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SPECIAL ISSUE ARTICLE

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Warfare, Imperialism, and the Making of Modern Chinese History: A Review Essay

Abstract This historiographic essay contends that warfare made and unmade the Qing dynasty between 1644 and 1911, and its study has helped to create the field of modern Chinese history during the past seventy years. It advances three principal claims. First, the literature on war, especially interstate conflict, can serve as a synecdoche for the development of the modern China field as a whole since the 1950s. The research interests of late Qing specialists have oscillated along an "external–internal–external" axis that corresponds with three distinct periods of intellectual inquiry, scholarly production, and generational dominance. Second, historians have reached inaccurate conclusions about the state capacity of the Qing Empire after 1840 through a crude analysis of the First Sino-Japanese War, a mistake they can rectify by adopting a longer-term perspective on the state-making process. Third, scholars have deftly traced the changing role of military power in modern Chinese politics but have also adopted the interpretive categories of *wen* and *wu* from literati discourse without sufficient critical reflection. In the future, researchers may seek to explore the intersection of warfare and the environment, technology, and ethnic identity, approaches that will continue to move the field in comparative, global, and Inner Asian directions.

Keywords warfare, historiography, Qing dynasty, New Qing history, methodology, future research directions

Between 1644 and 1800 the Qing dynasty created one of the most powerful empires in the early modern world through violent conquest. In the following century, they were forced to defend their expansive territories in a series of conflicts with aggressive foreign powers and domestic rivals. War in both periods played an integral role in shaping the institutional development, political culture, and statecraft of the Qing imperium, and scholars have devoted considerable

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attention to this problem in the historical literature.

This review essay evaluates a representative sampling of the writings on warfare and imperialism in the Qing era, focusing on the period after 1840, devoting primary attention to foreign conflicts, and limiting itself to works in English. I advance three principle claims in this article. First, I argue that the literature on war can serve as a synecdoche for the evolution of the modern China field as a whole since the 1950s. The research interests of late Qing specialists have oscillated along an "external-internal-external" (*wai-nei-wai* 外-内-外) axis that corresponds with three distinct periods of intellectual inquiry and scholarly production. In phases one and three, Sinologists have written extensively on warfare and the related topics of imperialism and state-making, seeking to place the Qing Empire within a geographic, methodological, and interpretive framework that transcends its own territorial boundaries. During the second phase, they emphasized the importance of discovering history in China, and these subjects all but disappeared from the research agenda because of concerns about Eurocentric bias. Since the 1990s the internal and external approaches have achieved a partial but incomplete synthesis, for example by combining the regional case study with comparative historical analysis. This pattern arose because of generational change in the China field, the emergence of new intellectual priorities in the academy, and the reconfiguration of the global order during the second half of the twentieth century.

Second, this essay asserts that scholars have used warfare to evaluate not only the state capacity of the Qing Empire after 1840 but the effectiveness of reform efforts such as the Self-Strengthening Movement. Yet a crude appraisal of the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 continues to leave the field close to the interpretive conclusions of the modernization theorists of the 1950s and 1960s, who envisioned the last half-century of Qing rule as an era of dynastic decline, administrative paralysis, and abortive reform. These findings may change if historians offer a clearer definition of the state, compare China with areas of Africa and Asia colonized by the European powers, and view state-making as a long-term process that unfolded over a full century from 1840 to 1950.

Third, historians have used war, particularly domestic rebellion, to trace the changing internal equilibrium of the Qing state and examine the relationship between military and political power in China. Their writings have provided important insight into processes of local militarization, the devolution of political power to the provincial level, and the partial eclipse of the court by Han Chinese officials in the nineteenth century. However, this body of literature also adopts the interpretive categories of civil and military (*wen-wu* 文-武) from literati discourse without sufficient critical scrutiny. In sum, this review article contends that warfare made and unmade the Qing dynasty between 1644 and 1911, and its study has helped to make the field of modern Chinese history over the past seventy years.

Warfare as a Historiographic Synecdoche

This essay will first evaluate the changing research focus, methodological practices, and normative assumptions of Qing studies in the United States since World War II. As noted in the introduction, warfare, especially interstate conflict, can serve as a synecdoche for the larger corpus of literature on modern Chinese history published in three successive periods: 1945–70, 1970–90, and 1990–present. Although military history has received limited attention in the scholarly literature, in practice historians have found it impossible to discuss war without addressing the issues of imperialism, international law, the tributary system, foreign trade, state-making, and Qing diplomacy.[1] These related problems first generated intense interest in the 1950s and 1960s, a time when scholars interpreted external or *wai* in terms of China's interaction with Europe and, to a lesser extent, Japan. The 1970s ushered in a new approach to the discipline that called for regional case studies, assessed cultural and social issues rather than gunboats, diplomats, and treaties, and above all stressed the indigenous roots of historical change. Paul Cohen codified this perspective with the phrase "discovering history in China" in his 1984 book of the same title, indicating a shift toward internal or *nei* in the practice of historical scholarship on China. The current phase began in the early 1990s with the global and comparative work of historians such as R. Bin Wong and Kenneth Pomeranz, and in the late 1990s the new Qing history added another important *wai* dimension to the literature.

Paul Cohen's writings associate the first external phase of historical interpretation in part with the work of John King Fairbank.[2] Cohen claims that he identifies foreign stimuli as the principal agents of political, economic, and social change in China after 1840, eliding indigenous processes such as population growth and the commercialization of the economy. Fairbank left himself open to charges of advocating a Eurocentric challenge-response model by stating that he "discerns two major factors that have shaped recent East Asian history—the forces of modernization originally introduced in large part from the West, and the native traditions." In the end China's indigenous civilization "let her down. The old ways

[1] Two strong examples of military history include Tonio Andrade, *The Gunpowder Age: China, Military Innovation, and the Rise of the West in World History*, and Bruce Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare, 1795–1989.*

[2] This essay frequently cites the work of Paul Cohen, who introduced a new degree of self-reflexivity to the study of modern Chinese history. It does not accept all of his conclusions but acknowledges that his scholarship has set the basic parameters of conversations about the historiography of modern China. See Paul Cohen, *Discovering History in China: American Historical Writing on the Recent Chinese Past.*

were indeed inadequate to modern times."[3] Cohen chooses these quotations from Fairbank's popular writings and a textbook co-authored with Edwin Reischauer and Albert Craig, and the phrase "response to the West" itself comes from a document collection. In scholarly work such as *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast*, Fairbank instead suggests that European imperialism stimulated a creative if painful transformation rather than destroying a moribund civilization.[4] For a time, the Qing integrated Western barbarians into new forms of shared or synarchic rule, revealing a latent strength in existing institutional practices. Nevertheless, critics could argue that even a partially successful response to an external threat still constitutes a response. In the final analysis, Fairbank's arguments imply either internal stagnation or active decline after 1800, an interpretive leitmotif derived from the Chinese idea of the dynastic cycle.

The Fairbank quote introduces another of Cohen's conceptual bugbears, the theory of modernization that informed a wide range of scholarship in the social sciences and humanities in the 1950s and 1960s. Joseph Levenson emerges as a primary target of his critique of the tradition-modernity paradigm, which he sees as Eurocentric, teleological, and self-congratulatory.[5] Like the putative Fairbank approach, this perspective deprived Chinese actors of creative agency in determining their own historical destiny. External forces such as foreign trade, imperialism, and technology transfer destroyed the cultural foundations of an aging civilization. Levenson grappled with the history of ideas rather than warfare, but in his view sudden, violent, and disorienting contact with Europe condemned Confucian China to its modern fate.

The problem of imperialism emerges in Cohen's view as the ultimate interpretive trap whether given a sympathetic treatment or denounced by self-styled leftists such as James Peck and proponents of world systems theory like Frances Moulder.[6] The radical position denies Chinese subjectivity and awards Euro-American actors the principal part in influencing the country's historical

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[3] John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, and Albert M. Craig, *East Asia: The Modern Transformation*, 5, 9–10; John K. Fairbank, "The Great Wall," 28. See Cohen, *Discovering History*, xx; Ssu-yu Teng and John K. Fairbank, *China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey, 1839–1923*.

[4] Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: The Opening of the Treaty Ports 1842–1854*; Fairbank, "Synarchy Under the Treaties," 204–31.

[5] Joseph Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy*; Joseph Levenson, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and the Mind of Modern China*.

[6] James Peck, "Revolution and Modernization and Revisionism: A Two-Front Struggle." Francis Moulder, *Japan, China, and the Modern World Economy: Toward a Reinterpretation of East Asian Development ca. 1600 to ca. 1918*.

evolution after 1840. In this narrative, they simply exchange white hats for black. Imperialism as a concept marginalizes the Chinese even when commentators seek to condemn it on ethical and political grounds. In short, the challenge–response, tradition–modernity, and imperialism paradigms all rest on the same set of Eurocentric assumptions and pose interpretive questions that distort the pattern of the Chinese past.

Cohen reifies a diverse body of scholarship from the 1950s and 1960s as well as selects works of uneven quality to represent the imperialism framework. Yet his analysis also captures many of the essential elements of the field in this period. European missionaries, merchants, diplomats, soldiers, and adventurers played outsized roles in treatments of the late Qing, and historians wrote numerous accounts of the Opium Wars, the Sino-French War, the First Sino-Japanese War, and the Boxer Uprising.[7] Monographs of the period also described armies, arsenals, dockyards, treaties, diplomacy, and modern industries such as shipping and telegraphy. A list of their authors includes many prominent historians of China during the first several postwar decades: Ralph Powell, Mary Wright, Masataka Banno, Immanuel Hsü, Lloyd Eastman, Hao Yen-ping, Benjamin Schwartz, Stanley Spector, Rhoads Murphey, John Schrecker, Albert Feuerwerker, Frederic Wakeman Jr., and, of course, Paul Cohen.

Like Fairbank, they understood the Opium Wars as a sharp discontinuity that severed China's traditional past from its modern present. Sinologists also tended to see historical change in China not simply as conditioned by war and imperialism

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[7] Paul Cohen, *China and Christianity: The Missionary Movement and the Growth of Chinese Anti-foreignism, 1860–1870*; and *Between Tradition and Modernity: Wang T'ao and Reform in Late Ch'ing China*. See also Ralph Powell, *The Rise of Chinese Military Power, 1895–1912*; Mary Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: The T'ung-chih Restoration, 1862–74*; Albert Feuerwerker, *China's Early Industrialization: Sheng Hsuanhuai (1844–1916) and Mandarin Enterprise*; Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *China's Entrance into the Family of Nations: The Diplomatic Phase, 1858–1880*; Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yan Fu and the West*; Stanley Spector, *Li Hung-chang and the Huai Army: A Study in Nineteenth Century Chinese Regionalism*; Hsin-pao Chang, *Commissioner Lin and the Opium War*; Masataka Banno, *China and the West, 1858–1861: The Origins of the Tsungli Yamen*; Frederic Wakeman Jr., *Strangers at the Gate: Social Disorder in South China, 1839–1861*; Hungdah Chiu, "The Development of Chinese International Law Terms and the Problem of Their Translation into English," 485–501; Lloyd Eastman, *Throne and Mandarins: China's Search for a Policy during the Sino-French Controversy, 1880–1885*; Rhoads Murphey, *The Treaty Ports and China's Modernization: What Went Wrong?*; Yen-ping Hao, *The Compradore in Nineteenth Century China: Bridge Between East and West*; John Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism: Germany in Shantung*.

but identified these forces as the primary drivers of events in the country. In addition, they defined "external" in terms of Qing diplomacy, trade, and warfare *with Europe* in contrast to a current *wai* phase that describes it using a global, comparative, and transnational vocabulary. Finally, their comparisons with Europe and Japan assumed a universal teleology of human economic and social development and ignored the possibility of Chinese innovation, achievement, or development.

However, Cohen ignores at least one practical handicap scholars encountered when conducting research during this period. Historians faced significant limitations on the range of documentary sources available to them in the absence of political relations with the People's Republic of China in the 1950s and 1960s. American citizens could only understand China from the outside, at best approaching its peripheries in Taiwan and Hong Kong. In contrast, they enjoyed unfettered access to European, American, and Japanese archives related to missionaries, diplomacy, warfare, and foreign trade. In short, source bias may have influenced the type and range of questions that historians asked as much as intellectual presuppositions, normative values, and contemporary events.

In addition, scholars in the 1950s and 1960s tended to explore the uncharted terrain of modern Chinese history from familiar points of departure such as missionary activities. It is perhaps understandable that historians began the study of a different culture by asking how members of their own society interacted with it. Given the immediacy of the Cold War and the prospect of global conflict raised by the Korean War, the Taiwan Straits crises, and Vietnam, it is even more understandable that their work focused on the problems of war and peace. This approach neither subordinated them to the national security state nor necessarily undermined the validity of their research findings. Subsequent generations of scholars might have justly accused them of abdicating their responsibilities as public intellectuals if they had *not* explored these issues during a time when nuclear war remained an immediate danger.

Third, although the agency critique pinpoints a genuine interpretive weakness, it also ignores a basic fact about the colonial condition. Relations across the imperial divide were by definition asymmetrical; the fundamental purpose of the colonial project in its varied forms lay in depriving indigenous actors of autonomy, subjectivity, and control of their own destinies. As an interpretive category, imperialism can acknowledge inequality, subjugation, and violence without giving way to a reductive Eurocentrism. For the past twenty years, scholars have emphasized this point, but even Fairbank awarded Li Hongzhang and the Empress Dowager Cixi as prominent a role in his work as Robert Hart, whom he described with some exaggeration as a virtual triumvirate in power.[8]

[8] See Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy*.

By the time *Discovering History in China* appeared in print in 1984, the interpretive and methodological focus of Qing studies had shifted from *wai* to *nei*. This second stage of historiographic development lasted from the early 1970s to around 1990 and corresponded in part with a generational change in the field. Warfare, particularly foreign conflicts, disappeared from the research agenda in modern Chinese history, and those few monographs on the subject evaluated it from an indigenous perspective. James Polachek, for example, assessed the Opium War through the lens of literati debates, bureaucratic factionalism, and the domestic political agenda of figures like Lin Zexu, whom he described as a gifted intriguer rather than a selfless servant of the Qing Court.[9] Imperialism, diplomacy, and state-making fared little better despite the publication of works such as Luke S. K. Kwong's *A Mosaic of the Hundred Days*, Jane Kate Leonard's *Wei Yuan and China's Rediscovery of the Maritime World*, Jonathan Ocko's *Ting Jih-ch'ang in Restoration Kiangsu*, and Thomas Kennedy's *The Arms of Kiangnan*.[10]

According to Cohen, this new perspective sought to address the weaknesses of earlier approaches to the Chinese past through four distinct innovations. First, scholars began to disaggregate China into smaller and more manageable analytical units, drawing in many instances on G. William Skinner's model of geographic macroregions.[11] Local and regional studies proliferated in the 1970s and 1980s as Sinologists attempted to paint a more richly textured portrait of the country's history. Philip Huang, for example, used the north China plain as a case study to argue for a long-term process of agricultural involution and the semi-proletarianization of the peasantry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[12] Second, scholars began to write Chinese history "from the bottom up," recognizing the partial disjuncture of the world of the literati elite from that of farmers, merchants, artisans, beggars, rebels, and members of secret societies. Their stories left the rarefied realm of court politics, foreign policy, and inter-state conflict and instead explored China's cultural, economic, and social margins. Susan Naquin, for instance, described the loose organizational structures of the Eight Trigrams sect and chronicled the tragic-comic efforts of this heterodox group to overthrow the Qing dynasty in 1813.[13] Third, historians of China engaged with

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[9] James Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*.

[10] Luke S. K. Kwong, *A Mosaic of the Hundred Days: Personalities, Policies, and Ideas of 1898*; Jane Kate Leonard, *Wei Yuan and China's Rediscovery of the Maritime World*; Jonathan Ocko, *Bureaucratic Reform in Provincial China: Ting Jih-chang in Restoration Kiangsu*; Thomas Kennedy, *The Arms of Kiangnan: Modernization in the Chinese Ordnance Industry, 1860–1895*.

[11] G. William Skinner, ed., *The City in Late Imperial China*.

[12] Philip C. C. Huang, *The Peasant Economy and Social Change in North China*.

[13] Susan Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion: The Eight Trigrams Rebellion of 1813*.

conceptual and methodological approaches from fields in the social sciences as well as cultural and literary studies, semiotics, and gender studies. This interdisciplinary dialogue produced a range of new scholarship and often incorporated the ideas of French post-structural theorists such as Foucualt, Derrida, and Bourdieu. Prasenjit Duara's book *Culture, Power, and the State*, for example, draws on the interpretive vocabulary and research methods of the field of anthropology to examine cultural change and fiscal extraction in rural north China in the first half of the twentieth century.[14]

Most importantly, practitioners of this new methodology advocated the analysis of "Chinese problems in a Chinese context," identifying the roots of historical change within the county's borders rather than in the international environment. They viewed this project as restoring creative agency to the Chinese rather than placing Europe at the center of historical accounts of the Qing Empire. Within this framework, the Opium War became less a radical break with the past than a single event overshadowed by population growth, commercialization, popular violence, and a decline in dynastic fortunes.

These changes reflected the so-called cultural turn in the academy, which questioned the value of positivism, underscored the importance of meaning, affect, and symbol, and placed cultural and linguistic issues at the center of humanistic inquiry. Political, military, and diplomatic history became passé within most geographic sub-fields, and the discipline as a whole turned away from the Rankean preoccupations of the past. At the same time, post-modernism exercised a growing influence not only on the types of questions that specialists posed but the epistemological foundations of their research. Concepts such as hegemonic discourse, knowledge production, and disciplinary regimes began to appear in the writings of China historians as well as their counterparts in other regional specialties.

Yet this internal phase also arose from trends within the China field itself. Sinologists began to enjoy access to historical archives and living subjects in the PRC for the first time in the 1970s and 1980s as a result of renewed diplomatic relations with the United States. It proved easier to discover history in China when scholars could physically go to China, an opportunity that eluded American academics in the 1950s and 1960s. By the end of this period, it had become standard practice to acquire strong proficiency in spoken as well as written Chinese, to conduct research in China, and to interact with scholars in the PRC as well as Chinese Hong Kong, Chinese Taiwan, and Japan. Historians had an unprecedented chance to understand the Chinese on their own terms rather than through the written records of Euro-American diplomats, soldiers, merchants, travelers, and missionaries.

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[14] Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900–1942*.

Finally, a younger generation of Sinologists sought to strike out in directions that distinguished them from their intellectual progenitors and distanced them from the political and scholarly preoccupations of the early Cold War period. Many were born in the post-World War II era or experienced the conflict only as children, instead completing their graduate training during the long years of American involvement in Vietnam. The protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s also drew their attention to problems of social, sexual, racial, and economic discrimination, and their academic work soon began to include various subaltern groups. For example, the impulse to write Chinese history "from the bottom up" reflected a new awareness of social hierarchy and a genuine sympathy with the political activism of the period.

Without question, the China-centered perspective deepened our understanding of the country's complex, troubled, and tragic history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Expanding the scope of research beyond the realm of politics, diplomacy, warfare, and the literati elite opened new vistas of historical knowledge and helped to reclaim the lives, aspirations, and voices of ordinary Chinese during this period. The quotidian and the everyday may offer greater insight into the inner dynamics of a society than the rarefied world of the imperial court, the scholar's study, or the battlefield. In a similar way, interdisciplinary dialogue can only serve to enrich the work of historians, particularly if they view theory not as a totalizing framework but a valuable point of intellectual departure.

Unfortunately, the *nei* approach suffers from shortcomings that make it as problematic as the earlier challenge-response paradigm that, in principle, dominated the field in the 1950s and 1960s. Disaggregating China into its constituent geographic components highlighted important regional trends, variations, and characteristics, but critics such as Michael Gasster have argued that it also obscured a clear vision of overarching patterns of change.[15] Despite its rhetorical nod to operating within an integrated framework of center-region-locality, the internal perspective threatened to dissolve "China" into a dizzying array of "Chinas."

Focusing on "Chinese problems in a Chinese context" succeeds best at the level of rhetoric because it leaves scholars ill-equipped to appraise historical processes that extend beyond the country's borders. It leads to an artificial distinction between what is Chinese and what is not, suggesting that researchers can disentangle the interwoven threads of causality by separating the domestic and the foreign. Taken to a logical extreme, one might ask if foreign imperialism was not, in fact, a Chinese problem. Certainly the Chinese thought so. By the 1880s a

[15] Michael Gasster, "Discovering China in History: Some Comments on Paul Cohen's *Discovering History in China*," 121–53.

significant segment of the literati class identified it as *the* crucial political, military, and economic issue of their time. Alternatively, one might ask if the demographic explosion of the eighteenth century was not in part a foreign issue. New World crops such as maize, potatoes, and melons expanded the food supply, while China's "foreign" Manchu rulers maintained a stable social and political order during the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong reigns. In short, this perspective implies a degree of political, economic, and cultural isolation belied by the historical record and also oversimplifies patterns of causality and change.

In his introduction to the 2010 edition of *Discovering History in China*, Cohen admits that the internal approach has also proven deficient in several important areas of historical research.[16] First, it relegates religious and ethnic minorities such as the Hui, Uyghurs, Tibetans, Mongols, and even the ruling Manchu elite to the margins while granting center stage to Han Chinese. Yet the Inner Asian origins of the Qing dynasty demand the use of a broader *wai* paradigm if historians desire to understand the place of this multiethnic empire within the early modern world. Moreover, the *nei* framework implicitly equates China with its ethnic Han population, a position close to the *de facto* historical narrative of the current government. During the many centuries of Chinese history, the establishment of ethno-cultural and later national identities depended on Han interaction with neighboring societies of the Inner Asian steppe, the rugged uplands of the southwest, and the arid deserts of the northwest. Second, the history of diasporic communities lies in part outside China even if places such as Guangdong and Fujian served as important nodal points in larger transnational structures. Moreover, states, treaties, law, diplomacy, and commerce necessarily intrude into histories of migration even if they no longer dominate them.[17] Finally, historians require a framework that transcends the boundaries of the Qing Empire if they wish to assess Asian regional systems.[18] For example, Japanese scholars such as Kaoru Sugihara and Takeshi Hamashita characterize the tributary system as a ritual façade for an East Asian commercial network that thrived even after the dissolution of the "traditional" world order in the 1800s. In short, the *nei* perspective fails to address comparative, transnational, and global issues and implicitly yields to its own form of cultural exceptionalism centered on the Han Chinese.

A third phase of historiographic development began in the early 1990s,

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[16] Cohen, *Discovering History in China*, xliii–li.

[17] Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times*; Adam MacKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, and Hawaii, 1900–1936*.

[18] Kaoru Sugihara, ed., *Japan, China, and the Growth of the Asian International Economy, 1850–1949*, vol. 1; Takeshi Hamashita, "The Intra-regional System in East Asia in Modern Times."

returning the field to a *wai* focus without abandoning the methodological innovations of the preceding period or rehearsing the arguments of the 1950s and 1960s. Imperialism, warfare, and state-making again appeared on scholars' research agendas without precluding the examination of issues such as gender and sexuality, religion, material culture, science, medicine, public health, urban space, and everyday life. Historians have, in fact, started to explore the intersection of these subjects, recognizing not only mutual influences but complex causal entanglements that defy tidy categories. This trend suggests that the most recent approach may in the future evolve into an amalgam of *wai-nei*, a classic post-revisionist synthesis. For the moment, however, the most creative work in the field continues to integrate an important global, comparative, transnational, or Inner Asian dimension.

The current *wai* phase began with the comparative projects of scholars such as R. Bin Wong and Kenneth Pomeranz in the 1990s but has assumed a second and different iteration in the form of the new Qing history.[19] Like the historians of the 1950s and 1960s, Wong and Pomeranz embrace comparisons between China and Europe but reject teleological conceptions of history based on the experience of the modern West. They instead adopt "symmetrical perspectives" that privilege the developmental trajectory of neither region, de-centering both ends of the Eurasian continent within a broader global framework.[20] Moments of divergence or conjuncture help them to place these different histories within world-historical time while avoiding the problem of Eurocentrism. Pomeranz, for example, identifies important similarities in core economic regions such as Jiangnan, the Kanto plain, Gujarat, the Netherlands, and England prior to 1800 but then describes the contingent factors that enabled parts of Europe to industrialize.[21] In particular, he argues that inexpensive energy in the form of coal, access to the resources of the New World, and participation in new types of trading systems triggered radical changes in the economic structures of places like Britain.

In his earlier work *The Making of a Hinterland*, Pomeranz helped to revive the problem of warfare and imperialism in modern Chinese history but asserts that they provided the larger context for a story of political, economic, and environmental change centered on indigenous actors. The Chinese exercised creative agency in their choice of policy reforms, responses to ecological decline, and behavior within

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[19] Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Making of a Hinterland: State, Society, and Economy in Inland North China, 1853–1937*; Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*; R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Experience and the Limits of European Experience*; Jean-Laurent Rosenthal and R. Bin Wong, *Before and Beyond Divergence: The Politics of Economic Change in Europe and China*.

[20] Wong, *China Transformed*, 282.

[21] Pomeranz, *Great Divergence*, introductory chapter.

marketing systems but also faced the constraints of European, American, and later Japanese power. Despite these limitations, they achieved substantial success in building the rudiments of state power and developing a new form of statecraft based on neo-mercantilist principles.

Although closely related, the work of Wong and Pomeranz differs in several significant respects. In *China Transformed*, Wong assesses a broad range of political and social phenomena such as revolution, state-making, and popular protest in comparative perspective, while Pomeranz constructs a global framework to explain the emergence of the modern world economy. In addition, Pomeranz relies on spatially smaller units of analysis in the form of discrete regions in *The Great Divergence* in contrast to Wong's large-scale comparisons of Europe and China. Finally, Wong makes extensive use of research from social scientific fields like sociology and political science, while *The Making of a Hinterland* adopts a more humanistic approach.

Yet both scholars imply that researchers can discover European history in China and vice versa through a form of parallax vision. Moreover, their work removed the stigma of Eurocentrism from the historical problems of imperialism, warfare, state-making, and Christianity in China, encouraging fresh scholarship on these issues during the past twenty years. Historians have not only reexamined subjects like the Opium Wars, the Self-Strengthening Movement, the Imperial Maritime Customs Service, and the legal order in China's treaty ports but also probed their intersection with "internal" issues of public health, urban space, consumption, religion, and gender and sexuality.[22] Once again a series of recognizable names

[22] Representative works include Daniel Bays, ed., *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*; Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth Century Shanghai*; J. Y. Wong, *Deadly Dreams: Opium, Imperialism, and the Arrow War (1856–1860) in China*; Eileen Scully, *Bargaining with the State from Afar: American Citizenship in Treaty Port China, 1844–1942*; James Hevia, *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth Century China*; Lydia Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making*; Ruth Rogaski, *Hygienic Modernity: Meanings of Disease and Public Health in Treaty Port China*; Karl Gerth, *China Made: Consumer Culture and the Creation of the Nation*; Wen-hsin Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor: Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843–1949*; Kirk C. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade: Qing Imperialism and Choson Korea, 1850–1910*; Pär Kristoffer Cassel, *Grounds of Judgment: Extraterritoriality and Imperial Power in Nineteenth Century China and Japan*; Peter Zarrow, *After Empire: The Conceptual Transformation of the Chinese State, 1885–1924*; Matthew W. Mosca, *From Frontier Policy to Foreign Policy: The Question of India and the Transformation of Geopolitics in Qing China*; He Wenkai, *Paths Toward the Modern Fiscal State*; Hans van de Ven, *The Maritime Customs Service and the Global Origins of Modernity in China*; Stephen Halsey, *Quest for Power: European Imperialism and the Making of Chinese Statecraft*; Robert Bickers and Isabella Jackson, eds., *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land, and Power*.

appears in even a partial list of scholars working on these problems: Daniel Bays, Robert Bickers, Pär Cassel, Karl Gerth, Gail Hershatter, James Hevia, Kirk Larsen, Lydia Liu, Matthew Mosca, Ruth Rogaski, Eileen Scully, Hans van de Ven, Odd Arne Westad, J. Y. Wong, Wen-hsin Yeh, and Peter Zarrow. Most historians would now describe warfare and imperialism as the historical context for *Chinese actions taken by Chinese actors* rather than the principal forces of historical change. This understanding recognizes the asymmetry in Sino-Western power relationships without presenting the Qing as feckless victims of foreign aggression.

The methodology used in the third phase of historical writing synthesizes the *wai-nei* approaches to a certain extent without fully integrating them. Scholars like Pomeranz have in part relied on the regional study, a methodological practice that gained widespread currency during the 1970s and 1980s. They have also drawn on work in other humanistic and social scientific disciplines, for example using the ideas of sociologist Charles Tilly to assess state-making in a comparative context. Finally, their scholarship at times investigates topics such as social protest, revolutionary movements, and local organizations but without explicitly embracing the goal of writing history "from the bottom up." However, the basic presuppositions of their approach are incompatible with the idea of discovering history in China, which minimizes the global, transnational, and broader Asian dimensions of the country's historical experience.

The new Qing history focuses on an earlier chronological period than this essay but merits attention because it too has renewed interest in warfare and imperialism. Its practitioners attribute the strength and longevity of the dynasty to the maintenance of ethnic difference by the Manchu rulers. In addition, they argue that this alien conquest elite developed a form of multiethnic statecraft that appealed to the distinctive political, religious, and cultural traditions of important constituencies within their empire. From its inception in the 1990s, this body of scholarship investigated the military organization, martial traditions, and imperial expansion of the Manchu people, emphasizing above all the significance of the dynasty's Inner Asian origins. Commentators such as Peter Perdue recounted the Qing annexation of Central Asia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Mark Elliott described the Eight Banner system of military-political-social organization, and Evelyn Rawski appraised the ritual practices and social world of the Manchu ruling elite. In one of the earliest contributions to this literature, Pamela Crossley recounted the fate of three generations of Manchu bannermen and in later work chronicled the Qianlong Emperor's efforts to reinvent a Manchu identity in the second half of the eighteenth century.[23] Finally, Joanna

[23] Peter Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*; Mark Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*; Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions*; Pamela Kyle Crossley, *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World*; Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology*.

Waley-Cohen argued for the militarization of culture during the Qing era, tracing the impact of warfare on ritual practice and the production of visual culture.[24] In short, warfare and Qing imperialism have emerged at the forefront of scholarship on the first as well as the latter half of the dynasty, placing the Qing polity within a world-historical context of competing empires such as the Ottoman, Russian, and Zunghar. Like the work of Wong and Pomeranz, the new Qing history suggests that the most recent iteration of *wai* has come to define "external" in terms of the global and comparative in contrast to the narrower emphasis on Europe during the 1950s and 1960s.

This third phase of historiographic development not only reflects the emerging globalism of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries but China's greater prominence on the world stage. The country's growing economic, political, and military clout has prompted scholars to examine how it interacted with other societies, supervised resident foreigners, promoted commerce and industry, established overseas communities, and created a strong polity in the past. Warfare, diplomacy, great power competition, and state-making again appear relevant in the context of a resurgent China, and this new geopolitical reality has stimulated interest in many of the historical subjects of the 1950s and 1960s.

At the same time, minority unrest in peripheral regions helps to explain the attention to ethnic identity, religious practice, and strategies of governance in a polyglot empire in the new Qing history. Although the Manchu have blended into the Han population in twenty-first century China, the Chinese state identifies Tibetans, Uyghurs, and other minority groups as sources of political and social instability. Scholars have investigated these sensitive issues under the assumption that the past may illuminate the problems of the present in important ways. In a general sense, societies across the globe have become more aware of their internal heterogeneity in recent years, and ethnic difference has assumed a correspondingly prominent place in political discourse.

Like the internal paradigm of the 1970s and 1980s, the current approach to Qing studies also arose from generational change within the field. Many of its earliest advocates completed their graduate work in the second half of the 1980s or the 1990s, and a number of these scholars acquired proficiency in Manchu, Mongol, or Tibetan in addition to the standard battery of East Asian languages. They studied with historians associated with both the earlier *wai* and *nei* periods, but with few exceptions their thesis supervisors have retired and they themselves have been training doctoral candidates for the past two decades.

Finally, the study of modern China has changed in tandem with the broader discipline of history. The American Historical Association now recognizes fields

[24] Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Culture of War in China: Empire and the Military Under the Qing Dynasty*.

such as World/Global/Transnational, Comparative, Borderlands, and Ethnohistory, categories that subsume much of the innovative scholarship published during the current *wai* phase. The new Qing history, for example, incorporates important elements of each of these thematic fields, while the work of Pomeranz and Wong falls under the aegis of the first two. As national boundaries have become more physically porous, they have also started to seem less significant as a framework for analysis across a range of historical fields and within other humanistic disciplines.

Warfare and State Capacity in the Late Qing Era

This essay also maintains that Sinologists have used interstate conflict, especially the First Sino-Japanese War, to assess state capacity and the effectiveness of reform policies during the late imperial period. In 1894–95, China and Japan fought a war for control of Korea, and Tokyo won commanding victories both on land and at sea. Historians of East Asia have concluded that this outcome affirms the "success" of reforms undertaken by the Meiji government (1868–1912) in Japan and the concomitant "failure" of the Self-Strengthening Movement in China.

The original formulation of this argument accepted the premises of modernization theory, and its contrasting images of China and Japan described the economic realities of the 1950s and 1960s. These seminal events have generated little new scholarship in the intervening decades, and the most recent monographic treatment replicates many of the standard arguments. S. C. M. Paine asserts in her 2005 study that the conflict marked "a terminal decline of the old inward-looking Confucian order and the ascendancy of the Western order of global politics . . . . China's millennia-long unquestioned dominance had abruptly ended."[25] In her view, the war left an "enduring legacy of political instability" in China, while in contrast Japan emerged as the dominant regional hegemon.[26] According to William Rowe, "This verdict has been nearly universally adopted by historians . . . [as] a dominating theme of late Qing historiography. The vast majority of scholarship in both China and the West has concentrated on explaining *why* China's early industrialization failed, not whether."[27]

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[25] S. C. M. Paine, *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95: Perceptions, Power, and Primacy*, 4. See also Stewart Lone, *Japan's First Modern War: Army and Society in the Conflict with China, 1894–95*.

[26] Paine, *The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95*, 3.

[27] William T. Rowe, *China's Last Empire: The Great Qing*. This account of Self-Strengthening and the late Qing state also appears in the most important textbooks. See Immanuel Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*; Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*; John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China: A New History*.

At first glance, the logic of these arguments appears unassailable. Weak states lose wars, while strong states win them. However, scholars should think carefully before accepting this proposition. For example, North Vietnam inflicted a decisive military defeat on the United States in the 1970s, but can we, in fact, characterize it as the stronger state? Sinologists may reach different conclusions if they view state-making as a gradual and cumulative process, clarify their definition of the state, and compare China's historical development with societies in Asia, Africa, and the America colonized by the great powers.

The outcome of the First Sino-Japanese War indicates little more than Tokyo's greater power in the mid 1890s and offers few insights into the long-term results of state-building in either country. Progressive policies enabled Tokyo to achieve great power status within fifty years, and in 1904–05 the nation inflicted a notable defeat on Russia. In contrast, the development of a powerful state in China required a full century from 1850 to 1949 and resulted in few military triumphs until the country fought the United States to a stalemate in Korea (1950–53) and acquired nuclear weapons in 1964. Recent work suggests that the Self-Strengthening Movement laid the foundation for a military-fiscal state in modern China, and the subsequent Republican and Communist governments continued the search for wealth and power in the first half of the twentieth century.[28] Despite profound differences in ideological orientation, these regimes agreed on the need to raise additional tax revenue, build new administrative institutions, and improve the armed forces to defend China's sovereignty.

Second, multi-tiered administrative structures and patterns of informal governance complicate definitions of the state in late imperial China. Does the term refer to the ruling monarch, the Aisin Gioro lineage, the central government, provincial and local administrators, gentry and mercantile organizations, clerks and yamen runners, or all of these in combination? In reality "China" mobilized only a portion of its military assets in the conflict with Japan because of the devolution of power to the provincial level after 1850. Should it come as a surprise to late Qing specialists that a unified Japan defeated a politically isolated Li Hongzhang in 1894–95? Disaggregating the late imperial state into its constituent components not only helps to explain the outcome of the First Sino-Japanese War but reveals that the primary impetus for progressive change after 1850 came from the regional and local level. Creative state-making in late imperial China took place in a context of partial political decentralization, a counterintuitive proposition that has led many commentators to dismiss the entire period as a series of disasters. The power of certain administrative organs waned in the last seven decades of Qing rule,

[28] Stephen Halsey, *Quest for Power: European Imperialism and the Making of Chinese Statecraft*, concluding chapter.

particularly in rural regions, while many other elements of the state enjoyed a new vitality in this period. Moreover, most historical accounts have not drawn a clear distinction between the inability of the Aisin Gioro to retain power after 1911 and the putative collapse of China's governing institutions as a whole. Dynastic failure is undeniable; state failure is not.

In contrast to the vast regions of Asia, Africa, and the Americas that fell victim to formal European colonization, the late imperial state and its twentieth century successors fared relatively well. The comparison with Japan obscures the fact that the great powers had invaded, annexed, and governed 84% of the world's total land area by 1914.[29] Placing China within a global framework highlights its divergence from this common historical trajectory, an outcome not explained by international rivalries or the country's size alone. The "weak" Qing and Republican regimes did something right or the country would not have maintained its independence in the predatory environment of the late 1800s and early 1900s. In short, the military and political development of *both* China and Japan appear remarkable if compared with other non-European societies during the long century after 1840.

Warfare and Political Culture in the Qing Dynasty

This essay also advances the thesis that historians have used warfare, especially domestic rebellion, to assess the changing political culture and internal equilibrium of the Qing state. This line of inquiry has offered new insight into the relative distribution of power between Manchu and Han Chinese, the rise of localisms in the nineteenth century, and the historical continuities between the late imperial and Republican eras. However, it also rests on an uncritical acceptance of the categories of civil (*wen*) and military (*wu*), terms borrowed from the political discourse of the literati class.

Scholars such as Joanna Waley-Cohen argue for the militarization of culture as early as the eighteenth century, describing an "intense focus on military affairs" as a central feature of the Qing state.[30] She traces the success of the dynasty not only to territorial conquests in Inner Asia but to a policy of mobilizing visual culture, ritual practices, and moral rhetoric in support of the empire's military projects. In addition, the Qing created a dual power elite that included members of the Eight

[29] For a more extensive discussion, see D. K. Fieldhouse, *The Colonial Empires: A Comparative Survey Since the Eighteenth Century*, 178.

[30] Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Culture of War in China: Empire and the Military Under the Qing Dynasty*, xii.

Banner system as well as the traditional scholar-gentry. Over the long term, this "laid the groundwork for creating a modern, militarized, nation-state" and placed civil and military power (*wen-wu*) on a more equal footing as early as the 1700s.[31]

Waley-Cohen's findings may place the emergence of regional armies after 1850 in a new historical context, linking them to an on-going process of militarization that began during the previous century. In the past, however, researchers focused on the ways that these new organizations influenced the political culture of the subsequent Republican period. As early as the 1930s and 1940s, Luo Ergang and Franz Michel traced the origins of warlordism to the "personal armies" of civil officials such as Zeng Guofan and Li Hongzhang in the 1850s and 1860s.[32] Philip Kuhn notes that Zeng integrated local militias from his home province into the cohesive, structured, and disciplined Hunan Army after Eight Banner and Green Standard forces proved incapable of suppressing the Taiping rebellion.[33] This, in turn, hastened the militarization of local society, the devolution of authority from the central to provincial governments, and a shift in power from Manchu to Han Chinese officials. Kuhn focuses less on historical continuities with the Republican era than either Luo or Michel but also believes that the mid century rebellions blurred the distinction between *wen* and *wu*.

In contrast, Liu Kwang-ching, Wang Ermin, and Ralph Powell claim that the court maintained greater control of provincial officials like Zeng and Li.[34] The power to make appointments, transfer bureaucrats between posts, and disband parts of the new military organizations placed limits on regional autonomy after 1850, and the dynasty itself still enjoyed a measure of political legitimacy. Moreover, the Aisin Gioro continued to command the personal loyalties of figures like Zeng, who resisted the temptation to overthrow the Qing with his Hunan Army and establish a new regime. Finally, the regional armies campaigned in a range of different provinces and within a decade of their creation began to recruit troops from a much broader geographic base. Li's Huai Army may have first and foremost served the political interests of its commander, but these coincided to a substantial extent with those of the empire as a whole.

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[31] Ibid., 1–2.

[32] Luo Ergang, "Qingji bingwei jiangyou de qiyuan," 235–50; Franz Michael, "Military Organization and Power Structure of China during the Taiping Rebellion," 469–83. See also Stanley Spector, *Li Hung-chang and the Huai Army: A Study in Nineteenth Century Chinese Regionalism*.

[33] Philip Kuhn, *Rebellion and Its Enemies in Late Imperial China: Militarization and Social Structure, 1796–1864*.

[34] See Liu Kwang-ching, "The Limits of Regional Power in the Late Ch'ing Period: A Reappraisal"; Wang Ermin, *Huaijun zhi*.

Stephen MacKinnon maintains that the Beiyang forces of the early 1900s resembled a genuine imperial army to a much greater extent than Li's troops. This New Army depended in part on the court for funding and recruited soldiers on the basis of training and education rather than personal ties to their commanding officers.[35] Despite his role as military strongman after 1911, Yuan Shikai embraced Chinese nationalism and saw a strong state as the solution to the country's domestic and international problems. Central, provincial, and local power overlapped to a significant degree, at times generating conflict but in other circumstances facilitating the pursuit of common goals by different actors. In short, the military organizations of the mid-1800s bore little similarity to the Beiyang Army, much less prefigured the fratricidal strife of the first half of the twentieth century.

Like MacKinnon, Edward McCord sees the development of warlordism as a contingent historical process rather than the predictable outcome of events in the mid nineteenth century.[36] Civil war originated in a series of clashes between civil and military officials in the 1910s as well as political tensions between the central government and provincial assemblies dominated by gentry and mercantile elites. In time, all parties resorted to force to resolve their differences, inaugurating a cycle of violence that militarized political power during the early years of the Republic. The power of the gun determined the nature of political life in China for the four decades after the Xinhai Revolution of 1911.

Together with the work of Waley-Cohen, this discussion appears to point to a long-term process of militarization that spanned the entire Qing dynasty. It is tempting to advance the hypothesis that civil and military authority enjoyed a more equal status in China after 1644 and to suggest that this trend has continued in various ways to the present. However, this conclusion would replicate a problem shared by most of the works described above. Scholars have too readily accepted the categories of *wen* and *wu*, using terms from traditional Chinese political discourse to write academic histories of the Qing era. The literati had ample reason not only to assert the supremacy of civil over military authority but to posit an absolute distinction between the two forms of power. This rhetorical strategy enabled them to affirm the social and political prerogatives of their class and to resist the exercise of monarchical power when their interests diverged from the Qing dynasty. The imperial bureaucracy may have divided military responsibilities between competing offices, but in practice most positions combined the functions of *wen* and *wu* to a certain degree. Even rulers understood the advantage of embracing these discursive categories, disguising their use of

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[35] Stephen MacKinnon, *Power and Politics in Late Imperial China: Yuan Shi-kai in Beijing and Tianjin, 1901–1908*.

[36] Edward McCord, *The Power of the Gun: The Emergence of Modern Chinese Warlordism*.

coercive force behind a veil of moralistic and ritualized language. They too professed their preference to govern through persuasion rather than violence, laying claim to the Mencian ideal of sagely rule. Historians should view their rhetoric with great skepticism and consider investigating the origins, elaboration, and discursive utility of *wen-wu* instead of adopting this binary formulation in their own work.

Future Directions

This review essay has argued that warfare not only played a crucial role in the development of the Qing dynasty but in its study in the American academy since World War II. First, I asserted that it offers a way of exploring the shifting priorities of the field of modern Chinese history as a whole during three distinct periods, particularly given its close association with the problems of imperialism and state-making. I described this pattern as an oscillation along a *wai-nei-wai* axis but identified a partial synthesis of the latter two approaches since 1990. Second, I contended that Sinologists have used warfare, particularly the conflict with Japan in 1894–95, as a means of measuring state capacity and the success of progressive policies. Historians might reach different conclusions about these issues if they disaggregate the Qing state into its constituent components, adopt a longer-term perspective, and compare China with areas of Africa, Asia, and the Americas colonized by the European powers. Third, I maintained that the subject of warfare has enabled historians to trace the development of China's political culture during the late imperial and Republican periods. At the same time, they have also relied on the reified categories of *wen* and *wu* to analyze these changes rather than subjecting these concepts to critical analysis. Warfare has regained its currency as a subject of historical inquiry, raising the question of which aspects of this problem China scholars may want to investigate in coming years.

Three potential approaches to this issue include the environment, technology, and ethnic identity, all of which would continue to move the field in *wai* directions. The ecological causes and consequences of violent conflict in late imperial China should invite more systematic study, and historians such as Micah Muscolino have already started to investigate this topic during the Republican era.[37] In his recent book *The Ecology of War*, Muscolino uses the flow of energy through the natural world to assess the Second Sino-Japanese War, focusing in particular on the militarization of the Yellow River in Henan Province. Researchers may want to consider examining the environment as a weapon of war

[37] Micah Muscolino, *The Ecology of War in China: Henan Province, the Yellow River, and Beyond, 1938–1950*.

in other conflicts such as the military campaigns against non-Han populations in peripheral regions of the empire. The study of China proper might begin with environmental histories of the White Lotus (1796–1804) and Taiping (1850–64) rebellions, describing their impact not only on soil, water, and vegetation but on patterns of human settlement and migration in the post-war period. In addition, the White Lotus may help to reveal the impact of the natural world on the development of military strategy in the high Qing period. The topography of upland Hubei, Shanxi, and Sichuan provinces invited the use of guerilla tactics and the subsequent adoption of sophisticated counterinsurgency strategies by the state. In sum, this environmental approach would require scholars to integrate non-human actors into their treatments of warfare and to conceptualize the human experience in global terms.

Historians of China have grappled with the issue of warfare and technology since the early 1950s, and this question continues to stimulate discussion seven decades later.[38] For example, in a recent book Tonio Andrade argues not only for the country's military dynamism in the early gunpowder age but for its rapid resurgence in the century since 1840.[39] He borrows the concept of divergence between Asia and the West from the work of Pomeranz and Wong, exemplifying in his approach many of the comparative and transnational features of the current historiographic phase. Future projects might build on his study through a systematic comparison with Japan in the century from 1840 to 1950 but abandon the earlier premise of Chinese failure. During this period, technological change in both societies began with weaponry and armaments, and the state founded the earliest large-scale industries in the form of arsenals and shipyards. In what ways did this history shape dominant forms of war-making, technology transfer, and the relationship between government and industry in these countries? Like the environment, technology promises to reveal more about warfare in China when assessed from a transnational or comparative perspective.

Finally, the subject of militarism and ethno-cultural identity demands serious reassessment by the field of Chinese history as a whole. Historians have too easily embraced a meta-narrative that associates military power with alien conquest dynasties such as the Liao, Jin, Yuan, and Qing, and civil authority with Han Chinese regimes. Political actors gave this idea expression in official sources to bolster their claims to legitimacy and to obscure the often violent intrusions into frontier regions like the steppe. At the same time, this story reinforced the ideology

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[38] See, for example, Stanley Spector, *Li Hung-chang and the Huai Army: A Study in Nineteenth Century Chinese Regionalism*.

[39] Tonio Andrade, *The Gunpowder Age: China, Military Innovation, and the Rise of the West in World History*.

of Chinese nationalism in the twentieth century, which presented the country as a victim of imperialist aggression in the "Century of Humiliation" after 1840. These facts alone should give Sinologists pause as they consider the role of warfare in the Chinese history. To their credit, commentators such as David Robinson and Charles Hartmann have begun to cast doubt on this account through their work on the Ming and Song, respectively, but it retains far too much influence.[40] Instead future work should start with the hypothesis that imperialism and violent conflict are woven into the fabric of the Chinese past. By discovering the history of warfare in China, scholars will not only demolish these myths but continue to think beyond the country's borders.

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[40] David Robinson, *Martial Spectacles of the Ming Court*; Charles Hartmann, "Sung Politics and Government," 19–138.

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