

Gong Zizhen and His Essay on the "Western Regions"

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Introduction

In 1820, the famous scholar and poet-*cum*-geographer Gong Zizhen published an essay arguing the merits of establishing the "Western Regions" (*Xiyu*, the ancient name for Xinjiang or Chinese Turkestan) as a regular province and formally integrating it into the Qing state. His essay was never formally submitted to the emperor as a memorial and had little official impact during his lifetime, but it did earn respect for him in geographical and reformist circles and influenced the Qing court's late nineteenth century decision to transform the territory of the "Western Regions" into a formal province.

The Rise of Frontier Studies in the Early Nineteenth Century

Qing intellectual history included important contributions to what traditional Chinese scholars have called "history and geography of the north and west,"¹ or what we today might call "frontier studies." A truly astounding number of well-known Qing scholars, such as Gong Zizhen, Songyun, Wang Chang, Wen Tingshi, Li E, Qi Junzao, Qi Yunshi, Gu Guangqi, Li Wentian, Shengyu, Sun Chengze, Ke Shaomin, He Qiutao, He Shaoji, Cheng Enze, Zhu Yun, Ji Yun, Xu Song, Miao Quansun, Hong Jun, Zhang Mu, Qian Daxin, Zhao Yi, and many others wrote important historical and geographical studies of Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet.

Interest in the frontier reached a high point during the early nineteenth century. The reasons for this interest defy simple analysis because there does not seem to be any single major factor in the intellectual fabric of Qing China that produced it. There seems to have been a multiplicity of causes that combined with each other to encourage and foster this new interest in the history and geography of the north and west. Under the auspices of the Qianlong Emperor, official

¹ *Xibei shidi*.

compilations on Manchuria,² Mongolia,³ and Xinjiang were undertaken. In their private writings, scholars also began to include the frontiers in their studies into historical geography. Under the exile system, many scholar-officials who fell out of favor with Beijing for one reason or another were banished to Xinjiang, and some of them brought back important, first-hand accounts of their observations and impressions.⁴ The rise of the "statecraft" or *jingshi* school as a response to domestic crises also served to attract the attention of reformers to the frontier regions. These and other factors combined to stimulate a widespread interest in the frontier during the early nineteenth century.

Gong Zizhen and His Essay

The *jingshi* school helped to take frontier studies out of the purely scholarly or academic realm and made them part of practical reformism.⁵ Gong Zizhen, a native of Zhejiang and a famous scholar,

² One such work on Manchuria was the *Manzhou Yuanliu Kao*. An important study of this work in its larger historical context is Pamela Kyle Crossley, "Manzhou Yuanliu Kao and the Formalization of the Manchu Heritage," *Journal of Asian Studies* 46.4 (November 1987), pp. 761-90.

³ Such works on Mongolia included the *Erdeni-yin Tobchi*, which in Chinese was entitled *Menggu Yunliu*, and the *Menggu Huibu Wang Gong Biao-zhuan*.

⁴ An interesting and informative study of the exile system is Joanna Waley-Cohen, "Banishment to Xinjiang in Mid-Qing China, 1758-1820," *Late Imperial China* 10.2 (December 1989), pp. 44-71. One important scholar who compiled several important works on Xinjiang while in exile was Xu Song.

⁵ The early nineteenth century witnessed the revival of interest in the *jingshi*, or "statecraft" school, a school which stressed the importance of social participation and activism. It rejected empty Neo-Confucian speculation but also regarded *kaozheng* scholarship as pedantic and useless. Its re-emergence was evidenced by the revitalization of the *jinwen* or "modern text" school which stressed a moral commitment to bringing peace and prosperity to state and society. An important early proponent of the revitalization of the *jinwen* school was Zhuang Cunyu of Jiangsu (1719-1788). His grandson, Liu Fenglu (1776-1829) helped the *jingshi* school gain momentum. Liu influenced a number of bright young scholars in the early nineteenth century, including Gong Zizhen, Lin Zexu, Huang Zhuezi, and Wei Yuan. Of these men Wei Yuan and Gong Zizhen had especially close ties with Liu Fenglu. Yen-p'ing Hao and Erh-min Wang, "Changing Chinese Views of Western Relations, 1840-95," in John K. Fairbank and Liu Kwang-ching, eds., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 11: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 145. See also Susan Mann Jones and Philip A. Kuhn, "Dynastic Decline and the Roots of Rebellion," in John K.

poet, and reformer in the early nineteenth century,⁶ saw in Xinjiang a possible solution to the problem of overpopulation that was plaguing China. The tempo of population growth in China had accelerated in the eighteenth century. Although it may have slackened because of a series of regional disturbances after 1796, it quickened again after peace was restored. Gong Zizhen viewed this ominous population growth and period of relative peace as the lull before a storm.⁷ Gong was part of a tradition of *bianfa* (lit., "change of method") or radical change that had cropped up over long intervals in Chinese history, from Wang Anshi of the Song to Gu Yanwu of the early Qing. In this tradition, radical change was advocated by a minority of traditional scholars and officials who wrote on statecraft.⁸

In 1820, Gong wrote his famous *Xiyu zhi xingsheng yi* ("A Proposal for Establishing a Province in the Western Regions"), in which he proposed that Xinjiang's frontier administrative structure be changed from a military colony to that of a regular Chinese-style province.⁹ Doing this would, he argued, achieve a two-fold purpose; first, it would facilitate migration away from the heavily populated areas of China proper and towards the sparsely populated Xinjiang, thus relieving some of the population pressure; second, it would enable Xinjiang to increase its agricultural output and thus provide more food and wealth for China's burgeoning population. Gong characterized these measures as the "principle of loss and gain": "What is the principle of loss and gain? It is nothing more than two sentences: 'Taking people from the center [China Proper] to benefit the west,' and 'Taking wealth from the west to benefit the center.'"

Fairbank, ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 11: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1929), pp. 148-56.

⁶ A biographical sketch of Gong's life, the first of its kind in English, is in Hummel pp. 431-34. An annotated translation of Gong's biography in the *Qingshi Liezhuan* is appended to Hummel.

⁷ Ho Ping-ti, *Studies on the Population of China, 1368-1953* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 272-73.

⁸ Hao and Wang, "Changing Chinese Views," p. 165.

⁹ Gong's proposal was never formally submitted to the emperor as a memorial and had little official impact during his lifetime. His outline basically followed information available to him through the 1790 edition of the *Da Qing Yitongzhi*, the *Qinding Huangyu Xiyu Tuzhi* (an illustrated atlas of the Western Regions compiled 1757-1783), and Xu Song's *Xinjiang Zhilue*.

The key to dealing with the population crisis lay, then, in developing and settling Xinjiang. The pie was only so large, and no matter how creatively it was sliced, it would not yield more:

The population of China is now increasing day by day . . . It is not that the prominent officials do not worry or that the Emperor does not confer [with officials], but that their discussions do not extend beyond selling official positions and degrees, raising taxes, and raising the price of salt. This is like fattening one's brain with flesh cut from one's own buttocks or eating one's own flesh . . .

In this essay, Gong also argues that ignoring the Western Regions would be tantamount to an unfilial renunciation of the efforts of the Kangxi and Qianlong Emperors to secure peace and stability in the region. The Western Regions had previously been under the control of the mighty Han, Tang, and Yuan dynasties. During these dynasties, a bold if oversimplified historical thesis had emerged to the effect that China's security and dynastic fortunes were tied to its control of Inner Asia, a region roughly comprising the areas of Mongolia and Xinjiang. During periods of strength and unity, China could secure control over these areas and hold the nomadic tribes of Inner Asia in check.¹⁰

The Kangxi and Qianlong Emperors had this thesis in mind as they struggled to secure the northern and western flanks of the Qing empire. Kangxi fought with the bold Euluth (Oirat) leader Galdan for decades. In 1679, Galdan conquered most of the Western Regions, plundered eastern Mongolia in 1688, and then invaded Outer Mongolia in 1690, penetrating all the way to the lower Kerulun River.¹¹ He then turned south with the intention of taking Beijing, but was stopped by Qing armies at Ulan Butung, within eighteen leagues of Beijing. In 1696, Kangxi finally succeeded in crushing Galdan, and as a result Hami came under Qing control. The Qianlong Emperor completed the conquest by literally exterminating the rebellious Dzungar Mongol tribes in 1757 and capturing Kashgar in 1759.

¹⁰ Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, "The Great Policy Debate in China, 1874: Maritime Defense vs. Frontier Defense," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964-65), pp. 225-26.

¹¹ It was at this time that the Khalkha Mongols, the dominant Mongol tribe of Outer Mongolia, offered to submit to the Manchus in exchange for military assistance against Galdan. This offer was accepted by the Qing court, and in 1692 the Treaty of Dolon-nor, which placed Outer Mongolia within the Qing empire, was concluded.

Gong maintained that it was only proper for the current court to continue and extend the merits of the former Qing emperors in the Western Regions:

If we continue on with already-established merit and add on to it and extend it, our foundation will become more substantial, our means will become greater, and the things we add will become more numerous. How could this not be the purpose which Heaven and Emperor Gaozong [the Qianlong Emperor] strove mightily to achieve?

Forsaking or neglecting these border areas was unthinkable because they had been given by Heaven to the Qing:

Emperor Gaozong was born in accordance with Heavenly purposes and responded to Heavenly purposes by utilizing military force. He was able, therefore, to inherit the military might of the [Manchu Qing] ancestors and jointly employ troops from the north, south, and east to expand the western borders.

Gong's essay marked the beginning of a movement toward reassessing the importance of the frontiers and their integration with China.¹² It won for Gong considerable fame and recognition in geographical circles. Gong soon became a close friend of Wei Yuan, and the two became active supporters of reform under the tutelage of Liu Fenglu. They shared a mutual preoccupation with Manchuria, Mongolia, and Xinjiang and were both keenly interested in the history of the two great dynasties of conquest, the Yuan and the Qing. Wei Yuan's *Shengwuji*, a history of major Qing military campaigns, was reprinted and circulated many times along with Gong's essay. Gong's essays also formed the largest single group in the frontier section of the *Jingshi Wenbian*, a compilation of writings on the *jingshi* school.¹³

¹² Ever since the conquest of Xinjiang by the Qianlong Emperor, Xinjiang had been under the control of garrison forces as a sort of colonial extension of Gansu. The capital of Xinjiang was in far-away Lanzhou in Gansu, and civilian government was left mostly to local Muslim *begs*, whose authority extended over the non-Chinese population in religious matters and petty civil disputes. Real authority was in the hands of the court-appointed Governor-general stationed in Ili. As such, Xinjiang was "Suppressed but not pacified, dominated but not absorbed," and remained a "remote frontier in fact and idea." -- Marwyn S. Samuels, "Kung Tzu-chen's New Xinjiang," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 66.3 (September 1976), p. 420.

¹³ Jones and Kuhn, "Dynastic Decline," p. 155.

In the same year, 1820, Gong also wrote another essay entitled "A Proposal to Bar Foreign Ships from our Southeastern Coasts" (*Dongnan ba fanpo yi*). The text of this article is now lost, but from its title we can surmise that Gong foresaw, some twenty years before the events, the disastrous effects that increased maritime trade and contact with Western nations would have. These two articles were no doubt meant to complement each other and state Gong's apprehensions about Chinese trade with foreigners; Xinjiang and Guangdong were interrelated because they were the two main areas where Qing subjects constantly traded with foreigners.¹⁴ Traces of Gong's aversion to maritime trade are visible in his essay on Xinjiang, where he argues that historically China had never been a manifestly maritime nation and should not seek to become one: "Of all that can be discussed in [Chinese] books and documents, there is no reference to the particulars of any seas to the north and west . . . The ancients who possessed all under Heaven claimed to possess all under Heaven and yet could not possess even a single sea . . ."

The Historical Importance and Impact of Gong's Essay

Gong's essay exerted a strong influence on Zuo Zongtang, an ardent advocate of the *jingshi* ideal who restored the Qing court's authority over Xinjiang after it had been rocked by the Muslim rebellions of the 1860's and 1870's. These rebellions had broken out in Shaanxi in 1862 and quickly spread to Gansu and Xinjiang. Most of Xinjiang fell to a Khokandian adventurer, Yakub Beg, and Russian forces occupied the rich Ili Valley in 1871.¹⁵ The court appointed Zuo Zongtang Governor-general of Shaanxi and charged him with quelling these rebellious areas. After suppressing the Nien rebellion in 1868, he set his hand to this task. After five hard years of campaigning, he cleared Shaanxi and Gansu of the Muslim rebels in 1873¹⁶ and was then poised to enter Xinjiang.

¹⁴ Joseph Fletcher, "The Heyday of the Ch'ing Order in Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet," in John K. Fairbank, ed., *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 11: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911, Part 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 360.

¹⁵ The classic study of these developments in Ili is Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Ili Crisis: A Study of Sino-Russian Diplomacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1965.

¹⁶ The most important study of the Muslim rebellions is Wen-djang Chu, *The Moslem Rebellion in Northwest China, 1862-1878* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966).

It was at this critical juncture, however, that a foreign relations crisis arose in the Taiwan Straits. In 1874, Japan invaded Taiwan on the pretext of punishing the island's aborigines for their earlier killing of shipwrecked Ryukyuan sailors.¹⁷ The Qing court was gravely concerned with these developments, and a great debate on national policy ensued.¹⁸ Could the Qing afford to support a bold naval program in response to Japanese aggression on the seas while at the same time supporting Zuo's costly campaign in Xinjiang? Li Hongzhang quickly became the major spokesman for those who wanted to bolster the maritime defenses. He wanted the Qing court to divert the funds from the Xinjiang campaign to an aggressive naval buildup. He and the other advocates of maritime defense made the following points: first, maritime defense was a more urgent and pressing matter in view of Beijing's proximity to the coast and Xinjiang's distance from it; second, Xinjiang was a vast stretch of barren land and was thus not worth the high cost of its maintenance; and third, postponing the recovery of Xinjiang was not unfilial because the temporary withdrawal of troops from the area did not amount to a renunciation of its conquest by the Qianlong Emperor.¹⁹

The Qing court outlined these arguments for Zuo Zongtang and solicited his opinions on the matter. Zuo rose to the occasion and forcefully argued that the Western nations were not driven by territorial ambitions but by a desire for trade profits, harbors, and ports. The danger they presented was, therefore, not immediate. The Russians, on the other hand, had territorial as well as commercial designs.²⁰ He argued that the domains conquered by the Qianlong Emperor should be

¹⁷ A detailed account of the Japanese attack is Edward H. House, *The Japanese Expedition to Formosa* (Tokyo, 1874), which is highly biased in favor of the Japanese point of view. A shorter and slightly more balanced account is in James W. Davidson, *The Island of Formosa* (Yokohama: n.p., 1903). A more recent study is Leonard Gordon, "Japan's Abortive Colonial Venture in Taiwan," *Journal of Modern History* 37.2 (June 1965), pp. 171-85. Sophia Yen, *Taiwan in China's Foreign Relations* (Hamden, Conn.: Shoestring Press, 1965), pp. 123-298 contains a lengthy and detailed account of the entire range of diplomatic activity concerning the expedition and includes many translations of original documents and sources.

¹⁸ A brief and readable study of this debate is Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, "The Great Policy Debate in China, 1874: Maritime Defense vs. Frontier Defense," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964-65), pp. 212-28.

¹⁹ Hsu, "The Great Debate," p. 218.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

reclaimed immediately and warned that stopping the Xinjiang campaign would encourage the rebels to advance. The court ultimately approved of the Xinjiang campaign, and by 1878 Chinese imperial authority was restored to all of Xinjiang except for a small pocket in Ili under Russian occupation, and the Russians had completely withdrawn by 1882.

Zuo Zongtang had been inspired by Gong's essay and made it the nucleus for his repeated requests (in 1877, 1878, 1880 and 1882) that Xinjiang be made a province to ensure its lasting peace and order.²¹ Zuo was also well aware that Gong's friend, Wei Yuan, had argued vigorously in his *Shengwuji* that a regular administrative system of Prefectures (*fu*) and Districts (*xian*) should be established in Xinjiang.²² Xinjiang was finally formally incorporated into the Chinese state as a province in 1884.²³ Li Hung-chang himself was to recognize the importance of Gong's essay in the decision to make Xinjiang a province: "The initiation of extraordinary projects often comes from the anxious and worried thoughts of scholars. Gong Zizhen suggested the establishment of a Province in the Western Regions . . . and it is finally being implemented on a large scale today."²⁴ It was the first of China's frontiers to experience administrative integration. The Qing court apparently believed that transforming its territories into formal provinces would help to bolster China's territorial integrity, because in 1887, after a negotiated settlement with Japan and the withdrawal of Japanese troops, Taiwan was also made a province.

The historical importance and influence of Gong's essay is, then, readily apparent. It is probably the most studied of all his writings, but to date no complete and annotated translation of it has, to my knowledge, been made available. In offering this annotated translation,²⁵ I make no claim to have completely understood every subtle nuance or implied meaning. Gong writes in a very convoluted style in this essay, and I would have been completely at a loss with more than one passage

²¹ Hsu, *The Ili Crisis*, pp. 193-94.

²² Chu, *The Moslem Rebellion*, p. 192.

²³ An important but unpublished study of Xinjiang's transformation is Nailene Chou, "Frontier Studies and Changing Frontier Administration in Late Ch'ing China: The Case of Sinkiang, 1759-1911," University of Washington Ph.D. dissertation, 1976.

²⁴ Xiao Yishan, *Qingdai Tongshi* (Taipei: Shangwu, 1972) p. 1789; cited in Samuels, p. 427.

²⁵ The text I use is the edited version in *Gong Zizhen Quanj, shangce* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1986), pp. 105-112.

had it not been for the patient and diligent efforts of my friends Wang Fan-sen and Professor Sechin Jagchid to explain difficult passages to me. I am also indebted to Saranghoa, a Mongol and native of Xinjiang in the People's Republic of China, for helping me with several Turkish and Mongol place names. Needless to say, I alone am responsible for the errors, excesses, and deficiencies which surely remain.

TRANSLATION

A Proposal for Establishing a Province in the Western Regions

Gong Zizhen

The great things that exist under the Heavens are all-inclusively called Sea; if they are viewed from the Four Directions, they are called the Four Seas. There are numberless countries in the Four Seas, [but] none is greater than our Great Qing. The country of the Great Qing is what has been called the Central Kingdom since the time of Yao.²⁶ To the east and southeast of the land it²⁷ actually occupies, it meets the sea, [but] to the north and west it does not meet the sea. Of all that can be discussed in [Chinese] books and documents, there is no reference to the particulars of any seas to the north and west. Today the extreme west of the frontier now extends to Afghanistan²⁸ and stops; the extreme north of the frontier extends to [the territory under] the administration of the Uriyankhai²⁹ Supervisor-in-chief³⁰ and stops. Its natural geographic phenomena such as land routes, water routes, small and great mountains, small and great rivers, and plains are not like Mukden, Shandong, Fujian, and Guangdong, where the territory ends at the sea.

²⁶ Yao was a legendary sage-emperor (twenty-fourth century B.C.) in Chinese mythology, exalted by Confucians as an exemplary and perennial model of virtue and righteousness. His name is inseparable from that of Shun, his worthy successor whom he selected instead of his own less worthy son.

²⁷ The Central Kingdom.

²⁸ *Aiwuhan*.

²⁹ Location undetermined.

³⁰ *Zongguan*; Hucker 7110.4.

As for the Western Regions, Buddhist scriptures regard them as the omphalos³¹ of the earth, and anciently as well as in recent times [this area] has been referred to as the Western Regions. After the founding ancestors of our Great Qing dwelt in the Changbai Mountains, Heaven first bestowed the Eastern Sea to the Great Qing. When Shizu³² entered the [Shan-hai] guan,³³ he only came into possession of the Southern Sea [which had been possessed by the Chinese] ever since the reign of Tang Yao.³⁴ Of provinces, in the east, south, west, and north, he established eighteen. The length [of Shizu's realm] was 20,000 *li*,³⁵ and it was 200,000 *li* in area.

The ancients who possessed all under Heaven claimed to possess all under Heaven and yet could not possess [even] a single sea.³⁶ Widely knowledgeable scholars rejected and disbelieved those who spoke of the vastness and immensity [of the Western Regions];³⁷ that which was to the north was not far off, and they could see it if they looked, [but] that which was to the northwest or due west was far off, and they could not see it if they looked. The Holy Dynasty³⁸ now possesses the two seas to the east and south and controls the Mongol Khalkha³⁹ tribe, and this cannot be called far off to the north. What is more, Emperor Gaozong⁴⁰ was born in accordance with Heavenly purposes and responded to Heavenly purposes by utilizing military force. He was, therefore, able to inherit the military might of the [Manchu Qing] ancestors and jointly employ troops from the north, south, and east to expand the western borders. The far [reaches of the western territories] are 17,000 *li* from the capital, and the dependent states of the Western boundaries have not yet been counted. Could it be, then, that Heaven will guide [our dynasty] to the western seas? We

³¹ Zhongyang.

³² The Shunzhi emperor, r. 1644-1662.

³³ The easternmost gate of the Great Wall, at the shore of the Gulf of Zhili in the Yellow Sea.

³⁴ *Tang Yaodi* is the full, formal name of Yao. The comma in the text is a punctuator's error.

³⁵ The *li* is a Chinese linear measure of distance and is approximately equivalent to one third of an English mile.

³⁶ *Gong* here means, I think, a sea to the north or west.

³⁷ I.e., the "widely knowledgeable scholars." Gong uses the term with some contempt.

³⁸ The reigning Qing dynasty.

³⁹ The main tribe of the Outer *jasagh*, or Outer Mongolia.

⁴⁰ The Qianlong Emperor, r. 1736-1795.

still cannot tell. But even if a few million [from the treasury in an endeavor to extend our dominions this far] were used, it could not be called waste; even if the worries and hard work of two reigns⁴¹ about the west were accumulated and military documents were [piled] one hundred inches high, it could not be called [troublesome] toil; if the sons of the Eight Banners⁴² and the commoners of the [Chinese] Green Standard Armies⁴³ sacrificed their lives in gratitude for their [favorable] treatment, it could not be called a loss.

If there were no Heavenly Law and sacred proclamation manifesting the inevitability [of expanding to the west], the stupid scholars with shallow views and the degenerate students from lowly hamlets would, it almost seems, doubt the wisdom of the emperor in expending [the resources of the center] and devoting [them] to the borders. [They would] doubt the emperor's sense of humanity⁴⁴ [because imperial armies] reduce the countries of [other] peoples, destroy [other] people's descendants, and leave the land barren and devastated for a thousand *li*. No! No! The way of possessing all under Heaven attaches importance only to continuing along with it.⁴⁵ [Even] if it were [true] as the base scholars say, that "The laborers will never rest [from their labors]," "The expenses cannot be recovered again," "The [tribes or peoples] destroyed cannot again continue [in their issue]," [and] "Those who have been killed cannot be brought back to life," there would still be no better choice of meritorious action than continuing along with it.⁴⁶ But this is all academic; it is certainly not as the base scholars say. If we continue on with [already-established] merit⁴⁷ and add onto it

⁴¹ The Kangxi (1662-1723) and Qianlong (1736-1796) reigns. Kangxi and Qianlong devoted a great deal of time and energy to subduing the Western Regions. See Introduction.

⁴² The eight banners of the Manchu troops. Manchu banners were identified by the color of their banners. Each banner corresponded to the equivalent of a modern division.

⁴³ Chinese troops identified by green banners, as distinct from Manchu troops identified by banners of white, yellow, red, and blue.

⁴⁴ *Ren*.

⁴⁵ Heaven. Gong's point here and in other passages that follow is that Heaven had directed the attention and energies of the Qianlong emperor towards the west, and that this westward orientation should be maintained and continued by current and future courts.

⁴⁶ The Heavenly purpose.

⁴⁷ The merit Gong speaks of here is, I think, the Qianlong Emperor's conquest of the Western Regions.

and extend it, our foundation will become more substantial, our means will become greater, and the things we add will become more numerous. How could this not be the purpose which Heaven and Emperor Gaozong strove mightily to achieve? If we wish to continue on with [already-established] merit and add onto it and extend it, then nothing would be better than weighing and considering the principle of loss and gain. And what is the principle of loss and gain? It is nothing more than two sentences: "Taking people from the center⁴⁸ to benefit the west,"⁴⁹ and "Taking wealth from the west to benefit the center."

The population of China is now increasing day by day, the times are becoming more difficult day by day, and the Yellow River is becoming more of a calamity day by day. It is not that the prominent officials do not worry or that the emperor does not confer [with officials], but that their discussions do not extend beyond selling official positions and degrees, raising taxes, and raising the price of salt. This is like fattening one's brain⁵⁰ with [flesh] cut from one's own buttocks or eating one's own flesh--nothing can replace what has been taken away.

Ever since the last years of the Qianlong era, the officials, functionaries, scholars, and commoners have been discouraged and faced with difficulties. The people who do not work as scholars, farmers, artisans, or merchants are fifty or sixty percent [of the total population];⁵¹ what is more, some smoke⁵² opium,⁵³ get involved in wicked sects, incur capital punishment,⁵⁴ and freeze or starve to death. Even so, they are unwilling to produce [even] one inch of silk or one grain of rice in order to benefit the people. They have inherited [these habits] from the height of peace during the sixtieth year of the Qianlong reign,⁵⁵ when the people's hearts became accustomed to great luxury, and they have fallen into the habit of loafing [aimlessly] about, especially in the capital. [This decadence] has spread from the capital in all directions, and in general rich households have become poor

⁴⁸ China proper.

⁴⁹ The Western Regions.

⁵⁰ Here the word "brain" (*nao*) is perhaps metaphorical for the central or hinterland areas of China proper.

⁵¹ That is, unemployment is very high.

⁵² *Sun*; literally, "eat."

⁵³ Apparently regarded as a hateful practice.

⁵⁴ Because of rebellion or other high crimes.

⁵⁵ Ca. 1751.

households, and poor households have become destitute⁵⁶ ones. The highest of the four classes of people⁵⁷ are seeking employment beneath their dignity, and the general situation in each province is so perilous that none of them can even support [themselves for the coming] months and days, much less find time to plan for [coming] years.

Outside the Jiayu guan, the garrison generals are numerous,⁵⁸ the soldiers are plentiful, and the beacon towers⁵⁹ are very densely dispersed. The length of the land is several thousand *li*, and there are several tens of tribes. Except for the deserts, the total [surface area] of the *tuntian*⁶⁰ in the north is only 238,632 *mou*,⁶¹ and in the south it is only 49,476 *mou*. This makes for a combined total of 288,108 *mou*. Of agricultural laborers, there is a total of only 103,905 persons; and in addition to this there are 204 exiled criminals or persons who exist in name only. It would be very easy to say that the Western Regions should be used to govern the Western Regions. In the hinterland today, every year Guangdong and Sichuan release food and give it to the province of Guizhou. Guizhou is without heavy military [installations, yet] its [agricultural] output does not equal its intake of official emoluments and military provisions. Every year the nation makes compensation from 50,000 or 60,000 taels⁶² to 80,000 or 90,000 taels [for Guizhou, and yet the nation] has still not enjoyed any benefit from Guizhou. If the hinterland is like this, what is there still to be said about Xinjiang? A request should be made that the idle⁶³ non-native people who live in the capital be recruited in a big way and that the commoners of Zhili, Shandong, Henan, Shaanxi, and Gansu be ordered

⁵⁶ Literally, "hungry."

⁵⁷ The *shi*, or scholar-officials.

⁵⁸ Literally, "they face each other to this extent."

⁵⁹ *Suibao*; these were fortifications or towers which employed fire signals to communicate military information.

⁶⁰ The *tuntian* (literally "encampment fields") were agricultural fields maintained by regular military forces stationed in the countryside. The *tuntian* concept was adopted from an ancient method of military settlements and enabled a large army to support itself without burdening the civilian agricultural population. In an ideal *tuntian*, each soldier would tend forty to fifty *mou* (see note below) of land.

⁶¹ The *mou* (or *mu*) is a land measure, equal to approximately 733 square yards.

⁶² *Liang*. The tael was an avoirdupois measure for silver. The term "tael" came into widespread commercial use through Portuguese and is ultimately traceable to the Malay *tahil*, a weight.

⁶³ Literally, "wandering and eating."

to migrate to the west. The people south of the Yangzi River are weak in bodily strength,⁶⁴ their roads are dangerous and distant, and they are easily angered and given to complaining--there need be no deliberation [about their westward migration]. Yunnan, Guizhou, Hunan and Hubei, and Guangdong and Guangxi are also distant, and Sichuan has vast territory and few people; [the people of these places] should not be moved again. Shanxi claims to be the richest within the country.⁶⁵ Its residents would be unwilling to migrate, and there need be no deliberation [about their westward migration]. Although there need be no deliberation, those willing to go [should] all [be allowed] to go. Others such as the people from Feng,⁶⁶ Ying,⁶⁷ Huai,⁶⁸ and Xu⁶⁹ of the Jiangnan⁷⁰ provinces and the people from Datong⁷¹ and Shuoping⁷² in Shanxi are also all powerful and martial in their natural dispositions, and they dare to travel; they have not become accustomed to arrogantly eating rice and wearing silk. The land [in the Western Regions] is not very far [from them]; if they were recruited to go, they would surely be willing to go. The wicked people who grow tobacco are most numerous in the two provinces of Jiangxi and Fujian. They greatly harm China, and they should be completely moved [west] without a trace [of them] left behind. How could their being unproductive people in the hinterland be as good as their being productive people in the western borders, where they could be productive people engaged in agriculture or pastoralism and thereby extend their posterity?

Those who do travel could be given a few [units of currency] per household by the officials for travelling expenses, and every adult

⁶⁴ Literally, "strength of sinew."

⁶⁵ Literally, "within the seas."

⁶⁶ Fengyang Prefecture (*Fu*) in northern Anhwei Province, north of the Yangzi River.

⁶⁷ Yingzhou Prefecture (*Fu*) in northern Anhwei Province, north of the Yangzi River.

⁶⁸ Huaian Prefecture (*Fu*) in northern Jiangsu Province, north of the Yangzi River.

⁶⁹ Xuzhou Prefecture (*Fu*) in northern Jiangsu Province, north of the Yangzi River.

⁷⁰ Jiangnan (Kiangnan) is used as a conventional term for the entire south of the Yangzi River (particularly referring to southern Jiangsu).

⁷¹ A prefecture (*fu*) in northeastern Shanxi.

⁷² A prefecture (*fu*) in northern Shanxi.

male⁷³ [could be given] a few [units of currency] for travel expenses. Deliberate on this and then report.

What is more, the population of the bannermen garrisoned in each province is growing every day, and the grain transported by water from the south is insufficient [for them]. They buy great quantities of rice to eat and silk to wear. If they were ordered to return to their banners, the inner city of the capital could not accommodate them. If they continue to increase in population for a few more years, there will be no limit of expenses to the provinces [in which they are stationed]. Those who are garrisoned⁷⁴ are the means of protecting the Heavenly Court. The sons of the Eight Banners have been longtime recipients of [imperial] kindness, and loyalty and uprightness is ingrained in their dispositions. If there is anything beneficial to the Heavenly Court, they would not be of different minds [in supporting it] and will have no objections [to implementing it]. Each general could deliberate and consider how many [banner]men the large provinces would send [to the west] and how many [banner]men the medium and small-sized provinces would send [to the west]. To make manifest our abundant consideration, their traveling expenses should be assessed according to the means of the people [along their route]. Discuss this and then memorialize. Grand Ministers⁷⁵ could temporarily be appointed to manage their migrant [transferral] affairs, and [these posts] would be disbanded after seven years. Deliberate on this and then report.

It is to be hoped that first of all the dangerous⁷⁶ cliffs would be cut down, steep peaks be crossed over, gurgling springs be diverted [for useful irrigation purposes], and swamps be drained. After arriving in the west and dividing [Xinjiang] into two circuits,⁷⁷ north and south,⁷⁸ the officials could give [each migrant family] one Mongolian [-style] tent. [After] their oxen and plows are made ready and their seeds are completely [adequate], large households could first of all be

⁷³ *Ding*.

⁷⁴ The bannermen.

⁷⁵ *Dachen*; Hucker 5888.

⁷⁶ Precipitous.

⁷⁷ *Lu*; Hucker 3839.1. Here *lu* is used as a generic term for large territorial jurisdictions which include smaller jurisdictions such as *fu* (prefectures) and *xian* (districts).

⁷⁸ With the Tianshan Mountains as the boundary between the north and the south.

given a few *zhang*⁷⁹ [of land], medium-sized households a few *zhang*, and small households a few *zhang*. [These households] would not be allowed to occupy [land] of their own accord. The banner men would be dealt with in accordance with the same principle. Except for the desert lands, which would not need to be reported on, every year there would be [submitted] one memorial on the amount [of land] brought under cultivation; every ten years the total would be reported, and every twenty years a grand total would be compiled and audited.

Every year there would be a ten percent assessment of millet, flour, oats,⁸⁰ and vegetables [as an in-kind tax], and it would be stored in local granaries and distributed as foodstuff emoluments. The remittance of cash poll taxes in these places should temporarily be exempted; after twenty years, in addition to paying in-kind grain taxes as in the inland, there would also be a poll tax. After [instituting] the poll tax, a quota [to be submitted] to the Ministry of Revenue⁸¹ could be established. For now, [in these areas] the remission of millet and flour [as in-kind taxes] would not be converted into silver cash equivalents; after twenty years [these remissions] could also be converted into silver cash equivalents as in the inland.

There could be appointed one local Governor-general⁸² [with concurrent status as] Ministry of War⁸³ Minister⁸⁴ and Right Censor-in-Chief⁸⁵ for Dzungar and Muslim areas, one local Governor⁸⁶ [with concurrent status as] Ministry of War Vice Minister⁸⁷ and Right Vice Censor-in-chief⁸⁸ for Dzungar and Muslim areas, (perhaps [following] the precedent of Zhili and Sichuan, wherein the Governor-general is

⁷⁹ A unit of land measurement, equivalent to approximately ten square feet. The *zhang* is usually a unit of lineal measurement, but here it probably has a more general meaning roughly equivalent to "lot" or "plot."

⁸⁰ Reading *ke* as *qingke*; Giles 6092.

⁸¹ Here reading *bu* as *hubu*; Hucker 2789.2.

⁸² *Zongdu*; Hucker 7158.2.

⁸³ *Bingbu*; Hucker 4691.3.

⁸⁴ *Shangshu*; Hucker 5042.3.

⁸⁵ (You) *Duyushi*; Hucker 7335. During the Qing, a Governor-general was automatically a nominal concurrent Censor-in-chief and sometimes also concurrent Minister of War. See Hucker 7158.2.

⁸⁶ *Xunfu*; Hucker 2731.

⁸⁷ *Shilang*; Hucker 5278.3.

⁸⁸ (You) *Fuduyushi*; Hucker 2108. During the Qing, a Governor had nominal concurrent status as Vice Minister of War and Vice Censor-in-chief. See Hucker 2731.

concurrently the Governor and no Governor is appointed, would also be acceptable), one Provincial Administration Commissioner,⁸⁹ one Surveillance Commissioner,⁹⁰ three Circuit Intendants,⁹¹ one Provincial Military Commander,⁹² three Regional Commanders,⁹³ eleven Prefects,⁹⁴ three Department Magistrates⁹⁵ of Directly Attached⁹⁶ Departments,⁹⁷ two Department Magistrates, and forty District Magistrates.⁹⁸

Of Prefectures⁹⁹ and Departments¹⁰⁰ there would be fourteen: Yidong Prefecture and Yixi Prefecture (current Yidong and Yixi Circuits), Kuzhou Prefecture (current Kurkara-usu¹⁰¹), Dihua Prefecture (current Urumchi¹⁰²), Zhenxi Prefecture (current Barkhul¹⁰³), Guazhou Prefecture (current Hami¹⁰⁴), Tazhou Directly Attached Department (current Tarbagatai¹⁰⁵)--the above [Prefectures and Directly Attached Department] would be the Northern Circuit.¹⁰⁶ Pizhou Prefecture (current Phucamni¹⁰⁷), Shazhou Prefecture (current Kharashira¹⁰⁸ and Kurcha¹⁰⁹ and Shahyar¹¹⁰), Suzhou Prefecture (current Aksu¹¹¹ and Sairam-bâzâr¹¹²), Qiangzhou Prefecture (current Yarkand¹¹³), Hezhou

⁸⁹ *Buzhengshi*; Hucker 4770.

⁹⁰ *Anchashi*; Hucker 12.3.

⁹¹ *Fenxundao*; Hucker 1941.

⁹² *Tidu*; Hucker 6482.

⁹³ *Zongbing*; Hucker 7146.

⁹⁴ *Zhifu*; Hucker 983.

⁹⁵ *Zhizhou*; Hucker 965.3.

⁹⁶ *Zhili*; Hucker 1024.1.

⁹⁷ *Zhou*; Hucker 1332.6.

⁹⁸ *Zhixian*; Hucker 993.

⁹⁹ *Fu*; Hucker 2034.6.

¹⁰⁰ *Zhou*; Hucker 1332.6.

¹⁰¹ *Kuerkelawusi*.

¹⁰² *Wulumuqi*.

¹⁰³ *Baerkule*.

¹⁰⁴ *Hami*.

¹⁰⁵ *Taerbaketai*.

¹⁰⁶ As Gong has outlined it, the Northern Circuit would include the territory in Xinjiang north of the Tianshan Mountains.

¹⁰⁷ *Pizhan*. Also known as Pichan.

¹⁰⁸ *Halashala*; location undetermined.

¹⁰⁹ *Kuju*.

¹¹⁰ *Shayaer*.

¹¹¹ *Akesu*.

¹¹² *Sailamu*.

¹¹³ *Ye'erqiang*.

Prefecture (current Khotan¹¹⁴), Tufan Directly Attached Department (current Och¹¹⁵), and Zhuanfang Directly Attached Department (current Kashgar¹¹⁶)--the above [Prefectures and Directly Attached Departments] would be the Southern Circuit.¹¹⁷ In Yidong Prefecture four Districts would be set up, with the Prefectural City as Yidong District, Ukharligh¹¹⁸ as Suiding District, Boro-tala¹¹⁹ as Bo District, and Ghanchikhan¹²⁰ as Zhu District. The boundaries [of these Districts] could be considered and discussed. In Yixi Prefecture four Districts would be set up, with the Prefectural City as Yixi District, Kürtü¹²¹ as Tu District, Guerbansali¹²² as Jie District, and Khongghur-olong¹²³ as E District. The boundaries [of these Districts] could be considered and discussed. Three Districts would be set up in Kuzhou Prefecture, with the Prefectural [city] as Ku District, Wuliyasutu¹²⁴ as Jiuying District, and Donga-baligh¹²⁵ as Fengjun District. The boundaries [of these Districts] could be considered and discussed. In Guazhou Prefecture four Districts would be set up, with the Prefectural city as Gua District, Sumkagho¹²⁶ as Jiubao District, Sai-bashe¹²⁷ Darya¹²⁸ as Hu¹²⁹ District, and Taranchi¹³⁰ as Tucheng District. The

114 *Hetian*.

115 *Wushe*.

116 *Keshege'er*.

117 The Southern Circuit would thus cover the area in Xinjiang south of the Tianshan Mountains. Much of this area is taken up by the virtually uninhabitable Tarim Basin.

118 *Wuhaerlike*; location undetermined.

119 *Bolotala*; location undetermined.

120 *Ganzhuhan*; location undetermined.

121 *Kuertu*; location undetermined--is a river.

122 Location undetermined. I have been unable to find a Turkish or Mongol pronunciation of this place name.

123 *Hongguoerelong*; location undetermined.

124 *Wuliyasutu*; location undetermined. This is obviously *not* the Uliasutai of Mongolia, the residence of the Manchu *amban*, or supervising governor, in Outer Mongolia.

125 *Jinghe*.

126 *Sumuhalagai*.

127 Location undetermined. I suspect that this is a Persian place name rather than a Turkish or Mongolian one, but I have been unable to confirm this suspicion.

128 *Daliya*. This is, of course, the Persian word *darya*, which can mean lake, river, or body of water.

129 *Hu* in Chinese means "lake."

130 *Dalenaqin*.

boundaries [of these Districts] could be considered and discussed. In Tazhou [Directly Attached Department] two districts would be set up, with the Department [city] as Ta District and Yarkhoto¹³¹ as Zhaofeng District. The two Prefectures of Zhenxi and Dihua have [governmental] institutions already established, and there is no need to discuss changing them. In the Southern Circuit, six districts would be set up in Pizhou Prefecture, with the Prefectural City as Pi District, Nakha¹³² as Dongpi District, Hongcheng¹³³ as Hong District, Likhun¹³⁴ as Liuzhong District, Kara-khoja¹³⁵ as Gaochang District, and Turfan as Anle District. The boundaries [of these Districts] could be considered and discussed. In Shazhou Prefecture one Department and four Districts would be set up, with the Prefectural [City] as Sha District, Kucha¹³⁶ as Guici District, Shorchugh¹³⁷ as Jiucheng District, Tokhonai¹³⁸ as Nai District, and Shahyar¹³⁹ as Shacheng District.¹⁴⁰ In Suzhou Prefecture one Department and five Districts would be set up, with the Prefectural [Capital] as Su District, Sairam¹⁴¹ as Pilo Department, Porman¹⁴² as Pa District, Toghsun¹⁴³ as Sicun District, Baicheng as Bai District, and Kürustam¹⁴⁴ as Xiaocheng District. The boundaries [of these Districts] could be considered and discussed. In Qiangzhou Prefecture five Districts would be set up, with the Prefectural [city] as Qiang District, Barchuk¹⁴⁵ as Xinqian District, Kholma¹⁴⁶ as Maping District, Kharaguji¹⁴⁷ as Zhe District, and Yularik¹⁴⁸ as Xiye District. The boundaries [of these Districts] could be

¹³¹ *Ya'er*.

¹³² *Nahu*; location undetermined.

¹³³ Location undetermined.

¹³⁴ *Lukejiake*.

¹³⁵ *Halahezhuo*; also known as Qoco.

¹³⁶ *Kuju*.

¹³⁷ *Shuoerchuke*.

¹³⁸ *Tohenai*.

¹³⁹ *Shaya'er*.

¹⁴⁰ The text here is obviously defective; five Districts are mentioned, but no Department is discussed.

¹⁴¹ *Sailamu*; location undetermined. Not a Mongol place name.

¹⁴² *Pa'erman*; location undetermined. Not a Mongol Place name.

¹⁴³ *Tokesan*; location undetermined. Not a Mongol place name.

¹⁴⁴ *Kushetamu*; location undetermined.

¹⁴⁵ *Baerchuke*.

¹⁴⁶ *Hulama*; location undetermined.

¹⁴⁷ *Halaguzheshe*; location undetermined.

¹⁴⁸ *Yeleliyake*.

considered and discussed. In Hezhou Prefecture four Districts would be set up, with the Prefectural [City] as Qiu District, Pisha¹⁴⁹ as Lin District, Yurungkash¹⁵⁰ as Lang District, and Borchu¹⁵¹ as Gan District. The boundaries [of these Districts] could be considered and discussed. In Tufan [Directly Attached] Department two Districts would be set up, with the Department [seat or city] as Mingding District and Sengim¹⁵² as Sen District. In Zhuanfang [Directly Attached] Department three Districts would be set up, with the Department [seat or city] as Zhuanfang District, Sairam¹⁵³ as Saimen District, and Yangi-his-sar¹⁵⁴ as Yinai District. The boundaries [of these Districts] could be considered and discussed.

How many military officials there should be below [the rank of] Regional Vice Commander¹⁵⁵ and civil officials below [the rank of] Vice Prefect¹⁵⁶ could be discussed separately. The Governor-general would be stationed at Yidong Prefecture, the Governor would be stationed at Dihua Prefecture, and the Provincial Military Commander would be stationed at Dihua Prefecture. One Surveillance Commissioner for the northern General Surveillance and Military Defense Circuit¹⁵⁷ of Anxi¹⁵⁸ and one Regional Commander¹⁵⁹ for the northern Defense Command¹⁶⁰ of Anxi would be stationed together at Zhenxi Prefecture; one Surveillance Commissioner for the General Surveillance and Military Defense Circuit north of the Tianshan [Mountains] would be stationed at Yidong Prefecture; one Regional Commander for the northern Defense Command north of the Tianshan [Mountains] would be stationed at Tazhou [Directly Attached] Prefecture; one Surveillance Commissioner for the southern General Surveillance and Military

¹⁴⁹ *Pisheya*.

¹⁵⁰ *Yulonghashe*. Name of a river.

¹⁵¹ *Boloqi*; location undetermined.

¹⁵² *Sennimu*.

¹⁵³ *Saiermen*; location undetermined.

¹⁵⁴ *Yinggesaer*.

¹⁵⁵ *Fujiang*; Hucker 2041.3.

¹⁵⁶ *Tongzhi*; Hucker 7471.2.

¹⁵⁷ *Fenxun Bingbeidao*; in addition to its basic meaning as a jurisdictional circuit, this is also a quasi-official reference to a Surveillance Vice Commissioner. See Hucker 1940.

¹⁵⁸ In western Gansu, approximately one hundred miles northeast of Dunhuang.

¹⁵⁹ *Zongbingguan*; Hucker 7146.

¹⁶⁰ *Zhen*; Hucker 7146.

Defense Circuit of the Tianshan [Mountains] would be stationed at Qiangzhou Prefecture; and one Regional Commander for the southern Defense Command of the Tianshan [Mountains] would be stationed in Tufan [Directly Attached] Department (not Anle District of Pizhou [Prefecture]). The Governor-general and Governor must both be stationed in the Northern Circuit; the north can control the south, [but] the south cannot control the north. Of old, before the Muslim tribes were under the authority of the Celestial Court,¹⁶¹ there was not one of them who did not willingly serve as frontier guards for the Dzungar barbarians. A Supervisor¹⁶² of Copper Selection and Purchase Affairs could be appointed (Imperial Household Department¹⁶³ personnel could be employed [for this purpose]); [these supervisors] would be transferred every three years and would be stationed in Tufan [Directly Attached] Department.

At Jiayuguan of Gansu Province a Supervisor could be appointed who would have exclusive charge of the taxation of trade from the inland to the Dzungars and Muslims. With the exception of rice, salt, tea, rhubarbs, and textiles,¹⁶⁴ none of the remarkable and decadent products of China would be permitted to leave the [Jiayu]guan, so that their [i.e., the Dzungars' and the Muslims'] customs might be improved [and sustained]; and except for leather goods and watermelons, [Dzungar or Muslim products] would not be permitted to enter into the [Jiayu]guan, so that their collective [wealth] might be enriched [and protected]. Copper mining and customs affairs are both means by which official emoluments are maintained and military rations are given.

The two princes of Hami and Pizhan could both be granted titles as Assistant Officials for Prefectural Affairs,¹⁶⁵ and at the sacrificial rites¹⁶⁶ on the first and fifteenth days [of the Chinese lunar calendar], when the time comes for falling into line [according to rank] at the solemn ceremonies,¹⁶⁷ [their positions] would be below the Circuit¹⁶⁸ and Prefectural [officials but] above the Vice Magistrates.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶¹ The Chinese imperial court.

¹⁶² *Jiandu*; Hucker 873.

¹⁶³ *Neiwufu*; Hucker 4291.

¹⁶⁴ *Buchou*; literally "[non-silk] cloth."

¹⁶⁵ *Xieban Fushiguan*.

¹⁶⁶ Animal sacrifices were probably not actually performed at these rites.

¹⁶⁷ *Dali*.

¹⁶⁸ *Dao*; Hucker 6306.8.

¹⁶⁹ *Tongzhi*; Hucker 7471.3.

Each of the Muslim cities could select a person from among their *begs*¹⁷⁰ and grant them the title of Assistant for District Affairs,¹⁷¹ and at the sacrificial rites on the first and fifteenth days [of the Chinese lunar calendar], when the time comes for falling into line [according to rank] at the solemn ceremonies, [their positions] would be below the District Magistrates [but] above the Assistant District [Magistrates].¹⁷²

The Anxi Southern Circuit is the furthestmost extent of the territory of Gansu Province, and the Anxi Northern Circuit is the beginning of the territory of the Dzungar and Muslim provinces.¹⁷³ [At the borders of these areas] boundary stones could be erected. The people who have recently moved [into the Western regions] as well as the bannermen and the Muslims are illiterate; it should be requested that after thirty years schools be established, Government Students¹⁷⁴ be provided for, and Provincial Examinations¹⁷⁵ be administered; [these matters] need not be discussed at present. Zhenxi [Prefecture] and Dihua [Prefecture] are already established; for the time being, [students] can, as usual, be turned over to the Governor for their examinations.¹⁷⁶

Local officials could make field investigations in the regions of the Gobi [Desert] where there is no water or foliage, and if there are areas where gold nuggets can be extracted, they could formulate rules and regulations [for gold extraction] and submit them [to the Court for consideration].

Official posts¹⁷⁷ in the Northern Circuit and near the Gobi could be designated as frontier posts, somewhat analogous to the

¹⁷⁰ *Boke*; Arabic and Persian *bey*. *Beg* was a title among Turkish peoples traditionally given to rulers of small tribal groups, to members of ruling families, and to important officials. Under the Ottoman Empire a *bey* was the governor of a province. The term is a cognate with the Manchu *beile* or ruling prince.

¹⁷¹ *Xieban Xianshi*.

¹⁷² *Chengxian*; Hucker 457.

¹⁷³ *Sheng*; not (Han) Chinese-style provinces. Here *sheng* is used in its more general, generic sense of a large unit of territorial jurisdiction under the central government.

¹⁷⁴ *Shengyuan*; Hucker 5193.

¹⁷⁵ *Xiangshi*; Hucker 2352.

¹⁷⁶ The point here is that no Education Official (*Xueguan*; Hucker 2696.1) was available, so the Governor would be in charge of the examinations.

¹⁷⁷ *Fengsha bianque*; lit., "positions at the border, where there is wind and sand."

"miasmic posts"¹⁷⁸ of the inland, and [officials appointed to these posts] would be quickly and regularly promoted and transferred [to other areas].

In the wastelands near gravel and sand,¹⁷⁹ shrines to the god of the wind and the god of the springs could be erected in many places. During the festivals sacrifices could be offered in veneration of God,¹⁸⁰ so that the earth will give forth her springs, the winds will stop in the heavens, and [the region] will be suitable for [growing] vegetables and grains. Written prayers could be distributed and posted in these areas. How many places for shrines for great rivers¹⁸¹ there should be could be considered and discussed; how many places for shrines for great mountains¹⁸² could [also] be considered and discussed.

All persons passing through the Gobi on official business could carry spring water [with them]; the wondrous Western[-style]¹⁸³ containers, which are small [yet] have large capacities and are convenient for travel,¹⁸⁴ should be manufactured and distributed [for this purpose]. It would also be useful to distribute and erect tall and wide objects to block the wind; it should be ordered that those [of such objects] which can be used in fields be [taken as] models for [further] manufacture.

Now after this is done, the *tuntian* can be completely withdrawn. In reality the *tuntian* [function more as] encampments than as agricultural colonies. The Three Dynasties¹⁸⁵ are remote in the past; it is now impossible to long for the uniting of soldier and peasant or long for private labor to maintain public fields. The current 280,000 or so *mou* of *tuntian* land should be given to the present 100,000 or so

¹⁷⁸ In the Chinese officialdom, areas with extremely hot and humid climates were widely regarded as unhealthy.

¹⁷⁹ In dry (and possibly windy) places. This is perhaps a reference to the dry, unfertile areas which exist alongside fertile, moist areas.

¹⁸⁰ *Shangdi*. In this context *shangdi* is probably an ineffable Heaven rather than a personal God.

¹⁸¹ Mongolian *ghol*.

¹⁸² Mongolian *daba'a*.

¹⁸³ *Xiyang*.

¹⁸⁴ Gong here is apparently describing some sort of bladder or canteen for carrying water. I have been unable to determine with any precision what type of container this is.

¹⁸⁵ The three ancient Chinese dynasties Xia (2205-1782 B.C.), Shang (ca. 1800-1400 B.C.), and Zhou (ca. 1122-256 B.C.).

tuntian soldiers as permanent assets.¹⁸⁶ Public lands would become private lands, the sojourners¹⁸⁷ would become registered households,¹⁸⁸ and the frontier guards would become native residents.

It would not be necessary to release and repatriate the criminals exiled to this region,¹⁸⁹ they could also be given a measured amount of inferior land to plow, sow, and pay taxes on along with everyone else. Once the encampments of the Green Standard banners have been withdrawn, the frontier guardsmen of the Eight Banners should also be withdrawn. Previously, the Chinese bannermen¹⁹⁰ stationed [in the Western regions] set up separate registries [for themselves] so that they might be distinguished from [Chinese] commoner households and Muslim households. Since [these Chinese] are designated as bannermen households and are [thus] the same as commoners who have land registers, [these Chinese banner units] can be withdrawn without worry about their having no place to which to return. It should be requested that the Generals,¹⁹¹ Vice Commanders-in-chief,¹⁹² Grand Minister Superintendent,¹⁹³ Company¹⁹⁴ leaders, clerks¹⁹⁵ of the Seals Office,¹⁹⁶ and other [such positions] all be abolished.

Those stationed soldiers who are Manchus, Solon,¹⁹⁷ Shibe,¹⁹⁸ and Mongols who are guardsmen in the northern Anxi Circuit could be

¹⁸⁶ *Shiye*; could perhaps be rendered as "hereditary enterprises."

¹⁸⁷ *Keding*, literally "guest stalwarts," a reference to the *tuntian* soldiers whose native places were elsewhere in China.

¹⁸⁸ *Bianhu*, a term for families entered in the household registers of the local government.

¹⁸⁹ It was common during the Qing for criminals to be exiled to Xinjiang. For an interesting study of this practice, see Joanna Waley-Cohen, "Banishment to Xinjiang [Sinkiang] in Mid-Qing [Ch'ing] China, 1758-1820," *Late Imperial China* v. 10 no. 2 (Dec. 1989), pp. 44 - 71.

¹⁹⁰ In the fully developed banner system there were eight Manchu banners and also eight Chinese banners and eight Mongolian banners.

¹⁹¹ *Jiangjun*; Hucker 694.

¹⁹² *Fudutong*; Hucker 2107.

¹⁹³ *Banshi Dachen*; Hucker 4414.

¹⁹⁴ *Dui*; Hucker 7390.

¹⁹⁵ *Zhangjing*; Hucker 107 and 7982.

¹⁹⁶ *Yinfang*; Hucker 7982.

¹⁹⁷ *Solon*, a Tungusic mountain-dwelling people whose ancestral home was originally in Heilongjiang. Many Solon troops assisted the Manchus in their conquest of China. They share some ethnic affinities with the Hulun-buir Mongols of western Manchuria. Their language is similar to that of the Dakhur Mongols. They were excellent hunters and fishers. The Qing stationed Solon troops in Xin-

designated as banner households of the northern An-hsi Circuit; those in the northern Tianshan Northern Circuit could be designated as northern Tianshan Circuit banner households, and those in the southern Circuit could be designated as southern Circuit banner households. The soldiers led by the Ili General are the most numerous, and the territories of Yidong and Yixi are also the largest; dispatching them into battle formation [in times of war] and dispersing them on the plains [in times of peace] should proceed smoothly, and there would be no worry about lack of provisions. They, along with the bannermen [originally] stationed in the hinterland who have recently been transferred [to Xinjiang], should all be turned over to the jurisdiction of the local [Xinjiang] officials. When they commit offenses,¹⁹⁹ however, they must not be caned in punishment by [the orders of] any official below [the rank of] District Magistrate,²⁰⁰ and when taxes are remitted, they should be given a considered reduction of twenty percent below the [tax] rates paid by the commoner²⁰¹ households and the Muslim households, in order to reward them for the services they and their preceding generations have performed. Having undertaken these [measures], there will [still] be some concern about their isolation.²⁰² It should be requested that a Grand Minister Superintendent be appointed and stationed in the proximity of the Yarkand and Khotan Departments of the extreme [southern] marches of the Southern Circuit. [This Superintendent would] take command of nine hundred Manchu soldiers,

jiang during the mid eighteenth century. The Solon often consider themselves a people ethnically separate from both the Mongols and the Manchus.

¹⁹⁸ *Xibo*. The Shibe are a Tungusic-speaking nationality said to have descended from the ancient Xianbei. Prior to the Manchu conquest they lived in the Jilin and Hulun-buir areas of Manchuria. They were hunters and fishers. Today there are pockets of Shibe population in Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang and important pockets in Xinjiang. They were conquered by the Manchus in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and were incorporated into the Manchu and Mongolian Eight Banner system. They were sent to garrisons in Xinjiang, Yunnan, and other remote areas of the Qing empire. In 1764 over one thousand Shibe soldiers and their families were sent to Xinjiang, and they have remained there to this day. Today the Shibe of Xinjiang represent the only sizeable Manchu-speaking ethnic community left in the modern world. They are ethnically somewhat different from most Mongols and Manchus.

¹⁹⁹ Literally, "when there is trouble."

²⁰⁰ This because corporal punishment meted out by lowly officials would be beneath the dignity of the bannermen.

²⁰¹ That is, Chinese commoner households.

²⁰² The isolation of these newly relocated bannermen.

seven hundred Mongol and Solon [soldiers], forty Shibe soldiers, and six hundred Green Standard soldiers, for a total of two thousand two hundred forty [soldiers],²⁰³ in order to secure control over the countries of the Bürüt,²⁰⁴ Kazak,²⁰⁵ Namukhan,²⁰⁶ and Aiwuhan²⁰⁷ under [the jurisdiction of] the Court of Colonial Affairs.²⁰⁸ For the supervision of the affairs of the tribute from each of the countries [mentioned above], a seal for a Superintending Grand Minister of the Western Borderlands²⁰⁹ could be cast, and [the official empowered by this seal] would have one honorific title²¹⁰ and [be assigned] the rank of 2A.²¹¹ He would be controlled by the Governor General for Dzungar and Muslim areas, and he, the Regional Commanders, and the Governor would control each other.²¹²

In order to make manifest the awesomeness and dignity [of their offices, the civil personnel the rank of] Provincial Administration Commissioner²¹³ and below would prepare [official] written announcements, and [military personnel the rank of] Regional Commander²¹⁴ and below would be seen wearing swords.²¹⁵ Of the garrison troops currently being considered for withdrawal, the best-trained could be

²⁰³ This number is not the total of the figures in the text.

²⁰⁴ *Bulute*; a Turkic tribe.

²⁰⁵ *Hasake*.

²⁰⁶ *Namuqian*, probably a Turkic tribe.

²⁰⁷ Unidentified.

²⁰⁸ *Fanbu*; presumably the Li-fan-yuan.

²⁰⁹ *Zongtong Xibian banshi dachen*.

²¹⁰ *Chiwen*. Perhaps this is an imperial decree rather than a title, but this would make less sense in the context.

²¹¹ *Zheng erpin*. The *jiupin* or "Nine Ranks" system utilized nine categories into which all official posts were graded for prestige, compensation, etc., with 1 as the highest and 9 as the lowest. Ranks were further subdivided into two classes, first class (*zheng*) and second class (*cong*), and in English translations of official ranks, "A" represents *zheng* and "B" represents *cong*. Thus, the rank that Gong suggests for the superintending Grand Minister of the Western Borderlands is a very high one.

²¹² The idea here is that there would be a sort of system of checks and balances among these offices.

²¹³ *Buzhengshi*; Hucker 4770.

²¹⁴ *Zongbingguan*; Hucker 7146.

²¹⁵ The idea here is that both *wen* [civil methods] and *wu* [martial or military methods] would be used to inspire obedience and respect in the people. The written announcements were emblems of the civil administration, and the swords worn openly by military personnel were to be seen as the emblems and means of the military establishment for keeping the peace.

specially selected out and retained. Their military provisions, weaponry, and monthly pay should be [allocated] in accordance with the precedents of Jiangning and Xingzhou in the interior. There would be a review once a year, a review by a Governor-general every three years, and every ten years there would be a request that a high-ranking and prestigious Grand Minister²¹⁶ be assigned to come west for a grand review. The natives of Burut and Kazak would all serve as attendants because theirs is the region of the great borders between the China of our Celestial Court and the foreign [countries].

The expenditures for [implementing] the above proposals will, for the present time, be extremely large, the construction [projects] will be extremely intricate and numerous, and the changes and alterations will be extremely great. The effects [of implementing these proposals] will [be seen only after] twenty years, [but after that] the benefits will be ten thousand-fold. Now twenty years is not something for which the Court would certainly be unwilling to wait, nor is it something for which the officials and subjects within the Four Seas who long for peaceful and orderly government cannot wait. This being so, it is then [clear] that an increasingly prosperous national destiny, an increasingly secure national foundation, increasingly substantial customs for the livelihood of the people, and increasingly [conscientious] attention to official affairs can only be achieved through the principle of [present] losses for [future] gains and a policy [that sanctions present] expenditures for [future] receipts. There is no second way [to achieve these ends]. [Proposals] which would not go along with the mind of Heaven, not carry out our ancestral heritage, and not boost the strength for great undertakings in generally benefiting the people of the Four Seas (east, west, north, and south) are not included in this proposal.

(I have planned this proposal over the course of two years, [but] I fear that it still has minor oversights and minor imperfections. I have had it printed²¹⁷ in order to elicit comments from the superiors and seniors of our day. I should be grateful if the good and bad points [of this proposal] were pointed out sentence by sentence.)

²¹⁶ *Dachen*; Hucker 5888.

²¹⁷ Literally, "carved [on wooden printing blocks]."