Village-State Cooperation

Modern Community Schools and Their Funding, Haicheng County, Fengtian, 1905-1931

ELIZABETH VANDERVEN
Reed College

This article draws on archival sources from Haicheng county, Fengtian province, to examine how rural communities responded to early-twentieth-century state orders to establish modern primary schools adhering to a set of uniform standards. Past scholarship has denied China's rural communities an important role in early-twentieth-century modernization, arguing either that the mandate to establish primary schools at the local level engendered hostile relations between state and society or that the introduction of modern schools led to community dissolution. This article highlights the contribution in Haicheng county of rural communities, mostly villages, to China's early-twentieth-century modernization. It argues that villages were willing participants in state-guided educational reform, pursuing creative and cooperative strategies that enabled them to set up hundreds of modern primary schools and simultaneously mark their identification with both the nation-state and their own local communities.

Keywords: *China; education; schools; village (rural conditions)*

Many studies of state making in the developing world assume a binary dynamic, opposing an intrusive and modernizing state to defensive village communities.[1] Certainly when it comes to the more extractive aspects of early-twentieth-century Chinese state making,

AUTHOR'S NOTE: *I thank Kathryn Bernhardt, Richard Gunde, Philip Huang, Edward McCord, and Alexander Woodside for their thoughtful and constructive comments in helping me to prepare this article for publication. Thanks also to Joel Andreas, Margaret Kuo, Yasuhiko Karasawa, Jennifer Neighbors, Chaohua Wang, and Jiayan Zhang, who participated in discussions of the earliest versions of this article. A version of this article was presented at the 2004 Association for Asian Studies annual conference where Charles Hayford and Peter Seybolt offered encouragement. Finally, I am most grateful to Alice Falk for editorial help.*

MODERN CHINA, Vol. 31 No. 2, April 2005 204-235
DOI: 10.1177/0097700404273985

such as taxation and military conscription, this assumption has been well borne out.[2] It thus might be expected that in 1904, after the Qing Ministry of Education (*xuebu*) ordered local communities, including villages, to set up new primary schools with their own funds, resistance and hostility resulted. Such a view is held by Sally Borthwick and John Cleverley, who both maintain that the new schools of the early twentieth century alienated the rural populace. Borthwick, especially, emphasizes that the new schools were extractive, asserting that their financing placed a heavy burden on community resources and was part of "an anarchic race to reach available sources of income before others carried them off" (Borthwick, 1983: 98; Cleverley, 1985: 34).

On the other side are those who suggest that state making (and the call for a modernized school system) ultimately brought about the breakdown of communities—or, at the least, the dissolution of practices that had long reinforced community ties, in particular religious life. For example, Prasenjit Duara describes how community life in the Shandong and Hebei countryside deteriorated as villages supported a flurry of state-mandated projects including schools, police, and administration (Duara, 1988: 149-51). On this view, schooling and educational reform activities should have disabled the strong ties and identifications of rural peoples with their own communities, replacing those loyalties with allegiances to a larger community based on the nation-state.[3]

This article draws on archival materials on educational reform in Haicheng county, Fengtian province, in the late Qing and early Republic to examine how rural communities funded and established the new primary schools and how villagers and the state coped with problems encountered in launching them.[4] I argue, against the two positions sketched above, that educational reform was not an either-or process. Communities could be simultaneously active and defensive in their response to state-guided educational reform. On the one hand, many rural communities in Haicheng county embraced state orders to establish new schools, showing an eagerness to participate in movements that had implications far beyond the borders of the village.[5] On the other hand, the willingness of these communities to participate in the state's modernization enterprise not only did not lead to community ties breaking down but in many ways reinforced them.

Up to now, scholars have assumed that rural communities did not play a significant role in China's early-twentieth-century modernization process; when they try to better understand modernization during this period, they generally look first toward urban spaces and phenomena. For example, Joseph Esherick writes of the Chinese city, "If a nation was to modernize, the cities had to take the lead," and "urban reforms . . . were arguably the most successful Chinese efforts at modernization in the early twentieth century" (Esherick, 1999: 1). Urban areas unquestionably played a vanguard role in modernizing China. But this scholarly emphasis has led to the village being largely ignored—an oversight that, even now, can be attributed to a long-standing presumption in Western scholarship that modernization comes from the breakdown of communities and is inevitably accompanied by a move toward urbanization. Such a view of modernization seems inadequate for China, where the roots of modernization can be found in the rural areas as well as in cities and where participation in state-guided modernization projects such as educational reform could actually strengthen community ties.

Despite the potential financial burdens brought by building new schools, in Haicheng county the mandate to build them, accompanied by an increased state presence in local society, did not simply create hostility and resistance or lead to community breakdown. Instead, local communities participated willingly in the state's modernization program and defined a role for themselves by taking the initiative to raise funds for primary schools, by forging partnerships with other villages to set up schools, and by seeking the county government's guidance and mediation. Although rural communities in Haicheng had difficulty coming up with resources, the state demand that they build schools generally served to mobilize them, bringing residents together and strengthening their sense of collectivity. Furthermore, when these communities encountered difficulties, they reacted not by opposing state pressures but by demanding further state intervention. The result was that villagers, striving to improve life in their own communities but also choosing to embrace state-guided educational reform, were simultaneously marking their membership in two communities: their immediate rural community and a larger national community.

THE SETTING: FENGTIAN PROVINCE AND HAICHENG COUNTY

In the late imperial period, education in Fengtian (present-day Liaoning) was considered to be backward and underdeveloped compared with that in other provinces, a reputation derived at least in part from the province's lackluster record of producing holders of civil service examination degrees.[6] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, increased migration from other parts of China, the development of railroads, and the rise of reform-minded leadership gradually brought the Northeast—especially Fengtian—into line with the rest of the country (Enatsu, 1991: vi-ix; Gottschang and Lary, 2000: 2, 45-46; Isett, 1998: 8; Suleski, 2002: 5). An important result of this transformation, especially after the New Policies were implemented and the civil service examination system was abolished in 1905, was the rapid growth and development of new educational institutions.

By 1908, 2,113 schools had been established across the province, including professional schools, normal schools, and middle schools (Liaoning jiaoyu shi zhi ziliao [Materials on the history of Liaoning education], 1990: 1.300-303 [hereafter cited as LJSZ]; Li Xiping, 1998: 208). While some of these schools were located in the provincial capital of Shengjing (Shenyang) or in prefectural and county seats, the vast majority (1,925) were lower primary schools in rural areas (LJSZ, 1990: 1.300-303).[7] Almost one-fifth (333) of these schools, officially known as "community-established primary schools" (*gongli chudeng xiaoxuetang*), were established in Haicheng county (Haicheng xianzhi [Haicheng county gazetteer], 1987: 483 [hereafter cited as HXZ]; LJSZ, 1990: 1.300-305).

The relatively large number of schools in Haicheng county and its rich archival sources from the late Qing and early Republic on educational reform make it an ideal area in which to conduct a close-up study. The impressive spread of schools there in the early twentieth century can be attributed to the county's location and its economy. Haicheng county was (and still is) located halfway down the Liaodong Peninsula, between the cities of Shengjing and Dalian. In the period under study, the county was bifurcated by the Japanese-controlled Southern Manchurian Railway line, ensuring its easy integration with the rest of the province and likely making it receptive to

new ideas and reforms. Equally important, Haicheng county, a well-irrigated agricultural hub, has been dubbed by its own inhabitants the "rice granary of southern Liaoning" (*Liaonan liangcang*); it is home to a vast and fertile plain that for centuries has produced corn, soybeans, sorghum, and paddy rice (HXZ, 1987: 1-2). In addition, early in the century a number of Japanese settlers resided in the county seat. Gavin McCormack suggests that this Japanese presence engendered an angry and patriotic response among locals that manifested itself in a variety of spheres, including education (McCormack, 1977: 94-95).

FUNDING THE NEW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS

COSTS OF ESTABLISHING AND OPERATING COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Haicheng county government funded only a small number of official (*guanli*) schools, mostly located in Haicheng city, the county seat. These elaborately planned schools, equipped with dormitories, dining halls, and libraries and enjoying substantial annual operating budgets, were a league apart from the numerous community primary schools set up by local villages. In 1924, budgets for official schools ranged from about 3,000 yuan for the five upper-lower primary schools to more than 8,000 yuan for the boys' middle school (HXZ, 1924: 6.24-25), a considerable sum at the time. The bulk of this money came from rents on the county's various landholdings, which were scattered among several of Haicheng's villages, as well as from local taxes and assessments.[8] However, as mentioned above, these assessments were used only for the official schools; community schools generally did not benefit.

The task of funding the community primary schools fell to the villages or townships where they were to be located. Compared with the official schools, these schools had relatively modest operating budgets. Just the same, there were many costs involved and communities sometimes struggled to establish and maintain institutions that were required to adhere to a uniform set of standards. The new curriculum and teaching methods called for a host of potentially expensive purchases, such as clocks, maps, blackboards, and textbooks. In addition, all schools were required to maintain a playground (*caochang*) suffi-

cient for at least 30 active children to run around on and perform calisthenics and drills. Items necessary for basic operation—which in Haicheng county, with its freezing winters, included a heated brick bed (*kang*), plenty of fuel, and even tea—also had to be paid for.

Not surprising, the most basic requirement was a place to house the school. In the past, when lower-level education had gone largely unregulated by the state, schools could and did operate anywhere—in private homes, clan halls, even shops. The new system, in contrast, sought to separate schooling from other activities. Ideally, communities were to erect a brand-new school building where only schooling was offered. But since most communities had insufficient resources to build new structures, the Qing government permitted them to house schools in preexisting ones as long as no other activities took place in them at the same time. Although schools most commonly occupied temples, some communities did manage to construct new buildings from scratch.

Few extant records detail the cost of constructing new buildings; an exception was provided to the county by the village of East Lianhuapao. In 1906, the village constructed an entirely new school on land donated by two of its residents. The building, including materials for the foundation, walls, and roof, as well as miscellaneous items such as nails and tools, cost 527 yuan. It was composed of three *jian* (bays), two to serve as the classroom and one as the teacher's living quarters. Because it was similar in size to other school buildings being constructed or renovated at the same time, we can assume that the costs for other communities were likewise similar.

Communities that did not receive land endowments or did not possess communal land generally rented property, with rents of course varying according to the land's location, quality, and area. The Teng'aobao upper-lower primary school paid 100 yuan per year for a plot on which it built a school from scratch. Teng'aobao, a township, was significantly larger and more heavily populated than were most villages in the county, and rents there may have been relatively high. The village of Yantai, located 60 *li* to the southeast of the county seat, paid 40 yuan per year to rent a house of five jian for its school. The village of Houyingleshan, 50 li from the county seat, rented a tile-roofed house of seven jian for 13 so-called foreign yuan (*yang yuan*).

Among the many other significant expenses borne by communities were those for the teacher's salary, classroom furniture, and books. Although the regulations did not stipulate the amount teachers were to be paid, salaries were fairly consistent across Haicheng county. From 1907 through the early Republic, most schools paid the teachers between 150 and 200 yuan per year, often with food and some supplies included.[9] Furniture and equipment consumed a large part of a school's budget. In 1906, the Teng'aobao School's single largest expenditure was 200 yuan for a quantity of desks. Textbooks cost a total of 53 yuan. The school also employed laborers to construct its school building and hired a cart to haul the textbooks from the bookstore in the county seat back to the town (Haicheng xian gongshu dang'an guan [Haicheng County Government Office Archives], 1905-1931: 6.17782 [hereafter cited as HXGDA]).

In addition, schools were required to set aside part of their budgets to pay for the numerous small items required for daily operations. These cost anywhere from a few jiao to a few yuan. In 1906, the Teng'aobao School management purchased a wide variety of supplies, including paper, glue (2.4 yuan), string (3 jiao), a desk clock (5.4 yuan), a hook for the door screen (4 jiao), and lamps, chalk, and bookshelves (10 yuan). Unlike most other schools, Teng'aobao provided its pupils with a noon meal, necessitating the purchase of kitchen supplies, including a knife, a basin for washing dishes, chopsticks, bowls, fuel, and grains such as sorghum (8 to 9 yuan per month), corn, and rice. These items, required by all primary schools to some degree or another, added up. In 1906, the total budget for the Teng'aobao School, not including the teacher's salary, was 1,157.23 silver yuan (HXGDA, 6.17782).

METHODS OF FUNDING PRIMARY SCHOOLS

To meet annual school budgets that sometimes exceeded 1,000 yuan, rural communities such as East Lianhuapao and Teng'aobao had to find the money wherever they could. Because any single source of funding rarely could sustain a school, the community primary schools almost always relied on a combination of sources, including

community funds and resources, individual donations, and tuition fees. This practice appeared to be common across early-twentieth-century China. Sally Borthwick has found that several primary schools listed in the Hangzhou prefectural gazetteer were "composite" schools, drawing revenue from a number of different sources. For example, funding for the Qiantang Yuhang Tiaoxi Combined Higher and Lower Primary School came from public property, voluntary contributions, fines, and boarding fees. The sources of funds for the Qixi Combined Higher and Lower Primary School were just as varied: temple property, rent, and a tax on the town's cooks (Borthwick, 1983: 98-99). Similarly, Stig Thøgerson notes that at least one rural primary school in Zouping county, Shandong province, was supported by an endowment of temple land, temple association funds, and a tax on water mills (Thøgerson, 2002: 47).

STATE FUNDS

Past scholarship has not made sufficiently clear the degree to which the new community primary schools may have benefited from government subsidies. Some scholars have suggested that the state provided new schools with subsidies and that the prospect of such subsidies encouraged communities not only to set up schools but also to compete over resources (Borthwick, 1983: 88-103). Marianne Bastid notes that community schools were eligible for state subsidies (Bastid, 1988: 69), and Sidney Gamble, in his study of Ding county, reports that in the experimental district, 14 of 63 village schools received subsidies from the county government for "special excellence" (Gamble, 1954: 206).[10] In contrast, Thomas Curran stresses that villages and rural communities generally did not receive state subsidies and in fact bore a double burden: they were required both to contribute extra taxes to support official schools and to establish schools in their own communities whose support was solely their responsibility (Curran, 1993: 38-39).

Such a range of interpretations suggests that state subsidies for community schools were spotty but generally quite infrequent throughout China. In fact, the 1904 central regulations did not call for provincial, prefectural, or county governments to subsidize community schools (Shu, 1961: 2.417). In Haicheng county, the financial

contribution of the state to village primary schools was insignificant; the schools did not as a rule receive subsidies from the county.

In Haicheng, villagers were required to pay nonstatutory charges on the land tax (*tankuan* or *mujuan*) as well as household taxes collected and administered by the village leaders (*huishou*). In the early years of the twentieth century, nonstatutory charges were imposed by county governments on villages as a whole to help the Qing meet indemnity and military expenses and to fund new institutions at the local level. Both the collection and allocation of taxes for such local purposes were the responsibility of village leaders (Duara, 1988: 64-65; Huang, 1985: 278-80; LJSZ, 1990: 1.300; Li Xiping, 1998: 213).[11] In Haicheng county, the government supported only a few official schools and none of the community primary schools with these moneys.

In villages, the village head (*cunzhang*) and leaders played a key role in funding and establishing the community primary schools. They often sat on school boards that gathered community funds, collected school fees from students and their families, supervised school budgets, and, subject to the county's approval, appointed the teachers (Gamble, 1954: 189; HXGDA, 6.18281, 6.17776, 7.20919). The school board also served as a liaison between the village community and the county authorities, especially the educational promotion bureau (*quanxuesuo*), the county administrative office responsible for overseeing educational reform.

Controlling school funding and other community resources may have provided village leaders with new opportunities for corruption and peculation, as past scholarship has suggested (Borthwick, 1983: 98; Duara, 1988: 112), but it should by no means be assumed that malfeasance always occurred. In Haicheng county, more than 300 schools were successfully operating by 1907. This success can be explained at least in part by the local community's responsiveness to orders to establish new schools, and by the village leaders' flexibility and creativity in utilizing community resources to fund the schools.

COMMUNITY PROPERTY

Community property, most commonly land, was an important source of funding for many village primary schools in Haicheng

county. In some cases, this land had been previously purchased by the village and its rental provided a continuous source of money for the newly instituted school system. In other cases, individuals donated land to the village as an endowment. Unfortunately, sources do not reveal exactly how often schools in the county were built on or funded by community-owned land. Usually records exist only if the use of the land was disputed in some way that required the intervention of the state—as happened at least twice (HXGDA 6.18608, 17999).

The written documentation from these two conflicts illustrates how village communities responded to state orders to set up new schools. First, villages that possessed community resources often drew on them to establish and maintain the schools, showing a willingness that itself suggests their eagerness to participate in educational reform. Second, once villages had invested in the schools, they took serious measures to protect their investment. Significantly, these disputes show that village communities increasingly recognized that the county government could be an important mediator when their interests (here, their schools) were threatened.

The first case comes from Jinjiatai village, where village leaders purchased a piece of temple land from a private owner in 1894 (Guangxu 20). Many years later, sometime after the new school system was implemented, Jinjiatai village chose to build its new four-room primary school on a portion of this land. To raise additional funds for the school, the village rented out the remainder of its property. The school had been operating for only a year or two when a banner-land manager (*zhuangtou*) from another village made some claims to the land, annexed part of it, and then tried to rent it out.[12] Not surprising, the Jinjiatai village head and other leaders passionately disputed this action and requested immediate intervention from the county government. After a quick investigation, the county authorities ordered the banner-land manager off the land so that the village school could continue to benefit from its rents (HXGDA, 6.17999).

We today lack sufficient information to assess the competing claims to the land made by Jinjiatai village and the banner-land manager. But regardless of which were more legitimate, the county, in the interest of furthering education and easing tension, ruled in favor of the village. This case illuminates the importance of community-owned property to the development of educational reform in Haicheng

county. More important, it demonstrates the substantial commitment that Jinjiatai had made to the school by devoting community-owned property to it; the village wanted the state to protect its commitment and the state obliged.

The second case, from 1909, revolves around a conflict about the use of endowed land;[13] it reveals how communities and their individual members encouraged and supported the new schools. Li Chunrong, a resident of Gaokanwan village and a student at the imperial college (*jiansheng*), donated land to Gaokanwan so it could set up a community primary school. When the actions of an unscrupulous monk threatened the school's existence, Li, along with the village leaders, filed a report with the county. In it, Li recounted that many years earlier his late father had given 120 *mu* of land as alms to the Shunhe temple located in the neighboring village of Xiaolianggou. Li was responsible for administering the land, and in 1907 he allocated 20 mu to support the monk who occupied the temple and gave the remaining 100 mu to Gaokanwan village for its school.

The village intended to farm its portion of land and use the harvest proceeds to fund the school. But without informing anyone, the monk, described by both Li and the village leaders as "evil" (*e*), pawned 30 mu of land, including 10 mu that belonged to the school. Both Li and the villagers sought the county's assistance in removing the monk from the land (HXGDA, 6.18165). Although the dispute's final outcome was not recorded, this case, like the one above, highlights the importance of donated property to a school's survival. The Gaokanwan villagers clearly depended on the land to cover many of the school's expenses. The villagers, along with the individual who endowed them with land, brought in the state to protect their own interests as a community.

In many other instances, villages in Haicheng county used rents from collectively owned land to partially cover school costs. For example, Xiaomatou village owned 100 mu of community land, a relatively large amount, and applied the annual rent to many of the operating costs of its school. Henanliugongtun village owned 20 mu of community land, a plot that generated enough rent to offset students' tuition fees. Similarly, Longtaipu village used the rental from approximately 17 mu of land to cover tuition (HXGDA, 6.18266).

If a village was lucky enough to be able to support a school partially or fully with community-owned land, then clearly many parties would benefit. From the village's point of view, when school expenses were covered by rent from community land—as in Gaokanwan village, where the imperial student, Li Chunrong, specified that his donated land should support the community school—then other collectively generated funds might be freed for other purposes. Individual families also benefited when, as in Henanliugongtun and Longtaipu, the village leaders chose to use rent to cover tuition fees. Families that did not have to dip very deeply into their own pockets would be more inclined to see the new schools as a boon to the community rather than a burden. Finally, the county government benefited from not having to expend energy and resources helping villages to find other alternatives or policing absenteeism engendered by high costs for individual families.

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

Some schools received significant amounts of financial support from individual members of their community. For example, in 1907 two cousins, Liu Ximing and Liu Xisheng, who were "anxious to contribute to the public good" (*jigong haoyi*), footed much of the bill to build a new school in East Lianhuapao village, a community of about 90 households.[14] At age 29, Liu Ximing was a graduate of the provincial police academy who worked for Haicheng county as a magistrate's assistant. Liu Xisheng, at age 32, managed the East Lianhuapao School (HXGDA, 6.18107; HXZ, 1924: 2.2). Liu Ximing donated 2 mu of land for the school's site and another 2.2 mu of quarry land to provide clay for its bricks. The rest of the money came from private donations that Liu Xisheng solicited from various villagers. In total, the cousins collected 727 yuan, a substantial contribution. As mentioned earlier, the cost of building the Lianhuapao Village School was 527 yuan; the remaining 200 yuan could go toward other expenses, such as the teacher's salary. The residents of East Lianhuapao later expressed their appreciation for the Lius' help by asking the county government to reward their efforts (HXGDA, 6.18107).

The primary school in Daluyan village, which was jointly operated by Daluyan and the neighboring village of Hougangouzi, also bene-

fited from individual donations. Wealthy households in both villages contributed 300 yuan to the school (HXGDA, 6.17776). Similarly, a number of individuals in the community donated between 1.5 yuan and about 25 yuan per person for the Teng'aobao primary school (HXGDA, 6.17782).

Perhaps the most striking effort by individual community members was launched in the large village of Xintaizi; in 1913 one of the residents, Gao Yuanzhong, founded a girls' primary school in a neighbor's yard in the east of the village. It proved so popular that Gao set up another girls' school in the village a few years later. He funded the school by campaigning vigorously for donations from individual members of the community. He himself raised about 500 yuan from fellow villagers. One relative, Gao Yuanzhi, donated 500 yuan of his own money. Others contributed more modest amounts, ranging from 110 yuan to as little as 10 yuan. In the end, eighteen different villagers gave 1,765 yuan for the two schools (HXGDA, 6.19135).

It is clear that local communities often took the initiative and could be quite creative in finding ways to pay for the new schools mandated by the state, despite the financial hardships they incurred. Indeed, in the absence of any formal and organized system for funding and with little state-provided financial support, this individual and community response was crucial to the successful implementation of the new school system in the early twentieth century.

TUITION FEES

Regardless of their other sources of funding, community primary schools in Haicheng county invariably charged tuition fees.[15] The practice of collecting fees, as described below, was both sanctioned and, at least in theory, limited by the state. The way fees were handled reveals an increasingly complex interaction between the county government and local society. Although the collection of fees was left to the discretion of individual villages and schools, the state was to act as regulator and prevent local communities from imposing unreasonably high fees. But because the county government recognized the importance of fees to many schools' operating budgets, it often overlooked the charging of very high amounts. Nevertheless, such (over)charging did not necessarily indicate that village leaders and school boards

were exploiting the families of students. Indeed, village leaders sometimes subsidized student fees or tried to offset them with other funds.

Only official primary and normal schools were to be free, according to the 1904 regulations (Borthwick, 1983: 107; Shu, 1961: 2.418). They set forth no formal policy for the community primary schools. Therefore, the question of whether fees should be assessed, and at what rate, rested with local authorities. Late in 1906, however, the Ministry of Education formally issued regulations allowing localities, "depending on local circumstances," to charge tuition fees (HXGDA, 6.17858). At the same time, the ministry sought to prevent local officials and schools from exploiting students or corruptly overcharging them. First, the regulations emphasized that to the greatest degree possible, tuition charges should be avoided. Second, they set a maximum that students could be charged. Lower primary students were to pay no more than 3 jiao in silver per month or 3.6 yuan per year; upper primary students were to pay no more than 6 jiao per month or 7.2 yuan per year (Bailey, 1990: 103; Borthwick, 1983: 107; HXGDA, 6.17858).

In the tenth month of 1906, the Fengtian Office of Education relayed these regulations to the provinces' prefectures and counties. At that time, the lower primary students in Haicheng county were already, in accordance with a previous local order, paying about 5 yuan per year in tuition. Furthermore, the new regulations were not officially put into practice until the spring of 1907, when two school managers requested that the county fix a policy on school fees.

The two managers, both from the Gengjiazhuangzi village upper-lower primary school, wanted the county to publish an official policy that would justify their collecting money from the upper-level students at the school. They admitted that when they opened the school in 1906, many parents hesitated to enroll their children because they feared heavy fees. Therefore, to attract students, the school initially used community funds to cover tuition and school supplies, but it could no longer afford to do so. The two managers pointed out that local regulations allowed schools to charge lower primary students up to 5 yuan in fees each year; they felt the policy for upper primary students should be similar. They asked the county to set the fees as it saw fit, but insisted on the importance of issuing an order (HXGDA, 6.17858).

If these managers are to be believed, the Gengjiazhuangzi school delayed collecting fees as long as possible and asked the county to set a policy only when community funds were no longer sufficient to support the students. It is also clear from the managers' request that the local community saw the state as responsible not just for helping them to facilitate the educational reform but also for protecting their interests.

In response, the county promotion bureau issued a general policy that essentially reiterated the regulations issued by the Ministry of Education a few months earlier. Thus, lower primary students were required to pay 3 jiao per month or a total of 3.6 yuan per year, and upper primary students 6 jiao per month or 7.2 yuan per year. The bureau went further and set a standard timetable for payments as well. Fees were to be collected twice a year, half on the Dragon Boat festival (the fifth day of the fifth lunar month) and half at the Mid-autumn festival (the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month; HXGDA, 6.17858).[16]

Despite the official order for schools to stay within the limits set by the Ministry of Education, most schools in the county did not lower their annual fees from 5 yuan to 3.6 yuan.[17] In trying to enforce the regulations, the promotion bureau was caught between the interests of the local communities and the interests of the school boards. Lower fees or no fees would make the new schools more attractive to the public but would undercut a school's operating budget. For example, a school with 30 students paying 5 yuan each would receive a total of 150 yuan in tuition fees. If school management reduced fees to 3.6 yuan per student, the amount stipulated by the ministry, it would lose 42 yuan annually, an amount that would cover a significant portion of rent or purchase a considerable quantity of supplies. Because the county could not compensate schools for their lost revenue, it took the easier course and overlooked the enduring practice of charging 5 yuan.

A representative sampling of 66 primary schools across the county (roughly one-fifth of all the schools) attests to the ubiquity of the 5-yuan tuition fee during the 1907 school year.[18] In 45 of the schools, the students paid exactly 5 yuan each. The remaining 21 schools frequently showed minor variation from the standard 5 yuan. In six of the schools, students paid from 5.2 to 5.5 yuan; in another school, each

student paid 4.9 yuan. In the other schools, fees were slightly lower, hovering at around 4.5 yuan per student. The only dramatic deviations were the fee of 6.25 yuan that students paid to attend the Dagaokan Village School and the 2.2-yuan fee that students paid at the Xiaorujumiao Village School. There is no explanation for these outliers (HXGDA, 6.18122, 18130, 18120, 18124, 18117, 18123, 18132).[19]

Although the 5-yuan tuition fee was almost universal, differences in how fees were assessed demonstrate that sometimes village leaders, the school board, or both sought to ease the financial burden on families with school-age children. Of course, in some communities or villages, families paid tuition fees out of their own pockets. In others, school boards sometimes provided money to "subsidize" tuition fees. For example, the school in Liansantun village officially "charged" each of its 28 students 5 yuan in tuition, but the board provided an extra 150 yuan in subsidies specifically to offset those fees (HXGDA, 6.18117). Similarly, although each of the 25 students in Erdaobian village was charged 5 yuan, the village leaders covered 120 yuan of the total sum (HXGDA, 6.18117). Recall also that both Henanliugongtun and Longtaipu villages applied revenues from community-owned land toward tuition fees.

Some schools, like the one in Haiqingwan village, tried to help students in other ways. The school itself was a joint effort by nine neighboring villages, each of which contributed community money toward its funding. Each of the 35 students attending the school paid 5.7 yuan, an amount somewhat higher than in other schools. But this school also received some subsidies from all nine villages that were specifically used to provide meals for the students rather than to cover their tuition (HXGDA, 6.18120).

MULTI-VILLAGE RELATIONSHIPS: CREATIVITY, COOPERATION, AND CONFLICT

Villages that were too poor or too small to set up schools on their own joined with other villages, pooling their resources. How these alliances were forged, sometimes dissolved, and forged again also reveals the cooperative effort between state and society. Village

communities often initiated relations with other villages but also welcomed the state's help in facilitating and supervising the process.

Past studies indicate that multi-village cooperation outside the realm of education occurred frequently in North China during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Prasenjit Duara notes that multi-village irrigation associations were common there at least as early as the mid-1800s. Martin Yang observes that the village of Taitou in Shandong province had long cooperated with several other villages in maintaining a public defense system. Philip Huang shows how in nineteenth-century Baodi county, a group of about twenty villages collectively nominated the *xiangbao*, a rural tax agent, who was then officially appointed by the county government (Duara, 1988: 27-28; Yang, 1945: 194-95; Huang, 1985: 24-225).

But despite this history of multi-village cooperation to such ends, the phenomenon of villages linking up to build schools appears to have been new to the early twentieth century. Scholars who write on education in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), for example, do not mention that villages cooperated in operating schools. Although the first Ming emperor ordered a school to be opened in every village, the standards were not nearly as strict as those required of primary schools in the early twentieth century. In the Ming, it was acceptable to simply install a teacher in the village; any available space could be used. A Ming-dynasty education intendant who ordered schools to be set up in every village and hamlet reportedly said that doing so "need not be overly troublesome. Some might choose convenient nearby cloisters, others might themselves build or use existing buildings and schools. Follow the willingness of the people and the local customs and establish them according to local circumstances" (qtd. in Schneewind, 1999: 293-94). In any case, Ming standards for village schools appeared to be such that almost all villages could afford to maintain their own.

The same was true of old-style *sishu*, the private informal schools that dominated primary education in rural China during the late imperial period. Almost all sishu adhered to a Confucian-based curriculum, but that was their only commonality. They might be attended by a single student or 50 students, and they were variously managed by a single teacher, a village, or a clan. Very little money was needed to set

up and maintain sishu, which were not so highly regulated as the new primary schools.

It was precisely the high degree of state regulation that accompanied the order to set up schools in the early twentieth century that made multi-village cooperation in education necessary for those communities too poor to establish schools on their own. Such cooperation sometimes succeeded and sometimes was fraught with tensions and frustrations, necessitating adjustment and compromise on the part of participating villages. When problems could not be resolved locally, the state stepped in to mediate and supervise.

The partnership between the villages of Dayushubaozi and Qianyushubaozi (hereafter referred to as Dayushu and Qianyushu), one of the longest on record, exemplifies a fairly successful joint effort at school building. In 1906, the relatively well-to-do Dayushu village built a primary school, purchased equipment, and opened its doors to its school-age children. A few months later, the educational promotion bureau sent the students from Qianyushu village to the school, whose status officially changed from a regular village primary school to a "two-village cooperative lower primary school" (*liangcun heli gongli chudeng xiaoxuetang*). The partnership between the two villages endured harmoniously for 23 years. Dayushu shouldered most of the expenses of the school it had originally built, but the students from Qianyushu paid fees to offset some of the costs.

In the seventh month of 1929, however, the harmony between the two villages was temporarily shattered. In the words of the Dayushu village leaders, by then the area had seen "cultural improvement" (*wenhua jinbu*) and the school system had become more sophisticated, causing substantial increases in its yearly expenditures. The extra school fees from Qianyushu were no longer enough. The village leaders reasoned that since the school was officially a "cooperative school" (*heli xiaoxuetang*), Qianyushu should take on a larger portion of its expenses. The Dayushu village leaders approached the Qianyushu village leaders with what they thought to be equitable terms for further cooperation. They proposed limiting Qianyushu's contribution to a share of consumable items such as kerosene, paper, and writing implements, as well as part of the teacher's salary. In addition, they wanted help in paying for repairs to the school's building and equipment. Dayushu's leaders suggested that the amount each

village should contribute should be based on the average amount of its land tax. When Qianyushu's leaders rejected these terms, Dayushu had no recourse but to seek the county's intervention.

Once the state stepped in, the situation resolved itself quickly. The county ordered Wang Qinghui, a promotion bureau officer, to inspect the two villages and confirm Dayushu's claims. Wang visited both villages, which were located 18 li to the west of the county seat, and met with their leaders. After some discussion, they agreed on terms satisfactory to each village. Wang recorded the terms in a contract to which each village head and leader—ten people in all—affixed either his seal or fingerprint.

The contract stipulated that the students of Qianyushu should, as in years past, pay school fees. In addition, Qianyushu was to pay one-fourth of the regular school expenses; Dayushu was to pay the remaining three-fourths and also cover building repairs and equipment (HXGDA, 7.20919). It is not clear whether the final division of financial responsibility was in fact based on land tax, as Dayushu had originally requested. However, Dayushu was more than twice the size of Qianyushu, with 84 households and 2,600 mu of land; Qianyushu, with only 32 households, held 765 mu (HXZ, 1924: 2.30-31). In any case, both sides accepted the terms and the school continued to operate, at least until the Japanese occupied Northeast China in 1931.

The successful partnership between the villages of Dayushu and Qianyushu was forged under state guidance. The state coordinated the initial partnership between the two villages, essentially ordering Qianyushu to join forces with Dayushu. This kind of state involvement aided the formation of cooperative arrangements that were beneficial to both villages. Qianyushu, too small to build a school on its own, was able to send its students to the Dayushu Village School. Dayushu in turn received its share of tuition fees and, after 1929, one-fourth of the total operating expenses from Qianyushu. The state benefited as well, as supervising the negotiations between or among villages helped it closer to its goal of setting up schools for every village.

The following example similarly shows how the state helped to smooth relations between villages; it also demonstrates how the villages themselves might initiate cooperative relations. In the fifth month of 1909, four villages in the remote western part of the county

informed the county authorities, as regulations stipulated, of their cooperatively built school that had been open since the second month of that year. In their report, the head and leaders of Bajiazi village explained why they built the school.

Since 1905, Bajiazi's villagers had sent its students to the school in Hanjiabao village.[20] But the Bajiazi students often failed to attend, complaining that Hanjiabao was too far away. To solve the problem, Wang Zeru, a county educational promotion bureau officer, encouraged the Bajiazi village leaders to set up their own school. Because Bajiazi was not large enough to do this on its own, it pooled its resources with several nearby small villages, including Dongtaoyuan village, which also had been sending its children to Hanjiabao. The new school had already employed a teacher and ordered desks, chairs, a podium, and a blackboard—all elements required for a school to have formal operating status. Although the equipment had not yet arrived at the time the village leaders filed their report, the school, attended by eighteen students, was operating provisionally (HXGDA, 6.18281).

Soon after receiving Bajiazi's report, the county government sent Wang to the villages to confirm its veracity. Wang told the county magistrate that the Hanjiabao School was a good school—it had 30 students and everything was in working order. But he agreed that it truly was too far from Bajiazi, and therefore he supported Bajiazi's request to end their relationship. Wang was also impressed at the excitement, despite their poverty, displayed by the three villages that had recently joined forces with Bajiazi. Wang reported that the school could soon expect an increase in enrollment and that the temporary equipment, though crude, was at least suitable (HXGDA 6.18281). With all matters thus settled, the Bajiazi Village School was officially launched.

While this arrangement worked perfectly for Bajiazi and Dongtaoyuan, it dealt Hanjiabao a serious financial blow. Of all the outlying villages that had been sending students to Hanjiabao's school, Bajiazi was the best off.[21] When Bajiazi withdrew, Hanjiabao in its own estimation lost two-thirds of its income as well as the tuition fees from the six Bajiazi and Dongtaoyuan students who left the school. Hanjiabao's village head and leaders quickly conveyed these concerns to the county authorities. But the bureau officer had antici-

pated Hanjiabao's reaction and had already moved to find a solution. Wang informed the county authorities of several other small villages nearby that could begin cooperating with Hanjiabao and send students to its school. The case ended with the county supporting Bajiazi's new cooperative arrangement and urging Hanjiabao to pool its resources with those of several nearby villages.

This case, like that of Qianyushu and Dayushu, reveals the high degree of state involvement in multi-village relations. Although the source of the original impetus for Bajiazi to cooperate with Hanjiabao is unclear, the state intervened quickly once Bajiazi's students began cutting class. Its intervention was welcome, at least in Bajiazi, because it gave the village a chance to justify ending its partnership with Hanjiabao and joining forces with other villages. This case also highlights that the county government and the villages had a mutually reinforcing relationship. The county depended on these multi-village alliances. From its perspective, if students failed to attend class and if villages could not afford to set up schools, its educational program was being undercut. By mediating and trying to find solutions that benefited as many villages as possible, the county ensured that the reform would be implemented more smoothly.

Not all disputes were so easily resolved, however. In at least one instance, a partnership that two villages entered into on their own ended in a bitter feud that ultimately required provincial intervention, a relatively rare occurrence. In the early spring of 1906, the village of Daluyan, 35 li northwest of the county seat, set up a lower primary school. Lacking its own school, the neighboring village of Hougangouzi sent ten children to Daluyan. From the beginning, both villages contributed the funds needed to run the school, in proportion with the number of students from each village attending it. Since twenty children from Daluyan attended the school, that village was responsible for two-thirds of the funding and Hougangouzi one-third (HXGDA, 6.17776).

The first five years of cooperation passed uneventfully. Ten terms were successfully completed, and the first class graduated after completing the five years of schooling specified in the regulations (Shu, 1961: 2.418). But in early 1911 the relationship between the two villages soured when some students from Hougangouzi began attending the school in the nearby village of Gushuzi. Daluyan's leaders

informed the county of the situation, stating that although the village had originally intended to set up a school on its own, its scant resources led it to initiate a partnership with Hougangouzi.[22] After five years with no "dissenting words," it was an unwelcome surprise when Hougangouzi's village leaders "intentionally" sent students instead to Gushuzi (HXGDA, 6.17776).

Upon hearing Daluyan's tale, the county magistrate, Zhao Peiguang, ordered Hougangouzi to continue paying one-third of the school's operating expenses. When Hougangouzi refused, the Daluyan village head and committee again tried to persuade Hougangouzi to return to the original arrangement. Hougangouzi still refused, and Daluyan once more requested the county's intervention.

In the meantime, the village heads of Hougangouzi took a step rarely taken by villages in Haicheng county: bypassing the county authorities, they appealed to the provincial authorities and explained why it was not in Hougangouzi's best interests to maintain its partnership with Daluyan. At some point after their cooperation began, Hougangouzi discovered that Daluyan was simply inconvenient to get to. Students had to travel 4 li each way, a long journey made worse in the summer months by heavy rains that caused the water from the nearby Guchengzisha River to rise and flood the road to a depth of several feet. The flooding so frightened the students that they returned home; and while the Hougangouzi village leaders had attempted to persuade the children to continue attending the school in Daluyan, they had been unsuccessful.

The refusal of many of Hougangouzi's students to go to school in Daluyan did not mean that they were averse to the idea of school itself, as the village leaders pointed out. Soon the students discovered that they had been "seeking afar what was actually near" (*shejin qiuyuan*) and of their own volition began attending school in the village of Gushuzi. Gushuzi was only half a li from Hougangouzi, and its school appealed to Hougangouzi's students. As the Hougangouzi village head reported:

> We do not need to persuade the children to attend the school [in Gushuzi]. They all want to go there. We have already discussed this with Gushuzi and are paying them the proper allocation according to

> the rules. Both villages agree with this plan. It really is more suitable for the students to attend the closer school. (HXGDA, 6.17776)

The Hougangouzi village leaders were not concerned only about the distance between Hougangouzi and Daluyan. They also believed that the quality of schooling at Daluyan was substandard—and they had some reason for concern. In 1906, not long after the two villages entered their partnership, the Daluyan School received an unfavorable inspection report from a county promotion bureau officer. He noted that the teacher, who was over the age of 50, followed the "old ways" of education. The report further criticized the teacher for his errors in mathematics and even alleged that he moonlighted as a quack doctor. Finally, the school was unacceptably dirty: the classroom was deep in dust and covered with cobwebs (HXGDA, 6.18130). Hougangouzi's belief in the marked superiority of the Gushuzi School tallied with comments made about it by the same bureau officer. After his inspection, he reported that the facility was in good working order and that the teacher was clear, followed new methods, and possessed good math skills (HXGDA, 6.18130).

In addition, Hougangouzi's leaders intimated that Daluyan was not as strapped for funds as it professed to be. Although Daluyan's leaders claimed that the school needed the additional enrollment from Hougangouzi, Hougangouzi's leaders said that at least ten Daluyan children who should have been paying fees to the village school were attending an illegal sishu. They thereby implied that if the sishu would close down and its students attend the village school instead, Daluyan would not need the fees from the Hougangouzi students. Their assertion was also in effect a rather serious allegation, for the county was making increasingly rigorous efforts to eliminate illegal sishu and there should not have been one in Daluyan in the first place.

But the provincial authorities found Hougangouzi's claims unpersuasive. After ordering the educational promotion bureau to investigate the statements of both villages, the province told the county to enforce its initial decision requiring Hougangouzi to continue paying one-third of the Daluyan School's operating expenses. Fortunately for Hougangouzi, the county leadership soon changed. Later in 1911, Magistrate Zhao, who had been responsible for the county's initial

order, resigned from office and was replaced by Magistrate Guo (Jinxiu). Hougangouzi's leaders, taking advantage of the shift, pressed the issue with Guo until he set aside Zhao's decision and worked out a compromise.

The compromise allowed Hougangouzi to reduce its previous contribution by half, to one-sixth of the Daluyan School's operating expenses, while sending only five students there. This arrangement worked for a short time, although leaders from both villages continued to grumble. Two years later, Magistrate Guo was promoted to a higher position and replaced by Magistrate Tian (Yushi), who supported his predecessor's attempt at a compromise but decided to alter the arrangement slightly by raising Hougangouzi's contribution from one-sixth to one-fifth. Hougangouzi would continue to send five of its students to the Daluyan School.

This arrangement should have appealed to both sides. Although Daluyan would not receive as much from Hougangouzi as it had during the first five years of their partnership, it would not be solely responsible for the school's costs. For its part, Hougangouzi, although unable to divorce itself completely from Daluyan, had its payments reduced significantly. It also was able to send at least some of its students to the school in Gushuzi as it preferred. Magistrate Tian, however, wary of the bitter relations that had developed between the two villages, decided to guarantee an end to the matter by ordering each party to sign a written pledge that it would raise no further complaints.

Daluyan's leaders balked, and borrowing the previous tactics of Hougangouzi's leaders, they went over Magistrate Tian's head and appealed to the provincial authorities:

> If we had sufficient resources, we could have set up the school ourselves. Why would we need [Hougangouzi's] contribution? It is only because our village's income is insufficient that we entered a partnership to build the school. If we follow Magistrate Tian's decision that (Hou)gangouzi pay only one-fifth, then our school will have to close. For this reason, we plead with the *xiantai* (provincial administration) and ask it to order the county to follow the previous order by which Gangouzi pays one-third. Do not change the original formula by which Gangouzi pays one-third and we pay two-thirds. Then this school can still be a product of cooperation. (HXGDA, 6.17776)

Upon receiving Daluyan's request, the provincial education office ordered the county to conduct yet another investigation,[23] in a final attempt to bring the two villages back together. The county even expressed a willingness to provide subsidies to Hougangouzi—though the state, as I noted above, almost never provided such financial support—if it would send students to the Daluyan School. But Hougangouzi's unenthusiastic response led the county finally to conclude that the dispute was irreconcilable.

The county judged that of the two villages, Daluyan was the more capable of independently running a school, and thus decided that Hougangouzi should continue to send its students to the Gushuzi School. Daluyan, surprisingly, accepted this decision and informed the county that since it could not return to its previous relationship with Hougangouzi, it would like to cooperate with the neighboring village of Xinhetun. The relieved county allowed Daluyan to operate its school independently or to merge with Xinhetun, as it preferred. Thus, the seven-year partnership between Daluyan and Hougangouzi ended in 1913. Throughout the conflict, the school remained open and in 1924 was still operating.[24] The Gushuzi School, too, was open in 1924 and presumably still attended by children from Hougangouzi.[25]

Although the partnership between Daluyan and Hougangouzi was largely unsuccessful, it raises several important points. First, as was also true of the previous two cases, when tensions arose between villages, the villages drew in the county government as a mediator. When the county failed to rule in Hougangouzi's favor the first time, Hougangouzi called on the province to mediate. Daluyan responded in kind, bringing in county officials again and then, dissatisfied with the compromise, bringing in those at the provincial level.

Second, the villages made it clear more emphatically than in the previous two cases that they were willing to carry out the state mandate to set up schools but lacked the financial means to do so. Recall that Daluyan told the province that it entered into a partnership with Hougangouzi only out of financial necessity. Such an assertion implies that Daluyan cooperated with Hougangouzi because it was doing its best to carry out state orders. It also implies that if Daluyan encountered difficulties in carrying out state orders, then the state had an obligation to step in and offer assistance.

Third, despite the tensions between the two villages, it is clear that neither was averse to the idea of cooperation. From the beginning, Daluyan wanted to maintain its partnership with Hougangouzi. In the end, when their partnership collapsed, Daluyan chose to cooperate with the village of Xinhetun rather than close down its school. Similarly, Hougangouzi objected not to cooperation but to cooperating with Daluyan: it preferred Gushuzi as a partner. This attitude also suggests that many villages were enthusiastic about setting up new schools and participating in the state's modernization project. Rather than simply carrying out state orders, the villages also recognized the benefits that came with new-style education. The Hougangouzi villagers behaved strategically; the village leaders and community acted to ensure that Hougangouzi's students were able to attend a better and more conveniently located school.

Finally, this case illustrates the degree to which state institutions and local society cooperated to implement educational reform. When villages too poor to set up schools on their own pooled their resources with other villages, the state gained. Without having to make any investment itself, the state saw its educational program reach into areas to which it previously had not penetrated. These arrangements also benefited the villagers. More villages both gained access to the new-style education, thereby playing a key role in modernization, and also took advantage of new opportunities to engage with the state.

CONCLUSION

Without question, the state program to set up primary schools drained community resources. Villages and townships bore a double burden, paying new taxes to fund the elaborate government schools located in the county seat and larger towns and bearing the costs of building and running schools in their own communities. Receiving little or nothing from county coffers, local communities had to locate funding on their own. In the face of these difficulties, communities in Haicheng county exhibited surprising initiative and effort in their attempts to implement the state reform program. They creatively pieced together resources from a multitude of sources; they drew on community property and, when possible, tried to offset expensive

tuition fees with community subsidies. Individuals frequently donated land and money to the schools in their communities.

The state, despite not providing money for community schools, played a prominent role in community mobilization. The communities called on the state to set fee policies and also to mediate when disputes arose over landholdings intended to support schools. Village communities in particular also brought in the state to initiate and supervise their efforts to cooperatively run schools with other villages. These arrangements produced both new tensions—between villages, rather than between village and state—and new opportunities.

Most important, local initiative and the cooperative relations between state and society in education reveal that rural communities were crucial in China's early-twentieth-century modernization. Although the process of educational reform was not smooth or uniform, it is clear that village communities, at least in Northeast China, supported it wholeheartedly.

This article has focused on how educational reform was implemented in one county in Northeast China during the early twentieth century. Although certain factors may have been unique to Haicheng county—its optimal location, its economy, and the sizable Japanese presence in its county seat—statistics from other counties and administrative areas in Fengtian province as well as ethnographic data from North China suggest that the pattern of educational reform that was obtained in Haicheng County during this period was representative of what was taking place elsewhere. Throughout Fengtian, community schools were funded by a variety of means, including tuition fees, community property, and rents (LJSZ, 1990: 2.300-303). In North China, rural communities played an active role in implementing educational reform. They derived school funding from a range of sources, lightened the economic burden on families by offsetting tuition fees, and, when resources were scant, cooperated with other villages to set up schools (Niida, 1952-58: 1.120; Gamble, 1954: 206; Li Jinghan, [1933] 1986: 207).

While these observations are preliminary, they indicate the strong likelihood that in the early twentieth century, rural communities across China, like those in Haicheng county, enthusiastically participated in educational reform activities, thereby playing an important role in China's modernization. Furthermore, they suggest that educa-

tion was an area in which state and society shared interests and goals and enjoyed a cooperative relationship.

NOTES

1. Perhaps the best-known proponent of this binary model is James Scott, whose moral economy approach is derived from his studies of Southeast Asia (Scott, 1976).

2. Both Philip Kuhn and Philip Huang discovered that late Qing and early Republican state-building increased the tax burden on village society and set the stage for hostile relations between state and society. Kuhn characterizes the taxes that were intrinsic to the late Qing modernization project as "a major burden upon the populace" (Kuhn, 1978-1979: 3.116-17). Huang, in his study of rural North China, also describes how the expansion of local government put a heavy financial burden on society (Huang, 1985: 275-91).

3. Eugen Weber's discussion of schooling's conversion of rustic rural children into polished French citizens rests on the assumption that education "eased individuals out of the [local group's] grip and shattered the hold of unchallenged cultural and political creeds" (Weber, 1976: 338).

4. In this article, I use "community school" as a general term to identify the new primary schools that carried the Chinese appellation *gongli* (community funded). Their local funding mechanism distinguished these community schools from those that were officially funded (*guanli*) or privately funded (*sili*). Although community schools were established on several administrative levels, including the township (*xiang*) and the municipality (*zhen*), most were set up at the level of the village. I therefore generally call them "village schools" and refer to them by the name of the village.

5. In his 1993 article "Educational Reform and the Paradigm of State-Society Conflict in Republican China," Thomas Curran suggests that in some areas, village communities welcomed the opportunity afforded by the state to modernize their schools and that village leaders as well as county and subcounty officials initiated educational reform and school building. Curran thus challenges the extractive state paradigm presented by scholars such as Duara and Kuhn, at least in this sphere (Curran, 1993: 45). Although his article is an overview that addresses the subject only in general terms, he persuasively makes clear that in-depth studies of educational reform in rural areas are needed.

6. According to both Ho P'ing-ti's and Benjamin Elman's statistics on the numbers of *jinshi* candidates (those who obtained the "palace graduate" degree, the highest in the civil examination system) during the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Northeast makes a poor showing (Ho, 1962: 227-29; Elman, 2000: 699-700). Several Chinese scholars also describe education in Northeast China, prior to the abolition of the examination system, as backward and underdeveloped (Guo Jianping, 2001: 1; Qi Hongshen, 1992: 2; Sun Jingyue, Dong Huiyun, and Zhang Xiuchun, 1993: 3).

7. To provide some context as to what these figures might mean, I have compared Fengtian with some other provinces. In 1907, Fengtian had more lower primary schools than more than two-thirds of China's (then) 23 provinces. It had nearly twice as many lower primary schools as Jiangsu (626) and Zhejiang (632), the two provinces with the richest tradition of civil service success. Fengtian ranked fifth in number of lower primary students, behind Sichuan, Zhili, Hubei, and Shandong. The following year, Fengtian had the third-highest number of lower primary students; only Sichuan and Zhili had more (Jindai jiaoyu shi ziliao, 1981: 2.85; LJSZ, 1990: 1.300-303).

8. The county owned a total of 7,940 mu of land, acquired from a variety of sources. Almost half (3,823 mu) came from landholdings that had formerly belonged to the county's imperial academy (*shuyuan*). Another 2,537 mu came from temple lands turned over to the public and then appropriated by the county. Village associations had donated 1,394 mu, and county-owned temple property provided another 95 mu. Finally, private individuals donated an additional 90 mu. In addition to maintaining the schools it established, the county funded the educational promotion bureau (*quanxuesuo*), the administrative office responsible for overseeing educational reform; it also reserved some money for subsidies, used mostly to aid private girls' schools and some *sishu* (private informal schools) that needed financial help for a successful conversion into a regular school. After 1919, upon orders from the provincial office of education to the promotion bureau, the county began to use fees from marriage certificates (*hunshu*) to subsidize schools, particularly those for women.

9. The role of inflation on teachers' salaries is not clear. Before 1922, prices in Northeast China were fairly stable, but the currency in the Northeast later began to lose value rapidly owing to conditions in the New York and Japanese markets (McCormack, 1977: 192).

10. The fourteen schools in Ding county, Hebei province, that received county subsidies were exceptional cases: they were located in the county's experimental district, where there was special emphasis on implementing reform (Gamble, 1954: 5, 10, 206, 462).

11. Huang points out that nonstatutory charges had different names in different localities (Huang, 1985: 278-80). In Hebei, where Prasenjit Duara focuses much of his research, the taxes were referred to as *tankuan*; in Fengtian province, they were known as *mujuan*, while household taxes were called *hujuan* (LJSZ, 1990: 1.300-303).

12. *Zhuangtou* (bailiffs) were state agents appointed by the Qing government to manage land and collect rent in Northeast China (Isett, 1998: 84-5).

13. Communities had used rents from land endowments to partially fund schools since as early as the Ming dynasty (see Rawski, 1979: 66-79; Schneewind, 1999: 301).

14. The number of households in 1924 was 86; there are not comparable data for 1907, when the school was set up, but it is unlikely that this figure changed drastically.

15. Even schools like the Xiaomatou School, which covered the cost of instruction with funds generated from rental of community lands, formally charged fees—which in this case did not have to come from individual pockets.

16. The promotion bureau also took this opportunity to settle other questions regarding school expenses, outlining who should be responsible for what. The bureau officially stated that all expenses, except for miscellaneous expenditures for such items as school equipment, furniture, window paper, oil, and fuel, were to be paid for with community funds. The school itself was to be responsible for miscellaneous expenses. In a very small concession, the county agreed to provide, as a matter of course, some smaller items to each school: twice a year, it would distribute brooms and dusters; once a year, a watering can, dustpan, and spittoon.

17. Borthwick also points out that many schools elsewhere in China charged more than the amounts fixed by the Ministry of Education (Borthwick, 1983: 107).

18. I looked at at least five schools from each area of the county: the north, northeast, east, southeast, southwest, and west.

19. In only one case were school fees actually reduced. In the spring of 1907, in Kongjiatun village in the western part of the county, students were paying 5 yuan each. However, only a few months later, ten students were paying 2.5 yuan each and fifteen were paying 3.5 yuan. The fee reduction may have been in response to the regulations as well as to individual need. The school thus experienced a total loss in income of 47.5 yuan, and it may have compensated by lowering the teacher's salary. In the spring of 1907, the teacher received 180 yuan annually. By the

summer, there was a new teacher who was being paid only 100 yuan, a low salary by county standards.

20. Bajiazi gave the date as 1905, while Hanjiabao reported it as early 1906.

21. It is not clear how many villages had been sending students to the school in Hanjiabao. Bajiazi had 105 households and owned 1,010 mu of land. As Wang observed, the villages with which it later cooperated were significantly smaller and poorer. Dongtaoyuan, for instance, had only 30 households and 270 mu; Hanjiabao had 39 households and 760 mu. But as Wang also indicated, if it pooled its resources with those of the four neighboring villages of Fuliyuan (21 households, 210 mu), Nanxiaohulitai (27 households, 230 mu), Xixiaohulitai (23 households, 620 mu), and Beixiaohulitai (32 households, 450 mu), they together could maintain a school (HXZ, 1924: 2.36-38).

22. According to the 1924 gazetteer, Daluyan had 70 households and landholdings of 1,100 mu; Hougangouzi had 55 households and 700 mu (HXZ, 1924: 2.54).

23. The provincial office speculated that other issues underlay the tension between the two villages but acknowledged the pointlessness of guessing what they might be.

24. By 1924, the school was officially called Gushuzi Citizens' School (*guomin xuexiao*). All community primary schools were ordered to formally take the name Citizens' School in 1915, but little changed except the name. Each community was still responsible for funding and maintaining its school, and the content of education remained largely the same as before, although the years mandated for primary schooling were reduced from five to four.

25. As of 1924, there was no school in Hougangouzi. There is no evidence of whether Daluyan maintained a successful relationship with Xinhetun, a village so tiny that it could be found neither on the county map nor in the county gazetteer.

REFERENCES

BAILEY, PAUL J. (1990) Reform the People: Changing Attitudes Towards Popular Education in Early Twentieth-Century China. Vancouver: Univ. of British Columbia Press; Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press.

BASTID, MARIANNE (1988) Educational Reform in Early 20th Century China. Paul Bailey (trans.). Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, Univ. of Michigan.

BORTHWICK, SALLY (1983) Education and Social Change in China: The Beginnings of the Modern Era. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.

CLEVERLEY, JOHN (1985) The Schooling of China: Tradition and Modernity in Chinese Education. Sydney: George Allen & Unwin.

CURRAN, T. (1993) "Educational reform and the paradigm of state-society conflict in Republican China." Republican China 18, 2: 26-63.

DUARA, PRASENJIT (1988) Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900-1942. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press.

ELMAN, BENJAMIN A. (2000) A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

ENATSU, YOSHIKI (1991) "The rise of the Fengtian local elite at the end of the Qing Dynasty." Ph.D. diss. Univ. of Michigan.

ESHERICK, JOSEPH W. (1999) "Modernity and nation in the Chinese city," pp. 1-16 in Joseph W. Esherick (ed.), Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950. Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press.

GAMBLE, SIDNEY (1954) Ting Hsien: A North China Rural Community. New York: Institute of Pacific Relations.

GOTTSCHANG, THOMAS R. and DIANA LARY (2000) Swallows and Settlers: The Great Migration from North China to Manchuria. Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, Univ. of Michigan.

GUO JIANPING (2001) Fengxi jiaoyu (Education in Fengtian). Shenyang: Liaohai chubanshe.

Haicheng xian gongshu dang'an guan [Haicheng County Government Office Archives] (1905-1931) Liaoning sheng dang'an guan (Liaoning Provincial Archives). [Cited by catalogue and juan (file) number.] Cited as HXGDA.

Haicheng xianzhi [Haicheng county gazetteer] (1924) Haicheng City. Cited as HXZ, 1924.

——— (1987) Haicheng City. Cited as HXZ, 1987.

HO, PING-TI [HE BINGDI] (1962) The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911. New York: Columbia Univ. Press.

HUANG, PHILIP C. C. 1985. The Peasant Economy and Social Change in North China. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press.

HXGDA. See Haicheng xian gongshu dang'an guan, 1905-1931.

HXZ. See Haicheng xianzhi.

ISETT, CHRISTOPHER (1998) "State, peasant, and agrarian change on the Manchurian frontier, 1644-1940." Ph.D. diss. Univ. of California, Los Angeles.

Jindai jiaoyu shi ziliao [Materials on the history of modern education] (1981) Beijing: Renmin daxue chubanshe.

KUHN, PHILIP A. (1978-1979) "Local taxation and finance in Republican China." Select Papers from the Center for Far Eastern Studies 3: 100-36.

LI JINGHAN ([1933] 1986) Ding xian shehui gaikuang diaocha (A summary of the investigation of society in Ding county). Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe.

LI XIPING [ed.] (1998) Liaoning jiaoyu shi (A history of Liaoning education). Shenyang: Liaohai chubanshe.

Liaoning jiaoyu shi zhi ziliao [Materials on the history of Liaoning education] (1990) 4 vols. Shenyang: Liaoning daxue chubanshe. Cited as LJSZ.

LJSZ. See Liaoning jiaoyu shizhi ziliao.

McCORMACK, GAVIN (1977) Chang Tso-lin in Northeast China, 1911-1928: China, Japan, and the Manchurian Idea. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press.

NIIDA NOBORU [ed.] (1952-1958) Chūgoku nōson kankō chōsa (Investigations of customary practices in rural China). 6 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami.

QI HONGSHEN [ed.] (1992) Dongbei difang jiaoyu shi: Dongbei jiaoyu shi yanjiu congshu (A history of local education in Northeast China: compendium of the history of education in Northeast China). Shenyang: Liaoning daxue chubanshe.

RAWSKI, EVELYN SAKAKIDA (1979) Educational and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China. Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, Univ. of Michigan.

SCHNEEWIND, SARAH (1999) "Community schools and improper shrines: Local institutions and the Chinese State in the Ming Period (1368-1644)." Ph.D. diss. Columbia Univ.

SCOTT, JAMES (1976) The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia. New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press.

SHU XINCHENG (1961) Zhongguo jindai jiaoyu shi ziliao (Materials on the modern history of Chinese education). 3 vols. Beijing: Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe.

SULESKI, RONALD (2002) Civil Government in Warlord China: Tradition, Modernization and Manchuria. New York: Peter Lang.

SUN JINGYUE, DONG HUIYUN, and ZHANG XIUCHUN (1993) Zhang Xueliang yu Liaoning jiaoyu (Zhang Xueliang and Liaoning education). Hong Kong: Xianggang tongze chubanshe.

THØGERSON, STIG (2002) A County of Culture: Twentieth-Century China Seen from the Village Schools of Zouping, Shandong. Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press.

WEBER, EUGEN (1976) Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press.

YANG, MARTIN (1945) A Chinese Village: Taitou, Shantung Province. New York: Columbia Univ. Press.

Elizabeth VanderVen received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles, and is a visiting assistant professor at Reed College in Portland, Oregon. Her primary research area is the effect of village and state relations on local educational reform.