PLACE, ADMINISTRATION, AND TERRITORIAL CULTS IN LATE IMPERIAL CHINA: A CASE STUDY FROM SOUTH FUJIAN*

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Throughout China's late imperial period (1368 to 1911), an integrated system of urban socio-spatial divisions, *"pujing"* (wards or precincts), was practiced in the city of Quanzhou in southern Fujian. This spatial institution was invented by the Ming dynasty's regional magistrates in the 1370s. Its initial functions were militia organization (*pubing zhi*) and information gathering; not long after its invention it came to be applied by the magistrates as an instrument of urban administrative control and a means of symbolizing the presence of imperial state structures in the locality. During the same period, local inhabitants under the rule of the imperial magistrates responded to the imposition of this spatial order through ceremonial appropriations and story-telling. Not surprisingly, the *pujing* system was adapted into a variety of different practices and conceptions. It was also turned into a spatial organization of territorial festivals, in which official spatial conceptions were altered. Documentary materials compiled by local historians and folklorists have confirmed that *pujing* played an important role in the social life of local inhabitants in traditional times. These materials, together with more recent investigations (Chen and Lin 1990; Wang 1992:132-63), provide clues from which we may be able to trace the origin and transformation of the system. This article represents my attempt to organize the available materials into a systematic analysis.

At first glance, my inquiry seems extremely specific. However, the example is "specific" only in the sense of a case illustration of a more general point. *Pujing* as a spatial institution can be taken as representative of the general issue of Chinese place institutions and identity. In particular, it illustrates how a spatial institution could be invented, utilized to govern society, and applied to organize diverse localities into a centralized order, and, equally importantly, how the same institution could be remolded into an alternative spatial institution and altered in terms of its function and meaning. The specific example thus draws out general implications of the interrelationship and interactions between administrative space and ritual folk geography, and between means of local governance and grass-roots cultures in a complex society.

Place, Order, and Territorial Cults

My argument derives from the recognition that "place" (*difang*) is intrinsic to the Chinese formation of social space and the ritual construction of landscapes, and, as such, is intrinsic to Chinese ways of being in society. I shall analyze *pujing* from the perspective of place creation and conceptions of space. By so doing, I will identify the mechanisms that underlie the patterns of Chinese place systems, and attempt to specify the implications of place for the understanding of Chinese society. This is influenced by, and in turn bears on, anthropological and social historical studies of the role of place in China since G. William Skinner.

In his celebrated studies of Chinese social space, Skinner (1964-65; 1977) presented a "functional" interpretation of place institutions. His theory of place was two-fold. On the one hand, he proposed that certain kinds of "central places" existed in rural China and that these were what was important in the spatial patterns of Chinese society. On the other hand, he suggested that China was not a unified entity but a collection of macroregions, which resulted from the integration of varied place hierarchies. The general feature of Skinner's theory is its emphasis on economic historical factors. Skinner admitted that place systems were subject to varied forces, but he postulated that the creation of a place mainly depended on where individuals chose to live, which in turn was influenced by the availability of land and market services. For Skinner, a Chinese place was not created with deliberate design. It was a consequence of a perduring "entropy" in which households, settlements, and markets gradually established themselves and became interlinked. The key mechanism incorporating households and settlements into a distinctive place was commercial activity. Skinner maintained that Chinese central

places were those foci where products were acquired from producers, processed and packaged, and distributed to consumers. All central places were arranged in discrete hierarchies defined by economic function: higher-level places served a network of lower-level places by providing transactional services for all lower-level places. Besides these points on central places, Skinner emphasized that Chinese places varied greatly in terms of size. He suggested that traditional China consisted of eight independent macroregions (1977). Each macroregion had a core-periphery structure. Regional cores were areas in which resources, production, investment, and commercialization were relatively concentrated. Peripheries, by contrast, had much less access to all that was available in the cores. The macroregions, according to Skinner, were "functional regions" because these regions were "internally differentiated," and they constituted "systems in which activities of many kinds are functionally interrelated" (1977:216).

My study takes as its point of departure Skinner's brilliant observation that the making of places played an important role in the making of Chinese society. But, more immediately, it begins with some major questions which arise from his functionalist "marketing model." Skinner obviously attributed the formation of places to the rational choice-making of individuals, market forces in society, and functional organization of regions. What about the role of political forces and their subjected agents? In particular, did the centralized state not play some role in the whole process which Skinner was describing? If Skinner was right in suggesting that the Chinese macroregions were relatively autonomous, how can we explain the existence of the centralized state? How did the ordinary inhabitants conceptualize places? Were economic mechanisms the only source of subjective place creation? In order to answer these questions, more recent inquiries on Chinese place institutions should be considered.

Since Skinner wrote, the importance of place in the formation of Chinese social ordering has been accepted by many social scientists of China. Nonetheless, many scholars have paid attention to political and cultural facets of Chinese place institution and conceptions. Among others (Rozman 1977-78; Esherick 1987; Sands and Myers 1986), I want to identify two contesting approaches. For the purpose of this article, I shall label them respectively as "*administrative space theories*" and as "*religious and symbolic theories.*"

By "administrative space theories," I refer to discussions of Chinese place institutions which emphasize the political role of place. In such theories, the role of place is considered in terms of the state's local social control, in which Skinner himself only showed a limited degree of interest. Place network and identities are seen as the product of a political process. The state is perceived

as a political, "civil," and military force that constructs the place systems it uses to effect its domination in society. Because of this "state" focus on the construction of place, researchers using this approach naturally turn to how the state tries to govern its subjects through place networks. Place systems are related to the imperial administrative spatial structure and are referred to as a means of social control (e.g., Brook 1985; Wakeman 1986), and as forms of metropolitan public order and resource management (Wakeman 1982). From a more or less Foucauldian point of view, this has also been related to state policing of the household and the neighborhood (e.g., Dutton 1988; Dray-Novey 1994). The role of the ordinary inhabitants in a particular place in the making of place is thus seen as "passive" or "receptive."

Administrative space theories have not been directly involved in rethinking Skinner's model; nonetheless they have presented an importantly different view of Chinese place-making. Comparing administrative space theories with Skinner's functional theory, we find that administrative space theories regard Chinese place institutions as political products, whereas Skinner perceived them as market products. Further, administrative space theories propose that the centralized state has been a forceful power in society, which is markedly different from Skinner's vision of regional independence. The difference is evidently derived from the fact that administrative space theories have shifted from Skinner's "bottom-up" pattern of social analysis to a "top-down" model. Skinner was much concerned to explain how small places were integrated into larger places. In contrast, administrative space theoreticians seek to examine how the centralized state has been "segmented" into small cellular places through which individuals were manipulated (see Siu's contemporary investigation, 1989).

Adopting the quite different approach of religious and symbolic anthropology, place has also been examined in terms of ideological and symbolic models. This line has a strong genealogical connection with Skinner; but it has differed quite strongly from its ancestor. Due to the influence of anthropology, most of those who have adopted this approach have been able to pay attention to those "indigenous conceptions" which Skinner had ignored. First, Feuchtwang (1974a), and to a lesser degree, deGlopper (1974) and Schipper (1974), showed how a temple in a place, be it a neighborhood in a city or in a much smaller place (Feuchtwang 1974b), acts as a symbolic representation and boundary-definition of community. Feuchtwang allows a degree of "self-determination" to the ordinary inhabitants; as he suggests, a place is marked out by an annual cycle of rituals, which is conceptualized and practiced by Chinese individuals and groups in particular social settings.

Nonetheless, influenced by Ahern's model of the popular ritual imitation

of imperial bureaucracy (1981), Feuchtwang argues that grass-roots place-identities are at once removed from central imperial ideological and social domination and simultaneously present the logic of an "imperial metaphor" (Feuchtwang 1992a). Although they have no real political connection with the imperial center(s), folk representations of place show a large degree of imitation of the center, especially in their symbolic representations of central authorities (Feuchtwang 1993). Such a consideration leads to the conclusion that there is a linkage between centers and remote places. To explain how these grass-roots place-identities could be merged with the imperial center(s), Feuchtwang resorts to Skinner's regional theory (although he does not directly refer to Skinner). For him, there is a middle ground between the grass-roots symbolic representations of place and the state centers. This is the conception of "many centers" (or, in effect, the macroregions of Skinner's theory). This suggests that the linkage between the center and the local places is at the same time a "de-linking" mechanism. As Feuchtwang himself writes when discussing processions of territorial cults,

> "The processions of territorial cults also mark out a map of China. Territorial cults and their festivals are, as I hope I have shown, a tracery of processions which inscribe centered cells of protection. But they do not culminate in a single center . . . The 108 stars are one manifestation of this lack of integration and unification." (Feuchtwang 1992:108)

Steven Sangren (1987a), also an anthropologist, conceptualizes place in terms of local cults as well as regional pilgrimages and hegemonic cosmology. Like Feuchtwang, Sangren agrees with the thesis of the "symbolic community" and, like Feuchtwang, he sees places as inhabitants' self-representations of communal identity and solidarity. But Sangren does not use the idea of "imperial metaphoric" domination. He suggests two alternative linkages between local places and their cults.

The first is the pilgrimage ritual, a kind of collective and "sacred" tour which at once reduces the sense of local solidarity and renders such solidarity a function of regional and dynastic authorization (Sangren 1987a:61-92). As Sangren argues, politico-economic centers, in contrast to peripheral places such as rural villages, are where "root temples" are situated, and where the root temples provide symbolic supplies for local cults and areas. Pilgrimages to the root temples at the regional centers appear merely to link the local small place cults with the centers symbolically; but they are part and parcel of the regional system of politico-economic order which was first defined by Skinner.

Secondly, Sangren attempts to relate the domination of the centers over peripheral places to a cosmological structure based on the hierarchical ordering of *yin* (darkness, femininity, subversiveness) and *yang* (brightness, masculinity, domination) (Sangren 1987a:132-40), and he tries to suggest that the hierarchical ordering of traditional cosmological forces legitimates the hierarchical ordering of place systems. As he postulates, "*yin* and *yang*, disorder and order, outsider and insider, and power embodied in their respective mediations clearly antedate the full-blown emergence of integrated regional economic systems" (1987a:232). This further leads Sangren to suggest that the state was powerful enough to create a hegemony within popular consciousness, and that this consciousness itself reproduces a state cult of orthodoxy which Skinner failed to address (Sangren 1987b; see similar points in Weller and Gates 1987; Zito 1987).

Studies of place cannot avoid examining the interrelationship between "centers" and "peripheries." This is not only true of Skinner's arguments but also true of those who have researched the problem since then. By now, we have at least three theories of center-periphery relations. For Skinner, "central places" were those which emerged as the consequences of an objective history of trading, network, and urbanization, and which became "higher places" than others due to their rational economic significance. For the "administrative space" theoreticians, centers were those nodal points where administrative power concentrated and the state had an explicit presence; peripheries where those spaces which were subject to the control of such centers. For religious and symbolic anthropologists, especially those who have focused on "territorial cults," the centers are the imagined "roots" which provide the small places symbolic resources. Peripheral small places have their own order; nonetheless, such an order is integrated, either "metaphorically" (Feuchtwang) or "religious-cosmologically" (Sangren), into the realm of whatever was the "central."

Administrative space theories and religious and symbolic theories of place have developed two equally important perspectives from which to examine some issues raised in reading Skinner. These perspectives are state-society relations on the one hand, and the relations between different conceptions of place and forms of power on the other. Nevertheless, administrative space theories, by over-emphasizing the role of the state, have paid insufficient attention to how ordinary inhabitants in a particular place treat the place. Here Feuchtwang and Sangren have succeeded where the political historians failed. Their analyses of "territorial cults" have created models which can be applied in understanding popular cultural conceptions. Nevertheless, in arguing that popular conceptions of place (territorial cults) were modeled

on official politico-economic and ideological definitions of palace hierarchies, they have still not answered the question as to whether what was imitated was the official administrative space, or something else.

On the basis of this brief review, I am now able to raise afresh a few issues: Is there a connection between administrative space and territorial cults? To what extent does grass-roots ceremonial discourse of place reconfirm the official state model of social spatial hierarchies? Can we isolate popular ritual representations of place from the administrative construction of space? Is there a connection between the political linkage (administrative space thesis) and what we may call "symbolic relations" between the "centers" and "peripheries" (the thesis of symbolic anthropology)? These questions are particularly important in considering whether the ordinary people have "unconsciously" legitimated the official hierarchy of place, or whether they have had their own conceptions of place differentiation. The specification of the processes which bridge and/or differentiate between *the official state ideal model* and *popular ritual constructions* is likely to remain a key issue in historical and anthropological studies of China. My intention here is to employ a case study to shed some light on our understanding of the issues.

As I shall further illustrate in this article, *pujing* itself presents evidence that the administrative and the popular symbolic constructions of place were inseparable. The invention of the system of *pujing* was tightly connected with the China-wide imposition of administrative space in the Ming dynasty (Brook 1985). Its role, as intended by the imperial government, lay in regulating local activities, reducing deviance, creating a system of local defense, and offering a complete vision of localized imperial order. *Pujing* also served to link local places, politico-cosmologically, to the imperial state center. Nonetheless, to the ordinary inhabitants of the city, *pujing* was nothing like that defined by the official state discourse, but a kind of geographical mapping of grass-roots ceremonial activities and a blending of celebrations, communal feuds, and games of contest.

Using the case of *pujing* in Quanzhou, I want to place the administrative space theories and grass-roots theories side by side in order to see where administrative space and grass-roots locality identities fit, and where they do not. My general argument is: in the process of its formation and transformation, *pujing* not only provided a spatial projection of society for officialdom, but also offered an imperial ideal model which folklore reflected, popular ceremonial cultures imitated, and, paradoxically, against which folk cultures reacted. Relations between Chinese imperial power and popular social forces, as we can see through examining place politics and ritual, were contradictory, although under certain conditions they could lead to seeming

compliance. Sharp contrasts can be found between the ideal imperial model and the popular model. Whereas the former emphasized "order," the latter placed a heavy stress on local solidarity and "communal contests"; whereas the former served the purposes of real imperial politics, the latter served to express a popular nostalgia for local autonomy lost in the late imperial political development. The case of *pujing* thus offers a good example of the contest and co-presence of the state's centripetal hierarchical organization of places, and unofficial centrifugal conceptions of place.

Pujing and Social Control

Imperial historical discourse (e.g., HAZS 1672-1987 reprint: 1.2; QQZFZ 1763: Vol.5; DJJXZ 1842: *juan* 21; QJJXZ 1765: Vol.1) referred the origins of the *pujing* institution to an archaic time. It suggested that the ideal model of *pujing* derived from the Zhou dynasty officials' experience in the dynastic court and in the "fields of wilderness" (*tiguo jingye*), and that the *pujing* had functioned in the same way as that in which the Zhou dynasty (1122-403 BC.) governed its society. In a sense, this is quite true. Place management had existed for over two millennia before the emergence of *pujing* (Cheng 1987). However, *pujing* in its strict sense was invented only a few centuries before the imperial local records were compiled.

Pujing as a term was unique to Quanzhou, but as an administrative organ it corresponded to a China-wide administrative institution which emerged at a political transition around the late fourteenth century (Brook 1985). According to the 1842 edition of the *Jinjiang County Gazetteer* (DJJXZ 1842: *juan* 21), *pujing* consisted of two levels of urban spatial division: *jing* (places or neighborhoods) and *pu* (precincts immediately above the *jing* level). But it was inseparable from *tu* (chartered areas, higher than *pu* and equivalent to *du*, or rural chartered areas) and *yu* (urban districts, higher than *tu*).

These concepts must have been unfamiliar to people who lived in Quanzhou in the Song, when Quanzhou city was divided into *xiang* (blocks), *fang* (neighborhoods), and *jie* (streets) (Zhuang 1980; Chen 1980). Terms such as "*du*," "*tu*," and "*yu*" first appeared in official descriptions of the Yuan dynasty's administrative geography (*banji zhi*). Jinjiang county gazetteers (1765; 1842) clearly indicate that hierarchical labels of place such as these emerged in the Yuan (in Quanzhou, 1277) and replaced the Song labels. At that time, *tu* and *yu* existed within the confines of Quanzhou, but *pu* and *jing* did not.

Due to the limitations of the historical materials, it is difficult to depict clearly the Yuan dynasty's place management in Quanzhou. What is clear is that "*pu*" as a term did exist in the Yuan, but meant something quite different

from its official designation in the Ming and Qing. In classical Chinese, "*pu*" means a span of distance: it is equal to ten Chinese miles (*li*). Prior to the Ming, "*pu*" was in use as an official unit for distance measurement. "*Pu*" could also mean a postal station. In the Yuan dynasty, "*pu*" and "*yi*" were two levels of messengers' stations where official documents were transferred, and local political and socio-economic information was stored.[1]

Before the Ming dynasty, Quanzhou City's urban space was divided into units which were larger than *pujing*, which would suggest that the "cells" of the imperial administrative body had not developed as completely as did their later counterparts.[2] *Pu* as an administrative spatial unit appeared in the Ming around the late fourteenth century. The institution was modelled on the Yuan *puyi* system. However, its function was transformed from information transmission and storage into militia organization and administrative space.

The editor of the *Chongwu Garrison Town Record* (CWSCZ 1542-1987 Reprint: 6, 9-10), who wrote in 1542, showed that "*pu*" was used in the early Ming dynasty in the context of "*wopu*," which was a kind of post for military guards within the garrison town of Chongwu, some forty kilometers to the north of Quanzhou. *Wopu* were a part of the Chongwu town's defense system and they were constructed by Zhou Dexing (MS, 1962 reprint: 132), the Lord of Jiangxia, in 1387. In other garrison towns which were constructed around the same time, there were also *wopu* (QJJXZ, 1765: Vol.2). In the 1765 edition of the *Jinjiang County Gazetteer*, the editors inform us that in 1381 the households in Quanzhou were registered according to seven categories (civilians, soldiers, salt producers, handicraftsmen, archers, guards, ward militia members, and doctors). One of the categories is "*pubing*" or "militia soldiers" of *pu* (ward) units. This suggests that at the time *pu* divisions already existed in Quanzhou.

From such clues, we might conclude that the original forms of *pujing* were either posts where military security guards were on sentry duty in the sixteen garrison towns which Zhou Dexing constructed between 1381 and 1387 along the Quanzhou coast (MS, 1962 reprint: 1675-76), or militia units which were responsible for neighborhood security and control in the city of Quanzhou. The Ming local government adopted part of the Yuan's *yu* and *tu* system and added to it a "*jia*" network (each *tu* included ten *jia* for the purpose of local social control and militia organization (DJJXZ 1842: *juan* 21; QZFZ 1763: 5:11). The walled city was divided into three *yu*; the three *yu* then were sub-

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[1] The 1763 edition of the *Quanzhou Prefectural Gazetteer* states that throughout the Song, Yuan, Ming, and early Qing Dynasties, *pu* and *yi* were applied by the government as information networks. It also informs us that, at the time when the book was compiled, the *puyi* system was still in use in the rural area (QQZFZ 1763: *juan* 4).

[2] Zhuang's and Chen's archaeological data confirm this (Zhuang 1980; Chen 1980).

divided into fifteen *tu*; each *tu* was further divided into ten *jia* (DJJXZ 1842: *juan* 21; QJJXZ 1765: *juan* 3). *Pujing* must have referred to divisions of urban space which were designed for the purposes of the militia organization of urban residents.

However, in the records compiled by historians in the Qing dynasty, *pujing* was described as a system of administrative spatial divisions (e.g., QJJXZ 1765: *juan* 1-3). At what time was *pujing* transformed into an institution of administrative control? The gazetteer edited in 1765 clearly states that in the early Qing some Quanzhou civilians were forced to move from the city into the inland (*qianjie*: see Xie 1982). In 1680 most of them were allowed back into the outskirts of the city. For the purpose of registration of the returned civilians, the imperial magistrates in Quanzhou added some extra units to the *pujing* system. It is therefore quite clear that *pujing* had served as an administrative institution well before the seventeenth century (DJJXZ 1765: *juan* 21).

Why did the late imperial prefectural government invent the system? To understand what implications *pujing* had for the imperial government and society, it is necessary to relate its local imposition to broader changes which affected local political and socio-cultural developments.

Assertion of Late Imperial Order

The historical period during which the *pujing* system was invented and consolidated in Quanzhou was a time during which political conditions underwent dramatic changes. Two inseparable political changes were influential in society at the time. On the one hand, the imperial state made a forceful move to build up a border along its frontier regions on the coast; on the other hand, the increase of the Chinese empire's concern with internal stability led the rulers to try to re-shape the social order left behind by the Yuan. The invention of the *pujing* system was inseparable from political historical conditions at the time.

As one of the major commercial centers on a Chinese frontier, Quanzhou enjoyed a few centuries of free development in the spheres of socio-economy, local politics, and culture prior to the Ming dynasty. Before the second century A.D., Quanzhou was not populated by Han Chinese. The city and the region was formed by migrant groups from north China (who traced their origins to Henan, Shandong, Shanxi and other northern Chinese provinces) (Wang 1986). Between the ninth and the tenth centuries, people in Quanzhou created a free space out of this marginal region. Within this free space, important developments occurred and contributed to the expansion of Quanzhou's local economy and culture (QZGYGDHYJT 1982:31-73). Among the most

notable developments in Quanzhou during the earliest period of its regional expansion were the development of handicraft production (such as porcelain), the establishment of local marketing networks and inter-regional trading, the establishment of the city of Quanzhou as a regional commercial and political center, and the creation of a link between Quanzhou and abroad (Clark 1991).

By the late tenth century, Quanzhou had become a major commercial center in China's southeastern coastal area, and also served as a transitional point where Chinese products were exchanged for overseas products (Zhuang 1985:196-212). From then on, Quanzhou started to receive direct attention from the imperial court. Between the Northern Song and Yuan dynasties (960-1368), a number of government trading offices (*shibo si*) were established (Fu, Z. W. 1983). These trading offices served as agencies of taxation. But their existence formalized commercial activities and created, within this "marginal region," a space for economic competition and commercialization. They also seemed to the local artisans and merchants to represent official encouragement of their commercial activities. The imperial government and the ordinary residents in Quanzhou had different motives for commerce and local economic expansion: what the government wanted was fiscal income and "tribute-goods" (*gongpin*) for the emperors, whereas the local producers and merchants sought to gain private profit. But this difference of attitudes toward commerce did not hinder Quanzhou's local economic expansion. Rather, state policies and local popular interests joined together and facilitated the growth of a system of important regional markets (*shi*) in the locality.

The marginal position of Quanzhou in the system of imperial regional order also allowed the city to remove itself, to a certain degree, from the moral-ideological domination of the state. During the Song and Yuan dynasties, the "commercial spirit" enjoyed a mature development in Quanzhou (Zhuang 1985: chap. 1). At the same time, basic social control was comparatively loose. Different religious cultures and social forms were allowed to flourish in the city (QZGYGDHYJT 1982:73-86). Under such conditions, place creation and hierarchical organization in the region were formed mainly through economic processes. Clark has shown how trade and commercial networks contributed to the formation of regional centers between the third and thirteenth centuries (Clark 1991).[3]

However, from the inauguration of the Ming dynasty onward, political changes remolded this city into a different place. Two factors led to the transformation of the Chinese dynastic polity. Internally, from the Ming

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[3]This indicates that Skinner's economic "functional model" can well be applied in understanding social space in the earlier phases of Quanzhou history.

dynasty onward, the Chinese empire was confronted with greater social crises and conflicts than before (Spence and Wills 1979; Wakeman and Grant 1975). Externally, its encounter with the European and Japanese trader-warriors became a major challenge to the legitimacy of China as the "central kingdom" (*zhongguo*) in the world (Elvin 1986). Late imperial regimes, the Ming and Qing dynasties, responded to internal social crises and legitimacy crises in external relations by political and military means. Attempts were made to set up a defense system on the coast and to suppress commerce and unorthodox socio-cultural forms in the frontier areas.

A major consequence of such political change was the transformation of Quanzhou from a marginal "free space" and commercial center into an outpost of China's coastal defense and an imperial administrative center. In the early Ming dynasty, sixteen garrison towns were constructed under the supervision of Zhou Dexing, an imperial military commander who was sent by the central government to Fujian to pacify the coast (MS 1962 reprint: 1675-76). These garrison towns were dispersed along the coast and surrounded the prefectural center, Quanzhou, serving as the first layer of a defense line on the border. Inside the confines of the larger area which was created by the front-line of the garrison towns, the city of Quanzhou was further enclosed by a consolidated wall, which was also reconstructed under the supervision of the same commander.

The inner space of the city was also reformed. During Quanzhou's commercial expansion, the city had two centers, which included the government compounds, situated in the center along the axial line of the enclosed urban space, and a large commercial center (locally known as "*Jubaojie*" or "Streets of Treasure"), which was located to the far south of the government compounds. In the Ming dynasty, the commercial center in the southern part of the city was enclosed, and the spatial structure of the city was designed so that the city had only one center, which was the government compound. This spatial reconstruction was coupled with the extension of ceremonial spaces, which were the official temples (*miao*) and altars (*tan*) (QJJXZ 1763: *juan* 5). Ceremonies and ceremonial spaces of an official kind had existed in periods prior to the Ming. But they were confined to the areas surrounding the government compounds. After the establishment of the Ming, they were extended into all areas of the city (QJJXZ 1765: *juan* 15).

At first, the *pujing* system was administered in coordination with the garrison towns and the walled city as a system of militia units, and served to supply supporting militia (*pubing*) at times when the border was attacked by "foreign devils" or, in particular, Japanese pirates (QJJXZ 1765: *juan* 7). Nonetheless, after having been systematized, it was joined with the recon-

structed urban government organization and the imperial ceremonial spaces in the process of installing the late imperial social and symbolic order in the walled city.

Three imperial gazetteers describe Quanzhou's *pujing* institution systematically. These are: the Qianlong edition of the *Quanzhou Prefectural Gazetteer* (QQZFZ 1763), the Qianlong edition of the *Jinjiang County Gazetteer* (QJJXZ 1765), and the Daoguang edition of the *Jinjiang County Gazetteer* (DJJXZ 1842). These imperial local gazetteers inform us that the city of Quanzhou as a place was made up of thirty-six *pu* (wards) and seventy-two *jing* (neighborhoods or sub-precincts) in the Ming dynasty, and they also indicate that the numbers of *pu* and *jing* changed in accordance with the extension of the system into the suburban areas in the Qing (QQZFZ 1763: *juan* 11; QJJZX 1765: *juan* 2; DJJXZ 1842: *juan* 21). The Daoguang edition of the *Jinjiang County Gazetteer* (1842) lists thirty-eight *pu* and ninety-six *jing* (DJJXZ 1842: *juan* 21). Above the *pu*, there were *yu* and *tu* levels of organization. Hence, what we now know as "*pujing*" in effect refers to a system of administrative segmental organization which consisted of four levels of place division: *yu* (districts), *tu* (divisions), *pu* (wards or precincts), and *jing* (neighborhoods or places). The same book also informs us that in the Ming dynasty there were three *yu* (districts) in Quanzhou. In 1675, a new *yu* was added by including some re-allocated *junhu* (militia households) in the suburban areas (DJJXZ 1765: *juan* 21).

Even though *pujing* was based on an urban militia organization, it had served as a system of urban administrative divisions since, possibly, the mid-Ming. Below the city level, the urban area of Quanzhou was divided into four districts (*yu*); each district was separated into four divisions or "chartered areas" (*tu*); each division consisted of several wards or precincts (*pu*); and each ward or precinct had two or more neighborhoods (*jing*).

Number of *yu, tu, pu,* and *jing*

Name of *yu*	No. of *tu*	No. of *pu*	No. of *jing*
East *Yu*	4	5	13
West *Yu*	4	10	22
South *Yu*	4	15	36
North *Yu*	4	5	15
Additional *Yu* (*Fuguo*)	3	10	unknown

Source: DJJXZ 1765: *juan* 21.

It seems evident that *pujing* as a system of places (Illustration 1) was modeled on a politico-cosmology and was based upon a semi-geomantic (*fengshui*) interpretation of spatial relations. The number of four *yu*, sixteen *tu*, thirty six *pu*, and seventy two *jing* were obviously prescribed in such a way to fit into the symbolic logic of numbers. Such arrangements served to reinforce the balance and stability of spatial relations and to create conditions of "peace" (*an*) in the frontier region where a border was being established.

As I will argue in the following, the purpose of inserting the imperial cosmology into Quanzhou through inventing *pujing* was two-fold. On the one hand, it sought to ensure the maintenance of ordered relations between different entities. On the other hand, it pursued the dominance of whatever was seen as "good" or "orthodox" (*zheng*) by the defenders of universal order. As the cells of the imperial body politic, the interiority of *pujing* had the task of maintaining a full degree of "harmony" (*he*), whereas its outer order served to embody a unified higher dominating order.

Place and Social Control

The editor(s) of the Daoguang edition of the *Jinjiang County Gazetteer* made the following remarks about *pujing* in the city of Quanzhou:
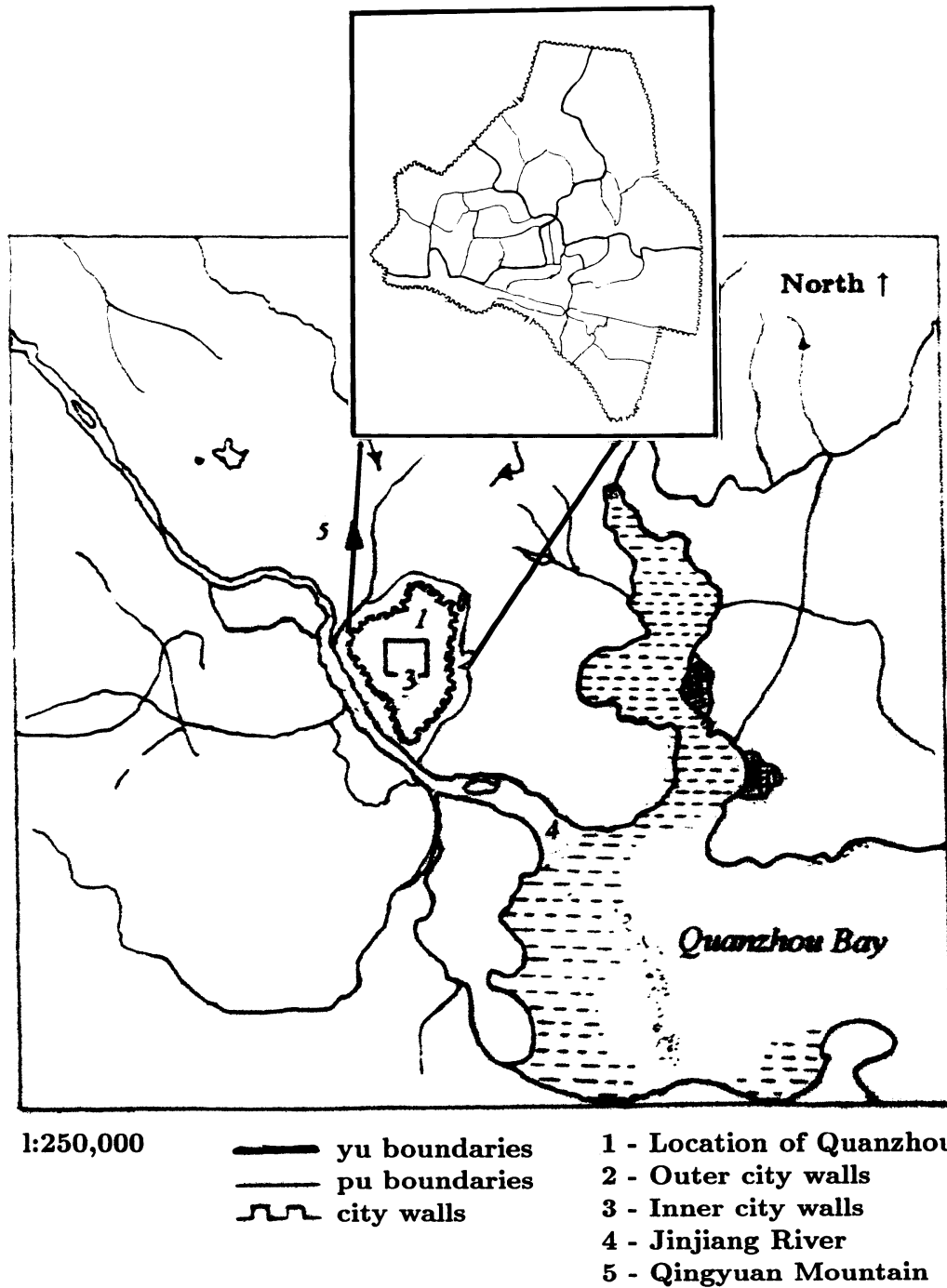
> "Through implementing the *pujing* institution, the magistrates can learn about the situations of different places, register households, observe the growth and decline of places, eliminate harmful elements and praise obedient people, and place things and people in right order. *Pujing* can assist the magistrates to implement imperial policies, supervise people's conduct, and carry out punishment. Further, it can help the governors to predict the potential development of different social tendencies." (DJJXZ 1842: Vol. 21).

To the late imperial magistrates, *pujing* was an instrument of politics, and its particular function was to maintain social order and to tie the city on the coastal border to the supreme imperial center. *Pujing* shares most of the characteristics of what has been described by Brook (1985), Dutton (1988), and Dray-Novey (1994) as administrative space and neighborhood policing. Its counterpart in other parts of China was the *lijia* institution, which was invented in the Song dynasty and continued to be used until the establishment of the People's Republic (Cheng 1987; Dutton 1988).

When analyzing forms of social control, Giddens (1985) refers to "surveillance," by which he means the integration of information and direct super-

Illustration 1

The City of Quanzhou in the Ming and Qing Dynasties

1:250,000

▬▬▬ yu boundaries
───── pu boundaries
⊓⊔⊓ city walls

1 - Location of Quanzhou
2 - Outer city walls
3 - Inner city walls
4 - Jinjiang River
5 - Qingyuan Mountain

Note: This map is imprecise. It is based on Chen and Lin 1990, and on my own preliminary researches between 1989 and 1990 (Wang 1992).

vision of human conduct. He points out that social control is based upon the regulation and coordination of activities through manipulation of the setting in which these activities take place. Social control requires "segmental spaces" where information concerning human activities can be obtained, and through which activities can be timed and located (Giddens 1985:44-47). I believe that the system of *pujing* can be described in terms of what Giddens has defined as "surveillance," so long as we are aware that "surveillance" existed in China in an earlier phase than that of the modern nation-state, with which Giddens is mainly concerned.

If we can accept these terms of analysis, then do we know how the spatial system for surveillance functioned? In particular, did each *jing* and *pu* have an office to regulate local social life? Did it have officials or police to control local affairs? What rules did the *jing* and *pu* have for the "harmonizing" of local social relations? Neither the *Prefectural Gazetteer* (1763) nor the *Jinjiang County Gazetteers* (1765; 1842) provide detailed information. When I visited the remaining sites of old *pujing* temples (I shall return to this point later), I found that the original term for the temples as used in inscribed temple stele was not "*miao*" but "*yuesuo*" (community compact hall). This indicates that the focal places of *pujing* must have been "*yuesuo*," which in turn may have been combined temples and public affairs offices for the particular *pu* and *jing*.

Some forty kilometers to the north of Quanzhou, a rural county (Huian) under the control of the same prefecture, also had a system of place administration similar to *pujing*. This system was designed at the same time as that of the city of Quanzhou, as an intrinsic part of the prefecture's regional ordering of geographic space. The basic units of this system were also *pu*, even though districts were called "*du*" (garrisons) instead of "*yu*," and neighborhoods were called "*jia*" instead of "*jing*." The *Huian County Government Manual* compiled in the Ming dynasty (HAZS 1987 reprint) provides detailed documentation on the practices of this place administration system. Strictly speaking, the records in the book are about Huian county. But they can also inform our analysis of the *pujing* institution in the city of Quanzhou, because both systems originated from the same government project and served the same purposes.

The role of the *pujia* (precinct and tithing) system in Huian exhausted all senses of surveillance. The original form of *pu* was "*xunjing pu*" or "neighborhood police posts" (HAZS 1987 reprint: 1.2), whereas "*jia*" (tithing) was transplanted from the imperial *lijia* institution. A *pu* was one of the several sub-units of *du*, more militarily organized territorial units. It consisted of several *jia*. According to the idealized description of the earliest compiler of

the book, Ye Chunji, the main governors of a *pu* included four persons: one *jia* chief (*zongjia*), one sub-*jia* chief (*xiaojia*), one *bao* chief (*baozhang*), and one deputy *bao* chief (*baofu*). They were all locally elected and approved by the higher-level government units. *Jia* chiefs were responsible for military affairs. They reported directly to the military *du* chief and organized local militia activities.

Apart from military functions, *pujia* served four other major purposes. These included: (1) organizing meetings and celebrations at local territorial patron temples; (2) registering households; (3) supervising local people's conduct and collecting information on conduct; and (4) maintaining local public order. The interior political spatial design of a *pu* consisted of a territorial altar or patron temple called a "*tan*," arrangements of households according to numerical orders, and a group of socially superior governors who served as the "gate-keepers" of the *pu*.

Each *pu* had a *tan* in which the grain god (*liji shen*) and the place god (*lishe shen*), as well as the local territorial patron (*shi zhu*), were placed. Within the temple, the north part of the space was allocated to a representative from the *du* and the governors of the *pu*. Between the deities and the governors was a space for religious specialists. Ordinary members of the *pu* were excluded from the enclosed temple and were placed outside the gate of the temple to witness proceedings of meetings and ceremonies organized by the governors (Illustration 2).

Several records were kept in the temple. These were community compact regulations (*xiangyue*), lists of households, and registration documents of new immigrants who just moved into the particular *pu*. A temple or *tan* was intended as a focal point of *pu* as a place. This was where disasters such as floods, fire, theft, disease, and crimes were reported to the governors and gods, publicized to the people, and resolved. It was also where local civil disputes such as those regarding marriage, land ownership, property, and exchange of goods were mediated by the governors and elders of the *pu*, and where deviance and criminality was punished in front of the public. On three occasions (the fifteenth days of the fourth and the seventh months, and the first day of the tenth month), universal salvation festivals (*pudu*) were officially organized to exorcise diseases and hungry ghosts, for the purpose of reducing popular fears. The compiler of the manual summarized these functions of the temple as "praying when there are requests" (*youqiu bidao*), "swearing when there are disputes" (*youyi bishi*), "punishing when there is misconduct" (*youguo bifa*), and "exorcising when there are malevolent demons" (*youhuan birang*) (HAZS 1987 reprint: *juan* 10).

Illustration 2
The Ideal Model of the Official Pujia Temples in Huian County
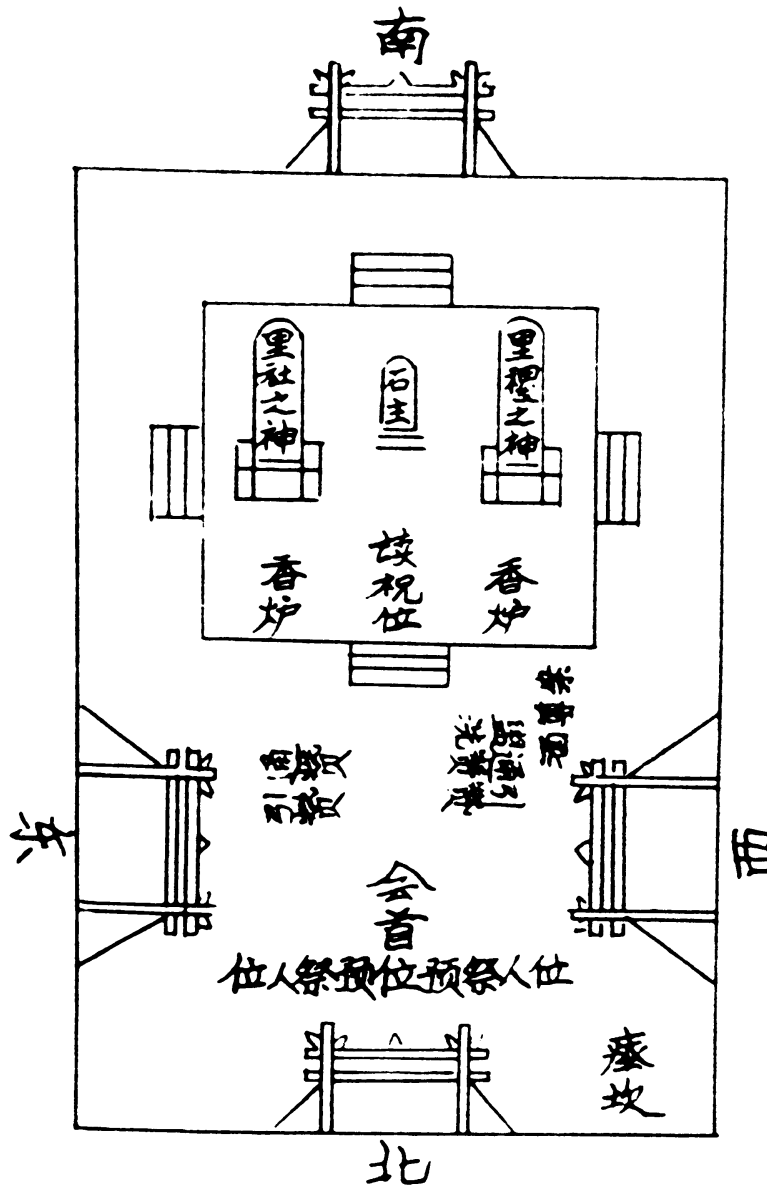
Source: HAZS 1987:345.

In a *pu*, each household (*hu*) hung up a placard (*pai*) distributed by the *pu*, on their front door, which not only indicated the registration number of the household, and the name of the *jia* and *pu*, but also indicated the number of men and women in the household, their social status and occupation, their ownership of land, number of rooms, details of visitors, number of cows, horses, and agricultural facilities, and birthplace. These details were also reported and catalogued in a household registration book (*puce*) kept by the *jia* chief in the *pu* temple.

The governors of the *pu* were the prime agents of the government, who were responsible for supervising people's conduct and maintaining local public order. But these two tasks of the *pu* were also assigned to the members of *pu*, who were, ideally speaking, organized as militia.

Juan 12 of the manual cites eight model regulations of the community compact (*xiangyue*). Because of their direct relevance to our understanding of place administration, I now translate them selectively:

(1) (*Pu* members) should behave according to the regulations put forward in the community compact.

(2) Strengthening neighborhood watch: . . . (*Pu* members) should conduct a mutual watch. If they find persons who speak different languages and dress strangely, they should report it to the government. The reward for this will be the same as for reporting robberies. Otherwise, if strangers turn out to be responsible for harmful events, those who met them and did not report to the government should be punished along with the criminals. *Pu* members should also report to the government misconduct such as gambling.

(3) Careful place patrol: In the city, each *pu* should assign five persons each night to conduct patrols. In rural areas, each *pu* should instead have ten persons to take up the task of patrol . . . in order to discover unusual events.

(4) Networking the local defense system: A drum has been installed in each *pu* at a critical position . . . When facing emergencies, a place should send someone to hit the drum. Hearing the sound of the drumbeats, all other places should respond and also beat their drums . . . Drumbeats mean military emergency. So all *pu* members should find their weapons and await *pu* chiefs' mobilization.

(5) All *pu* members must regularly conduct military exercises.

(6) People in each *pu* should equalize their wealth and poverty. Households with a lot of property are known to the robbers. They would do better to distribute some of their wealth to other people in order to enhance their reputation among the people, and donate some of it to the government for purchasing weapons. By so doing, they then can reduce the risk of robberies.

(7) Prohibiting aggression and violence (on the part of the *pu* governors): Those governors who are weak and unwise are often not able to make decisions and carry out policy. But those who are stronger and more clever often become treacherous persons. A better way for the governors to be is to exercise self-control, to conduct themselves as a good model for the people, and to refrain from infringing upon the rights of other *pu* members.

(8) If *pu* governors think too much of their own families, they often become hesitant in implementing government policies, and set obstacles to the implementation of the law. The government will punish such governors severely. (HAZS 1987 reprint: 12:370-74).

To what extent these regulations were put into practice remains a problem to be debated. However, there is no doubt that they were prevalent as official ideal models in southern Fujian during the Ming and Qing dynasties, and were coordinated with the imperial patriarchal order (Zheng 1992:229-41). The *xiangyue* was addressed to three audiences: ordinary members of the *pu*, wealthy *pu* households, and *pu* governors. To ordinary *pu* members, it sought to provide a set of guidelines for conduct and unified militia action. From wealthy households, it required a kind of personal sacrifice to public order. For *pu* governors, it warned against "personalization" of administrative power, and against distancing themselves from dynastic concerns through "using the public cause to gain private power."

The outline of the *pujia* system in Huian most probably also represents the intended functions of the *pujing* system in the city of Quanzhou. *Pujia* in rural areas and *pujing* in the urban setting were both modeled on a political design of locality, neighborhood, and household control, the origin of which can be traced back to Wang Anshi's *baojia* plan (Dutton 1988), the implementation of which in Quanzhou was not effected until the early Ming dynasty. In Quanzhou, the counterparts of the temple-offices or *tan* in Huian were the "*yuesuo*" (community compact hall) temples. Each *pu* or each *jing* also had several governors who responded to events "for the people" in front of the temple's altars, and in front of the higher level units of local gover-

nance. These locally-elected governors were also required by the magistrates to organize public and ceremonial activities, to register local households, and to supervise people's conduct.

Symbolic Organization of Space

The first set of "nexus points" which linked the small places, *pujing*, into a place network was the system of districts (*yu*) and divisions (*tu*). However, *yu* and *tu* were not what we may call "central places," as they were merely collections of *pu* and *jing* and did not have offices and other functional organizations. The only task they had was to transfer information from lower-level places such as the *pu* and *jing* to the prefectural magistrate. But both the system of *pujing* and that of the *yu* and *tu* were further integrated vertically by imperial city buildings. These buildings were more like "central places."

Even though the city as a totality of space was not to be compared with the emperor's capital, its plan bore some resemblance to the latter. This formed a cosmological legitimacy of imperial dominance, as discussed by Feuchtwang (1992:27-28). In a sketch view of the city, as it was represented for the imperial court, the *pujing* vanished. Replacing the *pujing* was a walled space, marked out by government compounds and the major official state ceremonial places. The wall of the city had seven gates (all of them constructed by Zhou Dexing). Four of them were located in the south; the east, the west, and the north walls each had one gate only. All seven gates had temples of the war god (*guandi miao*) immediately inside the gate, facing outwards. In the south part, many more gates were constructed, expressing a concentration of the defense system against forces from the south, in opposition to the imperial north (QJJXZ 1763: Vol. 1-5).

Under the protection of these military and symbolic forces, along the axial line but somewhat north of the center, a series of government office buildings were placed. The major building was that for the use of the "local emperor" (*tu huangdi*), or the prefectural chief (*tidu*), whose south-facing direction was protected by a gate-building (*jiaolou*) and, further to the south, by another gate-building (*chongyang men*). To the north of the prefectural chief's office was what was called "the gate leading to heaven" (*chaotian men*), or the northern gate of the city. The spatial relations between the prefectural chief's office and the north gate obviously expressed a linkage between the emperor and local governance. This link was once again confirmed by two major symbolic buildings: the altar of the place god and grain god (*sheji tan*) and the city god temple (*chenghuang miao*), both situated in the northern part of the city. Both of these two buildings bore the symbolism of the authority of the prefectural government, as local representative of the state (*sheji*) and

as organizer of urban affairs. The difference between the two was that the altar of the place god and the grain god was only open to visits from officials, while the city god temple (Zito 1987) was meant to receive regular visits of delegations from each *pu* and *jing* (Illustration 3).

Surrounding these central structures were several pairs of imperial religious and cultural buildings. These were the two major temples for the literati (*wenmiao*), in the northeast and the southeast of the city; two imperial academies, in the east and the south of the city; and two major official Buddhist temples, in the west and the east parts of the city. The largest Daoist temple was situated in the east central part of the city. Close to the gate in the south-eastern part of the city was a large ground for training of imperial troops (*yanwu chang*).

In sum, what the city's higher-level places symbolized was the local presence of imperial militarism, political control, and culture. Such a system was imposed on the city from the "beyond" (*shang*), and it existed "beyond" the basic social units of *pujing*. The city as a total place was distanced, in the vertical sense, from the bottom of society, *pujing* and their included households. But, intruding upon the urban society, it created a vision of unification as it organized the cellular units of that society into a political body.

Pujing in Popular Representations

How did the ordinary inhabitants in Quanzhou respond to the state imposition of a structured social space? Did they accept the readily available, idealized imperial model? Available data suggest that the *pujing* system was imitated in popular ceremonial culture. In Quanzhou, the most important popular rituals were territorial festivals. An official history written in 1573 already contained a brief record of territorial cult festivals and processions (WQZFZ 1573: *juan* 3). In a later edition of the same history, further descriptions of such popular celebrations were made (QQZFZ 1753: *juan* 20). The *Miscellaneous Notes of Fujian* (*Min Zaji*) written by Shi Hongbao (MZJ 1858) mentions that territorial divisions, "*fenshe*," played a central role in Quanzhou's popular celebrations. According to Chen Deshang, who wrote in the late Qing, the so called "*fenshe*" were in fact "*fenpu*," or divisions of *pujing* (Chen 1985:91). Chen further indicated that the imperial *pujing* system was employed as a model of community division used in grass-roots rituals.

Did popular festivals demonstrate, then, popular compliance with the imperial model? Scholars who have been impressed by the term "hegemony" (e.g., Sangren 1987a and b) may wish to argue that they did. For them, my evidence may merely indicate the existence of a dominant ideology in folk

Illustration 3

Imperial City Temples in Quanzhou
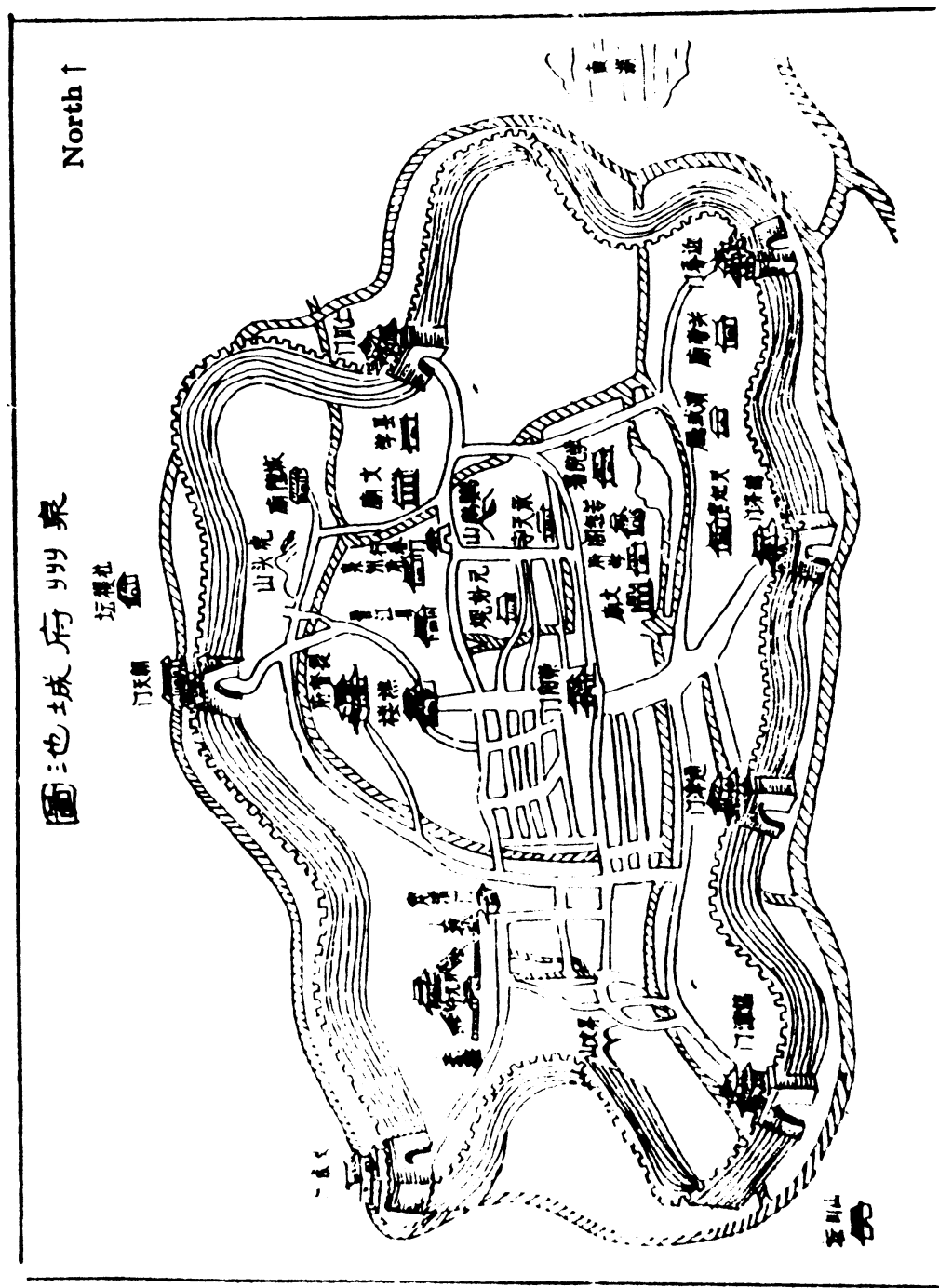
cultures. But is this the case? My analysis of the data leads me to conclude that popular imitations derived from nothing but an attempt to authenticate and disguise *unofficial* kinds of social spatial conceptions and grass-roots protests. I want to argue that, while *pujing* was used by the imperial magistrates in a *centripetal* manner to serve the imperial absorption of localities, *fenpu* as a folk model was constructed in a *centrifugal* manner to facilitate the development of *alternative identities and visions of society.* In consideration of the fact that territorial divisions and their popular festivals led to disorder and feuds, finally, I shall argue that territorial festivals were communal contests in which a game of enterprise was performed. But first, let us examine how the imperial administrative space was transformed into ritual conceptions of local solidarity.

Popular Cults of Place

Popular conceptions of place were based on territorial cults and their temples. The original temple buildings were the community compact halls (*yuesuo*) of the imperial *pujing*. The community compact halls had been turned into territorial temples as early as the Wanli reign of the Ming (1573), when popular temple festivals were first mentioned (WQZFZ 1573: *juan* 3). The territorial temples served greatly different purposes from the community compact halls. In the imperial design, the community compact halls were public places in which local political and social affairs were dealt with. By contrast, in popular ceremonial culture, they formed sites where popular festivals were held. In the 1753 edition of the *Quanzhou Prefectural Gazetteer* (QQZFZ 1753), this altered function of territorial temples (*jingmiao*) was mentioned in the chapter on local customs (*fengsu*), rather than in that on administrative institutions (*jianzhi*). According to Chen and Lin's research (1990), by the Qing dynasty, each *pu* or *jing* had a temple (*pujing miao*).

As we can still observe today (Wang 1992:132-63), each *pujing* temple has a local patron deity. The interior design and allocation was arranged in a similar way to that of an imperial government compound: the god usually had the title of "*di*" (emperor) or "*wangye*" (king or lord). Temple festivals were occasions on which the gods' birthdays were marked. Worship during normal times and also at the festivals repeated the procedures of communication in the courts of imperial magistrates. Along the two sides of the temple, images of police (*bantou ye*) were placed in such a way that they seemed like commanders of the public.

As Ahern (1981) shows, the Chinese worship of gods resembled petitions addressed to the imperial magistrates. In popular ritual in Quanzhou, a territorial patron god, whether it was a local deity or an imperial historical figure

such as the War God (*Guandi*), was treated as the foremost authority of the place (*pu* or *jing*). It provided clues to local people's destinies (*mingyun*); resolved their mental uncertainties; provided "solutions" to their practical problems; and, for doing so, it received respect. This imagined authority was created in the popular search for religious means of managing local affairs. As Ahern notes, this authority was distinguished from the real political authority of the imperial magistrates, even though it was modeled on imperial prescriptions. It represented a popular effort to turn what was a distant but real authority into an intimate symbolic authority.

Territorial cults and their temples also created a sense of identity which differed greatly from the model provided by the imperial administration. In the imperial plan of the city, boundaries between *pujing* had only relative significance (especially because they were vertically integrated through *yu* and *tu* and through the imperial city temples). So long as they made it convenient for the government to implement social control and subjection of the inhabitants, they needed no further reinforcement. This image of boundaries was replaced in popular ceremonial culture by a strong emphasis on local autonomy and solidarity.

Each year, a ritual called "*zhenjing*" or "guarding the territory' was conducted in each *pu* and *jing* (Wu 1985:157-71), which reconfirmed the boundaries of the *pujing*. The ritual was performed in two phases: one part in the spring and the other in the winter. In the spring, a date was chosen by divination within the territorial temple for a ceremony which was known as "*fangbing*" (sending the guards to stand sentry). On this day, all households within the same *pu* or *jing* placed offerings at the main entrances of their homes in order to placate the guards (*bing*) and generals (*jiang*). Near evening, a image of the *pu* or *jing* patron god was carried in a procession to survey the territory (*xunjing*). The route of the procession was the border line of the *jing* and *pu*. During the procession, a talisman was attached to each dividing point between different *jing* and *pu*. In the winter, the same series of ceremonies was repeated, though at this time they were called "*shoubing*" (calling back the guards).

The rituals of "sending the guards to stand sentry" and "calling back the guards" formed an annual cycle. In this ritual cycle, a year had a beginning and an end. It began with the task of guarding the territory and ended in the accomplishment of this task. Repeated annually, the ritual cycle constantly created a local time-space which differentiated one *pu* or *jing* from others.

The adaptation of the *pujing* institution in popular ceremonial cultures was further systematized in the *pudu* (universal salvation) festival. Chinese celebrations of the *pudu* festival are ritual expulsions of ghosts. Such celebra-

tions had close connections with an ancient convergence of Buddhist, Daoist and folk religious doctrines (Weller 1987a). However, as Feuchtwang (1974b) and Sangren (1987a) have shown, grass-roots expulsions of ghosts were in effect a redefinition of communal boundaries. Ghosts were conceptualized in Chinese folk ideologies as "strangers" to a particular community (Wolf 1974). Ritual expulsions of them sought to exclude these "strangers" from the community, and by doing so created a border between the community itself and neighboring places (Feuchtwang 1974b). This interpretation seems also valid in the case of Quanzhou.

Historical documents indicate that the *pudu* festival was an occasion on which the *pujing* divisions for a time became the defining feature of social activities (MZJ 1858: additional notes; Chen 1985 reprint: 84-96; Wu 1985 reprint: 138-43; Ke 1985: 143-50; Ruan 1962:40-51).[4] In Quanzhou, the *pudu* festival was a three-month celebration (from the first day of the sixth month to the end of the eighth month). Each month was a cycle of time and space. The three-month celebration repeated a monthly cycle. In the celebration, the city was divided into thirty units. Each unit took turns holding the celebration for a day, in a monthly cycle which was repeated three times.

Much like the *zhenjing* ceremonies,[5] the *pudu* festival displayed a ritual reconstruction of the divisions of the imperial *pujing* system. The rotational expulsion of ghosts was a series of ritual occasions on which different *pujing* sought to "purify" their territories. They were also occasions for them to mark the uniqueness of their own territorial identities. The three cycles of rotation were called respectively *shuqi* (establishing the banner), *pudu* (universal

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[4] A local tale suggests that the rotation institution was invented in the Qianlong reign of the Qing dynasty (1736-1795). According to the tale, prior to the Qianlong reign, celebrations of the festival did not take the form of rotation. In the Ming dynasty, all *pujing* marked the Ghost Festival on the same day (the 15th of the 7th month). In the early Qing dynasty, due to different *pujing*'s competitions over control of resources such as food and opera troupes, conflicts between *pujing* frequently occurred. At a certain stage, the feuding caused bloodshed. After that, different *pujing* were divided into the losers and the winners: the losers had to postpone their celebrations one day after the precise date of the festival, whereas the winners kept the conventional date for themselves. However, such a binary division still could not resolve the conflicts. Thus, in the Qianlong reign, local gentrymen proposed to the magistrates that celebrations could follow the pattern of the *pujing* divisions and the duration of the festival could be prolonged to three months. The proposal was approved and was imposed by the magistrates. The rotation institution thus became a local custom. We do not have written historical data to validate the tale. If this is the case, then it will be an interesting story of interaction between magistrates, the gentry, and ordinary ritual organizers and participants.

[5] "*Zhen*" in this context designates both "purification" and "exorcism." "*Zhenjing*" therefore means the purification of community and exorcism of "external evils" such as demons (*gui*) which may intrude upon the community. In the *zhenjing* ceremony, gods (*shen*) were sanctified as local patrons.

salvation), and *luofan* (lowering the banner) (Ke 1985:143-50). According to Ke's folkloric and historical research, each *pu* or *jung* had its own territorial banner. In the first month, each territory had a special date to hoist its own banner in front of the territorial temples. The banner remained hoisted until the end of the festival. It is evident that the banner was a symbol of territorial identity. The series of occasions on which it was hoisted and lowered were times for a *pujing* to sanctify its local unity.

Without doubt, the territorial units were integrated into one or several higher orders, but they were not integrated into the imperial regional hierarchies. Sangren has argued, on the basis of Taiwanese materials, how lower-level territorial cults were vertically integrated into regional networks which culminated in certain regional central places (Sangren 1987:105-26). Sangren related the map of popular territorial cult areas to Skinner's regional place model through the conceptualization of "root temples." This seems not to be convincing.

Territorial cults in late imperial Quanzhou traced their origins to certain "root temples" in a similar manner to Sangren's Taiwanese case. But the regional network of cults did not quite fit into the imperial place hierarchies. If Sangren's argument were applicable, then territorial temples in the city of Quanzhou would have all become the root temples of small temples and shrines in the prefecture's subject counties. But this was not the case. In the city of Quanzhou, only a limited number of "*wangye*" (kings or lords) temples were regional root temples (Chen and Lin 1990). Most other territorial temples had their root temples in the countryside. These were mainly the Baosheng Dadi (God who Protects Life) temple in Tongan, the Linshui Furen (Goddess Lin) temple in Gutian, and the Qingshui Zushi (the Zushi God in Mount Qingshui) temple in Anxi. It seems that the lower-level places (in the subject counties of the prefecture) in the ideal imperial model were treated as higher-level places (those in the prefectural capital) in the popular territorial cults.

Festivals, Feuds, and Games of Enterprise

Territorial festivals in Quanzhou had in common three characteristics. First, they were extremely "noisy" (*nao*), "chaotic" (*luan*), and "ecstatic" (*kuang*). Second, they often led to feuding violence (*xiedou*). Third, wealthier households in each *pujing* seemed to be active in the organization of the festivals.

Official histories invariably depicted popular territorial festivals in terms of "chaos" (*luan*). The editor of the 1573 *Prefectural Gazetteer* (WQZFZ 1573: Vol. 3) mentioned that during local festivals people in Quanzhou "got

drunk day and night" and "still did not want to stop drinking." In a vernacular history cited in a later edition of the gazetteer (QQZFZ 1753: Vol. 20), the popular "craze" for territorial temple festivals in Quanzhou was vividly described. Temple festivals which occurred on the dates of local deities' birthdays were known as *"hui"* (communal celebrations). On such occasions, each *pu* or *jing* collected donations from its member households. In addition, some households contributed specially shaped images of gods (*foxiang*). Processions of masked dancers, operatic troupes, musicians, people who held flags and weapons, and those dressed in uniforms of soldiers or costumes of classical dramas marched in the streets. The cacophonous "noise" of music and human voices as well as firecrackers continued late into the night (QQZFZ 1753: Vol. 20). The editor of the gazetteer concluded that those who celebrated such festivals looked as if they were "mad" (*kuang*).

Imperial magistrates obviously regarded territorial festivals as a threat to public order. Attempts to ban the festivals were made from time to time. For example, a public notice by the Fujian provincial government in 1871 strictly prohibited territorial festivals (YJYSCHZ 1871). It stated: "Territorial temples throughout the province customarily hold their own festivals. Such festivals easily cause disputes and public disturbances. They might even induce disasters. Therefore, they should be banned." However, the efforts of imperial officialdom were obviously unsuccessful. The "chaos" of festivals was repeated annually (QNZZ 1606: Vol. 2; MZJ 1858: additional notes). Until the beginning of this century, it still dominated Quanzhou's ceremonial landscape. Wu Zeng, a new local gentryman who wrote in 1908, criticized territorial festivals by saying that "operatic plays confuse people's mentality and arouse chaos" (Wu 1985 reprint:114).

A psychology of festival ecstasy may lead to the conclusion that festivity is about the construction of emotions, or feelings of collective involvement and sentiment. If this is the case, then we could argue that such sentiments and feelings are social. They are social in the sense that they create social conditions under which individual and group activities facilitate the free expression of such emotions. I should say that these festivals were also political because they were expressed in a manner which the ruling power sought to prohibit. This point may be further elaborated by way of looking at the "violent" aspect of these festivals.

In the countryside, communal feuding was closely linked with lineage feuding (Lamley 1990:27-64). In the city of Quanzhou, where lineage organization was less territorialized, feuds occurred between different *pujing*. Territorial (*pujing*) feuds were prevalent throughout the Ming and Qing dynasty among the local inhabitants (Li 1989).

What caused the conflicts was a binary division of the *pujing* system. This is what is locally known as "*Dongxi Fu*" (Eastern and Western Buddha Divisions). According to Ruan, He, and You's survey (1962:40-51), the *Dongxi Fu* divisions emerged in the early Qing dynasty, although it is unclear what led to the invention of the divisional system. *Donxi Fu* was a kind of regrouping of *pujing*, an alternative integration of *pujing*. In this system, individual *pujing* units were identified either with Dong Fu (Eastern Buddha) or with Xi Fu (Western Buddha). Those *pujing* units which shared the same identity did not share an area of residence; neither did they share the same cults. The headquarters of the two divisions were, however, situated in the West End and East End of the city respectively.

Conflicts between *pujing* which belonged to rival divisions frequently occurred. The major cause of the conflicts was always one *pujing*'s transgression of a rival *pujing*'s boundaries in its processions. For example, in 1800, on the tenth of the second lunar month, a procession from a Western Buddha *pu* carried the images of their *pu* cults through the streets of the city toward a major Daoist temple, the *Yuanmiao guan*, in the East End of Quanzhou, where they wanted to pay respect to the Daoist cult (*jinxiang*). On the way, they passed through the territories of some Eastern Buddha *pujing*. Soon, violence broke out when the Eastern Buddha *pujing* tried to force the Western Buddha *pujing* processions out of their territories (Ruan *et al.* 1962:49-50).

Zhenjing ceremonies and local deities' birthday celebrations were also frequent causes of feuding violence. In *zhenjing* ceremonies, images of territorial patron deities were carried along the major boundaries of the *pujing*. Sometimes, processions which were to "survey" (*xun*) the territoriality of a particular *pu* or *jing* transgressed neighboring *pu* or *jing* boundaries. If the particular *pu* or *jing* belonged to the same Buddha alliance, there was no conflict. Otherwise, bloodshed was inevitable. Sometimes, a *pu* or *jing* might become uncomfortable at its rival communities' temple celebrations. Inhabitants were then organized to cause trouble for them. Under such conditions, violence could also occur (Ruan *et al.* 1962:43).

Territorial festivals, apart from being religious communicative acts between the gods and the people, were a series of "communal contests." Wu Zeng confirmed this when he described how local *pujing*, be they poor or rich, all wanted to present larger festivals than others (Wu 1985 reprint: 122). What did the popular competitiveness mean? Lamley (1990:33-36) has argued that the communal feud in the Southern Fujian cultural area "provides evidence of local communities turned inward against themselves and the norms of their society." In his view, the feud in the late imperial period assumed "the guise of a game of enterprise." It enacted the popular

desire for an entrepreneurial culture which the late imperial ideology sought to eliminate. It was by way of shaping festivals into occasions for "contests" that the ordinary people posed a serious challenge to the authorities, and to the prescribed cultural norms. Therefore, imperial authorities showed a deep concern with the "disorder and moral retrogression" linked with festivals throughout the region. Lamley's insightful analysis enables us to perceive the territorial feud in Quanzhou as ritual actions which offered local inhabitants a space within which an unofficial ideology of competition and transaction might be enacted.

In addition to what Lamley has suggested, I should say that competition occurred not only between communities, but also within communities. In describing territorial festivals, a Qing local scholar said the following:

> All territorial celebrations are led by the individuals who are better-off and of high morality. They collect donations in order to set up *jiao* altars and employ ceremonial specialists. After the preparation, the gods are invited. Within the *jing* community, all households display offerings and burn incense in order to show respect to the gods. Some wealthy gentrymen offer petitions before especially prepared statues of gods for the benefit of the community. People call the good deeds of the wealthy gentrymen "repaying gratitude to the gods" (*saida*) (WLJS, cited in QQZFZ 1753: Vol. 20).

Another Qing scholar (Xu and Xu 1990: Vol. 2:5-6) described how Quanzhou people competed to make the most offerings during the *pudu* festival:

> During the Universal Salvation Festival, all households in Quanzhou put their offerings in the streets. They set up opera stages and display many precious things. These cost people all their property and exhaust the funds of temples . . . Even though poorer families are strained by the amount of expenditure, they never stop trying to make more offerings than the others.

Three important messages are included in these excerpts. First, in festivals, there was a major difference between those who were wealthy and those who were not regarded as such. Local wealthy individuals and households not only contributed more to the festivals, but also served to organize them. Second, the money and labor which the wealthy spent on the festivals was intended to show their gratitude to the gods. Third, there were competitions among local households in particular *pujing* to show more wealth at festivals than other households.

Perceived as an overall pattern, these three messages together indicate that economic hierarchy, a logic of reciprocal exchange between the wealthy people and the community (and between people and gods), and a fevered competition characterized territorial festivals. Gates has suggested that Chinese rituals express a popular petty-capitalist economic culture which offers a counterpoint to the ideal state model of society (Gates 1987). She has analyzed this petty-capitalist economic culture from the perspective of the reciprocity between gods and people, and a symbolic medium (spirit money) which articulates the culture. Her concept of "petty-capitalist economic culture" could well be applied to the territorial festival. According to Wu Zeng (1985 reprint: 97-125), the popular craze for celebrations in Quanzhou was encouraged by the quest for "good fortune." Contests between households to make the most lavish offerings to the gods reflected the "irrational idea" that the more offerings, the better the fortune. It was on this ideological basis that economic hierarchy was recognized and was explicitly acted out in ritual performance.

Even though the popular ceremonial culture of territorial divisions was modeled on the late imperial official ideal, it enacted a different vision of history. To the imperial magistrates, *pujing* served the purposes of administration and symbolic domination and, so to speak, of re-enacting imperial political history. By contrast, as games of communal contest, popular *pujing* festivals created a sense of enterpreneuership (Harrel 1987). This enterpreneuership grew out of the development of commerce in the heyday of Quanzhou harbor (960-1368), and in turn contributed to the expansion of local economic power. As mentioned earlier, in both the Ming and Qing dynasties, local commerce in this area was treated by the government as a threat to imperial orthodoxy, and suffered a major decline due to state suppression. The ritual exercise of "petty-capitalism" in the late imperial period was closely connected with popular nostalgia for the commercial prosperity of Quanzhou prior to the Ming. It also served to protest the state's attempt to eliminate local socio-economic autonomy. In one local folk tale, this protest was explicitly expressed.

Geomantic Tales and Popular Resistance

The tale, which was popular as a part of Quanzhou's oral tradition before and during the 1930s, when it was documented by the folklorist Wu Zaoting (Wu 1957), is an indirect folkloric refraction of the imperial *pujing* system. Yet it has a great deal of relevance to our argument. The tale is about Zhou Dexing, the imperial military commander who, as I have mentioned, initiated the *pu* militia organization, built up the garrison towns, reconstructed the city

wall, and created the plan of local imperial temples. It relates Zhou Dexing and the reconstruction of urban space in Quanzhou to geomantic myths.

The tale relates that between the Tang and Yuan dynasties (618-1368), Quanzhou was very prosperous. What gave Quanzhou the vital power to develop into a major commercial center and "upper prefecture" (*shangzhou*) was its geomantic lay-out: the burial areas of the city were situated in such geomantic positions that the ancestors of Quanzhou people could bequeath to their children the potential of becoming emperors. The shape of the city was like a carp, a kind of geomantic positioning highly beneficial to local people's success and profit. The twin pagodas that were built in the Tang dynasty were left by the ancestors of Quanzhou people as signs of wealth, prosperity, and energy; the rivers in the area were veins of energy which connected Quanzhou to sources of geomantic power (*qi*).

When Zhu Yuanzhang first established the Ming dynasty (1368), he worried about the geomantic power of Quanzhou city. He was aware of the fact that Quanzhou might spawn emperors who might replace him. He thus appointed Zhou Dexing as the Lord of Jiangxia to conduct a geomantic survey of the city. Zhou, who had once been a geomancer but later became an official, found that what the emperor had told him was true. For the sake of the emperor he served, and for the purpose of gaining personal promotion, he designed a plan to destroy the geomantic order of Quanzhou. He tried to cut the "veins" (*mai*) which supplied vital energies to the people of Quanzhou. First, he tried to burn the twin pagodas. But he failed to do so because the God of Rain (*yushi*) knew his conspiracy and poured water upon the pagodas to extinguish the fire.

Secondly, he planned to build some bridges across the rivers in the area. These rivers linked some prosperous households in Quanzhou to the caves of the moon and the sun (*riyue xue*) and they channeled vital energies from the caves into Quanzhou. Putting bridges across them was intended to block the flow of energies. When Zhou Dexing was carrying out the construction, however, he ran into major difficulties. The rocks which he wanted to cut into pieces for construction refused to fall apart. Only by employing the full repertoire of his geomantic techniques did he succeed in moving the rocks. Further, to destroy the geomantic harmony of Quanzhou, Zhou built seven temples for the War God (*Guandi*) and seven wells.

The story adds that Zhou Dexing finally managed to create conditions under which Quanzhou's vital energies were reduced. Nonetheless, Quanzhou people took revenge on him by utilizing tricks: they performed funeral music at Zhou's farewell party and they set up a stone altar above his grave to damage Zhou's geomantic energies and by so doing turned Zhou into a person

without offspring (*duanzi juesun*).

About the origin and authorship of the story we have no clear evidence. The way in which Zhou Dexing is described seems to suggest that the story emerged not long after Zhou's tenure in the city. According to Wu Zaoting, the tale was known to all households in Quanzhou throughout the Ming and Qing, and was still popular at the time he documented it. Whatever the origin, the tale makes decided commentaries on the imperial ideal model.

This is a history of the conflicts between the imposed imperial model and the local model of order. The central argument in the story refers to the intrusion of supra-local political domination on the local universe. In the folk tale, everything that was imposed by the late imperial regime is seen to be destructive of local geomantic order. The new buildings, walls, temples, wells, and so on (e.g., *pujing*), which represented the effort of the imperial state to create a local presence for itself, were all perceived as ominous things. In historical terms, the folk tale reflects critically on the imperial model of spatial organization, and expresses the local people's strong consciousness of what the Ming dynasty was attempting to do—to eliminate the "commercial spirit" and local autonomy which had rendered Quanzhou much benefit in the Song and Yuan periods.

Pujing and the Jiao Ceremony in 1896

In the above, I have contrasted two different conceptions of place which co-existed in Quanzhou. It is unsurprising that under certain conditions the two different systems of thought and practice could be brought together. But does their convergence lead to the assumption of an agreement of ideologies and social space between them? In order to answer this question, I want to consider a special event. This event was a *jiao* (conventionally translated as "universal renewal") ceremony, which was held in 1896 and involved the *pujing* system. This was an occasion on which an attempt was made to "orchestrate" different socio-cultural forms in a singular movement.

The special event was hosted by an officially-recognized Buddhist temple, the Chengtian Shi (CTWYPU 1896). The *jiao* ceremony at the Chengtian Shi was initiated formally by Buddhists, Daoist specialists, local officials and gentrymen, and representatives of ordinary inhabitants, in response to the widespread fear that had run through local society after the debacle of the Sino-Japanese War of 1895. Two reasons were put forward by those who organized the ceremony to explain why the ritual should be held (CTWYPD 1896:1-3). The first reason was concern over the tragic deaths of so many Chinese soldiers in the war. As the proposal for the ceremony suggested, even though the deaths did not occur in Quanzhou, they produced a host of

mournful souls (*shanghun*) which might roam the land of Quanzhou. A *jiao* ceremony should be held to placate these souls. The proposal also suggested that around the same year of the war, diseases had led to numerous deaths in the Quanzhou region. A *jiao* ceremony was also appropriate for this. The ceremony, then, was organized in response to a situation in which the larger society or "place" was faced with challenges from "outside" (*wai*), in the sense of beings beyond the human, and also in the sense of countries beyond the Chinese empire.

The ceremony was intended to overcome a series of common crises, and it therefore received attention from all sectors of local society. The imperial magistrates authorized the initiation of the ceremony. The Buddhist and Daoist specialists, who were usually not on good terms with each other, temporarily formed a coalition. The dates for the ceremony was chosen by divination in the imperial War God Temple by both Daoists and Buddhists. The magistrates, who did not usually recognize popular territorial deities and temples, were willing to mobilize these on behalf of the religious specialists.

The central ceremony, which lasted forty-nine days and nights (starting on the sixth day of the tenth month, 1896), was organized by the joint efforts of the magistrates, the Buddhists, the Daoists, and local gentry representatives, and was held at the Chengtian Shi. In the central temple precincts, altars were set up. The highest religious authorities in the ceremony were the Buddha and the Goddess of Mercy. Liturgies were read by Buddhist specialists to persuade these religious authorities to catch all evil souls and herd them into an enclosed space in the Chengtian Temple. Lists of the names of the souls were then burnt in the imperial City God Temple (*chenghuang miao*), to symbolize the "forgiveness" (*she*) of the souls by the City God.

Taking the Chengtian Temple as its center, the city of Quanzhou and its subject counties were divided, according to the imperial *pujing* and *duli* systems, into forty-nine units. Each unit was allowed a day and night to conduct the Universal Salvation ritual for its own community. To accomplish the salvation, the efficacy of the territorial deities (*jinzhu*) and earth gods (*tudi*) was officially recognized. These deities were then urged, ritualistically, by both magistrates and the religious specialists to co-ordinate with the supreme authorities, the Buddha and the Goddess of Mercy. Local operatic performances, which were usually offensive to the imperial magistrates, were staged by the organizing bureau in the Chengtian Temple (CTWYPD 1896:7-9). The ordinary inhabitants, who were usually excluded from official ceremonies, were this time mobilized to participate (WYCTPD 1896:9).

It seems as if just at the time when the larger society was confronted with external challenges it was able to integrate its sub-sections into a totality.

In its intended design, the *jiao* ceremony was to purify the city as a singular place through the joint efforts of different groups and, indeed, to demonstrate to insiders and outsiders alike that the city was a unified place. But was this attempt successful? It seems so at first glance: the convergence of greatly different social groups was demonstrated through the ritual joining of the different kinds of cults which were active in the city: the standardized imperial cults such as the War God (*Guandi*) and the City God (*Chenghuang*), the Buddhist cults of the Buddha and the Goddess of Mercy, and the popular territorial cults of the earth gods. The coordination between these different cults was based on a division of labor. The War God and the City God were presented as supernatural forces that authorized invocations of the Buddhist cults and territorial deities; the Buddhist cults served to accomplish the salvation ceremony for all the dead; while the territorial deities were each in charge of their specific areas (CTWYPD 1896:11-20).

In such a ceremonial campaign, compromises between customarily opposed social forces and groups were required to overcome conflicts. Cults associated with popular protest were required temporarily to subordinate themselves to the higher-level imperial order. At the same time, the imperial structural orders, to recruit more support, had to allow space for the existence of grass-roots social groups and cults. Symbolically, the unity was formed in order to face their common enemies, those from the "outside." But even under such a condition of crisis, disjunctures between the imperial ideal model and the territorial cult conceptions of palace were still apparent.

In deciphering the panic of "soulstealers" in eighteenth-century Jiangnan, Kuhn brilliantly shows how a singular theme could encompass greatly different configurations of society. Stories of "soulstealers" emerged at a time when China was faced with external challenges. Fear of these roaming evils was felt by all members of society. However, "the components of sorcery lore were arranged by each social group to fit its own view of the world" (Kuhn 1990:223). To the emperor and his court, the stories were means whereby the spectre of "political crime" was created to mobilize the bureaucracy and intimidate the literati. Among ordinary bureaucrats, who cared for little more than their own political survival, the panic gave rise to a variety of stratagems of expedience. Among the common people, however, the soulstealing panic was turned into a kind of fantasy of power which mirrored state imagery.

Like the different interpretations of the "soulstealing" panic considered by Kuhn, conceptual and social configurations in Quanzhou's *jiao* ceremony in 1896 sprang from different social roles and life experiences. The magistrates and the religious specialists, as well as the gentry delegation, represented themselves in the event as what Feuchtwang has defined as "responsive au-

thorities" (1993). Like the ordinary people, they feared the disasters and the challenges. But, in their positions, they had to present themselves as effective handlers of the situation. In their respective responses, their configurations were quite different. The religious specialists and the gentrymen performed the role of media. In their report to the magistrates, they emphasized two sources of "evil": the lonely souls who died in the war and the diseases which seemed to come from nowhere. Their reflections on the conditions of life were close to the perceptions of the ordinary people. They attempted to persuade the magistrates to authorize their actions by saying that all good emperors and officials in archaic times were adept at exorcising evils for the people, and contemporary rulers should do the same (CTWYPD 1896:1-2).

The prefect (surnamed Ye) responded to the report not long after it was submitted. His document expressed strong agreement with the report and promised official support for the proposed ceremony. But Ye also expressed his deep concern about the possible harmful consequence of the ceremony:

> I have a nagging fear that the scale of the ceremony may create a chance for evil and treacherous individuals to lurk behind the scenes, to stir up trouble, and to pry into imperial secrets. Consequently, I must insist that these individuals be prohibited from taking part in the event. Only by so doing can crimes be prevented and the ceremony lead to blossoming of Buddhist flowers in this prefecture. (CTWYPD 1896:4)

The result of this was that two organizations were assigned to control the ceremony: the temporary organizing committee of the religious specialists, and the Bureau of Prolonged Welfare (*Yanxi ju*) of the prefectural government. The former was mainly concerned with ritual preparation and performance. The latter was in charge of financing and public order. They were presented in the ceremony as representatives of "officials, the gentry, peasants, artisans, merchants, soldiers, and civilians" (CTWYPD 1896:21).

We have little access to the ordinary people's perceptions of the event. However, from what officialdom said about them, we may gain some idea of what they were. To officials, the ordinary people had the potential of "stirring up trouble" and creating social chaos. Even though their cults were exploited in the ceremony, they were still subject to public security control. In Prefect Ye's public notice, they were reminded not to commit three kinds of misconduct and crime: mixing with the opposite sex, making noise and creating crowdedness, and gambling (CTWYPD 1896:5). What the prefect was afraid of, then, was *the transformation of the official ceremony into a popular festival.* In addition to the above fears, officialdom was also afraid of

the city-wide exorcist ceremony becoming transformed into territorial *pudu* festivals. The government gave each *pujing* a day to treat lonely souls within itself. But an individual *pu* or *jing* was only allowed to "arrest" the evil souls and pass the "arrested" over to the supreme authorities, the Buddha, the Goddess of Mercy, and the City God (CTWYPD 1896:9). Unfortunately, we do not know whether the ordinary people did what the magistrates wanted them to do. But the way in which they were "warned against" their own forms of celebration by officialdom indicates that they had their own understandings of social conditions which might have posed challenges to officialdom. These understandings might have also been consistent with what was expressed in their territorial festivals: a sense of local solidarity and a game of contest.

Place, Politics, and Popular Ritual

Along with the implementation of the new place administration policy since the establishment of the modern Chinese nation-state in 1911 (Duara 1988), the imperial *pujing* system has been abolished (Su 1982; Ruan, He, and You 1962; Ke 1985). Between the 1920s and 1940s, *pujing* as an administrative institution was replaced by the Republican *baojia* system (Wu 1984). In the earliest phase of Communist rule (1949-1958), a new district (*qu*) and street (*jie*) system replaced the *baojia* system. After "collectivization" and until the end of the Cultural Revolution (1958-1976), urban spatial divisions were modeled on rural communes and brigades. These divisions were finally renamed "street offices" (*jiedao ban*) and "resident's committees" (*juwei hui*). Throughout this century, *pujing* as a system of popular territorial cults has never escaped government attacks (Su 1982; Wang 1992:152-58). However, it has survived and enjoyed a partial revival in recent years. In contemporary Quanzhou, scenarios of the contest between the official residents' committees and street offices, which try to prohibit "superstition" (*mixin*), and territorial temple organizations which attempt to continue the history of the *pujing* system seems a repetition of the contest between the imperial ideal model of *pujing* and its popular adaptations in the late imperial period (Wang 1992). To a certain extent, this analysis of *pujing* in Quanzhou seems still pertinent to the current situation.[6]

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[6]The spatial pattern of the current urban administrative units in Quanzhou is strikingly consistent with the *pujing* system in the Ming and Qing dynasties. Quanzhou now has four major street committees, which each supervise approximately ten neighborhood residents' offices. Rather ironically, the ordinary people call the officially named new neighborhoods "*pu*." The work of the neighborhood offices mainly consists of household registration, propaganda, family planning, and public security. These offices are also the agencies which implement the government's policy of attacking popular religion. During the seventh month,

Throughout the article, I have stressed the double role of *pujing* in society. I began by examining how *pujing* was invented by the Quanzhou magistrates and served to incorporate local neighborhoods and households into a state-imposed spatial hierarchy. Then, I described how the ordinary inhabitants in the city responded to the imposed spatial order. Available materials indicate that the imperial *pujing* system was utilized in popular territorial rituals as a means of authentication. But after this adaptation, its meaning instantly changed. It no longer implied "cells" of the imperial administrative body, but "havens" for the people. *Pujing* divisions in popular usage were nothing other than popular communal divisions and boundaries, within which a symbolic authority was created to mark local solidarity and serve as an emblem of popular communal feeling. The spatial network, which was intended by the magistrates as a means of vertical integration of society, became transformed into a system by which to structure communal feuds and contests.

The history of *pujing* poses questions relevant to the recent academic emphasis on "hegemonic" constructions of space. In recent studies of Chinese social space, scholars seem to divide themselves into two groups, each of which entertains a special focus. As I outlined at the outset of the article, those who argue for the "administrative space thesis" tend to see Chinese place networks as "cells" of the state geo-political organ (e.g., Brook 1985; Dutton 1988; Siu 1989). Some anthropologists alternatively perceive small places as symbolic representations, and suggest that popular conceptions and ceremonies played a critical role in shaping notions of place. In this latter approach, a certain degree of the importance of the role of popular place conceptions is admitted. Nonetheless, by over-emphasizing the links between territorial cults and the imperial ideal model of spatial organization, these scholars have, like the "administrative space theoreticians," treated place as something constructed out of a hegemonic socio-cultural order (e.g., Feuchtwang 1992b; Sangren 1987a). The case of *pujing* indicates that Chinese place signification is more than the outcome of the imposition and recognition of an imperial political and symbolic order. It is an active process of the contest between different social forces over the production and manipulation of meaning. This is a process which involves not only the imperial power but also the popular audiences.

In Chinese studies, there has long been a fascination with the ways in which popular audiences "learned" from the officialdom patterns of ritual and practice (Ahern 1981; Feuchtwang 1992a; Sangren 1987a). If the formation of popular culture indeed derives from this "learning game," then what is true about it is neither what Feuchtwang defines as "metaphoric"

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they are especially active: they are assigned by the government to eliminate the *pudu* festival.

reflections, nor what Sangren sees as the structural determinism of cosmological order, but rather a translation of state politics and administration (such as the *pujing* place divisions and management institutions) into a kind of "symbolic protest" (Scott 1977; Weller 1987b) against the state politics of standardization (Watson 1985) and distantiation.

This much said, the case of *pujing* enables us to comment on the interrelationship and contradictions between a centralized state and its included local communities or, in other words, the interrelationship between an empire as an integrated system of places and an alternative system of places each with a local communal character. It is common sense that China is politically unified but does not lack "segements." The basic units of these segments are the "small places" (*xiao difang*). Are these small places part of the state geo-political structures, or are they autonomous enough to comprise their own socio-cultural universe? The case of *pujing* does suggest an answer. This is, a place can be subjected to the *supra-local political order*, but at the same time it can also serve as the location and arena for *grass-roots expressions of protests*.

Every particular place in which Chinese individuals grew up has a history. In areas which were relatively more excluded from state intervention, the history of the place was possibly a process of what Skinner saw as the formation of a local socio-economic community. But in most other areas this history is a process of political *subjection* (Foucault 1977) and *anti-subjection*: on the one hand, place origination occurs in a centripetal manner and serves to integrate socio-cultural diversities into a state structure; on the other hand, it occurs in a centrifugal manner and facilitates the creation of grass-roots ceremonial culture and local socio-economic activities. In this light, place identification is not merely about a sense of belonging but also a process of contradictions.

Glossary

an	安	baosheng dadi	保生大帝
banji zhi	版籍誌	baozhang	保長
bantou ye	班頭爺	bing	兵
baofu	保副	Chaotian men	朝天門

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chenghuang miao	城隍廟	jiang	將
Chengtian shi	承天寺	jianzhi	建置
Chongwu	崇武	jie	街
Chongyang men	崇陽門	jiedao ban	街道辦
dongxi fo	東西佛	jiao	醮
du	都	jiaolou	譙樓
duanzi juesun	斷子絕孫	jingzhu	境主
fangbing	放兵	jinxiang	進香
fenshe	分社	jubao jie	聚寶街
fenpu	分鋪	juwei hui	居委會
foxiang	佛像	kuang	狂
gongpin	供品	li	里
Guandi miao	關帝廟	liji shen	里稷神
Guanyin	觀音	linshui furen	臨水夫人
he	和	lishe shen	里社神
hu	戶	luan	亂
hui	會	luofan	落幡
jia	甲	mingyun	命運

mixin	迷信	shi	市
nao	鬧	Shibo si	市舶司
pai	牌	shili yipu	十里一鋪
pubing	鋪兵	shi zhu	石主
puce	鋪册	shuqi	豎旗
pudu	普渡	shoubing	收兵
pujing	鋪境	tan	壇
pujing miao	鋪境廟	tianhou	天後
puyi	鋪驛	tiguo jingye	體國經野
qi	氣	tu	圖
qianjie	遷界	tudi	土地
Qingshui zhushi	清水祖師	tu huangdi	土皇帝
Quanzhou	泉州	wai	外
riyue xue	日月穴	wangye	王爺
shang	上	wen miao	文廟
shanghun	傷魂	wopu	窩鋪
she	赦	xiang	廂
sheji shen	社稷神	xiangyue	鄉約

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xiao difang	小地方	yu	隅
xiaojia	小甲	yushi	雨師
xiedou	械鬥	yuesuo	約所
xunjing	巡境	zheng	正
yanwu chang	演武場	zhenjing	鎮境
yanxi ju	延禧局	Zhongguo	中國
youqiu bidao	有求必禱	Zhou Dexing	周德興
youyi bishi	有異必誓	zongjia	總甲

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