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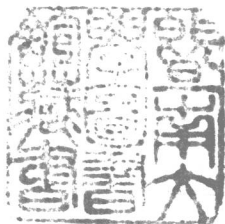
外文书

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THE MANDARINS

THE CIRCULATION OF
ELITES IN CHINA, 1600-1900

BY ROBERT M. MARSH



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THE
MANDARINS

DEDICATED TO
THE REVIVAL OF THE
SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF HISTORY

FOREWORD

THE MOST striking feature of this important work by Dr. Marsh is, I think, that it is a contribution to two fields of scholarship, sinology and sociology. And because it is at once a contribution to two fields, it is a better contribution to each. The historico-empirical data provide an excellent comparative case for a number of areas of specialized sociological interest, notably the interests in the family, formal organization, occupations and professions, and social stratification and mobility. On the other hand, both the explicit theoretical perspectives provided by these sociological fields, and the systematic empirical and statistical requirements of contemporary sociology perhaps deepen the sinologist's understanding of the Ch'ing period in Chinese history and of other related periods as well.

As a sociologist, I cannot, obviously, appraise the precise degree of Dr. Marsh's contribution to sinology. I have been more than assured, however, by specialists in that field with whom I worked conjointly in the supervision of an earlier version of this work that the contribution is considerable. As a sociologist, I can say, however, that Dr. Marsh's book will

be of widespread interest and great value in our field. I have already said that it is important as a comparative case for the fields of the family, formal organization, occupations and professions, and social stratification and mobility. I want to add that its comparative relevance should bring it to the eager attention of nearly all sociologists, since for them historical and other comparative works are functional alternatives to controlled experimentation as a means of testing and refining sociological theory. Regardless of their particular substantive content, all comparative works of scholarship have a certain generalized interest for sociologists who seek to enlarge the scope of systematic theory in their field, and thus increase its essential scientific character.

Dr. Marsh's book, then, is a very readable, substantively engaging, and theoretically creative addition to sinological and sociological knowledge. I enthusiastically commend it to a wide circle of readers.

BERNARD BARBER

*Barnard College
Columbia University*

PREFACE

CHINA HAD its own version of the Horatio Alger myth, whereby the poor but talented boy from a humble family could succeed, by a combination of "pluck and luck," in reaching high social position. As in American society, Chinese values stated that "government ministers and generals are not born in office"; "sons shall not necessarily remain in the same social stratum as their fathers; it is legitimate for anyone to seek to better his station in life." My purpose in this book is to determine the extent to which these "open-class" values were operative in the recruitment and advancement of government officials in traditional China. I shall also attempt to explain the career patterns of these officials—the exalted mandarins—by the use of sociological theory and methods, and with the help of an understanding of Chinese history.

I wish to gratefully acknowledge the contributions which several individuals and institutions have made to my work. My greatest intellectual debts are to my teachers in the Graduate Faculty at Columbia University: William J.

Goode, whose theoretical insights and abiding interest in Chinese social structure have always been a spur to my effort; C. Martin Wilbur, whose analysis of Chinese history is, at so many points, sociologically exciting; and Bernard Barber, whose excellent systematization of the theory and the comparative data in the field of social stratification helped to define some of the central points in the argument of this study.

My obligation to Robert K. Merton is perhaps less apparent in this study than I should like it to be, but it is nonetheless real and pervasive. I am grateful to Robert S. Lynd for his encouragement throughout my graduate study, especially when difficulties confronted me. I should also like to thank Professor L. C. Goodrich for essential bibliographical and other guidance. The staffs of the following Chinese libraries gave generously of their time and have greatly assisted me in my research: Columbia, Harvard, the University of California at Berkeley, the Library of Congress, Tokyo University and the Toyo Bunko, Japan, and the Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

To the Ford Foundation I must express my deep gratitude for financial and other assistance which enabled me to carry out research both in this country and in Taiwan and Japan between 1956 and 1958. The views expressed here are my own, of course, and not necessarily those of the Ford Foundation.

My wife, Susan Han Marsh, has helped me in innumerable ways and deserves much of the credit for the completion of this study.

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ROBERT MORTIMER MARSH

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IN CONTEMPORARY American society there is no one occupation or career which, *far more* than all others, assures one of the greatest rewards the society has to offer. Prestige, influence, wealth, and other rewards are somewhat *dispersed* among several of the professions, government service, business leadership, and politics. In China during the Ch'ing period (seventeenth through nineteenth centuries), on the other hand, the highest worldly rewards of the society were all integrated into *one* ideal career pattern—office in the imperial governmental bureaucracy. “The world cheats those who hold no office,” wrote the T'ang dynasty poet-official, Po Chü-i. The supreme status of officials was based upon several factors: they were closely associated with the Emperor, the “Son of Heaven,” as administrators of his Realm; their prestige and authority were second only to his and to that of a small group of nobility; official appointment and advancement presupposed, at least for many of them, the most extensive preparatory education of any career in the society, an education consisting wholly of the highly