

# *The Locality as Microcosm of the Nation?*

## **Native Place Networks and Early Urban Nationalism in China**

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Interplay between two constructions of territorial identity shaped the development of Chinese urban nationalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One construction involved native place or local-origin ties, ties that formed among people from the same native place who resided in a city away from their home. The second construction was based on the notion of belonging to a larger Chinese corporate body, defined through reference to common cultural beliefs and practices, through common Han ethnicity, or through the developing idea of a Chinese nation-state. This article traces the interrelation between the two in sojourning communities in Shanghai in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Because both the discourse of native place identity and the discourse of nationalism maintained that native place identity was a subset or component of a larger "Chineseness" (variously defined), native place identity will here be considered "subethnic."<sup>1</sup> To say this is not to deny the importance of "ethnic" differences between native place groups, but rather to emphasize the shared Chineseness of sojourners in a semicolonial city, where common cultural practices and common subjection to foreign institutions constructed a common Chineseness, even as native place differences divided Chinese into multiple communities.

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Subethnic native place networks (institutionalized in native place associations *huiguan* and *tongxianghui*) played a role in shaping popular nationalist mobilization in late Qing and early Republican Shanghai. Several studies have challenged our assumptions about the "particularism" of native place loyalties and the necessary contradiction between such ties and Chinese nationalism (e.g., Fincher, 1968; Schoppa, 1977; Duara, 1995). These studies variously indicate ways in which provincial loyalties, articulated in the institutions of provincial assemblies, provided a basis for developing national loyalties (Fincher), demonstrate the coexistence of provincial and national loyalties, their independence, and their periodic coalescence (Schoppa), or break with the idea of a unitary nationalism by illustrating how the nation was imagined differently by centralizers and provincial federalists (Duara). This article builds upon these insights through a study of the politicization of Shanghai native place associations. The role of these associations and of native place ties in nationalist movements is explored to address two underdeveloped areas in our understanding of the unfolding of Chinese popular nationalism: (1) nationalist mobilization on the basis of preexisting institutions within Chinese society, and (2) the position of local identities in the developing idea of the Chinese nation.

Benedict Anderson's term *imagined communities* has been broadly adopted because it well expresses the socially constructed nature of national communities and highlights how national entities and national identities become imaginable (Anderson, 1991). Anderson provides a useful focus on the means by which national community is constructed; however, his emphasis on the appearance of print capitalism obscures the contribution to developing nationalism of older ideas of community. Although recent theoretical literature on nationalism has suggested that nationalist movements could mobilize "certain variants of feelings of collective belonging which already existed" (Hobsbawm, 1990: 46), consideration of the conscious integration of preexisting ties (preexisting imagined communities) into a larger national imagined community has been minimal.

The distinctiveness of sojourner native place identity as an intermediate group identity, which might be integrated into a construction of broader national identity, is threefold. First, in contrast to family, clan, or village, in which feelings of common identity could be based

on a familiar and known community of people, sojourners' native place communities (which could involve hundreds of thousands of people in a large city like Shanghai) exceeded the boundaries of finite and familiar groups of people, and were based on imaginary as well as institutionalized reconstructions of the native place in the city of sojourning residence (Goodman, 1990). Second, in contrast to newer types of urban associations (merchant, student, worker associations), native place identity incorporated feelings for territory, ancestors, local culture, and language, all of which have played important roles in the formation of modern nationalisms. Third, sojourner identity, in contrast to the provincial identity found in the native place itself (with which it is often conflated), necessarily involved a departure from the native place and (in the cosmopolitan city of Shanghai) an awareness of the people and the polity beyond the locality.

Precisely because they were vulnerable to being labeled as self-interested, leaders of nineteenth-century sojourner organizations in Shanghai took care to legitimize their associations through identification with the larger Chinese polity. The ideological connection between native place identity and Chinese identity was grounded in traditional ideas of concentric circles of cultural and territorial identity. A statement of the origin of the Shanghai Guang-Zhao Huiguan (Guangzhou and Zhaoqing prefectures, Guangdong) provides this rationale for the establishment of native place associations:

China is made up of prefectures and counties and these are made up of native villages, [and the people of each] make a concerted effort to cooperate, providing mutual help and protection. This gives solidarity to village, prefecture and province and orders the country. . . . Thus people from the same village, county and prefecture gather together in other areas, making them like their own native place. This is the reason for the establishment of huiguan [Shanghai Guang-Zhao Huiguan].

In such accounts, love for the native place appears virtuous because it helps constitute and strengthen the larger political polity of China. Such statements, which structured themselves according to the concentric logic of the Confucian text *The Great Learning* (*Daxue*), also served strategic purposes, defusing threats from both the state and from Shanghai locals who would view an outsiders' huiguan with suspicion. Given the hostility of the Qing state toward private asso-

ciations, this statement, like others of its type, invoked quasi-Confucian values as a means of providing legitimacy by linking native place solidarity to the order of the polity. Such statements stressed a common orthodoxy that could be shared by people from different places, helping to dispel perceptions that sojourners were utterly foreign. In this way, native place associations brought with them into the city a language of common Chinese identity, even as they served as powerful markers of cultural difference among different Chinese groups.

The community leaders who articulated ideological connections between the native place and the larger political polity would over time abandon their invocation of Confucian values and take on the rhetoric of modern Chinese nationalism, shifting their stress on maintaining order to an emphasis on anti-imperialism and republican reform. In the process, their use of native place sentiment and organizations would both reflect and help define the urban development of Chinese nationalism. Enduring native place attachments in the arena of developing nationalism created particular tensions, tensions which could be muted at moments of revolutionary enthusiasm but which emerged to thwart efforts to construct a centralized state.

#### *ANTIFOREIGN AND NATIONALIST MOBILIZATION*

Tension between native place associations and Westerners began in treaty port Shanghai as a result of conflicts over land. Nineteenth-century native place associations—*huiguan* and *gongsuo*—were among the largest Chinese corporate landholders in the city, and (because of their religious importance to a broad sojourning community) could easily mobilize sectors of the Chinese population to defend their interests. By the end of the century, such conflicts acquired new meaning as symbols of a Chinese national struggle against imperialist brutality. As urban public opinion increasingly embraced the values of nationalism, sojourners constructed a powerful image of the native place as a microcosm of the nation. This in turn provided a rationale for organization by native place for nationalist goals.

Foreign authorities in semicolonial Shanghai had to contend with native place associations from the moment they established settle-

ments in the city. Chinese authorities insisted that huiguan be protected to preserve the integrity of the coffin repositories and burial grounds maintained by these institutions. As foreign settlements developed, huiguan thus stood in the way.

Native place associations were at the core of the first popular conflicts between Chinese and foreigners in post-Taiping Shanghai, the Ningbo cemetery riots. The riots are lauded in Chinese historiography as the first buddings of popular nationalism; recent revisionist Western historiography questions their nationalism and portrays them instead as arising from the deep concern for funerary ritual in Chinese culture.<sup>2</sup>

Whether or not the riots were informed by a developing sense of Chinese national sovereignty, it is significant that native place associations played a crucial role in the first antiforeign disturbances. Although concern for coffins was important in the riots, such sentiment could not in itself produce a riot. The structure of a well-organized native place community provided the basis for mobilizing popular antiforeign protest. The presence of a managerial circle of huiguan leaders, additionally, provided a mechanism for successful negotiations with foreign authorities in defense of specific Chinese interests. Whatever their actual content, the riots were quickly represented in the Chinese press as models of popular resistance to foreign imperialism. As such they provide a window onto developing Chinese understandings of nationalism.

The considerable holdings of the Siming Gongsuo (Ningbo huiguan) in the French Concession became an irritant to the French. Toward the end of 1873, the French authorities notified the Gongsuo of plans for two new roads, intersecting in one of the Gongsuo cemeteries. The Gongsuo directors protested the proposal because the property was densely packed with coffins (*North China Herald*, May 9, 1874). As negotiations proceeded between French authorities and Gongsuo leaders, several thousand members of the sojourning Ningbo community met and pressured the Daotai to negotiate with the French on the Gongsuo's behalf (*Shenbao*, Apr. 21, 27, 29, May 2, 1874).

The French temporarily suspended road work and agreed to meet with the Gongsuo directors on May 4, 1874. While this meeting was pending, a chance occurrence sparked a riot. On May 3, a crowd of Ningbo people, "packed together like fish roe," stood discussing the situation outside the Gongsuo. A woman, identified by the crowds as

a Guangdong prostitute, passed by in a cart. When Ningbo rowdies harassed her, accusing her of serving French clients, she called out for help. The police who came to her aid found themselves fighting a crowd of several hundred (Shenbao, May 4, 1874; North China Herald, May 9, 1874).

The police quickly called for reinforcements. Rioting broke out when police shot and killed a Chinese man. Forty foreign homes and three Chinese buildings were destroyed. Other targets were the French Municipal Compound and the East Gate Police station. Troops mustered to suppress the riot fired into the crowd. When calm was restored, seven Chinese people lay dead and twenty more were badly wounded (Shenbao, May 4, 8, 1874; North China Herald, May 9, 1874). The next day, despite the objections of the foreign consuls, Consul General Godeaux proclaimed that in deference to the Gongsuo directors and to Chinese authorities, Gongsuo buildings and graves were to be preserved in perpetuity (North China Herald, May 9, 1874).

More than twenty years later the French precipitated a second riot. This time they focused on the opportune issue of hygiene which provided an excuse for the elimination of the Gongsuo coffin repositories. In 1897 the foreign settlements forbade coffin storage within their boundaries (Shanghai Municipal Council, 1897: 66; Archives, 1897: 109). At this time the French were negotiating for extension of their settlement. When the Daotai refused their request in spring 1898, the French defiantly notified Siming Gongsuo directors of plans to expropriate Gongsuo cemetery land for various construction projects (Great Britain Public Record Office, 1898: 228.1293).

On July 16, after the French served final notice, French sailors began to demolish the cemetery wall. Gongsuo leaders responded by calling on Ningbo merchants to cease trade and meet the next morning (Shenbao, July 16-18, 1898). When night fell, crowds filled the streets smashing lamps and accosting foreigners. In suppressing this riot, French troops shot and killed between fifteen and twenty-five Chinese people, and seriously wounded another forty (Great Britain Public Record Office, 1898: 228.1293).

The next day, French and British authorities observed that the Ningbo community (which, in the estimate of the British consul, formed half of the French Concession residents) was on strike. Virtu-

ally all Ningbo people complied, from bankers to manual workers. Sectors of the Ningbo community began to boycott French goods (Great Britain Public Record Office, 1898: 228.1293; Shanghai bowuguan, 1980: 430; Jones, 1974: 87).

The riot and four-day boycott provoked months of negotiation between French and Chinese authorities, ending with the discovery of a document which recorded the settlement of the 1874 troubles and provided for permanent protection of the cemetery (Inspectorate General, 1892-1901: 469-470). While the Gongsuo celebrated its victory, the final settlement of the 1898 incident was not achieved until summer 1899, when Beijing authorities granted the French the settlement extension they sought, in one sweep doubling the size of the French Concession. Although the Guangxu emperor had steadfastly opposed such a grant (and had in fact proposed that the Gongsuo sacrifice its land to mollify the French), the court ultimately had no choice but to give in to the French expansion (Belsky, 1992: 67).

Both riots were essentially affairs of the Ningbo community, which mobilized to defend sacred burial ground. As such, it would be problematic to assert that they were an expression of nationalism. Although a group of Cantonese people took advantage of the second riot to attack a French police station, neither riot involved coordinated action among different native place groups in defense of "Chinese" rights. Nonetheless, public opinion, as articulated in the Shanghai newspaper *Shenbao*, constructed a different meaning for the 1898 riot. Editorials described the riot in universalistic terms, as an assertion of Chinese sovereignty:

If we do not resist, the will of the [Chinese] people will appear weak and Westerners will make unlimited demands. In the future, if the people's hearts from the one county of this little Gongsuo are as steadfast as this, this will show that even though the country might be weak and the officials might be controlled, the people cannot be bullied [Shenbao, July 19, 1898].

Members of the Ningbo community had risked death to protect their cemetery, but had raised no protest over the doubling of the French Concession. Nonetheless, *Shenbao* editorials portrayed Ningbo people as exemplary Chinese in their steadfast determination to protect

one small corner of Chinese territory from foreign imperialism. Here we see a linking of native place solidarity to national identity and national interests.<sup>3</sup>

The contrast between the preservation of Gongsuo ground and the trading away of Shanghai land highlights the local strength of Chinese associations and the weakness of the central government. As seen in this riot, national interests were not popular if they involved the sacrifice of local institutions (in this case the influential Siming Gongsuo). Although, ultimately, more Chinese territory was lost than gained after the riot, in local eyes the Gongsuo achieved a victory over the French, even emerging ironically (if no less sincerely) as a champion of the nation.

Informed public opinion and strategic political organization in Shanghai developed rapidly in the years following the 1898 riot, reflecting broad public awareness of China's humiliation in the Boxer Uprising (1899-1900) and the Empress Dowager Cixi's subsequent recognition of China's need for radical reform. This meant, among other things, rapid institutional innovation at the local level—the development of chambers of commerce following Western and Japanese models, of schools featuring “Western” learning, and of provincial assemblies and a local self-government movement.

As a result of this innovation, while native place associations remained crucial to urban social mobilization, they were also joined by new political organizations which would increasingly assume leadership of political movements. Native place ties often provided the informal networks of association within new political associations, and huiguan buildings often provided meeting places for more ephemeral or less well-endowed organizations. As social organization and political values changed, the idea of the native place and the role of native place associations were redefined.

#### *EARLY POPULAR ANTI-IMPERIALIST NATIONALIST MOBILIZATION*

Early Chinese nationalism built upon native place sentiments in anti-imperialist movements that rocked Shanghai in the first years of the twentieth century. In these incidents, activists played upon native



place loyalties to stir up nationalist activity, even as they brought together merchants, students, and workers of different sojourner groups into citywide political movements.

In 1904, while the 1898 riot was still relatively fresh in popular memory, a new foreign outrage aroused popular antiforeign sentiment and demands for Chinese rights. On December 15, two drunken Russian sailors on shore leave hired rickshaws to return to their ships. When they refused to pay, one of the rickshaw pullers persistently demanded his fare. Angered, one of the sailors grabbed an adze from the hand of a carpenter who was repairing the jetty, swung it at the rickshaw puller, but missed and struck a pedestrian, crushing his skull. The Russians walked on toward their ship, but were arrested by police who turned them over to the Russian consul. Zhou Shengyou, the man who lay dying, happened to be from Ningbo.<sup>4</sup>

The next day, some 30,000 Ningbo artisans, fishermen, and rickshaw pullers gathered to protest but were appeased by promises of the Siming Gongsuo directors that they would demand that the case be adjudicated by a Chinese official. As negotiations proceeded, the Gongsuo leaders printed handbills to keep their fellow provincials abreast of their efforts:

[We] now learn that the Russian Consul wishes to send the murderer and his companion back to their own vessel to be tried according to Russian naval law. . . . How can we, the fellow-provincials of the murdered Chou Seng-yu, of Ningpo, then stand by and look on without making a word of protest at such a miscarriage of justice, whereby the legal prerogatives of China are taken away? It has therefore been decided to engage a foreign lawyer. . . . We are also sending by telegraph a petition to His Excellency the Imperial High Commissioner of the Nanyang and Viceroy of the Liangkang provinces, and a letter to the Shanghai Taotai setting forth the powers and prerogatives of a Neutral State in a case where interned prisoners are guilty of breaking the laws [North China Herald, Dec. 23, 1904].

The circular reveals the increasing political and legal sophistication of the Gongsuo leaders. The case appears not simply as a Ningbo tragedy, but as violation of China's legal rights. Defense of the native place group acquired legitimacy as defense of the nation, with the native place association prompting national authorities in regard to national prerogatives.

On December 28, the Gongsuo leaders petitioned the Qing court, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Viceroy Zhou Fu at Nanjing, pressing the urgency of their case by stressing the threat of disorder in their sojourner community:

Seeing nothing being done, the Ningbo population of the rougher and lower orders have attempted to hold several indignation mass meetings, but they have so far been kept down with difficulty by the petitioners. . . . There are, however . . . just fears that as a first step there will be a general strike . . . causing a serious stoppage of trade and setting at large crowds of disaffected men. . . . [H]ad this been instead a case where a Chinese had killed a foreigner serious international complications would certainly have arisen [North China Herald, Dec. 30, 1904].

The petitioners insisted that the sailor be turned over to a mixed (Chinese and Russian) tribunal. In the meantime the foreign community praised the Gongsuo leaders for keeping order (North China Herald, Jan. 6, 1905).

By early January, the incident had become a cause célèbre in the radical press. Editorials in *Jingzhong ribao* praised the Ningbo people and identified their struggle as a nationalist struggle. An article titled "Ningbo People Can Take the Lead" urged Ningbo people to repeat their successful resistance against the French in 1874 and 1898, stressing that their struggles epitomized the struggles of the Chinese people: "If Ningbo people witnessing the killing [of their fellow provincial] cannot avenge their shame, [then] all Chinese people cannot avoid the tragic fate of being butchered by foreigners" (*Jingzhong ribao*, Jan. 8, 1905, in Luo, 1968: 163-164).

On January 14, Russian commanders found the sailor guilty of manslaughter, for which the minimum punishment was eight years hard labor. But stressing the "accidental" nature of the crime (in that in his drunkenness he missed his intended target), the tribunal shortened the sentence. In response Ningbo workers called for a demonstration at the Siming Gongsuo. When Gongsuo directors learned of the plan they held a special meeting, hoping to avert disorder (North China Herald, Jan. 20, 23, 1905; *Shenbao*, Jan. 15, 1905).

At this point Ningbo leaders moved beyond their native place community to mobilize the entire Chinese commercial elite, calling together leaders from many trades and native place groups in Shanghai. This assembly resolved to pressure the Russian authorities. Com-

mercial leaders from each province would send telegrams requesting support from national-level Chinese officials. Merchants would persuade the Shanghai Daotai to meet with foreign authorities in Shanghai, to make clear the extent of popular dissatisfaction with the judgment. Finally, the merchants agreed to boycott Russian goods.<sup>5</sup>

The leaders' actions did not prevent a gathering at the Gongsuo the next day, but they did diffuse popular anger. The protests also evinced some success. Pressured from all sides, the Russian consul extended the sentence to eight years (Shenbao, Jan. 16, 1905).

What is striking here, aside from the skillful manipulation of popular indignation by the sojourning commercial elite, is the symbolic importance of the Gongsuo for the larger Ningbo community. Rather than directly petitioning Chinese authorities or protesting before Western authorities, the Ningbo activists called for a meeting at the Gongsuo. Because the doors were closed, they met in front of the Gongsuo, making their statement to their fellow provincial leaders.

Although the nonelite Ningbo demonstrators fashioned their political statement in keeping with the boundaries and hierarchy of native place community, the Gongsuo elite stepped beyond the Ningbo community. In a new departure (facilitated by the institutional innovation of a Shanghai Chamber of Commerce which brought together many huiguan leaders in one organization), Ningbo leaders organized with other native place groups and businesses to coordinate action on the basis of Chinese nationalism. Chinese editorials identified the Ningbo cause as the national cause: "Among sojourning Ningbo people everyone is enraged . . . and among the people of all provinces sojourning in Shanghai there is not one who is not enraged. Now it is not just sojourners in Shanghai who are enraged but all Chinese. . . . This is not just a Ningbo people's tragedy, but a tragedy for all Chinese" (Shenbao, Jan. 23, 1905).

Although the incident involved an assertion of national identity and sovereignty, the mechanism of organization according to native place identity in a nationalist struggle was not discarded but applauded. This would also be the case in the larger scale Anti-American Boycott of 1905 that followed. In this and later movements we see the formation of new political associations, often comprising distinctly organized but cooperating native place groups. Although the new political associations produced much of the overarching political rhetoric and

strategy of specific movements, their effectiveness in penetrating and mobilizing Shanghai society depended heavily on the prior organization of residents through native place associations.

The Anti-American Boycott of 1905, which protested the exclusion of Chinese labor from the United States, is generally viewed as the first *modern* anti-imperialist boycott because it was not restricted to people from only one native place.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, although the Chinese Chamber of Commerce declared the boycott on May 10, participation was actually determined through native place organization and varied according to native place group. Native place loyalties were also important in the rhetoric of the movement.

The Chamber of Commerce was dominated by Ningbo merchants. Although Ningbo enthusiasm for the boycott was considerable, it did not match that of Fujian and Guangdong sojourner groups, both of which had stronger ties to overseas Chinese communities (Fewsmith, 1985: 33-34; Zhang, 1965: 44-45). Dissatisfied with the Chamber meeting, Guangdong and Fujian sojourners met separately the next day to propose more radical measures (Zhang, 1965: 43-46, 101; Field, 1957: 78; Shenbao, May 11, 1905).

Representatives of Guangdong, Chaozhou, Ningbo, Anhui, and Shandong associations participated in the leadership of a general boycott meeting held on July 20. The next day Ningbo fellow provincials rallied to protest U.S. immigration policy. Stating that Ningbo people comprised the majority of wealthy Shanghai merchants, many of whom engaged in trade with the United States, speakers stressed the special responsibility of Ningbo people to lead the boycott, citing the precedent of the Zhou Shengyou case (Shenbao, July 21, 22, 26, 1905).

Meetings followed at the Guang-Zhao Gongsuo, Fujian Tingzhou Huiguan, the Guang-Zhao Hospital, the Sichuan Merchants' Gongsuo, and the Chaozhou Huiguan. The functions of native place networks in the boycott are revealed in an account of a gathering of several thousand Ningbo merchants. Ningbo leaders announced that they had investigated Ningbo imports from the United States, contacted leading merchants in Ningbo, and secured boycott pledges (Shenbao, July 25, 27-31, Aug. 1, 1905; Zhang, 1965: 93). Over the months that followed, through public meetings, circulars, and printed manifestos, native place communities mobilized and regulated their fellow provincials.

Although political activists initiated the boycott, sojourner institutions sponsored meetings and policed their members, ensuring participation in the boycott in Shanghai and coordinating activities in home provinces. Their activities suggest that native place groups constituted fundamental organizational units, familiar communities for Shanghai residents that made possible a high degree of mobilization and compliance.

Many of the boycott activists were soon involved in disputes over legal jurisdiction in the International Settlement, disputes that would erupt in the Mixed Court Riot of December 1905, the most violent antiforeign protest since the opening of the treaty port. The case that sparked the riot joined a *huiguan* defense of fellow provincials with the issues of national sovereignty and legal authority over Chinese citizens.<sup>7</sup>

Protests began after a Guangdong widow, who was returning to her native place from Sichuan with an entourage of fifteen young girls, was arrested by British police on suspicion of transporting girls for sale. The Guang-Zhao Gongsuo protested her arrest and accused the British of trespassing on Chinese jurisdiction. After a fight broke out between Western police and Chinese yamen runners contesting for custody of widow Li, Xu Run, a director of the Guang-Zhao Gongsuo and one of the few non-Zhejiang directors of the chamber of commerce, called a protest meeting at the chamber and received the support of other merchant leaders in calling for Chinese representation in the foreign settlements (Shenbao, Dec. 11, 1905; North China Herald, Dec. 15, 1905).<sup>8</sup>

Merchant and popular meetings demanded the restoration of China's legal prerogatives, calling for the British to release widow Li and punish the offending police officers. Telegrams in the name of "sojourning Guangdong gentry merchants" insisted that this was not simply a matter of an injustice to a fellow provincial, but a question of "assert[ing] China's sovereignty" (Shenbao, Dec. 11, 1905). Although protests began initially within the Guangdong sojourner community, other influential native place groups took up the cause. Several thousand Ningbo people rallied on December 12 at the Siming Gongsuo demanding action "to protect national integrity" (*baocun guoti*) (Shenbao, Dec. 14, 1905). Other groups followed suit, sharing a common rhetoric of indignation at the foreigners' destruction of

China's national prestige in beating Chinese runners and insulting Chinese officials. Finally, succumbing to pressure from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Body of Beijing, British authorities delivered widow Li on December 15 to the Guang-Zhao Gongsuo.<sup>9</sup>

Despite widow Li's release, agitation increased. The radical Patriotic Oratorical Society (*Gongzhong yanshuo hui*), which had also been involved in boycott activism, called for a refusal to pay Settlement taxes. Although the public stance of their merchant leaders was more moderate, huiguan nonetheless sponsored public meetings featuring radical speakers. Former boycott leaders called for a tax strike, for example, at a December 15 meeting at the Guang-Zhao Gongsuo. After leaving this meeting, Ge Pengyun and members of the Patriotic Oratorical Society spoke to a crowd of more than 4,000 at the Chaozhou Huiguan. Two days later they spoke at the Siming Gongsuo. Although deploying native place sentiment to their advantage in meetings with Guangdong sojourners, the speakers connected these concerns to the larger issue of Chinese rights and demanded Chinese representation on the Municipal Council of the International Settlement in recognition of the considerable Chinese property and taxes in the Settlement (*Shenbao*, Dec. 15, 16, 1905; Great Britain Public Record Office, 1905: 228.2512).

While making the rounds of huiguan meetings, Ge stressed that the Mixed Court affair "affects all Chinese—whether natives of Canton, Ningbo or Swatow—everywhere in China." His statement and lecture circuit in this period in which, as the *Shenbao* commented, "there was no day without meetings and no meeting without indignation," reflect the organization of city residents into these prominent native place groups and the expedience of political organization through them (Great Britain Public Record Office, 1905: 228.2512; *Shenbao*, Dec. 16, 17, 1905). The nationalist rationale for activism did not necessitate rejection of native place identity.

By the morning of December 18, the walls of the Settlement were plastered with inflammatory placards. Crowds in different parts of the Settlement simultaneously targeted the first markets and rice-gruel shops to open, exhorting shop owners to remain closed. Rioting began soon after, when crowds set fire to foreign police stations and the town hall. Settlement authorities sent out police, volunteers, sailors, and

marines who restored order, at the cost of at least fifteen Chinese lives (North China Herald, Dec. 22, 1905; *Shenbao*, Dec. 19, 1905; Kotenev, 1925: 128-129; Xi, 1933: 431).

The riot was followed by negotiations between British and Chinese authorities and representatives of prominent *huiguan*. Through their manipulation of events, men like Yu Xiaqing (director of the *Siming Gongsuo*) and the associations they represented increased their influence. The negotiations touched on the possibility of organizing a consultative committee "representative of the best native opinion," to meet regularly with the Municipal Council to negotiate matters concerning Chinese residents in the Settlement, and to keep the council informed of Chinese public opinion. After the experience of the riot, for the first time the Municipal Council concurred in this step toward Chinese representation.<sup>10</sup>

In early 1906, the Municipal Council approved a Chinese consultative committee that reflected the power of the three most influential native place groups in the city. Five of the leaders chosen to represent the Chinese community were from Zhejiang (three from the *Siming Gongsuo*), and one each from Guangdong and Jiangsu (*Shanghai Municipal Council*, 1906: 393). Although *huiguan* leadership was not an explicit element in the selection process, in the choice of individuals who were both *huiguan* leaders and members of the Chamber of Commerce to represent the Chinese community, the proposed committee accorded with Chinese public opinion as formulated in the *Shenbao*, which suggested that *huiguan* provided a foundation for Chinese representative government: "All city residents should have the right to select representatives and keep order. Within the Settlement, although Chinese residents do not have this system, usually each group has a meeting place and each has merchant directors as leaders. Thus they already have the qualities of representatives" (*Shenbao*, Dec. 13, 1905). This committee was not ultimately approved. Nonetheless, the idea of *huiguan* representation of Chinese interests vis-à-vis foreign authorities was reconfirmed a decade later. A 1915 draft agreement for extension of the International Settlement provided for a Chinese Advisory Board, "to consist of two nominees of the Ningbo Guild, two nominees of the Canton Guild, and one nominee of the Special Envoy for Foreign Affairs."<sup>11</sup> Insofar as foreign authorities placed the leaders of native place associations in the position of

representing the Chinese community, they reinforced the tactical linkage between native place and national identity.

### *NATIVE PLACE TIES IN REVOLUTIONARY MOBILIZATION*

Revolutionary mobilization in Shanghai proceeded on two fronts: the early organizations of radical students and intellectuals, often sojourning in Japan, and more moderate, initially constitutionalist efforts of gentry and merchant activist reformers working through educational and local self-government organizations. These two wings of activism converged by late 1910 to form the fragile coalition that underlaid the overthrow of imperial power in Shanghai in the 1911 Revolution.

Shanghai was a magnet for radicals, both as a center for the dissemination of new ideas through foreign-style schools, bookstores, and newspapers, and because the foreign settlements offered a degree of refuge for people likely to run afoul of Chinese authorities. The most radical groups were in Japan for similar reasons (their radicalism reinforced by the experience of sojourning in a militarily stronger Asian nation). These groups relied on contacts in Shanghai as a gateway for disseminating their journals into the Chinese interior.

Early radicals were organized almost entirely through native place ties, which provided ready networks of association among sojourning students who spoke different dialects and had different cultural habits. Students in both Shanghai and Tokyo formed regional associations. The first revolutionary associations in China were also regional associations. Guangdong natives organized the *Xing Zhong hui*; Hunan and Hubei activists created the *Hua Xing hui*; Zhejiang activists established the *Guangfu hui*. When these groups joined together in 1905 to form the *Tongmeng hui* (Revolutionary Alliance), they retained much of their independent existence (Rankin, 1971: 13-14, 23-25).

The early radical press was also organized along native place lines. The most radical journals were published, not in Shanghai (where radical publishing was more risky), but by sojourners in Tokyo, who sent them into China through Shanghai. These journals, usually named for home provinces, express the combination of native place and



nationalist loyalties which characterized the development of Chinese nationalism. Love for the native place and activism in the interest of local self-government were conceived as integral to national strengthening, creating the local constituent building blocks for a modern constitutionalist state.<sup>12</sup>

The role of native place sentiment in the struggle to reform China was addressed in the inaugural issues of two of the most influential of these journals, *Jiangsu* and *Zhejiang chao* (Zhejiang Tide). The editors of *Jiangsu* reasoned that "our Jiangsu is the epitome of China." "Our Jiangsu people [are] just like China. Our Chinese people are renowned in the world as weak and sickly; and our Jiangsu people are renowned in China as weak and sickly" (*Jiangsu*, 1, 3, 1903, reprinted in Luo, 1968: 119-120).

To this idea of the native place as epitome, or embodiment of the whole, is added a second rationale: political action should properly start locally, building on "the familiar local soil of human feeling, history, geography and customs." The forward to *Zhejiang chao* suggested that Zhejiangese should "begin with Zhejiang—you can call it starting with one corner. The process does not end here, but [one is] limited by what one knows" (*Zhejiang chao*, 1, 2, 1903, in Luo, 1968: 67-102). Similarly, *Jiangsu* magazine defended local identity in the pursuit of nationalist goals: "In the project of reforming the whole country, how is it I speak just Jiangsu dialect? . . . Speaking of what is most intimate, it is appropriate to begin with Jiangsu . . . beginning with one corner to win over the entire country" (*Jiangsu*, 1, 3, 1903, in Luo, 1968: 119).

Such passages suggest both the notion of the native place as key, or embodiment of the whole (as a corner through which it may be possible to know the whole), and the idea that the native place serves as a necessary and familiar place to begin. By addressing reform in the native place, the abstract and enormous task of reforming the nation becomes concrete, manageable, and familiar. These writings also reflect the popularization of concepts of local self-government (*zizhi*) articulated in the late Qing by reformers like Feng Guifen and Huang Zunxian, who advocated the mobilization of local elites in the interest of strengthening the state. This type of localism was not seen as separatism (opposed to the state), but instead was seen as contributing to the health of the polity (Kuhn, 1975). These connections

drawn between native place and nation were both sincere and pragmatic, justifying the obvious and efficacious native place networks that underlaid effective social organization in this period.

In the course of the antiforeign movements of the last years of the Qing, politicized merchants found their government an obstacle to their efforts to strengthen the country. As their estrangement from the government increased, merchants gradually moved from asserting Chinese rights in the face of foreign imperialism toward revolutionary nationalism directed against the Qing. The local nature of foreign political and economic imperialism (through the partitioning of Chinese territory in railway and mining concessions, and foreign "spheres of influence") and disputes between local elites and the Qing government over provincial resources meant that native place networks and institutions would be involved in revolutionary and reformist nationalist mobilization in Shanghai. Sojourning merchants in Shanghai were deeply involved with railway and mining rights recovery movements in their native provinces (Shanghai shehui kexueyuan, 1981: 607; Guang-Zhao Gongsuo, 1908; Shenbao, Mar. 18, 1912).

In contrast to other areas, merchant mobilization in Shanghai preceded the successful November 3 uprising led by the revolutionaries. One of Yu Xiaqing's first acts after the resolution of the Mixed Court Riot was to form a Chinese Merchants' Exercise Association (*Huashang ticaohui*). In 1906 there were between 500 and 600 militia members (Great Britain Public Record Office, 1906: 228.1634). After the establishment of this Chinese militia in the International Settlement, merchants in the Chinese areas of the city followed suit. Five physical-exercise associations were established by commercial organizations by the end of 1905. These coalesced into an overarching militia in 1907 to maintain order during a campaign to close opium shops in the Chinese areas. By the eve of the revolution there were approximately twenty such militia in Shanghai, based on trade and native place groups (Pan, 1982: 109; Shen and Yang, 1980: 67-68; Guo, 1982: 943-944).

After a wave of rice riots and tax resistance shook the Yangzi delta in 1910, Shanghai merchants approached local officials and suggested the formation of a National Federation of Merchant Militia to maintain order. On May 7, 1911, the newly established federation organized a citywide meeting. The division of Shanghai residents into native place

groups and the need to unite them was expressed in a statement of the federation's goals by the Ningbo notable Shen Dunhe, who was elected chair. These goals included the promotion of martial spirit, education for national citizenship, the promotion of people's militia, and the creation of "a central organ to unite sojourning groups in Shanghai" (Ding, 1983: 309-315).

Concurrent with these developments that brought together different groups into overarching citywide frameworks, there was a parallel process of organizational activity which deepened native place ties and explicitly connected native place organization to national strengthening by stressing the importance of organizational units (*tuanti*) in building a united China. Much of this patriotic organizational activity took place in the context of reformulated native place associations, particularly among Zhejiang sojourners.<sup>13</sup> On March 19, 1911, a meeting to inaugurate a new Ningbo association took place at the Siming Gongsuo, with more than 2,000 sojourners attending. Shen Dunhe, who several weeks later would speak of the need to unite different sojourning groups into a "central organ," also chaired this meeting, which was dedicated to the special destiny of the Ningbo people, "whose footprints cover the world and who, in the future, can establish branch associations everywhere, with the center in Shanghai." Shen recounted the past achievements of Ningbo sojourners in Shanghai, referring to their "heroic" struggles with the French and crediting the results to Ningbo organizational strength. His speech combined visions of Ningbo glory and destiny with a popularized version of Liang Qichao's diagnosis of China's organizational weakness and ardent advocacy of social groupings (*qun*):<sup>14</sup> "Today, organizations are frequently dispersed like yellow sand. . . . Our Chinese people are insulted by foreigners because our organizations are not solid. . . . [Now] our Ningbo people have this great organization and this will facilitate the development of patriotic thinking. . . . Our association, with our protect-the-Siming-Gongsuo hearts, will go and protect the nation" (Shenbao, Mar. 20, 1911).

Later in 1911, in another act that simultaneously reinforced native place organization and nationalist revolutionary mobilization, Yu Xiaqing (who had been active in both the railway loan movement and the constitutionalist movement) organized a Ningbo Merchants' Gen-

eral Assembly (*Ningshang zonghui*). This assembly provided a secret meeting place for the Tongmeng hui in the months prior to the revolution (Ding, 1983: 317; Elvin, 1984: 157).

After Chen Qimei established a revolutionary government in the city in November 1911, Shanghai residents formed additional militia. Most of the student military corps were from the provinces of Zhejiang and Jiangsu. Other sojourners formed "northern expedition" brigades organized by native place, among which were the Jiangxi Northern Expeditionary Army, the Henan Northern Expeditionary Army, and the Hunan Sojourners' Northern Expedition Army. While these names declared the participants' native place identity, they also proclaimed their dedication to the project of national construction. Some, like the Sichuan Han Army, asserted native place and Han ethnic identity at once. The assertion of Han ethnicity did not prevent some militia from planning for provincial independence, as was the case for the Sichuanese (Wenshi ziliao, 1981: 601-607; Wu, 1983; Guo, 1982: 944).

In November and December, Shanghai native place communities gathered recruits for revolutionary armies to serve in home provinces and to serve the Shanghai military government. Recruitment notices in the revolutionary paper *Minli bao* appealed to both native place and nationalist sentiment, stressing the urgency of both local and national situations and invoking both the bravery of the revolutionaries and the special spirit or experience of the locality (*Minli bao*, Nov. 28, Dec. 3, 9, 12, 1911, in Shanghai shehui kexueyuan, 1981: 601-602, 605, 607). Such appeals clarified the abstract goals of nationalism with reference to local situations.

Native place associations also formed collection networks, raising funds for military expenses both in their native provinces and in Shanghai. As a former Siming Gongsuo director, Fang Jiaobo, recalled the situation:

At the time, in Shanghai commercial circles the Ningbo and Guangdong sojourners had the biggest groups. . . . Their members were extremely numerous and their leaders were the leaders of society. . . . [They] all used utmost strength to help the revolutionary army, and they called on the other sojourning commercial groups in Shanghai also to help support the revolution [Wenshi ziliao, 1981: 560-561].<sup>15</sup>

Several thousand sojourning Guangdong people met at the Guang-Zhao Gongsuo on December 5, 1911. The assembly, led by the director Wen Zongyao, established a systematic collection program for Guangdong trades and businesses. Wen began by stressing the Guangdong sojourners' Han ethnicity:

At this time the national situation is extremely urgent and we must rely on blood and iron. "Blood" refers to our great Han new republican citizens' blood. "Iron" refers to the firearms our great Han new republican citizens use to protect themselves. . . . Those of our citizens who are brave should mount horses and fight. Those who are wealthy should contribute to purchase the most modern weapons to prepare for military victory. In this manner it is possible not just to protect your own blood, but the blood of generations of descendants [Chai, 1981: 555].

Placing native place networks in the service of the nation, Wen calculated that if all the 170,000-180,000 Guangdong sojourners contributed, it would be easy to raise substantial sums. Guangdong businesses were to contribute the equivalent of 10% of their total monthly wages to the military. Employees and shop clerks were to provide one-tenth of their salaries. Collections were to continue until military affairs were settled (Shenbao, Dec. 5, 1911, in Wenshi ziliao, 1981: 632).

Other sojourning networks invested eagerly in the new government. The Quan-Zhang Huiguan contributed property-rental income and directed overseas Fujianese communities in Southeast Asia to initiate collections. The Dianchuntang organized collections from Fujian trade organizations to aid the Republican government. Shandong merchant leaders solicited Shandong shops for contributions, hyperbolically reporting that "none were not enthusiastic" (a number of individuals, indeed, each contributed more than 1,000 dollars). Shandong leaders also solicited Shandong sojourners in Osaka, Hong Kong, Vladivostok, and other ports (Shenbao, Dec. 7, 1911; Minli bao, Dec. 9, 11, 1911, in Wenshi ziliao, 1981: 626-639).

Revolutionary leaders appealed directly to their fellow provincials who responded at least initially with enthusiasm, seizing the opportunity to increase their influence while furthering the revolutionary cause. On the eve of his inauguration as president of the new republic,

Sun Zhongshan (Yat-sen) attended a feast hosted by Guangdong sojourning groups throughout China, while Guangdong groups in other provinces showered him with contributions. The Guang-Zhao Gongsuo pledged 400,000 taels to the National Assembly, trusting that its favored candidate, Wu Tingfang, would be appointed minister of foreign affairs (Bergère, 1968: 229-295; Shenbao, Jan. 1, 2, 5, 30, 1912).<sup>16</sup>

With similar spirit, Zhejiang sojourners (especially merchants from Huzhou) rallied to help Chen Qimei, who shamelessly filled government posts with his Huzhou tongxiang. As support for his regime waned, Chen appealed to the Huzhou Silk Cocoon Gongsuo. When even his fellow provincials grew reluctant, Chen imprisoned Huzhou merchants in the Gongsuo until they agreed to substantial contributions (Elvin, 1967: 252).<sup>17</sup>

Although native place ties produced important links in the fragile coalition that underlaid the 1911 Revolution in Shanghai (Ding, 1983: 312; Bergère, 1989: 195; Rankin, 1971: 207), precisely because they stressed native place identity, the alliance they produced was weak. Despite the broad nationalist rhetoric of the new Chinese republicans, the uprisings of 1911 were notable in their failure to construct a new national order.

Instead, in a story that is well known, the ideals of revolution degenerated into conflicts among local interests and battles over provincial turf. Native place ties, which had mobilized Shanghai residents for revolution, also provided the sentiments and associational networks of revolutionary disintegration. After the Wuchang uprising, Li Yuanhong sent Li Xiehe to Shanghai as general commander. The presence of Li and his Hunanese associates irritated Chen Qimei. There was also a split between groups with primary allegiance to the Guangdong-based Sun Zhongshan and those who were loyal to Chen Qimei. There was even an intra-Zhejiang split between the northern Zhejiang supporters of Chen Qimei and Tao Chengzhang's Restoration Society, which the former accused of favoring Shaoxing people over those of Huzhou, Ningbo, and Hangzhou (Elvin, 1984: 148-158; Rankin, 1971: 211).

# NATIVE PLACE AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE REPUBLICAN ERA

In the May Fourth Movement of 1919, native place associations underlaid many of the social coalitions that staged the Shanghai student, commercial, and worker strikes. Native place groups were constituent elements of newer, explicitly political organizations formed in this period. Sojourner communities, particularly those of Shandong, Ningbo, and Guangdong, closed their schools, enforced anti-Japanese boycotts, and met to inform their fellow provincials of national politics. Native place ties linked students, merchants, and workers and provided organizational units for the expression and dissemination of nationalist ideology (Goodman, 1992).

The visibility of these associations in the nationalist ferment of the early Republican era was not lost on contemporary observers. Viewing the disarray of the polity in the warlord period, two architects of the modern Chinese state, Sun Zhongshan and the young Mao Zedong, contemplated the task of nation building. As activists, not merely visionaries, each sought building blocks in the social realities that surrounded them. In an essay written a few months after the May Fourth Movement, Mao expressed optimism about the Chinese people's capacity for organizing and argued for the creation of a "great union of the masses" (*minzhong de da lianhe*), an overarching national union of the Chinese people (Mao Zedong, 1919: 57-69).<sup>18</sup> The great union was to be built from what Mao referred to as "small popular unions" (*minzhong de xiao lianhe*). In response to his rhetorical question of whether the Chinese people had the motivation to build a "great union," Mao celebrated the political associations that had developed in recent years. Mao identified three types of voluntary associations that provided a basis for popular mobilization: worker unions, student and educational associations, and *tongxianghui* (a new, secular, and self-consciously modern form of native place association), all of which had been made possible by "the recent opening up of government and of thinking" in the Republican period. Based on his observations in the May Fourth Movement, Mao argued that political disorder and foreign oppression had begun to motivate such

"small unions" to combine into "large unions." Among the several examples Mao provided of "large unions" were two sojourner associations in Shanghai (Hunan and Shandong). Mao based the "how to" portion of his essay not on the Western theorists he mentions in passing (whose work would not have led him to include native place associations in his theorizing), but on his personal observations of Chinese realities (pp. 62-68). In the following year, Mao advocated provincial ties as fundamental to China's salvation, recalling the early radicals' vision of the province as the microcosm of the nation: "We must strive first for . . . a Republic of Hunan, to implement the new ideals . . . and to become the leader of twenty-seven small Chinas" (Mao, cited in Duara, 1995).

As Sun Zhongshan conceived the task of creating a national community in his Three People's Principles lectures of 1924, he constructed a similar model for building what he referred to as "a large united body" (*da tuanti*). While lamenting that foreigners laughed at Chinese for being "no more than a sheet of loose sand" in regard to national consciousness, Sun stressed that Chinese society did provide other kinds of useful loyalties, family and native place loyalties, which might be extended to the nation:

An easy and effective way to create a large united body is to build on the foundation of small groups, and the small units we can build upon in China are lineage groups and native place groups. The native place sentiment of the Chinese is very deep-rooted; it is especially easy to unite people from the same province, prefecture or village [Sun, 1927: 77].

Given the prominence of native place ties in both the organization of the 1911 Revolution and in its failures, it is important to highlight the statements of Mao and Sun. What, indeed, are we to make of the nationalist "building block" rhetoric that went along with Republican-era native place loyalties? Surely Mao and Sun were aware of the obvious question: If native place identities served as building blocks, at the same time—by stressing regional differences—would they not also hinder national cohesion?

Perhaps this point, which seems retrospectively obvious, was not so simple. That Mao and Sun recognized the strengths of native place



communities and imagined their integration into a larger national unity is not surprising—their writing was based on their observations of Chinese society and their pragmatism as activists. Although their visions were compelling, their rhetoric was not particularly original, as we have seen from the language of native place associations involved in nationalist mobilization in the first years of the century. Their words were persuasive precisely because they embraced familiar social realities and because they repeated ideas of nation building based on popular notions that constructed the idea of the nation by conceiving local social units as building blocks for broader coalitions. It is also likely that, as activists, they could not abandon native place ties because (in their experiences) native place links had proven so useful, and they had not yet constructed new social linkages that could replace them. The potential for such new social linkages may be seen in the growth of party, labor, and professional organizations in the decade following the May Fourth Movement. The curbing of such associational developments in the first few years of the Nanjing decade, under the political constraints imposed by both the Guomindang government and Japanese aggression, reinforced the role of native place ties.

Although native place associations were important in the social mobilization that underlaid the May Fourth Movement, in the years immediately following they declined in their relative political importance as new forms of association—political parties, worker, and professional groups—developed and increased in influence.<sup>19</sup> This nascent shift toward new forms of association was constrained by the imposition of greater political controls after the establishment of the Nanjing government in 1927. As a result, by the 1930s there was a political reemergence of native place associations. This “political reemergence” was by no means overt (indeed, the publications of native place organizations stated clearly that they were *not* political organizations). Their political reemergence becomes nonetheless clear through an examination of the anti-Japanese activities of certain native place associations, and the shelter specific associations gave to anti-Japanese activists (individuals and associations who needed protection from Jiang Jieshi [Chiang Kai-shek]) (Chaozhou, 1932; Shanghai Municipal Police Files, D-8141; Goodman, 1995).

In the Nanjing decade, native place associations deployed rhetoric similar to that of Mao Zedong and Sun Zhongshan. Small groups were perceived as the organic constituents of the large group, the nation.

[To establish] nationalism it is necessary to have organizations. . . . Our people's ability to organize is weak, but "love one's home, love one's native place" sentiment is very strong. [This is expressed in] *huiguan* and *tongxianghui*. Using these as a base, it is possible for our people to go from small to great, from weakness to strength. Nationalism becomes possible [Henan, 1936: 1-3].

Such statements suggest that the development of nationalism depended on the further articulation of local identity. Public spirit was to be developed through the strengthening of loyalties to one's own group, and the mobilization of fellow provincials served the nation. Strong sojourner groups contributed to national strength.

The rhetoric also linked sojourner solidarity to anti-imperialist mobilization:

There is not a day we do not suffer the incursions of economic imperialism. . . . [We must] assemble many people with similar language and customs who can conform to and communicate with each other. . . . This provides a basis for struggles against the outside . . . to prevent oppression and insults. This is the essential idea behind *tongxianghui* [Chaozhou, 1934].

The process by which native place associations became a location for urban nationalism in the Nanjing decade—at times in defiance of Jiang Jieshi—may be illustrated through the career of the influential educational reformer Huang Yanpei. In the early Republican period, Huang worked to reform Chinese society through two new and increasingly influential institutions: the Jiangsu Provincial Education Association and the Chinese Vocational Education Association. The activities of both were quickly circumscribed. Education was an early victim of the Guomindang "partification" (*danghua*) process. Both associations came under attack in 1927, and Huang temporarily fled the city to escape assassination (Schwintzer, 1992).

Increasingly constricted in the political influence he could exercise through these organizations, Huang rechanneled his patriotic energies into his leadership of the Pudong *Tongxianghui*. In a manifesto written in 1933, Huang linked *tongxianghui* to the imperative of anti-Japanese

resistance. He invoked the precedent of the Ningbo cemetery riots and linked the native place to the nation through sojourner associations:

Our Chinese population is . . . repeatedly affronted by Japan. Our land is occupied; our people have been butchered, and we are forced to accept foreign control . . . while we are unable to help ourselves. . . . How should we save China? . . . People must abandon their selfish individualism and form small groups. They should knit these small groups into large groups and unite the large groups into one great national group. When the entire country becomes one group, the mass foundation for the nation will be established.

And what will be the starting point for the small groups? Human feelings really develop only when people leave their native place and manifest their sincere mutual love. Thus, the uniting of locals is often not as powerful as the uniting of sojourners who are motivated by the common experience of sojourning in a foreign place. The connections which result from the sojourning condition create large and solid groups. . . . [W]ith the Pudong tongxianghui the . . . business of the Pudong people increases and their contribution to society and the country is daily greater. The mass foundation of the nation is established, the nation is strengthened and will be long-lived, and there will be no more national disasters [Huang, 1933].

In Huang's rhetoric, the tongxianghui becomes the center for the ordering of the nation. This lessens the particularism of the native place tie. Huang's history and his manifesto also make clear the value of native place organizations for anti-Japanese activists in the 1930s. Because the anti-Japanese movement was under attack by Jiang Jieshi, particularly after the assassination of Shi Liangcai, under whose editorial supervision the *Shenbao* had become increasingly anti-Japanese, anti-Japanese activists and propagandists needed shelter. Shelter and institutional resources were available to individuals like Huang and others in the form of native place organizations.

## CONCLUSION

Attention to the institutional basis for popular nationalism reveals the importance of preexisting subethnic ties and institutions in mobilization for new forms of political activity and in the construction of new forms of political identity. As preexisting, powerful networks in

the city, native place associations were useful for a variety of nationalistic purposes. The collaboration of native place associations in nationalist movements facilitated the popular dissemination of ideas of the nation, locating the abstract entity of the nation in familiar local situations and practices. At the same time, as nationalist discourse became hegemonic, older arguments about native place sentiment were buttressed by allegiance to national goals. Native place organizations reconstituted themselves along republican lines and adopted the trappings of nationhood: constitutions, committees, even flags (Goodman, 1992). The dissemination of such icons of republicanism through local associations familiarized Shanghai residents with the practices of national citizenship, concretized through local communities and issues. Indeed, these associations were local embodiments of developing nationalism, which can only afford in theory to entirely transcend local ties. The idea that people simultaneously identify with multiple levels of constructed community has gained a certain acceptance in recent scholarship, modifying presuppositions of necessary conflict between nationalism and local identity (Potter, 1968; Duara, 1995). The role of native place associations in the development of urban nationalism, and the idea of the locality as a microcosm of the nation suggest the ways in which developing nationalisms necessarily build upon preexisting loyalties and ideas of community.

The integration of native place identities and associations into nationalist projects should provoke further consideration of the shifting alliances that constituted Chinese nationalism in practice, and the contradictions between the local associations that formed nationalistic alliances based on local self-government and the interests of the centralizing state that inherited the new nation. As the cases reviewed in this article suggest, the convergence of native place ties and nationalism was facilitated by the intertwining of the development of Chinese nationalism with the growth of anti-imperialist sentiment. Faced not with imperialist incursions (which united diverse local interests), but with a powerful, centralizing state, native place ties would look rather different. Without such a state, the alliances of 1911 that rested on native place linkages quickly fell apart. When such a state emerged, after 1949, the central government would find native place associations problematic (not nationalistic), and would eliminate them from the urban scene.

## NOTES

1. Honig (1992) uses the term "ethnic" rather than "subethnic" to describe native place identity. She argues that Subei identity in Shanghai was not necessarily encompassed within Han identity, particularly in the context of the war with Japan, when Subei identity became synonymous with the idea of the "Han traitor." This characterization of Subei identity does not demonstrate the absence of Han identity among Subei people, either in the minds of those who called them Han traitors (only Han may be Han traitors), or among Subei people themselves. The Subei complaint, also noted by Honig, that Jiangnan people treated them worse than Japanese, is based on a fundamental Subei claim to Chinese identity and outrage that fellow Chinese would treat them worse than non-Chinese.

2. Accounts of these riots appear in Jones (1974), Liu (1985), and Goodman (1990). Belsky (1992) provides a nuanced reevaluation of the role of nationalism in the riots.

3. The editorial writer is clearly also fastening on symbolic victories in the absence of substantive Chinese ability to fend off colonial control. As is evident here, the press played a crucial role in propagating popular nationalism. From the time of the Sino-French War (1883-1885), the *Shenbao* printed criticisms of the weak Chinese government and appeals for the Chinese people to resist foreign incursions.

4. This narrative is constructed from accounts in *North China Herald* and *Shenbao*, Dec. 1904 and Jan. 1905; Liu (1985: 301-309); and Xiong (1988: 245-246).

5. The ability of Ningbo huiguan leaders to call a meeting of major Shanghai commercial figures on short notice should be seen in the context of their concurrent leadership of the chamber of commerce.

6. Accounts of this boycott are available in Zhang (1965), Liu (1985), Remer (1933), and Field (1957).

7. The International Settlement Mixed Court was established after the opening of the treaty port, with a Chinese magistrate and a Western "assessor," to try cases involving Chinese within Settlement boundaries.

8. These incidents are described in detail in Goodman (1990: 226-242). See also Kotenev (1925: 127-130), Xi (1933: 408-440), and Elvin (1963: 131-158). This incident highlights a characteristic intersection of gender and racial sensitivities. As in the 1874 Ningbo cemetery riot, in which a Chinese prostitute was taunted for serving French clients, the Mixed Court Riot highlights the way in which foreign access to (or jurisdiction over) Chinese women produced popular outrage.

9. The British dealt directly with the Gongsuo, despite Chinese officials' demands that widow Li be turned over first to the Mixed Court Magistrate (*North China Herald*, Dec. 15, 1905; *Shenbao*, Dec. 11, 13, 14, 1905; Xi, 1933: 430).

10. Although the issue of Chinese representation became a major concern in 1905, such an advisory committee was not finally approved until 1920 (after the social disturbances of the May Fourth Movement). The 1906 proposal was defeated by the Ratepayers' Association (Shanghai Municipal Council, 1906: 295; Kotenev, 1927: 157).

11. This later formulation concedes one position to Chinese government authority, although the four-to-one configuration suggests a dim evaluation of this component. In this case, the establishment of the new board was thwarted by deadlocked negotiations between the foreign ministers and the Chinese government (Kotenev, 1927: 155-156).

12. Among these journals were *Hubei xueshengjie* (Hubei Student World), *Zhejiang chao* (Zhejiang Tide), *Yubao* (Henan), *Jiangsu, Dianhua* (Words from Hunan), *Meizhou* (Mei Prefecture), *Jiangxi*, and *Xianglu jingzhong* (Hunan Railroad Tocsin) (see Ding Shouhe, 1982: vols. 1

and 2). The rhetoric of these journals is close to Guangdong separatist Ou Qujia's idea that provincial loyalty was "small nationalism" (*xiao minzuzhuyi*) through which he argued in 1902 that "When the people of Guangdong manage their own affairs and complete their own independence, then it is the beginning of the independence of all China" (Ou, cited in Duara, 1995: 9). Zhejiang literati-activists in the 1890s propounded similar (although not separatist) notions of provincial cures for national weakness, suggesting that local chambers of commerce and militia could serve as foundations for national strength (Rankin, 1986: 168-169, 186-188).

13. In the early Republican period many reorganized native place associations appeared, using the name *tongxianghui* rather than *huiguan* (Goodman, 1992: 76-107).

14. For a discussion of Liang's advocacy of social groupings, see Chang (1971: 95-102).

15. Fang's Guangdong collection team raised 500,000 yuan. A Ningbo team raised 200,000.

16. The Guangdong community did not feel adequately recompensed for its contributions. In a telegram to their fellow provincials, Wu Tingfang and Wen Zongyao responded to news that the Shanghai Guangdong community might suspend its loan of 400,000 taels to Sun's government to protest the minor position given Wen. Wu and Wen declared their satisfaction with the composition of the new cabinet and reminded their *tongxiang* to act for the public welfare and not for private Guangdong interests (Shenbao, Jan. 5, 1912).

17. For meetings of Huzhou sojourners see *Shenbao* (Jan. 7, 1912) and *Shibao* (May 4, 1912), both reprinted in Shanghai shehui kexueyuan (1981: 970). For collection tactics in the Huzhou Huiguan see Wenshi ziliao (1981: 567-568).

18. The essay was originally published in serial format in *Xiangjiang pinglun* (Xiang River Review), July 21, 28 and Aug. 4, 1919. See also Strand (1991).

19. Native place *networks* continued to inform student, worker, party, government, and professional organizations in the 1920s, even as native place *associations* were politically overshadowed by these new forms of association. Wasserstrom (1991), Perry (1993), Bergère (1989), and Henriot (1993) all stress, in different contexts, the continuing importance of native place ties.

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