



POWER AND IDENTITY IN THE CHINESE WORLD ORDER

Festschrift in Honour of
Professor Wang Gungwu

Edited by

Billy K. L. So
John Fitzgerald
Huang Jianli
James K. Chin

POWER AND IDENTITY IN THE CHINESE WORLD ORDER

Festschrift in Honour of
Professor Wang Gungwu

Edited by

Billy K. L. So

John Fitzgerald

Huang Jianli

James K. Chin

香港大學出版社

HONG KONG UNIVERSITY PRESS



Hong Kong University Press

14/F Hing Wai Centre
7 Tin Wan Praya Road
Aberdeen
Hong Kong

© Hong Kong University Press 2003

ISBN 962 209 590 9

All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

This volume is published with the support of the University of Hong Kong and the Australian Academy of the Humanities.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Secure On-line Ordering

<http://www.hkupress.org>

Printed and bound by Liang Yu Printing Factory Ltd., Hong Kong, China.

Acknowledgements

This volume honours the life and scholarship of Professor Wang Gungwu, and it is a singular honour for the authors and editors to be associated with him in its production. First and foremost, we would like to express our deep and lasting appreciation to Professor Wang for his support in the preparation and publication of this volume.

We would especially like to thank the authors for their patience and co-operation, and the two external readers whose guidance and suggestions have helped us frame the volume in ways better befitting its subject. We also benefited from valuable assistance and support from Philip Yuen-sang Leung, Tan Chee Peng, and Elizabeth Sinn. Professor Philip Kuhn deserves a special note of appreciation for his untiring help and advice. We must also thank Hong Kong University Press for their solid support in the production of this volume.

Finally, we note with great appreciation that the University of Hong Kong and the Australian Academy of the Humanities have provided financial support to assist the publication of this book.

Billy K. L. So
John Fitzgerald
Huang Jianli
James Chin

November 2002

Contributors

Adrian Chan completed a doctorate at the Australian National University, before teaching political science at the University of New South Wales. His major field was Chinese Political Thought — Contemporary and Classical. He retired early to research and write, and has since completed a study of *Chinese Marxism* (Cassell-Continuum, 2001), and is currently working on another book entitled *Orientalism in Sinology*.

James K. Chin, Assistant Professor at the Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Hong Kong, works in the field of Chinese maritime history and the Chinese overseas diaspora.

Antonia Finnane is Senior Lecturer in history in the Department of History at the University of Melbourne. A graduate of Sydney University (1974), she completed a PhD in Chinese history at the Department of Far Eastern History in Research School of Pacific Studies at the Australian National University 1986. She authored *Far from Where? Jewish Journeys from Shanghai to Australia* (Melbourne University Press, 1999) and co-edited with Anne McLaren, *Dress, Sex and Text in Chinese Culture* (Monash Asia Institute, 1999). She has also published a number of papers on the city of Yangzhou, and is at present working on a history of Chinese dress in the twentieth century.

John Fitzgerald, Professor of Asian Studies at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, works in the field of modern Chinese history. His publications include *Awakening China: Politics, Culture and Class in the Nationalist Revolution* (Stanford University Press, 1997) which was awarded the Joseph Levenson Prize for Twentieth Century China by the Association for Asian Studies in 1998.

Edmund S. K. Fung is Foundation Professor of Asian Studies at the University of Western Sydney. Specializing in history and politics of twentieth-century China, he is the author of *The Military Dimension of the Chinese Revolution* (Australian National University Press, 1980), *The Diplomacy of Imperial Retreat* (Oxford University Press, 1991), and *In Search of Chinese Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Ho Hon-wai was educated at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Australian National University. Currently he is research fellow at the Institute of History and Philology at Academia Sinica in Taiwan. His research and publications are mainly in the field of governmental finance, monetary history and Guangdong gambling operations in late Qing China.

Huang Jianli is Associate Professor in the History Department of the National University of Singapore. His research interests and publications fall into two areas of history: student political activism and local self-government in Republican China from the 1920s to 1940s, and the history of Chinese intellectual and business elites in postwar Singapore.

Jennifer W. Jay is Professor of History and Classics at the University of Alberta, Canada. She studied Tang history at the University of British Columbia and received her PhD in Song and Yuan history at the Australian National University. Her research interests focus on medieval Chinese social and intellectual history, and she has also worked on the Chinese Canadian diaspora and East Asian women's history.

Philip A. Kuhn, Francis Lee Higginson Professor of History at Harvard University, researches Chinese history of the late-imperial and modern periods. His recent writings include *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768* (Harvard University Press, 1990) and *Les Origines de l'Etat Chinois Moderne* (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1999). Currently he is working on a history of Chinese emigration in modern times.

Lee Guan-kin is currently Associate Professor in the Centre for Chinese Language and Culture at the Nanyang Technological University. She completed her PhD at the University of Hong Kong in 1998, specializing in Singapore Chinese intellectuals. Her major research interest is the history of the ethnic Chinese in Singapore and Malaya with respect to personage, ideology, education and culture, subjects on which she has published widely.

She is now focusing on the history of Nanyang University (or Nantah). In 2001, she published a book on the response of Singapore Chinese intellectuals to Eastern and Western cultures, and edited a book, *The Nantah Scholar*.

Jane Lee is Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Policy Research Institute (HKPRI) and an Honorary Research Fellow of the City University of Hong Kong. She graduated from the University of Hong Kong with a first-class honours degree in History and Political Science, obtained a Master of Social Sciences in Public Administration from the same university, and subsequently a PhD degree in Hong Kong's political development from the Australian National University. Prior to joining HKPRI, Dr Lee was Director of the Public Affairs Group at Burson-Marsteller Public Relations Consultancy in Hong Kong. She was a Senior Lecturer at the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong between 1990 and 1992, and was a part-time member of the Hong Kong government's Central Policy Unit. Her two major edited books are *Public Sector Reform in Hong Kong* and *Public Administration in the NICs*.

Lee Kam-keung is Associate Professor in the History Department of Hong Kong Baptist University. He is Chief Editor of the *Journal of the History of Christianity in Modern China* and his publications include *Shusheng Baoguo: Origins of the Reform and Revolution Ideas in Modern China* (2001), *A Regional Study: History of Fujian under the Qing Dynasty* (1996), and *A Brief Report of a Conference on China's 1911 Revolution: Two Important Issues 1961–1982* (1987), as well as journal articles on modern Chinese history.

Terry Narramore lectures in East Asian politics, media and international relations in the School of Government at the University of Tasmania. His doctoral dissertation, completed at the Australian National University, presents a political history of newspaper journalism in Shanghai, 1912–1937.

Ng Chin-keong is Professor of History at the National University of Singapore. He researches the maritime history of southeastern China, on which he published *Trade and society: The Amoy Network on the China coast, 1683–1735* (Singapore University Press, 1983). He is currently working on a monograph on mid-nineteenth-century Fujian.

So Wai-chor is Associate Professor in the School of Arts and Social Sciences at The Open University of Hong Kong. He is the author of *The Kuomintang*

Left in the Nationalist Revolution 1924–1931 (Oxford University Press, 1991), and a number of articles on twentieth-century China. His current research is on Wang Jingwei and the collaboration government.

Billy K. L. So, Professor and Chairman of the Department of History, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, received his PhD from the Australian National University and published mainly on socioeconomic history, legal history and the foreign relations of pre-modern China. His most recent book is *Prosperity, Region, and Institutions of Maritime China: The South Fukien Pattern, 946–1369* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2000). He is currently working on a book project concerning legal thought and values in Song China.

Contents

Acknowledgements	ix
Contributors	xi
Introduction	1
<i>Billy K. L. So</i>	
Prologue	
Wang Gungwu: The Historian in His Times	11
<i>Philip A. Kuhn</i>	
Part I. In Search of Power: Power Restructuring in Modern China	33
1. The Fujianese Revolutionaries, 1895–1911	35
<i>Lee Kam-keung</i>	
2. Nation, Territory and Frontier: Chiang Kai-shek's Realism in Action	65
<i>So Wai-chor</i>	
3. The Kuomintang Peace Mission on the Eve of the Communist Takeover	91
<i>Huang Jianli</i>	
4. The New Positioning of Hong Kong after Reunification with Mainland China	121
<i>Jane Lee</i>	

Part II. In Search of Power: State Power vs. Economy and Society in Modern China	139
5. A Biographical Sketch of Liu Xuexun: The Controversial and Mysterious Guangdong Gambling Farmer, Mandarin-Capitalist and Secret Agent in Modern China <i>Ho Hon-wai</i>	141
6. Illusions of Autonomy? Journalism, Commerce and the State in Republican China <i>Terry Narramore</i>	177
7. Chinese Nationalism and Democracy During the War Period, 1937–1945: A Critique of the <i>Jiuwang–Qimeng</i> Dichotomy <i>Edmund S. K. Fung</i>	201
Part III. In Search of Chineseness: Identity of a Nation	221
8. Negotiating Chinese Identity in Five Dynasties Narratives: From the <i>Old History</i> to the <i>New History</i> <i>Billy K. L. So</i>	223
9. Treaties, Politics and the Limits of Local Diplomacy in Fuzhou in the Early 1850s <i>Ng Chin-keong</i>	239
10. On Being Chinese <i>Adrian Chan</i>	269
Part IV. In Search of Chineseness: Community and Self	289
11. The Returned Overseas Chinese Community in Hong Kong: Some Observations <i>James Chin</i>	291
12. Writing the Chinese Canadian Diaspora: Multiculturalism and Confucian Values <i>Jennifer W. Jay</i>	311

13.	Langxian's 'Siege at Yangzhou': A Post-Ming Reading <i>Antonia Finnane</i>	331
14.	The Slave Who Would Be Equal: The Significance of Liang Qichao's Australian Writings <i>John Fitzgerald</i>	353
Epilogue		
	Wang Gungwu: An Oral History <i>Lee Guan-kin</i>	375
Appendix		
	Selected Publications (1957–2001) by Professor Wang Gungwu	415
Glossary		429
Index		439

Introduction

Billy K. L. So

To honour Professor Wang Gungwu on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, the present fourteen studies were brought together in a volume that underscores, in its variety, issues surrounding the modern Chinese world order. The term 'Chinese world order' may remind students of modern Chinese history of the influential and classic volume, *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations*, edited by the late John King Fairbank over thirty years ago.¹ Professor Wang Gungwu contributed a seminal study of Ming China's relations with Southeast Asia to that volume.

Since then, much has happened in China and elsewhere. The Chinese perception of world order has presumably evolved accordingly. The concept underlying the term remains, for all that, a fundamental and yet ambiguous aspect of China's civilizational inheritance today — the more so as China engages openly with the world and interacts more closely and frequently with other states and civilizations at the start of a new millennium. This volume contributes to an ongoing exploration of the diverse meanings of the Chinese world order through a variety of original studies in modern Chinese history and society, framed around concerns that have animated scholarship since the publication of the Fairbank volume three decades ago.

The Chinese world order is essentially a Chinese perception of the world.² In the 1960s, the overarching concern of scholarship on this subject was China's perception of the world under an imperial system that guided its foreign relations and its policies towards other countries over time. One of the fundamental questions arising from this kind of analysis was why China failed, as a state, to respond positively to the Western impact of the

nineteenth century. By the turn of the twenty-first century, this kind of question might well be broadened to embrace social and cultural dimensions outside the framework of the international relations of the empire. For a start, the term Chinese is no longer confined to citizens of the Chinese state. Professor Wang's concern for Ming relations with Southeast Asia has now been amplified many times over in research into Chinese communities around the world. Chinese communities now have a more assured place in the Chinese world order.

Secondly, the Chinese perception of world order need not be considered homogeneous. In the imperial era, as Benjamin Schwartz pointed out some time ago, there was a diversity of attitudes towards non-Chinese within 'the overriding Chinese perception' of the empire.³ Attempts to enforce conformity of perceptions in the modern era (as in the Cultural Revolution) have not had a lasting effect.⁴ Our task here is, in any case, not to construct an alternative or expanded Chinese world order, past or present, but to explore the complexity of that world order in diverse contexts. To this end, the volume is organized around the two categories of power and identity.

The term 'power', as it appears here, indicates both the power structure of the Chinese state and the power of China in relation to other states, that is, China as a power in itself. The two dimensions are closely interwoven into the history of modern China. On the one hand, shifts in the domestic power structure have often created decisive effects on China's position vis-à-vis other powers or countries. On the other, the changing role of China in the international arena has also produced an enormous impact on political processes within China. A key point of convergence between power in domestic politics and power in world politics has been the sense of crisis and humiliation that has captured the imagination of many in China over the past two centuries — a sense of national crisis arising from international humiliation. This sense of humiliation has arguably been the most powerful driving force behind relentless Chinese efforts to restructure state power in the modern era.⁵

One of the most important focuses of national reconstruction was the effort to construct a constitutional framework for setting central and local governments in order. This constitutes the first theme of our volume (Part I). All four chapters in this section deal with the interaction between central authority and local political concerns in relation to national territories or conflicting forces, in the context of international politics. The second theme (Part II) also concerns power, although in this case power seen from a micro

or social perspective. The three chapters in the second section explore relations between state power on one side, and the economy and society on the other.

Identity is the second major category in the volume.⁶ The issue of Chinese identity has long been a concern of Chinese letters. The more traditional expression of this problem is drawn in the distinction between Chinese and non-Chinese, *huayi zhi bian*. Its modern representation turns on the classification of China as a nation of many nationalities, and of Chinese people as sharing a common cultural identity across divergent cultural contexts. The issue has been further complicated over the last few decades with recognition of previously neglected peripheries of Chinese culture, including Chinese abroad.⁷ The problem of Chinese identity thus constitutes another significant if ambiguous problem — a defining issue in relation to Chinese perceptions of world order in so far as the concept of world order turns on relational identities. The present volume provides empirical and micro studies on the broader issue of Chinese identity from traditional, religious and intellectual perspectives (Part III). Four other chapters investigate specific cases concerning Chinese identity, as community and in relation to questions of self and other in the contexts of gender and equality (Part IV).

The two categories of power and identity correspond with major concerns of Professor Wang Gungwu's scholarship over the past half century. The fruits of his work are succinctly and intimately documented in Professor Philip Kuhn's prologue. In the prologue, Kuhn surveys Professor Wang's writings over a span of fifty years, revealing how his thought developed in response to the historical events of his time, but revealing as well the consistency of certain fundamental concerns over a lifetime of scholarship. At the core of these concerns was a liberal idealism that rejected narrow communalism in any shape or form. In the epilogue, Lee Guan-kin offers an oral history of Professor Wang to help us locate his scholarship in his personal experience. The epilogue is based on nine in-depth interviews conducted with Professor Wang in 1999, ranging over his family background, his childhood and youth in Ipoh, his life and education in China and Britain, and his subsequent ten years of teaching at the University of Malaya, eighteen years in Australia, nine and a half years in the University of Hong Kong, and his directorship of the East Asian Institute in Singapore since 1996. The chapters sandwiched between the prologue and epilogue reflect the work of graduate students taught and advised by Professor Wang over his years in Australia, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Lee Kam-keung examines the revolutionary leaders and their followers who formed the vanguard of the anti-Qing movement in Fujian Province, with a view to evaluating the social character of the Republican Revolution. He argues that after the First Sino-Japanese War, Fujian became the target of political and economic ambitions by Japan, France, Britain, the United States and Germany. In the perception of its inhabitants, the province was under imminent threat of being partitioned by foreign powers. Although the Qing Court as a central government tried to maintain and defend its sovereignty, it failed to withstand foreign encroachment, resulting in further loss of sovereign rights. The Fujianese, like their compatriots elsewhere, gradually lost confidence in the Qing government, which they held responsible for national misfortune and humiliation. The chapter details who, precisely, took up the challenge of revolution in Fujian, and why they did so.

In Chapter 2, So Wai-chor probes the territorial identity of the modern Chinese state under the Chiang Kai-shek regime by examining the concept of 'Chinese territories' in the writings and decisions of the Nationalist (KMT) government from 1928 to 1945. Chiang Kai-shek, the paramount Nationalist leader of the period, inherited with his peers a vague idea that Chinese territories included all regions once ruled by the Manchu dynasty. Taiwan, the Ryukyu Islands and even Korea were, in this sense, territories belonging to China. But Chiang was too much a realist to ignore the fact that China was too weak to defend all these territories by force if confronted by foreign powers. He was prepared to compromise — notably in the case of Outer Mongolia. The author concludes that this realist attitude eventually defined the boundaries of China's national territory, and that Chiang's concept and rationale of 'Chinese territories' retains its relevance today.

The third chapter by Huang Jianli is a detailed examination of the KMT peace mission of April 1949, on the eve of the Chinese Communist takeover of the Mainland. This last major negotiation between the KMT and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) before the founding of the People's Republic of China has hitherto received little scholarly attention, in contrast to the peace talks mediated by Patrick Hurley and George Marshall in 1945–6. It commenced on 1 April and its eventual failure created an impression that the whole exercise was no more than an April Fool's Day joke. Was it merely a prank? If so, who was the perpetrator and who the victim? Huang examines the interplay of forces that set the stage for the peace mission and its eventual collapse, and explores the political dynamics of China on the eve of the Communist takeover.

The next empirical case is a contemporary one, examining Hong Kong's repositioning after reunification with Mainland China in 1997. Jane Lee attempts to explore the history of Hong Kong's positioning in the period over the twelve years of political transition from 1985 to 1997, and over the first two years after reunification with China. She argues that the unique positioning of Hong Kong depends on the capacity of the Hong Kong leadership to maintain a degree of ambivalence within the context of 'One Country, Two Systems' — specifically to position Hong Kong both as a city of China and as a separate and autonomous part of the country. The success of Hong Kong's autonomy is dependent on maintaining a degree of flexibility that allows both sides to make adjustments in response to developments in the domestic and international environments.

In the opening chapter of Part II, Ho Hon-wai addresses the issue of state power and the economy as these are embodied in the life of one individual across the historical divide separating the late Qing and the Republican eras. He threads together available fragments of historical information to reconstruct and uncover the life and career of Liu Xuexun (1855–1935), a colourful, mysterious and somewhat controversial Guangdong gambling operator, tax-farmer, mandarin-capitalist, secret agent and emissary. Ho positions his narrative of Liu Xuexun in the broader context of historical change over the period, seeking to elicit greater understanding of Liu's relations with other political forces over his lifetime.

In Chapter 6, Terry Narramore explores the fragile status of the professions during the Republican period. Taking up the neglected issue of journalism as a profession, Narramore explores the place of professional autonomy within a commercially based press. Journalists, he argues, underestimated the restrictions imposed upon them by commerce and politics. The expansion of the commercial press coincided with the rise of Chinese nationalism and the crisis of Japanese militarism. Historical events conspired to convert the earnest wishes of journalists for professional autonomy into futile dreams.

Edmund S. K. Fung scrutinizes the well-known thesis of Chinese philosopher Li Zehou, that 'anti-imperialist nationalism prevails over enlightenment' (*jiuwang-qimeng*), in the context of nationalism and pressure for democratic reforms in wartime China, from 1937 to 1945. Fung maintains that while this thesis offers insights into the relationship between anti-imperialist nationalism and democracy in pre-Communist China, it is imprecise conceptually and empirically oversimplified. While the thesis is useful for understanding Chinese intellectual and political developments

during the Sino-Japanese war, its dichotomous implication should not be over-stretched, as did Li and those who supported this thesis. To rectify it, Fung argues for modification of such a thesis by taking into account further the attempts of the liberal opposition to reconcile the external imperatives of *jiuwang* with the internal prerequisites of *qimeng*.

Part III deals with the broad issue of Chinese identity. It begins with my own account of identity as reflected in the narratives on the non-Han rulers of the Five Dynasties, written in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. The narratives are drawn from the two standard histories by Xue Juzheng and Ouyang Xiu. In my argument, Chinese identity in the traditional sense is a self-perception that engages constantly in the interactive and hermeneutic perception of others over time under various forms of negotiation. It has been a category open and subject to cultural and political change, and thus to redefinition.

In Ng Chin-keong's chapter, the abstract issue of Chinese identity is addressed in a more specific historical context where Christianity and its interaction with Chinese culture are put to the test. Christian missionaries played a significant role in the process of contact between Qing China and the West. One such encounter that occurred in Fuzhou in the early 1850s was marked by hostile confrontation between the indigenous and the exogenous. Western-language literature has long viewed the affair as a showcase of Chinese anti-foreignism and anti-Christianity. Chinese writings have been critical of the capitulationist attitude among the local Qing officials. Ng argues that both theses oversimplify the complex situation in which different contending forces, domestic and foreign, were at work. He investigates the milieu in which the missionaries lived and worked, and the operation of local diplomacy.

Chinese identity also involves the perception of Chinese by others. Adrian Chan looks at this dimension and provides a detailed critique of Orientalism in Sinology. He analyses a number of texts by selected modern translators, and maintains that these Sinologists retain the evangelical position of the founders of Western Sinology, while imposing a Christian deist cosmogony on the reconstruction of China's culture. In particular, Chan is critical of the Christian Orientalist distortion of Chineseness, which he finds ethnocentric.

The issue of Chinese identity has grown more significant with the rise of overseas Chinese communities around the world. Chinese identity, as cultural identity, also faces challenges when it confronts the realities of cultural contexts in which these communities live and evolve. As the first