huabao* 北京畫報 [Beijing Pictorial], 1.9.1928.

Figure 2.4. Portrait of Chen Xirun (left) and Liu Jiheng on their wedding day in summer, 1928. The photo was probably taken by the person recorded here as having sent it in to the press, Liang Yunqi 梁芸齊. Source: *Beijing huabao* 北京畫報 [Peking Pictorial Press] 1/9/11928.

Shuzheng 陳叔錚 of Tongzhou two years later, but in this case a Chinese ambience might have been important. The couple, well-versed in classical poetry, gave a poetry recital to the assembled literati, and guests responded in kind.[55] In Shanghai, it should be noted, there were fewer available sites of this sort.

[55] *Beiping huabao*, 26.4.1930.

2.5. *New Weddings in Old Spaces*

In both Shanghai and Beijing, urban architecture was shaping new modes of living. Hotels, clubhouses, and cafes provided the room for social activities that the small houses and apartments lacked. In some ways, however, Beijing presented quite a different environment from Shanghai's. An old city haunted by the imperial past, it was full of the long-gowned descendants of the former ruling strata—Manchu and Han. Foreigners were struck by its beauty and dignity and found it a sharp contrast to noisy, vulgar Shanghai, with its up-to-the minute architecture and streets of garish neon advertising. Shanghai, after all, was mostly a new city, carved out of the countryside surrounding the old walled town, which the international concessions soon dwarfed in size and significance. Beijing offers what is in some ways a more interesting an example of urban change.

Historians of Beijing have drawn attention to the transformation of a number of sites associated with the Forbidden City and its leisure grounds after the fall of the dynasty.[56] These former imperial spaces provided a new context for a range of social activities. "Chinese people love a crowd," wrote Herbert White in 1927, "and the aristocrats of Peking society delight in almost daily excursion to beautiful Central Park." Formerly the site of the Altar of Earth and Grain, Central Park became "at once the gayest and most popular resort in the city."[57] It lent itself to public events, of which the most notable in the Republican era was the mass mourning for Sun Yat-sen in 1925. Tens of thousands of people went to pay their respects to the departed, and recordings of his speeches were played over a loudspeaker system, while dozens of scrolls bearing tributes to him hung along the avenues.[58]

A much simpler ceremony marked the wedding here of Shen Congwen 沈從文 (1902–1988) and Zhang Zhaohe 張兆和 (1910–2003) in September 1933. Indeed, the "wedding" is described as involving no ceremony at all. It was not conducted by a celebrant, and there were no formal

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[56] David Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing: City, People, and Politics in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), p. 185; Madeleine Yue Dong, *Republican Beijing: The City and Its Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 82–86; and Minzheng Shi, "From Imperial Gardens to Public Parks: The Transformation of Urban Space in Early Twentieth-Century China," *Modern China* 24.3 (1998): pp. 219–254.

[57] Herbert C. White, *Peking the Beautiful* (Shanghai: Commercial Press), p. 108.

[58] Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 142; Frederic Wakeman Jr., "Mao's Remains," in James L. Watson and Evelyn Sakakida Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 257.

witnesses. The couple wore ordinary clothes, which in Shen's case meant a blue gown, not a suit. The occasion was marked by the presence of a few relatives and a host of friends from the academic and literary worlds. Ba Jin 巴金 (1904–2005) was in Shanghai and could not attend, but in a gesture marking modern weddings the world around, he sent a telegram wishing the couple "happiness beyond measure."[59]

This was not, of course, a picnic in the park. Before weddings could take place in parks, the provision of food and accommodation had to be assured. The wedding invitation was in fact an invitation to the wedding banquet in a restaurant called "Room for New Friends" (*Laijinyu xuan* 來今雨軒), established in the grounds of Central Park in 1915 and bearing a plaque with the calligraphy of Xu Shichang 徐世昌 (1855–1939). This restaurant was a popular meeting place for people in the literary and arts worlds,[60] and became a venue for important cultural events.[61] Although Central Park soon became a bit too vulgar for some tastes, too popular, too "middle-class," and hence rather "boring," according to Madeleine Yue Dong, it offered a variety of sites catering to different sectors of Beijing society.[62] The Room for New Friends Restaurant was clearly favored by urban intellectuals and was an appropriate site for a wedding in the literary world. Like the Neo-Gothic church in Shanghai, it had antiquarian architectural appeal.

Central Park was opened to the public in 1914, not long after the fall of the dynasty. The imperial family managed to hang on to their leisure grounds further north for a few more years. Beihai Park, now a very popular resort, was one of the last to be opened to the public. It became a "favourite haunt" of the new intellectuals, writes Dong,[63] and was the site of one of the more infamous weddings of the Republican era: the wedding of Xu Zhimo 徐志摩 and Lu Xiaoman 陸小曼, for both parties a second wedding.[64] This event illustrates well the rocky passage from the Nuptial

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[59] Du Sujuan 杜素娟, *Shen Congwen yu Da Gong Bao* 沈從文與大公報 [Shen Congwen and the *Dagongbao*] (Jinan: Shandong huabao chubanshe, 2006), p. 112.

[60] Lin Shen 林杉, *Lin Huiyin zhuan* 林徽因傳 [Biography of Lin Huiyin] (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1993), p. 158.

[61] *Free China Review* 37 (1987): 60.

[62] Dong, *Republican Beijing*, p. 271; Shi, "From Imperial Gardens to Public Parks," p. 245.

[63] Dong, *Republican Beijing*, p. 270.

[64] Xu Zhimo's love life was the focus of an extraordinarily popular T.V. drama series shown in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Mainland China in 2000 and gave rise to a plethora of books about him and his marriages. See, inter alia, Wang Huiling 王惠玲, *Renjian siyuetian zhi Xu Zhimo de aiqing gushi: Yige shiren de ai yu si* 陸人間四月天之徐志摩的愛情故事: 一個詩人的愛與死 [The love story of poet Xu Zhimo in "April of Humanity": The loves and death of a poet] (Taipei: Sanpin guoji wenhua shiye gufen youxian gongsi, 2000).

Rites to the civilized wedding in China. Xu had acted independently of his parents in instigating the divorce from the wife whom they had chosen for him, but he was sufficiently under the thrall of his father to agree to a number of conditions for his second marriage. Among these were that Liang Qichao serve as the witness, and Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962) as the go-between. The presence of these two men would give the Xu family face and mute the impact on them of one of the most scandalous relationships of the day. Hu Shi had himself struggled with the problem of arranged marriage: in 1918 he spoke frankly against the tendency of his peers to divorce "first thing on returning home" from overseas.[65] Liang felt strongly on the same subject and in one of the strangest wedding speeches of all time, took advantage of his role at the wedding to scold the errant couple in public.[66]

In contrast to these weddings in the park, the wedding of Lao She 老舍 (1899–1966; i.e. Shu Qingchun 舒慶春) and Hu Jieqing 胡絜青 (1905–2001) in July 1931 was celebrated according to the old rites—with some departures. Both bride and groom were from Manchu families, a sector of Beijing society famed for its conservatism and preoccupation with family rules. Lao She, it is said, wanted a new-style wedding, and sent out invitations to his friends to have a celebratory meal together, but the couple's plans were defeated by the two mothers, and they were wed with "kow-tows, a visit to the ancestral temple, and bows." Yet the wedding incorporated some "civilized" features, such as the proclamation by the chief witness. The couple were dressed like modern young people, he in a white dress coat, with gloves, and leather shoes, she in a white dress and tulle veil. It would appear also that there was no hazing, because after the wedding, the couple went to a hotel for the night, the *Huanying fandian* 環瀛飯店, at Dengshikou 燈市口, in the middle of the city.[67]

These three weddings were positioned on different points of the spectrum of "civilized" weddings, even the last-mentioned, rather old-fashioned wedding having a place there. Simplicity was the hallmark of the civilized wedding, and in this respect Shen Congwen and Zhang Zhao outdid both

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A popular book by the great-niece of Xu's first wife has made this story accessible to an English-language readership; see Pang-mei Natasha Chang, *Bound Feet and Western Dress* (New York: Doubleday, 1996).

[65] Jerome Grieder, *Hu Shih and the Chinese Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 354.

[66] Zhang Hongping, *Minguo si nüzi*, p. 234.

[67] Yang Xiao 楊笑, "Xingfu de baoban hunyin: Lao She yu Hu Jieqing de shengsi hunlian 幸福的包辦婚姻: 老舍與胡絜青的生死婚戀" [A happy arranged marriage: The lifelong marital happiness of Lao She and Hu Jieqing], *Xingfu (Hunyin)* 幸福 (婚姻) (2009.5): 平。20.

the other couples by a wide margin. But there were many respects in which this simple non-ceremony was comparable to the earlier Xu-Lu wedding. Both were held more or less in public view, in places that were scenically beautiful and redolent of Chinese history; both were attended by large numbers of Beijing literati, with friends and associates well outnumbering kith and kin; and in both cases the groom's parents were conspicuously absent. Comparing these two weddings with Lao She's, it would appear that mobility was distinctly favorable to the abandonment of the old Nuptial Rites. Weddings conducted far from home were inherently unable to feature a journey between *niangjia* and *pojia* and were unlikely to entail bowing to the (absent) ancestors.

2.6. *Conclusion*

Wedding venues were not among phenomena for which statistics were gathered during the Republican era. The cases discussed here are drawn from biographies, memoirs, and newspapers reports. In general, they suggest that in the Republican era, the so-called civilized wedding quickly became normative among educated townspeople. Traces of the old Nuptial Rites were often evident in the new-style ceremony, and sometimes both ceremonies were conducted for one couple, much as in France a church wedding might follow a civil ceremony. Nonetheless, the civilized wedding appears to have been disseminated with surprising speed, and even reactionary efforts to reform rites and music did not entail a revival of the Nuptial Rites.[68] As the scope of Henrietta Harrison's well-known study suggests, the reform of rites and music in Republican China was focused very much on the official realm.[69] Reforms and regulations governing marriage and divorce were a factor in changes in wedding rituals in the first half of the twentieth century, but by and large the authorities appear to have been legislating in accordance with, rather than in advance of, particular practices.

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[68] See the provisional guidelines for the conduct of weddings issued by the Beiping Municipal Police Bureau in 1942 at BJMA J181/022/14234.

[69] Harrison, *Making of the Republican Citizen*. See also Kan Yuxiang 闞玉香, "Shiping 'Zhonghua minguo lizhi' de juxianxing he jinbuxing" "試評 '中華民國禮制' 的局限性和進步性" [A critique of the limitations and progressive character of the "Rites of the Republic of China"], *Huanggang shifanxueyuan xuebao* 黃崗師範學院學報 30.1 (2010), pp. 29–31.

Local and regional studies of changes in wedding customs in China in the period under study confirm the broad conclusions of this paper concerning the timing and direction of change from the old Nuptial Rites to the civilized wedding. Even in a conservative, inland province like Shanxi, county gazetteers in the early Republican era were reporting changes in wedding rituals that were consistent with the advocacy of civilized weddings in the big cities in the opening decades of the twentieth century.[70] Yet the civilized wedding was essentially an urban phenomenon. The Nuptial Rites, which continued to be common even in towns, reigned supreme in the countryside. Two observations flow from this differentiation. First, a "third place" would rarely have been available in rural areas. The relative stability of the spatial organization in the countryside cannot but have tended to support established ritual structures. Second, weddings in Republican-era China were indeed becoming "rites of distinction." Civilized weddings distinguished urban from rural, and progressive from backward elements. They occupied central, highly visible sites in the city, and were meant to be observed, photographed, and even reported in the newspapers.

Weddings in China had of course always involved spectatorship at some level. Unlike in Europe, where two people could properly be married in absolute secrecy—technically even in the absence of a priest—simply by plighting their troth, in China community recognition of the formation of a family bond appears to have been fundamental to the legitimacy of the marriage. For women, as CK Yang noted, "it was the elaborate ceremony and the clan feast in the village that would give public witness, recognition, and security to her status as wife at a time when the marriage law of the government was hardly known to the common people."[71] Yet the "public" in the case of the old-fashioned rural wedding referred to by Yang was a world away from the public that participated in weddings of these celebrities. Most obviously, very few members of this new public were related to each other, or even knew each other. The facts that strangers and near strangers could gaze with impunity on the bride and groom, either in person or in the newspaper, that they could take an interest in so doing, and that a wedding could take place in a venue that anyone else could use—a public place, or a place for hire—all this pointed to an event that has rightly become emblematic of historical change in China in the early twentieth century.

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[70] Guo Yaping, "You fan qu jian: Qingmo Minchu Shanxi hunsu bianqian."

[71] C. K. Yang, *Chinese Communist Society: The Family and the Village* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1965), 84.

CHAPTER THREE

CITY-BUILDING, NEW LIFE AND THE 'MAKING OF THE CITIZEN' IN 1930s NANCHANG

Federica Ferlanti[1]

3.1. *Introduction*

This paper focuses on the Nationalists' reconfiguration of the public and political space in the city of Nanchang before and with the New Life Movement (*Xin shenghuo yundong* 新生活運動) of 1934. Major urban changes were set in motion by the Nationalists at the end of the 1920s and they were driven by a vision of what the modern city should look like and how it should function. It was a fast changing urban environment and in Nanchang the propagation of citizens' ethics and etiquette took place at the same time as the city development. This paper discusses how the Nationalists moved the boundary between public space and political space and modified how these two spaces interacted. A fundamental part of the citizen-making process was that of mobilizing and encouraging participation in the activities organized by the party and, by extension, by the local government. I will argue that the extension of party discipline and methods to the wider society led to the disappearance of a neutral public space. I will also argue that the Nationalists' use of public space and their notion of citizenship were contradictory. In Nanchang, the "making of the citizen",[2] the modern citizen, was underpinned by a growing utilization of public space on the part of the individuals—in the shape of new streets and transportation, cinemas, parks, and so on; however, the set of New Life rules which concerned both private and public behaviour

[1] The author would like to thank the organizers and participants of the conference "Urban Cultural Change in Republican China (1910s–1940s): Dialogue between Cultural Narrative and Historical GIS" held at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 18–20 September 2010, the Leverhulme China's War with Japan Programme for kindly sponsoring the trip to Hong Kong and the two anonymous reviewers for their comments. I am also grateful to Billy K. L. So, Eileen Walsh, and Lin Hsin-yi for their help.

[2] I borrow this expression from Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911–1929* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

de facto limited the individuals' appropriation of public space. The message of the New Life Movement, although rooted in hygienic practices, dealt with the organization of the space and how individuals should reposition into it, both physically and politically. In Nanchang the city-building process started as soon as the Nationalists took power, but it reached a crescendo in the mid-1930s, alongside the Nationalists' organization of mass mobilization. By examining these developments concurrently, as they took place in Nanchang, we are provided with an insight into the fundamental contradiction that stemmed from the Nationalists' resolve to merge the state-building process with the wider goals of national unity and consensus-building.

3.2. *Why Nanchang?*

Studies on urban planning are fundamental for understanding the evolution of the city and the relationship between the state and individual during the Republican period. The transformation of Chinese cities is well documented particularly for larger cities such as Tianjin, Canton, Shanghai and Beijing; Michael Tsin and David Strand's studies, respectively on Canton and Beijing, are important examples of how urban development was informed by a new concept of state and citizenship.[3]

Nanchang differs from these because urban redevelopment took place mostly during the Nanjing decade (1927–1937), so to a certain degree, later than that of larger cities. Local histories published in the PRC, with few exceptions, devote little space to the changes that took place in the city in the 1930s.[4] This period is sandwiched between lengthy and detailed descriptions of the Nanchang Uprising of August 1927 and the war against Japan (1937–1945), as if the Nationalist Government had not been there at the time and, above all, that nothing worthy of discussion had taken place in Nanchang. However, when I started to look at how the city of Nanchang developed, it seemed clear that the major shift in the way its residents lived in the city and experienced the city occurred during the

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[3] Michael Tsin, *Nation, Governance, and Modernity in China: Canton, 1900–1927* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); David Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing: City People and Politics in the 1920s* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1989).

[4] For a comprehensive coverage of the period see He Youliang, *Jiangxi Tongshi: Minguo Juan*, 江西通史民國卷 [Jiangxi General History: Volume on Republican China] (Nanchang: Jiangxi Renmin Chubanshe, 2008), vol. 11. I would like to thank Professor He Youliang of the Jiangxi Academy of Social Sciences for giving me a copy of this volume.

1930s. The question is: did the Nationalists transform the city, and if that is the case, as I argue, how?

Following the establishment of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing, and more generally during the Nanjing decade, a new set of legislation concerning urban administration was introduced throughout China.[5] The concepts of urban planning and the city as a modern space with plans for electrification, safe water and the development of urban transportation gained momentum in small cities such as Nanchang. A complex mixture of long-term administrative objectives and political priorities guided and influenced these developments. By the mid-1930s the transformation of urban life and space in Nanchang was defined by the centrality of the city in the fight against the Communists. The geographical proximity to the First Chinese Soviet Republic in the southern part of the province transformed Nanchang into an important test run for city- and citizenship-building and mobilization. The process was driven, on the one hand, by structural changes: new buildings, streets and infrastructures; and on the other hand, by the dramatic changes introduced by the Nationalists with regard to the utilization of the city's public space. So much so that by the mid-1930s the increasing politicization of urban life with the New Life Movement would lead to the disappearance of a neutral public space. This development was the result of major urban (re)construction (jianshe 建設) and of the redefinition of individual and public behaviour in what was perceived to be a modernised urban space and society.

Stephen Averill has examined the Nationalists' attempt to regain administrative and political control in Jiangxi and, more specifically, over the counties and rural areas which had been under the Communists' control. His analysis of the New Life Movement and the New Life-related policies is rightly critical of the results achieved; he has questioned both the substance and the effectiveness of the Nationalists' programme.[6] However, the analysis of Nanchang city-building and the New Life Movement suggests otherwise. The New Life Movement's emphasis on the Confucian virtues of propriety (Li 禮), uprightness (Yi 義), integrity (Lian 廉) and shame (Chi 恥) is certainly evidence of the Nationalists' reliance on traditional values and morality, but the improvement of hygienic standards,

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[5] Zhao Ke 趙可, *Shizheng Gaige yu Chengshi Fazhan* 市政改革與城市發展 [Municipal Administrative Reforms and Urban Development], (Beijing: Zhongguo Dabaike Quanshu Chubanshe, 2004), pp. 190–195.

[6] Stephen C. Averill, "The New Life in Action: The Nationalist Government in South Jiangxi, 1934–37," *The China Quarterly*, 88 (December 1981). *[594–628].*

public infrastructures and civics training are all part of the Nationalists' construction of modern citizenship. Nanchang was the place where the idea of the New Life Movement was put in practice and where the Nationalists' effort with regards to all these aspects came together.

3.3. (*Re*)*Constructing the City*

By late 1920s the modernization process which was well ahead in larger cities was fast extending to smaller cities like Nanchang. As we shall see, the city population at the time was hardly matched by millions residing in larger cities—263,704 inhabitants in 1934;[7] and Nanchang's geographical position, in the south-east of China, and its economy can be described as peripheral in comparison to the hustle and bustle of the coastal areas. However, the city's position had become of strategic military and political importance in the 1920s with the Northern Expedition (1926–1928) and, even more so, in 1932–1933 when Chiang Kai-shek chose it as the location for his Military Headquarters which would coordinate the military campaigns against the Communists in Jiangxi and neighbouring provinces. The latter event granted Nanchang a higher 'national' status.

The Nationalists' fight against the Communists should not detract our attention from the scope of the local reconstruction and transformation that the Nationalists generated: the planning for remodelling the city had started years before Chiang Kai-shek chose Nanchang as military headquarters. Indeed, the creation of a transportation infrastructure across Jiangxi was propelled by the need to move troops and reach remote areas across the province, but this alone cannot account for the changes that the city experienced.

The Nationalists established a new Municipal Government in 1927 as a result of the Northern Expedition reaching Nanchang at the end of 1926; but for several months the Municipal Government, promptly reorganized in five bureaux—Financial, Education, Public Security, Public Works, and Public Services, was engrossed in internal division.[8] The Nationalist Party's internal rift between Left and Right reached its apex in 1927 and the shockwaves of the April 12th coup in Shanghai were felt in Jiangxi too: the provincial level was first to be affected. That April, military governor

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[7] Nanchang shi difang zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (ed.), *Nanchang Shi Zhi* 南昌市志, [Nanchang City Gazetteer], (Nanchang: Fangzhi Chubanshe, 1997), vol. 1, p. 268.

[8] He Youliang, *Jiangxi Tongshi*, p. 114.

Li Liejun was removed by the Wuhan Government and replaced by Zhu Peide whose sympathies initially rested with the Left.[9] The defeat of the Communists in the Nanchang Uprising of August 1st, however, brought Jiangxi back to Chiang Kai-shek's side and this power shift marked the end of the Communists' substantial presence in Nanchang: Zhu Peide was substituted with Lu Diping whose term lasted until the end of 1931; and, for the following ten years, the province would be administered by Xiong Shihui,[10] whose commitment to Chiang Kai-shek and the New Life Movement was unconditional.

Nanchang would be one of a number of cities across China where the Municipal Government (shi zhengfu 市政府) went through considerable reorganization. Although the Nationalist Government had issued new administrative legislation which had led to the organization of city districts and municipal councils, the Nanchang Municipal Government ceased to operate in January 1932 and would be reinstated in July 1935 with the creation of the Nanchang Municipal Council (Nanchang shi weiyuanhui 南昌市委員會). In 1932 the Municipal Government had incurred "financial difficulties" serious enough to justify its suspension.[11] Nevertheless, He Youliang points out that in 1933 the Administrative Yuan had given permission to set up a municipal council (市委員會) and in 1934 the Jiangxi Provincial Government (Jiangxi sheng zhengfu 江西省政府) appointed a mayor to the city.[12] Although administrative and financial problems can account for the suspension of the Municipal Government, this did not hinder the city development. It is important to bear in mind that the city administration resulted from a close collaboration between the Nanchang Military Headquarters and the Jiangxi Provincial Government. In this respect, the city was at the receiving end of a highly centralised redevelopment plan.

The task of the Municipal Government was arduous. It was not simply a matter of renaming offices and putting new people in old and new positions; the city was extensively damaged and the task of reconstruction

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[9] Li Xin (ed.) 李新, *Zhonghua Minguo Shi*, 中華民國史 [The History of Republican China], (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju Chuban, 1996), part 2, vol. 5, p. 565; Li Shoulin et al., (eds.) 李壽林, *Minguo Zhiguan Nianbiao* 民國職官年表 [Chronological Tables of Republican Period Officials], (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju Chuban, 1995), pp. 728–729.

[10] *Minguo Zhiguan Nianbiao*, pp. 729–735.

[11] Deng Baoheng 鄧寶恒, *Minguo Shiqi Zhengqu Yange* 民國時期政區沿革 [History of the Administrative Regions during the Republican Period], (Wuhan: Hubei Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1999), pp. 284–285; and Zhao Ke, *Shizheng Gaige*, pp. 197–199.

[12] He Youliang, *Jiangxi Tongshi*, p. 261.

(jianshe 建設) was demanding.[13] As demography goes, it is apparent that the Northern Expedition and the August Uprising had been costly. Between 1926 and 1927 the population in the city decreased by 16.39%, while in 1928 the population increased by 26.5%; translated into numbers this meant that 46,920 residents resettled in Nanchang.[14] The population kept growing during the Nanjing decade, with the exception of 1934 when it decreased,[15] not dramatically, yet by nearly 3%. In 1928 Nanchang had 224,123 residents and by 1937 the number had reached 298,576.[16] The transformation of the city landscape started in 1928: the city walls, partly damaged, were demolished; moreover, two main streets, Zhongshan Road (中山路) and Desheng Road (德生路, later renamed Zhongzheng Road 中正路 and after 1949 renamed Shengli Road 勝利路), were rebuilt and they cut across the city from west to east and from north to south respectively.[17]

Located on the banks of the Gan River (a tributary of the Yangtze) and of the Fu River, the city was an important commercial hub and shipping centre. Goods arrived by water and then were shipped across the province. The north-west of the city where the Gan and Fu rivers joined was crammed with warehouses whilst the main retail centre was an area called Ximachi (洗馬池) on Zhongshan Road where there would be shops selling luxury and foreign goods.[18] The shop Henderson Lee (Hengdeli 亨得利), originally a branch of the Shanghai-based company which sold watches, jewellery and spectacles, was on Desheng Road. When in 1928 and 1929 the street was widened, the shop expanded and in 1934 underwent a thorough refurbishment: the shop's interior was celebrated as being the most fashionable in town with "a big glass shop window, two swinging doors, and a terrazzo floor…"[19]

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[13] Ibid., pp. 114–115.

[14] *Nanchang Shi Zhi*, vol. 1, p. 268.

[15] Since the population has been growing steadily since 1928, it is likely that the Communist evacuation from the rural areas and the Long March affected the number of urban residents. It is possible that local rural elites who had resettled in the capital returned to the countryside after the Communists left. There were also an earthquake, several major fires and a storm which provoked deaths. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 41–42.

[16] Ibid., p. 268.

[17] Ibid., pp. 103–104.

[18] Hu Nesheng 胡訥生, "Nanchang Shi Youguan Geming Huodong de Ruoguan Wangshi," 南昌市有關革命活動的若干往事 [Past Events concerning Revolutionary Activities in Nanchang] *Jiangxi Wenshi Ziliao Xuanji* 2 (May, 1980), 47.

[19] Ying Ming-Wang Quanruan 英名-汪春瑞, *Nanchang Lao Zihao* 南昌老字號 [Nanchang's Long-established Shops], (Nanchang: Ershiyi Shiji Chubanshe, 2005), pp. 6–7. The reference is slightly unconventional but significant as an example of the recent revival of

These areas are still a major commercial centre with big department stores and trendy shops. However, after 1949, the commercial and political centre of the city moved eastward. At the end of Zhongshan Road the Communists built the large August 1st Square where the August 1st Memorial Tower stands. This is now a space which commemorates the city's revolutionary past and the political present—with the Jiangxi Provincial Government's building not far away together with the shopping area which marks modern-day commercial prosperity.

Nightlife too revolved around Ximachi, Zhongshan Road and Desheng Road.[20] According to one recollection, Chiang Kai-shek's arrival at the Headquarters led to a substantial growth in the number of hotels, restaurants and nightclubs. The author makes a direct connection between the presence of Chiang's staff and the consumption of luxury goods and claims that there was also a remarkable rise in the trading and consumption of brandy, whisky, champagne, luxury cigarettes and opium. Prostitution was common, there was a red-light area removed from the city centre, but prostitutes were present in the nightclubs and bars across the city.[21] This was a far cry from the restrictions and moralization of the New Life Movement.[22] By the 1930s the city was enjoying a lively nightlife, but Nanchang was also an intellectual centre. Jiangxi Zhongshan University (江西中山大學) was founded in 1927 by merging four existing academies.[23] The city was also an important publishing centre. The May Fourth Movement and the Northern Expedition had boosted the publication and dissemination of newspapers, but the presence of the Nationalists in the city in the 1930s led to the establishment of several news agencies, some of which were supported by the government, and by 1933 Nanchang had 15 news agencies and 11 newspapers.[24]

The breadth and progression of the urban projects implemented since the late 1920s are impressive: in 1929 the first public bus service started but stopped in December 1931 because of financial problems; in 1932

Nanchang and Jiangxi's local history and culture through illustrated little books for young people. The shop *Hengdeli* is still going strong in Nanchang and the flagship store can be found at the same location. http://www.nchdl.com/.

[20] Fang Jiahan 房稼韓, "Yi Nanchang," 憶南昌 [Remembering Nanchang], *Jiangxi Wenxian* 江西文獻 111 (January, 1983), 30.

[21] Hu Nesheng, "Nanchang Shi," 51–52.

[22] On the Nationalists' attempt to regulate and limit prostitution, gambling, and narcotics in larger cities, such as Shanghai, see Frederic Wakeman, Jr., *Policing Shanghai, 1927–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 97–131.

[23] He Youliang, *Jiangxi Tongshi*, p. 114.

[24] Chen Qiheng 程其恒, "Jiangxi Xinwen Shiye Jianshi," 江西新聞事業簡史 [Brief History of Journalism in Jiangxi], *Jiangxi Wenxian* 92 (April, 1978), p. 23.

the plan for building a Water Treatment Station was approved; in 1933 works for the new airport started (around 300,000 civilian workers were conscribed at county levels) and a navigable canal around the city was completed; in 1934 the test pile for the building of the major bridge over the Gan River started (named after Chiang Kai-shek, the bridge's name was changed into Bayi 八一 after 1949) along with the construction of the new railway station; in 1935 work for the underground sewer system was commenced, with money raised through land lease; in 1936 another bridge was finished, Nanchang was connected by rail to Zhejiang province, and the city's public cemetery was completed.[25] It is important to note that Xiong Shihui, the Provincial Governor appointed by Chiang Kai-shek in December 1931, called in six engineers from the Shanghai's Bureau of Public Works (Gongwu ju 工務局) to work on the city planning and development.[26] This shows the extent to which Nanchang's city-building and the idea of urban modernity were shaped by Shanghai's model.

The changes in the city are echoed in the New Life Movement's focus on public health, personal hygiene and sanitation in general. The year the New Life Movement was launched, a series of measures were taken to improve the city sanitation: the streets were swept on a regular basis and rubbish collection was organized. Whereas in the early Republican period litter would be dumped in nearby alleys and canals, in 1934–1935 rubbish bins in reinforced masonry structures were installed by the Police Bureau (Jingcha ju 警察局) at city district levels and these were emptied every five days. The first two 'official' public toilets, in the sense of designated public areas, appeared and were opened in Nanchang in 1934 and by 1936 eighty-five dotted the city. However, the same source raises the critical point that by 1936 thirty-three were "inoperative", 51 needed repairing, and therefore only one could effectively be used.[27]

The improvement of hygienic standards in Chinese cities and its association with modernity fitted extremely well the Nationalists' rhetoric of strengthening the nation. However, public health and hygiene had been associated with modernity for many decades. Ruth Rogaski traces this phenomenon back to the arrival of the imperial powers in the nineteenth century; subsequently, the reinterpretation, adaptation, and assimilation

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[25] *Nanchang Shi Zhi*, vol. 1, pp. 38–43.

[26] He Youliang, *Jiangxi Tongshi*, p. 261; Zhu Youqian 朱有騫 "Shi nian lai zhi Jiangxi shizheng" 十年來之江西市政 [Ten Years of City Administration in Jiangxi), in Gan zheng shi nian bian ji weiyuanhui (ed.), *Gan Zheng Shi Nian* 贛政十年 [*Ten Years of Jiangxi Administration*), (Nanchang: 1941), p. 1.

[27] *Nanchang Shi Zhi*, vol. 4, pp. 401, 403, 408.

of new concepts on medicine and health, as well as practices, in the early twentieth century, gave rise to the development of a modernity discourse in the realm of hygiene and health ('hygienic modernity').[28] The Nationalists accentuated and used the link between the improvement of hygienic standards in Chinese cities and modernity, although, as Rogaski shows, the interpretation of what was hygienic and modern would be contentious among Chinese elites.[29]

This summary of Nanchang's political and urban changes, despite the setback of the public toilets, shows that by the mid-1930s, in the space of just a few years, the city had changed not only its appearance but its very fabric, with new streets, means of transportation and services. For anyone who had not experienced this kind of urban environment anywhere else, to live in the city meant that they needed to adapt and embrace a new way of life and to a certain extent abide by new regulations which pertained to the novel lifestyle. Nanchang citizens were experiencing a city which was utterly transformed and, from the government's perspective, they needed to be taught how to live and behave in the new environment. The New Life Movement would provide a clear set of regulations and instructions for them to follow. Interestingly, the Movement, which came immediately under scrutiny for what was considered a Confucian anachronistic view of society, was actually proceeding at the same pace as the city reconstruction, particularly when it came to the issue of health and hygiene. In addition, changes in the city and the making of Nanchang citizens affected the use of public space.

3.4. *Public Space and Political Space*

With the New Life Movement the relationship between public space and political space was transformed. Chiang Kai-shek and Song Meiling launched the New Life Movement in Nanchang in 1934. The launching ceremony is an example of how the Nationalists in Nanchang used the public space, with new streets, parks and stadiums for political purposes: for instance, by organizing and exerting control over public gatherings and general mobilizations. This was not simply a case of showcasing support to the Nationalist Party by the Nationalist Party: through the New

[28] Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty-Port China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 1–21.
[29] Ibid., pp. 233–240.

Life Movement, the Nationalists defined the use of public space by promoting model behaviours which they saw fit for life in a modern urban environment and pushed for the transformation of the public space into a political space.

The first mass gathering, after Chiang Kai-shek launched the New Life Movement at the Military Headquarters on February 1934, took place at the stadium on Huanghu Road. On March 11th, on a rainy day, around 100,000 people assembled at the stadium to hear the leading figures of the Nationalist Party and local government delivering speeches on the New Life Movement. Government administrative offices, various local associations and Nanchang residents for a total of 500 working units participated in the event.[30] The gathering was carefully organized and choreographed and so was the itinerary of the parade through the city streets which followed the assembly at the stadium. At 3 pm people started to leave the stadium; the dignitaries opened the parade, with the musical band in front, and students, local associations and citizens' representatives followed in neat marching rows. The parade came out from the north exit of the stadium onto Huanghu Road, moved south towards Zhongshan Road and on Yanjiang Road, then east onto Desheng Road. By 5 pm the parade had reached the main crossroad at Desheng Road where two stages had been placed and the propaganda teams performed 21 plays.[31] By the mid-1930s, these newly-built and widened streets had become centre stage for mass mobilizations and, by default, a place for the local government to convey information and propaganda. Student teams delivering public speeches were a common sight, but they were also asked to verify that street peddlers, shops and households would maintain good manners and respect hygienic standards.[32]

It is during this period that sporting facilities were upgraded. The first small stadium was built in 1921, then rebuilt elsewhere and much improved in 1928. The largest city stadium, the Jiangxi Provincial Stadium (Jiangxi shengli tiyuchang 江西省立體育場) was built in 1933 and by 1935 the city was equipped with two swimming pools.[33] The stadiums in

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[30] Xin Shenghuo Yundong Cujin Zonghui 新生活運動促進總會 (ed.), *Minguo Ershisan Nian Xin Shenghuo Yundong Zong Baogao* 民國二十三年新生活運動總報告 [General Report on the New Life Movement, 1934], (Xin Shenghuo Yundong Cujin Zonghui Chuban, 1935), p. 113.

[31] Ibid., pp. 113–115.

[32] Ibid., pp. 247–251.

[33] Deng Xiaojiang-Wang Min 鄧小江-王敏, *Caogen Nanchang* 草根南昌 [Nanchang's Roots], (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 2006), p. 125.

the city, besides being used for hosting sporting events and competitions, and practising sports, were places where the local government engaged with the community. One of the concerns which emerged with the New Life Movement was the prevention of diseases. In May 1935 the Public Health Office (Weisheng chu 衛生處) inaugurated a summer campaign with a public meeting which was held in one of the city stadiums, with the purpose of preventing and eradicating trachoma, a very common eye-disease at the time.[34] But the construction of the new stadiums and sporting facilities were also evidence of the emergence of "a new mass physical culture".[35] Vivid satisfaction was expressed by Ronald Rees, the secretary of the National Christian Council of China, who in a 1937 publication applauds the inclusion of physical education and sports in the school curriculum, and cheers at the liveliness shown by young Chinese in contrast to their forebears' passiveness:

> Physical exercise and games are not just a childish folly of the Anglo-Saxon race. They are essential to health, which is one of the greatest of God's gifts to men. It is immensely encouraging sight to see the young boys and girls of China in their thousands, in their millions now, playing football (soccer), tennis and basketball. Jumping and swimming, in great contrast to their grandfathers and grandmothers who were too dignified and would not run, or had bound feet and could not. Physical education is expanding the chest of China and adding inches if not cubits to its stature.[36]

Andrew Morris sees the 1930s as the decade in which the pursuit of sport and physical activities moved away from being an expression of Chinese elites and reached the populace as a whole. The Nationalists regarded physical activity, based on scientific premises, as a means to strengthen "the national and social body."[37] The state was fundamental in promoting this new mass culture, which in the early 1930s would become, he argues, increasingly militarized.[38]

Likewise, the planning of new buildings, such as the head office for the New Life Club (Xin shenghuo julebu 新生活俱樂部) and the People's Assembly Hall (Minzhong jihuitang 民眾集會堂), shows how the

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[34] Academia Historica, Taibei, Archives of President Chiang Kai-shek, 08A-02060, Quanguo Xialing Weisheng Yundong Gaikuang Baogao 全國夏令衛生運動概況報告 [Report on the General Situation of the Summer Hygiene Campaign Nationwide], 1935, p. 9.

[35] Andrew D. Morris, *Marrow of the Nation: A History of Sport and Physical Culture in Republican China* (Berkeley: California University Press, 2004), pp. 105–106.

[36] Rees Ronald, *China Faces the Storm* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1937), p. 24.

[37] Andrew Morris, *Marrow of the Nation*, p. 106.

[38] Ibid., pp. 130–139.

boundary between public and political space was narrowing. The New Life Club was set up by prominent citizens in Nanchang at the end of February 1934. The Club's members showed their support for the moral standards which underpinned the New Life Movement by pledging to oppose 'bad habits', including the frequentation of prostitutes, the use of opium, drinking, and gambling.[39] As it transpires from the articles on the *Jiangxi Republican Daily* (Jiangxi Minguo Ribao 江西民國日報) in March and April 1934, the project of the Club's building included space for an office, assembly hall, dormitory, and dining hall. The building would be located in Hubin Park (湖濱公園) and money would be raised through public subscriptions.[40] By then there were two main public parks in the city and both of them had been renovated between 1928 and 1932; one was Hubin Park and the other Zhongshan Park (中山公園). The latter was created from the nearby existing green lands of Baihuazhou (百花洲) after the completion of Zhongshan Road's renovation.[41] During one of its meetings, the Club also proposed the construction of a swimming pool;[42] the pool known as "New Life Club's swimming pool" was built in 1935 and used for major sports competitions.[43] The plan for constructing the People's Assembly Hall, which was very likely part of the New Life Club's new premises in Hubin Park, was yet another project which was intended to mark the public space in Nanchang. Jiangxi Provincial Governor Xiong Shihui promised to provide 100,000 *yuan* for building the large assembly hall which would have a capacity of 4,000 people.[44] Politicians and planners were not simply thinking big, they were catering for mass politics and mobilization. At the same time, the film and radio broadcasting industry and, more generally, public places of entertainment developed

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[39] "Xin Shenghuo Julebu Di Yi Ci Choubei Huiyi" 新生活俱樂部第一次籌備會議 [The New Life Club's first preparatory meeting], *Jiangxi Minguo Ribao*, 28 February 1934.

[40] "Xin Shenghuo Julebu Jiang Mukuan Jian Huisuo" 新生活俱樂部將募款建會所 [The New Life Club will raise funds to build *its* centre], *Jiangxi Minguo Ribao*, 15 March 1934; "Xin Shenghuo Julebu Qing Shengfu Zhibo Didian Jian Huisuo" 新生活 俱樂部請省府指撥地點建會所 [The New Life Club asks the Provincial Government to assign a site for the construction of the Club's building], *Jiangxi Minguo Ribao*, 2 April 1934.

[41] Deng Xiaojiang-Wang Min, *Caogen Nanchang*, p. 124.

[42] "Xin Shenghuo Julebu Jiang Mukuan Jian Huisuo," *Jiangxi Minguo Ribao*, 15 March 1934.

[43] Deng Xiaojiang-Wang Min, *Caogen Nanchang*, p. 125.

[44] "Xiong Zhuxi Jiang Bo Shiwan Yuan Jianzhu Minzhong Jihuitang" [熊主席將撥十萬元建築民眾集會堂], [President Xiong Shihui will give 100,000 yuan for the construction of the People's Assembly Hall], *Jiangxi Minguo Ribao*, 15 April 1934. I have not been able to locate any reference on this newspaper with regards to the actual completion of the project.

significantly, and between 1934 and 1935 new cinemas, theatres and amusement parks opened in Nanchang.[45]

In the small city of Nanchang, through buildings and public gatherings, the Nationalists created modern meeting places that could shape the urban landscape and affect the way the populace made use of the city space. Although the New Life Club's building, the swimming pools, stadiums and cinemas were conceived for public use, the convergence of community services and political messages highlights the Nationalists' attempt to occupy the public space. De Grazia in her study on the "culture of consent" in Italy has argued that the mass organization of leisure allowed the fascist regime to penetrate Italian society, particularly at the lower levels, and expand the basis of the regime's consensus. The fascist regime achieved this by creating a depoliticized space in which the lower classes would spend and enjoy their free time, and whose inclusiveness was achieved by the absence of activities that could be marked fascist in essence.[46] There are similarities here as we consider the encroachment by the Nationalists on the public space; however, their claim on public space produced a unique and curious mix of depoliticization and politicization of Chinese society. Depoliticization because it involved Nanchang residents in community service and civics training that were inclusive of the whole community and instrumental to the making of a citizen, as we shall see in the next section; but politicization because it extended party ethics and methods of mobilization to the whole community and combined both loyalty to the party and loyalty to the nation.

Crucially, the Nationalist Party was directly involved in the planning and implementation of mass gatherings and general mobilizations. Propaganda activities were implemented by its Jiangxi Provincial Executive Committee (Jiangxi sheng zhiweihui 江西省執委會) and reports sent back to the Central Propaganda Committee (Zhongyang xuanchuan weiyuanhui 中央宣傳委員會) as would be the case for any other province and not just Jiangxi. Between 1933 and 1935 the party propaganda was dominated by anti-communism and the recovery of the areas which had been, until recently, under the control of the Communists. This was particularly relevant to the areas directly involved, such as the south of the province, where party propaganda teams were sent out to work. At a more general level, for the campaigns which would involve the population,

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[45] He Youliang, *Jiangxi Tongshi*, p. 268.

[46] Victoria De Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leisure in Fascist Italy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 14–19, 151–187.

the party in its reports refers to the New Life Movement, hygiene campaigns, literacy campaigns and campaigns to support the consumption of national goods. There were many ways in which the messages that mattered to the party were circulated. One way was through the organization of public gatherings which had the purpose of reaching and involving as many people as possible. These were amply used to create a buzz around the New Life Movement or other events. At the same time, the public celebration of anniversaries (jinianhui 紀念會) such as Sun Yatsen's birthday, Confucius' birthday, the Nationalists' recovery of Nanchang following the August 1st Uprising, and the founding of the Republic were all occasions for the party to promote mass mobilization. The party made sure that on these occasions printed materials would be ready for circulation; and that the channels of communications extended beyond the party official channels.[47] For this purpose the course of action for propaganda included "guiding (zhidao 指導) newspapers and magazines and surveying (diaocha 調查) literary and arts associations (wenyi shetuan 文藝社團), movie theatres and film companies", as well as promoting the institution of the Jiangxi Association for Popular Literature and Arts (Jiangxi tongsu wenyishe 江西通俗文藝社).[48]

The Nationalist Party's strategy for gaining consensus through the control of popular culture and events promotion was very widespread and crucially relied on the work of party members. But it was tricky to balance this act as there was a shortage of members on the ground and perhaps this too triggered the involvement and mobilization of non-party members. In 1934 in Nanchang there were 1,647 party members which, set against the total population of Nanchang, made a ratio of roughly 1 party member to 160 residents.[49] If we examine the province as a whole, there was a sharp decline in party membership between 1928 and 1933; the data for 1934 are not conclusive and there was either a slight decline or increase.[50]

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[47] Archives of the Historical Commission of the Guomindang (Nationalist Party), Taibei, 436/7, Xiaji Dangbu Gongzuo Baogao Shenhe Huibian 下級黨部宣傳工作報告審核匯編 [Collection of Propaganda Reports at the Party's Subordinated Levels], 1933–1935.

[48] Ibid., November 1933.

[49] Jiangxi Sheng Difang Zhi Bianzuan Weiyuanhui (ed.), *"Jiangxi Sheng Zhi" Congshu: Zhongguo Guomindang Jiangxi Sheng Difang Zuzhi Zhi* 江西省志《叢書》: 中國國民黨江西省地方組織志 [Collectanea of Jiangxi Province Gazetteer: Gazetter of the Chinese Nationalist Party's Organizations in Jiangxi Province], (Beijing: Tuanjie Chubanshe, 2006), vol. 57, p. 53. I would like to thank Professor He Youliang of the Jiangxi Academy of Social Sciences for giving me a copy of this volume.

[50] Archives of the Historical Commission of the Guomindang, Taibei, 特 6/20.2, Zhongguo Guomindang Jiangxi Sheng Dangbu Gongzuo Gaishu 中國國民黨江西省黨部工作

However, it is interesting to note that although between 1934 and 1937 there was limited growth as far as full membership is concerned, the party appears to do very well in the numbers of members who were applying to the party but were going through a probation period (yubei dangyuan 預備黨員): 2,915 in 1934; 4,802 in 1935; 6,016 in 1936; and 5,510 in 1937. The most dramatic rise in party membership took place during the war against Japan.[51] It is not clear whether activists or members of mass organizations associated with the Nationalist Party would be granted automatically probationary status, or the extent to which individuals might have been compelled to join in, but what this data could show is that the party propaganda groundwork and mobilization were paying off and were boosting party probationary recruitment between 1934 and 1937.

3.5. *Community Service and Civics Training*

City-building in Nanchang was fuelled by state intervention and the agenda of sanitation, electrification and road-building was dictated by officials; Chiang Kaishek's presence in Nanchang added urgency and funding to the whole enterprise. David Strand has discussed the relationship between state power and local administration in cities and their drift towards authoritarianism during the Republican period, and contrasts it with the democratic nature of locally elected assemblies and self-government in the late Qing and pre-Yuan Shikai period.[52] The late 1920s and 1930s confirmed the growing expansion of the state over society by way of administrative and party institutions. Bryna Goodman's example of the Nationalists' attempt to register native-places associations in Shanghai is useful to understand their determination to control and curb the independence gained by the elites in the absence of a strong state.[53] This process was matched by the state's intervention in mass mobilization which was steered towards community service and civics training.

The New Life Movement focused on the improvement of hygiene and public health. The principles of "cleanliness" (qingjie 清潔) and

概述 [Overview of the Work of Nationalist Party's Jiangxi Provincial Party Committee], 1938, p. 6; and *Zhongguo Guomindang Jiangxi Sheng Difang Zuzhi*, p. 56.

[51] *Zhongguo Guomindang Jiangxi Sheng Difang Zuzhi*, p. 56.

[52] David Strand, "'A High Place Is No Better Than a Low Place': The City in the Making of Modern China," in Wen-hsin Yeh, ed, *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 118.

[53] Bryna Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 291–295.

"orderliness" (guiju 規矩) were applied everywhere: in restaurants, food stalls and bathhouses, to name a few, but also schools, administrative organs, and factories. In addition, it dealt with the changes in etiquette and customs by issuing regulations on weddings and funerals in order to reduce the burden of costly ceremony. The authoritarian approach is shown by the involvement of the Public Security Bureau (Gong'an ju 公安局), which was called in, together with representatives of each line of business or categories involved, to supervise the implementation of the directives connected to the Movement.[54] The New Life Movement defined what was expected from individuals as citizens in their city (shimin 市民) and by extension of the nation (gongmin 公民).

Robert Culp has provided a fascinating analysis of the continuity of civics education and citizenship training in Chinese secondary schools of the lower Yangzi region between 1912 and 1940, particularly during the Republican period. The idea of transforming youths into citizens was addressed through dedicated textbooks and training sessions in the schools. Culp observes that the construction of citizenship among students differed in approaches over time, but it nonetheless provided "a coherent conception of republican citizenship . . ."[55] The Nationalist Government did press on civics and citizenship training in the schools, but by the mid-1930s this process was extended from the classrooms to the adult population, and tied more closely to community service. To a great extent they had lost their neutral association with the nation because the Nationalists' articulation of how individuals were to behave in the context of the modern nation needed to be coherent with the Nationalist Party's ideology. For instance, the involvement of adult members of society through the New Life Movement introduced a strong political connotation into community services and civics training and suggests that the public space in which individuals would act as citizens had become increasingly politicized. The Nationalists were trying to create an identification with the nation that would be sheltered from political divisions, but their construction of citizenship posed the problem of possibly competing loyalties: to the party and to the nation. Was it possible for the modern citizen to be loyal to the nation without supporting the Nationalist Party?

By the early 1930s Nanchang was divided into ten administrative districts and the Public Security Bureau heads were present in each district. Groups

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[54] *Minguo Ershisan Nian Xin Shenghuo Yundong Zong Baogao, 1934*, pp. 178–184.

[55] Robert J. Culp, *Articulating Citizenship: Civic Education and Student Politics in Southeastern China, 1912–1940* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 9–10.

of citizens at this level were organized to implement the New Life Movement and the way they were recruited shows that the boundary between voluntary and required participation was blurred, to say the least. These groups were not moving freely in the public space. For instance, the Public Security Bureau and the *baojia* (保甲) heads coordinated the recruitment and activities of the male citizens who belonged to the Labour Service Corps (Laodong fuwutuan 勞動服務團). Each household in the district was expected to provide one member to the local Corps where the male family component's age ranged between 16 and 50. In the case of Nanchang citizens the Corps' organization replicated that of the city districts, with the head of the Public Security Bureau (Gong'an ju zhang 公安局長) and the superintendent (*ducha zhang* 督察長) being responsible for the Corps (tuan 團). The Corps' section (fentuan 分團) was established at the Police District's level (jingqu 警區), and the Public Security Bureau representative at that level was held responsible for it; the team (dui 隊) was established at the *baolian* (保聯) level, and the head of the *baolian* was in charge of it; the team-branch (fendui 分隊) was established at the *bao* (保) level, and was under the responsibility of the head of the *bao*; the group (zu 組) was organized at the *jia* (甲) level, and the *jia* head was held responsible for it; and, at the bottom, the family level (hu 戶) which would provide one member to the Corps.[56]

The organization of the Labour Service Corps stresses an all-inclusive approach to mobilization in which the *shimin* (市民 citizens, but specifically city residents) were divided along the lines of age and sex, and various circles (界 jie) and professionals associations (法團 fatuan) were brought under the same banner of the service corps (fuwutuan 服務團) engineered by the Nationalists. Bryna Goodman and David Strand have analysed the evolution of traditional elite-organizations such as the native-place associations in Shanghai and social mobilization in Beijing in Republican China. Their analysis of the transformation of local society groupings at urban level shows that in the 1920s traditional elite-organizations such as the native-place associations and professional associations were still fundamental in mobilizing their members, however, modern forms of associations surged following the 1911 Revolution and

[56] "Nanchang Shimin Xin Shenghuo Laodong Fuwutuan Zuzhi Jianze" [Principles for the Organization of the New Life Labour Service Corps among Nanchang Citizens], in Xin Shenghuo Yundong Cujin Zonghui (ed.), *Minguo Ershisi Nian Quanguo Xin Shenghuo Yundong* 民國二十四年全國新生活運動 [*The New Life Movement throughout the Country, 1935*], (Xin Shenghuo Yundong Cujin Zonghui Chuban, 1936), p. 269.

May Fourth Movement.[57] The Nationalists, whilst trying to gain control of the traditional and modern associations, promoted organizations and campaigns that would be mass-oriented to overcame localism and parochial interests.

The term *fuwu* (服務) embodies the idea of service-spirit which emerges as a common denominator for the organizations created by the Nationalists and linked to the New Life Movement. Robert Culp, very interestingly, has shown how since the 1910s and 1920s the notion of "social service" central in Scouting was incorporated in the Scouts' curriculum in China. The term *fuwu* in this context points towards the fact that the young scouts would provide a service which would benefit society and this act would define them as citizens. The commitment of youth organizations and students to active service in the community would increase with the New Life Movement and with the approach of the war against Japan,[58] but what we see in Nanchang is the adoption of a similar ethos by the civilian organizations composed by adults.

The organization of the Labour Service Corps was based on the principle that the Corps members would accept sacrificing themselves in order to support their country and that they would face the difficulties they would encounter on their path with bravery. Yet again, the element of benefiting the nation is clearly spelled out, but the service-spirit was promoted in society to create a strong community-based service among local residents. This is apparent from the tasks the Labour Service Corps would perform, such as spreading general education and literacy, giving support to the jobless and increasing economic production. The service was voluntary in the sense that members of the Corps provided the service during their free time for the minimum of one hour under the direction of the local New Life Movement's association.[59] Nevertheless, the involvement of the Public Security Bureau and the overlap with the *baojia* structure show that mobilization was carefully managed and controlled by local institutions.

Nanchang citizens during this period underwent civics training sessions (gongmin xunlian qi 公民訓練期). The study sessions were organized by the Jiangxi Province Citizens' Training Committee (Jiangxi sheng gongmin xunlian hui 江西省公民訓練會) which was established in April 1935.

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[57] See Bryna Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation*, pp. 217–257, 257–277; David Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing*, pp. 167–198.

[58] Robert J. Culp, *Articulating Citizenship*, pp. 193–197; Federica Ferlanti, "The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province, 1934–1938," *Modern Asian Studies*, 44.5 (September 2010), pp. 987–989, 995–996.

[59] "Nanchang Shimin Xin Shenghuo Laodong Fuwutuan Zuzhi Jianze," pp. 260–263.

Committee members such as Cheng Shuikui, Fan Zhengbo and Huang Guangdou were also directly involved in the structure that supervised the implementation of the New Life Movement. Each training period provided education in civics to different social elements and professions. According to the data of the Nationalist Party over a period of five months in Nanchang 10,583 citizens (gongmin 公民) had received training.[60] The source does not elaborate on the exact nature of the training, but by comparing it to other schemes for women's civics training which took place at the end of 1934 we can speculate that among the topics there would be New Life, individual and public hygiene, social etiquette, party songs and literacy teaching.[61] Although I have discussed the Labour Service Corps in this paper, women and students were involved in community service and civics training, and were very active members of a number of associations and groups which shared similar characteristics with the Labour Service Corps.[62] The 1930s and 1940s were crucial decades for women's involvement in politics: according to the data, in Jiangxi in 1934 women accounted for less than 2.5% of the Nationalist party membership, by the end of the 1930s the figure was slightly less than 3%, by 1942 around 3.9% and by 1945 a significant 8.5%. Jiangxi women's exposure to political messages through the activities promoted by the Nationalist Party, particularly during the wartime period, could well account for the increase in women's party membership.[63]

3.6. *Conclusion*

In the 1930s Nanchang changed considerably. The Nationalists transformed the city according to their idea of modernity while promoting a model of citizenship that blended together political loyalty, civics training, and mobilization campaigns such as the New Life Movement. The notion of a citizen who would participate in the general improvement of city-life was broad enough to involve the whole population, but the making of the citizen at this specific time was also aimed at legitimizing the Nationalists' rule and only by extension the nation. The progressive encroachment of the public space by the Nationalists with mobilizations

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[60] *Zhongguo Guomindang Jiangxi Sheng Difang Zuzhi*, p. 214.

[61] *Minguo Ershisan Nian Xin Shenghuo Yundong Zong Baogao, 1934*, pp. 269–271.

[62] For women and students' involvement in the New Life Movement in Nanchang see Federica Ferlanti, "The New Life Movement," pp. 989–991.

[63] *Zhongguo Guomindang Jiangxi Sheng Difang Zuzhi*, pp. 56–57.

that were, at the same time, social and political led to a change in the way in which the public space was perceived and used by both administrators and individuals. The Nationalists through the reconstruction of Nanchang were laying out new patterns for the use of the public space, a space which would become increasingly politicized. It meant that the new shining streets and stadiums were not only a place for the citizen to enjoy, but also a stage where political messages were passed on. The messages, however, needed to be embedded in a more general idea of citizenship, service to the community and the nation. In order to be inclusive and gather more support, mobilizations such as the New Life Movement addressed broad-spectrum issues and there are interesting similarities with De Grazia's culture of consent in fascist Italy, where consent was achieved through the creation of a depoliticized space of leisure. It would be reductive, however, to confine Nanchang's city-building and the making of the citizen uniquely to consensus-building. Nanchang in the mid-1930s had been transformed and the city-building plan and the ideas underpinning the Nationalists' making of the citizen were the result of long-term trends which the Nationalists adapted and reworked according to their ideology and political priorities.

CHAPTER FOUR

WARTIME REFUGEE RELIEF IN CHINESE CITIES AND WOMEN'S POLITICAL ACTIVISM, 1937–1940

Harriet Zurndorfer

4.1. *Introduction: Cities and Refugees in "Total War"*

From the perspective of refugees, the eight-year Sino-Japanese War, or War of Resistance, is a tale of many cities. As the Japanese Imperial Army bombarded and invaded one locality after another beginning in summer 1937, streams of refugees fleeing from the villages and farms along the line of the enemy's advance headed toward cities and towns in the hope of gaining shelter and support.[1] But the rapid and extensive aerial and ground attacks on China's major cities meant that by autumn 1938 there was not one urban municipality in eastern or central China that had not seen devastation, destruction, and/or occupation. Beijing was taken over by Japanese troops on 27 July 1937, Tianjin on 30 July, and Baoding on 24 September. In addition, Suiyuan fell on 1 October, followed by Taiyuan on 1 November.[2] Attacks on Shanghai began on 13 August and, although

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[1] Besides those refugees who fled to cities, there were also those who moved within the countryside. See Micah Muscolino, "Refugees, Land Reclamation, and Militarized Landscapes in Wartime China: Huanglongshan, Shaanxi, 1937–45," *Journal of Asian Studies* 69.2 (May 2010): 453–478. As Diana Lary notes in *The Chinese People at War: Human Suffering and Social Transformation, 1937–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 22, China was the first country in the world to be subjected to systematic bombing of civilian targets.

[2] Ta Chen, "Migrants," *American Journal of Sociology* 52 (1947): (supplement) 59. On the Japanese takeover of Tianjin and the refugee crisis there, see T. A. Bisson, *Japan in China* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), pp. 35–39. For the war's chronology, see Hans van de Ven and Edward J. Drea, "Chronology of the Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1945," in Mark Peattie, Edward Drea, and Hans van de Ven, eds., *The Battle for China: Essays on the Military History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), pp. 7–27; and Hollington Tong, ed., *China Handbook, 1937–1945: A Comprehensive Survey of Major Developments in China in Eight Years of War* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), pp. 707–726. For further information on Japanese wartime bombing in China, see Hagiwara Mitsuru, "The Japanese Air Campaigns in China, 1937–1945," in Peattie, Drea, and Van de Ven, *The Battle for China*, pp. 237–255. Lary, *The Chinese People*, p. 23, lists the sixty cities in nine provinces that were subjected to low-level bombing from 15 August to 13 October (1937), based on the account by *Manchester Guardian* correspondent

Chinese armies fought hard to defend the city,[3] the Japanese experienced little difficulty in establishing their power there by 11 November. Nanjing fell in December 1937, Anqing (the capital of Anhui Province) was in Japanese hands by 13 June 1938, and Wuhan was captured on 22 October 1938.[4] In all these locations a proportion of the population would try to escape, and refugee flight grew exponentially.[5]

The massive scale of the refugee movements, first toward the south and then inland to the west, was unparalleled in Chinese history.[6] Although the foreign incursions and domestic upheavals China experienced from the Taiping period to the 1930s were frequent and destructive, the devastation usually remained confined to a particular region "while neighbouring locales remained tranquil and even prosperous."[7] But in the Sino-Japanese War, no region escaped the enemy's advance, and thus the number of people seeking refuge was beyond comparison. Estimates of the numbers of refugees vary and range between thirty and ninety-five million.[8] According to MacKinnon, at the beginning of the war, in 1937 and 1938,

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H. J. Timperley, *What War Means: The Japanese Terror in China—A Documentary Record* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1938), pp. 119–124.

[3] Only some parts of Shanghai were under Chinese control in 1937 before the outbreak of the war, whereas much of the city remained under the authority of foreign powers until the start of the Pacific War in 1941.

[4] Marvin Willemsen, "The Military Dimension, 1937–1941," in James C. Hsiung and Steven I. Levine, eds., *China's Bitter Victory: The War with Japan, 1937–1945* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1992), pp. 135–156, gives a synopsis of the military operations for the period 1937–1941. For an overview of the regional divisions of war and occupation, see Diana Lary, "Introduction: The Context of the War," in Stephen MacKinnon, Diana Lary, and Ezra Vogel, eds., *China at War: Regions of China, 1937–45* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), pp. 7–12.

[5] Stephen MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938: War, Refugees, and the Making of Modern China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008), p. 47.

[6] Scholars observe that from the time of the Taiping wars of the mid-nineteenth century, violence and war dominated Chinese life, but that the Sino-Japanese War was the "nadir of civilian suffering" in modern China. See Diana Lary and Stephen MacKinnon, Introduction to *Scars of War: The Impact of Modern Warfare on Modern China* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2001), p. 6.

[7] MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, p. 46.

[8] The lower number is cited in Ta Chen, *Population in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), pp. 61–68, and the higher number by Hsi-sheng Ch'i, "The Military Dimension, 1942–1945," in Hsiung and Levine, *China's Bitter Victory*, pp. 157–184. Phyllis Ayrton, "The Refugee Problem in China," in H. G. W. Woodhead, ed., *The China Yearbook 1939* (Shanghai: North-China Daily News, 1939), p. 551, also cites a figure of thirty million.

at least sixty million people were in flight.[9] The majority of refugees came from the inland provinces of Henan, Shanxi, Hunan, and Hubei.

The sociologist Chen Ta (1892–?) described the refugees' escape as occurring in three phases.[10] In the first wave, in July and August 1937, refugees fled via two alternate routes: along the railroad line from Beijing to Hankou or via steamship down the coastal route from Tianjin or Qingdao toward Shanghai as the final destination. Around the same time, those Shanghai residents with the resources to do so fled for the interior, or to Hong Kong, and thus a two-way traffic jam of chaos and confusion ensued. The second wave began in fall 1937, during the Shanghai battle, when people from coastal urban regions moved up the Yangzi River to Nanjing. MacKinnon writes that more than 600,000 civilians escaped Shanghai, with half heading west (and some cases toward southern China and Hong Kong), and the remainder, some 250,000 (of whom 100,000 were children) squeezed into the Shanghai International Settlement areas.[11] The third wave began in December 1937 and January 1938, before and after the Nanjing massacre of civilians, when refugees advanced toward Wuhan or toward southern China in the direction of Guangzhou. More refugees poured into Wuhan in spring 1938 during the destructive battle of Xuzhou and the intentional destruction of the Yellow River dikes.[12] After these catastrophes, only the south-western cities of Guilin, Kunming, and Chongqing, which the Nationalist government had chosen as an alternative capital in autumn 1937, remained options for

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[9] MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, p. 47. Zhang Genfu 張根福, *Kangzhan shiqi de renkou qianyi* 抗戰時期的人口遷移 [Migration of the population during the war period] (Beijing: Guangming ribao chubanshe, 2006), p. 39, estimates around one hundred million (or one-quarter of the population) in flight.

[10] Chen, "Migrants," pp. 59–60. Already during the first confrontation between Japan and China in Manchuria in 1931, refugees relocated to big cities such as Beijing and Tianjin, and later Xi'an and Shanghai. See Sun Yankui 孫豔魁, *Kunan de renliu: Kangzhan shiqi de nanmin* 苦難的人流:抗戰時期的難民 [People in misery: The refugees of the anti-Japanese war] (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 1994), p. 35.

[11] Stephen MacKinnon, "Refugee Flight at the Outset of the Anti-Japanese War," in Lary and MacKinnon, *Scars of War*, pp. 121–122; see also Ayrton, "Refugee Problem," p. 552, on the first impact of the Shanghai refugee crisis.

[12] On the battle of Xuzhou, see Diana Lary, "Defending China: The Battles of the Xuzhou Campaign," in Hans van de Ven, ed., *Warfare in Chinese History* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 398–427; Diana Lary, "Drowned Earth: The Strategic Breaching of the Yellow River Dike, 1938," *War in History* 8.2 (2001): 191–207. For the crisis of the Yellow River dikes, see Muscolino, "Refugees, Land Reclamation."

refugees seeking sanctuary in urban conclaves.[13] By 1940, as the war fell into a stalemate, mass refugee movements became less frequent.

The extraordinary number of refugees may be attributed to the kind of warfare that the Japanese military regime (like its Nazi counterpart in Europe) inflicted on the Chinese populace. This was "total war": the wholesale killing of men, women, and children, for the distinction between soldiers and civilians ceased to matter.[14] In addition to the frequent use of heavy artillery and aerial incendiary bombing on urban centers, Japanese troops also applied chemical warfare in battles along the Yangzi River and carried out scorched-earth programs to destroy villages and surrounding fields.[15] The speed and efficiency with which the Japanese offensive affected China were unprecedented and "terrifying." The rapidity and the wide geographical reach of the Japanese offensive meant that within the first six months of the war, the enemy had control of all the major Chinese political, cultural, economic, and industrial centers, including Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Guangzhou, and within the first twelve months, Japanese authority extended over all or parts of China's twenty-one provinces "with the express purpose of terrorizing into submission the civilian population."[16]

At this point, we may ask, what was a "refugee"? The Chinese term *nanmin* 難民 literally means "victim of catastrophe" and represents those suffering war, but also famine, flood, and other calamities. But in Chinese wartime publications, *nanmin* commonly referred to those persons who were victims of wartime violence.[17] This definition, however, does not specify the gender of the refugees, for which information is difficult to determine given the inadequacy of aggregate figures. One set of statistics

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[13] On Chongqing's development before and during the war, see Lee McIsaac, "The City as Nation: Creating a Wartime Capital in Chongqing," in Joseph Esherick, ed., *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), pp. 174–191.

[14] Roger Chickering and Stig Förster, Introduction to *The Shadows of Total War: Europe, East Asia, and the United States, 1919–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 1.

[15] See the analysis of Japanese "war conduct" by Shuxi Xu (Shu-hsi Hsü): "Japanese War Conduct," in Council of International Affairs, *The Chinese Year Book 1938–39 Issue* (Chongqing: Commercial Press, 1939), pp. 180–226.

[16] MacKinnon, "Refugee Flight," p. 121. As Lary, *The Chinese People*, p. 38, observes, the Japanese "threat" had been around for a long time and thus when the attacks began people were not surprised. But what was a shock was "the scale of the attack, the fierceness of the fighting, and the devastation of the bombing."

[17] For the postwar declarations by the United Nations on the meaning of "refugee," see Sergio Aquayo, Astri Suhrke, and Aristide Zolberg, *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 4.

that analyzes the age and sex distribution of refugees from five Hunan counties surveyed in Sichuan in 1939 indicates that families with equal numbers of men and women moved together, minus their elderly.[18] That the aged population was absent in this migration is not surprising: for many refugees fleeing Wuhan to Chongqing, the only way to get there was to walk at night over difficult roads and often in inclement weather.[19]

Refugee flight is part of the massive trauma of the Sino-Japanese War that until recently was hardly studied from the perspective of social history.[20] The "scars of war" extended wide and far and penetrated the country's social fabric deeply, tearing apart families, local ties and networks, and communities. Chinese women were particularly vulnerable. The birth of an unwanted child, the fear of abandonment, the sheer sense of helplessness, the lack of income and the onset of poverty, as well as the terrors of aerial attack, bombardment, and fire, along with the constant threat of rape and enforced prostitution, overshadowed their daily lives.[21] Recent publications of oral histories by women survivors convey the multifarious dimensions of how the war affected their personal existence. The discovery of a husband's bigamy and children from earlier relationships, choosing between starvation or complicity with the enemy, the psychological pain of long-term separations from immediate family members, and, not least, the uncertainty of life as a refugee are just some of the tragic experiences expressed in these narratives.[22] Modern scholars also

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[18] Sun Yankui, *Kunan de renliu*, pp. 65–67, cited in MacKinnon, "Refugee Flight," p. 125. See also Floyd Taylor, "Chungking: City of Mud and Courage," in Hollington Tong, ed., *China after Seven Years of War* (New York: Macmillan, 1945), p. 44, who called wartime Chongqing "a city of young people."

[19] See the oral history of Yang Xianzhi, quoted in Danke Li, *Echoes of Chongqing: Women in Wartime China* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), p. 73.

[20] Lary and MacKinnon, Introduction, pp. 3–15. See also David M. Gordon, "Historiographical Essay: The China-Japan War, 1931–45," *Journal of Military History* 70 (January 2006): 137–182; Rana Mitter, "Historiographical Review: Modernity, Internationalization, and War in the History of Modern China," *The Historical Journal* 48 (June 2005): 523–543.

[21] Lary and MacKinnon, Introduction, p. 9.

[22] See the compilation of oral histories by You Jianming (Yu Chien-ming) 游鑒明, with Luo Jiurong 羅久蓉 and Qu Haiyuan 瞿海源, comps., *Fenghuo suiyuexia de Zhongguo funü fangwen jilu* 烽火歲月下的中國婦女訪問紀錄 [Twentieth-century wartime experiences of Chinese women: An oral history] (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2004), and also that by Li Xiaojiang 李小江, *Rang nüren ziji shuohua: Qinli zhanzheng* 讓女人自己說話:親歷戰征 [Let women speak for themselves: Experiencing war] (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2003). For a general overview of Chinese women during wartime, see Zhang Yufa 張玉法, "Zhanzheng dui Zhongguo funü de yingxiang 戰爭對中國婦女的影響" [The influence of war on Chinese women], *Jindai Zhongguo funüshi yanjiu* 近代中國婦女史研究 [Research on modern Chinese women's history] 17 (2009): 157–174. On the historiographical problems in the recovery of women's narratives about

consider "a defensive survivor mentality" one of the legacies of the war, a condition that in effect may have created a certain "numbness to brutal violence" that in the long term "may have possibly laid the groundwork for a sullen acceptance of the horrors of the late 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s."[23]

Refugee displacement in China's wartime history did not feature in pre-1990s scholarship that focused on the Nationalist-Communist rivalry,[24] usually with the emphasis on the Nationalist government's inadequacies, especially with regard to the centralization of its authority during wartime and its inability to build a viable state thereafter.[25] Also absent in earlier academic studies was analysis of the effects of the war on gender transformation. To be sure, there exist published works about the women's programs in Communist base areas,[26] but their agenda was more about socialist revolutionary dynamics than the causal relationship of war, gender, and social change.[27] The impact of warfare on women in urban

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the war, see Harriet Zurndorfer, "War and the Silent Women: The Retrieval of Chinese and European Jewish Women's Narratives of World War II," *Jindai Zhongguo funüshi yanjiu* 17 (2009): 107–155.

[23] Stephen MacKinnon, "Conclusion: Wartime China," in MacKinnon, Lary, and Vogel, *China at War*, p. 336. Lary, *The Chinese People*, p. 210, writes that postwar changing attitudes toward violence also brought on a "survivor mentality" that "made it easier for people to join in attacks on those they were not extremely close to."

[24] Chalmers Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: The Emergence of Revolutionary China, 1937–1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1962); Mark Selden, *The Yenan Way in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971). See remarks on this historiographical deadlock by Rana Mitter and Aaron William Moore, "China in World War II, 1937–1945: Experience, Memory, and Legacy," *Modern Asian Studies* 45.2 (2011): 228–234.

[25] See the works by Lloyd Eastman, *Seeds of Destruction: Nationalist China in War and Revolution, 1937–1949* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1984), and "Nationalist China during the Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1945," in John Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker, eds., *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), vol. 13, part 2, pp. 547–608; Maria Hsia Chang, *The Chinese Blue Shirt Society: Fascism and Developmental Nationalism* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1985). In contrast, there was already before the 1990s some scholarship that took a more favorable view of the Nationalists' state-building efforts. Refer to the studies by Arthur N. Young, *China's Nation Building Effort: The Financial and Economic Record, 1927–1937* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1971); Robert E. Bedeski, *State-Building in Modern China: The KMT in the Prewar Period* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1981); and William Kirby, *Germany and Republican China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1984).

[26] Gail Hershatter, *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), pp. 88–97, evaluates "CCP narratives" and beyond.

[27] For a critical view of this scholarship focusing on the Chinese Communist Party's unfilled promises with regard to women, see Yihong Pan, "Their 'Quiet' Devotion: Communist Women in the War of Resistance against Japan (1937–1945)," *The Chinese Historical Review* 16.1 (2009): 4–5. Pan's article focuses on the personal narratives of party

regions needs more scholarly enquiry,[28] if only to show how their wartime relief work stimulated women's politicization, which in the long run contributed to their presence in political circles in postwar Taiwan and the People's Republic of China. Nowadays, as scholars in East Asia "rescue" China's wartime history from obscurity,[29] and those in Euro-America pursue an agenda demonstrating how certain aspects of the state-building efforts of the Nationalist government did lay the basis for subsequent development under the aegis of the Chinese Communist authorities,[30] the year 1949 seems less than a watershed and more part of a continuum of certain modernization efforts.[31]

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women's experiences of the war. Lary, *Chinese People*, pp. 6, 97–100, underlines how the war changed the gender balance in Chinese society.

[28] See comments by Kristin Stapleton, "Warfare and Modern Urban Administration in Chinese Cities," in David Strand and Sherman Cochran, eds., *Cities in Motion: Interior, Coast, and Diaspora in Transnational China* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 2007), pp. 77–78.

[29] On China's "new remembering" of the war, see Parks Coble, "China's 'New Remembering' of the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance, 1937–1945," *The China Quarterly* 190 (2007): 394–410; Kirk Denton, "Horror and Atrocity: Memory of Japanese Imperialism in Chinese Museums," in Ching Kwan Lee and Guobin Yang, eds., *Re-envisioning the Chinese Revolution: The Politics and Poetics of Collective Memories in Reform China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press), pp. 245–286; and Rana Mitter, "Old Ghosts, New Memories: China's Changing War History in the Era of Post-Mao Politics," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38.1 (2003): 117–131. As a result of the revisionist turn in the PRC, historians there have demonstrated interest in Chongqing as a site of wartime resistance. See, for example, Luo Zhuanxu 羅傳勛, ed., *Chongqing kangzhan dashi ji* 重慶抗戰大事記 [A record of the big events during the War of Resistance in Chongqing] (Chongqing: Chongqing chubanshe, 1995); Peng Chengfu 彭承福, *Chongqing renmin dui kangzhan de gongxian* 重慶人民對抗戰的貢獻 [Chongqing people's contributions to the War of Resistance] (Chongqing: Chongqing chubanshe, 1995).

[30] See the path-breaking study by William Kirby, "Continuity and Change in Modern China: Economic Planning on the Mainland and on Taiwan, 1943–1958," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 24 (July 1990): 121–141. On Nationalist efforts to mobilize the wartime population in Sichuan, see Rana Mitter, "Classifying Citizens in Nationalist China during World War II, 1937–1941," *Modern Asian Studies* 45.2 (2011): 243–275.

[31] Paul Cohen, "Ambiguities of a Watershed Date: The 1949 Divide in Chinese History," in Cohen, ed., *China Unbound: Evolving Perspectives on the Chinese Past* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp. 131–147; Joseph Escherick, "War and Revolution: Chinese Society during the 1940s," *Twentieth-Century China* 27.1 (2001): 1–37. See also Jeremy Brown and Paul Pickowicz, "The Early Years of the People's Republic of China: An Introduction," in Brown and Pickowicz, eds., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 1–18; for continuities in the personal and work spheres, see Susan Glosser, *Chinese Visions of Family and State, 1915–1953* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Mark Frazier, *The Making of the Chinese Industrial Workplace: State, Revolution, and Labor Management* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); and Lü Xiaobo and Elizabeth Perry, eds., Danwei*: The Changing Chinese Workplace in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997).

In this chapter, I follow this revisionist turn with a brief survey of how the three locations, Shanghai, Wuhan, and Chongqing, managed their refugee crises, and, in particular, how wartime relief work organized by women in these cities affected their long-time pursuit of political rights and concrete social and economic benefits for women. The management of the war's refugee crises in these three urban areas not only thrust women into leadership positions, but also became the arena where female activists with diverse political loyalties put aside their differences and attempted to engender a certain force in China's state-building efforts. To date, understanding of the role of women's participation in war relief as well as the significance of that work for their political objectives have not received due attention and, instead, are too often subsumed under the topic of "Guomindang (GMD, hereafter) versus Chinese Communist Party (CCP, hereafter)" rivalry.[32]

In the decades leading up to the War, both these organizations had intersected with what was an active and committed women's movement that had flourished since the early twentieth century when reform and revolutionary discourses pushed girls and women to seek schooling and work outside the home.[33] By the 1930s a comparatively small but significant group of elite women, many of whom were educated abroad, became university professors, attorneys, bankers, physicians, nurses, entrepreneurs, writers, journalists, movie stars, and even government officials.[34] A certain proportion of these women also involved themselves in a vibrant campaign for women's suffrage.[35] Another focus of some women's groups was the female labor movement and its claims to better wages and labor

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[32] See, for example, the study by Ding Weiping 丁微平, *Zhongguo funü kangzhan shi yanjiu, 1937–1945* 中國婦女抗戰史研究 [A study on the history of Chinese women in China's War of Resistance against Japan] (Changchun: Jilin renmin chubanshu, 2000). For a general introduction to women's organizations doing war relief, see Lü Fangshang 吕芳上, "Kangzhan shiqi Zhongguo de füyun gongzuo 抗戰時期中國 的婦運工作" [The work of the women's movement during China's War of Resistance against Japan], in Li Youning 李又甯 and Zhang Yufa 張玉法, eds., *Zhongguo funüshi lun wenji* 中國婦女史論文集 [Collection of essays on the history of Chinese women] (Taipei: Shangwu shuju, 1981), 1:378–412.

[33] Susan L. Mann, *Gender and Sexuality in Modern Chinese History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 48.

[34] Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment: Oral and Textual Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 211; see also Yuxin Ma, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China, 1898–1937* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010).

[35] See Louise Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy: Women's Suffrage in China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

conditions,[36] while other women advocates worked in the realms of philanthropy and welfare reform.[37] In the 1930s the threat of war hastened both the GMD and the CCP to extend their meaning over how feminist activism, which had long been associated with Chinese modernity, should defer to the needs of the nation.[38] As we will demonstrate in this chapter, while leading feminists continued to fight for more women's political and economic rights during the War, their participation in refugee relief, and in particular for the years 1937 through 1941, legitimized their patriotism, inspired those persons with different ideological loyalties to engage in welfare work together, and encouraged those women without education to acquire political awareness.

4.2. *Shanghai Wartime Refugee Relief: Embedded Networks and Strange Bedfellows*

The Japanese attack on Shanghai on 13 August 1937 drove thousands of residents in the Chinese municipalities along both sides of the Huangpu River into the areas of the International Settlement and the French Concession. The actual numbers of refugees during the first months of the war is difficult to establish, but it is estimated that by the end of August 700,000 refugees were squeezed into the districts under foreign authority while the Nanshi section of the city may have hosted between 125,000 and 213,000 homeless.[39] Although Shanghai had experienced a number of

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[36] Emily Honig, *Sisters and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai Cotton Mills, 1919–1949* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986).

[37] On the first women's attempts at philanthropy in the early twentieth century, see Charlotte Beahan, "In the Public Eye: Women in Early Twentieth-Century China," *Historical Reflections* 8.3 (Fall, 1981): 220–21.

[38] Bryna Goodman sums up this situation: "…[Chinese] women, always signifiers of broader social virtue or its absence, were repositories for both the aspirations of modernity and also cultural ambivalence over the social side effects of modernity." Cited from Goodman, "The Vocational Woman and the Elusiveness of 'Personhood' in Early Republican China," in Goodman and Wendy Larson, eds., *Gender in Motion: Divisions of Labor and Cultural Change in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), p. 281; On the CCP's policy on feminism during the Republican era, see Christine Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution: Radical Women, Communist Politics, and Mass Movements in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); on GMD attitudes toward 'modern women', see Louise Edwards, "Policing the Modern Woman in Republican China," *Modern China* 26.2 (April 2002): 115–47; compare comments by Wang Zheng, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. 277–78.

[39] Patricia Stranahan, "Radicalization of Refugees: Communist Party Activity in Wartime Shanghai's Displaced Persons Camps," *Modern China* 26.2 (2000): 170; see also Zheng Shaomin 鄭少民 and Shen Shiwei 沈士偉, "Kangzhan shiqi de Nanshi nanmin qu 抗戰時

disasters in the same decade—the Yangzi flood of 1931 and the first Japanese assault on the city in 1932[40]—the intense bombardment from ships and planes of the 1937 incursion was an entirely new situation because of the scale of the refugee population.[41] As Henriot sums up: "to an area of less than six square miles, normally with a population of close to two million, war brought utterly destitute refugees by the hundreds of thousands within just a few weeks."[42]

In response to the crisis, both private charities and the Shanghai municipal authorities mobilized to provide relief and support. In general terms, the tremendous challenge of refugee relief was met more or less adequately. It has been well documented that temples, schools, and native-place associations welcomed the homeless; people from various strata of society gave freely of their time to help collect funding for food and medicine.[43] The work of refugee relief fell under the main headings of housing, feeding, clothing, and medical care—the last also included preventive work to maintain optimal sanitary conditions in temporary accommodation. Education and industry were important to help keep up morale; the reemployment of skilled workers and the restoration of refugees to their families were also relevant. In a city where politics, race, and provincial identity created "deep chasms," Shanghai refugee relief became a remarkable endeavour. One of the best-known attempts to help refugees was the creation of a safety zone by the French Jesuit Robert Jacquinot de Besange. The "Jacquinot Safe Zone," as it became known, was established in Shanghai's Yuyun District bordering the French Concession and sheltered up to a total of 300,000 men, women, and children from 1937 to 1940.[44]

期的南市難民區" [The Nanshi refugee zone during the War of Resistance], in Wu Hanmin 吳漢民, ed., *Ershi shiji Shanghai wenshi ziliao wenku* 二十世紀上海文史資料文庫 [Library of historical materials of Shanghai in the twentieth century] (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1999), pp. 307–314.

[40] See Donald Jordan, *China's Trial by Fire: The Shanghai War of 1932* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

[41] Christian Henriot, "Shanghai and the Experience of War: The Fate of Refugees," *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 5.2 (2006): 215–216.

[42] Henriot, "Shanghai and the Experience of War, p. 218. Ayrton, "Refugee Problem," p. 552, records that before the end of August 1937, the population of the International Settlement and the French Concession was increased by over one and a half million people.

[43] Stranahan, "Radicalization of Refugees," p. 166; Ayrton, "Refugee Problem," p. 553.

[44] Marcia Ristaino, *The Jacquinot Safe Zone: Wartime Refugees in Shanghai* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008). Jacquinot had previously organized safe zones on a smaller scale for flood and war victims around Shanghai in the early 1930s.

Recent research about these efforts locates the efficacy of Shanghai's relief program in four factors of which three were in place before the 1937 crisis. These three factors, which include the spontaneous initiative of hundreds of organizations, the strength of informal social networks (in particular, native-place organizations),[45] and the effective cooperation between state and civil society, were already in place during the 1932 crisis when some two hundred thousand people fled the Japanese invasion.[46] At that time, the Shanghai municipal government did offer some relief, including money and shelter, but it was in fact the city's elite (male) business community that provided the bulk of the aid. Members of the Shanghai War Zone Refugee Relief Committee were wealthy entrepreneurs, including compradors, merchants, industrialists, and investors, as well as a number of gangsters of whom Du Yuesheng 杜月笙 (1887–1951) was the most prominent.[47] Dillon, in her analysis of these philanthropists, emphasizes that although the networks of these men might have been narrow in scope, these individuals did have strong bonds with one another, combining multiple layers of personal, school, business, native-place, religious, and political ties.[48]

In the 1937 refugee crisis, a fourth factor became important, that is, the mobilization of resources from a much wider scope of Shanghai society. During the 1937 invasion, the same elite networks operated but now they were incorporated into wider groupings and into three principal organizations, two of which were Chinese, and the third international.[49] Another major umbrella organization was the Women's Consolation Society (Funü weilaohui 婦女慰勞會), which became responsible for mobilizing women of all strata to become involved in fund-raising, nursing,

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[45] See Yi Feng, "Élites locales et solidarités régionales: L'aide aux réfugiés à Shanghai (1937–1940)," *Études chinoises* 15.1–2 (1996): 71–107.

[46] Nara Dillon, "The Politics of Philanthropy: Social Networks and Refugee Relief in Shanghai, 1932–1949," in Nara Dillon and Jean C. Oi, eds., *At the Crossroads of Empires: Middlemen, Social Networks, and State-Building in Republican Shanghai* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), pp. 186–187. See also Toby Lincoln, "Fleeing from Firestorms: Government, Cities, Native Place Associations and Refugees in the Anti-Japanese War of Resistance," *Urban History* 38.3 (2011): 437–456.

[47] Dillon, "The Politics of Philanthropy," pp. 188–189; on Du Yuesheng, see Brian Martin, "Du Yuesheng, the French Concession, and Social Networks in Shanghai," in Dillon and Oi, *At the Crossroads of Empires*, pp. 65–83.

[48] Dillon, "The Politics of Philanthropy," pp. 183–184.

[49] Dillon, "The Politics of Philanthropy," pp. 189–190. These three committees include the Shanghai Federation of Charities Disaster Relief Committee, the Shanghai Municipal Relief Committee, and the Shanghai International Relief Committee, the last of which was the only one of the three to include women members, albeit only two.

and refugee relief.[50] This organization, like those whose members were male elites, was composed of people with widely different backgrounds. Founded by the two revolutionary women Song Qingling 宋慶齡 (1893–1981), the widow of Sun Yatsen 孫逸仙 (1866–1925), and He Xiangning 何香凝 (1878–1972), the widow of the radical Liao Zhongkai 廖仲愷 (1877–1925), this association was headed at the time of the Shanghai invasion by Xu Guangping 許廣平 (1898–1968), Lu Xun's 魯迅 (1881–1936) wife, and Huang Dinghui 黃定慧 (1907–?), another revolutionary who, along with her radical lawyer husband Chen Zhigao 陳志皋, established a refugee camp at Zhendan 震旦 University.[51] From the time of the 1937 Japanese incursion, Huang worked at connecting women's organizations in Shanghai into the Women's Consolation Society and raised money for relief.[52] Another important figure in the Shanghai Women's Consolation Society was the journalist Shen Zijiu 沈茲九 (1898–1989), who was founder and editor of the magazine *Funü shenghuo* 婦女生活 (Women's life), launched in 1935 by the Chinese Communist Party.[53] She served as the group's public relations officer.[54] Other officials of this association were of a rather different political spectrum: these included the wives of the Shanghai Guomindang leaders Yu Hongjun 俞鴻鈞 (1898–?) and Yang Hu 楊虎 (1898–?), as well as the partner of the gangster Du Yuesheng.

Both Song Qingling and He Xiangning were associated with the National Salvation Movement, which had called for a united front to resist the Japanese invasion as soon as in 1931 and which "outraged Chiang Kai-shek."[55]

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[50] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 159n14.

[51] Ibid., p. 321. Zhendan University, a French Catholic institution located in Shanghai, was also known as Aurora University.

[52] Ibid., p. 322.

[53] On *Funü shenghuo*'s role during the war as a mouthpiece for resistance, see Susan Glosser, "'Women's Culture of Resistance': An Ordinary Response to Extraordinary Circumstances," in Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh, eds., *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Shanghai under Japanese Occupation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 309n16. See also Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 202n16.

[54] Lily Xiao Hong Lee, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women: The Twentieth Century, 1912–2000* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), p. 449.

[55] Parks Coble, "The National Salvation Movement and Social Networks in Republican Shanghai," in Dillon and Oi, *At the Crossroads of Empires*, p. 115. The Shanghai Salvation Movement also counted a separate Women's National Salvation Society, known as the Shanghai funü jie jiuguo hui, which formed in December 1935 with the purpose of promoting constitutionalism and affirmative action legislation for women in politics. See Louise Edwards, *Gender, Politics, and Democracy*, p. 202; Zhonghua quanguo funü lianhe hui 中華全國婦女聯合會, ed., *Zhongguo funü yundong shi: Xin minzhuzhuyi shiqi* 中國婦女運

Song had long been active in struggles against GMD policies,[56] thus her left-leaning political views contrasted sharply with those of her sister Song Meiling 宋美齡 (1897–2003), Chiang Kai-shek's wife. For her part, Song Meiling had organized on 1 August 1937, in the aftermath of the fall of Beijing, a meeting of prominent women in the GMD capital Nanjing and established the Zhongguo funü weilao ziwei kangzhan jiangshi zonghui 中國婦女慰勞自衛抗戰將士總會 (Chinese women's general association for the care of anti-Japanese troops).[57] It is likely that once Song Qingling and He Xiangning heard about Song Meiling's initiative, they changed the name of their Women's Consolation Society to the Shanghai Women's Consolation Society (Shanghai funü weilaohui).[58] When the Japanese invaded Shanghai, Song Qingling, He Xiangning, and their close friend Shi Liang 史良 (1900–1985), a prominent woman lawyer who had been a leading figure in the National Salvation Movement and had been arrested in 1936 along with six others (all men), fled to Hong Kong.[59] While Song and He remained there until 1941, Shi went to Wuhan in February 1938, by which time this city too had become a major refugee site, following the capture and massacre of civilians at Nanjing from December 1937 to January 1938.

動史:新民主主義時期 [The history of the Chinese women's movement: New democracy period] (Beijing: Chunqiu chubanshe, 1989), p. 355.

[56] Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 469.

[57] He Husheng 何虎生 and Yu Zejun 於澤俊, *Song Meiling da zhuan, 1897–2003* 宋美齡大傳, 1897–2003 [Biography of Song Meiling] (Beijing: Huawen chubanshe, 2007), p. 288. As the name suggests, the purpose of this organization was women helping with the relief of soldiers and their families. At the time, Song Meiling was serving as the "director general" of the Women's Advisory Committee to the New Life Movement. On the impact of this organization with regard to the women's movement, see Chen Fengshen 陳逢申, "Jiang furen yu zhanshi de funü dongyuan 蔣夫人與戰時的婦女動員" [Madame Jiang and wartime women's mobilization], *Jindai Zhongguo* 近代中國 [Modern China] 158/159 (2005): 158–162.

[58] Patricia Stranahan, "Strange Bedfellows: The Communist Party and Shanghai's Elite in the National Salvation Movement," *China Quarterly* 129 (1992): 26. Stranahan bases this statement on the archival research of Wu Jingping. For further information on Song Qingling's wartime politics, see Zheng Canhui 鄭燦輝, Ji Hongsheng 季鴻生, and Wu Jingping 吳景平, *Song Qingling yu kang Ri jiuwang yundong* 宋慶齡與抗日救亡運動 [Song Meiling and the Anti-Japanese Salvation Movement] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1986).

[59] Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 452–453. These seven persons were known as the *qi junzi* 七君子 (seven gentlemen), which thus rendered Shi Liang's gender invisible. One can also translate the term "the seven virtuous ones."

4.3. *The "Wuhan Spirit" and the Women's United Front*

For ten months, from January to October 1938, Wuhan served as the unofficial GMD capital and a site of refuge for some half a million persons fleeing the enemy.[60] Wuhan became the symbol of national hopes for a successful resistance to Japan via a strategy of protracted war. The dramatic execution of the Chinese general Han Fuju 韓複榘 in January in Wuhan for abandoning Shandong after the fall of Nanjing was a turning point in domestic politics because from then on the reality of the Japanese threat mobilized the city's defenders to put aside temporarily their factionalism.[61] The GMD forces fought bitterly against Japan in 1938, which slowed the assault at the battle of Taierzhuang 台兒莊會戰 and Xuzhou 徐州, allowing the fortification of Wuhan. Before capitulating in October, Wuhan inspired a wide spectrum of political and military leaders, business people, writers and journalists, intellectuals and students, and ordinary workers with the belief that China could ultimately triumph in the unequal military confrontation.

The "Wuhan spirit" also had an impact on the delivery of refugee relief. Whereas the principal organization for helping refugees was the Xingzhengyuan zhenji weiyuanhui 行政院賑濟慰員會 (Executive Yuan's Relief Committee; also known as the Development and Relief Commission), established by the Nationalist government in April 1938 and responsible for the provision of food, shelter, and medicine,[62] other organizations also contributed and worked in close cooperation with officials. These associations included the International Red Cross Committee for Central China, the Emergency Relief Committee of Wuhan Christian Churches, the Roman Catholic Mission, and the World Red Swastika Society (Buddhist), as well as provincial guilds and local chambers of commerce.[63] But

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[60] MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, p. 50. On page 57, MacKinnon gives a figure of 430,000 refugees who went to Wuhan by June 1938.

[61] On the execution of Han Fuju, see MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, pp. 18–20; Diana Lary, "Treachery, Disgrace, and Death: Han Fuju and China's Resistance to Japan," *War in History* 13.1 (2006): 65–90. On the background to the defense of Wuhan, see Stephen MacKinnon, "The Defense of the Central Yangtze," in Peattie, Drea, and Van de Ven, *The Battle for China*, pp. 181–206.

[62] Bodu (Po-tu) Huang, "The Problem of War Refugees and Their Relief," in Council of International Affairs, *The Chinese Year Book 1938–39 Issue*, p. 665. The Commission (Xingzhengyuan zhenji weiyuanhui) established eight major districts all over China with the express purpose of aiding civilians. Within each district, a series of general relief stations, substations, and rest agencies all offering food and water, medicine, temporary accommodation, and some monetary support were established.

[63] Chen Zhenzhen 陳貞臻, "Kangzhan qijian de nantong jiaoyu (1937–1945) 抗戰期間的難童教育" [Child refugee education during the War of Resistance], p. 10, paper

with the launch of the Executive Yuan Relief Organization, the first steps toward a broader and more comprehensive state program for social welfare, aimed at replacing the efforts of diverse local groups and particularistic associations, began to take shape. Among the first targets of this plan were the large numbers of children of all ages who had lost their parents. Thus, the founding of the Zhanshi ertong baoyuhui 戰時兒童保育會 (Wartime association for child welfare; also known simply as "Baoyuhui") on 10 March, manifested this effort at greater unity over relief operations.[64] Song Meiling had introduced the idea of sponsoring children's homes for orphans in war zones already in her 1 August 1937 speech establishing the Zhongguo funü weilao ziwei kangzhan jiangshi zonghui, but it was only with the removal of the government to Wuhan, and the Executive Yuan policy for more comprehensive relief, that plans for this association to help children specifically were finally effected.[65]

Upon the Baoyuhui's inauguration, Song Meiling became its principal chairperson, but other women representing a wide range of political views also took on leadership roles.[66] The vice-chairwoman was Li Dequan 李德全 (1896–1972), the wife of the GMD general Feng Yuxiang and a feminist activist who had already declared her support for the anti-Japanese stance of the Communists in 1936.[67] The political affiliation of the Baoyuhui also extended to Communists. Deng Yingchao 鄧穎超 (1904–1992), Communist labor organizer and the wife of Zhou Enlai, also actively took part in this organization in Wuhan.[68] Other eminent social activists in this organization included the National Salvation Movement female leaders Liu Qingyang 劉清揚 (1894–1977) and Cao Mengjun 曹孟君 (1904–1967), who had been arrested in 1937 for her work with the movement.[69] In Wuhan, Cao became known for her dedication to refugee war relief and even risked exposure during air raids to help rescue

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presented at the Seminar on Educational Philosophy and History at National Taiwan Normal University, available online at http://www.ed.ntnu.edu.tw/~seph/paper.htm; Ayrton, "The Refugee Problem," p. 564. MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, pp. 56–57, writes that most of the initial efforts for refugee relief were undertaken by the Wuhan industrialist He Hengfu 賀衡夫.

64 This organization was launched in Hankou at the Hankou Girls School.

65 Sun Yankui, *Kunan de renliu*, p. 26; Chen Zhenzhen, "Kangzhan qijian," p. 1.

66 Sun Yankui, *Kunan de renliu*, p. 27.

67 Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 302. MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, p. 58, claims that Li asked Shi Liang at a public meeting in Wuhan in January 1938 to organize a refugee campaign for children, but it is likely that Shi did not get involved at this point because she did not arrive in Wuhan until February.

68 Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 134.

69 On Liu Qingyang, see Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 359.

children.[70] Both contemporaries and postwar chroniclers have considered the Baoyuhui operation successful, resulting in some hundreds of thousands of children under twelve rescued, sheltered, educated, and nourished.[71] The organization also spread its efforts to other locations, opening branches in Sichuan, Guangxi, Guangdong, Hunan, Hebei, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Fujian, Shaanxi, Shanxi, and Anhui.[72]

According to Stephen MacKinnon, Wuhan in 1938 underwent a remarkable transformation into an island of liberalism, social solidarity, and purposefulness that was unlike anything that preceded it or followed it in the history of Republican China. In this space, and at this heroic moment, differences in women's political activism also ground to a halt as patriotism and a reinvigorated nationalism directed against Japan overshadowed feminist political struggles. Nowhere is this phenomenon more obvious than the political consensus "cemented" at the Lushan conference Song Meiling organized in May 1938.[73] There and then Song proclaimed the Women's Advisory (or Guidance) Committee (hereafter, WAC) of the New Life Movement, which would guide the principles of women's wartime work, and issued a manifesto.[74] The New Life Movement (NLM, hereafter) originated in 1934 when Chiang Kai-shek and his wife along with other ideologues promulgated a campaign both to combat corruptive consumption excesses thought to be influenced by Western materialism and to instill Confucian and Christian values to help improve hygienic and moral standards. Whereas earlier analysis of this movement simplistically wrote

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[70] Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 30.

[71] MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, p. 132n42, suggests that present-day interest in wartime orphans is because of former CCP leader Jiang Zemin's own background as an orphan.

[72] MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, p. 58, is the source for the orphan numbers. See Chen Zhenzhen, "Kangzhan qijian," on the expansion of the Baoyuhui operation beyond Wuhan.

[73] On the conference, see Xia Rong 夏蓉, "Song Meiling yu kangzhan chuqi Lushan funü tanhuahui 宋美齡與抗戰初期廬山婦女談話會" [Song Meiling and the Lushan meeting in the early phase of the War of Resistance], *Minguo dang'an* 民國擋案 [Republican archives] 1 (2004): 122–130.

[74] The Chinese name of the organization is Xinshenghuo yundong cujin zonghui funü zhidao weiyuanhui 新生活運動促進總會婦女指導慰員會. On the manifesto of this organization, *Dongyuan funü canjia kangzhan jianguo gongzuo dagang* 動員婦女參加抗戰建國工作大綱 [Outline on mobilizing women to join the War of Resistance and national construction], see Lü Fangshang, "Kangzhan shiqi," pp. 378–380. This organization, which also attracted support from abroad, now oversaw the activities of the three main relief agencies that engaged women: the Zhongguo funü weilao kangzhan ziwei jiangshi zhonghui (for Chinese troops and their families), the Zhanshi ertong bayou hui (for orphans), and the Funü zhanshi jiuji xiehui 婦女戰時救濟恊會 (Women's wartime relief association).

it off as a transparent exercise of extreme conservatism, recent scholarship has tended to reveal its complexities and the multifaceted implications for the development of modern citizenship and identity.[75]

For many modern urban women, the NLM smacked of the traditional discourse of "virtuous wives and good mothers," and contemporary women's magazines became the forum where they communicated their anxieties about the roles espoused by NLM ideology.[76] However, there were also socially conscientious urban women who recognized how some NLM values coincided with their own feminist agenda. For example, the journal *Funü zhoukan* 妇女周刊 (Women's weekly), the supplement to the GMD's *Central Daily News*, which featured, in response to NLM directives, articles calling for educated women to help less-advantaged women—to establish women's schools and to offer classes to illiterate women and teach them practical skills—lent support to their endeavors.[77] Similarly, the monthly journal *Funü gongming* 婦女共鳴 (Women's support), founded by GMD women activists in 1929 in Shanghai but moved to Nanjing 1932, also endorsed a variety of causes that supported all women, including female participation in national politics, disaster relief, and the abolition of prostitution.[78] The sense of social responsibility integral to the NLM would continue to dominate women's war relief.

In concrete terms, the WAC did attract a wide membership and coordinated many different tasks, from direct relief supervision to education.[79]

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[75] See Frederica Ferlanti, "The New Life Movement in Jiangxi Province, 1934–1938," *Modern Asian Studies* 44.5 (2010): 961–1000. See also her chapter in this volume.

[76] See the articles by Gao Yunxiang, "Nationalist and Feminist Discourses on *Jianmei* (Robust Beauty) during China's 'National Crisis' in the 1930s," *Gender and History* 18.3 (2006): 546–573, and Yen Hsiao-pei, "Body Politics, Modernity, and National Salvation: The Modern Girl and the New Life Movement," *Asian Studies Review* 29.2 (2005): 165–186, both analyzing the contents of the woman's magazine *Linglong* 玲瓏 on the "modern girl" and NLM values. See also Edwards, "Policing the Modern Woman in Republican China."

[77] Jiang Na, "The 'New Virtuous Wife and Good Mother': Women Intellectuals' Group Identity and the *Funü zhoukan* (Women's weekly), 1935–1937," *Women's History Review* 16.3 (2007): 455. In the 1930s, the circulation of women's journals increased dramatically and became an important forum for the mediation of disputes between feminists and their opponents. In Shanghai alone, some fifty women's journals were established between 1929 and 1932. See Ma Yuxin, *Women Journalists and Feminism in China*, pp. 259–263.

[78] Tan Sheying 談社英, ed., *Zhongguo funü yundong tongshi* 中國婦女運動通史 [A general history of the Chinese women's movement] (Nanjing: Funü gongmingshe, 1936). In 1937, *Funü gongming* moved to Chongqing and remained in circulation there until December 1944. See Ma, *Women Journalists*, p. 266.

[79] Ho Simi 何思謎, "Xinshenghuo yundong cujin zonghui funü zhidao weiyuanhui zhi yanjiu 新生活運動促進總會婦女指導委員會之研究" [A study of the Women's Advisory Committee of the New Life Movement Promotion Association] (1936–1945), *Guoshiguan guankan* 國史館館刊 [Academia historical journal] 9 (1990): 141–182.

Shi Liang also became an active participant in the WAC,[80] and she gained repute for her indefatigable work on behalf of refugee assistance, especially her recruitment of young volunteers to engage with those in need. According to one story, one of the consequences of Shi's espousal of Song Meiling's wartime work in the context of NLM values was that she was forced to marry her longtime live-in partner, Lu Diandong, another Shanghai-based lawyer. Apparently, Madame Chiang told her that some people might not like her "marriage-like relationship." Shi replied: "All right . . . for the sake of the 'United Front' I will play bride."[81] Shen Zijiu also took up the cause of the WAC in Wuhan and founded the *New Women's Movement Journal* in support of their activities.[82] One reason the WAC may have attracted figures of Shi's and Shen's political stance was that women had already achieved equality of citizenship with the 5 May 1936 Double Fifth Constitution and, thus, working with Song Meiling and GMD conservatives seemed less unappealing or threatening than earlier.[83]

Wuhan was also the location of the first meeting of the People's Political Council (PPC, or Guomin canzhenghui 國民參政會) held in July 1938. This organization, which served as an advisory body to the central government, had two hundred members, of whom one hundred were not formally affiliated to the GMD.[84] As such, neither CCP members nor third-party advocates were excluded. At the PPC's initial gathering, ten women were present as official representatives, and, in the course of the war years during which time thirteen sessions were convened, many female councilors

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[80] MacKinnon, in his 2008 book, credits Shi as the "sparkplug" behind Wuhan refugee relief, but it is more likely that the Nationalist government provided the opportunity for Shi to engage in her activities rather than that she serve as the principal organizer. On page 59 of *Wuhan, 1938*, MacKinnon also incorrectly claims that Song Qingling organized the Lushan meeting.

[81] Anna Wang, *Ich kämpfte für Mao; Eine Deutsche Frau erlebt die Chinesische Revolution* (Hamburg: C. Wegner, 1964), p. 371; Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 453.

[82] Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 449. The reference here gives only the English title. This publication was one of several that were launched around this time, including *Zhanshi funü* 戰時婦女 (Wartime women), *Xinyun funü* 新運婦女 (Women of the New Life Movement), *Funü xinyun tongxun* 婦女新運通訊 (Bulletin of the Women's New Life Movement), and *Funü xinyun* 婦女新運 (Women's New Life Movement), all cited in Li, *Echoes of Chongqing*, pp. 28–29. Issues of the journal *Zhanshi funü* from May 1939 to 1942 have been compiled into one volume and published in 2006 by Beijing's Xianzhuang shuju.

[83] On the Double Fifth Constitution and women's rights, see Edwards, *Gender, Politics, Democracy*, pp. 192–194.

[84] MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, p. 66. See also Lawrence Shyu, "China's 'Wartime Parliament': The People's Political Council, 1938–1945," in Paul K. T. Sih, ed., *Nationalist China during the Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1945* (Hicksville, NY: Exposition-University, 1977), pp. 273–313.

attended. "In the name of mobilizing women for war," these women raised many political issues and fought for the improvement of women's access to education and healthcare facilities.[85] These political activities coupled with relief work would take on even greater importance when the capital shifted in October 1938 to Chongqing in Sichuan Province.[86]

4.4. *Chongqing: Social Changes and Women's Political Activism*

Given Chongqing's geographical situation with its numerous surrounding mountain ranges and rapid rivers, which made land or water invasion very difficult, it seemed at the time a logical choice for the wartime Nationalist capital. Because of the low clouds that often hung over the city, it was also believed air attacks would not be frequent. Moreover, it was thought that Sichuan, as China's largest province, with its fertile soil and moist climate, could produce enough food to sustain a sizeable migrant populace. Chongqing itself was also a large commercial center.[87] Beginning in autumn 1938, a large refugee population streamed into the city. Population estimates vary, but it is likely that the urban population at least doubled from 400,000 to 800,000 to as many as 1,000,000 by the war's end.[88] Not only did people move in, but also cultural, educational, and media institutions, including Zhonghua, Shangwu, and Sanlian and all the other major publishing companies, relocated there. The migration of intellectuals and professionals from Shanghai and Beijing to southwestern China drew international attention, as reported by Western news agencies.[89] Great numbers of factories also repositioned to Chongqing and surrounding areas, although only about two-thirds of the 639 plants resumed production.[90]

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[85] Edwards, *Gender, Politics, Democracy*, p. 200. For a list of women who attended the first three councils, see Shyu, "China's 'Wartime Parliament' ", p. 275n45.

[86] David Strand, "New Chinese Cities," in Esherick, *Remaking the Chinese City*, p. 217, notes that the Nationalists made an "urban long march" by boat, rail, foot, and airplane as they retreated from river town to river town until they reached Chongqing, in contrast to the Communists' extra-urban "long march" of the 1930s that avoided major cities.

[87] Jiang Shunxing 蔣順興 and Sun Zhaiwei 孫宅巍, *Minguo da qiandu* 民國大遷都 [The moving capitals of the Republican era] (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1997), p. 186.

[88] Zhou Yuanzheng 周元正, ed., *Kang Ri zhanzheng shi cankao ziliao mulu: 1937–1945* 抗日戰爭史參考資料目錄: 1937–1945 [Catalogue of research materials on the history of the War of Resistance: 1937–1945] (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 1985), p. 12.

[89] MacKinnon, "Conclusion," p. 337.

[90] William Kirby, "The Chinese War Economy," in Hsiung and Levine, *China's Bitter Victory*, p. 190; on the relocation of factories from Yizhang (near Wuhan) to Chongqing,

It is well-known that the "downriver people" (*xiajiangmin* 下江民), refugee elites who originated in Shanghai or other coastal cities, considered Chongqing provincial and backward, dirty and rat-infested, and terribly old-fashioned compared to municipalities in eastern and central China.[91] And as for the women of Sichuan, one observer wrote:

> The "new women" refugees from east China, were surprised and shocked when they found that conditions in the west were much like those that their mothers had [once] described to them. The Szechuwanese were also apt to be shocked. As one nice old lady said to me: "These modern young women will try to ape the men. Instead of wearing trousers as a decent woman should, and smoking a water pipe, they wear long-skirted gowns like a man, and smoke cigarettes."[92]

The tensions between the two groups began to dissipate once the Japanese bombing of Chongqing started in spring 1939. On 3, 4, and 12 May, the city was heavily bombed, with the downtown section partially wiped out and more than ten thousand people killed.[93] The worst bombing occurred on 19 and 20 August 1940, resulting in four-fifths of Chongqing in ruins and thousands of casualties.[94] Chongqing was bombed 268 times between

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see Joshua Howard, *Workers at War: Labor in China's Arsenals, 1937–1953* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 52–63.

[91] McIsaac, "City as Nation," pp. 177–181. McIsaac also makes the point that while Chongqing could boast of a number of wealthy militarists and merchants such as the affluent shipping tycoon Lu Zuofu 盧作孚, in wartime descriptions of the city, the local elite is almost entirely absent (p. 180).

[92] H. L. Richardson, "Szechuwan during the War," *Geographical Journal* 106.1–2 (1945): 23. These remarks were made by the wife of the British geographer H. L. Richardson who served as an agricultural adviser to the Chinese government from 1937 to 1943, during the "Discussion" part of his lecture, and later recorded into the printed version of his oral address. The "new woman" mentioned here by Mrs. Richardson is a Republican-era cultural image that is usually assigned positive characteristics: "she is educated, political, intensely nationalistic, and urban-based." See Sarah Stevens, "Figuring Modernity: The New Woman and the Modern Girl in Republican China," *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 15.3 (2003): 83, 87, 94.

[93] Tong, *China Handbook, 1937–1945*, p. 711. More recent studies raise the death toll to fifteen thousand, and the number injured to twenty thousand. See Edna Tow, "The Great Bombing of Chongqing and the Anti-Japanese War, 1937–1945," in Peattie, Drea, and van de Ven, *The Battle for China*, p. 257.

[94] For further details about these bombings, see Tow, "Great Bombing," p. 261; A. D. Harvey, "Army Air Force and Navy Air Force: Japanese Aviation and the Opening Phase of the War in the Far East," *War in History* 6.2 (1999): 185. See also the poignant accounts by Lin Yutang's three teenage daughters, who narrated their fear and anxieties living through forty bombings in Chongqing: Adet, Anor, and MeiMei Lin, *Dawn over Chungking* (New York: John Day, 1941).

1939 and 1941, with the express purpose of demoralizing the population.[95] In these conditions, prejudices seemed less important, and the need for people to support their country's struggle took over their sensibilities.[96] On the other side, some oral histories indicate that neither refugees nor local residents received much help from the Executive Yuan Relief Commission.[97] So when, for example, the extensive bombing destroyed homes, people were forced to make do with whatever they could find to create shelter. According to one testimony, thousands of poor families became "guerilla residents" shifting from one location to another in fear of the police who would destroy their temporary lodgings on the grounds of fire safety violations.[98]

The war began to change many of the refugees' habits and expectations. Due to food shortages, many people altered their diets and now ate unfamiliar locally grown vegetables, such as taro and sweet potatoes.[99] Young people no longer followed the convention of separate social spaces: "girls who have traveled for weeks, and sometimes for months under circumstances that allowed for few reserves, see no need for down-cast eyes or hiding within the house . . . [and] parents who have realized that their daughters know how to take care of themselves have long since lost regard for conventions that are useless."[100] One oral history recalls how during the flight from Wuhan to Chongqing, a mother was forced to agree to the demands of a young man to have sex with her daughter in exchange for protection against bandits and thieves.[101] The war in some instances also

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[95] Eastman, *Seeds of Destruction*, pp. 134–135.

[96] According to the journalist Zou Taofen 鄒韜奮 (1895–1944), the bombings helped unite the Chinese people into resistance. See Parks Coble, "The Legacy of China's Wartime Reporting, 1937–1945: Can the Present Serve the Present?" *Modern China* 36.4 (2010): 444. MacKinnon, *Wuhan, 1938*, p. 50, projects the entire war period as a "great leveler," bringing people of different classes, cultural levels, and varied linguistic backgrounds together, a more effective social integrator than the forced migrations of the *xiafang* 下放 campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s. In contrast, Chang Jui-te, "Bombs Don't Discriminate? Class, Gender, and Ethnicity in the Air-Raid-Shelter Experiences of the Wartime Chongqing Population," in James Flath and Norman Smith, eds., *Beyond Suffering: Recounting War in Modern China* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), pp. 59–79, questions the uniformity of the impact of the bomb attacks and suggests that mobilization exacerbated already existing social divisions among the populace.

[97] Li, *Echoes of Chongqing*, pp. 31–32, argues that oral history testimonies often conflict with documents, now available in archive collections, about the actual provisions government relief programs extended to war victims.

[98] Li, *Echoes of Chongqing*, p. 86.

[99] Irma Highbaugh, "Effects of the War on Rural Homes," in Frank W. Price, ed., *Wartime China as Seen by Westerners* (Chungking: China Publishing, 1942), p. 144.

[100] Highbaugh, "Effects of the War on Rural Homes," p. 145.

[101] Li, *Echoes of Chongqing*, p. 57.

modified young people's idea of the ideal partner. Now an ordinary man needed a mate "who could march beside him as a soldier or carry the baby on the trek as they flee before the enemy or from daily bombings."[102] For many middle-class refugee women, it was not uncommon to become *kangzhan furen* 抗戰夫人 (wives of the War of Resistance). As educator Lu Lihua 陸禮華 (1900–1997) explained in her oral history, when she moved from Shanghai to Chongqing to start a school there in 1938, she entered a relationship with a man whom she knew was married. After the war, he returned to his wife in Shanghai and she to her career.[103]

Chongqing served as the central headquarters of the WAC, which expanded its involvement in war work. By the end of 1938, this organization operated through nine departments: General Affairs, Training, Livelihood, Production, War Relief, Refugee Children, Coordination and Correlation, Culture, and Rural Service.[104] The last division was staffed by scores of middle school female graduates who had been trained earlier in Wuhan by the WAC in organizational work,[105] then given the task of creating rural service teams to mobilize women in the Sichuan countryside. This meant first teaching basic functional literacy to ordinary rural inhabitants and then propagandizing war resistance.[106] The rural teams were also known to try to alter local marriage practices: they informed women about their rights as codified in the National Civil Law of 1931, which prescribed free choice and monogamy and raised the age of marriage to fifteen for girls and seventeen for boys.[107] Whereas these teams in general failed to change the old arranged marriage system, the rural women were now at least exposed to different ways of thinking about age-old social practices. More successful were the efforts by the WAC to

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[102] Highbaugh, "Effects of the War," p. 145.

[103] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, p. 164. You Jianming's compilation of oral histories (*Fenghuo suiyuexia*) contains similar stories of this phenomenon.

[104] Ho Simi, "Xinshenghuo yundong," p. 146. The Coordination and Correlation Division was in contact with some 350 women's organizations from all over the country. See also Lily K. Haass, "Chinese Women's Organizations," in Price, *Wartime China as Seen by Westerners*, p. 85.

[105] Liang Huijin (Liang Hwei chin) 梁惠錦, "Kangzhan shiqi de funü gongzuo ganbu xunlian 抗戰時期的婦女工作幹部訓練" [The training of women staff in the period of the War of Resistance], *Guoshiguan guankan* 3 (1987): 125–158.

[106] Danke Li, "The Women's Movement in the Chongqing Region during China's War of Resistance against Japan, 1938–1945," *The Chinese Historical Review* 16.1 (2009): 52.

[107] Christine Gilmartin and Isabel Crook, "Marriage Reform, Rural Women, and the Chinese State during World War II," in Mechthild Leutner and Nicola Spakowski, eds., *Women in China: The Republican Period in Historical Perspective* (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2005), pp. 422–449. See also Li, "The Women's Movement," pp. 50–54.

help rural women in practical skills that would benefit their economic circumstances, including the chance to make money other than in field labor and to achieve some basic literacy.[108]

In wartime Chongqing, women's employment became the center of a political debate. Although it had become official National government policy with the establishment of the Development and Relief Commission in early 1938 that refugees should find employment once they relocated,[109] the policy was not clear with regard to women's work and above all their rights as employees. In Chongqing and its environs, female refugees acquired work in textile and handicraft enterprises (like their European and American counterparts who took over jobs once held by male workers). Young Chinese women began "to man" spinning and weaving mills to manufacture cotton cloth for army uniforms, civilian clothes, bandages, and woolen army blankets.[110] The WAC also fostered a special "experimental zone" in nearby Yongchuan 永川 County to help mobilize women to participate in wartime production; the zone included a textile factory that hired eight hundred workers, mostly women, and social service facilities (medical clinic, schools, and even a farm).[111] But in absolute terms, the total number of women who worked as wartime factory laborers was relatively small—women made up only about 4 percent of that workforce, according to one set of statistics.[112] The majority of those refugees who found employment in Chongqing became household laborers—serving as housemaids and caretakers, doing the cooking, cleaning, and laundry for others.[113] As told in oral histories, many of these women had to work in order to survive.[114] Nevertheless, by 1940 a public dispute began to develop whether women should stay at home or work outside their residences.

The difference of opinion on the issue revealed the gaps in the WAC program and GMD and NLM policies endorsing the role model of "the

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[108] Li, "The Women's Movement," p. 52, estimates, based on the WAC records from 1939 to 1944, that over 205,000 rural women received training at a local level and that some 122,000 achieved basic literacy.

[109] Huang, "The Problem of War Refugees," p. 666.

[110] Jean Lyon, "New Horizons for the Chinese Woman," in Tong, *China after Seven Years of War*, p. 66.

[111] Li, *Echoes of Chongqing*, p. 97, likens the experiment to the well-known special economic zones that emerged in the 1980s with the new economic reforms.

[112] Lyon, "New Horizons," p. 66; Li, "The Women's Movement," p. 34, claims that research, based on Chongqing Municipal Archive records, also shows a relatively small number of women in industrial enterprises.

[113] Li, "The Women's Movement," pp. 34–35.

[114] Li, *Echoes of Chongqing*, part 2.

virtuous wife and dutiful mother." The stimulus for the debate was a 1939 magazine article, authored by GMD General and Fujian Province Governor Chen Yi 陈仪 (1883–1950),[115] which put forward the vision that women should not be employed in the public sphere and that their primary enterprise should be in the home to raise and educate children and to manage household affairs.[116] In response to Chen's suggestion, some provincial government institutions (including the Central Post Office in Chongqing) began to lay off female employees, which in turn triggered widespread public demonstrations and a flurry of articles in newspapers and journals expressing pro- and anti-responses.[117] For women activists, the debate also provided further opportunity to promote their agenda: to them, the fight was not just an argument about whether women should work outside the home but a political issue about women's entitlements and rights then and in the postwar era. In the end, by 1942, due to much lobbying by Shi Liang in the PPC, the government did rescind the order of dismissal of female employees,[118] and female activists used the episode to encourage others to take an active role in constitutional reform. One of the most vociferous proponents of political reform for women was the well-known educator and philanthropist Wu Yifang 吴贻芳 (1893–1985), who had been the president of Nanjing's Ginling Women's College until her flight to Chongqing.[119] There, she worked with Song Meiling in the WAC, but her main interest was the PPC. She became the only woman of the five-member PPC presidium and devoted her influence there to push through a quota system for women's representation in representative political bodies.[120]

Other woman activists did not succeed as well as Shi Liang or Wu Yifang in their struggles to gain political rights for women. Liu-Wang Liming 劉王立明 (1897–1970), who had been active in Shanghai as a Protestant reformer helping to establish welfare institutions for deserted women, beggars, and slave girls, and was a leading member of the Chinese women's suffrage movement, fled in 1938 to Wuhan and then to

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[115] This person is the same Chen Yi later responsible for the 28 February 1947 massacre in Taiwan.

[116] Li, "The Women's Movement," pp. 35–37.

[117] On the responses by Deng Yingchao and Zhou Enlai published in *Xinhua ribao* 新華日報 [New China daily], see Li, "The Women's Movement," p. 37.

[118] Li, "The Women's Movement," p. 47.

[119] See Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 562–563; see also Jin Feng, *The Making of a Family Saga: Ginling College* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), pp. 170–214, on Ginling College during the war.

[120] Edwards, *Gender, Politics, Democracy*, pp. 216–217.

Chongqing.[121] She was selected as a councilor of the PPC, where, like Wu Yifang, she pushed for a guaranteed minimum quota of seats for women. But she was so outspoken in her demands for the implementation of constitutional rule in China that in September 1943 she was removed from the PPC.[122] Cao Mengjun also moved to Chongqing, where she continued her children's refugee work. She added to her tasks the editorship of *Funü shenghuo*, which she took over from Shen Zijiu. Under Cao's leadership, the magazine pressed for more democratic constitutional reform, demanding women's greater freedom of speech and the right to equal opportunity in matters of employment, welfare, health care, and education. By 1941, the GMD government had censored the journal and Cao was forced to end its publication.[123]

As the war dragged on, refugee relief became less of a government priority. Modern scholars consider 1941 as a crucial wartime divide. Before then, the organization of taxation, welfare, and military recruitment in GMD-controlled China proceeded in a relatively orderly way, but thereafter forced conscription, inflation, and deteriorating living standards prevailed.[124] With the Japanese intensive bombing of Chongqing, fewer people saw the city as a safe haven and instead sought shelter in the countryside. Inflation began to eat up government reserves, and official assistance became inadequate and less frequent.[125] The leading women reformers Song Meiling and Wu Yifang took their causes in 1942 to the United States, where they lectured about China's wartime problems in order to raise money and to gain moral support for U.S. assistance to their country.[126] Back in Sichuan, women in the PPC continued to promote wartime mobilization and spread anti-Japanese nationalism as a

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[121] Wang, *Women in the Chinese Enlightenment*, pp. 135–143. On the career of Liu-Wang Liming, see Helen Schneider, *Keeping the Nation's House: Domestic Management and the Making of Modern China* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), pp. 73–77, and pp. 221–22.

[122] Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 375.

[123] Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 30. Li, "The Women's Movement," pp. 48–50, analyzes Cao's writings in *Funü shenghuo*.

[124] Hans Van de Ven, *War and Nationalism in China, 1925–1945* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), chap. 7.

[125] Hou Chi-ming, "Economic Development and Public Finance in China, 1937–1945," in Sih, *Nationalist China during the Sino-Japanese War*, pp. 221–235.

[126] Lee, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 484, 563. On Song Meiling's visit to the United States, see Hannah Pakula, *The Last Empress: Madame Chiang Kai-shek and the Birth of Modern China* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009), chaps. 35–37. In her pleas for financial support for China's refugee children, Song referred to these victims as "warphans." See Laura Tyson Li, *Madame Chiang Kai-shek: China's Eternal First Lady* (New York: Grove Press, 2006), pp. 152–153.

means to politicize female residents in the countryside.[127] In this way, they extended their urban consciousness into the rural arena.

4.5. *Concluding Remarks*

In this chapter, I have shown how three cities were overtaken by the catastrophes of the Sino-Japanese War and transformed into sites of real and symbolic resistance as well as political-social accommodation. Whereas scholars of modern Chinese urban history have argued how the dichotomies "new" and "old" may not always be assigned to the major cities of the Republican era,[128] the outbreak of the war did challenge embedded social ties and age-old political rivalries. In the face of "total war," Shanghai, Wuhan, and Chongqing adapted to circumstances that brought people together, but in the long-term these sites did not emerge as conclaves of enduring revitalization or political transformation. What these cities did provide at the time was opportunity for those in defiance of the enemy to extend their political networks and, in the case of women, to gain an even more prominent voice to claim fundamental political and social rights. Thus, these urban locations were "social spaces" that helped create a unique moment in the history of Chinese women. For the first time in Chinese history, urban women consciously offered their knowledge and skills to women in rural areas, sometimes with successful results. Although one may tend to associate the first trappings of wartime female emancipation with Communist Party political activities at the village level,[129] the Rural Service brigades under the supervision of the WAC brought both basic literacy and political education to women in the countryside. The brigades also offered those women who were widowed or even those with a dubious past (e.g., in prostitution) the chance to learn

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[127] Li, "The Women's Movement," p. 56, suggests these efforts reached some two hundred thousand rural women over the course of the war. Compare Liang Huijin, "Kangzhan shiqi de funü zuzhi 抗戰時期的婦女組織" [Women's organizations in the War of Resistance], *Guoshiguan guankan* 2 (1987): 169–188.

[128] Strand, "New Chinese Cities," pp. 211–213. Elsewhere, in his study " 'A High Place Is No Better Than a Low Place': The City in the Making of Modern China," in Wen-hsin Yeh, ed., *Becoming Chinese: Passages to Modernity and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 101, Strand writes: "What was new [about cities] in the early twentieth century was the promise of uniform progress made against the reality of unevenness imposed by political upheaval, staggered treaty-port openings, the vagaries of global economic change, and the progressive modernization of transport."

[129] See Dagfinn Gatu, *Village China at War: The Impact of Resistance to Japan, 1937–1945* (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2007), pp. 233–234.

skills to support themselves and their families.[130] In this way, the shock of the war catapulted modern social development beyond cities and into a collective approach to Chinese society at all levels.

In sum, women's participation in wartime relief exemplified the kind of social cohesion that the GMD government had hoped would evolve in its state-building efforts in which cities were central foci for change. While leftist woman activists were willing to compromise with NLM values in their wartime work in order to build solidity at a time of crisis, the prewar tensions between Chinese nationalism and feminism were only dissipated for the time being. Urban-based women's political activism did not fade away entirely, but in the postwar era the voices of its greatest adherents were lowered and ingested into nationalistic prerogatives. In the long run, the experiences of women in wartime Shanghai, Wuhan, and Chongqing would prove both their 'finest hours' as well as the prelude to the demise of feminist political discourse in urban spaces.

[130] Lary, *The Chinese People*, p. 97.

PART TWO

LAW AND ORDER

CHAPTER FIVE

UNORGANIZED CRIME: FORGERS, SOLDIERS, AND SHOPKEEPERS IN BEIJING, 1927, 1928

Brett Sheehan[1]

5.1. *Introduction*

This chapter uses cases of forgery of paper money in Beijing in the late 1920s to address the patterns of connections among cities and among urban people, especially urban criminals, in republican China. I show how a group of ne'er-do-wells in Beijing used bank-issued money and the political conflicts of republican China in 1927–1928 for their own purposes. The ways they used this money showed that in spite of the fragmented political and economic situation in China at the time, Chinese cities remained linked by multiple strands of circulation of money, people—often soldiers—and knowledge about shifting market prices of various kinds of currency. Within the environment of this circulation, the connections among these criminals showed the shape and working of networks usually hidden in the historical record because of the lack of an institutional base. Many sociologists argue that networks play a key role in the commission and spread of crime. It is important to look beyond the more visible groups of organized criminals in urban China to understand as well the networks of the unorganized.[2]

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[1] Research for this paper was made possible in part by a grant from the Committee on Scholarly Communications with China.

[2] For work on the relationship between networks and crime, see Elin Waring and David Weisburd, eds. *Crime and Social Organization, Advances in Criminological Theory*, Volume 10 (New Brunswick and London: Transaction, 2002), and Paul Ormerod, *Crime: Economic Incentives and Social Networks* (London: The Institute of Economic Affairs, 2005). On the ability of network studies to cut across institutions, see Alisdair Rogers and Steven Vertovec, "Introduction," in Alisdair Rogers and Steven Vertovec, eds., *The Urban Context: Ethnicity, Social Networks and Situational Analysis* (Oxford and Washington: Berg Publishers, 1995), p. 15.

5.2. *Chinese Criminal Networks Revisited*

The networks studied here were less formally constituted and less institutionalized than the labor groups and native place associations which constituted much of the literature on the history of Chinese cities. In particular, the forgers, soldiers, and shopkeepers involved in these schemes did not show the hallmarks often associated with subaltern or criminal elements in Chinese cities during the republican period. They apparently had no salient native place ties, no special rituals, no defined territories, no evident patron-client ties, and no brother- or sister-hoods. Of course social disorganization does not mean a complete lack of social ties.[3] The ties here, however, were more web-like than hierarchical and without salient institutional or ritual trappings. These kinds of ties were distinctly urban, but not identifiable with the better known organized patterns of association, especially criminal association, among China's urban poor. Thus the evidence here stands in contrast to an expanding literature on cities during the late Qing and republican periods which shows how many urban residents lived lives embedded in particularistic networks and associations where work in transport gangs, water distribution, or pulling rickshaws depended on an individual's place in tightly woven patron-client and native place networks.[4]

Urban criminals were particularly known for their organizing tendencies. Local toughs in Tianjin dressed distinctively and had their own

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[3] Fobert J. Sampson, "Organized for What? Recasting Theories of Social (Dis)organization," in Elin Waring and David Weisburd, eds., *Crime and Social Organization, Advances in Criminological Theory*, Volume 10 (New Brunswick and London: Transaction, 2002), p. 108.

[4] For just a few examples, see Bryna Goodman, *Native Place, City, and Nation: Regional Networks and Identities in Shanghai, 1853–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), Emily Honig, *Sisters and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai Cotton Mills, 1919–1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986) and *Creating Chinese Ethnicity: Subei People in Shanghai* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), Frederic Wakeman, Jr., and Wen-hsin Yeh, eds., *Shanghai Sojourners* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1992), Elizabeth Perry, *Shanghai on Strike: The Politics of Chinese Labor* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Health and Disease in Treaty Port China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), and David Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing: City People and Politics in the 1920s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). Even William Rowe, who argues for the attenuation of native place ties in favor of an urban identity in Hankou, notes "a ready-made network of compatriot ties along which fleeting antagonisms might escalate into prolonged vendettas." William T. Rowe, *Hankow: Conflict and Community in a Chinese City, 1796–1895* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), p. 190.

"language, camaraderie, rules (if not ritual), and turf."[5] Shanghai's Green Gang "organized itself along fictive kinship lines" and emphasized sworn brotherhood as a "key means by which ordinary members built up personal networks."[6] In Sichuan young men joined the Gelaohui (哥老會, alternatively translated as the Elder Brother Society or Gowned Brothers) which . . . created rituals and a secret language of gestures and other signals, so that travelers could identify themselves and seek help from members of other lodges."[7] One of these means of communication involved the arcane knowledge of "tea bowl formations" which allowed them to communicate nonverbally."[8]

Unlike such organized and ritualized gangs, the individuals involved in these forgery cases came together in an almost casual way to break the law. They fit in to the little understood world of the unorganized, those urban Chinese who rarely, if ever, left tracks in documents. Scholars such as Madeleine Yue Dong and Hanchao Lu have used material culture as a means of understanding the worlds of the urban unorganized.[9] Here, I am fortunate to have a group of confessions and reports which enable a partial reconstruction of their activities and associational practices at the individual level.

Their actions showed a side of urban life in republican-period China which connected people and cities in a manner similar to what Philip Kuhn once called the "tinker peddler" mode of spatial organization.[10] Elsewhere I have argued that Chinese "Cities were arrayed in multiple hierarchies and connections among cities sometimes followed the up and down structures of these hierarchies and sometimes cut across them in irregular web-like formations."[11] Here I show how some of the strands of this web

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[5] Man Bun Kwan, "Order in Chaos: Tianjin's Hunhunr and Urban Identity in Modern China," *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (November 2000), pp. 77–78.

[6] Brian G. Martin, *The Shanghai Green Gang: Politics and Organized Crime, 1919–1937* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 18 and 21.

[7] Kristin Stapleton, *Civilizing Chengdu: Chinese Urban Reform, 1895–1937* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000), pp. 197–198.

[8] Di Wang, *The Teahouse: Small Business, Everyday Culture, and Public Politics in Chengdu, 1900–1950* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), p. 180.

[9] Madeleine Yue Dong, *Republican Beijing: The City and Its Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), and Hanchao Lu, *Beyond the Neon Lights: Everyday Shanghai in the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

[10] Philip Kuhn, "Preface to the Paperback Edition," in, *Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China: Militarization and Social Structure, 1796–1864* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. vi.

[11] Brett Sheehan, "Banks and Bankers in Motion," in Sherman Cochran, David Strand, and Wen-hsin Yeh, eds., *Cities in Motion: Interior, Coast, and Diaspora in Transnational China*, (Berkeley: University of California Institute of East Asian Studies, 2007), 81.

linked cities in the late 1920s and at the same time I extend the image of a web to connections within cities as well as among them. It is important, however, to emphasize the multiplicity, unevenness, and potential fragility of connections in these webs. The connective strands of the webs were denser or stronger in some places than others, they sometimes frayed, and they crisscrossed in complex ways without readily predictable patterns. Here we see another side of republican Chinese urban life unlinked to the multiple associations and groups normally identified with cities at that time. The cases examined here, thus remind us of the importance of ad hoc and contingent connections in the organization of Chinese urban society and urban systems. In this Chinese cities shared characteristics with a model of urban life in which structural constraints such as poverty still allowed for wide variation in collective efficacy.[12]

5.3. *Beijing and Its Monetary Links to the Rest of China*

In 1928 and 1929 when the forgeries studied here took place, Beijing was in the throes of economic decline stemming from both loss of its status as imperial capital and continuing warlord strife which sapped the city of much real status as republican capital.[13] Nonetheless Beijing still had links to the rest of China. Two of those links were the circulation of soldiers from place to place and the circulation of money. The latter requires a few words of explanation. At the time China's fragmentary monetary system had a Byzantine complexity. The details of this system are beyond the scope of this paper, so here I will limit myself to discussion of paper money issued by banks and backed by minted silver coins, mostly minted in China by the 1920s.

In the republican period prior to 1935, many different banks in China had the right to issue paper money. Each note issued could be exchanged for a specified number of silver yuan coins, a one-yuan note for one silver yuan coin, a five-yuan note for five silver yuan coins, etc. Because of the need to potentially convert paper money to silver yuan coins on demand, banks needed reserves of silver to back up their issue of banknotes, but in practice did not need 100 percent of the value of their issue in silver at any time. Reserves ranged from 30 to 60 percent of their note issue.[14]

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[12] Fobert, p. 105.

[13] Dong, chapter four.

[14] Brett Sheehan, *Trust in Troubled Times: Money, Banks, and State-Society Relations in Republican Tianjin* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 11, 34–43.

The remaining 70 to 40 percent, less printing costs, was pure profit, and in reality, many Chinese banks kept much thinner reserves. When some banks stopped exchanging money due to poor reserves, markets would develop selling the notes, sometimes for pennies on the dollar, as people speculated about the bank's future prospects.

These markets in money created an opening for forgers who could buy one kind of note at a discount and then alter it to appear to be another kind of currency. Forgers could exploit the monetary system by changing three different aspects of paper money: the amount, bank of issue, or place of issue. They changed amounts when, for example, they changed a one yuan note to look like a five- or ten-yuan note. Sometimes, when the currency of a particular bank had little value, they could change the bank name to look like that of a more viable institution. Most commonly in 1927 and 1928, however, they changed the place of issue.

Banks, such as the Bank of China and the Bank of Communications, issued paper money from their various branches. Thus the Bank of China issued Tianjin notes in Tianjin, Shanghai notes in Shanghai, Hankou notes in Hankou, etc. The Bank of Communications and other banks did the same. In practice it might be possible to present a Tianjin note for exchange in Shanghai and receive silver yuan coins, but the legal liability for exchange lay with the issuing branch. The bank stamped each bank note with the city name of the issuing branch such as the ten yuan Bank of Communications note from 1914 stamped "Shanghai" in Figure 5.1 (the place name Shanghai has been circled for ease of reference).

Figure 5.1. Ten Yuan Note of the Shanghai Bank of Communications, 1914 with its place of issue circled (personal collection of the author).

Figure 5.2. English-Language side of Ten Yuan Note of the Shanghai Bank of Communications, 1914 with the text "Promises to pay the bearer on demand at its office here" circled (personal collection of the author).

Each note had Chinese printed on one side and English on the other, an artifact of foreign influence during this period of semi-colonialism. The Chinese language text is vague about the place of redemption, but the English is very clear. Redemption is only promised at the place of issue. As can be seen in Figure 5.2, the back side of the note in Figure 5.1, redemption is promised when the note is presented "here," the place of issue and nowhere else. Once again, I have circled the relevant text for ease of reference. Place of issue was so important that a Zhibian Bank note seen circulating without a place name became a matter of comment in the press.[15]

Place of issue often became crucial in the value of bank notes when political figures pressured, or forced, local banks to issue large amounts of paper money without corresponding silver reserves.[16] This happened in 1927 and 1928 when the Nationalist Party launched its Northern Expedition to wrest China from the hands of warlords. Halfway through the conquest serious splits developed between the so-called left wing of the Nationalist movement and elements more generally considered to the right. Leaders of the left wing, ensconced in the middle-Yangzi treaty port of Hankou (also known as Wuhan) tried to take control of the Nationalist movement from Chiang Kai-shek. For a few brief weeks the Nationalist

[15] *Beiyang Huabao* 北洋畫報 [Beiyang Pictorial], 21 March 1933, p. 2.
[16] Sheehan, *Trust*.

movement had two centers of power.[17] To finance their regime, the Hankou leftists forced the country's two largest banks, The Bank of China and the Bank of Communications, to issue notes far in excess of local reserves. Pressure on these two banks had begun with a strike of bank employees.[18] In a counter move, banks outside of Hankou began to isolate the city, refusing to accept Hankou banknotes or to send remittances to the city.[19] At the same time, the Nationalist Party in control of the lower Yangzi River region decided to set up its own central bank to issue money while stipulating that no Hankou banknotes of any kind would be accepted.[20] As Hankou became more isolated, the regime there had little option but to force the various banks in its control to issue even more notes which in turn became worth less and less. For this, and other reasons beyond the scope of this paper, the Hankou regime eventually folded, leaving the city shell-shocked and leaving oceans of "Hankou" currency circulating in China. Meanwhile holders of Hankou notes besieged the Bank of China and Bank of Communications for remuneration.[21]

Hankou notes lost their value, but did not disappear from circulation. Traders bought and sold notes at discount depending on the perceived likelihood of future redemption. Money shops, smelters, banks, branches of foreign banks, and even small shops and stands bought and sold various kinds of money. With the help of these intermediaries, inter-city monetary circulation continued even in the midst of chaos and war. The devalued Hankou notes, for example, arrived in Beijing before the Northern Expedition ever did. These notes carried such heavy discounts that they proved irresistible to forgers who scraped "Hankou" off of the notes and

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[17] For early work in English on the various party conflicts at the time, see Hsiao Tso-liang, "The Dispute over a Wuhan Insurrection" *The China Quarterly* 33 (Jan–Mar 1968): 108–122, and Tien-Wei Wu, "A Review of the Wuhan Debacle: The Kuomintang-Communist Split of 1927," *Journal of Asian Studies* 29.1 (Nov. 1969): 125–143.

[18] Shanghai Bankers Association to Tianjin Bankers Association 上海銀行公會致天津銀行公會, 23 February 1927, Archives of the Shanghai Bankers Association (Shanghai) 上海銀行公會檔案 (上海), S173-1-199-01, and "Hankou Bank Strike," *Peking and Tientsin Times*, 9 April 1927, p. 2.

[19] Shanghai Bankers Association to Tianjin Bankers Association 上海銀行公會致天津銀行公會, 20 April 1927, Archives of the Yanye (Salt) Bank (Tianjin) 鹽業銀行檔案 (天津), 454–146.

[20] "Central Bank Notes to be Floated in Nanking," *Peking and Tientsin Times*, 26 April 1927, p. 9.

[21] "United Association of Holders of Hankou Notes of the Bank of Communications," to Shanghai Bankers Association 交通銀行漢口地名兌換券持券人聯合會致上海銀行公會, 27 December 1927, Shanghai Bankers Association 上海銀行公會, S173-1-053-02.

then substituted the place name of a branch whose notes still held their value, usually "Tianjin" or "Shandong."

The Bank of Communications was especially vulnerable to this kind of change because it used one set of printing plates for all of its branches. Local place names were then stamped on the note when issued by each branch rather than engraved at the printer's (see Figures 5.1 and 5.2). This stamp was much easier to alter than an engraved place name. By January of 1928, local branches of the Bank of China and Bank of Communications noted individuals trying to pass large numbers of Hankou banknotes under other place names. It is hard to know now how many banknotes were altered or how many people were involved. The Beijing office of the Bank of Communications would claim that by August it was seeing approximately 1,000 yuan per day in altered notes.[22] As a measure to distinguish between banknotes issued by various branches, the Bank of Communications moved immediately to print each branch's notes in a different color, but it abandoned the idea of engraving place names on each note as too costly.[23] In any case it was too late to change the color of the already-issued Hankou notes and this vulnerability was so exploitable that one of the key figures arrested in a forgery ring in 1928, Ren Huanzhang, was nicknamed "Bank of Communications" Ren.

5.4. *Forgers, Soldiers and Shopkeepers: The Unorganized Margins of Urban China*

Ren Huanzhang was a thirty-three year old Hebei native with no fixed address and no occupation. He had apprenticed in a local government lithography bureau in the city of Baoding as a youth, but he apparently spent much of his adult life in Beijing, the city of his arrest. The printing skills he learned as a youth, however, certainly served him well as a forger. He claims to have learned how to alter banknotes from a man named Wu Fenglin who would figure in another forgery ring discussed below, but who eluded capture. With a few simple tools "Bank of Communications" Ren altered hundreds of yuan in notes for at least four individuals who then passed the forgeries in the market. He normally charged three yuan

[22] Zone One Treasury to Main Office, Bank of Communications (Nanjing) 第一公庫區致總處, Archives of the Bank of Communications (Nanjing) 交通銀行檔案 (南京), 398-12146.

[23] Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12295 and 398-12298.

for each hundred yuan he altered.[24] When arrested early in the morning of 4 February 1928, police detectives found in his possession, "eighteen small knives and a needle bag with about 10 needles in it, an ink stone, four small packages of ink, a small piece of white [coloring stick], six writing brushes, eight colored pencils, two erasers, and a small brush." In the words of Ren's confession, "These are the tools I used to alter notes."[25]

According to the confessions of the people arrested, the twelve people involved in Ren's forgery ring came together on an ad hoc basis for petty crime. Their names and connections are outlined as "Group One" on Figure 5.3. From what we can tell, these criminals lacked many of the hallmarks we would expect from organized crime in early-twentieth century China. There were no crime bosses, no fictive kinship relations, no defined territories, and no rituals of brotherhood. There were also no readily apparent native place ties. We know native place for only five of the twelve individuals, but those five came from four different counties in Hebei province. Two, a father and son, shared the same native county, but for the most part, the confessions of these individuals indicated relationships built in the course of daily life.

"Bank of Communications" Ren met the forty-nine year old Wang Furong, for example, when he bought and sold various forms of currency at Wang's tobacco shop in Beijing. As they became acquainted, they decided to enter the forgery business together. Wang purchased banknotes at various money shops in the Beijing area paying between 1.4 and 3.9 yuan for a ten-yuan banknote. He hired Ren to alter the notes then sold them to his son, Wang Bingjun, a twenty-seven year old soldier stationed in Shandong province, and other of his son's comrades in arms for six yuan per ten-yuan note.[26]

Because Wang Furong's son and his son's colleagues were soldiers, their jobs involved travel back and forth between Beijing and Shandong province. According to Wang Bingjun's father's confession, this made them ideal figures to pass altered notes. Soldiers who traveled with their military units became prime operators in three of the four forgery rings arrested in Beijing in 1927 and 1928. Besides having the need to travel, in the turmoil of republican China soldiers also had the added ability to

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[24] Confession of Ren Huanzhang 任煥章, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Confession of Wang Furong 王福榮, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

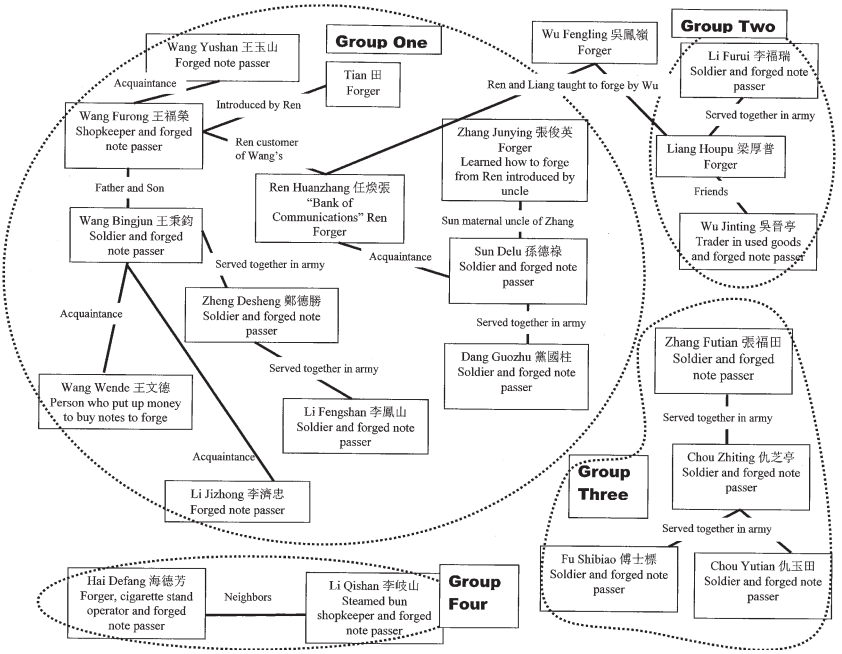

Figure 5.3. The networks of the forgers.

intimidate traders and shopkeepers. The soldier who brandished a gun in one hand and worthless currency in the other became a common trope in this period in China. Shopkeepers and merchant groups often complained that they had no choice but to accept valueless currency from the waves of soldiers who came through Chinese cities after each war.[27] In 1927 and 1928 the banks involved would claim that most note passers were soldiers.[28] A 1928 letter from Bank of Communications branches to the bank's headquarters noted that "soldiers are imposing and rude so it's impossible to argue with them."[29] Even the police seemed to be intimidated. In response to the entreaty of the Beijing branch of the Bank of Communications about soldiers cashing counterfeit banknotes by force, the Beijing police commissioner replied that he would investigate fully and asked the bank to bring any soldiers who tried to cash the notes to

[27] Sheehan, *Trust*, p. 113.

[28] *Shuntian Shibao* 順天時報 [Shuntian Times], 5 September 1928, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[29] Zone One Treasury to Main Office 第一公庫區致總處, 24 August 1928, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

the police station.[30] Apparently, the police were more than willing to deal with soldiers who could be subdued and brought in by bank clerks.

The confession of a soldier named Zheng Desheng shows both the involvement of soldiers and the ad hoc nature of the operation surrounding "Bank of Communications" Ren's forgeries. Zheng had served with Wang Bingjun in the Nationalist Third Army. In Beijing, Zheng looked up his old friend who for eight yuan sold Zheng two Zhili Provincial Bank banknotes originally for one yuan each but altered to look like five yuan notes. After successfully passing those notes on a trip to Tianjin, Zheng became a regular customer who "gave Wang Bingjun six yuan for every ten yuan in notes. Up until now," he recounted in his confession "I have passed more than 200 yuan in altered notes." At the time of his arrest, Zheng had in his possession, "one unaltered Bank of Communications ten yuan note, one five yuan Bank of Communications Hankou branch note altered to read Tianjin, and two five yuan Banque Industriele de Chine notes altered to read Zhonghua Maoye Bank."

The Wangs, father and son, brought in other contacts as well, extending the scope of the forgery ring through more apparently ad hoc connections. "Bank of Communications" Ren even introduced yet another forger to Wang Furong who also helped alter notes. To help finance the operation, Wang Bingjun brought in an acquaintance named Wang Wende. Neither the second forger nor the financier was arrested, however, so we have only minimal information on them.

For his part, "Bank of Communications" Ren knew another soldier named Sun Delu who also agreed to pass forged notes. They became so close that Sun arranged for Ren to stay at Sun's sister and brother-in-law's house in Beijing.[31] The sister and brother-in-law sold wool and chicken feathers for a living. They had a seventeen year old daughter named Zhang Junying who could read and write. Seeing that the teenager was literate, "Bank of Communications" Ren taught her how to forge. Zhang's mother started buying bank notes to alter and then pass in the market.[32] In March, police moved in and arrested "Bank of Communications" Ren, Wang Furong and his son Wang Bingjun, the soldier Zheng Desheng and the girl Zhang Junying. One group of forgers had been put out of business.

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[30] Beijing Branch to the Main Office 北京分行致總處, 12 September 1928, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[31] Confession of Ren Huanzhang, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[32] Confession of Zhang Junying 張俊英, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

Arrest certainly brought home the seriousness of their actions, but their confessions betray the casualness with which most of these people had entered into a life of crime. "Bank of Communications" Ren colluded with Wang Furong, a shopkeeper he met in the course of business. Wang's son readily passed notes in spite of the fact that only a few months earlier he had been caught trying to pass forged notes and sentenced to two months studying handicraft production.[33] Almost as soon as his sentence was up, he was passing forged notes again. The soldier Sun Delu came to know "Bank of Communications" Ren and soon introduced him as a guest to stay at the home of Sun's sister and her husband. Most surprisingly, the Zhang family encouraged their seventeen year old daughter (likely sixteen by Western reckoning) to learn forgery from "Bank of Communications" Ren. Did the young Zhang call Ren "uncle" when he lived with them? Did the two develop a romance which convinced Ren to pass on his valuable knowledge? There is no way to know for sure, but there was no long-term tie of fictive kinship or crime bosses here. As soon as the teenager had learned how to forge, the family saw less and less of "Bank of Communications" Ren.[34] The ease with which these individuals came together or split apart as a forgery ring attests both to the contingent nature of their organization as well as to the easy profits potentially afforded by China's chaotic monetary system.

Arrest of "Bank of Communications" Ren and the others in his group in March certainly did not end the forgery wave in Beijing. In September, after the arrival of the troops of the Northern Expedition, a second round of arrests shut down three more groups (Groups Two through Four in Figure 5.3). Liang Houpu, the forger associated with Group Two, had learned to forge from Wu Fenglin, apparently the same figure who had taught "Bank of Communications" Ren. Liang a thirty-six year old opium addict, however, adopted a slightly different business model than Ren's. Sometimes, like Ren, he charged fees for his services, but other times he purchased notes himself and then resold the altered products rather than charging fees for the alteration. According to his confession, he passed his forged notes to two old acquaintances, Wu Jinting, a thirty-six year old trader in used goods, and Li Furui, a thirty-eight year old who had no fixed profession "for a long time."[35] Once again there was no clear pattern

[33] Confession of Wang Bingjun 王秉鈞, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146. On work reform in Beijing, see Dong, p. 230.

[34] Confession of Zhang Junying, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[35] Confession of Li Furui 李福瑞, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

which defined their association. Liang and Li came from different counties in Hebei and Wu came from Shandong. In their confessions, they only admitted to knowing each other for a long time, but did not say how they made their acquaintance. In his confession, Li, in fact, did not admit to passing forged notes and no forged notes were found on him at the time of his arrest.

We know about group three entirely from the confession of Chou Zhiting, the only one arrested among them. Chou, another Shandong native, was a thirty-eight year old soldier stationed in Shandong. He obtained altered notes from one of his military buddies and then tried to pass them in the marketplace in Beijing. He also gave notes to others in his military unit to pass. Chou was caught when he tried to buy a padded jacket at a new clothing seller's shop in Beijing. He paid for the 3.8 yuan jacket with an altered five yuan Bank of Communications banknote. The shopkeeper noted the alteration and police detectives arrested Chou finding a stash of forgeries on his person.[36] There is a second individual surnamed Chou affiliated with this forgery ring. The two Chous are possibly relatives because it is an uncommon surname. Otherwise there is little to indicate strong ties among the others implicated here.

The fourth group arrested consisted of two Beijing shopkeepers who came to know each other as neighbors. Hai Defeng, 47, ran a cigarette stand which also exchanged money. Li Qishan, 33, had a shop which made steamed buns. Although both were Hebei men, they came from different counties. Together they agreed to purchase and pass forged notes. Some of the notes were purchased already altered and Hai Defeng altered the others himself. Apparently their plan did not get very far and according to their confessions they were arrested as soon as they tried to pass the notes.[37]

The four groups of forgers visible through these confessions share a common casualness, both about turning to crime and about finding partners in crime with whom to cooperate. The image portrayed here is one of individuals without deep roots or, for the most part, deep connections with each other, but with a shared sense that it is ok to break the law for profit.

The profits from forgery were indeed substantial. Table 5.1 shows just how much money could be made from forgeries in 1927 and 1928. Rather

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[36] Confession of Chou Zhiting 仇芝亭, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[37] Confessions of Hai Defang 海德芳 and Li Qishan 李岐山, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

modest investments of a few yuan could yield profits ranging from 25 to more than 200 percent in just a few days. Forgers, especially "Bank of Communications" Ren and Zhang Junying often just made wages for their time and effort (*shougongfei* 手工費). The main profits went to those who put up the capital to purchase notes in the first place and those who took the risk of trying to pass the altered products in the marketplace. Wang Furong, for example, could put up 41 yuan to purchase 100 yuan in notes for alteration and pay the forger "Bank of Communications" Ren. He then sold those notes to his son and his son's friends for 50–60 yuan, a profit of 22 to 40 percent and the notes still had not been passed in the market. His son, in turn, could purchase the notes for 50–60 yuan and then theoretically pass them for the full 100 yuan value achieving an additional profit of 80 to 100 percent, all on the same batch of notes initially purchased by his father.

As some of the largest operators from the arrests made in Beijing in 1928, the Wangs, father and son, forged and passed in volume. From December of 1927 through his arrest in March of 1928, Wang Furong, had "Ren Huangzhang alter about six or seven hundred yuan."[38] During the same time, his son, Wang Bingjun, passed "more than 1,000 yuan in altered notes."[39] Liang Houpu operated on apparently a much smaller scale. He admitted, "In all, I altered about 100 plus in Bank of Communications bank notes for the two of them [Wu Jinting and Li Furui] from January to now. I don't know where they passed [the notes]."[40] Of course these are just a fraction compared to the sea of worthless bank notes circulating in China in 1927 and 1928, but by the standards of petty merchants and traders, the amounts were considerable. At the time a pack of cigarettes or four pears cost only a dime and a used padded jacket could be purchased for 3.8 yuan.[41] A relatively well paid bank clerk at the time would only earn 50–60 yuan per month, so the forgers here had a potentially profitable business on their hands.

The marginal social and economic position of many of the people captured in these arrests is attested to by the property in their possession. In an example of the soldier Zheng Desheng's itinerant life and meager existence, in his confession, he listed his personal property also found by

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[38] Confession of Wang Furong, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[39] Confession of Wang Bingjun, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[40] Confession of Liang Houpu 梁厚普, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[41] Confession of Chou Zhiting, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

Table 5.1. Forged note transactions.

Purchaser/ Forger	Bank note	Cost	Seller	Proceeds	Profit	%	Source
"Bank of Comm." Ren	"Northwest" 10 yuan altered to read "Huawei" 5 yuan "Nongshang" altered to read "Nonggong" "Hankou" Bank of Comm. altered to read "Tianjin"			3 yuan per 100 yuan in notes			Ren Huanzhang
"Bank of Comm." Ren	10 one yuan Nong Gong notes		Sun Delu	4 yuan			Ren Huanzhang
"Bank of Comm." Ren	2 Northwest one yuan notes altered to read Nonggong, 1 Northwest five yuan note altered to read Nonggong, and 1 Bank of China Hankou five yuan note altered to read Tianjin		Dang Guozhu	3 yuan			Ren Huanzhang
Zheng Desheng	2 Zhili Provincial Bank one yuan notes altered to read 5ive yuan	8 yuan		10 yuan	2 yuan	25% (2/8)	Zhang Desheng
Wang Furong	Bank of Communications Hankou notes	3.9 per 10 yuan plus 3 yuan per 100 forgery cost	Wang Bingjun and other soldiers	50–60 yuan per 100 yuan	9–19 yuan per 100 yuan	22% to 46% (9/41 to 19/41)	Wang Furong
Wang Furong	Bank of China Hankou notes	1.4 per 10 yuan plus 3 yuan per 100 forgery cost	Wang Bingjun and other Soldiers	50–60 yuan per 100 yuan	33 to 43 yuan	194% to 253% (33/17 to 43 / 17)	Wang Furong
Wang Bingjun and other soldiers	Notes purchased from Wang Furong (above)	50–60 yuan per 100	Wang Bingjun and other soldiers	100 yuan	40 to 50 yuan per 100	80% to 100% (40/50 to 50/50)	Wang Furong

Table 5.1 (*cont.*)

Purchaser/ Forger	Bank note	Cost	Seller	Proceeds	Profit	%	Source
Wang Bingjun	5 one yuan notes of the Zhili Provincial Bank altered to read five yuan	0.80 yuan per note forgery cost					Wang Bingjun
Zhang Junying's mother	Hankou Bank of Communications	4 yuan per 10 yuan in face value					Zhang Junying
Zhang Junying				1 yuan forgery fee per ten yuan in notes			Zhang Junying
Liang Houpu	Hankou Bank of Communications	2.5 to 2.6 yuan per 5 yuan in face value	Wu Jinting	3.75 yuan per 5 yuan in face value	1.15 to 1.25 yuan per 5 yuan in face value	44% to 50% (1.15/ 2.6 to 1.25/ 2.5)	Liang Houpu
Wu Jinting	Hankou Bank of Communications altered to read Tianjin	3.75 yuan per 5 yuan		5 yuan (face value)	1.25 yuan per 5 yuan face value	33% (1.25/ 3.75)	Liang Houpu
Liang Houpu	Hankou Bank of Communications	5 yuan per 10 yuan face value	Wu Jinting	7 yuan per 10 yuan face value	2 yuan per 10 yuan face value	40% (2/5)	Liang Houpu
Wu Jinting	Hankou Bank of Communications altered to read Tianjin	7 yuan per 10 yuan face value		10 yuan (face value)	3 yuan per 10 yuan face value	43% (3/7)	Liang Houpu
Chou Zhiting	Bank of Communications Notes with place name altered	60 yuan for 120 yuan in notes		120 yuan if all passed	60 yuan if all passed	100% (60/60)	Chou Zhiting
Hai Defang	Bank of Communications Hankou and Henan notes	16.32 for 51 yuan in notes		51 yuan if all passed	34.68 if all passed	212% (34.68 / 16.31)	Hai Defang and Li Qishan

the police (at his rooms?). "The grey military blanket, military hat, grey leg wrappings, black and white arm band, one yellow cloth arm band, one yellow insignia, two epaulets, one award, and armband are all officially issued property. The white blanket, one watch, a picture in a frame, four pawn receipts, wallet, and several name cards are all my personal property." Wu Jingting, the trader in used goods, identified his property as "The five-yuan altered Bank of Communications note on my person is one I bought from Liang Houpu. The one-yuan Northwest Bank altered to read Huawei bank note was given to me by Liang Houpu. In the past I passed twenty or thirty altered notes, but I don't remember where. The old leather bag, foreign chewing tobacco, small key, and the Chahar Xingye Bank used copper 2,000 (coppers) banknote are my personal property."[42] In addition to the lack of personal property, there is some evidence that forgers operating at the time often did not read English. At least in some cases, altered notes had place names changed only on the Chinese side, not the English.[43]

5.5. *Conclusion*

This paper makes one argument about two different kinds of connections. It stresses the contingent and web-like nature of connections both among cities in urban networks and among residents within cities.

In relation to urban networks, the evidence here supports earlier arguments I have made about the multiplicity of kinds and routes of connections among cities.[44] The reliability of one kind of money or another often depended on the contingent influence of political conflict, economic flows, and the unevenness of economic reliability among banks and cities. This fragmented and chaotic system was subject to manipulation by bankers, political figures and forgers alike. In the chaos of 1927 and 1928, was the forger who scraped "Hankou" off a banknote to write "Tianjin" any more of a criminal than the politician who forced banks in Hankou to issue that Hankou note in the first place? Both took advantage of the fragmented

[42] Confession of Wu Jinting 吳晉亭, Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[43] Tianjin Branch to Main Office, 11 September 1928, 交通銀行天津分行致總處 Archives of the Bank of Communications, 398-12146.

[44] Brett Sheehan, "Urban Identity and Urban Networks in Cosmopolitan Cities: Banks and Bankers in Tianjin, 1900–1937," in Joseph Esherick, ed., *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), pp. 47–64, and "Banks and Bankers in Motion," pp. 81–105.

and uneven system for their own benefit. At the same time, in spite of great political and monetary upheavals, money, knowledge, and people continued to circulate well outside of each city showing web-like connections among cities in spite of political fragmentation. Soldiers, especially, seemed to change units and change location with a facility making it possible for people at the lower levels of society to also take advantage of the Chinese monetary system.

In terms of connections among urban residents, these cases show a little-known world of small-time crooks, drug addicts, shopkeepers, and soldiers. These individuals shared a life at the margins in a "buyer beware" urban society where fake goods, and even fake money, were common and the gullible deserved what they got if they were duped. Paper money, like the used goods sold in the Beijing Tianqiao neighborhood studied by Madeleine Yue Dong, operated in a system in which "It was a test of one's ability to tell good from bad quality, authentic from fake goods, and fair from unfair prices. One's skill determined how well one could use the market. There was no taken-for-granted sense of trust there."[45]

Connections among these people at the margins contrast, however, with previous work on urban china which has stressed the importance of local identities and association, what a sociologist would call "strong ties." Such ties have been especially prominent in accounts of criminal activities. Instead, here we see a mixed pattern of strong and weak ties with multiple, web-like strands and constant motion. Connections are made and broken with apparent ease. It is possible that the weak ties we see here link groups of more tightly bound individuals as theorized by Mark Granovetter in his classic work.[46] The sources here are too fragmentary to support such an argument, however. Nonetheless the cases here add to our picture of Chinese cities by positing a realm of casual and ad hoc forms of connections. The forgers, soldiers, shopkeepers and others involved in these operations were sometimes family, but just as often were neighbors, customers, military comrades, and acquaintances. They apparently agreed to work together in criminal enterprise with a facility which belies existing notions of urban association and points to more contingent, web-like connections. Personal relations, *guanxi*, relied on weak ties as well as strong and the unorganized used both.

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[45] Madeleine Dong Yue, "Tianqiao as Republican Beijing's Recycling Center," *Modern China* 25.3 (July 1999): 317–318.

[46] Mark S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *The American Journal of Sociology* 78.6 (May 1973): 1360–1380, and "The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited," *Sociological Theory* 1 (1983): 201–233.

CHAPTER SIX

THE ORDERING OF CRIME IN REPUBLICAN BEIJING FROM THE 1910s TO THE 1930s

Michael Hoi Kit Ng[1]

New values and knowledge from the West brought about not only changes in the governance system of China, but also a reconstruction of knowledge systems among the elite. During the early twentieth century, new meaning was given to what was deemed a crime, who was a criminal, and what were the causes of crime. Previous scholarship has described how the first generation of Chinese criminologists, adopting methodologies of social science acquired from the West, explained the causes of the crime problem in modern Chinese cities in the early twentieth century. Yet, few studies have discussed the institutional and bureaucratic frameworks of the newly transplanted legal system upon which these criminologists rely in conducting their sociological analysis of the crime phenomenon. These frameworks include an overhaul of the imperial statutory meaning of crime and a spatiotemporal ordering of crimes maintained by the Police Bureau according to a new legal definition of crime. This chapter will study the importance of these frameworks in creating differing public discourses among law drafters, law enforcement agencies, and crime scholars about the extent to which the modern urban community was becoming more or less safe during the Republican period. These discourses not only revealed the concern about and perceptions of the social reality of the city of Beijing among these participants in the criminal justice system but also continued to shape the criminal justice system as it coped with the perceived problems of crime in China during this period of social change and cultural transformation.

6.1. *The Sociological Order of Crime*

Western organizations and missionaries began to establish important academic institutions in Beijing during the early Republican period, and the

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application of emerging social science methods to the study of Chinese society became popular among both foreign and Chinese scholars. One of the manifestations of this new mode of research was the organization of large-scale studies such as the one conducted by Sidney Gamble on Beijing in the late 1910s under the sponsorship of the Princeton University Center in China.[2] Crime, together with other urban problems such as poverty, public hygiene, and prostitution, became popular subjects for foreign sociology researchers, many of whom approached China as a testing ground for their views on social progress. Gamble studied the social conditions and problems of China with the aim that "the Orient, as far as possible, be saved from the costly mistakes made by the Occident."[3] Combining scholarship with a mission of social reconstruction, these scholars aimed at working out a social program that would influence the lives of people in China.[4]

Local sociologists began to catch up in the 1920s and produced important work in an attempt to develop their own sociological discourse on the problem of crime in China. These social scientists tried to use the research techniques that they learned from the West to look for an explanation for the problem of crime in Beijing and other urbanizing cities of China in the early twentieth century. These studies were novel in the quest for answers to China's growing rate of urban crime in that they were based on new forms of empirical analysis. Jan Kiely has provided in his chapter of this volume succinct accounts of the studies done by the first generation of Chinese social scientists in the early twentieth century, including leading criminologist such as Yan Jingyue 嚴景耀.[5] In the 1920s, Yan studied data supplied by the Capital Police Bureau. He also visited the Beijing No. 1 Prison in 1926 to interview the inmates. In his analysis of crime in Beijing written in 1928, Yan, alarmed by the rising crime figures in the city, attempted to establish a connection among poverty, education, and crime.[6] These are social issues that could only be cured, according to Yan, by social measures, including a more even distribution of wealth, the provision of sufficient job opportunities, and improved education.

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[2] Madeleine Dong, *Republican Beijing: The City and Its Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 211–212.

[3] Sidney Gamble, *Peking: A Social Survey* (New York: George H. Doran, 1921), p. vii.

[4] Gamble, *Peking*, pp. 25–28.

[5] See also Frank Dikötter, *Crime, Punishment, and the Prison in Modern China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2002) and Dong, *Republican Beijing* for works done by the early Chinese criminologists. For the Romanization of Yan's name as Jingyue instead of Jingyiu, see note 1 of Chapter 5 in this volume.

[6] Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi 北京犯罪之社會分析" [Social analysis of crimes in Beijing], in Wen Zhang, ed., *Yan Jingyue lunwenji* 嚴景耀論文集 [Compilation of papers of Yan Jingyue] (1928; reprint, Beijing: Kaiming chubanshe, 1995), pp. 1–44.

Earlier works pointed to the fact that these sociologists, including Yan, created their public discourse of crime out of their concerns about rapid urban development in China and that they attached moral values to the rising crime problem they observed.[7] Out of anxiety about urbanization and Westernization, the urge for social advancement, and as a part of their mission to educate the poor masses, as pointed out by Kiely in his chapter, the criminologists collected social data and conducted empirical analysis learned from the West to present their discourse on crime in early twentieth-century China. However objective these early social scientists in China might consider their analyses, their empirical studies were premised upon data that had been filtered by the legal changes that were taking place in China at the same time. Lawmaking and enforcement agencies, with their own missions and visions, revisited the legal ordering of crimes at the turn of the twentieth century. These efforts of redefining crimes and recording crimes according to the new legal ordering would have considerable impact on the perception and discourse of these sociologists about the severity and the causes of crime, as we shall see in the next section.

6.2. *The Legal Reordering of Crime*

The new criminal justice system introduced into China numerous new institutions for dealing with crimes and criminals, including a new corps of certified attorneys and judges, a police force, law courts, and reformed prisons. What is equally important is the introduction of a new definition of crime under the law. This new legal definition affected not only the ways in which offenders were recorded, handled, and tried, but also the ways in which crimes were perceived, interpreted, and discussed further in the discourses of crime specialists.

During the imperial period, major categories of crime could be found in the Criminal Code (*xinglu* 刑律) section of the Qing Code. According to the Criminal Code, crimes were primarily grouped in the following

[7] See, for example, comments made by Dikötter: "To educate was to reform: a strong cognitive coherence thus existed between the dominant penal philosophy of the Republican period, which envisaged punishment as moral education, and the instrumentalist vision of criminological knowledge, designed to enlighten the public's understanding of the 'social problem' of crime. Within this approach, moral values were considered not so much to constitute either undesirable infringements of the presumed objectivity of science, or unconscious remnants of traditional thought, but the very premise on which the legitimacy of knowledge was based. In short, criminology was suffused with morality." (*Crime, Punishment, and the Prison in Modern China*, p. 185).

categories: robbery and theft, homicide, quarreling and fighting, use of abusive language, offenses related to presenting information to the court, bribery and corruption, forgery and fraud, incest and adultery, escape from arrests, and other miscellaneous offenses such as defacing public monuments and gambling.[8] Through the efforts of Shen Jiaben and Wu Tingfang, a New Criminal Code (*xinxinglu* 新刑律; hereafter NCC) was promulgated in 1910. Subsequently, a number of revised criminal codes were promulgated during the Beiyang and the Nationalist periods, but these new codes were little changed from the NCC of the Qing dynasty, especially in terms of the categorization of crime. The first criminal code of the Republic—the Provisional Criminal Code (*zanxing xinxinglu* 暫行新刑律; hereafter PCC) classified crimes into thirty-five types, most of which existed in the NCC, as follows: crimes related to national interest or security such as treason, foreign aggression, harming the relationship with another country, and leaking confidential information; crimes related to public duty of government officers such as dereliction of duty, harming public duty, and harming elections; crimes related to public order such as causing a breach of peace, harming public traffic, harming order, forging currency, forging weighing scales, harming the water supply, harming drinking water, and harming hygiene; crimes against persons, property, and reputation such as sexual offenses and bigamy, homicide and wounding, abortion, abandonment of babies, private arrest and imprisonment, abduction, damaging reputation and credibility, theft and robbery, deceit, misappropriating another's property, handling stolen goods, damaging property, and causing arson; and other specific offenses including escaping from arrest, hiding criminals and destroying evidence, forging evidence and making malicious accusations, possessing or manufacturing dangerous goods, forging documents, blaspheming religious ceremonies and excavating tombs, trading in opium, and gambling.[9]

This categorization of crime remained largely in force in China until 1949. The NCC and PCC not only re-categorized crimes but also excluded offenses that the law drafters considered less serious from the official definition of crime. These excluded offenses were redefined as police contraventions (*weijing* 違警) under the law and placed under another legal

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[8] George Staunton, *Ta Tsing Leu Lee: Being the Fundamental Law, and a Selection from Supplementary Statues, of the Penal Code of China* (1810; reprint, Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1966), pp. 269–353.

[9] Huang Yuansheng 黃源盛, *Minchu falu bianqian yu caipan* (*1912–1928*) 民初法律變遷與裁判 (1912–1928) [Judgment and change in law of the early Republic (1912–1928)] (Taipei: National Chengchi University, 2000), pp. 285–286.

regime called the Police Contravention Punishment Law (*weijing fafa* 違警罰法; hereafter PCPL). The concept of police contraventions was adopted from the Continental legal tradition by law reformers in the late Qing period. In 1908, the Police Contravention Code (*weijinglu* 違警律) was approved by the Qing government as a part of the legal reform. From then until 1949, many offenses were placed under the police contravention laws and outside the reach of the regime of criminal law and the criminal justice system. The Republic's PCPL, which was largely based on the Qing's Police Contravention Code, categorized police contraventions primarily into the following six categories: harming public peace, harming order, harming customs, harming hygiene, and harming others' bodies or property.[10] The nature of many offenses under the PCPL, such as harming the public peace and harming another's body, overlapped with those in the PCC except that the PCPL dealt with offenses that caused less serious injury or damage and hence were punishable by a fine of not more than 15 yuan or detention for a period not exceeding fifteen days.

The police contravention laws were important for a number of reasons. First, many offenses were removed from the definition of crime and hence were removed from the process of criminal justice. Offenders of police contraventions were neither tried openly nor sentenced by a court judge. They were summarily handled by the Police Bureau and were charged, convicted, and penalized inside police stations. Offenders were warned, fined, and/or detained at the detention center run by the Police Bureau but not in the new prisons built upon the Western model. Second, official data on crimes and criminals did not include police contravention offenses. In the police archives, data regarding police contraventions were recorded separately from the records and statistics of crimes (*fanzui* 犯罪).

Although some of the offenses under the police contravention law, such as harming another's body, were relatively more serious in nature than littering or creating a nuisance, they were removed from the official definition and statistics of crime if little injury was caused, and perhaps also from the attention of criminologists at that time. What remained in the official crime statistics of the Republican government were crimes that were not included in the police contravention law. Yan Jingyue, in his study, acknowledged the incompleteness and limitations of the crime data supplied by the government. This imperfection, he said, was partly due to the exclusion of

[10] Police Contravention Punishment Law 1915, from Yinzhu ju 印鑄局 [Printing and Minting Bureau], *Faling jilan* 法令輯覽 [Compilations of law and decree] (Beijing: Yinzhu ju, 1917), 3:190–202.

police contraventions.[11] However, he might not have realized that the difference could be as substantial as the following analysis will show.

Figure 6.1 below is a set of graphs that show the data used by Yan in his analysis of the crime situation in Beijing in the 1920s and those kept by the Police Bureau. From this comparison we are able to appreciate the various impressions of crime in the city that emerge when we base our conclusions on different definitions of offenses. First, the figure shows that the number of criminals examined by Yan was only 15 to 20 percent of the total number of criminals recorded by the Police Bureau, which was charged with maintaining and updating the crime data set for the city. Yan acknowledged in his study that his data source included only criminals sentenced to imprisonment. Therefore, the difference between the two sets could possibly be accounted for by those criminals sentenced to suspended sentences of imprisonment, fines, and probation orders.[12] In his study, Yan was alarmed by the 123 percent increase in the number of criminals over the seven years from 1920 to 1926,[13] but the rising trend would have looked much less serious if Yan had had the chance to study the official record of crimes in Beijing kept by the Police Bureau. Whereas the number of officially defined crimes was climbing over the years, police contraventions offered another impression. In contrast with the sharp increase in the numbers of criminals, the number of offenders who violated police contraventions during the same period decreased on average. If we combine the numbers of police contravention offenders during the same period and look at the data again, we get a different impression about crime in the city. The combined graph of criminals and police contravention offenders from 1911 to 1931 shows that the crime situation in Republican Beijing was not worsening to the extent described by Yan. Rather, the number came down in late 1920s to a level similar to that of the mid-1910s. Obviously, this combined result was dominated by the trend of police contraventions, because the number of police contraventions offenders was eight to ten times higher than that of criminals. Thus, putting together two sets of data reduces the impact of the number of criminals on the result of such criminological analysis.

Although we can assess neither the level of accuracy and completeness of the data used by Yan nor that of those recorded by the Police Bureau, at least it is evident from the previous analysis that the crime scholars

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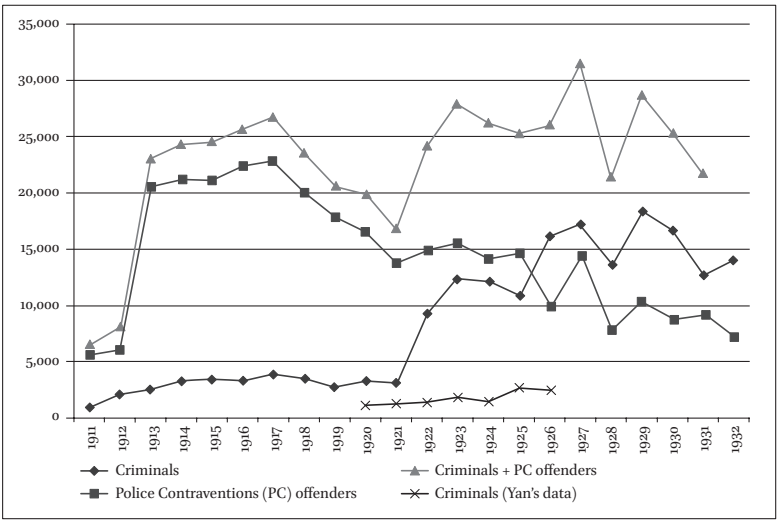
[11] Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," p. 3.
[12] Ibid., p. 5.
[13] Ibid., pp. 4–5.



Sources: Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," pp. 3–5; Police Bureau records (see note 13).

Figure 6.1. Crime data used by Yan Jingyue and those kept in the Police Bureau in the 1920s.

and the law enforcement agencies were using different sets of data to form images of the crime situation in Beijing. Using their own data sets, they conducted analyses and portrayed views to fit their conception of the social reality in the city. Criminologists applied Western sociological knowledge to the results of the studies to form their perception of crimes and theorize about the causes of crimes in Beijing. On the contrary, the police used the data they collected to form their own spatial order of crimes in the city that would guide their deployment of resources as well as their understanding about the causes of crimes.

6.3. *The Spatial Order of Crime*

The policing agency of Beijing had been responsible for collecting data concerning various aspects of life in the city since the imperial period, with crime data being one of the most widely collected. Data on crime included the number of criminal cases and criminals for each category of crime, the gender and age of criminals, the years and months in which offenses took place, and the districts in which they occurred. Such data not only provided useful information about the rise and fall of crime numbers, but

also traced the spatial order of crimes over time. First of all, these data were set in the frameworks that divided the city into different districts. Maps of the city of Beijing used in this article are divided into twenty districts, as shown in figure 6.2 (before 1928), or eleven districts, as shown in figure 6.3 (after 1928), according to the division of police districts during those periods. From this data we are able to generate, via the historical GIS (Geographic Information System), maps (Figures 6.4 to 6.13) that show the spatial pattern of crimes in Beijing as perceived by the Police Bureau.[14]

From the spatial distribution of criminals recorded by the Police Bureau from the 1910s to 1930s, the districts with the highest number of criminals (the darker ones on the maps) appear to have changed over the years. However, when we look more closely at the numbers, we are able to see the common denominators of these patterns. If we take the 1920s to early 1930s as a continuous period for observation, Outside No. 5 District was always within one of the top five districts with the highest number of criminals, and, in four of the nine years, it had the highest crime rate. Besides Outside No. 5 District, Outside No. 1 District was always among the top three districts. In fact, the northern part of the South City, which contained Outside No. 1 and No. 2 Districts as well as Outside No. 5 District, had always been a major crime center. Why did these districts remain attractive to criminals despite changes in the political and economic situation of Beijing over those years? The Outside No. 1 and 2 Districts, which are around Qianmen

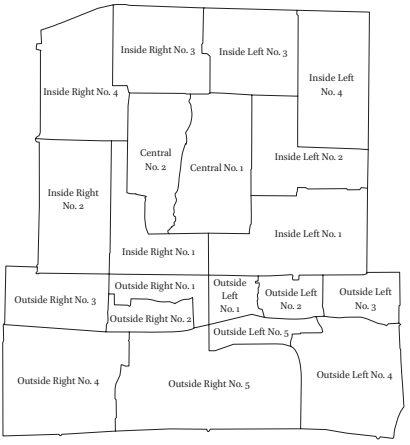


Figure 6.2. Beijing city in 20 districts.

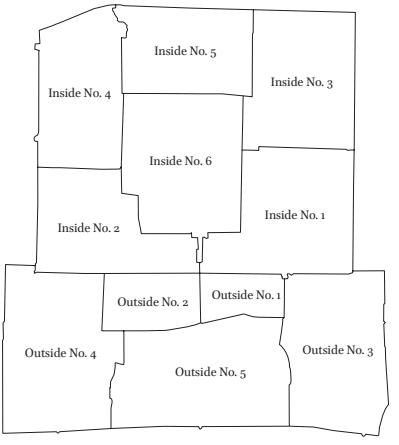


Figure 6.3. Beijing city in 11 districts.

[14] Republican police files stored in the Beijing Municipal Archives, file nos. ZQ12-2-268, ZQ12-2-307, J181-1-369, J181-1-369-370, J181-1-371, J181-4-34, J181-4-35, J181-4-36, J181-4-37.

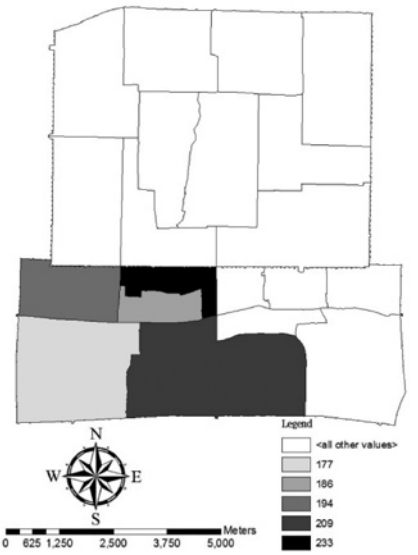


Figure 6.4. Distribution of criminals (1912).

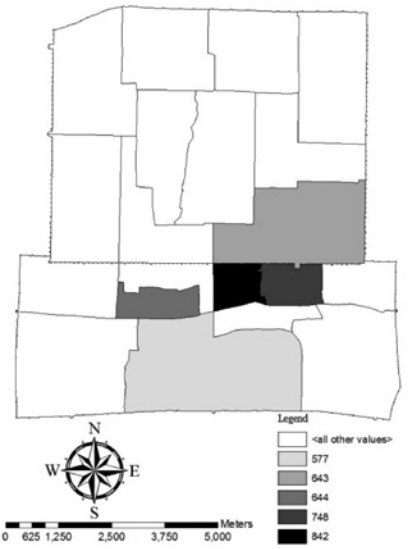


Figure 6.5. Distribution of criminals (1922).

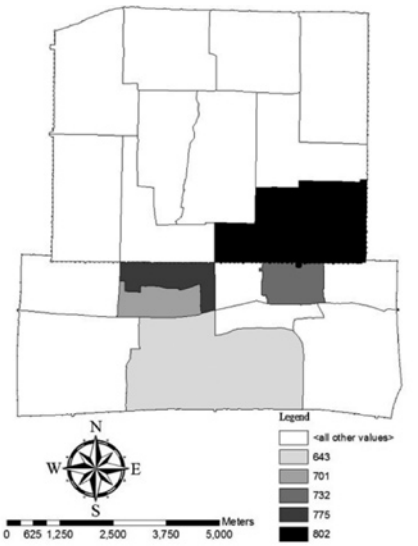


Figure 6.6. Distribution of criminals (1925).

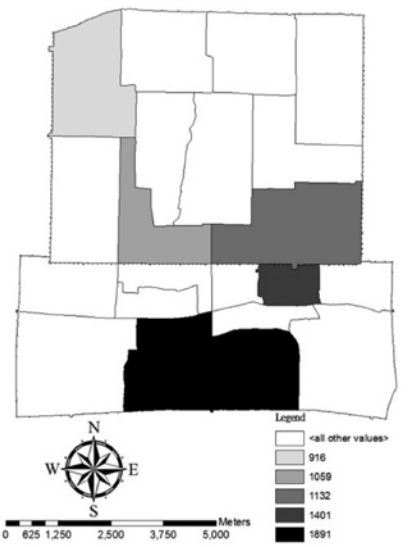


Figure 6.7. Distribution of criminals (1926).

Figure 6.8. Distribution of criminals (1927).

Figure 6.9. Distribution of criminals (1928).

Figure 6.10. Distribution of criminals (1929).

Figure 6.11. Distribution of criminals (1930).

Figure 6.12. Distribution of criminals (1931).

Figure 6.13. Distribution of criminals (1932).

Street across Xuanwumen, Zhengyangmen, and Chongwenmen in today's Beijing, were once the commercial center of Beijing, with the highest concentration of guilds, temples, shops, and markets, as shown in figures 6.14 to 6.16.[15] The Outside No. 5 District, another area popular with criminals, was also the site of the famous Tianqiao market. Tianqiao was the biggest market for low-priced goods in Beijing. It was a gathering place for sellers of mostly secondhand clothing, fabric, and leather goods. Tianqiao was also famous for its entertainment, such as wrestling matches and martial arts performances.[16] While poverty and lack of education were perceived by Yan Jingyue as major reasons driving the rise in crime rate, to the Beijing police force, these sites of vibrant markets and leisure activities, yet relatively affluent districts,[17] were highly dangerous and needed to be closely watched.

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[15] Data of Beijing temples stored in the Beijing Municipal Archives, file nos. J2-8-1138, J181-15-131; data of guilds from *Beiping zhinan* 北平指南 [Beiping guide] (Beijing: Beijing minshe, 1929); data of commerce and industry from *Beiping shi gongshangye gaikuang* 北平市工商業概況 [Overview of industry and commerce of Beiping] (Beijing: Beiping shi shehuiju, 1932).

[16] Dong, *Republican Beijing*, pp. 184–187.

[17] In the Outside No. 1, No. 2 and No. 5 Districts, according to Gamble's survey, "in which a large part of the business, hotel and amusement life of the city is centred, the 'very poor' constitute less than 4.5 percent of the population . . . In other police districts of the South City from 8 to 37.8 percent of the population are 'very poor' " (*Peking: A Social Survey*, p. 271).

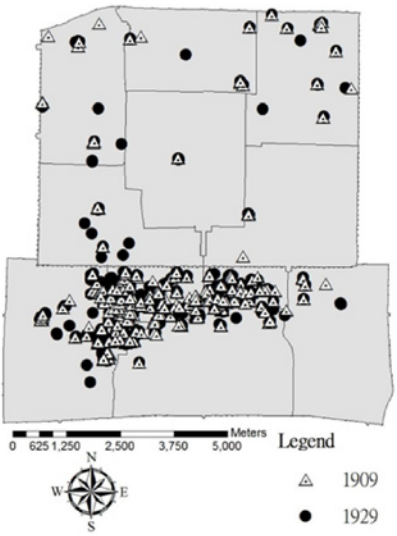

Figure 6.14. Distribution of guilds (1909 & 1929).

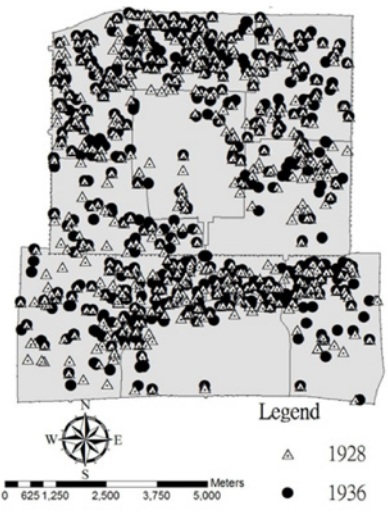

Figure 6.15. Distribution of temples (1928 & 1936).

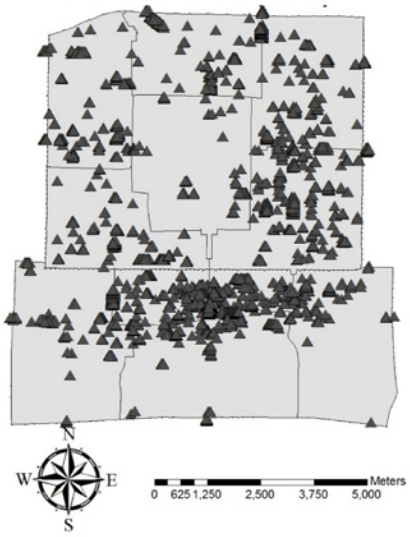

Figure 6.16. Distribution of industry and commerce (1932).

Figures 6.17 to 6.27 show the density of police in each of the districts of Beijing from the 1910s to 1930s.[18] Police density was measured by the number of constable policeman (CP) per Chinese mile (*li* 里). The analysis shows that, in keeping with the analysis of police data on criminal activity, Outside No. 1 and No. 2 Districts consistently had the highest concentration of constable policeman throughout the period. The spatiotemporal statistics on the incidence of crime maintained by the Republican police guided the Beijing police in deploying their manpower and in linking market activities with the criminality of specific areas, as we shall notice in the next section.

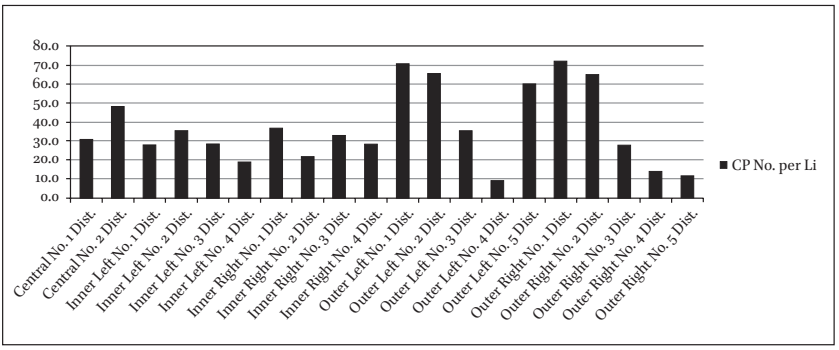

Figure 6.17. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1912.

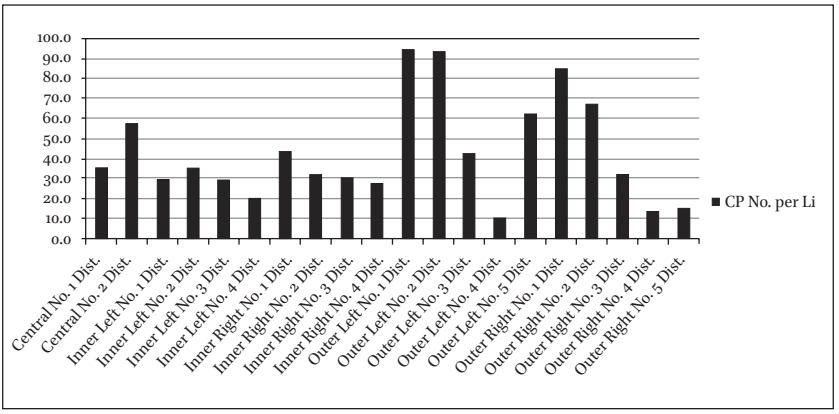

Figure 6.18. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1917.

[18] Republican police files stored in the Beijing Municipal Archives, file nos. J181-4-34, J181-4-35, J181-4-36, J181-4-37, J181-1-369, J181-1-371, ZQ12-2-261, ZQ12-2-268.

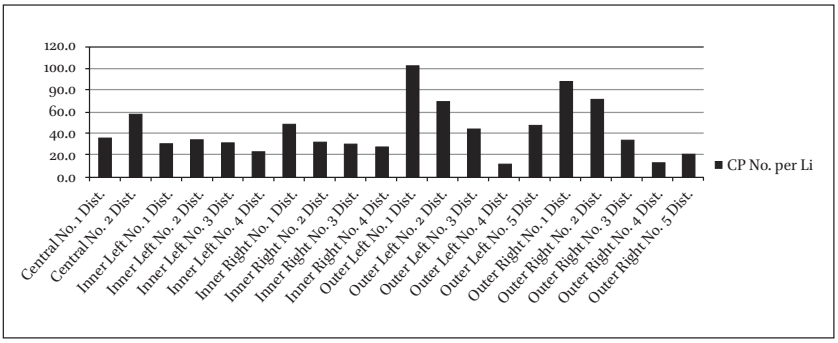

Figure 6.19. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1922.

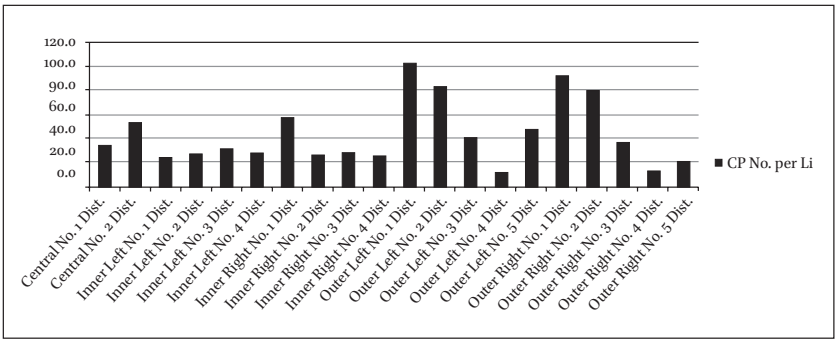

Figure 6.20. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1925.

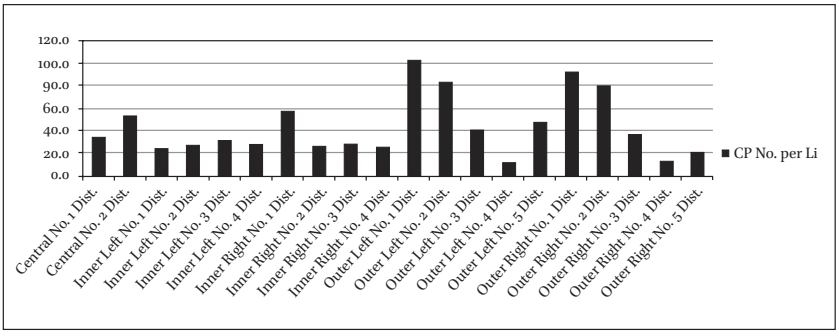

Figure 6.21. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1926.

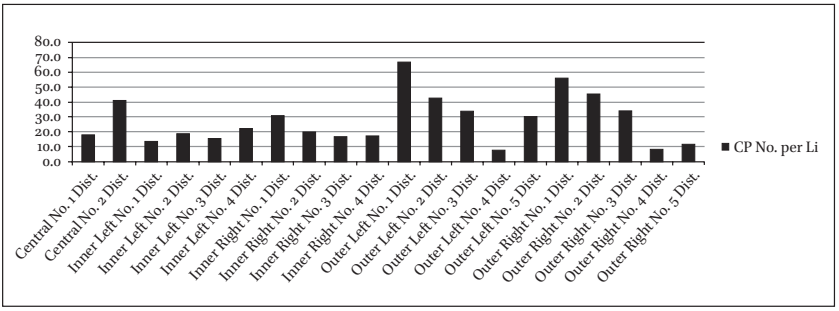

Figure 6.22. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1927.

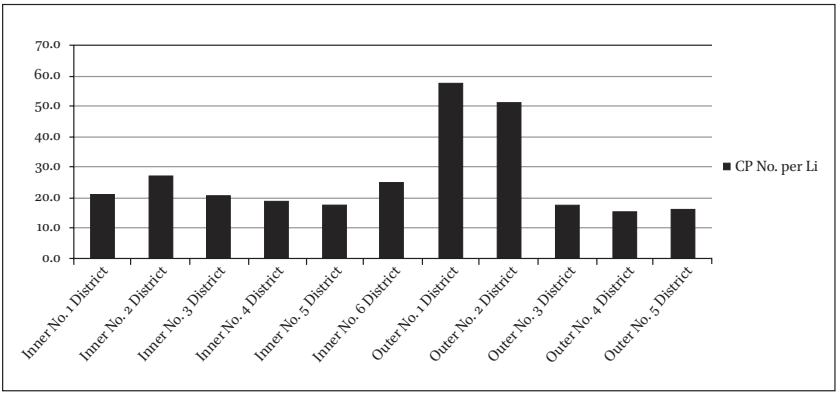

Figure 6.23. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1928.

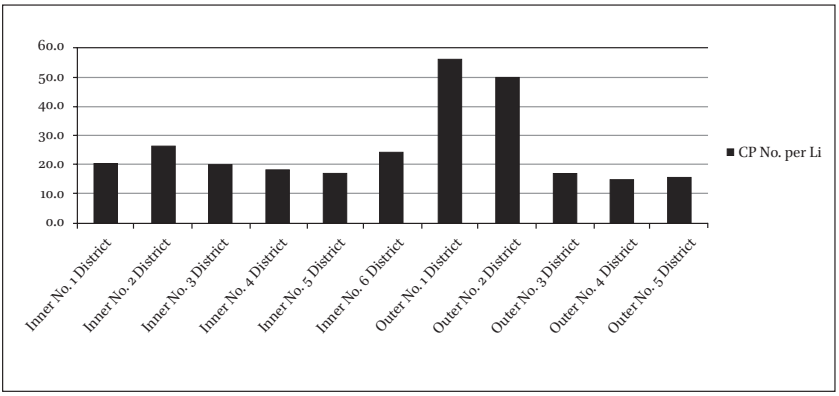

Figure 6.24. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1929.

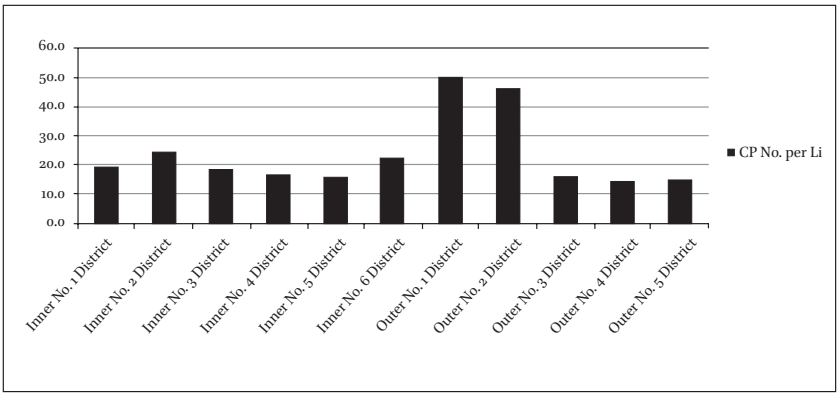

Figure 6.25. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1930.

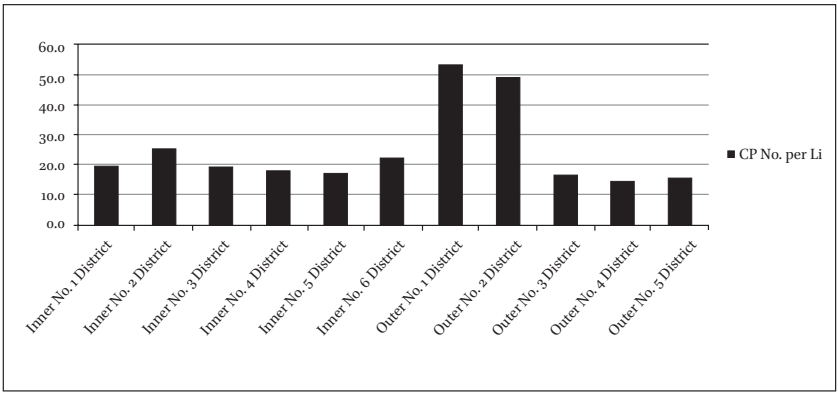

Figure 6.26. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1931.

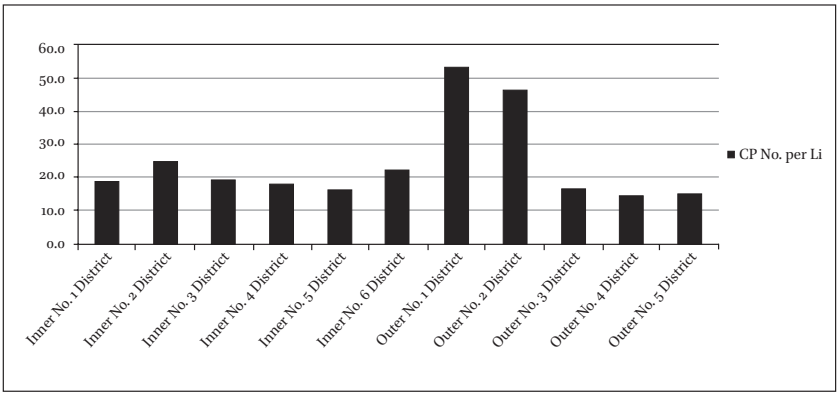

Figure 6.27. Numbers of constable policeman (CP) per *li* in 1932.

6.4. *A Perceived Market of Crime: The Recycling Business in Beijing*

The statistical data recorded by the Police Bureau of Beijing provided useful spatial information by which the deployment of police resources among various districts could be managed. The Police Bureau also created from this data a spatial order of crime by which it constructed an association of crime with other aspects of urban life in Beijing. The previous section has shown the concentration of the Beijing police force within traditional marketplaces in Beijing. Of particular interest is the association made between the location of recycling businesses and the distribution of crime. How was this association understood by those charged with law enforcement?

Beijing was renowned for its recycling businesses and markets of secondhand goods such as clothing, house ware, and antiques. Shops and booths selling secondhand goods could be found in many places in Beijing, including hundreds of shops and stalls located in the Tianqiao area.[19] Shopkeepers collected these goods from a number of sources in Beijing, including ordinary households and pawnshops. Another key source of supply was a group of specialized recyclers known as drum beaters (*daguren* 打鼓人), an occupational group peculiar to Beijing.[20] Drum beaters got their name from the way in which they attracted customers. Rather than operate from a fixed location, drum beaters roamed the city, weaving in and out of streets and small alleyways, announcing their presence by beating on distinctive leather drums. When people heard the sound of the drum they rushed from their homes to bring goods they no longer needed to these itinerants. Buyers and sellers transacted in the open space in the middle of *hutong* [alleys] or in front of homes.[21]

This was a relatively specialized business, thriving in the former imperial capital. There were two types of drum beaters, the hard drum beaters and the soft drum beaters. The hard ones bought more expensive goods, antiques, jewelry, furniture, old books, and products of better days when Beijing was home to China's political elite. Their business was based on the development of a good relationship with Beijing's many antique

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[19] Dong, *Republican Beijing*, pp. 184–185.

[20] Liu Xiaohui 劉小惠, "Daxiaogude 打小鼓的" [Those beating the drums], in Tao Kangde 陶亢德, ed., *Beiping yigu* 北平一顧 [A glance at Beiping] (Shanghai: Yuzhou fengshe, 1938), pp. 167, 169.

[21] For a photograph showing a drum beater transacting in the open space in Beijing, see Fang Qi and Jiran Qi, eds., *Old Peking: The City and Its People* (Hong Kong: Hai Feng Publishing, 1993), p. 90.

shops, and their routes were limited to the areas of the city where imperial elites still struggled to live. Among their main clientele were Manchus, particularly former members of the government elite residing in Beijing. After the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the income of this privileged group declined tremendously. Many had to support themselves by selling the expensive wares adorning their homes. The pressing financial needs of these former elites gave the drum beaters an opportunity to buy at low prices and sell at higher ones.[22]

In contrast, the soft drum beaters wandered around poorer areas of Beijing to collect any used goods with resale value, including shoes, jars, and clothes. These drum beaters, though very tough in negotiating price, provided important channels for poor families who often had to sell used goods and clothing for cash to support themselves, especially when out of work. After the drum beaters had bought these used goods, they sold them at specialized markets to keepers of shops and booths, located mainly at the Desheng Gate, the Xuanwu Gate, Tianqiao, the Anding Gate, Dongdan, and the Tudi Temple.[23]

The drum beaters and recycling businesses obviously provided important distribution channels for used goods for ordinary people as well as the businessmen of Beijing; however, in the eyes of the capital police, the recycling business also created challenges to the law and order of the city. The mobile nature of this business made buyers and sellers of goods difficult to identify. Drum beaters were highly mobile and were far more concerned with making a deal than with verifying the ownership and origin of goods. Beijing police force records contain frequent reports on the activities of drum beaters, and they carry the conclusion that drum beaters were important channels for selling off stolen goods. In the eyes of the police, the business of drum beaters facilitated theft, and the collection of information about drum beaters became part of their routine job of assembling spatial statistics for the city. In the process of analyzing the spatial data, drum beaters came to be linked to other conditions facilitating crime, with the result that secondhand goods themselves became a marker of the illicit and dangerous for Beijing law enforcement.

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[22] Goods collected by hard drum beaters were often sold through hanging-goods stalls (*guahuo pu* 掛貨鋪) or antique shops to the end customers, many of whom were foreigners. See Dong, *Republican Beijing*, pp. 135–138.

[23] Gao Qingxin 高清心, *Beiping huiyilu* 北平回憶錄 [Memory of Beiping] (Taichung: Qingxin wenyishe, 1967), pp. 62–63.

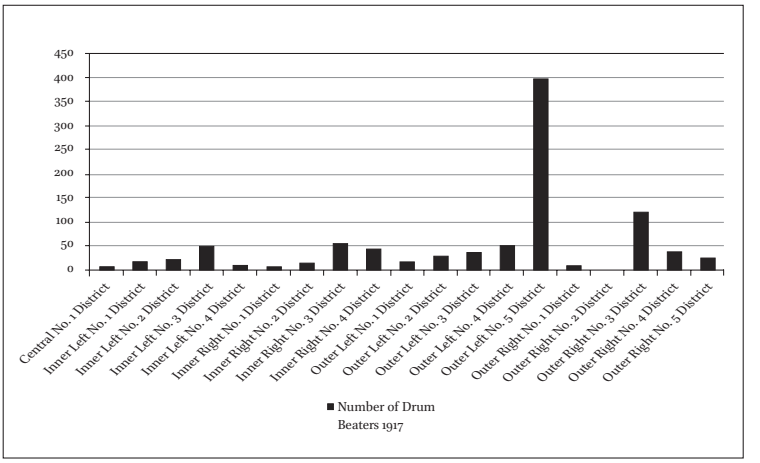

Figure 6.28. Numbers of drum beaters, 1917.

Figure 6.28 is compiled from the information about drum beaters collected by the Beijing police in 1917.[24] From this data we can see that Outside Left No. 5 District had the largest number of drum beaters. This district was a logical choice for drum beaters for a number of reasons. First, it was one of the densest centers of population in the city. Second, this district was also very close to the Tianqiao market, the final destination for many of the goods collected by the drum beaters. In the police report about spatial distribution of drum beaters, the high concentration of drum beaters in the Outside Left No. 5 District was also linked to another characteristic of this section of the city: "the Outside Left No. 5 District contained many abandoned houses and small shops and was habitat for thieves and robbers" (外左五區,破落之戶十居五六,而小店林立尤為盜賊淵藪).[25] The spatial correlation between the location of hidden thieves and the concentration of drum beaters led the police to consider that certain transactions handled by the drum beaters were criminal in nature. Not only were these mobile drum beaters monitored; shops for secondhand goods were also closely watched. In 1913, the Beijing government promulgated the Capital Police Bureau's Articles for Monitoring Business of Used Goods (*Jingshi jingchating qudi jiuhuoyingye zhangcheng* 京師員警廳取締舊貨營業章程) to regulate the opening and operation of businesses dealing in used goods. Under these articles, a shop selling used clothes, antiques,

[24] Republican police files stored at the Beijing Municipal Archives, file no. J181-18-8679.
[25] Ibid.

Figure 6.29. Form of particulars of used goods for submission to the police.

jade items, calligraphic or painted artworks, clocks, and/or watches was required to submit personal details of the shop owners and provide guarantees from three other shops to the Police Bureau before the shop could be opened. The shop owners were required to record details of each transaction including the description of used goods, value of transactions, and names and addresses of sellers (in accordance with the form shown in figure 6.29) and to submit the information to the Police Bureau regularly.[26] If the shop dealt with sellers who were itinerants with no known address, the owner had to find a guarantor or request that the police check their identity before a transaction could take place. The Police Bureau also from time to time circulated lists of stolen goods to shop owners, who were required to report to the police if they came across those goods named on the list.[27] These statutory requirements stemmed from the perception of the law enforcement agency that secondhand goods dealers and shops were the potential markets of crimes, a result that was generated from their analysis of spatiotemporal order of crime maintained in their register of city statistics.

6.5. *Conclusion: The Reordering of Crime during Cultural Transformation*

The analysis in this chapter reveals that the sweeping changes in the criminal justice system in China during the early twentieth century not only transformed the legal system, but also reconstructed the knowledge systems about crimes and criminals. The state agencies, social scientists, businessmen, and possibly others in the society participated in making sense of what constituted and caused crimes in modern China. The overhaul of the imperial Criminal Code and adoption of the new legislative division of crime and police contraventions redefined what was deemed criminal under the law. Only legally defined "crimes" were handled through criminal trials in the new criminal justice system, while other offenses were dealt with summarily by the Police Bureau. Similarly, only these officially recognized "crimes" were recorded in the crime statistics, whereas others would come under the record of police contraventions. These new institutional and bureaucratic frameworks possibly limited or even distorted criminologists' perceptions of the whole picture of criminal activities in

[26] Yinzhu ju, *Faling jilan*, 3:258–259.
[27] Ibid.

Beijing. Despite these possible limitations of the data, Chinese and foreign sociologists of the early twentieth century used the data to establish their views and concerns regarding the crime problem in China.

On the other side, the Beijing police force kept detailed spatiotemporal records of crimes and criminals of the city. Despite inevitable imperfections in the accuracy and completeness of these records, they were used by the law enforcement agencies in forming their own perception and explanation of the crime order in Beijing. From this spatial order, the Police Bureau tried to find the possible roots and causes of crimes. Sometimes, the spatial order of crimes and the spatial order of other walks of urban life in Beijing were connected by the police in forming their view of the city order. A particularly high concentration of policemen at the marketplaces and their close scrutiny over the activities of drum beaters and shops of used goods were examples.

As noted by Kiely in his chapter, some criminologists of the early twentieth century argued that the Western lifestyle and urban culture brought about an increase in crimes in Beijing. The truth to this argument is now difficult to verify. However, from the findings here, it is evident at least that Westernization brought about a change in institutional frameworks and knowledge systems in theorizing, categorizing, and explaining crimes in China. These various approaches interacted with and influenced each other in the reordering of what were deemed crimes, what were perceived as their causes, and how the new criminal justice system should work to cope with the social problem of crime.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DANGEROUS CITIES: JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES, CRIMINOLOGISTS, AND THE PERCEPTION OF CRIME ZONES IN 1920s AND 1930s CHINA

Jan Kiely

According to Yan Jingyue 嚴景耀 (1905–1976), one of the pioneering scholars of criminology in China, the root of China's modern crime problem lay in socioeconomic conditions produced by the destruction of "social equilibrium" through Western intrusion and the consequent emergence of "democracy, militarism, western technology and manufactured goods, *modern cities*."[1] Most of Yan's fellow academic and government crime-and-punishment experts of the 1920s and 1930s agreed that crime was primarily an urban problem, especially of the big cities most influenced by the foreign, modern world. Their view is hardly remarkable in light of certain popular accounts and social-historical studies of the Shanghai of drugs, prostitution, and organized crime.[2] Yet, considered in another light, the large early twentieth-century populations of Shanghai, Tianjin, and other major cities were made up of many people who had migrated not just toward economic opportunity, but also away from social and economic dislocation, violence and banditry in rural hinterlands. We might well wonder how many urbanites in this period believed they lived in crime-ridden, dangerous cities.

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[1] Ching-yueh Yen, "Crime in Relation to Social Change in China" (Ph.D. diss. abstract, University of Chicago, 1934), *American Journal of Sociology* 15.3 (November 1934): 300–301. As Yan rendered his name "Ching-yueh" (Wade-Giles) in his English language publications, which is "Jingyue" in pinyin Romanization (as opposed to the more common "Jingyao" pronunciation of the characters), this volume uses the pinyin Romanization "Yan Jingyue."

[2] Ling Pan, *Old Shanghai: Gangsters in Paradise* (Hong Kong: Heinemann Asia, 1984); Frederic Wakeman Jr., *Policing Shanghai, 1927–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Frederic Wakeman Jr., *The Shanghai Badlands: Wartime Terrorism and Urban Crime, 1937–1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Brian G. Martin, *The Shanghai Green Gang: Politics and Organized Crime, 1919–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); and Christian Henriot, *Prostitution and Sexuality in Shanghai: A Social History, 1849–1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Assuredly, ample cases of theft, robbery, assault, and other activities that, by many standards, would be considered criminal occurred in the major cities of Republican China. Nonetheless, it is evident that the idea of the modern urban crime problem came into focus through the lenses of new institutions and agents assigned to identify, analyze, police, and eradicate crime. This process was one of the realms of complex interaction between new, expanding state agencies of order and people living through processes of dynamic economic, social, and cultural change. While appreciating this broader context, this study concentrates on examining the perceptions of government and academic experts and their characterization of and theorizing about crime in China. Michelle Perrot once wrote, "there is a discourse of crime that reveals the obsessions of society."[3] In China's early decades as a republic and a nation-state, the discussions of a first generation of technical crime experts—elite academic criminologists, penologists, prison wardens, and judicial officials—exhibited revealing obsessions with and anxieties about rapid social-cultural change and its threat to idealized notions of morality and the social-ethical order. Their greatest and most obsessive concern was with the problem of big cities.

The crime experts' anxieties about China's large cities delineated sharp spatial-cultural contrasts between the city and the country and within cities. This tendency recalls Raymond Williams's observation in his classic study of urbanizing Britain, *The Country and the City*, that "the contrast of the country and the city is one of the major forms in which we become conscious of a central part of our experience and of the crises of our society."[4] Judicial authorities and criminologists, in writing about their concerns regarding a modern, urban social-cultural crisis, articulated an influential sense of difference and division in space and society, contrasting cultural geographies of stability and security with those of disorder and danger.

6.1. *Beiyang Judicial Authorities and the Urban Crime Problem*

The new system of modern police forces, laws, procurators, courts, judicial bureaucracy, and prisons, born of the late Qing "New Policies" reforms,

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[3] Michelle Perrot, "Delinquency and the Penitentiary System in Nineteenth-Century France," in Robert Forster and Orest Ranum, eds., *Deviants and the Abandoned in French Society* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 219.

[4] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 289.

established standard methods of statistical record keeping to assess crime and criminals during the first decade of the Republic. The statistics indicate, as Michael Ng also points out in his chapter herein, that crime was overwhelmingly concentrated in the largest cities and was increasing rapidly.[5] Alarmed by this data, leading judicial officials such as Wang Shurong and penal officials including the modern prison wardens Wang Yuanzeng and Li Zhuxun held that crime was a major social problem resulting from social and economic turmoil. The rapid growth of urban populations, the accelerated pace of city life, new technologies, and licentious, foreign urban habits and styles—indeed, all the cumulative effects of industrialization, urbanization, and modern urban culture—were implicated in the soaring crime numbers. As Madeleine Dong has shown, Warden Wang Yuanzeng associated crime with urbanites and urban spaces.[6] The statistics appeared to confirm many of the foreign criminology theories emphasizing social-economic explanations for crime that circulated through the translations and trainings undertaken by a number of leading, mostly Japanese-educated, officials.[7]

In fairness, these officials were not blind to imperfections in their developing institutions. They knew that statistics could only be as dependable

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[5] Sifa bu zongwuting diwu ke 司法部總務廳第五科, *Diyici xingshi tongji nianbao* 第一次刑事統計年報 [First annual report of crime statistics] (Beijing, 1914); "Difang shenpanting siniandu shoushou xingshi anjian bijiao biao 地方審判庭四年度授受刑事案件比較表" [Comparative chart of 1915 local court–processed criminal cases], *Sifa gongbao* 司法公報 [Justice report] 60 (30 May 1916): 113–115; *Sifa bu di wuci xingshi tongji nian* 司法部第五次刑事統計年 [Ministry of Justice fifth annual crime statistics] (Beijing, 1921), pp. 1–4, 309–314; *Sifa jiuniandu banshi qingxing baogao* 司法九年度辦事情形報告 [Justice management situation report for 1920] 161 (Beijing, 1922); and Faquan taolun weiyuanhui, *Kaocha sifa ji* 考察司法記 [A record of investigating the judiciary] (Beijing, 1924), pp. 514–515. See also prison records (which were a primary means of assessing crime rates), for instance, Second Historical Archives of China (hereafter SHAC) 1049/2442, 1925; 1049/2440, 1925; 1049/2472, 1927; 1049/2642, 1927; 1049/2709, 1927; Jiangsu Provincial Archives (hereafter JPA) 1047/26/440, 1922; Zhang Jingyu 張鏡予, "Beijing sifabu fanzui tongji de fenxi 北京司法部犯罪統計的分析" [Analysis of the Beijing Ministry of Justice crime statistics], *Shehui xuejie* 社會學界 [Sociology circles] 2 (June 1928): 80–83, 89; also see Jan Kiely, "Making Good Citizens: The Reformation of Prisoners in China's First Modern Prisons, 1907–1937" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2001), and Frank Dikötter, *Crime, Punishment, and the Prison in Modern China, 1895–1949* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

[6] Madeleine Yue Dong, *Republican Beijing: The City and Its Histories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 229.

[7] Wang Shurong, "Gailiang sifa yijian shu 改良司法意見書" [An opinion letter on reforming justice] *Falu pinglun* 法律評論 [The legal critic] 90 (March 1925); Li Zhuxun, *Jiangsu diyi jianyu baogao* 江蘇第一監獄報告 [Report on the Jiangsu Number One Prison] (Nanjing, 1919), including p. 1 of Wang Shurong's preface; and Wang Yuanzeng, *Jianyuxue* 監獄學 [Penology] (Beijing, 1924), pp. 137–151.

as the police and other officials were in carrying out their duties and keeping records. It was no secret that variations in reported criminal-case indictment rates between provinces reflected inconsistent practices in maintaining statistics.[8] Moreover, even as the Legal Revision Commission and Supreme Court in Beijing attempted to define a consistent legal framework, police, procurators, and judges exercised wide-ranging discretion as they navigated through an unresolved array of old and new laws, legal principles, and popular concepts of justice and morality. Sentencing practices for drug crimes, for instance, seem to have varied especially widely between provinces and cities.[9] Hence, crime statistics, as most leading officials appreciated, offered, at best, an incomplete representation of the problem.

These same officials, however, did not seem aware that the urban crime crisis had been made visible and so, in effect, had been partly manufactured by the new legal-judicial-penal institutional system itself, because it was primarily located in, focused on, and, consequently, most effective in the largest cities. Perhaps some fanned the flames of crime fears out of a bureaucratic self-interest, but most seemed merely to be finding what they were looking for. How could they not? Whereas the urban-based modern court system, which increased from 46 courts in 1914 to 136 in 1926, regularly reported to the Ministry of Justice, most of the nearly 1,800 mainly rural county office courts did not. Committed to projects of modernizing social discipline, the largest government centers and the major treaty port cities held the concentrations of police, procurators, judges, prisons, and judicial officials that most often apprehended, sentenced, and incarcerated offenders and entered them into statistical charts. The new agencies of state order not only extended their capabilities far beyond what had previously been possible, but also were acting upon many new laws and expanded definitions of criminal conduct. As a result, for instance, Beijing, which by numerous accounts was widely considered to have been

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[8] Zhang Jingyu, "Beijing sifabu fanzui tongji de fenxi," p. 89.

[9] *Report of the Commission on Extra-Territoriality in China* 3 (His Majesty's Secretary for Foreign Affairs, London, 1926), p. 48; Yan Jingyue 嚴景耀, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi 北京犯罪之社會分析" [Social analysis of crime in Beijing], *Shehui xuejie* 2 (June 1928): 38–42; Zhou Shuzhao, "Beiping yibai ming nufan yanjiu 北平一百名女犯研究" [Research on a hundred women criminals in Beiping], *Shehui xuejie* 6 (1931): 43; Zhang Jingyu, "Beijing sifabu fanzui tongji de fenxi," pp. 95, 121; Wang Shurong, "Gailiang sifa yijian shu," 1925 p. 99; *Sifa bu baniandu banshi qingxing baogao* 司法部八年度辦事情形報告 [Ministry of Justice 1919 management situation report] (Beijing, 1919), pp. 135–136; Yeung-li Liang, "The New Criminal Code," *China Weekly Review* 61 (8 September 1928): 104; and Dikötter, *Crime, Punishment, and the Prison in Modern China*, pp. 80, 97–98.

China's best policed and most secure city of the time, consistently registered among the highest crime statistics.[10]

The statistical records simultaneously illuminated and obscured social realities. Criminologist Zhang Jingyu's 張鏡予 1928 study of Ministry of Justice national crime statistics from 1914 to 1923 showed that drug offenses were the largest crime category at 27.4% of total arrests, followed by theft at 19.6%. Prison records generally reflect these figures, even as they indicate geographic variations.[11] The lists of such crime categories, along with suspects' ages, employment categories, and education backgrounds, and even files for specific cases including mug shots, certainly do provide an image of the criminal offender and crime, but it is a crude and grainy one. One keenly senses the absence of the tangled stories and settings behind individual cases. References to unemployment and poverty tell nothing of the many miseries of the time—the destitution, warfare and local violence, droughts, floods and famines, predatory extractions, and social abuses—that led those exposed or vulnerable, at particular times and places, to pursue a variety of survival strategies, some of which resulted in criminal offenses and arrests. Statistical formats largely ignored cultural factors and the diverse alternative criminal cultures with their own practices and styles. Through other sources we can learn of skilled professional thieves such as the notorious "flying burglar" of 1920s Beijing, Li San (a.k.a. "Li the Swallow") or of the spectrum of criminal gangs ranging from major organized crime associations including the Green Gang and Red Circle to native-place specialists such as Shanghai's Shaoxing kidnappers and Subei armed robbers, and various groups of local thugs with their own romantic vagrant (*jianghu* 江湖) codes of conduct, slang, and

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[10] Zhang Jingyu, "Beijing sifabu fanzui tongji de fenxi," p. 82; *Report of the Commission on Extra-Territoriality in China*, pp. 51, 54, 63; Sidney D. Gamble, *Peking: A Social Survey* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1921), p. 75; Jun Ke Choy, *My China Years* (San Francisco: East/West Publishing, 1974), p. 56; also see statistics in Faquan taolun weiyuanhui, *Kaocha sifa ji*. David Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing: City, People and Politics in the 1920s* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989), p. 71; and Philip Huang, *Code, Custom, and Legal Practice in China: The Qing and the Republic Compared* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 2.

[11] Zhang Jingyu, "Beijing sifabu fanzui tongji de fenxi," pp. 95, 121; Zhou Shuzhao, "Beiping yibai ming nufan yanjiu," p. 43; and Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," pp. 38–43; see prison records and statistical sources in note 5. On drug crimes, also see Yin Changfa, "Minchu Shanxi diyi jianyu zuifan de jiaohui yu zuoye tanxi 民初山西第一監獄罪犯的教誨與作業探悉" [An inquiry into prisoner instruction and work in the Shanxi No. 1 Prison in the early Republic], in Xia Zongsu and Zhu Jimin, eds., *Zhongwai jianyu zhidu bijiao yanjiu wenji* 中外監獄制度比較研究文集 [Collected comparative research on Chinese and foreign prison systems] (Beijing: Falu chubanshe, 2001), p. 359.

secret jargon.[12] Crime is surely an imprecise category as a social fact and a socially acknowledged and state-defined discursive construction, and so it is notoriously difficult to study in the present and the past. Yet, it also has its own socially embedded cultures and practices that must be real enough to victims and participants alike.

Official statistics, for all their limitations, do provide a broad, general profile of the most common criminal offenders (and prison inmates): they were poor, property-less, unemployed, uneducated men in their twenties and thirties arrested for petty theft or sometimes drug offenses in and around major cities.[13] The modernizing judicial-penal system, in effect, primarily busied itself with disciplining the poor *guanggun* (光棍 bare stick) male in the city. Frank Dikötter, in his study of crime, punishment, and prisons in Republican China, concludes, hence, that "property and violence . . . were the main objects of the penal system," that "social discrimination against the poor was inherent" in the system, and that "illiterate classes were literally dangerous classes in the eyes of the elite."[14] Often formulaic, reductive, and simplistic, the official statistics and records are certainly as much indices of the attitudes of officials as they are of actual criminal social behavior. Terse categories and comments reveal specific perspectives. For instance, a typical 1923 Ministry of Justice report concluded that "half of the various offenders come from among those who lack an occupation and half from among those that lack education."[15] The diagnosis anticipated the treatment, that is, work training and education, in order to transform offenders into productive citizens. Indeed, the elite legal-judicial officials often exhibited a paternalistic sense of ordering the lower classes for the stability of society and

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[12] Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," pp. 53–60; Zhao Jianxun, "Gaige jianyu yijianshu 改革監獄意見書" [Opinion letter on prison reform], *Falu pinglun* 600 (12 May 1935): 12; Chen Zhao, *Yi fofa: Guanli ganhua xingshi renfan zhi jianyi* 以佛法：管理感化刑事人犯之建議 [With Buddhism: A proposal for the management and reformation of convicts] (Beiping: Shanshu ju, 1935), p. 16; Li Yaochen, *Renzai jianghu* 人在江湖 [People of the romantic vagrant world] (Xianggang: Zhongyuan chubanshe, 1990), pp. 13–16; and Martin, *The Shanghai Green Gang*, pp. 18, 30.

[13] See statistical sources in note 5; Zhang Jingyu, "Beijing sifabu fanzui tongji de fenxi," pp. 97, 113, 132–143; Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," pp. 53–60; Li Jinghan, "Beiping zuidi xiandu de shenghuo chengdu de taolun 北平最低限度的生活程度的討論" [A discussion of the lowest level of livelihood in Beiping], *Shehui xuejie* 3 (September 1929): 9; Strand, *Rickshaw Beijing*, pp. 204–205; and Dikötter, *Crime, Punishment, and the Prison in Modern China*, pp. 77–78.

[14] Dikötter, *Crime, Punishment, and the Prison in Modern China*, p. 78.

[15] "Cheshi chafu ge xinjian jiaohui qingxing 徹實查覆各新監教誨情形" [Thoroughly investigate and report on the condition of instruction in the various new prisons], *Sifa gongbao* 179 (31 July 1923): 20.

the support of the nation-state. Crime and criminals were a major social problem that was to be understood and treated, but it was a problem that elicited considerable sympathy and condescension rather than fear of physical danger or a threat to state stability or the position of social elites. If there were times and places within cities that seemed to some to be lawless and unsafe, this appears to have had much to do with the particular social position and vantage point of the observer. Generally, educated elites and established urbanites tended to feel secure in most parts of major cities, much more so than in the often unruly small towns and rural areas. The crowds of all groups and classes that flocked to, as Dong has written, "*guang* Tianqiao 逛天橋" (wander around Tianqiao), one of the areas with the highest crime rates, had to be aware of the risk of being cheated, but they showed little fear of crime.[16] One junior government official recalled of his life in Beijing in the mid-to-late 1910s, "there were few burglaries or serious crimes. Pickpockets and holdups were unheard of; it was safe to loiter about in a crowded market or public amusement place."[17] The poor offenders were not so much seen as belonging to dangerous classes as they were understood to be of the ranks of the misguided and ignorant in great need of education and guidance as dictated by elites and the state.

6.2. *A 1920s Prison Instructor Warns of the Dangerous City*

Although the penal-judicial officials did not evince fear of the poor as "dangerous classes," they did believe there to be something dangerous about the major cities. This is illustrated in a 1925 prison instruction textbook, *Introduction to Moral Instruction* (*Jiaohui qianshuo* 教誨淺說) compiled by the Jiangsu No. 2 Prison instructor Shao Zhenji 邵振璣 from his own instruction notes. A recurring underlying theme in the lessons Shao taught inmates between 1922 and 1924 in this prison at Caohejing in suburban Shanghai was that rural China and urban Shanghai were moral realms separate and fundamentally different from each other. The convicts were not dangerous for the city; the city was dangerous for these mostly poor, young men. Shao held that Shanghai, with its unrestrained commerce, leisure-centered consumer culture, and modern styles and habits, was dangerous in the sense that it was morally degenerate and

[16] Dong, *Republican Beijing*, pp. 172, 192–193.
[17] Choy, *My China Years*, p. 56.

corrupting. And, the peril was greater in some places and sections of the city than in others. Shao contrasted the order and hygienic cleanliness of the International Settlement with the disorder of the Chinese-governed working-class districts of Zhabei and Nanshi. He told the inmates to avoid working in teahouses, bars, bathhouses, and theaters and on dock gangs. The money might be easy, but they could not live an upright and secure life by doing such work. A major problem, as Shao saw it, was modern urban culture. He even spoke out, for instance, against the harmful consequences of "the current Shanghai style of staying up late."[18]

The aspect of Shanghai society that most troubled Shao was the emergence of new kinds of relations between the sexes and new types of liberated, unrestrained women who in their depravity had become a danger to society. Freedom of romantic and sexual choice and pleasure, in Shao's view, was antithetical to the proper sentiments necessary for the family. The greatest error, he contended, would be for youths fascinated with "illicit relations between men and women" to confuse this with "true affection." Similarly, he was troubled, like so many of his male contemporaries,[19] by the elite, urban "modern girl" and her misguided romantic notions of love. Worst of all, in Shao's book, were the concubines of the wealthy. These women of "lost character" were consumed with extravagant desires, petty quarrels, and jealousies, "relationships with chauffeurs, familiarity with actors, and intimacy with 'pretty boys,' " and, in the end, "abscond with everything." Even the ordinary man, Shao argued, ought to avoid having mistresses, as such women would only drag them into financial ruin and, eventually, to theft and robbery and even plots to murder their wives. The root vice in all of this, he held, was female vanity; from it came much immoral conduct and crime. Vanity was even responsible for making young women "want to be the slaves of foreigners and sell products for them" in unseemly ways in Shanghai department stores. All men had to be warned of the dangers of urban licentiousness, female depravity, and venereal disease.[20]

In Shao's mind, the realm of licentious women and urban disorder contrasted sharply with the comparatively minor problems of rural China.

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[18] Shao Zhenji 邵振璣, *Jiaohui qianshuo* 教誨淺說 [Introduction to instruction] (Shanghai: Foxue shuju, 1936 [first edition 1925]), Vol. 2, p. 14.

[19] Madeleine Y. Dong, "Who is Afraid of the Chinese Modern Girl?" in The Modern Girl Around the World Research Group, eds., *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 206, 214.

[20] Shao Zhenji, *Jiaohui qianshuo*, pp. 24–27, 64, 67–68, 71–72; on the theme of female vanity, see Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures*, p. 257.

He generally depicted rural criminal cases as products of backward, traditional behavior by ignorant, but not particularly evil, country rubes. On these matters, Shao adopted a benevolent tone and even represented himself as a modernist defender of women. For instance, he sharply criticized female infanticide and denounced men who "regard their wives as slaves" and "hit and curse them" as "rural bumpkins" with "habits that are very unjust." Like a late imperial county magistrate or gentry moralist, Shao suggested that rural crime could be addressed by educating villagers in Confucian social ethics and so fostering a harmonious agrarian community. With this social order still in place, rural China needed only mild, corrective adjustments to maintain the old order. In Shanghai, however, in this urban space where the patriarchy, as we would now define it, had collapsed and unrestrained women caused social havoc, and where rampant crime was emblematic of a broader social-moral disorder, stronger measures were necessary. The morally dangerous city had to be disciplined primarily with a campaign for "civic morality" (*gongde* 公德).[21]

6.3. *The Scientists of Crime in the Nanjing Decade*

When the Nationalists came to power in the late 1920s, it was not only government statistics that indicated the existence of a major urban crime problem: newspapers were filled with sensationalized crime reports mostly from urban areas. Writing in 1929, one scholar estimated that crime stories accounted for a quarter of all newspaper content.[22] He also decried the socially harmful pervasiveness of popular crime fiction. Yan Jingyue concurred that late 1920s Beiping (Beijing) newspapers were filled with crime reports, especially "reports of listening in at court" filed by crime reporters attending trials.[23] Although seen as incitement to crime by these experts, such reports indicate the heightened public interest in crime and a mass-mediated public discourse about crime as a social phenomenon. Yet, in the late 1910s and 1920s, most academic writings about crime and punishment consisted of summaries of, or commentaries on, European,

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[21] Shao Zhenji, *Jiaohui qianshuo*, pp. 25, 66, 97–101, 103–115.

[22] Deng Juesheng 鄧覺生, "Fanzui de shehui yuanyin 犯罪的社會原因" [The social causes of crime], *Jianyu zazhi* 監獄雜誌 [Prison magazine] 1.1 (November 1929): 4.

[23] On the crime wave in Shanghai in the late 1920s and early 1930s, see Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, pp. 6–10; Yan Jingyue, "Beiping jianyu jiaohui yu jiaoyu 北平監獄教誨與教育" [Moral instruction and education in the Beiping prisons], *Shehui xuejie* 4 (June 1930): 41.

North American, and Japanese theories. Legal scholars and leading officials writing for such law journals as *The Legal Critic* (*Falu pinglun* 法律評論), of the Legal Criticism Society at Chaoyang University, and *Legal Studies News* (*Faxue xinbao* 法學新報), of the Fengtian Legal Studies Research Association, did not yet provide well-informed expert assessments of China's own criminal element.[24] This changed at the end of the 1920s with the emergence of a first generation of academic criminologists and penologists trained as social scientists in the leading Chinese universities and abroad. They advanced influential views of crime supported by the authority of their purportedly scientific methods.

There were two main groups, a Beiping school based in the Yenching University Sociology Department and a loose collection of scholars in Shanghai. In the summer of 1927, Yenching sociology graduate student, and later professor, Yan Jingyue began his lengthy on-site social investigation "Research on China's Crime Situation" in Beijing prisons with the assistance of long-time director of the Ministry of Justice Prison Bureau, Wang Wenbao 王文豹. Studying crime through the convicts in the prison laboratory became the hallmark of Yan and his students, notably Zhang Jingyu 張鏡予, Xu Yongshun 徐雍舜, Zhou Shuzhao 周叔昭, and Xu Chang 許昶. With funding from the government (primarily the National Central Research Academy Social Science Research Institute) and private, mostly American institutions (such as the Rockefeller Foundation), Yan's Yenching group eventually observed and interviewed inmates in major modern prisons all over China, publishing most of their findings in their department-supported journal, *Sociology Circles* (*Shehui xuejie* 社會學界). Most interested and influenced by such American, progressive, social reform–oriented sociologists as John L. Gillin (1871–1958) and Charles A. Ellwood (1873–1946), and, above all, by the Dutch Marxist social criminologist Willem A. Bonger (1876–1940), Yan and his students sought to use empirical studies to encourage social reform.[25]

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[24] Yan Jingyue 嚴景耀, "Fanzui shumu 犯罪書目" [Bibliography of criminology], *Shehui xuejie* 3 (September 1929): appendix. Other notable journals were *China Law Review* (Shanghai), *Falu zhoukan* 法律週刊 (Law weekly; Beijing), and *Faxuehui zazhi* 法學會雜誌 (Legal studies association magazine; Beijing).

[25] Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," pp. 34–35; Yan Jingyue, "Zhongguo jianyu wenti 中國監獄問題" [The Chinese prison question], *Shehui xuejie* 3 (September 1929): 26 ; Zhou Shuzhao, "Beiping yibai ming nufan yanjiu," p. 32; and Yan Jingyue, *Zhongguo de fanzui wenti yu shehui bianqian de guanxi* 中國的犯罪問題與社會變遷的關係 [Crime in relation to social change in China], trans. Wu Zhen (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1986), pp. 1–3 (Wu Zhen's introduction); also see *Jianyu zazhi* 1.1 (November 1929): 1–2; *Shehui xuejie* 2 (June 1928): 1; 4 (June 1930): 241 and appendix (5, 9). On sociology at

The relatively dispersed assortment of Shanghai criminologists included plainly Marxist scholars such as Li Jianhua 李劍華 (1900–1993) of Fudan University and later Shanghai Law University, Guanghua University's Deng Juesheng 鄧覺生, and the legal scholar Li Maodi 李茂棣. The Tokyo-educated Li secretly joined the Chinese Communist Party after his imprisonment by the Nationalists in the 1930s. The young women scholars Xu Huifang and Liu Qingyu shared similar social interests with the Marxists, but they focused on working class women, undertook prisoner studies like the Yenching scholars, and shared the progressive social reformists views of their adviser, Shanghai Baptist University professor Qian Zhenya 錢振亞. Others, including Shanghai Law University professor Chen Wenzao 陳文藻 (1905–?) and his sometime colleague Zhao Chen 赵琛 (1899–1969), were lawyers and legal scholars. Zhao was a Nationalist Party member, and he, Chen, and many others, including Yan Jingyue, eventually served as judges or judicial officials. Among a number of other names in the field in Shanghai, two of the most influential, Sun Xiong 孫雄 (1895–1939) and Rui Jiarui 芮佳瑞, were serving Shanghai prison wardens. Warden Sun (of the Jiangsu Shanghai Second Special District Prison) read works by all types of authors—the Italians Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) and Enrico Ferri (1856–1929), the Americans Gillin and Charles R. Henderson (1848–1915), the Japanese Terada Seiichi 寺田精一 (1884–1922), and even the latest Soviet and Nazi theorists—and tried to fit some aspect of every theory into his own understanding of crime.[26]

Yenching, see R. D. Arkush, *Fei Xiaotong and Sociology in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981); Fu Sudong, "Yanjing daxue shehuixue xi sanshi nian 燕京大學社會學系三十年" [Thirty years of the Yanjing University Sociology Department], *Yanda wenshi ziliao* 燕大文史資料 [Historical materials of Yenching University] (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1991), 2:139–157; also see Dong, *Republican Beijing*, pp. 221–223.

[26] Li Jianhua 李劍華, *Fanzuixue* 犯罪學 [Criminology] (Shanghai: Shanghai faxue bianze she, 1936), p. 1; Xu Youchun, ed., *Minguo renwu dacidian* 民國人物大辭典 [Biographical dictionary of the Republic] (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1991), p. 316; Xu Huifang and Liu Qingyu, "Shanghai nuxingfan de shehui fenxi 上海女性犯的社會分析" [Social analysis of Shanghai female offenders], *Dalu* 大陆 [Mainland] 1.4 (1 October 1932): 71; Sun Xiong 孫雄, *Fanzuixue yanjiu* 犯罪學研究 [Criminology research] (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1939), p. 9; Li Maodi, "Lun jiaoyuxing zhuyi yu fanjiaoyuxing zhuyi 論教育性主意與反教育性主意" [On educational-punishmentism and anti-educational-punishmentism], *Faxue zazhi* 法學雜誌 [Legal studies magazine] 8.1 (January 1935); Sun Xiong, *Yuwu daquan* 獄務大全 [Compendium on prison affairs] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1935); Rui Jiarui 芮佳瑞, *Jianyu gongchang guanli fa* 監獄工廠管理法 [Methods of prison workshop management] (Shanghai, 1934); and Rui Jiarui, *Jianyu zhidu lun* 監獄制度論 [On the prison system] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1934).

To be sure, the first generation of Chinese criminologists was a highly diverse group of scholars. While they all tended to view crime through the categories and terminologies of North American, European, and Japanese scholarship, they were interested in different theorists and disciplinary approaches and often stressed that their empirical studies showed the situation in China to be entirely unlike that of Europe and North America. Moreover, they considered a multiplicity of explanations and were generally far better informed and more sophisticated and savvy about the limitations of their data than the officials of the 1920s. Yan Jingyue and Zhang Jingyu, for example, both discussed the methodological problems inherent to depending on incomplete and often flawed government statistics. Sun Xiong explicitly acknowledged that high urban crime rates might be related to the thorough enforcement of laws by city police forces. Scholars and officials discussed anomalies in the data, regional and local differences in crime patterns and issues of time and season, as well as multiple causes.[27]

Yet, despite their sophistication and diversity, these scholars shared certain fundamental views and assumptions with one another and with many leading judicial-penal authorities. Above all, like the Beiyang-era officials, the criminologists believed China to be suffering from a serious problem of rising crime in the major cities. They quoted leading officials and government reports and pointed to records of rising police arrests, prison populations, and recidivism rates. Those looking, for instance, at conviction statistics or major modern prison records in Jiangsu could see that increasing numbers of poor young men were being arrested, convicted, and incarcerated for theft or robbery in the big cities. Some of the figures could appear quite alarming; Zhou Shuzhao was led to claim that the Beiping crime rate had spiked up 68 percent in 1929 alone.[28]

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[27] Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," pp. 33–38, 43–44, 47, 50–53, 56, 58, 61 63–64, 66; Yan Jingyue, "Zhongguo jianyu wenti," pp. 26, 39; Yan Jingyue, "Fanzui gailun 犯罪概論" [Introduction to crime], *Jianyu zazhi* 1.1 (November 1929): 2–3; Zhang Jingyu, "Beijing sifabu fanzui tongji de fenxi," p. 84; Zhou Shuzhao, "Beiping yibai ming nufan yanjiu," pp. 31–37, 80–81; Li Jianhua, *Fanzuixue*, pp. 4, 6; Li Jianhua, *Jianyuxue*, pp. 45–47; Deng Juesheng, "Fanzui de shehui yuanyin," pp. 1–2; Lu Renji, *Ganhua jiaoyu* 感化教育 [Reformatory education] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1931), pp. 9, 12, 14–16, 25, 29–35; Xu and Liu, "Shanghai nuxingfan de shehui fenxi," pp. 71–74, 78; Sun Xiong, *Fanzuixue yanjiu*, pp. 1–9, 143; Xu Yongshun, "Dongsansheng zhi yimin yu fanzuin 東三省之移民與犯罪" [Crime and migrants to the three northeastern provinces], *Shehui xuejie* 5 (1931): 147; "Fajie xiaoxi 法界消息." [News of the legal circles], *Falu pinglun* 613 (11 August 1935): 12; and Ye Chucang, *Shoudu zhi* 首都志 [Capital gazetteer] (Nanjing, 1935), p. 618.

[28] Zhou Shuzhao, "Beiping yibai ming nufan yanjiu," p. 40; Lu Renji, *Ganhua jiaoyu*, p. 2; Li Jianhua, *Jianyuxue*, p. 5; Sun Xiong, *Fanzuixue yanjiu*, p. 85; Sun Xiong, *Jianyuxue*

The Shanghai group and eventually Yan Jingyue fixated on Shanghai as the ultimate "den of crime" (*zui'e yuansou* 罪惡淵藪). The Shanghai crime numbers troubled them. On an average day in 1931, the police in the Chinese-governed districts of Shanghai remanded about a hundred offenders to the courts, and the courts dispatched between twenty and thirty convicts to prison. That same year, there were thirty-three murder cases and twenty-five major kidnapping cases reported to police. Authorities estimated that seventeen thousand Chinese and foreign criminals were active in the municipal area, and that these were mostly thieves who were responsible for approximately 2,220,000 yuan of property theft each year.[29] If not terribly shocking in historical comparative terms for a city of three million, this data alarmed the crime experts of the day. Most criminologists saw this seemingly ever-increasing urban crime trend as a major social problem produced by, and the most evident symptom of, the broad and vast economic, social, and related cultural dislocations of the modern era. Many emphasized economic-determinist explanations; Yan Jingyue argued that about 85 percent of Chinese criminals were motivated by economic conditions. The perspective implied that a crisis of this scale demanded a correspondingly massive political transformation.[30]

Moreover, with even more precision than the Beiyang officials, these criminologists presumed and so repeatedly depicted an essential contrast between dangerous, modernizing cities and a relatively peaceful, traditional countryside. Sometimes their views could seem quite obtuse. Evidently thinking of areas untrammeled by the banditry and disorder afflicting many rural counties, Yan Jingyue wrote of "a relative absence of crime in rural communities." Other criminologists, exhibiting urban prejudices similar to those of Instructor Shao Zhenji, associated rural crime with the uncouth, backward behavior of ignorant, superstitious country

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監獄學 [Penology] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1936), p. 3; "Luo Wengan shi zhi gaige sifa xingzhengyuan 羅文幹氏之改革司法行政院" [Mr. Luo Wengan's reform of the Ministry of Judicial Administration], *Falu pinglun* 432 (24 January 1932): 39; and Xu and Liu, "Shanghai nuxingfan de shehui fenxi," p. 74.

[29] "Zui'e yuansou zhi Shanghai 罪惡淵藪之上海" [Shanghai, den of crime], *Falu pinglun* 432 (24 January 1932): 38; "Fajie xiaoxi," *Falu pinglun* 427 (20 December 1931): 20–21; also see Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, pp. 6–10.

[30] Yan Jingyue, "Fanzui gailun," pp. 2–3; Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," p. 36; Zhou Shuzhao, "Beiping yibai ming nufan yanjiu," pp. 41, 48–50, 52–54, 57–62, 73–77; Xu and Liu, "Shanghai nuxingfan de shehui fenxi," pp. 74–75, 78–81, 84–85; Zhang Jingyu, "Beijing sifabu fanzui tongji de fenxi," p. 83; Li Jianhua, *Jianyuxue*, pp. 47–48, 116; Deng Juesheng, "Fanzui de shehui yuanyin," pp. 2–5; Li Maodi, "Lun jiaoyuxing zhuyi yu fanjiaoyuxing zhuyi," pp. 21–22; Sun Xiong, *Fanzuixue yanjiu* 1939, pp. 74, 80; and Dikötter, *Crime, Punishment, and the Prison in Modern China*, p. 203.

people.[31] Many ignored rural China entirely, showing no awareness of the rural origins of certain urban criminal conduct. Big cities, with their modern social and economic problems, were defined in the minds of many as *the* intrinsic spaces of crime and disorder.

6.4. *Crime Zones and Crime Anxieties*

The writings of the criminologists also delineated a social geography of crime *within* cities. Primarily, they associated crime zones with conditions similar to those described by foreign scholars. The "bad areas" were the slums of the poor and those popular, crowded commercial places with cheap leisure activities and entertainments. Yan Jingyue identified the impoverished and commercially lively Beijing neighborhoods of Outer Chaoyang Gate and Tianqiao, where rural migrants and an urban underclass of unemployed vagrants, beggars, and street prostitutes resided and mixed together, as one kind of high-crime zone. In pointing to Tianqiao and also to the Qianmen area as crime hotspots, Sun Xiong stressed, much as Ng does in his chapter, that crime flourished in the busy, crowded marketplaces. Amid the distractions of crowds, stalls, and street entertainers, thieves and pickpockets gathered. But Sun also held, writing of the 1930s, that crime was common in the mat-shed shantytown squatter communities around the outskirts of Beijing.[32] A similar pattern could be found in Shanghai. Most crime experts considered the working class, low-rent Zhabei and Nanshi districts as hotbeds of crime due to urban poverty. The other high-crime areas, according to Xu Huifang and Liu Qingyu, were the central commercial districts of Nanjing Road and Avenue Edward VII/Avenue Foch. Crime was particularly common in quarters with large crowds and licentious leisure enterprises. For Xu and Liu, dangers lurked not just in Shanghai's gambling houses, opium dens, and brothels, but also in teahouses, opera theaters, and the grand "pleasure palaces" for popular entertainment like the Great World and Spirits and Fairies World. These were the locations of, in their words, "a world of wanton, indulgent living."[33]

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[31] Yen, "Crime in Relation to Social Change in China," pp. 301–302; Sun Xiong, *Fanzuixue yanjiu*, pp. 56–58, 79, 86–87, 92.

[32] Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," pp. 53–60; Sun Xiong, *Fanzuixue yanjiu*, pp. 74, 80.

[33] Xu and Liu, "Shanghai nuxingfan de shehui fenxi," pp. 74–79, 85–87; Sun Xiong, *Fanzuixue yanjiu*, pp. 74, 80.

Criminologists, in effect, mapped out a geography of crime, which, as with their contrast between the country and city, bestowed meanings with regard to risk and moral quality on various urban spaces. This exercise was based on detailed study of social phenomena, and yet it also revealed much about these crime experts' deeply felt anxieties about urban poverty, popular leisure, and entertainment culture. These anxieties often were most aroused in relation to discussions about women and young male offenders.

Although juvenile delinquents and women convicts represented small minorities among those convicted of crimes in Republican China, crime experts and officials took an inordinate amount of interest in them. This, in part, reflected trends in Western criminology. Yan Jingyue notably dismissed the relevance of these foreign studies for China, arguing that, with the possible exception of certain "wild boys" in Shanghai, there was nothing like the American organized youth gangs or pervasive urban delinquency problem. Yet, other scholars and officials were quite taken with the problems of "youths," often drawing upon foreign and Chinese philosophical terms to describe the unstable characters and temperaments of young men as a major reason for them to engage in crime.[34] More commonly, however, a number of writers, including Yan himself, held that youths were especially susceptible to a morally debauched urban culture and society. The city corrupted in many ways. Deng Juesheng worried that all the popular crime fiction and sensational crime news in city newspapers enticed young people into crime. For many, the dangers lay not only with the presence of organized crime, and the vices of gambling, drugs, and prostitution, but with an undisciplined, dissolute urban culture. Warden Sun Xiong echoed his friend and former colleague Shao Zhenji when he warned of the degeneracy brought about by the sexual license of youths in Shanghai. New urban leisure enterprises—the bars, bathhouses, and hair salons where young people congregated—were, in Sun's view, "organs that propagate immorality in society." He expressed particular distaste for the hairdressers of the fashionable new hair salons: these

[34] Yen, "Crime in Relation to Social Change in China," pp. 303–304; Lu Renji, *Ganhua jiaoyu*, pp. 1, 4–5; "Sifa xingzhengbu xunzheng shiqi gongzuo fenpei nianbiao shuoming shu 司法行政部訓政時期工作分配年表說明書" [Explanatory annual report on work allocation of the Ministry of Judicial Administration in the period of political tutelage], *Jianyu zazhi* 1.1 (November 1929): 3; "Fajie xiaoxi," *Falu pinglun* 417 (11 October 1931): 28; Ye Chucang, *Shoudu zhi*, p. 618; and Wang Yongbin, "Shicha huabei qisheng sifa baogaoshu 視察華北七省司法報告書" [Report on the investigation of justice in seven provinces in North China], *Falu pinglun* 621 (6 October 1935): 35.

"average handsome, refined youths," with their "western suits and leather shoes like dandies," were, due to their poor, uneducated, and immoral backgrounds, only "of a mind to adorn themselves in everything" and to commit crimes of seduction, fornication, and worse.[35] If he expressed the situation more thoroughly and colorfully than most, he also evoked one of the deep anxieties about the vulnerable young man in the city. There was a fear of the disorder of sexual license with this new dapper, urban *guanggun* loose in the big city. Indeed, an anxiety about the patriarchal order under assault in the modern city appears to be evident in the frequent sharp criticisms criminologists, penologists, and officials leveled at urban nightlife, movies, dancing culture, and leisure itself. Urban modernity, in these critiques, was always identified with "the West" and with inappropriate, dangerous mingling of the sexes.[36]

Women, like male "youths," were often also described as victims of economic conditions and modern urban culture. Zhou Shuzhao and his female colleague, Liu Yaozhen, held that most of the Beiping women inmates they studied, the majority of whom had been convicted of human trafficking, drug dealing, and prostitution, had been below the "poverty line" (which they estimated at an annual income of 140–189 yuan). Many were also widowed or left by otherwise absent husbands to support themselves and their children. The women scholars Xu Huifang and Liu Qingyu pointed out that most of the women convicts they interviewed were poor, rural people from northern Jiangsu who had migrated to the urban slum districts, become industrial workers in textile or egg-processing factories or servants, and then suffered economic oppression in the big capitalist city. Left unexamined, however, was the extreme relative poverty of rural northern Jiangsu in comparison to even Shanghai slums. Nor did any criminologists seriously explore how native-place sisterhood gangs, organized crime networks, and drug and human trafficking involved vital linkages between rural hinterlands and the urban commercial and industrial center. That did not fit the narrative that portrayed women criminals as victims of urban economic conditions.[37]

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[35] Yen, "Crime in Relation to Social Change in China," p. 307; Deng Juesheng, "Fanzui de shehui yuanyin," pp. 3–4; and Sun Xiong, *Fanzuixue yanjiu*, pp. 24, 57, 103–105, 145–146.

[36] Xu and Liu, "Shanghai nuxingfan de shehui fenxi," pp. 74–76, 85–87; Wakeman, *Policing Shanghai*, pp. 10–13; and Dikötter, *Crime, Punishment, and the Prison in Modern China*, pp. 191. Dikötter notes Li Jianhua's criticism of licentious culture.

[37] Zhou Shuzhao, "Beiping yibai ming nufan yanjiu," pp. 41, 48–54, 57–62, 73–77; Xu and Liu, "Shanghai nuxingfan de shehui fenxi," pp. 74–75, 78–81, 84–85; and Yen, "Crime in Relation to Social Change in China," p. 303. On sisterhood gangs, see Emily Honig, *Sisters*

In some of the same studies, women were characterized also as victims of the disruptive social-cultural dislocations and urban culture of modernizing cities. Framing this female social problem as a sign of an approaching collapse of society, Zhou Shuzhao pointed to the dissolution of the family as a reason that women fell into trafficking, prostitution, and other crimes. Similarly, Xu Huifang and Liu Qingyu vividly characterized Shanghai as dangerously corrupting for poor, migrant women. How, they queried, could these country women arriving to work in the big city avoid falling into crime when they were "suddenly thrown into this different, grotesque, showy, and luxurious place, extending to an extreme of ten miles, leaving one unable to distinguish north from south, east from west?"[38] For other scholars, women were not just vulnerable to corruption amid the flashy and licentious urban society and culture; they were part of the problem. Few equaled Instructor Shao Zhenji on this theme, but several implied that autonomous urban women—those freed from the bonds of family—were themselves a danger. Yan Jingyue and Sun Xiong even discussed a kind of gendered female form of crime. These were complex, premeditated, clandestine, and mysterious crimes redolent with the whiff of older themes of female *yin* 阴 power and its potential to subvert the patriarchal social-ethical order.[39]

Such prejudices were not confined to theory. In Nationalist-government crime statistics, women were far more frequently than men placed in categories indicating that their crimes were the result of their personal naïveté, ignorance, or ethical failing rather than in categories suggesting they were victims of social or economic conditions. For instance, according to the statistical categorization of crimes committed by 628 male and 40 female common prisoners held at the Jiangsu No. 1 Prison in Nanjing at the end of 1936, 73 percent of the men and 50 percent of the women were listed under the major category of "social causes," which emphasized socioeconomic motivations; 27 percent of the men and 40 percent of the women were in the major category of "individual causes," and the remaining 10 percent of the women were in the major category "committed an unintended error in an isolated moment." In the subcategories under "individual causes," women were mainly recorded under "weak knowledge

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and Strangers: Women in the Shanghai Cotton Mills, 1919–1949 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986); Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures*.

[38] Zhou Shuzhao, "Beiping yibai ming nufan yanjiu," pp. 63, 82–83; Xu and Liu, "Shanghai nuxingfan de shehui fenxi," pp. 74–76, 85–87.

[39] Yan Jingyue, "Beijing fanzui zhi shehui fenxi," pp. 40, 45–46; Sun Xiong, *Fanzuixue yanjiu*, pp. 52, 63.

and ability," and, in smaller numbers, under "habituation to wickedness."[40] In effect, women convicts were, far more commonly than men, labeled as either hapless and ignorant or deeply evil. The statistics implied that women, when left to their own devices in the big cities, especially in the dangerous areas, were prone to be duped into crime or, in some cases, easily became depraved evildoers.

6.5. *Concluding Reflections*

The apparatus of government agencies of policing, justice, and punishment and the new scholars of crime and punishment in Republican China have left us a rich cache of information about activities that were deemed criminal and those who engaged in them. There is much we can learn about the state and the underclass, evolving social habits and conduct, and shifting and conflicting ideas of culture, morality, and justice. This study, however, has emphasized how the urban vantage point of the judicial-penal institutions and of a new generation of government and academic crime experts identified, and so formulated, the urban crime problem as they extended their systems of discipline and social analysis. In doing so, they mapped a geography of crime, delineating a crude spatial contrast between the big modernizing cities and the backward rural hinterland. Much was overlooked in the process, not least the many rural-urban channels of criminal activity. Similarly, the crime experts mapped crime zones within cities, identifying poor neighborhoods and crowded market areas with cheap popular entertainments and leisure activities with crime. These geographies of crime revealed the two themes that the criminologists, in spite of all their empirical work and study of various theories, repeatedly returned to explain crime—urban poverty due to social-economic dislocation and the moral corruption of modern urban culture. The attention paid to these themes had an obsessive quality. The concern with the urban poor, with its tone of patronizing sympathy, suggests not the fear of dangerous classes, but the concern that the underclass would undermine the aspirations of modernizers. The poor had to be trained and put to work and the slums eradicated.

The other, seemingly even more obsessive, theme of the susceptibility to criminal behavior of male youths and women appears to have had to do with deep-seated anxieties about the moral degeneracy of urban

[40] JPA 1047/17/1487, 1936.

culture and the special dangers it posed for the particular kinds of internal characters inherent to women and young men. The ethical breakdown of urban society was associated with the free mingling of the sexes, the young urban men and women roaming outside familial bonds. Women were presumed to be easily led into crime and, often, to be at the root of ethical problems that led to crime. If not a physically dangerous place most of the time, the cities were perceived as morally dangerous, and some parts of town were more dangerous to the morally upright than others.

In essence, the Chinese crime expert discourse of crime in the city in the 1920s and 1930s centered on the fear of the destruction of a patriarchal social ideal. In this, it shared a perspective with those views expressed at the time by male, elite, public moralists and political leaders.[41] Strikingly, however, several members of the new generation of criminologists were, in fact, themselves relatively young men and women. They joined older male colleagues and officials in writing analyses of crime data that produced conceptual maps of order and disorder between the country and the city, and within the city itself, that revealed their own anxieties and aspirations. This mapping of a moral order of space—urban in contrast to rural, good city neighborhood in contrast to bad—would guide and misguide the subsequent forces deployed to impose on Chinese cities new discipline and order.

[41] See Jan Kiely, "Shanghai Public Moralist Nie Qijie and Morality Book Publication Projects in Republican China," *Twentieth-Century China* 36.1 (January 2011): 15–18. The 1934 New Life Movement is just the best known of such governmental campaigns against the presumed moral dissolution brought on by foreign-influenced, urban modern culture.

PART THREE

GOVERNANCE ORDER

CHAPTER EIGHT

BRITISH CONCESSIONS AND CHINESE CITIES, 1910s–1930s

Robert Bickers

As the 1911 Revolution (*Xinhai geming*辛亥革命) erupted, a British diplomat was preparing an on-the-spot investigation of the terms on which British concessions and settlements in Chinese cities were operating, as well as conditions on the ground. Beilby Alston was heading out to Beijing as acting legation counsellor, but had recently been working on an interdepartmental Treasury committee that was considering the general question of concession leases in China. It had been a half century since the Treaty of Tianjin, which had opened up a second tranche of Chinese ports to foreign residence, and so it was a midway point in the ninety-nine-year leases granted to lot holders in the British concessions at Hankou, Canton, Tianjin, Jiujiang, and Zhenjiang. A query about the future of the British lease at Tianjin had been received from Chartered Bank, which was planning to redevelop its site and rebuild its premises there. Before making what would be a substantial investment, the bank wanted to get some clear vision of its future, for at that point its lease would expire in 1961 or 1962.[1] The propriety of holding concessions was hardly being questioned by any power, and certainly not by the British, and in the first decade of the twentieth century six substantive new foreign concessions had been established, mostly in Tianjin.[2] Russia, Germany, Belgium, Austria, and Italy had all joined the fray. As late as the early 1920s, settlement expansion was still the policy of the International Settlement administration at Shanghai (the Shanghai Municipal Council).[3] But increasingly, concessions

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[1] Technically, as we shall see, it was a sublease, not a lease.

[2] On the scale of these new initiatives at Hankou, see Customs, *Decennial Reports on the Trade, Industries, etc. of the Ports Open to Foreign Commerce and on the Condition and Development of the Treaty Port Provinces, 1902–1911* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1913), 1:361–362. "Substantive" might sometimes be a misleading term: "Fancy Austria having a large concession at Tientsin. Austria with only one solitary subject and he a German and no trade except in perfumed soap and unperfumed sausages" (G. E. Morrison to Valentine Chirol, 9 December 1906, in Lo Hui-min, ed., *Correspondence of G. E. Morrison* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976], 1:397).

[3] Isabella Jackson, 'Expansion and Defence in the International Settlement at Shanghai', in Robert Bickers and Jon Howlett, eds., *Britain and China, 1840–1970: Empire, Finance and War* (London: Routledge, forthcoming 2013).

and settlements presented complex problems that belied their seemingly simple rationale, as safe havens on Chinese soil for foreign trade.

Alston's resulting memorandum, which outlined his initial recommendations, contained a useful survey of the overall legal position of the British concessions in China, outlining in particular the variegated nature of arrangements underpinning the strings of Little Britain's along the coast and the Yangzi River. While for diplomatic purposes Alston's note was a "Memorandum . . . respecting British concessions in China," its term covered a multitude of forms and practices. Those publicizing the British presence in China to a metropolitan or international audience wrote easily of what appeared to be a network of sites of varying size, but of seemingly equivalent status. Each had its own municipal council, British consulate, public garden, and bund. There was a club, or two, a Masonic lodge, and a cemetery. In the nearby highlands was a summer resort; somewhere close by there was a racetrack. There was a police force, enforcing a set of local bylaws and municipal regulations, perhaps a newspaper, and certainly the branch offices of the usual firms: Butterfield & Swire, Jardine, Matheson & Co., British American Tobacco, the Asiatic Petroleum Company, Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, Chartered Bank. These firms steadily rotated their British personnel from port to port around their networks of offices, but some Britons and their families lived and worked for decades in a single port, forming the core of the British community in each place. This was a British world on Chinese soil, which had a multinational if not a cosmopolitan flavor, and which could be neatly packaged up for observers and potential investors and recruits, through such vehicles as the 1908 volume *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong-Kong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China*.[4]

In that heavily illustrated and richly-detailed book they certainly look like little versions of the colonies covered in the rest of the series, the pages showing busy urban settler enclaves cut off from their host cities, and strictly under British control. The literature on modern Chinese history has reified an odd mix of publicists' representations like this, and political discourse, making mountains out of what were, in most cases, most of the time, molehills. As this essay will argue, these concessions were generally spatially open, and British control weaker than has been assumed. They were small, and far less robust than they looked. We can

[4] On this world, see my *Britain in China: Community, Culture, and Colonialism, 1900–49* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999). On the dangers of 'cosmopolitan' as a descriptor in this context see my 'Incubator city: Shanghai and the crises of empires', *Journal of Urban History*, 38:5 (2012), 862–78.

assess this through case studies of significant confrontations over them between British and Chinese diplomats (especially as the 1921–22 Washington Naval Conference placed the renegotiation of the nineteenth century Sino-Foreign treaties firmly on the agenda), and between the concessions (and the British state) and different Chinese interests. These included Chinese municipal administrations in the cities concerned, local interests groups, Chinese concession residents, and the always far greater numbers of urban inhabitants or visitors who worked in or traversed the concessions which pocked the cities concerned.

The essay will look in turn at the underlying legal basis on which the concessions were held, and administered, and contestation of concession policies over gates and walls, at the relationship between these zones and Chinese urban redevelopment in the 1920s in particular, and at the behaviour and competence of British administrative personnel and other concession employees. The essay aims to place these concessions back into the cities in which they were sited, arguing that the relationship was not founded on any glorious British isolation, but on dynamic interaction within which Chinese interests confronted the fundamental insecurities of the British position. It also aims to link them again with the rivers and riverine networks of which they were outgrowths.

First we have to understand what they were, precisely, and how they worked. For a start the apparent uniformity masked some fundamental differences among these outposts. Indeed, the very terms used ("settlement," "concession") needed clarifying, for although still used interchangeably by many (as indeed they often are in Chinese today, both being represented by *zujie* 租界), there were precise technical differences. Alston found no standardized use of terms before 1861: "settlement" and "concession" were used interchangeably (so too, early on, was "ground"). Thereafter, a more regular distinction was made between concessions—sites of state-to-state leasing arrangements, and then subleasing by that foreign state to its nationals—and settlements, where land was leased directly by foreigners from Chinese owners within a zone set aside by local or international agreement. While concession leases were mostly ninety-nine years (except at Niuzhuang), settlement leases were perpetual, or for 999 years. Even there, that leasing at prevailing market rates may or may not originally have been entirely voluntary. Clearly at Hankou, in the aftermath of the 1857–1860 war, it was not.[5] However, as Alston noted, land transfers

[5] Britten Dean, "Sino-British Diplomacy in the 1860s: The Establishment of the British Concession at Hankow," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 32 (1972): 71–96.

in some British concessions actually followed the settlement model. In general, the international and local agreements or arrangements underpinning these urban outposts lacked uniformity in underlying principles or even in practical implementation. And not all treaty ports contained a concession or settlement, while some concessions and settlements that had been laid out in treaty, and even laid out on the ground, were never or barely developed (Nanning, for example), the reach of the treaty drafters and lobbyists outstripping the grasp of the trading interests needed to establish a viable presence.[6] The British communities at Fuzhou or at Yantai each outnumbered that of at least three of the British concessions combined. Extraterritoriality followed Britons into any Chinese city in which they resided, and most-favored-nation clauses generally gave them a functional level of access to opportunities opened up by other foreign powers. The British concession formed part of the repertoire of British practice in China, but never an exclusive one, and never generally an exclusive one in the cities directly concerned.

The concessions needed sorting out, regardless, and garnered more attention than they might otherwise practically have deserved. Setting aside Shanghai and Tianjin, and to a lesser extent Hankou, most of these British concessions, like most foreign concessions in China, were relatively tiny. Their consideration in the urban history of China might therefore seem as lacking in effective relevance as consideration of the tiny (6.5 acre) Kowloon Walled City in the history of British Hong Kong. But even the tiniest of these concessions bears some consideration, not least because while they existed they were a feature of diplomatic life and dispute. The Chinese cities that hosted them were transgressed or perhaps we might say interrupted cities, cities with holes in them, in many respects, filled in different ways by different powers. Chinese administrative or policing sovereignty was impaired. Concession authority circumscribed, thwarted, or contested Chinese sovereignty over Chinese subjects in the concessions. If at Canton the British Concession regulations prohibited the publication of Chinese newspapers, at Shanghai the settlement became the heart of a critical new world of journalism and periodicals.[7] Political meetings were held in the Zhangyuan (Zhang Garden). Plotters hid out in concession

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[6] On Nanning, see my chapter, "'Good Work for China in Every Possible Direction': The Foreign Inspectorate of the Chinese Maritime Customs, 1854–1950," in Bryna Goodman and David Goodman, eds., *Twentieth Century Colonialism and China: Localities, the Everyday, and the World* (London: Routledge 2012), 25–36.

[7] See, e.g., Barbara Mittler, *A Newspaper for China? Power, Identity, and Change in Shanghai's News Media, 1872–1912* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004);

safe houses (and some, of course, blew themselves up there in October 1911 to accidental but nonetheless tremendous effect).

These concessions and settlements were in some places accorded a hugely symbolic role in the presentation of individual foreign power in China, as outposts of architectural modernity or hygienic rationality, for instance. They were usually sites of fluidity and freedom of movement, but they were in fact cities of troubled movement, in which a man might walk a straight line for a mile, passing through different laws and expectations and under different eyes, and along a single road of many names. He might pass a Sikh, a Vietnamese, a Russian, a Japanese policeman, or a Chinese constable under the orders of British, German, Belgian, or Italian nationals. Sometimes there were gates, and his stroll along a straight road might be impeded by barriers, in principle if not in practice, for these gates were usually open but kept ready to close in crisis. He would have to mind his behavior, for different bylaws penalized different acts or else penalized acts that garnered no police attention in the Chinese-administered city. The claim is made sometimes that these zones were ignored by city residents, that unless business or employment specifically took people there, then they were absent from the city as lived. But that is not a convincing argument, and in addition we know that many of the residents of these concessions were Chinese, and indeed that in many respects the concessions' primary function and the key to their success lay in the fact of Chinese residence.

That latter point is one key commonality. Even Zhenjiang's tiny British Concession was dependent on Chinese residents. In 1919 there were twenty adult foreign residents and at least twelve hundred Chinese living in the concession, with at least another two thousand entering it daily to work.[8] Foreign-style housing and godowns stood empty as trade declined rapidly, but the security offered by the extra territorialized concession reportedly made local Chinese residents "flock" to the jerry-built housing that was built for them. The undermining of the second wave of concessions commenced almost from their establishment. In 1866 the commissioner of customs at Shanghai noted that Chinese merchants had already embraced the steamers plying the new riverine and coastal routes opened by treaty. Ningbo was undermined as a treaty port and protosettlement

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Weipin Tsai, *Reading Shenbao: Nationalism, Consumerism, and Individuality in China, 1919–37* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

[8] British Municipal Council, Chinkiang, *Report for the Year 1919 and Budget for the Year 1920* (Shanghai: Printed at Shanghai Mercury, 1919), p. 40.

by twice daily sailings to Shanghai, and the low $3 return fare a Chinese trader needed to invest in to settle his business at the latter port.[9] This augured well for Shanghai, but not for Ningbo, nor Zhenjiang, Jiujiang, and several other concessions, which were soon redundant economically, at least in terms of the early hopes pinned on them and the functions envisioned for them.

This chapter aims to help us understand these zones in the Republican period, not least in terms of the sources available to us. Usually, these areas are approached as either bridgeheads in a wider foreign occupation of China or as relatively self-contained enclaves. They are also sites of memory for the former expatriate communities.[10] Little survives by way of municipal records, barring annual reports lodged in consular archives, and some other publications.[11] On the whole they are mostly ignored in English, despite the attention that they garnered in Chinese in both national and local histories.[12] As individual political flashpoints they have sometimes received attention—the role played by Tianjin, for example, in Anglo-Japanese relations or Hankou in Sino-British ones.[13] As part of the wider foreign repertoire of colonial practice, they have generally received

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[9] *Reports on the Trade at the Ports in China Open by Treaty to Foreign Trade, for the Year 1865* (Shanghai: Printed at Imperial Maritime Customs Press, 1866), pp. 135–136.

[10] Among other examples there are J. G. Ballard, *Empire of the Sun* (London: Gollancz, 1984) and *Miracles of Life: From Shanghai to Shepperton* (London: Fourth Estate, 2008); Desmond Power, *Little Foreign Devil* (West Vancouver, B.C.: Pangli, 1996); A. H. Rasmussen, *China Trader* (London: Constable, 1954); and Peter Stursberg, *No Foreign Bones in China: Memoirs of Imperialism and Its Ending* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2002).

[11] H. Staples-Smith, *Diary of Events and the Progress on Shameen, 1859–1938* (Hong Kong: Ye Olde Printerie, 1938) is the only contemporary history of one of the concessions (as a concession) that I know of. There is, of course, a great deal on the concessions at Tianjin in O. D. Rasmussen, *Tientsin: An Illustrated Outline History* (Tianjin: Tientsin Press, 1925).

[12] See, for example, *Fei* Chengkang 費成康, *Zhongguo zujie shi* 中國租界史 [History of the concessions in China] (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 1991); *Lieqiang zai Zhongguo de zujie* 列强在中國的租界 [The concessions the powers established in China] (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1992); *Shanghai zujie zhi* 上海租界史 [Annals of the Shanghai concessions] (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue chubanshe, 1999); Shang Keqiang 尚克强, *Jiuguo zujie yu jindai Tianjin* 九國租界與近代天津 [The nine concessions and modern Tianjin] (Tianjin: Tianjin jiaoyu chubanshe, 2008); and the *Hankou zujie zhi* 漢口租界志 [Annals of the Hankou concessions] (Wuhan: Wuhan chubanshe, 2003).

[13] Sebastian Swann, *Japan's Imperial Dilemma in China: The Tientsin Incident, 1939–1940* (London: RouledgeCurzon, 2003); Edmund S. K. Fung, *The Diplomacy of Imperial Retreat: Britain's South China Policy, 1924–1931* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Lee En-han, *China's Recovery of the British Hankow and Kiukiang Concessions in 1927* (Perth: University of Western Australia, Centre for East Asian Studies, 1980).

due but often muted and vague analysis. In general in and of themselves, they are routinely bypassed both in specific histories of the cities concerned and in diplomatic accounts of Sino-foreign relations.[14]

Indeed, logic suggests, for example, that a study of the four scruffy waterfront acres that formed the British Concession at Xiamen might truly lack scholarly urgency, in and of itself. The foreign areas usually functioned as a national and international political issue in terms of the analysis of imperialism that became crucial in 1920s China and in the rhetoric and practice of anti-imperialist mobilization during the Nationalist Revolution (1926–1928). The most obvious and noteworthy episodes were the May Thirtieth Incident and Movement in Shanghai in 1925, the abandonment of the British concessions at Hankou and Jiujiang in January 1927 in the aftermath of their occupation by Nationalist forces, and the involvement of leading French Concession and International Settlement officials in Chiang Kai-shek's coup against the communists in Shanghai in April of that year.[15] Abstract opposition to imperialism could be given concrete form, cause, and opportunity in the micropolitics of a British concession. The same could be argued for any sign of overtly British presence in a Chinese town or city in a time of heightened nationalist excitement, but whereas British commercial installations certainly attracted popular attention elsewhere, British concessions were a British gift to nationalist activism, a gift that kept on giving. To their enemies they formed a national network of targets for mobilization, and the May Thirtieth Movement and its aftermath saw a wave of strikes and boycotts that hit most of the cities containing British concessions or were open to British and other foreign trade.

These problems were not always political in origin, however. Points of friction emerged that had as much to do with the organic growth of urban centers in the 1920s and the wave of urban redevelopment that marked

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[14] Some exceptions: Chen Yu, "The Making of a Bund in China: The British Concession in Xiamen (1852–1930)," *Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering* 7.11 (2008): 31–38; Dorothée Rihal, 'La Concession française de Hankou (1896–1943): De la condamnation à l'appropriation d'un héritage' (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., IAO, Lyon, 2007).

[15] Richard W. Rigby, *The May 30 Movement: Events and Themes* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1980); Nicholas R. Clifford, *Spoilt Children of Empire: Westerners in Shanghai and the Chinese Revolution of the 1920s* (Middlebury, VT: University Press of New England, 1991); Robert Bickers, *Empire Made Me: An Englishman Adrift in Shanghai* (London: Allen Lane, 2003); H. Owen Chapman, *The Chinese Revolution 1926–27: A Record of the Period under Communist Control as Seen from the Nationalist Capital, Hankow* (London: Constable & Co., 1928); and Marie-Claire Bergère, *Shanghai: China's Gateway to Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010).

this decade of republican modernity. Often, simply put, concessions got in the way—got in the way of new roads, new bundings, and new visions of the cities in which they were lodged and of who should work there. There were also affected by changing environments, by the shifting silting Yangzi at Zhenjiang, for example, which literally left the concession bund high and dry. At some point, the advantages of holding them were going to be outweighed by the disadvantages. That point had probably already been reached by 1925 before May Thirtieth and its bloody aftermaths at the Hankou and Shamian concessions. Local foreign volunteers (at the former) and volunteers and foreign troops (at the latter) killed at least sixty people during confrontations in June 1925 at those ports.[16] These related points form the subject of the first sections of this chapter. The final section explores the ways in which one newly available set of visual records might inform discussions: sets of photographs of treaty port cities taken between 1907 and 1940 by G. Warren Swire, a British director and later chairman of the firm John Swire & Sons.[17] British concessions were one network in a mesh of interlinked foreign networks in China, including the treaty ports, mission societies, shipping lines, and the commercial networks of British firms like Swires, and others.

At the start it will be useful to lay out as precisely as possible what the British world of concessions and settlements involved. In 1921 there were forty-nine formally recognized treaty ports, thirty-three more places opened to foreign trade, and nineteen cities containing some twenty-nine foreign concessions and settlements.[18] The British share of these twenty-nine formally recognized sites is set out in table 8.1 (appendix). This excludes the formally recognized, and extra territorialized, Diplomatic Quarter at Beijing, the Crown Colony at Hong Kong, and the leased territories at Weihaiwei and Kowloon, as well as such informally developed initiatives as the Kuling Municipal Council, which administered a

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[16] Fung, *The Diplomacy of Imperial Retreat*, pp. 40–44.

[17] The British holding company John Swire & Sons operated in China through the firm of Butterfield & Swire, which acted as the agency there for other company operations, mostly notably the steamship line the China Navigation Company.

[18] *The China Year Book, 1921–22* (Peking: Tientsin Press, 1922), pp. 218–222. This excludes Hong Kong and Kowloon. Another twenty-five "ports of call" on the Yangzi and West Rivers were formally recognized under various agreements. A comprehensive survey of the situation by 1905 is laid out in a report by S. F. Mayers that was subsequently issued to consulates. It had not been easy to bring the material together, or even to locate some key documents—no copy of the original Tianjin leasehold, for example, had been located in legation or consulate archives by 1914, and it was assumed there was none. See the Mayers Report, in TNA, FO 881/8747; on Tianjin lacuna, see "Second Memorandum by Mr Alston Respecting British Concessions in China," 1 July 1914, in TNA, FO 881/10507.

privately purchased area of Lushan, the Chefoo International Committee, a Committee of Public Works at Ningbo, and others.[19] Some other areas of concentrated British residence notably lacked any concession zone, such as Fuzhou and Yantai (Chefoo), while at Yingko the "Newchwang British concession" remained an active concept into the 1920s, despite lacking much if any reality on the ground. In 1898 it was reported to have mostly "subsided into the river." In 1920 staff at the legation in Beijing wondered whether there was in fact anything that could really be called a British concession there (and the consulate had no map of it), but even so, the surviving four lots were subject to the routine to and fro of administrative correspondence.[20] Some concessions were never developed, such as Wuhu, where a concession was marked out in 1877. Concessions and concession life always spilled over the formal limits and boundary stones. Concession authorities built extra settlement roads, for example at Zhenjiang. And there was never enough land to spare inside a concession for that vital necessity, a racecourse. These were generally established on land purchased outside the concession area but that was thereafter assumed through practice and bluster to be within it.[21] So, these concessions were not entirely static or confined. Their residents routinely lobbied for extensions, sometimes to no avail, but sometimes successfully (Hankou, 1898; Tianjin, 1899). Zhenjiang traders put their case forward in 1898, but they also had already built 20 miles of extra settlement roads by 1891.[22] At Shanghai in August 1913, during the Second Revolution, the Municipal Council made a grab for the neighboring district of Zhabei but had to beat a retreat. At Tianjin in 1916 and 1917, the French faced a storm of protest when they attempted to secure control of the adjacent Laoxikai District.[23] Viewed in the light of such designs and episodes, there were good grounds for supposing that concessions posed a real threat to the administrative integrity of their host cities.

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[19] On Ningbo, see Mayers Report, pp. 13–14.

[20] Lord Charles Beresford, *The Break-up of China* (London: Harper, 1899), p. 35; see Barton's comments in Newchwang no. 44, 17 December 1920, in TNA, FO 228/3197.

[21] On racing see Austin Coates, *China Races* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1984). *Hankow Race Club, Records of Placed Ponies from Autumn 1880 to Spring 1893* (no publisher, ca. 1893) offers a glimpse of the racing world there.

[22] Beresford, *The Break-up of China*, p. 126; Customs, *Decennial Reports, 1882–1891*, p. 305.

[23] On Zhabei, see Robert Bickers, *The Scramble for China: Foreign Devils in the Qing Empire, 1832–1914* (London: Allen Lane, 2011), pp. 364–370. On Laoxikai, see Songchuan Chen, "Shame on You! Grassroots Nationalism, Coercive Nationalism, and Competing Narratives of the Laoxikai Incident and the Tianjin Anti-French campaign, 1916–1917," *Twentieth Century China* 37:2 (2012), 121–138.

It is worth also remembering contexts, that is, which concessions stood alone and which had other concession neighbors, and indeed remembering fluidity. Five Chinese cities had more than one substantive concession: Canton, Wuhan, Shanghai, Tianjin and Xiamen. In spatial terms, the restriction of the Canton concessions to the mostly reclaimed island of Shamian effectively excluded them to some extent from the municipal landscape, and to a lesser extent the same could be argued for Xiamen, as the major settlement was on Gulangyu Island (although see later discussion). Tianjin and Hankou, alongside Shanghai, were the main cities that were reshaped through the existence of multiple concessions. The British network was on the surface not the only one, for Russia, Germany, Japan, and France all secured more than one concession, but it might actually be stretching the term "network" to apply it to more than the British and Japanese holdings, and in both those cases the concessions formed part of a very wide repertoire of colonial practice in China. The French presence in China included the three concessions, and the Guangzhouwan leased territory, but was also made manifest through its network of consulates, especially in southwest China and through its medical presence.[24] Russian concessions were dwarfed by the importance of the Chinese Eastern Railroad and the wider presence in Manchuria. German concessions were overshadowed by the navy's ministry-run colony at Jiaozhou (Qingdao). These different states deployed their power in China through different forms of territorial domination or alienation, based on treaty and on military power. Their concessions were less apparently central to their presence in China. Concessions still surviving at the onset of the Pacific War in 1941 were generally retroceded twice: once to the collaborationist Wang Jingwei government, generally in the summer of 1943, and secondly to the National Government. In practical terms, the first retrocession led to the incorporation of concession administrative machinery and personnel into citywide structures.[25]

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[24] See Florence Bretelle-Establet, *La santé en Chine du Sud* (*1898–1928*) (Paris: CNRS editions, 2002), and her "French Medicine in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century China: Rejection or Compliance in Far South Treaty Ports, Concessions and Leased Territories," in Goodman and Goodman, eds., *Twentieth Century Colonialism and China*, 134–50.

[25] See, for example, my "Settlers and Diplomats: The End of British Hegemony in the International Settlement," in Christian Henriot and Wen-hsin Yeh, eds., *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun: Shanghai under Japanese Occupation, 1937–45* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 229–256. In practice, in Shanghai, this was a reverse takeover: the settlement and concession administrations were largely used to run the entire city thereafter.

For the purposes of this chapter, Shanghai and Gulangyu, as the two international settlements, fall mainly into another category of analysis, as do the colonies and leased territories. Shanghai, moreover, by virtue of its size, population, and the sophistication of its machinery of administration, is really a case sui generis. Moreover, unlike the other concessions, it alone became the core of its host city, sharply reshaping Shanghai's pattern of settlement and development. In the 1920s and 1930s, contestation of the International Settlement involved the development and implementation of the Greater Shanghai Plan and the attempt to outflank the settlement by building a new city center northwest of the city.[26] But even the International Settlement and its neighboring French Concession administrations have attracted in fact little by way of direct analysis up to now, aside from consideration of their political impact in the turmoil of the mid-1920s.[27] Although the International Settlement will not, therefore, be directly covered here, in two important ways it is vital to understanding the nature of the British concessions elsewhere: first, its model of municipal administration was copied by those establishing the new concessions after 1860 (hence, in fact, the ambiguous moniker "model settlement").[28] Second, it was a continuing source of personnel, in particular, for the skeletal administrations that administered the small concessions. They applied to it for men, for advice, and for copies of its rules and regulations. Their annual reports mimicked its own, even though it was set on a fundamentally different standing to their administrations. By virtue of its international status, but also through simple neglect in many ways, it had secured an autonomous political standing that contrasted sharply with the situation in the British concessions, which were much more directly and effectively under consular control, even though all had elected municipal councils. Shanghai's autonomy remained a source of fond aspiration for some in

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[26] Christian Henriot, *Shanghai, 1927–1937: Municipal Power, Locality, and Modernization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Kerrie L. MacPherson, "Designing China's Urban Future: The Greater Shanghai Plan, 1927–1937," *Planning Perspectives* 5 (1990): 39–62; and Frederic Wakeman Jr., *Policing Shanghai, 1927–1937* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

[27] Exceptions include Kerrie MacPherson, *A Wilderness of Marshes: The Origins of Public Health in Shanghai, 1843–1893* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1987), and Isabella Jackson, 'Managing Shanghai: the International Settlement administration and the development of the city, 1900–43' (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of Bristol, 2012).

[28] "All eastern ports rejoice in their mother's jubilee," ran one of the slogans on banners that decorated the settlement during its jubilee celebrations in November 1893 (*The Jubilee of Shanghai, 1843–1893. Shanghai: Past and Present, and a Full Account of the Proceedings on the 17th and 18th November, 1893* [Shanghai: Revised and reprinted from the North-China Daily News, 1893], p. 44).

the smaller ports, but they had their supporters too, for their politics and the foreign life there generally seemed simpler and less fraught.

8.1. *Concessions and Cities*

Each British concession had its elected council, normally three to five members in number, and each council compiled its own annual report. On the surface it all looked *pukka*. But there are limits to how seriously we can take either the councils or their reports. At Xiamen, the council outnumbered its residents by some five to one.[29] At Jiujiang, the thickness of the report suggests a salaried secretary with much to prove and much time in which to try to prove it. The ratio of electors to councillors was marginally better at Zhenjiang, and slightly more orthodox at Jiujiang. These councils functioned on the basis of land regulations that incorporated a set of bylaws.[30] Promulgated as each concession was established, these were later revised and reestablished on the basis of formal Orders in Council, and they covered the constitution of the council and its remit, the eligibility of electors and councillors, and so on. An annual meeting of ratepayers and land renters approved the budget. The councils had powers to raise funds from land or property taxes, license fees (taverns, hotels, dogs), and charges on use of the bund and were used to build and maintain roads and jetties, law and order, drainage and sanitation. They established water supplies, lit the streets, perhaps maintained the cemetery, and usually maintained a prison. Each employed some form of police force and secretariat. It was the British consul's responsibility to call the annual meeting, over which he presided. He had final right of approval over all resolutions at the meeting and new bylaws, although this could be appealed to the minister in Beijing. Elections to the councils were rare, local residents and representatives of firms taking it in turns to hold a post that generally demanded little work. At Hankou in 1920 there were 13 European employees, including 4 policemen overseeing 35 Sikhs and 98 Chinese. At Jiujiang just 1, and 23 Chinese (police and warders). At Zhenjiang there was 1 Briton (concurrently chief of police

[29] As this sole resident was the Inspector of Police, he and his family were ignored when figures were given about residency within the concession.

[30] Details of clauses in the land regulations that follow in this paragraph and the next are taken from *Hertslet's China Treaties*, 3rd ed. (London: HMSO, 1908), vol. 2.

and council secretary)[31] and 24 Chinese. At Xiamen, 1 Briton and 10 Chinese. At Shamian in 1927 there were 3 Britons employed, 20 Sikhs, and 54 Chinese.[32] Most of the Chinese staff in the concessions were police, though that might be an overly generous term for many of them.

The land regulations make the power of the consular establishment clear, although none as explicitly as Jiujiang's, where the British minister in Beijing was deemed explicitly to have the final decision on all bylaws. But there were shades of difference here, and at Hankou consular approval was not required for bylaws relating "solely to the Council or their officers or servants" (§8). Consuls could not dissolve or replace these councils and so had less direct power over them than their fellow consular authorities over all the other concessions, but in practice they had leeway to direct affairs, and they had their veto. Clearly, British interests at times were happy to let the consuls undertake the work. E. T. C. Werner at Jiujiang in 1909 was consul and concession chairman ("and General Dictator," noted the Jardine's chairman at Shanghai, sarcastically).[33] Perhaps they sometimes envied their fellow consuls. The French had absolute control over their concession police forces, although these were funded by the concessions. Perhaps they sometimes also envied the outsourcing policy of the Germans, who subcontracted development at Tianjin and Hankow to commercial bodies, such as the Deutsch Asiatische Bank at Tianjin.[34] On the whole, British "general dictators" were few, but, by default and because they had administrative roles to play in land transfers and concession procedures, consuls were often caught up in the minutiae of concession affairs.

The various land regulations also made the paramount position of British subjects clear, but changing treaty port realities are reflected in the changes that can be seen in some of the sets of regulations over time. (And, as the Niuzhuang consul noted in 1920, "Most of the rules have been

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[31] This man took care of anything that needed seeing to, and when he served with the Chinese Labor Corps, during the First World War, his wife acted in his stead (IWM, Tinkler papers, RMT to Edith Tinkler, 16 December 1925; British Municipal Council, Chinkiang, *Report for the Year 1917 and Budget for the Year 1918* [Shanghai: Shanghai Mercury, 1918], p. 1).

[32] Details from Shameen Municipal Council memorandum, "Proposed Rendition of Shameen," 17 February 1927, in TNA, FO 676/83.

[33] David Landale to Sir John Jordan, 24 September 1909, in TNA, FO 228/2147.

[34] Mayers Report, p. 16; Cord Eberspächer, 'Colonialism on Equal Terms? Negotiating the German Concession in Tianjin 1895–1897', paper presented at the Conference on 'Treaty ports in Modern China', University of Bristol, 7–8 July 2011.

disregarded at one time or another as arbitrary or unreasonable)."[35] Originally explicit in restricting residence and lease holding to British subjects, Hankou's regulations were revised in 1867 to allow non-British treaty power nationals to hold leases in a move designed to help the concession develop after a slow start.[36] At Tianjin, the 1866 regulations specified not only that land could only be held by British nationals, or other treaty power nationals, but that if those non-Britons transgressed the regulations and bylaws, then their lots and property could be subject to forfeit (§4). The same penalty applied to any Chinese subjects who might be found to have secured lots. The 1871 Shamian regulations promised no such draconian penalty for non-Britons, although they still required the same undertakings (§16), but the original regulations had prohibited Chinese residence as well as lease holding on pain of confiscation.[37] Jiujiang's 1902 regulations extended eligibility to vote to householders and land renters, but these were carefully defined as including "foreign" nationals only, which term included Britons, treaty power nationals, and their recognized subjects (§32). Hankou's regulations (1902; §17) permitted either Britons or treaty nationals to vote and serve, as did those of the British Tianjin Municipal Extension (1899; §13), and there even to serve as chairman subject to the British minister's approval.[38] (These regulations also extended developments in the English 1894 Local Government Act to concession suffrage, and permitted women otherwise eligible the vote, but not the opportunity to stand as councillors [§11]). The issue of the status of Russian and German nationals after 1917 muddied these rules. Both lost extraterritoriality, and then stateless Russians later came under full Chinese jurisdiction.

Chinese residents on Gulangyu were allowed representation through two of their number, to be proposed by the Daotai, but no vote (1902; §2). At Tianjin and Gulangyu, the fact of existing Chinese residence had to be accommodated. The 1919 Land Regulations of the amalgamated British areas there enshrined a requirement for a simple majority of British nationals to be represented on the council, and after 1927 this was revised

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[35] Newchwang no. 44, 17 December 1920, TNA, FO 228/3197.

[36] By 1905 70 percent of the original concession lots were British held, but only 41 percent of the 1898 extension lots were (Mayers Report, pp. 14–15).

[37] H. S. Wilkinson to Marquis of Salisbury, 25 January 1888, in *Correspondence Respecting the Leases of Lands in British Concessions in the Treaty Ports and Lease of Such Lands to Chinese Subjects and Other Foreigners, 1877–1893*, Foreign Office confidential print, p. 45, in TNA, FO 405/55.

[38] But such was Customs Commissioner Gustav Detring's preeminence in Tianjin and its municipal affairs that this clause could not but be included.

as five Britons and five Chinese.[39] At other concessions the economics of Chinese residence were also accommodated, though circumscribed. At Hankou, construction of shops and houses for Chinese occupation was permitted in one demarcated area (Bye-law, §21)—the 1898 extension—subject to approval, conditions, and a license fee, but also subject to a termination clause: all licenses were to expire by the end of 1925.[40] At Zhenjiang, regulations introduced in 1891 strictly regulated Chinese occupation of properties, and Chinese occupied only blocks of housing allocated to them.[41] The reality will have been, as it was elsewhere, that land was in fact owned by Chinese, but through British agents. This practice often suited British officials, for it inflated the size of their own presence in the concessions, which was an important factor in diplomatic negotiations, and it suited leaseholders, for it was profitable.[42] British defense of this underlying principle of British occupation, however impaired it was by that point, remained an issue into the 1920s. Without it, the argument for retaining concessions was sharply undermined.

Alston's concern in 1911 and 1912 lay in the inconsistencies of leases. The concessions and settlements were themselves on perpetual lease, unlike the Weihai or Kowloon leased territories, which were to be held by the British for ninety-nine years. However, the Crown leases (or properly subleases) granted to British nationals in the concessions were of ninety-nine years' duration from their establishment.[43] At Shanghai, however, leases were perpetual. The British position in the concessions contrasted with that of all other treaty powers, which generally followed the model of perpetual leases. The issue then raised in 1911 was: how might greater security of tenure be provided in the British concessions, and at what, if any, cost to the leaseholders (especially given current and probably future land values)? And given that even current land values could logically suggest a very large windfall for the British government if it charged for lease renewal, what might be done with such a sum? This is in many ways an

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[39] F. C. Jones, *Shanghai and Tientsin* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), pp. 122–123.

[40] Hankow no. 16, 24 February 1921, in TNA, FO 228/3184.

[41] British Municipal Council, Chinkiang, *Report for the Year 1919 and Budget for the Year 1920*, p. 16.

[42] Jones calculated that at a minimum 50 percent of property in the British Concession at Tianjin in 1938 was Chinese owned, excluding that registered in British or other foreign names, which would increase that figure (*Shanghai and Tientsin*, pp. 126–127).

[43] This applied even to those granted sometime after the establishment of the concessions. Leases were granted lasting only to the ninety-ninth year from that initial point, not ninety-nine years from their grant.

insular debate, in that it is entirely about British practice and had little effective impact on Chinese realities, at least none at that time. There are two points to note, however. The first lies in the reported widespread negative attitude of leaseholders toward the changes proposed, which highlights the ambiguous relationship between the British state and its nationals in China, and the second lies in the ever-present but generally muted debate about Chinese residence in the concessions.

British interests were, Alston found, opposed to paying anything for lease renewals. Any increase in value was entirely "due to the exertions of past and present lot-holders," they claimed. Well, it was also due to the "protection and assistance" afforded by the various arms of the British state in China, Alston retorted, and as the British in China paid nothing by way of any imperial taxation, they received these services gratis. Too true, they cheerfully replied, showing, he thought, how "perfectly indifferent" they were to the burden thereby borne by the British domestic taxpayer. Instead of seeing themselves first and foremost as Crown tenants, they asserted their perfectly proper but separate rights to consular protection as British nationals in China. It bears repeating that the interests of British nationals and the British state in China need to be distinguished, and that in many cases those interests were, if not in active conflict, then rarely wholly and securely in parallel. Even where British consuls held sway over concession administrations, and the Crown held the underlying lease, British lot holders and residents were not agents of that state, and they resented that state when it attempted, as they saw it, to impose burdens on them. Their relationship to state power was markedly different to that of Japanese communities toward the Japanese consular establishment, which was much more directive of the activities of its subjects in China.[44]

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[44] See Mark R. Peattie, "Japanese Treaty Port Settlements in China, 1895–1937," in Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Informal Empire in China, 1895–1937* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 166–209, as well as Erik Esselstrom, *Crossing Empire's Edge: Foreign Ministry Police and Japanese Expansionism in Northeast Asia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009). This is not to suggest that there was not a variety of positions and interests within the Japanese communities, for there was, not least between lower-middle-class traders and larger commercial interests, but that Japanese consular power was much greater and wielded more consistently (Christian Henriot, "'Little Japan' in Shanghai: An Insulated Community, 1875–1945," in Robert Bickers and Christian Henriot, eds., *New Frontiers: Imperialism's New Communities in East Asia, 1843–1957* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 146–169; Joshua A. Fogel, *Articulating the Sinophere: Sino-Japanese Relations in Space and Time* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); and Barbara J. Brooks, *Japan's Imperial Diplomacy: Consuls, Treaty Ports, and War in China, 1895–1938* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

The question of Chinese residence in British concessions was shaped by the original treaties and land regulations, inflected by practical economics and greed, and shaped by plain racism. Under the 1858 and 1860 treaties, the British Crown secured the concessions, and lots were to be leased to British nationals only. Alston viewed this as stemming from a misunderstanding of the reasons for Shanghai's successful growth to that moment—a point that was made very clear when the Shanghai bubble burst in 1865 after the end of the Taiping Rebellion and there was movement out of the International Settlement of large numbers of Chinese residents who were able to return to homes in the Yangzi cities that they had fled. Chinese residents had often been seen and written of as a pestilential burden. The loss of huge numbers of both the "better class" as well as the poorer classes of residents was a blow to the settlement's economy, but it thereby taught a lesson other concession land renters noted, and some like the Zhenjiang and Jiujiang renters in 1877 soon petitioned the legation to be allowed to tap into this potentially lucrative market. This was refused, but the restrictive clauses in leases proved a "dead letter," as subletting to Chinese commenced regardless.[45] Wariness about unrestricted Chinese residence and about muddying British exclusivity in the concessions also stemmed from the intense practical difficulties encountered in 1843 and after, when Britons found it almost impossible to secure land or property in the newly opened cities. This was in large part a legacy of the all-too-recent conflict and was only resolved at Shanghai by the demarcation of a separate zone of British residence outside the city itself.

To complicate things further, in time, residence patterns became quite diverse, if not perverse. No Britons (unambiguously recognized as such) lived in the Xiamen concession, for all preferred the island of Gulangyu. Many British residents in Shanghai lived in the French Concession, or latterly outside both zones in areas that were later claimed by the settlement authorities.[46] At Canton many Britons lived on the Henan (Honam) side of the river, not at Shamian. As the sole concession holders in most ports

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[45] Bickers, *Scramble for China*, pp. 151–186; see item 1 and enclosures in *Correspondence Respecting the Leases of Lands in British Concessions in the Treaty Ports*, pp. 1–5. Acting Consul L. C. Hopkins, Jiujiang, to Marshall, 20 August 1890, details the extent of Chinese residence by that point (*Correspondence Respecting the Leases of Lands in British Concessions in the Treaty Ports*, pp. 67–68).

[46] These were the "outside roads" areas such as Hongqiao. These claims to sovereignty were effectively contested by the Chinese municipal authorities, but neither administration dislodged the other. The consequences are narrated in Frederic Wakeman Jr., *The Shanghai Badlands: Wartime Terrorism and Urban Crime, 1937–1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

for some fifty years after 1843, the British housed many foreign nationals who were often loath to take advantage of the concessions established by their own governments in the 1890s or 1900s. Foreign nationals other than Britons could lease land providing that they undertook to sign a declaration, endorsed by their own national representative, and that they abide by the British land regulations. With the establishment of the new concessions at the turn of the century, some Britons sometimes found themselves living under, for example, Russian administration, a situation not welcome in those Russophobic decades. In fact, some at Hankou found themselves dispossessed by their new French or Russian masters. Others, at Tianjin, chose to reside in the pleasant, tree-lined German concession.[47]

If the issue of who was a Chinese subject grew less clear during the Republic, the issue of who exactly was a British subject had never been clear. For the British presence in China had from the start included Nanyang Chinese from British colonies and would later include Hong Kong residents. But who exactly was a Hong Kong resident? And from the start also, Cantonese allies of the British had moved into the treaty ports with them as compradors, as linguists, and in other roles. How far in practice they came under the British umbrella was a vexed question for consuls. As trade grew, such problems only increased. British lot holders at Xiamen, for example, included Nanyang Chinese. And when the British consul general at Canton refused to allow the Hong Kong–registered Bank of East Asia to lease a lot in the Shamian concession in 1924 on the grounds that it was not a British company, he lost their challenge to the decision in the British Supreme Court at Shanghai.[48]

Three issues in the 1920s that kept consuls and diplomats busy and generated local heat about the concessions will be discussed next: first, attempts by concession authorities to install gates that could bar entry in times of crisis; second, resistance to wider urban redevelopment schemes launched by the city administrations that directly impinged on the concession area; third, the political and professional incompetence of foreign and Chinese concession personnel. As a result of these three issues, riots, boycotts, and other forms of protest kept the peculiarities of the concessions at Jiujiang or Xiamen on the desks of the minister at Beijing.

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47 Beresford, *The Break-up of China*, pp. 144–149; Rasmussen, *Tientsin*, p. 95.

48 See correspondence in TNA, FO 228/3193 and FO 228/3194.

8.2. *Gates*

A first assumption might be that the concessions were somehow physically demarcated by walls or fences. Chinese cityscapes are of course notable for their walled compounds, city walls, and gates.[49] But whereas buildings on most foreign lots were placed in walled compounds, the concessions themselves were usually spatially open. Although originally designed as residentially exclusive, and whereas, for example at Shanghai, they might be laid out to direct movement of Chinese along some roads and not others, it was not until the Taiping Rebellion that physical security of the settlement there became an issue. This was met with the installation of gates and the adoption of strict restrictions on the movement of Chinese within the settlement at night. Passes were required, and lanterns mandated. Shanghai was hardly alone in this. Hankou's insecurity in 1861 led the British consul to order construction of a wall around the concession area site.[50] The 1871 Shamian Bye-Laws required that Chinese carry lanterns in the hours of darkness (§19). The Anglo-French occupation of Canton was barely a decade in the past at that point, and fears of Chinese popular attacks on foreigners had been raised by the Tianjin massacre in 1870. Hankou's 1896 and 1902 Bye-laws also mandated lantern carrying (§23; §12), and again recent unrest (the 1891 Yangzi riots, and the Boxer uprising) may have been a factor. These two approaches—physical and legal—were later echoed at other concessions.

Although Chinese residence became a fact of life at the concessions, without which it was estimated, in 1892, that land prices would collapse to a quarter of their value, it was always residence on sufferance.[51] There were limits to how far Chinese residents, let alone visitors, were able to enjoy access to public facilities such as open spaces. Exclusion of Chinese residents from a British social club might be ethically dubious, but exclusion of residents from public facilities and space was indefensible. So, it was defended by resort to the land regulations, their precise delineation of British, treaty power national, and Chinese rights and their limitations

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[49] Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

[50] Dean, "Sino-British Diplomacy in the 1860s," pp. 75–76. The wall would also help clarify the extent of the area.

[51] Acting Consul Bennett, Zhenjiang, to Foreign Office, 20 September 1892, *Correspondence Respecting the Leases of Lands in British Concessions in the Treaty Ports*, pp. 73–74. At that point there were 1,383 Chinese residents at Zhenjiang and 37 foreign nationals (Consul Carles, Zhenjiang, to Mr. O'Connor, 15 December 1892, *Correspondence Respecting the Leases of Lands in British Concessions in the Treaty Ports*, pp. 74–76).

despite, or rather particularly because of, Chinese residential reality in the concessions. The police patrolled the bunds, moving people on, preventing them from standing to stare at European residents or resting on the bunds and seats. Moreover, concession authorities, through their police forces, used "deportation" or "banishment" orders as one of their categories of punishment, which was then reinforced by the offense of "returning from deportation."[52] (In legal terms this was an improvement, for example, on the early Shanghai practice of rounding up indigent Chinese and shipping them over to Pudong.) We might also remember that totals of Chinese residents in these concessions might be slightly augmented by those imprisoned in concession jails. And at Shamian, the bylaws required a register of Chinese servants, the better to help identify who was allowed on the island and who was not. An attempt to introduce this at Zhenjiang in 1923 was vetoed by the consul as too blunt.[53] After the Gelaohui riots in 1891, the authorities at Zhenjiang purged the concession of Chinese establishments. Jiujiang seems to have been unusual in that its gates and indeed walls long predated 1911. By 1922 they were routinely closed at 10 P.M. and opened at daybreak. "Breaking into Concession at night" was a crime, reported as such in the annual reports. On the city side of the Zhenjiang concession a similar arrangement was put in place in 1893, four gates being erected that year, and a fifth in 1900.[54] New gates were built in 1911 and 1912 to control access to the bund. So swiftly was the river shifting, however, that they were all but redundant within a decade and "little more than an emblem."[55] Access to Shamian across the two bridges was always restricted, and the gates were also closed at night.

Gating off through law might have helped the daily policing of the concessions, but the spatial openness became a source of anxiety again in 1911, and gates became sites of conflict in two concessions, Hankou and Xiamen, in 1918 and 1919. As fighting raged in Hankou after October 1911, makeshift wooden barriers were hurriedly erected across all openings

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[52] Hankou "banished from the concession" 160 Chinese in 1919 (British Municipal Council, Hankow, *Report for the Year 1919* [Hankow: Printed at Central China Press, 1920], p. 19); there were six returnees punished for this offense at Jiujiang in 1919 (Kiukiang Municipal Council, *Report of the Kiukiang Municipal Council for the Year 1919* [Hankow: Printed at the Central China Press, 1920], p. 5).

[53] There was also oblique comment about how this might in fact lead to the public identification of Chinese mistresses of foreign residents (Consul E. H. Sly to Teichman, Private, 14 June 1923, in TNA, FO 228/3189).

[54] Chinkiang no. 15, 13 July 1921, in TNA, FO 228/3189.

[55] R. H. Clive (Amoy), memo, "Amoy Boycott and Foreshore Question," 25 January 1922, in TNA, FO 228/3182.

from the city onto the two roads that marked the southern boundary of the British Concession. Gates were also erected at Zhenjiang—"very strong double gates of stout iron bars each with a span of some twenty feet."[56] By March 1912, British army engineers had replaced the Hankou gates with what were described as three "re-enforced wooden gates" that were "part of the permanent defences of the Concession." They proved, it was claimed, "of incalculable benefit," and—a familiar refrain—benefited not least Chinese "merchants and gentry" who fled to the concessions when order broke down in the city.[57] By July 1918, these had been reinforced with a 2,400-foot-long fence and 300 foot of wall and iron railings, with eight gates, three of them into the Chinese city.[58] The gates were, however, in ordinary times a hindrance to the free flow of traffic, and by 1919 the Municipal Council and city administration wished to replace them with new gates that could better accommodate traffic passing through the streets. The city administration had received calls from "public associations" calling for the removal of the gates in their entirety, but the concession authorities vetoed this, agreeing to compromise on the installation of less restrictive gates. But when the concession moved unilaterally to replace them in September 1919, it provoked both the posting of Chinese police pickets to prevent the work, as well as a popular agitation against the very idea of allowing gates, for, as slogans posted publicly announced, "This is our Hankou. . . . No one else can build here." Fearful of provoking a major incident, the British consul vetoed further work until things were clearer, for the Chinese authorities claimed that the gates were placed outside the concession boundary. As it turned out, this was in fact the case.[59]

At Xiamen, five gates and walls were erected for the first time in September 1918 when civil strife in the city was expected. They were accompanied by notice boards in Chinese declaring "British concession: No admittance except on business." For good measure, a flagpole was also erected, from which the Union flag flew. These measures were, it seems, resented from the start (not least also initially by members of the British Municipal Council, who objected to having to pay for work ordered to be undertaken by the British consul and military authorities). The particular point of conflict that emerged was over the prevention of traffic along the

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[56] Rasmussen, *China Trader*, p. 34.
[57] Hankow no. 104, 20 September 1919, in TNA, FO 228/3184.
[58] Hankow no. 125, 15 August 1918, in TNA, FO 228/3184.
[59] The affair is covered in correspondence in TNA, FO 228/3184.

bund, not least as the bund, partially reclaimed in 1878, technically lay outside the concession. In 1921, when Butterfield & Swire attempted to rebuild their bundside jetty, the issue was brought to a head. Demands were made for the demolition of the walls and gates and removal of the notices, and when the company under consular direction, and protected by a Royal Navy ship, began the work, it was subjected to what became a prolonged boycott. Its equipment was sabotaged, and the situation by 1922 reached an impasse. Well, concluded the consul, as the gates were "futile," they really could be lived without.[60] In mid-March 1922, demolition of the gates and removal of the signboards commenced once the British had a promise of sorts from the local authorities that this move would bring an end to the boycott. But despite the "futility" of the gates, the otherwise reasonable consular report recommended retention of the installations at the back of the concession as a "face-saving compromise." Gates, like lawns and public gardens, were accorded a symbolic value in British eyes. They were clearly physically more visible than the marker stones that once laid out concession or settlement boundaries, but their chief importance seems to have become a psychological one, tied up with notions of British prestige and with perceptions of "face," about which, surely, nobody was ever more concerned than the British.

Tightening up access to Shamian, which needed no wall, provoked a month-long strike against the British Municipal Council in July and August 1924. In 1920, the British and French consulates had implemented new rules to prohibit the storage of goods by non-resident traders seeking to take advantage of the safety of the concession during times of civil strife. The ostensible aim was to prevent the island from becoming the target of looting if law and order completely collapsed. In July 1924, new "traffic regulations" were introduced to restrict Chinese access to the island through the gated bridges. Only those with approved passes were to be admitted, and the aim was to prevent use of the concession as a thoroughfare and to keep the bund and its seats free from Chinese users. The new rules were rushed in after an attempt to assassinate the governor general of French Indo-China in the concession.[61] The concessions' Chinese police deserted as part of the protest, which saw the withdrawal of all concession labor and the picketing of the entrances to the concession

[60] R. H. Clive (Amoy), memo, "Amoy Boycott and Foreshore Question," 25 January 1922; Amoy Telegrams, no. 25, 2 March 1922, and no. 27, 15 March 1922, in FO 228/3182.

[61] With the exception of amahs accompanying foreign residents' children up to late afternoon ("Shameen Traffic Regulations," 21 August 1924, in TNA, FO 228/3193).

led by communist activists. It was only settled by a partial climb down by the councils.[62] Gated Shamian had quickly become blockaded Shamian (and not for the last time), and a seemingly local matter attracted widespread international press coverage. The little local difficulties of concession administration became politicized and internationalized issues, for the politics of revolutionary Canton clearly and swiftly took up the issue, and were inflamed by it; even island Shamian was not divorced from its host city.

8.3. *City Redevelopment*

Gates, then, were generally a later development than might be assumed, aside from the period of the Taiping emergency. They acquired an active political life later still, as urban nationalism found ready targets in the physical infrastructure of the foreign presence in China. The gates at Hankou had become an inconvenience resented by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and others by 1919. Tightening up access at Canton proved politically incendiary. But, we must also factor in simple urban development as well as complex urban politics. By the 1920s the concession at Xiamen had become an urban area for a municipal administration operating in an era of sustained urban redevelopment. As *Huaqiao* (華僑, overseas Chinese) investment flowed into Canton in the 1920s and 1930s, the city was swept by construction and development projects.[63] In 1927, plans for a new harbor-front road to be built on reclaimed land alongside the city's harbor edge were discussed by British officials. This wide new bund would cut across the access to the waterfront of the British lots. In both these cases, consular assumptions about the propriety of British actions in the past and the legal foundations of their position proved incorrect. Misplacing gates at Hankou by a few feet was an embarrassment, but it demonstrated how easy it was for British officials to misunderstand the comparatively recent and contingent nature of much that they thought

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[62] For more on the strike, see C. Martin Wilbur and Julie Lien-ying How, *Missionaries of Revolution: Soviet Advisers and Nationalist China, 1920–1927* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 107–108; TNA, FO 228/3193; Liang Guozhi 梁國志, "Guangzhou Shamian yangwu gongren de gaikuang jibagong jingguo" 廣州沙面洋務工人的概況及罷工經過 [The Circumstances and Strikes of Workers Employed in Foreign Firms in Shamian, Canton], in 廣州的洋行與租界Guangzhou de yanghang yu zujie [Foreign firms and Concessions in Canton] *Guangzhou wenshi ziliao* No. 44 (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1992), pp. 183–189.

[63] Carolyn Cartier, *Globalizing South China* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 136–138.

well-fixed in treaties and agreements. The haphazard development on the ground of the concession "system"—although it is debatable whether it can truly be called that—is instructive. There was a dearth of accurate information. Memories were short and fallible, and staff turnover in consulates and businesses was high. Consulate records went up in flames (at Shanghai in 1870 and at Zhenjiang in 1889), or else were infested with insects or damaged by mold. Or, they were simply destroyed in the early 1920s.[64] When the archive survived and was investigated, the results could be surprising. The Xiamen concession actually proved effectively to have no firm legal foundation at all and not to deserve the title "concession," for there turned out to be no provision in the 1852 arrangements for a grant in perpetuity to the British.[65] And while the micro details of the local agreements and bilateral treaties were hardly ignored by local Chinese and British officials, in the era of popular nationalist contestation, British claims that were not apparently legally watertight could be a significant liability. The British were embarrassed by Xiamen questions at the Washington Conference in 1922, such local spats providing fuel for Wellington Koo's bid there to roll back extraterritoriality and the foreign concessions.[66]

There was a sustained legalistic attack on the foreign position in the early republic, associated with Koo, and with Chinese students like him studying international law overseas, principally in the United States. Chinese diplomats had been as little aware as the British of the fine and precise detail of the dizzying array of local agreements underpinning the concessions. Researchers such as Koo, Bao Mingqian (Joshua Ming Chien Bau) and Tai Ensai (En-sai Tai) found themselves relying on foreign diplomatic archives and records to build their case against the foreign infrastructure in China.[67] Build it they did, however. While they generally accepted the argument that judicial reform within China was the sine qua non underlying treaty revision, they set to work arming negotiators and officials with fine detail rescued from foreign archives. Koo's move at Washington did not succeed, but by raising the issue of wholesale treaty revision head

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[64] Bickers, *The Scramble for China*, pp. 377–378.

[65] Amoy no. 35, 10 July 1930, in TNA, FO 228/4301.

[66] See also Legation no. 541, 26 August 1922, in TNA, FO 228/3189.

[67] Vi Kyuin Wellington Koo, *The Status of Aliens in China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1912); En-sai Tai, *Treaty Ports in China* (*A Study in Diplomacy*) (New York: Columbia University Press Bookstore, 1918); M. J. Bau, *The Foreign Relations of China: A History and a Survey* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1921). On the wider context of judicial revision see Xiaoqun Xu, *Trial of Modernity: Judicial Reform in early Twentieth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

on, he brought into the light the legal and other inadequacies and irregularities that characterised much of the position of the concession-holding powers, the British not least of all.[68]

Part of the issue also lay in the fact that the ground shifted beneath the feet of the British. They had arrived by water, barrelling off the steamers in 1861 to lobby the consuls for grant of a lot, preferably bund-side, but any lot would do. They mostly lived afloat on their hulks at Zhenjiang for five years after 1861, across the river from the concession area, for the swiftness of the current on the south bank of the river where the concession was laid out made its actual realization and smooth working a considerable challenge. They were quicker ashore and building at Jiujiang and Hankou, but not without facing some measure of opposition.[69] At none of the ports did they have control of the harbor or anchorages. Their limits were fixed to a boundary along the "river bank" (in most original lease documents)[70] or tidal foreshore, but thereafter lay under Chinese jurisdiction, generally exercised through the Maritime Customs. Chinese sovereignty over conservancy issues and its waterways was tested and confirmed in the face of British challenges over customs actions concerning substantial damage caused to the Zhenjiang bund by a Butterfield & Swire hulk, the *Cadiz*, after 1874.[71] The evolution and development of municipal facilities by the concession administrations could also fall foul of this fact. Chinese resistance to Zhenjiang's attempt to modernize its sewage system in 1921 was framed in the language of rights protection and Chinese sovereignty.[72]

Demarcating the shoreline became a key development task, and the bunding of the riverbank or harbor side was vital, not least given seasonal tidal differences and the average daily tidal range, which on the Yangzi ports was dramatic. The achievement involved in building these bunds was much celebrated, and their iconographic status has been analyzed. They look fine and strong in John Thomson's 1872 photographs of Hankou and Jiujiang, but their reality was often gimcrack, and less energy was put

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[68] On Koo at Washington see Stephen G. Craft, *V.K. Wellington Koo and the Emergence of Modern China* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2004), 61–71; on the wider pattern see Dong Wang, *China's Equal Treaties: Narrating National History* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005), 35–61.

[69] Dennys and Mayers, *Treaty Ports of China and Japan*, pp. 421–424 (Zhenjiang), pp. 429–444 (Jiujiang and Hankou).

[70] See Mayers Report, appendix 1.

[71] See, e.g., Fairbank et al., eds., *The I.G. in Peking* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 1:231, n2; Stanley F. Wright, *Hart and the Chinese Customs* (Belfast: Mullan, 1950), pp. 434–444.

[72] Chinkiang no. 32, 26 October 1921, in TNA, FO 228/3189.

into the ponds and land behind the bunds and the lots. (And at Jiujiang they failed to build a direct connection to the city.) Lot holders did not wish to pour funds into construction. Individuals were often looking to short-term returns on their investment, to making their £20,000 and getting out back home.[73] The measures taken were often therefore a compromise between necessity and tight budgets. So bunds decayed or collapsed, or were a source of anxiety.[74] But no bund would have stayed the Liao River at Niuzhuang, as it eroded seven of the eleven British lots and left two of those remaining "anything but secure" by 1891, and the approach of the "Chengjenchow" spit on the Zhenjiang concession after 1905 was plain to see and little effort was made to prevent it, for the port's trade hardly justified the expense.[75] More dramatically, if more occasionally, nearly all the concessions were troubled by major floods. Effective management of this threat was beyond the capacity of any single concession and needed government agencies, such as the Haihe Conservancy Commission at Tianjin, which could act across the region as a whole.[76] Foreshore questions took up much consular time and energy. A concession was only as good as its access to the water, but the water was not the concessions', nor was the foreshore, and the water could not be tamed.

8.4. *Incompetence*

Simple incompetence, clearly labeled as such, is, I think, little identified by historians as one of the contingent factors driving events. Often this is because it seems a value term, rather than an objective one. But all too clearly the personnel involved in running concession administrations or their departments were poorly qualified to do so, if qualified at all, nurses and civil engineers aside. As Wellington Koo had remarked in 1912, whereas foreign missionaries, the focus of much earlier conflict were "little impeachable in their private conduct, it would be entirely a different case with foreign merchants, for in their train there are apt to be characters of all kinds and grades."[77] These little Britain's charmed some

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[73] Bickers, *Scramble for China*.

[74] Customs, *Decennial Reports, 1882–1891*, pp. 304–305.

[75] Customs, *Decennial Reports, 1882–1891*, p. 16.

[76] The chairman of the British Concession had a place on the commission, but generally its foreign membership came from the consulate staffs.

[77] On nurses, see the work in progress of Rosemary Wall and Anne-Marie Rafferty on the Colonial Nursing Association, and Rafferty, "The Seductions of History and the Nursing Diaspora," *Health and History* 7.2 (2005), 2–16; Koo, *Status of Aliens in China*, p. 355.

observers because they were so cozy, and the billets enjoyed by their clubbable municipal secretaries so lacking in onerous duty. The British areas were in general rather makeshift. Tianjin and Hankou had the largest municipal staffs, and some semblance of professional practice, but at the smaller ports the police chief was sometimes the only foreign municipal official. The quality of the personnel routinely was decried in council reports; they were indeed 'characters of all kinds.' Nearly all the men at Zhenjiang were dismissed in 1919. They slept on duty, and they failed to rise above "the ordinary standard of native honesty." They were replaced by returnees from the Chinese Labour Corps.[78] Jiujiang's force contained men "connected with the thieves' Guild in the city" in 1919. The previous year, reported the British inspector, had been "very bad, owing to corruption and bribery connected with opium." The senior Chinese officer and other staff were dismissed in 1925.[79] The Xiamen concession police were finally dismissed en masse in 1925, their inspector included, and not replaced. They were not missed.

In an era when a minor street brawl could escalate into a major political incident, the lazy violence of a constable and the indifferent talents of his foreign inspector were dangerous threats. One such riot blew up on 14 March 1920 at Jiujiang, but whereas it arose because a Chinese constable hit one of a large group of laborers unloading rice bags from Butterfield & Swire's bund-side hulk, the policeman had been attempting to enforce a municipal bylaw that forbade "coolies" from resting on concession pavements. "You policemen again, kicking coolies," said one of the firm's Chinese employees to the British inspector, Harry Pritchard, when he arrived on the scene. Shortly thereafter the incensed crowd dragged the Briton out of the concession to the city government headquarters, along with his Chinese deputy, kicking and manhandling them all the way, then locking them up there for an hour in a wooden cage. This "rabble . . . of loafers and porcelain hawkers" surrounded them "jeering and shouting." The authorities apologized profusely, gave them biscuits and cakes, and when the situation had cooled—as it had only after U.S. naval personnel cleared the bund at bayonet point—sent them back with an armed escort.[80]

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[78] British Municipal Council, Chinkiang, *Report for the Year 1919 and Budget for the Year 1920*, p. 40.

[79] Kiukiang Municipal Council, *Report of the Kiukiang Municipal Council for the Year 1918* (Hankow: Printed at the Central China Press, 1919), p. 3; Kiukiang Municipal Council, *Report of the Kiukiang Municipal Council for the Year 1919*, p. 4.

[80] Kiukiang no. 6, 17 March 1920, no. 7, 20 March 1920, and enclosure, "Deposition of Harry Pritchard, Inspector of Municipal Police, Kiukiang"; Consul Kirke to Lampson, 27 March 1920; all in FO 228/3172.

Pritchard was "by no means a tactful individual and is liked neither by foreigners nor Chinese," reported the consul. He left the concession for good within a few weeks, but the police force had been entirely undermined by the incident and was failing to function. The need to reestablish the force and demonstrate to the "coolies" that the British were determined to police the concession was thought paramount by Consul Kirke. It was a puzzling affair, though, he thought, perhaps reflecting the "general unrest that is shewing itself in all countries," or even "incipient Bolshevism." Responded one reader at the legation in Beijing: "Is it not the revolt of Kiukiang cooliedom—ever a rowdy lot, for Chinese—against rules and regulations which appear to them tyrannical and meticulous, and which are enforced by a small unarmed body of their own countrymen in foreign pay?" "Foreign dog!" shouted a boy at one of the constables.[81]

Contestation of concession authority by city residents and workers was not entirely new in any of the ports. The bayonet was often wielded to clear the bund at this city or that. But contestation also won out. Chinkiang had abandoned an attempt to employ Sikh policemen, recruited in 1887, after two years, in the face of local Chinese opposition and a serious riot on 5 February 1889, which saw the destruction of the British consulate and other buildings.[82] As at Shanghai, an attempt was made there in 1891 to prohibit the chanting of laborers when hauling loads, but as at Shanghai, this attempt to master the sounds of the concession was entirely thwarted.[83] In the autumn of 1909, a substantial three-month boycott of British shipping followed the acquittal in the consular court of the Jiujiang concession police inspector, John Mears, on a charge of the manslaughter of a Chinese man, found collapsed on the concession bund, his admission that he might have given the man a "poke" notwithstanding. In the British Parliament, the undersecretary of state for Foreign Affairs claimed that as Mears was a concession employee, there was nothing consuls or diplomats could do about this continued employment, which was disingenuous, given the actual relationship between consuls and concession administrations. But the man was eventually persuaded by the affected British shipping companies to resign his post, the persuasion taking the form of a large payoff.[84]

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[81] Consul Kirke to Beilby Alston, 2 May 1920; Kiukiang no. 15, 29 April 1920; both in FO 228/3172.

[82] Customs, *Decennial Reports, 1882–1891*, p. 308.

[83] Customs, *Decennial Reports, 1882–1891*, p. 304.

[84] C. F. Remer, *A Study of Chinese Boycotts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1933), p. 19; *The Times*, 1909: 23 August, p. 3; 17 September, p. 3; 23 September, p. 3; 19 October, p. 5.

British concession administrations were seemingly model settlements, rationally and efficiently run, beacons of best practice for their municipal neighbors. This was an absolute tenet of British treaty port faith. But, their thick reports disguised the often woeful state of affairs. Sanitary conditions were until recently "deplorable," remarked the customs commissioner at Zhenjiang in 1912.[85] And what man of talent would take such positions as were available? The concessions generally took what they could get and so lived with the consequences. The bunds looked good, but sometimes the reality was no wider than that.

The actions of concession personnel, generally men of limited talents enjoying undemanding, cozy billets, recur as a problem. They were certainly not men fit for nationalist times, which required better British diplomacy at Beijing and on the ground. Incompetence and panic, and casual racism, lay behind the events on 30 May 1925 at Shanghai, which spiraled out across China. But the continual minor indignities and minor violence of small concession life took their toll on British prestige as well and impaired the freedom of action of consuls and diplomats, already finding themselves wrong-footed by China's well-educated, charming and agile young diplomats.

The language of prestige and face surfaces in the discussions about these bund squabbles and minor emergencies. For some, the symbolic capital of the British was heavily invested in these concessions, where the flag flew over smart lawns, tidy bunds, and efficient little councils administering their Chinese acres and displaying good British practical sense, energy, and efficiency.[86] But exasperated consuls grew tired of the pointless incidents that occurred and recurred and were happy to lose their responsibilities for dealing with the inefficient police chiefs and their lackadaisical staff. Small concession inefficiencies and incidents became too dangerous in the nationalistic 1920s. Even those flagstaffs could cause boycotts and trouble.

8.5. *Retrocessions*

Alston seems to have been suckered by the lobbyists in Hong Kong and China in 1911 and 1912, and he was probably swayed too by the uncertainties of the revolution and the new Republic. In a second minute, dated 1 July 1914, he reinforced his dissent from the original proposals

[85] Customs, *Decennial Reports, 1902–1911*, p. 422.
[86] Bickers, *Britain in China*, chaps. 3–4.

of the Inter-Departmental Committee. The acquisition of this estate in China by the Crown was accidental, he concluded, and policy overall was wholly inconsistent. The Crown should take no financial advantage of the position it was in; rather, it held these lands in trust for the British trading communities.[87] So, two years' residence in China had seen him well schooled by those communities. The leases conundrum was not resolved until much more correspondence was exchanged, meetings held, and positions explored. In December 1927, a Treasury minute was published that implemented one of the policy commitments announced in Foreign Secretary Austen Chamberlain's 1926 "December Memorandum," which had aimed to placate Guomindang (Nationalist Party) demands at the height of the Nationalist Revolution. All interests in concession leases held by the British government were surrendered to the lessees, and the Crown thereafter no longer acted as "ground landlord," collecting annual ground rents from lot holders and passing these on to the Chinese authorities.[88]

There was no sudden shift in policy about British retention of concessions and settlements, however. Overall, a decision had certainly been taken to concentrate on core interests. As British Minister Sir Miles Lampson and his team began to establish what became a fairly good working relationship with the Nationalist Government after 1928, they did move to surrender the irritant concessions that had survived the Nationalist Revolution. Hankou and Jiujiang had been surrendered in the face of populist agitation in the heady days of January 1927.[89] The absolute limits of the British use of force to protect these holdings was reached, and, recognizing the inability of marines, or foreign volunteers, to prevent their seizure without significant bloodshed and catastrophic consequences for the British position in China overall, British forces had been withdrawn. The surrender to Chinese control was ratified within weeks by the first agreement signed between the British and the Guomindang. Xiamen was discovered not to be at all properly established and was surrendered with no ceremony in 1929. Police sovereignty had actually been quietly abandoned

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[87] "Second Memorandum by Mr Alston Respecting British Concessions in China," 1 July 1914, in TNA, FO 881/10507.

[88] Cmd. 2994, China, *Copy of Treasury Minute Dated the 7th December, 1927, Relative to the Leases of His Majesty's Government in the British Concessions in China* (London: HMSO, 1927). On the 1926 initiative, see Fung, *The Diplomacy of Imperial Retreat*, pp. 101–104.

[89] Bickers, *Britain in China*, chap. 4, "Dismantling Informal Empire," pp. 115–169. For a memoir of the Jiujiang events, see P. H. Munro-Faure, "The Kiukiang Incident of 1927" [1944], *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 29 (1989): 61–76.

with the disbanding of the police force in 1925, so there was little real difference. Zhenjiang was let go in 1930.

By the end of that year the British estate had been reduced to its core, to the concession at Tianjin, and the international settlements at Shanghai and Xiamen, both of whose international status greatly complicated discussions about reform. Nonetheless, negotiations were undertaken in 1931 about their return, but were derailed by the fall-out from the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. Nonetheless, consuls and settlement authorities accommodated the assertive projection of the sovereignty of the National government within the settlements across many areas previously considered wholly within the purview of the foreign authorities. Flashpoints they remained, but increasingly they were flashpoints in intra-imperial conflict, as the Japanese exerted pressure on the British with a view to dislodging them from their Chinese possessions. There were standoffs at Shanghai and blockades at Xiamen and at Tianjin in 1939–40. All fell, in the end, as the Pacific War unfolded. Aside from Hong Kong and the New Territories, none of the British system survived the conflict.[90]

Staff of the former administrations harassed British officials over pension claims after 1943, when remaining privileges were surrendered in the Sino-British Friendship Treaty, as they had after 1927 and the return of the Yangzi concessions. Traders and residents had then complained about the failure of successor bodies to maintain the apparent high standards of the former British administrations. Mears and his ilk were forgotten. Other worries were highlighted. Would property prices fall? What about municipal bonds—would they be honored, where outstanding? How had the retrocession of Zhenjiang affected him, one long-time resident was asked in 1931 by a journalist, H. G. W. Woodhead, who opposed the new British policies and was reporting on the state of the former concessions. At Zhenjiang, Chinese businesses and hotels had been established in the former concession area since the handover and the ending of the restrictions on the Chinese presence. The silting foreshore was being reclaimed as a new bund, bigger in size than the original concession. The interrupted city was whole again. Well, the man replied, thinking over Woodhead's question, "I have never had clean bath water since."[91]

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[90] See, e.g. Swann, *Japan's Imperial Dilemma in China*.

[91] H. G. W. Woodhead, *The Yangtsze and Its Problems* (Shanghai: Mercury Press, 1931), p. 137.

Figure 8.1. G. W. Swire, Loading cargo at Jiujiang, 1906–1907, swl2-061.

8.6. *Concessions and Water*

This essay has shown, then, that the ground beneath British feet in the concessions was hardly firm, ethically, despite the precision of the land regulations. It was often less clearly delineated than its residents and British officials believed. It was not firmly rooted in treaty. It was certainly not firm physically in some of the concessions. We might now make an analytical virtue of this, and reimagine and resituate the concessions by thinking about them from the water, not from the land, and that can also be done by using a powerful, newly available visual source.

G. Warren Swire, grandson of the founder of John Swire & Sons, became a leading voice of the company in the 1920s and 1930s and was its chairman from 1927 to 1946.[92] Although the firm was headquartered in London, one of its directors made a trip "out east" (in company parlance) every year. This involved visiting Butterfield & Swire (Taigu 太古) branches and installations, calling on and lobbying where needed the agents of the British state, at Hong Kong, Beijing, and Shanghai, as well as Chinese officials and merchants, gingering up and assessing staff, inspecting new developments, and so on. Files of letters from the "Director Now Out East" are full of comment, gossip, and information about people and developments, crucial data for decision making at a distance. But Warren Swire also marked his voyages with photography, not as a snapshooter, but as a serious and technically proficient photographer. In one sense, Swire produced a large additional set of *aides-memoire*, good photographs of the company's assets in China and their environments, as well as its shipping. He thereby also left a stunning record of riverine and coastal China and its developments between 1906 and 1940.[93]

John Swire & Sons had their say in some concession administrations, for the company informally kept a place on the Shanghai Municipal Council, for example, but often sited their operations outside the concessions. At Shanghai, they were based on the French Concession bund and at Hankou just beyond the British limits. The company's installations were a source of friction and boycott at Xiamen and at Jiujiang. Swire had little truck with the small treaty port people for whom the concessions provided

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[92] On Swire, see Robert Bickers, "Swire, (George) Warren (1883–1949)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, September 2004, available at http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39473 (accessed 30 August 2010).

[93] The photographs can be viewed on the "Historical Photographs of China" Web site at http://hpc.vcea.net/>.

Figure 8.2. G. W. Swire, Junks and hulks at Zhenjiang, 1906–1907, sw12-057.

Figure 8.3. G. W. Swire, Hankou bund and the Customs House, 1920s, sw07-069.

Figure 8.4. G. W. Swire, Shameen, Canton, 1907s, sw14-010.

an insular world and one that needed protection. His photographs put the concessions in their place, and while they do so by putting them in the place of one particular company network, there is a wider lesson to be drawn. They remind us of the central importance of the riverine and maritime communications that linked these concessions, that they were small outposts within bigger cities and harbors and were nodes within much, much wider networks of treaty ports and ports of call across China. They remind us of the ambiguous position of Hong Kong within this network, wholly linked into it, but by virtue of its place in the formal British colonial world, also looking out. They remind us that this was a world wholly connected to and functioning within wider East and Southeast Asian networks of port cities and international trade and movement.

Swire photographed the bund at Xiamen, company installations at Yokohama, the hulks at Zhenjiang, and the wharves at Bangkok. Other companies' networks would provide geographical variations on this theme, but whether it was BAT, APC, or Swires, the essential fact remains that their Chinese world was one part of a wider world of activity and interests. These small British concessions, once vital to British interests, now in the Nanjing Republic regarded by many solely as sources of dreary conflict, were as a result resituated within the scope of British diplomacy and British interests. The ships kept running, nonetheless, linking these cities with their Asian counterparts. What was even recently held fast on to, by force of threat of arms, by table banging and restatement of apparent treaty obligations, was delivered over to Chinese control, for it had comprehensively outlived its usefulness, and the British state and its allies had re-orientated their China strategy, which had always taken place in a far wider context than was imagined in the municipal building at Hankou, or Zhenjiang.[94]

Conclusion

The British concessions have had several afterlives. Some were initially run as Special Administrative Districts, which retained some structures that accommodated or gave voice to British and concession leaseholder interests. The first SADs—the pun in the acronym was noted by opponents

[94] Jürgen Osterhammel, 'Imperialism in Transition: British Business and the Chinese Authorities, 1931–37', *China Quarterly*, No. 98 (1984), pp. 260–86.

of retrocession—were German and Austrian, the second wave Russian. Municipal reorganization during the Nanjing decade saw most of these vanish. None were ever established for the International Settlement at Shanghai or the British and French Concessions at Tianjin.[95] Second, they have functioned as a subject within the revived national humiliation discourse of the past twenty years, and early in that period as a byproduct of the functional analysis of the treaty ports as Special Economic Zones by social science academies during the Seventh Five-Year Plan period.[96] Most recently, they rejoined the mainstream of local urban history, in the recent volumes of the *Shanghai tongshi*, for example.[97] They have also become important sites in the heritage industry in China. Zhenjiang's old street, the Tianjin Italian district, and the revamped bund at Shanghai, form a telling part of the spate of new developments across Chinese cities aiming to capitalize on the country's growing tourist market.

This chapter has aimed to offer some thoughts about the place of the British concessions in Chinese cities. The fruits, generally, of hectic land grabs after 1842 and 1860, contested, extended, defended, mythologized, and romanticized, and also excoriated, the concessions were one defining feature of British activity in Republican China. As British diplomats retrenched in the aftermath of the Nationalist Revolution, some of these possessions were abandoned, to the great relief of many whose attention had been overly dominated by concession problems and disputes. The bathwater might thereafter have been less pristine at Zhenjiang, but the British relationship with the Nationalist Government became clearer.

The concessions offer us something by way of an entrée into their wider cities, for they were a part of these, and their attempts to demarcate themselves effectively show how porous they actually were, gates or no gates. But most essentially, too, they can remind us, not least if we approach

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[95] One early contemporary outline of these developments is Harold S. Quigley, "Foreign Concessions in Chinese Hands," *Foreign Affairs* 7.1 (1928): 150–155.

[96] See, e.g., Zhang Zhongli 張仲禮, chief ed., *Dongnan yanhai chengshi yu Zhongguo jindaihua*東南沿海城市與中國近代化 [The southeast coastal cities and China's modernization] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1996); Luo Shuwei 羅澍偉, chief ed., *Jindai Tianjin chengshi shi* 近代天津城市史 [Modern Tianjin's urban history] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1993); and Pi Mingxiu 皮明庶, chief ed., *Jindai Wuhan chengshi shi* 近代武漢城市史 [Modern Wuhan's urban history] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1993). On this phenomenon of combining city-planning and urban historiography, see Haiyan Liu and Kristin Stapleton, "Chinese Urban History: State of the Field," *China Information* 20.3 (2006): 391–427.

[97] Xiong Yuezhi 熊月之, ed., *Shanghai tongshi* 上海通史 [Comprehensive history of Shanghai] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1999). See also, for example, Zhong Junming 鍾俊鳴, ed., Shamian: Jin yi ge shenmi miansha 沙面: 近一個世紀的神秘面紗 [Shamian: A century of mystery] (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1999).

them through the visual records of a man like Swire, of maritime and riverine China, of the relentless movement of goods and peoples along the coasts and rivers, and of the movement thereby too of ideas and practices. Seen this way, the concessions serve as a reminder both of the fact of the incorporation of Chinese cities and through them, thereby, their hinterlands, into regional East Asia and international networks, and their national connectedness too along the rivers and coastal highways, the $3 ride from Ningbo to Shanghai, and the reshaping of modern China that this new world of accelerated movement shaped.

Appendix

Table 8.1. British concessions and settlements in 1920.

City	Type	Date	Size (acres)	Population (ca. 1920)		
				British	Other foreign	Chinese
Canton (Shamian)	Concession	1859	43	347#*		1,005
Hankou	Concession	1861	75	163	515	9,757
Jiujiang	Concession	1861	25		++	
Niuzhuang (Yingko)	Concession	1861	9##			
Shanghai	Int. Settlement	1843*	5,519	5,341	17,966	783,186
Tianjin**	Concession*#	1860	1,013	682	1,362	33,172
Xiamen	Concession	1852	4	0		
Xiamen (Gulangyu)	Int. Settlement	1902	330			
Zhenjiang	Concession	1861	26	24#		1,235

#* Census of 1914, no breakdown by nationality, foreign total includes Britons and non-Britons (H. S. S., *Diary of Events*, p. 25). In 1927 there were 116 Britons, a further 311 foreign nationals, and 803 Chinese (Canton no. 6, 17 January 1927, in TNA, FO 676/83).

++ In 1918 there were 445 foreign residents in the city, Liu Jifu 劉積福, chief ed., *Jiujiang shi zhi* 九江市志 [Annals of Jiujiang] (Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2004).

As originally laid out, the British occupied a riverside strip 1,000 yards long and 1 lot wide, some 30 acres in total, but 21 were washed away; see "Newchwang," Nicholar Belfield Dennys and William Frederick Mayers, *The Treaty Ports of China and Japan* (London: Trübner & Co., 1867), pp. 538–545; Mayers Report, p. 22, in TNA, FO 881/8747.

* Established as "English ground" in 1843; became the International Settlement through amalgamation with the American Hongkew Settlement in 1863.

** Population figure from 1925 (*Tianjin zujie dangan xuanbian* 天津租界檔案選編 [Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 1992], pp. 86–87). This is probably greater than the 1920 figure.

*# The amalgamated British Municipal Area of 1919 consisted of the original concession, the British Municipal Extension area of 1897, which had a separate council until 1919, and the Extra-Mural Extension area of 1903.

Figures from 1919. British and other non-Chinese not distinguished. Most of these, barring about half a dozen, will be British, however (*British Municipal Council, Chinkiang, Report for the Year 1919 and Budget for the Year 1920* [Shanghai: Printed at the Shanghai Mercury, 1919], p. 40).

CHAPTER NINE

PROVINCIALIZING THE CITY: CANTON AND THE RESHAPING OF GUANGDONG PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION, 1912–1937

John Fitzgerald

9.1. *Introduction*

One of the central tasks of government in imperial China was to administer a largely rural society from a distant urban base. The task facing government in the Republic was similar but in this case it was inflected by the provincialization of politics and administration over the last years of empire and by the growth of powerful provincial regimes in the Republic itself.[1] A number of key provinces including Guangdong were effectively self-governing before the outbreak of war with Japan. What did the development of powerful provincial governments in the Republic entail for a provincial urban centre, such as Canton (Guangzhou), in extending the reach of government over the countryside?

State-building in the Republic was driven by two of the classic imperatives of the modernizing state: to extend the reach of government to the village level and to ensure that the new administrative apparatus was internally differentiated and distinguished from the communities that it taxed and served. At the village and township level, differentiation entailed preventing dominant local leaders—the "local bullies and evil gentry" (*tuhao lieshen* 土豪劣紳) of republican folklore—from perverting the administrative apparatus of the Republic by colluding with local officials to subvert directives from above, in this case from the provincial level of government. Efforts to extend the reach of government and to differentiate the structure of the local bureaucracy were bound up with a third state-building imperative, the need to centralize provincial authority over a subordinate administrative apparatus that could reach through every county to each village in the province.

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[1] Phillip A. Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China: Militarization and Social Structure, 1796–1864* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 224; "Local Taxation and Finance in Republican China," *Select Papers from the Centre for Far Eastern Studies* 2 (1978–1979): 121–124 [*100–136*].

As a provincial capital, Canton was an important site for the extension, differentiation, and provincial centralization of the new republican state. By situating Canton in the reforming territorial hierarchy of the Republic, this chapter draws attention to the role that the provincial capital came to play in the extension of a new style of Republican authority. The chief aim is to illustrate the impact of the city's larger provincial role, both upon Canton as a city and on Guangdong Province as a whole. In particular, the chapter illustrates how the city came to serve as a centralized node for the extension of provincial authority through military operations, information gathering, and training and recruitment programs involving provincial-level units based in the city. In the broader context of institutional changes affecting the territorial hierarchy of the Republic, these initiatives helped to extend political authority from Canton to the ninety-four counties of Guangdong Province over the twenty-five years that elapsed between the founding of the Republic and the outbreak of war with Japan.

9.2. *Remarking the Territorial Hierarchy*

9.2.1. *Provincial Capital and Prefectural Capital*

The administrative reforms of the early Republic entailed a shift in the ballast of territorial administration in favor of county-level and provincial-level units at the expense of intermediate echelons such as prefectures and circuits. The reforms had the effect of leveling the status of subprovincial towns and cities and elevating provincial capitals in the spatial and administrative hierarchies of the Republic. The province of Guangdong was no exception.

At the end of the Qing dynasty, Guangdong was administered through six circuits (*dao* 道), nine prefectures (*fu* 府), seven directly administered departments (*zhilizhou*直隸州), three directly administered subprefectures (*zhiliting* 直隸廳), four independent departments (*zhou* 州or *san zhou* 散州), one independent subprefecture (*ting* 廳), and seventy-nine counties (*xian* 縣). By the third year of the Republic, this complex array of territorial jurisdictions had been reduced to a two-tiered subprovincial network of six circuits and ninety-four counties. The reduction was achieved by converting subprefectures and independent prefectures into counties—thereby expanding the number of counties from seventy-nine to ninety-four—and by eliminating prefectures altogether. In the ninth year of the Republic, the remaining six circuits were abolished as well,

leaving the ninety-four counties relating directly to the provincial government in Canton.[2]

In the late empire, Guangdong's nine prefectures were supported by prefectural offices in established prefectural towns. Cultural capital accrued to the towns selected for prefectural status, including the placement of prefectural-level academies and examination halls, the establishment of prefectural granaries, and the placement of multicounty associational halls, benevolent trusts, and other institutions. Their supracounty status placed them at an advantage in vying for the best schools, gardens, artificial scenic lakes, local benefactors, and public markets in late imperial Guangdong. Prefectural towns lost much of this capital when they surrendered their prefectural status in the first years of the Republic. With the introduction of a new hierarchy of territorial administration, they were reduced to the status of county towns. In this respect, the greatest losers in Guangdong Province were the prefectural capitals of Zhaoqing, Shaoguan, Huizhou, Chaozhou, Gaozhou, Leizhou, Lianzhou, and Qiongzhou. County seats emerged relative winners as sites of more intensified county administration equipped with commensurate resources. Guangzhoufu, the ninth of the old prefectural capitals, emerged the top winner. It served in a new and expanded role as the provincial capital (*shenghui* 省會) of a provincially centralized and intensified state system.

The decline of prefectural cities was only partly related to reforms affecting the territorial hierarchy. In Guangdong, the place of some prefectural cities had already been usurped by rapidly developing coastal and river ports under the impact of shifting trading patterns and, in time, by the growth of treaty ports under semicolonial jurisdiction.[3] Canton was the major treaty port in south China and hosted a conspicuous international settlement on Shameen Island, aside the Pearl River bund. The growing commercial and security role of Canton prompted the relocation

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[2] Pan Lixing 潘理性, Cao Hongbin 曹洪斌, and Yu Yongzhe 余永哲, eds., *Guangdong zhengqu yanbian* 廣東政區演變 [Changes in the administrative territories of Guangdong] (Guangzhou: Guangdongsheng ditu chubanshe, 1991), pp. 45–50. This text held that there were three *san zhou* before the fall of the Qing dynasty. However, there were altogether four units with the title of *zhou* at this time. The total should therefore be four instead of three. See also Niu Pinghan 牛平漢, *Qingdai zhengqu yange zongbiao* 清代政區沿革總表 (Beijing: Zhongguo ditu chubanshe, 1990), pp. 273–74.

[3] All but a few of the seventy-odd treaty ports opened to foreign trade were situated "beside the walls of pre-existing major Chinese trade centers" as Murphey noted. See Rhoads Murphey, *The Treaty Ports and China's Modernization: What Went Wrong?* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Chinese Studies, 1970), p. 34.

of senior official placements from nearby Zhaoqing well before the founding of the Republic, and pre-determined its selection as provincial capital following the collapse of the Qing. Similarly, expanded commercial activity in and through the treaty port of Swatow (Shantou) in the late nineteenth century elevated that city at the expense of the prefectural capital of Chaozhou well before Chaozhou lost its prefectural status in the Republic. In other provinces, the decline of prefectural cities was accelerated by acrimonious disputes between prefectural institutions and elites of formerly subordinate county towns, who sued their prefectural centers to recover for their home counties the surplus charitable funds deposited in the prefectural capital before they lost their prefectural status.[4] Overall, the standing of prefectural cities in Guangdong was irrevocably diminished when provincial authorities transferred the administrative role of prefectural cities over subordinate counties to the provincial capital. The realignment of commercial networks around urban sites in Guangdong was accompanied by a hierarchical realignment of administrative, social, and cultural networks in favor of Canton.

9.2.2. *Counties*

A second element of the administrative reforms of the early Republic was a shift in administrative ballast to the base of the system, the county, under the direct supervision of the provincial government in Canton. Provinces and counties each assumed greater weight in the evolving territorial architecture at the expense of intermediate subprovincial units such as circuits and prefectures. Counties became more intensive units of local government. Peering up the territorial hierarchy from a county seat, in the 1920s or 1930s, only the provincial level of government stood between the seat and the national capital. Peering down the hierarchy from a county seat, however, the number of subcounty echelons was rapidly proliferating. County governments sat at the apex of an expanded system of local administration involving several subordinate levels, including the ward (*qu* 區) and the administrative village (*xiang* 鄉), as well as older community units such as the hamlet (*li* 里) and the neighborhood (*lin* 鄰). As provincial governments concentrated authority over their subnational

[4] Wu Tao 吳滔, "Qing zhi minchu Jiading Baoshan diqu fenchang chuantong zhi zhuanbian 清至民初嘉定寶山地區分廠傳統之轉變" [The transformation of the tradition of local famine relief in the Jiading and Baoshan Districts from the Qing to the early Republic], *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 [Studies in Qing history] 2 (May 2004): 1–16.

jurisdictions, county governments concentrated authority within counties through more finely stratified territorial agencies of local administration situated in towns and administrative villages.

The concentration of authority at county level was accompanied by finer administrative differentiation and new ideas of county management. As Lin Yizhong, Head of the Guangdong Provincial Civil Affairs Department, informed county heads in April 1936: "County governments today are not the same as the county offices of earlier times . . . Today's county governments are complex organizations. All officers under a county head, including bureau heads, section chiefs, and section officers, are each and every one public servants with particular roles to perform and responsibilities to fulfill." As complex organizations, new-style county governments were integrated into a vertical/ horizontal matrix of area administration that limited the autonomy of the county head and calibrated the work of his subordinates by reference to provincial government plans that were drafted and supervised in Canton. The staff of county government offices worked to a plan, Lin continued. They toiled neither for honor, nor for profit, but to perform the tasks assigned to them by higher provincial authorities in Canton.[5]

Initially, the centralizing Guangdong provincial government related directly to the intensified system of county government without the aid of intermediate echelons. In time, however, Guangdong's counties proved too numerous and in many cases too remote from Canton to facilitate direct supervision and control by civilian agencies of the provincial government. A number of counties lay outside Canton's effective military reach for the first two decades of the Republic. Some counties situated along shared provincial borders were vulnerable to occupation by military forces based in adjacent provinces, including "guest armies" (*kejun* 客軍) from Guangxi, Yunnan, and Hunan, which periodically invaded the province with the avowed aim of settling interregime disputes in Canton. Later in the Republic, border counties were vulnerable to infiltration by Communist brigades camping in marginal areas. Other counties situated between the provincial borders and the capital were prone to occupation by native subprovincial warlords who had split off from the main force of the Guangdong provincial armies over the early years of the Republic.

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[5] Guangdong minzhengting 廣東省民政廳, ed., *Guangdongsheng wunianlai minzheng gaikuang* 廣東省五年來民政概況 [Overview of civil affairs in Guangdong over the past five years] (Guangzhou, 1936), 1:12–13.

Even governments in counties within a few days' march of Canton preferred to remain aloof from the volatile politics of the capital in order to conserve their resources to deal with local problems, such as banditry, or to raise and allocate revenues according to local priorities, rather than in deference to Canton's. Hence, bringing county governments to heel was a persistent problem for successive provincial administrations. Short of reviving prefectures and circuits, provincial governments in Canton came to exercise authority over county governments by inventing districts (*qu* 區) as subordinate arms of the provincial government.

9.2.3. *Districts*

Beginning in the early 1920s, successive regimes in Canton started experimenting with roving commissions that stretched across the interechelon space between the provincial city and the counties in order to capture and secure county seats and hold their officials to account. Within a decade, command of these district commissions enabled provincial governments to concentrate military power, political authority, and routine administrative oversight of county government administrations within a cluster of flexible, mobile, and coordinated district commissions.

Guangdong's district commissions started out as mobile offices of military, state, and party representatives dispatched from the capital to supervise county administrations and deal with problems of subcounty security. The first subprovincial districts appeared in Guangdong in the eighth year of the Republic, when they were known as rehabilitation boards (*shanhou duban* 善後督辦). In the mid-1920s, they were termed district administrative commissions (*xingzheng weiyuanhui* 行政委員會), in the late 1920s they were known as rehabilitation commissions (*shanhou weiyuanhui* 善後委員會), and in the early 1930s as pacification commissioner offices (*suijing weiyuan gongshu* 綏靖委員公署). By 1933, five district pacification commissioner offices were functioning in Guangdong, one each for the Eastern, Southern, Hainan, Northwestern, and Central Districts. When the central government resumed control of the province, in the summer of 1936, Nanking extended to Guangdong its own system of subprovincial administrative inspectorate districts (*duchaqu* 督察區) or specialist districts (*zhuanqu* 專區). These were replaced after the Japanese War by eleven inspectorate districts, and in the early 1950s by eight districts (*diqu* 地區) under the People's Government. Whatever name they went by, each of these subprovincial agencies included representatives of provincial government departments (typically the Civil Affairs and Finance

Departments) as well as Nationalist and later Communist Party representatives and regional garrison commanders. Their role was to hold county governments to account in Canton.[6]

Unlike subprovincial prefectures of the late imperial era, subprovincial districts of the Nationalist era were not discrete administrative echelons but agencies for provincial supervision of county governments. Districts were staffed by officials and officers working for the provincial government. The territorial orientation of district commissions in Guangdong reflected their subordination to the provincial capital: subprovincial commissions radiated around Canton along the spokes of regional military expeditions sent out from the city to suppress rival military forces and bring county governments to heel. In this respect, district commissions differed from comparable late imperial units such as circuits and prefectures, which bore in their titles the names of the walled cities in which their yamens were situated—Zhaoqing Prefecture based in Zhaoqing, for example, and Guangzhou Prefecture with its base in Canton. When district commissions replaced prefectures, they paid deference in their titles to the preeminence of the provincial capital. District commissions in Republican Guangdong were typically identified by whether they lay north, south, east, west, or "central" relative to the seat of provincial government in Canton. Southern route commissions serviced counties south of Canton, eastern commissions serviced the East River and Chaozhou areas, northern commissions operated along the spine of the North River, western commissions serviced counties west of Canton, and central commissions supervised counties surrounding the provincial capital. Canton was acknowledged as the center.

While the titles of these district commissions pointed north, south, east, and west of Canton, their actual jurisdictions altered with the terms of particular district commissions to accommodate changes in their regional missions from one military expedition to another. In most cases, commissions followed closely on a regional military expedition or a change of regime at the provincial level. The Eastern Administrative Commission

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[6] Guangdongsheng zhengfu mishuchu 廣東省政府秘書處, ed., *Gaiding Guangdongsheng danxing faling huibian* 改定廣東省單行法令彙編 [Collection of revised Guangdong provincial regulations] (Guangzhou, 1933), chart immediately inside cover; Guangdongsheng difang shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui 廣東省地方史志編纂委員會, ed., *Guanggdong shengzhi: Minzhengzhi* 廣東省志: 民政志 [Guangdong provincial gazetteer: Civil affairs gazette] (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1993), 8:14–17, 45–49, 208; and Hu Gu 胡嘏, *Zhongguo lidai jiangyu yu zhengqu* 中國歷代疆域與政區 [Historical boundaries and territorial administration in China] (Shenyang: Liaoning guji chubanshe, 1995).

followed immediately on the Eastern Expedition of 1925, and the Southern Administrative Commission trailed in the wake of the Southern Expedition of 1926. In both cases, these district commissions were important for ensuring that provincial military power was translated into effective civilian authority across successive regimes through a matrix of intermediary regional agencies radiating from Canton. The same principle applied to the creation of the northern, western, and central district commissions.

The creation of subprovincial districts offered immediate solutions to a number of problems of territorial administration bequeathed to the Republic by the New Policy reforms of the late Qing dynasty. Among other initiatives, the late Qing reforms had created specialized portfolios within local government offices to manage heightened demands on local communities including direct assessment of taxes and charges, the establishment of Western-style schools and colleges, and the introduction of new security and local-development programs. Existing subprovincial units such as circuits and prefectures were not well suited to the modernizing agendas of these provincial agencies. Hence, under the New Policy reforms, county magistrates were made directly accountable to provincial-level bureaus for industry, police, education, finance, and other specialized portfolios, in addition to their intermediary supervisors among prefects (*zhoufu* 州府) and circuit intendants (*daotai* 道台). Prefects themselves were placed under the direction of provincial-level bureaus.[7] In practice, officers of provincial bureaus based in Canton who wanted to evaluate the performance of county magistrates in their portfolios had little need to consult with circuit intendants or prefects, since they could make inquiries directly through their subordinate county sections for industry, police, education, or finance. Further, the reforms empowered new-style provincial governments to evaluate the performance of counties as area governments across a range of portfolios that were not matched at the intermediate level of the circuit and the prefecture. As a result, circuit intendants and prefects lacked the capacity to measure magistrates' performance across the range of portfolios assigned to them by the provincial level of government under the New Policy reforms. The late Qing reforms rendered intermediary positions between county and province, such as intendant and prefect, largely redundant before they were in fact abolished.

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[7] H. S. Brunnert and V. V. Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China*, revised by N. Th. Kolessoff and translated from Russian by A. Beltchenko and E. E. Moran (1910; reprint, Taipei: World Book Company, 1960), pp. 427–434.

The creation of district commissions met a need for top-down bureau-to-bureau management by facilitating provincial intervention at the county level. The provincial government in Canton exercised control over individual bureaus within county governments responsible for education, finance, sanitation, and so on by placing them under the supervision of corresponding provincial departments (*ting* 廳), which were represented on district commissions as occasion warranted. Regional boards and commissions carried out the directions of the provincial government and its military and party operatives over discrete regions of between ten and twenty counties.

The incremental expansion of provincial government authority through the placement of district commissions reflected the growing importance of Canton as a centralizing node of territorial authority in the Republic. The scale and placement of Republican districts corresponded, we noted, to the operational areas of military campaigns dispatched form Canton. The twenty-one counties that clustered together under the territorial jurisdiction of the first Southern Commission, for example, bore little relation to the southern circuits and prefectures of the late imperial era. In southern Guangdong, the former Gaolei and Qinlian Circuits never exceeded thirteen counties or departments between them.[8] The coplacement of twenty-one counties stretching from Jiangmen, south of Canton, to Qinlian in the far southwest of the province traced a new axis of political authority from Canton to the provincial border with Annam, extending state authority evenly across the domain to the limits of sovereign territory. Canton's independence from central governments in Beijing and Nanjing was accompanied by an expanding role for the city in centralizing power and authority from the metropolitan capital to the provincial borders of Guangdong within the new territorial architecture of the Republic.

9.2.4. *Canton City*

With the successful extension of district-level offices, Canton came to dominate Guangdong in the Republic as the centre of a web of proliferating territorial connections spun out by the new provincial government system. The city's municipal government was a relatively humble creature in this larger scheme of things—much as it was in Xian, as we see in Chapter ten. Canton was the first city in China outside of the

[8] Pan, Cao, and Yu, *Guangdong zhengqu yanbian*, pp. 45–51.

International Settlements to acquire a substantial city administration.[9] But it was initially incorporated as a discrete administrative entity chiefly to enhance its expanding role as the seat of provincial government.

The provincial incentive for its incorporation was consistent with the historical legacy of the city. Although Canton lacked a discrete municipal government in the imperial period, the walled city nevertheless played a leading role in provincial administration. Over the late Qing, the Guangdong provincial administration was housed within the walled community of Guangzhoucheng abutting the Manchu garrison on the Nanhai County side of the wall. The walled city intersected with five tiers of territorial administration—county, prefecture, circuit, province, and the Liangguang viceroy's yamen—but no single tier of administration corresponded to the space defined by the city walls themselves or to the larger metropolitan community of Canton extending beyond the walls to the east and west of the city. Nevertheless, the hierarchy of provincial administration culminated within the walls of the provincial city in the late imperial period. Canton played the role of provincial city (*shengcheng* 省城) before it was recognized as a city in its own right.

Under the empire, counties and prefectures were hierarchically situated relative to the site of the viceroy's or the governor's yamen in a provincial city. Canton hosted the viceroy of two provinces, Guangdong and Guangxi (Liangguang 兩廣). As a rule, the prefecture that hosted the provincial yamen was presided over by a capital prefect (*shoufu* 首府), assisted by a capital magistrate (*shouxian* 首縣), who presided over one of the two counties that cut across the city.[10] Still, the walled city related to the Guangzhou prefectural administration not as a unified urban entity but through the two yamens of the counties into which it was divided, Nanhai to the west and Panyu to the east. The city was not considered the sum of these two counties, as each county administration covered adjacent rural villages and townships in addition to its share of the city. Thus, the combined jurisdictions of Nanhai and Panyu counties extended well beyond the city walls and outer urban communities into rural villages and market towns to the west (Nanhai) and the east (Panyu) of the walls. Similarly, the prefectural yamen to which the county magistrates of Nanhai

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[9] Leslie H. Dingyan Chen, *Chen Jiongming and the Federalist Movement: Regional Leadership and Nation Building in Early Republican China* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1999), pp. 136–138.

[10] Brunnert and Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China*, pp. 427, 434; Tung'tsu Ch'u, *Local Government in China under the Ch'ing* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 8.

and Panyu reported was responsible for a number of counties in adjacent areas of the Pearl River Delta in addition to the two that administered the city between them. In sum, although the city was a peak site of provincial administration under the late empire, the city itself corresponded neither to a single unit of imperial administration nor to any particular combination of units based in Canton.

In October 1919, provincial authorities opened a Canton City Political Office (Guangzhou shi zhengzhi gongsuo 廣州市政治公所) to facilitate the city's expanding role as "provincial capital."[11] Significantly, Canton was formally recognized as a provincial capital at a time when the provincial level of government was emerging as more powerful echelon of territorial administration. The provincial capital served as a locus of social, cultural, and political life that was not simply urban but provincial in scale. Indeed, the city became a corporate entity as part of the wider restructuring of the territorial system affecting every unit and level of local government in China. As the provincial level of government extended its authority over the countryside, the capital came to dominate the countryside as the metropolitan center of a new kind of provincial community.[12]

Canton came to be recognized as a city for administrative purposes over a number of discrete stages. Nominally, it was recognized as a city in the first year of the Republic. In December 1911, Deputy Governor Chen Jiongming 陳炯明 issued a circular outlining the shape of the new Guangdong provincial government. He classified the new urban entity as a "people's government" (*minzhengfu* 民政府), albeit momentarily under military administration pending the establishment of an effective national government. According to the circular, the people's government would abandon the customary division of urban spaces across county jurisdictions. Walled cities were to be unified under single and discrete urban administrations and allowed to govern themselves under the "municipal independence system practiced in many countries east and west." The deputy governor ruled that the provincial city was no longer to be divided between Panyu and Nanhai Counties but to be administered directly by a municipal government responsible to the provincial government

[11] Pan, Cao, and Yu, *Guangdong zhengqu yanbian*, p. 55.

[12] On the parallel construction of a provincial 'Guangdong culture' in the late Qing and Republic, see May-bo Ching, "Literary, Ethnic or Territorial? Definitions of Guangdong Culture in the late Qing and Early Republic," in Tao Tao Liu and David Faure, eds. *University and Diversity: Local Culture and Identities in China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1996), pp. 51–66.

executive—in effect, the provincial civil and military governors themselves.[13] Before the proposal was carried into effect, however, Chen Jiongming and Nationalist Provincial Governor Hu Hanmin were removed from office in a military intervention staged by President Yuan Shikai with the help of forces from Yunnan Province allied to President Yuan's government in Beijing. In consequence, Canton city was not acknowledged as a discrete entity of state until the return of Chen Jiongming.

So it was that in October 1919 provincial authorities opened a Canton City Political Office to service the city's expanding role as the "provincial capital." After returning to office, Chen Jiongming promulgated a provisional charter for the city that sculpted a unified administration out of the two counties that had shared Canton to this time. Canton's 1920 city charter defined its aerial boundaries and outlined the executive powers, structure, and lines of responsibility of the new city administration. In 1921, the provincial government took a further step in the direction of autonomous urban government by instituting popular elections for a Canton city council. The charter set out a program for popular nomination and election of an advisory council and for the election of the city's chief executive, or mayor. The city administration was nevertheless subordinate to the Guangdong provincial government. A Canton City Administration Office (Guangzhou shizhengting 廣州市政廳) opened under the charter in February 1921 to support the city government and to assist in staging municipal elections. Other cities in Guangdong followed suit. In September 1921, three cities in neighboring Guangxi Province adopted similar municipal charters.[14]

Canton's path-breaking urban charter did not free the city from provincial government intervention in its governance or administration. At the time that Governor Chen promulgated his pioneering city charter, he issued further guidelines for rural self-government that granted considerably greater autonomy to rural counties than those offered to the capital city. Under Chen's county self-government charter, the position of county head was immediately open to indirect elections, subject to Governor Chen's final appointment. For Canton city, however, the provincial governor reserved to himself the power to appoint a city mayor, without election, for the five-year period immediately following promulgation of the charter. Leading citizens of Canton were incensed by the governor's

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[13] Chen Jiongming 陳炯明, *Chen Jiongming ji* 陳炯明集 [Collected works of Chen Jiongming] (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 1998), 1:40–41.

[14] Chen, *Chen Jiongming and the Federalist Movement*, pp. 136–137.

apparent slight on their city. The provincial assembly issued an alternative Canton city charter that would restore direct mayoral elections alongside elections for a city legislature (rather than an advisory council). Chen, as provincial governor, overruled its initiative.[15]

Chen's limited experiment in municipal government ended in the winter of 1922–1923 when Sun Yatsen employed extra-provincial mercenaries to chase him from office. Once Sun Yatsen's son, Sun Fo, was installed as city mayor, the Canton city government espoused a technocratic model of urban governance, again under provincial jurisdiction, that ruled out any prospect of popular elections either for council or for the mayor of the city. The governments of cities such as Canton required "specialized personnel," Mayor Sun explained, rather than the riffraff who would gain office through popular election. In Sun's judgment, Canton's urban citizens failed to measure up to the rigors of popular democracy. "In other countries," he observed in 1924, "the management of a city is in no way limited by central or local governments but is handled on the initiative of the [city] people themselves." This was not and should not be the case in China. "People in China have not yet reached this standard. So [city management] has to be promoted by government agencies. It is up to the government to determine what kind of system is best suited to local conditions."[16]

When Sun declared that it was "up to the government" to determine the fate of the city, he was not suggesting that it was up to the city government to determine what was best for local conditions. Canton was a local condition, not a site of government. The sole recognized government was the Nationalist Government of China, which, for the moment, situated its central and provincial arms of government in Canton city. Hence, the city was to be administered as an urban center of a provincial administration dedicated to the greater task of provincial and national unification and construction: as a creature of higher government authorities, it was dependent on wider provincial and central government initiatives. Under the Nationalist administration, the city cemented its urban status as a

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[15] Leslie Chen offers a balanced account of this dispute but supports Governor Chen's decision to reserve to himself the power to appoint a city head on the grounds offered by Chen Jiongming himself: the practice accorded with the latest style of appointments in the United States (Chen, *Chen Jiongming and the Federalist Movement*, pp. 138–139).

[16] Sun Fo 孫科, "Guangzhou shizheng tan 廣州市政談" [Talk on Guangzhou city governance], in Sun Zuji 孫祖基, *Difang zizhi taolun dagang* 地方自治討論大綱 [*Given English title*: Local Self-Government: A Syllabus of Questions with Reference Material for Use by Civic Clubs and Discussion Groups] (Shanghai: Qingnian xiehui shuju, 1926), pp. 49–53.

desideratum of the bureaucratic imperatives of republican state-building at provincial and national levels.

To avoid the untidy business of local legislative councils and council elections, from 1925 the Nationalists adopted a committee system (*weiyuanzhi* 委員制) of city governance that performed both legislative and executive roles.[17] The committee system was tailored to suit the hierarchical model of territorial administration then coming into favor within the Nationalist administration. The 1925 Canton city committee was nested in a hierarchy of committees that culminated in the governing council of the Nationalist Government, at the peak of the system, and worked its way down through provincial, city, and county, town, and ward committees in rural areas. City government was a matter for committee management in a national pyramid of territorial authority.

The Canton City Administration Office established by Chen Jiongming was consequently abolished in July 1925 to make way for a Canton city government (*Guangzhoushi zhengfu* 廣州市政府), with a city-level committee under provincial and, in theory, central authority. In the first instance, Canton city was placed under provincial government management and direction. Within a few years, it was transferred to central government jurisdiction.[18] In January 1930, the Nationalist Government in Nanjing classified Canton as a special city (*tebieshi* 特別市) under its Special City Organizational Law (*tebieshi zuzhifa* 特別市組織法), confirming again the city's subordination to higher territorial authority. Eight months later, Canton's central-city classification was withdrawn, but the city reverted not to urban but to provincial government jurisdiction. Central ("special city") status was restored to Canton again in June 1947, to return the city to direct central administration in preparation for a final showdown with the Communists.[19] The city retained its special city status into the fourth year of the Communist administration before reverting once again to provincial government authority, a position it retains to the present day.

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[17] Sun Fo particularly commended the committee system for combining legislative and executive functions (*Difang zizhi taolun dagang*, p. 49).

[18] "Zhongguo guomindang disici quanguo daibiao dahui neizhengbu gongzuo baogao 中國國民黨第四次全國代表大會內政部工作報告" [Work report of the Civil Affairs Department to the fourth Nationalist Party Congress] (1932), in Luo Jialun 羅家倫, ed., *Geming wenxian* 革命文獻 [Documents on the revolution] (Taipei: Zhongyang wenwu gongyingshe, 1973), 71:43 [*40–133*].

[19] The position of "mayor" (*shizhang* 市長) was reinstated in September 1929 in place of the chair of the City Government Committee (Pan, Cao, and Yu, *Guangdong zhengqu yanbian*, p. 55).

Like subprovincial districts, the system of urban administration and hierarchical classification initially developed in Guangdong was in time extended to other cities in China following the territorial expansion of the Nationalist administration across central and northern China. The "special city" classification system was modified over time to group cities under central or alternatively provincial government jurisdictions. One cluster of cities answering directly to the central government was known as Direct Jurisdiction Cities (*zhixiashi* 直轄市) or Yuan Jurisdiction Cities (*yuanxiashi* 院轄市), referring to the central government's Administrative Yuan. Direct Jurisdiction Cities were classified as equivalent to provinces in the national administrative hierarchy. Cities answering to provincial governments were termed Provincial Jurisdiction Cities (*shengxiashi* 省轄市) and were classified as county-level units under provincial jurisdiction.[20] Canton was nominated a direct jurisdiction city in January 1930 and, as noted, reverted to provincial jurisdiction later in the same year.

Throughout the Republic, the status of Canton city hinged on its significance as a site of provincial and national administration. Canton's role in the development of the larger territorial state was most pronounced under the Nationalist Government from 1925 to 1937. But its urban status was subordinated to the provincial level of government even before the Nationalists instituted their hierarchical committee system. On Chen Jiongming's earlier federal model, the city was considered too valuable a provincial government asset to permit any but the provincial governor to exercise authority over senior executive appointments to the city government or to monitor its municipal administration. For Governor Chen, the mantra of local self-government was an instrument for extending the reach of provincial government authority over subordinate counties from Canton. Canton's attainment of urban status in the early 1920s was prompted not by a vision of citizens as bearers of democratic rights, nor of cities as self-governing corporate entities, but by a model of provincial city governments as arms of higher executive administration under provincial and ultimately national government authority and direction. The city was fated to serve as an urban base for provincial governments to control, to tax, and to govern rural Guangdong.

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[20] Hu Gu, *Zhongguo lidai jiangyu yu zhengqu*, pp. 174–178.

9.3. *Governing the People*

9.3.1. *Information Gathering*

The capacity of provincial governments to gather, process, and share information about rural county-level agencies on a routine basis offers a rudimentary test of the operational effectiveness of territorial administration in the Republic. The focus of provincial efforts at data collection and planning was chiefly administrative, involving the recording of landholdings and tax liabilities, the distribution of populations, the placement of local schools, post offices, and hospitals, and the appointment, conduct, and responsibilities of local officials. On another level, however, these efforts at data gathering marked the rise of the 'fact' as a way of knowing and governing local communities around refashioned state categories of nation, race, gender, and youth.[21] Needless to say, citizens old or young rarely welcomed provincial census takers or cadastral surveyors, seeing their demands to reveal the size and makeup of households or to assess the value of landholdings as heralding expanded labor obligations, additional local levies, and higher provincial tax quotas. So governments in the Republic worked to gather information about their citizens with the same eagerness that citizens showed in conspiring to conceal themselves from gaze. Given this tension, the more information that a government could marshal, the stronger its claim to have extended authority to every county, town, and village in a province.

On this measure, the Guangdong provincial government made steady progress over the years preceding the outbreak of war with Japan. At the outset, its capacity for gathering information on counties outside the city walls was negligible. In 1912, officials in Canton learned about developments in the counties less through routine inquiries than through accounts of visiting relatives and occasional reports from itinerant traders or Western missionaries. By the early 1930s, however, provincial authorities in Canton could harness and process detailed information on more than half of the counties under their jurisdiction and routinely summon basic information on all but a few of them.

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[21] Tong Lam, *A Passion for Facts: Social Surveys and the Construction of the Chinese Nation-State 1900–1949* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 2011). On the implications of new social categories for the Republican style of governance in Canton, see Michael T. W. Tsin, *Nation, Governance, and Modernity in China: Canton, 1900–1927* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1999).

The flow of information through one official publication, the *Guangdong Provincial Government Gazette* (*Guangdongsheng zhengfu gongbao* 廣東省政府公報), illustrates the gradual extension of provincial government authority in the face of alleged elite resistance at county, town, and village levels, from one issue to the next. Chief among the barriers separating the government from the people, in the minds of provincial officials, was a formidable barrier of "local bullies and evil gentry" that allegedly stood in the way of the legitimate extension of republican government to towns, wards, and villages. In the name of the people, officials were advised to confront the leaders of local elite institutions such as temples, schools, and benevolent associations, who were thought to be obstructing the effective extension of republican authority. Provincial authorities called on subordinate officers staffing the lower levels of the system to assist them in identifying where these barriers stood and who it was that maintained them so that they could be removed in the name of improved relations between government and people.

The first issue of the *Gazette*, published in July 1929, outlined the provincial government's plans for Guangdong's ninety-four counties and listed the names of officials sent down from the provincial capital to oversee the implementation of provincial plans for counties, towns, and wards.[22] Sample copies of standardized report forms were included in early issues to illustrate the range of information the provincial government was seeking from local officials. Later issues carried summaries of the completed reports filed back to Canton. Numerous reports were duly filed and published on provincial road networks, telecommunications, schools, postal services, and developments in local security. Other reports listed state-sponsored social movements (*minzhong yundong* 民眾運動, or *minyun* 民運), including the Guangdong Cooperative Movement and the provincial Self-Government Movement.[23] By 1934 and 1935, the *Provincial Government Gazette* was featuring regular reports on all aspects of county government administration.

Guangdong's provincial 'Self-Government Movement' developed along a trajectory laid out over successive issues of the *Provincial Government*

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[22] *Guangdongsheng zhengfu gongbao* 廣東省政府公報 [Guangdong provincial government gazette], 1 (July 1929).

[23] The 'self-government movement' in Guangdong has not been researched in detail but appears to have been a top-down movement for local administrative reform. On the Guangdong Cooperative Movement, see John Fitzgerald, "Warlords, Bullies and State-Building in Nationalist China: The Guangdong Cooperative Movement 1932–1936", *Modern China*, 23.4 (October 1997): 398–436.

Gazette. The aim of the movement was to intensify linkages between county government officials and compliant local elites, with the aim of circumventing the "local bullies and evil gentry" who allegedly conspired to prevent provincial government penetration of rural villages. Early in 1930, the provincial Reconstruction Department (Jiansheting 建設廳) summoned magistrates and senior county officials from eleven of the province's ninety-four counties to attend a meeting on highway construction in Canton. Officers of the Civil Affairs Department took advantage of their presence in Canton to invite the visiting magistrates to a meeting on local self-government.[24] The meeting was followed by the dispatch of self-government envoys from Canton to the eleven counties concerned. By February 1932, the provincial government reported that it had succeeded in dispatching officers from Canton to "all of the counties" on local self-government work. In the same year, another fifteen counties sent representatives to the provincial capital for instruction on local self-government. By May 1932, forty-one counties had set up ward self-government organizations.[25] Eighteen months later it was reported that eighty-four counties had established self-government organs in Guangdong. Provincial regulations were amended in the interim to require that elected advisers at county and ward level should undergo training in the capital before they assumed office. By April 1934, around a thousand candidates were making their way annually to Canton to study at the Provincial Self-Government Academy. Many of these candidates stayed on in Canton to await assignment to town and county levels on graduation.[26] Whatever they may have done for local self-government, administrative "popular movements" such as the drive for local self-government extended and intensified the lines of communication and authority linking the provincial capital with rural counties in Guangdong.

9.3.2. *Training and Recruiting Cadres*

The training of a loyal cadre corps through the Provincial Self-Government Academy highlights a number of novel features of local personnel recruitment in the Republic. One was the massive scale on which republican

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[24] "Guangdong zizhi yundong xiaoxi 廣東自治運動消息" [News on local self-government in Guangdong], *Cunzhi banyuekan* 村治半月刊 [Village government fortnightly] 1.1 (1 June 1930): 9.

[25] *Guangdongsheng zhengfu gongbao* 178 (20 February 1932): 38–42, 43–45; 188 (31 May 1932): 9–13.

[26] "Lin tingzhang lici chuxun," p. 70.

authorities pitched their recruitment and training programs for local government appointments to service the new model of territorial government. The elaboration of administration below the county to embrace village, ward, and township-level offices under more highly centralized provincial administration created an unprecedented demand for cadres.

Gan Naiguang, a Guangdong native who rose to become an in-house administrative specialist of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing, estimated in 1942 that the government needed to train thirteen *million* cadres (*ganbu* 幹部) to staff basic village-, ward- and township-level positions throughout the country. On top of this, another seven million state personnel were required to meet the staffing needs of the local education system and marketing-cooperative network.[27] Gan's estimates were partly based on his experience of local administration as a senior provincial official in Guangdong in the 1920s when Nationalist authorities founded a number of specialist training academies in Canton.

Another distinctive feature was the centralization of recruitment and training at the provincial level. In a significant break with imperial precedent, each and every one of these party and government academies was located in the provincial capital of Canton. The walled city of Canton had long served as a site for urban literati and aspiring scholars in county academies seeking bureaucratic positions and preferment under the imperial examination system. But in imperial times, Canton was perched at the apex of a finely articulated territorial hierarchy that made systemic provision for counties and prefectures within the imperial training and examination system. The examination board of the provincial yamen in Canton marked the peak of a provincial network of schools and colleges (*shuyuan* 書院) that routinely trained and supplied candidates for the imperial examinations held in the provincial city every three or so years under provincial-level supervision. After the imperial examination system was abolished, in 1905, new systems for training and recruiting government personnel were introduced into Canton, including provincial police and military academies and a variety of government and party colleges that serviced city and provincial government departments. The requirement that city and county cadres be trained on an unprecedented scale was matched by a requirement that they be trained in Canton city and thence allocated to local government service in rural counties.

[27] Gan Naiguang 甘乃光, *Zhongguo xingzheng xinlun* 中國行政新論 [New thoughts on administration in China] (1942; reprint, Shanghai: Shangwu shuju, 1947), p. 289.

The modern training and examination system differed from the old in a number of ways.[28] Under the imperial system, the majority of candidates for the examination system studied outside the provincial city in schools and academies that were dispersed throughout the old urban network of Guangdong, as they were in other provinces of the empire. Ho Ping-ti concluded from a sample of Qing local gazetteers that, with the exception of certain areas in "remote backward provinces," almost all counties and prefectures in the empire housed one or more academies over the late imperial period. More than four hundred local academies were operating in Guangdong in the Qing dynasty, 258 of them under official auspices, and 153 on the initiative of community associations, lineages, and individual scholars or retired bureaucrats. While Canton hosted more than its share of these academies, all prefectures and virtually all counties outside the provincial city housed at least one academy each.[29]

The viability of these local academies was assured under the empire by a geographically assigned degree-allocation system under which fixed numbers of examination candidates were assigned to subprovincial as well as provincial administrative regions. Lower administrative units were assigned minimal pass-quotas of lower degree holders, who sat in turn for higher degrees in larger administrative units further up the system. In this way, the imperial examination system reflected and reproduced a spatial hierarchy of administrative places that made provision for smaller academies in counties and prefectures at the base of the system, for academies in provincial cities at the intermediate level, and for the imperial metropolis at the peak of the system. To be sure, by the late nineteenth century the majority of successful candidates from Guangdong hailed from Guangzhou prefecture. Nevertheless, the majority of candidates came up through the ranks of counties and prefectures outside Canton under the assigned quota system.[30]

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[28] Sally Borthwick, *Education and Social Change in China: The Beginnings of the Modern Era* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983); Wen-hsin Yeh, *The Alienated Academy: Culture and Politics in Republican China, 1919–1937* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000).

[29] Ping-ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368–1911* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 200–201; Tilemann Grimm, "Academies and Urban Systems in Guangdong," in G. William Skinner, ed., *The City in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1977), pp. 475–498; and Steven B. Miles, *The Sea of Learning: Mobility and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Guangzhou* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006).

[30] Guangdong was assigned an official quota of 72 *juren* (舉人, literally the first degree) places of the 1,200 to 1,400 degrees allocated throughout the empire for each provincial examination cycle in the Qing (Ho, *Ladder of Success*, pp. 184–185). One hundred successful

The geographical distribution of personnel training institutions altered dramatically in the Republic as the dispersed academies of the late empire made way for new-style schools in county towns as well as colleges and academies based in Canton. Throughout China, the most prestigious middle and high schools were overwhelmingly based in provincial capitals and major commercial cities.[31] By 1934, nevertheless, every county in Guangdong housed at least one middle school and all but a few had established high schools.[32] Nevertheless the new-style schools failed to offer opportunities for direct route to office through a common training, examination, and recruitment system.

In the early years of the Republic, lower ranking functionaries were trained, examined, and recruited for office through task-specific institutes set up by government, party, and military agencies to cultivate their own personnel in and around Canton city. A variety of cadre-training academies sprung up in Guangdong to turn out the backroom dealers, petty officers, street orators, pen pushers, and paper shufflers of the revolution.[33] Even the famous Peasant Movement Training Institute was located off Yuexiu Road in the provincial capital. Aspirants for positions in the regular civil service, the police force, the army, or the navy, or for popular-movement work among peasants, laborers, women, youth, and so on, all needed to study at specialized academies in Canton if they wished to secure a career in provincial or even county arms of the party and government in the Republican era. The provincial city came to dominate the province as a site of party, military, and government training in addition to recruitment for provincial and county government service.

Another variation from the imperial model of training and recruitment was a focus on low-level cadre training in contrast to the elite training that had characterized the imperial system. The first official training school to open in Canton after the abolition of the imperial examination

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candidates from Guangzhoufu made up 70 percent of the successful cohort in provincial triennial examinations conducted in the late nineteenth century (Grimm, "Academies and Urban Systems," pp. 497–498; John R. Watt, *The District Magistrate in Late Imperial China* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1972], chap. 2). The social significance of Guangzhou's emerging dominance over the hinterland is finely argued in Miles, *Sea of Learning*.

[31] Wang Qisheng 王奇聲, "Zhanqian Zhongguo de quxiang xingzheng: Yi Jiangsusheng wei zhongxin 戰前中國的區鄉行政: 以江蘇省為中心" [Ward and village administration in prewar China: The case of Jiangsu], *Minguo dangan* 民國檔案 [Republican archives] 83 (January 2006): 66–77.

[32] *Guangdong quansheng difang jiyao*, passim.

[33] John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), chap. 7.

system was a police constable school established in 1906. This was followed two years later by a police officers' academy, also in Canton. The constable school trained between 250 and 300 students per cohort for terms of four months in elementary reading, writing, and arithmetic, and in subjects dealing with regulations, laws, ethics, and discipline. The officers' academy catered to a more literate clientele of "candidates for civil offices in Guangdong" who had mastered reading and writing.[34] In time, these schools served as provincial academies. From the early 1920s, the provincial government began issuing directives to county and ward police chiefs requiring all local officers to be recruited exclusively from among graduates of Canton's specialist academies. In November 1921, for example, the office of Governor Chen Jiongming issued a directive on county- and ward-level police reforms that stated that graduates from the Canton city academies were to be dispatched to rural areas to assume local police duties. Local officials were obliged to accept them.[35]

A further point of difference, noted above, was the scale of training and recruitment in Republican Canton. By the 1920s, the number of specialist academies located in the city and the scale of their enrollments exceeded anything that had come before by several orders of magnitude. Over the two years from mid-1924 to mid-1926, by my estimation, no less than eight thousand students underwent training and examination in official party or military academies in and around Canton city.[36] Government academies, as distinct from party ones, were even more active in Canton in the early 1930s than in the 1920s. As noted, between 1932 and 1934, the provincial Civil Affairs Department's Self-Government Academy trained and graduated one thousand self-government movement personnel each year. Three provincial police academies were also operating in Canton by the 1930s, along with a number of other departmental-level institutes and several party and mass-movement institutes such as the Cooperative Directors Academy (Hezuoshe zhidaoyuan yanchengsuo 合作社指導員研成所).[37] The majority of students were assigned on graduation to official duties at city, district, county, and ward levels by the provincial government. In

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[34] Hwei-shung Gao, "Police Administration in Canton," *Chinese Social and Political Science Review* 10.2 (1926): 332–354.

[35] *Huazi ribao* 華字日報 [Chinese language daily news], 26 November 1921.

[36] An earlier study of training academies in Guangdong Province identified two government academies, several military academies, one party university, and nine party academies in Canton in the mid-1920s, enrolling some eight thousand students among them (Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, chap. 7).

[37] "Lin tingzhang lici chuxun," pp. 70–71; *Guangdong hezuo* 廣東合作 [Guangdong cooperatives] 1.1 (5 January 1934): 1.

total, I would estimate that no less than fifty thousand government and mass-movement personnel would have been trained and recruited for service in Canton over the twenty-five-year period from 1912 to 1937.

The contrasts between training, examination, and recruitment for government service in the late imperial and Republican eras are highlighted by the decline of county- and prefecture-level training institutions in the Republic. Under the empire, Canton served as the peak examination site for a dispersed examination system that extended to all prefectures and counties in the province. Candidates were educated locally, examined locally, and, if successful in the local examinations, traveled in relatively small numbers to Canton to take the provincial examination. In the Republic, Canton no longer acted as a peak examination center for a graduated series of local training and examination. The capital became the sole training and examination center for county as well as provincial government personnel. Students went to the city to study in droves, and on graduation they were dispatched to the "countryside" in numbered series of cohorts.

As government and party agencies proliferated at county and ward levels, the provincial government moved to ensure that their personnel were recruited exclusively through provincial academies based in Canton. It actively discouraged efforts to set up training academies at the county or district level to service local party and government requirements. At the first district conference held in the trail of the Southern Expedition in the winter of 1925–1926, a motion was foreshadowed by southern county magistrates to establish local peasant-movement training institutes at the county level. This was one of the few motions rejected out of hand by provincial authorities among the hundred or so put to the Southern Route Administrative Conference.[38] Similarly, in the spring of 1926, the Provincial Party Propaganda Bureau faced requests from a number of counties in Guangdong, including Zijin, Yingde, Nanxiong, and Xijiang, to set up county-level propaganda training institutes. The provincial bureau initially responded by suggesting that the counties should each nominate candidates for the Central Propaganda Bureau's Propagandist Training Institute in Canton. When it emerged that the Central Institute could not satisfy the growing demand for trained county-level personnel, the

[38] *Nanlu geshu xingzheng huiyi lu* 南路各署行政回憶錄 [Record of the administrative conference of all southern route jurisdictions], in *DongNanlu ge xingzheng weiyuan gongshu gongbao* 東南路各行政委員公署公報 [Reports of the administrative commissions of the eastern and southern routes] (Guangzhou, 1926), p. 63 [no serial pagination].

provincial propaganda bureau created a provincial academy of its own, also situated in Canton, to which counties were required to send their trainee officers. Provincial party headquarters decreed that no local institute should be established to train local cadres.

A similar pattern of centralization in the provincial capital was to be found among military training institutes in Guangdong over the same period. The Huangpu Military Academy displaced all other military institutions based outside Canton. Huangpu is remembered as the paramount military training institution of the Nationalist revolution because it trained some of the most important military officers of the Republic and People's Republic. The history of the Huangpu Academy also reflects a broader history of the systematic displacement of local training academies by authorized institutions based in Canton city. The official training and recruitment regime for party, government, and military personnel in Guangdong began and ended in and around Canton.[39]

9.4. *Conclusion*

Histories of China's heartland generally take provinces, prefectures, counties, cities, and townships more or less for granted as geographic markers on an inert landscape which forms a backdrop to the dramatic events that unfold—they are places where things happen rather than territorial institutions that shape each revolution as they are shaped by each in turn. As a result, we know rather less about the territorial evolution of Han regions of the Republic than we do about the extension of the orthodox territorial framework into national minority areas, such as Suiyuan.[40] In fact the republican revolution initiated a major realignment of ideological legitimacy and territorial authority in every part of China. These changes to the territorial system of government catalyzed the unfolding of the revolution in turn.

By plotting the relative placement of cities, towns, and counties in one province, we can begin to probe the spatial institutionalization of state power in twentieth-century China and start to ask what part these spatial innovations may have played in the unfolding of military campaigns,

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[39] Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, chap. 7.

[40] Justin Tighe, *Constructing Suiyuan: The Politics of Northwestern Territory and Development in Early Twentieth-Century China* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). See also James Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism: How the Qing Frontier and Its Indigenes Became Chinese* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

political events, and social movements themselves. One part they played was to shape understanding of republican democracy itself.

Ideologically, to be sure, China's transition from empire to republic was marked by a transfer of sovereignty from emperor to people. But bureaucratically it was marked by a shift of ballast from the central to the provincial level of government and from there to intensified county administrations under provincial government direction. This new pattern of hierarchical relations between center and province, between province and counties, and between counties and their subordinate wards and villages, served as a spatial analogue for a distinctively republican style of top-down democracy: the more closely higher arms of the state penetrated counties and villages, the more intensively local officials could claim to "embrace" (*qinmin* 親民) and to "represent" (*daibiao* 代表) the people. To substantiate their claims, provincial governments in Canton tried to infiltrate and to administer counties with minimum interference from intermediate social agents or echelons of government. So they abolished subprovincial echelons and they set out to destroy local elites. Canton then became a central urban site from which successive provincial governments, and in time national governments, could claim to embrace and to represent the people on the warrant of little more than their intensified system of local administration.

At the same time, the effort involved in elevating provincial cities to discrete sites of territorial government was expended in aid of the greater intensification of the territorial state. At the historical moment when cities were incorporated as territorial entities of state, the territorial system was itself adapting to the new ideology of popular sovereignty and to meeting expanding demands for delivery of infrastructure, social goods, and local security to rural counties, in return for delivering increased revenues to provincial and central arms of the state. As the changing character and expanding needs of the state made new demands on the territorial system, the city selected as the site of provincial government was cast as agent for the extension and centralization of bureaucratic authority.

The modern evolution of a provincial capital such as Canton needs to be understood in light of this larger ideological and territorial realignment. Provincial governments based in a provincial capital such as Canton came to centralize authority as responsible managers of an intensified system of county and subcounty administration. The imperative to extend republican authority to village settlements compelled provincial governments both to challenge the hold of local elites over rural communities and to rationalize and centralize their relations with counties under

their jurisdictions. The institutions and practices developed in support of these efforts had the effect of enhancing the provincial capital's role as the center of an intensified system of provincial administration capable of overseeing rural counties. And the function of the provincial level of government, based in the provincial city, was to control countryside and city together.

CHAPTER TEN

XI'AN, 1900–1940: FROM ISOLATED BACKWATER TO RESISTANCE CENTER*

Pierre-Étienne Will

The history of Xi'an in the early twentieth century is that of a forlorn place inhabited by the memories of its glorious past, a place that took several decades to regain political and strategic importance and join the mainstream of modern urban development in China.

Xi'an's significance had always been as a political, military, and administrative center: it was never a manufacturing and commercial metropolis whose prosperity and urban organization relied on its connection to faraway markets and on the wealth of its merchant class. Moreover, contrary to many inland cities in the late Qing, it never became a treaty port, a circumstance that might have supported an autonomous process of urban socioeconomic development (Hankou being a prominent example).

The reason why the Western powers were not interested in Xi'an is that the place was just not worth it: it was too poor, too far away, too unsafe, and, especially, too difficult to access. Well into the Republican era, Xi'an was largely shut off from the larger world, economically as well as culturally, and therefore very much dependent on the material and human resources of its hinterland, the Guanzhong 關中 plain. (Connections with the northern and southern parts of the province were much looser.) Indeed, as Xi'an's history cannot be separated from that of the twenty-odd counties that surround it, I will begin this essay with a rapid overview of the events that occurred in Xi'an and the Shaanxi core from the mid-nineteenth century, before focusing on various aspects of the transformations of Xi'an as a city in the first decades of the twentieth century.

10.1. *The Guanzhong Crisis, 1860–1930*

When the Dowager Empress Cixi, the Guangxu Emperor, and what was left of the imperial court entered Xi'an on October 26, 1900, and settled

* The revision of this essay benefited from remarks by Marie-Claire Bergère and Kristin Stapleton.

there at a safe distance from their Western invaders, the city and its surrounding region were a far cry from their past glory. Many centuries had elapsed since empires with continental reach had been ruled from Chang'an.[1] Closer in time, the Xi'an of the high Qing, though considerably reduced in comparison to Tang Chang'an, had been a comparatively prosperous provincial capital, somewhat remote from the empire's vital centers but of much strategic importance on the road to Sichuan, Gansu, and the Western regions, which the Qing was able to incorporate into China in a definitive fashion. Because of its strategic location, Qing Xi'an was the seat of a number of important civilian and military officials, it was routinely visited by an even larger number of them on their way to farther regions, it sheltered a large garrison, and it had the largest Manchu city outside of Beijing.

The Qing were intent on developing the region to make it self-sustaining or even a surplus area. In the eighteenth century especially the court entrusted Shaanxi to experienced and activist governors eager to improve infrastructures and productivity, such as Chen Hongmou 陳弘謀 (1696–1771) in the 1740s and 1750s—whose ambition was to make Shaanxi into a model province in terms not only of economic development and food security but also of scholarly discipline, social organization, and popular customs[2]—and Bi Yuan 畢沅 (1730–1797), the author in 1782 of a detailed blueprint for developing the region.[3]

By 1900, the prosperity and tranquillity brought by nearly two centuries of Qing "good government" were essentially a distant memory. Despite mounting tensions since the late eighteenth century, serious violence and disruption erupted only in 1862, when the Taiping and Nian Rebellions spilled over into Shaanxi, reaching right through the immediate surroundings of Xi'an. These forays awakened ethnic tensions that had been smoldering for a long time in the Wei valley and resulted in a surge of intercommunity violence between the Chinese (Han) and Muslims (Hui). Towns were besieged and ransacked, and the many Muslim villages that

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[1] More precisely, from the sites of modern Xianyang in the Qin and Han and nearby Chang'an (today's Xi'an) in the Sui and Tang.

[2] See William T. Rowe, *Saving the World: Chen Hongmou and Elite Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

[3] On Bi Yuan in Shaanxi (his governorship encompassed the years 1773 to 1785), see, e.g., Pierre-Étienne Will, "Clear Waters vs. Muddy Waters: The Zheng-Bai Irrigation System of Shaanxi Province in the Late-Imperial Period," in Mark Elvin and Ts'ui-jung Liu, eds., *Sediments of Time: Environment and Society in Chinese History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 319–321.

had prospered since the Yuan period were ethnically cleansed, their inhabitants either massacred or fleeing to the west. Only a small community of about twenty thousand Hui survived within the walls of Xi'an.[4] Added to the effects of "Hui Rebellion" and government repression were those of the dreadful North China famine of 1876 to 1879. Overall, where figures are available, the population of Guanzhong was cut by perhaps one half between the eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries, despite significant immigration in the wake of the famine.

At the time of the court's visit to Xi'an in 1900—which occurred in the midst of a drought and famine almost as devastating as the one in early Guangxu—not only was the region in a state of deep economic recession, it was also regarded by its own elite as a hopeless cultural backwater, essentially cut off from the fast-growing "new culture" of the coastal metropolises where the future of China was taking shape. The progressive scholars of Xi'an and the surrounding counties who started agitating for change during the last decade of the Qing and participated actively in the 1911 Revolution constantly lamented in their writings the twin disgraces of economic underdevelopment and cultural backwardness; over the next three decades, their demands could be subsumed under the word "modernization"—cultural, economic, and political.[5]

Modernization was extremely slow, however. In many ways the history of Guanzhong from 1912 and throughout the warlord period is one of socioeconomic spiralling down. The principal cause, according to most observers, was civil war. This is not the place to detail the many episodes of violence that happened in the region before the final imposition of Nationalist rule in late 1930. Not only was Shaanxi almost constantly

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[4] See Ma Shinian 馬士年, "Xibei diqu de Huizu 西北地方的回族 [The Muslims in the Northwestern Region]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 西安文史資料 [Historical Materials of Xi'an] 12:1–38 (this issue is entirely devoted to the Hui of Xi'an); Ma Changshou 馬長壽, ed., *Tongzhi nianjian Shaanxi Huimin qiyi lishi diaocha jilu* 同治年間陝西回民起義歷史調查記錄 [Historical Survey Report on the Muslim Uprising in Shaanxi during the Reign of Tongzhi] (Xi'an: Shaanxi renmin chubanshe, 1993). Muslims traditionally concentrated in the northwest quarter of the city. In the 1930s, and especially after Xi'an was reached by the railway, Hui immigrants from various parts of North China settled in the fast-developing areas of the northeast quarter (see later). See Zhao Changming 趙長明, "Dingju zai Xincheng qu de donglai Huimin 定居在新城區的東來回民 [Muslim Residents from the East who Settled in the New City District]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 12:52–55.

[5] See my essay "La génération 1911: Xi'an, 1905–1930," in Alain Roux, Yves Chevrier, and Xiaohong Xiao-Planes, eds., *Citadins et citoyens dans la Chine du XX^e siècle* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2009), pp. 353–424; English translation available at http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/pierre-etienne-will/index.htm#|p=/site/pierre-etienne-will/textes-inedits.htm|.

subjected to military rule, but Guanzhong all too often was a battlefield where the forces confronting each other were part of nationwide conflicts.[6] These military confrontations caused much human suffering and material destruction. The eight-month 1926 Xi'an siege by an army under former Shaanxi governor Liu Zhenhua 劉鎮華 (1882–1955), in particular, was an exceedingly violent episode, reportedly causing the death of fifty thousand people. By all accounts, the condition of Xi'an and its hinterland after they had been recaptured by Feng Yuxiang's United National Army in November 1926 was one of utter exhaustion and total deprivation.

The indirect consequences of civil war in terms of socioeconomic disruption were, if possible, even worse than its immediate destructive impact. The complete militarization of politics meant that much of the local resources was used to answer the endless demands of the armies stationed in the region and of their warlord (or, occasionally, revolutionary) commanders. Fiscal extraction bordered on pure exaction, the very high revenues earned from the so-called opium fines led authorities to de facto encourage poppy growing, with consequences that could only be negative,[7] rural misery bred banditry and the development of violent "self-defense" armed groups, and so forth. Besides, local warlordism, a legacy of the Sun Yat-sen-inspired National Pacification Army dissidence in the years around 1920, meant that the control exerted by the bigger warlords who were appointed Shaanxi military governors extended not even to the whole of Guanzhong, so that the policies of economic development or social improvement advocated by progressive leaders in Xi'an and elsewhere had even less chance to succeed.[8]

The impact of all of this was multiplied in times of natural disasters. There were two major episodes of drought in North China during the period under consideration, from 1920 to 1921 and 1928 to 1931, each the cause of large-scale famine. Guanzhong suffered especially from the

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[6] See Will, "La génération 1911."

[7] For the pervasive production and consumption of opium and its negative impact on the production of wheat and cotton, see, e.g., the sources cited in Eduard B. Vermeer, *Economic Development in Provincial China: The Central Shaanxi since 1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 465nn45 and 46.

[8] A case in point is the plan to modernize irrigation infrastructures in the Weibei 渭北 region, advocated since the early 1920s, which could only be started by the China International Famine Relief Commission (CIFRC) after the Nationalist recapture of the region in late 1930. See my "Junfa he Guomindang shiqi Shaanxi sheng de guangai gongcheng yu zhengzhi 軍閥和國民黨時期陝西省的灌溉工程與政治 [The Irrigation Projects and Politics in Shaanxi Province during the Warlords and Guomindang Periods]," *Faguo Hanxue* 法國漢學 [French Sinology] 9 (2004): 268–328.

second, about which we have a quantity of descriptions, each more horrendous than the other. For many observers,[9] the famine was due to government inefficiency, military exaction, social disorganization, and banditry more than the drought itself. One of the very first tasks of the new provincial government established under the chairmanship of Yang Hucheng in October 1930—exactly thirty years after the Qing court took refuge there—and at the same time one of the most urgent demands on the part of the locals, was to suppress banditry and solicit outside aid to combat famine efficiently. After this it would become possible to consider development policies—the next urgent demand.[10]

10.2. *The "Western Capital"*

Only after a degree of political reconstruction was made possible by the return of Shaanxi to Guomindang control did the downward trend start reversing, albeit with very limited results at first. The early 1930s were marked by extreme material difficulties and renewed famine threats. Famine refugees were a familiar view on the streets of Xi'an, misery and banditry continued to be pervasive in the city's immediate hinterland, and despite the central authorities' initial pledge of massive help the financial situation of the provincial government was desperate.[11]

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[9] Among them an American Red Cross investigation team that published a rather controversial report. See *The Report of the American Red Cross Commission to China* (Washington, DC: American National Red Cross, 1929); Karen Lynn Brewer, "From Philanthropy to Reform: The American Red Cross in China, 1906–1930" (Ph.D. diss, Case Western Reserve University, 1983), pp. 357–374.

[10] See for instance the nine issues of the *Shaanzai zhoubao* 陝災週報 [Weekly News on the Calamities in Shaanxi Province] (1930–1931). See also my Collège de France lectures, 2005–2008, passim (full text available at http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/pierre-etienne-will/index.htm#|p=/site/pierre-etienne-will/cours_et_seminaires_anterieurs.htm|).

[11] For an interesting testimony at the end of 1932, see Lin Pengxia 林鵬俠, *Xibei xing* 西北行 [Excursion into the Northwest] (1936), reproduced in Zhang Yuxin 張羽新 and Zhang Shuangzhi 張雙志, eds., *Minguo Zangshi shiliao huibian* 民國藏事史料彙編 [Compiled Historical Records on Tibet under the Guomindang Regime] (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2005), especially 23:52–53, 59–60, 72–73. Lin, a Fujianese raised in Southeast Asia who studied in Europe and the United States, was an adventurous young woman who went on a six-month study tour of the Northwest in 1932 and 1933. She met Li Weicheng 李維城, the chairman of the Shaanxi Provincial Bank, who commented on the province's financial distress and the difficulty launching development programs. See also Li Weicheng 李維城, "Yijiusanling zhi yijiusanba nian de Shaanxi sheng yinhang 一九三〇至一九三八年的陝西省銀行 [The Shaanxi Provincial Bank from 1930 to 1938]," *Shaanxi wenshi ziliao xuanji* 陝西文史資料選輯 [Selected Volume of Historical Records on Shaanxi Province] 16:93–121.

What helped things take off was that, once again, Xi'an and its region were seen by the Chinese government as a place on which to fall back in case of an invasion. In this case, of course, the potential invader was Japan. Soon after the Japanese attacked Shanghai in early 1932 and the Nationalist government temporarily took refuge in Luoyang, it was decided to make Xi'an into an "alternate capital" (*peidu* 陪都) with the status of Western Capital (Xijing 西京), Luoyang being Temporary Capital (Xingjing 行京). A "planning committee" that responded directly to the central government, the Xijing choubei weiyuanhui 西京籌備委員會, was set up in June 1932 to make preparations. A little later, it was decided to make the Western Capital into an autonomous municipality directly controlled by Nanking. However, not only did this project never materialize, but of course the Nationalist government did not move to Xi'an when abandoning eastern China became inevitable, but went first to Wuhan and then, in 1938, to Chongqing. Yet, the name Xijing did not disappear, and as we shall see the planning committee, which continued to exist until 1945, took over some of the functions of a municipal government. More importantly, the many plans to "develop the Northwest" (西北開發) discussed in the 1930s, as well as the efforts to build the Guanzhong region into an economic and strategic base to resist Japanese aggression and maintain communications with Central Asia and the USSR, brought about rapid development to its metropolis.

The crucial link in this process was the extension of the Longhai Railroad west into the Wei valley, a project that had been stalled for many years but had at present full government support because of its strategic importance. Taking place while Republican China was at long last striving to take off as an autonomous modern nation whose progress was based on science, if not yet democracy, it had a tremendous impact on the transformation of Xi'an, which became accessible by rail in the last days of 1934, into a modern city.[12] The physical connection of Guanzhong with the outer world by what was (and still is) the most reliable and economical means of bulk transportation also created new possibilities of development by opening the region to long-distance trade in heavy goods—exports of cotton, its main production, could now be multiplied by several orders of magnitude, and in the other direction heavy industrial equipment could

[12] Vermeer, *Economic Development*, in particular pp. 70–75, considers the advent of rail transportation as the absolute watershed: before it Xi'an was nothing; after it things started changing rapidly.

be imported from the coastal regions—making it more attractive to investors and easier to equip for the government.

As in the rest of China, the advances thus made were soon curtailed by war conditions, making this period of fast change and general optimism tragically short. Japanese bombings, particularly intense during the years 1937–1940, caused much destruction, including to the modern industrial infrastructure that had begun to develop around the city; they made the Xi'an citizen's life both tense and precarious, actually causing a temporary trend of emigration from the city.[13] Yet despite these conditions, which added to a political atmosphere made heavy by increased Guomindang control, Xi'an and its population continued by and large to develop during the war years, paving the way for the much faster growth of the recent decades.[14]

Such, then, is the general pattern. However, at the present stage there is not much records providing the details. Apart from the relatively limited amount of secondary literature devoted to Republican Xi'an,[15] I attempted to collect testimonies on its early period, both by locals and by visitors. Testimonies by Xi'an residents are found mostly in the various *Wenshi ziliao* series concerning Shaanxi, Xi'an, and the Guanzhong districts. Many essays published there offer a wealth of detail and a sense of immediacy lacking from more standard sources, but they also need to be used with caution: with few exceptions, their authors are not historians, and their memories may be fallible, which explains why they contain so many factual errors. Moreover, most narratives are suffused by People's Republic of China (PRC, hereafter) ideology and rhetoric—in other words, their discourse is reflecting the time when they were composed rather than the time when the events they describe took place.[16] As far as visitors from outside are concerned, most of the testimonies I will cite date from the

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[13] Vermeer, *Economic Development*, p. 80.

[14] On all of this see, in general, Vermeer, *Economic Development*, pp. 75–88.

[15] No urban history of Republican Xi'an seems to exist remotely approaching Shi Hongshuai 史紅帥, *Ming Qing shiqi Xi'an chengshi dili yanjiu* 明清時期西安城市地理研究 [A Study of the Urban Geography of Xi'an City during the Ming and Qing Periods] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2008), in depth and thoroughness. It is also telling that Xi'an does not figure in the index of Joseph Esherick, ed., *Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), and has only one passing mention (p. 90) in David Strand and Sherman Cochran, eds., *Cities in Motion: Interior, Coast, and Diaspora in Transnational China* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 2007).

[16] In the particular case of Xi'an and Guanzhong history, my impression is that the texts allow much more presence and influence to Communist activity and personalities than is warranted.

1930s; a few are by Chinese authors, and several are by Western travelers, who are in general more cursory, not to say superficial, in their approach but can at least claim a certain freshness of vision that is not without value.

It has been remarked that texts describing "old Xi'an" are not many, and that pictorial testimonies are even rarer.[17] Yet, it is largely on these that my account is based. It has seemed to me that the information presented here, incomplete and fragmentary as it is, outlines a narrative that makes sense and is an invitation to further research. The following, therefore, proposes preliminary considerations on Xi'an as an administrative entity, on its urban infrastructure, on its material life, and on its intellectual and political tradition, all during the early Republican period and with an emphasis on the profound changes that took place in the 1930s.

10.3. *Xi'an as a "Municipality"*

Administratively, Xi'an existed as a "city" for only a limited part of the period under consideration, in the sense that it did not have a municipal government. For most of the time it was defined only as the seat of the Shaanxi provincial government, which until the early 1930s was first of all a military government and controlled much of the life in the city through a number of provincial bureaus (*ting* 廳)—for civil administration, reconstruction, police, education, and so on—with responsibility over the whole of Shaanxi. Routine local administration was left to the Chang'an county government, whose jurisdiction extended well beyond the walls of Xi'an: all things equal, the situation was not very different from what it was in imperial times.[18]

That pattern changed for a short period, when Shaanxi was under the governorship of General Song Zheyuan 宋哲元 (1885–1940), one of Feng Yuxiang's most trusted lieutenants. Xi'an Municipality (Xi'an shi) was

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[17] See, e.g., Zong Ming'an 宗鳴安, *Xi'an jiushi* 西安舊事 [Old Stories of Xi'an] (Xi'an: Shaanxi renmin meishu chubanshe, 2002), p. 26. This somewhat disorderly and not always very reliable book by an old Xi'an resident does introduce some of that evidence (mostly unreferenced); it is in particular valuable for the photographs it reproduces. Other photographs (sometimes the same) can be found in Pingao Jia, *Old Xi'an: Evening Glow of an Imperial City* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2001; I have not seen the Chinese edition), or on the Xi'an Municipal Archives Web site (http://www.xadaj.gov.cn/structure/dahc/gcjs.htm).

[18] In the Qing, the administration of the city was split between two counties, Chang'an (to the west) and Xianning 咸寧 (to the east). Xianning was absorbed into Chang'an in 1914.

created sometime in the winter of 1928, with a jurisdiction that covered the area inside the city itself and the four outer walls (called *guan* 關) that protected the four main gates.[19] However, the experience was terminated in December 1930, right after the ouster of Feng Yuxiang's forces and the return of the region to the fold of the Nanking government: the city was again administered by Chang'an County and put under direct provincial control.[20]

As we already saw, in the spring of 1932 the Guomindang decided to make Xi'an into its western capital. The nineteen-man planning committee appointed to implement the decision was a mix of Guomindang politicians belonging to the central instances of the regime and of Shaanxi personalities, including the then governor, Yang Hucheng, and the famous engineer Li Yizhi 李儀祉 (1882–1938), who was at the time chief of the Shaanxi Reconstruction Bureau (Jianshe ting 建設廳). In 1933 the new governor, Shao Lizi 邵力子 (1881–1967), also joined the committee. The committee was placed under a Guomindang veteran, Zhang Ji 張繼 (1882–1947), and opened an office in Xi'an in April 1932. Then, in November of the same year, the Guomindang central authorities decided that the Western Capital and its immediate hinterland would become a special municipality called Xijing shi 西京市, directly dependent on the central government and (temporarily) funded by it. The committee would continue to function as a planning outfit, but the municipality would become an autonomous administrative entity with executive powers. The formal decision to that effect was taken on 7 January 1933.

The plan never materialized, however. Although official documents and handbooks continued to call Xi'an "Xijing shi" and mention it as a special municipality well into the 1940s, a municipal government was never formed. Zhang Ji and Yang Hucheng had been instructed to take steps to organize the new Xijing municipality, but nothing substantial was achieved, and when Shao Lizi succeeded Yang as Shaanxi governor in June 1933, he decided that for fiscal and other reasons a provincial capital directly administered by the central government was not in the interest of the province. He probably considered that reallocating the various responsibilities and infrastructures related to the city between the province and

[19] On these outer walls, built at the end of the Ming, see Tian Kegong 田克恭, "Xi'an chengwai de siguan 西安城外的四關 [The Four 'Outer Walls' of Xi'an]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 2:201–217.

[20] *Chang'an xianzhi* 長安縣誌 [The County Gazetteer of Chang'an] (Xi'an: Shaanxi renmin jiaoyu chubanshe, 1999), p. 16.

the municipality would have caused more complication and conflict than improvement, and also that it would have diminished his own room for initiative.[21] In any event, he recommended to the central authorities that they delay the creation of Xijing shi in consideration of the considerable difficulties the government was currently facing—and at the same time noted that the $30,000 per month the government had pledged to allocate to the new municipality had never been forwarded and asked that the Ministry of Finance quickly take the necessary steps. In response, the government accepted delaying the creation of the Xijing municipality and decided that for the time being the $30,000 would be sent to the provincial government; Zhang and the planning committee were entrusted with managing the actual work of building the Western Capital.[22]

As a result, Xi'an had no formal city government,[23] but the planning committee assumed some of its functions, notably in matters of city planning and infrastructural building. Indeed, several authors credit it with much of the modernization that took place in Xi'an in the 1930s.[24] In August 1934, a Xijing municipal government construction commission (Xijing shizheng jianshe weiyuanhui 西京市政建設委員會) was formed under the joint authority of the Xijing Planning Committee, of the National Economic Commission (NEC; Guomin jingji weiyuanhui 國民經濟委員會) and of the provincial government. It was entrusted

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[21] For the kinds of problems to sort out in such circumstances as well as the attending political haggling, see Wang Youzhi 王友直, "Wo ren Guomindang yuanxia Xi'an shi shizhang de huiyi 我任國民黨院轄西安市市長的回憶 [My Memory as the Mayor of Xi'an under the Direct Jurisdiction of the Executive Yuan during the Guomindang Period]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 2:122. Wang was appointed mayor of Xi'an in 1947, after the Guomindang decided to return the city to central government control. He says that the first plan was to move the provincial government to Xianyang, but the step was not taken for lack of resources.

[22] For much of the previous and of what follows, see Xi'an shi dang'an ju 西安市檔案局 [The Municipal Archive of Xi'an City], "Xijing shi shimo 西京市始末 [The History of the Western Capital]" (2008), available at www.xadaj.gov.cn/structure/gdls/ljsy/content_1187_1.htm. The Xi'an archives have published a documentary volume titled *Choujian Xijing peidu dang'an shiliao xuanji* 籌建西京陪都檔案史料選輯 [Selected Historical Documents on the Planning of the Western Capital as an Alternate Capital] (Xi'an: Xibei daxue chubanshe, 1994), which I have not been able to see.

[23] Only in 1942 was a "Planning Bureau for Xi'an City Government" (Xi'an shizheng choubeichu 西安市政籌備處) set up; in 1945, a Xi'an city government, dependent on the province, was formally established. See Wang Youzhi, "Wo ren Guomindang yuanxia Xi'an shi shizhang de huiyi," p. 116. In Wang's opinion, the Guomindang's decision to create a Western Capital at Xi'an (which he wrongly dates to 1937 instead of 1932) was no more than a proof of its cowardice and unwillingness to resist Japan. Writing in late 1932, Lin Pengxia (*Xibei xing*, p. 47) also regretted the plan, which she attributed to China's weakness and inability to unite (國力不充, 眾議難協).

[24] See, in particular, Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, passim.

with implementing the projects of urban modernization that were proceeding apace during these years. However, when Chongqing was made the wartime temporary capital in November 1937, in government correspondence the term "western capital" was replaced with "Xi'an urban district" (Xi'an shiqu 西安市區); in late 1940, Chongqing became the "alternate capital," and one year later the Xijing municipal government construction commission was disbanded, the "Xi'an urban district" being returned to the authority of the provincial government, leading eventually to the creation of a Xi'an municipal government in 1944. The Xijing planning committee disappeared in April 1945.

What precedes suggests that, all things equal, Xi'an's experience as a political entity was not very different from that of Canton as described in Chapter 9, except that there was never any plan to create an autonomous, let alone democratically elected, city government. Even the short-lived municipality of the late 1920s was no more than a technical outfit entrusted to a henchman of Feng Yuxiang's military clique. What remains to be ascertained, however, is the extent to which Xi'an could be transformed into a powerful and monopolistic provincial capital in line with the new republican political philosophy, as Canton obviously was. This would be a new research, but what I have seen of the evidence, at least, does not suggest the same single-minded effort to build a centralized civilian bureaucracy that would directly connect the provincial government to the remotest villages.

10.4. *The Population and the Physical Layout*

Xi'an is among the few major Chinese cities having preserved their city walls intact to this day, and it prides itself on having the largest one.[25] Already by imperial times, Xi'an's fortifications were among the most formidable in the country. The nearly 14-kilometer wall as it exists today goes back to the first years of the Ming, when the name of Xi'an Prefecture first appeared. It was repaired several times during the Ming and Qing but seems to have been in rather dilapidated condition at the end of the Qing. The Republican authorities did promote some maintenance work; but even in poor condition, in the context of early twentieth-century war

[25] On the Xi'an city wall, see Tian Kegong 田克恭, "Xi'an cheng de guoqu yu xianzai 西安城的過去與現在 [The Past and Present of the Xi'an City Wall]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 1:208–232.

the Xi'an wall still had a profound strategic significance, which obviously contributed to its preservation despite the wall-demolishing movement that flourished after the 1911 Revolution. The most spectacular illustration is of course the 1926 siege: the wall was seriously dented by enemy bombing, but it did protect the city.[26] During the Japanese air bombings from 1937 to 1940 the inhabitants dug some one thousand antiaircraft shelters inside the wall (which is more than 15 meters thick at the bottom), while the authorities opened a few escape passages through it.[27] However, the main transformation brought to the Xi'an wall in Republican times was the opening of several new gates to facilitate traffic.[28]

In some sense, the impressive wall can be seen as the defining feature of Xi'an. If in the present day this is mainly true from the point of view of tourism (hence the careful restorations of the past two decades), in earlier times the wall was both the symbol and instrument of the city's political and strategic importance, and for a long time it also defined Xi'an as an inhabited settlement. Whereas today the area enclosed by the wall is only the core of a sprawling and fast-growing megacity, up to the early 1930s not many people lived outside the city gates, and even inside the wall there were large expanses of empty space. This is readily apparent in the map of Xi'an inserted in the plate on Shaanxi Province in the *Shenbao* atlas compiled under the editorship of V. K. Ting 丁文江 and first published in 1933 (Figure 10.1). It also caught the attention of a number of visitors to the city, such as, for example, the American captain (later general) Stilwell when he visited Xi'an in 1922.[29] More than ten years later, the Czech sinologist Jaroslav Průšek (1906–1980)—then a foreign student in China—visited Xi'an with a fellow traveler. This appears to have been in March 1933. After a bus trip from Tongguan 潼關 (the terminus of the Longhai Railway at the time) made ghastly by pouring rain and ending in

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[26] See Wang Youzhi, "Wo ren Guomindang yuanxia Xi'an shi shizhang de huiyi," p. 123.

[27] Tian Kegong, "Xi'an cheng de guoqu yu xianzai", p. 223; Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, p. 56.

[28] Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 129–130. To the old East, West, North, and South Gates were added at various dates (and in circumstances on which authors are not always in agreement) lesser gates named Zhongshan (in honor of Sun Yatsen, said to have been specially opened when Feng Yuxiang and his army left the city in May 1927), Yuxiang (in honor of Feng), Xiaobei 小北 (originating in a breach caused by Japanese bombing), and Wumu (in honor of Jing Wumu 井勿幕, a revolutionary hero executed in 1918). Several other gates were opened in more recent times.

[29] See Barbara W. Tuchman, *Stilwell and the American Experience in China, 1911–45* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), p. 79. Tuchman's book generously paraphrases or quotes from Stilwell's diaries, letters, and other writings.

Figure 10.1. Xi'an in the early 1930s. From Ding Wenjiang 丁文江 et al., *Zhongguo fensheng xintu* 中國分省新圖 (Shanghai: Shenbaoguan, 1933).

a muddy ditch several kilometers before reaching the destination, Průšek and his companions literally hit the wall of Xi'an in the middle of the night: "The gate is shut and there is not a single house anywhere around, just bare fields"; inside, it was equally empty—obviously, they had entered one of the gates leading into the outer-wall areas built outside the four main gates in the late Ming, which they had then to walk across to reach, probably, Zhongshan Gate on the main wall.[30] Contemporary views of the wall seen from outside (Figure 10.2) indeed suggest a complete absence of suburbs.

Such expanses of uninhabited open space, inside and outside, are an illustration of the extent to which Xi'an had shrunk within its own shell, so to speak, since the Qing. The combined effects of civil wars, natural disasters, and bad government must have accounted for considerable demographic losses, but reliable figures are hard to come by. Xi'an's population *intra muros*—that is, most of its population at the time—is said to have hovered between 100,000 and 125,000 during the period 1928–1934 (with an upward trend beginning in 1932);[31] this came in the wake of the 1928–1930 famine and, earlier, the 1926 siege. We have no precise idea of what the city's population may have been in the late Qing, let alone before the nineteenth-century crises, but if one admits that in the eighteenth century the Manchu city alone may have sheltered some one hundred thousand people,[32] it is easy to imagine how much Xi'an's population around 1930 had shrunk compared with more prosperous times. Demographic growth, accompanied by densification and expansion *intra muros*, picked up only after Xi'an was connected to the rest of China by the railroad, and it accelerated considerably when refugees started to flow in after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War and, later, during the civil war.[33]

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[30] Zhongshan Gate was where the main road from Lintong and, beyond, Tongguan, ended. See Jaroslav Průšek, *My Sister China* (Prague: Karolinum Press, 2002; translated from the 1947 Czech edition), pp. 427–429. These highly entertaining memoirs may occasionally err on the side of exaggeration and the picturesque. There are few precise dates and some obvious errors one would not expect on the part of a distinguished sinologist. Thus, Průšek (or his translator) mistakenly describes Xi'an as "sheltered by two sets of giant, square-shaped fortification walls," the space between the two having been made empty by rebellions, famines, etc.

[31] Vermeer, *Economic Development*, pp. 70–71, 474n25.

[32] Mark Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 106, 119–120, table on p. 369; Xi'an's Manchu city appears to have been one of the most densely inhabited of all.

[33] Visiting the city at the end of 1937, the American journalist Agnes Smedley spoke of a quarter million inhabitants (we cannot know on what authority); see her *China Fights Back: An American Woman with the Eighth Route Army* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1938),

Figure 10.2. The Xi'an city wall seen from the outside, undated (early twentieth century). From Jia Pingao, *Old Xi'an: Evening Glow of an Imperial City* (Beijing: Foreign language press, 2001), p. 13.

Up till the early 1930s, significant changes in the physical layout of Xi'an were largely determined by political and military events rather than an autonomous process of economic and demographic growth or urban planning.[34] The first, dramatic change was the destruction and abandonment of the Manchu city following the 1911 Revolution. After the massacre of the Manchu garrison and banner population that took place during the

p. 28. Průšek proposed the same figure in 1933, but at that date it seems very unlikely. Wang Youzhi, the mayor of Xi'an from 1947 to 1949, claims that according to statistics the population of Xi'an, including suburbs, reached six hundred thousand on the eve of the Communist takeover (see his remembrances mentioned earlier, p. 117); however, the figure may be for the entire Chang'an County, where we know that a serious census was taken in 1947 and 1948 for the first time. Vermeer, *Economic Development*, p. 87, cites an official figure of about five hundred thousand in 1948 but says that according to local reports the figure could be as high as seven hundred thousand.

[34] On the development of professional urban administration in the 1920s, which does not seem to have had much of an impact in Xi'an, see Kristin Stapleton, "Warfare and Modern Urban Administration in Chinese Cities," in Strand and Cochran, *Cities in Motion*, pp. 55–66 [*53–78*].

1911 uprising,[35] the former Manchu city (sometimes called the Imperial City, Huangcheng 皇城), which occupied about a third of the walled city in the northeast quarter (see Figure 10.3),[36] was mostly pulled down; not only was the inner wall protecting it (with the Bell Tower at its southwest corner) torn down, facilitating traffic inside the city, but the materials from the ruined houses inside were taken away for reuse.[37]

The site of the old Manchu city was left largely empty for many years.[38] If we are to believe Stilwell—always a precise observer—by 1922 it was "only fields of a vegetable oil plant resembling mustard." Such neglected state is very striking when one thinks of the maze of streets and buildings in the Manchu city represented on a remarkable map of Xi'an drawn in 1893 (Figure 10.4),[39] and when one recalls that by the eighteenth century that space may have housed a hundred thousand inhabitants. Equally striking is the contrast with the comparatively peaceful way the Manchu city of Chengdu was transformed into an upper-class residential area.[40]

Apparently, the first attempt at putting this empty space to use was that of Feng Yuxiang during his first governorship of Shaanxi from 1921 to 1922. Stilwell, again, says that Feng had his headquarters "in the old Imperial City which he had reconstructed into neat clean barracks and

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[35] Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchu and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861–1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), pp. 190–193.

[36] The Manchu city is left as a blank space in this map, which is extracted from the 1815 *Chang'an xianzhi* 長安縣誌 (1936 reprint).

[37] On the Manchu city and its fate, see Tian Kegong 田克恭, "Xi'an dong dajie de bianhua 西安東大街的變化 [The Changes of the Eastern Main Street in Xi'an]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 3:176–178. According to this author, Zhang Fenghui 張鳳翽, the governor who took over after the 1911 Revolution, used materials taken from the former Manchu city to transform East Avenue (Dong dajie, or Zhongshan dajie)—which the Manchus had closed to the general public—into a 2-kilometer long, spacious shopping street lined with Japanese-style houses (he had lived and studied in Japan). This move is evocative of similar efforts in other provincial capitals during the New Policy (*xinzheng* 新政) reforms of the late Qing (see Stapleton, "Warfare and Modern Urban Administration," pp. 55–57, and, regarding Chengdu, *Civilizing Chengdu: Chinese Urban Reform, 1895–1937* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000], pp. 144–149).

[38] The 1933 Xi'an map in the *Shenbao* atlas (see Figure 10.1) still displays the paucity of buildings in the northeast corner of the city.

[39] See *Xianning Chang'an liangxian xuzhi* 咸甯長安兩縣續志 [The Supplementary County Gazetteer of the Two Counties of Xianning and Chang'an] (1936), 1/2b–3a; the commentary indicates that this is a 1:3 reduction of an original map drawn under the sponsorship of the Shaanxi provincial treasurer at the time. The same map is beautifully reproduced in Wu Bolun 武伯綸, *Xi'an lishi shulüe* 西安歷史述略 [A Brief History of Xi'an] (enlarged ed., Xi'an: Shaanxi renmin chubanshe, 1984), folding map facing p. 292.

[40] Stapleton, *Civilizing Chengdu*.

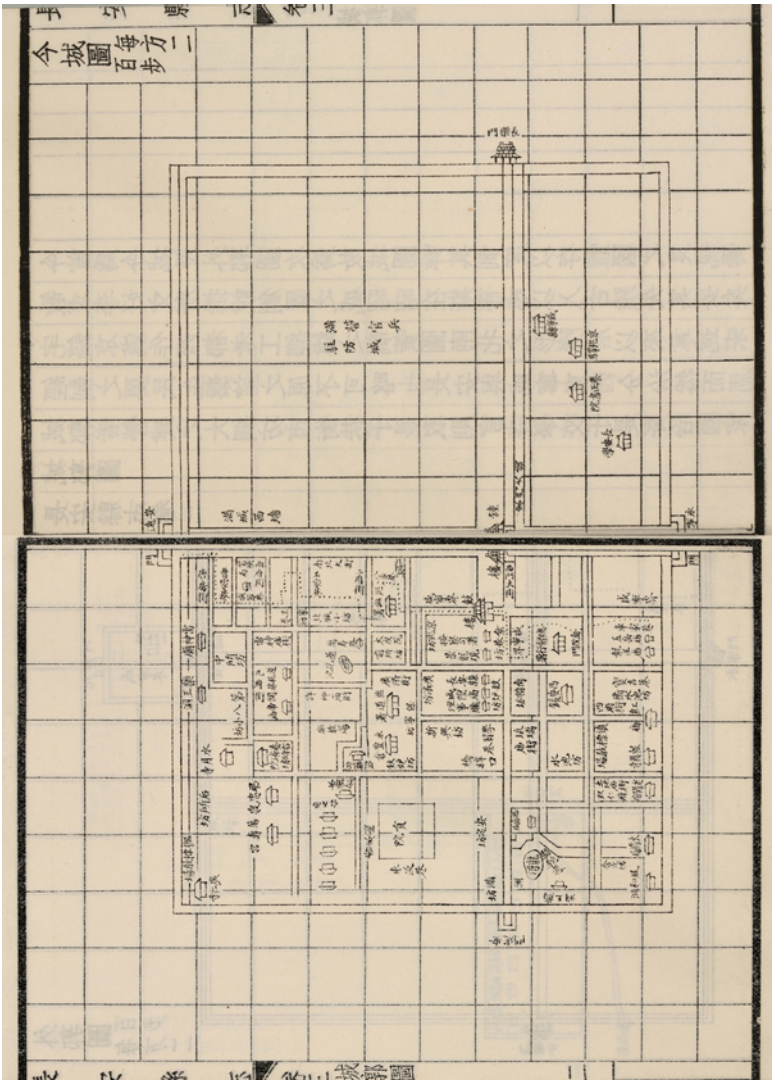

Figure 10.3. Xi'an in the early nineteenth century. From *Chang'an xianzhi* 長安縣志 (1815; rpt. s.n.: 1936).

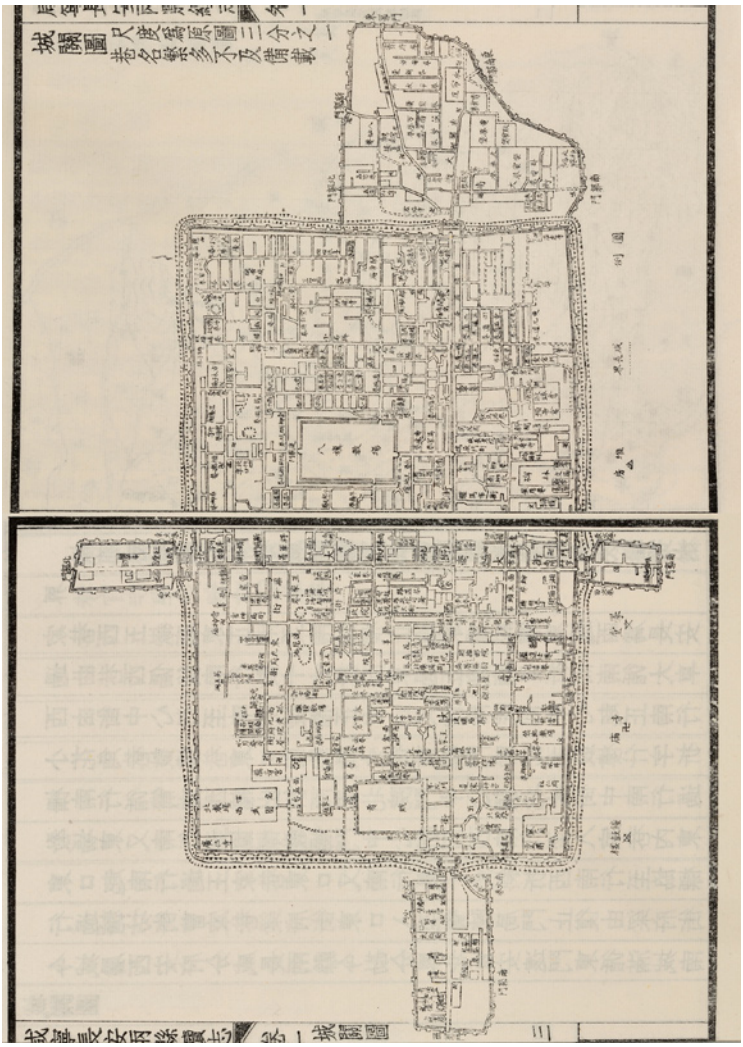

Figure 10.4. Xi'an in the late nineteenth century. From *Xianning Chang'an liangxian xuzhi* 咸寧長安兩縣續志 (s.n.: 1936).

drill grounds using soldier labor and bricks from the ruins."[41] Feng, in fact, attempted several things in the empty space left by the post-1911 destruction. On the one hand, the walled Eight Banners drilling ground (*baqi jiaochang* 八旗教場, clearly visible in Figure 10.4), which was itself on the site of the Qin princely palace (Qin wangfu 秦王府) under the Ming, was transformed into the "New City" (Xincheng 新城), part of which consisted of a large square used for rallies during the ensuing years, and where new government headquarters were built—to this day it is the site of the Shaanxi provincial government.[42] And on the other hand, he built a walled area more to the east, which one could get to through an arched gate bearing the inscription "Minle yuan 民樂園" and flanked by two smaller gates. It seems to have been a sort of amusement park (hence its name) and at the same time a place for propaganda: it contained a vast ceremonial hall, where Feng planned to teach the population and soldiers the Christian values he supported, and also had rows of shops to entertain the crowd. However, due to its isolation, the place did not thrive at all. During the next few years the Minle yuan seems to have survived as a sort of flea market, and only after the northeast quarter of Xi'an started repopulating following the opening of the railway station just north of the city wall did it find its vocation as a busy night market (and prostitution area). Indeed, from 1934 onward, land prices soared in this part of the former Tartar city, and it became a dense shopping area, inaugurating a new era in the urban history of Xi'an.[43]

Another change in the Xi'an ground plan because of war occurred at the beginning of the revolutionary episode that followed the 1926 siege and is sometimes captured by the phrase "Red Xi'an" (紅色西安). For about a half-year the city and its hinterland were under the military government of Feng Yuxiang's United National Army, by then under the control of the Guomindang-Communist alliance.[44] The two dominant personalities in Red Xi'an were Feng himself and Yu Youren 于右任 (1879–1964), a Guanzhong native who had been a Shaanxi revolutionary hero ever since the last years of the Qing and had become the most important Guomindang

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[41] Tuchman, *Stilwell*, p. 79.

[42] According to some authors, the compound continued to be called Huangcheng and the name Xincheng was given to it only in 1927 or later.

[43] See Tian Kegong, "Xi'an cheng de guoqu yu xianzai," pp. 224–227; Vermeer, *Economic Development*, p. 73.

[44] On this episode, see Will, "La génération 1911," pp. 408–413, and the sources cited therein. The experience ended with the departure of Feng's forces to join the Northern Expedition in Central China in May 1927 and the split between the Nationalists and Communists shortly thereafter.

leader there. One of Yu's most spectacular initiatives, shortly after the siege was raised, was the opening of two mass graves (one for men, one for women) where the victims of the siege were to be buried and honored. The place selected was an empty space to the northeast of the government city (Xincheng, rechristened "Red City," Hongcheng 紅城, at the time). There are some ghastly accounts of the process of exhumation, transportation, and reburial of the corpses, all of which took place at night during a period of two weeks in February 1927. After the graves were closed and a memorial mass rally presided over by Feng was held, the site was made into "Revolution Park" (Geming gongyuan 革命公園), still the largest park in the city, and a three-storied pavilion to commemorate the sufferings of the besieged population was erected, with its name Youzha ting 油渣亭 engraved in Yu Youren's calligraphy (see Figure 10.5).[45]

The public works just mentioned are the ones described in the literature, and there may have been others. What is distinctive about them is that they were initiated by political strongmen and had first of all a political signification. Another pattern appears during the period 1928–1930, when Xi'an was endowed with a formal municipal administration. During these years, Mayor Xiao Zhenying 蕭振瀛 (1886–1947) is said to have taken advantage of the terrible famine to open construction sites where famine victims were employed as workers in exchange for relief (the so-called *yi gong dai zhen* 以工代賑 method). Several avenues were repaired, the previously mentioned Minle yuan flea market was rehabilitated, several north-south streets were opened in the eastern section of the former Manchu city, and one of the main wells that provided water to the inhabitants of Xi'an (see later) was refurbished.[46]

To be sure, information on this sort of project is extremely limited—further research into the Xi'an municipal government archives probably

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[45] See Nie Zhixuan 聶芝軒, "Wei jinian jianshou Xi'an sinan junmin chuangjian geming gongyuan jingguo 為紀念堅守西安死難軍民創建革命公園經過 [The Building of a Revolution Park in Memory of those Military and Civilian Martyrs who Died Defending the Xi'an City]," *Shaanxi wenshi ziliao xuanji* 3:130–133 (the author was one of the persons in charge of the project); issue no. 11 has three other essays on the subject. See also Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 32–33; Chen Jiesheng 陳潔生, "Yijiuerqi nian shangbannian de hongse Xi'an 一九二七年上半年的紅色西安 [Red Xi'an in the First Half Year of 1927]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 2:27–37 (p. 29). The agreement of the victims' families was of course required. It seems that over 2,700 corpses were moved this way—certainly a very limited fraction of the total siege casualties—but several sources speak of "10,000 victims."

[46] Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 41–44. General Xiao Zhenying was a Jilin native who had served under Zhang Zuolin before switching over to Feng Yuxiang's Xibei army; at the time of his mayorship, he was a close associate of Song Zheyuan, Feng Yuxiang's deputy in Shaanxi and governor of the province.

Figure 10.5. A mass rally in Revolution Park, 1935. From Jia Pingao, p. 96.

would provide more of it. But these were no more than stopgap initiatives, not a planned effort at urban modernization. The latter occurred only later—with many hesitations and under many constraints to be sure—but from the mid-1930s it benefited at long last from the political and economic push that had eluded Xi'an for decades. As I have already pointed out, the crucial factor was communications. So, before proceeding further, let me say a word of Xi'an's communication problem—both within and without—and how it was gradually improved.

10.5. *Communications with the Outside World*

Xi'an's much-lamented isolation in the early twentieth century was essentially a matter of difficult transportation in the Guanzhong region before the advent of dependable motor roads and, above all, the railway. There are a few concrete descriptions, mostly by foreigners. One of the most colorful comes from Captain Stilwell's record of his 1922 trip from Lingbao 靈寶 in Henan (then the terminus of the Longhai) to Tongguan on the Shaanxi border, then to Xi'an. Each leg (about 130 kilometers long) took four days, and conditions must not have been very different from what they were in imperial times along what was one of the empire's trunk

roads: the "so-called road" (said Stilwell) was no more than a muddy track where crowds of pedestrians, wheelbarrows, and mule carts going both ways struggled along (and against each other) to make some progress.[47] This was practically the only way Shaanxi could import goods from inner China and export its own products, including bulky ones such as bales of raw cotton. Such conditions, which prevailed virtually everywhere in Shaanxi, could support only a very low, pre-modern level of commercial exchange, excluding in practice the development of an export-oriented economy.

Stilwell had in fact been invited by Feng Yuxiang to be chief engineer on a projected road from Tongguan to Xi'an, to be built with support of the China International Famine Relief Commission (CIFRC) (he had successfully conducted a similar project in Shanxi the year before), but work was soon interrupted because Feng and his forces were called to join the first Zhili-Fengtian war and left Shaanxi in a hurry in April 1922. And in any event, the legacy of the internationally backed movement to build modern motor roads taking advantage of the North China famine of 1920–1921—when relief funds and a workforce of famine victims could be easily mobilized—was short lived: these were still dirt roads, only part of them metalled and equipped with culverts, therefore much exposed to the damage caused by rain as well as the rutting of carts equipped with narrow wheels and the trampling of cattle. They would therefore have required careful and constant maintenance and strictly enforced traffic regulations. But to the despair of the Chinese and foreign engineers who participated in the "Good Roads Movement" of the early 1920s,[48] because of the indifference of the local population and authorities, the new roads were mostly doomed to neglect and rapid decay.[49] For example, Stilwell's road in Shanxi had all but disappeared a decade later. The case of the trunk road between Tongguan and Xi'an, which had considerable strategic importance, may have been more complicated. In a 1925 report, O. J. Todd, the CIFRC chief engineer, claimed that it was normally suitable

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47 Tuchman, *Stilwell*, pp. 77–78.

48 On that movement, founded in Shanghai in 1921 and known as the Zhonghua quanguo daolu jianshe xiehui 中華全國道路建設協會 [Pan-China Association for National Railways Building], see, e.g., Marie-Claire Bergère, "L'industrialisation et l'essor de la construction routière en Chine (1917–1922)," *Cahiers d'études chinoises* 9 (1990): 71–88; Stapleton, "Warfare and Modern Urban Administration." The movement also promoted urban modernization more generally.

49 See, for example, the report on modern roads in China in *Journal of the Association of Chinese and American Engineers* 3.11 (1922): 4–12. Only the roads built by warlords for military purposes seem to have stood a chance of being correctly maintained.

for motor vehicles thanks to the work performed by Feng's troops in 1921 and 1922.[50] According to Todd, again, during the period 1927–1930, when Shaanxi was in the hands of Feng and his generals, serious work was done on the main roads of Guanzhong, probably with a view to facilitate strategic communication within the domain controlled by Feng's Northwest Army, which included Henan and Shaanxi. When Todd entered Shaanxi from Shanxi through Tongguan on the heels of the Nationalist Army in November 1930, automobile traffic was apparently routine, if not always easy; such was also the case beyond Xi'an, through Fengxiang 鳳翔 in western Guanzhong.[51]

The effort to improve roads in Guanzhong and facilitate communications between Xi'an and its hinterland was pursued by the new authorities after 1930. There was a regular bus service between Tongguan and Xi'an, but as elsewhere its operation depended entirely on the weather: heavy rain was enough to transform roads into a mud bath and stop traffic altogether. Indeed, the testimonies we have from travelers in the early 1930s vary widely according to precipitation: Průšek in 1933 encountered a rainstorm and went through a nightmarish experience that ended in the middle of nowhere; on another raining day he commented somewhat emphatically: "However short-lived these intermittent showers may be, they are enough to change the whole landscape into a sea of mud. The governor banned all carriages and animals from leaving the city, or else within hours the dirt road would disappear without a trace and the city's entire fleet of vehicles would end up drowned in the yellow mud." On the contrary, Lin Pengxia in November 1932 complained only of aching all over the day after a ride, due to the terrible condition of the road and its dreadful bumps; that the road was in such condition she attributed to the many years of civil war Shaanxi had been through, but she also acknowledged that the new government cared more about completing the Longhai.[52]

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[50] This report seems to be in contradiction with Stilwell's observations. See O. J. Todd, "Present Condition of Motor Roads in China," *Journal of the Association of Chinese and American Engineers* 6.6 (1925): 62–69.

[51] Todd's report to the CIFRC, 25 November 1930, in the Todd archives held at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Box 30, Folder 1. Note also the problem of banditry as an obstacle to overland communication between Xi'an and Tongguan.

[52] Průšek, *My Sister China*, pp. 438–439; Lin Pengxia, *Xibei xing*, pp. 50–52. Much work on Shaanxi's highways was effected during the second half of the 1930s, greatly improving Xi'an's road communications with Tongguan to the east and Lanzhou to the west, and with south Shaanxi.

The extension of the Longhai Railroad to Xi'an *was* the real breakthrough: no longer after that would Xi'an be like an island in a sea of mud whenever it was raining. The project of connecting Xi'an with the outer world by rail went back to the last years of the Qing, but building the line does not seem to have been seriously considered by any of the various military governors who succeeded one another in Xi'an until 1927. In that year, the Longhai reached Lingbao in Henan, but its extension to Tongguan—73 kilometers of tracks to build, with several tunnels—was delayed by war and could not be completed until December 1931. The remaining 131 kilometers to Xi'an were built between August 1932 and December 1934, and the line was extended a further 173 kilometers west to Baoji, which it reached in December 1936—a crucial addition with both economic and strategic significance.[53]

The railway truly put Xi'an in direct contact with modernity—and, one might say, with civility. Summarizing what had struck him most in Xi'an, Hou Hongjian 侯鴻鑒 (1872–1961), a Wuxi native and an educator of some reputation who spent two weeks in the city in May 1935 at the beginning of an investigation tour of educational conditions in the Northwest, singled out as a particularly remarkable fact the discipline of the customers buying tickets at the recently opened Xi'an station (Figure 10.6): people waiting in front of the third-class window form an orderly line and proceed to the window two by two under the vigilant gaze of two policemen—none of the other Longhai stations can match this, writes Hou.[54] A mere detail, but not without significance: having the citizenry behave in a "civilized" (*wenming* 文明) way has been a frequent preoccupation for authorities in modern China and here was certainly a reflection of the Guomindang's effort at improving the morals and manners of the Chinese people, of which we shall see other examples regarding Xi'an.

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[53] See, e.g., "Longhai tielu Shaanxi duan zhi jianshe yu kangzhan 隴海鐵路陝西段之建設與抗戰 [The Building of the Shaanxi Section of the Longhai Railway and the Sino-Japanese War]," available at http://old.blog.edu.cn/user2/dgxf/archives/2006/1340644.shtml#. Several more branches were built in central Shaanxi and further west during the war despite enormous financial and material difficulties.

[54] See Hou Hongjian 侯鴻鑒, *Xibei manyou ji* 西北漫遊記 [Travel Accounts in the Northwest], in *Minguo zangshi shiliao huibian*, 23:25. (Large extracts from Hou's text devoted to Xi'an are reproduced in Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 12–26; Zong wrongly dates Hou's visit to 1936.) Arriving in Xi'an in 1936, Edgar Snow spoke of the "new and handsome railway station at Sian," which he had reached after a ride in a train "still new and very comfortable" (see *Red Star over China*, rev. ed. [New York: Grove Press, 1968], p. 42).

Figure 10.6. Xi'an's railway station, reportedly at the time of the Xi'an coup in 1936. From Jia Pingao, p. 21.

Still, the railway was not all civility. Even if the situation was far from being as bad as during the civil wars of the 1920s, military demands could very well disturb the plans of civilian passengers by requisitioning cars or blocking trains, and Hou is much complaining about that.[55] Even more striking, he notes that on the evening of 5 May, apparently the eve of his passage, the railway station at Lintong 臨潼 (some 20 kilometers east of Xi'an) was attacked by several tens of "local bandits" (*tufei* 土匪) who stole several hundred silver dollars—the station was more than 3 *li* away from the city, and there was no military guard.[56] Even after five years of Nationalist government, the trunk line to Xi'an and the very heart of Guanzhong remained unsafe. Finally it should be noted that Xi'an's communication with outside by air began in the 1930s, but it had little economic impact on the city.

10.6. *Traffic in Xi'an*

After the advent of the railway, Xi'an changed in ways that can be described as dramatic. Regarding intracity communications, however, some progress appears to have been made immediately after 1930, and even earlier. The city was crisscrossed by large avenues, some of which had been at least partially paved with stones for a long time, the rest of the roadway consisting of smaller streets and lanes without any pavement that were transformed into muddy paths as soon as it rained. The problem was to organize traffic on the dirt sections of the main avenues so as to preserve them from rapid damage, or, better, to resurface them using modern engineering techniques, either metalling or surfacing with bricks, and fix the smaller streets as far as was possible. The major incentive to improve the roadways was to facilitate automobile traffic, in all circumstances of weather, if possible; but with the population fast growing after 1935, general traffic as well had to be accommodated on better roads.

Impressions recorded by visitors provide vivid accounts of the roadwork and traffic in Xi'an in the 1920s and 1930s. Stilwell, on his arrival in Xi'an in 1922, simply noted that "the main business streets were paved with huge old stone blocks,"[57] but this may have been restricted to the traditional commercial area to the south and southwest of the Drum

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[55] Hou Hongjian, *Xibei manyou ji*, p. 9; Hou had been secretary-general of the Longhai bureau earlier in his career.

[56] Hou Hongjian, *Xibei manyou ji*, p. 12.

[57] At least in Tuchman's rendition (*Stilwell*, p. 79).

and Bell Towers, or possibly some sections of the 2-kilometer-long East Avenue (Dong dajie 東大街, or Zhongshan dajie 中山大街), which the first post-1911 governor had attempted to make into a Japanese-style shopping street. A photograph dated April 1928 shows serious construction (apparently metalling) on the western section of the same avenue (near the Bell Tower), undertaken by the provincial Bureau of Reconstruction, and another one, dated October 1928, shows the completed section (near the East Gate)—a wide avenue with what look like brick-covered lanes on both sides.[58] We have seen that during the 1928–1929 famine the municipality improved some of the roadway in Xi'an using labor relief.

Visiting Xi'an in December 1932, Lin Pengxia remarked on the spaciousness of the main avenues and noted approvingly that one line was reserved for automobiles and another for horse-drawn carriages, even though most of the traffic was still by carriage or rickshaw:[59] this suggests that the recommendations of engineers to preserve the surfacing of dirt roads by separating traditional and automobile traffic were enforced in the city. Indeed, she stressed that most of the roadway was still unpaved, and as everybody else did she reported complaints about the inconvenience or even total paralysis caused either by mud when it was rainy or by dust clouds when it was dry and windy.[60]

Improvements in traffic conditions in Xi'an seem to have been achieved on a larger scale under the responsibility of the Xijing Municipal Government Construction Commission set up in August 1934 and of its parent institution, the Xijing Preparatory Committee. The fact that the Construction Commission took over the Engineering Department attached to the provincial Reconstruction Bureau certainly is a sign that it was intent on modernizing the city's infrastructure as rapidly as possible.[61] Indeed,

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[58] See Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, p. 132.

[59] Automobiles were still a rarity, as noted by Hewlett Johnson, the dean of Canterbury, who traveled in the region with the engineer Todd in the spring of 1932: he remarked about Xi'an that "the streets are clean and orderly and thoroughly Chinese," and also that "the city can boast some motor-cars"—all American cars, to his chagrin. See his article in the London *Times*, 26 July 1932.

[60] Lin Pengxia, *Xibei xing*, p. 52. A few months later, Průšek noted after having toured the city that "its main thoroughfares are wide, paved, even lined with sparse rows of trees, the signs of a vigorous and dynamic administration mindful of the region's advancement" (see *My Sister China*, p. 430), but he seriously qualified this impression when it started to rain.

[61] The Xijing Preparatory Committee is also credited with trying to make the city more "green," by planting trees along the main avenues, among other activities. See Wu Hongqi 吳宏岐, Xiao Shouling 蕭受玲, and Yan Yan 嚴豔, "Kangzhan shiqi Xijing choubei weiyuanhui de chengshi lühua shijian ji qi qishi 抗戰時期西京籌備委員會的城市綠化實

testimonies dating from the second half of the 1930s all speak of a pattern of traffic significantly more "modern," both quantitatively and qualitatively. Right after arriving at Xi'an in May 1935, the educator Hou Hongjian wrote in his diary about his first walk on Zhongshan Avenue (i.e., Dong dajie) and described admiringly its spaciousness and the orderly traffic of cars and pedestrians. Interestingly, he compared the situation with what he had seen in Xi'an seventeen years earlier, when he had been allowed a mere three days in the city before having to interrupt his trip amid civil war and famine:

> Now, reconstruction is pushing ahead vigorously, public safety is maintained, the buildings have size and order, toward the east of Bell Tower the width of Zhongshan Avenue becomes even more remarkable. . . . Today, freely walking around, I can see the width of the streets, automobiles form an endless stream before my eyes, people at the market are boisterous and excited; the difference between then and now is just immeasurable!

Among the things that Hou found the most "special" in Xi'an he cites the fact that all the larger horse-drawn carriages are now equipped with rubber tires in order to protect the surface of the newly constructed streets from wearing away—proof that the authorities are "enthusiastic at reform," he says. But Xi'an's avenues and streets were still far from being entirely paved, hence another "special thing" about Xi'an—the dust raised by the wind, which penetrates everywhere, something to which Southerners are most unaccustomed.[62] Several pictures of roadworks—certainly raising a lot of dust—have been preserved, which must date from 1935 or after: one of them (Figure 10.7) shows construction on Xi dajie (the main avenue west of the Bell Tower), and another shows the completed street (Figure 10.8). The contrast with the obviously older, but regrettably undated, view of the same avenue taken from the top of West Gate (shown in Figure 10.9) well symbolizes the transformations the city was going through in the mid-1930s.

10.7. *Other Infrastructures*

The mid-1930s were also the years when the authorities attempted, with variable success, to endow Xi'an with some of the facilities essential to life

踐及其啟示 [The Green City Project Launched by the Planning Committee on the Development of the Western Capital during the Sino-Japanese War and its Insight]," *Zhongguo lishi dili luncong* 17.3 (2002): 117–128 (a study based on archival materials).

[62] Hou Hongjian, *Xibei manyou ji*, pp. 25–26.

Figure 10.7. Xi dajie under construction (around 1935). From Mao Dun 茅盾 (ed.), *Zhongguo de yiri* 中國的一日 (Shanghai: Shenghuo shudian, 1936).

Figure 10.8. Xi dajie after reconstruction. From Jia Pingao, p. 86.

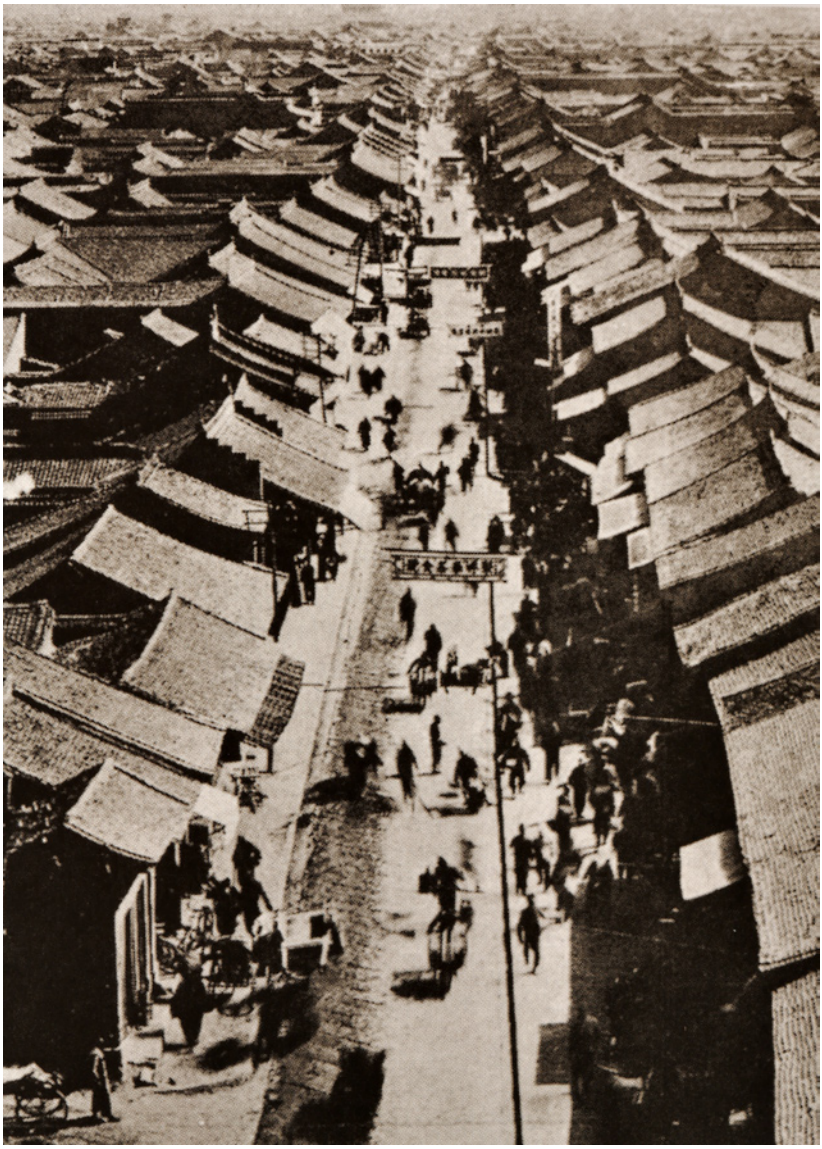

Figure 10.9. Xi dajie before construction, photo taken from West Gate. From Jia Pingao p. 193.

Figure 10.10. West Capital Department Store on Nan dajie (1936). From Mao Dun 茅盾 (ed.), *Zhongguo de yiri*.

in any modern city. Some of them seem to have been reasonably available by then: for example the telephone, mentioned in and around Xi'an as early as 1918, which after 1935 must have been comparatively widespread (for the time), as is at least suggested by the telephone poles laden with many lines displayed on the photographs of modern avenues (see Figures 10.7 and 10.10).

The distribution of electricity also began, although progress cannot have been very fast, and production was seriously hampered during the war years. A local power station providing electricity to a limited neighborhood in the southeast part of the city was installed as early as 1917,[63] and there may have been a few others, but this did not add up to a citywide grid. Lin, during her visit to Xi'an at the end of 1932, met with the head of the Telecommunications Bureau (Dianzheng guanliju 電政管理局), who told her that his ambition was to build a power station for the city, but that transportation costs were too high to ensure an adequate supply

[63] Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, p. 90.

of coal.[64] A small power station was finally built outside Zhongshan Gate in 1935; it had a modest capacity of 750 kilowatts, brought to 2,750 kilowatts two years later. In general, the electricity-generating capacity of Xi'an—including the private generators used by some industrial plants—grew significantly during the next few years. The power plants used coal transported by rail from Shanxi and Henan; later, when Shaanxi was cut off from these sources by the Japanese invasion, coal was brought in from the mines of Tongguan 同官 (present-day Tongchuan 銅川), about a hundred kilometers north of Xi'an, by a railroad completed in late 1941.[65] Still, in absolute terms the available capacity was not up to the needs of a big city with a fast-growing population. Public and business buildings such as administrative offices, banks, hotels, theaters, and other places of entertainment were as a rule supplied with electricity, but the situation was much more difficult in the lower end of private housing.[66] It would be several decades—until the early 1980s, in fact—before Xi'an's needs in electric power as well as many other tools and amenities began to be adequately addressed.[67]

One of these needs was a modern system of water distribution, which Xi'an did not get until 1946—and by that date it was still incomplete, a significant proportion of homes being without access to running water (the situation was still far from satisfying during the first three decades of the PRC). Xi'an in the Ming and Qing was supplied with fresh water through a combination of local wells and canals flowing in from the well-watered mountains north of the city.[68] Well water was said to be sweet in the southern part of the city (especially the southwest corner) but increasingly salty going north. Yet during the periods, including the

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[64] Lin Pengxia, *Xibei xing*, p. 55. Ten years earlier, Stilwell noted that "coal, sold by the pound at a street-corner market, was the city's fuel supply brought in by wheelbarrow from T'ung Kuan 90 miles away" (Tuchman, *Stilwell*, p. 79).

[65] The line connected with the Longhai (and hence with Xi'an) at Xianyang, on the north bank of the Wei. Its main rationale was to provide the Longhai locomotives with coal. However, serious difficulties with transportation from the Tongguan mines seem to have caused a "lasting coal shortage" from 1943. See Vermeer, *Economic Development*, p. 83.

[66] Even schools might not have electricity: visiting the elite Shengli gaoji zhongxue 省立高級中學 (The Provincial High School) in 1935, Hou Hongjian noted that contrary to the other schools its dormitory had electric lighting (*Xibei manyou ji*, p. 18).

[67] For power generation in Xi'an in the 1930s, see Vermeer, *Economic Development*, p. 470n12, and passim in his chapter 3 (on "The Growth of Xi'an and Industrial Development"), on the difficulties encountered until the 1980s.

[68] On the situation in the Ming and Qing, see, above all, chapter 3 in Shi Hongshuai, *Ming Qing shiqi Xi'an chengshi dili yanjiu*. On the Ming, Qing, and Republic, see Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 93–100.

early Republic, when the canal system—apparently including underground conduits faced with bricks—that distributed water across the city was out of order, wells were the only source of drinking water for Xi'an residents: water carriers would go to the main wells and peddle the water along the streets. Among the most important was the West Gate large well (Ximen *dajing* 西門大井), in operation since 1667, from which a continuous stream of carts moved water buckets to the various neighborhoods. In the 1920s, the Bureau of Reconstruction bore a number of public wells across the city, which provided water of varying quality. There were also a few tens of private wells from which people sold their water.

By the mid-1930s, population increase had made it urgent to devise a modern running-water system. Thus, the May and June 1935 issues of the journal *Shaanxi shuili yuekan* 陝西水利月刊, published by the Shaanxi Hydraulic Bureau since December 1932, feature two technical essays offering a blueprint for a Xi'an running-water system, which confirms that the topic was high on the agenda. That same year, the Shaanxi authorities signed a contract with a Shanghai foreign company to set up a simple water plant in Xi'an, but for various reasons the project was never completed. It also seems that at some point the engineering department of the Xijing Construction Commission made plans to revive part of the old Ming system of underground canals fed by the rivers north of the city and even started some construction, but with unknown results. In any case, we do know that in the second half of the 1930s some of the modern hotels I will mention were equipped with bathrooms and running water—and this must also have been the case with public buildings and high-end private residences—presumably relying on local engineering instead of tapping a citywide network of water distribution that did not exist.

10.8. *Public Buildings and the Xi'an Cityscape*

Republican Xi'an did not build up a modern cityscape comparable to Shanghai or Tianjin: it was still an expanse of low roofs dominated by the twin Drum and Bell Towers (Figure 10.11). But its architectural face certainly changed, with more and more modern-looking buildings in a variety of styles dotting the urban fabric. Although rarely dated, the few photographs available provide some idea of what the city may have looked like on the eve of the Sino-Japanese War. An interesting example is the short selection of rather badly printed pictures featured at the head of the section on Shanxi, Shaanxi, and Gansu in the famous anthology edited

Figure 10.11. The Xi'an cityscape with the Drum and Bell Towers (undated). From Jia Pingao, p. 87.

by Mao Dun in 1936, *Zhongguo de yiri* (One day in China): we see the Small Goose Pagoda; the "most busy street of Xi'an" (i.e., the Nanyuanmen 南院門 commercial district west of Nan dajie, the photo showing in fact no more than two buses and a few lonely traffic cops); the recently repaved Nan dajie with the modern multistoried Xijing department store amid rows of traditional shops (Figure 10.10); uniformed schoolboys participating in the "hygiene movement" (衛生運動); a general view of the roofs of Xi'an with the Big Goose Pagoda in the background; construction in progress on Xi dajie (Figure 10.7)—and corpses of famine victims on a Xi'an street, assuredly a striking contrast with images of either modernity or archeological legacy and a reminder of the fragility of the recent prosperity brought by modernization.[69]

At least two of the five Xi'an texts in *Zhongguo de yiri* do convey something of the city's atmosphere and material environment.[70] One, titled

[69] Mao Dun 茅盾, ed., *Zhongguo de yiri* 中國的一日 [One Day in China] (Shanghai: Shenghuo shudian, 1936), pictures in front of section 12. This is assuming, of course, that the pictures featured in the book describe the situation on 21 May, like the texts that make up the book (in at least one case the photo *is* dated 21 May 1936). Several of them resurface in other books and on Web sites on Xi'an.

[70] None of these texts is featured in the anthology of translations published by Sherman Cochran, Andrew C. K. Hsieh, and Janis Cochran, *One Day in China, May 21, 1936* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983).

"Xi'an Streetscape" ("Xi'an jiejing 西安街景"), by Jin Yun 金芸, is a sort of modernist collage where the city is made more attractive by the evocation of a glorious sunny day: we have colorful posters advertising shows or products (with the smoking modern girl typical of the period), planes roaring through the sky at noon, people crowding to read the newspapers posted in the Nanyuanmen commercial district, spectators clustering in front of a brilliantly illuminated movie theater at night, the "ardent pulsation in the arteries of the city," with automobiles and rickshaws streaming along the streets. The other text, "One day" ("Yiri 一日"), by a female student named Li Mingying 李鳴鶯, is less lyrical in its description of traffic: a crowd of students, teachers, and workers hastening along the street, a few empty buses amid the rickshaws pushed aside by policemen, shop windows full of imported pretty trinkets at which rickshaw coolies gaze with envious eyes. Then, a lazy day at school, the whistle of a train bringing in she cannot imagine what sort of people. She remarks that "since the Northwest has been developed, the spectacle of prosperity is gradually more in evidence; all of a sudden the old city of before has transformed itself into a modern metropolis (現代化的都市)." Then again, "On the streets, in the places of public entertainment, no, everywhere, at all times and in all places one sees people who have fled their homes. They know their villages have been transformed into scorched earth, and each time the train brings them in. The increase in population, this too is something frightening!" This captures rather well the tensions felt in Xi'an while it was resolutely entering modernity.

To return to architecture, information is scarce before the mid-1930s. The first modern public building in Xi'an was the central post office (Figure 10.12) built near the Bell Tower by an English architect as early as 1912, clearly a lone example of the "New Policies" type of modernization attempted in provincial capitals.[71] In the following years, new brick buildings for administrative offices, stores, schools, and the like appeared, displaying what according to Stilwell in 1922 was an improbable style "with facades that look like a mixture of Spanish mission, country garage, and Hose Company No. 2."[72] Indeed, some early Republican photographs of public buildings feature extremely kitschy facades, such as those of the orphanage opened during the 1929 famine (Shaanxi zaitong jiaoyangyuan

[71] Tian Kegong, "Dong dajie," p. 186, calls the architect 羅士 (Ross?). A new central post office was built only after 1949.

[72] Stilwell, as quoted in Tuchman, *Stilwell*, p. 79.

Figure 10.12. The Xi'an Post Office building (built 1912). From Jia Pingao p. 167.

Figure 10.13. Xi'an public orphanage opened during the 1929 famine. From Jia Pingao, p. 112.

Figure 10.14. The Shaanxi Provincial Women's Normal School, Xi'an. From Jia Pingao, p. 160].

陝西災童教養院; Figure 10.13) and the provincial Women's Normal School (Shengli nüshi省立女師; Figure 10.14).

In 1933, Průšek noted that "the central square [meaning probably the square in front of Nanyuanmen] boasts several European-style modern office blocks housing affiliations of Shanghai companies. . . . Otherwise, though, both houses and shops betray the city's decline and the overall poverty of its inhabitants. They are all but vacant." To be sure, when Průšek visited Xi'an, the city was barely starting to modernize, and indeed its shops had not much to offer—he complains they lacked even basic amenities available elsewhere in China. Still, at this date his contrast of a few modern office buildings amid a sea of derelict poverty may have been a bit of an exaggeration. However revealing in many respects, Průšek's testimony—like all individual testimonies—clearly must be taken with a grain of salt. In the matter of hotel accommodation, for example, he describes how he and his fellow traveler spent their week in Xi'an in a sort of stinking caravanserai without electricity or running water, let alone any sort of toilet—a traditional Chinese inn, obviously, where they had been taken by a Chinese companion in the middle of the night—and it is implied in his account that this was perfectly representative of the stage

of development reached by Xi'an at the time.[73] Yet a few months earlier, Lin Pengxia—who also insists on the general misery and on the poverty of the housing—put up at the Xi'an fandian, and there apparently the Westernized young woman was able to enjoy the comforts expected after an exhausting trip.[74] In other words, in 1932 or 1933, Western-style hotels were not unknown in Xi'an, and Hou Hongjian's text confirms that by 1935 Xi'an could boast several hotels providing modern facilities.

The most luxurious and state-of-the-art among them was the forty-six-room Western Capital Hotel (Xijing zhaodaisuo 西京招待所), which was built in 1935 by the Shanghai jianye gongsi 上海建業公司, one of China's public works companies that produced the best architecture at the time—during the same period it also built the Xi'an branches of the Bank of Communications and of the Bank of China.[75] The Western Capital Hotel (Figure 10.15), whose equipment had been imported from Shanghai, was run by the China Travel Agency (Zhongguo lüxingshe 中國旅行社), itself a subsidiary of the Bank of Shanghai, which had started operating in Shaanxi in 1933 and had bought the plot on Shangren Street 尚仁路 (now Jiefang Street) the same year.[76] The hotel was inaugurated in early 1936, and it enjoys some historical fame as Chiang Kai-shek's close military and political collaborators were staying there at the time of the Xi'an coup at the end of the same year and were confined to their rooms until the crisis was resolved.[77]

One of the hotel guests on that day, and witness to the incident, happened to be Agnes Smedley (1892–1950), the well-known leftist American journalist, who visited Xi'an on at least two occasions during this period

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[73] Průšek, *My Sister China*, pp. 430–432.

[74] Lin Pengxia, *Xibei xing*, p. 51.

[75] Another state-of-the-art infrastructure built by the Shanghai jianye gongsi in Shaanxi was the prestigious Wugong Agricultural School, not far from Xi'an.

[76] See Yu Chenggan 俞承淦, "Zhongguo lüxingshe jiqi zai Xibei jingying de qingkuang 中國旅行社及其在西北經營的情況 [The China Travel Agency and its Business in the Northwest]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 2:145–176 (esp. 163–167). The China Travel Agency was also operating the celebrated Huaqingchi 華清池 hot springs at Lintong, an attraction since the Tang dynasty and a favorite haunt for Xi'an's officials and well-heeled citizens (the round-trip took no more than six or seven hours). When Hou Hongjian visited the place on his way to Xi'an in May 1935, the management was in the process of laying out the Huaqing Public Park and building facilities for visitors, a $10,000 investment (*Xibei manyou ji*, p. 12). (According to Yu Chenggan, "Zhongguo lüxingshe," p. 163, the investment was $20,000.)

[77] See Yu Chenggan, "Zhongguo lüxingshe," pp. 165–166. Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 46–49, provides the entire list of guests on that fateful night, complete with room numbers, which he was able to get from an informant. Chiang Kai-shek himself was staying at the Huaqing resort (see previous note) when he was arrested by the mutinees.

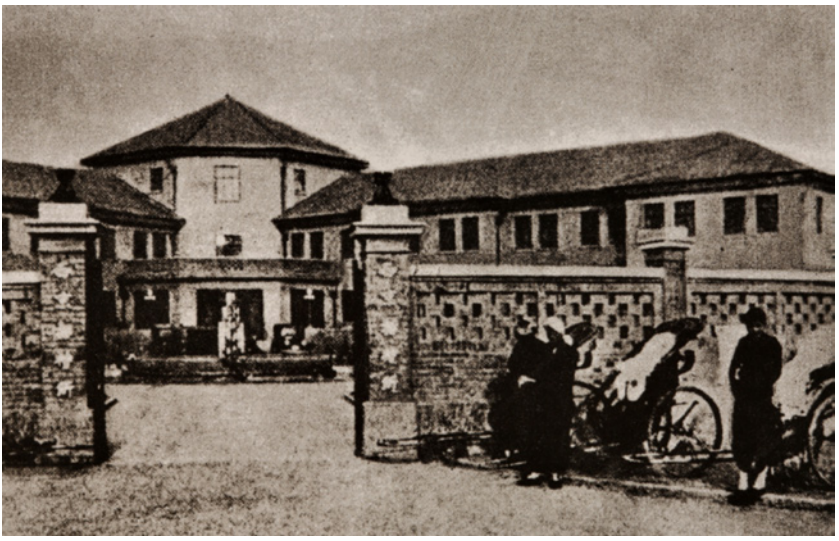

Figure 10.15. The Western Capital Hotel (西京招待所) (opened 1936). From Jia Pingao p. 22.

in the course of her reporting on the Yan'an communist base. In the fall of the following year, she traveled back to Xi'an from Yan'an to get medical treatment: Yan'an was the Mecca of revolutionary virtue, but Xi'an had a hospital with modern equipment, including X-ray—this was the Baptist Missionary Hospital (Guangren yiyuan 廣仁醫院), founded in 1898 and run by British missionaries.[78] Smedley was not impressed by Xi'an: "This is not much of a city," she says, "and the one-, two- and three-story shops are filled with piles of trashy, expensive things."[79] For the jaded journalist, who was more at home in Shanghai or Beiping—and at the same time so much enamored with Yan'an austerity—this was perhaps not much of a city, but by 1937 Xi'an certainly had become at least *something* of a city.

As we saw, its transformation accelerated dramatically once the Longhai reached it, an event that coincided with the setting up of the Xijing

[78] The Baptist Missionary Hospital was the most advanced medically in Xi'an, but there were several other hospitals in the city, for example, the Xijing yiyuan 西京醫院, founded on the initiative of Governor Yang Hucheng in 1933, which was devoted to treating people without means. See Dou Yinsan 竇蔭三 and Xue Zinan 薛子南, "Sili Xijing yiyuan de sanshi nian 私立西京醫院的三十年 [Thirty Years of the Private Western-Capital Hospital]," *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* 6:125–128.

[79] Smedley, *China Fights Back*, p. 28. One thinks of the shop windows full of imported trinkets mentioned by the student girl in *One Day in China*.

Municipal Government Construction Commission and more generally with the beginning of serious investment on the part of the Nationalist government—in particular, T. V. Soong's NEC—in developing the economy of the Northwest, endowing it with new industries, and making it contribute to the "produce Chinese, buy Chinese" policy encouraged at the time. (In Shaanxi, this mainly concerned cotton production—which grew considerably thanks to improvements in irrigation and the application of modern agronomic knowledge—and the related industries.) As going to the Northwest suddenly seemed profitable, even became the fashion, all the state-supported Chinese banks—the Central Bank, the Bank of China, the Bank of Communications, the Bank of Agriculture—as well as a number of private commercial banks established branches at Xi'an, all of them building modern headquarters. The Bank of Shanghai had already opened a branch in 1933. At the same time, the traditional business and core shopping areas of the city, concentrated around the Bell Tower, with Nan dajie and especially the Nanyuanmen sector among the most active, lost their preeminence to its fast-developing eastern section south of the railway station, where land prices were skyrocketing. It was there that the goods now imported from coastal China—Smedley's "trashy, expensive things"—as well as those manufactured by the new industries created after 1935 were on sale in modern-style stores and that brilliantly illuminated places of entertainment attracted the crowds at night. Zhongshan dajie at the time—to the south of this section of the city—has been described, perhaps with some exaggeration, as lined with tall buildings and modern stores, fully lit up and filled with the hustle and bustle of the crowd moving along at night, comparable to the busiest avenues of Tianjin or Nanking.[80]

10.9. *Progressive Xi'an*

What precedes does no more than skim over some aspects of Xi'an urban history of which it is possible to give a rough idea, despite some contradictory statements and inconsistencies, based on the scattered

[80] See Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 102–103. Still, how subjective such impressions are is suggested by the description of Xi'an in the fascinating report of a 1938 China trip by the famous British leftist writers W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, *Journey to a War* (New York: Paragon House, 1990): a lousy and muddy town imprisoned in its oversized city wall, not much different from the descriptions of the early 1930s despite a few novelties such as the improbable amenities of the Western Capital Hotel (p. 129ff).

(sometimes impressionistic) evidence available. Thus, I have barely touched on handicraft and manufacturing activities in and around Xi'an, which went through a process of rapid growth and qualitative change once the region was connected by railway to the rest of China. The impact on life in the city is likely to have been considerable, if only in terms of its social structure due to the rapid increase in the industrial workforce: by 1940 Xi'an was reported to have over fifty thousand workers, more than half new arrivals from the surrounding area or from outside Shaanxi, and more than half children and women.[81] Here again, if we have a general idea of these developments, a consistent and exhaustive picture remains to be drawn.[82]

Instead of pursuing that project, I have chosen to close this chapter with a few considerations on certain cultural and political aspects of the history of Xi'an from the eve of the 1911 Revolution through the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War, in which the city certainly displayed a distinctive personality explained both by its past tradition and by the political and military events it experienced.

I mentioned at the beginning the Guanzhong elite's twin complaints of economic and cultural backwardness. Whereas in the economic sphere the problem was rather clear-cut—it was first of all a problem of communications—it was less so regarding cultural or intellectual matters. The cultural splendor of Han and Tang Chang'an was a reason for pride, but it was, essentially, a capital to preserve, or rather to restore, if it was to bear any fruit. Indeed, from the early 1930s, efforts were made and institutions were set up to ensure the proper preservation and display of Guanzhong's archeological and other treasures. This was obviously a huge project, since the area was literally crammed with "cultural relics" that were all too tempting for unscrupulous persons to plunder.[83] And the monuments that could not be moved away were, more often than not, in a state of dereliction and in urgent need of preservation. Likewise, the Buddhist activists who were much involved in charities and relief organization during the 1928–1931 famine and thereafter, and who dreamed of restoring Xi'an to its ancient status of Buddhist world capital, devoted

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[81] Vermeer, *Economic Development*, pp. 73–74 and 77, on the new industries that were set up from 1935.

[82] Such general accounts can be found in Vermeer, *Economic Development*, passim, the *Wenshi ziliao* series, and Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 89–108.

[83] Examples abound. The famous set of six slabs representing Tang Taizong's favorite horses, four of which were sold to an American in 1915 (they are now at the University of Pennsylvania Museum in Philadelphia), is only one of them.

considerable efforts to raise the funds necessary to rehabilitate its more prestigious religious monuments.

Things were more complicated in the intellectual sphere. Shaanxi scholars prided themselves on a tradition of austere and practical Confucianism known as the "Guanzhong school" (Guanxuepai 關學派), going back to the famous Song philosopher Zhang Zai 張載 (1020–1078), which had much prestige among scholarly circles in China. Interestingly, the more prominent heirs to this tradition in the last years of the Qing were quite close to, or even participants in, the "new culture" movement that by the time of the 1911 uprising in Xi'an had seamlessly evolved into a revolutionary movement. Despite being steeped in the teachings of the old Guanzhong Confucian luminaries, they were avid to connect with the new, Western-influenced, intellectual trends that were fast developing in coastal China during the same period.[84]

This materialized in the creation of a remarkable number of progressive schools and academies in Xi'an and in many Guanzhong counties during the last decade of the Qing.[85] A tradition of modern education was thus established in the region, which laid the foundations for the development of educational institutions in Republican Xi'an that seem as a rule to have been ahead of the socioeconomic development of the city. To my knowledge, an exhaustive account of schools in post-1911 Xi'an has not yet been attempted, but testimonies abound.[86] To limit myself to authors I have already cited, Průšek and his companion, during their week in Xi'an in April 1933, were driven around the city by one of Governor Shao Lizi's secretaries and visited several primary schools. They were quite impressed by the uniformed, "cheerful and active" students and by the coziness of the premises. A little earlier, Lin Pengxia had occasion to talk to the head of Xi'an Women's Normal School (Xi'an nüzi shifan xuexiao 西安女子師範學校, an institution already in existence by 1924), who discussed the particularly miserable condition of women in the Northeast and the high rate of illiteracy among them. Clearly a feminist, Lin remarked that this lady was one of several "female comrades" she had met during her stay in Xi'an, whose deportment and simplicity (簡潔大方), so different from women in the South, she admired. In any case, her general comments on

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[84] See Will, "La génération 1911," pp. 367–376.

[85] Shi Hongshuai, *Ming Qing shiqi Xi'an chengshi dili yanjiu*, tables 4–5 on pp. 198–201, lists no less than thirty-two modern schools (*xuetang* 學堂) established in Xi'an between 1898 and 1911.

[86] For example, the *Xi'an wenshi ziliao* issues contain many essays on individual schools.

Shaanxi's educational institutions stress their extreme poverty—with the exception of two or three elite secondary schools in Xi'an—and the miserable salaries paid to the teachers.

Hou Hongjian cared much about female education, too: he was the founder and director of a school for girls in his native Wuxi that seems to have enjoyed some reputation. His observations on schools in Xi'an and its vicinity are both professional and systematic; he was on an official tour of inspection of educational institutions, after all, and for each of the many schools he visited he carefully describes the premises and facilities, records the budget, indicates the number of students and teachers, and discusses the teachers' salary range with much precision (salaries were low indeed).[87] The two provincial normal schools in Xi'an (for women and for men) were sizable institutions teaching hundreds of students, each with a large primary school attached to it. The men's normal school was located on the premises of the prestigious Guanzhong Academy (Guanzhong shuyuan 關中書院), where Li Yong 李顒 (1627–1705), one of the heroes of the so-called Guanzhong school, had taught in the past and which had been transformed into a modern school at the end of the Qing. As for the elite Shengli gaoji zhongxue 省立高級中學, it was endowed with a fairly rich library and well equipped laboratories. Hou also comments at some length on mass education, which had been a concern of Shaanxi's progressive scholars ever since the late Qing. He describes two "institutes of mass education" (*minzhong jiaoyu guan* 民眾教育館), one in the city, run by the province, and one nearby, which appear to have been quite well endowed institutions: they ran a quantity of activities, both on their premises and outside, and concerned themselves not only with literacy and science, but also with economics, vocational education, sports, hygiene, and the like. The Provincial Institute at Xi'an was also connected to similar institutions in the rest of the province, to which it provided leadership and guidance.

All in all, Hou's general impression was quite positive: the authorities had made obvious efforts to improve education in the city during the past two or three years, there was much dynamism and enthusiasm among the school principals and teachers he met, and there is no mention of the pervasive poverty so striking to Lin Pengxia less than three years before. Indeed, Governor Shao Lizi, whom Hou met on several occasions during his stay, was known to show great concern for educational matters, which

[87] The salaries were based on the number of hours taught, plus some bonuses, but only 80 percent (八折) of the nominal salary was actually paid.

together with the new economic dynamism in Xi'an must have contributed to these improvements.

An interesting detail in Hou's descriptions is the militarization of part of the student body: both in the men's normal school and in the elite secondary school he visited, a fraction of the students had been sent to Kaifeng for military training. This was 1935, and the Nationalist government was busy mobilizing society around the themes of national salvation and resistance against Japanese encroachment. As education was regarded as central to this effort—Hou harangued the students of the normal school to that effect—students, in Shaanxi as elsewhere, were expected to participate fully in the mobilization.

Yet students had always been a restive body, in Xi'an as much as in the other big cities of China. Already in the last decade of the Qing, some of the progressive modern schools recently founded in Xi'an were more or less discreet hotbeds of revolutionary activity and propaganda. They are one of the sources of a tradition of student protest and struggle against the authorities in early Republican Xi'an underscored by several authors, which is indeed quite striking. This tradition is clearly overemphasized in sources such as the *Wenshi ziliao* and most PRC publications on Xi'an, which tend to give the Communist Party a role more important than it actually had. But it is a fact that Xi'an, despite its general poverty and backwardness in the first two decades of the Republic, was a highly political place: the revolutionary surge of 1911 was still close in memory, the region was a bone of contention during the general conflict between the North and South in the late 1910s, Sun-Yatsenism remained quite alive under warlord governments, the press was remarkably well informed and active for a city that was still economically unimportant—and the students were an obvious presence. As has been remarked, the three dominant groups in Xi'an before it became an industrial city were the military, the officials, and the students.

Here again, a detailed history remains to be written, but a few facts should suffice for the current argument. The beginnings of student agitation in Xi'an clearly date to the May Fourth period. In 1919 Xi'an was under a duumvirate of reactionary warlords appointed by the Beiyang government, but the north bank of the Wei was held by a pro-Sun Yatsen rebellion led by Yu Youren, the father of revolution in Shaanxi. As I have shown elsewhere, communications between the two sides were in fact quite routine. While May Fourth student activists came from Beiping and Shanghai to assist Yu's dissident regime, in Xi'an the students of the Provincial School of Law and Government (Sheng fazheng zhuanmen 省法

政專門) started protesting and demonstrating.[88] Similarly, in the ensuing years and into the 1930s, each episode of national protest was echoed in Xi'an by strikes and demonstrations from this and other schools, which the authorities did not always attempt to repress.

The agitation caused by the May Fourth events also revealed a tension between politically progressive but culturally conservative leaders and the more radical younger generation. An example is Guo Xiren 郭希仁 (1881–1923), a provincial graduate in the ancient system and a local leader of Sun Yatsen's Revolutionary League (Tongmenghui 同盟會) in the last years of the Qing, as well as a prominent participant in the 1911 Revolution in Xi'an. During the warlord period, Guo was chief of the Shaanxi Education Bureau (Jiaoyuting 教育廳). In 1919, his attempts to revive classical studies and have the temple of Confucius refurbished and his cult restored led to violent confrontation with the Xi'an students; he resigned the following year.[89] As it happens, during the 1927 revolutionary episode, the Xi'an Confucius Temple was again threatened: this time, it was another progressive personality anxious to protect Confucian culture and its architectural symbols, Li Tongxuan 李桐軒 (1860–1932), who was to rise up against the activist students intent on pulling down the temple.

Li is an important actor in the early twentieth-century political and intellectual history of Xi'an.[90] One of his main contributions to the city was the founding in 1913, and for several years the running, of an institution that was to remain a mainstay of Xi'an's cultural and political life for a considerable period and is still in existence, the Yisushe 易俗社 (Society for changing customs). The Yisushe's main activity was popular education by way of theatrical shows written by its members, using the extraordinarily popular local form of theater known as *Qinqiang* 秦腔.[91] It also had a drama school. Distinguished guests visiting Xi'an were taken to the Yisushe and its theater, which was one of Xi'an's earliest modern public

[88] Heir to a late-Qing progressive school, the Provincial School of Law and Government was located on the site of the former prefectural examination compound in the southeast corner of the city. In 1924 it became Northwest University (Xibei daxue 西北大學) and went through other transformations following political events.

[89] On Guo Xiren, see Will, "La génération 1911." This was by no means the only example of Xi'an's students demonstrating against the policies of the provincial government.

[90] Li Tongxuan was the father of the famous hydraulic engineer Li Yizhi. His intellectual-political path was extremely close to that of Guo Xiren. See Will, "La génération 1911," passim.

[91] The Yisushe troupe toured China's big cities several times in the 1920s and 1930s.

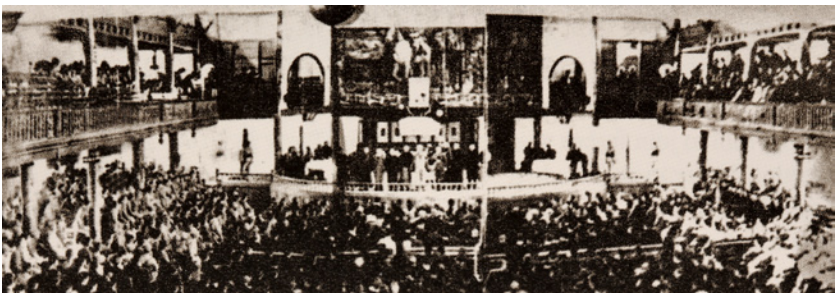

Figure 10.16. Yang Hucheng addressing an audience in the Yisushe theater. From Jia Pingao, p. 19.

buildings, constructed in 1919 and seating eight hundred people.[92] Průšek describes it in these terms: "The theatre building shone with newness, looking exactly like a smaller European theatre. It had comfortable seats and reasonably clean boxes. The stage was Europeanized, too, featuring a curtain and scenery, something unseen in Beijing."[93] The Yisushe theater (which was under the provincial Educational Bureau) was occasionally used for other purposes than showing plays, such as government declarations, public meetings and celebrations, and lectures by famous personalities, mentions of which are frequently encountered in the sources: Figure 10.16, supposed to represent Yang Hucheng addressing the audience before a Yisushe show at an unspecified date, is an example. This brings us back to the theme of political demonstrations.

The feverish, short-lived experience of revolutionary social reform after the lifting of the 1926 siege, when Xi'an was under the military government of Feng Yuxiang and Yu Youren, his political alter ego at the time, marks a turning point in the history of political activism in Xi'an.[94] By all accounts, there was an awful lot of demonstrating and rallying during

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[92] See Tian Kegong, "Xi'an dong dajie de bianhua," p. 180. Among the distinguished visitors were Lu Xun, and Hou Hongjian (see *Xibei manyou ji*, pp. 21–23). Lin Pengxia in 1932 visited the premises of an association named the Zhengsushe 正俗社 and commented at length on the educational value of the theater on the condition that its contents be adapted and devoted to real social problems (*Xibei xing*, p. 54). There was also a Sanyishe 三意社, said to be very profitable. See Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 114–115. In the *One Day in China* essay mentioned previously, Jin Yun speaks of posters advertising shows by the Yisushe, the Sanyishe (a production of *Xixiang ji*), and another company named the Tangfengshe 唐風社.

[93] See Průšek, *My Sister China*, pp. 439–441. The stage built in 1919 was equipped with the most modern devices known in China at the time.

[94] On this episode, see Will, "La génération 1911," pp. 408–413, and the sources cited therein.

these few months, but it was all mobilization decided by the leaders against faraway enemies such as the Beiyang warlords or world imperialism, not spontaneous agitation strictly speaking. For a short period, Xi'an's educational institutions became places of intense militancy and indoctrination. There was an efflorescence of propaganda outfits and revolutionary schools and institutes—such as the Sun Yatsen Military School (Zhongshan junshi xuexiao 中山軍事學校), which was crammed with communist cadres—not to speak of a variety of mass organizations. Northwest University (Xibei daxue), for years a hotbed of student opposition, became the Xi'an Sun Yatsen Institute (Xi'an Zhongshan xueyuan 西安中山學院), whose leadership was likewise mostly communist. The Guomindang headquarters, whose main gate was graced with calligraphy by Yu Youren engraved in stone, proclaiming "All the authority belongs to the Party; all the rights go to the masses" (一切權力屬於黨, 一切利益歸民眾), were set up on the same compound and were the seat of many mass meetings.[95] Indeed, mass meetings at various places in the city, where makeshift platforms were built from which the leaders would harangue the crowd and exchange slogans with it, seem to have been an almost daily occurrence.[96]

This culture of mass meetings convened by the authorities and party left an imprint on the city long after it had ceased to be "Red Xi'an." To be sure, more research is due on exact conditions in Xi'an during the three-year interim when the region was in the hands of Feng Yuxiang's generals, nominally still under the Guomindang umbrella but in fact out of Nanking's reach. This was certainly a repressive regime, and the political vitality that had animated most of the 1920s seems to have all but disappeared. But the trappings of revolutionary rule remained. Less than two months before the incumbent governor was ousted by the Nationalist Army, a "huge testimonial mass-meeting" was convened in Xi'an by the authorities to celebrate the plans for rehabilitating the Weibei 渭北 irrigation system, which the CIFRC representatives had just promised to help fund and realize:[97] it was political mobilization to support a major project that would help solve what was at the time the number one problem in the region—drought and famine.

Exactly the same problem faced the new provincial government under Yang Hucheng (himself a native of the region) immediately after its

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[95] Tian Kegong, "Dong dajie," pp. 182–183.
[96] On mass meetings, see Chen Jiesheng "Hongse Xi'an."
[97] See the *CIFRC Annual Report* for 1930, p. 27.

installation, and in fact it was with Yang that the CIFRC finalized the agreement and started the project. Though the evidence is somewhat spotty, it seems clear that after 1930 a new dynamic was set in motion and politics in Xi'an acquired a new texture, in some respects not unlike what had taken place during the "Red Xi'an" episode. After all, Yang was of miserable extraction and had been an important actor in the revolutionary history of Shaanxi since 1918. His PRC biographies claim he had communist sympathies, which is dubious, but he does seem to have remained faithful to the Sun-Yatsenian ideals and the personalities who embodied them, like Yu Youren, and the style of leftist mobilization that had been familiar in Xi'an since the 1911 Revolution was not apparently something to upset him.

But more importantly, political mobilization in Xi'an was now geared to the nationwide aspiration to economic development, recovery of China's dignity, and resisting Japan. Yang Hucheng, and after him Shao Lizi, were sympathetic to the student anti-imperialist and anti-Japanese demonstrations that followed the various "incidents" leading to the Japanese invasion. Despite the extreme economic difficulties of the early 1930s, Xi'an appears to have rapidly recovered a degree of political vitality; the press, subjected to much censure under the Feng Yuxiang regime, regained some of the variety and creativity it had displayed in the 1920s—and the students again were prone to agitate. Lin Pengxia, for example, witnessed at the time of her visit in December 1932 a "wave of student protest" (*xuechao* 學潮), with students on strike (she does not specify the cause), which reminded her of the patriotic student demonstrations she had joined when she was herself a student at Shanghai and Tianjin.[98]

10.10. *The Militarization of Society under the Guomindang Regime*

Patriotism was indeed the dominant passion in the 1930s, and it became increasingly so as the Japanese intensified their pressure. Since general war seemed the inevitable outcome, patriotic mobilization could only be imbued with a strong military component. From the mid-1930s, and of course even more so after the outbreak of the war, the government made considerable efforts to inculcate a sense of consideration for the military institution in the population, particularly the student population.

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[98] Lin Pengxia, *Xibei xing*, p. 65.

This certainly required some propaganda. During much of the decades discussed here, Xi'an and its hinterland had been in the control of warlords (be they of Beiyang or Sun-Yatsenian persuasion), meaning that its population was used to dealing with a soldiery notorious for its exactions and unruliness. The only exception may have been Feng Yuxiang's army at the time of his military governorship in 1921 and 1922, of which Stilwell (who recognized a well-disciplined troop when he saw one) has left colorful descriptions. At the time of Feng's return to Shaanxi after the 1926 siege, revolutionary discipline and austerity were high on the agenda, but clearly the constraints of supplying the military in a context of extreme poverty made it difficult to avoid any excesses. And it was much worse in the next three years, marked by the rift between Feng and the Nanking government and marred by drought and famine in Northwest China, when in the eyes of many observers the Northwest Army became one of the principal causes of the plight of the Shaanxi population.

Things appear to have changed significantly with the advent of Guomindang power in the fall of 1930, the Nanking military obviously bringing in a style quite different from that of the Beiyang warlords. Only impressions can be offered, to be sure. In a fictionalized account of his stay in Shaanxi from 1929 to 1933, Sigurd Eliassen, a Norwegian engineer who worked for the CIFRC, speaks of the discipline of the "Nanking soldiers" he encountered near Xi'an during the Nationalist capture of Guanzhong in October 1930—"soldiers of quite a different type, in well-fitting yellowish brown uniforms and with wholly modern equipment," led by an officer who "saluted stiffly" and spoke good English.[99] For his part, Průšek says of the officers escorting Governor Shao Lizi when visiting him and his friend at their hotel in Xi'an in 1933: "Jiang Jieshi's men, you can tell [them] from their stern, soldierly comportment and their brown uniforms."[100]

The officers were indeed stern, and the rank and file also were expected to be an example of disciplined conduct to the inhabitants of Xi'an. As for the police, seen everywhere on the photos that have survived, they were the enforcers, all of this being part of the Nationalist regime's effort to "civilize" the citizenry. The civilizing mission of the Guomindang at the time was encapsulated in the directives of the so-called New Life Movement, the actual impact of which on popular behavior remains an object of debate: scholars tend to think it was extremely limited, though not inexistent, but in cities, including Xi'an, it certainly was very much

[99] Sigurd Eliassen, *Dragon Wang's River* (London: Methuen and Company, 1957), p. 86.
[100] Průšek, *My Sister China*, p. 432.

in view. Průšek, again, mentions the "blue notice-boards" on the streets, "covered with white characters instructing the populace on the principles of 'New Life,'" with their combination of "old Confucian morals" and "the European virtues of patriotism and bravery."[101] The contrast with the squalor of the city as he describes it made him take this propaganda very lightly, but Shao Lizi's secretary, who accompanied him, was adamant that it was of the highest importance. Two years later, the British journalist Peter Fleming, who spent a very short time in Xi'an on one of his tours in the East, noted: "I attributed to a recent visit of the Generalissimo and Mme. Chiang, apostles-in-chief of the New Life Movement, the fact that I was twice in one day reprimanded by the police for smoking a pipe in the street."

Once again, this is just a detail, but Fleming also stresses that the city was "full of troops, reasonably well equipped and disciplined, whose presence, here as elsewhere in the north-west, was evidence that Chiang Kai-shek's anti-Communist campaigns have considerably accelerated the spread of Nanking's influence in the remoter provinces." It was not just in times of military campaigns, however: before him, Průšek also remarked that there were soldiers "all around the place." A few months before, Lin Pengxia insisted on the very strict (and rather rough) military controls of the passengers and their luggage at both ends of the bus trip between Tongguan and Xi'an.[102]

Xi'an had always been heavily militarized, but what was new in the 1930s was the effort to convince the populace that the troops were (or should be) a model of orderliness and efficiency for the nation. A significant part of the photographic corpus I have seen is devoted to military parades, army celebrations, and other examples of soldierly discipline. Mass mobilization included more often than not a considerable military presence. An example appears in Figure 10.5, which (according to the caption) represents a mass rally to celebrate the reunion of what was still called the Northwest Army, placed under Yang Hucheng at the time, and Zhang Xueliang's Northeast Army after its transfer to Guanzhong in 1935. The ceremony was taking place in Revolution Park, and one can see the pavilion built by Yu Youren in 1927, from which the organizers addressed the participants.

Another aspect of the militarization of society concerned—as elsewhere in China—education. I have already alluded to the military training

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[101] Průšek, *My Sister China*, p. 436.
[102] Lin Pengxia, *Xibei xing*, pp. 50–51.

of secondary- and normal-school students, of which Hou Hongjian speaks frequently and approvingly. But schoolchildren from primary schools also could be mobilized into the so-called children army (*tongzijun* 童子軍): here again there is no lack of photographs showing hundreds of children—both boys and girls—in uniforms and equipped with mock rifles, carefully arranged in neat ranks under the Nationalist flag. And Hou regarded it as the "right way in the form of education" that all the students walking the streets of Xi'an wear the same uniform—a military uniform for the boys. All of this intensified considerably after the actual beginning of the war, and children continued to be mobilized, as illustrated by an anti-Japanese mass singing rally of the Xi'an schoolchildren (*xiaoxuesheng kangzhan geyonghui* 小學生抗戰歌詠大會) that took place in 1938 in the Bei dajie stadium and was attended by the students of twenty-five primary schools.[103]

The Japanese never attempted to capture Xi'an, but the city suffered greatly from Japanese bombing, which seems to have been particularly intense during the first three years of the war and continued through the end. Mass mobilization was now aiming at self-protection, at increasing vigilance, and at limiting casualties. A thorough system of air warning was set up, and air shelters were dug. As early as June 1936, the authorities had opened an "Air Defense Exhibition" (Fangkong zhanlanhui 防空展覽會) that reportedly was much attended, and a monthly titled *Shaanxi fangkong* 陝西防空 was published, containing a mix of advice, technical articles, essays of anti-Japanese propaganda, poems, and more.[104]

10.11. *Conclusion*

In many ways the Sino-Japanese War cut short the development of Xi'an as I have attempted to sketch it. Recently installed industries were destroyed, notably the Dahua cotton mill, the largest of all, opened in 1936 and bombed in 1939, as well as two other cotton mills just brought from Hankou in 1938; the city was cut off from much of China only a few

[103] Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, p. 51.

[104] See Zong Ming'an, *Xi'an jiushi*, pp. 55–63. Smedley, during her stay in Xi'an in the fall of 1937, does mention one of these Japanese air raids that sent the Xi'an inhabitants to their basements or wherever they could take shelter (*China Fights Back*, p. 26). The Xi'an archives contain much material on the Japanese bombings, for example on the attacks that partially destroyed the Bell and Drum Towers in 1939 (see *Xi'an dang'an shiliao qikan* 西安檔案史料期刊 [Periodical of Historical Documents on Xi'an] 2 [2009] for a list).

years after the railway connection had made its industrial and commercial takeoff possible; and the influx of refugees fleeing war and scarcity caused enormous problems of provisioning. While government investment ensured some further development during the first years of the war, from 1940 onward not much progress could be achieved. Politically, as well, these were dark years, Guomindang repression putting an end to the relative freedom of expression that had existed until 1937.

Yet, the basis for future development had been created. To be sure, Xi'an continued to stagnate during the civil war, when military demands were crushing, and it did not develop much during the first decades of Communist rule, when poverty and underdeveloped infrastructure were still dominant. Yet, at the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War the city had become profoundly different from the backwater it was in the 1920s. As its inhabitants were themselves admitting, Xi'an had become a modern city, endowed, at least to some extent, with the infrastructures, activities, and mentality that the term implies, and with a distinctive personality steeped in its prestigious past and its chaotic history during the first four decades of the twentieth century. Much of this is still present in the thriving megapolis that Xi'an has become in the beginning of the twenty-first century.

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