

Chapter 9

Internalizing “Territory”: How the “Territory” Concept Became Part of China’s Contemporary Conceptual Apparatus

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Introduction

2005 marked the sixtieth anniversary of the climax of the Second World War. Across those countries which constituted the erstwhile alliance of Allied Powers, lavish celebrations were held in commemoration of the victories secured by their forefathers. China, too, was no exception. On 3 September 2005, the then incumbent President, Hu Jintao 胡錦濤, made the following remarks during an address.

In 1874, Japan invaded Taiwan. In 1894, it provoked the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 and proceeded to occupy Taiwan. In 1904, Japan started a war against Russia, violating China’s territorial integrity and sovereignty over northeast China (中國東北領土和主權). The victory of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression brought about the thorough defeat of Japanese aggressors, safeguarded China’s national sovereignty and territorial integrity (國家主權和領土完整) and spared the Chinese nation (中華民族) of the misfortune of colonial enslavement. Beginning in 1840, China was repeatedly invaded and trampled underfoot by imperialist powers, its national sovereignty and territorial integrity (國家主權和領土完整) time and again encroached upon and the Chinese nation (中華民族) subjected to untold misery.

The above extract constitutes a portion of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ official English translation of Hu’s address.¹ What is particularly striking about this extract is how Hu references the concepts “national sovereignty” (*guojia zhuquan* 國家主權)

¹ “Hu Jintao’s Speech at the Sixtieth Anniversary Ceremony of Chinese People’s War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War, Beijing, Sept. 3, 2005”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/chn//gxh/zlb/ldzyjh/t210209.htm> (Accessed on 12 March 2013).

and “territorial integrity” (*lingtu wanzheng* 領土完整), and furthermore, the way in which he uses these concepts to frame his overarching argument. Incidentally, in the revised 2004 version of the constitution of the People’s Republic of China promulgated in the year preceding this address, one also finds instances of “sovereignty” (*zhuquan* 主權) and “territory” (*lingtu* 領土) in use.

This chapter does not set out to analyze the objective veracity of statements contained within Hu’s address. Rather, what is of concern to us here are the reasons why Hu chose to frame his argument using such terminology and turns of phrase as “national sovereignty” and “territorial integrity”. Only by understanding these underlying reasons can we then start to consider the validity of the statements and attitudes outlined in his speech. Understanding these reasons is significant, for we find ourselves in a situation today where fruitless disputes continue to be waged with no discernable end in sight. Historians and contemporary affairs analysts alike are culpable for this state of affairs, having failed to pay adequate attention to the way in which words and concepts are mobilized in discourse, and furthermore, to the etymological trajectory that they have traced over the course of history.

In a previous work, through an analysis of the motivations which underpinned China’s decision to gainsay the notion of exercising “suzerainty” (*zongzhuquan* 宗主權) in its relations with Tibet and Mongolia, this author demonstrated the historical process by which the Chinese conceptualization of “sovereignty” (*zhuquan* 主權) came into play [Okamoto 2017: chap. 12]. Part IV of this book, too, is comprised of two chapters which extensively analyze how Mongolia and Tibet reacted to this process. This chapter expands upon this aforementioned work by analyzing the formation of the *lingtu* (territory) concept in the Chinese context.

The concept of *lingtu* (Jp. *ryōdo*) is intimately linked to the modern Western system of sovereign states. Alongside the notions of “sovereignty” and “the people”, it constitutes one of the integral building blocks of a modern state, indicating the extent of land which falls under the exclusive purview of a given state’s sovereignty. The concept is of Japanese origin, stemming back to the word *ryōchi* 領地, which was originally used as a translation for the English “territory”.²

Given its foreign origins and implicit connotations relating to the modern Western notion of sovereignty, how and why did *lingtu* percolate into and take root in the Chinese context? Furthermore, what China-specific idiosyncrasies and characteristics did the

² On this point, see [Watanabe 1930: 107–8]. One of the earliest examples of the phrase in usage in the Japanese context can be found in Nakae Chōmin’s 中江兆民 essay “Musings on the National Diet” (*kokkairon* 国会論) [Nakae 1983–86: vol. 10]. This information was provided to the author by Kishimoto Emi 岸本恵実. The author would like to use this opportunity to express his gratitude to Professor Kishimoto here.

term come to hold as a product of this internalization process? This chapter seeks to provide answers to these questions.

1. The Notion of *Shudi* 屬地

1. 1. Concepts Associated with the Qing System of Rule

When beginning to think about the makeup of China’s territory up to the present day and the nature of the *lingtu* concept, an understanding of the structure of the Qing’s system of rule is essential. Outside of China Proper, this author conceives of the Qing order as consisting of the following three categories.³

fanbu 藩部: Mongolia, Tibet, Xinjiang

shuguo 屬國: Korea, the Ryukyu Kingdom, Vietnam, Siam, etc.

hushi 互市: the Western countries, Japan, Southeast Asian trading port countries, etc.

Fanbu or *waifan* 外藩, both Chinese terms, refer to regions inhabited by non-Han Chinese ethnic groups which were administered by the Lifan Yuan 理藩院. *Shuguo*, or *shubang* 屬邦, Qing vassals, were administered by the Board of Ceremonies (Libu 禮部), which oversaw tribute protocol. Finally, *hushi*, a term which refers to a form of bilateral trade with countries or areas which did not fit into either of the above categories, was overseen by local authorities without reference to central government.⁴ In this way, clear boundary lines existed between the three because of the differing ways in which they were administered.

Up until the 18th century, however, there was very little, if any, conscious awareness (or attempt to conceptualize) how these three categories differed from one another.

³ As a starting point, please refer to [Okamoto 2017: chap. 1, Conclusion]. These chapters in [Okamoto 2017] correspond to the structure of “universalisms” outlined in this book’s Introduction. The term *shuguo* 屬國 can be seen as corresponding to Qing dependencies contained within the Classical Chinese Sphere, *fanbu* 藩部 to the Tibeto-Mongol Buddhist Sphere, and *hushi* 互市 as the means or rubric by which to identify countries which were contained within extraneous universalisms/cultural orders.

⁴ The categories of *fanbu* and *shuguo* are derived from the *fanbu zhuan* 藩部傳 and *shuguo zhuan* 屬國傳 of the *Draft History of the Qing Dynasty* (*Qingshi gao* 清史稿). The category of *hushi* is taken from the *Collected Statutes of the Jiaqing Period* (*Jiaqing huidian* 嘉慶會典). A portion of the latter corresponds to that which features in the *bangjiao zhi* 邦交志 in the *Draft History of the Qing Dynasty*.

Despite evincing clear boundary lines in terms of how they were administered on a practical level, these terms and concepts of Han Chinese origin proved to be extremely nebulous for drawing distinctions between other non-Han ethnic groups.

Of these, the distinction between *shuguo* and *fanbu* was particularly ambiguous. *Shuguo* were countries which engaged in tribute relations with the Qing under the aegis of the Board of Ceremonies, which was one of the six boards that governed the Han populace. In contrast, the *fanbu* were under the jurisdiction of the Lifan Yuan. When viewed objectively, the two ought to appear as distinct entities, for each straddled differing cultural orders and universalisms. However, in contemporaneous Han parlance, the two were often jointly referred to using the phrase *fanshu* 藩屬. This led to an ambiguity regarding which constituted which. Because of this ambiguity, one cannot make unequivocal assertions about the extent to which contemporaneous Han Chinese intellectuals consciously distinguished between the two.

Today, the erstwhile *fanbu* now collectively constitute a portion of Chinese territory. When and how, then, did these *fanbu* make the transition to Chinese “territory”? The final stage in this process came when Yuan Shikai 袁世凱, who became President of the newly established Republic of China through the 1911 Revolution, gave the following order on 21 April 1912.

Now that the five races are joined in democratic union, the lands comprised within the confines of Mongolia, Tibet, and Turkestan all become a part of the territory (*lingtu* 領土) of the Republic of China, and the races inhabiting these lands are all equally citizens (國民) of the Republic of China. The term “dependencies” (*fanshu* 藩屬) as used under the monarchy, must therefore cease to be used,⁵

It’s important to bear in mind that the terms *lingtu* and *fanshu* used here by Yuan are Chinese terms which concur with Han logic, and do not necessarily represent how indigenous peoples in these regions conceptualized their immediate surroundings over the course of history. Nevertheless, this is the first time that *fanshu* had ever been defined in such clear-cut language. This definition also holds significance in the contemporary context, continuing to define the parameters for territorial disputes over Tibet and the Senkaku Islands. The extract from Hu Jintao’s 2005 address introduced in this chapter’s opening pages is also grounded in such conceptualizations. If such is the case, then, how did the concepts and logic which we see in Yuan’s presidential order take shape in the Chinese context? We will now move on to examine this historical process.

⁵ FO371/1326, 16605, Presidential Order dated 21 April 1912, Encl. No. 3 in Jordan to Grey, No. 196, 27 April 1912. *Dongfang zazhi* 東方雜誌, 8-12, June 1912.

1. 2. Suoshu Bangtu 所屬邦土

Perhaps the earliest identifiable point in this historical trajectory came during the Qing’s negotiations with Japan over the Sino-Japanese Treaty of 1871. In Article 1 of the finalized treaty, one can find the phrase *suoshu bangtu* 所屬邦土. Throughout the 1870s, this phrase served as a perennial incendiary in Sino-Japanese relations, catalyzing such incidents as Japan’s expedition to Taiwan in 1874, and its annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1879 [Okamoto 2017: chap. 2]. The article itself was drawn up by the Qing side, and *suoshu bangtu* was used with the initial intention of referencing Korea and its *shu-guo* status. Indeed, according to the Qing side, the article had been “drawn up for the sake of Korea” (*wei Gaoli er she* 爲高麗而設). When referencing the treaty however, the Qing also used the term *shubang* 屬邦, which was a truncated version of the former. Either way, both phrases were used as synonyms for Korea.

Initially, these terms were only used to indicate Korea and its status apropos the Qing. However, as a consequence of shifting conditions in the region, the character *shu* 屬 over time came over to encompass much more than just the Qing’s relationship with Korea. Two pertinent examples of this include how its purview was stretched to encompass the aborigines targeted by the Japanese with punitive measures in their 1874 expedition to Taiwan, and also the Ryukyu Kingdom in its annexation process by the Japanese in the same decade. With this, *suoshu bangtu* came to encompass not only Korea, but also other countries and peoples.

That wasn’t all, however. Demarcation lines also began to be drawn between the terms *bang* 邦 and *tu* 土, which had hitherto been used as semantic equivalents. This delineation became particularly apparent during the Tianjin Talks, in which Mori Arinori 森有礼, minister plenipotentiary for Japan, and Li Hongzhang 李鴻章, the Qing’s Superintendent of Trade for the Northern Ports, discussed the Kanghwado Incident. Let us examine a portion of their conversation here.

Mori: “The case of Korea is no different to that of India. It is an Asian country, and cannot be regarded as a *shuguo*/vassal of China.”

Li: “Korea is a country which has already submitted to [Qing] rule (lit. a country which obeys the [Qing] calendar). How then, can you make the assertion that it is not a *shuguo*?”

Mori: “Korea is a country which merely pays tribute and receives investiture from China. China does not collect taxes from Korea, nor does it exercise any legal jurisdiction over its government. All countries therefore take the stance that it cannot be viewed as a *shuguo*/vassal.”

Li: “There is not a single individual who is not privy to the fact that Korea has for several thousand years belonged to China. In the Sino-Japanese Treaty of 1871, the phrase “*suoshu bangtu*” is used. “*Tu*” refers to each of the provinces which lie within China [proper]. These provinces constitute [China’s] inner lands (*neidi* 內地/*neishu* 內屬). As such, the government collects taxes from them and exercises legal jurisdiction over their governance. The character “*bang*” is used to indicate countries such as Korea. These constitute China’s outer dependencies (*waifan* 外藩/*waishu* 外屬). As such, China has allowed them to be autonomous in matters relating to taxation and governance. This system has been in place across multiple dynasties, and did not start during Qing rule. How then, can you make the assertion that [Korea] cannot be considered a *shuguo*?”⁶

Of particular importance in the above extract is the fact that Li describes *suoshu bangtu* as being composed of both the “provinces” of China proper, and of “countries such as Korea”. The provinces are positioned as *neidi* 內地 and *neishu* 內屬, or “inner lands”, and, taken in toto, constituted China’s inner territories (*shudi* 屬地). In contrast, other “countries such as Korea” are positioned as *waifan* 外藩, or *waishu* 外屬, which equated to China’s outer dependencies (*fanshu* 藩屬).

In this way, *suoshu bangtu*, an expression which had hitherto been used to indicate Korea and its status as a Qing “dependency” (*shubang* 屬邦), had been reconfigured to encompass regions which fell both under the *shuguo* and *fanbu* rubrics introduced earlier.

1. 3. *The Origins of the Shudi 屬地 Concept*

Approximately ten years after Li Hongzhang’s articulation of *suoshu bangtu* in his talks with Mori Arinori, in 1885, an even more representative form of this shift in territorial conceptualizations emerged, precisely at the time when the so-called Great Game between Britain and Russia over Central Asia and Afghanistan was beginning to reach new levels of intensity. Sandwiched between Russia and British India, both Xinjiang and Tibet were attracting ever greater levels of attention in international politics. The Qing authorities were by no means aloof from such developments, and realized that they ur-

⁶ “Ribei shichen Sen Youli shushi Zheng Yongning laishu wutan jielue” 日本使臣森有禮署使鄭永寧來署晤談節略 [Excerpt from Meeting with Japanese Minister Mori Arinori and Interpreter Tei Nagayasu], 28th day of the 12th month of Guangxu 1 [Li 1905–08: Yishu hangao 譯署函稿, vol. 4, p. 35].

gently needed to devise a plan of action to protect these areas. Particularly pioneering in this regard were the musings of Zeng Jize 曾紀澤 [the Marquis Tseng], the then incumbent Qing minister to Britain and Russia.

The extract which follows below is taken from a letter sent by Zeng to Li Hongzhang, who, in the position of Superintendent of Trade for the Northern Ports, was responsible for the greater part of Qing diplomatic affairs. There, Zeng puts forward his opinion that as the British had opted to send Colman P. L. Macaulay, Bengal Finance Secretary, to Beijing as an envoy to discuss the opening of trade relations between India and Tibet, it would be wise to seize this moment as an opportunity to reconsider the nature of Sino-Tibetan relations.

In recent years, the Western powers have focused their efforts on invading China's *shuguo*/vassals under the pretext that these regions “do not constitute real vassals” (*fei zhen shuguo* 非真屬國). As China, in its dealings with its *shuguo*/vassals, does not interfere in their internal governance, nor in their relations with other foreign countries, our treatment of our vassals is of an utterly different nature to the way in which the Western countries interact with their own vassals. Both Tibet and Mongolia are *shudi* of China (*Zhongguo zhi shudi* 中國之屬地), and are not *shuguo* 屬國/vassal. Yet, despite this, compared to the way in which Western countries rule over their own vassals, our governance over Tibet is far more magnanimous. What's more, the Western countries make no shrewd observations about these regions, electing only to call them “Chinese vassals” (*Zhonghua shuguo* 中華屬國), and to perceive them in an entirely different way from the rest of the provinces of China proper. We must take this opportunity to reassert our power over these regions, and make an unequivocal demonstration to the world of these regions' standing. If we fail to do so, in the not so distant future, the West will only strengthen its resolve and claim that our *shudi*, which they see as *shuguo*, are “not real vassals” (*fei zhen shuguo* 非真屬國) and we could potentially have to face the misery of further invasion.⁷

Here, this author wishes to draw attention to the fact that despite differing both in terms of their history and nature, Zeng makes reference to the Qing's *shuguo* and the West's vassals using the same terminology: *shuguo*. The reasons for this are unclear. Moreover, it is difficult to say how this view and choice of terminology was received back in China. Nevertheless, it ought not to be overlooked.

⁷ “Lundun zaizhi Li fuxiang” 倫敦再致李傅相 [Second Letter Sent in Response to Li Hongzhang from London], 9th day of the 7th month on the year yiyou 乙酉 (18 August 1885) [Zeng 1893: vol. 5].

While the comparison Zeng drew between the West's so-called "real vassals" and the Qing's differing treatment of its *shuguo* was an important one, another important aspect in this letter can be found in his use of the term *shudi* 屬地. According to Zeng, unlike Korea, a Qing *shuguo*/vassal, Tibet was a *shudi*. This delineation was most likely a product of the distinction Li drew between the "inner" and "outer" aspects of the *shu* concept ten years earlier. Through his use of the term *shudi*, Zeng was effectively attempting to reposition Tibet, a *fanshu* or *fanbu*, as an "internal" part of China.

These views of Zeng, coupled with his delineation of *shuguo* and *shudi* were, of course, all underpinned by a motivation to protect Korea and Tibet from the encroachment of foreign powers. As such was the case, it is incumbent upon us to clarify to what extent, if any, Zeng's conceptualization and usage of *shudi* actually accorded to reality.

While it is true that both Xinjiang and Taiwan were incorporated as official Chinese provinces in roughly the same period that Zeng penned this letter, neither was commonly referred to using the *shudi* concept. Consequently, identifying what direct linkages or causal relationships may have engendered such an articulation is not possible.⁸

Moreover, in relation to Vietnam and Korea, Li Hongzhang purposely took a policy of not distinguishing between them as *shuguo*/vassals and what the West deemed to be "true vassals" (*zhen shuguo* 真屬國). While Li undoubtedly understood what Zeng was alluding to in his letter, given the conditions that China faced on both internal and external fronts, Li took the decision of purposely blurring the lines of distinction between *shuguo*/vassals and what the West saw as "true vassals" (*zhen shuguo* 真屬國), so as to secure Vietnam and Korea from falling into foreign hands. To some extent, this effort bore fruit [Okamoto 2004; Okamoto 2011: 137–66].

However, approximately ten years after Zeng's penning of the above letter, the outbreak, and eventual defeat of the Qing in the First Sino-Japanese War, sounded the death knell for Li's strategy of indiscrimination. It was also from this point that the next phase in our discussion began.

1. 4. How the Shudi 屬地 Concept Took Root in the Collective Chinese Consciousness

Following the defeat of the Qing in the First Sino-Japanese War, a nascent form of Chinese nationalism began to take root in the collective consciousness of the Han intellectuals. Against this backdrop, then, how did these intellectuals perceive the Qing's *shu*-

⁸ In this regard, Paine [1996: 165–6] is incorrect in stating that China adopted the notions of "borders and sovereignty" apropos Xinjiang during the "Ili Crisis".

guo/vassals and *neidi*? A document submitted to the Guangxu Emperor by Kang Youwei 康有為 sheds some light on this. There, whilst lamenting the loss of the Qing's erstwhile tribute-bearing *shuguo*/vassals (the Ryukyu Kingdom, Vietnam, Burma, Korea, and Siam), Kang also expressed apprehension that the threat of foreign encroachment may permeate as far as China's *neidi*, which, in addition to the core Han-dwelling provinces, according to him, encompassed Tibet, Xinjiang, and the Three Eastern Provinces. His use of *neidi* here clearly incorporates Zeng Jize's conceptualization of *shudi*. This demonstrates that the *shudi*, whose ultimate arbiter of jurisdiction remained nebulous, had started to be conceptually incorporated into what constituted "inner" China.⁹

Unfortunately, in the body of contemporaneous historical materials available to us from this period, one cannot confirm whether or not these terms were in active use in the day-to-day workings of Qing bureaucracy. The same problem exists as to whether or not a clear distinction was drawn between the *shuguo*/vassals and *neidi* (= *shudi*) concepts. The question of whether or not these terms occupied a definitive position within the quotidian workings of Qing bureaucracy at this time will thus have to go unanswered for now. The situation ten years down the line, however, is completely different. In the body of materials available for this period, we find definitive evidence of both these concepts in use, and of clear-cut distinctions being drawn between them.

If the distinction between the outer *shuguo* and the inner *shudi* was ambiguous up until this point, this would suggest that there was no clearly defined criterion for making that distinction in the first place. What then produced the conditions for such a sea change? The answer to this question is the introduction of the concept of sovereignty. Up until this point, no clear and precise notion of "sovereignty" had taken root in the Chinese context. Indeed, it was only during the Sino-British negotiations over Tibet that the Qing government started to become aware of the notion of sovereignty.

At the time of these negotiations, the Qing Wai Wu Pu 外務部 or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs perceived Tibet not as a *shuguo* over which China exercised suzerainty (*zongzhuquan* 宗主權), but as a *shudi* over which China exercised sovereignty (*zhuquan* 主權). In other words, Zeng Jize's conceptualization of *shudi* twenty years prior to these negotiations, had now fully taken root in the Qing bureaucratic imagination. Here, let us examine an extract from a 1908 memorial penned by Zhao Erfeng 趙爾豐, the then incumbent Tibet *Amban*.

In international law, a principle exists which dictates that it is customary that the diplomacy of a protectorate is administered by its protecting state. ... Our nation's

⁹ Kang Youwei, "Shang Qingdi di-er shu" 上清帝第二書 [Second Petition to the Qing Emperor], 8th day of the 4th month of Guangxu 21 [Zhongguo shixuehui: vol. 2, pp. 132–3].

treatment of its *fanshu* 藩屬 has up until this point been very magnanimous. In addition to allowing for autonomy in their internal governance, we have not interfered in their diplomacy either. As a result of this, be it in the case of France and Vietnam, Britain and Burma, or Japan and Korea, each of these countries enticed the [*fanshu*] governments into signing treaties without consulting us, and, after having signed that one piece of paper and informing us of its existence, *ipso facto* used it as evidence to state that these countries “do not constitute real vassals of the Qing” (*fei wo zhen shuguo* 非我真屬國). As those countries stated above initially constituted tributaries of ours (*chaogong zhi guo* 朝貢之國), these acts are borderline tolerable. However, in the case of Tibet, in addition to the fact that it does not inherently possess sovereignty over itself, it does not possess its own political system, and it lacks the sufficient mechanisms for it to constitute a state in and of itself. Indeed, just like Inner Mongolia, Tibet constitutes one of our country’s *shudi*/territories (*wo guo zhi shudi* 我國之屬地), and cannot be considered to be a *shuguo* 屬國/vassal. What’s more, as we have an *Amban* in place for the administration of Tibet’s internal affairs, its diplomacy ought to be conducted by him and him alone. The very idea of a Tibetan engaging directly with the British or British India in negotiations is utterly absurd.¹⁰

Zhao’s memorial contains several noteworthy points. Firstly, we find he uses *fanshu* to encompass both the notions of *shuguo* and *shudi*. Secondly, the memorial suggests that based on the character *shu* 屬 alone, a distinction could not be made between *shuguo* (tributaries) and *shudi* (territories), and that *shudi* only took on its own unique definition after the Qing’s loss of its *shuguo* to foreign powers. Thirdly, the memorial also demonstrates that after the Qing lost its *shuguo*, it attempted to reposition its erstwhile *fanbu* (namely, Tibet, Mongolia, and Xinjiang) as *shudi* over which it exercised not suzerainty, but *sovereignty*.

From the manner in which Zhao and his contemporaries utilized the *shudi* concept, the basic conditions for what, in contemporary parlance, constitutes “territory” (*lingtu*) were met. Even after the submission of this memorial, the *shudi* term remained in conventional use, and, at least on the administrative front, things stayed that way for several years. Indeed, at this juncture in time, while the notion of *shudi* had become thoroughly ingrained in the bureaucratic imagination, a “territorial” consciousness had yet to emerge.

¹⁰ “Zhang Yintang zhu-Zang zougao” 張蔭棠駐藏奏稿 [Draft Memorials Penned by Zhang Yintang in Tibet], “Fu zhu-Zang Zhao dachen yuanzhe” 附駐藏趙大臣原摺 [Attachment of Tibet *Amban* Zhao Erfeng’s Original Memorial], 9th day of the 5th month of Guangxu 34 [Wu 1994: vol. 2, pp. 1432–3].

How then, did the notion of *shudi* evolve into *lingtu*? In order to uncover the answer to this question, we must now move our point of reference slightly away from the realm of political diplomacy and examine a new movement which was taking place concurrently.

2. The *Lingtu* 領土 Concept

2. 1. *The Media Influence*

The Hundred Days’ Reform movement which followed in the wake of the First Sino-Japanese War did not purely provide the impetus for political reform; it also engendered the creation of a new media platform. While the reform itself ultimately met with failure, this new media platform would go on to acquire great historical significance.

That is not to say that no prior precedent for journalism had yet to exist in China. Journalism had in fact flourished in China’s treaty ports. However, for the most part, journalism did not percolate beyond the boundaries of these confined geographic spaces and the communities who inhabited them. Journalism was, therefore, a phenomenon which was far removed from the intellectual milieu inhabited by the vast majority of China’s intellectuals. However, the reform movement, under the aegis of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao 梁啟超, produced a new media platform for these intellectuals which possessed wider connections to the press in both China and beyond. In this new journalistic age, Liang Qichao in particular would come to distinguish himself as the first, and most prolific, journalist in Chinese history.

This new media space by no means lagged behind the movements referred to above which were taking place in the realm of political diplomacy in the same period. Below, let us examine some key moments.

Perhaps the most emblematic example of this came with Liang Qichao’s 1901 translation of a phrase contained within the Japanese version of Paul S. Reinsch’s book as “a policy for expanding *shudi*” (*kuozhang shudi zhi zhengce* 擴張屬地之政策).¹¹ While the Japanese translation used the phrase “territorial expansion” (*ryōdo kakuchō* 領土擴張) [Takata 1901: 9–11], rather than leaving the Japanese neologism of “*ryōdo/lingtu*” 領土 as it was, Liang instead opted to replace any instance of the term with *shudi* 屬地 in his translation. By this point the term *ryōdo/lingtu*, originally of Japanese origin, had already percolated into the Chinese context. Indeed, instances of it in use can

¹¹ Liang Qichao, “Guojia sixiang bianqian yitong lun” 國家思想變遷異同論 [On the Shifts and Changes in National Thought], *Qingyi bao* 清議報, no. 95, October 1901, pp. 2–3, *Yinbingshi wenji* 飲冰室文集, vol. 6, 21 in [Liang 1936].

be located across a number of contemporaneous books and writings. Liang's preference for using *shudi* over *lingtu* would thus suggest that in 1901, at least from his perspective, *lingtu* was an arcane conceptual import, which had yet to take hold in the general Chinese consciousness.

When Liang penned this article, a large number of ethnic Chinese were based in Japan. The majority of these individuals were students. In the circles these individuals moved in, there was a marked tendency for the active incorporation of Japanese neologisms into one's lexicon; the term *ryōdo/lingtu* being no exception. An archetypal demonstration of this can be found in the title of an article penned by Yang Du 楊度 in 1902, entitled "Today, every country's China policy has evolved from one of partitionism to a dual-pronged policy of maintaining territorial integrity and open-doorism". These translations of "territorial integrity" (*lingtu baoquan* 領土保全) and the "open-door" (*menhu kaifang* 門戶開放), were of course, Japanese inventions.

Two points are worth bearing in mind in relation to Yang's aforementioned article. Firstly, Yang proactively chose to use the term "*lingtu*". This ran counter to Liang Qichao and his contemporaries' lexical preference for *shudi*, and ought to be seen as something which distinguished Yang from his peers. That being said, when reading the article, one gets the impression that Yang used this Japanese neologism willy-nilly without a full understanding of its implicit connotations. Secondly, Yang deliberately instilled negative connotations in the concept of "territorial integrity" and the concept of the "open-door". A case in point being the way in which Yang criticized the term "integrity" for carrying the implicit meaning of "partitioning a country in an intangible way".¹²

As it was, however, these two peculiarities we find in Yang's thought would soon undergo a sea change. This sea change would also have huge implications for every aspect of Chinese history and the course it would take.

2. 2. *The Revolutionaries and Reformists*

While Yang Du may have been the first individual to use the *lingtu* concept, it was the Japan-based Revolutionaries who brought the concept to prominence. After establishing the Tongmenghui 同盟會 in 1905, they began publication of the *Minbao* 民報 journal. There, examples of the term abound.

The Revolutionaries' proclivity for the term came down to the fact that it functioned as a convenient tool for spreading their political convictions, especially the pro-

¹² Yang Du, "Zai huansong Hunan fu-Ri liuxuesheng yanhui shang de yanshuo" 在歡送湖南赴日留學生宴會上的演說 [Speech Delivered at Send-Off Banquet for Hunan Students Going to Study in Japan], 21 February 1903 [Yang 1986: vol. 1, 90–1].

motion of anti-Manchism. One of Wang Jingwei’s 汪精衛 writings serves as a good example of this.

As long as the Manchu government remains in power, China will fail to achieve independence, and the underlying cause of its partitioning (*guafen* 瓜分; lit. to cut up like a melon) by the imperial powers will go unaddressed. ... However, [in recent years] the various countries have transitioned from a policy of partitionism to a policy of open-doorism and the upholding of territorial integrity. This shift has nothing to do with the Manchu government. This transition has come about as a result of (1) the necessity for these countries to maintain a balance of power between one another, and (2) because these countries have started to worry that the partitioning of China will be difficult to achieve in light of their new-found understanding of the situation our people face.¹³

Here, Wang criticizes the Qing government for its inability, like the rest of international society, to “uphold territorial integrity” and its inability to maintain, as practiced in international law, “territorial sovereignty”.

The key discursive opponent for the Revolutionaries was none other than Liang Qichao and his Constitutionalist contemporaries. In his writings, Liang had actively avoided the term *lingtu*. However, confronted by mounting levels of bellicose rhetoric dished out by the Revolutionaries, Liang eventually conceded and started to use the *lingtu* concept in his own writings. In 1906, he penned a response to Wang Jingwei’s article, in which he argued that just because the West “is practicing open-doorism and a policy of upholding territorial integrity”, it did not necessarily equate to China being free of further threat.¹⁴

The *lingtu* concept’s entrance into the common Chinese lexicon was thus a product of this discursive battle of wits played out between the Revolutionaries and the Constitutionalist. The concept was, for example, mobilized in their debates over whether or not the Manchu government ought to be overthrown. However, it was the frequent citation of the two Open Door Notes’ comments on “the upholding of territorial integrity” (*ryōdo hozen/lingtu baoquan* 領土保全) in debates over whether or not “revolution” held the potential to incite China’s “partitioning” which really propelled the *lingtu* concept into the realm of common usage.

¹³ Wang Jingwei, “Bo geming ke yi zhao guafen shuo” 駁革命可以召瓜分說 [Refuting Revolution Will Lead to [China’s] Partitioning], *Minbao* 民報, no. 6, July 1906., pp. 21–2.

¹⁴ Liang Qichao, “Baodong yu waiguo ganshe” 暴動與外國干涉 [Insurrection and Foreign Interference], *Xinmin congbao* 新民叢報, 4th year, no. 10 (no. 82), July 1906, pp. 10, 13, *Yinbingshi wenji*, vol. 19, pp. 58, 60, in [Liang 1936].

2. 3. Yang Du's "Theory of Gold-Ironism" Articles and Their Link to the Spread of the Lingtu Concept

From amidst these debates, a clearly defined definition of what constituted "Chinese territory" from the Constitutionalist perspective emerged in a series of articles published by Yang Du under the title of the "Theory of Gold-Ironism" in 1907.

"The upholding of territorial integrity" is not only an important policy for the foreign powers in their dealings with China; it is also an important national policy that will serve as a clue for considering how we as a country will survive. ... "*Lingtu*" in the Chinese context is the amalgamation of all territory inhabited by the five races. We must ensure that we do not lose any of this land that we preside over today, and must also devise a strategy that allows us to defend it to the bitter end. Any deviation from this course does not constitute a policy of "upholding territorial integrity". ... If we are to "uphold territorial integrity" we must protect the *Meng* 蒙 (i.e. Mongolians), the *Hui* 回 (Muslims based in Xinjiang), and the *Zang* 藏 (Tibetans) peoples. If we are to protect the *Meng*, *Hui*, and *Zang*, we must also protect the monarch too. In a country in which the monarch is afforded protection, its constitution can only be referred to as a constitutional monarchy, and not a republican constitution.¹⁵

Here we find that Yang Du perceived China's erstwhile *fanbu*—the "*Meng*", "*Hui*", and "*Zang*"—as constituting, in toto, one portion of China's "*lingtu*". In this context, we also find clear indications of how his usage of "*lingtu*" was predicated on the idea of "upholding of territorial integrity" (*ryōdo hozen/lingtu baoquan* 領土保全) as found in the Open Door Notes.

Interestingly, Yang's above stance actually exhibits a great deal of divergence from his previous musings on the subject, as expressed in the pre-Russo-Japanese War period of 1902–03. At the time, Yang saw "the upholding of territorial integrity" as an alternative means to articulate *guafen* 瓜分, or "partitioning". The ideas he expressed on the subject in his series of "Theory of Gold-Ironism" articles thus represented a 180-degree turn, and stood in stark contrast to his earlier musings. The outcome of the Russo-Japanese War could well have been the underlying catalyst for this ideological turn.

¹⁵ Yang Du, "Jintie zhuyi shuo" 金鐵主義說 [Theory of Gold-Ironism], 1907 [Yang 1986: vol. 1, 301, 302–3, 381].

At the same time however, these ideas can also be interpreted as a rebuttal to the ideas espoused by the Revolutionaries. At any rate, Yang's articles demonstrated that the Constitutionalists, too, had now taken an unequivocal stance on just what exactly constituted China's *lingtu*.

Yang's ideas were by no means new, however. Mongolia, Tibet, and Xinjiang had previously been conceived as *shudi* in the realm of Qing politics and diplomacy, and the notion of "national unity" had been previously espoused in the journalism of the time [Yoshizawa 2003: 94].

While similar ideas may well have been articulated earlier elsewhere, the question of how they were conceptualized or verbalized is a different matter altogether. Indeed, this period constituted a time in which such ideas began to move from the realm of hazy ambiguity to the realm of clearly articulated expression. An adequate lexical means which could thus encapsulate these newly emerging ideas was required, and it was none other than Yang Du who provided a clear solution to this quandary.

Yang found a vocal advocate of his ideas in Liang Qichao, who, upon reading Yang's "Theory of Gold-Ironism" articles rushed to pen an essay in staunch favour of the ideas Yang expounded.

In modern discourse, "China's land" collectively indicates the 18 provinces of China proper, the Three Eastern Provinces, Inner and Outer Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai, and Xizang (Tibet). "China's people" collectively indicates the Manchus, Mongolians, Muslims, Tibetans, and Miao people, and furthermore all individuals who reside within China's *lingtu* (territory). . . . If the regions inhabited by the Manchus, Mongolians, Muslims, and Tibetan people had been independent from the start, and had not been a part of China up until today, when the world powers interacted with these peoples, those interactions would undoubtedly not have been filed under the rubric of "the Chinese question". . . . The other countries of the world, too, see those lands as being part of China's *lingtu* (territory), and see the people who inhabit those lands as Chinese citizens.¹⁶

Here we see that, unlike in his previous writings, Liang has now taken to actively deploying the concept of *lingtu*.

Through the above process *lingtu* was inaugurated into the domain of common discourse. That being said, this "common discourse" nevertheless continued to be centered around the Japan-based journalism movement. In the bureaucratic world, concepts

¹⁶ Liang Qichao, "Xin chuxian zhi liang zazhi" 新出現之兩雜誌 [Two New Magazines], *Xinmin congbao*, 4th year, no. 16 (no. 88), October 1906, pp. 8–9.

such as *tudi* 土地, *shudi*, and *shutu* 屬土 continued to remain in common usage, and *lingtu* had yet to come into common use. From the Qing bureaucratic perspective, *lingtu* was nothing more than a foreign loan word which held no practical application for the quotidian workings of bureaucracy.¹⁷

2. 4. The 1911 Revolution

This state of affairs underwent a colossal sea change with the outbreak of the 1911 Revolution. Up until this point, both the Constitutionalists and Revolutionaries had been cut off from the nexus of political power, and had no choice but to resort to the media to air their views. The 1911 Revolution profoundly altered this situation. Their visions of how a governmental authority ought to operate, alongside the terms and concepts which framed these visions, were now no longer confined to the pages of newspapers and journals, and were now fully inaugurated into China's political and diplomatic frameworks. This same process brought *lingtu*—a concept once relegated to the status of foreign loan word and the realm of academic abstraction—into the bureaucratic lexicon, and furthermore allowed it to take root as a *Chinese* word. Once again, Yang Du was pivotal in this process.

As one of many Constitutionalists, after the 1911 Revolution, Yang became a member of the Peking Government. There, he served as a key aide to Yuan Shikai. Yang drew up many documents in this role, one being the “Declaration of the Masonic Society of State Affairs”.

[China's] so-called *lingtu* is an amalgamation of the twenty-two *xingsheng* [provinces] (二十二行省), and its various *fanshu*, which include Mongolia, Tibet, and Turkestan. ... If we, as a nation, are to seek out the maintenance of territorial integrity, and the unification of the Manchu, Han, Mongolian, Muslim, and Tibetan peoples, we must uphold the nominal status of the current monarch.¹⁸

The key points made by Yang in this statement are contiguous with those articulated in

¹⁷ This is not to say that the government did not use the term *lingtu* at all. One finds many instances of the term in use both during and after the Sino-Japanese negotiations over the so-called Kantō/Kando 閩島 problem. However, these instances were all predicated on Japanese usage. As such, one cannot refute the important influence that the Japan-based journalism movement and its proactive use of Japanese neologisms had on bringing the concept to the fore.

¹⁸ Yang Du, “Guoshi gongjihui xuanyanshu” 國事共濟會宣言書 [Declaration of the Masonic Society of State Affairs], 15 November 1911 [Yang 1986: vol. 2, p. 538].

his previous series of articles. A case in point is how *lingtu* is used as a unifying concept for the various *fanshu* of "Mongolia, Tibet, and Turkestan" with the "twenty-two *xingsheng*". As a country which now saw itself as exercising sovereignty, and not suzerainty, over its land, both *fanshu* and its *shudi* derivation were no longer adequate concepts for bringing the status of the erstwhile *fanbu* in line with the rest of the country's provinces. This was precisely why Yang chose to mobilize the *lingtu* concept in this statement.

During the South-North Peace Negotiations held from late 1911 into early 1912, Yang also served as an aide to Tang Shaoyi 唐紹儀, who represented the Peking Government in the talks.

Two declarations emerged from these negotiations. The first, released by the northern side in February 1912, was a declaration of the Xuanton Emperor's abdication. The second, released by the southern side in March of the same year, was the Provisional Constitution of the Republic of China. Let us look at two brief excerpts from both.

(1) The five peoples—the Manchus, Mongolians, Han, Muslims, and Tibetans—shall be unified, and all their territory integrated to form the great Republic of China.

(2) The territory of the Republic of China shall consist of the twenty-two *xingsheng*, Inner Mongolia, Outer Mongolia, Tibet, and Qinghai.

Both extracts exhibit palpable traces of the opinions and lexical choices made by Yang in his "Theory of Gold-Ironism" articles, and demonstrate that *lingtu* had now taken root as a political concept in China's ideological, discursive, and bureaucratic spheres. Moreover, from these extracts, it is evident that the concept was not used as a descriptive expression of pre-existing circumstances, but rather as the expression of an ideal; an ideal which would lend itself to the construction of a new Chinese state.

This historical process was directly connected to the promulgation of Yuan Shikai's Presidential Order (referenced in footnote number 5 of this chapter), which took place one month later. Why, however, was the elimination of the term "dependencies" (藩屬), as used under the monarchy, necessary? For the new Han-centric political authority, it was essential that any lingering inertia from the "monarchical" period was done away with. The failure to do so could hinder the achievement of their ultimate goal: the creation of a new Chinese people and state.

Conclusion

The emergence of and process by which the *lingtu* concept took root in the Chinese

context coincided with the process by which the content and scope of “sovereignty” was gradually defined. While both terms were of Western origin, they were introduced to China via Japan as Japanese neologisms which were constructed out of Chinese characters. Furthermore, both the characters they used, and the content they conveyed, were a product of China’s interactions with Japan and the West.

The act of consciously drawing lines of delineation between groups and their affiliations was not an alien concept to the Qing. In actual fact, it had been a long-standing practice which underpinned the very basis of its system of rule. However, such a practice did not make a direct transition to a more modern form of territorial awareness, nor did the concept of *lingtu* permeate the Qing bureaucratic conscious overnight. As this chapter has sought to demonstrate, the incipient forms that these delineations took can be expressed through the categories of *hushi*, *shuguo*, *fanbu*, and China proper’s provinces. These distinctions would gradually come to morph over time, and were eventually subsumed under *lingtu*.

This process which culminated with the adoption of *lingtu* began in the second half of the 19th century with the various *hushi* states. Through either the direct signing of treaties with the Qing, or through their colonization by foreign powers, the *hushi* countries were reconfigured in the Qing imagination as genuine foreign states which were removed from the Qing’s immediate civilizational context. This process thus eliminated the former *hushi* states from inclusion in the area which would later come to constitute Chinese “territory”.

The next phase began in 1876, when Li Hongzhang clashed with Japan over the status of the Korean Peninsula. In his discussions with Japan, Li claimed that the Chinese provinces constituted the Qing’s “inner *shudi*”, and that the *shuguo* constituted its “outer *fanshu*”. These conceptualizations, while decidedly ambiguous, serve as a good demonstration of how the Qing structurally perceived its “territorial” architecture at the time. Although the usage of expressions that differentiated the “inner” from the “outer” were not unique to this particular instance, in signing treaties with the West and Japan, the Qing was compelled to make distinctions which were as clear-cut as possible.

At this point in time, China’s “inner” provinces were predominantly inhabited by Han Chinese. These same Han people—when referencing peoples and regions which existed “externally” to them—would invoke the Chinese concept of “*shu*”. It is for this reason that both the *shuguo* and the *fanbu* were often collectively referred to using the term *fanshu*, and that no clear distinction was drawn between them.

However, the increasingly torrid international situation of the 1880s introduced the need for drawing a clear line of demarcation between the *fanbu* and the *shuguo*. In this regard, it was particularly important that such *fanbu* as Tibet and Xinjiang were seen as constituting land which existed internally within China, and were not seen as falling outside of its immediate boundaries. To this end, the phrase *shudi* was introduced as a

means to delineate the *fanbu* from the *shuguo*, and to place the former firmly within China’s interior. However, there was a problem: the term *shudi* shared the character of *shu* 屬 in common with *shuguo*. Consequently, despite such efforts, the distinction between *shudi* and *shuguo* remained nebulous.

The Qing’s defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War would usher in the next stage. This defeat was significant, for the Qing had to recognize the “independence” of Korea; the last remaining card in its *shuguo* deck. At roughly the same time, the world powers’ scramble for a slice of the Chinese pie also reached its zenith. While the Qing’s loss of its last remaining *shuguo* and the Western powers’ endeavors to grab a slice of the Chinese pie were not unrelated *per se*, on a fundamental level they were entirely different problems. Yet, because the two crises occurred in succession, the populace saw them as being causally related, thus instilling a genuine fear that the country would soon meet with its demise. At the turn of the century however, an incipient form of Chinese nationalism surged forth from amidst this fear.

The first task that this new wave of nationalism would see to undertake was the delineation of China’s *fanshu* from its now irretrievable *shuguo* through a tempering of the *shudi* term. This process enabled the *shudi* concept—which had its origins in the ambiguous notion of *fanshu*—to be redefined as a term which denoted the expanse of land that could be attributed to Chinese “sovereignty”. The events of 1905 were of particular significance in this transition.

While this new spin on *shudi* penetrated the political and diplomatic spheres of the Qing bureaucracy, in the newly emerging Japan-based Chinese media platform, another term was beginning to find its place: *lingtu*. *Lingtu*, whilst originally a Japanese coinage, began to take root in Han intellectual circles under the influence of the United States’ Open Door Policy. It was popularized as a conceptual term which corresponded to the idea of national integration, which had, of course, been an idea which gradually took root in China in the face of growing fear over her “partitioning” at the hands of the West. One individual who was particularly significant in popularizing the term was Yang Du.

The regions which corresponded to China’s *fanbu* such as Xinjiang and Tibet were thus articulated in two different ways in two different contexts. *Shudi* was used in Qing bureaucratic circles, and *lingtu* was used in the articles and publications of the Japan-based intellectuals. After the outbreak of the 1911 Revolution however, these two concepts were unified under *lingtu*.

Irrespective of its connotations, *shudi* was a concept which had originally been derived from *fanshu*, a term which shared aspects of semantic continuity with the now obsolete *shuguo*. Its precise definition thus often remained nebulous. When translated into English for example, *shudi* would be rendered as “dependency”, the exact same term used for the translation of *shuguo*. *Lingtu* was much less ambiguous, lending itself to both the unequivocal assertion of sovereignty over a given geographical space, and to

the articulation of the indivisibility of a given nation's land. It was precisely for these reasons that *lingtu* was adopted in the Republic of China's declaration of establishment, and in all political documents which followed after.

That being said, we must nevertheless remain cognizant of the fact that when concepts such as *zhuquan* or *lingtu* were invoked in these contexts, they were premised on unilateral conceptions of sovereignty and territory which emanated from the Chinese language world. Namely, the central government or the Han race. The will of peoples inhabiting former *fanbu* regions, whose cultural links were tied to other universalisms, were not taken into consideration. This is precisely why Mongolia and Tibet attempted to achieve independence from China.

Through the process outlined above, the Chinese conceptualization of "territory", or *lingtu*, came to take on two peculiarities which distinguished it from its Western, or indeed Japanese, counterparts. Firstly, it was the notion of "territorial integrity", rather than the standalone notion of "territory" which the concept of *lingtu* took on. As such, when invoking *lingtu*, "territory", in the Western sense, is inseparable from the idea of "integrity", even up to the present day. This is why *lingtu* is habitually juxtapositioned with either *wanquan* 完全 or *wanzheng* 完整 (which also mean integrity), or their semantic opposite of *qinshi* 侵蚀 or *qinfan* 侵犯 (which refer to encroachment).

Secondly, *lingtu* inherited aspects of conceptual ambiguity from its predecessor *shudi*. *Shudi* was a term which was both derived from and used as a synonym of *fanshu*, and furthermore was difficult to differentiate from *shuguo*. As such, on a conceptual level, the limits and extent of what *shudi* encompassed was often unclear, and these ambiguities were carried over to *lingtu*.

In the contemporary context, a Chinese writer who is looking to add a bit of panache to his writing may well elect to articulate *lingtu* using the slightly antiquated but refined term of *shudi*. *Fanshu* goes even one step further. When putting either of these terms from pen to paper however, the implied geographical scope grows and grows. In other words, the ambiguities inherited by *lingtu* from its *shudi* predecessor enable it to function as a concept which continually carries the latent potential for expansion to encompass not only the Qing's erstwhile *fanbu* regions, but its long-lost *shuguo*, too.

Maps are a good illustration of this latent flexibility inherent in *lingtu*.¹⁹ This unique understanding of the world and of history are intimately entwined with China's conquest over imperialism and its successful creation of a nationalistic ideology, and have served as the backbone of the country's national history since the Republican era. As the remarks quoted from Hu Jintao's speech at the beginning of this chapter demonstrate, such views continue to be passed from generation to generation. In this regard,

¹⁹ On this point, see [Huang 2005; Yoshikai 2009; Kawashima 2010].

nothing has changed from the Republican period up to the present.

In the realm of contemporary international politics, this unique take on the world and on history is what continues to sow the seeds of disputes over history and over land borders between China and its neighbors. Sadly, a practical solution still seems a long way off.

—*Translated by Thomas P. Barrett*