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Spider Manchu: Duanfang as Networker and Spindoctor of the Late Qing New Policies, 1901-1911

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by

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The Dissertation of Jun Zhang is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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The dissertation adopts a network approach to explore the New Policy reforms during the late Qing dynasty. It covers the period from 1900 to 1911 and focuses on how provincial officials, with Manchu statesman Duanfang as the central figure, used favors, symbols, personal bonds, and resource exchanges to command the political economy of the reform era. Chapter one elaborates the composition of the upper echelon of the Qing government (Duanfang's major political arena) and how the 1900 Boxer debacle drastically reshaped this arena and facilitated the fast rise to power of a particular group of officials (including Duanfang). Chapter two examines the general mindset of high

officials about reform and introduces the scale and structure of Duanfang's networks. The next two chapters focus on the funding and expenses of the new policy projects. Chapter three uses a case study to illustrate the universal "squeeze" system through which the revenues were levied during the late Qing, as well as the tussle over financial resources between the court and an alliance of provincial governors. Chapter four looks into Duanfang's spending choices during a critical turn of the New Policy Reform, and how he arrived at the cold logic of keeping peasants at a bare subsistence level while prioritizing resources for soldiers, students, and factories. Chapter five demonstrates how Duanfang, being aware of the time-consuming nature of constitutional reform, maneuvered the cultural aspect of his networks to bolster faith in the Qing government. Chapter six begins with Duanfang's abrupt dismissal in 1909, and ends with his tragic death amidst the chaos in 1911. Throughout these two cases, I scrutinize the changing variables in Duanfang's networks and how they were related to the fate of the dynasty.

Introduction
Human Landscape and Reform

What has been done in the field of historical studies concerning reform during the late Qing dynasty? A keyword search of "late Qing" and "reform" in JSTOR brings up 1,792 results. A survey of these results reveals the steps we historians have taken. We started by identifying the main stages of the reform such as the Self-Strengthening Movement (1861–1894), the Hundred Days Reform (1898) and New Policy reforms (1901–1911). Based on this periodization, historians have discussed the discontinuities and continuities among the stages, foreign influences, major leaders and their policies, and major thinkers and their ideas. First we looked at the different aspects of reform—educational, economic, military, legal, and constitutional—and assessed the gains and losses on each front. Next we differentiated the political and social groups of elites: the court, metropolitan and provincial officials, educated elites, merchants, and army cliques. After that subaltern groups and mass movements emerged as hot topics. Research was conducted on the role of peasants, laborers, miners, peddlers, and many occupational groups from the lower end of the society. Then ethnicity came into the picture, followed by gender, nationalism, the frontiers, and notions of "invention" and "translation." Meanwhile, more names of cities, towns, and reformers are being brought up, uncovered with data freshly dug up from the archives.

These solid bodies of research have helped build our understanding of the situation at that time. There were real efforts, accomplishments, and failures. But ultimately, in terms of historical significance, how do we prevent them from devolving into a list of meaningless facts? All those railways and school buildings have by now

been pulled down. The technology of the warships has become obsolete. Trading policies have become quite different due to the shifting political and economic landscape. And the ideas of great thinkers at the turn of the twentieth century—thinkers such as Liang Qichao and Zhang Taiyan, who wrote on ideas of progress and individualism—have become a natural part of our way of thinking today. In short, the reform plans and ideas of the late Qing have all broken up over the course of the past century.

If history is in part intended to provide us with invaluable lessons to help us reflect on and handle present-day affairs, then what should we hold up as the rather durable components of reform? In other words, what factors in late Qing reform continue to play a role on the current political stage? There are at least three shared aspects of reform movements during late Qing and PRC China: 1) the absence of a substantive challenge to the concentration of power in small government circles; 2) the dominance of officials in initiating and implementing reform policies; 3) an opaque decision-making process in officialdom. By "officialdom," I mean both the hierarchy of positions within the state bureaucracy as well as the set of unwritten but widely acknowledged rules that govern these positions. By "official," I mean the mobile group of people who variously occupy these positions.

I therefore focus my study of late Qing reform on the officials, not because their ideas are the most advanced, but because they controlled the political power vital to the process of reform. Specifically, I focus on the social networks and personal webs of reform-minded officials. A reformer is different from a thinker. A reformer can not be alone with his thoughts. To realize his ideas of progress, he has to convince others to find companions and draw a consensus around him. Individual human connections stand

at the intersection between pure ideas and their implementation. We cannot study late Qing reform without looking at the human landscape of officialdom. There is an old saying about "missing the forest for the trees." Research on the plans and ideas of reformers, on the number of schools constructed, or the categories of popular discourse is like describing the trees. To get a whole picture of the forest, however, we need to look at the ground, at the human bonding that enables or deters the reform process.

The understanding of social networks and personal webs is especially important in the Chinese case. Fei Xiaotong, a renowned Chinese sociologist, made an intriguing comparison between Chinese social structure and that of Western nations. He viewed Western societies as bundles of wood. Each piece of wood was tied together in a small bundle, and each bundle was in turn tied within in a larger bundle, all of which eventually constituted a stack. Fei likened these separate bundles to Western organizations or groups, each of which had its own boundaries that clearly defined who was a member and who was not.

By contrast, Fei viewed Chinese society as a series of ripples. The organizational mode of association in Chinese society seemed to him like the circles that appear on the surface of a lake when a rock is thrown into it. Everyone stood at the center of the circles produced by his or her own social influence. These circles were interrelated, with each individual touching different circles at different times and places. In other words, Chinese social structure was a pattern composed of distinctive networks spreading out from the personal connections of each individual. Within this pattern, social relationships

spread out gradually from individual to individual, resulting in an accumulation of personal connections.[1]

Since the articulation of his thesis, more than half a century has passed and Fei's statements may now seem outdated. Yet contemporary Chinese sociologists continue to pay constant attention to the dominant role of social networks (*guanxi*) in the operation of daily life and business activities.[2] Mayfair Yang has argued that such interpersonal *guanxi*, however negatively it may be represented within the official discourse against corruption, is still an unavoidable aspect of Chinese urban life: "Where the state binds persons together into collective state segments, *guanxi* subjects form networks that cut across such divisions."[3] To this day, the interconnectedness of individuals rather than groups remains an influential analytic concept for characterizing Chinese social structure.

However, systematic research on personal networking has been missing in previous historical scholarship. Many network studies in Chinese history have been primarily descriptive, leaving readers in a fog of stories of favor exchange, corruption, or nepotism, without guideposts to make sense of these phenomena. This gap between social network theory and the rather anecdotal research on *guanxi* in Chinese history arises from the difference in source bases. The former draws on large sets of data obtained through personal interviews with employees of corporate giants and statistical

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[1] Fei Xiaotong 费孝通, *Xiangtu Zhongguo* 乡土中国 [From the soil: the foundations of Chinese society] (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1985), 26.

[2] See Mayfair Mei-Hui Yang, *Gifts, Favors, and Banquets: The Art of Social Relationships in China* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Bian Yanjie 边燕杰, *Huaren shehui de diaocha yanjiu: fangfa yu faxian* 华人社会的调查研究: 方法与发现 [A survey on Chinese societies: methods and findings] (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2001); and Gary G. Hamilton, *Business Networks and Economic Developments in East and Southeast Asia* (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Center of Asian Studies, 1991).

[3] Yang, *Gifts, Favors, and Banquets*, 5.

reports. With details like age, position, salary, and duration of workplace interactions, sociologists have been able to fine tune the metrics and generate mathematical models capable of analyzing interpersonal relationships. In the Chinese case, even for contemporary studies, the comprehensiveness and precision of the available data have been constrained by political circumstances. For historians, the scattered nature of the sources makes systematic discussion of networking even more daunting.

Nevertheless, the Duanfang archives (housed in the Chinese First Historical Archives in Beijing), which comprises 979 volumes of Duanfang's correspondence, personal writings, and administrative records, offers us an opportunity for a deeper historical understanding of web building and maneuvering. First, a few words on Duanfang are in order. The Qing dynasty was a minority-ruled dynasty with the Manchu conquerors outnumbered by the Han majority on the scale of 350 to 1. Duanfang was the leading Manchu statesmen during the last decade of the Qing. A sort of Benjamin Franklin of his day, Duanfang was at once an avid tinkerer with new technology, the foremost connoisseur of Chinese antiquities, the drafter of constitutional reform proposals, the leader of the Qing international constitutional delegation, a notoriously effective suppressor of revolutionary uprisings, a diplomat, and a statesman—all rolled into one.

More importantly, Duanfang's political career was intertwined with the New Policy Reform (1902–11) period, which was the third and final stage of late Qing reform. After the Boxer debacle of 1900, in early 1901 the Empress Dowager issued the famous "imperial edict" (*shangyu*) of January 29. In it she called upon all members of the government to "reflect carefully on our present sad state of affairs, and to scrutinize

Chinese and Western governmental system with regard to all dynastic regulations, national administration, official affairs, matters related to people's livelihood, modern schools, system of examination, military organization, and financial administration." In the end, she urged the empire's of governing elites to "weigh what should be kept and what abolished" and "report detailed proposals within two months."[4] Over the next ten years, "new systems" were introduced in the realms of education, the military, the police and prison systms, the law, the judiciary, and constitutional government. Historians have observed the radical intellectual and institutional changes that China experienced during this final decade of the last imperial dynasty. Mary C. Wright, in her 1968 volume, *China in Revolution, The First Phase 1900–1913,* concluded that every one of the major revolutions that took place in China during the twentieth century—the 1911 revolution, the 1919 New Cultural Movement, the 1949 communist victory, and the 1966 Cultural Revolution—stemmed from roots first planted in this decade.[5] In the opinion of contemporary historian Douglas Reynolds, during the 1901–11 decade China did not just experience a "quiet revolution," but rather a "shift from tradition to modernity."[6]

The 1901–11 decade also witnessed Duanfang's fast rise to power and his abrupt demise. Duanfang made his debut as a one-of-a-kind provincial judge during the 1900 Boxer debacle, and subsequently reigned over six provinces—Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Anhui, Jiangxi, and Zhili—as governor or viceroy in the nine years from 1901 to 1909. After being mysteriously dismissed in November 1909, he was reinstated in June 1911

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[4] Douglas R. Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912: The Xinzheng Revolution and Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 13.
[5] Mary C. Wright, " Introduction: The Rising Tide of Change," in *China in Revolution: The First Phase 1900–1913*, ed. Mary C. Wright (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), 63.
[6] Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*, 13.

and died tragically five months later amidst the mutiny of the 1911 revolution. At the forefront in almost every field of the New Policy reforms, Duanfang rose to power just as the reform movement was getting underway, earned an international reputation during the implementation process, and lost his life when the reform came to an end with the collapse of the dynasty.

The Duanfang archives include a complete set of every telegram Duanfang sent and received from 1901 to 1911 (totaling 648 volumes), letters mentioning the amount of gifts and money exchanged, and private memos and notes on his regular expenses. Though only four volumes from this collection have ever been published, these four volumes alone contain more than 400 telegrams. To my knowledge——confirmed by every Chinese studies scholar I have spoken to—this collection has never been consulted for any study published in the English language. The concentration, comprehensiveness, and precision of data on the official and private life of one prominent statesman are unprecedented in Chinese historical studies.

This source base makes it possible for us to go beyond descriptive stories of corruption and nepotism and instead systematically examine the composition and operational principles of a statesman. We can now assess the duration and density of their interactions, calculate the monetary and symbolic value involved in favor exchange, and compare different types and patterns of interpersonal connections.

Moreover, by mapping out this maze of connections, we can shed light on the pivotal role that individual human connections exert on pure ideas and their actual implementation: What sorts of threads did Duanfang string across the social and political scene during the last decade of the Qing? How did he use favors, symbols, personal

bonds, and resource exchanges to command the political economy of the last Qing decade? How did circles of people linked by his web interact with one another? Duanfang ultimately died amidst a revolution that overthrew the dynasty he tried to maintain. How do we explain his apparent "failure," and how did the abrupt end of reform and Duanfang's life test the strength of the threads he had woven together?

Furthermore, the New Policy decade is not just the last decade of the last imperial dynasty, but also a transitional period from empire to nation in China. It marked the beginning of early nation-building efforts as the Chinese empire made the move towards constitutional government. The Qing has been regarded as the most successful conquest dynasty in Chinese history. The conquering Manchus managed to hold on to power for almost three centuries while nearly doubling the size the Chinese empire in the process. The present-day borders of the People's Republic of China largely owe their shape to the Qing conquests. However, new challenges demanded new solutions during the last Qing decade. In Duanfang's time, the *perceived* differences and grievances held by Han revolutionaries made some of them willing to go so far as using suicide bombing tactics to assassinate Manchu officials. And the political elites in Xinjiang, Mongolia, and Tibet were also looking for an opportunity to claim independence. Quandaries and dilemmas of change confronted the Qing rulers and their successors in the republic: How were the subjects of a multiethnic empire to be transformed into modern citizens? What were the grounds for a potential "Chinese" identity? How could foundations of nationhood be constructed in the face of foreign imperialism and bloody ethnic conflicts?

In short, I first seek to start filling the gap between social network theory and the rather anecdotal research on *guanxi* (connections and relationships) by systematically

analyzing Duanfang's networks, picturing its structure in visual form, and defining key variables in numeric terms. Second, with Duanfang as the central figure, I plan to sketch the human landscape of the New Policy reforms—the patterned array of relationships that joined governmental and civilian elites—and hence add a network dimension to the narrative of late Qing history. Third, I would like to place my analysis of the human landscape of late Qing reform within the larger process of the transition from empire to nation, and examine how interactions among upper elites during this decade first began and subsequently proceeded to set the tone of China's political course throughout the twentieth century.

This dissertation is a beginning step toward achieving the above goals. It introduces several major events in Duanfang's career as a governor/viceroy, a reformer, and a networker, with special attention devoted to the flow of resources within his political orbit. The resources at Duanfang's disposal allowed him to initiate and maintain connections, and these connections in turn allowed him to generate additional resources for his reform projects. The focus of this discussion is not on what Duanfang achieved, but on how he used his networks to manipulate outcomes to his advantage, and how he made spending choices for his reform projects based on the resources that existed within his networks.

Chapter one elaborates the composition of the upper echelon of the Qing government (Duanfang's major political arena) and how the 1900 Boxer debacle drastically reshaped this arena and facilitated the fast rise to power of a particular group of officials (including Duanfang). Chapter two examines the general mindset of high officials about reform and introduces the scale and structure of Duanfang's networks.

The next two chapters focus on the funding and expenses of the new policy projects. Chapter three uses a case study to illustrate the universal "squeeze" system through which the revenues were levied during the late Qing, as well as the tussle over financial resources between the court and an alliance of provincial governors. Chapter four looks into Duanfang's spending choices during a critical turn of the New Policy reforms, and how he arrived at the cold logic of keeping peasants at a bare subsistence level while prioritizing resources for soldiers, students, and factories. Chapter five, titled "Constitutional Reform and the Unnamed Publicity Campaign," demonstrates how Duanfang, being aware of the time-consuming nature of constitutional reform, maneuvered the cultural aspect of his networks to bolster faith in the Qing government. Chapter six begins with Duanfang's abrupt dismissal in 1909, and ends with his tragic death amidst the chaos in 1911. Throughout these two cases, I scrutinize the changing variables in Duanfang's networks and how they were related to the fate of the dynasty.

Chapter One
All the Queen's Men: The Upper Echelon of the Qing Government after 1900

This chapter is about the political leadership of China. In order to understand why the last decade of the Qing was a special moment, we need to map out the human landscape of the upper echelon of the government after the Boxer debacle. This map will allow us to see how politics was radically changing in the years from 1900 to 1911.

Part I: Defining the Upper Echelon of the Qing Government

During the Qing dynasty, who ruled China, and who governed China?

The first question is easier to answer. During the Qing dynasty the state of absolute monarchy in China reached its historical high point. The founders of the dynasty had learned the lessons surrounding the fall of the Ming dynasty, which buckled under weak emperors, the dominance of eunuchs and imperial concubines, and military desertion. They paid special attention to these factors as they attempted to solidify the emperor's power both inside and outside the Forbidden City. First of all, within the Forbidden City a number of codes were written to circumscribe the eunuch's political influence: Eunuchs were neither allowed to go outside the city of Peking nor to hold actual positions in the government. The Qianlong emperor abolished the eunuchs' chances to receive education in the Forbidden City, and any officials could be executed on the charge of "conspiring with eunuchs."[7]

[7] Zeng Fanyan 曾凡炎, "Qingdai huanguan zhidu yu wanqing huanguan shijian tanxi" 清代宦官制度与晚清宦官事件探析 [Insights on the eunuch system of the late Qing dynasty], *Guizhou daxue xuebao* 贵州大学报 110 (2001): 84.

Second, similar codes were applied to the imperial concubines and their families. Once selected, these noble women could at best see family members once every decade, and therefore had difficulty plotting directly with anyone outside the Forbidden City. Infant princes and princesses were taken away from their birth mothers and raised by designated servants in a separate division of the Forbidden City. This measure ensured that that relations with their birth mothers were diluted to the greatest extent possible. Chinese scholar Xu Kai has concluded that, out of all the imperial dynasties in Chinese history, the Qing court code was the most systematic and comprehensive.[8] Despite its seeming failure during the late Qing, when Empress Dowager rose to become the de facto ruler, the power mechanism that was designed to guarantee the monarch's exclusive rule in the Forbidden City had functioned rather well throughout most of the dynasty's history.

Outside the Forbidden City, the emperor was backed up not just by the bureaucratic group, but by the banner military force led by the Manchu nobles. Young Manchus from the Upper Three Banners constituted the imperial guard. Fifteen Tartar generals directed the banner garrisons stationed in the frontier provinces. The eight so-called Princes of the Iron Cap (*tiemaozi wang*) and the twenty-four Banner Commanders (*baqi manmeng hanjun dutong*) oversaw national divisions of the banners.[9]

Now let us come to the second question. Who governed China? Scholars have proposed different answers to this question. Beatrice Bartlett regards the Grand Council

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[8] Xu Kai, " Huangdi de enze: qingdai houfei huiniangjiang" 皇帝的恩泽：清代后妃回娘家 [Emperor's benefaction: imperial concubines' chances to visit home in the Qing dynasty], *Zijincheng* 紫禁城 145 (2007): 186.

[9] The eight Iron Capped Princes were: Prince Li, Prince Rui, Prince Yu, Prince Su, Prince Zheng, Prince Zhuang, Prince Shuncheng, and Prince Keqin. For details on the structure of the banner army, see Mark C. Elliot, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 78–89, 128–33, and 138–46.

as the most powerful body of the Qing state apparatus. Grand Councilors, constituted exclusively by Manchu princes and grand secretaries, were handpicked by the emperors as members of the "inner court." Their numbers were never fixed, and, contingent upon the emperor's needs, ranged from two to eight. Bartlett also provides the most comprehensive account to date on how these members of the "inner court" routinely oversaw and intervened in every aspect of the government on behalf of the monarch.[10] Chu Tung-tsu describes the functioning of "one-man government" at the *zhou* and *xian* levels, and reminds us of the combination of formal and informal government at the local level. Bradley W. Reed also follows this route and brings county clerks and runners under the spotlight. These people, according to Reed, "governed China during the Qing dynasty."[11]

The above three scholars have added important dimensions to our understanding of "the system" in imperial China. However, within their strengths are also limitations of sorts: They all emphasize the role of informal parts of the government machine. For instance, the Grand Council was deliberately designed as a flexible "inner court."

Although the formal structure of the government is taken for granted, I feel that a reassessment is needed. I want to return to the basic structure of the government and examine in-depth the ranks of the decision-makers in the civil bureaucracy of China. That is, within the sprawling bureaucracy, who occupied the positions most intimately involved with making and implementing government policy?

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[10] See Beatrice S. Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch'ing China, 1723–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
[11] Bradley W. Reed, *Talons and Teeth: County Clerks and Runners in the Qing Dynasty* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

Let me begin by identifying the top tier within the government. The Qing government ran a nine-rank (*jiupin*) system. Each rank was further divided into four subgroups based on the civil/military divide. For instance, the four subgroups in rank one were: civil first rank (*wenzhi zheng yipin*), civil first rank minus (*wenzhi cong yipin*), military first rank (*wuzhi zheng yipin*) and military first rank minus (*wuzhi cong yipin*). Hence, in general, the officials listed on the government payroll were compartmentalized into thirty-six subgroups. The system of government resembled a pyramid, and the Manchu nobles were also included in the pyramid by holding either substantial or honorary positions.

We can get a sense of the layout of the top part of this pyramid from Table 1.1. In it I list the positions in the first and second rank groups.

Table 1.1: List of the First- and Second-Rank Officials in the Qing State

	Civil Officials		**Military Officials**	
	In Beijing	**Outside Beijing**	**In Beijing**	**Outside Beijing**
First Rank (*zheng yipin*)	1. Grand Preceptor (*taishi*) [H] 2. Grand Tutor (*taifu*) [H] 3. Grand Guardian (*taibao*) [H] 4. Grand Secretary (*neige daxueshi*)		1. Chamberlain of the Imperial Bodyguard (*ling shiwei neidachen*) 2. Superintendent of the Imperial Equipage Department (*zhang luanyiweishi dachen*)	

Table 1.1 Continued:

	Civil Officials		Military Officials	
	In Beijing	**Outside Beijing**	**In Beijing**	**Outside Beijing**
First Rank Minus (*cong yipin*)	1. Junior Preceptor (*shaoshi*) [H] 2. Junior Tutor (*shaofu*) [H] 3. Junior Guardian (*shaobao*) [H] 4. Grand Preceptor of the Heir Apparent (*taizi taishi*) [H] 5. Grand Tutor of the Heir Apparent (*taizi taifu*)[H] 6. Grand Guardian of the Heir Apparent (*taizi taibao*) [H] 7. Assistant Grand Secretary (*xieban daxueshi*) 8. Presidents (*shangshu/dachen* of 9 Ministries [Note2]	1. Viceroys (*zongdu*) of 8 Regions [Note3] 2. Director-General of Grain Transportation (*hedao zongdu*) 3. Director-General of the Conservation of the Yellow River and the Grand Canal (*hedong hedao zongdu*)	1. Banner Commanders of 24 National Divisions of the Banners (*baqi manmeng hanjun dutong*) 2. General Commandant of the Gendarmerie (*tidu jiumen bujun xunbu wuying tongling*)	1. Tartar Generals (*zhufang jiangjun/dutong*) of 15 regions [Note 3] 2. Commanders-in-Chief of Land Forces (*lulu tidu*) and Marine Forces (*shuishi tidu*) of the Green Standard Armies in 19 regions [Note5]
Second Rank (*zheng erpin*)	1. Junior Preceptor of the Heir Apparent (*taizi taishi*) [H] 2. Junior Tutor of the Heir Apparent (*taizi taifu*) [H] 3. Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent (*taizi taibao*) [H] 4. Head of the Imperial Household (*neiwufu zongguan*) 5. Vice Presidents of the 9 Ministries	Governors of 15 provinces [Note 6]	1. Commandants of the Left and Right Wings of the Vanguard Division of Metropolitan Banner Forces (*zuoyouyi qianfengtongling*) 2. Captain-General of the Guards Division of the Metropolitan Banner Forces (*baqi hujun tongling*) 3. Banner Vice-Commander of 24 National Divisions of the Banners (*baqi manmeng hanjun fudutong*) 4. Commissioner of the Imperial Equipage (*luanyishi*) 5. Lieutenant-Generals of the Gendarmerie (*bujun yamen zuoyouyi zongbing*)	1. Brigade Generals of Land Forces (*lulu zongbing*) and Marine Forces (*shuishi zongbing*) of the Green Standard Armies in 19 regions, 83 in total

Table 1.1 Continued:

	Civil Officials		Military Officials	
	In Beijing	**Outside Beijing**	**In Beijing**	**Outside Beijing**
Second Rank Minus (*cong erpin*)	1. Chancellor of the National Academy (*hanlinyuan zhangyuan xueshi*) [H] 2. Chancellor of the Grand Secretariat (*neige xueshi*)	1. Treasurers of 20 regions [Note7] 2. Provincial Judges of 18 regions [Note8]		Colonels of the Green Standard Armies, 137 in total.

Notes:

1. [H] stands for to honorary positions and [C] for concurrent positions.
2. [Head of Ministry] 9 ministries: Civil Appointment, Revenue, Rites, War, Punishment, Works, Dependencies, Foreign Affairs and the Censorate.
3. [Viceroy] 8 regions: Zhili, Liangjiang, Huguang, Liangguang, Shaangan, Sichuan, Minzhe and Yungui.
4. [Tartar General] 15 regions: Shengjing, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Suiyuan, Jiangning, Fuzhou, Hangzhou, Jinzhou, Xi'an, Ningxia, Yilin, Chengdu, Guangzhou, Zhang Jiakou, and Rehe.
5. [Commanders-in-Chiefs of the Green Standard Army] 19 provinces: Zhili 7, Shandong 3, Shanxi 2, Henan 3, Jiangsu 5+2, Anhui 2, Jiangxi 2, Fujian 4, Zhejiang 5+3, Hubei 2, Henan 3, Shaanxi 3, Gansu 5, Xinjiang 3, Sichuan 4, Guangdong 4+4, Guangxi 3, Yunnan 6, Guizhou 4, Changjiang 0+4.
6. [Governor] 15 provinces: Shandong, Shanxi, Henan, Jiangsu, Anhui, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Hubei, Hunan, Shannxi, Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan, Guizhou, Gansu, Xinjiang.
7. [Provincial Treasurer] 20 regions: Zhili, Shandong, Shanxi, Henan, Jiangning, Jiangsu, Anhui, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Fujian, Hubei, Hunan, Shannxi, Gansu, Sichuan, Guangdong, Guanxi, Yunan, Guizhou, Gansu, Xinjiang.
8. [Provincial Judge] 20 regions: Zhili, Shandong, Shanxi, Henan, Jiangsu, Anhui, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Fujian, Hubei, Hunan, Shannxi, Gansu, Sichuan, Guangdong, Guanxi, Yunnan, Guizhou.

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1. Ren Shuanyan 任双燕, "Qingdai zhongyang guojia jiguan wenwu guanyuan pinji yilanbiao" 清代国家机关文武官员品级一览表 [List of the ranks of civil and military officials in the Qing state], in *Qingdai guojia jiguan kaolüe* 清代国家机关考略, ed. Zhang Deze 张德泽 (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2001), 315–16.
2. Zhang Deze 张德泽, ed., *Qingdai guojia jiguan kaolüe* 清代国家机关考略 [The organization of the Qing government] (Beijing: Xueyuan chubanshe, 2001).
3. Wei Hsiu-mei 魏秀梅, *Qingji zhiguan nianbiao* 清季职官年表 [Offices and personnel in the late Ch'ing period: metropolitan officials and high officials in provinces and dependencies, 1796–1911] (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 2002).

To get a more accurate list of the positions most intimately involved with making and implementing government policy, let us further exclude four groups in table 1.1.

First are the honorary positions, which did not hold real job responsibilities. These positions included: Grand Preceptor, Grand Tutor, Grand Guardian, Grand Secretary, Junior Preceptor, Junior Tutor, Junior Guardian, Grand Preceptor of the Heir Apparent, Grand Tutor of the Heir Apparent, Grand Guardian of the Heir Apparent, Junior Preceptor of the Heir Apparent, Junior Tutor of the Heir Apparent, Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent and Chancellor of the National Academy.

Second is the Chancellor of the Grand Secretariat. Though adorned with high official ranks, these chancellors' daily responsibilities were mainly limited to document processing and did not involve strategy planning or decision making. Third is the Head of Imperial Household, a position only responsible for what happened in the Forbidden City. The fourth and the last are the military posts. Although the commandants and generals were as prestigious as the top civil officials, they rarely got involved in affairs outside the military camp.

Hence we narrow our list to only the first and second rank non-honorary civil positions in Beijing and the provinces. The final group is not very big. In Beijing it includes the grand secretaries, presidents and vice presidents of nine ministries. Table 1.2 (see Appendix) lists their job titles and ethnic composition in detail. Except for the Grand Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Dependencies, the eight ministries were written in the code to be headed jointly by Manchu and Han officials. Hence we see a near one-to-one ratio of Manchu to Han.

Table 1.3 (see Appendix) lists the provincial positions in the group. It includes viceroys of nine regions, two director-generals, governors of fifteen provinces, provincial treasurer of twenty regions, and provincial judges of eighteen regions. The total positions

amounted to 61. Unlike the positions located in Beijing, there were no enforced regulations on the ethnic composition of these provincial positions. Thus in theory they were open equally to both Manchu and Han officials. To test this theory, Chinese scholar Li Xizhu has examined the ethnic background of all 118 people who had taken the positions of viceroys or governors in the last decade of the Qing. The statistical result is as below (Table 1.4). It shows that Han viceroys and governors were far more numerous in total number than their Manchu peers.

Table 1.4: The Manchu-Han Distributions of the Viceroys and Governors during the New Policy Reform Era in the Qing dynasty, 1901-1911

	Han	**Manchu**	**Total**
Number	90	28 (17 Manchu bannermen, 5 Mongol bannermen, and 6 Han bannermen)	118
Percentage	76.3%	23.7	100%

Source: Li Xizhu 李细珠, *Qingmo xinzheng shiqi defang dufu de qunti jiegou yu renshi bianqian* 清末新政时期地方督抚的群体结构与人事变迁 [A group analysis of the viceroys and governors during the New Policy Reform period, 1901–1911], in *Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan jindashi yanjiusuo qingnian xueshu luntan 2005 nian juan* 中国社会科学院近代史研究所青年史学论坛 2005 年卷 [Publication of the 2005 Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Institute for Modern History, Young Historian Forum] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2006), 150.

Table 1.5 (see below) combines Table 1.2 and Table 1.3 in a concise form. In total, the upper echelon of the government was constituted by 120 positions, 57 in Beijing and 63 in the provinces. If we think of the Qing government as a machine, then Bartlett would see the Grand Council as the operator standing at the control panel. The 120 positions that I identify as the upper echelon are literally the control panel. People in these positions were the decision makers on national and provincial affairs. This is the primary set of officials that any national leader would have to work with.

Table 1.5: List of Positions in the Upper Echelon of the Government

Rank	Office Location	Title	Total	% in the Whole Group
First Rank (1st R)	Beijing	Grand Secretary	5	4.17%
First Rank Minus (1st RM)	Beijing	Assistant Grand Secretary	2	1.67%
	Beijing	President of the Ministry	18	15.00%
	Province	Viceroy and Director-General	10	8.33%
Second Rank (2nd R)	Beijing	Vice President of the Ministry	32	26.67%
	Province	Governor	15	12.50%
Second Rank Minus (2nd RM)	Province	Provincial Treasurer	20	16.67%
	Province	Provincial Judge	18	15.00%
Total			**120**	**100.00%**

Sources: Tables 1.2 and 1.3.

Let us come back to the question of "who governed China in late Qing," a question first broached at the beginning of this chapter. The answer is: Besides the monarch, 120 officials governed China during the late Qing. To get a sense of how small this group was, we can compare its numbers to the total population.

Scholar Luo Yi has estimated the total population of China on the basis of Ho Ping-ti's book as well as his own research (see Table 1.6). According to his research, in the twelve years from 1900 to 1911, the average population was 419,945,000. The 120 officials occupied 0.0286% of the total population. In other words, each of them outran 3,499,542 people in the empire to get his position.

Table 1.6: Population of China in the Last Years of the Qing Dynasty, 1900-1911

Year	Population		Year	Population		Year	Population		Year	Population
1900	404,918,000		1903	412,988,000		1906	421,219,000		1909	429,615,000
1901	407,590,000		1904	415,714,000		1907	424,000,000		1910	432,450,000
1902	410,280,000		1905	418,458,000		1908	426,798,000		1911	435,304,000
Average (1900-1911)										**419,945,000**

Table 1.6 Continued:
Source: Luo Yi 骆毅, "Qingchao renkou shuzi de zai gusuan" 清朝人口数字的再估算 [An estimation of the national population during the Qing dynasty]," *Jingji kexue* 经济科学 6 (1998): 128.

The upper echelon of the government in late Qing was an extremely exclusive club. When one set his foot in this club, he was at least fifty years old (see Table 1.7, originally composed by Li Xizhu). Seniority does not necessarily produce political caution, but is usually characteristic of it. The group of 120 officials was usually rather stable due to the seniority of its members and their natural desires to keep power. We will discuss this point more in Part III of this chapter and the next chapter.

Table 1.7: Ages of Viceroys and Governors in the Last Decade of the Qing Dynasty

Viceroy	Zhili	Liangjiang	Shangganggan	Minzhe	Huguang	Liangguang	Sichuan	Yungui								**Average**
	51.3	62.4	58.5	66.1	58.6	54.6	59.1	58.5								**58.6**
Governor	Jiangsu	Anhui	Shandong	Shanxi	Henan	Shannxi	Xinjiang	Zhejiang	Jiangxi	Hunan	Guangxi	Guizhou	Hubei	Guangdong	Yunnan	**Average**
	55.5	55.3	53.2	54.1	58.8	54.0	62.2	58.1	58.2	47.0	46.2	60.7	47.5	60.6	50.8	**54.8**

Source: Li, "Qingmo xinzheng shiqi," 155.

Above the 120 top officials stood the monarch. The de facto ruler of China in late Qing was the Empress Dowager Cixi. This woman from the Manchu Yehenara clan outran all men from the imperial clan in the race, ruling China for almost fifty years from 1861 to 1908.

Cixi's rise to power is quite a story. Daughter of a low-ranking Manchu official, she gave birth to Tongzhi, the only male heir of the Xianfeng emperor, who assumed the throne after the Xianfeng emperor died in depression while fleeing British and French troops. But if Xianfeng expected Cixi to be merely a caring mother-mentor of her son, he

was bitterly disappointed. Cixi would soon prove to be the most grasping and ambitious women ever to be made empress dowager in Qing history. On her way back to Beijing, Cixi had already made an alliance with Xianfeng's younger brother Yixing (Prince Gong), dismissed the eight regent ministers whom Xianfeng had designated on his deathbed, and executed three of them. This paved the way to become the regent of her five-year-old son. When her son died of syphilis at the age of nineteen, she forced her pregnant daughter-in-law to commit suicide, since the birth of a son would make Tongzhi's empress, instead of Cixi, the legitimate regent. For Cixi, the only way to maintain her regent status was to make sure the throne was occupied by someone from her son's generation. She then chose the four-year-old son of Prince Chun (Xianfeng's younger brother) as the new emperor, with the reign name Guangxu. In this way Cixi ruled another fourteen years, from 1875 to 1889, with the title Holy Mother Empress Dowager. She held this title until the Guangxu emperor turned eighteen. But the emperor never stepped out of the shadow of his "Holy Mother," and his only try in 1898 led to house arrest for the rest of his life.

Cixi's iron-fisted ruling strategy has been comprehensively examined by several biographers. But one aspect of her personal life was often left out. The Empress Dowager hated her family! A close look at her relatives shows that their blood relationship with the woman who ruled China for half a century brought them neither power, fortune, nor fame. Her father, who was dismissed from the civil service in 1853 (two years after Cixi enter the Forbidden City), was never reinstated. As for her three brothers and two sisters, the eldest brother passed away at an early age, the youngest one never held any official titles, and only the second brother, Guixiang, once held a position

as Deputy Lieutenant-General in the Plain Yellow Banner. The youngest sister was off the record—historians have yet to find out whom she married.[12] The only prominent one was Cixi's old sister, Emperor Guangxu's birth mother, who was married to Prince Chun. However, it is hard to say whether having her four-year-old son taken away and made into a puppet emperor was a blessing or a curse for Cixi's older sister. This woman almost never had a chance to see her only son again for the rest of her life. This older sister died at the early age of 39 with no other children.

Princess Derling, the First Lady-in-Waiting and translator from 1903 to 1905, noted that Cixi had an "eccentric brutality," which was fully expressed in her attitude toward her siblings. They were already barely supporting a decent life on petty wages, but Cixi intended to make them even poorer. Derling recalled: "Empress Dowager punished them by presenting them gifts. Whenever her relatives received her gifts, they had to tip the eunuchs and porters at least 100 taels of silver, which far exceeded the actual values of the gifts. The gift-presenting took place so frequently that eventually her relatives often had to hold the eunuchs there for couple of hours so that they could pawn their jewels or other valuable things for tip money."[13] In particular, Derling noted that Cixi was aware of this situation but never made an effort to intervene. Cixi personally had 30,000 taels of gold (around 3,000,000 taels of silver) and numerous jewels stored in the Forbidden City. But she never gave a cent to her family.[14]

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[12] Chin Ch'eng-i 金承艺, " Cixi taihou de jiazu" 慈禧太后的家族 [The Empresso Dowager Cixi's family members], *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院近代史研究所集刊 4 (May 1973): 96–100.

[13] Derling 德龄, *Huangshi yanyun* 皇室烟云 [Two years in the Forbidden City] (Su zhou: Jiangsu jiaoyu chubanshe, 2006), 57.

[14] Chin Ch'eng-i, " Cixi taihou de jiazu," 108.

In some sense, Cixi only used the women in her family as surrogate moms. She married her sister to Prince Chun and adopted her son as the emperor. Then she married her second brother's daughter (Empress Longyu) to Guangxu, with the clear hope that she could bear an heir to Guangxu. Empress Longyu was yet another a tragic figure; she was pushed to marry a man who never liked her and never touched her. It seems that the purpose of these arranged marriages was not to guarantee fortune or power for her relatives, but rather to mix the Yehenara blood into the imperial line in order to solidify her legitimacy as a regent. For Cixi, they were not close relatives or even allies, but rather breeding stocks.

This seemingly familial affair was related to an important factor behind the political landscape: The ruler of China, who was already faced with a serious legitimacy problem, had no natural allies. As a result, throughout her reign Cixi always had to make close alliances with at least one imperial member by making him head of the Grand Council. At the beginning she cooperated with Prince Gong, Xianfeng's brother, who was excluded from the power circle by the eight regent ministers. When Prince Gong himself aspired to be the sole regent, in the mold of Dorgon, Cixi dismissed him and half of the grand councilors in 1884. After that he was overshadowed by Prince Chun, Emperor Xianfeng's half-brother. However, Prince Chun was born without ambition. When Cixi announced that his six-year-old eldest son would be made emperor, this man "fell to the ground and cried until he fainted." Ever since that moment he shunned politics, content to engage himself in mostly literary activities. When the 1898 coup took place, he instructed his whole family to withdraw from politics, hoping to passively survive the storm. Cixi's new ally was Prince Duan, the son of Xianfeng's cousin. Prince Duan's

son was appointed as the official heir to Emperor Guangxu. If not for the Boxer debacle, Prince Duan's son very likely would have assumed the throne. But he unwisely supported the war in 1900 and together with his son was exiled to Xinjiang when the war was over. The newcomer this time was Prince Qing, the grandson of Xianfeng's uncle, whose story will be told in Part III of this chapter.

The change in Cixi's imperial allies implies another principle behind Cixi's rule—loyalty-based promotion. That was why Prince Gong and Prince Chun were forced out of the picture despite their exceptional capabilities. That was also why Prince Qing, at best a mediocre administrator and notoriously corrupt, stayed on through Cixi's reign after 1900. This principle also extended to both Manchu and Han officials. Zeng Guofan's and Li Hongzhang's abilities were widely accepted, but they were never really close to Cixi due to the fact that they were first promoted by the regent ministers whom Cixi had executed in the 1861 coup.[15]

In contrast, Zhang Zhidong was one of Cixi's leading "byal men." Cixi handpicked him from the Hanlin Academy in 1880 and made him the Governor of Shanxi, where his glorious career started. Zhang also showed his special care for the Empress Dowager in both political and personal ways. For twenty years he had given Cixi the best jades in her collection. For Cixi, jade was not just one kind of precious stone; it was the symbol of her nobility and elegance. Though she had reached the top, she could never wear bright red, the color reserved exclusively for the empress. Cixi was not the kind of person who would settle for the variations of red such as pink, rose, crimson or

[15] Jiang Ming 姜鸣, "Li Hongzhang" 李鸿章, in *Tiangong buyu dui kuqi* 天公不语对枯棋:晚清的政局和人物 [Political Situation and Major Political Figures in Late Qing] (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2006), 33.

burgundy. These "almost-red" colors only reinforced her "almost-empress" status. Jade green, which resonates with "Worthy Lady Orchid," the first title Cixi earned in the Forbidden City, became her favorite color.[16] Zhang Zhidong apparently did not miss this detail. And his efforts paid off. In 1898, Zhang Zhidong had originally been the sponsor of Yang Rui, one of the "Six Gentlemen" publicly executed in the coup. Zhang was also the first patron of Kang Youwei's Society for National Strengthening in Shanghai, supplying them with 3,000 taels of silver from his own pocket. However, while his colleagues who were only remotely related to the reformers (e.g. Chen Baozhen, Governor of Hunan) were dismissed, Cixi left Zhang intact after he wrote the anti-reform piece "Exhortation to Study" (*quanxue pian*).[17]

Besides allying with several key Manchu princes, Cixi was also good at maneuvering the cliques in the court. One parallel example concerned the Yangwu (foreign affairs) Clique and Qingliu (pure current) Clique. The former, represented by Li Hongzhang and Yuan Shikai, was more prone to reform. The latter, composed mainly of metropolitan and provincial censors, served to curb the power of reform officials. Li Hongzhang, Yuan Shikai, Prince Gong and Duanfang were all once impeached by officials from this clique. Even though the impeachments did not necessarily bring immediate results, Cixi still intended to leave enough room for these censors to survive.[18]

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[16] Derling, *Huangshi yanyun*, 151.
[17] Li renkai 黎仁凯, *Zhang Zhidong mufu* 张之洞幕府 [Zhang Zhidong's Mufu] (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 2005), 13–14.
[18] Liu Tizhi 刘体智, "Qingliu yangwu gezhiyiduan" 清流洋务各执一端 [The Qingliu clique and Yangwu Clique stand against each other], in *Yicilu* 异辞录 [Collection of Qing anecdotes] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 91.

The year 1900 was the fortieth year of Cixi's rule. She was in firm control. Guangxu was just a weak young man who was imprisoned on a tiny island in Zhongnanhai. Her majesty had already picked the son of Prince Duan as the heir to the emperor, hence securing another strong ally in the Manchu nobles. Three senior governors—Li Hongzhang, Zhang Zhidong and Liu Kunyi—guarded the South. Ronglu, Cixi's closest non-imperial Manchu, oversaw the Grand Council and the government. As for the 120 officials in the upper echelon of the government, the uneasiness brought by the 1898 coup had faded away, and the chance of another coup was quite slim. These fifty-or-more-year old men were looking at a rather stable future.

Then the 1900 boxer debacle came.

Part II: The Boxer Reshuffle

The boxer episode can be summarized as such: The anti-foreign Boxers, who emerged as a force in northwest Shandong during 1898, expanded dramatically in the spring of 1900 and entered Beijing and Tianjin by May. With the court's partial acquiescence, they tortured and sometimes killed foreigners, especially missionaries, as well as their Chinese converts. The conflicts between Chinese and foreigners rapidly escalated with the Westerners' seizure of the forts at Dagu, the death of the German minister in Beijing, and the Boxers' siege of the foreign-legation areas, all within a month. On June 21, 1900 the empress dowager again declared war on the foreign powers, officially condoning attacks on mission compounds and on foreigners around the country. As a result, an eight-nation alliance of about 20,000 troops entered Beijing on August 14. The same day the empress dowager and the Guangxu Emperor fled to the west,

establishing a temporary capital in Xi'an. The foreign troops plundered Beijing as well as a substantial part of Zhili region, and Li Hongzhang was summoned to Beijing to lead the negotiations. After a formal peace treaty known as the Boxer Protocol was signed in September 1901, the empress dowager and the Guangxi emperor retuned to Beijing in January 1902.[19]

However, this simple and straightforward account does not do justice to the large scale changes that occurred nationwide in the wake of the Boxer disaster. In this part, I will address one dimension of these changes: the biggest political reshuffle of the upper echelon of the government in the history of the late Qing dynasty.

After the boxers entered Beijing in early June and conflicts between Chinese and foreigners escalated rapidly, the western armies seized the forts at Dagu in order to prepare for a troop landing should full-scale war break out. From June 16 to June 19 the court held four profile meetings, discussing whether to fight the Westerners or to negotiate. Zaiyi (Prince Duan), Xu Tong (Grand Secretary) and Gangyi (Assistant Grand Secretary) advocated the immediate declaration of war; Xu Yongyi (President of the Ministry of War), Xu Jingcheng (Vice President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment) and Yuan Chang (Director of the Court of Sacrificial Worship) made plain the likely catastrophic consequences of war. Both sides had a number of high officials as supporters, and the debate became increasingly intense. At one point imperial family members Zaixun and Zairun "almost overturned the desk of the emperor" in their zeal, emotionally requesting a declaration of war in order to avenge previous generations of

[19] This paragraph is a summary of Jonathan D. Spence's account of the Boxer uprising. See Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), 230–33.

humiliation at the hands of the foreign powers. The Guangxu emperor and Xu Jingcheng cried out during court, begging Her Majesty to be cautious.[20]

In the end the court boldly declared an all-out war against the foreign powers and ordered all provincial authorities to organize the Boxers and exterminate foreign invaders. At exactly the same time, a group of provincial leaders in South and East China collaborated to oppose the court, and signed their own peace agreement with the foreign community. They were Li Hongzhang in Guangdong, Liu Kunyi in Jiangsu, Zhang Zhidong in Hubei and Yuan Shikai in Shandong. This move was later referred to by scholars as the "Independent Action of South and East China" (*dongnan hubao*).[21] Because the agonized court was not able to punish these influential officials, it unleashed its anger on those officials in Beijing who opposed the war.

On July 28, the court ordered the execution of Xu Jingcheng and Yuan Chang. The bloodbath of 1900 among the national political elites had officially started.[22] On August 6, Yulu, governor of Zhili, committed suicide as soon as the alliance troops seized Tianjin. On August 11, the court executed three additional pro-negotiation officials: Xu Yongyi, Lishan (President of the Ministry of Revenue) and Lianyuan (Chancellor of the Grand Secretariat). On August 17, Li Bingheng, former viceroy of Sichuan, followed the defeat of his army by committing suicide in Tongzhou, a county near Beijing.

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[20] Bayonglouzhuren 八咏楼主人, *Xixun huiluan shimoji* 西巡回鸾始末记 [Account of the Court's 1900 western tour] (Taibei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1972), 127.
[21] Immanuel C.Y. Hsü, "Late Ch'ing Foreign Relations, 1866–1905," in *The Cambridge History of China*: *Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911*, ed. Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 123.
[22] Jia Sucun 贾熟村, " Yihetuan shiqi de Yuanchang 义和团时期的袁昶 [Yuan Chang in the Boxer movement]," *Binzhou xueyuan xuebao* 滨州学院学报 24, no. 1 (February 2008: 30–31.

On August 15, the Western allied troops broke into Beijing and forced the imperial party to flee. Although court historians later referred to this move euphemistically as the "western tour" (*xi xun*), it was in actuality a panic-stricken flight across districts racked by the Boxer chaos. Cixi and the Guangxu Emperor rushed out of the Forbidden City when the allied foreign troops broke through the palace gates. At that time Cixi wore only a blue cotton summer dress and left her hair uncombed. In their haste, they left not only almost all the concubines and maids behind, but also all articles of daily use. Along the way all the stores and restaurants were closed because of the Boxer chaos. Cixi and Guangxu did not have anything to eat for the entire day until one local magistrate in Zhili presented them with five chicken eggs. Cixi finished three of the five eggs and finally combed her hair in the yamen. The magistrate also offered Cixi the Han-style clothes of his mother to save the Empress Dowager from catching a cold in her thin summer skirt. Emperor Guangxu was not as lucky; he had to borrow clothes from his eldest son.

All the way from Beijing to Taiyuan, they were received in basically the same way, sometimes with even less formality since the local magistrates had already fled and the throne had to share food with the peasants. In Taiyuan, just as they were about to settle down, they were forced to evacuate because of reports that foreign armies had broken through the cities nearby. Not until October 19, more than two months after their initial departure, did the imperial party reach Shaanxi.[23]

The imperial party left Beijing in such a hurry that many officials did not catch the ride and consequently died during the chaos. Xu Tong committed suicide in Beijing

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[23] Bayonglouzhuren, *Xixun luanhui shimoji*, 118–22.

on August 16. Chongqi (President of the Ministry of Revenue) hung himself in Zhili province on August 22. On October 16, Gangyi died of illness in Shanxi province due to poor medical care. In November the allied armies executed Tingyong, acting governor of Zhili.

One day after the arrival of the imperial party in Xi'an, the foreign ambassadors sent the court a joint diplomatic note, requesting the severe punishment of eleven top officials who were responsible for the war. In order to pacify the foreign powers, the court began another round of purges in early 1901. Zaixun (Prince Zhuang) was ordered to commit suicide on February 21, 1900; four days later Zhao Shuqiao, Deputy Grand Councilor, met with the same fate. Yuxian (Governor of Shanxi) was executed in Lanzhou on February 22; four days later the same punishment was imposed on Qixiu (President of the Ministry of Rites) and Xu Chengyu (Vice-President of the Ministry of Civil Punishment). The court also dismissed Dong Fuxiang (General Commandant of the Gendarmerie) and exiled Zaiyi to Xinjiang.[24]

The cases listed above include only a small portion of the political reshuffle of 1900. In order to get a complete picture of what happened in the upper echelon of the government, I will examine the list of officials in each of the 120 positions, compare the incumbents in 1900 and 1901, count the death toll and number of dismissed officials, calculate the instances of personnel change, and record the reasons behind these changes. The results can be seen in Table 1.8 (see Appendix).

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[24] Jia, "Yihetuan shiqi de Yuanchang," 30–31.

Based on the information in Table 1.8, we can compile a series of sub-tables. The first one concerns the frequency of personnel changes (see Table 1.9 below). As we can see, only 26 out of the 118 officials remained in their positions during the boxer debacle. The turnover rate in the upper echelon of the government was as high as 78.33%! In 20.83% of the positions, personnel changes occurred twice or more; in 17.50% of the positions, changes occurred three times or more. In 5% of the positions, a new incumbent showed up every five to six months.

Table 1.9: Number of Personnel Changes in the Upper Echelon of the Government, 1900-1901

Changes	No Change	Once	Twice	Three Times	Four Times	Five Times+	Total
Positions	26	48	25	15	4	2	120
Percentage	21.67%	40.00%	20.83%	12.50%	3.33%	1.67%	100%

Source: Table 1.8

Frequency of personnel change during the Boxer debacle, though high, was still a rather mild aspect of the overall Boxer reshuffle. Death constituted the most severe change. Every war has its casualties. In the boxer case, 26 out of the 120 officials died, making the death rate 21.67%. Among the 26 officials who died, fourteen died during the chaos, five voluntarily or involuntarily took their own lives, and seven were sliced in humiliating fashion in public.

Table 1.10: Death Toll in the Upper Echelon of the Government, 1900-1901

	Died of Illness or Exhaustion	Died of Suicide	Died of Execution	Died in Total
Incumbent Official	14	5	7	26
% in the Death Toll	53.85%	19.23%	26.92%	100.00%
% in the 120 Group	11.67%	4.17%	5.83%	21.67%

Source: Table 1.8

These 26 officials were not the only ones who were wiped off of the political government map. Twenty officials in total were permanently removed from their

positions (See Table 1.11 below). In other words, among the 120 top officials, one out of every ten was fired outright, and one out of every twenty was forced to resign or retire.

Table 1.11: Dismissal Toll in the Upper Echelon of the Government, 1900-1901

	Fired Outright	Forced to Resign or to Retire	Dismissed in Total
Incumbent Official	13	7	20
% in the Dismissal Toll	65%	35%	100%
% in the 120 Group	10.83%	5.83%	16.67%

Source: Table 1.8

Amid this political earthquake, which zone was safer and more stable: the central government or the provincial government? Table 1.12 (see below) compares the turnover rate, death rate and dismissal rate between the central officials and provincial officials. It shows that officials in Beijing and outside Beijing had roughly the same chance of changing positions as well as the same chance of being dismissed. However, a central official was two times more likely to die than his provincial peer. This might be because there were more central officials directly involved with the court's decision to declare war.

Table 1.12: Comparison of Personnel Changes in Beijing and the Provinces in the Upper Echelon of the Government, 1900-1901

	Turnover		Death		Dismissal	
	Toll	Percentage	Toll	Percentage	Toll	Percentage
Central Officials (57 in total)	44	77.20%	18	31.58%	9	17.65%
Province Officials (63 in total)	51	81.00%	8	12.70%	11	17.46%

Source: Table 1.8

In sum, we can use the following terms to describe how the Boxer debacle affected the political careers of officials in the upper echelon of the Qing government. In 1900, each of these 120 official had outran 3.5 million of his contemporaries in the race for power and had climbed to the top of the top. He was in his fifties, looking to enjoy another one or two decades of being a powerful and respected man before retiring. Then

the Boxers came to the cities, the court declared war, and the foreigners came with cannons and guns. The political world of these 120 officials swirled upside down. In the following year, these officials had a 78.33% chance of changing his post and a 17.50% chance of changing more than two times.

To make things worse, within this process of change, there was a 38.34% possibility that he would be permanently removed from his position, losing everything he had been struggling to attain for a lifetime, and having no chance to start over again. That was still not the worst part. His chance of dying was as high as 21.67%. He might be worn down to death, forced to commit suicide, or executed in public before a big audience. If he happened to be a central official, the possibility of death rose to one-third.

Should he survive, against all odds, until the end of 1901, he would find that the whole upper echelon of the government had changed face. Many of his old friends were gone, and their positions were now filled by a host of newcomers boosted by war-tested loyalty and amazing luck. The Boxer debacle, which led to the biggest political reshuffle in late Qing history, also served as the launching point for the careers of many other people. Their stories will be told in the next part.

Part III: The Post-Boxer Human Landscape

This part will survey the political landscape of the court in the last decade of the Qing dynasty. Historians often pay more attention to an official's political writings and acts than to his personality and ability. However, while the boundary of an official's political stand was often blurred by family relationships and shifting political circumstances, his personality and ability, shaped by genes and early personal experience,

was much more predictable. Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration was luck, or in other words, fortuitous chance. As Nicholas Rescher, president of the American Philosophical Association, said, "It is crucially important to recognize the role of luck in human affairs—for good and ill alike. For otherwise one succumbs to the gross fallacy of assimilating people's character to their actual lot of life."[25] In the last several chaotic decades of the Qing dynasty, fortuitous chance was not necessarily the cause of one's situation, but such luck nonetheless held a big influence over it.

From 1902 until the abdication of the Puyi emperor in 1911, the Grand Council deliberated in what would later become known as the "Yikuang Decade." Yikuang (Prince Qing, 1838-1917) headed the Grand Council during these nine years. His superior position in the court has been frequently cited by later scholars as a prime example of the decadence of the late Qing government. Yikuang and his son, Zaizhen, head of the Ministry of Commerce, were notoriously corrupt. Though born a member of the imperial clan, Yikuang grew up in poverty. When he finally became powerful in his fifties, he was determined to guarantee his children and grandchildren a better material life. During his Grand Council years, he had been consistently and systematically cashing out the positions at his disposal. In 1904 alone his savings at HSBC amounted to 1.2 millions taels of silver, and his extravagant lifestyle was subsequently recounted in the *Draft to a History of Qing* (*Qingshigao*).[26]

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[25] Nicholas Rescher, "Presidential Address," in *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 64, no. 3 (November 1990): 5–19.

[26] He Shuhong 何树宏, " Yikuang yu wanqing zhengju" 奕劻与晚清政局 [Yikuang and the political situation in the late Qing dynasty]," *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 2 (2002): 118.

Scholars often attribute Cixi's tolerance of Yikuang to her unsound judgment or personality flaws. But if we place ourselves in her position, we may be able to find her decision more understandable. As stated in Part I, as a woman, the Empress Dowager had to make close alliances with at least one imperial member. She had family relations with only two Manchu princes—Yihuang (Prince Chun, 1840-1891), husband of Cixi's younger sister, and Zaiyi (Prince Duan, 1856-1922), husband of Cixi's niece. However, Yihuang passed away in 1891, and Zaiyi was exiled to Xinjiang due to his major role in pushing the Boxer war. Among the remaining available Manchu princes, Yikuang stood out as the only one who was both senior enough and held enough years of government service. Just as a coin had two sides, Yikuang's yearning for financial security shaped his political philosophy: He cherished the lives of his family members, and would not risk them for any aggressive political moves. This naturally appeased the Empress Dowager. After all, she was already sixty-seven, and could not afford the prospect of yet another *coup d'etat*.

The Empress Dowager's choice of Yikuang was also precipitated by urgent needs. Four out of the six grand secretaries died directly or indirectly because of the debacle, including the empire's two finest officials—Li Hongzhang (1823-1901) and Ronglu (1836-1903).

Li Hongzhang's candle finally burned out in the exhausting year-long negotiation for the Boxer Protocol. He was in the warm and peaceful Guangzhou when the bloodbath swept over north China. But because he was the only official in the empire capable of handling the postwar negotiations, he had no choice but to drag his seventy-seven-year-old body back to Beijing. A student of the College of Languages

(*tongwenguan*) wrote down how the attitude of ordinary Beijing residents toward Li Hongzhang shifted drastically in 1900:

> When the Boxers were at their peak, Li Hongzhang was in Guangdong. Residents in Beijing called him a traitor and wished to execute him. After the foreign armies broke into Beijing, residents knew then that he was the only one capable of handling the chaos, and hence eagerly waited for his assistance. When he arrived, everyone in Beijing, especially the banner man whose government subsidy was interrupted by the war, celebrated with joy. In the restaurants, whenever someone brought up the topic of Li's arrival, the host would pleasantly call on the waiter to "bring another bottle." They still called him a traitor, but admitted that he was a "necessary traitor."[27]

Li arrived at Beijing on October 11, 1900. In the next twelve months, he labored through hundreds of meetings with representatives from eleven countries, enduring daily humiliation. On October 30, 1901, he started to cough blood, fell into a coma, and died on November 7, 1901. The empire thus lost its most famous reformer.

The negotiation of the Boxer Protocol also resulted in the death of Ronglu. Ronglu (1836-1903), maternal grandfather of the future Puyi emperor, was possibly the only official in the court whom Cixi really trusted. When Cixi carried out the coup d'etat after her husband's death in 1861, Ronglu, then Head of Imperial Household, stood firmly at her side. He backed her up again in the 1898 *coup d'etat*, with his soldiers imprisoning the Guangxu emperor and the emperor's followers. During the 1900 Boxer debacle, when Cixi fled to Xi'an, he stayed behind in Beijing and arranged the negotiation. Rumor had it that he set the bottom line as such: As long as the foreigners

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[27] Quote from Qi Rushan, a famous Peking opera writer who wrote most of Mei Lanfang's plays. Qi studied in the College of Languages in the 1900s. See Jiang Ming, *Tiangong buyu dui kuqi*, 37.

allowed the Empress Dowager to stay as the de facto ruler, everything else would be negotiable.[28]

Ronglu's capabilities were as indisputable as his loyalty to Cixi. His grandfather, assistant Imperial Agent at Xinjiang, died on the field of battle. His father and uncle, both third rank military officers, fought to their deaths during the suppression of the Taiping rebellion. The torch was thus passed to him. He joined the battle with the Nian rebels and acted like his father's son, earning the highest military honor for his bravery in 1871. Then he became a civil official, spent the next twenty-five years heading the Ministry of Industry, Ministry of the Censorate, Imperial Household, Ministry of Revenue, and Ministry of War, respectively. He entered the Grand Council in 1896, and acted as Cixi's eyes and hands in the government ever since. Ronglu also built up massive political connections. He married his two sisters into the families of two grand councilors, and his two daughters with two Manchu princes (one of them was Prince Chun Zaifeng). He made Li Hongzao, mentor of two emperors and leader of the Qingliu clique, his sworn brother, and maintained close relationships with major viceroys such as Liu Kunyi and Zhang Zhidong.

For Cixi, Ronglu was not her yes-man, but her best man. She could trust him to make sound judgments, even if he went against her wishes. When he could not convince her to drop the idea of declaring war against the foreign powers, he took up the task of besieging the embassies and managed to forestall the actual attacks for several weeks. When the court ordered him to bombard the British embassy, he arranged for a deliberate

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[28] Zhang Yufen 张玉芬, "Cixi yu Ronglu" 慈禧与荣禄 [The Empress Dowager Cixi and Grand Councilor Ronglu], *Zijincheng* 4 (1994): 18.

high shot and the shell flew over the buildings, leaving them intact. Meanwhile, he exchanged telegrams frequently with Li Hongzhang, Liu Kunyi, and Zhang Zhidong, encouraging their intentions to sign their own peace agreements with the foreign powers.[29] Finally, when Cixi fled, he stayed in Beijing to face the fury of the foreign armies, put the situation under control, and prepare for her return in 1902.

The toil in 1900 and 1901 wore him down. Ronglu fell ill shortly after Cixi returned to Beijing. He died a year after. Her Majesty thanked her old friend in various ways. She bestowed upon him numerous laudatory titles, and conferred the highest hereditary position upon his son, who had neither imperial blood nor a valorous war record. Six years later she would make his grandson the emperor. But all these efforts can not make up for the fact that the seventy-year-old Empress Dowager had lost the leading Manchu noble man who had always acted in her best interests.

The shoes left by Li and Ronglu were too big to fill. None of the four new grand councilors—Yikuang, Wang Wenshao (1830-1908), Lu Chuanlin (1836-1910), and Qu Hongji (1850-1918)—held Li's vision of empire or Ronglu's solid connections. Yikuang was too concerned about his personal welfare; Wang was a firm believer in "no action" (*wuwei*), which I will explain in detail in the next chapter; Lu Chuanlin used to be a valiant general, but had fought enough good fights and looked forward to peaceful retirement; Qu Hongji was the youngest and most passionate, but his personality flaw of being "excessively righteous" also meant that he fell a little short of the fullest leader stature. In the last years of the dynasty, grand councilors had to bond with top provincial

[29] Zhang, "Cixi yu Ronglu," 19.

officials in order to carry out major projects. On most occasions, the councilors merely set the handbook of propriety, and the stimulus to improvement had to come from below. I will elaborate this point in the next chapter.

In some sense, two star viceroys—Yuan Shikai (1859-1916) in north China and Zhang Zhidong (1837-1909) in South China—jointly took up the task left by Li Hongzhang. Yuan succeeded Li Hongzhang as the Viceroy of Zhili after Li's death in 1902. In the seven years from 1895 to 1902, Yuan rose from a fourth-rank military officer to imperial commissioner to Korea, provincial treasurer of Zhili, governor of Shandong, and finally to the most powerful official outside the capital. Outstanding savior or treacherous traitor? His contemporaries and later scholars could never agree on what to say about him. Yuan Shikai might be the second most intriguing figure in modern Chinese history; the first prize goes to Chairman Mao.

With an egg-shaped head, short neck and limbs, and a chubby belly, Yuan Shikai resembled a standing *maotai* bottle, far away from the image of a martial general. He also looked nothing like a literati, and he was never one—he bought his candidacy for the civil service exam and never passed beyond the provincial level. But both Li Hongzhang and Ronglu picked him as their wingman. Ronglu appointed him as the commander of the first New Army in 1895 during his incumbency as the Head of the Ministry of War.[30] Li Hongzhang recommended Yuan to take up his post at his death bed.[31] And the Empress Dowager trusted their judgements.

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[30] "Ronglu" in *Qing shigao* 清史稿 [Draft of Qing history], vol. 437, ed. Zhao Erxun et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006), *liezhuan* 224, 3376.

[31] Yuan Jingxue 袁静雪, "Wo de fuqin Yuan Shikai" 我的父亲袁世凯 [My father Yuan Shikai]," in *Wenshi ziliao xuan* 文史资料选辑 [Selected collection of historical materials], vol. 74, ed. Zhongguo

Wang Xitong (1865-1938), founding father of the Chinese cement industry, summarized the "secret" of Yuan's success as such:

> Yuan had a stronger shoulder than anyone else at his time. No matter how big the burden was, he always bore it by himself, not expecting to put it on another person's shoulder. When he achieved something, he would celebrate as if it was a group achievement, spreading money and jobs to people around him. When he failed a task, he would take all the blame and never drag other people into the mess. Precisely because of this, people competed to be in his team and were even willing to die for him.[32]

In other words, the strength of Yuan's personality lay in his "knightly spirit." He had the hard bones of Napoleon, and the big heart of Liu Bang (founder of the Han Dynasty). In 1902, he was placed in the most powerful position outside the capital, being entrusted with the task of guarding Beijing and training a national army. The knight was in his place, and he was bound to make history.

While Yuan Shikai was a newcomer in the viceroy club, Zhang Zhidong had been in it for sixteen years. Born in 1837, Zhang was eleven years younger than Li Hongzhang and was also a generation younger in terms of political credentials. Zhang's academic and literary record was impeccable. He established himself as a genius before ten, challenged the highest level of the civil service exam (*dianshi*) at the age of twenty-seven, and ranked third (*tanhua*) out of all examinees. In the third year of the Tongzhi reign, Zhang Zhidong became a junior censor in the Ministry of Censorate. While slowly climbing up the administrative ladder, his reputation as a critical and outspoken literati had spread around the capital. As a natural result, he became a member of the "disinterested scholar" (*qingliu*) clique, following the lead of Li Hongzao, grand

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renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi quanguo weishi ziliao weiyuanhui 中国人民政治协商会议全国委员会文史资料委员会 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1993), 130.

[32] Wang Xitong 王锡彤, *Yizhai zishu* 抑斋自述 [Autobiography of Wang Xitong] (Zhengzhou: Henan daxue chubanshe, 2001), 385.

councilor and Li Hongzhang's lifelong opponent. However, by 1881, Zhang had offended enough high-rank officials—including Zeng Guofan's son—that Li Hongzao had to move him out of the center of the storm in Beijing in order to protect him. Starting at the age of forty-four, Zhang Zhidong began his twenty-six years of experience as a provincial official, as Governor of Shanxi (1882-1884), Viceroy of Liangguang (1884-1889), Viceroy of Liangjiang (1894-1896), and Viceroy of Huguang (1889-1894, 1896-1907).

Zhang Zhidong had quite a look: hollow-eyed, long white eyebrows and a beard. He looked like the Chinese version of Gandalf from the Lord of the Rings. Some of his contemporaries noted that Zhang reminded them of the mythical wisdom ape, who had lived an almost infinite life.[33] Zhang Zhidong was far from ordinary; his learning and determination could easily fill people with awe. He often preferred to sleep from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and processed documents and met his staff from late in the night until sunrise.[34] If Zhang Jian was the "king of Nantong," Zhang Zhidong could be called the "lord of Hubei." He spent sixteen years changing Hubei province in every respect. Before Zhang came, Hubei, with its favorable geographic position, was the transportation and trade hub in inland China. With Zhang's decade-long effort, starting from the 1890s, Hubei had been at the front of every reform program.

Zhang's knowledge on industry and education equaled that of Li Hongzhang, but he was less experienced in handling foreign and military affairs. After the death of both Li Hongzhang and Liu Kunyi in 1902, Zhang officially became the most senior and

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[33] Li, *Zhang Zhidong mufu*, 43.
[34] Ibid.

experienced provincial official in the empire. In the last decade of the Qing, Zhang and his various reform projects in Hubei attracted able men from both within and without China. I will discuss this in detail in the next chapter.

Besides the above three major players in the first rank of the government, two star governors—Duanfang (1861-1911) and Cen Chunxuan (1861-1933)—also emerged on the court map. Both of them rose as a result of the spectacular loyalty they showed to Her Majesty during the most chaotic point of the Boxer debacle, and both of them remained her favorites until her death.

Cen Chunxuan was the third eldest son of the famous general Cen Yuying, who was known for his successful suppression of the Muslim Rebellion in Yunnan during the Tongzhi reign. Cen Yuying spent most of his career governing the provinces, and the posts he took included the Governor of Yunnan, Governor of Guizhou, Governor of Fujian and Viceroy of Yungui. When Cen Chunxuan reached sixteen, his father sent him to live in Beijing to obtain a better education. To his father's dismay, instead of studying, the sixteen-year-old Cen Chunxuan ended up spending most of his time having fun: he held banquets, visited brothels and rode fast horses around the city. "He [young Cen Chunxuan] was keenly aware of the prestigious family background and exploited it to the extreme, strutting and swaggering like a conquering hero."[35] According to scholar Xu Yishi, Cen Chunxuan was rated as one of "Top Three Most Spoiled Rich Kids" in the city. Ruicheng, the future Hubei governor, was also one of these three.[36]

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[35] Xu Yishi 徐一士, "Cen Chunxuan" 岑春煊, in *Yishi leigao, yishi tanhui* 一士類稿，一士談薈 [Collected writings of Xu Yishi] (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1983), 437.

[36] The other two are Ruicheng and Lao Ziqiao. See Yang Lizhu 杨丽祝, *Wanqing shiqi de Cen Chunxuan* 晚清时期的岑春煊 [Cen Chunxuan during the late Qing dynasty] (master's thesis, National Taiwan University, 1985), 5–6.

However, after four or five years of complete hedonism, Cen Chunxuan redirected his energy into more serious work. He participated in the civil service exam in 1885, got a *juren* degree, and entered the government service. During the next decade, he rose from a department director in the Ministry of Industry (*gongbu langzhong*), sub-director of the Banqueting Court (*guanglushi shaoqing*), and director of the Court of Judicature and Revision (*dalisi qing*). In 1898, during an imperial audience, he impressed the Guangxu emperor by his vision on economic reform. The emperor decided to send Cen to the province to carry out his projects. At the age of thirty-seven, Cen Chunxuan was appointed the provincial treasurer of Guangdong.

Cen made his debut as a provincial treasurer by impeaching a Viceroy! Less than two months after arriving in Guangdong, he urged Viceroy Tan Zhonglin (1822-1905) to dismiss Tan's close subordinate Wang Cunshan, head of the Bureau of Commerce, whom Cen considered to be abusing his power. Cen was almost forty years younger than Tan, and was at least three generations junior in terms of political credentials. Yet he dared to charge Tan on grounds of incompetence. Grand Councilor Ronglu was quite impressed. Hence when the court started punishing the followers of Guangxu emperor in 1898, Ronglu let Cen off the hook and only transferred him to a seemingly equal but actually less prestigious position—the provincial treasurer of Gansu.[37]

Cen arrived at Gansu in 1899. One year later, his big turning point came. As soon as he heard that the foreign troops had broken into Tianjin, he pressured Viceroy Wei Guangtao to send troops to protect the emperor and empress dowager. When Wei

[37] Ibid., 8.

did not act quickly enough, Cen volunteered to lead the vanguard militia. After four days of fast riding, he and his team caught up with the imperial entourage.

Cen Chunxuan's appearance in front of the Empress Dowager was quite dramatic. In the late afternoon of the third day of the "tour," rain was pouring down and the eunuchs and guards were dragging the carriages through mud. Suddenly a group of armed men charged in on their big horses. While everyone was scared out of their wits, the leader of the armed men jumped off of his horse, knelt down before the imperial carriages, cried out his official title and asked the Empress Dowager to pardon his late arrival.[38]

A closer look at this rescuer could reveal some details that downgraded his heroic acts. Cen Chunxuan, though son of the famous general Cen Yuying, did not have his own troops as the provincial treasurer of Gansu. Those armed men led by him were mostly peasants and militiaman that he had recruited on the ground. After a long trip, less than fifty of them showed up in front of the imperial entourage, and their weapons were swords and spears. It must have been amusing for Cixi when she heard that these fifty peasant soldiers and their leader claimed to protect her from the foreigner gunners.[39]

But what mattered was that Cixi was touched by Cen's loyalty. When the foreign troops embarked on the shores of Tianjin, the court sent edicts to governors and generals around the country, ordering them to send troops to Beijing. However, except for the banner troops in Beijing and Zhili, no other forces showed up. Yuan Shikai had joined the "Independent Action of South and East China" and was therefore holding his soldiers

[38] Ibid., 14.

in Shandong. Other northern governors had been dragging their feet in order to avoid sacrificing their military forces in vain. Cen Chunxuan was officially the first one to show up. His very appearance boosted the Empress Dowager's self-confidence. From then on Cen Chunxuan became her majesty's lionhearted Zhuang (Cen was an ethnic Zhuang). In the next eight years, he was promoted governor of Shaanxi, then of Shanxi, then of Guangdong, then Viceroy of Yunnan, then of Sichuan, and then of Liangguang.

Cixi's encounter with Duanfang was another case. On October 19, when the weary and bedraggled imperial party arrived at the Huang River, the boundary between Shanxi and Shaanxi, what greeted them was a sight for sore eyes. Three huge ships decorated with brocade carried them across the waters. When they disembarked on the other side, Cixi and Guangxu were welcomed by cheers of "Long live the emperor" from thousands of Shaanxi residents. Duanfang, deputy governor and provincial judge of Shaanxi, handled all of these proceedings meticulously. He then guided the Empress Dowager to a temporary dwelling palace in Xi'an, which was like a miniature Forbidden City, and arranged for a sumptuous imperial-style dinner after that.[40] The peaceful situation in Shaanxi must have seemed like a godsend to Cixi and the imperial court after months of fleeing from Beijing to Xi'an. The imperial court finally decided to settle down in Xi'an, where they would end up staying for almost a year until it returned to Beijing on October 6, 1901.[41]

Duanfang was born in the same year as Cen Chunxuan, and shared a similar family background and early experiences. Duanfang came from an upper-class Manchu

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[40] Bayonglouzhuren, *Xixun huiluan shimoji*, 118–22.

[41] Changguchuanxiongtailang 长谷川雄太郎, "Huiluan riji" 回鸾日记 [Diary of the 1900 western tour], in *Yihetuan wenxian huibian* 义和团文献汇编 [Collected archives of the Boxer movement], vol. 3, ed. Yang Jialuo 杨家骆 (Taibei: Dingwen shuju, 1973), 491.

family whose members had been serving in the government for generations. His father was a magistrate in Zhili, and his uncle a tutor of the Tongzhi emperor. Born a Manchu aristocrat, Duanfang began his career as a department-secretary, and formed an exclusive club of the Manchu "smart set" with another two young secretaries—Rongquan and Natong. Rongquan later took the post of provincial judge but was demoted in 1911. Natong later became the president of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a grand councilor. These three young men were notorious for their life of dissipation and extravagance. Scholar Gu Hongming recalled in 1911 that "old women in the gay singing-girls' house in Peking, to this day remember and speak of Da Rong (Rongquan), Xiao Na (Natong) and Duan Lao Si (Duanfang)."[42]

In the Hundred Days Reform, the Guangxu emperor ordered Duanfang out to superintend the newly established Bureau of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce. The Bureau was abolished two months later when the emperor was put under house arrest. Though Duanfang lost his position, he escaped by bribing Li Lianying and writing a poem eulogizing the Empress Dowager's virtues.[43] The court later reprinted the poem and handed it out to every student who participated in the civil service exam in Beijing that year. In 1899 he obtained appointment as provincial treasurer of Shaanxi, and in October of the following year was made acting governor of that province. Then the Boxer uprising took place and her majesty came.

As Duanfang knelt before Cixi, he could have expected harsh punishment or reprimands for his direct defiance of an imperial edict two months prior. As the deputy

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[42] Hung-ming Ku, *The Story of a Chinese Oxford Movement* (Shanghai: Shanghai Mercury, 1912), 60.
[43] Ku, *The Story of a Chinese Oxford Movement*, 62.

governor of Shaanxi, even though he did not officially join the "Independent Action of South and East China," he actually did almost the same thing for the same purpose. He fired radically xenophobic officials, posted placards to protect foreign missionaries, and sent the foreign community a letter assuring them that, "as long as I am incumbent, your safety will be guaranteed."[44] Furthermore, he suppressed the Boxers and intimidated unruly soldiers and commoners with the threat that anyone who dared to cause chaos would risk execution. Under his efforts, Shaanxi maintained a relatively peaceful situation, whereas Shanxi, its neighboring province to the east, was embroiled in chaos because its governor followed the court order to the letter. Ironically, Duanfang was able to provide Cixi a safe haven only because he had defied her orders two months earlier.

Duanfang's risky defiance of court orders in Shaanxi was a considerable gamble from which he emerged a big winner. When the central court first ordered the provincial leaders to organize the Boxers, nobody, Duanfang included, could have known that the court would later flee to Xi'an. Of all the provincial leaders who defied the court order, Duanfang was in the most vulnerable position because Cixi had just barely pardoned him for his participation in the abortive 'Hundred Days' of reform in 1898. It was almost impossible to expect that she would give him another chance if he dared to disobey her again.

The Empress Dowager chose to appreciate the final result. Thus, as Duanfang prostrated himself before the imperial retinue he was awarded with ginseng candy from her Majesty's personal handkerchief, instead of being scolded for his earlier

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[44] Bayonglouzhuren, *Xixun huiluan shimoji*, 169.

disobedience.[45] He also had a special audience with Cixi that same day. It seems that Cixi was impressed by his ability to control the situation, since the very next day Duanfang was sent to Henan to assist the governor in restoring order there. Cixi might have appreciated Duanfang even more because he was a bannerman. One Zhili magistrate, who had an audience with Cixi during her flight, later recalled that, besides inquiring about his name, the first question Cixi asked him was whether he was a bannerman. Upon hearing that he was not, Cixi was surprised that "a Han official could be so considerate."[46] We do not know the details of the conversation between Cixi and Duanfang, but from the context we can reason that Cixi might have felt more affinity with Duanfang as a fellow Manchu.

This was the launching point of Duanfang's extraordinary political career. Duanfang soon became one of Cixi's favorites and would later be granted the privilege of having an audience with Cixi anytime. During the next nine years, Duanfang was promoted to become the governor of Hubei, then of Jiangsu, then of Hunan, then Viceroy of Liangjiang, and then of Zhili. His career and connections will be the major theme running through the rest chapters.

Duanfang and Cen Chunxuan, both thirty-nine years of age in 1900, thus began their political careers as governors. There are several other new risers worth mentioning: Metropolitan officials Rongqing (1859-1917) and Natong (1857-1925) were ordered to stay in Beijing and represented the court in the negotiation of the "Boxer Protocol." Both of them benefited from this distinguished experience. Rongqing later became the

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[45] Ibid., 123.

[46] Wu Yong 吴永, "Gengzi xishou congtan" 庚子西狩从谈 [My observations of the imperial "western tour" in 1900] in *Yihetuan wenxian huibian* 义和团文献汇编 [Collected documents on the Boxer uprising], vol. 3, ed. Yang Jialuo 杨家骆 (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1973), 404–5.

President of the Ministry of Education and Natong the President of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Zaifeng, father of Puyi and the future Prince Chun, was sent to Germany on behalf of the Qing government to apologize for the death of Klemens Freiherr von Ketteler. That was also his first big official role.

There are many interesting comments on the working styles, abilities and personalities of the post-1900 major players listed above. For instance, Zhang Zhidong, Yuan Shikai and Cen Chunxuan were listed as the "three butchers" (*san tu*) in the court. Zhang was the "butcher of money," meaning that he spent extravagantly on his reform projects. Yuan was the "butcher of people," meaning that he often exploited the ordinary people to an extreme. Cen Chunxuan was the "butcher of officials," meaning that he frequently dismissed or executed large number of local officials.[47] There was also an interesting comparison on the academic training and political skills of Zhang Zhidong, Yuan Shikai and Duanfang: Zhang Zhidong was "refined but not cunning" (*you xue wu shu*), Yuan Shikai was "unrefined but cunning" (*wu xue you shu*), and Duanfang was "refined and cunning" (*you xue you shu*).[48]

In general, as for the human landscape of upper-level officialdom after the debacle, one peculiar phenomenon was the rise of close alliances between individual grand councilors and individual provincial officials (governors and viceroys). Four grand councilors died in the three years from 1901 to 1903. Xu Tong committed suicide in his home after the foreign troops entered Beijing. Gangyi fell ill and died in the court's panicked "western tour." Li Hongzhang exhausted himself in the negotiation of the

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[47] Xu, "Cen Chunxuan," 439.
[48] Liu Yusheng 刘禺生, *Shizaitang zayi* 世载堂杂忆 [Anecdotes of famous figures in the Qing dynasty as collected by Liu Chengyu] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 58.

"Boxer Protocol" and passed away right after that. The last one was the chief grand councilor Ronglu, maternal grandfather of the future Puyi Emperor and possibly the only official in the court whom Cixi really trusted. As the highest policy-making body in the court, the Grand Council used to be the most stable group and usually only rotated one member every four or five years. But the consecutive deaths of the above four grand councilors forced the court to speed up the recruitment process. The newly appointed councilors neither had credentials and experiences comparable to the old ones, nor did they have solid connections—which took years to cultivate—with each other. Therefore they had to make alliances with newly appointed viceroys and governors. For the same reason, alliances were also formed between new presidents of the ministries and the new provincial officials, and among provincial officials themselves.

The result was the emergence of several major political cliques in the court. Yikuang and Yuan Shikai formed an almost life-long partnership on the grounds of considerable mutual economic benefits. Qu Hongji and Cen Chunxuan formed the post-Qingliu clique based on their common mission to wipe out corruption and "purify" the country. Duanfang and Natong rekindled the brotherly affection they held back into the Manchu "smart set" days. Yuan Shikai and Duanfang became sworn brothers and watched each other's back in north and south China. Chapter Three will further elaborate the structures and members of these cliques.

Meanwhile, the larger political environment around these high officials changed in three aspects. First, foreign powers started to seriously intervene in the appointment of provincial officials. Duanfang's promotion to Governor of Hubei serves as a good example. The position became available when Zhang Zhidong quarreled with the

incumbent governor and requested that he be transferred elsewhere. The potential successor was vetoed by the British ambassador due to his anti-foreign stand. As Cixi's trusted Manchu, the sworn brother of Zhang Zhidong's oldest son, and the protector of all missionaries in Shaanxi, Duanfang became the only person that all three parties could accept.[49]

Second, the involvement of provincial officials in foreign affairs reached a new high point. They saw the tragic fates of predecessors who had mishandled foreign affairs and thus became extremely cautious whenever issues relating to the foreigners arose.

Furthermore, the "Independent Action of South and East China" opened the possibilities of shared sovereignty between the court and the provinces. In this event, established provincial leaders ignored the court's declaration of war and made an informal pact with the foreign consuls at Shanghai, stating that they would protect foreign lives and property and suppress the Boxers within their jurisdictions. In return, the foreign consuls agreed not to bring in military forces.[50] Following this example, governors in the last decade of the Qing frequently signed contracts independently with foreign governments and institutions.

With these observations in mind, in the next five chapters we will examine the New Policy reforms and provincial officials' networking.

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[49] Ji Qinsheng 纪钦生, *Wanqing shiqi de Duanfang* 晚清时期的端方 [Duanfang during the late Qing dynasty] (master's thesis, Taiwan University, 1985), 15.
[50] Hsü, "Late Ch'ing Foreign Relations, 1866–1905," 123–24.

Chapter Two
Reform is a Bonus and Reformers as Networkers

The Boxer debacle ended with the imperial party's return to the capital in January 1902. In precisely ten years, the emperor of the dynasty abdicated. When we look back at this period, we realize that it was the last decade of the Qing dynasty, the most successful conquest dynasty in Chinese history. The Qing dynasty lasted almost three centuries and nearly doubled the size of the Chinese empire. This period also marked the last decade of over 2,000 years of imperial China, whose systems of unifying power had amazed the world.

It is pleasant to view this decade as a grand fight between reformers and revolutionaries. Many biographical articles and books have been written about the officials of this time.[51] But they run the risk of abusing the term "reformer." A quick look at scholarly articles and books reveals that a section on "reform" is almost a matter of course. Such sections invariably note an official's contributions in setting up schools, building railway lines, promoting trade, etc. "Reform," as later historians have explained, is the magic word used to justify the significance of our subjects. Reform was the road to power and fame. It has been used by historians as frequently as has the phrase "think outside the box" by HR specialists in the 1990s and the word "synergy" by executives today.

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[51] Examples include: Benjamin Isadore Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961); Mary C. Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: The T'ung-Chih Restroation, 1862–1874* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962); Samuel C. Chu, *Reformer in Modern China: Chang Chien, 1853–1926* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965); and Roger V. Des Forges, *Hsi-liang and the Chinese National Revolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973).

However, is it appropriate or helpful for historians to measure their historical subjects completely on the basis of reform? By examining the mindsets and qualifications of the upper-level officials during the last decade of the Qing dynasty—a strata of officials collectively known as the prime movers behind the New Policy reforms—this chapter seeks to revisit the very definitions of "reform" and "reformer." Was reform really a necessary credential for high officials during the last decade? How big a part did reform play in their general mindset? Besides being powerful and famous, what other qualifications made one a reformer?

Part I: Reform Agenda: Boon or Bane?

To answer these questions, we should begin with the basic facts of political life and examine how a high official managed to hold his position in the first place. As I stated previously, the rise to a first- or second-rank position required years of effort, careful networking, and a lot of luck. Several unique characteristics of the provincial positions emerged from a close reading of the list of metropolitan officials and provincial high officials during the late Qing period. To some extent, a seat in the upper echelon of the government was a tenured position. There was no term limit for officials at or above the second rank, whereas there was a two- to three-year limit for the lower officials. Moreover, officials in the exclusive 120-people club were rotated less frequently than those below them. The higher the position, the less frequently one was replaced. Rarely did a grand councilor get dismissed. However, high advantages also led to high stakes. In not a single case was a first- or second-rank official guilty of wrongdoing punished by demotion. He was simply fired outright. Some of them managed to get reinstated within

a few years, but there was not much of a middle ground between high official and commoner. For members of the upper echelon of the government, wrongdoings that could cause dismissal were certainly not affordable.

A table of dismissed high-ranking officials along the written and unwritten reasons behind these dismissals will help us get a sense of these unaffordable mistakes. The high officials here include the grand councilors, viceroys, and governors. Toward the end of the Qing, governors and viceroys had concentrated the control of finance, personnel, law, and the army in their hands and had made the provincial treasurer and judge merely their subordinates. Their interactions with each other, the court, their subordinates, and urban elites were vital for any reform projects.

From the personnel roster of all the governors, viceroys, and grand councilors during the last thirty years of the Qing (1880-1910), I selected only those who met the following criteria: (1) This was their last position; and (2) They did not die in office. This left a total of 131 people. From these, I excluded those who were honorably retired because of age—as shown by the award of a temple name. I further excluded those who were honorably retired due to health failure (i.e. those who died of illness within two years of their retirement date). The final list of 62 is shown in Table 2.1 (see Appendix). Table 2.2 below is a statistical tally of Table 2.1.

Table 2.2: The Reasons for Dismissals (Source: Table 2.1 in Appendix)

Category	People	Percetage		Category	People	Percetage
Boxer debacle	8	12.90%		Expendable	2	3.23%
Power struggle	7	11.29%		Fiscal shortfall	2	3.23%
Riot/Uprising/Bandits	7	11.29%		Offended Cixi	2	3.23%
Sino-French war	6	9.68%		Sino-Japanese war	2	3.23%
1898	5	8.06%		Forging documents	1	1.61%
Natural disaster	5	8.06%		Judiciary complaints	1	1.61%
Death of missionaries	3	4.84%		Tax complaints	1	1.61%
Corruption	2	3.23%		Unspecified	8	12.90%

As we can see in the table, there were 15 general categories of wrongdoings that led to dismissal. Yet the inability to reform was not one of them. 33.87% of the dismissals were caused by four major events: the Sino-French war in 1885, the Sino-Japanese war in 1895, the Hundred Days Reform in 1898 and the Boxer debacle in 1900. In the first two cases, when a war was lost, heads needed to roll. No matter what roles those dismissed officials had actually played in the war, the official records were full of justifications such as "poor leadership," "unauthorized absence," and "cowardice." These officials were not necessarily incompetent; they just had the misfortune of being at the wrong place at the wrong time. The court, after all, ultimately held the record for all of the bad qualities listed above. As for the Hundred Days Reform, since even the emperor was knocked out of the picture, it was not surprising that five high-ranking officials met with the same fate. And the Boxer debacle directly led to the biggest political reshuffle in late Qing history. For the officials, events like the above four were not something that they could have expected or prepared for. The remaining eleven situations were much more manageable.

The governors and viceroys were aware of these eleven pitfalls. To maintain their positions, they would have had to commit a large fraction of their available resources to prevent these from happening. The security of the missionaries required close monitoring; the same went for dike quality. With several millions of people under one's jurisdiction, legal appeals, tax complaints and potential riots had to be dealt with quickly as they rose one after another. To put a reform agenda in front of these concerns was unwise in terms of maintaining one's position. Furthermore, due to its high-cost

nature, reform often boosted possibilities for corruption, fiscal shortfall, and tax complaints.

The first challenge of reform for governors was the extra demand on revenues, a demand that impinged on normal expenses. This was even harder during the last decade of the Qing because the Boxer Imdemnity alone had cut a huge share out of the provincial revenues. On average each province paid a million taels of silver out of the treasury. Some provinces paid more than two million. Table 2.3, originally composed by Chinese scholar Shen Xuefeng, shows the percentage of Boxer reparation payment and foreign debts in the provincial revenue in 1910. In Anhui, Fujian, Jiangsu, and Jiangxi, the payment even amounted to one third of total provincial revenues.

Table 2.3: Percentage of Boxer Reparations and Foreign Debts in Provincial Revenue in 1910 (Unit: tael of silver)

Provinces	A: Total Revenue (tael)	B: Boxer Reparation and Foreign Debts (tael)	B/A (%)
Anhui	4,997,800	1,805,930	36.1
Fujian	5,061,163	1,611,854	31.8
Gansu	3,805,956	355,637	9.3
Guangdong	23,201,957	4,771,768	20.6
Guangxi	4,470,000	610,250	13.7
Henan	9,741,000	1,865,655	19.2
Hubei	13,545,147	2,567,739	19.0
Hunan	7,661,153	1,430,651	18.7
Jiangsu (Ning part)	25,741,937	4,444,697	17.3
Jiangsu (Su part)	9,834,751	3,424,991	34.8
Jiangsu (Total)	35,576,688	7,869,688	22.1
Jiangxi	7,432,925	2,955,967	39.8
Shaanxi	4,213,510	996,592	23.7
Shanxi	8,188,561	1,327,421	16.2
Sichuan	23,676,100	3,885,972	16.4
Zhejiang	14,289,452	3,451,590	24.2
Zhili	25,335,170	1,036,559	4.1

Source: Shen Xuefeng 申学峰, *Wanqing caizheng zhichu zhengce yanjiu* 晚清财政支出政策研究 [Study on the expense policies of the late Qing government] (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2006), 96.

Reform projects were no less costly than the payment of reparation and foreign debts. In Hubei, under Zhang Zhidong's jurisdiction, as early as 1900 the expense of the Hubei arsenal had already reached 839,170 taels of silver.[52] The cost for building schools totaled 700,000 taels in 1905. In Zhili, under Yuan Shikai's jurisdiction, the Beiyang arsenal cost 2,020,244 taels in the five years from 1903 to 1907.[53] In Jiangxi, under Duanfang's jurisdiction, exploration of the Ganzhou bronze mine alone cost 400,000 taels from 1905 to 1907.[54] Meanwhile, around 500-700 students were sent to study abroad. The least expensive ones—those sent to Japan—cost 700 taels each, and the ones in the United States and Europe cost double or even triple. Table 2.4 shows the deficits in several provinces in 1908. The provinces with the most reform projects, such as Hubei and Zhili, also held the biggest deficits.

Table 2.4: Fiscal Deficit in the Provinces in 1908 (Unit: tael of silver)

Province	Revenue	Expense	Deficit
Anhui	6,006,000	6,741,000	735,000
Gansu	3,121,000	3,290,000	169,000
Guangxi	4,890,000	4,992,000	102,000
Hubei	16,545,000	18,521,000	1,976,000
Hunan	6,028,000	6,424,000	396,000
Jiangxi	7,569,000	7,895,000	326,000
Jilin	4,858,000	5,355,000	497,000
Xinjiang	3,172,000	3,340,000	174,000
Yunnan	6,011,000	6,983,000	972,000
Zhili	21,658,000	23,574,000	1,916,000

Source: Shen, *Wanqing caizheng zhichu zhengce yanjiu*, 46.

[52] Shen Xuefeng 申学峰, *Wanqing caizheng zhichu zhengce yanjiu* 晚清财政支出政策研究 [Research on the financial expenses of the late Qing government] (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2006), 159.
[53] Ibid., 159.
[54] Ibid., 160.

Fiscal shortfall as high as those shown in the table above could have already justified a governor's dismissal. The increasing tax demand behind the reform projects would also aggravate social instabilities. To prevent their grand designs from being undermined by meager funding, provincial governors like Zhang Zhidong and Duanfang created new sources of revenues, including bronze coin making and inter-provincial opium customs.[55] For instance, Hubei profited by 14 million taels from bronze minting during 1902-1903 and 12 million taels from opium customs during 1903-1905.[56] These innovations did alleviate the financial pressure to a certain degree but also brought another type of tension when the court tried to take its cut.

Two examples will illustrate this tension. One was Duanfang's confrontation with Tieliang in 1904, an episode that will be examined in the next chapter. The other is the long-term feud between Zhang Zhidong and grand councilor Weng Tonghe. It all started in 1894. There was an unwritten rule that for every one million taels the province received from the Board of Revenue, the province would "contribute" 4% of it (40,000 taels) to the board for the officials there to share as a bonus. To fund his reform projects, Zhang Zhidong, then Governor of Guangdong, cut this routine kickback to 2% and seriously offended Weng Tonghe, then head of the Board of Revenue. Weng retaliated in early 1898 by undermining Zhang Zhidong's chances of becoming a grand councilor.[57] If

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[55] Li, *Zhang Zhidong mufu*, 300.
[56] Liu Zenghe 刘增合, "Yapian shuishou yu qingmo xingxue xinzheng" 鸦片税收与清末兴学新政 [Opium revenues and late Qing educational reform], *Shehui kexue yanjiu* 社会科学研究 1 (2004): 120.
[57] Li Shisun 李石孙, " Zhang Zhidong shiji shuwen" 张之洞事迹述闻 [Things about Zhang Zhidong]," in *Wenshi ziliao xuan* 文史资料选辑 [Selected collection of historical materials], vol. 34, ed. Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi quanguo weishi ziliao weiyuanhui 中国人民政治协商会议全国委员会文史资料委员会 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1980), 73–74.

Weng had not been dismissed during the Hundred Days Reform, it is almost certain that Zhang would have suffered even more from this feud.

Reform was a bonus, not a job requirement. It not only boosted the risks of one's dismissal, as shown above, but also did not seem a necessary credential for one's promotion. Out of a hundred governors, viceroys, and grand councilors in office from 1900 to 1911, Li Hongzhang, Zhang Zhidong, Yuan Shikai, and Duanfang remain the most memorable names in both academia and popular culture due to their grand visions and innovative moves. However, century-long fame did not resonate with contemporary requirements for power and fortune. The major actors on the late Qing political stage were a much bigger group than what we remember nowadays. Let us look at the experiences of four high-ranking officials—two grand councilors and two viceroys.

Grand councilor Wang Wenshao (1830-1908) started his career as a *jinshi* in 1851 and gradually rose up to become a grand councilor in 1898. He stayed there for almost the rest of his life. Having served under three emperors (Xianfeng, Tongzhi, and Guangxu) for fifty-six years, Wang was never once dismissed or demoted, and was known colloquially as "the slickest of the slick" (lit. "loquat seed soaked in oil"). He did not even seem to worry about violent attacks from the revolutionaries. Every morning on his way to the Forbidden City, his sedan chair was accompanied by a huge and bright lantern marked with his surname "Wang." When his subordinates urged him to take the character off to protect him from bombing or shooting, he explained that he intended to make himself easily identifiable so that the rebels would not mistake him for other

officials and hurt him.[58] While his colleagues bore the consequences of more innovative moves—Weng Tonghe was dismissed outright, Li Hongzhang was shot on the cheek, and Xu Tong committed suicide—Wang Wenshao held his position until he retired honorably in 1907. The official who held the position of grand councilor for the second longest period in the last decade was Rongqing (1859-1917). Like Wang, Rongqing neither actively supported reform nor stubbornly rejected it—he sometimes enacted, but never initiated.

At the provincial level, Chen Kuilong (1857-1948) shot upward as Governor of Henan, Governor of Jiangsu, Viceroy of Sichuan, and Viceroy of Huguang, before finally assuming the most prestigious position outside the capital—Viceroy of Zhili. Throughout his career he had been calling himself a "conservative" (*baoshou yipai*) and had publicly claimed to avoid interacting with three groups of people: scholars of new learning (*xinxuejia*), overseas students (*liuxuesheng*), and phony literati (*jia mingshi*).[59] He remained the last Viceroy of Zhili under the Qing dynasty. Chen's self-evaluation could just as well apply to Zhang Renjun (1846-1917), the famous "retrograde" viceroy who never changed his stand against constitutional reform. Like Chen, Zhang's underachievement as a reformer did not seem to hinder his career. He variously held the governorships of Shandong, Henan, Guangdong, and Shanxi. Then he rose to Viceroy of Liangguang and later assumed the second most prestigious position outside of the capital—the Viceroy of Liangjiang—before his retirement.[60]

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[58] Li Qiao 李乔, *Qingmo guanchang tuji* 清末官场图记 [Illustrated compendium of officialdom during the late Qing] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), 90.
[59] Xu, *Yishi leigao*, 191.
[60] Zhang Shouzhong 张守中, ed., *Zhang Renjun jiashu riji* 张人骏家书日记 [Letters and diaries of Zhang Renjun] (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1993), 3–5.

Officials such as the above four, though powerful in their day, are often criticized today as "non-reform-minded," "underachieving," "enjoying the emolument of office without merit," or even "retrograde." But let us not assume that these fellows were doing nothing. On the contrary, they might have done a lot to make sure that nothing happened. With the rapid changes occurring around them in the first decade of the 1900s, maintaining peace was a challenge requiring the mastery of many variables. First, there was the hard fact of population pressure on all existing resources. Second, handling affairs related to foreigners had become more important than ever. A murdered missionary could get half of the officials in a province punished. Third, the court's increasing demand for taxes was pushing the masses into a corner. Even a petty clash could trigger an uprising. Fourth, the burgeoning merchant and other elite groups continued to clamor for more rights and constantly mobilized the press in their support. We can draw a long list of these variables.

Here we can try to draw a line between "reformers" and what I would call "competent placemen." Late Qing reformers included Zhang Zhidong, Yuan Shikai, and Duanfang. Based not only on their stories and those of Martin Luther, the greatest reformer in modern Europe, but also that of Wang Anshi, the most famous reformer in imperial China, several shared characteristics of a reformer emerge. First, a reformer holds a vision and moves before his contemporaries. Martin Luther was as disillusioned by the corruption of the Church as other fellow Europeans, but he undertook the decisive move to send his *Ninety-Five Theses* to an archbishop and nailed another copy to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg in 1517. Wang Anshi proposed the concepts of the welfare state and planned economy in the eleventh century. Duanfang and Yuan Shikai

first petitioned for constitutional reform. They were the ones who set the train in motion, not those who followed its move. Second, a lonely visionary is a philosopher, but a reformer must be able to cultivate some kind of group consensus. Zhang Zhidong's thousand-member *mufu* was an example. Third, reform does not necessarily generate good results or achieve success in the short term. In many cases the high demand of reform on existing resources may lead to brutality and economic chaos. Yuan Shikai once earned a reputation as "Butcher Yuan" for both his suppression of the Boxers in Shandong and his brutal tax levying in Zhili. Fourth, and most importantly, a reformer faces a high risk of destroying his career. Wang Anshi was permanently exiled in 1085 and died in depression the year after. Martin Luther's final statement was, "We are beggars." Duanfang's sudden dismissal in 1909 was also related to his push for assembling a national parliament.

"Competent placemen" refers to those officials who did their jobs but were not prone to making innovations. They excelled not so much in the skill of solving problems as in preventing problems from developing. The classic example was Shen Shixing, the Ming Grand-Secretary in Ray Huang's *1587*. "If little could be said about his management of his office, this meant that he had kept things as they should be."[61] Such achievements were accomplished through a subtle balance of personnel and resources.

If China was like a very large house and each governor was responsible for maintaining a constant temperature in his chamber, then we could say that the chief resource at his disposal was the bureaucratic machine, which acted like an air conditioner. In his chamber, there might be an oven on, a broken window, and holes on the roof;

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[61] Ray Huang, *1587: A Year of No Significance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 105.

meanwhile, outside elements like wind and rain and even hail occasionally blew in to disturb the equilibrium. Thus maintaining the temperature required a huge expenditure of energy. The most passive governors might just leave the air conditioner blowing all day, sucking up all available energy resources. One with more initiative might devote himself to patching holes. It would be rare for a governor to enact remodeling projects without in some way jeopardizing his primary role as a temperature control man. Fine balancing was not impossible, but it required exceptional ability.

Part II: Reformer as Networker

The key to harnessing the exceptional ability of a reformer lies in one's networking skills. A reformer is different from a thinker—he cannot be alone with his thoughts. To realize his ideas of progression, he has to convince others, find companions, and draw a consensus around him. Among the viceroys and provincial governors in the last decade, those with broader vision and political ambition had to have the network power to incorporate a critical mass in their reform efforts. And his networks could not be limited to either the central or provincial level.

Let us use Duanfang's handling of the *Subao* case in 1903 to get a sense of how a networker maneuvered his connections. As we know from chapter one, in 1901 Duanfang was appointed governor of Hubei. This was not a normal one-level promotion. With its favorable geographical position and reformer Zhang Zhidong's decade-long effort, Hubei was the transportation and trade hub in central China at the time and stayed at the front of every reform program. In 1903, Zhang Zhidong was called to Beijing to

temporarily serve in the Grand Council. Duanfang then became the Acting Viceroy of Huguang.

The *Subao* incident in 1903 was the first time in Chinese history that the government (as a legal party) confronted individuals in court. While some students in Tokyo organized the National Military Education Society to oppose the government, the *Subao* newspaper in the Shanghai International Settlement printed "unusually violent and uncompromising material," which made "other radical journals of the day seem relatively tame."[62] The *Subao* articles, written mainly by Zhang Taiyan and Zou Rong, not only directly advocated the killing of Manchus, but denied any possibility of reformist compromise with the government. The sincerity of reformers like Kang Youwei was impugned as "slave identity," and "one article even hinted that if Kang assumed office, he might be in danger of assassination." Furthermore, words and phrases such as "revolution" and "oppose the Manchus" were intentionally printed in boldface, thus enhancing the provocative contents of articles."[63] These activities clearly show a rising radical trend in China that simultaneously targeted the Manchu ruling group and the Qing imperial system.

Upon the request of the Qing government, in June 1903 the Shanghai Municipal Police arrested six *Subao* contributors (including Zhang Taiyan and Zou Rong). Unsatisfied with a trial by a mixed court, the Qing government tried to have the prisoners extradited so that they could be tried under Chinese law. The negotiation lasted five

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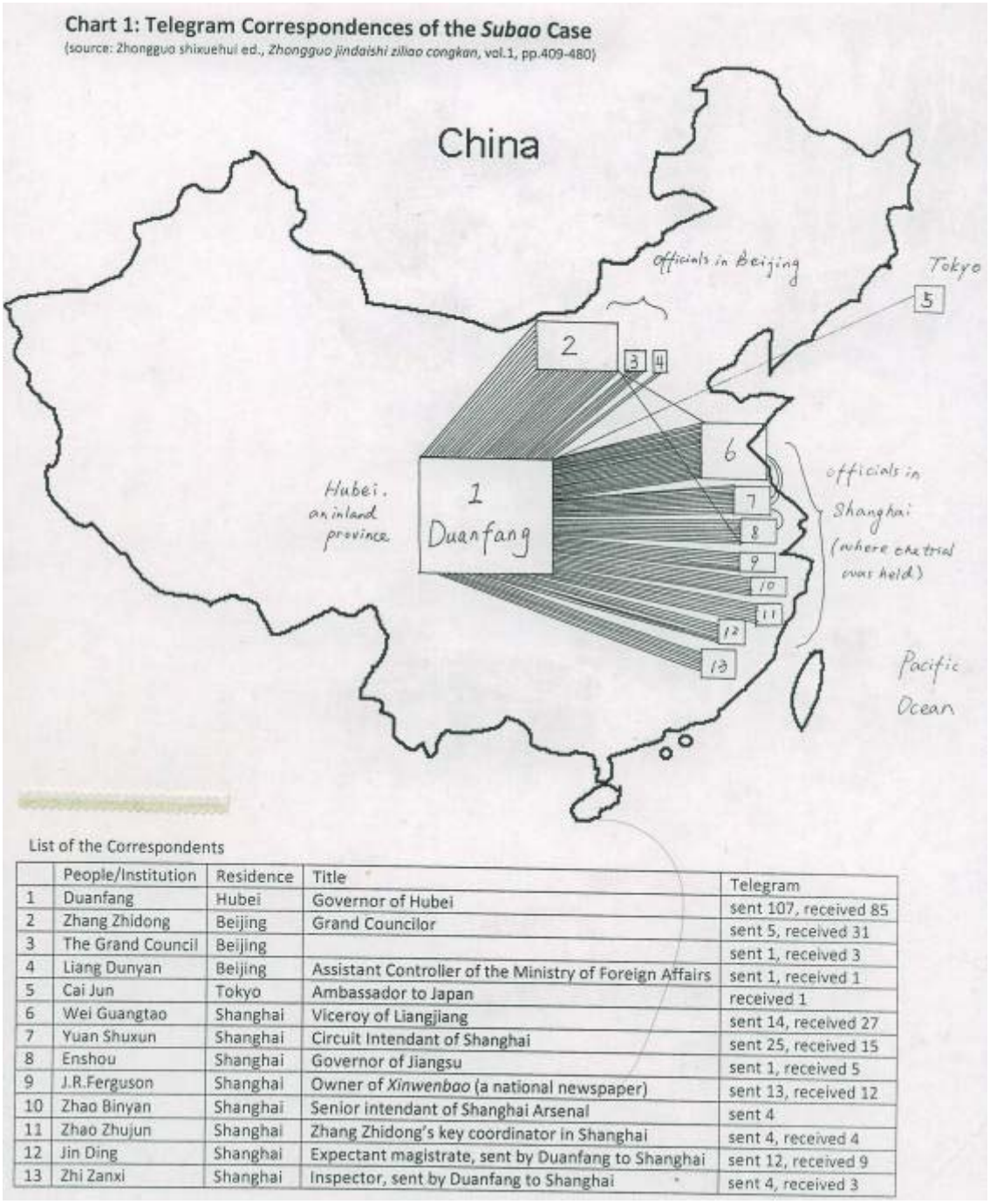
[62] Mary Backus Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries: Radical Intellectuals in Shanghai and Zhejiang, 1902–1911* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 79.
[63] Ibid, 80, 77–95 (for further discussion about Subao's articles); see also J. Lust, "The 'Su-pao' Case: An Episode in the Early Chinese Nationalist Movement," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 27, no. 2 (1964): 408–29.

months and officials from Chinese grand councilors to consulates of six countries all got involved. In the end the trial was still held in the Shanghai Municipal Court in January 1904 with two Qing officials sitting in as assistant judges. Zhang Taiyan was sentenced to three years of labor and Zou to two years. Zou died in prison at the age of twenty and became one of the most famous martyrs of twentieth-century China. Zhang Taiyan served out his term and was welcomed as a revolutionary hero at his release.

The History Association of China published a collection of 198 telegrams exchanged among Qing officials on the *Subao* case.[64] Based on these telegrams, we can draw a correspondence chart (see Chart 2.1). One shocking finding is that, out of the 13 people/institutions appearing in the chart, the one who sent or received the most telegrams was not Wei Guangtao (Viceroy of Liangjiang), not Yuan Shuxun (Circuit Intendant of Shanghai), nor Enshou (Governor of Jiangsu), but rather Duanfang, acting Viceroy of Huguang. He is no doubt the central figure in this correspondence map, with 192 out of the total 199 telegrams related to him.

[64] Zhongguo shixuehui 中国史学会, ed., *Xinhai geming* 辛亥革命 [The 1911 revolution), vol.1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 408–80.

Chart 2.1: Telegram Correspondences of the *Subao* Case, 1903



List of the Correspondents

	People/Institution	Residence	Title	Telegram
1	Duanfang	Hubei	Governor of Hubei	sent 107, received 85
2	Zhang Zhidong	Beijing	Grand Councilor	sent 5, received 31
3	The Grand Council	Beijing		sent 1, received 3
4	Liang Dunyan	Beijing	Assistant Controller of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	sent 1, received 1
5	Cai Jun	Tokyo	Ambassador to Japan	received 1
6	Wei Guangtao	Shanghai	Viceroy of Liangjiang	sent 14, received 27
7	Yuan Shuxun	Shanghai	Circuit Intendant of Shanghai	sent 25, received 15
8	Enshou	Shanghai	Governor of Jiangsu	sent 1, received 5
9	J.R.Ferguson	Shanghai	Owner of *Xinwenbao* (a national newspaper)	sent 13, received 12
10	Zhao Binyan	Shanghai	Senior intendant of Shanghai Arsenal	sent 4
11	Zhao Zhujun	Shanghai	Zhang Zhidong's key coordinator in Shanghai	sent 4, received 4
12	Jin Ding	Shanghai	Expectant magistrate, sent by Duanfang to Shanghai	sent 12, received 9
13	Zhi Zanxi	Shanghai	Inspector, sent by Duanfang to Shanghai	sent 4, received 3

Source: Zhongguo shixuehui 中国史学会, ed., *Xinhai geming* 辛亥革命 [The 1911 revolution), vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 408–80.

As a provincial governor far from Shanghai, Duanfang's "official" task was to curb the influence of this case in his own province. He did it well. Students in Beijing

and Anhui had been inspired by the bold articles in *Subao* and suspended classes in a show of moral support.[65] They also sent emotional letters to students in Hubei, exhorting them to join in the class suspension.[66] Duanfang sabotaged this student mobilization attempt. The students in Hubei public schools suspended classes for only one morning and were persuaded by Duanfang to resume normal class schedules. As for the students in private schools, there was almost no response.[67]

However, it seemed that Duanfang was determined to take a personal role in the counter-fire against *Subao* and its inflammatory articles. Although Shanghai was far out of his jurisdiction, Duanfang notified the court of the subversive anti-Manchu publications and pushed the Viceroy of Liangjiang to arrest the leading *Subao* revolutionaries on June 29, 1903. When the Shanghai Chinese official adopted the normal path to negotiate with British Municipal authorities about the arrest, eight days passed without any actions taken. Then Duanfang mobilized his powerful American friend J.R. Ferguson to lobby the ambassadors and had the arrest warrant issued in one day. Meanwhile, magistrate Jin Ding was sent to Shanghai to investigate the *Subao* case on the pretext of visiting his hometown. Jin himself proudly claimed that "my trip was so secret that none of the Shanghai newspapers were aware of it."[68] In order to extradite the radicals from the international settlements into Qing jurisdiction, Duanfang packed the most ferocious articles and pamphlet of the radicals and sent them to his acquaintance

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[65] *Subao*, May 20, 1903. See also "Jingshi daxuetang xuesheng zhi E ge xuetang shu" 京师大学堂学生致鄂各学堂书 [Open letter to Hubei students from students in Capital University], in *Ju E yundong* 拒俄运动 [The anti-Russian movement], ed. Yang Tianshi 杨天石 and Wang Xuezhuang 王学庄 (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1981), 154.
[66] Ibid, 156.
[67] *Subao,* May 18, 1903.
[68] Zhongguo shixuehui, ed., *Xinhai geming*, vol. 1, 426.

Liang Dunyan in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and got the minister to talk to British, American, and Japanese ambassadors in Beijing. Knowing the British consul's stand against extradition, Duanfang had the University of Edinburgh graduate Tomson Ku (Gu Hongming) write an elegant and logic-driven letter to London *Times* journalist G.E. Morrison in Beijing.

If not for an unexpected action on the part of Empress Dowager Cixi, Duanfang's plan to extradite the *Subao* radicals and execute them might well have succeeded. But on July 31 Cixi suddenly had a journalist named Shen Jin beaten to death in Beijing.[69] The repercussion of this case in foreign circles was considerable, and the foreign consuls changed their attitude toward the *Subao* case. They refused to allow the extradition of *Subao* radicals so as to prevent these revolutionaries from sharing the fate of Shen Jin. Cixi's "incredible folly," as G.E. Morrison called it, disrupted Duanfang's efforts.[70] Even though the trial was finally held in the International Mixed Court, Duanfang still tried to make the best of it. He handpicked the two foreign lawyers for the Qing government and had Wu Tingfang come down to Shanghai as their Chinese colleague. Meanwhile, an affidavit from Tang Caichang—a rebel executed in 1900—which stated his collaboration with one of the arrested *Subao* writers, was dug up by Duanfang's secretaries from the archives and was presented to the International Mixed Court as one of the strongest pieces of evidence.

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[69] Shen Jin was a journalist who published a text of the secret clauses of the Russian agreement over the reoccupation of Manchuria, which the Qing government later rejected. This publication provoked a flood of cables to the Foreign Affairs Ministry and, due to flood of bad publicity, enraged the court. See Lust, "The 'Su-pao' Case," 424.

[70] Hui-min Lo, *The Correspondence of G.E. Morrison* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), vol. 1, 245.

Duanfang also used the public endorsement of Wang Jingfang, a former leader of the National Military Society who had resigned from the organization when it shifted its target toward the Manchu court, to elevate the Qing government's credibility.[71] During one anti-Manchu speech in Tokyo, Wang stood up and objected: "We should not betray our dynasty! We should not slander our government." About two hundred students agreed with him and withdrew from the meeting.[72] Later, Duanfang invited Wang Jingfang back to Hubei and memorialized the court, promoting him to *juren* (provincial-level degree holder) without examination. The editors of *Dagongbao* (*L'Impartial*), an influential newspaper based in Tianjin, greatly appreciated Duanfang's solution to the Wang Jingfang case. They considered it a deliberate and politically savvy move to appease the southern elites who had been disappointed by the execution of Shen Jin. Duanfang's connections among the editorial staffs of the *Shenbao* and *Zhongwai ribao* had also guaranteed pro-government coverage in these newspapers.

In some sense Duanfang was like Truman Capote. When he saw the *Subao* case in his spy network reports, he felt a jolt just like Capote did when he read in the newspaper about the murder in Holcomb, Kansas. This would be his road to greatness. Duanfang reported the *Subao* activities to the Grand Council and named Zhang Taiyan and Zou Rong before his colleagues in Jiangnan. In just four days he sent nine telegrams to the Circuit Intendant of Shanghai, Viceroy of Liangjiang, and Governor of Jiangsu, pressing for the immediate arrest of the radicals. And it was his foreign connections that made the final arrest possible. Unsatisfied with the rather lenient and indifferent attitudes

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[71] "Jiu guomin jiaoyuhui de chengli" 救国民教育会的成立 [The establishment of the military-educational society], in *Ju E yundong*, 106.
[72] "Duanfang zhi zhengfu dianwei" 端方之政府电位 [Duanfang's telegram to the court], in *Ju E yundong*, 314–15.

of his colleagues in Shanghai and Jiangsu toward the case, Duanfang managed to pressure them into adopting a hard line through his patron in the Grand Council. Furthermore, he gathered a group of eyes and ears on the scene that included one Shanghai Arsenal official, one expectant magistrate, two investigators, and one member of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce (see Chart 2.1).[73] Just three weeks after his first notification of the case to the Grand Council, Duanfang's efforts resulted in his become the intermediary between the central court and those who should have been in charge of the *Subao* case. At the provincial and municipal level, from Shanghai officials to the viceroy of Liangjiang, all of them deferred to Duanfang before making a decision. By directly consulting with the grand councilors, exerting pressure on Jiangnan officials, pacifying overseas students, sending aides to monitor Shanghai officials, and manipulating the media, Duanfang did not just push the case; he made the case into his own stage.

As we can see, to get the *Subao* radicals punished, Duanfang drew on all the resources at his disposal. His vast network, which enabled him to be the prime mover of a case outside his jurisdiction, was constituted through thirteen acquaintances (see Chart 2.2). How did Duanfang manage to connect with all these people and to intervene within the jurisdiction of the officials in Shanghai and Jiangsu? The main factor that enabled him to do that was the existence of his strong patron Zhang Zhidong in the Grand Council. Duanfang surely understood this ultra important node in his network. As the sworn brother of Zhang's eldest son, Duanfang had always posed himself as Zhang's young

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[73] Jin Ding 金鼎, "Jin Ding zhi Liang Dingfen shu" 金鼎致梁鼎芬书 [Jin Ding's letter to Liang Dingfen], in *Xinhai geming ziliao huiji* 辛亥革命资料汇辑 [Collected documents on the 1911 revolution], ed. Zhou Kangxie 周康燮 (Hong Kong: Dadong tushu gongsi, 1980), vol. 1, 25.

disciple and had been following Zhang's lead loyally and devotedly during the past three years. Support from the high court was not the only bonus Duanfang received from his mentor; he also partly inherited Zhang's connections. Two of his acquaintances—Zhao Zhujun and Liang Dunyan—got involved in the *Subao* case for Zhang Zhidong's sake. Zhao Zhujun had been one of Zhang Zhidong's top aides since the 1880s. They were comrades "for better or for worse, in sickness and in health." In 1896, when Zhang's enemies pressed a severe charge against Zhang for "selling government positions," Zhao took all the blame and left Zhang's career intact. After that Zhang kept Zhao on the payroll of the Hubei Telegram Bureau and made Zhao his key coordinator in Shanghai. From 1896 to 1903, Zhao cultivated a friendship with his fellow townsman Zhang Jian and became a prominent member of the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce. Liang Dunyan was another person whom Duanfang had met through Zhang. When Liang returned from studying in the United States in 1881, Zhang Zhidong offered him his first job as the director of the Hanyang Customs, the most profitable customs in inland China. This was a very high start for a fresh college graduate.

However, Duanfang's network was not just a simplified version of Zhang's. He had his own unique nodes. The first one was J.R. Ferguson, an American who had been in China since the 1870s, and who was also founder of the Jinling University (Nanjing University), owner of *Xinwenbao*, and a senior advisor to the Chinese Ministry of Commerce. Ferguson's friendship with Duanfang was rare among Chinese officials and foreigners in China at that time. Most officials could not speak English at all and had at best only some business relationships with foreigners. But Duanfang and Ferguson were drawn together by their shared interests in antiques. Both of them were well-known

connoisseurs of Shang dynasty bronzes. London *Times* journalist G.E. Morrison once praised Duanfang as "the greatest authority living on Chinese antiquities," whose collection was "the finest in the Empire."[74] In 1997, Thomas Lawton of the Smithsonian Museum wrote a book entitled *Two Collectors of Chinese Art*, which featured Duanfang and Ferguson's bonding and their antique exchanges. John Ferguson later reminisced about their meetings: "He left in his *T'ao Chai Chi Chin Lu* a complete record of his great collection, but, when looking through his valuable book, I always miss the flashing eyes and nervous movements of the great connoisseur as I can remember him while handling his wonderful bronzes."[75] We might imagine Qing politics as a game of bridge. One player's hand might not be strong in all suits. But it might contain a particular combination of cards from one or two suits that can change the dynamic of the game. In Duanfang's case, this was the antique card. It provided him with a solid foreign connection such that even super elites like Zhang Zhidong had to resort to him for help on foreign affairs.

Another noteworthy aspect of Duanfang's *Subao* web was the fact that several of his own nodes developed through the Hubei governorship. Jin Ding was Duanfang's subordinate-turned-friend. As for Cai Jun, Chinese ambassador to Japan, they had solidified their bonds with each other ever since 1901, when Duanfang made Cai business coordinator of the Hubei Central Mint in Japan. After that, every year Cai handled orders amounting to 200,000 taels of silver and earned a huge sum in commissions. Furthermore, Duanfang never trusted anybody to finish the job completely, so he made

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[74] Lo, *Correspondence of G. E. Morrison*, vol. 2, 692.
[75] Thomas Lawton, *A Time of Transition: Two Collectors of Chinese Art* (Lawrence, Kans.: University of Kansas, 1991), 19.

plans within plans. He asked Ferguson to monitor Yuan Shuxun, and then assigned Jin Ding to monitor Ferguson.[76]

Part III: Greasing the Mechanism: The Position-Centered Favor Exchange System

The *Subao* case provides us with an opportunity to visualize how a governor was able to use his network in order to manipulate outcomes to his advantage. However, as we saw in Part III, no matter how significant it was, a case like this was still only one incident in a governor's busy working schedule, a schedule filled with building dams, balancing the deficit, maintaining social order, and so forth. A governor's network was many times bigger and more complicated than what we were able to draw from the *Subao* correspondences alone. In other words, a networker's strength lay in the vast pool of coordinators (nodes) that he had spent years cultivating. And when an emergency like the *Subao* case came up, he picked up some nodes from the pool and spread out his influence. Moreover, as the associates built up connections among themselves, the initial patron-client (governor-associate) webs were likely to spawn resilient horizontal connections. Such lower networks could even survive the dismissal of the network originator, just as in some cases of severe brain traumas neural networks can continue functioning and even grow alternate connections.

In this part, we will start looking into the central pillar that held up one's network—that is, the favor exchange. Other parallels, such as a common political stand and native placeship, though important, functioned more as the supplemental or balancing pillars. One's political stand, as we saw from chapter one, often shifted in line

[76] Jin, "Jin Ding zhi Liang Dingfen shu," 25.

with political circumstances. And, for two reasons, the township factor was much less conspicuous in an official's daily operation when he rose to the provincial level and above: first, his peers—governors, viceroys, and grand councilors—came from a broad range of geographic areas; second, due to the avoidance system, his jurisdiction would be far from his hometown, and, for his own convenience, he often needed to make alliances with the locals to get things done. Favor exchange was a different case. It made use of the immediate resources at one's disposal, and enabled connections that could be carried on despite the change of period and place.

What was the major "favor" that a provincial official could exchange with others? Not money; that would be too blatant. It was position, which could naturally lead to practical control, material benefits, and reputation. The exchange of positions could also be perfectly disguised as an appointment based on merit and virtue. Offering positions was widely practiced and was different from selling positions directly for money (recall that in the previous part I mentioned that Zhang Zhidong was once charged with "selling positions"). A provincial official in the last decade of Qing usually had at least 1,500 positions under his jurisdiction at his disposal. Hu Sijing, Provincial Censor of Guangdong in the 1900s, noted in his memoir that in the last several decades of the Qing, with the exception of the Provincial Treasurer, Judge, and Censor positions, almost all other positions in a province were appointed or at least needed to be approved by the governor or viceroy.[77]

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[77] The original text is: *Jinsui, dufu bushou jiuzhi, mei daofu quechu, suizhe baojian yiyuan, zhibuxia ji chushouzhi. Chaoshi xianggu cuo'e, mozhi hexuren. Yisheng zhaoduan, ge dufu yuanli erzhi* 近岁, 督抚不守旧制, 每道府缺出, 随折保荐一员, 旨不下即除授之. 朝士相顾错愕, 莫知何许人. 一省肇端, 各督抚援例而至. See "Jianfang daofu chengli" 简放道府成例 [The appointment of *dao* and *fu*], in *Guowen*

A close look at the channels of the appointments of in-province officials may help us better understand Hu's comments. The total number of civil offices in the late Qing was around 20,000, and sixty percent of them—about 12,000—were in the provinces.[78] Whenever one of those positions became available due to dismissal, retirement, promotion, transfer, death of parents, or health problems, the protocol was that the governor/viceroy would be the one to name a candidate, memorialize the Grand Council or Board of Civil Appointments, wait twenty to thirty days for approval from Beijing, and then arrange for the candidate to assume the position. However, as Hu Sijing and many other scholars point out, starting from the 1870s, this procedure had been shortened due to the increasing power of provincial officials. After sending out the memorials about the candidate, the governor/viceroy no longer waited for approval from the capital, but usually went ahead and let the candidate take his office. Thus officials from the Grand Council and Board of Civil Appointments had to "approve" the governor/viceroy's memorial.[79] In this way a provincial official became both the recommender and arbiter of the appointments of most in-province officials.

From how big a pool did a governor/viceroy draw the candidate, and by what standards? This was the part with the biggest leeway. There were four ways to get into the pool of the qualified—passing the civil service exam, winning military honors, becoming a renowned senior scholar, or contributing a considerable amount of money to

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beicheng 国闻备乘 [Collection of political anecdotes from the late Qing period], ed. Hu Sijing 胡思敬 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1997), 127.

[78] Liu Fengyun 刘凤云, " Qingdai dufu yu difangguan de xuanyong" 清代督抚与地方官的选用 [Viceroy/governor and the appointment of local officials], in *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 3 (1996): 22.

[79] For Hu Sijing, see endnote 1. For other scholars, see Du Jiaji 杜家骥, " Qingdai guanyuan xuanren zhidu shulun" 清代官员选任制度述论 [An approach to the mandarin selection and appointment system during the Qing dynasty]," in *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 2 (1995): 18.

the court. The last one was called *juan'na* (donation-contribution), which started from the Kangxi reign when the emperor needed this extra revenue to fund his war with the Three Feudatories, and was carried on until the end of the dynasty. Besides a few key positions such as the grand councilor, minister, deputy minister, governor, viceroy, provincial treasurer, judge, censor, commander-in-chief, and general, almost all the other offices had a price. For instance, in Jiangsu province in 1899, a Circuit Intendant (*daoyuan*) cost 4723.2 taels of silver, Prefect (*zhifu*) 3830.4, and magistrate (*zhixian*) 648.[80] In other words, by paying the price, a clean-record civilian could join the same candidate pool with those who scored high in the civil service exam, performed well in battles, or held exceptional literary reputations. According to court regulations, such a contributor/donor would be treated equally in this pool.[81] For wealthy commoners, the *juan'na* channel, which could save them many years of mental labor and physical risks, appeared to be much more "doable" than the other three. Thus their determination to "buy an office" never stopped. In the budget chart compiled by the Ministry of Revenue in 1910, the income from *juan'na* amounted to 5,650,000 taels of silver nationwide.[82]

But one thing needs to be clarified. What money bought was not an actual position, but rather the credentials for a position. The popular *juan'na* practice naturally resulted in an explosion in the number of the group of "expectant officials" (*houbu guan*). As the saying went at the time, "There were as many expectant officials as hairs on an

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[80] Xu Daling 许大龄, *Qingdai juan'na zhidu* 清代捐纳制度 [The *juan'na* system of the Qing dynasty] (Taibei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1987), 111–12.
[81] Du, "Qingdai guanyuan xuanren zhidu shulun," 11.
[82] Xie Junmei 谢俊美, " Juan'na zhidu yu wanqing lizhi de fubai" 捐纳制度与晚清吏治的腐败 [The *juan'na* system and the corruption of late Qing officialdom]," in *Tansuo yu zhengming* 探索与争鸣 4 (2000): 45.

ox."[83] In Jiangsu in 1874, seventy "expectant circuit intendants" (*houbu dao*) competed for two vacancies.[84] In Sichuan in 1905, a total of fifty-nine available offices, from prefect to magistrate, met with more than one thousand "expectant officials" in line. Ten percent of them were degree holders, thirty percent military achievers, and the rest paid for their candidacies.[85] The in-province offices usually rotated every two to three years, and it was pretty common for an expectant official to wait more than ten years to get an actual position.[86]

Under these circumstances, the governor/viceroy became the arbiter who selected "the one" from the large pool. The chances of getting a position without cultivating connections with the governor or his acquaintances were not zero, but were still very small. Take the position "circuit" (*dao*), for instance. From 1890 to 1910, there were around 180 *dao*-level positions in the 23 provinces in China, and they rotated every three years, meaning that there were around 800 opportunities for the expectant *dao* officials to become incumbent somewhere. However, Hu Sijing recalled that in those twenty years, only one person, Zhang Lüchun, obtained a position without recommendations from either grand councilors or provincial officials.[87] The odds of such an occurrence were 0.125%.

The governor/viceroy did not just play a crucial role in the appointment of new officials, but also in the promotion of incumbent ones. The official handbook identified

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[83] Lu Zijian 鲁子健, *Juan'na: Qingdai de maiguan yujue zhidu* 捐纳: 清代的卖官鬻爵制度 [The "selling-office" system in the Qing dynasty], *Wenshi zazhi* 文史杂志 6 (1999): 76.
[84] Xie, "Juan'na zhidu yu wanqing lizhi de fubai," 43.
[85] Ibid., 76.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Zhang was promoted directly by Empress Dowager Cixi. See "Jianfang daofu chengli," in *Guowen beicheng*, ed. Hu Sijing, 127.

only two general requirements for the promotion of a local official: first, he had to have served in his current position for at least three years; second, he should have been impeached less than ten times. Since more than half of the incumbent officials could meet these requirements, the governor/viceroy was left with a big leeway to pick. Furthermore, toward the end of one's term (usually two to three years), an evaluation would be drafted by one's supervisors and later sent to the court by the governor/viceroy. One with negative or plain comments would be automatically dismissed in order to open up a space for the expectant ones. Thus, just in order to maintain one's position, a favorable impression from the provincial officials was essential. [88]

Besides the positions listed on the regular payroll of the provincial administration, a governor/viceroy also controlled two other major employment avenues for expectant officials: the governor/viceroy's private administration (*mufu* and *yamen*) and newly created reform-related institutions. Let us start with the private administration. Ch'ü T'ung-tsu and Bradly Reed have both described the "one-man" government in the county level, meaning that the magistrate was the only one in his *yamen* listed as a formal official. [89] The same saying can also be applied to the governor/viceroy. One interesting aspect of the provincial administration of the Qing dynasty was that the provincial treasurer and provincial judge both had their own bureaus, but a governor or viceroy did not have a regular quota of posts for employees in his *yamen* or *mufu*. These employees, hired through a private agreement, were entirely outside the formal networks of official

[88] Liu Fengyun, " Qingdai dufu yu difangguan de xuanyong," 27–28.
[89] See Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, *Local Government in China under the Ch'ing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962); and Reed, *Talons and Teeth*.

posts and jobs. Different from a governor's bureaucratic subordinates, they were usually addressed as "clerks" (*li*) rather than "officials."

Employment in a governor/viceroy's private administration provided considerable opportunities for expectant officials. First, being managed exclusively by the governor/viceroy himself, the hiring was very flexible. [90] Second, the number of positions available was not small. Take the case of Zhang Zhidong: Li Renkai's monograph on Zhang's *mufu* lists the names and backgrounds of 398 Chinese and 239 foreigners who once served as his private subordinates.[91] Table 2.5 below shows the size of Zhang's private administration in several different periods.

Table 2.5: The Size of Zhang Zhidong's Private Administration (*mufu* & *yamen*) from 1882 to 1909

Time Period	Jan.1882-May 1884	June 1884-Nov. 1889	Dec.1889-Sept. 1907	Sept. 1907-October 1909
Zhang's Position	Shanxi Governor	Viceroy of Liangguang	Viceroy of Huguang	Grand Councilor
Number of People in *fu & yamen*	40-50	130-160	More than 400	5-7

Source: Li Renkai 黎仁凯, *Zhang Zhidong mufu* 张之洞幕府 [Zhang Zhidong's private administration] (Beijing: Zhongguo guangbo dianshi chubanshe, 2005), 21–37.

As we can see, Zhang Zhidong's private administration offered more than four hundred positions in Hubei and Hunan provinces during the last decade. And a quick glance at his subordinate list shows that one-third of them were filled by "expectant officials." Zhang was not the only one. Yuan Shikai, Tao Mo and Zhao Erxun had also held sizable private administrations (see Table 2.6, originally composed by Chinese scholar Guan Xiaohong).

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[90] For studies of *mufu* during the late Qing, please see Kenneth E. Folsom, *Friends, Guests, and Colleague—the Mu-Fu System in the Late Ch'ing period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968); and Jonathan Porter, *Tseng Kuo-fan's Private Bureaucracy* (Berkeley: University of California, 1972).
[91] Li, *Zhang Zhidong mufu*, 121–66.

Table 2.6: The Structure of the Viceroy's Private Administration in the Liangguang and Huguang regions in the 1900s

Year	Officlal	Units in the Private Administration	No. of Units	No. of Staffs
1901	Yuan Shikai—Governor of Shandong	正稿房、副稿房、钦件房、钱粮房、粮船房、北运房、南运房、词讼房、清讼科、秋审科、销号房、内号房、厘金房、土药房、河务房、户收房、堂号房、赈捐房、筹款房、提饷科、学堂科、督催科、节孝房、承发房、刑南房、刑北房、正本房、副本房、随本房、提稿房、咨房、揭房、即行房、集行房、本吏房、誊錄科、海防房、洋务房、先锋房、电报房、机器房、兵马房、军需房、军务房	44	430
1901/1902	Tao Mo—Viceroy of Liangguang	吏房、户房、礼房、兵房、刑房、工房、承发房、盐政房、西科、东房、东稿科、东卷科、东柬科、东副科、西稿科、西钱粮科、西本科、西咨揭科、西牌案科、西柬承科、盐政牌案科、西卷科、洋务房、盐政房	24	unspecified
1908	Zhao Erxun—Viceroy of Huguang	吏房、户房、礼房、兵房、刑房、工房、承发房、日行房、本房、揭房、咨房、知印房、会稿房、奏咨房、总号房、抄奏房、帮缮房、陕文房、照磨房、贤否房、稽催房、条例房、洋务房、值堂房	24	unspecified

Source: Guan Xiaohong 关晓红, "Wanqing dufu yamen fangke jiegou guankui" 晚清督抚衙门房科结构管窥 [A glance at the private bureau of governors and viceroys during the late Qing], *Zhongshan daxue xuebao* 中山大学学报 3 (2006): 58–59.

The third major employment in the governor/viceroy's hand was those institutions newly established in the provinces related to military, economic, and educational reform design. Table 2.7 (originally composed by Shen Xuafeng) below presents an extensive list of the names of these institutions in the provinces, and helps us to get a sense of the "burgeoning" of these institutions in a rather short period of time. Just like the governor/viceroy's private administration, these institutions were outside the formal court and provincial bureaus and were funded solely by provincial revenues. The sources do not give an exact number regarding the total number of positions in these institutions, but

based on the number of institutions, we can estimate that their employees could easily exceed a thousand in each province.

Table 2.7: Newly Established Institutions in the Provinces During the Last Two Decades of the Qing Dynasty

Category	List of Institutions	No. of Institutions
Military Supply (*junxu*)	善后总局、善后分局 (12~15)、军需总局、报销总局、筹防总局、防营支应总局、军装支应总局、军装置办总局、制造药铅总局、收发军械火药局、防军支应局、查办销算局、军械转运局、练饷局、团防局、支发局、收放局、转运局采运局、军需局、军械局、军火局、军装局、军器局、军器所 and etc.	>35
Foreign Affairs (*yangwu*)	洋务局、机器局、机器制造局、电报局、电线局、轮船支应局、轮船操练局 and etc.	>7
Education (*jiaoyu*)	各处中西学堂 (12~15)、小学堂(12~15)、蒙学堂(12~15)	>36
Local (*difang*)	清查藩库局、营田局、招垦局、官荒局、交代局、清源局、发审局、候审局、清讼局、课吏局、保甲局、收养幼孩局、普济堂、广仁堂、铁钱局、蚕桑局、戒烟局、刊刻刷印局、采访局、采访忠节局、采访忠义局 and etc.	>21
Various Duties (*lika*)	牙厘局 (12~15)、百货厘金局 (12~15)、洋药厘捐局 (12~15) and etc.	> 40
Total		**> 139**

Source: 1. Shen, *Wanqing caizheng zhichu zhidu yanjiu*, 191.

2. Liu Ziyang 刘子扬, *Qingdai defang guanzhi kao* 清代地方官制考 [A study on the local administration of the Qing dynasty] (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 1988), 459–523.

In light of a governor/viceroy's strong influence on the employment of the provincial bureau, reform-related institutions, and his private administration, we can see why he could have up to thousands of positions at his disposal. These positions served as the major source of favor that he used to cultivate political connections. In order to develop this idea further, let us look into the parties a governor/viceroy usually exchanged favors with. Records on favor exchange can only be found in personal letters or secret documents and are usually rare. Fortunately, the Duanfang Archives, housed in the First Historical Archives of China, collected a number of Duanfang's personal

documents. From volume 15, 19, and 29 of this collection, I have found 28 letters that explicitly asked Duanfang for a favor during the first month of his term as the respective governor of Hubei, Jiangsu, and Hunan. They are listed in Table 2.8 below.

Table 2.8: Selected Favor-Related Letters Received by Duanfang During Three Months in 1901, 1904, and 1905

Time	People	Position	Favor asked from Duanfang	Result
March-April 1901 (First month of Duanfang's term as Governor of Hubei)	Cai Naihuang 蔡乃煌	Circuit Intendant of Su-Song-Tai of Jiangsu Province	Duanfang's support for Cai's own promotion	Done
	Dai Hongci 戴鸿慈	Senior Vice-President of the Board of Revenue	Position for Dai's acquaintance Gao Zhen, expectant magistrate	Done
	Dexin 德馨	Former Governor of Jiangxi	Position for Dexin's acquaintance Luo Tingzhen	Unspecified
	Feng Xu 冯煦	Provincial Treasurer of Sichuan	Position for Feng's acquaintance Liu Qijia	Unspecified
	Huang Changnian 黄昌年	Court Censor	Position Huang's younger brother Huang Lüyi	Done
	Huang Shaochun 黄少春	General-in-Chief of Marine Forces of Yangzi River	Position for Huang's son in the Hubei Customs	Done
	Qian Junxiang 钱俊祥	Eminent merchant in Haining county, Zhejiang Province	Position for Qian's acquaintance Tan Risen	Done
	Shen Yiqing 沈翊清	Lieutenant-Colonel of Ministry of Wars	Position for Shen's acquaintance Lin Zijing, expectant perfect	Done
	Sun Jianai 孙家鼐	Grand Councilor	Position for Sun's acquaintance Lu Yuren	Done
	Wang Yanwei 王彦威	Secretary of the Grand Council	Position for Wang's acquaintance Jin Mengsong, expect magistrate	Done
	Wei Guangtao 魏光焘	Viceroy of Liangjiang	Position for Wei's acquaintance Benkui, expectant magistrate	Done
	Wu Zhaotai 吴兆泰	Court Censor	Position for Wu's son Wu Bao	Done
	Xilun 锡纶	Tartar General Military Governor of Ili	Position for Xilun's acquaintance Sun Rong, expectant magistrate	Done
	Yi Shunding 易顺鼎	Provincial Censor of Guangdong	Position for Yi's acquaintance Hu Shurong, expectant magistrate	Unspecified

Table 2.8 Continued:

Time	People	Position	Favor asked from Duanfang	Result
March-April 1901 (First month of Duanfang's term as Governor of Hubei)	Yun Yuding 恽毓鼎	Chancellors of the National Academy	Position for Yun's former servant Yang Ming	Done
	Zhang Baixi 张百熙	Minister of Civil Appointments	Position for Zhang's acquaintance Zhang ??, expectant Lieutenant	Done
	Zhang Xunhe 张荀鹤	Provincial Censor of Shandong	Position for Zhang's younger brother Zhang Yinzha	Done
	Zhang Yinglin 张英麟	Junior Vice-President of the Ministry of Civil Appointments	Position for Zhang's acquaintance Zeng ??, expectant magistrate	Done
	Long Dianyang 龙殿扬	General of the Ministry of War	Position for Long's acquaintance Wang Zhiping.	Done
	Ding Zhenduo 丁振铎	Governor of Shanxi	Position for Ding's acquaintance Feng Yingshu, expectant magistrate	Done
May-June 1904 (First month of Duanfang's term as the Governor of Jiangsu)	Kungang 崑岡	Grand Councilor	Position for Kungang's acquaintance Zhang Shouyong, expectant magistrate	Done
	Lü Peifen 吕佩芬	Compiler of the First Class of the National Academy	Position for Lü's brother-in-law Lü Qianji	Unspecified
	Yang Zonglian 杨宗濂	Director of Zhili Arsenal	Position for Yang's nephew Yang Qichang	Done
	Zeng Guanghan 曾广汉	Senior Vice-President of the Board of Rites	Position for Zeng's younger brother Zeng Guangjun	Done
	Zhang Renjun 张人骏	Governor of Guangdong	Position for Zhang's disciple Wang Wanzhen, expectant circuit intendant	Done
	Cheng Wenbing 程文炳	General-in-Chief, Marine Forces of Yangzi River	Position for Cheng's acquaintance Ling Zhaoxiong	Done
Dec.1904—Jan. 1905 (First month of Duanfang's term as the Governor of Hunan)	Chuo Habu 綽哈布	General-in-Chief, Hubei Brigade	To send a joint memorial for the promotion of Liang Dingfen, expectant circuit intendant	Unspecified
	Lü Haihuan 吕海寰	Minister of Works	Petition to let Lü's former teacher Li Shiying stay in his current prefect position for another term	Done

Source: Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Correspondences*, vols. 15, 19, and 29.

As we can see, these letters were sent by a broad range of officials, from the grand councilor, minister, court censor, lieutenant-colonel, and national academy scholar in Beijing, to the viceroy, governor, general-in-chief, and financial commissioner in the provinces. The main theme running through these letters was "to find someone a job." Readers might ask why those powerful officials in the central bureau, some of them as high as a grand councilor, chose to ask Duanfang for help instead of finding a position for their acquaintance or relative in Beijing. The truth of the matter was that officials in Beijing, no matter how high their rank was, quite simply did not have as much direct access to appointments as the provincial officials. Table 2.5 also shows that when Zhang Zhidong was transferred back to Beijing, the number of his subordinates dropped from more than four hundred to five because Zhang could no long designate provincial revenue to pay his personal staffs. Furthermore, it was widely known that the income of officials in Beijing, especially that of the lower officials, was much less than their counterparts in the provinces. They were often in desperate need for the "bestowals" from officials in the provinces in order to make a living.[92] Due to this material reality, most expectant officials wanted to begin their career in the provinces. This also helps to explain why high-ranking officials in the court needed to ask governors like Duanfang for personnel help. Another noteworthy point was that Duanfang received more favor requests as the Governor of Hubei than of Jiangsu and Hunan. This is related to the fact that Hubei, where Zhang Zhidong had been working for a decade, had stayed at the forefront of every reform program. Consequently, Hubei contained had more job

[92] See Li, "Qiong jingguan" 穷京官 [Poor capital officials]," in *Qingdai guanchang tuji*, 25–29.

opportunities in both the governor's private administration and the reform-related institutions.

On each letter listed in Table 2.8, Duanfang, or possibly his secretaries, had written the comment, "important letter" (*yaohan*). As for the people recommended in these letters, all but four obtained a position within a short period, a fact evident in later correspondences. For the four who were not immediately appointed, Duanfang also sent letters to their recommenders and promised that he would find employment for these people just as soon as positions became available. Through these appointments, Duanfang strengthened his connections with supervisors in the court (those in the Grand Council, Ministry of War, and Civil Appointments) as well as with fellows in other provinces (Zhili, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Guangdong, Shandong, and Xinjiang).

Part IV: Duanfang's Double-Web System

Positions were the biggest but not the only resources at Duanfang's disposal. He also controlled a large amount of money, valuables, information, and honorary titles. Officials, especially those in the upper echelon of the government, were the most important contacts Duanfang needed to make, but he also needed to draw consensus from almost every social group. In the *Subao* incident alone, Duanfang got involved with at least ten parties: grand councilors, governors, foreign diplomats, American entrepreneurs, British journalists, lawyers, students educated abroad, Chinese newspaper owners, lawyers, and private detectives. Hence, in the fog of stories of favor exchange, corruption, and nepotism, how are we going to conduct systematic research on personal

networking? What can serve as guideposts to help us select and coordinate the above phenomena?

My network approach starts by viewing a given social system as networks of dependent relationships resulting from the differential possession of scarce resources at the **nodes**, and the structured allocation of these resources at the **ties**. In Duanfang's case, he and his contacts can be identified as nodes, and the channels through which materials, ideas, or information reached each contact represent the ties. The structural holes formed by the nodes and ties exerted influence over social sectors (e.g., Duanfang's jurisdiction at a given time.) Duanfang served as the patron in ego-centered webs, but there were times when Duanfang held a structural equivalence with other group members. Over time, horizontal connections could also form among lower members of such patron-client networks.

Sociologist Mark Granovetter published a groundbreaking article in 1973 entitled, "The Strength of Weak Ties." In his article Granovetter suggested that, based on the degree of intimacy, intensity, exchange of services, and time commitments, the ties in one's network can be divided into strong ties and weak ties. He then suggested that actors with many weak ties will be in a favorable position to receive earlier and better information, because weak ties are more likely than strong ones to expose an actor to diverse information sources.[93]

Inspired by Granovetter's strong theory, I see Duanfang's web as consisting of two components: cliques and extended circles. The following diagram will help visualize this double-web mechanism (see Chart 2.2).

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[93] Mark Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1973): 1360–65.

Chart 2.2: Duanfang's Double-Web (Clique/Extended Circles) System

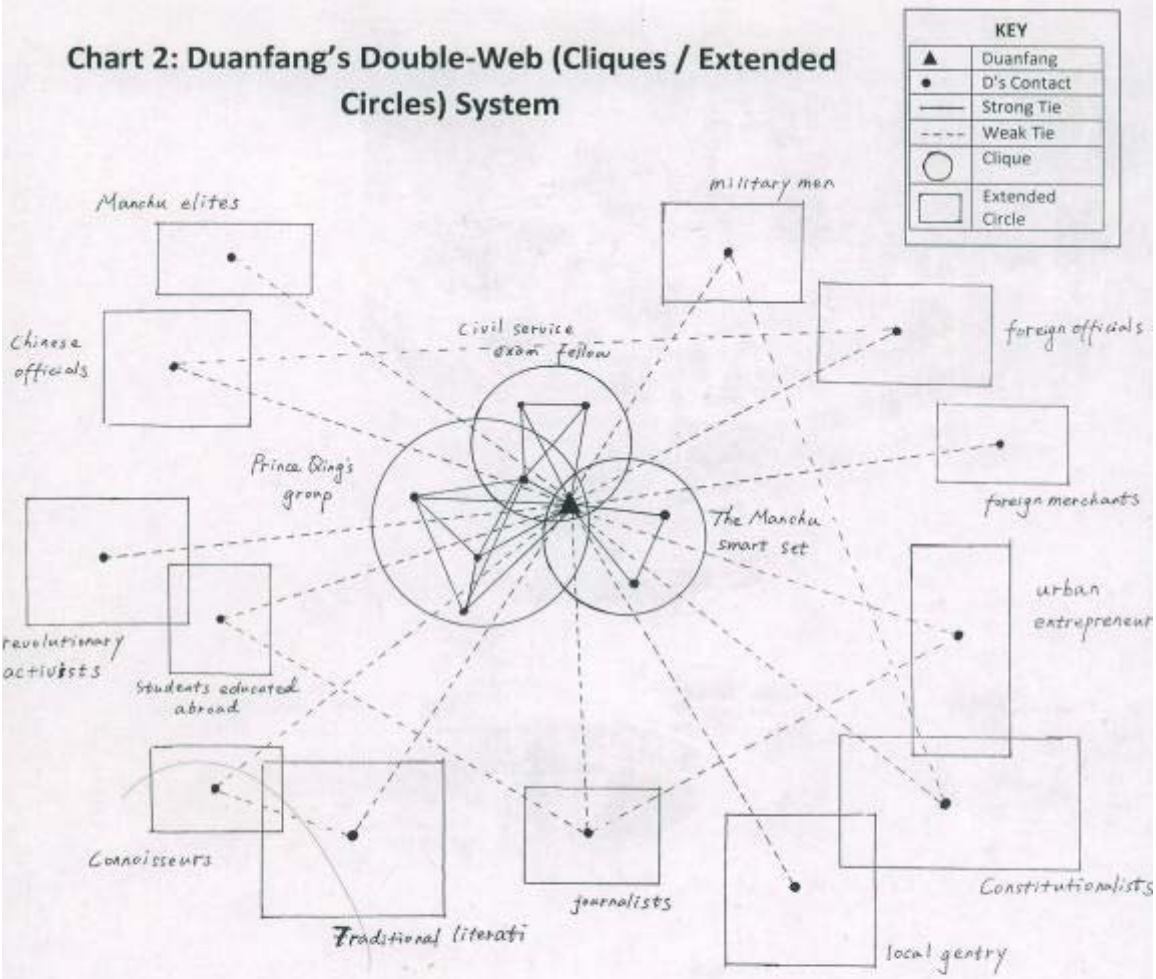

Table: Clique & Extended Circle

Type of Web	Description	Currency of Exchange	Developing Principle	Function
Clique	A group in which members were bonded by **strong ties**, and two associates of a node were usually affiliates themselves; emphasizes solidarity, smaller the better	Emotion cohesion and high mutual monetary benefits	To maintain connections to all members in the clique	For personal promotion
Extended Circle	Bonded to Ego (Duanfang) by **weak ties**; emphasizes network scales, bigger the better; associates of a node were not necessarily affiliates; by linking to separate contacts, ego controls their communications	Position (major); official awards	To identify one "structural equivalence" in the circle	For reform projects

The biggest node, positioned in the center of this chart, represents Duanfang. The small rings around him represent the cliques to which he belonged, and the bigger rings represent the extended circles to which he connected.

A **clique** was a group in which members were bonded by strong ties, and two associates of a node were usually affiliates themselves. In Duanfang's time, cliques usually stemmed from emotional cohesion and high mutual monetary benefits. Since generating and maintaining strong ties required much time, energy, and money, cliques tended to limit group size in order to guarantee solidarity. To be in a clique, one had to maintain connections with all of its members. In contrast, **extended circles** emphasized network scale. Here his contacts were not connected to each other. By linking to two people who were not themselves linked, Duanfang was able to control their communications and spread his influence far and wide. To connect to an extended circle, one only needed one, or at most two, "structural equivalences" in the circle.

These two components served different purposes in Duanfang' political life. The clique was for personal promotion or protection, and the extended circle was for reform. Previous studies of late Qing politics tended to start from cliques, but I find that the clique should not be the basic unit of network analysis when studying reform. As we saw in the last part of chapter one, there was no single "reform clique" in the last decade of the Qing. There might be one or two people from each clique, but not all, or even the majority, were reformers (on the chart I use solid lines to draw their ties).

Duanfang belonged to several court cliques. He was simultaneously a member of the "Manchu smart set" (being an aristocratic Manchu playboy from an early age), the "Southern Governors' Group" (being Zhang Zhidong's handpicked right-hand man), and the "Yikuang Circle" (being a sworn brother of Yuan Shikai). Each was highly cohesive, and involved high monetary exchanges which amounted to tens of thousands of taels of silver per person per year. Since the formations of these cliques were based on strong

emotional cohesion and high mutual monetary benefits, members backed each other up in the court whenever it came to personnel change. Hence clique connections were vital for personal promotion.

However, in order to mobilize the disparate fragments of the empire, reformers like Duanfang could not stick to small cliques. He had to extend himself circle by circle. As we can see from the chart, Duanfang was connected to foreign diplomats, urban entrepreneurs, constitutionalists, traditional literati, students educated abroad, military men, and revolutionaries. His operational principle was to identify the "structural equivalence" in each social circle. For instance, if Duanfang tried to reach out to the gentry group in one town, he did not have to know a lot of people from that group. He needed only to establish ties with the one who held a similar strategic position in that circle. Different from the cliques, the major currency in Duanfang's extended circles was position. As discussed in the previous part of this chapter, a powerful provincial official like Duanfang controlled three major official employments: the regular provincial administration, a governor's private staff, and newly created reform-related institutions. In total, he had about 1,500 positions at his disposal. With this bag of assets, Duanfang built up a massive network composed of two-way and even three-way relations. In the process he also blurred all social and political boundaries.

The double-web system enabled governors like Duanfang to exploit resources beyond his jurisdiction while cunningly climbing up the court ladder. However, this system was also a double-edged sword. On the one hand, having close connections with a number of supervisors and colleagues not only helped a governor/viceroy to secure his place and move up the court ladder, but also saved him a considerable amount of internal

disputes and smoothed the implementation of his various projects—including reform. On the other hand, the burgeoning number of positions brought along enormous financial pressure. Take the provincial-supported Lianghu Academy in Hubei province, for example, where the annual salary of the lowest-level staff was 250 taels of silver—equal to the price of 5,000 pounds of rice. Administrators and professors received more than 1,200 taels a year.[94] And the foreign engineers and military tutors cost even more—3,600-4,000 taels each per year.[95] The total expenses add up to more than 60,000 taels annually for a single academy. There are many other examples. The Telegram Bureau of Liangguang posted an annual deficit of 56,000 taels of silver, with expenses of 67,000 taels and an income of only 11,000.[96] In Henan in 1908, an elementary military school alone cost 37,259 taels.[97] In Sichuan in 1909, the provincial administrative expenses reached 250,000,000 taels—14.4% of the total provincial revenue.[98]

To visualize the inverse relationship between the financial resources at a governor/viceroy's disposal and the broadness of his network, I have drawn Chart 2.3 below. In this chart, Point A signifies the start of a governor/viceroy's term, when the resources at his disposal were sufficient and his connections limited. From Point A to Point B, he used positions and money (e.g., bribes, which will be examined in the next chapter) as favors in exchange for bonds with supervisors and colleagues. As he spent his resources, his network developed and the efficiency of his political operations also increased. But the investment in networking, with its long-term nature, would not pay

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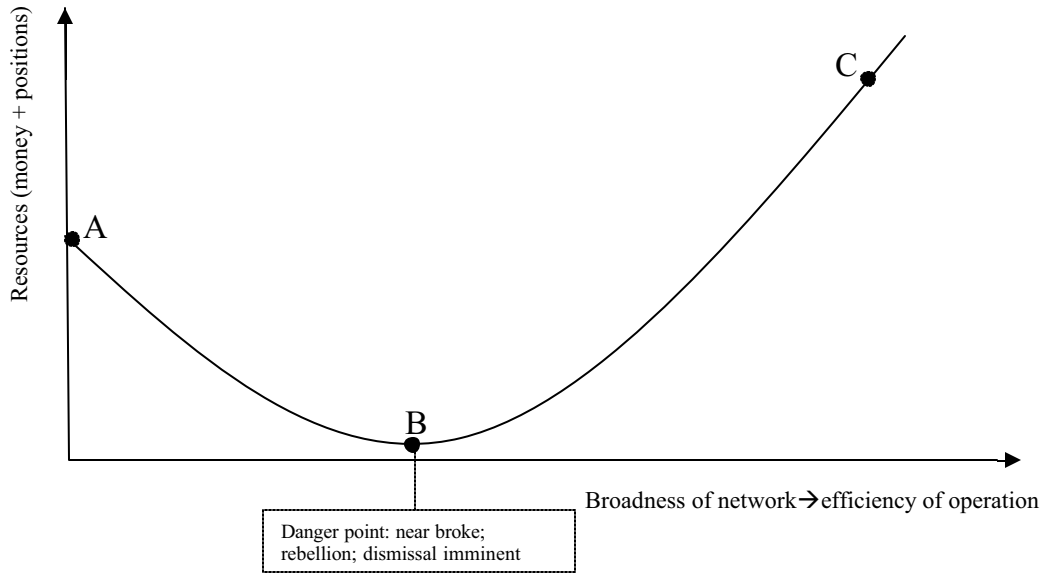
[94] Li, *Zhang Zhidong mufu*, 53.
[95] Ibid., 83.
[96] Shen, *Wanqing caizheng zhichu zhengce yanjiu*, 161.
[97] Ibid., 139.
[98] Liu Wei 刘伟, *Wanqing dufu zhengzhi* 晚清督抚政治 [Viceroys and governors during the late Qing] (Wuchang: Hubei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003), 254.

back that soon. And every networker would eventually reach the worst point, Point B, when he perhaps discovered that he was running out of resources, the exploited masses were planning a rebellion, floods were imminent and dams were inadequate, and, furthermore, he was on the verge of dismissal. If he managed to survive through this risky period, he could move from Point B to Point C and start to make his way on a positive resource-network track. The reform-related projects he established, such as industries, would begin to bring in revenues, which would give him more positions or money to trade for connections. Meanwhile, with well-established relationships in both the central and provincial bureaus, his position would be secure, and his further proposals would have a bigger chance of obtaining the court's approval and cooperation. The link between resources and network would thus evolve into a mutually prosperous relationship. However, if he failed to make it through the worst period, Point B would be the end of his career. As we saw in Part I, he would not be demoted, but simply fired outright, and would lose almost all of the political credentials he had been building over several decades.

Chart 2.3: Investing in Networking



Thus the crucial question is: if reform-oriented networking was inevitably costing resources, when would Point B come? Why did some officials manage to survive the Point B while other did not? For a governor/viceroy, is the track from Point A to Point B calculable? What major elements constituted this track, and how can we discover and evaluate them? How did an individual, reform-minded governor/viceroy's performance on this track add up and influence the general result of the reform? These questions will be explored in last two chapters when we discuss the fall of Duanfang and the collapse of the Qing dynasty.

Chapter Three
Show Me the Money: Tieliang's 1904 Audit of the South and Provincial Governors in Cahoots

The New Policy reforms were quite ambitious in both scope and depth. It aimed at breakthroughs in every level of state administration and in almost every aspect of urban life. We can recapitulate its major policies and goals in the following paragraphs.

The New Policy reforms started in the educational arena. Provincial leaders opened or patronized new schools extensively and persistently throughout the decade from 1901 to 1911. New primary schools, middle schools, high schools, technical schools, girls' schools, normal schools, and colleges emerged on the map with a substantially fresh curriculum. Primary schools and normal schools were the most desired. The government plan called for setting up one primary school in every area of 25 square *li*, so that a child of less than ten years of age needed to travel at most 10 *li* (5.75 kilometers) a day to go and from school.[99] If we assess the total acreage of Qing China at 9,600,000 square kilometers, then in theory there would have been more than a million of primary schools located around the country. In reality, by 1910 there were 8,534 lower and 174 higher elementary schools in Zhili province alone, serving 180,489 and 8,639 students, respectively.[100] The booming primary schools needed qualified teachers urgently. Hence the task of setting up normal schools, which were too advanced and expensive for the local gentries, was prioritized in the governmental educational investments.

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[99] Chu, *Reformer in Modern China*, 95. One *li* in the Qing dynasty was equivalent to 576 meters.
[100] Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*, 84.

With the new schools came a fresh curriculum. Besides studying Chinese ethics, classics, literature, and history, students were expected to spend more time on mathematics, science (elementary zoology, botany, and mineralogy), foreign languages, and military drills.[101] Confident in the effectiveness of this mixture of modern specified knowledge and traditional classics, the court abolished the Civil Service Exam in 1905. The new candidate pool for government employees became mainly composed of students who had passed the pre-1905 exams, university and college graduates, and students educated abroad. The last group was especially welcome due to their international aura. From 1898 to 1911, at least 15,000 students were trained in Japan on partial or full government scholarships, and 2,000 in the U.S. and Europe on full government scholarships.[102] Furthermore, a Ministry of Education was established to coordinate the educational affairs nationwide.

Besides opening schools, another program that was intended to reach into all areas of the country was the replacement of the *baojia* security system with new police forces. Like the design for primary school, the general plan was to set up a police headquarters for every 10,000 people, and more than 40,000 headquarters nationwide.[103] In order to meet the needs of these police officers, the government sent students to Japan for training, and set up two special academies in Beijing and Baoding to educate future sergeants.

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[101] Stephen R. MacKinnon, *Power and Politics in Late Imperial China: Yuan Shi-kai in Beijing and Tianjin, 1901–1908* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 145.
[102] Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*, 42.
[103] MacKinnon, *Power and Politics in Late Imperial China*, 155. The total population of China in the 1900s was around 419,945,000. For details, please see Table 1.6 in chapter one.

The new police did not function as a defense corp. The court's military goal was to build "a modern army modeled after those of Germany and Japan, with a proposed strength of thirty-six divisions by 1912."[104] The central project was the Beiyang Army in Zhili, which was to include six divisions of at least 10,000 men each. In other provinces, governors or generals needed to organize the miscellaneous troops into "standing armies" (*changbei jun*), where soldiers served three years on active duty and then retired into reserve units.[105] Each province was also expected to establish an independent supply system. New uniforms needed to be tailored; guns, cannons, and warships imported or built; instructors trained or hired from abroad; and drills held frequently and regularly.

On the economic front, in order to foster merchant initiative in developing the provincial economy, a Ministry of Commerce was established in Beijing, and a Bureau of Commerce in each province. These institutions were in charge of running industrial exhibitions, researching markets and products, establishing technical schools and workshops, and starting pilot factories in important industries. Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Hubei, and Zhili were the front runners in this arena. Take Zhili province, for example: by 1907 there were eleven new, privately owned modern factories and three new industrial schools in Tianjin, as well as over sixty new factories with modern machinery elsewhere in the province.[106]

On the political front, numerous departments and institutes were scheduled to be reorganized, streamlined, and established (we will discuss these details in the next chapter). Other aspects of the reform included: drafts of a new Criminal Code and Civil

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[104] Joseph W. Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China: The 1911 Revolution in Hunan and Hubei* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 108.
[105] MacKinnon, *Power and Politics in Late Imperial China*, 92.
[106] Ibid., 164.

Code; a Japanese-style system of graded courts, from local to district and up to high and supreme courts; "model prisons" and reformatories in all provinces where the prisoners could get training in skills; replacement of banishment with penal servitude; telegram bureaus, railways, and many more.

As we can see, the New Policy reforms involved everything from building schools and factories, sending students abroad, training modern armies, and overhauling the bureaucracy, to debating about manner and hairstyle. Money was the bloodline for any reform project. The political world of a province and the political world of the central state were competitors for the same resources. This chapter will examine this competition through a single case study: Tieliang's audit of the southern provinces in 1904.

The result of Tieliang's intrusion into the provinces involved not only the possession of a single amount, but also the general principles of fundraising and spending during the late Qing New Policy reforms. Related issues include: changes in late Qing tax structure (e.g., the proportion of land and commercial tax); newly created new sources of funds (such as bronze coin minting and interprovincial opium customs); the nuanced hide-and-seek game between the court and the provinces; and the administrative and personnel strategies behind the reforms. This chapter seeks to address these issues.

Part I: The Late Qing Revenue Puzzle and the Universal "Squeeze" System

What can we say about the late Qing financial system? The total revenue was a big jigsaw puzzle of which various parties, from central government to provincial

bureaus to local administrations, each held a piece. The puzzle was never complete, and the closest call was in 1911, the last year of the dynasty.

No official statements bearing on the financial and fiscal condition have ever been published. The Qing government professed to be ignorant of revenue and disbursements, with the lone exception of those handled by the central administration. In 1973, scholar Wang Yeh-chien gathered five sets of records currently available and put them together in one table for comparison. The five sets of records include: 1) the report of the Board of Revenue on the estimated national revenue in 1903; 2) the national budget submitted by the Ministry of Finance in 1911; 3) the report of Hosea Ballou Morse, high commissioner in the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs Service, who attempted to estimate the Chinese national revenue of 1904 and 1905; 4) a 1912 article published by economist E.T. Williams in *Quarterly Journal of Economics*; and 5) economist Wang Yeh-chien's 1973 estimates in his *Land Tax in Imperial China* in 1973. These records are listed in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1: Reported and Estimated Annual Tax Revenues in China, 1902-1911 (unit: tael of silver)

Report or Estimate	***Land Tax***	***Salt Tax***	***Likin***	***Maritime Customs***	***Native Customs***	***Miscellaneous Taxes***	***Total***
1903 (reported)	35,360,000	13,000,000	18,200,000	31,500,000	3,900,000	3,500,000	105,460,000
Morse Estimate (1904 or 1905)	63,881,500	40,500,000	21,268,500	17,555,500	3,699,000 (1906)	5,419,500	152,324,000
1911 (budget)	49,670,000	47,622,000	44,177,000	42,139,000	N/A	26,164,000	209,722,000
Williams Estimate (1910 or 1911)	69,000,000	57,000,000	43,000,000	36,000,000	6,100,000	38,000,000	249,100,000

Table 3.1 Continued:

Report or Estimate	***Land Tax***	***Salt Tax***	***Likin***	***Maritime Customs***	***Native Customs***	***Miscellaneous Taxes***	***Total***
***Scholar Wang Yeh-chien Estimate* (average, 1902-1911)**	102,400,000	45,000,000	40,000,000	32,900,000	6,700,000	65,000,000	292,000,000

Sources:

1. Yeh-chien Wang, *Land Taxation in Imperial China, 1750–1911* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 74.
2. Jia Shiyi 贾士毅, *Minguo caizheng shi* 民国财政史 [The financial history of Republican China] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1917), 25–26.
3. H.B. Morse, *The Trade and Administration of China* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1908), 85–110.
4. E.T. Williams, "Taxation in China," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 26, no. 3 (May 1912): 482–510.

As shown in Table 3.1, data from these five estimates differ in every major category. Take the first and second sets, for instance. Since there were no major wars or natural disasters during the three years from 1903 to 1905, presumably the levying of taxes and collecting of customs revenue for these years should not diverge too greatly. Yet the official report for 1903 and High Commissioner Morse's estimation for 1904-05 differed from each other by tens of millions of taels of silver.

In the land tax category, Morse's estimation of the 1904-05 (fall 1904- fall 1905) revenue was almost twice that of the government's report for 1903 (28.5 million taels more). If we consider this in terms of the average land tax per person, this is not a small difference. From Table 1.6 in chapter one, we saw that the population figures for 1903 and 1905 were 412,988,000 and 418,458,000, respectively. Thus, according to the official report, on average each Chinese resident paid 0.086 taels of silver as land tax in 1903; according to Morse's estimation, each Chinese resident paid 0.153 taels as land tax in 1904 or 1905. Despite the fact that there were no man-made or natural disasters from

1903 to 1905, Morse's estimation for these three years was 0.077 taels more per person. This amount was enough to purchase more than four pounds of milled rice, which could provide provisions for a single person for up to five days.[107]

In the salt tax category, Morse's estimation was more than three times that of the official report (27.5 millions taels more). In the miscellaneous taxes, Morse's estimation was 1.5 times that of the official report (1.9 million). Conversely, Morse's estimation of the maritime customs was much more conservative than the official report, possibly because of his sensitive position in the Imperial Maritime Customs Service. In total, Morse's numbers for the 1904-05 revenue was fifty millions taels more than the government's report for 1903!

Similarly, economist Williams' estimation of the total revenue for 1910-11 was forty million taels higher than the Qing government's official estimation of the revenue for 1911. For the land tax alone Williams' number was twenty million taels more. When we look at the data pulled up by present-day scholar Wang Yeh-chien, the contrast was even more shocking. Wang's estimation of the total 1910-11 revenue was 90 million taels more than the official Qing number, and 33 million taels more in land tax alone.

When estimations of Chinese annual revenue offered by several different parties differ from each other by tens or even hundreds of millions of taels of silver, which party's number can we rely on, and whom should we believe? Was the Qing government deliberately hiding its income in the official report? Are current scholars too optimistic? Or were the four parties—the court, Morse, Williams, and Wang—all telling the truth, or at least the truth that they could see?

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[107] The average price of milled rice in 1903–04 was 0.018 taels of silver per pound.

Several factors have accounted for the difficulty of compiling an accurate and widely acknowledged report on the Qing government's national revenue. The first was the unavailability of financial records since the 1850s and 1860s. During the Taiping rebellion, governors like Zeng Guofan, while fighting the rebels on their own, also raised funds on their own. A number of budget and expense items were newly created and accessible only to provincial officials. The destruction of many financial records during the war further prevented the court's accurate evaluation of the provincial financial situations.[108] Second was the mystery regarding the collection of the land tax. Table 3.1 shows how conservative or radical land tax can be estimated. This has to do with the competition from Beijing and local parties. "The men who were close to the actual collection of land taxes—tax farmers, yamen runners, and local magistrates—absorbed most of the surpluses."[109] Thirdly, the Qing government's tax structure experienced severe change since 1840. While the percentage of land tax in the revenue significantly declined, the percentages of miscellaneous tax, salt tax, and commercial tax increased.[110] And data on the non-land tax were even harder to get hold of.

In a word, the exclusivity of financial records within individual provinces, the hesitancy of local officials to update information on land area and land yields, and the income- and price-elasticity of the non-land tax all help us to understand why the national revenue remained a jigsaw puzzle.

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[108] He Hanwei, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun kan zhongyang he difang de caizheng guanxi" 从清末刚毅铁良南巡看中央和地方的财政关系 [Late Qing center-province fiscal relations as seen in the imperial mission of Kangyi and Tieliang in 1899 and 1904], *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 68, no. 1 (1997): 57.
[109] MacKinnon, *Power and Politics in Late Imperial China*, 55.
[110] Wang Yeh-chien, *Land Taxation in Imperial China, 1750–1911* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 81–82.

It is similarly almost impossible for historians to complete this puzzle, but we can start by attempting to grasp its most basic rule: the universal "squeeze." The greater part of all revenues was disbursed by provincial authorities. Each official, from viceroy to petty mandarin, endeavored to keep secret the amount of taxes collected, since everything above a certain amount was retained as his official perquisite. If a "higher up" would begin to suspect that any province or district was yielding additional revenue or could be made to yield more than was returned upon, they would increase their demands. This system made each official anxious to represent the taxes collected in his district at the minimum amount, and the central government and Qing court did not object so long as they received the correct proportions.[111] The "squeeze" system was a complex and elaborate combination of checks and balances that was designed to keep the people ignorant of how the revenues were handled and to prevent any official from getting more than his share.

As we stated in chapter two, during the last decade of the Qing, reform was a bonus, not a job requirement. The reform projects listed at the beginning of this chapter were not written in the handbook of ministers, viceroys, and governors, and these officials needed to explore funding resources outside the traditional arena. The fast increasing non-land tax was the best place to go. Table 3.2 composed by Wang Yeh-chien shows that by 1908 the land tax had hardly doubled while other taxes had cumulatively jumped up almost ten times.

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[111] " Chinese Finance Run on a System Called 'Squeeze'," *New York Times*, July 5, 1908.

Table 3.2: Changes in the Tax Structure of China in the Qing Period

Tax		*Percentage of Total Tax Revenue (%)*	
		1753	*1908*
Land Tax	Total	73.5	35.1
	Quota	59.31	18.64
	Surcharges	14.19	16.46
Other Taxes	Total	26.5	64.9
	Salt Tax	11.9	15.4
	Native Customs	7.3	2.3
	Maritime Customs	N/A	11.3
	Likin	N/A	13.6
	Miscellaneous Tax	7.3	22.3
Total		100	100

Source: Wang, *Land Tax in Imperial China, 1750–1911*, 80.

Why did the growth of the land tax fall far behind that of most other taxes in the late Qing? To answer this question, three principal reasons may be suggested. The first was the availability of other taxes. The creation after the mid-nineteenth century of the maritime customs, likin, and a variety of miscellaneous taxes (both local and provincial), all proved to be highly productive. Thus there was less pressure for an increase in the land tax than would otherwise be the case.

Second, there was a great difference in revenue elasticity between the land tax and most other taxes. Unlike the land tax, most other taxes were commodity taxes and therefore highly responsive to changes in income and prices. That is to say, when the income of a society (aggregate or per capita) rises—provided no appreciable change occurs in the distribution of income—its consumption will naturally increase. Consequently, commodity taxes will likewise increase. Moreover, in a time of rising prices, even if the real income of a society remains the same as before, the absolute amount of revenue from commodity taxation would still multiply. Meanwhile, based on

land area instead of land value or land yields, the Qing land tax system was hardly responsive to rising prices or rising yields.

Third, the government did not keep land registration up-to-date or raise the tax rates. The Manchu government never made a land survey on a national scale and showed no interest in updating the country's land data beyond the level reached in 1600. On the other hand, local officials saw conformity to the established quota (1600) as the most practical way to manage the land tax administration.[112]

The non-land tax included salt tax, native customs, maritime customs, *likin*, and miscellaneous taxes. From Table 3.2 we can see that these taxes accounted for 64.95% of the total revenue. Among them the miscellaneous taxes, which composed all the most recent and convenient tax items, grew the fastest in 1901-1911 decade. Table 3.1 shows that the levied amount of miscellaneous taxes in 1910-11 was almost eight times that of 1904-05.

The composition and actual amount of the miscellaneous taxes in the provinces were the secrets that governors and viceroys attempted to hide and which the court tried to uncover. Three years into the New Policy reforms, Tieliang, then senior vice-president of the Board of War, was ordered by the throne to make an inspection of military and financial conditions in the Yangtze area. The real motive behind this inspection tour related to the central government's desire to finance its military modernization projects, with estimated costs of up to 9.6 million taels of silver. Thus the court despatched an imperial mission to audit the treasury of affluent southern provinces.[113] Duanfang was

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[112] Wang Yeh-chien, *Land Taxation in Imperial China*, 81–82.
[113] Ralph L. Powell, *The Rise of Chinese Military Power, 1895–1912* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 187–89.

then the governor of Jiangsu, the richest province whose treasury was Tieliang's main auditing target of this trip. Thus began the confrontation between Tieliang and an alliance of governors led by Duanfang.

Part II: Tieliang's Southern Audit

The story began as follows. In July 1904, an edict was issued to appoint Tieliang, then senior vice-president of the Board of War, to lead a special commission into four southern provinces in the Yangtze area: Jiangsu, Anhui, Hubei, and Hunan. The edict described three goals for the trip: 1) inspect the administrative and financial details for the relocation of the Jiangnan arsenal from Shanghai to an inland location; 2) scrutinize provincial revenues and expenses; and 3) evaluate the efficiency of provincial administration.[114] The public speculated variously on Tieliang's real mission. Some argued that he was going after the secret societies and anti-Manchu radical associations. Others believed that Tieliang made the trip in order to weaken the power of the southern governors who had defied the court's order in 1900.[115] But the real unwritten message in the edict eventually emerged when Tieliang's schedule became known: He was sent to reinvigorate the court's failed fundraising efforts for metropolitan troops from the previous year. This time he intended to seal the deal.

Besides serving on the Board of War, Tieliang carried another important title: Vice-President of the Commission for Army Reorganization (*lianbing chu*). The Commission was established in 1903 with the designated function of reorganizing and

[114] He, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun," 92.
[115] Ibid., 92.

centralizing the Chinese army along Western models.[116] Yuan Shikai and Tieliang were made its president and vice-president. Ever since the establishment of the Commission, funding had been the biggest problem. Yuan and Tieliang were reportedly "calculating every cent." G.E. Morrison, the London *Times* journalist in Beijing, noted that even an amount of 10,000 taels of silver required careful deliberations.[117] The existing troops stationed in the provinces hindered the central military project in two respects. First, they used up a substantial portion of the materials available for the central army. Second, and more importantly, because these troops were controlled by the governors, they posed an obstacle (if not a threat) to the standardization of armies on a nationwide scale.

The timing of Tieliang's visit further underscored its significance. From 1901 to 1911, the central court's fundraising strategy experienced three phases of funding allocation: 1) 1901-03, for the Boxer Reparation; 2) 1904, for the Beiyang Army (the supposed central army); and 3) 1905-1911, for central reform projects. Tieliang's southern tour not only signified the starting of the second phase, but set an important example to follow in the third phase.

How much did the court want? Approximately 8,360,000 taels of silver every year. As early as December 4, 1903, when the Commission for Army Reorganization was established, Yuan and Tieliang had memorialized on collecting 10,000,000 taels from the provinces as the Commission's startup fund. In January 1904 the court lowered

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[116] The Commission for Army Reorganization (*lianbing chu*) was established in 1903 at the initiative of Yuan Shikai for the reorganization and centralization of the Chinese army on Western lines. Yuan and Tie were made its president and vice-president. It was amalgamated in 1906 with the Ministry of War (*lujun bu*).

[117] Liu Zenghe 刘增合, "Basheng tugao tongjuan yu qingmo caizheng jiquan" 八省土膏统捐与清末财政集权 [The eight-province joint opium tax and the centralization of finance during the late Qing dynasty], *Lishi yanjiu* 历史研究 6 (2004): 111.

the amount to 96,600,000, before reducing it to 8,360,000 in the February edict.[118] Table 3.3 below shows the amount allocated to each province.

Table 3.3. Obligatory Provincial Contributions to the Commission for Army Reorganization

Provinces	Amount Requested	Provinces	Amount Requested
Zhili	1,100,000	Hunan	400,000
Jiangsu	850,000	Henan	400,000
Guangdong	850,000	Fujian	400,000
Sichuan	800,000	Anhui	350,000
Shandong	550,000	Shaanxi	300,000
Hubei	500,000	Yunnan	200,000
Zhejiang	500,000	Gansu	100,000
Jiangxi	500,000	Guizhou	60,000
Shanxi	500,000		
		Total	**8,360,000**

Source: Zhou Yumin 周育民, *Wanqing caizheng yu shehui bianqian* 晚清财政与社会变迁 [Government finance and social changes during the late Qing dynasty] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2000), 393.

However, until the middle of 1904, none of the other provinces responded actively to the court's call. The lone exception was Zhili province, where the Beiyang Army was stationed and Yuan Shikai held the office of viceroy, Governors kept sending in memorials that grumbled about the financial difficulties they were going through. When the court pushed again, the same governors sent out another round of memorials. During this process of tedious correspondences, six months passed by without any substantial deposits into the accounts of the Commission for Army Reorganization. Two other factors further enabled the procrastination of the governors on this issue. First, such procrastination of court contributions had become the norm by that time. At the beginning of 1904, revenues from the provincial customs collected by the central court

[118] He, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun," 94.

were 10,780,000 taels short to begin with.[119] Second, the amount demanded by the court (8.36 million taels) was so enormous that most governors regarded it as a joke.[120]

And the governors had solid evidence to prove the "excessiveness" of this demand. When the Qing court signed the "Boxer Protocol," China was fined war reparations of 450,000,000 taels of fine silver (about 67.5 million pounds/333 million U.S. dollars) for the damages that it caused. The reparation was to be paid within 39 years, and with interest included would total 982,238,150 taels. The court then placed the burden on the provinces and made them responsible for 16,210,000 taels in the 1900s.[121] In the last chapter I discussed how heavy these burdens were on provincial treasuries. Table 2.3 in the previous chapter (page 57) shows the percentage of Boxer Reparation that was to be culled from each province's revenue.

The resources that each province depended upon to pay the reparation are laid out in Table 3.4 below. Tax increases turned out to be the major solution. Meanwhile, as stated in the previous chapter, provinces were also carrying out expensive reform projects, such as building schools and factories, and sending students abroad. All these projects, together with the burden of reparation, had already strained the provincial revenues. Under such circumstances, governors were naturally not in a rush to contribute to the court's nine-million-tael military project.

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[119] Wang Shuhuai 王树槐, " Qingmo minchu Jiangsusheng de zhaihai" 清末民初江苏省的灾害 [The disaster facing Jiangsu province during the late Qing and early Republican eras], *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院近代史研究所集刊 10 (July 1981): 386.
[120] Liu, "Basheng tugao tongjuan," 111.
[121] Zhou Yumin 周育民, *Wanqing caizheng yu shehui bianqian* 晚清财政与社会变迁[Government finance and social changes during the late Qing dynasty] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2000), 383.

Table 3.4: Resources for Boxer Reparation in the Provinces, 1901-1911

Resources	Amount	%
Salt Tax	5,542,000	27.41
Goods Tax	4,469,000	22.10
Extra Land Tax	4,150,000	20.53
Budget Cut	2,785,000	13.78
Sales Tax	1,758,000	8.70
Leasing Tax	1,162,000	5.75
Others (selling official titles)	350,000	1.73
Total	20,216,000	100.00

Source: Shen, *Wanqing caizheng zhichu zhengce yanjiu*, 97

Hence, in August Tieliang was sent down to the four most affluent southern provinces: Anhui, Jiangsu, Hunan, and Hubei. The euphemist pretense the court used for this mission was "to inspect the relocation from Shanghai to Jiangxi." The actual tasks Tieliang was entrusted with, however, were threefold: 1) homogenize the provincial armies based on central design (and thus bring them under central control); 2) move the Jiangnan arsenal to Henan (thus putting it under the direct control of the court; and 3) raise the 8.36 million taels of silver as the startup fund for the Commission for Army Reorganization. Table 3.5 below shows the itinerary and major activities of Tieliang's trip. He spent most of his time in Jiangsu and Hubei.

Table 3.5. Tieliang's Southern Trip

Dates	Length of Stay	Province/City	Activities
August 20-28, 1904	9 days	Beijing→Tianjin→Shanghai	On the road
August 29-September 14, 1904	16 days	Shanghai (Jiangsu)	Inspect the Arsenal
September 15-October 4, 1904	20 days	Suzhou (Jiangsu)	Inspect treasury
October 5-20, 1904	16 days	Wusong, Jiangyin and Zhengjiang (Jiangsu)	Inspect armies and batteries
October 21-November 28, 1904	38 days	Nanjing (Jiangsu)	Inspect the treasury
November 29-December 27, 1904	29 days	Wuhu (Anhui) and Pingxiang (Jiangxi)	Inspect the arsenals
December 28-31 1904	4 days	Wuchang (Hubei)	On the road

Table 3.5 Continued:

Dates	**Length of Stay**	**Province/City**	**Activities**
January 1-15, 1905	15 days	Changsha (Hunan)	Inspect armies and schools
January 16-February 14, 1905	29 days	Wuchang (Hubei)	Inspect treasury
Total	**165 days**		

Sources:

1. "Zhengfu pai Tie shilang zhi nanxia" 政府派铁侍郎南下 [The court's despatch of Tieliang to the Yangzi region], *Dongfang zazhi* 东方杂志 1, no. 7 (August 1904): 40.
2. He Hanwei, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun kan zhongyang he difang de caizheng guanxi" 从清末刚毅铁良南巡看中央和地方的财政关系 [Late Qing center-province fiscal relations as seen in the imperial mission of Kangyi and Tieliang in 1899 and 1904], *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 68, no. 1 (1997): 95.

The court selected Tieliang for a reason. Tieliang was a rigidly moral man, a puritan and a soldier who valued honor and duty rather than love and mercy. Scholar Gu Hongming compared him to Lord Lansdowne in England and called Tieliang "the Chinese superman." In other words, Tieliang was a moral epitome, representing impartiality and determination. In this mission, he had the court as well as Yuan Shikai to back him up. The court also assigned him a secret escort, Liangbi. Liangbi was born to a very high Manchu family and was the first Manchu to graduate from the Tokyo Military School. He was known for his decisiveness and ruthlessness.

Tieliang's major rivals in this court-province tug-of-war were two senior viceroys: Wei Guangtao, viceroy of Jiangsu, Anhui, and Jiangxi; and Zhang Zhidong, viceroy of Hubei and Hunan. Both of them had been viceroys for more than a decade and were known for the enormous amount of reform projects they sponsored in the jurisdictions. The 1900 "Independent Action of South and East China" (*dongnan hubao*) incident revealed their entrenched power in the Yangtze area (see chapter one). Upon hearing of

Tieliang's visit, Zhang and Wei ordered the treasurers in Suzhou, Jiangning, Jiangxi, and Anhui to check all their account books and fix the numbers.[122]

However, when both sides—Tieliang and the group of Yangtze governors—were engaged and the tug-of-war was about to begin, the court gave the governors an unexpected blow and helped Tieliang take the first round. Two court edicts arrived in Shanghai the same day as Tieliang. One edict summoned Zhang Zhidong for an immediate imperial audience in Beijing, the other ordered Wei Guangtao to exchange positions immediately with Zhou Fu, Viceroy of Zhejiang and Fujian. Wei was ordered to leave within three days.[123] Wei's transfer signified the end of a forty-year rule of the Jiangnan area by the Xiang Army clique. Following Wei's departure, his right-hand man Wei Rongbin was dismissed for a vague accusation of a trivial negligence. With the departure of Zhang and Wei at the same time, Tieliang was left as the highest ranking official in Shanghai, and he quickly assumed absolute authority over officials there.

Tieliang then charged into the Jiangnan Arsenal. He found 1,008,968 taels of silver in its treasury. This amount had been accumulated in the past decade through three sources: the Shanghai customs revenue, the entire *likin* revenue of Jiangsu province, and income from the steamship construction industry. Thrilled by this finding, Tieliang swiftly confiscated 804,968 taels, more than 80% of the Arsenal's entire funding.[124] This

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[122] "Tie shilang nanxia zhi guanxi" 铁侍郎南下之关系 [The motive behind Tieliang's southern tour], *Dongfang zazhi* 1, no. 8 (September 1904): 182–83.
[123] Gong Yuzhen 宫玉振, "Tieliang nanxia yu qingmo zhongyang jiquan" 铁良南下与清末中央集权 [Tieliang's southern tour and the centralization of power during the late Qing dynasty]," *Jianghai xuekan* 江海学刊 1 (1994): 154.
[124] " Lun Tie Shilang tiqu zhizaoju cunkuan bashi wan liang shi" 论铁侍郎提取制造局存款八十万两事 [Tieliang's extraction of 800,000 taels of silver from the treasury of the Jiangnan Arsenal], *Dongfang zazhi* 1, no. 9 (October 1904): 223–25.

extraction paralyzed the Arsenal for more than a month until new custom revenues started coming in.

After staying in Shanghai for sixteen days, Tieliang came to Suzhou. This time, he put his hands on the salt tax in Jiangsu. His findings included the following revelations. First, the records on salt tax income for the Huaibei area had stopped at 1898, meaning that the income for the intervening past six years had mysteriously "disappeared." Second, according to the record, in 1902 revenue from the sale of non-Jiangsu-produced salts (those produced in Hunan, Hubei, Jiangxi, and Anhui) was only 125,000 taels. Yet the actual amount should have been 1,680,000 taels—ten times of the reported number. Third, with regard to the ban on the circulation of non-government-produced salt (*siyan*), the officials concerned had secretly made a pact with the major illegal producers and collected 20% of their sales income in exchange for tolerating and even protecting their operations. Fourth, Mo Shensun, the chief of salt tax administration of Wuhe counties in Huaibei, had embezzled 283,000, and his accomplices included eleven other mid-rank tax collectors. Fifth, the Bureau of Salt Tax of Bianyi county in the Huainan areas had confiscated as many as 40,000 bags of smuggled salt every year, yet never once recorded these amounts in the official records. Instead, this salt was sold on the spot and the income became part of the year-end bonus for the bureau employees. The same misdeed was conducted by five other county bureaus in the Huainan and Huaibei areas. Lastly, Tieliang discovered that the taxes levied on Sichuan-produced salt by the salt tax bureaus in Jiangsu were conducted with intentionally unqualified weight scales, thus reducing the original weight to 60% of the total. Furthermore, bureau

administrators had created a tax item called "enguan" (beneficial custom) and levied it with the intent to fatten their purses.[125]

In total, Tieliang discovered that in the past five years, the revenue on salt tax in Huainan should have been 12,000,000 taels, which was 7,000,000 more than the reported number of 5,000,000. He immediately reported this finding to the Board of the Revenue and urged them to allocate a fixed percentage of these newfound revenues to the Commission for Army Reorganization. He then went on to audit another four provincial financial institutions: the Office for the Issue of Money (*zhiying ju*), Likin Station (*lijuan ju*), Office of Foreign Affairs (*yangwu ju*), and Office for the Collection of Consolidated Duties (*tongjuan ju*).[126] It seemed that Tieliang was unstoppable. He was bound to thoroughly audit the whole treasury of Jiangsu and then the other provinces. Then he met his real opponent—Duanfang.

Part III: When Tieliang Met Duanfang: The Mint Profits

While Tieliang was exploiting the absence of Viceroy Wei Guangtao and busy scrutinizing every account book available, Duanfang, the former Hubei governor and newly appointed governor of Jiangsu, was on board the fastest steamship to Suzhou. When Zhang Zhidong and Wei Guangtao were involuntarily removed from the battlefield, they hedged their bets with Duanfang, who had just been transferred from Hubei to Jiangsu. By that time Duanfang had already worked as Zhang's right-hand man for two years. With the absence of Zhang and Wei in the Yangtze region, Duanfang was the only

[125] He, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun," 97.
[126] Ibid., 98.

one left who could stand up against Tieliang. And he would do that not by relying on rank, but by relying on personality and networking.

The tug-of-war between Tieliang and Duanfang, the court tycoon and the provincial lord, was expected to be interesting. Both were prominent, both were famous, and both were leading Manchus of their time. Their contemporaries could not quite agree on what to say about them. In 1911 Scholar Gu Hongming described the Manchus as "the descendants of the only military caste in China who had constantly before them the ideal of self-sacrifice." And Gu concluded, "At present within the Manchu aristocracy, Tieliang is the strongest and best type, and Duanfang is the weakest and worst type."[127] However, another account provides quite the opposite set of characterizations concerning these two men. In 1905, an anti-Manchu activist used suicide bombing tactics to assassinate Manchu officials. In his death note, Wu warned his fellows that Tieliang was the " most treacherous enemy," while praising Duanfang as a remarkable Manchu official whose actions largely deviated from the interests of the Manchu group. The suicide bomber even went so far as to hope that "we Han people could have someone like Duanfang."[128]

If Tieliang was a tough superman, then Duanfang was a paragon of bureaucratic flexibility (we have seen how he maneuvered his immense connections to get the radical students punished in the 1903 Subao incident). But these two Manchu statesmen shared the fame of determination. In this tug-of-war, Tieliang and Duanfang adopted quite different strategies to achieve what they wanted.

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[127] Ku, *The Story of a Chinese Oxford Movement*, 58.
[128] "Jie Tieliang zhi zuizhuan" 揭铁良之罪状 [Revealing Tieliang's crimes], in *Xuehua ji* 血花集 [Flower of blood], ed. Wu Yue 吴樾 (Chongqing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1944), 7–10.

Tieliang was determined to extract as much as he could. Even though aware of the impossibility of thoroughly auditing the provincial treasury in Jiangsu, he wanted to pose as if he would never stop until he got the answer, casualties be damned. The investigation of the bureaus of the salt tax was a good example. Tieliang was decisive and ruthless, revealing scandals and corruption and reporting names to the central bureau without reservation. The purpose was not only to set an example for the other financial institutions in Jiangsu, but also to set an example for the other three provinces he was about to visit. Tieliang had the court's support, and, in order to scare the governors and pressure them into contributing revenues to the Commission for Army Reorganization, he exploited his authority to its fullest extent,.

Some other governors might be scared by superman Tieliang. But Duanfang was not a person easily scared. Even if he appeared to be scared sometime, that was often his strategy to get the enemy to lower his guard. When facing the aggressive Tieliang, Duanfang chose not to confront him directly, but instead opted to sabotage his invasion with two tactics. Duanfang first attempted to weaken Tieliang's support in the court, and then hid any big revenue resources from Tieliang by presenting him with smaller ones. He mobilized a large group of mid-rank bureaucrats in Jiangsu to file complaints about Tieliang's nit-picking working style, and he intentionally leaked these complaints to his acquaintances in major newspapers, thus instigating substantial media coverage. He then asked his close friends in Beijing to spread the stories around the central bureaus.[129] Furthermore, Zhang Zhidong helped Duanfang inform the grand councilors in Beijing

[129] *Duanfang Dang'an* 端方档案 [Duanfang Archives], *Collection of Sent Telegrams* (*qu*), vol. 67, telegrams 2, 4, and 7–12.

about Tieliang's "misdeeds," and Li Lianying—the most powerful eunuch in the 1900s and the closest person to the Empress Dowager—helped to inform Her Majesty.[130]

Through these subtle steps, Duanfang succeeded in getting his message through, and the court responded. In early October an edict was sent to Tieliang, urging him to finish the auditing in Jiangsu immediately and move on to other provinces. As for the malpractices Tieliang had discovered, he was ordered to "suggest them to the Jiangsu governor (Duanfang) and let that governor deal with them."[131]

Knowing that the court's restrictions on Tieliang were on the way, Duanfang gave Tieliang free reign in his inspection of the account books for the Office of the Issue of Money (*zhiying ju*), Likin Station (*lijuan ju*), and Office for the Collection of Consolidated Duties (*tongjuan ju*). Meanwhile, Duanfang intended to use those account books to keep Tieliang's hands so full that Tieliang would not be able to get to the Mint Office anytime soon. The reason was simple: Compared to the salt tax and likin, the profits from minting were the real source of revenue that could not be exploited by the court.

A few words on the non-central minting industry during the late Qing. It was started by Li Hongzhang in Guangdong in 1900. Beginning from the latter half of the 1890s, China suffered from a serious shortage of copper cash (*tongqian*), a shortage that hampered the purchase of products (such as tea) from the peasants. To solve this problem, Li Hongzhang, then viceroy of Lianguang, set up a mint (*tongyuan ju*) in Guangdong, started issuing copper coins, and put this supplementary cash into circulation.

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[130] *Duanfang Dang'an* 端方档案 [Duanfang Archives], *Collection of Correspondences* (*han*), vol. 121, letter 2.
[131] He, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun," 101.

This act proved to be quite effective in meeting the shortage in the money supply for the Guangdong market.[132] The court then ordered the coastal and riverside provinces to follow Guangdong's example. Governors soon found the minting industry highly lucrative and ran it as a regular government enterprise. Until 1905, there were 20 mint factories in 17 provinces, in addition to the central mint operated by the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu zaobi zongchang*). By 1907, the total number had risen to 24.[133]

Scholars working on the New Policy reforms have all singled the minting industry out as an important source of "extra revenue." For instance, according to Stephen MacKinnon, the Beiyang mint (*Beiyang tongyuan ju*) became profitable almost immediately after its establishment in 1902. In 1904 its funds financed the opening of an industrial primary and middle school, and in 1905 "supplied Yuan with 500,000 taels for military purpose."[134] Joseph W. Esherick noted that the provincial government of Hunan "took 4 million taels from the Hunan mint between 1902 and 1911, primarily to support the New Army."[135]

However, an estimation of the total profits of mint factories in the provinces is still unavailable. The governor and provincial treasurer supervised the provincial mint directly and kept its financial information top secret. "The amount of revenue derived from the Hunan and Hubei mints is impossible to determined," says Joseph Esherick in

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[132] Qiu Fanzhen 丘凡真, "Jingqi de bizhi gaige fang'an yu wanqing bizhi wenti" 精琪的币制改革方案与晚清币制问题 [J. W. Jenks' 1904 program for currency reform and the currency problem in late Qing China], *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 3 (2005): 135–36.
[133] Zhao Hongbao 赵洪宝, "Qingmo tongyuan weiji yu Tianjin shanghui de duice" 清末铜元危机与天津商会的对策 [The Tianjin Chamber of Commerce's countermeasure against the currency crisis during the late Qing dynasty], *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 4 (1995): 173.
[134] MacKinnon, *Power and Politics in Late Imperial China*, 59–60.
[135] Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China*, 115.

his monograph on the 1911 revolution.[136] So far what we have are pieces of records: the Jiangsu mint profited around 1,340,000 taels in the three years from March 1904 to July 1906;[137] the Hubei mint gained 746,452 taels in 1905, and roughly 725,000 taels in 1908;[138] the Henan mint yielded 1,050,000 taels from July 1905 to January 1907;[139] and the Jinlin provincial mint made 372,710 in 1908.[140]

In this section I will try to use another method to estimate the total revenue generated by the mint in each province during the decade from 1902 to 1911. Instead of attempting to find additional fragments of records on mint profit, I plan to calculate it based on two figures: the exact profit gained from copper coin minting, and the total number of coins made in each province.

The first step is to find out the itemized costs of minting one coin. The copper coins had six kinds of face values: 50 *wen*, 20 *wen*, 10 *wen*, 5 *wen*, 2 *wen*, and 1 *wen*. Among them the 10-wen one was the most welcome in the market, probably because it was easy to count and its value was neither too high nor too negligible. Because 90% of the coins were made with the face value of 10 *wen*, I will select it here as the main subject of my study.[141]

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[136] Ibid.

[137] Zhang Guohui 张国辉, "Wanqing huobi zhidu yanbian shuyao" 晚清货币制度演变述要 [A survey on the changes in the currency system during the late Qing dynasty], *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 5 (1997): 33.

[138] For the 1905 data, see Qiu, "Jingqi de bizhi gaige fang'an," 138. For the 1908 data, see Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China*, 115.

[139] Zhang, "Wanqing huobi zhidu yanbian shuyao," 33.

[140] Hu Tianqiong 胡天琼, "Qingmo bizhi gaige shuping" 清末币制改革述评 [A survey on the reform of the currency system during the late Qing dynasty], *Xihua shifan daxue xuebao* 西华师范大学学报 3 (2004): 123.

[141] Binxia wuzhi 滨下武志 [Hamashita Takeshi], *Zhongguo jindai jingjishi yanjiu: Qingmo haiguan caizheng yu tongshang kou'an shichangquan* 中国近代经济史研究: 清末海关财政与通商口岸市场圈 [A study on modern Chinese economic history: Qing maritime customs and the market circles of treaty ports], trans. Gao Shujuan 高淑娟 and Sun Bin 孙彬 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2006), 176–77.

In 1906, *Dongfang zazhi* published an article entitled, "A Brief Outline of the Expenses and Profits of Bronze Coin Minting." This article is so far the most comprehensive account on the production procedures and expense of minting copper coins, and is my major source here. Yet when the data from this article is put into a table, the final numbers do not add up to the figure stated in the article. Hence I only use the figures in this article to begin my calculations, but I will draw my own final figure.

There were three major categories of costs in making one 10-wen coin: the price of raw materials (*cailiao kaixiao*), the production cost of raw materials (*xiaohao*), and the expenses from salaries and fuel (*gongtan kaixiao*). First, the raw materials were 95.5% red copper (*zitong*), 4.3% lead (*baiqian*), and 2% tin (*dianxi*). Second, 3.5% of these materials were wasted during the production process.[142] Third, the expenses from salaries and fuel took up 10% of the circulation value.[143]

To simplify the deduction process, I will use one thousand 10-wen coins as my basic calculation unit. Each coin weighed two *qian* (each *qian* weighed 1/160 of one *jin*).[144] Thus one thousand coins weighed 12.5 *jin*. Furthermore, according to the *Dongfang zazhi* article, the circulation value of a 10-wen coin was around 71% of its face

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[142] During the production process, the materials were mostly wasted in three ways: 1.491% during melting (*ronghao* 熔耗), 0.98% during grinding (*sunhao* 損耗), and 1.03% during washing (*xihao* 洗耗).

[143] "Zhu tongyuan benli jianming biao" 铸铜元本利简明表 [Brief outline of the expenses and profits involved in bronze coin minting]," *Dongfang zazhi* 2, no. 9 (October 1905): 195–97.

[144] Zhongguo renmin yinhang canshi shi jinrong shiliao zubian 中國人民銀行參事室金融史料組編, ed., *Zhongguo jindai huobishi ziliao* 中國近代貨幣史資料 [Collected documents on the history of currency in modern China], vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964), 917.

value.[145] Therefore I take the circulation value of one thousand 10-wen coins as 7.1 taels of silver[146].

Table 3.6 shows the itemized cost of making one thousand 10-wen coins. The total cost was 4.9623 taels of silver. Since the circulation value of these coins was 7.1 taels of silver, the total profit from making them was 2.1377 taels. In other words, from the production of every single coin with the face value of 10-wen, the mint factory gained a profit of 2.14 wen.

Table 3.6 Itemized Costs of Making A Thousand 10-Wen Copper Coins

1	Cost of Raw Materials	Metal	Weight (*jin*)	Price per *jin* (tael of silver)	Weight * Price (tael of silver)	Total (tael of silver)
		Red Copper	11.9375	0.34	4.05875	4.1085
		Lead	0.5375	0.09	0.0484	
		Tin	0.0250	0.05	0.0013	
2	Cost of Wastage of Raw Materials	4.1085 * 0.035 (3.5 % of the cost of raw material)				0.1438
3	Cost of Salaries and Fuel	7.1 * 10% (10% of the circulation value)				0.7100
A: Total Cost of Making A Thousand 10-wen Coins						4.9623
B: Circulation Value of A Thousand 10-Wen Coins						7.1000
C: Profit in Making A Thousand 10-Wen Coins (C=A-B)						2.1377
D: Profit in Making One 10-Wen Coin (D=C/1000)						0.00214

Sources:

1. "Zhu tongyuan benli jianming biao" 铸铜元本利简明表 [Brief outline of the expenses and profits involved in bronze coin minting]," *Dongfang zazhi* 2, no. 9 (October 1905): 195–97.
2. Zhongguo renmin yinhang canshi shi jinrong shiliao zubian 中國人民銀行參事室金融史料組編, ed., *Zhongguo jindai huobishi ziliao* 中國近代貨幣史資料 [Collected documents on the history of currency in modern China], vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964), 923–24.

[145] In the article, the circulation value of 48,250 ten-wen coins was evaluated at 34.46 taels of silver; thus, on average the circulation value of one ten-wen coin was 7.1 *wen*, or 71% of its face value.
[146] For convenience in calculation, I here assume that one tael of silver is equivalent to one thousand *wen* of bronze coins.

The second step is to count the total number of coins made in each province during the last decade of the Qing. My main sources for this number are two tables that were compiled by a Chinese archivist and a Japanese historian, respectively. The first one is from the source book, *Collected Documents on the History of Currency in Modern China*, which was published by the People's Bank of China (PBC) in 1964. The editor for this volume gathered pieces from both central and provincial officials' memorials relating to coin minting and put them together in a table.[147] The second table was compiled by Hamashita Takeshi, the world specialist on the history of the Chinese maritime customs, and is based on multiple monographs of Chinese economic history.[148] Because the first source covers the time period 1900-1907 and the second one covers the time period 1900-1913, I take their averages as the estimated number. Since 10-wen coins accounted for almost all of the coins minted, I have converted all of my figures to the 10-wen unit.

Table 3.7 below lists the volume of coins made in each province. The numbers are huge. Hunan minted 5.4 billion coins, Hubei 5.3 billion, and Jiangsu 3.6 billion. Fourth and fifth place were taken by Zhili and Guangdong, both of which produced over a billion. In addition to these top five, four other provinces (Zhejiang, Henan, Fujian, and Anhui) minted over half billion coins each. Even though the profit from minting a 10-wen coin was only 0.00214 taels of silver, when we multiply it with the number of coins produced, the total profits were enormous. Hunan and Hubei both profited by eleven million taels of silver, and Jiangsu by seven million. Six provinces (Anhui, Fujian,

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[147] Zhongguo renmin yinhang canshi shi jinrong shiliao zubian, ed., *Zhongguo jindai huobishi ziliao*, 917–22.
[148] Hamashita, *Zhongguo jindai jingjishi yanjiu*, 176–77.

Guangdong, Henan, Zhejiang, and Zhili) made one or two million. For these provinces, the mints were literally a money-making machine.

Table 3.7: Estimated Profits of Copper Coin Making in Provinces, 1900-1910

Province	Years of Minting	No. of 10-Wen Coins Made			Profit per Coin(taels of silver)	Total Profits (taels of silver)
		PBC's Estimation	Hamashita's Estimation	Average Number		
Anhui	4 (1902-06)	519,361,334	519,361,500	519,361,417	0.00214	1,111,433
Fujian	11(1900-10)	426,304,117	695,713,000	561,008,559	0.00214	1,200,558
Guangdong	11(1900-10)	963,854,700	1,154,726,000	1,059,290,350	0.00214	2,266,881
Henan	6(1905-10)	230,545,880	911,645,000	571,095,440	0.00214	1,222,144
Hubei	9(1902-10)	3,759,986,345	6,824,792,200	5,292,389,273	0.00214	11,325,713
Hunan	9(1902-10)	812,315,925	10,095,304,000	5,453,809,963	0.00214	11,671,153
Jiangsu	6(1901-06, 08)	3,228,313,391	3,893,781,000	3,561,047,196	0.00214	7,620,641
Jiangxi	9(1902-10)	379,722,376	379,722,000	379,722,188	0.00214	812,605
Shandong	4(1903-06)	296,274,556	286,274,200	291,274,378	0.00214	623,327
Sichuan	7(1904-10)	275,512,944	281,457,500	278,485,222	0.00214	595,958
Yunnan	4(1907-10)	N/A	17,951,000	17,951,000	0.00214	38,415
Zhejiang	4(1903-06)	821,017,384	984,360,400	902,688,892	0.00214	1,931,754
Zhili	6(1905-10)	682,180,520	1,440,662,400	1,061,421,460	0.00214	2,271,442
Total		**12,395,389,472**	**27,485,750,200**	**19,949,545,336**		**42,692,027**

Sources:

1. Zhongguo renmin yinhang canshi shi jinrong shiliao zubian 中國人民銀行參事室金融史料組編, ed., *Zhongguo jindai huobishi ziliao* 中國近代貨幣史資料 [Collected documents on the history of currency in modern China], vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1964), 917–22.

Table 3.7 Continued:
Sources:

2. Binxia wuzhi 滨下武志 [Hamashita Takeshi], *Zhongguo jindai jingjishi yanjiu: Qingmo haiguan caizheng yu tongshang kou'an shichangquan* 中国近代经济史研究: 清末海关财政与通商口岸市场圈 [A study on modern Chinese economic history: Qing maritime customs and the market circles of treaty ports], trans. Gao Shujuan 高淑娟 and Sun Bin 孙彬 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2006), 176–77.
3. Table 3.6

Now let us come back to the Tieliang-Duanfang story. As stated before, Duanfang gave Tieliang free hands on the account books of *likin* and other salt taxes in order to prevent Tieliang from exploring the operation of mint factories. This was quite a smart move when we consider the annual gain for Jiangsu's provincial treasury from minting copper coins. Jiangsu's minting industry posted an annual profit of 1.3 million taels, which was 1.5 times that of the 0.85 million that the court demanded.

In Table 3.8 below, I compare the mint profit in each province with the amount requested by the court for central military reform. In Jiangsu, Hubei, Hunan, and Zhejiang, the annual profit from coin minting alone was equal or almost equal to the amount the court requested. Though Anhui's annual profit was less than these four provinces, it too could easily assume almost four-fifths the required "military contribution." From Table 3.5 we can see that Tieliang inspected Jiangsu, Anhui, Hubei, and Hunan during his audit trip. We can also imagine that if Tieliang discovered the real numbers behind the minting industry, he would have been determined to take away substantial parts of these profits from the provincial treasuries.

Table 3.8 Estimated Annual Profits of Minting in the Provinces, 1900-1910 (value: tael of silver)

Provinces	A: Total Provincial Profit	B: No. of Years of Minting	C: Annual Provincial Profit	D: Amount Requested by the Court	E=A/D (%)	F=C/D (%)
Anhui	1,111,433	4 (1902-06)	277,858	350,000	317.55%	79.39%
Fujian	1,200,558	11 (1900-10)	109,142	400,000	300.14%	27.29%
Guangdong	2,266,881	11 (1900-10)	206,080	850,000	266.69%	24.24%
Henan	1,222,144	6 (1905-10)	203,691	400,000	305.54%	50.92%
Hubei	11,325,713	9 (1902-10)	1,258,413	500,000	2265.14%	251.68%
Hunan	11,671,153	9 (1902-10)	1,296,795	400,000	2917.79%	324.20%
Jiangsu	7,620,641	6 (1901-06, 08)	1,270,107	850,000	896.55%	149.42%
Jiangxi	812,605	9 (1902-10)	90,289	500,000	162.52%	18.06%
Shandong	623,327	4 (1903-06)	155,832	550,000	113.33%	28.33%
Sichuan	595,958	7 (1904-10)	85,137	800,000	74.49%	10.64%
Yunnan	38,415	4 (1907-10)	9,604	200,000	19.21%	4.80%
Zhejiang	1,931,754	4 (1903-06)	482,939	500,000	386.35%	96.59%
Zhili	2,271,442	6 (1905-10)	378,574	1,100,000	206.49%	34.42%

Sources: Table 3.3, Table 3.7

However, it seemed that Duanfang successfully prevented Tieliang from figuring out the actual numbers. In total, Tieliang collected 1,020,000 taels from Jiangsu. This was a large amount. But when we look into the individual components of his collections (see Table 3.9, originally composed by He Hanwei), we find that he only extracted 200,000 taels from the minting industries. In other words, Tieliang took away only 10% of the coin-making revenue in Jiangsu.

Table 3.9 The Total Amount of Silver Taels Tieliang Collected from Jiangsu Province in 1904

Supplied Institution	Item	**Amount** (taels)
Office for the Issue of Money (*zhiying ju*)	Lottery profits	80,000
Office for the Issue of Money (*zhiying ju*)	Accumulated deposits	60,000
Office of Building (*gongcheng ju*)	Accumulated deposits	360,000
Likin Station (*lijuan ju*)	Accumulated deposits	110,000

Table 3.9 Continued:

Supplied Institution	**Item**	**Amount** (tael)
Jianghai Custom (*jianghai guan*)	Commodity Export Income	Around 160,000
Mint (*tongyuan ju*)	Minting profits	Around 200,000
Office for the Collection of Consolidated Duties (*tongjuan ju*)	Accumulated deposits	50,000
Total		**Around 1,020,000**

Source: He Hanwei, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun kan zhongyang he difang de caizheng guanxi," *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 68, no. 1 (1997): 95.

Tieliang left Jiangsu on November 29, 1904. After that he stayed in Anhui province for 15 days, Jiangxi for 14 days, Hunan for 15 days, and Hubei for 33 days. Governors of these provinces had received tips from Duanfang on how to deal with the audit. First, do not confront Tieliang directly. Second, gather a few hundred thousand taels that can be offered to Tieliang upon his arrival. Third, give Tieliang ample freedom in his investigation of the tax and custom revenue, but prevent him from getting any insider information on minting profits. Finally, generate media coverage on Tieliang's misdeeds so as to pressure him to shorten his stay.[149] The governors—Liankui in Anhui, Xia Yan in Jiangxi, Lu Yuanding in Hunan, and Zhang Zhidong in Hubei—applied these tips quite well.

Tieliang's last stop was Hubei province, where the mint industries brought in 1.3 million taels a year. Before Tieliang arrived in the capital city of Wuchang, Zhang Zhidong had already finished his audience with the emperor and had hurried back. Zhang handed over 500,000 taels to Tieliang on the spot and promised the contribution of another 500,000 taels during the coming year. On February 14, 1905, Tieliang left Wuchang with 1,000,000 taels added to the account of the Commission for Army

[149] Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Sent Correspondences*, vol. 3, letter 5.

Reorganization. Zhang Zhidong got to keep the Hubei coin-making profits intact. Furthermore, Zhang and Tieliang also made a pact on the Jiangnan Arsenal. A northern branch would be set up in Tianjin, jointly funded by Hubei and Jiangsu provinces. But the original factory would remain in the Yangtze region.

Part IV: Other Governors in Cahoots: On the Joint Opium Tax System

Tieliang returned to Beijing in late February and was soon promoted to president of the Board of Revenue. Though the governors lost a chunk of their revenues, they also managed to protect the important ones. However, the story did not end there. Besides the land tax, salt tax, regular custom revenue, and mint profit, there was another important revenue source at the provincial level in the 1900s: the interprovincial opium custom. From the previous section we saw how insider knowledge on the operation of coin minting and the profits it generated had by and large been kept from the court. Compared to the coin-minting process, the interprovincial opium custom was newer and more opaque. It did not start until January 1904, and the exact amount of revenue was accessible only to governors, provincial treasurers, and the head of customs.

Tieliang appears to have been unaware of the existence of this high-volume-profit item when he left Beijing on August 20, 1904. Throughout his 165-day long trip to the four southern provinces, governors like Duanfang and Zhang Zhidong had tried their best to hide the interprovincial opium revenue. But what they did not know was that Tieliang had found a informant who not only revealed to him the details concerning this hidden revenue, but also advised him on how best to "coerce" the governors into handing over such revenues to the court. Therefore, while the governors of the four provinces were

counting down the days before Tieliang's departure, Tieliang himself had secretly memorialized the court about the interprovincial opium custom. And by the time Tieliang returned to Beijing on February 14, 1905, the court had already issued an edict to the four governors requesting a contribution of 60% of the annual revenues of the interprovincial opium custom.[150]

I would like to draw attention here to the superb new work of historian Liu Zenghe at Zhongshan University. His *Opium Revenue and the New Policy Reforms at the End of the Qing Dynasty* (*Yapian Shuishou yu Qingmo xinzheng*, 2005) describes how the ups and downs of the opium revenue contributed or even determined the course of the New Policy reforms. Here I draw on his painstaking and meticulous research concerning the interprovincial opium revenues in order to complete the story of Tieliang's southern audit.

The official levying of an opium tax had started as early as 1851, but the interprovincial opium custom did not come into practice until 1904. It came as a joint attempt by the provincial governors to standardize the tax rates of locally produced opium in a multi-province region. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, the tax rates of locally produced opium were quite different in each province (see Table 3.10, originally composed by Liu Zenghe).

Table 3.10: Tax Rates of Locally Produced Opium in Sixteen Provinces in 1903
(Unit: silver tael / 100 pounds)

Province	**Tax Rate**	**Province**	**Tax Rate**	**Province**	**Tax Rate**	**Province**	**Tax Rate**
Anhui	20	Guangdong	30	Jiangsu	30	Sichuan	10 (to leave the province)

[150] "Tieliang zou shiban bashing tugao tongjuan" 铁良奏试办八省土膏统捐 [Tieliang's memorial on the eight-province joint opium tax], *Dongfang zazhi* 2, no. 1 (February 1905): 9–12.

Table 3.10 Continued:

Province	Tax Rate	Province	Tax Rate	Province	Tax Rate	Province	Tax Rate
Fengtian	50	Henan	33	Jiangxi	43	Yunnan	6 or 12 (to leave the province)
Fujian	35	Hubei	32	Shaanxi	35	Zhejiang	48
Gansu	16.6	Hunan	16 or 26 (transit duty)	Shanxi	55	Zhilii	20

Source: Liu Zenghe 刘增合, "Yapian shuishou yu qingmo xingxue xinzheng" 鸦片税收与清末兴学新政 [Opium revenues and late Qing educational reform], *Shehui kexue yanjiu* 社会科学研究 1 (2004): 44.

As a result, opium producers and traders always took advantage of the regional differences in tax rates. They either dodged the native tax by smuggling the opium to another province, or used interprovincial routes to transport the opium so as to avoid going through places with higher tax rates. These alternate routes had given the tax bureaus big headaches and cost them a large portion of the income.

In 1903, Hubei governor Duanfang and Hunan governor Zhao Erxun proposed a joint tax system of opium trade between their jurisdictions. Zhang Zhidong, who was then in Beijing, helped to get this proposal approved by the court. With the establishment in January 1904 of a standard tax rate in Hubei and Hunan, opium traders saved time and energy formerly spent dodging the tax bureaus. In turn, the government saved time and energy formerly spent tracking the illegal traders down, and began to receive regular incomes from universal taxation. The revenue was considerable. From January 1904 to January 1905, 1,324,897 taels of opium custom revenue flowed into the treasuries of

Hubei and Hunan provinces. The two provincial treasuries divided this 1.32 million evenly.[151]

After Zhang Zhidong came back to Hubei, he mobilized the governors of Jiangxi and Anhui to join Hunan and Hubei in the joint tax system. Therefore the standard tax rate of locally produced opium was expanded to a four-province region: Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi, and Anhui. The figures for Jiangxi's and Anhui's gains from this pact are not available. But we can speculate that they were not inconsiderable, or else the provinces would not have agreed on the pact in the first place.[152]

Inspired by this four-province collaboration, the governors of Guangdong and Guangxi also started their own pact in late 1904. In an official statistical report compiled by the Guangdong treasury in 1910, we can see that from November 1904 to October 1906, the Guangdong treasury profited by 1.54 million taels, and Guangxi treasury by 1.67 million. And according to the *Shenbao* journalists, these figures were still underestimated.[153]

Governors tried to keep the actual revenue of the joint opium tax system a secret, but a informant soon emerged. Sun Tingli was one of Zhang Zhidong's closest subordinates and former deputy director of the Hubei Opium Bureau. In July 1904 Sun got into a vicious fight with Zhang over a deficit issue and was subsequently dismissed that same month. To enact his revenge on Zhang, Sun went to Tieliang in December 1904 and informed him about the profitable opium custom.

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[151] Liu, *Yapian shuishou yu qingmo xinzheng*, 49.
[152] Ibid., 51.
[153] Ibid., 52–53.

After learning about this big "hidden" revenue, Tieliang was determined to cut a piece out of it. He first suggested that the court request a contribution of 60% of the annual revenues of the interprovincial opium custom.[154] Then he went further and proposed that the court should take entire control over the current four-province system and also incorporate another four provinces. The Grand Council approved Tieliang's proposal and designed the eight-province joint opium tax system (the eight provinces were Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi, Anhui, Guangdong, Huxi, Sichuan, and Guizhou). The governors were ordered to put this system into practice before April 1905.[155]

Putting eight provinces in one camp was a good plan for financial centralization, but it also resulted in a severe disturbance within the entrenched inter-provincial chain of opium trade. In the former system, Sichuan and Guizhou produced opium, and the other provinces consumed and traded opium. Among the six consumer/trader provinces, Guangdong and Guangxi belonged to one camp, while Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi, and Anhui belonged to another. The former one imported opium from Sichuan and Guizhou via land transport, usually setting the major customs in the mountain passes. The latter one imported opium via water transport, and naturally set the customs along the Yangzi and other rivers.

In other words, the eight provinces belonged to three different camps of interest: Sichuan and Guizhou constituted the producer camp, Guangdong and Guangxi the land-transportation consumer camp, and the remaining four provinces constituted the water-transportation consumer camp. Tax rates in the three provinces were and should be

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[154] "Tieliang zou shiban bashing tugao tongjuan," 9–12.
[155] Liu, *Yapian shuishou yu qingmo xinzheng*, 54.

different. It should be cheaper to trade opium in the place of production than in the place of consumption. And since the costs of shipping opium through mountain passes are naturally higher than through shipping along river routes, the land-transportation and water-transportation camps should be justified in determining their own tax rates.

Now the court was trying to force these three camps into one and establish a joint opium tax system within the eight-province region. This time, eight governors (Zhang Zhidong in Hubei, Zhao Erxun in Hunan, Duanfang in Jiangsu, Hu Tinggan in Jiangxi, Zhang Zengyang in Anhui, Cen Chunxuan in Guangdong, Li Jingyi in Guangxi, Xiliang in Sichuan, and Li Shaonian in Guizhou) formed an alliance to deal with this order. The strategy was procrastination. Governors quietly kept the presidents on the Board of Revenue busy with paperwork: memorials sent to the board from individual governors, joint memorials sent to the board from multiple governors, correspondences among governors that were intentionally forwarded to the board, and many more. As late as May 1905, one month after the original deadline, the central and provincial bureaus still had not reached a conclusion on the details of the opium tax rate.[156]

The stalemate was broken when the court yielded on the personnel issue, which concerned the power to appoint the person recommended by the provinces as the Superintendent of the Native Opium Exercise (*duban tuyao tongshui shiwu dachen*). At that time Ke Fengshi had just left the office of governor of Guangxi and was about to take up the position of governor of Guizhou. Before that he was the provincial treasurer of Jiangxi. He was also a disciple of Zhang Zhidong, who picked him out in the 1883 civil service exam.

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[156] Liu, *Yapian shuishou yu qingmo xinzheng*, 68–76.

Ke took the office in June 1905. In the following two years, he worked as a mediator between the Board of Revenue and the provinces. His design of the eight-province tax system, along with its application, have been discussed in detail in Li Zenghe's book. Overall, it is estimated that the total revenue generated by the interprovincial opium custom amounted to 52 million taels, 31 million of which stayed in the provinces.[157]

Part V: Results of the Wrestle

Tieliang started his 165-day inspection tour of the Yangtze region with the goal of scrutinizing the provincial treasuries and securing many millions of taels for the metropolitan army. The second part of the mission was accomplished quite well. By the end of his trip, he had obtained a total of 4.3 million taels from Shanghai and the four provinces he visited (see Table 3.12 below). This amount alone had already taken up 52.1% of the 8.36 million taels the court had originally requested from the provinces. Since five provinces (the Yangzi four and Zhili) had paid the full amount that the court requested, governors of the other provinces had to follow their examples. By early 1905, 8.36 million taels were recquisitioned for expenses within the Commission for Army Reorganization.[158] Furthermore, Tieliang's inspection led to the establishment of the eight-province joint opium tax system, which in all brought the court 21 million taels over the next five years.

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[157] Ibid., 76.
[158] He, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun," 101.

Table 3.11: The Reported Amount Tieliang Collected from the Southern Inspection, 1904-05

Provinces	**Item and the Supplied Institutions**	**Amount** (tael)
Shanghai	Accumulated deposits of the Jiangnan Arsenal	804,968
	Accumulated deposits of the Shanghai treasury	780,000
Jiangsu	Lottery profits of the Office for the Issue of Money	80,000
	Accumulated deposits of the Office for the Issue of Money	60,000
	Accumulated deposits of the Office of Buidling	360,000
	Accumulated deposits of *Likin* Station	110,000
	Commodity Export Income of Jianghai Custom	160,000
	Minting profits	200,000
	Accumulated deposits of the Office for the Collection of Consolidated Duties	50,000
Hubei	Accumulated deposits of the Hubei Treasury	1,000,000
Hunan	Accumulated deposits of the Hunan Treasury	400,000
Anhui	Accumulated deposits of the Anhui Treasury	350,000
Total		**4,354,968**

Sources:

1. "Ping Tie shilang zhi nanxia" 评铁侍郎之南下 [Comments on Tieliang's southern tour], *Dongfang zazhi* 1, no. 8 (September 1904): 181–85.
2. "Lun Tie shiliang tiqu zhizaoju bashiwan liang cunkuan" 论铁侍郎提取制造局八十万两存款 [Tieliang's extraction of 800,000 taels of silver from the treasury of Jiangnan Arsenal], *Dongfang zazhi* 1, no. 9 (October 1904): 223–25.
3. "Tieliang zoucha Jiangsu sikusuo kuanxiang" 铁侍郎奏查江苏司库所款项 [The amount of savings in the Jiangsu treasury as reported by Tieliang to the court], *Dongfang zazhi* 2, no. 1 (February 1905): 7–9.
4. He, "Cong qingmo Gangyi Tieliang nanxun," 95–101.
5. Table 3.10

Interestingly enough, although Tieliang managed to procure 4.3 million taels from the four provinces he inspected, he was unable to scrutinize the provincial treasuries as he had originally planned. In Jiangsu, he did gain access to a considerable number of records in the Bureau of Salt Tax, Office for the Issue of Money, and some *likin* stations and local customs. But his scrutiny persisted for only a month before Duanfang stopped him with the court order. He had very limited knowledge on the operations of the mint industry, let alone fathoming how lucrative it was. In other words, Tieliang's audit of the

Jiangsu treasury, though meticulous and intimidating, did not really touch the most opaque and "local" part. When he visited the other three provinces, the governors there had already received tips from Duanfang and they succeeded in diverting Tieliang's attention from the most profitable revenues.

The control of finance is always an issue of intense concern in the study of the New Policy reforms. But here I would like to draw attention to another aspect of power, that is, the control of personnel. During and after his inspection, Tieliang sent a number of reports to the Grand Council, the Board of Wars, and the Board of Revenue, revealing the misdeeds and inefficiency of the provincial bureaucrats. Yet in the end only one incumbent—Mo Shensun, the chief of the salt tax administration in Wuhe county in Huaibei—was punished.[159] He had acquired eight thousand taels from the treasury of the Jiangnan Arsenal, but did not manage to relocate it to north China. The Jiangnan Arsenal remained under the control of the Shanghai and Jiangsu officials. Mo acquired over three million taels from the treasury of four Yangzi provinces, but did not succeed in seizing the power to appoint and discharge local officials. As we can see from chapter two, a governor's biggest asset for favor exchange was the large pool of positions within his jurisdiction that were under his disposal. Furthermore, in the race for the appointment of the Superintendent of the Native Opium Exercise, Mo again lost to the southern governors when his preferred man was not selected by the court.

In this sense, the southern governors also emerged as winners in the tug-of-war with Tieliang and the central bureaus that backed him. They used Tieliang's inspection

[159] "Ping Tie shilang zhi nanxia" 评铁侍郎之南下 [Comments on Tieliang's southern tour], *Dongfang zazhi* 1, no. 8 (September 1904): 182.

as an opportunity to draw a clear territorial boundary between the center and the provinces. The court's extractions and political maneuverings concentrated on gaining larger short-term revenues. But the governors retained their monopoly of control over financial institutions and provincial personnel.

Tieliang was a straightforward man. Scholar Gu Hongming compared him to "cement"—bigoted but with a strong sense of honor and duty, and rigid but with true integrity.[160] He was determined at all costs to organize a strong army for China. Toward this goal he was willing to overcome a series of obstacles: fund shortages, the collaboration of provincial governors, and the misdeeds and illegalities that ultimately cost the government money. He loved order, and worshiped rules.

But the game of governance in China was never about strict rules; it was about people. In chapter one we saw that the operation and mediation of any national projects ultimately rested in the hands of 118 officials. The allocation of the empire's financial, military, and cultural resources in the end accorded with the human landscape of the upper echelon of the government. Capable statesmen excelled not just in the skill of solving problems, but also in preventing problems from developing by meddling bureaucrats. Duanfang understood this unnamed principle and endeavored to draw a consensus among his high colleagues. His control of the appointment of numerous positions further enabled his political networking. That is why he could stop Tieliang's attack by bringing in an order from the court—the very party Tieliang was fighting for. And that is why, despite Tieliang's multiple memorials to the Grand Council and the

[160] Ku, *The Story of a Chinese Oxford Movement*, 55.

Board of Revenues concerning very specific proposals on how to clean up the provincial administrations, few of these proposals actually received positive responses.[161]

Due to its monetary success, Tieliang's southern inspection tour seemed to be an indication of increased centralization. But the inspection tour also accelerated the process of provincialization (or even federalization) within southern China. The pressure from the center not only pushed the governors to work with one another, but also boosted their reputations in the provinces. Chapters one and two discussed the human landscape behind the New Policy reforms. We saw that the New Policy reforms did not come into being as a historical necessity, but was rather single-handedly launched by a small group of provincial leaders who rose to power following the unexpected Boxer debacle. This chapter has focused on the funding resources of the reform projects. In the next chapter, we will elaborate on the rather disappointing results of the reform by 1907 and how the original reformers—men like Yuan Shikai, Duanfang, and Cen Chunxuan—adopted different strategies to make it through the crisis.

[161] Li Bingzhi李炳之, "Wo suo zhidao de Tieliang" 我所知道的铁良 [My impressions of Tieliang]," in *Wenshi ziliao xuan* 文史资料选辑 [Selected collection of historical materials], vol. 120, ed. Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi quanguo weishi ziliao weiyuanhui 中国人民政治协商会议全国委员会文史资料委员会 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2006), 112–13.

Chapter Four—To Pump or Not to Pump: The 1907 Flood Relief and Duanfang's Spending Choice

Part I: Year 1907: The Achievement of the New Policy Reforms?

The New Policies passed a quiet sixth birthday in 1907. In a sense, there was not that much to celebrate. While the reform movement had been inaugurated with such fanfare after the Boxer disaster, by 1907 even its strongest supporters had to admit that the problems exceeded their expectations. Let me begin with a summary of the jewel in the crown of the New Policies: the educational reform.

The landmark event of the late Qing educational reform was the abolishment of the civil service exam in 1905. When Zhang Zhidong, Yuan Shikai, and other four top officials jointly proposed this move, their reasons were strong: the civil service exam, they alleged, the content of which is wholly classical, allows for little progress in any of the walks of science, literature, or art. The new schools, with their comprehensive and pragmatic curriculum, were the real places for education. However, due to their obsession with the civil service exam, most people were still shunning the new schools. Therefore, in order to train China's future elite and expand the educational opportunities of the general public, the examination had to be terminated.[162]

The court immediately approved this proposal in September 1905. From then on the candidate pool for elite recruitment was made up of two main groups: students educated abroad and the graduates of the new Chinese schools. For students educated abroad, the government set up an annual standard exam, awarded them nine ranks of

[162] Liao Yizhong 廖一中 and Luo Zhenrong 罗真容, eds., *Yuan Shikai zouyi* 袁世凯奏议 [Collection of Yuan Shikai's memorials], vol. 3 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1987), 1187.

official titles, and recruited the best ones. From 1905 to 1911, seven annual exams were held, with 1,388 students qualifying.[163] *Jinshi* titles were awarded to 170 of the top students, while the rest received *juren* titles. Ultimately, 989 of these students acquired positions in the government.[164] For those who studied in the new Chinese schools, they were also awarded low-rank official titles upon graduation and became eligible to compete for the government posts.[165]

An overseas degree was apparently the best credential for the job market. Since the cost of studying in Europe or the U.S. was extremely high, Japan, as the leading Asian country, became the destination of most people. In 1887, the number of Chinese students studying in Japan was only 77, but by 1899 it had risen to 143, and then 159 by 1900, 266 by 1901, 727 by 1902, 1,242 by 1903, 2,557 by 1904, before finally rocketing up to 8,000 by 1905.[166] By 1911, 38,330 Chinese students had studied in Japan.[167] Normally, the coursework for a degree in Japan required at least three years, but the majority of the students could not afford either the money nor the time to stay in Japan for that long. Hence accelerated courses, which took only three to seven months to

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[163] Zhang Xiaodong 张晓东, "Feichu keju hou qingchao wenguan luyong de zhuangyehua he jishuhua" 废除科举后清朝文官录用的专业化和技术化 [The emphasis on professionalization and technical expertise in the recruitment of civil officials after the abolishment of the civil service exam system], *Linyi shifan xueyuan xuebao* 临沂师范学院学报 2 (2001): 44.

[164] Guo Xinyao 郭新曜, "Qingmo liuxue guiguo kaoshi yu qing zhengfu liuxue jiaoyu zhengce de bianhua" 清末留学归国考试与清政府留学教育政策的变化 [The government exams held for students educated abroad and policies for sending students abroad during the late Qing dynasty]," *Changsha tiedao xuanyuan xuebao* 长沙铁道学院学报 3 (2008): 6.

[165] Zhang, " Feichu keju hou qingchao," 45.

[166] Zhang Wei 张玮, "Qingmo minchu Zhongguo liuxue jiaoyu de duoyuan quxiang" 清末民初中国留学教育的多元趋向 [Diverse trends of overseas education in China during the late Qing and early Republican period]," *Jiaoyu lilun yu shijian* 教育理论与实践 26, no. 12 (December 2006): 11.

[167] Zhang Yaqun 张亚群, "Lun qingmo liuxue jiaoyu de fazhan" 论清末留学教育的发展[The development of overseas education during the late Qing dynasty]," *Huaqiao daxue xuebao* 华侨大学学学报 4 (2000): 71.

complete, became the most attended types of course among the numerous Chinese who swarmed into Japan. So overwhelming was the demand that several major universities, including Meiji University, established quick programs specifically for Chinese students. In the end more than 70% of the Chinese students in Japan graduated from accelerated courses instead of regular ones. Waseda University was the only institution that insisted on enrolling only those Chinese students who were committed to a three-year program. However, the result was disappointing: of the mere 4,000 students who began their studies at Waseda, less than 5% actually completed their degree.[168]

Half of the 38,330 students were sponsored by the Qing provincial governments. Based on the archival records of the Education Bureau of Yunnan province, the cost of a three-year program was 1,516 taels of silver at minimum—1,116 for tuition, room, and board, and 400 for travel expenses. A six-month short program cost much less, but also amounted to five or six hundred taels.[169] In other words, from 1901 to 1911, more than one million taels were drained from the provincial treasuries in order to support Chinese students in Japan. And in forerunner provinces such as Hubei, Jiangsu, and Zhili, sending students to Japan amounted to a million-tael project every year.

However, these big expenses brought disappointing results. Most students went to Japan with little knowledge of Japanese, and the accelerated programs they attended were way too short to help improve their language skills, let alone general knowledge. In Jiangsu province, for example, the typical study cycle took on a familiar sequence of events. Following the Spring Festival, a group of several hundred students, including

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[168] Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*, 56–58.

[169] Zhou Liying 周立英, "Wanqing Yunnan liu Ri xuesheng de xuanbo ji xiangguan qingkuang" 晚清云南留日学生的选拔及相关情况 [The Yunnan government's selection of students to study abroad during the late Qing dynasty], *Xueshu tansuo* 学术探索 1 (2004): 113.

those with the *juren* degree, incumbent bureaucrats, fresh high school graduates, or even fresh college graduates, set out to Japan on government money. Upon their arrival in Japan, 70% of them would enroll in a "law and politics" (*fazheng ban*) program, the classes for which were mainly lectures without exams. Four to six months later, despite the fact that most of them could only manage a superficial conversation in Japanese, these students all came home as "Japan-trained legal/political specialists." Then in the fall, another group left for Japan, and the circle started all over again."

The academic quality of these short programs was so bad that in the end even the Japanese government could not tolerate it. In November 1906, with the consent of the Chinese Education Ministry, the Japanese government announced the "Regulations Concerning Government and Private Schools for Admitting Chinese Students." This regulation "tightened qualifications for study abroad and limited, then prohibited, the dispatch of new short course scholarship students to Japan."[170] Beginning in 1908, the total number of students in Japan sharply declined. Provincial governments spent millions of taels on tuition for a Japanese education, thereby underwriting the peak "age of studying in Japan" from 1902 to 1907, before seeing it come to a crashing halt.

Unfortunately, the result of sending students to study in Europe and the U.S. was not much better. From 1902 to 1907, the number of Chinese students studying in the West was much less than that in Japan. By 1907, there had been a total of only 401—301 in Europe, 100 in the U.S.—which was less than 3% of the total studying in Japan.[171] The reason for this sharp difference was simple and straightforward: studying in the West

[170] Reynolds, *China, 1898–1912*, 61.
[171] Zhang, "Qingmo minchu zhongguo liuxue jiaoyu de duoyuan quxiang," 10.

was too expensive. Almost every article and book on late Qing educational reform notes this point. But the question of how expensive remains unanswered. In the Duanfang Archives I found twelve letters addressed to Duanfang that were written by Hubei students studying in Germany and France in 1903. In these letters the students mentioned the amount of tuition, rent, food expense, and other costs. Based on these details, I have drawn an estimation of their annual expenses (see Table 4.1 below).

Table 4.1: One Student's Itemized Cost of Studying in Germany, France, and Japan in 1903

	Germany		France	Japan
	Mark	**Tael**	**Tael**	**Tael**
Monthly Rent	200	67.8	72	
Annual Rent	2,400	813.6	894	
Other Monthly Expenses	14.75	5	36	
Other Annual Expenses	177	60	432	
Monthly Tuition	300	101.7	36	
Annual Tuition	3,600	1,220.4	432	
Summer Travel Expenses	59	20	N/A	
One Year's Expenses		2,114	1,758	372
Three Years' Expenses		6,342	5,184	1,116
Four Years' Expenses		8,456	7,032	
Relocation Expenses		600	600	300

Notes: 1 mark=0.339 taels of silver. I have calculated this rate from two sources. The first is Jiang Lichang 蒋立场, *Qingmo yinjia biandong yanjiu* 清末银价变动研究 [A study of the fluctuation of silver prices during the late Qing dynasty, 1901–1911] (master's thesis, Suzhou University, 2004). In Table 1.5 on page 9 he estimates that in the 1900s, one ounce of silver was equivalent to 0.54 American dollars. The second source is Harold Marcuse's webpage article, "Historian Dollar-to-Marks Currency Conversion," in which he states that before 1915, one American dollar was equivalent to 4.198 marks.

Sources: Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Correspondences*, vol. 4, letters 1–12.

As we can see, the cost of one student's study in Germany for a year was enough for him to study in Japan for six years, while the cost of one student's study in France was enough for him to study in Japan for almost five years. I have not been able to find similar data regarding the cost of studying in the U.S., but based on the correspondences

in Duanfang Archives, the U.S. was one of the most expensive countries to go to at that time. To study in the West was not just far pricier, but also took much longer. Different from their counterparts in Japan, most Chinese students who went to Europe or the U.S. studied for regular degrees, which meant four years for an undergraduate college degrees, three years for a master's degree, or five to six years for both.[172] Upon earning the degree, each of these students had already spent between seven to nine thousand taels of silver. By comparison, this amount alone was enough to support the operation of two girls' normal schools in Jiangsu.[173]

Because of such high costs, during the decade from 1901 to 1911, the government was the major sponsor of those studying in the West. By 1908, more than 75% of the students studying in the West were supported by government scholarships.[174] Take the Hubei provincial government, for instance. In the summer of 1903, Governor Duanfang sent fifteen students to study in Germany, eight to France, nine to Russia, and six to the U.S. Since these students were mostly in their late teens or early twenties, Duanfang also designated for each country a "Controller of Students" (*youxue jiandu*), who took charge of and supervised the student group in that country. The salaries of these controllers further added to the total cost. Based on the individual costs listed in Table 4.1, we can estimate that these 38 students alone cost the Hubei treasury seventy to eighty thousand taels that year.

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[172] Gu Weixing 顾卫星, "Qingmo sanci zhongyao yingyu jiaoyu bijiao yanjiu" 清末三次重要英语留学教育比较研究 [Comparison of three major tides of overseas study in the West during the late Qing dynasty]," *Suzhou daxue xuebao* 苏州大学学报 2 (2007): 108–09.

[173] The annual expenditure of the Nantong Girl's Normal School was around 4,300 taels of silver. See Chu, *Reformer in Modern China*, 100.

[174] Zhang, "Qingmo minchu zhongguo liuxue jiaoyu de duoyuan quxiang," 12.

However, throughout the academic year 1903-04, Duanfang received more than a dozen letters from these students complaining about their controllers, and quite a few from the controllers complaining about the students. The most intense conflicts took place between ten students in Berlin and their controller Yinchang.

The students' side of story was as follows. Upon their arrival in Berlin, Yinchang insisted that they should start with home schooling. When it came time to begin the search for housing, Yinchang decided to rent the house of his acquaintance, a Germany military officer, despite the fact that more than four hundred additional people had responded to the newspaper advertisement. The students soon found themselves crammed into a four-bedroom townhouse, with a lease that was twelve months long. The only teacher they had access to was the lady owner of the house, herself only a high school graduate. She had no teaching plan, no curriculum, and lectured only four hours a day. The food was terrible, and the students barely had any pocket money. Yinchang only visited them once every two or three weeks, and never took their complaints seriously.[175]

Yinchang's letters told another story. According to him, the owner of the townhouse, a retired colonel, was well respected in the community. And his wife was a well-bred lady. Because the students had no knowledge of German, the teacher decided to start with the phonetic alphabet. The students were very impatient with this step-by-step approach, and demanded unreasonably quicker learning methods. Moreover, they refused to adapt to the local conditions by rejecting German food. Hence they constantly

[175] Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Correspondences*, vol. 4, letters 1, 2, 3, 8, and 9.

asked for more pocket money with the purpose of squandering these funds on unnecessary banquets or entertainments.[176]

It was very hard for Duanfang to decide which party had more justice on its side. Being so far from the scene, he could only try to pacify both. He sent an official warning to the students urging them to discipline themselves, while also "strongly suggesting" to Yichang that he break the lease and find the students another teacher.[177] But the complaints from both parties continued unabated throughout the whole year. By the summer of 1904, to Duanfang's frustration, the ten students in Berlin, having cost the Hubei treasury more than twenty thousand taels of silver, admitted that their language skills were still not enough to master the high school curriculum, let alone attend college courses.[178] The group in Germany was not the only case. Almost every student group in Europe and the U.S. reported the similar results.

The students should not be the party to blame, and Duanfang knew that. Chinese students studying in the West were almost without exception more hardworking and better educated than those in Japan. This was proven by the result of the tests held by the Ministry of Education for students educated abroad. Though far fewer in total number, for three years in a row (1905-08) those students educated in the West scored much higher than those in Japan. In 1905 they took the top ten places, in 1906 the top fifteen, and in 1906 the top twelve.[179] Yet cultivating a Chinese student through an original Western education was a multi-year process. And by 1907, most of the Chinese students were still in the middle of this process and had not yet emerged as the promising fresh

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[176] Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Correspondences*, vol. 4, letters 4, 5, and 10.
[177] Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Correspondences*, vol. 4, letters 8 and 10.
[178] Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Correspondences*, vol. 4, letter 11.
[179] Zhang, "Qingmo minchu zhongguo liuxue jiaoyu de duoyuan quxiang," 13.

blood that governors like Duanfang could proudly present to the public. The positive effects of sending students abroad required years to surface, but in 1907, time was not on Duanfang's side. This point will be full elaborated in the second part of this chapter.

Now let us come to the broader influences of the new schools that had been established nationwide since 1901. In the decade from 1901 to 1911, the number of new schools in all provinces increased at an astonishing pace, with each year's number doubling or tripling that of the previous year. Table 4.2 is made up of the pieces of information I collected from eight articles and books on this subject. We can see that the enrollment of students in new schools nationwide in 1907 was ten times more than that in 1904. Primary schools were the sites of the fastest growing enrollment numbers, expanding at a minimum rate of 400% annual increase in all provinces.

Table 4.2: Number of New Schools Established in the 1900s

	No. of Primary Schools	No. of Middle Schools	No. of Girls' Schools	No. of Normal Schools	No. of Technical Schools	No. of Colleges	No. of Night Schools	Total Number of Schools	Total No. of Students Enrolled
Jiangsu (1906)	1,471 (347 in 1905)	17 (4 in 1904)	2	40	2	8		>1,540	
Zhili (1907)	4,946 (30 in 1902/03)		121			4	257	8,723	164,172
Fengtian (1908)	2,071				8	3		>2,082	>83,931
Heilongjiang (1908)	157		3	3				>163	>7,000
Hunan (1909)	1,113 (40 in 1905)	50		26	5			>1,194	>43,310
Jilin (1909)	172	4	3					>175	
Hubei (1909)	2,489		19		11	7		>2,526	>88,718
Zhejiang (1909)	1,890							>1,890	>71,219

Table 4.2 Continued:

	No. of Primary Schools	No. of Middle Schools	No. of Girls' Schools	No. of Normal Schools	No. of Technical Schools	No. of Colleges	No. of Night Schools	Total Number of Schools	Total No. of Students Enrolled
Guizhou(1910)	781	16		28	13	2		>740	
China (1904)								4,222	92,169
China (1907)								37,888	1,024,988
China (1908)								47,995	1,300,739
China (1909)								52,346	1,626,720

Sources:

1. [Jiangsu 1906] Wang Zhiguo 汪志国, *Zhoufu yu wanqing shehui* 周馥与晚清社会[Zhou Fu and late Qing society] (Hefei: Hefei gongye daxue chubanshe, 2004), 172.
2. [Hubei 1909 & Hunan 1907] Wang Xuehua 王雪华, "Wanqing lianghu diqu de jiaoyu gaige" 晚清两湖地区的教育改革 [Educational reform in Hunan and Hubei provinces during the late Qing dynasty]," *Jianghan luntan* 江汉论坛 7 (2002): 61–63.
3. [Zhili 1907] Stephen R. MacKinnon, *Power and Politics in Late Imperial China: Yuan Shi-kai in Beijing and Tianjin, 1901–1908* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 144–48.
4. [Zhejiang 1909] Wu Hongcheng 吴洪成, "Qingmo xinshi xiaoxue jiaoyu gaige shulun" 清末新式小学教育改革述论 [The reform of elementary schools during the late Qing dynasty], *Hebei daxue xuebao* 河北大学学报 3 (2005): 29–30.
5. [Guizhou 1910] Zhang Yuqiong 张羽琼, "Lun Qingmo Guizhou jiaoyu gaige jiqi yingxiang" 论清末贵州教育改革及其影响 [Educational reform in Guizhou during the late Qing dynasty], *Guizhou daxue xuebao* 贵州大学学报 3 (2003): 69–71.
6. [Fengtian 1908, Heilongjiang 1908, and Jilin 1909], Zhang Xiaoming 张晓明, "Lun Qingmo xinzheng zhong de dongbei jiaoyu gaigeï" 论清末新政中的东北教育改革 [Educational reform in Manchuria during the New Policy Reform period, 1901–1911], *Anshan shifan xueyuan xuebao* 鞍山师范学院学报 2 (2007): 26–29.
7. [China 1904] Huang Jiawen 黄加文, "Lun qingmo xinzheng shiqi de jiaoyu gaige ji qi yingxiang" 论清末新政时期的教育改革及其影响 [Educational reform in the New Policy Period during the late Qing dynasty], *Jiangxi shifan daxue xuebao* 江西师范大学学报 2 (2002): 21.
8. [China 1907-1908] Kong Xianglei 孔祥雷, "Lun qingmo xinzheng zhong de jiaoyu gaige" 论清末新政中的教育改革 [The educational front of the New Policy reforms during the last decade of the Qing], *Cangsang* 沧桑 1 (2007): 22.

Again, the negative aspect of building new schools was as conspicuous as the positive one. On the one hand, the radical growth of the new schools still failed to satisfy general needs. In 1907, Zhili's promotion of elementary schools topped other provinces with its enrollment of 150,000, but this only took up 2.6% of the total population of

eligible children.[180] Hunan province was also at the forefront of educational reform. But by 1909, less than 4% of its two million youths attended middle school. The promotion of elementary education was more effective, but still, only 14% of the three million children made it.[181] On the other hand, the financial burden placed by new schools on the provincial treasuries was already too hard to bear. As for the minimum annual expenditure, a lower primary school of thirty students required 300 taels, a girls' school 4,300 taels, a middle school 8,000 taels, and a normal school around 21,000 taels.[182] In a memorial in 1908, Duanfang reported that the new schools in Nanjing city alone had cost the Jiangsu provincial treasury 1.6 million taels of silver in 1907.[183]

High costs, though intimating, were not the biggest problem of the educational reform. The real danger was the general confusion regarding the standard of academic accomplishment brought by the new educational system. Historian Joseph Esherick observed that by abolishing the civil service exam, "China forsook an institution which had reached into all areas of the country and preserved at least the myth of open recruitment on the basis of intellectual achievement."[184] The exam was terminated so abruptly that those trained in the traditional schools lost (virtually overnight) the life they

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[180] Wu Hongcheng 吴洪成, "Qingmo xinshi xiaoxue jiaoyu gaige shulun" 清末新式小学教育改革述论 [The reform of elementary schools during the late Qing dynasty], *Hebei daxue xuebao* 河北大学学报 3 (2005): 64.

[181] Wang Xuehua 王雪华, "Wanqing lianghu diqu de jiaoyu gaige" 晚清两湖地区的教育改革 [Educational reform in Hunan and Hubei provinces during the late Qing dynasty]," *Jianghan luntan* 江汉论坛 7 (2002): 63.

[182] Chu, *Reformer in Modern China*, 100. Also see Zhuang Jifa 庄吉发, "Qingji xuetang jingfei de laiyuan" 清季学堂经费的来源 [Funding resources for the new schools during the late Qing]" *Qingshi lunji* 清史論集 [Research papers on Qing history], ed. Zhuang Jifa (Taipei: wenshizhe chubanshe, 2003), 306–08.

[183] Zhang Hailin 张海林, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng* 端方与清末新政 [Duanfang and the New Policy Reforms during the last decade of the Qing dynasty] (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2007), 278–79.

[184] Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China*, 259.

had been struggling to attain for years. Even those trained in the new schools were frustrated because the newly established standards of official recruitment clearly favored those with overseas educational background. However, many of the students returning from abroad failed to live up to their "foreign" auras. They had enough credentials on paper, but in reality rarely exceeded the local-trained students in terms of working abilities. When there was not a clear and convincing path to power and fame under the new educational system, people found it hard to agree on the enormous expenditure of sending students abroad or building new schools.

Moreover, the new educational system also failed to live up to the promise of "expanding the educational opportunities of the general public." In the words of Esherick: "As for the new schools, the poor had neither the time nor the money to attend; and the 'middle class' of small merchants and rich peasants regarded the primary schools as inadequate to advance one in society, and the secondary and higher schools as too costly for their meager incomes."[185] Starting as early as 1904, according to a report in *Dongfang zazhi*, destroying schools, especially in towns and villages, had become a popular phenomena. In Jiangsu, Sichuan, Jiangxi, and Guangdong, city and town residents, often in the hundreds and thousands, charged into the schools, tore the books to pieces, burned the desks, and even hit the teachers and students.[186]

Joseph Esherick has amply shown that the costly and sweeping New Policy reforms had by 1910 helped bring the empire to the brink of disaster, riots, and inflation, and ultimately helped bring down the Qing. My point here, as I have shown in my

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[185] Ibid., 118.

[186] Shao Yong 邵勇, "Qingmo miaochan xingxue yu huixue minbian" 清末庙产兴学运动与毁学民变 [The movement to transform temples into schools during the late Qing and the subsequent social riots], *Qinghai shehui kexue* 青海社会科学 3 (2006): 130.

summary of the educational reforms, is that the warning signs were already in evidence by 1907. In the interest of space, I will not summarize the other hundred aspects of the reform, but suffice it to say that in every area—education, military, police, and taxation being the most prominent—the reforms were too sudden and too expensive. I argue that the governors of Duanfang's political world were well aware of this danger. In a time when many of his fellow governors were turning back and streamlining, why did Duanfang choose to do the opposite and increase spending?

Part II: The Spending Choice: To Continue or To Stop

In April 1907, Zaizhen, son of Yikuang and founding President of the Ministry of Commerce, was impeached by a low-rank censor on charges of "involvement with prostitution." In the following three months, under the leadership of Grand Councilor Qu Hongji and Viceroy Cen Chunxuan, a dozen central censors launched an intensive attack in court on Yikuang, Yuan Shikai, and their major political allies—including Duanfang. Outside the court, a number of Beijing newspapers echoed the censors' accusation by digging out and publicizing first-hand evidence of the misdeeds of Yikuang's followers. This event was not just a power struggle between two political cliques in high court, but also a wrangling over the directions of the New Policy reforms.

A nineteen-year-old courtesan named Yang Cuixi turned out to be the trigger of this series of incidents. It is said that Zaizhen ran into her at a social gathering in Tianjin and was fascinated by her artistic performance. Duan Zhigui, an expectant Intendant (*houbu dao*) observed this romantic encounter and acted upon it. He spent 12,000 taels to purchase Yang from the brothel and presented her to Zaizhen, along with 100,000 taels in

cash for Yikuang. Yikuang and Zaizhen happily accepted the gifts, and in return appointed Duan as the Governor of Heilongjiang province on April 20, 1907.[187]

Four days after Duan's appointment was announced, Zhao Qilin, a fourth-rank censor in Beijing, memorialized the court about this favor exchange, and urged the authorities to punish the "heartless" and "shameless" Yikuang and Zizhen.[188] On April 30, the attentive Empress Dowager designated Zaifeng (Prince Chun) and Grand Councilor Sun Jianai to look into this case. After two weeks of investigation, Zaifeng and Sun concluded that there was no evidence of Yikuang's accepting 100,000 taels from Duan Zhigui. Moreover, the report concluded that Yang Cuixi was a maid, not a courtesan. This investigation apparently did not tell the truth, however, for Yang Cuixi was one of the most popular courtesans in Tianjin city. But under the circumstances, it was the most suitable official conclusion. Since Yikuang was the head of the Grand Council, and Zaizhen held both the posts of the Chamberlain of the Imperial Bodyguard (the highest-ranking honorary military position) and the President of the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce (*nonggong shangbu*), it would be a blow to the imperial reputation if their names were publicly related to bribe and prostitution. Her majesty understood this, and punished both sides in her own way: She dismissed Censor Zhao and tacitly consented to Zaizhen's resignation from both of his posts.[189]

But the censors refused to let the matter pass that easily. Starting from May 15, they began another round of impeachments. Jiang Chunlin, the censor who oversaw the

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[187] Zhao Qilin 赵启霖, " He shufu Duan Zhigui ji Qing Qinwang fuzi zhe" 劾署抚段芝贵及庆亲王父子折 [The memorial to impeach Gui Zhigui, Yikuang, and Zaizhen], in *Zhao Jingyuan ji* 赵静园集 [Collected writings of Zhao Qilin], ed. Shi Ming 施明 (Changsha: Hunan chubanshe, 1992), 25.
[188] Ibid.
[189] Ibid. 27.

Xinjiang Circuit (*zhang Xinjiang dao jiancha yushi*), pointed out that if Yang really was a maid, she would be the most expensive maid in Chinese history at the high price of 12,000 taels (even the best-trained maid cost less than a hundred taels on the market).[190] Lu Baozhong, Senior President of the Censorate (*duchayuan zuo duyushi*), demanded a second investigation.[191] Zhao Binglin, the censor who oversaw the Liaoning-Shenyang Circuit (*zhang Liaoshen dao jiancha yushi*), bluntly pointed out that Duan Zhigui's illegitimate path to the governorship of Heilongjiang was so well-known that even a Japanese newspaper had reported on it.[192]

Meanwhile, two big players joined this impeachment movement and expanded the targets to include almost every major ally of Yikuang and Yuan Shikai. On April 29, Cen Chunxuan, who had just been transferred from the position of viceroy of Yungui to the position of viceroy of Sichuan, came to Beijing for an imperial audience. After meeting the Empress Dowager, Cen successfully secured the leading position of the Ministry of Posts and Communication (*youchuanbu*) and officially stayed on in Beijing. During the month of May, Cen paid four imperial audiences and drafted seven major memorials. In these memorials, sixteen top rank officials—six governors, four viceroys, one grand councilor, one minister, one vice minister, two provincial treasurers, and one Tartar general—were impeached on charges of "aiding Yikuang's corruptions" and "abusing

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[190] Jiang Chunlin 江春霖, " Zou he Wang dachen cha'an yidou su" 奏劾王大臣查案疑窦疏 [The memorial to impeach Grand Councilor Wang Wenshao], in *Jiang Chulin yushi zougao jianzhu* 江春霖御史奏稿简注 [Annotated collection of the writings of censor Jiang Chunlin] ed. Lu Jincheng 卢金城 (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2000), 121–22.

[191] Lu Baozhong 陆宝忠, "Duchayuan zuo duyushi Lu Baozhong zhe" 都察院左都御史陆宝忠折 [Memorial submitted by Lu Baozhong, Senior Vice President of the Ministry of the Censorate], in *Zhao Jingyuan ji*, 29–30.

[192] Zhao Binglin 赵炳麟, "Zhang Liaoshendao jiancha yushi Zhao Binglin zhe" 掌辽沈道监察御史赵炳麟折 [Memorial submitted by Zhao Binglin, the censor of the Liaoning-Shenyang circuit]," in *Zhao Jingyuan ji*, 30–31.

power under the disguise of reform."[193] These officials, including Duanfang, were all known for their close relationships with Yikuang and Yuan Shikai.

Cen Chunxuan's wide attacks were backed up by Grand Councilor Qu Hongji, the spiritual leader of the "pure current" (*qingliu*) clique. Besides Cen Chunxuan, Qu Hongji also brought journalists into this political tug-of-war. With Qu's support, Wang Kangnian, chief editor of *Beijing Daily* (*jingbao*) turned the Yang Chuixi incident into headline news, and made it the hottest topic of the month.[194] By the end of May, the attacks on Yikuang, Yuan Shikai, and their allies had reached their peak. Rumors had it that Qu Hongji would replace Yikuang as the head of Grand Council, and Cen Chunxuan would take over control of the Beiyang Army from Yuan.

Behind these political disturbances lay general resentment toward the New Policy reforms both in the court and in the greater society at large. The censors were not only outraged by Yikuang's corruption, but also shuddered at the fact that Yuan Shikai had manipulated Yikuang into consenting to various costly reform projects. In their opinion, Yikuang's act of trading posts for cash might have cost the government millions of taels, but the reform ambition of governors like Yuan Shikai had cost the treasuries tens of millions of taels. To halt these expensive projects, they had to curb the ambitions of leading reformers such as Yuan Shikai; to curb Yuan's ambition, they had to oust his key ally in the Grand Council. And the Yang Cuixi incident was a golden opportunity to terminate Yikuang's dominance in the court.

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[193] Yang, *Wanqing shiqi de Cen Chunxuan*, 103–04.
[194] Ibid., 104.

Duanfang was not the main target of the anti-Yikuang movement. But he was the sworn brother of Yuan Shikai, the viceroy of China's richest province, and the third most famous reformer in the empire. He had to respond to the attack on Yuan and the New Policy reforms. More importantly, the political environment was also pushing him to make a decision on the pace of reform. When we glance through the hundreds of telegrams and letters that Duanfang received from subordinates under his jurisdiction during 1906-07, we find that they were stressing the same set of problems: popular resentment against the increase in taxes; depreciation of copper coins; the dilemma between the financial need for opium revenue and the moral need to ban opium; seemingly endless expenditure on educational and military projects; the frequent mob destruction of new schools; the rise of anti-Manchu sentiments among young students; the potential alliance of anti-government revolutionaries, secret societies members, and the mob; and bureaucratic inefficiency and redundancy.

With all these problems unsettled, Duanfang in 1907 faced the critical choice of carrying on the New Policy projects or bringing them to a halt and consolidating his resources. Although sustaining the existing projects despite all the difficulties remained an attractive idea, the ultimate success of reform still seemed like the mirage in the desert, both so far and so close. To suspend the costly reform projects at that point seemed to be a safe move, but it was against Duanfang's style and could constitute a fatal blow to his followers.

In making his decision, Duanfang probably drew lessons from Cen Chunxuan. During his four-year reign as the Viceroy of Guangdong-Guangxi from 1903 to 1906, Cen Chunxuan noticeably changed his main working goal from promoting new projects

to streamlining bureaucracy. In the first and second years of his viceroyship, Cen Chuanxuan was quite active in establishing a number of educational and industrial projects. He set up three military schools in late 1903. In 1904 he designated 900,000 taels from the provincial revenue in order to open a tap-water company and a cement factory. Later that year he made plans to take out a foreign loan of ten million silver taels to invest in the new schools and troops.[195] But by 1905, Cen had closed the two factories, dropped the loan proposal, suspended the annual plan of building eighty primary schools, and put all his efforts into economizing government expenditure as well as enhancing the productivity of government employees.

As stated in chapter one, Cen Chunxuan, together with Zhang Zhidong and Yuan Shikai, was listed as one of the "Three Butchers" (*san tu*) in the court. Cen's nickname was the "Butcher of Officials (*guan tu*)," meaning that he frequently dismissed or executed large number of local officials. This trademark working style started early on in his career, but reached its peak during Cen's viceroyship of Guangdong-Guangxi. From 1904 to 1906, Cen impeached and dismissed a total of 1,060 officials, an average of almost one per day.[196] The dismissed officials included high-ranking posts such as a governor, treasurer, and a provincial judge, all of whom belonged to the exclusive ruling group of 118 people that we mentioned in chapter one.

Cen's determination to punish corrupt or incompetent officials under his jurisdiction was fearsome. When a dismissed magistrate named Pei Jingfu fled to Macao to escape prison, Cen dispatched a warship and a commission to extradite Pei back to

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[195] Ibid., 61–62.
[196] San Ming 桑兵, *Gengzi qinwang yu wanqing zhengju* 庚子勤王与晚清政局 [The movement to "Restore the Guangxu Emperor to His Throne" and its influence on the political situation during the last decade of the Qing dynasty] (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2004), 273.

Guangdong, whereupon he then had Pei exiled to Xinjiang.[197] Another dramatic case concerned the exile of Zhou Rongyao, a former bookkeeper of the Guangdong Maritime Custom (*yue haiguan*) who had reportedly embezzled three million taels from the custom treasury. By the time Cen had uncovered this crime, Zhou had already bribed Yikuang and obtained the position of First Councilor in the Chinese embassy in Belgium. After Cen issued the urgent arrest warrant, Zhou fled at once to Hong Kong, but was finally extradited back to Guangdong, and, like Pei Jingfu, was then exiled to Xinjiang.[198] To check the involvement of Guangdong bureaucrats in brothel activities, he imposed a rule that during regular working hours, any government employee caught in a brothel would be fired outright and fined three hundred taels.[199] Furthermore, so as to save administrative expenditure, he confiscated corrupted officials' assets, heavily fined incompetent employees, and eliminated redundant positions from the government payroll (for instance, the entire office of the Guangdong Maritime and all the doormen in the county *yamen*).[200]

In a word, Cen Chunxuan's general solution to financial strain was to cut expenditure instead of creating new revenue. However, the achievements of this rather prudent strategy were far less than he expected. First, cutting government expenditure led to the shortage of soldier's pay and provisions. As a result, despite Cen Chunxuan being one of the best generals in the empire, he had trouble putting down the small-scale uprisings under his own jurisdiction. Starting from late 1903, small bandit groups had

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[197] Zhang Huateng 张华腾, "Qingmo tuguan Cen Chunxuan" 清末屠官岑春煊 [Cen Chunxuan, the "Butcher of Officials" during the late Qing dynasty], *Yindu xuekan* 殷都学刊 3 (1994): 42.
[198] Ibid., 43.
[199] Yang, *Wanqing shiqi de Cen Chunxuan*, 56.
[200] Ibid., 57.

been amassing in the vicinity of fourteen counties of Guangxi and seven in Guangdong, threatening the public order of these areas. In the next three years, Cen Chunxuan mobilized 121 battalions of soldiers (around 60,500 in all) from four provinces in order to suppress these hundred-people bandit groups. He even personally led the fight for six months. But by the spring of 1906, bandits still pervaded nine counties in Guangxi and one in Guangdong. This dragging fight against banditry not only wore down the local population, but also severely damaged Cen's public reputation. Later in his autobiography Cen admitted that the biggest factor contributing to this failure was fund shortage. "The soldiers were not paid well, and they refused to fight. In many encounters with the bandits, though dozen of battalions of government troops were present, there was not even one solider who had the guts to challenge the enemy."[201] In 1906, in order to raise funds, Cen Chunxuan had to revive the practice of selling official titles (*juanguan*) in Guangdong—a practice he had single-handedly stopped in 1905. This move brought an ironic contradiction into his career: though he had endeavored to terminate the practice of trading positions for cash in Guangdong and Guangxi, toward the end of his viceroyship he ended up personally reviving the very same system.

Cen Chunxuan's strategy of consolidating rather than expanding the reform projects also incurred dissatisfaction among urban gentry. Guangdong was the cradle of the Self-Strengthening Movement and its urban elites were famous for their wealth and open-mindedness. Yet by 1906, Guangdong's achievements within the New Policy reforms lagged far behind that of Hubei, Jiangsu, or Zhili. From 1902 to 1904, only

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[201] The original line is: *Sui haocheng shiying, shi bude yibing zhiyong* 虽号称数十营, 实不得一兵之用. See Cen Chunxuan 岑春煊, *Lezhai manbi* 乐斋漫笔 [Collected writings of Cen Chunxuan] (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1971), 67.

around eight new schools were set up in Guangdong. As for the training of a new army, when Zhou Fu succeeded Cen Chunxuan as the Viceroy of Guangdong-Guangxi in 1907, he found that the actual number of soldiers in the provincial army was around 10% less than what was listed on the official records.[202] Hence, in 1907, *Dongfang zazhi* concluded that in the three years of Cen's reign in Guangdong, he "achieved nearly nothing in promoting education, training armies, disciplining officials, and establishing police forces."[203] This probably disappointed many urban elites who were eager to participate in government affairs.

Cen's dictatorial working style further intensified his conflicts with the urban elites. While insisting on severe punishment for corrupted officials, Cen often adopted the same attitude toward those social elites who dared to challenge his authority. In January 1906, in a dispute over the ownership of the Guangdong part of the newly-recovered Guangdong-Wuhan railway, Cen and the representative of Guangdong merchants held opposite opinions. Cen advocated for the government's full ownership of the railway, but since the provincial treasury had difficulty paying off the foreign loan—which amounted to around 5.36 million taels—Cen proposed to increase the grain and salt taxes. On the contrary, the merchants demanded that the railway be put under the name of non-governmental capital. During the negotiations, one merchant made an inflammatory comment regarding the inefficiency of the Guangdong provincial government during the negotiations. Upon hearing this comment, Cen immediately became enraged and ordered the arrest of three merchant representatives. Moreover, he

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[202] "Junshi" 军事 [Military Affairs], *Dongfang zazhi* 5, no. 4 (April 1908): 49–52.

[203] The original line is: *jufan xingxue, lianbing, lizhi, buwu, zhuduan weiwen yiyou chengxiao* 举凡兴学, 练兵, 吏治, 捕务诸端未闻一有成效. See "Caizheng," 财政 [Financial Affairs], *Dongfang zazhi* 4, no. 7 (July 1907): 104.

deprived them of their official titles and warned the other merchants to behave. This triggered the the joint protest of the Guangdong merchants again Cen. They sent angry telegrams to the Grand Council, the Ministry of Commerce, and a number of court officials. Some of these telegrams even demanded that Cen resign.[204] Even though the conflicts were eventually resolved with the arrival of the central investigation team, Cen's relationship with the Guangdong merchants had been damaged. In May 1906 Cen voluntarily left Guangdong and took a three-month medical leave in Shanghai.

The above account about Cen Chunxuan's 1903-06 reign in Guangdong might be contradictory at several points. But Cen's activities in this period were full of contradictions. At the beginning he was quite ambitious, laying out the design of new educational, military, and industrial projects on a broad scale. In the middle of carrying out these projects, he observed the financial costs they brought to the treasuries and their rather "superficial" achievements. He then decided to suspend these projects and to streamline the bureaucracy first. He refused to add new tax categories and cut government expenditures, instead trying to find a balance between steady progression and consolidation. However, the ultimate efficiency of bureaucracy seemed to be even harder to realize than the true success of those expensive reform projects. And he started to suffer the consequences of not carrying on those projects. Without extra cash, his soldiers were poorly equipped and thus refused to risk their lives fighting the bandits. As a result, the government's battles against banditry in Guangdong-Guangxi dragged on for two full years and still failed to succeed in the end, ultimately hurting his reputation as the son of a famous general and a proud military man himself. Meanwhile, Cen's

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[204] Yang, *Wanqing shiqi de Cen Chunxuan*, 74–76.

relationship with the urban elites was getting worse, having deteriorated to the point of no return in the 1906 railway incident. Ironically, when the urban elites summarized Cen's misdeeds during the past three years, they not only criticized him for not patronizing enough schools and industries, but also blamed him for failing to make the government efficient and free of corruption. In a word, Cen suspended his ambitious reform plans in order to focus on streamlining the government, but in the end he failed to achieve either of these goals and had to take the blame from both government officials and the social elites.

Part III: Duanfang's 1906-07 Flood Relief

We just saw in the previous section how Cen Chunxuan's crusade for a balanced budget earned him the worst of both worlds. Now let us come back to Duanfang, who, on top of the normal funding issues, faced two major problems in 1906: the Jiangsu flood and banditry. Faced with the choice of carrying on the New Policy projects or halting them to consolidate resources, Duanfang chose a different path from Cen Chunxuan. If even Cen, a capable general and financier, was forced to cut back on reform and suffer disgrace from bandits, how then do we explain Duanfang's ability to keep pumping money into his projects while simultaneously battling the worst flood of the decade and crushing a major uprising with seeming ease? Duanfang did not have a magic pocket from which money flowed out. If anything, the Jiangsu flood of 1906 washed away his treasury reserves and forced him to scramble for funds. In this section, I examine Duanfang's sources of funding and suggest that, in contrast to Cen's fixation on a

balanced budget (that is, the division of the government pie), Duanfang managed to keep the money flowing by enlarging the pie itself to include non-government funds.

How did he do this? Let us first survey the flood and then the issue of money.

In any natural crisis in which the number of disaster victims totaled over a million people, official Qing records usually classified the crisis as a *dazai* (big disaster; major disaster). From 1900 to 1911, eight *dazhai* took place in China (see Table 4.3 below). Among them the worst was the 1902 drought in Sichuan, in which 10 million people in 115 counties directly suffered from the drought. The 1906 flood in Jiangsu, with its number of victims reaching 7.3 million, emerged as the second biggest natural crisis and the biggest flood in the last decade of the Qing dynasty. It started in July 1906 as a result of enormous rainfall and the breaking of dikes, and lasted almost two months.

Table 4.3: List of Major Natural Disasters (*dazai*) in the Last Decade of the Qing Dynasty

Year	Type	Province	Extent	Disaster Victims
1900	Drought	Shaanxi	56 counties	1.5 million
1902	Drought	Sichuan	115 counties	10.0 million
1904	Flood	Sichuan	59 counties	2.0 million
1906-07	Flood	Jiangsu	65 counties	7.3 million
1907	Flood, Drought, Locusts	Zhili	38 counties	2-3 million
1909	Flood	Hubei	30 counties	2.2 million
1910	Flood	Anhui	37 counties	2.0 million
1911	Flood	Jiangsu	22 counties	4.0 millions; 0.7-0.8 million died

Sources:

1. Li Wenhai 李文海 et al., eds., *Jindai zhongguo zaihuang jinian* 近代中国灾荒纪年 [Chronology of famines in modern Chinese history] (Changsha: Hunan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1990), 665–803.
2. Wang Shuhuai 王树槐, " Qingmo minchu Jiangsusheng de zaihai" 清末民初江苏省的灾害 [The disaster facing Jiangsu province during the late Qing and early Republican eras], *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院近代史研究所集刊 10 (July 1981): 146–47.

Duanfang took the post of Viceroy of Jiangsu-Anhui-Jiangxi at the worst time, when he could do nothing to minimize the flood damage but could only pick up the wreckage. When he arrived at Nanjing on October 29, 1906, the total number of disaster victims reached 7.3 million in 65 counties, and 2.4 million of them had been compelled to leave their hometown and roam about for food. In each of the five major areas the victims gathered (Qingjiang *fu*, Yangzhou *fu*, Jiangning *fu*, Zhenjiang *fu*, and Muyang *xian*), more than 300 people starved to death on a daily basis.[205] Around the whole northern part of Jiangsu, flood victims ate grass, tree bark, and dead bodies. In some parts, families exchanged children to eat. In Xuzhou *fu*, 15,000 children were abandoned by their parents.[206]

Ultimately, Duanfang needed enough cash to provide the victims with grain, clothing, and money; to repair the dams; and to assist the victims in reconstructing their homes. The amount required was enormous. During the 1902 drought, the Sichuan provincial government used up 12,445 *shi* of grain and 4,525,365 taels of silver toward relief efforts.[207] In the Jiangsu case, if the provincial government distributed just 500 *wen* of cash to each victim—the minimum by all standards—the cost already amounted to 3.65 million taels. And this was only part of the government expenses for flood relief.[208]

When Duanfang arrived in Nanjing, the relief account contained only 100,000 taels. He immediately transferred 300,000 taels to the account from the Jiangsu

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[205] Li Wenhai 李文海 et al., eds., *Jindai zhongguo zaihuang jinian* 近代中国灾荒纪年 [Chronology of famines in modern Chinese history] (Changsha: Hunan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1990), 723.
[206] Wang, "Qingmo minchu Jiangsusheng de zaihai," 149.
[207] Li, *Jindai Zhongguo zaihuang jinian*, 689.
[208] Zhongguo di yi lishi dang'anguan bian 中国第一历史档案馆编, ed., *Qingdai junjichu dianbaodang huibian* 清代军机处电报档汇编, vol. 30 (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2005), 246.

provincial treasury.[209] Then he generated three fundraising campaigns among the gentry and urban elites in Jiangsu province, the city of Shanghai, and Zhili province. Within two months, he collected 400,000 taels from the Jiangsu donors, 200,000 from the Shanghai donors, and 40,000 from the Zhili donors. By this time the relief fund had reached 1,040,000 taels. This sum enabled Duanfang to temporarily pacify the refugees by setting up 129 soup kitchens (*zhoupeng*) in the flooded areas and distributing over a million cotton-padded clothes.[210]

Duanfang exercised good leadership in encouraging the native elites to donate money for the flood relief. But what was more impressive was that he managed to acquire funding from other provincial treasuries. Two months after he took the viceroy position, his sworn brother Yuan Shikai, then the Viceroy of Zhili, bestowed 100,000 taels on the relief account on behalf of the provincial treasury.[211] Yuan's support for his sworn brother did not stop there. He also informed Duanfang about another potential donor source: the Guangxi provincial treasury had raised over a million taels more than expected through the selling of official titles that year. Upon learning of Guangxi's extra revenue, Duanfang acted aggressively to obtain a piece of the pie. At his request, Yuan Shikai, Sheng Xuanhuai (Vice President of the Ministry of Works), Lü Haihuan (President of the Ministry of War), and eleven high-ranking Jiangsu-born officials in Beijing spent the whole of December 1906 writing continual memorials suggesting one thing: the Guangxi government should contribute its unexpected extra million taels in income from that year to Jiangsu province, where 7.3 million people were suffering from

[209] Ibid., 116.
[210] Ibid., 123–24.
[211] Ibid., 128.

the worst flood in the last thirty years. The deluge of memorials worked! On January 4, 1907, the court approved the proposal and ordered the Governor of Guangxi to hand over 600,000 taels to the Jiangsu treasury.[212]

Duanfang's third major source of fundraising lay in the various central and local bureaus. First, with the approval of the Ministry of Revenue, from late February to early March in 1907, he acquired 480,000 taels from the Shanghai Maritime Custom (*jianghaiguan*). Of this amount, 180,000 taels were given to the flood relief account as a loan and 300,000 as a contribution.[213] The second place Duanfang visited was the Jiangsu treasury itself. He called on all of treasury's staff members to show their patriotism through monetary contributions. This was sheer intimidation, disguised as friendly proposition. But none of the employees dared to challenge this well-connected viceroy, and they soon jointly presented 100,000 taels to the relief fund.[214] In the third move, on April 8, 1907, Duanfang took a loan of 1,000,000 taels from the bank of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu yinhang*).[215]

In addition to native elites, provincial governments, and official institutions, the fourth channel of funding that Duanfang discovered was from abroad: contributions from foreigners and overseas Chinese. Two of his most powerful foreign friends served as the intermediaries in this project. One of them was Hayashi Gonsuke, then the Japanese ambassador to China whom Duanfang had befriended in 1903. Through Ambassador Hayashi, a sum of 101,000 Japanese *yen* were added to the relief account—91,000 from Tokyo residents, and 10,000 from the famous Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd.

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[212] Ibid., 156.
[213] Ibid., 246.
[214] Ibid., 262.
[215] Ibid., 338.

(*Kawasaki Jukogyo Kabushiki-gaisha* 川崎重工業株式会社).[216] The other lucrative foreign friend was American businessman Archibald Little, a long-time resident of China and the first person to have navigated the Yangtze River by steamship (accomplished in 1898). In January 1907, Mr. Archibald founded the "China International Famine Relief Commission (*huayang yizhen gonghui*)" in Shanghai and started to attract monetary and material donations from Britain, the United States, and Southeast Asia. By March, the Commission had successfully raised 300,200 taels of silver, 81,900 silver *yuan*, and 84,000 *dan* of wheat flour.[217]

Duanfang's final target was tribute grain (*caoliang*). During the flood relief, grain was a vital resource. To maintain public order and social stability, the government needed to publicly distribute grain, operate soup kitchens, and sell grain at below-market prices.[218] However, the flood naturally caused a food shortage in the region, and made grain even harder to obtain than money. Since the importation of grain from other provinces was time-consuming and expensive, rice-producing provinces like Jiangsu could hold on to the tribute grain by delaying its shipment to the capital. However, since the political significance of the tribute system—the exhibition of central control over a large supply of grain—was more important than its economic benefits, the court usually only allowed governors to retain modest amounts (less than 200,000 *shi* on each occasion) of tribute grain. It is noteworthy that during the 1906-07 flood relief, Duanfang set the record for retaining the largest amount of tribute grain within the six decades spaning 1852 to 1911. On December 22, 1906, he proposed retaining 150,000 *shi* of tribute grain

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[216] Ibid., 347.
[217] Ibid., 116, 138, and 368.
[218] Lillian M. Li, *Fighting Famine in North China: State, Market, and Environmental Decline, 1690s–1990s* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 380.

in Jiangsu for assistance to flood victims. The court granted permission.[219] On January 7, 1907, Duanfang memorialized again for an additional 300,000 *shi*, and the court again granted his request.[220] On March 20, 1907, Duanfang memorialized for a third time, asking permission to keep another 200,000 *shi*, and the court again approved his request, with the minor stipulation that he reduce 200,000 *shi* to 150,000 *shi*. Even more amazingly, two weeks later Duanfang also managed to transfer 100,000 taels of tribute silver (enough to purchase 25,126 *shi* of rice) to the flood relief account.[221] In total, Duanfang secured 500,000 *shi* of tribute grain and 100,000 taels of tribute silver for Jiangsu province. As stated before, this was the highest record in the last sixty years of the dynasty, even trumping the amount retained in national crises like the Taiping Rebellion and the Boxer debacle.[222]

By May 20, 1907, six months into Duanfang's viceroyship, Jiangsu province had survived the crisis caused by the biggest flood in the last thirty years, and started to return to a semblance of normal life. Through the persuasion and assistance of officials and local gentry, three million flood victims had returned to their hometowns. The market price of rice became stabilized. And the harvest of spring grain was within reach. As for further flood protection, except in the Haizhou region, most broken dikes had been repaired or rebuilt.[223] In sum, the official relief of 1906-07 was rather effective and efficient.

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[219] Zhongguo di yi lishi dang'anguan bian, ed., *Qingdai junjichu dianbaodang huibian*, vol. 30, 123–24.
[220] Ibid., 165–66.
[221] Ibid., 326.
[222] Ni Yuping 倪玉平, *Qingdai caoliang haiyun yu shehui bianqian* 清代漕粮海运与社会变迁 [The development of grain transportation system and the related social changes during the Qing dynasty] (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2005), 527–32.

The availability of funding was crucial for the success of flood relief. Table 4.4 summarizes the nineteen major sources of funding that Duanfang relied on to carry out relief projects in late 1906 and early 1907. We can see that in total he collected 6,481,723 taels of silver to carry out the relief projects in Jiangsu. This amount is quite impressive when we compare it with the Sichuan government's expenses for drought relief in 1902. The number of disaster victims in the Sichuan case was three million more than that in the Jiangsu case, yet the total amount of relief funds raised by the Sichuan government was 1.5 million taels less than the amount raised by the Jiangsu government.

Table 4.4: Itemized Sources of Funding for the 1906-07 Flood Relief in Jiangsu

Date Acquired	Cash	Grain (*shi*)	Funding Source	Total Value (taels)
10/29/1906	100,000 *liang*	N/A	Gift from the court	100,000
11/10/1906	300,000 *liang*	N/A	Contribution from the Jiangsu treasury	300,000
12/10/1906	400,000 *liang*	N/A	Donation from social elites in Jiangsu	400,000
12/12/1906	200,000 *liang*	N/A	Donation from social elites in Shanghai	200,000
12/20/1906	40,000 *liang*	N/A	Donation from social elites in Zhili	40,000
12/22/1906	N/A	150,000	Tribute grain retained	597,000 [note1]
12/23/1906	100,000 *liang*	N/A	Contribution from the Zhili treasury	100,000
01/04/1907	600,000 *liang*	N/A	Contribution from the Guangxi treasury	600,000
01/07/1907	N/A	300,000	Tribute grain retained	1,194,000[note1]
02/23/1907	180,000 *liang*	N/A	Loan from the Shanghai Maritime Custom	180,000
03/03/1907	100,000 *liang*	N/A	Donation from the employees at the Jiangsu treasury	100,000

[223] *Qingdai junjichu dianbaodang huibian*, vol. 30, 406.

Table 4.4 Continued:

Date Acquired	Cash	Grain (*shi*)	Funding Source	Total Value (taels)
03/10/1907	1,000,000 *liang*	N/A	Loan from the bank of the Ministry of Revenue	1,000,000
03/20/1907	N/A	150,000	Tribute grain retained	597,000 [note1]
04/03/1907	100,000 *liang*	N/A	Tribute silver retained	100,000
04/14/1907	91,000 Japanese *yen*	N/A	Donation from Tokyo residents	57,595 [note2]
04/14/1907	10,000 Japanese *yen*	N/A	Donation from Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd.	6,329 [note2]
04/28/1907	288,900 *liang*; 52,300 silver *yuan*	N/A	Donation from abroad raised by the "China International Famine Relief Commission"	326,556 [note3]
04/28/1907	N/A	71,167 (84,000 *dan*)	Donation from abroad raised by the "China International Famine Relief Commission"	283,243 [note 1 & 4]
Total Expenses for the 1902 Sichuan Drought Relief	4525,365	12,445		4,958,820 [note 5]

Sources:

1. Zhongguo di yi lishi dang'anguan bian 中国第一历史档案馆编, ed., *Qingdai junjichu dianbaodang huibian* 清代军机处电报档汇编, vol. 30 (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2005), 116, 123–24, 128, 156, 165–66, 246, 262, 322, 326, 338, 347, and 368.
2. [supplementary source] Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Telegrams on Special Topics*, vols. 74–77. These four volumes are all on the topic of 1906–07 flood relief.
3. Li Wenhai et al., *Jindai Zhongguo zaihuang jinian*, 685.

Notes:

1. In late 1906 and early 1907, the average rice price in Suzhou (Jiangsu province) was 3.98 taels of silver per *shi*. See Wang Yeh-chien, "Secular Trends of Rice Prices in the Yangzi Delta, 1638–1935," in *Chinese History in Economic Perspective*, ed. Thomas R. Rawski and Lillian M. Li (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 46.
2. In 1907, the exchange rate between the Haikwan tael of silver and the Japanese *yen* was 1 to 1.58. See Feng-hua Huang, *Public Debts in China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1919), 99.
3. The silver *yuan* here refers to the Mexican silver coin, the most popular silver coin in the late Qing period (1850–1911). Each Mexican silver coin weighed 0.72 taels of silver. See Ding Jinjun 丁进军, "Wanqing gesheng zhuzao yinyuan shiliao xubian" 晚清各省铸造银元史料续编 [Selected historical documents on the minting of silver coins in the provinces during the late Qing period, addendum I], *Lishi dang'an* 历史档案 1 (2004): 45.

Table 4.4 Continued:

Notes:

4. In late imperial China, 1 *dan* weighed 0.8472 *shi*. See Kenneth Swope, *The Three Great Campaigns of the Wanli Emperor, 1592–1600: Court, Military, and Society in Late Sixteenth-Century China* (doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, 2001), vii.
5. I cannot find the rice price in Sichuan in 1902, and therefore have to use the price in Suzhou. The annual rice price in Suzhou in 1902 was 3.54 taels of silver per *shi*. See Wang, "Secular Trends of Rice Prices in the Yangzi Delta, 1638–1935," 99.

Duanfang's master skills of fundraising were further revealed in the composition of the fund he assembled. Based on the information in Table 4.4, we can categorize the sources of relief fund into three major groups: internal revenue, external contributions, and loans. Internal revenue refers to the actual amount coming from the Jiangsu provincial revenue. External contribution was collected from four parties outside the Jiangsu treasury (see Table 4.4). The loans here include two main categories: loans from banks and loans from the court (tribute grain). Table 4.5 demonstrates the sum of each of these three groups and their percentages in the total fund.

From Table 4.5 we learn that internal revenue accounted for only 6.17% of the total relief fund. Out of the 6.5 million taels of silver that Duanfang assembled for flood relief in Jiangsu, only 0.4 million was from the pocket of the Jiangsu treasury. The flood occurred in Jiangsu and affected 7.3 million residents there, yet viceroy Duanfang led the province through the crisis while keeping the provincial treasury almost intact. He did take out two loans totaling 3,568,000, but the pressure brought by these loans was not as heavy as it might seem. The Jiangsu government did not need to pay the tribute grain back in monetary form, and still had the choice of appealling for a reduction in the quantity of grain the following year, which in fact Duanfang did in 1908. As for the loan from the bank of the Ministry of Revenue, the term of loan was ten years, which gave the Jiangsu treasury some breathing room.

More importantly, Duanfang managed to get ahold of 2.5 million taels of pure donations and contributions for the relief efforts. Here we can see the operation of his double-web system previously discussed in chapter two. Of this sum (1.2 million taels), 48% came from the court's contributions, other provincial treasuries, and the Maritime Custom, where Duanfang's clique friends like Yuan Shikai, Sheng Xuanhuai, and Lü Haihuan exerted strong influence. The other 52% (1.3 million taels) stemmed from the donations of gentries, urban elites, overseas Chinese, and foreigners, with whom Duanfang had established ties with those figures holding positions of "structural equivalence" to his own.

Table 4.5: Structure of Funding Resources for the 1906-07 Flood Relief in Jiangsu

Category	Subcategory	Amount (tael)	% of the Category Total	Category Total(tael)	% of Total Funds Raised
Internal Revenue	From the Jiangsu provincial revenue	400,000	100.00%	400,000	6.17%
External Contribution	From the court	200,000	7.96%	2,513,723	38.78%
	From official institutions (Zhili Treasury, Guangxi Treasury and Shanghai Maritime Custom)	1,000,000	39.78%		
	From gentry and urban elites	640,000	25.46%		
	From foreigners and overseas Chinese	673,723	26.80%		
Loan	Loan from the court (tribute grain retained)	2,388,000	66.93%	3,568,000	55.75%
	Loan from official institutions (Shanghai Maritime Custom and Bank of the Ministry of Revenue)	1,180,000	33.07%		
Total				**6,481,723**	**100.00%**

Source: Table 4.4

Part IV: A Cannon for a Mosquito: The Suppression of Uprisings and Banditry in 1907

The flood was not the only problem Duanfang needed to solve upon becoming the viceroy of Jiangsu-Anhui-Jiangxi. Scholar Lillian M. Li states that "the worst famines occurred during times of war or rebellion."[224] It is also true the other way around. From late 1906 to mid-1907, one major insurgency and nine relatively small revolts broke out under Duanfang's jurisdiction.

The insurgency was the famous Ping-Liu-Li Uprising of December 1906, which was jointly organized and led by the Revolutionary Alliance (*tongmenghui*) as well as the secret Society of Brothers and Elders (*gelaohui*). Scholar Charlton M. Lewis has discussed this event in detail in his 1971 book, *Prologue to the Chinese Revolution*.[225] In sum, the uprising occurred in four counties along the border between Hunan and Jiangxi provinces. Starting on December 4, 1906, 30,000 peasants, coal mine workers, secret society members, discharged soldiers of the former Green Standard Army (*lü yingjun*), and other poor people began to participate in the insurgency, making it the biggest revolt in south China since the Taiping rebellion. Acting on the orders of the Grand Council, four provincial governments (Jiangxi, Jiangsu, Hunan, and Hubei) sent 35,000 troops to the insurgent area and fought with the rebels for seven days before finally suppressing the insurgency on December 11.

As for the nine small-scale revolts that occurred in Jiangsu from October 1906 to June 1907, based on the research of Chinese scholar Wang Shuhuai and the records in

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[224] Li, *Fighting Famine in North China*, 378.
[225] Charlton M. Lewis, *Prologue to the Chinese Revolution: The Transformation of Ideas and Institutions in Hunan Province, 1891–1907* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976).

Duanfang Archives, I summarize their developments in Table 4.6 below. As we can see, the biggest resistance group to emerge in these revolts was the bandit group in Haizhou, whose member reached 1,000. Yet even the smallest one had more than 100 participants. However, unlike their counterparts in Guangdong and Guangxi, these bandit groups were easily crushed by government forces. With the exception of the river pirates in Kunshan, none of the bandit groups lasted for more than two months.

Table 4.6: List of Banditry in Jiangsu, October 1906-June 1907

Time	Location	No. of Participants	Activities	Final Result
1906, Oct-Nov	Haizhou	600-1,000	unsanctioned gun purchase; river piracy; erection of private toll gate; looting	89 participants captured, including five headman; 20 executed on the ground
1906	Tongzhou	N/A		badly defeated; headmen captured
1906	Xuzhou	400+	Shandong bandits went down to Xuzhou	exterminated; two leaders captured and executed on the ground; 51 captured; 30 shot to death; more than 300 burned to death
1906	Liyang	100+	looting in mountainous areas	badly defeated; headman captured
1907	Yangzi River	N/A	river piracy	badly defeated; headman captured.
1907	Xuzhou, Peixian	100+	banditry	80+ killed
1907	Taicang	100+	river piracy	N/A
1907	Kunshan	200	river piracy	defeated government troops in 1907, but exterminated by early 1908
1907	Zhenze county	200-300	river piracy	badly defeated; headmen captured

Sources:

1. Wang, "Qingmo minchu Jiangsu sheng de zaihai," 161–62, 172.
2. [1906-07 Haizhou], Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Telegrams on Specific Topics*, vols. 57–58 (31 telegrams in total).

The reason behind these "efficient" suppressions of uprisings and banditry under Duanfang's jurisdiction is worth exploring. In Guangdong and Guangxi, Viceroy Cen Chunxuan had been fairly unsuccessful in dealing with small bandit groups over a period of three years (see Part II). How did Duanfang manage to wipe out the rebels and bandits, while at the same time also managing to pacify 7.3 million victims? In terms of personal military ability, Cen was a renowned general, and Duanfang was just a civil official. In terms of the scale of government forces available for battle, Cen dispatched 60,500 troops (121 battalions) to the insurgent areas, whereas Duanfang had less than 25,000 new army soldiers under his jurisdiction.[226]

The key to Duanfang's military success lay in the combat ability and equipment of the troops at his disposal. From October 1906 to May 1907 he spent 800,000 taels from the government treasury on troops for the new army in Jiangsu.[227] This expense was twice that of the Jiangsu treasury's expenses for flood relief that year (see Table 4.5 in Part II). With this amount, Duanfang set up military schools, hired Japanese and German tutors, purchased guns and cannons from abroad, and arranged regular military drills. As a result, compared to the rebels, the new army soldiers in Jiangsu were superior in both combat ability and equipment. Table 4.7 below compares the weapons used by the government troops and those by the rebels in three confrontations—the Haizhou Uprising, the Ping-Liu-Li Uprising, and the Xuzhou Bandit Revolt. We can see that the weapons of the government troops were far more advanced. How could spears, knives, muskets, and smoothbore cannons beat rifles, revolvers, volley guns, cannons, and gunboats? In

[226] By 1911, there were 22,841 new army soldiers in the Jiangsu-Jiangxi-Anhui region, 2,857 in Jiangbei, 9,044 in Jiangnan, 4,619 in Jiangsu, 1,803 in Anhui, and 4,518 in Jiangxi. See Liu, *Wanqing dufu zhengzhi*, 308.
[227] Zhang, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 402.

addition, Duanfang continuously rewarded his soldiers for their performance on the battlefield, further strengthened their morale.

Table 4.7: Comparison of Military Equipment between Rebel Groups and Government Troops in Three Revolts in Jiangsu and Jiangxi, 1906-07

Time	Revolt	Anti-Government Forces		Government Troops	
		Number	Equipment	Total Number	Equipment
Oct-Dec. 1906	Haizhou Uprising (Jiangsu)	600-1,000 participants • 300-400 rebels • 300-600 flood victims	• 50-100 boats • More than 100 smoothbore muskets (only reliably accurate to about 60 meters)	2,056 soldiers • Four infantry battalions (2,000 men) • Four cavalry squads (56 men) • Three companies of coastguards (450 men)	• 40 river gunboats (armed with a mix of small caliber cannons and machine guns) • 1 steam-powered battleship • More than 2,000 double-barrel shot guns
Dec. 1906	Ping-liu-li Uprising (Jiangxi/ Hunan)	More than 30,000 participants • Peasants • Coal mine workers • Secret society members • Former Green Standard soldiers	• Spears • Knives • muskets • 2 smoothbore cannons	Around 31,000 soldiers from Jiangxi, Jiangsu, Hunan, and Hubei • Four infantry brigades (12,000 men) • Three artillery battalions (1,500 men) • Five cavalry battalions (1,500 men) • Two transport battalion (1,000) • 15,000 regular troops	• Rifled muskets (better long-range accuracy than smoothbore musket) • Double-barrel shot guns • Rifles • Revolvers (with multiple chambers) • Volley guns (seven-barreled; capable of firing seven pistol balls at the same time) • Rapid-fire Gatling guns • 10 Muzzle-loaded cannon • 3 grapeshot cannons • More than 200 horses
1907	Shandong Bandits in Xuzhou (Jiangsu)	400+ bandits	• 50 spears and knives • 3 horses • 11 muskets • 2 shotguns • smoothbore cannon	• 1,000 soldiers (two infantry battalions)	• Rifled muskets • 2 muzzle-loaded cannons • 80-100 horses

Table 4.7 Continued:
Sources:

1. [Haizhou]: Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Telegrams on Specific Topics*, vols. 57–58 (31 telegrams in total).
2. [Shandong bandits in Xuzhou]: Zhongguo di yi lishi dang'anguan bian, ed., *Qingdai junjichu dianbaodang huibian*, vol. 30, 214.
3. [Ping-liu-li]: Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Telegrams on Specific Topics*, vols. 38–39 (67 telegrams in total).

Notes:

1. Each brigade (*biao*), battalion (*ying*), company (*dui*), and squad (*peng*) were respectively made up of 3,000, 500, 150, and 14 men. See Mackinnon, *Power and Politics in Late Imperial China*, 100.

Duanfang never hesitated to deter the rebels through brutal killings. After putting down the Ping-Liu-Li uprising, he and Zhang Zhidong launched a three-month-long campaign of "cleaning up" the insurgent area (*qingxiang*), in the process identifying more than 10,000 people as rebels and executing them.[228] When the leader of the 1906-07 Haizhou uprising escaped the encirclement, Duanfang sent a lieutenant colonel and sixty soldiers to chase after him. After two and a half months on the run, Yang was finally captured and publicly executed.[229] The most notorious example was that of the assassin Xu Xiling, who, following his arrest in 1907 for the death of Anhui governor Enming, was brutally executed by Duanfang and had his heart carved out of his chest as a sacrificial offering for the slain Enming's memorial service.[230]

As a result, "from 1907 onward, the importance of student activists and secret society military power in the movement against the Ch'ing diminished sharply."[231]

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[228] Zhongguo di yi lishi dang'anguan bian, ed., *Qingdai junjichu dianbaodang huibian*, vol. 30, 194, 224, 260, and 298.
[229] Ibid., 316.
[230] "Zhe an jilüe" 浙案记略 [An account of Xu Xiling's assassination of Anhui governor Enming], in *Xinhai geming*, ed. Zhongguo shixuehui, vol. 3, 58.
[231] Lewis, *Prologue to the Chinese Revolution*, 195–96.

Conclusion: The Cold Logic

From the above analysis we can get some idea of the logic behind Duanfang's decisions and how his choices stood in stark contrast to those of his contemporary and rival Cen Chunxuan. To spend or not to spend, and to pump or not to pump? Cen failed because his answer to this question was the standard response of spending within his means. It was a reasonable economic choice but a political disaster, and it left Cen with a soured reputation and an ill-equipped army. Duanfang's calculations led him down the more dangerous path of overspending, in which he seemed to realize that success was as much about image and public relations as it was a matter of economics. In a perverse way, spending beyond his means actually increased his ability to spend more. Keeping the pump primed on soldiers, students, and factories did not bankrupt him so much as it helped him gain the confidence of domestic elites and foreign banks and thus enlarge the total pie. Thus, when the flood came, Duanfang could draw on funds far beyond his own province's ability to bear.

The cold truth was that the lives of ordinary peasants were, in the calculus of governors like Duanfang, simply not worth spending more than a penny out of every dollar on. Even in a flood year, it was much more desirable to pump money to keep the army equipped with the latest guns, the domestic and foreign industrialists supportive of his industries, and the urban elites confident in his commitment to reform. As long as peasants were kept at the level of bare subsistence, they were a non-factor to hard men like Duanfang. As we have seen, Duanfang's self-reinforcing cycle of overspending ensured that there were always enough repeating rifles to put down the pitchforks and spears of desperate farmers.

Duanfang's choice was further reinforced by the success of his political clique in the 1907 court struggle. In Part II of this chapter we saw that in April and May of 1907, Grand Councilor Qu Hongji, Viceroy Cen Chunxuan, and a number of censors in Beijing launched a lengthy attack on Yikuang, Yuan Shikai, and their close allies on charges of corruption. Several local Beijing newspapers like *Beijing Daily* (*jingbao*) also joined this political tug-of-war by making the misdeeds of Yikuang and his son Zaizhen into headline news. By the end of May the attack seemed close to success when rumor in Beijing had it that Yikuang and Yuan Shikai would lose their dominant positions in the Grand Council and the Beiyang Army.

However, in early June, the Empress Dowager's favor leaned toward the Yikuang-Yuan clique. On June 1 Cen Chunxuan was reappointed as the Viceroy of Guangdong-Guangxi and was ordered to leave Beijing immediately, the scene of the court tangle, for Guangzhou. Two weeks after, Qu Hongji was dismissed on the grounds that he had "colluded with the newspaper, ganged up with the censors, and abetted clique members to disturb the harmony in court." [232] Upon hearing this, Cen Chunxuan, who was then in Shanghai, procrastinated his departure for Guangdong and pondered what to do next. Unfortunately he was not given much time to make the decision. In early July a court order removed him from the viceroyship of Guangdong-Guangxi with the official reason that Cen needed more time to recover from illness.

After three months of struggle, the Yikuang-Yuan clique won the battle with the *Qingliu* clique by successfully ousting its top two leaders from the court. Yikuang and

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[232] The official line was: *antong baoguan, shouyi yanguan, yinjie waiyuan, fenbu dangyu, yinyong siren* 暗通报馆, 授意言官, 阴结外援, 分布党羽, 引用私人. See Yang, *Wanqing shiqi de Cen Chunxuan*, 106.

Yuan Shikai's strategy was simple but effective. They charged Qu Hongji and Cen Chunxuan for "conspiring with blacklisted 1898 reformers like Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao." First, they collected evidence concerning the close relationship between Kang Youwei and Wang Kangnian, editor of the *Beijing Daily*, and his key protégé Qu Hongji, who had encouraged the media attack on Yikuang. Second, one widespread rumor was that Duanfang had managed to make a fake picture of Cen Chunxuan, Kang Youwei, and Liang Qichao in order to prove Cen's connections with 'Kang Youwei's gang' (*Kang dang*). And with the help of Li Lianying, her majesty's closest servant, Cixi "happened" to see the fake group photograph.[233]

Duanfang correctly predicted that Cixi's antipathy towards those who had threatened her power would triumph over her dissatisfaction with corruption. After the dismissals of Qu Hongji and Cen Chunxuan, Yikuang and Yuan Shikai's status in the court remained untouchable until Cixi's death the following year. As their close political ally, Duanfang stayed on as Viceroy of Jiangsu-Jiangxi-Anhui for the two more years. In 1909, he reached the peak of his power, having accepted a transfer to the post of viceroy of Zhili, the most prestigious and powerful position in the empire outside the capital.

[233] Guo Weiding 郭卫东, "Lun Dingwei zhengchao" 论丁未政潮 [The 1907 political tug-of-war in the high court], *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 2 (1984): 85.

Chapter Five
Constitutional Reform and the Unnamed Publicity Campaign

Part I: Duanfang during the First and Last Stand of Qing Constitutionalism

When Duanfang enthusiastically promoted educational reform, he also had to face one ironic result: the emergence of anti-Manchu, anti-government revolutionaries from among the ranks of students he had tried so hard to cultivate, especially those sent abroad. These young radicals polarized the Manchu and Han camps and claimed that the Manchu ruling court should assume full responsible for the weakness of China. To "revive the Han race" and overturn the Qing dynasty, they would try any possible method including mobilization, assassination, and uprisings. Duanfang found himself pushed to the opposite camp of these young students, and they did not give him any chance to reconcile their differences. The revolutionaries threatened not only his career but also his life.

In chapter three we saw that Wu Yue, the anti-Manchu activist who tried to assassinate the Imperial Constitutional Commissioners with a bomb on October 24, 1905, admitted that "Duanfang tried his best on education reform and promoted various schools, which also greatly benefited our Han people."[234] Wu Yue went even further to praise Duanfang as "an exceptional individual in the Manchu group."[235] It is unknown whether Duanfang ever saw these comments, but even if he did there would have been little cause

[234] The original sentence is: *duofang xingxue, yizhi hanren* 多方兴学, 以智汉人. See Wu, "Jie Tieliang zhi Zuizhuan," in *Xuehua ji*, 7–10.
[235] The original sentence is: *sigu pizu zhong, shi nande qiren* 四顾彼族中, 实难得其人. Ibid., 8.

for satisfaction. Wu Yue wrote the words in a valedictory letter, a last will and testament that only became available in 1906 after his suicide bomb had already torn through the train carrying Duanfang and the five constitutional ministers. Radicals like Wu Yue might have distinguished Duanfang from other Manchus and expressed some appreciation for his reforms, but that did not stop them from labeling Duanfang as a Manchu enemy worthy of assassination. Try as he might, Duanfang could not shake off this label.

The 1907 Xu Xiling case marked another level of revolutionary threat. Unlike the previous anti-government plots and rebellions, this incident came from within the Qing government itself. The Manchu governor Enming was assassinated by Xu Xiling, the superintendent of a provincial academy, while he presided over the graduation ceremony of the very same provincial academy. Recommended by Yikuang himself, Xu had been in charge of the provincial police for two years and was highly respected by Enming. The assassination revealed that Xu had in fact joined the Qing government with the sole purpose of overturning it.[236] This kind of internal subversion caused tremendous unease in the Qing court. Empress Dowager Cixi cried when she heard about the incident and immediately ordered her own security detail to be strengthened. Yuan Shikai, who was famous for his bravery, also reportedly felt a sense of unprecedented dread.[237] But few could have felt more uneasy than Duanfang, who was next on Xu Xiling's hit list. Xu clearly stated in his confession that he planned to kill four Manchu officials, in the following order: Enming, Duanfang, Tieliang, Liangbi. Duanfang "reportedly sent his

[236] Zhang, "Xu Xiling zhi ci Enming," 52–54.
[237] Ji Qinsheng, *Wanqing shiqi de Duanfang*, 159.

family back to Beijing, and though he remained at his post in Nanjing, he was accompanied by a special bodyguard everywhere he went."[238]

Upon his arrest, Xu Xiling readily confessed that he had killed Enming simply because he was a Manchu. Even though he had no feud with Enming, Xu insisted that it was imperative for the Han people to take revenge on the Manchus.[239] Duanfang might have felt that no matter how hard he tried, he could not fully stem the revolutionary tide. Moreover, it became more and more difficult to clearly discern the revolutionaries from the non-revolutionaries. How many revolutionaries were working undercover in official positions and just waiting for the perfect chance to burst out? How many passionate youth, though not yet revolutionaries, would soon be swayed to join the anti-government camp? All of these questions burdened Duanfang. He needed to find a better solution.

Frustration over the attacks by revolutionaries might help to explain Duanfang's turn to political reform in 1905. When the educational reforms and the suppression-recruitment policy still failed to reduce the appeal of revolution to the new generation, he seriously considered more fundamental changes. In other words, the system itself needed to be changed in order to make the best use of the new generation. This would be accomplished in two fundamental ways. First, the idea of the Qing as a despotic, autocratic government had to be refuted by promoting representative government and granting the empire's citizens more political rights. Second, the divisions between Manchu and Han, a major issue driving the revolutionary theories prevalent at the time, had to be eliminated.

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[238] Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 106.
[239] Ibid., 105.

According to Liang Qichao, Duanfang was "the strongest Manchu supporter of constitutional reforms."[240] Duanfang was the first Manchu official to challenge the Manchu ruling class, and his resolute support was crucial to the success of constitutional reform. Two factors are pivotal in explaining Duanfang's central role: his status as a Manchu and his close relationship with Empress Dowager Cixi.

The process of reforming an autocratic state into a constitutional monarchy is always a difficult enterprise. In the case of China, this process was further complicated by the fact that the imperial clan was an ethnic minority. As we know from Edward Rhoads' *Manchus and Han*, the Manchus enjoyed considerable privileges based on the ethnic identity they shared with the monarch. The basic principle of constitutional reform is the legitimization of the people's participation in ruling the country. Within this process, the limitation of the monarch's power is a central concern. However, in the case of the Qing dynasty, expanding the power of the people (most of whom were ethnic Han) would naturally place the Manchu emperor in a particularly unfavorable position. Likewise, Manchu elites would also feel threatened. Thus, any reform towards representative government put the members of the Manchu ruling class in a potentially precarious position.

Moreover, no matter how enthusiastic or how powerful the constitutionalists were, or how advanced their plans were, they still needed to convince the monarch, the ultimate arbiter of the reform, of the advantages of a constitutional monarchy. In this sense, the Manchu monarch was a decisive factor in the constitutional reform movement. So how

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[240] Ding Wenjiang 丁文江, *Liang Rengong xiansheng nanpu changbian chugao* 梁任公先生年谱长编初稿 [Biographical chronology of Liang Qichao], vol. 1 (Taibei: Shijie shuju, 1962), 205.

was the monarch convinced? Rhoads has pointed out that "Manchus played no less important a role [than Han] in convincing Cixi of the desirability of constitutionalism."[241] We could go even further and argue that Manchu elites might well have had more influence than their Han counterparts on Cixi's decision to enact political reform. Since they shared the same interests and would suffer the same diminution of power from constitutional reform as Cixi, they were in a more solid position to persuade her.

Four edicts signaled the key steps that were taken during the late Qing constitutional reform. On July 16, 1905, five top officials were appointed by the court to go abroad "to investigate all aspects of governmental administration with the intention of selecting the best for adoption."[242] On September 1, 1906, an edict in the name of the Empress Dowager promised to introduce a constitutional form of government and to begin preparations immediately. On August 27, 1908, the court approved a "Nine-Year Program of Constitutional Preparation" and a "Principles of the Constitution," thereby pledging to adopt a system of constitutional monarchy in nine years. On January 11, 1911, the court approved a new constitutional timetable, one that provided for the establishment of a cabinet in 1911, the proclamation of a constitution in 1912, and the convening of a bicameral parliament in 1913.

Duanfang played a major role in developing these edicts. According to the leading Han constitutionalist Zhang Jian, over the course of multiple audiences with Cixi in 1906, four individuals—Duanfang, Tieliang, Zaizhen, and Xu Shichang—managed to

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[241] Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 96.
[242] Ibid.

push Cixi to rule in favor of constitutional reform.[243] Chapter one detailed the development of Duanfang's close relationship with the Empress Dowager Cixi following the Boxer Uprsing in 1900. In 1906, Cixi not only took Duanfang's advice, but also appointed him as one of the commissioners in an investigative trip. Within a period of eight months from December 1905 to August 1906, Duanfang passed through Japan, the United States, and twelve European nations.[244] He was so impressed by these first-hand experiences abroad that on August 21, 1906 he expressed his passion for constitutional change in an imperial audience with the Empress Dowager. Nine days later, Cixi issued her historic edict on setting up a constitutional system, thus beginning the age of constitutional preparation in China.[245]

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[243] Tieliang was then the Manchu senior vice president of the Board of War and concurrently associate head of the Office of Military Training. Xu Shichang was Tieliang's Han counterpart at the Board of War. Zaizhen was Minister of Commerce. See Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 96. "At first, Tieliang and Xu Shichang proposed some rough ideas of political reform," Zhang stated. "Then Duanfang made a firm stand in his audiences with Empress Dowager, he really made a stand on that." Later Zaize sided with Duanfang and Cixi was finally enlightened. See Zhang Jian 张謇, *Seweng ziding nianpu* 啬翁自定年谱 [Zhang Jian's self-compiled chronological biography], in *Nantong Zhang Jizhi xiansheng zhuanji* 南通张季直先生传记 [A biography of Zhang Jian of Nantong], ed. Zhang Xiaoruo 张孝若 (Taibei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1974), 58. For this citation, I am indebted to Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 96, footnote 104. Rhoads' work contains a detailed account of the conversation between Duanfang and Cixi. When the Empress Dowager asserted, "We have inaugurated our New Policies, and we have not overlooked anything," Duanfang pointed out, " You have not instituted constitutionalism." She then asked, "What is constitutionalism about?" He answered reassuringly, " If constitutionalism is implemented, then the imperial institution may last forever." Among the above four individuals, Duanfang took the strongest stand and confronted the Empress Dowager in a way that even Zaizhen, whose grandmother was Cixi's sister, dared not to do. Duanfang's bravery might have come from two sources: his strong will on political reform, which was mainly caused by his frustration with the revolutionaries, and his close relationship with Cixi, which began during the Boxer troubles in 1900. For Cixi, Duanfang was a considerate Manchu companion who had provided a peaceful refuge for her during the most dire circumstances. She not only listened to Duanfang's suggestion, but also appointed him one of the four officials in the investigative trip. Five years earlier, she had sent Duanfang from Shaanxi to Henan to assist the governor in restoring the post-Boxer order there. One year prior, she transferred Duanfang from Jiangsu to Hunan with the special mission to deal with the rebellions there. This time, in 1905, she again dragged Duanfang out of his own jurisdiction (Duanfang was the Hunan governor) and sent him abroad to help her decide the future of the dynasty. See E-Tu Zen Sun, "The Chinese Constitutional Mission of 1905–1906," *Journal of Modern History* 24, no. 3 (September 1952): 253.

[244] Sun, "The Chinese Constitutional Mission of 1905–1906," 255.

[245] Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 101.

After the constitutional trip, Duanfang was so impressed by his first-hand experience in Western countries that up until 1908 he still indulged in describing the "liberal social setting" he witnessed in 1906. Yet meanwhile he was still facing a serious problem: His short experience abroad was not enough for him to present a complete and systematic propose for the practical design of constitutional reform. At this point, Duanfang undertook a shocking action by resorting to help from Liang Qichao, the blacklisted ex-reformer who also happened to be a specialist in constitutionalism.

To seek help from Liang Qichao was almost as risky as Duanfang's public defiance of court orders back in 1900. Although the new policies Cixi began to enact were basically the same as those of the abortive Hundred Days of Reform, Cixi never forgave 1898 reformers such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao. One example that reveals her sensitivity on this issue was the dismissal of Cen Chunxuan, mentioned in the last part of the previous chapter. Like Duanfang, Cen Chunxuan had been famous for maintaining a close relationship since 1900 with Cixi. But this close relationship was not enough to save Cen from being fired for a possible connection with the blacklisted reformers Kang and Liang. Under these circumstances, Duanfang was once more risking his whole political career by contacting Liang Qichao. But Duanfang's dedication to constitutional reform overcame his uneasiness. Through an intermediary named Xiong Xiling (Duanfang's subordinate and a close friend of Liang), Duanfang expressed his concern about political reform to Liang, and Liang finally agreed to be Duanfang's

ghostwriter.[246] From 1906 to 1908, Liang Qichao helped Duanfang draft a deliberate program of reform that ultimately ran to more than two million words.[247]

The main points of this program can be summarized as follows. First, a "responsible cabinet" (*zeren neige*) would be appointed to take care of daily administrative details, allowing the monarch to still enjoy supreme power without having to bear personal responsibility for maintaining order in the country. As a result of the indisputable security of the monarch's position within the constitutional system, he or she would thus benefit from political reform.[248] Second, there would be a clear power division between the central and provincial governments: The central government would be in charge of military, diplomatic, and customs affairs while the provincial governments would enjoy autonomy in other aspects.[249] Third, the division between Manchus and Han was indicted as the fundamental cause of the current instability in the empire. Thus, in order to enforce constitutional reform and guarantee the dynasty's survival, the boundary distinctions between Manchus and Han should be completely removed. In the future monarchical system under consideration, there would be only

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[246] Ding, *Liang Rengong nianpu changbian chugao*, vol. 1, 205. See also Zhou Qiuguang 周秋光, "Xiong Xiling yu qingmo lixian" 熊希龄与清末立宪 [Xiong Xiling and the late Qing constitutional reform], *Hunan shifan daxue xuebao* 湖南师范大学学报 5 (1996): 10–16.

[247] Ding, *Liang Rengong nianpu changbian chugao*, vol. 1, 205. See also Zhou, "Xiong Xiling yu qingmo lixian," 10–16. Duanfang's four major edicts on constitutional reform were: 1) enact the basic principles of national affairs for future stabilization (*qing ding guoshi yi an daji* 请定国是以安大计); 2) reorganize the administrative system for the preparation of constitutional reform" (*qing gaiding guanzhi yiwei yubei zhe* 请改定官制以为立宪预备折); 3) abolish the boundaries between Manchus and Han (*qing ping manhan zhenyu mizhe* 请平满汉畛域密折); and 4) adopt the essence of the political system in Europe and the United States" (*Ou Mei zhengzhi yaoyi* 欧美政治要义).

[248] Duanfang 端方, "Qing ding guoshi yi an daji zhe" 请定国是以安大计折 [Enact the basic principles of national affairs for future stablization], in *Duan Zhongmin gong zougao* 端忠敏公奏稿 [Collection of Duanfang's memorials] (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1967), 689–719.

[249] Duanfang, "Qing gaiding guanzhi yiwei yubei zhe" 请改定官制以为立宪预备折 [Reorganize the administrative system for the preparation of constitutional reform], in *Duan Zhongmin gong zougao*, 719–70.

three kinds of people in China: the throne, the imperial family (*huangzu*), and the people.[250]

These proposals were included in the court's 1908 "Nine-Year Program of Constitutional Preparation." Meanwhile, Duanfang also tried to put into practice his ideas concerning the reorganization of the administration and the abolition of Manchu privileges. In 1909, he married his daughter off to Yuan Kequan, the fifth son of Yuan Shikai, thus supporting the trend of Manchu-Han intermarriage.[251] During his tenure as viceroy of Liangjiang, he oversaw the successful election of the first provincial assembly. He also initiated the discussion about the pressing problem of banner livelihood.

While Liang Qichao praised Duanfang as the strongest Manchu supporter of constitutional reform, revolutionaries regarded him as the single most dangerous Manchu enemy. Hu Hanmin, editor of *Minbao*, the flagship journal of the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance (*tongmenghui*), concluded that Duanfang and Tieliang were formidable enemies of the Han people. According to Hu, Tieliang was trying to organize the Metropolitan Banner's Standing Army to defend Manchu interests against the Han people, and Duanfang was faking constitutional reform in order to weaken the vigilance of the Han people toward the Manchus. Hu went even further, arguing that Duanfang was more dangerous than Tieliang because his hypocrisy had given many Han people dangerous

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[250] Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 99. For the original memorial, please see Duanfang, " Qing ping manhan zhenyu mizhe" 请平满汉畛域密折 [Abolish the boundaries between Manchus and Han], in *Xinhai geming* 辛亥革命, vol. 4, ed. Zhongguo shixuehui 中国史学会 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1957), 27–31.

[251] Yuan Kewen 袁克文, *Huanshang si chen* 洹上私乘 [Memoirs of Yuan Kewen, the eldest son of Yuan Shikai] (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2000), 16. For this citation, I am indebted to Ji Qinsheng 紀欽生, *Wanqing shiqi de Duanfang: yi wei gaige guanliao zhi yanjiu* 晚清时期的端方:一位改革官僚之研究 [Duanfang during the late Qing: research on a reformer of the bureaucracy] (master's thesis, National Taiwan University, 1985), 129, footnote 11.

illusions about a Manchu-Han peace. When most of the Han people had become immersed in such illusions, Manchus like Duanfang would then take advantage of the opportunity to annihilate the revolutionaries and ensure that the Han people were enslaved forever.[252]

Part II: The Evaluation of the Constitutional Reform

Hu Hanmin's comments regarding late Qing constitutional reform, though prejudiced, do indicate some historical truths. After all, the Qing dynasty collapsed in the 1911 revolution, bringing to a sudden halt the court-directed constitutional reform. The Manchu-Han boundary was erased as well, with the Manchus losing overnight their livelihood and prestige. In this section, we will review the scholarly debates on the historical significance of the late Qing constitutional reform and seek another way of analyzing it. Table 5.1 below lists the major projected government goals during constitutional reform in chronological order.

Both nationalist and communist historians have called this reform a "fake reform." To them, the Qing court intentionally stipulated a lengthy nine years for preparation and reserved the right to postpone even further the convening of a parliament. The court talked about constitutionalism but aimed at the preservation of absolutism. In other words, constitutionalism was adopted by the court as a device to conciliate the

[252] Hu Hanmin 胡汉民, " Kaocha zhengzhi wuqingchen zhi guaizhuang" 考察政治五清臣之怪状 [The absurd activities of the five constitutional commissioners], *Minbao* (Tokyo) 7 (July 1906): 78.

public without actually compromising its own power, to centralize government control, and to exclude the Han from the hub of power.[253]

This view was first challenged in 1968, when Mary Wright and other contributors to the edited volume, *China in Revolution: the First Phrase 1900-1913*, called attention to the importance of the constitutionalists in the last decade of the Qing dynasty. Taiwan scholar Zhang Pengyuan expressed a similar view in his monograph on the late Qing constitutionalists.[254] In 1976, Joseph W. Esherick stated additionally that "there was no more important development in the final years of the Qing dynasty than the constitutional movement and the establishment of the provincial assemblies."[255] And in his 2000 monograph, *Manchus and Han*, Edward J. M. Rhoads provided solid evidence of the pivotal role played by Manchu elites in the elimination of Manchu privileges. Some current scholars even go further, suggesting that the 1909 election and self-government experiments shed much light on the discourse of democracy in the early twentieth century.[256]

In order to reach a definitive conclusion over whether the Qing court was sincere in carrying out the constitutional reform or whether the reform was "inconsequential," we need further research on the court, the reformers, and central and local politics. For instance, we need to: 1) read the content of various official announcements and distinguish the nuances between the spoken and unspoken messages; 2) compile a long

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[253] Hsü, "The Constitutional Movement," in *The Rise of Modern China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 493–500.
[254] Chang Peng-yuan 张朋园, *Lixianpai yu xinhai geming* 立宪派与辛亥革命 [Constitutionalists and the 1911 revolution] (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1969), 199.
[255] Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China*, 94. I obtained this reference from David Chang, "Democracy Is in Its Details: The 1909 Provincial Assembly Elections and the Media" (paper presented at the "UCSD-Cornell Modern Chinese History Graduate Student Research Conference," June 18–20, 2007, San Diego, CA), endnote 30.
[256] Chang, "Democracy Is in Its Details," 37. See also Zhang, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 549.

list of the important figures in late Qing politics, examine the life and works of each, and then identify each of them as "reactionary" or "progressive"; and 3) collect anecdotes starring the Empress Dowager Cixi and Regent Zaifeng and speculate about their mindsets. Finally, a comparison of the procedures of constitutional reform in China, Japan, and Germany is also required.

Rather than trying to evaluate the reform based on our present-day perspective, let us try to think about what it was like to be a high-ranking official on the ground at that time. Table 5.1 below lists the major projected government goals during constitutional reform in chronological order.

Table 5.1: List of the Projected Governmental Goals in the Constitutional Reform, 1906-1917

Year	Month	Agenda Announced by the Court
1906	Sep.1	Promised to introduce a constitutional form of government and to start preparations immediately
	Sep.	To set up two committees with the task of revising the government
	Nov.	To revise the central government: - Reorganize four central bureaus - Amalgamate nine ministries - Establish three new ministries and department
1907	July	To revise the provincial government - Abolish the posts of circuit *daotai* and the traditional aides of the prefects and magistrates - Create the posts of an industrial *daotai* and a police *daotai* - Create a new set of assistants in counties and districts
	July 11	To establish a School of Ceremonials with the task of revising the rites of funerals, sacrifices, and weddings in order to complement the changing conducts in education and the army
	Aug. 13	To transform the Committee for the Investigation of Modern Politics and Governments into the Committee for Drawing up Regulations for Constitutional Government
	Sept. 9	Appointed three officials (Wang Daxie, Yu Shimei, and Dashou) as constitutional commissioners to conduct separate investigations in England, Germany, and Japan

Table 5.1 Continued:

Year	Month	Agenda Announced by the Court
1907	Sept. 20	To establish the Political Consultative Council (*zizhengyuan*) as the basis for the future parliament
	Sept. 30	Ordered the Ministry of Education to draft regulations for universal education and to prepare textbooks for citizens
	Oct. 19	Instructed the viceroys and governors to establish provincial assemblies and to plan for the establishment of deliberative assemblies in the prefectures, departments, and districts
1908	July 22	Sanctioned the regulations for the provincial assemblies
	Aug. 27	- Announced the "Nine Year Program of Constitutional Preparation" - Promulgated of the *Principles of the Constitution*
	Unspecified	- To create a Provincial Assembly Preparatory Bureau in each province - To establish Election Affairs Offices or Election Investigation Bureaus in the cities - To set up election training centers and offer free training courses in the provinces - To promulgate regulations on local self-government in towns and villages - To compile universal elementary readers and textbooks for citizens - To promulgate a census by households and a census by persons - To draft a civil code - To establish the Commission for the Revision of the Banner Organization
1909	Jan.-Feb.	- To complete voter registration for the election of provincial assemblies - Ordered the election-related offices to distribute training materials and send out election workers to local areas - Recruited students of politics and law, especially those trained in Japan, to become the teachers and trainers of election workers - To form survey offices in the provinces; dispatch surveyors to towns and villages, and appoint local guides to accompany the surveyors to visit each potentially eligible voter and verify his education and wealth status
	Mar.	Hold elections in the provinces
	Oct.	Hold the first meetings of the provincial assemblies
	Unspecified	- To promulgate regulations on local self-government in sub-prefectures and districts - To promulgate universal elementary readers and textbooks for citizens - To conduct a survey of the total annual revenue and expenditures of each province - To complete a census by households - To draft a new criminal code - To compile the new regulations for civil service examinations and for the employment of officials and their salaries - To arrange police forces in sub-prefectures, departments, and districts

Table 5.1 Contiued:

Year	Month	Agenda Announced by the Court
1909	Oct. 3	- To formally inaugurate the National Assembly, whose session was to last 3 months
	Dec. 15	To change hairstyles and dress codes - Make queue-cutting mandatory for officials, soldiers, police and students, and optional for the rest of the population - Conduct a thorough study of ceremonial costumes at home and abroad - The regent and the emperor should take the lead in adopting the customary ways of the foreigners, as had the Meiji emperor of Japan
1910	Unspecified	- To complete the regulations for local taxes - To promulgate the new criminal code - To compile the residence laws - To promulgate the New Regulations for civil service examinations and for the employment of officials and their salaries - To start organizing police forces in sub-prefectures, departments, and districts
1911		- Establish a cabinet and the Grand Council, Grand Secretariat, and Office of Government Affairs - To promulgate the regulations for local taxes - To complete the regulations for national taxes - To complete a census by households and a census by persons - To draft an auditing law - To draft a commercial code - To establish courts in the provincial capitals and treaty ports - To enforce the new regulations for civil service examinations and the employment of officials and their salaries - To complete arranging police forces in towns and villages
1912		- To announce a constitution - To promulgate the reorganization of the provincial governments - To promulgate the regulations for national taxes - To promulgate the residence laws
1913		- To convene a bicameral parliament - To establish regulations on local self-government in towns and villages - To enforce the new criminal code - To promulgate the new civil and commercial codes - To enforce the residence laws - To establish courts in the prefectures, sub-prefectures, and districts - To set up a course of administration justices
1914		- To promulgate regulations on local self-government in sub-prefectures and districts - To obtain a 1% literacy rate among the people - To promulgate the auditing law

Table 5.1 Contiued:

Year	Month	Agenda Announced by the Court
1909	Oct. 3	- To formally inaugurate the National Assembly, whose session was to last 3 months
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1910	Unspecified	- To complete the regulations for local taxes - To promulgate the new criminal code - To compile the residence laws - To promulgate the New Regulations for civil service examinations and for the employment of officials and their salaries - To start organizing police forces in sub-prefectures, departments, and districts
1911		- Establish a cabinet and the Grand Council, Grand Secretariat, and Office of Government Affairs - To promulgate the regulations for local taxes - To complete the regulations for national taxes - To complete a census by households and a census by persons - To draft an auditing law - To draft a commercial code - To establish courts in the provincial capitals and treaty ports - To enforce the new regulations for civil service examinations and the employment of officials and their salaries - To complete arranging police forces in towns and villages
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1914		- To promulgate regulations on local self-government in sub-prefectures and districts - To obtain a 1% literacy rate among the people - To promulgate the auditing law

Table 5.1 Contiued:
Sources:

1. Norbert Meienberger, *The Emergence of Constitutional Government in China, 1905–1908* (Bern: Verlag Peter Lang AG, 1980).
2. John H. Fincher, *Chinese Democracy: The Self-Government Movement in Local, Provincial, and National Politics, 1905–1914* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1981).
3. David Chang, "Democracy Is in Its Details: The 1909 Provincial Assembly Elections and the Media" (paper presented at the "UCSD-Cornell Modern Chinese History Graduate Student Research Conference," June 18–20, 2007, San Diego, CA).

We can see that in the six years from August 1906 to October 1911, in almost every month there were edicts on either setting up new councils and offices or reorganizing current institutions. The tasks to be completed had been projected all the way to 1917. To provide a few statistics, the administrative projects to be carried out at the central level included reorganizing thirteen bureaus, setting up two committees, establishing nine ministries or bureaus, conducting three surveys, and holding one election. At the provincial level, the projects included reorganizing twelve bureaus, establishing thirteen new offices, conducting five surveys, holding two elections, and creating thousands of new positions in counties and districts.

Every project on the list was time consuming. Let us take one representative project as an example. In 1908 and 1909, during preparations for the election of the first Provincial Assembly in Jiangsu province, nearly every clause of the *Regulations on Provincial Assemblies* and the election rules took a significantly longer time to be acknowledged. The ambiguous nature of many clauses led to different interpretations by various participants. One scholar describes the situation as such: "Local magistrates asked provincial governors for interpretations, and governors in turn asked the Constitutional Commission (in Beijing). Provincial Assembly Preparatory Bureaus also provided their own interpretations, and newspapers weighed in to offer their opinions

through editorials or letters to the editors. In some cases, foreign powers became involved as well…To make matters worse, the Commission's interpretations often contradicted the original Regulations."[257]

One controversial issue was whether former opium addicts would be eligible to vote in the election. In the end it took the central and provincial bureaus three whole months, back and forth, to reach a conclusion.[258] Among the enormous number of tasks pressed upon a provincial governor by the court, the work of validating an election clause was akin to a drop in the ocean. In a mere six years, a governor or viceroy needed to streamline the whole provincial bureaucracy, establish a provincial assembly, and set up deliberative assemblies in the prefectures, departments, and districts. He was also obliged to promulgate new tax regulations, an auditing law, a criminal code, a civil code, and a commercial code. Meanwhile, his task list also included conducting multiple land and population surveys, establishing a police force, and directing two elections.

Given the unavoidable power struggles involved in every little step of the constitutional reform, it was impossible for any central or provincial official to finish all the tasks assigned by the court within a period of six years. Even the handling of only a small number of these tasks proved to be extremely difficult. One example was the reorganization of the central government, which took place from September 1906 to January 1907. The court issued the edict on September 2, and within a few days a commission composed of princes, grand councilors, ministers, and viceroys was set up. In the original proposal of early October, the commission suggested setting up a cabinet,

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[257] Chang, " Democracy is in Its Details," 21, 23.
[258] Ibid., 20–21.

a Political Consultative Council, an independent judiciary, and an independent Audit Department. This immediately drew opposition from a large number of metropolitan officials, including four grand councilors (Wang Wenshao, Qu Hongji, Lu Chuanlin, and Tieliang), five censors (Cai Jintai, Du Bechong, Zhang Ruiyin, Liu Ruji, Shi Changxin, and Zhao Binglin), two readers of the National Academy (Ke Shaowen and Zhou Kekuan), and a secretary of the Ministry of Civil Appointments. Furthermore, Prince Qing and Yuan Shikai, the president and vice-president of the commission, were "coincidentally" impeached by several court censors on accusations of bribery.[259] Negotiations reached a stalemate. In the end, when the official program of central government reorganization came out in November, it merely mandated certain consolidations and alterations of names, the creation of one new ministry, a reduction in the number of the officials heading the ministries, and the abolition of the distinction of race in selecting candidates for these posts.[260] These results were deeply frustrating to the constitutionalists.

Let us zoom back to the overall progress of constitutional reform. In full knowledge of the difficulty of each project, how would a governor or viceroy on the ground feel when, every single month, he received yet another edict about more new projects? What would he do? We can speculate that many of them just sat there and effectively did nothing since they deemed it impossible to accomplish everything. But some determined governors such as Duanfang refused to capitulate in the face of an increasingly dire situation. The discontent of the masses toward the court had been

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[259] Zhang, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 203.
[260] Norbert Meienberger, *The Emergence of Constitutional Government in China, 1905–1908* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1980), 53.

widely exhibited through verbal assaults, bombs, assassinations, and rebellions. In 1907, under Duanfang's jurisdiction, secret society members and revolutionaries formed an alliance to organize the Ping-Liu-Li uprising. Later in the same year, Xu Xiling, a disguised revolutionary in the post of a local official, shot Enming, governor of Anhui.[261]

As a man who had been a governor or viceroy of five provinces (Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang, Hunan, and Hubei), Duanfang was aware of the practical difficulties of implementing constitutional reform on the ground, and of how far the reform projects could plausibly be carried out over the next few years. But as an elite Manchu official with vision, he also understood the urgency brought about by rising anti-government sentiment around the country. The problem he needed to tackle was the following: If, in the near future, he could not single-handedly accelerate the institutional changes needed to broaden the political participation of educated elites and soothe their bitterness over Manchu ethnic privilege, then what useful goal could he try to accomplish instead?

Part III: Publicity Campaign I: Bronze Appreciation and the Cultural Haven

Duanfang was no fool. He knew very well that, even if he convinced the monarch, constitutional reform could not be achieved overnight. Therefore, he decided to prepare the way by campaigning on two fronts: cultural unity and international recognition. Let us deal with them in this order. We can view these fronts as the domestic and the international components of a master publicity campaign that Duanfang designed in order to bolster faith in the Qing government.

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[261] Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 105.

Domestically, Duanfang needed to inspire general confidence in the government's determination and ability to carry out political reform. Instead of political machines, he used "culture" as his tool. Duanfang decided that he needed help from the educated elites (gentry, literati, industrialists, etc.) in order to develop and reinforce the cultural threads in his networks. Thus, he appealed for a new cultural unity.

J.W. von Goethe once discussed the relations between the "useful" and "beautiful" in his book *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*:[262]

> Every gift is valuable and ought to be unfolded. When one encourages the beautiful alone, and another encourages the useful alone, it takes them both to form a nation. The useful encourages itself; for the multitude produces it and no one can dispense with it. The beautiful must be encouraged; for few can set it forth and many need it.

Let us consider this in Duanfang's terms. The "useful" was identified with concrete resources such as coal, steel, machines, and railroads. The "beautiful," in contrast, was identified more with abstract ideas such as faith, hope, manners, and cultural legacy (such as the Confucian *Analects*, Chinese poetry, and art). Without the beautiful, there is no nobility of character, and without nobility of character, the power of industry produced by the people of a nation will be frittered away in ignoble and wasteful consumption.[263]

Duanfang saw it as his mission to revive respect toward the emperor and rejuvenate the Manchus as an aristocracy by connecting them with "the beautiful." In Duanfang's time, the public reputation of the Manchus had deteriorated to its lowest point ever. Their ancestors had fought the good fight, winning and re-establishing the

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[262] Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 547.
[263] Ku, *The Story of a Chinese Oxford Movement*, 7–8.

great Chinese Empire. The Manchus inherited property and vested interests, enjoying privileges in legal treatment and in government employment. They were also hereditary stipendiaries of the state, living on regular stipends paid in silver, grain or land. These state policies divided the Manchus into two extreme groups. On the one hand, the Manchu elites lived luxuriously, indulging in fancy furniture, delicate sets of glassware, and snuff-boxes, while patronizing entertainments such as Beijing opera and cricket-fighting. On the other hand, the Manchus from those banner families at the bottom had no source of income other than the small pittance of government allowance. Most sank into a life of self-denial and semi-starvation. Without basic vocational skills, many of them drudged along like slaves.

Furthermore, residents of north China had invented the word *daye* (lit. "big sir") to address the stereotyped "idiot Manchu." Scholar Gu Hongming has described *daye* as such: "A blue or red bottomed idiot, without the faintest reason on his side, he will argue with you, having all the time not the slightest idea of what negotiation or argument means, until one feels one must run away for fear of being frenzied and forced to commit murder by throttling and strangling the pale-faced, lack-luster-eyed gibbering idiot."[264] In short, the Manchus had become a despised group in China. Somebody from the outside or some exceptionally strong and able person from among themselves had to take control of the reform of the Manchus and breathe new life into them.[265]

Duanfang tried to play that reformist role. He proposed that in the new China, the Manchus should be neither privileged nor separate. Rather, Manchu nobility was to be

[264] Ibid., 27.
[265] Ibid., 28.

expressed not in politics or in technical knowledge, but in their superior grasp of culture. Like the British nobility and the Japanese samurai, they could be spirited aristocrats, leading the nation toward elegance and health. To embody the best of China, Manchus needed to be even more cultured and "Chinese" than the Han.

Thus, Duanfang presented himself as a "new Manchu" who cultivated a sense of the "beautiful" not in consumer culture but in antiquarian culture like bronze appreciation. A famous aristocratic playboy early on in life, Duanfang was quite familiar with the luxurious lifestyle. But the "beautiful" could not be found in those things that were produced merely to satisfy cravings of vanity, comfort, luxury, and gaiety. On the contrary, because ancient bronze was a glorious symbol of primeval Chinese political and religious authority, it was the exemplar of "Chinese beauty" and historically priceless.

Duanfang was noted for his rich collection of antiques. G. E. Morrison, the London *Times* journalist who spent twenty-five years in China from 1895 to 1920, praised Duanfang as "the greatest authority living on Chinese antiquities."[266] There is a widely-known story about how Duanfang became a bronze expert. When he was still a young man, he once attended a party with several distinguished connoisseurs. When Duanfang tried to join the connoisseurs' discussion about bronze inscriptions, Wang Yirong, one of the connoisseurs, refused to answer his question and dismissed him as someone who was only interested in "such amusements as drinking with actors." Duanfang "coolly responded to Wang by vowing that within three years he would be an

[266] Lo, *The Correspondence of G.E. Morrison, 1895–1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 692.

authority on the subject." After that he studied assiduously at an antique center in Beijing, soon acquiring a reputation as a serious connoisseur.[267]

Before we consider Duanfang's bronze-collecting activities and his tactics of "bronze diplomacy" in the next part (Part IV), we must first devote some space to discussing the sheer beauty and value of ancient Chinese bronzes.

Bronze is usually an alloy of either copper and tin, or copper, tin, and lead. Chinese craftsmen and artists mastered bronze casting four thousand years ago, the second in the world (the first was the Middle Easterners) to do so. China's Bronze Age began during the mysterious Xia dynasty around 2000 B.C., began to flourish with the rise of the Shang Dynasty circa 1600 B.C., and ended when the Western Zhou Dynasty collapsed around 771 B.C. Most of the existing bronze artifacts are vessels, but there are also bronze bells, drums, daggers, crossbows, chariot ornaments, surveying instruments, and buckles.

At first the precious material was used chiefly for casting ritual vessels. Starting from about 1100 B.C., sacred bronzes were used not only for sacrificial and memorial purposes, but also as insignia of office. *The Rituals of Zhou* (*zhouli*) has a section devoted to the use of vessels for indicating differences in rank among officials. Eventually, the bronzes acquired further political significance when they were presented both as gifts from princes to ministers whom they had granted interviews as well as bribes by individuals or small states who wished to acquire influence. Sometimes a bronze gift to enemies could even put an end to acts of war. [268]

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[267] Lawton, *A Time of Transition*, 43.
[268] John C. Ferguson, *Outlines of Chinese Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1919), 40–41.

Bronze art aimed to depict the solemnity and loftiness of deities, ancestors, royal power, and "rule by rites."[269] The decorations on bronzes are mysterious. Only a few bronze motifs are realistic, and most are transformations of natural objects. For instance, the dragon motif uses the snake and the lizard as the main parts of its image, in addition to incorporating aspects of several other animals. The *tao-tie* motif is the transformation of the front view of an ox head.[270] Fangs, horns, claws, beaks, heraldic birds, trunked monsters with spiraling bodies—all of these vivid and impressive images also turn the bronzes into symbols of ideas. The overwhelming superhuman powers of history combined with the mysteries of primitive religion have endowed bronze objects with a solemn aura and a lofty aesthetic style.

The cultural regard for antiquity had been translated into a national passion for the bronze first in the Song, then in the Qing dynasty. Scholars and literati regarded bronzework as the oldest of China's national arts, and adored the few archaic specimens that were preserved or excavated with the greatest veneration. Today, ancient bronzes still form one of the most important sections of both the Imperial Museum at Peking and the National Palace Museum in Taipei.

To become a bronze expert requires comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of history, the classics, art, and even technology. Influenced by Confucius's nostalgic yearning for the "ideal age"—the Bronze Age—many Chinese artists over the course of history believed that the perfect consummation of their craft consisted of the repetition of ancient designs. In bronze casting, the basic shape of ancient ritual vessels has been

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[269] Wangheng Chen, *Chinese Bronzes: Ferocious Beauty*, trans. Lizeng Gong, Aiwen Yang, and Xingzheng Wang (Asiapac, 2001), 161.
[270] Ibid.

followed almost to the present day. Hence, to determine the approximate age of any bronze artifact, one needs to examine its workmanship, decoration, and patina. Experts should also have enough knowledge of classical learning to identify the inscriptions on the bronzes, which are sometimes records of noble deeds or historical facts, e.g., a dedication from a son to his father or the glorification of the donor's own deeds.

In a word, the bronze, with its grace of form, purity of line, turquoise color, ferocious decoration, and historical inscriptions, celebrates the virtues of coherence, clarity, hierarchic order, and fine craftsmanship. They were created as emblems of power, and could only be preserved or excavated, not reproduced. What other antique could better symbolize the glories of traditional China? What other group of literati could be nobler than the bronze connoisseurs, who must be masters of history, art, archaeology, and aesthetics?

Collecting bronze was Duanfang's personal hobby, but he turned it into a cultural phenomenon that was both a product of his extensive network and also a reinforcement of it. In the 1900s, when he traveled throughout China as a governor or viceroy, he continued to acquire antiquities. Some of these pieces had been heirlooms in family collections for many generations, while others had been unearthed only recently. Moreover, he surrounded himself with a group of the most outstanding bronze specialists and literati. Duanfang offered these scholars various positions as members of his private staff, employees of a newly-established governmental unit, teaching fellows in a state-supported school, etc. In return, they assisted Duanfang in acquiring precious bronzes.

In his monograph, *A Time of Transition*, Dr. Thomas Lawton, curator of Chinese art and director of the Freer Gallery, introduces the lives and collections of two

connoisseurs of Chinese antiques—Duanfang and John C. Ferguson.[271] According to Dr. Lawton, the two most famous bronzes in Duanfang's collection were the Mao Gong Ding (dated to the Western Zhou Dynasty) and the Tuan-fang Altar Set (dated to the early years of the Western Zhou dynasty). The Mao Gong Ding bears an inscription of 497 characters, the longest ever discovered on any bronze so far unearthed. It is now kept in the Taipei Palace Museum as one of the Museum's top two most precious objects. The Tuan-fang Altar Set includes a complete set of bronze vessels—one rectangular bronze base, eleven vessels, one bronze spoon, six bronze ladles, and a small wine cup—unearthed in 1901 from a grave in Shaanxi province. This set is now kept in the Metropolitan Museum of Art as the central piece of its Chinese bronze collection.

Some of the other famous bronzes in Duanfang's collection include: 1) a Shang dynasty bronze ritual wine container, dated to the eleventh century B.C., currently in the Nelson-Atkins museum; 2) a bronze bell with a long 117-character inscription, dated to the sixth century B.C., currently in the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco; 3) a gilt-bronze Maitreya, dated 536 A.D., currently in the University Museum in Philadelphia; 4) another gilt-bronze image, dated 437 A.D., currently one of the treasures of the Eiseti Bunko Foundation; 5) a Sui-dynasty gilt-bronze shrine, currently in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston; and 6) six gilt bronzes, including two lions and an incense burner, currently in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.[272]

With the help of the top connoisseurs around him, Duanfang also published four high-quality catalogues on bronzes, jades, steles, and paintings. The bronze catalogue

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[271] Lawton, *A Time of Transition*.
[272] Ibid., 15–27.

was the first Chinese publication to print rubbings of bronze inscriptions using the photolithographic process. It is also the earliest record concerning the whereabouts of bronze ritual vessels that were taken from the Qing imperial collections during the second Opium War and the 1900 Boxer debacle. [273] In 1907, during his tenure as the Viceroy of Liangjiang, Duanfang also established an antique center in Nanjing named *Bao Hua An*. His personal collections filled up seven high-ceilinged rooms. According to Dr. Lawton, "almost every museum in the world with a Chinese collection contains some artifacts that have passed through Duanfang's hands."[274]

Based on shared interests in bronzes and other antiques, Duanfang gathered around himself a circle of the top literati in China. The names, native places, occupations, and specialties of some of these literati are listed in Table 1 below. Glancing through this table is like looking at a *Who's Who* of the literati world in China at the opening decade of the twentieth century.

Table 5.2: Scholars in Duanfang's Mu-Fu (Private Administration)

Name	Home Province	Membership Period	Job Description	No. of Works in the National Library of China	Fields of Study
Yang Shoujing (1839-1915)杨守敬	Hubei	Spring 1909	identify antiques; compile catalogues	329	history, geography, paleography, philology, calligraphy, poetry, seal-carving, bibliography
Lao Naixuan (1843-1921)劳乃宣	Zhejiang	1906-07	identify antiques	103	etymology, phonology, phonetics
Miao Quansun (1844-1919) 缪荃孙	Jiangsu	1906-09	compile catalogues	854	history, geography, gazetteer, paleography, philology, classics, poetry, seal-carving, bibliography

[273] Ibid., 13.
[274] Ibid., 2.

Table 5.2 Continued:

Name	Home Province	Membership Period	Job Description	No. of Works in the National Library of China	Fields of Study
Deng Jiaji (1845-1909) 邓嘉辑	Jiangsu	1908	library administration	22	prose, library science, archival science
Fan Zengxiang (1846-1931)樊增祥	Hubei	1900-01; 1908	compile catalogues	179	poetry, literature
Chen Sanli (1852-1937) 陈三立	Jiangxi	1907	identify antiques	54	poetry, education
Tu Ji (1856-1921) 屠寄	Jiangsu	1908-09	identify antiques	36	history, prose, poetry
Chen Yan (1856-1937) 陈衍	Fujian	1902-04	compile catalogues; financial administration	134	poetry, economy
Li Baoxun (1859-1915) 李葆恂	Henan	1907-09	compile catalogues	37	poetry
Kuang Zhouyi (1859-1926)况周颐	Guangxi	1907-09	compile catalogues	113	poetry
Li Xiang (1859-1931) 李详	Jiangsu	1907-09	compile catalogues	43	history, classics, paleography, philology
Chen Qingnian (1862-1929) 陈庆年	Jiangsu	1905; 1907-09	library administration	11	history, classics, gazetteer, geography, library science
Yang Zhongyi (1865-1940) 杨钟义	Yellow Banner	1901-04; 1906-07	document drafting	6	seal-carving, inscription, poetry
Wang Renjun (1866-1914) 王仁俊	Jiangsu	Unknown	identify antiques; compile catalogues		history, classics, Dunhuang, paleography
Zeng Pu (1872-1935) 曾朴	Jiangsu	1908-09	draft foreign documents	110	English, fiction, finance
Liu Shipei (1884-1919)刘师培	Jiangsu	1909-11	draft documents	338	history, classics, ethics
Sun Cheng (N/A) 孙澂	Zhili	unknown	acquire artifacts	0	unknown
Huang Shiling (N/A) 黄士陵	Anhui	unknown	identify antiques	7	seal-carving, calligraphy
Wang Chonglie (N/A) 王崇烈	Shandong	unknown	identify antiques	3	seal-carving, calligraphy
Zhu Deyi (N/A) 褚德彝	Zhejiang	1902	identify antiques	11	seal-carving

Table 5.2 Continued:

Name	Home Province	Membership Period	Job Description	No. of Works in the National Library of China	Fields of Study
Jiang Kai (N/A) 蒋楷	Jiangsu	unknown	unknown	11	education
Wang Guan (N/A) 王瓘	Sichuan	unknown	unknown	0	unknown
Gong Xiling (N/A) 龚锡龄	Hunan	1898; 1906-06	compile catalogues	2	classics
Huang Junfu (N/A) 黄君复	Shan-dong	1908	unknown	1	unknown
Guanlin (N/A)管琳	Jiangsu	1907	unknown	0	unknown
Huang Tingrong (N/A) 黄廷荣	Anhui	1908-09	catalogue illustration	2	painting

Sources:

1. Shang Xiaoming 尚小明, "Duanfang mufu" 端方幕府 [Duanfang's private administration (table)], in *Xueren youmu yu qingdai xueshu* 学人游幕与清代学术 [The literati's involvement in *mufu* and its influence on the development of scholarship during the Qing dynasty] (Beijing: Shehui kexue chubanshe, 1999), 314–17.
2. Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Correspodence*, vols. 27–29.

Previously in chapter two, we discussed the double-web system of Duanfang's network. The major resource Duanfang used for favor exchange within his extended circle was official positions. In the case of constitutional reform, Duanfang was eager to find companions among the empire's most respected scholars. He found them through their shared passion for the bronzes, and managed to keep them within his orbit by offering them various official positions within his jurisdictions.

For these scholars, what Duanfang provided was not just financial security, but also a cultural haven. Duanfang's enthusiasm for the bronzes was well known. When Duanfang was the governor of Liangjiang in 1908, he once sent out nine telegrams in two days to secure the acquisition of a bronze vessel recently excavated in Shaanxi.[275] John C.

[275] Duanfang Archives, *Collection of Correspondences*, vol. 121.

Ferguson reminisced about their meetings: "He left in his *T'ao Chai Chi Chin Lu* a complete record of his great collection, but, when looking through his valuable book, I always miss the flashing eyes and nervous movements of the great connoisseur as I can remember him while handling his wonderful bronzes."[276] In place of tables and chairs, Duanfang's drawing room displayed a large number of old drums (dated to 42 C.E.).[277] The scholars around him later recalled that they spent the best days of their lives in that drawing room, sitting on ancient drums, sipping tea, decoding inscriptions, and marveling at bronzes and jades that represented millennia of Chinese cultural heritage.

This cultural haven was like a magnet, attracting people with cultural prestige and shared political passion from other social circles. Another frequent visitor to Duanfang's drawing room was Zhang Jian, the "king of Nantong" and later the chairman of the first Jiangsu Provincial Assembly. Zhang Jian was also a master of classical learning who took first place in the 1894 palace exam. Moreover, throughout his lifetime Duanfang maintained a close relationship with Liang Qichao, who was acknowledged to be the foremost intellectual giant at the turn of the twentieth century and the leading theorist of constitutionalism.[278]

In a word, constitutional reform was not just about changing the law of the land. It was also about changing ethnic, cultural, and provincial perceptions of that law. Posing himself as an exemplar Manchu, Duanfang found companionship among Han literati through connoisseurship and thereby acquired political effectiveness. He was seeking a cultural compromise that all parties could accept without surrendering their

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[276] Lawton, *A Time of Transition*, 19.
[277] Ibid., 20.
[278] Joseph R. Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959).

prerogatives (i.e., Manchus would not have to stop being Manchus, and Chinese could strengthen their pan-Chinese identity).

Part IV: Publicity Campaign II: The International Projects

This was all well and good. But Duanfang also realized that in the new world, self-assertion was not sufficient. Even if the Chinese-educated elite identified with a core cultural essence as embodied by a refined monarch and a rejuvenated China, a new constitutional monarchy could not survive without foreign recognition and goodwill. Thus, in order to gain publicity, Duanfang devoted a large proportion of his resources to the international front. In this section we will discuss three examples of this: the 1905 constitutional trip, the 1908 Jinan school for overseas Chinese, and the Nanyang Exposition of 1910.

The constitutional trip was not so much about constitutionalism as it was an extension of Duanfang's domestic cultural campaign. Duanfang's affection for bronzes not only shaped his domestic cultural strategy, but also transformed into a diplomatic style all his own. We might call this "bronze diplomacy." On his constitutional trip to the United States and Europe in 1905 and 1906, Duanfang became an international superstar by playing the dual role of both statesman and art savant. He presented precious bronzes and jades from his personal collection as gifts to presidents, ministers, monarchs, and nobles. In New York he visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art and commented on their bronze collections. In Chicago he presented the soon-to-open Museum of Natural History with a Tang dynasty Daoist stele that dated back to 726 A.D. In return, the museum presented Duanfang with a small collection of ancient North and South

American pots and a basket woven by the Tlingit Indians of Alaska.[279] In Germany Duanfang gave a lecture on Chinese antiques. In the end, he turned his political mission into a cultural event, conveying the message that China was both cosmopolitan (that is, willing to adapt to constitutionalism) and traditional (proud of its cultural heritage).

Furthermore, during his trip Duanfang visited the University of California, Stanford, Cornell, Harvard, and Yale, in the process meeting overseas Chinese students and speaking to them about the perils of ethnic hatred and a potential civil war. In San Francisco, he arranged a special meeting with revolutionary representatives (who were also recruiting student activists) and implored them not to propagate anti-Manchu hatred anymore. "We are all Chinese," he said, "We should cooperate to defend China against the foreign powers. Trust me—after this investigative trip, I will figure out a way to solve the Manchu-Han problem."[280]

Duanfang also built special schools that offered tution-free, all-expenses-paid education to the children of overseas Chinese. Noticing that activists such as Sun Zhongshan enjoyed widespread support among the overseas Chinese communities, Duanfang tried to draw away the financial base of the revolutionaries by courting those same communities. Also, welcoming the overseas Chinese back into China was in a sense an attempt to expand the social and mental parameters of the government to include those born abroad, a bid for pan-Chinese loyalty to the Qing regime.

At the end of 1907, almost every major overseas Chinese community in Southeast Asia and North America had received a flyer from Duanfang, governor-general

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[279] Lawton, *A Time of Transition*, 8.
[280] Liu, *Shizaitang zayi*, 100.

of Liangjiang. In this poster, Duanfang announced the opening of the Jinan school in Nanjing, which was specially directed toward the children of overseas Chinese. According to Duanfang, any overseas Chinese child regardless of nationality could attend this school as long he or she demonstrated some knowledge of the Chinese language. The tuition and living expenses would all be covered by the Qing government. The quality of teaching was guaranteed by the governor-general himself, who personally selected the teachers and vouched for the school's impeccable standards.[281]

Duanfang spared no expense in his creation of a home-like community for the students in the Jinan School.[282] In addition, he was keenly aware that keeping overseas parents informed about his efforts was crucial for garnering support for the Qing government. At his request, every semester the school would send a detailed report to each student's family and the major overseas Chinese associations. The reports would include short biographies of teachers, brief introductions to the coursework, the daily schedule, uniform styles, dinner arrangements, and the student's grades. Most importantly, according to school regulations all students were required to write a letter to

[281] The school curriculum would have included instruction in morality, Chinese literature, mathematics, English, painting, history, geography, science, music, and calisthenics. See Xia Quan 夏泉, " Duanfang yu Ji'nan xuetang" 端方与暨南学堂 [Duanfang and the establishment of Ji'nan University], *Ji'nan xuebao* 暨南学报 2 (1995): 87–88.

[282] Duanfang went to great lengths to guarantee the quality of teaching. In March 1907, the first 29 students arrived in Nanjing. Since most of original hometowns were in Guangdong, Duanfang assigned two Cantonese to take care of them. To help these children improve their Chinese, Duanfang selected ten students from Nanjing local schools in the same class with these overseas children to create more opportunities for conversation. Besides free dinner and free housing, each student received two uniforms (one for summer and one for winter) every year. Students also enjoyed free medical care and were offered the choice of doctors trained in Chinese medicine or doctors trained in Western medicine, according to their needs and habits at home. Furthermore, Duanfang maintained close contact with the students entrusted to his care. He frequently visited the school to check on their living conditions. When he saw children from the Jinan school on the streets of Nanjing, he was known to invite them to join him in the carriage and tour the city together. See Xia, " Duanfang yu Ji'nan xuetang," 87–88.

their parents every week.[283] By creating a high-quality school for children of overseas Chinese and continuously showcasing this achievement to Chinese living abroad, Duanfang attempted to shorten the distance between overseas Chinese and the Qing government.

The policy worked. Stories about the Jinan school traveled swiftly among overseas Chinese communities, and many parents strived to get their children enrolled. In less than two years, the number of students expanded from the original twenty-nine to over two hundred.[284] Duanfang also began to enjoy an excellent reputation in Southeast Asia, and many Chinese stores there hung a photo of Duanfang on the shop fronts. The revolutionaries were understandably annoyed. Traditionally, Chinese merchants had been known to display portraits of Guan Yu, a powerful historical folklore figure. Yet after the famous 1898 reforms, shop fronts were graced with portraits of the reformer Kang Youwei. Now the Qing official Duanfang replaced Kang Youwei.[285]

The Nanyang "Encouraging Industry" Exposition (*Nanyang quanye hui*), held in Nanjing in February 1910, was China's first nation-wide exposition. It was also the brainchild of Duanfang. At the turn of the turn of the twentieth century, world fairs (large commercial, industrial, and technological exhibitions) were held mainly by the great powers in order to show off the fruits of progress and to give their citizens a glimpse of where civilization was envisioned to be headed. However, "the last Chinese dynasty, having just discovered the power of nationalism, attempted an international

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[283] Ibid., 85–89.
[284] Ibid., 87.
[285] "Duanfang" 端方 [Duanfang], in *Zhonghua minguo kaiguo wushinian wenxian* 中华民国开国五十年文献 [Documents on the fifti eth anniversary of the founding the Republic of China], vol. 16, ed. Zhonghua minguo kaiguo wushinian wenxian bianzuan weiyuanhui 中华民国开国五十年文献编纂委员会 (Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1963), 460.

exposition of its own in the summer of 1910 at the same time that the 'Festival of Empire Exhibition' was booked into London's famed Crystal Palace."[286] Scholar Susan Fernsebner has provided the most comprehensive account on this event in an article published in *Late Imperial China* entitled, "Objects, Spectacle, and A Nation on Display at the Nanyang Exposition of 1910."[287] sIn sum, representatives from fourteen countries attended the events. Items on display not only included material products, industrial arts, fine arts, and educational articles produced locally in China, but also included modern armaments, a fully equipped emergency hospital, and a miniature passenger railway. There were a dozen large common buildings financed by the exhibition and an equal number of smaller private exhibits, numerous commercial and eating establishments, theaters both Chinese and Western, various other amusements, and fifteen provincial pavilions.

Through the exhibits, the organizers, including Duanfang, aimed to "offer stirring examples of the historic strides that had been taken, to display the skill of 'Chinese' people and to create the things that would pull the nation up to par with its international competition."[288] Foreign newspapers, including the London *Times*, observed that the exposition "showed that China's leadership was willing to stand before the foreign powers to be evaluated by their standards," and, though incomplete, the exhibits reflected "great credit on the promoters."[289]

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[286] Michael R. Godley, " China's World Fair of 1910: Lessons from a Forgotten Event," *Modern Asian Studies* 12, no. 3 (1978): 503.
[287] Susan R. Fernsebner, " Objects, Spectacle, and a Nation on Display at the Nanyang Exposition of 1910," *Late Imperial China* 27, no. 2 (December 2006), 99–124.
[288] Ibid., 111–12.
[289] Godley, " China's World Fair of 1910," 519.

Eventually about 100,000 taels of silver (approximately 16% of the total) were raised abroad and 250,000 taels (approximately 42% of the total) were contributed by the gentry and urban elites for general capital expenditure.[290] The event was the product of joint efforts by the government, the gentry and urban elites, and the overseas Chinese. The Nanyang Exposition, like Duanfang's other ventures in those years (such as public park building and appearing as the chief Chinese representative of the International Opium Ban Convention held in Shanghai in 1909), helped cement his position as an international superstar. His generous spending seemed to pay off both domestically and internationally.

Part V: Open Hand in Recruiting Top Revolutionaries

Again, this was all well and good. The above accomplishments would have been enough for any reformer interested in glory. Duanfang, however, had walked in too many circles to be unaware that reformers and revolutionaries were in a war for the hearts and minds of the nation-to-be. Being the Manchu spider that he was, he could not resist using his publicity tools to target some of the prominent members of the revolutionary movement. We can thus use a few examples of his dealings with revolutionaries as a measure of his success as the number one Qing spindoctor.

Duanfang was ingenious in his ability to successfully convert radicals into serving the Qing government. In the revolutionary accounts, he was denounced first and foremost as a "crafty rascal" (*jiaohua zhi wulai*).[291] His recruitment of leading

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[290] Ibid., 520. See also Zhang, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 312.
[291] "Duanfang," in *Zhongguo tongmenghui*, vol. 16, 457.

revolutionary intellectual Liu Shipei and his near recruitment of paramount anti-Manchu theorist Zhang Taiyan, among others, were scandalous upsets in the revolutionary rank.

In the early 1900s, Liu Shipei was one of the spiritual leaders of anti-Manchu activities. However, the following two passages written by him, the first in 1904 and the second in 1908, reveal a striking change in tone, and are worth quoting at length:

> To Duanfang: The boundary between Hua 华 and Yi 夷 has been formulated and entrenched for thousands of years. I reckon that you are very clear regarding this point. Now the Han people have revived and revolted everywhere. If you insist on being stubbornly going against this revolutionary trend, you have only two possible futures: to flee to a remote area like Wang Baobao [the Yuan general who fled to Inner Mongolia after the fall of Yuan dynasty], or to be killed like Taihabuha [the Yuan general who was killed in the war with Zhu Yuanzhang]. So now I would suggest that you surrender to our Han troops. This is the only way you can possibly survive. From: Liu Guanghan [Shipei].[292]
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> To Duanfang: I have always heard about your extraordinary attainments in both traditional literature and western learning. And many people tell me that you go out of your way to enlist the services of the talented and the learned. I used to be fooled by the anti-Manchu radicals and joined their camp. Not until I went to Tokyo did I see the truth about the so-called 'revolutionaries.' Sun Zhongshan is ignorant, incompetent and shameless. Anti-Manchu activities would cause civil war in China and make it divided by foreigners. Here I voluntarily surrender to you, hoping that you can pardon my former misgivings. From: Liu Shipei.[293]

Guanghan, which means "To revive the Han identity," was the revolutionary name Liu Shipei adopted in 1903, the year he joined the Shanghai Patriotic Association

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[292] Wang Ling 王凌, "Youguan Li Shipei yi ze fanqing shiliao" 有关刘师培一则反清史料 [A historical document on Liu Shipei's anti-Qing activities], *Lishi dang'an* 历史档案 3 (1988). See also Liu Shipei 刘师培, "Shang Duanfang shu" 上端方书 [Letters to Duanfang], in *Liu Shipei xinhai qianwen xuan* 刘师培辛亥前文选, ed. Zhu Weizheng 朱維錚 and Li Miaogen 李妙根 (Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 1998), 95–96.

[293] Liu Shipei, "Shang Duanfang shu," in *Liu Shipei xinhai qianwen xuan*, 96–97.

and met radical intellectuals such as Zhang Taiyan, Wu Zhihui, and Huang Yanpei.[294] Although Zhang was 15 years older than Liu (Liu was 19 that year and Zhang was 34), he was really impressed by Liu's talent and deep understanding of Chinese traditional literature. (Liu Shipei was also known for reading the entirety of the Four Books and Five Classics before the age of twelve and composing one hundred poems in two days when he turned thirteen.[295])

Later, during his imprisonment following the *Subao* case, Zhang wrote two letters to Liu, whom he had met only two months prior, expressing his longing for his young friend and highly praising Liu's works.[296] Inspired by Zhang and other radical scholars, Liu Shipei changed his name to Guanghan and became one of the leading anti-Manchu scholars. From 1903 to 1906, he published articles in eleven radical newspapers and journals.[297] Among those articles was his letter to Duanfang (the first paragraph in the above citations), which he wrote in January 1904 to persuade Duanfang to adapt to the historical trend and surrender to Han people.

Although countless anti-Manchu articles were published in the first years of twentieth century, Liu Shipei (Guanghan) still stood out as one of the spiritual leaders of anti-Manchu activities. One reason for this was that his articles were different from

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[294] Zhao Shenxiu 赵慎修, "Liu Shipei pingzhuan" 刘师培评传 [Biography of Liu Shipei], in *Liu Shipei pingzhuang zuopin xuan* 刘师培评传作品选 [Biography and selected writings of Liu Shipei], ed. Zhao Shenxiu (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1998), 15.
[295] Ibid., 9.
[296] Zhang Taiyan 章太炎, " Yu Liu Guanghan shu" 与刘光汉书 [Letter to Liu Shipei], in *Liu Shenshu yishu* 刘申叔遗书 [Collection of documents related to Liu Shipei] (Jiangsu: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1997), 227–30. For this citation, I am indebted to Zhao, "Liu Shipei pingzhuan," 16.
[297] Liu Shipei worked for *Subao* 苏报, *Eshi jingwen* 俄事警闻, *Jingzhong ribao* 警钟日报, *Jiangsu* 江苏, *Zhongguo baihuabao* 中国白话报, *Yang Zijiang baihuabao* 扬子江白话报, *Zhengyi tongbao* 政艺通报, *Guocui xuebao* 国粹学报, *Guangyi congbao* 广益丛报, *Xinshi* 醒狮, and *Fubao* 复报. See Zhao, "Liu Shipei pingzhuan," 17.

simple emotional appeals or unrestrained vituperation. He consistently justified his attack on the Manchus with solid academic evidence. For example, in his article, "Manchus are not Chinese" (*Bian manren fei Zhongguo zhi chenmin*), Liu carefully defined the term *Zhongguo* and the historical areas that it referred to. Then he spent forty pages meticulously tracing the history of Jianzhou, the original Manchu homeland, and proved that it did not belong to any country (*wu guoji*). Liu's conclusion was that the Manchus not only differed ethnically from the Han, but that they also belonged to a country different from *Zhongguo*.[298]

In 1907 Liu Shipei came to Tokyo on the invitation of Zhang Taiyan, who was then the main editor of *Minbao*. Liu joined the Revolutionary Alliance (*Tongmenghui*) after he met Sun Zhongshan there and soon became one of the major writers for *Minbao*. Liu's career as a revolutionary seemed very promising. One month after his arrival in Tokyo, Liu was invited as one of seven Chinese representatives to attend the farewell dinner held by Japanese officials for Sun Zhongshan, who was leaving Japan for America. The other six Chinese representatives were Huang Xing, Zhang Taiyan, Hu Hanmin, Wang Jingwei, Zhang Ji, and Wang Dong, all members of the elite circle of the Revolutionary Alliance. [299]

However, in January 1908, Liu made a political recantation and wrote a secret letter to Duanfang. This time, Liu surrendered to the Manchu official whom he had tried to induce to capitulate three years ago. Though Liu's turnaround was due to various factors, including his political division with Sun Zhongshan, Duanfang's well-known

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[298] Liu Shipei 刘师培, "Bian manren fei Zhongguo zhi chenmin" 辨满人非中国之臣民 [Manchus are not subjects of the Chinese empire], *Minbao* (Tokyo) 15 (April 1907): 39–73.
[299] Zhao Shenxiu, "Liu Shipei pingzhuan," 33.

respect for literati and welcoming attitude facilitated the transition process. When Duanfang caught wind of Liu's situation in Japan, he immediately drafted an enthusiastic invitation letter to Liu.[300] Moreover, upon Liu's arrival in Nanjing from Tokyo in early 1908, Duanfang honored him with a large welcoming party, in all inviting more than a hundred scholars.[301]

Liu Shipei stayed in Duanfang's administration until Duanfang's death in 1911. His defection to Duanfang's side in 1908 was like a bombshell dropped on the revolutionary camp. His "betrayal" also caused direct damage to revolutionary activities in China. Liu played an important role in the arrest of Tao Chengzhang, the founder of the Society for the Revival of China (*Guangfuhui*) and a close companion of Xu Xiling. He also informed Duanfang of a revolutionary plot in Zhejiang, resulting in the arrest of rebel leader Zhang Ji.[302] Furthermore, after Liu Shipei's defection, "the anarchists among the Chinese academic circles in Japan dispersed like an audience dispersing at the end of a performance and their activities in Tokyo ceased as a result."[303]

If Duanfang's recruitment of Liu Shipei was like a slap in the face for anti-Manchu revolutionaries in 1908, then in 1909 he gave them a solid punch with his almost-successful recruitment of Zhang Taiyan.

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[300] Li Hongyan 李洪岩, "Liu Shipei heyi yao beipan geming" 刘师培何以要背叛革命 [Why did Liu Shipei betray the revolution?], in *Zhongguo shekeyuan jindaishisuo qingnian shixue luntan 2002 nian juan* 中国社科院近代史所青年史学论坛 2002 年卷 [Publication of the 2002 Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Institute for Modern History, Young Historian's Forum] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2002), 134.

[301] For details about why he made this political recantation, see the following works: Li, "Liu Shipei he yi yao beipan geming," 130–36; and Chen Jie 陈洁, "Suochang daoduan Liu Shipei" 说长道短刘师培 [About Liu Shipei], *Yanhui chunqiu* 炎黄春秋 1 (2001): 71–73.

[302] Chen, "Suochang daoduan Liu Shipei," 73.

[303] Fu-ch'ing Huang, *Chinese Students in Japan in the Late Ch'ing Period* (Tokyo: Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1982), 196.

To evaluate how big an impact the Zhang-Duanfang relation was on the revolutionary camp, we need to briefly trace Zhang's life. Mary Rankin describes Zhang Taiyan as the "revolutionary most famous for single-minded anti-Manchuism."[304] As early as 1902, Zhang commemorated the 242nd "Anniversary of the Conquest of China" in Tokyo with a clarion call to Chinese everywhere to expel the Manchus and restore the Han race.[305] In 1903, Zhang was among the two *Subao* radicals who were convicted and sentenced to imprisonment. This case made him a legendary figure, just like Sun Zhongshan's kidnapping in London gave Sun a prominent name among revolutionaries. Whereas Zhang survived the three-year imprisonment, Zou Rong, the other convicted *Subao* activist, died before his two-year sentence expired. As soon as Zhang Taiyan was released, members of the newly organized Revolutionary Alliance escorted him to Japan. In Tokyo he was given a hero's welcome by members of the revolutionary party and made chief editor of the *Minbao*. In the next two years, he helped to combat the influence of Liang Qichao's popular monarchist journal, "New People's Miscellany (*Xinmin congbao*), and drew an increasing number of Chinese intellectuals into the revolutionary movement.[306] In other words, Zhang's status in the revolutionary camp was almost as prominent as that of Sun Zhongshan.

From the end of 1909 to early 1910, Zhang Taiyan's five letters to Liu Shipei and his wife He Zhen were revealed in the revolutionary periodicals *Zhongguo ribao* and *Xin Shiji*. In these letters, Zhang expressed his intent to become a monk in India and asked

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[304] Rankin, *Early Chinese Revolutionaries*, 9.
[305] Feng Ziyou 馮自由, *Geming yishi* 革命逸史 [An anecdotal history of the revolution], vol. 1 (Taibei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1953, 1965), 57–59.
[306] "Chang Ping-lin" 章炳麟 [Zhang Binglin], in *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, vol. 2, ed. Arthur W. Hummel, 678.

Liu Shipei to contact Duanfang about financial support. Thus, if Duanfang would agree to provide him with enough funds, Zhang promised to give up his career as a revolutionary and concentrate on academic research for the rest of his life.[307] Although negotiations between Zhang and Duanfang later failed because of their division over the amount of financial support and Zhang's travel destination, in the eyes of the revolutionaries who had followed Zhang for so many years this courtship in itself was already a scandalous affair. It was furthermore a sign of the disarray within the revolutionary camp.[308]

In 1908, a member of the Revolutionary Alliance named Chen Gongyao returned from Japan with orders to assassinate Duanfang. When Chen was arrested and sentenced to be executed, Duanfang pardoned him due to his close relationship with Zhang Jian, a leading Han constitutionalist. In gratitude, Chen changed his name to Taoyi, which means "spared by Tao [Duanfang]." Chen continued to use this controversial name long after Duanfang was killed in the 1911 revolution, and his relationship with Duanfang did not prevent him from being elected vice-president of the temporary senate under the new republican regime.

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[307] Yang Tianshi 杨天石 and Wang Xuezhuan 王学庄, "Zhang Taiyan yu Duanfang guanxi kaoxi" 章太炎与端方关系考析 [Examination on the relationship between Zhang Binglin and Duanfang], *Nankai xuebao* 南开学报 6 (1978): 38–45. For further information about the relationship between Zhang Taiyan and Duanfang, see Zeng Yeying 曾业英, "Zhang Taiyan yu Duanfang guanxi buzheng" 章太炎与端方关系补证 [Further examination on the relationship between Zhang Binglin and Duanfang], *Jindaishi yanjiu* 近代史研究 1 (1979): 320–24.

[308] Zhang Taiyan and Duanfang had major conflicts on two issues. The first concerned the location in which Zhang would begin his religious cultivation. Zhang wanted to go to India, but Duanfang insisted that he should stay in somewhere in China, such as Gu mountain in Fuzhou or Putuo mountain in Zhejiang. The second issue was related to the manner of payment. Zhang suggested a one-time payment of all travel and living expenses, but Duanfang insisted on a system of monthly payments. The negotiations finally broke down. See Zeng, "Zhang Taiyan yu Duanfang guanxi buzheng," 320–24. For this citation, I am indebted to Ji, *Wanqing shiqi de Duanfang*, 166–67.

Duanfang's reputation, as we have seen, reached a peak in 1909 and 1910. It did not rise all by itself. Every step of the way he used his networks and resources to buy his way into social circles and gain more political influence. All along I have been pointing at the uses of political networking and the internal danger point, and how a reformer had to manage both to good effect. Not all problems, as it turned out, could be resolved by spending. I will explain in the next and final chapter how Duanfang fell at last in 1910 and conclude with an assessment of what networks can teach us about the reform movement and the end of the Qing.

Chapter Six
The Breakdown

Part I: Duanfang's Dismissal I: The Court Politics Factor

The summer of 1909 was the peak of Duanfang's career. For it was in that year that he received an exceptional court evaluation of his three-year reign as the viceroy of Jiangsu-Anhui-Jiangxi, and was transferred to the post of the viceroy of Zhili, the most powerful and prestigious post outside of Beijing city. This post had been formerly held by Li Hongzhang and Yuan Shikai. When Duanfang was appointed to this position on June 28, 1909, he was only 48 years old. Chinese scholar Li Xizhu has made a statistical study of the 52 people who had taken up the post of viceroy in the last decade of the Qing dynasty (see Table 6.1). Duanfang was ten years younger than the average age. Furthermore, with the dismissal of Yuan Shikai and the death of Zhang Zhidong (Zhang died on October 4, 1909), Duanfang had established himself as the leading constitutionalist and reformer in the empire. Young, powerful, and both domestically and internationally well-known, Duanfang was eager to set new records with his career.

Table 6.1: The Average Age of Viceroys in Nine Regions, 1900–1911

Viceroy of	Zhili	Jiangsu-Anhui-Jiangxi	Shaanxi-Gansu	Fujian-Zhejiang	Hubei-Hunan	Guangdong-Guangxi	Sichuan	Yunnan-Guizhou	Manchuria	**Average**
Average Age	51.3	62.4	58.5	66.1	58.6	54.6	59.1	58.5	57.4	58.5

Source: Li Xizhu 李细珠, *Qingmo xinzheng shiqi defang dufu de qunti jiegou yu renshi bianqian* 清末新政时期地方督抚的群体结构与人事变迁 [A group analysis of the viceroys and governors during the New Policy Reform period, 1901–1911], in *Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan jindashi yanjiusuo qingnian xueshu luntan 2005 nian juan* 中国社会科学院近代史研究所青年史学论坛 2005 年卷 [Publication of the 2005 Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Institute for Modern History, Young Historian Forum] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2006), 160.

However, on November 26, 1909, five months after his appointment and three months after his taking the office, Duanfang was suddenly dismissed on grounds that he had shown disrespect to the funeral procession of the Empress Dowager Cixi. In all, he was accused of three major ritual improprieties: 1) he had authorized his subordinates to photograph the funeral procession; 2) he had ridden a horse while other mourners proceeded by foot; and 3) he had strung up telegraph wires within the geomantic (or spiritual) screen forming the enclosure around the mausoleum.[309]

All these improprieties were minor and understandable. Duanfang was not a participant in the funeral procession, but rather its chief organizer and supervisor. The tomb of the Empress Dowager is located in the Eastern Qing Tombs Complex (*qing dongling*), 75 miles east of Beijing. This complex covers an acreage of 2,500 square kilometers, with a six-kilometer-long entrance road. The mourners included all members of imperial clan and officials of the central government. The canopies set up for them required thirty-six carriages alone to transport.[310] To coordinate the enormous amount of funeral affairs on the ground over such a vast area, riding a horse was a better choice than walking on foot. For the same reason, it was also reasonable for Duanfang to string up telegraphs wires throughout the area so that the service workers in the Eastern Qing Tombs Complex could communicate directly with their counterparts in Beijing and neighboring cities.

As for authorizing his subordinates to photograph the funeral procession, Duanfang loved to have his picture taken. So did the late Empress Dowager. Both of

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[309] Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 152.
[310] Zhang Hailin, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 501.

them had posed for a considerable number of photographs, and both of them left a considerable number of posthumous photos. To record the grandeur of her majesty's funeral can be seen as Duanfang's last tribute to the queen who brought him to the center of China's political stage. It could possibly also be viewed as a sign of Duanfang's enthusiasm about constitutional reform beyond his memorial record. After he returned from his investigative trip abroad, Duanfang frequently mentioned the fact that in the European constitutional monarchies, there was no dividing line between the monarch and the people, and the press was allowed to freely photograph the monarch. Duanfang expressed his hope that China could follow this example.[311]

Here we are confronted with an enigma. Duanfang was among the most powerful of officials and of the Manchu elites. Can we attribute his sudden dismissal to simply an inappropriate use of photography and telegraph wires in a funerary setting or a misplaced enthusiasm for newly introduced technologies? To dismiss high-rank officials for minor offences was not uncommon in high court politics. As mentioned in chapter four, grand councilor Qu Hongji was dismissed in 1907 on vague charges of "collusion with a newspaper" after losing the empress dowager's favor in a power struggle with Yikuang and Yuan Shikai. In December 1908, Yuan Shikai was forced to resign on grounds of a foot illness after Zaifeng, the younger brother of the Guangxu emperor whom Yuan had betrayed in the 1898 coup d'état, succeeded Cixi as the de facto ruler of the empire. Hence, besides ritual improprieties, there must have been some underlying political factors that contributed to Duanfang's dismissal.

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[311] Liu Chengyu 刘成禹, "Duanfang chuyang qushi" 端方出洋趣史 [Interesting stories about Duanfang's trip abroad], in *Shizaitang zayi*, 102.

We can glean the first clue from a *New York Times* article published on January 3, 1910 entitled "Tuan Fang's Degradation: A Woman's Influence and a Selfish Dynasty Responsible for It." It is a letter to the editor written by Professor George Trumbull Ladd, a specialist of "oriental affairs" and former chair of the Philosophy Department of Yale University. The letter starts by pointing out the "Empress Dowager Yu" was the prime mover behind Duanfang's dismissal:

> The most important recent political news from China is the degradation of Tuan Fang, Viceroy of Chili Province, who was generally regarded by foreigners as the most able of the Chinese high-class officials, and who was once looked upon as the future leader in Peking politics …The Empress Dowager Yu is said to have insisted on Tuanfang's dismissal.[312]

The "Empress Dowager Yu" mentioned here refers to Consort Dowager Yu, one of the five wives of the late Tongzhi emperor. The Tongzhi emperor had one empress and four consorts during his nineteen-year-long life. Two consorts died before him, and Cixi forced the empress to commit suicide within a month of his death due to her pregnancy. As stated in chapter one, Cixi gave birth to Tongzhi, the only male heir of the Xianfeng emperor. When the Xianfeng emperor died, Tongzhi, who assumed the throne, was only five years old. As a result, Cixi, as the birth mother of the emperor and the official Empress Dowager, assumed the status of regent. When the Tongzhi emperor died, had his posthumous child been a son, then Tongzhi's empress would have been the legitimate regent instead of Cixi. To maintain her regent status, Cixi needed to make sure that the throne was occupied by someone from Tongzhi's generation. She then forced the pregnant empress to commit suicide and chose Tongzhi's four-year-old cousin as the new

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[312] "Tuan Fang's Degradation: A Woman's Influence and a Selfish Dynasty Responsible for It," *New York Times*, January 2, 1910, 8.

emperor, with the reign name Guangxu. As a result, the two consorts of Tongzhi emperor still living during the Guangxu reign were thrown into a very awkward situation, being neither "empress dowager" nor "empress." One of them was Consort Yu. She was only nineteen when Tongzhi died, and thereafter became the "forgotten one" in the Forbidden City. After Cixi died, Longyu, the niece of Cixi and wife of the Guangxu emperor, became the new empress dowager. And Consort Yu, though at a higher level of seniority than Longyu, had to be subordinate to Longyu because her title was "consort dowager" (*huangtaifei*) rather than "empress dowager."

The "photograph" incident provided Consort Dowager Yu with a good opportunity to reclaim her honors. According to the *New York Times* article, during the funeral, "incidentally, owing to the confusion caused by the photographing, by a subordinate of Tuan Fang, of the funeral procession, the new Empress Dowager (Longyu) stole a march on the Empress Dowager Yu (Consort Dowager Yu)." Consort Dowager Yu seized Longyu's act of ritual impropriety and denounced it openly. She "was thus greatly angered and refused to take food, being determined to commit suicide, together with the two other female royalties." Furthermore, when the imperial family members were scheduled to return to Beijing, she refused to leave the late Empress Dowager's mausoleum until being treated with the same honors as Empress Dowager Longyu. She also insisted that Duanfang, whose subordinate's photographing act had disturbed the peace of the mausoleum, should be punished.[313] In the end, Regent Zaifeng and Prince Zaizheng (son of Yikuang) had to personally and most likely humbly "persuade" her to

[313] Ibid.

return to Beijing, all the while promising her the same courteous and material treatment as Empress Dowager Longyu.

The temporary confusion among the imperial concubines caused by the photo shooting incident was originally quite minor. But Consort Dowager Yu made an awkward scene out of it and connected the incident to imperial dignity. She then used this matter to coerce Regent Zaifeng and Empress Dowager Longyu to offer her more benefits. This was quite an unpleasant and disgraceful imperial affair. The anger of Regent Zaifeng and Empress Dowager Longyu, if unable to be fixed on Consort Dowager Yu, had to be vented on someone. As a result, "the heir of the Marquis Li Hung Chang [Li Hongzhang] had been made to impeach Tuan Fang, as an ordinary Censor would be unable to shake the position of such an influential man as Tuan Fang."[314]

Hence Duanfang was pushed out in order to take the blame. On November 20, one week after the funeral was over, two of Duanfang's subordinates in charge of the funeral photography, along with the two camera men they hired, were thrown in prison. Two weeks later, the two camera men were sentenced to a ten-year-long penal servitude, and the two government employees were sentenced to life imprisonment.[315] Meanwhile, on November 26, Duanfang was stripped of his office on grounds of "violating ritual propriety and showing disrespect to the imperial court."[316]

The editor of the *New York Times* commented on Duanfang's dismissal as such: "It is certainly discouraging that a man of his ability, progressive spirit, and talent for

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[314] Ibid.
[315] Zhang Hailin, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 501.
[316] Ibid.

organization should be sacrificed to appease the spite of a sulking woman."[317] Though the influence of the quarrel between Empress Dowager Rongyu and Consort Dowager Yu upon the political position of Duanfang was quite evident, it is also noteworthy that Regent Zaifeng's consent for the punishment of Duanfang was another key factor.

Zaifeng's decision probably had to do Duanfang's three memorials in the four months from July to November 1909. In the first memorial, Duanfang suggested that Zaifeng appoint a group of senior scholar-officials as imperial consuls and set aside two to three hours daily to hear their advice on political reform.[318] Due to Zaifeng's inaction, Duanfang repeated his suggestions in a second and third memorial, in an increasingly fervent tone. This was an indirect attack on Zaifeng for failing to carry out Cixi's will of continuing constitutional reform, thus hinting that Zaifeng had not carried out his responsibility as regent.[319]

One note on the background and personality of Zaifeng (1883–1951). In terms of family background and personal experience, Zaifeng was an ideal candidate for regent. First, he was of pure imperial blood, being the nephew of the Xianfeng emperor, cousin of the Tongzhi emperor, brother of the Guangxu emperor, and father of the Xuantong emperor. He was, if not the most noble, at least of the noblest Manchu of his time by any standard. Second, he married Ronglu's daughter. Ronglu, as discussed in chapter one, was probably the only official in court whom Cixi ever truly trusted. As the former chief Grand Councilor, Ronglu was well connected to almost every major group in the court—

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[317] "The Awakening East," *New York Times*, January 2, 1910, 12.
[318] Zhang Hailin, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 485-486.
[319] " Duanfang" 端方, in *Minguo renwu zhuan* 民国人物传 [Biography of eminent Chinese in the Republican period], ed. Lou Xiange 娄献阁 and Zhu Xinquan 朱信泉 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1978), 509.

Manchu nobles, censors, ministers, renowned viceroys, and governors. A substantial portion of these connections were inherited by Zaifeng. Third, Zaifeng was the younger brother of the Guangxu emperor. Since Guangxu did not have any children, in the eyes of those political and social elites who were sympathetic to the 1898 reform, Zaifeng was the most legitimate successor to carry on the torch. Fourth but not last, Zaifeng was also one of the few high Qing officials who had ever traveled abroad. In 1901, he was sent to Germany on behalf of the Qing court to apologize for the death of the German envoy Ketteler, who had been shot by a banner soldier during the Boxer chaos. Though only nineteen years old, Zaifeng accomplished his mission successfully.

With such a background, Zaifeng had enough political capital to be a strong ruler. But his personality prevented him from attaining political maturity. First, he was not raised to be nor was he by nature an ambitious man. His father, the former Prince Chun, "fell to the ground and cried until he fainted" when Cixi announced that his six-year-old son (Guangxu) would be made emperor. As early as 1875, Prince Chun already foresaw the misfortune of his eldest son, and tried to protect the rest of his family by withdrawing from politics. As soon as Guangxu assumed the throne, he resigned all his positions and engaged himself mostly in literary activities. After the 1898 coup occurred, Prince Chun went further to urge his whole family to become politically introverted, hoping to passively survive the court politics.[320] As his father' son, Zaifeng was also quite reluctant to accept Cixi's decision of making his son Puyi the next emperor and him the next regent. In his diary he wrote: "[Upon hearing the news], I kowtowed

[320] Wang Jialun 王家伦, "Chun Qingwang yu wanqing zhengju" 醇亲王与晚清政局 [Prince Chun and late Qing politics], in *Qingshi yanjiu lunshou* 清史研究论薮 [Collected essays on Qing history] (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1994), 420–21.

repeatedly, begging her majesty to consider other people … I almost made her mad … in the end, I had exhausted all means and had to comply with her."[321]

Secondly, many of Zaifeng's contemporaries noted that Zaifeng was not a strong-willed person; some of them even went further and described him as "indecisive," "weak," or "cowardly." He did not like to openly and directly express his opinions, and lacked the guts to fight for his decision in front of opponents. Jin Liang, one of the main compilers of the *Draft of Qing History* (*Qingshigao*), left the following account of Zaifeng's working style:

> When Zaifeng first started his regency, he attempted to follow the example of the Yongzheng Emperor, endeavoring to read through all the memorials and write comments on the margin. However, due to his limited experience, his comments often failed to encapsulate the essence of the memorial or rather seemed vague and confusing. Furthermore, he tended to yield easily when his decisions encountered opposition in the high court. Eventually, he disappointed almost every one. Many officials recalled that during their imperial audits with the regent, the conversations often fell into awkward silence. Even when they tried to break the silence by asking the regent for his decision on certain issues, they could rarely get a firm and clear answer. This kind of scene also occurred during my audience with the regent. Once when I explicitly asked him for a decision, he nodded first, seemingly agreeing with me, but then immediately appeared to be bewildered, as if he had forgotten what I had said. Sigh, it is really hard to have a productive conversation with him.[322]

In a coward there is the seed of a tyrant, and in a tyrant there is the seed of a coward. This is a matter for the psychologists to explain. For our purposes, we can note that Zaifeng's sore spot lay in the fact that everyone at court saw him as a coward and a wishy-washy sort, and he knew it. If we look at the correspondence of the last few

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[321] The original line is: *Kouci zhizai, weiyao yuyun ... wanfen wufa, bugai zaici* 叩辞至再, 未邀俞允 … 万分无法, 不敢再辞. See Yu Dahua 喻大华, "Cixi weihe xuanze Zaifeng shezheng" 慈禧为何选择载沣摄政 [Why did Cixi choose Zaifeng to be the regent?], *Zijincheng* 紫禁城 4 (2000): 21.

[322] Jin Liang 金梁, *Guangxuan xiaoji* 光宣小记 [Collected anecdotes on the Guangxu and Xuantong reign] (Taibei: Xuesheng shuju, 1973), 191–92. For this citation, I am indebted to Zhang Hailin, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 191–92.

months of Duanfang's official career, we can see that Duanfang pushed Zaifeng's nerves. Like other officials, Duanfang was frustrated with the incommunicative regent, but Duanfang chose to press his luck through a quick succession of three memorials in four months from July to November 1909. Duanfang suggested that Zaifeng appoint a group of senior scholar-officials as imperial consuls and set aside two to three hours daily to hear about their advice on political reform.[323] Zaifeng, true to his reputation, did not respond. Duanfang's tone got harsher and harsher, hinting that Zaifeng was inexperienced, indecisive, incapable, and lacking in vision for constitutional reform. This was a terrible blunder for someone so well versed in court politics. The result was as we might expect: Zaifeng swung to the other extreme and decided to play the part of tyrant for a day. He summarily dismissed Duanfang and squatted on issues of constitutional reform without consulting others and without considering the consequences. We will talk about these consequences in Part III.

Part II: Duanfang's Dismissal II: The Network Factor

In the previous section we reviewed the factors in court politics that directly caused Duanfang's dismissal. The immediate circumstances of his dismissal were a clash of personalities and court insecurities after the demise of the Empress Dowager. In this part, we will examine how the health of his networks related to his fall.

At the end of Chapter Two I suggested an inverse relationship between the financial resources at a governor/viceroy's disposal and the broadness of his network (see pages 90-92). Reform-oriented networking ate up resources and did not yield immediate

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[323] Zhang Hailin, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 485–86.

benefits but promised long-term rewards. Every networker, and thus every potential reformer, had to run the gauntlet of diminishing resources until he had passed the danger point and begun to climb the positive resource-network track, wherein the resources and networks boosted each other.

Duanfang's choices, as we saw in Chapter Four (flood) and Five (constitutional reform), suggest that he had just crossed the danger point in 1906. Though he was aware of the wasteful nature of many reform projects, he did not halt these projects but rather enlarged their scale. He realized, perhaps quicker than most, that success as a reformer-networker was as much about image and public relations as it was a matter of economics. The positive effects of the reform agenda could not show in the next few years, so he needed to convince the domestic elites and foreigners—whom he relied on for financial as well as moral support—that the reform was sincere and that changes were on the way. Hence he kept pouring money in training armies, building schools, sending students abroad, setting up factories, and holding expensive international projects. He won renown from the gentries, industrial elites, diplomats, foreigner observers, and overseas Chinese. By this point, spending beyond his means actually increased his network to the point where he could spend even more. Duanfang seemed to have broken through the stage of diminishing resources.

This strategy had its risks, of course, but I argue that it was not bankruptcy of networks that caused Duanfang's fall. Until his dismissal, he was never impeached for overspending or running huge deficits in his jurisdiction. According to the court rule, when one viceroy/governor was transferred to another region, he had to be able to submit a balanced treasury report of his jurisdiction. Duanfang's transition from Viceroy of

Jiangsu-Anhui-Jiangxi to Viceroy of Zhili was very smooth. What is more, the official reason for Duanfang's dismissal is telling. Fiscal mismanagement or deficit spending was a much better excuse for dismissing an official than ritual improprieties. But Zaifeng did not use it, which meant that at least on the surface, Duanfang's financial record was fine.

The major problem in Duanfang's networks was the loss of balance due to the damage of his inner circle. In Chapter Two, I discussed how Duanfang's web consisted of two components, cliques (inner circles) and extended circles (see pages 86-90). These two components served different purposes in Duanfang's political life. The clique was for personal promotion or protection, and the extended circle was for reform. For most of his career Duanfang kept these two in a virtuous cycle and was careful to keep either one from excessive growth at the expense of the other. He was less vigilant than he should have been in 1908, and in that year things began to unravel.

When Duanfang was promoted Viceroy of Zhili, the scale and influence of his extended circles reach their peak—he was powerful, well-connected to almost all political and social groups, and held excellent national and international reputations. But his inner circles suffered from a series of events. Cixi passed away in November 1908; Yuan Shikai was dismissed in January 1909; Zhang Zhidong fell ill in July and died in October. Yikuang, though healthy and still at his post, had been pushed aside from the center of power, because unlike Cixi, Zaifeng did not need to bind himself with another imperial prince for reasons of gender or legitimacy. Thus, in twelve months, Duanfang lost the majority of key knots in the inner circle. Four of his major allies in the high court were completely or substantially out of the picture.

Officials like Duanfang depended on close clique allies to maintain their positions, so Duanfang's fall was directly related to the fact that he did not patch up his web in time. We can only speculate on the reasons for his neglect. First, generating and maintaining strong ties required huge inputs of time, energy, and money. By the end of 1908 Duanfang, who had so scrupulously nurtured his double web up to this point, seemed more interested in his extended circles for reform than in his protective inner circles. This may have been related to a second factor, the arrogance of success. Having risen within a decade to become the most prestigious official outside the capital and an international statesman, Duanfang might be forgiven for basking in the glory, even if it was a bad moment to do so.

Duanfang's future seemed to be bright, but the damage to his inner circles meant that he no longer possessed an inner court clique to cushion him from the fluctuations of elite politics. The *New York Times* reported that he was "generally regarded by foreigners as the most able of the Chinese high-class officials, and who was once looked upon as the future leader in Peking politics."[324] But most people's attention, including Duanfang's, were fixed on the success of his extended circles and ignored the problems in the core part. When his dismissal was announced, articles complaining about the government's unwise move appeared in almost every major newspaper in China—*Dagongbao*, *Shenbao*, *Xinwenbao*, and *The North China Herald*. Urban elites in south China sent a joint telegram to the Grand Council protesting the dismissal decision. The gentry members in Tianjin even organized a boycott against Chen Kuilong, who

[324] "Tuan Fang's Degradation: A Woman's Influence and a Selfish Dynasty Responsible for It," *New York Times*, January 2, 1910, page 8.

succeeded Duanfang as the Viceroy of Zhili.[325] But the protests of foreigners and gentry did not sway the court.

From Duanfang's example, we can see that his reputation was not transformed into solid political capital. He spent lavishly on his external networks and basked in praise for his reform efforts, but the achievements of his extended circle could not make up for the collapse of his inner circle. His extended ties, however grand, could not serve as an adequate safety net. When Duanfang did not, or could not, create new powerful allies to ensure his political survival, his career was finished.

Part III: The 1911 Revolution and the Death of Duanfang

In 1910, the Qing court was a court without Yuan Shikai, Zhang Zhidong, and Duanfang. What had changed? Yuan, Zhang, and Duanfang were universally acknowledged as capable reformers, and they all spent beyond their means to increase their ability to spend more. Their shared working style, combined with the fact that all of them had controlled multiple provinces for a considerable number of years, had two natural results. First, these three individuals became irreplaceable. They had accumulated so much social capital and network power that they had turned themselves into indispensable assets. The second result was the jump in urban elite involvement in reform, and more importantly, their increasing expectations and eagerness for leadership roles. Yuan, Zhang, and Duanfang all managed to enlarge the resource pie by attracting funding from gentries and industrial elites. Once these three viceroys had opened the

[325] Zhang, *Duanfang yu qingmo xinzheng*, 507-508.

door to the political stage, urban elites flooded in, and the door could not be shut without alienating this group.

Zaifeng failed to understand the delicacy of the situation. When Zaifeng felt that he was being pushed into a corner, he replaced his dithering with sudden forcefulness, but at the cost of acting blindly. After he dismissed Duanfang, the court had lost its key contact with the urban elites, and the urban elites lost their spokesman in the court. The means that Duanfang's spiderweb had provided for communications and cooperation between urban elites and the court had been disrupted. Worse than the court's loss of credibility was the loss of faith by the urban elite, who had invested too much to back down. Without reformist officials like Yuan Shikai and Duanfang on whom to pin their hopes, urban elites became increasingly shrill in their demands for political reform.

All of this was serious enough, but Zaifeng's ruling policies made matters worse. Many scholars criticize Zaifeng for being a stubborn and conservative Manchu regent. In my opinion, Zaifeng was not conservative; he was just indecisive, unstable, and thus inconsistent in his ruling policies. From 1909 to 1911, he actually carried out a considerable number of reform-related projects: he tried to streamline the central and local governments, urged legal specialists to compile handbooks to instruct and moderate the behavior of imperial clan members, introduced new agricultural technology, and promoted government loans to fund military modernization. The problem was not conservatism, but the weakness of his personality. He vacillated and failed to respond to important issues in time, and when pressured to hurry up, he would often compensate for his weakness by becoming pugnacious. This personality trait, more than anything else, made him appear stubborn or stupidly inactive.

One example was his clash with the constitutionalists over the issue of convening a parliament. After the provincial assemblies were elected and met for the first time, the constitutionalists started to push for the formation of a national parliament in late 1910. In November, Zhang Jian, the chairman of the Jiangsu Provincial Assembly, initiated a conference in Shanghai to discuss united action. 51 representatives from 16 provinces attended the conference. On January 22, 1910, the constitutionalists launched the first nationwide petition, pleading with the court to hasten the formation of a parliament. 200,000 people signed the petition. Zaifeng did not respond. On June 22, the constitutionalists launched the second nationwide petition. 300,000 people signed. Zaifeng still did not respond. On October 3, the constitutionalists launched the third petition, demanding the summoning of a true parliament by the very next year and the concurrent formation of a "responsible cabinet." They collected 2,500,000 signatures on the petition this time. Only then did Zaifeng make move. On November 4, the court agreed to advance the summoning of Parliament to 1913 and to name a cabinet sometime before then. This could not satisfy the constitutionalists. They immediately pushed again, and on January 16, 1911, the court promised a responsible cabinet in May 1911.[326]

The court did appoint the first cabinet in May as promised, but it turned out to be the notorious "imperial kinsmen's cabinet." Among the thirteen members of the cabinet, nine of them were Manchus; furthermore, seven of the nine Manchus were imperial family members. The constitutionalists were enraged. They spent the whole summer of 1911 urging the court to reconsider the ethnic composition of the cabinet. The court

[326] Rhoads, *Manchus and Han*, 167.

rejected the request.[327] Without officials like Duanfang or Yuan Shikai to salvage the credibility of the court or placate the urban elites, the court dug itself and the Manchu ruling class into a hole.

From Duanfang's dismissal to the final alienation of urban elites in August 1911, Zaifeng had many opportunities to turn the situation around. However, he failed to act. In the summer of 1909 the people of Sichuan began the railway rights movement, and the movement turned violent on September 7 when government troops fired at the crowds, killing about 30 and wounding many others. In the words of historian Joseph Esherick, "by October 1911, Central China lacked only the spark that would light the prairie fire."[328] Then on October 10, the Wuchang Uprising broke out. Within one and a half months, eighteen provinces and regions claimed independence from the court (see Table 6.2 below). By that point, recalling Yuan Shikai and Duanfang to court was too little, too late.

Table 6.2: The Chronology of 1911 Revolution

Order	Province/City	Date of Uprising	Date of Claiming Independence
01	Hubei	10.10	10.11
02	Hunan	10.22	10.22
03	Shaanxi	10.22	10.25
04	Jiangxi	10.23	10.23
05	Shanxi	10.29	10.29
06	Shanghai	11.03	11.03
07	Guizhou	11.04	11.04
08	Zhejiang	11.04	11.04
09	Jiangsu	11.05	11.05
10	Guangxi	11.06	11.06
11	Anhui	11.08	11.08
12	Guangdong	11.09	11.09
13	Fujian	11.09	11.09
14	Shandong	11.13(recall on 11.24)	

[327] Ibid.
[328] Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China*, 175.

Table 6.2 Continued:

Order	Province/City	Date of Uprising	Date of Claiming Independence
15	Ningxia	11.21	11.21
16	Chongqing	11.22	11.22
17	Fengtian	11.26	11.26
18	Sichuan	11.27	11.27

Source: Zhongguo shixuehui 中国史学会, ed., *Xinhai geming* 辛亥革命 [The 1911 revolution), vol. 8 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986).

On January 1, 1912, the Nanjing Provisional Government was formally established and Sun Yat-sen was inducted as the Provisional President. On February 12, 1912 the child emperor Puyi, the last emperor of China, abdicated. A month later, Yuan Shikai was sworn in as the second Provisional President of the Republic of China in Beijing. The whole 1911 revolution, as Esherick concludes, was "sudden, surprisingly bloodless, and almost totally urban."[329] The Qing monarchy, which lasted almost three centuries and doubled the size of the Chinese empire, collapsed almost overnight like a joke.

Duanfang's murder during the "surprisingly bloodless" 1911 chaos was another cruel joke. When the Sichuan railway movement seemed to be getting out of control, Zaifeng rehabilitated Duanfang and entrusted him to handle the situation. Duanfang was appointed director-general of the newly nationalized Guangdong-Hankou-Chengdu railroads and ordered to lead a battalion of soldiers (around 500) from the Hubei Infantry to Sichuan to suppress the demonstrations. He and the soldiers left Wuhan on September 23, 1911. On his way to Chengdu, the Wuchang Uprising broke out. Duanfang halted at the border of Sichuan to observe the situation and ponder the next move. However, on November 26, 1911, some of his soldiers mutinied and hacked him to death as a gesture of moral support to the uprisings around the country. He was fifty years old.

[329] Esherick, *Reform and Revolution in China*, 177.

Duanfang's head was brought back to Wuchang as a trophy and was later handed back to his family by General Li Yuanhong, who had been forced to crawl out from under a bed at gunpoint and had thus been "elected" leader of the Wuchang rebel forces.

Duanfang's death was one of those accidents that make up history. He happened to be in a remote county with a group of young New Army soldiers who were eager to jump on the political stage. If he had not been rehabilitated and instead stayed in retirement in Beijing, he probably would not have died in the 1911 revolution. After the fall of the Qing, based on his close relationship with Yuan Shikai and the constitutionalists, he would very likely have regained power and honor and played a leading role in the new republic government. However, he was rehabilitated at the worst time by an indecisive monarch, all of which cost him his life.

One scene from his death is noteworthy. When the mutineers raised their swords at Duanfang, they were briefly slowed by his desperate appeal. "Please don't kill me for being a Manchu! My ancestors did not become bannermen until several generations ago. I am actually a Han of the surname Tao—please, forgive your compatriot."[330] This surprising claim did not save Duanfang. His captors insisted that he was Manchu and that his death was a matter of "national revenge" for all Han. The revolutionary accounts later derided Duanfang's last-minute renouncement of his Manchu ethnicity as a slimy opportunist ploy. But Duanfang's desperate cry might also show the inner struggle and anxiety of a well-connected reformer. Throughout his career, he had been the paramount example of someone who could cross all the lines of various defined

[330] "Duanfang beisha Zizhou zhi baogao" 端方 [Report on the killing of Duanfang in Zizhou], in *Zhonghua minguo kaiguo wushinian wenxian* 中华民国开国五十年文献 [Documents on the fiftieth anniversary of the founding the Republic of China], vol. 3, ed. Zhonghua minguo kaiguo wushinian wenxian bianzuan weiyuanhui 中华民国开国五十年文献编纂委员会 (Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1963), 116.

groups, interacting with all but adhering strictly to none. However, in the end, he was forced into a narrow ethnic category and hacked to death for it. In the last moment of his life, Duanfang's appeal for understanding was misunderstood as a trick.

People who looked more favorably on Duanfang considered his death a tragic loss. Upon hearing the news, London *Times* journalist G. E. Morrison wrote down these sad words: "Tuanfang was a man who enjoyed universal respect in China. He was a Manchu, but a Manchu of the best type. I knew Tuanfang well, and had many intimate talks with him. His barbarous murder has called forth universal condemnation."[331] Eighty years after the 1911 revolution, scholar Thomas Lawton went suggested that Duanfang's sudden death had grave ramifications for the fortune of China:

> Seen in the context of the political and social turmoil that attended the last months of Ch'ing rule, Tuan-fang's death could be interpreted as a symbol of the fall of imperial China. No one could have foreseen the sweeping changes that came with the establishment of the Republic and later, the People's Republic of China. Had he lived, Tuan-fang might have made a considerable difference in that time of transition.[332]

I agree with Lawton that Duanfang would have played a leading role in the transition from empire to nation. He had already been doing so for a decade before the empire fell. On the question of how to relate Duanfang's death to the fall of the Qing, I do not think it is useful or necessary to try to explain why such a great networker could not save the dynasty. After all, he was no superman. While recognizing his remarkable versatility and the achievements of his projects and his reformist networks, we should not hold unreasonable expectations that he could have single-handedly rescued the Qing system from destruction.

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[331] Hui-min Lo, *The Correspondence of G.E. Morrison*, vol. 1, 692.
[332] Thomas Lawton, *A Time of Transition*, 45.

I would like to discuss instead how the fall of the dynasty affected Duanfang's networks. Duanfang's brutal death in the 1911 revolution tested the strength of the threads he had woven together in the last decade of the Qing, but somehow the network he had created lived on. Li Yuanhong, a military officer who had worked hand-in-hand with Duanfang to suppress revolutionary insurgencies, went on to become the first "republican governor" in Hubei and later president of the Chinese republic for almost a decade. Duanfang's confidential secretary Wen Bingzhong later took the position of Foreign Affairs minister in the Provisional Republican Government of Nanking, while Alfred Sze (Duanfang's English interpreter) built a reputation as a diplomat and represented China at the Versailles Conference of 1919. Zhang Jian, Duanfang's close ally in the fight for constitutional reform, became Minister of Agriculture, Commerce, and Irrigation. Last but not least, Duanfang's ally and in-law Yuan Shikai dominated the Chinese republic until 1915.

In a word, many of Duanfang's former associates maintained close political and social connections into the early years of the fledgling republic and worked closely with another toward the target of building a strong and unified Chinese nation. These facts suggest that although 'things fall apart and centers cannot hold,' multilayer networks can bridge the gap between empire and nation. Neurobiological studies have shown that in some cases of severe brain trauma, neural networks can continue functioning and even grow through alternative connections. I envision this study of Duanfang and the web he drew together in the last Qing decade as the beginning of a network approach to studying China's century of reform and revolution.

Epilogue: Notes on Future Research

Did personality matter? This may be a matter for the future book project rather than the dissertation, but I raise the million-dollar question here as a signpost for further research. When I read contemporaries' comments on Duanfang, I find that along with "capable and energetic," I saw the frequent use of words like "frivolous" and "lacking in principle." Gu Hongming, who thought highly of Tieliang and very poorly of Duanfang, put the latter in the same type as Archibald Primrose (Fifth Earl of Rosebery) and George Villiers (Second Duke of Buckingham). Gu applied to Duanfang the derisive words of Dryden's portraiture of Villiers:[333]

> *A man so various that he seemed to be*
> *Not one, but all mankind's epitome.*
> *Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,*
> *Was everything by starts, and nothing long;*
> *But, in the course of one revolving moon,*
> *Was chemist, fiddlers, statesman, and buffoon.*
>
> *Railing and praising were his usual themes,*
> *And both, to show his judgment, in extremes.*
> *In squandering wealth was his peculiar art.*
> *Nothing went unrewarded but desert.*
> *Beggared by fools, whom still he found too late,*
> *He had his jest and they had his estate.*
> *He laughed himself from Court, then had relief*
> *By forming parties, but could never be chief.*

What was true of the man was, as like as not, true of his brainchild. Duanfang's network, though materially rich, may have been attenuated by the flaws of its creator. People acknowledged his ability, but few would emulate him; many were indebted to him, but they did not respect him. He was a paragon of flexibility, yet the accounts of many of his peers suggested that what he lacked was precisely the rigidity that could have

[333] Ku, *The Story of a Chinese Oxford Movement*, 59.

gained their respect. The same could be said of Yuan Shikai and his own network, in which he cribbed heavily from Duanfang.

As we consider the role of networking in the transition from empire to nation, and in early nation building, we come up against an apparent contradiction. Political networkers are supposed to be manipulators and compromisers, but in this time of transition they found themselves up against unique demands for firmness, principle, and ideology. For a country as large and multiethnic as China, and in a time of upheaval, demoralization, and imminent fragmentation, the transformations of the twentieth century demanded a concurrent drive for "stability." Vital national networks would have best been centered around leaders who were not only master manipulators but also possessed a certain firmness of character that could inspire trust and confidence. This may help to explain Yuan Shikai's fall in 1915 and the rise of Chiang Kai-shek a decade later.

Appendix

Table 1.2: List of First- and Second-Rank Civil Positions in Beijing

Rank	Job Title	Composition	Total
1st R	Grand Secretary (*neige daxueshi*)	Wenhuadian, Wuyingdian, Wenyuange, Dongge, and Tirenge	5
1st RM	Assistant Grand Secretary (*xieban daxueshi*)	One Manchu, one Han	2
1st RM	President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment (*libu shangshu*)	One Manchu, one Han	2
1st RM	President of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu shangshu*)	One Manchu, one Han	2
1st RM	President of the Ministry of Rites (*libu shangshu*)	One Manchu, one Han	2
1st RM	President of the Ministry of War (*bingbu shangshu*)	One Manchu, one Han	2
1st RM	President of the Ministry of Punishment (*xingbu shangshu*)	One Manchu, one Han	2
1st RM	President of the Ministry of Works (*gongbu shangshu*)	One Manchu, one Han	2
1st RM	President of the Ministry of Dependencies (*lifanyuan shangshu*)	One Manchu	1
1st RM	President of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*waiwubu dachen*)	One controller, one assistant controller, and one president	3
1st RM	President of the Ministry of the Censorate (*duchayuan duyushi*)	One senior president, one junior president	2
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment (*libu shilang*)	Two Manchus, two Han	4
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue (*hubu shilang*)	Two Manchus, two Han	4
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of Rites (*libu shilang*)	Two Manchus, two Han	4
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of War (*bingbu shilang*)	Two Manchus, two Han	4
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of Punishment (*xingbu shilang*)	Two Manchus, two Han	4
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of Works (*gongbu shangshu*)	Two Manchus, two Han	4
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of Dependencies (*lifanyuan shilang*)	Two Manchus	2
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*waiwubu shilang*)	One senior vice president, one junior vice president	2
2nd R	Vice President of the Ministry of the Censorate (*duchayuan fu duyushi*)	Two Manchus, two Han	4
Total			**57**

Table 1.2 Continued:
Sources:

1. Table 1.1
2. Wei Hsiu-mei 魏秀梅, *Qingji zhiguan nianbiao* 清季职官年表 [Offices and personnel in the late Ch'ing period: metropolitan officials and high officials in provinces and dependencies, 1796–1911] (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 2002).

Table 1.3: List of First and Second Rank Civil Officials in Provinces and Dependencies

Rank	Job Title	Total
1st RM	Viceroy of Zhili	1
1st RM	Viceroy of Liangjiang	1
1st RM	Viceroy of Huguang	1
1st RM	Viceroy of Liangguang	1
1st RM	Viceroy of Shanggan	1
1st RM	Viceroy of Sichuan	1
1st RM	Viceroy of Minzhe	1
1st RM	Viceroy of Yungui	1
1st RM	Director-General of Grain Transportation	1
1st RM	Director-General of the Conservation of the Yellow River and the Grand Canal	1
2ndR	Governor of Shandong	1
2ndR	Governor of Shanxi	1
2ndR	Governor of Henan	1
2ndR	Governor of Jiangsu	1
2ndR	Governor of Anhui	1
2ndR	Governor of Jiangxi	1
2ndR	Governor of Zhejiang	1
2ndR	Governor of Hubei	1
2ndR	Governor of Hunan	1
2ndR	Governor of Shaanxi	1
2ndR	Governor of Guangdong	1
2ndR	Governor of Guangxi	1
2ndR	Governor of Yunnan	1
2ndR	Governor of Guizhou	1
2ndR	Governor of Gansu-Xinjiang	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Zhili	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Shandong	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Shanxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Henan	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Jiangning	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Jiangsu	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Anhui	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Jiangxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Zhejiang	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Fujian	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Hubei	1

Table 1.3 Continued:

Rank	Job Title	Total
2ndR	Governor of Hunan	1
2ndR	Governor of Shaanxi	1
2ndR	Governor of Guangdong	1
2ndR	Governor of Guangxi	1
2ndR	Governor of Yunnan	1
2ndR	Governor of Guizhou	1
2ndR	Governor of Gansu-Xinjiang	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Zhili	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Shandong	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Shanxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Henan	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Jiangning	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Jiangsu	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Anhui	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Jiangxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Zhejiang	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Fujian	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Hubei	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Hunan	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Shaanxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Guansu	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Sichuan	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Guangdong	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Guangxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Yunnan	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Guizhou	1
2nd RM	Provincial Treasurer of Gansu-Xinjiang	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Zhili	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Shandong	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Shanxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Henan	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Jiangsu	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Anhui	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Jiangxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Zhejiang	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Fujian	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Hubei	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Hunan	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Shaanxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Gansu	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Sichuan	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Guangdong	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Guangxi	1
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Yunnan	1

Table 1.3 Continued:

Rank	Job Title	Total
2nd RM	Provincial Judge of Guizhou	1
Total		**63**

Sources:

1. Table 1.1
2. Wei Hsiu-mei, *Qingji zhiguan nianbiao.*

Table 1.8: Personnel Change in the Upper Echelon of the Government in 1900 and 1901

Abbreviations:

- R = Official Rank;
- L: Office Location, C (in the column "L") = Center, P (in the column "L") = Province;
- D = Death Toll; N (in the column "D") = died in rather natural way (from exhaustion or illness); E (in the column "D") = died from execution; S (in the column "D") = died from suicide;
- T = Dismissal Toll, F (in the column "T") = fired outright, R (in the column "T") = forced to resign or retire
- P = Times of Personnel Change

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
1st R	C	Grand Secretary-*wenhuadian*	李鴻章	李鴻章→N/A	Li died of illness in November 1901. The position was left vacant until March 1902.	1N	0	1
1st R	C	Grand Secretary-*wuyingdian*	N/A	N/A	The position was left vacant from 1898 to 1903.	0	0	0
1st R	C	Grand Secretary-*wenyuange*	榮祿	榮祿		0	0	0
1st R	C	Grand Secretary-*dongge*	崑岡	崑岡		0	0	0
1st R	C	Grand Secretary-*tirenge*	徐桐→王文韶	王文韶	Xu Tong committed suicide.	1	0	1
1st RM	C	Assistant Grand Secretary-Manchu	剛毅→崇禮	崇禮	Gangyi died of illness in Shanxi province. He would have been executed if he had lived a few months longer.	1E	0	1
1st RM	C	Assistant Grand Secretary-Han	王文韶	徐甫	Wang Wenshao was promoted to Grand Secretary.	0	0	1
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment-Manchu	熙敬→敬信	敬信	Xijing died during the chaos.	1N	0	1
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment-Han	徐甫→孫家鼐	孫家鼐	Xu was reappointed as the Minister of Rites.	0	0	1
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Revenue-Manchu	立山→崇綺→敬信→崇禮	崇禮	Lishan was imprisoned; Chongqi died during the chaos; Jingxin was reappointed as the Minister of Civil Appointment.	1S	1F	3
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Revenue-Han	王文韶→鹿傳霖	鹿傳霖	Wang was promoted to Grand Secretary.	0	0	1

Table 1.8 Continued:

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Rites-Manchu	懷塔布	啟秀→世續	Huaitabu died during the chaos; Qixiu was executed.	2;1N+1E	0	2
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Rites-Han	廖壽恒→鹿傳霖→孫家鼐	孫家鼐→徐甫	Liao Shouheng was forced to retire on grounds of illness; Lu Chuanlin was reappointed as the Minister of Revenue; Sun Jia'nai was reappointed as the Minister of Civil Appointment.	0	1R	3
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of War-Manchu	剛毅→敬信→裕德	裕德	Gangyi died of illness; Jingxin was reappointed as the Minister of Revenue.	0	0	2
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of War-Han	徐用儀→徐會灃	徐會灃	Xu Yongyi was executed on the spot.	1E	0	1
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Punishment-Manchu	崇禮→貴恒	貴恒	Chongli was reappointed as the Minister of Revenue.	0	0	1
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Punishment-Han	趙舒翹	趙舒翹→薛允升	Zhao Shuqiao was ordered to commit suicide.	1S	0	1
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Works-Manchu	松桂	松桂		0	0	0
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Works-Han	徐樹銘→徐會灃→陳學芬→瞿鴻機	瞿鴻機	Xu Shuming died during the chaos; Xu Huifeng was reappointed as the Minister of War; Chen Xuefeng died during the chaos.	2N	0	3
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Dependencies	裕德→懷塔布	懷塔布→世續→阿克丹	Huaitabu died during the chaos; Shixu was reappointed as the Minister of Rites.	1N	0	3
1st RM	C	Controller of the Ministry of Foreigner Affairs	奕劻	奕劻		0	0	0
1st RM	C	Assistant Controller of the Ministry of Foreigner Affairs	王文韶	王文韶		0	0	0
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of Foreigner Affairs	趙舒翹	趙舒翹→瞿鴻機	Zhao was dismissed on February 13, 2008.	0	1F	1
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of the Censorate-Manchu	懷塔布→英年→溥良	溥良	Huaitabu was reappointed as the President of the Ministry of Dependencies; Yingnian was dismissed during the chaos.	0	1F	2
1st RM	C	President of the Ministry of the Censorate-Han	徐會灃→吳廷芬→鹿傳霖→瞿鴻機→張百熙	張百熙→呂海寰	Xu Huifeng was reappointed as the President of the Ministry of Works; Wu Tingfen was dismissed during the chaos; Lu Chuanlin was reappointed as the President of the Ministry of Rites; Qu Hongji was reappointed as the President of the Ministry of Works;	0	1F	5

Table 1.8 Continued:

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment-Manchu I	崇光→溥善	溥善	Chongguang died during the chaos.	1N	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment-Manchu II	溥善→溥顧	溥顧	Pushan was promoted to the Manchu I rank of Vice President.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment-Han I	許景澄→陳學芬→華金壽→李殿林→陳邦瑞	陳邦瑞	Xu Jingcheng was executed during the chaos; Chen Xufen was promoted to the President of the Ministry of Works; Hua Jinshou died during the chaos; Li Dianling was reappointed as the Provincial Educator of Jiangsu.	2;1N +1E	0	4
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment-Han II	陳學棻→張英麟	張英麟	Chen Xufen was promoted to the Han I rank of Vice President.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue-Manchu I	立山→英年→桂春	桂春	Lishan was promoted to the President; Yingnian was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Censorate.	0	0	2
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue-Manchu II	溥良→那桐	那桐	Puliang was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Censorate.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue-Han I	吳樹梅	吳樹梅		0	0	0
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue-Han II	吳廷芬→華金壽→呂海寰	呂海寰→葛寶華	Wu Tingfen was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Censorate; Lü Haihuan was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Censorate.	0	0	3
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Rites-Manchu I	榮惠	榮惠		0	0	0
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Rites-Manchu II	溥顧→桂春→那桐→綿文	綿文	Pugu was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Civil Appointment; Guichun was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue; Natong was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue.	0	0	3
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Rites-Han I	張百熙→李紱藻	李紱藻	Zhang Baixi was reappointed as the Vice President of the Censorate.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Rites-Han II	吳廷芬 (acting)	吳廷芬→陸潤庠	Wu Tingfen was reappointed as the Vice President of the Censorate.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of War-Manchu I	阿克丹	阿克丹→溥頤	Akedan was promoted to the President of the Ministry of Dependencies.	0	0	1

Table 1.8 Continued:

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of War-Manchu II	文治	文治		0	0	0
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of War-Han I	葛寶華	葛寶華→李昭煒	Ge Baohua was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of War-Han II	李殿林→陸寶忠	陸寶忠→徐琪	Li Dianlin was transferred to chair the civil service exam in Guangdong; Lu Baozhong was reappointed as the Provincial Education of Shuntian.	0	0	2
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Punishment-Manchu I	崇勳	崇勳		0	0	0
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Punishment-Manchu II	堃岫→景澧	景澧	Jing Feng was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Punishment-Han I	徐承煜	徐承煜→薛允升→戴鴻慈	Xu Chengyu was executed in Beijing; Xue Yunsheng was promoted to the President.	1E	0	2
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Punishment-Han II	梁仲衡	梁仲衡→沈家本	Liang Zhongheng was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of the Works.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Works-Manchu I	鳳鳴→英年→世續→繼祿	繼祿	Fengming died during the chaos; Yingnian was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue; Shixu was reappointed as the Manchu General-in-Chief of the Mongol Division of the Plain Red Banner.	1N	0	2
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Works-Manchu II	英年→世續→溥興	溥興	Yingnian was promoted to the Manchu I rank of the Vice President; Shixu was promoted to the Manchu I rank of the Vice President.	0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Works-Han I	華金壽(acting)→李殿林→陸潤庠	陸潤庠	Hua Jinshou was demoted to the Han II rank of the Vice President; Li Dianlin was transferred to chair the civil service exam of Guangdong.	0	1F	2
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Works-Han II	華金壽→李端遇	李端遇→陳邦瑞→梁仲衡	Hua Jinshou was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue; Li Duanyu was dismissed during the chaos; Chen Bangrui was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Revenue.	0	1F	3
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Dependencies-Manchu I	景澧→那桐→壽耆	壽耆	Jingfeng was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Punishment; Natong was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Rites.	0	0	2

Table 1.8 Continued:

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Dependencies-Manchu II	會章	會章		0	0	0
2nd R	C	Senior Vice President of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	N/A	徐壽朋→呂海寰	Xu Shoupeng died during the chaos.	1N	0	1
2nd R	C	Junior Vice President of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	N/A	聯芳		0	0	1
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Censorate-Manchu I	慶福	慶福		0	0	0
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Censorate-Manchu II	奕枕	奕枕		0	0	0
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Censorate-Han I	李端遇→何乃瑩	何乃瑩→張仁黼	Li Duanyu was reappointed as the Vice President of the Ministry of Works; He Naiying was dismissed during the chaos.	0	1	2
2nd R	C	Vice President of the Ministry of Censorate-Han II	曾廣鑾→成章	成章	Zeng Guangluan was removed from his position to "take care of his family" during the chaos.	0	1R	1
1st RM	P	Viceroy of Zhili	裕祿→李鴻章	李鴻章→袁世凱	Yulu committed suicide; Li died of illness.	1S	0	2
1st RM	P	Viceroy of Liangjiang	劉坤一	劉坤一		0	0	0
1st RM	P	Viceroy of Huguang	張之洞	張之洞		0	0	0
1st RM	P	Viceroy of Shanggan	陶模→魏光燾→崧藩	崧藩	Taomo was reappointed as the Viceroy of Liangguang; Wei Guangtao was reappointed as the Viceroy of Yungui.	0	0	2
1st RM	P	Viceroy of Liangguang	李鴻章→鹿傳霖→陶模	陶模	Li was reappointed as the Viceroy of Zhili; Lu Chuanlin was reappointed as the Minister of Rites.	0	0	2
2ndR	P	Viceroy of Sichuan	奎俊	奎俊		0	0	0
2ndR	P	Viceroy of Minzhe	許應騤	許應騤		0	0	0
2ndR	P	Viceroy of Yungui	崧藩→魏光燾	魏光燾	Songfan was reappointed as Viceroy of Shanggan.	0	0	1
2ndR	P	Director-General of Grain Transportation	松椿→張人駿	張人駿→恩壽→陳夔龍	Songchun was dismissed; Zhang Renjun was reappointed as the Governor of Shandong; Enshou was reappointed as the Governor of Jiangsu.	0	1F	3
2ndR	P	Director-General of the Conservation of the Yellow River and the Grand Canal	任道鎔	任道鎔→錫良	Ren Daorong was reappointed as the Governor of Jiangsu	0	0	1

Table 1.8 Continued:

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
2ndR	P	Governor of Shandong	毓贤→袁世凯	袁世凯→张人骏	Yuxian was reappointed as the Governor of Shanxi; Yuan Shikai was promoted to the Viceroy of Zhili	0	0	2
2ndR	P	Governor of Shanxi	鄧華熙→毓賢→錫良	錫良→岑春煊	Deng Huaxi was reappointed as the Governor of Guizhou; Yuxian was executed; Xiliang was reappointed as the Governor of Hubei	1E	0	3
2ndR	P	Governor of Henan	裕長→于蔭霖	于蔭霖→松壽	Yuzhang was reappointed as the Governor of Hubei; Yu Yinlin was reappointed as governor of Hubei	0	0	2
2ndR	P	Governor of Jiangsu	鹿傳霖→松壽	松壽→聶緝槼→恩壽	Lu Chuanlin was promoted to the Viceroy of Liangguang; Songshou was reappointed as the Governor of Henan; Nie Jigui was reappointed as the Governor of Anhui	0	0	3
2ndR	P	Governor of Anhui	王之春	王之春→聶緝槼	Wang Zhichun was dismissed.	0	1	1
2ndR	P	Governor of Jiangxi	景星→李興銳	李興銳	Jinxing was reappointed as the Governor of Hubei.	0	0	1
2ndR	P	Governor of Zhejiang	劉樹堂→惲祖翼	惲祖翼→任道镕	Liu was dismissed; Yun Zuyi resigned due to the death of his mother.	0	2;1 F+1 R	2
2ndR	P	Governor of Hubei	于蔭霖→裕長→景星	景星→聶緝槼→于蔭霖→錫良→端方	Yu Yinlin was reappointed as the Governor of Henan; Yu Chang was dismissed; Jingxing was reappointed as the General of Fuzhou; Yu Yinlin was reappointed as the Governor of Guangxi; Xiliang was reappointed as the Director-General of the Conservation of the Yellow River and the Grand Canal	0	1	6
2ndR	P	Governor of Hunan	俞廉三	俞廉三		0	0	0
2ndR	P	Governor of Shaanxi	端方→岑春煊	岑春煊→升允	Cen Chunxuan was reappointed as the Governor of Shanxi; Duanfang was reappointed as the Governor of Hubei.	0	0	2
2ndR	P	Governor of Guangdong	德壽	德壽		0	0	0
2ndR	P	Governor of Guangxi	黃槐森	黃槐森→李經義→丁振鐸	Huang Huaisen was dismissed; Li Jingyi was reappointed as the Governor of Yunnan.	0	1F	2
2ndR	P	Governor of Yunnan	丁振鐸	丁振鐸→李經義	Ding Zhendun was appointed as the Governor of Guangxi.	0	0	1
2ndR	P	Governor of Guizhou	王毓藻	王毓藻→鄧華熙	Wang Yuzao was removed from his position on grounds of illness.	0	1R	1
2ndR	P	Governor of Gansu Xinjiang	饒應祺	饒應祺		0	0	0
2ndR M	P	Treasurer of Zhili	廷杰→廷雍→周馥	周馥	Tingjie was summoned to Beijing; Tingyong was killed by the eight-nation alliance troops.	1E	1F	2

Table 1.8 Continued:

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Shandong	張人駿→胡廷幹	胡廷幹	Zhang Renjun was promoted to the Director-General of Grain Transportation	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Shanxi	何樞→李廷蕭→升允→廷祉	廷祉→李紹芬	He Shu died during the chaos; Li Tingxiao was reappointed as the Treasurer of Gansu; Shengyun was reappointed as the Treasurer of Shannxi; Tingzhi was reappointed as the Treasurer of Henan;	1N	0	4
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Henan	景星→廷祉	廷祉→端方→陳夔龍→廷祉	Jingxing was promoted as the Governor of Jiangxi; Tingzhi was reappointed as the treasurer of Shaanxi; Duanfang was promoted to the Governor of Hubei; Chen Kuilong was promoted as the Director-General of Grain Transportation.	0	0	4
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Jiangning	恩壽	恩壽→吳重憙	Enshou was promoted to the Director-General of Grain Transportation.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Jiangsu	聶緝槼	聶緝槼→陸元鼎	Nie Jigui was promoted to the Governor of Hubei.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Anhui	湯壽銘	湯壽銘		0	0	0
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Jiangxi	張紹華	張紹華→柯逢時	Zhang was reappointed as the Treas ure of Hunan.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Zhejiang	惲祖翼→榮銓	榮銓→張廷燎→誠勛	Yun Zuyi was promoted as the Governor of Zhejiang; Rongquan was dismissed; Zhang Tingliao resigned due to the death of one of his parents.	0	2;1F+1R	3
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Fujian	張曾敭	張曾敭→周蓮	Zhang was reappointed as the Treasurer of Hunan.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Hubei	善聯	善聯→瞿廷韶	Shanlian died during the chaos.	1N	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Hunan	錫良→張曾敭→余聯沅	余聯沅→張紹華	Xiliang was promoted as the Governor of Shanxi; Zhang Zengyang was reappointed as the Treasurer of Guangxi; Yu Lianhuan was removed from his position on the ground of illness.	0	1F	3
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Shaanxi	端方	端方→升允→李紹芬→夏巖	Duanfang was reappointed as the Treasurer of Henan; Shengyun was promoted to the Governor; Li Shaofen was reappointed as the Treasurer of Shanxi.	0	0	3
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Gansu	岑春煊→李廷簫	李廷簫→何福堃	Cen Chunxuan was promoted to the Governor of Shaanxi; Li Tingxiao committed suicide during the chaos.	1S	0	2
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Sichuan	周馥→員鳳林	員鳳林	Zhou was reappointed as the Treasurer of Zhili.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Guangdong	丁體常	丁體常		0	0	0

Table 1.8 Continued:

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Guangxi	李興銳→張曾敭	張曾敭	Li Xingrui was promoted as the Governor of Jiangxi.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Yunnan	李經義→林紹年	林紹年	Li Jingyi was promoted to the Governor of Guangxi.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Guizhou	紹積誠	紹積誠		0	0	0
2ndRM	P	Treasurer of Gansu Xinjiang	文光	文光		0	0	0
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Zhili	廷雍→周浩	周浩	Tingyong was reappointed as the Treasurer.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Shandong	胡景桂→尚其亨	尚其亨	Hu was reappointed as the Provincial Judge of Hunan.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Shanxi	李廷簫→升允→沈家本	沈家本→陳璚→吳廷斌	Li Tingxiao was reappointed as the Treasurer; Shengyun was reappointed as the Treasurer of Gansu; Shen Jiaoben was summoned to Beijing; Chen Qiong was reappointed as the Provincial Judge of Sichuan.	0	0	4
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Henan	廷祉→鐘培	鐘培	Tingzhi was reappointed as the Treasurer.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Jiangsu	陸元鼎	陸元鼎→誠勳→效曾	Lu Yuanding was reappointed as the Treasurer of Jiangsu; Chengxun was reappointed as the Treasurer of Zhejiang.	0	0	2
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Anhui	聯魁	聯魁		0	0	0
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Jiangxi	陳澤霖→余聯沅→柯逢時	柯逢時→明徵	Chen Zelin was summoned to Jiangsu to train armies; Yu Lianhuan was reappointed as the Treasurer of Hunan; Ke Fengshi was reappointed as the Treasurer of Hunan.	0	0	3
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Zhejiang	李光久→榮銓→世杰→湍多布	湍多布	Li Guangjiu died during the chaos; Rongquan was reappointed as the Treasurer; Shijie died during the chaos.	2N	0	3
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Fujian	周蓮→吳重憙	吳重憙→楊文鼎	Zhou Lian was reappointed as the Treasurer; Wu Chongxi was reappointed as the Treasurer of Jiangning.	0	0	2
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Hubei	瞿廷韶	瞿廷韶→李岷深	Qu Tingshao was reappointed as the Treasurer.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Hunan	胡廷幹→胡景桂	胡景桂	Hu Tinggan was reappointed as the Treasurer of Shandong.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Shaanxi	馮光裔	馮光裔→李紹→芬樊增祥	Feng Guanyu was removed from his position on the ground of illness; Li Shaofen was reappointed as the Treasurer.	0	1R	2

Table 1.8 Continued:

R	L	Job Title	1900	1901	Notes	A	B	P
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Gansu	何福堃	何福堃→潘效蘇	He Fukun was reappointed as the Treasurer.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Sichuan	萬培因→夏巖	夏巖→陳璚	Xiayan was reappointed as the Shaanxi Treasurer; Chen Qiong was reappointed as the Treasurer.	0	0	2
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Guangdong	吳引孫	吳引孫		0	0	0
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Guangxi	張廷燎	張廷燎→希賢	Zhang was reappointed as the Treasurer of Zhejiang.	0	0	1
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Yunnan	鄒馨蘭→全楸績	全楸績	Zou Xinlan was removed from his position on grounds of illness.	0	1R	1
2ndRM	P	Provincial Judge of Guizhou	林紹年→曹鴻勛	曹鴻勛	Cao Hongxun was reappointed as the Treasurer.	0	0	1

Source:

1. Wei Hsiu-mei, *Qingji zhiguan nianbiao.*
2. Zhao Erxun et al., *Qing shigao* 清史稿 [Draft of Qing history] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006).

Table 2.1: The Dismissed Governors, Viceroys, and Grand Councilors from 1881 to 1910

NAME	POSITION	START	END	OFFICIAL REASON	ACTUAL REASON	LABEL
Chen Baozeng 陳寶箴	Governor of Hunan	1895.9.12	1898.10.6	緣事革職	Dismissed for participating in the Hundred Days reform;	1898
Hu Pingzhi 胡聘之	Governor of Shanxi	1895.10.7	1899.9.12	解職	Dismissed for participating in the Hundred Days Reform;	1898
Liao Choufeng 廖壽豐	Governor of Zhejiang	1894.1.8	1898.11.18	因病解職	Dismissed for participating in the Hundred Days Reform;	1898
Tan Jixun 譚繼洵	Governor of Hubei	1889.12.22	1898.8.30	裁缺	Fired for being the father of Hundred Days reformer Tan Sitong;	1898
Weng Tonghe 翁同龢	Grand Councilor	1897.9.11	1898.6.15	緣事開缺	Dismissed for participating in the Hundred Days Reform;	1898
Gangyi 剛毅	Grand Councilor	1898.6.10	1900.9.25	緣事交都察院吏部議處	Dismissed for participating in the Boxer debacle;	Boxer
Liu Shutang 劉樹堂	Governor of Zhejiang	1898.11.18	1900.11.25	開缺候簡	Dismissed for the participation in the Boxer debacle	Boxer

Table 2.1 Continued:

NAME	POSITION	START	END	OFFICIAL REASON	ACTUAL REASON	LABEL
Songchun 松椿	Viceroy of Caoyun		1900.11.25	緣事革職	Dismissed for the participation in the Boxer debacle;	Boxer
Wang Yuzao 王毓藻	Governor of Guizhou	1897.3.7	1900.3.13	因病開缺	Dismissed for participating in the Boxer debacle	Boxer
Xu Tong 徐桐	Grand Councilor	1896.12.9	1901.1.5	自盡	Forced to commit suicide for the Boxer debacle	Boxer
Yu Lu 裕祿	Viceroy of Zhili	1898.9.28	1900.7.8	免	Dismissed for the participation in the Boxer debacle	Boxer
Yuxian 毓賢	Governor of Shanxi	1900.3.14	1900.9.26	緣事解職	Dismissed for the participation in the Boxer debacle	Boxer
Zhang Numei 張汝梅	Governor of Shandong	1897.9.27	1899.3.14	緣事開缺聽候查辦	Dismissed for inability to put down the Boxers;	Boxer
Enshou 恩壽	Governor of Shaanxi	1907.10.5	1911.7.29	因病解職	Dismissed for corruption;	Corruption
Wenyu 文煜	Grand Councilor	1884.6.23	1884.9.25	因病開缺	Forced to resign on charges of corruption;	Corruption
Hu Tinggang 胡廷干	Governor of Jiangxi	1905.1.10	1906.4.15	緣事撤任	Dismissed for improper handling of the case of a missionary murder in Jiangxi;	Death of missionaries
Li Bingheng 李秉衡	Viceroy of Sichuan	1897.9.27	1897.12.11	緣事解职	Dismissed at the request of German Ambassador; two German missionaries were murdered when Li was the governor of Shandong;	Death of missionaries
Liu Binzhang 刘秉璋	Viceroy of Sichuan	1886.6.6	1894.11.19	到京另候简用	Dismissed at the request of British ambassador for the murder of a missionary under his jurisdiction	Death of missionaries
Ding Zhenduo 丁振鐸	Viceroy of Minzhe	1906.9.11	1907.3.4	開缺	Transferred out of his position so that Cen Chunxuan, viceroy of Liangguang, could take his spot;	Expendable
Tan Zhonglin 譚鐘麟	Viceroy of Liangguang	1895.4.16	1899.12.19	到京陛見	Transferred out of his position to open it for Li Hongzhang;	Expendable
Lin Zhaoyuan 林肇元	Governor of Guizhou	1881.10.5	1883.12.21	緣事革職	Dismissed because of a shortfall in the provincial treasury	Fiscal shortfall
Pan Xiaosu 潘效蘇	Governor of Gansu-Xinjiang	1902.10.6	1905.9.16	緣事革職	Dismissed for a shortfall in the provincial treasury	Fiscal shortfall

Table 2.1 Continued:

NAME	POSITION	START	END	OFFICIAL REASON	ACTUAL REASON	LABEL
Zeng He 曾鈳	Governor of Hubei	1898.11.1	1899.1.17	緣事革職	Dismissed for forging memorials in the name of the viceroy of Shaan-Gan to propose his own reform ideas;	Forging documents
Xu Yingkui 許應騤	Viceroy of Minzhe	1898.10.25	1903.4.5	緣事解職	Dismissed for bungling court cases;	Judiciary complaints
Chen Shijie 陳士杰	Governor of Shandong	1883.1.17	1886.6.2	到京候簡	Transferred out of his position for inadequate flood control measures that became apparent after a disaster;	Natural disaster
Li Henian 李鶴年	Governor of Henan	1881.10.5	1883.4.6	緣事革職	Dismissed for inadequate flood control measures that became apparent after a disaster	Natural disaster
Mei Qizhao 梅啟照	Director-General of the Conservation of the Yellow River and the Grand Canal	1881.10.20	1883.4.6	緣事革職	Dismissed for inadequate flood control measures that became apparent after a disaster	Natural disaster
Ni Wenwei 倪文蔚	Governor of Guangdong	1883.10.9	1886.6.2	因病解職	Dismissed for inadequate flood control measures that became apparent after a disaster	Natural disaster
Bian Baodi 卞寶第	Viceroy of Minzhe		1892.6.22	因病解職	Forced to resign because Bian opposed Cixi's allocation of navy funds to build the Summer Palace;	Offended Cixi
Yan Jingming 閻敬銘	Grand Councilor	1886.1.18	1888.8.23	因病開缺	Dismissed for opposing Cixi's allocation of navy funds to build the Summer Palace;	Offended Cixi
Baojun 寶鋆	Grand Councilor	1877.4.2	1884.4.8	緣事休致	Baojun was close to Prince Gong; dismissed together with Prince Gong	Power struggle
Cen Chunxuan 岑春煊	Viceroy of Liangguang	1907.5.28	1907.8.12	因病開缺	Lost position in power struggle with Prince Qing and Yuan Shikai	Power struggle
Cheng Fu 成孚	Director-General of Conservation of Yellow River and Grand Canal	1884.1.19	1887.11.14	開缺	Dismissed for inadequate flood control measures that became apparent after a disaster	Power struggle

Table 2.1 Continued:

NAME	POSITION	START	END	OFFICIAL REASON	ACTUAL REASON	LABEL
Duanfang 端方	Viceroy of Zhili	1909.6.28	1909.11.20	革	Dismissed for taking pictures of Cixi's funeral	Power struggle
Huang Huisen 黃槐森	Governor of Guangxi	1897.10.27	1901.4.4	開缺候簡	Edged out by Li Hongzhang, viceroy of Liangguang, due to their disagreements over how to handle Boxers;	Power struggle
Qu Hongji 瞿鴻機	Grand Councilor	1906.2.19	1907.6.17	緣事開缺	Lost in a power struggle with Prince Gong and Yuan Shikai;	Power struggle
Shengyun 升允	Viceroy of Shanggang	1905.4.8	1909.6.23	准开缺	Dismissed for impeaching Prince Gong and Enshou;	Power struggle
Yuan Shikai 袁世凯						Power struggle
Cen Chunming 岑春蓂	Governor of Hunan	1906.9.4	1910.4.17	緣事開缺聽候查辦	Dismissed for his mishandling of the 1910 Rice Riot in Changsha;	Riot/Uprising/Bandits
Ding Baoquan 丁寶銓	Governor of Shanxi	1909.11.23	1911.6.18	因病乞休	Forced to resign for ordering troops to fire on peasants resisting the opium ban;	Riot/Uprising/Bandits
Kuijun 奎俊	Viceroy of Sichuan	1898.7.12	1902.8.5	命开缺	Dismissed for inability to put down the Sichuan Boxer uprising in 1902	Riot/Uprising/Bandits
Ruicheng 瑞澂	Viceroy of Huguang	1910.6.12	1911.10.12	緣事革職	Dismissed for inability to put down Wuchang uprising;	Riot/uprising/bandits
Shi Nianzu 史念祖	Governor of Guangxi	1895.7.23	1897.10.14	緣事革職	Dismissed for inability to put down bandits in Guangxi.	Riot/Uprising/Bandits
Wang Zhichun 王之春	Governor of Guangxi	1902.7.3	1903.7.7	緣事革職	Dismissed for inability to put down bandits.	Riot/Uprising/Bandits
Yang Changrui 杨昌濬	Viceroy of Shanggang	1888.4.6	1895.11.20	开缺回籍	Dismissed for inability to put down Muslim uprising;	Riot/Uprising/Bandits
Zeng Guoquan 曾国荃	Viceroy of Shanggang	1881.2.28	1881.10.16	因病开缺	Dismissed for inability to put down Nian uprising in Northwest;	Riot/Uprising/Bandits
Liu Changyou 劉長佑	Viceroy of Yungui		1883.5.30	因病乞休	Forced to resign; the Sino-French war was lost, so heads needed to roll.	Sino-French war
Pan Dingxin 潘鼎新	Governor of Guangxi	1884.3.26	1885.3.24	緣事革職	Dismissed; the Sino-French war was lost, so heads needed to roll.	Sino-French war
Xu Yanxu 徐延旭	Governor of Guangxi	1883.10.9	1884.3.26	緣事革職	Dismissed; the Sino-French war lost, so heads needed to roll	Sino-French war
Tang Jiong 唐炯	Viceroy of Yunnan	1883.7.25	1884.3.26	緣事革職	Dismissed; the Sino-French war was lost	Sino-French war

Table 2.1 Continued:

NAME	POSITION	START	END	OFFICIAL REASON	ACTUAL REASON	LABEL
Xu Yanxu 徐延旭	Governor of Guangxi	1883.10.9	1884.3.26	緣事革職	Dismissed; the Sino-French war lost, so heads needed to roll	Sino-French war
Zhang Shusheng 張樹聲	Viceroy of Liangguang	1883.7.13	1884.5.22	因病開缺	Dismissed; the Sino-French war lost, so head needed to roll;	Sino-French war
Zhang Zhaodong 張兆棟	Viceroy of Fujian	1883.5.30	1884.9.19	緣事革職	Dismissed; the Sino-French war lost, so head needed to roll;	Sino-French war
Tang Jingsong 唐景崧	Viceroy of Taiwan	1894.10.13	1895.5.20	解職到京	Dismissed; the Sino-Japanese war was lost, so heads needed to roll.	Sino-Japanese war
Wu Dacheng 吳大澂	Governor of Hunan	1895.3.26	1895.7.5	到京另候簡用	Wu volunteered to lead Hunan army into the Sino-Japanese war; dismissed when the war was lost;	Sino-Japanese war
Li Hanzhang 李瀚章	Viceroy of Liangguang	1889.8.8	1895.4.14	因病開缺	Li Hongzhang's elder brother; forced to resign because of the unpopularity of his tax measure to support Sino-Japanese war;	Tax complaints
Dexin 德馨	Governor of Jiangxi	1884.11.4	1895.9.11	緣事革職	Unable to identify;	Unspecified
Lian Kui 聯魁	Governor of Gansu-Xinjiang	1905.9.16	1910.8.25	到京另候簡用	Unable to identify;	Unspecified
Niu Jigui 聶緝槼	Governor of Zhejiang	1902.10.6	1905.10.10	緣事開缺	Unable to identify;	Unspecified
Pan Hongshu 龐鴻書	Governor of Guizhou	1906.9.4	1911.5.21	解職	Unable to identify;	Unspecified
Ren Daorong 任道鎔	Governor of Zhejiang	1901.5.23	1902.10.6	因病解職	Unable to identify;	Unspecified
Songkun 嵩崑	Governor of Guizhou	1895.7.7	1897.2.24	緣事革職	Unable to identify;	Unspecified
Wu Chongxi 吳重憙	Governor of Henan	1908.8.29	1910.4.26	到京另候簡用	Unable to identify;	Unspecified
Zhang Liangui 張聯桂	Governor of Guangxi	1892.2.27	1895.7.21	因病開缺	Unable to identify;	Unspecified

Source: Zhao Erxun et al., *Qing shigao* 清史稿 [Draft of Qing history] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006).

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Glossary

difang 地方

baqi hujun tongling 八旗护军统领

baqi manmeng hanjun dutong 八旗满蒙汉军都统

baqi manmeng hanjun fudutong 八旗满蒙汉军副都统

baiqian 白铅

Bao Hua An 宝华盦

Baojia 保甲

baoshou yipai 保守一派

Beiyang tongyuan ju 北洋铜元局

Bian manren fei Zhongguo zhi chenmin 辩满人非中国之臣民

bujun yamen zuoyouyi zongbing 步军衙门左右翼总兵

caoliang 漕粮

cailiao kaixiao 漕粮开销

changbei jun 常备军

cong yipin 从一品

dachen 大臣

Dagongbao 大公报

dalisi qing 大理寺卿

dazai 大灾

daye 大爷

dan [wheat] 担

dao 道

daoyuan 道员

dianshi 殿试

dianxi 点锡

Dongfang zazhi 东方杂志

dongnan hubao 东南互保

duban tuyao tonghshui shiwu dachen 督办土药统税事务大臣

duchayuan zuo duyushi 都察院左都御史

fazheng ban 法政办

fu 府

gelaohui 哥老会

gongbu langzhong 工部郎中

gongtan kaixiao 公摊开销

guanxi 关系

Guangfuhui 光复会

Guanghan 光汉

Guan Yu 关羽

guanglusi shaoqing 光禄寺少卿

hanlinyuan zhangyuan xueshi 翰林院掌院学士

hedao zongdu 河道总督

hedong hedao zongdu 河东河道总督

houbu dao 候补道

houbu guan 候补官

hubu yinhang 户部银行

hubu zaobi zongchang 户部造币总厂

huayang yizhen gonghui 华洋义赈工会

huangtaifei 皇太妃

huangzu 皇族

jia mingshi 假名士

jianghai guan 江海关

jiaohua zhi wulai 狡猾之无赖

jiaoyu 教育

jin 斤

jinshi 进士

jingbao 京报

jiupin 九品

juren 举人

junxu 军需

juanguan 捐官

juan'na 捐纳

Kang dang 康党

li [clerk] 吏

li [measurement] 里

lijuan ju 厘捐局

lika 厘卡

likin [*lijin*] 厘金

lianbing chu 练兵处

liang [cash] 两

ling shiwei neidachen 领侍卫内大臣

liuxuesheng 留学生

lulu tidu 陆路提督

lulu zongbing 陆路总兵

lü yingjun 绿营军

luanyishi 銮仪使

maotai 茅台

mufu 幕府

Nanyang quanye hui 南洋劝业会

neige daxueshi 内阁大学士

neige xueshi 内阁学士

neiwufu zongguan 内务府总管

nonggong shangbu 农工商部

qian 钱

qingxiang 清乡

Qingliu 清流

Qingshigao 清史稿

quanxue pian 劝学篇

san tu 三屠

shangshu 尚书

shangyu 上喻

shaobao 少保

shaofu 少傅

shaoshi 少师

Shenbao 申报

shi [grain] 石

shuishi tidu 水师提督

shuishi zongbing 水师总兵

Subao 苏报

taibao 太保

taifu 太傅

taishi 太师

taizi taibao 太子太保

taizi taifu 太子太傅

taizi taishi 太子太师

tanhua 探花

T'ao Chai Chi Chin Lu [*tao zhai ji jin lu*] 陶斋吉金录

tao-tie 饕餮

tidu jiumen bujun xunbu wuying tongling 提督九门巡捕统领

tiemaozi wang 铁帽子王

tongjuan ju 统捐局

tongmenghui 同盟会

tongqian 铜钱

tongwenguan 同文馆

tongyuan ju 铜元局

wen 文

wenzhi cong yipin 文职从一品

wenzhi zheng yipin 文职正一品

wu guoji 无国籍

wuwei 无为

wu xue you shu 无学有术

wuzhi cong yipin 武职从一品

wuzhi zheng yipin 武职正一品

xi xun 西巡

xian 县

xiaohao 消耗

xieban daxueshi 协办大学士

Xinmin congbao 新民从报

Xinwenbao 新闻报

Xin Shiji 新世纪

Xinwenbao 新闻报

xinxuejia 新学家

yamen 衙门

Yangwu 洋务

yangwu ju 洋务局

yaohan 要函

youchuanbu 邮传部

youxue jiandu 游学监督

you xue wu shu 有学无术

you xue you shu 有学有术

yuan [silver] 元

yue haiguan 粤海关

zeren neige 责任内阁

zhang Liaoshen dao jiancha yushi 掌辽沈道监察御史

zhang luanyiweishi dachen 掌銮仪卫事大臣

zhang Xinjiang dao jiancha yushi 掌新疆道监察御史

zhifu 知府

zhixian 知县

zhiying ju 支应局

Zhongguo ribao 中国日报

Zhongwai ribao 中外日报

Zhou 州

Zhouli 周礼

zhoupeng 粥棚

zhufang dutong 驻防都统

zhufang jiangjun 驻防将军

zitong 紫铜

zizhengyuan 资政院

zongdu 总督

zuoyouyi qianfengtongling 左右翼前锋统领