

# **NEW LADDERS OF SUCCESS**

SICHUAN STUDENTS IN THE TRANSITIONAL TIMES 1900 - 1920

By

YU LI

B.A., Yunnan University, China, 1982

M.A., Yunnan University, China, 1987

M.A., International University of Japan, 1992

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Department of History

The University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, Canada

Date April 21, 1999

## **Abstract**

This Dissertation examines Sichuan students' attitude toward modern education in the transitional times. The text describes the intrinsic crisis of the civil service examination system in the late nineteenth century, the establishment of the new school system in the first decade of the twentieth century, and the birth of the first generation of the new political elite in Sichuan after the 1911 Revolution. It highlights the students' participation in the educational reform from their motives of career-seeking and social mobility rather than from their political sentiments such as radicalism, nationalism, and modernization. The study argues that without fundamental social and economic change, educational reform in inland China did not cause a substantial change in the students' traditional attitude towards education. The new school system, substituting for the abolished civil service examination system, functioned as a new ladder of success or a new elite recruiting mechanism for the students. The study suggests that statistical growth did not mean modernity. Tradition played an important role in inland China's modernization movements in the twentieth century by shaping the ways that were used to pursue the aims of the movements and the motives of the people who participate in the movements. Extensive primary documents - ranging from government decrees to local gazetteers - are employed in the study, and attention is paid to the similarities and contrasts between Sichuan and the coastal provinces. Quite a number of tables and a comprehensive bibliography are also included.

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## INTRODUCTION

*Once the tree falls, the monkeys scatter*

--Chinese proverb

Whatever significance modern scholars may see in the civil service examination system in imperial China,<sup>1</sup> for the examination participants themselves, the system was nothing more than "a ladder of success," or a mechanism of upward social mobility. For centuries, the examination system not only provided a major path for Chinese men of education to power and wealth, but also shaped their basic view of the value of education. The abolition of the system in 1905, and the establishment of the new school system, are hailed by many as a great reform of the education system in China. But did the so-called education reform really cause a dramatic change in educated Chinese men's traditional attitudes towards education in the first two decades of the twentieth century? Was the new school system an accurate imitation of that of Western industrial society or a hybrid of the traditional and the modern?

This study, taking as its focus the generation of students during the transitional period of the early twentieth century in Sichuan, the largest inland province of China, argues that without fundamental social and economic change, educational reform in inland China, though producing a great number of modern schools, did not cause a substantial change in the students' attitude towards education. Functioning as a substitute

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<sup>1</sup> See Benjamin A. Elman. 1991. Elman views the Ming-Qing period examination as a means of political, social, and cultural reproduction for the prevailing social system.

for the abolished civil service examination system, the new modern education provided the career seeking students with new ladders of success and produced the first generation of a new political elite class in Sichuan in the decade after the 1911 Revolution.

Existing theories about the emergence of modern education and the motives of students in seeking this education, although they claim to be based on observations of experiences in many parts of the world, can not explain the nature of education reform in Sichuan. One such theory, for example, argues that there is a close relationship between industrialized society and modern education, and that individuals need to understand the diverse roles created by an urbanized, industrialized society, or they will not be able to fit into its structure. Hence, education is necessary to provide the cognitive skills required by the modern industrial system, and students seek such an education for the purpose of obtaining such skills.<sup>2</sup> The basic fact about education reform in Sichuan in the early twentieth century, however, is that it occurred within the setting of a pre-industrial society. The rapidly established new school system was not a natural result of the development of a modern economy, but was imposed by the state without much consideration of local economic and social needs. Though some enterprises of modern industry and trade emerged in Sichuan in the early twentieth century, the change they brought to this province was far from anything resembling an industrial revolution. Over 80 percent of the population in the province were still peasants, and the major provincial government revenue still came from traditional agriculture, commercial, and handicraft sectors.

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Dreeben. 1968; Alex Inkeles and David H. Smith. 1974.

Another theory, based on an analysis of the specific historical background in China, seems to be much more relevant. This theory sees the emergence of modern education in China as the result of Chinese officials' and intellectuals' sense of national crisis. The abolition of the examination system and the founding of a new school system were the outcome of such political events as China's defeat in the first Sino-Japanese War and the Boxer Rebellion, the purpose of which was to strengthen China, whose sovereignty was in great danger. This education reform failed to prevent the downfall of the dynasty and its replacement by a republic in 1911-1912, but it did nevertheless represent a wider change in Chinese intellectuals' attitudes towards education.<sup>3</sup> As sensible as this theory is, it has two shortcomings. One is that it regards the educational reform as stimulated solely by Western influence, without taking into account the increasingly serious inherent crisis of the civil service examination system in the Qing dynasty and the cry for educational reform from many of the most traditionally minded gentry scholars.<sup>4</sup> Another is that this theory, choosing to focus on modern minded officials, gentry scholars, and educators in coastal provinces and big cities, provides very little analysis of the attitude of the large junior literati group of *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* toward educational reform, most of whom lived in villages or county and rural market towns.

The inherent crisis of the civil service examination system resulted mainly from the great educational expansion and surplus student population in the Qing dynasty. This

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Bailey. 1990; Marianne Bastid. 1988.

<sup>4</sup> Professor Alexander Woodside points out that there had been a cry for education reform in Qing dynasty from some gentry members who were fascinated by the ancient state controlled school system and saw the system as an exit for the intellectual class from the awkward political situation caused by the crisis of the civil service examination system. And there was a connection between the idea of these most traditionally minded Chinese education reformers and the modern education reform in the early twentieth century, though this connection distorted to some degree the modern education system that was modeled on that of western countries. See Woodside. 1994:458-492.

surplus and its pathologies were most observable in Sichuan, the largest inland province of China proper. The abolition of the civil service examination system in 1905 left Sichuan with as many as about 667,000 *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*. Contrary to what some scholars in present-day China would like to believe, the most urgent problem concerning these young men was their personal *chulu*, (career outlets) rather than China's fate. The pre-industrial social setting provided few alternative ways of promotion for these partially educated youths in Sichuan, who knew nothing but the Confucian classics. They thus viewed the new educational system as a mechanism of upward social mobility replacing the abolished examination system, and enthusiastically enrolled in the new schools. This might explain partly why Sichuan, one of the most backward and closed provinces in China proper nonetheless ranked ahead of most of the advanced coastal provinces in the development of a modern school system.

Unlike the case of the Yangzi Delta where modern gentry initiated the establishment of the new school system, as Marianne Basid described remarkably in her masterpiece about Zhang Jian, the Jiangsu educational reformer, the state played a more critical role in the educational reform in Sichuan. Local officials and bureaucratic educational organizations at all the provincial, prefecture, and county levels, rather than modern gentry which hardly existed in Sichuan in the first decade of the twentieth century, were the major founders of the new schools. But in an unchanged social setting, local officials and bureaucratic educational organizations in Sichuan had to resort to the traditional ways in school founding: raising school funds from traditional agriculture, commercial and handicraft sectors; converting the property of Buddhist and Daoist temples for school use, encouraging social institutions such as clans, *hanghui*, and

*huiguan* to establish private schools; bestowing honorific archs, official titles, and even official posts upon the donors of new school funds.

But a modern school system in a pre-industrial social setting had its intrinsic weaknesses. One of the weaknesses was that the school system in Sichuan was an unbalanced structure with a great number of primary schools at the bottom but very few higher and specialist schools at the top. It was a pyramid with a disproportionately large base. This suggests that there were no urgent social needs for many specialties that would have been imperative in a modern industrialized society. The new school system thus had a limited capacity to absorb the surplus student population left over by the traditional education system, and the students had to find other paths to power and wealth outside the regular school system, such channels as overseas study in Japan; special schools for training in law and administration; military training schools; and extra-bureaucratic political activity. I also propose that the intellectual revolutionary organizations that appeared during this period in Sichuan functioned as a career outlet.

Without economic and social change, the political and institutional reform during the first decade of twentieth century alone did not provoke a real change in students' (and their parents') attitudes towards education. Even the Revolution of 1911 had no great effect on their attitudes. We can see an apparent continuation of the abolished examination system in Sichuan students' specialty choices in modern education. Sichuan students' three favorite specialties in the new modern education during this period were law and administration, military studies, and pedagogy, the first two of which were actually the counterparts of the old civil service and military service examinations of the

traditional education system. Pedagogy, or teacher training, was the *tongsheng* or *shengyuan*'s first occupational choice in imperial times after failing higher examinations.

The modern school system in Sichuan did not reform people, nor did it produce a new technological elite class of the sort required by an industry society. Instead, what the school system produced was just a new political elite class. In the decade after the 1911 Revolution, the new political elite class in Sichuan, created by the new educational system, was made up of essentially the same sort of people as the old political elite created by the civil and military service examination system in imperial China. The similarity between them is demonstrated clearly by the fact that both groups had a background of being *tongsheng* or *shengyuan*. The only important difference between them, in one modern historian's words, is that before the revolution they were a gentry-military coalition, but after the revolution they became a military-gentry coalition.<sup>5</sup>

The present study departs from previous scholarship in methodology as well as in argument. It focuses on the social group of junior students (*tongsheng* and *shengyuan*), rather than on the more comprehensive literati stratum covered by the inclusive term, "gentry". I think that *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* should receive special attention because, being at the bottom of the ladder of success, a majority of them were still struggling for a higher social status and a better life. Therefore as a subaltern group they were quite different, in psychology and aspiration, from those who had already reached the top of the ladder and been recruited into the national political elite. The abolition of the civil service examination system meant different things to these two sorts of people. Since a mechanism of social mobility was no longer important to the upper gentry and officials, it

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<sup>5</sup> Jerome Chen. 1979:3-4

was much easier for them to adopt a new point of view on the value and function of education. But for the *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* who still relied on education to obtain wealth, power, and prestige, the abolition of the civil service examination system only forced them to look for new ladders of success, without causing a change in their attitude towards education. Furthermore, we must remember that the *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* greatly outnumbered the upper gentry. It is from this subaltern careerist perspective rather than from the perspective of elite nationalism and modernization alone that we may interpret some important political and social trends among the students in Sichuan and to some extent in the whole of China in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

In addition, though this paper concentrates on Sichuan, it always keeps an eye on the coastal provinces. I realize that coastal China and inland China often faced different problems in the long history of China, and the differences had grown more pronounced since the middle of the nineteenth century. In many cases, conclusions drawn from the study of one area can hardly apply to the other. But it is also true that one can obtain a much better understanding of one area on the basis of a knowledge of the other. Thus in each chapter of the thesis, I offer some comparisons or contrasts between Sichuan and several coastal provinces, in the hope of presenting Sichuan's characteristics more clearly. I emphasize that all the important differences in education between the two areas were caused by economic and social factors rather than by political or institutional factors.

Finally, though it refers to quite a large number of secondary works, this study is based mainly on primary Chinese materials such as the local gazetteers of Sichuan province, memorials of Sichuan officials to the emperor, statistics issued by governments

in the early Republic, biographies and memoirs of the Sichuan elite, newspapers and journals published in the early twentieth century, archive documents, oral history records, and even novels. When I selected materials, my main concern was to employ those which could best suggest the general trends in education, and among students, during the transitional period. For this reason, I tried to use quantitative methods in every possible place, adopting or constructing quite a number of tables and graphs. I am aware that one can not expect statistics drawn from the records of a pre-modern agrarian society to match those from an industrialized society. But if our purpose is only to represent some general trends in the society, this sort of data should still be suggestive. For the same reason, I do not attach much importance to the political articles written by some overseas Sichuan students during this period, for example those which can be found in *Juansheng* (Cry of the Cuckoo), a political journal edited in Tokyo, Japan in 1906 by radical Sichuan students.<sup>6</sup> Those highly emotional and radical articles represented only the state of mind of a small number of students compared to a student population total in Sichuan as large as 667,000.

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<sup>6</sup> The title of this journal was changed to *Sichuan* in 1907.

## THE EXPANSION OF EDUCATION AND THE SURPLUS OF THE STUDENT POPULATION IN QING SICHUAN

In the nineteenth century, one of the more serious problems in Chinese society was the surplus of the student (*tongsheng* and *shengyuan*) population. The surplus was relative. On the one hand, the nationwide expansion of schools produced a larger number of students than ever before in Chinese history,<sup>7</sup> on the other hand, the Qing regime purposely restricted the number of upper degree holders for political reasons,<sup>8</sup> and the pre-industrial society with its limited choices of occupations was unable to absorb all the career-seeking students. This surplus and its outcomes were most observable in Sichuan, the largest inland province of China proper. In this chapter, we first examine the socio-economic background for the education expansion in Qing Sichuan. We then study the expansion itself and our focus will be on the charitable schools (*yixue*) and academies (*shuyuan*). After that, we will calculate the number of students in the late Qing Sichuan and show the ratio between the province and the whole country. Finally, we will investigate the impact in various ways of the surplus of the student population on the students themselves and on the local society.

<sup>7</sup> For discussion of Qing education expansion, See Alexander Woodside and Benjamin A. Elman. 1994:525.

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed analysis of how the civil service examination system, as the major elite recruiting mechanism, was weakened in the Qing dynasty, see Alexander Woodside. 1994:472-474.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Sichuan is the largest province in inland China. Its landform is like a basin. In the middle is a large plain called Chengdu Plain or Chuanxi Plain, which is surrounded by high mountains on all sides. The capital city of Sichuan, Chengdu, is located at the west of the plain. Before modern means of transportation were introduced to this province, its connection with the outside world was the Yangzi River and several narrow mountain paths leading to the neighboring provinces, Shaanxi to the north, Hubei and Hunan to the east, and Guizhou and Yunnan to the south.

Compared to that of Ming Sichuan, the territory of Qing Sichuan was greatly expanded, yet the expansion was directed only to the west. The northern and eastern border of Sichuan remained almost unchanged, though its southern border had actually contracted a little. The westward expansion of Sichuan territory was determined in the 39th year of the Kangxi Emperor (1700) after the Qing conquered Dajianlu,<sup>9</sup> but the Qing's actual control of this area was not solidified until its military victory over the Tibetan-speaking Kham people in the large and Small Jinchuan Wars (1747-1776). Annexation of this area enlarged the Sichuan administration map, but it did not cause a dramatic increase of administrative units under the provincial government. This was because the newly conquered land was a sparsely populated minority area. Qing Sichuan had 15 *fu*, 9 *zhili zhou*, and 3 *zhili ting* in the *fu* level; 11 *zhou*, 11 *ting* and 118 *xian* in the county level, compared to Ming Sichuan's 13 *fu*, and 6 *zhili zhou* in the *fu* level; 16 *shu*

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<sup>9</sup> Its present-name is Kangding.

*zhou*, and 111 *xian* in the county level.<sup>10</sup> But since the policy of the Qing government toward the minority people after the war changed from military suppression to cultural assimilation (*jiaohua*), the annexation of the west area was one of the causes for the expansion of Sichuan education in the Qing dynasty.

In the Han people's area of Sichuan, the most significant social factor relating to the expansion of education in the Qing might be the explosive increase in population, which was not only one of the stimuli to, but also a parameter for, the quantitative expansion of education. The continuous wars which occurred in Sichuan during the Ming-Qing transition had caused a sharp drop in Sichuan's population from about 3.1 million at the end of Ming to about five hundred thousand at the beginning of Qing.<sup>11</sup> When the dust of the wars settled, a large number of immigrants from other provinces rushed into Sichuan.<sup>12</sup> What facilitated the people's migration was the introduction of new varieties of crops such as yams, potatoes, and corn, permitting settlement in arid areas. Up to the eighteenth century, not only the Chuanxi plain, but also the mountainous areas in east Sichuan were inhabited by immigrants.<sup>13</sup>

Unlike the eastern provinces whose population change in the Qing dynasty was greatly affected by the Taiping Rebellion in the middle of the nineteenth century, the peasant rebellions which occurred in Sichuan after the Kangxi period such as the White

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<sup>10</sup> For the Qing figures, see *Qingshi gao*, juan 69; for the Ming figures, see *Mingshi*. Juan 43. Ming Sichuan had 45 *tusi* (areas ruled by minority hereditary headmen) and Qing Sichuan had 29 *tusi*. Qing Sichuan had less *tusi* because the Qing government carried out the *gaitu guiliu* (conversion of hereditary local officials into circulating officials) policy in the minority areas.

<sup>11</sup> Li Shiping, 1987:149.

<sup>12</sup> For a detailed study of the reaction of the Qing state to the migration, see Robert Entenmann, 1980:35.

<sup>13</sup> Twitchett and Fairbank, ed., *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol.10, part 1.1978:109

Lotus Rebellion (1796-1805), the Li-Nan Rebellion (1859-1865),<sup>14</sup> and the Shi Dakai invasion of Sichuan (1861-1863), had no substantial impact on Sichuan's population growth. The growth rate of the Sichuan population was therefore even faster than the average rate for the whole country. During the Qing dynasty Sichuan rose from one of the least populous provinces (about 500 thousand in 1661) to the most populous province (40.233 million in 1898) in China.<sup>15</sup>

The migration movement to Sichuan in the early Qing period stimulated a rapid revival and development of Sichuan's economy. Thanks to the immigrants' large-scale reclamation of wasteland, cultivated land in Sichuan increased nearly 25 times from the 24th year of Kangxi (1685) to the 18th year of Qianlong (1753).<sup>16</sup> From the period of the Yongzheng emperor, Sichuan began to export grain to other provinces. During the reigns of the three emperors Yongzheng, Qianlong and Jiaqing (1723-1820), there were 16 provinces that imported grain from Sichuan on some occasions<sup>17</sup>. Hubei, Zhejiang and Fujian were the main importing provinces. According to the record of the Qing palace archives for Qianlong period, in one year (1752) Sichuan once sold to Hubei 400 thousand piculs of rice.<sup>18</sup>

Handicraft industries such as weaving (cotton, flax, silk), sugar refining, oil extracting, alcohol brewing, printing, paper making, wood and bamboo processing which had been destroyed during the wars of the 17th century were revived in the Qianlong times as well, but they were just sidelines of agriculture. Because these were scattered

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<sup>14</sup> The leaders of the rebellion were Li Yonghe, as well as Nan Dashun and Nan Ershun brothers, who were from Yunnan, but fought their wars against Qing mainly on Sichuan territory.

<sup>15</sup> Wang Di.1989:96-101.

<sup>16</sup> Cheng Shisong and others. Ed. 1993.5:210

<sup>17</sup> Wang Gang 1991:575.

household industries, it is hard to estimate their proportions in the local economy. There was also great diversity in their geographical distribution, which was to some degree decided by the local agricultural products. For example, because Fuzhou in south Sichuan produced kapok, the women in that *zhou* were “busy with weaving”.<sup>19</sup> Cane was popularly planted in Jianzhou near Chengdu, and therefore sugar refining was prevalent in that *zhou*.<sup>20</sup>

Mining industries were larger in scale and more independent of agriculture. The major mining industries in Qing Sichuan included well-salt, tin, iron, copper, coal, and sulphur. Among them, salt mining was the largest. Sichuan has such plentiful salt deposits under its ground that one modern historian states that “Sichuan sits on the salt.”<sup>21</sup> In the Yuan-Ming dynasties, salt production was monopolized by the state. The Qing regime adopted a policy of encouraging private salt production, which brought about a rapid revival and development of salt mining in Sichuan. By the Qianlong period, five large salt producing fields had appeared: Pengxi-Shehong fields (north Sichuan), Nanbu-Langzhong fields (north Sichuan), Jiading-Jianwei fields (southwest Sichuan), Fushun-Rongxian fields (south Sichuan) and Yunyang fields (east Sichuan).<sup>22</sup> The total salt wells in the five fields during the Qianlong period numbered about 2600. In such a salt

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<sup>18</sup> *Gongzhong dang Qianlong chao zouzhe*. 1977(1736-1795). 1:200-1. One *dan* equals about 50 kilograms.

<sup>19</sup> Cheng Shisong and others. Ed. 1993. 5:268.

<sup>20</sup> Cheng Shisong and others. Ed. 1993. 5:266.

<sup>21</sup> Zelin. 1990: 84

<sup>22</sup> Pengxi-Shehong region had 306 salt wells in the 25th year of Kangxi (1686); Nanbu-Langzhong region had 806 salt wells in the 23rd year of Qianlong (1758); Jiading-Jianwei region had 1153 salt-wells in the 23rd year of Qianlong (1758); In Fushun-Rongxian region, Fushun had 281 salt wells in the 9th year of Yongzheng (1731) and Rongxian county had about 20 during the Daoguang period; Yunyang region had 116 salt wells in the 23rd year of Qianlong (1758). Cheng Shisong and others. Ed. 1993. 5:242.

producing field “Salt-well derricks dominate the skyline like the smokestacks of an early English factory town.”<sup>23</sup>

Trade within Sichuan and with other provinces was prosperous as well. Market towns rose abruptly during the Qianlong period throughout Sichuan. Pengxian county had only one market town in the Kangxi period, and yet in the Qianlong period, it had ten. In Jintang county there were only four market towns in the early Qing but by the Qianlong time, the number of the market towns there increased to sixteen.<sup>24</sup> Because of the development of the trade between Sichuan and the provinces of Lower Yangzi River, Chongqing, a city located by the Yangzi River, replaced Chengdu as the most important trade center of Sichuan at the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>25</sup> Though the expansion of education in Qing dynasty Sichuan had multiple causes, the revival and development of the economy offered a material foundation for it. It was not coincidental that the Qianlong period saw a great surge of school establishments in the province.

Despite the development of handicraft industries and trade, Qing Sichuan was basically an agrarian society and most people lived by agriculture. Land was the most important means of production and per capita cultivated land was the most important indicator for the wealth of the society. In the first fifty years of the Qing rule when Sichuan had just begun to revive from the devastation of the 17th century wars, the amount of per capita cultivated land was still very low, but it grew. In other words, the enlargement of the cultivated land exceeded the growth of the population. In the

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<sup>23</sup> Zelin. 1990:83.

<sup>24</sup> Cheng Shisong and others. Ed. 1992. 5: 270;271.

<sup>25</sup> Lin Chengxi. 1994:62.

Yongzheng and Qianlong periods the amount of per capita land under cultivation in Sichuan reached its apex.

But before long, the Malthusian law set to work in Sichuan. The enlargement of the cultivated land in Sichuan slowed down while the population kept on increasing at an accelerating speed. This caused the amount of per capita available land in Sichuan to drop continuously. In the 7th year of Yongzheng emperor (1729), the Qing regime measured the land of the whole province. The result of the measurement was 45.9 million *mu*.<sup>26</sup> The population of Sichuan then was about 3.36 million, so the per capita cultivated land was about 14 *mu*. At the turn of the 19th century, the per capita land was reduced to 4 *mu*. By the middle of 19th century, it had decreased further to only about 3 *mu*. The following table shows the change of the per capita cultivated land in Sichuan in the Qing dynasty

TABLE 1.1  
CHANGE OF PER CAPITA CULTIVATED LAND IN QING SICHUAN\*

Year	Size of the Land (in ten thousand <i>mu</i> )	Population (in ten thousands)	Per capita cultivated land (in <i>mu</i> )
1660	119	50	2.4
1671	148	63	2.3
1685	173	99	1.7
1722	2,054	290	7.1
1724	2,145	298	7.2
1728	4,590	336	13.7
1753	4,595	483	9.5
1783	4,619	942	4.9
1812	7,784	2,071	3.8
1873	9,492	3,317	2.9
1893	9,682	3,992	2.4
1910	10,281	4,414	2.3

<sup>26</sup> One *mu* equals one fifteenth hectare.

Source: For the figures of the size of land from 1660 through 1724, adopted and modified from Cheng Shisong and others: 1992:209; for the figures of the size of land from 1728 through 1910 and all the figures of population, adopted and modified from “Table 32” in Wang Di. 1989:81. \*Skinner has proved how unreliable the official statistics of population of Qing Sichuan were (G.William Skinner, 1987); therefore we adopt the revised statistics of modern Sichuan scholars. Though the figures presented here were still estimations, they should be closer to the reality than the Qing official figure was.

Even if we agree with Dwight Perkins that the productivity of each unit of land in Sichuan increased twice in the nineteenth century compared to that in the eighteenth century,<sup>27</sup> the decrease in the per capita land was still very significant. Its impact on the development of Sichuan education was easy to understand since the major basis of school funds in Qing Sichuan was land. Less per capita land meant that it was harder for the school founders to collect enough funds for the establishment or maintenance of schools.

Along with the decrease in per capita land availability came an increase in taxes imposed on Sichuan society by the Qing government. The last decade of the eighteenth century was the very time when the financial balance of the Qing government changed from surplus to deficit.<sup>28</sup> The cost of the wars with the rebels in the early and middle nineteenth century, the indemnities for the wars with foreigners at the end of the 19th century, and the expenditures on the various reform projects at the beginning of the 20th century together caused the financial situation of the Qing government to increasingly deteriorate. The Qing government was forced to extricate itself from difficulties by taxing its society more and more heavily.

The taxes on Sichuan had increased both in amount and in kind during the 19th century. In the early Qing, to encourage the emigrants to reclaim wasteland, the Qing

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<sup>27</sup> Dwight H.Perkins. 1969:19 table II.3.

<sup>28</sup> Naquin and Rawski. 1987:219.

government adopted a light tax policy in Sichuan,<sup>29</sup> and the total land tax of the whole province was only 680 thousand taels of silver<sup>30</sup> which was the lowest among all the provinces of Qing China. In addition, many counties of Sichuan in the early Qing often enjoyed exemption from land taxation.<sup>31</sup> For example, from the reign of Kangxi emperor to that of Jiaqing, Shuangliu county near Chengdu was exempted from land taxation about 20 times.<sup>32</sup> Before the Jiaqing period, Sichuan society did not need to bear the cost of the wars that occurred in Sichuan such as the Qing repression of the rebellions of the Three Feudatories and the Kham people of the large and Small Jinchuan. Instead, the Qing central government bore the burden. In the early Qing, there was only one increase of taxation on Sichuan, which happened during the reign of Yongzheng. That was for the collection of silver for the supplementary “nourishment of virtue” (yang lian) salaries for the officials of Sichuan and the total increased amount was only one hundred thousand taels.<sup>33</sup>

In the Qianlong period, Sichuan’s annual tax total was around 1.8 million taels of silver (See table 1.2). This figure had almost tripled by the middle of 19th century. At the

<sup>29</sup> This policy was mainly applied to north and east Sichuan. Zhang Xianzhong entered Sichuan from the Northeast, this part of Sichuan, therefore, suffered his massacre most and had a great social change. The Ming documents regarding lands, people, and taxes of the Northeast Sichuan were no longer applicable in the Qing. Because southwest Sichuan escaped Zhang’s massacre, This area continued to be taxed by the Qing government according to Ming standard. The amount of tax on the southwest was thus much heavier than that on the north and east Sichuan. For example, Hezhou (present Hechuan county) in east Sichuan was a large and rich county, but its annual amount of tax was only 4,998 taels while Yaan, a county that was not so rich but located in west Sichuan paid 14,099 taels. The difference in tax rate between the East and the West remained through the whole Qing. See Zhou Xun. 1935:19.

<sup>30</sup> Here I have adopted Zhou Xun’s figure. Zhou used to be an official in Qing Sichuan and participated in the inspecting and arranging of the accounting books in the provincial treasury in 1902. According to *Qingshi Gao*, the total was 660 thousand taels: “Land tax in Sichuan was 660 thousand taels which was the lightest in China (*tianxia*)”. See Zhao Erzhan and others. 1976. Ed. *Qingshi Gao*. Juan 375: *He Linghan zhuan*.

<sup>31</sup> In the early Qing not only Sichuan but also all the other provinces of the Southwest China, Yunnan, Guizhou, and Guangxi were regarded by the Qing government as frontier provinces and sometimes exempted from land tax.

<sup>32</sup> *Shuangliu xianzhi*. 1937:144-146.

<sup>33</sup> Zhou Xun.1966 (1935):21.

end of the 19th century, the annual tax on Sichuan reached ten million taels. The first decade of the twentieth century was the period of the quickest increase of taxes on Sichuan in the Qing dynasty. During this period about 7 million taels of new tax were levied on Sichuan society. In the last year of the Qing dynasty, the total tax on Sichuan was almost ten times larger than that in the early Qing.

TABLE 1.2  
ANNUAL TAX REVENUE OF SICHUAN PROVINCE  
IN THE MIDDLE YEARS OF QIANLONG TIMES

<i>Sort</i>	<i>Amount(tael)</i>
Land tax	890,000*
Tariff**	100,000
Contract tax***	78,000
Salt tax	800,000
Total	1,868,000

Source: This table is constructed on the basis of Zhou Xun. *shuhai congtan* (1935) ch.1.\* Including 110 thousand taels of *huohao* silver (service charge) and 100 thousand taels of tax for *yanglian* salary silver.

\*\*Qing Sichuan had seven provincial customs before the establishment of the Congqing Customs in 1891. \*\*\* Including taxes on house contracts and land contracts.

In early Qing Sichuan, besides the land tax there were only taxes on salt, on contracts, and on customs tariffs. In the 51<sup>st</sup> year of Kangxi (1712) the Qing government announced a permanent freeze on land taxes. But by the Jiaqing period, the Qing government was unable to bear the huge cost of suppressing the White Lotus Rebellion, so it had no choice but to levy more taxes from the agricultural sector. Pretending not to have broken its promise of 1712, it played with the terms. The new land tax was called a subsidy (*jingtie*) rather than a land tax.<sup>34</sup> In the middle of the 19th century, because of the war in Xinjiang, Qing government increased the land tax again. This time the new tax was called a contribution (*juanshu*). After 1900, to pay the indemnity for the Boxer

<sup>34</sup> *Xuanhan xianzhi*. 1931. 6:10b.

Rebellion, the Qing government increased the land tax for the third time.<sup>35</sup> “New contribution” (*xin juanshu*) was the name given to the new tax. Besides the land tax there were also a number of other new kinds of taxes levied from Sichuan society to meet the increasing financial need of the Qing government after the White Lotus Rebellion. Table 1.3 shows the sorts of taxes in 1910.

TABLE 1.3  
TAX REVENUE OF SICHUAN PROVINCE IN 1910

<i>Sort</i>	<i>Amount (tael)</i>
Land tax	4,300,000
Tariff*	100,000
Contract tax	3,100,000
Salt tax	6,300,000
Transit tax on trade ( <i>lijin</i> )	700,000
Tax on slaughtering pigs	1,100,000
Alcohol and Tobacco tax	1,000,000
Sugar and oil tax	600,000
Total	17,200,000

Source: This table is constructed on the basis of Zhou Xun. *shuhai congtan* (1935) ch.1. Excluding the tariff of the Chongqing Customs established in 1891.

Comparing table 1.3 and table 1.2, we can see that the land tax increased almost 5 times and the salt tax increased nearly 8 times.<sup>36</sup> But the fastest increase was the contract tax, which was almost 40 times higher at the end of Qing than it had been in the early Qing. The customs tariff remained the same.<sup>37</sup> All the other taxes were new sorts, and their total quantity was 2,600,000 taels of silver, larger than the tax total in the early Qing. Though the huge increase in taxes on salt and contracts as well as the creation of

<sup>35</sup> If we include the increase of the land tax for yanglian silver during the Qianlong reign, this was the fourth time taxes were raised.

<sup>36</sup> The increase of the salt tax was partly due to the development of the salt industry during the Qing, and partly due to the reform on the salt tax system. For the reform of the salt tax system in Qing Sichuan, see Zhou Xun 1966 (1935):56-57.

the new sorts of taxes may suggest that the Sichuan economy was more complex and more commercialized, they also indicate that the society was much more heavily exploited by the state. A much heavier tax burden, along with the declining per capita availability of cultivated land, illustrates most clearly that Sichuan society after the Qianlong reign was experiencing a process of pauperization. Based on this evaluation of the socio-economic circumstances of Qing Sichuan, we will examine the expansion of Sichuan education in the following section.

## THE EXPANSION OF EDUCATION

Sichuan education in the Qing dynasty expanded. The obvious manifestation of this expansion was the increase of the numbers of schools. The surge of school establishments in the Qianlong period resulted from multiple factors: the administrative ambitions of the government, the population increase, the social stability and the economic prosperity of the local society. The local officials were the main founders of schools. After the Jiaqing reign, as in other provinces, local gentry and local people in Sichuan seemed to be more active in establishing *shuyuan*, or academies. This was due to the fact that most of the newly founded academies during this period were located in rural market towns that emerged in great number along with the growth of the population and where the state power rarely reached. But the local officials did not totally relinquish their responsibility in the development of local education. They were still concerned with such affairs as maintaining and enlarging the academies at county towns and cities. They

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<sup>37</sup> The dramatic increase of the contract tax suggests that the land and house trade and the annexation of land in the late Qing Sichuan were very active. There were more big landlords in Sichuan in the late Qing than in the early Qing.

were also in charge of the establishment of most of the *yixue* or charitable schools. Indeed, the growing land tension in Sichuan in the nineteenth century required the local officials more frequently to resort to their administrative power to raise school funds. In Qing Sichuan, there seemed to be no significant shift of the control of education from the state to the gentry class.

The most important elementary educational institution in Qing Sichuan, as in other provinces of China proper, was the *sishu* (private schools). But unfortunately, we do not have, and it is impossible for us to have, a reliable census of the number of the *sishu* in Qing Sichuan, for almost all the *sishu* were short-lived schools. However, a calculation of the reformed *sishu*, which was done by the Ministry of Education of the Qing government in early 1911, may give us a sense of their numerousness. In that year, the reformed *sishu* in Sichuan numbered 16,300, and had 245,000 students, more than that of any other provinces in China.<sup>38</sup>

There were two kinds of *sishu*. We may name them as “the student-centered” and “the teacher-centered”. The student-centered *sishu* was founded and a teacher was hired when several boys in a family or a clan or a neighbourhood reached the school age, but in most cases, when the children grew up, the *sishu* would be closed. The teacher-centered *sishu* were founded and the students were recruited when a lower degree holder tried to earn a living by teaching. He might close his *sishu* any time when his circumstances changed, such as leaving for provincial examinations,<sup>39</sup> or adopting a new profession. It was because of this sudden opening and sudden closing of the *sishu*, that there are no

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<sup>38</sup> JYZZ 1911. Vol. 6: *jishi*.

<sup>39</sup> Taking provincial examinations was time consuming, especially for those whose home town was far away from Chengdu. For example it would take at least one month for a candidate to reach Chengdu on foot from Xuding fu in

records of them in the local gazetteers.<sup>40</sup> But we can reasonably assume that along with a larger population and more households in the nineteenth century, there were more *sishu* in Sichuan.

Another type of elementary school in Qing Sichuan that was recorded in the local gazetteers, but was fewer in number than *sishu*, was *yixue*, or charitable schools. The establishment of charitable schools in Qing Sichuan was mainly due to the efforts of the state, though the purpose of the state in promoting them was political rather than educational. The occurrence of the White Lotus Rebellion in Sichuan at the end of 18th century demonstrated that heterodox ideology had a strong appeal for the common people in Sichuan. Thus the Qing state tried to indoctrinate (*jiaohua*) Sichuan people in the same way it often attempted to indoctrinate the minority people in the frontier areas: by establishing of *yixue*.<sup>41</sup> Yu Shaoyuan, a county magistrate of Xuanhan county in east Sichuan during the reign of Daoguang emperor, illustrates clearly this in his *An Account of Founding of More Charitable Schools*:

In the third year of Daoguang (1823), seeing that Sichuan province was remote, the people were unable to distinguish good from bad, and thus the most important thing [in the province] was to improve the moral tendencies of the people. The governor ordered every prefecture and county in the province to establish charitable schools, so that the boys

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east Sichuan. If a student decided to take the provincial exam, he often had to prepare to leave his home for more than one year.

<sup>40</sup> *Yingjinggg xianzhi* 1915:378-379.

<sup>41</sup> The charitable schools, therefore, were not the sort Leung finds in Lower Yangzi region, but the sort Woodside and Rowe find in Yunnan. See Leung. 1994 384-388; Woodside.1983:3-33; Rowe.1994:417-448

from poor families were able to get an education, and he also transmitted the emperor's Sacred Edicts, poems, and rhymes on encouraging learning, in the hope that the voice of reading could be heard in all the remote and poor areas.<sup>42</sup>

After that year charitable schools were established in succession all over the province. (See table 1.4)

TABLE 1.4  
CHARITABLE SCHOOLS IN SEVERAL COUNTIES IN QING SICHUAN AFTER 1823

Name of counties	Number of schools		
	Before 1823	After 1823	Reference
Wanxian	2	15	1866 XZ, 328
Kaixian	0	18	1853 XZ, 210
Quxian	0	24	1932 XZ, 248
Dazhu	0	35	1945 XZ, 413
Hanzhou	3	12	1869 ZZ, 6:12b-13a
Liangshan	0	26*	1935 XZ, 5:4b-7b
Gaoxian	1	20	1866 XZ, 15:15b-7a
Nanchuan	0	22**	1926 XZ, 7:7a
Pengxian	4	21***	1878 XZ, 393
Shuangliu	0	10	1937 XZ, 2:15b-16b
Xuanhan	2	17	1931 XZ, 9: 2a

\*Among them, 21 were named as *xiangxue*. \*\* All of them were named as *xiangxue*. \*\*\* All of them were named as *xiangxue*.

The enthusiasm in the establishment of charitable schools was not limited to Han people area. In the Kham people area of west Sichuan, quite a number of charitable schools were also founded after the third year of Daoguang. According to the local

<sup>42</sup> *Xuanhan xianzhi*, 1931:1140

gazetteers, the first charitable schools in Chonghua station (*tun*) and Suijing station, both belonging to Maogong department (*ting*), were founded in the Daoguang period.<sup>43</sup> The two charitable schools in Songpan department were founded during the period of the Tongzhi emperor, the two in Dajianlu department during the Guangxu period.<sup>44</sup>

*Shuyuan*, or academies, in Qing Sichuan also expanded. According to a recent calculation, the number of academies in Qing Sichuan totalled 398, which was a much larger number than that of Song Sichuan (42), Yuan Sichuan (13), and Ming Sichuan (98) according to the local gazetteers edited in the Qing dynasty.<sup>45</sup> This number was also larger than those in most of the other provinces in the Qing dynasty. Table 1.5 shows the expansion of academies during the Qing dynasty. The Qianlong reign was the period when academies in Sichuan began to expand rapidly in numbers. Though this was a nationwide phenomenon, more academies were established during this period in Sichuan than in the coastal provinces such as Zhejiang (53)<sup>46</sup> and Guangdong (103).<sup>47</sup> Why did Sichuan, an educationally backward province in the inland, have a better performance in academy-building than the educationally advanced coastal provinces? One reason was that this passion for academy establishment all over China was caused by the emperors' orders to establish academies nationwide which were issued in the 11th years of Yongzheng (1733) and in the first year of Qianlong (1736). For this reason the number of academies in the provinces differed mainly according to the number of their local

<sup>43</sup> The one in Suijing station was founded in the fifth year of Daoguang. There was no indication in the local gazetteer about the founding year of the one in Chonghua station.

<sup>44</sup> Yang Ming and Wang Lan. 1993: 155.

<sup>45</sup> Xong Mingan and others. 1993: appendix 2.

<sup>46</sup> Rankin. 1986: Appendix B.

<sup>47</sup> Liu Boji. 1958: 78.

administrative units. Sichuan, as the largest province in China, had more local administrative units than any other province.

TABLE 1.5  
ACADEMIES FOUNDED IN QING SICHUAN

Founders	Founding dates				Total
	SZ-YZ (1644-1735) 92yrs.	QL (1736-1795) 60yrs.	JQ-DG (1796-1850) 55yrs.	XF-GX (1851-1900)* 50yrs.	
Officials	31	121	56	33	241
Private or public	3	4	27	53	87
Unknown	7	5	21	37	70
Total	41	130	104	123	398

Source: The table is constructed on the basis of Xiong Mingan and others. 1993: appendix 2. \*Though the period of Guangxu emperor lasted until 1908, the *xinzheng* (Reform) began immediately after 1900. We may consider 1900 a demarcation between old and new systems.

Since academy establishment was initiated by the state, the academies in Sichuan formed a hierarchy in scale and quality that was parallel with the administrative levels, though the scale and quality of the academies at the same level but in different regions of the province might be quite different. Jinjiang Academy which was founded in the 43<sup>rd</sup> year of Kangxi (1704) and financed partly by Yongzheng emperor in 1733 with nineteen other big academies, and Zunjing Academy, which was founded in the first year of Guangxu (1875) by Zhang Zhidong, were both located at the provincial capital, Chengdu. They were the largest and the best in the province. The students and funds for these two provincial academies came from all over the province. They were also the models for the academies at the lower levels. The academies at the prefecture level that were usually located at the prefecture capitals were smaller, and those at the county level that were usually located in county towns were even smaller. Their students and funds came

respectively from the whole prefecture or the whole county. Below the county level were the rural academies located at the rural market towns. They were the smallest, and their students and funding were the least ample, but during the Qianlong era, rural academies were still rare. Most of the academies were those at the county level.

But administrative order alone was not sufficient to bring about the dramatic expansion of schools during the Qianlong period. Social stability and economic development also played an important role, as can be elucidated by comparisons between the establishment of academies in Sichuan and in the coast provinces before the Qianlong period. During the reigns of the first three emperors, Shunzhi, Kangxi, and Yongzheng, there were 101 academies in Guangdong<sup>48</sup> and 46 in Zhejiang<sup>49</sup>, while in Sichuan there were only 41. The poorer performance of Sichuan during this period was certainly due to the devastation of the wars during the Ming-Qing transition to Sichuan society, while the better performance during the Qianlong period might be attributed to the revival and development of the local economy and the growth of population, which provided the expansion of academies with a solid material foundation.

Though the founders were mainly local officials, the funds for the academies established in Sichuan in this period came from a variety of sources. The major ones were: 1) donations from officials, gentry, and local people; 2) confiscated lands,<sup>50</sup> 3) diversion of funds from other local public projects; 4) a levy on local commercial

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<sup>48</sup> Liu Boji. 1958:78.

<sup>49</sup> Rankin, 1986:Appendix B

<sup>50</sup> This category included public uncultivated land illegally seized by the local people, the land whose status was unclear because there was no agreement about who was the legal owner, the criminals and rebels' lands and the lands of Buddhist and Taoist temples.

activities. Though commercial capital was one of the forms of funding for the construction of academies, the main form was lands.

Another point which is noteworthy in table 1.5 is that the speed of expansion of academies during 1850-1900 was even more rapid than during the Qianlong period. Again this was a phenomenon we can find in other provinces. Consider, for instance, the numbers of the newly founded academies in 1850-1900 in Sichuan and those in Guangdong, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang in the same period.<sup>51</sup>

	Qianlong period	1850-1900
Sichuan	21.7 per decade	24.6 per decade
Guangdong	17.2 per decade	22.0 per decade
Jiangsu	10.3 per decade	16.0 per decade
Zhejiang	8.8 per decade	16.8 per decade

All four provinces saw a new surge of establishment of academies during 1850-1900, which was even greater than that of the Qianlong era, but the increases in the Yangzi delta provinces and Guangdong were obviously more dramatic than in Sichuan. The surge in the three coastal provinces coincided with the renewed vigour of the post-Taiping Rebellion restoration, which was not an important impetus in Sichuan. But no matter whether it was dramatic or not, there was a nationwide increase in the establishment of academies during the second half of the nineteenth century. How should we explain this common phenomenon? Grimm suggests that in Guangdong and Anhui,

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<sup>51</sup> For the numbers of Guangdong, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang, see Barry Keenan. 1994:496.

a large percentage of the newly established academies during this period were privately sponsored, due to the development of commercial capital and urbanization in these two provinces.<sup>52</sup> Rankin's study of Zhejiang and Keenan's study of Jiangsu reveal the same correlation.<sup>53</sup> But Grimm holds that in Guangdong "the nineteenth-century resurgence of private funding for academies was not accompanied by any departure from the officially defined orthodoxy or by any lessening of government control",<sup>54</sup> while Keenan and Rankin see a different case in Yangzi delta: "post-Taiping academy expansion signified a weakening rather than a strengthening of ties with the state."<sup>55</sup>

In Sichuan, as in other provinces, privately financed academies occupied a greater percentage of the newly founded academies in the latter half of the 19th century. Though we are quite sure that the surge of academy establishment in Sichuan during this period was related to the growth of the rural population and the rise of rural market towns, the surge was not necessarily a sign of weakening of government control of education. In the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods, nearly every county in Sichuan had already established at least one academy in or near its county town. In this period, the newly established academies in Sichuan often had the following features: 1) they were located in rural market towns, 2) they were established by local gentry and people, 3) they were of poor quality and small scale. Rawski finds that 44.6 percent of Qing Sichuan schools were situated in urban locations and only 21.4 percent in rural areas, but her calculation is based on the provincial gazetteer edited in Jiaqing reign.<sup>56</sup> Most of the rural academies

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<sup>52</sup> Tilmann Grimm. 1977:480-484

<sup>53</sup> Barry Keenan. 1994:495.

<sup>54</sup> Tilemann Grimm. 1977:493

<sup>55</sup> Barry Keenan. 1994:495; Marry Rankin. 1986:53.

<sup>56</sup> Rawski. 1979: 93.

were established in a later period. We may take the nine academies established in Dongxiang county<sup>57</sup>, east Sichuan in the Qing dynasty as an example (Table 1.6)

TABLE 1.6  
ACADEMIES IN DONGXIANG (XUANHAN) COUNTY IN THE QING DYNASTY

<i>Name of academy</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Year of establishment</i>	<i>Founder</i>	<i>shanzhang</i>
Lailu	County town	6th QL (1741)	Official	<i>juren</i>
Wenchang	Market town (80 <i>li</i> from county town)	JQ period	Private	No record
Qinge	Market town (30 <i>li</i> from county town)	DG period	Private	Learned gentry
Xiangbo	Market town (120 <i>li</i> from county town)	22nd DG (1842)	Private	No <i>shanzhang</i>
Taocheng*	Market town (80 <i>li</i> from county town)	10th XF (1860)	official	<i>juren**</i>
Xinwen	Market town (40 <i>li</i> from county town)	4th TZ (1865)	Public	No <i>shanzhang</i>
Zhonghe	Market town (100 <i>li</i> from county town)	4th TZ (1865)	Public	No <i>shanzhang</i>
Huilong	Market town (90 <i>li</i> from county town)	19th GX (1893)	private	No <i>shanzhang</i>
Fuxing	Market town (60 <i>li</i> from county town)	No record	Public	No <i>shanzhang</i>

Source: *Xuanhan xianzhi*. 1931. *juan* 9.\*The establishment of this academy was initiated by a group of *shengyuan*, who made use of the magistrate's influence to collect donation by asking the magistrate to be the founder of the academy.\*\* This *juren shanzhang* was hired from a neighboring county, Wanyuan county.

Dongxiang county was a poor county in the mountainous area of east Sichuan. It was able to have as many as 8 market town academies only because these so-called academies were very small. The county gazetteer observes of these academies: "They were unable to hire a *shanzhang* (instructor) because they were short of funds, and they only invited local gentry scholars to give lectures occasionally. They were no better than

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<sup>57</sup> The name of this county has been changed to Xuanhan since the early Republic.

elementary schools (*mengxue*), though they offered monthly tests and awards like the county town *shuyuan*.<sup>58</sup>

Because most of them were small and insignificant compared to the county town academies founded by the county magistrates, the emergence of the great number of these rural market town academies was not a full indicator of the expansion of education in Sichuan in the latter half of the nineteenth century. An equal, if not more, important indicator of the educational expansion during this period was the enlargement of the county town academies. The local officials still played an important role in the local education, but their attention changed from establishment of new academies to enlargement of existing county town academies. For example, Jinjiang academy in the *zhou* town of Huili *zhou*, southwest Sichuan, was founded in the 17th year of Qianlong emperor (1752) by the county magistrate, but the local gazetteer recorded many occasions of buying new lands for the academy by successive magistrates afterwards: 10 times during the Qianlong period, twice during the Jiaqing period, 15 times during the Daoguang period, once during the Xianfeng period, and 9 times during the Tongzhi period.<sup>59</sup> Jiufeng academy, the county academy of Pengxian county near Chengdu, was founded in the 15th year of Qianlong emperor (1750). At first, the study land (*xuetian*) of this academy was rice fields of 240 *mu*. Due to the efforts of the later magistrates, up to the 13th year of Daoguang emperor (1833), its study land included rice fields of 330 *mu*, and “a great tract of dry lands”.<sup>60</sup> Fengshan academy in the county town of Changshou near Chongqing was established during the reign of Yongzheng emperor. It had an annual

<sup>58</sup> *Xuanhan xianzhi*. 1931. *Juan* 9:18a.

<sup>59</sup> *Huili zhoushi*. 1870:

<sup>60</sup> *Jiaqing Sichuan Tongzhi*. 1816. *Juan* 79:5b; *Pengxian zhi*. 1878. *Juan* 4:50b. Dry land means those lands different from water lands (paddy field) in which rice is planted.

income of 200 piculs of rice during the Qianlong times. In the 22nd year of Guangxu emperor (1896), its annual rice income increased to over 800 piculs.<sup>61</sup> When Wenjiang academy in the county town of Gaoxian, south Sichuan, was established in the 22nd year of Qianlong emperor (1757), it had only 100 taels of silver as capital, which it loaned to the salt merchants to get interest. In the 7th year of Daoguang (1827) this academy possessed a variety of real properties in 29 places, and its annual rent income was 233 taels of silver.<sup>62</sup> It is true that though the magistrates were still active in developing local education in the nineteenth century, they were more hesitant to draw money from their own pocket now.

On the other hand, though there was an undeniable further expansion of education in Sichuan after Qianlong period, the expansion was still limited compared to the increase of the population. The relative pauperization of the Sichuan society in the 19th century did not permit the expansion of education to keep the same pace as the growth of Sichuan population.

## THE EXPANSION OF STUDENT POPULATION IN QING SICHUAN

One of the consequences of a larger population and more schools in Sichuan in the second half of the nineteenth century was the expansion of student population. By students, we mean those *shengyuan* and *tongsheng*, who were the participants or potential participants in the civil service examination competition. They were the literate sub-elite,

<sup>61</sup> *Changshou xianzhi*, 1928, juan 7:12a.

<sup>62</sup> *Gaoxian zhi*, 1866, juan 15:15a.

comparable to the literati elite who held a *juren* or higher degree. They were also different from the literate commoners without upward mobility aspirations. The latter included those people who had mastered a certain amount of Chinese characters, but would not necessarily be able or willing to participate in the examination. The different ratios between the students and the upper gentry in Sichuan and in the whole of China during this period demonstrate that the problem of a students surplus in Sichuan was more serious than that at the national level.

It is generally agreed that the numbers of *shengyuan* in the Qing dynasty had been relatively stable since 1683, and without dramatic increase until the later half of nineteenth century.<sup>63</sup> Gu Yanwu says in his famous essay on the *shengyuan* that they numbered around 500,000 in China.<sup>64</sup> His estimate, of course, refers to the early Qing. Two hundred years later, Kang Youwei estimates that the number of *shengyuan* in his time (1898) was near one million,<sup>65</sup> but this figure might include military *shengyuan*. By Chang Chung-li's calculation, the total civil *shengyuan* in the latter half of the nineteenth century was about 650,000.<sup>66</sup> Chang's figure is confirmed by Ho Ping-ti who estimates "the number of *shengyuan* during the latter half of the nineteenth century was probably around 600,000, a figure that is 20 percent higher than that of the pre-1850 period."<sup>67</sup>

The population of *Tongsheng* was much larger and more unstable than that of *shengyuan*. The expansion of student population in the Qing was, to a great extent, an expansion of *tongsheng* population. Chang Chung-li estimates that there were 2 million

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<sup>63</sup> The increase after 1850 was due to the *juanshu* (contribution) of the provinces to suppress the Taiping Rebellion.

<sup>64</sup> Gu Tinglin *shiwenji*. 1959:22

<sup>65</sup> Kang Youwei. 1898. In ZJJZ. Vol. 1:38

<sup>66</sup> Chung-li Chang. 1955: Table 2.

<sup>67</sup> Ping-ti Ho. 1962:181.

of them any time in the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>68</sup> But his number includes only active *tongsheng*. If we include those *tongsheng* who had withdrawn from the examination for reasons such as overage, as David Johnson suggests, the number should be tripled.<sup>69</sup> This means that the total number of *tongsheng* in the whole of China at any given time in the latter nineteenth century would be about 6 million. Thus the ratio between *shengyuan* and *tongsheng* was about 1: 10 at the national level. All of these figures were calculated by taking thirty years as the average career span of a *shengyuan* and *tongsheng*.

How many *shengyuan* were there in Qing dynasty Sichuan in the latter half of the nineteenth century? We have three figures. Zhou Xun, the author of an important insider account of life in Sichuan, says: “in the two examinations of *ke* and *shui* within three years, by summing up the quotas of all *fu*, *ting*, *zhou*, *xian* [in Sichuan], the total *shengyuan* newly accepted was 3,852”<sup>70</sup> If we take thirty years as the average career span of a *shengyuan*, the total *shengyuan* in Sichuan during the latter half of the nineteenth century would be around 38,520. Zhang Zhidong notes in his account of the establishment of the Zunjing academy that in his time, “the number of *xuesheng* (*shengyuan*) in the whole of Sichuan is 30,000.”<sup>71</sup> He established the Zunjing academy when he was on his tenure as Sichuan *xuezhang* (provincial director of education affairs) from 1873 through 1876. Chang Chung-li estimates that the pre-Taiping total of Sichuan *shengyuan* was 28,686 and the post-Taiping total was 41,412.<sup>72</sup> If we take an average of

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<sup>68</sup> Chung-li Chang. 1955:100.

<sup>69</sup> Johnson. 1985:59.

<sup>70</sup> Zhou Xun, 1935:113.

<sup>71</sup> Zhang Zhidong. 1876. *Juan* 213:19a.

<sup>72</sup> Chung-li Chang. 1955:Table 20; Table 22.

the three numbers provided by Zhou Xun, Zhang Zhidong, and Chang Chung-li, the number of Sichuan *shengyuan* in the latter half of the nineteenth century would be around 37,000.

We have no existing calculations or estimates of the number of *tongsheng* in Qing Sichuan, but there were several signs suggesting that the number had greatly increased in the nineteenth century. One sign was the expansion of the schools in the later Qing as we discussed above. Another sign was that many counties began to build up or expand examination halls from the Daoguang reign. In early Qing, *tongsheng* in many Sichuan counties usually wrote their examinations in the county government halls. The halls turned out to be too small in the late Qing because of the increase of the number of *tongsheng*. According to the local gazetteers, some county examination participants at that time had to sit outside of the county government hall to write their examinations because the hall was too crowded, and they were frequently in danger of getting wet in the rain as the weather might change any time during the examination.<sup>73</sup> The number of seats in a county's newly established examination hall seemed to be a good hint of the size of the *tongsheng* population of that county. The following table (table 1.7) shows the number of seats in four county examination halls we find recorded in local gazetteers.

TABLE 1.7  
NUMBERS OF SEATS IN THE EXAMINATION HALLS OF SELECT SICHUAN COUNTIES

<i>County name</i>	<i>Year of establishment</i>	<i>Seats</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Wanxian (east Sichuan)	19th yr. DG (1839)	1800	1866 XZ, 11:11b-12a
Liangshan (east Sichuan)	5th yr.DG (1825)	1600	1935 XZ, 5:8a-b
Rongxian (south Sichuan)	13th yr.JQ (1808)	1200	1929 XZ, 14:53a-b
Xuanhan (east Sichuan)	9th yr. DG (1829)	1700	1931 XZ, 9:36a

<sup>73</sup> Liangshan xianzhi. 1935. Juan 2:8a-b; Xuanhan xianzhi. 1931. Juan 9:35b; Wanxian zhi.. 1866. Juan 11:11b-12a.

Among the four county examination halls, Rongxian's had the fewest seats, which might be because it was built in an earlier year. Yet, the average number of seats of the four examination halls was around 1500. If we take this as the average number of active *tongsheng* in every Sichuan county in the nineteenth century, the total number of *tongsheng* then should be around 210,000.<sup>74</sup> Since east Sichuan was a poor mountainous area, the estimation of the number of Sichuan *tongsheng* based on the counties of this area should have less danger of overestimation. But Johnson's point of view should be taken into account. Thus Sichuan had about 630,000 *tonsheng* at any given time in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The ratio between *shengyuan* and *tongsheng* in Sichuan was therefore 1:17, much higher than the national ratio of 1:10. This means that there was a more intense competition in Sichuan for *shengyuan* degree at that period.

*Juren*, *gongsheng* and *Jinshi* did not belong to the social group of the lower elite students defined above, but the comparison of their numbers in Sichuan and in the whole of China can help to illustrate how narrow the ladder to success for the Sichuan students was. According to Chang Chung-li, the upper layer degree holders, (*juren*, *gongsheng* and *jinshi*) in China probably numbered about 120,000 in the pre-Taiping period, and 200,000 in the post-Taiping period.<sup>75</sup> How many upper gentry members resided in Sichuan?

In the Qing dynasty, the provinces of China were divided bureaucratically into three categories: large provinces, middle provinces and small provinces. This division was significant because it was the basis for the allotment of the *juren* and *jinshi* quotas

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<sup>74</sup> Qing Sichuan had about 140 county level administrative units. See page 1-2.

<sup>75</sup> Chung-li Chang: 1955:137.

among the provinces in the Qing dynasty. The division was not in accordance with geographic size but with the size of the population, the level of cultural development, and the amount of tax revenues. Roughly, the *juren* quotas for the large provinces were 80-90, for the middle ones 60-70, for the small ones 30-40.<sup>76</sup> Because the division was made in the early Qing when Sichuan was weak in all three standards, Sichuan was put into the category of the middle provinces and its quota for *juren* before Daoguang times was 63.<sup>77</sup>

The allotted quota, however, was not fixed. The Qing regime often permitted an extension or reduction of it.<sup>78</sup> The extension or reduction was mostly temporary but in the late nineteenth century, because of the extra financial contribution of the provinces to state expenditure like war indemnity (*juanshu*), quite a few provinces received permanently extended *juren* quotas as reward.<sup>79</sup> Among them was Sichuan. In fact, Sichuan was the province that obtained the largest permanently extended quotas by the extra financial contribution.<sup>80</sup> The total Sichuan *juren* quota, including both the temporary and permanent extensions in the late nineteenth century, was around 103.<sup>81</sup> Since the provincial examination was held every third year in the Qing dynasty, and if we take thirty years as the average career span of a *juren*, the numbers of Sichuan *juren* at any time in the late nineteenth century would be around 1,030. But the geographical

<sup>76</sup> Liu Zhaobin. 1977:28

<sup>77</sup> Among which 3 were for the families of Eight Banners soldiers in Chengdu. Zhou Xun.1935:116.

<sup>78</sup> Because the change of the quota of each province was very frequent, it was very hard to calculate. But it was a usual practice that when there was an extension, the large province would extend more and the middle provinces less and the small provinces fewest; when there was a reduction the largest provinces would reduce comparatively less; the middle provinces more and the small provinces most. There were more times of extension of provincial quotas than reduction of them in the Qing dynasty. See *Qinding DaQing huidian shili*.Juan 349

<sup>79</sup> Each 100 thousand taels of silver *juanshu* may change for 1 *juren* allotment. *Qinding DaQing Huidian shili*.Juan 349:14a.

<sup>80</sup> Sichuan got two extensions; one in the 8th year of Xianfeng (1858), and another in the 6th year of Tongzhi (1867). Because each time the extension quota was 10, the total extension was 20. *Qinding DaQing huidian*,juan 349:17a; 23a.

distribution of *juren* in Qing Sichuan was very unbalanced. For example, Shuangliu county near Chengdu produced 62 *juren* during the Qing dynasty,<sup>82</sup> while Wanyuan county, a remote mountainous county in east Sichuan, produced only 5.<sup>83</sup>

The *gongsheng*, whose number was much larger than that of the *juren*, are also considered higher status gentry by some historians like Ping-ti Ho. Because their quota like the *shengyuan* quota was assigned to counties, their geographical distribution, if seen from the provincial level, was more balanced than *juren*. The following Table (Table 1.8) provides the statistics of the number of *gongsheng* in several counties in Qing Sichuan.

TABLE 1.8  
NUMBERS OF GONGSHENG\* IN SELECT SICHUAN COUNTIES IN THE QING

<i>County name</i>	<i>Gongsheng number</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Dongxiang	188	1931,XZ,1661-1692
Shuangliu	126	1937,XZ 320-330
Wanyuan	152	1932,XZ 731-734
Yingjing	218	1915,XZ 517-556
Changshou	230	1928,XZ 422-438

\*Includes only the five sorts of *zhengtu* (earning the title in the examination system rather than buying it) *gongsheng* in the Qing dynasty: *Engong*, *Bagong*, *fugong*, *suigong*, and *yougong*.

The average number of *gongsheng* of these five counties was around 170. If we take this number as the average number of the *gongsheng* in the whole province, then the total *gongsheng* in Sichuan during the whole Qing dynasty should be about 24,000.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, if we take 30 years as the average career span of a *gongsheng*, the number of *gongsheng* in Sichuan at any time in the late nineteenth century would be about 2,800.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>81</sup>Zhou Xun,1935:116.

<sup>82</sup>*Shuangliu xianzhi*,1937:320-330.

<sup>83</sup>*Wanyuan xianzhi*,1932:710.

<sup>84</sup> For there were about 140 administrative units at the county level in Qing Sichuan

<sup>85</sup> There seems to have been obvious increase of the quota of *gongsheng* in the late Qing as there was of *shengyuan*.

Ho Ping-ti has told us that in the Qing dynasty Sichuan produced 763 *jinshi*. This number ranked 14th among the 19 provinces of Qing China.<sup>86</sup> But were there more *jinshi* in Sichuan in the nineteenth century than in the early Qing? Before we answer this question, let us take a brief look at how the Qing regime allotted *jinshi* quotas among provinces. The allotment of the *jinshi* quota, like that of the *jure*n quota, was also based on the division of large, middle, and small provinces, but the way of calculating the quota was different. There were no fixed quotas for the provinces before an examination. The quota for a province depended on how many *jure*n from that province arrived in Beijing for that particular examination. For large provinces, every 40 *jure*n who arrived in Beijing would be assigned 1 *jinshi* degree; for middle provinces every 30 *jure*n would be assigned 1 *jinshi* degree; and for small provinces every 20 *jure*n would be assigned 1 *jinshi* degree.<sup>87</sup>

Sichuan was a middle province. In the early Qing, there was a small *jure*n quota for Sichuan, and also Sichuan *jure*n going for the metropolitan examination in Beijing had to take the tough route on land through Shaanxi and Shanxi; thus many Sichuan *jure*n preferred to give up the chance of success rather than endure the hardship of travelling on foot for several months.<sup>88</sup> Thus the number of Sichuan *jure*n who arrived in Beijing for

<sup>86</sup>Ping-ti Ho. 1962: 228. Li Chaozheng, a contemporary Sichuan scholar, has provided a different calculation from Ho's. According to Li, the total number of Sichuan *jinshi* in the Qing dynasty recorded in *DaQing huidian* and *Xu wenxian tongkao* is 786. But when those from Zunyi fu were transferred to Guizhou province after the Yongzheng times and those whose real origin native places were not Sichuan are omitted, the "true" Sichuan *jinshi* total in the Qing was 774. Li Chaozheng. 1986:9.

<sup>87</sup>This way to allot provincial quotas was put into practice in the 51st year of Kangxi emperor (1712) *Qinding daQing huidian shili*. Juan 350:4b. Zhou Xun. 1935:121.

<sup>88</sup>In early Qing, the metropolitan examinations were usually held in the February (Chinese calendar), therefore the *jure*n who wished to participate in the examination must leave for Beijing in the winter or autumn of the previous year. According to the regulation of Qing regime, the *jure*n from Zhili must set off for Beijing in the December of the previous year; those from Shandong, Shanxi, Henan, Shaanxi in November; those from Jiangnan, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, and Huguang in October; those from Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, SICHUAN, and other provinces, in September. Strangely enough, although Sichuan was one of the provinces farthest from Beijing, the Qing regime gave Sichuan *jure*n only 4 taels of silver as the stipend for the long trip, as little an amount as it gave to the *jure*n

the metropolitan examination was small. Consequently, few *jinshi* were produced. In the nineteenth century, however, along with the increase of Sichuan *juren* quota and because of the opening of the sea route along the east coast of China,<sup>89</sup> more Sichuan *juren* participated in the metropolitan examinations and thus more *jinshi* were produced. In the examination of Kangxi 52nd year (1713), when the new way to allot quota was first put into practice, altogether 186 *juren* from all over the country passed the Metropolitan examination. Among them there were only 4 Sichuanese,<sup>90</sup> far less than the large provinces like Jiangnan (Jiangsu and Anhui 30)<sup>91</sup> and Zhejiang (20).<sup>92</sup> The quota differences were narrowed in later years. For example, in the examination held in the 24th year of Jiaqing emperor (1819), 222 *jinshi* were selected, among whom 8 were from Sichuan, and 19 from Jiangsu and 19 from Zhejiang.<sup>93</sup> At the end of the Qing dynasty, the gap was further narrowed. In the 12th year of Guangxu emperor (1886), 316 *juren* passed the metropolitan examination, among whom were 24 from Jiangsu, 24 from Zhejiang, and 13 from Sichuan.<sup>94</sup> In the latter half of the nineteenth century, from the 6th year of Xianfeng emperor (1856) till the 12th year of Guangxu emperor (1886),

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from Zhili, the nearest province. As a contrast, the *juren* from Anhui received 20 taels; from Jiangxi and Hubei 15 taels; from Zhejiang and Henan 10 teals. Though the *juren* from Guizhou and Yunnan were only given 3 taels, the Qing regime also provided them with horses to ride. *daqing huidian shili*. Juan 339:1a-b

<sup>89</sup> Now Sichuan *juren* who left for Beijing for the metropolitan examination would first go to Shanghai by Yongtse River and then reach Beijing by the sea route.

<sup>90</sup> This figure suggests that only about 120 Sichuan *juren* went to Beijing in that year to participate in the national examination.

<sup>91</sup> The quota of Jiangnan was divided into quota of Jiangsu and quota of Anhui in the 60th year of Qianlong emperor (1795). *Qinding daQing huidian shili*. 350:17a-b.

<sup>92</sup> *Qinding DaQing huidian shili*. 350:11a.

<sup>93</sup> *Qinding DaQing huidian shili*. Juan 350:19b.

<sup>94</sup> *Qinding DaQing huidian shili*. Juan 350:25b.

altogether 14 metropolitan examinations were held.<sup>95</sup> And the total Sichuan *jinshi* selected during this time in all the examinations was 168.<sup>96</sup>

The above calculations are summarized in table 1.9.

TABLE 1.9  
COMPARISON OF STUDENT POPULATION IN SICHUAN AND THE WHOLE OF CHINA IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

	<i>Population</i>	<i>Tongsheng</i>	<i>Shengyuan</i>	<i>Upper gentry</i>
Sichuan	35,000,000*	630,000	37,000	4,000
China	430,000,000**	6,000,000	650,000	200,000
Ratio	1:12	1:10	1:17	1:50

\*Ping-ti Ho adopts Yan Zhongping's estimation that Sichuan population in 1850 was 44,164,000 (Ping-ti Ho. 1962:142), but more recent calculation by some Sichuan scholars shows that Yan's figure is too large, and Sichuan's population from 1850 to 1900 remained between 30-40 million people, (Li Shiping 1987:189; Wang Di,1989: 101). \*\*Ping-ti Ho. 1962: 278.

Table 1.9 shows that in the second half of the 19th century, Sichuan's population was about one twelfth of China's total population, which means for every 12 Chinese there was one Sichuanese. At the *tongsheng* level, the ratio between Sichuan and the whole country changed into 1:10. This change suggests that Sichuan had a higher rate of literacy than that in the national level average, which is confirmed by contemporary observers like Zhang Binglin.<sup>97</sup> At the *shengyuan* level, the gap widened. Among any 17 *shengyuan* in China, there was only one Sichuan *shengyuan*. But the most dramatic change occurred at the upper gentry level; among 50 upper degree holders, we have only one Sichuanese. The change of the ratios in table 1.9 illustrates plainly the gravity of the student surplus in Qing Sichuan in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

<sup>95</sup> Among them 4 were *enke* (gracing examination).

<sup>96</sup> Qinding Da Qing huidian shili. Juan 350:22b-25b.

<sup>97</sup> Zhang observed in 1918: "By my observation, with regard to erudite scholars, Sichuan can not match *xiajiang* (lower Yangzi region). But since everyone reads books and few peopel are illiterate, Sichuan has surpassed *xiajiang*." Quoted from Zhou Kaiqing.1976. *Shushi chongtan*:91-92.

## THE JAMMED LADDER TO SUCCESS

Compared to those of the coastal provinces, Sichuan students had fewer opportunities to obtain upward social mobility not only inside of the civil service examination system but also outside of it. The relatively more developed commercial economy and the emergence of modern industries in the coastal provinces in the latter half of the 19th century permitted the students there to have more possible choices of “decent” occupations outside the bureaucracy. Considering this fact, the problem of the surplus of student population in Sichuan appears to have been even more serious. In this section, we will discuss the various social manifestations of this student surplus problem in late Qing Sichuan.

One of the outcomes of educational expansion in Sichuan was that there were more *shengyuan* from poor families in the nineteenth century. Zhang Zhidong says in 1870s: “In recent years there have been too many students in Sichuan. The more numerous they are, the poorer they are. In seeking lodging, they cast themselves upon relatives. They scheme to eat what others save. They die in dire poverty. All of these are actual conditions.”<sup>98</sup>

In early Qing Sichuan more than half of the government schools at the county level possessed either no study lands or very small ones,<sup>99</sup> but in the latter half of the 19th century, it became popular for the county government schools to buy study lands.<sup>100</sup> Why did this happen when the competition for land was more tense in Sichuan society?

<sup>98</sup> Hu Jun. 1978. Ed. *Zhang Wenxianggong Nianpu*: 18. English translation is quoted from Ayers. 1971:46.

<sup>99</sup> *Jiaqing Sichuan tongzhi*. Juan 77.

<sup>100</sup> This phenomenon is easy to ascertain in the local gazetteers. For example, Quxian county set up study lands in 1882, Xuanhan county in 1890, and Dazhu county in 1882.

The answer was that there were poorer *shengyuan* students in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and the government schools had to set up study lands to help them. In the era of Guangxu emperor, Huang Jifei, a county magistrate in Nanchuan county in southeast Sichuan claims in his *Xuetian beiji* (Study Land Tablet Inscription) that 20 new *wen* (civil) and *wu* (military) students would enroll in Nanchuan county government school in every *sui* and *ke* examination. Most of them were from poor families, and it was hard for them to pay the entrance fee for the government school. After he thought over this issue, he decided that the best way to help them was to set up study lands.<sup>101</sup> In Dongxiang county, the officials for education would ask the new students to pay an entrance fee graded in accordance with their financial situation, but even a student from poor family had to pay tens of taels of silver. Thus some *tongsheng* from poor families sometimes would go on strike, making agreements with one another that none of them would take the county examinations. Such a tense situation lasted until 1893 when the study lands were set up in that county.<sup>102</sup>

Besides the expansion of the student population, another reason which enabled more boys from poor families to became *shengyuan* in the nineteenth century was that since now it was easier for the boys from rich families to get a degree and even an official post through other channels than the examination system, many of them therefore chose to withdraw from the intense competition of the examination. These other channels included *najuan* (buying), *laoji* (achievement), *jungong* (military exploit), *baoju* (recommendation), *enci* (bestowing by the emperor), and *fengying* (inheritance). Yunlian county in Sichuan provides us with an astonishing example of the numbers of people who

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<sup>101</sup> *Nanchuan xianzhi*.Juan 3:6a.

<sup>102</sup> *Xuanhan xianzhi*.Juan 9:21b.

got official posts through these other channels. In the whole Qing dynasty this county produced 205 *juren* and *gongsheng*, among whom only 56 received appointments to official posts, but those who became officials by other means were as many as 73.<sup>103</sup>

*Najuan* (buying an official position) was the most important one. Though this practice began in the early Qing,<sup>104</sup> it became prevalent in the nineteenth century. Most of the buyers were rich students who failed in the examinations or were unwilling to participate in them, but there were some who bought the official posts because they were unqualified for the examination.<sup>105</sup> In the late Qing, there were many of these people in Sichuan who had paid money and were waiting for the nominations. Xiliang, the Sichuan provincial governor, reported to the emperor when he arrived in Sichuan to assume his post in 1903:

Since I arrived in Sichuan, I have been making a careful inspection. I have found that the *shitu* (the way leading to official posts) is very crowded and the government is corrupt here. During this time of abolition of the purchases practice, all the buyers of the official posts who have paid the money and are waiting for appointment have come to get together in the capital city of the province. They have nothing to do, and therefore just

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<sup>103</sup> This county produced no *jinshi* in the whole Qing dynasty. *Yunlian xianzhi*. 1948:295-308.

<sup>104</sup> During Shunzhi period, the Qing regime announced that one who contributed 7-8 thousand taels of silver to the state would be given an official post. However, the contributor needed to take a simple test. Those who could write clear and coherent papers would be appointed as a county magistrate, and those who could not would be appointed as a *shoubei* (rank 5 military officers). Yin Dexin. 1990:398.

<sup>105</sup> Lou Tong, a young man who came from Yunnan to Wanyuan county, Sichuan, where his father was an official during the Guangxu times. According to the regulation of the examination, Lou must go back to Yunnan to participate in the examination. Lou did not want to go back home in Yunnan for it was far from east Sichuan. He therefore bought an official post in Sichuan. *Wanyuan xianzhi*. 1932:907.

learn from each other dissipated ways, becoming increasingly dispirited and inert.<sup>106</sup>

The men from rich families taking other channels to official posts than the examinations caused vast envy and contempt among the local people. This emotion was shown clearly in a poem that was written by an anonymous local poet in Wanyuan county in east Sichuan in the late Qing. The poem was one of four poems recorded in the Wanyuan county gazetteer that sneered at those “sons and brothers” from rich families who did not like to “read books”. The poem reads:

Drinking and playing around without worry,  
even if you are almost illiterate.

Though you may buy a degree or an official post,  
you have no fragrant ink smell on your body.<sup>107</sup>

The withdrawal of “the sons and brothers” from the rich families from the examinations provided those from poor families more chances to become a *shengyuan*, but to become a *shengyuan* in the Qing dynasty had not much financial benefit. Only a few of them (4-12 depending on the counties) could receive a stipend, and they were called *bingshan sheng* (stipend receiving students). The stipend in Sichuan was a very small sum of money. In most counties it was annually only 3.2 taels of silver, which was

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<sup>106</sup> Xiliang. 1959 (1903): 357.

<sup>107</sup> *Wanyuan xianzhi*. 1932: 1046.

apparently unable to guarantee a comfortable life for a receiver. Many *shengyuan* in Sichuan suffered lifelong poverty. “A poor and impractical pedant” might be the general image of the *xiucuai* in late imperial China, but it was particularly accurate to illustrate Sichuan *xiucuai*. Thus Zhang Zhidong advised the Sichuan students that they should have second thoughts before they decided to get into a life of examinations:

At present, many so-called *shi* (student gentry) in the schools have no good teacher. They are not diligent, and know nothing except *tiekuo* (stereotyped examination forms). They are unable to write poems and prose, but they still want to participate in the examination in the hope that a miracle will befall them. They meet repeated failures and when they become old, they try to change their profession but it will be too late. They are incapable of the work of *nong, gong, shangjia* (peasants, workers, merchants). When they are desperate with poverty, they have no choice but do some immoral things. I wish that students should work hard and try their best to be successful [in the examination]. If you think that you are not strong-willed, you had better give it up as soon as possible, and choose another occupation, thus you may at least have a skill to live on. Never assume a title of gentry but have nothing to do with it, spoiling your life without knowing.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Zhang Zhidong, 1876. *Youxuan yu*. Juan.204:4b-5a.

But it was not so easy for the students to give up the examination as Zhang Zhidong suggested. In many cases, it was not the boys themselves who wanted to participate in the examination. They were under the strong pressure of social expectation. As Dai Junheng (1814-1855), a Qing scholar, says: "If [a boy] does not participate in the examination when he is fifteen years old, his father and elder brothers will consider him stupid; if [a boy] has not entered the government school when he is twenty years old, he will be looked down upon by the neighbors."<sup>109</sup>

The poverty of Sichuan gentry in the Qing dynasty was illustrated by another fact that they were not involved in charitable activities except for the establishment of *shuyuan* that were related to their own benefit. When one looks over the county gazetteers of Qing Sichuan, one cannot help but notice that in most cases the donors for public and charitable projects were *yiren* (county men) rather than *shisheng* (gentry). In the meantime, since upper degree holders accounted for a smaller proportion in the gentry class in Sichuan than in most of the other provinces, the gentry class as a class in Sichuan included more *shengyuan* and was therefore poorer than that in many of the other provinces.

The modern capitalist economy with its various new occupations did not appear in Sichuan until the early twentieth century, almost fifty years later than in the coastal provinces.<sup>110</sup> The alternative occupations for the students (*tongsheng* and *shengyuan*) who failed in the competition for the higher examination degrees were still mainly those traditional ones such as doctors, fortune-tellers, and elementary school teachers as well as

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<sup>109</sup> Sheng Langxi. 1977:214.

<sup>110</sup> Wei Yingtao. 1990:209.

pettifoggers.<sup>111</sup> From this perspective, the Sichuan students had even fewer “exits” than those in the coastal provinces.

There are quite a few records in Sichuan county gazetteers about the failed competitors who became medical doctors later. For example, Yishan Gong in Jiangan county in south Sichuan was good at medicine. Because of his repeated failures in the provincial examinations after he became a stipend receiving student, he decided to withdraw from the examination and concentrate on the study of medicine. His house was filled with medical books.<sup>112</sup> Wu Yuanxian in Rongxian county in south Sichuan was a *jiansheng*. Failing several times in the provincial examinations, Wu also turned to learn medicine. According to the gazetteer, he saved many people’s lives.<sup>113</sup> One Sichuan old saying goes: “If you can not become a good official, become a good doctor.”

Elementary school teaching was the students’ most preferred occupation in late Qing, as Rawski points out in her *Education and Popular Literacy*, but the income for this job in many parts of Sichuan was less than modest. The annual salaries for *yixue* teachers in east Sichuan had been only 20-40 *chuan* since the Daoguang times. Up to the middle years of the Guangxu era the price of grain increased but *yixue* teachers’ salaries remained the same. According to Dazhu county gazetteer, the *shengyuan* lost interest in teaching and the *yixue* in that country existed only in name.<sup>114</sup>

The salaries for the *sishu* teacher might be quite different depending on the local people’s evaluation of the quality of the teacher, which was based on the performance of

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<sup>111</sup> For a discussion of these occupations in Qing China general, see Rawski. 1979: 101-103; Chang Chung-li. 1962:117-122.

<sup>112</sup> *Jiangan xianzhi*. 1923. *Jiangan wenzheng, Juanshang*: 499.

<sup>113</sup> *Rongxian zhi*. 1929. *Renshi*:8.

<sup>114</sup> *Dazhu xianzhi* 1928. 431.

his students in the examination. The more of his students who passed the examinations the more families would ask him to be the teacher of their children and the higher his pay would be. For this reason, it was a popular phenomenon in Sichuan that a *sishu* teacher would encourage his students to participate in the examination as early as possible, even if some of the students were still children. He would try to convince the children's parents that it was no harm for the children to "learn the rules of the examination hall" at an earlier age.<sup>115</sup>

One of the outcomes of the expansion of the student population and the limited number of government posts in 18th century was the increase of *muyou* (officials' private aides) in China, as is pointed out by Susan Mann Jones and Philip A. Kuhn in the *Cambridge History of China*,<sup>116</sup> but we should notice that *muyou* were mainly produced in the coastal provinces, especially in Yangzi Delta. In Qing dynasty Sichuan, it was a fashion for all the government officials from the provincial governors to the magistrates of the *zhou* and *xian* to employ *muyou* to do desk work, but ninety percent of the *muyou* in Sichuan were not from Sichuan itself but from Zhejiang, especially from the two counties of Shaoxing and Huzhou in Zhejiang. In the latter nineteenth century, the *muyou* from these two counties formed into two cliques in Sichuan to compete with each other. One clique would have the advantage over the other, if one of its members became the *muyou* of the provincial governor.<sup>117</sup>

The Qing regime promulgated a clear regulation to forbid *shengyuan* becoming pettifoggers. The regulation was inscribed on a tablet that was erected at the gate of every

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<sup>115</sup>See Zhang Zhidong. 1876. *youxuan yu. Juan*.204:5b

<sup>116</sup>Twitchett, Denis and Fairbank, John K. 1978. Ed. *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol.10. Ch.3. 1978:148.

<sup>117</sup>Zhou Xun.1935:384.

government school, but it was simply ignored by the Sichuan *shengyuan*. The late Qing Sichuan was a very violent society with numerous lawsuits, and the *shengyuan* often acted as pettifoggers in these lawsuits and in many cases they purposely instigated one of the parties concerned to bring a lawsuit against the other so that they were able to obtain fees for their service in the legal actions. Zhang Zhidong said in 1870s: "Sichuan people are frivolous, and often enter lawsuits. In cases concerning defrauding public or private properties, there must be *wensheng* (civil *shengyuan*) involved; in cases relating to the organizing of gangs and encouraging the masses to create disturbances, there must be *wusheng* (military *shengyuan*) involved."<sup>118</sup>

There were very few cases in Qing Sichuan in which a poor *tongsheng* or *shengyuan* would become a merchant after his failure in the provincial examination. This was not because he was unwilling but because he was unable (due to lack of funds or ability) to adopt that occupation.

The surplus of students and the limited ability of society to absorb them in the latter nineteenth century caused an increasingly strong pressure on the examination system, consequently, more cases of violating the regulations for the examination took place in Sichuan than in any other province.

In Qing dynasty there were strict restrictions on the qualifications of the candidates for the prefecture examination. One of the most important restrictions was that a candidate must participate in the county examination held in one's native county where the candidate's family had registered as tax payers in that county. If one took an examination in a county other than his native county and was discovered, he would suffer

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<sup>118</sup> Hu Jun. 1978. Ed. *Zhang Wenxianggong Nianpu*: 43.

a serious penalty. The purpose of this restriction was to guarantee the geographical balance of the *shengyuan* quotas.

In late Qing Sichuan, registering a false native place caused serious social problems in some places. For example, Bazhou in northeast Sichuan was a big county, and the competition in the examination there was very intense. Some of the families in that county bought lands and forests in the neighboring county, Wanyuan, in an attempt to have their names registered in the list of tax payers of that smaller county, and thus participate in its less intense county examination, but after the abolition of the Civil Service Examination in 1905, these fraudulent immigrants denied Wanyuan was their native place and thus caused problems concerning taxes.<sup>119</sup>

There were other popular ways of cheating in the examination in late Qing Sichuan. One was cheating about one's age. The Qing regime offered a gracious quota to the elderly *tongsheng* who were over 80 years old as a reward for their persistence on examination. Some *tongshen* who were only 50 or 60 years old would claim to be over 80 so that they might get the special grace.<sup>120</sup> The other was to submit false documents about the candidate's family. According to Qing regulation, students from certain family backgrounds were not permitted to participate in the prefecture or higher examinations. Thus some of them from such backgrounds would claim that they were the adopted sons of a family that was not under the restriction. Though this kind of cheating might be found all over China at that time, it was, according to Zhang Zhidong, particularly prevalent in Sichuan.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> *Wanyuan xianzhi*. 1932:647-648.

<sup>120</sup> Zhang Zhidong. 1876. *Youxuan yu. Juan*. 204:6a-b.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

But the most popular and serious cheating was the sort taking place in examination halls, that of candidate who employed someone else to write the examination under their names.<sup>122</sup> By Qing regulations, a candidate must find a stipend receiving *shengyuan* to act as his guarantor when he registered for the examination. But some rich students who employed others to write the examination under their names would bribe their guarantor to give them false affirmation. The amount of money for the bribery, according to Zhang Zhidong, was small and the risk for the guarantor was great,<sup>123</sup> but still many stipend receiving students wanted to do this dirty job. This may be considered as further evidence that the *shengyuan* in Sichuan in the nineteenth century were particularly poor.

Because the concerned officials in Sichuan were inert in punishing the candidates who violated the examination regulations, some local people would take action. They would wait at the gate of the examination hall and kidnap those candidates who were suspected of having cheated. This kidnapping was called *lake*. Sometimes, the attacked candidates might hire some bodyguards for protection. In such cases there would be fighting which might result in bloodshed. Those people who participated in the kidnapping were seeking not only justice but also ransom.<sup>124</sup>

Though Zhang Zhidong did much work to strengthen the discipline inside and outside the examination halls during his tenure as the Sichuan education director in the 1870s, it seemed to be of little consequence. As late as in 1904, Chongqing *fu* still had to order the counties under its jurisdiction strictly to forbid the violation of the regulations

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<sup>122</sup> Hu Jun. 1978. Ed. *Zhang Wenxiang Gong Nianpu*, 1978:40.

<sup>123</sup> The *shengyuan* who was found to offer a false guarantee would lose his *shengyuan* title. Zhang Zhidong. 1876. *youxuan yu. Juan*.204:6b.

<sup>124</sup> Hu Jun. 1978. Ed. *Zhang Wenxiang Gong Nianpu*, 1978:40.

for the examination halls. The order reads: “recently the regulations on the examination hall often have not been strictly carried out in Sichuan. Students may go out of and come into the hall at their will after they have received the question sheet. Some of them even carry their paper out of the hall and hand it in when the time of the examination is up. There is also cheating in the transcribing and sealing offices. Things are really out of order.”<sup>125</sup>

The surplus of the student population in the nineteenth century and its pathologies were most observable in Sichuan, the largest inland province of China proper. The case of Qing Sichuan demonstrated that educational expansion in such a pre-industrial agrarian society was not necessarily a good thing. Since the aim for a student to obtain education in the society was to become a political elite member, a surplus of the student population resulting from educational expansion might cause serious trouble to the whole mechanism of elite recruiting. This is quite different from the case in a modern industrial society where mass education is indispensable to train the personnel needed by the large number of economic and political institutions. But before we consider whether the new schools system established in Sichuan after the abolition of the civil service examination system in 1905 was the same sort of modern school system as that in an industrial society, and whether the Sichuan students in the new schools changed their attitude toward education in the first two decades of the twentieth century, in the next chapter we must first look at how the modern school system in Sichuan was established and what specific characteristics it possessed.

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<sup>125</sup> Baxian archive (micro-film). Guangxu reign. No. 6215:55

## Chapter 2

### **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW SCHOOL SYSTEM IN SICHUAN**

In the first decade of the twentieth century, China began to undergo one of the most rapid and far-reaching state-led political and institutional reforms in its history. Concepts of constitutions and assemblies were introduced into Chinese politics; traditional government converted into modern forms; new armies and police troops organized; modern industries and businesses encouraged. Educational reform occupied a central role in China's modernization. The civil service examination system, with its attached educational institutions such as academies and charitable schools, was finally abolished in 1905, and a "universal, compulsory and practically oriented" modern school system was established. Interestingly enough, Sichuan, the remote inland province and political, economic, and cultural backwater in the Qing dynasty, became the leader of China in the development of modern schools. In this chapter, we will investigate the way the new education system, an imitation of that of western industrial societies, was transplanted to Sichuan, a pre-industrial agrarian province. We will also examine the scale and structure of the new school system and offer both an explanation of it and a comparison with those in other provinces.

## NEW SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

In her case study of the educational reformer Zhang Jian (1853 - 1926) Marianne Bastid argues that the “modern gentry”, a new social group defined as men who held traditional degrees but were involved in modern industry or commerce, emerged in China during the latter half of the nineteenth century. This new elite played a leading role in educational reform, and their modern industry and business enterprises formed an important financial source for the establishment of the new school system in such coastal provinces as Jiangsu in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>126</sup>

The educational reform in Sichuan, however, was different from the picture portrayed by Bastid. The number of men who might be identified with the modern gentry was insignificant in Sichuan during this period. Though modern industries and businesses finally appeared there at the turn of the twentieth century, their scale was still very small and unable to provide the new school system with a new material foundation.

Though foreign commodities began to enter Sichuan as early as the middle of the nineteenth century, establishment of Chongqing Customs in 1891 and conversion of Chongqing into a treaty port in 1892 marked the official beginning of Sichuan’s direct trade with western powers. Increasing numbers of foreign merchants and trading companies entered Sichuan from that point. And to protect their economic and political interests there, almost all the major powers set up consulates in Sichuan during the period from 1891 through 1910.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Marianne Bastid:1988

<sup>127</sup> Britain in 1891; France in 1895; Japan 1896; the United States in 1896; Germany and Italy in 1904. See You Shimin.1990:3.

The foreign merchants sold in Sichuan mainly cotton yarns, cigarettes, kerosene, hardware and machines, while they bought from Sichuan hill country handicraft products (household utensils made of wood, bamboo, clay, etc.), bristles, silk, tung oil, grass cloth and so forth. The international trade enabled a group of comprador merchants to arise in Sichuan who were different from the traditional merchants. But compared to the merchant class in the coastal provinces, the number of the Sichuan comprador merchants was still small and their capital was modest. In 1907, Zhou Shanpei, the director of the Bureau for the Promotion of Industry and Business (*Quanyeju*) in Sichuan, remarked: “With regard to the Sichuan merchants, not only are there no such millionaire merchants as those in Fujian and Guangdong, but even those who have one or two hundred thousand taels of silver were rare.”<sup>128</sup>

Sichuan’s proportion in the total of China’s international trade was tiny in the first decade of the twentieth century, only about 4.22 percent.<sup>129</sup> Chongqing port was just a middle scale port among the 82 treaty ports open to the powers in the whole of China by 1910.<sup>130</sup> Its annual tariff revenue in the first decade of the twentieth century was around 500,000 taels of silver and this money was almost totally expended on paying the Boxer indemnities.<sup>131</sup> Some scholars in China found that before 1911, the per capita possession of commercial goods in Sichuan was about only one fourth that in Hubei province.<sup>132</sup>

One reason for the undeveloped international trade in Sichuan might be that there were no modern commercial banks. Before 1911, all the commercial loans in Sichuan

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<sup>128</sup> SWGB.1907.No.23:11.

<sup>129</sup> Zhang Xuejun and Zhang Lihong. 1990:106.

<sup>130</sup> Yan Zhongpin and others. 1955:41-46.

<sup>131</sup> You Shimin.1990:3.

<sup>132</sup> Wei Yingtao. 1990:254

were offered by the traditional *piaohao* and *qianzhuang*, which were unable to support large scale business. But the most serious restriction to Sichuan's international trade as well as its trade with the coastal provinces was its miserable transportation system. Although the Chuan-Han (Chengdu-Hankou) Railway Company was founded in 1904, the Chuan-Han Railway was not built during the Qing rule. The transportation of the goods into and out of Sichuan then was mainly via the Yangzi River. However, the first modern steamboat did not come to Chongqing until 1909 and before that year the transportation along the Yangzi River between Hankou and Chongqing relied on about 2,500 old-fashioned junks whose total freight tonnage was around 80,000.<sup>133</sup> This transportation capacity was too little, for as early as 1907, steamboats in all the treaty ports in China already numbered 91,380 and their total freight tonnage was 74,130,376.<sup>134</sup>

The origin of Sichuan's modern industry could be traced back to 1877 when provincial governor Ding Baozhen founded the Sichuan Machine Bureau (*Sichuan jiqiju*). This factory was the outcome of the Self-Strengthening Movement and it produced mainly munitions. Although the capital of the factory was large, its production had very little relationship to the local economy.

The modern industries which produced commodities for popular use did not begin until the last decade of the nineteenth century, and did not obviously grow until the first decade of the twentieth century. There were two sorts of modern enterprise in Sichuan: One comprises those businesses transformed from traditional handicraft industries by the introduction of machines and other modern equipment in their process of production.

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<sup>133</sup> Yan Zhongpin and others. 1955:235.

<sup>134</sup> Yan Zhongpin and others. 1955:221.

These sorts of enterprises mainly emerged from such large traditional handicraft industries as salt mining, silk reeling, sugar making, printing, and mining. The other consisted of those businesses transplanted from foreign countries such as match production, electricity generation, glass making, soap making, and machine making.

Most of the enterprises of modern industries during this period were privately rather than officially opened. According to calculations by some Sichuan scholars, 108 enterprises of modern industries were opened from 1901 through 1911 in Sichuan. Of these, 6 were officially sponsored; 3 were officially and privately jointly sponsored; and all the rest (99) were privately sponsored. These enterprises were mostly small, usually with only tens of workers. Of the 108 enterprises, 38 left records of the amount of their capital, and their average capital was less than one hundred thousand *yuan* apiece.<sup>135</sup>

It is actually doubtful whether some of these enterprises should be called modern enterprises since they were very poorly equipped with machinery. Records show that there were only 210,000 silver taels worth of machinery equipment imported into Sichuan from 1891 through 1911.<sup>136</sup> This figure seems to be a more precise indicator of the development of modern industry in Sichuan than the doubtful numbers of the modern enterprises calculated by Sichuan scholars. To get a sense of how little this amount was, we can take a look at the total importation of machinery equipment into China in 1910. In that single year, the cost of all machinery equipment imported into China was 10,991,000 *yuan*.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> We Yingtao. 1990:252-253.

<sup>136</sup> We Yingtao. 1990:251.

<sup>137</sup> Yan Zhongpin and others. 1955:72.

The most important modern industry in modern China, the textile industry, was centered in six cities: Shanghai, Qingdao, Wuhan, Tianjin, Wuxi, and Nantong.<sup>138</sup> Except for Wuhan, all the other five were in coastal provinces. Although there were 21 textile factories in Sichuan by 1911,<sup>139</sup> their equipment was backward and their production small. The undeveloped textile industry in Sichuan was due to Sichuan's insufficient cotton production and Wuhan's powerful rivalry.<sup>140</sup>

Because of the small foothold that modern industries and international trade had in Sichuan's economy in the first decade of the twentieth century, they did not cause a significant change to Sichuan's traditional economic and social structure. They were unable, as we will show later, to replace the traditional agriculture, handicraft industry, and commerce to be the major financial source for the new school system.

#### FOUNDERS AND RESOURCES OF NEW SCHOOLS

Because of the underdevelopment of modern industry and commerce, Sichuan remained basically a traditional agrarian society in the first decade of the twentieth century. Traditional methods and resources for school establishment were still employed for the establishment of the new school system. There were very few "modern gentry" with a capitalist character who were active in school founding in Sichuan as in some eastern provinces,<sup>141</sup> therefore, state power still played the most important role in raising

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<sup>138</sup> Yan Zhongpin and others. 1955:91;107.

<sup>139</sup> Most of them were in Chongqing.

<sup>140</sup> Zhang Xuejun and Zhang Lihong. 1990:181.

<sup>141</sup> About the definition of the modern gentry, see Marianne Bastid. 1988:16-17. Bastid pointed out that most numerous of the modern gentry were in Zhili, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Hubei, Hunan, and Guangdong. Bastid. 1988:17.

funds for school founding. The providers of school funds were not a specific social class, but people from a variety of social backgrounds. The motives of the school founders in Sichuan were complicated and hard to generalise.

The state supervision of school founding in Sichuan could be divided into two periods in the first decade of the twentieth century. Before the abolition of the civil service examination system in 1905, the local officials were in charge of the founding of the new school system, while after 1905, bureaucratic educational organizations such as the bureaus for promotion of education (*Quanxuesuo*) took over the work.

As early as 1904, shortly before the abolition of the examination system, the Sichuan governor Xiliang called upon the local officials to take responsibility for education reform, and proclaimed that from then on the provincial government would evaluate local officials' administrative performance according to their work on new school founding. He declared that all the departments and counties must begin to establish primary schools and *mengyang* schools immediately, and those local officials who had done a good job within half a year would be awarded and those who had not would be punished.<sup>142</sup>

This proclamation was not a bluff but actually carried out. In 1905, the provincial government, according to the request of the Sichuan Provincial Education Office (*xuewuchu*), recorded merits for magistrates in 15 departments and counties, because they “used the right persons”, “collected adequate funds”, “set up a large number of schools”, or “employed the right method to lead and encourage school founding”.<sup>143</sup> In the meantime, 11 magistrates were given demerits with the accusations being that they

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<sup>142</sup> SCXB.1904.Vol.16.*gongdu*:35.

<sup>143</sup> SCXB.1905.Vol.12.*gongdu*:1-3.

“delayed in school founding”, “wasted funds”, “muddled through the work”, “founded no schools”, or “made false reports”. Another five prefecture and department and county magistrates who had a very mediocre achievement in school founding were exempted from punishment for “the places under their jurisdiction were either remote or minority inhabited areas.”<sup>144</sup> In the same year, Governor Xiliang also submitted a memorial to the emperor and asked him to issue a decree to award four magistrates and one educational official (*jiaoyu*) for their vigour in school founding, and demote three officials for their inertia in educational affairs.<sup>145</sup> The purposefulness of the provincial government forced the officials at lower ranks to be dynamic in school founding. They sent personnel to Chengdu repeatedly to learn the new school regulations.<sup>146</sup>

The first group of new schools was converted academies and charitable schools. The two provincial academies in Chengdu, Zunjing academy and Jinjiang academy, were transformed into the Sichuan Higher School in 1902 and the Sichuan Higher Normal School in 1906 respectively. Those academies in the capitals of prefectures were transformed into middle schools, while those academies in the department or county towns were transformed into upper primary schools. The small academies in the market towns and charitable schools were transformed into lower primary schools.

Other traditional educational facilities, such as the buildings and study lands of the government schools, the examination halls, and the subsidies for the students who went to Chengdu for the provincial examination (*binxing fei*), also became the annexed resources of the first new schools. Zhou Xun points out: “at the end of Qing dynasty

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<sup>144</sup> SCXB.1905.Vol.12.*gongdu*:1-3.

<sup>145</sup> XLYG. *zhougao*. 5:530.

<sup>146</sup> In the Archives of Sichuan University, one can see many introductory letters for the personnel who were sent to participate in the training center by the *zhou* and *xian* governments. (The archive No:28)

during the period of abolition of the civil service examination system ... and the establishment of new schools, it was really due to the study lands of charitable schools and governmental schools that those new middle and primary schools were able to be established.”<sup>147</sup>

When a county magistrate received the order to found new schools, he would first call the local gentry together and obtain their support. This was quite different from the Yangzi delta model during this period in which modern gentry, according to Bastid, often initiated school founding. One account of the process of the founding of the first group of new schools in Dongxiang county around 1902-1904 by the county magistrate illustrates vividly how a local official transformed academies into new schools with the supplementary aid of the local gentry:

In the Winter of *gengzhi* year (1902), the Court determined to reform and practice the new policies. All the academies in the departments (*zhou*) and the counties (*xian*) were to be transformed into primary schools ... I assumed the post of magistrate of this county in the *renyin* year (1903) ... An inspection of the environment of the existing Lailu academy revealed that the landform did not allow an expansion of the academy building. But below the Lailu pavilion on the left side of the academy, there was an empty space which was tens of *mu*, wide enough to build tens of classrooms and student bedrooms. I called the gentry together, asking for their opinions and getting their agreement. Thus workers began to clean

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<sup>147</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935:367.

the place, lay the foundation, choose the material and construct the houses.

In about nine months, the whole project was finished and the academy was transformed into the county primary school. .... Those old small academies in the market towns ... were all transformed into *mengyang* schools (entry level children's schools). Though donated and managed by the local people, their transformation was under the supervision of the government.<sup>148</sup>

It may be true, as Sally Borthwick suggests, that the introduction of the new school system to China was based on the Chinese elite belief that since schools had brought about the rise of Japan, they would bring about the rise of China.<sup>149</sup> It may also be correct that Chinese officials and scholars were enthusiastic about the establishment of the new school system because they wanted to reform the people, producing a patriotic, hard working and united citizenry, as Paul Bailey believes.<sup>150</sup> But the Chinese did not all share the same point of view. Those great expectations for the new school system were certainly not in the minds of some Sichuan officials and gentry who were active in new school founding. If we take a look at those tablet inscriptions written by the local officials for commemorating the founding of new schools<sup>151</sup> in Sichuan local gazetteers, we will find that to many of them, the abolition of the civil service examination system and the establishment of the new school system were nothing but a return to the ancient state

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<sup>148</sup> *Sichuan Xuanhan xianzhi*. 9:41a.

<sup>149</sup> Borthwick. 1983:66.

<sup>150</sup> Bailey. 1990:1-2.

<sup>151</sup> A custom inherited from the time of the academies.

controlled school system in the pre-imperial Golden Age.<sup>152</sup> For example, Hu Songyun, the magistrate of Wanyuan county who assumed the post in 1902, commented in his *Inscription on the Tablet for Establishing An Upper Primary School* that the new school system was not so new because “the state (*zheng*) and education (*jiao*) were combined in our China before the Three Dynasties. The right to change people’s heart (*xinhua*) was then controlled by the emperor (*jun*).”<sup>153</sup> Huang Rujian, a gentry member in Yingjing county claimed that Ma Duanlin (1254?-1323) in his *wenxian tongkao* (General Study of Literary Remains) had already pointed out that in ancient times, “the state and education were combined; teachers and officials were the same person”. He said that only after the Qin (221-207 BC) and Han (206 BC-220 AD) dynasties, the state and education were separated and the civil service examination system became developed. He was particularly angry with some young boys (*housheng xiaozhi*), because after “the European wind has blown to China”, they, forgetting their ancestors, did not understand what the real purpose of the school system was.<sup>154</sup>

It was obvious that these Sichuan officials and gentry misunderstood the purpose of the Qing regime in promoting the new school system, but ironically, this misunderstanding helped to promote the founding of the new schools in Sichuan during this period. When they called for folks to participate in the education reform, this “return to a golden age” theory of the Sichuan local officials might have been more persuasive to the local people than the arguments of the modern-minded educational reformers who

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<sup>152</sup> This was the period of the Xia dynasty (about 21st-16th century BC), the Shang dynasty (about 16th-11th century BC), and the Zhou dynasty (about 11th century – 3rd century BC).

<sup>153</sup> *Wanyuan xianzhi*. 1932. 5.17a-b.

<sup>154</sup> *Yingjing xianzhi*. 1915. 5. 1a-b. To return to the ancient state controlled school system seemed to have long been a wish of the reform-minded gentry of the Qing. See Alexander Woodside’s article in Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside. 1994.

published articles in the newspapers in Shanghai and other big cities of the coastal provinces.

Since 1906, bureaus for promotion of education (*quanxuesuo*) had begun to be set up one after another in the departments and counties in Sichuan. From then on, although the magistrates still cared for school founding, the practical educational affairs were now managed by this bureaucratic organization. Each bureau had several staff members called the directors for promotion of education (*quanxue yuan*). Under the bureau for promotion of education were numerous lecture halls (*xuanjiang suo*), the lecturers' tasks were to explain and publicize the principles and regulations of the new education system. In the same year, by the order of the education ministry of the Qing central government, the provincial Education Office was renamed the Board of Education (*xuewu gongsuo*)

While the Board of Education and the bureaus for promotion of education were the most important official educational organizations in Sichuan, the most important unofficial organization was the Education Association of Sichuan, whose headquarters was founded in Chengdu in 1907. Since it was an unofficial organization without administrative necessity, some prefectures or counties established branches (*fenhui*) and some did not. Although this organization was supposed to be an unofficial, independent organization and its members mainly local gentry, it was established according to the order of the education ministry of the Qing government.

A number of other official educational organizations were also founded during the Reform period, such as the Provincial Office of Inspecting Education Affairs (*sheng xuewu diaocha suo* 1904) which took the responsibility of choosing and training the

inspectors of local education affairs; the Synthesizing Office of Education Affairs (*xuewu zonghesuo* 1905), an intermediate organization set up at the level of prefectures to transfer the educational documents between the Bureau of Education at the provincial level and the bureaus for promotion of education in the county level; the Office of Education Studies (*jiaoyu yanjiu suo* 1905) which was in charge of such affairs as examining and approving textbooks and training teachers; the Training Office of Sichuan Education Officials (*Sichuan Jiaoyuguan Lianxisuo* 1907), whose task was, as the name indicates, training and improving the skill of the executive officials of education in the province; the Associations of *Sishu* Reform (*Sishu gailiang hui* 1909); and the Office of Primary Education Studies (*jiaoyu yanjiu suo* 1910).<sup>155</sup> The establishment of so many organizations illustrated the state's effort to bureaucratize education.

There was no doubt a greater degree of state involvement in educational reform in Sichuan than in coastal provinces. It was likely for this reason that fewer mass riots against the new schools occurred in Sichuan. According to Abe Hiroshi's calculations, from 1904 through 1911, only 6 popular anti-school riots occurred in Sichuan, while 10 occurred in Guangdong; 38 in Jiangsu; and 44 in Zhejiang.<sup>156</sup>

We now turn to the financial resources for the establishment of the new school system. The funds for both official schools and public schools in Sichuan were collected by the local officials or the bureaus for the promotion of education from local society; therefore, it was not often easy to distinguish between these two types of schools. In 1909 the education ministry of the Qing government in Beijing ordered that all the official

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<sup>155</sup> For a more detailed description of these educational organizations, See Wang Di.1993:469-473.

<sup>156</sup> Hiroshi Abe 1993:170. Of the 6 riots in Sichuan, 4 were caused by the masses' hatred toward Christians, for local people believed that new schools were somehow related to foreigners. This hatred of Christians and foreigners was

lower primary schools in the country should charge tuition fees. Whether public lower primary schools did so depended on these schools themselves. Some Sichuan provincial assemblymen did not think that this order was suitable for Sichuan, because there were no substantial differences between the two sorts of schools there. They thus put forward a motion, which reads:

The expenditures of most lower primary schools in Sichuan are provided by the bureaus for the promotion of education. The middle schools, upper primary schools, and those lower primary schools attached to normal schools are called officially founded, while those schools in towns or rural areas whose expenditures relied upon charitable schools, temples, guild halls, taxes on pigs, taxes on grain and all the other sundry taxes are called publicly founded. But these so called publicly founded are not much different from the officially founded ... we suggest that all the lower primary schools, no matter whether they are official or public ones, should charge tuition fees from new students.<sup>157</sup>

The statistics of the sources for provincial education revenue issued by the Qing Education Ministry in 1907, 1908, and 1909<sup>158</sup> consist of as many as eight items. The 1907 statistics includes no Sichuan data, but those statistical records of 1908 and 1909 do. The items of the sources for school funds in table 2.1 show that these sources were

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not an important reason for the riots in Guangdong, Jiangsu and Zhejiang, where people were more concerned with educational taxes. See Abe, Hiroshi 1993:163-168.

<sup>157</sup> SXGS:26.

<sup>158</sup> They were Diyici, Dierci and Disanci jiaoyu tongji tubiao respectively.

not substantially different from those for the traditional educational institutions before the abolition of the civil service examination. Among the eight items, only the tuition fees were a new source of funds.

TABLE 2.1  
REVENUE FOR EDUCATION IN SICHUAN IN 1908 AND 1909

Sorts	Amount (tael)	
	1908	1909
1 Rent from Real property	147,868	252,954
2 Interest of Deposit	73,308	70,173
3 Official allocation	753,602	940,501
4 Public Money	703,746	756,976
5 Tuition Fees from Students	196,313	197,146
6 Imposed Donations	123,989	161,926
7 Voluntary Donations	182,288	33,397
8 Sundry Revenue	127,285	165,259
Total	2,308,399	2,578,331

Source: The figures for 1908 are from Sichuansheng xuewu suiru leibie tongji biao. In *Sichuan jiaoyu tongji biao. 34th year of Guangxu emperor* (1908). Sichuan Provincial Archives. No.120:10:132/2. This document contains the original statistics submitted by Sichuan education authority to Qing Education Ministry as data for the edition of *dierci jiaoyu tongji tubiao*. The figures for 1909 are taken from *disanci jiaoyu tonji tubiao*: 16.

Items 1 and 2 in table 1 were mainly the income from the property taken over from academies, charitable schools and other traditional educational facilities, while items 4 and 8 were the revenue from various taxes and incomes from public facilities such as ferries. All the four items can be considered public money. Item 3 was official money that was allotted from the provincial tax revenue.<sup>159</sup> As far as items 5, 6, 7 were concerned, we may combine them into a category of private money. The following table 2.2 shows the comparison of the three categories of the sources for education funds among Sichuan and some coastal provinces in 1907.

TABLE 2.2  
COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL FUNDS IN SELECT PROVINCES IN 1907

	Sources		
	<i>Official money</i>	<i>Public money</i>	<i>Private money</i>
Sichuan*	32.6%	45.6%	21.8%
Guangdong	18.3%	58.5%	23.2%
Jiangsu**	24.8%	32.5%	42.7%
Zhejiang***	13.7%	41.6%	44.7%

Source: The reconstruction of the figures in the three provinces other than Sichuan is based on *Diyici jiaoyu tongji tubiao* (The First Educational Statistics, Graphs and Tables). 34th year of Guangxu emperor (1907).\* Since Sichuan's data was not included in the *tubiao*, we have to use the corresponding figures in *Sichuan sheng xuewu suiru leibie tongji biao* (Tables of Sichuan Annual Educational Income by Category). In *Sichuan jiaoyu tongji biao* (Statistics Tables of Sichuan Education). 34th year of Guangxu emperor (1908). Sichuan Provincial Archives. No.120:10:132/2.\*\* Bastid classes public and privately founded schools as one category because she believes that both schools essentially depended on local notables. Therefore her calculation of the percentage of privately founded schools in Jianshu in 1907 was as high as 72%. Bastid. 1988:69-69.\*\*\* May also refer to Rankin. 1985:212.

As table 2.2 indicates, Sichuan had larger percentage of official money and less private money for new schools than the coastal provinces. However, it was not necessary for official schools in Sichuan to use only official money and public schools to use only public money. Actually the two sorts of schools did not only use both official money and public money, but also private money, especially donations. The following pages contain a detailed discussion of the donations for official and public schools in Sichuan in the first decade of the twentieth century.

As is shown in table 2.1, there were two sorts of donations: the voluntary donation and the imposed donation. The voluntary donors for official schools and public schools might be any sort of people and their motives might be quite varied. The director of educational affairs, Fang Xu, donated to Jiading Business and Industry school 5,000 taels of silver to show his favour for that kind of school.<sup>160</sup> When one of the market towns in Jiangan county planned to establish an upper primary school at the end of Qing, one

<sup>159</sup> Zhou Xun.1935: 76.

gentry member donated 1,000 taels of silver and another donated more than 100 taels for they thought that this school would enhance the local education level.<sup>161</sup>

Quite a number of people donated funds to the official and public schools not because they were advocates of modern education but because they hoped to obtain personal benefits from the donations. This is the place where a present-day historian should be very careful, otherwise he might misinterpret the donors' intention. The Qing regime offered different rewards to donors according to the amount they donated, such as a certificate of merit, an honorific arch, and even an official post. If the donor was already an official, his official rank might be promoted. In 1905, a *shengyuan* in Liangshan county got a certificate of merit for his great contribution in school founding.<sup>162</sup> Two brothers in Rongxian county contributed 1,000 *chuan* of copper coins, and they each also received a certificate of merit.<sup>163</sup> Such certificates might be employed by the holder to promote his or her social prestige in the local society.

An honorific arch was usually awarded to those who donated more than one thousand taels of silver for official or public schools. A *gongsheng* in Wanxian county contributed 2,000 taels for school founding in 1909 and the ministry of Ritual in Beijing permitted him to set up an honorific arch.<sup>164</sup> In Huayang county, a widow established a school for girls which cost her over 1,000 taels of silver; therefore, she was able to set up

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<sup>160</sup> DFZZ.1908.Vol.5.No.6:144.

<sup>161</sup> Jiangan xianzhi.1923.Juan 2:118.

<sup>162</sup> SCXB.1907.Vol.1:1.

<sup>163</sup> SCJYGB.1910.No.1:10.

<sup>164</sup> SCJYGB.1910.No.5:12.

an honorific arch and inscribe on it four special Chinese characters awarded by the emperor to honor her merit.<sup>165</sup>

Those who had a degree and donated more than 10,000 taels of silver for new schools were hopeful to get an official post. This kind of reward was in fact the continuation of buying an official post in the second half of the nineteenth century. For example, in 1907 *gongsheng* Wang Pingfang, *jiansheng* Wang Yunfang and Wang Xinyuan in Gaoxian county each donated 10,000 taels of silver to the county primary school; *gongsheng* Tian Hongru and Mu Zhixi in Yunlian county each offered the rent of their land, which was valued at 10,000 taels of silver, to the county primary school. All of them were subsequently recruited as county magistrates at the emperor's permission.<sup>166</sup>

If those officials who already had an official title donated to school founding, they would be promoted in rank. A Changshou county magistrate in waiting donated over 10,000 taels of silver to establish an upper and lower primary school in his home town; his bureaucratic official rank was therefore raised from rank 7 to rank 4.<sup>167</sup> Zhou Wanhang, a *xiancheng* (assistant county magistrate) in Chongqing, donated 5,000 taels of silver and he was rewarded with a *tongzhi* (Vice prefecture magistrate) title.<sup>168</sup>

The most surprising donors for new schools in Sichuan were widows. We have numerous examples of widows making donations to official schools and public schools: widow Wei, nee Li<sup>169</sup> in Mianzhou had a little tract of land, but when she saw that the

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<sup>165</sup> SCJYGB.1910.No.10:5.

<sup>166</sup> XLYG. *Zhougao*. *Juan* 5:451; XBGB.1907.No.71:33.

<sup>167</sup> XLYG. *Zhougao*. 5:582.

<sup>168</sup> XLYG. *Zhougao*. 5:582

<sup>169</sup> In Sichuan during the imperial period, women usually had no given names. They were addressed by their husband's family name and their own father's family name together. Therefore "Wei" here was the woman's late husband's family name; Li was her own father's family name.

public school of her clan (it should be her husband's clan) was short of funds, she generously contributed over 20 *mu* of land to the school. The *zhou* magistrate thus asked the higher authorities to reward her.<sup>170</sup> Widow Hu, nee Nie, in Weiyuan county, donated some of her property for school use and she was permitted to set up an honorific arch.<sup>171</sup> Widow Mi, nee Cheng, and her son, who was a lower official at rank nine in Shuining county, donated 1,350 taels of silver for the officially founded upper primary school and her son was therefore promoted three ranks.<sup>172</sup> Widow Wang, nee Xia, in Huili *zhou*, contributed a tract of land which was valued at 4,250 taels of silver,<sup>173</sup> widow Kang, nee Du, also in Huili, contributed a tract of land which was valued at 1500 taels of silver to set up a lower primary school for the clan.<sup>174</sup> Widow Yi, nee Zhang, in Dianjiang county, who donated for schools and was permitted to erect an honorific arch.<sup>175</sup>

Why were these widows so concerned with new schools which seemed to have nothing to do with them? The reason was that after the death of the husband of a family, if the widow had no children, the land of the family would be coveted by the clan of the husband. In such a case, if the widow contributed some land or money to the official or public schools, she could get certain rewards from the government, such as a certificate of merit, or an honorific arch, which was a sort of protection for her property. For example, widow Ding, nee Li, in Baxian county, had no children. The clan people of her late husband tried to seize her land. The dispute was brought before the county

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<sup>170</sup> DFZZ.1907.Vol.4.No.7:174.

<sup>171</sup> SCXB.1906.Vol.9.*Gongdu*:8.

<sup>172</sup> XLYG. *Zhougao* 5:582.

<sup>173</sup> XLYG. *Zhougao* 5:582.

<sup>174</sup> XLYG. *Zhougao* .5:583.

<sup>175</sup> SCXB.1906.Vol.12. *Zhouyi*:5.

government. The widow pleaded to the government to allow her to donate a tract of land which could produce 50 piculs of grain annually to the prefecture school, and the rest which could produce 10 piculs was left for her as compensation. She claimed that in the future she would adopt a child to inherit the land left for her to avoid the clan people's harassment. The county government accepted her pleading and the dispute was settled.<sup>176</sup>

Local governments sometimes could become a rival of a widow's husband's clan for the widow's property. In 1907, a widow in Xinfan county died, leaving an adopted child. A relative in the clan longed for the deceased's property, but he was depressed to find that his desire was unable to be fulfilled, because the county government claimed that it found evidence that the widow had made a will to leave a part of her property to the county bureau for promotion of education for establishment of a girls' school, another part to the clan, and the last part to her adopted son.<sup>177</sup>

The imposed donation (*quanjuan*) was very questionable in Sichuan. In many cases it was a sort of plunder. In 1906, Huang Zhenming, an inhabitant in Naxi county sold grain in the market without the permission of the local authority and the county magistrate imposed upon him a penalty of 200 taels of silver to be donated for the purpose of school founding.<sup>178</sup> In 1904, Di Baokui, the magistrate of Longchang county, was reported to the emperor, and accused by some rich gentry in that county for harshly imposing levies of money with the excuse of raising donations for school founding. Though the magistrate was finally exempted from investigation under governor Xiliang's

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<sup>176</sup> DFZZ.1907.Vol.10.No.10:240.

<sup>177</sup> SCXB.1907.No.6 *gongdu*:4.

<sup>178</sup> XLYG. *Zhougao Juan* 5:588.

protection, this case illustrated that conflict between the gentry and the local officials might exist in some places in Sichuan concerning imposed donations for schools.<sup>179</sup>

Most imposed donations came from Buddhist and Taoist temples and other houses of deities. Imposing donations on temples was a traditional way to collect local educational funds. In fact, many of the charitable schools established during the Daoguang period in Sichuan used Buddhist and Taoist temples as their school sites. Later, Zhang Zhidong proposed using confiscated temple property to support new schools. He suggested in his *Exhortation to Learning* (1898) that seventy percent of temple property should be taken over for new school use, while thirty percent be left for the monks and nuns.<sup>180</sup> Sichuan, one of the most religious provinces in China, had large numbers of temples and houses of gods, many of which were transformed into modern schools in the early years of the twentieth century. (Table 2.3)

TABLE 2.3  
THE TEMPLES, CONVENTS, AND HOUSES OF GODS TRANSFORMED INTO  
NEW SCHOOLS IN SICHUAN IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

	<i>Houses of deities</i>	<i>Buddhist temple</i>	<i>Taoist temple</i>	<i>Buddhist convent</i>	<i>Taoist convent</i>	<i>Total</i>
Existing	2,940	16,168	2,507	2,057	449	24,121
Transformed*	1,054	1,670	241	114	21	3,100
Abandoned	232	521	78	84	39	954

Source: *Sichuan sheng neiwu tongji Baogao shu*. Vol.2 *xuanju-lijiao* (1916). SPA.No.3:1:17/5. \*A few of them might have been transformed for other use rather than the use of schools.

In 1911, two monks in a temple in Baxian county were accused of being law-violating monks and all the lands belonging to their temple were confiscated. The tenants

<sup>179</sup> XLYG.Zhougao. Juan 5:419-20.

<sup>180</sup> Zhang Zhidong. 1898. *Quanxue pian*:14536-8.

on the land were informed that their rent would be used as school funds from then on.<sup>181</sup>

Also in Baxian in 1911, *juren* Hu Weikai accused the chief monk Liaosu of the Temple of Sage Emperor Yu in the county town of having violated laws often. He asked the county government to drive Liaosu out of the temple and transform the temple into a girls' school. Hu justified his accusation by stating that the action was necessary because grounds for school building in Baxian county were "very hard to find".<sup>182</sup>

Temples were coveted by the school founders not only because they had lands and houses but also because they had trees. Most of the Buddhist and Taoist temples in China were surrounded by tall trees which could be used as material for building houses. In 1904, some school founders in Wenjiang county received the sanction of the county magistrate and asked the temples in four districts (*xiang*) of the county to cut hundreds of cypress trees immediately for school construction.<sup>183</sup>

To avoid the endless demands of the founders of official and public schools, the monks might contribute part of their property on their own initiative. Monk Wuming of Qingsheng county generously donated twenty percent of the income of his temple to the new schools and advised other temples to help the schools too; thus the funds contributed by the temples exceeded 1,000 taels of silver in that county. The county magistrate reported the monks' action to the higher authority and requested a reward for them.<sup>184</sup>

Perhaps because the temples in Sichuan suffered so much harassment in those days the Sichuan provincial government twice declared, in July of the 30th year (1904)

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<sup>181</sup> SPA. *Baxian dang*. Microfilm. *Juanhao*:1623. *Zhouhao*:11. According to the file, one monk in the temple was old and ill and the other was very young. There was no concrete description of what law they had violated.

<sup>182</sup> SPA. *Baxian dang*. Microfilm. *Juanhao*:1600. *Zhouhao*:11.

<sup>183</sup> DFZZ. 1904. Vol. 1. No.9:215.

<sup>184</sup> DFZZ. 1907. Vol.4. No.7:174.

and June of 31st year of Guangxu emperor (1905), that forcibly cutting the trees and occupying the lands of the temples was “against generally acknowledged norms”. And it ordered that the local governments must not extort resources from the temples but “take over as much of their property as is viable.”<sup>185</sup>

Although the provincial government declared that it was protecting the Buddhist and Taoist temples from extortion, the protection did not extend to the houses of deities and ceremonies of folk beliefs. The provincial government declared: “The surplus money of the houses of deities and ceremonies of folk beliefs has been consumed in drinking, eating, and playing. This money, different from the property of temples which were under our protection, should be taken over for school funding. If anyone tries to resist this order, he will be punished severely.”<sup>186</sup>

To this point, we have been talking about official and public schools. Yet what of the private schools? These institutions were founded by a single person, or a group of people, or a social institution with its own money.<sup>187</sup> The majority of the private schools seem to be low level technical schools, vocational schools and girls’ schools; their founders were most likely sincere social reformers. Fragmentary data about the private school founders available in newspapers and periodicals ( mainly *Dongfang Zazhi*) published in the first decade of the twentieth century identifies these founders and the kinds of schools they founded.

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<sup>185</sup> SCXB.1905.Vol.7. *Gongdu*:16; Vol.13. *Gongdu*:31.

<sup>186</sup> SCXB.1905.Vol.13. *Gongdu*:13.

<sup>187</sup> My definition. It is not easy to define a private school. For example, should we consider a clan school a public school or a private school? From the point of view of the families in the clan, it was a public school, but from the point of view of the outsider, it was certainly a private school. Bastid simply classes all public and private schools in Jiangsu in one category (Bastid.1988:69).

*Officials*: Some local officials were not only the founders of official schools but also the founders of private schools. Xu Jiantian, an inspector of Sichuan middle schools, set up a girls' school with his own money at his home in 1905 and invited *juren* Cheng Shisheng's wife to teach cultivation of character, domestic management (*jiazheng*), history, Chinese, and the arts. He invited another lady to teach mathematics and geography. The school enrolled 15 students.<sup>188</sup> In Luozhi County, magistrate Cheng Dao and his wife set up a girls' school in 1907 whose purpose was to "create the right social tendencies."<sup>189</sup> An official of Chongqing customs opened a school in 1907 to teach on written Chinese in phonetic symbols. Anyone aged 10-40 who was interested in phonetic symbols written Chinese might enrol in that school.<sup>190</sup>

*Gentry*: In 1907, gentry in Dianjiang county thought that the kindergarten was the basis of *mengxue*. But because the county was short of nannies, they decided to establish a nanny school in the county town, and selected 30 women who knew some Chinese characters to attend. The kindergarten was set up in half a year after the students graduated from the nanny school.<sup>191</sup> To advocate sericulture, gentry in Fuzhou founded a sericulture industry school in 1906 and established a training center in a market town so that the students had a place to do field research.<sup>192</sup>

*Common people*: In 1905, Bian Xiaowu, in Jiangjin county, with his friend, a Japanese army officer, opened a Japanese language school in Chongqing, offering

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<sup>188</sup> DFZZ.1905.Vol. 2.No.6:160.

<sup>189</sup> DFZZ.1907.Vol.4.No.3:6.

<sup>190</sup> DFZZ.1907.Vol.4.No.11:296.

<sup>191</sup> DFZZ.1907.Vol.4.No.11:296.

<sup>192</sup> DFZZ.1906.Vol.3.No.6:138.

language training for those who planed to study in Japan.<sup>193</sup> Again in Jiangjin county in 1905, two common people, following the example of girls' schools in Chongqing, established a girls' school in their home town. Before long, two brothers in the neighbouring county Longchang, taking the Jiangjin girls' schools as models, founded a girls' school in Longchang.<sup>194</sup> In 1908, Wang Yaoshi of Zhaohua county and his friends founded an industry and business school, teaching sericulture and textile dyeing. And in the same year, Che Guanyao of Qingfu county, collected 6 thousand taels of silver and opened a sericulture school.<sup>195</sup> Some people in Chengdu found that many peddlers in the provincial capital were illiterate; therefore, they set up an evening school, teaching them cultivation of moral character, Chinese, calculation with abacus, physics, and geography.<sup>196</sup>

*Returned students:* A Mr. Cheng of Kuizhou prefecture came back to his home town as a returned student from Japan in 1907. He called together some friends, collected a sum of money, and then established a school for sight and hearing impaired people, teaching cultivation of moral character, Chinese characters and other subjects in mandarin pronunciation inscribed on wood blocks.<sup>197</sup> Zhang Junpei, a “person of ideals and integrity” (*zhishi*) and a returned student in Chongqing established a private military school to train new army soldiers in 1904. He distributed an advertisement, calling the young men in the nearby counties to enrol in his school so as to defend their home town when needed, but the people who saw his advertisement worried about whether the

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<sup>193</sup> DFZZ. 1905. Vol.2, No.4:93

<sup>194</sup> DFZZ. 1905. Vol.1. No.12:281.

<sup>195</sup> DFZZ. 1908. Vol. 5. No.6:144.

<sup>196</sup> DFZZ. 1906 Vol.2 No.12:347.

<sup>197</sup> DFZZ. 1907 Vol.10. No.9:225.

government would allow the school to exist.<sup>198</sup> A Huang couple of Chongqing county finished their study in Japan and returned to their home town in 1907. They talked with the people in their clan and suggested to them they establish a girls' school. Their suggestion was warmly accepted by the clan people who shared the funds for the school, which was soon established.<sup>199</sup>

*Merchant Guilds (hanghui)*: This kind of school often enrolled only their members' children. The courses in these schools were not only the general ones such as learning to read and cultivating one's moral character, but also those related to the knowledge of the *hanghui*'s business. For example, the merchant guild in Kuizhou *fu* opened a commercial school which enrolled only the "sons and brothers" of merchants. The courses included bookkeeping, mathematics, and English. After the students graduated, they would be employed by the merchants belonging to that guild.<sup>200</sup> A similar type of school was also established in Shunqing. The silk merchant guild there founded a public school near the guild hall, recruiting exclusively "the sons and brothers" in the silk merchant families, and teaching them sericulture as well as dyeing and weaving<sup>201</sup>

*Guild halls (Huiguan)*: Guild halls also established schools. For example, the guild hall of immigrants from Jiangxi province in Xinwen county established a primary school. The headmaster of the school was the manager of the salt shop opened by officials and merchants combined.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> DFZZ. 1904. Vol. 1 No. 1.

<sup>199</sup> DFZZ. 1907 Vol. 4. No. 11:296.

<sup>200</sup> DFZZ. 1907. Vol. 4. No. 4:127.

<sup>201</sup> DFZZ. 1907. Vol. 4. No. 9:225

<sup>202</sup> SJXRZ. Vol. 3:193

*Clans*: A Ye clan in Chengdu established a clan school in the clan hall, named “Respecting Practice School” (chongshi xuetang). The school was mainly open for boys in the clan, but it accepted a limited number of boys who were not in the clan. The school registered itself with the Provincial Office of Education in 1904, and was under its protection.<sup>203</sup> A Yang clan in Xinfang county was a populous clan with many families which differed in wealth. At the end of each year, the clan would distribute money to the poorer families. In the summer of 1907, the head of the clan suggested that the sum of money given to the poor families should be used to establish an upper and lower primary school which enrolled the boys from the poor families of the clan. The suggested school was founded in the autumn of that year.<sup>204</sup>

The Wang clan in Fushun county was one of the biggest salt merchant clans in Sichuan,<sup>205</sup> and had had a clan charitable school since the period of the Tongzhi emperor. This particular charitable school enrolled only children from within the clan. In 1901, the charitable was transformed into a primary school named Privately Founded Upper and Lower Primary School for Education of People (*sili shuren liangdeng xuetang*), and began to accept children who were from Wang clan.<sup>206</sup> In 1907, the Wang clan invited four male and female Japanese and several returned Chinese students from Japan to be teachers, expanding the school into a middle school attached by a department for training male and female teachers, a preparatory department for study overseas, a department of

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<sup>203</sup> DFZZ.1904.Vol.1.No.10:240.

<sup>204</sup> DFZZ.1907.Vol.4.No.11:296.

<sup>205</sup> For further information about this clan. See Madeleine Zelin. 1990.

<sup>206</sup> SCWS.8 ji:131.

physical education, and a department of English. The school regulations followed closely those of Japanese schools.<sup>207</sup>

*Modern enterprises:* There were few modern enterprise schools established at this time. We have just discovered one example. Deng Shaoyun, the owner of the Chongqing Senchang Match Factory, set up a school in his factory. He required that the workers learn four Chinese characters each day after work, and the school was named the Four Character School. It was said that hundreds of workers in that factory consequently were able to read.<sup>208</sup>

The above fragment reports of private school founding in the newspapers and periodicals might give us an impression that private schools in Sichuan were numerous, but according to the official statistics for the period, private schools occupied a minor percentage of the school total in Sichuan, though their growth rate was faster than that of the official schools. (Table 2.4)

TABLE 2.4  
THE GROWTH OF NEW SCHOOLS IN SICHUAN FROM 1902 TO 1909

Year	Schools*			Total
	Official	Public	Private	
1902	2			2
1903	19	7	2	28
1904	52	114	4	170
1905	1,000	1,741	52	2,793
1906	1,531	3,254	112	4,897
1907	2,052	4,626	265	6,943
1908	2,452	5,741	741	8,934
1909	2,471	6,561	1,025	10,057

Source: *Sichuan sheng xuetang linian zengjian bijiao biao.* In *jiaoyu tongji biao.* 34th year of Guangxu emperor (1908). SPA.No.120:10:132/2. *Disanci jiaoyutongjitubian.gesheng:*37. \*The compiler of the original table does not tell us how the official, public, and private schools were defined.

<sup>207</sup> DFZZ. 1907 Vol.3. No.12:374.

<sup>208</sup> DFZZ. 1905. Vol.2 No.3:50.

Although many of the private school founders might have been sincere social reformers, some were probably motivated by other factors. To avoid financial disputes some participated in school founding. In 1907, Chongqing merchant Li Hengye and others decided to transform their guild hall with its land into a primary school. They did so because the tenants of the guild land often did not pay their rent according to the contract and the landowner could do nothing about it. However, the tenants accused Li and his colleagues of using school founding as an excuse for breaking the rent contract.<sup>209</sup>

Some clan halls and guild halls established new schools to lessen their imposed donation. In 1905, the Education Bureau warned local officials that “Clan halls and guild halls often excuse themselves from donating for schools by stating that they will establish their own schools. This is something which should be prevented. But we should not generalize all the cases. Some of them may mean what they say, though some may not.”<sup>210</sup> The schools founded by the monks had similar problems.<sup>211</sup>

#### THE SCALE AND STRUCTURE OF THE NEW SCHOOL SYSTEM

The abolition of the civil service examination system in 1905 overcame the major obstacle to the development of a new school system in China. But it was the mass campaign of school establishment launched and directed by the local administration system that made Sichuan stand out from other provinces in the area of educational reform. A greater state involvement seemed to offset effectively Sichuan’s economic

<sup>209</sup> SPA.Baxian archive files. Microfilm. *Juanhao* 5960. *Zhouhao* 53. In Sichuan Archives.

<sup>210</sup> SCXB.1905.No.7.*gongdu*:26.

<sup>211</sup> DFZZ.1905.Vol.4

backwardness in the development of modern education, at least at the level of primary education. By 1907, the scale of the Sichuan new school system, whether in the number of schools, or in student total, had ranked first among all the provinces of China. Some scholars who study educational expansion in other parts of the world have already argued that it is not necessary that the area which has a more developed modern economy will have a higher educational growth.<sup>212</sup> The fact that Sichuan had a higher number of new schools than coastal provinces seems to confirm this argument. The structure of the new school system in Sichuan, however, was not so outstanding. It was quite unbalanced with many primary schools and students at the bottom, but too few higher schools and students on the top. This reflected the inherent limitation of a modern school system in the setting of a pre-industrial agrarian society.

The poor quality of statistics made by the Sichuanese in the nineteenth century was notorious.<sup>213</sup> This Sichuan tradition continued into the first decade of the twentieth century. When the *Graphs and Tables of the First Collection of Educational Statistics* (*Diyici jiaoyu tongji tubiao*) of China was published in 1907 by the Qing Education Ministry, the editor commented on the data submitted by Sichuan: "All the statistics tables sent by Sichuan were not in accordance with the requirement of the (education) ministry. They are disorderly and unsystematically organized and impossible to edit."<sup>214</sup> Therefore in many items in the *Graphs and Tables of the First Collection of Educational Statistics*, Sichuan's figures had to be left blank.

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<sup>212</sup> See Lundgreen's study of the case of Germany. Lundgreen. 1976.

<sup>213</sup> See Skinner's analysis of the Sichuan's population data. 1987:1-80.

<sup>214</sup> *Diyici jiaoyu tongji tubiao*. 1907:726.

One possible explanation for the extremely poor quality of the Sichuan statistics in *Graphs and Tables of the First Educational Statistics* is that the time span the Qing education ministry gave the Sichuan data compiler to finish the statistics of education in the province was too limited, considering Sichuan's size as a large province and its poor transportation system. Perhaps the statistics could not really be finished until the next year, because we see that in 1908 a much more complete statistical report, entitled *The Tables of Sichuan Educational Statistics (Sichuan jiaoyu tongji biao)*, was completed, which was submitted to Beijing to be entered into *Graphs and Tables of the Second Collection of Educational Statistics (dierci jiaoyu tongji tubian)*.

According to these statistics, the new school system in Sichuan developed very swiftly. The new school student total in the province increased from 140 to 345,383 and the new school total from 2 to 10,661 within only 6 years from 1902 to 1909. (Table 2.5)

TABLE 2.5  
SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS IN SICHUAN FROM 1902 TO 1909

Year	Schools	Students
1902	2	140
1903	28	1,550
1904	170	6,308
1905	2,793	73,219
1906	4,897	145,876
1907	7,793	244,538
1908	8,934	276,907
1909	10,661	345,383

Source: *Sichuan jiaoyu tongji biao*. 34<sup>th</sup> year of Emperor Guangxu (1908). In Sichuan Provincial Archives. No.120:10:132/2; *Disanci jiaoyu tongji tubian*. 1909. *Disanci jiaoyu tongji tubiao*. Gesheng:1-2.

Table 2.5 shows that in 1905 there was a dramatic increase in both the student and school numbers, and the reason for this was surely the abolition of the examination system. This fact suggests that the change of the mechanism of social mobility seemed to

be a much stronger impetus for Sichuan students' participation in the new school system than their nationalism and modernization endeavours.

Sichuan ranked second only to Zhili in the number of schools and ranked first in the number of students among all the provinces in 1907. Two years later in 1909 Sichuan still fell behind Zhili in the number of schools, but kept its number one status in student total.<sup>215</sup> (Table 2.6) Scholars have noticed that several inland provinces seemed to have a better performance than the coastal provinces in the scale of the new school system.<sup>216</sup> Borthwick believes "a possible explanation for the apparently high attendance in remote areas is that officials charged with reporting the progress of such areas found it easier to invent statistics than to obtain them"<sup>217</sup> As far as Sichuan was concerned, it seemed that it was such factors as a greater state involvement in the educational reform, rather than the creation of statistics alone that gave Sichuan one of the largest new school systems in China. When Rankin studied school founding in Zhejiang, she found that the relatively independent elite initiative in that province "did not produce as many new schools as promotion did by strong, modernizing governors-general like Yuan Shikai in Zhili, Zhang Zhidong in Hubei, and Xiliang in Sichuan."<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> *Xuantong yuannian: Disanci jianyu tongji tubiao* (Beijing, 1911), Gesheng, pp. 1-2; Borthwick, 1983: 78.

<sup>216</sup> Paul Bailey, 1990: 100; Sally Borthwick, 1983: 79.

<sup>217</sup> Borthwick, 1983: 79.

TABLE 2.6  
SCHOOLS, STUDENTS IN CHINA IN 1907 AND 1909

Provinces	1907		1909	
	Schools	Rank	Students	Rank
Zhili	8,723	1	164,172	2
Fengtian	1,447	7	48,865	6
Jilin	50	22	2,714	22
Heilongjiang	97	21	3,409	21
Shandong	4,350	3	53,996	5
Shanxi	968	11	20,399	15
Shaanxi	2,343	4	43,232	7
Henan	1,932	5	38,804	9
Jiangning	767	13	20,266	16
Jiangsu	1,049	10	35,570	11
Anhui	344	19	8,367	20
Zhejiang	1,295	8	41,569	8
Jiangxi	513	17	15,134	18
Hubei	No record		56,671	4
Hunan	849	12	30,201	12
Sichuan	7,793	2	244,538	1
Guangdong	1,607	6	75,733	3
Guangxi	582	15	22,074	13
Yunnan	1,246	9	36,980	10
Guizhou	635	14	17,678	17
Fujian	448	18	21,085	14
Gansu	531	16	10,927	19
Xinjiang	103	20	1,187	23

Source: Xuebu. *Diyici jiaoyu tongji tubiao* 1907. *Gesheng*: 27-29; *Disanci jiaoyu tongji tubiao*. *Gesheng* 1909: 1-2.

The presence of a more highly developed new school system in Sichuan than in the coastal provinces might also be ascribed to a larger number of school participants resulting from a larger population, more villages, market towns and local administrative units, and a more developed old educational system in this province. The new school system, after all, was supposed to be a universal and compulsory school system. According to the regulation of the new school system issued by the Qing regime in 1903, each province should have one higher school in the provincial capital, each prefecture should have at least one middle school and each department and county should have at least one upper primary school. As far as the lower primary schools were concerned, the

<sup>218</sup> Rankin 1986:221.

regulation claimed that within the first five years one school should be founded in an area where there were five hundred households, but the aim in the future was “one primary school should be founded in each village which had one hundred households.”<sup>219</sup> To follow this regulation meant that the province that had more population, villages and administrative units would have more schools and students. From this perspective, the superiority of the new school system in the more economically developed coastal provinces must be in quality rather than in quantity.

Let us now turn to the structure of the new school system. In traditional China, as Ruth Hayhoe has suggested, there were two levels of education which performed two different functions: moral indoctrination at the lower level and talent cultivation at the higher level.<sup>220</sup> The lower level educational institutions were the *sishu* and charitable schools, while those at the higher level were the academies and the government schools (*ruxue*). In the new school system, there were also two levels of education: the *guomin jiaoyu* (compulsory education) at the lower level and the *rencai jiaoyu* (professional education) at the higher level. The purpose of *guomin jiaoyu* was to promote citizens’ quality, while the purpose of *rencai jiaoyu* was to train all kinds of persons with specialized skills. There were four sorts of schools in the new school system according to the Qing divisions: common schools (*putong xuetang*), normal schools (*shifan xuetang*), vocational schools (*shiye xuetang*), and specialist schools (*zhuanmen xuetang*). Roughly, common schools dealt with *guomin jiaoyu*, while the other three kinds of schools were engaged in *rencai jiaoyu*.

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<sup>219</sup> Shu Xincheng, 1961:416.

<sup>220</sup> Ruth Hayhoe, 1992:47.

With regard to the percentages of the different kind of schools in the new school system, too many schools were common schools and too many common schools were primary schools.(Table 2.7) More accurately, 99% of the new schools in Sichuan were primary schools and 98% of the students in the new school were primary school students. The primary schools in Sichuan in the first decade of the twentieth century were usually small, averaging 30 students in a school, as large as a *sishu*.

TABLE 2.7  
COMMON SCHOOLS IN SICHUAN IN 1908

	Primary School						Total	
	Middle School	Upper	Upper/Lower	Lower	Mengyang	Half-day	Girl School	
Schools	51	221	360	8,014	3	159	84	8,892
Students	5,323	10,694	16,108	233,770	226	4,738	2,838	273,697

Source: Statistics of Sichuan Education. 34th year of Guangxu emperor (1908). Sichuan Provincial Archives. No.102:10:132/2.

Although Sichuan had an impressive number of primary schools, they did not replace *sishu* completely. In 1909 when *sishu* in Sichuan were reformed, the reformed *sishu* numbered 16,314, and students 245,000<sup>221</sup> This meant that there was an almost equally large traditional educational system existing beside the new school system. In the early twentieth century, there were around 9,000,000 children aged 6-15 in Sichuan,<sup>222</sup> but the students in the common schools and the reformed *sishu* combined were just around 600,000 in 1909. Thus only 6% of children at school age in Sichuan were enrolled in formal schools. This percentage suggests the limitation of the development of the mass education in Sichuan, as well as in China, in the first decade of the twentieth century.

<sup>221</sup> JYZZ.1911.No.6.jishi;We Yingtao.1990:401.

<sup>222</sup> There were 4,631,780 chidren aged 6-10, and 4,507,126 chidren aged 11-15 in 1915. Sichuan sheng xianzhu renkou nianling biebiao, in Sichuan neiwu tongji baogaoshu.1916. SPA.file No.2:1:17/5.

Though Sichuan achieved a number one position in *guomin jiaoyu* (compulsory education), its performance in *rencai jiaoyu* (talent education) was not so outstanding. In 1908, Sichuan fell behind Zhili, Guangdong and Hunan, ranking fourth in the number of students in specialist schools. Its number of students in normal schools also ranked fourth, after Zhili, Henan and Guangdong. The number of students in vocational schools ranked as far back as eleventh. The total students in the three kinds of schools in 1908 were only 3,423. (Table 2.8) Sichuan's bad performance in *rencai jiaoyu* was understandable, because the purpose of the *rencai jiaoyu* was to train people with special skills needed by a modern society, but Sichuan was even further from a modern society than many other provinces in China were.

TABLE 2.8  
NORMAL, SPECIALIST, AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS IN SICHUAN IN 1908

	Normal schools	Specialist schools	Vocational schools	Total
Schools	18	8	8	34
Students	1,299	1,391	733	3,423

Source: *Sichuansheng xuewu tongji zhongbiao*. In *Statistics of Sichuan Education*. 34th year of Emperor Guangxu (1908). Sichuan Provincial Archives. No.102:10:132/2.

Normal schools were the first established new schools in Sichuan because common schools relied on them to supply teachers. Governor Xiliang, the active reformer, had two competent advisers on educational affairs: Hu Jun and Fang Xu.<sup>223</sup> These two men had visited Japan and had been impressed greatly by the Japanese education system. In 1904, they suggested to Xiliang that the first step in founding a new school system was to train teachers. This could be done by establishing normal schools

<sup>223</sup> Hu used to be a member of the Hanlin Academy in Beijing. He returned to his home town in Sichuan because of his mother's death in the early 1900s. Governer Cen Chunxuan asked him to be the President of the Sichuan Higher School in 1904. Fang used to be a prefecture magistrate in Zhili province, and was famous for his achievement in school founding there. Xiliang invited him to Sichuan to be in charge of the Office of Education.

and teacher training centers, and by sending young men to Japan to study teaching in those brief training courses opening for Chinese students.<sup>224</sup> Xiliang adopted their suggestion. After that year, a number of normal schools at lower and advanced levels were established in different places of Sichuan. But among the 18 normal schools in 1908, nine were teacher training centers which could only produce teachers for lower primary schools.

The eight vocational schools in 1908 included one agriculture school (middle level), two industry schools, (one upper level and another middle level) and five preparatory programs for industry and business. The subjects taught in these schools were related to the needs of Sichuan society. Silk was one of the major products of Sichuan, and therefore the main course in the agriculture school was sericulture. The specialties in the industry schools included kilning, dyeing, mining, and applied chemistry, which were the recently emerging semi-modern industries in Sichuan.

Although the definition of the specialized school seemed to be somewhat confusing, this type of school could be considered similar to present-day colleges. The schools belonging to this type in 1908 included one higher school, four law and administration schools and three medical schools. It was noteworthy that one of the medical schools was actually a school of physical education. The statistician of the 1908 Statistics of Sichuan Education classified this school as medical school because he thought that the courses taught in this school were related to the health of human bodies.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> XLYG:371.

<sup>225</sup> *Sichuan zhuanmen xuetang tongjibiao*. In *Statistics of Sichuan Education*. 34th year of Guangxu emperor (1908). Sichuan Provincial Archives. No.102:10:132/2.

Because of the unbalanced structure of the Sichuan new schools, it was predictable that the majority of students graduated from primary schools could not enter the schools at higher levels, and must find jobs in the society. Fortunately, although new schools developed rapidly in Sichuan in the first decade of the twentieth century, very few students, most of whom were still little boys, graduated from them. From 1902 through 1908, only 4,751 students graduated. More than half of them graduated from the teacher training centers, and became the teachers of the rapidly increasing number of lower primary schools.<sup>226</sup> Therefore, the new school system produced little employment pressure on Sichuan society during this period. Such pressure would not begin to be obvious until the second decade of the twentieth century. But what we are more concerned with is the fate of the large number of the students left over by the old education system, *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*. In the next chapter we will study their relations to the new school system.

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<sup>226</sup> Of the 4,751 graduates, 715 graduated from common schools; 2,812 from normal schools; 733 from vocational schools; and 491 from specialist schools. See *Sichuansheng xuesheng linian zhengjian bijiao*

## Chapter 3

### ***SHENGYUAN, TONGSHENG AND THE NEW SCHOOL SYSTEM***

Because it was not accompanied by any fundamental socio-economical change, the establishment of the new schools system in Sichuan in the first decade of the twentieth century did not automatically resolve the problem of the surplus student population left over by the old educational system. In fact, students now faced a more serious problem, that is, knowing nothing but the classics, they would, as a seemingly antiquated social group, become marginalized outcasts. However, changes also brought them new opportunities and choices. They began to seek for the new *chulu* (career exits) out of their dilemma in the changed situation without delay, and in the meantime managed to get rid of the stigma left on them by the old education. They rushed into the new education system as students, teachers, or staff members of the educational bureaucracy. Their participation was one of the reasons for the rapid founding and development of the new school system in Sichuan. They embraced the new schools more because the new education was the new ladder of success than because they wanted to “become modern.” Actually the new school system at this stage was still very similar to the old education system in some critical aspects, and therefore hard to label modern.

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*biao*. In Statistics of Sichuan Education. 34th year of Guangxu emperor (1908). SPA. No.102:10:132/2

## SUBSTITUTE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION SYSTEM

Scholars who have studied Chinese students in the early twentieth century have tended to be over-concerned with student politics. Student activities and behaviors were often explained from the perspective of their radicalism, and nationalism alone.<sup>227</sup> This does not provide a very balanced understanding of the Chinese students of this period, who, like students in any other times and other countries, had also their personal uncertainty to worry about, and personal aspirations to fulfill. Their passion for the new education after the abolition of the civil service examination system resulted not only from their pursuit of modern knowledge, which would be used to save China, but also from their desires to find a new ladder of success. It is valid to say that the students left over by the old education participated enthusiastically in the education reform for the reason that the new school system was similar, in some critical aspects, to the civil service examination system.

In order to console the students who were accustomed to looking to education for official posts, from the very beginning of the education reform, the Qing state tried hard to preserve the official selecting function of the civil service examination system in the new school system. Zhang Boxi, and Zhang Zhidong, the two major designers of the educational reform program, maintained that there was no fundamental difference between the new school system and the civil service examination, and that the merit which could be found in the examination system existed still in the new schools.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> See Rankin. 1971. Gasster.1969. Sang Bing 1991:71.

<sup>228</sup> Zhang Zhidong.1920. 37:11;19.

What was the “merit” of the civil service examination system kept in the new school system? It was nothing else but the connection between education and official posts. This “merit” was clearly displayed in a government decree issued in 1904, *Xuetang jiangli zhangcheng*, or the Regulations for Awards toward Students Graduated from New Schools (Table 3.1).

TABLE 3.1  
REWARDS TO STUDENTS GRADUATED FROM NEW SCHOOLS

<i>New Schools</i>	<i>Graduated from</i>	<i>Titles</i>	<i>Official Positions*</i>
First Level	University	<i>Jinshi</i>	<i>Positions in Hanlin Academy</i>
Second Level	Higher School	<i>Juren</i>	<i>County magistrate</i>
	Law and Administration School	<i>Juren</i>	<i>County magistrate</i>
	Upper Vocational School	<i>Juren</i>	<i>County magistrate</i>
	Upper Normal School	<i>Juren</i>	<i>County magistrate</i>
Third Level	Middle Vocational School	<i>Gongsheng</i>	<i>Magistrate assistant*</i>
	Lower Normal School	<i>Gongsheng</i>	<i>County educational official**</i>
	Middle School	<i>Gongsheng</i>	
Fourth Level	Upper Primary	<i>Shengyuan</i>	

Source: Shu Xincheng. *Jindai Zhongguo jiaoyu shilao*. 1928. Vol.4: 63-74. \*Rank lower-seven officials such as *Zhoupan*, *zhubo*. \*\* Such as *Jiaoshou*, *jiaoyu*, *xundao*.

It seemed to be unfair to blame the Qing government for seducing the youth with *lilu* (wealth and official post), as Liang Qichao did,<sup>229</sup> for the government actually did not have much choice. At this stage of the reform, the government worried that the *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* might have had no interest in the new schools if the new education could not provide them with fame and power. But it was true that though the policy of rewards might be useful in winning support for the reform in a short time, from a long term point of view, it was an obstacle to the healthy development of modern education in China. In fact, the negative effects of the policy soon appeared. In Baxian Archive one can find a

<sup>229</sup> Liang Qichao. 1985:80.

decree issued by the Ministry of Education at Beijing, which was transmitted by Sichuan provincial educational authority to the Baxian government in 1910. The decree instructs local educational authorities to prohibit students of vocational schools who were capable of further study from choosing to take official posts. The decree says:

By recent investigation in various places, many graduates of middle vocational schools are seeking to be assigned to official posts, unwilling to enter schools at higher levels. If they are all permitted, higher vocational schools will probably have to be closed for lack of students. Therefore, it seems that some restrictions are needed. It is intended that from now on all the graduates of vocational schools who are at an age younger than 25 should not be permitted to take official posts.<sup>230</sup>

This sort of problem did not occur only in Sichuan but nationwide. Cai Yuanpei, the great Chinese educator and the president of Beijing University in the early Republic, explains in one of his articles that the Republican government abolished the Qing policy of selecting officials from the graduates of new schools in 1911 for the reason that the government organizations could not absorb all the college graduates and that for the students who studied science and technology to assume an official post was *xue fei suo yong* (one does not do that which one has learned).<sup>231</sup>

Some scholars in the late Qing and early Republic already pointed out the negative effects of the Qing education reform designers' efforts to connect the new

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<sup>230</sup> SPA. Baxian Archive. Microfilm. *Juanhao*:1646. *Zhouhao*: 11

<sup>231</sup> Cai Yuanpei and others. 1931:86-87.

education with official posts. In 1925 Liang Qichao, one of the most outstanding scholars and reformers of modern China, commented harshly on the Qing educational reform and the “new scholars” (*xin xuejia*) produced by it as a failure, alleging that the modern schools differed from the civil service examination only in name, and the new learning was the eight-legged essay in another form. Most of the students in the new schools had no pure motive. They regarded learning as means not as ends, using it as “a brick to knock on the door” (*qiao men zhuan*), throwing it away when it had served its purpose.<sup>232</sup>

Another equally outstanding but more radical scholar of the time, Zhang Taiyan (Binglin), though disagreeing with Liang Qichao in many political and academic issues, held the same opinion as Liang regarding the new school and its students. Zhang identified a variety of problems with the new education: the new schools stressed usage not truth; the new schools were controlled by the government; the new schools were no different from the civil service examination in the sense that the students in them studied only for elite status (*chushen*).<sup>233</sup>

Sichuan students’ motives for new education were no “purer” than those of the students in other provinces, which Sichuan provincial government and educational authority understood very well. The government seemed to be ready to take care of Sichuan students’ interests. In the early 1907, the preparatory course for Sichuan Higher School recruited 300 students from *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*, and the educational authority promised the students that they needed to spend only one year on the course before they were allowed to enter the programs in the higher school. But later in the same year, the provincial government received an order from Beijing, which stipulated that the

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<sup>232</sup> Liang Qichao. 1985:80.

<sup>233</sup> Zhang Taiyan. 1977:417.

time for the students in the preparatory course must be prolonged to three years. This order excited the students' resentment. Sichuan governor Xiliang, to placate the students, requested the Education Ministry of the central government to award these students the same title as that awarded to graduates of middle schools. He argued that since those students in Shandong, Shanxi, Fujian provinces who had encountered the same situation were rewarded by the Education Ministry, Sichuan students should receive the same treatment. The Education Ministry concurred with Xiliang's request, acknowledging:

The new education is still at the initial stage. If the promise can not be kept, nobody will listen to educational managers in the future. The educational affairs in Sichuan will be affected. People will be suspicious of any promise of rewards afterwards, and plans for establishment of new schools in some places may be laid aside, for people will not be excited by lip-service.<sup>234</sup>

The civil service examination system had such a lasting predominance in Sichuan students' psychology that many of the students seemed to be incapable of separating it from the new education. As was the fashion of the time, Chengdu students launched a strike in 1910 to appeal for a constitutional government. The movement was miserably undermined by the introduction of examinations in the new schools. Guo Moruo, who was one of the participants in the movement, recalls:

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<sup>234</sup> SUA. File No: 71.

Except the few activists, the students participated in the movement just for excitement, being happy to have a holiday everyday. Therefore, the students' real motive was not enthusiasm but relaxation... The civil service examination system was just abolished at that time. In the students eyes, the examination was probably more important than their lives. It seemed that they became students for the purpose of participating in the examination. The incoming examination was a greater hindrance to the movement than five hundred orders from the provincial education ministry.<sup>235</sup>

Obviously, the examination in the new schools was important because its results, like those of the civil service examination, profoundly affected the students' opportunities in obtaining elite status in the future. In many cases, it was more convincing to explain Sichuan students' behaviour in this period from the perspective of their career seeking than from that of their political attitude. The students who graduated from Sichuan Administration and Law School in 1911 went back to their Alma Mater several years later, asking the school authority to change their certificates of graduation, for the government stamp on the certificates was not that of the Republic government. The students submitted this petition not because they were pro-republic, but because "the incompatible certificates hampered the graduates' promotion".<sup>236</sup>

There was certainly a widespread disappointment at the abolition of the civil service examination among the families that hoped one of their children might pass the

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<sup>235</sup> Guo Moruo. 1978. Vol.1:208.

<sup>236</sup> SUA:No.49.

examination, and it was even more difficult for students' parents to separate mentally the new schools from the civil service examination. Li Huang, a famous politician during the Republic period and a Sichuanese, says in his autobiography that though the civil service examination system was abolished, "most parents still cherished the old conception when they sent their children to school. They hoped their children would achieve scholarly honours and official ranks (*gongming*), glorifying their family by becoming officials."<sup>237</sup> In 1905, Zhu De, later the commander in chief of the People's Liberation Army, participated in the last civil service examination of the Qing dynasty in his native county, Yilong county of north Sichuan. He passed the examination and became a *shengyuan*. According to Zhu's recollection, though he was already tired of the civil service examination at that time, he had no choice but to participate in it, for his parents placed their hopes on him that he might become somebody in the future.<sup>238</sup>

Because the Qing state promised to offer the graduates from upper primary schools the title of *shengyuan*, many young men and even some old *tongsheng* in Sichuan enrolled themselves for the entrance examination of upper primary schools. Families which had a son who entered the upper primary school would receive congratulations from their relatives and neighbours as if the son had got a *shengyuan* title in the old times. Guo Moruo mentioned in his autobiography that his father was so proud of him when he passed the entrance examination for upper primary school that he brought him to the county town so they could visit their relatives' families there one by one.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Li Huang. 1973:13.

<sup>238</sup> Smedley. 1979:78-79

<sup>239</sup> Gu Moro.1978:58.

Whatever negative effects the connection between the new education and the official posts had, it was indeed a very strong stimulus for the Sichuan students to enroll in new schools. In some regions of Sichuan the regulations of rewards aroused students so greatly that one *sishu* teacher at that time complained that whenever a new school was founded at his county, a great number of students left the *sishu* and entered the new schools.<sup>240</sup> But this passion for new schools did not mean that new schools were welcomed by ordinary peasant families which could not afford their sons' education in the new schools. This issue we will discuss later.

#### A HYBRID OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN

It is true that there were several important new features in the new education system we can not find in the old educational system. For example, despite its great achievements, the traditional education system, as Woodside and Elman insightfully argued, had always had a close connection with political, economic and gender powers; while the new school system was based, at least according to the government, on a concept of universal, and compulsory education.<sup>241</sup>

The new education system also tended to change the geographical distribution of high level students in favour of the cities. Esherick summarizes this development as follows:

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<sup>240</sup> Dagongbao: May 24, 1905; Sang Bing, 1991:181.

<sup>241</sup> Woodside 1992; Elman and Woodside. 1994:528-529.

No longer was it possible for an aspiring scholar to study the classics with a private tutor in some distant area of the province, in the hope that he could pass the exams and progress along the path to power and wealth in the official bureaucracy. Now the able and the ambitious were inevitably drawn to the cities and especially the provincial capitals, for only there were the best schools and the best opportunities to advance.<sup>242</sup>

But to what extent can we say that the new school system in Sichuan in the early twentieth century was a modern school system? Robert Dreeben, an American educational theorist, argues that one of the most important characteristics of modern school education is that it formed the linkage between the family life of children and the public life of adults in an industrial society. “Modern schooling represents a developmental process taking place outside of the family in which large masses of the people acquire certain psychological capacities that enable them to participate in the major institutional areas of an industrial society.”<sup>243</sup> If Dreeben’s understanding of the function of the modern school is correct, does it pertain to a pre-industrial agrarian society, as in the case of Sichuan? The logical answer seemed to be that if so, either the modern schools were repudiated by the society because the psychological capacities the students had acquired and the knowledge the students learned in the schools were incompatible with the society and thus the schools could not bridge the family life of children and the public life of adults, or the modern schools must retain some

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<sup>242</sup> Joseph Esherick 1976:46.

<sup>243</sup> Dreeben 1968:93.

characteristics of the traditional education system so that they were more compatible with the social reality.

The new schools in early twentieth century Sichuan seemed to be characterized by both. They were repudiated by the rural society on one hand but kept some critical characteristics of traditional education on the other hand. The restoration of *sishu* during the Republican period was a good demonstration that the new schools were repudiated in Sichuan countryside for many peasant families who did not have the extravagant hope that their children would advance socially in the future seemed to prefer *sishu* to the new schools. We know that in 1911 the Qing state tried hard to transform *sishu* into new schools, but according to 1936 official statistics of *sishu* in 88 Sichuan counties, *sishu* in these counties still numbered 18,469; the *sishu* students 246,874; the teachers 14,044. And these figures do not reflect the whole province; statistical figures from the other 52 Sichuan counties could not be collected because of the social disturbance in those counties.<sup>244</sup> Why did the *sishu* re-emerge in Sichuan in such great numbers? The Gazetteer of Wanyuan county, a poor and mountainous county in east Sichuan, provides an answer:

At the end of Guangxu period, the examination system was abolished and new schools were established, but the villagers regarded the new learning (*xinxue*) as foreign learning (*yangxue*), and the textbooks [of the new schools] as foreign books (*yangshu*). And those teachers of old learning

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<sup>244</sup> The Survey of Sichuan Province. 1936: 20.

(*jiuxue xiansheng*) were not very much in favour of the new learning; therefore, young talents are now as rare as the stars in the morning sky.<sup>245</sup>

It was not only a problem in Sichuan but also in some other inland provinces like Hunan that the new school was incompatible with its social setting. Mao Zedong provides an interesting discussion of the new education in Hunan countryside in 1927:

Peasants have never been able to bear the sight of the “new schools” (*yang xuetang*, literally foreign style schools). When I was a student [of new schools] in the past, and went back home and saw the peasants opposing the new schools, I, just like other new students and new teachers, from the standpoint of the new schools, thought the peasants must be wrong. In the fourteenth year of the Republic (1925) when I was already a communist with a Marxist point of view, I went to the countryside and lived there for half a year, and realised that I had been wrong and the peasants were right. All the teaching materials in the rural schools were about the matters in the cities, having nothing to do with the needs of the countryside. And the teachers of the primary schools treated the peasants in a bad manner. They were not only no help to the peasants, but also loathed by the peasants. Therefore, the peasants would prefer *sishu* which they called *hanxue* (Chinese style schools) to the *xuetang* (new schools) which they called

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<sup>245</sup> Wanyuan xianzhi. 1932: 639-640.

*yangxue* (foreign style schools), welcoming *sishu* teachers instead of the teachers of the primary schools.<sup>246</sup>

On the other hand, the new schools in Sichuan at this stage were a far cry from the sort of modern schools one finds in industrial societies. The average number of students in the primary schools, as we mentioned in chapter two, was only 30 in the first decade of the twentieth century, just the size of a *sishu*. In such schools, as in *sishu*, the students from different age groups usually sat in the same classroom, which was in conflict with one of the crucial aspects of the modern school defined by Dreeben: homogeneous age composition in a classroom.<sup>247</sup>

The norms the students learned to accept in such schools were not the sort one would be expected to follow in a modern industrial society, rather, it was still the norms of the traditional Confucian society. This was clearly reflected in those strict campus regulations of the new schools of that time.<sup>248</sup> Moral Character Cultivation and Confucian Classic Reading were still two most important courses in the new schools.

Universality was certainly not a feature of the new school system in Sichuan in this period. It was not just that merely 6% of the children at school ages had enrolled in the new schools by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the school system was still practicing gender discrimination. The earliest girls' *sishu* in Sichuan was founded in 1903 by several returned students from Japan. The name of the *sishu* was Girls' *Sishu* for Fair Behavior (*shuxin lushu*), which reflected the purpose of the school:

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<sup>246</sup> Mao Zedong 1952: 41-42.

<sup>247</sup> For why homogeneous age composition in a classroom is important in a modern school, See Dreeben. 1968:38.

training good wives and mothers. Confucian classics were the major courses of the students. It was not until 1907 that the name of this school was changed to Girls' School for Fair Behavior (*shuxin luxue*). Although the new school system in Sichuan was established as early as 1904, new girls' schools were not permitted in Sichuan until 1907 when the Qing regime issued Regulations for Primary Girls' Schools and Regulations for Girls' Normal Schools which called for the localities to open girls' schools. Before 1907, although there were some girls' schools in Sichuan, they were in fact *sishu* rather than new schools. In 1905, a lady Zhou, nee Zhang, applied to transform the girls' *sishu* she had opened into a new girl school, but her application was rejected by the provincial Board of Education, which claimed:

According to the combined regulations for *mengyang* (elementary school) and *jiajiao* (family teaching), Chinese girls should be taught in families. To establish girls' schools will cause many problems, and therefore it is not appropriate. China had different customs from those of the West which should not be adopted incautiously. Therefore, this board will not ratify any applications for founding girls' schools.<sup>249</sup>

After 1907, though girl schools were established and girls were allowed to receive a school education, there were still many social restrictions which hindered them in going

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<sup>248</sup> For the regulations, consult Shu Xincheng. 1961. Ed. *Zhongguo jindai jiaoyushi ziliao* (Documentary Materials in Modern Chinese Educational History) 3 Vol. Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe. Beijing.

<sup>249</sup> SCXB.1905.No.15:62.

to school. The number of female students enrolled in schools before 1949 was much smaller than that of the male students.

Textbooks were also a problem for the schools in the Sichuan countryside of the time. At first the schools of Sichuan got textbooks for their students by asking those merchants who had business in Shanghai to buy textbooks on their behalf. From 1903, Sichuan *Guanshuju* (official publishing house) began to print school textbooks, and later when the Commercial Press opened a bookstore in Chengdu, it became easier for the schools in cities and county towns to get textbooks and other new educational books.<sup>250</sup> But to many schools in remote and poor areas, textbooks were still a problem, for students in these schools could not afford the prices of the standard textbooks. It seems that until the early Republic, textbooks continued to be a problem in Sichuan. *Wendu Monthly*, a magazine issued in Chengdu during 1912-1913, published a notice of the Sichuan education authority in February, 1913, which says:

Due to the lack of funds, the primary schools in different prefectures departments, counties, are not using standard textbooks. They still force children to read those old books one can find in ordinary bookstores. This is not good for the development of children's intelligence... For this reason, this bureau has invited some experts to edit a variety of textbooks, which are in accordance with the goal of the Republic, for the upper and lowers primary schools alike.<sup>251</sup>

<sup>250</sup> XLYG. 1959. zhougao juan5: 443; Li Huang:1977:11.

<sup>251</sup> Wendu Monthly. 1913, February: No:7 faling: 7.

Qualified teachers in Sichuan were even a more serious problem during this period. It would be an undue expectation that just after several months of training, those men of the old education system who grew up in *sishu* and knew nothing but Confucian classics could become qualified teachers in the new schools. Guo Moruo said that his primary school mathematics teacher, a returned student from Japan, knew almost nothing about mathematics, but the teacher's knowledge about classical learning was one of the reasons for Guo's interest in that subject later. When Guo entered the middle school, he found that his geography teacher, though familiar with *Shanhai jing*, *Huainanzi*, and *Dixinxun*,<sup>252</sup> was confused about the relative geographic positions of China, Japan, and Korea. The teacher was also interested in teaching students how to identify directions by employing The Five Elements and The Eight Trigrams.<sup>253</sup>

The most important feature of the new school system during this period in Sichuan and in the whole of China, which made it distinct from the sort of modern schools in western industrial society, was of course its close relation to the political center, as Professor Woodside has already pointed out.<sup>254</sup> To see how the contemporary scholars thought about this problem, we may quote a paragraph from Zhang Taiyan, extracted from Zhang's letter to one of his friends, Wang Heming.

You said: “[New] schools are at least better than the examination system; since the examination system has been abolished and schools established, a progress of learning should be expected.” This is a repeatedly announced

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<sup>252</sup> All are ancient Chinese pre-scientific geographic books.

<sup>253</sup> Guo Moruo. 1978:64; 95.

<sup>254</sup> Woodside. 1994.

vulgar view. Looking back at Shang-Zhou [dynasties] and looking outside at Europe and America offer no help in understanding China's circumstance! Chinese learning, if originating from below, would flourish; if advocated from above, would certainly decline. What the court recommended only invited people to be concerned with emoluments, but did not encourage them to delve deep into learning. Some able and virtuous men simply ignored the court's awards and concentrated on their own learning. Therefore during more than one thousand years when the civil service examination system was practised, the *dianzhang* (the study of decrees and regulations) flourished in the Tang; *lixue* (Confucian philosophy) originated in the Song; *Tianyuan* and *Siyuan* (mathematics equations) emerged in the Song-Yuan transition; and *xiaoxue* and *jingxun* (philology and the explication of classics) arose in the Qing. All of them were initiated outside the civil service examination system, and were able to develop into different schools of learning. Was their rise due to any official awards? The more disgusted one became with what the court endorsed, the harder one would work to improve his learning. Now, the schools were established by the court; they are merely a path to wealth and official posts, making people drift along. What progress of learning you can expect? Moreover, since the schools are managed by the officials, numerous barriers will be set. The sons and brothers from rich families can always manage to pass through, while the people from poor families

are hopeless. The decline of learning, therefore, will be even faster than during the period of the civil service examination system.<sup>255</sup>

#### ABSORPTION OF SHENGYUAN AND TONGSHENG

The Sichuan students of the traditional education system, *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*, were obviously not in the same state of mind as Zhang Taiyan. After the abolition of the civil service examination, the urgent problem for them was how to adapt themselves to the new situation. They knew nothing but the classics, which were no longer able to bring them power, wealth, and prestige. To climb as quickly as possible the new ladder of success, the new school system, became their first concern. Some of them found a post in the newly founded educational bureaucratic organisations; others entered the new schools and became students again so as to change their identity; still others became teachers in the new schools after a brief training.

Enrollment in upper primary schools and even lower primary schools was immensely attractive to *tongsheng* because through the new regulations the graduates of the primary schools might receive a *shengyuan* title. Though according to the regulations issued by the Qing education ministry, the age limit for the students who entered lower primary schools must be under 10,<sup>256</sup> and for upper primary schools under 15,<sup>257</sup> these

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<sup>255</sup> Zhang Taiyan 1974:12

<sup>256</sup> According to 1903 regulations for lower primary schools, the age of the children who entered primary schools should be seven, but because the new school system had just been founded, children under ten were allowed to enroll within five years from 1905. ZJJZ:427.

<sup>257</sup> Shu Xincheng, 1961:441.

limits were never taken seriously in Sichuan. Guo Moruo recalls in his autobiography that in 1905, “Jiading<sup>258</sup> Upper Primary School was located in Chaotang Temple outside of the north gate of the town. The ages of the students in that school were quite divergent. Some were old *tongsheng*, who at an age of thirty or even forty had failed repeatedly in the civil service examination; others were twelve or thirteen year old innocent teenagers<sup>259</sup>.” Yamakawa, a Japanese teacher in the Sichuan Higher School at that time, participated in the sports meet held in Chengdu by all the new schools of the provincial capital in 1905, and noticed that the oldest student in the primary schools was over sixty years old.<sup>260</sup>

Although it seems that very few students who had already had a *shengyuan* title enrolled in the primary schools, it is quite clear that almost all the students in middle schools were *shengyuan*, and even *gongsheng* during this period. Governor Xiliang suggests in one of his memorials to the emperor in 1904 that more middle schools would be founded so that they could recruit those young *shengyuan* and *gongsheng* who had no schools to go to after the abolition of the examination system, because their literary level was higher than upper primary school and there were not enough normal schools to absorb all of them.<sup>261</sup>

All the students in normal schools were *shengyuan* and *gongsheng*. Rule one in chapter three of *The Regulations for Lower Normal Schools* issued by the emperor in 1903 says: “The students in the normal schools of a provincial capital must be selected

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<sup>258</sup> Jiading is in southwest Sichuan. Its current name is Leshan. It was Guo's home town and also Su Dongpo's home town.

<sup>259</sup> Guo Moro.1978:Vol.2:3.

<sup>260</sup> Yamakawa Hayamizu.1909:130.

<sup>261</sup> XLYG:522

from the *gongsheng*, *linsheng*, *zengsheng*, *fusheng*, *jiansheng* in all the departments and counties of the province. The students in the normal schools of a department or a county must be selected from the *gongsheng*, *linsheng*, *zengsheng*, *fusheng*, *jiansheng* in the department or the county.<sup>262</sup> The regulations for advanced normal schools issued in the same year stipulated that all the students for advanced normal schools should be selected from *juren* and *gongsheng*,<sup>263</sup> but this rule was not followed in Sichuan. The roll of the students graduated in 1908 from the advanced normal class of the Sichuan higher school kept in the Sichuan University Archives shows that all the 19 students in that class were *shengyuan*.<sup>264</sup> The majority of the students in vocational schools<sup>265</sup> and specialist schools were also *shengyuan* and *gongsheng*. For example, there were 42 students in the Japanese language class of Sichuan Higher School in 1908. Among them there were only four who had no degrees (*gongming*), and all the rest were *shengyuan*.<sup>266</sup> Modern Sichuan scholars have investigated the background of 178 students in the specialist schools in Sichuan during 1907-1908, and found all of them had a *shengyuan* (174) or *gongsheng* (4) degree.<sup>267</sup>

In sum, the total number of students in upper primary schools, middle schools, normal schools, vocational schools, and specialized schools amounted to about 20,000 in Sichuan in 1908; most of them were *tongsheng*, *shengyuan* and *gongsheng*. They accounted for roughly 7 percent of the student total in Sichuan schools in that year. This

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<sup>262</sup> Shu Xincheng. 1961:687

<sup>263</sup> Shu Xincheng. 1961:701.

<sup>264</sup> SUA. File No.87.

<sup>265</sup> There were three levels of vocational schools. The lower level was equal to upper primary school, the middle level was equal to middle schools and the upper one was equal to higher schools. The students at those ages in the first decade of twentieth century were most probably either *tongsheng* or *shengyuan*.

<sup>266</sup> Dongwen bingban xuesheng xinming niansui jiguan qingce. SUA. File No.151.

percentage seems smaller than those in some other provinces. In Guangdong, for example, according to some researchers, at the end of Qing, about 10 percent of the new students enrolled in the new schools already had a gentry title, most of the others in the new schools were *tongsheng*.<sup>268</sup>

The capacity of the new education system for absorption of Sichuan students left over by the old education system depended not only in its recruiting students but also in its employing teachers and staff into the new schools and educational organisations. The staff in those new bureaucratic organisations of education in Sichuan, which we mentioned in the second section of this chapter, were almost exclusively students of the old education system (*shengyuan* and *tongsheng*). Their total might be around 2,000. Table 3.2 shows the total number of staff in the three most important educational organizations in Sichuan in 1908.

TABLE 3.2  
THE NUMBERS OF STAFFS IN THE ORGANIZATIONS OF EDUCATION IN  
SICHUAN IN 1908

<i>Organization Name</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Staff</i>
Bureaus for promotion of education	143	1,189
Education associations	44*	88**
Lecture halls	234	281
Total	421	1,558

Source: *Sichuansheng xuewu tongji zongbiao*. In *Statistics of Sichuan Education*. 34th year of Emperor Guangxu (1908). Sichuan Provincial Archives. File No. 102:10: 132/2. \* By 1909 it had increased to 64.

\*\*Notice this number was of staff (the presidents or vice presidents of the associations) rather than of members. The number of members was 6,304 in 1908; they were mainly teachers.

The statistics of the Sichuan Education Department in 1908 preserved in Sichuan Provincial Archives has provided the educational background of the directors of the 143

<sup>267</sup> Wei Yingtao. 1990:473.

<sup>268</sup> Sang Bing, 1991, 159.

bureaus for the promotion of education. Among them only 21 held a degree of *juren*. All the rest were *shengyuan* or *gongsheng*, though 30 of them also graduated from a school in Japan and 27 of them from a new school in China.<sup>269</sup> As far as the education associations were concerned, only 14 out of the 88 staff were *juren*, all the others were *gongsheng*, *shengyuan*, or *shengyuan* who had also a background of new school education in China or Japan.<sup>270</sup>

For some students of the old education system, to be in charge of the establishment of the new school system offered them not only a bureaucratic post but also a chance to pocket money. In the Sichuan educational gazette published during this period, one can read quite a number of reports of the cases of embezzlement of public money by *shengyuan* who were in charge of educational affairs. It was also noteworthy that most of the people who brought charges against these *shengyuan* were also *shengyuan* themselves.

The number of teachers and staff members in the new school system totaled nearly 17,000 in 1908.(see Table 3.3) Except for those in the schools at advanced levels, most were *shengyuan* and *tongsheng*. To determine how many teachers in the new schools were *shengyuan* and *tongsheng*, we must first omit those foreign teachers at different levels in Sichuan schools.<sup>271</sup> So far as we know, there were altogether 87 foreign teachers who taught in Sichuan at the end of Qing<sup>272</sup> and most of them (77) were

<sup>269</sup> *Sichuan sheng quanxue suo tongji biao*. In *Stastistics of Sichuan Education. 34th year of Emperor Guangxu* (1908). SPA. File No.102:10: 132/2.

<sup>270</sup> *Sichuan sheng jiaoyu hui tongji biao*. In *Stastistics of Sichuan Education. 34th year of Emperor Guangxu* (1908). SPA. File No.102:10: 132/2.

<sup>271</sup> Japanese teachers could be found from primary schools to higher schools. European teachers were mostly in specialist schools and advanced normal and vocational schools.

<sup>272</sup> Wei Yingtao. 1990:387-389

Japanese.<sup>273</sup> The Chinese teachers in advanced schools usually had an upper degree; few of them were *shengyuan*. For example, in 1905, Sichuan higher schools had 26 teachers and staff, of whom there were 1 *jinshi*, 8 *juren*, 3 *gongsheng*, 3 *shengyuan*, 3 returned students, 5 foreigners,<sup>274</sup> and 3 who had no degrees.<sup>275</sup>

TABLE 3.3  
THE NUMBERS OF TEACHERS AND STAFFS OF NEW SCHOOLS  
IN SICHUAN IN 1908

	<i>Common schools</i>	<i>Normal schools</i>	<i>Vocational schools</i>	<i>Specialist schools</i>	<i>Total</i>
Teachers	11,505	38	48	77	11,668
Staffs	4,834	94	22	30	4,980
Total	16,339	132	70	107	16,648

Source: *Sichuan sheng xuewu tongji zhongbiao*. In *Statistics of Sichuan Education*. 34th year of Emperor Guangxu (1908). Sichuan Provincial Archives. File No.102:10: 132/2.

Most of the *shengyuan* and *tongsheng* teachers were in middle schools and primary schools. This can be illustrated by the roll of the teachers and staff of a private primary school in 1904 in Changshou county near Chongqing. In this school there were 10 teachers and 5 staff members. Among the 10 teachers, 4 were *tongsheng*; 4 were *shengyuan*; and the other 2 were *juren*. Four out of the 5 staff members were retired officials or officials waiting for a post and 1 was a *gongsheng*.<sup>276</sup> Another example was given by Guo Moruo. He says that in the Jiading Upper Primary School, excepting the headmaster who was a *juren* and the school supervisor (*jianxue*) who was a *fubang*, all

<sup>273</sup> Yamakawa Hayamizu ( a teacher who taught in Sichuan Higer School in 1905 ) therefore claimed that the Sichuan new education was transplanted from Japan by these Japanese teacher. Yamakawa Hayamizu:1909:129.

<sup>274</sup> One British and four Japanese.

<sup>275</sup> Roll of Teachers and Staffs in Sichuan Higer School (1905).SUA.No.97.

<sup>276</sup> Changshou Xian minli xiaoxue tang zongli jiaoxi yuanshi. SUA.No.3.

the 4 teachers were *shengyuan*, of whom 2 also graduated from Hongwen normal school in Japan.<sup>277</sup>

The first group of primary school teachers in 1904 were trained for several months in teacher training centers. They had been selected from *shengyuan* and *tongsheng* from the departments and counties of the province. Their total was 1,020.<sup>278</sup> After that year, although the qualifications for teachers became stricter, and many teacher training centers were closed, more students graduated from normal schools than from any other schools. From 1902 to 1908, there were altogether 4,751 students graduated from Sichuan new schools. More than half of them (2,812) were from normal schools.<sup>279</sup> These students became the teachers of the early middle schools and primary schools. Although they could claim that they were graduates of the new schools, the knowledge they possessed was still of the traditional type.<sup>280</sup>

If we combine the numbers of all the teachers and staff in the new school system, excluding those in advanced schools, the numbers of all the students in upper primary schools, middle schools, normal schools, vocational schools, and specialist schools, and the numbers of all the staff members in the educational organizations in Sichuan in 1908, the total sum is around 40,000.<sup>281</sup> Excluding those upper degree holders and those who had no background of civil service examinations, as well as those foreign teachers, we

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<sup>277</sup> Guo Moruo. 1978. Vol. 1:63-64

<sup>278</sup> Sichuan sheng xuewu tongji zhongbiao. In Statistics of Sichuan Education. 34th year of Emperor Guangxu (1908). Sichuan Provincial Archives. File No. 102:10: 132/2.

<sup>279</sup> Sichuan xuesheng linian zhengjian bijiao biao. in Stastistics of Sichuan Education. 34th year of Emperor Guangxu (1908). SPA. File No. 102:10: 132/2.

<sup>280</sup> In Guo Moruo's autobiography, one can read much vivid description of the *xinxue* (new learning) knowledge of these so called teachers graduated from new schools.

<sup>281</sup> This calculation is based on *Sichuan xuewu tongji zongbiao*. In Statistics of Sichuan Education. 34th year of Emperor Guangxu (1908). SPA. File No. 102:10: 132/2.

may estimate that 80 percent of the total or 32,000 were *shengyuan* or *tongsheng*. This figure represents the capacity of the regular school system to absorb the traditional student population. Considering that there were around 630,000 *tongsheng* and 37,000 *shengyuan* in Sichuan at the end of Qing,<sup>282</sup> this figure does not seem to be very impressive. The students of traditional education were obliged to find other paths of advancement outside the regular school system, which we will study in the next chapters.

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<sup>282</sup> See chapter 1.

## Chapter 4

### **NEW PATHS OF ADVANCEMENT FOR THE STUDENTS OF THE OLD EDUCATION**

One weakness of the new school system as a mechanism of social mobility in the first decade of the twentieth century was its undeveloped *rencai jiaoyu*, or education of specialized “people of talent”, because the system was, as we have shown in chapter 2, an unbalanced structure with many common schools at the bottom but too few higher, vocational, and specialist schools at the top. As a consequence of this weakness, the new school system had a limited capacity to absorb the surplus student population produced by the old education system. The students thus needed to find some other channels to power and wealth outside of the regular school system. In this chapter, we would like to study four such major channels in Sichuan in the first decade of the twentieth century. These new channels were shaped more by the political and institutional transformation of the state than by the economical and social development of the society. They were temporary mechanisms of social mobility in a transitional time; therefore, they were modern mechanisms which met the traditional desire of the Chinese intellectuals, or traditional mechanisms in a modern form.

## STUDY IN JAPAN

It is well known that the great mass fervor of Chinese students to go to study in Japan in the first decade of the twentieth century was stimulated by the defeat of China by Japan in the first Sino-Japanese War in 1894.<sup>283</sup> What is not so well known is that the effect of the abolition of the examination system was equally important. The climax of the fervor, after all, did not really come until 1905, ten years after the war. The Qing government and educational reformers encouraged students to study in Japan for the purpose of strengthening China, but did the students cherish the same purpose when they responded to the government call, setting off for Japan? Some present-day historians like Paula Harrell think the students did, believing “they went to Japan looking for solutions to China’s backwardness.”<sup>284</sup> But we have doubts about the general validity of this point of view, for our research on Sichuan seems to suggest that to many students of the traditional educational worlds, studying abroad, as well as entering domestic new schools, was very much a new path of advancement that replaced the civil service examination.

Actually, even the Qing government considered the policy of sending students to study in Japan not only a measure of Self-Strengthening, but also one of the ways of elite recruitment. In 1903, two years before the abolition of the examination system, Zhang Zhidong, at the demand of the Qing government, had worked out a system of rewarding the returned students from Japan with degrees from the civil service examination system

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<sup>283</sup> Shu Xincheng 1933:4; Huang Fuqing 1975:2.

<sup>284</sup> Harrell, 1992:5.

and official ranks according to the levels of Japanese schools from which they graduated.<sup>285</sup> The awarding of degrees was as follows:

*Degrees Awarded to students graduated from Japanese schools*

<u>Japanese school</u>	<u>Chinese degree</u>
Middle schools	<i>bagong chushen</i>
Official Higher schools	<i>juren chushen</i>
Universities (diploma)	<i>jinshi chushen</i>
Universities (bachelor)	<i>Hanlin chushen</i>
Universities (doctorate)	<i>Hanlin chushen and Hanlin shengjie</i>

In 1904 Zhang Zhidong and Liu Kunyi suggested to the emperor that certain important government posts should be assumed only by returned students.<sup>286</sup> In the same year, the Qing government issued another regulation, requiring that the returned students must pass a test held in the Palace before they were rewarded with a *juren* or *jinshi* degree. The first test was held in 1905. Fourteen returned students from Japan participated and all of them passed. The test was then held every year, but from 1906 not only the returned students from Japan, but also those from western countries, were requested to participate. The requirement for the qualification of the candidates was more strict, confined only to those who had graduated from a higher school or a university in a

<sup>285</sup> SCXB.1905.No.5 zhangcheng:4

<sup>286</sup> Shu Xincheng.1933:51.

foreign country. In the test of 1910, there were 238 returned students who passed. Fifteen of them were awarded the *jinshi* degree and all the rest were awarded the *juren* degree.<sup>287</sup>

Due to the encouragement of the government, increasing numbers of Chinese students went to study in Japan in the first decade of the twentieth century, but the strongest of the driving forces during this period was the abolition of the civil service examination system in 1905. This was clearly illustrated by the following round numbers of Chinese students in Japan during this period, as provided by a Japanese historian, Saneto Keishu.<sup>288</sup>

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of students in Japan</i>
1901	280
1902	500
1903	1,000
1904	1,300
1905	8,000
1906	8,000
1907	7,000
1908	4,000
1909	4,000

<sup>287</sup> XBGB.1910.No.127:Benbu zhoushang:1-13.

<sup>288</sup> Saneto Keishu.1982:appendix 3. Keishu's number may not be very accurate, but it shows us a rough trend of the changes in the Chinese student numbers in Japan in the first decade of the twentieth century.

The Sichuan provincial government was in line with the Qing central government in encouraging students to study in Japan. Two Japanese language schools were established in Chengdu in 1904 and 1905 by the provincial education authority, which offered language training for students who intended to study in Japan. Also in 1905, some gentry founded a Japanese language school in Chongqing under the patronage of the provincial government. The school promised the students that after their graduation, they might go to study in Japan with the support of official funds. In the next year, another Japanese language school was founded in Jianzhou, west Sichuan.<sup>289</sup>

Some cases show that to go to Japan was a substitute for the civil service examination even before its abolition. Yang Wei, a young man in Xuyong county, failed in the *tongsheng* examination in his county because someone reported him to have registered a false native county. “He was so angry that he decided to go to Japan despite the disapproval of his family.”<sup>290</sup> But it was after the abolition of the examination system that to go to study in Japan became a popular choice of the Sichuan students. Wu Yuzhang<sup>291</sup> says: “The crowd of students in Zunjing Academy (they were all *shengyuan*) had long worried for their own *chulu* (career outlets). When the civil service examination system was abolished and the dream of study in Japan became a fervor, they went to Japan in groups.”<sup>292</sup> Zhu De recalled that in 1905 there were more than one thousand young men in his home county who competed in the last civil service examination of the

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<sup>289</sup> Wang Di. 1993:454.

<sup>290</sup> RWZ.3:98.

<sup>291</sup> A famous revolutionary. He first followed Sun Ya-shen and was one of the senior members of the Nationalist Party, but he joined the Communist Party in the 20s. After 1949, he was the first president of the People’s University in Beijing. Wu himself never passed the examination for *shengyuan*, but his brother was a *shengyuan* selected to Zunjing Academy in 1902. He therefore lived and studied with his brother in Zunjing Academy for a while, and was familiar with that academy.

<sup>292</sup> Wu Yuzhang.1961:70.

Qing dynasty held in 1905. During the breaks between the sections of the examination, many candidates were talking about going to study in Japan or entering the new higher school in Chengdu. Interestingly enough, one of the candidates of the examination was a returned student from Japan.<sup>293</sup>

Though at present it is hard to know exactly how many Sichuan students went to Japan in the first decade of the twentieth century, some existing statistics from different sources demonstrate the number of them and their proportion to the Chinese student total in Japan increased year by year. In 1902 the number of Chinese students recorded in the *Qingguo liuxuesheng huiguan di erci baogao* was 670, of whom only 14 or about 2% were Sichuan students.<sup>294</sup> The next year, 1903, according to *Dongfang zazhi*, there were 57 Sichuan students in Japan, and that number was about 6% of the Chinese student total in Japan in that year. *The Sichuan youxue zhusheng diaochabiao* (the Survey Chart of the overseas Sichuan students) and other sources show that the number of Sichuan students in early 1905 reached 393, which was about 5% of the Chinese student total in Japan.<sup>295</sup> In the next year of 1906, there was a sharp increase in Sichuan students. Of the approximately 8,000 Chinese students in Japan in that year, around 800, or 10% were Sichuan students.<sup>296</sup> Considering Sichuan's exclusion from coastal China and the greater dynamics of modernization in the Yangzi delta area, the proportion of Sichuan students was large. Paula Harrell has noticed that 1905 was the year when there was a great change of the proportion of Sichuan students in the total of the Chinese students in Japan,

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<sup>293</sup> Smedley. 1979:78-79

<sup>294</sup> Fang Zhaoying. Ed. 1962:1-53. Notice that here the number of Chinese student total in Japan in 1902 is different from the number provided by Keishu (see last page). We think Fang's number is more accurate because it was based on name list.

<sup>295</sup> Wang Di.1993:456. Saneto Keishu.1982 Appendix 2.

<sup>296</sup> Wang Di.1993:456. Saneto Keishu.1982 Appendix 2.

but she did not offer an explanation for the cause of the change.<sup>297</sup> Sichuan students longed to go to Japan not because they were eager to learn modern knowledge, or because they were more aware of China's backwardness, but because they were larger in number than the students in the other provinces, and more sensitive to new career opportunities.

We may find reports of some of the above numbers of Sichuan students in Japan are contradicted by other sources. For example, Since Xiliang mentioned in 1908 in his letter to the Chinese envoy in Japan that the quota of Sichuan students to Japan supported by official money was 24 in 1901,<sup>298</sup> how was it possible that in 1902, there were only 14 Sichuan students there and of them, only 8 were official students (*guanfeisheng*) and the other 6 were private students (*zifeisheng*).<sup>299</sup> The reason is that most of the official students sent in 1901 were officials' sons and brothers. Because of the Qing *huibi* (avoidance) system, officials in Sichuan on the county level and above came almost exclusively from other provinces. Therefore, 16 out of the 24 so called Sichuan students were actually students from other provinces. They were not considered to be Sichuan students by Sichuan people though they were sent from Sichuan.<sup>300</sup>

In another document, Xiliang says that in the 31st year of Guangxu emperor (1905), Sichuan private students going to Japan numbered no less than 400-500.<sup>301</sup> But

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<sup>297</sup> Harrell 1992:72-73.

<sup>298</sup> SCWS: Vol.15:221.

<sup>299</sup> Fang Zhaoying. Ed. 1962:1-53.

<sup>300</sup> In 1904, some high officials who were Sichuanese but worked in Beijing in the central government wrote to Sichuan provincial government and protested that of the 24 students sent to Japan by the provincial government, only 8 were real Sichuanese. They claimed that since the rest were local officials' sons and brothers, their study in Japan would not benefit Sichuan in the future but use Sichuan's money. Shortly after that, *Sichuan tongxiang hui* (Society of Sichuan natives) accused the provincial government too, because they found the real Sichuanese in the group were 6 rather than 8. SCXB:1905.No.2.Gongdu:4.

<sup>301</sup> XLYG. *zhougao*.5.522.

according to the above quoted survey chart, the total number of Sichuan students in that year was only 393. Which figure was correct? The answer is both, because Xiliang's figure of private students was for the whole year, while the figure in the survey chart was collected in January, 1905.

We are quite sure that by 1905, the number of private students from Sichuan had surpassed that of Sichuan official students. The fervor for study in Japan was, to a great degree, a private students' fervor. Some open-minded gentry and officials understood that after the abolition of the examination system, study in Japan was one of the shortcuts to power and wealth, so they encouraged their sons or daughters to go to Japan and provided them with financial support. *Dongfang zazhi* reported in 1905 that shortly after a Nanchong county magistrate's son and a Xichong county magistrate' daughter had married in that year, they went to study in Japan.<sup>302</sup> One of the biggest salt merchant clans in Sichuan, the Wang clan, sent more than ten young persons of the clan to study in Japan around 1905.<sup>303</sup> A member of the gentry in Luzhou department allotted 2,000 taels of silver from local public money with the permission of the Luzhou bureau for the promotion of education to support five students from that department to go to Japan.<sup>304</sup>

To go to Japan became a sort of fashion in the years from 1904 through 1907 in Sichuan. Local gazetteers show that almost all Sichuan counties sent some students to Japan during this period. It was not rare at the time for father and son, husband and wife, brother and sister to go to Japan together and enroll in the same school. At the end of 1904 a journalist from *Dongfang zazhi* was surprised to find so many Sichuan students

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<sup>302</sup> DFZZ.1905.Vol. 2.No.9:248.

<sup>303</sup> SCWS.8:131

<sup>304</sup> DFZZ.1905.Vol. 2.No.9:248.

going to Japan when he reported on the last group of Sichuan students getting off to Japan in that year.<sup>305</sup> Guo Moruo recalled that the fervor also spread to his home town in south Sichuan. Before his elder brother (a *shengyuan*) set off for Japan after his graduation from *Chengdu dongwen xuetang* (Chengdu Japanese Language School), he returned to his home town. When people there got the news, dozens of people wanted to go with him.<sup>306</sup> In Chongqing in 1905, over 30 people formed a group to go to Japan together.<sup>307</sup> Also in Chongqing in 1905, a middle school allotted about 3,000 taels of silver to send 10 students to Japan, and declared that it would thereafter send equal numbers of students annually.<sup>308</sup> Even Sichuan monks wanted to go to Japan. Baxian county archive records one interesting case: A monk named Biming was accused by the local people of having deceived them on the Japanese overseas study issue. He had been sent by his temple to go to study in Japan for two years, but after he returned to Baxian, he resumed secular life unexpectedly and became a school teacher. He not only refused to return the money the temple had provided him, but also planned to sell the property of the temple.<sup>309</sup>

Since the students' purpose for studying in Japan was to change their educational identity, many of them were more concerned with the symbolic significance of having been to Japan than the study there per se. The year when there were the most Chinese students in Japan was also the year the quality of the students was poorest.

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<sup>305</sup> DFZZ.1904.Vol. 1.No.7:174.

<sup>306</sup> Guo Moruo.1978:43.

<sup>307</sup> DFZZ.1905.Vol. 2.No.2:30.

<sup>308</sup> DFZZ.1905.Vol. 2.No.2:30.

<sup>309</sup> SPA. Baxian Archive. Microfilm. No. 1667/11.

Most of the students who went to Japan during 1905-1906 studied in the common schools and short-cut schools which were opened particularly for Chinese students. The common schools, just like their Chinese copies, were middle schools and primary schools. The short-cut schools were either normal schools or law and administration schools (*fazheng xuetang*), some of which were so lax that students in them needed to study only for several months or even several days.<sup>310</sup> The Qing Education Ministry reported to the emperor in 1907: “In recent years, we have investigated carefully the number of students studying in Japan, and found that though the total has been over ten thousand, 60 percent of them study in short-cut schools; 30 percent of them are students in common schools; 5-6 percent of them have dropped out of schools without finishing their courses; 3-4 percent have entered higher schools or advanced specialist schools; and those who have entered universities are just one percent.”<sup>311</sup> The numbers of the Chinese students who graduated from the higher schools and universities in Japan from 1901 to 1909 were extraordinarily low:<sup>312</sup>

1901 -- 40

1902 -- 30

1903 -- 6

1904 -- 109

1905 -- 15

1906 -- 42

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<sup>310</sup> Saneto Keishu.1982:37.

<sup>311</sup> Shu Xincheng.1933:55.

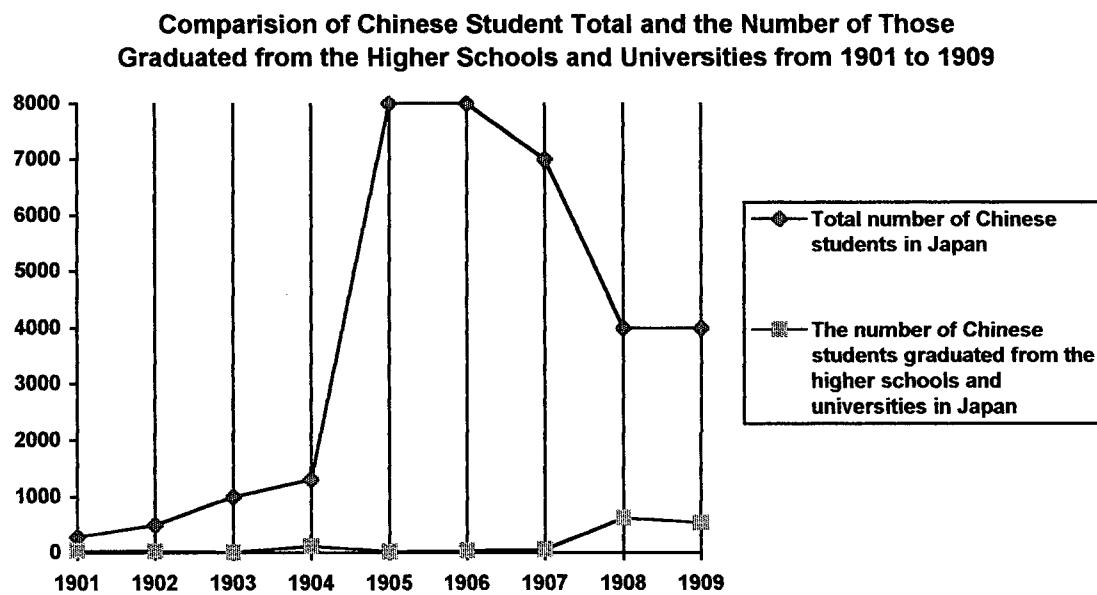
<sup>312</sup> Saneto Keishu.1982:Appendix:3.

1907 -- 57

1908 -- 623

1909 -- 536

To have a clear sense of the rarity of Chinese students graduating from the higher schools and universities in Japan compared to the Chinese students total there from 1901 to 1909, consider the following graph. Notice that the years (1905 and 1906) when there were the largest totals of Chinese students were the years when there were the fewest students who graduated from the higher schools and universities.



Source: This graph is constructed on the basis of Saneto. 1982: Appendix 3.

Quite a few students in the so called short-cut schools were concerned only with diplomas or degrees that were not hard to obtain from those money-oriented Japanese schools, and paid little attention to their study. They loafed about day and night and even did their exams perfunctorily by copying teachers' teaching materials. To go along with these Chinese students, the Japanese short-cut schools might change their curriculum and teaching plans at any time as the students demanded.<sup>313</sup>

It is no surprise that these returned students from Japan during 1905-1906 were poorly qualified. In the 1906 test of returned students from foreign countries held by the Qing Education Ministry, all the returned students from Japan failed; the best five were all students who returned from the United States. This result embarrassed not only the Chinese students recently returned from Japan but also the Japanese side. A Japanese journal, *Sun (taiyo)*, at that time appealed to the officials in the Education Ministry of Japan: if they considered Japan an advanced country in education in East Asia, they must not ignore this matter. The journal also reminded the officials to be aware of their own reputations. *Yomiuri Shinbun*, one of the major newspapers of Japan, explained that there were three reasons for the poor performance of the Chinese returned students from Japan: 1) the Chinese students had been fond of short-cut courses; 2) the Japanese schools hankered only after money; 3) the type of test held by the Qing Education Ministry might be unfair.<sup>314</sup> Whatever the reasons were, after 1906 the Qing government began to restrict the number of students who went to Japan for study in short-cut schools, and the general quality of Chinese students improved afterward.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> Huan Fuqing.1975:24.

<sup>314</sup> Saneto Keishu.1982:39.

<sup>315</sup> For example, 2 students returned from Japan got the best marks in the 1907 examination, compared to 5 from the United States. *Diyici jaoyu tongji tubiao*.1907:19

In Sichuan, Li Jieren's novels and Guo Moruo's autobiography offer vivid descriptions of these students returned from Japan, who were still very ignorant but considered themselves no ordinary beings. Born in Chengdu, Sichuan, Li Jieren (1891-1962) was a returned student from France in the 1920s and one of the best novelists in modern China. He wrote many novels concerning Sichuan society before 1911. The following passages are excerpted from his novel *Baofengyu qian* (Before the Storm).

“What is Mr. Two four?” Brother Tian asked curiously.

“Is there still something under the sky you don’t know?...Two four is eight. It refers to those gentlemen who went to Japan and lived in Hongwen Normal School (Kobun Gakuin)<sup>316</sup> for eight months. Before they even got familiar with Tokyo city, they came back to China with a huge amount of teaching material in Chinese, and claimed themselves to have mastered both Chinese learning and western learning.”<sup>317</sup>

In Guo Moruo’s autobiography, he recalls that when he was a student in a middle school in Chengdu in about 1909, one of his classmates told him:

I have been to Japan. The Japanese devils were poor, and they did not mind whether you studied or not. What they were really interested in was your money. All the privately founded schools there sold diplomas.

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<sup>316</sup> One of the most famous Japanese normal schools which opened specially for Chinese students during the fervor of study in Japan.

<sup>317</sup> Li Jieren. 1980. Vol. 1: 463-4.

Chinese students needed only to play with the housekeeping girls of the dormitories and learn some of their degrading words. These idiots had no common knowledge of science before they went to the foreign country and came back after they had been there for just a couple of years. You can imagine by yourself; such a short time was not even enough for mastering the language, how was it possible to really learn something? But despite this, they are returned students; they are Doctors, Masters. You can do nothing with this.<sup>318</sup>

Viewed from the perspective of education per se, the fervor of study in Japan during 1905-1906 might be regarded as a failure, but it was quite successful in changing the educational identity of those Chinese students who were involved in it. Before they went to Japan, they were students of the old education system, knowing nothing but Confucian classics; now they were the people who learned *xinxue* (new learning) in a modern country; therefore, they were supposed to be more qualified than others to teach in the new schools and to serve in the new bureaucratic organizations.

#### TO STUDY LAW AND ADMINISTRATION

Because of the Reform, the Qing state faced two bureaucratic problems: one was that the abolition of the examination system let the government lose its stable official-

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<sup>318</sup> Guo Moruo. 1978. Vol. 1:184.

providing source; the other was that the establishment of a large number of new institutions needed many more officials and staff members than the old bureaucratic system. The Qing regime resolved the problems by ordering the provinces to establish law and administration schools (*fazheng xuetang*) to train officials and government staff. This provided the career-seeking *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* with a new channel to official posts. In Sichuan, to enter law and administration schools was one of the most popular choices of the young people who had a background of *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*. This enthusiasm for law and administration schooling lasted until after the 1911 Revolution.

During the Reform, a large number of modern administrative bureaus and offices were founded in Sichuan one after another. By the time of the last emperor, Xuantong (1908-1911), there had been more than twenty new sorts of administrative bureaus and offices established in Sichuan at the provincial government level alone,<sup>319</sup> and the government posts had increased 20-30 times.<sup>320</sup> Therefore, a huge number of officials and government staff were needed. The abolition of the examination system had ended automatically the supply of officials by the central government, and Sichuan had to find the personnel itself. To meet the emergency, many official candidates who were waiting for a vacancy, officials who had lost their posts for certain demerits, officials who had left their post because of their parents' death<sup>321</sup> and even those rich men who had bought only an official title not an official post, were appointed to a government post in the reform years.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935:297-317.

<sup>320</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935:323.

<sup>321</sup> According to Qing regulation, an official must leave his post when either of his parents died and could not return to official post until after three years of mourning.

<sup>322</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935:322.

But appointment of these people was only a temporary measure. Even before the abolition of the civil service examination system, the Qing state had been aware of the problem of the sources for its officials. In 1903, by the order of the Qing government, official training boards (*keliguan*) were founded in all the provinces, as a preparation for the abolition of the examination system. In March of 1905, the Bureau of Government Administration submitted a memorial to the throne, suggesting the establishment of law schools and the opening of short-cut administration classes in the provincial official training board.<sup>323</sup> Shortly after that, Zhili governor Yuan Shikai submitted the regulations of the Zhili Law and Administration School (*Zhili fazheng xuetang*) to the throne, and in August of 1905, the Bureau of Government Administration distributed that regulation to the provinces, ordering them to establish law and administration schools accordingly.<sup>324</sup>

The official training board was founded in Sichuan, as in other provinces, in 1903, and in early 1906, it was changed into an administrative management board (*shixueguan*), which offered five courses: law, education, police, finance, and foreign affairs. The law and administration school was not established in Sichuan until August of 1906, almost one year later than in many other provinces. Governor Xiliang explained in one of his memorials to the emperor in that year that delay was due to the lack of qualified teachers.<sup>325</sup>

The first law and administration school in Sichuan, located in the former provincial examination hall, had two classes: one official class which enrolled exclusively those who had an official title, and one gentry class which enrolled only those

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<sup>323</sup> SCXB.1905.Vol.11.*Zhouyi*:2

<sup>324</sup> XLYG.*zhougao*.Vol.5:648.

<sup>325</sup> XLYG.*zhougao*.648-649.

who had a gentry title. The official class opened in the autumn of 1906, enrolling 60 students. The gentry class, enrolling 240 students, opened half a year later because there were not enough classrooms.<sup>326</sup> Shortly after the official law and administration school was founded, a number of public and private law and administration schools were also founded in Chengdu and other regions of Sichuan. And their total number increased to nearly twenty by the last year of the Qing dynasty.<sup>327</sup> These public law and administration schools promised their students that those who got a middle and above grade when they graduated would be appointed to official posts directly. According to the 1910 student recruitment advertisement of the East Sichuan Public Law and Administration School, the best students might be assigned to a rank eight official post.<sup>328</sup>

Though there was a rapid increase in the creation of law and administration schools in the last two or three years of the Qing regime, very few students actually graduated from them during these years for lack of finishing their studies. In 1909, the Provincial Institute of Self-governing Studies was founded to offer a fast training of local administration staff. Four hundred trainees were chosen among local gentry throughout the province, each county having a quota of two. The period of training was 8 months. Shortly after that, a new order was issued that each administrative unit under the provincial level should establish an institute of self-governing studies, selecting local gentry members to study in it. To enroll as many participants as possible, the order demanded that auditor seats should be prepared. There were 127 such institutes established in the prefectures, departments and counties throughout Sichuan, and the

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<sup>326</sup> XLYG.zhougao.684-649.

<sup>327</sup> Wang Di.1993:486. Accoding to Zhang Huichang, the total number was 13. Zhang Huichang.1962:152.

<sup>328</sup> SPA. Baxian Archive..Microfilm.1594:10.

participants numbered several thousand.<sup>329</sup> In 1910, to meet the urgent need for modern judges, the Qing government resorted to the way of the abolished civil service examination for recruiting them, and sent each province two examiners to examine the candidates. The examination included three sessions. The first two were written tests and the last an oral test. In Sichuan, there were over one thousand candidates participating in the examination. Around one hundred of them passed the written tests, but only about sixty passed the oral test.<sup>330</sup>

After the founding of the Republic, in order to apply for a government position, one must have a diploma awarded by a law and administration school. Consequently, more law and administration schools opened in Sichuan, and most of them were private ones. In Chengdu alone, there were nearly fifty private law and administration schools opened in the first two years after the founding of the Republic, and many of them were poorly qualified. Guo Moruo writes in his autobiography:

The great number of privately founded law and administration schools exhibited most clearly the Chinese opportunist psychology, and eagerness for official posts. In Chengdu city whose girth was just 22 *li*, there were a good number of privately founded law and administration schools when we went there for the first time before the revolution, but within the first one or two years after the revolution, all of a sudden, the numbers of this sort of school increased to about fifty. Three month short-cut, six month short-cut, and one year short-cut schools! The educational institutions of

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<sup>329</sup> Zhang Huichang. 1962: 152

<sup>330</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935:342.

the time produced the talents of law and administration faster than paper-flower-making craftsworkers produced paper flowers. There were plenty of admirable rumors such as father and son, grandfather and grandson studying in the same law and administration schools. China was thus ‘reformed’ and thus ‘self-strengthened’.<sup>331</sup>

It was a phenomenon not only in Sichuan but in the whole country that a large number of privately founded law and administrative schools were set up like bamboo shoots after the spring rain. In 1914, the Education Ministry condemned the phenomenon, warning that “a great number of law and administration schools recruited unqualified students and attached no importance to education, while the enrolled students were concerned only with diplomas and official posts.”<sup>332</sup> The ministry then sent two inspectors to inspect the privately founded law and administration schools in seven provinces: Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Zhejiang, Anhui, Hubei, Hunan, and Zhili. When the two inspectors returned to Beijing, they submitted to the Ministry a very negative report of the schools they had inspected, accusing them of “being bent solely on profit.” Based on this report, the Education Ministry instructed all the provinces to close all privately founded law and administration schools in their jurisdiction within a stated time.<sup>333</sup>

In the first Sichuan law and administration school established in 1906, the students in the official class were all officials who were rank eight or higher officials; the students in the gentry class were those who held a degree of the civil service examination,

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<sup>331</sup> Guo Moruo. 1978. Vol. 1:296.

<sup>332</sup> JYZZ. 1914. Vol. 5. No. 10. *jishi*: 85.

<sup>333</sup> JYZZ. 1914. Vol. 5. No. 11. *jishi*: 93.

either a *juren*, or a *gongsheng*, or a *shengyuan*. Though the school was supposed to teach modern knowledge, the minds of the students were still very feudalistic. Many of them went to school and went back home after school by sedan chair, and some even had servants.<sup>334</sup>

The students in the public law and administration schools were also mostly those who had degrees from the civil service examination system. To qualify for a public law and administration school, according to regulations issued by the Qing government, applicants must be 20-40 years old, either *juren*, *gongsheng* and *shengyuan*, and must bring a letter of introduction from the local government with them when they applied to the school. In reality, very few *juren* and *gongsheng* applied to such public schools. The 58 applicants for Sichuan public law and administration schools in 1910 whose roll was still kept in Sichuan University Archives were all *shengyuan*.<sup>335</sup> After the establishment of the Republic, the applicants for the law and administration schools were required to have graduated from one of the region's middle schools.

At present, we have no idea about the total number of students who graduated from the law and administration schools in Sichuan during this transitional period. But a survey of the lists of students graduated from higher schools and universities during the first two decades of the twentieth century recorded in Sichuan county gazetteers tells us that the students who studied law and administration were always the most numerous. For example, Shuangliu county recorded 82 students graduated from higher schools or specialist schools between the years 1905 and 1915, of whom the specialist distribution was as follows:

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<sup>334</sup> Guo Moruo. 1978: Vol. 1:222.

<sup>335</sup> SUP. File No.28

TABLE 4.1  
SPECIALTY DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS IN SHUANGLIU COUNTY

<i>Specialty</i>	<i>Number</i>
Law and Administration	27
Military	26
Normal school	11
Science and technology	10
Higher School (no specialty indicated)	3
Agriculture and Sericulture	2
Police	2
Business	1
Total	82

Source. *Shuangliu xianzhi*. 1920.2:104a-105b

One reason for the *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*'s preference for studying law and administration in Sichuan was the Chinese intellectuals' traditional value, *dushu zuoguan* (study for official post), inherited from the civil service examination. Another reason was that many of these students with a traditional education had no background in science. And to study law and administration was easier than to study other subjects. In 1906, when it instructed the provinces to establish law and administration schools, the Education Ministry of the Qing government stated:

At present, the new policies are being carried out in all the provinces, and talents are urgently needed. Such posts as judges and tax-collectors are such only those who have been specially trained can assume. Since the civil service examination system has been abolished, and the *juren*, *gongsheng*, and *shengyuan* have found nowhere to continue their study, it is good for them to study law and administration, which is not so difficult as other specialties. Senior people have more life experience, and they are

more learned in Chinese learning; therefore, they must be more capable of mixing Chinese learning and Western learning for practical use.<sup>336</sup>

It is noteworthy that for the Sichuan students in Japan during this period, as for those in domestic schools shown in table one, to study law and administration was also one of the three most popular specialties. (The other two were the study of pedagogy, and the study of the military subjects). The students' specialty choices reflected the combination of the requirement of the new times and Chinese students' traditional occupational preferences.

#### MILITARY SCHOOLS AND THE NEW ARMY

We have seen that either going to Japan or studying law and administration was encouraged by the government first and then followed enthusiastically by the *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* who were impatiently looking for new roads to social success. The eagerness of intellectuals to enter military schools and to join the new army in the first decade of the twentieth century followed the same pattern. The conventional wisdom is that the popularity of military education during this period was the consequence of the influence of western theories like Social Darwinism. But it is also possible to argue that the popularity, at least in the case of Sichuan, resulted from the abolition of the examination system and the students' pursuit of new ladders of success.

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<sup>336</sup> SCXB.1906.No.7.*gongdu*:2

It is an overstatement of some scholars to say that “the traditional officers were uncultured.”<sup>337</sup> In imperial China, besides the civil service examination system, there was a similar structured military service examination system, which had almost as long a history as the civil service examination.<sup>338</sup> Since the 14th year of the Chenghua emperor of the Ming dynasty (1478), the military service examination, imitating the civil service examination, had included the three levels (county, province and nation) of examinations as well, and candidates who passed them would be rewarded with status as a military *shengyuan*, military *juren*, or military *jinshi* respectively. This system was inherited by the Qing dynasty. The prefecture and county government schools in the Qing dynasty, included both *wensheng* (civil students) and *wusheng* (military students), though the number of *wusheng* was just half the number of *wensheng*.<sup>339</sup>

The provincial and metropolitan military examinations, like the civil ones, also consisted of three sessions. The first two sessions were called “outside sessions” (*waichang*), testing candidates’ physical *gongfu* like horse-riding and archery. The third session was a written test called the “inside session” (*neichang*). The candidates were required to answer some military policy questions (*celun*). Therefore, the military candidates must be literate, though their expertise was not in the Confucian classics but in the ancient books on the art of war. Actually, in the Qing dynasty, some candidates were able to pass the provincial and metropolitan military examinations mainly because they wrote “a good article” (*wenzhang hao*) during the inside session of the examination.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> Edmund Fung. 1980:22.

<sup>338</sup> According to *Jiaqing Sichuan tongzhi*. The first military service examination was held in the second year of the emperor Changan of the Tang dynasty (702 AD).

<sup>339</sup> In Sichuan in the period of emperor guangxu, for example, a small county government school had a quota of 26 *wensheng* but only 13 *wusheng*. See *Xuanhan xianzhi*.1932.9:19b.

<sup>340</sup> *Jiaqing Sichuan tongzhi*.139:1a-2a.

The military *juren* and *jinshi* were a large social group. According to the early 1800's Sichuan gazetteer, Sichuan produced 126 military *jinshi* and 2,252 military *juren* during the one and a half century rule of the first five Qing emperors.<sup>341</sup> These military degree holders were one of the most important sources of the Qing army officers.

Therefore when Edmund Fung says in his splendid book that "the social contempt for the soldier had discouraged any men of education from serving in the army,"<sup>342</sup> the comment should be more discriminating. The social contempt for the soldier had only discouraged the men of education from serving in the army as soldiers, not from serving in the army as officers or advisers. Whenever there was a chance of promotion in the army, or a need for local defense, Chinese men of education never hesitated to join the army. In many local gazetteers, the names of the *gonggong* are recorded. They were *shengyuan* who had become *gongsheng* because they rendered outstanding service to the state or to their local community, which in most cases was military service. We should not forget that the armies that fought against the Taiping Rebellion, whether they were formal armies such as the Xiang (Hunan) Army and the Huai (Anhui) army, or local defense militias, were led by intellectuals.

During the Reform period in the first decade of the twentieth century, the military service examination system was abolished as well. Just as the civil officials in the modern government were trained in the law and administration schools, the officers in the new army would now be trained in modern military schools. This change offered the young men of education in Sichuan a new chance. To study in a military school became one of their popular choices. The earliest Sichuan military students were among the officially

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<sup>341</sup> *Jiaqing Sichuan tongzhi*. 139:2a-75b.

<sup>342</sup> Edmund Fung. 1980:22.

sent students to Japan. As we mentioned above, there were fourteen Sichuan students who studied in Japan in 1902-03, of whom, nine studied military subjects.<sup>343</sup>

In 1904, of the 1300 Chinese students in Japan, about 200 were studying military subjects; however, the Chinese minister to Tokyo, influenced by the Japanese Ministry of War, thought the number was still too small. He therefore proposed to the Qing regime that more military students be sent abroad.<sup>344</sup> It was because of his proposition that the Qing regime drew up a plan to send 400 more students to enroll in military studies in Japan within four years, or 100 each year. The 100 students were distributed among the provinces and military stations. Sichuan, Zhili, Jiangsu, Guangdong, Hubei, and the Eight Banners each got the largest quota, six, while the other provinces and military stations were allotted one to three. All the students were to be selected from the sons and brothers of the official and gentry families or from those who were studying in the provincial military schools.<sup>345</sup>

The Qing regime was more cautious with the students it sent to study in military schools in Japan than with students it sent to study any other subjects. In early 1904, the Chinese minister to Tokyo proposed to the Qing regime that the students who were to study military subject should be all officially sent. His argument was that the tuition fee for military study in Japan was much higher than that of the other specialties, and it was hard for the private students to pay. Several months later, the Qing regime issued a regulation to forbid private students studying military subjects in Japan, but it presented a different argument. The regulation reads:

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<sup>343</sup> See Fang Zhaoying, 1962:1-53

<sup>344</sup> SUA: File No.113; Shu Xincheng, 1933:58.

<sup>345</sup> Shu Xincheng, 1933:58.

The only purpose for studying military subjects is to revive the military strength of the country; therefore, it is natural that the students should be officially sent, and study by self-financing should be forbidden. The minister to Japan should check the aspiration (*zhiqu*) of the self-financed students who are now studying military subjects and find the energetic, diligent and young, reporting their names to the Military Training Bureau (*Lianbing chu*) and providing them with subsidies. To benefit their study, their status should be changed to officially sent students. After the promulgation of this regulation, all self-financed study of military subjects in Japan will be forbidden.<sup>346</sup>

At the same time, the Qing regime encouraged the provinces to establish their own military schools. The first Sichuan military school, the Sichuan Military Preparatory School (*Wubei Xuetang*), was established in 1901 by governor Kui Jun. Because there were no qualified teachers, the school provided no courses in the classroom, and its students could only learn German military drills on the parade grounds. Before long, the school was closed. The next year, 1902, governor Cheng Chunxuan reestablished this school with the same name but in another location. The instructors were first Japanese but they were soon replaced by Chinese military students recently returned from Japan.<sup>347</sup> The curriculum in the school included infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineering, and logistics. There were three programs: regular (three years), training (two years), and

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<sup>346</sup> Shu Xincheng, 1933:60-61.

<sup>347</sup> Des Forges, 1973:53.

short-cut (one year). All the curriculum, drill, and even school management copied the pattern of the Army Officers School of Japan (*Rikugun shikan gakko*).<sup>348</sup> The qualifications required for applicants for the school were “civil and military *shengyuan* and *tongsheng* who are intelligent and healthy.”<sup>349</sup> The applicant, like the applicants for the civil service examination, must obtain a letter of guarantee from a member of the gentry of his home town before he participated in the entrance examination of the school.<sup>350</sup> The school lasted for three years until 1905 when the Qing regime ordered it to be closed, because the central government wanted to supervise military officer training throughout the country. Many of the students in the regular program were sent to the Army Officers School of Japan.<sup>351</sup>

Besides *Wubei xuetang*, quite a number of other military schools were established in Sichuan at the end of Qing and the early Republic. They were 1) Sichuan Land Force Primary School (*Sichuan lujun xiaoxuetang*); 2) Sichuan Land Force Short-cut School (*Sichuan lujun shucheng xuetang*); 3) Sichuan Military Officer School (*Sichuan guanbian xuetang*); 4) Sichuan Military Officer Primary School (*Sichuan guanbian xiaoxuetang*); 5) Sichuan Land Force Officer School (*Sichuan lujun junguan xuetang*); 6) Sichuan Officer School (*Sichuan jiangbian xuetang*); and 7) Sichuan Officer Short-cut School (*Sichuan junguan shucheng xuetang*).<sup>352</sup> The students of the schools were mainly recruited from *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*, the students of the new schools, and the literate soldiers of the new army. Though almost all these schools were short-lived, they

<sup>348</sup> Zhou Kaiqing.1969:88-89.

<sup>349</sup> SCXB.1905. No.5, *gongdu*; Wang Di. 1993:411.

<sup>350</sup> SUA.File.No.147.

<sup>351</sup> Zhou Kaiqing.1969:88-89.

<sup>352</sup> Zhang Zhonglei.1962: 345-364.

produced more than two thousand military officers (Table 4.2). Some of the students like Yin Changheng, Liu Cunhou, Zhou Jun, Liu Xiang, Yang Sen, and Deng Xihou became famous military commanders or warlords or even provincial governors in the later years. The most important military factions in Sichuan during the later Warlord period, such as the *Wubei* faction, the *Sucheng* faction, the *Baoding* faction,<sup>353</sup> and the *Junguan* faction, were formed around the students who graduated from these schools.<sup>354</sup> Viewed from this perspective, these military schools offered one of the preconditions for Sichuan warlordism in the following decades.

TABLE 4.2  
SICHUAN MILITARY SCHOOLS AT THE END OF THE QING AND THE EARLY REPUBLIC

<i>The School Names</i>	<i>The Years of Existence</i>	<i>The Students trained</i>
Sichuan Military Preparatory School	1902-1906	270*
Sichuan Land Force Primary School	1908-1911	500**
Sichuan Land Force Short-cut School	1906-1911	260
Sichuan Military Officer School	1904-1911	180
Sichuan Military Officer Primary School	1911	60
Sichuan Officer School	1912	400***
Sichuan Land Force Officer School	1912-1915	620
Sichuan Officer Short-cut School	1912-1913	540
Total		2,830****

Source: The table is constructed on the basis of Zhang Zhonglei. 1962. “Qingmo Minchu Sichuan de junshi xuetang ji chuanjun paixi.” In Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xueshang huiyi quanguo weiyuanhui. Ed. *Xinbai geming huiyilu*. Vol.3:345-364. \*The number of students who finally graduated was 220. \*\* Of them, 200 were transferred to Sichuan Land Force Officer School later. \*\*\* Of them, 200 were transferred to Sichuan Land Force Officer School later. Because among the 620 students in Sichuan Land Force Officer School, 400 were transferred from the other two schools, the actual total should be 2,430.

The Sichuan new army was founded in 1903 and its first 2,500 soldiers were selected from the old army. It consisted of five battalions, each of which had 500 soldiers. This army was called a standing army (*changbeijun*), whose commander was a

<sup>353</sup> This faction was formed around the students who had studied in the Sichuan Land Force Primary School. Because most of the students who graduated from that school were finally sent to Baoding Officer School in Hebei., the faction was thus named.

*gongsheng*, Chen Huan. Because the Sichuan Military Preparatory school had been recently established, and no students had graduated, all the officers were also selected from the old army.<sup>355</sup> In 1906, the Qing regime planned to organize 36 divisions and distribute them among the provinces. Sichuan was assigned 3 divisions, second only to the metropolitan area (*jingji*), which was allotted 4 divisions; the other provinces were allotted only one or two divisions.<sup>356</sup> Because a certain proportion of literate soldiers in the new army was required, governor Xiliang appealed to the Qing regime, claiming that due to lack of qualified soldiers, Sichuan could only train two divisions, and they would be organized in three years. Though the Qing regime ratified Xiliang's appeal, Sichuan was still unable to recruit enough qualified soldiers for two divisions, and had to downgrade the qualification.<sup>357</sup> At the outbreak of the revolution of 1911, there was actually only one incomplete division (17th division) garrisoned in Chengdu, which was organized in 1909.<sup>358</sup>

The number of soldiers in Sichuan New Army, 17th division, was 10,001, of whom one was the chief commander, 6,000 were land force soldiers, 4,000 were cavalry, artillery, engineer, and logistics soldiers. Most of the higher officers in the army were those returned military students from Japan, and the lower ones were those graduated from the local military schools.<sup>359</sup> The soldiers were no longer selected from the old army but recruited mainly from literate young men in the local society and graduated students

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<sup>354</sup> Zhang Zhonglei. 1962: 355-364.

<sup>355</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935: 103.

<sup>356</sup> Edmund S.K.Fung. 1980: Appendix 1.

<sup>357</sup> SXGS. Vol. 1: 75-76.

<sup>358</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935: 103-104; Edmund S.K.Fung. 1980: Appendix 2.

<sup>359</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935: 104.

from the middle and primary new schools.<sup>360</sup> The proportion of literate soldiers in the new armies varied from province to province. Joseph Esherick suggests that Hubei had the largest, best-educated, and best-trained New Army in south China due to the concentration of that army in a major treaty port, and the inability of the provincial school system to absorb all the partially educated youth of the province.<sup>361</sup> The level of literacy among the Sichuan New Army was much lower. One of the motions in the first meeting of the Sichuan Provincial Assembly in 1909 addressed the problem of recruiting a sufficient number of qualified literate soldiers. Apart from social contempt, the problem for Sichuan was that many young men who were disciplined and healthy such as the members in the local defense militia (*tuanlian*) were illiterate, while many who were literate like the students in the new schools were not disciplined and healthy. The resolution of the assembly on this problem included three measures: 1) to establish child factories (*ertong gongchang*) to train children who could be both workers and soldiers in the future; 2) to open training classes to educate the members of the local defense militia; 3) to found associations of physical education in upper primary schools.<sup>362</sup> Though the resolution was rejected by the provincial administration,<sup>363</sup> it revealed the difficulty Sichuan faced in recruiting qualified soldiers.

Notwithstanding the variety of the literacy rate of the soldiers in different provinces, there was a general increase in educated men serving in the army. The cause for the increase, as Diana Lary has pointed out, was that the military had become the new

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<sup>360</sup> Zhou Xun. 1935:104

<sup>361</sup> Esherick. 1976: 145-146

<sup>362</sup> SXGS:Vol.1:76.

<sup>363</sup> SXGS:Vol.1:77.

route to wealth and power.<sup>364</sup> The Qing regime granted various privileges to the recruits in order to raise the social status of the soldiers. The salary of the soldiers in the new army was higher than that of the soldiers in the old army.<sup>365</sup> The retired soldiers were awarded a sort of certificate, and they were to be exempted from corvee and were not to be arrested or insulted by local officials until concrete evidence was produced.<sup>366</sup> These rights were the sort the *shengyuan* had enjoyed during the times of the civil service examination. The literate soldiers had opportunities to be sent to the military schools, and they might thus become officers. The pay rates for the officers in the new army were extremely attractive. A regimental commander in the new army, for instance, would be paid 500 taels a month and a battalion commander 400 taels a month.<sup>367</sup> These rates of pay would be envied by any professors and even presidents of the provincial higher schools.<sup>368</sup>

## INTELLECTUALS AND REVOLUTION

In imperial China, it was not rare for intellectuals to reach political power by participating in rebellions. At least since the Tang dynasty, there had been intellectuals in almost all the important peasant uprisings, and when a rebellion was near to victory, there would be more of them. The most famous example was the large number of gentry

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<sup>364</sup> Diana Lary. 1985:5.

<sup>365</sup> Zhou Xun. 1966 (1935):104.

<sup>366</sup> Edmund S.K.Fung. 1980:24.

<sup>367</sup> Edmund S.K.Fung. 1980:24.

<sup>368</sup> The salary for the president (*jingli*) of Sichuan Higher school at the end of Qing was 160 taels of silver a month; for Chinese teachers it was 40 - 60 taels; and for foreign teachers it was 85 - 355 taels a month. "The roll of the teachers and staff of Sichuan Higher School (1905-1914)." SUA. File No:97.

members of east Zhejiang, such as Liu Ji, Song Lian, Zhang Yi, and Ye Chen,<sup>369</sup> who joined the uprising army of Zhu Yuanzhang (the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty) at the end of the Yuan Dynasty. Liu Ji's words demonstrated plainly the motives of the intellectuals participating in rebellions. "If the true man (*dazhangfu*) is born and grows up in the wilderness (*caomao*), and is unable to be promoted in peaceful times, he should come out to serve the country in a period of disturbance, and in doing so he is still great."<sup>370</sup>

The 1911 Revolution was, of course, a much more complicated event than any traditional rebellion in imperial China, and the intellectuals who participated in it, no doubt, had much more elaborate motives, but the claim that "the basic aim of the 1911 Revolution was modernization, closely tied to nationalistic attitudes"<sup>371</sup> seems to be too generalized and risks obscuring the complexity of the revolution. Esherick does have a point when he asks why the Revolution of 1911, if it was aimed at modernization, took place first in less foreign influenced provinces like Sichuan, and Hubei.<sup>372</sup> The 1911 Revolution was similar to the traditional rebellions at least in one respect: it functioned as a mechanism to enable the participants of lower social status to reach political power.

In Sichuan, the young men who had *shengyuan* or *tongsheng* background were the most active social group in the revolution. The first radical intellectual political groups in Sichuan were The Public Interest Strengthening society (*Gongqianghui*) and The Walking and Thinking Society, (*Youxianghui*) organized by some *shengyuan* and

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<sup>369</sup>For the relationship between Zhu Yuanzhang and the intellectuals of east Zhejiang, see Chen Gaohua, 1978. "Yuanmo Zhedong dizhu yi Zhu Yuanzhang." In *Lidai nongmin qiyi luncong*. Vol.2:189-197.

<sup>370</sup>Liu Ji. *Song Zhang Sanyi zhi longquan xu*. In Chengyibo wenji: 3.

<sup>371</sup>Rankin. 1971. Preface: page 2.

<sup>372</sup>Esherick. 1995:58.

*tongsheng* in Chongqing in 1903. Two years later, in 1905, the students in the new schools began to organize political groups, such as The Moral Study Society (*Daode xuehui*) in Sichuan Upper School in Chengdu and The Society for Introducing Novelty (*Shuxin xueshe*) in Southern Sichuan Normal School in Luzou. Though many of the members in these early intellectual groups joined the Revolutionary Alliance (*Tongmenghui*) later, their major activities at that time were to spread modern ideas by organizing *salons*, and distributing progressive newspapers.<sup>373</sup> They were not yet Revolutionary groups.

Sichuan's young intellectuals did not become converted to the cause of the anti-Manchu revolutionists in large numbers until 1905. According to the extant materials, only six Sichuan students joined the early Anti-Manchu Revolutionary organizations in Japan before 1905.<sup>374</sup> The Revolutionary Alliance was founded in Tokyo by a combination of these earlier Revolutionary organizations in 1905 when the surge of Chinese students to Japan began. Many Sichuan students coming to Japan joined the Revolutionary Alliance in that year and the following years. By a reliable record, Sichuan, one of the most conservative and backward provinces, had 127 students joining the Revolutionary Alliance during the two years of 1905 and 1906 in Japan, second only to Hunan among the 17 provinces which had members in the Revolutionary Alliance.

(Table 4.3)

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<sup>373</sup> Cheng Xinni. 1981:64-66; Deng Xigong. 1981:66-68; Wei Yingtao. 1990.467.

<sup>374</sup> Zhou Kaiqing, 1976:201-202.

TABLE 4.3  
DISTRIBUTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ALLIANCE  
IN 1905-1906

Hunan	157	Jiangsu	36
Sichuan	127	Zhili	35
Guangdong	112	Yunnan	21
Hubei	106	Zhejiang	20
Anhui	59	Henan	9
Shanxi	55	Jiangxi	8
Shandong	53	Guizhou	8
Guangxi	43	<i>Total</i>	849

Source: This table is based on *zhongguo tongmenghui chengli chuqi zhi huiyuan mingce*. In GKW.s.1,v.2:244-304.

Most members of the Revolutionary Alliance were young men under 30 years old. Of the 127 Sichuan members of the Revolutionary Alliance, 72 recorded their age. The youngest one was 16, while the oldest one was 44. The breakdown of their age groups is as follows.

Age Groups	Numbers
15-20	9
20-29	56
30-39	6
40-45	1

This breakdown indicates that about 92% of these Sichuan members of the Revolutionary Alliance in the early years were young men under 30. This was true of the members of the Revolutionary Alliance in all the other provinces.<sup>375</sup> Though there was no record of the educational background of these members of the Revolutionary

Alliance, inferred from their ages, most of them were probably *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*. On the other hand, few of those Sichuan scholars with *juren* or *jinshi* degree who went to study in Japan during these years such as Pu Dianjun, Luo Chengxiang,<sup>376</sup> Yan Kai, Deng Xiaoke, among others, joined the Revolutionary Alliance. This might be a demonstration that one's political attitude was to some degree decided by one's social status.

It is also worth noting that the private students were generally more radical than official and public students. Almost all the famous Sichuan student revolutionaries like Xiong Kewu, Zou Rong, Wu Yuzhang, Lei Tieya, and Yang Wei were private students. Compared to the official and public students, the private students seemed to care less for study, and to be more eager "to give up study and join in the revolution," even when they were not sure what the revolution was, as Xiong Kewu recalled.<sup>377</sup> Some of them even claimed: "We come to Japan not for study but for our country and people. Even if we are bound by study, and able to graduate, after we return to China, we are no more than slaves, being at the other's beck and call."<sup>378</sup> That Sichuan was one of the provinces which had the most private students in Japan might explain partly why Sichuan ranked first in the number of Revolutionary Alliance members among all the provinces.

After the members of the Revolutionary Alliance returned to Sichuan, most of them became teachers in new schools. They recruited new members for the Revolutionary Alliance from among their students, friends, and colleagues, and that was their major Revolutionary work. Though working in schools, the revolutionaries, unlike

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<sup>375</sup> GKW.s.1,v.2:244-304.

<sup>376</sup> Luo Chengxiang (1865-1926) was the last *zhuangyuan* (the number one of the *jinshi*) of the civil service examinations and the only Sichuan *zhuangyuan* in the Qing dynasty. He was also the only *zhuangyuan* in Chinese history who went to study abroad.

<sup>377</sup> Xiong Kewu.1962:2.

<sup>378</sup> See Sang Bing.1991:126.

the later communists, seemed to have little interest in arousing a student movement. Most of the student riots in the new schools in Sichuan before the Railway Protection Movement (*baolu yundong*) were simply conflicts between students and school authorities over the tough school disciplines, and they all occurred inside school grounds.<sup>379</sup> Even the major student strike that took place in Chengdu in 1907 was unpolitical, being caused by the strife between students from two schools attending the sports meeting held by all the middle and higher schools in Sichuan.<sup>380</sup> Mary Wright's idealizing comment about the Chinese student movement during this period can not be applied to Sichuan. She wrote in 1968: "The Chinese youth movement, of which we have not seen the end, began in this period rather than in 1919. The May Fourth Movement was its second stage, not its origin. Intelligence, courage, and indifference to death for their cause gave the new youth an influence out of all proportion to their numbers." This statement must be based only on an observation of the coastal provinces.<sup>381</sup>

Though quite a few Sichuan members of the Revolutionary Alliance were military students, compared to Hubei's Revolutionary Alliance, the Sichuan Revolutionary Alliance in later years paid less attention to absorbing members from the new army. Partly for this reason, the Sichuan new army did not play a key role later in the revolution as the Hubei new army did. The Sichuan Revolutionary Alliance planned several small military uprisings, such as in Pengxian county in 1905, in Jiangyou county in 1906, in Chengdu, Guangan county, and Jiading prefecture in 1907, but the major participants of the uprisings were not the members of the Revolutionary Alliance in the new army but

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<sup>379</sup> Guo Moruo's autobiography has recorded a number of students' riots occurred in his school during this period. Guo Moruo. 1978.

<sup>380</sup> Ning Zhicun. 1981:68

<sup>381</sup> Mary Wright. 1968:32.

those in the new schools and secret societies (*huidang*). Most of the uprisings were put down by the Qing regime even before they were actually launched.<sup>382</sup>

Beside the members of the Revolutionary Alliance, the Sichuan Provincial Assembly was also a political institution that recruited quite a number of *shengyuan*. The Qing regime assigned the quota of assembly members to a province not by the population of the province, but by 5% of its *shengyuan* quota in the abolished civil service examination system. Thus the province that had had a larger *shengyuan* quota in the past had a larger provincial assembly in the present. The Sichuan assembly had 105 members, making it the fourth largest among the 21 provincial assemblies.<sup>383</sup> Though the member quota for the Sichuan Assembly was 105, the elected members numbered 127. The extra 22 were alternative members. The distribution of the degree holders in Sichuan Provincial Assembly was as follows:<sup>384</sup>

Degrees	Numbers
<i>Jinshi</i>	2
<i>Juren</i>	33
<i>Gongsheng</i>	26
<i>Shengyuan</i>	55
No record of degree	11
Total	127

<sup>382</sup> Zhou Kaiqing. 1969:4-7.

<sup>383</sup> The three provinces which had a larger assembly than Sichuan were Zhili (140), Jiangshu (121), Zhejiang (114). See “Zhiyiju zhangcheng”. In *Qingchao xu wenxian tongkao*. 394: Xianzheng 2; Zhang Pengyuan. 1969:13; Li Jinxiu. 1988:80.

<sup>384</sup> Zhang Huichang. 1962:156-151.

It was not only in Sichuan but also in other provinces that *shengyuan* occupied a large percentage of the members of the assemblies which were established nationwide in 1909. What was remarkable about Sichuan was that it was one of the few provinces where *shengyuan* were a high proportion of the provincial assembly members. At present, there are only six provinces for which a complete record of the educational background of the assembly members can be found. They were Sichuan, Fengtian, Shaanxi, Guangdong, Hubei, and Shandong. The average percentage of *shengyuan* among the member total of the six provincial assemblies was 34%, while the percentage of Sichuan was 42%.<sup>385</sup>

Though there was a large percentage of *shengyuan* in the assembly, they were all wealthy *shengyuan*. According to the Regulations for the Election of the Members of Assembly issued by the Qing regime in 1908, the qualified voter must be male and over 25 years old, must have been in charge of educational affairs or other public affairs for three years, must have real property worth at least of 5,000 *yuan*, must possess a *shengyuan* or higher degree, or must have graduated from a middle or higher school. All registered voters in Sichuan, according to Zhou Kaiqing, numbered about only 191,500, or 0.3-0.4% of the whole population.<sup>386</sup> Those eligible for appointment must meet the same conditions, but be 30 years of age or older. It was noteworthy that the elected assemblymen were generally older than the members of the Revolutionary Alliance. The

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<sup>385</sup> See Zhang Pengyuan. 1969:27.

<sup>386</sup> Zhou Kaiqing. 1969:139.

following table provides the breakdown of the members of the Sichuan Provincial Assembly by age group.<sup>387</sup>

Age groups	Numbers
60-69	5
50-59	20
40-49	44
30-39	57
No record of age	1
Total	127

We know that the 1911 revolution opened the path of advancement for a large number of youth with a *shengyuan* and *tongsheng* background. In Sichuan, the revolution began with the Railway Protection Movement. Some scholars have tended to simplify the cause of the movement, seeing it as the climax of the conflict between the gentry and the Qing state.<sup>388</sup> There is no doubt that the gentry were the leaders of the movement, but there were other social and political forces, such as the members of the Revolutionary Alliance, and the chiefs of secret societies, who played leading roles in the movement as well, especially in the later phase of the movement, and in the regions outside Chengdu. The Sichuan common people should not be ignored either. The Sichuan common people had their own interests in the railway quarrel. Otherwise, they would have had no reason to follow the gentry, or anyone else, and the quarrel might not have developed into such

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<sup>387</sup> Zhang Huichang. 1962:146-151.

<sup>388</sup> See Chuzo Ichiko. 1968:304.

an extensive and bloody movement. There were also railway crises in Guangdong and Hubei, and yet they did not develop into bloody upheavals of the masses.

But what were the Sichuan common people's interests? In 1904, when the Chuan-Han Railway Company was founded, the estimated cost for the construction of the railway was about 70 million taels of silver, which were to be raised by selling shares among the Sichuan people. There were three sorts of shares: merchant shares (*shanggu*); purchasing shares (*gougu*); and renting shares (*zugu*). The first two sorts were mainly sold to rich merchants and gentry, while the last sort, the price per share of which was commonly five taels of silver, were distributed among the Sichuan common people by increasing the land tax of Sichuan families.<sup>389</sup> One author of the time wrote: "Either the rich or the poor, the noble or the humble, the male or the female, the old or the young, all [Sichuanese] have invested in the railway and want to construct it by themselves. It is different from the case of Guangdong, where the railway shares are held by the rich merchants; and the case of Hubei, where there are few shareholders...The [Sichuan] people consider their property as important as their lives. When they were informed that the construction of the railway would be nationalized, they were worried to death."<sup>390</sup>

The Sichuan Provincial Assembly first tried to lead the Sichuan people to appeal peacefully for Sichuan's rights, and the movement was not an anti-Manchu movement. In the summer of 1911, the main streets of Chengdu were decorated with improvised shrines for the late emperor Guangxu's tablet (*shengwei*), for this emperor had issued a decree that the railway should be commercially constructed. But in August of 1911, when Zhao Erfeng was appointed to be the governor of Sichuan, the situation began to change. Zhao

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<sup>389</sup> Shi Tiyan. 1962:42-43.

<sup>390</sup> Yuzhai cungao: 83. Quoted in Wei Yingtao. 1990:588.

adopted a policy of suppression, arresting the president of the provincial assembly, Pu Dianjun, as well as other influential assemblymen. The Chengdu masses crowded before the gate of the governor's *yamen* and asked the governor to release the arrested people. Zhao ordered the army to shoot at the masses, and as a consequence, over 100 people were killed in the event. The peaceful movement thus turned to a violent uprising. Sichuan people in all the counties began to organize Railway Protection Armies. After the Wuchang Uprising and the independence of Hubei province, which was stimulated to some degree by Sichuan's event, in November, 1911, the Railway Protection uprising became an anti-Manchu revolution.

The revolution in Sichuan had different regional characteristics. In Chengdu, the capital city and the political center of the province, the assemblymen were the leaders from the beginning of the movement. After the military uprising, though there were fierce battles between the railway protection armies and the Qing army in the counties and departments near Chengdu, the government was peacefully handed over to the assemblymen by governor Zhao Erfeng at the end of November, 1911. But they held political power for only 12 days when a mutiny occurred led by the Qing army which had not yet disbanded. As soon as the mutiny was crushed, a new and more Revolutionary government was established, in which quite a number of high officials were the members of the Revolutionary Alliance.<sup>391</sup>

In Chongqing, the largest commercial city of Sichuan by the Yangzi River, the members of the Revolutionary Alliance directed the military uprising. The base of the Revolutionary Alliance in Chongqing was in educational circles. Many members of The

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<sup>391</sup> Huang Suisheng. 1962:138-139.

Revolutionary Alliance were the headmasters or chiefs of staff of the new schools. For example, The Revolutionary Alliance member Yang Shukan was the headmaster of Chongqingfu Middle School, and Zhang Peijue was the student inspector. Zhu Yunzhang was the headmaster of Baxian Middle School. Yang Lin was the director of East Sichuan Normal School, and Zhu Zihong was the president of the Chongqing Education Association. The Chongqing branch of The Revolutionary Alliance was located in Chongqingfu Middle school. During the Railway Protection Movement, the members of the Chongqing Revolutionary Alliance allied themselves with anti-Manchu businessmen, members of secret societies and officers in the new army, but they kept the leadership through the whole movement.<sup>392</sup>

In the departments and counties, the cases were more complicated. The leaders of the Railway Protection armies might be chiefs of a secret society, members of the Revolutionary Alliance, or local gentry. (Table 4.4) Roughly, in west Sichuan, the chiefs of secret societies were the leaders in most counties, while in south, north and east Sichuan, more members of the Revolutionary Alliance played the leading role. But in many cases, it was not so simple to say that the movement in a county was led by the members of the Revolutionary Alliance or chiefs of the secret society or gentry members, because they might all be leaders or a leader might have all these capacities. In the whole of Sichuan, the soldiers of the railway protection armies included people from almost all walks of life, but the main body was made up of peasants.

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<sup>392</sup> Xiang Chu and others:1981:215.

TABLE 4.4  
THE MAJOR LEADERS OF THE RAILWAY PROTECTION ARMIES OF THE COUNTIES

<i>Leaders</i>	<i>Numbers</i>	<i>%</i>
Members of The Revolutionary Alliance	46	37%
Chiefs of the Brotherhood	39	31%
People in the both The Revolutionary Alliance and the Brotherhood	11	8%
Gentry	8	6%
Other local elites	15	12%
No record of background	7	6%
Total	126	100%

Source: Adopted and modified from *Sichuan Baolu Tongzhijun Zhuyao Fuzheren Yilanbiao*. In Wei Yingtao. Ed. 1990:664-672.

After the independence of Sichuan, it seemed to be a commonly accepted idea in the province that the people who participated in the revolution should be rewarded with official posts. Since many members of the Revolutionary Alliance were either *tongsheng* or *shengyuan*, and quite a number of gentry and other local elite at the county level were also *shengyuan* or *tongsheng*, many *shengyuan* and *tongsheng* thus came to power through revolution. It is interesting to notice that those opportunists who hoped to find a position in the new government claimed to be the members of the Revolutionary Alliance. As Guo Moruo wrote satirically in his autobiography: "So many members of Revolutionary party (*geming dang*) were there after the revolution succeeded! Those teachers in the official class of the Law and Administration School; those teachers in the gentry class of the Law and Administration School, and even those who wore army uniforms and carried an officer's sword, all turned out to be members of the Revolutionary party."<sup>393</sup> There were also real revolutionaries who preferred wealth to official posts. Xia Zhishi, a famous member of the Revolutionary Alliance in Chongqing, after declining an official post in the new Sichuan United Government on the advice of one of his friends that money was more important than power, received 30,000 *yuan* from

the government as a reward.<sup>394</sup> A study of the background of the officials in the Sichuan new governments at different levels after the revolution will tell us more about how effective the revolution was as an instrument of social advancement for the young intellectuals, but we will discuss this topic in the next chapter.

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<sup>393</sup> Guo Moruo. 1978. Vol. 1: 245.

<sup>394</sup> Xiang Chu and others. 1981:235.

## Chapter 5

### **THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF SICHUAN'S POLITICAL ELITE IN THE DECADE AFTER THE REVOLUTION OF 1911**

The Revolution of 1911 was a political revolution in the strictest sense. It had little impact on Sichuan's social structure. Though a new political elite class emerged in Sichuan after the revolution, it was quite different from the elite that arose in the West after the Industrial Revolution. The bourgeoisie in Europe gained wealth and influence from its control of the private sector of the economy and then employed the state as an instrument to protect its privileges. In Sichuan, the commercial sector had never developed to the extent that it could influence the state power, except for individual bribery of government officials, and purchase of official posts, which was widely practiced in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The people who wanted to be recruited into the elite after the revolution still relied chiefly on the two traditional resources: education and violence. In this chapter, we will examine the background, especially the educational background, of the political elite class in Sichuan after the revolution at both the provincial level and county level, to see how efficient the elite-recruiting mechanisms we discussed in the last chapter were.

## SICHUAN'S SOCIAL STRUCTURE AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Before we study the Sichuan political elite after the revolution, we should first define the general social structure of the province. In 1916, the Sichuan provincial government issued a report entitled *The Statistics of Sichuan Land and Population*, which provided the first land and population figures of Sichuan based on a census in the technical sense of the term. In that report is a table which demonstrates the occupational differentiation among the Sichuan people, from which we can see that Sichuan was still fundamentally a traditional society in the decade after the 1911 Revolution. (Table 5.1)

TABLE 5.1  
OCCUPATIONAL DIFFERENTIATION OF SICHUAN POPULATION IN 1916

Occupations	Numbers
Assemblymen	4,124
Officials	4,387
Government staff	22,607
Teachers	41,484
Students	1,338,247
Monks and other religious men	330,242
Lawyers	156
Journalists	143
Doctors	75,709
Peasants	19,907,081
Miners	229,664
Businessmen	4,594,562
Manufacturing workers	3,245,451
Fishermen	70,747
People in miscellaneous work	3,710,029
Coolie	3,354,357
Prostitutes	11,619
No occupation*	11,751,976
Total	48,692,585**

Source: *Sichuan renkou zhiye leibiebiao*. In *Sichuan neiwu tongji baogaoshu*. 1916. SPA. File No.2:1/17/5.

\*This category includes old persons, children, disabled persons, vagrants, beggars, and housewives. \*\*This number excludes soldiers and policemen.

Although the table offers us a clear picture of the Sichuan social structure, certain of its figures need a little explanation. One might be puzzled, given that Sichuan was

such a large agricultural province, that the percentage of peasants in 1916 could be so small, only about 41% of the whole population? The puzzle might be caused by confusing peasants with rural inhabitants. The term peasants in this table refers only to the agrarian labourers whose number was probably less than half of the rural inhabitants.<sup>395</sup> We estimate that the rural inhabitants then would make up at least 85% of the total population of Sichuan, for even in 1982, about 65 years later, the percentage of the rural inhabitants was still as high as 85.73% of the total population of the province.<sup>396</sup>

It is worthwhile to point out that there was class stratification among the rural inhabitants though it was not reflected in table 5.1. The Revolution of 1911 had little influence on this stratification because during and after the revolution there was no transfer of property in the countryside from one class to another as in the later communist revolution. For this reason, we could not regard the Revolution of 1911 in Sichuan as a social revolution. *Dongfang Zazhi* published an investigation of the class stratification in north Sichuan that shows how stable the class structure in Sichuan countryside was in the decade after the revolution:<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> Sichuan agrarian laborers remained at 42%-44% of the whole population in the countryside for most of the twentieth century. The following figures are provided in Liu Hongkang and others. Ed. 1988:277.

Year	percentage
1949	42.07
1957	44.89
1965	44.17
1975	41.91
1982	44.98

<sup>396</sup> Liu Hongkang and others. Ed. 1988:198.

<sup>397</sup> Source: DFZZ.1927.Vol.24.No.16:34; Wei Yingtao Ed. 1990:762. Since we do not really know how these figures were produced, they are here for reference only.

Year	Landlords	Landowing	Tenant peasants		Landless farmhands
			Small peasants		
1912	20%	15%	29%		36%
1913	21	14	30		35
1914	22	16	29		33
1915	21	15	30		34
1916	23	18	28		31
1917	24	19	26		31
1918	26	15	28		31
1919	23	18	27		32

The references to businessmen and manufacturing workers in table 5.1 could be easily misunderstood as well. They were not the sort of workers or businessmen in the factories or companies in Europe after the Industrial Revolution, but were mainly traditional peddlers and handicraft workers, especially family handicraft workers, who were living in the countryside or rural towns. In Sichuan, many men and women in the countryside were able to do handicraft works and often sold their products in nearby markets. It was always hard to tell whether such a person was a peasant or a handicraft worker. The Sichuan handicraft industry had been flourishing, and it flourished even more in the early twentieth century.

Such occupations as doctors, lawyers and journalists also need explanation. The doctors were not the sort found in modern hospitals or clinics. They were the doctors of the traditional Chinese medicine, being either from the hereditary medical families or those *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* who failed in the examination and then transferred to this profession, as we mentioned in chapter one. Lawyers and journalists might be the only

new occupations of this period in Sichuan, but their numbers were still very small. Though publishing newspapers and magazines enjoyed a rapid but brief development after the revolution,<sup>398</sup> this occupation originated in Sichuan during the earlier reform period.

According to table 5.1, the number of students in Sichuan exceeded one million. This figure is contradicted by other sources. For example, in the statistics of Chinese students of all provinces issued by the education ministry of the Republic government in 1919, the number of Sichuan students in 1915 was only 502,968.<sup>399</sup> It was incredible that in only one year the total number of students had more than doubled. One possible explanation for this discrepancy is that the numbers in table 5.1 might include students in *sishu* and kindergartens. Though there was a steady increase in student enrollment in Sichuan after the revolution, we have no evidence to demonstrate that the increase was caused by the revolution.<sup>400</sup>

The people in the first three categories were the political elite whom we are going to study in this chapter. The category of assemblymen (*yiyuan*) included all the assemblymen in the national parliament, the provincial assembly and the county councils, while the official and government staff included all the officials and government staff at different administrative levels in the province. They were mainly intellectuals, military personnel and revolutionaries. Though they were the most powerful and talented class, these elite people in Sichuan formed a tiny social group, only about 0.06% of Sichuan's total population.

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<sup>398</sup> See Wang Luping. *Sichuan baokan jilan*. 1993.

<sup>399</sup> Su Xincheng. 1961. Vol.1:373.

<sup>400</sup> *Sichuan jiaoyu tongji biao*. 34th year of Guangxu emperor (1908). In Sichuan Provincial Archives. No.120:10:132/2; *Disanci jiaoyu tongji tubian*. 1909. *Disanci jiaoyu tongji tubiao*. Gesheng:1-2; Su Xincheng. 1961. Vol.1:373.

## THE POLITICAL ELITE AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL

Jerome Chen argues that after the Revolution of 1911, governments in China at all levels might be called military-gentry governments, in contrast to the gentry-military governments prior to the revolution. By Chen's definition, the basis of the traditional government of China was the coalition of gentry and military, in which civil officials had an advantage over generals. But after the revolution, the power of the military expanded and it became the stronger side of the coalition. Civil officials were now under the leadership of the military at all administrative levels; China thus entered the period of warlordism.<sup>401</sup> Chen's argument fits with the case of Sichuan well. The political elite discussed in this chapter were actually the same group of people as Chen's "military-gentry". We do not adopt Chen's term directly because our main interest in this chapter is not in the political development of Sichuan after the revolution, but in the educational background of the members of the leading class, and the term "political elite" is therefore more convenient for our analysis.

Let us first see who were the major officials in the provincial government in the second decade of the twentieth century. After the Revolution of 1911, as we noticed in the last chapter, two governments were established in Chongqing and Chengdu respectively, and both claimed to be the government of the whole province. The government in Chongqing was founded in November 22, 1911, five days earlier than that in Chengdu, and its formal name was the Shu Military Government (*Shu jun zhengfu*).

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<sup>401</sup> Chen. 1979: 3.

The leaders of the government included a governor, a vice governor and about 30 ministers and vice ministers who were in charge of 17 ministries and bureaus, such as the civil administration, war, finance, transportation, foreign affairs ministries. The major officials of the Chongqing government were almost exclusively those Revolutionary Alliance members who had led the revolution in Chongqing except for the finance minister and the minister of war. We now provide the resumes of the four top leaders in the government to show what qualifications they had to enable them to obtain their positions.

*Governor Zhang Peijue:* Zhang was born in 1876 in Longchang county in south Sichuan, and his father was a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine. He became a *shengyuan* in 1899 when he was 24 years old. In 1902, he went to Chengdu to participate in the provincial examination but failed. He therefore decided to enter The Sichuan Higher School (*Sichuan gaodeng xuetang*) and study pedagogy. In 1906 after the abolition of the civil service examination system, he and his fellow townsmen (*tongxiang*) living in Chengdu established a Middle School in Chengdu that enrolled the young men from their home county. He was therefore selected as the president of the native place association of his home town in Chengdu. He joined the Revolutionary Alliance in the same year. In 1907, he graduated from Sichuan Higher School and became the headmaster of the above mentioned middle school. He participated in planning a number of anti-Qing uprisings organized by the Revolutionary Alliance, but all failed. In early 1911, he went to Chongqing and acted as the director of teaching affairs (*jiaowu zhang*) in Chongqing Prefecture Middle School. He and other members of

the Revolutionary Alliance led the Railway Protection Movement and the revolution in the Chongqing area. After the independence of Chongqing, he was selected by his comrades as the chief of the new government. He was 36 years old in that year.<sup>402</sup>

*Vice governor Xia Zhishi:* Xia was born in a middle peasant family in 1887. His childhood was spent in a *sishu* (private school) in his home town, Hejiang county in south Sichuan. In 1902 he went to Zigong city and enrolled in the new school opened by the famous salt merchant clan of the city, the Wang clan. In 1904 he went to Japan as a private student, studying military subjects. He was one of the first group of Chinese students who joined the Revolutionary Alliance when it was organized in 1905 in Tokyo. He returned to Sichuan in early 1908. After a short period of military mapping work in Tibet, he was appointed as a platoon leader in the new army. When the Railway Protection Movement took place in 1911, he was ordered by his commander to lead a group of soldiers to Longquanyi, a small town east of Chengdu. In early November of the year, at the news of the Wuchang uprising, he instigated a mutiny by 230 soldiers and led them on a long march eastward to Hubei where the Revolutionary Alliance government had been established. He urged the troops of the new army he met along his way to join him, and when he arrived at the outskirts of Chongqing at the end of the month, the soldiers in his army totalled about one thousand. His arrival was good news for the members of the Revolutionary Alliance inside Chongqing, who were planning to take over the government of Chongqing but were frustrated by the lack of armed force. Xia and his army entered Chongqing on November 22, and the Shu Military Government was

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<sup>402</sup> The information about Zhang Peijue is taken from Yang Shukan. "Zhang Peijue xiaozhuan." In SXGS. Vol.2:396-397; Xiangchu. "qian shujun dudu Sichuan minzheng zhang zhanggong mu." In SXGS. Vol.2:401-404; Zhang Zhongyun. "Zhang Peijue nianpu." In SXGS. Vol.2:409-411.

founded the same day. Although he was only 24 years old, Xia was selected as the vice governor because of his great contribution to the revolution.<sup>403</sup>

*Adviser Yang Shukan:* Yang was born in Baxian county of Chongqing prefecture in 1881. His father was a small merchant. In 1900 when he was 19 years old, Yang passed the *fu* examination and became a *shengyuan*. He then began to learn English from a British pastor. After the establishment of Chongqing Prefecture Middle School, he became one of the English teachers in that school. In 1903, Yang and several other young intellectuals of Chongqing organized the Public Interest Strengthening society (*gongqianghui*) in which they exchanged their new political ideas. This society was converted into the Chongqing branch of the Revolutionary Alliance in 1906, and all members including Yang therefore became the members of The Revolutionary Alliance. In the same year, Yang was hired as an English teacher by the attached middle school of Sichuan Higher School, and went to Chengdu. In 1907, he became the president of Yongning Middle School. He secretly planned an uprising with his Revolutionary Alliance comrades in that year but failed. Two years later, he assumed the post of president of Chongqing Prefecture Middle School, and therefore moved the office of the Chongqing branch of the Revolutionary Alliance into the school. During the Railway Protection Movement in 1911, he was the top leader of the uprising in Chongqing. After the independence of Chongqing, he acted as the adviser to the new government; he was 30 years old.<sup>404</sup>

*The Chief of General Affairs Department Xie Chi:* Xie was born in 1876 in Fushun county in south Sichuan. His father was a small merchant in the tea business. Xie

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<sup>403</sup> SJXRZ. Vol.2:106-108.

<sup>404</sup> SJXRWZ. Vol.2:85-87; Xiang Chu. Yang Shukan zhuan. In Zhou Kaqing. 1966:170-172.

failed repeatedly in county examinations when he was a teenager. In 1898 he entered Jiangyang Academy located at his hometown, and finally passed the examination and became a *shengyuan* the next year. In 1900, for some reason he offended the magistrate of his home county, and was forced to flee to Luzhou, a neighboring county. There he entered one of the first new schools of Sichuan, the *Chuannan jingwei xuetang*. After graduation he went to Chengdu where we do not know what he did. In 1905, however, he returned to his home county, assuming the post of the headmaster of a new school. He joined the Revolutionary Alliance in 1907. He went to Chengdu for the second time in the summer of the year and was appointed as a secretary in the Provincial Commercial Bureau. In the autumn of 1907, he fled to Shanghai to avoid capture by the Qing authority for his participation in an abortive uprising organized by the Revolutionary Alliance. He and several other members of the Revolutionary Alliance left Shanghai for Shaanxi in 1909 when the Qing Shanghai authority was active in tracking down and arresting the members of the Revolutionary Alliance in that city. He went back to Sichuan in the winter of 1910, and was employed as a teacher in Chongqing Baxian Girls' Normal School. During the 1911 revolution in Chongqing, he was one of the leaders. He acted as the chief of general affairs of the Shu Military Government after Chongqing became independent. He was 36 years old at the time.<sup>405</sup>

In Chengdu, five days after the independence of Chongqing and the establishment of the Shu Military Government, that is, November 27, 1911, Zhao Erfeng, the provincial governor of Qing Sichuan, handed over the sovereignty peacefully to Pu Dianjun, the

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<sup>405</sup> SJXRWZ. Vol.2.118-120.

president of the provincial assembly. Zhao made this decision because he saw that almost all the provinces in China had declared independence<sup>406</sup> and the downfall of the Qing regime would be inevitable. Pu organized a new provincial government, the Great Han Sichuan Military Government (*Dahan Sichuan jun zhengfu*). This government was fundamentally a gentry government. Pu was the governor while the vice governor was the commander of the Qing New Army who was not a Sichuanese. The major officials of the government consisted mainly of former provincial assemblymen and rich merchants. No members of the Revolutionary Alliance were recruited in it. The government was denounced by the Chongqing government and the members of the Revolutionary Alliance in Chengdu for its conservative color. But later when Pu tried to persuade the members of the Revolutionary Alliance to participate in the government, they refused.

The uncooperative attitude of the Revolutionary Alliance was not the only problem that Pu's government had to face. There were the undisciplined Railway Protection Armies that came into Chengdu after the hand-over of sovereignty, and the Qing New Armies that were still under the command of the Qing officers. On December 8, 1911, only 12 days after the establishment of the Great Han Sichuan Military

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<sup>406</sup> Of the provinces in China, Sichuan was the first to rebel but the last to declare independence during the revolution of 1911. The dates of the provinces declaring independence were as follows:

Hubei: October 12	Shaanxi: October 22
Hunan: October 24	Jiangxi: October 24
Shanxi: October 29	Yunnan: October 30
Guizhou: November 4	Zhejiang: November 4
Jiangsu: November 4	Guangxi: November 7
Anhui: November 8	Fujian: November 9
Guangdong: November 9	Shandong: November 13
Sichuan: November 22 (Chongqing government); November 27 (Chengdu government)	

Government, soldiers launched a mutiny because they were unsatisfied with their pay. They robbed shops and houses in Chengdu. The city fell into chaos and the new Government collapsed. After the crackdown on the mutiny, a new government, the Sichuan Military Government (*Sichuan jun zhengfu*) was established. This government was a mixture of military men, members of the Revolutionary Alliance and the gentry. The members of the Revolutionary Alliance occupied roughly fifty percent of the major posts of its 13 ministries and bureaus,<sup>407</sup> but they did not control any military forces. Let us consider the resumes of the four top officials of the Chengdu government.

*Governor Yin Changheng:* Yin was born in 1884 in Pengxian county in west Sichuan. His father was a *sishu* teacher. In 1897 when he was 13 years old, his family moved to Huayang county of Chengdu prefecture. Yin became a *shengyuan* and entered the provincial academy, Zunjing Academy. He participated in the provincial examination once but failed. In 1902, because his family was poor, Yin decided to enter the newly established Sichuan Military Preparatory School (*Wubei xuetang*). Military Preparatory School was not only free but also offered students 4 taels silver each month as a stipend. In 1904, he was sent to Japan as an official student to study military subjects in the Army Officer School (*Rikugun shikan gakko*). He returned to China in 1909. After a short period of service in Guangxi province, he went back to Chengdu. He acted as the president of the Land Force Primary School (*Lujun xiaoxuetang*) in 1911. Yin was the leader of the Sichuan officers whenever there was a conflict between Sichuan officers and the officers from other provinces in the Sichuan New Army. After the hand-over of

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<sup>407</sup> Huang Suisheng, 1962:138-139.

sovereignty, he was made minister of the Military Ministry in the Pu Dianjun government. During the mutiny, when most of the high officials in the government were in panic, he braved the storm of shots and rushed to the suburb of Chengdu on horse back, leading garrison troops there back into the city to suppress the mutiny. After the restoration of law and order in Chengdu, though only 28 years old, he assumed the post of governor of Chengdu government with the support of the military and members of the Revolutionary Alliance.<sup>408</sup>

*Vice governor Luo Lun:* Luo was a typical gentry member. Born in 1878 in Xichong county of north Sichuan, he became a *shengyuan* in 1892 when he was 14 years old. He entered Zunjing Academy, passing the provincial examination and becoming a *juren* in 1902. He then went to Changshou county near Chongqing and helped the county to establish a modern normal school. He acted as the president of the school for two years. In 1904, by the invitation of the headmaster of Shunqing Middle School, he went to that school to teach history and Chinese. Afterward, he undertook the position of chief of staff of the General Service Department in the Sichuan Law and Administration School and then taught in the Preparatory School for Overseas Study (*Youxue Yubei Xuetang*). When the Sichuan Provincial Assembly was founded in 1909, he was selected as the vice president. In 1911, he and several other Sichuan gentry members inside and outside the assembly were arrested by governor Zhao Erfeng because they were leaders of the Railway Protection Movement. After the establishment of the Dahan Sichuan Military Government, he became one of the ministers of the government. During the mutiny, he kept calm, doing his best to persuade the mutinous soldiers to surrender, and

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<sup>408</sup> SJXRWZ. Vol.2:97-100; Zhou Kaiqing. 1966:252-258.

therefore was appointed as the vice governor of the new government after the suppression of the mutiny. He was 33 years old in 1911.<sup>409</sup>

*The chief minister of the General Political Bureau Dong Xiuwu:* Dong was born into a merchant family of Bazhong county in east Sichuan in 1879. He became a *shengyuan* when he was 16 years old. He entered Chengdu Japanese School (*Chengdu dongwen xuetang*) in 1902 and went to Japan two years later as an official student to study law and administration. He joined the Revolutionary Alliance in 1905 in Tokyo and was one of the leaders of the Sichuan branch. He returned to China in 1911 and worked in the Sichuan Law and Administration school. After the independence of Sichuan, to Dong's disappointment, no member of the Revolutionary Alliance was recruited into Pu Dianjun's provincial government. To show the strength of the Revolutionary Alliance, he and other members of the Revolutionary Alliance called a mass rally in Chengdu, which gathered together more than ten thousand people. After the mutiny, the Revolutionary Alliance members participated in the organization of the new government, and Dong was selected as the chief minister of the General Political Bureau and the financial minister. He was 32 years old in that year.<sup>410</sup>

*Chief of Police Department Yang Wei:* Yang was born in Xuyong county in south Sichuan in 1887. His forefathers had been garrison military officers in Yunnan province for many generations. In the time of his grandparents, the family moved to Xuyong county, and therefore there was always a problem of native place ambiguity with his family. Yang participated in the examinations for *shengyuan* in Xuyong county when he was a teenager, but failed because someone complained he had registered a false native

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<sup>409</sup> Huang Shou.1981:252-253.

<sup>410</sup> SXGS.Vol.2:552-566; SJXRWZ.Vol.2:73.

place. Yang therefore decided to leave for Japan despite the opposition of his family. He studied policing and military subjects in Japan. In 1906, he met Sun Yat-sen in Yokohama and joined the Revolutionary Alliance. He returned to Sichuan in the same year. In 1907, he was arrested for organizing the Revolutionary Alliance military uprising in Chengdu. He was not released until the end of the Qing rule in Sichuan in late 1911. After the mutiny, at only 24 years of age, he was appointed as the chief of the police department in the new government because of his capacity of a member of The Revolutionary Alliance and his specialty of police studies in Japan.<sup>411</sup>

There are some obvious common features in the resumes of the top leaders in both the Shu Military Government in Chongqing and Sichuan Military Government in Chengdu: most of them were from “socially middling” families. They had either *tongsheng* or *shengyuan* background from the old education system, but they had also entered the new schools in China or Japan after the abolition of the civil service examination system. They were all young men under 40. They were either intellectuals or soldiers. These similarities confirmed the argument we presented in last chapter that the new education and revolution were important mechanisms of social mobility for the *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* after the abolition of the examination system. But there were also differences between the leaders of the two governments. Those of the Chongqing government were almost exclusively members of the Revolutionary Alliance, while those of the Chengdu government had more diverse origins. These similarities and differences

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<sup>411</sup> SXGS.Vol.2: 368-370; SJXRWZ.Vol.3:98-99.

held true not only for the top leaders but also the other main leaders such as the heads of the ministries and the bureaus in the two governments.

The Revolution of 1911 enabled Sichuan to become independent but split up the province as well. The existence of two provincial governments seduced the neighbouring Yunnan Military Government into interfering in Sichuan internal affairs. Yunnan governor Cai E condemned the Chengdu government as a *gelaohui* (Elder Brother Society) government, declaring that Yunnan recognized the Chongqing government alone. Cai even tried to ally with Hunan governor in order to attack Chengdu.<sup>412</sup> Both the Chengdu and Chongqing governments were aware that the only way to avoid a new disturbance in Sichuan was to unite the two governments.<sup>413</sup> Therefore they sent representatives to discuss unification in the spring of 1912. It was not difficult for them to reach the agreement that a united government should be organized immediately and its location would be at Chengdu, the traditional capital city of Sichuan. But the main problem for the unification was how to distribute the official positions. After several rounds of negotiations, the parties involved finally agreed that while Yin Changheng, the governor of Chengdu government, would keep the post of governor, the post of vice governor was to be assumed by Zhang Peijue, the governor of the Chongqing government. Though other important posts were also redistributed among the high officials of the two governments, more of them went to the former officials of the Chengdu government. For this reason, some people think that the unification of the Chongqing and Chengdu governments after Sichuan's independence was similar to the

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<sup>412</sup> Sichuan governor Yin Changheng realized the danger of so many soldiers of railway protection armies , many of whom were members of *gelaohui*, staying in Chengdu after the revolution. To try to appease and control them, Yin allowed *gelaohui* to act publicly in Chengdu, and he even joined *gelaohui* himself. There fore Cai condemned Chengdu government was a *gelaohui* government.

agreement of the South and North national governments after the Revolution of 1911, a surrender of the revolutionary government to a military government.<sup>414</sup>

Although there were more members of the Revolutionary Alliance in the united provincial government at Chengdu than in the former Chengdu government, the really powerful men were the military officers who were represented by governor Yin Changcheng. In 1912, an armed rebellion occurred in Tibet. President Yuan Shikai of the Beijing government appointed governor Yin as the commander of an expeditionary army and Yin led an army of 2,500 soldiers who left Chengdu for an expedition to Tibet. Yin did not trust civil officials. Before his departure, he handed over his post not to vice governor Zhang Peijue, but to another military officer, his friend and former teacher in the Sichuan Military Preparatory School (*Wubei xuetang*), Hu Jingyi. This hand-over marked the beginning of a long series of transfers of Sichuan power from one military officer to another. The transfers sometimes were carried out peacefully but more often violently. The political development in the second decade of the twentieth century was very complicated, and we have no intention of describing it here. To keep in line with our purpose in this chapter, we shall confine ourselves to investigating the careers, especially the educational backgrounds, of the frequently changing governors in the Sichuan "military and gentry government" in the second decade of the twentieth century. (Table 5.2)

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<sup>413</sup> Xiang Chu and others. 1981:233.

<sup>414</sup> Wen Shaohe. 1981:186.

TABLE 5.2  
SICHUAN GOVERNORS IN THE SECOND DECADE OF THE TWENTIETH  
CENTURY

Governor *	Occup	Age**	Native Place	Father	Traditional Education	Modern Education
<i>Yin Changheng#+</i> (1912, 2-1912, 7)	Military	28	Sichuan	<i>Sishu</i> teacher	<i>Shengyuan</i>	China: Military study Japan: Military study
<i>Hu Jingyi#+</i> (1912, 7-1915, 6)	Military	34	Sichuan	Salt merchant	No information	China: Military study Japan: Military study
<i>Chen Huan+</i> (1915, 6-1916, 5)	Military	46	Hubei	No information	<i>Gongsheng</i>	(The headmaster of Wubei xuetang)
<i>Zhou Jun#+</i> (1916, 6-1916, 7)	Military	32	Sichuan	No information	No information	China: Military study Japan: Military study
<i>Luo Peijin#</i> (1916, 6-1917, 4)	Military	38	Yunnan	No information	<i>Shengyuan</i>	China: Higher school Japan: Military study
<i>Dai Kan</i> (1917, 4-1917, 7)	Military	38	Guizhou	No information	<i>Shengyuan</i>	Japan: Pedagogy
<i>Zhou Daogang#+</i> (1917, 7-1917, 12)	Military	42	Sichuan	No information	<i>Shengyuan</i>	China: Military study Japan: Military study
<i>Liu Cunhou#+</i> (1917, 12-1918, 1)	Military	32	Sichuan	No information	No information	China: Military study Japan: Military study
<i>Xong Kewu</i> (1918, 3-1920, 7)	Military	33	Sichuan	Medical doctor	<i>Sishu</i> student	China: Japanese Japan: Military study
<i>Lu Chao</i> (1920, 7-1920, 9)	Military	30	Sichuan	<i>Sishu</i> teacher	<i>Sishu</i> student	China: Military study

Source: SJXRWZ.Vol.1-6; Zhou Kaiqing. 1966. Ed. *Minguo Sichuan renwu zhuanji*; Zhou Kaiqing. 1976. Ed *Minguo Sichuan renwu xuzhuan*; Zhou Kaiqing. 1974. Ed. *Minguo Chuanshi jiyao*: 1911-1926; SXGS.Vol.2; Enta Ichikame. 1930. *Fensheng xin zhongguo renwuzhi*; MRDC.1991. And other fragmentary data. \* From March 15, 1912 through June 30, 1914, governors in all the provinces were called *dudu*; from June 30, 1914 through July 6, 1916, they were called *Jiangjun*; from July 6, 1916 through 1922, they were called *dujun*. Here we translate all of these titles as governor. \*\*Their age when they assumed the position. #Those who graduated from *Rikugun shikan gakko* in Japan. +Those who graduated or taught in Sichuan *Wubei xuetang*.

Robert A. Kapp, in his pioneer study of Sichuan warlordism, has summarized the characteristics of “the first generation of Republican militarists,” pointing out that most of them were Sichuan native young men who had received their military education

abroad.<sup>415</sup> The information about the Sichuan governors in the above table confirms and amplifies his finding.

Sichuan governors in the first decade after the 1911 Revolution were frequently changed. Though it was a popular phenomenon in this period that the heads of governments in China at all the levels changed very frequently,<sup>416</sup> the situation in Sichuan was particularly unstable. We may choose Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Guangdong as our sample provinces for comparison. During the 8 years from 1912 to 1920, there were 6 governors in Jiangsu,<sup>417</sup> 7 governors in Zhejiang,<sup>418</sup> and 8 governors in Guangdong.<sup>419</sup> But in the same length of time, there were 10 governors in Sichuan, whose average tenure was less than one year.

Most of the Sichuan governors were native Sichuanese. Among the 10, only 3 (Chen Huan, Luo Peijin, and Dai Kan) were from other provinces. Actually Chen Huan

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<sup>415</sup> Kapp, Robert A. 1973:11-13.

<sup>416</sup> In the warlord times, not only the head of the provincial governments, but also the head of central government frequently changed. During the 14 years from 1911 to 1925, including temporary president Sun Yat-sen, there were successively 6 presidents in the central government. The cabinets changed as many as 42 times.

<sup>417</sup> They were 1) Chen Dequan (1911 - 1912, 2), from Sichuan, Jiangshu *xunfu* at the end of Qing. He declared the independence of Jiangshu during the revolution of 1911 and became the first Jiangsu governer of the Republic; 2) Zhuan Yunkuan (1912, 2 - 1912, 4), Jiangshu native, *Jinshi*; 3) Again Chen Dequan (1912,4 - 1913, 9); 4) Zhang Xun (1912, 9 - 1912, 12), from Anhui, Jiangnan general in the Qing; 5) Feng Guozhang (1914, 12 - 1916, 8), from Zhili, graduated from *Baoding wubei xuetang*; 6) Li Chun (1916, 8 - 1920, 10), from Zhili. Graduated from *Tianjin wubei xuetang*; 7) Qi Xieyuan (1920, 10 - 1924, 12), from Zhili, graduated from Beiyang *lujun xuetang*.

<sup>418</sup> They were 1)Tang Shouqian (1911-1912), *Jinshi*, Zhejiang native; 2)Jiang Zungui (1912), Zhejiang Native, returned military student from Japan; 3) Zhu Rui (1913-1916), Zhejiang native, graduated from Nanyang *lujun xuetang* (Nanyang military school); 4) Lu Gongwang. (1916-1917), Zhejiang native, graduated from the Beiyang Land Army Speeded-up School. 5) Yang Shande (1917.7 - 1919.7), from Anhui, Qing Beiyang armyman; 6) Lu Yongxiang (1919.7 - 1924), from Shandong, Qing beiyang armyman; 7) Shun Chuanfang (1924, 9 - 1927), graduated from (Land Army Officer School of Japan (Rikugun shikan gakko).

<sup>419</sup> They were 1) Jiang Zungui (1911), from Zhejiang, returned military student from Japan; 2) Hu Hanmin. (1911,9-1913,6), Guangdong native, *tongmenghui* member, returned student from Japan where he studeied Law and administration; 3) Chen Jiongming (1913,6-1913,8). Guangdong native, graduated from a law and administration school in Guangdong, *tongmenghui* member, Guangdong assemblyman at the end of the Qing. 4) Long Jiguang (1913,8-1917,4), from Yunnan, military officer of the Qing; 5) Chen Bingkun (1917,4-1917,10), from Guangxi, military officer of the Qing; 6) Li Yaohan (1917,10-1919,6), Guangdong native. 7) Mo Rongxin (1919,6-1920,10), from Guangxi; 8) Tang Tingguang (1919, 6), Guangdong native, temporary governor; 9) Chen Jiongmin again (1920,9-1923,3).

had been the commander of the Qing new army in Sichuan for quite a few years; he might therefore be considered a Sichuanese too. In Jiangsu, of the 6 governors, only one of them was a Jiangsu native; the other five were respectively from Sichuan (1), Zhili (3), and Anhui (1). Of the seven governors in Zhejiang during this period, three were from two other provinces: Anhui (1), and Shandong (2). In Guangdong, half (4) of the governors were Guangdong natives; the other half were from Guangxi (2), Yunnan (1), Zhejiang (1).

The most remarkable characteristic of the Sichuan governors was their educational background. They were mainly *shengyuan* and *tongsheng* of the old education system. With regard to their new education, almost all of them were military students returned from Japan. Six of them were actually classmates in *Wubei xuetang* in Sichuan and *Shikan gakko* in Japan; therefore, the second decade of the twentieth century was the period when the *Wubei* faction (*wubeixi*) or the faction of military students returned from Japan (*liurixi*) ruled Sichuan. The last governor during this period, Lu Chao, was a graduate of *Baoding Junguan xuetang*. His emergence represented the end of the rule of Sichuan by “the first generation of Republican militarists”. In Jiangsu, Zhejiang where the governments were dominated by *Beiyang* warlords, and Guangdong, where the old Qing army officers from Guangxi and Yunnan were in power for quite a few years, there was no such faction of military students returned from Japan. The following is a summary of the comparison of the governors in the 4 provinces during the decade after the revolution:

Province	The total governors	Provincial natives	Military students returned from Japan
Sichuan	10	7	8
Jiangsu	6	1	1
Zhejiang	7	4	0
Guangdong	8	4	1

But it was not unique for Sichuan that native military students returned from Japan dominated the provincial government and officer corps. Donald S. Sutton's study of Yunnan militarism in the early republic shows that there was a very similar situation to that of Sichuan in that province.<sup>420</sup> The difference here between Sichuan and the three coastal provinces might reflect the difference between two larger regions, the Southeast coast China and the Southwest inland China.

Having explored the educational background of the governors of the Sichuan "Military-gentry government," we now turn to the educational background of the civil officials and the Assemblymen in Sichuan in the same period. What sort of material should we use for our analysis? Y.C. Wang's excellent article, "Western Impact and Social Mobility in China", is mainly based on an analysis of the figures in *Who's Who in China*.<sup>421</sup> However, *Who's Who in China* can not meet our purpose because it includes mainly the elite members in the coastal provinces. For example, the 1920 edition of this book includes 153 people. Of them, 36 were Jianshu (including Shanghai) natives; 18 Zhejiang natives; 24 Guangdong natives; and only 1 Sichuan native.<sup>422</sup> *Who's Who* lays particular stress on individuals with European and American educational backgrounds.

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<sup>420</sup> Sutton . 1980: 174.

<sup>421</sup> See Y.C. Wang. "Western Impact and Social Mobility in China." In *American Sociological Review*. 1960.V25: 2: 843-855.

<sup>422</sup> See *Who's Who in China*. Second Edition. 1920.

The overseas students in Europe and America were mainly sent from coastal provinces in the earlier period, and most of them specialized in science, technology, economics, and the arts; therefore, it is understandable that there were almost no Sichuanese included in that book.<sup>423</sup>

We thus have to consult two other sets of data: 1) the Collection of the Biographies of the Recent Officials and Members of the Gentry (*Zuijin guanshen luli huilu*); and 2) Biographies of Members of the Upper and Lower Houses in China (*Zhonghua minguo yiyuan liezhuan*). The first set of data was compiled in 1920. Though it claims to record the resumes of both officials and gentry members, the 79 Sichuanese resumes included in it were mainly officials' resumes. Therefore, this set of data has provided some important information about the new governmental officials in Sichuan after the revolution, which we may summarise as follows: 1) a majority (about 66%) were returned students from Japan; 2) with regard to their specialties, about 41% of them studied law and administration while those who studied military matters were only 13%. This means that though the provincial government was controlled by the military, civil officials still occupied most of the government posts; 3) quite a number of people who had only the old education (27%) remained to become officials. Most of the last type of people were Sichuanese who held an old civil service examination degree and had acted as officials in Beijing or in other provinces in the defunct Qing dynasty. They came back to Sichuan after the revolution and became the officials in the new government of their home province (Table 5.3). It was a shame that because most of the resumes are very short, we have no way to tell from them the percentage of the officials who obtained their

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<sup>423</sup> It was only later that Sichuan young men went to study in Europe, especially in France, in large number.

posts by participating in the revolution. Nevertheless we see quite a few familiar names of the Revolutionary Alliance members among them.

TABLE 5.3  
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF ELITE MEMBERS IN *THE COLLECTION OF THE BIOGRAPHES OF THE RECENT OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF GENTRY*

Country of Study	
<i>China only</i>	
Old education only	26.6%
Law and Administration	3.8
Military	-
Other specialties	3.8
<i>Japan</i>	
Law and Administration	36.7
Military	12.7
Other specialties	16.4
<i>Total</i>	100.0
<i>Total number</i>	79

Source: This table is constructed on the basis of *the Collection of the Biographies of the Recent officials and Members of Gentry* (*zujin guanshen luli huilu*). 1920. All the resumes of Sichuan figures included in this book can be found in Zhou Kaiqing. 1976. Ed. *Sichuan renwu xuzhuan*: 303-325.

The second set of data, *Biographies of Members of the Upper and Lower Houses in China* was edited in 1916 by a Japanese named Sato Saburo. The first assembly of the Republic (April 8, 1913 - June 1, 1922) had a total of 870 assemblymen (274 senators and 596 representatives)<sup>424</sup>. Of them, 45 were Sichuanese (10 senators and 35 representatives). But Sato's book includes only 452 assemblymen's resumes, in which we have found that 25 were those of Sichuanese assemblymen.

The educational backgrounds of these Sichuan assemblymen were similar to those in *the Collection of the Resumes of the Recent Officials and Members of Gentry*. Most of them were students returned from Japan (68%). Those who studied law and

<sup>424</sup> With regard to the seats different political parties occupied, the Nationalists party occupied 392; the Republican party (gonghe dang), Democratic party (minzhu dang), and United party (tongyi dang) together occupied only 223 seats only. Tang Zongrao. 1979:4.

administration also occupied a large percentage (64%). But there were differences: no military staff and few men who had the old education only became assemblymen (Table 5.4):

TABLE 5.4  
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE SICHUAN ASSEMBLYMEN IN  
*BIOGRAPHIES OF MEMBERS OF THE UPPER AND LOWER HOUSES IN CHINA*

Country of Study	
<i>China only</i>	
Old education only	8%.
Law and Administration	12
Military	-
Other specialties	12
<i>Japan</i>	
Law and Administration	52
Military	-
Other specialties	16
<i>Total</i>	100
<i>Total number</i>	25*

Source: This table is constructed on the basis of Sato Saburo, Ed. *Biographies of Members of the Upper and Lower Houses in China*. Peking Photo Agency. 1913. \*In the first Assembly of the Republic, there were a total of 45 Sichuanese assemblymen (35 in the Lower House; 10 in the Upper House); therefore, the number of the Sichuanese assemblymen recorded here was just about half of the total.

It was not only in Sichuan but also in coastal provinces that few military men were selected into the Assembly. In so far as those who had only the old education were concerned, there were striking differences between Sichuan and the coastal provinces. There were resumes of 16 assemblymen from Jiangsu, 28 from Zhejiang and 27 from Guangdong in the *Biographies of Members of the Upper and Lower Houses in China*. A calculation of the ratios between the assemblymen who had only the old education and those who had a new schooling background (in both Japan and China) in these provinces shows that they were much higher than those of Sichuan. In Jiangsu the percentage of the assemblymen who had only old education was around 38%; in Zhejiang 46%; in Guangdong 41% while in Sichuan it was only 8%. (Table 5.5). The differences suggest a

greater change of the political elite class after the revolution in Sichuan than in the coastal provinces.

TABLE 5.5  
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF SICHUAN, JIANGSU, ZHEJIANG AND  
GUANDONG ASSEMBLYMEN IN *BIOGRAPHIES OF MEMBERS OF THE UPPER  
AND LOWER HOUSES IN CHINA*

Country of Study	Sichuan	Jiangsu	Zhejiang	Guangdong
China only				
Old education only	8.0%	37.5%	46.4%	40.7%
Law and administration	12.0	6.2	7.1	14.9
Military	-	-	-	3.7
Other specialties	12.0	-	3.6	11.1
Japan				
Law and administration	52.0	43.8	28.6	18.5
Military	-	-	-	-
Other specialties	16.0	12.5	14.3	3.7
USA				7.4*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	25	16	28	27

Source: This table is constructed on the basis of Sato Saburo. Ed. *Biographies of Members of the Upper and Lower Houses in China*. Peking Photo Agency. 1913. \* 2 assemblymen. No specialty indicated

It is unfortunate that we have no systematic data about the assemblymen of the first Sichuan Assembly that was also held in 1913. We know only the names and the native counties of the 140 provincial assemblymen, but have no information about their educational background. However, in county gazetteers we can find fragmentary material about the assemblymen who were native to that county. From these materials, we learn that the educational backgrounds of these provincial assemblymen were very similar to those of the national assemblymen. For example, Jin Changyun, an assemblyman of the first provincial assembly in the Republic from Dongxiang county, was a *shengyuan* and a

returned student from Japan.<sup>425</sup> Gao Yuwen, an assemblyman from Jiangan county, was also a returned student from Japan.<sup>426</sup>

#### POLITICAL ELITE AT THE COUNTY LEVEL

By political elite at the county level, we mean the major officials in a county government such as the county magistrate, the heads of the local public organizations which were sponsored by the government as well as the county councilors. It was more difficult for us to study the educational background of the political elite at the county level in Sichuan because unlike the elite at the provincial level, very few biographies or autobiographies of the elite at the county level have ever been published. In the Sichuan Provincial Archives, according to the staff there, there are no files about the political personnel at the county level in the early Republic because all of them were burned during the civil war.<sup>427</sup> Thus we have to rely heavily on the county gazetteers published during the early Republic, though the relevant information in them was often incomplete.

As we have mentioned in the last chapter, those who led the Railway Protection Movement and the anti-Manchu revolution at the county level might be any of the following people: members of the Revolutionary Alliance, gentry, chiefs of the secret society, or other elite members. It was not very meaningful to study these people's political beliefs or ideology, because many of them were not very serious about their claimed ideology, if they had any. Their main concern was how to obtain power during a

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<sup>425</sup> Xuanhan xianzhi. 1994:933.

<sup>426</sup> Jiangan xianzhi. 1923. xumu:9a.

<sup>427</sup> Author's interview with Sichuan Provincial Archives personnel, July 4, 1996.

time of disturbance. In short, the 1911 Revolution in many Sichuan counties turned out to be a struggle for political power rather than for political beliefs.

Before the independence of Hubei, the local elite's participation in the Military Uprising for Railway Protection depended mainly on their personal estimation of the risk. After the Wuhan uprising succeeded, and when the breakdown of the Qing regime appeared inevitable, they eagerly involved themselves in the revolution, even though they did not really understand its purpose or significance. One typical case was the revolution in Dongxiang county in east Sichuan. Shi Tiyuan, one of the leaders of the revolution in that county, recalls the psychology of the leaders of the revolution in that county. Shi held a *shengyuan* degree before the abolition of the examination system but was a student in a new school in Chengdu when the revolution occurred in 1911.

Zhao Erfeng's massacre of the petitioning masses aroused the railway protection uprising . . . My classmates left Chengdu one after another. I also planned to go back to my native county, and take action according to circumstance. But because I had been out for a long time and had little connection with the masses in my home county, it was difficult for me to get their support. I contemplated that the Ran family was a landlord family in the county town; if Ran Chonggen [of the family] was willing to stand up to be the leader, everything would be OK. Chonggen was very famous. He had joined the secret society, *paoje*,<sup>428</sup> when he was young. He had been elected as a member of the provincial assembly and acted also as a

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<sup>428</sup> The name of Elder Brother society in Sichuan.

director of the Chuan-Han Railway Company. He had many relations in and out of Sichuan. It happened that Ran had just hurried back to Chengdu from Yichang [of Hubei]. I immediately persuaded him to go back to our home county and launch independence. Chonggen agreed with me completely. At that very moment, the news of the Wuchang uprising spread to Chengdu; we were more determined and all the anxiety was gone.<sup>429</sup>

After they went back to their home county, Ran and Shi made contact with six or seven other local elite to form the leading core of the revolution. One of them was Jing Changyun, a *shengyuan* and returned student from Japan. They successfully led the uprising in Dongxiang county, driving out the Qing county magistrate and taking over the county government. Ran became the county magistrate and all the other leaders became officials in the new government though they had hardly heard of any Revolutionary ideology.

None of us six or seven leaders of the uprising was a member of the Revolutionary Alliance. About the significance of the revolution, (*guangfu*<sup>430</sup>) we had obtained just some vague understanding by reading newspapers. In so far as the guiding principles of the administration and the organization of the new government were concerned, our mind turned out to be a blank sheet of paper. It happened that Jing Changyun had

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<sup>429</sup> Shi Tiyuan. "Dongxiang guangfu ji". 1962: 319-20.

<sup>430</sup> Literally, *guangfu* means recovery.

subscribed to a Shanghai newspaper, *Shenbao*, in which there was a detailed description of the structure of the military governments in Hubei. For example, the governments at the provincial level and in important cities were called military governments (*junzhengfu*); their heads were called governors (*dudu*). The governments at the prefecture level were called branch military governments (*junzheng fenfu*); their heads were called deputy governors (*fu dudu*). The governments at the county level were also called branch governments; their heads were called consulting governors (*candu*). In the light of this structure, we named our government the Dongxiang Branch Military government.<sup>431</sup>

Clearly, revolutionary ideology did not play an important role in the revolution of Dongxiang county. But one may say that the case of Dongxiang was not really typical because there were no members of the Revolutionary Alliance in the leading group. Let us see what was the situation in counties where the members of the Revolutionary Alliance were leaders. According to Bai Zaizhong's recollection, the major leaders of the Great Han North Sichuan Military Government (*Dahan Shubei junzhengfu*) that was located at the *yamen* of Guangan department were all members of the Revolutionary Alliance.<sup>432</sup> It thus seemed to be a very revolutionary government. But a study of this government by Nanchong Normal College in the 1960s shows that it was very strongly influenced by secret societies. Quite a number of soldiers in the Revolutionary Alliance

<sup>431</sup> Shi Tiyuan. "Dongxiang guangfu ji". 1962: 324.

<sup>432</sup> Bai Zaizhong. 1982: 310.

army thought that “the revolution offered them an opportunity to seize power and wealth. They looted a variety of taxes and levies, taking liberties with opera performers and hunting for concubines. . . The revolutionists were not very well organized and had no firm Revolutionary conviction.”<sup>433</sup> The name of the government, including the term *Dahan*, reflected the appeal of the secret society. Though the governor and the vice governor were both the members of the Revolutionary Alliance, they could not live in harmony with each other. The governor was not satisfied with his post. He pretended to be ill and finally left for Chongqing to assume an official post in Chongqing government.<sup>434</sup>

The most important official post in a county government was of course the county magistrate. Immediately after the revolution, this post was, in most cases, occupied by the leader of the uprising in that county. Then it was appointed by the provincial government. After 1916, when the warlord wars began in Sichuan, the warlord who occupied the county would decide who (usually one of his subordinate officers) took the position. In this sense, the military - gentry coalition government emerged later at the county level than at the provincial level in Sichuan. In many counties, the magistrates changed even faster than the governors of the provincial government. One extreme example was Daxian county where the first magistrate after the revolution, Yin Dingsan, who held a *shengyuan* title, remained in the magistrate post for only half a day. His successor Zhong Yangyun, also a *shengyuan*, was more fortunate; his tenure in the post lasted three days.<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> Nanchong Normal College. 1962:292-293.

<sup>434</sup> Nanchong Normal College. 1962:292.

<sup>435</sup> Mei Jian. 1962: 316.

A large percentage of people with only a traditional education remained in the elite class at the county level after the revolution. Of those who did have a modern educational background, most of them graduated from the new schools in China, especially in Sichuan; the political elite at the county level consisted of very few students returned from Japan. This was similar to the case in the army during the same period: higher officers were mostly returned military students from Japan while lower officers were the students graduated from Chinese military schools. Local gazetteers seldom record the educational background of the county magistrate during the early Republic. We have so far found only two county gazetteers edited in this period that contain such records, but both were incomplete. They are the 1931 Xuanhan county<sup>436</sup> gazetteer and the 1932 Quxian county gazetteer. Based on these records, we may construct tables 5.6 and 5.7.

TABLE 5.6  
MAGISTRATES OF XUANHAN COUNTY (1911-1921)

Magistrate	Old education	Modern education		Occupation	Tenure	Native county
		China	Japan			
1 <sup>st</sup>					1911	Native
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>				1912	Other county*
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>Gongsheng</i>				1913	Other county
4 <sup>th</sup>					1913	
5 <sup>th</sup>					1913	Other county
6 <sup>th**</sup>					1913	Native
7 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Juren</i>	Business			1914	Other county
8 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Gongsheng</i>	Law & adm			1915	Other county
9 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Gongsheng</i>				1915	Hunan
10 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>		Pedagogy		1916	Native
11 <sup>th</sup>			Law & adm	Military	1916	Other county
12 <sup>th</sup>		Military		Military	1916	Other county
13 <sup>th</sup>					1916	Other county
14 <sup>th</sup>				Military	1917	Other county

<sup>436</sup> This county was called Dongxiang county in the Qing dynasty.

15 <sup>th</sup>	Church schl	Military	1917	Other county
16 <sup>th</sup>		Military	1918	Other county
17 <sup>th</sup>			1919	Other county
18 <sup>th</sup>			1919	Other county
19 <sup>th</sup>	Gongsheng	Military	1919	Other county
20 <sup>th</sup>		Military	1920	Other county
21 <sup>st</sup>	Middle schl	Military	1920	Other county
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Law & adm	Military	1920	Other county
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Law & adm	Military	1921	Other county
24 <sup>th</sup>	Military	Military	1921	Other county

Source: Xuanhan xianzhi. 1931. 8:416a-420a. \* The term other county here means other county in Sichuan. \*\*The same person, Ran Chonggen.

TABLE 5.7  
MAGISTRATES OF QUXIAN COUNTY (1912-1921)

Magistrate	Old education	Modern education		Capacity	Tenure	Native county
		China	Japan			
1 <sup>st</sup>					1912	Other county
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Shengyuan				1913	Other county
3 <sup>rd</sup>					1915	Yunnan
4 <sup>th</sup>	Shengyuan				1916	Jiangsu
5 <sup>th</sup>	Juren				1916	Other county
6 <sup>th</sup>	Shengyuan				1916	Other county
7 <sup>th</sup>					1917	Other county
8 <sup>th</sup>	Shengyuan	Law & adm		Military	1918	Other county
9 <sup>th</sup>					1918	Other county
10 <sup>th</sup>		Church schl		Military	1919	Other county
11 <sup>th</sup>		Law & adm		Military	1920	Other county
12 <sup>th</sup>		Pedagogy		Military	1920	Other county
13 <sup>th</sup>		Military		Military	1921	Other county
14 <sup>th</sup>			Law & adm	Military	1921	Other county

Source: Quxianzhi. 1925-1932.

After 1916, most of the county governments in Sichuan became military-gentry governments. As the above tables indicate, the post of civil magistrate was assumed by men with military backgrounds. This aroused an even greater passion among Sichuan students to study military subjects and become soldiers. In 1919, even students in law and administration schools wanted to transfer to military school. In the Sichuan University Archives, one can find in the files of the Sichuan Public Law and Administration School

official letters concerning disciplinary actions against those students who had applied for military schools without informing the authority of the law and administration school beforehand.<sup>437</sup> These letters demonstrate how desirable a subject military study had become.

However popular military study was, except for the magistrates and the head of local defense, few officials of the county government and few leaders of public organizations possessed a military background. Though there are fragmentary data scattered in local gazetteers, it is very hard to find a systematic record of the educational background of this local elite. Yingjing county gazetteer may be the only local gazetteer edited during the Republic in Sichuan that provides such a record. This gazetteer recorded six sorts of government officials and leaders of public organizations of the early Republic. They were: directors of tax bureau, educational inspectors, directors of the bureau of industry and business, chief custodial officers, chiefs of police bureau, and heads of local defense. The following tables show the educational background of this local political elite. Because the bureau of industry and business in this county was not set up until 1919, we have omitted its leaders' record.

TABLE 5.8  
THE DIRECTORS OF TAX BUREAU OF YINGJING COUNTY (1913 -1920)

Director	Old education	Modern education		Tenure	Native
		China	Japan		
1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1913	Other county
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1914	Other county
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1915	Other county
4 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Gongsheng</i>			1916	Other county
5 <sup>th</sup>		Returned student*		1917	Other county
6 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Gongsheng</i>			1918	Other county
7 <sup>th</sup>				1918	Other county
8 <sup>th</sup>	Higher school**			1919	Other county

<sup>437</sup> Sichuan gongli fazheng zuanmen xuexiao. 1918-1919 *Yuke zhaosheng wenjuan*. SUA. File No. 35

9<sup>th</sup>

1920

Other county

Source: *Yingjing xianzhi*. 1915-1928.4:23a-b\*No specialty indicated.\*\* No specialty indicated.

TABLE 5.9

## THE EDUCATION INSPECTORS OF YINGJING COUNTY (1906-1920)

Inspector	Old education	Modern education		Tenure	Native
		China	Japan		
1 <sup>st</sup>			Pedagogy	1906	Native county
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1907-1912	Native county
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>Gongsheng</i>			1912	Native county
4 <sup>th</sup>		Pedagogy		1914	Other county
5 <sup>th</sup>		Pedagogy		1915	Guizhou
6 <sup>th</sup>		Science <i>Juren</i> *		1917	Native county
7 <sup>th</sup>		Higher school**		1918	Native county
8 <sup>th</sup>		Technology		1919	Native county
9 <sup>th</sup>		Pedagogy		1920	Native county

Source: *Yingjing xianzhi*. 1915-1928.4:25a-b. \*Qing regime awarded the degrees of the civil service examination to the students graduated from new schools after the abolition of the examination system.  
\*\*No specialty indicated..

TABLE 5.10

## THE CHIEF CUSTODIAL OFFICERS OF YINGJING COUNTY (1913 - 1921)

Chief officer	Old education	Modern education		Tenure	Native
		China	Japan		
1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>Xiaolian fangzheng</i> *			1913	Other county
2 <sup>nd</sup>				1915	Zhejiang
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1916	Other county
4 <sup>th</sup>				1918	Other county
5 <sup>th</sup>				1919	Other county
6 <sup>th</sup>				1920	Other county
7 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1921	Other county
8 <sup>th</sup>				1921	Other county
9 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Gongsheng</i>			1921	Other county

Source: *Yingjing xianzhi*. 1915-1928.26a-b. \*A kind of degree awarded to a person who passed the *xiaolian fangzheng* examination held in the Qing dynasty whenever a new emperor ascended the throne. The first examination of this sort was held in the first year of Yongzheng (1723). The receivers of this degree were usually assigned to a county magistrate post.

TABLE 5.11  
THE CHIEF POLICEMEN OF YINGJING COUNTY (1906 - 1916)

Chief police	Old education	Modern education		Tenure	Native
		China	Japan		
1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1906-1910	Native county
2 <sup>nd</sup>		Police subjects		1910	Native county
3 <sup>rd</sup>				1911	Other county
4 <sup>th</sup>				1912	Other county
5 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1912	Other county
6 <sup>th</sup>				1913	Other county
7 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1913	Other county
8 <sup>th</sup>				1914	Native county
9 <sup>th</sup>				1914	Other county
10 <sup>th</sup>				1914	Other county
11 <sup>th</sup>				1915	Other county
12 <sup>th</sup>				1916	Other county
13 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Shengyuan</i>			1916	Other county
14 <sup>th</sup>				1916	Native county

Source: *Yingjing xianzhi*. 1915-1928.27a-b.

TABLE 5.12  
THE HEADS OF LOCAL DEFENSE OF YINGJING COUNTY (1897-1921)

Head	Old education	Modern education		Tenure	Native
		China	Japan		
The 1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>Gongsheng</i>			1897-1918	Native county
The 2 <sup>nd</sup>			Pedagogy	1919	Native county
The 3rd*	<i>Gongsheng</i>			1920-1921	Native county

Source: *Yingjing xianzhi*. 1915-1928.30a-b. \*The same person as the first one.

The information about the educational background of the major government officials and public organizations at the county level in the above tables is obviously incomplete, but it does suggest to some degree that there was less of a change of the elite class at the county level than at the provincial level in Sichuan after the revolution. Except for the educational inspectors,<sup>438</sup> elite members were still mainly those who had

<sup>438</sup> The educational inspectors were an exception because the people who had only a traditional education were not qualified to take this post. It was quite possible that the inspectors in Table 5.6 had both an old and new educational background, though the gazetteer recorded their new education only. It seemed to be a general practice at that time that if someone had both an old education and a new education, the latter would surely be recorded while the former not necessarily because people valued the new education higher than the old one. But if someone was recorded as having an old education only, it means in most cases that he indeed only had that.

an old educational background only. But was the case of Yingjing representative of the counties in the whole province? The answer we think is yes. Though we have not found specific records of the educational background of the major county officials in other counties, we may consult another sort of material which is also very telling and can be found in almost all the local gazetteers.

We are talking about the editing team of a local gazetteer. Local gazetteers were traditionally written and edited by officials and gentry members. Open any county gazetteer edited in the imperial times, and what one first sees will be a namelist of the editing team. This list sometimes offers us a hint about the situation of classical education and the structure of the local elite in that county, for it records not only the names of the elite members in that county but also their degrees on the civil service examination and their official titles and ranks. Most Sichuan county gazetteers edited during the Republic followed the same format, though some of the editors might have a modern degree or a modern official title. Let us now take a look at the editing team of the Shuangliu county gazetteer that was edited in 1921 and see what we may bring to light about the elite in the first decade after the revolution in that county.(Table 5.13)

TABLE 5.13  
THE EDITING TEAM OF SHUANGLIU COUNTY GAZETTEER (1921)

<i>Official title</i>	<i>Old education only</i>			<i>Modern edu</i>		<i>No edu record</i>	<i>Total number</i>
	<i>Juren</i>	<i>Gong-Seng</i>	<i>Sheng-yuan</i>	<i>China</i>	<i>Japan</i>		
County Magistrate						4	4*
President of county council			2**				2
Secretary of county council			1				1
Head of chamber of commerce			1				1
Director of edu association			1				1
Army officer		1		1		1	3
Headmaster of primary school			1				1
Head of local defense						1	1
Secretary of local defense		1					1
Manager of dike worker union			2***			1	3
Manager of local public money						1	1
No official title	2	6	31	4	1	5	49
<i>Total</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>68</i>
<i>Total percentage</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>59%</i>	<i>6%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: *Shuangliu xianzhi*. 1921. Juanshou:8a-10b. \*Including three former magistrates. \*\*Including the presidents of both Senate and the House of Representatives of the county Assembly. \*\*\*One of them was a military *shengyuan*.

What the above table suggests is compatible with the case of the elite in Yingjing county reflected in table 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, and 5.12. The elite in Shuangliu county in the decade immediately after the revolution still mainly consisted of the people who had an old education only. It is striking that of the total 68 people in the editing team only 6, or 9%, had a modern education, while the percentage of *shengyuan* was as high as 59%. It was not only in Shuangliu county, but also in other counties that *shengyuan* were still the main body of the local elite. The following table shows the editing teams of three county gazetteers of Sichuan: Jiangan county gazetteer (1923), Yongjing county gazetteer (1915-1927), and Quxian county gazetteer (1925-1935).

TABLE 5.14  
THE RATE BETWEEN THOSE WHO HAD AN OLD EDUCATION ONLY AND  
THOSE WHO HAD A MODERN EDUCATION IN THE EDITING TEAMS OF  
THREE SICHUAN COUNTY GAZETTEERS

	Jiangan (75%)	Yingjing (85%)	Quxian (79%)
Old education only			
<i>Shengyuan</i>	12	12	14
<i>Gongsheng</i>	6	12	1
<i>Juren</i>	2		2
<i>Jinshi</i>			
No record of education background*	1 (25%)	10 (15%)	13 (21%)
Modern education			
China only	7	5	7
Japan	1	1	1
Total	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)
Total number	28	40	38

Source: *Jiangan xianzhi*. 1923. *Xumu*:8a-9b; *Yingjing xianzhi*. 1915-1937. *Juanshou*:1a-4a; *Quxian zhi*. 1935 (1925). *Juan* 1:16a-18a.\*In the gazetteers, these people were either officials who had only an old education or recorded as “people in the county” (*yiren*).

The county councils themselves were good evidence that the 1911 revolution had a very limited impact on the local society of Sichuan. Most county councils in Sichuan after the 1911 Revolution were left over from the Qing dynasty. Therefore, the councilors were still those *shengyuan*, *gongsheng*, and other people who had only a traditional education. Usually a county council included a group of higher councilors (*canshi hui*) and a group of lower councilors (*yishi hui*). The number of councilors in a council depended on the counties. In a mid-sized county like Xuanhan county, there were 45 councilors (including both higher and lower councilors), while in Changshou, another middle scale county, there were only 29.<sup>439</sup> Most Sichuan counties did not hold new county council election until about 1920.

Our above exploration has shown that the revolution of 1911 did not cause as dramatic a change in the elite class at the county level in Sichuan as it did at the

<sup>439</sup> *Xuanhan xianzhi*. 1994:540; *Changshou xianzhi*. 1928:31a.

provincial level. Most members of the elite were still those who had a traditional education. One reason for this was that the revolution in many counties was led by the old local social elite. Among those who did have a background of new education, very few of them were returned students from Japan. Compared to the whole population of men of education in Sichuan, the number of the students returned from Japan, and graduated from middle, higher or specialist schools in Sichuan was still very small during this period, and they would prefer to seek a post in the bureaus or organizations at the provincial level and stay in the big cities where they had many more chances to get promotions.

## CONCLUSION

With regard to the study of a country's modernization, one had better, the British social scientist Peter Burke advises, distinguish models which emphasize internal factors in change from models which stress external factors.<sup>440</sup> It is also important, in the case of the Chinese, to distinguish the aims of the modernization movements from the ways that were used to pursue the aims and the motives of the people who participated in the movements. The aims were often set by the foreign influences, while the ways and the motives possess more traditional, domestic, and local attributes. Chinese educational reform and the students' collective attitude toward the new education in the transitional times of the early twentieth century provide us with a good opportunity to perceive such a distinction. The establishment of the new school system during this period could be easily understood as a total rupture with the traditional educational system centered on the examination system, and Chinese students embracing the new education could be explained by their "interest in Western knowledge"<sup>441</sup> and in things modern. The reality, however, was far more complex than such a supposition suggests.

Though the educational reform was a part of China's modernization endeavour in the early twentieth century, the ways of striving for the reform and the participants' motives for the reform, were not necessarily modern too, especially when the reform took place in an inland province like Sichuan which had received little influence from the western industrial countries, and where people understood the reform more as an administrative order than a social necessity. This does not mean that a modern reform

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<sup>440</sup> Burke. 1992:131.

<sup>441</sup> Rankin. 1971:3.

could not be carried out successfully in such a province, because the native forces for change would try to find their expression in the reform movement. These forces did not necessarily always conflict with the aim of the reform; rather, in some cases, they might reinforce the reform. The major purpose of this dissertation has been to identify such native forces that served or handicapped the educational reform stimulated by foreign invasion and influence.

Our study began with Qing Sichuan's expansion of education, which was reflected in the large increase in the number of educational institutions like academies, charitable schools and *sishu*. Sichuan's educational expansion was a part of the educational expansion in the whole of Qing China, which has been analyzed by Woodside and Elman. Unlike in pre-industrial European countries, there was not a single paramount cause, as Woodside and Elman point out, for the educational expansion in Qing China.<sup>442</sup> The causes in Sichuan were manifold, including the impact of population growth, the favourable social environment provided by long-time social stability and economic prosperity in the Qianlong period, the rise of market towns during and after the Qianlong period, and the governmental encouragement for school founding so as to reinforce social control after the White Lotus rebellion.

One of the major consequences of the expansion of education was a surplus of the student population. We have found that the number of students in late Qing Sichuan was the largest among all the provinces in China, but the quota for higher degrees assigned by the Qing regime to Sichuan students was one of the smallest, and the examination halls in Sichuan in the latter half of the 19th century were the most crowded. There were fewer

alternative channels for Sichuan students to obtain upward social mobility in the late nineteenth century than for students in coastal China because the modern economy was even more underdeveloped in Sichuan than in other regions. All the other channels besides the examination system were still the traditional ones, which had limited ability to divert the career-seeking student stream and absorb the surplus student population. There were definitely more poor students in Sichuan in the latter nineteenth century than ever before, who were desperate for *chulu* (outlets or exits). These circumstances had great influence on Sichuan's educational reform in the early twentieth century.

We have also found that although modern industries and international trade had appeared in Sichuan at the turn of the century, they had a limited impact on Sichuan society and were unable to form an important material basis for the new school system. By the early twentieth century, the inland provinces had benefited little from the development of modern economy in China. Scholars like Kenneth Pomeranz and Joseph Esherick have even argued that the modernization process in the coastal areas actually hurt the neglected hinterland.<sup>443</sup> Therefore, contrary to the case of the Yangzi Delta provinces described by scholars like Bastid and Rankin, the establishment and development of the new school system in Sichuan still mainly relied on local governments to raise resources from traditionally agricultural and commercial sectors. The motives of the people of all backgrounds who participated in the establishment of the new schools were complicated, and are hard to generalize, but most of them were just obeying the governmental administration orders, and few were really converts to a full-

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<sup>442</sup> The rivalry between the religious sects for control of people's minds in European countries is considered to be the most important reason for the educational expansion in pre-industrial European countries by scholars like Lawrence Stone . Elman and Woodside. 1994:535.

<sup>443</sup> Esherick.1995:58.

fledged mentality of modernization. Generally speaking, the state played a more critical role in the educational reform in Sichuan than in coastal provinces like Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Guangdong.

Sichuan was economically more backward than the coastal provinces, but the scale of its new school system ranked first among all the provinces in China in the first decade of the twentieth century. This might be another example that there is no close connection between industrialization and educational growth in the early stage of the development of modern education, as Peter Lundgreen's study of the education expansion in nineteenth century Germany has demonstrated.<sup>444</sup> Sichuan's strong performance in the quantitative development of the new school system was due more to traditional factors than to a development of modern economy stimulated by foreign influence and invasion. These factors included a competent provincial governor, a great number of administrative units, a large population, a large number of traditional elementary schools (*sishu* and charitable schools) in late Qing, and most importantly, the active participation in the new education system of a great number of *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* who had long been frustrated by the hardship of passing the civil service examination. Though the Sichuan new school system was comparatively large, it was misshapen with a great number of primary schools at the bottom but very few higher and specialist schools at the top. Because there was no urgent social needs, modern *rencai jiaoyu* in Sichuan remained underdeveloped.

I have argued that the new education in China, like the abolished civil service examination system, was still connected with official posts, and yet it was not very

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<sup>444</sup> Lundgreen, 1976.

compatible with the rural social setting in its various modern features. Thus it suffered criticism from both Chinese social reformers and Chinese peasants. This seeming paradox suggested that the new school system was a hybrid of the traditional and the modern. Sichuan students, like the students in many other provinces, embraced the new schools system not only because they wanted to "become modern," but also because they, encouraged by the Qing education authority, regarded the new school system as a substitute for the abolished examination system, or a new path to wealth and power.

Because the new school system in Sichuan was an unbalanced structure with few vocational and higher schools at the top, it had a limited capability to absorb the huge student population left over by the old education system. Since only about 32,000 Sichuan *tongsheng* and *shengyuan*, out of a total of about 667,000, were absorbed into the new school system in the first decade of the twentieth century, many of them had to find some other channels to power and wealth outside of the regular school system. I have pointed out that though study in Japan was recommended by the Qing government as a measure of self-strengthening after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, it reached a climax after the abolition of the examination system in 1905. Though Sichuan was a closed, conservative, and backward province in inland China, it was one of the provinces which sent the most students to Japan. One of the reasons for this contradictory phenomenon was that Sichuan had a larger surplus student population from the old education system than most of the other provinces, and many of the students regarded study in Japan as a new social *chulu*.

I have emphasized that though the civil service examination system was abolished in 1905, the young Sichuan intellectuals were still haunted by the traditional concept of

*dushu zuoguan* (study for official posts). This might explain why there was a sudden passion for studying in law and administration schools in Sichuan after 1905. Though the establishment of the law and administration schools was encouraged by the Qing state, to enter these schools was mainly the choice of the students themselves. Besides the traditional concept of *dushu zuoguan*, another reason for the *tongsheng* and *shengyuan* to crowd into the law and administration schools was that they had little basic scientific knowledge which was required for the study of many other subjects. But of course the preference for legal study to science was not limited to Sichuan students; it was a popular phenomenon which could be found in many parts of the world where the social setting was still largely that of an agrarian society. For example, in 1810, forty-five percent of the students in French public *lycees* and *colleges* were majoring in law, whereas only five percent studied science.<sup>445</sup> In 1963 at the new University of Abidjan of the Ivory Coast, an African country, 550 students were majoring in law, while only 44 were in science.<sup>446</sup>

In imperial China, there had been great social contempt for soldiers, but much less for officers and advisers in the army. Considering the long history of the military service examination in imperial China, and the gentry's activities in organizing local defense, it was not really a new phenomenon for the Sichuan literati to enroll in the military officer schools in the first decade of the twentieth century. The real revolutionary change in the first decade of the twentieth century was that there were many literati recruited as soldiers in the new army, though compared to Hubei and other provinces, Sichuan's new army had a lower proportion of the literate. The contempt for the soldiers was reduced because

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<sup>445</sup> Stearns. 1998:36.

<sup>446</sup> Abernethy. 1969:11.

military service, as Professor Diana Lary has pointed out, had become a new road to wealth and power.<sup>447</sup>

Even the 1911 Revolution had a traditional flavour in at least one respect. In imperial China, the people's uprising, unlike those in medieval Europe where feudal social stratification was fixed, was one of the most important mechanisms of social mobility. There were numerous examples in Chinese history in which intellectuals or at least literate people reached political power by joining and even leading mass rebellions, especially among the first generation officials of a dynasty. From this perspective, Sichuan students joining the Revolutionary Alliance and participating in the 1911 Revolution could be considered a modern version of intellectuals being involved in rebellions. Most of these revolutionists in Sichuan in the first decade of the twentieth century were those students of the new schools with a *shengyuang* or *tongsheng* title of the old education system. After the revolution, many of them were recruited into the political elite of Sichuan.

By political elite, I mean those people who had been recruited into state or warlord institutions, such as government officials, military officers and assemblymen. In recent decades, in the English-language scholarship about China, there has been an obvious shift of emphasis in the understanding of local power from its relation with the state to its relation with society, from examination degree holders themselves to the importance of land, lineages, the military, and commerce. This shift is generally considered to have been initiated by Hilary Beattie and to have been reinforced by such scholars as Philip Kuhn, Johanna Meskill, Keith Schoppa, Mary Rankin, and Joseph Esherick, among many

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<sup>447</sup> Lary, 1985:5.

others. One of the results of the shift is that the term “gentry” has been replaced by the term “elite”, a much broader term which can be comfortably used to describe the local dominating class in different parts of China, and in different periods of Chinese history. But in our case, the term “elite” tends to be too simple to suggest the substantial differences between the elite members who had been recruited into the bureaucratic system and those whose status had little connection with the state. To specify more clearly what sort of people I am talking about in chapter five of this dissertation, I thus used the adjective “political” before the term “elite”.

To be recruited into the political elite in Sichuan in the early twentieth century, which was different from the case in the highly commercialized Yangzi Delta, one still relied mainly on two options, education and violence. The wide variety of elite resources mentioned by Esherick and Rankin, such as land, commercial wealth, kin groups, associations, claims to have religious and magical powers, the practice of a particular life style, charitable activities and so on,<sup>448</sup> might be very effective in creating and maintaining one’s status among a social elite, but they were not so useful, at least in Sichuan, in guaranteeing one’s recruitment into the state organizations. In the late Qing, one might buy an official post, which seemed to indicate that land and commercial wealth alone could be resources for political elite status, but this practice was not the *zhengtu* (appropriate way) to official posts and had been abolished at the end of Qing.

Andrew Whiteford, in his study of the social classes in Queretaro, Mexico, found that the traditional upper class there had been replaced by generals immediately after the

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<sup>448</sup> Esherick and Rankin. 1990:11.

1910 Revolution.<sup>449</sup> In Sichuan, the case was similar. After the 1911 Revolution, the provincial governors in Sichuan were all militarists with very similar educational backgrounds. Most of them were *tongsheng* or *shengyuan* from the time of the old education system. After the abolition of the examination system, they chose to study military subjects and graduated from the first new Sichuan military school, *Wubei xuetang*. They were then sent to Japan by the Qing government to continue their military study in the famous Japanese military school, *Shikan gakko*. They therefore formed the so-called Wubei faction (*Wubei xi*) or faction of returned students (*liuxue xi*) after they returned to Sichuan. Many of the other government officials and the assemblymen at the provincial level were also *tongsheng* or *shengyuan*. They were also mostly returned students from Japan, but their specialties were mainly law and administration. Though some people who had only a traditional education maintained their provincial political elite status after the revolution, their percentage was small compared to the case of the coastal provinces.

Quite a number of educated men were recruited into the political elite class by participating in the Revolution of 1911, but we can not therefore conclude that republican ideology played an important role in Sichuan's revolution, especially at the county level. In many counties of Sichuan, during the revolution, there seemed to be no clear revolutionary ideology functioning as the guiding principle except for the *gelaohui*'s anti-Manchu racism slogan. After the revolution, a good number of people who had a traditional educational title maintained their political elite status at the county level. The county magistrates were first among the local elite who had led the revolution. Then they

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<sup>449</sup> See Whiteford.A.H.1964. Two cities of Latin American: A comparative description of social classes. New york: Doubleday.

were appointed by the provincial government and after 1916 were mainly military men appointed by warlords. These magistrates as well as other county government officials, heads of public organizations, and county councilors were still mainly those *tongsheng*, *shengyuan*, and *gongsheng*. Though some people who had modern educational backgrounds were also recruited into the political elite at the county level, their percentage was small. This indicates that the traditional forms of elite recruitment of the old order were so strong that they could survive the deep crises of the order at the national level, with the breakdown of its legitimacy and many of its values. They could survive all the more readily because the new elite recruiting mechanisms did not yet have a national application in the post -1911 China that was no longer an empire but not yet, in structural terms, a well integrated nation-state.

Our above study of the Sichuan educational reform and its students' collective attitude toward the new education in the early twentieth century suggests that tradition plays a very important role in inland China's modernization movements. It shapes the ways that are used to pursue the aims of the movements and the motives of the people who participate in the movements. It may even revise or distort the aims of the movement per se. Western scholars have long been frustrated by China's seeming inability to become modern in the twentieth century, but to the local Chinese, if modernization can not satisfy their traditional needs and desires, it has not much use.

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