

Paper for the Wisconsin International Outreach Consortium (WIOC) conference, "A Shifting Target: The Challenge of Teaching about Global Ethnicity in the College Classroom," Madison, Wisconsin, June 4, 1997.

## ‘THE VIRTUES OF SIMULATION: REFLECTIONS ON PLAYING ‘THE CH’ING [QING] GAME’”

Richard J. Smith  
Rice University

### CONTENTS

- I. Paper
- II. Notes
- III. Handouts
  - A. Ways of World-Making: An Approach To Cross-Cultural Understanding
  - B. Collaborative Learning Exercise
- IV. Appendices
  - A. Table of Contents for the Ch’ing Game “Workbook” (consecutive pagination)
  - B. Ch’ing Game Round Cards
  - C. Situation Cards for the Third Round
- V. Some Additional Bibliographical Materials

### I. PAPER

Before discussing simulation itself, I would like to say a few words about how I view teaching generally, and how ethnicity fits into the pedagogical picture. [1].

I see teaching as an on-going negotiation between my expectations and those of the students. What I try to do in the classroom is to connect my material directly to their lives—to their backgrounds (esp. the way they were “socialized”), their values, their dreams, and their anxieties. To me, techniques of simulation are especially well suited to achieving this end. From the standpoint of content, I like to work in the tense space created by conventional dichotomies: gender differences, elite and popular culture; global and local perspectives, theory and practice; orthodoxy and heterodoxy; past and present.

My view is that learning should be at least slightly disorienting, so I try to destabilize the familiar as well as familiarize the “alien.” I like to use a wide range of often-conflicting texts (both original sources and interpretive studies), as well as a great many visual images and additional materials that convey the sights, sounds, and “feel” of the culture under discussion. Fundamentally, my teaching focuses on ways of thinking creatively about the “other,” and in so doing, achieving a better understanding of ourselves—not least, as the “other’s” other.

This leads me to the matter of ethnicity. I am an historian of China by training, and have gradually moved away from my traditional disciplinary background and toward a more anthropological interest in “culture.” By culture I mean “ways of world-making” [see Handout “A”]—socially constructed systems of shared meaning. In the case of China, my particular interest is in how a “Chinese” identity is formed, transformed, and transmitted. What, in other words, are the “patterns of behavior, features of language, beliefs and values, systems of logic, symbolic structures, aesthetic preferences, and material achievements” that at a given place and time have come to be considered distinctively “Chinese” by people who consider *themselves* to be “Chinese?”

A number of scholars, both within and outside the field of Chinese studies, have recently criticized what they have described as a Parsonian notion of culture (i.e. “systems of symbols and meanings”) for contributing to various “totalizing” and “essentializing” orientalist projects, including the rise of “academic modernization theory” and “imperialist development policy.” It has been blamed for creating a “neat divide between ‘Oriental’ culture and ‘Western’ reason,” and for providing “the most convenient” explanation for the “willful backwardness and irrationality [of so-called traditional societies] in the face of rapid global modernization.” In the view of critics such as Judith Farquhar and James Hevia, the reification of ideas and values encouraged by Parsons and his disciples has led to a “static and stagnant” conception of culture which justifies Western aggression and represents imperialism as “a salvation project.” [2]

It is not clear to me that all, or even most, of those who have employed some sort of Parsonian notion of culture in their academic writing (including John Fairbank within the China field and Clifford Geertz without) are guilty of such crimes. Nor am I convinced that the long-positing relationship between ideas, values, intentions, ideologies and other forms of consciousness on the one hand and human behavior or “action” on the other is wrong-headed. One can argue, I think, for positioning culture “in the materiality and (messiness) of everyday life” [3] without disengaging it entirely from the realm of thought.

My own work on Chinese culture has tended more toward the generalizing than the particularizing side of the interpretive spectrum. I would hope, however, that it is not viewed as either a “totalizing” or an “imperialist” enterprise, and certainly not one that valorizes or privileges Western culture in any way. [4] Indeed, one of my most successful exercises in collaborative learning (see Handout “B”)—although ostensibly designed to produce a classroom consensus—invariably leads to a dismantling or “deconstruction” of that consensus, as well as a vigorous student critique of the gap between theory and practice in various realms of American culture. It also often leads to an indictment of American pride (arrogance), individualism (selfishness), aggressiveness (imperialism), and materialism (greed).

As I have tried to indicate in the most recent edition of *China’s Cultural Heritage* (1994), my interest is in sustaining a dialectic between holistic and particularistic

studies of China. Pamela Crossley is assuredly correct in maintaining that the geographical and cultural entity of China is “a totality of convergently and divergently related localisms,” and that Chinese culture is a product of the “challenging and differentiating effects of aboriginal, border and heterodox cultures.” [5] But simply to speak of aboriginal, border and heterodox cultures is to acknowledge implicitly a hegemonic, “central,” and “orthodox” one in constant tension with them. What, one may legitimately ask, is the nature of that larger culture?

I am particularly taken by the idea of culture as “classification”—that is, the way groups of Chinese (whether they see themselves primarily as “the Han people,” “Guangdong people,” or whatever) name and arrange things and ideas into coherent systems of meaning. In this respect I identify with the interpretive outlook of Marshall Sahlins. [6] I am perfectly willing to acknowledge, however, that the “Chinese” cultures under consideration are neither static nor monolithic. They vary across time and space and according to class and gender; they are constantly changing, and are always situated in particular social and political contexts. I would also grant that these cultures are invariably the product of some sort of “invention,” and the cultural meanings produced are constantly contested by different groups and individuals.

Yet there remains a sense in which people share an identity that can not only be encapsulated by one or more self-referential terms (as opposed to designations imposed from without) but also described (again from within) as a constellation of commonly accepted attributes, attitudes, and concerns. As Sahlins points out, “In order for categories to be contested . . . there must be a common system of intelligibility, extending to the grounds, means, modes, and issues of disagreement.” It would be difficult, he argues, “to understand how a society could function, let alone how any knowledge of it could be constituted, if there were not some meaningful order in the differences. If in regard to some given event or phenomenon the women of a community say one thing and the men another, is it not because men and women have different positions in, and experience of, the same social universe of discourse?” [7]

Let me now turn to simulation as a pedagogical technique—specifically the so-called “Ch’ing Game,” invented by my friend and colleague, Bob Oxnam, more than twenty-five years ago at Trinity College, in Hartford, Connecticut. His intent at the time was “to introduce students (players in the Game) to Chinese history through both an intellectual and experiential mode.” [8] The players were to be, in other words, more than simply students of Chinese history and culture; they were also to be active participants in the simulated society and government of traditional China during the Ch’ing (Ch’ing) period, 1644-1912. Since then, other college teachers have attempted to play the Game in their courses—although comparatively few have written about it, as far as I know. [9]

I am compelled to confess here that I have not played a large-scale version of Ch’ing Game at Rice since my five-year term as Master of Hanszen College (1982-1987). But during this period I played the Game nearly every Spring as the culmination of my course on Traditional Chinese Culture (History 250/450). The primary reason I

stopped playing the Game (I tell myself) is that I never again enjoyed so much readily available physical space—space that included the expansive Master’s house, the Dining Commons and many other residential College facilities.

I have come to believe, however, that the revolution in electronic communications makes it far less important than it once was for students to share the same basic physical space while playing the Game. Web pages, e-mail, and a wide variety of innovative software applications make it possible, I think, to play the Ch’ing Game with a high degree of sophistication, integration and authenticity in several venues. Personal interaction can still take place, of course, and it certainly should; but we might also remember that an authentic simulation of life in late imperial China would not allow much direct contact between many of the individuals operating in different political and social spheres.

During the period in which I played the Ch’ing Game, my entire course revolved around it. The Game itself took the place of a final examination. Early lectures were devoted to topics such as Ch’ing political, social and economic institutions, as well as language, philosophy and religion. Later lectures stressed the importance of art, literature, music and other forms of refinement as a kind of “cultural capital” in Ch’ing society. Special sessions were devoted to discussions of Chinese law, bureaucratic behavior, social ritual, and particularistic relationships. Both lectures and exams were designed to prepare the students to play realistic parts in the Ch’ing Game, and to encourage them to think concretely about the reward structure and strategies of advancement in traditional Chinese society.

When I first played the Ch’ing Game in 1983, *China’s Cultural Heritage* had just come out. This work served as the basic text for the course, together with required readings by Jonathon Spence, *Emperor of China* (New York; 1975) and *The Death of Woman Wang* (1978), Arthur Waley, *Yuan Mei* (1970), David Hawkes, trans., *The Story of the Stone*, volume I (1973), Arthur Waley, trans., *The Analects of Confucius* (1966) and *The Way and Its Power* (1958), Patricia Ebrey, ed., *Chinese Civilization and Society* (1981), and, of course, Oxnam’s *The Ch’ing Game* (1972).

Since 1983, a great many excellent books on various aspects of traditional Chinese culture have been published—including ground breaking works such as Dorothy Ko’s provocative *Teachers of the Inner Chamber: Women and Culture in Seventeenth Century China* (1994). The 1994 edition of *China’s Cultural Heritage* takes into account much of this huge outpouring of careful and creative scholarship, including excellent new translations of Chinese poetry and prose. I must say, however, that the works by Spence, Waley, Ebrey and Hawkes are still of considerable value. [10] In an initial note on the Game—part of a special *Handbook* compiled for the students (see APPENDIX “A”)—I discussed the basic organization and aims of the exercise, including Oxnam’s idea of “rounds,” each of which represented the passing of three years’ time (see APPENDIX “B”). Special “situation cards” (APPENDIX “C”) introduced additional variables into the Game, prompting appropriate responses on the part of specific groups and individuals.

Part of my introductory note stated: “The point of the Game will be for both individual players and groups (families, clans, cliques, etc.) to improve their position in Ch’ing society by various bureaucratic and extrabureaucratic means. This should not only give the players an active appreciation of the way the traditional Chinese state operated, but also indicate the importance of informal channels of information and opportunity that existed in Chinese society as a whole.”

I went on to say that my aim was “to illustrate concretely the dynamics of Chinese political, social, and economic life. By participating in the Game, players should come to appreciate more fully the complexity of Chinese culture, with its intricate web of group affiliations, personal relationships, and codes of conduct. They will see more clearly the problem of reconciling individual interests with those of the larger group, as well as the difficulty of contending with conflicting loyalties and commitments in different social and political circumstances.”

Finally, I expressed the hope that the Game would “show the players the many ways in which “knowledge was power” in traditional Chinese society—how, for example, a knowledge of culture (in the sense of literary ability, artistic refinement, an appreciation of music, etc.) contributed to social and bureaucratic mobility. Players will see how variables such as wealth, education, birth, and personal ties affected behavior, and how intermediaries (ranging from official patrons to matchmakers and “peace-talkers”) were essential to most aspects of Chinese life.” In short, my aim was to give players in the Game a genuine “feel” for traditional Chinese culture, and an appreciation for its subtlety and sophistication.

All this remained quite abstract until we began to organize the Game itself. What follows is a brief account of this initial effort. In subsequent incarnations, many of the “bugs” were worked out, but it is important, I think, to emphasize problems as well as possibilities, and so I have chosen to convey an early account of the Game rather than a later one.

Fortunately, the students were patient during the first few weeks of the semester, and accepted on faith the assertion that things would somehow work out. The turning point came with our allocation of roles. Although initially the class size was about the same as usual (between 45 and 55 students), I had no idea how many would stay in the course past the tenth-week drop deadline—especially since I had never played the Game before and could not give the students a sense of the time involved, or even how the players would ultimately be evaluated. Not knowing what the size of the class would finally be, I decided to build the Game from the bottom up, prepared, if necessary, to whittle down the metropolitan bureaucracy rather than to eliminate the local (clan) component.

In the end, virtually all of the students stayed in the course, forcing me to devise a rather expansive version of the Ch’ing Game. [11] The first step was to discuss the various possible roles in terms of their scope, their relationship to one another, and the

possibilities each held for self-advancement, and the advancement of others. In these discussions, I tried to indicate that every role would be challenging and rewarding if played correctly, and encouraged the students to choose a part that seemed particularly appealing. If more than one person signed up for any single role, the choice would be made by a random draw. Students were allowed to trade roles if they could find someone to switch with, in order to maximize their interest. Although this process took some time and organization, it helped to generate an atmosphere of genuine involvement. [12]

The players fell into six main categories: (1) members of the Imperial Household; (2) members of the metropolitan bureaucracy (all *chin-shih* [*jinshi*] degree-holders); (3) members of the provincial bureaucracy (all *chin-shih*, down to the District Magistrate); (4) members of the Li clan; (5) members of the Yang clan; and (6) players unaffiliated with either of the two major clans—including a guild head, a divination specialist, a mediation specialist, a legal specialist, a ritual specialist, a doctor, a matchmaker, a crafts and calligraphy specialist, the head of a Buddhist “benevolent association” (a secret society “front”), and a Green Standard Captain. Each clan was of equal size (about a dozen members) and approximately equal economic resources, and each had about the same representation of different social groups. All players in the Game were considered literate, but not all possessed degrees. Within each clan scholars predominated, but there were also merchants, clerks or runners, and specialists of various sorts. Prior to the Game, each clan elected a clan head, who automatically received the *chin-shih* degree.

The provincial bureaucracy consisted of a District Magistrate, a Circuit Intendant, a Provincial Censor, a Provincial Commander-in-Chief, a Governor, and a Governor-General (initially a Manchu). The metropolitan bureaucracy included a President of the Censorate, a Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy, Presidents of each of the Six Boards, and two Grand Councilors. At the outset of the Game an effort was made to balance Chinese and Manchu officials at the metropolitan level in order to approximate the Ch’ing dynasty’s dyarchic structure, a balance that continued to exist throughout most of the game. The Imperial Household was comprised of an Emperor, an Empress, an Empress Dowager, a Minister of the Imperial Household, and a Chinese bondservant. (During the second round of the Game, one of the players decided to “castrate” himself and become a eunuch in the Imperial Household Department.)

The existence of a sophisticated imperial court and metropolitan bureaucracy contributed immensely to the Game in a variety of ways, and brought out some of the most dramatic and effective role-playing. It is thus possible to play a productive and satisfying Ch’ing Game involving these two levels alone, especially with a smaller class. On the other hand, an equally productive and satisfying Game can be undertaken entirely at the local level, focusing on social interaction and clan competition rather than bureaucratic politics. Although lineage organizations were not, of course, distributed uniformly throughout China, they nonetheless provide a convenient unit of

organization for a version of the Ch'ing Game, and can be used to illustrate a number of important points about Chinese society in late imperial times.

Our version of the Ch'ing Game focused at the local level on the district and city of Chia-ting [Jiading] in Kiangsu [Jiangsu] province. One of the reasons for this choice was my own familiarity with the area based on previous research. [13] The other reason was the availability of Jerry Dennerline's masterful study of the region at the time of the Manchu conquest, *The Chia-ting Loyalists* (1981). Although chronologically not particularly convenient (our Game began arbitrarily in the 40th year of the Ch'ien-lung [Qianlong] emperor's reign, 1775), Dennerline's book proved to be an invaluable source of information for virtually all of the players. In addition to providing the students with a vivid sense of what the Chia-ting area looked like, and where it was located, *The Chia-ting Loyalists* portrayed in exquisite detail patterns of local leadership, networks of literati affiliation, various other social roles and relationships, channels of mobility, and the activities of clans and other corporate organizations in Chinese economic, social, and political life.

Preparation for the Game—in addition to lectures, discussions, assigned texts and recommended readings—included the writing of 5-10 page papers on various roles, organizations, and systems. Each paper was designed as a reference for all other players (to be placed in the Reserve Reading Room), and was written with this specific purpose in mind. Once again, students were allowed to choose their paper topics from a list of possibilities, as long as all major topics were covered. Under some circumstances, two people were allowed to write on the same subject if they could agree on a fruitful division of labor.

Most students wrote papers on the roles they would be assuming in the Game, while others wrote voluntarily on organizations (such as clans, villages, guilds, scholarly associations, and secret societies), or systems (such as those of education, examination, law, land tenure, taxation, marketing, communications, local control, the military, ritual, religion, banking, and charity). To simplify the process of doing research, I provided a handout of basic bibliographical suggestions for each role, organization and system, placing both books and photocopies of articles on reserve for ease of reference. I also circulated a list of players, roles, paper topics and personal phone numbers in order to facilitate communication between the students and to minimize the problem of duplication of effort.

In retrospect, it became clear that I should have parceled out roles and paper assignments much earlier than I did, and that I should have encouraged more interaction between the students at the outset. Much of the success of the Game depends on a shared sense of commitment among the players, and while this shared attitude eventually emerged, it could have been generated a good deal earlier.

Another mistake I made was to give insufficient attention to the question of evaluating Game performance. Although I repeatedly stressed that the two criteria for "success" in the Game were accurate role-playing and self-advancement (or the advancement of

family and friends), I had to admit that (A) it was very possible to play one's role well and yet not advance in Ch'ing society, and (B) that I could not of course be everywhere at once to observe all aspects of the Game. My two student assistants (one graduate student and one advanced undergraduate) helped monitor the Game, but only belatedly did I come up with an effective device for encouraging proper performance and objectively evaluating it—namely, the requirement that all players keep a personal “diary” of their activities, to be turned in at the end of the semester together with official records, land deeds, money, “gift certificates,” and other relevant documents. Since this idea came to me so late in the term, it imposed an extra and unanticipated burden on the students at a difficult time for them. Nonetheless, all responded with diaries of remarkable insight and authenticity.

Another difficulty was the frantic pace of events. This problem could easily have been remedied had I not tried so hard to involve all of the players in activities during each round. Complicating matters was the lack of an efficient communications system—a limitation which e-mail could certainly have overcome. The Green Standard Captain in charge of transporting official documents became hopelessly overburdened, as did most civil bureaucrats in the absence of sufficient numbers of “runners.” Private secretaries, meanwhile, were often obliged to convey official messages from their superiors, activities that they found demeaning. My remedy for this situation, also devised belatedly, was to encourage officials to recruit friends interested in the Game but not enrolled in the course as temporary message bearers. This made it unnecessary to allocate mundane roles to full-time players.

A major problem was that of finances. Despite Oxnam's explicit warnings and his useful advice, the economic side of the Game presented several practical difficulties. [14] Originally, I thought I could dispense with Oxnam's “Game Headquarters” by having the Six Boards—the Board of Revenue in particular—assume its functions of record keeping, allocation of individual and clan income (from salaries, landholdings, and commercial investments), receipt of tax revenues, and announcement of changes in status (degrees, marriages, appointments, etc.). Unfortunately, this placed an enormous burden on the whole system, and created a great deal of inefficiency and frustration. After instituting the Game Headquarters at the beginning of the round three, we were able to collect revenue and dispense income with comparative ease, and to monitor changes in the game more readily. We still tried, however, to supply both funds and information to the Headquarters through the proper bureaucratic channels.

Our economic system was somewhat more complex than Oxnam's. Rather than establishing fixed land and commercial yields, [15] we devised a system of variable yields based on throws of the dice. In subsequent semesters creative students wrote computer programs that did this more rapidly and efficiently. At the beginning of the Game, we distributed resources to individual players as well as the two major clans. Each clan was given about 1,000 *mou* of land (c. 167 acres). Most individuals received random allocations of between 24 and 150 *mou* (c. 4 to 25 acres), although a few were given as much as 250 *mou*. Some people received cash in addition to, or in place of, land; but our failure to distribute more money initially led to a serious cash flow

problem in the first round. The merchants received several hundred *taels* worth of “gift certificates” that could be purchased from them for either goods or services.

Yields were calculated according to a formula in which landowners received between 1 and 6 *taels* per round for each *mou* of their land (a 3.5 *tael* per *mou* mean yield per round). One roll of a six-sided die multiplied by 10 determined the average yield for each ten *mou*, allowing larger landowners the luxury of less income variation. Commercial investments were calculated according to a formula in which larger investors received a yield per round of between 10% and 100% of their investment (a mean return of 55%) based on one throw of a ten-sided die, and smaller investors received a yield per round of between 10% and 80% of their investment (a mean return of 45%) based on one throw of an eight-sided die. The introduction of a greater element of risk in the Gamed tended to encourage more prudent investment, although it also complicated the financial tasks of the Board of Revenue (and then Game Headquarters). [16]

Salaries for officials ranged from 600 *taels* per round for top metropolitan officials (ranks 1a to 2b; i.e., Grand Councilor to Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy) and 450 *taels* per round for top provincial civil officials (ranks 1b to 3b; i.e., Governor-General to First-Class Provincial Censor), down to 150 *taels* per round for the circuit Intendant (rank 4a) and the District Magistrate (rank 7a). The Green Standard Commander-in-Chief also received a salary of 150 *taels*, and the Captain a salary of 60 *taels*. As a rule, we decided to lower personal incomes rather than to assess a cost-of-living fee as in Oxnam’s Game. [17]

In fact, the financial side of the Ch’ing Game must always leave something to be desired because so many important variables have to be eliminated. It is true, of course, that all aspects of the Game involve compromises with “reality;” but they seem to be especially obvious in the economic system. Yields from land ownership are generally too high, and official salaries are generally too low—especially in the absence of *yang-lien* supplement. A cost-of-living fee gives only the vaguest indication of a crucial and complex consideration. Yet without an economic component the Ch’ing Game would lose a great deal of its significance. All that can be said in defense of the above arrangements (and those devised by Oxnam), [18] is that they seem to work reasonably well in the Game, allowing sufficient scope for gifts and other merchandise to be both, for influence to be peddled, for graft to be taken, and for monopoly rights to be extended. Furthermore, additional taxes can always be levied and “contributions” requested, just as they were historically in Ch’ing times.

In a large-scale version of the Ch’ing Game, classroom space becomes as scarce a commodity as peasant capital. Ideally, there should be separate but proximal rooms for the Game Headquarters, Imperial Household, metropolitan bureaucracy, provincial bureaucracy, local bureaucracy, the clans, and non-affiliated players. There should also be a meeting place for the entire class. It is possible to divide large classrooms into smaller and relatively discrete administrative subunits, but special care should be taken to limit the interaction of players under these circumstances, since they will always be

tempted to break social and bureaucratic barriers for the sake of convenience. On the other hand, if the Game is too diffuse, problems of communication become especially acute and the players tend to become discouraged. [19]

This brings me to the general problem of frustration and fatigue. As Oxnam points out, fatigue and frustration were “rampant” in Ch’ing dynasty China. [20] Many scholars studied long and hard for the examinations, only to fail them repeatedly; merchants struggled mightily to amass wealth, only to see it snatched away by venal officials; peasants worked long hours on the land, only to find themselves victimized by natural disasters, oppressive landlords, and usurious moneylenders. Even official life was full of caprice and uncertainty. To gain a sense of these frustrations experientially is, to be sure, very instructive; but without careful monitoring of the Ch’ing Game, such feelings can intensify and become counterproductive—particularly during an extended period of play.

Fortunately, in our version of the Game the two student assistants managed to keep spirits high, offering valuable advice and constant encouragement in their capacity as “wandering clerics” (rather in the fashion of their counterparts in the novel *Hung-lou meng* (*Honglou meng*; *Dream of the Red Chamber*)). As representatives of the “supernatural world,” they received written prayers, communicated informally with all sectors of society, assisted in divination, and served ably as the agents of Heaven (my role). Thus Heaven “saw as the people saw, and heard as the people heard,” but didn’t have to do much in the way of directly intervening in their personal affairs.

My research on ritual and divination in Ch’ing China led me to believe that authentic simulation required an explicitly spiritual dimension to the Ch’ing Game. [21] By design, therefore, religious and ritual specialists, including diviners, played important roles, ranging from giving advice to individuals and clans on proper etiquette and ceremonial observances (regarding, for example, ancestor worship and the Ch’ing-ming festival), to saying prayers, selling charms, and, of course, telling the future. As with the initial allocation of land, money, and children (number, age, and gender), and the calculation of income from land and other investments, divination normally involved a system of probabilities based on rolls of the dice within certain pre-determined limits. [22] This meant, for example, that diviners were correct more often than not (the other players were told that this would be the case), but they were not infallible. Furthermore, answers to prayers and divination were often given cryptically, by reference to passages in the *I-ching* (*Yijing*; *Classic of Changes*). [23]

What other modifications were made in our version of the Game? Obviously, the more social focus of our Game entailed the creation of more non-bureaucratic roles than Oxnam’s, as well as a greater emphasis on devices other than the examination system and bureaucratic service for achieving power and prestige. Thus, while always aspiring for success in the exams and officialdom, our players worked especially hard at acquiring wealth, property, and at least the trappings of elite status (book collections, artwork, garden parties, etc.). They also devoted considerable time and energy to establishing “connections” (*kuan-hsi* [*guanxi*]) with influential members of society—officials, scholars, rich merchants, and so forth—through the giving of gifts

(in the form of “gift certificates”) and the providing of services. All these possibilities, it should be noted, were anticipated in Oxnam’s initial version of the Game.

One technique we used to give players as much experience as possible in both the bureaucratic and non-bureaucratic spheres of the Game was to rely on standard Ch’ing devices such as withdrawal for mourning (*ting-yu* [*dingyou*]), frequent transfer, and retirement to move officials out of their positions. Random selection by throws of the dice or other means kept players from taking these changes personally, while promotions, demotions and dismissals continued to reflect regular bureaucratic procedures based on triennial evaluations (*ta-chi* [*daji*]) for provincial officials and *ching-ch’a* [*qingcha*]) for metropolitan officials). At the local level, clan rules might stipulate a periodic change of leadership, but very often a clan head would enter the bureaucracy or at least be hired as a private secretary anyway, necessitating the election of a new clan head. [24] In any case, it was essential that all persons in leadership positions—whether bureaucrats or not—left specific instructions to their successors, and that clan heads in particular reminded fellow clansmen of their responsibilities, including activities such as compiling a clan genealogy, observing proper rituals, keeping up the clan temple, and providing educational and social services.

Although an examination system is essential to almost any version of the Ch’ing Game, its particular features will reflect different teaching circumstances. In our case, since we operated on a Tuesday/Thursday schedule with sessions of an hour and twenty minutes each, the students could write their examination essays outside of class rather than during the actual rounds (as in Oxnam’s Game). This saved class time for other activities, and resulted in “eight-legged essays” that reflected careful research and obvious attention to both form and style. By contrast, lectures to the Emperor by the Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy had to be prepared during each round, and were tailored to the Emperor’s particular situation. Part of the fun of the Ch’ing Game was in crafting “situation cards” to encourage maximum player interaction, both during each round and between rounds.

As must be apparent, I am convinced that it is best to spread the Game out over several days rather than to play one day in a marathon session. In the two and a half weeks of our Game (one practice round and four regular rounds) an enormous amount of time was spent by the students outside of class, not only in preparing for the examinations, but also in planning strategy. Clan members from different residential Colleges met for lunch, dinner or after meals, as did the Imperial Household and certain sectors of the bureaucracy. This kind of interaction significantly enhanced the quality of play, and was undertaken without being required.

Throughout the Game we endeavored to create an atmosphere of authenticity. Costumes were optional (few students wore anything even vaguely ethnic), but several players brought Chinese paintings and calligraphy (including one original scroll) to class, as well as books, brushes, and food. I contributed some Ch’ing period relics such as a geomancer’s “compass” (*lo-p’an* [*luopan*]) and three Ch’ien-lung coins for

the diviner, in addition to a few manuscripts, ceramics, and other props. The crafts and calligraphy specialist was continually employed during the game producing paintings, scrolls and inscriptions, and in both of the clans ritual specialists helped to construct altars and tablets for ancestor worship. Players learned gestures of respect and other visual cues from the illustrations in *China's Cultural Heritage*, Gilbert Walshe's *Ways that are Dark* (1925) and various collections of Ch'ing-era photographs. [25] These materials, together with access to numerous primary materials translated by Ebrey and others, contributed significantly to our effort to simulate Ch'ing society in a realistic manner.

It also helped, I think, to allow players to choose their own Chinese given names from a list of the 214 radicals, rather than to assign them arbitrarily. Admittedly, Oxnam's names are often very clever (at least for insiders who catch the plays on words), but the students seemed to appreciate the opportunity to put together actual Chinese characters into meaningful combinations. The names they chose for themselves and their "children" were almost invariably grammatically correct, colorful, and witty. Moreover, their concrete and creative use of the radicals reinforced a number of points about the Chinese language which had probably not taken hold in my preliminary lectures.

Also in the interest of authenticity, we used "seals" (*yin*) to validate official documents, although these were merely rubber stamps inscribed with the name of an office or a title. Most members of the Imperial Household, all major bureaucrats, and the heads of the two clans were given seals, each of which had to be carefully guarded and, in the case of bureaucrats, surrendered to successors with appropriate ceremony. Heaven also had a seal, which provided the only "certainty" in spiritual communication; that is, while prayer and divination would always be answered in some form, only messages marked with Heaven's seal could be considered "true." Other messages might or might not be true. This element of uncertainty, used judiciously, proved to be an advantage in the Game.

In our version of the Ch'ing Game, we found it expedient to meet together as a group at the beginning and end of every round. This provided an opportunity for us to distribute materials (round cards, situation cards, *pao-chia* [*baojia*] /*li-chia* [*lijia*] forms, special handouts, etc.), and, if necessary, for the Emperor or his officials to issue verbal instructions to subjects of the realm. During our practice round, the Emperor's dramatic edict to the entire class, issued on the occasion of his fortieth year as the Son of Heaven, helped set the tone of the entire Game, and established the reputation of the Emperor as a strong and dynamic ruler. Although historically implausible, his "speech to the people" paradoxically made the Game more "real." Meanwhile, the division of the class into various sectors (Imperial Household, metropolitan bureaucracy, etc.) had the effect of galvanizing these groups into unites of shared concern. The sooner this is done in the Game, the better.

What, then, were the lessons learned from the Game? Many have already been identified by Oxnam: the relationship between formality and informality in Chinese

political life; the pervasiveness (and reasons for) corruption in Ch'ing society; the power of disesteemed groups such as clerks, runners, and servants; the inexperience and insecurity of bureaucrats; the arbitrary character of decision-making; the importance of education; the regimentation of intellectuals; and so forth. [26] Our Game in particular underscored the importance of group affiliations and personal connections based on ties of blood, marriage, local affinity, and other common denominators. It highlighted the political and social value of gift-giving, the rigidity of status distinctions, the role of intermediaries, and the necessity of employing specialists in nearly all spheres of Chinese life.

The murder trial in round four (see APPENDIX "C"), which was not planned but grew out of an incident in the second round of the Game, provided an apt illustration of both the theory and practice of traditional Chinese law. It also served as an excellent example of the interplay between Confucian moral concerns and Legalist sanctions in Ch'ing administration. As it developed, the head of the Buddhist benevolent association was charged with the murder of Li Shan-yin, but judged not guilty by reason of insanity. [27] The prisoner was then released to the custody and care of her family and clan. The Governor-General brought this "final" verdict, but it was then overturned by the Emperor, who adopted—as did the Ch'ing government historically—a hard-line policy toward the criminally insane after several decades of leniency. [28] (He ordered the death penalty.) Both the Governor-General's ruling (based on the Legal Specialist's petition and the District Magistrate's preliminary report) and the Emperor's final judgment were well argued and plausible, and the five suspects in the case all acted in perfect character. Since the trial was public, most players in the Game were able to see how each of the suspects was treated, and all came to appreciate more fully the advantages members of the Ch'ing elite enjoyed in legal affairs, as in so many other realms of Chinese life. [29]

Another message conveyed by the Game was the complexity of Ch'ing administration, with its elaborate regulations, massive paperwork, overlapping jurisdictions, and poor communications. Yet another concerned the constraints operating on individuals—limitations, imposed by time, money, social position, the bureaucracy, and the needs and expectations of other individuals and groups. Our Game revealed with particular clarity the tension between individual aspirations and group demands, as well as the interplay between competition and cooperation at the various levels of Chinese society. Finally, our focus on the clan allowed us to understand the advantages of lineage organization, the economics of "corporate kinship," the obligations of clan membership, and the problems created by the particularistic loyalties of the lineage.

The diaries of the students provided a fascinating index of their cultural concerns and Game-related activities. Most were written in excellent Chinese style, some adorned with sketches and poems, and others with appropriate references to the Classics, ancestors, *yin-yang* cosmology, Heaven, fate, and so on. A number of students commented candidly on the performance of other players, displaying remarkable perceptiveness. Several players modeled themselves after characters in their readings, such as the good-hearted runner in *The Death of Woman Wang* (or at least so one

student claimed!); and a few created backgrounds and genealogies for themselves that were both interesting and credible. Not surprisingly, a number of students took the opportunity to use their diaries for naked self-promotion, indicating not only their Game activities, assets and major accomplishments, but also their in-depth knowledge of Chinese culture. One player even provided a list of persons with whom he had established some kind of *kuan-hsi*, and the specific obligations other players owed to him.

Many students remarked on the value of the Game in “bringing China to life.” One student wrote in her course evaluation: “As secretary to the President of the Board of Revenue I was able to see exactly what goes on in . . . [the Chinese] bureaucracy—the inefficiency, corruption, and deceit as well as the correct functioning of the government machinery. I feel that I learned a lot more than I would have just from readings and lectures.” Other players expressed similar views, adding that the Game was not only enjoyable and instructive, but that it also gave them an opportunity to know many more students than they would normally have had a chance to meet in a class of over fifty people.

There were, of course, complaints. Although in their written course evaluations (which, in contrast to the diaries, were accessible only after grades had been turned in) all of the students found the Game worthwhile, many were frustrated by the initial disorganization and the rapid pace of events. Most thought we should have played more rounds, and a few chafed at their isolation—their inability to see what was going on in the rest of the Game. Some admitted to being confused at times about exactly what was expected of them. As I have already indicated, these were valid criticisms, and worthy of careful consideration.

My own impressions of the Ch’ing Game coincide almost exactly with those of the students. Better planning would obviously have made a better Game. I am still not sure whether too much activity is worse than not enough, but it is evident that an appropriate balance can be reached without too much difficulty—especially if the Game is extended to say, six rounds. It would be possible (and in some cases, I suppose, preferable) to structure the Game in such a way as to indicate to the students ahead of time exactly what is to be expected of them and how events will unfold; but my own preference would still be to allow future themes and problems to emerge naturally out of the activities of the previous round. The disadvantage of this approach is, of course, that it involves planning throughout the Game, and requires continual adjustments.

In short, there are many different ways to play the Game. Interesting variations might focus on specific “neglected” social groups (women, minorities, etc.), areas with especially diverse populations, countercultural activities, and so forth. As with any class, the instructor must naturally take into account the interests, needs, and special talents of his or her students. Attention should also be given to variables such as teaching schedules, classroom space, and resources. Obviously the Game demands a significant commitment on the part of both the teacher and the class, but once the

decision has been made to embark upon the experiment, the personal rewards of organizing and playing the Game can be quite extraordinary. For my part, in twenty-five years of teaching at Rice, I have never had students who worked harder, achieved more, or displayed so much obvious enthusiasm for what they had learned (and how they learned it) than those who played the Ch'ing Game. And I can certainly say that I have never enjoyed a course more, despite the extra work and agonizing uncertainty regarding the outcome. The post-Game evaluation and discussion was as intellectually satisfying and emotionally rewarding as any educational experience I have ever had. For all kinds of reasons the Ch'ing Game—or some other form of simulation—is worth a try.

## II. NOTES

1. For a number of useful perspectives, see David Schoem, et al., eds, *Multicultural Teaching in the University* (Westport, Conn and London: Praeger, 1993).
2. Judith Farquhar and James Hevia, 1993. "Culture and Post-War American Historiography of China." *positions* 1.2. 492-494
3. *Ibid.*, p. 489
4. I might add that my use of the term "traditional" implies no pejorative judgment; it refers simply (or perhaps not so simply) to an inclination on the part of individuals and groups to focus primarily on inherited wisdom and indigenous experience as a guide to the present and future. I do not view "tradition" as bad and "modernity" (however defined) as good; nor do I accept the presumably related "Orientalist" dichotomies that artificially oppose "culture" to "reason" or "culture" to "history."
5. Pamela Crossley, "Thinking About Ethnicity in Early Modern China." *Late Imperial China* 11.2 (June, 1990), p. 2
6. Marshall Sahlins, "Goodbye to Tristes Tropes: Ethnography in the Context of Modern World History." *Journal of Modern History* 65 (March, 1993).
7. *Ibid.*, p. 15
8. Robert Oxnam, *The Ch'ing Game: History and Simulation* (New York: New York State Education Department, Foreign Area Materials Center Occasional Publication No. 18; 1972), p.v.
9. For one brief discussion, see Thomas Fisher, "Active Learning: The Ch'ing Game," *Ch'ing-shih wen-t'i*, 4.4 (December, 1980). Some recent evaluations of simulation in college teaching include: Chet Meyers and Thomas B. Jones, *Promoting Active Learning: Strategies for the College Classroom* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), pp. 89-102; Stephen Brookfield, *The Skillful Teacher: On Technique, Trust, and Responsiveness in the Classroom* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), pp. 115-131. See also Charles Bonwell and James Eison, *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom* (Association for the Study of Higher Education-ERIC Education Report no. 1, 1991), pp. 47-50; Stanford Ericksen, *The Essence of Good Teaching* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993), pp. 76-82.
10. Waley's translations leave something to be desired, of course, and the whole issue of which transliteration system to use has been complicated by the increasing popularity of the Pinyin system—which I have used in the second edition of *China's*

*Cultural Heritage* (1994). The most recent edition (1993) of Ebrey's excellent collection of translated documents also employs the Pinyin system.

11. Oxnam, p. 61, provides for modifications up to 40 players and down to 17. He indicates that with less than 17 players the Ch'ing Game "loses its vitality;" but he suggests that limited simulation exercises can still be attempted with smaller groups. I agree.

12. Cf. Oxnam, p. 12. Oxnam points out that his only stipulation during the role selection process was that the "Emperor" have an "A" average on previous work in the course. I did not make this stipulation and had no cause to regret it, since the person chosen by the random draw was outstanding. Perhaps there should be some way to assure that the Emperor will be strong and effective, but then this was certainly not always the case in imperial China. In fact, during a later version of the Game, in response to the importunings of disgruntled students, I arranged for a weak emperor to "die" mysteriously while he was attending a scholarly meeting—whereupon the merchant who had hosted the event "committed suicide" (I reincarnated him as the Dalai Lama). In any case, it should be clear that in the Ch'ing Game females can play roles traditionally assumed by males and vice versa. This is not a sexist Game, despite the sexist society it attempts to simulate.

13. Richard J. Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins: The Ever-Victorious Army in Nineteenth Century China* (Millwood, New York: Kraus-Thomson Ltd.; 1978).

14. See Oxnam, pp. 19 and pp. 51-52.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-43, 51-52, and 64-65.

16. In Oxnam's Game, each *mou* of land cost 10 *taels* and yielded 5 *taels* of revenue per *mou* per round. Cf. Chang Chung-li, *The Income of the Chinese Gentry* (Seattle: University of Washington Press; 1962), pp. 138-139.

17. See Oxnam, pp. 51, 64-65 on salaries and cost of living. Cf. Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (Oxford and New York; Oxford University Press, fourth edition; 1990), pp. 60-63; also Smith *China's Cultural Heritage* (1994), pp. 301-303.

18. Most of Oxnam's economic policies (see pp. 39-44)--including his 2 to 2.5 *tael* land tax per *mou* per round, and the idea of a licensing and customs fee of 20% for initial merchant investments—fit well enough with the modifications I have suggested. I do not, however, see the need for a cost-in-living fee unless a great many other adjustments are made in the Game.

19. The changes indicated in our round cards (see APPENDIX "B") suggest some of the logistical problems. As indicated above, new electronic technologies will no doubt make the problem of space less acute.

20. Oxnam, p. 14.

21. Eventually I published a book chapter on ritual in K.C. Liu, ed., *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press; 1990) and a book on divination titled *Fortunetellers and Philosophers: Divination in Traditional Chinese Culture* (Boulder and London: Westview Press; 1991)

22. Later on we wrote a primitive computer program that generated random numbers for various purposes.

23. My two student assistants, Gary Cole and John F. Elder IV, proved invaluable in both transmitting and receiving spiritual messages. They also played a major role in

all aspects of planning our version of the Ch'ing Game, and I owe them a special debt of gratitude.

24. A supernatural dimension to the Game provides yet another means by which it change personnel. For example, a person might “die” by a role of dice, only to be reincarnated if the proper rituals were carried out. In our Game, one player (the clan head, Li Shan-yin) was “killed” by another player, but was subsequently reincarnated as her son in the next round, after his clan observed the proper mourning ceremonies.

25. For example, Clark Worswick and Jonathon Spence, *Imperial China: Photographs 1850-1912* (New York: Crown/Pennwick; 1978) and Burton Beers, *China in Old Photographs, 1860-1910* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons; 1978).

26. See Oxnam, pp. 1-17.

27. She did, in fact, commit the “crime” in the midst of an extortion plot, on the suggestion of a wandering “spirit” in the Game. The Legal Specialist, armed with a copy of Vivien Ng's article “Ch'ing Laws Concerning the Insane: An Historical Survey,” *Ch'ing-shih wen-t'i*, 4.4 (December, 1980), argued that the defendant believed herself to be “possessed by an evil spirit.”

28. Ibid. The Emperor's hard-line policy may have resulted in part from a lecture given by the Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy on the 21st hexagram (*shih-ho*) of the *I-ching*.

29. A work of great value to players of the Game, especially in preparing for the trial, was Jonathon Ocko's *Bureaucratic Reform in Provincial China: Ting Jih-ch'ang in Restoration Kiangsu, 1867-1870* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; 1983).

### III. HANDOUTS

Handout “A”

#### WAYS OF WORLD-MAKING: AN APPROACH TO CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

“There is, I maintain, no so such thing as the real world, no unique, ready made, absolute reality apart from and independent of all [other] versions and visions.”  
Nelson Goodman (1984)

One useful approach to understanding “other” cultures is to focus on what Nelson Goodman refers to as “ways of world-making,” or what Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann describe as “the social construction of reality”—that is, the way groups of people (“cultures”) arrange things, ideas and activities into coherent systems of meaning. The fundamental assumption underlying this approach is that an understanding of another culture requires a genuine appreciation of how the people in that culture view the world—how they are socialized to accept a certain vision of the way things are, and the way things ought to be. The question then becomes: What sort of cultural logic determines whether something in a given society is perceived as “natural,” “right,” “beautiful” or “true”?

Clifford Geertz has written that one of the most remarkable features about human beings is the fact that we all have the biological capacity to live any number of different lives, yet each of us ends up living only one. How do we make our choices? Clearly they are conditioned by culture. To be sure, culture is neither static nor monolithic; it varies over time, across space, and according to factors such as age, social class, gender and ethnicity. Nonetheless, within any given social group—regardless of its size and geographical spread—there are certain broadly shared perceptions, values, and inclinations that provide its members with a collective identity. Significantly, this identity always implies some sort of “other” in opposition to it.

Of course most of us give little thought to the systems of meaning that shape our lives. How do they come into being and how do they evolve? How do we learn about them and internalize their messages? Do competing systems of meaning exist and, if so, how are conflicts and contradictions resolved? What does this sort of introspection reveal about our attitudes, priorities and anxieties? What do our ways of world-making suggest about the problems we face in trying to understand other cultures? Here are some additional questions that we might ask of ourselves (or any other society), keeping in mind certain variations based on considerations of gender, class, and ethnicity):

- How is knowledge organized? What are the primary categories of concern? What realms of knowledge are especially prized?
- How are things “named” and arranged, or renamed and rearranged?
- How is time conceived and measured?
- How is space organized?
- What are the organizing principles and basic assumptions of religious life?
- What are the dominant moral values? Where do they come from? How are they organized? Are they related? Do they ever come into conflict?
- How is government organized? How is it viewed?
- What is the place and purpose of law? What are its basic assumptions?
- How is society organized? What assumptions inform the social order?
- What are the mechanisms of social control?
- What aesthetic principles operate in the realms of art, literature, music, dance, etc.?  
What are the standards of physical beauty?
- How is history viewed? How is “history” distinguished from “myth”?
- Who are the heroes and villains of the society? Why are they viewed this way?

What other questions might be asked?

Some related readings:

Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality*. New York: Doubleday, 1966.

- Marcus, George, and Michael, Fischer. *Anthropology As Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books, 1970.
- Gates, Henry Louis, "Presidential Forum" for the Modern Language Association, *Professions* '93 (1993).
- Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).
- Geertz, Clifford. "The Uses of Diversity," *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 25 (1986).
- Goodman, Nelson: *Ways of World-Making* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1978).
- Goodman, Nelson. "Notes on the Well-Made World," *Partisan Review*, 51.2 (1984).
- Hsu, Francis. *Americans and Chinese: Passages to Differences*. 3rd edition. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1981.
- Pena, Devon G. "Diversity and Community: Two Views," *Liberal Education*, 76.5 (November/December, 1990).
- Rudolph, Suzanne Hoerber. "The Paradoxes of Transnational Learning," in George Keller, et al., eds., *Changes in the Context for Creating Knowledge*, American Council of Learned Societies Occasional Paper No. 26, 1994.
- Smith, Richard J. "All Under Heaven: The West and 'the Rest' in Humanistic Education," in Tamar March, ed. *Interpreting the Humanities*. Princeton: Woodrow Wilson Foundation, 1986.
- Smith, Richard J. China and the West: Some Comparative Possibilities, in *Liberal Education*, 73.4 (September/October, 1987).
- Smith, Richard J. "The Future of Chinese Culture," *Futures*, 1989.
- Stimpson, Catharine. "Women's Studies: The Idea and the Ideas," *Liberal Education*, 73.4 (September/October, 1987).

Handout "B"

## COLLABORATIVE LEARNING EXERCISE

### I. The Problem of Generalizing about Cultures:

We know from experience that it is virtually impossible to discuss anything substantial without making generalizations. Yet we also know (at least proverbially) that "all generalizations are false, including this one." How, then, should we approach the problem of making historical and cultural generalizations? How do we determine a meaningful (and acceptable) level of generalization? What, in other words, are the advantages and liabilities of using generalized concepts such as "Asia," "the West," "China," "the United States," etc.?

### II. The Exercise:

Chinese scholars are fond of identifying the enduring "special characteristics" (*tezhi* or *tese*) of traditional Chinese culture. One representative scholar from Taiwan, Professor

Wei Zhengtong, has identified ten such characteristics that obtained for more than two thousand years in traditional China, from about 200 B.C. until well into the twentieth century: (1) Isolated creation; (2) long history, (3) absorptive capacity; (4) unity; (5) conservatism; (6) esteem of peace; (7) feelings of local affinity (8) humane cosmological outlook; (9) family and clan system; and (10) emphasis on moral spirit. Looking at the last two hundred or so years of American history, what ten enduring and distinctive “special characteristics” of the United States would you identify? Can we come to some sort of consensus on this question? The method proposed is this: to divide the class into several groups, each of which will elect a spokesperson. The task of each group will be to reach an agreement regarding an answer to the question, from which we will then work toward a broader consensus of the class as a whole (through discussion of the points made by each spokesperson). Each group should work on finding formulations that are succinct, revealing, and as accurate as possible. Note: What Wei had in mind, and what everyone should also keep in mind, are cultural attributes that *best characterize* the society in question. Wei’s list may provide a sense of possible categories of concern, but you need not (and should not) attempt to follow his lead too closely. Also, remember that the cultural characteristics chosen may conflict (as do, for example, Wei’s number 4 and number 7).

#### IV. APPENDICES

##### APPENDIX “A”

##### Table of Contents for the Ch’ing Game “Workbook” (consecutive pagination)

##### I. Guidelines

- A. A Note on the Ch’ing Game pp. 1-3
- B. Roles in the Ch’ing Game pp. 4-6
- C. Paper Topics and Basic Bibliography pp. 7-10
- D. Chart of Official Ranks p. 11
- E. Basic Types of Ch’ing Documents p. 12
- F. Summary of Ch’ing Judicial Practice p. 13
- G. Suggested Retail Prices p. 14
- H. On Income and Taxation p. 15
- I. List of Radicals pp. 16-17
- J. Pronouncing the Chinese Language pp. 18-19
- K. Index for *Emperor of China*, *Death of Woman Wang*, and *Yuan Mei* pp. 20-22

##### II. Attitudes and Values (articles and excerpts from books)

- A. Wakeman Parable (from James Crowley, ed., *Modern East Asia*) p. 23
- B. Tseng Kuo-fan’s Letters to His Sons (from Dun J. Li, *The Civilization of China*) pp. 24-30

- C. Nathan on “Connections” (from Andrew Nathan, *Peking Politics, 1918-1923*) pp. 31-37
- D. Huang Tsung-hsi on “Wastefulness” (from Dun J. Li, *The Civilization of China*) p. 38
- E. Chu Ch’en-ying on “. . . My Wife” (from *ibid.*) p. 39

### III. Education and Administration (articles and excerpts from books)

- A. Nivison on the Examination System (from Johanna Menzel, ed., *The Chinese Civil Service*) pp. 40-42
- B. Lui on Cliques (from Adam Lui, *The Hanlin Academy*) pp. 43-46
- C. Dennerline on Factions (from Jerry Dennerline, *The Chia-ting Loyalists*) pp. 47-62
- D. Lan’s Casebook on Law (from Patricia Ebrey, *Chinese Civilization and Society*) pp. 63-66

### IV. Economics (articles and excerpts from books)

- A. Permanent Property (from *ibid.*) pp. 67-70
- B. Taxes and Labor Service (from *ibid.*) pp. 71-75
- C. Myers on the Private Sector (from Ramon Myers, *The Chinese Economy Past and Present*) pp. 76-107
- D. Myers on the State Role (*ibid.*) pp. 108-137

### V. Social Institutions (articles and excerpts from books)

- A. The Liang Clan (from Hsiao Kung-ch’uan, *Rural China*) pp. 138-140
- B. Genealogy Rules (from Patricia Ebrey, *Chinese Civilization and Society*) pp. 141-143
- C. Village Organization (from *ibid.*) pp. 144-146
- D. Marriage Contracts (from *ibid.*) pp. 147-148
- E. Description of Chia-ting (from Jerry Dennerline, *The Chia-ting Loyalists*) pp. 149-179
- F. Skinner on Mobility Strategies (from Carol A. Smith, ed., *Regional Analysis*, vol. 1) pp. 180-199

## APPENDIX “B”

### Ch’ing Game Round Cards

#### *First Round*

It is the third month of the lunar year, and time for the annual Ch’ing-ming [Qingming] festival. It is a happy occasion, marked by dramatic performances, family reunions, and ancestral sacrifices—although bureaucrats are distant from their homes,

and both major merchants are in Peking. Individuals, families, and clans should make appropriate arrangements.

At Chia-ting, members of the Li and Yang clans, as well as unaffiliated scholars, specialists, and others, find themselves in the same general area (Physics #212) after enjoying a play. Relations between the two clans are cordial, but there are rumors of impending problems—possibly a property dispute. Each clan should therefore solidify its leadership, take stock of its resources, and update its genealogical records, while still attending to its various ceremonial, educational, and charitable duties. For some reason, the Taotai takes a particular interest in these clan activities, and ought to be informed of them.

Members of each clan, as well as unaffiliated individuals, are naturally anxious to perform their civic duties and to promote their own special interests, providing advice, goods, or services to those who may be in need. (In some cases, a bit of carefully considered “self-advertisement” may be appropriate.) Merchants at the capital, and the guild head at home will be the principal source of supply for goods of all kinds, including items of food for ritual use—represented by “gift certificates” (or “commodity certificates,” if I can ever get around to making them). Ritual and religious specialists may give advice (it is Ch’ing-ming, after all), peddle charms, etc. The divination specialist should be in demand for a number of reasons, as should the crafts and calligraphy specialist, who will make party invitations, write auspicious inscriptions, etc. The mediation specialist and legal specialist may be contacted since there are rumors of a rift between the Yang and Li clans. For future rounds, everyone should acquire as much potentially useful information as possible. This applies especially to the matchmaker and the mediation specialist (who may have to assume a matchmaking role if marriage business is brisk).

At the capital and in the provinces, officials are in the midst of reconsolidating the bureaucracy after a major purge. They are concerned primarily with reestablishing normal bureaucratic procedures (especially land registration and, near the end of the round, evaluating subordinates), and insuring the proper flow of paperwork to the throne and elsewhere. Secretaries will probably have to be hired by several officials. The Green Standard Captain will be in charge of transmitting official documents. It is time to begin establishing (or reaffirming) personal relationships (*kuan-hsi*) and other affiliations. *Keep a diary* (to be handed in at the end of the semester). You can operate outside of class. Return to Physics #210 at 2:15 p.m.

### *Second Round*

Players: You and your children are all three years older now (and, of course, wiser). It is time again for the Empress Dowager’s birthday and for congratulations to be sent from all quarters. The country is recovering from the devastating effects of a major earthquake which, among other things, destroyed part of the Summer Palace. Meanwhile, flooding of the Yangtze River has covered 50% of the Yang clan and Li clan lands, as well as—remarkably enough--25% of each personal holding in the Chia-

ting area. As if this were not enough, there is a dispute between the Yang and Li clans regarding 100 *mou* of unflooded land adjacent to government lands that each clan claims. Since both clans have armed to resist local banditry, there is danger of a conflict. Worried over the situation, the Emperor plans an inspection tour of Kiangsu province for the third round, and will stay three days in the Chia-ting area.

The Emperor has also declared that he intends to “reward the virtuous” throughout the realm, and seeks information on noble and upright actions undertaken by his subjects. Many people will want him to know of their good deeds, but few will be able to inform him of them directly. Individual and collective interests will have to be reconciled.

Bureaucrats must remember that when they leave office they should provide a set of instructions to their successors, and that they can recommend subordinates not only for actual positions, but also for expected vacancies (*hou-pu/houbu*) and titles. Clans, for their part, should take an active role in publicizing the accomplishments of their respective members (e.g. building memorial arches, hanging banners for examination successes, etc.). Within the bureaucracy, remember the rule of “frequent transfer.” Public announcements of new bureaucratic appointments and examination results (by the Board of Civil Appointments and Ritual, respectively) should be made at the beginning and/or end of each round. Finally, if you have nothing specific to do, work for the advancement of yourself, your family, and your friends.

Practical tips: “Gift certificates” can be used for all kinds of goods and services, including repairs; see the handout on “Suggested Retail Prices.” Room schedule today only: Physics #210, Imperial Household and Metropolitan Bureaucracy; Architecture #230, Li Clan; Architecture #229, Yang Clan; Architecture #210, Provincial Bureaucracy; Architecture #218, Unaffiliated People. Return to Physics #210 no later than 2:15. *The last two sessions will be at Hanszen House.* People can eat lunch at Hanszen and other Colleges in the area to spread the burden. Remember to keep a diary.

### *Third Round*

#### Timetable:

1:00 Meet in living-room/foyer are of Hanszen House

A. Allocation of room space: (1) Master bedroom (Emperor, Imperial Household, etc.); (2) Guest bedroom (Metropolitan Bureaucracy); (3) Child’s bedroom (Game Headquarters and Spirits); (4) My study (Provincial Bureaucracy); (5) Living room (Li clan Tues.; Yang clan Thurs.); (6) Den (Yang clan Tues.; Li clan Thurs.); (7) Foyer and Dining Room (Specialist and others)

B. Distribution of Materials

C. Announcements by Emperor (Search for the virtuous; marriages; imperial tour; etc.)

D. Announcements by Board of Revenue President (Establishment of “Game Headquarters”)

1:10-1:40 Administrative details

- A. Distribution of income from Game Headquarters (salaries, yield, etc.)
- B. Work on pao-chia registration, taxes, etc. (see below)

1:40-2:00 Imperial tour

- A. Reception by Governor and Governor-General in Soochow (patio) c. 1:45 (c. 5 minutes)
- B. Visits to Li and Yang clans respectively (c. 5 minutes each); 2:05  
Distribution of “late” situation cards

2:10 Pao-chia registration forms and taxes due

A. To be sent to Magistrate’s office by 2:10

2:15 Meet again together in living-room/foyer for final messages

- A. E.g. Emperor’s announcement of exam question for final round (note: a purchased *chien-sheng* [*jiansheng*] degree costs 100 *taels* for commoners, 50 *taels* for *sheng-yuan* [*shengyuan*]; pay the Board of Revenue.)  
As the above timetable indicates, the major event this round is the imperial inspection tour—although there are a couple of imperial marriages to celebrate. The major institutional adjustment is the establishment of a Game Headquarters. Other situations: deaths in the families of at least two officials, and investigations concerning the reported disappearance of the head of the Li clan (Li Shan-yin). Certain clues may be revealed, but they are definitely “true” only if they bear Heaven’s seal. All in all, there will be many opportunities for legal, religious and other specialists to ply their “trade.” The final round will probably involve a trial (conducted by the Governor) after preliminary hearings conducted by the Magistrate. Anyone “arrested” by a proper authority (G/S/ captain or constable) must go to jail at the outset of round 4. For guidance, see Oxnam, pp. 44-45 and our red booklet.

#### *Fourth Round*

1:00 Assemble promptly in living room of Hanszen House

- A. Distribution of materials should already have taken place
- B. Announcements by Emperor
- C. Announcements by President of Board of Revenue

1:10-1:40 Administrative details

- A. Distribution of income from Game Headquarters (1:10-1:20)--merchant "contributions" due at 1:20 (Board of Revenue)
- B. Magistrate's office compiles dossier on murder investigation (1:10-1:20) and forwards it immediately to Governor's office

1:20-1:40 Public trial at Governor's yamen (patio); Governor-General presiding; Governor and officials from Censorate and Board of Punishment should be present or represented. The personal secretary of the Governor or Governor-General should take notes.

1:40-1:45 Summary reports of trial sent to the Emperor with other documentation  
 1:45-1:55 Emperor's review of sentence

A. Deliberations with high officials and imperial family

1:55 Reassemble in living room for imperial edit

A. Emperor's pronouncement on the trial

2:00-2:20 Evaluations of the Course/Game (be brutally frank; Heaven won't see these until after the grades are in)

*General Situation:* The emperor is still ill, but recovering. Prayers, gifts and good wishes apparently work wonders. On the other hand, there are military disturbances on the northern frontier, and problems in the provinces. At Chia-ting, the body of Li Shan-yin, former head of the Li clan has been found, the victim of strangulation. Circumstances suggest a relationship between the murder and extortion attempts. Several suspects have been identified, and all possible witnesses are encouraged to provide relevant information to the authorities before they are jailed and forced to testify. Warrants for arrest cannot be resisted, and voluntary surrenders will be viewed favorably. The kitchen will be the jail. As indicated above, the Governor-General will personally conduct the trial, based on his own investigations and materials supplied by the District Magistrate. The case will automatically be reviewed by the emperor. Remember to make copies of documents—especially for the trial—and that clues with Heaven's seal are definitely true, while those without the seal may or may not be true. Also, this is your last chance for marriages, adoptions, land purchases, etc.

*Final note:* Diaries, official records, land deeds, other property, cash, and other relevant materials should be turned in to one of the History Department secretaries in a package *with your name on it* as soon as possible. This applies especially to graduating seniors.

APPENDIX "C"

Situation Cards for the Third Round (Note: Each situation card was written separately on a 5" x 8" card, which was then folded and stapled, with the (Chinese) name of the recipient written on the outside. The third round was the only one in which I both remembered and had time to make copies of most of the major situation cards.)

*Emperor:* Your schedule appears on the round card handout. Enjoy yourself. Note: Following his imperial tour, the Emperor received a late situation card, indicating that he had fallen gravely ill.

*Empress Dowager:* Accompany the Emperor on his tour of Kiangsu. Bring the Emperor's favorite bondservant and eunuch along. Will the trip be safe? Remember, there are rumors of sedition.

*Empress:* You will assume the reins of government in the Emperor's absence, together with the Grand Councilors. For your information, the President of the Board of Works, your fellow clansman, has lost his father.

*Minister of the Imperial Household:* You will need to explain your absence to the throne. Stay in Peking and assist the Empress.

*Bondservant:* Accompany the Emperor and Empress Dowager on their inspection tour. You will be responsible for managing affairs, together with the eunuch.

*Eunuch:* What if something happened to the Emperor during his inspection tour? Keep records for the Emperor on his journey, and stay vigilant.

*Grand Councilor (Chinese):* You will help the Empress govern in the Emperor's absence. Your Manchu colleague has suffered a tragic loss, but her loss may be your political gain. Be aware of the possibilities.

*Grand Councilor (Manchu):* Alas, both of your parents have died in a mysterious accident. You must withdraw for mourning, although, as you know, the period is not as long for Manchus as for Chinese. Surely your fellow provincials in Kiangsu will want to honor your deceased parents in some way. Remember to "restrain yourself and restore the rites."

*President of the Board of Revenue:* Your father has passed away after a long illness. Withdraw for mourning and carry out the appropriate rituals. How should your father be remembered?

*President of the Board of Ritual:* You may soon be receiving the examinations of Li Shan-yin's son and an unnamed military man; they should, perhaps, receive special consideration.

*President of the Board of Works:* The Emperor will want to know about your role in ameliorating distress in Kiangsu after the Yangtze River floods. What about dike repairs and land reclamation?

*President of the Board of War:* Communications in the empire are said to be atrocious, and there is unrest in Kiangsu province. What are you going to do about these problems?

*President of the Board of Punishments:* The Emperor would appreciate accurate information on the recent death of the Li clan head in the Chia-ting area.

*President of the Board of Civil Appointments:* About halfway through the round at least two officials will have to leave office to enter mourning: the

President of the Board of Revenue and the Manchu Grand Councilor. These are important vacancies to fill, even if only temporarily.

*President of Censorate:* Rumors abound concerning a killing in the area of Kiangsu; investigate. Also, what happened to the Yang clan money from the Board of Revenue? Investigate.

*Chancellor of the Hanlin Academy:* You must prepare a lecture for the Emperor upon his return from Kiangsu. The topic is: “By honoring men of virtue and talent, the sovereign is preserved from errors of judgment.”

*Governor-General:* You should arrange a reception for the Emperor in Soochow before he visits Chia-ting. Naturally the Governor will handle the details. What do you know about the death of Li Shan-yin?

*Governor:* Prepare a reception for the Emperor together with the Governor-General. You will handle the details.

*Circuit Intendent:* Check on the merchants. Are they paying their taxes? Any evidence of corruption? Report to the proper authorities.

*Provincial Censor:* It is rumored that the former District Magistrate ordered a bribe to a clerk or runner to kill the Li clan head—reportedly because Li Shan-yin was planning to reveal the Magistrate’s misdeeds. Investigate this situation.

*Provincial Commander-in-Chief:* Good luck on your exams. What kind of security will there be for the Emperor’s inspection tour? There may be an opportunity for you here.

*Green Standard Captain:* You’ve been a Captain long enough; make use of your contacts and see if you can find out what happened to Li Shan-yin. There ought to be something in all this for you. Be careful, though; wild accusations will only bring trouble. Do you know anything about the Buddhist “benevolent association?”

*Li Shan-yin:* If your clan undertakes the proper sacrifices, you will be reborn as your son. In the meantime, you will serve in Game Headquarters (the worst of the Ten Courts of Hell!). You must not discuss what has happened to you with anyone.

*Yang Clan Head:* It is rumored that you or one of your clansmen killed the head of the Li clan. The legal specialist should be consulted in the event of an investigation or trial. You have heard that the Guild Head was involved in a dispute with the Li’s over a commercial transaction. Could he be the culprit? There are also rumors of a conflict between the former District Magistrate and the Li clan. Perhaps the Magistrate is involved in some way. Use your contacts to look into these possibilities. Meanwhile, don’t forget the imperial tour.

*Li Clan Head:* The spirit of Li Shan-yin is restless. How might it be placated? What has been done to find out how your former leader died? Have you prepared for the imperial tour?

*Legal Specialist:* The killing of Li Shan-yin has created quite a stir. Your services should be in great demand, but you should find out as much as you can before you act. How might you acquire the information you need?

*Mediation Specialist:* Your efforts have not gone unnoticed by Heaven. Keep up the good work and consider using what you know to advance your interests. Check with your friend the matchmaker on the Li Shan-yin affair.

*Doctor:* Your services will probably be needed later in the round. Be prepared for a major opportunity.

*Head of the Buddhist Benevolent Association:* Things are heating up. You are, it is rumored, a suspect in the Li Shan-yin affair, although there are at least four other suspects. These include the head of the Yang clan, the former District Magistrate (and/or her underlings), and the Guild Head.

*Divination Specialist:* The Buddhist Benevolent Association is a front for a secret society. You may give this information to those who seek your guidance *on their own*. Further divination may bring additional information (Seal of Heaven).

*Matchmaker:* In the course of your activities you have learned that the head of the Buddhist “benevolent association” once had a grudge against the Li clan head, and that she has always had a rather unsavory character. Be careful whom you tell, however, lest you become involved in litigation.

## V. SOME ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS FOR THE QING GAME

### A. Some print bibliographies

The most complete and up-to-date print bibliography on China is the annotated work by Charles Hayford titled *China: World Bibliographical Series*, volume 35 (1997). See also Harriet Zurndorfer’s valuable *China Bibliography* (1995). An older, but still very useful bibliographical reference is G. William Skinner’s massive three-volume work (separate volumes for Chinese-, Japanese- and Western-language articles and books), titled *Modern Chinese Society* (1973). The best on-line bibliography is clearly the *Bibliography of Asian Studies* (<http://bas.umdl.umich.edu/b/bas/>).

### B. Some useful on-line bibliographical sources

A Visual Sourcebook for Chinese Civilization (University of Washington):

<http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/>

Bibliography of China:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/FergAB/ChinaBib.htm>;

Bibliography of China: <http://violet.umf.maine.edu/~mshea/China/bibtxt2.html>

Bibliography of Chinese history and culture:

<http://zinnia.umfacad.maine.edu/~mshea/China/bibtxt2.html>

Bibliography on Confucianism:

<http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/Asian/templebiblio.html>

Bibliography: Chinese Families, Gender:

<http://library.kcc.hawaii.edu/asdp/biblio/women's/easian/china/chinesef.html>

Center for East Asian Studies Resources (UCLA):

<http://www.isop.ucla.edu/eas/Resource.htm>

China WWW Virtual Library: <http://sun.sino.uni-heidelberg.de/igcs/>

Chinese Internet Sources: <http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/CHIINRES.HTM>

Chinese Studies Virtual Library:

<http://coombs.anu.edu.au/WWWVLAAsian/China.html>

“East Asia in World History” (Columbia University):  
<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/eacp/webcourse/index.html>  
Fairbank history website (China): <http://www.cnd.org/fairbank/>  
Feminism in China <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/chin.html>  
History of China: <http://www-chaos.umd.edu/history/toc.html>  
Internet East Asian History Sourcebook (Fordham University):  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/eastasia/eastasiasbook.html>  
Modern China: <http://deall.ohio-state.edu/denton.2/elec.htm#D>  
Modern Chinese History: A Basic Bibliography (Qing dynasty):  
<http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/chinesehistory/bibqing.html>  
Online Bibliographies for Chinese Studies: <http://sun.sino.uni-heidelberg.de/igcs/igbiblio.htm>

C. A few other useful on-line resources (with word-search capabilities):

JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org/>)  
Lexis-Nexis: <http://riceinfo.rice.edu/Fondren/Indexes/Restricted-LN/lexis.html>  
Project Muse (<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/>)